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# THE ANSWER TO THE LORD'S RESISTANCE ARMY

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**A**lthough war clouds remain on the horizon, the cessation of hostilities agreement between the Government of Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army that resulted from the Juba peace process now has largely held for 10 months. But the relative progress is fragile, as small LRA units could re-infiltrate northern Uganda and conduct ambushes, abduct kids, or burn a camp, and the fear and paranoia generated by such attacks could undermine any chance for peace. Indeed, there have been scattered LRA attacks in the last couple months in northern Uganda, and LRA attacks and abductions continue in southern Sudan.

Therefore, what is urgently required is a major international push to end what may be the least complicated war in the world to resolve. The importance of a solution cannot be overstated. In addition to allowing one and a half million Ugandans to return to their homes, it also will greatly increase the prospects of implementation of the north-south peace deal in Sudan, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. The LRA constitute a serious threat to southern Sudan's stability, and until neutralized it will continue to be a tool the Khartoum regime could use to undermine the south before the elections and independence referendum.

As always with Africa, the only missing ingredient is political will.

There is an unprecedented opportunity now to build on the positive momentum generated by United Nations Envoy and former Mozambican president Joaquim Chissano's mid-April brokering of a return to the Juba peace talks and extension of the cessation of hostilities agreement with additional monitoring. Urgent efforts are required by the Ugandan government and the international community to construct an overall peace strategy that has a chance to end this recurring nightmare once and for all.

Such a strategy involves a combination of the following four ingredients:

- reforming the Juba process and supporting its cessation of hostilities;
- facilitating parallel direct contacts between President Yoweri Museveni and LRA leader Joseph Kony aimed at brokering a security deal for the LRA leadership;
- preparing for a wider process that would follow the security deal that would address the political, economic, and social concerns of northern Ugandans; and
- increasing leverage from the international community through the application of carrots and sticks in support of a solution.

## AT WAR IN THE FIELDS OF THE LORD

As long as the LRA exists, it retains the potential to destabilize parts of eastern Congo, southern Sudan, and northern Uganda, with the looming prospect of an expansion into the Central African Republic. Despite the clear threat to international peace and security—an "early warning" that should be acted upon—no comprehensive strategy backed by the U.N. Security Council has been put forward to deal decisively with the crisis. A peace strategy aimed at normalizing northern Uganda and stabilizing the broader region must both defuse the LRA security threat as well as deal with rehabilitation, reconstruction, and reconciliation in northern Uganda. There are two phases involved.

- First, a package addressing the LRA leadership's security and livelihood concerns should be negotiated through intensive shuttle diplomacy with a respected mediator such as Chissano, backed by increased international leverage and a full-time, senior U.S. official to support the process.
- Second, a more inclusive process of reconciliation and rehabilitation dealing with some of the roots of northern Uganda's suffering and marginaliza-

tion should move forward, including civil society, government, and rebel participants.

Strong international commitment, particularly U.S. engagement, is necessary for both to succeed, because without that support the LRA will remain skeptical that any Ugandan peace overtures will be fulfilled or any agreement implemented.

With his eye on the upcoming Commonwealth Heads of Government summit in Kampala this November, Museveni is more willing than ever to strike a deal to end the war, as he will have the eyes of the world on Uganda at that time and will want to showcase Uganda as the success story of Africa. Legacy issues also enter his calculations. Like Rwanda's President Paul Kagame, Museveni wants to be perceived (and remembered) as a constructive force for regional peace and stability and as an engine for the development of east and central Africa. He is eager to consolidate economic gains made in the south and the center of the country, which are dampened by the economic impact of the war in the north. The potential for trade and investment with neighboring southern Sudan is enormous. All of this requires peace in the north. And peace in the north requires greater U.S. engagement, as the United States has the most leverage with the Ugandan government and inspires the most concern in the LRA.

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## WAR WITHOUT END?

The LRA insurgency is the longest-running war in Africa for a reason. For 20 years, the international community and the Ugandan government have not jointly or separately been able to sustain an

appropriately targeted mediation effort between Uganda's charismatic president, Museveni, and the LRA's messianic leader, Kony. Until these two decision-makers talk turkey, via a mediator they both respect, a war that already has expanded into three neighboring countries will keep spreading like a virus.

