

Uganda (56)

UGANDA COUNTRY REPORT

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OCTOBER 2003

COUNTRY INFORMATION & POLICY UNIT

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1. SCOPE OF THE DOCUMENT

1.1 This report has been produced by the Country Information and Policy Unit, Immigration and Nationality Directorate, Home Office, from information obtained from a wide variety of recognised sources. The document does not contain any Home Office opinion or policy.

1.2 The report has been prepared for background purposes for those involved in the asylum / human rights determination process. The information it contains is not exhaustive. It concentrates on the issues most commonly raised in asylum / human rights claims made in the United Kingdom.

1.3 The report is sourced throughout. It is intended for use by caseworkers as a signpost to the source material, which has been made available to them. The vast majority of the source material is readily available in the public domain. These sources have been checked for currency, and as far as can be ascertained, remained relevant and up to date at the time the document was issued.

1.4 It is intended to revise the report on a six-monthly basis while the country remains within the top 35 asylum-seeker producing countries in the United Kingdom.

2. GEOGRAPHY

2.1 The Republic of Uganda has a total area of 235,887 square kilometres, with an area of 20% covered by inland water and swamps. The rest is a mixture of tropical rainforest, savannah and mountains on the western borders. It is a land-locked equatorial country in East Africa bordered by Sudan to the north, the Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire) to the west, Kenya to the east and Rwanda, Tanzania and Lake Victoria to the south. The climate is tropical, with temperatures moderated by the altitude of the country, varying between 15 and 30 degrees centigrade. [1]

2.2 The latest census, conducted in January 1991, enumerated a population of 16,671,705, giving a density of 69 inhabitants per square kilometre. [1]

For further information on geography, refer to Europa World Yearbook 2002 (43rd edition) [1] [1]

3. ECONOMY

3.1 In May 2000, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) observed that while Uganda remains one of the poorest countries in the world, the share of the population living in poverty declined to 44% in 1996/97 from 56% in 1992/93. The fund also noted that the percentage of children of primary school age who attended school increased from 56% in 1995/96 to 94% in 1998/99. [1]

3.2 Impressive progress has been made with economic reforms since 1986, albeit from a very low base. The Government has consistently promoted a free-market approach and many institutional barriers to profitable business have been removed. However, corruption has remained endemic and legal redress is a long and painful process. Public expenditure is under control and well allocated, although donors continue to monitor closely defence spending patterns. [16b]

3.3 The East African Community pledges to work towards common action on the movement of labour and goods between Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania and the integration of transport, tourism and telecommunications. It has considerable economic potential as a regional bloc with a combined population of 80 million, a land area of 1.8 million square kilometres, common languages such as English and Kiswahili, and large amounts of natural resources, including minerals, water, energy, forestry and wildlife. [8]

3.4 In July 2003, the UN's World Food Programme (WFP) announced that food aid is urgently needed for over 1.6 million people in northern and eastern Uganda in the worst humanitarian crisis the country has seen for years. Those most in need were 820,000 displaced people in the north, 655,000 drought victims in Karamoja region, and 147,000 refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo. [68cc]

3.5 Over one million people are currently displaced by the ongoing conflict with the rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in the north, not all of whom were accessible by humanitarian workers. Currently WFP was unable to reach about 150,000 displaced people around Katakwi in eastern Uganda. [68cc]

4. HISTORY

4.1 On 26 January 1986 the National Resistance Army (NRA) led by Yoweri Museveni took control of Kampala by force and dissolved the Military Council. On 29 January 1986, Museveni was sworn in as President. In February 1986, he announced the formation of a new cabinet, comprising of mainly NRA members and National Resistance Movement (NRM - the political wing of the NRA). The cabinet also included representatives of other political groups including the Democratic Party (DP), the Uganda People's Congress (UPC), the Uganda Freedom Movement (UFM), the Federal Democratic Movement (FEDEMO) and three members of the previous administration. A National Resistance Council (NRC) was formed to act in place of a legislature pending the introduction of a new constitution. [1]

4.2 All activity by political parties was banned in March 1986, although political parties were not proscribed. Museveni began implementation of his "Ten Point Plan" which the NRA had worked on from 1981 to 1986.

