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Mugizi, Tom Patrick

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ETHNIC CONFLICT IN AFRICA: A CASE STUDY OF THE LORD'S RESISTANCE ARMY (LRA) WAR IN NORTHERN UGANDA

BY

MUGIZI TOM PATRICK

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, IN THE FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG – REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR GILBERT M. KHADIAGALA

OCTOBER 2011

DECLARATION

I DECLARE THAT THE WORK IN THIS THESIS IS MY OWN WORK AND HAS NOT BEEN PRODUCED ELSEWHERE. IT IS BEING SUBMITTED FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WITWATERSRAND, FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS. TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE, IT HAS NOT BEEN SUBMITTED BEFORE FOR ANY DEGREE OR EXAMINATION IN ANY OTHER UNIVERSITY.

MUGIZI TOM PATRICK

DATE: ----------

SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR GILBERT M. KHADIAGALA

DATE----------

DEDICATION

TO MY FATHER MZEE ENOCK RUNTEMU (RIP), MOTHER VERONIKA KAYANGYI RUNTEMU (RIP), DAUGHTERS CLAIRE KARUNGI, IRENE KEMIGISHA, PATIENCE KYOMUHENDO, MY BROTHER GEORGE WILLIAM NUWAGIRA, MY SISTERS, ANNETTIE BATUMA NSASIIRWE, FLAVIA KIMULI ASIIMWE, KELLEN AJULE BUGA AND CONNIE KYOMUGISHA

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to recognize a number of people and institutions that have helped me in this research. First, I thank in a special way my supervisor, Professor Gilbert M. Khadiagala who has given me academic and professional guidance and assistance during the process of writing this thesis. You fill the gap of a mentor in my life. I would also like to thank my lecturers at Makerere University Kampala, Uganda, who provided me with the academic foundation that has enabled me to carry out this research. I would also like to thank all those who assisted and supported me in various ways during the course of writing this thesis. Special thanks go to Professor Rock Ajulu, Ms Annettie Nsasiirwe, Mr. George William Nuwagira, Ms Flavia Kimuli Asiimwe, Dr. Kizza W. K. Besigye, Ms. Kellen Ajule Buga, Mr. Habert Tumusiime, and Mr. Manaseh Tumuhimbise who have given me constant encouragement and support.

I would also like to thank the Ugandan Members of Parliament, local leaders especially in Acholi sub-region, x-servicemen and the civilians without whose cooperation, this work would have been difficult to execute. I will not break the promise and mention your names for security purposes. Secrecy is the currency of investigative exchange and confidentiality is its goodwill. I would also like to thank my friends Mr. Mike Kakooza, Mr. Alex Magezi, Mr. Ben Ngyende, Mr. Hebert Tumusiime, Mr. Philip Kakuru, Mr. Wilbroad Tinkibyenda, Mr. Disan Kalule, Dr. Golooba-Mutebi Fred and Dr. James Oguttu and family for the inspiration and motivation they gave me during the process of this work. I cannot forget my research assistants and field team who diligently and

professionally conducted the interviews unperturbed with my absence and at times in risky situations and passed on information to me. I cannot mention your names as agreed

Last but not least, I am highly indebted to my parents Mzee Enock Runtemu (RIP) and Mrs. Veronika Kayangyi Runtemu (RIP) who natured and provided me with parental guidance, wisdom and support and who tiressly emphasized and encouraged me to study right from primary level, up to Makerere University but who, unfortunately, have not lived to witness this noble achievement. Over and above, my humble and special thanks goes to my family, daughters; Karungi Claire, Irene Kemigisha, and Patience Kyomuhendo and all other family members who missed my presence during this work but who continued to encourage me throughout the exercise.

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ACRONYMS

ACORD	Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development
ADF	Allied Democratic
AF	Auxiliary Forces
AI	Amnesty International
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ARLPI	Acoli Religious Leaders Peace Initiative
APG	Acholi Parliamentary Group
AU	African Union
CAR	Central African Republic
CMI	Chieftaincy of Military Intelligence
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
DP	Democratic Party
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ERRP	Emergency Relief and Rehabilitation Programme
EU	European Union
ESO	External Security Organization
FEDEMU	Federal Democratic Movement
FOBA	Force Obote Back Again
FRONASA	Front for National Salvation
FUNA	Former Uganda National Army
GLR	Great Lakes Region
GNPA	Greater North Parliamentary Association
GoU	Government of Uganda
HRW	Human Rights Watch
HSA	Holy Spirit Army
HSM	Holy Spirit Movement
HURIPEC	Human Rights and Peace Centre

ICC	International Criminal Court
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IRC	International Rescue Committee
KAP	Kalangala Action Plan
LCs	Local Councils (Formerly known as Resistance Councils (RC)
LDUs	Local Defence Units
LRA	Lords Resistance Army
MPs	Members of Parliament
NRA	National Resistance Army
NRM	National Resistance Movement
NUSAF	Northern Uganda Social Action Fund
NURP	Northern Uganda Reconstruction Programme
OAU	Organization of African Union
PAPSCA	Programme for the Alleviation of Poverty and Social Costs of Adjustment
PRA	Popular Resistance Army
PRDP	Peace, Recovery and Development Plan for Northern Uganda
RDC	Resident District Commissioner (A Representative of Central government and head of district)
SAPs	Structural Adjustment Programmes
SPLA/M	Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement
UA	Uganda Army
UCDA	Uganda Christian Democratic Army
UN	United Nations
UNC	Uganda National Congress
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNLA	Uganda National Liberation Army
UNRF	Uganda National Rescue Front

UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UPA	Uganda Peoples Army
UPC	Uganda Peoples Congress
UPM	Uganda Patriotic Movement
UPDF	Uganda Peoples Defence Forces
UPE	Universal Primary Education
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Education Fund
UNHS	Uganda National Household Survey
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme
WNBF	West Nile Bank Front

Chapter One

The Study setting, methodology, objectives and significance

Introduction:

Uganda has been independent for forty eight years since 1962. It has had eight rulers; Mutesa, Obote, Amin, Lule, Binaisa, Obote II, Tito Okello and Museveni[1]. All these rulers assumed leadership through unconstitutional means for example coup d'état[2], election rigging[3] and armed insurgency[4], save for the first government from 1962 to 1971 which came into office through national consensus and order. As such the country has been engulfed in intermittent turmoil characterized by political instability, ethnic conflict, intense human suffering and misery, economic decay and breakdown of the rule of law.

The main cause of this has been competition for state power and economic resources through the manipulation and politicization of ethnicity[5] and the militarization of politics. It is worth noting that the military has been at the centre of political turmoil in Uganda. It should also be realized that its role and involvement has not been by default but rather by design. Politicians have sought to use the military to suppress their opponents in order to entrench themselves in power. In 1966 Obote used the army to storm the *'kabaka's'*[6]

[1] Mutibwa Phares, M, "Uganda since Independence: A Story of Unfulfilled Hopes", London, Hurst and Company, (1992) p. 11-58, 125-86
[2] Amin came into power in 1972 through a coup d'état that ousted Obote from power
[3] In 1980 Obote the president of UPC party came into power by winning the elections but which were widely perceived by Ugandans as rigged and which led to Museveni to wage a guerrilla campaign against his regime
[4] In 1986 Museveni captured power after waging a five-year guerrilla campaign against the UPC government
[5] Juma Okuku, "Ethnicity, State Power and the Democratisation Process in Uganda", Discussion Paper No. 17, Uppsala (2002) p. 7
[6] Sir Edward Mutesa II was the 'kabaka' (king) of Buganda and the first president of Uganda while Obote was the Prime Minister

(king) palace, a precedent that marked the formal entry of the army into Uganda's politics and which, six years later deposed him from power[7]. Since then the army has not only committed gross human rights abuses against the people but also interfered in politics to the extent of influencing the outcome of a political contest or determining who should rule Uganda. Indeed as pointed out by Brett, "bullets rather than ballots have determined politics in Uganda"[8]. It is within this context that Museveni waged a guerrilla campaign against the UPC Obote government, capturing power in 1986. This led to the shift of political and military power that had been in the control of the northerners to the southerners.

Since 1986 when Yoweri Museveni captured power, he has tended to personalize and use the security forces and especially the army to maintain a grip on power and also to crack down on individuals and groups with divergent political opinions. Indeed as pointed out by Muhumuza, "--Museveni's determination to retain power has degenerated into militarization of politics. Not only has president Museveni maintained a strong grip on the security forces through appointing and promoting loyal cadres to top positions, but has also purged those insubordinate and disloyal to him. The army is also deployed during presidential elections purportedly to keep peace"[9]. +He further points out that "Uganda's transition to democracy under Museveni's National Resistance Movement regime is a typical case of a flawed democratic transition that has fallen prey to vested

[7] Joshua B. Rubongoya, "Regime Hegemony in Museveni's Uganda, *Pax Musevenica*", Palgrave Macmillan, (2007) p. 36-40
[8] Brett. E. A, "Neutralising the Use of Force in Uganda: The Role of the Military in Politics", The Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 33, No, 1, (March 1995) p. 130-152
[9] Muhumuza William, "From Fundamental Change to No Change: The NRM and Democratisation in Uganda", p.22 http://www.ifra-nairobi.net/cahiers/Cahier_41/2Muhumuza.pdf; see also, Joel Barkan, Simba Kayunga, J. D. S. Ngethe and N. Titsworth, "The Political Economy of Uganda: The Art of Managing a Donor-Financed Neo-Patrimonial State", Kampala, World Bank Commissioned Report (2005)

political interests and manipulation"[10]. The security forces have been accused of being partisan and also fomenting political violence intended to intimidate and marginalize some individuals and groups of people from meaningful participation in the politics of the country. The 17th February 2011 a presidential election is a case in point. During this election, the national army (UPDF) influenced the process to the extent that it determined the final results of voting in favour of the incumbent Museveni.

Military-led intimidation and violence characterized the exercise. Local and international human rights organizations, religious leaders, independent observers and opposition political parties[11] expressed concern over the activities of the military and militia groups which not only created fear and uncertainty, but also increased repression in opposition strongholds for example in Acholiland.

This situation has tended to exacerbate ethnic tensions as successive rulers mobilize support along ethno-linguistic and regional lines to oust incumbent governments only to replace them with members of their own ethnic groups. In tandem with the above situation and aggravating it is the fact that political parties in Uganda have been formed and organized largely on the basis of ethnicity and religion. For example, the Uganda National Congress (UNC) the first party which was formed in the 1950s was predominantly protestant and based in Buganda[12]. Other parties which were formed

[10] Muhumuza William, "From Fundamental Change to No Change: The NRM and Democratization in Uganda", p. 35-36
[11] See Daily Monitor, 20th March 2011, "Politicians accuse the military of vote theft", and Daily Monitor of 19th October 2009, "Autocratic tendencies killing Uganda's status"
[12] Mugaju, J. B. "The Illusions of Democracy in Uganda, 1955-1966", in Oyugi, W. O. and Gitonga A, (Eds.), "Democratic Theories and Practice in Africa", East African Educational Publishers Ltd. (1987) p. 86-95

around the same time for example the Uganda People's Congress (UPC) was overwhelmingly protestant, while the Democratic Party (DP) was catholic both in membership and leadership[13].

Other parties formed later also followed the same trend for example the Uganda Patriotic Movement (UPM) formed in the early 1980s and which later transformed into National Resistance Movement Organization (NRMO) was predominantly protestant. Because the formation of many of these political parties was motivated and driven by personal grievances of the founders against the leaders of other political parties especially the one in power rather than genuine political processes, the resultant asymmetrical ethno-religious and regional social stratification nature of the party formed often led to mutual distrust and antagonisms, discrimination and recriminations which fueled ethnic conflict.

On the other hand, state building in Uganda has been problematic as each successive government has tended to improve in certain areas in order to earn a positive international image while neglecting others. For instance the NRM concentrated on reconstructing the economy and tackling the HIV/AIDS pandemic but has not made progress in such areas as conflict resolution, good governance and ethnic integration through accommodation of divergent views and consensus building. Indeed as aptly observed by Khadiagala, recent political happenings in East Africa indicate that there is still enduring tension between state building and progress on fronts such as representation and good governance. He particularly notes that "in Uganda, changes of regime have only partially succeeded in

[13] Mazrui Ali A. "Religious Strangers in Uganda: From Emin Pasha to Amin Dada", African Affairs, Vol, 76, No, 302, (January 1977) p. 24-38

resolving this tension"[14]. In addition to this, governments in Uganda have tended to prefer the use of force to resolve political differences. But this escalates the problem as it does not solve the underlying causes of the discontent but merely stifles peaceful avenues for negotiation. Moreover, force is often not an exclusive monopoly of the state but the ethnic groups suffering the deprivation may also mobilize and use force to fight back. The civil war that started in Acholiland in 1986 and the enduring tension should be understood in this context. This chapter sets the stage for investigating the relationship between this conflict and ethnicity by presenting the context of the study, its background, significance and research methodology.

The Study Setting

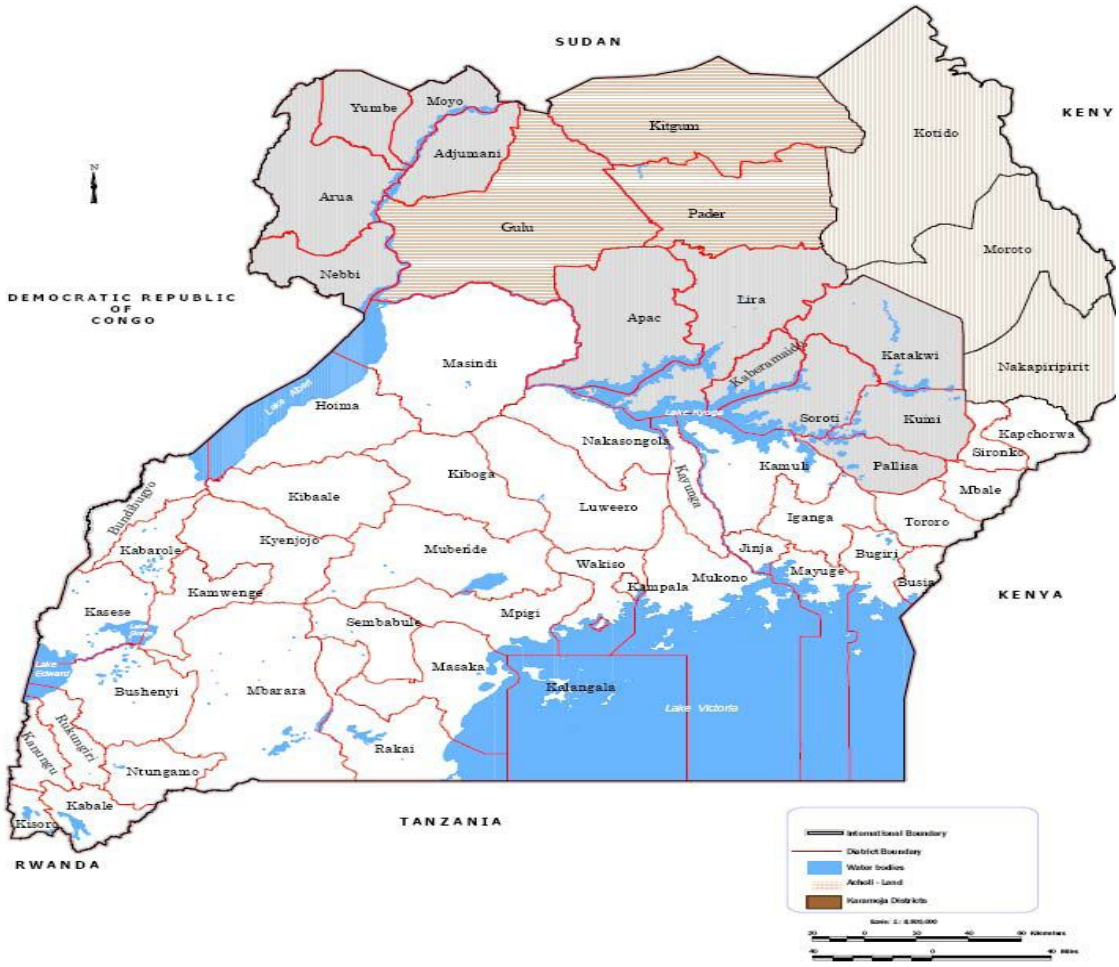
Uganda is a landlocked country situated in East Africa and along the Equator. It was a colony of Great Britain until independence on October 9th 1962. It lies within the Latitudes of 4.12^{o} N and 1.29^{0} S and Longitudes 29.34^{0} E and 35.0^{o} W[15]. Total land surface area is approximately 2416, 550.7 square kilometers, with a population of about 30.7 million persons[16]. Its neighboring countries are the Republic of Sudan in the north, Tanzania in the south, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in the west, Rwanda in the southwest and Kenya in the east. The Acholiland which is home to Acholi ethnic people and which is the main focus of this Study is located in northern Uganda.

[14] Khadiagala M. Gilbert, "Uganda's Domestic and Regional Security since the 1970s", The Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 31, No, 2, (June 1993) p. 250
[15] Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS), Statistical Abstract, (June 2010) p. xv
[16] Ibid, p. v

It comprises of seven districts of Gulu, Kitgum, Pader, Amuru, Lamwo, Agago and Nwoya respectively with a total land surface area of approximately 28 138.1 square kilometers and a combined population of approximately 2 048 208 people. In 1986 when the NRA/M captured power, Acholiland which is about 380 kilometers from the capital city of Kampala comprised of two districts of Gulu and Kitgum. In 2001, Kitgum was subdivided to create a third district of Pader. This subdivision continued in which the latter four districts were curved out of the three districts by the NRM government in a policy aimed at improving service delivery but which critics point out that political patronage by way of allocation of jobs through clientele networks rather than improved service delivery is the primary explanation[17]. The population density in Acholiland is lighter, average rainfall is lower and less reliable[18] for a bigger part of the year.

The neighboring areas of Acholiland are the Republic of Sudan in the north, Kotido district in the east, Lira, Apac and Masindi districts in the south and Nebi, Arua and Adjumani districts in the west. Although the insurgency war between the LRA and the government of Uganda affected other areas of northern Uganda for example Langо and Apac and also spread to eastern Uganda around 2003, Acholiland has been the most ravaged area since 1986. It is also worth noting that though the parties in this conflict, their motives and methods have changed over the years, the effect on the local population has been one of devastation of the Acholi cultural fiber, family and traditional relationships.

[17] Elliot Green, "Patronage, District Creation and Reform in Uganda" Studies in Comparative Development, Vol. 45, No, 1, (January 2010) p. 84-89, 92-95
[18] Basalirwa, C. P. K. "Delienation of Uganda into Climatological Rainfall Zones using the Method of Principal Component Analysis", International Journal of Climatology, Vol. 15, No, 10, (year), p. 9-15



Map of Uganda showing Acholiland and its boundaries[19].

[19] Source: Justine Nannyonjo, Conflicts, Poverty and Human Development in Northern Uganda, Bank of Uganda, Research Department, prepared for the WIDER Conference on Making Peace Work, Helsinki, 4-5 (June 2004) p. ii

Ethnic groups in Uganda: Geographical spread and settlement

In order to understand the ethnic question in Uganda, it is important to have an overview of the different ethnic groups and their configuration. Uganda's population is composed of a complex and diverse range of ethnic groups which can be classified into four broad categories of the Bantu, the Nilotics, the Luo and the Pygimoid. The Bantu occupy the central and southern part of the country, the Nilotics or Nilo Hamites occupy the north and eastern, the Luo are found in the West Nile and northern parts, while the Pygmoid occupy the south western part bordering the Democratic Republic of Congo.

There are more than 60 ethnic groups (also referred to as tribes) in Uganda with varying size in terms people and the geographical area occupied by each group. The point being emphasized is that while some ethnic groups are large, some are small. For example, the percentage of the following ethnic groups in terms of the total population is estimated to be as follows; "Baganda 17%, Banyankole 8%, Iteso 8%, Bakiga 7%, Langi 6%, Bagisu 5%, Acholi 4%, Lugbara 4%, Batooro 3%, Banyoro 3%, Alur 2%, Bagwere 2%, Bakonjo 2%, Japodhola 2%, Karamojong 2%--"[20]. The Kuliak are small ethnic communities found in the mountains of northeastern Uganda. They share similar characteristics with the Nilotic but are more distinct because of the language difference. The Acholi people who are the main subject of this thesis occupy the northern part of Uganda

[20] Source; Demographics of Uganda, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics_of_Uganda It should be realised that while these figures may not represent the most current and up-to-date picture in terms of the real percentages, they nevertheless give an indication of the approximate size and diversity of ethnic groups in Uganda. For a comprehensive statistical data, see Table 2.1C: Census population (1991 and 2002) by region and district and projected (2010 and 2011) mid-year population, Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS 2010) Statistical Abstract, p. 95-100

Map of Uganda showing the ethnic groups and their geographical spread and settlement



Source: Downloaded from Demographics of Uganda on 08th August 2011 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics_of_Uganda

The context of the Study:

One of the major threats that have characterized a number of developing countries and more especially those on the African continent is violence and especially one involving the use of arms. In several aspects, this violence has manifested itself into intra-state wars with dire consequences for the populations involved. The resurgence of these wars on the African continent is a result of factors, both domestic and international. From the international perspective, three factors that have a relationship with these wars are colonialism, cold-war era and globalization. The roots of Uganda's socio-political disharmony, ethnic conflict and tension can be traced back to the colonial period and is intertwined with the artificial nature of the state in Africa.

The historical context and the manner in which this context gave rise to African states led to emergence of weak states in Africa in several aspects. First, the genesis of the weak state begins with the manner in which the boundaries of African countries were drawn by the imperial powers at the Berlin Conference of 1884-5, a period popularly referred to as the 'scramble for Africa' where the colonizers ignored, and in actual fact, did not have a well-defined criteria to take into account the demographic and ethnographic configurations but simply adopted the rule of drawing lines on maps, moreover of territories they had not been to or even having sufficient knowledge about[21].

[21] Jeffrey Herbst, "The Creation and Maintenance of National Boundaries in Africa", International Organization, Vol. 43, No. 4, (Autumn 1989) p. 674-682; see also Mutibwa, Phares, *Uganda since Independence: A Story of Unfulfilled Hopes*, London. Hurst and Company, (1992) p. 1-4

The exercise of partitioning of Africa at the Berlin Conference was guided and conducted mainly from the prism of economic resources. Consequently, the post-colonial state begun as a weak one in the sense that the state and society were not mutual symbionts in as far as their political, economic and social relationships are concerned. This scramble for Africa witnessed the artificial sub-division of the African continent by European powers in their struggle for influence, expansionism and resource exploitation[22].

Resulting from this colonial demarcation, many African countries share a common post-colonial history of 'artificial nature' of their state borders. These arbitrary borders often split homogenous communities thus disregarding ethnic cohesion, economic potential and distribution of economic resources. This not only disturbed the peaceful coexistence among societies by catapulting them into a completely new structure that was alien to them and prone to hostilities, but also set the stage for ethnic conflict, territorial disputes and disputes over natural resources which to some extent, has contributed to political instability and a challenge to legitimacy and nation building[23].

Second, understanding the ethnic conflict in northern Uganda necessitates understanding the colonial context in which colonization employed the imperial policy and technique of 'divide and rule'[24]. This strategy was used in order to extract easy capital from the newly

[22] Schoeman, M. "Africa's International Relations, in Power, Wealth and Global order", edited by P. Nel and P. J. McGowan, Cape Town: Cape Town University Press, (1999)
[23] Pierre Englebert, Stacy Tarango, and Mathew Carter, "Dismemberment and Suffocation: A Contribution to the Debate on African Boundaries", Comparative Political Studies, Vol. 35, No, 10, (2002), p. 1094-1098,
[24] Mutibwa, Phares M. "Uganda since Independence: A Story of Unfulfilled Hopes", London. Hurst and Company, (1992) p. 1x; see also Kabwegyere, T. B., *"The Politics of State Formation"*, Nairobi. East African Literature Bureau, (1974); Museveni, Y. K. *Sowing the Mustard Seed: The Struggle for Freedom and Democracy in Uganda*, London, Basingstoke, Macmillan, (1998)

created states on one hand and also to coerce the colonized people to submit to the colonial authority on the other[25]. The manner in which this policy was conducted in Uganda provided both reasons and fertile ground for ethnic hatred which seriously undermined peaceful relationships among the people of Uganda, a phenomenon that still exists to date. In this policy, the British colonial officers used a mechanism of indirect rule and employed Baganda chiefs as their agents in order to extend their rule to the rest of Uganda, a policy that not only set the ethnic groups on the path of collision but also sowing the seed of resentment and hatred that would result in ethnic confrontation and conflict. However, whether the sowing of seed of hatred and resentment by the colonialist was by design and intent or erroneous, Ugandans must accept the blame for nurturing rather than uprooting those seeds. If we are to understand the dynamics of the ethnic conflict in northern Uganda, we must now turn our lens to the context of the politics in Uganda since the 1980.

On the domestic scene, it has been argued that the cause of ethnic conflict is attributed to human agency and that is, the behavior of rulers themselves[26] rather than imposition of state idea on top of existing traditional political and social structure which was based on kin and blood relationship. This human agency can be better understood especially if we consider the events that took place in Uganda after the 1980 presidential elections. These elections were contested by a number of candidates representing different political parties. Among them were Milton Obote for UPC, Kawanga Semwogerere for DP, and

[25] Shelton George, "From Authoritarianism to African Liberalism: the Ugandan experience", The Journal of Conflict Resolution. Vol. 17, No. 6, (May 2004). p. 2-3
[26] Reno, William. "Clandestine Economies, Violence and States in Africa", Journal of International Affairs, Vol. 53, No. 2, (Spring 2000) p. 434-440, 443-448

Yoweri Museveni for UPM. Obote emerged victorious and UPC assumed leadership of the country.

However, soon after election of Obote in office, Museveni refused to recognize and support his government claiming that the elections were rigged and vowed to go to the bush and wage a war against him. He launched his guerrilla campaign in the jungles of Luwero, located in central Buganda, the choice being strategic in the sense that he knew he would exploit the hatred between the ethnic Baganda and the northerners in general and Obote in particular because of the 1966 crisis[27] in which their king was deposed by Obote, an ethnic northerner. The choice was thus a deliberate strategy to manipulate ethnic hatred against the northerners in his ambition for political power. When the war started in 1982 between the NRA and the Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA) and as it progressed through the years, many people were killed, others displaced from their villages and property destroyed.

Because the government army the UNLA was predominantly made up of ethnic northerners, these killings and destruction were blamed on them in order to amplify and exploit further the ethnic hatred against them. Indeed as observed by the Human Rights and Peace Centre (HURIPEC), "--the real significance in the war in Luwero Triangle has not been the skulls, which have been used as exhibition of Acholi atrocities, but the initiation of the conflict in Luwero based on ethnic and religious divisions which

[27] In 1966 Obote who was then the Prime minister of Uganda sent troops commanded by General Idi Amin to storm the palace of the *'Kabaka'* the king of Buganda who was the President of Uganda. The king had to flee into exile in Britain where he later died

produced those skulls"[28] which explains the ethnic dimension of the conflict that the NRM government continued to pursue in Acholiland.

The context of the military and Uganda's political scene is also worth noting. From independence in 1962, Uganda's political and military scene had been dominated by leaders' hailing from the north. In addition to this, the country's post-independence political scene has been one of turbulent history, characterized by politically motivated violence, social chaos, intermittent dictatorships, military invasions and civil wars[29]. Security forces and especially the military have given their allegiance and loyalty to the president rather than the constitution, a factor that makes them to be partisan in politics, giving their loyalty and support to the incumbent government.

After the NRA/M captured state power in 1986 which shifted the balance of power to the south[30], this resulted into mistrust, suspicion and resentment by the northerners who believed that the incoming regime would not only revenge on them, but also marginalize them in the politics and governance of Uganda. Constriction of political space coupled with inability to deliver security and social economic development proved their suspicion of marginalization by the Museveni regime, further deepening the north south divide which fueled and provided fertile ground for rebellion[31].

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[28] See Report by Human Rights and Peace Centre (HURIPEC), "The Hidden War: The Forgotten People, War in Acholiland and its Ramifications for Peace and Security in Uganda" (October 2003) p. 29

[29] Gooloba-Mutebi, F. "Collapse, War and Reconstruction in Uganda, an Analytical Narrative on State-Making", Crisis States Working Papers Series, No. 27. (January 2008), p. 1

[30] Manisuli Ssenyonjo, "Accountability of Non-State Actors in Uganda for War Crimes and Human Rights Violations: Between Amnesty and the International Criminal Court", Journal of Conflict and Security Law, Vol, 10, No, 3, (September 2005). p. 409

[31] Several scholars, independent writers and political analysts have written extensively about the inequality in development between the north and south commonly referred to as the north-south divide. See for example, Joshua, B. Rubongoya, *Regime Hegemony in Museveni's Uganda, Pax Musevenica*, Palgrave,

Museveni has consistently rubbished the northern rebels as agents of evil forces of the past regimes, terrorists, murderers, and discordant forces with no coherent demand and thus not worth negotiating with. He has also consistently blamed northerners and the past leaders as being responsible for the ills of Uganda. We must remember that dictator Idi Amin exhibited the same behaviour by using the same language to attack Obote after overthrowing him and the consequences were disastrous for the Langi and Acholi people during his rule from 1971-1979. Mazrui makes an important observation when he points out that to blame a catastrophe on someone who happens to belong to a certain tribe does not only affect that individual, but also the ethnic roots from where he comes[32]. This observation was made in relation to Amin's behaviour of repeatedly warning Obote which ultimately led to the suffering of the Langi and the Acholi.

In the context of Ugandan politics, the effect of use of this kind of language by a leader is sowing the seeds of hatred and disharmony which aggravates ethnic tensions and the potential for hostility and conflict arising out of this tension is high. This is because it invokes past memories of hatred and misbehavior and power-hungry leaders who wish to perpetuate themselves in power will always exploit these memories[33]. The marginalization and hostility against the Acholi people and the resultant insurgency in Acholiland should thus be viewed in this light. The study therefore emphasizes that understanding the northern conflict necessitates critical analysis of the ethnic

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Macmillan, New York, (2007) p. 82-84; USAID country report, Uganda, Democracy and Governance Assessment: Republic of Uganda, (2005) ARD, Inc. Burlington, Vermont, USA, p. vii, 3, 26; Kasfir, Nelson, *The Shrinking Political Arena: Participation and Ethnicity in African Politics, with a Case Study of Uganda*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London,: University of California Press, (1976) p. 95-99, 109-113

[32] Mazrui Ali A. "Soldiers and Kinsmen in Uganda: The Making of a Military Ethnocracy", New York, Sage Publications, (1975) p. 116

[33] Jaraslav Tir and Michael Jasinski, "Domestic-Level Diversionary Theory of War: Targeting Ethnic Minorities", Journal of Conflict Resolution, Vol, 52, No, 5, (October 2008). p. 644-645

underpinnings and how it has been used by NRM rulers in order to have a tight grip on power at the expense of national integration.

Background to the study:

This study examines the relationship between political repression and ethnic conflict in Northern Uganda, an area commonly referred to as Acholiland. The rebellion referred to here is one carried out by the LRA rebels led by Joseph Kony against the government of Uganda. Although the guns have fallen silent since August 2007, northern Uganda exists in a fragile atmosphere far from sustainable peace and stability. This is because the underlying conditions that led to the emergence of the insurgency have not been sufficiently addressed and also the fact that the LRA has not been destroyed. The point being emphasized is that ethnic tension still prevails in northern Uganda and there is no guarantee that hostilities cannot break out again as long as the underlying causes of the rebellion remain unaddressed[34]. In order to understand this conflict, it is better to trace its genesis from the colonial days.

Uganda was a colony of Great Britain until independence on 9th October 1962. It is worth noting that colonialism was more often than not, a violent process[35]. Force rather than negotiations was often used to extend the imperial rule throughout the colonized territory in order to bring people under the colonial administration and to compel them to do what

[34] Personal interview with Ugandan Member of Parliament, South Africa, September 2010;se also Daily Monitor of 9th May 2008, 'Uganda has perfected the art of ethnic state'; Daily Monitor 25th May 2008, 'I will die fighting-says Kony' and the Independent of week ending January 2010, 'Are conditions rife for rebellion in Uganda'

[35] Shelton, George. "From Authoritarianism to African Liberalism: The Ugandan experience", Journal of Conflict Resolution. Vol. 17, No. 6, (May 2004). p. 1-3; Gardener Thompson, Governing Uganda: British Colonial Rule and its Legacy, Fountain Publishers, Kampala, Uganda, 2003. p. 43

the ruler wanted. The philosophy of divide and rule practiced by the colonialist led to the formation of the north-south divide in Uganda[36].

Northerners were generally considered masculine and war-like while people in the south, collectively known as westerners, were considered soft-spoken and tender. Consequently, people from the north were recruited to provide cheap labour in the tea and sugar plantations in the south. The north was also used as a reservoir for recruitment in the police, prisons and armed forces while the southerners were recruited mainly in the civil service and thus performed clerical and administrative tasks. Indeed as observed by Mamdani, "it became a colonial truism that a soldier must be a northerner, a civil servant a southerner and a merchant an Asian"[37].

This imbalance in skills development ultimately resulted in an imbalance in regional development, creating the north-south divide. Consequently, the south became and still remains developed in terms of infrastructure, human resource and socioeconomic development while the north has remained poorly developed and chronically marginalized. Therefore, it is not surprising that bad decisions and policies by the colonial rulers continued to affect negatively the post-independent Uganda in general and northern region in particular. Successive post independent rulers have continued to play this regional and ethnic card in their contestation and struggle for power.

[36] Roody Doom and Koen Vlassenroot, "Kony's Message: A New Koine?" The Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda", African Affairs, Vol. 98, No, 390, (January 1999) p. 7

[37] Mamdani Mahmood, "Nationality Question in Neo-Colony: A Historical Perspective", Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. 19, No. 27, (July 1984) p. 1049; See also Karugire, Samwiri, R. "Roots of Instability in Uganda" , Fountain Publishers Kampala Uganda, (1998) p. 29, 33

Dictator Amin's rule in particular is notoriously remembered for murdering thousands of other ethnic tribes (Acholis were the most targeted) while he tended to favor his Kakwa and Nubian ethnic tribesmen. With the fall of Amin from power in 1979, and the subsequent coming of Obote, Ugandans experienced relative peace and looked forward to a new political dispensation characterized by democratic order, ethnic integration, and above all, peace and stability. However, this relative peace was short-lived as Obote himself a northerner, played the ethnic card and thus the underlying ethnic tensions continued.

The emergence of the NRA/M under Museveni in 1986 has dramatized ethnic politicization and polarization, pushing it to greater heights, characterized by the northern rebellion, as this investigation will argue[38]. For the first time in post independent Uganda history, the northerners were divorced from state power. The composition of the armed forces formerly dominated by ethnic northerners also dramatically changed and was now in control of people from the south. Because ethnic revenge and reprisal has characterized Ugandan politics and more especially within the armed forces, the Acholi people feared revenge from the incoming forces, the NRA. Their fears were confirmed by the manner and the way the NRA deployed and conducted operations as it entered the north[39].

[38] See Daily Monitor, 9th May 2008. In the article 'NRM has perfected the art of ethnic state', Anthony Okuku argues that post-election violence that took place in Kenya could occur in Uganda because of a number of reasons including; ethnicity has exercised profound influence on Ugandan politics and the tendency by the incumbents, the 'hunters' to monopolize power and become life presidents, a situation that can easily lead to violent ethnic conflict.

[39] Ocitti, Jim. "Political Evolution and Democracy in Uganda: 1952-1966", Lewiston, the Edwin Mellon Press, (2000) p. 341; Ruddy Doom and Koen Vlassenroot, "Kony's Message: A New Koine? The Lord's Resistance Army in Northern Uganda", African Affairs, Vol. 98, No. 390, (January 1999) p. 13-15

Since 1986, this war has escalated and taken on different forms both in scope and magnitude, from local to regional, war by proxy and from ordinary civil war to near genocide and brutal tactics exemplified in the hacking and cutting off people's limbs, ears, nose and other body parts mutilation, by the LRA. It is also worth noting that government forces, the UPDF, have not been exonerated from these atrocities[40]. Thousands of youngsters both male and female have been abducted by the rebels to be used as child soldiers, human 'mules' and sex slaves respectively[41]. A report by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), points at the heavy toll both in scope and intensity which the war impacted on the socioeconomic fabric of the Acholi people and consigning over a million people in the 'Protected' Internally Displaced People's Camps (IDPs) that had never been secure"[42]. Testimonies of horrendous suffering by the victims of the war, the brunt of which was meted on the Acholi people by the protagonists in the war including amongst the Acholis themselves have been narrated by the population with pain[43].

[40] Manisuli Ssenyonjo, "Accountability of Non-State Actors in Uganda for War Crimes and Human Rights Violations: Between Amnesty and the International Criminal Court", Journal of Conflict and Security Law, Vol, 10, No, 3, (September 2005). p. 418; See also 'The Cooling of Hearts': Community Truth-Telling in Acholiland, Justice and Reconciliation Project (JRP), Gulu District NGO Forum, Special Report (July 2007) p. 5, 17-18, www.justiceandreconciliation.com

[41] Human Rights Watch (HRW), Stolen Children, Child Recruitment by the Ugandan, The recruitment of Children into the Local Defence Units and their use by the UPDF, (March 2003); Ogenga Otunnu, "The Path to Genocide in Northern Uganda, Refugee, Vol. 17, No. 3, (August 1998) p. 6-8; Ruddy Doom and Koen Vlassenroot, "Kony's Message: A New Koine? The Lord's Resistance Army in Northern Uganda" African Affairs, Vol. 98, No. 390, (January 1999) p. 15

[42] United States Agency for International Development (USAID), "Democracy and Governance Assessment: Republic of Uganda, 2005", ARD Incorporation, Burlington USA, p. 26

[43] Chris Dalan, COPE Fieldwork Findings, Northern Uganda, "What Do You Remember?" A Rough Guide to the War in Northern Uganda, 1986-2000

As long as Uganda remains polarized along ethnic lines, coupled with the government failure or inability to deliver effective security, political and socioeconomic development to the north, perceptions of relative deprivation among the northern ethnic groups in general and the Acholi people in particular will continue to persist thus deepening the already severe legitimacy deficit rooted in the deep north-south division characterized by immense human misery and suffering[44]. The study therefore emphasizes that understanding the northern conflict necessitates critical analysis of ethnic underpinnings and how it has been used by NRM rulers in their exercise of political power to maintain their narrow ethnic or regional hegemony, at the expense of national integration.

It thus aims at the search for causality in an effort to make sense between power dynamics and the rights and entitlements of ethnic minorities in society by reflecting on repression and marginalization factors which have tended to exclude the northern region in general and Acholiland in particular from the body politic. Seen in this light therefore, the northern rebellion can be said to be symbolic of a people who are attempting to resist persecution, discrimination and ethno-political marginalization.

The study contends that the rebellion in northern Uganda is an ethnic conflict reflected in the failure by the Kampala regime to integrate the northern groups in general and the Acholi people in particular with the rest of the country and the perceived exclusion in the governance of the country. What this means is that the study will focus on violence in the north by analyzing the exercise of power by the NRM in Uganda. In this endeavor, an

[44] Shelton George, "From Authoritarianism to African Liberalism: the Ugandan experience", The Journal of Conflict Resolution. Vol. 17, No. 6, (May 2004). p. 9

explanation for the LRA rebellion will be examined by focusing on the political processes and ethnic polarization that have taken centre stage since the NRA/M government led by Museveni came to power.

Statement of the problem:

Peace in northern Uganda has remained elusive as the war between the LRA rebels and the government of Uganda remains unsettled. Despite the cessation of hostilities agreements[45] between the two parties, which has witnessed relative calm and the silence of the gun since August 2006, the security situation in northern Uganda can still be described as being fragile and uncertain. Joseph Kony's LRA rebels and his war machinery remain intact in the jungles of Sudan and the Central African Republic, although the Ugandan government claims to have destroyed its fighting capability. More than 1.5 million people were displaced from their homes, with tens of thousands killed, maimed, abducted and raped[46], a good number of whom are still stuck in IDPs camps to date[47].

It is also worth noting that Uganda's post-independence scene has been one of turbulent history, characterized by politically motivated violence, social chaos, intermittent dictatorships, contested elections, military invasions and civil wars[48]. This post-independence history set the stage for armed struggle in which access to political power

[45] See attached appendix 1; Agreement on cessation of hostilities between the government of the republic of Uganda (GoU) and the LRA/M

[46] Kevin, Ward, "The Armies of the Lord', Christianity, Rebels and the State in Northern Uganda, 1986-1999" , Journal of Religion in Africa, Vol. 31, No. 2, (2001) p. 15

[47] See New Vision of 13th August 2010. In Pader district alone, about 233,849 displaced persons have still remained in camps as of this date

[48] Golooba-Mutebi, F. '*Collapse, War and Reconstruction in Uganda: An Analytical Narrative on State-making*', Crisis States Working Paper No. 27, (January 2008) p. 1

became the key source of wealth and violence became the foundation of that power. Ethnic politics became more pronounced and contentious as rulers organized political parties around religious and ethnic lines. Every regime tended to care about its people and ethnic patronage became the norm[49]. Because power has been obtained by force or manipulation of the political process through for example rigging elections, and coup detat, every regime in Uganda has tended to purge people from whom the previous leader springs.

Following the 1980 presidential elections in which Obote, the UPC party president emerged victorious but which were considered rigged, Museveni refused to recognize and give support to his government and vowed to go to the bush. It was in this context that he decided to launch his NRA/M guerilla campaign which waged a protracted armed struggle from 1982 and captured state power in 1986. Upon ascent to power, Museveni promised and assured Ugandans amongst other things, to restore democracy, rule of law, peace and stability and to bring about sustainable development, saying that his regime was not a mere change of guards but instead, was ushering in a 'fundamental change'[50]. However, soon after this capture of state power, armed rebellion against the NRM government started in several parts of Uganda.

Whereas some of the rebel groups were defeated by military force while others signed peace agreement with government, the LRA has persisted to fight till to date. The official NRM explanation of the war has been given through several reasons for example, the

[49] Jeremy, M. Weinstein, "Inside Rebellion, The Politics of Insurgent Violence", Cambridge University Press, USA (2007) p. 66
[50] See Y. K. Museveni, *What is wrong with Africa*, *NRM Publications*, Kampala, (1992) p. 22

violent nature of the Acholi people, disgruntled politicians of the past regimes attempting to come back to power, and Kony being a mere thug and terrorist. While these reasons may seem to have convinced some section of Ugandans, especially those from the western, Museveni's home region, there is prima facie something more that needs to be explained. In addition to this, the GOU and particularly the UPDF has on several occasions claimed that Kony and the LRA has been defeated and that the war is no more.

To the contrary however, the war is still going on, except that what has changed is the location of the war theatre. That military force has failed to resolve this conflict requires that the northern war be analyzed from deeper issues that lie hidden beneath the official explanation and in this context, the ethnic question and resource allocation and the manner in which they have been handled by NRM be examined deeper. This study therefore aims at analyzing the link between the conflict in northern Uganda and the state by entertaining the statement of the problem; 'To explain why the war in the north has persisted despite the NRA/M government and the international community's sustained efforts to curtail it". It is aimed at espousing the nexus that led to the emergence of the LRA rebellion'.

The central research question:

The central research question in this thesis is: 'Why has the NRA/M government despite its control of state machinery and military prowess failed to control the LRA rebellion?"

The thesis also tries to answer the following specific questions;

1. What caused and perpetuated the LRA rebellion, and how, if at all, is it linked to ethnicity and inter-ethnic relations in Uganda?

2. How has ethnicity been politicized and used as an instrument of conflict by the NRM regime?

3. To what extent do Acholi legislators think that the people they represent are formally or informally excluded and disenfranchised from meaningful political, social, or economic participation?

4. How have ethnic mistrust and hatred been used in the Ugandan politics and to what extent, if at all, are they linked to the war in Acholiland?

5. How can ethnic stereotyping, hatred and conflict be contained or neutralized in Uganda in general and Acholiland in particular?

Objectives of the Study:

The objectives of this study are four fold. First, it tries to identify and examine causal factors that are central to the northern Uganda conflict. Second, it tries to analyze the link between the state and conflict and also contextualize and evaluate the concept of ethnicity and to assess its role and impact on the war in Acholi sub-region. Third, it examines to what extent, if at all, has the settlement of outstanding issues over which the war emerged been addressed. Fourth, it examines the entry of new players and the influence of new motives on the escalation of the war. Lastly, it tries to explain why the war in the north has persisted despite concerted efforts to contain it.

Justification of the Study:

The justification of the Study is in two dimensions, that is, the academic justification on one hand and the policy justification on the other. In the first instance, it is significant first because it provides insight into the nature of ethnic politics in the countries on the African continent in general and Uganda in particular. It tries to show how and why ethnicity came to the fore in the context of the rise of Museveni and how the Acholi people in the north have been brutally suppressed. It is hoped that it will provide input to policy makers in their effort to look for amicable solutions the northern conflict.

It will also contribute to the existing lacuna on conflict and understanding of the role played by ethnicity in Africa in general and Uganda in particular and provide the basis for further (scholarly) research on the causes of war which has resulted in the loss of many lives and property destroyed with Acholiland being the epicenter of this conflict.

The humanitarian crisis created by this war, repression and perception of relative deprivation makes it an important subject for studying. It is the intention of this research therefore, to develop models and ideas that are generic to international conflict resolution principles and practice. It is therefore hoped to contribute to the existing scholarly thesis and to shed more light on a body of knowledge on linkage between ethnic politics and perpetuation of conflict by demonstrating that until national cohesion is made a prerequisite in Uganda, conflict and rebellion are not likely to end.

In the second instance that is on policy justification it seeks to explain the conflict in northern Uganda in terms of ethno-political dimension. The conflict has gone through intermittent phases of direct combat engagement between the LRA rebels and the Uganda national army, the UPDF, unilateral and negotiated cessation of hostilities. Many people have been killed, dozens maimed and or displaced and the infrastructure destroyed. Although the guns have been silent since mid 2006, the stakes remain high as the conflict has not been brought to a conclusive end.

Indeed in the absence of a greater understanding of the causes of this war, peace and stability will remain elusive in northern Uganda. In such circumstances, there is a possibility that war can re-surface and cause renewed violence, moreover in a nastier form even if it may not be by Joseph Kony. The point being emphasized is that ethnicity has taken profound influence in Ugandan politics to the extent that it has exacerbated the tension between the people in the north, particularly the Acholi and those in the south. As such, the security situation in Acholiland can be described as fragile and far from sustainable peace and stability. It is hoped that the findings will provide insights and

therefore a valuable input that will help in finding amicable solution to the conflict in northern Uganda.

Second, the study is important because the research setting is in a region that is prone to political instability and violence resulting from complex and rapidly changing social/geopolitical dynamics especially since the 1980s, of which there is paucity of literature. With increasing concern over peace and stability, and above all, the sanctity of human security by the international community, it is hoped that this research will make a significant contribution to enhancing the level of knowledge and awareness in this area.

Third, it focuses on how to integrate the conflict resolution tools and mechanism within the political framework that involves all the stakeholders. Once again it is hoped that this research will make a significant contribution in this area. Fourth, the study is significant in the sense that although the primary focus of this research is on the conflict (war) in northern Uganda resulting from repression and political exclusion, it is hoped that the findings will shed more light on other conflicts resulting from other causes other than repression such as: inequitable distribution of resources, women rights, children and other disadvantaged ethnic minorities.

Research Methodology and analytical procedures:

The methodology used in this study was both qualitative and quantitative approach to gather field data. But overall, by conducting content analysis, qualitative approach remained the principal design method of data analysis to generate quantitative results.

This represented the best means to a broad, precise and richer detail of the complex environment in which the ethnic conflict occurs. Emphasis was put on process-tracing, congruence and within-case analysis, in an attempt to make the link between possible causes and observed outcome with a view of uncovering evidence of causal mechanism at work[51]. In other words, a sequence of events that are believed to characterize the cause and escalation of the LRA rebellion were traced from the prism of ethnic politicization and repression within the NRA/M political dispensation.

Miles and Huberman[52] explain that by counting frequencies of occurrences and sequencing particular words, phrases or concept the researcher is able to understand the interaction of the variable, elaborates, develops analysis and confirms results through triangulation that provides quick insights into the research. Analysis was also guided by their pragmatic approach which combines the use of interview questions and themes emerging from data to inform analysis[53]. The presence of the team conversant in the local Acholi language made it possible to maintain quality assurance in the collection of data by following themes that are relevant to the research.

The primary source of information consisted of in-depth interview with relevant key informants which included; politicians (especially the Acholi legislators), government officials, personnel of humanitarian and aid agencies, religious leaders, local and cultural leaders. The IDPs including social workers and managers within these camps formed the

[51] See Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, "Case Studies and Theory Development in Social Sciences", MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England, (2005)
[52] Miles, M. B. And Huberman A. M. "Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook", Sage, Thousand Oaks CA. (1994)
[53] Ibid, p. 58-65

core of the interviews, as these have got vital first hand information. Their views and account of the facts that have since taken place on the ground were vital in answering the questions set forward in the study. The point being emphasized is that tracing the role of ethnicity in the northern conflict was grounded in secondary or official sources that are available, but also heavily relied on in-depth focused discussions and interviews conducted in the war-torn Acholi sub-region.

A number of primary documents from local and international agencies were consulted and these included; The United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Human Rights Watch (HRW), Amnesty International (AI), The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), Oxfam Uganda, Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development (ACORD), Speeches and documents such as Parliamentary Hansard, Statement to Parliament on the Peace Talks between the Government of the Republic of Uganda and the LRA, Uganda's Quest for Democracy, Peace and Good Governance by Dr Kizza Besigye and Committee Reports.

Secondary literature was also made use of and this was equally obtained from a wide range of sources which included but not limited to; academic journals, text books, workshop and seminar reports, magazines and newspapers including documentary information from religious and humanitarian individuals[54] based and working in Acholiland. The validity of the outcome was ensured by avoiding bias in selection, which

[54] Father Carlos Rodriguez, "The Northern Uganda War: The "Small Conflict" that became the world's worst humanitarian crisis", Health Policy and Development Journal, Vol. 2, No. 2, (August 2004).

could have had negative consequences on the final results. By using qualitative research approach personal rather than detached engagement was applied and the validity of the outcomes was adhered to in a practical way.

Although one hundred percent (100%) non-bias investigation seldom exists in practical research, my team and I tried to minimize the incidence of bias by not wittingly selecting cases that represent a truncated sample within the population of interest[55]. Acceptance of the unbiased data was guided by careful listening and observing the innuendo in the tone and answers given by the respondents, thus separating those with vested interest to protect from those representing ideal situation, consequently working with the latter. My intuition played a large role in the initial stage of the raw data collection in as far as deciding which participant's information to accept and which to dismiss.

Selection of research sites:

The three districts of Acholi sub-region, that is Gulu, Kitgum and Pader covers an area of approximately 28,138.1 Square Kilometers and is home to approximately two million people, 80% of whom lived in IDPs camps. In 2006, there were a total of 83 camps in Acholiland[56]. Although some of the smaller camps were merged with bigger ones as a security measure, there were still over 70 camps at the time of conducting this research in the three districts mentioned above. The research team visited two camps from each district. Although there is relative calm in most areas of Acholiland, selection of the sites was based in part on security considerations. Bellow is the typology of the camps visited

[55] Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, "Case Studies and Theory Development in Social Sciences", MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England, (2005) p. 23
[56] See Appendices; Northern Uganda Region: IDP Camps and Population figures, November 2006

Name of District	**Name of camp**	**Population**
Gulu	Unyama	12, 593
	Koro-abili	5, 597
Kitgum	Layamo	18, 578
	Amida	28, 982
Pader	Pader Trading Centre	20, 626
	Kwonkic	2, 632
Kampala		

The above sites were also considered safe in terms of security as they are close to the urban centres, have got sufficient populations in terms of representation and are homogeneous in terms of ethnic identity.

From the above typology, twenty cases for interview were identified from each site. This figure was considered representative and also manageable by the field investigative team which assisted in conducting out interviews. The targeted category of interviewees

included at least three local camp administrators, six social workers and eleven displaced persons. The decision to employ targeted selection was based on the premise that careful selection of cases is a good criterion for matching interviewers with respondents and also, to reduce reactivity and increase the comfort of disclosure. This "investigator responsiveness" to broader and specific contextual issues results in conceptual validity, a strategy for good analysis and working with rigor[57].

Selection of Kampala as a research site was based on the fact that there are people from the north who migrated to Kampala and therefore easy to access and whose views are important. Having Kampala as a site was helpful in the sense that, as an urban area, it includes cases that constitute tough test for the theory, as the Acholi people in the city are likely to express different opinion as well as identifying new causal variables. Although it is practically not easy to achieve full randomness in scientific research of this nature, minimizing bias was done in such a way that interviews were not conducted on whoever rushed to the team to give his or her story.

Data Collection Methods:

Qualitative methods of data collection were used in this study because of their ability to obtain information on sensitive topics, which are not amenable to quantitative instruments. A semi-structured instrument (interview schedule) developed in English was translated in Luo, (the Acholi local language), and used during one-on-one interviews. A team of research assistants capable of speaking fluent English and Luo was therefore

[57] Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, "Case Studies and Theory Development in Social Sciences", MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England, (2005) p. 19

crucial for this exercise, as questions in some cases necessitated asking and clarifying in the local language. This method is appropriate for in-depth individual interviews especially with those who are willing to participate.

Prior to each interview, the interviewers introduced themselves, outlined the purpose of the study and asked the respondent for his or her consent. Strass and Corbin[58] point to the fact that those who have used qualitative research have obtained satisfactory results and appropriate answers to the central research questions investigated. Silverman[59] points to the flexibility of the qualitative method of data collection, the fact that it allows theory questions to be pursued in a highly effective and economic way and is particularly reliable when trying to report how "people see certain things", or "why they behave in certain ways", an indication that it was appropriate for this kind of study.

Guided by Miles and Huberman[60], my research team and I suspended as much as possible, any pre-conceived notions of the ways in which ethnicity might shape interviewees' responses. The data collection process was guided by the questions, who are the people saying similar things? What is it exactly that they are saying? And, why might they be saying similar things?

[58] Strass, A. L. and Corbin, J. "Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques", Newbury Park, CA. Sage Publications, (1990)
[59] Silverman, D. "Interpreting Qualitative Data, Methods for Analyzing Talk, Text and Interaction", London, Sage Publications, (2006) p. 24-26
[60] Miles, M. B. and Huberman, A. M. "Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Source Book", Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA, (1994)

Interviews:

Interviews were conducted one-on-one and face-to-face with the respondents. The respondent's identities were kept anonymous for security purposes. Partially-structured, face-to-face interviews were considered appropriate because of their flexibility. This is because, not only can questions be adapted to, but also the respondent feels motivated[61]. In addition to being motivated, the response rate or the proportion of the targeted people from whom completed interviews are obtained is typically high, partly because of the intrinsic attractiveness of being interviewed[62], having someone's attention, being asked to talk about oneself, the novelty of experience, and also the difficulty of saying "no" to someone asking something in person.

The approach is also considered useful because of the fact that importance and credibility of the research is conveyed best by a face-to-face interviewer who can show identification and credentials. It is also helpful particularly with respondents whose writing skills are weak or have none at all or who are less motivated to make the effort to respond fully as is the case with some members of the local population, LRA and UPDF.

Qualitative Data Analysis

There is often a misconception that qualitative research and data analysis is ad hoc, intuitive, unsystematic and thus without academic rigor. Despite this perception, many

[61] Singleton, Royce. JR. Bruce, C. Straits and Ronald J. McAllister, "Approaches to Social Research", Oxford University Press, New York, (1998) p. 244; see also, Argyris, C. "Some Unintended Consequences of Rigorous Research", Psychological Bulletin, Vol. 70. No. 3, (1968) p. 185-197

[62] Mugenda, O. M. & Muganda, A. G, *Research Methods*, Nairobi, ACTS Press, (1999); Singleton Royce JR, Bruce C Straits, Margaret M Straits and Ronald J McAllister, "Approaches to Social Research", Oxford University Press, New York, (1988) p. 244

authors on qualitative analysis agree that data analysis occurs in various degrees throughout the research process, including the data collection phase. In this investigation my research assistants and I worked as a team and with rigour. Miles and Huberman offers a pragmatic approach which combines the use of interview questions (which are obviously shaped by the research question) and themes emerging from data to inform analysis. Data analysis was therefore informed and driven by Morse et al's[63] strategies for introducing rigour during analysis which includes: "investigator responsiveness", "methodological coherence", "theoretical sampling and sampling adequacy", "an active analytic stance" and "saturation". Data was thus split into 'spoilt' and 'un-spoilt', consequently working with the latter

In the initial phase of interview, fifty[64] individuals in three sub-counties, namely Lakwana and Bobi in Gulu district and Purongo in Amuru were interviewed. These sub-counties were purposively selected for their locations at the boarders between Acholi and Lango (Lakwana and Bobi), Acholi and Alur (Purongo). This was intended to give ethnic geographical representation of the people living in remote areas in Acholiland that have experienced the LRA war in the last 20 years. In addition, a total of 5 key informant interviews were conducted with the local authorities in these selected sub–counties.

For the purpose of this initial pre-test phase and for later data collection, interviews were mainly targeted to adults (male and female) aged between 19 and 70 years old. Of this age bracket, those respondents aged between 43 and 70 years of age were an important

[63] Morse, M. Janice, Michael Barrett, Karin Olson and Jude Spiers, "Verification Strategies for Establishing Reliability and Validity in Qualitative Research", International Journal of Qualitative Methods, Vol. 1, No, 2 (Spring 2002) p. 1-19

[64] This number is based on pre-test sample

component. They are the categories of respondents we felt have experienced the ethnic turmoil in Uganda since independence in 1962.

Outline of the Thesis:

The Thesis is divided into seven chapters. Chapter one provides the Study setting, methodology, and analytical procedures. It particularly explains the geographical location of Uganda and Acholiland, the main focus of the Study. It also provides the background as well as the significance of the Study. Chapter two examines the literature review. It focuses on the scholarly works that have been written on ethnicity and the concept of relative deprivation. It also analyses the construct of ethnicity in the colonial and post-colonial context. Chapter three examines the emergence of the NRA/M and the reconstruction of the Ugandan state. It provides insight into the configuration of ethnicity under the NRM leadership and policies and how this created inter-ethnic disharmony, resentment and hostilities that led to emergence of insurgence in Acholiland.

Chapter four analyses the social and power relations under the NRM. It particularly focuses on the state response to the insurgence in the north and the consequences of this response. It attempts to explain that the state's heavy reliance on the military option did not and has not only failed to destroy the LRA, but entrenched mutual distrust and escalation of the conflict. Chapter five examines the impact of the LRA war and its implications for peace and stability in Acholiland. It attempts to explain that the war has led to increased impoverishment of the Acholi people and also failed to bridge the north/south divide. Chapter six analyses the attempts to mitigate the war between the

LRA and the GOU. It examines the various peace initiatives that have been undertaken by different players and their outcomes. It also looks at the ICC and its impact on the war. Chapter seven is divided into two sections. The first section highlights the Conceptual and Empirical contribution of the thesis to the paradigm of ethnicity and conflict and its impact on social cohesion, human security, socioeconomic development and above all, peace and stability. The second section summarizes the general conclusion of the thesis.

Conclusion:

The chapter has shown the geographical location of Uganda and the location of Acholiland, the main focus area of this study including its demographic outline. It has also indicated that in order to understand the war in northern Uganda, it is important to examine the domestic as well as international factors. The saliency of colonialism in constructing ethnicity is a crucial factor as well as the human agency especially after post-independence period. Of particular importance are the political events following the disputed 1980 presidential elections together with those after the 1986 capture of power by the NRA/M after waging a five-year guerrilla war against the Obote government.

The ethnic skewed nature of the military and its intervention in politics has also been shown as one of the factors to be examined because of its potential to exacerbate ethnic conflict and in fact prolong it. To the extent that it is viewed as an instrument of the ruling party where military officers are mobilized and politicized for the purpose of enabling the incumbent regime perpetuate itself in power, at the expense of other ethnic

groups because its ultimate loyalty to the party rather than the state[65], it has generated discontent and led to inter-ethnic disharmony and animosity.

It has also demonstrated that ethnic conflict in Uganda is part of the deep north-south divide where the north has for a long time remained impoverished while the south is developed, a social-economic imbalance that has been perpetuated by successive Ugandan rulers. Although Ugandans hoped that this imbalance and ethnic integration which has been at the heart of the country's problems would be prioritized by the NRA/M government, through policies designed to accommodate and address the underlying structural causes, it instead became worse as ethnicity took center stage in the political processes of the NRM. Understanding the concept of ethnicity and how it can be used as a source of conflict is examined in the next chapter.

[65] Samuel P. Huntington, "Reforming Civil-Military Relations", Journal of Democracy, Vol. 6, No, 4, (1995) p. 9-11

CHAPTER TWO

The nature of ethnic conflict in Africa, insurgency and relative deprivation: A theoretical frame work.

Introduction:

The manifestations of ethnicity in Africa and the socio-historical transformations that accompanied it can be traced to the colonial period when the process of organization of power within the colony, administration and extraction of economic potential was based on the concept of ethnicity. These manifestations have given rise to tribal identity, cultural prides and values which help many ethnic groups to claim self-determination, cohesion and a sense of belonging. However, they are also responsible for creating hatred, resentment and conflict as different groups compete with one another in order to gain access and control of scarce resources and political power at the expense of others.

Ethnicity has taken central stage in the politics of many African countries to the extent that current political upheavals, civil wars, massive displacements and misery can be to a large extent attributed to ethnic rivalries and confrontation. Most conflicts on the African continent have taken place within intra-state although they have not been immune to outside interference. The people fighting together in these conflicts, justification notwithstanding, are more often than not members belonging to the same ethnic or religious affiliation. Because of this, there is a tendency to attribute the actions of the warring parties to primordial ethnic connotations (which is not true), for example that they are fighting the other because of cultural or religious differences.

Consequently, the underlying causes of conflict become 'foggy' as the tendency is to think of the trigger of conflict as embedded in ethnic differences; religious, tribal or customs. Indeed as observed by David, ethnicity and culture were until mid 1970s, relegated to the status of epi-phenomena" and periphery by the Dependency, Marxist and Development theorists on the notion that conflict is a natural phenomenon because "people seem to trust and prefer those of their own cultural group, while feeling more distant from, and distrustful of, those of other cultural groups"[66].

However, as the need for explaining ethnicity and politics on one hand and ethnicity and conflict on the other increased, it became apparent that "the causes of conflict were thus seen to lie, for example, in the mobilization activities of manipulative elites, or in the economic disparities between regions and communities. Ethnicity itself was not apparently the cause, but rather a consequence, of change in the social, economic and political arena"[67]. What this means is that conflict has taken on an ethnic dimension because of the manipulative behaviour of politicians in the competition for power and resources. This same observation is noted by Francis and Nafziger by pointing out that the causes of ethnic conflict "--are to be found in the interactions of power-seeking with group identity and inequalities"[68].

[66] David Brown, "Ethnic Revival: Perspectives on State and Society", Third World Quarterly, Vo, 11, No, 4. (October 1989) p. 1-4
[67] Ibid, p. 2
[68] Stewart F. "The Root Causes of Humanitarian Emergencies", In Nafziger, Stewart, and Vayrynen (Eds.), Vol. 1 (2000) p. 3-4, http://www.ksu.edu/economics/nafwayne/eccarstat.pdf

Within this context, ethnicity has become a strategy and means for mobilization where the ruling elites, often members of an ethnic cleavage use repression and marginalization against other groups in order to maintain a strong grip on power. This generates a feeling of relative deprivation on the part of the groups affected and spurs social discontent which provides the motivation and drive for collective violence. The dynamics of this situation are such that the group in power mobilizes for support using ethnicity to maintain power while the relatively deprived groups will tend to resort to war in the absence of amicable redress, by also mobilizing through ethnicity in order to remove those in power who are perceived as the source of their frustration and deprivation.

Such a situation then results in a vicious cycle of violence in which the parties to the conflict use the discourse of group hatred to further mobilize on ethnic lines. The armed rebellions, coup d'états, insurgence and civil wars that have bedeviled many countries on the African continent should be viewed in this light. This section aims at explaining the link between ethnicity and conflict by employing theories advanced by scholarly works. This is because in order for conflict to be contained or eliminated, it is important to understand the motivation of actors and the conditions that predispose them to violence. In order to do this, we need first to have an overview of ethnicity and how it can be used as an instrument for conflict.

Ethnicity and Politics: An Overview

Ethnicity as a concept has been extensively written on by scholars and independent analysts alike. It is worth noting that ethnicity per se is not a problem as people enjoy collective cultural and identity pride of where they belong and who they are. It even becomes an important political tool if membership of a society is mobilized on the basis of common values such as culture, social support, language, territory, and security[69]. In this case ethnicity becomes an important factor in galvanizing people and increasing the intensity of their participation in political activities as they will feel and see themselves as members of the same community with equal treatment and opportunities not only in politics, but also in economic, security, education, welfare and development.

It is only when ethnicity is politicized and manipulated by leaders for their own selfish purposes such as favoritism, and rewarding resources to specific ethnic groups in exchange for their loyalty while neglecting others that creates feelings of relative deprivation, discontent and resentment, which then becomes a potent source of conflict as has been the case in several African countries. Understanding the role of ethnicity in politics is therefore important because politics is about control of the state, together with its distributive and allocative functions including policies and programmes.

Because control of the state and distribution of (scarce) resources tends to be, and perhaps better put, is problematic in the case of Africa, in the sense that individuals in control and who are responsible for leadership of society define themselves on the basis

[69] Kasfir, Nelson, "The Shrinking Political Arena: Participation of Ethnicity in African Politics with a Case Study of Uganda, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, University of California Press, (1976) p. 48

of ethnic nexus to which they belong and which often leads to conflict, a deeper understanding of ethnicity and how it manifests into violence is today, more greater than ever before. The study contends that it is in this broader context of hegemonic-directed competition for access to and control of the state and resources using manipulation and politicization of ethnicity and militarization of politics that makes ethnicity a violent tool by parties in the conflict, but more especially the ruling elites to punish or suppress dissent.

Politics is about managing a state or government, allocation of resources, and the administration and control of its internal and external affairs. Within this context, government has a public responsibility to make and administer laws in the interest of the public and to provide the socioeconomic and political goods to its citizens in a fair, equitable and orderly manner in return for the taxes it collects, including the sanctioned authority and mandate given by the people. While politicians in many of the countries in the western world have, for the most part, separated politics from for example personal interests such aggrandizement, the situation in Africa seems to be different. In most African countries, ethnicity and politics are intertwined in such a way that ethnicity is to a large extent the organizing principle of politics and the basis for determining ones social standing in society as well as access to political opportunities such as jobs, government tenders, wealth and prestige.

Thus, it tends to be seen as a means of acquiring power and access to the scarce resources by the ruler in order to enrich himself and members of his ethnic group. As aptly noted by Zakaria, "--in societies without strong traditions of multi-ethnic groups or assimilation, it is easiest to organize support along racial, ethnic, or religious lines. Once an ethnic group is in power, it tends to exclude other ethnic groups. Compromise seems impossible and political competition that is so divisive can rapidly generate into violence", and that "armed rebellions and coups in Africa have often been directed against ethnically based regimes"[70].

It is therefore no surprise that political decisions in terms of who gets what for example good infrastructure, schools, hospitals, roads, factories, and employment opportunities are all made and allocated on the basis of ethnicity. Nyambegera notes that, this is "--discrimination as it leaves the majority people in certain ethnic groups continually without access to society's opportunities and rewords"[71], which breeds social political and economic discontent and resentment amongst ethnic groups. Other scholars have written about multicultural societies or population heterogeneity as a source of conflict arguing that because of ethno-political competition, "it breeds conflict that is difficult to resolve and, as a consequence, political systems that are inherently more unstable"[72].

[70] Zakaria Fareed, "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy", Foreign Affairs, Vol. 76, No, 6, (December 1997) p. 35-38

[71] Nyambegera, Stephen Morangi, "Ethnicity and human resource management practice in sub-Saharan Africa: the relevance of managing diversity discourse", The International Journal of Human Resource Management, Vol. 13, No. 7. (November 2002) p. 1080

[72] Christopher, J. Anderson and Aida, Paskeviciute, "How Ethnic and Linguistic Heterogeneity influence the Prospects for Civil Society: A Comparative Study of Citizenship Behaviour", The Journal of Politics, Vol. 68, No. 4, (November 2006) p. 786

Their assertion is guided by the reasoning that multicultural or heterogeneous communities are prone to conflict because of threats arising out of uneven access and consumption of scarce resources and threats because of their group (ethnic) belonging. Their conclusion is that "--heterogeneity has negative effects on civil society and provision of public goods"[73]. Whereas this may vary from case to case and therefore is subject of debate, generalizing and viewing ethnic conflict and unstable government environments in this light is not only erroneous but also tends to miss the point. This is because if ethnic heterogeneity is a source of conflict, then almost all countries on the African continent would be in turmoil.

Recent studies on ethnicity have focused attention on its relationship with culture and the state, the main issue here being the role of the state in shaping ethnic identities in a bid to find out why third world countries especially on the African continent continue to experience economic dependence, authoritarian rule, political instability and conflict. One of the reasons given is because "in country after country, a single ethnic group has taken control over the state and used its power to exercise control over others---, in retrospect there has been far less 'nation-building' than many analysts had expected or hoped, for the process of state building has rendered many ethnic groups devoid of power or influence"[74].