At its core, the LRA is a predatory militia-for-hire, lacking any coherent political agenda beyond fierce opposition to the Government of Uganda. The Khartoum regime has used the LRA to undermine stability in southern Sudan, and will likely do so again in advance of elections scheduled for 2009

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and the referendum on independence for the South anticipated in 2011. Khartoum may also use the LRA to destabilize the Central African Republic and further regionalize the crisis in Darfur and Chad. Recent ENOUGH field research suggests that a group of LRA entered CAR last month and received supplies originating from Khartoum. At recent meetings, LRA fighters have had new uniforms and boots, and Kony's Deputy Vincent Otti said during a recent meeting that the LRA will remain in DRC until Bashir tells them to leave. The LRA can also be used by Congolese parties to advance local objectives in return for resupply and sanctuary. And the LRA can be and is used by various Acholi<sup>1</sup> diaspora elements who want to embarrass and undermine the Ugandan government.

But it is what the LRA has done for 20 years in northern Uganda that sets it apart. The brutality of LRA attacks against civilian populations has few parallels throughout the world. The LRA's *modus operandi* includes kidnapping children and having them commit heinous crimes against their families

<sup>1</sup> The Acholi comprise the vast majority of the inhabitants of northern Uganda.

or neighbors in order to sever the ties between the kids and their places of origin. Through a brutal indoctrination and severe penalties for trying to escape, the LRA then becomes the new “family” of the children.

The LRA is diminished but not defeated. Its fighting capacity has been greatly reduced by a loss of supply lines and safe havens in southern Sudan, the reduction in support from the Khartoum regime, and increased Ugandan army effectiveness. LRA forces, estimated at anywhere from 1,000 to 3,000, are highly mobile and adept at brutal guerilla tactics that can destabilize large swathes of territory with relatively few combatants.

In visits to sprawling internally displaced camps this year, we found a camp population which was generally pessimistic about the Juba process. Residents were confounded by the absence of any U.S. involvement and the lack of intensified international engagement in support of the process. Meanwhile their suffering continues. Already, 1,000 people die every week in the camps, according to the last major [survey](#) conducted by the World Health Organization, Uganda’s Ministry of Health, and International Rescue Committee. Five people had died in one camp in the few days prior to my visit. In addition to malnutrition, severe violence, security concerns, and some of the worst diseases known to mankind, elephants had trampled their community gardens during the week before our visit. Furthermore, in mid-March the U.N. World Food Program announced that it would have to cut its rations because of inadequate aid contributions from international donors.

As is widely reported, the conditions faced by children in northern Uganda, with one of the highest population growth rates in the world, rival the worst in the world. One of every five children has lost one or both parents. One in three young men and one in six young women have been abducted by the LRA at some point. Eighty percent of chil-

dren live in camps for internally displaced persons.

Listen to the people of northern Uganda and you can begin to know, but never understand, what they have experienced.

- One young woman lamented, “We have lost our culture here in the camps.”
- A young man asked us rhetorically, “We are awaiting death. Will it be Kony or famine that takes us?”
- An elderly woman questioned, “What level of suffering do we have to experience before you come to help us?”

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- A teenage girl told me she felt like committing suicide because she had no hope. In fact, the Ugandan camps have a very high suicide rate, which continues to grow.
- An elderly man pleaded, “The U.S. needs to come save the children, or else the Acholi people will be wiped out.”

What is missing, ultimately, is a respected mediator backed by real international leverage. So in order to bring an end to this widespread suffering, the Juba process needs to be reformed and its cessation of hostilities given greater support. But more importantly, fledgling direct contacts between Kony and Museveni need to be built upon by a senior mediator of stature, such as Chissano, and focused on the conclusion of a deal that would address the main security and livelihood issues of Kony and the other LRA leaders. This requires the development

of a package of sticks and carrots by international actors that would bring real leverage to the table and increase the chances for success. Ultimately, it also requires a commitment by the Ugandan government to address human rights abuses by its army and the marginalization of the north.