During 1986 the Museveni Government developed a nation-wide system of resistance committees at local and district level; their responsibilities were to include the maintenance of security and the elimination of corruption. [39]

4.3 In January 1994 the Ugandan National Democratic Alliance (UNDA) and the Ugandan Federal Army (UFA) agreed to suspend their armed struggle under the provisions of a Government amnesty. [1]

For history prior to 1986 refer to Europa World Yearbook publication 2002 - 43rd Edition [1]

1989 Elections

4.4 The first national election since 1980 was held in February 1989. The NRC, hitherto composed solely of Presidential nominees was expanded from 98 to 278 members, to include 210 elected representatives. Twenty ministerial posts were reserved for nominated members of the NRC and fifty were allocated to elected members. In October 1989 (despite opposition from the DP) the NRC approved draft legislation to prolong the Government's term of office by five years from January 1990 (when its mandate was due to expire). In March 1990 the NRM extended the national ban on political activity (imposed in March 1986) for a further 5 years. [1]

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5. STATE STRUCTURES

THE CONSTITUTION

5.1 Following the military coup in July 1985, the 1967 Constitution was suspended, and all legislative and executive powers were vested in a Military Council, whose Chairman was the Head of State. In January 1986 a further military coup established an executive Presidency, assisted by a Cabinet of Ministers and a legislative National Resistance Council (NRC). In September 1995 a Constituent Assembly enacted a Draft Constitution. The Constitution was promulgated on 8 October 1995. Under its terms, a national referendum was to take place in 2000. [1]

5.2 The referendum produced an overwhelming vote in favour of retaining the existing "no-party" system. A direct presidential election took place in May 1996, followed in June of that year by legislative elections to Parliament. This body, comprising 214 elected members and 62 nominated members, replaced the NRC. At the general election of June 2001 the number of nominated members was increased to 78. [1]

5.3 A draft Constitution was prepared by a constitutional commission appointed in 1989 and presented to the Government in December 1992. The draft was published in March 1993, and in the following month, the NRC passed legislation authorising the establishment of a Constituent Assembly, (CA). The newly elected

members of the CA debated and amended the draft constitution and it was finally enacted in September 1995 and promulgated on 8 October 1995. [18]

5.4 The Constitution confers fundamental human rights and freedoms on every person in Uganda. This includes equal protection under the law, equality between men and women in all aspects of life and guarantees the enjoyment of individual rights without discrimination on the basis of sex, race, colour, ethnic origin, social standing or political opinion, and without interference with the rights of others. [18]

5.5 In addition to the protection for those accused of crimes, individual freedoms include freedom of speech, expression, and the press and other media; freedom of thought, conscience and belief, including academic freedom; freedom to practice any religion and freedom of peaceful assembly, association and movement. [18]

5.6 The Government of Uganda set up a Constitutional Review Commission (CRC) in February 2001. The Commission has wide remit to consider including decentralisation; the relative powers of the executive, the judiciary and the legislative; the electoral system; the scope for federalism and the role of traditional leaders. The commission is due to report its findings within 18 months. [50h]

5.7 In May 2001 the CRC launched a programme to collect views from members of the public on the amendment of the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda. A statement made by the secretary of the CRC, Dr Higirom Semajjege Friday said that the terms of reference of the commission will be, among other things, to examine the consistence and compatibility of the constitutional provisions relating to the sovereignty of the people, political systems, democracy and good governance. He also said that the purpose would be to make recommendations as to how best to ensure that the country is governed in accordance with the will of the people at all times. [31ae]

5.8 On 20 March 2002, Parliament passed the Anti-Terrorism Act, which authorises certain law enforcement officials to intercept communication in order to detect and prevent terrorist activities. [2]

5.9 In June 2002, President Museveni signed the Political Organisation Bill (POB). The POB provides that no party or organisation shall "open branches below national level". The resulting Act is the Political Parties and Organisation Act, which stipulates that parties and political organisations are also prohibited from holding "more than one national conference in a year". They are prohibited from holding public meetings except for the national conference, executive committee, seminars and conferences at the national level. Party leaders could be imprisoned for a number of years or made to pay fines if they contravene the Act. [28e]

5.10 In early July 2002, Ugandan opposition groups filed a petition against new restrictions on political parties. The chair of the Reform Agenda, Sam K Njuba, condemned the Act as being a violation of human rights. [69i]

5.11 In February 2003, the Director of Information in the President's office said that the Freedom of Information Act, which will give access to information in state possession, will be in place by the end of 2003. A working committee, comprising officials from several ministries and headed by the Director of Information Dr Okullu Mura, was set up to identify what kind of information should be released and what should remain classified. [50m]