[73] Ibid, p. 786
[74] David Brown, "Perspectives on State and Society", Third World Quarterly, Vol. 11, No. 4, (October 1989), p. 9-10

Apparently this seems to be the trend in many African countries where state elites have tended to remove or restrict opportunities for political participation, which to a large extent explains the conflicts on the continent. In such a situation, politicization and manipulation of ethnic consciousness in order to gain control of and use of state power and resources generates discontent and hostility within the relatively deprived groups who may in turn mobilize through rebellions or coup d'états.

Conceptualizing ethnicity:

The concept of ethnicity has been analyzed through different theories by different scholars. It refers to mythology, symbols and artifacts, language and ancestry as ethnic groups try to define who they are in relation to others. The term finds roots in the fifth century Greek civilization where "ethos" referred to connotations of common culture, language and history and which in the fifteenth century became a term of self-definition, referring to a "we group"[75]. One of the major concerns of scholars in conceptualizing and analyzing ethnicity has been to understand its role in social relations, shaping political processes as well as its relationship with the state and political violence.

The primordialists explain ethnicity as inherently inborn and that its characteristics are not only psychological but biological as they are passed on from generation to generation. They contend that ethnic bonds are in blood and are as strong as the history of the ethnic group itself, with strong psychological and emotional attachment, to the extent that "--the presence of ethnic divisions in a nation is a sufficient condition for the occurrence of

[75] Carola Lentz, "Tribalism and Ethnicity in Africa: A Review of four decades of Anglophone research", (1995)

ethnic violence"[76]. Primordialists like Brown and Boswell[77], Scott and Edward believe that the characteristics of a particular group of people stems from the 'givens' of being born into for example a particular religious community, speaking a similar language, behave in a similar manner, with bonds of blood relationship. As pointed out by Scott;

"As one thought about the strengths of tensions in family attachments, it became apparent that the attachment was not only to the other family member merely as a person but as a possessor of certain especially 'significant relational' qualities which could only be described as primordial. The attachment of one member to one's kinship group is not just a function of interaction---. It is because a certain ineffable significance is attributed to the tie of blood"[78].

But critics of the primordialist's approach point at a number of flaws. First, the explanation of ethnicity tends to be in absolute terms and static in the sense that the 'givens', blood relations, language, and common history can never change. Contrary to this thinking however, ethnicity is not static but dynamic as cultural attributes are fluid, contextual and depend on relationships. In other words, ethnic identity varies overtime and across individuals[79]. A person, who moves from one place to another for example from the countryside to town, is likely to experience a change in several aspects including his political and ethnic consciousness. Consequently, he is likely to take on new loyalties

[76] Damet Yalcin Mousseau, "Democratizing with Ethnic Divisions: A Source of Conflict?" Journal of Peace Research, Vol. 38, No. 1, (2001) p. 549
[77] Brown Cliff and Boswell Terry, "Ethnic Conflict and Political Violence: A Cross-national Analysis", Journal of Political and Military Sociology, Vol. 27, No, 1, (Summer 1997) p. 111
[78] Scott, George M. "A Resynthesis of the primordial and Circumstantial Approaches to Ethnic Group Solidarity: towards an Explanatory Model", Ethnic and Racial Studies, Vol. 13, No. 2, (April 1990) p. 150
[79] Jean S, Phinny and Anthony D. Ong, "Conceptualization and Measurement of Ethnic Identity: Current Status and Future Directions", Journal of Couseling Psychology, Vol. 54, No, 3, (2007) p. 273

and identity, but this does not necessarily mean that he drops his old identity. Indeed as aptly observed by Kasfir,

"*The increasing change of social change is likely to make people more concerned about their identity and more prepared to form groups on the basis of ties which they have taken little interest in the past", and that "as soon as an individual ventures outside the range of direct influence of his rural compatriots, he responds to a set of stimuli in which his previous ethnic identity plays a minor role"*[80].

Second, ethnicity is a social construct and an invention by the colonial masters. As such, it can be deconstructed just like any other invention. Hence it is not true that it is in blood and cannot change. However, what is important is the role it plays in the contemporary society and politics. Prior to conquest and colonization of Africa by European imperial powers in the 18th century, the notion of ethnicity did not exist. Indeed as Thomas points out, "tribes were thus a product of colonial rule, as administrators created new chiefdoms -- and propagated African traditions--"[81]. Thus the tendency by politicians to manipulate and mobilize people on the basis of ethnicity for selfish ends has continued in the same way as it was used by colonial masters.

Third, primordialists attribute the seriousness of the ethnic conflict to intense emotional power of an individual's attachment to his ethnic belonging, "--a tie that 'has to do with

[80] Kasfir Nelson, "The Shrinking Political Arena: Participation of Ethnicity in African Politics: with a Case Study of Uganda", Los Angeles, University of California Press, (1976) p. 57
[81] Thomas Spear, "Neo-Traditionalism and the Limits of Invention in British colonial Africa", Journal of African History, Vol. 44, No, 1, (2003) p. 17

something that is so basic to man's life, it is not at all a mystery that he is willing, indeed almost eager, to die in defence of it"[82]. Because of the above shortcomings of primordialism, failure to take into account the social changes, and inability to encompass political and economic influences, it cannot sufficiently explain the ethnic phenomena.

The Instrumentalist approach on the other hand emphasizes socio-economic and political factors as the main motivators and causes of ethnic conflict. They point out that (unfair) competition among ethnic groups for access to and use of scarce resources and political power is the problem and also that the process of modernization invigorates conflict. Scholars such as Newman point out that demographic, economic and political balance among ethnic groups within a state are crucial factors as they determine the chances and opportunities of who gets what, the strategy of which is determined by the ethnic leadership. He further points out that within this context, "the state often uses its immense resources to politicize ethnic identifications".

McKey points out that "renewed ethno-tension and conflict are not the result of any primordial need to belong, but are due to the conscious efforts of individuals and groups mobilizing ethnic symbols in order to obtain access to social, political and material resources"[83], an argument supported by Brown and Boswell[84]. Viewed in this light therefore, it is not ethnicity that is the cause of ethnic violence but the political actors

[82] McKay James, "An Exploratory Synthesis of Primordial and Mobilizational Approaches to Ethnic Phenomena", Ethnic and Racial Studies, Vol. 5, No. 4, (October 1982) p. 398-399
[83] McKey James, "An Exploratory Synthesis of Primordial and Mobilizational Approaches to Ethnic Phenomena", Ethnic and Racial Studies, Vol. 5, No. 4, (October 1982) p. 399
[84] Brown, Cliff and Terry Boswell, "Ethnic Conflict and Political Violence: A Cross-national Analysis", Journal of Political and Military Sociology, (Summer 1997)

especially the rulers who manipulate it in order to secure tangible goods and benefits for a particular ethnic group[85]. Neil makes an important observation by pointing out that "it is noted that 'bad leaders are the biggest problem' encouraging ethnic conflict, and it is clear that political entrepreneurs determined to attain and maintain power often place their personal prejudices above inter-ethnic coexistence or the national interest and promote ethnic outbidding"[86]. It is also within this context that scholars such as Kandeh argue that ethnicity is a multifaceted and dynamic phenomenon and that one of its attributes is instrumental because it forms the basis for political and social organization, a mechanism used for elite domination than as an emancipatory and resource mobilization for the interest of the people[87].

It is not surprising therefore that many communities and the political processes that influence and affect their relationships are based on ethnic identity and there is nowhere else this phenomenon is more prevalent than on the African continent. That ethnicity is not a fixed condition but a historical process that was derived from and profoundly shaped and influenced by the cultural, social, economic and political forces of the colonial administration, and which has continued to exert strong influence in the political discourse of many countries, makes it relevant to be studied under specific contexts. An analysis of contemporary ethnic dimensions in the African context needs to begin with a consideration of the colonial state and ethnic realms that shaped and nurtured it.

[85] Horowitz Donald, Ethnic Groups in Conflict, University of California Press, (1999) P. 186-187
[86] Neil Devota, "From Ethnic Outbidding to Ethnic Conflict: The Institutional bases for Sri Lanka's Separatist War", National and Nationalism, Vol. 11. No, 1, (2005) p. 144
[87] Kandeh D. Jimmy, "Politicization of Ethnic Identities in Sierra Leone", African Studies Review, Vol. 35, No. 1, (1992) p. 82

Colonialism and the construction of Ethnicity in Africa:

The modern social relations in which ethnicity plays a significant role can be traced to the colonial period when the colonial system and processes of state formation were based on the colonial ideology and culture of divide and rule. This period which started with the Berlin conference of 1884-85, witnessed the division of African societies into political units called states with clearly defined boundaries. Ironically these boundaries split the traditional social structures, consequently ignoring ethnic cohesiveness, economic potential and distribution of natural resources[88].

Within these states, further subdivision was made whereby districts and counties were created with boundaries drawn on the basis of the concept of the tribe which was an invention of the colonial masters and not from the people making up these units.[89] The point being emphasized is that the imposed boundaries for the most part ignored cultural patterns in the colonized societies"[90], because after all, the colonialist was not interested in the formation of a state on the notion of western structure, but rather for expansionism, quest for markets, imperial aggrandizement, strategic reasons and extraction of capital.

Soon after the exercise of partitioning, the colonialist then moved quickly to assert his authority and influence in the territory. This was necessary in order to deter competing rivals from taking over the territory on one hand, but also to identify and establish alliances with preferred natives through whom colonial rule would be extend to the rest

[88] Thomson, A, An Introduction to African Politics, London, Routledge, (2000) P. 12-16
[89] Kasfir Nelson, "The Shrinking Political Arena: Participation of Ethnicity in African Politics: A Case Study of Uganda", Los Angeles, University of California Press, (1976) p. 36
[90] Mbembe J. A, and Randall Steven, "At the Edge of the World: Boundaries, Territoriality and Sovereignty in Africa", Public Culture, Vol. 12, No, 1, (Winter 2000) p. 265-270

of the territory. Categorizing, and sorting out natives by forming a typology of the different groups and authoritatively defining and dictating the rules of the game; what was and wasn't permitted, was a prerequisite for ease of administration. Within this sorting process, Young notes that "the colonial state visibly created new categories of identity" and that "Ethnonyms in East Africa such as Teso, Gisu, Toro, Acholi, Kiga, Sukuma or Luhya would hardly have been encountered at all a century ago"[91], an observation shared by Kasfir[92].

Arising out of institutionalization of colonialism in the process of state formation which relied heavily on the basis of ethnicity is the fact that the state begun as a weak state and has to a large extent remained a weak state. This is mainly because colonial powers omitted to transfer important aspects that characterize the modern state to Africa. Doctrines concerned with civil liberties, limitations of power, constitutionalism, liberalism and the principle of nationhood were carefully left behind[93]. However, explaining the context and nature of the state in Africa and its link with ethnicity necessitates having a working definition of a state.

[91] Young, Crawford, "Patterns of Social Conflict: State, Class and Ethnicity", Daedalus, Vol. 111, No, 2, (Spring 1982) p. 75
[92] Kasfir Nelson, "The Shrinking Political Arena: Participation of Ethnicity in African Politics: A Case Study of Uganda", Los Angeles, (1976) p. 36
[93] Cornwell, R. "The Collapse of the African State in Peace, Profit or Plunder?: The Privatisation of Security in War-torn Societies", edited by Jakkie Cilliers, and Peggy Mason, Halfway House, Institute for Security Studies, (1999) p. 66-68

Halliday defines a state as; "---a territorial association of people organized for the purpose of law and diplomacy--"[94]. Clapham points at "--an environmental base where values and identities define politics and authority between the rulers and the ruled--"[95], while Ojo and Ranny emphasize the aspect of a sense of national identity and political culture[96]. For the sake of this thesis, a working definition of a state is 'a geographically bounded sovereign territory which is inhabited by a permanent population that is linked together by social political cohesion and governed by a legitimate authority that is sanctioned by the people of that particular state. In light of this definition therefore the state and its citizens are mutual symbionts with the state having responsibility of providing an environment conducive for socio-political cohesion[97].

The state in Africa has been analyzed in the context of the state in Europe. While the state in Europe is characterized by factors such as consensus, ability to extend control over the territory, legitimacy and political order which to a large extent explain the sociopolitical unity and cohesion, in the developing world it tends to be characterized by sociopolitical exclusion and marginalization of some groups, hegemonic domination, and rule through patrimonial networks which leads to relative deprivation thus providing breeding ground for discontent, conflict, violence and political instability. Although this generalization may not apply entirely to all countries as there are some where state-society relations are cordial and which are politically stable, many counties remain under personal rule based

[94] Halliday, Fred. "Rethinking International Relations", London, Macmillan, (1994) p.74
[95] Clapham Christopher, "Africa and the International Systems: The Politics of State Survival", Cambridge University Press, (1996) p. 6-8
[96] Ojo, O.J.C.B. "The International Actors, in African International Relations", by O.J.C.B. Ojo, D.K. Orwa & C.M.B. Utete, London, Longman, (1985) P. 28
[97] Rotberg I. Robert, "Failed States in a World of Terror", Foreign Affairs, Vol. 81, No, 4, (2000) p. 2-3

on ethnic ties resulting in their legitimacy to be challenged by some sections of the population.

As such, many countries in Africa including Uganda do not seem to suit this definition and can therefore be described as weak states where conflicts are attributed to the fact that governments have failed to assertively exert and extend their authority to the entire territory under their control and have also been unable to bring about and sustain ethnic unity or provide new incentives for different ethnic groups to live together. Moreover, ethnic manipulation exacerbates old conflicts and creates new ones as rulers try to concentrate their efforts on suppressing dissent. Leadership becomes more vulnerable and because of this vulnerability, the focus shifts from people relations to maintaining power at all cost. Clapham aptly captures this situation of weak states when he uses the metaphor of a ship's captain to describe this type of rulers when he says that they cannot spend time setting the course and navigating but rather only concentrate on staying afloat.[98]

Furthermore, colonialism effected ethnicisation through stereotyping. In this process, ethnic groups were compared with one another on the basis of capabilities and disabilities as the determinant criteria for collective group worth. While group comparison is an aspect of life that can be used positively for emancipation and mobilization of people to enjoy public goods and services, it can also be used for dividing, disempowering and discriminating against them. It's potential to create feelings of prejudice and resentment

[98] Clapham Christopher, "Africa and the International System: The Politics of State Survival", Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, (2002) p.4-5

especially if its purpose is to extend favoritism and reward to groups considered loyal while neglecting others is high. In the African context, stereotype attributes such as industrious or lazy, warlike, backward, primitive, aggressive, gentle, intelligent or ignorant, receptive or antipathetic were assigned to different groups.

It was on this basis that for example employment policy was determined and implemented. In support of this argument, Young points out that "military recruitment, for example, especially for the British and the Belgians, was concentrated upon groups perceived as "martial races", a doctrine that emerged in early nineteenth century India and became firmly rooted dogma--"[99], while those perceived gentle and intelligent were employed in the administration of the protectorate. This tendency to cleave and compare groups did not only create specific functions and roles for particular ethnic groups but also transformed and influenced inter-group relations in which the favoured in-groups and the discriminated out-groups became hostile to one another, which led to behavioural tendencies that often resulted in conflict and violence. Moreover, as Horowitz observes, "these were essentially congeries of clans, living in closest proximity under identical conditions and yet displaying rudiments of separate people-hood and propensity to invidious comparison"[100].

In addition to the above, distribution of economic opportunities and public goods were also based on ethnic stereotypes and the consideration being whether a particular group was perceived submissive, loyal or disloyal. As a matter of fact, good schools, railway

[99] Young Crowford, "Patterns of Social Conflict: State, Class and Ethnicity", Daedalus, Vol. 111, No, 2, (Spring 1982) p. 80
[100] Horowitz, L. Donald, "Ethnic Groups in Conflict", University of California Press Ltd. (2000) p. 144

line, government offices, processing plants and commercial enterprises were to be found within the area of the favoured in-groups. As noted by Horowitz, "the location of an ethnic group's home territory often provided a head start"[101]. Cultural, soils and other natural resource endowment factors also played a crucial role in the process of crystallization of ethnic groups' stratification and configuration.

Given the fact that regions have different economic endowment and are inhabited by different groups of people, the manner in which these material opportunities were distributed created distortions and also had location and ethnic meanings to particular groups to the extent that it inevitably created a sense of exclusive ownership that had to be guarded jealously. This uneven distribution of opportunities resulted in groups being unequally advantaged a factor that largely explains the interethnic rivalry and hostility, often expressed through armed rebellions as the disadvantaged groups attempt to remove the governments from power. Jinadu takes this argument a step further by pointing out that "the asymmetrical ethno-racial stratified social structure of the colonial state, left its unwholesome unhealed, simmering scars, recriminations, mutual antagonisms and fears, all of which served to undermine – a sense of nationhood and common citizenship"[102].

One other factor that largely contributed to the establishment and growth of ethnic identity was the policy of indirect rule which heavily relied on collaboration with the local chiefs. This policy was used by the colonial authorities in such a way that natives in a particular area with more or less similar characteristics would be classified together,

[101] Ibid, p. 151
[102] Jinadu, L. Adele, "Explaining and Managing Ethnic Conflict in Africa: Towards a Cultural Theory of Democracy", Uppsala University Forum for International and Area Studies, (February 2004) p. 9

counted and designated as an administrative unit under the jurisdiction of a 'tribal' chief or headman. This process of classifying people together, moreover in demarcated areas, was often accompanied by the application of native registration procedures. The purpose of registration which was not only aimed at knowing the persons in the zones, but also to track and control their movements outside their 'home' areas led to the creation of ethnic identity.

As noted by Bruce, "through the application of such instruments of the state as consensus and maps, and even the establishment of colonial museums, all communities, persons, land and even physical artifacts were assigned a unique tribal identity and physical location"[103]. It was thus through this way that ethnic identities which often bore little correspondence to their previous social composition and set up were formed and ruled through appointed tribal authorities. However, because this policy was practiced in such a manner that different groups were treated differently – the in-groups were favoured while the out-groups were discriminated – created a long lasting impact and colonial legacy of inter-ethnic rivalry which has continued to fuel ethnic tension and conflict long after the countries in which it was practiced attained independence[104].

In Uganda, the indirect rule policy originated from the recognition of Buganda as the largest, wealthiest, well organized and most powerful Kingdoms in Uganda. Buganda served not only as a centre of political power and a favored mechanism of administration

[103] Bruce J. Berman, "Ethnicity, Patronage and the African State: the Politics of Uncivil Nationalism", African Affairs, Vol. 97, No, 388, (1998) p. 321
[104] Golooba-Mutebi, Fredrick, "Collapse, War and Reconstruction in Uganda, an Analytical Narrative on State-Making", Crisis States Working Paper Series, No. 27. (January 2008), p. 1-4

which the colonialist wanted rolled out to other parts of Uganda, but also as a source of manpower for the expansion of colonial conquest and administration of the rest of the country. In order for the colonizer to achieve this, local agents (Baganda chiefs and Baganda foot soldiers) from the Bantu speaking central region were sent to the north to enforce the indirect rule of the colonialist.[105] This brought about resentment and ethnic sentiments against the Baganda in particular and the Bantu speaking southerners in general. Consequently, this has remained a contentious rivalry between northern and southern tribes in Uganda[106].

The origin of these rivalries can also be traced in groups discrimination and the colonialist comparative process of evaluating the virtues and vices of ethnic Africans which were based on the premise that the ruled were unfit to manage their own affairs and in which even the most advanced ethnic groups among the colonial people were denigrated which further lead to fracturing of societies along ethnic lines. In tandem with the legacy of discrimination and aggravating it was the manner in which colonial rule handled and nurtured ethnicity in Africa. Ethnicity was handled unevenly and inconsistently to the extent that often there was deliberate use of a group against the other which led to feelings of resentment, fears, mistrust, and hatred among the different ethnic groups making the potential for ethnic conflict high.

[105] Ibid, p. 2-3
[106] Phares Mutibwa, "Uganda since Independence: A Story of Unfulfilled Hopes", Hurts and Co. Publishers, (1992) p.8-9

As Horowitz aptly notes, "the nature of these feelings can be understood better by examining the stereotypes groups hold about each other"[107]. In Uganda, stereotypes and derogatory terms such as "*Anyanya*", "*adui*", "*abakoko*", "*kipingamizi*" and songs such as "*tulimupiga Anyanya*--" have been used to insinuate and describe northerners as murderers, rebels and beasts. On their part, the northerners have often referred to Bantu speaking people especially those from Western Uganda as "*nyarwanda*" insinuating that they are weaklings and not Ugandans but foreigners from Rwanda

Ideologically, European colonizers viewed Acholi tribe land as occupied by a tribe of quite different and inferior order. Arising out of this perception was the way in which colonial labor policy was designed and implemented along ethno-regional lines as certain jobs became the preserve of specific groups who were judged to have special attributes that were considered to be in harmony with the job[108]. As a matter of fact, recruitment and employment policies were heavily based on ethnic stereotypes. Northern tribes who were regarded to possess a reputation and attributes for martial skills[109] were recruited in the army, police and prisons. They were also recruited to provide cheap labor in the tea and sugar plantations in central Uganda.[110]

[107] Ibid, p. 167
[108] Ibid, p. 157-158
[109] Kasfir Nelson, "The Shrinking Political Arena: Participation of Ethnicity in African Politics: A Case Study of Uganda", Los Angeles, University of California Press, (1976) p. 109; Karugire R. Samwiri, "Roots of Political Instability in Uganda", Fountain Publishers, Kampala, 2003. p. 32-34
[109] Ibid, p. 36

[110] Ibid, P.109; see also Mutibwa Phares, "Uganda since Independence: A Story of Unfulfilled Hopes", Africa World Press, Inc. (1992) p. 6-9;Karugire Samwiri, "Roots of Instability in Uganda", Fountain Publishers Kampala, (2003) p. 33

However, at independence in 1962, Acholi and other northern tribes became key players in the socio-political arena of Uganda but barely four years after attainment of independence, ethnic sentiments came at the forefront of political power maneuvers leading to the Buganda crisis of 1966 in which the palace of Buganda's King, Sir Edward Mutesa and the first president of Uganda was stormed by the army on the orders of Obote. The king fled into exile in Britain where he subsequently died.

It should be realized that this skewed nature of labor policies and recruitment along ethnic lines was also practiced in other countries on the African continent. In Ghana for example, the military officer corps was largely drawn from the Ga and Ewe ethnic tribes during Nkrumah's reign, in Rwanda the army was predominantly Hutu dominated while in Sierra Leone the ethnic Mende dominated the army[111]. The resultant effect of this lopsidedness was uneven regional development, unequal distribution of state resources, coups and counter coups as groups purged one another in their struggle for ethnic domination and control of state power.

It should be no surprise therefore that the northern Uganda ethnic tribes in general and the Acholi in particular have had deep feelings of mistrust and suspicion resulting from socio-economic and political deprivation of the northern region which has been exacerbated during the NRM regime. In the present context, regional disparity between south and north is perceived by people from the north as a deliberate government move to purge dissent and eliminate the political power base and capacity of the northerners to come back to power. Odong, a Local Councilor in Kitgum said that "what is happening in

[111] Horowitz L. Donald, "Ethnic Groups in Conflict", University of California Press, (2000) p.527-531

Acholiland today is not by coincidence, it is deliberate. Museveni and the NRM hate people from the north and especially we Acholis. We are treated as if we are enemies. You can see that there are two sets of Ugandans, the superior in the south and the inferior and impoverished in the north which is visible as soon as you cross Karuma Bridge"[112].

Feelings of marginalization were also expressed by a group of displace men in Gulu. They particularly talked of how the national army, the UPDF thinks that all Acholi people are corroborators of Kony, thus reflecting an ethnic dimension.[113] Several other people spoken to talked of the army being of westerners who will never have a liking for the northern people. Expressions like "this army of westerners do not care whether we all the Acholis die or suffer because they think we are all rebel collaborators[114]" and "ending the war and our suffering has never been part of this governments business"[115] were echoed by a group of men and women in Gulu and Pajule.

State Building and Ethnicity: The Post-Colonial African context

In post-colonial Africa, ethnicity has continued to be a major factor in determining the success or failure of a country and has manifested itself in a number of ways. First, political power control, access to and distribution of economic resources has largely remained in the hands of strong men whose rule is characterized by informal patriarch networks based on ethnic and regional lines. Whereas the post-independent rulers

[112] Interview with Odong, a Local Councilor (LC), Kitgum, October 2009; see also Joshua B. Rubongoya, "Regime Hegemony in Museveni's Uganda, Pax Musevenica", Palgrave Macmillan, (2007) p.82
[113] Interview with a group of IDPs, Gulu, June 2009
[114] Interview with a shopkeeper, Gulu, September 2009
[115] Interview with a teacher, Kitgum, June 2009; During negotiations to mark International Labour Day in Kampala on 1st May 2008, Museveni is quoted to have said that he has never sent the team that was negotiating with Kony and that he will never send one and that also he will never beg Kony to come out of the bush

inherited artificial states which were created by European colonial powers at the Berlin Conference, their bureaucratic authoritarianism, instrumentalized disorder[116], patronage and greed for power has had adverse effects on state building, inter-ethnic relations, national integration, social economic development and stability. In actual fact ethnicity has gained momentum largely due to its manipulation and politicization by rulers in the struggle to maintain hegemonic control of state power and resources

This in turn has shaped the scope of ethnic politics, and the particular character of state-society relations to the extent that rulers have tended to ignore national integration of the diverse ethnic groups, but have instead undermined it by arbitrary and authoritarian use of state power to enrich themselves, allocate jobs to ethnic tribesmen, thus breaching the social contract of public trust. As aptly noted by Bruce, "the politics of political tribalism and moral ethnicity become linked to the ability of the 'big men' of ethnic communities holding positions in the state to obtain for the districts and regions a significant share of the large-scale collective benefits---as well as more individual rewards apportioned through the discrete personal contracts of the back verandah"[117].

The relationship between the state and citizenship is also an important dimension if the phenomenon of ethnic conflict especially on the African continent is to be understood. This is because the notion of citizenship is linked to the state, thus necessitating examining the structural and institutional linkage between it and the state on one hand

[116] Robert I. Rotberg, "Failed States in a World of Terror", Foreign Affairs, Vol. 81, No.4, (July-August 2002). p.128

[117] Bruce J. Berman, "Ethnicity, Patronage and the African State: The Politics of Uncivil Nationalism", African Affairs, Vol. 97, No, 388, (1988) p. 355; see also Bayart Jean Francois, *The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly*, Longman, London and New York, 3rd edition, (1993)

and its influence on inter and intra-ethnic relations and perceptions on the other. Instead of the state using citizenship positively as a tool for social mobilization, emancipation, sociopolitical cohesion and harmony, it has in most cases used it as a means to marginalize or exclude particular people from political participation and denying them certain rights and privileges, by questioning their ancestry and origin, which often makes the disadvantaged to express their discontent through conflicts and civil wars.

Second, the issue of citizenship and its relationship with the state has had an influence in ethnic conflicts. The problem between citizenship and the state tends to lie in the definition of the concept and who is a real citizen in the real practical sense. This is because in the context of the state, there are two major categories of people, that is, citizens and non citizens or aliens. The two categories enjoy different rights and privileges and are not necessarily subject to the same rules and regulations. It is also worth noting that citizens of the state are subdivided into further categories of indigenous and non indigenous, immigrants and settlers.

The word citizenship "derives from the root word city"[118], and reflects the historical relationship between the individual and his city. The genesis of the concept is rooted in the medieval world when people lived in small urban-centred dwellings and within this context it referred to 'free man of the city'. Linda defines it as "formal legal membership

[118] Said Adejumobi, "Citizenship, Rights and the Problem of Conflicts and Civil Wars in Africa", Human Rights Quarterly, Vol. 23, No. 1, (February 2001) p. 23

in a political community"[119], while Charles Tilly defines it from four angles; as a category, role, tie and identity;

"As a category, citizenship designates a set of actors-citizens – distinguished by their shared privileged position vis-à-vis a particular state. As a tie, citizenship identifies an enforceable mutual relation between an actor and state agents. As a role, citizenship includes all of an actor's relations to others that depend on the actor's relation to a particular state. And as an identity, citizenship can refer to the experience and public representation of category, tie or role"[120].

It should be realized that citizenship is not a problem as people do belong to different citizenship categories and the fact that the idea of a state cannot be meaningful without citizenship. It only becomes a problem and source of conflict when it is politicized by politicians for their own selfish ends for example when citizenship rights and benefits are denied. Rather than use citizenship as a means and platform for equal rights and access to public goods and services by all the people, the state has often used it to divide and deny particular individuals access to these goods and services.

Within this context, the state creates hierarchy of unequal citizenship with indigenous or native being 'superior' and top on the hierarchy, and 'immigrants' or 'settlers' taking the lowest position. In between these two are those whose origins and ancestry is questionable including dual citizenship. As noted by Said, the state "uses ethnic identity as the primary identity for state entitlements and social rights. It de-individualizes

[119] Linda Bosniak, "Citizenship Denationalised", Indian Journal of Global Legal Studies, Vol. 7, No, 2, (Spring 2000) p. 448
[120] See Said Adejumobi, p. 153

citizenship and makes it more of a group phenomenon. As a result, in gaining access to state institutions, the individual does not relate to the state directly as a citizen, but relates to it as a member or representative of an ethnic group. The result is that the central state becomes an arena of ethnic contest with the more powerful ethnic groups excluding and submerging the lesser ones and denying their people the benefits of citizenship"[121], which not only breeds sociopolitical discontent but also undermines ethnic cohesion and national integration.

It should be realized that soon after independence, the role of ethnicity and ethnicisation of politics became central to African politics because the elites wanted to 'enjoy' the fruits of freedom of the limited resources to the maximum for their own benefit and this phenomena has continued unabated. This has led to intense competition for resources in which exclusion of others is easiest done by using rather fixed features of social stratification like ethnicity and citizenship. It should also be realized that politics is about the control of power and resources in a state and how this is managed or organized.

Within this context is the fact that in a situation of power struggle in post-colonial Africa, the issue of who 'enjoys' or benefits from the resources of the state is determined by the decision of, 'who belongs and who does not'. In such a situation, citizenship is used to marginalize rather than marshal the centripetal impulses of society to unite and build cohesion. Thus the tendency to instrumentalise citizenship as an identity, role or category to create unequal members of society creates feelings of disillusionment for the downtrodden and often leads to violence. Moreover, when it is used in conditions of

[121] Ibid, p. 160-161

distrust, hatred and suspicion between parties like the case between the Acholi people and many in the southern-led NRM government, as the Acholis were referred to as '*Anyanyas'* from Sudan, then it becomes a lethal weapon.

Third, the literature on ethnicity and state-society discourse indicate that the legacy of patron-client relations based on ethnic solidarity has to a large extent continued unabated in post-colonial African states. In support of this argument, Bruce points out that "in post-colonial Africa, the colonial combination of bureaucratic authoritarianism and clientalism has continued essentially unchanged, especially in the structure of rural control"[122], and that "ethnicity has been the fundamental context and idiom of class formation--". In many countries in Africa, there is a common use of analogies and metaphors referring to politics as 'eating', feasting' or 'devouring', literally meaning that once an individual gets into power, then the whole ethnic group from where he comes are automatically entitled to access the jobs, material benefits and all the opportunities and privileges of the state.

Through this way, both the ruler and members of his ethnic group seek to assure themselves of continued hold and perpetuating the dominance of power at whatever cost even in the face of overt resentment and disapproval by other groups. Apparently this tends to be the case in the political arena of most African countries where ethnicity has been politicized and manipulated, resulting into political instability and chaos. The armed rebellions and civil wars that have affected many countries on the continent for example those in the Great Lakes Region such as Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Rwanda,

[122] Bruce J. Berman, "Ethnicity, Bureaucracy and Democracy: The Politics of Trust", James Currey Ltd, (2004) p. 40-50

Burundi, Uganda, including Nigeria, Liberia, and Sierra Leone are largely linked to ethnic connotations. This reliance on support and loyalty from members of one's ethnic group is not only symptomatic of institutional weaknesses and failure but is also reflective of the pervasive fear in African politics that, if you lack powerful patrons with a strong base in homeboys, then some other groups are likely to remove you from power.

In addition to the authoritarian style of leadership, these rulers inherited weaknesses which were deeply rooted in tribal or ethnic affinity but instead of designing policies to correct these weaknesses, they made them worse. While one must avoid over-generalizing as there are states which have been relatively peaceful and not engulfed by ethnic conflict, it is however worth noting that majority of the countries especially those in Sub-Saharan Africa have been prone to ethnic violence. The issue is not how governments and rulers have continued to practice the colonial legacy of divide and rule, ethnic politicization and fractionalization which has eroded the crystallization of national ethnic integration, but rather why they have decided to use the ethnic card that has brought about enormous human suffering and misery.

Indeed as observed by Karugire, "personalities of those who governed after independence played a vital role in determining whether or not the inherited ethnic diversities could be coalesced or mitigated in order to create social peace and harmony".[123] To the extent that rulers continue to rely on ethnic politicization and the 'favoured' in-groups against the disadvantaged out-groups, ethnic conflict has continued to assume deadly violent and

[123] Karugire S.R., "Roots of Political Instability in Uganda", Kampala, Fountain Publishers, (2003) p. 4

dimensions stemming from inter-ethnic competition for economic resources and political power and there is nowhere else this has been so intense than on the African continent.

Relative Deprivation (RD) and Ethnicity:

Violence in many societies has been extremely brutal, endemic and linked to the interests and aspirations of the ruling classes, a phenomenon that has taken on a much more prominent role in academic and intellectual discourse with responsibility to develop theories in order to explain its causes and dynamics. That there has been pervasive resurgence of intra-state conflicts which have threatened to tear apart many countries around the world, but more especially in Africa is obvious enough. The consequences of these wars have been catastrophic. Many people have been killed, others maimed, property destroyed, provision of public goods and services disrupted, with burgeoning exodus of refugees fleeing their countries and yet others forcefully displaced from their villages to become IDPs, all of which have thrived in and exacerbated an environment of chaos and instability.

Relative deprivation is one of the theories that have been advanced to explain the cause of ethnic violence. Its salience lies in the presumption that state actions promote inter-group disharmony, rivalry and violence through ethnic manipulation and deprivation. This is because both concepts are shaped, nurtured and influenced by the state, which paradoxically becomes the core arena and contested terrain where ethnic violence takes place. Within this nexus, the focus has been centred on establishing and explaining the

social causes of collective violence, what makes it focus on a political system and the societal conditions that affect the magnitude and form, including consequences.

RD is defined as the "actors' perception of discrepancy between their value expectations and their value capabilities"[124]. In other words, it is the suffering that a particular group of people unjustifiably undergoes as a result of being deprived of the goods and services which they are justifiably entitled to and which they think they can get and keep. Value expectation which are expressed in present and future terms are the goods and services which people think they are justifiably entitled to in relation to others in society. These include for example, food, shelter, health services, power values and economic development. Value capabilities on the other hand refer to the goods and conditions in life that people believe they can get and maintain through their skills and collective abilities.

According to this theory therefore, if there is a mismatch between what people think they are justifiably entitled to and what they believe they should have got compared to others in society, then RD sets in and triggers discontent whereby frustration and anger act as the drive to violence. It therefore follows that if people feel discontented about the manner in which they are treated, for example suppression of political expression, repression or marginalization from access to and consumption of collective goods and services as compared to others, then the likelihood of precipitating feelings of RD will be high.

[124] Gurr, Ted Robert. "Why Men Rebel", Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, (1970) p.24

What the theory suggests is that whereas men are biologically born with psychological traits of anger, it is an instinct that remains innate, only to be activated by stimuli such as frustration and anger. In other words, the occurrence of aggressive discourse presupposes the existence of frustration and anger. This basically, is the frustration-aggression theory which predisposes men to violent action. Indeed as he further points out, "aggressive responses tend to occur only when they are evoked by an external cue, that is, when the angered person sees an attackable object or person that he associates with the source of frustration" and that "--if frustration continues, aggression is likely to recur"[125].

Within this context therefore, in countries where particular sections of ethnic groups are marginalized and discriminated against and where their political views and participation is stifled, feelings of frustration and anger expressed in form of armed rebellion and civil wars should be understood in light of this theory. In support of the RD theory, Damet observes that some regimes "--prevent participation in policy and decision-making and try to control society by force and coercion. These conditions are likely to create an intense sense of injustice and deprivation among people; therefore the ascent of violent opposition and civil wars is more likely--"[126].

Horowitz argues that ethnic violence is an event with a cause and natural history whereby members of one ethnic group search out with considerable care and attack disliked members of the target group, often settling old scores in the process. He further points out

[125] Ibid, p. 34
[126] Demet Yalcin Mousseau, "Democratising with Ethnic Divisions: A Source of Conflict?, Journal of Peace Research, Vol. 38, No, 5, (2001) p. 550

that "like the willingness to die for a cause, the willingness to kill for a cause constitutes a kind of statement about the cause, the killer, the victim and the act of killing"[127]. Although he tends to stress hostile outburst which results from the confrontation that pit for example 'protesters' against 'authorities', which may manifest into different categories of violent phenomena, he however shares common assumptions of the basic characteristic of collective rationality of the participants in violence.

In actual fact, he acknowledges the underlying proposition that people behave violently because they feel aggrieved and that the "discontent arising from the perception of relative deprivation is the basic, instigating condition for participants in collective violence"[128]. Other scholars have also contributed to the literature of ethnic violence and its causes. Although their explanation tends to come from different perspectives, they however commonly agree on the salience of RD. Thandika for example argues that in many developing countries, increased income inequality, growing poverty and informalisation of the economy have created social structures that are "politically dangerous"[129], and have intensified the sense of RD.

He further observes that the linkage between the state and the countryside is in such a way that governments interest has been to a large extent driven by the extraction of capital, thus increasing the potential for the marginalized youth to join rebel movements, events that have eventually precipitated into civil wars. While his argument captures

[127] Horowitz, L, Donald, "The Deadly Ethnic Riot", University of California Press, (2001) p. 2
[128] Ibid, p. 37
[129] Thandika Mkandawire, "The Terrible Toll of Post-Colonial 'Rebel Movements' in Africa: Towards an Explanation of the Violence against the Peasantry", The Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 40, No, 2, (June 2002) p. 192-193

some reality about the causes of intra-state conflict, it does not explain why conflict has not occurred in some countries where income disparities and the level of poverty are high but yet there is no ethnic conflict and armed rebellions.

RD is a potent source of resentment, aggression and conflict. The link between it and politics is based on the fact that it is political leaders who, as policy makers make decisions that affect the people being ruled. When the decisions of political leader affect a group of people in a negative manner for example by denying them goods and services and favorable conditions in life compared to other members in society, then RD sets in and triggers discontent whereby anger and frustration act as a drive to violence[130]. In order therefore, to understand ethnic conflict in Africa it is important to examine how political power is exercised by political leaders to make decisions and policies which bring about RD and the reaction of the ruled who are affected by these decisions. There is no doubt therefore that in Africa, ethnic conflict is more often than not a human-made crisis generated from the policies and actions of political leaders. These policies which are made within the context of political processes often create feelings of deprivation, socio-political and economic discontent leading to ethno-political conflict[131].

[130] Gurr, Ted Robert, Why Men Rebel, Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, (1970) p.34 - 39
[131] Demet, Yalcin Mousseau, "Democratizing with Ethnic Divisions: A Source of Conflict?" Journal of Peace Research, Vol.38, No,5, (2001) p.549

The Military and Ethnic Conflict

The relationship between the military and ethnic conflict has become a major topic for research among scholars and independent analysts because of the way it influences and shapes sociopolitical systems, inter-group relations and the distribution of power among ethnic groups. This is not because the two are necessarily antagonistic, but rather the way the military is manipulated by rulers for their own selfish ends which make it a potent source of violent conflict. The primary role of the military is to provide security by guarding the country's boarders and protect it from external aggression.

Ayoob points out that in international relations literature, the concept of security is based on two major assumptions, first that the security threats of a state principally emanates from outside its borders and second, that "these threats are primarily, if not exclusively military in nature and usually need a military response if the security of the target state is to be preserved"[132]. Although this is realistic about the functions of the military in as far as peace and security is concerned, the role of the military has gone through transformation over the last decades and now include any action that protects the state and its institutions from any security threat that is in harmony with the law and policy[133].

Within this context, it is important that the composition of the men in uniform reflect the national character of the demographic composition of the country from which they are recruited, which they owe allegiance and a duty of care. Scholars writing about the

[132] Ayoob Mohammed, "The Security Problematic of the Third World", World Politics, Vol. 43, No, 2, (Jan 1991) p. 261
[133] Daniel J. Jensen, "Homeland Security: Roles and Responsibilities of the Army National Guard", Strategy Research Project (February 2002) p. 3

military and ethnicity have mainly focused attention on understanding and explaining the dynamics of manipulation of the military on the basis of ethnicity, its role in triggering ethnic conflict or influencing its course, the conditions under which it manifests, including its durability and breakdown.

The genesis of ethnically skewed armed forces can be traced to the colonial period when the recruitment in the forces became the preserve of specific groups who were considered to possess 'unique' attributes that included martial qualities[134] or worrier traditions, tall in height and stamina. In other words, for one to be recruited in the armed forces, he had to be fierce, brave, bloodthirsty, tall, solid and strong, attributes that were based on ethnic stereotypes[135]. Consequently, the military became dominated by people from one ethnic group. This ethnic dominance continued into the post-independent countries and did not change much.

It should also be realized that in the history of the military, ethnic stereotyping has been used in many parts of the world. Certain ethnic groups have been preferred over others by colonialists because of their perceived martial attributes. For example the Yao formed the main source of recruits in (Nyasaland) Malawi[136], while in Nigeria between 1914 and 1918 the Yoruba and Hausa[137] provided over 80% of the men in uniform. In Kenya,

[134] Carola Lentz and Paul Nugent (Eds), "Ethnicity in Ghana: The Limits of Invention", New York: St. Martin's Press and Basingstoke, Macmillan Press Ltd. London, (2000) p. 118-124; see also Horowitz, L. Donald, "Ethnic Groups in Conflict"
[135] Enloe, C. H. "Ethnic Factors in the Evolution of the South African Military", Journal of Opinion, Vol. 15, No, 5, (1980) p. 25-26
[136] Risto Marjomaa, "The Martial Spirit: Yao Soldiers in British Service in (Nyasaland) Malawi 1895-1939", The Journal of African History, Vol. 44, No, 3, (2003) p. 1-5
[137] John Barrett, "The Rank and File of the Colonial Army in Nigeria, 1914-18", The Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 15, No, 1, (March 1977) p. 106-107

colonial military recruitment was predominantly from the Kamba and Kikuyu[138] ethnic groups while in India, the Lambadis and Karachas[139] who were commonly referred to as "criminal castes" or "criminal tribesmen" were heavily recruited in the army.

Horowitz makes an important observation which is that the military can be a resource and an object of ethnic conflict and gives several reasons in explanation of how this can happen. First, dominance of the military by members of one ethnic group is perceived as a big risk in the minds of disproportionately represented groups because of the monopoly of power at their expense. The point being emphasized is that if the military is not aligned with the national ethnic composition of the country from which it purports to spring and of the government to which it owes allegiance, then the potential to become a source of ethnic conflict is high[140].

This is because in such a situation, offices, recognition, allowances and welfare, opportunities and privileges will tend to be unevenly distributed in favour of the dominant group based on ethnic ties and loyalties, which may generate resentment and discontent among the disadvantaged and discriminated group and therefore a potential source of conflict. Moreover, because the balance of power is tilted in favour of the dominant ethnic group, the possibility of oppressing the minority cannot be overlooked. In addition, members of the ethnic groups disproportionately represented will develop feelings of ethnic strangers in an institution which, in the interest of serving a noble cause

[138] Hal Brands, "Wartime Recruiting Practices, Martial Identity and Post World War II Demobilisation in Colonial Kenya", The Journal of African History, Vol. 46, No, 1, (2005) p. 108-109
[139] Rachel J. Jolen, "Colonising and Transforming the Criminal Tribesman: The Salvation Army in British India", American Ethnologist, Vol. 18, No, 1, (February 1991) p. 106-125
[140] Horowitz, L. Donald, "Ethnic Groups in Conflict", University of California Press, (2000) p. 443

they willingly subscribed to, but are segregated on ethnic sentiments from enjoying the same rights and privileges.

Second, in many countries the recruiters tend to favour members of the groups already in service, implying that a certain ethnic group will at all times outnumber others especially given the fact that recruitment governs composition, thus sustaining ethnic imbalance and militarization. Indeed as further pointed out by Horowitz, “Once heavy recruitment of certain ethnic groups begins, it is likely to continue”. In such an environment, nepotism becomes the central principle and the basis for defining who should be recruited when, how and where including entitlements, with the objective of continuously reinforcing the dominance of the group in the army. Literature on the military indicate that because of lack of mechanism to redress this situation, which in actual fact is deliberate leads to formation of cliques and factions, with the discriminated who may desert the army to join rebel forces.

Third, promotions in the army tend to favour members of the dominant ethnic group because after all, those already in senior positions who make decisions often belong to the this group. Members of the groups that are disproportionately represented seldom do not have a voice and their views are either ignored or suppressed which aggravates discontent. It is not surprising therefore to find that in some countries, the top echelon of the army is made up of officers who belong to one ethnic group, in essence meaning that the control of the army is in the hands of a particular ethnic group, a factor that has

remained contentious as disadvantaged groups challenge the legitimacy and capacity of the state, sometimes resulting into bloody ethnic clashes.

Moreover, the commanders are often appointed on the basis of ethnic affiliation and personal loyalty with little regard to educational qualifications, career excellence, or even military seniority. In tandem with the above phenomenon of dominance and aggravating it is the fact that one ethic group controls the monopoly of the use of force. This can be disastrous if such a force is deployed for example to subdue an internal rebellion waged by an ethnic group which is not well represented in the national army, since it may perpetuate and in actual fact exacerbate the conflict.

Fourth, the military may become a source of ethnic conflict because of intervention in the politics of the country. George and Peter point out that the motives of military men or using military means to intervene in politics and take up power is normally based on several reasons and one of the major reasons advanced is primarily to remove a 'bad' regime or to correct the deficiencies of a civilian rule.[141]**.** The military men once in power quickly make a pronouncement to promise and reassure the people that they are not interested in permanent military rule but just to correct the mistakes of the overthrown leaders and then hand-over power to elected men of integrity who would govern the country.

[141] George Klay Keih, Jr and Pita Ogaba Agbese, "From Politics Back to the Barracks in Nigeria: A Theoretical Exploration", Journal of Peace Research, Vol. 30. No, 4, (1993)

This promise is not only made by professional military men but also by guerrilla leaders who, though without military training give themselves military ranks and continue to use military symbols after capturing power. Ironically, these military rulers do not keep their promise but instead give conditions and use manipulation to extend their entrenchment and stay in power. In the 1970s and 1980s a number of African leaders who came to power through armed struggle against colonialists sought to perpetuate themselves in power through ethnic and regional support base especially from individuals and clientele networks recruited from their home areas many of whom were officers in the armed struggle and now elevated to political positions

The contemporary military regimes in Africa however, are taking on new forms. The leaders come to power through protracted ethnically formed rebel groups and perpetuate themselves in power by allowing some sort of democracy in order to legitimize their rule. But these leaders still behave in a manner similar to military leaders who come into power before them and if anything, become even worse. It is also worth noting that although almost every 'big man' or military regime claims that its rule will be temporary, they become entrenched as the years go by due in part to what they call 'unfinished business' and the problem of finding a successor.

They further observe that failure by the military regime to solve the socio-political and economic problems which motivated and propelled it into power soon erodes its legitimacy to remain in power[142]. Consequently, relinquishing power can only take place through counter-coups or under guardian mechanism by the very regime. Unfortunately

[142] Ibid, p. 413

the latter also faces a problem of finding acceptable successor, because even among those who led the rebellion that removed the previous regime tend to base their support and popularity on ethnic lineages mainly based on regional, tribe or family line, which ultimately erode the trust and goals for which the rebellion began and also cause ethnic resentment among the disadvantaged ethnic groups in the country.

Overall however, we should not forget that first the military is one of the few institutions inherited after independence that was stable, confident and with hierarchy-based discipline and command. This was one of the 'organized' institutions established by colonialists as a watchdog to keep law and order by crashing any dissent that was handed over to the new rulers. Irrespective of its role and responsibilities which have changed overtime, one important feature to note is that successive rulers have reshaped and continue to change the configuration of the army to suit their personal political ambitions in the sense that they manipulate the ethnic composition to be dominated by their home boys. Secondly, in nation states, the privileged power of force is reserved for security forces.

Conclusion:

The chapter has demonstrated that ethnicity is one of the major motivation and driving factors in triggering civil wars. However, it has also shown that ethnicity itself is not the cause of the problem but rather a consequence. In other words, its manipulation and politicization by individuals especially politicians, that is, its use for mobilizing political support in the competition for access to and control of power and economic resources is what makes it a potent source of conflict. This is because domination of the political arena by an ethnic group often results into inequitable distribution of political power and

public goods to members of other ethnic groups, a factor that is not only unfair but unjustified and discriminatory.

Consequently, it creates feelings of relative deprivation among those ethnic groups that are denied access to the society's opportunities and rewards which they think they are justifiably entitled to and which in turn creates discontent and resentment. It has also shown that ethnicity is an artificial construct that can be deconstructed. The concept was constructed during colonialism period with an objective of controlling and exploiting people in the colonized territories but has been perpetuated by post-colonial rulers as a strategy for retaining power at all costs. Arising out of this is the fact that in states where ethnicity is politicized, the state has not only remained weak but has also increased the potential for the marginalized sections of the population to challenge the legitimacy of the government, more often than not through armed insurgencies.

In addition to the above, the military has been central to the problem of ethnic conflict. This is because state authorities often align with ethnic communities from which they come and perpetuate this nomenclature through recruiting preferences, deployment and promotions restricted to such ethnic groups who are considered politically reliable for the regimes survival. Ironically, such an army will find it difficult to resolve a political problem because it will be perceived as partisan. The point being emphasized is that in a scenario where such an army is deployed into a communally tense situation for example to subdue an armed insurgency, it will tend to exacerbate the conflict because it will be perceived as an army of repression and therefore an enemy rather than a neutral arbiter.

As such civil wars on the African continent should be understood from this context. Examining state reconstruction under the NRM and how it has used ethnicity in politics and its impact on ethnic and regional divisions as demonstrated by the civil war in northern Uganda is the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

Emergence of NRA/M, State Reconstruction and International Relations

Introduction

Since Uganda got independence in 1962, it has been gripped by violence and conflict, save for a few years from 1962 to 1966. This violence has been detrimental to inter-ethnic harmony, economic development, peace and stability. Ethnicity has been a central theme and organizing principle around which this violence take place. Successive governments have come into power through politicization of ethnicity in competition for political power and control of scarce resources. Because of ethnic-directed competition, the state was turned against the people and as a result, it suffered destruction and decline on three fronts namely, social, economic and political. Obote for example relied heavily on ethnic politicization between 1980 and 1985 in order to maintain a grip on power which led to stiff competition, political instability and economic decay.

It is within this context that the NRA/M under Museveni waged a guerrilla war against the second Obote government claiming that elections were rigged, by mobilizing support through manipulation of ethnicity which intensified inter-group disharmony, mutual distrust and suspicion. But ethnicity cannot be taken for granted. This is because available evidence from scholarly research indicates that ethnicity is not the problem and source of conflict as it can be constructed and deconstructed. There is therefore need to understand how and why it has been used to foment ethnic conflict in Uganda. Following

the rise to power of NRA/M in 1986, it promised restoration of the economy, national ethnic integration and unity, the rule of law, peace and stability.

It begun the reconstruction of the state based on restoration of trust in authority, reversing the image of the military and elimination of war. It introduced reforms which set the stage for political and economic recovery of which it received praise. It at the same time experienced armed rebellions and most notably the LRA insurgency in Acholiland since 1987, which is the focus of this thesis. It should also be realized that while under the NRM leadership the central and south west parts have enjoyed relative peace and stability, the northern region and more specifically Acholiland has experienced civil war for over two decades.

This section examines the formative years of NRA/M as a guerrilla movement and its link with ethnicity. It also examines how its policies and actions in the process of the reconstruction of the state after capturing power in 1986 to date triggered discontent and resentment which ultimately led to the rebellion in the north. Specifically, I will show that government's policies towards the Acholi people account for the ethnic conflict that has endured in Acholiland. This is because the construction and nature of the state in Uganda tend to be intertwined with ethnic manipulation and politicization which creates unequal distribution of public resources and political power, thus fueling social discontent which often results into and exacerbate ethnic conflict.

The rise of NRA/M and Manipulation of Ethnicity (1982-1986):

In order to understand the emergence of the conflict in Acholiland, it is important to consider factors that took place prior to and after the NRA/M captured power in 1986. Three factors that need to be taken into account and explained are first, the civil war that took place particularly in the central jungles of Luwero between 1982 and 1986, second, the overthrow of Obote II government on 27th July 1985 by Acholi military officers, and thirdly, the regime's policies and politics that sought to ostracize the Acholi people. These events had significant influence on the politics of ethnic manipulation which has continued to fuel conflict in several areas of Uganda, but most notably the war in Acholiland.

The war in Luwero Triangle in particular is important because ethno-regional factors played a pivotal role to the extent that the current armed confrontation between Acholi insurgents and the UPDF can be traced to this episode. In actual fact, the war was fought and perceived as a confrontation between ethnic northerners and the Bantu-speaking ethnic southerners. Museveni rallied support by invoking linguistic and ethnic affiliation to build his fighting force by pitting the north against the south. Indeed as pointed out by Otunnu, "the most striking characteristic of president Museveni's early moves has been his manipulation of ethnic and linguistic factors for political reasons"[143].

[143] Amii Omara-Otunnu, "Politics and the Military in Uganda, 1890-1985", ST. Antony's College, Oxford, (1987) p. 176-177

It is also worth noting that ethnicity in `post-independence Uganda has been used by one group against the other, a factor that has tended to make one group to dominate others and in the process, stirring up ethnic hostilities and conflict. This is because monopoly of political power and public resources, insubordination and control of other groups by intimidation and coercion often creates feelings of deprivation and resentment which become a tool for the leaders in the affected group to mobilize and fight what they consider as the source of the deprivation. In 1981 Museveni launched his guerrilla campaign against the second Obote government.

Although the decision to go to the bush was based on allegation that the 1980 elections were rigged, even when this option is difficult to justify given the fact that the allegation could have been settled through non violent means, his pronouncements indicate an ethnic-driven motive. For example he presented the claim in ethnic terms and that is, "-- to remove a repugnant system of government based on an army dominated by northerners, especially the Acholi"[144], thus casting the 'problem' in ethnic terms.

The decision to launch this war in Luwero therefore was not by chance but just a strategic one. The reasoning that it has jungle terrain which is suitable for guerrilla campaign is not convincing enough as there are other areas in Uganda that have similar and perhaps better terrain that could have been used by the NRA. Something more than just terrain was therefore needed and that is ethnic manipulation in the sense that rivalry and hostilities could be invoked in a hostile environment against the Obote government, thus making

[144] Mutibwa Phares, "Uganda since Independence: A Story of Unfulfilled Hopes", Africa World Press, Inc. (1992) p. 154

ethnic mobilization and recruitment much easier. The overriding factor therefore was that a particular ethnic group must be having memories of hatred against northerners that could easily be invoked.

Luwero Triangle combined these characteristics and presented itself as the locus and epicenter of hatred where the armed campaign against northerners could be launched. The issue of ethnicity was thus not only used politically in deciding whom to target and attack, but also deciding the geographical location of where to launch the armed campaign. It was an area where entrenched hostility could be easily exploited. The civil war therefore signifies the extent to which political manipulation based on ethnic, religious and linguistic maneuvers are used in Ugandan politics to mobilize support for access and control of state power and economic resources.

It is also worth noting that because in Africa there is lack of autonomy between the state and competing ethnic groups, the state becomes the prize for competition, the resource and contested arena over which ethnic groups fighting for its control takes place. The point being emphasized is that because individuals in the state define themselves in terms of ethnicity and pay allegiance to particular ethnic groups, the struggle for ownership of the state and its privileges becomes salient as ethnic groups try to answer the question, "to whom or which ethnic group does the state belong?"

In a situation of this nature, the neutrality or autonomy of the state ceases to exist. Consequently, the state and its institutions become ethnicized and embroiled in patron clientalism networks that further entrench monopolization of economic resources and

political power by one ethnic group and creating and positioning “gatekeepers” in key positions of the state. This was the nature of the Obote II-led UPC government as it was composed entirely of UPC members, especially his ethnic homeboys who held key positions and controlled resources of the state. Furthermore, Obote relied on the military constituency that was not only predominantly Acholi-Langi hegemonic but also lacked discipline that is crucial in creating and maintaining cordial civil-military relations and the trust between the state and (ordinary) people in harmony.

This is the context within which the NRA/M sprang using ethnicity as a basis for mobilization which has deepened the polarization of the north south-divide and generated intense ethnic conflict between itself and the people in the north, particularly the Acholi people. It should also be realized that this ethnic manipulation by the Museveni-led NRM government has inevitably affected other ethnic groups in other areas in the country, for example in Bunyore between the Banyoro and Bakiga. It is no wonder therefore that Museveni has tended to follow in the footsteps of his predecessors in as far as manipulation and politicization of ethnicity and militarization of politics is concerned. It cannot be a coincidence or by default that all the post-independence rulers of Uganda have taken this path in the leadership and management of state affairs, but rather by design.

Ethnicity played a crucial role as a driver of the rise of the NRA/M right from its formation as a guerrilla movement in early 1980s. The initial fighters who started it and led by Museveni were predominantly southern Bantu-speakers from the Banyankole ethnic group. Four years after the capture of Kampala and after the force was transformed

into a national army the UPDF, and having been in power for twenty five years now, the ethnic dominancy has remained in the hands of the same ethnic group. The UPDF has had seven army commanders in the last 29 years and out of these, only one came outside the Banyankole ethnic group.

Furthermore, to prove that ethnicity was a driver in the rise of NRA/M, the leaders of the rebellion designed what they called "The Ten Point Programme of the National Resistance Movement", a policy document that would guide them once in power. It was a set of values and principles that were meant to form the basis of the fundamental change in Uganda's governance and new political dispensation. Point number three on the list read as follows, "consolidation of national unity and elimination of all forms of sectarianism". Sectarianism refers to all forms of religious, ethnic and gender chauvinism.

After capturing power, Museveni used and continues to use ethnic-based sectarianism, the vice he vowed to eliminate. For example and as already mentioned, the UPDF continues to be dominated by people from the same ethnic group of Banyankole. The same applies to other government institutions where you find majority of the workers or officials in the top echelon are from the same ethnic group or part of the country, which makes these institutions look like ethnic camps. Examples of institutions dominated by people from one region or ethnic group by 2010 include the following;

Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets:

Names **Position Held**

1. James Kahoza……Chairman Board of Governors
2. Joshua Mulera…….Director Procurement, Audit and Investigations
3. Benson Turamye…….Manager
4. Marry Sozi……..Director Finance and Administration
5. Fionah Kanyike……..Manager
6. Asaph Mugisha……Human Resource Manager
7. Etiang Joseph……..Internal Audit Manager
8. Conelia Kakooza Sabiiti……..Legal Compliance Director
9. Milton Tumutegyereize……Director Training and Capacity Building

Uganda Investment Authority

1. William Kalema……Board Chairman
2. Maggie Kigozi……..Executive director
3. Tom Buringuriza……..Deputy Executive Director
4. Issa Mukasa…….Director Investment Promotion

5. Lawrence Byensi…….Director Investment Facilitation

6. Arthur Bwire Tukahirwa…….Director Industrial Parks Development

7. Joel Byaruhanga……..Director Finance and Administration

8. Barnabas Tumwesigye……Director Lands Development Division

Source; see the Independent Newspaper, 'Regional distribution of top jobs in government bodies', 26th January 2010

It is not clear whether this configuration has changed but indications shows that the status quo has remained the same. It can therefore be argued that consolidation of national unity was included in the Ten Point Programme not because Museveni (and perhaps other leaders of the guerrilla movement) subscribed to national unity ethos, but rather for purposes of accessing and strengthening his hold on power and attract international and local recognition and support. He was therefore never interested in elimination of ethnic disharmony but rather take advantage of it. Indeed as pointed out by Omara-Otunu, Museveni's five-year-long guerrilla campaign was underpinned by the "--appeal to ethnic and linguistic sentiments"[145].

Ironically, he constantly talks against 'tribalism' and sectarianism but has done little, if not nothing to stem the vice. In actual fact, people who have complained about manipulation and politicization of ethnicity by his government have ended up being punished instead. Within this context, it can be argued that the allegation that the 1980 elections were rigged which formed the reason and basis for Museveni to start a guerrilla

[145] Omara-Otunnu Amii, "Politics and the Military in Uganda 1890-1985", Houndsmills and London, Macmillan (1987) p. 176

campaign against the Obote II government was mere deceit and politicking aimed at getting power for the sake of it through ethnic manipulation and politicization.

Ethnic motive is aptly expressed in an interview with Drum Magazine in 1985 in which Museveni claimed that the 'political mess' in the country was a result of bad leadership of people from the north by saying;

"The problem in Uganda is that the leadership has mainly been from the north. The southerners who are mainly Bantu have played a peripheral role all these years since independence in 1962. A lot of blood has been shed. We want genuine elections and we are sure that if these were held the best candidate would win. We are not against northerners as such, and if a popular man from Acholi or Lango or even Madi wins, he will have our mandate. What we cannot stomach is rigged elections, such as the one we had in 1980. We are still prepared to talk to Okello as a military leader on the future of our country but we are not going to talk out of weakness. In fact our forces are already inside Kampala and soon we may surprise the world"[146].

This statement indicates two main messages. First it gives an indication that even if the problem may have been political, the ethnic northerners were still to blame and not other people. It was not only diversionary but also deliberate. This is because if the blame had been put on the government as a whole, then the leadership which comprised of people from other parts of Uganda like Bunyoro, Busoga, Kigezi, would have been to blame. By

[146] Human Rights and Peace Centre (HURIPEC), "The Hidden War, The Forgotten People: The War in Acholiland and its Ramifications for Peace and Security in Uganda", (October 2003) p. 25-26; see also Zachary Lomo and Lucy Hovil, "Behind the Violence: The War in Northern Uganda", Institute For Security Studies, Monograph Number 99, (2004) p. 19

singling out ethnic northerners, the intent was to create a negative picture of northerners in the minds of other groups especially the southerners which increased ethnic tensions and resentment.

Second, it also indicates that even if the 1980 elections had been free and fair and won by a candidate from the north, Museveni and the NRA/M were not prepared to recognize him and supported his rule. In this way, ethnicity was used to 'justify' an individual's aspirations to gain access to the highest political office in the land through regional and ethnic manipulation, by blaming a collective responsibility to a particular group of people. It can also be interpreted to mean that after all, holding elections is not what matters but rather the military force at ones disposal.

Third, in the current context of Uganda's political elections, it could also mean that there is no problem going into the election process but as long as 'I control the vote counting and announcing the winner', because in this way the winning candidate will not necessarily be the genuine one but one who controls the instruments of force. This therefore exposes the politics of manipulation and the 'strong man' syndrome that has characterized Ugandan politics where an individual controls power by coercion, selective use of force and intimidation.

This civil war therefore forms an important start point and basis for understanding why Acholiland has remained the locus of armed confrontation between the NRM and the LRA. It is intertwined with the NRM's mobilization strategies that are based on appeal to ethnic and linguistic sentiments and the general trend in Uganda, whereby the guns rather

than elections are used to settle differences[147]. Because a person's ethnic identity can be used as a tool for hatred or loyalty-inducing force, mobilization of support through manipulation of ethnicity rather than objective principles becomes the feasible alternative to the leader.

This in turn allows the leader to portray the disliked target group as the source of suffering of other groups and therefore the 'real' problem. In this process, he intensifies the misperceptions and negative views of ethnic others and exploits the fragmentation of society in his favour. Indeed as aptly pointed out by Joraslav and Michael, "Because many groups were involved in atrocities against one another at some point in the past, memories of misbehavior- which tend to persist longer and cut deeper than memories of good relations, become a part of the ethnic lore"[148].

Viewed in this way, the inter-group disharmony and the civil war in Acholiland or perhaps put it in a better way, the north-south divide is a result of the politics of 'divide and rule' tactics by pitting one ethnic group against the other. As Muwonge says, "Museveni exploited the ethnic Bantu hatred against the northerners to recruit them into his guerrilla force many of whom were peasants and gave some of them guns while others were not and did not care whether they were killed as many did not get training"[149].

[147] Brett E. A. "Neutralising the Use of Force in Uganda: The Role of the Military in Politics", The Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 33, No, 1, (1995) p. 142
[148] Joraslav Tir and Michael Jasinski, "Domestic-Level Diversionary Theory of War: Targeting Ethnic Minorities", Journal of Conflict Resolution, Vol. 52, No, 5, (October 2008) p. 644
[149] Interview with Muwonge, a primary school teacher, Luwero, December 2009

This observation of using ethnic hatred is also pointed out by this veteran soldier when he says, "--some NRA soldiers would be dressed in military uniform similar to that of UNLA soldiers and deployed to terrorize the village under the guise of UNLA soldiers after which a representative of the NRA/M would come and address people after the 'UNLA soldiers' have disappeared and advise them to vacate their villages or join the NRA. It was also used as an initiation exercise for NRA recruits to gain courage but sometimes they could be deployed to conduct ambushes"[150]. This revelation is in line with that of Keitetsi, a former NRA child soldier now turned ambassador of goodwill to fight for the rights of children. In her autobiography, she gives insight into what happened in Luwero Triangle massacres during the NRA/M insurgent campaign between 1982 and 1985. In one of her revelations, she recalls;

"A month had passed since I left the training grounds. I was picked for a special assignment along with a few other children. I was excited because I would be seeing the action I had heard so much about from the other children—but it did not happen quite as I had been told. The sound (of the fighting) was terrifyingly loud and everything on the road seemed to splinter into pieces as rocket-propelled grenades (RPG) hit the trucks--our side won and after the battle everybody run to the road and begun undressing the dead soldiers. Every one of us, except senior officers needed something to wear--my excitement turned into sadness when I saw the wounded enemy scattered around and crying for help, and suddenly it became hard for me to think of them as enemy--"[151].

[150] Interview with a veteran NRA soldier, Kampala, December 2009

[151] China Keitetsi, "Child Soldier: Fighting for my Life", Bellevue, Jacana (2002) p. 97, Cited from Robert Lukwiya Ochola , MCCJ, "Religious Leaders' Peace Initiative in the Battle Field of Northern Uganda, An Example of an Integral, Inculturated and Ecumenical Approach to Pastoral Work in a War Situation", (June 2006) p. 32

She continues to narrate the NRA's brutality and what happened to the captured UNLA enemy combatants as follows;

"*When we got back to our camp the prisoners were ordered to dig their own graves and some of our officers told us to spit in their eyes. The enemy was told that no bullets would be wasted on them. I could feel tears dropping in my heart while I watched the enemy being told how they were to be killed. "After you have dug your graves I will call for the best men who will hit you on your head with an akakumbi"- a short but heavy hoe. After the men had finished digging they were ordered to stand next to their graves. They were hit on the foreheads and on the back of their heads until they dropped into their graves and died"*[152].

As the war escalated so did the rise of human casualties especially among the civilian population, many of the dead and maimed being women and children. It did not occur to the protagonists to have a negotiated settlement as each stuck to his guns. Counter accusations became the norm as Obote blamed the death of the people on the NRA/M guerrillas referring to them as bandits and assuring the nation that they would soon be wiped out. In fact in one of the public rallies, Obote told his listeners that Museveni's NRA bandits were confined in a small area and that the Baganda were trouble causers who needed to behave themselves or else they would be taught a lesson[153], thus indicating Uganda's complex ethnic politics and crystallization of ethnicity.

On his part, Museveni and his NRA/M accused Obote and UNLA forces of committing atrocities against men, women and children and destroying property. NRA forces concentrated on guerrilla tactics of ambush and hit and run most of the time. For every attack that was carried out by NRA, the government forces in response unleashed brutal

[152] Ibid, p. 32
[153] Mutibwa Phares, "Uganda since Independence: A Story of Unfulfilled Hopes", Africa World Press, Inc. (1992) p.159

force to the people in the area leading to civilian deaths, which was always blamed on UNLA soldiers. This gave The NRA/M more chance to increase recruitment by telling people that the enemy was the government of Obote and his Acholi soldiers.

In the meantime, heavy ethnic mobilization and recruitment of the peasants meant heavy death toll. Whereas atrocities were blamed on the predominantly Acholi dominated UNLA, the question still remains as to whether it was only the guns of government forces killing and not those of the NRA. It is in this light that some politicians[154] are demanding for an independent inquiry into the massacres of Luwero triangle and other areas where the fighting took place in order to know the truth despite continuous denial and resistance from some high ranking and influential NRM personnel. In the absence of an impartial independent inquiry, the Acholi may continue to be blamed and the truth of who committed these atrocities may perhaps never be known let alone bringing to justice the perpetrators. Ethnic reconciliation is likely to remain a far away dream in Uganda.

Furthermore, information from senior personnel who participated in this war indicate that ethnic tendencies were a major motive and drive behind the NRA/M insurgent war against the northern-led government. In a recent revelation, Museveni's bush war colleagues and senior NRA/M resistance struggle combatants stated that this war was against northerners;

[154] The president of Uganda People's Congress Party (UPC) Olala Otunnu insists that the NRA/M committed atrocities during the five year guerrilla war especially in Luwero despite their continuous denial and instead blaming the UPC government and has called for an inquiry in order to establish the truth.