## THE WARLORD'S PRAYER

### *Kony's Calculations*

Kony remains largely an enigma. Understanding his actions and calculations will be the key to constructing a peace process that has a chance of leading to a sustainable peace deal.

Kony told someone who visited him recently in his Congo headquarters that he didn't know how he'd survive if he came out of the bush. "He has built an empire," his interlocutor told me. "Peace talks would dismantle that empire. He needs to be reassured of his security and his welfare."

He does, however, believe he can continue to survive in the bush—a sentiment that is not conducive to a peace deal. One Ugandan general told me, "Kony believes he is able to predict attacks and knows when he will die. The 'oracle' will always help him escape."

A former LRA colleague of Kony's who recently spent time with him believes that Kony is just buying time through the Juba process. Some of the LRA collaborators in northern Uganda also corroborate this view, saying Kony does not want to negotiate. One intercept of the conversation of a senior LRA official revealed that the LRA motives for stringing out the Juba talks were to reorganize militarily, remove the arrest warrants issued by the International Criminal Court warrants, re-recruit captured LRA soldiers, and transform the LRA into a more legitimate rebel group. Whatever Kony's true intentions are, the LRA is currently maximizing its room for maneuver by pursuing multiple strategies simultaneously without clearly committing to one in particular. The main policy challenge now is to

progressively cut off the paths available to the LRA through a combination of pressure and persuasion to ensure that they view a peace agreement as their best and only option.

There are signs that Kony's enthusiasm for endless war may be waning. Another former LRA colleague said that Kony is much less motivated than he used to be by spirits, and that he no longer conducts the extensive rituals that yielded such notoriety amongst northerners. He even dresses more conventionally than in the past, and has worn a pressed army uniform in his recent meetings with journalists and diplomats. The former LRA colleague advises, "A mediator must go in and ask, 'What do you want?' And then let the process take the time it needs."

Kony is often alleged to have no understanding of the enormity of his crimes. However, in a recent meeting with Equatorian community leaders from southern Sudan, he apologized to the elders for committing atrocities in Sudan and said he wanted to be forgiven. The elders gave him a white bull as a sign of their forgiveness. Anecdotes can be misleading, but this one seems to demonstrate that Kony can take rational action, which could be the basis of his acceptance of any future peace deal. "Guided by spirits or not," says Adam O'Brien of the International Crisis Group, "Kony is capable of making rational decisions based on self-interest."

Kony and his deputy Otti have been contacting some of the ex-LRA abductees who have escaped and returned to civilian life. Talking to some of these young men provides a window into the pull that Kony has over them. Some have returned to the LRA, having become disillusioned with the squalid conditions of life in the camps and the meager reintegration packages provided by the international community. Others are considering returning. We had long talks with a few young men who were constantly receiving text messages from their former LRA commanders, trying to lure them back in the bush. They were truly torn over

whether to return or not, despite understanding the kinds of crimes committed by the LRA and what they may be required to do.

### DAMNING UGANDANS WITH INTERNATIONAL FECKLESSNESS

The last 20 years of Ugandan history are littered with one failed peace initiative after another, none of which have enjoyed unified international support. Even the most promising of past initiatives—such as those led by veteran mediator Betty Bigombe (one of the co-authors of this paper), which laid the groundwork for the Juba process—were undermined by a lack of high level international engagement and leverage in support of those efforts.

There is no doubt that the cessation of hostilities secured through the Juba peace initiative has improved security and humanitarian access, and the Government of Southern Sudan should be congratulated for taking on this knotty challenge. But the process, as presently structured, contains the seeds of its own demise. Reforming the process and building a peace strategy around it requires understanding these structural flaws. The Juba process involves the wrong participants, the wrong issues, and inadequate leverage—the **WHO**, **WHAT** and **HOW** of peace-making.