Citizenship and Nationality

5.12 The 1995 Constitution of Uganda on Citizenship states that every person born in or outside Uganda and having one parent or grandparent who is a citizen of Uganda at the time of that person's birth, shall be a citizen of Uganda. A child of not more than 5 years of age found in Uganda, whose parents are not known, shall be presumed to be a citizen of Uganda. On application, a child under the age of eighteen years, neither of whose parents is a citizen of Uganda, and who is adopted, shall be registered as a citizen of Uganda. Citizenship can also be registered when an application is made after marriage to a Ugandan citizen, or someone who has voluntarily migrated to and has been living in Uganda for at least ten years. [59]

5.13 A person may be deprived of Ugandan citizenship, if acquired by registration, if they have voluntarily acquired citizenship of another country, voluntary service in the armed forces or security forces of a country hostile to or at war with Uganda, or had acquired citizenship by fraud, deceit or bribery. [59]

Political System

5.14 The country's first presidential election took place on 9 May 1996. Museveni won with 74.2% of the votes cast. International observers judged that the elections generally reflected the preference of the electorate. Legislative elections took place in June 1996. As with the CA elections, they were conducted on a non-party basis, but NRM supporters won a large majority of the seats. Multiparty supporters won seats in the north. Voting took place in June 1996 for local councils. Further local elections were held in November 1997. [1]

5.15 A referendum was held on 29 June 2000 on the future of politics in the country - whether to adopt Movement or Multiparty. [54a] The Movement System attracted 4.322 million votes accounting for 90.7% of the total, while the multi party drew only 442,823 votes registering 9.3%. [64b] There were also 148,800 invalid votes cast, 3% of the ballot, which electoral officials attributed to a lack of civic education and illiteracy. [48]

5.16 In the approach to the presidential election of March 2001, a number of candidates announced their intentions to stand. [1] The main candidates for the presidency were Karuhanga Chapaa, Muhammad Kibirige Mayanja, Francis Bwengye and Aggrey Awori. President Museveni, in power from 1986, won 70% of the vote in the presidential elections of 1996. [54b] Museveni found himself challenged by Kizza Besigye, his former physician and comrade in arms during the guerrilla war, which brought Museveni to power. Unlike most of the other candidates, who were mostly connected with discredited political parties, Besigye, a member of Museveni's NRM presented a real challenge. [1]

5.17 There were reports of pre-election violence and on 8 January 2001 three people were injured when armed men shot at a convoy of vehicles carrying Dr Besigye's supporters. UPDF commanders, who were operating in the district, were accused of engaging political campaigns and threatening supporters of some presidential candidates. [31g] On 19 January 2001, surprise presidential candidate and Bakayimbira Dramactors director, Charles James Ssenkubuge released a press statement saying that he was quitting the race for presidency due to intimidation. He claimed that he had received anonymous phone calls of a threatening nature. [31i]

5.18 The presidential election was held on 12 March 2001. The poll had been scheduled for 7 March, but was delayed to allow the Electoral Commission time to check and amend the electoral register after it was found to contain about 2.5 million more voters than there were citizens eligible to vote. [1]

5.19 On 15 January 2001, police set up a team to fight election-related violence. On 11 January 2001 - the day before campaigning began - President Museveni's campaign manager in Uganda's central region was shot and killed after attending a strategy meeting. [67a] On 20 February 2001, Ugandan security agents forcibly arrested a senior aide of Dr Besigye, Major Rabwoni Okwir. Just before boarding a flight to Adjumani in northern Uganda with Besigye's campaign team, Major Okwir was forcibly arrested by the Military Police at Entebbe Airport. [65e] A statement by Okwir on 21 February 2001 said that he had withdrawn from presidential candidate Dr Besigye's Task Force. [50f]

5.20 He later claimed he had been intimidated with death threats to sign the press release withdrawing from the Task Force. Okwir was released from custody and taken to his home. [31j] According to the "Monitor" newspaper dated 28 February 2001 Okwir had left Uganda to go into exile in the United Kingdom. [31k]

5.21 Uganda's external donors expressed concerns about reports by local election monitors of increasing violence and intimidation of voters, particularly by Government agents. In a statement issued on 20 February 2001 and signed by the Danish Ambassador Flemming Bjork Pedersen, the Post-Referendum Support Group (PRSG) also called for the display of the voters' register in public places. The donors urged the Government to uphold the law and ensure impartiality. PRSG members include Austria, Belgium, Canada, European Commission, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, United Kingdom, USA and UNDP. [50g]

5.22 A Human Rights Watch (HRW) report on 4 March 2001 stated that the electoral playing field in Uganda was "definitely not level" and serious human rights concerns in the lead-up to Uganda's presidential elections cast doubt on whether they could be free and fair. It said that the Government of President Museveni was "trying to win this election by bullying the opposition", which had been threatened by violence, arrests and intimidation since campaigning started in January 2001. [68b]

