

# COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

*Findings of the National Reconciliation and Transitional Justice Audit*



**2014**

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are most grateful to all the focus group discussion participants and key informants who participated in the National Reconciliation and Transitional Justice Audit (NRTJ). They generously shared their memories and their views, fears and hopes related to Uganda's history and future in general, and to justice processes in particular. A special thanks also goes to the local Government officials, the community development officers and members of civil society who both participated in and supported the field research.

Pool researchers who participated in the field research and to whom we express our gratitude are, in alphabetical order: Bonome Kibukila, Christopher Okidi, Edward Ssendagire, Jimmy Wamimbi, Joan Aliobe, Hope Zainab Natukunda, Joseph Okumu, Lawrence Okware, Marsiale Kadoogo, Richard Veve, Rosemary Luroni, Hellen Mabonga and Thomas Kanooti.

The Compendium is based on Field Briefs published on each visited district. These were drafted by the different research teams, and benefited from the valuable inputs of Angela Nabwowe, Dr Chris Dolan, Emily Cody, Jessica Shewan, Kari Griffiths and Lisa Feirabend, as well as the exceptional desk-top publishing skills of Shaffic Opiny.

This Compendium of Conflicts was written by Annelieke van de Wiel (Coordinator of the National Reconciliation and Transitional Justice Audit, Beyond Juba Project II Coordinator), Benard Okot Kasozi (Senior Research Officer), Lyandro Komakech (Senior Research Officer and Deputy Head of Conflict, Transitional Justice and Governance Programme) and Stephen Oola (Head of the Conflict, Transitional Justice and Governance Programme). Different sections benefited from editing by Benedetta Lanfranchi, Cory Kuklick, David Danielson, Jane Bowman and Jessica Shewan, and overall copy-editing by Alex Humphrey. Editorial oversight was provided by Dr. Chris Dolan (Director of the Refugee Law Project) and Annelieke van de Wiel. The Compendium benefitted tremendously from peer review and expert feedback by Dr. Arthur Bainomugisha, Prof. Epelu-Opio Justin, James A.A. Otto and Kabumba Busingye.

The research which led to the Compendium of Conflicts would not have been possible without the generous financial support by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), the Democratic Governance Facility (DGF) and UK Department for International Development (DFID).

## FOREWORD

Ugandans have been waiting to tell the truth for a long time. Each citizen has her or his own experience of that truth. Few get to tell the world their particular story.

Officials, bureaucrats, policy makers and practitioners frequently believe that they know better, and that the general citizen is defined by their ignorance rather than their potential contribution to the bigger picture.

This Compendium demonstrates that common ground can and must be found, and that when it comes to dealing with untold legacies of violence, expertise resides in every corner of this country. When it comes to understanding the structural underpinnings of violence, ordinary civilians are the match of international experts. When it comes to connecting the dots between poverty, violence and the form that justice needs to take if it is to deliver sustainable peace, they readily outstrip the mainstream policy debate.

In a far-reaching and unprecedented effort to establish and integrate the ordinary experiences of Uganda's multiple histories and truths, indeed to establish Uganda's past as a resource for the future, the researchers held in-depth dialogues with community members in 20 of Uganda's 111 districts. The scope of their combined knowledge is reflected in the text that follows, a compendium of invaluable information and perspectives on more than 125 conflicts that have affected and continue to have negative impacts on Uganda now and in the future; they include both those that are specific to particular locations, and those that cut across the country as a whole.

As such, this Compendium provides an important resource and contribution to the construction of a national truth-telling process for the nation. It also reminds us that in establishing the parameters of such a process, the voices of those who have survived to tell the stories, or who are the messengers for their departed, must be prioritized.

The nature of human memory is such that it rarely offers us the whole truth and nothing but the truth. It is multi-layered, and the pathways to remembering are often blocked by the emotional scars of traumatic experience. As such, establishing the truth can only ever be a work in progress. It is our hope that this first edition of the Compendium of Conflicts will help to trigger a positive cycle of personal remembering, public reminding, and, ultimately, shared national history building and reconciliation.



**Dr. Chris Dolan**

***Director - Refugee Law Project***

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

|                |   |   |
|----------------|---|---|
| <b>ADF</b>     | – | Allied Democratic Forces  |
| <b>BJP</b>     | – | Beyond Juba Project   |
| <b>CP</b>      | – | Conservative Party  |
| <b>CSO</b>     | – | Civil Society Organisation  |
| <b>DP</b>      | – | Democratic Party  |
| <b>DRC</b>     | – | Democratic Republic of the Congo  |
| <b>FDC</b>     | – | Forum for Democratic Change   |
| <b>FEDEMU</b>  | – | Federal Democratic Movement of Uganda                                       |
| <b>FGD</b>     | – | Focus Group Discussion  |
| <b>FOBA</b>    | – | Force Obote Back Again  |
| <b>FRONASA</b> | – | Front for National Salvation  |
| <b>FUNA</b>    | – | Former Uganda National Army   |
| <b>GoU</b>     | – | Government of Uganda  |
| <b>HSM</b>     | – | Holy Spirit Movement  |
| <b>HSMF</b>    | – | Holy Spirit Mobile Forces   |
| <b>ICC</b>     | – | International Criminal Court  |
| <b>ICRC</b>    | – | International Committee for the Red Cross                                   |
| <b>IDP</b>     | – | Internally Displaced Person   |
| <b>KAR</b>     | – | King’s African Rifles   |
| <b>KII</b>     | – | Key Informant Interview   |
| <b>KY</b>      | – | Kabaka Yekka  |
| <b>LC</b>      | – | Local Council   |
| <b>LC-I</b>    | – | Local Council One   |
| <b>LC-V</b>    | – | Local Council Five  |
| <b>LG</b>      | – | Local Government  |
| <b>LRA</b>     | – | Lord’s Resistance Army  |
| <b>MONUC</b>   | – | United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo |
| <b>MP</b>      | – | Member of Parliament  |
| <b>NALU</b>    | – | National Army for the Liberation of Uganda                                  |
| <b>NAADS</b>   | – | National Agricultural Advisory Services                                     |
| <b>NGO</b>     | – | Non-Governmental Organisation   |

## COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

|               |   |  |
|---------------|---|--|
| <b>NRTJ</b>   | – | National Reconciliation and Transitional Justice |
| <b>NRA</b>    | – | National Resistance Army                         |
| <b>NRM</b>    | – | National Resistance Movement                     |
| <b>NUSAF</b>  | – | Northern Uganda Social Action Fund               |
| <b>PRA</b>    | – | People’s Redemption Army                         |
| <b>PRDP</b>   | – | Peace, Recovery and Development Plan             |
| <b>RDC</b>    | – | Resident District Commissioner                   |
| <b>RLP</b>    | – | Refugee Law Project                              |
| <b>SGBV</b>   | – | Sexual and Gender Based Violence                 |
| <b>SPLM</b>   | – | Sudan People’s Liberation Movement               |
| <b>TCI</b>    | – | Tororo Cement Industries                         |
| <b>TPDF</b>   | – | Tanzania People’s Defence Force                  |
| <b>TPO</b>    | – | Transcultural Psychosocial Organisation          |
| <b>UA</b>     | – | Ugandan Army                                     |
| <b>UFDA</b>   | – | Uganda Federal Democratic Alliance               |
| <b>UFF</b>    | – | Uganda Freedom Fighters                          |
| <b>UFM</b>    | – | Uganda Freedom Movement                          |
| <b>UNLA</b>   | – | Uganda National Liberation Army                  |
| <b>UNLF</b>   | – | Uganda National Liberation Front                 |
| <b>UNM</b>    | – | Uganda National Movement                         |
| <b>UNRF</b>   | – | Uganda National Rescue Front                     |
| <b>UPA</b>    | – | Uganda People’s Army                             |
| <b>UPE</b>    | – | Universal Primary Education                      |
| <b>UPC</b>    | – | Uganda People’s Congress                         |
| <b>UPDA</b>   | – | Uganda People’s Democratic Army                  |
| <b>UPDF</b>   | – | Uganda People’s Defence Forces                   |
| <b>UPDM/A</b> | – | Uganda People’s Democratic Movement/Army         |
| <b>UPF</b>    | – | Uganda Patriotic Front                           |
| <b>UPM</b>    | – | Uganda Patriotic Movement                        |
| <b>WNBF</b>   | – | West Nile Bank Front                             |

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# CHAPTER

## INTRODUCTION

# ONE



## COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

When a nation takes the bold step of looking back unflinchingly into its history, what exactly does it need to look for? Ever since the 2006-2008 Juba Peace Talks between the Government of Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army set in train a process of national self-scrutiny, different sectoral stakeholders have attempted to put in place the frameworks for such an analysis. Civil society has led the way in developing a draft National Reconciliation Bill, while the Justice Law & Order Sector has moved forward the elaboration of a Transitional Justice Policy which was submitted to Cabinet in 2014. However, all these efforts have taken place against the backdrop of a crippling information deficit and a lack of certainty regarding the full extent of the legacies of violence that they are supposed to address. The names, nature and legacies of the numerous rebel groups that have troubled Uganda ever since its independence are neither well defined nor well described; the majority of the conflicts are never discussed, and where there are atrocities, abuses and failures of governance, they are effectively silenced by the broader narrative of Uganda's post-1986 'renaissance'.



Many of Uganda's citizens, increasingly divided by an extensive districtisation process (often along ethnic and sub-ethnic lines), tend to focus on their own difficulties rather than the challenges faced by fellow citizens in other parts of the country. The long duration and particular history of the northern Uganda conflict ultimately prompted the development of strong civil society voices seeking to tell the world about what was happening in their region. Most of Uganda's other, shorter, conflicts have remained much less well publicized, and both civil society and Government are much less able to speak out about them. The lack of clarity about specific conflicts, and a corresponding lack of awareness of the numerous conflict related traumas, tensions and reconciliation

needs which linger in diverse corners of the country, are major obstacles to thinking through the shape that a comprehensive national reconciliation process needs to take.

To fill this information gap, the Refugee Law Project in 2012 began a National Reconciliation & Justice Audit (NRTJ Audit), a participatory research process that was conducted throughout the country. Premised on the view that whenever the spotlight of international attention focuses on one conflict, others tend to be ‘forgotten’ (whether in policy-making, history teaching, or simply in the collective national consciousness), the goal of the NRTJ Audit was to disperse the shadows that hide so many aspects of Uganda’s history.

By sampling districts from every corner of the country, the NRTJ Audit gave voice to the people of Uganda, more than fifty years after Independence; it captured their exasperation at an enduring lack of peace, at persistent and deep divisions in society, and at the failure to address legacies of conflict and injustice. Through focus group discussions and key informant interviews, the NRTJ documented 125 conflicts, the vast majority of which involved armed violence, yet remain unknown by anybody outside the areas most immediately affected. It sought to answer not just questions of fact (which rebel groups were there? What did they do? What legacies remain to be dealt with?), but also to capture community attitudes towards a range of justice mechanisms.

The process itself offers a model for any future truth-telling in Uganda: Participants consistently expressed a deep satisfaction at the opportunity to discuss and illuminate Uganda’s history in a public forum. As they examined the causes and impacts of the 125 conflicts reflected in this Compendium, the importance of knowing one’s history was expressed and reflected upon time and again. As one participant from Kitgum said,

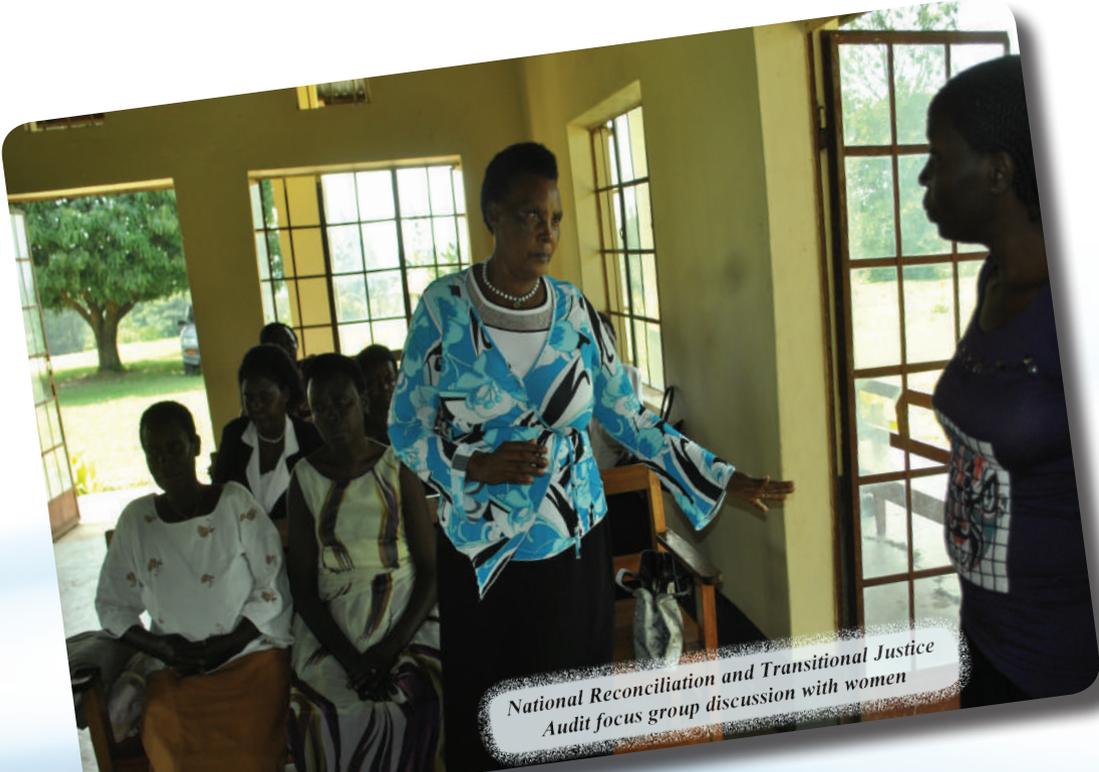
*“If history is not allowed to be talked about, then what history can we have as people? History must be allowed. It must be told in a true way to enable us to get healing.”*

The conflicts identified in this Compendium are not limited to armed conflicts between different armed groups or between armed groups and the State. When asked which conflicts they wanted to discuss, participants did not focus solely on armed conflicts, adopting instead a much broader definition, including (often unarmed) conflicts between tradition and modernity, ethnic groups, religions, generations and genders. The Compendium of Conflict reveals diversity in Uganda’s conflicts, but also a common concern to address key forms and sources of fragmentation, and with that, an understanding of cycles of violence and a wish for greater national cohesion.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The methodology of the NRTJ Audit was tailored to enable a broad and comprehensive overview of various conflicts that occurred at the village, district, regional and national levels, while at the same time allowing for some in-depth coverage of the nature and unaddressed legacies of those conflicts. The field-researchers were led by two main objectives:

1. To document from a community perspective all the post-Independence and post-1986 conflicts in Uganda of which participants were aware



*National Reconciliation and Transitional Justice  
Audit focus group discussion with women*



*National Reconciliation and Transitional Justice  
Audit focus group discussion with men*

- To identify and assess the outstanding reconciliation and transitional justice needs related to each of these conflicts, and to reflect on the merits of possible mechanisms and processes to address these needs

The NRTJ Audit comprised of field trips to 20 key districts,<sup>1</sup> involving 65 focus group discussions, over 80 key informant interviews, and more than 582 hours of conversation. The districts were selected to be evenly distributed across Uganda. The areas visited correlate broadly with the district borders of the 1980s, before the rapid process of districtisation in Uganda began. As such, most sub-regions are represented. Preliminary findings were presented in 18 Field Briefs and two documentaries (“Not Only Him is Bright” and “Uganda’s Black Gold”), all available online ([www.beyondjubaproject.org/NRTJA/index.php](http://www.beyondjubaproject.org/NRTJA/index.php)). This Compendium of Conflicts reflects the full results of the Audit.

The following districts were visited:

| District visited for NRTJ Audit Field Research |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Kitgum   | September 12 - 17, 2011        |
| Pader/Patongo                                  | September 13 - 18, 2011        |
| Lira   | September 18 - 24, 2011        |
| Gulu   | September 18 - 24, 2011        |
| Adjumani                                       | September 25 - October 1, 2011 |
| Arua   | October 2 - 9, 2011            |
| Nakapiripirit                                  | October 3 - 9, 2011            |
| Bulambuli                                      | October 30 - November 7, 2011  |
| Kasese   | November 7 - 13, 2011          |
| Soroti   | November 8 - 14, 2011          |
| Tororo   | November 29 - December 5, 2012 |
| Nakasongola                                    | December 5 - 12, 2011          |
| Bundibugyo                                     | January 16 - 22, 2012          |
| Hoima  | January 16 - 22, 2012          |
| Kyankwanzi/Mubende                             | February 12 - 20, 2012         |
| Luwero   | February 12 - 19, 2012         |
| Mukono   | April 10 - 17, 2012            |
| Mbarara  | June 11 - June 17, 2012        |

During the fieldwork, the teams conducted four focus group discussions in each district, with a full day allocated to each discussion. Typically, the first day was spent with women, the second with men, the third with youth, and the fourth with representatives

1 One field trip comprised of visits to two recently split districts, the findings of which were compiled in the Pader District Field Brief. Another district, Kyankwanzi, was visited for two days. The research team, however, had to leave the area due to intimidation by sub-country authorities and security personnel before the field work could be successfully completed. No Field Brief was produced for the latter district.

## COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

from civil society and local Government. Generally, the four focus group discussions were organised in the same location outside the district centre, unless it was clear that in a particular location there were no civil society organisation representatives in the vicinity. In that case, the focus group discussions for civil society and local Government would be organised in the district centre.

Participants were invited through a mobiliser who selected participants based on guidelines aimed at ensuring a balanced group composition in terms of age, gender, socio-economic status, political and religious affiliation. Twenty participants were invited to each focus group during the first week of the NRTJ Audit. Afterwards it became clear that the quality of discussion improved if the group was restricted to 15, so in all subsequent districts this was the number of participants in each focus group. Participants remained in the room for the discussion throughout the day except for a few participants who indicated they had to leave shortly before the conclusion of the discussion due to prior commitments. In addition, in-depth key informant interviews were conducted with people who had particular information about certain issues that arose during the focus group discussions. All focus group discussions were recorded through near-verbatim note taking, the writing of key points on flipcharts and through video and audio recordings.



*Videography was one of the methodologies used during the National Reconciliation and Transitional Justice Audit*



*RLP researcher conducting a key informant interview with prominent peace activist, Archbishop John Baptist Odama*

## COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

Prior to the fieldwork, the NRTJ Audit researchers developed and tested an interview guide for the focus group discussions and key informant interviews during a two day workshop. Focus group discussions were split into morning and afternoon sessions. The morning sessions were used to “look back” and identify the different conflicts that participants remembered on national, regional, district and village levels, the causes and impacts of the conflicts, as well as the stakeholders involved. Afternoon sessions were used to inquire about participants’ perceptions of, and recommendations for, transitional justice mechanisms, looking specifically at truth-telling, prosecutions, reparations, traditional justice, institutional reform, psychosocial support, reconciliation, memorialisation, amnesty and accountability. In closing, participants were invited to address messages to any actors they regarded as particularly key stakeholders in dealing with Uganda’s past and future.

During the first week of the NRTJ Audit field research, the interview guide was further tested and refined. However, the content of the first and final interview guides is essentially the same, with only minor re-phrasing of questions to make them easier to understand. The interview guide was as follows:



## PART 2: LOOKING FORWARD

## WELCOME BACK

- Reminder of purpose of second half: from looking back to looking forward

A. How does it feel to be talking about the history of this country?

E.g.:

RECONCILIATION

TRADITIONAL JUSTICE

TRUTH-TELLING

AMNESTY

PROSECUTIONS

PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

MEMORIALIZATION

REPARATIONS

CHANGES IN LAW / INSTITUTIONS

B. 1. What does JUSTICE mean to you?  
2. Has JUSTICE been done to the stakeholders? How could it be done?

C. MESSAGES...

The 18 Field Briefs arising from field-trips to 20 districts can be accessed at [www.beyondjuba.org/NRTJA/index.php](http://www.beyondjuba.org/NRTJA/index.php), and detail community conflict narratives and perspectives on transitional justice mechanisms. On the basis of the Field Briefs a two-day validation exercise was held. This included representatives from all the visited districts, from civil society in Kampala, and the researchers who had participated in the NRTJ Audit field-work. The Compendium incorporates the findings of the validation workshop. Analysis has been further informed by research conducted in the course of the Beyond Juba Project, and participant observation by Beyond Juba Project staff in numerous Justice Law and Order Sector (JLOS) meetings.

In writing this Compendium of Conflicts, the authors were led by observations and information with regards to conflicts that surfaced during the field research. Whereas in the Field Briefs the conflict descriptions were solely based on information provided by participants, in the Compendium of Conflicts this was further supplemented with secondary sources (articles, books, websites and media coverage), to provide further background and detail with regards to those conflicts identified during the field research. At no point were conflicts added that did not surface during field research, even where secondary sources indicated the existence of such conflicts. Where information from secondary sources is added, this is clearly referenced.



National Reconciliation and Transitional Justice Audit Focus group discussions were recorded in writing

## LIMITATIONS

Budget and time constraints resulted in the purposive sampling of 20 out of Uganda’s 111 districts. As such the Compendium cannot claim to detail *all* the conflicts that have ever occurred throughout all of Uganda’s numerous districts. Furthermore, although focus group discussions were generally open and frank, not all participants will have felt comfortable bringing up *all* conflicts, their causes and impacts, and stakeholders that they knew of. In some cases, participants discussed certain atrocities but declined to name perpetrators. For discussion on some issues, such as incidents involving sexual and gender based violence (SGBV), the open forum of the discussion group was not conducive. Even for information that was already public locally, the fact that the research teams in Kyankwanzi and Bundibugyo districts faced direct intimidation, shows that there are actors who would rather see such information about Uganda’s history of conflict remain hidden from the national limelight, and that the space available for open discussion of issues of conflict, peace and justice is not as expansive as it needs to be.

It is also important to note again that conflict descriptions in this Compendium are based

on perspectives and opinions of the participants with whom researchers interacted. At times, the conflicts that were discussed occurred many decades ago and memories of such conflicts might have faded. It was generally not possible to fact-check all the elements of the conflict perspectives that came up during the focus group discussions and key informant interviews. It is possible that if these conflicts were to be further investigated, information contradicting some of the findings in this Compendium might surface. Notwithstanding these limitations, the Compendium reveals a wealth of information about conflicts that have occurred throughout Uganda, many of which were previously only known to locals and small circles of conflict stakeholders. It provides a clearer and more inclusive picture than hitherto existed of the countrywide existence of conflicts and their impacts.

We anticipate that this foundation will over the next few years be developed, as more districts are visited, more documentation is gathered, and more people step forward to share what they know. In this way, we consider this Compendium of Conflicts a *living document* that has a long life and healthy growth ahead of it. Refugee Law Project will develop this living document over the next few years. Ideally, Uganda should go through a national, comprehensive and open truth-telling process to unearth all the conflicts Uganda has lived through, as well as their causes, impacts and stakeholders.

## THE STRUCTURE OF THE COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS

Section A provides an introduction to the Compendium, as well as describing the methodology and background of the NRTJ Audit. Section B of the Compendium starts by highlighting cross-cutting themes that emerged during the NRTJ Audit, enhancing the understanding of the conflicts that are described by participants on national and regional levels. After, participants describe their perspectives on national level conflicts and the regional manifestations of national level conflicts. As such, the narration is divided into national conflicts and northern, eastern, western and central level conflicts. While the focus of the Compendium is on post-Independence conflicts, pre-Independence conflicts are also included and discussed where participants regarded them as important to our understanding of post-Independence conflicts. Section C provides community perspectives on a range of transitional justice mechanisms.

## TERMS AND LANGUAGE

Some terms in the Compendium, particularly those related to names of ethnic groups (or 'tribes'), their members, language and territories/polities, can be confusing. Below is a brief overview of the most often mentioned names which will provide the reader with an understanding of usage of the different prefixes (such as Mu-, Ba- and Lu-) that denote territory/polity, ethnic group member(s) and language respectively, within the Bantu language group. Examples are also given of tribes to which such prefixes do not apply. In some cases, spelling of particular names may vary amongst authors, as in the case of the Batooro/Batooro. One manner of spelling has been selected for the sake of consistency.

## COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

| Territory/Polity of Ethnic Group/ Sub-region | Ethnic Group Member (singular) | Ethnic Group Members (plural) | Language of Ethnic Group |
|--|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Buganda                                      | Muganda                        | Baganda                       | Luganda                  |
| Bugisu                                       | Mugisu                         | Bagisu or Gisu                | Lugisu                   |
| Tooro  | Mutoro                         | Batooro                       | Lutoro                   |
| Teso   | Etesot (M) / Atesot (F)        | Iteso                         | Ateso                    |
| Acholiland                                   | Acholi                         | Acholi                        | Acholi                   |
| Karamoja                                     | Karimojong                     | Karimojong                    | Ngakarimojong            |

Rather than the commonly used term ‘Decentralisation’ the Compendium of Conflicts uses *districtisation*. This term reflects the reality that the creation of more districts does not necessarily lead to decentralized power and decision-making (even though this is the official aim of the decentralisation/districtisation policy).

**Transitional Justice** is another term that not every reader might be familiar with. Kofi Annan, former Secretary General of the United Nations, described transitional justice as;

*“The full range of processes and mechanisms associated with a society’s attempts to come to terms with a legacy of large-scale past abuses, in order to ensure accountability, serve justice and achieve reconciliation. These may include both judicial and non-judicial mechanisms, with differing levels of international involvement (or none at all) and individual prosecutions, reparations, truth-seeking, institutional reform, vetting and dismissals, or a combination thereof.”<sup>2</sup>*

More views on transitional justice, at times pushing the boundaries of the mainstream understandings of it, are covered in part C of this Compendium.

2 United Nations Security Council. (2004) *The rule of law and transitional justice in conflict and post-conflict societies (Report of the Secretary General, S/2004/616 United Nations Security Council)* [Internet], August. Available from: <<http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N04/395/29/PDF/N0439529.pdf?OpenElement>> [Accessed on January 18, 2012]

# CHAPTER

## CROSS-CUTTING THEMATIC ISSUES

## TWO

Participants of the NRTJ Audit identified a number of cross-cutting thematic issues that could not always be easily described as conflicts in and of themselves, but which provided the backdrop against which tensions could develop into open violence. The participants argued that addressing these would be critical in breaking ongoing cycles of conflict. These thematic issues thus provide lenses through which the different conflicts in this Compendium can be examined and understood.

### COLONIALISM AND ITS LEGACIES

The era of British colonialism was identified both as a conflict in its own right, as well as a root cause of post-Independence conflicts. Participants from across the country blamed European newcomers for causing an abrupt break with the past. As described by A. Adu Boahen, colonialism was viewed as a loss of sovereignty and independence as well as an assault on established cultures.<sup>3</sup>

As part of the European “scramble for Africa”, Uganda was subjugated by the British in the 1890s, following the arrival of British explorers and European missionaries of various nationalities. The area that is now known as ‘Uganda’ became a British protectorate in 1894. In 1900, representatives of the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland and the Kabaka of Buganda jointly signed the Buganda Agreement. This treaty defined in a detailed fashion the privileges of and the British mode of cooperation with the Buganda Kingdom. It also made the Buganda Kingdom a province of the larger Protectorate of Uganda<sup>4</sup> and set the stage for more than half a century of British indirect rule over Uganda through the Buganda Kingdom.

3 Boahen, A. (1985). Africa and the colonial challenge. In: **Mazrui, A. ed.** *General History of Africa*, vol. VII. Berkeley, University of California Press-UNESCO. pp. 624-628

4 Mazrui, A. (1970) Privilege and protest as integrative factors: the case of Buganda’s status in Uganda. In: Rothberg, R. and Mazrui A. ed. *Protest and Power in Black Africa* New York, Oxford University Press. pp. 1072 – 87

## Colonialism as a conflict

Colonialism itself was considered a conflict as it brought new tensions, violence and suffering to Uganda. The colonial authorities engaged in warfare with the peoples of Uganda, resulting in death, injury, and the theft and destruction of livestock, agriculture and property.

Many older participants commented in particular that the British combined manipulation with open violence to subjugate the people of what is now Uganda. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, for example, they



killed the West Nile traditional leader, Chief Aliku,<sup>5</sup> and gave military support to the Tooro Kingdom against the Bunyoro Kingdom when the latter refused to sign a cooperation agreement similar to the one the Baganda had signed.<sup>6</sup> When the people of Lamogi in Acholiland rebelled against colonisation in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (Lamogi Rebellion 1911-1912<sup>7</sup> and Paimol Rebellion 1917), these rebellions were violently crushed.

The newcomers also indirectly caused conflict in different areas of society amongst Ugandans. This occurred, for example, through the introduction of money, the subjugation of traditional leaders and Kingdoms, and the introduction of foreign religions. Protestant and Catholic missionaries contributed to growing divisions and violence as they caused

5 For more information, see conflict number 4 in this Compendium

6 For more information, see conflict number 90 in this Compendium

7 Ibid.

conflict between newly converted Catholics and Protestants.<sup>8</sup> Marriage between people of two different religions became taboo and many families were divided along religious lines.

## Colonialism as a root cause of post-Independence conflict

The end of the colonial era did not end the divisions it had created. Instead, these divisions had become firmly rooted and would inspire conflict for generations to come. A participant in Kitgum said:

*“The British left conflict behind before Independence. It has continued in different forms... and we are still not solving the conflicts related to it.”*

The first Ugandan independent Government inherited more than just the boundaries of the State of “Uganda” from the British Protectorate. A political landscape characterised by division, tribal rivalries, resentments, conflicts and struggles for power had developed. Participants considered this colonial legacy never to have been comprehensively addressed by the post-Independence Governments.<sup>9</sup> In fact, post-colonial divisions were regularly exploited by Uganda’s rulers, and a number of participants believed that ‘divide and rule’ strategies implanted by the British remain largely intact today.<sup>10</sup>

Participants found that the colonialists, through the use of indirect rule and their divide and rule policies, were responsible for sowing the seeds of division and conflict in all layers of society. They said that the colonial administration exploited and exacerbated already existing rivalries between different ethnic groups (and the polities they had links to, such as Kingdoms). Where alliances were created with certain rulers, they were granted special privileges. The 1900 Buganda Agreement, for example, allowed the Buganda Kingdom to expand their sphere of influence across the Protectorate. With the help of the British, the Buganda Kingdom annexed territory that previously fell under the jurisdiction of the Bunyoro Kingdom, an area commonly known as “the Lost Counties.”<sup>11</sup>

British policies of divide and rule and indirect rule set the stage for ‘Tribalism’ and national disunity that would keep Uganda divided to date, according to participants. In Gulu, this was described as Uganda’s “national disease”. The British divided Ugandans not only between Baganda and non-Baganda, but also according to region. (See directly below, under ‘Post-Independence North-South Division’)

8 For more information, see conflict number 2 in this Compendium

9 Some limited attempts to deal with colonial legacies were arguably made. It is possible to consider the structure of Uganda’s first post-Independence Constitution in this fashion, as well as Obote’s abolition of Kingdoms in 1966. None of these actions, however, were considered to constitute a genuine and comprehensive process to deal with colonial legacies

10 One of the Compendium’s reviewers added to this analysis. As had the participants, he considered that the colonial legacy had yet to be properly addressed, and that Uganda remains a “conquest state”, created through conquest by colonialists and inherited as such by the first independent Ugandan government. The conquest state, he argued, remains predatory, repressive, undemocratic and unaccountable in nature, having never undertaken the reforms necessary to achieve democratization to derive its power and legitimacy from the people rather than coercion

11 For more information see, conflict number 8 in this Compendium.



that the British, during different dictatorships and conflicts in Uganda, remained bystanders without ever taking responsibility for what was essentially the outcome of their subjugation and maladministration of Uganda. Demands for truth, apology and compensation by the British were made across the country and across generations. It was argued that the legacies of colonialism should be addressed for the country to achieve national reconciliation and unity.

## POST-INDEPENDENCE NORTH-SOUTH DIVISION

The colonial division of Uganda into ‘north’ and ‘south’ was widely identified as one of the most destructive and pervasive of the colonial legacies, having perpetrated mistrust and conflict, and undermined national unity. This was particularly strongly expressed in northern Uganda, where participants claimed that the north-south divide explains the underdevelopment and marginalisation of the north relative to the south.<sup>12</sup>

Discriminatory recruitment and education opportunities offered to the northern and southern regions by the colonial administrators are seen as one of the primary examples of divide and rule policy and strategy: people from the North were predominantly trained and recruited militarily, while people from the South were much more likely to benefit from formal education to prepare them for civil service.<sup>13</sup>

In addition to discriminatory military recruitment and education policies, the colonialists also introduced a discriminatory agricultural policy. Under British rule, the southern region came to benefit from perennial cash crops, such as coffee, while the north was assigned seasonal cash crops like cotton.

This regional divide widened after Independence, beginning with Obote’s first administration, which saw the abolition of the Buganda Kingdom (as well as other Kingdoms) and the exile of the Kabaka to the United Kingdom.<sup>14</sup> A participant in Kitgum argued that the death of the Kabaka in exile still causes the Baganda to carry bitterness in their hearts towards people from the North. People from the North became associated with violence when different regimes – led by rulers from the north and employing mainly northern soldiers – committed atrocities. This included the regimes of Milton Obote (both his first and second regime), Idi Amin and Tito Okello. People from the North were, according to the current NRM government’s narrative, also identified as the main perpetrators during the Bush War that saw many civilian casualties in the Luwero Triangle.

Anti-northern sentiment, according to participants from the north, in turn led to revenge killings in West Nile after Idi Amin’s fall. Such revenge killing occurred in Lango and Acholiland after the overthrow of Obote, and the subsequent ousting of Tito Okello. They also argued that this anti-northern sentiment was a pretext for marginalisation and oppression of northern Uganda under President Museveni.

12 For more information, see conflict number 5 in this Compendium

13 This is also described in Karugire, S.R. (2003) *The roots of instability in Uganda*. Kampala, Fountain Publishers

14 Comment by one of the Compendium reviewers

One participant in Kitgum said;

*“President Museveni made a deliberate effort to subdue the people of Acholi. Rule the people well by making them poor. This is reflected by allowing the Karimojong to take away our cattle.”*

This policy, according to participants in the north, led to a division between the north and south in terms of development.<sup>15</sup> According to a participant, “When you cross Karuma Bridge, you enter in the home of poverty.”

## INTER-LINKED POLITICAL, ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS DIVISIONS



*Some members of the Democratic Party in 1967*

<sup>15</sup> For more information, see conflict number 7 in this Compendium

Participants considered political, ethnic and religious divisions in society to be inter-linked, and another outcome of the colonial divide and rule policy. The development of Pre-Independence political parties, allegedly stimulated by the British, tended to be along both ethnic and religious lines; the first political party to be formed was the Uganda National Congress (UNC) in 1952, with a predominantly Baganda leadership and Protestant membership. The Democratic Party (DP), formed in 1954 and initially Buganda based, was by contrast predominantly Catholic.

Ethnic divisions continued to pervade early political party formation in Uganda with an element of “anti-Bugandanism” introduced in 1958 by the Uganda People’s Union (UPU). The UPU was formed by established leaders outside the districts of Buganda sitting in *Legco*.<sup>16</sup> Three factions of the UNC waged war on each other until March 1960 when one wing of the UNC merged with the UPU to form the Uganda Peoples Congress (UPC) led by Obote.<sup>17</sup>

Divisions amongst political, ethnic and religious lines were influenced during the Lancaster Constitutional Conference in London in 1961. The Buganda delegation was led by Amos Sempa, who was against the Obote led UPC. However, Lord Carrington of the British Home Office reportedly told him during the Conference “Amos, we are aware that you do not like Obote, but the Crown likes him. This means you have no choice but to go with Obote.”<sup>2</sup> Lord Carrington also said that in the history of the British Empire, authorities had never handed over power to a non-Protestant and that Uganda was not going to be an exception. This unequivocal position by the British would largely determine the Ugandan post-colonial political landscape.<sup>3</sup>

The formation of the Baganda *Kabaka Yekka* (“Only the King”) party in 1961 split the Baganda between royalists who supported Baganda federalism (voting for *Kabaka Yekka*) and anti-royalists who were in support of a democratic and unitary nation state (voting for the DP).

## CONFLICT BETWEEN TRADITION AND MODERNITY

Colonialism introduced an abrupt break with the past. Uganda’s subjugation by the British and the arrival of new systems, norms and technologies introduced a tension between ‘tradition’ and ‘modernity’. Participants referred to the introduction of ‘the new’ or ‘modern’ as an “*erosion of cultural values*”, or “*moral degeneration*”. It was said that colonialists and missionaries destroyed traditional institutions and values.

The introduction of money and foreign religion provoked the most fundamental departures from traditional ways of life. Money was considered to set the stage for greed and conflict over land ownership. In Acholiland, for example, land was

16 Legco is short for the Uganda Legislative Council, the predecessor of the National Assembly of Uganda before Uganda gained Independence

17 In 1988, the President appointed Betty Bigombe as Minister of State for Pacification of Northern Uganda to his Cabinet. This has been noted by some as an indication that while the NRM focused on “pacifying” the north of Uganda, it focused on “development” for the rest of the country

## COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

traditionally considered to belong to God. It could be used but not sold. Money changed this perception and land conflicts have persisted to date. The introduction of European (religious) beliefs is considered to have interfered with indigenous beliefs and traditions.

A participant commented;

*“We abandoned our ancestors and are taking other people’s culture.”*

These new (often religious) values and beliefs are believed to have undermined harmony in society. New conflicts emerged within the different religious sects as Muslims and Christian groups clamoured for converts. Community divisions often reflect contemporary religious differences: those who held on to tradition, Muslims, Protestants, Catholics, and, recently, Pentecostals. The clash between traditional spiritual beliefs and new religions was considered a reason for the emergence of spiritual rebel groups such as the Holy Spirit Mobile Forces and LRA. A woman in Kitgum said;

*“The Holy Spirit Movement was fought on spiritual grounds to evangelise Uganda and restore the Ten Commandments of God.”*

She also considered the spiritual wars in northern Uganda as evidence that the ancestors were taking revenge on their descendants. The tension between tradition and new values and beliefs also influenced the changing of traditional gender roles, which is partly held responsible for an increase in sexual and gender based violence. (See the section ‘Conflicted relationship between men and women’)

## ETHNIC CONFLICT OR “TRIBALISM”

‘Tribe’ appears to have become one of the strongest identity markers in Uganda. Indeed, Ugandans often identify much more strongly with members of their ‘tribe’ than with the larger Ugandan ‘nation’. Participants suggested that allegiance to tribe prevailed because its advantages were clear, especially if the ruling elite were members of your tribe. ‘Tribe’ also became more important in the context of external threat. ‘Tribalism’ in this sense, has come to be understood as favouritism or clientelism as well as discrimination on the basis of what is perceived as ‘tribe’. One’s tribe appears to determine one’s opportunity at every turn in our politics. Participants suggested that this happens at the expense of national unity.<sup>18</sup>

‘Tribalism’ was widely considered to be a negative factor in Ugandan politics, with connotations of self-proclaimed superiority, nepotism, favouritism, discrimination, sentiments of revenge and a lack of national unity, ultimately causing conflict. For example, people throughout the country claimed that the Banyankole and Banyarwanda

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18 As one of our peer reviewers emphasised, the fact that tribalism is prominent may be partly explained by the British colonial capitalisation on ethnic differences as part of their divide and rule policy, as they did in their other colonies, such as India. He commented “nationhood was not in the agenda of the British as this would seemingly undermine their divide and rule programme.”

are favoured by the regime in power. In Hoima, it was said that the tribe of the President, the Banyankole, are untouchable. Participants gave an example of a group of Banyankole-Balaalo herdsmen who, when summoned by a Sub-County Chief over letting their cattle graze in cultivators' farms, rhetorically asked him

*“Who are you? You are in charge of the sub-county but we are in charge of Uganda.”*

In the case of the Banyankole, it is often alleged that being a member of this tribe (the tribe of the President) puts one in a favourable position to access state employment. While this dynamic may be considered to hold some ground, it is also often exaggerated and used to stigmatise the Banyankole.

Across the country, participants pointed at ethnic conflict or ‘tribalism’ as a key factor in different armed and non-armed conflicts. While it seemed it was never the sole reason to take up arms, deeper discussion often revealed that ‘tribalism’ indeed contributed to prejudice, frustration, anger and eventually conflict, and related to other causes of conflict like poverty and the lack of rule of law or equal opportunities. Disputes over resources, or the political incitement of one ethnic group against another, for example, frequently appear to be at play, and participants argued that ‘tribe’ has become a tool around which to mobilize people as well as a way to attempt to explain different conflicts in Uganda’s history.

The term ‘tribe’ has been problematized by sociologists who argue that the unit of the ‘tribe’ has been invented or exaggerated, at least in part to justify colonial strategies of divide and rule, and that it carries misleading stereotypes and assumptions of stagnancy and uniformity (see, for example, Lowe C, Behrend H, Mamdani M. ‘Ethnicity’ is generally seen to be a more open and flexible term to describe belonging (including shared ancestry, culture, language etc.). In this Compendium we use both terms interchangeably, not least because it is in common usage throughout Uganda. We use the term ‘tribe’ where participants consistently referred to a group as a tribe.

## DISPLACEMENT

Most of the conflicts described in this Compendium have caused displacement, and this, according to participants, constitutes one of the most salient impacts of the different conflicts that have affected Uganda. In every single district visited, displacement was described as one of the most harrowing consequences of conflicts. A participant in Kitgum remembered the dire circumstances of displacement and said

*“I’m not willing to go to the camp next time. I will accept to die at my home.”*

Conflicts have caused Ugandans to flee both within and across Uganda’s borders. In



*Kenyan refugees take refuge in eastern Uganda after their post-election violence*

Bundibugyo District, for example, the ADF rebel incursion<sup>19</sup> which began in the late 1990s, had by mid-2000 resulted in the displacement of approximately 175,000 people, almost the entire population of the district.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup> For more information, see conflict number 98 in this Compendium

<sup>20</sup> Refugee Law Project (2003) Displacement in Bundibugyo District: a situation analysis. Working paper no. 10. quoting African Rights, *Avoiding an Impasse: Understanding Conflicts in Western Uganda*. (Mimeo 2001) Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre and Norwegian Refugee Council (2012). Uganda: Need

People had no real choice as to whether or not they would stay in their village or move to a camp. Even if they escaped being targeted by the rebels, they ran the risk of being considered rebel collaborators by Government and victimised as such.<sup>21</sup>

In northern Uganda, the conflict between the LRA and the GoU had displaced 1.8 million people by the end of 2005.<sup>22</sup> As in Bundibugyo, the UPDF was criticized for not offering sufficient protection to citizens in the IDP camps and, in some instances, for committing atrocities themselves.<sup>23</sup> In particular, the massacre at the camp in Barlonyo raised questions amongst participants about the Government's intentions for the encampment of citizens. It was widely believed that the lack of protection either demonstrated a lack of Government will to protect people in camps, or exposed a lack of capacity to do so. Participants in Pader said that the military was partisan and always suspicious of people in the camps, rather than working in a spirit of protection.

Forced displacement, as such,



to focus on returnees and remaining IDPs in transition to development. Refugee Law Project (2003) Displacement in Bundibugyo District: a situation analysis. Working paper no. 10. quoting African Rights, *Avoiding an Impasse: Understanding Conflicts in Western Uganda*. (Mimeo 2001)

21 Ibid

22 United National High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (2012) UNHCR country operations profile – Uganda

23 See for example Refugee Law Project (2003). Displacement in Bundibugyo District: A situation analysis. working paper no. 10

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was considered more as a military counter-insurgency strategy than as a way of protecting people. Participants described some IDP camps as “Protecting camps” as opposed to “Protected camps” given that the military were often encircled by civilians. Many of the IDP camps became a one-stop abduction centre, as LRA would abduct at will. More civilians are estimated to have died as a result of the encampment than from direct armed violence.

A policy on internal displacement, which provides for the rights of IDPs, was published in 2004, and Uganda was the first to ratify the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of IDPs in Africa. These policies aside, however, the Ugandan Government’s actual response to mass-scale displacement was widely criticized by participants, particularly in

areas where displacement occurred.<sup>24</sup> Internal displacement is still a reality in Uganda, as for example in the displacement of approximately 400 Bakonzo caused by ethnic clashes in Bundibugyo in 2012.<sup>25,26</sup> Displaced people in Uganda also include people who have fled from neighbouring countries to Uganda. In 2013, Uganda hosted 190,000 registered refugees and asylum seekers, in



24 See also Refugee Law Project (2012) From arid zones in to the desert: The Uganda national IDP policy implementation 2004 – 2012. Working paper no. 23

25 Bukenya, B. (2012). 400 displaced by ethnic clashes in Bundibugyo. *Uganda Radio Network*. [Internet], 10 July. Available from: <<http://direct.ugandaradionetwork.com/a/story.php?s=43549>> [Accessed 27 May 2014]

26 Bassime, F et al. (2012). The Bakonjo Bamba clashes: looking beyond the fights. *Daily Monitor* [Internet], 14 July. Available from: <<http://www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/The-Bakonjo--Bamba-clashes---Looking-beyond-the-fights/-/688334/1453512/-/5qt3fy/-/index.html>> [Accessed 27 May 2014]

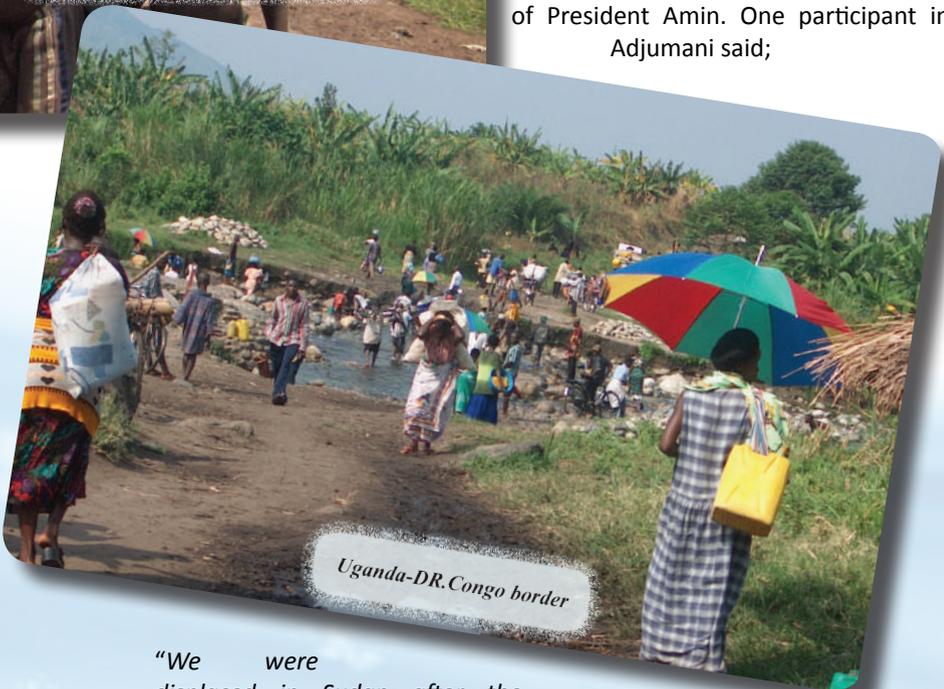


*Pabbo IDP camp, northern Uganda*

particular from DRC, Somalia and South Sudan.<sup>27</sup> Primarily due to the conflict in South Sudan and the resultant forced migration to Uganda, this number increased to 317,000 in early 2014.<sup>28</sup>

### Participants views on causes and impacts of displacement

Across the country, participants explained how regime changes have been followed by the displacement of members of the ethnic group of the outgoing president. In Arua and Adjumani (the West Nile region), for example, people explained how they fled [*en masse*] across the border to the DRC and Sudan following the ousting of President Amin. One participant in Adjumani said;



*Uganda-DR.Congo border*

*“We were displaced in Sudan after the overthrow of Idi Amin. The Acholi soldiers were moving from door to door asking for any soldier who served*

27 United National High Commissioner for Refugee (UNHCR) (2013). UNHCR country operations profile – Uganda

28 Mulondo, M. (2014). Uganda overwhelmed as refugees hit 317.000. *New Vision* [Internet], 30 January. Available from: <<http://www.newvision.co.ug/news/651986-uganda-overwhelmed-as-refugees-hit-317-000.html>> [Accessed 27 May 2014]

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*in Amin's regime. They would follow you with your foot mark up to the garden or bush and kill you like they killed Brigadier Wilson Gad Toko."*

Participants in West Nile called for initiatives to memorialise their experiences during displacement as these had altered their lives and particularly those of their children. They lamented educational opportunities that were missed during that time, and the fact that their culture was undermined by displacement and exile.

The quote from the participant in Adjumani illustrates that conflict memories are often influenced or distorted by emotions such as anger and grief and as a consequence may not always be correct. For example, it is on record that Colonel Gad Toko died in a road accident along Jinja Highway, not as a result of being killed in the bush by Acholi soldiers.

In northern Uganda, the overthrow of Tito Okello<sup>29</sup> marked the beginning of a protracted situation of conflict and mass displacement. Participants in Gulu described the process of displacement as happening in three phases. First, in 1988, an ultimatum was given to the civilian population to leave their villages and move to Sir Samuel Baker School, Pece, and Bungatira within 24 hours. Even before the 24 hours grace period had lapsed, army soldiers began raping men, defecating in food, burning houses and killing civilians. This was known as operation *Fagia* ("Sweeping") purportedly led by General Salim Saleh.<sup>30</sup> The second phase started in 1991, when NRA soldiers were involved in the infamous Bucoro massacre from 14<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> March. The third, most widespread phase of displacement started in 1996, when people were given 48 hours to leave their villages. This third stage continued until 2006 and the beginning of the Juba Peace Talks, and was characterised by mass forced displacement to IDP camps, ordered by the Government as a military strategy.<sup>31</sup>

In Adjumani, Lira and Teso, mass displacement occurred later, from 2003 onwards, with similar consequences for the people living in those areas. In Adjumani, where people were also displaced in the context of LRA rebel activity, participants lamented the fact that their plight received much less attention than in the Acholi sub-region. Due to the limited and late acknowledgement of displacement in Adjumani, it was argued, the district did not benefit from post-conflict recovery and development initiatives. Indeed, in 2006 Refugee Law Project found that "*Unlike other war-affected districts in northern Uganda, humanitarian assistance to IDPs [in Adjumani] has been intermittent and commonly provided on a one-off basis.*" This was mainly ascribed to the fact that the conflict situation in Adjumani was under-recognized and that displacement was not the result of a Government policy to transfer people to official IDP camps, resulting in less visibility.<sup>32</sup>

29 For more information, see conflict number 22 in this Compendium

30 For more information, see conflict number 56 in this Compendium

31 The Independent, 8 December 2009, Gen. Arond's admission on camps exposes crimes against humanity

32 Refugee Law Project (2006). Invisibly displaced persons in Adjumani District, Working paper no. 19

**Case study: mass displacement in Teso**

*The below is based on an extract from Prof. Justin Epelu-Opio's book "Teso War: Causes and Consequences" generously provided to enrich the Compendium:*

In Teso, mass displacement came in two phases. First, during the Teso War, and second, during the LRA incursion. The first phase of mass displacement occurred in 1988 and 1989. Soroti Town was the worst affected. The population of displaced people was almost 600,000. In Soroti, people were scattered in open grounds, sleeping on verandas and in open spaces as there were no IDP camps. IDP camps were to be found in Bukedea, Kumi, Mukura, Ngora, Nyero, Kanyum, Acowa, Wera and many other trading centres.

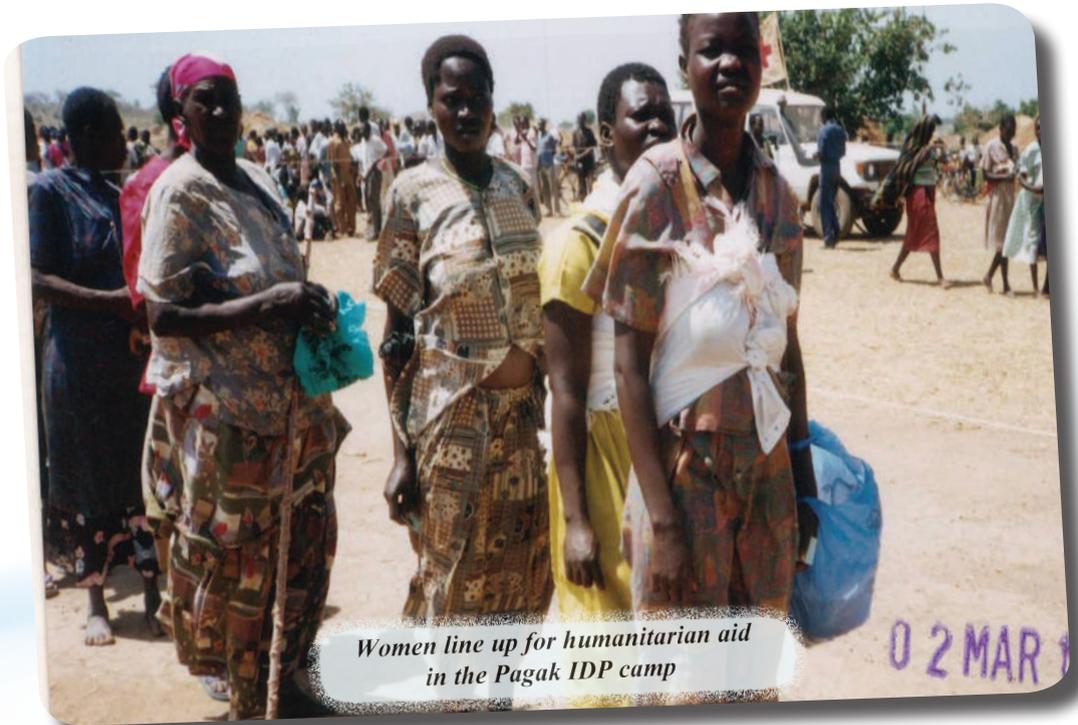
During the second phase, in 2003, IDP camps were located in Soroti Town as well as in some trading towns in Kaberamaido District, Amuria Town and near Kapir in Ngora District following the incursion of Kony and his LRA fighters.

In Teso, life in the IDP camps has totally destroyed the once coherent social fabric in the community before 1988. Elders lost authority. The youth were the bosses because elders feared for their lives when they tried to advise the youth to stop the so-called rebellion which eventually lost all sense of direction.

Across northern Uganda, participants described the IDP camps as places of restriction, danger, humiliation, disempowerment, moral degeneration and terrible living conditions. Participants in Kitgum referred to the IDP camps as "*concentration camps*." According to participants, the future of youth was undermined in the camps, as they missed out on educational opportunities. It was argued that without proper education, those who grew up in the camps – who on several occasions were described as a 'missing generation' - are unable to compete on an equal basis with those across the country who were never displaced. It was said that poverty in northern Uganda can in part be attributed to prolonged displacement. Similarly, in Soroti, where people were displaced by the Karimojong, the UPA and the LRA, participants blamed protracted dependency on aid for increased poverty levels.

One of the most frequently mentioned detrimental impacts of displacement, which continued or even increased after people left the camps and returned home, was altered power relations and increased hostility between men and women. When open war outside the homestead had ceased, conflict inside the home intensified. Participants attributed increasing levels of SGBV to the fact that men were deprived of their role as provider during camp life, and were forced to be idle. One woman respondent in Kitgum described how "*In the past men used to be bread winners, but when people went to the camp, men lost all these authorities, so their anger went to women.*"

In Pader and Lira, some participants blamed NGOs who organized 'sensitisation meetings' about the rights of women during encampment for distorting relationships between



Women line up for humanitarian aid in the Pagak IDP camp

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men and women. Also in Kitgum, the involvement of human rights organisations that established themselves without taking time to understand the context in which they operated was considered detrimental. World Food Programme was faulted for registering women as Heads of Households for purposes of relief distribution.

It was said that, during the time in the camp, organisations “looked at women as responsible people to be in the control of the food aid which deprived men of their rights” and that as men lost their authority, children would go to mothers for decision-making. The sense of disempowerment amongst men caused alcohol abuse, anger and violent behaviour.

In addition to the frequent discussions of men’s violence towards women, a number of men also talked of women beating men. As one man in Kitgum said;

*“If you visit prisons, you will find many women there because of murder, because they think they are practicing their rights.”*

Participants described how the difficult relationship between men and women has resulted in the breakdown of families and the neglect of children.<sup>33</sup>

It was also said that encampment led to a distortion of culture and moral degeneration.

33 See the section on ‘The conflicted relationship between men and women’ for further discussion

UPDF soldiers were blamed for luring or even forcing girls and women into sex. As a result HIV/AIDS became widespread. In Adjumani, it was said that the UPDF knowingly spread HIV. Finally, it was argued that displacement led to environmental degradation. In Dzaipi sub-county in Adjumani, for example, displaced people cut down trees to make charcoal.

Participants in Gulu argued that if there is still displacement, it indicates that there is no peace. The elderly and people with disabilities especially face difficulties in returning from the camps. Indeed, as of 2012, 30,000 people were still confined to camps in northern Uganda because of obstacles relating to the return process.<sup>34</sup> Those who were able to return faced numerous difficulties. Many, especially the younger generations, found it hard to readapt to village life. Land conflicts were rife. Across northern Uganda, people described land conflicts between people who returned to their land clashing with others over ownership and demarcations.<sup>35</sup> Robberies were also said to have increased as a result of displacement, because people had grown accustomed in the camps to not working for their livelihood.

Although most prevalent and publicized in northern Uganda, displacement and its negative consequences has by no means been limited to a single region of the country. During the Bush War, for example, people from the Luwero Triangle were displaced into IDP camps in a number of places, such as Mukono District. In Nakasongola, people complained that the Bush War displaced people, leading to illegal occupation of the land of the displaced. As a consequence, land conflicts and evictions continue in these regions today. Participants in Tororo explained that the Bush War displaced people from Tororo who had settled in the region around Luwero. Suddenly, they were perceived to be unwanted 'foreigners' and forced to leave. Today, they demand compensation for their lost land.

In Bundibugyo, conflict related displacement also affected people widely. People decried impacts of displacement similar to those seen in northern Uganda, notably moral degeneration and people having sex at an earlier age, resulting in an increase in HIV/AIDS. On a positive note, people argued that displacement led to the development of infrastructure, such as an increased number of health centres in IDP camp locations.

In Kasese, which was also affected by ADF-related displacement, people demanded reparations in the form of resettlement for the formerly displaced. In Bulambuli, participants described displacement caused by land conflicts between the Sabinu and Bagisu ethnic groups. In Nakapiripirit in Karamoja, participants described displacement caused by the generally hostile ecological environment and the forced disarmament process. Men often fled to nearby urban centres. Women fled with their children to urban centres as far away as Kampala, where they were often rounded up and forced to return to Karamoja. Female participants who were resettled to Karamoja in this manner lamented the fact that Government had not provided them with sufficient support for effective resettlement.

34 Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre and Norwegian Refugee Council, Uganda 'Need to focus on returnees and remaining IDPs in transition to development' (24 May, 2012)

35 See the section on 'Land Conflicts' for further discussion

One participant said;

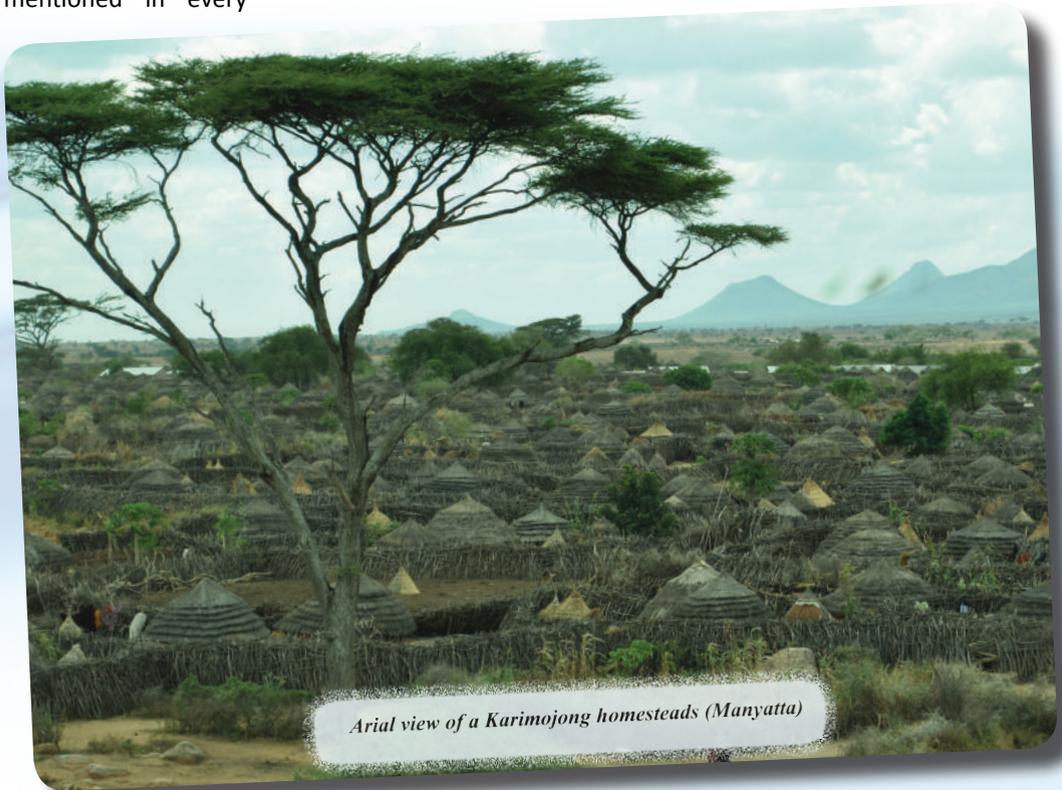
*“They took us to some place called Nbulengele which was a gazetted area. It was undesirable and uncomfortable. Not a single NGO has come to help us since we were returned to Karamoja.”*

In Hoima, participants lamented that the discovery of oil in the region has caused people in these areas to be displaced from their land without receiving adequate compensation. Participants in Hoima also discussed conflicts between host communities and refugees, who were said to overload the capacity of social services in the district.

Participants also discussed forms of forced displacement unrelated to human violence. In Mbarara, participants discussed displacement caused by magma from the volcanic Muhabura Mountain and displacement due to landslides. Similarly, in Bulambuli participants recalled displacement due to landslides, floods and droughts and reported on conflicts between host communities and displaced people.

## LAND CONFLICTS

Land, as well as the forests above ground and the minerals below, feature amongst the most prominent and widespread drivers of conflict in Uganda today. Land conflict was mentioned in every



*Aerial view of a Karimojong homesteads (Manyatta)*

single focus groups discussion held throughout the country, by men, women, youth and local government and civil society actors alike. One participant in Tororo said;

*“You see, land is something that is very precious to us ... If you lose a piece of land you are the poorest, because all of our dependency is on land.”*

Indeed, 85 % of Uganda’s rural population depends on land for their livelihood and income.<sup>36</sup>

Failure to address historical patterns of land dispossession and appropriation is further compounded by grievances and contestation over identity, ownership, access and usage. The discovery of oil and valuable minerals throughout the country, and the expansion of urban centres have further exacerbated the problems. Land conflict manifests in different forms and between different stakeholders; one tribe or ethnic groups against the other, citizens against the State, kingdoms against Government, communities against investors, local Governments against central Government as well as Ugandans against citizens of neighbouring countries.

Participants painted a picture of how in conflict over land, arguably the most essential resource in Uganda, all sorts of divisions and conflicts show their face. There is conflict over land between Uganda and neighbouring countries, between districts, between ethnic groups, between citizens and the State, between citizens and investors, between the rich and the poor, between tradition and modernity, between generations and between men and women.

Participants stated that land conflicts increase in the aftermath of armed conflict and internal and external displacement.<sup>37</sup> It was also said that problems with land law, policies and adjudication were contributing to the increase in land conflicts, and that population growth was leading to growing competition over land. This section will first provide an overview of land law, policy, systems and practice to understand the context for land conflicts in Uganda. It will then examine participants’ perspectives on the different kinds of land conflicts, mentioned above, one by one.

## Land law, policy, systems and practice

As stipulated in article 237 of the 1995 Constitution, all land in Uganda vests in the citizens (rather than, as before, the State) of Uganda. The Uganda Land Act of 1998 spells out four different land tenure systems: 1. Customary 2. Freehold 3. *Mailo* 4. Leasehold. In practice, considerable confusion and variations in the way each system is applied exists throughout the country.<sup>38</sup>

36 Owaraga, N. (2012) Conflict in Uganda’s land tenure system. Backgrounder [Internet], 14 May. Available from: <[http://www.africaportal.org/articles/2012/05/14/conflict\\_uganda%E2%80%99s-land-tenure-system](http://www.africaportal.org/articles/2012/05/14/conflict_uganda%E2%80%99s-land-tenure-system)> [Accessed 27 May 2014]

37 For more information on this particular aspect of land conflicts, see the section ‘Displacement’

38 Uganda Land Act (1998)

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The customary land ownership system is most prevalent in northern Uganda (76.1% of total land area), followed by eastern Uganda (53.7%) and western Uganda (46.65%). In central Uganda only 0.4% of total land area falls under customary land ownership.<sup>39</sup> Customary land ownership is characterized by local customary regulation of ownership, use, occupation of and transactions in land. Land is owned in perpetuity. There are limitations on transfer of land outside the family and clan. As a result, land is normally handed down through inheritance. Freehold tenure involves the holding of registered land in perpetuity or for a period less than perpetuity and enables the holder to exercise full powers of land ownership, i.e. to lease or sell it at will. This system is only applied to a small percentage of land in the country.

The *mailo* tenure system is derived from the 1900 Buganda Agreement between the Kabaka and the British and involves the holding of registered land in perpetuity. At the same time, it normally distinguishes between ownership of land (by landlords) and ownership of developments made by lawful or bona fide occupants (the tenants). Although it is similar to freehold, *mailo* is subject to the rights of occupiers (known as *kibanja* holders), and this often leads to conflict. The *kibanja* holder has the option to purchase and thus move on to the *mailo* property. The Land Act also guarantees statutory protection to the *kibanja* holder and his/her successors against any eviction as long as the prescribed nominal ground rent is paid.

Finally, leasehold is a form of tenure under which a landlord or lessor rents the land for a period of time. Land rights under this system are derived from a superior title in exchange for the payment of rent and any other conditions imposed by the terms of the lease. It is more commonly used in urban areas and more easily accommodates market demands for land than the other systems.<sup>40</sup>

Participants partly attributed the underlying causes of today's rampant land conflicts in Uganda to the introduction of foreign land laws that followed from the 1900 Buganda Agreement. These laws introduced different systems of land tenure in Uganda, and created ambiguity and great confusion. New British tenure systems introduced individual as opposed to collective ownership, land became commercialized, and new land administrative units undermined collective security and land use. As a result many people have been rendered landless over time, particularly as poorer people have resorted to selling off their land to wealthier people for survival. Individualized land holdings have thus created a permanent rift between landowners and landless occupants.

Around the country, participants called for a review of land laws and policies to protect the poor and powerless. At the same time, they called for sensitisation of the poor on land laws, and underlined the need to tackle corruption of politicians, police and judges. In Kitgum, the new land law that entered into force in 2006 was said to be considered "obnoxious" because it disregarded traditional practices. In Luwero, it was said that the mailo land system was confusing, as land is often considered to have been sold, but

39 National Development Plan: 2010/2011 – 2014/2015, Republic of Uganda (2010)

40 Information on the different land systems described in this section is derived from the Uganda Constitution 1995, the Land Act 1998, Cap 227, and 'Drafting the National Land Policy' a Public Consultation Document prepared by the International Development Consultants, September 2008 for the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development

then the buyer is eventually denied a land title. Participants in this district attributed the frequency of evictions of tenants by landlords to the confusing land tenure system. One participant said that;

*“Landlords are evicting people from their land due to low understanding and remittance of payment [1000 UGX per year], instead preferring to plant forests or any other business on his or her land.”*

The *mailo* tenure system was also blamed for blocking Ugandans who originate from outside Buganda from access to land ownership. Sometimes they are sold land, but eventually denied the land titles. Often, there are conflicts over the collection of land dues (*busulu*) between the Buganda leadership and the locals. In Mubende, it was said that locals who cannot afford the *busulu* are often evicted, so that their land can be sold to rich people, and that this happens even if they have lived on the land for generations.

In Kasese it was argued that a land tribunal should be instituted to address land disputes. It was suggested that in this land tribunal LC I's should work together with traditional leaders to address disputes. Participants in different parts of the country said that before the colonial period, intercommunity land conflicts were appropriately resolved through traditional structures within the community. For example, an elderly participant in Arua said;

*“Before the white man came here, we were at home and very peaceful. Clan leaders headed homes. In other parts of Uganda there were kings, here we had chiefs. Whenever there were conflicts, clan leaders solved these problems and people continued living in peace. Problems used to come over grazing land [and] water points, and these were solved traditionally by chiefs.”*

In Mubende, however, Baganda traditional justice institutions were considered to have lost credibility exactly because they had failed to solve land conflicts, and had instead, it was said, contributed to land conflict. Feeling that land conflicts cannot be resolved through formal or traditional justice, many people across the country resort to witchcraft and poisoning of adversaries to ‘resolve’ such conflicts. The combination of corruption and a major back-log of cases in the judiciary and formal courts have further dampened hopes of addressing these land conflicts. Participants called for alternative land dispute resolution forums, strengthening of lower courts and cultural institutions to handle land cases, and strategies to address corruption amongst judges.

The recently introduced Land Amendment Act 2010 criminalized illegal evictions in the interest of tenants and increased the protection of lawful and *bona fide* occupants of registered land. In February 2013, cabinet approved a long awaited land policy providing a framework for the management and usage of land over the next 30 years. This policy was also approved to strengthen the protection provided under land laws against practices such as illegal evictions.

## Conflict over land between Uganda and neighbouring countries

Cross-border land conflicts between neighbouring communities surfaced primarily in West Nile and Karamoja. In Arua and Adjumani, participants described violent clashes at contested border areas in Moyo and Adjumani District between the Sudanese tribes and the Ugandan local population. In Karamoja tensions regularly flare between the pastoral communities living on either side of the Kenya-Uganda and Uganda-Sudan borders. Such



land conflicts often revolve around access to and control over agricultural or grazing land. The violent clashes have caused growing resentment against the South Sudanese and neighbouring Kenyans amongst the local Ugandan population. In Hoima participants also commented on clashes between Ugandans and Congolese over resources such as fish in Lake Albert.<sup>41</sup> With the new oil discoveries, participants expressed fears that land conflicts will inevitably escalate.

## Conflict over land between districts

The policy of decentralisation (for more information see the section 'Districtisation') was said to have contributed to conflicts over land between newly established districts and the 'parent' district from which they were carved out. With new district boundaries came new identities and conflict fault lines. Examples include the conflicts between Kitgum and Lamwo Districts, tensions between Gulu and Amuru over Palaro, in Amuru and Nwoya over Alero, et cetera. In West Nile, participants quoted conflicts over land

<sup>41</sup> See below under 'conflicts over land between ethnic groups' for the conflicts between originally non-Ugandans who have settled in Ugandan districts.

between Adjumani and Amuru, and between Maracha and Terego districts. In Lira, participants commented on an aggressive conflict by four districts over the collection of dues in a market located at the border with Lira and three other districts.

## Conflict over land between ethnic groups

The majority of widespread land conflicts appear to be between ethnic groups. One of the longest-running conflicts (which participants across the country highlighted as the



*Children stranded with their property after their families were evicted from land in Apaa by the Wildlife Authority*

historically most significant) was that over the “Lost Counties” (the territory taken over by Buganda from Bunyoro during the colonial time).<sup>42</sup> Another long-running conflict over land exists between the Sabinu and Bagisu, and has been ongoing since the 1950s. This conflict escalated in 1961 when political leaders gave Kapchorwa District to the Sabinu as a reward for voting for the Democratic Party in the pre-Independence elections. The Sabinu subsequently claimed an area of land covering the whole of Bulambuli district. This conflict escalated in 1979 and left hundreds of Bagisu dead. Since then, mutual revenge killings have taken place and insecurity continues to date.<sup>43</sup>

In Tororo, participants

indicated the existence of conflicts between the Jophadhola and the Banyole as well as the Jophadhola and the Iteso. In Adjumani, conflicts between the Acholi and Madi over land were said to have led to clashes with bows, arrow, knives and guns in September 2009.<sup>44</sup>

The element of ‘nativism’ surfaced in many discussions about land conflict. Some participants felt that based on their ethnic identity they had a superior right to land than individuals of ethnic groups that had arrived later in a particular area. They considered

42 For more information, see conflict number 8 in this Compendium

43 For more information, see conflict number 77 in this Compendium

44 For more information, see conflict numbers 40, 53 and 71 in this Compendium.

themselves 'natives' of the land, whereas those arriving later, even if they held Ugandan citizenship, were seen as 'immigrants' or 'foreigners'. In Kibale District, for example, the Bakiga are considered 'immigrants' by the Banyoro, since they 'only' settled in the area in 1966. Similarly, the Shana in Bulambuli are considered 'immigrants' by the Bagisu. The Shana are believed to have migrated from western Uganda and to have first settled in Budaka District. From there, they gradually migrated to Bulambuli District where they constitute a minority group who feel marginalized and find themselves in land conflicts with the Bagisu 'locals'.

The 'Balaalo', cattle keepers from western Uganda who graze their cattle in a cattle corridor running to northern Uganda, are often considered State sponsored outsiders or intruders. In Nakasongola, it was said that the Balaalo graze their cattle in the gardens of the local inhabitants, thereby damaging those gardens. This complaint also came up in Hoima. It was said that the Government, whose leaders are ethnically related to the Balaalo, support them and shield them from legal action. In Bundibugyo, it was said that the Balaalo are strategically employed by Government to settle in areas rich in oil deposits in Ntoroko District, to secure future State access to those places.

This has caused conflict between the local Butuku and the Balaalo. In Arua, participants voiced a similar complaint, maintaining that the Balaalo have relatives amongst the highest ranks of the military who provide them with guns, making it difficult for the locals to defend their land, even when destruction of their crops by the Balaalo provoke anger and aggression. In Nakasongola, the cattle keepers were accused of bribing court officials to win land cases. With regard to populations moving across national borders, it was said in Hoima that the Alur from the DRC enter the district, bewitch the local Banyoro and occupy the land illegally. In Mbarara, participants discussed conflicts over land between refugees from Rwanda and the DRC and the local population in their district. Before and after the 1994 Rwandan genocide, a large number of Rwandan refugees came and settled in the area and together with the Congolese refugees they were said to have encroached on land, leading to conflicts. It was alleged that many have been naturalized as Ugandans.

### **Conflicts over land between citizens and the State and investors**

Conflicts over land between the State and citizens date back to colonial times. The British demarcated areas for national game reserves, thereby pushing people off fertile areas of land that they previously inhabited. One major example is the Pian-Upe National Game Reserve in Karamoja.<sup>45</sup> After Independence, the Batwa population was uprooted in a similar manner from Semuliki forest and displaced to a small area of land in Kasita Sub-County in Bundibugyo in 1991, where their numbers have dwindled almost to extinction. Similarly, the Bakiga and Bafumbira tribes were evicted from Mpocha Game Reserve in Kasese in 1992.

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45 Pian-Upe, together with the Matheniko and Bokora Reserves together formed 26.204 square kilometres of land in Karamoja by 1964. By 1965, 94.6% of the land in Karamoja had become a protected area for wildlife conservation. See Margaret Rugadya et al, *Tenure in Mystery: Status of Land under Wildlife, Forestry and Mining Concessions in Karamoja Region, Uganda*. (2010)

More recent conflicts between citizens and the State over land are primarily related to the alignment of State interests with those of investors and oil companies. Such conflicts are thus understood



President Museveni tours the Kakira sugar factory, 2011

as being simultaneously between citizens and the State and between citizens and investors. Government, it was said, disrespects citizens' land rights in an effort to facilitate investments by business interests. As such, land owners are pushed off their land without adequate compensation, making the rich richer, and the poor poorer. Participants in Tororo discussed government-supported efforts by Madhvani (a major investor in commercial agriculture), to push people off 26 square kms of land, allegedly for phosphate exploitation.<sup>4647</sup>

In Nakasongola, it was said investors were paying the Government to evict the local Baruli from their land. Having received payment, it was said, the Government then evicts people without consulting the land owners and inhabitants. Particular individuals within Government were blamed for abusing their position of power to secure access to land. In Arua, the conflict was described as being driven by a "*big man in the forest.*" This was explained to be an indirect reference to President Museveni's brother General Salim Saleh who, it was alleged, had forcefully occupied the Biafra Forest Reserve with the aim of building a shopping mall. In Hoima, land grabbing by top Government officials, in

46 The same company is involved in similar controversy in Amuru District. In this District, Madhvani laid an interest in acquiring 40,000 ha for sugar plantations and factories. One of our reviewers commented "if this was not resisted by the locals in concert with their political leaders, the former IDPs would have had no land to return to, though the conflict is still protracted involving political dialogue as well as court action"

47 For more information, see conflict number 35 in this Compendium.

particular by UPDF and Government officers, featured prominently.

## Oil-related conflicts over land between the State and citizens



*Oil exploration site near Lake Albert*

Increasingly, citizens have had conflicts with Government related to the oil discoveries and consequent land dispossession in the oil exploration belt. Participants in the Albertain region and Acholi sub-region said they have become mistrustful, and they questioned the Government's motives and handling of oil exploration. They do not believe the process thus far has been transparent. Instead they consider it corrupt and exploitative of local resources without corresponding benefits.

A participant in Hoima said;

*"We only see big vehicles passing, spoiling our roads, and now we hear that they are going to construct an oil refinery."*

In Gulu and Kitgum, participants wondered why the oil is referred to as "Bunyoro oil" when some oil wells are indeed within Acholiland. In Arua and Bundibugyo, the lack of transparency with regards to oil prospecting, extraction and revenue sharing was also discussed, and participants expressed a high level of suspicion in the process. High-ranking Government officials were alleged to be buying large chunks of land in the area under a veil of secrecy.

## Conflicts over land between the rich and poor

It was said that the wide gap between the rich and poor in society shows its face in conflict over land. When a conflict arises, the poor have no access to justice. In Tororo, one participant stated

*"Someone who is poor cannot have justice," and that "If there is a rich man who wants to grab land, they can win the case."*



*A local of Lakang village, Amuru district demonstrating how they will defend themselves from Land grabbers*

It was further argued that the rich elite make use of their ties to Government to grab land with impunity. In Buganda, it was said people close to the Kabaka (for example the 'Bambejja', his female relatives) enjoy historical privilege in land ownership. This can be traced back to the Buganda Agreement, in which the King's power to give land to those he chooses is enshrined.

These unfair practices of land distribution are said by participants to have resulted in a divide between landlords and 'landless' or 'tenants' ('Bakopi') (also referred to as 'squatters'), that persists to date, and to have laid the basis for widespread evictions and land conflicts. In order to sell the land to rich investors in Nakasongola, for example, absentee landlords reportedly evict the so called 'squatters' from their land, even though these people may have lived on the land for generations.

Conflicts between landlords and squatters often break into violent confrontation in different parts of Buganda, and Government was blamed for not protecting people against such kinds of evictions. In Mukono, it was said that rich people from Kampala use middle-men to purchase small pieces of land for them. They later claim to have bought a larger piece, and use their money and power to assert their claim. This practice has led to the even further impoverishment of a number of poor people in the district. In Mubende, evictions of the poor by the rich led to violent acts of retribution by the evictees, who resorted to damaging and burning rich people's farms, even killing landlords in some cases. It was said that the rich, especially if they are pro-Government, are not held accountable.

One participant commented;

*“The rich have bought all the land and in the future we are likely to have conflicts over land.”*

## **Conflicts over land revealing the conflict between tradition and modernity**

In Kitgum, participants stated that colonial imports, most notably new religions and the introduction of a Western monetary system, destroyed people’s traditional cultural relationship with land. Before colonialism, it was said, land belonged to God and could not be sold. The monetization of land, counter to the communal landownership system in the region, introduced land conflict. This was reiterated in Pader where a participant said

*“The colonialists introduced money which made some people especially the chiefs sell off their land which was wrong.”*

## **Conflicts over land between generations**

Poverty was said to inspire conflicts between older and younger generations over land. Younger generations, in need of cash, were said to favour the selling of family land, while older generations prefer to keep land in the family.<sup>48</sup> In Arua, a participant commented

*“Recently here in Arua, some two boys even killed their father to sell off his land.”*

In Nakasongola, youth blame a range of problems, including landlessness and evictions, on what they see as the elders’ uncritical support for the NRM Government. In Mukono, participants also complained about children beating or killing their own parents over land. In different districts across the country, elders were blamed for evading their responsibility to help resolve land conflicts. In many cases, it was said, they know the truth about land boundaries, but opt to keep quiet. This is particularly a problem in areas such as northern Uganda where customary land ownership is prevalent. In the context of post-displacement return, precise land boundary demarcations are unclear or unknown, leading to disputes.

## **Conflicts over land between men and women**

Conflict over land between men and women surfaced in northern Uganda. It was said that in the era of post-displacement return the widows whose husbands had died

<sup>48</sup> According to older generations, communal land such as grazing and hunting areas and water points were never owned singly or as a group. It was instead owned by the community as a whole. This means it can never be acquired for the fulfilment of individual or parochial group interests. However, in Pader, for example, there have been cases of ownership claims on land informally earmarked for community grazing and hunting.

during the war were particularly vulnerable to having their legal rights to their deceased husbands' land denied by his (male) relatives. Traditional understandings that women cannot inherit their deceased husband's land are causing conflict between men and the women who have started to reject this practice. In short, land conflicts embody both gender conflicts and conflicts between tradition and modernity.

## CONFLICTED RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN

Participants in every district highlighted and stressed the conflicted relationship between men and women. This conflict, according to them, plays out primarily within the household. It was noted that in locations where violent and publicly visible political conflict, such as insurgencies, have ended, domestic conflict in the privacy of the home has continued or even increased.<sup>49</sup>



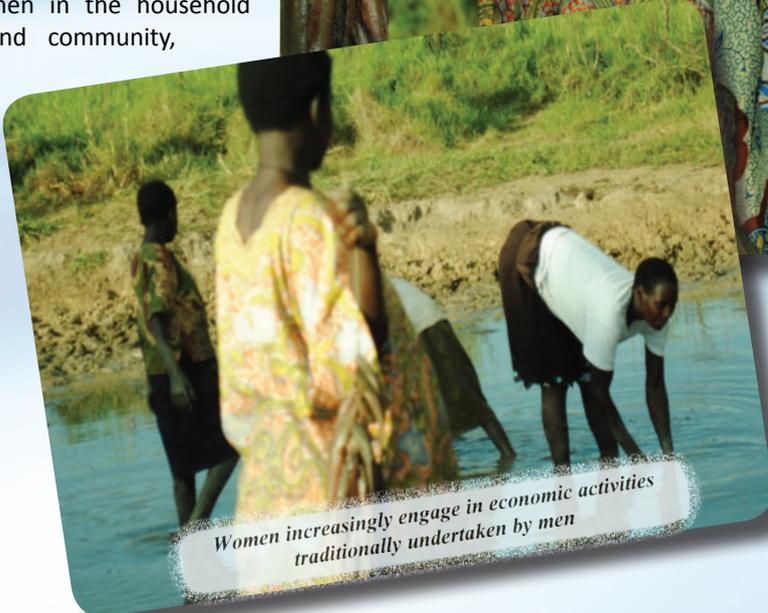
### Causes of conflict between men and women

Direct triggers of arguments and domestic abuse between men and women that were mentioned included alcohol abuse, infidelity or polygamy, and men and women disagreeing over their traditional family responsibilities (such as provision of school fees for the children, or preparation of food). The deeper causes of the conflicted relationship between men and women are, according to participants, to be found in changes in society

<sup>49</sup> For more information, see conflict numbers 70 and 123 in this Compendium.

## COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

that have shaken up traditional role divisions between men and women in the family. The traditional role of men was described as being the head of the household, a role that came with certain responsibilities, such as a duty to protect and provide for the family, as well as certain privileges, such as the right to be served food and to make decisions for the family. The traditional role of women was described as taking care of the children and husband. In Luwero it was commented that kitchens and gardens are considered to be women's 'offices', and that women are told not to interfere with men's decision making in the household and wider community. While a large number of women across the country criticized this traditional position of men in the household and community,



*Women increasingly engage in economic activities traditionally undertaken by men*

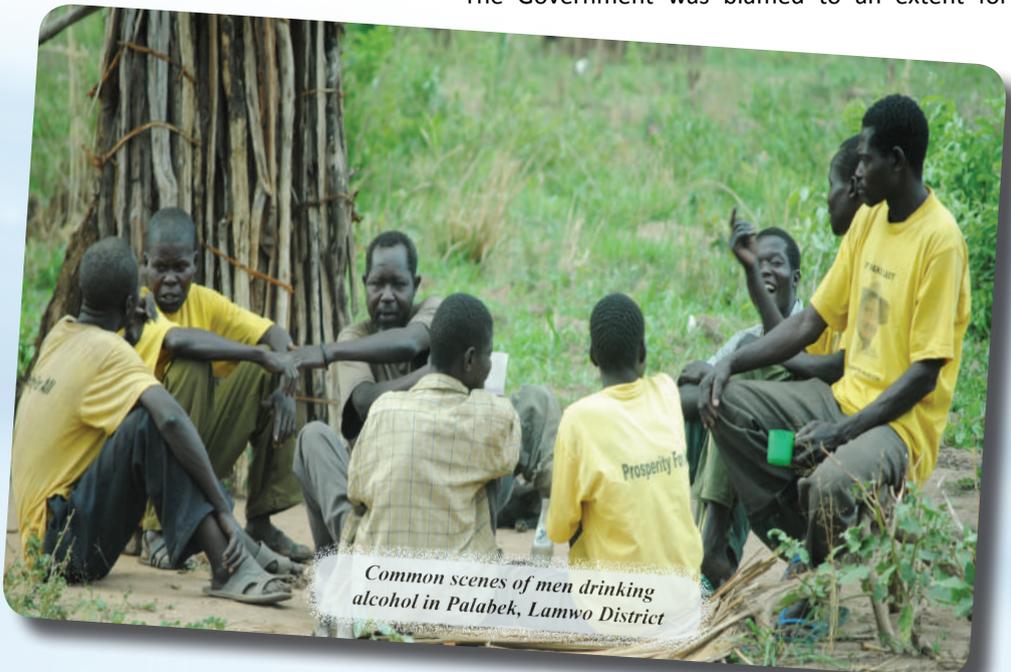
many others respected and ascribed to it. One woman in Kitgum commented;

*“The world has gone crazy, how can a woman bring more money than a man in the house?”*

Challenges to the traditional role of the man are increasing as women become better educated and increasingly hear Government and civil society organisations emphasize the rights of women. Increasing access to education has resulted in more opportunities to earn money, and affirmative action under the NRM regime has also benefited women. Periods of displacement have further upset gender patterns and undermined the usual position of men as protectors and providers, in part because humanitarian and human rights organisations have introduced and given prominence to a human rights discourse promoting women rights, not least in conflict and post-conflict areas.

The educational and economic empowerment of women was held to be a source of domestic conflict by both men and women as it reportedly challenges the traditional authority of men over women. In Tororo, women held themselves partly responsible for domestic violence. They said that young and financially successful women have come to misunderstand the institution of marriage. When they earn their own money, they do not share resources with their husbands and they ‘become selfish’. In Arua, the phenomenon of women earning more money than their husbands was illustrated through the phenomenon known as ‘*amarioro*’ - men who marry rich women for survival. In those circumstances, the traditional understanding that men are responsible for earning money for their children’s school fees is undermined.

The Government was blamed to an extent for



## COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

promoting changes in gender relations. In Nakasongola, both men and women commented that affirmative action of women under President Museveni has led to women disrespecting their husbands. It was said that women arrogantly tell their husbands

*“We have the right to do what we want. Museveni gave it to us.”*

Women with this attitude were referred to as *‘women of Museveni’*. In Gulu the police were blamed for automatically being on the side of women in cases of domestic violence, even though women are also known to beat men.

In areas where displacement was widespread, power relations between men and women were disrupted, particularly due to the fact that men were no longer able to provide for women (for ample findings on this phenomenon see the section *‘Displacement’*). This shift was intensified by the intervention of human rights organisations that sought to take advantage of transforming gender relationships and roles to empower women. This made men feel ineffective and weak and want to assert their power over women through violence. Many participants blamed NGOs and their *‘sensitisation’* of women on women’s rights for an increase in violence in the household. In Nakapiripirit, women’s rights were said to contradict traditional power relations, and thus to pit men and women against each other. In Tororo, a man decried being treated like an automatic enemy when he - with the best of intentions - approached an NGO for a household related problem in his community.

Participants in this district pointed at one particular organisation, alleging it was biased, one-sided, and fuelling domestic conflict. In particular they highlighted that the organisation taught girls taekwondo for self-defence, a practice which participants unanimously decried as inappropriate and in fact counterproductive in tackling violence in the household. The perception that human rights organisations and the human rights discourse had impacted negatively on gender relations was prominent in post-conflict, post-displacement areas. However, even in areas where violent political conflict is further in the past, human rights organisations were also criticized for spreading this empowerment message.

In Nakasongola, for example, women were blamed for misinterpreting *‘rights’* as providing the license to disrespect their husbands. Participants also viewed poverty as a cross-cutting cause of conflict between men and women. In Luwero, economic hardship was considered a main cause of aggression in the household, because *“a family head can’t afford some necessities in a home.”*

Unemployment and idleness of men, throughout Uganda, was said to lead to alcoholism and sometimes drug abuse, further instigating conflict and violence. In summary, it was felt, predominantly by men but also by a number of women, that masculinity has come under attack from various directions: from a changing society with changing norms, from women, from Government, from NGOs and the human rights discourse, from police, et cetera.

## Impacts of the conflicted relationship between men and women

A strong consensus exists throughout the country that the changes described above have led to an increase in domestic violence as men attempt to (re)assert their power through violence. One divergent opinion came from a woman in Kitgum, who claimed that before the war, beatings of women by their husbands occurred as often, but the beatings became harder to bear. She said

*“Before, women could stand the beating because they were eating very well. But because of being fed with food from donations, they are now weak and can’t stand the beating anymore.”*

Though less common, it was agreed that not only do men beat women, but women also beat men. Feelings of powerlessness, emasculation and undermined self-esteem were not considered a figment of men’s imagination. Some women said that a man who does not provide is less of a man. In Nakapiripirit, participants spoke of ‘injured pride’ of men by women. When for example men fail to secure access to herds of cattle, women refer to men in derogatory terms like “*weak men*”, “*women*” or “*useless*”.

Participants around the country lamented that conflict between men and women often results in the breakdown of families and the institution of marriage, to the detriment of children. In Arua it was said that women had misinterpreted the discourse on rights and equality and were increasingly engaging in adultery, just to ‘prove’ their equality. In Kasese, it was said that men are chased away from marital homes because they cannot provide for the economic wellbeing of their families, and that when they are chased away they sometimes go for much younger girls, leading to defilement. A woman in Kasese commented

*“Many families have separated because young men are now going for girls of 15 years.”*

Rape of women by men, particularly during times of armed conflict, was widely regarded as one of the most serious consequences of the conflicted relationship between men and women. In Bundibugyo, it was said that Government soldiers and civilians alike raped women both during and after open political conflict. A participant remarked “Wars exposed men to the aggressive behaviour of rape.”

## UNEMPLOYED YOUTH AS A CONFLICT RISK FACTOR

With 77% of the population under the age of 30 in 2005,<sup>50</sup> Uganda has the youngest age structure of any country in the world.<sup>51</sup> In 2010 children between 0 and 14 years of age

50 Population Action International (2010) The effects of a very young age structure in Uganda: country case study [Internet] Available from: <[http://populationaction.org/wpcontent/uploads/2011/12/SOTC\\_UgandaCCS.pdf](http://populationaction.org/wpcontent/uploads/2011/12/SOTC_UgandaCCS.pdf)> [Accessed 27 May 2014]

51 Ibid



made up 48.7% of Uganda's total population.<sup>52</sup> This demographic factor is considered a conflict risk indicator, both in academic literature and by the participants of the NRTJ Audit. The Ugandan Minister of Finance recently said that

*"...Uganda risked experiencing a 'demographic disaster' if the high population growth rate is not matched by the provision of social services."<sup>53</sup>*

This concern was also expressed by participants across the country. They were alarmed by what they perceived as a large and increasing group of young, unemployed people. They pointed to violent criminal gangs such as the *Abe Miitalimwa* (Ironbar hitmen) and the no longer active *Boo Kec*<sup>54</sup> as examples of youth who are capable and energetic, but see their ambition to lead productive lives quashed by a lack of opportunities to work.

Participants all around Uganda could remember times when they had seen youth joining rebellions, and were worried that this might happen again. In Tororo, a senior citizen remembered the countless youth who joined Alice Lakwena when she reached Tororo. He explained "When you are recruiting, you look for the disgruntled people who are

52 United Nations Statistics Division (2014) Uganda [Internet] Available from: <<http://data.un.org/CountryProfile.aspx?crName=Uganda>> [Accessed 27 May 2014]

53 Bwambale, T. (2012) Uganda has the youngest population in the world. New Vision [Internet], 14 December. Available from: <<http://www.newvision.co.ug/news/638120-uganda-has-the-youngest-population-in-the-world.html>> [Accessed 27 May 2014]

54 For more information, see conflict number 68 in this Compendium

jobless. These were the first victims.”

In Kasese, participants recalled how different insurgent groups were able to use redundant youth as a recruitment base, and expressed concern that this continues to date. In Soroti, participants said people who are unemployed use violence and join rebellions to meet their basic needs. In Kitgum, participants lamented that young, potentially productive people, have problems finding employment, especially if they are from the ‘wrong tribe’. Elders in Kitgum were concerned that if unemployment and youngsters’ sense of hopelessness was left unaddressed, they might be ready to join another rebellion.

Participants did not only point at the risk that unemployed and frustrated youth might join organized rebellions. They also considered criminality, looting and riots the outcome of such dynamics amongst youth. In Mbarara, increasing violent criminality and violent riots were ascribed to increasing levels of unemployment amongst youth.

In Mubende, unemployed but energetic youth use riots both to loot and to express their grievances with the current state of affairs in Uganda. They further attributed rising levels of robbery and witchcraft amongst the youth to unemployment. In Mukono, participants explained how rampant youth unemployment led to drug abuse, cattle theft and the recent rise of violent gangs such as the ‘*abe miitalibwa*’. They recommended that, for sustainable peace to be achieved, unemployment should be addressed through reform of school curricula.

In Luwero, the youth elaborated on their increasing level of frustration with unemployment and on how they saw unemployment as the biggest potential ‘conflict trigger’. Youth in other areas expressed their disappointment with the state of the economy and governance in Uganda, and the lack of equal opportunity. One youth in Arua said;

*“It’s going to take us a long time to achieve peace in Uganda. People go to war because its the last attempt of survival. If 70% of the people here are poor and do not have any source of livelihood, how can you talk about peace?”*

The above observations by the NRTJ Audit participants relate to social science literature about the extent to which unemployment amongst the youth correlates to violence and armed conflict in societies.<sup>55</sup> According to a recent UN report,

*“The recent empirical evidence suggests that youth bulges are associated with increased risk of political violence, but that governments can mitigate this risk by providing better opportunities for young people, particularly in education*

55 See for example: Collier, P. (2000) Doing well out of war: An economic perspective. In: Berdal, M. and Malone eds. *Greed and grievance: Economic agendas in Civil Wars*. Boulder, Lynne Rienner Publishers. pp. 91-113; Huntington, S. (1996) *The clash of civilizations and the remaking of world order*. New York, Simon & Schuster; Collier, P. and Hoeffler, A. (2004) Greed and grievance in civil war. *Oxford Economic Papers* 56 (4), pp. 563-95

## DECENTRALISATION OR 'DISTRICTISATION' AND CONFLICT

When the current regime came to power in 1986, it embarked on a policy of decentralisation. This was initially done through the introduction of local Resistance Councils (RCs), which were later replaced with Local Councils (LCs). In 1992, the Local Government Decentralisation Programme was launched and in 1993 the Local Governments Act was passed. These developments were aimed at decentralising decision-making powers on matters of local significance. Uganda's decentralisation policy, particularly in its early phases, drew praise from scholars and donors.<sup>57</sup> More recently, though, with an increasingly accelerated creation of new districts (currently counting 111), the policy has begun to attract criticism. Rather than achieving true decentralisation of power, critics say, the policy derailed to become mere 'districtisation' of the country.<sup>58</sup>

Across the country, participants in the NRTJ audit criticized the decentralisation policy



*An Etesot man bites a rat in protest of his community's demand for a separate ethnic district*

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- 56 Urdal, H. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division. (2012) Expert paper no.2012/1, A clash of generations? Youth bulges and political violence
- 57 Green, E. (2008) Decentralisation and conflict in Uganda. *Conflict, Security and Development*, 8 (4). pp. 427-450. Refugee Law Project (2003) Displacement in Bundibugyo District: a situation analysis. Working paper no. 10
- 58 See Refugee Law Project (2009) Breeding Fragmentation? Issues in the Policy and Practice of Decentralisation in Uganda. Working paper no. ????. Accessible at [http://www.beyondjuba.org/BJP1/issue\\_papers/breeding\\_fragmentation.pdf](http://www.beyondjuba.org/BJP1/issue_papers/breeding_fragmentation.pdf)

as being a ‘divide and rule’ policy packaged in a promise of ‘decentralizing power and services’. An elder in Arua commented;

*“It is not decentralizing services. It is decentralizing poverty and blame.”*

In Tororo, it was also said that the policy did not lead to a decentralisation of power, but that instead *“conflict has been decentralized.”* People become engaged in ethnic conflict over who “owns” the district and who is to access district jobs. A youth who belonged to the Bakonzo ethnic minority in Bundibugyo complained that

*“As long as we are still in Bundibugyo, no Mukonzo will ever become Local Council V Chairman.”*

For this reason, many Bakonzo promote the creation of a new district in Bundibugyo – as do other district minorities around the country – in the hope that they too may gain access to employment at the district.

People are thus caught in a paradox: on the one hand, they can see the negative impacts of the policy of decentralisation, but on the other, wherever they find themselves the ethnic minority in any particular district, they favour the creation of new districts. This contradiction was perhaps heard most clearly in Tororo, where it was argued that now that the decentralisation policy was going on anyway, people might as well try to benefit on an individual, clan and ethnic level, even though this would not benefit the country as a whole. It was argued that decentralisation as a ‘divide and rule’ policy has been highly effective. A participant in Tororo explained

*“We have killed the nationalism in Uganda through decentralisation. ... Uganda, there is no way you can call it a country now.”*

## IDENTITY, OWNERSHIP AND BELONGING IN CONFLICT

The concerns with the decentralisation policy tie in with the conflicted and complex relationship between identity, ownership and belonging that surfaced in discussions around the country. A closer look at the complexity of this relationship reveals that sentiments of ownership and belonging generally tie in much more closely with ethnic identity than with notions of citizenship and nationality. The district was considered the most common ‘battle ground’ where conflict over identity, ownership and belonging is waged.

Politicized ethnic identity appeared a popular tool to claim belonging in - and ownership of - a particular district, to the detriment of people with different identities and different links to ownership and belonging. Inclusion and exclusion in different areas of public life in relation to ownership and belonging appeared closely linked to (ethnic) identity. This type of conflict over identity, ownership and belonging at the district level appeared most prominently in Kasese and Bundibugyo, both of which are districts within the

Rwenzori sub-region.<sup>59</sup>

In July 2012 violent ethnic clashes erupted in Bundibugyo District between the Baamba and Bakonzo ethnic groups, resulting in the displacement of over 500 people.<sup>60</sup> This happened shortly after the conclusion of the NRTJ Audit field-work, but participants had already seen the violence coming.<sup>61</sup> They discussed a clash between identity, ownership and belonging, vis-à-vis different cultural and political entities, such as the district and cultural institutions as well as the state. They placed this in the context of a long history of perceptions of historical marginalisation and subjugation of their region, first by the Batooro in collaboration with the British, and later by the Ugandan Governments. With a joint identity suppressed and threatened from the outside, the Baamba and Bakonzo (together with a number of other smaller ethnic minorities) struggled jointly under the banner of the Rwenzururu Movement. The Movement sought emancipation through secession from the Batooro Kingdom, recognition of the Rwenzururu Kingdom and the establishment of separate districts.

Under Idi Amin, in 1974, some of these demands were met through the creation of what are now Kasese and Bundibugyo Districts. Under Museveni, the Baamba and Bakonzo were recognized as separate tribes (as opposed to being considered part of the Batooro) in the 1995 Constitution, and the Rwenzururu Kingdom was eventually recognized and restored in 2007.

With the external threat to identity now reduced, the initial shared sense of identity became fragmented and the sense of belonging and ownership shifted. This resulted in new conflict dynamics in the sub-region. Kasese and Bundibugyo Districts, predominantly inhabited by Bakonzo and Baamba respectively, now became the locations for politicized ethnic conflict between formerly friendly majority and minority ethnic groups. Belonging to the majority ethnic identity in these districts came to facilitate access to and ownership of political power. With the recognition of and increasing power of the Rwenzururu Kingdom, ethnic groups, such as the Baamba who had previously supported the idea of the Kingdom, now reportedly turned against it as a Bakonzo imposed institution.

The themes of identity, ownership and belonging also surfaced in other localities. The discourse of 'nativism' - whereby the 'natives' in a particular area turn against 'immigrants' or 'newcomers' - often extends beyond the boundaries of any given district. In Bunyoro, for example, those who considered themselves to be natives of the land lamented the presence of the Bakiga and Alur whom they considered 'immigrants,' despite the fact that the latter two groups have lived in the region for generations and carry Ugandan citizenship.

Ethnic based political power, loyalties and marginalisation at national level were also discussed. Participants emphasised the importance of national unity and harmony, but

59 The Rwenzori region consists of Bundibugyo, Kabarole, Kamwenge, Kasese and Kyenjojo. Out of these districts, NRTJ Audit researchers only visited Bundibugyo and Kasese.

60 Similar clashes occurred exactly a year later

61 Most recently in July 2014, the region experienced renewed wave of ethnic clashes with simultaneous attacks in Bundibugyo, Kasese and Ntoroko districts killing over 90 people - see New Vision Monday July 07 2014

complained that this is prevented by the political reality of divisionism and ‘tribalism’.

One participant in Kitgum commented;-

*“If your tribe is not in power, you do not feel at peace.”*

Some participants from northern Uganda commented that they were made to feel like a “*lesser Ugandan.*” When they discussed their real or perceived marginalisation as compared to other regions, they rhetorically asked the question “*Are we not Ugandan?*” Elders in Acholiland lamented that besides the unfortunate lack of nationalism and national pride, youth also no longer carry their Acholi identity with pride. Several participants in the north commented that, if it were possible, they would rather separate from Uganda and have their own country: “*the Republic of Northern Uganda.*”

Participants around the country claimed that members of the President’s ‘tribe’ are greatly advantaged in terms of access to political power, employment and wealth. A youth in Arua said, in this regard,

*“Today’s Uganda belongs to one tribe and everybody knows that. I got a job because I have a western name. Many of my colleagues had to change their name to sound western to even get called for an interview.”*

It was argued that some Banyankole behave as if they ‘own’ the country. In Hoima, a Banyankole/Balaalo was quoted as telling a sub-county chief:

*“Who are you? You are in charge of the sub-county, but we are in charge of Uganda.”*

## GOVERNANCE AND MILITARISATION IN CONFLICT

Participants around the country attributed many of Uganda’s conflicts to strong interlinkages between Uganda’s system of governance and patterns of militarisation. Throughout Uganda’s history, the military has been used as a tool to gain and maintain power, and has increasingly grown in importance in Uganda’s political landscape. Participants considered this dynamic an impediment to good, fair, democratic governance by the rule of law.



*Emblem of the Uganda Army under H.E. Milton Obote and H.E. Idi Amin*

Militarisation was traced back to the colonial time, when the British established the army and monopolised the use of weapons such as guns. When the institution of the state was introduced in Karamoja, the Karimojong started referring to it



as '*ariang*', or 'violent institution'.<sup>62</sup> This term is still in use and resonates throughout the country, in that many participants described the relationship between the state and citizens as inherently problematic.

Participants in Kitgum considered militarisation a direct legacy of colonialism and commented that the army was introduced as a personal asset to guard the interests of the ruling regime instead of those of citizens and the nation. After Independence, Uganda enjoyed a period of civilian governance, but not for long. The Kabaka Crisis<sup>63</sup> was identified around the country as a turning point in history. In Mukono, participants marked this as the first time when the army openly departed from its objective of protecting citizens, and instead attacked them. In Adjumani, it was said that the Crisis introduced the dynamic of using military means to resolve political conflicts. In Kitgum, a participant commented on the Kabaka Crisis;

62 In Acholi, the use of brute force for political interest became termed '*komdan*' or '*munumuno*' (referring to the white man's use of force – *muno* means "white person")

63 For more information, see conflict number 10 in this Compendium.

*“That is when [Obote] started using the military and that is the genesis of the gun in Uganda’s politics.”*

Soon after Independence, the army came to realise the power they had and the role they could play in Uganda’s system of governance. In early 1964, army soldiers mutinied against the Government of Obote. Instead of disbanding the army, as happened in Tanzania, the Ugandan national army was left intact. No punishments took place. Instead, the army forced the Government to increase their minimum salary significantly. In the same year, an incident took place in Nukulabye. In what came to be known as the Nakulabye Massacre the military had a run-in with innocent civilians and indiscriminately killed people in the area.

Participants perceived a close connection between political and military power. Participants considered the dictatorial rule by Idi Amin that followed Obote’s rule a continuation of this dynamic. Amin came to power through the gun, ruled by decree and buried the rule of law and the Constitution. It was said that during this time, Uganda completely “lost track.” Indeed, Amin’s rule was followed by one military coup after another and Uganda has not seen regime change without the use of weapons since. The fact that regime changes have always been secured through military instead of democratic means might explain the large number of insurgencies both against past regimes and against the current one.



*President Museveni cocks an AK47 during a UPDF training session*

## COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

A number of participants criticized this military approach to political questions. Some alleged that individuals in the Government had a vested interest in approaching the conflict in northern Uganda from a military angle. They cited a number of Government and army officials and members of the first family whom they thought had benefited from the prolonged military conflict. In Mukono it was argued that the state used its monopoly on force solely in the interest of staying in power, to the detriment of the security of citizens.

A participant there said

*“The incumbent Government does not mind about what does not threaten its Government, since the iron bar hit-men squad does not have the intention to overthrow the Government. I bet the Government will remain dormant in providing total security and clearing these bandits...”*

Militarisation of Ugandan society was said to be manifest at many different levels, in addition to the national political level. In Adjumani, women complained about military tendencies amongst the youth, some of whom have been abducted and forced to fight. It was said that the history of militarisation has led the general population to see the gun as a means either to obtain power or to defend against the abuse of power. In Gulu, participants noted that people had to defend themselves militarily when the NRA crossed Karuma after the overthrow of Tito Okello, in order to protect themselves against the atrocities of operation *Fajia* (see conflict No. 56) and other such attacks. The lack of demobilisation of previous Government soldiers in northern Uganda, combined with the military response to the real or perceived threat posed by NRA forces, was said to have contributed to the descent of northern Uganda into a state of conflict that would last for decades.

Participants further criticized the militarisation of the police, evident during political protests and demonstrations that were frequent during the time of the field research. In Mbarara, it was said that both the army and police displayed lack of respect for human life and used excessive force against civilians during protests around the country. They commented that arrests by military operatives and police that took place at that time could be considered a continuation of the illegal *panda gari* arrests by the military before Museveni came to power. In Luwero, youth wished the police were more non-partisan and independent from the army. They called the Uganda Police Force the “*NRM Police*.” One youth wanted to tell the Inspector General of Police

*“Please use your power equally so that all political parties get equal services.”*

## **THE DEMOBILISATION, DISARMAMENT AND REINTEGRATION (DDR) DEFICIT**

A lack of appropriate demobilisation, disarmament and reintegration of former army

soldiers and insurgents has, in the view of participants, contributed to the prevalence of armed violence and conflict in Uganda. According to participants, those who are used to the gun find it difficult to give it up and reintegrate into society, especially in the context of a lack of economic opportunities. In northern Uganda, the case was made that the northern conflict could partially be attributed to the fact that former UNLA soldiers who



*Ex-UPA combatant Omeda Max receives the Amnesty Commission's reintegration package*

returned to northern Uganda were not prepared to give up their military lifestyle. Even though the Amnesty Commission was mandated in 2000 to assist former rebels with DDR, it was said that when they returned to their societies they did not receive sufficient support. This has contributed to the prevalence of guns in society, armed criminality, ex-combatants' belligerent attitudes, and the risk that armed conflict might return to the region.<sup>64 65</sup>

64 Research conducted in Kitgum District

65 See also: Advisory Consortium for Conflict Sensitivity (2013) Northern Uganda Conflict Analysis Report.

## COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

In the Rwenzori region, a similar case was made. Capitalising on historical grievances, the National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (NALU) was able to recruit from former Rwenzururu Movement combatants who had not been properly demobilised, disarmed and reintegrated. Later, the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) were able to recruit from the pool of former NALU combatants. In Karamoja, Government has made several attempts at voluntary and forced disarmament, with various levels of success and marred by human rights violations.<sup>66</sup>

Participants identified the DDR deficit as both an unaddressed legacy of conflict as well as a conflict driver. Although the Amnesty Commission was recognised for its contribution to DDR and peacebuilding, it was also considered to have not done enough. Traditional justice mechanisms played some role in reintegration, but the potential of other transitional justice mechanisms to address the DDR deficit remains under-utilised. Although discussions around DDR and transitional justice gained momentum during the Juba Peace Talks, and agreements on both issues were signed between the LRA and Government of Uganda, neither agreement was ever fully implemented, and the potential linkages between them have not yet crystallised, whether in practice or in policy discussions. In discussions about transitional justice in the international arena, however, conceptual connections between DDR and transitional justice have increasingly been made over the last few years. For example, Pablo de Greiff has argued that linking DDR to reparations enhances the chance of success of DDR processes. He argues that “Providing benefits to ex-combatants without attending to the claims of victims not only leaves victims at a comparative disadvantage, but gives rise to new grievances, which may exacerbate their resistance against returning ex-combatants.”<sup>67</sup> Generally, it has become increasingly recognised that the two processes overlap in purpose, and can mutually reinforce each other.<sup>68</sup>

## POVERTY AND PEACE

When participants were faced with the question “Do you think there is peace in Uganda?” they responded instead with reference to various specific conflicts - both described in this thematic section and the overview of conflicts below - to justify why their response was almost always a resounding ‘no’. Researchers were primarily interested in armed conflicts and secondarily in manifest conflict dynamics in society that were not necessarily accompanied with gunshots and raised pangas. Participants, however, insisted that the

This report provides an overview of some of the DDR related challenges and their implications in northern Uganda, e.g. the recruitment of over 3000 people into auxiliary forces to help boost the UPDF during the war without appropriate DDR afterwards, and the prevalence of illegal fire arms. Respondents of the study made a direct link between “weapon availability, disgruntled ex-combatants, disenfranchised youth and current insecurity in their communities”. It further quotes similar challenges in Bunyoro, Karamoja and Teso, where community leaders referred to a “culture of the gun” or “a culture of violence”

66 For more information on these operations, see conflict numbers 52 and 61 in this Compendium.

67 de Greiff, P. (2010) Research brief: Establishing links between DDR and reparations ,*International Center for Transitional Justice* [Internet] February. Available from: <<http://ictj.org/publication/establishing-links-between-ddr-and-reparations>> [Accessed 21 March 2014]

68 This recognition is illustrated by a collaboration between the International Center for Transitional Justice and the United Nations resulting in the publication of a module for the UN’s Integrated DDRStandards on transitional justice, published in 2009. See Module 6.20, Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards: DDR and Transitional Justice (14 December 2009), accessible at <http://ictj.org/sites/default/files/UN-DDR-and-Transitional-Justice-2009-English.pdf>

lack of peace cannot be explained solely by the presence of violence and visible conflict. Unanimously, they pointed at the biting and increasing presence of poverty in society as a major impediment. As one participant in Tororo explained; “A man with an empty stomach cannot have peace.”

In Arua, a participant said;

*“People go to war because it’s the last attempt of survival. If 70% of the people here are poor and do not have any source of livelihood, how can you talk about peace?”*

While not using academic terminology, they were alluding to what some academics describe as ‘structural violence’.<sup>69</sup> Despite a number of initiatives to tackle poverty under the NRM Government that participants commented on – such as NURP I & II, NUSAF I & II, PRDP, UPE and youth loan schemes - they argued that poverty is unmistakably increasing in Uganda. They pointed to the Walk to Work protests and teachers’ strikes that were ongoing during the time of the field research as indications of this.

Poverty was not considered an individual misfortune, but an unnecessary societal injustice. Participants insisted that it is within the Government’s power to reduce such needless suffering. People used a variety of terms to explain and illustrate the concept of poverty, such as ‘delayed development’, ‘economic marginalisation’, ‘unequal distribution of the national cake’, ‘unfulfilled promises [by the Government]’, and ‘corruption’, all of which imply state responsibility. In northern Uganda in particular, participants claimed that poverty in their region is the outcome of a deliberate Government policy to “*subdue the people of Acholi [and] rule the people well by making them poor.*”

Poverty was considered both a cause and an impact of conflict. As such, it was regarded as a fundamental driving force in Uganda’s vicious cycles of conflict. It was considered a *cause* in that poverty as perceived marginalisation and deliberate disempowerment has prompted people to take up weapons in anger and in an attempt to access wealth through securing power.

It was also considered an *impact* in that protracted conflicts around the country have caused delayed development in the regions where they were felt most heavily. In Soroti, for example, participants traced the gradual descent of the Teso sub-region into poverty from the Bush war, through brutal NRA counter-insurgency, through Karimojong cattle raids, to the LRA attacks. In Lira, participants commented on how the direct effects of conflict can also perpetuate poverty indirectly and less visibly, be it through the breakdown of the education system, the prevalence of mental illness or the fact that many families are headed by children. These effects prevent people from meaningfully engaging in the economy.

Similarly, poverty can emerge as an immediate consequence of conflicts of a shorter nature, such as land disputes and resulting land dispossession. At the same time,

69 See Galtung, J. (1960) Violence, Peace, and Peace Research. *Journal of Peace Research*, 6 (3) pp. 167-191

## COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

participants in Tororo stated that poverty is the main reason why conflicts over land escalate.

In Arua, one participant said;

*“Because of poverty, people are selling land that belongs to other families, especially where there are no elders. This is causing a lot of conflict within the community.”*

Poverty was considered to have a number of other effects that undermine peace in society. One particularly abhorrent practice mentioned across the country was ritual child sacrifice, promoted by witchdoctors as the fastest way to riches. Further direct effects of poverty mentioned across the country included alcohol and drug abuse, domestic violence, prostitution, defilement, HIV/AIDS, looting, theft and other types of criminality. In Nakasongola, poverty was seen as the cause of conflict between the youth and elders. The former hold the latter responsible for their poverty, as they supported the coming to power of the current regime.

Participants also described a conflict between the rich and the poor, qualified by some as conflict between classes. Across the country, concerns were expressed that the gap between the rich and poor has been widening over the last decades, and tension and resentment has been growing. Throughout the country, it was said that poverty often goes hand in hand with a lack of access to education, health services and formal justice systems, and that these factors, whether singly or in combination, result in even fewer opportunities for upward mobility, as people are kept in ignorance and a state of disempowerment, and are thus vulnerable to manipulation.

In Kitgum, it was said poor people are easy to manipulate before and during elections. Their votes are bought with simple items like soap. The education system was regarded not as a tool for emancipation, but as instrumental in widening the gap between rich and poor. In Tororo, it was argued that the education system is used deliberately to perpetuate a class structure in society. Children of poor families go to schools of poor quality, while children of the rich access quality education and continue to university on Government scholarships.

A participant commented;

*“In Uganda now, the gap between the rich and the poor is going to be very wide. Give it just two years from now. The rich man will remain rich for life, the poor man will remain poor for life. That is where Uganda is headed to. It is a very big time bomb. That thing in history brought a lot of wars.”*

The section on land conflicts above elaborates further on conflict between rich and poor.



Participants looked at the problem of poverty through a justice lens. When asked for their definition of 'justice', they described a vision of social justice, and focused on socio-economic rights. They did not focus on formal justice, courts and civil-political rights, but on concepts of fairness, equal distribution of resources and equal opportunities.

*"The law favours rich people only and justice is not for the poor."*

said a youth in Luwero. In Tororo this was repeated;

*"Someone who is poor cannot have justice."*

Participants in Mbarara believe that resources are unequally



*Anti-corruption demonstration, 2006*

## COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

distributed to different parts of the country. They said that the north of the country was disproportionately poor, causing tribal hatred towards those who come from the current President's region, Mbarara. They said that this unequal resource distribution in the country prevents national reconciliation.

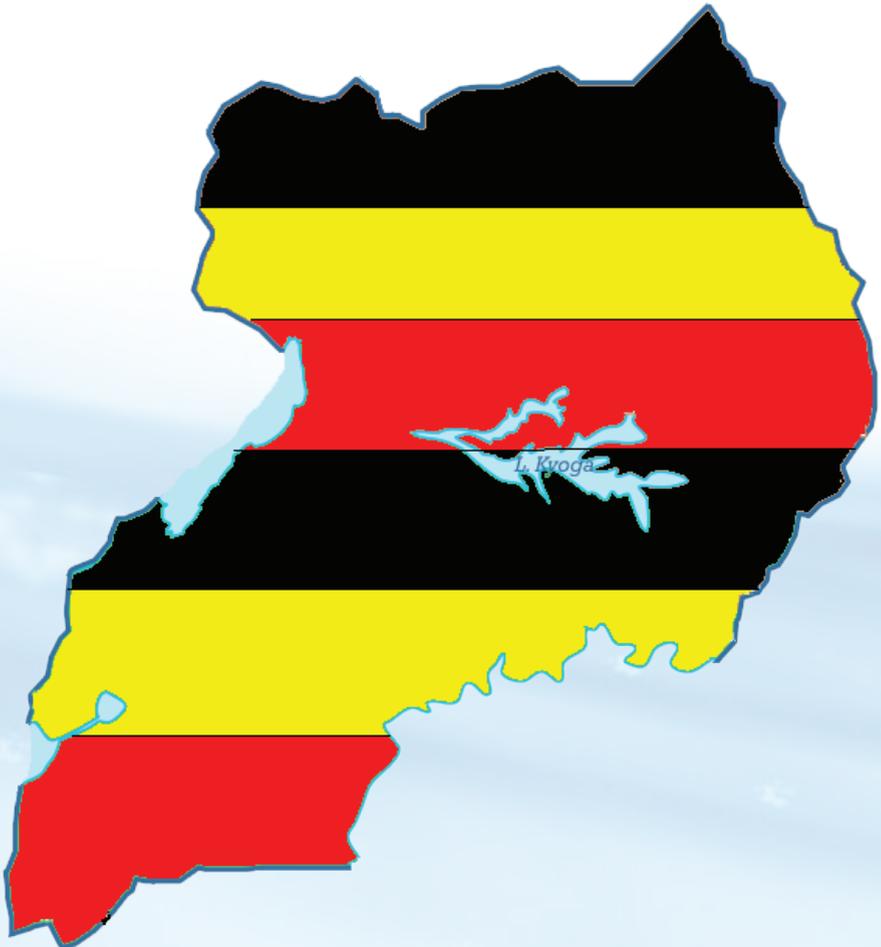
The fact that participants focused, amongst all other impediments to peace, on poverty as an injustice, has important implications for transitional justice and post-conflict recovery. It calls into question the traditional focus of transitional justice on the violation of civil and political rights at the expense of social and economic rights. It raises doubts with regards to Uganda's current focus on prosecutions, at the expense of reparations and institutional reform. If transitional justice is to help prevent reoccurrence of violent conflict, and poverty and marginalisation are identified as structural causes of conflict, then any transitional justice approach that neglects social and economic rights seems diluted at best, and complicit in perpetuating citizen disempowerment at worst. One participant in Bundibugyo summed this up best by asking us

*"How do we have heroes of wars, and not those who fight poverty?"*

# CHAPTER

## NATIONAL LEVEL CONFLICTS

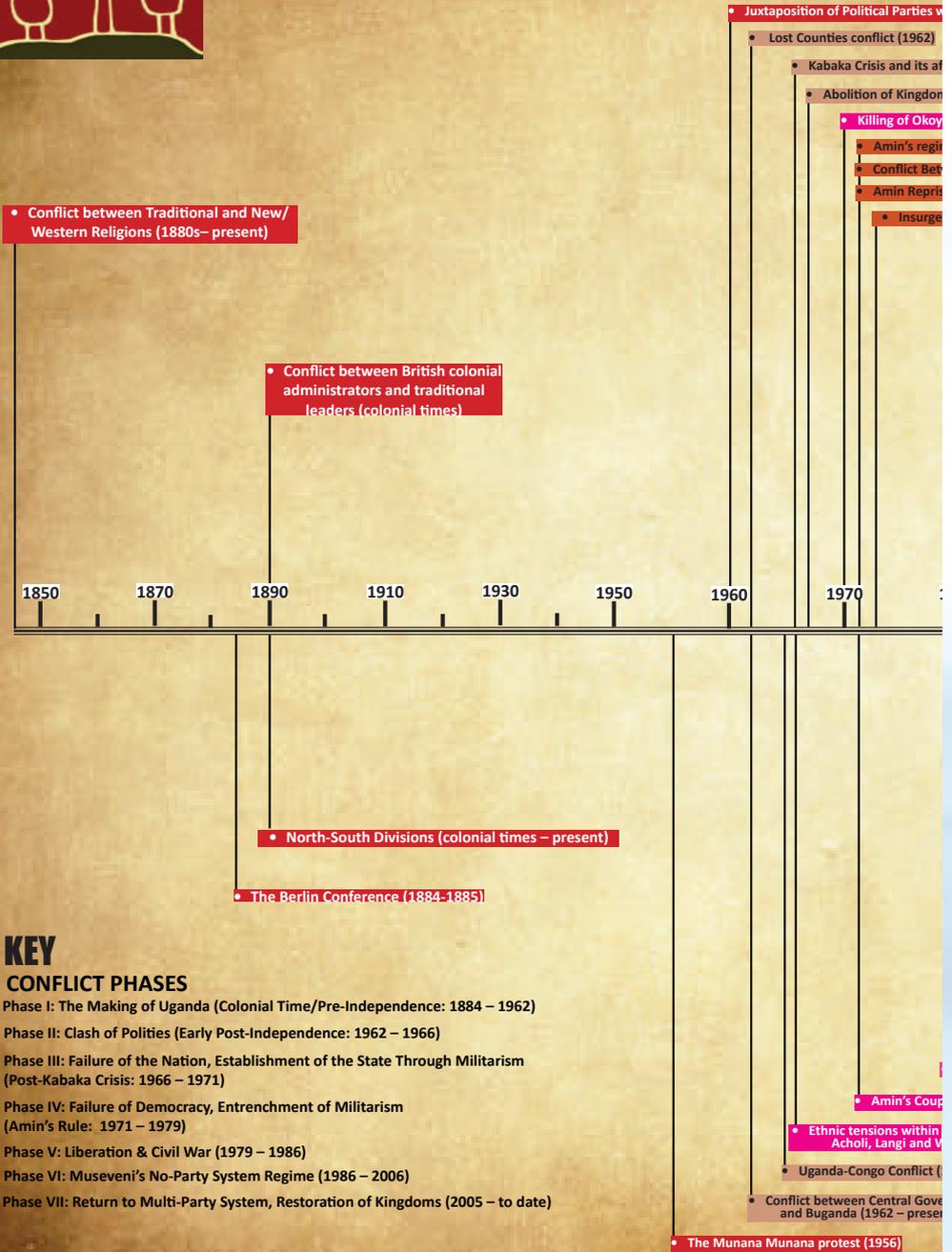
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Flag Map of Uganda



# NATIONAL CONFLI



## KEY

### CONFLICT PHASES

- Phase I: The Making of Uganda (Colonial Time/Pre-Independence: 1884 – 1962)
- Phase II: Clash of Polities (Early Post-Independence: 1962 – 1966)
- Phase III: Failure of the Nation, Establishment of the State Through Militarism (Post-Kabaka Crisis: 1966 – 1971)
- Phase IV: Failure of Democracy, Entrenchment of Militarism (Amin's Rule: 1971 – 1979)
- Phase V: Liberation & Civil War (1979 – 1986)
- Phase VI: Museveni's No-Party System Regime (1986 – 2006)
- Phase VII: Return to Multi-Party System, Restoration of Kingdoms (2005 – to date)

# CONFLICT TIMELINE



with Religious Affiliations (1960 - present)

termath (1966)

ns (1967)

a (25th January 1970)

ne (1971 - 1979)

ween West Nilers and Langi/Acholi (1971 - present)

als Against Community in Lalogi for Hiding Museveni (1971)

ncy Against Amin by Kikosi Maalum and Front for National Salvation (FRONASA) (1972)

• Liberation War to Overthrow Amin (1979)

• Overthrow of Milton Obote by Tito Okello Lutwa (1985)

• Disparity between the North and South in Development (1986 - present)

• War fought by the Uganda People's Defence Forces in DRC (1998 -2003)

• Buganda Riots (2009)

• Kampala al-Shabaab Bomb Blasts (2010)

• Economic crisis (2010 - present)

• Conflict between Government forces and unarmed civilians (2011 – to date)

• Conflicts between investors and local communities (ongoing)

1980      1990      1995      2000      2005      2010      2015      2020

• Resource based conflicts with neighbouring countries (Ongoing)

• Theft and robbery (On-going)

• Border conflict between Uganda and South Sudan (2009 – present)

• Mabira Riots (2007-2010)

• Conflict between political parties (especially NRM and FDC) (2005 - present)

• The Allied Democratic Forces insurgency (1996 - to date)

• Conflict related to decentralisation (1995-present)

• Museveni's "Cold War" (1986 - present)

• Increased poverty (1986 – present)

• National Resistance Army military takeover (1986)

• The Bush/Luwero Triangle War (1981-1986)

• Conflict between Christians and Muslims (post-1979)

against President Milton Obote (1971)

the army leadership between West Nilers (1966-1971)

1965 – present)

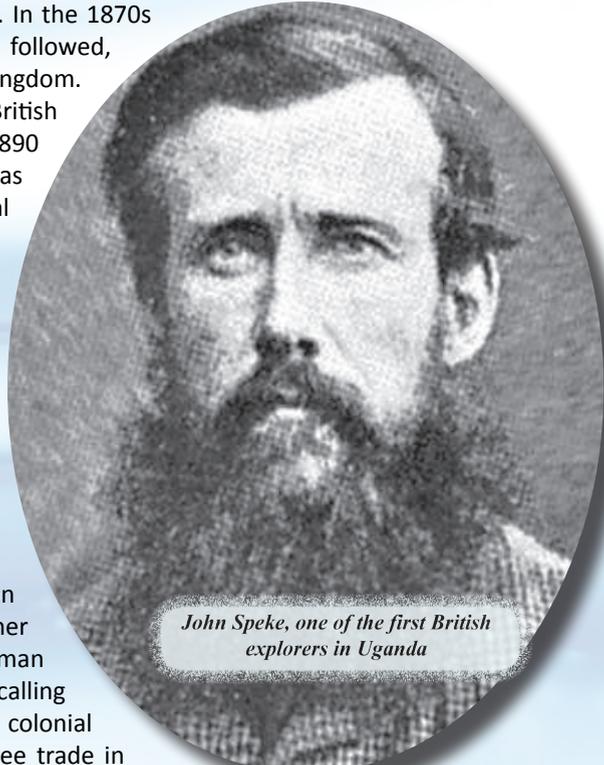
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## PHASE I: Colonial Construction of Uganda, 1884 – 1962

*The seeds of many of the conflicts that Uganda faces today were sown or watered in Uganda's pre-Independence years. In their quest to divide and rule the people of what would later become known as Uganda, the colonialists exploited, deepened and created cleavages in society that divided people in all spheres of public and private life, such as ethnicity, political allegiance, religion and politics. Native traditions, beliefs and administration were subdued by the administrative and religious dominance of Europeans. When Uganda gained Independence in 1962, its citizens were in a state of division and discord: a recipe for conflict.*

### 1. The Berlin Conference (1884-1885)

Prior to the European scramble for Africa, what is now Uganda was made up of a number of 'hereditary rulerships'. In the 1860s and 1870s, the first British explorers came to Uganda: J.H. Speke, A.J. Grant, Sir Samuel Baker and H.M. Stanley. In the 1870s the first Christian missionaries followed, arriving in the Buganda Kingdom. The 1880s saw the arrival of British colonial agents, and between 1890 and 1902, the area now known as Uganda became a British colonial polity through a number of treaty-making engagements primarily under the auspices of Captain F.D. Lugard and Sir Harry Johnston. When a British Protectorate was proclaimed over Buganda in 1894, and subsequently extended to neighbouring regions, Uganda was born.<sup>70</sup>



*John Speke, one of the first British explorers in Uganda*

European powers' competition to secure control over other areas in Africa resulted in German chancellor Otto von Bismark calling them together to discuss their colonial ambitions in Africa, promote free trade in contested regions, and partition the continent according to their national interests. During the Conference, convened in 1884, the European powers recognised the Protectorate of

<sup>70</sup> The information in this paragraph is drawn from Low, D.A. (2009) *Fabrication of Empire: The British and the Uganda Kingdoms 1890-1902*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, and is provided as background to what participants described as the conflict of the Berlin Conference

Uganda as British administered territory.<sup>71</sup> This event was identified by participants as a conflict in itself, as well as the source of many ongoing conflicts on the continent.<sup>72</sup> In the so-called 'Scramble for Africa' artificially drawn boundaries split ethnic groups into separate territories and created new political entities composed of diverse populations. While these boundaries were delineated according to colonial interests in resource extraction, and sparked both inter- and intra-state conflicts, they have endured and continue to define the shape of modern African countries.<sup>73</sup> In Uganda's case, this has affected relationships with the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan, Kenya, Tanzania and Rwanda. The Berlin Conference furthermore set a precedent for the use of divide-and-rule strategies, such as the modern-day division of citizens into districts under the guise of decentralisation.

## 2. Conflict between Traditional and New/Western Religions (1880s - present)

The arrival of European explorers was followed by the arrival of Christian missionaries in the 1870s. When Anglican Protestants and Roman Catholics first arrived in the Buganda Kingdom they found that prior engagements with Arab traders had inspired a number of Baganda to embrace Islam. The arrival of different religions in a short time-span led to "a deeply confusing situation which was not helped by [Buganda King] Mutesa's reluctance to choose between four competing faiths (Buganda's indigenous pantheon of Gods, two rival versions of Christianity, and Islam)".<sup>74</sup> The subsequent Buganda King, Kabaka Mwanga, conflicted with both Christians<sup>75</sup> and Muslims at different times. A number of religious wars between Muslims and Christians and Protestants and Catholics broke out.<sup>76</sup> Western religious institutions, represented first by Catholic and Anglican missionaries, and later by right-wing Pentecostal evangelists, have consistently condemned and interfered with indigenous African beliefs. As a result, they have promoted extensive divisions between Ugandans who shifted to the new religious institutions and those who instead remained dedicated to existing belief systems. Before the introduction of the "new" religions, participants asserted that there had been a consensus on acceptable religious practices based on customary beliefs.<sup>77</sup> According to some participants, Pentecostal churches, among others, continue to

71 In 1984, this territory covered the current Uganda, excluding West Nile and Karamoja. West Nile was brought under British administration in 1914 and Karamoja in 1922. See Leopold, M. (2006) Legacies of slavery in North-West Uganda: The story of the 'one-elevens'. *Journal of the International African Institute*, 76 (2), pp. 180- 199

72 Research conducted in Arua District

73 Griffiths, I. (1986) The scramble for Africa: Inherited political boundaries. *The Geographical Journal*, 152 (2) p. 204

74 Low, D.A. (2009) *Fabrication of empire: The British and the Uganda kingdoms 1890-1902*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, p. 3

75 One of the most violent episodes in Kabaka Mwanga's interaction with converted Baganda Christians was his mass execution of the "Uganda Martyrs" in 1886 at Namugongo. The Christians were executed for their resistance to the Kabaka's authority, in particular his sexual advances. Their death is commemorated up to today on June 3rd each year, a national holiday. Some two decades earlier, a number of Muslims had also met their death under similar circumstances, ordered by the Kabaka

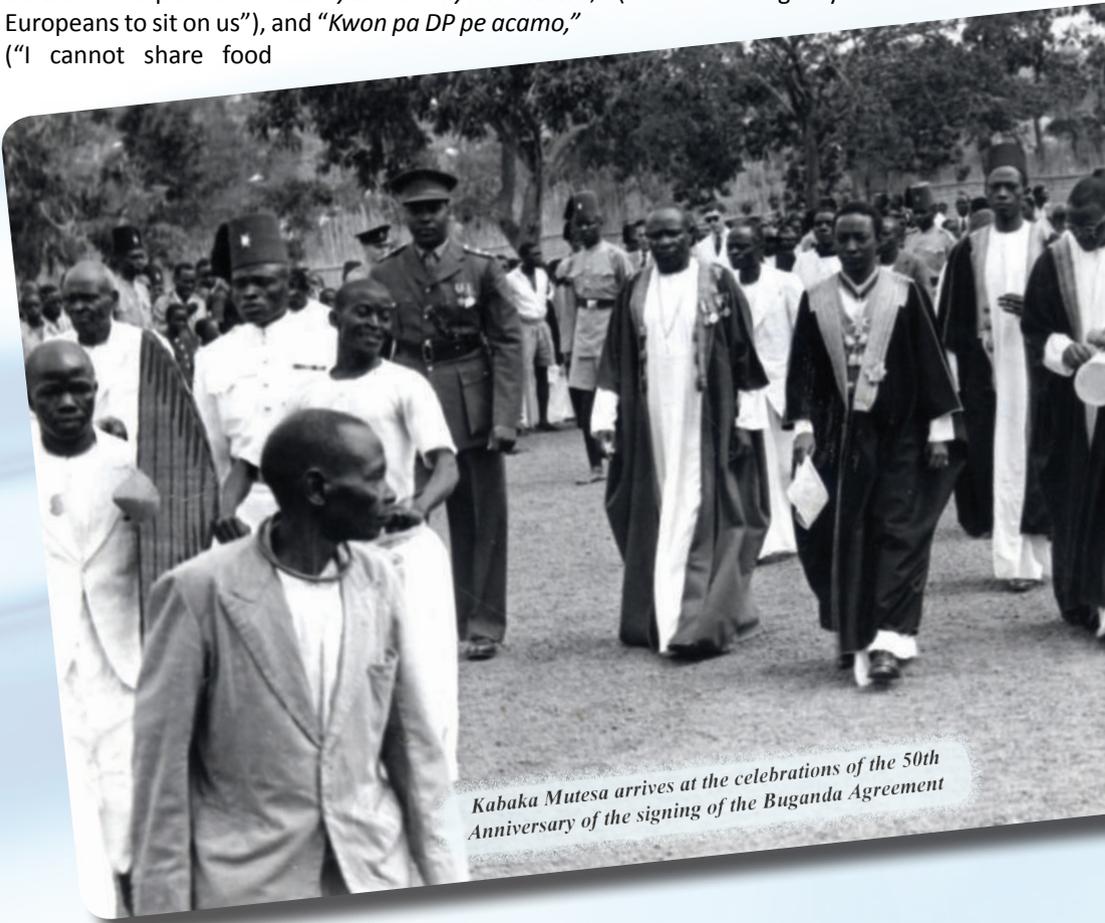
76 The information in this paragraph is drawn from Low, D.A. (2009), *Fabrication of empire: The British and the Uganda kingdoms 1890-1902*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, and is provided as background to what participants described as the conflict between traditional and new/Western religions.

77 Research conducted in Kasese District

divide the community by preaching that salvation can only be achieved upon being 'born again'.<sup>78</sup> Religious differences continue to spark conflicts across Uganda, and are manifested in the way different religious denominations and communities relate to one another, and in many cases condemn traditional African beliefs.

### 3. Juxtaposition of Political Parties with Religious Affiliations (1960 - present)

Participants identified the introduction of religiously affiliated political parties, particularly the Democratic Party (DP) and the Uganda People's Congress (UPC), as responsible for creating conflicts and societal divides that continue to define Ugandan politics. The DP, for example, is largely supported by Catholics, while the UPC is supported primarily by Protestants. Participants referred to the following songs to highlight the political divide between the parties: "*Muni oyube me nyono wii wa,*" ("It was a design by the Europeans to sit on us"), and "*Kwon pa DP pe acamo,*" ("I cannot share food



with the DP"). The last phrase illustrates how party politics has gone so far as to divide

78 Ibid

families members who once sat together to share food.<sup>79</sup> The political conflict created by religious affiliation cuts across ethnic and social lines, causing numerous impediments to democratisation processes in Uganda. Some politicians use religion to win votes through appealing to a common sense of identity and belonging, obtaining citizens' support irrespective of their leadership capabilities.

#### 4. Conflict between British colonial administrators and traditional leaders (colonial times)

Before the British colonial administration came to Uganda, communities were governed on the basis of traditional lineage systems. The establishment of the British in Uganda, through their collaboration with the Buganda leadership (formalized in the Buganda Agreement of 1900),<sup>80</sup> sparked numerous clashes with traditional leaders in many communities around the country.



Before the signing of the Buganda Agreement, the king of the Baganda, Kabaka Mwanga II, resisted British rule, declaring war on the colonialists in 1897. He was promptly defeated. British violence against the Baganda led to grievances that have yet to be addressed. The Bunyoro Kingdom was the last Kingdom to become part of the British protectorate of Uganda in 1933, owing to both a long-fought resistance movement against British troops led by Sir Gerald Portal, as well as Bunyoro's longstanding conflict with the Buganda Kingdom.<sup>81</sup> To this day, the Banyoro still demand reparations and compensation from the British over atrocities committed on their land and against King Kabalega.<sup>82</sup>

In Acholi the Lamogi Rebellion of 1911 is still remembered.<sup>83</sup> The Karamoja region was integrated into the state of Uganda through various armed conflicts beginning in 1926, and as a result of the British containment strategy of designating vast areas of land as game parks and reserves, a policy that set in motion a relentless squeeze on traditional livelihoods that continues to date.<sup>84</sup> In West Nile, the British are also blamed for the disappearance of Chief Aliku during the pre-Independence period.<sup>85</sup>

#### 5. North-South Division (colonial times – present)

Long-running tensions between the North and South of Uganda can be traced back to colonial recruitment policies. People from the north were

79 Research conducted in Pader District

80 Mugambwa, J.T. (1987) Legal aspects of the 1900 Buganda Agreement revisited. *Journal of Legal Pluralism*, 25 (26), p. 243

81 Research conducted in Luwero District

82 Research conducted in Hoima District

83 Research conducted in Gulu District

84 Research conducted in Luwero District

85 Research conducted in Adjumani District

predominantly conscripted into the police, army and prison systems, while the Baganda from the central region were selected for office and administrative work, thereby putting them in a position of power relative to other ethnic groups. The colonialists collaborated with Buganda in order to colonise the rest of the country, pitting the region against the other parts of Uganda. These divisions created by colonialists were reinforced after Independence as a result of deadly events such as the 1966 Kabaka Crisis and the Bush War from 1981-86.

In such conflicts, affected communities attributed most of the atrocities to northern soldiers. There is also long-standing anger over the fact that in 1967, Prime Minister Apollo Milton Obote, a northerner, abolished all Kingdoms, which were particularly strong in the south.

The Government's counter-insurgency strategies in northern Uganda, which began in 1986<sup>86</sup> and continued for two decades (ostensibly to contain the threat posed by the Lord's Resistance Army), resulted in mass internal displacement. Many people from the North interpreted this as a further attempt to marginalise the North from the growth of the South. This combination of factors marks a conflict between the North and South that remains unresolved to date.<sup>87</sup>

## 6. The Munana-Munana protest (1956)

In 1956, local traders led a boycott against Asian stores in Kampala in protest against overexploitation and perceived discrimination.<sup>88</sup> A Muganda named Augustine Kamywa formed the Uganda National Movement (UNM), specifically recruiting groups of Baganda who felt economically exploited and held longstanding grievances against the colonial Government.<sup>89</sup> This movement eventually declared a trade boycott on non-African goods, enforced through intimidation and violence against Asian traders and those who attempted to buy from them. The Buganda Kingdom (Mengo) Government only supported the boycott privately, as it was against its interests to publicly endorse such lawlessness. Local people in the Buganda region, however, joined the boycott hoping to obtain the reign over Asian-run ginneries and the marketing of cash crops. Eventually, the colonial Government proscribed the protest and, when it turned violent, arrested many of its leaders.<sup>90</sup>

This altercation continued to threaten the relationship between Baganda and Asian business operators in Buganda. These tensions were later exploited by Idi Amin in 1972 to justify the expulsion of Asians in order to gain mass support in Buganda.

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86 Refugee Law Project (2004) Working paper no. 11: Behind the violence: Causes, consequences and the quest for justice

87 Research conducted in Adjumani, Kitgum, Pader, Lira Districts

88 Research conducted in Arua District

89 Jørgensen, J. (1981) Uganda: a modern history. New York, St. Martin's Press

90 Uganda Media Centre, Office of the President (date not indicated) Political History of Uganda, Uganda Media Centre [Internet] Available from <<http://www.mediacentre.go.ug/details.php?catId=7>> [Accessed 12 October 2012]

## PHASE II: Clash of Polities (Early Post-Independence: 1962 – 1966)

*Before the arrival of the colonialists, the area that comprises modern Uganda was composed of different polities, both the bigger, well-known kingdoms of Buganda, Bunyoro, Tooro and Ankole, as well as smaller kingdoms and chiefdoms. With the proclamation of Independence, a new polity was born: the Ugandan state. Many Ugandans still paid more allegiance to their traditional leaders than to the new Ugandan state. Old and new polities soon clashed, for example during the conflict over the lost counties between Buganda and Bunyoro, the 1966 Kabaka crisis, as well as during clashes with neighbouring states, such as Congo. Although Kingdoms were abolished in 1967, the clash of polities would haunt Uganda for decades to come.*

### 7. Conflict between the Central Government and Buganda (1962 – present)

Following the Buganda Agreement in 1900, the Buganda Kingdom opposed the centralization of government.<sup>91</sup> After Independence in 1962, numerous events unfolded in Buganda that tore apart the relationship between Buganda and the Central Government. Most notable was the 1966 attack on the Kabaka's palace that led to the deposition of Kabaka Edward Fredrick Mutesa II and his subsequent flight into exile in England. Shortly thereafter, Prime Minister Milton Obote declared himself the President and introduced a Republican Constitution. This abolished all Kingdoms and caused resentment of the centralized state, especially in the well-established Kingdom of Buganda.<sup>92</sup>



*Independence Day, October 9, 1962.  
Prime Minister Obote holds Ugandan flag*

<sup>91</sup> Research conducted in Mukono District

<sup>92</sup> Johannessen, C. (2005) The Legal and institutional context of the 2006 elections in Uganda: Kingship in Buganda. Research Notes. Chr. Michelsen Institute & Makerere University [Internet], Available from: <<http://www.cmi.no/pdf/?file=/uganda/doc/Johannessen-kingship%20in%20Uganda-politics-research%20notes-Dec%2005.pdf>> [Accessed 13 September 2012]

## COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

By the 1980s, the rebel group Federal Democratic Movement for Uganda (FEDEMU) led by George Nkwanga, emerged in hopes of establishing a federal state with more autonomy for the Buganda region.<sup>93</sup> Under the current regime of President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, multiple altercations with the Central Government have continued to undermine the relationship between the Buganda Kingdom and the State. From 1992-1993, the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) insurgency led by Major Itongwa, a National Resistance Army (NRA) renegade, called for the restoration of a federal system.<sup>94</sup> Later, in 2009, a Governmental decision to stop the current Kabaka of Buganda, Ronald Mutebi, from visiting Kayunga, provoked huge protests in which many people died and Kampala ground to a standstill. Governmental efforts to give away part of Mabira forest to investors sparked further mass protests in 2010, and tensions mounted following a mysterious arson attack on the Kasubi tombs.

The Central Government and the Buganda Kingdom remain in conflict over the control and ownership of resources within Buganda, and over Buganda's autonomy from state interference. One senior citizen interviewed in Mukono commented;

*"If the Central Government is not willing to cooperate with Buganda Kingdom, then they should take away the capital city (Kampala) from Buganda land to western Uganda and leave us alone."*



*Uganda Constitutional Conference, Lancaster House, October 9, 1961, preparing Uganda for Independence*

93 Research conducted in Nakasongola District

94 Research conducted in Luwero District

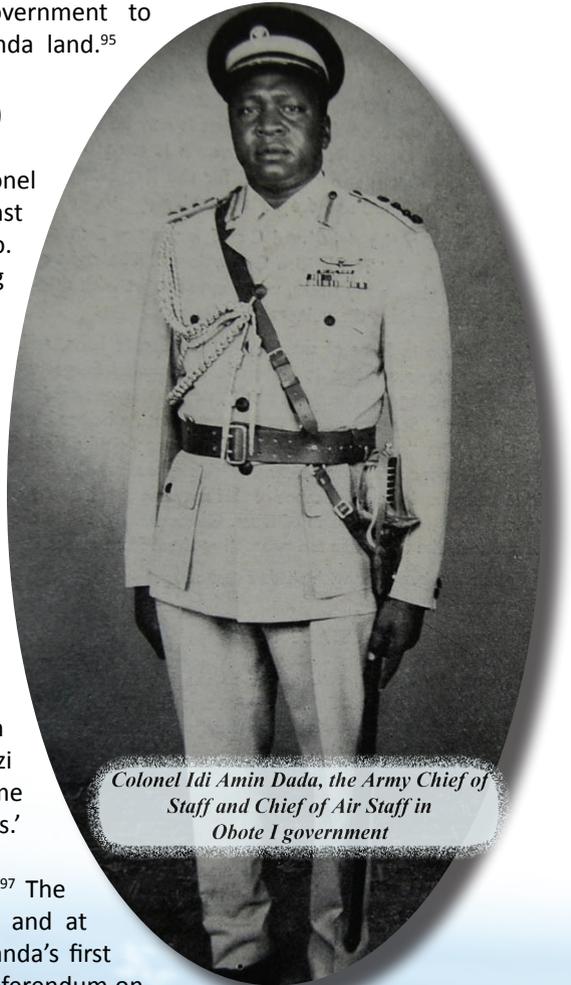
This sentiment resembles a motion passed by the Buganda Kingdom Government to Parliament in 1966, which called for the Central Government to physically remove itself from Buganda land.<sup>95</sup>

## 8. Lost Counties conflict (1962)

In December 1893, the British Colonel Colville led a military campaign against Kabalega, the leader of the Banyoro. The Banyoro had been acquiring weapons from the Arabs in order to fight against the Buganda Kingdom, which was armed by the British. Kabalega was gravely defeated, driven out of his county, and forced to take refuge in Lango in 1894.<sup>96</sup>

At that point, as a reward for their support to the British campaign against Kabalega, Colonel Colville promised the Buganda chiefs that all Bunyoro territory south of River Kafu would be incorporated into Buganda. This promise was later realised when the counties of Buyaga and Bugangaizi were assigned to Buganda and became famously termed as the 'Lost Counties.'

Bunyoro never accepted this loss.<sup>97</sup> The British left this conflict unresolved, and at the London Conference to draft Uganda's first Constitution, it was decided that a referendum on the issue would be held after independence. This was considered a 'big trap', setting up the new nation for future turmoil.<sup>98</sup> The referendum was held on 4 November 1964 and culminated in the return of Buyaga and Bugangaizi counties to Bunyoro.<sup>99</sup> Today, these constitute Kibaale District.



*Colonel Idi Amin Dada, the Army Chief of Staff and Chief of Air Staff in Obote I government*

95 Research conducted in Mukono District

96 Johannessen, C. (2005) The legal and institutional context of the 2006 elections in Uganda: Kingship in Buganda. Research Notes. Chr. Michelsen Institute & Makerere University [Internet], Available from: <<http://www.cmi.no/pdf/?file=/uganda/doc/Johannessen-kingship%20in%20Uganda-politics-research%20notes-Dec%2005.pdf>> [Accessed 13 September 2012]

97 Research conducted in Luwero District

98 Green, E.D. (2008) Understanding the limits to ethnic change: Lesson's from Uganda's 'lost counties'. Perspectives on Politics, 6 (3) p. 474

99 Research conducted in Kitgum District

## 9. Uganda-Congo Conflict (1965 – present)

Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) have been engaged in conflict since the 1960s largely due to various incidents in which political and military leaders have been accused of border trespassing and the plundering of natural resources. In 1965, then army Commander Idi Amin was implicated in looting ivory and gold from the DRC during the first Obote administration.<sup>100</sup>

Subsequent accusations of illegal border incursions have heightened distrust between the two nations. Accusations of resource plundering emerged strongly in the second half of the 1990s, during the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) operations against rebel groups based in the DRC.<sup>101</sup> Indeed, a UN Panel of Experts established to look into the illegal exploitation of natural resources and other forms of wealth of the DRC found that Ugandan Government structures and top army commanders were involved in mass scale looting and illegal systematic and systemic resource exploitation.<sup>102</sup>

More recently, the discovery of oil and plans for its exploitation around Lake Albert in Buliisa and Hoima Districts have led to further disputes.<sup>103</sup> People from these border areas demand that the Government not only focus on oil exploration, but also address conflict with neighbouring DRC; some Congolese have abducted Ugandans fishing on Lake Albert and around the oil rich areas, claiming they are trespassing, and this in turn has led to several Ugandan threats and counterattacks. The governments of both the DRC and Uganda have been fighting armed rebellions for years, and have accused each other of supporting some of those rebel groups.<sup>104</sup> Additionally, the porous Uganda-DRC border is a security threat that can precipitate violence, as rebels can decide to hide across the border and launch attacks from there.

The shift of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) into northeastern DRC in 2008 is one such example, and Congolese attacks against Ugandans at the border have

100 Uzoigwe, G.N. (1982) Uganda: The dilemma of nationhood. United States, NOK Publishers International Ltd

101 Mutibwa, P. (1992) Uganda since independence. Kampala, Fountain Publishers Ltd.

102 Research conducted in Luwero and Hoima Districts

103 Report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, S/2001/357

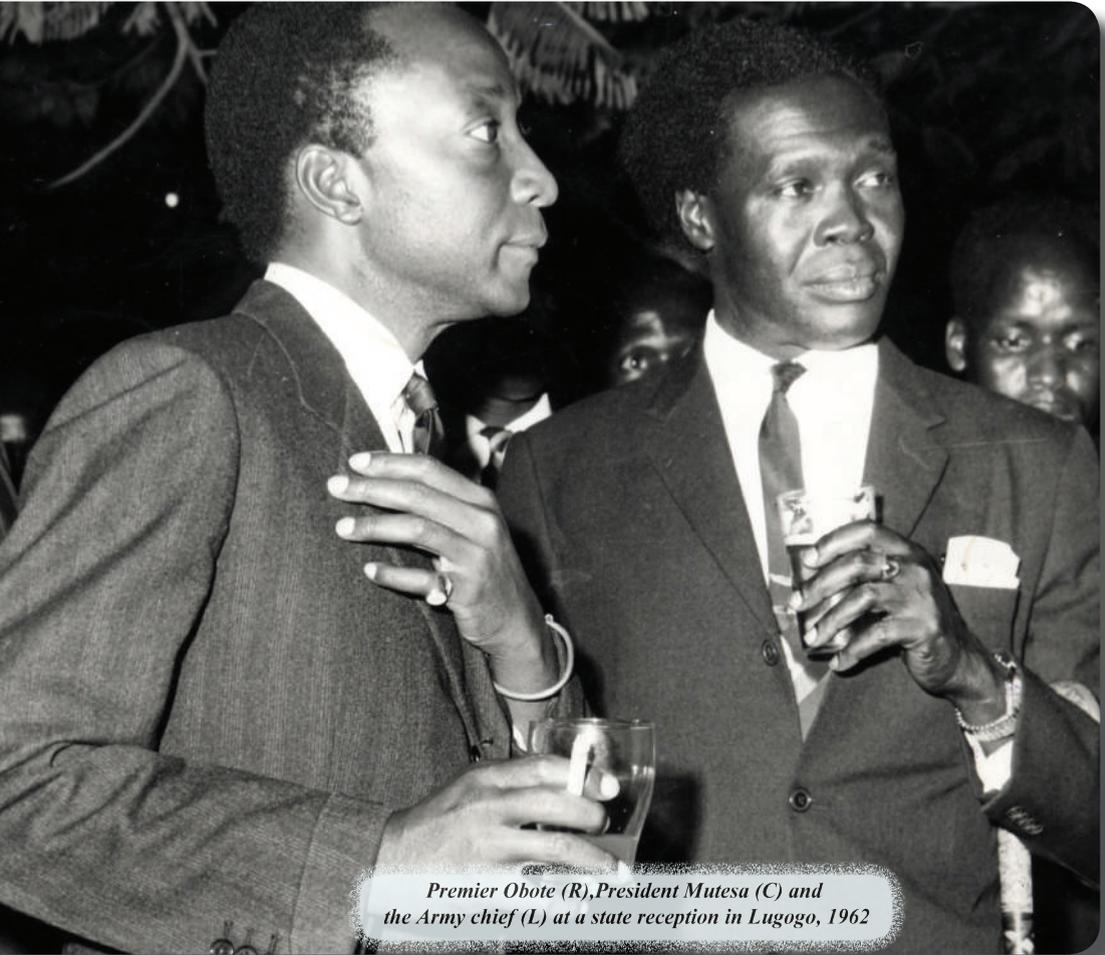
104 International Crisis Group. (2012) Black gold in the Congo: Threat to stability or development opportunity? Africa report no. 188. [Internet], 11 July. Available from: < <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/publication-type/media-releases/2012/africa/congo-black-gold-in-the-congo-threat-to-stability-or-development-opportunity.aspx> > [Accessed 27 May 2014].



also strained relationships between Ugandan nationals and Congolese refugees and asylum seekers in mid-western Uganda.

### **10. Kabaka Crisis and its aftermath (1966)**

Independence from the British Colonial Government did not imply the end of the power struggles between political and traditional leaders. The conflict over power centred around Obote, Uganda's first Prime Minister, and the Kabaka, Uganda's first President,



*Premier Obote (R), President Mutesa (C) and the Army chief (L) at a state reception in Lugogo, 1962*

representing the central government and Buganda Kingdom (which had been accorded federal status in the Independence Constitution) respectively. The conflict continued after the 1964 referendum that saw the 'Lost Counties' (Bugangaizi and Buyaga) returned from the jurisdiction of the Kabaka to the Bunyoro Kingdom. The Kabaka, as the ceremonial Head of State, was by law required to endorse the results of the referendum, but refused to do so. As a result, Obote used his executive powers to approve the results

of the referendum, and the counties were returned to Bunyoro. This angered the Kabaka to the extent that he wanted Obote and his Government out of Buganda territory.<sup>105</sup>

In February 1966, Obote suspended the 1962 Independence Constitution and declared himself President. In April of that year he had copies of a new Constitution dropped in parliamentarians' pigeon holes. Participants in Kitgum described this Constitution as the 'Pigeon-Hole Constitution'. Further, he abolished the post of Prime Minister, and vested all executive powers in the President (himself). In response, the Parliament of the Buganda Kingdom, the *Lukiiko*, demanded that the central Government remove itself from Buganda soil (effectively announcing secession).<sup>106</sup> The following month (May 1966), Prime Minister Obote ordered Idi Amin to lead an armed attack on the Kabaka's Palace at Mengo in Kampala. During this 'Battle of Mengo',<sup>107</sup> which caused the death of numerous Kabaka sympathisers, the Kabaka himself managed to escape into exile.

The participants described the Kabaka crisis as the first time in the history of post-Independence Uganda that the State had deliberately and systematically turned its guns against its own people. Indeed, the national army deployed military tanks and artillery against the Kabaka and his loyalists, resulting in great losses to the Buganda Kingdom.<sup>108</sup> The falling out between Obote and the Kabaka was said to have 'brought the army into politics'.<sup>109</sup> In September 1967 a new Constitution was enacted that abolished Kingdoms, established a Republic, and conferred much more wide-ranging powers on the central Government.

## 11. Abolition of Kingdoms (1967)

Kingdoms in Uganda have played vital roles in shaping the history of the country. Those that became parts of the British protectorate from 1901 retained a considerable degree of autonomy. Many of the kings at the time, notably in Buganda, Bunyoro, Tooro, Ankole and Busoga, continued to rule themselves despite British interests in controlling their economic and political affairs.<sup>110</sup> Even as monarchies in many other African countries were facing extinction, political lineage systems survived the British colonial influence in Uganda.

It later became apparent that the Kingdoms that survived the arrival of colonialists would not survive their departure, as the attainment of Independence in 1962 introduced a political system that undermined the authority of Kingdoms. This created conflicts between the political leaders and traditional kings who were not willing to let go of their

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105 Based on research conducted in Mukono and Luwero Districts

106 Phares, M. (1992) Uganda since independence, a story of unfulfilled hopes. Kampala, Fountain Publishers Ltd

107 Ibid

108 Research conducted in Soroti, Mubende and Gulu Districts

109 This incident marked the first time the state turned its weapons against its own citizens in the few years that had passed since Independence. (Prior to Independence, however, the colonial administration had done this several times.) It may be argued that the 1964 army mutiny (and the manner of its resolution) is an important forewarning of the 1966 Kabaka crisis, as it was the first sign of militarized governance.

110 Research conducted in Luwero District

pre-Independence power, privileges and status.<sup>111</sup> This was perhaps most evident in the Kabaka Crisis of 1966,<sup>112</sup> as described above, an event that deepened the divide between the Central Government and Buganda and permanently weakened the Kingdoms, despite President Museveni's attempt at their revival in 1993.<sup>113</sup>

### PHASE III: Failure of the Nation, Establishment of the State Through Militarism (Post-Kabaka Crisis: 1966 – 1971)

*In the early post-Independence years, efforts were made to establish Uganda not only as a state but also as a 'nation', even if only based on civic nationalism. Ugandans sung a national anthem, hoisted a national flag and depended on a national army for the protection of their borders. In an attempt to ensure a power monopoly, kingdoms were abolished. Nonetheless, Uganda appeared not as a nation-state, but as a state comprising many nations competing for power. Soon, the army was deployed to quell such challenges to power and became an instrument not only to protect the national borders, but also to ensure the survival of the state and the regime that embodied it. With the increasing role of the military as a power broker, the competition between different ethnicities also entered the army, contributing to the downfall of Uganda's first regime.*

#### 12. Ethnic tensions within the army leadership between Acholi, Langi and West Nilers (1966-1971)

During Obote's regime a tangle of ethnically based conflicts emerged within the national army.<sup>114</sup> These were manifest through unfair promotions and demotions, favouritism along ethnic lines, and the mysterious deaths of army officers (such as Brigadier Pierino Yere Okoya and Colonel Omoya).<sup>115</sup> Obote appointed Idi Amin Army Commander in response to rising tensions over leadership in the army between the Acholi, Langi and West Nilers.<sup>116</sup> Amin's appointment, which was intended to sideline the Acholi generals in the army,<sup>117</sup> also created enmity between the inhabitants of these three regions. In many respects, Obote favoured the Langi in the army and later the Kakwa over the Acholi.

111 i-Uganda. (no date provided) *Kingdoms of Uganda – Our Historical Roots Explained* [Internet], Available from: <<http://www.i-uganda.com/kingdoms-of-uganda.html#U4R5ili1asA>> [Accessed on 13 September 2012]

112 Phares, M. (1992) *Uganda since independence, a story of unfulfilled hopes*. Kampala, Fountain Publishers Ltd

113 Johannessen, C. (2005) The legal and institutional context of the 2006 elections in Uganda: Kingship in Buganda. *Research Notes. Chr. Michelsen Institute & Makerere University* [Internet], Available from: <<http://www.cmi.no/pdf/?file=/uganda/doc/Johannessen-kingship%20in%20Uganda-politics-research%20notes-Dec%2005.pdf>> [Accessed 13 September 2012].

114 Okuku, J. (2002) Ethnicity, state power and the democratization process in Uganda. Discussion Paper No. 17, Nordic Africa Institute [Internet], Available from: <[http://cloud1.gdn.net/~research\\_papers/Ethnicity,%20state%20power%20and%20the%20democratisation%20process%20in%20Uganda](http://cloud1.gdn.net/~research_papers/Ethnicity,%20state%20power%20and%20the%20democratisation%20process%20in%20Uganda)> [Accessed on 17 September 2012].

115 Research conducted in Gulu District

116 Research conducted in Arua District

117 Phares, M. (1992) *Uganda since independence, a story of unfulfilled hopes*. Kampala, Fountain Publishers Ltd.

Over time, Obote and Amin came into conflict with one another. This caused discontent amongst the Nubian and West Nile elements in the army, and ultimately sparked the 1971 *coup d'état* that toppled Obote's government. Favouritism in the army subsequently became a vicious cycle as Amin favoured the Nubians and his West Nile cohorts over other ethnic groups, which caused the loss of innocent blood and prompted the Liberation War of 1979.<sup>118</sup>



*President Obote is received by Col. Idi Amin, before Idi Amin would overthrow Obote's Government in 1971*

The Obote II Government that came to power in 1980 also exhibited favouritism

towards the Langi over other groups - including the Acholi, who eventually toppled Obote's Government.<sup>119</sup> Participants from all the districts included in the NRTJ Audit said that the incumbent Government might suffer similar consequences, because ethnic favouritism in the army and other sectors has led to a national outcry. They emphasised that the failure of Ugandan leaders to learn from mistakes committed by past leaders is detrimental to national unity and sustainable peace in Uganda.

### 13. Killing of Okoya (25<sup>th</sup> January 1970)

Numerous events and wrongs committed in the post-colonial period remain critically important to different communities in Uganda. To the Acholi ethnic community, one of the most haunting of such events was the mysterious killing of Brigadier Pierino Yere Okoya and his wife during a visit to his home village in Gulu District in 1970.<sup>120</sup> The couple's murder at the hands of an unknown assassin exacerbated tension between Acholi and Langi soldiers within the national army, especially as a proper investigation

<sup>118</sup> Ibid

<sup>119</sup> Research conducted in Hoima and Mukono Districts

<sup>120</sup> Phares, M. (1992) Uganda since independence, a story of unfulfilled hopes. Kampala, Fountain Publishers Ltd.

was never carried out.

The death of Okoya occurred immediately after the mysterious death of another Acholi soldier, Colonel Omoya. Taken together, these incidents were viewed by many Acholi soldiers as evidence of a plot by Obote (a Langi) and Amin (a West Niler) against the Acholi, thereby increasing anti-Obote sentiment in the army which contributed to setting the stage for Obote's overthrow in 1971.

Prior to his death, Okoya had violently quarrelled with Amin about the general's behaviour following the attempted assassination of Obote, accusing him of desertion and cowardice.<sup>121</sup> When the Brigadier and his wife were shot a few weeks later, Amin was accused of having a hand in the assassination. Participants cited this event as a turning point in Uganda's history because it heightened mistrust of the Central Government in the Acholi sub-region, and continues to be a source of bitterness and conflict.<sup>122</sup>

#### 14. Amin's Coup against President Milton Obote (1971)



*President Idi Amin drives through the crowded streets of Kampala shortly after his military take-over*

121 Jørgensen, J. (1981) Uganda: a modern history. New York, St. Martin's Press

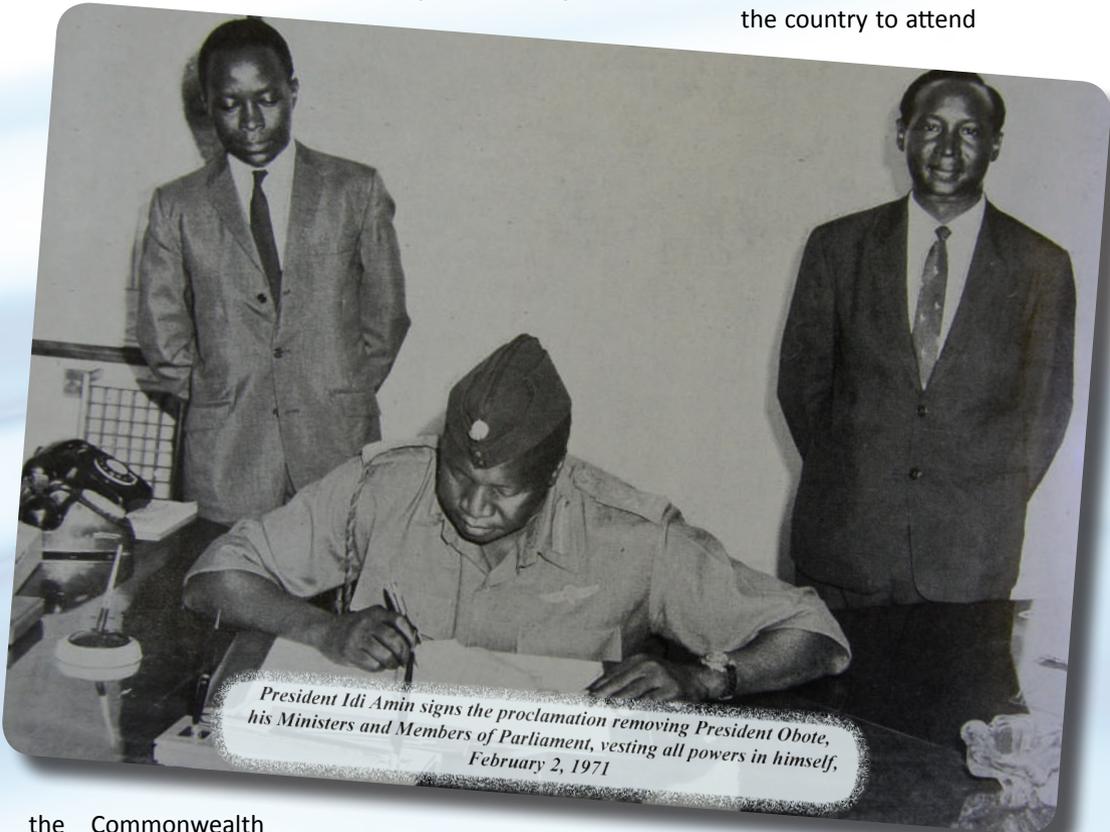
122 Research conducted in Kitgum and Gulu Districts

## COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

In 1971, Amin led a *coup* against the government of Milton Obote and declared himself President of the Second Republic of Uganda, a position he maintained through oppressive and brutal control tactics for the following eight years. Amin had previously been promoted by Obote in 1966 to the position of Commander of the Army and carried out the attack on the Kabaka's palace, initiating the Kabaka crisis of the same year.<sup>123</sup> There were many precipitating factors for the *coup*. Amin accused Obote of tribalism, claiming he disproportionately favoured his own Langi people over other Ugandans.<sup>124</sup>

Power struggles over promotions in the military gave Amin the support he needed from disillusioned officers in the army.<sup>125</sup> He also denounced the centralization of power that took place under Obote, who simultaneously occupied the offices of President, Minister of Defence, Head of Foreign Affairs, and Prime Minister.