**WHO:** The participants in the peace process from the LRA side are Ugandans from the diaspora and not the fighters on the ground. The link between the LRA leadership and the delegates is tenuous at best. But Kony and Otti selected these delegates, maintain constant communication with them, know exactly what they are pushing for at the negotiating table, and not only have not renounced them but continue to publicly support them. Delegation representatives have used the LRA military card to advance their own political ambitions and agendas. In turn, they are being used by Kony in endless tactical maneuvers and internal political games. Both Kony and Otti are playing delegation

factions against each other and are mobilizing the diaspora to support a possible return to war. One recent visitor to Kony's Congolese headquarters alleged, "He uses them, he doesn't care about them, and he exposes them." Kony is using the delays and obfuscations of the Juba process to re-equip his forces and regroup in Congo. And as long as there is no direct involvement by Kony, the process has little chance of succeeding.

**WHAT:** The agenda of the Juba talks is weighed down heavily by issues on which the LRA has no right to represent the people of northern Uganda, such as all of the political, economic, and developmental issues that must ultimately be addressed in a wider process. The Agreement on Comprehensive solutions signed by the parties on May 2 is somewhat ambiguous about how, when, and where these longer-term issues, essential to breaking the cycle of conflict in northern Uganda and building

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a sustainable peace, will be addressed. Under the terms of the deal on comprehensive solutions, the Ugandan government accepts its obligation to redevelop war-ravaged areas and reintegrate the north into the social, economic, and political fabric of the nation. However, the LRA retains the ability to bog down the peace process in the future by demanding to negotiate an implementation protocol or resurrecting an array of overly ambitious demands—such as restructuring the Ugandan army and federalism for northern Uganda—that the LRA have little legitimacy to assert. Solutions to northern Uganda's many ills must be found, but negotiating solely with the LRA is not the way to achieve them. The Ugandan government will not negotiate these issues with the LRA, and the LRA delegation will continue to press outrageous demands that will undermine the process.

**HOW:** The Juba process lacks any mechanisms for international leverage to be applied to the parties. Moreover, the international actors with leverage, including the United States, are not working to assemble the carrots and sticks necessary to build the leverage that could help close a deal. As long as the process remains the sole purview of a regional government (southern Sudan), regional observers with little leverage, with only sporadic visits, mixed messages, and erratic interest by broader international actors, the process stands little chance of success.

## ROADMAP TO REDEMPTION

### *The Answer to the LRA*

The Juba process is not without benefits:

- at least 230,000 people have begun to leave the camps for satellite “decongestion sites” closer to their homes;
- there have been few attacks attributable to the LRA against civilians in northern Uganda, and none on IDP camps;
- restrictions on the freedom of movement have been eased;
- access for humanitarian relief agencies has greatly improved;
- an assembly point has been created where the LRA rank and file can gather without fears of attack; and
- positive engagement by the neighboring Government of Southern Sudan has been secured;
- At least partial, temporary neutralization of the Khartoum regime’s support for the LRA has resulted.<sup>2</sup>

The Juba process indeed serves a purpose and should be reformed: the negotiating agenda should be pared down, LRA decision-makers should be brought to the venue, adequate resources must be devoted to implement recently strengthened monitoring and protection mechanisms for the cessation of hostilities, and the GOSS peace secretariat should be broadened. Already, Chissano has brokered an arrangement whereby representatives from Mozambique, South Africa, Kenya, Tanzania, and the Democratic Republic of Congo will be brought in to observe the talks and serve as partial guarantors of any final agreement.<sup>3</sup>

However, the process in Juba alone, even if reformed, is still missing the three essential ingredients for peace: the right participants, the right agenda, and the right leverage. Again, the **WHO**, **WHAT**, and **HOW** of peace-making need to be revisited and revamped.

**WHO:** A successful peace initiative will have to deal directly with Kony and engage in shuttle diplomacy between Kony and senior-most officials in the Ugandan government, preferably President Museveni himself. The mediator needs to be someone Kony and President Museveni respect. UN Envoy President Chissano might make the most sense since he already traveled to the bush to meet Kony and helped unlock the logjam preventing a return to Juba by the LRA. Kony has told some of the people who have visited him in his Congo hideout in the past few months that the Juba process is just a formality, a sideshow. What he really wants are talks with President Museveni. Museveni opened three phone lines for the LRA to call him directly, which has greatly increased communication.