5.23 The NGO Election Monitoring Group-Uganda (NEMGROUP-U) blamed the violence, which occurred on 3 March 2001 in Rukungiri town on the Presidential Protection Unit (PPU). The violence was the result of clashes between the PPU and supporters of Besigye at the instigation of the PPU. The monitors called for the Government to demilitarise the electoral process and immediately withdraw PPU soldiers from places like Rukungiri where the President is not present. The NEMGROUP-U also asked the electoral commission to

enforce the provisions of section 12(1)(e) of the Electoral Commission Act 1997 which requires it to ensure that the electoral process is conducted under conditions of freedom and fairness. [31i]

5.24 70.3% of eligible voters turned out to vote on 12 March 2001. The election monitors from African countries said that the presidential elections were transparent, free and fair. The monitors also said they were impressed that the army and the police did not interfere in the polling exercise despite the fact that they were deployed. [49e] The chairman of the Electoral Commission, Haji Aziz Kasujja announced the final results on 14 March 2001. [68c]

5.25 The results of the presidential elections on 12 March 2001 were as follows:

Candidate	Votes	%
Lt. Gen Yoweri Kaguta MUSEVENI	5,123,360	69.3
Dr Kizza BESIGYE	2,250,795	27.8
Other Candidates	210,036	2.9
Total	7,584,191	100.00

[34][68c]

5.26 Following the elections two people were killed and six injured in two explosions in Kampala. One explosion was at Nakivubo Mews in central Kampala and the second took place on a taxi minibus 100km (60 miles) south west of Kampala. These explosions occurred as President Museveni's supporters were on the streets of Kampala celebrating his victory. [69d] Two men were arrested in connection with the explosions. [60]

5.27 On 20 March 2001, defeated presidential candidate Dr Besigye was summoned to CID police headquarters to explain comments, which he had allegedly made with seditious intent. As a result, the Head of Military Intelligence, Lieutenant Colonel Noble Mayombo, imposed a travel ban. He said the move was necessary following the bomb blasts as they could be linked to politicians who were unhappy with the election results. A senior Government official said that the reason for the ban was that Besigye was going to South Africa to meet with Rwandan President Kagame who was due to arrive there on the same day. [69b]

5.28 Earlier in March 2001, Uganda declared Rwanda a hostile nation. This was instigated because Uganda feared that Rwanda was funding Dr Besigye's bid for presidency. [69b]

5.29 Dr Besigye, who finished second in the presidential elections, challenged the results. He challenged both President Museveni and the Electoral Commission over the alleged irregularities and rigging of the final results. The hearing in the Supreme Court opened on 5 April 2001. The Supreme Court threw out Besigye's petition 2 weeks later. The court's five judges ruled by a majority of 3-2 that, although there had been irregularities in the poll, these had not substantially affected its outcome. [31s]

5.30 Legislative elections took place on 26 June 2001 to elect the new Ugandan parliament. The Members of Parliament elected would form the country's seventh parliament since Uganda gained independence in 1962. [69e] There were reports of election related violence marring the voting. The Post Referendum Support Group (PRSG) together with local election monitors concurred that although the atmosphere during the elections was calm and conducive for people to exercise their democratic choice, "there were widespread, worrying instances of election mal-administration, mal-practice and excessive violence". [56d]

5.31 President Museveni made wide-ranging changes in his new Cabinet and relinquished the portfolio of the Minister of Defence to Amama Mbabazi, which he had held for the last 15 years. The 64 strong Cabinet and junior ministers has 17 new entrants, eight ex-officio members and 16 women [56c] Among the women Dr Speciosa Wandira Kazibwe was appointed vice president. [65c] After the appointment of Dr Kazibwe, President Museveni said that some men did not like the appointment of a woman as vice president. But the President said that he did this so that she could be a role model for girls. [31q] However in May 2003 Dr

Kazibwe resigned her political role in order to pursue a PhD at Harvard School of Medicine in the United States. Her resignation led to a mixed reaction from Ugandan Women's Organisations. While many have welcomed the stand taken on such issues as domestic violence and independence from spouses, she has been as being "mere tokenism" by Jackie Asiime - Mwesige, co-ordinator of the Uganda Women's Network. [68aa]

5.32 On 4 April 2002, a democracy advocacy group (NGO) called RESPOND Uganda was launched in Washington DC in the United States of America. Besigye's former campaign manager, Anne Mugusha, hosted the launch. The group promised to work with democracy advocates across Africa. Colonel Besigye was highly praised at the launch. The Chairman Board of Directors is Joseph Angole who is an economic consultant with the International Finance Corporation. [31a]

