

Profiles

HE Yoweri Kaguta Museveni

has been President of the Republic of Uganda since 1986, when his National Resistance Army (NRA) seized power from the Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA) government of Tito Okello. He has since won successive elections in 1996 and 2001, as well in 2006 – the first multiparty elections since he took power.

However, the legitimacy of elections has been repeatedly challenged, including in the

Supreme Court, and opposition parties and civil society have complained about the continued narrowing of democratic space. Museveni is credited with establishing relative peace in central and western Uganda, and presiding over economic reforms that have lifted many out of poverty. In the conflict-affected areas of northern and eastern Uganda, however, poverty is double the 30 per cent national average. Museveni's handling of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) war has also been criticized as being overly militarized and for contributing to civilian suffering, and for failing to address the root causes of the conflict. Museveni will contest the presidential election planned for 2011.



Uganda's president Yoweri Museveni, Kampala, November 2007

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Joseph Kony is the leader of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), an armed group that has waged war against Museveni's government since 1986. As the LRA increasingly committed atrocities against Acholi civilians, it lost its support base among the northern Ugandan population. In 2005 Kony was made the subject of an International Criminal Court (ICC) arrest warrant. In 2006 he declared his wish to conduct peace talks. Having been largely elusive through decades of warfare, during

the Juba talks of 2006-08 he opened up to the international community for the first time. He gave press conferences and met delegations from northern Uganda, Southern Sudan and the UN. He did not honour the set of agreements negotiated on his behalf at Juba, however, and refused to sign the Final Peace Agreement. Since 2008, after the start of a government military offensive (Operation Lightning Thunder) he has again severed communication with the outside world. LRA supporters have occasionally issued statements purportedly on his behalf, but there is doubt that they represent Kony's views.



Leader of the Lord's Resistance Army Joseph Kony after a meeting with Jan Egeland at Ri-Kwamba, Southern Sudan, November 2006

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HE Lt. General Dr Riek Machar Teny-Dhourgon is Vice President of the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS), and was the chief mediator of the Juba talks. Machar is a highly contentious figure in Sudan, having split from southern Sudanese rebel movement the SPLA to ally with the government of Sudan in the 1990s. He later reconciled with the SPLA and became Vice-President of the new GoSS after the death of Dr John Garang. His mediation of the Juba talks coincided with his own political struggles within Sudan. Since the failed Juba signing ceremony and the Ugandan government's military action against the LRA, he has publicly pledged his continued support for a political, peaceful resolution of the conflict.

HE Joaquim Alberto Chissano was the Special Envoy of the United Nations Secretary-General for LRA-Affected Areas and former President of Mozambique. Chissano became the Special Envoy late in 2006, offering greater international credibility to the Juba talks. While his involvement was largely representative, he is credited with bringing the parties back together at crucial points of division. In 2009 he gave his final briefing to the UNSC as a Special Envoy.



Joaquim Chissano, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Lord's Resistance Army-Affected Areas in northern Uganda, briefs journalists outside the Security Council Chamber, New York, March 2007

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LRA delegation to the Juba talks

Members of the LRA/M delegation were largely drawn from the Acholi diaspora, as well as some Ugandan residents and military personnel.

Martin Ojul led the LRA/M delegation from July 2006 to early 2008, when he was dismissed by LRA leader Kony while simultaneously resigning due to the death of second-in-command Vincent Otti. Having been known as a local preacher, the nature of Ojul's connection to both the LRA and the Ugandan government remained unclear throughout the Juba talks.

Dr David Nyekorach Matsanga took over as delegation leader from Martin Ojul. He is a self-styled political advisor and blogger on African affairs and has moved in and out of Ugandan politics for over a decade. The nature of his relationship with the LRA leadership is also unclear. He resigned from the LRA delegation in 2009.

Justin Labeja, a member of the peace delegation from the start of the Juba talks, he has since been named as the official delegation leader.

GoU delegation to the Juba talks

The GoU delegation consisted of high-profile politicians and Ugandan security personnel.

Hon. Dr Ruhakana Rugunda, leader of the GoU delegation, is a seasoned GoU cabinet member and was Minister of Internal Affairs during the Juba talks. Having been engaged in previous LRA and GoU peace talks, he was criticized for offering no real negotiation points at the early stages of the process and continuing the GoU's non-political stance. As the process evolved Rugunda's profile increased, particularly after he personally went to Garamba Park to meet the LRA leadership. He is now Uganda's Permanent Representative to the UN. In that capacity he was president of the UN Security Council in July 2009 during Uganda's time as a non-permanent member on the Council.

The International Criminal Court

The Ugandan government made an unprecedented self-referral to the ICC in December 2003. The Chief Prosecutor of the ICC, **Louis Moreno-Ocampo**, formally opened investigations in July 2004. In July 2005 the ICC issued arrest warrants for crimes against humanity for five LRA commanders: Joseph Kony, Vincent Otti (now deceased), Okot Odhiambo, Raska Lukwiya (now deceased) and Dominic Ongwen. The ICC has been criticized for not



Louis Moreno-Ocampo, Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, June 2008

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investigating alleged war crimes committed by the UPDF. Some argue that the warrants have been instrumental in diminishing LRA attacks and motivating the peace talks. Others view them as an impediment to negotiations and the main reason that Kony did not sign the Final Peace Agreement.

IKV Pax Christi, a Netherlands-based peacebuilding NGO, was instrumental in bringing about the Juba talks by facilitating early contact between the LRA and Riek Machar. The organization withdrew from the talks amidst controversy about the negotiation modalities, but facilitated a separate meeting in 2007 between LRA/M and Ugandan government representatives in Mombasa, Kenya. While the meeting achieved an outline of a peace agreement, it is also seen as having fuelled distrust and division with the LRA/M.