The rising popularity of Amin created rivalry with Obote. A serious falling out between the two leaders resulted in the temporary house arrest of Amin in 1970. He was released on Independence Day, the 9<sup>th</sup> of October. When Obote left the country to attend



the Commonwealth  
Heads of Government Meeting in Singapore in January

123 Southall, A. (1975) General Amin and the coup: Great man or historical inevitability? *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 13 (1) pp. 85-105; Brett, E.A. (1995) Neutralising the use of force in Uganda: The role of the military in politics. *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 33 (1), pp. 129-52

124 Research conducted in Mubende District

125 Research conducted in Mukono and Hoima Districts

1971, Amin took the opportunity to stage a *coup* and seized power on January 25<sup>th</sup>, thereby pre-empting a reported order from Obote to loyal army officials to arrest Amin and his supporters.<sup>126</sup>

Amin gained support from the Baganda, who had been marginalized under Obote since the Kabaka Crisis, which contributed to the success of the overthrow.<sup>127</sup> Once in power, Amin allowed Kabaka Mutessa II's body to be returned from exile for burial. Throughout his regime he showed special favour to the Kakwa and Nubian people from his home region of West Nile.<sup>128</sup> Notably, the participants from Arua in West Nile did not cite the Amin *coup* as a destabilising national conflict. According to participants in Bundibugyo, the Baamba and Bakonjo, two ethnic groups who had been incorporated into the Tooro Kingdom against their will, also benefited under Amin when they broke away from the Batooro and formed a new district in 1974.<sup>129</sup>

### **PHASE IV: Failure of Democracy, Entrenchment of Militarism (Amin's Rule: 1971 – 1979)**

In the period 1971-1979 prospects for democracy dwindled. Uganda's first coup was described as the moment when 'Uganda really lost track'. The new head of state personalized the army and turned its guns against Ugandan citizens for survival. The military rather than the people gained a central position in Ugandan politics and ethnicity became a determining factor whether any individual considered the state and army an ally or a threat. Such a militaristic regime could not be tackled through democratic means, and indeed, the regime ended the way it began: through force of arms.

#### **15. Amin's reign of terror (1971 - 1979)**

Amin's coup sparked an eight-year reign of terror in which his torture tactics and grave human rights abuses destabilized the entire country.<sup>130</sup> Acholi and Langi army officials and soldiers were specifically targeted for execution because of the threat they posed to the regime.<sup>131</sup>

In 1972, Amin divested Asians and Indians of their property and forced them into exile. In turn, he awarded their seized wealth to his supporters and his fellow Muslims.<sup>132</sup> This resulted in revenge killings against Muslim communities throughout Uganda. Powerful elites, wealthy business people, and religious leaders were also killed. The

126 Brett, E.A. (1995) Neutralising the use of force in Uganda: The role of the military in politics. *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 33 (1) pp. 129-52; Research conducted in Hoima District

127 Brett, E.A. (1995) Neutralising the use of force in Uganda: The role of the military in politics. *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 33 (1) pp. 129-52

128 Research conducted in Adjumani District

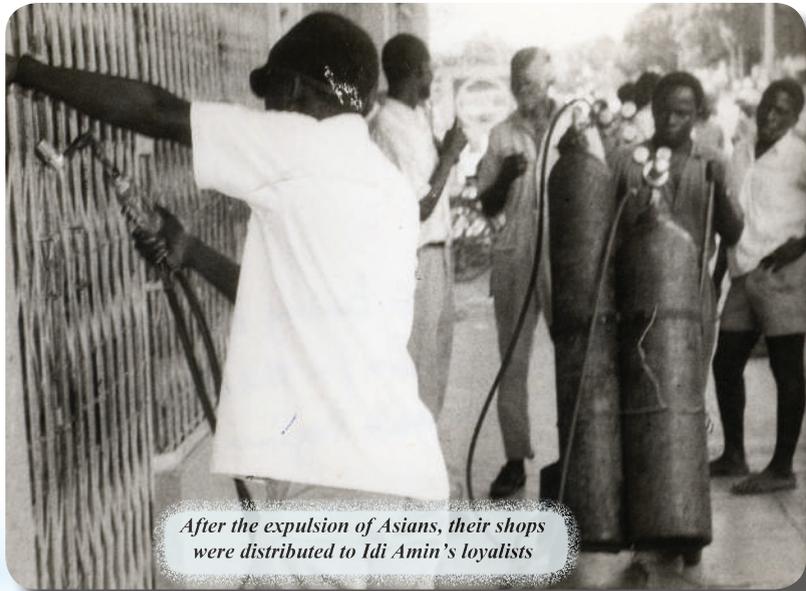
129 Research conducted in Bundibugyo District

130 Research conducted in Mubende District

131 Research conducted in Adjumani, Bulambuli, and Pader Districts; Tall, M. (1982) Notes on the civil and political strife in Uganda. *A Journal of Opinion* 12 (1/2) p. 41

132 Brett, E.A. (1995) Neutralising the use of force in Uganda: The role of the military in politics. *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 33 (1) pp. 138,139

decay of rule of law was facilitated by the suspension of the Constitution and an accompanying economic collapse that further crippled Ugandan society.<sup>133</sup> The effects of the Amin regime continued to impact the political and social landscape of the country even after his eventual overthrow by the Uganda National Liberation Army and the Tanzanian People's Defence Forces in 1979.<sup>134</sup>



## 16. Conflict Between West Nilers and Langi/Acholi (1971 – present)

Deadly conflict emerged between the peoples of West Nile (the Lugbara, Kakwa, Madi, Alur and Nubian tribes), and those from the Acholi and Langi sub-regions immediately after Amin toppled Obote's government in 1971. Amin regarded the Acholi and Langi as supporters of Obote, and for that reason he turned against them and brutally murdered or exiled a large number of soldiers and officers, as well as prominent politicians and civilians.<sup>135</sup>

The slaughtering of Acholi and Langi Obote loyalists<sup>136</sup> by Kakwa and Lugbara tribes pitted the Acholi and Langi against those from West Nile, causing hatred and a desire for revenge between these various ethnic groups.<sup>137</sup> This conflict continued even after the overthrow of Amin in 1979. During both Obote II and Tito Okello's governments the people of West Nile suffered revenge violence during which many were killed and exiled in revenge for atrocities committed by Amin<sup>138</sup> against the Acholi and Langi tribes. The conflict between these ethnic groups remains unaddressed to date. According to

<sup>133</sup> Research conducted in Adjumani District

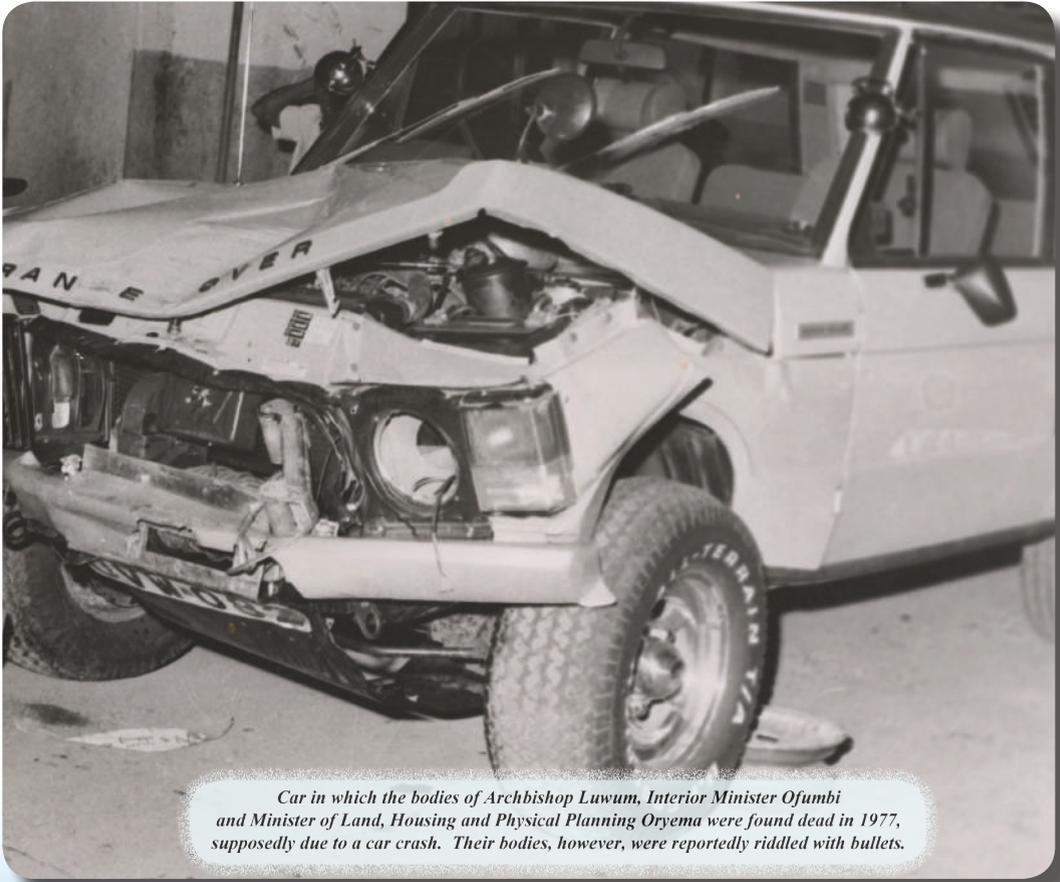
<sup>134</sup> Ward, K. (2001) *The armies of the lord: Christianity, rebels and the state in Northern Uganda, 1986-1999*. *Journal of Religion in Africa* 31 (2) p. 192; World Vision. (2001) *Peace and Reconciliation for the Children of War*. p. 14

<sup>135</sup> Refugee Law Project (2004) Working paper no. 11: *Behind the violence: Causes, consequences and the quest for justice*

<sup>136</sup> Minorities at Risk Project (2004) *Chronology for Acholi in Uganda* [Internet] Available from: <<http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/469f38ea1e.html>> [Accessed 18 September 2012]

<sup>137</sup> Uganda - Military rule under Amin (1990) Mongabay [Internet] December. Available from: <[http://www.mongabay.com/history/uganda/uganda-military\\_rule\\_under\\_amin.html](http://www.mongabay.com/history/uganda/uganda-military_rule_under_amin.html)> [Accessed 18 September 2012]

<sup>138</sup> Research conducted in Adjumani District



*Car in which the bodies of Archbishop Luwum, Interior Minister Ofumbi and Minister of Land, Housing and Physical Planning Oryema were found dead in 1977, supposedly due to a car crash. Their bodies, however, were reportedly riddled with bullets.*

participants from Acholi, Lango and West Nile, the memory of atrocities still leads to feelings of vengeance.<sup>139</sup>

### **17. Amin Reprisals Against Community in Lalogi for Hiding Museveni (1971)**

Museveni, currently President, was involved in rebel activities against President Amin throughout the 1970s. In 1971, he hid from the Ugandan Army in Lalogi Sub-County in Gulu District. During a reprisal attack by Amin, some Acholi men were executed, including Colonel Omoya. Participants decried the fact that Museveni never appreciated this initial support by the Acholi, despite the fact that they had hosted him in his rebel years, and lost some of their sons as a result.<sup>140</sup>

<sup>139</sup> In 1981 a Gomo Tong ceremony (Bending of the Spear) was held between the Acholis and the Lugbaras in Palaro, but participants said the process was not concluded because the Acholis did not go to West Nile as they were supposed to

<sup>140</sup> Research conducted in Kitgum District

## 18. Insurgency Against Amin by Kikosi Maalum and Front for National Salvation (FRONASA) (1972)

A year after toppling the first Obote Government, Amin met stiff opposition from former Government forces and leaders who were exiled to Tanzania in 1971. In September 1972, a group of predominantly Acholi and Langi anti-Amin forces organised themselves into 'Kikosi Maalum' (meaning 'Special Force' in Kiswahili). The group was commanded by Colonel Tito Okello, with Lt.-Col. Oyite-Ojok as second in command, and was loyal to Obote.<sup>141</sup> They were later joined by Museveni's Front for National Salvation (FRONASA). The move came after Amin announced in August 1972 that he intended to invade Tanzania to capture some territory that he claimed belonged to Uganda. This announcement prompted Tanzania to support the Ugandan exiles in their attempt to attack Amin and overthrow his government.<sup>142</sup> The invasion by Ugandan exiles took place from Mutukula, Tanzania, but the forces were defeated immediately and suffered heavy losses.<sup>143</sup> Time Magazine reported that "the invasion in retrospect was both futile and foolhardy".<sup>144</sup>

Many insurgents were killed, wounded or captured alive, and the survivors retreated back to their base in Tanzania. This invasion strained the relationship between Uganda and Tanzania, and prompted a quest for other ways to resolve the conflicts. These culminated in the signing of the Mogadishu Agreement in 1972 and the Addis Ababa Pledge in 1973 that required Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere to stop helping Ugandans fight Amin.<sup>145</sup> Participants from Mbarara District (close to the Tanzanian border) argued that this attempt to overthrow Amin was devastating to the civilian population and is still affecting communities today. It also changed Amin's character for the worse, having deadly spillover effects throughout Ugandan communities.<sup>146</sup>

### PHASE V: Liberation & Civil War (1979 – 1986)

***After the Liberation War that saw the second military overthrow of the central Government, a number of old and new rebel groups, dissatisfied with the return to power (through contested elections) of Uganda's first head of Government (Obote), took to the bush. The Government army and the different rebel groups fought each other in a deadly civil war, centred around the Luwero Triangle. This period was a continuation of the cycle of violence that citizens had already suffered from for a decade. A coup in 1985 was quickly followed by another in 1986, bringing to power the regime that remains in power today.***

141 Phares, M. (1992) *Uganda since independence, a story of unfulfilled hopes*. Kampala, Fountain Publishers Ltd

142 Ibid

143 Research conducted in Mbarara and Arua Districts

144 The Black Hole of Kampala (1972) *Time* [Internet] 2 October. Available from: <<http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,906445,00.html>>

145 Acheson-Brown, D. (2001) The Tanzanian invasion of Uganda: A just war? *International Third World Studies Journal and Review*, 12, pp. 1-11

146 Participants from Mbarara District say the 1972 attempt to overthrow Amin reminds them of the *Kazuguzugu* (the sound of Amin's fighter jets flying all over to drop bombs on the rebels and suspicious places) killing many people and causing destruction of numerous civilian properties

## 19. Liberation War to Overthrow Amin (1979)

The war to overthrow Amin, waged by the Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA) and the Tanzanian People's Defence Forces (TPDF) against Amin's military regime, represents a watershed in the political and social history of the nation. Amin's eight-year rule was characterised by deteriorating economic conditions, brutality by security forces, and rampant corruption.<sup>147</sup>



President Lule(2nd R), Oyite Ojok(R)  
and Tito Okello(2nd L)

By the end of his stay in power, his local support base had dwindled, the foreign financial and military support from which he had initially benefited had mostly dried up, and his own military was crippled by division and indiscipline.<sup>148</sup> The immediate result of the Liberation War, as it is commonly called, was increased insecurity caused by soldiers pillaging the country, and political instability as Amin's successors contended for power.<sup>149</sup>

Cracks in the regime's foundations first appeared when several battalions mutinied, thereby forcing Amin to rely increasingly on mercenaries from southern Sudan and eastern Zaire/Congo.<sup>150</sup> Though Amin had previously enjoyed foreign military support

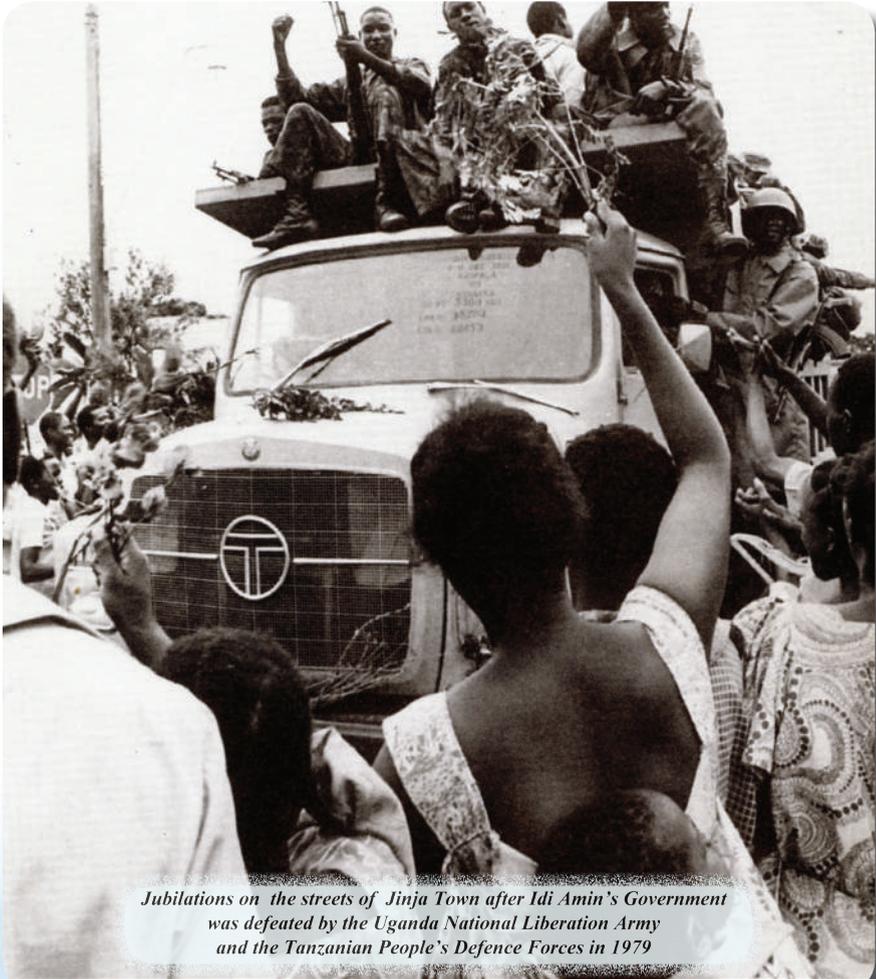
147 Research conducted in Mukono District

148 Fall of Idi Amin (1979) *Economic and Political Weekly*, 14 (21) (1979), pp. 907-10

149 Southall, A. (1980) Social disorganisation in Uganda: Before, during and after Amin. *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 18 (4), p. 627-56

150 Fall of Idi Amin (1979) *Economic and Political Weekly*, 14 (21) (1979), pp. 907-10





*Jubilations on the streets of Jinja Town after Idi Amin's Government was defeated by the Uganda National Liberation Army and the Tanzanian People's Defence Forces in 1979*

Conference in 1979.<sup>152</sup> With the support of President Nyerere's Tanzania People's Defence Force (TPDF), which was fighting to defend Tanzania's national sovereignty against the belligerent Amin regime, the UNLA forces successfully took Kampala in April, 1979.<sup>153</sup> Yusuf Lule was installed as President on 11 April, shortly to be replaced by Godfrey Binaisa.<sup>154</sup> Within months, the Military Commission of the National Liberation Council took power, headed by Paulo Muwanga and supported by Army Commander David Oyite Ojok.<sup>155</sup> Obote was later declared President after elections were held in December 1980.

Most participants who mentioned this conflict referred to it as a war of liberation, and

152 Field Brief from Luwero; Tindigarukayo, J. (1988) Uganda, 1979-85: Leadership in transition. *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 26(4) pp. 607-22

153 Fall of Idi Amin (1979) *Economic and Political Weekly*, 14 (21) (1979), pp. 907-10; Southall, Aidan. (1980) Social disorganisation in Uganda: Before, during and after Amin. *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 18 (4), p. 627-56

154 Jørgensen, J. (1981) *Uganda: a modern history*. New York, St. Martin's Press.

155 Southall, 651; Field Briefs from Luwero and Bulambuli

some mentioned that the Tanzanian soldiers were popularly called *Wakombozi*, or 'liberators'.<sup>156</sup> Participants in Arua, however, also chose to call this conflict the Saba Saba War, after the destructive rocket launchers used by the TPDF, or the 1979 War, revealing a more ambivalent attitude toward the actions of opposition forces.<sup>157</sup>

## 20. Conflict between Christians and Muslims (post - 1979)

The advent and penetration of Uganda by Christianity during the 1870s gave way to religious conflicts based on ideology and belonging that continue today. Religious tension also infiltrated national institutions in which members of various denominations were both the victims and perpetrators of oppression and discrimination.

Religious conflicts in Uganda, however, were magnified during the regime of Amin, as he attempted to Islamise the entire country.<sup>158</sup> In the process, he paved the way for the persecution and even execution of members of other religions.<sup>159</sup> When Amin's government was toppled, Muslims became targets for revenge by members of other religious groups, and significant numbers of Muslims were murdered, persecuted and oppressed.

In Mbarara district, for example, a participant revealed that *"When Amin was overthrown, the local people slashed the plantations of Muslims, destroyed their cattle and burnt their houses. Many Muslims were forced to flee away in fear of vengeance and some leaders and active participants during the persecution of the Muslims were imprisoned for a long period of time in Luzira."*<sup>160</sup>

Past religious conflicts and ideologies remain significant in explaining the continuing violence between Christians and Muslims, making religion more of a dividing than uniting factor in Uganda.

## 21. The Bush War (Luwero Triangle) (1981-1986)

The 1980 elections, which were dominated by Obote's UPC and Paul Kawange Ssemogerere's Democratic Party, were widely denounced for malpractice and vote-rigging. Nonetheless, Milton Obote of the Uganda People's Congress (UPC) was declared the winner, prompting an outcry from opposition groups.<sup>161</sup> Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, although not a major contender, had run on the Uganda Patriotic Movement ticket. He refused to accept the new government<sup>162</sup> and responded to the UPC victory by initiating a rebellion against the new Obote

156 Research conducted in Bulambuli and Hoima Districts

157 Research conducted in Arua District

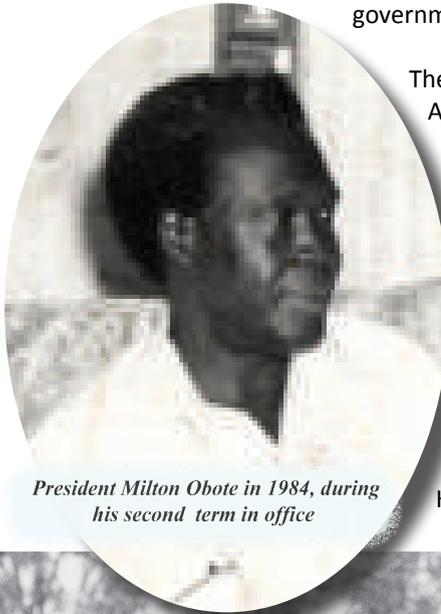
158 Phares, M. (1992) Uganda since independence, a story of unfulfilled hopes. Kampala, Fountain Publishers Ltd

159 Kasozi, A.B.K. et al. (1994) The social origins of violence in Uganda, 1964-1985. London, McGill-Queen's University Press

160 Research conducted in Mbarara District

161 Research conducted in Bulambuli, Soroti and Nakasongola Districts

162 Research conducted in Nakasongola District



*President Milton Obote in 1984, during his second term in office*

government.

The rebel group, first called the Popular Resistance Army, launched its first attack in Mubende District on 6 February 1981.<sup>163</sup> The subsequent Bush War took place primarily in the Luwero Triangle (the region between Kampala, Hoima and Masindi roads) in the central region, and then later expanded further into western Uganda.<sup>164</sup> The PRA later changed its name to the National Resistance Army when it joined forces with Yusuf Lule's Uganda Freedom Fighters. Other supporting rebel groups were also active during this period including the Uganda Freedom Movement led by Lutakome Kayira, the Federal Democratic Movement of



*NRA combatants during the bush war campaign against Obote's government*

163 *Ibid*

164 Federal Research Division, Library of Congress (1990) Uganda The Ten-Point-Program. Library of Congress Country Studies [Internet], Available from: <<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/ugtoc.html>> [Accessed 27 May 2014]



*NRA combatants look at the skulls of people killed during the Bush War*

Uganda (FEDEMU) led by George Nkwanga, Kakooza Mutale's Vumbula, and the West Nile Bank Front led by Moses Ali.<sup>165</sup> To counter these groups, General Tito Okello (who would later overthrow Obote himself) bolstered the Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA) with Sudanese soldiers from the *Anyanyas* rebel group.<sup>166</sup>

The Bush War had a number of direct and indirect impacts on people living in Uganda, both inside and outside the Luwero Triangle. In addition to mass displacement in the Luwero Triangle, the NRA rebellion and the Government's counter-insurgency measures (led by the UNLA) caused large-scale atrocities and insecurity across the country.<sup>167</sup>

Some participants noted that the conflict escalated already existing ethnic tensions between the north and the south of the country.<sup>168</sup> In Bulambuli, participants reported that because UNLA troops were redirected from their district to fight the NRA, raids by the Karimojong increased in the eastern region.<sup>169</sup> Participants in Tororo commented

165 Research conducted in Nakasongola, Luwero and Hoima Districts

166 Research conducted in Hoima District

167 Research conducted in Mubende, Tororo and Mbarara Districts

168 Research conducted in Gulu District

169 Research conducted in Bulambuli District

that people from their district who had been living in the Luwero Triangle were affected by violence both during and after the Bush War. After the NRA victory, they were stigmatised and targeted as Obote supporters and forced to flee.<sup>170</sup> These reports attest to the national scope of the instability caused by the Bush War. The conflict continued until January 1986, when the NRM seized Kampala under command of now President Yoweri Museveni. Obote had already been overthrown just half a year earlier by UNLA Brigadier Basilio Olara Okello and Tito Okello, chairman of the Military Council. Museveni had entered into the Nairobi Peace Talks with them to negotiate an end to the war.<sup>171</sup> These failed when Museveni's forces captured Kampala and took control of the Government in 1986. Though this brought an end to the Bush War, participants noted that it precipitated future insurgencies such as the Holy Spirit Movement and the Lord's Resistance Army.

**22. Overthrow of Milton Obote by Tito Okello Lutwa (1985)**

Milton Obote's second presidential administration, which began with a contested election in 1980, deteriorated due to both



*Gen. Tito Okello Lutwa (left) and his army commander Basilio Olara Okello (right) during their brief time in power in 1985*

external pressure from several rebel groups and internal divisions

170 Research conducted in Tororo District  
 171 Research conducted in Mukono District

## COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

within the army (the UNLA) and civilian circles.<sup>172</sup> In addition to his unpopularity in Parliament and the Buganda region, discontent within the army was most detrimental.<sup>173</sup>

Accused of tribalism and poor management of the ongoing Bush War, Acholi officers withdrew their support.<sup>174</sup> This rift can be traced to the death of Langi General Oyite Ojok in a 1983 helicopter accident. With the Chief of Staff dead, a replacement needed to be selected and Obote eventually appointed a Langi, Major Opon-Acak, instead of the higher-ranking Basilio Okello (an Acholi).<sup>175</sup> This demonstration of tribalism mirrored Obote's increasing reliance on the Langi-dominated Special Force Units within the military structure.<sup>176</sup>

Aside from these internal divisions, Obote faced external pressure from the ongoing Bush War against the NRA and other insurgent groups such as the Uganda National Rescue Front (UNRF I), the Uganda Freedom Movement (UFM), and the Federal Democratic Movement (FEDEMU).<sup>177</sup>

Obote's order for the arrest of Brigadier Basilio Okello, an Acholi, triggered a military *coup* organised by another leading Acholi General, Tito Okello Lutwa.<sup>178</sup> This *coup*, during which Kampala was seized on 27 July 1985, although it was referred to by some as a peaceful 'Palace *Coup*',<sup>179,180</sup> nonetheless resulted in loss of life and property, according to participants.<sup>181</sup> Obote sought refuge in Zambia.<sup>182</sup>

The new military government, led by General Tito Okello Lutwa as head of a Military Council, soon initiated peace talks with the NRA in Nairobi. Some participants from the north referred to these as the 'Nairobi Peace Jokes'.<sup>183</sup> These talks eventually fell apart and Museveni's rebels ousted Okello from power in January 1986.

Participants' perceptions of the legacy of the Okello *coup* varied. Those in Arua positively acknowledged that Okello allowed West Nilers to return from exile in Zaire (now DRC) and Sudan. However, those in Pader noted that this event led to a rift in the military between the Langi and Acholi that persists to the present day.

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172 Research conducted in Soroti District

173 Research conducted in Adjumani District

174 Research conducted in Pader, Mbarara, Adjumani and Mukono Districts

175 Research conducted in Pader District; Tindigarukayo, J. (1988) Uganda, 1979-85: Leadership in transition. *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 26(4) p. 607-22.

176 Federal Research Division, Library of Congress (1990) *The Second Obote Regime: 1981-85. Library of Congress Country Studies* [Internet], Available from: <<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/ugtoc.html>> [Accessed 27 May 2014]

177 Research conducted in Adjumani and Mukono Districts

178 Research conducted in Hoima and Nakasongola Districts

179 Research conducted in Kitgum District

180 Phares, M. (1992) *Uganda since independence, a story of unfulfilled hopes*. Kampala, Fountain Publishers Ltd

181 Research conducted in Tororo District

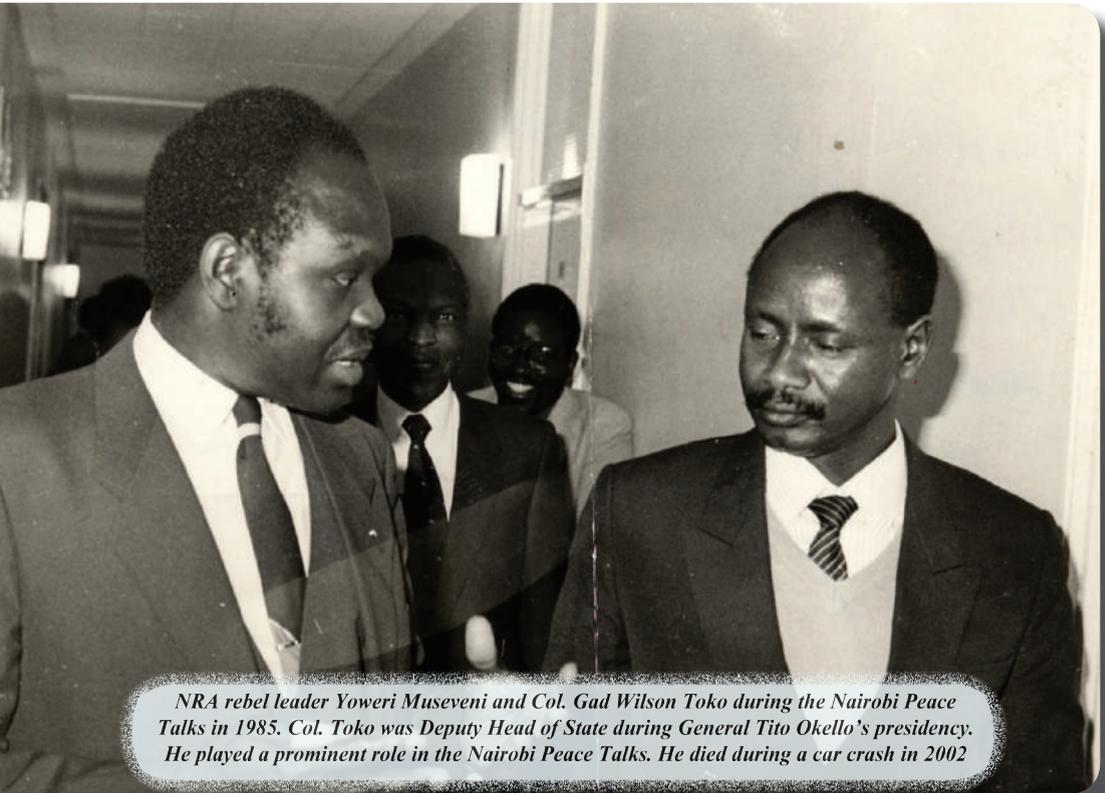
182 Federal Research Division, Library of Congress (1990) *The Second Obote Regime: 1981-85. Library of Congress Country Studies* [Internet], Available from: <<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/ugtoc.html>> [Accessed 27 May 2014]

183 Research conducted in Gulu District

### 23. National Resistance Army military takeover (1986)

The takeover of the Government by Museveni's National Resistance Army/Movement (NRA/M) in January 1986 signalled both the downfall of the Tito Okello Lutwa regime and the end to the Bush War that had begun in 1981. Though the NRA and the Government's Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA) had signed a peace agreement in Nairobi in December 1985, the terms were never implemented. NRA forces finally captured power on 25 or 26 January (see text box below), and Museveni was declared President three days later.<sup>184</sup>

Today, the officially recognised date on which the NRA took over power is January 26, 1986. However, it has been argued that, in fact, power was seized one day earlier, on January 25. In his book "Betrayed by my Leader," John Kazoora writes about the day on which the NRA captured Kampala: "The NRM regime has since that day tried hard to hide the fact that the day they captured power was on the 25<sup>th</sup> – the same day Idi Amin had led a bloody coup against Milton Obote's first presidency on January 25, 1971. They now insist Kampala was liberated on the 26<sup>th</sup>."<sup>4</sup>

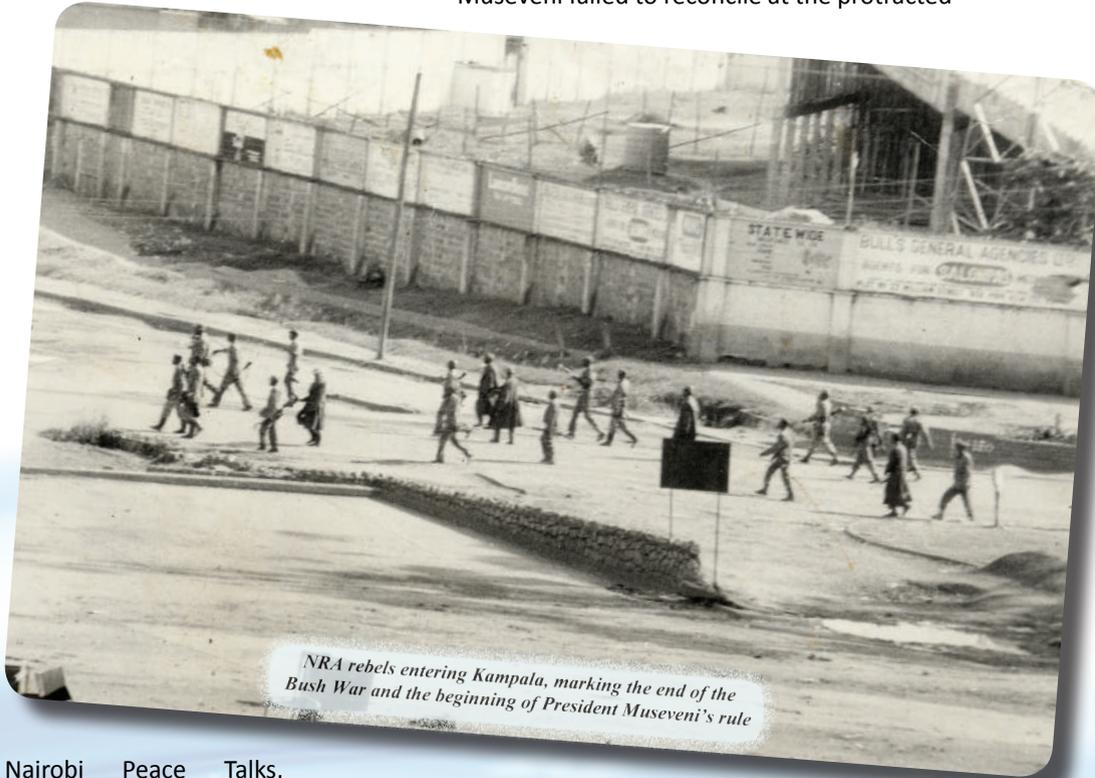


*NRA rebel leader Yoweri Museveni and Col. Gad Wilson Toko during the Nairobi Peace Talks in 1985. Col. Toko was Deputy Head of State during General Tito Okello's presidency. He played a prominent role in the Nairobi Peace Talks. He died during a car crash in 2002*

184 Research conducted in Gulu and Mubende Districts; Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. (1990) *The Return of Military Rule: 1985*. *Library of Congress Country Studies* [Internet], Available from: <<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/ugtoc.html>> [Accessed 27 May 2014]. .

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Though the NRA initially aimed to overthrow President Milton Obote, the insurgency continued after Obote's own generals staged a *coup*, installing Tito Okello as the chairman of a Military Council in 1985. When the forces led by Okello and those led by Museveni failed to reconcile at the protracted



Nairobi Peace Talks,

Museveni set the fragile Nairobi Peace Agreement aside in favour of a renewed military offensive. Especially in the northern districts, participants emphasised Museveni's loss of credibility resulting from this decision. After his victory, the NRA replaced the UNLA as the national army.

Participants from several districts emphasised the widespread instability that followed the NRA takeover, especially in the northern and eastern regions of the country. Many defeated UNLA soldiers fled to their homes in the Acholi and Langi districts and were then targeted by pursuing NRA forces, purportedly as revenge for atrocities committed by the UNLA in the Luwero Triangle during the Bush War. In response, the UNLA attempted to reorganize as the Uganda People's Democratic Army (UPDA), but were ultimately forced to retreat into Sudan or broke off into splinter groups throughout the North. Although many of the UPDA soldiers ultimately supported the Pece Peace Accord signed with the NRA on 3 June 1988, some opted to join other emerging insurgencies such as the Holy Spirit Movement (HSM) and later the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA).

In addition to the HSM and the LRA, rebel groups such as Force Obote Back Again (FOBA), the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) and the Uganda People's Army (UPA) also added

to the insecurity that characterised the country following the NRA's rise to power.<sup>185</sup> Participants in Bulambuli emphasised that atrocities committed by ill-disciplined NRA forces during this period also led to more loss of life and property, for which citizens are still demanding apologies and compensation.<sup>186</sup>

## PHASE VI: Museveni's No-Party System Regime (1986 – 2006)

*A new phase started for Uganda with the coming to power of the current regime, with promises of democracy, economic development and a new constitution. Even though peace seemed to have arrived in the capital, new insurgencies were born in the peripheries. Amidst reforms in the army and new policies such as decentralization and no-party politics, disparity in development between the north and south of the country deepened. Rather than allowing a break from the past, it has been said that, with the new regime, conflict and lack of national unity continued, albeit with a different face.*

### 24. Disparity between the North and South in Development (1986 - present)

The deep-rooted regional divide in Uganda between the northern and the southern regions of the country, which was created by the British Colonial Government in the name of administrative efficiency, continues to vividly manifest in different forms, thereby impeding national unity, equitable development and sustainable peace. Post-Independence leaders concentrated powers and resources in the hands of specific groups according to the leader's region of origin. This engineering of regional exclusion, inequality and imbalance in the country, as seen during the Apollo Milton Obote and Idi Amin regimes, bred anti-northern sentiments in southern Uganda.<sup>187</sup>

Participants across the country discussed the process by which President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni's administration has concentrated powers, authority and resources in western Uganda and marginalised people from the north and people from the east, thus perpetuating unequal development and deep-seated ethnic hatred. Participants suggest that if the North-South divide is not addressed and if there is no regime change soon, the ethnic communities in western Uganda associated with the incumbent President Museveni might suffer terrible reprisals for the current maltreatment of other regions.<sup>188</sup>

### 25. Increased poverty (1986 – present)

In all districts visited, participants indicated that the National Resistance Army (NRA)

185 Research conducted in Adjumani, Gulu, Bulambuli and Soroti Districts

186 Research conducted in Bulambuli District

187 Refugee Law Project (2004) Working paper no. 11: Behind the violence: Causes, consequences and the quest for justice

188 This came from all the districts visited. The participants from Mbarara District expressed their current fears of revenge and mistreatment after Museveni's regimes ends, and a significant number of participants from other districts expressed sympathy to many innocent people from western Uganda who might in future pay for the sins and crimes perpetrated by the incumbent Government.

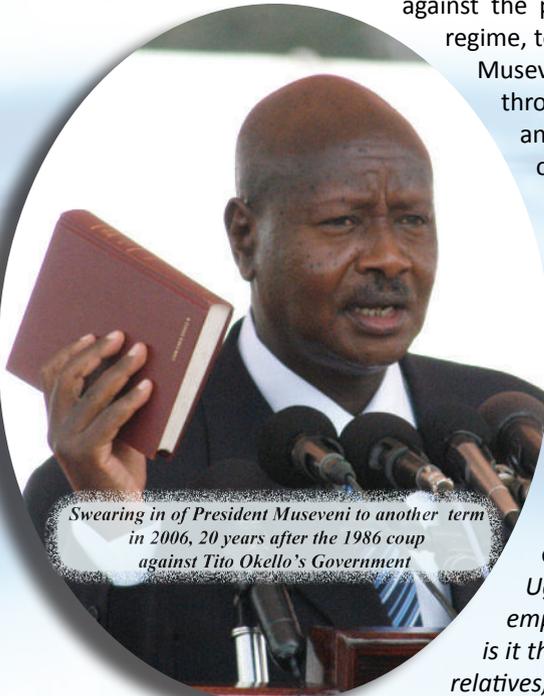
*coup* in 1986, in their view, was followed by huge nationwide impoverishment. They stated that the NRA war and subsequent rebellions had dramatic impacts on economic activities, productivity, and livelihood, and resulted in the destruction of some of the major pillars of production (labour, entrepreneurs, capital and land). In addition, the insecurity caused by the various rebellions hampered productivity and social fabric and resulted in nationwide poverty. Furthermore, the current high level of corruption, especially at the top levels of government, was said to be one of the major impediments to service delivery in the country that further led to poverty. In Mbarara District, participants indicated that poverty has driven women to obtain microfinance loans without consulting their husbands. Many have failed to pay back the loans and have been imprisoned. In Nakasongola and Mukono districts, it was said that many people turned to witchcraft for commercial business ends, thereby causing conflicts in the community.<sup>189</sup> In northern Uganda, people frequently resorted to begging and blamed their impoverishment on the Government and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). Youth throughout the visited districts were said to be engaged in illegal enterprises, including theft, armed robbery, violence, supporting strikes, smuggling and engaging in the black market. Others were said to have resorted to drug and alcohol abuse as ways of coping with poverty and unemployment.<sup>190</sup>

## 26. Museveni's "Cold War" (1986 – present)

According to participants, there is an ongoing 'Cold War' against the people of Uganda by the current regime, termed as '*Museveni's Cold War*.'<sup>191</sup>

Museveni, they say, is fighting this war through tactics of political domination and by extending unequal education opportunities, coupled with poor education systems, economic deprivation and inequality.

The amendment of the 1995 Constitution to lift term limits was referred to as a tool of domination, and the ethnic composition of Parliament and the Cabinet is seen as evidence that Uganda is progressively becoming a tribalist entity. One respondent asked, "*Is Uganda a project for Banyankole empowerment?*"<sup>192</sup> She added, "*Why is it that all ministers who matter are his relatives, friends and in-laws, while the rest*



*Swearing in of President Museveni to another term in 2006, 20 years after the 1986 coup against Tito Okello's Government*

189 Research conducted in Nakasongola and Mukono Districts

190 Research conducted in Mukono and Mbarara Districts

191 Research conducted in Arua District

192 Ibid

*are just there to take instruction?"*

Participants alleged that Museveni's Government sold off all Ugandan-owned assets to the President's family and foreign financiers.<sup>193</sup> The youth pointed out that people hailing from western Uganda have a decent opportunity to gain employment and lead happy lives, while people from the other parts of the country languish in poverty.<sup>194</sup> They added that Uganda's business infrastructure and investments can be found predominantly in the western side of Uganda. A female participant from West Nile (Arua) commented that, *"All we have here are so-called reconstruction efforts; building health centres without doctors and medicines. It is better to get treated under a mango tree than to die in a hospital bed without a doctor and no medicine."*<sup>195</sup>

The unarmed conflicts highlighted during the NRTJ Audit are reportedly manifestations of poor governance that breed national inequality based on ethnicity. Such societal divisions could prove disastrous to national unity, harmonious co-existence and sustainable peace in the country, and create a high potential for anarchy and violent internal conflicts in Uganda.

## **27. Conflict related to decentralisation (1995-present)**

The advent of the decentralisation policy in Uganda, which was justified by technocrats on the basis that it was intended to take services closer to the people, subsequently contributed to conflicts over leadership, ethnicity and employment in many communities across the country.

Participants from Bunyoro Sub-Region cited daunting conflict between the Banyoro and Bagungu tribes over unequal representation in district leadership positions and related discrimination in access to employment opportunities. Similar grievances between Batooro and Bakiga in Kibaale District have also led to violence.<sup>196</sup> Tension is also present between the Babuya and Batikane in the Bagisu region and in many other cosmopolitan communities in Uganda. In eastern Uganda there is a political conflict between the Jopadhola and Iteso over district leadership and jobs.

The desire to split Tororo District in two is primarily fuelled by Jopadhola domination over the position of the Local Council Five (LCV) and over access to employment, given that they are the majority in the district.<sup>197</sup> The minority, the Iteso, are keen to split Tororo District so that they can constitute a majority in the newly created district and more easily access leadership positions and other jobs as a result.<sup>198</sup> These conflicts have all greatly affected development and harmonious co-existence. If not properly addressed, they have the potential to spark future ethnic violence and contribute to prolonged disunity. Unsurprisingly, affected communities are eager for the creation of their own districts to solve the perceived problems of marginalisation, unaware that this

193 Ibid

194 Ibid

195 Ibid

196 Research conducted in Tororo and Hoima Districts

197 Research conducted in Tororo District

198 Ibid



could itself lead to spiralling tensions.

**28. The Allied Democratic Forces insurgency (1996 - present) and war fought by the Uganda People’s Defence Forces in DRC (1998 -2003)**

Across the country, the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) insurgency was identified as a national level conflict, as the rebel group targets the central Government and has been held responsible for bomb blasts in Uganda’s capital city.<sup>199</sup> To many participants, it was not clear who constitutes the ADF’s membership or why they have been fighting. More information on the motivation, composition and impacts of the rebel group is provided under ‘western level conflicts’ later in this compendium.

The ADF was able to cross Uganda’s border into DRC in search of a safe haven, and

<sup>199</sup> Tripp, A. (2010) Museveni’s Uganda: paradoxes of power in a hybrid regime. Boulder, Colorado, Lynne Rienner Publishers

by mid-1998 the Ugandan Government had troops present in Northeast DRC, claiming that these were there to prevent attacks from the ADF.<sup>200</sup> Uganda remained in DRC from 1998 to 2003. The International Court of Justice later ruled that the presence of the Uganda People’s Defence Forces (UPDF) amounted to a violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the DRC and that Ugandan forces committed “*human rights violations and grave breaches*” of international humanitarian law.<sup>201</sup>

**PHASE VII: Return to Multi-Party System, Restoration of Kingdoms (2005 – present)**

*2005 and 2006 marked important changes for Uganda. Term-limits were lifted in 2005 so that President Museveni could be elected to a third term in 2006, which brought him increasing criticism. Further, the no-party system was abolished, paving the way for multi-party elections. Relative peace returned to northern Uganda in 2006, introduced by the Juba Peace Talks. In recent years, discontent with the regime seems to have grown, with increasing levels of poverty and political protests and riots that are met by violent Government crackdowns.*

**29. Conflict between political parties (especially NRM and FDC) (2005 – present)**



*The Walk-to-Work Campaign saw the tension between the NRM and FDC and other opposition parties climax*

200 Amnesty International (3 September 1998) Democratic Republic of Congo: A Long- standing Crisis Spinning out of Control (AI Index: AFR 61/33/98)

201 Armed Activities on the Territory of the Congo (Dem. Rep. Congo v. Uganda) (2005) International Court of Justice [Internet], Available from: <<http://www.icj-cij.org/docket/index.php?p1=3&p2=3&k=51&case=116&>> [Accessed 27 May 2014]

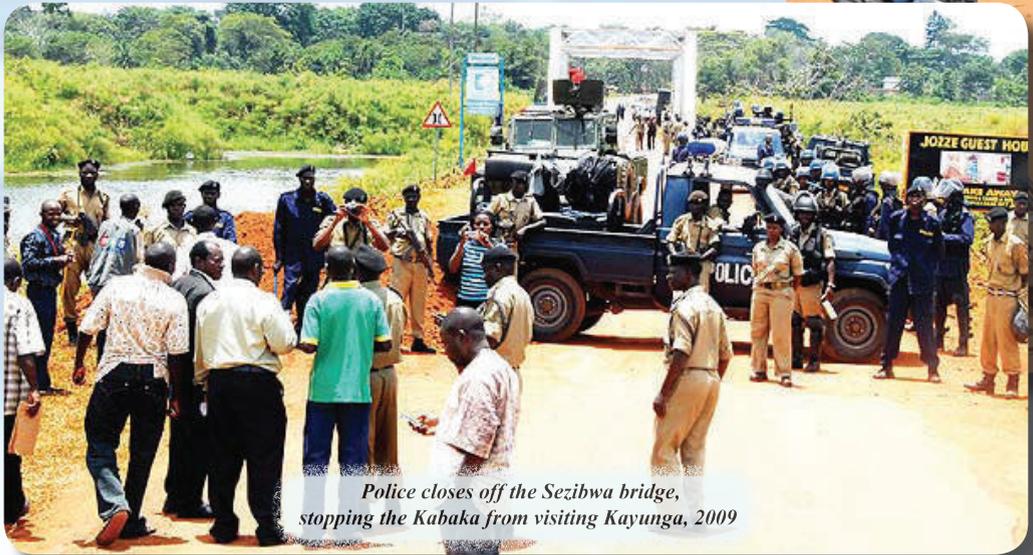
## COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

The opening up of political space in Uganda as a result of the 2005 Referendum led to the emergence of numerous political parties and multiple divisions based on party affiliation. The daunting conflict between the leaders and supporters of the National Resistance Movement (NRM) and the Forum for Democratic Change (FDC), two rival political parties, has been manifested openly in verbal and physical confrontations, inciting their followers to resistance and violence. Further, many accusations have been made, for instance, that FDC leader Kizza Besigye was linked to People's Redemption Army rebel group (for more information, see "western level conflicts") and that the NRM framed rebel groups to implicate some members of the opposition.<sup>202</sup>

Participants from all the districts described ongoing conflict between political parties as one of the major causes of the lack of peace and equitable development in Uganda. They warned that if this conflict is not addressed, it is most likely to drag the country into national anarchy, given the fact that it has caused antagonism in all the communities and sectors in Uganda. Participants wondered why this conflict always intensifies during campaign and election periods, and then continues in different forms,<sup>203</sup> especially during processes of resource allocation and distributions, appointments, promotions and demotions in public offices, and service delivery throughout the country.

### 30. Buganda Riots (2009)

In September 2009, a Government decision to block Kabaka Ronald



*Police closes off the Sezibwa bridge, stopping the Kabaka from visiting Kayunga, 2009*

202 Research conducted in Mbarara District

203 *Ibid*

Mutebi II's planned visit to his own community in Kayunga, within the Buganda Kingdom, sparked mass protest and riots from the Baganda. Violent encounters in Kampala and other urban centres in Buganda between police and army and civilian rioters left over 40 people dead.<sup>204</sup>

**Participants**



*State institutions have been accused of the disproportionate use of force in quelling demonstrations*

from Buganda described these events as an attack on their Kingdom, which the Museveni Government claims to have revived after Obote's abolition of Kingdoms in 1967. Participants further asserted that the attack on their Kabaka was politically influenced because the Government used the Banyala, a so-called marginalised ethnic group in Kayunga, to break away from Buganda Kingdom and become independent.<sup>205</sup>

204 Sserunjogi, E.M. (2011) Two years after Buganda Riots. The Independent [Internet], 10 September. Available from: <<http://www.independent.co.ug/News/news-analysis/4595-two-years-after-buganda-riots>> [Accessed 5 September 2012]

205 Research conducted in Mubende and Mukono Districts

Indeed, a participant in Mubende District commented that

*“Prior to Kabaka’s plan to visit Kayunga, President Museveni had recognized Banyala and made one of them [a member of NRM] as a political attempt to split the Banyala from Buganda Kingdom, with which they have been paying strong allegiance to for decades and decades.”<sup>206</sup>*

Participants from Buganda viewed this exchange as a war waged by the Government on Buganda, which urgently needs to be addressed if the Government and the Buganda Kingdom are to reconcile.

### **31. Mabira Riots (2007-2010)**

This conflict was the result of a mass protest against an attempt by the Government to give one-third of Mabira Forest (around 70 square km located in Mukono District between Kampala and Jinja), a protected forest reservation (Mabira Forest Reserve) to Mehta Group (Sugar Corporation of Uganda Limited) for sugar cane cultivation. The plan to give away the forest, and the deforestation that would result, were widely opposed by the Kabaka of Buganda who offered alternative land, and by environmentalists who feared the loss of large numbers of endangered species, increased soil erosion, damaged local livelihoods, negative impacts on water balance and regional climate change.<sup>207</sup> The struggle compelled activists to organise the ‘Save Mabira’ crusade. Accompanying demonstrations later turned violent when the police and military operatives clashed with protestors,<sup>208</sup> an altercation that claimed numerous lives. Participants viewed this widely supported riot as a practical strategy that successfully stopped the sale of Mabira land.

### **32. Border conflict between Uganda and South Sudan (2009 – present)**

Tensions around the border between Uganda and the new state of South Sudan play out primarily in the border areas in Yumbe, Moyo and Adjumani Districts, and Lokung and Madi Opei Sub-Counties in Lamwo District. These tensions have escalated since South Sudan seceded from Sudan in 2011. At some points along the border, boundaries are unclear or disputed. South Sudanese authorities claim that Uganda does not respect historical boundaries. This has resulted in tension and violence between South Sudanese and Ugandan communities, particularly between the Madi tribe in Moyo and Adjumani Districts (on the Ugandan side) and the Kuku tribe of South Sudan. People and livestock have been killed, and gardens and property have been destroyed. Early in 2012, local authorities in Kajo-Keji County in South Sudan’s Central Equatoria state accused Ugandan authorities (particularly in the West Nile region) of encouraging Madi farmers to encroach on South Sudanese land.<sup>209</sup> Six Ugandan legislators and members of the Presidential and Foreign Affairs Committee were arrested by South Sudanese authorities,

<sup>206</sup> Research conducted in Mubende District

<sup>207</sup> Research conducted in Hoima and Mukono Districts

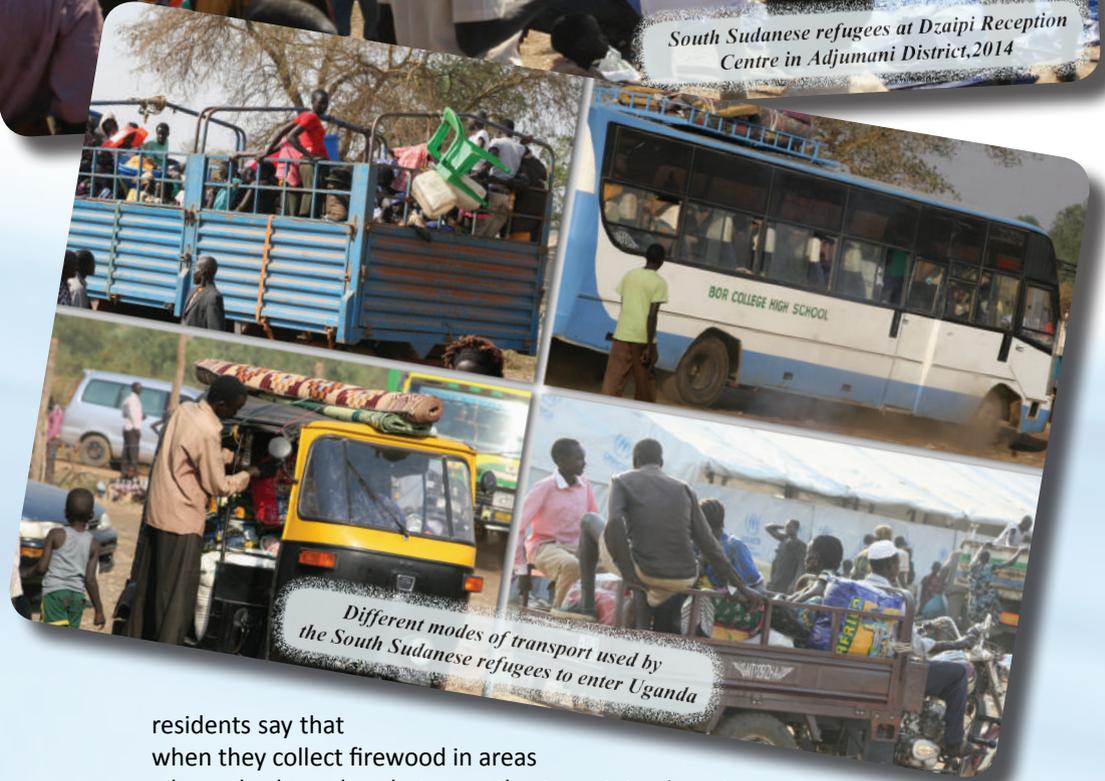
<sup>208</sup> Tripp, A. (2010) *Museveni’s Uganda: paradoxes of power in a hybrid regime*. Boulder, Colorado, Lynne Rienner Publishers

<sup>209</sup> Commissioner of Kajo-Keji County of South Sudan

who claimed that they had provoked South Sudan by entering its territory without any legal documents.<sup>210</sup> In Yumbe District,



*South Sudanese refugees at Dzaipi Reception Centre in Adjumani District, 2014*



*Different modes of transport used by the South Sudanese refugees to enter Uganda*

residents say that when they collect firewood in areas where the boundary between the two states is not

210 Odyek, J. and Namutebi, J. (2012) MPs narrate Sudan detention ordeal, New Vision [Internet] 10 March. Available from: <<http://www.newvision.co.ug/mobile/Detail.aspx?NewsID=629531&CatID=1>>

clearly marked, they are often arrested by the South Sudan Forestry Authorities claiming that the Ugandans have encroached on protected South Sudanese forests. Participants also said that the area acts as a conduit for small arms. Over the last few years, violence within South Sudan has forced South Sudanese to flee and cross into Uganda. Their influx puts pressure on host communities in Adjumani district and has caused clashes between the Madi and Acholi from Uganda and the Dinkas from South Sudan.<sup>211</sup> Some parts of Kitgum District, such as Yoke, Afuke and Ngom Oromo in Pawoo parish in Lukungu Sub-County were claimed by South Sudan in 2011.<sup>212</sup> Residents of Lukungu Sub-County claimed that the South Sudan Authorities had placed a signpost in Aweno Olwii at Tenten, located one kilometer inside the Uganda territorial borders, heightening tensions. Claims are also made that both UPDF and Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) elites have been involved in land grabbing, as well as unauthorized logging and farming on both sides of the border during the LRA insurgency.<sup>213</sup>

### 33. Kampala al-Shabaab Bomb Blasts (2010)

The terrorist bombing in Kampala by al-Shabaab, a Somali militant organisation, remains a horrific memory for Ugandans. Participants described the attack, which occurred on 11 July 2010 on the eve of the 2010 World Cup Final, as a turning point that marked the beginning of



*Aftermath of the Al-Shabaab attacks in 2010 at the Ethiopian Village in Kabalagala, Kampala*

collective national fears about external attacks.

The first explosion took place at an Ethiopian restaurant at 10:25 pm, killing 15 people; approximately 15 minutes later, twin blasts at Kyandondo Rugby Club killed over 49

211 Focus Group Discussion in Dzaipi, Adjumani, during a Rapid Assessment of the South Sudan Influx in West Nile, June 2012, conducted by Refugee Law Project

212 Research conducted in Kitgum

213 More recently, on 15 September 2014, thousands of Moyo residents took to the streets to protest the arrest and humiliation of their leaders by South Sudanese soldiers. See NTV news, 15 September 2014

people and injured at least 67. The total death toll eventually rose to 74 people.<sup>214</sup> This terrorist attack left Ugandans in mass mourning and was viewed as a threat to peace and security nationwide.<sup>215</sup> The majority of participants blamed the Government for sending peacekeepers to Somalia, arguing that this prompted al-Shabaab to take revenge on innocent Ugandans. A participant in Soroti District commented,

*“The presence of Ugandan soldiers in foreign countries like Somalia justifies lack of peace in Uganda as this would continue to sour our relationship with these countries; hence terror attacks and aggressions are likely to continue.”<sup>216</sup>*

Since the blasts, Ugandan police have sounded numerous terror alert warnings, signifying a state of vulnerability to future terrorist attacks in the country.

### 34. Economic crisis (2010 – present)



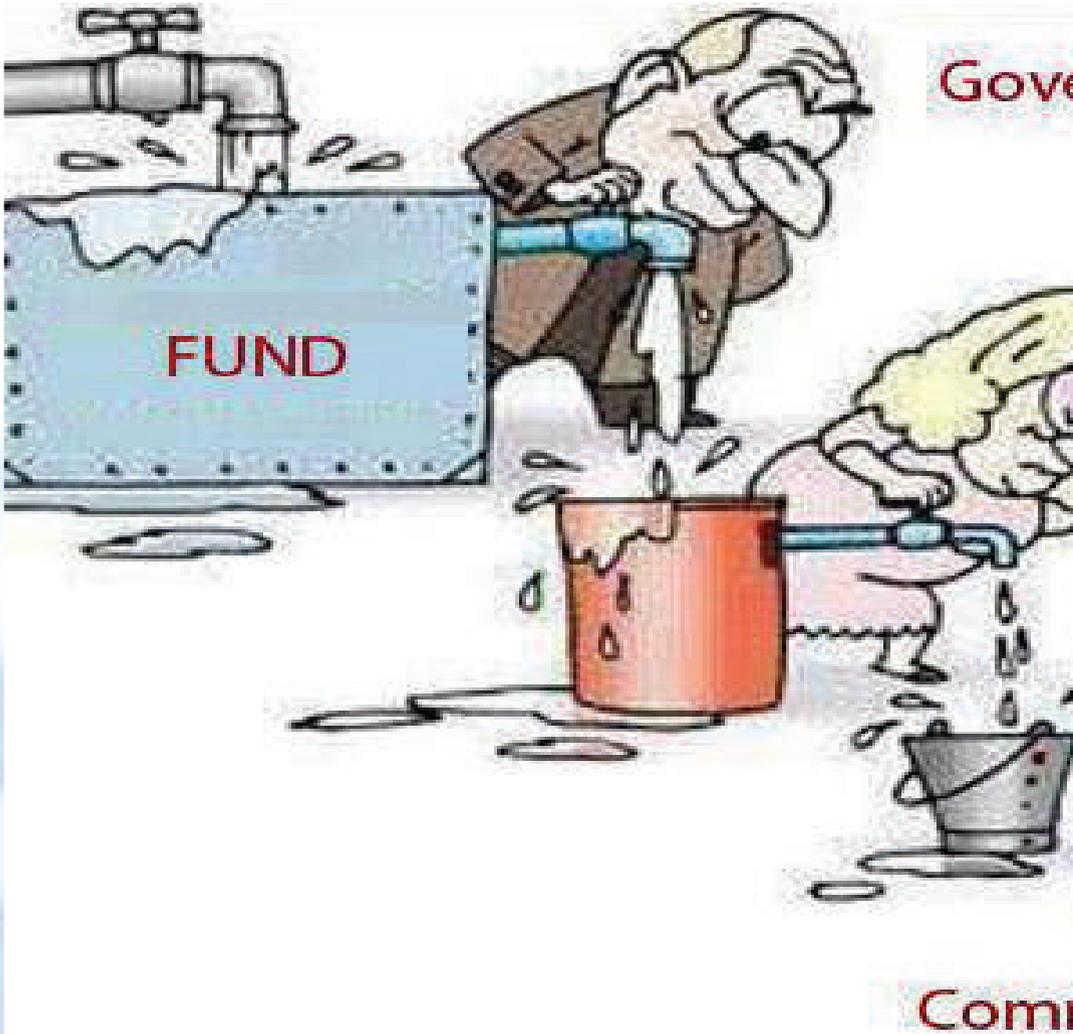
214 Gibson, H. (2010) Kampala World Cup bombing: Al-Shabaab strike outside Somalia for the first time. Consultancy Africa Intelligence [Internet], 2 August. Available from: <[http://www.consultancyafrica.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=492:kampala-world-cup-bombings-al-shabaab-strike-outside-somalia-for-the-first-time&catid=60:conflict-terrorism-discussion-papers&Itemid=265](http://www.consultancyafrica.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=492:kampala-world-cup-bombings-al-shabaab-strike-outside-somalia-for-the-first-time&catid=60:conflict-terrorism-discussion-papers&Itemid=265)> [Accessed 7 September 2012]

215 Fisher, M. (2012) Why al-Shabaab would attack in Uganda. The Atlantic [Internet] 12 July. Available from: <<http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2010/07/why-al-shabaab-would-attack-in-uganda/59551/>> [Accessed 6 September 2012]

216 Research conducted in Soroti District

COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

Uganda's current economic instability characterised by sky rocketing inflation and fluctuating commodity prices has greatly affected citizens. It was qualified as a 'conflict' because of the destabilizing and detrimental impact the crisis has on society and people's



lives. In 2011, the unfavourable economic conditions provoked 'Walk to Work' protests to compel the Government to take positive remedial and transformative action to save the economy.<sup>217</sup> In the process of demanding positive economic reforms in the economy,

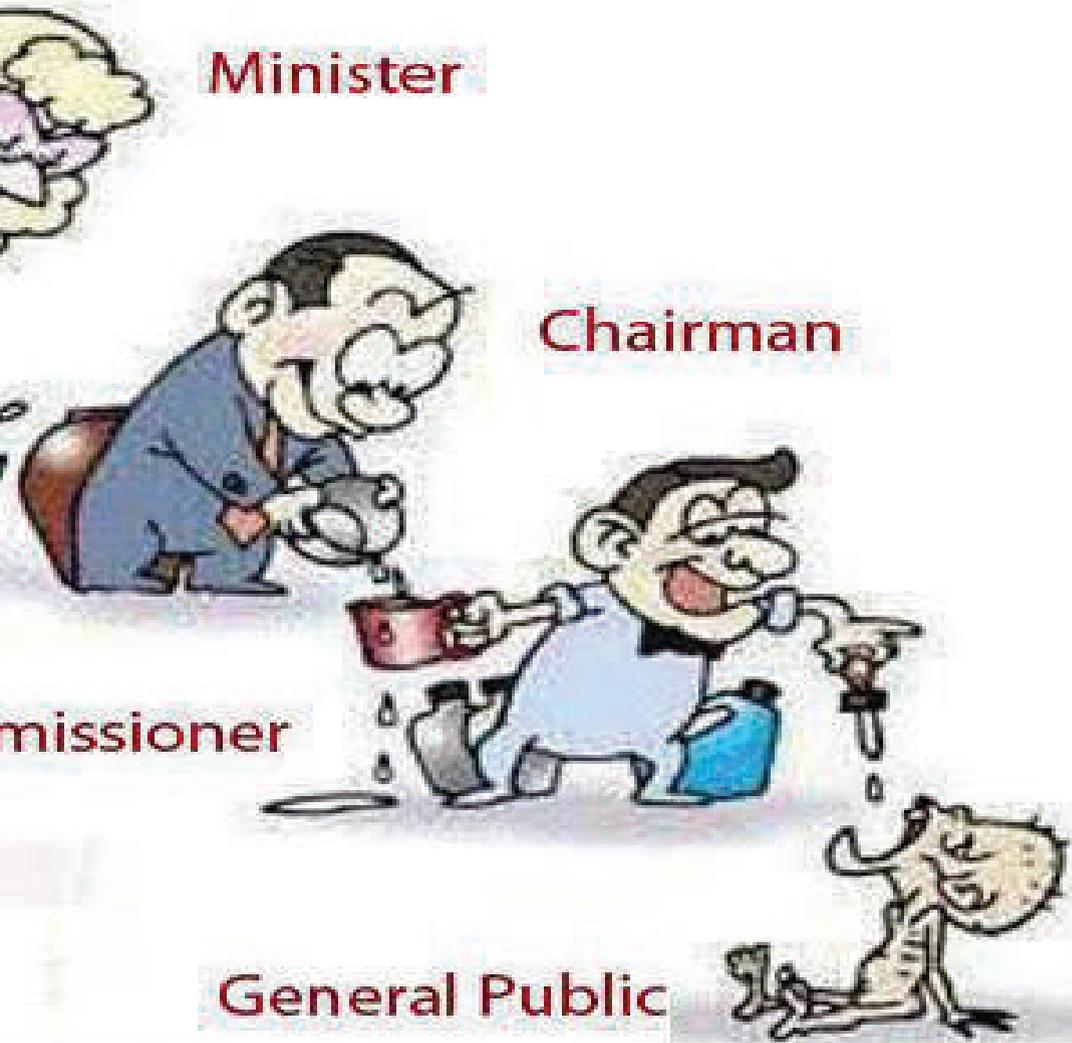
**Government**

**Minister**

**Chairman**

**Commissioner**

**General Public**



217 Research conducted in Soroti District

many of the protestors, led by Dr. Kizza Besigye, turned to violent tactics that caused mass insecurity in affected towns and the loss of lives and properties.<sup>218</sup> Participants in all the districts involved in the NRTJ Audit confirmed that Uganda is not at peace in economic terms, due to increasing inflation that affects individuals, families and the entire country.

### **35. Conflicts between investors and local communities (ongoing)**

Around the country, participants highlighted conflicts between investors and communities. In Tororo, for example, there are several land conflicts between investors and the local communities. There are efforts by Madhvani Group of Companies (one of the largest Indian-owned companies in Uganda), with the support of Government, to push people off a 26 sqkm piece of land in Osukuru Sub-County and Rubongi Sub-County, allegedly in order to allow for phosphate exploitation. Participants became especially distressed and angry during a discussion of Madhvani's alleged attempts to appropriate people's land. One participant said,

*“You see, land, is something that is very precious to us in Bukedi region, or particularly Tororo. If you lose a piece of land you are the poorest, because all of our dependency is on land.”<sup>219</sup>*

Madhvani was accused of trying to connive with a few district leaders to strong-arm people into selling their land. The area's Member of Parliament advised people to lease their land, but not sell it.

Other companies such as Tororo Cement Industries (TCI) were also blamed for conflicts in the region. Participants claimed that big companies, including TCI, use the land in Tororo and pollute the area at the expense of the local community. One participant stated; “All the good jobs are all taken by Indians and Kenyans.” Participants also regretted that the big companies are not accessible for dialogue. Tororo Cement Industries pays unskilled labourers 4000 shillings [less than US\$2.00] per day without food and water, yet they work for over eight hours. Participants said that the work conditions are terrible, as labourers do not receive protective gear or appointment letters.<sup>220</sup>

In Nakasongola, absentee landlords reportedly sold land to private investors who subsequently evicted tenants with no compensation or resettlement assistance. Government officials have also been implicated in buying up land from absentee landlords and engaging in forceful evictions.<sup>221</sup> In Mukono, violent clashes erupted between local communities and the police when they demonstrated against the selling of Mabira Forest to Mehta group, a sugar cane corporation.<sup>222</sup>

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218 Research conducted in Hoima and Bulambuli Districts

219 Research conducted in Tororo District

220 Ibid

221 Research conducted in Nakasongola District

222 Research conducted in Hoima and Mukono Districts

### 36. Theft and robbery (Ongoing)

Participants revealed that theft and robbery are among the major causes of insecurity in Uganda, especially in urban centres and communities affected by armed conflicts. The rise of these unlawful acts in the country has largely been attributed to the alarming poverty that forces individuals, especially youth, to engage in armed robbery, theft and other illegal enterprises. This problem is manifested differently in each district, and local communities have different ways of referring to the perpetrators.

In conflict-affected communities such as northern and eastern Uganda, participants explained that various factors have prompted some youth to illegally acquire guns for robbery, and in some cases to disguise themselves as rebels. These include processes of militarisation that occurred during past conflicts, the unsuccessful disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) process of former fighters, porous state borders, and continuing hardships after conflicts. The robbers in northern Uganda were referred to as *boo kec*, which means 'greens are bitter'; in other words, 'we want to eat meat'.<sup>223</sup> In Mukono, armed robbers are termed '*abe miitalibwa*', which means 'iron bar hit men' for the weapon they use in assaulting people. Participants said that Government does not care about these gangs, as long as they do not threaten their regime.<sup>224</sup>

One participant in Mbarara District revealed that,

*"For us we don't have rebels like Joseph Kony in Gulu; we have our own rebels who rob, kill, rape, loot us. They are very deadly, and I don't know where they get their guns from. These rebels are thieves and thugs that must be dealt with if we don't want another Kony to be formed here in the district, because they are rampant and are getting organised."*<sup>225</sup>

### 37. Conflict between Government forces and unarmed civilians (2011 – present)

Participants revealed that, despite the fact that the incumbent Government claims credit for the restoration of rule of law and democracy, Government military operatives have perpetrated violence against the civilian population on several occasions, especially during and after recent elections.<sup>226</sup> Immediately after the 2011 national elections, for example, participants nationwide recounted processes by which popular dissatisfaction with the Government led to the formation of pressure groups such as 'Walk to Work' protesters.<sup>227</sup> *Activist For Change* organised public rallies and held press conferences to discuss national grievances and the need for political and economic reforms.

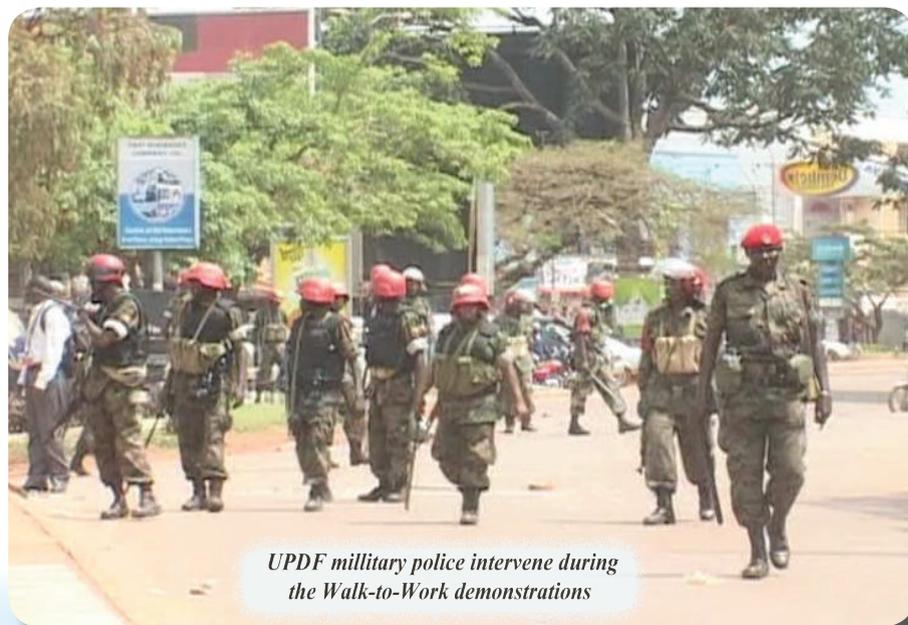
223 Research conducted in Gulu District

224 Research conducted in Mukono District

225 Research conducted in Mbarara District

226 Human Rights Watch (2012) World report 2012: Uganda country report. [Internet], January. Available from: <<http://www.hrw.org/world-report-2012/world-report-2012-uganda>> [Accessed 5 September 2012]

227 Research conducted in Hoima District



*UPDF military police intervene during the Walk-to-Work demonstrations*

As a result, the police and national army (UPDF) were involved in brutality against innocent demonstrators, including the use of expired tear gas creating health risks, arbitrary arrests and other human rights violations.<sup>228</sup> This sparked more angry reactions from civilian protestors who fought the police, and in one encounter in Kampala, John Ariong, the Assistant Inspector of Police, was killed.

### **38. Resource based conflicts with neighbouring countries (Ongoing)**

Uganda is a landlocked country endowed with natural resources such as forests, rivers, lakes and minerals, and some of these resources extend past its borders into neighbouring countries. Thus, competition over access to resources has caused conflicts between Uganda and neighbouring countries such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), South Sudan, Sudan, and Kenya.

For example, conflicts between Uganda and Kenya over fishing rights near Migingo Island in Lake Victoria remain unresolved today. A conflict over oil exists between Uganda and the DRC in the Lake Albert/Bunyoro border area. Such resource-based conflicts with neighbouring countries pose a threat to regional integration, peace and security.<sup>229</sup>

228 Human Rights Network-Uganda. (2011) CSO letter on the handling of the Walk to Work campaign and demonstrators. [Internet], Available from: <<http://hurinet.blogspot.com/2011/05/cso-letter-on-handling-of-walk-to-work.html>> [Accessed 10 July, 2014]

229 Research conducted in Hoima and Mukono Districts

# CHAPTER

## NORTHERN REGION CONFLICTS

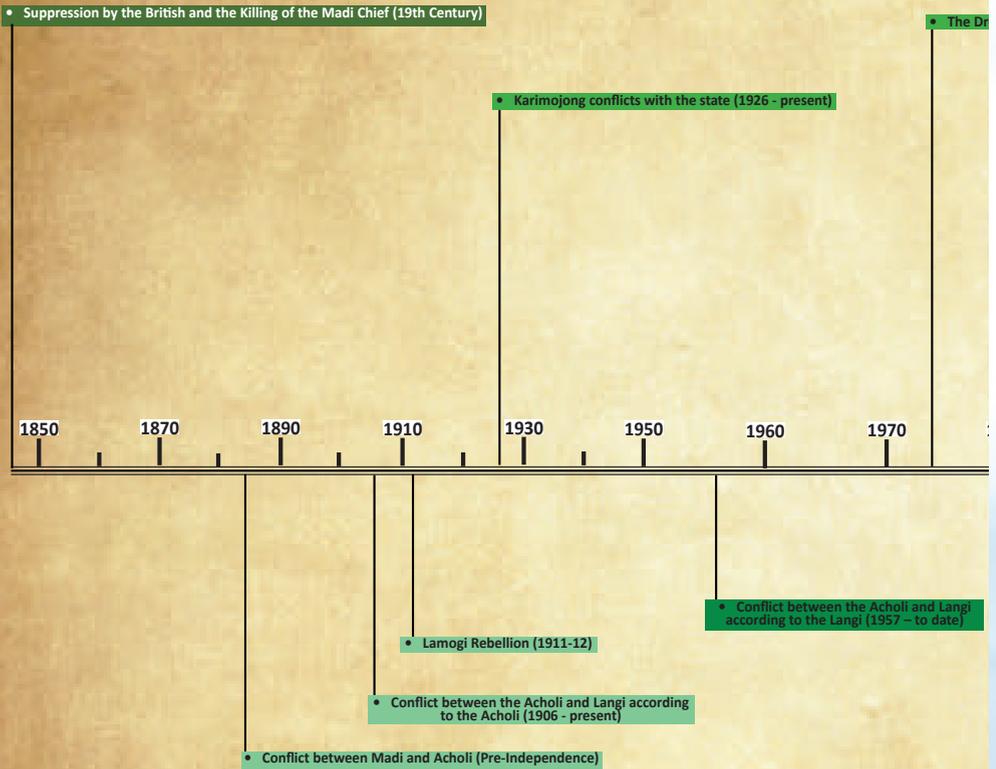
# FOUR



Karuma Bridge



# NORTHERN REGION C



## KEY

### SUB REGIONS

- West Nile Sub-region
- Karamoja Sub-region
- Acholi Sub-region
- Lango Sub-region

# CONFLICT TIMELINE



555 Code Conflict (Amin vs. Karimojong) (1972)

- Post-Amin Land Conflicts in the West Nile Region (1980 – present)
- The Amin Onzi War (1980- 1982)

- NRA/UPDF vs Karimojong conflict (1986 - present)
- The Uganda People's Democratic Movement/Army (July 1986 - June 1988)
- Cel-ibong splinter group insurgency (1986 - 1988)
- Agoyo Ayaro Splinter Group Insurgency (1986 - 1988)
- The post-1986 northern conflict in Lango

• The 'Big Man in the Forest' conflict (2009 – to date)

• Karimojong/NRA raids (1989 - to date)

• Opon-Acak's alleged rebellion (1999)

• Conflict with the state over lack of electricity (On-going)

1980                      1990                      1995                      2000                      2005                      2010                      2015                      2020

• The West Nile Bank Front (1995 – 1998)

• Boo Kec attacks on the community (1988 – mid-nineties)

• Pigi-Ligi War (1988 to date)

• The Lord's Resistance Army (1987 - present)

• The Opio and Ocen Insurgency (1987 - 1988)

• Jo Pa Won or Holy Spirit Movement II (1987- 1989)

• Holy Spirit Mobile Forces (1986 – 1987)

• The 'Trinity Wars' (1986 – to date)

• Cilil splinter group insurgency (1986 - 1988)

• NRA/UPDF war against citizens in the North (1986 - 2006)

• Conflict between Congolese and West Nilers over arbitrary fees (on-going)

• Post-conflict conflicts in Lango (2006 – to date)

• Post-conflict robberies in Acholiland Communities (2006 - present)

• Post-conflict land conflicts in Acholiland (2006 - present)

• Post-conflict Domestic Conflicts (2006 – present)

• Wildlife versus surrounding communities in Nwoya District, Northern Uganda (2006 - present)

• Uganda National Rescue Front I (1980-1985)

• The Yerego War (1980)

• The Oyoro Boys (1979 – 1980)

# West Nile sub region



*Map of Uganda showing districts in West Nile sub-region*

## WEST NILE

### The Coming of Colonial Masters and Missionaries Collaboration, Resistance and Conflict

*In this section on northern region conflicts, we visit each sub-region and look at them in three phases: pre-Independence, post-Independence and recent times, starting with the colonial time in the West Nile region.*

#### 39. Suppression by the British and the Killing of the Madi Chief (19<sup>th</sup> Century)

In the quest to weaken the tradition of West Nile and consolidate British colonial administration in the sub-region, the British attacked the Madi cultural institution with the arrest and disappearance of Chief Aliko. Today, Chief Aliko is still regarded as the Paramount Chief by some participants from Adjumani.<sup>230</sup> Participants emphasised that, prior to the abolition of Kingdoms by Milton Obote in 1967, this act of violence by the British was one of the most significant attacks on peace, stability and tradition in West Nile. It is widely believed by participants that the illegal arrest and disappearance of Chief Aliko by the British marked the final disintegration and collapse of the Madi cultural institution.