"Museveni's orientation to the liberation of Uganda was ethnic. Going to the bush in Luwero was intended to fight the northerners and that is why the alliance with Lule was made- to have Lule as a Muganda so that he would get support in Luwero to fight northerners--. The way the forces that took over Kampala treated the northerners demonstrated that. And so it has continued to be ethnic and the people in the north seem to see their persecution as being ethnic (Professor Dan W. Nabudere and Major (Rtd.) Rubaramira Ruranga[155]"

There was also another dimension to the claim of liberation of Uganda by the leaders of NRA/M during the early 1980s. They claimed that liberation was necessary for the emancipation of Ugandans and more especially the disadvantaged peasantry south of Lake Kyoga that were being exploited by the elites who had 'failed' to serve the interests of the public, but instead only cared about their welfare, an appeal that had ethnic connotations. Even when there seemed to be a contradiction as the objective later changed to transforming Uganda from a 'backward' state to an industrialized one by creating a middle class, still the motive seemed to be aimed at promoting the interests of a particular group of people.

Ironically, the very leadership seemed to be aware of the negative effects of ethnicity arising out of policies and actions of manipulative politicians, as Museveni writes, "Uganda and most other countries in Black Africa are still pre-industrial societies and they must be handled as such. Societies at this stage of development tend to have vertical polarizations based mainly on tribe and ethnicity"[156]. In these circumstances, one might even argue that these strategies were used to attract support of a certain ethnic group who would form a dominant class. In his analysis of class and power in Africa, Sklar points

[155] Diana Camack, "Big Men', Governance and Development in Neo-patrimonial States", (2007) p.8
[156] Ronald Kassmir, "Reading Museveni: Structure, Agency and Pedagogy in Ugandan Politics", Canadian Journal of African Studies, Vol. 33, No, 2, (1999) p. 654-655

out that "the most common political device for dominant class consolidation in Africa has been authoritarian government"[157], often through repression which inevitably creates an upsurge of widespread discontent and agitation against the regime that may be expressed through rebellion and civil wars.

These ethnic and revenge tendencies which started and were amplified during NRA/M's early days of the insurgent struggle have continued and largely explain the inter-ethnic tensions among the various ethnic groups in Uganda in general and the northern conflict in particular. Revenge tendencies in the case of the war in Acholiland makes sense as noted by Joraslav and Jasinski when they point out that "because many groups were involved in atrocities against one another at some point in the past, memories of misbehavior ---become part of ethnic lore"[158]. That the NRA fought against Acholi-dominated UNLA and continues to blame the Acholi for the atrocities during this period has meaning for revenge.

It is also important to note that the fighters of NRA were mainly members of one ethnic group the Banyankole from places like Ankole and Kigezi in south western Uganda, together with Banyarwanda who settled in Luwero. However, other groups like the Uganda Freedom Movement (UFM) and Federal Democratic Movement (FEDEMU) were also formed along ethnic lines. All these groups mobilized and fought using ethnicity to mobilize fighters and support thus indicating the salient and complex role ethnicity plays in Uganda's politics. It is therefore not surprising that the UNLA was also

[157] Sklar L Richard, "The Nature of Class Domination in Africa", The Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 17, No, 4, (December 1979), p. 540-550
[158] Joraslav Tir and Jasinski Michael, "Domestic-Level Diversionary Theory of War", Journal of Conflict Resolution, Vol.52. No, 5, (October 2008) p.644

built on the basis of ethnicity especially between the Acholi and Langi. The divisions and misunderstandings between these two were later to play in favour of the NRA. For instance, the Acholi complained about promotions which they said were favouring the Langi when instead it was them doing the donkey work of fighting at the frontlines and therefore dying in great numbers.

It should also be realized that the regimes policies and ethnic politics sought to ostracize the ethnic groups in the north, particularly the Acholi people while it did not do the same to other people. First, the cordial and friendly relations between the guerrillas and ordinary people especially in the central and south was rarely exhibited in the north. As the victorious NRA troops advanced northwards, the nature and scale of hostility and brutality against ordinary people and suspected or real former UNLA soldiers became more militarist, aimed at punishing them rather than winning their hearts and minds.

According to Odong, a social worker in Pabo,

"*The NRA instructed the local leaders in villages to write down the names of all the former soldiers including those who were in Amin's Uganda Army (UA) in the 1970s without an explanation, which made people, not only fearful but suspicious of the intent. The lists were normally handed over to the local NRA commanders. In many cases the NRA would appear in a village unnoticed, surround it and conduct cordon and search under the guise of looking for guns and former soldiers. Those who were suspected of being former soldiers or having link with the rebels, or thought to have withheld 'important' security information especially men, were often undressed and tied 'three piece kandoya' where ones hands are tied tightly behind his back to the extent that the chest protrudes forward and then forged or beaten in front of the family. It did not matter to them whether you are a head of the family or what age you are. It was total humiliation"*[159].

[159] Interview with Odong, Gulu, 2009

Secondly, people were forcefully removed from their villages and made to live in squalid conditions in IDPs camps that were neither planned for nor protected from rebel attacks. This policy which was first implemented by the army in Acholiland purportedly to isolate civilians from rebel combatants was not aimed at protecting them but rather a disguise to punish them. Consequently, it had a profound impact on the Acholi social set up, as it led to the death of many people, family and cultural fibre broken and many people traumatized. It should be noted that whereas the central and southern parts of the country were affected by insurgency, irrespective of size and duration of insecurity, for example the Force Obote Back Again (FOBA) and the ADF which still operates in Kasese, people in the affected areas have never been forcefully taken to camps like in the north.

One former NRA soldier said that in December 1987, the HSM/A fought a fierce battle with an NRA detachment at Pajule in former Kitgum district but now Pader in which many soldiers and rebels were killed and Museveni arrived the following day to assess the situation. During his address to the officers and men in which he issued new orders, the soldier quotes Museveni to have said that,

"--from now onwards you should act decisively if we are to defeat these bandits. You should be similar to them by being light in order to move and act swiftly in pursuit after an attack and also before the attack. By this I mean you should only carry your great coat, raincoat, gun and at least three magazines full of ammunition and track them wherever they pass and go. You should also deny them food in the field by eating and uprooting what you can't eat from the gardens, destroy the granaries and hunt them down like rats. We shall defeat them again like we did in Luwero"[160].

[160] This was said by a veteran soldier of NRA who belonged to a detachment of the 67th Battalion that was stationed at Pajule in 1986-87. He retired from the army in 1991

Orders of this nature from a leader of government clearly show that this was deliberate and consciously done to purge the Acholi people. It is part of a history of ethnic marginalization and repression that has tended to characterize Uganda's political scene. In a situation of this nature, politics of retribution becomes an important factor in embedding violent use of ethnicity to exert control over specific ethnic groups considered a threat to the regime and purportedly to establish stability after conflict.

NRA/M consolidation of strength and intensification of hostilities (1985-1986):

Although by 1984 the NRA was exhausted[161] and in actual fact sent emissaries to government seeking to negotiate for peace, the situation soon changed in its favour operationally on one hand but intensified ethnic hostilities on the other. The guerrilla campaign gained momentum and it stepped up its military attacks. This was brought about by a number of factors. First, the death of Oyite Ojok, the UNLA Chief of Staff in 1983 increased the morale of the NRA while that of the UNLA plummeted. This is because Oyite Ojok's professional leadership had ensured unity in the army and was effective in command including designing and directing counter-guerrilla operations against the NRA. To make matters worse, not only did the morale of UNLA go down but they also responded with excessive force especially in Luwero where much of the fighting was taking place and where a helicopter carrying him was brought down, resulting in heavy civilian casualty. Such acts increased NRA/M's opportunities for

[161] Joraslav Tir and Jasinski Michael, "Domestic-Level Diversionary Theory of War", Journal of Conflict Resolution, Vol.52. No, 5, (October 2008) p.162

recruitment of the local people who were constantly reminded that the Acholi soldiers of Obote were the ones killing them.

Second, Smith Opon Acak the new UNLA Chief of Staff who was appointed by Obote to replace Oyite Ojok, though fairly educated did not have the necessary leadership abilities and military stamina[162] to command respect across the army like his predecessor. Besides, there were other officers who were senior to him who according to army establishment would have taken up that position. This brought about resentment, factionalism and discontent in the UNLA especially among the Acholi where the senior army officers to the chief of staff hailed from. This sparked growing unrest within the UNLA because of the perceptions that Obote was favouring the Langi at the expense of the Acholi by promoting and appointing them to high positions within the army. To the Acholi therefore, the appointment of Opon Acak meant that they were not only being sidelined, but could not have any of their senior officers in influential positions in the army. Moreover, to make matters worse, the Acholi accused him of favoring his ethnic Langi officers and men and also of sending them to the frontlines to fight the NRA guerrillas[163] thus resulting into many Acholis to die. All this played in the hands of NRA/M which stepped up its insurgent campaigns, strengthened its fighting capability through increased ethnic mobilization and recruitment and expanded the territories under their command.

[162] Omara-Otunnu Amii, "Politics and the Military in Uganda 1890-1985", Macmillan Press Ltd. (1987) p.160-162
[163] *Africa Research Bulletin*, 15th September 1985, p. 7761

In the meantime as the government army became weaker and weaker as a result of weak command, internal strife and Obote's lineage to his ethnic tribe for advice and support, the morale and capacity of the army to fight the insurgency and defend the country was undermined. Because of this, the focus was diverted from counter-guerrilla operations to purging Acholi officers suspected of planning 'subversive' activities and also rounding up and detaining soldiers who were escaping from the frontline and were now terrorizing civilians. It was not only soldiers who were being rounded up and detained but also civilians especially the ethnic Bantu-speaking from central and south as they were suspected of collaborating with the NRA rebels.

The UNLA carried our operations commonly known as "*panda gari*" meaning get into the car as suspects were ordered to jump into the trucks that were used to ferry them to detention centres. Ironically, Obote was now using ethnicity which was the main cause for his overthrow in 1972, moreover by the very institution he relied on and needed most to keep him in power. It is therefore not surprising that the NRA/M took advantage of these weaknesses and consolidated its war campaign and fighting strength. The biggest opportunity for NRA/M presented itself when discontent and factionalism in the UNLA reached all levels high and senior ethnic Acholi[164] army officers organized a contingent of Acholi-dominated troops to overthrow Obote.

[164] The coup against Obote was organized by Brigadier Bajlio Olala Okello an ethnic Acholi together with other Acholi officers

The Overthrow of Obote II Government, and manipulation of ethnicity (July 1985 to January 1986):

A contingent of Acholi troops led by one time loyal commanders Tito Okello Lutwa and Bajrio Okello overthrew Obote government on 27th July 1985. Ironically these officers had been close to Obote since the formation of the UNLA, the military wing of the Uganda National Liberation Front (UNLF) and in actual fact, threw their support behind him and the UPC. They controlled the military power which remained in the hands of the Luo-speaking northerners thus symbolizing perpetual continuation of the traditional colonial structure since independence.

The officers who masterminded the coup said that one of the major reasons was to stop destruction and bloodshed in the country in order to create necessary conditions for peace, unity and development. In a press release which was issued four months after the coup, its leader Bajilio Olara Okello stated the motive as follows;

"*The main reasons for the action taken by the army of 27th July were; to stop bloodshed in the country; and to create conditions for viable peace, unity, development, and the observance and promotion of human rights. In fact the UNLA merely responded to the anguished voices of the people of this country who have suffered for too long at the hands of dictators and self-seeking politicians. I can assure you there were no other compelling reasons for the takeover apart from the ones I have just mentioned. (Press Release from Commander of Defence Forces, Lieutenant-General Bajilio Olara Okello, 11 November 1985, Kampala"*[165].

[165] Omara-Otunnu Amii, "Politics and the Military in Uganda 1890-1985", Macmillan Press Ltd. (1987) p. 165

Despite the above statement however, some scholars have pointed out that the Acholi people wanted power themselves[166], while others have indicated that this was a continuation of the social political chaos, brutal and destructive vengeance[167] against an ethnic group considered to have benefitted materially and politically at the expense of others which has tended to characterize Uganda since 1966, whereby force rather than negotiations is used to settle disputes. The reason thus has been interpreted from different perspectives but to a large extent seem to depend on who you talk to.

Nevertheless, it is important to examine how ethnicity influenced and shaped it and the situational factors that contributed to it. This is because deciding to fight is one thing but choosing the ideology, method of mobilization and whether to negotiate or continue fighting is yet another. In the case of the NRA, the option chosen was to continue fighting and the method of mobilization heavily relied on ethnicity. The Military Junta's desire to bring about peace and reconciliation became futile and the search for peace continued to be elusive. Whereas some armed groups that were also fighting the Obote government such as UFM, UNRF, FEDEMU and FUNA, agreed to join the Military Junta, the NRA/M vehemently refused.

Museveni stated that he and the NRA/M could not join the Military Junta because of the atrocities committed by the Acholi soldiers in Luwero. As a result, the bloodshed that the leaders of the coup had thought they could stop continued unabated. It is against this

[166] Phares Mutibwa, "Uganda since Independence: A Story of Unfulfilled Hopes", Africa World Press, Inc. (1992) p. 167-175 Hopes,
[167] Edward Khiddu-Makubuya, "Violence and Conflict Resolution in Uganda", in Kumar Rupesighe and Morcial Rubio Correa (Eds), "The Culture of Violence", United Nations University Press, New York, (1994) p. 150-159

background that, they initiated peace negotiations with the NRA/M. This appeared to be the only feasible and realistic option if the country was to return to order and stability. Apparently, Museveni did not seem to be interested in listening to the pleas for negotiations. Even when he finally agreed, he stated that the NRA/M was willing to take part in negotiations but that this was not going to be from the point of weakness. The insinuation of this is that it was going to be on its own terms.

It is also apparently clear that the lack of interest in negotiations served to signal that first, the NRA/M was determined to push the northerners out of power and second, that the barrel of the gun rather than compromise and accommodation would determine the discourse of politics in Uganda[168]. Furthermore, joining the Okello government would mean working with the 'bad' people they were fighting against. Given the fact that in peace talks different entities bring different resources and therefore enabling new avenues for dialogue which generates mutually supportive and value-laden benefits and problem solving opportunities, the manner in which the NRA/M reacted to the idea suggest that it was not interested in the talks but rather to fight the Acholi and eliminate them from the political scene.

Within this context, it seems clear that ethnic dislike and hatred was a salient reason for lack of interest in the talks as well as the motive for continued fighting. It can also be argued that ethnic hatred was the source of the Luwero atrocities and not the other way round. Indeed as observed by HURIPEC, the atrocities and skulls can be attributed to

[168] Brett E. A. "Neutralising the Use of Force in Uganda: The Role of the Military in Politics", The Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 33, No, 1, (March 1995) p. 129-152

"the initiation of a conflict in Luwero based on ethnic and religious divisions--"[169], rather than the other way round.

The negotiations took place in Kenya's capital of Nairobi and were chaired by the then Kenyan president Daniel Arap Moi. However, the events that took place during the process demonstrated that ethnic sentiments were more apparent than unity in purpose, accommodation and reconciliation. These sentiments coupled with mutual distrust tended to undermine the need for a peaceful settlement. Far from acting with a common vision, the two parties pursued different agendas. Indeed as observed by Khadiagala, as talks proceeded, "--it became apparent that neither side was committed to a negotiated settlement, live alone even a cease-fire"[170].

For a bigger part of the process, bickering and counteraccusations tended to predominate. This observation is noted by Bethuel Kiplagat, who was then the permanent secretary in the Kenyan Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the mediator of the negotiation process when he points out that Museveni and the NRM were angry because they thought that the revolution which they had fought for years was being hijacked by the Okellos whom they accused of gross human rights violations. On one occasion, Museveni disappeared to Europe for three days, tabling new demands on his return. During negotiations, tempers would flare as Museveni denounced past regimes as "primitive" and "backward".

[169] Human Rights and Peace Centre (HURIPEC), "The Hidden War: The Forgotten People, War in Acholiland and its Ramifications for Peace and Security in Uganda", (October 2003) p. 29
[170] Khadiagala M, Gilbert, "Uganda's Domestic and Regional Security Since the 1970s", The Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 31, No, 2, (1993) p. 242

He further points out that,

"They began the talks by hurling insults at each other and continued to do so throughout the proceedings. Museveni denounced the previous regimes in Uganda as "primitive" and "backward" He initially refused to negotiate with the military council delegation, dismissing them as 'criminals'. He in turn was accused by the military council of delaying the negotiation process unnecessarily--. Once an agreement was reached on an agenda item, Museveni would change his position the following day, or put forward new demands on the same matter"[171].

It should also be realized that prior to the talks, the NRA/M made several conditions. These included one, "--that half the members of the military council be replaced by their representatives and that no other ruling authority should be established"[172]. Two, that the national army should be comprised of soldiers according to percentages from the fighting groups[173]. Three, that both Museveni and General Okello should enjoy equal status on the military council.

While the official understanding in the public domain was that these negotiations were progressing well, things were different on the battleground. They were different in the sense that although there was no overt fighting taking place, the NRA used this opportunity of ceasefire to reorganize and plan for a military assault that would depose the Acholi-led Military Junta. Indeed although the peace accord was signed on 17th December 1985 after four months of protracted peace talks- commonly dubbed 'peace jokes' especially in the guerrilla circles, the NRA/M dishonored the accord and launched fierce assault on the military junta and pushed it out of power on 25th January 1986.

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[171] Bethuel Kiplagat, "Reaching the 1985 Nairobi Agreement", in L. Okello (Ed), Protracted Conflict, Elusive Peace: Initiatives to end Violence in Northern Uganda, (London; Conciliation Resources and Kacoke Madit 2002) p. 25

[172] Jimmy K. Tindigarukayo, "Leadership in Transition", The Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 26, No, 4, (December 1988) p. 619

[173] Drum Magazine 1985, p. 9

In a country fractured by deep ethnic divisions dating back since colonial days, the act of dishonoring the peace gesture presented in the power sharing agreement was perceived as the greatest betrayal in the eyes of northerners to be ever committed by NRA/M and deepened further the ethnic divisions between the north and the south. In the eyes of northerners therefore, NRA/M war was an indication of nothing else but power struggle aimed at removing northerners from power and a confrontation between non-Bantu speaking northerners and Bantu speaking southerners[174]. Accordingly therefore, NRA/M's narrow ethnic power base and manipulation of ethnic and linguistic appeals to urge ethnic Bantu to rally around their ethnic affiliation was purely for political ends.

NRM's Political Discourse and Emergence of Dissent and Conflict

The emergence of dissent in Uganda since 1986 when NRA/M captured power has come from different areas and by different actors. Although this capture of power was welcomed with excitement, euphoria, hope and optimism for the restoration of democracy, security and economic prosperity by a wide cross section of Ugandans especially in the south, it was also met with fear, suspicion and mistrust especially by people in the north, retreating northern soldiers and the politicians dislodged from power because they suspected revenge from the incoming NRA/M forces. However, it is important to understand that despite the fact that the northern Uganda people mistrusted and suspected the NRA/M forces to carry out revenge against them, their reaction to the government forces as they advanced northwards was a wait and see.

[174] Ibid P. 156; see also Phares Mutibwa, "Uganda since Independence: A Story of Unfulfilled Hopes", Africa World Press, Inc. (1992) p.156

Following its success in overrunning the capital city of Kampala, the NRA continued advancing and entered northern Uganda without any much resistance and took up positions in the region. Although some retreating UNLA soldiers continued fleeing and entered Sudan, some remained behind in their villages, removed their military uniforms and hid their guns. They had accepted and come to terms with NRA victory. The defeated combatants complied with the new governments call to surrender their arms and demobilize. Some of those who gave in their arms were registered and sent back home while others were reabsorbed into the NRA. However, others were sent to reorganization centres which were in western Uganda for example in Kiburara and the former Simba garrison near Mbarara town. It should also be realized that there was relative peace in northern Uganda in the first months up to April 1986 although stakes remained high because of tension and suspicion emanating from NRA's language and songs that were perceived as provocative. Nevertheless, this peace did not last long and this was because of the following factors.

First, the methods used by the NRA/M to consolidate power and bring northern Uganda under its control were considered suspicious and provocative by the defeated soldiers. In May 1986 for example, it ordered all former UNLA forces to report to the nearest barracks. This order was deeply suspicious as it reminded them of a similar order by Amin in 1972 in which many soldiers were killed, majority of them ethnic Acholis. In response to this order, some soldiers went underground while others escaped and joined their colleagues in Sudan. This order was based on a number of reasons but most importantly the NRA intelligence reports indicated that the defeated Acholi soldiers who escaped across the border into Sudan were organizing attack on its positions and that they

were collaborating with those inside Uganda who still had arms caches buried underground. Second, the NRA's view was that these soldiers were a potential threat in the event of hostilities breaking out and therefore thought this preemptive move was necessary. Third, it wanted to take them to camps in the pacified areas of west and central Uganda in order to politicize them and prepare to deploy them should war erupt again as it was thin on the ground, besides being exhausted.

In addition to these reasons was the general view of the Bantu-speaking people of the central and south Uganda that everybody in the north was a bad person. In other words, there was a general tendency of people in the south to regard people in the north negatively as looters and murderers which increased friction between the two parties. Arising out of this was the use of stereotypes and derogatory terms such as "Anyanya[175]" and "Killers" to describe them, insinuating that they were not Ugandans but Sudanese. To make matters worse, they were now removed from occupation that used to provide them and their families with economic support. This sociopolitical and economic deprivation increased a sense of insecurity and triggered discontent which the leaders of the rebellion capitalized on to mobilize.

However, some people who were in NRA in northern Uganda in 1986 but now retired say the intelligence reports were poor and often concocted by Intelligence Officers (IOs) in order to get money for information gathering and operational allowances and that armed hostilities wouldn't have erupted if NRA had shown good gesture of reconciliation and

[175] Anyanya is a tribe in Southern Sudan which became notorious of its ability to kill many Sudan government soldiers during the early years of the first Sudanese civil war in the 1950s which was also known as Anyanya 1 rebellion

accommodation and not harassed the people as this one informant notes, "---people were arrested by the NRA, tied 'kandoya' or 'three-piece' and forced to confess that they had guns, beaten while their clothes were removed moreover in front of their families and sometimes the general public"[176].

Hellen, a social worker in Bungatira a suburb in the outskirts of Gulu town said about the conduct of NRA soldiers that;

"*--although there were good soldiers but these were few. Women and young girls were raped with impunity, goods taken by force and it was not easy to report the soldiers to their bosses because it was difficult to reach them leave alone tracing them to military detaches--. People feared to report because of reprisal and in cases where there was a chance to report, no action was taken and people perceived it as the official policy to protect their soldiers"*[177].

Against this background of harassment and brutality was the NRM's policy of no party politics. Parties were de-legitimized and restrictions imposed on all political party activities on claim that they are people-divisive and sectarian. But in the real sense this policy was aimed at shrinking the political arena in an environment where patronage, cronyism and corruption served to benefit only those who helped Museveni and his NRM to rise to power. Indeed as noted by Omara "--as non-Bantu speakers have been marginalized in the political processes of the country, smaller ethnic loyalties have begun to create fission among the Bantu speakers"[178]. No-party politics meant that politicians could not use the collective voice of the parties but were allowed the option of co-option

[176] Interview with a shopkeeper in Kitgum, November 2009
[177] Interview with Hellen, a social worker, Gulu November 2009
[178] Omara-Otunu, Amii, "Politics and the Military in Uganda,1890-1985", Macmillan Press Ltd. (1987) p. 179

but even those co-opted who had divergent views from those of NRM were silenced by legal clauses and harassment so that they toe the line of NRA/M.

All this worked to bring about socio-political discontent and increased voices of dissent. Consequently, NRM's capacity and legitimacy increasingly came under question in the north. A combination of repression and human right abuses[179] by the army such as rape, arbitrary arrests, detention and torture and killing of civilians, confiscation of livestock, humiliation and constricting the political space through a policy of no-party politics not only meant that the underlying grievances of marginalization could not be addressed but proved to majority of the northerners that indeed what they had been thinking and suspecting all along in their minds that the NRA/M was there to revenge for 'massacres of Luwero' was true.

The unfolding tense situation was also made worse by the fact that the SPLA forces fighting the government of Sudan who were perceived as close allies of Museveni attacked the Acholi camps around Owiny Kibul along the Sudan Uganda border. It is against this background that the UPDA/M issued a statement which was aired on BBC in August 1986 calling for a return to elected government in Uganda[180].

[179] Diclitch Susan,and Lwanga Doreen, "The Politics of being Non-Political: Human Rights Organizations and the Creation of Positive Human Rights Culture in Uganda", Human Rights Quarterly, Vol. 25, No, 2, (May 2003) p. 485-495

[180] Erin Bernstein, "Social Suffering in Northern Uganda: Analytical Reflections on Psychosocial Healing in the Aftermath of War", Senior Thesis Project, University of Tennessee, USA, (April 2009) p. 3-4; Omara-Otunnu, Amii, Politics and the Military in Uganda 1890-1985. Macmillan Press Ltd. (1987) p.179.

The Rise of insurgency in Acholiland:

Although when exactly insurgency in Acholiland began is not clear as it depends on who you talk to, the attack on NRA positions on 20th August 1986 by UPDA from Sudan led by Brigadier Odong Latek,[181] seems to have marked the beginning of the armed rebellion in Acholiland between the NRA and Acholi rebel forces. The debate as to when it commenced has been in much the same way as to what triggered it. Arguments about causes have raged from claims of people in northern Uganda wanting to regain the state power they lost[182], to ethnic revenge[183] and spontaneous response in a chaotic situation but which was fueled by NRA excesses.

For example Bainomugisha and Tumushabe explain that "hundreds of former government army (UNLA) who feared reprisals from the victorious NRA fled to Sudan with their weapons"[184]. They were later attacked and routed by the SPLA/M in collaboration with the NRA forcing most of them to flee back to Uganda where they formed the Uganda People's Democratic Army (UPDA). However, despite the different accounts by different people, the fact of the matter remains and that is, attacks against the NRA started shortly after it entered the north.

[181] Ogenga Otunnu, "Causes and Consequences of the war in Acholiland", (2002) p.4, http://www.c-r.org/our-work/accord/northern-uganda/causes-dynamics.php
[182] Kasaija Philip Apuuli, "The International Criminal Court (ICC) and the Lord's Resistance Army Insurgency in Northern Uganda", Criminal Law Forum, Vol. 15, No, 4, (Spring 2004) p. 403-405; Sverker Finnistrom, "Wars of the Past and War in the Present: The Lord's Resistance Army/Movement in Uganda", Journal of the International African Institute, Vol. 76, No, 2, (2006) p. 2002
[183] Human Rights and Peace Centre (HURIPEC), "The Hidden War: The Forgotten People, War in Acholiland and its Ramifications for Peace and Security in Uganda", (October 2003) p. 34
[184] Bainomugisha Arthur and Tumushabe Godber, "The Torturous Peace Process in Northern Uganda: An Analysis of Peace Initiative and Prospect for a Settlement", MACOMBA Policy and Academic Research Series No. 1, (2005) p, 8-9

This was because of the manner in which it conducted operations which was characterized by killings, rape, humiliation, detention and torture. Moreover, this was not only meted on former soldiers but even the civilian population. For example Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have documented gross human rights abuses committed by the government army in northern Uganda[185]. Because of these atrocities, many people were left with no option but rather forced to join insurgency. Indeed as pointed out by Brett, people like Charles Alai one time a Deputy Minister in the NRM government confirmed that the reason why he joined the rebels was because he was beaten by the NRA at his home. Several other people had been harassed and tortured. It is thus against this background that the UPDA was formed in August 1986. The leaders of the rebellion were able to mobilize support by capitalizing on the violation of the people's rights. The young people including even those who may not have supported the uprising were forced to join the insurgency as the only way out.

The most prominent leaders of the UPDA were Otema Alimadi former Prime Minister in Obote II government and Brigadier Odong Latek. Odong Latek is alleged to have fired the first bullet of the Northern Uganda rebellion on 20th August 1986. The UPDA's grievances were four folds: first it accused the NRA/M of violating the Nairobi peace talks in 1985; second, the Acholi commanders and political wing of the UPDA blamed NRA fighters of Human rights Abuses termed *'Tek Gungo'*— the rape of Acholi men by NRA fighters during the early years of NRA operations in Northern Uganda; Third, promoting divisive and communist ideologies in Uganda.

[185] Human Rights Watch, Uganda: Army and Rebels Commit atrocities in the North, 20th September 2005

During the initial stages of UPDA's activities, this accusation helped the political wing based in London UK to lobby for support. Lastly, the NRA/M was accused of favoring and involving Rwandese in the political affairs of Uganda. Although it denied this accusation during the Nairobi peace talks, a few years later, in 1994, Rwandese forces based in Uganda attacked Rwanda and overthrew an established government there. The UPDA/M was however short lived and this was due to a number of reasons. The main ones being poor organizational skills, inadequate supplies and reinforcements, general lack of human resources to manage the errant remnants of UNLA but the immediate failure of UPDA was loss of combatants resulting from factionalism between Acholi of Gulu and those coming from Kitgum and Pader.

This was coupled with deaths of senior commanders between 1985 and 1987. Some of these commanders were killed by their own rank and files who had become highly opportunistic who lacked the required qualification and appropriate training. By august 1987, UPDA was defeated at corner kilak when Colonel Eric Odwal and many combatants were killed. These losses led the UPDA to enter into peace negotiations with NRA/M, which was concluded in 1988. However, many of the insurgents rejected the deal and attacks on the NRA, infrastructure, including civilians continued unabated.

The situations unfortunately rapidly worsened as the NRA/M's military campaign continued thus dashing out any hopes for peace. A number of reasons have been attributed to the deterioration of the situation. First, the Gulu peace talks signed in 1988 left several outstanding issues unresolved which ultimately caused the rebellion to continue. For example issues of unbalanced development between the north and the

south, social suffering of the northern people and sharing of political power were not discussed. As *Ladit* Ocaya points out;

"*The NRA/M was not interested in addressing the real issues that were responsible for starting the war. You could see that they were really interested in persuading the UPDA/M leadership especially the commanders to abandon fighting for the sake of it and not for the improvement of the lives of the general population. Exchanges of money and promises of material goods were used on individual people rather than addressing the causes for example marginalization and NRA abuses that were at the heart of the conflict. Moreover, the promise of stopping harassing people was mere pretense because even as the purported negotiations were going on, many people were continued to be tortured while others were killed. The Acholi feel hated and rejected by the Bantu-led government of Museveni"*[186].

This observation was further supported by a Ugandan newspaper by describing the situation in northern Uganda that, "in some villages the situation is gloomy and desperate---. The approach of these (NRA) agents working in the new 'war zone' is more militarism than political. It seems to be more of a 'conquering' mission, of breaking 'their' backs than of winning over the people's hearts--. Therefore, unless there is change of attitude towards them by the powers that be, they do not see their salvation in the NRM but elsewhere"[187]. This situation exposed the ethnic manipulation and targeted attacks against those considered to pose a military challenge to the incumbent regime but also revenge that has witnessed a particular group of people to be considered as enemies. Both rebels and government forces were accused of committing atrocities[188].

[186] Interview with Ocaya, Gulu October 2009
[187] Amii Omara-Otunnu, "The Struggle for Democracy in Uganda", The Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 30, No, 3, (1992) p. 453
[188] Human Rights Watch, "Uprooted and Forgotten: Impunity and Human Rights Abuses in Northern Uganda", Vol. 17, No, 12(A), (September 2005) p. 14 – 4,1 http://www.hrw.org/en/node/11614/section/1

Second, the NRA/M accused UPDA officers integrated into the NRA of attempted coup plot. This led to a few former commanders being arrested or killed. Third, the UPDM/A political wing fell-out with the military wing which singed the Gulu Accord because the politicians were left out from the newly formed alliance between NRA/M and UPDA. Even if the politicians would have wanted to be party to the negotiations and therefore benefit from the deal, the leaders of the NRA/M were not prepared to accept them in a revolution they believed was a result of their own success which they fought for and achieved.

Moreover, the socioeconomic and political problems the country was in were blamed on the leaders of the past regimes, a reference to these very politicians on the notion that they misled the soldiers. In short, NRA/M was not prepared to bring on board politicians it had just overthrown in the struggle for power that was now in its favour. Third, the majority of the UPDM members were young, less educated and were not satisfied with the outcomes of the peace talks because there was no assurance for benefiting in the deal.

In addition to this, they were not represented in the talks. Moreover, the negotiations were conducted between the NRA/M government and a small group of the UPDA with majority of the members refusing to take part. To make matters worse, they were now targeted by the NRA because they were perceived to be hiding guns and therefore a potential source of another insurgency. They remained worried about the deteriorating human rights issues, the way they were being witch hunted and victimized, including negative ethnic stereotyping. To these young people, life had ceased to have meaning.

The struggle for power based on ethnic and religious lines in which force rather than accommodation became the means through which people from one region sought to assert their authority alienated and pushed to the periphery a section of people from another region to the extent that they were ready to use the same force and violence in an attempt to get that which they had been deprived. Indeed as noted by Lamwaka, "in Africa, those who have captured state power through guerrilla warfare have tended to over-glamorize their achievements, sending the wrong signal to the young people that "the gun is mightier"[189]. The demise of the UPDA thus did not mean the end of insurgency in Acholiland but rather a step in the metamorphosing situation that would see another armed group emerge, that of Holy Spirit Army/Movement (HSA/M).

The HSA/M emerged in the late 1986 and was led by Alice Lakwena, a simple woman born in a peasant Christian family in Gulu district. Lakwena is a Luo term which means a messenger of God or a disciple of Christ. After coming on stage, she quickly informed and promised her followers that she had been sent by God to rid Uganda in general and Acholiland in particular of the bad leaders and therefore bring peace and prosperity to all people. She used the bible teaching and local cultural traditions to gather local support. Her ecumenical idiom and cultural appeal strategy worked in her favour and gave her a following.

[189] Lamwaka Calorine, "Can There Be Mutualism Among Humankind?", Journal of Peace Psychology, Vol. 6, No, 3, (2000) p. 226

Her message was a mixture of the need to cleanse the Acholi people of the evil spirit and to get back the power which was snatched from them by the NRA. In short her strategy used a combination of Christian theories, cultural and moral regeneration dogma to defeat the enemy. She became notorious for her ability to mobilize elites, professional and young Acholi and langi into her fighting force. The movement rapidly became popular among the Acholi and Langi ethnic groups for two major reasons: first it claimed to purify Acholi and Lango land from the demise of evil that led their forces and government to be defeated by the weak and under dogs from "*Loka nam*" across the Nile.

Second, the youths who had disapproved the deal between the UPDA and NRA and who were now vulnerable to the NRA operations were attracted to join this movement as the only option for their survival. Even when they were not militarily trained, politically and ideologically well organized to face the powerful government force, they had no choice but to join rebellion. To make matters worse, they were not well armed as few were supplied with old rifles while many carried stones and sticks. This is the fighting force that confronted the NRA in which many of its fighters were decimated with ferocious fire power. It should be realized however, that despite being killed in large numbers the HSA fighters relentlessly confronted the NRA in what they perceived as a war of noble cause because of collective despair, unjustified abuse of their human rights, anger and humiliation.

Arising out of the heavy toll of human cost in terms of death and injury especially because of the crude and often 'poor' tactics used, several people described the leadership of the HSA/M from different perspectives. For example Museveni described Lakwena as

"a poor girl with psychiatric problem"[190], while tabloids in the Western countries described her and her followers as desperate people possessed with witchcraft, and yet others describing her as a 'former prostitute', Ugandan witch, and 'a voodoo priestess". While resorting to force in the manner the HSA/M did may seem difficult to explain and therefore tend to justify the stereotypes used to describe Lakwena and her followers, understanding the conflict in Acholiland in terms of myth and witchcraft does not only result in missing the point, but also ignores the deep ethnic, regional, political, and cultural underpinnings of the conflict. It should also be realized that although the two parties, the HSA/M and the NRA/M differed in terms of for example organization, tactics and articulation of the sociopolitical and economic problems that were facing the country, what they both had in common was ethnic appeal.

That the poorly-armed ethnic group combined witchcraft and religion and fought and held out against a well-armed and superior government army for over a year before getting defeated means a lot in terms of ethnic conflict and politics of hatred. It tends to disapprove the perception of the latter group as irrational and primitive and this being the case it means that there must be a plausible and logical explanation. Moreover, much as the aggrieved Acholi people could have resorted to the use of non-violent means to express their discontent, the government also could have avoided the conflict by handling the sensitivities of the situation through designing policies that could peacefully address the underlying causes.

[190] Amii Omara-Otunnu, "The Struggle for Democracy in Uganda", The Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 30, No, 3, (September 1992) p. 457

The fact that this did not happen shows not only the extent to which force is perceived and used as the preferred option to settle political differences but also how it is used by one group to dominate others and how ethnic loyalties is critical in the discourse of Ugandan politics. As Achelam, a teacher in Kitgum said, "The NRA did not want to listen to the views of the Acholi people regarding how guns and other military equipment could be collected and how to get cooperation from the local people. To them every Acholi was an '*adui*'- enemy and therefore everybody had to be handled harshly in order to show them that they were no longer in power and that they the NRA were entitled and had capacity to use force in any way they wanted"[191].

This observation tends to make sense especially if we consider Brett's assertion when he says that "victorious regimes are tempted to assert their authority by punishing and humiliating the vanquished. Yet coercion is an uncertain basis for political authority, since violence creates potential enemies who will comply only while they believe that resistance is impossible as Ugandan history has shown"[192]. This then brings us to examine the significance of the rebellion led by Lakwena in terms of ethnic politicization and relative deprivation. The significance is fourfold.

First, the determination to confront a well-armed superior army using old rifles, sticks and stones to a large extent indicates the desperate and magnitude of the threat that was facing a particular group of people. It was an attempt to resist the repression of the state. As the saying goes that 'desperate or unique situations may require desperate or unique

[191] Interview with a teacher in Kitgum October 2009
[192] Brett E. A., "Neutralising the Use of Force in Uganda: The Role of the Military in Politics", The Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 33, No, 1, (March 1995) p. 144

measures', the Acholi people had to use any means available to them however inappropriate or ineffective those means may have seemed to be.

Second, the large numbers of the Acholi people that she was able to mobilize to take up arms against the NRA/M government indicate the extent of the feeling and existence of collective deprivation suffered. The Acholi people were not only forcefully pushed out of power but were also frustrated in their attempt to have their grievances listened to. Moreover the UPDA/NRA talks did not bring everybody on board and therefore did not cater for the interests of all the parties. The rebellion was therefore a result of frustration-induced anger. Indeed as pointed out by Gurr, "the occurrence of civil violence presupposes the existence of relative deprivation among substantial members of individuals in a society"[193].

Third, since the system did not provide non-violent channels such as political debate, negotiations, arbitration and round table talks through which the Acholi could express their grievances, the only option left to them tended to be rebellion through mobilizing ethnic membership. In such a situation where the political space is constricted and monopolized and where a particular ethnic group feels alienated from participation by another ethnic group moreover using violence, the potential for counter violence organized and staged by the group that feels deprived and frustrated is very high.

Fourth, since the deposed military junta was predominantly Acholi, and since they were accused of committing atrocities in Luwero, the view among the NRA/M and their

[193] Gurr, Ted Robert and Charles Ruttenberg, "The Conditions of Civil Violence: First Tests of A Causal Model", Research Monograph No. 28, Princeton University, (April 1967) p. 5

followers was that every Acholi was a bad person which in actual sense portrayed collective criminalization. In effect, this was politicization and manipulation of ethnicity. The fact that the UNLA was dominated by the Acholi does not necessarily mean that they may have been the only ones who committed atrocities. In addition to this, the allegation presents a one-sided story albeit a distorted one as in the war situation there are at least two opposing parties.

Moreover by employing the army and trying to use military force to solve a political problem amounted to militarization of politics. Although Lakwena and her HSA/M was defeated near the town of Jinja in eastern Uganda in late 1988, the underlying structural causes of Acholi grievances remained unsolved and her ecumenical appeal and the spirit to fight continued on, although this time under a different rebel name and leadership, that of LRA/M under Joseph Kony.

Kony a relative of Lakwena who claims to have inherited her spirit after her defeat, continued with the war by bringing together the fighters of the HSA/M that scattered after its defeat under his command. However, it should be realized that prior to the defeat of HSA, he already had his own force which, although insignificant but was one of those fighting the NRA/M government. He changed the name of his rebel movement first from Uganda People's Democratic Christian Army (UPDCA) to Uganda Christian Democratic Army (UCDA) and finally in 1991, to the LRA a name it has retained to date.

The LRA and its tactics, methods of operation, human rights abuses, transformation and its behaviour during and after peace negotiations have been written on extensively in

intellectual and academia publications, civil rights organizations reports, and special reports for example the United States Congressional Reports. In particular, atrocities such as the brutal murder, mutilation and summary execution of non-combatants, extortion, torching of homesteads, abduction of young boys and girls to be used as killing machines, 'human mules' for transportation of goods, sex slaves and concubines respectively have been extensively documented.

To facilitate the understanding of the LRA war and its relationship with ethnicity, I will therefore focus my analysis on examining the ethno-political manipulation, politicization of the conflict and state repression against the Acholi people by the NRM regime, factors that have tended to prolong as well as escalate the conflict. Such analysis is crucial in order to appreciate the nexus of the conflict in rational terms and to shift our intellectual paradigm beyond the stereotypes that have been used to describe it for example as religious fanatics, terrorists, lumpens, negative forces, murderers[194], killers, biological substances, criminals and people possessed by witchcraft.

First, the perception of NRM and its supporters especially the Bantu speaking people towards the Acholi people has been such that they are a cultural hotbed of rebellion and murderers who committed atrocities in the south during the time they were in power. This perception to a large extent explains the acts of vengeance and humiliation by the UPDF. There is no doubt that NRA's track record of discipline was good and far exceeded that of previous armies for example the UA and UNLA which were unpopular and in fact

[194] Ben Ochola Latigo, "Acholi, Victims of the Northern War and Isolation", Kacoke Madit, (April 1997) p. 2 http://www.km-net.org.uk/conferences/KM97/papers_pdf/victims.pdf

resented by the public. The NRA demonstrated that it was pro-people especially in the south and this explains its success in cooperating with the people in the war zones there.

Unfortunately, its track record in the north did not match that of the south especially in as far as its relationship with the civilian population was concerned. Ethnic retaliation motivated by bad past relations led soldiers to agitate violently against the Acholi people. This adversely affected its civil-military relations. It should be noted that during the Juba peace negotiations between the LRA and government of Uganda, the LRA team demanded that the NRM government stop using abusive language and "demeaning attitude designed to insult and demonise our people as an ethnic group and to sow seeds of hatred and disunity in the country"[195]. While some acts of violence may have been ignored, one major incident that triggered confrontation was the NRA's 35th Battalion killing of innocent civilians in Namukora, Kitgum district in late 1986. This was followed by other incidents for example the Buchoro massacre where suspects detained in underground pit that was used as prison died of suffocation. These were not isolated incidents carried out by errant soldiers but were based and driven by negative perceptions that characterized the Amin and Obote regimes which pitted northerners against southerners but which crystallized more during the 1982-86 civil war.

[195] Daily Monitor, 27th August 2006

In such a situation where certain groups of people hold negative views about others, then this will influence the way they treat those they perceive negatively as 'internal outsiders'[196] but yet from within the national boundaries. Although the earlier insurgent groups such as the UPDA and HAS were now defeated, continuation of the war by the LRA led to perceiving the Acholi people in the minds of southerners that these were people determined to cause trouble and therefore intensified the negative perceptions and stereotyping. In an army that is dominated by one ethnic group, this can be disastrous especially if it is deployed to subdue an insurrection dominated by members of the disliked group. It can also result in the deterioration of discipline within the army.

This is supported by Acker when he aptly notes that, "--the report of the Porter Commission is revealing in its conclusion that there is a deep-seated indiscipline throughout the UPDF which requires further investigation and a full review of the capability, discipline and honesty of officers"[197]. But negative perception and stereotype is not a one-sided phenomenon. The belief among the northerners in general and the Acholi people in particular that the NRA/M is a Bantu government who have traumatized them for over two decades, have destroyed their source of survival and family fabric and therefore have no sympathy at all for them, makes them perceive the NRM government and its supporters as their enemy. Within this context, it is worth noting that ethnic stereotyping which often creates ethnic hierarchies and feelings of resentment and exclusion was not a preserve of the southerners under Museveni, but also the Acholi helped perpetuate the ideology by seeing the NRM as a force of Bantu speakers, and

[196] Frank Van Acker, "Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army: The New Order No One Ordered", African Affairs, Vol. 103, No, 412, (2004) p. 399
[197] Ibid p. 339

therefore demonstrates how complex the relationship between ethnicity, power and conflict is.

This interpretation of course seems to be based on ethno-regional sentiments and leaves out Kony who has exacted untold death and devastation on his own people by using brutal and horrific methods of punishment to any person perceived to be or in actual fact collaborating with government. Efforts by the government to resolve the conflict and improve its image and legitimacy remain tainted by this perception. Moreover, although it has shown that it is willing to listen as demonstrated by the peace negotiations, its policies and actions have continued to rely heavily on military option as a means to solve a political problem.

It has also continued to send mixed signals of continuous blame and desire to end the rebellion but with little trust in peace initiatives. On the other side, the LRA remain unpredictable and adamant that the NRM is the problem and that as long as it continues to harbor ill feelings against the Acholi people there will be no peace in Acholiland. The two sides appear to behave the same by trying to project a negative image of their opponent in the minds of the people they supposedly purport to or represent through counter accusations and blame.

The result of this is loss of confidence in government by the Acholi people who have suffered the brunt of the war and who want to see its conclusive end through peaceful means. These misperceptions indicate how ethnicity is used by different groups against one another in Uganda which results in inter-group disharmony and escalation of tension

resulting into conflict. For example, former army commander James Kazini is quoted to have said that, "if anything it is local Acholi soldiers causing the problems. It's the cultural background of the people here. They are very violent. It is genetic"[198].

Second, inequality in development and its resultant effect of unequal access to opportunities for group emancipation and self-advancement has remained a crucial contributory factor to ethnic conflict in Uganda. Whereas the root cause of this can be traced to the colonial period whereby the policy of 'compartmentalization' of the protectorate meant that different areas were designated for specific purposes, the post independence Ugandan rulers never cared to address this imbalance. If anything, they nurtured it and in fact exacerbated it. Basic colonial infrastructure for example roads, schools, and hospitals were concentrated in the south a phenomena that has not changed much and which gives perceptions of relative deprivation among northern ethnic groups.

Twenty four years of NRM's rule makes it the longest government in power of all the governments that have ruled Uganda since independence. There is no doubt that its early reforms through the International Monitory Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB) sponsored structural adjustment programmes reversed the economic decay, political quagmire and provided an environment conducive for development. Indeed this led to marked progress in development in social, economic and political aspects of the country. For example Obwona contends that Uganda has done a remarkable job in attracting

[198] Ibid, p. 344

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) which has accelerated the country's development especially in agriculture, forestry, fishing, manufacturing, construction and services[199].

He further notes that the banking and insurance industry have witnessed marked improvement and growth which has led to improvement in the socioeconomic lives of Ugandans. Although his argument is that foreign investment increases productivity and which increase is not completely appropriated by the investor, and that therefore other groups will have a share and thus benefit directly from the proceeds of this investment, the persistent increase in poverty has given rise to intense debate about the impact of this FDI. Furthermore, even if there has been progress in addressing the problem of poverty, there is unevenness in how the benefits are being shared. Levels of poverty in Uganda remain far higher and have fallen less rapidly in the northern and eastern regions of the country[200].

That the country has experienced growth and development in areas such as reconstruction of roads, health facilities and schools which has witnessed an increase in primary and secondary enrolment of students, reduction of poverty and general improvement of security and welfare under the NRM is no doubt. However it should be realized that this development has taken place in the central and south western parts of the country collectively referred to as the south and has not been extended to the north. Indeed as noted by Carson, "Development that has taken place in the south has not been experienced in the north. In fact social conditions and personal security have worsened in

[199] Obwona B. Marios, "Determinants of FDI and their Impact on Economic Growth in Uganda", African Development Review, Vol. 13, No, 1, (June 2001) p. 54-58
[200] The Daily Monitor October 30th 2010, Hunger still haunts Ugandans despite impressive growth

a number of northern communities"[201]. Barkan makes the same observation by pointing out that although Uganda's annual rate of economic growth was impressive from 1988 through 1995 and having remained above 5%, the "figures suggest that Uganda's economic "miracle" has benefited some ethnic groups far more than others, a fact that sows the seeds of potential conflict along ethno-regional lines"[202].

This situation is also observed by Tindifa when he points out that contrary to the World Bank statistics showing that poverty in Uganda dropped from 56% in 1992 to 35% in 2000, it is not clear what growth rate Uganda has registered because there are conflicting statistical figures and says that,

"Over the years, NRM has committed many policies, programs and projects to ending poverty. If only half of them delivered, some beggars in this country would be millionaires---.Towards the end of 1987, NRM launched the ERPs. By 1992, it was evident this program which included structural adjustment was responsible for a new wave of poverty. The program for alleviation of poverty and Social Cost of Adjustment (PAPSCA) followed by a multiplicity of policies and programs all targeting poverty, have since been launched. It is important to stress that there are two kinds of poor people in Uganda. There are those who are poor because they have never been rich and those who are poor because of the policies of the NRM, starting with the economic reform programs and other ill-conceived policies--"[203].

Arising out of this situation is the fact that many northerners dislike the NRM because they think it has deliberately ignored the horrible social and economic conditions that affect their communities. This perception of inequality in development and unequal

[201] Johnnie Carson (Ambassador), "A Legacy in Danger", a paper presented at a Conference in Kampala, under the theme "Challenges and Change in Uganda" , 2nd June 2005 http://www.wilsoncenter.org/topics/pubs/Uganda2.pdf

[202] Barkan D Joel, "An African "Success" Past its Prime", Paper presented at a Conference under the theme 'Challenges and Change in Uganda', 2nd June 2005, p. 10

[203] Tindifa B Samuel, "Peace, Conflict and Sustainable Development: The Experience in Uganda", Paper presented at a Conference on Sustainable Development, Governance and Globalisation, 17th-21st September 2001, Nairobi Kenya

treatment has led to the calls for secession of northern Uganda from Uganda and to form a Nile Republic. For example in agitating for secession, Mao is quoted to have said that, "we are either full citizens, equal to others or non-citizens"[204].

In addition to the above, one of the major aspects of the movement 'democracy' upon assent to power in 1986 was the promise of establishing a 'broad-based' government where Ugandans from different ethnic groups and backgrounds were to be co-opted into political, economic and military in order to reflect a national character, ethnic integration and legitimacy of the NRM. It was a mechanism through which the wounds of the past would be healed in the sense that every Ugandan would be brought on board in order to forge unity that has eluded past regimes, resulting into interethnic tensions and conflict. However, twenty four years down the road, NRM's performance and track record of building national consensus can be described as ambiguous at best and sectarian at worst.

Third, equal representation in the armed forces is a crucial factor for ethnic groups to have equal status, cohesion and feeling of belonging to an institution. Of major importance in this respect is the composition of officer corps and the offices they hold measured by ethno-regional distribution, ranks and power in the decision-making bodies of the army. Prior to 1986, the top echelon was made up of officer corps from the north. In 1986 this equation changed and the army became a western-led Bantu-speaking. This development served to simultaneously ethnicise the army which now became predominantly western, thus legitimizing the instrumental nexus of ethnicity and

[204] Daily Monitor 21st February 2010

resuscitating to the surface of political discourse the already severe cultural and ethnic divide between the north and the south.

It is against this background that the negotiating team of the LRA in Juba talks demanded that the national army reflect a national character by saying that, "the present army does not reflect a national character. It is ethnic, partisan and pledges its loyalty to president Museveni personally and not to the nation. We demand its total disbandment so that--recruitment is done taking into account regional balance and integration of those in the LRA and other armed opposition"[205]. As a result of this, a clause regarding proportional representation in the armed forces and other security agencies was included in the Agreement on Comprehensive Solutions between the government of Uganda and the LRA/M[206].

Although some soldiers of the defeated UNLA and former fighting groups were integrated in the UPDF, the overall composition remained heavily biased in favour of the Bantu-speaking ethnic group. For example the top echelon of the UPDF is predominantly made up of officers from the Banyankole ethnic group while the northerners are underrepresented. Furthermore, a close examination of this category shows that majority of the officers come from a small Bahima sub-group of the Banyankole ethnic group[207]. For example, out of 23 senior army positions from Commander-in-chief to Division

[205] The Daily Monitor, August 27th 2006
[206] See Appendix 2, Agreement on Comprehensive Solutions between the Government of the Republic of Uganda and the LRA/M, Article 8.1 under Institutional Arrangements for Security Organs
[207] Andrew M. Mwenda and Roger Tangri, "President Museveni and Politics of Presidential Tenure in Uganda", Journal of Contemporary African Studies, Vol. 28, No, 1, (February 2010) p. 44

Commanders, the north hold only 2, the east has none, while the west and central have 17 and four respectively[208].

Indeed as this MP says, "the army and other security organs are in the hands of one ethnic group, the Banyankole and everybody in Uganda knows this. The few officers from other regions for example Acholi, Arua, and Teso are there to make the UPDF look as if there is representivity. They do not have a voice or influence. Their ranks and position are more symbolic than wielding authority"[209]. Moreover, the soldiers of the LRA who denounced rebellion under the Amnesty Act and were integrated in the UPDF remained insignificant in terms of promotion, position in the army and further training. Senior officers like Brigadier Sam Banya and Sam Kolo have neither been promoted nor is their position in the army clear.

For example Kolo, the former LRA chief spokesman who surrendered to the UPDF in February 2005 is now the NRM vice-chairman for the veterans' league in Nwoya district. This may not only indicate in the minds of northerners in general and Acholi in particular that even if they denounced rebellion and are integrated in the army they will not have any influence but also inability to fulfill the aspirations of what they were fighting for. The war against the LRA therefore reflects how the ethnic factor has been a major factor both in defining the challenge against the NRM as well as shaping Ugandan security forces. As a matter of fact, "Museveni saw not just the LRA, but the Acholi as the enemy;

[208] The Independent, 26th May 2009, Northern MPs anger shows national pain
[209] Interview with Ugandan MP, Johannesburg, South Africa, September 2010

LRA was only the armed wing of resistance"[210], thus casting the political rivalry in ethnic terms.

Fourth, the belief that the war can be brought to an end by military force led to it being politicized, that is, its use for purposes of mobilizing support in a political context where Acholi political identity came to be inextricably tied to the wrong deeds of the northern-led military junta and by the NRM projecting it in the minds of Ugandans especially southerners that these "*abatemu*"[211] (the killers) were trying to come back to power. In this way, the leadership of the NRM uses the war in the north as a strategy for maintaining a political constituency by telling the bulk of its support who are in the south that if it was not because of its capacity to fight the rebels, the people from the north would come back.

Within this context, Museveni presents himself as the 'protector' the bridge between the north and the south and that if this bridge is removed he will no longer be relevant to the south. This shows that the use of force and ethnicity has remained a centrifugal force and largely defines political participation in Uganda, which has not only served to heighten suspicion and mistrust among ethnic groups but also makes political engagement a zero-sum phenomenon. The war in Acholiland has become a key campaign issue for Museveni and his ruling NRM especially at political rallies. For example he often tells his listeners

[210] The Independent, 20th April 2010, Is this Ankole-Acholi Rivalry?
[211] Human Rights and Peace Centre (HURIPEC), "The Hidden War, the Forgotten People, War in Acholiland and its Ramifications for Peace and Security in Uganda", (October 2003) p. 27

that the war is now over and the opposition "have no lies" to tell the voters, yet the fact of the matter is that the war has not really ended; it is only the theatre that has shifted[212].

That the UPDF continues to pursue and fight the LRA in far away territories from the Ugandan border for example in Central African Republic (CAR)[213] since it entered the country in early 2009 is testimony to the continued reliance on military force rather than peaceful means to resolve the problem. It should be noted that the military option has failed to defeat the LRA. Indeed as pointed out by Egeland, "Twenty years of LRA terror should have taught us that there is no pure military solution. That was tried repeatedly in the years before the Juba peace effort"[214], and failed. A number of military offensives conducted by the UPDF and aimed at destroying the LRA have not only ended in failure but also led to increased attacks on civilians more than ever before.

These offensives include for example, Operation North in 1991, Operation Iron Fist in 2002 and Operation Lightening Thunder in 2008 all of which failed to achieve their objective of destroying the LRA. The objective has since then shifted and seems to be aimed at weakening the LRA and destroying its command structure, which also inevitably seem to be failing as it has increased its brutal retaliatory attacks on civilians in CAR, DRC and parts of southern Sudan. Although the years from 1986 to 2006 and onwards marked a progressive decline of the Acholi as a political force, their identity and resolve to have an impact and influence on Uganda's politics did not diminish. Instead

[212] Daily Monitor, 16th November 2010
[213] See the Independent, 4th July 2010, Article titled, 7000 UPDF enter Central African Republic to Pursue runaway Kony
[214] This was said by Egeland Jan, the former United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator on the progress towards ending the conflict in Northern Uganda and in the Democratic Republic of Congo, at the UN Headquarters, New York, September 2006,

their identity became galvanized and strengthened by feelings of betrayal, oppression and resentment at the prospect of continuing to be marginalized and deprived of their basic rights by a regime whose actions they perceived to be motivated and driven by ethnic revenge and humiliation.

Despite continuation of hostilities between the two sides, the Acholi clergy through the ARLPI continues to urge the NRM government to resume peace talks with the LRA. In a petition to the United States of America government, the religious leaders argue that they have spent a significant time dealing with the LRA conflict and therefore have a greater understanding of its implications in the Great Lakes Region[215]. In addition to this, that the Acholis who suffered the brunt of the war, many of them former IDPs are willing to forgive the perpetrators including Kony as Achan who does not know the fate of her two sons that were kidnapped in 1995 says,

"We know the LRA killed our people and destroyed our families but so did the government soldiers. We also know that we Acholis have been targeted by the NRM because we are disliked by Museveni. Continuing to fight Kony will not bring peace and will not solve the problems we are facing for example we do not know whether some of our sons and daughters are dead or alive. All that we want is forgiveness so that the war can end, our people come home and we enjoy long-lasting peace"[216], indicating not only how ordinary Acholis think they have been attacked on the basis of ethnicity but also the ineffectiveness of force to end the war.

[215] New Vision 11th and 26th October 2010
[216] Interview with Achan, Gulu November 2009

Conclusion:

This chapter has demonstrated that ethnicity in Uganda has been a major theme around which mobilization for political support and access to public resources has been conducted. It has also shown that mobilization for support based on ethno-regional, religious and linguistic appeal lies at the heart of ethnic conflict in Uganda since independence in 1962. Post-independence Ugandan rulers have used ethnicity to pit one group against the other which creates feelings of relative deprivation and resentment, feeding into frustration and anger thus making the potential to resort to violence by the ethnic group suffering deprivation to be high.

This is because in such a situation exercise of power is based on ethnic affiliation leading to one ethnic group dominating others. On the other hand, distribution of scarce resources and access to public goods is made in such a way that they disproportionately benefit members of the ruling ethnic group through patron-clientalism that is directed by selective access to state offices and favours. Because of this ethnic domination and as economic survival and social emancipation of particular ethnic groups become increasingly difficult to realize, violence directed at incumbent regimes gradually take shape.

The disliked ethnic group that is deposed from power then becomes the target of attack and reprisal because on one hand, it is blamed for the wrongs that took place during the period it was in power, as well as being perceived to have benefitted at the expense of others on the other hand. In addition to this, because the two parties were at one time

involved in a war, the hostilities and bad blood memories which tend to remain submerged and persist longer are often exploited by the rulers of the ethnic group in power to exact revenge and retribution against the members of the deposed ethnic group.

The conflict in Acholiland reflects this scenario. After deposing the Acholi-led Military Junta in February 1986, the NRA/M's policies towards the northerners in general and the Acholi in particular especially in as far as military operations and 'pacification' of Acholiland was concerned, aroused their ethnic consciousness and belief that they were not only relegated to secondary citizens but also considered 'genetically' violent. They were also explicitly accused of being rebellious as well as collaborating with the rebels and supporting the uprising. In the words of a UPDF officer, "their military and political capability had to be destroyed"[217].

The chapter has thus shown that the violent ethnic conflict between the LRA and the NRM government is clearly indicative of how ethnicity has assumed greater salience in the competition for economic resources and political power. As Berman[218] points out, ethnicity in modern Africa is derived from and profoundly influenced by the forces of colonialism, which assigned roles and identity to different ethnic groups, an argument supported by Nederveen[219]. Though this being the case, the NRM has not transcended the regional, religious and ethnic legacy and maneuvers of the colonial and post-colonial dispensation, but has rather entrenched and intensified them.

[217] Interview with a UPDF officer, November 2009
[218] Berman J Bruce, "Ethnicity, Patronage and the African State: The Politics of Uncivil Nationalism", African Affairs, Vol. 97, No, 388 (1988) p. 310-313
[219] Nederveen, P. J. "Deconstructing? Reconstructing Ethnicity", Paper presented at a workshop under the theme 'Ethnicity and the State in East Africa', organised by OSSREA and the Nordic African Institute, Addis Ababa, 3rd to 5th June 1996

CHAPTER FOUR

Regional Dynamics, Social and Power relations under the NRM rule: The Northern Question

Introduction

Ethnic conflict wreaks havoc and cause enormous suffering to the people in areas where it takes place. To understand the actions of the rebels, the nature of the violence and how it is ethnically-directed, we must understand not only the contextual and social relations that produce their leaders but also the actions and responses of the state. That the NRA/M pursues negotiations and the military solution as a means of ending the northern conflict, but prefers the latter is obvious enough. However, the military strategy has proved that it is unlikely ever to defeat the LRA. It has instead led to the relocation of the theatre of war outside the Ugandan territory, more violence, continuous distrust and suspicion and thus making the possibility of achieving national reconciliation between the north and the south not only difficult but unlikely.

On the other hand, although the LRA's desire for genuine negotiations appears minimal, the government's track record shows that it has rarely acted in good faith in its efforts to address the northern grievances. The argument is that 'violence begets violence' since failure or inability to resolve the underlying causes is likely to continue generating ethnic resentment that will make the conflict to endure. The reaction of the international community is also of salience in order to understand the predicament of the people in northern Uganda in general and the Acholi in particular. This chapter examines the

international and state response to the insurgency in the north and how this has impacted on the ethnicity and regional ramifications of the LRA. It also presents the perceptions of different people but especially the Acholi, who have been the victims of the war and its impact on their lives.

State response to the insurgency in the north: The military strategy and escalation of ethnic hostilities (1987-1991)

When the LRA/M emerged in northern Uganda in 1986, the NRA/M appeared not to be bothered about its consequences and implications on the fragile security situation in the area and its impact on the geo-political dynamics in the region and beyond. It was perceived as another act of banditry of the Acholi people that was not different from the previous ones. In actual fact it was taken to be an internal matter that had to be solved by Uganda under the domestic law and mechanisms. The initial response was therefore a military one in which more NRA soldiers were mobilized and deployed in northern Uganda and especially in Acholiland.

This was mainly because of Museveni's strong belief in the use of force to solve political problems and conviction that a guerrilla force devoid of support from the population cannot survive. As such it can be argued that Museveni never thought of and entertained the idea of negotiations. Indeed as pointed out by Branch,

"*Museveni's conviction of the NRA's political impeccability and the rebels' bankruptcy, both proven in Luwero, led him to announce that because no guerrilla group without support from the population can survive, the NRA would necessarily and quickly defeat the UPDA. Therefore, negotiations were also out of question. A deputy minister of local*

government, Kahinda Otafire, asked rhetorically in 1986, "--who are those people, what are they fighting for and what are we going to discuss with them?"[220]

But this was self defeating because experience should have taught him that he covertly and overtly negotiated with those he denigrated and castigated as political criminals without any agenda. In his mind, the NRA would defeat the LRA.

Since it had defeated the previous rebel groups of UPDA/M and HSA/M mainly through military force, although it entered into negotiations with the UPDA, it can be argued that the NRA was sure of military victory over the LRA although this is debatable. However, there are two dimensions of the strategy of force that have to be taken into account because they intensified and influenced ethnic hostilities, suspicion and distrust between the Acholi and the NRM government. First, the NRA was predominantly made up of the Banyankole ethnic group from the south, which not long ago had forcefully driven the Acholi people out of power and had also defeated two Acholi rebel groups in which many people died. Continuous fighting would mean more misery and suffering.

Second, this tended to erode any prospects for peaceful settlement of their grievances because the NRA/M did not have a credible track record of negotiations. Memories of 'betrayal' at the Nairobi peace talks of 1985 and failure to bring every member of UPDA/M on board during the 1988 peace negotiations were still fresh in their minds. Their fears were increased by the fact that the military officers of the former rebel UPDA who were integrated into the NRA after signing the peace agreement were soon after arrested and charged with treason. Some of these officers died in prison, others

[220] Adam Branch, "Neither Peace nor Justice: Political Violence and the Peasantry in Northern Uganda, 1986-1998", African Studies Quarterly, (March 2005)

disappeared mysteriously while yet others for example Major Mike Kilama was shot and killed by the NRA while reportedly trying to escape[221].

Soon after the war started, the NRA used scorched-earth methods during operations against the rebels for example "*kandoya*" or "three piece" a method in which the victims arms are tied behind his back together with the feet thus tightly exposing the chest and made to roll like a ball during operations, which restricts the flow of blood and which often led to death. Other gross abuses for example rape, arbitrary arrests, plunder and confiscation of livestock were also committed. The news of these abuses and mistreatment traveled first and reached many Acholis and reminded them of the same situation during the war with UPDA and HSA. In these circumstances, even those who may not have supported the rebellion because the LRA seemed devoid of an articulate political agenda had no choice.

It is under this context that it enjoyed the support of the local community at the start of its armed campaign, which support seemed to emanate from the perception that the NRA was revenging against them and therefore it was necessary to fight it[222]. But such support for the rebellion only served to make them vulnerable because the NRM tended to perceive it in terms of collective guilt. With the attack by the NRA growing, the Acholi people became isolated and alienated from government, moreover whose duty is to provide security to the people. This did not only increase the discontent against the

[221] Juma Okuku, "Ethnicity, State Power and the Democratisation Process in Uganda", Nordiska, Uppsala, Discussion Paper No. 17 (February 2002) p. 35
[222] Fabious Okumu-Alya, "The Regional Dynamics of the War in Northern Uganda", p. 13, http://www.issafrica.org/uploads/CPRDNORTHERNUGANDA.PDF

government but also escalated the war to the neighboring districts of Acholiland for example Lango and Teso.

The military strategy previously thought to be a quick solution was to be proved wrong as the war intensified. What was seen as a localized insurgency that would be defeated in a short time became protracted. After ten years of fighting from 1987 to 1996, it became increasingly clear that the war was going to take longer. According to '*Ladit*' Omona, "right from the war with the UPDA to HSA the Acholi people looked at the war as between the westerners versus northerners and you could see it from the way the army was behaving because they never cared about the thousands of people who were dying. In almost all cases whenever the fighting took place, there were few prisoners of war. The whole Acholi community was bleeding"[223].

Although the military strategy became a disaster in terms of increasing casualty numbers especially civilians, it continued unabated. This catastrophic nature was even acknowledged by Egland when he said that "I cannot find any other part of the world that is having an emergency on the scale of Uganda which is getting so little attention", and described it as "the world's worst humanitarian disaster and the least known"[224]. In the meantime the government was faced with the challenge of convincing the Acholi people that they should not support the rebels because this would deny them an important constituency and support base and therefore weaken their fighting capability. One of the methods devised by government was to create Para-military local defence units within the

[223] Interview with Omona, Gulu, October 2009
[224] Human Rights Watch, "Uprooted and Forgotten: Impunity and Human Rights Abuses in Northern Uganda", Vol. 17, No, 12 (A), (September 2005) p. 13

community known as 'Home guards' and 'Arrow Brigades'. Although overtime more than five thousand pro-government militias were recruited and armed with guns, many remained armed with whatever they could use including bows and arrows, spears, machetes and axes.

In some cases they were instructed to use drums and whistles to make noise once they cited the rebels as a way of quick communication and alerting the NRA in order to make a quick response. Ironically this did not improve the security situation as the army would always arrive at the scene long after the rebels have committed atrocities and left. As pointed out by Rodriguez, "What puzzles me is that for so many months all you hear from the military is that they are winning the war, scoring many victories, making progress, but why is that progress not translating into improvement of security of people on the ground? There is no single road that is safe here and the abductions are continuing"[225].

On the other hand, what we see here is the dimension of manipulation of ethnicity come into play, but in this case turning the Acholis against fellow Acholis. The point being emphasized is that although the intention of this local defence mechanism was to make the people defend themselves against the LRA attacks, it was in actual sense pitting the poorly armed Acholi civilians against the rebels who in most cases were better armed than them. This manipulation of ethnicity proved successful for the NRA in the sense that

[225] Father Carlos Rodriguez is a Spanish Catholic priest who lived and worked in northern Uganda for 17 years where he physically experienced the war. He was also a key member of the Acholi Religious Leaders' Peace Initiative. He spoke out for the Acholi people brutalised by the LRA and the UPDF alike. He was shot at while holding peace meeting with the rebels, arrested and detained by the UPDF which threatened and demanded his deportation, http://www.irinnews.org/InDepthMain.aspx?InDepthId=23&ReportId=65772

it made the Acholi people fight the LRA in what was seen as a shift in loyalty from the LRA to NRA, which enabled the latter to fight the rebels from two fronts, the civilian population and the government side. But it can also be argued that rather than government defending the victims of the war, it instead used these very victims to defend themselves thus demonstrating that it had failed in its constitutional duty of defending the people.

However, this infuriated Kony and the people had to pay a heavy price as he considered it as a betrayal, moreover from his own people, a behaviour that was unacceptable. The result was that the rebels turned their wrath against their own people. In a situation of this kind, the people got inextricably entangled and caught up in the war between the government and its methods on one hand and the LRA and its retribution on the other. The army would for example instruct people to leave the villages and go to trading centres in order to isolate the rebels so that it can fight them easily, warning that anybody remaining behind would be treated as a rebel, but the rebels also often gave similar threats and instructions to people to move back and deep into the villages and bushes.