The flip side, however, is that if Kony really just wants talks with Museveni, why does he remain publicly committed to the delegation once these

<sup>2</sup> There are disturbing signs of continued Khartoum government support of the LRA. There is no smoking gun, but lots of smoke, such as the reports that groups of LRA went to the Central African Republic to receive supplies from Khartoum, the new uniforms the LRA has, and Otti’s statement during a recent meeting that the LRA will remain in Congo until Bashir tells them to leave. The question is not whether Khartoum is continuing to support the LRA, but rather why wouldn’t it continue? The strategy is the creation of breathing space until the CPA begins to falter. There is no need to rearm the LRA at the moment. But two years down the road, when it is time to start destabilizing the preparations for the elections and then the referendum, the LRA will come in handy. So just enough food and supplies to keep them alive will be provided over the next couple years, until Khartoum needs them again.

<sup>3</sup> See the most recent International Crisis Group report at [www.crisisgroup.org](http://www.crisisgroup.org) for more in-depth suggestions.

channels were opened? There are competing interpretations: 1) Kony is interested in sending as many mixed messages as possible and opening as many dead end negotiation tracks as possible to draw this process out and give the LRA more breathing space; or 2) the LRA is truly interested in creating the perception that it is a legitimate rebel group with a defined political agenda, like the SPLA. Kony's deputy Otti was intercepted saying that this was one of their goals, and this argument seems to be credible for two reasons. First, the LRA is clearly unnerved by being on a U.S. Government terrorist list<sup>4</sup> and want to be taken off of it. Second, the loss of their supply lines in southern Sudan and their inability to reinforce their ranks through abduction (because the UPDF has been more effective in northern Uganda) means that the LRA has lost its traditional methods of sustaining strength and needs to try build popular support for its own survival.

Dr. Ruhakana Rugunda, Ugandan Minister for Internal Affairs, met directly with Kony when he accompanied UN Envoy Chissano to Ri-kwangba in southern Sudan. He also has had numerous phone conversations with Vincent Otti. Dr. Rugunda will play a central role in any possible resolution. This direct dialogue provides the seeds of a potentially successful initiative, in which the Ugandan government could present a series of concrete proposals through a respected mediator directly to Kony in a shuttle diplomacy effort to get to the bottom lines for both sides.

**WHAT:** What is first needed is a simple deal that addresses Kony's core concerns: security for himself and the other indicted commanders, and livelihood opportunities for all of the LRA. In our unscientific sampling of opinion in the displaced camps, residents overwhelmingly support providing Kony and the other indictees with third country asylum, i.e., allowing them to have sanctuary in another country that does not have an extradition treaty with the ICC. If he agrees to a deal and begins implementation, the UN Security Council can suspend the ICC's case for a year at a time in the interests of peace.

Alternately, and this seems to be the track being pursued by the mediators, the parties could come up with their own solutions to the problem by concluding a deal with robust accountability mechanisms and then challenging the admissibility of the case. The idea is that the ICC is a court of last resort with jurisdiction complementary to national governments which should only step in when that government, like Khartoum in the most vivid example, is unwilling or unable to bring perpetrators to justice. But, it is not clear what will satisfy the ICC's standards here or whether the LRA leadership has any interest at all in undergoing traditional reconciliation ceremonies.

Any offer of amnesty/asylum for Kony, however, should be accompanied by strong mechanisms of accountability, such as a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, support for civil (not criminal) cases in the Ugandan courts against perpetrators of atrocities, and traditional justice processes that address the crimes committed, in which those accused accept responsibility for their crimes, ask forgiveness, and pay compensation rather than face imprisonment. In the case of the indicted leadership, they would be banished from Uganda. For the others, being banned from leadership positions or other forms of sanction could be considered. To this end, the traditional justice mechanism of *mato oput* is key. LRA commanders and fighters who demobilize would then go through this process as part of the accountability element of any peace deal.

In addition, a transparent program of demobilization and reintegration needs to be created to deal with the influx of LRA commanders and fighters in the event of an agreement. Current efforts are inadequate and do not provide a significant incentive for anyone to come out of the bush and defect. This should be a major priority of donor countries, the World Bank, and UNDP. As one former LRA leader told me, "If you focus on reintegration programs, you could draw out many of those remaining in the bush."