To date, the people of West Nile continue to demand a truth telling exercise pertaining to the arrest and disappearance of Aliko as well as an apology and compensation from the British Government.<sup>231</sup> The participants blamed the British more than Obote for attacking and weakening their traditional institutions and leadership, though currently, efforts are being made for its revival. One female participant said;

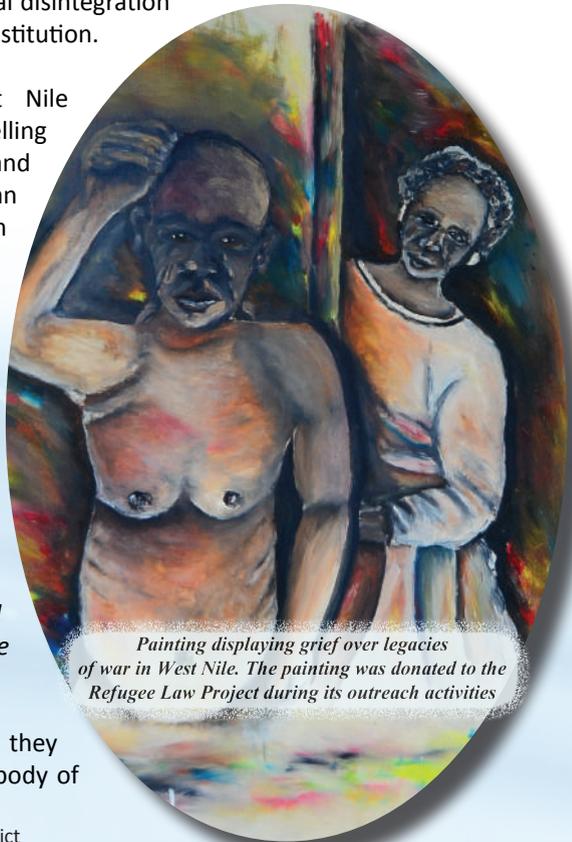
*“The whites killed our traditional chief who did not pass on traditional leadership/power to the young ones”.*<sup>232</sup>

The participants indicated that they wanted to see the grave and the body of their Chief Aliko.

230 Research conducted in Adjumani District

231 Ibid

232 Ibid



*Painting displaying grief over legacies of war in West Nile. The painting was donated to the Refugee Law Project during its outreach activities*

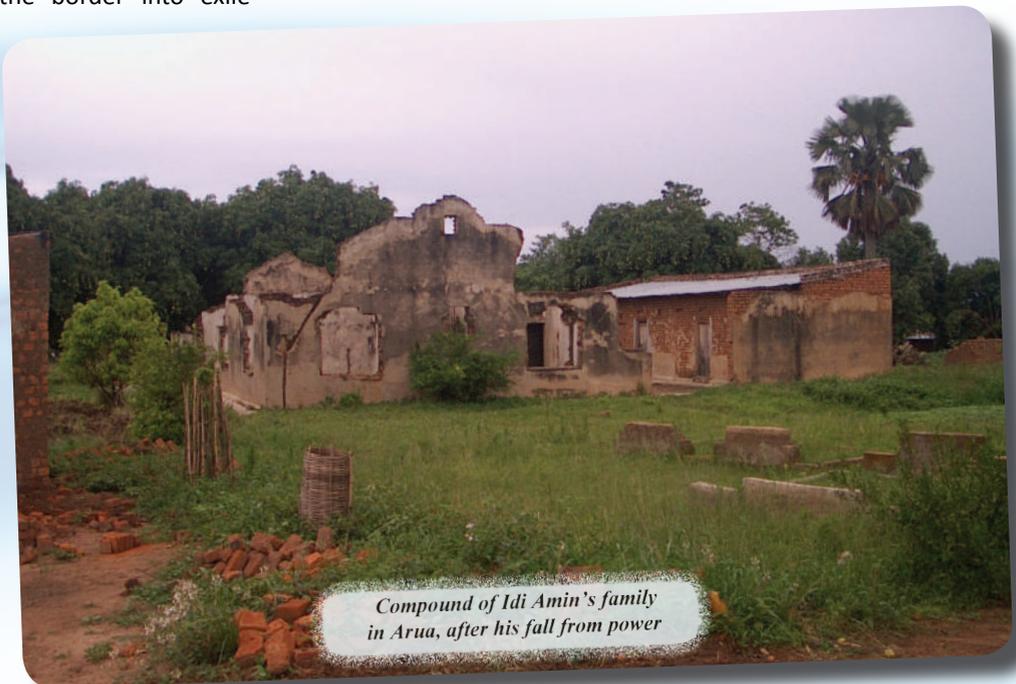
## WEST NILE

### Post-Amin

*The West Nile region has witnessed serious instability and conflict by armed groups, the genesis of which lies in indiscriminate revenge killings by the UNLA following the overthrow of Idi Amin Dada in 1979. In the aftermath of Amin's downfall, insurgencies emerged in West Nile to bring Amin back to power, but also in an effort to protect the population from revenge attacks that had been on the rise since Amin's overthrow. Examples of such armed insurgencies are the Uganda National Rescue Front I and II (UNRF) and the West Nile Bank Front (WNFB).*

#### 40. Post-Amin Land Conflicts in the West Nile Region (1980 – present)

The post-Amin era in the West Nile region has been characterised by violent land conflicts. After Amin's fall from power in 1979 at the hands of the Tanzanian People's Defence Forces (TPDF) and the Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA), elements of the Ugandan Army (which had been the national army under Amin) fled to West Nile. They were followed by retaliating UNLA forces who occupied the whole region, "*wreaking their revenge on those they believed to be Amin's people – in effect, all or most of the West Nile tribes*"<sup>233</sup>. Between 1980 and 1985, 80% of all West Nile residents were forced over the border into exile



*Compound of Idi Amin's family  
in Arua, after his fall from power*

233 Leopold, M. (2005) Why are we cursed: Writing history and making peace in north west Uganda. Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, 11 (2), pp. 211-229.

in Zaire and southern Sudan.<sup>234</sup> After Museveni seized power in 1986, the displaced West Nilers returned to the region to find that other people had encroached on and even sold off much of their land. The resulting land conflicts were further exacerbated in the same year by an influx of over 100,000 Sudanese refugees<sup>235</sup> escaping violence perpetrated by the Sudanese army as well as the SPLM. Fighting for the re-instatement of Amin, several insurgency groups operated in the area from 1986-2002. These included most notably the Uganda National Rescue Front I (1980-1985), the West Nile Bank Front (1995-1998), and the Uganda National Rescue Front II (1996-2002). This further contributed to widespread destruction of property and land. The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) insurgency in the adjacent Acholi region (1986 – 2006) further affected the West Nile region, causing displacement and destruction of property, which in turn further heightened the incidence of land disputes. Specifically, an increase in land conflict has occurred in areas bordering the Acholi region, such as Bibya, Apaa, Pagirinya and Elegu.<sup>236</sup>

In Adjumani district in particular there has been a protracted conflict over land between the Acholi and Madi people since LRA activity caused the displacement of these groups. In September 2009, these tensions over land led to physical attacks involving bows, arrows, guns and knives.<sup>237</sup> Furthermore, many ethnic groups in the region have cross-border ties. Disputes between communities across borders gain virulence as many return from LRA-induced displacement; in Elegu, Madi groups living in South Sudan have sold off land belonging to their Ugandan counterparts while they were housed in Internally Displaced People (IDP) camps during the LRA insurgency. Further, national border conflicts between Uganda and South Sudan have developed into a real security threat, as large parts of Moyo district are claimed by the South Sudanese. These tensions have resulted in several clashes over border demarcation and grazing land, further fuelling land disputes in the wider area.<sup>238</sup>

This situation has been exacerbated by perceived land grabbing and the unregulated sale of land.<sup>239</sup> In Arua district, residents are greatly disturbed by what is locally termed the 'Big Man in the Forest' conflict (2011 – present), as it is alleged that Museveni's cousin, General Salim Saleh, has illegally occupied Biafra Forest Reserve for private economic gain.<sup>240</sup> Additionally, the continuous creation of new districts by the government - Yumbe and Koboko districts were created in 2001, Maracha-Terego district in 2006 and Zombo district in 2009 – has triggered great suspicion and fuelled further disputes over land ownership and boundaries.<sup>241</sup> Participants clearly identified land ownership disputes to be of utmost concern in the West Nile region as they often "*result in criminal offences such as arson, criminal trespass and murder*".<sup>242</sup> Land

234 Gersony, R. (1997) The anguish of Northern Uganda, USAID [Internet], August. Available from: <[http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PNACC245.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNACC245.pdf)> [Accessed 28 May 2014]

235 Neuner, F. (2003) Epidemiology and treatment of posttraumatic stress disorder in West Nile populations of Sudan and Uganda. PhD dissertation, University of Konstanz, pp. 54

236 Research conducted in Adjumani District

237 Ibid

238 Research conducted in Arua and Adjumani Districts

239 Ibid

240 Research conducted in Arua District

241 Ibid

242 Refugee Law Project (2007) Partial justice: Formal and informal justice mechanisms in post-conflict West

## COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

tribunals mandated to resolve such disputes are said to be excruciatingly slow and lacking in capacity. Their proceedings were put on hold by the Government in 2006.<sup>243</sup> Furthermore, given that most land in West Nile is customarily owned, many informants suggested that land disputes could be resolved only by consulting elders, who should thus be formally empowered to act as mediators. As one participant remarked:

*“Land as a commercial entity is causing conflicts. Culturally we used to settle and use land free of charge and peacefully without claiming ownership and there was peace...cultural institutions should be empowered to resolve land conflicts because they understand issues on land.”<sup>244</sup>*

Another strongly voiced perception was that land disputes affect rural and urban areas equally, and that population growth coupled with widespread poverty and youth unemployment further complicate questions pertaining to land ownership. One participant remarked,

*“Because of poverty, people are selling land that belongs to other families, especially where there are no elders.”<sup>245</sup>*

Further, it was stated that even

*“foreigners from outside West Nile and even from Sudan have been buying land... and [we are] also competing for resources with Sudanese refugees.”<sup>246</sup>*

The disputed land often becomes inaccessible and is not available for use while the dispute continues.<sup>247</sup> This leads to family destitution, forced displacement and increased regional inequality. The unregulated sale of land also results in the destruction of entire livelihoods as people are driven off their land.

The victims of post-Amin land conflicts in West Nile are above all members of the general population, many of whom have seen their livelihoods compromised due to disputed access to land. Perceived perpetrators are individuals involved in regional insurgencies, in particular the members of the LRA, as well as influential businesspeople buying up land in the West Nile region. Participants also pinpointed the influx of refugees from Sudan and South Sudan, as well as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as further exacerbating land disputes. They identified beneficiaries of these situations as being both wealthy businesspeople buying up land in West Nile and Government, which has

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Nile, RLP working paper 21, 15

243 Ibid

244 Research conducted in Arua District

245 Ibid

246 Ibid

247 Carfield, M. (2011) Towards legal empowerment: Evaluating the integration of customary and formal law land dispute mechanisms. International Development Law Organization [Internet], Available from: < <http://www.idlo.org/publications/grantsreportuganda.pdf> > [Accessed 28 May 2014]

reportedly encouraged the sale of land to investors.<sup>248</sup> Some participants argued that the Government and current leadership are passive bystanders to the regional escalation of land conflicts.

#### 41. The Oyoro Boys (1979 – 1980)

The Oyoro Boys were a collection of small rebel groups that formed in Arua in 1979.<sup>249</sup> They emerged after the overthrow of Idi Amin and the withdrawal of Tanzanian forces with the aim of returning Amin to power. The Oyoro Boys eventually joined the West Nile Bank Front (WNBF).

The Oyoro Boys were comprised of former army officials under Amin, including Bumuze and Yerego. They targeted the Acholi and Banyankole forces of the Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA) in revenge for past wrongs, and were primarily involved in looting. After occupying Arua town for one day they were chased away by the army. Women who participated in a focus group discussion performed a skit on how the war came to Arua with the invasion of the Oyoro boys, the retaliation of UNLA soldiers, wanton killings, and their subsequent suffering and exile in the Congo.

Though the Oyoro Boys were one of the smaller rebel groups in West Nile, participants across all focus group discussions in Arua insisted that smaller local groups committed numerous atrocities while part of the larger WNBF. They emphasised that the respective legacies of these smaller groups need to be disaggregated in the pursuit of comprehensive solutions.

#### 42. The Yerego War (1980)<sup>250</sup>

The Yerego War refers to a small insurgency that was active in 1980 in present day Maracha District. The rebel group was led by Yerego, a former military commander under Idi Amin. Participants identified the Yerego rebels as one of the splinter groups active in different parts of West Nile between 1979 and 1986.

Though a relatively small force, those under the leadership of Yerego reportedly committed many atrocities in present day Maracha district. Participants insisted that the Yerego group, while part of the larger West Nile Bank Front (WNBF), committed significant atrocities and violations. Therefore, the participants agreed that this small group also needs to be given close attention in the justice and recovery process.

#### 43. The Amin Onzi War (1980)

Another splinter insurgency was fought by Amin Onzi. Amin Onzi joined the army in 1967, and in 1976, President Idi Amin promoted him to the rank of Major. When Amin's government was overthrown, Amin Onzi fought with the Oyoro Boys. Participants mentioned that he also fought on his own, and named this the 'Amin Onzi War'. Amin Onzi

248 Research conducted in Arua District

249 This section summarises research conducted in Arua District

250 This section summarises research findings from Arua District



*General Moses Ali, former Minister of Finance under President Idi Amin and founder of the UNRFI.*

around the same time joined forces with Moses Ali and together they formed the UNRF, where he fought the capacity of overall field commander against the Obote II regime. While Moses Ali was the official leader, Amin Onzi was the *de facto* leader coordinating operations on the ground.<sup>251 252</sup>

#### **44. Uganda National Rescue Front I (1980-1985)**

Following Amin's overthrow, West Nile civilians were held to be collectively guilty for the atrocities committed during his regime and, consequently, were subject to attacks by UNLA soldiers. The extensive displacement caused by UNLA atrocities, resulting in the forced exile of nearly 80 percent of the population of West Nile,<sup>253</sup> provided the immediate context for the formation of the Uganda National Rescue Front (UNRF I). Established

in 1980, the UNRF consisted of former supporters of Idi Amin who sought his return to power. This force emerged under the leadership of Amin's former Minister of Finance, Brigadier Moses Ali, to fight the Obote Government. It launched attacks against the Acholi and Banyankole forces of the Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA). Although Ali was the official leader of the UNRF, he was in exile in Pakistan, from where he mobilised external support and resources for the insurgency. In his absence, Major Amin Onzi was the *de facto* leader, coordinating operations on the ground. The UNRF I conflict caused large scale migration, contributing to immense instability and the break-up of many families.

251 Kakande, J. (2002) Uganda: Amin Onzi dead. All Africa [Internet] 24 April. Available from: <<http://allafrica.com/stories/200204240446.html>> [Accessed 21 September 2012]

252 See Refugee Law Project (2004) Negotiating peace: Resolution of conflicts in the Uganda's West Nile region, RLP working paper no. 12; Kasasira, R. (2011) UNRF boss family: Army battle over rank. Daily Monitor [Internet], 6 March. Available from: <<http://mobile.monitor.co.ug/News/-/691252/1119470/-/format/xhtml/-/9i8n5q/-/index.html2>> [Accessed 21 September 2012]

253 Refugee Law Project (2004) Negotiating peace: Resolution of conflicts in the Uganda's West Nile region, RLP working paper no. 12, p. 8

After Tito Okello Lutwa ousted Obote in 1985, he offered an olive branch to all the fighting factions in West Nile by inviting them to join his Government. This caused conflicting actions from the UNRF; on the one hand, the UNRF sought to partially join the Okello junta,<sup>254</sup> and on the other, the UNRF and NRA brokered a mutual support agreement in Libya. Ultimately, Museveni convinced Ali to join the National Resistance Army (NRA) to overthrow Okello's Government, effectively bringing an end to the activities of the UNRF I. They signed an agreement stipulating that if the NRA captured power, Museveni would become President and Ali would become Vice President. UNRF I dissolved and joined the NRA, with Ali spearheading the fighting in the North.

Following the NRA victory, Ali was not in fact appointed Vice President, but rose through the hierarchy and served the National Resistance Movement (NRM) Government in a variety of capacities. In 2012, following his retirement, he was promoted to the rank of General, thereby becoming the first General in Museveni's regime who did not come from western Uganda.

A sizeable minority of the UNRF, which had not been included in the settlement with the NRA, returned to the bush to form the UNRF II between 1997-98, citing concerns for their safety.<sup>255</sup>

Initially, community support for the UNRF I was high, especially in Koboko and Yumbe where people believed the insurgents were fighting for the right to return home. As one civilian stated;

*"The suffering in exile is what forced people to support the rebels. People wanted to come home".<sup>256</sup>*

But for many others, the UNRF and Former Uganda National Army (FUNA) insurgents were little better than the UNLA soldiers:

*"During Obote II, people were forced to be with the rebels. Those who returned, the government forced them to inform on the supporters in the community..."<sup>257</sup>*

The West Nile region is currently emerging from decades of conflict and is struggling to cope with the consequences. Given the multiple insurgencies that have plagued this region, the categories of victim, perpetrator, and bystander overlap with considerable fluidity. Participants in Arua and Adjumani blamed multiple perpetrators for the protracted underdevelopment and neglect of the West Nile region. These included the British Government as 'colonial masters', the Israelis who aided Amin in toppling Obote's

254 Interview with Major General Bamuze, Fairway Hotel, Kampala, 28th April 2004. In: Refugee Law Project. (2004) Negotiating peace: Resolution of conflicts in the Uganda's West Nile region. RLP Working Paper No. 12

255 Community dynamics in West Nile: A situation analysis, DANIDA, June 2004, p. 3

256 Interview with civilian, Arua, 19th April 2004. In: Refugee Law Project. (2004) Negotiating Peace: Resolution of conflicts in the Uganda's West Nile region RLP working paper no. 12 ,Pg 8

257 Interview with religious worker, Arua, 14th April 2004. In: Refugee Law Project. (2004) Negotiating peace: Resolution of conflicts in the Uganda's West Nile region, RLP working paper no. 12. Pg 11

## COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

Government, Libyan President Gaddafi who supported Museveni and many dictators in Africa, Juma Oris, Ali Bamuze, Moses Ali, Yoweri Museveni, Joseph Kony, Musa Ecweru, Amin Onzi, as well as all Acholi and Langi in the UNLA military. The Tanzanian People's Defence Forces (TPDF) and the UNLA were also castigated for overthrowing Amin and unleashing violence on the people of West Nile in revenge.

Importantly, all participants mentioned past presidents, along with the current Government, as perpetrators. Victimhood was ascribed to the entire civilian population of West Nile, and of Uganda at large.

*"This conflict has affected all Ugandans in one way or another and that is why we must all be involved in dealing with its legacies and prevent future conflicts,"*

declared one participant.<sup>258</sup> Participants identified a number of peace builders who played a role in bringing about peace and reconciliation. The TPDF was lauded for liberating Uganda from Amin. General Tito Okello Lutwa and Col. Gad Wilson Toko were praised for forgiving Amin's former soldiers and working to reconcile Acholi with West Nilers.

Col. Toko is said to have been instrumental in a reconciliatory cleansing ritual (bending of the spear) between West Nilers and Acholi communities, in Palaro, the home of the late Brig. Okoya. This may explain the non-involvement of West Nilers, especially the youth, in counter-insurgency activities of the state in Acholi. The state is said to have attempted to play the communities against each other through resurrecting the old mutual post-Amin hatred. The Arua elders reportedly restrained their youth from killing Acholi in the name of revenge, as reconciliation between the communities had taken place. This explains the conspicuous absence of West Nile militias in the northern Uganda battlefield, save perhaps those in NRA/UPDF nominal list.<sup>5</sup>

### 45. The West Nile Bank Front (1995 – 1998)

The West Nile Bank Front (WNBFB) was an armed rebel group which formed in Uganda's West Nile region around 1995 under the leadership of Juma Oris, a former Foreign Minister in Idi Amin's government and a senior commander under Moses Ali at the time of the United National Rescue Fund I (UNRF I).

After the National Resistance Movement (NRM) under Museveni came to power in 1986, some former fighters of the UNRF I (1980-1985) were not given the official positions initially promised. This perceived betrayal led former UNRF I commander Juma Oris to form the WNBFB in order to undermine Museveni's control over the West Nile region. Active throughout the West Nile region from 1995-1998, the group primarily consisted of Kakwa members and recruited heavily from Arua, Moyo and Yumbe districts.

In doing so, Oris is said to have greatly *"capitalised on the lack of development*

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258 Research conducted in Arua and Adjumani Districts

opportunities in the region in order to recruit members,"<sup>259</sup> as the initial motivation for youth joining the rebellions was the lack of economic alternatives. As an ex-combatant put it,

*"When we heard of WNBF we wanted to join. There was unemployment, and Juma Oris was promising us \$300 each. We saw that the government wasn't caring about us, so we joined".*<sup>260</sup>



*West Nile Bank Front commanders*

259 Interview with religious worker, Arua, 14th April 2004. In: Refugee Law Project. (2004) Negotiating peace: Resolution of conflicts in the Uganda's West Nile region, RLP working paper no. 12. p. 14

260 Interview with three ex-WNBF combatants, Oraba border post, 20th April 2004. In: Refugee Law Project. (2004) Negotiating peace: Resolution of conflicts in the Uganda's West Nile region, RLP working paper no. 12. p. 14

## COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

Money rarely materialised, and the WNBF soon moved to mass abductions to replenish fighters,<sup>261</sup> rendering the WNBF increasingly unpopular among the civilian population.

Attacks by the WNBF were



primarily aimed at the Ugandan People's Defence Force (UPDF), and as such the number of victims among the general population was initially small. However, in September 1996 the fighting reached a climax with the bombing of Moyo town and the WNBF became increasingly feared for their forced abductions and planting of landmines.<sup>262</sup> Further, as the WNBF relied on the Sudanese Government for financial support and the establishment of bases outside Uganda, its forces were also heavily involved in countering advances of the Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement (SPLM).

Capitalising on ever decreasing civilian support for the WNBF and increasing pressure on the group by the SPLM, the UPDF dislodged the group from its bases in Sudan. A final battle occurred in 1997 in Kaya in Sudan, after which the WNBF formally ceased to exist. However, WNBF-affiliated elements, such as groups organised by Captain Moses Chaku and Taban Amin,<sup>263</sup> continued to forcibly recruit individuals and carry out acts of violence in both Uganda and DRC until their voluntary repatriation back to Uganda

261 Gersony, R. (1997) The anguish of Northern Uganda, USAID [Internet], August. Available from: <[http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PNACC245.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNACC245.pdf)> [Accessed 28 May 2014]

262 Spelten, A. (2000) Krisenprävention und Konfliktbearbeitung in Uganda. Eschborn: GTZ

263 Azolleli, K. and Namutebi, A. (1998) Uganda: Revived WNBF raids Arua, abducts 220. The Monitor [Internet], 2 September. Available from: <<http://allafrica.com/stories/199809020051.html>> [Accessed 2 September 2012]

by the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) in 2003-04.<sup>264</sup>

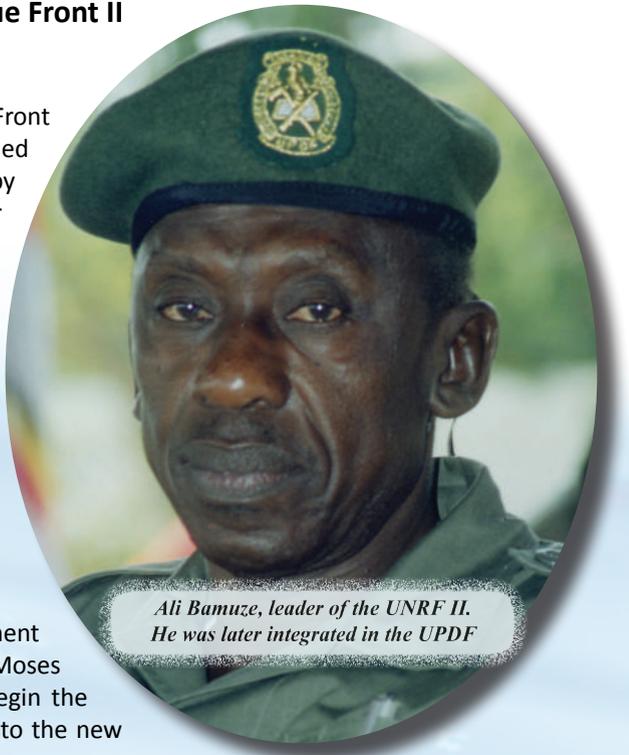
The Government of Uganda and the WBNF never engaged in official peace negotiations.<sup>265</sup> Apart from benefiting from the Amnesty Act (2000) and basic resettlement packages, the Ugandan Government has not provided former combatants with demobilisation and reintegration support,<sup>266</sup> rendering both the repatriation of former WBNF fighters and community reconciliation very difficult. A former WBNF combatant stated in 2004 that *“Now we are comparing the bush life with this life. Communities have hatred and suspect...we were received badly by the communities. We don’t stay with them”*.<sup>267</sup>

WBNF forces are widely held to have been *“the most offensive, rebellious [insurgency group]. If you refused to join you were immediately their sworn enemy. They lost a lot of favour due to the planting of landmines. Their negative relations with the community led to their failure”*.<sup>268</sup> The general perspective among participants was that the victims of WBNF violence, namely the general population of West Nile region, had yet to see justice done.

**46. Uganda National Rescue Front II (1998-2002)**

Uganda National Rescue Front (UNRF) II was a rebel group formed in West Nile in 1996 and led by Ali Bamuze, formerly a senior commander in the UNRF I. The origins of the UNRF II lie in mistrust around the disbanding and demobilisation of UNRF I in 1985/86. Despite initial fears of reprisals in West Nile following the overthrow of Tito Okello Lutwa in 1986, the Museveni-led National Resistance Army (NRA) brought a degree of peace to the region.

In line with the Tripoli Agreement signed between Museveni and Moses Ali, steps were also taken to begin the process of integrating UNRF I into the new



*Ali Bamuze, leader of the UNRF II. He was later integrated in the UPDF*

264 Community Dynamics in West Nile: A Situation Analysis. (2004) DANIDA, June, p. 12.

265 Ibid, p. 28

266 Ibid

267 Ibid

268 Refugee Law Project (2004) Negotiating peace: Resolution of conflicts in the Uganda’s West Nile region, RLP working paper no. 12, p.15



national army. However, this integration was complicated by the fact that the UNRF I lacked a complete register of its membership. Subsequent efforts to develop such a register were never completed, and the integration of the UNRF I into the NRA was undermined.<sup>269</sup> Though a number of UNRF soldiers were integrated



into the NRA, not all maintained the rank they claimed to have held in the UNRF I. According to a member of the UNRF II political wing, *“The agreement was that UNRF combatants were to retain their ranks. But people were demoted instead...Many UNRF deserted the army, others retrenched, others retired. The whole process of integration was not done”*.<sup>270</sup> This increased suspicion and mistrust between the UNRF and the NRA, exacerbated by Museveni’s failure to honour the 1985 agreement, led to the establishment of the UNRF II.

At the same time, West Nile witnessed growing insecurity, as more and more individuals were arrested, killed or simply disappeared. The arrests of Moses Ali, Rajab Rembe, Major Abiriga, and

269 DANIDA, (June 2004) Community dynamics in West Nile: A situation analysis. p. 10

270 Interview with Asedri Oyemi, political wing of the UNRF II, 5th January 2003. In: Refugee Law Project. (2004) Negotiating peace: Resolution of conflicts in the Uganda’s West Nile region, RLP working paper no. 12, p. 13

Major Noah Talib among others,<sup>271</sup> were interpreted as a repetition of the revenge that had followed the earlier rise to power of the Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA), and as justification for a return to armed insurgency. In addition, the National Resistance Movement (NRM) Government was seen to have socially and politically marginalised the West Nile region through inadequate development. In response to this, the UNRF II was consequently formed in the Sudan in 1998 with a force of 3000 active soldiers. When peace negotiations took place nearly four years later, the majority of the UNRF II's demands revolved around issues of development, particularly relating to infrastructure projects including the construction of schools, tarmac roads, and the provision of electricity. It was believed that these projects would facilitate economic activities that had previously been denied to them.<sup>272</sup> The Boma peace agreement signed in Yumbe on 24<sup>th</sup> December 2002 and that brought the UNRF II out of the bush had been



*Salim Saleh, receives the UNRF II's flag from his brother President Museveni, after the group had denounced rebel activities. According to participants, Salim Saleh sought to benefit financially from his presence in the area in what was called the "big man in the forest" conflict*

brought about through a multi-pronged process that saw the active involvement of the community, the Government, and UNRF leadership.

271 Ibid, p. 14

272 DANIDA, (June 2004) Community dynamics in West Nile: A situation analysis

## COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

The agreement promised a number of dividends including amnesty to ex-combatants, 4.2 billion Ugandan shillings to be distributed to the defunct UNRF II through the involvement of a Liaison Committee, and guarantees of development for the entire region. It is generally considered a success as it brought about a negotiated end to the conflict rather than a military solution. However, despite these promises, there remained a strong residue of resentment. Apprehensions were voiced about the Government's commitment to the peace dividends and there was a perception that not all victims of the war had been adequately acknowledged in the negotiated settlement. Significant numbers of civilians questioned why ex-combatants received resettlement packages, while those who suffered atrocities at the hands of the WNBf and the UNRF II were asked not to seek restitution.<sup>273</sup>

The UNRF II is recognised as the only rebel group that openly denounced rebellion and 'reconciled' with both the Government and the community through a multi-pronged, transparent, and relatively successful peace process following the enactment of an Amnesty Act in 2000. Many of the rebels integrated into the community with the option of joining the national army. Bamuze himself was integrated into the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF). However, while the signing of the peace agreement was a symbolic end to the conflict and the beginning of a process of reconstruction and reintegration, numerous long-standing legacies of the conflict still need to be addressed.

## WEST NILE

### Present

*Ongoing conflicts in West Nile are mostly related to national level discontent by citizens over region-specific manifestations of marginalization and poverty. These conflicts are not armed but still cause significant social and economic problems.*

### 47. The 'Big Man in the Forest' conflict (2009 – present)

The 'Big Man in the Forest' refers to President Museveni's brother Salim Saleh, who is said to have occupied the Biafra Forest Reserve. While Saleh established himself in the forest under the pretence of setting up a temporary camp from where to pay ex-soldiers, many participants, including ex-soldiers, indicated that few were actually paid.<sup>274</sup> Moreover, many believe that the camp was used as a political tool for Museveni in the 2011 general elections.<sup>275</sup> In Arua, people complained that they were not consulted and that forest land has been cleared to pave way for the construction of houses. The situation now seems to have escalated into full-fledged land grabbing.

<sup>273</sup> Ibid

<sup>274</sup> Research conducted in Arua District; Butagira, T. and Okello, F. (2012) Saleh named in Arua land grab. Daily Monitor [Internet], 22 September. Available from: <<http://www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/Saleh+named+in+Arua+land+grab/-/688334/1514022/-/view/printVersion/-/11d5orpz/-/index.html>> [Accessed 26 September 2012]

<sup>275</sup> Research conducted in Arua District; Butagira, T. and Okello, F. (2012) Saleh named in Arua land grab. Daily Monitor [Internet], 22 September. Available from: <<http://www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/Saleh+named+in+Arua+land+grab/-/688334/1514022/-/view/printVersion/-/11d5orpz/-/index.html>> [Accessed 26 September 2012].

It is further alleged that Saleh paid out a lot of money to his agents to buy up cassava flour – the staple food in the region – for export to China. This resulted in a rapid increase of prices, whereby cassava prices jumped from 300 shillings per kg to about 1,200 shillings per kg, leading producers in the area to sell their cassava to the ‘Big Man in the Forest’. As a result, people had no food reserves and could not find cassava in the ordinary markets; where it was available, it was unaffordable.<sup>276</sup>

At the time of the National Reconciliation and Transitional Justice Audit research in 2011, tensions were flaring over Saleh’s occupation of the forest land. Despite proposals that it be de-gazetted and sold to local landless people, it was believed that Saleh intended to build a shopping mall instead.<sup>277</sup> Participants argued that Saleh’s business venture in cassava trade was undermining stability on the ground by causing food insecurity, and thus deemed Saleh a spoiler of the peace as profiteering from conflicts takes away incentive to build lasting peace.<sup>278</sup>

#### **48. Conflict with the state over lack of electricity (on-going)**

Participants reported that the lack of electricity in the West Nile region, from the colonial era until the present, is an ongoing source of conflict as it increases West Nilers’ sense of marginalisation. One participant questioned,

*“Is this a deliberate attempt to keep us backward and deny us development?”<sup>279</sup>*

Others pointed out the injustice of the fact that some of their parents and grandparents had perished while building the Owen Falls Dam, a major hydro-electric initiative constructed from 1950 to 1954.

#### **49. Conflict between Congolese and West Nilers over arbitrary fees (on-going)**

Participants cited growing extortion by border authorities from the Democratic Republic of the Congo as a destabilising conflict. Ugandan traders are increasingly subject to arbitrary fees when doing cross-border business, though participants claimed they were free to trade peacefully in the past.<sup>280</sup> This problem of extortion has, in turn, created enmity between the local population and Congolese living in West Nile.

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276 Research conducted in Arua District

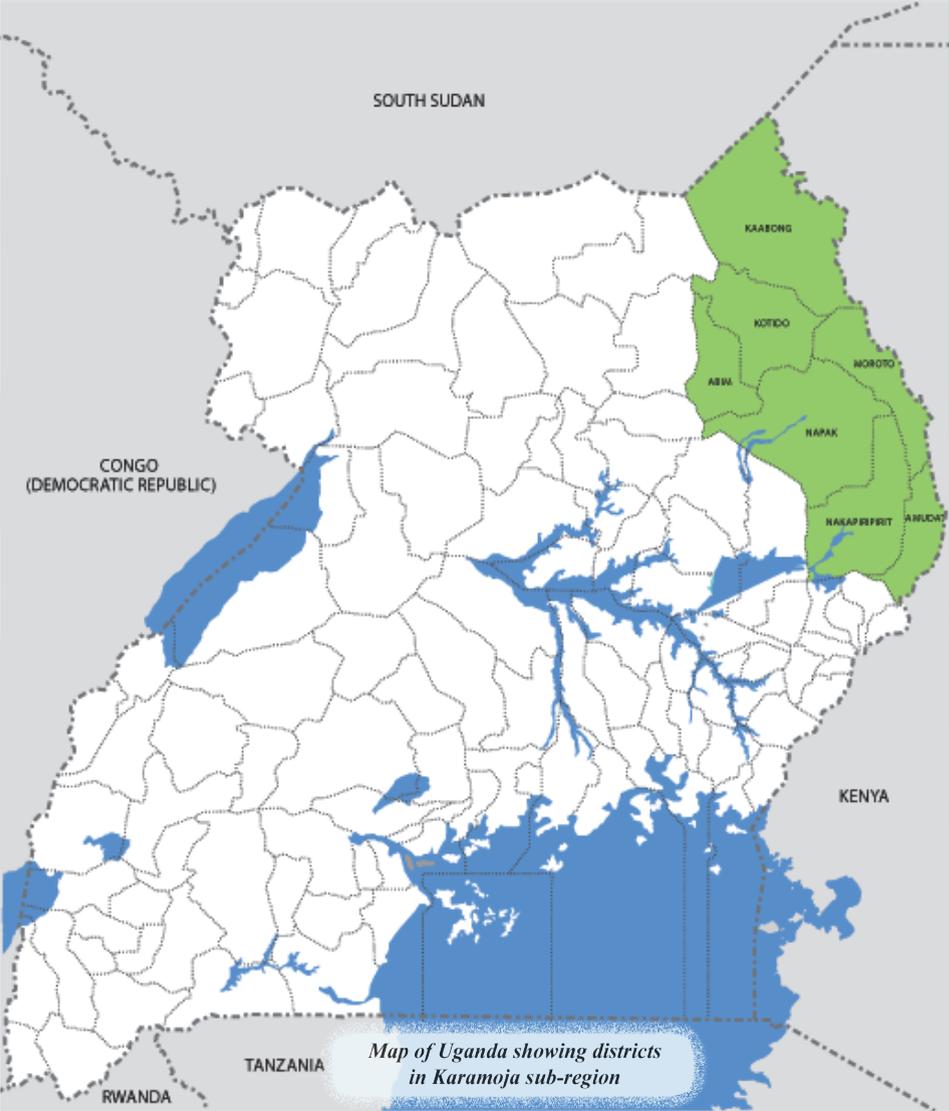
277 Ibid

278 Ibid

279 Research conducted in Arua District

280 Research conducted in Aura District

# Karamoja Region



*Map of Uganda showing districts in Karamoja sub-region*

## KARAMOJA

### The Coming of the Colonialists/Missionaries: Collaboration, Resistance and Conflict

*The Karamoja sub-region in the far north east of the country is economically, socially and infrastructurally isolated from the rest of Uganda. Its pastoralist people have been marginalized and in a troubled relationship with the State since colonial times, and their traditional livelihood, cattle herding, is increasingly threatened. It is often said that 'Uganda can't wait for Karamoja to catch up' - but the Karimojong intellectual who said 'We died long time ago' undoubtedly captured the sentiment of many in Karamoja itself.*

#### 50. Karimojong conflicts with the State (1926 – present)

Conflict between the Karimojong and the central Government stretches back to colonial times when centralized government was first introduced in the area; huge chunks of the pastoralists' communal lands were seized and gazetted by the British Colonial administration in actions which have yet to be reversed. The colonial administrators declared Karamoja a closed region and managed it under martial law from 1911 onwards. Plunder and repression by the colonial administration was continued by subsequent

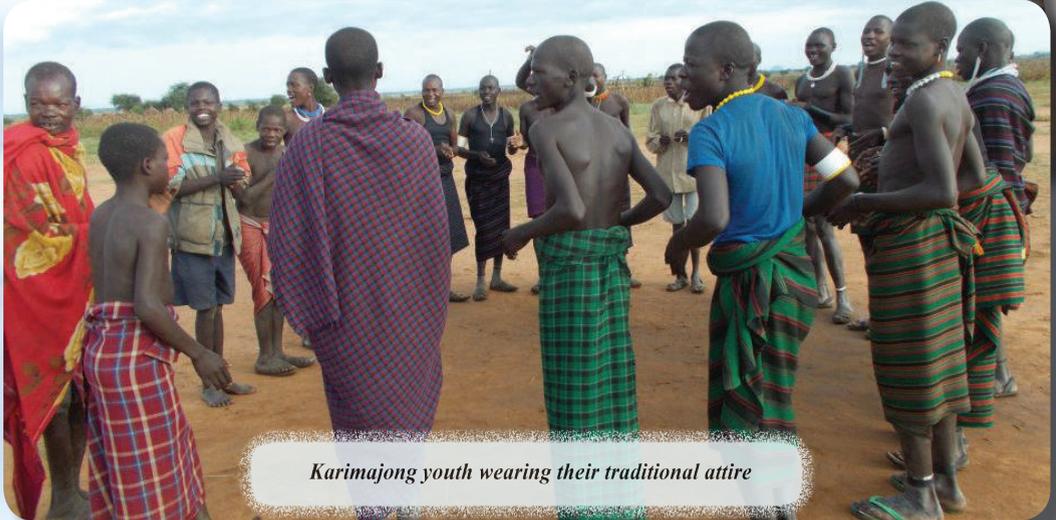


*Karimojong youth demonstrate the use of spears for fighting*

## COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

post-Independence governments.<sup>281</sup> Convinced that the Karimojong communities had an ethno-military culture, the British recruited Karimojong youths, much like the Acholi, to serve under the King's African Rifles during World War II military campaigns conducted in Africa and Asia. The military skills and weapons that were acquired at that time later came to have long-term impacts on patterns of cattle raiding in Karamoja and neighbouring regions.<sup>282</sup> Most importantly, the marginalisation of the Karimojong by both colonial masters and post-Independence governments remains a conflict trigger between the Karimojong and the State.<sup>283</sup>

### The Karimojong



*Karimajong youth wearing their traditional attire*

281 Mamdani, M. et al. (2004) Karamoja: Ecology and history, Working paper no. 22.. Centre for Basic Research, Kampala

282 Mburu, N. (2002) The proliferation of guns and rustling in Karamoja and Turkana districts: The case for appropriate disarmament strategies. [Internet] Available from: <[www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk/dl/Guns.pdf](http://www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk/dl/Guns.pdf)> [Accessed 29 May 2014]

283 Conflict Early Warning and Response Network. (2001) Conflicts in pastoral areas along borders: The Kenya, Uganda and Sudan, CEWARN Consultancy Report.

continue to have negative feelings toward the Government of Uganda, which they refer to as *'ariang'* (enemy). They say the word can also mean 'violent institution' when referring to the Government army. The various post-independence governments have continued to implement anti-pastoralist policies, and to deprive many communities of important strategic land for the subsistence of the herds on which they remain dependent.

Efforts to sedentarise pastoralists, including through policies of decentralisation, have given rise to unforeseen social disaster, and set the scene for emerging conflicts over the allocation and use of resources.<sup>284</sup> The communities' response has been manifest in several armed attacks by Karimojong warriors on the national army, the UPDF. Members of the Karimojong population, along with some local non-governmental organisations have accused the UPDF of violence and human rights abuses in the region.<sup>285</sup> This has created a situation of mutual mistrust between the Government and the community.

The Karimojong community acquired more weapons following the overthrow of President Idi Amin and his army in Uganda as the result of an alliance between the Tanzanian People's Defence Force and Ugandan exiles in 1979.<sup>286</sup> One major source



*Guns recovered during the disarmament exercise in Karamoja sub-region*

284 Muhereza, F. (1999) Violence and the state in Karamoja: Causes of conflict, initiative for peace. *Cultural Survival Quarterly*, 22 (4), p. 43

285 Research conducted in Nakapiripirit District

286 Maero, T. (2002) Surrender gun, win yourself land. *The East African Standard* [Internet], 19 May. Available from: < <http://allafrica.com/stories/200205190153.html>> [Accessed 29 May 2014]

of weapons was the Moroto barracks, which the fleeing dictator abandoned intact, allowing the Karimojong to help themselves to the substantial quantities of small arms and ammunition stocked there. An eyewitness reported having seen large numbers of small arms and ammunition being loaded onto scores of donkeys that then trekked up to the top of Mount Moroto. This was followed by rigorous training on the mountain slopes in preparation for defence and cattle raids.<sup>287</sup>

## KARAMOJA

### Post-Colonial/Present

#### 51. The Dress Code Conflict (Amin vs. Karimojong) (1972)

In the name of ‘civilisation’, Idi Amin’s Government in 1972 ordered all Karimojong to abandon traditional Karimojong wear in favour of clothing that was considered more ‘decent’. The local communities immediately rejected this directive, but Amin’s forces quickly adopted various inhumane methods of enforcing the decree. One participant remarked,

*“Whoever was found putting on slippers made of vehicle tyres would be made to chew it”.*<sup>288</sup>

An eyewitness recounted an incident in Kangole in 1972 in which a number of Karimojong were mobilised for a rally at which they were told that a Governor would address them. When they assembled, most of them were naked. An army officer issued an order to the effect that the crowd be cordoned off and shot, which was followed. This incident has gone down in Karimojong history as the notorious “Kangole Massacre”.<sup>289</sup>



*Karimojong gather to witness the burning of confiscated arms during the disarmament exercise in 2008*

287 This eye witness account was given to NRTJ Audit researchers in Kampala after the completion of the field work for the NRTJ Audit

288 Research conducted in Nakapiripirit District

289 Supra note 67

## 52. NRA/UPDF vs Karimojong conflict (1986 - present)

Conflict between the Karimojong and Ugandan state continued under Museveni's regime with the National Resistance Army (NRA) and later the UPDF as key actors. Immediately after coming to power, NRA soldiers used '*Kandoya*' (a method of torture used by NRA soldiers that constituted tying both hands of suspected rebel collaborators in a backward position) against the Karimojong. The conflict between the army and communities was ultimately based on the possession of small arms by Karimojong communities. In the remote region in Uganda, small arms are said to be central to security and livelihood.<sup>290</sup> Initially, President Museveni allowed the Karimojong to keep some firearms for self-defence against the Turkana and Pokot cattle raiders of Kenya and Uganda and the Toposa of southern Sudan.<sup>291</sup> However, the Ugandan Government underestimated the community's perception of the importance of weapons and the Karimojong increased the number of weapons in their communities, leading to a high prevalence of armed violence and fatalities.<sup>292</sup>

The Government's response over the last decade has been a number of disarmament programmes. A voluntary disarmament campaign in 2001 was followed by forceful disarmament in 2002. The latter resulted in several violent confrontations between the Karimojong warriors and the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) and several deaths.<sup>293</sup> These two campaigns informed the Karamoja Integrated Disarmament and Development Programme (KIDDP), implementation of which started in 2005, becoming increasingly coercive over the following two years. 'Cordon and search' methods in particular occasioned<sup>294</sup> various human rights abuses.<sup>295</sup> It has been argued that these operations have not been successful and, due to the lack of alternative security provisions, have in fact contributed to an escalation in armed violence.<sup>296</sup>

This is particularly the case since the disarmament was unevenly enforced and did not happen across the border in neighbouring countries. The disarmament operations saw several violent confrontations between Government forces and the Karimojong warriors and have entrenched perceptions in Karimojong communities of the state and national army as the enemy ("*ariang*") rather than as institutions providing services and protection.

290 Mwaaura, C. (2005) Kenya and Uganda pastoral conflict case study (No. HDOCPA-2005-20). Human Development Report Office (HDRO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

291 Ibid

292 Bevan J. (2008) Crisis in Karamoja: Armed violence and the failure of disarmament in Uganda's most deprived region, Small Arms Survey

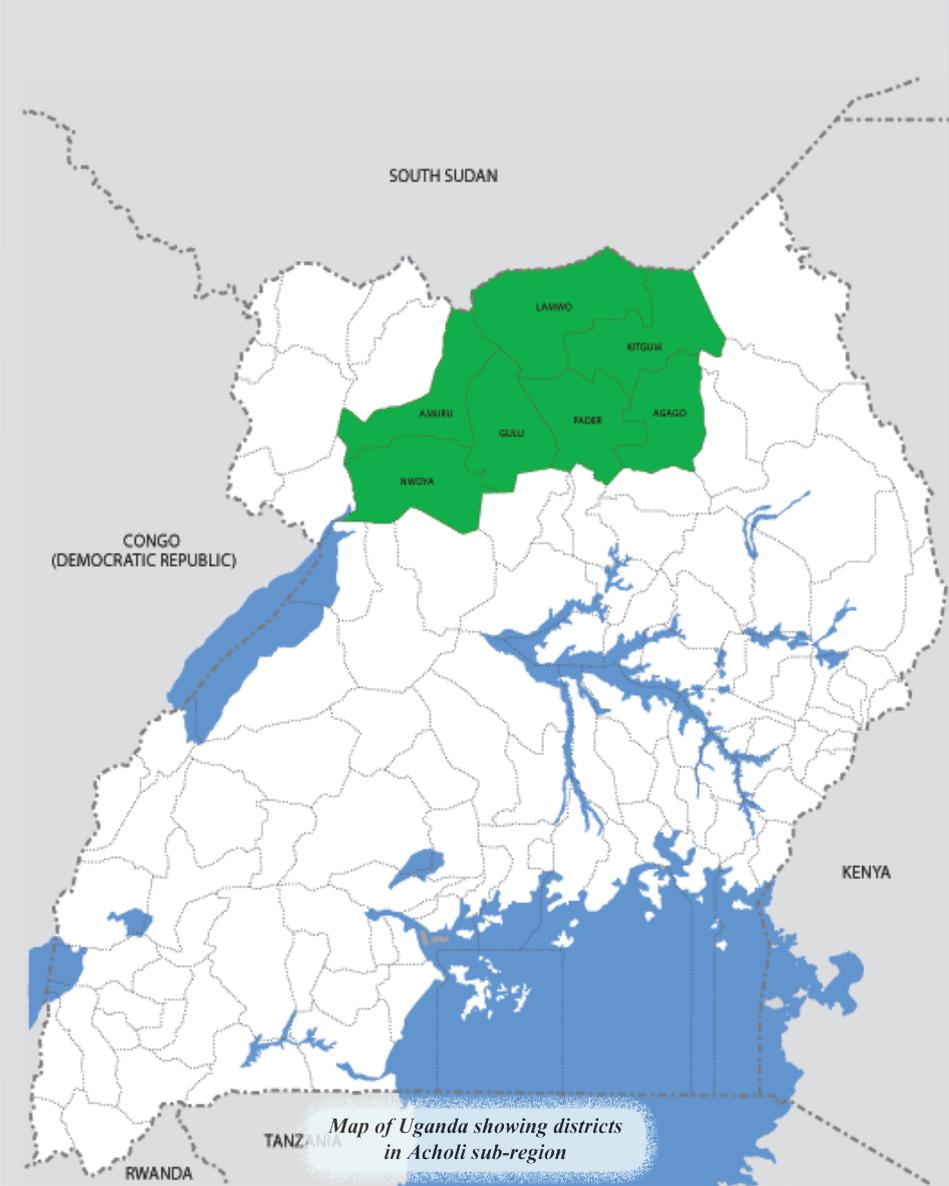
293 CDRN, CAFOD & UEC. (2007) The Search for Alternative Initiatives for Sustainable Livelihoods, Peace and Development in Karamoja. pp. 34-38

294 Bevan, J. (2008) Crisis in Karamoja: Armed violence and the failure of disarmament in Uganda's most deprived region, An occasional paper of the Small Arms Survey, Small Arms Survey, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies; Human Rights Watch. (2007) Get the gun: Human rights violations by Uganda's national army in law enforcement operations in Karamoja Region. September. 19 (13A)

295 Human Rights Watch (2007) Get the gun: Human rights violations by Uganda's national army in law enforcement operations in Karamoja Region. September. 19 (13A)

296 Bevan J. (2008) Crisis in Karamoja: Armed violence and the failure of disarmament in Uganda's most deprived region, Small Arms Survey.

# Acholi Sub - Region



*Map of Uganda showing districts in Acholi sub-region*

## ACHOLILAND

## The coming of Colonial Masters and Missionaries; Collaboration, Resistance and Conflict

*Acholiland went through several conflicts before Uganda attained Independence. These conflicts were with neighbouring tribes and in insurrection against the British colonialists.*

### 53. Conflict between Madi and Acholi (Pre-Independence)

According to participants, during the pre-colonial period, the Madi and Acholi lived together peacefully and interdependently as neighbouring communities, bound by trade and inter-tribal marriages. Hunting was a widespread economic activity at the time, and the Acholi bought numerous spears from the Madi for both hunting and security purposes. Later, however, when disagreements emerged between the two tribes (the precise cause of which is unclear), fighting seemed inevitable.<sup>297</sup> The



*Madi women dance traditional Mbiri dance, 1995*

<sup>297</sup> This historical data is also described in Merx, J. (2005) Refugee identities and relief in African borderland: a study of northern Uganda and Southern Sudan UNHCR Working Paper No.19 UNHCR. p. 19.

## COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

Madi claim that the Acholi used 'their spears', the spears they had bought from the Madi, to kill the Madi indiscriminately during their first major armed confrontation. The Madi conceded total defeat. After this fight, the Madi mobilized for a revenge expedition and waged an offensive. The fiercest battle between the Madi and Acholi happened in Meto at Otce Mountain in the current Moyo District. Chief Aliko instructed his fighters to "squat and shoot" ("nyotu nyi kwir" in Madi) and to aim for the legs of the Acholi, so as to avoid the shields they were using to protect their bodies.<sup>298</sup> During this battle, Madi fighters defeated the Acholi and chased them across river Loropi, back to Acholiland. River Loropi's name is believed to have been derived from this battle. After the defeat of the Acholi fighters, the vanquished were directing fellow fighters to run towards the river ("walaro pii") and to cross into Acholiland. The Madi were said to have been supported by the Aringa ethnic community who fought the Acholi with poisonous spears and shot at their legs in order to win the battle.<sup>299</sup>

These battles, along with subsequent events following the overthrow of Idi Amin, such as atrocities committed by the Acholi dominated Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA) in West Nile and by the Acholi led Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), placed a strain upon the communities' relationship. This strain has since been aggravated by boundary and land conflicts between Madi, Alur and Acholi on the border in Nwoya and Amuru districts. An adult man in Dzaipi sub-county, Adjumani district, said that "This conflict is unresolved and I can compare the strained relationship between Acholi and Madi to that of Israel and Palestine."<sup>300</sup>

During the 1970s, an attempt at reconciliation between the two communities failed when the spear that was supposed to be bent during a ceremony (to symbolise an end to hostility and reconciliation) disappeared mysteriously from the present Dzaipi sub-county.

The participants agreed that it must have been stolen by someone who did not want to let go of the hostility and/or did not believe that the ceremony would be able to address the deep seated danger and facilitate genuine acceptable reconciliation. To date, the two communities have not successfully reconciled.<sup>301</sup>

### **54. Conflict between the Acholi and Langi according to the Acholi (1906 - present)**

Participants cited British colonial official General Bwana Tong, formerly District Commissioner for Lango, as primarily responsible for increased tensions between the Acholi and Lango ethnic communities. They explained that in 1906, General Bwana Tong's bodyguard from Bunyoro was killed by the Langi. In response, Bwana Tong mobilised the Acholi Chiefs to wage war against the Langi in revenge for his bodyguard's death. In doing so, he sowed the seeds of discord between the Acholi and Langi.<sup>302</sup>

298 Research conducted in Adjumani District

299 Ibid

300 Ibid

301 Ibid

302 Research conducted in Pader District

This discord is manifest in land and boundary conflicts between the Acholi and Langi that continue to date. One historical example included an attempt by the Langi to extend their boundary and move from Ayami Parish, Aromo sub-county, Lira district to Puranga sub-county in Pader (formerly Kitgum district). When the Langi refused to return to Ayami Parish, conflict emerged between the Langi and Acholi. The Acholi mobilised themselves with spears and bows and arrows and fought with the Langi in a final battle in which they trapped the Langi in a bush and set the surrounding Langi land ablaze. A female elder commented that;

*“After the war, Acholi developed a victory slogan that, ‘Omiru owang ilum calo pura’ (Langi got burnt in the bush like a waterbuck) and to date if you mentioned that to a Langi, a fight will erupt because it was a deadly war where the Acholi besides burning the Langi, went ahead and captured many Langi women and girls that they later turned them as their wives. My grandfather married a captive from Lango.”<sup>303</sup>*

The Acholi-Lango conflict could also help explain why former Acholi Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA) commanders mobilised to topple the Obote II government and why a subsequent Langi alliance was formed to provide support to the National Resistance Army/Movement (NRA/M) when it overthrew Tito Okello in 1986.<sup>304</sup>

## 55. Lamogi Rebellion (1911-12)

The Lamogi Rebellion was an insurrection by the Acholi against British colonial rule that took place in Guru-guru village, Lamogi sub-county, Amuru District in 1911-12. The Acholi resisted British colonial rule in a major battle on Guru-guru Hill during which the Acholi killed a British captain. The British in turn killed a number of Acholi in reprisal attacks. This resulted in the defeat of the Acholi and their subsequent submission to the British. Today, the people of Lamogi continue to demand compensation from the British Government as well as the preservation of sites in Lamogi for memorialisation and tourism.<sup>305</sup>

Another anti-colonial rebellion was the Paimol rebellion of 1917, in the current Agago District. In a fashion similar to the Lamogi Rebellion, this uprising was brutally crushed. The British brought military reinforcement from Masindi and killed a number of people. Rwoth Lakidi of Paimol was extra-judicially executed by hanging. The hanging reportedly took place in the Kitgum garrison headquarters of the British colonialists.

303 Research conducted in Kitgum District

304 Research conducted in Gulu and Kitgum Districts

305 Research conducted in Gulu and Pader Districts

## ACHOLILAND

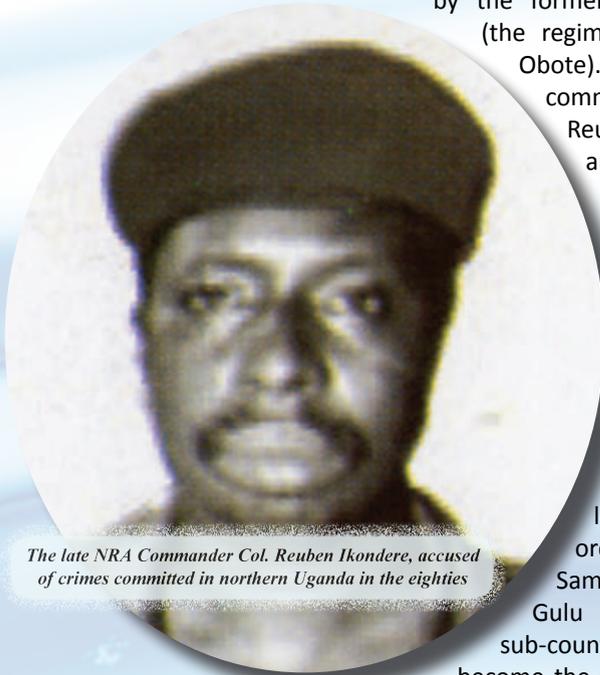
### Post-1986 Conflicts

*After Yoweri Museveni's take-over, the northern region, particularly Acholiland, was plunged into conflict and violence. In effect, the war that was fought in the Luwero Triangle did not stop but continued, albeit in a different location and with a rebel group turned national army. When the NRA crossed the river Nile, a range of insurgent groups emerged, including the Uganda People's Democratic Army, the Holy Spirit Mobile Forces and, most notoriously, the Lord's Resistance Army.*

#### 56. NRA/UPDF war against citizens in the North (1986 - 2006)

When the National Resistance Army (NRA) captured state power from Tito Okello Lutwa in 1986, they embarked on what the participants described as 'a war on the citizens in northern Uganda' as a way of seeking vengeance over alleged atrocities committed by the former Northerner-led Governments

(the regimes of Tito Okello and Milton Obote). Participants described how NRA commanders such as the late Colonel Reuben Ikondere ordered the killing and torture of significant numbers of civilians and former soldiers in Kitgum District (for example, in Palabek Kal and Namukora sub-counties).<sup>306</sup> The NRA's Operation Fagia (meaning "to sweep"), led by General Salim Saleh, half-brother to the President, began in 1988 with an ultimatum to the civilian population in Gulu District to leave their villages. They were ordered to move to camps in Sir Samuel Baker School, Pece Division, Gulu Municipality and Bungatira sub-county within 48 hours. This would become the site of the first encampment in Acholiland commanded by the NRA/M Government.



*The late NRA Commander Col. Reuben Ikondere, accused of crimes committed in northern Uganda in the eighties*

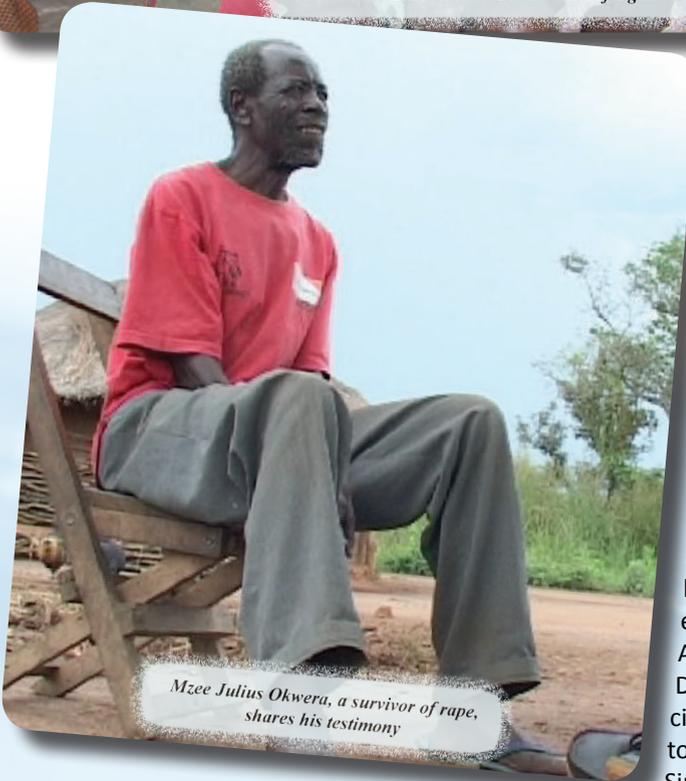
Participants recounted that before the 24 hours elapsed, the NRA started torturing and killing civilians as they ran to the designated camps. According to an eyewitness, NRA soldiers threw bombs on villages that they suspected would not heed the ultimatum to relocate to the camps in 1988.<sup>307</sup>

306 Research conducted in Kitgum District

307 Supra note 67



*Night commuters during the conflict between the LRA and the Government of Uganda*



*Mzee Julius Okwera, a survivor of rape, shares his testimony*

During this attempt to sweep away former Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA) fighters and their supporters in northern Uganda, NRA soldiers committed atrocities including the widespread rape of men (*tek gungu*), defecating in food and drinking water, burning houses in villages under the pretext of clearing fighting ground, mass arrests of civilian suspects, killings and massacres (for example in Bucoro Village, Awach sub-county, Gulu District, where arrested civilians were suffocated to death or buried alive). Similar incidents are also said to have taken place in

Anaka sub-county (present Amuru District), Alero and Koch-Goma sub-counties (present Nwoya District), and many other areas of northern Uganda<sup>308</sup>

308 Research conducted in Gulu District

COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA



*Massacre sites in Acholiland, northern Uganda*

**57. The Uganda People’s Democratic Movement/Army (July 1986 - June 1988)**



*The late Col. Walter Ochora joined UPDA when President Museveni took power. After the Pece Peace Agreement he joined the NRA, later serving as Chair of Gulu District and as Resident District Commissioner*

Having overthrown Ugandan President Tito Okello Lutwa in January 1986, the National Resistance Army (NRA) under the command of Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, immediately embarked on aggressive demobilization of former UNLA fighters. This process led to many allegations of NRA torture, abduction, disappearances, brutal arrest and numerous killings and massacres of former UNLA fighters and the general civilian population. This violence was perceived by the local population as revenge on the Acholi people for what UNLA soldiers had done while in power.

Fearing this revenge by the NRA, many former UNLA soldiers sought refuge in southern Sudan and regrouped to form the Uganda People’s Democratic Movement/Army (UPDM/A). The UPDM was led by Prof. Okot Bwangamoi and Otema Alimadi. The UPDA was under the leadership of Brigadier Justine Odong Latek. They were joined by many able-bodied youths and adults seeking to resist NRA-led atrocities against the civilian population. Participants referred to the 10 May 1986 order from the Government which required all former UNLA fighters to report to the NRA military headquarter in Kampala. This order was perceived as a trap that would result in the execution of the former UNLA fighters, and these fears helped to popularise the newly established UPDA and its fight against President Museveni’s Government.

The UPDM/A’s high command, largely constituted of former UNLA soldiers from

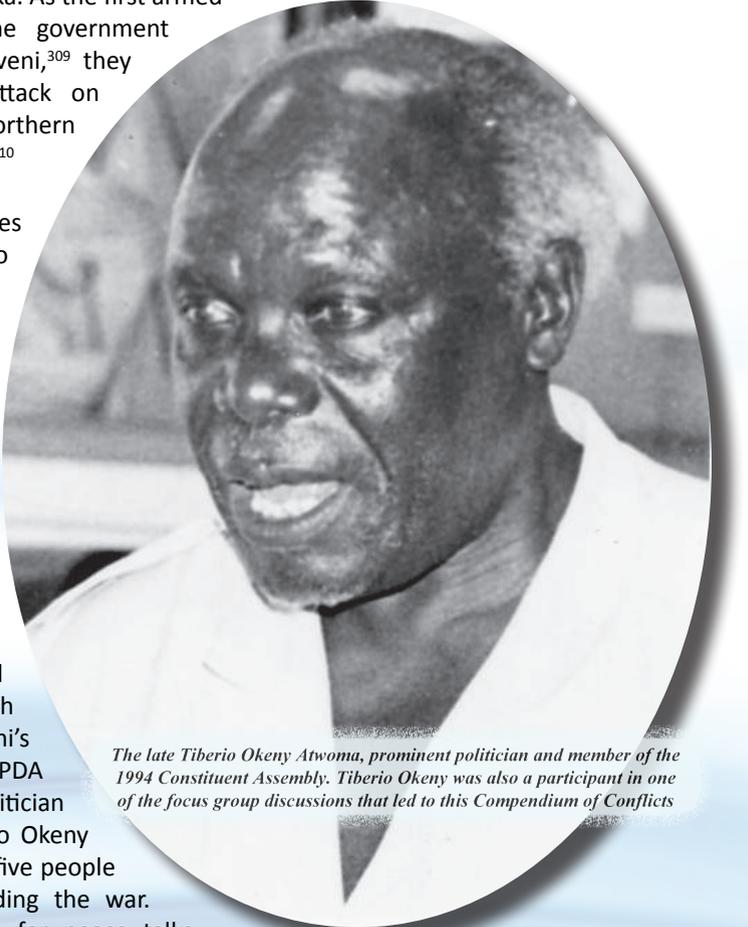
## COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

the northern Districts of Gulu and Kitgum, included Okello Keno, in charge of Pabbo, Kilama Mike, in charge of Paicho, and Walter Ochora Odoch, in charge of Anaka. As the first armed insurrection against the government of Yoweri Kaguta Museveni,<sup>309</sup> they launched their first attack on government forces in northern Uganda in August 1986.<sup>310</sup>

Initial UPDA successes forced the NRA to withdraw from the countryside and retreat to the towns of Gulu and Kitgum, but in the absence of a decisive defeat of the NRA, the conflict only fuelled atrocities in the region. On 31 October 1986, a civil society organisation called 'Goodwill Peace Mission' advocated peace talks and, with President Museveni's

endorsement, met the UPDA in the bush. The politician and Acholi elder, Tiberio Okeny Atwoma, led a team of five people to Juba to discuss ending the war.

This talk set the stage for peace talks between the Government and UPDA leaders, which eventually resulted in the Pece Peace Accord (sometimes referred to as the Gulu Peace Accord), signed on 3 June 1988 in Pece Stadium (Gulu town) in the presence of five thousand citizens.<sup>311</sup> This Accord marked the end of UPDA rebellion and resulted in the integration of the UPDA into the NRA.<sup>312</sup> The Accord also called for the release of prisoners of war, resettlement of displaced people, rehabilitation of infrastructure destroyed by the war, establishment of a government endorsed by the people of Uganda, an expansion of Parliament as well as a Constitutional Assembly to discuss a



*The late Tiberio Okeny Atwoma, prominent politician and member of the 1994 Constituent Assembly. Tiberio Okeny was also a participant in one of the focus group discussions that led to this Compendium of Conflicts*

309 Lindemann, S. (2011) Just another change in guard? Broad-based politics and civil war in Museveni's Uganda. *African Affairs* 110 (440), pp. 387-416

310 Doom, R. and Vlassenroot, K. (1999) Kony's Message: A New Koine? The Lord's Resistance Army in Northern Uganda. *African Affairs* 98 (390), pp. 5-36.; Lindemann, S. (2011) Just another change in guard? Broad-based politics and civil war in Museveni's Uganda. *African Affairs* 110 (440), pp. 387-416

311 Ibid

312 Lindemann, S. (2011) Just another change in guard? Broad-based politics and civil war in Museveni's Uganda. *African Affairs* 110 (440), pp. 387-416

new constitution.<sup>313</sup>

In parallel to the move toward peace talks and an eventual peace accord, many UPDA soldiers deserted, returning to their villages. Village populations grew as a result, leading to unrest and the formation of splinter insurgent groups that operated under the bigger umbrella of the UPDA but with their own identities. Such identities were reflected in



*President Museveni signs the Pece Peace Accord between the NRA and UPDA in Gulu on July 3, 1988*

the groups' activities and in the names they gave themselves; these included "Ci-lil" (Go and spread the rumours [to NRA]), "Cel-ibong" (Shoot and charge/feel [the NRA soldiers to see whether they are dead]) and "Agoyo-ayaro" (Smash [the NRA] completely). While some of the members of these groups supported the Pece Peace Accord with the NRA in 1988 and demobilised, others joined the so-called "Trinity Wars."<sup>314</sup>

## 58. Cilil splinter group insurgency (1986 - 1988)

Cilil (meaning "Go and spread the rumour to National Resistance Army that we are here or have passed") was one of the UPDA splinter groups that operated in the villages and urban centres of Gulu and Kitgum, fighting NRA soldiers. Their operation in northern

313 Lamwaka, C. (2002) Flash back: The peace process in northern Uganda 1986 – 1990. Acholi Times [Internet], Available from: < <http://acholitimes.com/index.php/news/feature/212-flash-back-the-peace-process-in-northern-uganda-1986-1990> > [Accessed 9 July 2012].; Additional information based on research conducted in Gulu District

314 Based on research conducted in Pader and Gulu Districts

Uganda caused insecurity that resulted in numerous human rights violations, including but not limited to NRA killings, torture and disappearances of significant numbers of civilians and rebel supporters. Participants revealed that after the June 3<sup>rd</sup> 1988 signing of the Pece Peace Accord between the leaders of UPDA and the Government of Uganda, the fighters ended their rebellion. This gave rise to their demobilisation and the integration of some members into the NRA. However, those who did not agree with the peace process joined other rebel groups such as the Lord's Resistance Army.<sup>315</sup>

### **59. Cel-ibong splinter group insurgency (1986 - 1988)**

The Cel-ibong fighting group, based in Kitgum district, was composed primarily of former Uganda National Liberation Army fighters who fled back with their guns to northern Uganda. This group was at some point commanded by Bazilio Okello Olara, a former UNLA commander, who later sought refuge in Sudan. Okeny Atare from Nam Okora sub-county, Kitgum District, was also one of the top commanders. His unit's operations mainly affected Chua County, Kitgum District. The group worked mainly in Kitgum District and the present Pader District where they attacked National Resistance Army barracks with the aim of capturing Kitgum District. They then planned to proceed to Kampala to topple the then new government of President Museveni. This group received little support from the community because their presence often prompted NRA attacks in which the surrounding civilian population was victimised. The Cel-ibong group was ill equipped to continue its insurgency and later dissolved, with some of its members joining the NRA and rebel groups such as the LRA. Some individuals who renounced the Cel-ibong later disappeared or died under mysterious circumstances. Participants cited a case in which a man named Okello Kolo, once a supporter of the NRA, was found dead near his home village in Kitgum district after he disagreed with the Government in 1989.<sup>316</sup>

### **60. Agoyo Ayaro Splinter Group Insurgency (1986 - 1988)**

Participants revealed that the *Agoyo Ayaro* was a group of former Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA) fighters who rebelled against President Museveni's National Resistance Army/Movement (NRA/M) Government in 1986. The name of the Agoyo Ayaro group came from a founding member who is believed to have said, "*Nyangkole mamwa, wagoyo wayaro,*" meaning "Mere Banyankole, we are going to crush and finish them." This reflected their belief in their own capacity to defeat the Banyankole and regain the glory of having an Acholi president in power again.

Participants recalled that, despite its grand aspirations, the group was small and scattered in villages of Kitgum (now Pader) District, from where they would attack NRA soldiers and steal their guns. They would then redistribute them amongst the members who did not have arms. After multiple encounters with the NRA and the realisation that they would be unable to capture state power, the group slowly dissolved. Some members resorted to armed robbery, others joined different rebel groups operating in northern Uganda and still others joined the NRA. Some returned to civilian life and their previous agricultural livelihoods.<sup>317</sup>

315 Research conducted in Gulu and Pader Districts

316 Research conducted in Kitgum District

317 Research conducted in Pader and Kitgum Districts

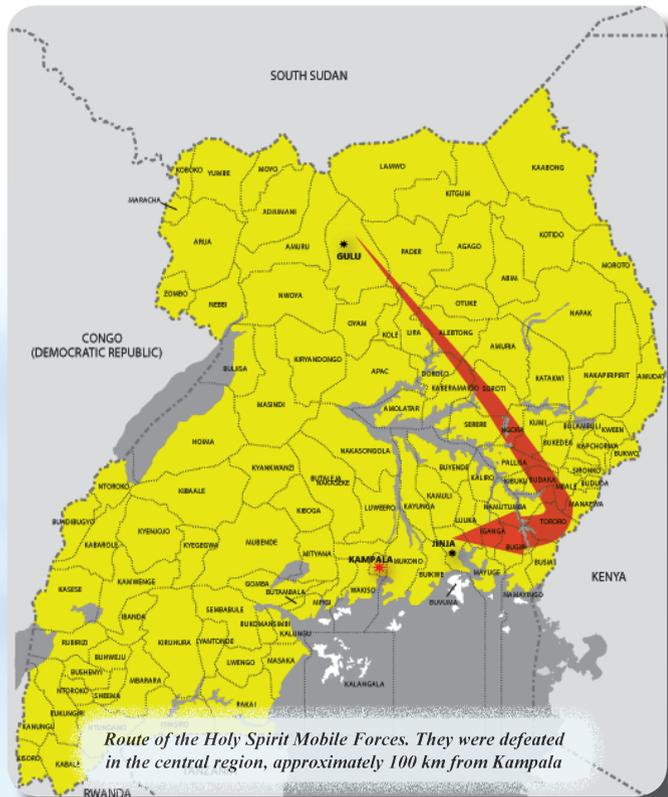
## 61. Karimojong/NRA raids (1989 - present)

Prior to 1979, the Karimojong used spears only during their cattle raids. However, after the 1979 raid of the Moroto Armoury, during which they acquired guns, some Karimojong engaged in violent cattle raids in Karamoja and the neighbouring communities. In 1986, when armed conflicts in the Acholi region reached a peak, the Karimojong raiders took advantage of the unrest and entered the region to raid cattle. According to participants, cattle were not only taken by the Karimojong raiders but also by the National Resistance Army.<sup>318</sup> In Soroti, the participants accused the NRA of allying with the Karimojong to raid cattle instead of protecting the civilian population and their properties from cattle raids.

Various disarmament programs initiated by the government have significantly contributed to a decline in raids, but the enmities created by the raids (and subsequent disarmament campaigns) have never been resolved. Besides raiding cattle, the Karimojong have committed atrocities in neighbouring Acholi, Teso, Langi, and Bagishu communities. Participants in neighbouring districts felt that a comprehensive stocktaking exercise in the affected communities was necessary to open a way forward for acceptable reconciliation between the Karimojong and their neighbours.

## 62. The 'Trinity Wars' (1986 – present)

Participants noted that in 1945 a spirit called 'Lakwena' possessed a man named Severino Lukoya. In 1982, nearly forty years later, the man began doing whatever he believed the spirit was instructing him to do.<sup>319</sup> The spirit subsequently also possessed his daughter Alice Auma, who claimed to be able to heal people using water. Tito Okello Lutwa is believed to have first consulted Alice's spirit in 1982, and it is also believed that in 1986 Okello disregarded the spirit's instructions



*Route of the Holy Spirit Mobile Forces. They were defeated in the central region, approximately 100 km from Kampala*

318 Research conducted in Gulu, Kitgum, Pader, Soroti and Bulambuli Districts

319 Research conducted in Pader District

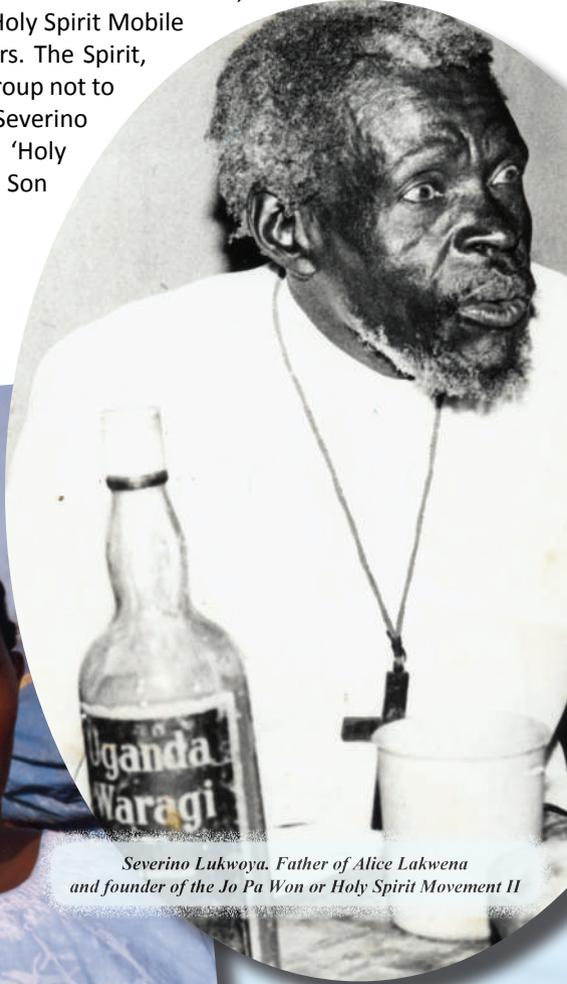
and was overthrown by Museveni's forces shortly thereafter. Six months later (August – September 1986), Alice Auma, as the spiritual medium for Lakwena, emerged as the leader of a group known as the Holy Spirit Mobile Forces, marking the beginning of the Trinity Wars. The Spirit, whom Alice claimed was supreme, directed the group not to use weapons in warfare. Participants thought of Severino Lukoya, Joseph Kony and Alice Lakwena as a 'Holy Trinity', with Severino as the Father, Kony as the Son and Lakwena as the Holy Spirit.<sup>320</sup>

### 63. Holy Spirit Mobile Forces (1986 – 1987)

Alice Lakwena operated as a spiritual medium, using her professed healing powers to attract a following in Gulu and Kitgum Districts.<sup>321</sup> Claiming to have obtained her spiritual powers from the River Nile in Pakwach, Nebbi District, she planned on liberating the people of God from the National Resistance Army and on seeking revenge on behalf of the Acholi for the atrocities committed



*Alice Lakwena during her exile in Kenya*



*Severino Lukwya. Father of Alice Lakwena and founder of the Jo Pa Won or Holy Spirit Movement II*

by soldiers during the conflict in Luwero Triangle. In the beginning, the Holy Spirit Mobile Forces (HSMF) used stones and prayers to fight the NRA instead of bullets because of their belief in supernatural protection. Lakwena's opposition to Museveni's Government expanded when she absorbed a significant number

<sup>320</sup> Ibid

<sup>321</sup> Research conducted in Gulu and Kitgum Districts

of former Uganda National Liberation Army fighters in 1986.<sup>322</sup> She made her first armed attack on Christmas Eve in 1986 in Kitgum, and many people at the time were convinced that she would successfully overthrow the Museveni Government.

Lakwena's popularity began to decrease among the Acholi community when her supernatural powers failed to save them from NRA bullets during their encounters.

However, the HSMF proceeded to Lira and Soroti Districts on their way toward Kampala. Although they were initially welcomed in these areas because they did not attack local communities, they did not gain massive support in the region either. Eventually, the HSMF abandoned their base in Tubur sub-county, Soroti District and continued to the Busoga sub-region.<sup>323</sup> The HSMF were eventually defeated by the NRA in Busoga, Jinja District, forcing Lakwena into exile in Kenya in December 1987.<sup>324</sup>

**64. Jo Pa Won or Holy Spirit Movement II (1987- 1989)**

Jo Pa Won, or the Holy Spirit Movement II (HSM II), was founded in 1987 after the defeat of the Holy Spirit Mobile Forces of Alice Auma Lakwena. Led by Severino Lukoya, the father of Alice Lakwena, HSM II followers were called 'Jo pa won' in Acholi/Luo, meaning 'Followers of the Father'. This referred to the spiritual belief of trinity salvation where Severino Lukoya was seen as the Father, Joseph Kony as the Son and Alice Auma Lakwena as the Holy Spirit. Lukoya's rebel movement did not gain as much popularity and support as that of his daughter, though some followers of Lakwena later joined HSM II.<sup>325</sup> As a result, the rebellion only lasted briefly, soon to be defeated by the more powerful National Resistance Army. In 1989, Lukoya surrendered to the government and was imprisoned.

Though this marked the end of HSM II, participants widely agreed that it also



*Joseph Kony, leader of the Lord's Resistance Army, during his younger years*

322 Allen, T. (1991) Understanding Alice: Uganda's Holy Spirit Movement in context. *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute* 61:3(1991) 371-72

323 Research conducted in Pader District

324 Research conducted in Soroti District

325 Research conducted in Pader District; See also Allen, T "Understanding Alice: Uganda's Holy Spirit Movement in Context." *Journal of the International African Institute*, 61 (3), pp. 370-399

## COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

served as an opening for Joseph Kony to launch the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), which sought to fulfil the prophesized liberation of the Acholi people and Uganda, as well as salvation by God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Lukoya, Kony, and Lakwena respectively). Although Severino Lukoya surrendered to the Government, the participants believed that many of his followers did not surrender but instead joined the LRA and continued the rebellion against the government of President Museveni.<sup>326</sup>

Severino Lukoya's HSM II did not abduct and forcefully conscript civilians, as did the LRA. His mode of mobilisation consisted of convening prayers with the local population, teaching them about the scriptures, and promising liberation from the sin and oppression they had experienced under the Museveni government. The participants revealed that during the prayer services, Lukoya would cure the sick and deliver prophecies about the future of Uganda and Acholiland.

These methods gained him a significant number of followers who were anointed, initiated, and commissioned into the fighting force for the salvation war. Participants noted that the Movement never gained momentum. In August 1988, Lukoya was taken prisoner by Kony but later escaped and was captured by the NRA. After serving several years in prison he was pardoned.<sup>327</sup>

Though the rebellion ended in 1989, participants expressed their discontent about the brainwashing and indoctrination of the Acholi community by Lukoya, which they believed to have resulted in the death of thousands of innocent civilians.<sup>328</sup> An elder in Awach commented that;

*"The recurrent bloodshed in Acholiland is a manifestation of unaddressed wrongs committed in the land; we are still going to suffer from endless deadly wars, mysterious deaths, misfortunes and unexplained strange happenings if we fail to cure what went wrong here and in other parts of Uganda. I am talking as an elder, we cannot cure this alone, we need the government, we need the wrong-doers and we also need everybody to cleanse Uganda so that innocent blood shed stops and we begin to see and feel peace, not the peace of being in the IDP camps because the LRA is in the villages."*<sup>329</sup>

### 65. The Opio and Ocen Insurgency (1987 - 1988)

Opio and Ocen, born in Awach sub-county, are twin brothers. Former Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA) fighters, they returned home to Gulu District after the defeat of the UNLA in fear of the newly established National Resistance Army/Movement (NRA/M) Government. As the insecurity in Northern Uganda grew, due to grave human rights violations

326 Doom, R. and Vlassenroot, K. (1999) Kony's Message: A New Koine? The Lord's Resistance Army in Northern Uganda. *African Affairs* 98 (390), pp. 5-36

327 Research conducted in Gulu District

328 Research conducted in Pader District

329 Research conducted in Gulu District

committed by the NRA after the overthrow of Tito Okello's Government, the twins started mobilising youths and former army colleagues to fight and liberate the Acholi people.<sup>330</sup> Together with 14 others, it is believed that Opio and Ocen started their rebellion as traditional healers against the NRA government in 1987, based in Dog Abera in Paicho sub-county, where they trained followers and cured sicknesses. It was also widely believed that, in the beginning, they were ill equipped with just two guns and some machetes (pangas).