5.33 On 17 August 2001 Col Dr Besigye reportedly beat a 24-hour surveillance by military intelligence personnel and fled to the United States of America. It was reported that since the March 2001 elections he had been under a travel ban and 24-hour surveillance by the Chieftaincy of Military Intelligence. [31u] It was also reported that Col Besigye had links with the ADF and that he had supplied 200 guns to the rebel organisation but this was denied. He said that the Government was trying to tarnish his name. [31b]

5.34 In an American radio interview, Besigye said that he left Uganda mainly because he 'felt that his security was quite compromised and in danger' but this was refuted by a presidential spokesman who claimed that this statement was not true. [69h] Besigye is currently in self-imposed exile [2]. However, his wife, Mbarara Municipality MP Winnie Byanyima remains in Uganda and is currently 3rd Chairperson and Secretary for Political Strategy and Mobilisation of the Reform Agenda (see section on Reform Agenda). [31aa]

5.79 It was reported, in May 2000, renewed fighting broke out between Uganda and Rwanda who were supposed allies in the fight against President Kabila's Government. The two allies did not agree on strategy - Uganda accused Rwanda of wanting to install a 'puppet regime' in the DRC. By the middle of May 2000 the leaders of both countries met in an attempt to heal the rift. A communique issued at the end of the talks said that Uganda and Rwanda had pledged to forge ahead with their declaration, made on 8 May 2000, to demilitarise the town of Kisangani and remove troops from each other's borders. [56a]

5.80 On 31 August 2000, it was reported that Congolese warriors had attacked the Ugandan customs border post. The UPDF rounded up over 40 attackers whose motives were unclear according to security forces. This incident caused fear and uncertainty among Ugandans along the border. [2]

5.81 In an effort to tackle corruption and inefficiency in the army the Government raised the pay of soldiers by 5% - to discourage pilfering. [66d] The UPDF established a special pay unit to curb fraud and corrupt practices, and will be in charge of procurement of goods and supplies. President Museveni estimated that US \$4.8 million was lost annually through fraud in salaries and food supplies by one division alone. [28d]

5.82 The Internal Security Organisation (ISO) remained under the authority of the President and although primarily an intelligence-gathering organisation the ISO also has the power to arrest and detain civilians. The Directorate of Military Intelligence (DMI) comes under control of the UPDF and also takes an active part in anti-terrorist activities. It has been accused of serious human rights abuses. [2]

Prisons & Prison Conditions

5.83 Prison conditions remained harsh and life threatening for the estimated 17,500 inmates in the various prisons and police cells primarily as a result of the Government's seriously inadequate funding of prison facilities. Prison conditions came closest to meeting international standards in Kampala, where prisons provided medical care, running water, and sanitation; however, these prisons also were among the most overcrowded. By one estimate, the country's prisons held approximately three times their planned capacity. [2]

5.84 The central prison system continued to work with NGOs and the donor community to improve prison buildings, water and sanitation systems, food, and uniforms; however, progress was minimal during 2002. Although the law provides for access to prisoners by their families, ignorance of this right and fear of prison authorities often limited family visits. The Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC) reported that it

received allegations that officers in charge of police cells sometimes demanded bribes to allow visits. [2]

5.85 The Government permitted full access to prisons by the ICRC and local NGOs, principally the Foundation for Human Rights Initiative (FHRI) and the Uganda Prisoners' Aid Foundation. The UHRC visited numerous prisons and reported on its findings publicly. Prison authorities required advance notification of visits, a process that often was subject to administrative delays. [2]

5.86 The Community Service Act signed in 2000, reduces prison congestion by allowing minor offenders to do community service instead of being imprisoned. Since the act was implemented in November 2001, 301 offenders have been sentenced to community service in the pilot districts of Mukono, Mpigi, Masaka, and Masindi. [2]

5.87 There were reports of deaths in custody, which resulted from alleged torture or other abuse. On 6 June 2002, a juvenile trying to escape from Nyabahukye Farm Prison in Mbarara district died after the prison warden allegedly ordered other inmates to beat him. There were no reports of action taken against the responsible prison officials. [2]

5.88 On 11 February 2003, the treatment of suspects detained in alleged torture chambers dominated debate in Parliament. Kashari MP John Kazoora informed the house that he had received reports of suspects being dumped in cages of snakes and crocodiles. [31x] On 20 February 2002, the New Vision newspaper reported that inmates at Kigo Prison narrated the alleged torture they went through at the hands of the military before they were taken to court. One inmate said he was forced to accept that he communicated with Kizza Besigye as he faced snakes in a place not known to him. [50ae]