<sup>4</sup> The LRA is on the U.S. State Department's [Terrorist Exclusion List](#) (TEL).

Beyond a narrow deal with Kony, a second phase that should follow such an agreement must also address some of the issues that will help northern Uganda develop. To jump start this effort, the Ugandan government could do a few things immediately to prepare the way for an inclusive process that can address reconciliation and rehabilitation issues:

- formulate a national land policy (which is in the works but stalled because of insufficient funding);
- bring in police officers with human rights training to demilitarize law enforcement and curb Ugandan army human rights abuses;
- establish courts to rebuild the rule of law and provide forums for dispute resolution; and
- take advantage of the window of opportunity caused by improved security to enhance delivery of essential services and supplies to the camps.

A wider process involving political, religious, and community leaders from the north should be part of the second phase initiative. These kinds of issues should be de-linked from the Juba process, as the LRA is not the representative of popular aspirations of northern Ugandans.

**HOW:** The Juba process enjoys little support from countries that have some leverage over the parties and lacks any kind of strategy to develop leverage. To buttress peace efforts, a series of actions could make a difference to the calculations of the Ugandan government and the LRA regarding their commitment to peace:

- **U.S. DIPLOMACY:** The U.S. must step up its engagement in the search for peace by sending a senior official to work in direct support of the Juba process, the cessation of hostilities, and UN Envoy Chissano's efforts. Such an official would provide the peace partner that President Museveni currently lacks. (He recently called in the ambassadors of the five UN Security Council members

in frustration over their lack of engagement on northern Uganda). Naming a senior official also could reassure the LRA leadership that if they do indeed sign and implement a deal, they will be taken off the U.S. terrorist list and will not be hunted indefinitely, as Kony currently believes. "Kony remains fearful of the U.S.," one Acholi political leader who recently visited Kony in Congo told us. The U.S. can also help organize other countries in direct support of a push for peace, leading in the UN Security Council, among donors, and with the UN Special Envoy. A 'Friends of the Process' contact group, for example, could be established to kick-start these efforts.

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"If the U.S. wanted this war to come to an end, it would have ended."  
—Religious leader

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The U.S. has an essential role to play if it decides to step up to the plate. Without the U.S., there is no chance for peace, given that the U.S. is the most important external ally of President Museveni and is one of the outside actors most feared by the LRA because of the uncertainty involving the U.S. terrorist list. As one religious leader commented to us, "If the U.S. wanted this war to come to an end, it would have ended." Another civil society leader told us, "If the U.S. sent one envoy, it would make all the difference."

So far, the U.S. has not engaged deeply or robustly in support of peace. One senior U.S. official told me, "There is no coherent U.S. policy towards northern Uganda. It is schizophrenic." The U.S. did pressure the Sudanese government to end its support for the LRA, but neither the Ugandan government nor the LRA feel any pressure from the U.S. to focus more seriously on the end of the war.

- **SANCTIONS:** LRA supporters around the world need to be subjected to targeted sanctions. There is a significant network of global support through extremist diaspora elements. This is a so-

phisticated group that raises funds in Germany, the UK, the U.S. and elsewhere. The UN Security Council should create and staff a sanctions committee to examine the sources of support among the diaspora and from states or officials in the region, particularly in Sudan and Congo. Anyone found to be providing such support should face immediate sanctions from the UN Security Council in the form at least of asset freezes and travel bans. Cutting off the supply lines to the militias, the intravenous feed to the LRA, will leave its units with no leg to stand on and its leaders more willing to negotiate.

Naming and shaming people for supporting such an organization can have an impact. One Ugandan-American U.S. citizen has been a central supporter of the LRA. He has presented himself as a U.S. government official on numerous occasions. If he is working for the CIA, as many Ugandans believe, then the U.S. government is abetting terrorism. If he isn't, then why isn't the U.S. arresting him for impersonating a government official and providing material support to a group on the U.S. terrorist list?