Following the acquisition of additional weapons and a period of training, they waged a small-scale rebellion against the NRA. In a final clash with the NRA in 1988 in Corner Kitgum, they lost most of their followers and were overpowered. The followers killed during this battle were buried in a mass grave along Corner Kitgum in Iriaga Village, Gulu District.<sup>331</sup> Opio and Ocen managed to escape and are still alive today. Some participants indicated that they were captured, imprisoned and later released.

## 66. The Lord's Resistance Army (1987 - present)



*LRA rebels during the Peace Talks*

<sup>330</sup> ibid

<sup>331</sup> ibid



*LRA high command during the Peace Talks in Garamba*

Joseph Kony, who claims to be Alice Lakwena's cousin, began his insurgency in early 1987. Like Lakwena, he was driven by spirits that spoke through him, and he preached that he had been sent by God to destroy all evil forces. His rebel group, eventually called the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), did not tolerate any other form of worship, including indigenous beliefs. He declared witchcraft and sorcery to be evil. He said he had come to teach the Acholi to follow the Ten Commandments.

In the early years of the insurgency, the LRA gained some support from Acholi communities because of widespread discontent with atrocities committed against them by the National Resistance Army (NRA). Initially, Kony started fighting in Gulu, where he employed similar supernatural battle tactics as did Alice Lakwena. However, later he adopted



*Human rights activists march in Atiak, promoting peace talks and dialogue over military action to end the conflict with the LRA*



*Mothers demonstrating for the return of their children, Gulu*

more conventional guerrilla tactics and resorted to violence and looting of food from the civilian population. The

participants revealed that Kony underwent a commissioning ceremony when he was initiated in Awach sub-county, Gulu District, and received blessings from the elders.<sup>332</sup> With the intention of pacifying the LRA, the NRA embarked on a counter-insurgency campaign that made the general population afraid to associate with Kony. Feeling

332 Research conducted in Gulu District

abandoned by the Acholi, Kony resorted to the use of violence against civilians and abduction as a recruitment strategy.<sup>333</sup>

Using southern Sudan as its base, the LRA gradually expanded its activities in Uganda into other districts, ultimately reaching as far east as Soroti district in the early 2000s. After withdrawing from the Juba Peace Talks that ran from 2006-2008, the LRA began to operate in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and, ultimately, in the Central African Republic. Over nearly two decades the Government of Uganda – LRA situation caused massive human rights violations and widespread atrocities on the civilian population, including, but not limited to mass

abduction, massacres, rape, looting, mutilation, killing, torture and displacement.<sup>334</sup> Not all abuses, however, can be attributed to the LRA, as participants also placed responsibility on Government forces.<sup>335</sup>

Participants suggested that the Government might have had a hand in the long duration of the war, as the military elite saw the war as a 'business venture'. Other actors that were held partially responsible for the long duration of the war were the Acholi diaspora, the international community, and 'the rest of Uganda', who either stood



*Lord's Resistance Army rebels*

333 Research conducted in Gulu District

334 Doom, R. and Vlassenroot, K. (1999) Kony's Message: A New Koine? The Lord's Resistance Army in Northern Uganda. *African Affairs* 98 (390), pp. 5-36

335 Dolan, C (2009) *Social Torture: the case of northern Uganda, 1986-2006*. New York, Berghahn Books.

by and did nothing, or in some cases supported the warring factions. The Museveni Government responded to Kony's insurgency with both military operations and a strategy of relocating the majority of the northern population into 'protected villages' or Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps. By 2005, approximately 2 million people in the Acholi sub-region, 200,000 people in the Teso sub-region, 41,000 people in West Nile, and 33% of the population in the Lango sub-region were displaced due to the conflict.<sup>336</sup>

In response to pressure from civil society actors, and several previous attempts at peace talks, the Government and the LRA leadership convened for negotiations in Juba in 2006, which resulted in a ceasefire.<sup>337</sup> Though the Juba Peace Talks continued for two more years, and were hailed as a landmark toward ending the conflict, a final peace accord was never signed. Though the LRA had honoured the ceasefire and not resumed activities in northern Uganda, it is still active in the DRC, Central African Republic and South Sudan. Participants voiced concerns that Kony's fighters could return to terrorize them. They also commented on the deep impacts of the war, describing the daily felt consequences of prolonged disempowerment, dependency, economic marginalization, lack of education, spoilt community relations and physical and psychological wounds, and stressed that they continue to advocate for the return of abductees still in captivity.

## 67. Pigi-Ligi War (1988 - present)

The *Pigi-Ligi* War, sometimes called by participants as *Pigi-Luge* War ("disturbing or haunting spirits"), is the war between the living and the spirits of the dead. The participants believed it started in 1988 in Bucoro, Awach sub-county, Gulu District, because of the innocent blood that was shed during the numerous massacres and killings by both the NRA and the LRA.<sup>338</sup> In Adjumani district, Civil Society and Local Government participants further explained that this spiritual war, called *jojok* in the Alur language, is waged by the spirits of the dead in communities that were greatly affected by LRA attacks.<sup>339</sup> This war seems to extend throughout northern Uganda, especially where brutal killings and massacres took place, such as in Mucwini in Kitgum, Atiak in Amuru, Acholpii in Pader, Lukodi in Gulu and Barlonyo in Lira districts.<sup>340</sup>

The living are reported to have been physically and verbally attacked by the spirits during day- or night-time, resulting in numerous formerly displaced people being forced to flee to either the former Internally Displaced Person (IDP) camps or to their relatives in urban centres. Participants stated that the spirits attack both children and adults, inflicting strange sicknesses, madness, nightmares and confusion. There have even been reports of spirits wrestling with or strangling the living.

336 Research conducted in Gulu, Kitgum, Pader, Adjumani, Arua, Hoima, Soroti and Lira Districts

337 Uganda Human Rights Commission (2011) *The dust has not yet settled: Victims' views on the right to remedy and reparation*, a report from the Greater North of Uganda. p. 55

338 Pressure from international donors on the Government of Uganda to seek ways to end the conflict had also been increasing. In 2003, the conflict had gained international attention when Jan Egeland, the UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs had called the crisis in northern Uganda "the biggest forgotten, neglected humanitarian emergency in the world today". See Mareike Schomerus, "International Involvement and Incentives for Peacemaking in Northern Uganda", accessed at: [http://www.c-r.org/sites/c-r.org/files/accord%2019\\_25internationalinvolvementandincentivesforpeacemaking\\_2008\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.c-r.org/sites/c-r.org/files/accord%2019_25internationalinvolvementandincentivesforpeacemaking_2008_ENG.pdf)

339 Research conducted in Gulu District

340 Research conducted in Adjumani District

Such manifestations leave the living feeling troubled and unsafe. For example, a participant said;

*“We had organised weekly prayers around Bucoro massacre site and some strange voices were projected to us that we are shouting for them and should leave before they attack us. We all ran away ... in different directions and hurt ourselves.”<sup>341</sup>*

Such manifestations go beyond individual hallucinations or delusions as multiple people experience the same apparition. Participants observed that the spirits were protesting against past injustices perpetrated against them and seeking revenge. If the spirits were not appeased and given a decent burial, participants believed they would continue their war against the living, causing multiple unusual psychosocial problems and restlessness in the land.

## **68. Boo Kec attacks on the community (1988 – mid-1990s)**

As well as giving rise to numerous armed insurgencies in northern Uganda, the 1986 military overthrow of Tito Okello Lutwa by Museveni’s NRA opened an avenue for the unlawful use of guns to either rob or perpetrate violence against civilians. Participants attributed the illegal possession of guns to the existence of an arms and ammunition black market that arose during the late 1980s and early 90s. It is also due to the fact that many former Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA) fighters returned home with their guns after their defeat in 1986, and began using them against the NRA and to rob civilians as a means of supporting themselves.

One of the most well-known groups of armed robbers is referred to as Boo Kec (literally “greens are bitter”, implying “we want to eat meat”). These groups consisted of thieves, self-described rebels, home guards or Local Defence Units who ambush and rob civilians. Their perceived aim was to enjoy a luxurious life through armed robbery, and to feed on only meat, whether they are living in the bush or in an urban environment.

The participants looked at this group as a major source of insecurity, while the Government seemed to underrate the threat they posed. Among the most notable acts of violence committed by Boo Kec were ambushing vehicles to loot business people, robbing boda boda drivers and pedestrians after they have sold their agricultural products, and targeting trading centres and homes of well-to-do people in villages and urban centres.

They were initially most active in Kitgum and Pader and later in Gulu Districts, where they staged ambushes along major travel routes in villages and towns. Some participants argued that attacks by Boo Kec continue today. A man in Awach sub-country, Gulu District said;

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341 Research conducted in Gulu District

*“With the alarming poverty in Acholiland caused by Kony’s activities, I anticipate an increase in armed robbery and vigorous Boo Kec attacks throughout the region; this means that we have entered into another Kony war, I mean Boo Kec and poverty.”<sup>342</sup>*

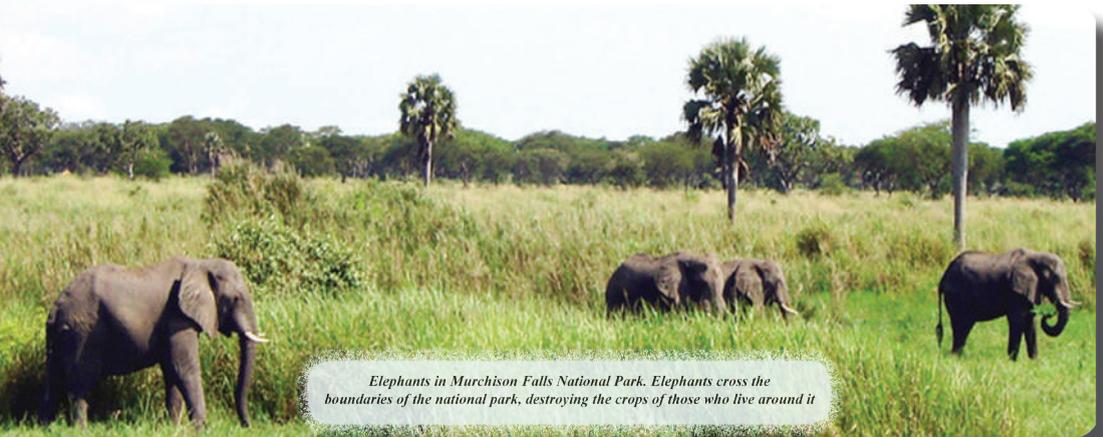
## ACHOLILAND

### Conflicts after the guns fall silent

*The Juba Peace Talks brought relative peace to northern Uganda. But even though the guns went silent, different kinds of conflict related to the war that had been raging since 1986, have flared up. These include conflicts with wildlife and inter-community conflicts related to trauma, disempowerment, poverty and land.*

#### 69. Wildlife attacks on communities in Nwoya District, Northern Uganda (2006 - present)

Participants revealed that attacks by wildlife have been a major cause of instability and food insecurity in communities surrounding national game parks and reserves throughout the country. However, the Government has not been taking tough measures to prevent wild animals from straying and destroying plantations.



*Elephants in Murchison Falls National Park. Elephants cross the boundaries of the national park, destroying the crops of those who live around it*

In Nwoya District, wild elephants have come from Murchison Falls National Park and destroyed the households and crops of former Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), who began returning to their ancestral land in 2006.<sup>343</sup> This has caused a mass outcry by the local population, who accuse their district leaders and the Government’s wildlife authorities of failing to address these problems. Consequently, the villagers have

342 Research conducted in Gulu District

343 Research conducted in Gulu District

resorted to unlawful killing and poisoning of marauding elephants, which has brought some individuals into conflict with the law. Participants revealed that the wildlife problem has hampered peace, recovery and development in Nwoya District, and the community is planning to use other approaches such as mass demonstrations to compel the Government to address the problem.<sup>344</sup>

## 70. Post-displacement Domestic Conflicts (2006 – present)

Participants throughout the northern region noted that domestic conflicts between men and women are among the major causes of insecurity and lack of peace at the family level.<sup>345,346</sup> While the origins of domestic conflicts were said to predate the war in northern Uganda, participants stated that these disputes intensified during displacement, and fully revealed themselves when the war that raged outside people's houses came to an end and the war indoors continued.

The main narrative on this conflict was that during life in the IDP camps, men lost the wealth from which they previously derived respect, authority and privilege as heads of their households. This in turn threatened their sense of masculinity and perceived place in the traditional patriarchal system. No longer able to provide for the basic needs of their families, men were often overcome by feelings of powerlessness. Further, the majority of male participants across northern Uganda argued that the promotion of gender equality and female empowerment in Uganda has disrupted the harmony between men and women in Acholiland.<sup>347</sup> Many men resorted to beating their wives in an attempt to show their power and command respect.

Rampant violence between men and women during displacement has led to numerous family breakdowns, divorce and separation, as well as an increase in child abuse and children living on the street. Child neglect has been a very common form of abuse during the post-conflict period, as some men tend to evade their responsibilities toward children. They justify this under the pretext that Kony's rebels will come back and abduct these children, so there is no reason to educate them.<sup>348</sup> Participants also discussed that poverty caused by the prolonged armed conflict in northern Uganda has contributed to frustrations and conflict between men and women.<sup>349</sup>

## 71. Post-conflict land conflicts in Acholiland (2006 - present)

As communities affected by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) returned from Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps to their ancestral villages, land conflicts emerged and disrupted the newly established fragile peace in the region. Participants explained that a significant number of former IDPs resettled on land that did not belong to them, while

344 Research conducted in Gulu District

345 Ibid

346 For contextualizing of and more information on this conflict, see "Conflicted relationship between men and women" in the "cross-cutting thematic issues" section of this Compendium

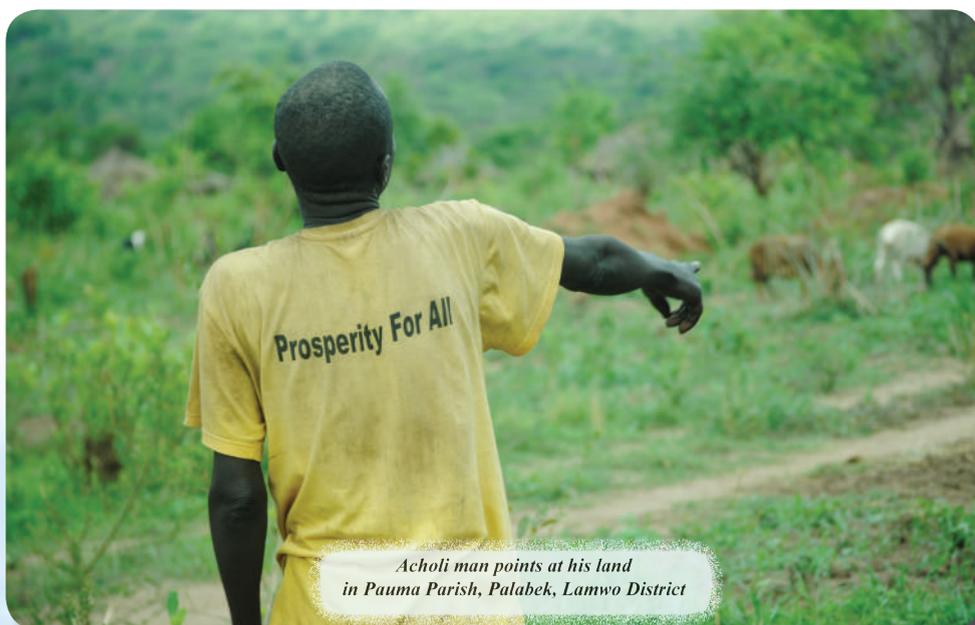
347 Research conducted in Gulu, Pader, Kitgum, Lira and Adjumani Districts

348 Research conducted in Gulu, Adjumani, Soroti, Hoima, Mubende, Nakasongola, Mbarara and Mukono Districts

349 Research conducted in Gulu and Adjumani Districts

others forgot the exact location of the boundaries of their land. This was especially true in the case of children whose parents and grandparents had died during the war. Many returnees were involved in the illegal sale of land that did not belong to them. These situations led to numerous land conflicts, episodes of violence and acts of counter aggression throughout northern Uganda, thereby undermining peace-building processes.

Unlike in the pre-LRA period, land conflicts are now rampant in Acholiland, as well as along the Acholi/Madi border where many Acholi Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA) ex-combatants took refuge in fear of revenge after their defeat by NRA in 1986. Many of them continue to live in the area up to today, but the legality of their occupancy is challenged. This has contributed to a particularly severe ongoing land dispute between the Acholi and Madi. Additionally, many Madis were displaced by the LRA to IDP camps in both Madi and Acholiland, and now deeply disagree on land boundaries and ownership.



*Acholi man points at his land  
in Pauma Parish, Palabek, Lamwo District*

Land conflict in Acholiland is regarded as one of the major conflict drivers that must be addressed in order for processes of transitional justice and reconciliation to take shape in the region.<sup>350</sup>

## **72. Post-conflict robberies in Acholiland Communities (2006 - present)**

When people started returning from Internally Displaced Person (IDP) camps to their ancestral land, there was a sharp increase in levels of armed robbery. Participants described how armed robbery was largely perpetrated by youth with access to guns from armed rebel groups operating in West Nile and northern Uganda. Furthermore,

<sup>350</sup> Research conducted in Gulu, Pader, Kitgum, Lira and Adjumani Districts

## COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

participants revealed that some youth acquired guns by fighting in the conflict between the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF), and that there has not been proper demobilisation of ex-combatants in northern Uganda since 1986. This has paved the way for an influx of illegal guns that have become tools for robbery.

While discussing post-conflict robbery in the northern region, participants emphasised that many youth became accustomed to IDP camp life where basic needs were supplied by humanitarian agencies, and that these youths resort to robbing instead of engaging in productive developmental work. These armed robbers are distinct from Boo Kec because they do not present themselves as rebels and are primarily motivated by their post-conflict poverty. Nonetheless, they have also caused high levels of insecurity in numerous villages and urban centres in the region, thereby affecting peace, recovery, and development, as well as creating conflicts at the family, community and district levels.<sup>351</sup>

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351 Research conducted in Gulu, Kitgum and Pader Districts

# Lango Sub - Region



## LANGO

*Together with Acholiland, Lango is part of the Central North. Until 1974, the Lango sub-region was a single district called Lango District, but was afterwards divided in different districts. The Langi and the Acholi, related ethnic groups both hailing from the north, together accounted for the fact that the armed forces under Obote were regionally unbalanced, as together they constituted the majority of the army. Both communities suffered revenge attacks under the Amin regime, which saw both ethnic groups as allied to Obote, who was a Langi. They also both suffered as a result of the post 1986 northern conflict, although the Acholi experienced the full extent of the violence before the Langi. This section reflects conflict perspectives that were found to be particular to the Lango sub-region.*

### 73. Langi perspectives on conflict between the Acholi and Langi (1957 – present)



*Army Chief of Staff Opon Acak, 1985*



*David Oyite-Ojok was Army Chief of Staff under Obote II when he died in a helicopter crash in 1983*

In Lango, the tension between the Acholi and Langi was traced back to disagreements over the Minakulu border between Lira and Gulu in 1957. After Independence and during Obote's first regime, this tension was exploited and exacerbated by a number of Baganda royalists (such as Abu Mayanja) to undermine Obote's rule.<sup>352</sup>

352 Research conducted in Lira District

During Obote's second rule, the tension arose again, and there was "growing unrest in the UNLA because of suspicions that the President was favouring his fellow Langi, at the expense of the Acholi."<sup>353</sup> For example, in 1984, "the vacant post of Chief of Staff, caused by the death of Oyite-Ojok (killed the previous year in a helicopter crash), was filled by Smith Opon-Acak, another Langi."<sup>354</sup> The tension between the two ethnicities was solidified in 1985, when the Acholi Tito Okello and his supporters defeated Langi forces under the command of Opon-Acak and came to power through a military coup on 26 July 1985.<sup>355</sup> The most recent alleged LRA atrocities committed in Lango, such as the Barlonyo massacre in Lira, deepened and compounded the hatred and enmity between the Acholi and the Langi. The Langi blame the Acholi for LRA atrocities in their land since the composition and leadership of the LRA is largely Acholi.<sup>356</sup> After the Barlonyo massacre, anti-Acholi riots were organised in Lira town leading to the deaths of four people.<sup>357</sup>



*Civilians killed in the Barlonyo massacre are buried in mass graves on February 22, 2004*

353 Tindigarukayo, J. (1988) Uganda, 1979-85: Leadership in transition. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 26 (4), pp. 607-622

354 Ibid

355 Ibid

356 Research conducted in Lira District

357 Ibid

## 74. The post-1986 northern conflict in Lango

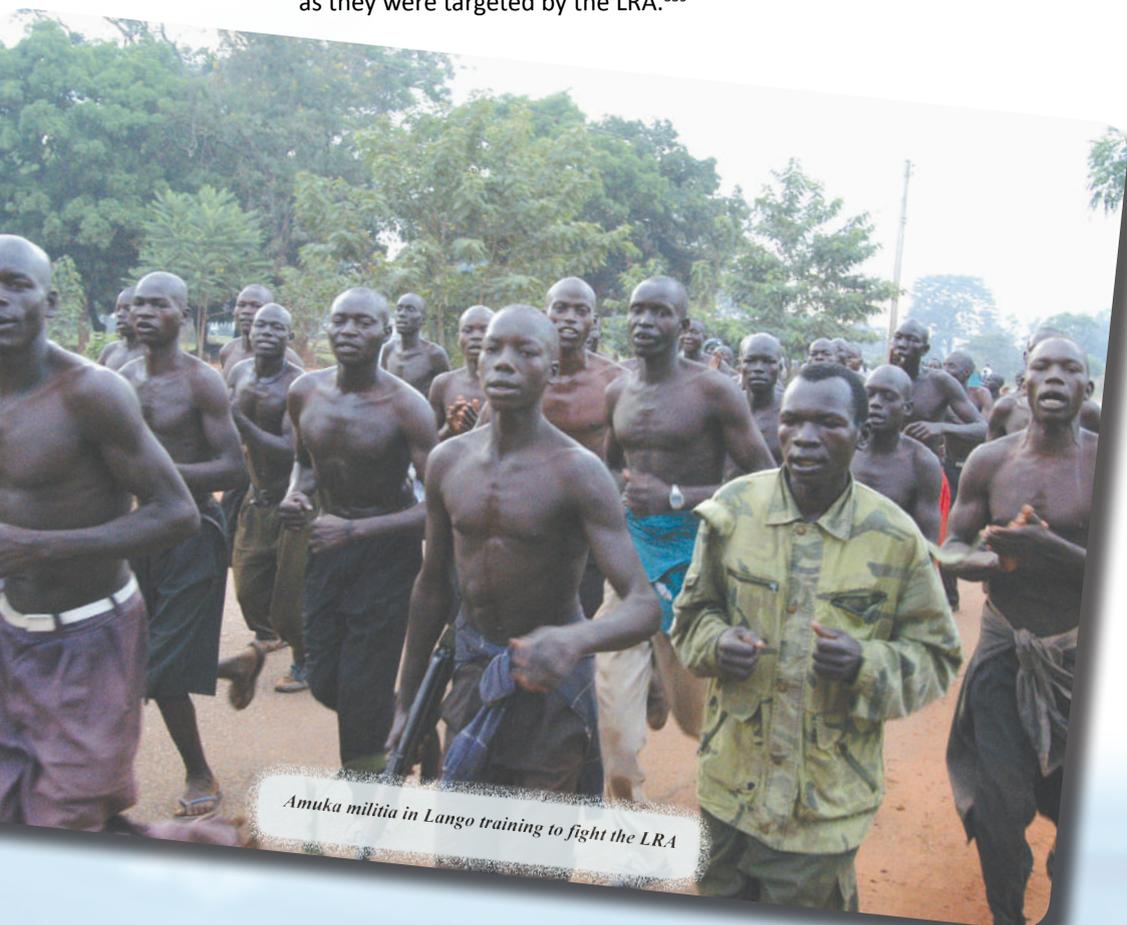
People in Lango experienced the northern conflict differently than their neighbours in the north. Despite similar experiences of NRA vengeance attacks, the Langi did not sympathise as much with the UPDA as did the Acholi. This was largely because the UNLA was commanded by those who had overthrown Obote, a Langi. Instead, the Langi felt more sympathy for the HSMF. A number of young men joined Alice Lakwena, partly in the hope that it might help them restore Obote's power. When the HSMF passed through Lango, the prevalence of guns is said to have declined drastically, possibly because these new recruits took weapons with them.

The LRA first entered Lango in the beginning of the 1990s through Pader, in search of food. In 1992, they burnt Abia Primary School and abducted people. LRA atrocities in Lango intensified after 2003, when the war spread to the west and particularly the east. This was partly due to the fact that the LRA rebels were again in search of food, which



*Abducted girl-children in the LRA camps*

was hard to come by in the Acholi region, with the majority of people displaced in IDP camps. Further, perhaps, the LRA sought the support of former rebels in these areas.<sup>358</sup> The LRA's incursion in Lango caused mass displacement and suffering similar to that in Acholiland. With support from the UPDF, the population organised itself in militias called the Amuka Boys, also referred to as the Rhino group. Participants commented that these poorly trained and under-equipped militias were among the primary victims of conflict, as they were targeted by the LRA.<sup>359</sup>



*Amuka militia in Lango training to fight the LRA*

## 75. Opon-Acak's alleged rebellion (1999)

Participants in Lango believed that the alleged rebellion by Opon-Acak, the former Chief of Staff of the army under Obote, was fabricated by the Government to get rid of him. It was alleged he had started a rebel group called 'Citizens's Army for Multi Party Politics' (CAMP), with only twelve members and just a few guns. Many participants doubted the Government's claim that Opon-Acak was killed in battle.<sup>360</sup>

358 Lomo, Z. and Hovil, L. (2004) Behind the violence: The war in northern Uganda. Institute for Security Studies, Pretoria, South Africa

359 Field Research conducted in Lira District

360 Research conducted in Lira District.

## 76. Post-conflict tensions in Lango (2006 – present)

As in Acholi, Lango witnessed the rise of a number of intercommunity conflicts when the LRA conflict subsided. Often, the policy of decentralisation added to the conflict dynamics. For example, the number of land conflicts in the region increased. Among these were a dispute between four districts over Mulamu Market at Oromo border, and a conflict over Nekapiri Market between Apac and Lira. The prevalence of land conflicts between individuals and clans in the wake of displacement also intensified.

In the wake of the northern conflict, communities in Lango are disgruntled over the post-conflict aid, which is perceived to be disproportionately distributed in Acholi sub-region, at the expense of Lango, Teso and West Nile sub-regions. Particularly with regard to resettlement packages, people observed discrimination. One participant observed;

*“People wonder whether it is peace building or conflict building.”<sup>361</sup>*

Participants further lamented that the Acholi were disproportionately assigned big jobs at NGOs in northern Uganda. For their part, the Acholis complained that with Rebecca Otengo (a Langi) as State minister for Northern Uganda, all NGOs were heading to Lango and Karamoja sub-regions.

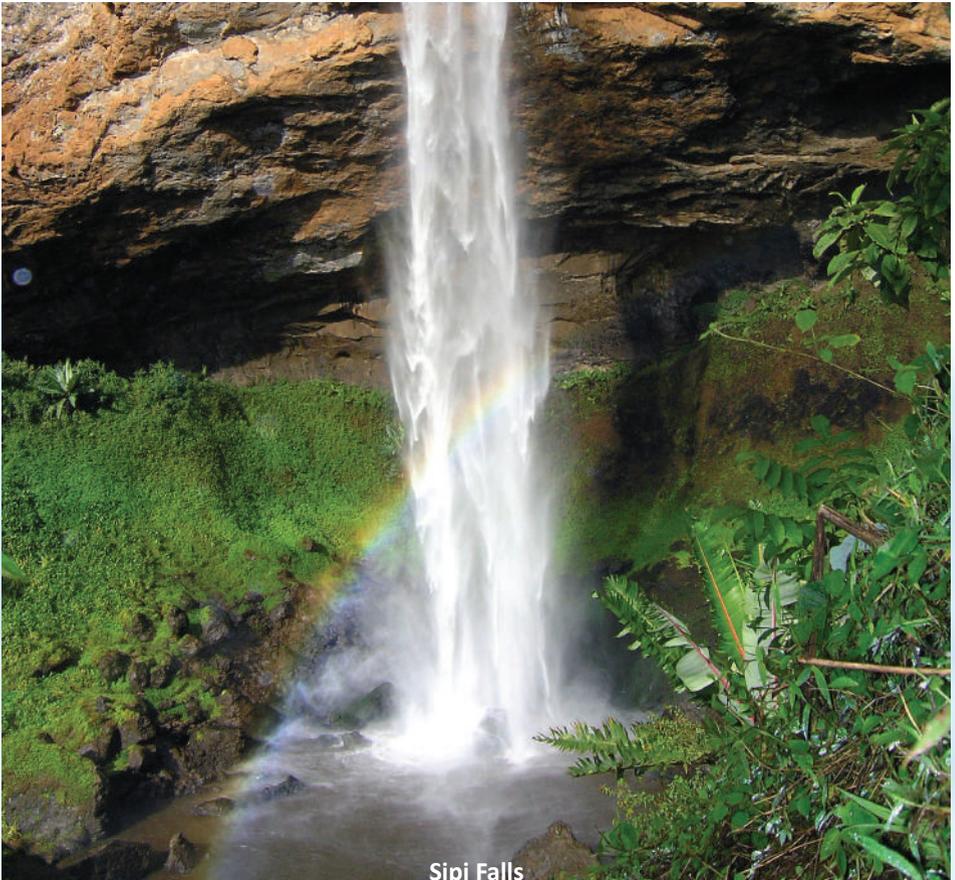
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361 Field Research conducted in Lira District

# CHAPTER

## EASTERN REGION CONFLICTS

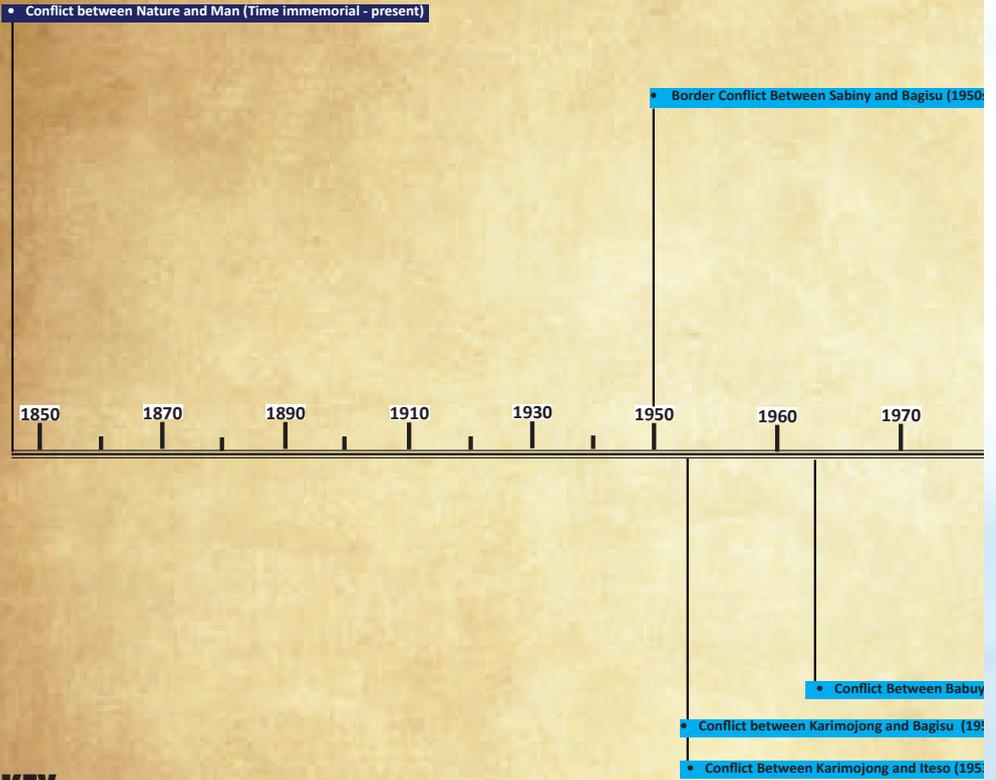
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Sipi Falls



# EASTERN REGION C

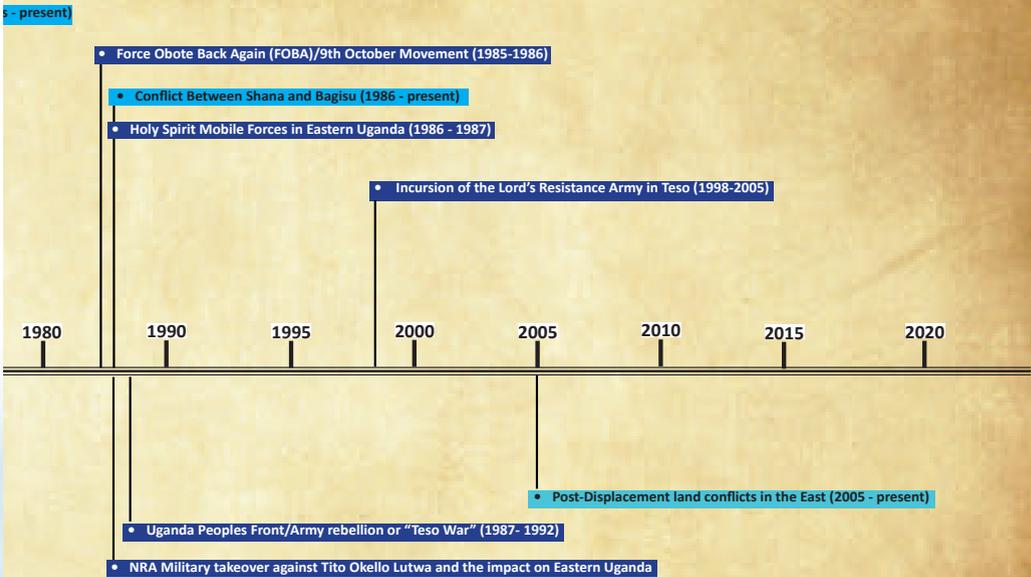


## KEY

### CONFLICT SECTIONS

- SECTION I: Conflicts Between Ethnic Groups
- SECTION II: Post-1986 Conflicts in Eastern Uganda
- SECTION III:
- SECTION IV:

# CONFLICT TIMELINE



and Bhatikhana (Post Independence - present)

53 - present)

8 - present)

## CONFLICTS BETWEEN ETHNIC GROUPS

*Conflicts between ethnic groups are present throughout Uganda, but were most commonly discussed in the country's eastern region. This section can be considered a case study of the nature of ethnic conflicts in Uganda, which seem to be primarily related to land, district leadership and discrimination against minority groups, with the additional dynamics, in the case of eastern Uganda, of raids by neighbouring Karimojong.*

### 77. Border Conflict Between Sabiny and Bagisu (1950s - present)

Land conflicts have defined the relationship between the Bagisu and the Sabiny tribes since the 1950s. In 1961, tensions between the two groups mounted when Benedict Kiwanuka, President General of the Democratic Party (DP) and the Chief Minister in the Uganda Legislative Council, gave the Sabiny a district called Kapchorwa as a reward for overwhelmingly voting for the DP in the pre-Independence elections. Conflict arose regarding the boundaries of this district, as they were not clearly defined. The Sabiny people hold that Kapchorwa borders Sironko District and contains the entirety of Bulambuli District.<sup>362</sup> In 1979, conflict over land between the Sabiny and the Bagisu left hundreds of Bagisu dead and many others wounded and homeless. Following this bloodshed, numerous attacks and counter-attacks took place. Countless individuals remain without land to this day.

The conflict was compounded in 1986 when the Bagisu people were evicted from Mount Elgon Forest Reserve and in the process became landless as the Government failed to resettle them. The displaced Bagisu fled to Bulambuli District where the Sabiny of Kapchorwa also claim land ownership, resulting in further violent encounters between the two communities. This district border issue and its impacts have been raised in Parliament. However, the Government seems reluctant to settle the dispute. Insecurity and fear of attacks continue to plague both groups. The Sabiny are accused of spying on and attacking the Bagisu community, as well as refusing to negotiate for peace and reconciliation with Bagisu over violence committed during past conflicts.

### **Conflicts between Karimojong and neighbouring tribes over Karimojong raids (1953 – present)**

### 78. Conflict Between Karimojong and Iteso

Karimojong livelihood revolves primarily around livestock rearing, an indispensable part of their social and cultural lives.<sup>363</sup> The Karimojong live in a semi-arid area in northeast Uganda where the pasture for their animals suffers from minimal rainfall. These challenging conditions fuel conflicts between the Karimojong and their neighbours, who are also cultivators, but with extensive land and more access to water.<sup>364</sup> The Karimojong

<sup>362</sup> Research conducted in Bulambuli District.

<sup>363</sup> Research conducted in Soroti, Bulambuli, Nakapiripirit and Pader Districts

<sup>364</sup> Nannyonjo, J. (2005) Conflicts, poverty and human development in Northern Uganda. United Nations



*Karimojong elder*

conflict with neighbours can be traced back to colonial times when Uganda was under British rule.

The participants indicated that during the 1950s, cattle disease in Karamoja forced the British to quarantine many of the region's cows in order to control the spread of the illness. All cattle coming from Karamoja were to undergo screening before being allowed to enter other districts. Any found to be sick were immediately killed and burnt; Soroti District was gazetted by the authorities for this disposal process. Many Karimojong livestock were disposed of in this manner, to the objection of the Karimojong community. This caused a rift between Karimojong and Iteso, as the former collectively accused the Iteso of allying with the British to steal and eat healthy Karimojong livestock. According to participants, this conflict forced Karimojong to organize themselves with a vengeful attitude and inspired attacks on a significant number of Iteso animals. Numerous subsequent raiding expeditions and counter attacks plagued the Iteso-Karimojong relationship, with spears, bows and arrows used as primary weaponry.<sup>365</sup> The cycle of violence was transformed in 1979 during the Liberation War that ousted Idi Amin. The Karimojong raided the Moroto barracks armoury in 1979 and looted numerous guns, which they used to raid their minimally armed neighbours.<sup>366</sup> This marked the beginning of a deadly

trend of armed raids by the Karimojong that continues to cause insecurity in eastern and northern Uganda today.<sup>367</sup>

In 1986, the violent raids intensified significantly due to the lack of governmental protection from the National Resistance Army (NRA). It was even rumoured that the

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University Research Paper No. 2005/47, pg. 3

365 Research conducted in Soroti and Bulambuli Districts

366 Also see Epelu-Opio, J. (2009) Teso War 1986-1992: Causes and Consequences, Kampala, Uganda, Fountain Publishers

367 Research conducted in Soroti and Bulambuli Districts; see also Nannyonjo, J. (2005) Conflicts, poverty and human development in Northern Uganda. United Nations University Research Paper No. 2005/47, pp. 1-4.; Refugee Law Project (2002) War as normal: The impact of violence on the lives of displaced communities in Pader District, Northern Uganda. RLP Working Paper No. 5. pp 6-7; Doom, R. and Vlassenroot, K. (1999) Kony's message: A new koine? The Lord's Resistance Army in Northern Uganda. African Affairs 98 (390), pp. 5-36

NRA supported the looting of the Iteso cattle.<sup>368</sup> Following a disarmament exercise by the UPDF in the 1990s, there was a noticeable decrease in the number of raids.<sup>369</sup>

The Karimojong raids remain among the most serious conflicts and causes of instability and insecurity in the Teso sub-region. The armed raids, rapes, and looting associated with this conflict also caused displacement of the population, especially in Katakwi District.<sup>370</sup> Despite disarmament of the Karimojong, they still pose a serious challenge to peace and stability in the region, leading to an impoverishment of the Teso community. Various initiatives by Iteso cultural, religious, and community leaders, as well as civil society organisations engaging in peace meetings and mediation, have led to some slight improvements. However, the conflict is still seen by inhabitants as a huge inhibitor of peace and development not only in Teso, but across eastern Uganda.<sup>371</sup>

## 79. Conflict between Karimojong and Bagisu

Participants in Bulambuli, Soroti and Gulu districts indicated that there has long been a conflict between the Karimojong and Bagisu communities. It is defined by Karimojong raids on Bagisu property and cattle, which have claimed numerous innocent lives. This is regarded as a historical conflict dating back to the 1960s.<sup>372</sup>

Participants described how the first attacks, in which rudimentary weapons such as spears, arrows, and bows were used, were less severe than subsequent ones.<sup>373</sup> However, this changed after the Karimojong raided the armoury in Moroto in 1979,<sup>374</sup> gaining access to heavier arms which they used to attack the Bagisu and other neighbouring communities,<sup>375</sup> resulting in looting, rape and the death of many innocent local people.

Male participants also identified the NRA bush war as a notable conflict which resulted in the loss of cattle, life and property. During the height of the fight between the Tito Okello's Government forces and Museveni's NRA, Government forces stationed in eastern Uganda were redeployed to fight the NRA as the latter advanced toward Kampala. The resulting vacuum left eastern Uganda without adequate army protection, thereby giving free reign to Karimojong cattle raiders to attack and displace the unarmed Bagisu. The Bagisu seek Government compensation for losses suffered at the hands of the Karimojong. They also expressed desire for reconciliation with the Karimojong, though

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368 Refugee Law Project (2002) War as normal: The impact of violence on the lives of displaced communities in Pader District, Northern Uganda" RLP Working Paper No. 5. p. 7

369 Research conducted in Soroti District

370 Nannyonjo, J. (2005) Conflicts, poverty and human development in Northern Uganda. United Nations University Research Paper No. 2005/47, pg. 3

371 Research conducted in Soroti and Bulambuli Districts

372 Research conducted in Bulambuli, Soroti and Gulu Districts

373 Research conducted in Bulambuli and Soroti Districts

374 Nannyonjo, J. (2005) Conflicts, poverty and human development in Northern Uganda. United Nations University Research Paper No. 2005/47, pp. 1-4; Refugee Law Project. (2002) War as normal: The impact of violence on the lives of displaced communities in Pader District, Northern Uganda, RLP Working Paper No. 5. pp. 5-6; Doom, R. and Vlassenroot, K. (1999) Kony's message: A new koine? The Lord's Resistance Army in Northern Uganda. African Affairs 98 (390), pp. 5-36

375 Research conducted in Bulambuli, Soroti and Gulu Districts

no concrete steps seem to have been taken in this direction to date. While this conflict cannot be considered over, it has been alleviated by the Government's efforts to disarm the Karimojong, as well as the increased security in the region following the Uganda People's Defence Forces' deployment at the Bagisu borders. However, participants believed that if the Government were to withdraw or even reduce the number of soldiers present at the border, the cycle of violence and the armed raids would recommence.<sup>376</sup>

## 80. Conflict Between Babuya and Bhatikhana (Post Independence - present)

Both the Babuya and Bhatikhana are Bagisu by ethnicity, and live in Bulambuli District. The Babuya live in lower Bulambuli, the dry area of the district, whereas the Bhatikhani live in upper Bulambuli, the mountainous part of the district. Natural disasters often affect both areas, with lower Bulambuli suffering from floods during the wet season and drought during the dry season, and upper Bulambuli suffering from land and mud slides. The geographical separation seems to have caused a cultural division between the two tribes.

The majority Bhatikhana occupy most elected political positions in the district, leading to dissatisfaction among the minority Babuya. For example, the incumbent LC5 Chairman and the region's two members of Parliament are all from the upper region of the district. Participants expressed a common sentiment that all effective development programmes are directed to the upper Bulambuli people, leading to a sense of marginalization among the Babuya of lower Bulambuli. These individuals expressed a desire for a district or county of their own, in order to ensure fairer representation among elected positions.<sup>377</sup>

The perceived discrimination and differences between these communities are detrimental to peace. In 2011, for instance, when the Bhatikhana suffered from recurrent land and mudslides, assistance and quick relocation was necessary. The participants indicated that the Babuya, when asked to temporarily accommodate the vulnerable people of the upper plain on their land, refused and vowed never to support the Bhatikhana.<sup>378</sup>

## 81. Conflict Between Shana and Bagisu (1986 - present)

The Bagisu, the ethnic group considered to be indigenous in Bulambuli, and the Shana, who are considered 'immigrants' from western Uganda, once co-existed peacefully. It is believed that the Shana first settled in Budaka District and eventually migrated to Bulambuli District. This peaceful coexistence was disrupted in 1986 when the Government, in concert with the 'indigenous' Sabinu ethnic group, evicted members of the Bagisu community from Kapchorwa District where they had settled, for illegally living on Government land in Mount Elgon, as well as private land in Kapchorwa. The displaced Bagisu returned to Bulambuli and occupied any open space they could find, claiming land from the Shana in particular. The situation deteriorated as a result of increasing districtisation combined with the effects of multi-party politics, which required each

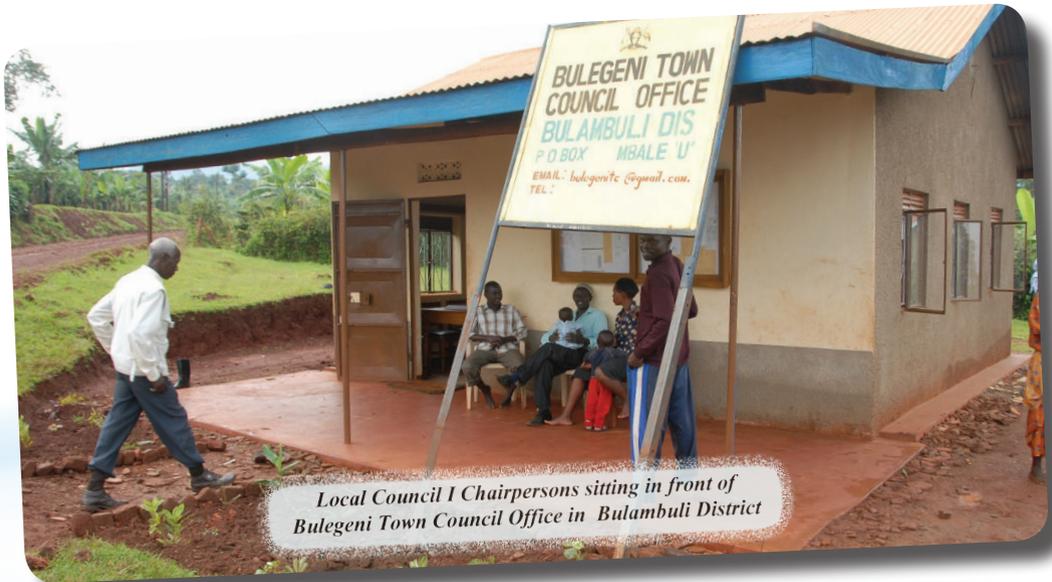
376 Research conducted in Bulambuli and Soroti Districts

377 Research conducted in Bulambuli District

378 Ibid

## COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

district to elect their own leaders by majority vote. This increased conflict between ethnic minorities and majorities in districts, as the former saw the latter triumph in district elections. The Shana felt marginalized by the Bagisu.<sup>379</sup> Land ownership, illegal habitation, and disputed political representation at the district level are therefore the main sources of conflict between the Shana and the Bagisu.



Local Council I Chairpersons sitting in front of Bulegeni Town Council Office in Bulambuli District

The conflict escalated after the national elections of 2011, when a new administrative unit, the Bulegeni Town Council, was created at the request of the Shana leaders. Numerous physical confrontations and counter attacks between these two communities further fuelled deep-seated animosity and insecurity. Crops and houses were destroyed, whilst many people were forced to flee in fear of mob justice and rival attacks.<sup>380</sup> A religious leader in Bulambuli district stated;

*"I am Mugisu, right? I anticipate mass killings and destructions in the near future between these two ethnic groups in constant fighting since the district authorities and the central Government is not coming forward boldly to help settle the conflicts but instead trying to smoothen it by sending a few dotted police and UPDF to guard a few households and villages, leaving the vast remaining areas vulnerable to become battle or murder fields: Today they are using machetes, hoes, and spears, tomorrow they might use something more sophisticated, who knows?"<sup>381</sup>*

379 Research conducted in Bulambuli District

380 When researchers visited the scene on 5th November 2011, they saw the many houses burnt, banana and coffee plantations destroyed and many abandoned houses whose owners fled to unknown places in fear of attacks and mob justice from rivals. They also saw a number of armed police and soldiers deployed in the area to keep peace

381 Research conducted in Bulambuli District

In the Shana's quest for justice, they have taken the majority Bagisu leadership to court over their decision to forego consultation of the Shana in naming the Town Council. To date, the Town Council is still not functioning due to the lack of leadership and administrative structure since the Shana boycotted the 2011 election.

The on-going conflict between the two communities has had a detrimental impact on peace and development in the district, and many key figures within these communities refuse to negotiate on the issues at hand.

## POST-1986 CONFLICTS IN EASTERN UGANDA

*As in northern Uganda, the regime change that brought the NRA/M to power also introduced a period of insecurity, conflict, insurgency, and violence to the people in eastern Uganda. Violence could be ascribed to insurgency groups with origins in the region, spill-over effects from groups with origins in northern Uganda, as well as to Government counter-insurgency operations.*

### 82. NRA military takeover, and its impact on Eastern Uganda (1986 onwards)

Historically, regime changes in Uganda have been undemocratic and characterised by violence and use of the military. This also holds true for Yoweri Kaguta Museveni's takeover of power. Tito Okello Lutwa opted for peace talks that took place in Nairobi and subsequently entered into a peace agreement with Museveni. The NRA leader ignored



Monument commemorating the Mukura massacre

## COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

the agreements and continued fighting, eventually defeating Okello and becoming President. Museveni's military overthrow of Okello set the scene for a number of regional conflicts that continue to trouble the population. Prior to 1986, many of Okello's men were redeployed when the fighting intensified as the NRA marched on Kampala, leaving the eastern Districts of Soroti and Bulambuli inadequately protected. The whole of eastern Uganda was left vulnerable to Karimojong attacks and cattle raids, as there were not enough soldiers to provide adequate protection to the people and their property. As a result, the Karimojong were able to intensify their raids.

Despite the NRA's victory, insecurity in Teso remains a major issue. Instead of protecting the civilian population and their property against Karimojong raids, the new government was accused of supporting the Karimojong and of perpetrating mass violence against the Iteso community. Such abuses included killings, torture, and unlawful arrest and disappearance. A significant part of the eastern region was perceived to be a Uganda People's Congress stronghold, and the Government feared resistance and rebel collaboration. The Mukura massacre of 1989, in which 69 civilians, accused by the NRA of rebel collaboration, died after being suffocated in a railway wagon, was described as one of the most unforgettable acts that contributed to continued condemnation of, and resistance to the NRA Government. Such atrocities inspired a significant part of the Iteso community to form, join, or support various rebel groups, including Force Obote Back Again and the Uganda People's Army.<sup>382</sup>



*An abandoned building in Teso during the LRA insurgency*

382 Research conducted in Soroti and Bulambuli Districts

*One comprehensive account of the Teso War is provided in the book Teso War: Causes and Consequences, by Professor Justin Epelu-Opio. The book covers the war from an eye-witness perspective. He hails from the region and was instrumental in bringing peace as the head of the Presidential Committee on Teso for Peace. He kindly provided RLP with a number of extracts from his book for the Compendium's enrichment. The following is based on Epelu-Opio's account of Government protection against, and collaboration with the Karimojong cattle raiders, and the role this played in the upsurge of rebellion.*

In Teso, one of the first NRA/NRM administrators, the Resident District Commissioner (formerly Special District Administrator), made insinuating remarks to the people. He was quoted to have said that "the strength of the Teso people is cattle and so when these animals have been removed then the region would be rendered poor".

During the Okello junta regime, cattle raiding had become institutionalised. The regime did not check the behaviour of the Karimojong raiders. It was alleged that the Okello regime operated in a spirit of revenge, because the Iteso were considered to have been favoured in the military under Obote. The Deputy Minister of Defence, Mr. P. Otai, the and Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs, Col. W. Omaria, were both Iteso. When the NRA took over power in early 1986, cattle rustling by the Karimojong ceased instantly because the Government took tough measures against the raiders. The NRA was received with ululation in Teso.

But the jubilation by the Iteso was shortlived. Remnants of the UNLA staged war against the NRA in northern Uganda shortly after they had come to power. This resulted in the NRA redeploying the militia from Iteso, where they were protecting against Karimojong raiders, to the North. A vacuum was again created in Teso. The Karimojong started raiding cattle deep into Teso and beyond to Pallisa. For the first time the rustlers reached deep into Kaberamaido and all the villages of Teso. Thus, the Teso people came to blame both the Okello and NRA regime for conniving with the Karimojong.

The NRA was too thin on the ground to contain the Karimojong raids and the Government was blamed by Teso people for neglecting the region. As a result, the Teso youth, deserters from the UNLA, police, prisons and the disbanded Special Force formed a fighting force against the NRA/NRM Government late 1986.

The decision to fight the Okello Junta had apparently been made already in late 1985. The entry in power of the NRA accelerated the formation of FOBA and the 9th October Movement, with the aim of returning Obote to power. These groups were later followed by the UPF/UPA, which received political backing by prominent Teso politicians and some military officers.

Disagreements among four prominent Teso political leaders in exile caused problems in the operations of UPA. This was aggravated by the regional rifts among the fighters of the UPA. The group eventually succumbed and crumbled in 1992.

## COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

Participants specifically mentioned a former Obote soldier known as Werikhe who did not join the NRA but instead fought against them. He was believed to be one of the FOBA commanders in charge of the Mafudu areas of Sironko District during late 1980s and early 1990s. Ill equipped and with few followers, Werikhe was quickly defeated by the NRA. Werikhe fled to Kenya where he died a natural death without facing justice.<sup>383</sup> The participants wondered how victims and the affected population can access and benefit from justice if a perpetrator flees Uganda.

Participants also indicated that, in response to FOBA activities in eastern Uganda, the NRA sent soldiers to Soroti and Bulambuli districts to suppress the rebels. Participants alleged that in 1990, as part of the counter-insurgency movement, one unnamed NRA officer forcefully circumcised 100 men as a collective punishment to instil fear and to compel the community and anti-NRA groups such as FOBA to denounce rebellion and support the new government of President Museveni. Of the 100 men, 90 bled to death.<sup>384</sup> Participants blamed the incumbent government for its failure to arrest and prosecute the responsible UPDF officer who had commanded the crimes.

### **83. Force Obote Back Again/9<sup>th</sup> October Movement (1985-1986)**

The rebel group Force Obote Back Again (FOBA)<sup>385</sup> is said to have been founded in late 1985 by supporters of Obote's Uganda People's Congress (UPC) government, after he had been overthrown. Peter Otai, a former Minister of Security during Obote's regime, led the group, which strove to reinstate Obote as president. This rebellion was most active in eastern Uganda, in particular in Mbale and Soroti Districts. The "9<sup>th</sup> October" Movement's name refers to Uganda's national Independence Day. The implication was that on this day, Obote legitimately received power by the British, and that his leadership should be restored.

Like other rebel groups, FOBA was infamous for indoctrinating innocent civilians and inciting them against the NRA Government, insisting that the Government was led by a murderous and oppressive regime. FOBA was also known for raping women and looting. The NRA reacted with violence in many communities where FOBA was operating in an attempt to curb the group's support.<sup>386</sup> Some participants



<sup>383</sup> Research conducted in Bulambuli District

<sup>384</sup> Ibid

<sup>385</sup> Also known as "Force Obote Back Army", see Jones, B. (2005) The church in the village, the village in the church. *Cahiers D'Études Africaines*, 45(2), pp. 497-517

<sup>386</sup> Research conducted in Bulambuli and Soroti Districts

believed that FOBA was a military group initiated by the NRA Government. They thought that the atrocities committed by this group were a strategy to eradicate support for previous regimes and attempts to bring back past leaders, especially Obote.<sup>387</sup>

Though not entirely clear as to when this war ended, participants from the districts of Soroti and Bulambuli suggested that FOBA operated for a short period of time before it changed its name to Uganda People's Army (UPA) (see conflict no. 85 below).<sup>388</sup>



*Peter Otai (left) sits with former President Muwanga (second left), then President Obote (second right), and soon to be President Tito Okello Lutwa (right) in 1984*

Participants viewed this change as a strategic move to elicit national support and make the group sound more inclusive, as FOBA had been criticised for being too tribalistic.<sup>389</sup>

387 Ibid

388 Jones, B. (2005) The church in the village, the village in the church. *Cahiers D'Études Africaines*, 45(2), pp. 497-517; Also see: Jones, B. (2009) *Beyond the state in rural Uganda*. Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press

389 Ibid

## 84. Holy Spirit Mobile Forces/Holy Spirit Movement in Eastern Uganda (1986 - 1987)

Alice Auma Lakwena founded the Holy Spirit Movement (HSM) in northern Uganda in 1986 to serve as a fighting force to redeem Uganda from evil and bloodshed.<sup>390</sup> The HSM operated under the guidance of a spirit called Lakwena, speaking through Alice Auma. The HSM forces used stones as their major weapon of war, believing that stone would miraculously turn into bullets or bombs.<sup>391</sup>

In 1987, HSM also moved into the Teso sub-region (Soroti District). The movement established its presence in Tubur sub-county (Soroti District) for approximately six months where it endeavoured to gain the support of the local population without resorting to the use of force. The participants observed that the movement did not attract many Iteso followers.<sup>392</sup>

The participants noted that the HSM did not loot from local communities, electing instead to buy or beg for food. Similarly, the forces did not forcefully conscript or abduct civilians. Some youth joined the movement voluntarily, often with the intention of securing access to food. They also did not commit serious atrocities against civilians as the fighters believed that the spirits did not allow the killing of innocent civilians.<sup>393</sup> However, the HSM did attack the NRA detachments and barracks on numerous occasions while proceeding toward Kampala, and the population suffered reprisals by the National Resistance Army (NRA), including arrests of suspected rebel collaborators. In a number of cases, participants accused the NRA of burying people alive.<sup>394</sup> Determined not to cease their fight until they captured the capital, HSM forces engaged in continuous fights with the NRA from Soroti to other eastern districts, including Mbale and Jinja. The NRA finally defeated the HSM in October 1987, near Jinja.<sup>395</sup>

## 85. Uganda Peoples Front/Army rebellion or “Teso War” (1987- 1992)

The Uganda People’s Front (UPF) and its Army (UPA) were formed in Teso in 1987 in opposition to the government of President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni. The UPF<sup>396</sup> was

390 Literature suggests different years in which the HSM was active, for instance, see: Lindemann, S. (2011) Just another change in guard? Broad-based politics and civil war in Museveni’s Uganda. *African Affairs*, 110(440). pp. 387-416; Doom, R. and Vlassenroot, K. (1999) Kony’s message: A new koine? The Lord’s Resistance Army in Northern Uganda. *African Affairs*, 98 (390), pp. 5-36; Nannyonjo, J. (2005) Conflicts, poverty and human development in Northern Uganda. United Nations University Research Paper No. 2005/47, p. 3.

391 Research conducted in Soroti District

392 Ibid

393 Doom, R. and Vlassenroot, K. (1999) Kony’s message: A new koine? The Lord’s Resistance Army in Northern Uganda. *African Affairs*, 98 (390), pp. 5-36

394 Research conducted in Tororo District

395 Literature seems to suggest the HSM was active in 1986 and 1987. For instance, see: Lindemann, S. (2011) Just another change in guard? Broad-based politics and civil war in Museveni’s Uganda. *African Affairs*, 110(440). pp. 387-416; Doom, R. and Vlassenroot, K. (1999) Kony’s message: A new koine? The Lord’s Resistance Army in Northern Uganda. *African Affairs*, 98 (390), pp. 5-36

396 Peter Otai was a Minister of State for Defence under Obote II administration (1981-1985); Research conducted in Soroti District



*NRA soldiers pose for a photo after capturing UPA prophetic sheep (Ausi)*

led by Peter Otai,<sup>397</sup> who was responsible for coordinating logistics and other support from sympathetic members of the diaspora.<sup>398</sup> The UPA is said to have been led by Major General Moses Eregu, also known as ‘Papa 1’ or ‘Hitler’.<sup>399</sup> The UPF was primarily made up of former (Iteso) soldiers from the Special Forces of the Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA), as well as numerous ex-soldiers of the former Milton Obote and Tito Okello Lutwa Government armies.

An overwhelming majority of the participants justified their initial support for the UPF/A by referring to the prevalent insecurity in the Teso sub-region at that time. This was caused by Karimojong, who had intensified their raids of

Iteso cattle while also raping women, looting, and killing innocent civilians. In addition, the participants of all the FGDs indicated that the National Resistance Army (NRA), following their take-over in 1986, contributed to the insecurity as they perpetrated many human rights violations in the Teso sub-region, including rape, torture, killing civilians and former soldiers, abduction and massacres.<sup>400</sup> The prevailing insecurity inspired former UNLA soldiers and other able-bodied men to launch the UPF/A rebellion that fought the NRA from 1987 to 1992.

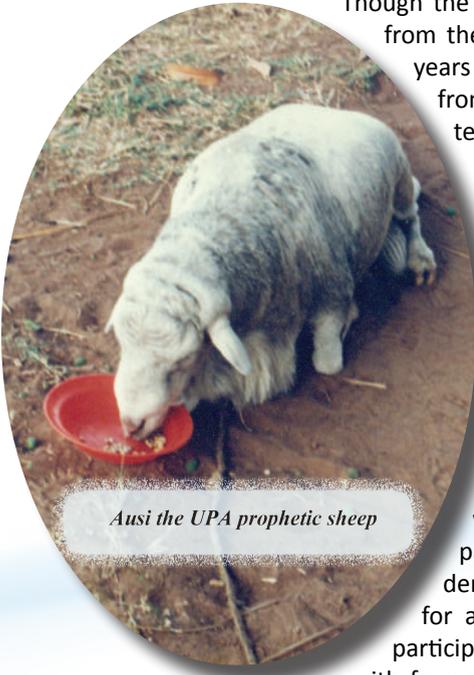
397 UPF was not another rebel group. It was the name that was given to the groups of civilian supporters at grass-root in Soroti who were providing logistical support to the UPA such as: food, drugs, clothes and information to the fighters

398 Ibid

399 Ibid

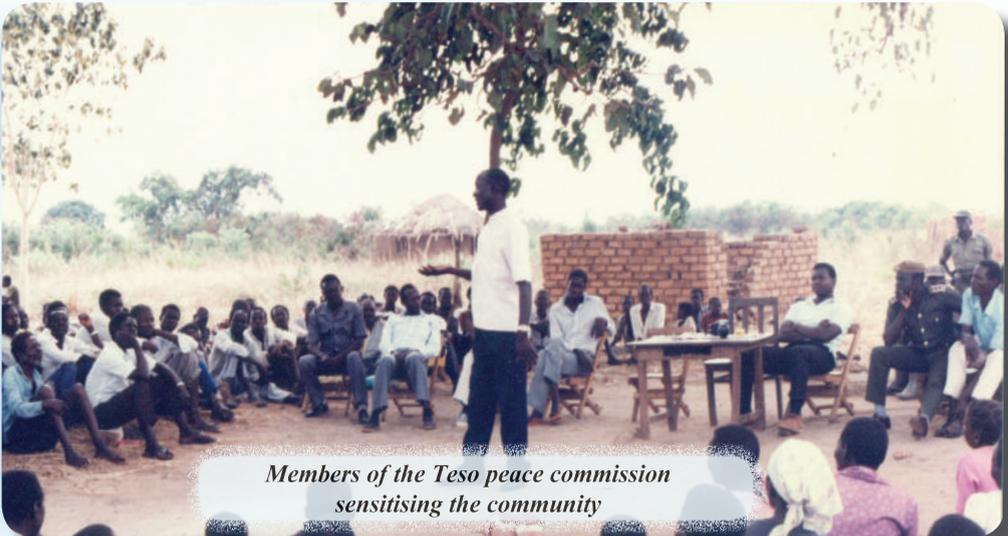
400 Lindemann, S. (2011) Just another change in guard? Broad-based politics and civil war in Museveni’s Uganda. *African Affairs*, 110(440). pp. 387-416.

Though the UPF/A initially received popular support from the Teso population, this dwindled in later years as the UPF/A was accused of deviating from their original cause, adopting policies of terrorism that targeted local populations.<sup>401</sup>



*Ausi the UPA prophetic sheep*

After tireless efforts by elders as well as the religious and cultural leaders of the Teso sub-region, a peace commission called the Presidential Commission for Teso was established in September 1990. This Commission was set up to mediate peace between the rebels, the government and members of the local population who were being brutally victimised.<sup>402</sup> This initiative, combined with other strategies, such as a presidential pardon for demobilized rebel fighters who denounced the rebellion, paved the way for an end to the conflict in 1992.<sup>403</sup> Many participants referred to the lack of reconciliation with former UPA fighters who received presidential pardon from the Government and now live amongst the



*Members of the Teso peace commission sensitising the community*

401 Research conducted in Soroti District

402 Lindemann, S. (2011) Just another change in guard? Broad-based politics and civil war in Museveni's Uganda. *African Affairs*, 110(440). pp. 387-416

403 Research conducted in Soroti District; Jones, B. (2005) The church in the village, the village in the church. *Cahiers D'Études Africaines*, 45(2), pp. 497-517; Lindemann, S. (2011) Just another change in guard? Broad-based politics and civil war in Museveni's Uganda. *African Affairs*, 110(440). pp. 387-416.

population they once terrorised as one of the major remaining challenges.<sup>404</sup>

*The following is based on an extract of Professor Justin Epelu-Opio's book Teso War: Causes and Consequences, which deals with the causes of the UPA war, as well as strategies to bring the war to an end, from an eye witness perspective.*

In Teso region, the militia created by the Obote II Government to counter the Karimojong cattle raids was disbanded some time in 1986. Some militia members were retained and absorbed into the NRA rank and file. However, the youth responded eagerly to inciting statements by the Resident District Commissioner's, who claimed, for example, 'that the Government wanted to sell their land to foreigners'. This contributed to the emergence of a war that led to massive destruction of infrastructure and poverty. People lost sense of direction.

The government employed various ways and means of ending the war, besides the military approach. This included a peace mission including three ministers from Teso sub-region. While conducting their mission in 1987 the ministers were abducted by the rebels. One minister managed to escape after about 3 months in captivity. The second ended up being shot dead by the fleeing rebels. The third one was rescued by the NRA and is still alive.

Other attempts by the Government to end the rebellion were a general amnesty, granted throughout the country, a presidential pardon and the establishment of internally displaced peoples' camps (as in northern Uganda). In Teso specifically, the Government set up security committees chaired by Members of Parliament. Although these measures resulted in the surrender of some rebels, the insurgency persisted.

Finally, the Government set up a Presidential Commission for Teso in September 1990. It was chaired by Prof. Epelu-Opio Justin. The President gave the Commission four terms of reference. The first and main one was "to find ways of ending the war in Teso for GOOD."

The Presidential Commission for Teso preached and encouraged the idea of reconciliation between the Government and the Teso people on one hand and the ex-rebels and the people who had been traumatised by the war on the other. It was successful in ending the rebellion. The Commission organised seminars and workshops besides organising cultural events across the region. Families were able to meet and discuss the pros and cons of the war. The ex-rebels were integrated in their communities without any problem. Their relatives forgave them for the atrocities they had committed in their remit areas.

By April 1992 the Teso war ended soon after the capture of the infamous Ram nicknamed "Commander Ausi". This ram had accompanied the rebels during the rebellion and was revered by them.

## 86. Incursion of the Lord's Resistance Army into Teso (1998-2005)

The incursion of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) into Teso was described by participants to have taken place in numerous phases. The first phase commenced on 16 June 1998 when the LRA looted the Orungu Roman Catholic Mission Centre in Katakwi District before retreating to Acholiland. In 2000, several individuals, ostensibly with mental disabilities, stayed in Soroti for a short time. It was subsequently alleged that they had been LRA spies using mental disability as a disguise.<sup>405</sup>

In 2003,<sup>406</sup> the LRA resurfaced when they stormed Obalanga sub-county,<sup>407</sup> Amuria District, and looted a health centre and committed numerous atrocities, including mass displacement, killing, raping women and girls, and conscripting children as child soldiers. They subsequently spread to other parts of Soroti. The intensity and brutality of the LRA operation in the Teso sub-region led to the formation of a militia called the Arrow Boys in 2003, under the leadership of Musa Ecweru and Mike Mukula. The militia, comprised of Iteso youth and men, fought to expel the LRA from their land. This local



405 Research conducted in Soroti District

406 Ibid

407 In Obalanga, the LRA infiltrated Teso in 2003. It became the largest Internally Displaced Person (IDP) camp in Teso Sub region harbouring over 40,000 IDPs. Obalanga is also has the largest mass grave in Teso with approximately 365 remains of victims buried in it. See: Justice and Reconciliation Project "Field Notes XIV" (2012).

militia received support from local leaders and ultimately also from the Government. Participants acknowledged the contribution of the Arrow Boys toward driving the LRA out of Soroti, though they also expressed concerns that the LRA rebellion has not yet ended. Furthermore, the participants indicated that the animosity between the Acholi and Iteso resulting from the LRA incursion in Teso, would need to be addressed.

One female participant in Tubur sub-county, Soroti District stated;

*“We hear that LRA are no longer in Uganda but for some of us whose children were either killed or kidnapped and their whereabouts are not known feel that the LRA are around, if they are not around, then where are my children they abducted when I was seeing?” She further said that “The Arrow Boys and UPDF fought fierce battles with LRA, defeated them and drove them out of Teso land and Uganda, but we the women are fighting psychological wars of painful endless thoughts, worries and imagination over our children kidnapped by LRA, and this is going to finish us because there is nothing we can do about it.”<sup>408</sup>*

## POST-ARMED CONFLICT & DISPLACEMENT CONFLICTS IN THE EASTERN REGION

*As in northern Uganda, the east suffered from land conflicts related to prior conflict-induced mass displacement of people.*

### 87. Post-Displacement land conflicts in the eastern region (2005 - present)

Participants from Teso revealed that the displacement of the region’s population to Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps during the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) conflict later resulted in significant disputes over the ownership of abandoned land. When the formerly displaced people finally returned to their villages, many found their land had come to be occupied by their neighbours. This caused frustration, anger and violence as well as biting poverty given the absence of appropriate mechanisms to amicably settle disputes. As a result, many poor people have resorted to poisoning and witchcraft to settle differences with one another, since both formal and traditional justice mechanisms have loopholes.<sup>409</sup> Other land conflicts include disputes between Iteso and neighbouring ethnic communities (Karimojong, Kumam, Acholi Labwor/Etur), as well as conflicts between Iteso and the Government over 38,000 hectares of land that was given by the community to the Government in 1960s.<sup>410</sup>

408 Research conducted in Soroti District

409 Ibid

410 Based on validation workshop discussions on September 18, 2012

## NATURAL DISASTERS

*Eastern Uganda has suffered not only from man-made disasters, but also from many natural disasters that have caused mass instability, displacement and unaddressed loss and trauma.*

### 88. Conflict between Nature and Humans (Time immemorial - present)

Natural disasters such as land and mud-slides, floods and droughts have repeatedly been a source of suffering in Bulambuli, causing the loss of lives, destruction of property and massive displacement. The people of upper Bulambuli live in fear as major cracks, stretching over 15 kilometres, leave the area vulnerable to new land and mud-slides.<sup>411</sup>

Participants expressed their sorrow while reminiscing about the August 2011 landslide. Caused by heavy rainfall, this displaced hundreds of households and caused several deaths across the district. Similar deaths and displacement also occurred in Bududa District following a massive landslide in 2010, resulting in a massive resettlement scheme implemented by the Government.<sup>412</sup>



*Aftermath of the land slides in Bududa that left over 100 people dead*

Pleas to the Government from the affected population of Bulambuli district for resettlement to safer areas have been in vain. The survivors of the landslides who lost their loved ones are requesting a special remembrance of the deceased through the construction of memorial sites. Initiatives to prevent landslides such as tree planting have commenced, but little is being done by the Government to address emotional distress and other consequences of the landslides.<sup>413</sup>

411 Research conducted in Bulambuli District

412 Refugee Law Project (2012) From arid zones into the desert: The Uganda national IDP policy implementation 2004-2012, working paper no. 23

413 Research conducted in Bulambuli District

# CHAPTER

## WESTERN REGION CONFLICTS

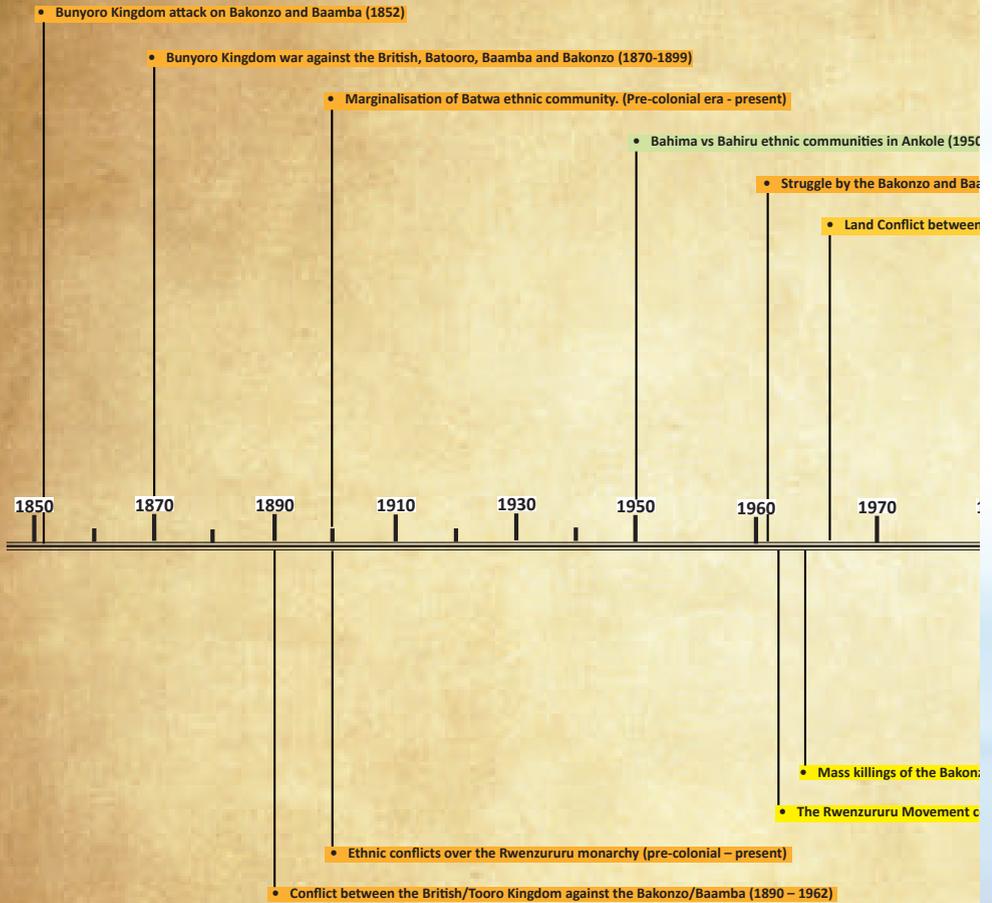
XIX



Rwenzori Mountains



# WESTERN REGION C

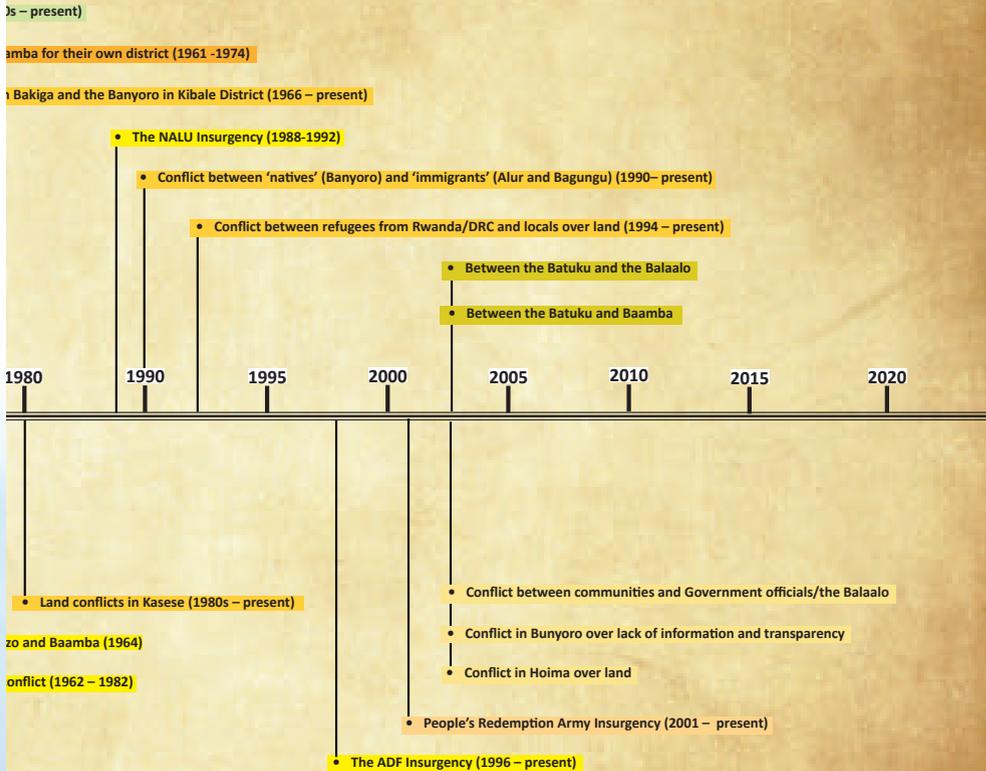


## KEY

### CONFLICT SECTIONS

- PRE-INDEPENDENCE CONFLICTS IN THE RWENZORI REGION
- POST-INDEPENDENCE: ARMED CONFLICT IN THE RWENZORI REGION
- CONFLICT IN THE ANKOLE REGION
- THE PEOPLE'S REDEMPTION ARMY
- CONFLICT BETWEEN 'NATIVES' AND 'IMMIGRANTS'
- CONFLICTS RELATED TO OIL: CONFLICT BETWEEN CITIZENS AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
- CONFLICTS RELATED TO OIL: CONFLICT OVER OIL BETWEEN ETHNIC GROUPS

# CONFLICT TIMELINE



## PRE-INDEPENDENCE CONFLICTS IN THE RWENZORI REGION

*More than in any other region visited, NRTJ participants in the Rwenzori region of western Uganda were able to detail a string of conflicts that had affected the region's inhabitants even before Uganda became an independent state. Most of these were related to the formation of new polities (organised into Kingdoms, or 'nations'), the dominance of one polity over another, and various levels of collaboration, marginalisation and rebellion between these polities.*

### 89. Bunyoro Kingdom attack on Bakonzo and Baamba (1852)

Tooro Kingdom emerged from the Bunyoro Kingdom in the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>414</sup> and was founded by Kaboyo Olimi I.<sup>415</sup> When Prince Kaboyo, the son of the King of Bunyoro, visited the area now known as Tooro with the ostensible purpose of strengthening his father's Kingdom, he instead rebelled and initiated the break away of Tooro from Bunyoro. During this process Prince Kaboyo was hosted by the Bakonzo and Baamba, prompting an attack on both groups by the Prince's father, King Kamurasi of the Bunyoro Kingdom.<sup>416</sup>

### 90. Bunyoro Kingdom war against the British, Batooro, Baamba and Bakonzo (1870-1899)

After Prince Kaboyo's initial rebellion against the Bunyoro Kingdom, the Tooro Kingdom was reintegrated into the Bunyoro Kingdom, prompting the more determined Prince Kasagama to begin a new uprising. When Prince Kasagama insisted that the prior secession from Bunyoro Kingdom be recognised, his demand was rejected by King Kabalega of Bunyoro. Like Kaboyo, Kasagama launched his rebellion with support from the Batooro, Baamba, and Bakonzo. This provoked an attack on Prince Kasagama and his hosts, the Batooro, Baamba and especially the Bakonzo in the 1870s.

The British, under the command of Captain F.D. Lugard, intervened on the side of Kasagama. They were motivated by an economic interest in the region's ivory trade as well as their desire to break the strength of the Bunyoro Kingdom, following the Kingdom's refusal to sign an agreement to collaborate with the colonialists. For these reasons, the British rallied behind Kasagama and provided



414 Different sources quote different years for the birth of the Kingdom, e.g. 1922 and 1930

415 The website of the Tooro Kingdom (owned and managed by the Batebe of Tooro Foundation) states on the birth of the Tooro Kingdom: "Toro Kingdom was part of the large empire of Kitara, under the reign of the Bito dynasty, which dates back to the 16th century. Our oral History has it that Prince Olimi Kaboyo Kasunsunkwanzi, son of the king of Bunyoro Kingdom, annexed the southern province of his father's kingdom and declared himself king of this land, known as Toro. He was warmly received and accepted by the batooro, who accepted him as Rukirabasaija Omukama Kaboyo Olimi I. The new kingdom survived the early, tumultuous years of its infancy, and grew to enjoy well over a century of goodwill, peace and prosperity." See: <http://www.torokingdom.org/Toro.htm> [Accessed on 25 April 2014]

416 Research conducted in Kasese District (key informant interview with senior official of the Rwenzururu Kingdom). See the sub-section "Identity, Ownership and Belonging in Conflict" in the thematic overview of issues in this Compendium for a history and analysis of polity making in the Rwenzori Region.

military support to his campaign against the Kabalega of Bunyoro, which ultimately resulted in the formal establishment of the Kingdom of Tooro. With the British-Tooro alliance, the war of Bunyoro against this alliance took on the nature of anti-colonialist resistance.

The conflict ended in 1899 with the arrest of King Kabalega, together with King Mwanga, in Lango. Mwanga had shortly before joined Kabalega in his anti-colonial resistance. Together, they were forced into exile in the Seychelles Islands in the Indian Ocean. The British replaced both leaders with their young descendant, bringing their Kingdoms under effective control of their pro-British guardians.<sup>417</sup> This episode of conflict, especially the period of open war between 1894 and 1899, is described by sociologist Tarsis Bazana Kabwegyere as the most outstanding single case of open colonial violence in Uganda.<sup>418</sup>

### **91. Conflict between the British/Tooro Kingdom and the Bakonzo/Baamba (1890 – 1962)**

The Tooro Kingdom made collaboration with the British Colonial administration conditional upon a recognition of the integration of the Bakonzo and Baamba ethnic



*Toro Palace in 1906 with King Kasagama and his Council*

417 The above narrative summarises findings of research conducted in Kasese District (key informant interview with cultural leader)

418 Kabwegyere, T. (1972) The dynamics of colonial violence: The inductive system in Uganda. *Journal of Peace Research*, 9(4), pp. 303-314.

groups into their Kingdom. When the Kingdom, following the British acquiescence, declared the slopes of Mount Rwenzori and the lowlands a part of the Kingdom, this triggered open hostility from the Baamba and Bakonzo towards the Batooro.