As this old man says,

"We were woken up one morning by government soldiers who had surrounded our village and started beating us accusing us that we were rebel collaborators. They ordered us to move and stay together at a nearby school which was deserted and never to go back to the village saying they would give us protection. Two days later the rebels came and threatened to kill us and instructed us to run to the bush and never to listen to the government soldiers. They took six boys and girls with them"[226].

[226] Interview with an old man, Kitgum November 2009

In addition to this, some people who were given arms by government were former rebels who surrendered and returned home. They used the guns to score differences with rivals which increased insecurity in the region. This made the situation complex as it increased the rate of death and it was difficult to know the killers and bring them to justice. Although vetting and screening exercises were conducted before handing out guns, they were not watertight as criminals easily surmounted them. Many disappeared with the guns while others hid them and claimed they were lost during the LRA attacks. Information received from one interviewee in Gulu and a former combatant of the LRA revealed that many guns remain accessible while others are still buried underground in Acholiland to date. Asked why this is so he said,

"A gun is very useful. It can protect you and it can be a source of living by giving you what you want but you must be extremely careful. During the war many guns were buried underground. For me I don't have one but I know friends of mine who buried them and I suspect they use them because they look better off yet they don't work anywhere to earn money. This situation of poverty can force you to do anything. Also many of my friends believe war is likely erupt anytime again because Museveni cannot be trusted and should this happen people will find it easier to join with their guns. This is because during the war if you came with you gun you would be treated well and become an officer"[227].

Despite the disarmament efforts, local leaders and security personnel believe many of those who received guns disappeared with them and are using them to commit crimes. The spate of killings is worrisome as many former IDPs who returned home had to flee their villages because of gunmen who attack them a factor that makes them scared thinking the LRA is back[228]. In 2005, the Uganda Joint Christian Council (UJCC) appointed a team to educate communities about the misuse of fire arms. During the

[227] Interview with a former LRA combatant, Gulu October 2009
[228] See Daily Monitor, 24th December 2008, Fear as Gunmen Attack Gulu Residents

exercise, it was discovered that there were a lot of illegal arms in the region. Many of these were in the hands of the former LRA fighters as many buried them in case they needed them again. It was further reported that some of them were even buried in coffins in order to protect them from rusting[229].

Paradoxically, the government remained skeptical that the people had stopped supporting the LRA. In fact the NRA commanders and government officials accused them of being double dealers by giving the rebels logistical support in terms of food, money, sanctuary and also information while purporting to be fighting them. In support of this allegation, Betty Akech the minister of state for security and herself an Acholi said that,

"*There are people who are benefiting from the war; shopkeepers, drug dealers, transporters and several others. We also know that there are children who give up rebellion and come back home but there are instances where their families send them back. There was a girl who came back with about three million Uganda shillings and said she was tired of the war*"[230].

In her message of '*dwong paco*'- return home to the rebels, and in one of her visits to the Pagak IDPs camp in Gulu district, she said that there were collaborators living in the camps within the rest of the innocent people and that the LRA was coming in the area and hidden by members of the community until about 6.00 pm when they would open fire[231]. Although it is difficult to tell whether the people thought this accusation even from one of their own was made in good faith and honestly or whether they took it

[229] Bill Oketch, "War-Era Guns Linked to Recent Murders", (21st October 2010); http://ugandawatch.blogspot.com/
[230] See New Vision 9th May 2003, Acholi support Kony-n Akech
[231] New Vision 16th June 2004; during this visit the minister was accompanied by Max Omeda, the Gulu RDC then and Major Noel Nuwe of UPDF among others. Nuwe said that there was evidence of collaboration from the population

seriously, it apparently became evident that it generated bad blood within the community especially from those whose children were abducted to know that some members of their ethnic group with whom they were staying were responsible for these horrendous acts and suffering. This added another dimension of ethnic hostility by transforming it into a conflict among the Acholi themselves.

The "Operation North", brutality and escalation of the conflict, (Mach 1991 onwards):

In March 1991 the UPDF launched a military offensive codenamed 'Operation North' under the command of General Tinyefuza who was dubbed "Swarzcopf of the north" because of his ruthlessness. The objective of this offensive was to defeat the LRA by destroying its bases once and for all. Although it had a considerable impact on the rebels by weakening their fighting capability, the manner in which it was conducted generated resentment against the army and the government. Rather than employing confidence building measures such as treating ordinary people humanely which would have brought them to the side of government, the manner in which they were treated demonstrated that Uganda was a country divided between the north and the south. His ruthless brutality conduct of the operation failed to differentiate between the rebels and the ordinary people, a factor that alienated many civilians from the NRM government in general and NRA in particular.

In fact if anything, it served to remind the people in the north that the past wounds were not about to heal and that reconciliation with the NRM government was still a far dream. Movement of people to the north was cut off at Karuma Bridge save for those coming out

of the region, but even these were subjected to rigorous thorough search and scrutiny by the security forces. An information black-out was also imposed on the region. Karuma Bridge is situated along the River Nile and symbolically represents a geographical location separating the northern from southern Uganda. During the offensive, blanket cordon and search operations were carried out with an objective of identifying the rebels. In some cases people were herded into stadiums and open grounds purportedly to identify rebel collaborators.

Reports emanating from this operation indicated that there were arbitrary arrests, detention, torture and humiliation. In many instances, people had to stay for long hours and sometimes days waiting for clearance from military authorities, moreover in an environment without food, water, shelter or sanitation. Despite widespread outcry from civil society organizations about this situation, government neither expressed apology nor distanced itself from the brutal methods employed. This is not to suggest that it was the official policy or that it may have endorsed the torture and brutal conduct of the army, but in the absence of practical steps to stop arbitrary detention and torture and hold those responsible to account, it can be argued that it approved the way the operation was conducted and the subsequent treatment of the people of the north. Moreover, in an attempt to respond to the these allegations, the army spokesman said that whatever Tinyefuza did was not on his own but under the command of his superiors including the Commander-in-chief, the president himself thus totally indicating that Museveni was aware of what was taking place

This situation coupled with the previous conduct of the NRA from 1986 when it entered northern Uganda and launched operations in which many northerners were arbitrarily arrested and tortured which led to death and destruction of property, deepened the anger and feelings of hatred by the northern ethnic groups, in particular the Acholi against the southerners, especially the Banyankole, the tribe of Museveni thus exacerbating the north-south divide. As Opodo says,

"*People did not like the rebels because of the atrocities they were committing and were ready to assist the army with information about the LRA if it had conducted the operation in a humanitarian manner. But because of the dehumanizing methods used such as torture and beatings, they hated it. They perceived the brutality meted on them as deliberate because of their ethnicity given the fact that they were northerners. My simsim (sesame) worth five million Uganda shillings was destroyed by rain after soldiers after spilling it on the ground by soldiers on claim that they were searching for hidden guns. For the first time, I proved that we northerners belong to a different Uganda and are hated by the NRM"*[232].

Prominent politicians like Otema Alimadi were ordered to leave the northern region within 48 hours, failure of which they would be arrested and charged with sabotaging the operation. This operation which was commonly referred to as "operation *simsim*"[233] because of the notoriety of soldiers to destroy this staple food also witnessed the arrest and torture of Ogenga Latigo, Omara Atubo, and Zachary Olum, politicians hailing from the north who happened to be in the region and who were later flown to Kampala to be tried on treason charges. They later won the case through court. In the eyes of the northerners and particularly the Acholi people, this was not only an act of disrespect for

[232] Interview with Opodo, Gulu September 2009
[233] Robert Lukwiya Ochola, MCCJ. "The Acholi Religious Leaders' Peace Initiative in the Battlefield of Northern Uganda: An Example of an Integrated, Inculturated and Ecumenical Approach to Pastoral Work in a War Situation", Phd Thesis (June 2006) p. 40, http://www.comboni.de/literatur/ochola_diplomarbeit.pdf ; See also, "Let My People Go: The Forgotten Plight of the People in the Displaced Camps in Acholi", An Assessment carried out by the Acholi Religious Leaders' Peace Initiative and the Justice and Peace Commission of Gulu Archdiocese, (July 2001), p. 35

their elders who were also their leaders, but also a deliberate humiliation that indicated to them that nobody was safe, hence widening the north-south divide.

In relation to this mistreatment, Atubo, is quoted to have said that,

"We were arrested and beaten badly in 1991 before Tinyefuza because he had convinced Museveni that we were sabotaging the war (military operation) in the north. But what we really disagreed with was the scorched-earth method that Tinyefuza and government were using against our people in the north. This was very absurd"[234].

Questions as to why the army did not pursue and defeat the rebels towards the end of this offensive when they appeared significantly weakened and when it had the chance to do so remain an issue among the Acholi especially in as far as there is repeated accusation that the NRM prefers continuation of the war in order to project them as rebellious and also to continue cracking down on those challenging its legitimacy because of the failure or inability to address the socioeconomic and political imbalance between the north and the south. As long as the underlying structural causes of the conflict are not addressed, this perception among the ethnic groups in the north in general and the Acholi in particular is likely to continue generating discontent and frustration, thus making them to feel besieged by the post-1986 politics of heaping collective blame and guilt for all the historical wrongs upon them which will continue fueling ethnic hatred[235].

[234] Jonzu News, "General Tinyefuza's Massacres exposed", 2nd February 2010, http://news.jonzu.com/z_middle-east_gen-tinyefuzas-massacares-in-n-uganda-exposed.html
[235] See the Independent, 6th January 2010

Critics of the NRM government point at a number of reasons for the failure of the military offensives against the LRA. First, they argue that economic interests rather than strategic operational weaknesses account for the failure. Within this reasoning, they argue that the commanders' interest is in continuous access of operational allowances[236] rather than ending the war. This means that if they end the war, they will not be able to get this money. Second, they argue that the war provides a convenient justification for the non-transparent defence expenditure[237] which is used for patronage purposes. Consequently, the government is more comfortable with a low-level intensity conflict rather than ending it.

Following the failure of this offensive to achieve its objective of destroying the LRA, the rebels retreated and crossed into Sudan, thus adding an international dimension to the conflict. Arising out of this retreat, Acholiland experienced a period of relative calm for almost two years. However, towards the end of 1993, the rebels made a violent come back directing their attacks on soft targets especially the civilian population, killing, maiming and abducting many of them. They also attacked civilian vehicles on roads, relief and military convoys. In 1997 for example, the rebels hacked to death over 412 men, women and children in Lokung and Palabek areas in north western Kitgum district, forcing thousands to flee their villages[238].

[236] Bellie O'Kademire, Conciliation Resources, "LRA/Government negotiations, 1993-94", http://www.c-r.org/our-work/accord/northern-uganda/negotiations-1993-94.php
[237] International Crisis Group, "Northern Uganda: The Road to Peace With or Without Kony", Africa Report, No. 146, (December 2008) p. 146
[238] See "Let My People Go: The forgotten plight of the people in the displaced camps in Acholi", An assessment carried out by the Acholi Religious Leaders' Peace Initiative and the Justice and Peace

The Amnesty Act 2000, denunciation of rebellion and exposure to violence:

Faced with increasing pressure from the civil society organizations to encourage and persuade the rebels to denounce rebellion, the government in January 2000 passed the Amnesty Act. An Amnesty Commission was established and its members were appointed in June 2000. Under this Act which was extended to all fighting groups, rebels who laid down arms and surrendered to government would be forgiven of their wrongdoing during the rebellion. In addition to this, "amnesty packages" comprising of cash and resettlement implements such as iron sheets, seeds, hoes, machetes, etc would be handed out to assist returnees to resettle back into the communities. Following the enactment of this legislation, many rebels responded positively and opted to give up fighting. In fact by 2004, over 5,000 fighters applied for amnesty by denounced rebellion and decided to come out of the bush[239]. Many of these fighters reported to district authorities or surrendered to the UPDF and were allowed to rejoin their communities without going through the amnesty Comission or formally being given amnesty.

However the Act did not cover the leadership of the LRA. Government refused to extend the Amnesty to Kony and his top lieutenants on claim that they mislead their followers and that they were therefore responsible for the atrocities committed, for which they had to be held accountable. Consequently, rather than curtail the violence, it instead exacerbated it. Critics of government point at a number of factors which led to increased violence. First, they point at the manner in which it was conducted. Their argument is that

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Commission of Gulu Archdiocese, (July 2001) p. 12, http://www.archdioceseofgulu.org/JPC/LET_MY_PEOPLE_GO.pdf

[239] Tim Allen, "War and Justice in Northern Uganda: An Assessment of the International Criminal Court's Intervention", (February 2005) p. 32

whereas the use of the local media the Mega FM radio station to explain the Amnesty Act through the local Acholi language may not have been a problem, it explicitly encouraged defection from the LRA. Under this move, fighters who surrendered were called in to appeal and persuade their colleagues they left behind. This infuriated the leadership of the LRA who not only instructed their fighters not to listen to the radio but also threatened to punish severely anybody suspected of trying to surrender to government. It thus put many people in the line of fire by the rebels.

Second, the 'special treatment' accorded to the LRA returnees after surrendering make ordinary people resentful especially because of the financial and material benefits they receive from government. The argument is that by providing them with material Amnesty package government is perceived as if it is rewarding people who committed atrocities. In addition to this, although they are members of one ethnic group and whether or not the atrocities committed were inadvertently or under duress, they still carry the tag of perpetrators until cleansing rituals are performed and forgiven by the victims. As Ladit Obwoya says,

"While the law helped to entice many rebels to come out of the bush, at the same time it created resentment among the people who suffered at the hands of these returnees. Ironically it appeared as if the perpetrators were being reworded. The material things the government gave them were not accessible by other people and this did not please them. Moreover many of them were known by their victims within the community with whom they had lived together in the same villages and whose children were abducted or had witnessed friends or members of their families killed by these very people. So, whereas people wanted to forgive in the interest of society and in order to bring the war to an end, the preferential treatment accorded to returnees brought emotions to the surface in many instances and sometimes led to hostile outbursts and stigmatization by the victims. Many

were threatened with revenge and had to relocate in towns and trading centres. They thus faced threat from both, Kony and the victims"[240].

But such complaints of injustice were not only made by the victims but even among the rebel combatants especially the lower echelon. This is because of the way government treated commanders as compared to other combatants. As a result of this, returnees "--frequently complained of the injustices meted out by proponents of the 'culture of forgiveness', citing government-sponsored preferential treatment given to demobilized senior commanders in contrast to the stigma and poverty faced by returning former wives, foot-soldiers and other formerly-abducted persons"[241].

The threat which included death was also extended to all those who responded to the appeal and defected. From the year 2000 onwards, the rebels intensified attacks in all areas of Acholiland and extended into neighboring districts as a retaliation against the Amnesty law and to punish those who defected as well as to discourage those intending to do so by showing what would happen to them and their families. A series of attacks were carried out in which many people were brutally killed. Many of these incidents have been documented by international and local humanitarian organizations, but suffice to mention few examples here. Human Rights Watch and UNICEF for example reported

[240] Interview with Obwoya, Gulu, August 2009
[241] Julian H, Chessa O, Letha V, Lanyero L and Komakech C, "With or Without Peace: Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration in Northern Uganda", Justice and Reconciliation Project, (February 2008) p. 1-2, http://www.ligi.ubc.ca/sites/liu/files/Publications/JRP/FN6_JRP_QPSW.pdf

that between June 2002 and May 2003, over 8,400 children were abducted by the LRA, a sharp rise from 2001[242].

These series of attacks continued relentlessly. In June 2003, dozens of people were killed using clubs in Lira district and 40 children abducted. On 17th May 2004 the LRA attacked Pagak IDPs camp 18 kilometres north of Gulu town and killed dozens of people, burnt down houses and abducted others and forced them to carry the food and other items looted from the camp. On 16th May 2004 the rebels attacked Lukodi camp located 12 kilometres away from Gulu town, killed 49 people, burnt down the houses and forced thousands to flee. Some of the abducted people especially mothers were killed by smashing their heads with blunt objects and their bodies left along the route simply because their children were making noise.

The "Operation Iron Fist" and Intensification of hostilities (March to September 2002):

In March 2002, the UPDF launched a military offensive codenamed Operation Iron Fist (OIF) aimed at destroying the LRA bases in Sudan with the consent of the Sudan government. The UPDF declared that this time around it was prepared to defeat Kony and that the LRA would be history. General Kazini, the Division Commander based in Gulu is quoted to have promised that "if he couldn't deliver LRA Joseph Kony's head by

[242] See, "Child Soldiers Use 2003: A Briefing for the 4th UN Security Council Open Debate on Children and Armed Conflict", (January 2004) p. 45; http://www.hrw.org/en/reports/2004/01/16/child-soldier-use-2003; See also, Human Rights Watch, "Uganda: Sharp Decline in Human Rights", retrieved from http://www.hrw.org/press/2003/07/uganda071503.htm

December, he would quit"[243] the army. But this was not the first time such promises were being made. They had been made before, deadlines set and the LRA declared a foregone case only to be proved wrong as the rebels would emerge with more brutality than before. The offensive which was supposed to last three months (March to May 2002) according to the protocol signed between the Sudan government and the GoU was extended for another three months (June to September 2002)[244]. Many young Acholi boys, former abducted persons and men were forcefully recruited by the UPDF and deployed in the front lines as field guides, reconnaissance scouts as well as fighters which led many of them to be killed, a factor that angered the Acholi people as they perceived the government to be sacrificing their people.

It is therefore not surprising that in the wake of this offensive, the LRA re-entered northern Uganda, split into smaller groups that made it difficult for the UPDF to hunt down and conducted violent brutal attacks against civilians especially in the IDPs camps despite the UPDF's claim that it had destroyed its fighting capability and was therefore winning the war. In actual fact the offensive failed to achieve its stated objective of destroying the rebels, ending the attacks on civilians as well as rescuing the abducted children. It should also be realized that the failure of the military solution is not only that it failed to end the war but rather entrenched the war and cleavages with each failed offensive. In short, it led to hardened attitudes, more abductions, deaths and miming and destruction of property, the brunt of which was directed at and borne by the Acholi ordinary people. .

[243] Kevin C. Dunn, "The Lord's Resistance Army", Review of African Political Economy, Vol. 31, No, 99, (March 2004) p. 141
[244] See New Vision, 12th June 2002, Sudan Renews Iron Fist Protocol

For example on 5th August 2002 the rebels attacked the Acholi-pii IDPs camp and killed over 60 people[245], wounded many others and forced thousands of Madi and the Dinka ethnic groups who had fled from Sudan because of the escalation of fighting between the SPLA and the Sudan government and settled in camps close to the Sudan-Uganda border as well as inside Uganda to flee and scatter. The escalation of the conflict and brutal attacks against Acholi civilian continued unabated and in actual fact increased both in magnitude and speed. Horrific graphic pictures of people with noses and limbs cut off, decomposing bodies of men and women burnt in their huts and in other cases, pictures showing cooking pots with human parts sent shock waves around the world. Kony had turned against the very people he said he was fighting for.

Whereas an attempt to give reasons as to why the LRA brutally attacked its very people who not only comprised its principal support constituency, but perhaps even potential future support has been made by some researchers and political observers, there is still need for more probing as Kony's behaviour really defeats conventional wisdom and reasoning. Within this context, it is important to ask the following questions. First, besides some Acholis changing sides and 'supporting' the government while others were given arms and joined in the fight against the rebels which seems to have infuriated Kony, what is that can explain the scale of the LRA's brutality against its own (Acholi) people? In other words, what is it that can account for the radicalization of the LRA during the long-lasting conflict? Has the movement metamorphosed over the years into something different from the original LRA? Has this metamorphosis or change, if at all

[245] Leben Nelson Moro, "Refugee Camps in Northern Uganda: Sanctuaries or Battlegrounds?" Unpublished manuscript (2002) p. 1-2; http://www.sudanstudies.org/leben03.pdf

any, made brutality against everyone in Uganda and the region acceptable and legitimate in the internal LRA psychology and dynamics?

These and perhaps other questions are likely to continue posing a challenge to anyone wishing to study and understand the behaviour and motives of the leaders of the LRA in as far as obsession with the killing, especially of its own people is concerned. One thing that seems to be clear is that Kony was and continues to be infuriated by the lack of support of his own people whom he thinks abandoned him when he needed them most, coupled with the condemnation of his actions by the Acholi elders, especially the killing of innocent people and abduction of children to be used as sex slaves and killing machines.

Various reasons have been put forward by the UPDF as to why this offensive did not achieve its objective despite the huge and superior military arsenal, logistical support including manpower at its disposal. The reasons range from for example claims that the government of Sudan gives sanctuary and logistical support to the LRA, bad roads thus hampering effective movement of the army, lack of morale and confidence, to underfunding of the defence budget and corruption in the army. However, while these reasons have been widely written about in the lacuna about the war between the LRA and the Uganda government, one factor that seems to have attracted little attention is that of ethnicity in the UPDF and auxiliary paramilitary forces.

Moreover, the argument that the army lacked confidence and morale does not gain credence especially given the fact that the Commander-in-chief who is the president has

been physically involved in overseeing these operations. In fact during this operation, "Museveni was encamped in Gulu and then Soroti in order to oversee the operation himself"[246]. Despite his presence and the UPDF's concerted effort, the war escalated into the neighboring districts of Teso in the east and Karamoja in north eastern Uganda displacing over 240,000 people[247]. It is therefore important to probe more deeply into the dynamics of ethnicity and how it has been used to influence and shape the configuration of the UPDF and its role in triggering conflict or influencing its course and its impact on dissident-military relations.

The argument I am trying to present here is that failure or inability to address ethnic imbalance in the composition of the security forces especially the army, often motivates the dominant ethnic group to think of the army and the state as exclusively in its ownership and this has a negative impact on internal cohesion, command, civil-military relations and success in countering aggression in multi-ethnic societies. The dire consequences of this impact manifest both at the strategic planning and execution level. This ethnic imbalance often creates the tendency to deny the weaker ethnic groups to have an equal say in the security matters of the country.

Their ideas, suggestions and advice are often ignored no matter what strategic salience they may bring on board in trying to solve a nascent security situation, as the nervous commanders of the dominant ethnic group define their role and responsibility in terms of protecting the central government which they are ethnically aligned to by destroying their

[246] Frank Van Acker, "Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army: The New Order No One Ordered", African Affairs, Vol. 103, No, 412, (July 2004) p. 353
[247] See report of the UN Office of the Coordinator of Humanitarian Affairs, (November 2003) retrieved from; http://www.reliefweb.int/

opponents at all costs. This creates inter-ethnic distrust and hostility as the underrepresented ethnic groups feel not only alienated and insecure but also vulnerable because of their ethnic minority in the army. The is even made worse in a situation where some members of the underrepresented ethnic groups in the army belong to the ethnic group of the dissidents fighting against government and especially if such a force is sent to subdue this ethnic rebellion. Indeed as pointed out by Enloe, "when such an armed force is sent into an ethnic conflict, it will be seen by both the central elite and communal dissidents to be not merely a neutral actor; it will be recognized as a reflection of the current ethnic-political stratification"[248].

But this ethnic configuration is not only characteristic of the government armies but also often extends to the rebels alike. However, although the ethnic factor tends to play out in almost similar ways in the sense that the war between both parties is characterized by ethnic mobilization, an important factor to ameliorate it lies in making concessions that addresses the ethnic imbalance in the military as well as demonstrating guarantees to the communal dissidents that their grievances will be genuinely addressed. In a situation where the state is ethnically polarized and where each antagonistic group comprises of substantial members[249] of an ethnic group, then ethnic conflict is likely to be severe and compromise difficult to reach. Apparently this seems to be the case between the LRA and the UPDF

[248] Cynthia H. Enloe, "Police and the Military in the Resolution of Ethnic Conflict", Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 433, (September 1977) p. 138
[249] Bethany Lacina, "Explaining the Severity of Civil Wars", The Journal of Conflict Resolution, Vol. 50, No, 2, (April 2006) p. 283-284

As aptly observed by Enloe, "The ethnic imbalances in the state militaries and police forces of multi-ethnic countries rarely catch the eyes of outsiders trying to analyze and offer solutions to communal conflicts. Journalists and social scientists focus instead on political parties and interest groups"[250]. Unfortunately for the UPDF the domination by soldiers from the Bantu ethnic group coupled with other factors proved counterproductive in stemming hostilities between the north and the south. Because of increased civilian and military casualties, and in the face of increased pressure from humanitarian agencies and civil society organizations to end the war, the government sought other strategies that would improve the situation but maintain the use of force.

Consequently, a force had to be mobilized from amongst the Acholi community to supplement the army in fighting the LRA. Moreover, the fact that there was presence of substantial numbers of Acholi people with knowledge in military skills made this option feasible even if it may not have been desirable. These included retrenched soldiers and policemen including former fighters of Alice Lakwena's HSA/M and UPDA who surrendered or had earlier deserted and returned back home. In addition to the numbers and experience in military skills, other factors such as knowledge of territory, customs, local language and tactics used by the rebels would give the UPDF a fighting edge over the rebels.

But such a project has its challenges and risks if it is not well sought out and managed. The risks include domination of the AF by one ethnic group, infiltration and double dealing especially by collaborating with the rebels, lack of discipline, refusing to take

[250] Cynthia H. Enloe, p. 143

orders, the tendency to loot and to use the guns against the very population they are supposed to guard including melting away and joining the rebels. Despite these risks, the NRM went ahead with establishing AFs. After all, they were to be under the command and control of the UPDF, while the political control would be exercised through politically reliable cadres. Consequently in military radio messages in 1989, Museveni announced that the AFs in reference to the LDUs were part of the reserve force[251]. The political strategy was to ethnicize[252] the war by recruiting amongst the local population in areas where the insurgency was operating and by pitting ethnic groups especially the Langi and Iteseo against the Acholi.

The Auxiliary forces and ethnic conflict:

The UPDF Act 2005 defines "Auxiliary Forces" (AFs) as Home guards, Local Defence Forces (LDFs) and Vigilantes[253]. They are also categorized under the reserve forces under Article 17(2) of the same Act[254]. They are men and women with military experience, (although not necessarily in some cases) who are mobilized to assist in security matters in their locality but more especially in grave situations for example during protracted guerrilla war, natural disasters like floods and earthquakes[255] where their presence and efforts are considered vital to supplement other forces in order to avert

[251] Sabiiti Mutengesa and Daylan Hendrickson, "State Responsiveness to Public Security Needs: The Politics of Security Decision-Making", CSDG Papers (June 2008) p. 53-54, retrieved from; http://securityanddevelopment.org/pdf/CSDG%20Papers%2013.pdf
[252] Jeremy Ginifer and Hoonman Peimani, "Civil Defence Forces in Post-Conflict Security Challenges: Experiences and Implications for Africa", in David J Francis (Eds), Civil Militia: Africa's Intractable Security Menace? Ashgate Publishing Limited, (2005) p. 254-255
[253] UPDF Act 2005, Part I, Preliminary, p. 13
[254] UPDF Act 2005, Part II, Sources and Organisation of the Reserve Force, p. 20
[255] Kiselev, V. A., "Employment of Combined Armed Formations in the Elimination of Natural and Man-Made Disasters", Military Thought, Vol. 2, No, 17, (2008) p. 41-47

a catastrophe. Members of AFs have often been used to augment and support the regular forces in many countries around the world in the war against the insurgent forces.

In Uganda AFs became an important locus for security in many areas of the country that suffered insecurity because of attacks by rebel forces that sprang up after 1986 to challenge the NRM government and more especially in the Acholiland where majority of the UNLA soldiers of the deposed Obote II government and Military Junta hailed from. Although they played an important role in fighting the insurgency, they at the same time became part of the ethnic conflict, armed violence and in fact intensified it. It should also be realized that in situations where the AFs have been used to fight counter insurgency, one of the problems that rarely catch the eyes of researchers and observers trying to analyze and suggest solutions to the conflict is that of ethnicity and politicization of these very forces which often exacerbates the conflict.

Whereas the main objective of government for establishing AFs militias among the very population from whom the rebels emerge and operate is to decrease the burden of the army and also to deny the rebels of the local support, this strategy if not well applied may create humanitarian crisis or backfire even when in the long run the rebels may seem to be defeated. A combination of selective recruitment based on alignment with government ideology, harsh treatment by the army, poor facilitation and deployment in war often without remuneration moreover where they are fighting against their own community defeats the very purpose for which the AFs were created and alienates an important group whose support is badly needed.

It is not surprising therefore that in such a situation, members of the AFs who are often impoverished tend to use the arms for their own survival or collaborate with the rebels or even sometimes join them. This complicates the situation as the loyalty of the members of the AFs is divided between the rebels because they belong to the same ethnic group and who they may provide covert support on one hand and also government in order to avoid its reprisal by pretending they do not support the rebels on the other hand. But this behaviour is often a result of government's policies and actions towards members of the AF and the ethnic community from whom they are recruited rather than collective aggression or ethnic warrior traits.

As such the AFs have often been a challenge to state authorities seeking to use them during and after the insurgency. The challenge firstly, is in the lack of trust by government a factor that largely explains the half hearted support towards the AFs. Because of this, they were rarely armed with weapons superior to or matching those of the rebels or similar to army's. This meant that in the event of an attack by the rebels, members of the poorly armed AF became vulnerable[256] to the rebel's fire power, a factor that explains the many casualties among them whenever there was such an engagement. According to Ogik,

"Many of my fellow Acholis were killed by Kony rebels not because they were not brave and didn't know how to fight but because we did not have good guns. Many of the guns frequently malfunctioned because of mechanical problems while others got stuck because of the rough conditions as we lacked basic maintenance items. In many cases the rebels moved and attacked in smaller numbers which we could have effectively engaged but because of the problems I have mentioned, people would just run away. Many of those

[256] Zachary Lomo and Lucy Hovil, "Behind the Violence: The War in Northern Uganda", ISS Monograph No 99 (March 2004) p. 54-55

who staged a serious fight ended up being killed. In one such incident in November 1995 after four of my colleagues at a detachment near Custom Corner in Gulu were killed, a senior officer from the UPDF Fourth division headquarters visited us. When my commander explained that the cause of death was because we had bad guns and requested him to provide us with better ones, he said that he was not going to do it because we were not trusted as we would give them to rebels. He went ahead to explain by giving examples but we knew they were fabricated. Overtime, many abandoned their posts or simply joined the rebels because the perception was that we were killing and being killed by our fellow Acholis. The NRM was using Acholi against Acholi"[257].

Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the AFs did well in a number of cases by successfully fighting off the rebels and effectively protecting the lives of many civilians that would have been killed. But this often came at a cost. Response from the UPDF as a rapid back-up would come late and in most cases never came at all. This often made it easier for the rebels to overrun the few armed militias and in many cases led to the death of civilians. Because of the increased incidents of this nature, people felt neglected by the UPDF which was responsible for their security and the local militias felt they were being used as scapegoats because of their ethnicity. In cases where the army recognized and accepted its weakness, though rarely it would blame and punish the junior officers leaving the senior ones who in the ordinary circumstances should have been responsible for the security lax under their areas of jurisdiction.

In September 2003, Corporal Pimundu, a UPDF soldier was charged with cowardice and sentenced to death by firing squad. His offence was that he failed to respond to information from a civilian that the LRA had attacked Agasi village near his place of duty and that the death of eight civilians were attributed to his (in)action. Although Pimundu pleaded not guilty saying that the location of attack was outside his area of

[257] Interview with Ogik, a former member of the LDU, Gulu November 2009

jurisdiction, the court pronounced that its decision was final and that there was no appeal[258]. In reaction to this incident and the sentence, many people said it was because Pimundu was an ethnic northerner and that's why he was executed. It was perceived in ethnic terms in the same manner like those who had been killed in torturous circumstances. In the absence of similar treatment in other incidents that took place before and after this one, questions of why Pimundu will continue to be asked thus raising ethnic sentiments.

By mid 2003, over two thousand veterans were mobilized by the NRM government to fight against the LRA in Acholiland. Similar forces were also mobilized in Lango and Teso where the war escalated to but under different names and leadership. For example in Lango they were called '*Amuka*' which means Rhino because of the strength of the rhino, in Teso they were called 'Bow and Arrow' boys, while in Adjumani they were called 'Cock' brigades. By early 2004, the combined number of the militias in Acholiland, Teso and Lango were over ten thousand. This number continued growing despite opposition by northern politicians who argued that this act was not only unconstitutional but also was not going to improve the situation but rather make it worse as it would result into more bloodshed, robberies, inter-ethnic strife and revenge killings.

Their views towards the conflict and its resolution remain strongly premised in the philosophy of peaceful settlement, reflected in their continuous efforts in urging government to pursue dialogue with the LRA, a view strongly supported by the civic and

[258] New Vision 7th September 2003; UPDF Soldier to Face Firing Squad for Cowardice

religious leaders[259]. Indeed, rather than galvanizing the militias and the various ethnic groups to have a common focus and objective of fighting against the rebels, creation of militias led to inter-ethnic hostilities and rivalry as each blamed the other of insurgency. In other words, the formation of local militias created bad blood among the different ethnic groups. For example, the Iteso and Langi people perceived the Acholi as trouble causers because they started the rebellion. As such they often blamed and attributed the death of their members on the Acholis.

This perception generated resentment and often led to anger making the Acholis living in areas affected by the LRA insurgency subject of attack in a sort of ethnic cleansing albeit at a low scale. The phenomenon exposed how ethnic groups in Uganda have been made enemies of one another by the actions of the state or individuals in the state. People who had lived together in harmony as friends and good neighbours despite their ethnic differences suddenly turned enemies of one another. Cases of people lynched by mob justice in spontaneous rage because of being Acholi or speaking a dialect similar to Acholi and therefore presumed to be associated with the LRA were reported in Lango, Adjumani and Teso.

Although such incidents were known to the political leaders, they were rarely condemned and little was done by way of practical measures to stop them such as conducting sensitization campaign and punishment of perpetrators. Indeed as pointed out by Rukooko,

[259] Fabius Okumu-Alya, "The Regional Dimensions of the War in Northern Uganda", p. 20, retrieved from; http://www.issafrica.org/uploads/CPRDNORTHERN UGANDA.PDF

"It would appear that this killing would have continued, had the Acholi Religious Leaders led by the Archbishop of Gulu, John Baptist Odama, not gone to Lira to plead for the life of the innocent Acholi. In comparison, although the president camped in both war-affected areas of Lango and Soroti, he never condemned anything against this ethnic killing of innocent Acholi. Instead he thanked both the Iteso and Acholi for rejecting the rebellion--"[260] and kept quiet about these brutal murders, a responsibility which as a head of state should have been the spearhead and the first person to condemn them.

Although the ethnic killings stopped around 2005 following the defeat of the LRA in Teso and Lango, it apparently appears the hostilities did not disappear altogether. The danger is that they are likely to be resuscitated to the surface should political instability take place in Uganda in future. Indeed as this trader in Kampala says, "the Acholi are very bad people. They killed our people and destroyed our houses during the war. My two brothers who were in arrow brigade were killed by these people. We know that they still want to wage another war, but this time we shall teach them a lesson they will never forget. For me I shall never forget and forgive them for what they did and I am sure many of our people think the same"[261].

This shows that whereas the war seems to have ended, the seeds of hatred were sown by its dynamics and ethnic tension though submerged but still endures. Moreover this tension and hatred is often kept alive by the ruler through continuous appeal and mobilization for support from these militias who become recipients of the patrimonial

[260] Rukooko A. Byaruhanga, "Protracted Civil War, Civil Militias and Political Transition in Uganda", in David, J. Francis (Eds) "Civil Militia: Africa's Intractable Security Menace?" Ashgate Publishing Limited, (2005) p. 222-223
[261] Interview with a trader, Kampala, December 2009

clientele network by promising them groceries and making them believe that their social economic wellbeing can never be improved until their opponents are eliminated. So, while this hardens the ethnic disharmony, at the same time it serves to entrench the rulers grip on power by using these militias during elections to harass the opposition and reminding them that the incumbent is the only one who can guarantee their security needs.

In such a situation, the potential for a return to ethnic conflict remain high. Indeed as pointed out by the United States, "it is equally important that the government reinvigorate its efforts to promote national unity and reconciliation. Divisions and upheavals surrounding the 18th February 2011 elections could undermine the country's unity and potentially its stability"[262]. Another factor in the ethnicisation of the local militias was the manner in which the government mobilized, recruited, trained and armed them. While according to the official recruitment process, a candidate to be recruited must; be eighteen years and above, be in good health, possess a minimum of senior four certificate and also should have a recommendation from the local councilor (LC), this criteria was rarely followed.

In actual fact, there was official and unofficial recruitment[263]. Much of the recruitment was done in the latter process. In the unofficial process, potential recruits would be sent by the 'trusted' LCs and movement cadres to the UPDF for enrolment. Even if the reason behind this move was that the individuals recommending the recruits had to know them

[262] Daily Monitor, 16th August 2010, Uganda Government must ensure election are free and fair
[263] Human Rights Watch, "The Recruitment of Children into the Local Defence Units and their use by the UPDF", 28th March 2003, http://www.hrw.org/en/node/12346/section/5

well in order to avoid taking up 'wrong' people, such a process could neither guarantee that the right people be the ones recruited nor did the government appear interested in official criteria apart from NRM philosophy of military ideology. In short, the process lacked accountability and transparency. Consequently, school boys and girls, former rebels, criminals and children were absorbed in the LDUs. Whereas recruits consented because of different reasons, many joined because of impoverishment. Others were lured to joined on promise of promotion and good jobs while yet for those whose parents were killed, they were told that they would revenge against the killers, despite the fact that many of them could not tell who the killers were and therefore who to revenge against. Indeed as Ocaya says,

"*I was in primary five in 2000 when my parents were killed. My younger brother and I were persuaded by the NRA commander to go to their barracks in Kitgum so that we could get food. He took us to the barracks and gave us food and told us that some bad Acholis were the ones who killed our parents. He also convinced us to learn how to use the gun so that we could kill those who killed them. He took us to train as local defence force in the barracks. My young brother died while in training in the same year because of harsh treatment and lack of food. Some of my friends escaped because of bad treatment. After one month I also escaped. Although up to now I cannot tell who killed my parents, but I know that the NRA took advantage because of the situation and our age to fight the LRA just as Kony was doing*"[264].

The recruitment of young people into the (local defence) forces is acknowledged by a retired UPDF officer but denies it was not the policy of the NRM and says, "Although these young people did a good job, it was never the policy of UPDF to recruit them. Recruitment process was the responsibility of the ministry of Internal Affairs in conjunction with the LCs and chiefs in the respective communities. Our work as to train, provide them with arms and sometimes guide them in their operations. They were also

[264] Interview with Ocaya, Acholi-bur, November 2009

paid by our pay masters although their money was from a different budget"[265]. This kind of mobilization though augmented the army's efforts in fighting the rebels it also led to the death of many militias of the LDF. It can also be argued that it amounted to indoctrination as young people do not have a mature mind to make independent informed decisions and therefore easy to manipulate. The same argument also goes for impoverished people. Under this context, the NRM ethnicized and politicized the LRA war and the LDUs through the leadership of loyal NRM district cadres who intimidate and harass the opposition and individuals along ethnic and regional lines, a role they continue to play to date.

International response to the war in northern Uganda:

Until the late 1990s, the war in northern Uganda and its impact on the people in the area were rarely known by the outside world. However, following the efforts of Egeland to create awareness, the humanitarian crisis created by this war attracted attention of the international community. Commenting on this war he said, "It is mind boggling that the UN, its member states, and the whole donor community could be sitting in Kampala for 18 years and not look over their shoulders to see that massacres of the worst kind were taking place"[266]. Although the international community expressed concern, it remained to a large extent in rhetoric than practical efforts to find a solution through peaceful means.

International organizations such as the UN and the EU condemned the insurgency and called for an end to hostilities. For example, the EU passed a resolution and called for

[265] Interview with a UPDF officer, Kampala, November 2009
[266] See Egeland Jan, interview, Conciliation Resources, New York, (September 2006), http://www.c-r.org/our-work/accord/northern-uganda-update/interview_jan_egeland.php

constructive engagement of the parties involved in order to resolve the conflict amicably. However the resolution did not indicate how constructive engagement would be carried out. In the meantime, the NRM government continued to project the war as a local affair and that it was managing it effectively whereas in actual fact the involvement of Sudan and its transformation into proxy appeared to be making it complex.

Although most countries condemned the LRA and promised to do whatever they could to stop the shedding of blood, it apparently seemed that they implicitly did not want to intervene and in actual fact were not prepared to get directly involved in an 'African problem' that required an 'African solution'. Indeed as Moller observes, the problem with the belief by African rulers in the philosophy of "African solutions for African problems" is that it "--all too conveniently lets the west off the hook".[267] It can also be argued that they tended to look at this conflict as one of those dotted on the African continent. But the more the Acholi people perceived the international community as standing by during the critical situation when they needed help most, the more they felt isolated and excluded from the family of the international community which not only increased their despair and frustration, but also increased ethnic hostilities.

In 2001 the UN Security Council sent a mission to Africa. The delegation visited several countries including Uganda and held discussions with heads of states and government, representatives of civil society and religious leaders among others. On 25th 2001, they met Museveni in Kampala who, during the discussion attributed the problems in the

[267] Bjorn Moller, "The African Union as Security Actor: African Solutions to African Problems?" Crisis States Working Papers, Paper No. 57, (August 2009) p. 16

region to the international community by saying that, "the problem in the wider region had been accumulating over the decades and were compounded because of lack of attention by the international community"[268]. Ironically, no mention was made about the LRA war even when it was as disastrous as the war in D. R. Congo and perhaps even more in terms of the human casualties and atrocities committed which were documented by International human rights organizations for example Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, including local organizations.

Until 2003, the civil society and the Acholi people remained puzzled as to why no international pressure for example internationally sponsored and monitored negotiations or sanctions were imposed on those violating international conventions on human and civil rights. Within this context, one of the common questions that kept on being asked by the Acholi people was why the war was allowed to go on for such a long time without attracting concern and intervention of the international community. For as long as the war continued, the ethnic groups in the north in general and the Acholi people in particular viewed themselves not only treated as "outsiders" in relation to the southern Bantu ethnic groups, but also as rebel collaborators while at the same time suffering sustained brutal attacks by the LRA which considered them as traitors who betrayed the cause and supported the government.

In this situation, they became victims of both parties the government soldiers and the rebels alike. Gross human rights abuses for example rape, kidnappings, torture, killings,

[268] Report of the United Nations Security Council mission to the GLR, 15th to 26th May 2001 (29th May 2001) p. 14

mutilation of limbs and destruction of property continued unabated and led to severe impoverishment of the Acholi people. Consequently, they felt abandoned by the international community and seemed to give up hopes for peace, justice and reconciliation. Such feelings seemed not only to stem from isolation, marginalization and benign neglect, but also from what many people in the north perceived as Museveni's manipulation of the international community. This perception of neglect and desperation was echoed by Bishop Ochola when he said that, "we are dying at the roots. Unless the world sees, we have no future"[269]. Acholi leaders called for outside pressure and intervention especially from the U.N. to protect the civilians and requested for the crisis in northern Uganda to be considered at the United Nations level.

In 2004, the UN Security Council passed resolution 1539[270] in which it condemned recruitment and use of child soldiers by parties to armed conflict, killing and maiming of children, rape and other sexual violence and called upon parties to abide by international obligations. In the same year, the US Congress passed the 'Northern Uganda Crisis Response Act'[271], the first American bill to regarding the LRA war in northern Uganda. The Act stressed among other things, to work with the government of Uganda and the international community to provide resources to meet the relief of the war affected areas, and to work with the government and the international community to ensure compliance with the international human rights conventions.

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[269] Gina L. Bramucci, "Dying at our roots: Seasons of War in Northern Uganda", Africa Policy E-Journal, (September 2003) http://www.africafocus.org/docs03ej/ug0309.php

[270] See Resolution 1539 (2004) Adopted by the Security Council at its 4948th Meeting (22nd April 2004) p. 3-4, http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/site/c.glKWLeMTIsG/b.2880405/

[271] Govtrack.US, "S. 2264: Northern Uganda Crisis Response Act", at http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd?bill=s108-2264

The Act was also part of a wider project on the African continent in which the United States would help Africa organize an "African Crisis Response Force" composed of selected African units that it would help train, equip and fund. As pointed out by Wierner, "for the United States helping Africans develop a capability to avoid or solve their regions security problems has re-emerged recently as an important strategic goal that led to the African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI)"[272]. This is because according to the American congress, persistent conflicts, formation of failed or lawless states does not only result in humanitarian disasters but also has the potential to affect international politics. Although this did not appear to significantly change the situation on the ground as hostilities continued, the pressure generated marked the beginning of a process that would witness the government of Uganda and the LRA come to a negotiating table.

Despite these efforts however, the Acholi people remain skeptical and suspicious about America's intentions especially given the fact that since the 1980s, Museveni has enjoyed a "special relationship" with senior US policymakers epitomized during the Clinton and Bush administrations, moreover when he is a key player in the conflict. Soon after coming into power in 1986, the American leadership described him as one of the "New-Breed" of African leaders and quickly established friendship with him despite the fact that he acquired leadership illegitimately and his legitimacy faced challenge by armed groups in which government soldiers committed atrocities. As such, the US policy tended to focus on economic development and HIV/AIDS rather than human rights and governance credentials of the NRA/M leadership.

[272] Wierner Biermann (Ed), African Crisis Response Initiative: The New U. S. African Policy, Transaction Publishers, USA, (1999) p. 2-5

In the same year, the U.S. Secretary of State advised the government of Uganda to enter into negotiations with the LRA without stipulating what would be done if this advice was ignored. Indeed as pointed out by Lynch, "neither Rice nor her questioners seemed to believe that there was anything inappropriate about a representative of the U.S. government pressuring a sovereign government to respond in a particular way to a guerrilla war"[273]. That the U.S. administration had earlier cut off military aid to Uganda in a move aimed at punishing it because of its intervention in the war in Congo in the late 1990s but was reluctant or unwilling to do the same about the northern war was perceived by the Acholi people as double standards.

In July 2003, Bush visited Uganda and discussed with Museveni on a range of issues but concentrated his focus on HIV/AIDS and less on the war in northern Uganda. In fact he told him that, "your country, as you noted, is strategically located in the heart of Africa. And therefore you are drawn into a lot of disputes. And you have done an excellent job of using your prestige and your position to help resolve those disputes"[274]. With increased international support for the peace initiative from countries for example the UK, Italy, Belgium, Germany, Ireland Sweden and Canada, the prospects for negotiation gradually took shape and with it the hope for peace and stability in northern Uganda, and perhaps including parts of southern Sudan, D.R. C. and CAR ravaged by the LRA. In order to facilitate the process, confidence building measures for example cease fire, cessation of hostile media and propaganda campaign between the protagonists had to be implemented.

[273] Edward A. Lynch, "Uganda and U.S. Foreign Policy", Foreign Affairs, Vol. 50, No, 1, (Winter 2006) p, 108
[274] Ibid, p. 114

Peace talks between the Uganda government and the LRA started in July 2006 and took place in the Southern Sudan capital of Juba. Although the two sides appeared far apart when the talks began as they seemed to pursue different agendas which threatened to derail the process, the efforts of the chief mediator together with that of the distinguished and experienced members of the international community kept the process moving forward. During the process, representatives of the belligerent parties threatened to abandon the talks by walking out although they would later come back. In fact the Ugandan delegation was the first to threaten a walk-out and to return home on the first day of the talks claiming it was infuriated by what it considered belligerent and irresponsible remarks by the rebel delegation[275].

In addition to participation in the Juba Peace process and continuous appeal to the warring parties to resolve the conflict through peaceful means, the international community donated humanitarian relief support and financial assistance to the Uganda government in order to meet the relief and development needs of the communities affected by the war. In 2007 for example, the UK in support of the peace process allocated aid to the Uganda government to the tune of 70 million pounds. In the same year, Canada contributed $2.5 million[276] towards stabilization and peace building projects in northern Uganda.

[275] Joanna Quinn. "Getting to Peace? Negotiating with the LRA in Northern Uganda", Human Rights Review, Vol. 10, No, 1, (2008) p. 9-10

[276] See Relief Web, "Canada calls on Ugandan parties to maintain commitment to Juba peace talks and announces $2.5 million towards peace efforts; http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/db900SID/RMOI-6Y22R5?OpenDocument

Speaking about the peace negotiations, Peter MacKay Canada's Foreign Affairs Minister stated that "the current peace process represent the best opportunity in two decades to build a lasting and peaceful solution to the conflict in northern Uganda. This opportunity must not be lost, since a return to hostilities would be tragic for the people of Uganda and other areas affected by the hostilities--"[277].

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that the strategy preferred by the GOU in a bid to resolve the LRA war was and continues to be a military one. In this endeavor, military offensives codenamed 'Operation North' and 'Operation Iron Fist' whose objective was to destroy the LRA once and for all were carried out in 1991 and 2002 respectively. However, these operations miserably failed to achieve the intended objective, but instead increased the hostilities, escalated and exacerbated the war. The rebels carried out more brutal attacks especially against civilians in the wake of these operations, at an unprecedented scale that had not been experienced before.

It has also demonstrated that the GOU formed and armed local militias within the community to fight against the LRA. Although this seemed to provide security for the local communities to some extent, it however proved to be disastrous as the rebels exacted more brutal attacks to a constituency they regarded as their own. It has also shown that the NRM regime presented the war as a domestic affair, saying that it was effectively handling it, which made it not to attract the international attention, concern

[277] Ibid

and intervention. In actual fact, the war remained hidden from the international community for a long time, which not only created feelings of isolation, marginalization and benign neglect, but also what many Acholi people perceived as Museveni's manipulation of the international community. As the war continued unabated, its consequences on the human and economic capital in Acholiland worsened and created humanitarian disaster. The next chapter examines the impact of the war on Acholi people and its implications for peace and stability in Acholiland.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Impact of the LRA War on Acholi people and its implications for Peace and Stability in Acholi Sub-region

Introduction

The LRA war has had an impact on the people in different areas where it took place but more especially on the Acholi where it emerged and where Acholiland became the epicentre and main battleground for about two decades. As a result, people suffered on several fronts; social, political, economic and humanitarian to the extent that large numbers of orphans, high rates of crime and diseases such as HIV/AIDS, illiteracy and poverty illustrate this tragedy. A society that had been peaceful was engulfed in violence that led to humanitarian crisis the consequences of which are likely to be felt for several decades to come. The biggest impact upon which many other social and economic problems seem to have radiated from was the creation of IDPs camps into which many people were forced to live.

Within this context, the role of the NRM government, its militarism, ethnicisation and politicisation of the conflict generated much anger that fuelled it and led to its escalation. Consequently, the war had dire consequences on the Acholi people in several ways. For example it led to many people being killed and others abducted, property and infrastructure destroyed, deterioration of human rights, a fall in literacy levels and school enrolment, increase in poverty, disease and malnutrition, including tremendous damage

to the family and cultural fibre. This chapter examines the impact of the LRA war on the Acholi people and its implications for peace and stability in Acholiland.

Emergence of IDPs Camps and the Humanitarian Consequences:

One of the main social impacts of the war was the displacement of people from their homes and villages into the IDPs camps. This phenomenon led many people to vacate their homes against their will. According to the UPDF the directive was a strategy designed to isolate the population from the rebels and therefore making it easier to track them down. The decision to create camps was officially announced by Museveni[278] in September 1996 during a meeting with members of parliament in which he told them that the army had decided to remove people from villages and put them in places where it would provide them better protection but which would also enable it to effectively fight the rebels.

Although majority of the people have left these camps and gone back to their villages as a result of the silence of the gun since 2006, the security situation in Acholiland remains fragile especially given the fact that neither the rebels have been totally defeated nor has a comprehensive peace agreement been signed between the LRA and the Uganda government. The war has had tremendous impact on the Acholi people with deteriorating and far reaching consequences on their socioeconomic and political life which they attribute to both the LRA and the NRM government.

[278] See "Let My People Go", an assessment carried out by the Acholi Religious Leaders' Peace Initiative and the Justice and Peace Commission of Gulu Archdiocese, (July 2001) p. 8-9

Poverty and Food Insecurity:

From the economic perspective, the two-decade war has left the Acholi people more impoverished than ever before. The region has faced serious food insecurity since the insurgency war began in 1986. Acholiland is predominantly an agricultural area largely depending on subsistence cultivation. By September 2005, "only 22% of households in Acholiland had access to land of any kind"[279]. This meant that majority of the people could not access and use their land for food cultivation and farming. Although majority of the displaced persons have left camps and gone back to their villages, many of them are still living in abject poverty because of opportunity costs from lost agricultural production, inadequate or lack of agricultural implements and lost labour productivity because of deaths and ill health.

Many Acholis point at economic deprivation as one of the major causes of the poverty they live in today which has undermined their ability to provide their families with the basic necessities. Political analysts and observers of the northern situation have pointed out that this may lead to further instability if not addressed. It is also important to note that before the war started in Acholiland in 1986, the Acholi people who are generally agriculturalists[280] tilled the land which provided them with a source of living. In addition to this, they practiced mixed farming but also engaged in other activities such as fishing especially along the River Nile and art craft by making for example carpets and baskets

[279] Civil Society Organisations for Peace in Northern Uganda (CSOPNU), "Counting the Cost: Twenty Years of War in Northern Uganda", (March 2006), p. 17-18, Retrieved from; http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/policy/conflict_disasters/downloads/csopnu_nuganda.pdf
[280] Charles Onencan, "The Beauty of Acholiland before the Conflict",

made from papyrus reeds. They also engage in carpentry and woodworks, cotton ginning, bee keeping and hunting.

The communal land tenure system enabled them to cultivate enough food during the rainy season for home consumption and kept the surplus in family granaries which are used as storage facilities to take them through difficult times for example the dry season. The hard working qualities of the Acholi people thus ensured food security which made individual core families to be self-sufficient and prosperous as well as supporting the extended families. Famine and handouts of food was never heard of. Their economic power comprised of livestock such as goats, sheep, and cows in addition to growing crops for example sorghum, beans, millet, cassava, simsim (sesame) and pea nuts. They also grew tobacco, cotton and kept chicken and piggery[281].

Other crops include mangoes, oranges, avocadoes, papaws, passion fruits and vegetables which they use as food often grown on small-scale peasantry holdings but with high yields. These also provide a source of income in form of money used to buy essential items for example sugar, salt, medicine, clothes, as well as pay school fees for their children. However, because of the war, farming became very difficult and what was in the gardens was destroyed by the rebels and the UPDF. Livestock too was eaten up by parties in the conflict. Consequently, the economic base and lifeline was destroyed. Two decades of war thus undermined the agricultural potential and put at risk the community's prospects for food sustainability and income generation.

[281] Finsstrom Sverker, "Living with Bad Surroundings: War, History and Everyday Moments in Northern Uganda", Duke University Press, (2008), p. 10-38

Today, northern Uganda is the poorest region[282] in Uganda with 64.8% of people living below the poverty line[283]. Living below the poverty line means anybody who depends on less than a dollar (about Uganda shillings 2,300) a day[284] compared to 35% for the rest of the country. Northern Uganda also has the highest poverty gap at 23.5% while the western region has the lowest at 4.52%, making the northern people to fall in the category of the most vulnerable people in Uganda[285]. The war compounded impoverishment of the Acholi people to the extent that an ordinary person cannot afford to buy a goat which costs about Uganda shillings 30, 000 ($13) in order to perform cleansing rituals and as a result, the Acholi people have requested government and NGOs to support them with goats and chicken in order to perform traditional rituals[286].

According to Ladit Omona,

"Life in Acholiland today is worse than it has ever been before in terms of poverty and all this is due to the war which many Acholis blame on the LRA but also mainly on the NRM government and doubt whether the situation will ever improve as long as Museveni remains in power. Many people lost property and after fifteen years of living in camps means that they have to start from scratch as they go home. Moreover others have failed to occupy the lands they used to live on before because of the land wrangles that came about because of this war and as such cannot access farmlands. Although the community leaders and courts are playing a big role in solving these wrangles, the household demands are so huge that many people are unable to access even the basic necessities in life such as medicine, or clothes. While we are working hard and hope that we shall at

[282] John A. Okidi and Gloria K. Mugambe, "An Overview of Chronic Poverty and Development Policy in Uganda", CPRC Working Paper No. 11, (January 2002) p.17-22; see also Ambassador Steven A. Browning, Ambassador's Review, "Sustaining Positive Momentum in Northern Uganda", 23rd July 2007, http://northernuganda.usvpp.gov/momentum.html

[283] Justine Nannyonjo, "Conflict, Poverty and Human Development in Northern Uganda", the Round Table Journal, Vol. 94, No. 381, September 2005, p. 473; see also The Independent 26th May 2009, Northern MPs anger shows national pain

[284] The Independent, 26th May 2009, Northern MPs anger shows national pain

[285] Godfrey Bahiigwa, Dan Rigby, and Philip Woodhouse, "Right Target, Wrong Mechanism? Agricultural Modernization and Poverty Reduction in Uganda", World Development, Vol. 33, No, 3, (March 2005) p. 481-483; see also the Observer 18th February 2009, West gets richer, poverty settles in northern Uganda

[286] See New Vision 9th August 2010, Land owners want help on IDP graves

some time in future stabilise and live decent life, at the moment many Acholis have been reduced to paupers and feel as if they are strangers in their own country where the north is living in abject poverty and the south in prosperity[287]*."*

One of the factors that have tended to exacerbate poverty in Acholiland is the loss of an important asset that is, livestock and especially cattle[288]. Before the war, three out of five families in Acholiland owned at least cattle on top of goats and sheep[289]. Data from veterinary experts before the war in 1985, estimated the cattle population in Acholiland to be about three hundred thousand[290]. Ten years later less than 2% of the pre-war cattle remained. This depletion continued to the extent that two decades of the war nearly decimated the cattle in Acholiland[291]. The ones that survived are those that were kept near urban centres or military bases, areas that were relatively secure than deep in the villages. However, one crucial negative aspect of the depletion of this asset was severe loss of social and financial capital which the communities would use as a cushion in times of hardship for example during loss of a family member, financial crisis and drought.

Moreover, the Karimojong rustlers took advantage of the chaotic situation created by the war and carried out systematic raids of cattle on a scale that had never been experienced by the Acholis before. In the words of an elder from Pongdwong,

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[287] Interview with Ladit Omona, Gulu October 2009
[288] See, "War as Normal: The Impact of Violence on the Lives of Displaced Communities in Pader District, Northern Uganda", Refugee Law Project Working Paper No. 5, (June 2002) p.6-7
[289] Morteas Boas, and Anne Hatloy Fafo, "Northern Uganda, Internally Displaced Persons Profiling Study, USAID, Vo. 1, (September 2005) p. 24, http://www.fafo.no/ais/africa/uganda/IDP_uganda_2005.pdf
[290] Robert Gersony, "The Anguish of Northern Uganda" Results of a Field-based Assessment of the Civil Conflicts in Northern Uganda", (August 1997) p. 26-28
[291] Elizabeth Stites, Dyan Mazurana, and Khristopher Carlson, "Movement on the Margins: Livelihoods and Security in Kitgum District, Northern Uganda", (November 2005) p. 6-7

"*The Karamojong came in large numbers during the war and took all our cattle. Many of them put on military uniform and carried guns similar to that of the UPDF and it was difficult to identify them except when they spoke their language. They were as free as fish in the water. To our surprise, they could raid cattle from villages near the UPDF bases moreover during broad day light. The UPDF rarely responded to counter these raids and in situations where they did, cattle was either never recovered or they just ate what was recovered. This made many people to believe that the NRM government colluded with the rustlers to decimate cattle as part of the punishment against the Acholi people or masqueraded as Karimojong. This perception has not disappeared from people's minds till to date"*[292].

Besides being a social capital and household welfare asset, the salience of cattle among the Acholi and the implications of its absence are important factors that necessitate deeper understanding because of the roles it plays in the community's wellfare. First, the Acholi short-horned oxen cows are important assets in subsistence farming as they pull oxen-ploughs during tilling of the land. Second, cows are used in traditional customary practices for example during marriage ceremonies where they are paid as bride price or exchanged as gifts between two parties of the bride's and bride groom's families. Third, cows are used in cultural rituals for example compensation in settling disputes between rival parties, cleansing as well as acting as symbols of social prestige.

The absence of this important asset coupled with widespread perception among the Acholi people that the UPDF colluded with and sometimes disguised as Karamojong rustlers to steal their cows is likely to make reconciliation with NRM government to take a long time. The Acholi people were dismayed by lack of confrontation between the UPDF and the rustlers during these raids, a phenomenon they believe was deliberate and thus posing the question as to why it was allowed to take place, to which convincing answers seem hard to find. Indeed as pointed out by Gersony,

[292] Interview with OLweny, Kitgum, November 2009

"The disappearance of the Police tracking force which in the past had restricted Karimajong raiders to sporadic incidents along the Kitgum eastern border contributed to the lawless environment in which these raids occurred. The Acholi people except its active insurgents were disarmed. That there was no reported confrontation in Acholi between the cattle raiders and the police, military or other government authorities, led the local population to believe that they were tolerating the plundering, which later occurred in the same magnitude in other districts. The attitude of most Acholi ranges from deep suspicion to absolute conviction that that lawlessness of this magnitude could not have occurred if it had not been instigated - or at least approved, at the highest level of government"[293].

Komakech from Koc Goma in south western Gulu recalls a period between 1980 and 1985 when the Acholiland was vibrant with livestock and says,

"Everywhere you looked was full of cattle and the farmers were reaping good income after selling them to abattoirs in Gulu and others to traders coming from as far as Sudan and Kampala. Even government farms such as Aswa ranch were well stocked with cattle which was a pride to the region and where students would study farming skills. My family was sustained by cows as i would get milk for home consumption and sold the surplus for money to buy essentials for the family. At the beginning of every term i sold a cow and raised school fees for my children. But all this is now gone. My sons keep asking me when we shall get back our cows so that they can go back to school while the orphans i am looking after have grown up thinking milk is provided by World Food Programme (WFP). It is very demoralising and frustrating when as a parent you cannot provide for your children"[294].

Following the relative peace from 2006, the NRM government in cooperation with local NGOs and international development partners responded to the challenge of poverty in order to help the afflicted population improve their social and economic welfare. A number of initiatives and programmes were launched. For example in October 2007, the Peace, Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP) for northern Uganda was commissioned and its implementation begun in July 2008[295]. Other programmes such as Plan for Modernization of Agriculture (PMA), Northern Uganda Social Action Fund (NUSAF)

[293] Gersony Robert, "The Anguish of Northern Uganda: Results of a Field-based Assessment of the Civil Conflicts in Northern Uganda", (August 1997) p. 28
[294] Interview with Komakech, Kitgum November 2009
[295] See Peace Recovery and Development Plan for northern Uganda, http://www.ugandaclusters.ug/prdp.htm

and Northern Uganda Rehabilitation Programme (NURP) aimed at economic revival of the north were also launched.

However, although there has been improvement in some areas for example in providing soft loans and agricultural implements to individuals and groups, these programmes have generally had little success in the sense that their impact in alleviating poverty has been insignificant. The main problem is largely because they have been marred with corruption[296], politicisation and mismanagement to the extent that only few people have been able to access them.

Members of Parliament (MPs) especially from north have complained that the money meant for recovery and development programs has been misused. In 2006, Betty Aol Achan, the Gulu District woman MP pointed out that corruption was hampering development programs for the north and in particular mentioned NURP and NUSAF. In 2009, Museveni suspended[297] the programme on reasons of corruption although it was later resumed. Government has tried to restock northern Uganda with vital economic asset, cows and especially the oxen heifers[298] but very few have benefited from this effort thus making majority to view it with scepticism and saying it is not interested in helping them. A farmer in Acholibur Kitgum said that,

[296] Ellen Martin, Cellia Pettey and James Acidri, "Livelihoods in Crisis: A Longitudinal Study in Pader, Uganda", Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG) working paper October 2009, p. 9, http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWFiles2009.nsf/FilesByRWDocUnidFilename/SNAA-7WGB5W-full_report.pdf/$File/full_report.pdf ; see also Godfrey Bahiigwa, Dan Rigby, and Philip Woodhouse, "Right Target, Wrong Mechanism, Agricultural Modernisation and Poverty Reduction in Uganda", World Development, Vol. 33, No, 3. (March 2005) ; see also "Building a Peace Economy in Northern Uganda, Conflict-sensitive approaches to recovery and growth, Investing in Peace", Issue No. 1, (September 2008) p. 29, http://www.international-alert.org/pdf/building_a_peace_economy_in_northern_uganda.pdf

[297] The Observer, 18th February 2009, West gets richer, poverty settles in northern Uganda.

[298] See New Vision 19th August 2010

"--the Acholi people are hard working but now they are the poorest. We used to have cattle, goats, sheep, oxen ploughs and chicken but today we have become paupers. Many families cannot afford to buy even the basic necessities like salt and paraffin and all this is because of the UPDF who looted all of our animals together with the Karimojong cattle rustlers. How can we trust this government?[299]*"*

Another man concurs with him and says,
"I lost my entire forty heads of cattle to UPDF in 1996 and i have not received anything untill today despite repeated promises by government. I have lost interest in the matter because i know the NRM government is not interested in helping the Acholi people because they think we are linked to Kony and therefore anti-government"[300].
Although on the face of it there seem to be booming business in retail merchandising, '*boda-boda*[301]*'* transportation, construction sites, and food vending in urban towns like Gulu and Kitgum, many people still experience severe problems in meeting family and school requirements for their children including extended family of relatives and dependants, many of whom lost their bread winners during the war. The situation is bad especially as you move away from towns and it is not uncommon to see men and women engaged in selling for example mangoes, roasted maize, and wild fruits by the roadside. Many women have resorted to making local brew '*kwete'* and '*lira-lira'* for survival. According to a local councillor in Pabo,

"The main problem with the NRM government is that it seems to be interested in getting votes from the people in the coming 2011 presidential elections and because of this, they have tended to politicise every programme that is intended to help the people in northern Uganda. In the process they deviate from the focus and objective of empowering the people as money is swindled through corruption"[302].
This observation is also noted in a study carried out in Pader district in which it is pointed out that there has been "--limited support from government of Uganda in form of

[299] Interview with a farmer in Acholibur Pader, December 2009
[300] Interview with Odong in Corner Kilak, December 2009
[301] '*Boda-boda'* is a local term referring to the business of transporting people and their property often on bicycles or motorcycles at a fee. The term finds its origin along the border between Uganda and Kenya where this business first started by transporting people across the common border.
[302] Interview with a Local Councilor in Gulu, December 2009

agricultural tools"[303] and households receive little practical assistance when they move out of camps. Although there are some cases of individuals and families who have been able to make progress in terms of recovery through for example farming or trading, these are still very few. Majority of the people have not been able to access land for farming and opportunities for employment because these opportunities rarely exist, but also largely due to lack of skills. In the meantime, as fighting between the LRA and the UPDF continues in the Central African Republic (CAR) and as the 2011 presidential elections draw nearer, coupled with the Acholi grievances that remain unresolved, many Acholis are sceptical about the ability and willingness of the NRM government to fulfil its responsibility of promoting socioeconomic development in order to alleviate the biting poverty.

In such a situation, it can therefore be concluded that if the NRM government does not ensure that development gains enjoyed elsewhere in the country reach the north or if it does not demonstrate seriousness and commitment on promises of addressing the grievances arising out of the marginalisation of northern Uganda in general and Acholiland in particular, then this will perpetuate the deep mistrust and resentment between the people in the north and those in the south. It will also exacerbate the north south divide, which will continue to pose significant challenges to long-term peace and recovery, thus negatively affecting sustainable political stability in the region.

[303] Ellen Martin, Cellia Pettey, and James Acidri, "Livelihoods in Crisis: A Longitudinal Study in Pader, Uganda", Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG) Working Paper, October 2009, p. 1-33

Some MPs especially from north have complained that the money meant for recovery and development programs has been misused. In 2006, Betty Aol Achan, the Gulu District woman MP pointed out that corruption was hampering development programs for the north and in particular motioned NURP and NUSAF. In 2009, Museveni suspended[304] the programme on reasons of corruption although it was later resumed. Government has tried to restock northern Uganda with vital economic asset, cows and especially the oxen heifers[305] but very few have benefited from this effort thus making majority to view it with scepticism and saying it is not interested in helping them.

The impact of the war is still expressed by many people who say that they have little faith in government programmes. This is not because they think that it does not have capacity but because they perceive it as a Bantu government which does not care about them thus indicating a regional and ethnic dimension. They think these programmes are only meant to hoodwink the international community to believe that the NRM government is addressing the socioeconomic problems of the northern region. Moreover, to compound the problem, the people in the north and particularly the Acholi have voted overwhelmingly in favour of the opposition in all the successive presidential elections since 1996, making them believe they are being punished for this voting behaviour.

Indeed as this farmer in Acholibur says,

"The Acholi people are hard working but now they are the poorest. We used to have cattle, goats, sheep, chicken, and oxen cows to plough the land but today we have become paupers. Many families cannot afford to buy even the basic necessities like salt and paraffin and all this is because of the UPDF who looted all of our animals together with

[304] The Observer, 18th February 2009, West gets richer, poverty settles in northern Uganda.
[305] See New Vision 19th August 2010

the Karimojong rustlers. How can we be sure that even those who have received cows from the NRM government cannot be taken away by the same government at sometime in future because we do not vote for it and when the president says that people will be rewarded according to the way they vote? How can we then trust this government?[306]*"*
Although on the face of it there seem to be booming business in retail merchandising, '*boda-boda*[307]*'* transportation, construction sites, and food vending in urban towns like Gulu and Kitgum, many people are still unable to meet family and school requirements for their children including extended family of relatives and dependants, many of whom lost their bread winners during the war. The situation is particularly disturbing especially as you move away from towns and it is not uncommon to see men and women engaged in selling for example mangoes, roasted maize, and wild fruits by the roadside. Many women have resorted to making local brew *'kwete'* and '*lira-lira'*[308] for survival.