- **SUPPORT FOR THE ICC:** As the first real consequence for 20 years of LRA brutality, the ICC has already had an impact on the ground in northern Uganda by driving the LRA into a more formal peace process. The ICC should take the next step and begin a formal investigation into sources of support for the LRA, whether from the diaspora or regional governments. The LRA leadership remains very worried about the ICC, and has hired lawyers to handle their cases. However, because the ICC lacks an enforcement mechanism, no one from the LRA has yet been arrested and the population in the north has begun to become disillusioned with the ICC as part of a solution. Accountability for crimes against humanity will be crucial to ending the cycle of impunity that has led to so much violence in post-independence Uganda, and the ICC will be central to this. Governments should

continue to support the ICC cases while beginning to devise mechanisms of executing the warrants.

- **REGIONAL MILITARY PLANNING:** There needs to be a visible process of military planning focused on how to arrest and pressure the LRA leadership if it is responsible for the demise of the peace process. Such a planning exercise will demonstrate seriousness on the part of the region's leaders and the international community, thereby providing leverage to mediators, in addition to preparing for effective military action should the peace effort not succeed. A multilateral approach is needed, involving the governments of Uganda, Congo, Central African Republic and Sudan, and the regional government of Southern Sudan. Beyond the region, the U.S., UK, EU and others should contribute. It will be important to secure the involvement of the UN Peacekeeping missions in Sudan and Congo, UNMIS and MONUC, respectively, in some form of oversight capacity.

A number of models could be discussed, including adding a special forces unit to MONUC dedicated exclusively to counterinsurgency operations against the LRA, joint operations by the Congolese and Ugandan militaries with MONUC oversight, joint operations by MONUC and the Congolese, a joint intelligence cell, and so on. The Congolese government has significant and justifiable reservations about any joint action with the Ugandans, given the latter's history of mineral exploitation and support for militias in Congo, so international involvement is needed in the construction of any strategy. In the absence of such international involvement, the Ugandan military may go in unilaterally, which could further destabilize the region. "If Kony sends his troops back into northwest Uganda," one senior Ugandan military official told me, "we will go into the Congo militarily in hot pursuit after him."

"Pressure and self-preservation brought Kony to the table," said Adam O'Brien of Crisis Group, "and

the right kind of stick swung with enough leverage might jolt Kony enough to sign a peace deal. Moreover, only military options remain if this process fails. It will be much easier to make the case for a robust regional response if every reasonable effort is made to cut a deal.”

## THE THREE P’S OF CRISIS RESPONSE

The **WHO**, **WHAT**, and **HOW** above can be translated into the ENOUGH Campaign’s conceptual framework for responding to violent conflict and mass atrocities: the 3 P’s of peacemaking, protection, and punishment.

*Peacemaking:* A two-phase, multi-track strategy involving reforming Juba, supporting direct talks, and devising a process for long-term reconciliation should be pursued.

*Protection:* The cessation of hostilities should receive more international support for monitoring, and the government army should expand efforts to protect civilians, including prosecuting human rights abusers in the army.

*Punishment:* Support should continue for the ICC, the UN Security Council should form a sanctions committee, and the region should plan for contingency military operations against the LRA if it undermines the peace efforts.

## DELIVER US FROM EVIL

The possibilities for northern Uganda are limitless. Walking through the bustling streets of Gulu—which only three years ago was a ghost town—demonstrates that given just a little respite from the horror, the residents of northern Uganda can quickly bounce back. We encountered dozens of examples on our most recent visit:

Bosco, a former abducted child soldier, stood up one day in primary school and announced, “I have

killed 82 people.” He lunged for the boy next to him, proclaiming, “You will be the 83rd!” He was physically restrained, and the school sent him for psycho-social counseling through a local NGO. Bosco is now successfully attending secondary school and planning for his future.

Sarah was abducted by the LRA in 1996 at the age of eight. She was trained to fight, and was part of a group that killed 30 people. She told me that if she didn’t participate in these killings, she herself would have been killed by her commander, the infamous Okot Odhiambo. She became a rebel’s “wife” at the age of 13 in a forced arrangement, and the next year had a child. “If I said no I would have been killed,” she told us. She escaped during a Ugandan army raid. After going through counseling, she is now going to school full time, studying, and deciding what she would like to do for a career.

The horrific atrocities in Uganda will continue, and ‘success stories’ like those of Bosco and Sarah will continue to be limited by circumstances of conflict, unless the U.S. engages more intensively in bringing about a solution that will unlock the huge unrealized potential of the people of northern Uganda.

## BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS

A comprehensive peace strategy aimed at ending the LRA’s regional threat and normalizing northern Uganda should thus proceed on four fronts:

1. Reform the Juba peace process along the lines spelled out above and strengthen monitoring mechanisms for Juba’s main achievement: the cessation of hostilities agreement;
2. On a parallel track, expand and formalize direct contacts between Kony and President Museveni, which could be brokered by a respected mediator such as UN Envoy Chissano and focused on cutting a security and livelihoods deal with the LRA leadership;

3. Undertake a series of actions aimed at building leverage for peace, including support for the ICC, initiation of regional military contingency planning, the creation of a sanctions committee by the UN Security Council to go after LRA suppliers, and the appointment of a senior U.S. diplomat to support peace efforts.
4. Prepare for a wider process to address issues related to northern Uganda's political and economic development.

In sum, the Juba process is not redundant, but it is not necessarily integral. If a deal is brokered, it will be in the bush and Juba will serve as a stage to formalize or ratify the agreement.

The U.S. role is key. Absent political pressure from concerned American citizens, and absent serious leadership and demands from the U.S. Congress, it is unlikely that the Bush administration will significantly step up its involvement in support of peace in northern Uganda. It is up to concerned human rights, student, and faith-based activists to convince our elected officials that it matters to us

that our government is not doing all it can to end this human tragedy. Groups like Invisible Children and Resolve Uganda, working with the ENOUGH Campaign, are the initial building blocks in what must be a much more vocal demand by voters that the U.S. has a role to play in ending one of the most destructive wars in the world.

Although not much legislative action has been taken to date, Senator Russ Feingold and Representative McDermott have written a letter urging the Bush administration to appoint a senior diplomat to work in direct support of the peace process, and Representative Hank Johnson Jr. has introduced a resolution (H.CON.RES.80) urging the U.S. and the international community to offer immediate and substantial support for the ongoing peace process. Meet with, call, or write to your Senators and member of Congress asking them to support both of these initiatives, and tell them that they should do much more to pressure the White House to name a senior official to work on behalf of the peace process in northern Uganda. The cost in U.S. money and energy would be negligible, but the benefits to the people of the north would be profound.

*John Prendergast is on leave from his International Crisis Group work to help build ENOUGH, which he co-founded. Previously, John worked at the White House and State Department during the Clinton administration, where he was involved in a number of peace processes throughout Africa. John also has worked for members of Congress, the UN, human rights organizations, and think tanks. He has authored eight books on Africa, the latest of which he co-authored with actor/activist Don Cheadle, entitled Not on Our Watch. John travels regularly to Africa's war zones on fact-finding missions, peace-making initiatives, and awareness-raising trips involving network news programs, celebrities, and politicians.*

*The author traveled with Betty Bigombe to northern Uganda earlier this year to conduct an assessment mission. For part of the visit they were accompanied by Academy Award-nominated actor Ryan Gosling and author Jimmie Briggs. Gosling and Briggs wrote an op-ed for ABC.com and were interviewed by ABC about the trip, available at [www.abc.com](http://www.abc.com). Two television stories were filed by veteran journalists Kira Kay and Jason Maloney for HDTV and the Lehrer Newshour, available at [http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/africa/jan-june07/uganda\\_04-26.html](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/africa/jan-june07/uganda_04-26.html).*



# enough

The project to abolish genocide + mass atrocities

ENOUGH is a joint initiative, founded by the International Crisis Group and the Center for American Progress, to prevent and resolve genocide and mass atrocities. With an initial focus on the crises in Darfur, eastern Congo and northern Uganda, ENOUGH's monthly updates provide analyses of what is happening on the ground, outline challenges and obstacles to policy change, and offer targeted recommendations using a "3P" strategy that focuses on promoting durable peace, providing civilian protection, and punishing perpetrators of atrocities. The monthly updates also provide an agenda for activists and concerned citizens to affect change. To learn more about ENOUGH, and what you can do to help, go to [www.enoughproject.org](http://www.enoughproject.org).



## enough

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