Following their incorporation into the Tooro Kingdom, the Bakonzo and Baamba felt marginalised and sought a return to autonomy. Such perceived marginalisation consisted of several aspects. For example, Batooro loyalists occupied the land of Bakonzo and Baamba retreating from Batooro dominated areas. Further, they levied heavy taxes on those who remained and subjected them to forced labour (*olubwa*) on plantations, in road construction and in the palace. According to the Bakonzo and Baamba, the Batooro acted with scorn and arrogance. The Bakonzo and Baamba were also denied access to schools, clinics, roads, markets, and were prohibited from speaking their own language. The British gazetted their farmland and forests to serve as hunting grounds and game reserves.<sup>419</sup>

One particularly important incident marks the conflict between the British/Tooro and Baamba/Bakonzo and remains actively commemorated today. Three Bakonzo/Baamba leaders, Nyamutswa, Tibamwenda and Kapolya, sat in the Tooro Parliament (“Rukurato”) but were consistently overshadowed by the Batooro parliamentary majority. Frustrated by such political marginalization, the three representatives launched a liberation movement against the Tooro Kingdom, so as to create a district of their own in the Rwenzori Mountains. This movement was initiated while Uganda was still under British colonial rule and was thus in effect a resistance movement against both British and Batooro subjugation.<sup>420</sup> Under orders from Captain F.D. Lugard and with the collaboration of the Tooro Kingdom, the three leaders were killed by British colonial forces and buried in one grave at Kagando (present day Kagando Hospital). Burying multiple bodies in the same grave was considered a cultural taboo, and thus caused outrage. This incident marked a turning point in the relationship between the Bakonzo/Baamba and Batooro and the larger struggle against subjugation.<sup>421</sup> It inspired anger and became a rallying call for resistance.

## **92. Ethnic conflicts over the Rwenzururu monarchy (pre-colonial – present)**

This conflict involves, on one side, the Batooro, and on the other, the Bakonzo and Baamba, along with the Banyabwindi, Batuku and Babwisi tribes, all of which are considered to have a special link to Mount Rwenzori. They initially considered the Batooro to be a common opponent and were all in favour of a Kingdom for the Rwenzururu Mountain people, or “Obusinga Wa Rwenzururu,” as a common rallying point against Batooro subjugation.

Obote’s abolition of the Kingdoms in 1967 created an additional rallying point, and fueled

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419 Research conducted in Kasese District (key informant interview with senior official of the Rwenzururu Kingdom)

420 Ibid

421 Research conducted in Kasese District (key Informant Interviews with several senior officials at the Rwenzururu Kingdom)



Map showing tribal areas in the Rwenzori region

anti-Government conflicts for decades to come, not only for Rwenzururu Movement, but also the National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (NALU) and the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) (all elaborated on below). However, with the reinstatement of Kingdoms was in 2007 and the waning of Batooro subjugation, some groups began to object to the idea of an “Obusinga Wa Rwenzururu,” or Rwenzururu Kingdom as an imposition of the Bakonzo-Baamba alone.<sup>422</sup>

Subsequently, the Baamba also distanced themselves from the Rwenzururu Kingdom, claiming the Kingdom only represents the Bakonzo. An elderly participant stated that:

*“The Baamba and Bakonzo did not come to a common understanding on the Obusinga. The Babwisi were furthermore excluded in the Constitution of the Obusinga and the process was top-down, captured by some elite.”*

He added that it is not appropriate for the Bakonzo to subject the Baamba to the Obusinga due to mere geography, instead of cultural and ethnic considerations. Both the Baamba and the Babwisi reject the idea that the armed struggle of the Rwenzururu Movement that started in the 1960s (for a description of this conflict see below) was truly about the restoration of the Obusinga. Instead, participants claimed that the true intentions of the movement were to counter Batooro policies of suppression and exploitation that targeted both the Baamba and Babwisi.

### **93. Marginalisation of Batwa ethnic community (pre-colonial era - present)**

The Batwa ethnic community in the region has experienced a history of entrenched marginalisation. The current population in Bundibugyo district numbers a mere 96 Batwa individuals.<sup>423</sup> Although the marginalisation of the Batwa appears to exist wherever they reside, their marginalisation is particularly clear in Bundibugyo district where they live side-by-side with the Baamba and Bakonzo.

The Batwa experience varying degrees of exclusion in terms of accessing social amenities. For instance, at schools, Batwa children are sometimes chased away by the other students because they are considered ‘dirty’. One Batwa stated that “our children are chased away by other children as being smelly. This has made them abandon school.”<sup>424</sup> They are also ridiculed by the community because of their perceived short stature.

Batwa women have been victims of sexual violence perpetrated by men from other ethnic groups in Bundibugyo. Strong community perceptions exist that the Batwa women are a ‘medicine’ to cure backaches through ‘sexual therapy’. One participant remarked that “When you sleep with a Mutwa woman you feel your back healing, in case you have a problem with your back.”<sup>425</sup> As a result, HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted

422 Research conducted in Bundibugyo District

423 Research conducted in Bundibugyo District (key informant interview with Batwa elder)

424 Research conducted in Bundibugyo District

425 Ibid

infections are prevalent in the Batwa community. Coupled with exclusion from social services and environmental adaptation



difficulties, this accounts for the near extinction of the Batwa ethnic group in Bundibugyo.

#### 94. Struggle by the Bakonzo and Baamba for their own district (1961-1974)

The continued subjugation of the Baamba and Bakonzo communities led to the formation of the Rwenzururu Movement in 1961. During the period of an interim self-rule government, led by Ben Kiwanuka, the Bakonzo and Baamba wrote the first Rwenzururu Memorandum, demanding the creation of Rwenzururu district (in what are now Kasese, Bundibugyo and Ntoroko districts).

They began by summarizing the findings that the Bakonzo Life History Research Society had generated. "From time immemorial," they wrote, "[Bakonzo people] were the true

natives of what is now called Tooro.”

Based on the research conducted by the Society, Isaya Mukirane, its President and one of the MPs who walked out of the Tooro Parliament in protest, together with his colleagues stated that;

*“We... are created different from [Tooro people] in our build, appearance, traditions, languages, customs, marriage, native dances, circumcision, and mourning for our deceased relatives.”<sup>426</sup>*

When their demands were not met, they formed the Rwenzururu Movement.<sup>427</sup> In June of 1962, thirteen Baamba and Bakonzo councillors walked out of the Tooro Kingdom Parliament (Orukurato), and petitioned the colonial administration for the creation of a separate district, to be referred to as the Rwenzururu District. Isaiah Mukiranyi was arrested by the Batooro Government, but subsequently escaped from captivity.<sup>428</sup>

On June 30, 1962, in an act of further defiance, the Bakonzo and Baamba declared the creation of the Kingdom of Rwenzururu. Neither the Tooro monarchy nor the British Government accepted the declaration. The Government immediately responded and appointed a Commission of Inquiry to investigate the volatile situation. However, recommendations by the Commission of Inquiry did not change the status quo. Only when Amin came to power, in 1974, were the Bakonzo and Baamba granted their own districts: Kasese and Bundibugyo, respectively.<sup>429</sup>

## POST-INDEPENDENCE: ARMED CONFLICT IN THE RWENZORI REGION

*When Uganda was declared an Independent state, the struggle for ethnic-nation based self-determination continued unabated. The nature of this struggle became more militant with the introduction of fire-arms and the emergence of organised rebel groups. The Rwenzururu Movement stood at the beginning of armed rebellion in the region. Unaddressed grievances and insufficient disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration efforts were seen to contribute to the formation of subsequent armed groups.*

### 95. The Rwenzururu Movement conflict (1962 – 1982)

The history of the Rwenzururu Movement can be traced back to the second half of the nineteenth century, when a number of ethnic groups felt subjugated by the Batooro and British. These groups, in an area that covers present day Kasese, Bundibugyo and Ntoroko Districts, had already begun organising themselves into a resistance movement when the Ugandan national flag was first hoisted. This struggle against subjugation was primarily

<sup>426</sup> Peterson, D. (2012) The work of time in western Uganda. *Citizenship Studies*, 16(8), pp. 961-977

<sup>427</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>428</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>429</sup> *Ibid*

fought by the Bakonzo and Baamba ethnic groups, and later became characterized by mobilisation around the Rwenzururu Kingdom (the *Obusinga wa Rwenzururu*), propagated by the Rwenzururu Movement.<sup>430</sup>

The Rwenzururu Kingdom unilaterally declared its autonomy from Tooro Kingdom in June 1962. In 1967, the first Obote Government abolished all Kingdoms with the overthrow of the 1962 Ugandan Constitution. The Rwenzururu Kingdom opposed the Government's decision and, despite Obote's policy, maintained some semblance of governance.

The declaration of the Rwenzururu Kingdom was, according to participants, partly a reaction to increased Batooro 'arrogance'. In 1962, the ethnic division among the Batooro, Baamba, Bakonzo, Batuku and

Batwa deepened with the emergence of the name '*Batooro Nyakabara*', meaning 'real Batooro', denoting ethnic superiority. The Batooro used this term to refer to themselves, while referring to the Bakonzo and Baamba instead as '*baboons*'. Around this time, the Batooro practice of subjecting the Bakonzo and Baamba to forced labour on Batooro plantations intensified as well.<sup>431</sup>

In 1963 these increasingly hostile ethnic dynamics gave way to full-blown conflict when, in a bid for autonomy, Mukiranyi, Mupalya and Kawamara declared war on the Tooro Kingdom, effectively launching the Rwenzururu Movement conflict. Today, the Bakonzo and Baamba communities continue to demand that the Government officially recognise these three leaders as national heroes.

430 Ibid; Lindemann, S. (2011) Just another change of guard? Broad-based politics and civil war in Museveni's Uganda. *African Affairs*, 110(440) pp. 387-416

431 Research conducted in Kasese District



*Charles Mumbere, King of the  
Rwenzururu Kingdom, in military fatigues*

## COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

The Rwenzururu Movement later came to involve not only the Bakonzo and Baamba, but also the Basongora, Batwa and Batuku. The latter three, during the beginning of the conflict, sided with the Bakonzo and Baamba, united in their common aspiration of autonomy from the Tooro Kingdom. As the Rwenzururu Movement progressed, however, the tribes' motivation for supporting the Movement dwindled. The support that these tribes did continue to provide was sometimes the product of fear for retribution rather than sincere support for the Rwenzururu Kingdom.<sup>432</sup>



*President Museveni with King Charles Mumbere after his coronation in 2009*

Though initially peaceful, the Movement became increasingly militant and violent against the Batooro. A ceasefire was brokered with the Obote Government in 1982. Nonetheless, some of the Movement's fighters later joined NALU and the ADF (for more details on these groups see below).

The sentiments around the Rwenzururu Kingdom that fed the different armed groups were finally appeased in 1995 when the new Constitution recognised the Bakonzo and Baamba as distinct ethnic groups, and in 2007 when the *Obusinga wa Rwenzururu* King was crowned and recognised by the Government of Uganda.

### 96. Mass killings of the Bakonzo and Baamba (1964)

For two bloody weeks in 1964, people from the Bakonzo and Baamba communities were killed, under orders from the Tooro Kingdom leadership. The Government failed to intervene, resulting in the victimisation of many people, including women and children, in what has been termed genocide by the Rwenzururu Kingdom.<sup>433</sup> The Government's

<sup>432</sup> The Batuku also propagated some level of self autonomy. They were granted Ntoroko District in 2010, carved out of the former Bundibugyo District

<sup>433</sup> On the website of the Rwenzururu Kingdom, this incident is described as follows: "Toro Kingdom declares 14 days of Massacring the Bakonzo, a genocide that was never given its right name. Men, women, children and the unborn were slaughtered, harked and burned alive. Houses were put on fire and property looted. After two weeks of mass slaughter Uganda government sends police to rescue the remaining and take them to Kahunge refugee camps." See: <http://www.rwenzururu.or.ug/history.php>. [Accessed on 25 April 2014]

eventual intervention saw a relocation of the victims to Kahunge camp.

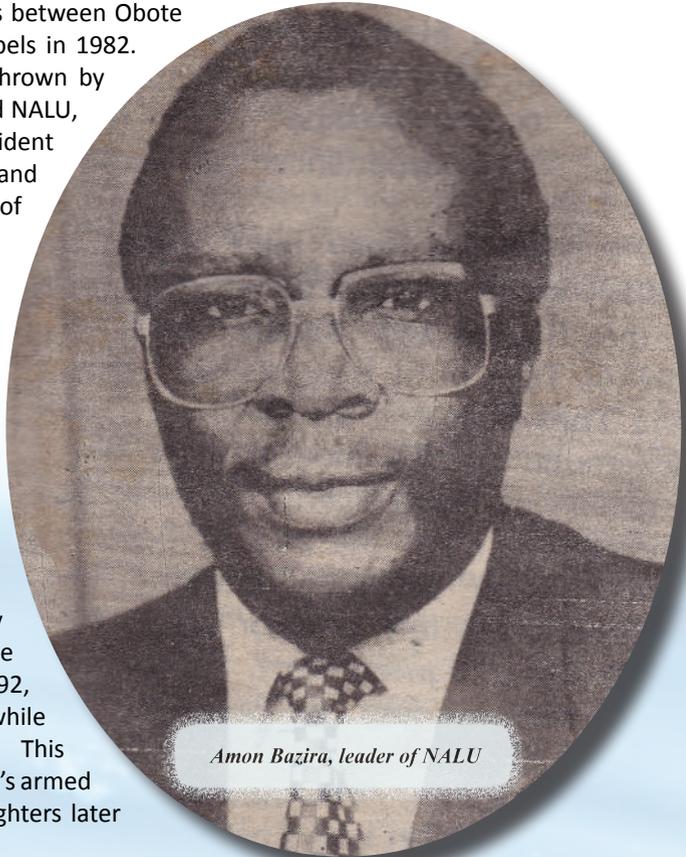
This massacre became one of the driving factors for rebellion in the ranges of Mount Rwenzori (initiated by the Baamba and Bakonzo). It was first cited as a major reason for rebellion by the Rwenzururu Movement, and later to some extent by the NALU and ADF insurgencies.<sup>434</sup> The violence also inspired other means of protest, such as a refusal to engage in inter-ethnic marriage with the Batooro.

## 97. The NALU Insurgency (1988-1992)

The National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (NALU) emerged out of the Rwenzururu Movement, which sought the Government of Uganda's recognition of the Rwenzururu Kingdom. NALU was led by Amon Bazira, a UPC supporter and former Intelligence Chief under Obote. He had also been instrumental in the reconciliation efforts between Obote and the Rwenzururu rebels in 1982.

When Obote was overthrown by Museveni, Bazira formed NALU, with the support of President Mobutu of the DRC and President Arap Moi of Kenya.<sup>435</sup>

NALU, comprised mainly of Bakonzo and Baamba members, fought for the restoration of the *Obusinga*. The NALU insurgency's agenda was based on long-standing grievances that had never been settled by the early post-Independence governments. In 1992, Amon Bazira was shot while he was in Nairobi.<sup>436</sup> This effectively finished NALU's armed activities. Many of its fighters later joined the ADF.



*Amon Bazira, leader of NALU*

434 Research conducted in Kasese District (key informant interview with senior officials of the Rwenzururu Kingdom)

435 Prunier, G. (2004) Rebel movements and proxy warfare: Uganda, Sudan and the Congo (1986-99). *African Affairs*, 103(412), pp. 359-383

436 Ibid

## 98. The ADF Insurgency (1996 – present)

Participants reported that the Allied Democratic Front (ADF) became active in 1996 in Kasese District, under the leadership of Jamil Mukulu, who was trained by Bin Laden in Sudan. Allegedly, the ADF received financial support from Laurent Desire Kabila, the Sudanese government, as well as Muslim extremist groups.<sup>437</sup> Analysis of the relationship between financiers and the ADF suggests that these stakeholders may have defined the violent anti-civilian character and long duration of the insurgency.<sup>438</sup> It has further been suggested that financing by foreign states/groups may be part of a larger, unending ‘tit-for-tat’ game, with states funding internal insurgencies in neighbouring states as reprisals for those states doing the same.<sup>439</sup>

The proclaimed aim of the ADF is to overthrow the Government of Uganda by force. The rebel group initially adopted the agenda of the Bakonzo and Baamba as a justification for fighting, even though the ADF leadership is not exclusively from the Rwenzori region. The ADF leadership was able to mobilise support by appealing to the frustrations of the

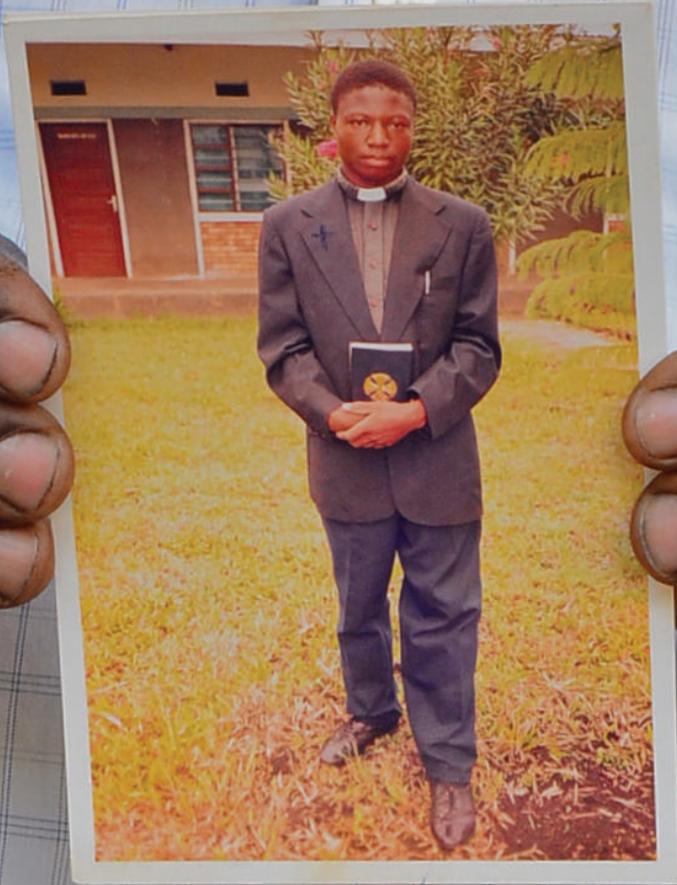


*Captured ADF fighter Muzamil Kabagoza sits with captured arms as UPDF soldiers look on, 2007*

437 Refugee Law Project (2003) Displacement in Bundibugyo district: A situation analysis, Working Paper No. 10

438 Hovil, L. and Werker, E. (2005) Portrait of a failed rebellion: an account of rational, sub-optimal violence in western Uganda. *Rationality and Society*, 17(1) pp. 5-34

439 Byman, D.L. et al. (2001) Trends in outside support for insurgent movements. Santa Monica, RAND



*Man holds a picture of his missing brother in Kasese*



*Land mine survivors in Kasese*

region's community, and successfully integrated a number of former NALU fighters.

However, local support waned as the ADF started committing various atrocities against civilians, including massacres, abductions, forceful conscription of children into the rebellion, mutilation, and destruction of property and general devastation of the land. During the ADF attack on Kicwamba Technical Institute in Kabarole District in 1998, for example, over 200 civilians (mostly children) were abducted, and around 80 were killed.<sup>440</sup>

One of the biggest impacts of the conflict was the massive displacement of between 150,000 and 180,000 people. At the height of the insurgency, these individuals resided in 84 camps in Bundibugyo, Kabarole and Kasese Districts, in all of which living conditions were appalling.<sup>441</sup> Affected communities are still living with the unaddressed legacies of this period. A number of participants emphasised that the ADF conflict remains unresolved, as peace talks have never been held. Despite the successful cessation of hostilities between the ADF and the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) in Kasese district,<sup>442</sup> participants warned that the ADF was mobilising intensely, thus posing a threat to peace and security in the area. In key informant interviews, locals and officials at the border post in Mpondwe stated that ADF cells are active in the DR Congo, where at present between three to five thousand ADF soldiers are training with the intention of attacking Uganda.<sup>443</sup>

440 Ibid

441 Kyaddondo, D. et al. (2002) The challenges and hopes for protection and resettlement of internally displaced people in the Rwenzori Region, with policy recommendations. Oxfam, Kabarole Research Institute and DED-Uganda

442 The State House of Uganda (2012) President advises people of Kasese to live harmoniously [Internet], Available from: <<http://www.statehouse.go.ug/media/news/2012/08/06/president-advises-people-kasese-people-live-harmoniously>> [Accessed 13 October 2012].

443 Research conducted in Kasese District (key informant interviews with local leaders)

## CONFLICT IN THE ANKOLE REGION

*In the western region, not only the Rwenzori sub-region has been plagued by conflicts. The Ankole sub-region suffered similar conflicts related to dominance of one group over another, though of lower intensity.*

### 99. Bahima vs Bahiru ethnic communities in Ankole (1950s – present)

During the 1950s, the Ankole Kingdom (locally called *Obugabe*) was still prominent and influential in the lives of people in Ankole region. The *Obugabe*, alongside other Kingdoms, was abolished by Obote in 1967 and has not yet been restored. In the Kingdom, there was a strict division between two social/ethnic groups: the minority cattle keepers who were considered royalty (the Bahima) and the majority Bahiru, who worked mostly as farmers. Participants described the Bahima as oppressors of the Bahiru.

Today, such discrimination and perceptions of ethnic superiority and inferiority between the two groups remain. As a result, the Bahima's struggle to reinstate the *Obugabe* Kingdom remains controversial, as the memory of past oppression by the *Omugabe* (the King of the *Obugabe*) is still fresh in Bahiru minds.<sup>444</sup> It is a latent conflict that continues to manifest itself in various forms and remains unresolved to date.

#### The Kumanyana Movement

Just as the Bakonzo and Baamba would later organise themselves against Batooro suppression under the banner of the Rwenzururu Movement, the Bahiru rose against Bahima domination through formation of the Kumanyana Movement in Mbarara in the 1940s.

*Kumanyana* means 'to get to know each other'. The movement contributed to some extent to Bahiru emancipation. In 1967, the Ankole Kingdom, as all other kingdoms in Uganda, was abolished by Obote. This effectively brought an end to the institutionalised dominance of the Bahima over the Bahiru, and quelled the Kumanyana Movement.<sup>8</sup>

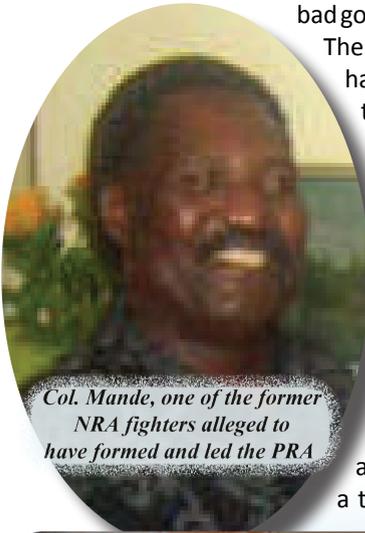
### 100. People's Redemption Army Insurgency (2001 – present)

*This conflict surfaced only in discussions in Mbarara District and was shrouded in controversy and a lack of information.*

The People's Redemption Army (PRA) is a Ugandan rebel group that was only mentioned by NRTJ participants in Mbarara district, and even then with great reluctance. Shrouded in controversy and a lack of information, the group is said to be based in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The group is suspected to have been formed and led by former National Resistance Army (NRA) army officers, Col. Samson Mande and Lt. Col. Kyakabale) who fell out with the Government of Uganda in 2004.<sup>445</sup> The PRA, according to a key informant, primarily seeks to expose perceived

<sup>444</sup> Research conducted in Mbarara District

<sup>445</sup> Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights. (2011) Uganda: non state



*Col. Mande, one of the former NRA fighters alleged to have formed and led the PRA*

bad governance in Uganda, and is especially critical of the NRM. The same individual claimed that the NRM Government has failed to abide by its own Ten Point Programme, the party's main propaganda tool, employed when Museveni and the NRM first came to power in 1986.<sup>446</sup>

A key informant stated that the PRA had very strong support from opposition politicians in Uganda and other anti-Government groups in countries including Rwanda and the DRC, as well as some Ugandans living abroad in South Africa and Europe.<sup>447</sup> Participants also alleged that the PRA had been recruiting youth in western Uganda, and that they continue to train them in the DRC. Although the PRA has not been as active as the LRA, Government officials recognise it as a threat to peace and security in Uganda.<sup>448</sup> Participants



*PRA suspects of treason are released under the Amnesty Act*

actors. [Internet], Available from <[http://www.geneva-academy.ch/RULAC/non-state\\_armed\\_groups.php?id\\_state=163](http://www.geneva-academy.ch/RULAC/non-state_armed_groups.php?id_state=163)> [Accessed 15 October 2012]; Also see: Butagira, T. (2013) I planned Besigye escape in 2001, says Col Mande. Daily Monitor, [Internet], Available from: <<http://www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/I-planned-Besigye-escape-in-2001--says-Col-Mande--/688334/2011554/-/c8kky7/-/index.html>> [Accessed 29 September 2013]; Xinhua. (2004) Uganda deploys troops along on Congo border. People's Daily Online, Available from: <[http://english.people.com.cn/200412/02/eng20041202\\_165928.html](http://english.people.com.cn/200412/02/eng20041202_165928.html)> [Accessed 15 October 2012].

446 Research conducted in Mbarara District

447 Ibid

448 Uganda Online. (2007) PRA still a threat – col. Kyanda. Red Pepper [Internet] Available from: <[http://www.ugandaonline.net/red\\_pepper/view/3957/prs\\_still\\_a\\_threat\\_col\\_kyanda](http://www.ugandaonline.net/red_pepper/view/3957/prs_still_a_threat_col_kyanda)> [Accessed 15 October 2012]

posited that the PRA has strong links with rebel groups like the LRA, UPA, and the Major Itongwa group in Buganda.

According to the same informant, the PRA could be considered a reaction by Rwanda to its concerns that Rwandan renegades might be enjoying some sympathy from the Ugandan Government. This would explain the sharp back-and-forth accusations between the Ugandan and Rwandan Governments between 2000 and 2009. The theory continues that the 1998 Kisangani clashes between forces of the Rwandan and Ugandan national armies were a result of suspicion between the UPDF & the RPF regarding strategies for uprooting the *Interahamwe* and the ADF. This mistrust continued while the UPDF was working with the RPF in pursuit of ADF, and later compelled the UPDF to craft unholy alliances with other rebel groups in DR Congo.<sup>449</sup> It was in this context that the PRA became a proxy front for Rwanda to pursue its strategic security.<sup>450</sup> According to the above-mentioned informant, the PRA never declared war because, as they were being harboured in neighbouring Rwanda, this could have been interpreted as a direct attack on Uganda from Rwanda.<sup>451</sup>

## CONFLICT BETWEEN 'NATIVES' AND 'IMMIGRANTS'

*Another driver of conflict in the western Region is the discourse around 'nativism'. This discourse is characterised by the argument that those who consider themselves 'natives' of the region hold more entitlements to the region's resources than those who are considered 'immigrants'. This is regardless of whether or not the latter are born in the region and hold Ugandan citizenship. Identity and belonging translate to conflict in these contexts, especially over land ownership.*

### 101. Conflict between 'natives' (Banyoro) and 'immigrants' (Alur and Bagungu) (1990 – present)

The Alur, who allegedly migrated from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) due to destabilising conflict, entered Uganda and settled in Hoima District. Since their arrival in Uganda, many have been accused of using witchcraft against the Banyoro. They have also been accused of practicing cannibalism. As a result, the Banyoro are demanding that the Government of Uganda resettle the Alur back to the DRC.<sup>452</sup>

Another similar conflict that was identified is between the Bagungu (who migrated to Bunyoro from the north) and the Banyoro. This dispute is based on unequal access to leadership and employment opportunities at the district level. The Bagungu, who are predominantly from Kigorobya sub-county, are currently demanding district status to solve this problem.

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449 Ibid

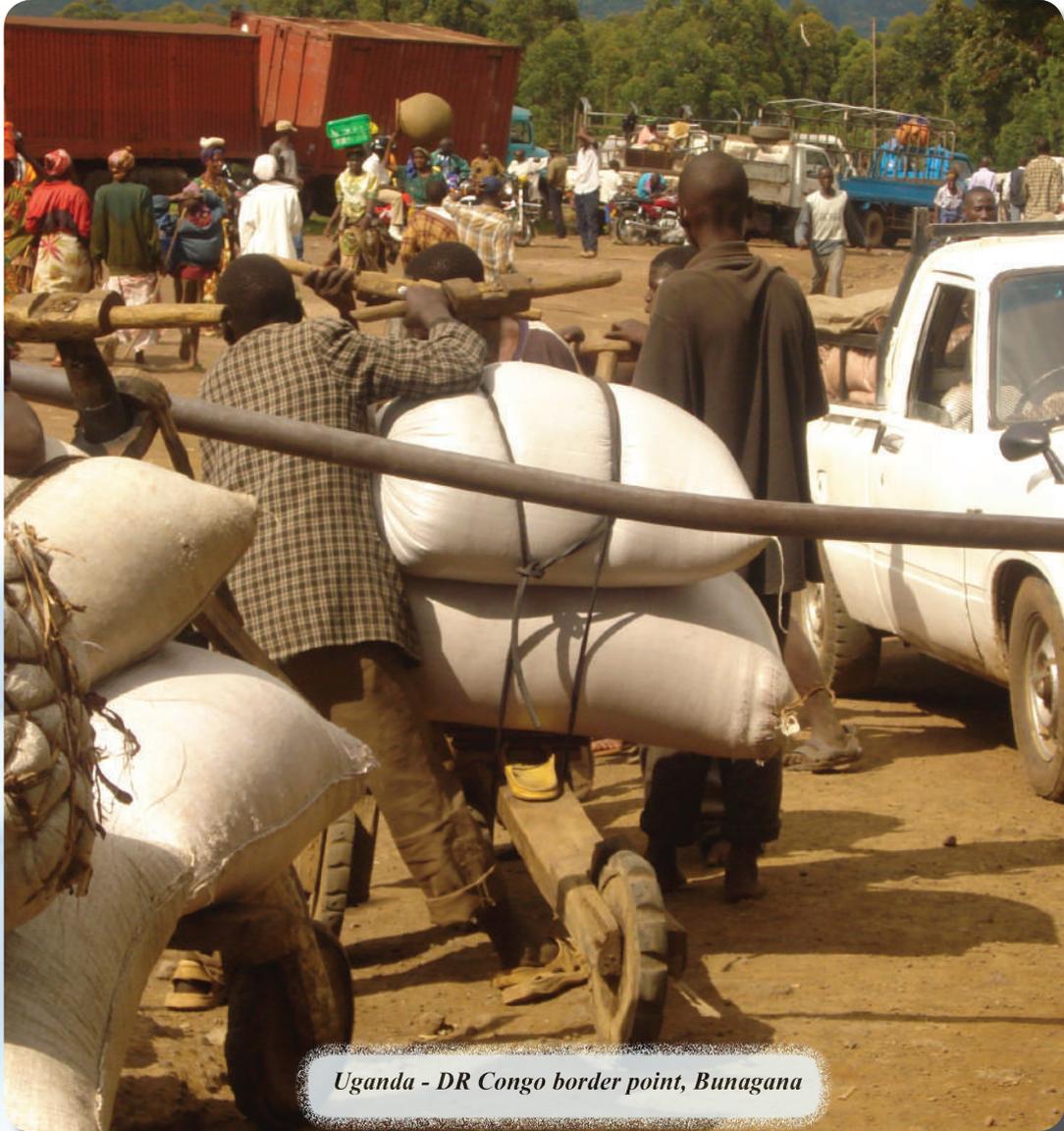
450 Ibid

451 Ibid

452 Research conducted in Hoima District

## 102. Conflict between refugees from Rwanda/DRC and locals over land (1994 – present)

The 1994 Rwandan genocide has directly affected western Uganda, as many displaced Rwandans crossed the Uganda-Rwanda border seeking refuge. In the years that followed,



*Uganda - DR Congo border point, Bunagana*

many of these refugees became permanent residents of the area, and remain settled in the region today. A number of land conflicts involve refugees from Rwanda and the DR Congo, for example in Kamwenge and Isingiro Districts.<sup>453</sup>

<sup>453</sup> Research conducted in Mbarara District

### 103. Land Conflict between Bakiga and Banyoro in Kibale District (1966 – present)

The Bakiga migrated from Kigezi in south western Uganda to Kibale District in 1966. This mass-migration was the result of a Government policy that sought to decongest the over-populated Kigezi through assisted migration of the Bakiga to the, at the time, sparsely populated Bunyoro. Since 2001, these immigrants have featured prominently in conflicts with the indigenous Banyoro over ownership of land and district leadership.<sup>454</sup> The Banyoro claim that following their arrival, the Bakiga encroached on ancestral Banyoro land, rather than staying on the land to which the Government had resettled them. They also claim that the Bakiga have been ‘imposed on them’ by top politicians in Government.<sup>455</sup>

Participants argued that the problem between Bakiga and Banyoro in Kibale is an ‘imposed problem’; it is not that the Banyoro hate the Bakiga, but that ‘somebody’ or ‘a group of people’ have been ferrying Bakiga into the area to acquire land and settle. Participants said that the problem has been compounded by the fact that Bakiga votes now outnumber those of the Banyoro in Kibale.<sup>456</sup> As a result the Bakiga have taken over political leadership in the area even though the Banyoro consider these Bakigas mere ‘immigrants’ (*‘bafuruki’*) who have overstayed their welcome.<sup>457</sup>

### 104. Land conflicts in Kasese (1980s – present)

There are numerous inter-community land conflicts, especially between the Bakonzo ‘natives’ and Basongora ‘immigrants’. These land conflicts are particularly prevalent in Ibuga, Nyakatonzi, Kiburara, Kishasha and Rwahingo, as well as Bigando in Hima Town Council and in the corridors of Mount Rwenzori and Queen Elizabeth National Park. Participants stated that they face problems with foreigners engaging in land grabbing.<sup>458</sup> These areas are predominantly Basongora (traditionally cattle keepers) and Bakiga migrants (traditionally cultivators). The areas mentioned are all lowland, stretching alongside game reserves and Queen Elisabeth National Park. The gazetting of the lowlands as wildlife conservation areas took away community land from the Bakonzo who are now restricted to a small corridor of land between the game reserve and the Rwenzori mountain ranges.<sup>459</sup> This also explains the present tension regarding the demand of the Basongora for an autonomous Busungora Kingdom as well as for a new district to be carved out of Kasese, and to be referred to as ‘Busungora’. Some of the Bakonjo, however, insist that the new Kingdom would fall under the jurisdiction of the Rwenzururu Kingdom.<sup>460</sup>

454 Research conducted in Hoima District

455 New Vision Archive. (2006) Banyoro-Bakiga wrangle: time bomb in Kibale? New Vision, [Internet], 12 March. Available from: <<http://www.newvision.co.ug/D/8/26/486943>> [Accessed 22 April 2012]

456 Ibid

457 Ibid

458 Research conducted in Kasese District

459 Ibid

460 Ibid

## CONFLICTS RELATED TO OIL

*The discovery of oil in the Albertine Graben carries the promise of increased economic growth both at the regional and national level. So far, however, oil exploration has mainly brought heightened mistrust, suspicion and tension, both between citizens and Government and between ethnic communities. Participants expressed fears about what the future might hold and whether the presence of oil in the region should be considered a blessing or a curse. They quoted examples of the effect the presence of oil has had in states like Nigeria and Libya, where the resource has been used to enrich and empower the elite at the expense of local communities.<sup>9</sup> In this section, a sample of conflict dynamics related to oil in the western region is discussed.*

### CONFLICT BETWEEN CITIZENS AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

#### 105. Conflict in Hoima over land



*Oil exploration site in Bulisa District*

In Hoima District, especially in Kyangwali sub-county, tension has mounted over land claims between powerful Government officials and local communities. Kyangwali is in the middle of the Albertine rift's biggest oil field, referred to as 'Kingfisher'. It is reported to be one of the largest oil wells in the basin, estimated to contain over 300

million barrels of oil.<sup>461</sup> This is regarded as the reason for the growing number of land disputes between local communities and powerful politicians and military officials. The rising value of land in the area, and the prospect that landowners might receive high compensation when the construction of oil infrastructure begins, has motivated powerful individuals to obtain land, often coercively.<sup>462</sup> One land conflict arose in 2011 around an area Government claimed for the construction of military barracks. This was met with disbelief and rejection by the local inhabitants.<sup>463</sup>

### 106. Conflict in Bunyoro over lack of information and transparency

The discovery of oil has caused conflict between the Government and local communities. Locals alleged exclusion from projects run by both the Government and oil companies. They say there has been a lack of Government transparency, accessibility, and accountability with regards to oil in Bunyoro, particularly related to the likely benefits or detrimental consequences surrounding the discovery of oil on their land. A participant said, “We only see big vehicles passing; spoiling our roads and now we hear that they are going to construct an oil refinery.”<sup>464</sup> Furthermore, Government officials allegedly exploited the ignorance of the local people regarding the real value of their land, and bought it cheaply, displacing many people without adequate compensation. Participants expressed a lot of fear with regard to the discovery of oil in their region.



### 107. Conflict between communities, Government officials and the Balaalo pastoralists

The discovery of oil has increased levels of suspicion towards both Government officials and the Balaalo (Banyarwanda pastoralist cattle owners who move with their cattle around the country) among community members, especially in Ntoroko District. Participants suspected that the Government has a hidden agenda to strategically settle the migrants in areas rich in oil deposits, so that it can bring those areas under state-control. This suspicion is strengthened by the alleged purchase of huge chunks of land by very influential high-ranking Government

461 Matsiko, H. (2012) Land grabbing in oil region. The Independent, [Internet], 27 May. Available from: <<http://www.independent.co.ug/cover-story/5831-land-grabbing-in-oil-region>> [Accessed 22 April 2012]

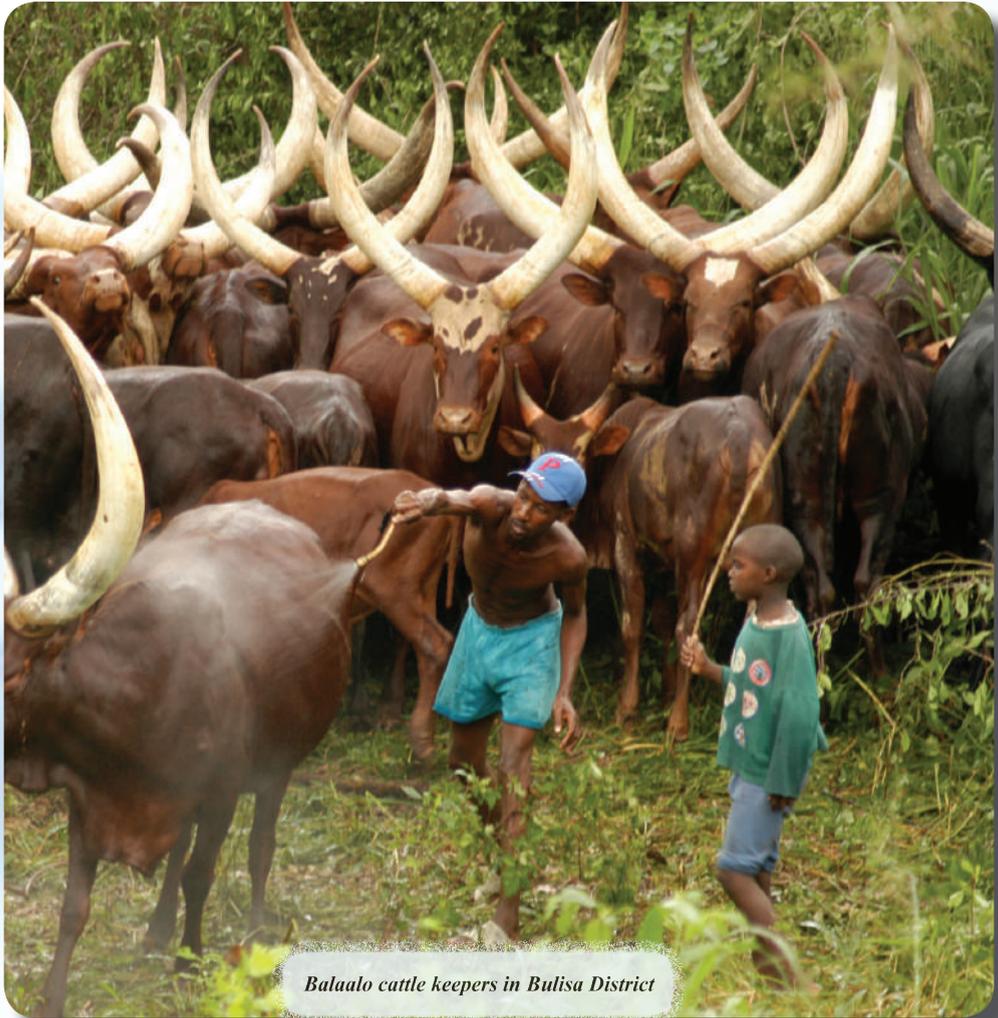
462 Ibid

463 Research conducted in Hoima District

464 Ibid

officials. It is further alleged that the Government and Balaalo collaborate in an attempt to politically empower the latter through securing access to district political leadership. The intention of doing so is believed to be to increase the indirect influence of both the Balaalo and the Government in the region. Since the discovery of oil in the region, the influx of Balaalo has accelerated and is generating increasing tension. Currently, the Balaalo immigrants are said to exceed the indigenous population.<sup>465</sup> This demographic shift increases the chances of violent conflict over land between the Government and the leadership of the Batuku community in Ntoroko. Participants said that the conflict is further fuelled by the greed of both local and central Government officials.<sup>466</sup>

## 108. Between the Batuku and the Balaalo



*Balaalo cattle keepers in Bulisa District*

465 Research conducted in Bundibugyo District

466 Ibid

The conflict between local communities and the Balaalo, who are alleged to collaborate with Government, was not only characterised as a conflict between citizens and Government, but also as an ethnic conflict. The Batuku, who are the indigenous people of Ntoroko District, increasingly find themselves at odds with the Balaalo cattle keepers. The Batuku are overwhelmed by the settling of the migrants, which is causing land conflicts and ethnic tension.

## CONFLICT OVER OIL BETWEEN ETHNIC GROUPS

### 109. Between the Batuku and Baamba



*Balaalo are evicted from land  
in Bulisa District, 2010*

Similarly, ethnic tension in Ntoroko District is intensifying between the majority Batuku and the minority Baamba. The Baamba feel marginalised, have very limited political power, and are afraid they might lose their land.<sup>467</sup> Tension has increased

<sup>467</sup> Research conducted in Bundibugyo District

## COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

as both communities fear that they may be denied their fair share of oil proceeds in spite of bearing the environmental burden related to oil production. This concern has contributed to hostilities between the two communities, as well as increased resentment of the Government and oil companies.<sup>468</sup>

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<sup>468</sup> International Alert. (2009) Investing in peace: harnessing oil for peace and development in Uganda. International Alert Issues Paper No. 2.

# CHAPTER

## CENTRAL REGION CONFLICTS

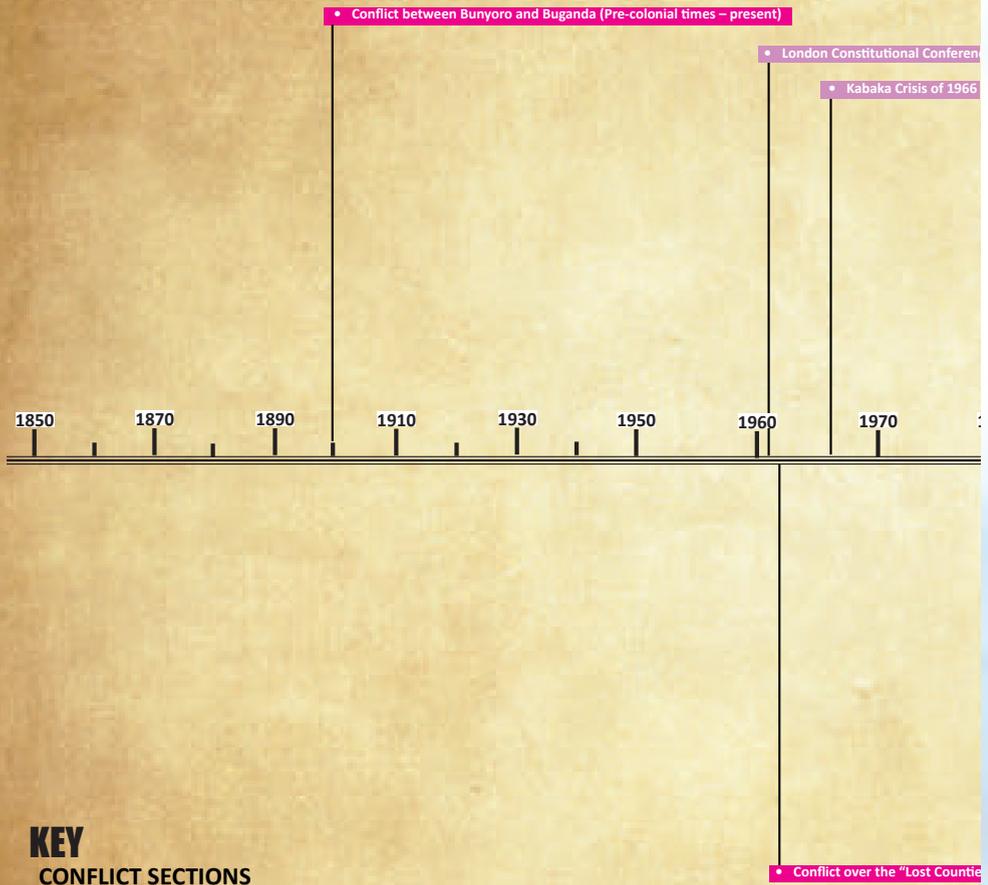
### SEVEN



Mengo, seat of the Buganda Parliament



# CENTRAL REGION C

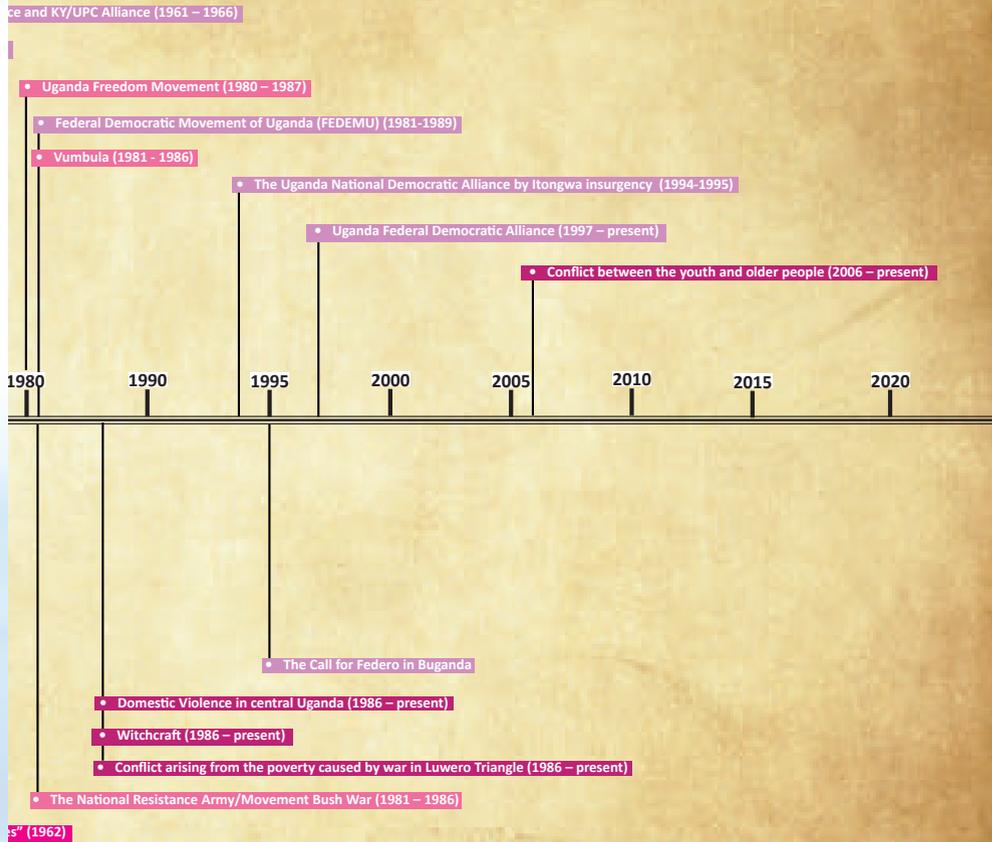


## KEY

### CONFLICT SECTIONS

- BUGANDA: Pre-Colonial Conflict between Bunyoro and Buganda
- BUGANDA: Struggle for autonomy
- BUGANDA: The Bush War
- BUGANDA: Post - Bush War Conflicts

# CONFLICT TIMELINE



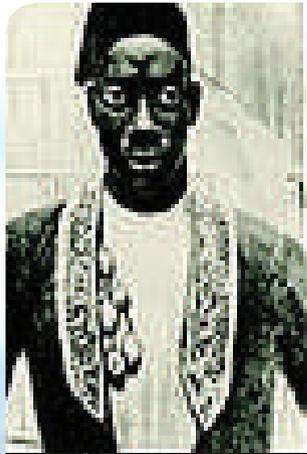
## BUGANDA

### Pre-Colonial Conflict between Bunyoro and Buganda

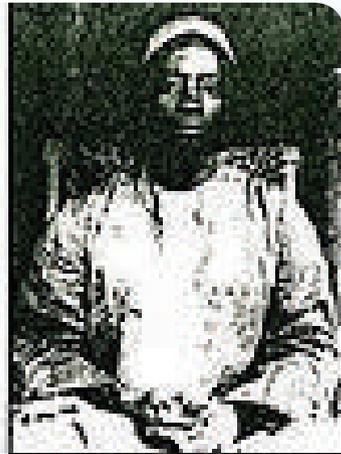
*Discussions on pre-colonial conflict in Uganda's central region (comprising the area falling under the Buganda Kingdom) focused on the longstanding tension between the Buganda and Bunyoro Kingdoms. In pre-colonial times the Bunyoro Kingdom was the region's dominant power, a situation challenged by the growth of Buganda Kingdom, particularly following the arrival of the British colonial power.*

#### 110. Conflict between Bunyoro and Buganda (Pre-colonial times – present)

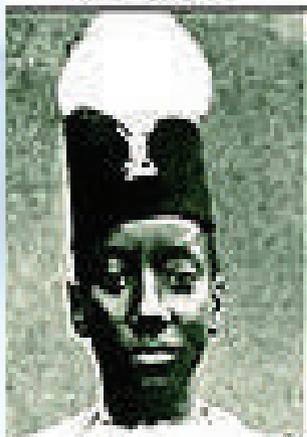
The conflict between the two kingdoms stems largely from the manner in which Buganda rapidly expanded and annexed counties from Bunyoro, including Buddo, Bugerere, Bulemeezi, Buruli, Butambala, Buwekula, Gomba, and Ssinga. Moreover, Buganda utilised the coming of the British to its own advantage, by striking a collaborative relationship with the newcomers. The British rewarded their Buganda partners by allowing them to annex Bugangaizi and Buyaga counties. Buganda's collaboration with the British eventually led to the defeat of Bunyoro. The British in turn employed agents from Buganda to oversee the administration of the newly obtained territory.



Muteesa I



Mwanga II



Chwa II



Muteesa II

Former buganda kings

## The Counties of Buganda

| County             | Chief's Title      | Designated Rank     | How Acquired   |
|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|--|
| Buddu              | Ppookino           | Mutuba II           | Annexed by Jjunju from Bunyoro                           |
| Bugerere           | Mugerere           |                     | Annexed by Semei Kakungulu from Bunyoro                  |
| Bulemeezi          | Kangaawo           |                     | Some of it original territory, rest annexed from Bunyoro |
| Buruli             | Kimbugwe           |                     | From Bunyoro, 1900 Agreement                             |
| Busiro             | Ssebwana           |                     | Original Territory                                       |
| Busujju            | Kasujju            |                     | Original Territory                                       |
| Butambala          | Katambala          |                     | Annexed by Kateregga from Bunyoro                        |
| Buvuma             | Mbuubi             |                     | Annexed by Mwanga II                                     |
| Buweekula          | Luwekula           |                     | Annexed by Kamaanya from Bunyoro                         |
| Ggomba             | Kitunzi            | Mutuba I            | Annexed by Kateregga from Bunyoro                        |
| Kabula             | Luwama             |                     | Ceded to Buganda from Ankole                             |
| Kkooki             | Kaamuswaga         |                     | Tributary kingdom, subsumed 1896                         |
| Kyaddondo          | Kaggo              | Ssabaddu            | Original Territory                                       |
| Kyaggwe            | Ssekiboobo         | Ssabawaali          | Annexed by Kimera  |
| Mawogola           | Muteesa            |                     | Mostly carved out of Buddu, 1900 Agreement               |
| Mawokota           | Kayima             | Musaale             | Original Territory                                       |
| Sseese             | Kweba              | Islands of the Gods | Originally autonomous, became county in 1900             |
| Ssingo             | Mukwenda           | Ssabagabo           | Some of it original territory, rest from Bunyoro         |
| <i>Bugangazzi*</i> | <i>Kiyimba</i>     |                     | Given by British, 1896                                   |
| <i>Buyaga*</i>     | <i>Kyambalango</i> |                     | Given by British, 1896                                   |

## 111. Conflict over the “Lost Counties” (1962)

In 1896, British colonial administrators, as a reward to Buganda for their collaboration with the British in the fight against Bunyoro, appropriated Buyaga and Bugangaizi Counties, which came to be referred to as the “lost counties”, from Bunyoro to Buganda Kingdom. This land transfer was a reward, arising from the spoils of war between the British and Buganda versus the Bunyoro. While King Kabalega of Bunyoro attempted to resist British colonisation of Bunyoro Kingdom, his efforts were in vain. The King eventually fled and



*Supporters of Kabaka Yekka protest against the possible transfer of the Lost Counties to Bunyoro shortly before Independence. This conflict would later lead to independent Uganda's first armed conflict*

was displaced in Acholiland and later in Lango. There, he was arrested by the British and exiled to the Seychelles Islands together with the Buganda King Mwanga, who, at that moment, had also turned against the British.

Participants at the London Constitutional Conference referred the matter of the “lost counties” to be decided in a referendum that was conducted in 1964. The result of the vote was that the “lost counties” were returned to Bunyoro Kingdom. The “lost counties”

issue remains a thorn in Uganda's political side, and is still considered unresolved because the area remains home to a large number of Baganda absentee landlords who refused to leave the confiscated land following the referendum.

Bitterness and tension between the communities continues to exist over the "lost counties" and there have been no efforts at reconciliation. The conflict continues to manifest itself in various forms in the politics of Buganda and Bunyoro.

## BUGANDA Struggle for autonomy

*The 1950s were characterised by the Uganda's preparation for Independence, after more than half a century under British colonial administration. With the prospect of autonomy from the British, political forces within the Buganda Kingdom, which had enjoyed a special status within the Uganda Protectorate, rose up to militate for the continuation of some level of autonomy within Uganda. They favoured federal status or secession over integration into a unitary Ugandan state. Forces outside Buganda, however, alarmed by the prospect of domination by Buganda, also organised themselves politically. The British initially favoured the integration of Buganda in a unitary Uganda, which contributed to the political manoeuvring by pre-Independence Ugandan politicians who sought a transition to Independence whilst not losing sight of the implications of Buganda's relationship with the state. The contentious status of Buganda within Uganda has remained a pertinent factor in post-Independence Uganda's political history, inspiring resentment that continues to exist to date and contributing to several insurgencies against the state.*

### 112. London Constitutional Conference and KY/UPC Alliance (1961 – 1966)

The London Constitutional Conference of September – October 1961, also referred to as the 'Lancaster Conference', was convened to prepare Uganda for Independence. It did not resolve the contentious relationship between the Kingdom of Buganda and the State of Uganda. Indeed, Buganda's desire for the creation of a federalist system of governance in which it would enjoy a higher degree of political autonomy within the State remained an issue of contestation. These unresolved disputes set the stage for many of Uganda's conflicts following Independence.

The *Kabaka* (King) emerged as a formidable force in demanding Buganda's independence. When negotiations regarding Buganda's autonomy during the initial pre-Independence discussions failed, the Kabaka's supporters boycotted the March 1961 election that was organised in preparation for self-rule. Many Catholic Baganda, on the other hand, chose to participate in the election, and overwhelmingly supported the Democratic Party (DP). Largely thanks to Baganda support, the DP defeated the Uganda People's Congress (UPC) in a landslide, winning 20 out of 21 Buganda seats in the National Assembly. The defeat of the UPC encouraged the Baganda separatists to form a political party in the King's name, referred to as *Kabaka Yekka* (KY) (*The King Only*).

Kabaka Yekka went on to sign an alliance with the UPC based on an acceptance of Buganda semi-autonomy and special status within the state of Uganda. This agreement permitted the Kabaka to appoint Buganda's representatives to Parliament, which would undermine the DP's political power in Buganda. The UPC-Kabaka Yekka alliance also provided for the Kabaka to become the ceremonial head of state of Uganda. This alliance led to the defeat of the DP interim administration in April 1962. The UPC-KY alliance formed the government to which Independence was granted on October 9<sup>th</sup>, 1962. It was this alliance that sowed the seeds for various conflicts in post-Independence Uganda.

### 113. Kabaka Crisis of 1966

The loss of Buyaga and Bugangaizi counties to Bunyoro after the 1964 referendum had intensified suspicion of the Central Government by the Baganda. Further, the Baganda were bitter over what they considered a broken UPC/KY alliance. In May 1966, the Buganda Parliament passed a resolution stating that the incorporation of Buganda into Uganda (which resulted from a constitutional amendment that repealed Buganda's semi-autonomous status within the Uganda's federalist political structure) was a violation of the country's Constitution. This prompted a directive by Prime Minister Obote to General Idi Amin, to attack Kabaka Mutesa II's palace in Mengo, a suburb of Kampala. The troops were allegedly ordered to go to Mengo Palace to search for a cache of arms allegedly hidden in the palace. It is noted that Obote distrusted the Buganda Kingdom, which he viewed as a hindrance to democratic nationalism and nation building.<sup>469</sup> The resultant battle of Mengo on May 22, 1966 between the national troops and the Kabaka's guards, was thus underpinned by multiple tensions. Participants suggested that the fact that Uganda's major kingdoms were primarily located in the South represented a Bantu-Nilotic polarisation that later played a key role in the



*President Mutesa and Prime Minister Obote, during the early post-Independence Government in 1964*

<sup>469</sup> Mulira, P. (2006) Four factors led to the 1966 Buganda Crisis. New Vision [Internet] 23 October. Available from: <<http://www.newvision.co.ug/D/8/20/528137>> [Accessed 28 January 2012]

1966 crisis. The Parliament's 1964 election of the Kabaka as the nation's President (a largely ceremonial position) brewed conflicts between the Buganda and the central Government. This later climaxed especially after the lost counties' referendum that saw Bunyoro take back its counties. The first disagreement between the President and the Prime Minister arose in 1963, as a result of the Buganda government ultimatum that unless the central government remove all its police stations from Buganda and allow the Lukiiko to determine funds to be transferred by the central government to Buganda, the kingdom government would suspend all cooperation with the central Government.

Another issue contributing to the 1966 crisis was the KY's decision to move a motion of no confidence against Obote following Obote and Amin's implication in a plot to smuggle gold from then Zaire into Uganda. The motion was moved by Daudi Ocheng, a KY MP, on February 4, 1966. Parliament recommended the appointment of a commission of inquiry into the activities of Prime Minister Obote and the Army commander Idi Amin. Attempts were made to arrest Obote, based on these allegations. On February 22, 1966, Obote suspended the constitution and arrested five of his ministers.<sup>470</sup> Obote, who had previously held the title of Prime Minister, declared himself President. The Kabaka was in turn exiled. A participant said;

*"During the Kabaka's crisis, it was my first time to see planes in the air and to hear the exchange of bullets. We were told that the Luwero police station had been stormed. Everything changed and we couldn't eat or sleep, and we spent too much time in the bush. When the bullet stopped making noise, we received news that the palace had been stormed."<sup>471</sup>*

The attack on the Kabaka's palace and the eventual abdication of the Kabaka from the throne to seek exile in London was followed by Obote's abolition of the 1962 Constitution and the coerced promulgation of the 1967 Republican Constitution, which afforded Obote the official title of President of Uganda.

#### **114. Federal Democratic Movement of Uganda (FEDEMU) (1981-1989)**

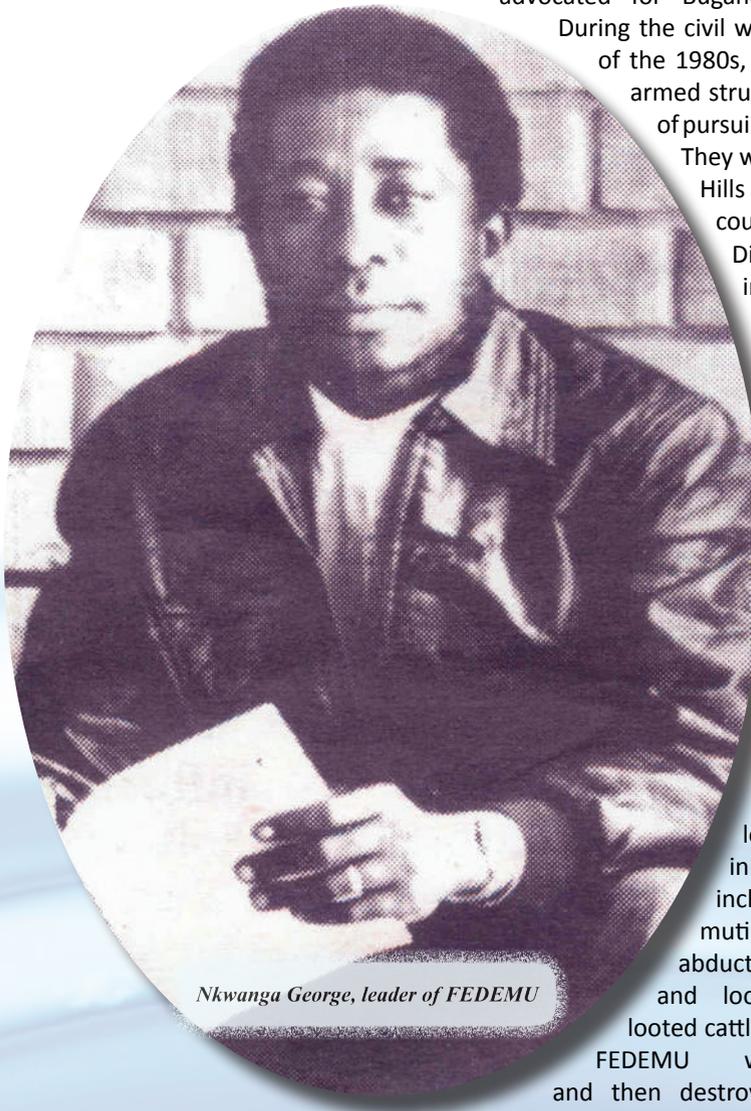
The Federal Democratic Movement of Uganda (FEDEMU), an insurgent group led by Captain Nkwanga, was mainly comprised of Buganda loyalists striving for a federal system of governance for Buganda. FEDEMU broke away from the Uganda Freedom Movement (UFM) in 1981 as a result of internal conflicts that emerged after the successful attack on Lubiri army barracks in February 1981.<sup>472</sup> This rebel group operated during the time when several other armed groups, including the NRA and UFM, were fighting the second Obote Government, and later, in 1985, the Government of Tito Okello Lutwa.<sup>473</sup> Their strongest support base was in the Buganda region, since they

470 Ibid

471 Research conducted in Mukono District

472 Research conducted in Nakasongola and Mukono Districts

473 Research conducted in Nakasongola, Hoima and Mukono Districts; Ruddy, D. and Vlassenroot, K. (1999) Kony's message: a new koine? The Lord's Resistance Army in northern Uganda. *African Affairs*, 98(390) pp. 14



*Nkwanga George, leader of FEDEMU*

advocated for Buganda’s autonomy.<sup>474</sup>

During the civil war of the first half of the 1980s, FEDEMU adopted armed struggle as the means of pursuing their objectives.

They were based in Nsita Hills in Nabbale sub-county in Mukono District, operating in for example Kimenyedde Sub-County in Mukono and in Kayunga District.

Participants from Mukono district noted that, similar to other rebel groups, FEDEMU committed numerous atrocities that left many families in grief. These included killings, mutilations, torture, abductions of civilians and looting. They also looted cattle, food and shops.

FEDEMU was weakened and then destroyed by the NRA after the mysterious killing of Captain

Nkwanga. Some believe that he was killed by Tito Okello Lutwa’s forces,<sup>475</sup> while others says that he was killed in 1986 during Museveni’s regime.<sup>476</sup> After his death, many of his followers defected and were integrated into the NRA in 1986 while others operated as armed bandits and later disappeared to Jinja and other places unknown.<sup>477</sup>

474 Ibid

475 Research conducted in Mukono District. See also Lubega, H. (2010) NRM historical: Why 1986’s NRM differs from 2010’s? The Observer, [Internet] 14 February. Available from: <[http://www.observer.ug/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=7240&Itemid=59](http://www.observer.ug/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=7240&Itemid=59)> [Accessed 13 August 2012]

476 Nkwanga, G. (2007) Nkwanga was murdered by NRA-former FEDEMU commander. ZoomInfo [Internet] Available from: <<http://www.zoominfo.com/#!search/profile/person?personId=592464899&targetid=-profile>> [Accessed 13 August 2012]

477 Research conducted in Mukono District

## 115. The Call for *Federo* in Buganda

As described throughout this Chapter, demands for '*Federo*' (Federalism) have been constant throughout Uganda's post-independence history, and were not limited to the previously described armed insurgency group, FEDEMU. Demands for *Federo* were especially vocal during the drafting of the 1995 Constitution. *Federo*, according

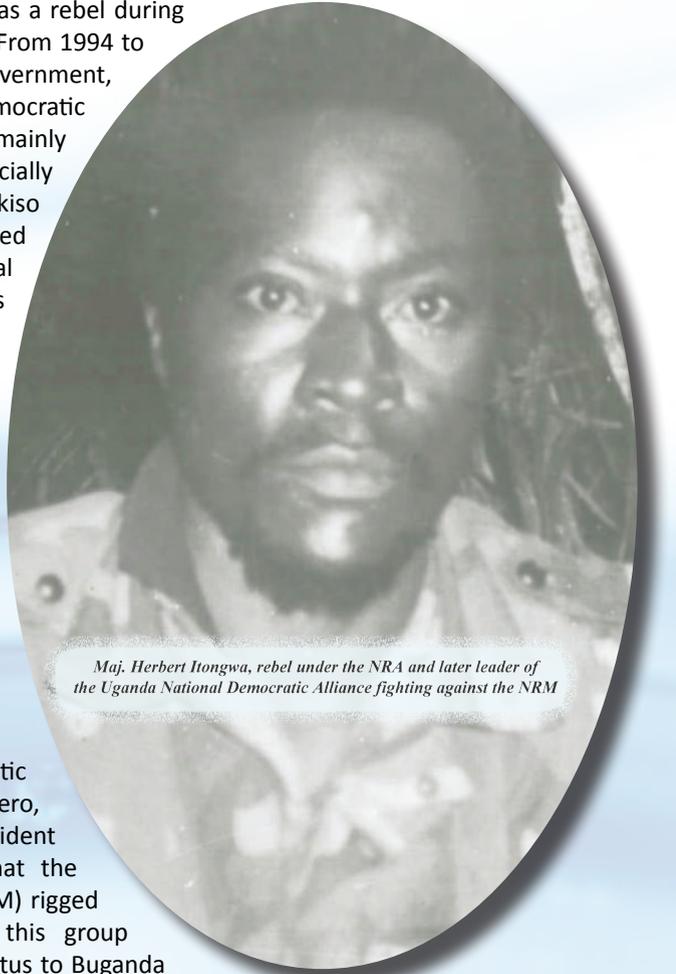


*Baganda supporters of Federo demand the introduction of a federal system of governance and the return of Buganda land*

to participants, stands for a federalist system of government rather than the current centralised state, essentially giving greater autonomy to the Buganda Kingdom. During the 1993 Constitutional Review consultations, 67 per cent of Ugandans supported *Federo*. Ninety nine per cent of the people of Buganda, supported *Federo*. However, the Government of Uganda failed to include *Federo* in the 1995 Constitution, inspiring resentment among participants in Luwero. Participants emphasised that the failure to meet this demand undermines peace and causes conflict.

## 116. The Uganda National Democratic Alliance (1994-1995)

Major Herbert Kikomeko Itongwa was a rebel during the Bush War, fighting for the NRA. From 1994 to 1995, he turned against the NRM Government, leading the Uganda National Democratic Alliance insurgent group that mainly operated around Buganda, especially in the Mukono, Luwero and Wakiso districts. The insurgency's reported agenda was the restoration of federal status to Buganda Kingdom as demanded during the Constituent Assembly debates in 1994 that gave rise to a new Constitution in 1995. The insurgents have since disappeared from public view.<sup>478</sup> Itongwa went into exile in Europe, and died in Germany on April 19, 2013.<sup>479</sup>



*Maj. Herbert Itongwa, rebel under the NRA and later leader of the Uganda National Democratic Alliance fighting against the NRM*

## 117. Uganda Federal Democratic Alliance (1997 – present)

The Uganda Federal Democratic Alliance (UFDA), led by Duncan Kafero, launched a struggle to oust President Museveni from power, alleging that the National Resistance Movement (NRM) rigged the 1996 elections. Additionally, this group sought the restoration of federal status to Buganda and other regions as demanded during the Constituent

Assembly debates prior to the promulgation of the 1995 Constitution that did not

<sup>478</sup> Additional key informant interview of a Senior Political leader in Kampala, 12 – 16 June 2012

<sup>479</sup> Kasasira, R. (2013), Herbert Itongwa: A soldier who turned guns on his own govt. Daily Monitor [Internet], 24 April. Available from: <<http://www.monitor.co.ug/artsculture/Reviews/HERBERT-ITONGWA--A-SOLDIER-who-turned-guns-on-his-own-govt/-/691232/1756222/-/item/1/-/724ax6/-/index.html>> [Accessed 11 May 2013]

include these claims. The strength of the group's armed wing was very limited. Today, its political wing operates from London and other parts of Europe. The UFDA remains active in Uganda despite the absence of an operational military campaign on the ground.

## BUGANDA

### The Bush War

*The Bush War remains one of the darkest episodes in Uganda's history of conflict. Led by Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, several armed insurgent groups joined the National Resistance Army (NRA) and fought the Governments of Milton Obote (1981-1985) and Tito Okello (1985-1986). The end of the Bush War marked the beginning of the National Resistance Movement (NRM) regime led by President Museveni, which remains in power today.*

#### 118. The National Resistance Army/Movement Bush War (1981 – 1986)

The National Resistance Army/Movement (NRA/M) was founded in 1981 upon the merger of Yusuf Lule's Uganda Freedom Fighters (UFF) and the Popular Resistance Army (PRA) of Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, a former Minister of Defence and former Presidential candidate who represented the Uganda Patriotic Movement (UPM) party during the 1980 election.

Prior to the 1980 elections, candidate Museveni of the newly formed UPM had stated that if the elections were rigged he would go to the bush to launch a rebellion. Arguing that the Obote II Government had indeed rigged the 1980 national elections,<sup>480</sup> Museveni made good on this promise and the NRM/A waged a war of resistance from 1981 to 1986.<sup>481</sup> The armed struggle was launched on 6 February 1981, when NRA rebel forces, led by Yoweri Museveni, first attacked Kabamba Military Barrack in Mubende district. They in turn proceeded to the Luwero district where they set up their base, concentrating their operations



*Yoweri Museveni during his leadership of the Uganda Patriotic Movement*

480 Omach, P. (2009) Democratisation and conflict resolution in Uganda. *Les Cahiers D'Afrique de L'Est*, 41. pp. 1-20

481 Baker, B. (2004) Popular justice and policing from bush war to democracy: Uganda 1981-2004. *International Journal of the Sociology of Law* 32 pp. 333

## COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

within the Luwero Triangle area.<sup>482</sup> In his quest to overthrow the Obote II Government, Museveni convinced other parallel rebel groups also fighting the Obote II Government to join the NRA. These groups included Vumbula of Rt. Major Kakoza Mutale, the Uganda Freedom Movement of the late Dr. Kayira Lutaakome, and the Uganda National Rescue Front (UNRF I) of General Moses Ali.<sup>483</sup> This growing NRA fighting force later ousted Tito Okello Lutwa in 1986.



*Yoweri Museveni during the Bush War*

The bush war was characterised by instability, human rights violations, recruitment of child soldiers (*kadogo*), killing and torture of civilians by Government as well as NRA forces, and displacement of civilians into Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps. This was especially true in Nakitoma sub-county in Nakasongola and Nakaseke districts. More than a quarter century later, participants from central Uganda remain anxious for adequate reparations, acknowledgement of wrongs committed by the warring parties, apologies to the victimised population, and full accountability to and rehabilitation of the community.

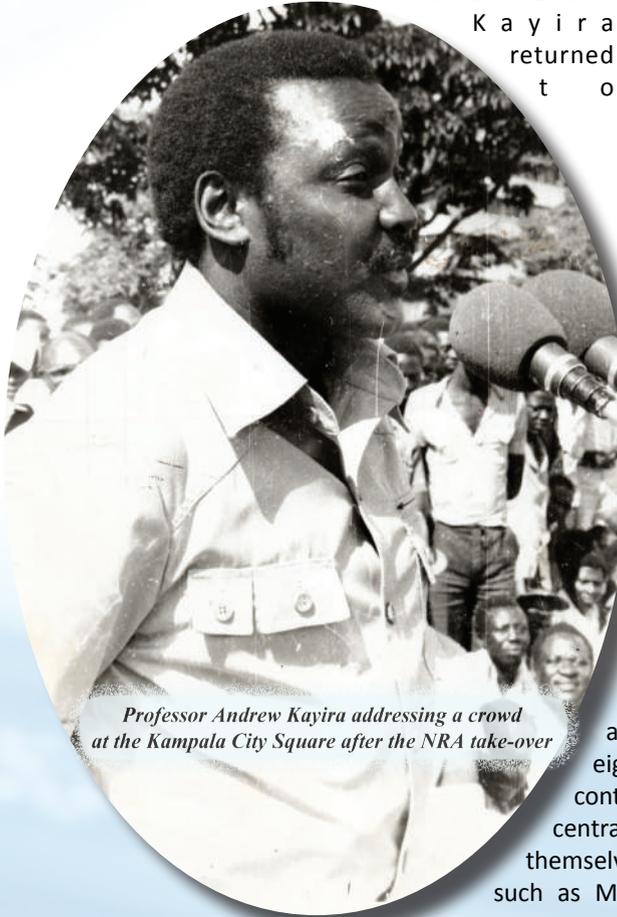
482 Research conducted in Nakasongola, Hoima, Mukono and Luwero; Baguma, R. Thawite, J. and Nzinjah, J. (2012) Over 600 awarded medals at army day celebrations. New Vision, [Internet], 1 June. Available from: <<http://www.newvision.co.ug/mobile/Detail.aspx?NewsID=628853&CatID=1>> [Accessed 14 August 2012]

483 Kasfir, N. (2005) Guerrillas and civil participation: the National Resistance Army in Uganda, 1981 – 86. The Journal of Modern African Studies 43(2), pp. 282

## 119. Uganda Freedom Movement (1980 – 1987)

The Uganda Freedom Movement (UFM) was a rebel group formed and led by Dr. Lutaakome Andrew Kayira<sup>484</sup> to fight the Government of the late Dr Apollo Milton Obote. After leading the Uganda Freedom Union while in exile from the dictatorial government of the then President Idi Amin Dada<sup>485</sup>

K a y i r a  
r e t u r n e d  
t o



*Professor Andrew Kayira addressing a crowd at the Kampala City Square after the NRA take-over*



*Kimeze a child soldier during the Luweero bush war*

Uganda after Amin's overthrow in 1979. He quickly formed the UFM to fight the Obote II Government, alleging that the 1980 elections were rigged in favour of Uganda People's Congress (UPC).<sup>486</sup> Shortly thereafter, on 23 February 1981, Kayira's UFM successfully attacked the Lubiri army barracks in a battle lasting eight hours. His movement continued to concentrate on central Uganda while allying themselves with other rebel groups, such as Museveni's National Resistance

484 Omara-Otunnu, A. (1992) The struggle for democracy in Uganda. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*. 30 (3). p. 449

485 WeInformers. (2012) Late DP military man Andrew Litaakome Kayira committed two crimes state records indicate. WeInformers [Internet], Available from: <<http://www.weinformers.net/2012/08/03/late-dp-military-man-andrew-lutaakome-kayira-committed-two-crimes-state-records-indicate/>> [Accessed 13 August, 2012]; Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada. (1996) Uganda: Information on the Ugandan Freedom Movement (UFM) including its history, organization and how it was coopted by the government. [Internet], Available from: <<http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3ae6ad1484.html>> [Accessed 13 August 2012]

486 Kibirige, D. (2004) Who killed Kayira? Ugnest [Internet], Available from: <<http://www.mail-archive.com/ugandanet@kym.net/msg11885.html>> [Accessed 14 August 2012]

Movement (NRA).<sup>487</sup>

After the overthrow of the Obote II Government by Tito Okello Lutwa and Bazilio Okello Olara, Kayira joined as the military council while Okello was the Head of State. By the time Museveni's NRA toppled Okello's Government in 1986, Kayira was in charge of areas of Ggaba, Konge, Muyenga, Makindye and other parts of Kampala. When Museveni overthrew the Government of Okello, Kayira joined forces with the NRA and was appointed as Minister of Energy. Despite Kayira's integration into the NRA and his subsequent appointment as Minister, it seems the NRA Government mistrusted him, resulting in his eventual arrest in October 1986. He was accused of treason for allegedly plotting to overthrow the Government of President Museveni, though he was acquitted and released by court on February 24, 1987.<sup>488</sup> On 9 March 1987, Kayira was assassinated by unknown gunmen. After his death, his followers disintegrated. Some went into exile, others were integrated into NRA, while others deserted.<sup>489</sup>

## 120. Vumbula (1981 - 1986)

Around 1981, Rtd. Major Kakoza Mutale formed and led a rebel group called Vumbula. Participants from Nakasongola district claim that Vumbula was based in Nakaseke district. Kakoza's rebel group operated in the Luwero triangle areas, fighting to overthrow the second Government of Apollo Milton Obote.

Participants indicated that Vumbula's operations in central Uganda were characterised by massive displacement of people from Nakaseke and other nearby communities, especially in Nakitoma sub-county.<sup>490</sup>



*Kakoza Mutale, leader of Vumbula*

487 Kasfir, N. (2005) Guerrillas and civil participation: The National Resistance Army in Uganda, 1981 – 86. The Journal of Modern African Studies, 43 (2). p.282

488 Thompson, K. (Scotland Yard). Scotland Yard report on the murder of Dr Andrew Lutaakome Kayira: Democratic Party version. [Internet], Available from: <<http://semuwemba.files.wordpress.com/2010/03/kayiramurderreportdpversion.pdf>> [Accessed 14 August, 2012]

489 Research conducted in Mukono, Luwero, Mubende and Nakasongola Districts

490 Research conducted in Nakasongola District

Kakoza's group later joined Museveni and his National Resistance Army (NRA). Since the overthrow of Tito Okello Lutwa in 1986, Kakoza Mutale has remained with the NRA/M and has held several government positions.<sup>491</sup>

## BUGANDA

### Post - Bush War Conflicts

*The end of open war that raged from 1981 to 1986 did not mean the end of conflict in the central region. As in northern Uganda, a wide variety of conflicts of a different nature sprang up after the guns heard during the Bush War fell silent. Participants identified poverty caused by the Bush War, witchcraft, domestic violence and conflict between youth and older people as conflicts that are legacies from the armed violence of the Bush War.*

#### 121. Conflict arising from the poverty caused by war in Luwero Triangle (1986 – present)

As mentioned above under “national level conflicts”, the Bush War plunged the Luwero Triangle into poverty that persisted after Museveni took power. Participants emphasized that peace is absent in homes due to economic hardship, and this has caused a lot of domestic violence in the district.<sup>492</sup> As one participant noted, when “a family head can't afford some necessities in a home” this creates a climate of aggression and gender-related conflicts in the home.<sup>493</sup>

#### 122. Witchcraft (1986 – present)

In all of the communities in central region, ‘witchcraft’<sup>494</sup> was identified as the source of major on-going conflicts. When the five-year Bush War left survivors in the Luwero triangle area (especially in Nakasongola district) impoverished, they turned to witchcraft to acquire wealth. According to participants, however, many who turned to witchcraft failed to meet the demands made by spirits. Such demands included the sacrifice of children. For that reason, witchcraft spirits are said to haunt public places such as markets, the roadside, schools and hospitals, and to have become a public menace in Nakasongola District.<sup>495</sup>

Spirits were said to have attacked pupils in Bujabe primary school in Nakitoma sub-county in November 2011, causing them to become confused and to start running up and down. As a consequence, the students were unable to complete their national exams. It was also said that in Nabiswera health centre III, spirits attacked and raped a female staff member and tortured a male staff member. As a result, the centre's patients

491 Ibid

492 Research conducted in Luwero District

493 Ibid

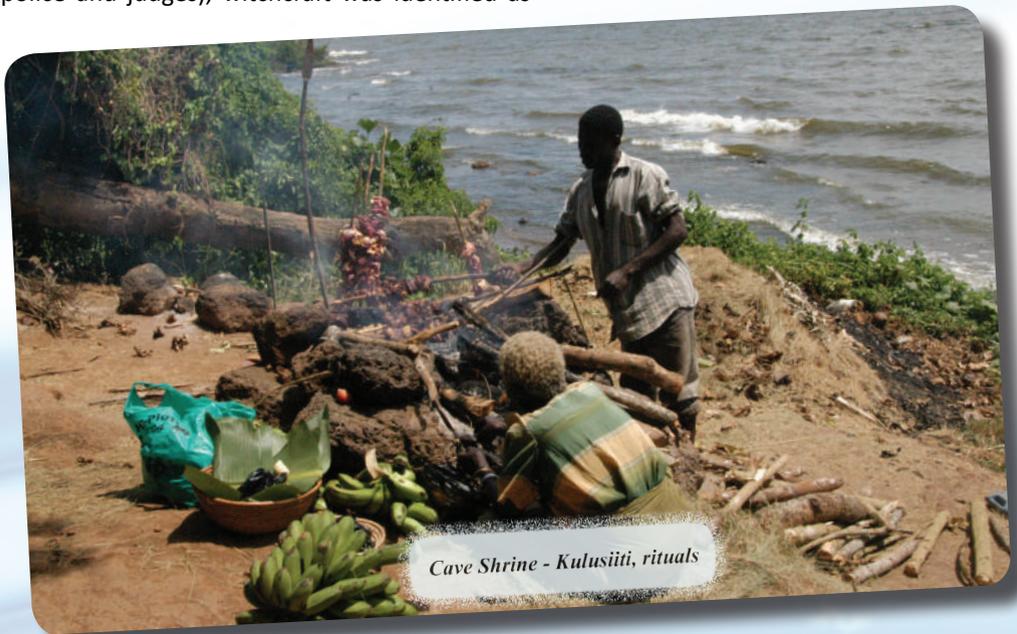
494 The terminology used in this Compendium reflects that used by the participants and does not reflect an opinion or judgement of the authors or editors

495 Research conducted in Nakasongola District

felt forced to abandon the facility in 2006.<sup>496</sup> These incidents caused the Nakasongola District Council to discuss the issue of witchcraft during local government meetings in search of a solution.

Cases of witchcraft were also discussed in Mukono, Mubende, Mbarara and Luwero Districts. Witchcraft was said to be used to poison, charm, disable or kill, often as a method to steal land from the victims.