According to a local councillor in Pabo, "the main problem with the NRM government is that it seems to be interested in getting votes from the people in the 2011 presidential elections and because of this, they have tended to politicise every programme that is intended to help the people in northern Uganda. In the process they have lost focus of the objective of empowering the people and money is swindled through corruption"[309]. Indeed as noted in a study that was carried out in Pader district, there has been "--limited

[306] Interview with a farmer in Acholibur Pader, December 2009
[307] '*Boda-boda'* is a local term referring to the business of transporting people and their property often on bicycles or motorcycles at a fee. The term finds its origin along the border between Uganda and Kenya where this business first started by transporting people across the common border.
[308] '*Lira-Lira*' is a local potent gin in northern Uganda which is made from fermented millet, sorghum or cassava but which often makes people who drink it to be violent and sometimes results in fatal deaths because of its toxicity
[309] Interview with a Local Councillor in Gulu, December 2009

support from the government of Uganda in the form of agricultural tools"[310] and households receive little practical assistance when they move out of camps.

Although there are some cases of individuals and families who have been able to make progress in terms of recovery through for example farming or trading, these are still very few. Majority of the people have not been able to access government support. In the meantime, as fighting between the LRA and the UPDF continues in the Central African Republic (CAR) and as the 2011 presidential elections draw nearer, coupled with the Acholi grievances that remain unresolved, many Acholis are sceptical about the ability and willingness of the NRM government to fulfil its responsibility of promoting socioeconomic development in order to alleviate the biting poverty. If the government does not ensure that development gains enjoyed elsewhere in the country reach the north or if it backtracks on its promises of addressing the marginalisation grievances as many Acholis perceive it, then this will perpetuate the deep mistrust characterised by the north south divide, which will continue to pose significant challenges to long-term peace and recovery, thus negatively affecting sustainable political stability in the region.

Education:

The war has adversely affected schools, students and teachers in Acholiland. Many schools were destroyed during the war and others badly damaged. Scholastic materials such as books and furniture were destroyed. Education has been impacted on in several ways; First, many school buildings and compounds were occupied by the rebels and

[310] Ellen Martin, Cellia Pettey, and James Acidri, "Livelihoods in Crisis: A Longitudinal Study in Pader, Uganda", Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG) Working Paper, October 2009, p. 14

government soldiers alike. For example the NRA used to put up detachments in or near schools many of which were located along the main roads of trading centres. Soldiers in these detachments used furniture as firewood and also destroyed other properties such as books.

According to Opoka, a primary teacher in Kitgum,
"The NRA put up a detachment in Acholi-bur trading centre along the road from Lira to Kitgum in 1986 and occupied buildings in the centre including the school. Although they would vacate it for other places as they fought the rebels, they would reoccupy it again after sometime. This was the case in many instances with other schools and trading centres as the army moved around Acholiland conducting operations against the rebels. During their stay in the school, soldiers used furniture as firewood and also broke into stores and scattered books and whatever was there. This did not happen to this school alone but also to other schools. The LRA also would sometimes occupy schools and destroy property but generally the NRA did more damage than the rebels. Moreover, whenever the NRA or the LRA vacated the school, some rogue people would come and vandalize whatever was left be it iron sheets, windows or doors. Whatever was left was also destroyed by rain or termites"[311].
Second, many teachers had to flee the war situation and sought refuge in towns like Gulu and Kitgum where it was relatively safe. Many others left and went as far as Kampala, the capital city of Uganda while others relocated to other districts in the country where the working conditions were better including guaranteed security. Many of these teachers have not returned to Acholiland even when there is no longer any fighting taking place. In effect this led to a brain drain as the best teachers left the area, with skills that are likely to take a long time to replace. For example there is serious scarcity of teachers in disciplines like mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, agriculture, information technology, accounts and economics[312].

[311] Interview with Opoka, Kitgum September 2009
[312] Statistics Department, Uganda Demographic and Health Survey, (1995) http://www.ubos.org/onlinefiles/uploads/ubos/pdf%20documents/Uganda%20DHS%201995%20Final%20Report.pdf

Killings, Miming and Destruction of Schools:

In addition to the above, many teachers and students were killed and schools destroyed during the war. For example between 1986 and 1998, in Gulu district alone, out of 123 primary schools, 75 were destroyed, 250 teachers out of 1,041 were killed while 3,384 out of 51,979 school children were abducted and 843 killed[313]. This did not only severely disrupt the educational programme but also led to displacement of many schools in Acholiland making student attendance and teaching difficult. Moreover many of the schools relocated to other areas were heavily congested and lacked basic teaching materials and facilities.

As several schools for example ten relocated in a 'secure' location and merged at a host school which constituted what was referred to as a "learning centre", many students came together under one umbrella and formed a 'mega-school' or 'mega-class' whereby a primary two class constituted all the students of that grade from the five schools forming one class. In such situations where schools and 'classrooms' are overcrowded, the environment is not conducive to learning and the teacher will find it difficult to manage all the students. This is because whereas the national average ratio of teacher/student is at about 1:65 in Acholiland it is about 1:150[314]. The teacher/student ratio is defined as the average number of full time study students per full time working teacher. Research has shown that pupils in smaller classes have better reading skills than those in larger classes.

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[313] George Ochol Onono and Augustus A. Oryem, "The Effects of the War in Northern Uganda in Education in Gulu District", http://www.km-net.org.uk/conferences/KM98/deo.htm;
[314] Michelle Brown, "The Failing Humanitarian Response in Northern Uganda", Humanitarian Practice Network, http://www.odihpn.org/report.asp?id=2854

This is because in the smaller sized classes, the teacher individualises more and uses the instructional material in a more flexible manner[315].

It is also worth noting that several schools that were destroyed have not been reconstructed or have been moved away from their original location. Consequently students and teachers in the north in general and Acholiland in particular walk as many as twenty five kilometres to get a school and many schools have experienced shrinking numbers as the drop-out level increases. While by 2008 the national drop-out rate for primary schools in Uganda was about 17% for boys and 35% for girls, in northern Uganda it was 54% for boys and 69% for girls[316]. Also in the same year, the national examination results released by UNEB for primary and secondary levels exposed the extent of the education deficit in northern Uganda. For example although the national performance at Primary Leaving Examination (PLE) was generally poor, most schools in Acholiland did not have a student passing in Division One thus demonstrating the magnitude and extent of the regional inequality in education access, quality and performance.

The education sector has been so badly affected to the extent that in some areas students lack classroom facilities and study in open space under trees.

[315] Paula Nilsson, "Education for All: Teacher Demand and Supply in Africa", Education International Working Paper No. 12, (November 2003) p. 9-10
[316] See The Independent, 26th May 2009, Northern MP's Anger Shows National Pain



Primary school students in Gulu studying under a tree; source

http://ugandansatheart.wordpress.com/2010/06/08/education-system-in-uganda-is-dividing-ugandans

These students lack facilities like laboratories for science subjects, libraries, dormitories, including sanitation facilities such as toilets, clean water and food. Being in the open space also means that they are exposed to the weather conditions which directly affect their attention and cognitive ability. The conditions of sunshine, wind, coldness and rain affects them and makes learning as well as teaching difficult. Ironically, these students have to sit the same examination from Uganda National Examination Board (UNEB) like other students in schools that are well developed, facilitated and equipped with for

example teachers and students resource centres, electricity and running water, moreover in a security guaranteed environment. In addition to the above, there are high rates of teacher absenteeism because teachers lack motivation, and often have to travel long distances to school. It is not rare to find students and teachers walking to school at 10.Am when at this time, most students in other parts of the country are most likely in their fourth or even fifth lesson.

The war also severely impacted on the school children especially in as far as their health is concerned because of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Because of the policy of the LRA to boost their fighting forces with child soldiers, many children who were at school including those who had attained school-going age but were not yet at school were abducted to serve as child soldiers and sex slaves to its commanders. This was mainly because children can easily be indoctrinated and the fact that they could not easily find their way back to their homes even if they wanted to escape. Consequently many students were abducted from primary and secondary schools. Young girls were sexually abused and often raped while others were forcefully married. This abuse was not only committed by the rebels but also the government forces. Consequently, many were infected with HIV/AIDS to the extent that many died while others could not continue with school and therefore dropped out. According to Beatrice, the challenge of the disease has ruined her future,

"*I was in primary one in 1997 when my parents were killed and my two elder brothers and sisters were abducted from school by the rebels. I was then taken by my aunt with whom i stayed in Kitgum and she put me back to school. But i had to live school after she died in 2006 because of HIV/AIDS. One of my abducted sisters managed to escape and come back with a child but she too and her child are infected with AIDS and are too*

weak. I am the one looking after them. She told me she does not know where the others are and fears they might have died in the bush"[317].

Beatrice is one of thousands of students in Acholiland especially girls that have dropped out of school due to AIDS-related circumstances whether direct or indirect. This also means that the future generation of the Acholi people has been affected in the sense that many students who would have for example become leaders, professionals and technocrats and whose skills would have probably contributed to the development of Uganda in general and Acholiland in particular have been lost. The impact of the war on education is also echoed by Adong, a health worker in Patong when she says,

"Many students especially the girls have not gone back to school. This is because of a number of reasons. First, many of them are now mothers because they were either raped or married by rebels or government soldiers. Many are also infected with HIV/AIDS. Second, they are now looking after their children or family orphans and have therefore taken the responsibility of family care because there are no older people to look after them. Third, Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT), provision of anti-retroviral drugs and general health care are all limited and the situation is acute in the villages. Moreover, majority of the rape survivors are still traumatised, sensitisation is largely inadequate and health services and staff in schools remain largely absent"[318].

Arising out of all the above is the fact that the northern Uganda in general and Acholiland in particular has the highest percentages of people with no education in the country with males and females at 17 % and 35 % according to demographic surveys[319].

Physical and mental health:

The health problem in Acoliland has been written on widely by other scholars, independent analysts and researchers. Hence issues concerned with how the health system was affected by the war, health education and management will not be dealt with here. Rather what is presented is an analysis of the current situation and how it is

[317] Interview with Beatrice in Kitgum, October 2009
[318] Interview with Adong, Patong, November 2009
[319] John A. Okidi and Gloria K. Mugambe, "An Overview of Chronic Poverty and Development Policy in Northern Uganda", Economic Policy Research Centre, Makerere University, Working Paper No. 11, (January 2002) p. 1-34

impacting on the lives of the Acholi people in the context of the need for healthy society for sustainable peace and development. To begin with, health facilities in terms of hospitals and dispensaries are inadequate for the population and even the few that are available, people have to travel long distances in order to reach a hospital. For example Achan a widow from Lacekocot, Pader district says

"*I have to travel over 40 kilometres to Lacor hospital in Gulu in order to get medicine for my son who suffers from a kidney problem. In 2005 he was arrested by the UPDF soldiers on allegation that he was a rebel collaborator and was detained at a detachment before being transferred to Kitgum. He said that during interrogation they were routinely beaten and kicked by soldiers. He was released after six months but when he came home he was complaining of severe pain in his lower abdomen. He was diagnosed with a kidney problem in early 2006 and since then i have to take him to hospital. Sometimes we travel by car but when we don't have money as is the case in most cases we have to walk. Sometimes we don't go for check up as we lack transport money. Sometimes we sleep there for two days or more until we get treatment*"[320].

The problem of having to travel long distances is not being encountered by Achan alone but also many other people in Acholiland. St Mary's Hospital Lacor commonly known as Lacor hospital is one of the few referral hospitals in Acholiland located 6 kilometres from the town of Gulu on the Sudan road. Although it is relatively supplied with medicine and has qualified staff, "--we are overstretched with the number of patients"[321], says James a medical officer at the hospital. According to him, the problem is caused by inadequate health facilities in Acholiland, thus making the few available to be congested. He further says that because there is scarcity of medicine and sometimes absolute lack of it, patients have to travel long distances to look for medicine.

The problem is compounded by lack of qualified medical personnel especially at community health centres. In addition to this, not many Ugandan health workers like to

[320] Interview with Achan in Gulu town, December 2009
[321] Interview with a medical officer Lacor hospital December 2009

work in the north because of poor infrastructure and uncertainty about their personal security. Most returnees who are opening up their fields and readjusting for a new life after leaving the IDPs camps say that one of the problems they are facing is lack of medical treatment. Peter, a medical officer who prior to the war in 1985 owned a drugs outlet in Opit village had to relocate to Gulu town after the war started in 1986 and says he cannot go back because of security reasons. Besides security, he says that "people are so poor that you can no longer sustain the same business even if you are good hearted and feel you should help people with medical service"[322].

Achelam a Local Councillor in Pajule says "there are few qualified medical personnel to the extent that you have to walk long distances in order to get one. Even in cases where you are able to get one, most prescribed medicine is not available nearby, in which case the only option is to refer you to a hospital like Kalong which is far away. Most people have resorted to traditional medicine and witchcraft, but this cannot treat most disease and lives that would have been saved end up being lost"[323]. According to him, because of inadequate health practitioners and medicine, coupled with health education which is largely absent, most people attribute illnesses to the evil spirit (*cen*) leading them to seek treatment from witchdoctors but which worsens the situation in many cases.

Indeed as noted in a study that was carried out in 2009, "lack of drugs at health centres in return areas, the lack of water and hygiene services and household decisions not to seek health care because of the distance to better equipped centres have contributed to higher

[322] Interview with Peter in Gulu December 2009
[323] Interview with a Local Councillor Pajule November 2009

mortality rates in return areas including transit sites--"[324]. Today, northern Uganda region has the highest rate of HIV/AIDS compared to other regions in the country. It is also worth noting that the disease increased by five percent from 10.9% in 2008/2009 to 12.9% in 2009/2010[325]. Although the increase is attributed to a number of factors for example commercial sex, inconsistent use of condoms, multiple sex partners, sex for survival, alcohol abuse before sex, mother to child transmission and poverty, Achiro an HIV positive woman and resident of Pece suburb says soldiers and poverty are the most causes of the disease in Gulu. Many women and young girls have resorted to sex trade just for survival. This observation is also noted by the paramount chief (king) of the Acholi people (*Rwot)* David Acana II when he says that the alarming HIV/AIDS rates and its impact on the Acholi people are a serious worry to him.

This is because the disease is taking a heavy toll on his people. Commenting about the plight of his people, Acana says "it had never been in our tradition for adults to survive on handouts, but this war has turned my people into beggars. There is so much poverty and disease"[326]. He further points out that at the peak of the war, the soldiers were the only people with cash and there is no doubt that they used it to seduce the unprivileged ones into reckless sexual activities leading to the spread of HIV/AIDS. This phenomenon puts a stain on Uganda, a country once hailed as a success story for its pragmatic policies in tackling HIV/AIDS.

[324] Ellen Martin, Cellia Pettey, and James Acidri, "Livelihoods in Crisis: A Longitudinal Study in Pader, Uganda", Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG) Working paper, October 2009, p. 23
[325] See Daily Monitor 28th March 2010, HIV/AIDS spread on the increase in the north, by Sam Lawino and David Okumu, http://allafrica.com/stories/201003290750.html
[326] See Daily Monitor, 14th August 2010, A new dawn or Acholi kingdom

Vulnerable groups in northern Uganda in general and Acholiland in particular who include children, young girls, commercial workers and women account for 79.8% of the infection[327]. The story of Nakasi, a mother of 12 children who was raped 16 times[328] purportedly by the UPDF during the war and infected with HIV/AIDS, which resulted into her being thrown out of her marital home after her husband learnt of the infection is one of the many cases that demonstrate the magnitude of the infection and the extent of abuse and vulnerability especially of the women during the war. According to Odong a community elder in Kafata village in Kitgum "HIV/AIDS has seriously impacted on the Acholi community and has undermined the family fabric to the extent that many families have broken up, many people have died and the stigma associated with the disease is high"[329].

One other problem that is having huge impact on the Acholi people is the mental stress and depression, a phenomenon that is likely to affect the victims of the war for years and perhaps decades to come. During the war, many people were exposed to extreme violence which they either participated in or witnessed. As a result, many people in Acholiland are still traumatised and suffer from Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), an emotional illness that develops as a result of a terribly frightening and life-threatening

[327] Accorsi S, Fabiani M, Nattabi B, Corsado B, Iriso R, Ayella E. O, Pido B, Onek P. A,Ogwang M and Declich S, "The Disease Profile of Poverty: Morbidity and Mortality in northern Uganda in the context of War, Population displacement and HIV/AIDS", Transactions of the royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, Vol. 99, No. 3, (March 2005) p. 226-227

[328] See The Independent, 2nd August 2010, Raped 16 times, infected with HIV/AIDS and kicked out of the marital home.

[329] Interview with Odong, Kitgum December 2009

condition[330]. A Study conducted by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine in conjunction with Gulu University established that more than half of the study population (54%) displayed symptoms of PTSD while more than two thirds (67%) showed signs of depression.

The study further established that three quarters of those questioned said that they had witnessed or experienced murder of a family member, friend or relative, while more than half said that they had been kidnapped, raped or sexually abused. In terms of magnitude, intensity and gravity of the situation, it is pointed out that these levels are among the highest recorded globally and in fact, far higher than those recorded for displaced groups in other conflict areas such as Afghanistan and Croatia[331] although in another study it is indicated that majority of the male youth- both abducted and non-abducted have relatively low levels of emotional distress[332].

It was further revealed that for example out of 1200 patients examined by medical professionals in Amuru and Gulu districts in 2006, 54 percent were found to be suffering from PTSD while 67 percent were found to have depression. At the mental health unit of Lachor Hospital in Gulu, over 9600 cases of mental-related illnesses were reported in 2006, while at the African Centre for the Rehabilitation of Torture Victims in Gulu town,

[330] Bayard Roberts, Kaducu Felix Ocaka, John Browness, Thomas Oyok and Egbert Sondorp, "Factors associated with post-traumatic stress disorder and depression amongst Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Northern Uganda", BioMed Central (BMC) Psychiatry, Vol. 8. No. 33, (May 2008) p. 1-2
[331] Ibid, p. 7
[332] Jeannie Annan, Christopher Blattman and Roger Horton, "The State of the Youth and Youth Protection in Northern Uganda: Findings from the Survey of War Affected Youth", Report for UNICEF Uganda, (September 2006) p. 1-50

over 1500 cases were recorded in 2007[333]. These cases included epilepsy, depression, alcohol and drugs abuse, insomnia, paranoia, acute psychotic disorders, and chronic psychosis. Many of these cases were triggered by violence while those that were already present were made worse. Common symptoms of mental disorder include sleeplessness, avoiding socialising, easily agitated, aggressiveness, nightmares and depression.

However, the worst trauma affecting the Acholi people is a strange and mysterious disease refered to as the 'nodding disease' because it is characterized by head nodding. The disease was identified more that nine years ago in Kitgum district and is also characterized by epileptic seizures, severe weight loss, cognitive mental retardation, neurological deterioration, oozing saliva, uncontrolled bouls and urine, and blurred vision among others. It commonly attacks children between the ages of 1 – 20 years but according to Musinguzi, a medical practitioner, "one cannot rule out older people suffering the same disease in future". Although the number of people affected is estimated to be about three thousand with more than one thousand dead, the actual figure is believed to be much higher than this. The NRM government has remained conspicuously silent despite pleas from civil society organizations and Acholi legislators to declare the area a disaster zone and respond expeditiously to the victims. Although the causes of the disease remain unknown, some theories point at black flies carrying parasitic worms, drinking conterminated water, to dietry problems. However, some sources intimated to this researcher that the UPDF used banned (poisonous) explosives during the war against the LRA which exposed people to toxic chemicals. Whatever the cause may be, the disease has wrecked havoc to the Acholi people and the trauma and

[333] Northern Uganda Bear Mental Scars, http://iwpr.net/report-news/northern-ugandans-bear-mental-scars

death are likely to continue for several decades. Nevertheless, despite the concerted effort and measures taken by the medical personnel to treat the huge numbers of patients affected, PTSD is still prevalent in Acholiland and is affecting the daily lives and psychological wellbeing of many people especially the youth who were abducted by the LRA and many of whom were forced to commit brutal acts for example murder, torching homesteads with people inside and cutting off people's limbs. Opira of Pece Ward in Gulu municipality says,

"My son who is now 16 years old and who was abducted by the LRA in 1998 and stayed with them for three years before escaping gets nightmares and makes screaming noise in the night saying people want to kill him or that he is frightened by the ghost of his friends who were killed in the bush. He also sometimes prefers solitary life and does not mix freely with his peers. I understand his problem because sometimes when he is making noise i wake up only to realise that i was also dreaming about his younger brother crying shortly before he was hit on the head with a pounding mortar and died instantly"[334].

The same condition was expressed by Opira, a student of Layibi secondary school by saying that,

"The terrifying situation that you go through cannot easily go away from you even when you try to fight it out of your mind. Although I can say that I have improved as i can now mix freely with friends because of counselling from the church, I still get nightmares. I often dream that I am in a war situation with gunshots all around me and people dying. Sometimes I get panic attacks as if something bad is about to happen to me and I feel frightened and want to be left alone. It is affecting my studies because when I get these attacks I loose concentration"[335].

Apparently it appears this condition is not affecting Opira alone but also others especially those like him who were abducted and exposed to violence although they prefer not to talk about it. Children were often ordered to commit brutal acts for example killing their friends or family members. This was intended to remove fear from them as well as to stop them from nursing any ideas of going back home. Indeed when asked whether he knows others who may be going through the same condition like him he said that some of

[334] Interview with Opira, Gulu December 2009
[335] Interview with Opira, Gulu November 2009

his friends tell him they experience the same condition but prefer to keep quiet because they don't want to be associated with Kony in order to avoid name-calling or just in case they can be revenged against[336]. This is further alluded to by Ojara who said that "if you are identified as having had a link with Kony, people will perceive you to have *cen* (evil spirit) and will not want to associate with you". Indeed as pointed out by Gulu district NGO Forum, "returnees are often accused of having *cen* which is another form of social rejection from the community. --they are also socially ostracised through resentment which is illustrated in various ways". Many of the returnees are blamed for the abducted children who have either been reported dead or have not been able to return home and "often there is tremendous anger as to why their children were not lucky enough to come home"[337].

The Erosion of Acholi Culture and Values:

The devastating impact of the war has also affected the culture and values cherished by the Acholi people. As such it has to a large extent eroded the customs and ways of living which is the very basis and foundation of the Achol culture in a number of ways. First, the Acholi culture is such that the elders are treated with dignity and respect irrespective of whether they are family members or not. Men, women and children recognise this fact and place elders in a category of their own. This is because elders command wisdom and are also part of a system and framework of custodians of the Acholi culture who pass it on from generation to generation.

[336] See Special report, "The Cooling of Hearts: Community Truth-telling in Acholiland", (July 2007) p. 10-12, www.justiceandreconciliation.com
[337] See Roko Wat I Acoli, "Restoring Relationships in Acholiland: Traditional Approaches to Justice and Reintegration", (September 2005) p. 32-37

As such they are the fulcrum of unity and guidance and symbolise the peace and tranquillity upon which the traditional Acholi family set-up revolves. However, because of the war, respect for the elders has been affected to the extent that their function and role in society has been seriously undermined. For example children no longer respect them and in some cases even abuse them openly. In a situation of this nature, children cannot grow up upright with good manners. As a social worker commented,

"Many of the children growing up in Acholiland today are not disciplined. They do not listen and respect the elders as well as their parents. They do things that we know they may not have done if it was not because of the war. For example many do smoke and drink alcohol which they have learnt from their friends in camps and towns. A group of children threw stones at an elder when he advised them not to play in the road because they can get accident. It is very sad indeed"[338].

Second, vices such as prostitution, elopement and adultery have led to the breaking up of many families resulting in single parenthood and problems of bringing up children who are the future generation of the Achoi community. Because people were herded into camps, thousands of families were forced to live together in crowded conditions. Inability to access their fields to grow or even harvest the crops they left behind led to acute food shortage. The UPDF warned that whoever goes back to the village would be treated as a rebel. Many who risked their lives and went back in search of food were shot at and killed while others were critically wounded.

To make matters worse, men who are bread winners could not get employment and therefore could not earn any income with which to buy family requirements. Consequently, women had to try by all means in order to provide food to the hungry children. They resorted to begging for physical food or money from men outside their families in exchange for sex. In some cases mothers would even encourage their

[338] Interview with a social worker, Kitgum November 2009

daughters to do the same so that they can have enough food on the table. In the process, men who discovered their wives having sex with other men chased them away from the family thus resulting in many families to break up, a phenomenon that has exacerbated the disintegration of the social cohesion of the family.

Frequent quarrels broke out because of inability by men to support their families. This resulted into sour relationship between husband and wife and consequently, men had to look for active women as concubines for survival. In short, both parties in the family that is, husband and wife engaged in sex outside the family mainly for the reasons of survival. This situation introduced a new dimension of 'sugar daddies' and 'sugar mummies' in the marriage set up which was alien to the Acholi family domain. This behaviour which became widely practiced in the IDPs camps because of idleness but also largely due to inability by spouses to fulfil their respective roles in providing for the family welfare and which led to a state of hopelessness has continued to affect the family relationships.

As pastor Okello of Kitgum says,
"Once behaviour has been entrenched in society it becomes difficult for people to break way from it. The war and displacement has impacted on the Acholi family domain to the extent that many marriages are breaking down. Even when majority of the people have gone back to their villages, the moral degeneration can still be observed. Cases of sexual violence for example men beating their wives and throwing them out of matrimonial homes and in some cases inflicting grave bodily harm or even murdering them are common these days. There are also cases where women have killed their husbands. This poses a big worry for the future of the Acholi society"[339].
In addition to the above, the traditional courtship of the Acholi marriage whereby the clan and family of the boy or girl to be married takes active role in the process of selecting a suitable partner, preparing and organising the marriage have been eroded. Customary

[339] Interview with Okello, Kitgum November 2009

practices like carrying out information search about each party's family background, exchanging gifts and performing cultural rituals necessary for creating harmony and binding the two families together are slowly but steadily dying out. The situation has been made worse by the lack of cattle which provides the bride price, but also because many young men and girls are moving into towns where they learn foreign habits. Consequently, young men no longer seek advice and involvement of their parents but instead randomly pick girls through casual acquaintances and present them for marriage.

In tandem with the problem of family break-up and aggravating it is the fact that in many families, men have lost their traditional role as family heads and bread winners, a role and function that has been taken over by women because of economic empowerment. Many Acholi women today are employed as domestic servants by well to do families or re engaged in doing petty business for example selling brooms, fruits and vegetables from which they get money to look after their families. Arising out of this is the fact that many women have become decision makers in the households. While this is advantageous in the sense that it has opened the avenues for women to engage in economic activities and therefore enabled them to make economic decisions, it has at the same time led them to under-look and disrespect their husbands thus eroding the value of mutual respect and creating disharmony in many families. It has also created feelings of failure and shame among men and led them to resort to gambling and drinking alcohol which has made them alcoholics in an attempt to hide their frustration.

Indeed as this teacher commented,
"The Acholi culture today is bleeding because of the social problems generated by the war. An Acholi man is supposed to be strong and provide security to his family as well as

material support by buying all the things that it needs. He proves his worth by executing this function in the same way like he does in the war where he can never surrender or give up the fight. His assets like cattle, land and produce provides him with the means of wealth and respect. But the war has deprived many men of these assets and made them powerless. It has upset their traditional values and roles to the extent that they feel humiliated. As a result of this, they cannot command authority and respect in the family as they did before and it is not uncommon to find children under single parents because of divorces, a phenomenon that is on the increase in Acholi society today"[340].

This observation is also noted by analysts and scholars writing about the war in Acholiland and its impact on Acholi culture by pointing out that lack of morals and the disruption of daily lives of many communities tends to make the future of the Acholi very bleak[341]. It is also important to note that within this context, women and children are the most vulnerable category because of their weak status in society which makes them subject to abuse. Moreover the structure and system of ensuring social harmony in which the elders play a vital role as arbitrators in family matters, settling disputes within communities and passing on cultural traditions and Acholi values has equally been affected by the war.

Prior to the war, elders were popularly respected because of their role of imparting knowledge about cultural tradition especially to the youth, which they have done from one generation to another. This transfer of social knowledge provided the cultural and moral guidelines that shaped and guided the Acholi society. An important aspect in this was the special hut located in the family compound exclusively for elders where they would meet and discuss matters of social interest necessary for maintaining order and harmony among the Acholi people which accorded them special status in society. Within

[340] Interview with a primary teacher in Pajule, November 2009
[341] Zachary Lomo and Lucy Hovil, "Behind the Violence: The War in Northern Uganda", ISS Monograph No. 99 (March 2004)

this nexus, important issues would be transmitted to the youth from the *wang oo* (central fireplace) also located centrally within the homestead.

Because of this, elders were perceived as symbols and custodians of the Acholi customs and values and were regarded as men of wisdom and therefore torch bearers for the future. Unfortunately, the war destabilised all this. According to Ladit Opio, "elders today are not respected and this is because the war undermined their status. Congested conditions in the camps led elders to mix with ordinary people even in socialising places which diluted their status". During the war, alcohol became the main source of 'comfort' and people drunk excessively. Unfortunately, the elders also fell pray to this drinking spree which affected the way society views them[342].

Conclusion:

This chapter has demonstrated that the war between the LRA and the NRM government has impacted on the Acholi community with devastating consequences in different ways. The major social impact has been the displacement of people from their villages and homes and being forced to live in the 'protected villages' or IDPs camps which were never protected. People's lives in the IDPs camps became vulnerable not only because of attacks from the rebels and government forces but also because of the inhumane living conditions. It has also demonstrated that people have been exposed to abuses such as arbitrary arrest and detention, torture and many have been killed. Women and girls have been systematically raped.

[342] Judy El-Bushra and Ibrahim M. G Sahl, "Cycles of Violence, Gender Relations and Armed Conflict", (2005) p. 17-29, 82-97, www.acord.org.uk

In addition to the above, it has shown that the war has had long term consequences on the Acholi people in general and particularly those living in Acholiland. The Region is the poorest in Uganda with over 64% of the people living bellow the poverty line. The war has in actual fact made their condition worse off than they were before the NRM came to power in 1986. Moreover they have now taken on other problems such as high level of HIV/AIDS, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and malnutrition which are taking a heavy toll on society. The people are acutely malnourished with half of the children stunted while 30% are "wasted", a medical term that describes a worse form of malnutrition.

The war also impacted on education to the extent that the north in general and Acholi sub-region in particular is lagging behind other regions in Uganda. Education infrastructure for example schools, books and stationery were destroyed and many schools have not been reconstructed till to date. It also led to high school drop outs both at primary and secondary level. Many teachers were forced to leave the region because of insecurity and sought work in areas of the country where the working conditions are good and their security guaranteed. In effect, this led to brain drain from the region and as a result, many schools lack teachers in critical disciplines like mathematics, physics and chemistry, biology, agriculture and economics.

It has also shown that because of lack of teachers and teaching facilities, performance at PLE, O level and A level exams in the north have been poor as compared to performance at the same level in other regions, thus showing the extent of regional inequality in education access, quality and hence performance. Consequently, the impact on education

has led the region to have the highest percentage of people with no education in the country with males and females at 17% and 35% respectively. In such a situation, failure or inability by the NRM government to ensure that gains and privileges enjoyed elsewhere in the country are extended to the north will not only maintain the deeply-felt mistrust between the north and the south, but will project the LRA as the vehicle through which Acholi grievances are expressed and therefore perpetuate ethnic tensions.

Also Acholi cultural institutions and values have been affected. The respect and powers of the elders, men as household heads and chiefs have been eroded. Many people especially the youth no longer respect the elders, divorce and gender-based abuse is on the increase and the future of Acholi society is at stake. It has also indicated that as long as the LRA conflict is not brought to an end, peace and stability in Acholiland is likely to remain elusive and the effects of the war lasting longer or even getting worse. The point being emphasised is that as long as the underlying structural causes of the northern war, that is, the Acholi grievances of socioeconomic and political marginalisation are not adequately addressed, the potential for the resurgence of violence in Acholiland cannot be ruled out. The next chapter examines the attempts to mitigate the LRA conflict, the chances of success and failure and why.

It has also demonstrated that although the government has put in place policies and programmes that are aimed at socioeconomic revival of the northern region, in practical terms, little impact has been created on the ground. While it can be argued that these policies signify practical moves and therefore a process to accommodate and integrate

people in the northern region with the rest of the country, they at the same time appear to be largely a matter of form rather than content.

This is in line with what has been pointed out in the previous chapters that the problem in Acholiland is generally a result of socio-political and economic marginalisation by the NRM government which has led to relative deprivation, lack of security and ethnic integration which has in turn created feelings within the Acholi people to think that they are not treated like people from the south. It can therefore be argued that the problem is primarily a problem of politics from which the economic and ethnic conflict derives. The NRM government has tended to politicise ethnicity and almost all other aspects of social life in Uganda and has maintained power through a combination of patronage client networks, selective use of force and intimidation, which has resulted into socio-political discontent and ethnic conflict. In fact, various insurgent groups that have emerged in Uganda since the NRM captured power in 1986 (although many of these died out save for the LRA and ADF) demonstrate that the policies of the ruling elites are at the root of insurgency and humanitarian emergency in Acholiland.

CHAPTER SIX

Managing the Conflict in the North and Shifting Trends in the Search for Peace

Introduction:

This chapter examines the nature, impact and outcomes of the measures taken to mitigate the LRA conflict in the search for peace in northern Uganda. In particular, the initiatives aimed at promoting dialogue taken by interlocutors such as Betty Bigombe, the Gulu Elders Peace Initiative, ARLPI, the Community of Sant'Egidio and the Carter Center and their role as mediators in an attempt to resolve the conflict through peaceful means will be examined. In addition it also examines the regional and international institutions for example the AU, UN and the ICC and their role in conflict resolution and to what extent, if at all, they intervened in the northern Uganda war.

Examination of these institutions is based on the fact that the sanctity of human security has today become a major concern of the international community more than ever before and also because intra-state conflicts knows no system boundaries and often spills in the international system[343]. There is no doubt that conflict is part of human interaction resulting from many factors but mainly out of frustration of sociological needs of identity and recognition including political and developmental needs. To this end therefore it is important to examine these institutions.

[343] John Burton, "Conflict Resolution as a Political Philosophy", Interdisciplinary Peace Research, Vol. 3, No, 1, (May 1991) p. 63-72; Stefan Lindermann, "Exclusionary Elite Bargains and Civil War Onset: The Case of Uganda", Crisis States Working Paper No, 76, (August 2010) p. 58

In order for conflict to be resolved, these needs must be managed and addressed to the mutual satisfaction of the parties involved. Success of these initiatives also largely depends on the involvement of all other stake holders. Hence the term management is used here because of its salience in everyday life and extends to conflict handling modes between warring parties for the benefit of society. Indeed as noted by Wallensteen, "conflict management can help in reducing the dangers of crisis, creating some confidence and lessening potential or actual suffering"[344].

Within this context, parties involved in the conflict must recognise the need for mutual co-existence and respect for one-another and also the need for them to negotiate everlasting agreements despite the fact that they have fought a bitter war. As such, an environment of negotiations based on the principle of trust and win-win in which they all emerge victorious is necessary. This chapter examines whether this took place in the case of the negotiations between the LRA and the NRM government and if not, whether it is likely to take place in future. Indeed as pointed out by Gakunzi,

"The work of conflict resolution cannot be confined to the high-level signing of peace agreements between two warring parties. It entails strengthening trust between communities and challenging the institutions responsible for excluding certain groups. Conflict prevention should introduce laws and procedures which guarantee equal opportunities in economic activities and participatory political structures"[345].

[344] Wallensteen Peter, "Understanding Conflict Resolution: War, Peace and the Global System", 2nd Edition, SAGE Publications Ltd. London, (2007) p. 5

[345] Gakunzi David, "Sharing Roles in Conflict Prevention in the Great Lakes Region", In Helene Grandvoinnet and Hartmut Schineider (Eds), "Conflict Management in Africa: A Permanent Challenge", OECD Publications, Paris France, (1998) p. 67

Attempts to Mitigate the War between the LRA and the GOU:

Because of increasing humanitarian crises and the need to protect people against human rights abuses and attacks by the rebels and government soldiers, the state came under increasing pressure from governments as well as national and international civil society organisations to bring the war to an end and advised that the best way was through a negotiated settlement. Several initiatives to negotiate peace between the NRM government and the LRA have been made. However, these initiatives have been beleaguered with a number of problems[346] which include mutual distrust and suspicion, inadequate financial and logistical support, lack of direct face-to-face with Joseph Kony, limited diplomatic and international support and most importantly, lack of political will on the part of the NRM government

The Betty Bigombe Peace Negotiations (1993-1994):

In 1993 Museveni appointed Betty Bigombe as minister of state for the pacification of the north, a portfolio whose responsibility amongst other things was to deal with the socio-political problems in the northern region especially those connected with the uprising. Betty, herself an ethnic Acholi moved to the northern town of Gulu, established her office and resided in the NRA's 4th Division Garrison Headquarters. Although the portfolio of 'pacification of the north' was perceived by the Acholi community especially the elites as derogatory and insulting as they considered it to imply conquest and subjugation[347], they nevertheless waited to see what her role and function were and how this would influence

[346] Jonna R. Quinn, "Getting to Peace? : Negotiating with the LRA in Northern Uganda", p. 1-24, retrieved from; http://politicalscience.uwo.ca/faculty/quinn/gettingtopeace.pdf

[347] See Ben Ochola Latigo, "Acholi, Victims of the Northern War and Isolation", *Kacoke Madit*, 4th-5th April 1997,p.3, http://www.km-net.org.uk/conferences/KM97/papers_pdf/victims.pdf

the brutal repression that was being meted on the Acholi people, coupled with the decades of marginalisation and the security situation that was deteriorating very fast.

Soon after settling in her new office in Gulu in 1993, she started initiatives that were aimed at finding means and ways to reach out to Kony. She had to find someone trusted and a confidant of Kony to act as an intermediary who could reach to him. Her instinct and skill told her she should scrutinise the LRA documents that the NRA had captured during operations as the starting point, although she also sought contact with Kony's commanders through their wives in the villages and IDPs camps[348]. Going through these documents which she requested for from the NRA officers, though she never told them of her intentions to contact the LRA, she looked for names that were mentioned repeatedly. One of the names identified was that of Ladit Yusuf Okwonga Adek. Her rapport engagement and interaction with him would later enable her not only to learn crucial information about the reclusive LRA leader but also act as an entry point in her initiative project to contact him.

It should be realised that the initiative to contact Kony was entirely hers and only informed the army after establishing contact with him through Ladit Adek and being sure that the relationship and link would continue. The decision not to inform the NRA was because she did not know whether it could compromise its operations but in large part due to inability to contemplate its reaction given the fact that it had preferred the military campaign rather than dialogue. Indeed when the NRA learnt of the initiative through

[348] See, Betty Bigombe "I needed to Talk to Joseph Kony", (March 2010), http://www.rnw.nl/africa/article/i-needed-talk-joseph-kony

Colonel Waswa the division commander in Gulu, the reaction from officers was mixed with some appreciating the move while others wanted her to "negotiate the surrender of the rebels"[349].

Moreover, Museveni never openly supported the initiative, but preferred to remain ambiguous ostensibly to 'kill two birds with one stone' that is, if it worked out, to disapprove those who criticised him for his militaristic policy and if it failed, to prove what he had all along been saying that the rebels had no meaningful agenda rather than killing people. He however gave Bigombe a go ahead but advised her to liaise with the NRA commanders especially in Gulu. On 25th November 1993 the first face-to-face negotiations between the LRA and the GOU took place at Pagic in Aswa district and was attended by Bigombe, senior NRA officers and elders among them Yusuf Adek, Kony's confidant and intermediary whose efforts and linkage charisma led to this historic meeting and negotiations.

Despite security hiccups emanating from each of the two opposing forces insisting that its forces guards the venue, the matter was quickly sorted out and the two parties would soon sit down together in a confidence-building environment and begin deliberations that would pave the way and framework for subsequent negotiations. It is important to note that Kony did not attend this meeting, probably because of security reasons and instead sent his senior commanders. The meeting was also attended by elders, cultural and spiritual leaders, including Bigombe's link men.

[349]O'Kadameri Billie, "LRA/Government Negotiations", (2002), http://www.c-r.org/our/accord/northern-uganda/negotiations-1993-94.php

During the meeting, the LRA put forward the following pints and requests. First, that the past should be forgotten and a new chapter opened, since this marked a new beginning. What the LRA meant by this was that it should not be blamed for the human rights violations during the war as it had agreed to the peace talks in good faith and besides, it was not a lone party in the war and insisted that this was important if the negotiations were to succeed. Second, that it should not be seen or regarded as a force that has been defeated but rather as responsible and understanding people who wanted peace. Third, that its fighters should not be referred to as rebels but people who have decided to return home rather than surrendering.

Fourth, a request was made to allow it mobilise its fighters who were scattered in the region including those abroad in Europe and other countries in order to bring them home. According to the LRA representatives, if everyone was not mobilised to come home, then some people would remain fighting and the war would continue. Fifth, they requested that government treats their sick and wounded and that both parties supervise this exercise. Lastly, they pointed out and recommended that the traditional Acholi cleansing ritual performed by elders be carried out as a mechanism for reunion of brothers and kinsmen who had been enemies.

This initial phase of talks was held under an atmosphere of mutual respect and recognition especially as Bigombe used her skills and tried to convince the rebels that government recognised their grievances and was willing to resolve them in an amicable manner. Indeed as pointed out by O'Kadameri, "confidence had been established to the point where the LRA was later able to send their representatives to the NRA's Gulu

barracks, where Bigombe lived to discuss the progress of the talks"[350]. But yet despite these developments, ambiguity, confusion, lack of political clarity, support and guidance especially from Museveni tended to mar the progress, scope and direction which created feelings of betrayal in Bigombe and also led to scepticism about the success of the negotiations among the observers of the talks. She was also under immense political pressure to go slow as she had been accused of giving much concession to the LRA. Some analysts have pointed out that this was perhaps because she was on the road to success that would lead her to carry the fame, praise and recognition for resolving the LRA conflict through dialogue and bring peace in northern Uganda where many had failed.

To majority of the Acholis, these talks looked promising with a hope that the war was about to come to an end and that the marginalisation problem which had dodged past governments and pushed the Acholi people to the periphery, was about to be a thing of the past. It was an opportunity that would mark the beginning of the end of the suffering of the Acholi people. This is because Bigombe was talking the (friendly and rapport building) language the rebels could understand and besides this, she was a daughter of the soil. She demystified the distorted image of the Acholis that had been projected by the NRM government that Kony was a killer, the LRA was a senseless group without a cause and devoid of any agenda[351] and that the Acholi people were not interested in ending the war. This point is made clear in her own words after the encounter with Kony when she says that,

[350] Ibid, http://www.c-r.org/our/accord/northern-uganda/negotiations-1993-94.php
[351] Daily Monitor 9th November 2007

"Of course Kony speaks sense. I remember one night while i was in the bush talking peace with the leader, i went with him one mile away from the crowd, and he spoke perfect sense. The use of spiritual powers does not stop him from speaking sense"[352].

Because of the talks, the optimism for peace became high and some LRA commanders came out of the bush, mixed freely with the NRA, to the extent that they entered the barracks and also met in social places where they even drank *malwa*[353] from the same pot. However, uncertainty remained as some people especially within the Acholi community remained sceptical and suspicious about the sincerity of these peace negotiations and the anticipated outcome, basing their scepticism on the continuous use of derogatory and provocative language by Museveni and some high-ranking NRA commanders for example by referring to Acholis as killers[354].

Indeed as pointed out by Akello, "this was implicit in the president's speeches, where he referred to the rebels in the north as 'groups of bandits', 'thugs', and 'jiggers in the foot' among others"[355]. According to these sceptics, the NRM was only buying time and hoodwinking the international community in a campaign that was aimed at lessening the impact of the war in Acholiland in order for it to pursue the military campaign aimed at crushing the insurgency[356] and political dissent unperturbed. It should also be realised that the atmosphere outside the peace talks remained tense as the NRA continued

[352] Human Rights and Peace Centre (HURIPEC), "The Hidden War: The Forgotten People', War in Acholiland and its Ramifications for Peace and Security in Uganda", (October 2003) p, 46
[353] '*Malwa*' is a local brew made out of fermented mixture of sorghum and millet, and this drink is commonly taken by several people using long straws and drinking from the same pot.
[354] Throughout the war, Museveni continued referring to the rebels as killers and warning that the army would deal with them decisively
[355] Akello Grace, "Wartime Children's Suffering and Quests for therapy in Northern Uganda", African Studies Collection, Vol. 25 (2010) p. 5-6, retrieved from;
https://openaccess.leidenuniv.nl/bitstream/1887/15604/2/ASC-075287668-2755-01.pdf
[356] Human Rights and Peace Centre (HURIPEC), "The Hidden War: The Forgotten People', War in Acholiland and its ramifications for peace and security in Uganda", (October 2003) p. 32.

operations, albeit at low level in which civilians were arbitrarily arrested and detained, their animals confiscated, conducting cordon and search of villages, parading and searching villagers in a humiliating manner especially in operation zones outside the towns of Kitgum and Gulu. This did not only jeopardise the daily lives of the people but also tended to undermine the prospects for peace.

As Ageta says,

"--information from people in the villages indicated that they continued to be harassed and tortured contrary to what Colonel Waswa the division commander in Gulu and other senior NRA commanders were saying that the army had stopped all operations and was determined to pursue peace negotiations. This behaviour of the army led many people to suspect its intentions and those of the government. Even if the rebels may have been playing 'tricks' as alleged by the government, the continued harassment of people and the behaviour of the NRA commanders who accompanied Bigombe to the talks clearly indicated that there was no goodwill on the part of government. Yet despite this situation, the LRA remained committed to peace negotiations"[357].

On 11th January 1994 the two teams met again in Pagic and this time Kony physically attended the negotiations. In his speech, he gave the reason why they decided to go to the bush by saying that they were fighting for democracy in order for the people of Uganda to be free but were also fighting to restore a government based on biblical morals of the Ten Commandments because they were given by God[358]. He blamed the Acholi elders who sent them out on this mission but later abandoned them. He further said that Government should exhibit honesty and sincerity in order for the talks to succeed. He also requested Bigombe to inform government authorities that he was willing to come out

[357] Interview with Ageta who was close to the 1994 Betty Bigombe's peace talks, Gulu, November 2009

[358] See Daily Monitor 29th June 2006. In his first interview with Sam Farmar, the Times of London Journalist in the jungles of Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Kony denied meting atrocities on the Acholi people and said that they were fighting for democracy. He also said that they were fighting against Museveni because of his oppression of the Acholi people and because he destroyed their wealth and property. Asked about the Ten Commandments he said "yes we are fighting for 'Ten Commandments'. Is it bad? It is not against human rights. They were not given by Joseph Kony and the LRA but God himself".

of the bush with all his fighters and demanded for a six month period in which to accomplish all this.

A follow-up meeting was held on 24th January 1994 and was attended by Bigombe, senior NRA officers Waswa and Tolit as well as senior LRA field commanders George Omona and Otti Lagony among others. The date on which the groundbreaking agreement between the LRA and the GOU was to be signed and which was to end the war was set for 2nd February 1994. The agreed venue was Lacekocot trading centre, 50 kilometres on Gulu-Kitgum road. Yet despite this development, the NRA seemed to think the progress was slow and that it was not about to achieve what it wanted which was surrender, to the extent that in one of the meetings held in Bigombe's house in the Gulu barracks, Brigadier Mugume the then NRA Chief of Combat Operations (CCO) told Lagony that "I thought you had come here to negotiate your surrender", which humiliated and annoyed the LRA team. This followed a remark from the LRA in which it requested for uniforms for its fighters on the basis that they and the NRA were now one.

The situation continued to deteriorate rapidly as the negotiations moved into the final stage. The tone became increasingly harsh and tempers flared to the extent that the two parties overtly expressed their anger at each other. This put Bigombe as chief negotiator in a precarious position and threatened to derail her trust and control of the negotiations process as the two parties suspected the motives of the other and engaged in bickering and squabbles. Moreover, the fact that she had to consult the very army and Museveni who never openly gave her support, coupled with inability to make on-the-spot decisions further complicated the negotiations.

Following this situation, the LRA informed Bigombe that they were not willing to attend any other meeting because they believed the NRA was planning to arrest its leaders. The army believed the LRA was trying to buy time while they had already received military hardware from Sudan and were ready to continue with the war. On its part, the LRA perceived the NRA as arrogant and the Museveni government as dishonest and not interested in the talks. The stakes were high on both sides and time seemed to be running out for any meaningful outcomes. If the talks were to be salvaged from collapse, the parties had to be willing to compromise, but this was not done and each stuck to his guns.

The last blow to the talks on the eve of preparations to end the war was delivered by Museveni on 6th February 1994 during the visit by Pope John Paul II to the district of Gulu. In his address to the people of Gulu at Kaunda grounds, he said that the LRA was not serious at ending the war but was instead taking advantage of the talks and said that he was giving it seven days to surrender or else the NRA would annihilate it militarily[359]. This effectively shattered hopes for dialogue and led to the collapse of the Bigombe-led negotiations.

Sixteen years after these peace talks were conducted (1994-2010), people's views especially the Acholis who have borne the brunt of the war point at the distrust, pretence and the militarism as motives that continue to drive the protagonists in the northern war thus making the prospects for a common agenda focused on sincere and honest peace negotiations an illusion. Indeed as pointed out by Burton, "as each party becomes more

[359] This ultimatum was given by Museveni during his address to the people of Gulu at Kaunda grounds while he attended the anniversary of the visit by Pope John Paul II to the visit of the war-torn district of Gulu on 6th February 1994

and more entrenched in its position and as contentious and coercive tactics escalate, issues such as "image-loss" and "face-saving" become important motivational factors entrapping the parties in their positions and making them less able to understand the other's interests and engage in problem-solving"[360]. This is in line with what Odong says, that,

"The Museveni government was never interested in peace talks. It has preferred and continued to pursue a military strategy and has never wanted to be perceived as if it has failed to defeat the LRA militarily. It only agrees when the talks suite their interests and when pressurised by civil society and international community. But even then, government will continue to undermine the opponent from within by using all means including inducement through bribery by using money and promises of offers of position within its structure and the UPDF is good at this. Although this may succeed in the sense that it may disrupt or even destroy the internal cohesion of the opponent, it is counterproductive in the end. Officers of the LRA whose actions and intentions became suspect would be dealt with ruthlessly by Kony although some managed to escape and surrender to the UPDF. This often destroyed the prospects for trust and honest dialogue"[361].

The elders' Peace Initiative (1996):

Following the failure of the Bigombe peace talks, the security situation in Acholiland worsened tremendously. The LRA responded by launching violent and indiscriminate attacks directed especially against civilians, mass abduction of children and introduced a new dimension, the widespread use of landmines and blockade of mobility by making the arteries of communication impassable. The attacks occurred on almost daily basis and whole villages came under attack. The rapidly deteriorating situation became the concern of everybody in Acholiland and more especially the elders who are crucial pillars of Acholi society. Survival of the entire society was at stake. All avenues and attempts had

[360] Burton John, "Conflict Resolution as a Political Philosophy", Interdisciplinary Peace Research, Vol. 3, No, 1, (May 1991) p. 63-72
[361] Interview with Odong, Makerere University Kampala, November 2009

to be made no matter how difficult and risky they were if Acholiland was to be saved from the looming catastrophe of death and destruction.

In March 1996, *Rwot* Achana led a delegation of elders and chiefs to Musevenis home village of Rwakitura where they met him and asked him to agree to a peaceful resolution of the war through dialogue and also requested him to allow some members of the delegation to establish contact with the LRA to which he agreed. Following this arrangement, some elders, notably *Ladit* Okot Ogony a relative of Lucy Oringa, one of Kony's favourite wives and *Ladit* Olanya Lagony a brother to Commander Otti Lagony one of the high ranking field commanders in the LRA held meetings with Commander Vincent Bebabeba also known as Otingting who had moved from Sudan into northern Uganda and particularly Acholiland on a public relations mission aimed at convincing the civilian population and restoring their cooperation in order to create good relations with the LRA[362]. It is further reported that Kony had given Bebabeba a go ahead to interact with the elders if he found it was worth it but also warned that he should be careful because they may be government spies.

It is also important to point out that whereas the war raged on in almost every corner of the sub-region, it was characterised by two levels of magnitude that is, low-intensity level and high-level coordinated brutal operations. The former involved smaller numbers of fighters sometimes moving in groups of three or four but well scattered and roaming most of the time who carried out harassment and attacks in villages, schools and

[362]O'Kadameri Billie, "LRA/Government Negotiations, 1993-94", (2002), http://www.c-r.org/our-work/accord/northern-uganda/negotiations-1993-94.php

community centres especially as the LRA looked for food and other supplies. Targets in the low-intensity included local council officials, family members, traders, health workers, students and teachers. People walking to and from the markets or schools, working in their gardens, or even riding bicycles on roads became vulnerable to attacks which in some cases involved chopping off their limbs (hands or legs) and body mutilation such as cutting off ears, fingers, nose or mouth lips.

The high-intensity level attacks involved relatively bigger numbers of LRA fighters who converged on a target in what often appeared to be a well planned and coordinated move in which they exacted systematic and brutal assault that often resulted into the death of many people and destruction of property. The Atiak massacre which took place on 22nd April 1995 and in which more than 200 civilians were killed and dozens seriously injured is an example. These attacks often occurred unchallenged as the poorly armed LDUs were often outnumbered and ran away. In cases where they attempted to stage a challenge, many were killed and others taken captive. Aggravating and complicating the situation was the fact that the NRA would arrive much later after the rebels have finished their business and withdrawn or would not come at all even when they had been alerted of the presence of the rebels in the area. It is against this background and situation of extreme violence that the Acholi people wished to have another chance at negotiations by reviving the peace talks that had collapsed two years earlier.

It should also be realised that Kony had rubbished and blamed the *ludito* (elders) as responsible for the mayhem that was taking place in Acholiland. He criticised them for having abandoned him whereas they originally blessed, supported and were behind the

war. Indeed it was reported that during the failed peace talks with Bigombe, Kony criticised the political elders and pointed out that it was them who had led them into confusion, saying that, "--it was because of their stupidity and weaknesses that I have become a rebel leader"[363]. In trying to revive the peace talks therefore, the elders were not only trying to execute their responsibility bestowed onto them by moral and cultural requirements, but perhaps also to repair the dented, or better put, 'collapsed' relationship between them and Kony and restore their image in society.

During this time in May 1996, Uganda was preparing for presidential elections. Kony refused to engage in any talks but indicated that he would do so after the elections. This was perhaps because he thought he would engage with a different leader other than Museveni if that leader won the elections. The preferred person and a presidential candidate was one of Musevenis's opponents and opposition leader Ssemwogerere, who promised to talk to rebels and who was widely supported by the electorates in Acholiland. Kony therefore refused to meet the elders, waiting to see what the outcome of the elections would be, but perhaps also because he never trusted them as he may have perceived them to be NRM agents trying to repair Museveni's image of anti-negotiations and therefore government decoy. Although the Acholi voted overwhelmingly for the opposition, Museveni won the elections and remained the president. Soon after the elections, the elders continued with their project of wanting to meet and talk to Kony.

[363] Denis Pain, "The Bending of Spears: Producing Consensus for Peace and Development in Northern Uganda", '*Lacwec tye*', (December 1997) p. 20-22, www.km-net.org.uk/publications/bending ofspears.doc

In June 1996, Museveni visited Gulu, met and discussed with various interest groups on a wide range of issues but more especially, the worsening security situation. Among those he met were the chiefs and elders who were part of the delegation led by Rwot Achana that had earlier visited him in his home village of Rwakitura in March 1996 and who lobbied him to adopt a peaceful approach as the best method of ending the war and also to allow some people to establish contact with the LRA. They sought permission from the government and military authorities in order to travel to the rebels without being attacked by the UPDF which was allowed. They had also apparently received information that Kony wished to meet them.

During his visit to Gulu, Museveni asked the elders and chiefs to make a budget for the peace process which would be funded by government. The elders worked out a budget and came up with a figure of four million Uganda shillings (about US $ 4, 000). According to *Ladit* Levi Arweny one of the influential elders since the Bigombe peace negotiations, Museveni "assigned his staff to make sure the budget was ready in one night. We came out with something like four million shillings but the president said that that was too little. Then we came out with something like seven million shillings but the president said this is too low. Finally we came out with a budget of around 52 million shillings which was given to minister Bigombe"[364].

Arweny further states that "and then before we knew it, a newsman picked it up. The next day the whole thing was in the papers that elders are demanding 150 million shillings.

[364] See Ochan Otim, "Museveni's Minister meets with Kony", (25th March 2004) , http://www.mail-archive.com/ugandanet@kym.net/msg12531.html

We were torn apart. We became immediately the enemy of the rebels. They thought that we were only looking for means of getting money and that we had been bought by government to get them killed". It also happened that around this time, Kony sent a message that he wanted to meet elders and more especially Okot Ogony and Rwot Achana, but it appeared that information had apparently leaked to the army indicating that they would be killed by Kony if at all they accepted this invitation and travelled to meet him. The NRA therefore warned them not to travel to the bush. Despite this warning however, the elders remained determined to continue with their plan of meeting Kony, arguing that claims of intent to harm them were tricks by Bigombe aimed at frustrating and sabotaging their efforts since hers had failed. By so doing, all indications are that they, in effect ignored the warning.

On 7th June 1996, the two elders Okot Ogony, the Chairman of the Council of Elders Peace Committee and a coordinator for Cwero in Aswa county, and Olanya Lagony a respected elder and brother to Otti Lagony set off on a mission to get in touch with Kony in order to stimulate peace negotiations, but which mission would later end up in a disaster and one in a series of aborted trials whose anticipated results at dialogue have not only been risky but also uncertain, factors that have tended to characterise peace talks between the LRA and the GOU. It appears that even in the face of risks and dangers that seemed obvious, the elders resolve and determination to stop the suffering of the people by bringing peace to Acholiland overrode any fears of any possible contemplated disaster.

The ability and capacity of elders in such endeavours is based on a number of factors. First, the respect given to them in the Acholi culture and the long tradition they have embodied as mediators of disputes and conflict between individuals and groups in order to bring about peace and harmony in society gives them leverage and credibility. Second, their wisdom and experience spawning over generations meshed with a culture of dialogue gives them the ability to analyse events and situations and foretell the outcomes and also provide amicable and viable solutions capable of averting danger through peace-building, reconciliation and forgiveness.

Third, they are not politicians and neither are their actions influenced and guided by the ambitions of joining politics, a factor that makes them neutral, gain recognition and therefore acceptable to the opposing parties and thus given due audience. As such, these qualities accords them a special role and gives them legitimacy and goodwill as they are perceived as promoters and genuine emissaries of peace and justice, guided by the philosophy and principle of dialogue and relationship-building. Unfortunately for these elders, they were murdered ostensibly on the orders of Kony on reasons that, besides speculation, remain unclear till to date.

On 8th June 1996, the two men are reported to have left Pagic which is about seven kilometres from Cwero trading centre escorted by a unit of the LRA headed by commander Bebabeba, ostensibly to meet Kony, and were never to be seen again except their bodies which were found a few days later in the bush. That such elderly people could stake their lives in search for peace no matter how risky and dangerous the venture appeared to be, underscores the magnitude of social suffering the war occasioned on the

Acholi people and the dire need for third party intervention. Some reports indicate that the money given to the two elders by government for facilitation angered Kony who perceived them as its agents and spies, devoid of any good intentions.

Others say they were killed by the UPDF which found them bathing in the river and shot them purportedly to stop any resumption of the peace talks. Yet others say that they were killed by some soldiers of the UPDF masquerading as the LRA in order to prove that what they had predicted was correct in order to present a picture which would confirm and probably prove that Kony was a killer even of his own people close to him. Although the death of these peace emissaries, whatever the reason may be, was a severe blow to people's hopes for a negotiated settlement, the spirit of finding alternative avenues to the military strategy, and sustained efforts for dialogue and reconciliation remained alive.

The Community of Sant'Egidio, Italy (December 1997-February 1998):

Following the failure by previous attempts to bring peace through dialogue between the LRA and the GOU coupled with the worsening humanitarian situation in northern Uganda, the Community of Sant'Egidio a Catholic peace movement based in Rome, Italy offered to play the role of mediator between the protagonists. The coming in of Sant'Egidio can be traced to meetings held by Acholis living in the Diaspora in which they discussed the war in northern Uganda and resolved that peaceful means through dialogue was the only viable solution. This was a good development considering the fact that for a long time, the Museveni regime has had strained relations with Acholis living

abroad, accusing them of supporting and aiding the LRA and as such, had not been part of the peace efforts.

The framework and basis which provided an entry point for Sant'Egidio to act as mediator evolved from these meetings which not only recognised the urgent need for peace in Acholiland through mutual dialogue and cooperation but also exploring possibilities of finding a third party acceptable to both parties who would play the role of mediator between the LRA and the GOU. Cognisant of the fact that the military force was not going to be a solution to the war, the Acholis living abroad sought for approaches and mechanism through which the plight of their kinsmen at home could be alleviated. These initiatives span way back in 1996 to a meeting which was held in Toronto, Canada on ways of ending the war in which dialogue was salient.

In April 1997, the first *Kacoke Madit* (KM), literally meaning large gathering was held in Great Britain, London bringing together the Acholi communities in exile including those who travelled from Uganda for example church leaders under the ARLPI, government ministers and administrators, politicians and opinion leaders to discuss the conflict and make recommendations on the ways to end it and bring about durable peace in northern Uganda and amongst all Ugandans. It was also attended by the representatives of the LRA, friends of Uganda, well-wishers and sympathisers of the Acholi people. It was a ground-breaking and soul-searching convention aimed at honest discussion rich in relationship building which is a crucial factor for creating common ground for peaceful and meaningful dialogue. Indeed as pointed out by Khadiagala, "in establishing links

with the Acholi exiles, the ARLPI has given the government an entry point into a critical Acholi constituency"[365].

The discussion at this convention was structured around three central themes, the war in Acholiland; Acholi unity, solidarity, reconstructing and building Acholi; and the way forward[366]. It was pointed out among other things that the escalation of insecurity in northern Uganda and Acholiland in particular, was a result of complex political dynamics taking place in the Great Lakes Region and the Sudan. The Rt. Rev. Bishop Macleod Ochola II, the Bishop of Kitgum and a representative of the ARLPI summarised some of the effects of the war on Acholi people as follows,

"Violent deaths of our people in the hands of various armed groups and formations; arson perpetrated on a mass scale in our land; rape and defilement of our women and girls; abduction of our young people; forced recruitment of our people into rebel ranks; the prevalence of general atmosphere of fear and disenchantment amongst our people; mass displacement of our people; creation of protected villages which have become breeding grounds for malnutrition and deaths resulting from cholera, measles, and other preventable diseases amongst our people; and destruction of our infrastructure and continuous decline in socio-economic growth"[367].

It was therefore recommended amongst others that the GOU must show genuine and open desire for peace talks with the LRA. Three months later, a second KM was held in London in July 1997 in which it was also recommended that the LRA and government enter into a cease-fire as a preliminary step to dialogue facilitated by a third party. It was against this background that the Rome-based catholic organisation of the community of Sant'Egidio was contacted to play the role of mediator, to which it agreed. As part of the

[365] Khadiagala M. Gilbert, "The Role of the Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative (ARLPI) in Peace Building in Northern Uganda", (March 2002) p. 6, retrieved from http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNACY566.pdf

[366] Patrick Otto, Kacoke Madit Opening Address, http:/www.km-net.org.uk/conferences/KM97/press97.htm

[367] See Macleord B. Ochola, "The Role of the Church in Conflict Resolution", Kacoke Madit London, http:/www.km-net.org.uk/conferences/KM97/press97.htm

preparatory framework for the preliminary contact between the two parties, and perhaps also to show commitment to the peace discourse, the LRM/A officials shuttled between Italy and Sudan in August 1997 to discuss with the Sant'Egidio officials and the LRA High Command about the arrangement and details of the anticipated meeting with the GOU.

The discussion in Rome with Sant'Egidio agreed that the LRA delegation should consist of persons from the military as well as the political wing. In Sudan, the LRA High Command was briefed that it had been agreed in principle in Italy that four persons- two from the military wing and another two from the political wing, should constitute its team. However, lack of participation by the military personnel from the LRA would later cause problems for the peace negotiations. It also became apparently clear that even the political wing was equally disorganised. The cause of this disorganisation seemed to have emanated from jockeying for position and influence in the political wing especially with the appearance of Powell Onen Ojwang, a wealthy London-based Acholi businessman who insisted that he should be appointed LRM/A Vice-Chairman.

It should also be realised that, as already indicated earlier, peace initiatives were being pursued from various fronts and in actual fact going on concurrently, though independently of one another but all aimed at the same objective and that is, peaceful resolution of the conflict. Mobilising for peace therefore became a critical task for everybody who believed in sustainable peace through dialogue as a prerequisite for socio-political and economic development and also to break away from the myth and cycles of violence that had exacerbated ethnic tension and led to the escalation of the conflict.

Within this context, civil society organisations played a crucial role as promoters of dialogue.

Whereas the protagonists and the objectives of the peace talks remained the same, the outcomes of the initiatives facilitated by different mediators often fed into one another and influenced the subsequent course of events in the peace process. This is demonstrated for example by the Equatoria Civic Fund (ECF), an NGO headed by Dr. Leonzio Onek a Sudanese Acholi whose mediation efforts between the GOU and the LRA in October 1997 were to have profound influence on the outcomes of the mediation effort of Sant'Egidio two months later. The point being emphasised is that the ECF arranged peace talks meeting between the LRA and GOU which was held in Lancaster House in London on the 18th October 1997 which were attended by the political wing of the LRA and excluded the military wing, which did not go down well with the GOU. Consequently, this initiative collapsed and the GOU informed the LRA that future talks must be conditional on participation by the field commanders, a factor that was to impact on the Sant'Egidio mediated talks later.

On 6th November 1997, the representative of the LRA wrote a letter to the GOU proposing for peace talks and stating that they would be mediated by Sant'Egidio. Museveni replied the letter from the LRA representative on 22nd November 1997 stating that, "our delegation is ready to discuss with your representative anywhere and we are ready to reach a peaceful settlement within the confines of the 1995 constitution of the

republic of Uganda[368]. On 12th December 1997, peace talks between the LRA and GOU were held in Rome and mediated by the Community of Sant'Egidio[369].

The delegation representing the GOU included the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Amama Mbabazi and the Director of External Security Organisation (ESO), David Pulkol, while the LRA was represented by Obita, the Secretary for External Affairs and Mobilisation and Charles Loroker (google him and his profile). The head of Sant"Egidio, Andrea Riccardi and Father Matteo Zuupi mediated the talks. Officials of the contact teams of the GOU and the LRA kept on consulting their superiors during the process of the talks.

The discussions at the talks which were said to have been cordial and provided an opportunity for further talks agreed that another follow-up meeting be held in one month's time on 18th January 1998. However, at the close of the meeting, the GOU reiterated once again that the LRM/A field commanders must be present at the next round of talks. As the delegations left Rome and went home to prepare for the scheduled next round of talks, events on the ground especially within the LRM/A continued to unfold in a manner that posed serious challenges not only to the internal cohesion of the rebel movement but also the sustainability and prospects for success of the subsequent talks.

[368] See Letter from the LRM/A to President Museveni dated 6th November 1997 from the Secretary for Foreign Affairs of the LRA and reply letter from Museveni to the LRM/A dated 22nd November 1997, http://www.c-r.org/our-work/accord/northern-uganda/letters.php

[369] James Alfred Obita, "Kacoke Madit: A Stimulus for New Initiatives", (2002) http://www.c-r.org/our-work/accord/northern-uganda/peace-efforts-1996-98.php

Disputes within the LRM/A over its political representation widened and generated confusion and disorganisation to the extent that the need to settle internal squabbles seemed to override the need to focus on conflict resolution and preparing for future negotiations. In tandem with this situation and aggravating it was the fact that because of this confusion, the LRA leadership seemed to be in the dark of what was going on during the discussions in Rome. To make matters worse, Obita who represented it was imprisoned and stripped of all responsibilities on the orders of Kony as he returned to Sudan to brief him on the meeting, accusing him to be a greedy person only interested in money and therefore a traitor, thus exposing the magnitude of the division and fractures within the LRM/A.

In the meantime, the Sant'Egidio mediating officials became concerned about the intransigence of the LRA, hardline stance taken by both parties and the lack of progress on the peace talks and the negotiation process. With the problems of communication and trust between the mediating officials and the LRM/A, and between the protagonists themselves increasing, the process increasingly became on the verge of collapse. It did not come as a surprise therefore that this phenomenon ultimately led to the collapse of the Sant'Egidio-mediated peace initiative.

The Carter Center (1999-2000)

Getting the two warring parties to negotiate remained dodgy for the most part of the war. This was in large part because of the history of mistrust but also due to the fast changing events on the ground which increased the hostility between the two sides. For example

the creation of the IDPs camps which was against the will of the people, military offensive Operation North, formation of LDUs, hostile propaganda and sustained war of words fuelled the war. Both parties, the LRA and the Government of Uganda (GOU) tried to inflict harm as much as possible on one another by all means throughout the 1990s. For example, in September 1996 Colonel James Kazini the then 4th Division Commander in Gulu incited soldiers who lynched several rebel suspects in military cells. This incitement was also done by other officers for example colonel Semakula who also incited civilians to lynch suspected LRA suspects in Gulu town[370], while Major Kakooza Mutale, the presidential advisor on military affairs called all district leaders rebel collaborators, which led to mass demonstration against his utterance by people in Gulu.