5.89 In most prisons female prisoners were held in segregated wings with female staff. According to human rights advocates, rape generally was not a problem, although female prisoners also suffered from severely substandard conditions. Due to a lack of space in juvenile facilities, juveniles were often kept in prisons with adults. The central prison system maintained one juvenile prison and four lower security remand homes. School facilities and health clinics in all five institutions were defunct; prisoners as young as 12 years old performed manual labour from dawn until dusk. Severe overcrowding was also a problem at juvenile detention facilities and in women's wings. The remand home in Kampala, designed for 45 inmates, held approximately 140 children. In penal institutions in Kampala, pre-trial detainees were kept separate from convicted prisoners; however, in the rest of the country, due to financial constraints, pre-trial detainees and convicted prisoners sometimes were held together. [2]

Military Service

5.90 There is no military conscription in Uganda. The Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) is under full civilian control. The recruitment criteria is a minimum age of 18, recommended by the local council structure, medically fit and educationally literate. However, in practice some recruiters have allowed 17 year olds to enlist. LDUs may recruit children under the age of 18 with parental consent. [2] There have been several reports from concerned parents of forced recruitment. This may be due to the massive levels of recruitment since the start of the conflict with the DRC and also high levels of unemployment making the army a relatively attractive option for out of work youngsters. [14b]

5.91 There is no provision for conscientious objection. In 1991, under the National Resistance Army (NRA) Code of Conduct, applications from professional serving soldiers for discharge were made under an individual basis. Apparently, leaving the armed forces for professional serving soldiers may prove difficult. [17]

Medical Services

5.92 The 1993 Health Policy clearly set out consolidation and rehabilitation as the main strategies. This is currently being updated by the Government and has entered into negotiations with donors with a view to implementing a sector wide approach. The Ministry of Health produced a 5 year Health Policy and Plan. The underlying theme of this is to increase access to a minimum essential package of health services. This allows for limited expansion of the health infrastructure. Services are currently being provided by a combination of public and private sources, with the public sector playing a key role. With decentralisation, the districts have taken on the responsibility for delivering district health services receiving block grants from the Ministry of Health. The role of the Ministry of Health is now focussed on providing technical support, supervision and monitoring, setting norms and standards, mobilising resource and donor co-ordination. The NGO sector also plays an important role. [19]

5.93 In September 2000, the town of Gulu in northern Uganda was struck by the Ebola virus (haemorrhagic fever) which left 149 dead out of 357 reported cases. The virus had spread to Mbarara, in south west Uganda, and Masindi, south of Gulu. The World Health Organisation (WHO) Country Representative for Uganda, Dr Walker, said that the mortality rate was low and credit should go to the national task force for putting up the idea of active searches for potential cases. [68d] In November 2000, Medecins sans Frontieres (MSF) sent a team to assist in containing the outbreak. At the end of November 2000 the number of Ebola cases began falling and WHO reported that the epidemic had been contained. [68e]

5.94 In September 2001, the Government, with the assistance of the African Development Bank, established a support to health sector strategic plan project. A statement issued by the permanent secretary, Ministry of Health, Richard Muhinda, said the project is aimed at strengthening mental health services in Uganda and added that it will also serve to address primary health care in northern Uganda. [49d] In October 2001, a new hospital opened in Gulu. The new hospital promises to perform specialist services that will minimise travel for medical treatment outside Uganda. [49b]

5.95 In September 2002, the neo-natal tetanus elimination campaign was launched in Buyengo sub-country Jinja. During which over 700 women were immunised. The Minister of State for Health said that 144 and 177 children died in 2000 and 2001 respectively. [31n]

5.96 Uganda has one of the highest sickle cell prevalence rates in Africa although the exact numbers are not known. Health officials estimated, over 25,000 children in Uganda are born every year with the disease. According to experts on the disease most of the deaths could be avoided by simple interventions if the communities are sensitised. Chairperson of a new body, The Sickle Cell Association of Uganda, to be launched said the association would offer counselling and sensitisation to reduce the stigma among the sufferers. [50r]

5.97 According to Government figures Uganda has an estimated 5.3 million cases of malaria for a population of 21.1 million. According to Medecins sans Frontieres, in Bundi Bugyo hospital in the east of the country next to the border with Democratic Republic of Congo, 60% of hospital stays in the paediatric department are linked to malaria. Reducing malaria morbidity and mortality is one of Medecins sans Frontieres's priority objectives. [55]