Participants stated that the commercial use of witchcraft is a relatively new phenomenon. Witchcraft is advertised over the radio as a type of employment. Participants stated that witchcraft is a countrywide problem affecting peace and health. At the same time, it was described as a means to an end. As formal court processes are considered expensive, slow and partial in favour of the rich (who have resources and knowledge to manipulate the police and judges), witchcraft was identified as



one of the most widely used 'justice' mechanisms available to the poor. Further, high poverty levels in the community were said to lead community members, driven by jealousy, to use witchcraft to sabotage the progress of fellow community members. Often, cases of deaths, disease and psychological problems are subscribed to witchcraft. As such, witchcraft is seen as a destabilising factor in society, undermining peace and harmonious coexistence.

### **123. Domestic Violence in central Uganda (1986 – present)**

Domestic violence, though not a new phenomenon, is said to have risen exponentially following the Bush War in the areas affected by the conflict. The participants indicated

<sup>496</sup> Kiwanuka, F. (2007) Uganda: Nakasongola Health Centre cleansed. All Africa, [Internet], Available from: <<http://allafrica.com/stories/200705090051.html>> [Accessed 14 August 2012]

that while the NRA guerrilla war was won in 1986, it left many areas impoverished, not only the Luwero Triangle, but throughout the country. Participants from central Uganda commented that as a result, survival became increasingly contingent on handouts, begging, and in some cases prostitution,<sup>497</sup> thievery and witchcraft. Previously the sole providers, men became unable to provide for their families. This resulted in increased violence against women, suicide, fighting and verbal assault, and confrontations between married men, their wives and their children. In this patriarchal society where women are expected to be subordinate to men, the emancipation and equality that was promoted by the NRM Government led to further confrontations between men



People protest against domestic violence

and women, as the men considered their masculinity to be under threat. In Central Uganda, as in other parts of the country, the misinterpretation of women rights and the resultant failure of some women to meet or execute their roles and responsibilities as housewives in homes often results in quarrels, fights, child neglect, separation and divorce.

#### 124. Conflict between the youth and older people (2006 – present)

Conflict between the youth and older people has emerged due to continued support for the NRM Government by older people, dating back to the NRA bush war. To date, according to the youth, the Government has done very little to address the consequences of the war that caused such devastation to the country. Youth in turn blame older people for supporting a regime that has turned a deaf ear to the their problems

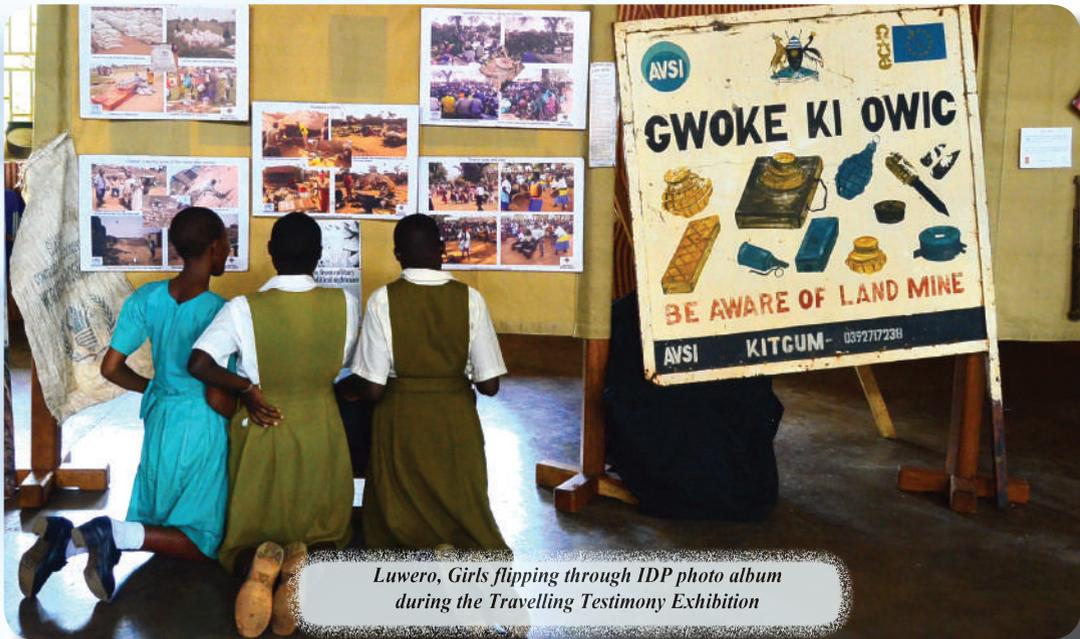
<sup>497</sup> The term 'prostitution' used here was used by participants to describe post-Bush War dynamics

and that has failed to reward them for their contributions to NRM's rise to power.<sup>498</sup>

Participants from Nakasongola district claimed that they were peaceful and wealthy until they either gave away or lost all their wealth to NRA fighters during the NRA bush war, that they have failed to regain their former wealth, and that peace has remained elusive. The youth expressed that the war caused them to miss educational opportunities as well as the possibility of enjoying and inheriting their parents' wealth that was lost during the war. They suffer from unemployment and extreme poverty, and are worried about the poor prospects of reacquiring lost wealth. The Government has made numerous empty promises to compensate the victims and rehabilitate the districts in appreciation for their parents' sacrifices and contributions toward the NRA/M victory.

Despite these dilemmas, the youths indicated that in 2006, the elderly encouraged them to vote for the NRM Government, as the elderly believed that the NRM "is their son they delivered" which should not be deserted. However, after the NRM received overwhelming votes from the youth and won the elections for the second time, the participants expressed that very little action was undertaken by the Government to show their appreciation, with numerous unfulfilled promises including assurances of compensation.

A significant number of youth were resentful of older generations and stated that they do not accept advice from their elders. As a result, the elderly are vulnerable to exclusion from social support from the youths.<sup>499</sup>



*Luwero, Girls flipping through IDP photo album during the Travelling Testimony Exhibition*

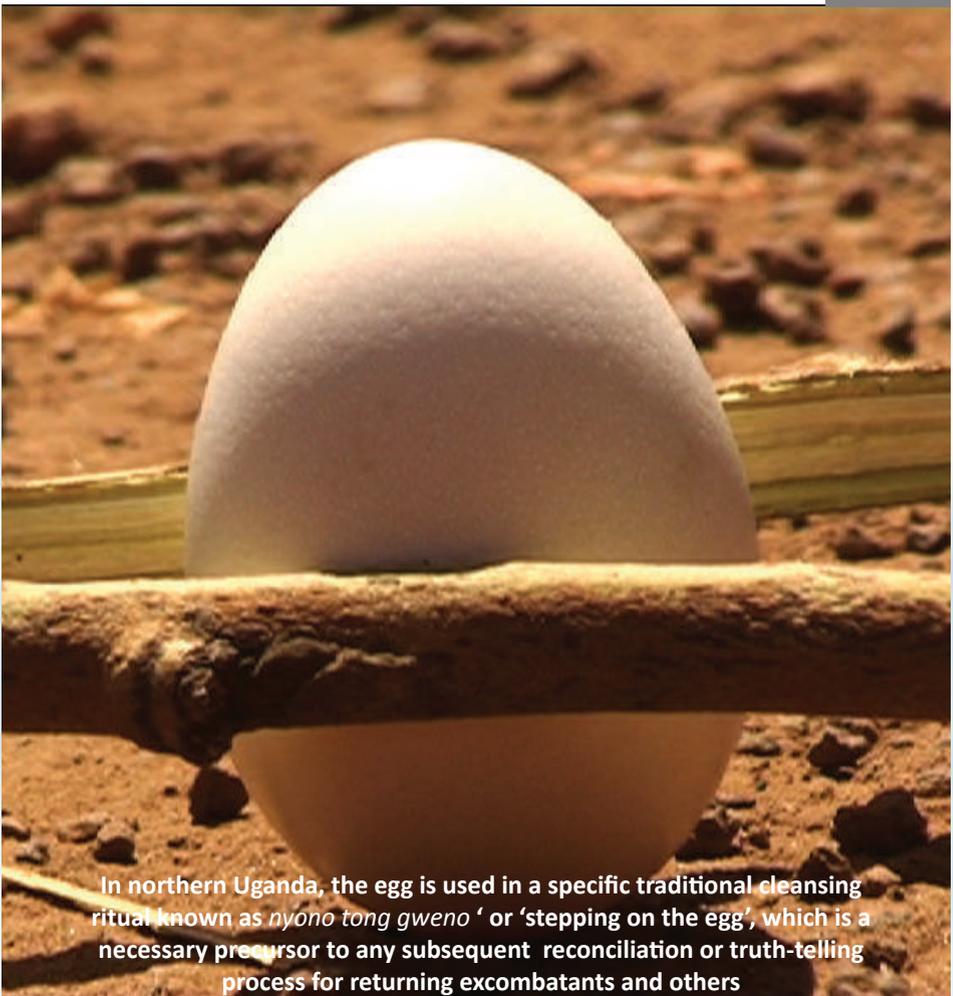
498 Similar feelings of blame were said to exist between men and women. Men blame women for supporting the NRM unconditionally

499 Research conducted in Nakasongola District

# CHAPTER

## TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE MECHANISMS IN UGANDA

### EIGHT



In northern Uganda, the egg is used in a specific traditional cleansing ritual known as *nyono tong gweno* ' or 'stepping on the egg', which is a necessary precursor to any subsequent reconciliation or truth-telling process for returning excombatants and others

## Introduction

Against the backdrop of a multiplicity of conflicts over a protracted period encompassing both the colonial and post-independence eras, it is perhaps surprising that more has not been done to address the legacies of this turbulent past. A couple of exceptions stand out: in 1974 then President Idi Amin Dada established a Commission of Inquiry into the Disappearance of People in Uganda to investigate rampant disappearances in the country. When the Commissioners ultimately implicated the regime, they themselves disappeared. In 1986, after taking power, the NRM instituted a Commission of Inquiry into Human Rights Violations and Abuses from 1962 to 26 January 1986. The Commission conducted extensive investigations and made several recommendations, most of which were never implemented, save for the establishment of a permanent human rights body, the Uganda Human Rights Commission, and the report was never publicly disseminated. Both commissions, therefore, failed to bring closure to the multiple violations which drove their establishment.

Following these experiences more than two decades passed before the incumbent regime engaged again in a discussion about possible transitional justice measures for Uganda. The 2007 Juba Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation, together with its 2008 Annexure, were the first roadmap for transitional justice ever drawn up for post-conflict Uganda. Although there was no final peace agreement with the LRA, the Government of Uganda nevertheless proceeded to implement some of the agreed upon mechanisms, notably a Special Division of the High Court, known as the International Crimes Division. A Transitional Justice Working Group was also established under the Justice Law and Order Sector (JLOS) to advise Government on appropriate transitional justice mechanisms, and tasked with the development of a national Transitional Justice Policy by 2014. Whereas a fourth draft of the policy was presented to Cabinet in 2013, and a fifth draft of the policy was developed in 2014, at the time of writing it was not clear if and when the draft policy would be accepted.

Recognising that much of the discussion about transitional justice had been informed by perceptions of the LRA-GOU conflict in northern Uganda, Refugee Law Project, in the course of conducting the National Reconciliation and Transitional Justice (NRTJ) Audit, sought to elicit grassroots perspectives on appropriate transitional justice processes from around the country.

This section of the *Compendium of Conflicts* portrays both how individuals dealt with conflict legacies in their communities in the past and how they conceive of approaches to transitional justice in the future. It presents grassroots understandings of concepts common in the lexicon of transitional justice, which are key tenets of the Juba Peace Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation, including mechanisms such as prosecutions, amnesty, truth-seeking, reparations, traditional justice, institutional reform and memorialisation.

## Accountability

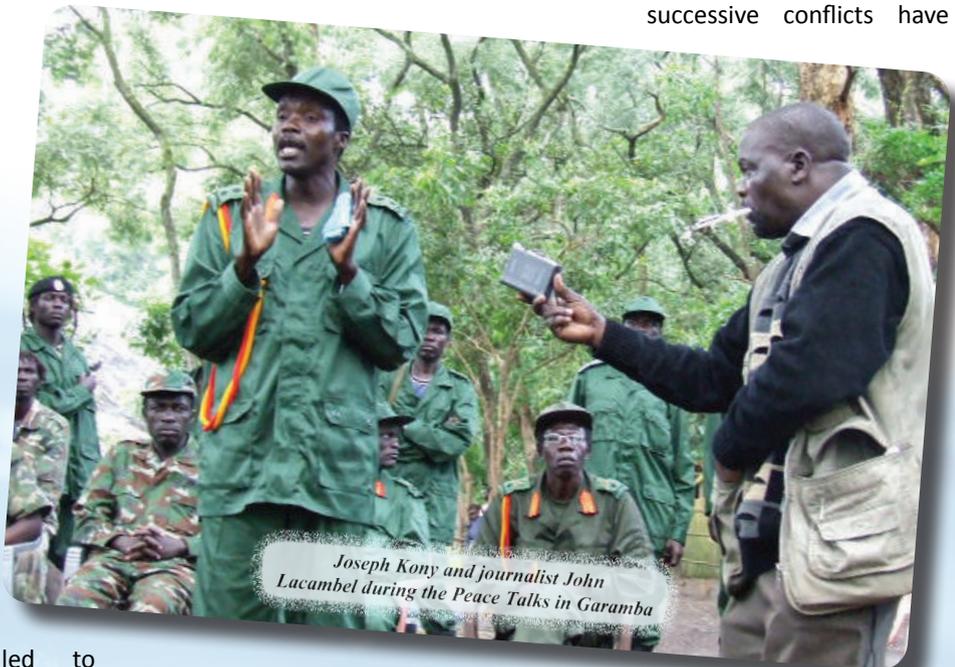
In the transitional justice realm, accountability connotes measures adopted to eliminate

impunity through mechanisms of punishment, truth-telling, answerability and reparations. While ‘accountability’ is not defined under the Juba Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation, the section on accountability stipulates that; “Formal criminal and civil justice measures shall be applied to any individual who is alleged to have committed serious crimes or human rights violations in the course of the conflict. Provided that, state actors shall be subjected to existing criminal justice processes and not to special justice processes under this Agreement.”<sup>500</sup>

Participants of the NRTJ Audit viewed accountability in a broad sense: notions of confession, acknowledgement, acceptance of responsibility, apology, repentance, asking for forgiveness, truth, fulfilment of promises and reparations all entered into the discussions. Participants stated that the general lack of accountability is responsible for grave feelings of bitterness in Uganda and instances of mob justice.

### ***The Accountability Gap***

In discussing the meaning and application of accountability as a justice mechanism, participants in the NRTJ Audit throughout Uganda noted that successive conflicts have



*Joseph Kony and journalist John Lacambel during the Peace Talks in Garamba*

led to numerous human rights violations, both under all post-independence administrations, and during political transitions such as the National Resistance Army’s own struggle for power.<sup>501</sup> To date, the majority of perpetrators have not been held to account, and their victims continue to suffer from

500 Juba Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation (2007), Clause 4.1

501 Research conducted in Nakasongola District

## COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

physical and psychological impacts related to these conflicts.<sup>502</sup> These long-standing accountability gaps are believed to be promoting impunity,<sup>503</sup> as well as fuelling public bitterness.<sup>504</sup>

Corruption in the formal justice system and an absence of proactive reforms and witness protection schemes contribute to impunity.<sup>505</sup> Obstacles in the judiciary, especially perceptions of biases in the prosecutorial process, further limit the willingness of individuals to come forward and seek justice.<sup>506</sup> Due to these challenges, many perpetrators evade accountability.<sup>507</sup> One response to continued perpetrator impunity



*Relatives and wives of LRA top command arrive in South Sudan for the Juba Peace Talks*

502 Research conducted in Bulambuli District

503 Research conducted in Nakasongola District

504 Research conducted in Bulambuli District

505 Research conducted in Soroti District

506 Research conducted in Hoima District

507 Research conducted in Bulambuli and Nakasongola Districts

is an increase in incidents of mob justice.<sup>508</sup> As victims continue to suffer, accountability for human rights abuses and resulting destabilisation of the country is essential.<sup>509</sup> While participants acknowledged that ensuring accountability is particularly difficult with regard to senior politicians and leaders, they stated that those responsible must be held to account through the appropriate mechanisms, be they rebels, Government officials or civilians.<sup>510</sup>

### ***Means of Accountability***

Participants' views on how accountability could be achieved in Uganda ranged beyond criminal prosecutions alone to encompass a broad and varied spectrum of transitional justice mechanisms. Most participants throughout Uganda see the award of reparations as a key component of accountability. In some districts, participants described how promises made to communities remain unfulfilled.<sup>511,512</sup> Suggestions included the restitution of looted property and drawing upon the resources of the perpetrators.<sup>513</sup> Participants in Nakasongola district, for example, specified that President Museveni should provide compensation specifically for the loss of lives and property during the NRA Bush War.<sup>514</sup> Participants further believed that reparations would be enhanced by apologies that victims saw as genuine.<sup>515</sup>

Participants also regarded just prosecutions as a form of accountability, but argued that a lack of independence in the judicial process facilitates the evasion of justice by perpetrators.<sup>516</sup> Some said that Joseph Kony should be criminally prosecuted for LRA crimes committed under his command.<sup>517</sup> Likewise, they argued, other rebel leaders, former rebels who currently hold Government positions, and corrupt officials should be held to account, and the property of the latter should be confiscated.<sup>518</sup> The pervasive demand for accountability does not remain confined to prosecutorial justice but also encompasses reconciliation.<sup>519</sup> In northern Uganda, for example, where atrocities were committed on all sides of the conflict, participants felt that both Joseph Kony and the current Government should accept their responsibility, apologise openly, repent and ask for forgiveness.<sup>520</sup> Apologies can thus be seen as a central component of accountability.

Furthermore, in the eyes of communities, truth-telling mechanisms are one of the key and acceptable forms of accountability, because truth-telling facilitates the acceptance of responsibility for one's actions.<sup>521</sup> Institutional reform was another mechanism that

508 Research conducted in Hoima District

509 Research conducted in Hoima and Mukono Districts

510 Research conducted in Mukono, Kitgum and Nakapiripirit Districts

511 Research conducted in Nakasongola District

512 Research conducted in Hoima District

513 Research conducted in Mukono District

514 Research conducted in Nakasongola District

515 Research conducted in Hoima and Soroti Districts

516 Research conducted in Soroti District

517 Research conducted in Nakasongola District

518 Research conducted in Nakasongola and Mukono Districts

519 Research conducted in Soroti District

520 Research conducted in Adjumani District

521 Research conducted in Mukono and Hoima Districts

participants linked with accountability, especially as it applied to the judiciary and formal prosecutions, as well as the International Crimes Division, which civil society representatives from northern Uganda claimed should be more representative.<sup>522</sup> Finally, amnesty for followers of rebel leaders was seen as compatible with pursuing accountability for higher-level perpetrators.<sup>523</sup>

## Reconciliation

Reconciliation is defined in the Juba Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation as “the process of restoring broken relationships and re-establishing harmony.”<sup>524</sup> The Agreement states that;

*“Parties shall promote appropriate reconciliation mechanisms to address issues arising from within or outside Uganda with respect to the conflict. [They] shall promote collective as well as individual acts, and processes of reconciliation shall be promoted at all levels. Truth-seeking and truth-telling processes and mechanisms shall be promoted.”<sup>525</sup>*

### **The Need for Reconciliation**

An overall consensus emerged in focus group discussions and key informant interviews alike, that there is a pressing need in Uganda for reconciliation at the local, regional, and national levels. Many believe that if conflicts that have plagued the country during both pre- and post-independence periods are not addressed through reconciliation, sustainable peace will remain elusive.<sup>526</sup> One participant said that unresolved issues amount to “a time bomb ready to burst.”<sup>527</sup> While reconciliation contributes to peace-building and national unity, it must be regarded as an incremental process.<sup>528</sup> Participants argued that reconciliation can only take place in a climate devoid of fear and must include both state and non-state actors.<sup>529</sup> They further underscored that high-level political leaders have a role to play and encouraged them to speak the language of reconciliation.<sup>530</sup> Concretely, participants in Kasese called for the initiation of a national reconciliation process through the adoption of legislation such as the National Truth and Reconciliation Bill proposed by civil society (see Annex),<sup>531</sup> while individuals in Pader pressed for a national stakeholder conference or forum.<sup>532</sup> Across the country, communities emphasized the need for a national law and a national policy to promote reconciliation and nation building.<sup>533</sup>

522 Minutes from NRTJ Audit Validation on Workshop, 28 August 2012

523 Research conducted in Mukono District

524 Juba Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation (2007), Clause 1

525 Juba Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation (2007), Clauses 7.1-7.3

526 Research conducted in Gulu, Adjumani, Mukono, Hoima and Kasese Districts

527 Research conducted in Kitgum District

528 Research conducted in Gulu District

529 Research conducted in Gulu District

530 Research conducted in Arua District

531 Research conducted in Kasese District

532 Research conducted in Pader District

533 Research conducted in all districts

## The Challenges for Reconciliation

Despite the strongly voiced need for reconciliation, participants noted that any such initiatives were unlikely to be successful in the absence of genuine governmental support and political will.<sup>534</sup> They urged the Government to take a comprehensive and honest approach in adopting the most adequate mechanisms for solving outstanding issues.<sup>535</sup>

Furthermore, participants mentioned various local and regional conflicts that remain unaddressed. These included tensions between the Madi and Acholi as well as conflicts between the Pian, Bokora and Matheniko communities in Nakapiripirit and even with cross-border groups in Kenya and South Sudan.<sup>536</sup> Participants called on the Government to initiate peace-building activities between the people of Bulambuli and the Karimojong,<sup>537</sup> while others noted the urgent need for negotiated talks between the Bamba, Bakonzo, and Batooro.<sup>538</sup> The people of Soroti also declared themselves willing to reconcile with neighbouring communities such as the Acholi and Karimojong.<sup>539</sup>

## Avenues to Reconciliation

While reconciliation is believed to be a necessity for peace-building, many Ugandans see it as only one part of a comprehensive transitional justice framework. Accordingly, participants expressed their views on a variety of desirable transitional justice mechanisms. For example, communities called overwhelmingly for traditional justice approaches because they consider these to most adequately acknowledge conflict legacies.<sup>540</sup> While acknowledging the need for national reconciliation, many participants also wanted reconciliation and truth-telling initiatives to take place at the community level where traditional leaders would be at the core of the process.<sup>541</sup>

For many, grassroots leaders are considered better positioned than Government officials to spur reconciliation between parties on the ground.<sup>542</sup> Participants from western Uganda regarded the participation of traditional kings as essential in dealing with the tensions between the Batooro, Bamba, and Basongora at the community-level.<sup>543</sup> Representatives from Arua cited the ‘bending of the spear’ ceremony, which is led by elders without government intervention, as a key component of reconciliation.<sup>544</sup> Such local processes should complement and even inspire reconciliation processes at the regional and national levels.<sup>545</sup>

Despite recognising the role that powerful traditional structures historically played

534 Research conducted in Soroti and Hoima Districts

535 Research conducted in Bundibugyo District

536 Research conducted in Adjumani and Nakapiripirit Districts

537 Research conducted in Bulambuli District

538 Research conducted in Bundibugyo District

539 Research conducted in Soroti District

540 Research conducted in Pader District

541 Research conducted in Gulu District

542 Research conducted in Gulu District

543 Research conducted in Kasese District

544 Minutes from northern region discussion at the NRTJ Audit Validation Workshop, 28 August 2012

545 Research conducted in Gulu and Kitgum Districts

in reconciling aggrieved parties through dialogue, rituals, ceremonies and compensation, participants argued that they are rarely in a position to be very effective today due to a lack of political will. Traditional institutions, such as the Omukama of Bunyoro, are weak and Government support is minimal.<sup>546</sup> For this reason, some districts called for more and not less Government involvement in bringing perpetrators to victimised communities and facilitating reconciliation on a regional and national level.<sup>547</sup> One civil society representative from Kitgum said, “We cannot push the Government aside in reconciliation. Government and [civil society organizations] and people should come together.”<sup>548</sup>

Participants additionally noted that existing community cultural

associations should be strengthened in order to foster reconciliation and promote harmony, including among members of the diaspora.<sup>549</sup> In addition to the role of cultural leaders, participants raised the possibility of involving religious leaders as well as mediators and other third parties.<sup>550</sup> The established ‘Family Protection Units’ of the police were also cited as important actors in promoting reconciliation at the household level.<sup>551</sup>

Participants referred to a variety of other mechanisms they saw as useful for advancing reconciliation. Some requested apologies from the perpetrators or their families so that



*Reconstruction of house burnt by the LRA in Bucoro, 1996*

546 Research conducted in Hoima District

547 Research conducted in Nakapiripirit and Mubende Districts

548 Minutes from northern region discussion at the NRTJ Audit Validation Workshop, 28 August 2012

549 Research conducted in Bundibugyo District

550 Research conducted in Arua, Kitgum and Mukono District

551 Research conducted in Tororo District

past harms could be acknowledged and forgiveness solicited.<sup>552</sup> Compensation for losses and the restitution of looted property were also regarded as conducive to reconciliation.<sup>553</sup> Similarly, psychosocial support for the parties involved in the conflict was seen as necessary.<sup>554</sup> Some argued that Amnesty could create a foundation for reconciliation insofar as it draws people out of the bush and fosters a broader reconciliatory state of mind.<sup>555</sup> Others, however, saw the Amnesty Act as a top-down approach to reconciliation which did not include the voices of victimized communities.<sup>556</sup> Still others emphasized the importance of implementable and concrete ideas, like power sharing, for furthering reconciliation.<sup>557</sup>

Truth-telling processes were also mentioned, and some participants argued for a Truth and Reconciliation Commission on a national level, inspired by the South African precedent.<sup>558</sup> Civil society representatives from northern Uganda clarified that such a commission should be created by an Act of Parliament and be composed of eminent persons rather than political appointees.<sup>559</sup> In a similar vein, some participants suggested an institutionalized reconciliation team composed of religious leaders, elders, traditional leaders, civil society members, and Government representatives.<sup>560</sup> Moreover, certain initiatives that have already demonstrated a potential to foster reconciliation between victims and perpetrators should be encouraged. These include inter-marriages, exchange visits, dialogues, mediation efforts and trade between affected communities.<sup>561</sup> These are hampered, however, by the continuation of conflicts and the absence of genuine and sustained Government support, and as a result such approaches require more commitment if they are to attain their potential.<sup>562</sup>

Other ideas included perpetrators' contributions toward burial ceremonies,<sup>563</sup> the use of a national language such as English or Kiswahili to facilitate greater unity,<sup>564</sup> and more emphasis on bridging persistent economic gaps.<sup>565</sup>

Finally, participants stressed the importance of documenting, disseminating and commemorating on-going and successful reconciliation initiatives in different parts of the country.<sup>566</sup> For instance, in Adjumani, the participants attributed the cyclical nature of violence to a failure to transmit messages of reconciliation to younger generations. They regretted that a certain spear used for *gomo tong*, or the bending of the spear peace-making ceremony amongst the Acholi and Lugbara-Kakwa, was lost and noted that it was a "misfortune and a sign that the two communities shall continue fighting

552 Research conducted in Gulu and Mukono District

553 Research conducted in Mukono and Kitgum Districts

554 Research conducted in Mukono District

555 Research conducted in Gulu District

556 Research conducted in Tororo District

557 Research conducted in Arua and Pader District

558 Research conducted in Gulu and Nakapiripirit Districts

559 Minutes from NRTJ Audit Validation Workshop, 28 August 2012

560 Research conducted in Hoima and Mukono Districts

561 Research conducted in Kasese, Tororo and Soroti Districts

562 Research conducted in Soroti District

563 Research conducted in Mukono District

564 Research conducted in Pader District

565 Research conducted in Arua District

566 Research conducted in Adjumani District

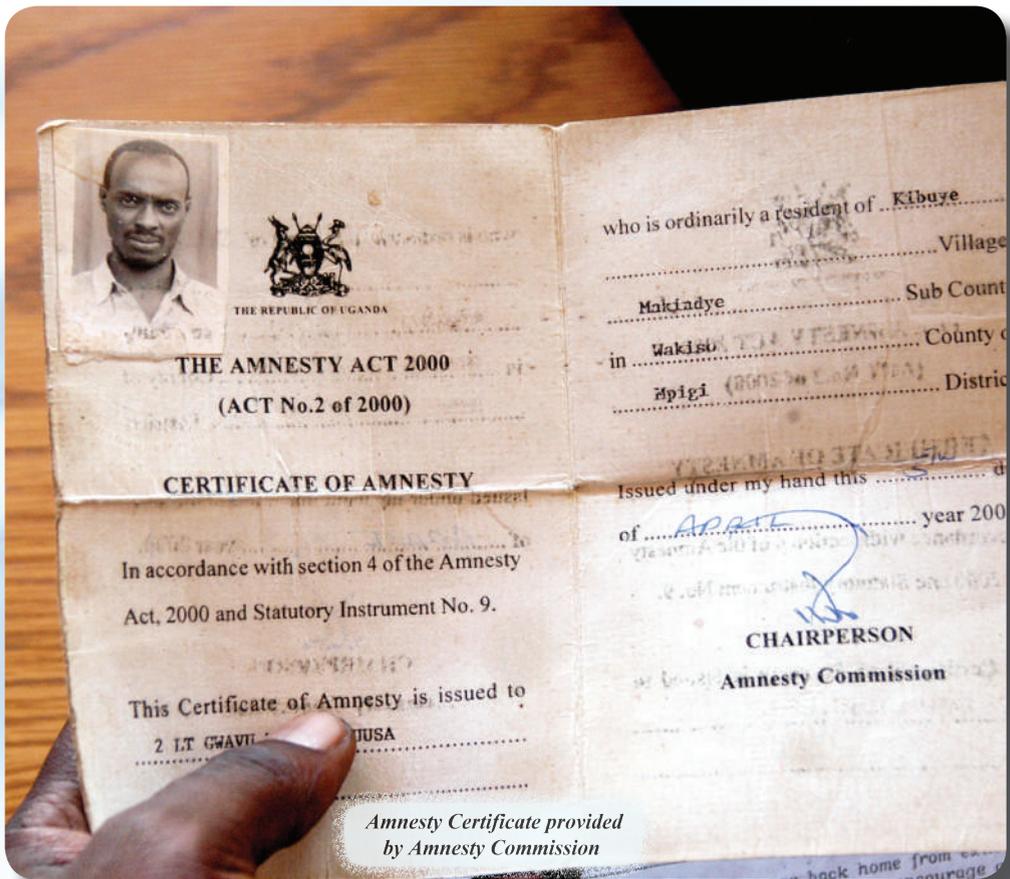
and shedding blood.”<sup>567</sup>

## Amnesty

On 21<sup>st</sup> January 2000, the Parliament of Uganda passed the Amnesty Act, which defined amnesty as;

*“a pardon, forgiveness, exemption or discharge from criminal prosecution or any other form of punishment by the State.”*<sup>568</sup>

This ground-breaking transitional justice measure extended amnesty to “any Ugandan who has at any time since the 26th day of January, 1986, engaged in or is engaging in war or armed rebellion against the government of the Republic of Uganda,”<sup>569</sup> provided they report to appropriate authorities and renounce rebellion. According to the Amnesty



567 Research conducted in Adjumani District

568 Amnesty Act (2000), Clause 1.a

569 Amnesty Act (2000), Clause 2.1

Commission, from 2000 to 2012 over 26,000 reporters from 30 different insurgent groups were granted amnesty and reinserted in their communities, with the Amnesty Act also providing avenues to peace negotiations with insurgent groups.<sup>570</sup>

On 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2012, the Minister of Internal Affairs, Hon. Hillary Onek, signed two statutory instruments extending the Amnesty Act but declaring the lapse of Part II of the Act, which gives the Commission powers to grant amnesty certificates. This effectively ended amnesty for those affiliated with rebel groups. Exactly a year later, however, the declaration of the lapse of Part II was revoked and Part II was thereby be deemed to have continued in force. The whole Amnesty Act is set to remain in force until May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2015. The research for the NRTJ Audit was conducted prior to the initial lapse of the Amnesty Act. The NRTJ Audit validation workshop with civil society representatives took place after the lapse. In this workshop, participants confirmed the importance of the Amnesty Act; several called for it to be reinstated in some form, while some dissenting voices claimed it fostered impunity.<sup>571</sup>

Participants from all districts acknowledged benefits of amnesty, yet many cautioned against implementing amnesty without community involvement and complementary transitional justice mechanisms such as reparations, truth-telling, and reconciliation through apology and forgiveness. Some also favoured prosecutions in certain cases. For example, those in Lira claimed that they had more faith in formal justice institutions than people in Acholi land, but their unwillingness to prosecute perpetrators from the UPDF weakened this system. The complexity of the amnesty process and the reactions it inspires from various communities are outlined below.

Epelu-Opio's book *Teso War: Causes and Consequences* documents how, in Teso, in 1989, amnesty was granted by the National Resistance Movement Government by decree, encouraging rebels to surrender. A Presidential Pardon was also announced. Nonetheless, rebellion persisted. The war did finally come to an end two years after the creation of the Presidential Commission for Teso, through organised events, meetings and dialogue.

### **Perceived Benefits**

It was widely agreed that amnesty played a key role in ending rebellions in Uganda, particularly in the northern and eastern regions of the country, and remains an important tool for ending conflict in general.<sup>572</sup> In some cases, this occurred on a local Government level even before the Amnesty Act was created.<sup>573</sup> Participants noted that amnesty fosters a reconciliatory mood for former fighters and communities, and has successfully drawn fighters out of the bush and brought them to the negotiating table.<sup>574</sup> Others mentioned that

570 See Kato, D. (2012) DDR in Uganda. *The Amnesty Commission* [Internet], 12 December. Available from: <[http://www.tdrp.net/PDFs/KampalaPPT\\_Kato.pdf](http://www.tdrp.net/PDFs/KampalaPPT_Kato.pdf)> [Accessed 12 September, 2012]

571 Notes from the NRTJ Audit Validation Workshop in Mukono, 28 August 2012

572 Research conducted in Bundibugyo, Bulambuli, Pader, Kitgum, Nakasongola, Arua, Hoima, Nakapiripirit, Tororo and Mbarara Districts

573 Research conducted in Tororo District

574 Research conducted in Gulu, Hoima and Mukono Districts

amnesty provides an opportunity for rebels to be reintegrated not only into the community, but possibly also into the national army.<sup>575</sup> Finally, some participants favoured amnesty because it fosters forgiveness in a manner consistent with cultural and religious values.<sup>576</sup>

### **Words of Caution**

While participants acknowledged the positive impact of amnesty in their respective districts, many raised concerns about the implementation process. First, participants emphasized that the amnesty process must be inclusive of the local community and keep them informed in order to better facilitate the reintegration process.<sup>577</sup> Others cautioned against implementing amnesty without complementary apology or truth-telling processes.<sup>578</sup> On the other hand, some alleged that amnesty was selectively applied to those who were willing to share intelligence, and unjustly denied to those who kept quiet, like Thomas Kwoyelo.<sup>579</sup>

“Amnesty is valuable, but it has a big legal mistake in it in that it only considers the two fighting parties... It is blind to the victims and the affected communities and the damage caused by their actions. Amnesty should come after acceptance by communities when perpetrators ask for repentance and address the damage caused by the two parties.”

Civil Society Representative from Soroti  
NRTJ Audit Validation Workshop, 28 August 2012

On the subject of reintegration, some asserted that former fighters must be assisted in returning to society,<sup>580</sup> while others suggested that resettlement packages could encourage others to join rebel groups in order to receive these benefits upon return.<sup>581</sup> On the other hand, some participants observed that rebels still in the bush are an outstanding threat not to be ignored,<sup>582</sup> and that selective application of amnesty will lead to more conflict since abductees would not be allowed to return home.<sup>583</sup> Regarding impunity, some participants believed that amnesty could encourage rebels to continue fighting with the knowledge that their crimes might not be prosecuted.<sup>584</sup> Others noted that some rebels who had returned acted as though they were “untouchable,” and threatened violence or other forms of revenge when offended by other community members.<sup>585</sup> Finally, some criticized the amnesty process for awarding resettlement packages to those who had never been rebels, as well as for requiring abductees to ask for pardon despite never having willingly committed wrongs.<sup>586</sup>

575 Research conducted in Mukono District

576 Research conducted in Adjumani District

577 Research conducted in Bundibugyo and Mukono Districts

578 Research conducted in Gulu, Tororo, Bundibugyo and Adjumani Districts

579 Research conducted in Lira District

580 Research conducted in Adjumani District

581 Research conducted in Bundibugyo District

582 Research conducted in Gulu District

583 Research conducted in Hoima District

584 Research conducted in Hoima District

585 Research conducted in Gulu District

586 Research conducted in Kitgum District

## Way Forward

Overall, participants in many districts recommended promoting amnesty as a means of bringing peace to Uganda and favoured extending amnesty to fighters who renounce rebellion.<sup>587</sup> Some participants suggested improving communication with rebels about amnesty provisions in order to accelerate their return.<sup>588</sup> Dissenting voices did surface, however. For instance, a minority of participants in Mukono contested that amnesty should not continue because it fosters impunity,<sup>589</sup> and some youth in Adjumani insisted that Joseph Kony should be prosecuted and punished, though they supported amnesty for General Bamuze of the Uganda National Rescue Front (UNRF).<sup>590</sup>

Out of the majority who favoured the use of some form of amnesty as a transitional justice mechanism, many participants offered recommendations on how such processes should be implemented. Primarily, they emphasized that local communities must be more fully involved in the process, including through better sensitization to facilitate reintegration<sup>591</sup> and also involvement in the decision-making process for evaluating applications for amnesty.<sup>592</sup>

In a similar vein, some recommended that the Amnesty Commission be independent of the Government in order to avoid granting of amnesty for political reasons.<sup>593</sup> Participants in Hoima recommended a nation-wide process that included elders, religious leaders and community members in order to build public confidence in such measures.<sup>594</sup> It was generally argued that implementing amnesty at the local level should also emphasize acknowledgement and reparations for survivors, making the process more victim-centred.<sup>595</sup>

Participants shared mixed views regarding the criteria for granting amnesty. Some participants suggested that amnesty be ensured for abductees and vulnerable people such as children and the elderly.<sup>596</sup> Some recommended making amnesty less selective for both state and non-state actors in order to promote peace and regime change.<sup>597</sup> Others noted the need to thoroughly assess applicants and consider the gravity of any atrocities committed before granting amnesty.<sup>598</sup> While some participants specifically asserted that amnesty should be offered to rebel commanders like Joseph Kony, and that the International Criminal Court arrest warrant for Kony be withdrawn,<sup>599</sup> others recommended that amnesty should be granted universally, excluding only perpetrators

587 Research conducted in Arua, Hoima, Bulambuli, Soroti, Nakasongola and Mbarara Districts

588 Research conducted in Bundibugyo District

589 Research conducted in Mukono District

590 Research conducted in Adjumani District

591 Research conducted in Nakasongola and Kitgum Districts

592 Research conducted in Mukono, Nakasongola and Bundibugyo Districts

593 Research conducted in Bundibugyo District

594 Research conducted in Hoima District

595 Research conducted in Arua and Kasese Districts

596 Research conducted in Bundibugyo District

597 Research conducted in Mukono and Bundibugyo Districts

598 Research conducted in Mukono and Mubende Districts

599 Research conducted in Adjumani, Kitgum and Soroti Districts

of crimes against humanity and war crimes.<sup>600</sup> One group of participants emphasized that amnesty should only apply to those who voluntarily give up fighting, not those who are captured.<sup>601</sup>

Finally, a common sentiment among participants was that the amnesty process be accompanied by various other transitional justice mechanisms. Many asserted that those seeking amnesty, whether low-level rebels or their leaders, must apologize and seek forgiveness, not just from the Government but from local communities as well.<sup>602</sup> Others stated that reparations, truth-telling, and psychosocial rehabilitation for fighters should be linked to the implementation of amnesty.<sup>603</sup>

With regards to services offered to former fighters, some participants recommended reviewing or discontinuing the provision of resettlement packages due to the unrest it caused in local communities.<sup>604</sup> On the other hand, others stressed the need to provide adequate reintegration assistance to former fighters returning from the bush.<sup>605</sup> Some participants also mentioned the need to protect former rebels from discontented victims and from the Government.<sup>606</sup>

## Prosecutions

The Juba Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation provides that;

“Formal criminal and civil justice mechanisms shall be applied to any individual who is alleged to have committed serious crimes or human rights violations in the course of the conflict [...]. Prosecutions and other formal accountability proceedings shall be based upon systematic, independent and impartial investigations.”<sup>607</sup>

Additionally, the Annexure to the Agreement stipulates that “a special division of the High Court of Uganda shall be established to try individuals who are alleged to have committed serious crimes during the conflict.”<sup>608</sup>

### ***Prosecutions as a Component of Transitional Justice***

In most districts, a majority of participants recognised that the prosecution of perpetrators is important for achieving justice in the wake of human rights violations

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600 Research conducted in Kasese District

601 Research conducted in Bundibugyo and Lira Districts

602 Research conducted in Soroti, Nakasongola, Gulu, Lira, Tororo and Adjumani Districts

603 Research conducted in Mubende, Arua, Pader and Hoima Districts

604 Research conducted in Bundibugyo District

605 Research conducted in Soroti, Mubende and Hoima Districts

606 Research conducted in Mukono District Juba Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation (2007), Clause 4.1

607 Annexure to the Juba Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation (2008), Clause 7

608 Research conducted in Mukono, Soroti, Adjumani, Bulambuli, Mbarara, Bundibugyo, Pader, Arua, Kasese, Nakasongola, Mubende and Gulu Districts

and economic abuses that occur during conflict.<sup>609</sup> Participants in Kitgum specified that this should include both rebel and Government actors involved in conflict,<sup>610</sup> while in Gulu, participants identified the trial of Thomas Kwoyelo and the ICC's indictments of LRA leaders as examples of relevant though contested developments in the formal justice arena.<sup>611</sup>

### ***Dissatisfaction with Formal Justice Processes***

While believing in the importance of criminal prosecutions, a majority of participants



*Full Bench of Uganda's highest appellate court, the Supreme Court*

throughout Uganda voiced serious concerns about the judiciary's ability to hold all perpetrators to account. They expressed mistrust of the formal justice system and did not regard it as a credible means to achieve justice.<sup>612</sup> This prevailing dissatisfaction is a result of perceived partiality in the justice system. Participants underscored a lack of transparency and independence of the prosecutorial bodies, regarding them as subject to political interference from the appointing authorities, especially the Executive branch of Government.<sup>613</sup> They stated that court processes favour those who are rich enough or hold sufficient power to manipulate the process, and that corruption is a major obstacle.<sup>614</sup> As a case in point, participants cited the example of a group of Banyankole-Balaalo herdsmen who were summoned by the sub-county chief for letting their cattle graze in cultivators' farms. They asked him rhetorically,

609 Research conducted in Kitgum District

610 Research conducted in Gulu District

611 Research conducted in Mukono, Mubende, Bulambuli, Adjumani, Gulu and Nakasongola Districts

612 Research conducted in Mubende, Mbarara, Bulambuli, Tororo and Soroti Districts

613 Research conducted in Gulu, Mukono, Mubende, Hoima, Mbarara, Soroti and Bulambuli Districts

614 Research conducted in Hoima District

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*“Who are you? You are in charge of the sub-county, but we are in charge of Uganda.”*

Others noted that the Government had never prosecuted Karimojong cattle raiders.<sup>615</sup> As a result of a corrupt system, participants felt, state actors who have committed offenses have not been prosecuted.<sup>616</sup> Participants said that Government officials who are shielded by the President for political reasons turn prosecutions into *“a mechanism for [targeting] the poor and chicken thieves.”*<sup>617</sup> Such failures in the justice system have contributed to acts of mob justice, fear in the community, and unwillingness to provide information as witnesses in court processes.<sup>618</sup>



*LRA rebel Thomas Kwoyelo arraigned by the International Crimes Division, 2011*

615 Research conducted in Lira District

616 Research conducted in Gulu and Lira Districts

617 Research conducted in Mubende District

618 Research conducted in Tororo District

“Justice has not been done. Especially where the perpetrators are still in Government. Because when someone commits a crime and he supports the Government in power he is not put on trial. But after overthrow is when you think of putting people on trial. Justice has not been done in that area. If the law is there let it get everybody, in Government and outside Government, at all times.”

Male participant from Tororo District

Regarding prosecutions of LRA leaders, participants expressed deep dissatisfaction with both the Kwoyelo trial, which was perceived to discourage peaceful defections of other rebels, and with the ICC’s attempt to prosecute top LRA commanders, which had still failed to bring them to justice.<sup>619</sup> Others feared that the International Crimes Division, while domesticating the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, would fail to prosecute Government actors alongside rebel leaders.<sup>620</sup>

### Way Forward

In light of the perceived lack of transparency, independence and impartiality in the judiciary, participants overwhelmingly underscored the need for reform so that human rights abuses may be credibly addressed and peace promoted. Many underlined that equality before the law must be ensured and

that there should be transparency rather than partial accountability.<sup>621</sup> Certain participants called for all key perpetrators to be prosecuted.<sup>622</sup> Some particularly emphasised the need to hold accountable those who have not renounced rebellion or who have ignored amnesty.<sup>623</sup> Others noted that commanders in the UPDF should also be prosecuted for



*Karimojong Elder walks with his sitting stool*

619 Research conducted in Lira and Kitgum Districts

620 Research conducted in Kitgum District

621 Research conducted in Mubende, Arua, Bundibugyo, Pader, Hoima and Nakasongola Districts

622 Research conducted in Arua District

623 Research conducted in Bundibugyo District

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failure to fulfil their Constitutional duty to protect the life and property of Ugandan citizens.<sup>624</sup> Additionally, some participants urged that war criminals be prosecuted at the domestic level and their assets seized upon conviction.<sup>625</sup> Others believed war crimes should be handled by special courts and lower-level perpetrators should be dealt with by the local courts.<sup>626</sup>

Regarding alternative justice mechanisms, participants from Hoima noted that the Banyoro once relied on traditional avenues for handling abuses, including public punishment, beating, banishment and the levying of fines, which were enforced by clan leaders and the Bunyoro Kitara Kingdom.<sup>627</sup> In Adjumani, due to the prevailing mistrust of the formal justice institutions, and in the absence of substantive reforms to enhance their independence, participants favoured a shift toward such local justice mechanisms.

Perceptions of prosecutorial justice are especially complex and nuanced as they relate to the amnesty process. In Mukono, participants asserted that those who oversaw serious human rights violations must be prosecuted, while the individuals under their command could be granted amnesty.<sup>628</sup> Similarly, in Mubende, the importance of prosecutions was recognised, but it was also stated that formal justice processes should not be rushed by magistrates and judges due to the fact that some individuals may benefit from amnesty and other reconciliatory initiatives.<sup>629</sup>

Furthermore, many participants underscored that not only serious human rights abuses, but also corruption by Government officials must be tackled.<sup>630</sup> Corrupt officials should be fired, prosecuted, and subjected to harsh treatment for deterrence purposes. In Nakasongola, participants added that those who are convicted must return misappropriated money, their property should be auctioned, and they must be jailed and banned from public office.<sup>631</sup> In Bundibugyo, participants asserted that senior Government officials in particular should be targeted in order to demonstrate to communities that the law is effectively implemented.<sup>632</sup> Participants offered additional recommendations relating to legal and institutional reform in the judiciary for effective prosecution. Women in Mukono called for the appointment of more female magistrates whom they regarded as more trustworthy and impartial than the men who presently constitute the majority in the judiciary.<sup>633</sup>

In Kasese, women also urged for a review of legislation on domestic violence, defilement and land management.<sup>634</sup> Finally, in Pader, participants suggested that measures should be taken to fast-track litigation and deal with the backlog of cases in the courts of

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624 Research conducted in Pader District

625 Research conducted in Nakasongola District

626 Research conducted in Kasese District

627 Research conducted in Hoima District

628 Research conducted in Mukono District

629 Research conducted in Mubende District

630 Research conducted in Mbarara, Nakasongola and Bundibugyo Districts

631 Research conducted in Nakasongola District

632 Research conducted in Bundibugyo District

633 Research conducted in Mukono District

634 Research conducted in Kasese District

law, especially related to land conflicts.<sup>635</sup> In the course of the validation workshop, civil society members also highlighted the need for more Governmental consultation with communities and civil society organizations and better sensitization of citizens concerning their rights in court processes.<sup>636</sup>

## Truth-Seeking & Truth-Telling

In the Juba Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation, truth-telling is considered an essential component of the transitional justice process. Under the Reconciliation Section, the Agreement states that “truth-seeking and truth-telling processes and mechanisms shall be promoted.”<sup>637</sup> Furthermore, the Agreement states that victims “have the right of access to relevant information about their experiences,” while their “dignity, privacy and security” are to be protected as they participate in such accountability and reconciliation proceedings.<sup>638</sup>

The NRTJ Audit revealed an overall consensus on the need for truth-telling mechanisms as an avenue to justice, and many participants offered recommendations on how such



*Reburial of LRA victims in Gulu district*

635 Research conducted in Pader District

636 Notes from the NRTJ Audit Validation Workshop in Mukono, 28 August 2012

637 Juba Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation (2007), Clause 7.3

638 Juba Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation (2007) Clauses 8.3 and 8.4

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a process might be best conducted. Many said that the lack of adequate truth-telling, especially with regards to recent conflicts, was causing mistrust between Government and citizens.<sup>639</sup> At the same time, others raised reservations and fears related to the potential abuses and risks entailed in truth-telling. In some cases, only civil society and local government leaders were sufficiently well-versed on this topic to offer perspectives, while in other districts, women, men, and youth contributed meaningfully to the dialogue.<sup>640</sup>

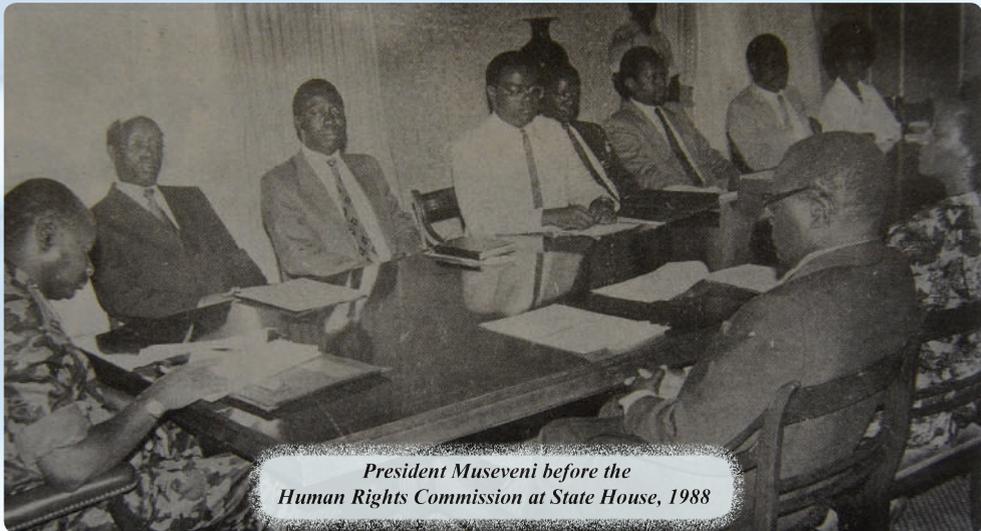
### ***Anticipated Benefits***

The potential benefits of a truth-telling mechanism were evident in many districts, and numerous participants believed that this process would lead to healing and reconciliation on an individual and communal level.<sup>641</sup> Often, participants suggested that truth-telling would offer an opportunity for perpetrators to apologize and for victims to forgive.

“The reason why we have so many conflicts in Uganda is because of absence of truth-telling. People do not speak the truth.”

Local leader in Mubende District

In Soroti, participants noted that truth-telling would contribute to healing by revealing information about those who had died or disappeared with no explanation. A female participant in Nakasongola said that truth-telling can also discourage people from joining further conflicts. In Hoima, participants linked truth-telling to promoting transparency in general, and asserted that such a process would fight corruption and address problems



*President Museveni before the  
Human Rights Commission at State House, 1988*

639 Research conducted in Lira and Kitgum Districts

640 Research conducted in Bulambuli, Hoima and Arua Districts

641 Research conducted in Bundibugyo, Arua, Mbarara, Adjumani, Mukono, Lira and Pader Districts

related to human rights violations and oil extraction in their area.<sup>642</sup>

### **Potential Pitfalls**

While participants readily recognized truth-telling as an essential component of transitional justice, participants in almost all districts also expressed reservations about instituting truth-seeking and truth-telling mechanisms. They indicated possible adverse effects, including arousing negative emotions from victims and their families,<sup>643</sup> and potential backlash against those admitting to past wrongdoing. Such repercussions could take the form of mob justice, imprisonment, or denial of jobs.<sup>644</sup>

Participants agreed that without adequate protection for those taking part in truth-telling processes, implementing such mechanisms would be inappropriate and risky, especially if it led to further conflict.<sup>645</sup> Another potential negative effect of truth-telling mentioned was the use of these processes for pursuing political aims. In Bundibugyo, participants warned that truth-telling could be manipulated to pursue political vendettas, and in Adjumani, they gave the example of a political candidate engaging in truth-telling and apology for disingenuous reasons. Still, they noted that this initial attempt could lead to more transparent mechanisms in the future.<sup>646</sup>

### **Way Forward**

Given the possible benefits and potential risks of engaging in truth-telling, participants in all districts offered ideas on how an effective mechanism should be structured. One recurring theme was that truth-telling must be inclusive and engage actors on all levels of society. Victims and perpetrators, Government and rebel leaders, and even those Ugandans who are living in exile must all participate, it was said.<sup>647</sup> While some believed that truth-telling should begin at the local level,<sup>648</sup> many recommended a national level process involving the President as well as rebel leaders.<sup>649</sup> Several participants, particularly those in northern Uganda, articulated the need for a National Truth and Reconciliation Commission such as in South Africa.<sup>650</sup> They specified that local and religious leaders, not political appointees, should lead the process and publish their findings.<sup>651</sup> They should also make recommendations on how to unite the country. Such a national framework would help prevent abuses by those seeking political gain and would better facilitate reconciliation.<sup>652</sup> In Pader, participants suggested that establishing such a Truth Commission would promote reconciliation by clearly linking truth-telling with complementary processes of acknowledgement,

642 Research conducted in Hoima District

643 Research conducted in Mukono District

644 Research conducted in Mukono and Hoima Districts

645 Research conducted in Gulu, Mubende, Nakapiripirit, Tororo and Nakasongola Districts

646 Research conducted in Adjumani District

647 Research conducted in Aura District

648 Research conducted in Gulu District

649 Research conducted in Aura, Nakapiripirit and Soroti Districts

650 Research conducted in Bundibugyo, Tororo, Gulu, Arua, Lira, Kitgum and Pader Districts

651 Research conducted in Kitgum and Tororo Districts

652 Research conducted in Tororo District

forgiveness, and reparations; they also believed it could ensure that amnesty was properly administered.<sup>653</sup> Furthermore, participants frequently noted that protection mechanisms for witnesses must be in place.<sup>654</sup> In Mukono, civil society and local government representatives suggested that truth-telling through written accounts and through round-table dialogues would be effective, while male community members emphasized that confidentiality should be a priority. This implies that a balance between transparency and protection must be actively sought.

One participant in Mukono suggested that collective truth-telling is one way perpetrators could be protected from mob justice and unfair treatment by the Government. Traditional leaders were named as key players because they are able to draw upon traditions and institutions that promote truth-telling in the context of reconciliation. They may also offer structure to the process and protection of witnesses.<sup>655</sup> In Gulu, participants suggested that traditional leaders use *abila* (shrines) to facilitate truth-telling with those who are either dead or alive.<sup>656</sup> Finally, sensitization of the community about truth-telling processes was widely recommended.<sup>657</sup> This may be accomplished through radio talk shows or through incorporating truth-telling themes into school curricula.<sup>658</sup> With regards to community sensitization, some recommended that researchers from universities and civil society organizations participate in truth-telling mechanisms by documenting the process as a means of preventing lying and abuse.<sup>659</sup> In sum, the participants emphasized that they “need a conducive environment for truth-telling and reconciliation,” which would be enhanced by the Government following through on promises and by better documentation of past atrocities with the help of local leaders.<sup>660</sup>

## Traditional Justice

The role of traditional justice processes in advancing transitional justice is recognized by the Juba Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation, which states that:

“Traditional justice mechanisms, such as *Culo Kwor*, *Mato Oput*, *Kayo Cuk*, *Ailuc* and *Tonu ci Koka* and others as practiced in the communities affected by the conflict, shall be promoted, with necessary modifications, as a central part of the framework for accountability and reconciliation.”<sup>661</sup>

While the Agreement further acknowledges that “alternative justice mechanisms shall promote reconciliation and shall include traditional justice processes, alternative sentences, reparations, and any other formal institutions or mechanisms,”<sup>662</sup> the practical ways that traditional institutions may complement a formal justice system are not specified.

653 Research conducted in Bundibugyo District

654 Research conducted in Pader District

655 Research conducted in Tororo and Mukono Districts

656 Research conducted in Bulambuli and Hoima Districts

657 Research conducted in Gulu District

658 Research conducted in Aura, Kasese, Hoima and Bulambuli Districts

659 Research conducted in Kasese District

660 Research conducted in Hoima District

661 Research conducted in Kasese District

662 Research conducted in Kitgum District

The Agreement provides that “formal courts provided for



Former LRA rebel commander Sunday Oto participates in the Mato Oput traditional justice mechanism

under the Constitution shall exercise jurisdiction over individuals who are alleged to bear particular responsibility for the most serious crimes, especially crimes amounting to international crimes, during the course of the conflict.”<sup>663</sup> Such statements raise important questions about the place traditional institutions have in facilitating justice in post-conflict contexts.

Participants in the NRTJ Audit generally favoured the use of traditional justice mechanisms over formal institutions. The reasons for their preference for traditional justice, and how they envision its contribution to transitional justice are outlined in the following sections.

### ***State of Traditional Justice Institutions***

As participants commented on the historical and current roles of traditional justice institutions, it was clear that these varied according to district. Some of these institutions were active at the time of the NRTJ Audit, such as *mato oput* in Acholi sub-region<sup>664</sup> and traditional courts in the Buganda Kingdom, which were reinstated after a period of inactivity,<sup>665</sup> as well as others like *ekyaghanda* in Kasese that exist without any legal

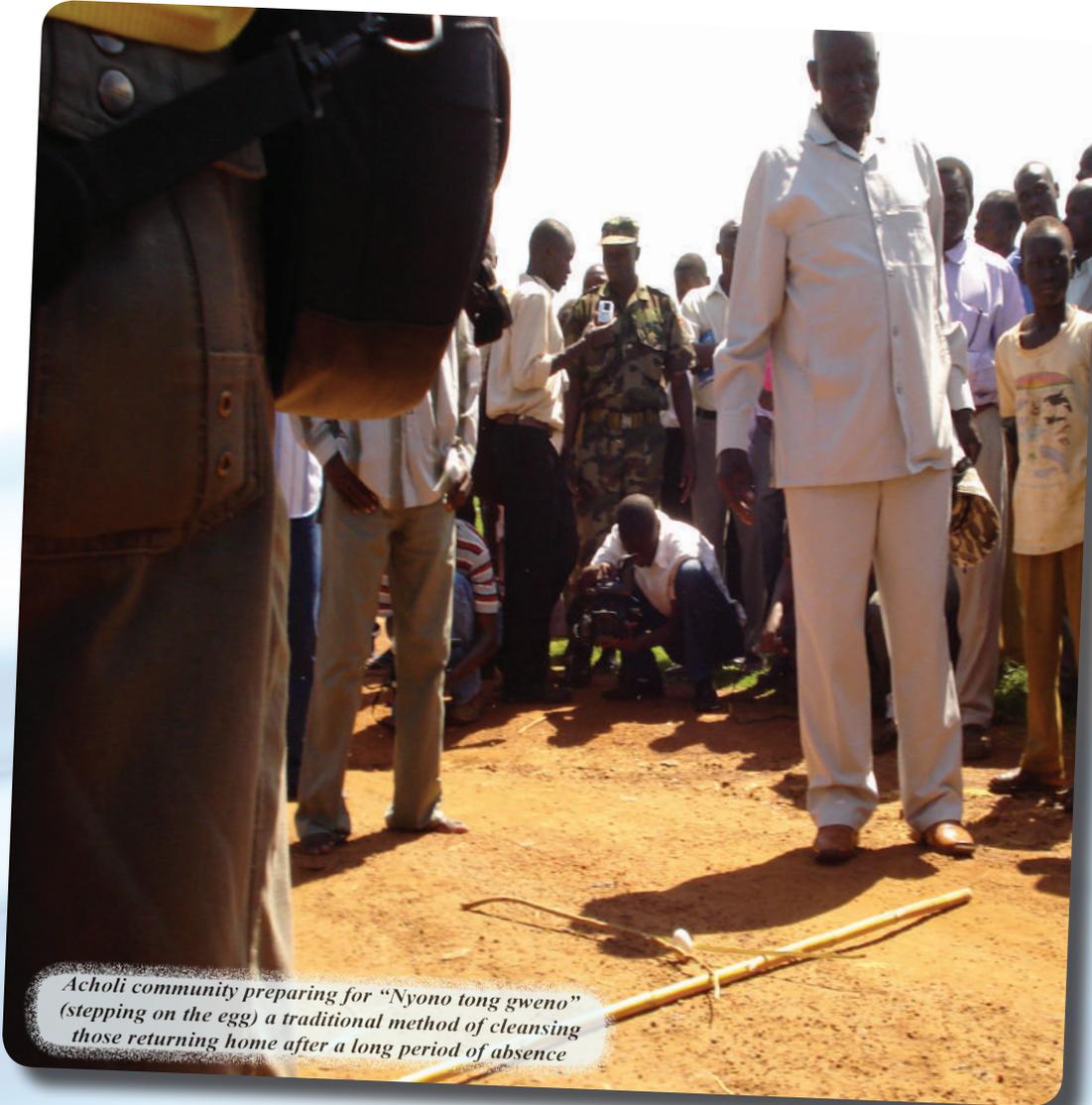
663 Juba Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation (2007), Clause 3.1

664 Juba Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation (2007), Clause 5.3

665 Juba Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation (2007), Clause 6.1

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recognition.<sup>666</sup> In Bundibugyo, participants called for *ekyanghanda* to be brought back as a complement to the formal justice system that has replaced it.<sup>667</sup> Similarly, the Karimojong called for the revival of their *akiriket* dispute resolution system.<sup>668</sup>



*Acholi community preparing for “Nyono tong gweno” (stepping on the egg) a traditional method of cleansing those returning home after a long period of absence*

Other forms of traditional justice mentioned were *omukuka* in Bulambuli, *kayo chogo* (biting the bone) in Tororo, *gomo tong* (bending of the spear) in Pader<sup>669</sup> and the use of *abila* shrines in Gulu. Traditional courts in the Banyoro and Ankole Kingdoms have not yet been fully

666 Research conducted in Gulu and Pader Districts

667 Research conducted in Mukono District

668 Research conducted in Kasese District

669 Research conducted in Bundibugyo District

reconstituted.<sup>670</sup>

## Perceptions of Traditional Justice

Despite the predominance of the formal justice system in Uganda, participants overwhelmingly favoured the reinstatement and strengthening of traditional justice systems. The reasons for this position include traditional justice's resonance with cultural values, its incompatibility with corruption, and its capacity to promote reconciliation.

### ***Consistency with Cultural Values***

Notably, participants spoke highly of traditional justice because it is a source of law based on local values, as opposed to the "formal law" which was perceived to be an imposition of foreign customs.<sup>671</sup> Relying on the wisdom and depth of knowledge of traditional leaders was cited as another advantage.<sup>672</sup> Similarly, focus group discussions revealed that traditional justice was more accepted and trusted by the general population despite its weaker position vis-à-vis the formal justice system.<sup>673</sup>

### ***Less Corruption***

Another reason for the preference of traditional justice was widespread mistrust of national justice institutions, which participants perceived to be unreliable.<sup>674</sup> Some attributed problems like discrimination, bias, corruption and understaffing to formal justice systems, all of which lead people to favour traditional justice.<sup>675</sup> Several participants stated that traditional courts were generally more trustworthy and free of corruption because they allow many voices from the affected clans to be heard.<sup>676</sup>

### ***More Reconciliation***

Lastly, traditional justice maintains popularity because it is less punitive than formal justice systems, and instead promotes conciliation, apology, peace building and reconciliation.<sup>677</sup> Youth in Bundibugyo stated that "formal law has little regard for our values, customs and norms. They emphasize vengeance, while we emphasize reconciliation."<sup>678</sup> Participants in other districts observed that traditional justice served more "realistic" punishments,<sup>679</sup> and that it operated on "conflict sensitive" principles that avoided death sentences.<sup>680</sup>

### ***Dissenting Voices***

Though perceptions of traditional justice mechanisms were overwhelmingly positive, one notable exception came from Bulambuli, where women rejected traditional justice

670 Research conducted in Nakapiripirit District

671 Research conducted in Pader District

672 Research conducted in Gulu District

673 Research conducted in Hoima and Mbarara Districts

674 Research conducted in Bundibugyo and Tororo Districts

675 Research conducted in Arua District

676 Research conducted in Gulu and Hoima Districts

677 Research conducted in Adjumani District

678 Research conducted in Hoima District

679 Research conducted in Mukono, Tororo and Bundibugyo Districts

680 Research conducted in Bundibugyo, Tororo and Soroti Districts

because it reinforced patriarchal traditions that marginalized women; for this reason they favoured the formal justice system, though they also cited negative implications of these mechanisms. In one example, the women observed that when men are sentenced to prison, they may divorce their wives after they are released.<sup>681</sup> Another challenge related to traditional justice is the requirement of paying reparations, which has been an obstacle in some post-conflict contexts.<sup>682</sup>

### **Way Forward**

Given the widespread legitimacy enjoyed by traditional justice mechanisms, several interviewees and focus groups described how such systems should be promoted in order to complement the formal justice system as well as other transitional justice mechanisms.

### **Complementarity with Formal Justice System**

In many cases, participants advocated for a complementary relationship between traditional and formal justice systems.<sup>683</sup> They asserted that traditional justice is capable of addressing certain categories of crimes, especially as family and clan elders work together to adjudicate disputes and appeals.<sup>684</sup> Because of the advantages of traditional justice, such as its independence and reliability<sup>685</sup> and its history of resolving conflicts, promoting peace, and enabling development,<sup>686</sup> representatives from several districts believed that the Government should support rather than undermine such institutions.<sup>687</sup>

“Human rights institutions should know their boundaries, not popping their noses in to the traditional setting and their time tested wisdom in resolving disputes before these human rights institutions were formed.”

Elder from Nakapiripirit

A positive synergy could be created as traditional justice mechanisms balance the punitive focus of formal justice processes. This could be achieved by drawing on traditional reconciliation values,<sup>688</sup> while formal justice systems could provide a common institutional framework in those situations where the parties involved do not adhere to the same traditional system.<sup>689</sup> Both systems could contribute to settling land disputes, especially if traditional leaders serve on land tribunals.<sup>690</sup>

681 Research conducted in Bundibugyo District

682 Research conducted in Mukono District

683 Research conducted in Gulu and Tororo Districts

684 Research conducted in Bulambuli District

685 Research conducted in Lira District

686 Research conducted in Aura and Kasese Districts

687 Research conducted in Bundibugyo District

688 Research conducted in Adjumani District

689 Research conducted in Mukono District

690 Research conducted in Arua, Hoima and Mukono Districts

## ***Complementarity with Other Transitional Justice Mechanisms***

In terms of the wider transitional justice agenda, traditional justice also complements mechanisms like prosecution, reparations, reconciliation and truth-telling. Some participants noted that many people desire prosecutions for perpetrators of violence, and argued that traditional justice systems can offer an acceptable means for trying such cases.<sup>691</sup> Others again noted the important contribution of traditional justice to the reconciliation process because it allows for the acknowledgement of wrongdoing and facilitates the return and reintegration of former fighters.<sup>692</sup> Participants also noted that traditional practices like the use of *abila* shrines or cleansing ceremonies can facilitate truth-telling and peace-making by involving the spirits of those wrongfully killed who are currently disturbing survivors.<sup>693</sup>

### ***Practical Steps Forward***

In order to make traditional justice systems more functional, participants recommended several changes, including a more cooperative and supportive approach from the Government toward traditional leaders and courts.<sup>694</sup> Some suggested that mechanisms like *mato oput* would benefit from more funding.<sup>695</sup> Finally, several participants emphasized passing on knowledge about traditional justice to younger generations, either through incorporating such lessons in primary school curricula or by parents transmitting these customs to their children.<sup>696</sup>

## **Reparations**

The Juba Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation includes provisions on the establishment of a reparations mechanism for victims of the conflict in northern Uganda. It notes that such a mechanism shall be holistic and encompass measures ranging from compensation, rehabilitation and restitution to guarantees of non-recurrence and symbolic reparations. Both individual and collective forms of reparation are to be granted, and they should be delivered not only through formal judicial processes, but also through alternative mechanisms. Consultations and the prioritization of vulnerable groups are identified as essential to the process.<sup>697</sup> Pursuant to the Implementation Protocol to the Agreement on Comprehensive Solutions, the Government of Uganda is responsible for the creation of a reparations policy that provides reparations for victims and vulnerable persons.<sup>698</sup>

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691 Research conducted in Gulu and Bundibugyo Districts

692 Research conducted in Pader District

693 Research conducted in Kasese District

694 Research conducted in Adjumani District

695 Research conducted in Soroti, Pader, Gulu, Kitgum, Lira and Arua Districts

696 Research conducted in Gulu and Kitgum Districts

697 Research conducted in Soroti, Arua, Hoima, Tororo and Mukono Districts

698 Research conducted in Gulu District

## ***Limitations of Current Forms of Reparations***

Most participants in the NRTJ Audit pinpointed the selective manner in which reparations are currently provided to victims of conflict.<sup>699</sup> They acknowledged that some reparations (compensations) have been granted, such as in the case of the victims of the Kampala bomb blast and for a few individuals and families in Teso, West Nile, Central and Western sub-regions.<sup>700</sup> However, they perceived these initiatives to be reserved for those who have connections to President Museveni, and to be the result of political campaigns or personal sympathy; such reparations, they argue, do not entail acknowledgment by the Government of its failure to adequately protect Ugandan citizens.<sup>701</sup> These perceptions underscore a lack of coordination both in the promises made by the President and the Government, and in the implementation of those promises.<sup>702</sup> In Nakasongola, veterans expressed their disillusionment with what they saw as false promises, and stated that they would never attend another meeting on compensation as it was a waste of their time.<sup>703</sup>

Furthermore, communities expressed dissatisfaction with the absence of any consultations on reparations.<sup>704</sup> In instances where compensation has been granted, it often benefitted politicians more than the victims because those responsible for administering the funds lacked knowledge about the needs on the ground.<sup>705</sup> Participants observed that some, but not enough, of the war-affected communities had benefited from new schools, and that programmes in the north such as the Peace, Recovery and Development Plan were too broad and non-transparent, and did not focus enough on war-affected areas.<sup>706</sup>

For participants in many districts the primary concern was a complete lack of, rather than merely the selective distribution of reparations. In Bulambuli and Kitgum, communities continue to demand Government compensation for the cattle that were lost to the Karimojong. Similarly, in Nakapiripirit, communities are calling for compensation for lost property, stolen cattle, and surrendered guns as well as for more access to vocational training.<sup>707</sup> While there have been some initiatives in conflict-affected regions in the North, East and West of the country, both Nakasongola and Bundibugyo have not yet received any form of reparation, according to participants.<sup>708</sup> Informants in Lira also claimed that no livelihood support existed for victims.<sup>709</sup> Overall, participants in many districts highlighted the absence of a policy framework to deal with reparations.<sup>710</sup> They argued that this absence demonstrates a lack of commitment by the Government to national healing, delays the recovery of affected communities, arouses victims' anger toward the Government and the perpetrators, and causes envy toward the select few

699 Research conducted in Arua, Pader and Kasese Districts

700 Juba Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation (2007), Clauses 9 and 11

701 Implementation Protocol to the Agreement on Comprehensive Solutions (2008), Clauses 26-28

702 Research conducted in Hoima, Adjumani, Gulu, Mbarara and Mubende Districts

703 Research conducted in Mbarara and Gulu Districts

704 Research conducted in Mbarara, Gulu, Hoima, Tororo and Mubende Districts

705 Research conducted in Adjumani, Hoima, Lira, Kitgum and Gulu Districts

706 Research conducted in Nakasongola District

707 Research conducted in Nakasongola and Adjumani Districts

708 Research conducted in Nakasongola District

709 Research conducted in Lira, Tororo and Kitgum District

710 Research conducted in Bulambuli, Kitgum and Nakapiripirit Districts

who have received compensation.<sup>711</sup>

## The Need for a Comprehensive Reparations Framework

Bearing in mind the limited nature of reparations and the history of conflict in Uganda, it appears there is widespread support for the adoption of a uniform approach to reparations, coupled with corresponding legislation.<sup>712</sup> Such a framework would provide acknowledgment of suffering to affected individuals and communities, enable them to cope with the losses resulting from conflict, and help them live more positively with their memories.<sup>713</sup> In some districts, a nationwide reparations programme was suggested to ensure that certain regions are not overlooked.<sup>714</sup>

### **Beneficiaries**

Participants acknowledged that not everyone may benefit from a reparations programme given the current existing limitations.<sup>715</sup> Specific attention should, however, be given to the women who bore the brunt of the conflict. In Nakasongola, participants claimed that Baruli women had greatly contributed to the NRA Bush War, yet had not been incorporated into the reparations process.<sup>716</sup> Participants from the district also added that broader reparative measures must be provided to those who suffered during the NRA Bush War, in particular since they had provided cattle and food crops, served as informants, and some had been tortured to death by the opposition as a result.<sup>717</sup>

### **Centres of Responsibility**

Additionally, participants believed that the Government holds responsibility for the delivery of reparations.<sup>718</sup> Former colonial governments and the United Nations should also participate, they noted, given the levels of corruption on the African continent.<sup>719</sup> Some suggested that the International Criminal Court's Trust Fund for Victims should be used to assist victims.<sup>720</sup> Specifically in terms of violations perpetrated against refugees exiled to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the people of West Nile wish to obtain reparations from the Congolese Government now that they have returned to Uganda.<sup>721</sup>

## Forms of Reparations

Communities throughout Uganda shared their views on which forms of reparations, including compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction, restitution and guarantees of non-repetition, would be most meaningful. They also made various and specific recommendations on what they should encompass. Participants believed that reparations

711 Research conducted in Nakasongola and Bundibugyo Districts

712 Research conducted in Lira District

713 Research conducted in Adjumani, Gulu and Kasese Districts

714 Research conducted in Mubende, Bulambuli, Hoima and Gulu Districts

715 Research conducted in Arua, Hoima, Mbarara, Mubende, Adjumani, Kasese, Nakasongola, Bundibugyo, Bulambuli, Gulu, Mukono and Pader Districts

716 Research conducted in Adjumani, Bulambuli, Hoima and Pader Districts

717 Research conducted in Arua and Nakasongola Districts

718 Research conducted in Pader District

719 Research conducted in Nakasongola District

720 Research conducted in Nakasongola District

721 Research conducted in Bulambuli, Kasese, Pader, Hoima and Arua Districts

should be provided both to individuals and affected communities in immediate, interim and long-term processes.<sup>722</sup> Reparations must also be both material and immaterial in nature.

### **Compensation**

Firstly, participants expressed a desire to be compensated for the losses they suffered during conflicts and viewed such economic reparations as key to sustaining their livelihoods.<sup>723</sup> The Banyoro called for compensation for the cattle and property they lost during past conflict, while community members in Bundibugyo demanded compensation for the land they lost to Government forces and for the destruction of crops and buildings.<sup>724</sup> Others requested start-up capital for livelihood support initiatives.<sup>725</sup> Participants noted, however, that compensation is only one form of reparation and must be complemented by other mechanisms in a comprehensive approach.<sup>726</sup>

### **Restitution**

People affected by past conflicts prioritized restitution, or restoration to the life they had enjoyed prior to certain violations. Those who are still displaced must be urgently resettled, and housing should be provided to the victims. One elder in Kigoroby, Hoima District, stated that; “During the NRA Bush War, we lost jobs, education, freedom and justice. We need all to be brought back.”<sup>727</sup>

Participants from Bulambuli also underlined that those who had suffered from landslides should be relocated.<sup>728</sup> In terms of infrastructure, many considered that a post-war reconstruction programme was necessary to rebuild the institutions that had been destroyed during conflict, including churches, main roads,<sup>729</sup> and community roads. Participants in Kitgum cited the new roads and school in Luwero following the NRA Bush War as an example of what is needed in the north.<sup>730</sup> Yet, as underlined by participants in Arua, investment in infrastructure alone is not sufficient.<sup>731</sup> Educational support is paramount to deal with the loss of opportunities during the war. Participants argued that the Government should not only build schools, but also assist children, war orphans and widows with scholarships, bursaries, and access to special programmes and vocational training.<sup>732</sup>

### **Rehabilitation**

In many districts, participants highlighted the need to establish rehabilitation facilities and programmes in order to repair damages, treat wounds, ensure physical repair and to help deal with the socioeconomic and psychological consequences of the war.<sup>733</sup> Specific

722 Research conducted in Arua District

723 Research conducted in Lira District

724 Research conducted in Arua District

725 Research conducted in Bundibugyo and Mukono Districts

726 Research conducted in Mbarara, Mubende and Arua Districts

727 Research conducted in Bundibugyo District

728 Research conducted in Mukono District

729 Research conducted in Mbarara District

730 Research conducted in Hoima District

731 Research conducted in Bulambuli District

732 Research conducted in Bundibugyo, Mbarara and Mukono Districts

733 Research conducted in Kitgum District

therapeutic services for victims of amputation and bodily mutilation, as well as medical programmes for victims of rape must be created.<sup>734</sup>

“Reparations is a process of rehabilitating communities that were affected and effecting the circumstances...Once there is development of [social structures] to rehabilitate them, there is healing the minds of people, socially and economically.”

Civil Society Representative from Nakasongola  
NRTJ Audit Validation Workshop, 28 August 2012

### **Satisfaction**

In addition to material forms of reparation, the majority of participants also acknowledged the importance of symbolic measures. They called for memorial sites, decent burials, apologies and acknowledgement of their suffering.<sup>735</sup> Participants from Hoima expressed their desire for the establishment of a memorial hospital.<sup>736</sup> Specifically with regard to memorials, participants were emphatic that they should be community-driven.<sup>737</sup>

### **Design and Implementation of a Reparations Framework**

Participants also expressed views on the process of designing and implementing a comprehensive reparations programme. They regarded community outreach as a fundamental but currently overlooked component of current approaches to reparations.<sup>738</sup> Victims must be sensitized to the reparations process and should be consulted to ensure its adequacy.<sup>739</sup> Before starting any reparations programme, many participants stated that a mapping exercise should take place. Wrongs and damages must be investigated, victims identified, and their perspectives sought in order to facilitate the process.<sup>740</sup> While some believed reparations should be proportional to the harm suffered, others called for a standardized process.<sup>741</sup> In terms of the structures which are to be used, some participants said that existing Local Councils could be mobilized and that the process should be decentralised at the regional level.<sup>742</sup>

Others also called for the establishment of an independent body both to register victims and provide reparations for conflict-related abuses.<sup>743</sup> Participants were adamant that reparations be granted immediately to suffering victims and should precede the conclusion of judicial processes or truth-telling initiatives.<sup>744</sup> Finally, participants agreed that a policy and legislative framework on reparations should be established by the Government in order to facilitate post-conflict recovery.

734 Research conducted in Arua District

735 Research conducted in Gulu, Mubende, Hoima and Nakasongola Districts

736 Research conducted in Hoima District

737 Research conducted in Gulu District

738 Research conducted in Adjumani District

739 Research conducted in Mubende and Mukono Districts

740 Research conducted in Mubende, Mbarara and Mukono Districts

741 Research conducted in Mukono District

742 Research conducted in Mukono District

743 Research conducted in Pader District

744 Research conducted in Arua District

## Psychosocial Support

Psychosocial support is a less developed component of transitional justice, but still an essential one, as noted in the Juba Agreement on Comprehensive Solutions. The Agreement states that, “the Parties agree that the Government of Uganda shall develop and implement in the affected areas a policy for the support and rehabilitation of victims of the conflict.”<sup>745</sup> The NRTJ Audit findings suggest that support and rehabilitation for victims will often need to include psychosocial and counselling services. The following provides a summary of these psychosocial needs and participants’ recommendations for meeting them within the search for post-conflict justice.



*Refugee Law Project counselor attends to a rescued suicide survivor in Kitgum Government hospital*

## Outstanding Needs

Representatives from numerous districts recognized the extant psychosocial needs of those affected by violent conflict and disasters. Participants listed the on-going effects of trauma as aggression, violence, mental illness, suicide, alcoholism, prolonged grief, anger, and pain.<sup>746</sup> Some explicitly attributed such problems to post-traumatic stress disorder,<sup>747</sup> while others related them to haunting memories of past tragedies.<sup>748</sup> Other conflict-related problems mentioned by participants included increased drug abuse by

745 Juba Agreement on Comprehensive Solutions (2007), Clause 12.1

746 Research conducted in Soroti and Hoima Districts

747 Research conducted in Bundibugyo District

748 Research conducted in Mukono District

youth, which leads to more violence and theft, as well as other social and economic problems.<sup>749</sup>

Many participants reported that though these needs are great, psychosocial support from the Government is inadequate or non-existent.<sup>750</sup> Participants noted that such a lack of attention has a negative influence on the healing process and reduces community support for other Government programmes.<sup>751</sup> The services provided by community-based organizations are too few, and in many cases are being discontinued.<sup>752</sup> Other family and clan systems of support are often destroyed or crippled by conflict.<sup>753</sup>

### ***Recommendations for Action***

Because psychosocial support was recognized as indispensable for healing in post-conflict settings,<sup>754</sup> participants offered many suggestions for ways to address these needs. First, several called for the creation of a national rehabilitation policy that would guide psychosocial programmes throughout the country.<sup>755</sup> Apart from proactive Government support, some informants called for traditional remedies to be administered, and for the support of customary and religious leaders to address the spiritual dimension of psychosocial issues.<sup>756</sup>

Lastly, participants noted that properly trained researchers should investigate and register those with mental health issues to facilitate better treatment.<sup>757</sup> The predominant recommendation was that rehabilitation facilities should be created, either as centres to serve trauma victims,<sup>758</sup> or as hospitals with trained specialists.<sup>759</sup> Participants also mentioned the need to make trained counsellors available to the community, to enable peer support and establishment and support to survivor groups.<sup>760</sup> One group suggested that psychosocial needs could be addressed through providing sports grounds and recreation facilities for victims.<sup>761</sup>

Apart from the direct provision of psychosocial services, participants asserted that rehabilitation support should be linked with other transitional justice measures. This might be accomplished through creating a psychosocial hospital that also serves as a memorial, or through prioritizing decent burials and commemoration of victims from past conflicts and disasters.<sup>762</sup> Other participants called for compensation of lost

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749 Research conducted in Mukono District

750 Research conducted in Hoima, Soroti, Mukono, Bulambuli, Nakasongola, Bundibugyo, Gulu and Mubende Districts

751 Research conducted in Gulu District

752 Research conducted in Gulu and Soroti Districts

753 Research conducted in Hoima District

754 Research conducted in Mukono District

755 Research conducted in Gulu, Adjumani and Bundibugyo Districts

756 Research conducted in Mbarara, Mukono and Bundibugyo Districts

757 Research conducted in Mukono District

758 Research conducted in Kasese, Hoima, Mbarara, Arua, Nakasongola and Bundibugyo Districts

759 Research conducted in Mukono, Kasese and Nakasongola Districts

760 Research conducted in Mukono, Bundibugyo and Nakapiripirit Districts

761 Research conducted in Arua District

762 Research conducted in Nakasongola and Bulambuli Districts

property and the implementation of income-generating activities for victims and former combatants as a complement to broader psychosocial interventions.<sup>763</sup>

Civil society representatives from northern Uganda who contributed to the NRTJ Audit Validation Workshop also added that cultural institutions, religious leaders, and NGO and CSO partners should be heavily involved in meeting psycho-social needs at a community level. This is because of corruption in the delivery of counselling services by Government programmes, and because of the resonance of traditional mechanisms with participants.<sup>764</sup>

## Memorials & Memorialisation

The importance of memorialisation as a transitional justice mechanism is evident in two distinct points in the Juba Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation. The Agreement states that “victims have the right of access to relevant information about their experiences and to remember and commemorate past events affecting them.”<sup>765</sup> Elsewhere, the Agreement lists “symbolic measures such as apologies, memorials and commemorations,” as possible reparation measures.<sup>766</sup>

When participants in the NRTJ Audit commented on memorialisation, they emphasized the importance of such measures as commemoration and documentation for healing and recovery. They further linked memorialisation to other transitional justice aims such as reconciliation and reparations. Another clear theme was the necessity of adopting appropriate methods and approaches to memorialisation; participants noted that negative memorialisation could promote hostility and lead to unintended consequences.