As the security situation deteriorated several parties tried to look for solutions. In the July 1998 KM held in London by the Acholi Diaspora peace network, it was recognised that human rights abuses and atrocities in northern Uganda in general and Acholiland in particular had reached deplorable scale and that negotiating peace was the only way to stop this situation. Consequently, several resolutions were passed and among them, a recommendation that the LRA and GOU enter into dialogue facilitated by a third party. Jongomoi Okidi-Olar, a Ugandan representative of the KM peace network was tasked to establish contact with GOU, the Sudan government, SPLA and the LRA with an objective of convincing them to agree to come into dialogue mediated by a third party.

[370] See Amnesty International "Breaking the Circle: Protecting Human Rights in the Northern War Zone", (March 1999), http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/AFR59/001/1999/en/17984178-e33c-11dd-808b-bfd8d459a3de/afr590011999en.pdf, retrieved on 7th Jan 2011; see also Amnesty Report on Uganda 1995; Human Rights Report: Uganda", http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/af/119030.htm

The former United States of America president Jimmy Carter would facilitate the talks as mediator.

In November 1998, he met the presidents of Uganda, Sudan, senior government officials and senior commanders of the LRA and SPLA, who agreed to negotiate under the mediation of a third party. In April 1999, Carter received letters from Museveni and Bashir in which they expressed their acceptance of the peace talks and formally acknowledging him as mediator. It apparently appeared clear to Carter that in order for the talks to achieve the objective of bringing peace between the warring parties, the insurgent movements of the SPLA and LRA would have to be part of the talks and that Sudan and Uganda must expressly agree to cease supporting each others insurgence movements.

Although securing Kony's consent and perhaps making him to participate personally in the talks posed the biggest challenge considering his elusiveness and conduct in the previous talks, the Carter team made efforts to reach out to him. In addition to this, the relationship between Carter and Garang, the leader of SPLA/M was not strong despite the fact that Carter had met him several times before. In short, participation of two crucial parties appeared difficult to secure. Yet despite this scenario, "Carter wrote to both Garang and Kony informing them that he had been asked to mediate between the two governments and urging them to take part in the process"[371].

The process of negotiations necessitated that the issues to be negotiated about, that is, agenda, time and venue for the talks be clearly spelt out. Within this framework, it was

[371] See "Restoring Relations between Uganda and Sudan: The Carter Center Process" http://www.c-r.org/our-work/accord/northern-uganda/carter-center.php

also necessary to get Sudan and Uganda to agree to have the SPLA and LRA as participants in the talks and in actual fact, to use their influence and convince them to attend. To underscore the importance of this requirement and process of negotiations, a delegation was sent by Carter in June 1999 to discus with leaders and officials of Sudan and GOU including those of the SPLA and LRA about the details of the negotiations that would foster common approaches and thus form the basis for talks.

The legitimacy and credibility of Carter in the negotiations was a salient factor and it stemmed from a number of factors. First, during his tenure as president of USA, he put Africa on top of his agenda for assistance and development and also visited a number of African countries and established good working relationship the heads of state and government officials. Indeed as pointed out by Brinkley,

"The Carter administration saw Africa as the ideal place to demonstrate the president's passionate commitment to human rights. --More than any other Cold War president, Carter believed the United States had a moral obligation to help Africa fight famine and disease. Then as x-president, he founded Global 2000 in 1985 to demonstrate how truly concerned he was about Africa's future"[372].

Second, since the 1980s, Carter had been working with the leaders and officials of the Sudan government and rebels SPLA in trying to resolve the Sudanese civil war. For example, in 1995 he negotiated a ceasefire with Bashir and Garang popularly known as the "Guinea Worm Ceasefire" which enabled health workers to access remote areas of

[372] Brinkley Douglas, "Bringing the Green Revolution to Africa: Jimmy Carter, Norman Borloug and the Global 2000 Campaign", World Policy Journal, Vol. 13, No, 1, (Spring 1996) p. 53-62

the Sudan especially in the south where the disease had reached alarming proportions. Carter also hoped that this move would achieve the duo purpose of health workers eradicating the guinea worm and also create an environment conducive for peace talks between the belligerents and therefore bring peace in southern Sudan. As such, the LRA would not be much of a problem as he had already established good relationship with leaders in the region from which to begin. Third, his diplomatic and international stature coupled with experience in other conflicts such as that of Bosnia gave him a reputation of a real peace maker[373].

In April 1999 he received letters from Bashir and Museveni requesting him to help them re-establish and normalise their relations. A team of officials from the Carter centre travelled to the region in June 1999 for preliminary arrangements in which they met and discussed with officials of the government of Sudan and GOU. Each side presented the team with its concerns. The Sudan government pointed out that Museveni had not respected the previous agreements signed with him which included among others, to stop giving logistical support to each others rebels, using of each others territory by rebels, recruiting Sudanese refugees in Uganda into SPLA movement and to stop hostile propaganda against Sudan.

On 30th June 1999, the delegation visited Uganda and held talks with Museveni and senior government officials. On his part, Museveni pointed out that the problems with Sudan were two, the LRA and the Sudanese civil war and accused the Sudan government

[373] Walter C. Clemens Jr., "Can Outsiders Help? Lessons from Third Party Intervention in Bosnia", International Journal, (Autumn 1993) p. 687-719; See also, Joshua S. Goldstein, and Jon C. Pevehouse, "Reciprocity, Bullying and International Cooperation: Time-Series Analysis of the Bosnia Conflict", The American Political Science Review, Vol. 91, No, 3, (September 1997) p. 515-529

of trying to make Africans into Arabs. He further pointed out that while the SPLA was a liberation movement fighting for self determination, the LRA was a terrorist group. He said that whereas in the previous negotiations he had refused to negotiate directly with Kony, this time he was willing to negotiate with him. In the same meeting, the Ugandan team said that they were ignorant of what the LRA was fighting for and also accused the Acholis in the Diaspora of not being helpful but rather fuelling the conflict.

According to the officials of the Carter mediation team, the differences between the two parties were deep, further underscoring the need to bring on board the LRA and SPLA. But this necessitated confidence-building measures especially if the LRA was to have confidence and trust in the negotiations and hopefully to attend. Verbal and written messages were sent to Kony in an attempt to secure a meeting with him or his representative but this proved futile, ostensibly due to communication problems as it was difficult to ascertain the authenticity of the emissaries. Arising out of this uncertainty was the fact that Kony was not going to attend the negotiations. But Carter did not see the absence of Kony as failure for the mediation venture but rather a step in the process of dealing with the enduring conflict however painful it was. After all, the belligerents in the conflict and people in the region had known that he was willing and determined to assist them. As such, it became apparent that if meaningful negotiations and peace were to occur in the region, then Carter was the preferred broker.

In August 1999 the two delegations from Uganda and Sudan arrived in London for preliminary preparations aimed at drawing up the agenda for the anticipated peace talks between the two countries. However it imerged that during the exercise, bickering and

squabbles characterised the process as each party tried to insist that the list of its grievances be agreeable to the other, which were to form the basis for discussion. The most contentious issue appeared to be the case of more than 100 Aboke girls who were kidnapped by the LRA in October 1996 and taken across the boarder into Sudan. By arming and giving sanctuary to the LRA, the argument was that Sudan was by implication responsible, whether covertly or overtly for this act and therefore had the onus to compel or get the abducted girls from Kony and return them to Uganda as a condition for the talks.

This was vehemently rejected by the Sudan delegation which instead accused Uganda of politicising the matter in order to vilify it in the eyes of the international community. It should also be realised that in 1994 when the SPLA overrun the southern strategic town of Kajo Keji close to the Uganda-Sudan boarder, many Sudanese soldiers fleed across the border into Uganda and were taken prisoners by the GOU and kept in Nabisojjo camp, established in Luwero, north of Kampala. The release of the Aboke girls and the Sudanese prisoners of war became sticky points and bargaining chips for both sides.

On 5th December 1999, the two delegations met in Nairobi to draft the final agreement ahead of the summit of heads of state. But the deep-seated differences they exemplified in the August meeting in London seemed to take the centre stage. As a matter of fact, the two delegations could not meet face-to-face but instead the Carter Center team met each of them separately, thus exposing how far apart the two sides were. This did not only put doubt on whether the agreement would be honoured but also on implementation. Nevertheless, Carter helped in ironing out the contentious issues and the two parties'

agreed on the final draft agreement. The final agreement was signed on 9th December 1999 in the presence of Carter and Moi as witnesses[374].

The signing of the agreement generated excitement and expectation of resolving the conflict especially among the Acholi community who had borne the brunt of the war. But there were also sceptics who did not expect positive results basing their scepticism on the failure of the previous peace talks which they blamed on Museveni's conduct and behaviour during and after the talks. Indeed as pointed out by the ISS report of 2009, the failure of the 1985 Nairobi peace talks between the Tito Okello military Junta and Museveni kept on haunting subsequent peace efforts in northern Uganda and "it is from these talks that Museveni has continually been perceived as a crafty leader that is disinterested in dialogue"[375]. As Olweny, a local Journalist said,

"Some people especially in Acholiland did not trust the Nairobi agreement between Museveni and Bashir and as such did not expect the war to come to an end because of the past experience and what was happening on the ground. The interaction between the SPLA and UPDF continued to be business as usual even though they tried to do it covertly. SPLA personnel continued seeking medical treatment in hospitals inside Uganda especially in Arua and Gulu and also coming to the military barracks ostensibly for military assistance. It is very easy to identify Sudanese persons especially from the south and moreover, it is possible that information was leaking from personnel within the UPDF who had links or were sympathetic to the LRA as it was difficult to eliminate this. It was like a children's game of 'hide and seek' where participants know the tactics of each other and this had been going on for some time. It is highly likely that the Sudan government was getting this information"[376].

[374] Joyce Neu, "Restoring Relations between Uganda and Sudan: The Carter Center Process", (2002), Retrieved from; http://www.c-r.org/our-work/accord/northern-uganda/carter-center.php
[375] David Mwaniki, Manasseh Wepundi and Harriet Morolong, "The Northern Uganda Peace Process: An Update on recent Developments", ISS Situation Report, (February 2009) p. 7, http://www.issafrica.org
[376] Interview with Olweny, Gulu November 2009

The optimism and euphoria that greeted the signing of the Nairobi peace accord did not last for long as hundreds of the LRA fighters made incursions into Uganda on 2nd and 3rd January 2000 and attacked the military and civilian villages. This act did not only cause frustration to the peace efforts but also serious social dislocations especially among the civilian population. The agreement collapsed and the hopes for peace shattered, at least in the eyes of the northern people, though not necessarily with Carter and his mediation team. In the meantime, as the war escalated, both Sudan and Uganda reverted to their blame game and counter-accused one another for acting in bad faith and dishonouring the terms of the accord. It took the intervention of Carter to save the bad situation from getting worse by personally seeking assurances from Museveni and Bashir to stick to the agreement and exercise maximum restraint.

Efforts to reach out to Kony remained at the centre of the Carter peace project if peace and stability were to be realised, although the modalities of establishing contact with him remained a puzzle. The Sudanese government played the 'gate keeper' and the viable channel to him and therefore had to be used carefully but also pressurised. Within this context, the Carter Center requested the Sudanese government to arrange a meeting with the leadership of the LRA and most preferably its leader, Kony.

The Amnesty Act 2000:

Following the collapse of the Betty Bigombe talks (1993-94), the Elders Piece Initiative (1996), the Community of Sant'Egidio (1997-98) and the Carter-mediated peace talks (2000), the LRA continued its attacks on the civilian and military targets in northern

Uganda. Civilians continued to be tortured or killed almost on a daily basis and children, both boys and girls continued to be abducted in their thousands. In actual sense, the war continued unabated both in magnitude and effect. However, despite the enduring confrontation between the LRA and the UPDF, the GOU remained committed to peace.

Because of increased hostility between the belligerents from 1995 to 1996 and especially the Atiak massacre (April 1995) and Karuma-Pakwach convoy ambush (March 1996) in which over 300 people were killed, the religious leaders increasingly became concerned as they saw no end to the conflict and realised that if the war was to be transformed, there was need for forgiveness. They knew that the rebels had committed atrocities for which they feared to be prosecuted even if they wanted to come out of the bush. Consequently, during their earliest activities in trying to forge ways of ending the war, they recommended and lobbied government for amnesty, basing their argument on the biblical philosophy of unconditional forgiveness[377].

In 2000, the GOU granted Amnesty to the LRA rebels who denounced rebellion and came out of the bush[378] as a carrot to end the violence. The Amnesty Act 2000[379] was passed by parliament and became operational in January of that year. Although the Amnesty was directed mainly at the LRA fighters, it also catered for other persons who engaged in acts of rebellion against the GOU in the stipulated time period. Within this

[377] Father Carlos Rodriguez, "The Role of the Religious Leaders", (2002), http:www.c-r.org/our-work/northern-uganda/religious-leaders.php
[378] Manisuli Ssenyonjo, "Accountability of Non-State Actors in Uganda for War Crimes and Human Rights Violations: Between Amnesty and the International Criminal Court", Journal of Conflict and Security Law, Vol. 10, No, 3, (September 2005) p. 419-420
[379] See Amnesty Act 2000, available at http://c-r.org/our-work/accord/northern-uganda/documents/2000_Jan_The_Amnesty_Act.doc

context, Article three of the law states that, "An Amnesty is declared in respect of any Ugandan who has at any time since the 26th of January 1996, engaged in or is engaged in war or armed rebellion against the government of the republic of Uganda by, (a) actual participation in combat; (b) collaborating with the perpetrators of the war or armed rebellion; (c) committing any other crime in the furtherance of the war; or (d) armed rebellion; or assisting or aiding the conduct or prosecution of the war or armed rebellion"[380].

The Amnesty Act was based on the preamble which it stated as "the expressed desire of the people of Uganda to end armed hostilities, reconcile with those who have caused suffering and rebuild their communities" and "the desire and the determination of government to genuinely implement its policy of reconciliation--"[381] The aim of the Act which became operational in January 2000 was to forgive all those involved in the rebellion against the government of Uganda, meaning that those who agreed to it and denounced their acts would not be prosecuted or punished for their ills committed during the period stipulated therein. It was widely appreciated by the civil society organisations and the Acholi community as one of the best ways to persuade the LRA fighters to abandon rebellion and come home. This was mainly because many had joined the rebellion against their will as they were forced through abduction and forced conscription

[380] Kasaija Philip Apuuli, "The ICC Arrest Warrants for the Lord's Resistance Army Leaders and Peace Prospects for Northern Uganda", Journal of International Criminal Justice, Vol. 4 , No, 1, (2006), p. 183-185; see also, Scort Worden, "The Justice Dilemma in Uganda", USIPeace Building, (February 2008), p. 1-13, http://www.usip.org/files/resources/1_3.PDF

[381] Manisuli Ssenyonjo, "Accountability of Non-State Actors in Uganda for War Crimes and Human Rights Violations: Between Amnesty and the International Criminal Court", Journal of Conflict and Security Law, Vol. 10, No, 3, (September 2005), p. 419-420

literally on penalty of death[382], but overall it appeared that the fear of prosecution was a major hindrance for those who had intentions of coming out.

It was believed that giving blanket immunity and resettlement packages to fighters who surrendered their arms would give them confidence and also encourage others to do so, a process that would not only eliminate the use of force but also distrust between the belligerents and thus create avenue for reconciliation and reintegration, ultimately bringing peace in the region. The terms of the Amnesty Act was that it would remain in force for a period of six months subject to ministerial extension. Individuals interested in taking up Amnesty were required to report to the Amnesty Commission which was responsible for issuing them with certificates after which they would get resettlement packages.

Many fighters took advantage of the Amnesty Act and came out of the bush especially during its early stages soon after promulgation. Between 2002 and 2003, over 5,000[383] fighters had surrendered and applied for Amnesty, many of whom were integrated in their communities. By the end of January 2005, the number of returnees who received amnesty rose to 14,695[384]. The exodus of the returnees coming out of the bush during this period

[382] Linda M. Keller, "Achieving Peace with Justice: The International Criminal Court and Ugandan Alternative Justice Mechanisms", Connecticut Journal of International Law, Vol. 23, No, 209, (2008) p. 224

[383] Mathew Happold, "The International Criminal Court and the Lord's Resistance Army", Melbourne Journal of International Law, Vol. 8, No, 1, (2007) p. 164

[384] Kasaija Philip Apuuli, "The ICC Arrest Warrants for the Lord's Resistance Army leaders and Peace Prospects for Northern Uganda", Journal of International Criminal Justice, Vol. 4, No, 1, (March 2006) p. 179-187

was largely due to the efforts of the religious leaders and the cultural leaders[385] who embarked on community sensitisation about the advantages of the provisions of the law. They urged them to extend the message to their relatives and all others who were in the bush. They also reached out to the rebels by making use of the goodwill they had already established through informal network contacts and also used radios[386] to create awareness and persuade them to take up this opportunity.

Individual fighters who gave up rebellion and surrendered to government through amnesty would be taken by government officials to radio stations and made to talk about themselves and explain what they have gained through amnesty and encourage their friends still with the LRA to escape and benefit in the same way. This instilled courage and confidence-building among those left behind and led to many fighters to come out of the bush. This strategy also reduced the fears for reprisal on the part of the returnees as the communities from which they originated expressed willingness to forgive and accept them back.

However, problems began to emerge and more especially after the key LRA leaders were excluded from the Amnesty Act. Initially, the law gave blanket treatment to everyone but was later amended by the Uganda parliament to exclude Kony and his senior commanders[387]. In explaining why amending the Amnesty Act to exclude the top

[385] Patrick William Otim, "The Role of the Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative in Uganda's Peace building", (March 2009), http://www.beyondintractability.org/case_studies/role_acholi_religious_leaders.jsp?nid=6827
[386] One radio station that is influential in the region is Mega FM which broadcasts from Gulu. Its geographical outreach is well spread in Acholiland as well as parts of southern Sudan.
[387] New Vision 17th April 2006, Kony does not deserve Amnesty; See also Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN) accessed on 25th January 2011, http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?reportid=47689

leadership of the LRA was necessary, government argued that Kony and his top commanders were responsible for the prolonged northern insurgency, had refused offers for dialogue and also that they were blocking their subordinates from surrendering.

However, several MPs from the opposition as well as from even within the ruling NRM opposed the amendment arguing that excluding Kony and his top lieutenants from being eligible for pardon had the potential to lead to the escalation of the conflict. For example, Nobert Mao of Gulu Municipality and a member of the APG said that no one should be excluded from the Act, arguing that even those who had not made up their mind to abandon rebellion could still have a change of hearts. They further pointed out that it would send a wrong signal to the LRA and make the amnesty Act fail to achieve its objective.

The religious leaders especially the ARLPI and other civic organisations, including the Acholi community were also not in favour of amending the bill. The ARLPI in particular urged government to extend the Amnesty, arguing that "it takes time for people to trust one another and talk". Even the governments Amnesty Commission pointed out that the proposed amendments by government would seriously damage the peace efforts. Despite the opposition to amend the Act from several quarters who pointed out the potential negative impact, the NRM government went ahead and used its majority numbers in parliament to pass the amendments.

In December 2003, the UPDF spokesperson Shaban Bantariza told the Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN) that the top LRA leadership would be excluded

from the Amnesty Act by saying that "how can they be interested in the amnesty if they are not interested in the peace talks? The amnesty has been renewed many times. They don't want it. We are forcing it on them. So what is the point?"[388] Although this statement can be on one hand understood to express the frustration of the military, it also indicated that the UPDF was determined to continue with the military force on the other hand. Indeed in March 2002, a military offensive codenamed Operation Iron Fist (OIF)[389] was launched by the UPDF aimed at destroying the LRA bases inside Sudan.

This offensive had negative impact on the amnesty. In addition, it did not only fail to achieve its objective, but also proved to be disastrous[390] as it led to the escalation of the conflict which witnessed thousands of the LRA fighters cross back into Uganda and carried out attacks on a scale not experienced before, which exacerbated the violence[391] and the humanitarian situation. As pointed out by Allen, "Operation Iron Fist made clear that president Museveni and the UPDF were not really interested in reconciliation"[392]. It also indicated that the UPDF preferred the military strategy to solve the conflict rather than peaceful means, and in actual sense reinforced Kony's argument, which was that the Bantu-led government did not have good intentions for the Acholi people.

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[388] See Patrick William Otim Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN) site, http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?reportid=47689 accessed on 25th January 2011

[389] Kevin C. Dunn, "Uganda: The Lord's Resistance Army", Review of African Political Economy, Vol. 31, No, 99 (March 2004), p. 139-142

[390] Van Acker Frank, "Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army: The New Order No One Ordered", African Affairs, Vol. 103, No, 412, (July 2004) p. 335-357

[391] Cassandra Veney, "Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea: Internally Displaced Women and Girls in Liberia and Uganda and the Role of the International Community", Journal of International Women's Studies, Vol. 7, No, 4 (May 2006) P. 217-218

[392] Allen Tim, "War and Justice in Northern Uganda: An Assessment of the International Criminal Court's Intervention", (February 2005), p. 32 available at,

Consequently, Kony took advantage of this offensive to denounce the Amnesty and in actual fact seriously campaigned against it by telling his fighters that the government was luring them into a trap and also threatened anybody found listening to its programmes on radio, especially the Amnesty Act which he described as dangerous. As Ocaya says, "we were ordered not to listen to the government programmes especially amnesty. Our commanders said this was a *Banyankole* government propaganda aimed at destroying the LRA, and that anybody found listening to it would be dealt with seriously. They even confiscated some radios and destroyed them"[393].

This indicates the ethnic connotation and how peace efforts initiated by government, even if they may have involved some people other than the *Banyankole*, were perceived in terms of ethnicity. Moreover, in December 2003, Museveni referred the LRA to the International Criminal Court (ICC)[394] to be investigated on war crimes and crimes against humanity. This further complicated the situation and tended to erode any chances for more fighters to surrender even if they would have liked to take up amnesty, as the LRA tightened its grip on them by threats of death.

Although Musevenis decision to exclude Kony and his top commanders from amnesty and also to invoke the jurisdiction of the ICC may have been influenced by security considerations and the need for justice, many people especially in Acholiland remained opposed to these actions saying they were going to be a roadblock in the path of peace. In tandem with the above situation and aggravating it was the fact that the LRA tracked

[393] Interview with Ocaya, a former LRA fighter, Kitgum November 2009
[394] Payam Akhavan, "The Lord's Resistance Army Case: Uganda's Submission of the First State Referral to the International Criminal Court", The American Journal of International Law, Vol. 99, No, 2, (April 2005) p. 403-421

down and attacked those who had surrendered, killing them in some cases[395], thus discouraging anybody harbouring intentions of surrendering. The attacks on villages where former fighters were living continued which in turn attracted the UPDF to conduct operations against the LRA.

Although the amnesty lured a significant number of fighters to give up the war, it did not achieve the objective of stopping the war. This is because the amnesty idea was not offered in good faith but rather was an attempt to weaken the LRA. Consequently, it became difficult for the amnesty initiative not only to convince and entice the radical and die-hard LRA top commanders to come out of the bush but also for government - through the International Crimes Division (ICD) a division of Uganda's High Court that was established - to prosecute and punish those accused of committing serious crimes categorised as crimes against humanity, war crimes and genocide.

Within this context, it can be argued that in enacting the Amnesty Act, the Museveni-led NRM government was interested in using it selectively and deliberately to exclude the top command of the LRA and also decide on who should or shouldn't be prosecuted, without taking due consideration of the flaws inherent in such a scenario. The Amnesty Act was thus not only ambiguous but also confusing and in conflict with sections of the penal code. This largely explains why Thomas Kwoyelo[396], a senior commander of the

[395] In May 2004, the LRA attacked a village in Pagak, Gulu district where one of the former LRA commanders together with other fighters who surrendered through amnesty were staying. Several people were killed and others kidnapped. Before this attack, the commander had made a party to celebrate which was broadcasted on Mega FM

[396] Kwoyelo is a former combatant and senior commander in the LRA who comes from Pabbo in Amuru district. He was facing over 53 charges of murder, wilful killing, kidnap with intent to kill and extensive damage of property. He was set free by the Uganda Constitutional Court on 22nd September 2011.

LRA who was injured, captured and taken into custody by the UPDF following a fight between it and rebels of the LRA in Ukwa, eastern DRC in March 2009 was freed by the court in September 2011[397]. His trial became controversial because of a number of factors. First, Kwoyelo denounced rebellion and applied for Amnesty under the Amnesty Act like any other rebel who denounced acts of rebellion. However, his request was neither responded to by government nor his eligibility determined which exposed the arbitrariness and weaknesses of the Amnesty Act.

Second, he was not only held in custody incommunicado in an undisclosed location for a long time, but also could not access legal representation. Even when he finally got defence attorneys, they were not made aware of the trial opening until few weeks to the trial in order to conduct the necessary preparation thus showing lack of guarantees for credible, impartial and fair trial on the part of the government. Third, critics of government and the Amnesty Act pointed out that whereas other senior LRA commanders were granted amnesty for example Brigadier Keneth Banya and Sam Kolo, the refusal to extend the same to Kwoyelo indicated that his prosecution was politically motivated.

The Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative (ARLPI) (2002-2003):

Following the failure of the previous attempts to bring peace to Acholiland, the war continued unabated, and in actual fact escalated. People continued to die in large numbers, directly or indirectly as a result of the acts and at the hands of the LRA and the

[397] See Daily Monitor, 22nd September 2011, "Court frees ex LRA rebel Kwoyelo"

UPDF, property destroyed and social life disrupted to the extent that it became extremely difficult for communities to sustain their daily lives. As a result, people sought support and help from religious leaders, especially those of the Catholic and Anglican faith whose churches are relatively well spread in Acholiland. Thus the vacuum left by the failed previous mediation efforts and the subsequent escalation of the war which led to unprecedented state of lawlessness, misery and suffering of the Acholi people motivated the religious leaders to be proactive and engage in the peace-building that would create an environment for dialogue.

The initial religious leaders that came together were those of the Anglican and Catholic faith, though they were later joined by the leadership of the Muslim faith. In particular, the most prominent leaders of these religious denominations and advocates for dialogue who started the peace initiatives have been Bishop Macleod Baker Ochola, of the Anglican Diocese of Kitgum, the Right Reverend John Baptist Odama, the Catholic Achbishop of Gulu, the Right Reverend Nelson Onon-Onweng, the Anglican Bishop of northern Uganda, Sheikh Musa Khalil, the Muslim Chief Khadhi of Gulu and Sheikh Suleiman Wadrif, the Chief Khadhi of Kitgum[398].

These leaders came together under a loose but well coordinated inter-faith framework in order to overcome their differences which had for a long time hampered their efforts to work together. This tended to surprise many people, especially considering the fact that the NRM government not only viewed them with suspicion as they were perceived to be

[398] Gilbert M. Khadiagala, "The Role of the Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative (ARLPI) in Peace Building in Northern Uganda", USAID Report, Case Study No. 2, (March 2001), p. 3, available at, http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNACY566.pdf

rebel collaborators and divisive to people along ethno-religious lines, but also received little sympathy from their counterparts elsewhere in the country, but especially those in the south, who considered the war in the north as an Acholi affair, and therefore tended not to offer support. This shows the extent to which the Acholi society was viewed on ethnic lines and as people interested in war, especially by those in the south. Indeed as pointed out by Olara, "right from the time they set foot on Acholi soil, the NRA had a preconceived mindset that the Acholi were "uniquely evil" and that it was only a matter of time before they attacked the NRA. Therefore, the NRA would not give them that opportunity. They were going to "smoke out" this war mentality and have it eradicated before it erupted"[399].

Moreover, these faith bodies had been also characterised by rivalry arising from each of them making distinctive claim-truths while referring to the other as false, which in actual fact demonstrated the incompatibility of the doctrines that defined each of them, a legacy that kept them wide apart right from the time they were established in Uganda. Consequently, this made people sceptical about the outcome of their intended objective. To many people therefore, the question has been why did they come together, what have they done and what has been their major achievements? United in purpose under the umbrella body they called the Acholi Religious Peace Initiative (ARLPI), these leaders together with the Catholic Comboni Fathers begun a series of initiatives aimed at forging a way forward that advocated for non-violent means of resolving the war.

[399] See the Independent, 25th January 2011, Politics of Acholi Marginalisation is not a myth

The ARLPI is thus an inter-faith framework that brings together the religious leaders of four different religious denominations- Anglican, Catholic, Muslim and Orthodox, together with their respective constituencies to work towards peace through community-based peace building, dialogue and reconciliation, and by facilitating an environment of trust and cooperation between the LRA and the GOU which would bring about harmony and mutual co-existence between the Acholi ethnic group and the Bantu ethnic groups in the south. Within this context, initiatives such as prayer gatherings for peace, peace workshops, seminars, peace marches, demonstrations and peace-seeking errands have been some of their major activities. They had to work for the voiceless. Indeed as pointed out by Rodriguez, they begun "--ecumenical initiatives to 'speak for those who cannot speak for themselves" [400] as and as witnesses to the northern conflict[401]

Initial efforts to stem the war which culminated in preliminary frank and honest discussions about the causes of the war and its impact on the Acholi people and therefore how to resolve it, begun in 1996, mainly in the district of Kitgum. Between 1997 and 1998, these efforts had spread throughout Acholiland. For example, in 1997, they organised joint peace prayers and marches in the towns of Gulu and Kitgum and issued joint message that condemned the war and recommended peaceful means of ending it[402],

[400] Father Rodriguez Carlos, "The Role of the Religious Leaders", (2002), http://www.c-r.org/our-work/accord/northern-uganda/religious-leaders.php
[401] Father Carlos Rodriguez, "The Northern Uganda War: The "Small Conflict" that Became the World's Worst Humanitarian Crisis", Health Policy and Development, Vol. 2, No, 2, (2004) p. 81-84
[402] Tim Allen, "War and Justice in Northern Uganda: An Assessment of the International Criminal Court's Intervention", (February 2005), p. 66-70

a view that they have continued to advocate for till to date[403]. In February 1998, the ARLPI was formally inaugurated, with offices and staff in Gulu and Kitgum towns.

One of the ARLPI's landmark events in 1998 was the "***Bedo Piny pi kuc"*** (sitting down for peace discussion) conference which sought to engage the stake holders in the northern conflict in exploring peaceful ways and means of ending the enduring war. This was based on what its preamble termed "***kacel pi kuc***" (together for peace) and its Mission Statement which states that, "ARLPI is an inter-faith organisation that works for peace and development by transforming violent conflict through dialogue, negotiation, mediation and reconciliation in order to promote sustainable peace building and development in northern Uganda"[404]. The conference drew participants from the Acholi community, religious leaders, Members of Parliament (MPs), NGOs, and the UPDF among others, who for the first time sat down to discuss the war which the government had not only vowed to end by military force, but also distorted the image of the Acholi people as trouble causers.

It was pointed out in this conference that the genesis of the war was because of repressive methods of the NRM/A in Acholiland, destruction of property, humiliation and vilification of the Acholi people which alienated them from participating in the politics of the country and made them internal refugees in their own home. Indeed as pointed out by Besigye, "the LRA should not have started at all or it would have ended soon after it broke out had the NRM not marginalized the Acholi. The war would not have begun in

[403] See Response of Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative (ARLPI) to Regional Violence by the LRA, http://www.arlpi.org/arlpi-responds-to-lra-vi
[404] See Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative (ARLPI) Mission Statement, http://www.arlpi.org/about-us

the first place had government not mismanaged the politics by marginalizing the Acholi"[405]. Marginalisation therefore led to stigmatisation and demonization of the Acholi people as an ethnic group, one which started as early as 1986, soon after the NRA/M set foot in Acholiland.

In 1999, the ARLPI in conjunction with NGOs and civic organisations increased their efforts in the search for peace and carried out a number of activities, These included community sensitization and awareness for conflict source and dangers, lobbying for dialogue, amnesty, dismantling of IDPs, gender-based seminars to bring women leaders in the peace process, documentation of conflict and peace issues, national and international lobbying and advocacy for peace in Acholiland and training of Volunteer Peace Animators (VPAs) within the community.

The latter has been instrumental in multiplier effect through training others in identifying the causes of conflict and developing strategies to avoid or resolve it, and also extending the message of the need for peace, reconciliation, development, tolerance and forgiveness, acceptance and reintegration of returnees which became bedrock for healing and restoration of relations at the local level within the communities. This helped a lot and led to communities to accept the former fighters who either directly or indirectly occasioned brutal atrocities against them and to allow them resettle back in the community.

[405] See the Independent, 25th January 2011, Politics of Acholi marginalisation is not a myth

In the same year (1999), the ARLPI in conjunction with a local NGO, the Agency for Co-operation and Research in Development (ACORD) organised an international peace conference under the theme, "Peace Research and the Reconciliation Agenda" which drew participants from other conflict-ridden areas like Teso, Karamoja, West Nile[406], Lango, and Bundibugyo to share experience and also combine efforts in the search for peace through non-violent means. Other peace activities conducted by the ARLPI include the formation and participation in the joint peace District programmes, for example the Kitgum Joint Forum for Peace (KJFP)[407] and the Gulu District Reconciliation and Peace Team (DRPT)[408], contributing to the resettlement programme, identifying with the most vulnerable and setting up of reception centres for returnees, especially the Formerly Abducted Children (FAC). These projects attracted funding from local as well as international organisations[409].

One of the major achievement was the highlighting the plight of the children who had to trek long distances from their villages to the town centres where they would sleep on shop verandas in order to escape abduction and death by the LRA. Some of these children had to travel a distance of over 15 kilometres every evening on a daily basis and go back the following morning. Even when it was rainy, making the temperature at night very cold, they had to do this because they had no alternative. Because of travelling at

[406] Khadiagal Gilbert, "The Role of Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative in Peace Building in Northern Uganda", USAID, Greater Horn of Africa Peace Building Project, (March 2001), p. 8-10, http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNACY566.pdf

[407] See Record and Proceeding of the Rally held at Lacekocot by Team "A" on Friday 11th February 2000, http://www.km-net.org.uk/about/partners/arig/rally.htm

[408] Ern K. Baines, "The Haunting of Alice: Local Approaches to Justice and Reconciliation in Northern Uganda", International Journal of Transitional Justice, Vol. 1, No, 1, (2007), p. 91-114

[409] See New Vision 22nd July 2008, Gulu gets Shillings 520m Peace Project. The Gulu Reconciliation and Peace Team (GDRPT) received 200 000 Euros in 2008 from European Union and Save the Children in Uganda as assistance towards its programmes and activities of conflict resolution and reconciliation among the people of northern Uganda

night, they were called "Night Commuters"[410]. In June 2003, in a move aimed at raising international awareness about the plight and also demonstrating solidarity and compassion with the suffering children, the leaders of the ARLPI spent cold nights by sleeping with them on the verandas and streets of Gulu municipality.

As pointed out by Otim, "in one of the most dramatic advocacy events, the leaders of the ARLPI walked to Gulu town and slept next to children on the verandas. American Free Press (AFP) quoted these religious leaders to have said, "We shall just carry our blankets as children do, so as to highlight their plight to the world"[411]. Since its inception, the ARLPI have travelled several times abroad and addressed international audiences in their efforts to further raise the conflict in northern Uganda and the plight of the Acholi people. These activities have earned them credibility and made them popular both at home and abroad. Although they have not been directly involved in mediation between the GOU and the LRA, they have played a number of roles but the most salient one being that of the bridge that links the two warring parties including other stake holders.

Nevertheless, they have also met difficulties and challenges during the course of their activities in the process of searching for peace. Insufficient funding, poor coordination with UPDF units in operational zones, and negative attitude by government towards the Acholi people have had an impact on their activities. Two of the biggest problems have been mistrust by the LRA, government politicians and some senior officers of the UPDF,

[410] Florence Ochola, "How to ensure that reparation do not further stigmatize victims, particularly children", (March 2007), http://www.redress.org/downloads/events/StigmatizeVictimsFO.pdf
[411] Otim P. William, "The Role of the Acholi Traditional Leaders Peace Initiative in Uganda's Peace building", (March 2009), http://www.beyondintractability.org/case_studies/role_acholi_religious_leaders.jsp?nid=6827

including the involvement of the ICC in trying to prosecute the leaders of the LRA, which has hampered reconciliation and peaceful conclusion of the war.

Sometimes they have been perceived and branded as collaborators of the other side by the LRA and the GOU as well, a factor that has not only frustrated their efforts, but also put their lives in danger. Arising out of this is the fact that some religious leaders have been killed, shot at while in peace meetings, harassed, detained, others threatened with deportation, while others have been issued with ultimatum for death especially from the LRA. On 26th April 2001, Father Tarcisio Pazzaglia, an Italian Missionary from the Comboni Order and Rwot Aywek were shot at by the UPDF while meeting junior officers of the LRA in Pajule, Kitgum district, despite the fact that Father Pazzaglia had alerted the military authorities prior to this meeting[412].

The meeting was one in a series that had been conducted by the religious leaders aimed at convincing the rebels to negotiate peace with the government. Despite this incident and continued harassment by the UPDF, the religious leaders continued their efforts to contact the rebels and convince them to enter peace talks with government as they were sure that dialogue was the most feasible and best way of ending the conflict. Their efforts had paid off as they led to the release of several abductees, many of them children and women, including fighters escaping from the bush for example, seventeen fighters led by Major 'Oneko-Mon-Ki-Koko' who escaped from Sudan in October 2001 with the help of the Pajule Comboni Mission.

[412] Father Carlos Rodriguez, "The Role of the Acholi Religious Leaders", (2002), http://www.c-r.org/our-work/accord/northern-uganda/religious-leaders.php

On 28th August 2002, Fathers Tarcisio Pazzaglia, Giulio Albanese and Carlos Rodriguez came under heavy attack by the UPDF while meeting representatives of the LRA in Timangu, Kitgum District to convince them to release more abductees and to negotiate with government. They narrowly survived death but were arrested and detained by the UPDF[413] despite their explanation of goodwill intentions and plea of innocence. To make matters worse, the act of storming the venue for the meeting by the UPDF raised concern in the LRA circles and made them suspect that it may have been a trap by the priests and which led Kony to be angry to the extent that he ordered his commanders to kill the religious leaders if they attempted similar contacts.

In December of the same year, Father Carlos Rodriguez was threatened with deportation by the UPDF after being accused of "making false allegations" against the UPDF. The spokesman of the UPDF, Shaban Bantariza, is quoted to have said that, "he is always misrepresenting what is happening on the ground"[414]. However, critics pointed out that the priest's threat of deportation emanated from his criticism of the way the army was handling the war in northern Uganda. In 2003, the LRA attacked the Comboni Missionary headquarters in Opit, 40 kilometres South East of Gulu town, torched nearby huts, looted and destroyed church property before abducting about 30 people[415]. Despite these setbacks, the religious leaders are still determined to continue with peace efforts. This is demonstrated in their New Year messages in which they emphasise their commitment to reconciliation, moral rehabilitation and building peace in the

[413] Father Carlos Rodriguez, "Acholi: People Want Peace but the Men with Guns Don't", http://www.acholipeace.8k.com/leadership.html
[414] Omar Kezimbira, "Ugandan Army Seeks Priests Exit – BBC", http://www.mail-archive.com/ugandanet@kym.net/msg11087.html
[415] See LRA rebels decline mediation of religious leaders and attack two missions, (June 2003), http://www.mail-archive.com/ugandanet@kym.net/msg04051.html

community[416]. They have also told the United States leaders that the military force will neither work against the LRA nor end the conflict because the situation is complex as it involves splinter groups and tribal conflicts[417]. They particularly advised president Obama to support non-violent means of settling the conflict, such as negotiations[418].

The ARLPI are also not in favour of the ICC prosecution of the LRA leaders, a view that is also held by most ordinary Acholi people. Indeed it has been pointed out that attitudes in northern Uganda have tended to shift towards non-prosecutorial alternatives[419]. They argue that prosecution will neither bring everlasting peace nor end the war and that instead compromise should be adopted for the sake of peace. Thus the ARLPI warned that the threat of legal action would put the peace process in the north at risk. Speaking to the French News Agency (AFP), Archbishop John Baptist Odama said that,

"*The peace process has been put in jeopardy. We all thought that the (local) peace process was the only avenue to yield real fruits, but it seems it has not been given enough time. We do not question the existence of the ICC or its principles. However, we feel that the presence of the court here and its activities are in danger of jeopardising the efforts to rebuild the rebels' confidence in peace talks. How can we tell the LRA soldiers to come out of the bush and receive amnesty when at the same time the threat of their arrest by the ICC hangs over their heads?'*[420]

[416] See Peace and Hope in the Great Jubilee Year 2000: A New Year Message of the Acholi Religious Leaders on the Ocasson of the World Day of Peace, January 1st 2000, http://www.km-net.org.uk/about/partners/arig/hope.htm
[417] See Ugandan Bishops tell US leaders military option won't work against rebels, 15th September 2010, http://www.arlpi.org/september-15-2010-ugandan-bishops-tell-us-leaders-military-option-won-t-work-against-rebels
[418] New Vision 28th May 2010, Acholi warn Obama on Kony
[419] Linda M. Keller, "Achieving Peace with Justice: The International Criminal Court and Ugandan Alternative Justice Mechanisms", Connecticut Journal of International Law, Vol. 23, No, 209, (2008), p. 228
[420] Waldimar Pelser "Will ICC Prosecutions Threaten Ugandan Peace Process?" (November 2005) http://iwpr.net/report-news/will-icc-prosecutions-threaten-ugandan-peace-process

That there is relative peace in Acholiland currently does not guarantee that it will endure the test of time, as long as the underlying structural causes remain insufficiently addressed. Because of this, the ARLPI continue to stress that they are willing to play the role of the "bridge" between the LRA and the GOU. This is underpinned by a declaration in a joint statement at the end of the International Conference of Religious Leaders on the LRA Issue, which took place in Kisangani, DRC, between 2nd - 4th February 2010 in which they expressed commitment to peace and resolved to lobby for the completion of the Juba Peace Talks and also that the GOU should continue to pursue this initiative in order to find a durable solution, as one of the recommendations[421].

Despite their demonstrated ability and willingness to act as peace interlocutors and continued pressing for dialogue between the GOU and the LRA, the ARLPI have continued to face challenges. The UPDF's conduct and rhetoric has demonstrated lack of patience in peaceful means to end the war and this has negatively impacted on the efforts of the religious leaders to bring the two warring parties together. It has tended to prefer and rely on military strategy which is opposed by religious leaders because it increases the civilian casualties, is a hindrance to reconciliation and therefore an obstacle to peaceful resolution of the conflict.

This has created challenges from both sides. It has led them to be regarded with suspicion especially by the LRA and therefore put their lives at risk while the GOU has tended to

[421] The ARLPI attended an International Conference of the Religious Leaders on The LRA Issue from 2nd to 4th February 2010 which was held in Kisangani, DRC under the joint initiative of the Archdiocese of Kisangani and IKV Pax Christi Netherlands in which they issued a joint statement on their commitment to peace and recommendations. See;
https://salsa.democracyinaction.org/o/2241/images/FINAL%20DECLARATION%20INTERNATIONAL%20CONFERENCE%20OF%20RELIGIOUS%20LEADERS%20ON%20THE%20LRA%20ISSUE.pdf

discourage them from contacting the LRA. However, despite these challenges, the ARLPI remained determined and vowed to continue pressing for dialogue between the GOU and the LRA and to play the role of "bridge" even in the face of serious risks and setbacks,[422] the result of which is the current relative peace in Acholiland. It should also be realised that although the current peace has been largely because religious and cultural leaders insisted and led peace negotiations, the war between the LRA and the GOU has not been conclusively brought to an end, but instead what has changed is the war theatre.

Betty Bigombe's Second Peace Attempt (2004-2005):

Following the collapse of the peace talks between the GOU and the LRA in 1994 as a result of Museveni's ultimatum to the rebels to surrender within seven days or face military annihilation, Bigombe who had initiated these talks moved to Washington, United States of America in 1997 to work with the World Bank. She worked as a senior social scientist in the post-conflict unit as well as a consultant in the Bank's Social Protection and Human Development Unit and also as a Senior Fellow at the United States Institute of Peace (USIP). Despite her relocation outside Uganda, she remained strongly committed to bring about peaceful end to the conflict in her home region of northern Uganda and also convinced that dialogue was the most viable way to ensure durable peace.

[422] Museveni wrote a letter to Archbishop John Baptist Odama instructing him to stop making contacts with the rebels because the LRA was planning to kill him. But the ARLPI said that although they had no way of verifying the allegation, if the LRA has any message to pass on, they will continue to do so. They further said that, "we are not interested in politics. We think People's blood should not be spilt any more. We have a clear agenda, to stop the deaths of people. We will continue appealing to both parties to sit down and talk". http://newsite.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportID=34877

While in Washington, she maintained contacts with stakeholders in the northern Uganda war which she established while working as a minister in the region, and more especially with the LRA high command and the various peace emissaries. She realised that in order to overcome her felt frustration by the lack of political will on the part of the GOU and the UPDF to end the war, which she experienced during the previous failed attempt when she acted as a mediator between the two warring parties, there was need to use pressure by involving other parties especially the international community. This would also give credibility to the talks. Her network contacts established while in Washington would guarantee this.

In February 2004 while watching her TV she saw footage of the Barlonyo massacre in which more than 200 people were murdered, many of them hacked to death while others were herded in their huts which were torched and roasted alive by the LRA rebels[423]. This followed a series of horrendous attacks and atrocities which included among others, the Atiak massacre, and the abduction of 132 girls from St. Marry's College Aboke, which attracted world attention and condemnation. She had been following events in northern Uganda which continued to unfold ever since her mediated peace talks which failed as a result of government calling off negotiations on the eve of signing of the agreement.

The underlying causes of the war remained unaddressed and led to its enduring and escalation. Indeed according to her, "when underlying causes of conflict remain un-

[423] Frank Nyakairu, "Uganda: Joseph Kony's Killing Fields in Northern Region", (January 2008), http://www.ligi.ubc.ca/?p2=/modules/liu/news/view.jsp&id=323

addressed, there is a reasonable likelihood that conflict will flare up again"[424]. This same observation is noted by Ssenyonjo when he points out that, "--even if the LRA rebellion is suppressed, it is likely that more rebellions will emerge and instability will continue until the underlying political questions have been appropriately resolved"[425]. The worsening humanitarian situation became of major concern to her. This is underpinned in her statement as she prepared to leave Washington for Uganda when she said that, "people are dying. Children are not going to school- it just can't go on anymore"[426].

Arising out of the above was the fact that the military strategy had failed to bring peace in northern Uganda. Indeed she further said that, "i am also a strong believer that military victory will never bring sustainable peace. You can subdue people, you can humiliate them, they feel they have no voice, they will go underground- it will resurface"[427]. The rebels had also escalated and expanded their operations, covering a wide area that included DRC, Central African Republic (CAR) and parts of Western and Southern Sudan.

In March 2004, she took leave from World Bank and flew to Uganda to make another attempt at peace negotiations by playing the role of mediator. Backed by the UN, UK, Norway and Netherlands, she travelled to Sudan from May 2004 and begun shuttle diplomacy between the Sudanese officials, GOU and the LRA in an attempt to put the

[424] Tabu Butagira and Kakaire, "Corruption prolonged the LRA war, says insider", (September 2007), http://www.mail-archive.com/ugandanet@kym.net/msg24866.html
[425] Ssenyonjo Manisuli, "Accountability of Non-State Actors in Uganda for War Crimes and Human Rights Violations: Between Amnesty and the International Criminal Court", Journal of Conflict and Security Law, Vol. 10, No, 3, (2005) p. 432
[426] See Aaron Brown Interview: Betty Bigombe, (July 2008), http://www.pbs.org/wnet/wideangle/episodes/lords-children/aaron-brown-interview-betty-bigombe/2144/
[427] Ibid

peace project back on track. Although she could not meet Kony as he remained elusive, she maintained discreet link with some members of the LRA high command. With the support of Sudan government, she travelled to Juba where she stayed between May and June 2004 using her influence to contact the LRA. In particular, her link with Sam Kolo, an influential and senior LRA field commander who was regarded as a moderate, seemed to rejuvenate a sense of optimism in giving peace talks another chance.

Consequently, she succeeded in arranging a series of meetings between the LRA and various groups which included GOU officials, religious leaders, Acholi cultural leaders, civic society, the UPDF and MPs. Her efforts also led to a ceasefire declaration between the belligerents and a landmark meeting in Palabek in December 2004 which witnessed the Ugandan delegation led by the minister of Internal Affairs shake hands with senior LRA commanders after several years of bitter hostility. However, in December 2004, violations of the ceasefire by both parties curtailed her mediation efforts and threatened to derail the peace process.

In addition to this, the surrender of Sam Kolo, the main LRA negotiator in February 2005 to the UPDF[428], with whom she had been in close contact tended to compound the situation as the LRA seemed to view her as a government operative[429]. In tandem with this situation and aggravating it was the fact that the GOU requested the ICC[430] to

[428] Kasaija P. Apuuli, "Amnesty and International Law: The Case of the Lords Resistance Army Insurgence in Northern Uganda", African Journal of Conflict Resolution, Vol. 5, No, 2, (2007) p.1-30
[429] David Mwaniki, Manasseh Wepundi, and Harriet Morolong, Situation Report ,"The Northern Uganda Peace Process: An Update on recent developments", (February 2009), p. 7,
[430] Kasaija P. Apuuli, "The ICC Arrest Warrants for the Lord's Resistance Army Leaders and Peace Prospects for Northern Uganda", Journal of International Criminal Justice, Vol. 4, No, 1, (March 2006) p. 1-9

investigate the LRA, which subsequently issued arrest warrants for Kony and four of his top lieutenants. Nevertheless, despite these setbacks, her mediation efforts, like in the first attempt of 1994 became one of the most successful peace overtures which provided the foundation for the Juba peace talks. Although she still believes dialogue is the only viable option to bring the war between the LRA and GOU to amicable end, it is not clear whether she is still in contact with the LRA.

The Juba Peace Talks (2006-2008):

In 2006, the LRA and the GOU agreed to hold talks in the southern Sudanese town of Juba. These talks which began on 14th July 2006 and lasted for 22 months before collapsing in April 2008 were facilitated by the government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) with Dr. Riek Machar, as the Chief Mediator. Several other individuals representing local, regional and international bodies and governments were also involved. They included among others, Joaquim Chissano, former president of Mozambique as a Special Representative of the UN Secretary General, Japheth R. Gitugi, government of Kenya, Francisco Caetano Madeira, republic of Mozambique, Lt. Gen. (Rtd) Gilbert Lebeko Romano, for South Africa, Ali I. Siwa, Tanzania, David W. Gressly, UN Deputy resident and Humanitarian Coordinator Southern Sudan, Andre M. Kapanga, DRC, Heidi Johansen, for Norway, Anna Sundstram, European Union, Timothy R. Shortley, USA and Bryan E. Burton for the government of Canada.

Deliberations began on day one July 14th 2006 with members of the negotiating teams from the warring parties presenting their positions. The LRA put forward the following demands.

1. Ceasefire: an immediate ceasefire and cessation of hostilities

2. IDP camps people to go back to their villages

3. Land: the issue of land grabbing must stop until the population is put in a position to make a judicious decision

4. The army to reflect a national character in terms of regional balance and must pay allegiance to the constitution rather than the president.

5. Political persecution and marginalisation of the north and East must stop immediately and a proportionate power sharing arrangement that takes into account regional balance effected

6. Development of the northern region which has been marginalised since independence must be addressed

7. Equal opportunities for proportionate employment, education and access to public resources for all Ugandans

8. The use of derogatory language demonising certain sections of the population and sowing the seeds of hatred and disunity must stop henceforth

On its part, the Uganda government put forward the following;

1. Renounce and abandon all forms of terrorism

2. Cease all forms of hostilities

3. Disband and handover all weapons and their inventory

4. Assemble in agreed upon areas for demobilisation, disarmament and documentation

5. Combatants who qualify will be integrated into the UPDF and those who wish to go home will be reintegrated into civilian life

6. Government to re-engage cultural and religious leaders to reconcile demobilised combatants with their community

The talks were conducted in a cordial atmosphere of relative calm but were also characterised by accusations and counter accusations, sometimes tempers flaring, and absence of the field commanders on the LRA negotiating team. Despite these problems,

the process witnessed the signing of 5 protocols in 21 months[431]. These protocols are; Cessation of Hostilities (COH), Comprehensive solutions to the problems of Northern Uganda, Accountability and Reconciliation, Final (permanent) Ceasefire, and Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR).

Although the above five agreements were crucial in as far as bringing peace and stability in northern Uganda in general and Acholiland in particular is concerned, the Protocol on Accountability and Reconciliation was the most important aspect of the Juba peace talks. In fact it was considered the backbone of the talks that would break or give impetus to the peace process and ensure the future stability of Acholiland. This was because in order for justice to prevail, issues to do with human rights violations that were committed during the course of the war and the need to promote and ensure durable peace was a paramount prerequisite. As such, the agreement provided for the use of both formal and informal mechanisms of justice, reconciliation and conflict resolution.

Within this framework, a special division of the Ugandan court system was to be created and mandated to exercise jurisdiction[432] over individuals alleged to have committed serious crimes, especially those described as serious war crimes and crimes against humanity. The agreement further provided that state actors shall be subjected to existing formal criminal and civil justice measures while non-state actors shall be subjected to special justice processes[433] as well as local mechanism carried out under independent and

[431] See Report of International Crisis Group, Northern Uganda: The Road to Peace With or Without Kony, Africa Report No, 146. (December 2008) p. ii
[432] See, Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation, Article 6 (6.1)
[433] Ibid, Clause 4.1

impartial investigations[434] by the state. It also provided for the application and use of "*Mato Oput*", the Acholi traditional justice and conflict resolution mechanism performed to reconcile parties formerly in conflict after full accountability.

As the debate on accountability and reconciliation continued to be salient, questions such as who would be responsible for selection of those considered to have committed serious crimes and under what criteria raised further concern among the participants. The main argument hinged not on whether accountability and reconciliation should be carried out, but rather how it should be implemented, that is, through which mechanism. The LRA stressed the need to recognise the causes of the war and that all parties must accept responsibility for the atrocities committed, suggested and recommended the application of the traditional justice mechanism and payment of compensation.

On its part, the GOU insisted that in order for justice to be seen to be done formal courts must try those responsible for serious crimes, arguing that this was in line with the requirements of the Rome Statute of the ICC that is aimed at preventing impunity[435]. It should be realised that in 2003, Museveni referred the LRA to the ICC[436] for investigation, making Uganda the first country to make such referral[437] and continued to rely on it as one of the strategies to pressurise the LRA to end the war. It is no surprise

[434] Ibid, Clause 4.2
[435] Preamble to the International Criminal Court; see also, Kriksciun Alex, K. "Uganda's Response to International Criminal Court's Arrest Warrants: A Misguided Approach?" Tulane Journal of International Law, Vol. 16, No, 213, (2008) p. 230
[436] Joanna R. Quinn. "Getting to Peace? Negotiating with the Lord's Resistance Army in Northern Uganda", Human Rights Review, Vol. 10, No, 1, (June 2007) p. 55-71
[437] Payam Akhavan, "Developments at the International Criminal Court: The Lord's Resistance Army Case: Uganda's Submission of the First State Referral to the International Criminal Court", American Journal of International Law, Vol. 99, No, 2 (April 2005) p. 403-421

therefore that the ICC was recognised[438] in the Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation.

The legal justice mechanism and its implementation thus became a sticky issue during the Juba peace process. In a lengthy discussion under the themes; international legal standards, Uganda legal justice, traditional mechanism and accountability, the parties, amid tensions recognised the importance of traditional justice mechanism and the role it plays in conflict resolution and reconciliation, but could not agree that it should be the sole accountability mechanism to be adopted. This made the Ugandan position problematic. Arising out of this situation is the fact that Musevenis position on accountability, to a large extent displayed inconsistency, as he repeatedly stated that he was willing to request the ICC to lift the indictments, but only if the FPA was signed first.

Indeed as pointed out by Dagne, "--president Museveni announced on July 19th 2007, that warrants for the top LRA leaders will remain in place until a final peace agreement has been reached: "we are not going to ask the ICC to lift the arrest warrants. If the LRA leaders don't conclude the peace talks, they could be arrested and taken to the ICC or get killed. If they conclude the peace deal, that is when the government can write to the ICC to say we have found an alternative solution"[439]. From this assertion, it can be argued that Museveni was not, and to a large extent continues not to be interested in dialogue but rather coercion and force in dealing with the LRA, an issue that many people especially

[438] See Preamble to the Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation
[439] Dagne Ted, "Uganda: Current Conditions and the Crisis in Northern Uganda", Congressional Research Service, (May 2009), p. 6-7, http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf&AD=ADA501201

the Acholi accuse him of. Indeed Museveni is quoted by Egeland in his book "A Billion Lives: An Eye Witness Report from the Frontiers of Humanity" as never interested in dialogue and having said that, "let me be categorical--there will only be a military solution to this problem"[440].

Although the parties managed to sign the Agreement on accountability and reconciliation on 29th June 2007, the issue of indictments remained a thorny issue, and one that threatened the success of the peace process. The ARLPI advocated for the suspension of the indictments in order to ensure that dialogue was given a chance to succeed by pointing out that the timing came at a very sensitive and critical moment[441] when dialogue was taking place. Arising out of this situation is the fact that the final protocol which was supposed to be signed on 10th April 2008 to symbolise the Final Peace Agreement (FPA) could not take place as Kony never showed up at the agreed venue for signing. In explaining his refusal to sign the FPA, he said that this was because matters regarding his security were not sufficiently addressed[442]. By this he was referring to the warrants of arrest that were issued against him and four of his top commanders in October 2005[443]. According to Kony, the warrants had to be withdrawn first if he was to sign the FPA[444]. Indeed as pointed out by Kriksciun, the LRA emphasised that "they will

[440] Egeland Jan. An Eye Witness Report from the Frontlines of Humanity, Simon and Schuster, New York, (2008) p. 210-212
[441] ARLIPI's Position on the International Criminal Court (July 2009), http://www.arlpi.org/international-criminal-court-s-icc-uganda
[442] See Monitor Newspaper, 27th May 2008
[443] Monitor Newspaper, 3rd July 2006
[444] Michael Otim and Marieke Wierda, "Justice at Juba: International Obligations and Local Demands in Northern Uganda", (March 2008) http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/Digital-Library/Publications/Detail/?ord633=grp1&ots591=eb06339b-2726-928e-0216-1b3f15392dd8&lng=en&id=58832

not sign a peace deal unless the ICC -- lifts its arrest warrants for its leader, Joseph Kony, and four of his senior associates"[445].

The issue of the ICC did not only become a roadblock to peaceful resolution of the war, but has also proved to be controversial because Museveni considered it as a means to bring the rebels to the negotiating table[446] rather than a means of bringing the violators of human rights to justice and also with little regard to its implications and consequences to ending the war. Whereas it has been pointed out that the ICC weakened the LRA and therefore forced it to accept and participate in the Juba peace process, it has neither achieved its overall objective of bringing the perpetrators to justice nor ending the confrontation between the LRA and the GOU. With the refusal by Kony to sign the final agreement, the peace negotiations were declared collapsed and Kony and his troops have since relocated in an area covering the jungles of DR Congo, Central African Republic (CAR) and southern Sudan where atrocities against civilians and clashes with the UPDF troops pursuing him continue to take place.

The United Nations (UN):

The United Nations was founded on the premise "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war"[447]. This means that protecting human kind from disasters arising out of, for example wars by stopping them or even preventing them from happening is one of its cardinal aims. Despite this goal however, the UN neither intervened nor played a

[445] Kriksciun Alex K. "Uganda's Response to International Criminal Court Arrest Warrants: A Misguided Approach?" Tulane Journal of International Comparative Law, Vol. 16, No, 213 (2008) p. 230
[446] Ibid, p. 213-225
[447] See Preamble of the United Nations Charter.

significant role in the war, at least in the early stages, between the LRA and the GOU until 2003, seventeen years after it had been going on, despite the presence of conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (EWRM) in its framework[448]. For all these years, the war in Acholiland and the plight of the Acholi people remained hidden from the international community.

As the plight of the Acholi people worsened and led to the deaths of many people, the world bodies, it can be argued, tended to keep quiet or ignored the phenomenon perhaps thinking that it was under control by the GOU. In fact UNICEF estimated that the number of children forcefully abducted by the LRA to be 25,000, while human rights organisations put the number of people killed at 300,000 with many more reported missing or disappeared in unclear circumstances[449]. It was only after Jan Egeland, the then Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator briefed the UN Security Council in April 2004 by asking such questions as, "where else in the world have there been 20,000 children kidnapped; where else in the world have 90 percent of the population in large districts been displaced; where else in the world do children make up 80 percent of the terrorist insurgency movement"[450] that the UN started rethinking about the situation in northern Uganda.

It is against this background that many Acholi people think that the conflict in their home region could have perhaps been subdued, lives saved and the suffering avoided or

[448] Herbert Wulf and Tobias Debiel, "Regional and Global Axes of Conflict, Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism: Tools for Enhancing the Effectiveness of Regional Organisations? A Comparative Study of the AU, ECOWAS, IGAD, ASEAN/ARF and PIF" (May 2009) p. 1
[449] Daily Monitor 27th October 2004
[450] Peter Okema Otika, "UN finally admits Uganda has world's most neglected tragedy", (November 2004) http://humanrightshouse.org/Articles/217.html

lessened, if the UN was to act first. However, it should be realised that the UN's inability or slow response, at least in the early stages of the war stem from various angles and are intertwined with its legal protocols and workings. One of these is to be found in the principle of sovereignty of the state, although since the September 11th 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States of America, the principle of sovereignty has increasingly been violated. The concept of sovereignty of the state is enshrined in Chapter two of the UN' Charter. According to this chapter,

"*All members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations. (---) Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorise the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state or shall require the members to submit such matters to settlement under the present Charter--*"[451].

This concept of sovereignty has tended to give leverage to repressive authoritarian rulers to violate people's human rights and do anything they like in their countries without being checked. In the meantime, people continue to suffer and the economies decline because huge resources continue to be channelled to building military machinery at the expense of other sectors as dictators continue to rely on the ethnicized military as a power base and an instrument that maintains them in power. Indeed as pointed out by Reno, "international support for African sovereignty offers additional resources to manage political rivals or would-be rivals by giving the rulers the prerogative to decide who has access to the country's territory" and enables them "to shield transactions from the eyes

[451] See the United Nations (UN) Charter, Article 2

of outsiders"[452]. The same observation has also been pointed out by other scholars by saying that the way rulers exploit the principle of sovereignty by "--confining a diversionary conflict within the state's borders gives the state's government considerable advantage by allowing it to frame the conflict in terms favourable to itself"[453].

It is also worth noting that in one of the UN Secretary General's Reports, Kofi Anan, former UN Secretary General stated the following in 1998;

"For the UN, there is no higher goal, no deeper commitment and no greater ambition than preventing armed conflict. The prevention of conflict begins and ends with the promotion of human security and human development. Ensuring human security is, in the broadest sense, the cardinal mission of the UN"[454].

Two years later in 2002, he stated the following;

"--i have stressed that conflict prevention lies at the heart of the mandate of the UN in the maintenance of international peace and security--- conflict prevention strategies offer the greatest potential for promoting lasting peace and creating an enabling environment for sustainable development"[455].

In the same report, he recognises the need to prevent conflict by stating that,

"*One of the principle aims of preventative actions should be to address the deep-rooted socio-economic, cultural, environmental institutional and other structural causes that often underlie the immediate political symptoms of conflicts"*[456].

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[452] Reno William, Uganda's Politics of War and Debt Relief, Journal of International Political Economy, Vol, 9, No, 3, (August 2002) p419
[453] Jaroslav Tir and Michael Jasinski, Domestic-Level Diversionary Theory of War: Targeting Ethnic Minorities, Journal of Conflict Resolution, Vol, 52, No, 5, (October 2008) p, 646
[454] Kofi A. Annan, The Causes of Conflict and the Promotion of Durable Peace and Sustainable Development in Africa, Report of the UN Secretary General, 1998, paragraph, 2.
[455] See report of Kofi A. Annan, Prevention of Armed Conflict: Report of the Secretary General, Published by the UN Department of Public Information, DPI/2256-23597, New York, (February 2002) p, x
[456] Ibid, p, ix

It is important to note that all this was being said when the war in Acholiland was taking place. Besides condemning the war, no immediate practical action for example by investigating or deploying UN peace keeping troops was effected despite the various voices within northern Uganda that were calling on the UN for action.

In addition to the above is the fact that different sets of people who flee their homes and who ordinarily qualify to be refugees are treated differently by the international community. The point to note here is that according to international legal conventions, refugees are those people who escape from their homes for example because of war and who flee across international borders. This means that if you flee from your home because of the same reasons but remain in your country, the international community will not recognise you to be a refugee according to international legal convention and therefore you will not be protected by the international community.

Toole and Waldman point out that, "refugees are clearly defined by international legal conventions and, therefore, are entitled to protection and assistance by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). In contrast, persons who flee their homes for the same reasons as refugees but who remain inside their own countries enjoy no such legal status"[457]. They continue to point out that "these 'internally displaced' persons are particularly in a precarious situation because they are often beyond the reach of

[457]Toole J. Michael and Walderman J. Ronald, "Refugees and Displaced Persons: War, Hunger and Public Health, Journal of the American Medical Association, Vol, 270, N0, 5, (August 1993) p, 601

international agencies, which rely on cooperation of national governments to deliver relief aid"[458].

The African Union (AU):

The African Union was formally constituted in 2002 after dissolving the Organisation of African Unity (OAU). The Charter of the AU stipulates several important principles, among them, "to promote peace, security, and stability --- as well as to engage in effective intervention under grave circumstances"[459]. It was established with robust emphasis on providing African solutions to African problems. In 2004, the Peace and Security Council (PSC), the AU's arm responsible for addressing conflict through prevention, management and resolution was established[460]. However, this mechanism had already been established under the OAU in 1993[461] except that this time it adopted a new name and new mandate. It should also be realised that the war in Acholiland started during the period of the OAU and at the time of its transformation into the AU, the war was still raging on and in actual fact had entered its 18th year. Although the AU has intervened in a number of conflict situations by conducting peace missions on the African

[458] Ibid, p, 601
[459] Herbert Wulf and Tobias Debiel, Crisis States Working Paper No, 49, "Regional and Global Axes of Conflict, Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanisms: Tools for enhancing the Effectiveness of Regional Organizations? A Comparative Study of the AU, ECOWAS, IGAD, ASEAN/ARF and PIF", (May 2009) p. 13
[460] Ibid, p, 13
[461] Simon Massey, "Multi-faceted Mediation in the Guinea Bissau Civil War", South African Journal of Military Studies, Vol, 32, No, 1, (2004) p, 84

continent, for example in Burundi, Darful and Somalia[462], in the case of northern Uganda, the Acholi people feel it let them down.

The one million dollar question is why should situations become catastrophic with tens of thousands of people dying, leave alone emerging in the first instance, when the mechanism for monitoring and prevention of conflict has been put in place? Alternatively, at what level does a situation turn into catastrophic as described in Section 4 of the Charter? These and perhaps several other questions will continue to pose a serious challenge to the AU in as far as it's in/ability and capacity to deal with conflicts on the African continent is concerned. That this mechanism is armed with an early warning system which is based on intelligence gathering and information network analysis among other protocols in order to provide response action but yet conflict tends to be nurtured and rage on in member states, speaks a lot in terms of challenges facing the AU and conflict management.

One of the major responsibilities of the PSC is also "to assess potential crisis situations and send fact-finding missions to trouble spots" but for northern Uganda war, this doesn't seem to have been the case. It can therefore be argued that Acholiland, which by its geographical location is at the epicentre of a region prone to instability, was never given due attention. In a situation of this nature, repressive regimes are bound to continue oppressing their people and targeting some ethnic groups overtly or covertly, moreover with impunity which has led to enduring conflicts on the continent.

[462] Herbert Wulf and Tobias Debiel, Crisis States Working Papers Series No, 2, Working Paper No, 49, Regional and Global Axes of Conflict, Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanisms: Tools for Enhancing the Effectiveness of Regional Organizations? A Comparative Study of the AU, ECOWAS, IGAD, ASEAN/ARF and PIF, (May 2009) p, 15

Several factors can explain why it has tended to be difficult for the African Union to intervene in the conflicts on the African continent. First, the contemporary African politics is based on a system of sovereign states in which non-intervention is the norm. For example Section 4 of the AU Charter states that "Non-interference by any Member State in the internal affairs of another and the right of the Union to intervene in the Member State pursuant to a decision of the Assembly in respect of grave circumstances, namely; war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity"[463]. The concept of sovereignty provides authoritarian rulers protection from their acts being effectively scrutinised and also from being accountable to their own people including the international community.

Arising out of this is the fact that the warnings and calls for help from people who are about or have started to be attacked are often ignored as the ruler convinces the international community that the situation is under control, in effect hiding his heinous acts under the shield of sovereignty, thus resulting into misery and suffering of the people as has been the case with the war in Acholiland[464]. This in turn creates impunity in the military forces to violate the citizens' rights under the disguise of crushing a nascent uprising. Because they have the backing of the person holding the highest office in the country, the president, who is also the commander-in-chief, the military personnel behave in such a way that the state of chaos continues as they direct their efforts in building a

[463] See African Union (AU) Charter Constitutive Act, Article 4

[464] Human Rights and Peace Centre (HURIPEC), The Hidden War: The Forgotten People, War in Acholiland and its Ramifications for Peace and Security in Uganda, (October 2003) p, 116; see also Monitor Newspaper, 24th June 2008, Northern Legislators urged government and the LRA to reconsider Peace Talks. The legislators singled out president Museveni for sounding war drums by threatening to crush Kony, a situation they said would cause more death and destruction and extinguish possibilities for resumption of further talks

political economy of war fare. But this creates more disorder, socio-political discontent and further weakens the state as its legitimacy increasingly becomes under question. In such a situation, the rulers can only survive through patronage networks and the use of selective force and intimidation.