HIV/AIDS

5.98 According to a report by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), issued in July 2002, Uganda's HIV infection rate has declined from the 17th highest in the world to the 20th highest. [50ai] In December 2000, Ugandan radio reported that HIV and AIDS in urban areas had dropped by 30%. [66e] Also in December 2000, the Bill Gates Foundation donated US\$15.3m (over sh27b) to Uganda for the implementation of national population programmes focusing on adolescents and HIV/AIDS. [50y] A report in May 2001 stated that the Government of the United States of America was to introduce two new development programmes and a total of \$50m to help fight the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Uganda. [31p]

5.99 According to an HIV/AIDS surveillance report released by the Ministry of Health in November 2002, 94,755 Ugandan children under the age of 15 years had died as a result of the disease. Statistics at the end of 2001 showed that out of 1,050,555 Ugandans living with HIV/AIDS, 105,055 were children under the age of 15 years. [50ag]

5.100 In June 2002, officials from the Ministry of Health and the United Nations children's fund said they would be expanding the Prevention of Mother-to-Child HIV Transmission (PMTCT) project following successful pilot trials at six sites in four districts. Under the project, all mothers attending antenatal clinics would be counselled about the need to take HIV tests. Those who test HIV positive and their babies would receive free doses of the drugs, which reduce mother-to-child HIV transmission. They also receive counselling and support. [50aj] In August 2002, the Government announced that they plan to provide free anti-retroviral treatment for more than 2,000 AIDS patients countrywide. [28g]

5.101 Anti-Retroviral Drugs (ARV's) are available in Uganda, and the Government is to receive a further US\$36 million under the Global Fund for HIV/AIDS to help fight the AIDS pandemic. [50n] According to the Minister of Health a total of 10,000 people (one-third of the ARV users in sub-Saharan Africa), are in Uganda. [68f] AIDS Healthcare, one of the United States' specialised provider of HIV/AIDS medical care currently operate a completely free AIDS treatment clinic in Masaka. [43]

5.102 In February 2003, trial of a preventive HIV/AIDS vaccine began on human volunteers in Entebbe, by the Uganda Virus Research Institute (UVRI). [68i] However, response was slow - as reported in April 2003. The head of UVRI said the initial phase required 50 volunteers between the ages of 18 and 50 and only ten people had participated so far. [68h]

5.103 According to a UN Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN) report issued on 17 January 2002, the Government promised to start distributing free condoms in villages countrywide in an effort to control the HIV/AIDS pandemic. [68r]

5.104 Members of the Uganda Coalition for Access to Essential Medicines have argued that, although Uganda has been hailed as a success story in the war against HIV/AIDS, doctors are still forced to turn many AIDS patients away because they lack the funds to purchase life-prolonging anti-retroviral drugs. [68bb]

5.105 In August 2003, the Director General of Health Services, Prof. Francis Omaswa announced that by 2004 all Ugandans suffering from AIDS would have access to free anti-retrovirals. [75]

Mental Illness

5.106 In 2000 Uganda formulated a mental health policy based on advocacy, promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation. This revised the previous policy formulated in 1996. [73].

5.107 Uganda treats mental health as part of the primary healthcare system but treatment for severe mental disorders is not available at the primary level, however such treatment is available at the 10 regional referral centres and the National Mental Referral Hospital. Uganda spends around 0.7% of the total health budget on mental health and there exists an essential drugs list (for therapeutic drugs), first formulated in 1993 and subsequently reviewed in 1996 and 2001. [73].

People with Disabilities

5.108 The Constitution provides that persons with disabilities have "a right to respect and human dignity" and requires that authorities take appropriate measures "to ensure that they realise their full mental and physical potential". However, despite this provision, there is no statutory requirement for Government services or facilities, such as accessibility to buildings for the disabled. Most buildings have one storey, but in larger towns with multi-storey buildings, there are often no elevators; even where they do exist, they are rarely reliable. [2]

5.109 There was a Minister of State for Disabled Persons and a Department for Disabled Persons within the Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development; however, these institutions lacked sufficient funding to undertake or support any initiatives. Widespread discrimination by society and employers limits job and educational opportunities for those with physical disabilities. In 1998 the Government appointed a Minister of State for Disabled Persons. A Department for Disabled Persons also exists under the Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development; however, these bodies and positions have little funding to undertake or support any initiatives. Five seats are reserved in Parliament for the disabled. [2]

5.110 The Children's Statute also requires children with disabilities to be treated and given necessary special facilities; however, in practice inadequate funding hampered its enforcement. [2]