### *Anticipated Benefits*

Participants in nearly every district enumerated several potential benefits to pursuing memorialisation as a form of transitional justice. Many noted that memorialisation could support positive living and dealing with painful memories of violence in the past.<sup>767</sup> Others stressed the importance of remembering those who had died, including the details of how they perished, as well as acknowledging those living in exile and the loss of animals due to cattle raiding during conflict.<sup>768</sup> Without proper memorialization, participants noted that many people remain unaware of the locations of mass graves and other important sites.<sup>769</sup>

In addition, participants noted that commemoration and public education about past conflict could prevent future conflict and contribute to ideas about making a more

763 Research conducted in Nakasongola, Bulambuli and Mubende Districts

764 Minutes from northern region discussion at the NRTJ Audit Validation Workshop, 28 August 2012

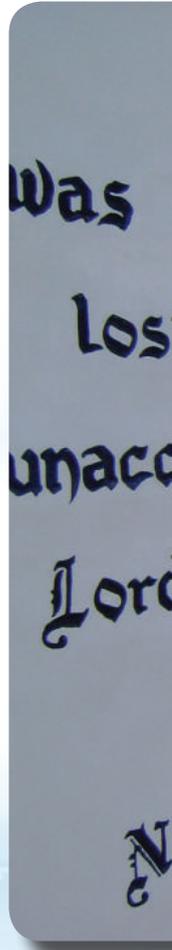
765 Juba Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation (2007), Clause 8.3

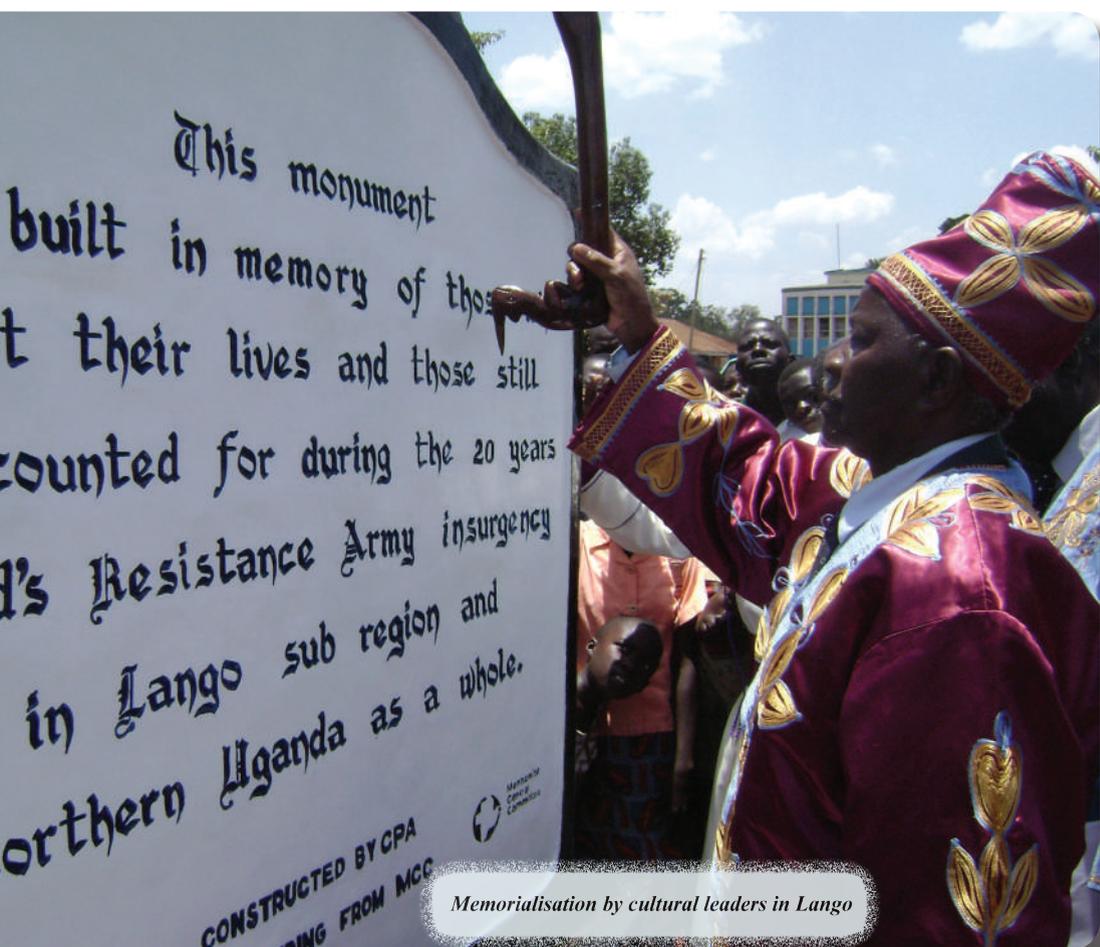
766 Juba Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation (2007), Clause 9.1

767 Research conducted in Mukono and Nakasongola Districts

768 Research conducted in Adjumani, Arua and Soroti Districts

769 Research conducted in Tororo District





*Memorialisation by cultural leaders in Lango*

peaceful future.<sup>770</sup> Finally, memorialisation would preserve Uganda's history and document it for future reference.<sup>771</sup>

### **Possible Pitfalls**

In addition to the expected benefits of a memorialisation process, participants also raised concerns about the possible negative effects of such measures. Participants in several districts mentioned that revisiting past injustices and atrocities could inspire hatred and incite people to commit violent acts of revenge.<sup>772</sup> Others referenced examples of negative experiences with memorialisation, such as exhuming mass graves, talking badly about the dead, and poor maintenance of certain shrines.<sup>773</sup> Three districts cited the destructive impact of displaying skulls of Luwero victims along the roadside during past

770 Research conducted in Adjumani, Hoima and Mukono Districts

771 Research conducted in Kasese District

772 Research conducted in Adjumani, Hoima and Mbarara Districts

773 Research conducted in Mukono District

elections.<sup>774</sup> In another example, a statue in Tororo fuelled tension between the Jopadhola and the Iteso, leading to violent protests.<sup>775</sup> A controversial monument in Kitgum with inadequate information about those who had died deepened rather than alleviated pain.<sup>776</sup> Finally, participants in Nakasongola and Hoima noted that the practice of honouring war heroes in places like Kampala, far away from the locations where the violence had occurred, made local communities feel overlooked and caused them to harbour negative feelings toward the memorialisation effort.<sup>777</sup>

### **Way Forward**

Along with warnings about memorialisation practices to avoid, participants offered

several suggestions on how constructive memorialisation process might be implemented. They indicated two general categories of actors necessary in such an effort. First, the involvement of local community members was emphasized, so that memorialisation is rooted in the location where past events took place.<sup>778</sup> Women in Hoima noted that this should extend beyond church-based memorialisation to include the entire community. Others argued that locals should be consulted because they have records of those who died, such as in the landslides in Bulambuli District.<sup>779</sup> In a related way, some participants asserted that the people themselves are living memories, implying that they must be meaningfully included in the memorialisation process.<sup>780</sup>



*Mass grave in Ombaci, West Nile*

774 Research conducted in Mukono and Hoima Districts

775 Research conducted in Tororo District

776 Research conducted in Kitgum District

777 Research conducted in Nakasongola and Hoima Districts

778 Research conducted in Hoima and Lira Districts

779 Research conducted in Bulambuli District

780 Research conducted in Gulu District

The second category of actors mentioned was the Government. Kasese participants suggested that the Government should take the lead in constructing memorials and museums throughout the country. Other districts suggested a “national memorial policy” and an organized mechanism for memorialisation.<sup>781</sup> Participants offered numerous recommendations regarding practical ways that memorialisation might be accomplished. Some suggested public holidays and events to honour local peace builders and heroes.<sup>782</sup> Memorial prayers might also be organized to commemorate past events.<sup>783</sup> Others recommended documentation, and public dramas, lectures and videos to pass on accurate information to future generations.<sup>784</sup> One district offered the idea of a published volume that contained the names of victims of violent conflicts.<sup>785</sup>

Participants in many districts supported the idea of new structures to serve as a means of memorialisation. Several informants insisted on memorial sites and monuments, and some referred to museums such as those constructed by the Government in Rwanda.<sup>786</sup> The National Memory and Peace Documentation Centre in Kitgum was cited as a positive initiative that should be expanded.<sup>787</sup> Others favoured constructing public institutions and infrastructure developments in memory of victims and peace builders. These could



*Lugweni Lim monument, marking the spot of an NRA massacre, Kitgum*

781 Research conducted in Adjumani and Gulu Districts

782 Research conducted in Kasese, Lira and Bundibugyo Districts

783 Research conducted in Nakasongola, Gulu and Mukono Districts

784 Research conducted in Bundibugyo, Hoima, Mbarara, Mukono and Arua Districts

785 Research conducted in Nakasongola District

786 Research conducted in Mukono, Gulu, Kasese, Bulambuli, Nakasongola, Soroti, Hoima, Tororo, Lira and Mbarara Districts

787 Research conducted in Kitgum District

be schools, health centres, vocational centres, churches, bridges, and roads.<sup>788</sup>

In offering these recommendations, participants also linked memorialisation with other transitional justice mechanisms. They asserted that memorialisation through documentation would complement truth-telling,<sup>789</sup> memorial prayers could facilitate reconciliation between victims and perpetrators,<sup>790</sup> and positive commemoration could lead to healing.<sup>791</sup> Other participants connected the construction of memorial schools, roads, and health centres referred to above with the need for reparations, and stated that some new projects should be targeted to help orphans and widows with new structures for housing or access to loan schemes.<sup>792</sup> In Soroti, the call for memorialisation and reparations extended to animals, and participants recommended restocking cattle lost in past raids and conflicts.

## Institutional & Legal Reform

Although the Juba Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation states that “existing national institutions and mechanisms, with necessary modifications”<sup>793</sup> are responsible for the implementation of the Agreement, participants in the NRTJ Audit emphasized the need for reform of such institutions in order to guarantee a non-recurrence of conflict.

The Juba Agreement on Comprehensive Solutions describes the standards to which governmental institutions and policies should be held. These include maintaining an inclusive and democratic system of Government, an independent judiciary, a representative security force, an adequate Peace, Recovery and Development Plan for northern Uganda, and the equitable management of land, amongst others. While these Agreements point to the need for evaluation and possible reform of institutions, they do not endeavour to specify where such reforms are needed. Virtually all districts included in the NRTJ Audit called for specific reforms. The following section summarizes these needs according to general themes and then according to sector.

### ***Building Inclusive and Accountable Institutions for Good Governance***

One of the overarching themes of the NRTJ Audit was a call for good governance and the rule of law. Participants emphasized that national resources should be distributed

788 Research conducted in Kasese, Soroti, Nakasongola, Hoima, Mbarara, Mukono, Lira and Bundibugyo Districts

789 Research conducted in Mukono District

790 Research conducted in Gulu and Nakasongola Districts

791 Research conducted in Soroti District

792 Research conducted in Mukono District

793 Juba Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation (2007), Clause 5.4





*Parliament of Uganda*

equitably to all regions,<sup>794</sup> and that Ministry assignments and other political appointments should reflect a regional balance.<sup>795</sup> Similarly, other informants insisted that the rights and freedoms guaranteed in the Constitution be applied equally to everyone.<sup>796</sup> Participants frequently called for term limits to be reinstated,<sup>797</sup> and some called for

794 Research conducted in Soroti, Kitgum, Lira and Nakasongola Districts

795 Research conducted in Kasese District

796 Research conducted in Pader, Bulambuli and Mbarara Districts

797 Research conducted in Adjumani, Kasese, Aura, Bulambuli, Bundibugyo, Mubende, Mukono, Soroti and Hoima Districts

the independence of the electoral commission.<sup>798</sup> Many asserted that the independence of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches should be maintained, so that they properly coordinate action, but without undue influence from one another or from the military.<sup>799</sup>

## ***Anti-corruption***

Related to good governance, the importance of fighting corruption in public institutions was a top priority among participants in the majority of districts.<sup>800</sup> Some participants specified that corruption in the courts and among the police force resulted in justice being served only for the wealthy.<sup>801</sup> Suggested approaches to reducing corruption included increasing the salaries of civil servants,<sup>802</sup> establishing Inspectorate General of Government offices at the sub-regional level,<sup>803</sup> and more cooperation between the Public Accounts Committee, the executive and judicial branches and the Public Service Commission.<sup>804</sup> Others recommended that public institutions be vetted and evaluated, especially to ensure that they are led by professionals and that leaders are rotated regularly.<sup>805</sup>

## **Institutional Reform by Sector**

### ***Executive***

Demands for reform of the executive branch of Government commonly centred on reinstating term limits and calling on the current incumbent to retire.<sup>806</sup> Some participants said that adequate protection for the President should be ensured so he will be free to retire without fear of reprisals by subsequent administrations.<sup>807</sup> One group suggested that the Office of the President be filled on a rotating basis by leaders from different regions.<sup>808</sup> Other recommended changes included that more attention be paid to demonstrators and that Government display greater willingness to meet their demands,<sup>809</sup> increased respect for local views, an end to the appointment of Resident District Commissioners who have previously lost elections,<sup>810</sup> and less Presidential interference in Parliament.<sup>811</sup> Additionally, the Office of the Prime Minister was urged to stop misappropriating tax money.<sup>812</sup>

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798 Research conducted in Pader District

799 Research conducted in Hoima, Gulu, Bulambuli and Mubende Districts

800 Research conducted in Soroti, Mbarara, Hoima, Nakasongola, Kitgum, Lira and Bulambuli Districts

801 Research conducted in Kasese District

802 Research conducted in Mukono, Kitgum and Bulambuli Districts

803 Research conducted in Kasese District

804 Research conducted in Hoima, Bulambuli, Mukono and Bundibugyo Districts

805 Research conducted in Gulu, Hoima and Bulambuli Districts

806 Research conducted in Adjumani, Arua, Bulambuli, Kasese, Hoima, Mbarara, Mukono, Lira and Bundibugyo Districts

807 Research conducted in Arua District

808 Research conducted in Nakasongola District

809 Research conducted in Nakasongola Districts

810 Research conducted in Bulambuli District

811 Research conducted in Tororo District

812 Research conducted in Soroti District

### **Parliament**

Recommendations regarding Parliament included calls for greater independence of the legislative branch, specifically by reducing the military's influence on politics.<sup>813</sup> Others insisted on a reduction in the size of Parliament<sup>814</sup> and for Members of Parliament (MPs) to be more responsive to the needs of their constituents, especially regarding land conflicts, infrastructure development and women's issues.<sup>815</sup> Finally, participants asserted that corrupt MPs should be investigated.<sup>816</sup>

### **Judiciary**

Similar to the sectors mentioned above, participants called for reform of the court system in Uganda.<sup>817</sup> Many emphasized putting an end to corruption<sup>818</sup> and called for greater independence and impartiality of judges.<sup>819</sup> Specifically, participants recommended that judges be appointed from different political parties, or that they be chosen by the public rather than appointed by the President.<sup>820</sup> Others suggested the creation of a monitoring body to address corruption, which might consist of either popularly appointed officials or members of other East African countries who could form a regional monitoring committee.<sup>821</sup> Notably, some participants cautioned against interference from Western countries.<sup>822</sup>

One instance of reform commonly cited was the decentralization of the judiciary through the opening of courts and the appointment of magistrates on the sub-county level, and by ensuring that resident judges are appointed in every district.<sup>823</sup> Other recommendations included sensitizing the community on court procedures, facilitating the transportation of witnesses to attend trials,<sup>824</sup> recognizing alternative justice mechanisms and judgements,<sup>825</sup> and giving more attention to domestic violence, possibly with assistance from groups like FIDA, the Uganda Association of Female Lawyers.<sup>826</sup>

### **Local Government**

Calls for reform of the local Government focused on promoting transparency and fairness in awarding projects,<sup>827</sup> monitoring programmes to ensure efficacy,<sup>828</sup> and limiting the practice of witchcraft.<sup>829</sup> Some noted that local Government councillors should be guaranteed salaries.<sup>830</sup>

813 Research conducted in Arua, Kitgum and Gulu Districts

814 Research conducted in Arua District

815 Research conducted in Hoima and Bulambuli Districts

816 Research conducted in Hoima District

817 Research conducted in Gulu, Lira and Hoima Districts

818 Research conducted in Kasese and Mbarara Districts

819 Research conducted in Hoima, Nakapiripirit, Bundibugyo and Nakasongola Districts

820 Research conducted in Hoima, Lira and Gulu Districts

821 Research conducted in Gulu and Adjumani Districts

822 Research conducted in Bulambuli District

823 Research conducted in Kasese, Hoima, Lira and Pader Districts

824 Research conducted in Tororo District

825 Research conducted in Hoima and Tororo Districts

826 Research conducted in Kasese District

827 Research conducted in Bulambuli District

828 Research conducted in Nakasongola District

829 Research conducted in Nakasongola District

830 Research conducted in Bulambuli District

**Prison**

Regarding prison reform, participants called for improved infrastructure of prison facilities, as well as improved services such as health care, access to nutritious food, and access to education for prisoners.<sup>831</sup> Some participants emphasized that correction and the development of vocational skills should be a priority in the prison system,<sup>832</sup> while others suggested that community service rather than jail sentences would be a better means of rehabilitating criminals.<sup>833</sup> In terms of prison administration, participants called for balanced regional representation in the recruitment of prison guards and further professionalization of prison officials.<sup>834</sup>

**Police**

Participants from many districts offered suggestions for reform of the policing sector. These included restructuring and professionalizing the police force, recruiting officers with attention to educational background and regional balance, and offering promotions based on experience.<sup>835</sup> Some participants cautioned against integrating former members of Local Defence Units into the police.<sup>836</sup> They also urged police to respect the law and treat citizens humanely, especially refraining from torture and the use of tear gas during demonstrations.<sup>837</sup> With regards to corruption, participants called for investigations to be conducted seriously, with no tolerance for transgressions within the police force; others recognized that officers should be paid adequate salaries.<sup>838</sup>

**Military**

Participants favoured both a reduction in militarization and continued protection from a professionalized army. On the one hand, they suggested reducing and professionalizing the military, regional balance in officer appointments, removing generals and reducing their influence in Parliament and politics, and halting the purchase of new weapons like tanks and jets.<sup>839</sup> They also called for the military to respect the Constitution and to refrain from using force to support the President and from interfering in activities outside of their mandate, including police work.<sup>840</sup> Others denounced land-grabbing by the military.<sup>841</sup>

At the same time, some participants in Bulambuli called for the military to continue disarming the Karimojong and to provide adequate protection from cattle raids.<sup>842</sup> More generally, participants supported equitable compensation for all former members of the military, and suggested greater community dialogue to promote cooperation between the military and local communities.<sup>843</sup>

831 Research conducted in Kasese and Bundibugyo Districts

832 Research conducted in Kasese and Pader Districts

833 Research conducted in Pader District

834 Research conducted in Kasese and Arua Districts

835 Research conducted in Gulu, Arua, Kasese, Bundibugyo and Nakapiripirit Districts

836 Research conducted in Pader District

837 Research conducted in Bundibugyo, Nakasongola, Tororo and Mukono Districts

838 Research conducted in Arua, Kasese, Bulambuli and Bundibugyo Districts

839 Research conducted in Arua, Lira, Pader and Bundibugyo Districts

840 Research conducted in Bulambuli, Pader and Bundibugyo Districts

841 Research conducted in Hoima District

842 Research conducted in Bulambuli District

843 Research conducted in Arua and Pader Districts

## **Education**

In the education sector, the overarching concern of participants from a majority of districts centred on increasing access to quality schools. Participants called for an increase in the number and quality of schools, including vocational institutions and universities, as well as an increase in the number of stable and well-paid full time teaching staff.<sup>844</sup>

While some participants insisted that equal education opportunities be extended to every region,<sup>845</sup> others prioritized certain groups, advocating for more funding for the Karimojong, special attention and free education for conflict-affected children and orphans, and adequate funding for the Functional Adult Literacy programme.<sup>846</sup> Regarding content of curricula, some participants highlighted the need to teach English in primary school since local languages are not used in exams,<sup>847</sup> and others suggested promoting entrepreneurship skills,<sup>848</sup> unity<sup>849</sup> and nationwide civic education.<sup>850</sup> Participants across the country also discussed the importance of balanced history teaching. In general, participants observed that more monitoring and supervision of the education sector is needed from both the local and central Government.<sup>851</sup>

## **Health**

Several districts reflected a need for reform in the area of health care. Some groups called for more funding and better distribution of drugs,<sup>852</sup> while others prioritized better services, technology and well-paid staff at district hospitals.<sup>853</sup> In general, participants noted that health service delivery should be improved to reach the community at the grassroots level,<sup>854</sup> and that more monitoring is needed by relevant local and central Government officials.<sup>855</sup> Specifically, some called for a review of policies which granted licenses to traditional healers.<sup>856</sup>

## **Land**

Reform of land policy was a priority for those concerned with mediating land disputes and protecting vulnerable populations from manipulation by elites.<sup>857</sup> Participants observed that greater understanding of land conflicts was needed, and that the relevant Government Ministries should visit affected areas more often.<sup>858</sup> Some participants recommended that a land tribunal be established so that local Government officials and traditional leaders could settle disputes, while others advocated for increasing the capacity of local courts to deal with land issues, thus minimizing the risk of corruption

844 Research conducted in Bulambuli, Gulu, Arua, Bundibugyo, Mbarara, Mukono and Soroti Districts

845 Research conducted in Soroti District

846 Research conducted in Bulambuli, Kasese, Lira and Pader Districts

847 Research conducted in Bulambuli District

848 Research conducted in Mukono District

849 Research conducted in Kitgum District

850 Research conducted in Hoima and Nakasongola Districts

851 Research conducted in Bundibugyo District

852 Research conducted in Adjumani and Bulambuli Districts

853 Research conducted in Gulu, Mbarara and Bundibugyo Districts

854 Research conducted in Mukono and Hoima Districts

855 Research conducted in Bundibugyo and Bulambuli Districts

856 Research conducted in Nakasongola District

857 Research conducted in Bundibugyo and Lira Districts

858 Research conducted in Bulambuli District

common in higher courts.<sup>859</sup> Participants recognized the need to deal efficiently with such disputes to prevent people from turning to extra-legal solutions.<sup>860</sup> Others recommended that policy on land ownership be clarified and made more restrictive for foreigners seeking to purchase land.<sup>861</sup>

### **Economy**

Participants discussed two major economic policy issues: reducing unemployment rates, particularly among youth, and making essential goods more affordable. Regarding the former, participants advocated for encouraging early retirement for those in the workforce by lowering the retirement age and ensuring prompt payment of benefits.<sup>862</sup> This would in turn increase the employment opportunities available to the country's youths. Further, participants suggested that offering more livelihood options to Uganda's young people would prevent conflict by addressing idleness among youth, which in Karamoja has led to increases in cattle-raiding.<sup>863</sup>

Regarding calls for a reduction in commodity prices, participants suggested a decrease in taxes on essential goods including food and fuel, an adjustment of wage rates, and a reduction in interest rates.<sup>864,865</sup> Other poverty alleviation measures recommended included reforming the *Northern Uganda Social Action Fund* to make it more easily accessible, and instituting affirmative action policies for post-conflict reconstruction in regions like Rwenzori.<sup>866</sup>

### **Other Areas of Reform**

In addition to the sectors listed above, participants raised other areas of concern.

- a. In Mubende, participants specifically noted the need for reform of traditional institutions to ensure that they can adequately carry out traditional justice processes.<sup>867</sup>
- b. Regarding the management of natural resources, residents in Hoima advocated that benefits from these resources be shared with local citizens.<sup>868</sup>
- c. Some groups called for new laws to be enacted against the use of derogatory language about certain ethnic groups.<sup>869</sup>
- d. Related to children, participants believed more responsibility for childhood development should be given to parents and guardians under the Children's Act; others recommended better care for orphans and a review of the children's rights framework to prioritize education, health, food and clothing.<sup>870</sup>
- e. Regarding disaster management, representatives from Bulambuli emphasized that better and more equitable service delivery is needed during

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859 Research conducted in Pader and Kasese Districts

860 Research conducted in Pader District

861 Research conducted in Nakasongola District

862 Research conducted in Pader, Bulambuli, Pader and Bundibugyo Districts

863 Research conducted in Pader and Bulambuli Districts

864 Research conducted in Hoima, Bulambuli and Kasese Districts

865 Research conducted in Arua, Hoima and Kasese Districts

866 Research conducted in Bulambuli, Lira and Kasese Districts

867 Research conducted in Mubende District

868 Research conducted in Hoima District

869 Research conducted in Kasese District

870 Research conducted in Pader, Kasese and Hoima Districts

drought or flooding crises.<sup>871</sup>

f. The Election Commission must have impartial leadership to conduct free and fair elections.<sup>872</sup>

g. Some participants recommended that the Government prevent expatriate workers from taking jobs at the expense of local citizens.<sup>873</sup>

h. The issue of creating new districts sparked different reactions; some groups called for more to be created and others called for them to be stopped.<sup>874</sup>

i. Pertaining to gender policy, participants called on the Minister of Gender to provide better sensitization on the rights of women.<sup>875</sup>

## **Way Forward**

Given the number of concerns raised by participants in every district, and the abundance of recommendations offered, institutional and legal reform is evidently a major priority for a comprehensive transitional justice agenda. The research reveals that both local and central Government authorities are key actors in implementing needed reforms. Overall, institutional and legal reforms represent forward-looking actions that can promote justice through safeguarding the rule of law and fighting corruption in the provision of social services. Also, better economic and land policy can prevent future conflicts, and improving access to services and education can complement other transitional justice mechanisms such as reparations.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the NRTJ Audit findings presented above, several emerging themes relating to the state of transitional justice in Uganda can be identified. The NRTJ Audit revealed a general consensus on many overarching justice needs and a broadly shared vision for how transitional justice mechanisms should address them. These key issues are outlined below.

First, participants articulated a clear call for implementation of transitional justice measures on all levels of society, from the grassroots to the national arena. This was evident especially in the demand to include a broad range of stakeholders, both state and non-state actors, in truth-telling and accountability processes. There was a consensus that Uganda's conflicts are mostly due to unresolved national questions and that they should therefore be addressed not only at the local but also at the national level.

Second, communities called for more Government support of local institutions, primarily in order to increase their capacity to carry out traditional justice processes, provide psychosocial support, engage in memorialisation, participate in amnesty decisions and facilitate the distribution of reparations.

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871 Research conducted in Bulambuli District

872 Research conducted in Lira District

873 Research conducted in Arua District

874 Research conducted in Nakasongola, Tororo and Hoima Districts

875 Research conducted in in Bulambuli District

## COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

Third, and concurrently with the above points, participants supported the development of a national transitional justice policy, emphasizing that all future justice measures should be applied in a consistent, transparent and equitable manner throughout the country. This requires creativity in the development of a policy framework that acknowledges the difficulties of integrating local, regional and national justice demands and processes.

Specifically, this challenge includes defining how formal prosecution and traditional justice may complement one another to satisfactorily meet demands for accountability. Additionally, transitional justice advocates must attend to the concerns raised by opponents of traditional justice and ensure that these processes are gender sensitive and otherwise compatible with international human rights standards. Furthermore, in order to realize a comprehensive national transitional justice framework, policymakers must resolve the outstanding question on the future of amnesty in Uganda.

Further, participants described a vision of social justice and focussed on socioeconomic rights when asked what constituted justice to them. They identified impacts of conflict on the individual, community and regional level as major obstacles to peace and justice. For this reason, many participants prioritised the need for reparations over a range of other transitional justice mechanisms.

Finally, the NRTJ Audit exposed the overwhelming need for institutional reform in several sectors of Ugandan society, from the highest levels of Government to local institutions, all of which are essential for the adequate implementation of transitional justice mechanisms.

In sum, these conclusions provide important insights into current perceptions of the state of peace and justice in Uganda. They highlight citizens' perspectives and priorities regarding the development and implementation of a transitional justice process in Uganda, so that Uganda may finally achieve sustainable peace, justice, reconciliation and development as envisaged in the National Development Plan and Uganda's vision 2040.





*Cover page of the National Planning Authority's 'Uganda Vision 2040', showing a transformed Ugandan society, from a peasant to a modern and prosperous country*

## **ANNEX 1**

# **THE DRAFT NATIONAL RECONCILIATION BILL, 2011**

## **MEMORANDUM**

1. The object of this Bill is to promote national unity, peace and reconciliation by providing for the investigation and full disclosure of gross violations of human rights committed since Uganda attained independence in 1962.
2. Since independence, Uganda has been characterised by violent conflicts and gross violations of human rights especially through the conflicts in Acholi, Teso, Lango, West Nile, Western Uganda, Luwero and Karamoja.
3. Although the Government has, in the past, taken measures to address the violations by establishing policies for the purpose of achieving closure with regards to past oppression, while simultaneously working toward national security, unity, sustainable peace and reconciliation, to date, there is no permanent record of the causes, motives and perpetrators of these conflicts or human rights abuses which have coloured the history of Uganda.
4. Objective III of the National Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy requires the Government to make every effort to integrate all peoples of Uganda while recognizing the existence of their ethnic, religious, ideological, political and cultural diversity, and to establish and nurture institutions and procedures for the resolution of conflicts fairly and peacefully.
5. Reconciliation through dialogue is integral to the attainment of sustainable national peace, unity and security and during the course of the Juba peace talks the Government recognized the need for an overarching national justice and reconciliation framework, including alternative justice mechanisms such as traditional reconciliation and truth telling processes, alternative sentencing, reparations and any other formal institutions or mechanisms;
6. At present, the Amnesty Act, Cap. 294 constitutes the only effort that recognises exemption from responsibility for violations of human rights. However even under the Amnesty Act, the amnesty is limited to violations arising out of war against the Government and is restricted to violations occurring after 1986. Significantly, the Amnesty Act does not require full disclosure as a condition of granting amnesty, there is little or no participation of the victims and the people of Uganda, and the Act does not provide for reconciliation.
7. The Bill seeks to provide for reconciliation through a process of national healing which integrates the people of Uganda in a comprehensive, independent and impartial analysis of the history and manifestations of conflict, including the human rights violations, abuses and crimes committed since 1962.

8. The Bill is based on the principle that reconciliation depends on acknowledging what happened and forgiveness and that acknowledgement and forgiveness can only take place if gross violations of human rights are fully disclosed. National healing and reconciliation will be greatly enhanced by a process that seeks to establish the truth through public dialogue regarding the nature, causes, and consequences of violent conflict and the impact these continue to have on the country and the people of Uganda.

9. The Bill proposes to establish a National Truth and Reconciliation Commission to facilitate the process of reconciliation within the country and to investigate the circumstances under which the gross violations and abuses of human rights were committed, including their motives, perpetrators and victims and to disclose the truth with respect to the violations in order to prevent a repeat of the violation or abuses in future.

10. Whereas violations and abuses of human rights may be addressed through the formal justice system, there is little or no room for reconciliation since the formal justice system is based on retribution and is adversarial in nature.

11. The Bill therefore seeks to provide an alternative but complimentary justice forum for violations and abuses of human rights by providing for full disclosure through truth telling and the participation of the victims, perpetrators and the community in the justice system in order to promote peace, unity and reconciliation within the country.

## **12. PROVISIONS OF THE BILL**

The Bill comprises seven parts and four Schedules.

### **13. PART I OF THE BILL-PRELIMINARY**

Clauses 1-3 deal with interpretation of the terms used in the Bill like, amnesty, human rights abuse or violation, victim, etc; Clause 2 on application proposes that the Act should apply to violations occurring since 1962 and should apply for five years with power for Parliament to extend the Bill to acts occurring after 2011 or beyond the five years. Clause 3 gives the objective of the Bill.

### **14. PART II - NATIONAL TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION**

Clauses 4-10 deal with the establishment of the National Truth and Reconciliation Commission as a body corporate with capacity to sue or be sued. Clause 5 on composition, qualification and tenure of the commission proposes that the commission should have a chairperson and 12 commissioners appointed by the President on the advice of the Selection committee and should serve for a period of five years.

Clause 6 establishes the selection committee appointed by Parliament for purposes of identifying and recommending to the President persons suitable for appointment as commissioners.

Clause 7 gives the grounds for removal from office of a commissioner like, inability to perform the functions, misconduct, etc.

## COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

Clause 8 on independence of the commission proposes that the commission should not be subject to direction or control of any person or authority in the discharge of its functions.

Clause 9 gives the quorum of the commission as seven for meetings, nine for hearings and three for committees.

Clause 10 gives the commission power to regulate its procedure and to apply rules of natural justice.

### **15. PART III OF THE BILL- FUNCTIONS OF THE NATIONAL TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION**

This part comprises clauses 11-13. Clause 11 gives the functions of the Commission like initiating, facilitating and coordinating inquiries into gross violations of human rights, receiving evidence, encouraging inter-communal reconciliation, etc.

Clause 12 proposes that the jurisdiction of the commission should be the investigation and hearing of matters of gross violations of human rights save for those matters before the International crimes division of the high court, among others.

Clause 13 gives the powers of the commission like summoning any person to attend the commission or to produce any books or documents in his or her custody, etc.

### **16. PART IV-SECRETARIAT AND STAFF OF THE COMMISSION**

Clauses 14-18 deal with the secretariat of the commission. Clause 14 proposes that the secretariat should be responsible for the day to day operations of the commission with functions such as to collect evidence, record statements from any person connected to a matter, interview any person connected to a matter, etc; the secretariat should be headed by the executive secretary.

Clause 15, proposes that the executive secretary should be appointed by the Minister on the recommendation of the commission.

Clause 16 gives the powers of the executive secretary like implementing the policies and programmes of the commission, managing the funds of the commission, keeping records of the proceedings of the commission, etc.

Clause 17 gives the commission powers to appoint officers and other staff necessary for effective performance of its functions; Clause 18 proposes that the Commission may establish regional offices for purposes of discharging its functions.

### **17. PART V- HEARINGS AND PROCEDURE OF THE COMMISSION**

Clauses 19- 31 deal with the committees of the commission which include the human rights committee, amnesty committee, reparations committee and any other committee as may be constituted by the commission.

Clauses 20 and 21 propose that the human rights committee should be composed of a chairperson and at least three commissioners one of whom a woman. The committee

has powers to co-opt experts in human rights to take part in its proceedings.

Clauses 22-26 deal with amnesty committee.

Clause 22 proposes that the amnesty committee should be composed of a chairperson and at least three commissioners one of whom should be a woman.

Clause 23 gives the criteria of eligibility for amnesty like the violation or abuse committed must be within the mandate of the commission, the applicant or person recommended must have made full disclosure of all the facts, etc.

Clause 24 deals with application or recommendation for amnesty which should be in the prescribed form and the committee should consider it within three months from the date of receipt.

Clause 25 provides that the commission may grant or refuse amnesty and where the commission rejects the application, the reasons for refusal should be stated.

Clause 26 proposes that the effect of amnesty should be exemption from responsibility and non prosecution in civil or criminal court for the violations or abuses of human rights to which amnesty relates.

Clause 27 proposes the reparations committee composed of a chairperson and three other commissioners one of whom should be a woman. The committee should be responsible for reparations under the Act;

Clauses 28-31 deal with general provisions relating to hearings and proceedings.

Clause 28 on public hearings provides that subject to Article 28 of the constitution hearings before the commission shall be open to the public but the commission has discretion to hear some matters in camera.

Clause 29 proposes that a person required to appear before the commission may appear in person or may be represented by an advocate and where he or she cannot afford an advocate, the state shall provide one.

Clause 30 proposes that a witness may be granted immunity from subsequent prosecution in respect of incriminating evidence where the commission is satisfied that the witness has made full disclosure.

Clause 31 requires the commission in consultation with the police to take sufficient witness protection measures where the security of perpetrators, victims or witnesses is at risk.

## **18. PART VI-FINANCIAL PROVISIONS**

Clauses 32- 35 deal with funds of the commission. Clause 32 proposes that funds of the commission should consist of monies appropriated by Parliament and donations, loans, grants and gifts from sources within and outside Uganda.

Clause 33 provides that all expenses of the commission shall be charged on the

consolidated fund.

Clause 34 proposes that commission should be a self accounting body with power to deal directly with the Ministry responsible for finance.

Clause 35 gives the financial year of the commission as a period of twelve months from 1st July to 30th June of the following year.

Clause 36 proposes that the commission should submit estimates of income and expenditure to the minister within three months before the commencement of each financial year.

Clause 37 proposes that the commission should keep proper books of accounts which must be periodically audited by the auditor general.

## **19. PART VII- GENERAL**

This part contains general provisions relating to the operation of the Act. For instance under clause 38 a commissioner who has an interest in a matter before the commission shall disclose his or her interest and shall not take part in the proceedings and where a commissioner does not disclose conflict of interest, all decisions affected by the conflict of interest shall be reviewed without the participation of the commissioner concerned.

Clause 39 creates an offence for whoever discloses information obtained in course of duty.

Clause 40 proposes that entry, search or seizure should be upon a warrant signed by the chairperson.

Clause 41 spells out the reporting requirements of the commission.

Clause 42 proposes that the President with the approval of Parliament should establish a framework to implement the report and recommendations of the commission.

This part also deals with appeals to the High court against decisions of the commission, protection of members and officers of the commission from liability for acts done or omitted to be done in good faith, penalty for interference with the work of the commission, application of existing laws relating to facilitation and promotion of national peace and reconciliation with necessary modification and power to make regulations to give effect to the Act.

## **20. SCHEDULES**

The Bill has 4 schedules.

Schedule one deals with the currency point which is equivalent to twenty thousand shillings only.

Schedule two proposes the criteria for selection of the commissioners by the selection committee.

Schedule three deals with oaths of a commissioner and staff of the commission.

Schedule four proposes the guiding principles in hearing matters by the commission.

**THE NATIONAL TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION BILL, 2011**  
**ARRANGEMENT OF CLAUSES**

Clause

**PART I - PRELIMINARY**

1. Interpretation
2. Application
3. Objective of the Act

**PART II - NATIONAL TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION**

4. Establishment of National Truth and Reconciliation Commission
5. Composition, tenure and qualifications
6. Selection Committee
7. Vacating the office of commissioner
8. Independence of the Commission
9. Quorum of the commission
10. Procedure of the Commission

**PART III - FUNCTIONS OF THE NATIONAL TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION**

11. Functions of the commission
12. Jurisdiction of the Commission
13. Powers of the Commission

**PART IV - SECRETARIAT AND STAFF OF THE COMMISSION**

14. Secretariat of the Commission
15. Executive Secretary
16. Duties of the Executive Secretary
17. Other officers and staff of the Commission
18. Regional offices

**PART V - HEARINGS AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMISSION**

19. Committees of the Commission.

Human rights committee

20. Human rights committee
21. Functions and powers of the human rights committee

## COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

### Amnesty committee

22. Amnesty committee
23. Amnesty
24. Application or recommendation for amnesty.
25. Grant or refusal of amnesty.
26. Effect of amnesty

### Reparation committee

27. General provisions relating to hearings and proceedings
28. Public hearings
29. Appearance before the Commission
30. Immunity of witnesses
31. Witness protection

## PART VI – FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

32. Funds of the commission
33. Commission expenditure to be charged on the Consolidated Fund
34. Commission to be self-accounting
35. Financial year of the commission
36. Estimates
37. Accounts and audit

## PART VII – GENERAL

38. Conflict of Interest
39. Non disclosure of information
40. Entry, search or seizure upon warrant

### Reports and implementation

41. Reports
42. Implementation

### Miscellaneous

43. Appeals
44. Protection of members and officers of the Commission
45. Offences
46. Existing laws
47. Regulations

A Bill for an Act

ENTITLED

**THE NATIONAL TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION ACT, 2011**

An Act to provide for the establishment of a National Truth and Reconciliation Commission: to provide for and foster fair and peaceful resolution of conflicts in Uganda through a direct and independent national reconciliation process; to provide for the integration of the people in addressing the historical causes and patterns of violent conflicts and gross violation and abuses of human rights; and to provide for related matters.

BE IT ENACTED by Parliament as follows:

**PART I PRELIMINARY**

1. Interpretation

In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires –

“amnesty” means discharge from criminal responsibility, prosecution or any other form of punishment;

“Amnesty Committee” means the committee of the Commission responsible for determining amnesty under this Act;

“Armed forces and groups” refers to any full or part-time members or agents of the state and its respective auxiliaries, or any armed groups not under the control of the state;

“Commission” means the National Truth and Reconciliation Commission;

“currency point” has the value assigned to it in Schedule 1;

“human rights abuse” means a violation of human rights perpetrated by a non-state actor;

“human rights violation” means a violation of human rights perpetrated by state actors, including groups or individuals not officially affiliated with the state but under the control or authority of the state;

“Minister” means the Minister responsible for justice;

“Selection Committee” means the committee responsible for recommending persons to be appointed as members of the Commission;

“perpetrator” includes a person or institution directly and indirectly implicated in the organisation, financing, directing, or execution of crimes, in the course of a conflict;

“reparation” means a remedy or any form of compensation, symbolic or ex-gratis payment, restitution, rehabilitation or recognition, reconciliation, satisfaction or guarantee of non-repetition made to or in respect of a victim;

“victim” means a person who individually or collectively suffered harm, including physical or mental injury, emotional suffering, economic loss or substantial impairment of their fundamental rights, through acts or omissions that constitute gross violations of human rights and includes –

(a) a member of the immediate family or dependant of the direct victim;

(b) a person who has suffered harm in intervening to assist a victim in distress or to prevent victimization.

## COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

### 2. Application

- (1) This Act applies to gross human rights violations or abuse of human rights from 9th October, 1962 to 2011.
- (2) Subject to subsection (3), this Act shall apply for five years after which it shall lapse.
- (3) Parliament may by resolution extend the application of this Act –
  - (a) to acts or human rights violations or abuses occurring after 2011;
  - (b) after the period specified in subsection (2).

### 3. Objective of the Act

The objective of this Act is to facilitate and promote national unity, sustainable peace and reconciliation

## PART II NATIONAL TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION

### 4. Establishment of National Truth and Reconciliation Commission

- (1) There shall be a National Truth and Reconciliation Commission.
- (2) The Commission is a body corporate with a common seal and may sue and be sued in its corporate name and may do, enjoy or suffer anything that may be done, enjoyed or suffered by a body corporate.

### 5. Composition, tenure and qualifications.

- (1) The Commission is composed of a chairperson and twelve commissioners, at least seven of whom shall be women, as follows –
  - (a) a retired judge, a judge or a person qualified to be appointed as judge who shall be the chairperson;
  - (b) one person representing the Amnesty Commission;
  - (c) one person representing the Uganda Human Rights Commission;
  - (d) one person from the academia;
  - (e) one person from the civil society;
  - (f) one person representing the Inter Religious Council of Uganda;
  - (g) one person representing the Council of older persons;
  - (h) one person representing each of the following regions of Uganda –
    - (i) central;
    - (ii) western;
    - (iii) northern; and
    - (iv) Eastern;
  - (i) one person nominated by the President;
  - (j) one person representing the Equal Opportunities Commission.

(2) The commissioners shall be appointed by the President on the recommendation of the Selection Committee.

(3) A person is not qualified to be appointed commissioner unless that person is of high moral character and proven integrity.

(4) Every commissioner shall, before assuming the duties of commissioner take and subscribe the oath specified in Schedule 2.

(5) A commissioner shall hold office on a full time basis for five years on the terms specified in the instrument of appointment.

## 6. Selection Committee

(1) Parliament shall appoint a selection committee of five persons, at least two of whom shall be women, for the purposes of identifying and recommending to the President the persons to be appointed commissioners.

(2) In appointing a selection committee, Parliament shall ensure that the persons appointed –

- (a) reflect a regional balance;
- (b) are highly qualified with proven integrity and credibility;
- (c) are citizens of diverse professional backgrounds drawn from academia, civil society organizations, faith based institutions, cultural institutions or other professions;
- (d) are non-partisan;

(3) A person shall not be appointed to the Selection Committee who—

- (a) has been convicted of an offence involving dishonesty or fraud by a competent court in Uganda or elsewhere;
- (b) is insolvent, or has made any assignment or arrangement with his or her creditors;
- (c) has been convicted of an offence and sentenced to a term of imprisonment of six months or more by a competent court in Uganda or elsewhere;
- (d) is a Member of Parliament, a Minister or a member of a local government council;
- (e) is a member of the executive committee of a political party or political organization;
- (f) is a member of the Uganda Police Force or Uganda Peoples Defence Forces.

(4) For the purposes of subsection (1), the selection committee shall act in accordance with Schedule 3.

(5) The selection committee shall stand dissolved after performing its function under this section.

## 7. Vacating the office of commissioner.

(1) The office of commissioner shall become vacant if the person holding the office resigns in writing addressed to the President or is removed from office by the President only for-

- (a) inability to perform the functions of his or her office arising from infirmity of body or mind;
- (b) misbehaviour or misconduct; or
- (c) incompetence.

(2) Where the President intends to remove a commissioner from office for misbehaviour or misconduct, the President shall, before removal, give the commissioner an opportunity to be heard on the allegations made against him or her.

## 8. Independence of the Commission.

(1) Subject to this Act, the Commission shall, in the exercise of its functions, be independent and shall not be subject to the direction or control of any person or authority.

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(2) For the purposes of this section a member of the Commission shall discharge the functions of his or her office impartially and independently in good faith without fear, favour, bias or prejudice.

9. Quorum of the commission.

(1) The quorum of the commission is seven commissioners for meetings and nine commissioners for hearings.

(2) The quorum of a committee of the Commission is three commissioners.

10. Procedure of the Commission.

(1) Subject to this Act, the Commission shall regulate its own procedure.

(2) The Commission shall observe the rules of natural justice.

### PART III- FUNCTIONS OF THE NATIONAL TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION

11. Functions of the commission

(1) The functions of the Commission are -

(a) to facilitate, initiate and coordinate, inquiries into -

(i) gross violations or abuses of human rights, including violations which were part of a systematic pattern of abuse;

(ii) the nature, causes and extent of gross violations or abuses of human rights, including circumstances, factors, context, motives and perspectives which led to the violations or abuses;

(iii) the identity of all persons, authorities, institutions and organisations involved in gross violations or abuses of human rights;

(b) to collect information and receive evidence from any person, including persons claiming to be victims of gross human rights violations or the representatives of the victims, their fate or location and the nature and extent of the harm suffered by the victims;

(c) to provide a platform for victims, perpetrators and the community to give an account of the gross violations and abuses of human rights;

(d) to promote and encourage the preservation of the memory of the events through memorials, archives, renaming of roads, among others;

(e) to promote reconciliation between the victims and the perpetrators and the reintegration of perpetrators into the community through the establishment and disclosure of the truth;

(f) to come up with reconciliation initiatives and encourage inter-communal reconciliation in collaboration with the relevant institutions;

(g) to recommend to the Amnesty Commission to grant amnesty to perpetrators of gross violations or abuses of human rights arising out of war or rebellion against the Republic of Uganda;

(h) to grant amnesty to perpetrators under this Act who are not eligible for amnesty under the Amnesty Act;

(i) to establish procedures and arrangements for the participation of victims in the reconciliation process and design mechanisms for the protection of witnesses appearing before the Commission;

(j) to prepare a comprehensive report which sets out its activities and findings,

- based on factual and objective information and evidence collected or received by it ;
- (k) to make recommendations to the President regarding -
  - (i) the measures to take in making reparation to victims of gross human rights violations or abuses;
  - (i) the rehabilitation of perpetrators taking into account their needs for psycho-social or other rehabilitative services;
  - (ii) the creation of institutions conducive to a stable and fair society and the institutional, administrative and legislative measures which may be taken or introduced in order to prevent the commission of gross violations or abuses of human rights;
  - (l) to perform any other function related to or consequential to the functions under this Act or conferred by Parliament.

(2) The Commission shall, to the greatest extent possible, and consistent with this Act, consult and co-operate with departments, branches and agencies of the Government having duties, aims or objectives related to those of the Commission.

(3) In the performance of its functions, the Commission may seek the assistance of traditional, cultural or religious leaders to facilitate the public sessions held by the Commission or to assist in the reconciliation programmes of the Commission.

## 12. Jurisdiction of the Commission

(1) The Commission shall investigate, determine and make recommendations on all matters involving gross violations or abuses of human rights within its functions and to which this Act applies.

(2) The Commission shall not investigate or deal with —

(a) any matter which is pending before a court or judicial tribunal or is under investigation by another public institution unless the court or other institution adjourns its proceedings in order for investigations or proceedings to take place under this Act;

(b) a matter involving the relations or dealings between the Government of Uganda and the government of any foreign state or international organization;

(c) a matter relating to the exercise of the prerogative of mercy under article 121 of the Constitution;

(3) For the avoidance of doubt, the Commission shall not hear or determine any matter before the International Crimes Division of the High Court.

## 13. Powers of the Commission.

(1) In the performance of its functions under this Act, the Commission has the powers of a court to—

(a) require the attendance before the Commission of any person, including a person who has been pardoned, convicted, acquitted or granted amnesty ;

(b) require the production of any books, papers or documents;

(c) inspect any books, papers, materials or documents produced before the commission or otherwise and—

(i) retain the books, papers, materials, or documents for a reasonable period as the Commission shall determine; or

(ii) make copies of any of them, or their contents;

(d) require any person to take or subscribe to an oath or affirmation to speak truthfully to the Commission and to respond to all questions put by members of the

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Commission relating to any matter being inquired into by the Commission;

(e) require any person appearing before the Commission, including the person whose conduct is subject to an inquiry, whether summoned to appear or not, to answer any question put by any member of the Commission, or by any other person appearing before the Commission.

(2) Where a person—

(a) is served with a summons to attend before the Commission and the person fails without reasonable excuse to attend in obedience to the summons; or

(b) is served with a summons to produce any books, papers, materials or documents and the person fails without reasonable excuse to comply with the summons;

(c) misbehaves before the Commission, willfully insults the Commission or a member of the Commission, or interrupts the proceedings of the Commission;

(d) refuses to be sworn or to affirm or to answer a question when required to do so by the Commission,

that person commits an offence and is liable, on conviction, to a fine not exceeding ninety six currency points or imprisonment not exceeding forty eight months or both.

(3) In the course of its proceedings, the Commission may—

(a) receive in evidence the transcript of evidence in proceedings before a court or tribunal and draw conclusions of fact from that evidence as it considers appropriate; or

(b) adopt any finding, decision or judgment of a court or tribunal that may be relevant to the proceedings.

(4) In the performance of its functions, the Commission may recommend to or order any institution, body, authority or person to adopt or take particular steps or action which, in the opinion of the Commission will promote reconciliation, national unity or peace.

## PART IV – SECRETARIAT AND STAFF OF THE COMMISSION

### 14. Secretariat of the Commission

(1) The Commission shall have a secretariat which shall be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Commission and implementing the decisions of the Commission.

(2) The secretariat shall be headed by an executive secretary.

(3) For the purposes of subsection (1), the secretariat may -

(a) collect documents or evidence and record statements from any person connected with a matter under investigation;

(b) interview any person and visit any place in Uganda for the purposes of collecting or verifying information;

(c) require that a person, institution or organisation preserves specified documents until the committee has examined them;

(a) seize any article or thing which is relevant to the investigations;

(b) inspect and search premises connected to a matter under investigation;

(c) take photographs or other recordings of any person or property connected with a matter under investigation or consideration by the Commission.

#### 15. Executive Secretary

(1) The Executive Secretary shall be appointed by the Minister on the recommendation of the Commission on terms and conditions determined by the Commission.

(2) A person shall not be appointed Executive Secretary unless that person has considerable knowledge and experience in transitional justice, law, conflict resolution or human rights.

(3) A person shall cease to hold the office of Executive Secretary if that person –

(a) resigns

(b) is declared insolvent;

(c) is convicted of a criminal offence in respect of which a penalty of imprisonment of six months or more is imposed without the option of a fine;

(a) is removed from office by the Minister on the recommendation of the Commission for -

(i) continuously and persistently being unable to discharge the functions of the office of Executive Secretary;

(ii) failing to disclose to the Commission any interest or connection to any matter connected to the Commission;

(iii) engaging in misbehavior or abuse of office.

#### 16. Duties of the Executive Secretary

(1) Subject to this Act and to the general supervision of the Commission, the Executive Secretary is the chief executive officer of the Commission and is responsible for –

(a) implementing the policies and programmes agreed upon by the Commission;

(b) managing the funds and property of the Commission;

(c) administering, organizing, supervising and generally controlling the staff of the Commission;

(d) keeping the Commissioners informed of the activities of the Commission;

(e) keeping record of all the proceedings and transactions of the Commission.

(2) In the performance of his or her duties, the Executive Secretary is answerable to the Commissioners.

#### 17. Other officers and staff of the Commission

(1) There shall be officers and staff of the Commission as may be necessary for the effective performance of the functions of the Commission.

(2) The officers and staff of the Commission shall be appointed by the Commission on terms and conditions determined by the Commission.

#### 18. Regional offices

(1) The Commission may establish offices in any part of Uganda for the purposes of discharging the functions of the Commission.

(2) For the purposes of subsection (1), the Commission may establish offices in each of the regions of Uganda.

### **PART V - HEARINGS AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMISSION**

19. Committees of the Commission.

For the purposes of discharging the functions of the Commission, the Commission shall have the following committees –

- (d) the human rights committee;
- (e) the amnesty committee;
- (f) reparation committee;
- (g) any other committee that in the opinion of the Commission is expedient and necessary for the discharge of the functions of the Commission.

**Human rights committee**

20. Human rights committee

(1) The human rights committee shall be composed of a chairperson and at least three commissioners, one of whom shall be a woman.

(2) The Commission may co-opt any person with expert knowledge in human rights or concerning the functions of the Commission to attend and take part in the proceedings of the investigation committee.

21. Functions and powers of the human rights committee

The human rights committee is responsible for executing the functions of the Commission specified in section 11(1) (a) and (i) and any other function delegated or assigned to the committee by the Commission.

**Amnesty committee**

22. Amnesty committee

(1) The amnesty committee shall be composed of a chairperson and at least three commissioners, one of whom shall be a woman.

(2) The Commission may co-opt any person with expert knowledge concerning the functions of the Commission to attend and take part in the proceedings of the committee.

(3) The Amnesty committee is responsible for determining applications for amnesty and making recommendations to the Commission to grant amnesty to persons in accordance with this Act.

23. Amnesty

(1) A person is eligible for amnesty if the Commission is satisfied that –

- (a) the violation or abuse of human rights committed by the person is within the mandate of the Commission under this Act;
- (b) the violation or abuse of human rights was committed in the cause or furtherance of a war, conflict or political objective;
- (b) the person has made full disclosure of all the facts relevant to the violation or abuse of human rights.

(2) The Commission shall grant amnesty to an eligible person upon –

- (a) the application of the person for amnesty; or
- (b) where the person is recommended for the grant of amnesty

by the human rights committee.

(3) In determining an application or recommendation for amnesty the Commission shall

take into account –

- (a) the nature and gravity of the human rights abuse or violation;
- (b) the motive for committing the violation or abuse;
- (c) whether the violation or abuse was committed in execution of an order made by or with the approval of the institution or political body for which the person was a member, agent or supporter;
- (d) the relationship between the human rights abuse or violation and the political objective or the effect on the public including the proximity or proportionality of the abuse or violation to the objective.

#### 24. Application or recommendation for amnesty.

- (1) An application for amnesty shall be made to the Commission in the prescribed form.
- (2) The human rights committee may after carrying out investigations in accordance with this Act, recommend to the Amnesty committee in the prescribed form to grant amnesty to a person.
- (3) The Amnesty committee shall consider and determine an application or recommendation for amnesty within three months from the date of receipt of the application or recommendation.
- (4) The committee may consider applications or recommendations for amnesty jointly, where the applications or recommendations relate to violations or abuses of human rights arising out of the same facts, acts or omissions.

#### 25. Grant or refusal of amnesty.

- (1) The Commission shall grant amnesty on the recommendation of the amnesty committee where the Commission is satisfied that the applicant or person recommended for amnesty is eligible for amnesty and has complied with the requirements of this Act for the grant of amnesty.
- (2) Where the committee is satisfied that the applicant or person recommended is not eligible or does not meet the requirements of this Act, the committee shall reject the application or recommendation.
- (3) The Executive Secretary shall within seven days after the Commission has determined the application or recommendation for amnesty, notify the person of the decision of the Commission.
- (4) Where, the decision is to reject the application or recommendation, the commission shall give reasons for the refusal or rejection.

#### 26. Effect of amnesty

- (1) A person granted amnesty under this Act shall not be held responsible for the gross human rights violation or abuse to which the amnesty relates.
- (2) For the avoidance of doubt, a person granted amnesty is not liable in civil or criminal proceedings in respect of the acts or omissions arising out of the human rights violations or abuses for which that person has received amnesty.

### **Reparation committee**

#### 27. Reparation committee

- (1) The reparation committee shall be composed of a chairperson and at least three

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commissioners, one of whom shall be a woman.

(2) The Commission may co-opt any person with expert knowledge in reparations to attend and take part in the proceedings of the committee.

(3) The reparations committee is responsible for matters relating to the reparation of victims under this Act.

### General provisions relating to hearings and proceedings

#### 28. Public hearings

(1) Subject to article 28 of the Constitution and this Act, hearings before the Commission shall be open to the public.

(2) The Commission may at the request of a party, direct that the hearing shall be closed to the public.

(3) The Commission shall be guided by the principles in Schedule 4 when conducting hearings.

#### 29. Appearance before the Commission

(1) A person required to appear before the Commission or a committee of the Commission shall appear in person.

(2) A person appearing before the Commission may be represented by an advocate.

(3) Where a person cannot afford legal representation, that person shall be provided with legal representation at the expense of the State.

#### 30. Immunity of witnesses

(1) A person appearing before the Commission has the immunity and privileges of a witness before a court.

(2) Without prejudice to subsection (1), the Commission may grant immunity to a witness from subsequent criminal prosecution in respect of the evidence given to the Commission where the commission is satisfied that the witness has made full disclosure.

#### 31. Witness protection

The Commission may in consultation with the Uganda Police Force, take sufficient witness protection measures during public proceedings in cases where the physical or mental security of alleged perpetrators, victims, or witnesses is at risk.

## PART VI – FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

#### 32. Funds of the commission.

The funds of the Commission shall consist of –

(a) money appropriated by Parliament for the purposes of the Commission;

(b) loans, grants, donations and gifts from sources within and outside Uganda.

#### 33. Commission expenditure to be charged on the Consolidated Fund.

All the administrative expenses of the Commission including salaries and allowances shall be charged and paid out of the Consolidated Fund.

34. Commission to be self-accounting.

The Commission shall be a self-accounting body and shall deal directly with the Ministry responsible for finance on matters concerning its finances.

35. Financial year of the commission.

The financial year of the Commission is the period of twelve months beginning on the 1st day of July in each calendar year and ending on 30th June in the next year.

36. Estimates.

The Commission shall, within three months before the commencement of each financial year, prepare and submit to the Minister, estimates of income and expenditure of the commission for the next financial year.

37. Accounts and audit.

(1) The Executive Secretary shall keep proper books of accounts in respect of the income and expenditure of the Commission.

(2) The Auditor General or an auditor appointed by the Auditor General shall in each financial year audit the accounts of the Commission.

(3) The Executive Secretary shall give the Auditor General or the auditor appointed by him or her access to all books of accounts and other financial records of the Commission and to any information and explanation in relation to the books and records.

## **PART VII – GENERAL**

38. Conflict of Interest

(1) Where at any stage during the hearing, proceedings or other meeting of the Commission or a committee of the Commission, it appears that a commissioner or officer has or may have a personal interest or is acquainted with any witness likely to come before the Commission or committee in a manner that may cause a conflict of interest in the performance of his or her functions, that commissioner or officer shall disclose the nature of the interest and shall not take part in the proceedings or meeting.

(2) Where a Commissioner or officer of the Commission does not disclose any potential conflict of interest and the non disclosure is subsequently discovered, all decisions previously taken which are affected by the conflict of interest shall be reviewed without the participation of the commissioner or officer concerned.

(3) Where a commissioner or officer of the commission does not disclose a conflict of interest, the Commission shall determine the disciplinary action to take against the commissioner or officer of the Commission.

39. Non disclosure of information

(1) A person shall not disclose any information obtained by that person in the course of performing duties or functions under this Act.

(2) For the purposes of this section, every commissioner, or employee or officer of the Commission or a person connected with the Commission in the performance of the functions of the Commission, shall –

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- (a) keep all information obtained in the strictest confidence;
- (b) not release or disclose any information except in accordance with this Act.

(2) A person who contravenes subsection (1) commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding ninety six currency points or imprisonment not exceeding forty eight months or both.

### 40. Entry, search or seizure upon warrant

(1) Every entry upon premises, inspection, search or seizure under this Act shall be made upon a warrant issued in accordance with this Act.

(2) A warrant shall be issued by the chairperson and shall specify the premises to be inspected or searched or the articles, documents to be seized.

(3) The chairperson shall specify the person to execute the warrant and the time between 8a.m and 5 p.m when the warrant shall be executed.

(4) A person executing a warrant under this section shall at the time of executing the warrant identify themselves.

(5) A person executing a warrant under this section shall be accompanied by a police officer who may use reasonable force to execute the warrant.

(6) A person who enters or inspects premises or seizes any article or document without a warrant commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding forty eight currency point or imprisonment not exceeding twenty four months or both.

## Reports and implementation

### 41. Reports

(1) The Commission may, at any time, when requested to do so or on its own accord, submit to the Minister, a report on any matter arising during the performance of the functions of the commission under this Act.

(2) The Commission shall within three months after the conclusion of its activities under this Act, make and submit a final report to the President and Parliament.

(3) The reports under this section shall specify how the Commission has discharged each of the functions in section 11 and shall include –

(a) details of the Commission’s work, including investigations, hearings, and findings, including -

(i) the nature of investigations, the number of persons investigated;

(ii) the number of persons who applied or were recommended for amnesty;

(iii) the number of persons granted amnesty;

(iv) the number of victims, including those who did not appear before the Commission;

(v) the nature of human rights violations or abuses and their impact on the public;

(b) the conclusions regarding the needs of victims, as well as recommendations regarding public memorials and prosecution;

(c) recommendations for reparation of victims;

(d) recommendations regarding the steps that should be taken, including new legislation, changes in government policy and amendments to the law, to prevent the occurrence of the violations and abuses of human rights in future;

(e) the strategy that should be taken to implement the recommendations of the Commission, including identifying the responsible ministry, institution or agency.

- (4) The Commission shall publish a summary or simplified version of the final report of not more than 300 pages.
- (5) The final report shall be published in the Gazette and other media and shall be translated in the local languages.

#### 42. Implementation.

- (1) The President shall within three months after receiving the final report of the Commission, with the approval of Parliament, establish a framework to implement the report of the Commission.
- (2) The framework shall specify the ministry, agency or institution to implement the specific recommendations of the report and shall specify the time within which the recommendations shall be implemented.
- (3) In the performance of its functions, the institution established under this section shall be supervised and answerable to Parliament.

### **Miscellaneous**

#### 43. Appeals

A person aggrieved by a decision of the Commission or a committee of the Commission may appeal to the High Court.

#### 44. Protection of members and officers of the Commission

A member or an officer of the Commission or a person acting on the directions of the Commission or of an officer of the Commission is not personally liable for any act or omission done or omitted to be done in good faith in the exercise of the functions under this Act.

#### 45. Offences

- (1) A person shall not hinder, obstruct, molest or interfere with or intimidate a person —
- (a) participating in a hearing, inquiry, examination, investigation or other proceedings under this Act;
  - (b) giving evidence or information to the Commission or a committee of the commission;
  - (b) executing a warrant issued under this Act or implementing a decision or order of the Commission.
- (2) A person, who contravenes subsection (1), commits an offence and is liable, on conviction, to a fine not exceeding ninety six currency points or imprisonment not exceeding forty eight months, or both.

#### 46. Existing laws.

Any law in existence at the coming into force of this Act relating to facilitating or promoting national peace, unity and reconciliation shall have effect subject to the necessary modifications in order to give effect to this Act.

#### 47. Regulations

- (1) The Minister may, by statutory instrument, on the recommendation of the Commission, make regulations to give effect to this Act.

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- (2) Without prejudice to subsection (1) regulations made under this section may -
- (a) prescribe the matters required to be prescribed;
  - (b) provide for any other matter that is expedient and necessary to give effect to this Act.

### SCHEDULES

#### SCHEDULE 1

##### Section 1

##### Currency point

One currency point is equivalent to twenty thousand shillings.

#### SCHEDULE 2

##### Section 5

##### Oaths.

Part I.

Oath of Member of the National Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, being appointed chairperson/member of the National Truth and Reconciliation Commission, swear in the name of the Almighty God/solemnly affirm that I will well and truly exercise the functions of chairperson/member of the National Truth and Reconciliation Commission and do right to all manner of people in accordance with the Constitution and in accordance with the laws of the Republic of Uganda without fear of favour, affection or ill will. (So help me God.)

Part II.

Oath of Executive Secretary/Officer of the commission.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, being appointed executive secretary to/officer of the commission being called upon to perform the functions of executive secretary to/officer of the commission swear in the name of the Almighty God/solemnly affirm that I will perform the duties of my office and I will not directly or indirectly reveal to any unauthorised person, or otherwise than in the course of duty, the contents or any part of the contents of any documents, communication or information which may come to my knowledge in the course of my duties as such. (So help me God.)

#### SCHEDULE 3

##### Section 6

##### CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF COMMISSIONERS BY THE SELECTION COMMITTEE

- (1) The Selection Committee shall by public notice invite nominations of persons to be appointed Commissioners.
- (2) The Committee shall invite the academia and the civil society to nominate persons to be appointed Commissioners.
- (3) The Amnesty Commission, the Uganda Human Rights Commission, Equal Opportunities

Commission, the Inter Religious Council of Uganda and the Council of Older Persons shall each nominate two candidates within thirty days from the date of the public notice.

(4) The notice and invitation under paragraphs (1) and (2) shall specify the particulars of the person that should be sent to the Commission.

(5) The Committee shall publish the names of the persons nominated under paragraphs (1), (2) and (3) and shall invite the public to make comments about their suitability as members of the Commission within thirty days.

(6) The Selection Committee shall group the persons nominated into the categories specified under section 5.

(7) After considering the comments in paragraph (5), the Selection Committee shall within fifteen days recommend to the President one person to represent each of the institutions specified in section 5 and paragraph (3) of this Schedule.

(8) For the purposes of carrying out its responsibility, the Selection Committee may before inviting nominations under this Act, conduct a nationwide sensitization process across all regions of Uganda to inform the public about the functions and purposes of the Commission.

(9) The public may also nominate candidates during the nationwide sensitisation and the selection committee shall consider the persons nominated.

#### **SCHEDULE 4**

##### **Section 28**

#### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES IN CONDUCTING HEARINGS BY THE COMMISSION.**

(1) When dealing with alleged victims and perpetrators, the Commission or a committee of the Commission shall be guided by the following principles:

(a) All alleged victims and perpetrators shall be treated with compassion and respect for their dignity;

(b) All alleged victims and perpetrators shall be treated equally, without regard to race, ethnicity, religion, language, sexuality, gender, social group, ability, nationality or age;

(c) Procedures dealing with alleged victims and perpetrators shall be expeditious and fair.

(d) Appropriate measures shall be taken to minimise inconvenience to alleged victims, perpetrators and witnesses and, when necessary, to protect their privacy and safety and that of their families.

(e) The commission shall take sufficient measures to allow victims to communicate in the language of their choice and where necessary, an interpreter will be provided by the commission.

(2) The Commission may apply the United Nations Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law of 2006.

## ANNEX 2: Legal Notices

### **UGANDA: LEGAL NOTICE CREATING THE COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS**

*The Commissions of Inquiry Act  
Legal Notice No. 5 (May 16, 1986)  
(Cap. 56)*

#### **A Commission**

Whereas for a period of nearly two decades the people of Uganda have experienced diverse forms of violation of human rights, breaches of the rule of law and excessive abuse of power, in contravention of the provisions of the Constitution of Uganda and of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to which Uganda is party:

And Whereas in the interest of good Government, public security and welfare and constitutional supremacy it is deemed expedient that the causes of the circumstances surrounding and possible ways of preventing the recurrence of the matters aforesaid, be inquired into:

Now Therefore,

In Exercise of the powers conferred upon the Minister by section 2 of the Commissions of Inquiry Act, I, JOSEPH NYAMIHANA MULENGA, Do Hereby appoint,

- (i) Hon. Mr. Justice Arthur O. Oder;
- (ii) Mr. Edward Khiddu-Makubuya;
- (iii) Mr. Jack Luyombya;
- (iv) Mr. John Kawanga;
- (v) Mr. John Nagenda;

to be Commissioners to inquire into all aspects of violation of human rights, breaches of the rule of law and excessive abuses of power, committed against persons in Uganda by the regimes in government, their servants, agents or agencies whatsoever called, during the period from the 9th day of October, 1962 to the 25th day of January, 1986 and possible ways of preventing the recurrence of the aforesaid matters, and in particular, but without limiting the generality of the foregoing, to inquire into,

- (a) the causes and circumstances surrounding the mass murders and all acts or omissions resulting in the arbitrary deprivation of human life, committed in various parts of Uganda;
- (b) the causes and circumstances surrounding the numerous arbitrary arrests, consequent detentions without trial, arbitrary

- imprisonment and abuse of the powers of detention and restriction under the Public Order and Security Act, 1967;
- (c) the denial of any person of a fair and public trial before an independent and impartial court established by law;
  - (d) the subjection of any person to torture, cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment;
  - (e) the manner in which the law enforcement agents and the state security agencies executed their functions, the extent to which the practices and procedures employed in the execution of such functions may have violated the human rights of any person and the extent to which the state security agencies may have interfered with the functioning of the law-enforcement agents;
  - (f) the causes and circumstances surrounding the massive displacement of persons and expulsion of people including Uganda citizens from Uganda and the consequent disappearance or presumed death of some of them;
  - (g) the subjection of any person to discriminatory treatment by virtue of race, tribe, place of origin, political opinion, creed or sex, by any person acting under any written law or in the performance of the functions of any public office or public authority;
  - (h) the denial to any person of any other fundamental freedoms and rights prescribed under Chapter III of the Constitution of Uganda or the unlawful interference with the enjoyment by any person in Uganda of the said freedoms and rights;
  - (i) the protection by act or omission of any person that perpetrated any of the aforesaid things, from due process of law;
  - (j) any other matter connected with or incidental to the matters aforesaid which the Commission may wish to examine and recommend;

And I Do Hereby direct that Hon. Mr. Justice Arthur O. Oder be the Chairman of the Commission;

And I Do Hereby appoint Mr. Ben B. Oluka to be the Secretary to the Commission;

And I Do Hereby direct that in the proper discharge of its duty, the Commission may call such witnesses and ask for the production of such evidence as it may deem necessary and may receive such assistance from any person as it may think fit;

And I Do Hereby prescribe that the said Commission shall in the course of its inquiry, so far as is practicable, apply the law of evidence, and shall in particular conform with the following instructions, that is to say,

- (a) that any person desiring to give evidence to the Commission shall do so in person;
- (b) that hearsay evidence which adversely affects the reputation of any person or tends to reflect in any way upon the character or conduct of any person shall not be received;

- (c) that no expression of opinion on the character, conduct or motives of any person shall be received in evidence;
- (d) that any who in the opinion of the Commissioners is adversely affected by the evidence given before the Commission shall be given an opportunity to be heard and to cross-examine the person giving such evidence, and

except in so far as the Commissioners consider it essential for ascertaining the truth of the matter into which the Commissioners are commissioned to inquire, not to depart from such instructions;

And I Do Hereby direct that the said inquiry be held at places within Uganda as the said Commission may from time to time, determine, and may be held in public or in private or partly in public and partly in private as the Commission may from time to time determine;

And I Do Hereby direct that the Commission shall start as soon as possible and shall execute the said inquiry with all due diligence and speed and make their report to me with recommendations without undue delay and within the shortest possible time;

And I Do Hereby require all other persons, whom it may concern to take due notice hereby and to give their obedience accordingly.

Dated this 16th day of May, 1986.

JOSEPH NYAMIHANA MULENGA, S.C.,  
*Minister of Justice/Attorney-General.*  
*Date of publication: 16th May, 1986.*

**Commission of Inquiry into the Disappearances of People in Uganda since 25 January,  
1971: Charter1**  
**Legal Notice No. 2 of 1974**  
**THE COMMISSION OF INQUIRY (Cap. 56)**

A. Commission.

WHEREAS it is alleged that some people have disappeared from Uganda since the Military take-over on 25th January, 1971.

WHEREAS some of these alleged missing persons ought to be dead and others still living whether taken elsewhere:

NOW THEREFORE,

In Exercise of the power conferred upon the Minister in Section 2 of the Commission of Inquiry Act I, as the GENERAL IDI AMIN DADA, V.C., D.S.O., M.C. and Commander-and-Chief of the Ugandan Armed Forces also holding portfolio of the Minister of Defence, do hereby appoint the following Commissioners.

1. Mr. Justice Mohamed Saied, Chairman 2. Mr. S.M. Kyefulumya, Superintendent of Police, Member 3. Mr. A. Esar, Superintendent of Police, Member 4. Captain Haruna of the Uganda Armed Forces, Member.

AND I DO hereby decree that Mr. C.C. K. Ndozircho, a Kampala advocate, shall be the Secretary of the said Commission, to inquire into the aspects of the disappearances of the persons in Uganda, and in particular, but without forgetting the centrality of the foregoing.

- a) to inquire into and establish the identity of the persons who are alleged missing;
- b) to establish whether such persons are dead or alive;
- c) for these persons believed to be living outside Uganda, the reasons and circumstances that led to their quitting Uganda as far as such reasons and circumstances can be ascertained;

1 Note: The charter can be found in Appendix 8 contained in section 5 of the report (pages 115- 118 of the PDF). This document is an attempt to re-type the original charter. Text is missing in places marked by .... Posted by USIP Library on: June 25, 2009

Source Name: Commission of Inquiry into the Disappearances of People in Uganda since 25 January, 1971: Charter

d) for those proved dead, how, when, where and in what circumstances they met their deaths

e) whether there are any individuals or organisations of persons whether within or outside Uganda who are criminally responsible for the disappearances or deaths of the missing persons and what should be done to the persons criminally responsible for such disappearances or deaths;

f) what should be done to the affairs and families of the missing persons bearing in mind the provisions of decree No. 20 of 1973;

g) what should the Government do to put an end to the criminal disappearances of people in Uganda:

AND I DO HEREBY prescribe the said Commissioners shall conform with the following instructions, that is to say,

a) that any persons desiring to give evidence before the Commissioners shall do so in person: but the Commissioners may in their absolute discretion receive in evidence any written memoranda from a person who is unable to give evidence in person if the

## COMPENDIUM OF CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

Commissioners are of the opinion that such evidence will be valuable to their enquiry;

b) that hearsay evidence which adversely affects the reputation of any person or that is to reflect in any way upon the character or conduct of any person shall not be received;

c) that the expression of opinion touching upon the character, conduct or motives of any person shall not be received in evidence;

d) that any witness who gives evidence before the Commissioners may, if he so desires and requests, give evidence in camera and his name shall be kept secret. Such witness shall not be subjected to cross-examination by the person adversely affected by the evidences given by such witness, so however, that the person adversely affected by such witness' evidence shall be given the opportunity to reply to the allegations made against him without being supplied the name of the witness;

e) that subject to the immediately preceding provisions any person who, in the opinion of the Commissioners, is adversely affected by evidence given before the Commissioners shall be given an opportunity to cross-examine the person giving the evidence, except in so far as the Commissioners consider it essential for ascertaining the truth of the matter into which the Commissioners are commissioned to inquire, not to depart from such instructions:

AND I DO HEREBY direct that the said Inquiry may hear at such times and in such places as the said Commission may, from time to time, determine and may be ....or in private or partly in public and partially in private..., said Commissioners may, from time to time, determine provided that there were the public interest and request the President may direct that certain evidence be given in public, in the presence of the Press, Radio and Television:

AND I DO HEREBY direct that any matter touching the security of the State shall be excluded from evidence:

AND I DO HEREBY direct that the Commissioners give due consideration to the local and national events of the military take-over as well as the events, pertaining and auxiliary to the defence of Uganda when the nation was invaded on the 7th day of September, 1972:

AND I DO HEREBY direct that the enquiry shall not extend to any person expelled from Uganda under any authority conferred by law or who has suffered a sentence of death imposed upon him under due process of law. Nor shall the enquiry extend to persons of Asian origin or extraction who though claiming to be citizens of Uganda either remaining outside Uganda or at anytime ran away from Uganda for any reason whatsoever:

AND I DO HEREBY direct that the said Commissioners shall start on 1st July 1974, and shall execute the said inquiry with all due diligence and convenient speed to make their report to me without undue delay (not after than 30th September, 1974):

AND I DO HEREBY require all other persons, whom it may concern to take due ..... assistance to the witnesses and Commissioners...

DATED this 30th day of June, 1974.

GENERAL AL-HAJI IDI AMIN DADA, V.C., D.S.D., M.C., President and Commander-in-Chief of the Uganda Armed Forces (including the portfolio of Minister of Defence).

Date of Publication: 30th June, 1974.

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3. National Reconciliation and Transitional Justice Audit focus group discussion with women [RLP]
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13. Oil exploration site near Lake Albert [Vision Group]
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19. An Etesot man bites a rat in protest of his community's demand for a separate ethnic district [Vision Group]
20. Emblem of the Uganda Army under H.E.Milton Obote and H.E. Idi Amin [Vision Group]
21. Kaweweta Training Institute, 2009 [Vision Group]

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4. Independence Day, October 9, 1962. Prime Minister Obote holds Ugandan flag. [Vision Group]
5. Colonel Idi Amin Dada, the Army Chief of Staff and Chief of Air Staff in Obote I government [RLP]
6. Premier Obote I, President Mutesa & Army chief at a state reception in Lugogo, 1962 [Vision Group]
7. President Obote is received by Col. Idi Amin, before Idi Amin would overthrow Obote's Government in 1971 [Vision Group]
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10. President Idi Amin signs the proclamation removing President Obote, his Ministers and Members of Parliament, vesting all powers in himself, February 2, 1971 [RLP]
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20. NRA rebel leader Yoweri Museveni and Col. Gad Wilson Toko during the Nairobi Peace Talks in 1985. Col. Toko was Deputy Head of State during General Tito Okello's presidency. He played a prominent role in the Nairobi Peace Talks. He died during a car crash in 2002. [Vision Group]
21. NRA rebels entering Kampala, marking the end of the Bush War and the beginning of President Museveni's rule [Vision Group]
22. Map of Uganda showing the current 111 districts, 2013 [<http://www.i-uganda.com/ugandan-districts.html#.VDEQ809ip0s>]
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29. Aftermath of the Al-Shabaab attacks in 2010 at the Ethiopian Village in Kabalagala, Kampala [Vision Group]
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3. Painting displaying grief over legacies of war in West Nile. The painting was donated to the Refugee Law Project during its outreach activities. [RLP]
4. Compound of Idi Amin's family in Arua, after his fall from power [Vision Group]
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6. West Nile Bank Front commanders [Vision Group]
7. The UPDF captures WNBF arms [Vision Group]
8. Ali Bamuze, leader of the UNRF II. He was later integrated in the UPDF. [Vision Group]
9. Weapons turned in during the UNRF II "Guns-for-Cash Programme" [RLP]
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11. Karimojong youth demonstrate the use of spears for fighting [RLP]
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10. Kimeze a child soldier during the Luweero bush war [Vision Group]
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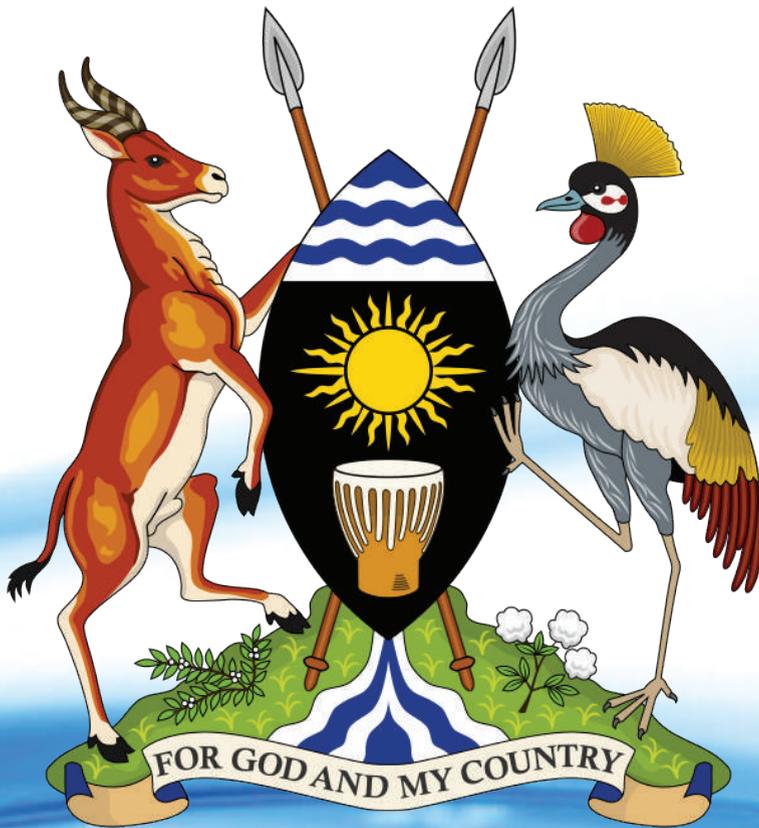
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