But there is also a bigger problem in the early warning and response mechanism of who should be warned and who should act on this warning[465]. This is especially so because many rulers on the African continent share similar characteristics of authoritarianism, bad governance, corruption and the tendency to perpetually elongate their stay in office, in effect becoming life presidents and as such they tend to lack moral authority to give warning of a potential conflict or suggest solutions even when it is happening in the neighbourhood, unless if such action will serve their personal interests.

In the nexus of conflict resolution, it has also been argued that the role of conflict resolution through mediation can best be done by countries in proximity of the country where the war is taking place and more especially the neighbouring countries. The idea behind this reasoning is that "due to their cultural affinity and common social and historical configuration, the people of a region normally have more intimate knowledge of the evolution and political sensitivities of the conflict in question---. Their general sense of solidarity, arising from common histories, experiences, geographic contiguity

[465] Herbert Wulf and Tobias Debiel, Crisis States Working Papers Series No, 2, Working Paper No, 49, "Regional and Global Axes of Conflict Conflict, Early Warning and Response Mechanisms: Tools for Enhancing the Effectiveness of Regional Organizations? A Comparative Study of the AU, ECOWAS, IGAD, ASEAN/ARF and PIF", (May 2009)

and cultural compatibility, can play a central role in the process of consensus building in times of crisis"[466].

But even within this intervention framework and strategy of proximity and neighbourhood, problems of neutrality and impartiality are bound to arise and even if a neighbouring country facilitates and mediates peace talks, cases of abrogating the agreements are not new especially in Sub-Saharan Africa. The NRM government is a good example here, having dishonoured the Nairobi peace-talks agreement with the Tito Okello Military Junta in 1985 and preferring a military solution rather than peace negotiation[467].

The International Criminal Court (ICC):

The ICC was established on 1st July 2003 by the Rome Statute Section 16, as a permanent international institution with the objective and "the power to exercise its jurisdiction over persons for the most serious crimes of international concern, ---, and shall be complimentary to national criminal jurisdictions[468]". These crimes include genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. In December 2003, Museveni referred the LRA to ICC for investigation concerning human rights violations and war crimes[469]. In January

[466] Simon Massey, "Multi-Faceted Mediation in the Guinea Bissau Civil War", in Scientia Militaria, South African Journal of Military Studies, Vol. 32, No, 1, (2004) p, 89
[467] Monitor Newspaper, 24th June 2008
[468] Manisuli Ssenyonjo, "Accountability of non-state actors in Uganda for War Crimes and Human Rights Violations: Between Amnesty and the International Criminal Court", Journal of Conflict and Security Law, Vol. 10, No. 3, (September 2005) p. 422
[469] El Zeidy M. Mohamed, "The Uganda Government Triggers the First Test of the Complementarity Principle: An Assessment of the First State's Party Referral to the ICC", International Criminal Law Review, Vol. 5, No, 1, (2005) p. 83-120

2004, Moreno Okampo, the ICC prosecutor formally opened an investigation into the northern Uganda war.

This was at a time when efforts in search of peace especially through dialogue were being undertaken by various parties, particularly the ARLPI, an interfaith peace building and conflict transformation organisation that was formed in 1997 as a proactive response to the war and suffering of people in Acholiland. The government's move of referring the LRA to the ICC impacted negatively on the ARLPI's efforts in the search for peace. While they recognised Uganda's position as a signatory to the Rome Statute, and its attempt to address issues of human rights violations moreover with impunity around the world, they at the same time expressed reservations about its ability to bring peace in northern Uganda, especially because of what they called "Lack of sensitivity for current initiatives taking place to bring about peace and justice--"[470]. In addition to this, it was perceived negatively as being partisan, especially by the people in the north because it was invited by Museveni, himself a party to the conflict and also given the fact that officials of ICC had held joint press conferences with him and other GOU officials.

In 2005, the ICC indicted Kony and his four top commanders; Vincent Otti, Raska Lukwiya, Okot Odhiambo and Dominic Ongwen[471], and issued warrants for their arrest. From the time the ICC exerted its influence on the war between the LRA and the NRM government, events on the ground changed, but these changes were both for the good and bad. Good in the sense that for the first time, it put international pressure on Kony and the

[470] ARLPI's position on the International Criminal Court (July 2009), http://www.arlpi.org/international-criminal-court-s-icc-uganda

[471] Scott Worden, The Justice Dilemma in Uganda, United States Institute of Peace (USIP) briefing, (February 2008) p. 4; see also New Vision, 30th June 2006, 'Kony pleads with ICC'

LRA to come to the negotiating table in Juba, which led to the signing of five agreements between 14th July 2006 and 29th February 2008. This was a significant achievement since the war began 21 years ago in 1987. Although the comprehensive peace still remains an illusion, as the two parties are still at war, though outside Uganda's international boundaries, the relative peace in northern Uganda in general and Acholiland in particular can be said to be a result of this pressure. On the other hand, the ICC's involvement and especially its indictments on Kony and his top lieutenants has turned out to be one of the major obstacles to achieving comprehensive peace between the NRM government and the LRA, a factor that makes sustainable peace in northern Uganda fragile and uncertain[472]. The leadership of the LRA indicted by the ICC have categorically stated that they cannot (and perhaps will never) sign the comprehensive peace agreement unless and until the indictments are withdrawn.

Kony has persistently blamed the indictments against him and four of his top lieutenants on Museveni's propaganda and manipulation. On 28th June 2006, he and his number two Vincent Otti appealed to the ICC to come to their Garamba base in DRC in order to hear their side of the story. Their appeal was made through Bellie O'kademire, a presenter on Radio France International (RFI) whom they called and said that "ICC should come quickly to Garamba but without the warrant of arrest. We are ready to host them for three days so that they get our side of the story"[473].

[472] Ibid, p. 5
[473] New Vision, 30th June 2006

They argued that the ICC had convicted them before hearing their side of the story and further said that "we are ready to go to The Hague but first listen to us". Prior to this interview, Kony spoke to Sam Farmar, the Times of London journalist whom he met in a lengthy face-to-face interview in the jungles of the DR Congo. Asked about the killings, abductions and mutilations that were perpetuated in his name, Kony said that, "that is not true. It is just propaganda. Museveni went into the villages and cut off the ears of the people, telling the people that it was the work of the LRA. I cannot cut off the ear of my brother---it was Museveni who destroyed our wealth and property--I don't kill civilians, I kill the soldiers of Museveni"[474].

The ICC arrest warrants have been one of the most challenging issues to the GOU in the search for peace and justice with regard to the northern Uganda war. This is because, if the arrest warrants are withdrawn, then Kony and his commanders would not only get away with impunity, but it would also send a bed message to countries that are signatory to the statute, some of whom have almost or similar internal problems they would like to refer to the same court in future. In addition to this, "when a nation ratifies the Rome Statute, it automatically accepts the oversight of the ICC"[475]. It is also worth noting that the Juba agreement acknowledges the ICC[476] . Although not elaborate, it acknowledges the prevention of impunity according to "--the requirements of the Rome Statute of the

[474] See Daily Monitor, 29th June 2006
[475] Kriksciun Alex K. "Uganda's Response to International Criminal Court's Arrest Warrants: A Misguided Approach? Tulane Journal of International and Comparative Law, Vol. 16, No, 213, (2008) p. 220
[476] Scott Worden, The Justice Dilemma in Uganda, United States Institute of Peace (USIP) briefing, February 2008, p. 4-5

International Criminal Court--"[477] and obliges government to "address conscientiously the question of the ICC arrest warrants relating to the leaders of the LRA/M"[478].

The issue of the ICC continues to be a tricky one and a constraint in as far as justice, durable peace and stability are concerned. Meanwhile, the ICC on its part has insisted that it cannot drop the indictments on Kony and the LRA as this would compromise the mandate of the court. However, the referrals have neither ended the war nor brought the perpetrators to justice, but instead has sparked a debate both in the national and international circles as to whether they are a roadblock to peace negotiations and therefore whether they should be dropped or withheld[479]. Within this context, many people especially the Acholi who have been the main victims of the war prefer peace first and justice later. The rebels also have insisted that the indictments must be dropped if a final agreement is to be reached

It is against this background that the LRA negotiating team visited The Hague in June 2006 with an objective of persuading the prosecutor to withdraw the indictments against Kony and his commanders, but did not get the assurance. Even if the ICC is acting within its mandate and with good intentions of prosecuting the perpetrators of crimes against humanity, its influence has led to devastating consequences on the resolution of the war, and peace and stability in the region and more especially in the areas of eastern DRC, Sudan and CAR where governments control is fluid and therefore Kony can move at

[477] See agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation, p. 1
[478] Section 14.6 of the agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation obliges the NRM government to "A dress conscientiously the question of the ICC arrest warrants relating to the leaders of the LRA/M"
[479] George H. Norris, "Closer to Justice: Transferring Cases from the International Criminal Court". (January 2010), http://www.minnjil.org/?p=412

ease. Military confrontation between the LRA and UPDF has continued in CAR where several attempts to destroy the LRA have not only ended in failure, but also resulted in heavy civilian casualties of the people in the area. In the meantime, Museveni has continued to insist that the ICC warrants of arrest will remain in place[480] until Kony signs the FPA and renounces violence.

Mato Oput:

This is a traditional justice mechanism used by the Acholi people in resolving disputes. It is based on confession of one's wrongdoing, apology, compensation, and forgiveness. The Acholi people have a long history of resolving conflict[481] and stymieing potential disputes and their escalation within intra-clan, inter-clan and inter-tribal communities through this traditional mechanism that has been carried on from generation to generation. Under this mechanism, the offender who has for example committed a crime of theft or killed another person is expected to accept and confess his wrongdoing in the presence of people representing different parties. These parties include the family or clan or tribe of the wrongdoer, the victim or relatives and people from the side of the victim to whom the truth has to be explained as to why he did it and ask for forgiveness, giving assurance that he will never do it again.

[480] Ted Dagne, "Uganda: The Current Conditions and the Crisis in Northern Uganda", (May 2009) p. 6-7 http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf&AD=ADA501201
[481] Sott Worden, The Justice Dilemma in Uganda, United States Institute for Peace (USIP) briefing, February 2008

This Acholi traditional ritual of cleansing, forgiveness and reconciliation makes use of different items which carry different meanings and cultural significance but which overall symbolise appeasing and togetherness. These include eggs, *'pobo'* tree[482], sheep, goats, 'kwete'[483], and gifts such as cattle, produce and money. The egg symbolises something that does not have a mouth and therefore does not abuse or insult. It thus signifies innocence, peace, holiness and therefore cleanliness. During the performance of the reconciliation ritual, the two parties, the perpetrator and the victim or representative(s) of the victim will each step on the egg and the *'pobo'* tree. This will be followed by presenting of traditional gifts from both parties. For example each party will bring a ram and stand facing one another while holding the ram. Thereafter the animals will be slit open and blood from both mixed with *'kwete'* in the calabash and both parties will lower their heads and sip from this brew at the same time.

At this moment women will make ululations accompanied by traditional songs and peace and reconciliation will be regarded as restored. These tools have been used by the Acholi people for generations and the traditional practice is aimed at bringing about order and harmony in the community whenever there is calamity, misunderstandings or disputes. Indeed as observed by Vorke, the aim of the traditional justice mechanism "--is not punishment of the perpetrators for deeds done in the past, but restoration as a basis for

[482] '*Pobo*' is a tree which is slippery when its back is pilled. Its slippery nature when stepped on symbolizes the washing away of any ill feelings. Therefore, when it is stepped on it means that the two parties will be washed off of any ill feelings against one another and instead empowering both parties with feelings of love, togetherness, and well wishing

[483] '*Kwete*' is a local brew made from a mixture of millet and sorghum which when after fermenting is squeezed to form this brew

reconciliation"[484]. Reconciliation is necessary for peace and tranquillity in society in general and restoration of cordial as well as social relationship between conflicting parties in particular. Within this process, the conflicting parties have to come to consensus that what has been told as truth is the real truth, in which case the perpetrator apologises and asks for forgiveness from the victim(s) who will in turn reciprocate acceptance and forgive.

However, critics of the traditional justice mechanism point out that it can only work in limited contexts and in specific communities where there are shared values and relationships and that therefore it is not suitable for the complex war between the LRA and the NRM government as it involves diverse parties from different backgrounds. The different parties in the sense that it has for example involved firstly, conflict among the Acholi (Acholi against Acholi) and secondly, Acholi against the NRM government. Moreover, according to one Acholi legislator, "the NRM government is not comfortable with the traditional justice mechanism especially in as far as truth-search and truth-telling is concerned because it requires confessions from perpetrators and victims. This will implicate it in committing atrocities against the Acholi people despite the fact that it has maintained denial and thus put it at the same level with Kony"[485]. This is because the perpetrators would come face-to-face with the victims and in the case of the UPDF soldiers, reveal who ordered them.

[484] Volke Boege, "Traditional Approaches to Conflict Transformation- Potentials and Limits", (July 2006), p. 7. http://www.berghof-handbook.net/documents/publications/boege_handbook.pdf
[485] Interview with a Ugandan legislator, November 2009

Should this happen, then it would be a big blow to the NRM government which has over the years maintained intense and high-level propaganda by depicting the LRA as terrorists[486] and killers. It would also confirm allegations that the UPDF masqueraded as Kony rebels and attacked the civilians inside Uganda and Sudan in order to discredit the LRA. It should also be realised that throughout the conflict, the GOU has attributed all the attacks on civilians on the LRA. This is despite the fact that some incidents of violent attacks against civilians have been reported to have been carried out by the UPDF although it vehemently denies these allegations.

For example the 14th June 2008 attack in Pageri Payam[487], Southern Sudan in which a civilian was killed and others injured and the attacks on Kakokeji[488] in the same month in which a trader was killed were found out to be the responsibility of the UPDF masquerading as the LRA and not the LRA as was claimed by the UPDF. This strategy of scapegoating was also used by the then NRA guerrillas in the Luwero Triangle, as already indicated above by masquerading as the government army of Obote, the UNLA which was predominantly Acholi and committing atrocities against the civilians which they blamed on the army, and subsequently persuaded the civilians to join the guerrillas. This perhaps explains why the NRM government and some top UPDF officers have refused calls for the truth-search and fact-finding in the wars that have taken place in Uganda, in which it has been involved and more especially in northern Uganda, to the

[486] See Monitor 29th June 2006
[487] International Crisis Group, Northern Uganda: The Road to Peace With or Without Kony, Report No. 146, (December 2008) p. 13
[488] Ibid, p. 13

extent that it has threatened those calling for such adventures with arrest and prosecution[489].

During a military Heroes Day ceremony to award medals to individuals who participated in the five-year NRA/M struggle which was held in Luwero on 10th June 2010, Museveni warned the UPC Party president against making statements that the UPDF committed atrocities in Acholiland and also that it was the NRA/M guerrillas that were responsible for the massacres in Luwero. In his address during this ceremony, he insisted that it was the Obote II government army, the UNLA that carried out the massacres saying "why were they killing innocent people? They were doing it with impunity. They would go to the village arrest children elderly and women and massacre them--"[490].

Searching for the truth therefore cannot be in the interests of the UPDF nor the Uganda government. This is because in the process of truth-telling, some soldiers and other NRM/UPDF operatives are likely to confess their part in committing atrocities and reveal the commanders who ordered them thus vindicating government. Critics also have pointed out that the over two decades-war and displacement has dealt a serious blow to the Acholi cultural fibre and the traditional way of resolving conflict. The chiefs and elders as the custodians of traditional values no longer command authority and respect and the young generation, majority of who have grown up in camps are not interested in the traditional ways of life. This seems to be true especially considering Rwot

[489] See Monitor 10th June 2010. Mr. Otunu has consistently accused Museveni and the NRA of having been behind the Luwero massacres.
[490]

Achana's[491] observation when he says that in the past chiefs used to provide for the people, but now it is the other way round. Chiefs have lost everything, have lived with people in camps and people are instead the ones looking after them. In such a situation and conditions, they cannot have authority and respect they used to have.

Conclusion:

The chapter has demonstrated that a number of attempts to resolve the war between the LRA and the GOU have been conducted. They have included the Betty Bigombe-led peace talks (1993-1994), the Acholi elders' peace initiative (1996), the Rome Catholic-based Community of Sant'Egidio-led mediation (1997-1998), the Cater Center (2000), the Amnesty Legislation (2002-2003) and the Betty Bigombe second attempt at reviving dialogue and putting the peace talks that had collapsed in all the above efforts back on track. It has also examined the role played by the AU, UN and the ICC in trying to mitigate the conflict and to what extent have their involvement influenced and shaped the dynamics of the war.

The chapter has also shown that the Acholi religious leaders through the ARLPI, an interfaith framework, have intervened and tried to bring the GOU and the LRA through dialogue as the best viable method of ending the war in order to foster reconciliation, peace and harmony in Acholiland. Of all these attempts, the Betty Bigombe-led mediation proved to be one of the most successful peace overtures. They provided an

[491] Rwot David Onen Acana II is the paramount chief and the cultural head of the Acholi people overseeing all the 54 smaller chiefdoms locally known as '*Ker*' that are spread all over Acholiland. During pre-colonial and colonial days, the Rwot who is a central figure of the Acholi people had executive, judicial and legislative powers and in addition to this he was the link between the living and the dead, and it was his duty to offer sacrifices to the ancestors on behalf of his people.

entry point for the subsequent parties and their mediation efforts, and more significantly, the foundation for the Juba peace talks which, for the first time, culminated into the signing of five peace protocols of which the relative peace that has taken place in Acholiland can be attributed to. In particular, her mediation effort between the LRA and the GOU between 1993 and 1994 came close to striking a deal that many people believe would have witnessed the end of the war, had the GOU not called off the talks on the eve of signing the final peace agreement.

However, despite all these mechanisms and efforts, the FPA has remained a far dream and the military confrontation between the LRA and the UPDF has continued unabated, although since 2008, this is taking place outside Acholiland and the international borders of Uganda. Furthermore, although the Acholi people, many of whom lived in IDPs camps have been able to return to their villages, continued military confrontation between the LRA and the UPDF and the widespread perception among the Acholi of continued socioeconomic and political marginalisation by the NRM government, has continued to pose challenges as well as generate debate about the future of Acholi sub-region and its people in as far as sustainable peace and stability are concerned. The next chapter summarises the main arguments and looks at the future of Acholiland in the context of the NRM politics, absence of FPA and enduring confrontation between the LRA and the UPDF.

CHAPTER SEVEN:

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section highlights the Conceptual and Empirical contribution of the thesis to the paradigm of ethnicity and conflict and its impact on social cohesion, human security, socioeconomic development and above all, peace and stability. The second section summarises the general conclusion of the thesis. The first section tries to answer the question, "What is the contribution of the Study to the understanding of manipulation and politicisation of ethnicity, and the militarization of politics in a broader perspective and in the Ugandan context in particular?"

This is because ethnicity has become a popular field of study in social sciences especially to peace activists, authors and scholars[492] in the areas of anthropology, international relations and political economy, including human rights personnel wishing to investigate intra-state violence, civil war, domination, repression and genocide. It should not be surprising therefore to acknowledge that research findings have established that ethnic politics lies at the heart of turmoil and violence that has ravaged many societies of the countries on the globe and more especially on the African continent, with devastating consequences on human life and infrastructure.

Whereas there has been concerted efforts at the national and international level to deal with intra-state violence which has led to the stymieing of a number of civil wars on the African continent, the reality on the ground indicates that several ethnic groups in a number of countries are still engulfed in ethnic violence and that the rulers of these

[492] See for example, William Easterly, "Can Institutions Resolve Ethnic Conflict", Economic Development and Cultural Change, Vol. 49, No, 4, (July 2001) p. 687- 706; Daniel N. Posner, "Measuring Ethnic Factionalisation in Africa", American Journal of Political Science, Vol. 48, No, 4, (October 2004); Zeric Kay Smith, "The impact of liberalisation and democratisation on ethnic conflict in Africa: An empirical test of common assumptions", The Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 38, No, 1, (2000) p. 21-39

countries continue to exercise ethnic politics, patrimonial practices[493], militarization of politics and politics of exclusion or winner-takes-it-all, which fuels resentment, hostility and violence on the part of the deprived and that this trend is not about to stop.

Conceptual and Empirical contribution of the Study to the understanding of ethnicity and conflict

Conceptual contribution:

Understanding the contribution of the study of ethnicity ought to begin by acknowledging the fact that ethnicity has been and continues to be a subject of debate among scholars of social science. The debate tends to be on the method of including and excluding potential ethnic groups for purposes of defining an ethnic entity, rather than whether such an ethnic group exists and whether its manipulation and politicisation leads to ethnic violence. As such, the debate tends to be concerned with the definition of ethnicity, especially in as far as essential characteristics that can be generally accepted in determining an ethnic group, because the concept of ethnicity has come with various connotations across time and space[494]

Within the context of this debate, others regard ethnic politics as a temporary phenomenon. Indeed as pointed out by Wimmer[495], "others regard ethnic and nationalist politics as transitory phenomena, the birth pains of the modern age that will be forgotten as soon as democracy and civil society have grown to maturity". Whether this may be

[493] Diana Cammack, Fred Golooba-Mutebi, Fidelis Kanyongolo, and Tam O'Neil, "Neopatrimonial Politics, Decentralisation and Local Government: Uganda and Malawi in 2006", Overseas Development Institute, (December 2007) http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/download/4746.pdf

[494] Elliot Green, "The (Mis)use of Ethnicity in Current Political Economy Literature: Conceptual and Data Issues", Paper presented at UNU WIDER conference on Making Peace Work, Helsinki (June 2004) p. 1-32 http://personal.lse.ac.uk/greened/UNU%20WIDER%20Paper.pdf

[495] Wimmer Andreas, Nationalist Exclusion and Ethnic Conflict: Shadows of Modernity, Cambridge University Press (2002) p. 1

true or not, the reality is that it is increasingly becoming an uphill task to convince many people in the developing countries and especially those on the African continent, that 'nationalist or ethnic politics is a transitory phenomena that will be forgotten once democracy has grown to full maturity' because many leaders have manipulated democracy for their own selfish ends to the extent that the concept of democracy has tended to cease meaning to the very people who are supposed to enjoy its fruits.

Uganda under Museveni's leadership presents a clear example of manipulated democracy based on vested personal interests and indeed as pointed out by Muhumuza, "Uganda's transition to democracy under Museveni's National Resistance Movement (NRM) regime is a typical case of a flawed democratic transition that has fallen prey to vested political interests and manipulations"[496]. It is not surprising therefore that ethnic politics continues to be practiced by rulers in several countries especially on the African continent through neopatrimonial clientele linkages where authority is maintained through personal patronage rather than through ideology or law[497], which brings into question the assertion that ethnic politics, is a temporary phenomenon on transit.

Nevertheless, despite the divergent views about ethnicity, there is a common understanding among scholars that ethnicity per se and "--ethnic diversity is not a cause of conflict, but can easily be manipulated by greedy elites, arguing that ethnic groups can be re-imagined to suit their economic needs"[498]. The thesis has illuminated this case in the Ugandan context. The study has therefore shown that first; ethnicity alone is not the

[496] Muhumuza William, "From Fundamental Change to No Change: The NRM and Democratization in Uganda", p. 21-42, http://www.ifra-nairobi.net/cahiers/Cahier_41/2Muhumuza.pdf
[497] Michael Bratton and Nicolas Van de Walle, "Neopatrimonial Regimes and Political Transitions in Africa", World Politics, Vol. 46, No, 4, (July 1994) p. 453-489
[498] Elliot Green, The (Mis)use of Ethnicity in Current Political Economy Literature: Conceptual and Data Issues, p. 6-7

problem as members of an ethnic group derive ethnic identity, belonging, embodiment and prestige through sharing common characteristics such as culture and ancestry. Ethnicity becomes a problem only when it is manipulated and politicised by scrupulous politicians for their selfish ends. This argument is pointed out by Kaufman when he says that;

"*I argue that violent conflict along ethnic cleavages is provoked by elites in order to create a domestic political context in which ethnicity is the only politically relevant identity....by constructing individual interest in terms of threat to the group, endangered elites can fend off domestic challengers who seek to mobilise the population against the status quo and, can better position themselves to deal with future challenges. In other words, leaders of ethnic communities provoke ethnic war in order to keep (or, perhaps, grab) power for themselves"*[499].

In several countries of Sub-Saharan Africa, the use of ethnicity as a tool in contemporary politics and conflict is so common, to the extent that even when some members of the ruling party are aware of its negative effects, cannot criticise the system either because they are benefiting from it or they fear the wrath of the rulers. However, a Member of Parliament and the ruling NRM O party who hails from the Banyankole ethnic group where Museveni comes from could not hide his sentiments, because of the concern over inter-ethnic rivalries that are steadily increasing in Uganda and said the following;

"*I am very concerned by the situation in which Uganda finds itself today especially the hatred amongst the different peoples and more especially between the northerners and westerners which has greatly undermined inter- ethnic group cohesion and nation building. The 'disease' is even spreading to members of other communities for example the Banyoro and Bakiga who previously lived together in harmony. I blame all this on the leadership of the country especially the president. Museveni has been telling his followers especially those in the central and south west that he is the bridge between the north and south and that if he was not to be there, chaos would return to haunt the southerners because the killer northerners would come back. He uses this as a political blackmail and strategy to maintain a support base but unfortunately this has led to more*

[499] Kaufman J. Stuart, "Modern Hatreds: The Symbolic Politics of Ethnic War", Cornell University Press (2001) p. 4-5

resentment, disenchantment, despair and more division among the people than uniting them"[500].

Secondly, ethnic conflict is not a result of intergroup differences such as religion, economic potential or education but rather domination and polarisation of relations. This point is supported by Lake and Rothchild by pointing out that, "--ethnic conflict is not caused directly by intergroup differences---or the stresses of modern life within a global economy". It is because, "As groups begin to fear for their physical safety, a series of dangerous and difficult-to-resolve strategic dilemmas arise that contain within them the potential for tremendous violence"[501]. Based on this argument, it is plausible therefore to conclude that the LRA war was borne out of the Acholi people's fear for their physical safety including socio-political and economic concerns because of the repressive policies of the NRM regime.

Thirdly, ethnicity should be understood as a social construction that increasingly became a political tool of post-colonial African state-centric politics. As such, ethnicity should not be understood as a 'primordial given', but rather as a political mechanism designed and manipulated by various social forces, especially the political elites in the contestation and control of political power and economic resources. This is often done by physical means through the use of the military and psychological attacks deliberately targeted at particular ethnic groups especially those perceived as potential threats to the survival of the regime in power.

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[500] This was said by an MP of the ruling NRMO party because of his concern of the dire situation the country is in, which according to him is because Museveni is obsessed with power and tends not to care or listen to advice. See also, Diana Cammak, "Big Men' Governance and Development in Neopatrimonial States", (September 2007) Overseas Development Institute, p 1-11; Daily Monitor 1st March 2011 "Bidandi Ssali's Letter to President Museveni after 2011 Polls"

[501] Lake A. David and Rotchild Donald (Eds), "The International Spread of Ethnic Conflict: Fear, Diffusion and Escalation", Princeton University Press (1998), p. 4 -5

Within this context, the regime makes the targeted ethnic group(s) to be perceived as the 'bad guys' by the other ethnic groups in a bid to create justification for the ethnic purging. It also creates the divide and rule strategy that is reminiscent of the colonial legacy. But ethnicity is not only used by the state. It is also used by the ethnic group(s) who sees itself or themselves as being unjustifiably denied and deprived of socioeconomic and political opportunities and as such as the deliberate victims of the state. The leaders and influential people in these ethnic groups often mobilize ethnic support amongst their people in order to 'fight back' at their attacker. This is one of the dimensions of the genesis of ethnic conflict and civil war.

Contribution to the understanding of ethnicity and conflict in the Ugandan context:

In the context of Uganda, the study has made the following illumination of how ethnicity has manifested itself in the Ugandan politics, especially under the NRA/M regime, which has led to Museveni's vindictiveness of the Acholi people.

First, ethnicity played a crucial role in the rise of the NRA/M right from its inception as a guerrilla movement in the early 1980s, its manpower composition and especially the leadership of the key positions of command and control of the fighting force and Museveni has continued to use the military to entrench himself in office[502]. The NRA, a guerrilla force formed by Museveni in 1982 which comprised of the initial 27[503] fighters who fired the first shot against the Obote II government at Kabamba military garrison and which later transformed into UPDF was dominated by westerners and has continued to be

[502] Mwenda M. Andrew and Roger Tangri, "President Museveni and the Politics of the Presidential Tenure in Uganda", Journal of Contemporary African Politics, Vol. 28, No, 1, (February 2010) p. 31-49

[503] Museveni Y. K. "Sowing the Mustard Seed: The Struggle for Freedom and Democracy in Uganda", London, Macmillan (1997)

so. For example, out of the seven (7) Army Commanders in the last 29 years (1980-2011), only one came from outside the Banyankole ethnic group. It is also worth noting that the small Bahima sub-ethnic group which comprises 2% of the Banyankole control key sectors of the army and dominate the upper echelon of the UPDF[504].

Uganda is an ethnically diverse country. There is no justifiable reason why for almost three decades of the NRA/M government's rule, the army cannot have army commanders that are representative of the country's ethnic heterogeneity. The fact that (senior) commanders from other ethnic groups and especially from the north e.g. the Langi or Acholi are conspicuously absent from the top command structure does not only suggest, but demonstrates that the regime is highly dependent on ethnic militarisation of the security forces for continued survival.

Secondly, the thesis has also shown that Museveni has been conscious and in actual fact, unwilling to implement multi-ethnic cohesion in the army. By under-representing other ethnic groups for example the Acholis from the army, Museveni has not only satisfied his desire of building a lopsided and partisan army that would serve his interests, but also tried to minimise or eliminate the risk of being deposed from power by those who would resist his divisive and ethnic policies that are aimed at favouring loyal members of his ethnic group at the expanse of national ethnic integration and harmony.

The nexus of the war in the north contributed to the realisation of this strategy. Indeed as pointed out by Mwenda, "the fortification of the west-centre coalition and the north's exclusion was aided by civil unrest in northern Uganda"[505]. That this behaviour is consciously inherited from the colonial legacy and a history of ethnic marginalisation

[504] Andrew Mwenda and Roger Tangri, "President Museveni and the Politics of Presidential Tenure in Uganda", Journal of Contemporary African Politics, Vol. 28, No, 1, (February 2010) p. 44
[505] See the Independent, 19th January 2011

shows not only to what extent the ruler is willing to use brutal force against certain sections of society which he or she is supposed to protect, but also doing it with impunity. Third, the regimes policies and ethnic politics sought to ostracise the ethnic groups in the north and more especially the Acholis while it did not do the same to other peoples. Whereas the NRA guerrillas exhibited cordial and friendly relations with the people in the war zones and the pacified areas especially in the south and central Uganda during the armed struggle that led it to the capture of state power in 1986, it did not do the same to the people in northern Uganda. As the victorious NRA troops advanced northwards, the language shifted from 'cooption' to 'liberation' and in actual fact became tougher and uncompromising. Indeed as pointed out by Ocitti, the NRA deployed with harsh brutality as it entered the north. One local newspaper stated that;

"The approach of these (NRM) agents working in the new war zones is more militarist than political. It seems to be more of a conquering mission, of breaking their backs than of winning over the people's hearts.... Therefore unless there is a change of attitude towards them, (people in the north and east of the country) by the powers that be, they do not see their salvation in the NRM but elsewhere"[506].

The Acholi former soldiers were accused by the NRA/M of killing Ugandans and especially the people in Luwero triangle and looting their property, an act of which they vowed to punish the former soldiers dearly. It should be no surprise therefore that appalling incidents of brutality directed against the Acholi people for example the NRA entering villages and burning houses and granaries, and also looting properties for example secondary schools trucks being taken and cattle rustled from Pabo by the NRA's 65th Battalion, killing people attending funeral rights, the Buchoro massacre, raping

[506] Ocitti Jim, "Political Development and Democratic Practice in Uganda, 1952-1996", Lewiston, New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, (2000) p. 341

women and children[507] seem to indicate a grand plan that was well sought out and orchestrated by the NRA in order to ostracise the Acholi people.

Ostracization of the people in northern Uganda and more especially the Acholi is also observed by Arya when he points out that "northern Uganda is treated differently by the central government in official and unofficial talks. There is a condescending attitude of 'let them have it' reflected in actions and inactions, reverberations and counter-reverberations – perhaps as a consequence of the colonial north-south divide"[508].

Further evidence of ostracising the Acholi people is shown by Asiimwe, a retired NRA soldier who participated in the fighting against the Acholi-led army of Obote II government and the Tito Okello Military Junta in 1986 when he points out that, "there was no possibility that Museveni could treat the people in the north like the way he treated those in the south and west. This is because they were his main opponents during the war and he used to tell us that they were the worst criminals especially the Acholi and Langi soldiers. Every time we were reminded that the '*adui*' (enemy) was the Acholi soldiers and that we should deal with them harshly"[509].

Fourth, Museveni's populist policies of political participation, national ethnic integration, socio-political and economic reforms purportedly to fight sectarianism and build a harmonious Uganda seems to have been aimed at generating national support and legitimising his regime rather than building consensus based on the principle of all inclusive and round-table stake-holders participation through dialogue that is a

[507] Chris Dolan, "What do You Remember? A rough guide to the war in Northern Uganda", ACORD (2000) http://museveniwarcrimes.blogspot.com/ : Documents on War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity Committed by Yoweri Museveni 1970-2008

[508] Arya Fabious Okumu, "The Regional Dimensions of the War in Northern Uganda", http://www.iss.org.za/uploads/CPRDNORTHERNUGANDA.PDF

[509] Interview with Asiimwe, Kampala, 2009

prerequisite and bedrock for building trust and ethnic harmony. However, it should be realised that in the early years from 1986-1990, he tended to be consultative and listened to the other point of view, a factor that not only generated him local and international support but also promised to reduce ethnic and regional divisions.

About ethnic manipulation and disharmony in Uganda, a former minister in the Museveni government had this to say;

"At the beginning you would think that Museveni was the salvation that would galvanise Ugandans. He used to emphasise that if Uganda was to be stable and develop, then the people must be united first and used to say that this was one of his principle tasks. That people perceived him as someone who was ready to fight ethnic divisions and sectarianism which he attributed to past leaders was good enough to attract him widespread support. It was a common message in his speeches wherever he went around the country. I remember the closed meetings he held with the elders from the north in 1987 and specifically from the districts where Amin, Obote and Tito Okello come, assuring them that their sons and daughters would get equal opportunities of jobs in government like any other Ugandan and that all Ugandans would be treated equally whether you are from the north, south or elsewhere. As such, many Ugandans including some sceptics in the north though gave him a benefit of doubt saw in him a uniting father who would bring unity, peace and stability that had eluded past regimes. But this rhetoric was not followed by practical reality. Though he picked a minister among the rebels, accepted some rebels who surrendered to join the UPDF and in actual fact promoted them to higher ranks, at the same time many northerners continued to be arbitrarily arrested and detained[510], others disappearing mysteriously while others escaped from the country into exile. The use of ethnicity did not and has not only taken place in the north but also elsewhere in the country for example in Kibale – Bunyoro between Banyoro and Bakiga. The man is full of deception and manipulation and will use whatever strategy as long as it suits him to retain power at all costs"[511].

It can therefore be concluded from the above that Museveni's acceptance of populist reforms and embracing or perhaps better put, rhetoric of ethnic integration was not because he subscribed to them but rather for purposes of maintaining a strong grip on power and attracting donor support that is crucial for the country. In fact he has been put

[510] See Juma Okuku, "Ethnicity, State Power and the Democratization Process in Uganda", Discussion Paper No, 17 (2002)
[511] Interview with a former minister South Africa, 2010; The name of the former minister cannot be revealed because of the sensitivity of the matter

at task by even members of his own party to explain why most people holding key government positions are from western Uganda and are closely related to him and yet he claims to be against sectarianism and ethnic chauvinism. In an attempt to answer this allegation, he has laboured to explain that people from his ethnic group are dominant because of their individual contribution to the struggle that brought him to power in 1986. However, one major question that will continue to be asked is, 'after Museveni staying in power for a quarter of a century and still continuing, why should his government continue to be dominated by people from the same ethnic group'? His legacy as an individual and statesman will be evaluated against such underpinnings. However, a number of questions remain unanswered which in my view form grey area that requires further academic and scholarly investigation and analysis.

Questions such as 'why does the international community tend to act as a passive bystander when an ethnic community or group of people become victims of social political and economic vindictiveness by their own government that is supposed to protect them?', 'why does the international community pass resolutions, implement them and act swiftly in some cases purportedly to protect people from oppression emanating from their ruler(s) for example in Libya and yet turn a blind eye in others?', 'how can the victims of oppression develop their own coping mechanism in the face of a tyrant that maintains a strong grip on power'? 'what are the new strategies and mechanisms that can be used to curtail or eliminate ethnic politicisation and conflict in order to bring about peace and stability in the world at large and the African continent in particular and above all to protect and preserve the security and sanctity of people at risk in a country'?

In conclusion, the study has demonstrated that examining contemporary ethnic manipulation and conflict through the lens of ethnic hatred, oppression and vindictiveness sheds more light and explains why explanations based on purely political economy and stereotypes such as 'barbarism', 'witchcraft', 'lunacy', 'common criminal' and 'war lord' to describe an insurgent group and its leader like the LRA and Kony are inadequate. In the absence of ethnic integration, clear and objective dialogue, access to socioeconomic and development opportunities, the Acholi people will continue to feel socioeconomically and politically excluded from a government they perceive to be ethnically biased.

General Conclusion

The debate about the northern Uganda question in general and the Acholi people in particular concerning social, economic and political challenges under the NRM government continues to take place in academic, political and civil society organisations discourse especially as regards resolving the long standing political and economic grievances. The main issue in this debate is not about whether the Acholi people will like or dislike, approve or disapprove the legitimacy of the NRM government, but whether it can integrate and elevate them to the level of the rest of the country especially in the areas of major concern such as, economic development, political, social, land, education, health and above all, durable peace, security and stability. Government is responsible for providing its citizens with basic socio-economic and political services, security and protection within the framework of the social contract and mutual trust between it and the

citizens, against anything that is likely to impact negatively on their rights and freedoms[512].

Within this context, the NRM government and its policies is the principal determinant as to whether the socio-economic and political situation of the Acholi people will change and for the better, remain the same that is, marginalised and lagging behind in the above mentioned areas as compared to the people in the south or even become worse. It should also be realised that in order for development to take place, peace and stability are a prerequisite[513]. Efforts must be directed towards national reconciliation in which balancing the ethnic and regional composition of the armed forces, national ethnic integration and resolving conflict by bringing groups formerly at war on board through dialogue are important factors. In the case of Acholiland, this will depend on addressing the broader causes and sources of the civil conflict[514]. Analysing the future of stability and development in Acholiland under the NRM therefore necessitates examining the NRM political dynamics and relations between the north and the south. Within this nexus, the extent and the manner in which the Acholi grievances have been addressed can help us determine whether there has been economic improvement and political accommodation or the potential for continued political challenges remain high.

[512] Steven J. Heyman, "First Duty of Government: Protection, Liberty and the Fourteenth Amendment", Duke Law Journal, Vol. 41, No, 3, (December 1991), p. 508-538
[513] Kees Kingma, "The Role of Demobilisation in the Peace and Development Process in Sub-Saharan Africa: Conditions for Success", African Security Review, Vol. 5, No, 6, (1996), http://www.iss.co.za/pubs/ASR/5No6/Kingma.html
[514] Khadiagala M. Gilbert, "The Role of Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative (ARLPI)in Peace Building in Northern Uganda", (March 2001) p, 17-18

Continued Perceptions of Marginalisation:

When the NRA/M captured power in 1986, it stopped violence and ethnic killings to a large extent that had characterised Uganda during the reign of Amin and Obote. Consequently, it restored order especially in the central, south and western Uganda. This enabled it to embrace the structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPS) with the backing of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB), which led to the turning around of the economy that had been in decline. In the early 1980s and 1990s it was referred to as one of Africa's success stories because of its remarkable economic growth. But this growth and development only took place in the south of the country. It did not and has not translated to the north.

The north remained poor in terms of social and economic development and in fact became worse as the south progressed. Arising out of this situation and as pointed out by a number of scholars and independent observers,

"Many northerners dislike Museveni and the NRM, and believe that the president has intentionally ignored the serious social and economic conditions that afflict their communities. Unlike most of southern Uganda, there has been virtually no economic growth and development in the northern part of the country since Museveni's rise to power. In fact, social conditions and personal security have worsened in a number of northern communities. Until the Uganda government is able to build better relations between north and south and to bring development projects and outside investment into the northern communities in the same manner as it has done in the south, the LRA will continue to find the handful of willing recruits"[515].

[515] Ambassador Johnnie Carson, "A Legacy in Danger", a paper presented in a Conference under the theme "Uganda: An African "Success" Past its Prime?" (2nd June 2005), http://www.wilsoncenter.org/topics/pubs/Uganda2.pdf

The same view is held by Diclitch and Lwanga by pointing out that,

"Although the movement regime has improved the socioeconomic situation since the Amin and Obote regime, the improvements have been unequal regionally and ethnically, and still far below minimal international standards"[516].

It is not surprising therefore that for the last 25 years the NRM has been in power Acholiland has reflected the highest poverty level (23%) while the western has the lowest (4.52%)[517]. Indeed as *ladit* Aguma says,

"Majority of the Acholi people today have become paupers. Although the war has been a contributing factor, many Acholis put the blame on Museveni and the NRM Banyankole government. Young people have grown up knowing that World Food Programme is the only source that can provide food. Many others have turned to churches for food aid but it is not even enough. But the biggest fear is that if Museveni and his NRM continue to remain in power, then we Acholi do not hope for any bright future. We shall continue remain in poverty and suffering because he knows we don't like him since we do not vote for him in elections"[518].

The issue of poverty is also observed by Barkan when he points out that,

"The proportion of the population living in poverty is also much higher in some areas of the country than in others, suggesting that the process of poverty alleviation has been highly uneven, both geographically and sectorally. Thus while the proportion of the population living in poverty across the south and in the west is now roughly 27%, the percentage across the north is 63%.---these figures suggest that Uganda's economic "miracle" has benefited some ethnic groups far more than others, a fact that sows the seeds of potential conflict along ethno-regional lines"[519].

This has led to many northerners and especially Acholis to view their dire economic situation as a deliberate move by Museveni and his southern-led NRM government to punish them because they do not vote for him and therefore are perceived as anti-NRM.

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[516] Diclitch Susan and Lwanga Doreen, "The Politics of being Non-Political: Human Rights Organisations and the Creation of a Positive Human Rights Culture in Uganda", Human Rights Quarterly, Vol. 25, No, 2, (May 2003), p. 487-494

[517] Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) 2010 Statistical Abstract, p. 19-20; See also the Weekly Observer 18th February 2009, 'West gets richer, Poverty Settles in Northern Uganda'.

[518] Interview with Aguma, Gulu November 2009

[519] Barkan D. Joel, "An African "Success" Past its Prime", A paper presented in a Conference under the theme "Uganda: An African "Success" Past its Prime", (2nd June 2005) http://www.wilsoncenter.org/topics/pubs/Uganda2.pdf

In the minds of many Acholis therefore, it is a punishment for the poor Nilotic speakers of the north by the more prosperous ethnic Bantu speakers of the south, a scenario they think will continue as long as Museveni and the NRM government remains in power. During his tour in Acholiland for the presidential campaign of 2011, Museveni told the Acholis to vote wisely or else they risk losing out on essential government programmes. He is quoted to have said that "The problem is that you (Acholi) have been voting unwisely in the previous elections. You must start to vote the party that wins and you will see your sons and daughters in government"[520].

Acholis have also been referred to as "biological substances"[521], "backward", "primitive", "chimpanzees"[522], "murderers", "killers", and "Anyanya", derogatory phrases that have not helped the healing situation, in order to foster ethnic harmony, political accommodation and eliminating the north-south divide. Such utterances coupled with years of social, economic and political unrest as well as politicized ethnicity is likely to entrench the perception of deliberate continued marginalisation and feeling of resentment in the minds of many Acholis, thus further undermining the development of ethnic harmony, tolerance and reconciliation. Whether directly or indirectly, Museveni's comments can be interpreted to mean that the regime shall not tolerate dissent or disloyalty, an issue that is likely to make the Acholis think that the NRM will continue to purge them and therefore make them worried.

[520] See Mao praises Museveni, http://allafrica.com/stories/201004140780.html
[521] Omara-Otunu Amii, "The Struggle for Democracy in Uganda", Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 30, No, 3, (September 1992), p. 450-451
[522] Todd David Whitmore, "Genocide or Just another "Casualty of War?" http://practicalmattersjournal.org/issue/3/centerpieces/genocide-or-just-another-casualty-of-war-1

Continuous low-Intensity Conflict and living with Fear:

As the war between the LRA and the UPDF continue unabated, albeit at a low level, in a distant land outside Acholiland and Ugandan borders, people in northern Uganda in general and Acholiland in particular remain fearful that the rebels can come back any time. There is no credible sign or guarantee that all this is about to end. Indeed as Mao said, "there is still that fear that the LRA is in a neighbouring country and you never know the Great Lakes Region is a very volatile region"[523]. The UPDF has continued to prefer and pursue a military strategy rather than dialogue in an effort to end the war.

However, past experience has demonstrated that this is not only impossible but also unrealistic, as successive military offensives such as "Operation North" (1991), "Operation Iron Fist" (2002) and "Operation Lightenin Thunder" (2008) have all miserably failed to achieve their objective of destroying the LRA's fighting capability and have instead led to the rebels to retaliate with brutal attacks in their wake. The Acholi people know that the military strategy cannot defeat the LRA but will instead increase hostilities to the extent that the rebels can come back any time and launch fresh attacks.

Whereas there has been relative peace in Acholiland from 2008 since the LRA relocated outside Uganda, its continued existence creates an environment of fear and insecurity within the Acholi people. To make matters worse, the enduring military confrontation between the LRA and the UPDF in the jungles of DRC and CAR[524] is a constant

[523] The Independent, 14th July 2011, 'Document is not a rebel force – Mao'
[524] The Independent 4th July 2010, '7,000 UPDF enter Central African Republic to pursue runaway Kony'

reminder to them that the rebels can come back to Acholiland and the potential dangers they are likely to face again as the rebels start fresh attacks. This is because such a scenario has happened in the past[525], where the LRA fighters crossed into northern Uganda and attacked civilians with ferocious brutality on a scale not witnessed before, ironically when the GOU had pronounced their demise. It has also been reported that Kony plans to return[526] to Uganda and continue with the war.

Moreover, Kony has vowed to die fighting[527] rather than surrender and be taken to The Hague, while Museveni has vowed to destroy the LRA[528]. This situation has become a stalemate, continue to cause concern, anxiety and fear among many Acholis who are worried that the resurgence of the war cannot be ruled out as long as both parties remain stuck to their guns. According to Okumu,

"Memories of death and destruction in which many people were hacked to death, limbs cut off, bodies mutilated, huts torched with people locked inside, children both boys and girls forcefully abducted to be made sex slaves and killing machines, many of whom have never been seen by their parents and are feared dead, remain fresh in people's minds till today. They fear that Museveni's continued stay in power is likely to bring back the war"[529].

Arising out of this is the fact that some people decided to remain in IDPs camps while others went back to their villages. According to Peter Odok W'Oceng, the LC5 chairperson of Pader district, about 233,849 IDPs still remained in Pader camps by

[525] Van Acker Frank, "Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army: The New Order No One Ordered", African Affairs, Vol. 103, No, 412 (July 2004) p. 335-357
[526] Enough Project, "Does LRA Presence in Garamba constitute a real threat to Uganda?" http://www.enoughproject.org/blogs/does-lra-presence-garamba-constitute-real-threat-uganda#
[527] Daily Monitor 25th May 2008, 'I will die fighting- Kony'
[528] Daily Monitor 6th June 2008, 'Museveni Vows to destroy LRA's Kony'
[529] Interview with Okumu, Pajule October 2009

August 2010[530]. According to him, the reason was because there were doubts in the minds of most IDPs who chose to remain in camps as they were not sure of the outcome because of the failed peace talks. In addition to this, about 5,000[531] people remained living in IDPs camps of Potika 'A' and 'B', Aweno-Olwiyo, Pangira, Ngomoromo, Akilok and Muchini in Lamwo district and Orom in Kitgum district by December 2010.

It is not clear whether these people have left the camps and gone back to the villages. Nevertheless, irrespective of whether they have left or not, this demonstrates that there is still fear among the Acholi people, and they attribute this fear to a number of factors. First, their argument is that there is lack of credible guarantees for safety and security coupled with uncertainty of durable peace. This is one of the biggest problems that is still felt in the minds of many people, and one that is perhaps likely to take a longer time to overcome, if at all. As a former IDP said,

"I still fear the rebels can attack us any time. They can sneak in unnoticed and surprise everybody. They have done it in the past and i know they are still capable of doing it. This is their home area and they know it better. They do not like Museveni and the NRM and he has also said that he will destroy Kony. Now that he has remained in power, i fear the fighting will continue and the rebels can come back here. My two children were abducted and my wife was killed in front of me. I survived by the mercy of God. I live with this memory every day and i am sure many others whose children were abducted or family members and friends were killed are going through the same. The fear of another war and going back to the camps is very devastating, but what can we do"[532].

[530] New Vision 13th August 2010
[531] New Vision, 7th December 2010, '5,000 still living in IDPs camps', This was revealed by Charles Ssekatawa, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) field coordinator in Uganda
[532] Interview with a former IDP, Puranga, November 2009

Second, the hostility and military confrontation between the LRA and the GOU still rages on despite the cessation of hostilities agreement signed in Juba in 2006[533]. The context of this fear has also been noticed by other researchers and independent observers of the northern conflict. For example, the Refugee Law Project of the Faculty of Law of Makerere University Kampala in its report of 2002 observes that in expressing this fear, some Acholis have said that,

"The LRA can enter from Sudan and disturb us. That makes us not sleep day and night fearing they will come---. I came here to be safe, but when i heard of the movement of the LRA it is not safe for me here. Any time my remaining children might be abducted.--we are so fearful of Kony's people, they are like mad people. They can come any time. They take children, make people carry things, rape, and even kill old people. We know any time death might come"[534].

Third, people think that the UPDF will not provide them with adequate protection in the event of the war breaking out again. The UPDF's response to rebel attacks against civilians in the past still remains in question. As such, people's attitude towards the UPDF is that of an army that is likely to desert them at the hour of need because of its inability or slow response to rebel attacks. Such response often resulted into many people being massacred by the LRA and people have not forgotten this situation. Moreover, the UPDF compounded the situation by attacking unarmed civilians, sexually abused women, destroyed crops, schools and boreholes and confiscated livestock[535], thus compounding the situation.

[533] See Appendix 1, 'Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities between the LRA and the GOU'
[534] Refugee Law Project Working Paper No. 5 (June 2002) "War as Normal: The Impact of the Violence on the Lives of the Displaced Communities in Pader District, Northern Uganda", p. 13-14
[535] Ogenga Otunnu, "The Path to Genocide in Northern Uganda", Refugee, Vol. 17, No, 3, (August 1998) p. 1-10 http://pi.library.yorku.ca/ojs/index.php/refuge/article/viewFile/21969/20638

Indeed as pointed out by Gersony,

"Brutal beating of civilians during questioning in rural areas was described as routine. This is reported not only when army patrols reach villages through which rebels may have passed, or which they believe to be collaborating with the LRA. Several close observers assert that villages sometimes inform the army of LRA which they have been encouraged to do. But by the time the army arrives, the LRA has already departed. Civilians are then brutally questioned and accused of having assisted the LRA. If the civilians have done so, it is usually because they had no choice which the army's slow reaction to their reports tends to reinforce. Rape continues to be a continuing problem"[536].

He further points out that

"A widespread complaint in Gulu town is that at night UPDF soldiers in civilian dress, or civilian thugs with whom such soldiers collaborate, prey upon the civilian population through looting – and in isolated case – killing of those who resist. In cases where such thugs have detailed information about funds which the victims have recently received, more elaborate collusion is suspected. A number of cases have apparently been confirmed by the local authorities"[537].

This situation is still fresh in people's minds and they still perceive the UPDF as a potential source of violence that is likely to traumatise them and bring back the suffering which they underwent for many years. One woman in expressing this fear and her ordeal said that,

"In 1998 i went with my daughter to the bush to look for firewood. On our way back we were ambushed by the rebels who raped us. They then took my daughter and i have never seen her again. They told me they could not take me because i had 'cen' (evil spirit) but luckily enough they did not kill me. I was by then living in Pabo camp. When i went to the army detach to report, i was told by the detach commander that i was deceiving because Acholis were joining the LRA willingly. That i was pretending because many children were being used as spies. I was even tasked to describe and explain the details of the

[536] Gersony Robert, "The Anguish of Northern Uganda: Results of a Field-Based Assessment of the Civil Conflicts in Northern Uganda", USAID Report (August 1997), p. 46
[537] Ibid, 46-47

incident and the rebels who ambushed us. One month later, the rebels attacked the camp. Many people were killed including my husband. The soldiers guarding the camp would run away. I was forced to relocate to near Gulu town. Although we are now staying in our villages, nothing much has changed. The government army still remains the same and i can see many of the soldiers who tortured us during the war"[538].

Such incidents and memories appear to be fresh in people's minds and tend to increase their fear, if renewed violence was to take place again, thus demonstrating the context and extent to which they live with expectation of further attacks, although they cannot explain how and when this is likely to take place. Fear of cattle rustlers is one other factor the Acholis are still worried of under the NRM rule, despite government's promise to restock Acholiland with cattle and also efforts to stem the vice of cattle rustling that devastated many areas in eastern and northern Uganda by decimating the livestock and which reached climax during the war. The Acholis accused the UPDF of not stopping the Karimojong worriers from raiding their animals during the war and have the belief that the same thing could happen again if war starts in Acholiland.

Some in actual fact alleged that the UPDF masqueraded[539] as Karimojong to steal their animals while yet others said that they colluded with the cattle rustlers as a deliberate strategy to punish the Acholi people for rebelling against government. Indeed as pointed out by Gersony, "The attitude of most Acholis ranges from deep suspicion to absolute conviction that lawlessness of this magnitude could not have occurred if it had not been instigated – or at least approved - at the highest level of government"[540]. This belief and

[538] Interview with a wiman in Gulu, November 2009
[539] Van Acker Frank, "Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army: The New Order No One Ordered:, African Affairs, Vol. 103, No, 412 (July 2004) p. 335-357
[540] Gersony Robert, "The Anguish of Northern Uganda: Results of a Field-Based Assessment of the Civil Conflicts in Northern Uganda", USAID Report, (August 1997) p. 28-29

fear is still enduring in Acholilansd as this trader in Kitgum made similar observation by saying that,

"I hear government saying that cattle rustling will never take place again because it has disarmed the Karimojong worriers. I cannot trust this government because today it says one thing and tomorrow another. They failed to stop our cattle from being stolen, moreover in areas where they were heavily concentrated and now they are saying it will never happen again. Who can believe them? First, they are the same people who allowed open access of our land to the Karimojong and colluded with them to steal our animals. The Karimojong have got many guns and the government cannot remove all of them. I fear they can attack us any time. Secondly, today Museveni and the UPDF are saying it because Kony is not here but if the LRA returns, the warriors will attack us again"[541].

That these attitudes and perceptions among the Acholi people that were common especially during the early period of the anti-NRM insurgency war in the late 1980s and throughout the 1990s continue to persist till to date, though now seem to be minimal, demonstrates the extent to which the Acholi people continue to live with fear under the NRM rule. In addition to the above, many Acholis think Museveni and the UPDF are exploiting the situation to their advantage. Museveni has been persistently trounced since 2001 by the opposition candidates in votes received from northern Uganda in general and Acholiland in particular during the presidential elections, an issue that has angered him. The northern region has largely remained a constituency that overwhelmingly supports and votes for the opposition while the south and the west have remained stronghold for the NRM.

[541] Interview with a shopkeeper in Kitgum, October 2009

The Acholi people thus believe that Museveni has maintained a low-intensity war against the LRA as a means of perpetual punishment for their refusal to endorse his leadership and legitimacy. His motives are embedded in the argument that the LRA is a terrorist organisation with a predominant threat to Uganda's security, the GLR and Horn of Africa regions' stability. Indeed as pointed out by Mwaniki, Wepundi and Morolong, "Museveni has very often used the LRA card to frame the domestic political debate in his country"[542]. In addition to this, the low-intensity war enables him to justify huge defence expenditure and creation of "classified" accounts through which patronage resources are channelled. This also allows him to maintain a large army in the north, in the name of "protecting" the Acholi people. The perception of the Acholis towards the NRM and its continued rule and its impact on their lives therefore can be described as that of anxiety and uncertainty. In order for durable peace to take place in Acholiland and in order to curb the Acholi fears, the war must be resolved peacefully.

It is against this background that the civil society organisations, peace activists, religious leaders, MPs and the international community have continued to insist and advise that the GOU and the LRA reconsider peace talks. For example, in 2008 shortly after the Juba peace talks had collapsed, the Greater North Parliamentary Association (GNPA), a group that brought together about 90 MPs from the war-affected regions of east and north urged the GOU to resume talks with the LRA. The group pointed out that it was unfortunate the

[542] Mwaniki David, Wepundi Manasseh, and Morolong Harriet, "The (Northern) Uganda Peace Process: An Update", ISS Situation Report, (February 2009), p. 4

UPDF and the LRA were already sounding drums of war again, yet it is possible to be patient[543].

The ARLPI through ecumenical strategies continue to be at the fore front in the struggle for peace and stability in Acholi sub-region. They have continued to emphasise and appeal to the GOU to resolve the war with the LRA through dialogue. In a petition to the US government, they pointed out that, "a negotiated end to the conflict that leads to the demobilisation of the combatants would be ideal and therefore should be pursued if there is a viable opportunity"[544]. The call for peace talks has also been emphasised by the former IDPs. In actual fact, they have gone a step further to call for forgiveness by saying that, "we know that the LRA killed our people, but we want them to be forgiven so that we can enjoy long-lasting peace. We want the government to resume peace talks with the rebels so that they stop killing civilians wherever they are"[545].

During their visit to the USA in September 2010, Archbishop John Baptist Odama and the Anglican Bishop Macleod Baker Ochola of Kitgum Archdiocese told the Catholic News Service in Washington that the issue is no longer the LRA and Uganda, but rather regional. They also met State Department officials. Citing numerous occasions on which force did not work against the rebels, they said that regional dialogue with the LRA rebels would work better than a military solution. They also said that capturing or killing

[543] New Vision 24th June 2008, 'Northern legislators tell government, LRA to reconsider peace talks'
[544] New Vision, 26th October 2010, 'Acholi clergy want LRA peace talks back'
[545] New Vision, 11th October 2010, 'Former IDPs want Kony talks resumed'

Kony would not necessarily end the conflict, because the situation is so complex and includes splinter groups and tribal conflicts. "We are afraid"[546] Archbishop Odama said.

The ARLPI have also called for peaceful resolution of the conflict during national, regional and international[547] conferences, including annual New Year's messages[548].

Land Conflicts:

The debate on land in Acholiland has remained one of the most controversial and contentious issues since early 2000 when the NRM government expressed the desire to acquire land in Acholi sub-region for "national" development – even though it later seemed to have backed down - largely due to the resistance and threat of 'war' by the Acholi MPs and the peasants. Although this threat led the government to go slow on the issue, it neither abandoned the intentions nor reversed its decisions as can be demonstrated by a number of acts that have since taken place. This situation has created fear among the Acholi people, as they perceive the government to have a "hidden" agenda to grab their land.

Although the widespread fear and belief among the Acholi people that the Museveni regime wants to grab their land came up after the creation of IDPs camps in 1996

[546] Daily Monitor, 17th September 2010, 'Bishops tell US leaders military option won't work against rebels'
[547] International Conference of Religious Leaders on the LRA Issue, Kisangani (2nd - 4th February 2010), http://www.comboniane.org/progetti/images/upload/final%20declaration%20international%20conference%20of%20religious%20leaders%20on%20the%20lra%20issue.pdf
[548] Have Hope for Peace (30th December 2000), http://www.archdioceseofgulu.org/JPC/ARLPI%20N_YMsg.htm; Peace and Hope in Great Jubilee Year 2000: A New Year Message of the Acholi Religious Leaders on the Occasion of the World Day of Peace (1st January 2000), http://www.km-net.org.uk/about/partners/arig/hope.htm

whereby people were forced to vacate their villages and live in these camps, the genesis of the negative impact on the land can be traced to 1998 when the NRM implemented the land reform and policy in Uganda. However, before examining the land reform policy and its implications on the land systems, it is important to understand the land tenure system in Acholi sub-region, its salience and the relationship between the Acholi people and the land.

Land in Acholiland is communally owned. It belongs to everyone in society. Its protection and utilisation rests in the authority of the Acholi culture, overseen by the cultural and clan leaders. Writing on land in Acholiland, Kligerman points out that, "land tenure is communal, often described as 'cultural' or 'customary' and passed patrilineally through localised families and clans via male heirs; women have access to land only through their husbands and male heirs. Non-clan members can use cultural land, but are unable to claim ownership. Communal land is not titled and therefore often is not recognised as "owned" by the government and investors"[549].

It has been passed on and used from generation to generation in this manner. As such, it has been and remains the most important source of their livelihood, by providing opportunity for growing crops, livestock rearing, hunting as well as firewood and building materials. Acholis also regard land as a link and medium of communication with their ancestors through burial grounds. One former IDP succinctly described their relationship with land as that of absolute survival by saying that "anything that alienates

[549] Kligerman Nicole Scharft, "The Violence of Capitalism: Privatisation and Land Tenure in Uganda, Minnesota and Mexico", (April 2010), p. 30-33, http://digitalcommons.macalester.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1003&context=lashonors

us from our land would amount to sentencing us to death. It has to be resisted by all means"[550].

However, a series of events – though insignificant at first – have had profound consequences on the Acholi land and engendered conflict amongst the Acholi community in the form of land wrangles and also fear of losing it to the powerful people within or connected to the NRM regime. But first, let us turn our lens on the Land Act of 1998, as it is the bedrock and basis upon which subsequent land conflicts have tended to radiate from. The NRM promulgated this Act basing itself, primarily on the argument that the land tenure system in Uganda needed reform in order to stimulate investment and development, by making land in rural and urban areas available to the market.

According to this Act,

"All Ugandan citizens owning land under customary tenure may acquire certificates of ownership (Article 237 (4) (a) and Section 4 (1) of the Act. Any person or community holding land under customary tenure may convert the customary tenure into freehold"[551]. The Act also "empowers government to compulsorily acquire land in the public interest, Section 15 (1)"[552]. The target was mainly the '*Mailo*' land and customary or communal land systems that have been and continue to be practiced especially in central and northern Uganda. The objective was to make the land under these systems to be

[550] Interview with a male former IDP, Gulu October 2009
[551] Juma Anthony Okuku, "The Land Act (1998) and Land Tenure Reform in Uganda", Africa Development, Vol. 31, No, 1, (2006) p, 1-26
[552] Ibid, p, 18

accessible through buying or otherwise by individuals and government who would then transform it into private and public land by having title and ownership in their names.

The reasons advanced by the NRM government in favour of transforming the customary and '*Mailo*' land into private and freehold ranged from "misuse" of collectively owned land, fragmentation into small pieces through inheritance, and a hindrance to economic development. This marked the beginning of arbitrary acquisition of land by individuals and government and one that set them on the path of collision with land owners in different parts of Uganda, and in this case, the Acholi people. Moreover, the definition of 'public interest' and who should determine 'public interest' is very ambiguous. It is within this framework and context that the land in Acholiland became subject for grab especially after people were forced to move into IDPs camps.

Indeed as the ARLPI points out,"soon after the forced removal of people from the countryside, Maj. Gen. Salim Saleh started some kind of commercial farming business in kilak County, engaging people in this enterprise under conditions tantamount to exploitation, since people were given money to engage into farming but had to repay double the amount after the harvest. People were so desperate that theyu engaged in this kind of business. During our consultations with the people in the camps, many expressed fear that the policy of putting the population of Acholi into camps was a well-calculated move to grab their land"[553].

[553] Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative (ARLPI), "Let My People Go: The Forgotten Plight of the People in the Displaced Camps in Acholi", (July 2001) p, 10; See also Tod David Whitmore, "Genocide or Another Casualty of War"? p, 4

In his address to parliament concerning the issue of Acholiland, the chairman Acholi Parliamentary Group (APG) expressed people's fear and pointed at the following incidents in order to prove the real threats over Acholiland by saying that,

"In 1992, the government of Uganda signed a protocol with the government of Libya giving away the following large chunks of land; Bukaleba Beef Ranch, 4,000 hectares, Aswa Ranch, 46,000 hectares, Maruzi Ranch, 16,376 hectares. In 1999, a company called Divinity Union Limited came up with a proposal to turn Uganda into what it called the Bread Basket of Africa. The land targeted for this proposal was basically in Acholi sub-region. APG fought this and it never took off. In May 2003, a programme entitled Security and Production Programme (SPP) was produced. ---the proposal was to plan and turn the IDPs camps into permanent settlements. The three districts of Acholi then – Gulu, Kitgum and Pader – convened a meeting of about 380 selected people in Kitgum in October that year and the proposal was unanimously rejected, save for two or three people who supported the idea. In December 2005 as presidential election campaigns were gaining momentum, the Office of the Senior Presidential Advisor on Reconstruction of northern Uganda, Luwero and the Rwenzori came up with yet another project called "Food Security First 2006-2010, Gulu, Kitgum and Pader". The Senior Presidential Advisor was none other than General Salim Saleh. The project was to cost UG Sh. 92, 181, 230, 000. This project proposed to allocate 2 acres of land to each family in the three districts of Acholi. Each family would then choose two crops to grow from among the list of crops given. The list of crops does not include millet, which is the main staple crop in Acholi. The question is; if the Acholi are on their land, who was to allocate them two acres per family? What would happen to the rest of the land? How does one provide food security in Acholi without millet? And so on so forth"[554].

He further points out that,

"During the recent tour of Acholi sub-region by APG, we received report that some unknown people had surveyed a huge chunk of land measuring ten (10) square miles under the protection of UPDF at a place called Got Apwoyo in Purongo Sub-county, Nwoya County, Amuru District. APG went to this area and walked the thick grass looking for mark-stones. One freshly planted marc-stone was found. It was photographed and recorded on video by the journalists accompanying the APG. APG also saw two (2) large farms being guarded by the UPDF soldiers. One was reported to belong to Colonel Walter Ochola, the RDC Gulu, and the other to Colonel Charles Otema Awany, the 4th Division Commander. In addition, APG had received reports of a serious land dispute between a lady called Harriet Aber and Hon. Maj. Gen. Julius Oketta in Amuru Sub-

[554] Hon. Okello-Okello John Livingstone, Chairman Acholi Parliamentary Group (APG), "Statement to Parliament on the Issues of Acholi Land", (2006), http://www.upcparty.net/memboard/acholi_statement.htm

county, Kilak County, Amuru District. This matter is now before court and i cannot say much about it. The cultural leader of the area also put an announcement over radio MEGA FM appealing to the parties to the dispute to stop using UPDF soldiers and the gun. The scenarios listed above are some but not all the attempts that have been made to grab the land in Acholi. In view of all this, APG met in Kampala before the commencement of its tour of Acholi, which run from the 23rd November – 2nd December 2006 and resolved on the issues of land as follows; ----that land grabbers who use force or tricks to acquire the land will be fought in all possible ways. They are not any different from bank-robbers. Land is the only asses that the people of Acholi are left with. It should not under any circumstances follow the livestock"[555].

The study has therefore demonstrated that the conflict in northern Uganda and particularly the war between the LRA and the GOU is an ethnic conflict produced by the political dynamics of the NRM government policies. It is a result of manipulation and politicisation of ethnicity, militarisation of politics and repression within the context of the struggle for access to and control of political power and resources, in which the ethnic groups in northern Uganda and particularly the Acholi people have been largely marginalised. It has also demonstrated that this has been a result of the colonial legacy of divide and rule which led to the north-south divide and which has been perpetuated by the successive post-independence Ugandan rulers and which has been exacerbated during the NRM rule.

Because they controlled the political scene as well as dominating and controlling the armed forces since independence, the people in the north and especially the Acholis were seen as a potential threat by the NRM government. Their military skills and capacity and the fact that they put up serious resistance against the NRA during the war in Luwero meant that they had to be dealt with militarily if the NRM was to rule unchallenged. The political power so captured by the southern-led government had to be maintained not

[555] Ibid

through negotiation with the Acholi military men but rather through military force by clamping down on dissent and those perceived as potential threat and also who were considered to have "eaten" for long.

This does not only expose the failure by the successive post-independence Ugandan rulers to ensure national ethnic integration but also hegemonic access and control of political power and resources that has characterised Ugandan politics since independence, in which the use of the gun has been favoured and used as a first resort. Within this context, the hostility against the leaders of the deposed governments has often been extended to the members of the ethnic group from which they come. Caught in this complex web of ethnic hatred and hostility directed at particular leaders, the whole ethnic group directly or indirectly becomes victim for revenge and purging.

Thus the tendency for victorious rulers – often men in uniform or using men in uniform – has become a vicious circle in Uganda. For the Acholi people, the entire ethnic group was stereotyped and the hostility against the Obote regime, Tito Okello and the Acholi soldiers who were blamed for the past mistakes by the NRM was extended to them. The case of the war between the LRA and the NRM government fits within this explanation and scenario. However, like it happens often in almost every situation where oppression and marginalisation takes place, the oppressed people will try to resist subjugation and this can be expressed in different forms, irrespective of the magnitude and consequences of their actions.

It has also demonstrated that there is widespread perception and fear among the Acholi people that their situation is not likely to improve as long as Museveni and the NRM government remain in power. Arising out of all this is the fact that Museveni's rule and legitimacy remain in serious question in Acholiland. The LRA war demonstrates that it is an ethnic conflict born out of perceiving the ethnic groups in the north and in particular the Acholi people by the NRM government as enemies of change who have refused to endorse the NRM leadership.

It has also demonstrated that when an entire ethnic group is stereotyped and targeted with revenge attacks, oppression and humiliation ostensibly as punishment for the assumed mistakes of individuals coming from that particular ethnic group, the consequence is resistance and retaliation by some members of that ethnic group. In the case of northern Uganda, the LRA symbolises this resistance. As long as there are no genuine steps to address the northern grievances of socio-political and economic marginalisation in an honest and amicable manner through round-table stakeholders' dialogue and framework, then ethnic conflict and violence are bound to continue.

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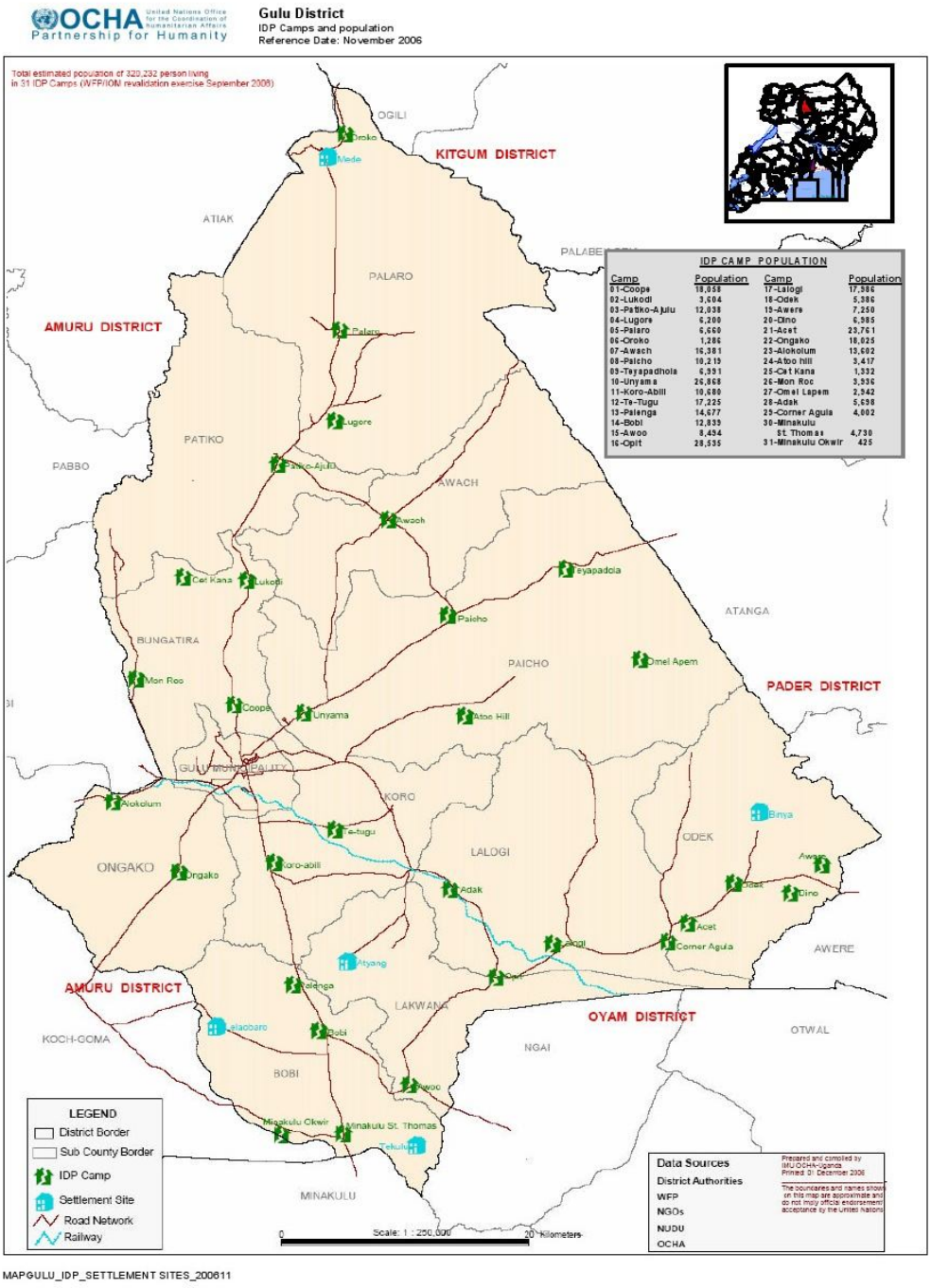

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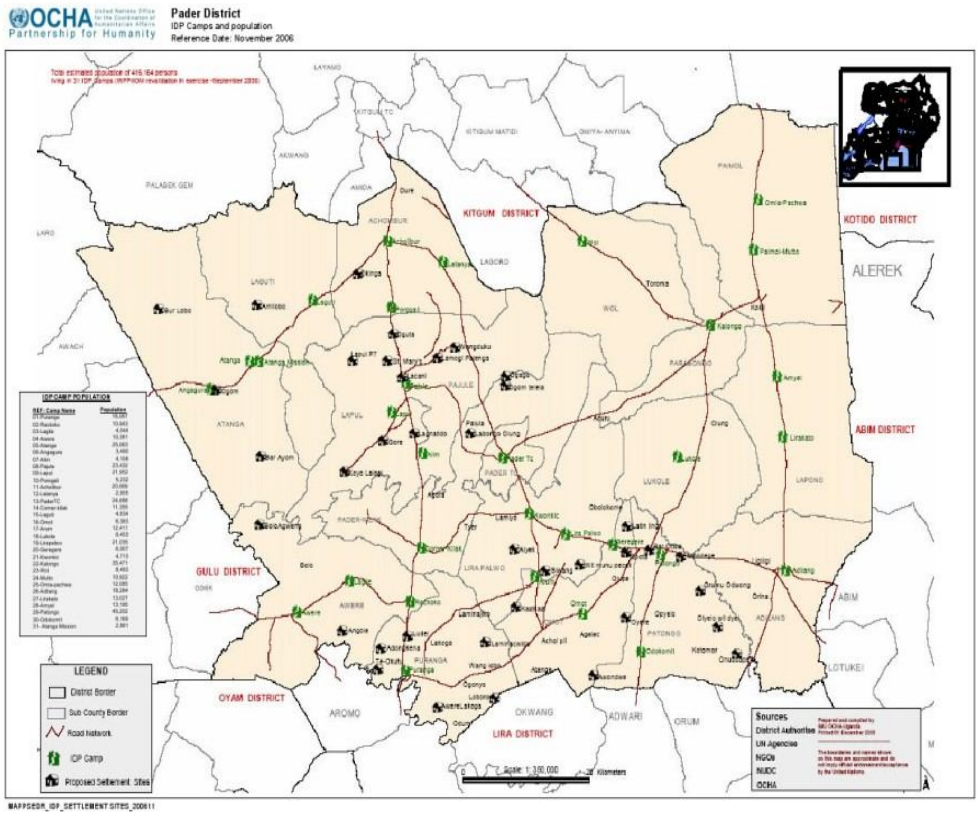

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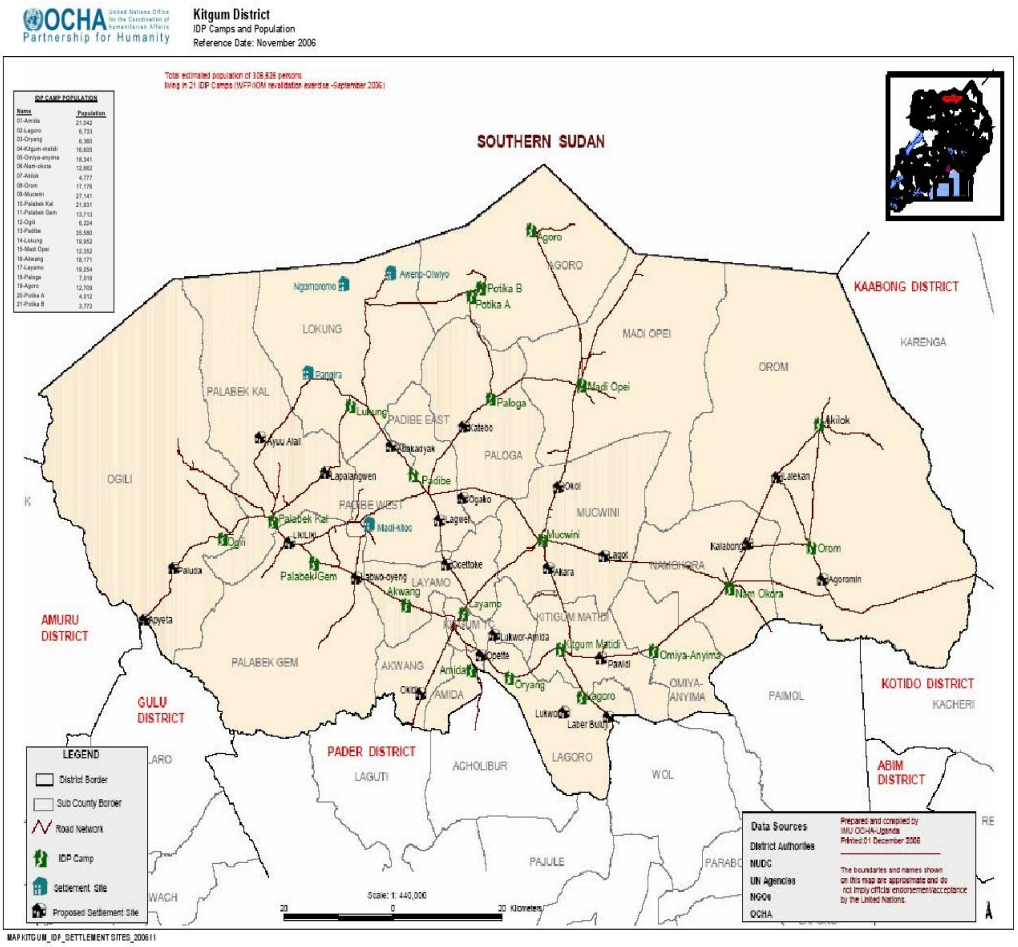

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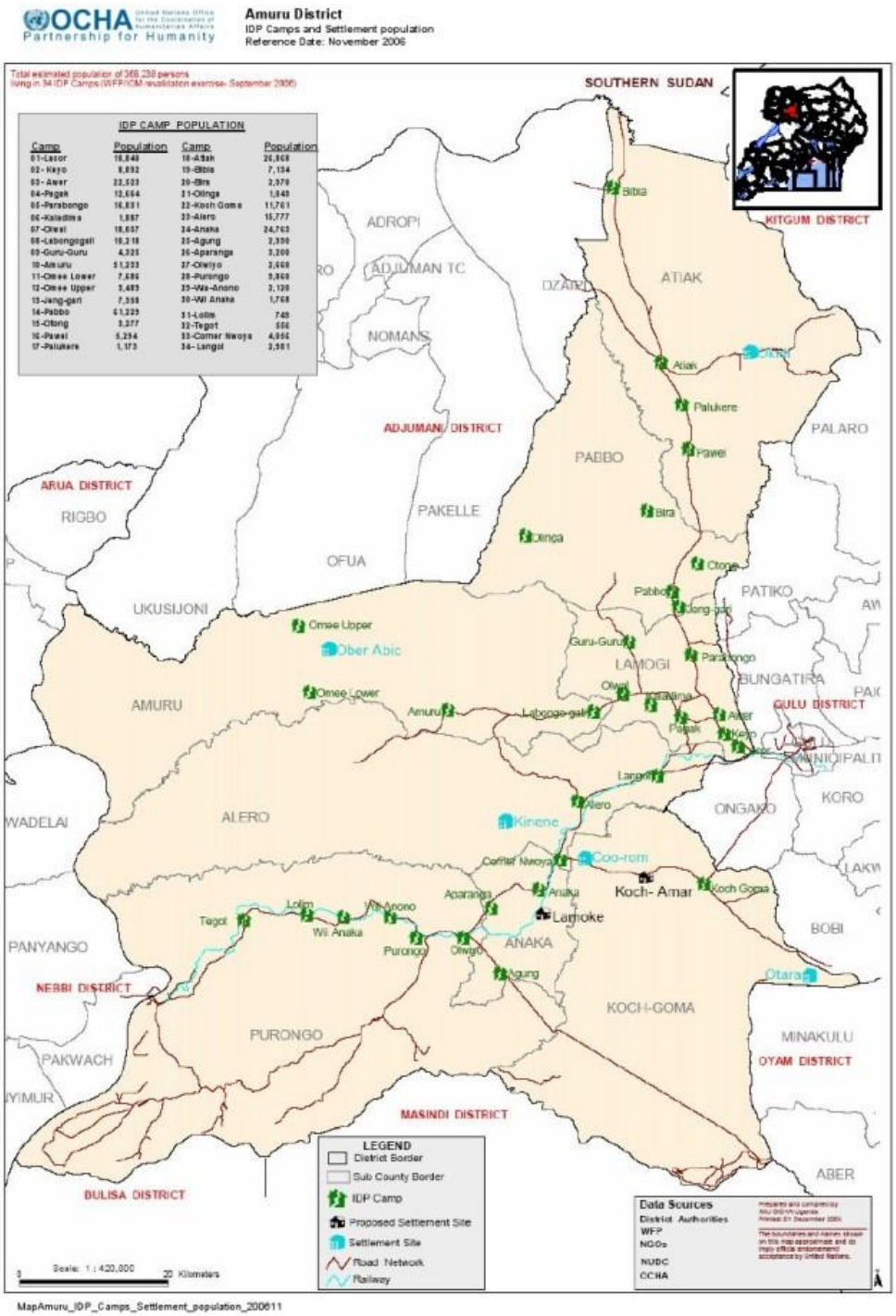
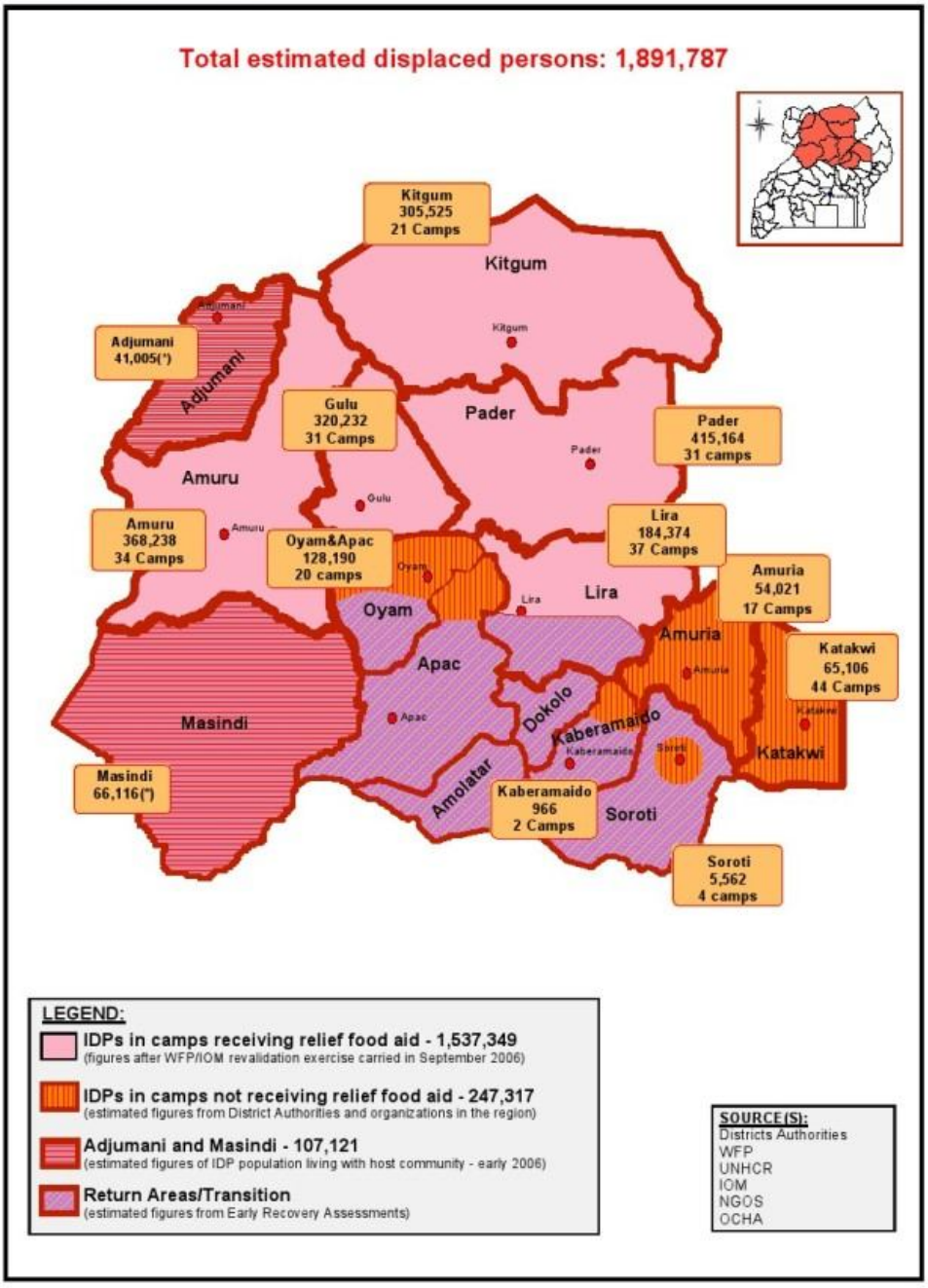


OCHA United Nations Office for the Coordination of humanitarian Affairs
Partnership for Humanity

NORTHERN UGANDA REGION
IDP Camps and Population figures
Reference Date: November 2006



MAPNORTHUGA_IDPPOPULATION_200611
Organizations are most welcome to provide information to OCHA Uganda-Kampala office or emails to ocha-uganda@un.org

APPENDIX 1

AGREEMENT ON CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA AND LORD'S RESISTANCE ARMY/MOVEMENT JUBA, SUDAN

This Agreement (herein referred to as the "Agreement") signed **BETWEEN** the Government of the Republic of Uganda (GoU) and the Lord's Resistance Army/Movement (LRA/M); both parties hereinafter referred to as "the Parties"; **witnesseth that:**

WHEREAS the GoU and the LRA/M are currently engaged in peace negotiations in Juba, Southern Sudan, being mediated by the Government of Southern Sudan (GOSS).

DETERMINED to bring back peace to Northern Uganda and the conflict affected areas in Eastern Uganda thereby consolidating peace throughout the country;

CONVINCED of the urgent need for reconciliation at the individual, community and national levels;

COMMITTED to finding comprehensive and durable solutions to the conflict by peaceful means and through dialogue;

DETERMINED to end the effects of the conflict on the peoples of Uganda, Sudan and the Region;

RECOGNISING the progress we have made in our negotiations so far;

COGNISANT of the need to create a conducive environment for the successful completion of the peace talks.

NOW THEREFORE, the Parties hereto agree to a Cessation of Hostilities as follows:

1. **Declaration of Cessation of Hostilities**

The Parties agree to cease all hostile military action aimed at each other and any other action that may undermine the Peace Talks.

2. **Hostile Propaganda**

The Parties agree to cease hostile media and other propaganda campaigns, including any action that undermines the standing of the other.

3. **Surfacing of LRA Forces**

The Parties agree that the forces of the LRA shall surface wherever they may be present.

RMT

NO

4. Assembly Process of the LRA in the Sudan

a) The Parties agree that places of worship in Uganda, designated in consultation with religious leaders, may serve as sanctuary for the LRA forces, if they so choose, from which they will proceed to Assembly Areas.

b) The Parties agree that all LRA forces in Uganda and Sudan will assemble at **Owiny-ki-Bul** in Eastern Equatoria State on the eastern side of the River Nile and those in the DRC at **Ri-Kwangba** in Western Equatoria State on the western side of River Nile.

5. Safe Passage for LRA Forces

On commencement of the Cessation of Hostilities, the Government of Uganda shall order its Armed Forces to guarantee safe passage to the LRA within Uganda to enable them to move to the designated Assembly Areas.

6. Monitoring and Protection at the Assembly Areas

a) The Sudan People's Liberation Army shall monitor and protect the LRA at the Assembly Areas.

b) In the event of failure of the peace talks, the LRA shall be allowed to leave the Assembly Areas peacefully.

7. Communication of the Declaration of Cessation of Hostilities

The Parties shall ensure that the terms of this Agreement are widely communicated to their forces and all concerned, through, but not necessarily limited to;

i. Normal military communication,
ii. Media Houses, both local and international,
iii. Messages through places of worship and local councils,
iv. Non-governmental, community and faith-based organisations.

8. Completion of Movement of LRA to Assembly Areas

The LRA shall complete their movement to the designated Assembly Areas within three (3) weeks of the declaration of the Cessation of Hostilities. In the event the assembly process is not completed within three (3) weeks, the Parties shall review the situation.

9. Supervision/Monitoring of the Implementation

a) There shall be a Cessation of Hostilities Monitoring Team (CHMT) that shall report to the Mediator and shall be composed of:

RMT

i. Team leader who shall be a senior SPLA military officer appointed by GoSS in consultation with the Parties,
ii. Two representatives, each of the two parties.
iii. Two senior military officers appointed by the African Union (AU),

b) In the implementation of its functions, the CHMT shall be in regular contact with the civil and political leaders and the Mediator.

c) The Terms of Reference for the Team shall include, but not necessarily be limited to:

i. Monitoring the implementation of this Agreement,
ii. Investigation and verification of any allegation of violations,
iii. Amicable resolution of any disagreement arising out of the implementation or interpretation of this Agreement,
iv. Analyzing and reporting events and trends to the Mediator, who will brief the Parties and the public on the progress,
v. Reporting violations to the Mediator and cases which could not be amicably resolved,
vi. When necessary, drafting joint statements to be approved by the Mediator,
vii. Arranging security and escort to ensure safe arrival of LRA forces to the agreed upon Assembly Areas,
viii. Determination of sanctuary referred to in point 4(a), above,
ix. Monitoring the delivery of basic assistance to the LRA in the Assembly Areas.
x. Recommending any additional Assembly Areas, if need arises.

10. Provision of Basic Services

a) The Government of Southern Sudan shall provide food and service support to the LRA at the Assembly Areas.

b) In the course of assembling the forces of the LRA, the GoSS may, in collaboration with the LRA and specialized humanitarian agencies, assist the LRA in its declared intention to re-locate and make separate provisions for any non-essential members of the LRA in the care of specialized humanitarian agencies.

11. Renewal of Terms of the Agreement

After the assembly of the LRA in the Assembly Areas, the Agreement shall be renewed bi-weekly upon review of the progress of the negotiation and compliance by the parties.

12. Commencement of the Agreement

This Agreement shall come into force at 0600 hrs on Tuesday, 29th August 2006 upon declaration thereof by the Commander-in-Chief of the Uganda Armed Forces and the Leader of the LRA/M.

MO

RMT

13. Dispute Resolution

Any dispute arising from the implementation and/or interpretation of this Agreement raised by the CHMT shall be resolved by the Mediation Team.

In witness of the above, the duly authorized representatives of the Parties have signed this Agreement on the 26th day of August, 2006.

Hon. Ruhakana Rugunda (Dr)
Minister of Internal Affairs and
Head of GoU Delegation

Mr. Martin Ojul
Leader of the LRA/M Delegation

26/8/2006

Witnessed by:
H.E. Lt. General Riek Machar Teny-Dhurgon (PhD)
Vice President, Government of Southern Sudan
And Mediator of the Peace Talks.

Dated the 26th August, 2006.

CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES AGREEMENT
BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA AND
THE LORD'S RESISTANCE ARMY/MOVEMENT
RI-KWANGBA, SUDAN

ADDENDUM 3

Preamble:

WHEREAS:

a. The Government of the Republic of Uganda (GOU) and the Lord's Resistance Army/Movement (LRA/M) (hereinafter referred to as "the Parties") signed a Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (the Agreement) on the 26th August 2006, under which the Parties agreed to cease all hostile military and other actions and propaganda aimed at each other, that may undermine the Peace Talks;

b. Addenda 1 and 2 to the agreement were signed by the parties on 1st November and 16th December 2006, respectively;

c. The Parties, in accordance with Articles 8 and 11 of the Agreement, Article 8 of Addendum 1, and Article 4 of Addendum 2, have agreed to review and have reviewed the said Agreement.

Now therefore the Parties agree as follows:

1. Recommitment of the Parties

a) This Addendum 3 shall form an integral part of the Agreement, and the Parties hereby recommit themselves to implementing the terms of the Agreement and the Addenda.

b) In case of any conflict and/or inconsistency between this Addendum and the Agreement and/or the previous Addenda, the provisions of this Addendum shall prevail to the extent of such conflict or inconsistency.

2. Monitoring

a) The parties welcome the decision of the African Union to deploy additional members to the Cessation of Hostilities Monitoring Team (CHMT);

3) Assembly

a) Following a request made by the LRA for all their forces to be assembled in a single assembly area in Ri-Kwangba, Western Equatoria, the parties agree to this request;

b) The LRA forces East of the Nile within Southern Sudan, and those forces still in Uganda, shall complete assembly in Ri-Kwangba within 6 weeks of the signature of this Addendum 3;

4) Review of Implementation

The implementation of the Agreement shall be reviewed at the end of June 2007 and the Agreement shall lapse upon the signing of a formal ceasefire agreement between the Parties.

In witness whereof, the duly authorized representatives of the Parties have signed this Addendum at Ri-Kwangba on the 14th day of April, 2007.

Hon. Dr. Ruhakana Rugunda
Minister of Internal Affairs and
Head of GoU Delegation

Mr. Martin Ojul
Leader of the LRA/M Delegation

Witnessed by:

14/4/2007

H.E. Lt. General Riek Machar Teny-Dhurgon (PhD)
Vice President, Government of Southern Sudan
And Mediator of the Peace Talks.

H.E. Former President Joaquim Chissano
Special Envoy of the UN Secretary General

H.E. Japheth R. Getugi
For the Government of Republic of Kenya

H.E. Francisco Caetano Madeira
For the Government of Republic of Mozambique

Lt.-Gen (Rtd) Gilbert Lebeko Ramano
For the Government of the Republic of South Africa

H.E. Ali I.Siwa
For the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania

APPENDIX 2

AGREEMENT ON COMPREHENSIVE SOLUTIONS
BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA AND LORD'S RESISTANCE ARMY/MOVEMENT
JUBA, SUDAN

A: PREAMBLE

This Agreement (herein referred to as the "Agreement") signed BETWEEN the Government of the Republic of Uganda (GoU) and the Lord's Resistance Army/Movement (LRA/M); (hereinafter referred to as "the Parties"); witnesseth that:

WHEREAS the Parties are determined to peacefully resolve the conflict affecting north and north eastern Uganda; and having accepted with appreciation the mediation of the Government of Southern Sudan (GOSS) and support of the international community for a negotiated settlement to the conflict;

AWARE of the impact of this conflict which has left thousands of people dead or injured, caused suffering and has adversely affected the political and socio-economic development in the area;

RECOGNISING the regional disparities and imbalances in terms of socio-economic and infrastructural development of the country as a result of history and the conflict;

COGNIZANT of the vision and ideals of the people of Uganda enshrined in the Constitution and laws of the Republic of Uganda, and in international charters and conventions, which promote, among others, national unity, equality, peaceful and harmonious co-existence, representation of all in and by the Government, national reconciliation, fundamental freedoms, and affirmative action to redress any imbalances;

COMMITTED to finding comprehensive, just and durable solutions to the conflict between the Parties by peaceful means and through dialogue;

NOW THEREFORE, the Parties hereto agree to adopt this Agreement, which shall form an integral part of the final peace agreement on the conflict, as follows:

B: DEFINITIONS

1.0 Unless the context suggests otherwise, the following words and phrases shall have the meaning assigned thereto:

"Agreement" means this agreement read together with the relevant parts of the implementation protocol.

"North and north eastern" refers to the conflict affected areas of:

Acholi (Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum and Pader)

Lango (Dokolo, Lira, Oyam, Apac and Amolatar)

Teso (Amuria, Kaberamaido, Katakwi, and Soroti)

West Nile (Adjumani)

"Government Institutions" mean and include Government Ministries, the Armed Forces, Statutory Commissions and Authorities, and Parastatal Bodies;

"Internally displaced persons" (IDPs) are persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of

generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border.

"The Government" means the Government of the Republic of Uganda.

C: PARTICIPATION IN NATIONAL POLITICS AND INSTITUTIONS

2.0 Principles of Governance.

2.1 The Parties shall adhere to the following objectives and directive principles enshrined in the Constitution as the guiding principles in the implementation of this Agreement:

a) The State shall be based on democratic principles, which empower and encourage the active participation of all citizens at all levels in their own governance.

b) The composition of Government shall be broadly representative of the national character, gender and social diversity of the country.

c) Every effort shall be made to integrate all the peoples of Uganda in governance while at the same time recognizing the existence of their ethnic, religious, ideological, political and cultural diversities.

d) The Government shall take necessary measures to bring about balanced development of different areas of Uganda and between the rural and urban areas.

e) The Government shall take special measures in favour of development of the least developed areas.

f) The Government shall take affirmative action in favour of groups marginalised on the basis of gender, age, disability or any other reason created by history, tradition or custom, for the purpose of redressing imbalances, which may exist against them.

g) All persons are equal before and under the law in all spheres of political, social and cultural life, and in every other respect and shall enjoy equal protection of the law.

h) The Parties affirm that there shall be no arbitrary detentions.

2.2 In the conduct of public affairs, leaders shall use constructive and unifying language.

2.3 The Parties also agree that implementation of this agreement shall be guided by relevant principles embodied in international treaties and conventions ratified by the Government of Uganda.

3.0 System of Government.

3.1 All power belongs to the people who shall exercise their sovereignty in accordance with the Constitution.

3.2 The Parties reaffirm the freedom of Ugandans to choose, advocate and promote democratically a system for their governance.

3.3 The Parties recognise the right of any Ugandan or group of Ugandans to promote any system of governance, including federalism, through constitutional means.

3.4 The parties also recognise the constitutional duty of parliament to enact a law providing for the right of the citizens to request the Electoral Commission to hold a referendum on any issue.

4.0 Inclusiveness in Participation in Government.

The parties recognise that the Constitution of Uganda makes it incumbent that the Government of Uganda shall be structured so as to ensure that all Ugandans are represented in and by it, and have access to government services.

5.0 Ensuring equal opportunities.

The Parties agree that the recently enacted Equal Opportunities Law, shall be used to ensure equal treatment of all groups within Uganda; specifically, the elimination of inequalities and discrimination against any individual or group of persons on the ground of ethnic origin, social or economic standing, gender, disability, or political opinion.

6.0 Participation in State Institutions.

6.1 The Parties agree that the Government shall, through the Equal Opportunities Commission, review and assess the nature and extent of any regional or ethnic imbalances and

disparities in participation in Central Government institutions and shall take all necessary steps to remedy any anomalies.

6.2 The Government, on advice of the Equal Opportunities Commission, shall develop and support special programmes to remedy any imbalances or disparities for the north and north eastern parts of the country.

7.0 The Judiciary.

7.1 The Parties recognise the duty of all Ugandans to respect the independence of the judiciary in accordance with the Constitution of Uganda.

7.1 The Parties agree that the Government shall restore and strengthen the institutions of the rule of law in the conflict affected areas of Uganda where such institutions have been disrupted.

7.2 The Government shall promote access to justice in the affected areas.

8 Institutional Arrangements for Security Organs.

8.1 The Parties affirm the principle of proportional representation of all the regions in the armed forces and other security agencies as a guarantee for sustainable stability in the country.

8.2 The Parties agree that members of the LRA who are willing and qualify shall be integrated into the national armed forces and other security agencies in accordance with subsequent agreements between the Parties.

11.0

8.3 The Parties affirm that the children of the departed LRA combatants shall benefit alongside other conflict-affected children from the policies of Universal Primary Education (UPE) and Universal Post-Primary Education and Training (UPPET).

8.4 The Parties agree that the Uganda Police shall fully take over its constitutional responsibilities in the affected districts.

D: RETURN, RESETTLEMENT AND REHABILITATION OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

9.0 Humanitarian Interventions on Impact of the Conflict.

9.1 The Parties commit themselves to ending the conflict and thereby ensuring the conditions for the voluntary, dignified and secure return of all IDPs in accordance with the principles adopted in the IDP Policy.

9.2 The Parties agree that the Government shall avail resources to facilitate the process of return of IDPs.

9.3 The Parties call upon the international community to continue and increase its assistance to the people of the affected areas in ameliorating the impact of the conflict.

E: ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH AND NORTH EASTERN UGANDA

10 Strategy for Recovery.

10.1 The Parties recognise the vital need for adopting an overarching framework for delivering sound and

comprehensive programmes for the recovery of conflict-affected areas of north and north eastern Uganda, and agree that the Government shall:

10.1.1 Facilitate the further development and adoption of the Northern Uganda Peace, Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP).

10.1.2 Ensure that recovery programmes are implemented expeditiously and where necessary "fast tracked" in order to respond effectively to the post-conflict needs in affected areas.

10.1.3 Ensure an enabling environment for pursuing private economic activity in affected areas and shall take steps to support the access of communities and individuals to micro finance institutions that offer credit.

10.2 The Government of Uganda shall take affirmative action to revamp the institutions of learning, health and other social services in the conflict affected areas.

11 Institutional Framework.

The Parties agree that:

11.1 The comprehensive programmes for the recovery of the affected areas of northern and north eastern Uganda shall be implemented through:

a) A mechanism that ensures easy access to funds by the targeted communities for resettlement and enhancement of productive capacities.

b) A national and self-accounting body to be established by an Act of Parliament, shall be the implementing agency for the institutional and infrastructural development of the areas affected by the conflict.

12 Vulnerable Groups.

12.1 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.

12.2 The Parties agree that the Government of Uganda shall in accordance with existing policies and through special assistance programmes in the affected areas make appropriate provision for vulnerable groups and in particular shall protect, resettle and promote the advancement of child-headed households, orphans, street children, unaccompanied minors, traumatized children, widows, female-headed households, persons with disabilities (PWDs), persons living with HIV/AIDS and the elderly.

13 Livestock.

13.1 The parties recognise the substantial loss of livestock, in the north and northeastern parts of Uganda which loss has had severe social and economic implications.

13.2 The Government shall strengthen and fast track re-stocking programmes in the affected areas by committing additional resources to mitigate the effect of losses of livestock taking into account individual losses and the need to improve on the quality of livestock in the affected areas.

14 Issues Relating To Land.

14.1 The Parties affirm that land in Uganda belongs to the citizens of Uganda, and shall vest in them in accordance with the land tenure systems provided for in the Constitution. The Parties further recognize that land is central in the lives of communities and individuals.

14.2 The District Land Boards, which are mandated by law, among other things, to coordinate and monitor land use in the country may explore and adopt additional mechanisms for protection of land rights.

14.3 The Parties affirm that in accordance with the Constitution and the Land Act of 1998, fair and equitable compensation shall be payable in case of expropriation of land. No expropriation shall be allowed except in the public interest and in accordance with the law.

14.4 The Parties agree that no customary or communal land in north and north eastern Uganda shall be sold or purchased without the express consent of the concerned community.

14.5 Land owners whose lands have been used for settlement of internally displaced persons or establishment of barracks and detaches, shall be entitled to repossess their land or to receive fair and just compensation.

14.6 The conflict in north and north eastern Uganda has caused significant environmental degradation. In this regard, measures shall be taken to restore and manage the environment sustainably.

F: TRANSITIONAL SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS

15 The Parties recognise the need to provide protection to the LRA leaders, combatants and personnel during the transition from conflict to peace, and hereby agree to adopt security measures in subsequent agreements.

16 The Parties shall promote and engender trust between each other and undertake appropriate confidence-building measures.

17 Stakeholders' Conference.

After the final Peace Agreement has been signed, the mediator in consultation with the parties shall convene a meeting in Uganda comprised of political, Civic, Religious, Traditional leaders e.t.c to sensitize them on the provisions of the agreement, their role in its implementation and to disseminate the information to the grassroots.

18 Implementation

18.1 Implementation modalities of this agreement shall be contained in a protocol signed by the Parties.

18.2 The protocol shall form an integral part of the final Agreement.

In witness of the above, the duly authorized representatives of the Parties have signed this Agreement on the 2nd day of MAY, 2007.

Hon. Okello Henry Oryem
Minister of State for International Relations; Deputy Head of GOU Delegation and Acting Head of GoU Delegation

Mr. Martin Ojul
Leader of the LRA/M Delegation

Witnessed by:
H.E. Dr. Samson L. Kwaje
Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Government of Southern Sudan and
Acting Mediator of the Peace Talks.

H.E. Japheth R. Getugi
For the Government of Republic of Kenya

H.E. Francisco Caetano Madeira
For the Government of Republic of Mozambique

Lt.-Gen (Rtd) Gilbert Lebeko Ramano
For the Government of the Republic of South Africa

H.E. Ali I. Siwa
For the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania

W. David Gressly
UN Deputy Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator Southern Sudan

Dated this 2nd day of MAY 2007.

APPENDIX 3

AGREEMENT ON ACCOUNTABILITY AND RECONCILIATION

BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA AND THE LORD'S RESISTANCE ARMY/MOVEMENT
JUBA, SUDAN

This Agreement, between the Government of the Republic of Uganda (The Government) and the Lord's Resistance Army/Movement (LRA/M) (herein referred to as the Parties), witnesseth that:

PREAMBLE

WHEREAS THE PARTIES:

HAVING BEEN engaged in protracted negotiations in Juba, Southern Sudan, in order to find just, peaceful and lasting solutions to the long-running conflict, and to promote reconciliation and restore harmony and tranquillity within the affected communities and in Uganda generally;

CONSCIOUS of the serious crimes, human rights violations and adverse socio-economic and political impacts of the conflict, and the need to honour the suffering of victims by promoting lasting peace with justice;

COMMITTED to preventing impunity and promoting redress in accordance with the Constitution and international obligations and recalling, in this connection, the requirements of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and in particular the principle of complementarity;

DRIVEN by the need for adopting appropriate justice mechanisms, including customary processes of accountability, that would resolve the conflict while promoting reconciliation and convinced that this Agreement is a sound basis for achieving that purpose;

GUIDED BY the Objective Principle of the Constitution, which directs that there shall be established and nurtured institutions and procedures for the resolution of conflicts fairly and peacefully; and further recalling the Constitutional duty on the courts of Uganda to promote reconciliation.

NOW THEREFORE THE PARTIES AGREE as follows:

1. DEFINITIONS

Unless the context suggests otherwise, the following words and phrases shall have the meaning assigned thereto:

"Ailuc" refers to the traditional rituals performed by the Iteso to reconcile parties formerly in conflict, after full accountability.

"Alternative justice mechanisms" refers to justice mechanisms not currently administered in the formal courts established under the Constitution.

"Constitution" means the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda.

"Culo Kwor" refers to the compensation to atone for homicide, as practiced in Acholi and Lango cultures, and to any other forms of reparation, after full accountability.

"Gender" refers to the two sexes, men and women, within the context of society.

"Kayo Cuk" refers to the traditional rituals performed by the Langi to reconcile parties formerly in conflict, after full accountability.

"Mato Oput" refers to the traditional rituals performed by the Acholi to reconcile parties formerly in conflict, after full accountability.

"Reconciliation" refers to the process of restoring broken relationships and re-establishing harmony.

"**The Conflict**" means the conflict between the Parties in Northern and North-eastern Uganda, including its impacts in the neighbouring countries.

"Tonu ci Koka" refers to the traditional rituals performed by the Madi to reconcile parties formerly in conflict, after full accountability;

"Victims" means persons who individually or collectively have adversely suffered harm as a consequence of crimes and human rights violations committed during the conflict.

2. COMMITMENT TO ACCOUNTABILITY AND RECONCILIATION

2.1. The Parties shall promote national legal arrangements, consisting of formal and non formal institutions and measures for ensuring justice and reconciliation with respect to the conflict.

2.2. The accountability processes stipulated in this Agreement shall relate to the period of the conflict. However, this clause shall not prevent the consideration and analysis of any relevant matter before this period, or the promotion of reconciliation with respect to events that occurred before this period.

2.3. The Parties believe that a comprehensive, independent and impartial analysis of the history and manifestations of the conflict, especially the human rights violations and crimes committed during the course of the conflict, is an essential ingredient for attaining reconciliation at all levels.

2.4. The Parties agree that at all stages of the development and implementation of the principles and mechanisms of this Agreement, the widest possible consultations shall be promoted and undertaken in order to receive the views and concerns of all stakeholders, and to ensure the widest national ownership of the accountability and reconciliation processes. Consultations shall extend to state institutions, civil society, academia, community leaders, traditional and religious leaders, and victims.

2.5. The Parties undertake to honour and respect, at all times, all the terms of this Agreement which shall be implemented in the utmost good faith and shall adopt effective measures for monitoring and verifying the obligations assumed by the Parties under this Agreement.

3. PRINCIPLES OF GENERAL APPLICATION

3.1. 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.

Conduct of Proceedings

3.2. The Parties recognise that any meaningful accountability proceedings should, in the context of recovery from the conflict, promote reconciliation and encourage individuals to take personal responsibility for their conduct.

3.3. With respect to any proceedings under this Agreement, the right of the individual to a fair hearing and due process, as guaranteed by the Constitution, shall at all times be protected. In particular, in the determination of civil rights and obligations or any criminal charge, a person shall be entitled to a fair, speedy and public hearing before an independent and impartial court or tribunal established by law.

3.4. In the conduct of accountability and reconciliation processes, measures shall be taken to ensure the safety and privacy of witnesses. Witnesses shall be protected from intimidation or persecution on account of their testimony. Child witnesses and victims of sexual crimes shall be given particular protection during proceedings.

Cooperation within proceedings

3.5. The Parties shall promote procedures and approaches to enable individuals to cooperate with formal criminal or civil investigations, processes and proceedings. Cooperation may include the making of confessions, disclosures and provision of information on relevant matters. The application of any cooperation procedures shall not prejudice the rights of cooperating individuals.

3.6. Provisions may be made for the recognition of confessions or other forms of cooperation to be recognised for purposes of sentencing or sanctions.

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Legal representation

3.7. Any person appearing before a formal proceeding shall be entitled to appear in person or to be represented at that person's expense by a lawyer of his or her choice. Victims participating in proceedings shall be entitled to be legally represented.

3.8. Provision shall be made for individuals facing serious criminal charges or allegations of serious human rights violations and for victims participating in such proceedings, who cannot afford representation, to be afforded legal representation at the expense of the State.

Finality and effect of proceedings

3.9. In order to achieve finality of legal processes, accountability and reconciliation procedures shall address the full extent of the offending conduct attributed to an individual. Legislation may stipulate the time within which accountability and reconciliation mechanisms should be undertaken.

3.10. Where a person has already been subjected to proceedings or exempted from liability for any crime or civil acts or omissions, or has been subjected to accountability or reconciliation proceedings for any conduct in the course of the conflict, that person shall not be subjected to any other proceedings with respect to that conduct.

4. ACCOUNTABILITY

4.1. 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.

4.2. Prosecutions and other formal accountability proceedings shall be based upon systematic, independent and impartial investigations.

4.3. The choice of forum for the adjudication of any particular case shall depend, amongst other considerations, on the nature and gravity of the offending conduct and the role of the alleged perpetrator in that conduct.

4.4. For purposes of this Agreement, accountability mechanisms shall be implemented through the adapted legal framework in Uganda.

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5. LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

5.1. The Parties affirm that Uganda has institutions and mechanisms, customs and usages as provided for and recognised under national laws, capable of addressing the crimes and human rights violations committed during the conflict. The Parties also recognise that modifications may be required within the national legal system to ensure a more effective and integrated justice and accountability response.

5.2. The Parties therefore acknowledge the need for an overarching justice framework that will provide for the exercise of formal criminal jurisdiction, and for the adoption and recognition of complementary alternative justice mechanisms.

5.3. Alternative justice mechanisms shall promote reconciliation and shall include traditional justice processes, alternative sentences, reparations, and any other formal institutions or mechanisms.

5.4. Insofar as practicable, accountability and reconciliation processes shall be promoted through existing national institutions and mechanisms, with necessary modifications. The Parties shall consult on the need to introduce any additional institutions or mechanisms for the implementation of this Agreement.

5.5. The Parties consider that the Uganda Human Rights Commission and the Uganda Amnesty Commission are capable of implementing relevant aspects of this Agreement.

Legislative and policy changes

5.6. The Government will introduce any necessary legislation, policies and procedures to establish the framework for addressing accountability and reconciliation and shall introduce amendments to any existing law in order to promote the principles in this Agreement.

6. FORMAL JUSTICE PROCESSES

6.1. Formal courts provided for 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.

6.2. Formal courts and tribunals established by law shall adjudicate allegations of gross human rights violations arising from the conflict.

Sentences and Sanctions

6.3. Legislation shall introduce a regime of alternative penalties and sanctions which shall apply, and replace existing penalties, with respect to serious crimes and human rights violations committed by non-state actors in the course of the conflict.

6.4. Alternative penalties and sanctions shall, as relevant: reflect the gravity of the crimes or violations; promote reconciliation between individuals and within communities; promote the rehabilitation of offenders; take into account an individual's admissions or other cooperation with proceedings; and, require perpetrators to make reparations to victims.

7. RECONCILIATION

7.1. The Parties shall promote appropriate reconciliation mechanisms to address issues arising from within or outside Uganda with respect to the conflict.

7.2. The Parties shall promote collective as well as individual acts and processes of reconciliation shall be promoted at all levels.

7.3. Truth-seeking and truth-telling processes and mechanisms shall be promoted.

8. VICTIMS

8.1. The Parties agree that it is essential to acknowledge and address the suffering of victims, paying attention to the most vulnerable groups, and to promote and facilitate their right to contribute to society.

8.2. The Government shall promote the effective and meaningful participation of victims in accountability and reconciliation proceedings, consistently with the rights of the other parties in the proceedings. Victims shall be informed of the processes and any decisions affecting their interests.

8.3. Victims have the right of access to relevant information about their experiences and to remember and commemorate past events affecting them.

8.4. In the implementation of accountability and reconciliation mechanisms, the dignity, privacy and security of victims shall be respected and protected.

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9. REPARATIONS

9.1. Reparations may include a range of measures such as: rehabilitation; restitution; compensation; guarantees of non-recurrence and other symbolic measures such as apologies, memorials and commemorations. Priority shall be given to members of vulnerable groups.

9.2. The Parties agree that collective as well as individual reparations should be made to victims through mechanisms to be adopted by the Parties upon further consultation.

9.3. Reparations, which may be ordered to be paid to a victim as part of penalties and sanctions in accountability proceedings, may be paid out of resources identified for that purpose.

10. GENDER

In the implementation of this Agreement, a gender-sensitive approach shall be promoted and in particular, implementers of this Agreement shall strive to prevent and eliminate any gender inequalities that may arise.

11. WOMEN AND GIRLS

In the implementation of this Agreement it is agreed to:

(i) Recognise and address the special needs of women and girls.

(ii) Ensure that the experiences, views and concerns of women and girls are recognised and taken into account.

(iii) Protect the dignity, privacy and security of women and girls.

(iv) Encourage and facilitate the participation of women and girls in the processes for implementing this agreement.

12. CHILDREN

In the implementation of this Agreement it is agreed to:

(i) Recognise and address the special needs of children and adopt child-sensitive approaches.

(ii) Recognise and consider the experiences, views and concerns or children.

(iii) Protect the dignity, privacy and security of children in any accountability and reconciliation proceedings.

(iv) Ensure that children are not subjected to criminal justice proceedings, but may participate, as appropriate, in reconciliation processes.

(v) Promote appropriate reparations for children.

(vi) Encourage and facilitate the participation of children in the processes for implementing this Agreement.

13. RESOURCES

The Government will avail and solicit resources for the effective implementation of this Agreement.

14. OBLIGATIONS AND UNDERTAKINGS OF THE PARTIES

The Parties:

14.1. Expeditiously consult upon and develop proposals for mechanisms for implementing these principles.

14.2. Ensure that any accountability and reconciliation issues arising in any other agreement between themselves are consistent and integrated with the provisions of this Agreement.

The Government:

14.3. Adopt an appropriate policy framework for implementing the terms of this Agreement.

14.4. Introduce any amendments to the Amnesty Act or the Uganda Human Rights Act in order to bring it into conformity with the principles of this Agreement.

14.5. Undertake any necessary representations or legal proceedings nationally or internationally, to implement the principles of this Agreement.

14.6. Address conscientiously the question of the ICC arrest warrants relating to the leaders of the LRA/M.

14.7. Remove the LRA/M from the list of Terrorist Organisations under the Anti-Terrorism Act of Uganda upon the LRA/M abandoning rebellion, ceasing fire, and submitting its members to the process of Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration.

14.8. Make representations to any state or institution which has proscribed the LRA/M to take steps to remove the LRA/M or its members from such list.

The LRA/M:

14.9. The LRA/M shall assume obligations and enjoy rights pursuant to this Agreement.

14.10. The LRA/M shall actively promote the principles of this Agreement.

15. ADOPTION OF MECHANISMS FOR IMPLEMENTING THIS AGREEMENT

15.1. The Parties shall negotiate and adopt an annexure to this Agreement which shall set out elaborated principles and mechanisms for the implementation of this Agreement. The annexure shall form a part of this Agreement.

15.2. The Parties may agree and the Mediator will provide additional guidance on the matters for the Parties to consider and consult upon in the interim period, in developing proposals for mechanisms for implementing this Agreement.

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16. COMMENCEMENT

This Agreement shall take effect upon signature.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the duly authorized representatives of the parties have hereunto appended their respective signatures at Juba, South Sudan, this 29th day of June 2007.

Dr. S. P. Ragoda
Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Internal Affairs
Acting Head of the Government
of Uganda Delegation

Mr. Martin Ojul
Leader of the LRA/M Delegation

WITNESSED BY:

29/6/2007

H.E Lt. Gen. Riek Machar Teny-Dhurgon (PhD)
Vice President, Government of Southern Sudan and
Mediator of the Government of Uganda - Lord's Resistance Army/Movement
Peace Talks

H.E Japheth R Getugi
For the Government of the Republic of Kenya

H.E Ali I Siwa
For the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania

APPENDIX 4

AGREEMENT ON A PERMANENT CEASEFIRE
JUBA, SUDAN

This Agreement, between the Government of the Republic of Uganda (the Government) and the Lord's Resistance Army/Movement (LRA/M) (herein referred to as the 'Parties') provides as follows:

THE PARTIES:

HAVING BEEN engaged in negotiations in Juba, Southern Sudan, in order to find just, peaceful and lasting solutions to the conflict, and to promote accountability and reconciliation and restore harmony and tranquillity within the affected communities;

HAVING concluded a cessation of hostilities agreement on the 26th of August 2006 and thereafter other agreements;

HAVING resolved to bring to an end all forms of armed conflict;

CONVINCED of the urgent need for a permanent ceasefire to pave way for lasting peace and reconciliation;

RECOGNISING the significance of this agreement in the quest for national unity and development;

NOW THEREFORE AGREE as follows:

1. DEFINITIONS

Unless the context suggests otherwise, the following words and phrases shall have the meaning assigned thereto:

"Buffer zone" refers to the area within the Southern Sudan delineated by a fifteen (15) - kilometres distance from the specified perimeters of the Ri-Kwang-Ba Assembly Area.

"Ceasefire" refers to the permanent cessation of hostilities under this Agreement.

"Child" refers to any person below the age of eighteen (18).

"CHMT" refers to the Cessation of Hostilities Monitoring Team.

"CMT" refers to the Ceasefire Monitoring Team.

"Gender" refers to the two sexes, men and women, within the context of society.

"GoSS" refers to the Government of Southern Sudan.

"GoU" refers to the Government of the Republic of Uganda.

"IDDRS" refers to the Integrated Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Standards of the United Nations.

"LRA/M" refers to the Lord's Resistance Army/Movement.

"Ri-Kwang-Ba Administrative Headquarters" refers to the area defined by the attached grid reference and map.

"Ri-Kwang-Ba Assembly Area" refers to the area within the Southern Sudan delineated by a ten (10) - kilometres radius from the administrative headquarters of Ri-Kwang-Ba.

"SPLA" refers to the Sudan People's Liberation Army.

"SOP" refers to Standard Operating Procedures.

2. DECLARATION AND COMMENCEMENT OF CEASEFIRE

2.1. The Parties hereby declare and shall observe a permanent ceasefire commencing 24 hours after the signature of the Final Peace Agreement.

2.2. Upon the coming into force of the ceasefire the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement shall lapse. This provision supersedes contrary provisions of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement.

2.3. The LRA/M and the GoU shall ensure that their forces abide by the terms of the ceasefire.

3. ASSEMBLY AND ENCAMPMENT

3.1. All forces of the LRA shall be encamped within Ri-Kwang-Ba Assembly Area.

3.2. The forces of the Parties shall respect the buffer zone around Ri-Kwang-Ba Assembly Area.

3.3. In the preparation of detailed agreements and arrangements for disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration, the implementation of measures necessary to adhere to gender and child specific UN IDDRS standards for encampment shall be given the highest priority.

3.4. Except with the express written permission from the Office of the Chief Mediator, and with notification of the CMT established in Clause 4.1 of this Agreement, nobody shall approach or gain access to the LRA Assembly Area.

4. CEASEFIRE MONITORING

4.1. Upon the coming into force of this Agreement there will be reinforcement of the Cessation of Hostilities Monitoring Team (CHMT) transforming it into the Ceasefire Monitoring Team (CMT) as outlined in Clause 4.3 of this Agreement.

4.2. The CMT shall report to the Chief Mediator.

4.3. The CMT shall be composed of:

(a) The Team Leader who shall be a senior officer in the SPLA.

(b) The Deputy Team Leader who shall be a senior officer in the SPLA.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the duly authorized representatives of the Parties have signed this Agreement in Juba on the 23rd day of February 2008

Hon. Ruhakana Rugunda (Dr)
Minister of Internal Affairs and
Head of GoU Delegation

Dr David Nyekorach Matsanga
Leader of the LRA/M Delegation

WITNESSED BY:

23/2/2008

H.E. Lt. General Riek Machar Teny-Dhurgon (PhD)
Vice President, Government of Southern Sudan
And Chief Mediator of the Peace Talks

H.E. Joaquim Alberto Chissano
United Nations Special Envoy of the Secretary-General
for the LRA affected areas

André M. Kapanga

H.E. André M Kapanga (PhD)
For the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo

H.E. Japheth R. Getugi
For the Government of the Republic of Kenya

H.E. Nsavike G. Ndatta
For the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania

Lt. Gen. (Rtd.) Gilbert Lebeko Ramano
For the Government of the Republic of South Africa

H.E. Heidi Johansen
For the Government of Norway

Ms Anna Sundström
Political Advisor to the EU Special Representative for the Great Lakes Region,
For the European Union

H.E Bryan E. Burton
For the Government of Canada

Mr Timothy R. Shortley
Senior Advisor to the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs,
For the Government of the United States of America

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APPENDIX 5

AGREEMENT ON DISARMAMENT, DEMOBILISATION AND REINTEGRATION

JUBA, SUDAN

This Agreement, between the Government of Uganda (The Government) and the Lord's Resistance Army/Movement (LRA/M) (herein referred to as the 'Parties'):

THE PARTIES:

HAVING BEEN engaged in negotiations in Juba Southern Sudan in order to find just, peaceful and sustainable solutions to the conflict and to promote reconciliation and restore harmony and tranquillity within the affected communities;

HAVING CONCLUDED agreements on Comprehensive Solutions, Accountability and Reconciliation and a Permanent Ceasefire;

COMMITTED to a conclusion of the Juba Peace Talks and an orderly and successful disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration process in line with national policies and international standards;

RECOGNISING that Uganda already has mechanisms for receiving and resettling former-combatants, and determined to draw and build on that experience;

NOW THEREFORE AGREE as follows:

1. DEFINITIONS

Unless the context suggests otherwise, the following words and phrases shall have the meaning assigned thereto:

"Child" refers to any person below the age of eighteen (18).

"CMT" refers to the Ceasefire Monitoring Team.

"DDR" refers to Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration as defined in the UN IDDRS.

"Gender" refers to the two sexes, men and women, within the context of society.

"GoSS" refers to the Government of Southern Sudan.

"GoU" refers to the Government of the Republic of Uganda.

"IDDRS" refers to the Integrated Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Standards of the United Nations.

"LRA/M" refers to the Lord's Resistance Army/Movement.

"PRDP" refers to Peace, Recovery and Development Plan for Northern Uganda.

"Repatriation" refers to the movement and return of LRA members from the Assembly Area to Uganda or their respective countries; or the movement from Uganda to their home country.

"Ri-Kwang-Ba Assembly Area" refers to the area within the Southern Sudan delineated by a ten (10) - kilometres radius from the administrative headquarters of Ri-Kwang-Ba.

6.4. Non-Ugandan LRA members will be repatriated to or remain in their respective countries.

7. REINTEGRATION PROGRAMME

The Parties agree that:

7.1. The reintegration programme shall be implemented according to the Reintegration Policy referred to in clause 2.2.

7.2. Former LRA combatants and non-combatants shall be supported in their transition to civilian life.

7.3. LRA officers who have chosen not to join the armed forces or other security agencies shall receive reintegration support in line with Uganda's national reintegration policy.

7.4. All former LRA members who wish to go to school, including vocational training schools, shall be assisted to do so.

7.5. Any support under the reintegration programme shall have a specific timeframe.

7.6. Reintegration support provided to former LRA should promote harmony within the wider community.

8. ELIGIBILITY

8.1. All LRA members who present themselves in the Ri-Kwang-Ba Assembly Area shall be eligible for individual access to the DDR programme.

8.2. The CMT will issue certificates to LRA members in the Assembly Area.

8.3. Arrangements shall be made in Uganda for the DDR of any LRA members who may surface in Uganda after the signature of this Agreement, provided that such persons come forward at places of worship and to cultural leaders, with their weapons within 2 weeks after a sensitisation period of 2 weeks.

9. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

9.1. The relevant aspects of the DDR programme shall be implemented in Uganda under its national legal framework.

10. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

10.1. The Government shall adopt a national institutional framework to ensure the most effective implementation of the DDR programme in accordance with the Implementation Schedule of the Final Peace Agreement.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the duly authorized representatives of the Parties have signed this Agreement in Juba on the .... day of February 2008

Hon. Ruhakana Rugunda (Dr)
Minister of Internal Affairs and
Head of GoU Delegation

Dr David Nyekorach Matsanga
Leader of the LRA/M Delegation

WITNESSED BY: 29/2/2008

H.E. Lt. General Riek Machar Teny-Dhurgon (PhD)
Vice President, Government of Southern Sudan
And Chief Mediator of the Peace Talks

H.E. Joaquim Alberto Chissano
United Nations Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the
LRA affected areas

André M. Kapanga

H.E. André M Kapanga (PhD)
For the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo

H.E. Japheth R. Getugi
For the Government of the Republic of Kenya

H.E. Nsavike G. Ndatta
For the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania

Lt. Gen. (Rtd.) Gilbert Lebeko Ramano
For the Government of the Republic of South Africa

Ms. Heidi Johansen
For the Government of Norway

Mr Roeland van de Geer
EU Special Representative for the Great Lakes Region

H.E Bryan E. Burton
For the Government of Canada

Mr Timothy R. Shortley
Senior Advisor to the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs,
For the Government of the United States of America

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APPENDIX 6

AGREEMENT ON IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING MECHANISMS

JUBA, SUDAN

This Agreement, between the Government of the Republic of Uganda (The Government) and the Lord's Resistance Army/Movement (LRA/M) (herein referred to as the 'Parties') provides as follows:

THE PARTIES:

HAVING BEEN engaged in negotiations in Juba, Southern Sudan, in order to find just, peaceful and lasting solutions to the conflict, and to promote reconciliation and restore harmony and tranquillity within the affected communities;

HAVING signed agreements on Cessation of Hostilities; Comprehensive Solutions; Accountability and Reconciliation; Permanent Ceasefire; and Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration;

RECOGNISING that within Uganda there already exist coordination mechanisms within the various sectors of Government for implementing policy, and determined to make the best use of these in the implementation of the Agreement;

DETERMINED TO ensure the full implementation of the Agreements they have signed in Juba and thereby to usher in a new dispensation of peace and recovery in the conflict-affected areas;

AGREE AS FOLLOWS

1. **DEFINITIONS**

   In this Agreement, the following words and expressions have the meanings attached thereto:

"CMT" refers to the Ceasefire Monitoring Team

"JLG" refers to the Joint Liaison Group

"LRA/M" refers to the Lord's Resistance Army/Movement

"SESG" refers to the Special Envoy of the United Nations Secretary General for LRA affected areas

"The Forum" refers to the Oversight Forum established in this Agreement

"The Government" refers to the Government of the Republic of Uganda

"Transitional Period" refers to the period immediately following the signing of the Final Peace Agreement

Elements of the Final Peace Agreement

2. The Final Peace Agreement shall consist of all the substantive Agreements reached between the Parties in Juba, Sudan. These include: the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement and its six addenda; the Agreement on Comprehensive Solutions and its Protocol; the Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation, and its Annexure; the Agreement on a Permanent Ceasefire; the Agreement on Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration, and this Agreement. In addition, the Parties shall sign a final agreement and implementation schedule recommitting themselves to the implementation of the above Agreements.

Implementation Commitments and Monitoring

3. The Parties agree that mechanisms are required for the implementation and monitoring of the Final Peace Agreement.

4. The Parties shall agree an Implementation Schedule which shall be attached to the Final Peace Agreement. The Schedule shall set out the dates and timeframes within which the Parties and any implementers of the Final Peace Agreement should undertake their commitments.

5. In the monitoring and verification, gender sensitive mechanisms shall be adopted.

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6. The Government will solicit additional resources for implementing the Final Peace Agreement.

The Oversight Forum

7. There shall be established an Oversight Forum to oversee and monitor the implementation of the Final Peace Agreement and to provide advice and support to the Parties and any relevant institutions established under the Final Peace Agreement.

8. The Oversight Forum shall be responsible for addressing any disputes arising between the Parties and in the work of the JLG or generally in the implementation of the Final Peace Agreement.

9. The Forum may, as appropriate, request reports from the Parties, the JLG, the Ceasefire Monitoring Team, and any other institution or actor implementing the Final Peace Agreement.

10. The Oversight Forum shall promote confidence-building measures between the Parties and the Parties undertake to cooperate with these measures.

11. The Forum shall operate for a period of nine (9) months which may be extended in consultation with the Government.

Composition

12. The Oversight Forum shall be composed of the following members:

    (a) the Chief Mediator, who shall chair the Forum; and,

    (b) the Special Envoy of the United Nations Secretary General (SESG) for LRA affected areas, who shall speak on behalf of the Forum.

13. The following shall be invited to join the Forum:

    (a) one (1) representative from each of the African Union observer countries; and,

    (b) one (1) representative from the European Union and one (1) representative from each of the countries which are witnesses to the Final Peace Agreement.

14. The participation of an individual in the Oversight Forum shall be without prejudice to any other recognised role they might play in relation to the implementation of this Agreement.

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Working Practices of the Forum

15. The Oversight Forum shall regulate its own working practices and shall meet regularly and in any event, at least once a month during the Transition period.

16. The Chief Mediator shall be responsible for convening the Oversight Forum. A member of the Forum may request for a meeting.

17. The Forum shall adopt its decisions by consensus.

18. The Forum shall make public its reports and findings.

Resources

19. The Office of the SESG in Kampala shall provide technical and secretariat support to the Oversight Forum.

20. The Oversight Forum shall mobilise the necessary funds for its work.

The Chief Mediator

21. The Chief Mediator shall maintain regular contact with the Parties, the members of the Oversight Forum, the Joint Liaison Group (JLG) established under this Agreement, and with relevant implementing agencies, especially within Sudan.

22. The Chief Mediator may, in consultation with the appropriate Party, and the Oversight Forum, nominate any person to liaise with a Party or any institution with respect to the implementation of the Final Peace Agreement and to report to him or to the Oversight Forum accordingly.

23. The office of the Chief Mediator shall provide the LRA with legal advice and support on issues relevant to the implementation of the Final Peace Agreement, in particular on questions of accountability and reconciliation.

24. The Chief Mediator shall solicit or avail the necessary funds for the JLG to carry out its duties.

25. The Chief Mediator shall establish a technical secretariat to support the work of the JLG.

The Joint Liaison Group

26. The Parties agree to establish a Joint Liaison Group (JLG) to facilitate the monitoring and implementation of the Final Peace Agreement. The JLG shall operate for a period of nine (9) months. The period may be extended with the consent of the Government.

27. The JLG shall be composed of three (3) persons nominated by the Government; three (3) persons nominated by the LRA; and, a person nominated by the Chief Mediator in consultation with the Parties, who shall chair the Group.

Functions of the JLG

28. The JLG shall have the following functions:

(a) monitoring the implementation of the Final Peace Agreement in accordance with the Implementation Schedule adopted by the Parties;

(b) making recommendations to the Government or other implementing agencies on any aspect of the implementation of the Final Peace Agreement;

(c) furnishing the Oversight Forum with regular briefings; and,

(d) making recommendations to the Chief Mediator concerning the holding of a stakeholders' conference.

29. The Government and the JLG shall refer to the Oversight Forum any issues arising from the working of the JLG.

Working practices of JLG

30. The JLG shall adopt a work plan and appropriate working practices.

31. The decisions of the JLG shall as far as possible be reached by consensus.

32. The JLG shall propose the names of persons to be considered for state appointments under clause 3 of the Implementation Protocol to the Agreement on Comprehensive Solutions.

33. The Government shall ensure that all departments implementing national programmes relevant to the Final Peace Agreement cooperate with the work of the JLG and submit regular reports to the Group.

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34. The JLG may request the Government for specified information on the implementation of the Final Peace Agreement; provided that the JLG may not make any request for or receive any report relating to an investigation or proceeding undertaken in the implementation of the Final Peace Agreement, or on any matter which might prejudice the Security of the State or the rights of third parties.

Transitional Period

35. Immediately upon the signing of the Final Peace Agreement a Transitional Period of one (1) month shall commence, during which the Parties shall prepare for the DDR process and for accountability in Uganda.

The Government's Obligations

36. During the Transitional Period, the Government shall urgently take the necessary steps to establish national mechanisms of accountability and reconciliation as are provided for in the Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation. In this regard, the Government shall give priority to commencing criminal investigations and establishing the special division of the High Court.

37. On the basis of the steps taken under clause 36 of this Agreement, the Government shall request the UN Security Council to adopt a resolution under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, requesting the International Criminal Court to defer all investigations and prosecutions against the leaders of the Lord's Resistance Army.

38. The Government shall give to the ICC a comprehensive report on the Juba Peace Process, the Agreements between the Parties, and the progress on the implementation of the Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation.

39. The Government shall provide the Chief Mediator, the Oversight Forum and the JLG with updates on the status of the implementation of the Final Peace Agreement, especially the obligations under clauses 36 and 37 above.

The LRA's Obligations

40. During the Transitional Period, the LRA shall observe the Permanent Ceasefire agreed upon and fully assemble in Ri-Kwang-Ba.

41. The DDR process shall begin after the Transitional Period.

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42. The LRA in Uganda shall surface in accordance with clause 8.3 of the Agreement on Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration.

The Chief Mediator's Obligations

43. Before the end of the Transitional Period, the Chief Mediator shall, in consultation with the Oversight Forum, determine whether or not the Government has established the national mechanisms and sought a deferral from the UN Security Council in accordance with its commitment under clauses 36 and 37 of this Agreement.

44. Before the end of the Transitional Period, the Ceasefire Monitoring Team shall verify whether or not the LRA has assembled in Ri-Kwang-Ba and whether its forces in Uganda have surfaced in accordance with clauses 40 and 42 of this Agreement, and shall advise the Chief Mediator and the Oversight Forum accordingly.

45. If upon verification, the Oversight Forum determines that the Government has not met its obligations as referred to in clauses 36 and 37, the Transitional Period shall be extended for not more than 30 days.

Miscellaneous Provisions

46. The Provisions of clauses 26, 27, and 28 of the Protocol to the Agreement on Comprehensive Solutions (relating to victims and vulnerable groups) shall not be subject to clause 34 of that agreement (relating to commencement of implementation).

47. In any of the agreements between the Parties a reference to "the mediator" or "the mediation" shall be construed as a reference to the Chief Mediator.

Dissolution of the LRA/M

48. Upon the Disarmament and Demobilisation of LRA members under the Agreement on DDR, the LRA/M shall stand dissolved.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the duly authorized representatives of the Parties have signed this Agreement in Juba on the 29th day of February 2008

Hon. Ruhakana Rugunda (Dr)
Minister of Internal Affairs and
Head of GoU Delegation

Dr David Nyekorach Matsanga
Leader of the LRA/M Delegation

WITNESSED BY:

29/2/2008

H.E. Lt. General Riek Machar Teny-Dhurgon (PhD)
Vice President, Government of Southern Sudan
And Chief Mediator of the Peace Talks

H.E. Joaquim Alberto Chissano
Special Envoy of the United Nations Secretary General
for LRA affected areas

André M. Kapanga

H.E. André M Kapanga (PhD)
For the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo

H.E. Japheth R. Getugi
For the Government of the Republic of Kenya

H.E. Nsavike G. Ndatta
For the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania

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Lt. Gen. (Rtd.) Gilbert Lebeko Ramano
For the Government of the Republic of South Africa

.....

Mr. Roeland van de Geer
EU Special Representative for the Great Lakes Region

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H.E Bryan E. Burton
For the Government of Canada

.....

Mr. Timothy R. Shortley
Senior Advisor to the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs,
For the Government of the United States of America

RMTD

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