Educational System

5.111 The Government continued the Universal Primary Education (UPE) program, which provided free education through the seventh grade; however, education was not compulsory. According to official statistics, there was a 95 percent enrolment rate; however, this figure was widely believed to be inflated as a result of both school dropouts and a tendency of some schools to inflate attendance figures for funding purposes. Since the implementation of UPE, primary school enrolment increased from 2.9 million in 1996 to 7.2 million in 2002. Education received the largest percentage of the budget. [2]

5.112 Girls and boys theoretically had equal access to education in the lower grades; however, the proportion of girls in higher school grades remained low because families traditionally favoured boys when making financially related educational decisions. Boys were also more likely to finish primary school and

perform better on the PLE. The Government continued several programs to promote a national plan for the education of girls; only 54% of adult women were literate compared with 74% of adult men. [2]

5.113 Political education and military science courses known as "Chaka Mchaka" were suspended prior to the June 2000 Referendum on political systems but resumed in August 2000. These courses are criticised as indoctrination in Movement political philosophy. There continued to be reports that techniques used in some of the courses included intimidation and physical and mental abuse. [2]

5.35 In May 2002, parliament adopted the highly contested Political Organisations Law, which retained current constitutional restrictions on political parties and added new ones. It outlawed most activities normally associated with political parties, such as opening and operating branch offices, and holding delegates' conferences and rallies. Existing political parties would "legally cease to exist" if they failed to register within six months of the law's entry into force. This has been subject to a challenge by opposition MPs however. [35c]

5.36 President Museveni announced on 26 January 2003 that Uganda was not yet ready for a pluralist society. However, the Movement's vice-chairman, Al Hajji Moses Kigongo, in early February 2003, said that the return to full operation of political parties would be addressed at an appropriate time. [50i] On 18 February 2003, President Museveni was reported as saying that he has recommended Uganda open up to multi party politics. President Museveni, who had in the past been most critical of multi party politics, surprised Movement leaders when he passionately called for a return to political party competition. [31h]

5.37 In March 2003, a court in Uganda ruled as unconstitutional a law, which prevents political parties from carrying out their activities. Under the Political Organisations Act 2002 the court agreed that it effectively makes Uganda a one party state in favour of the government-sponsored system of Government. According to the judgement the Movement is now treated as a political party that cannot enjoy preferential treatment. [69r]

5.38 In April 2003, the ruling Movement sought to lift the two-term limit, provided for in the Constitution, for a serving president. This was sharply criticised by the Local Government Minister. [69q] However, a couple of days later some 200 members of the NRM's top decision-making organ, the National Executive Committee reached the decision to remove the presidential term limit. Ugandan opposition leaders vowed to block the decision. [68a]

Reform Agenda

5.39 The Reform Agenda is an opposition pressure group founded by Besigye after his bid for presidency failed. However, security organisations claim that RA is more than a pressure group. [50a] In July 2002, the Reform Agenda (RA) elected Besigye as National Chairman in absentia. Deputy Chairman of the RA, Sam Njuba said that the group has reconstructed itself into a pro-reform, pro-democracy pressure group and resolved not to register under the newly passed Political Parties and Organisations Act. [31aa]

5.40 On 5 January 2003, Reform Agenda advised Besigye not to return to Uganda but to stay in exile. This followed a statement by President Museveni, the previous week that Besigye was free to return to Uganda. However, Njuba said that the Government would have to guarantee Besigye's freedom if it is serious about his return. [31e]

5.41 On 22 January 2003, a local daily newspaper quoted an official from RA as saying that about 50 of their activists had been arrested by security operatives. Security organisations accused all those arrested of being involved in armed rebellion. Bushenyi RDC Mr Barnabas Bamusede Bwambale said, in his personal opinion, there were genuine fears that the RA offers the political base and network from which the People's Redemption Army would draw inside support. The military establishment also made remarks that Besigye has links with the Lords Resistance Army (LRA). However, a RA Activist said that any talk linking them to the LRA is aimed at intimidating them into submission and a ploy by the Government to label them as a rebel group and consequently outlaw them. [50a]

5.42 On 28 January 2003, President Museveni agreed to talk to RA members. At an RA Press Conference on 27 January 2003, it was revealed that the RA were ready for such a meeting. [66g] In February 2003, the RA resolved that their exiled leader, Besigye, should lead their delegation and take part in the proposed talks with the President. Vice-chairperson, Njuba said that the RA gave certain conditions for the talks: there must be an

agenda, Besigye has to lead the delegation, the meeting must also be with other opposition leaders and the RA prisoners were to be released first. [50i]

5.43 In February 2003, former Kampala mayor, Nasser Sebaggala said that Besigye should return from exile. Mr Sebaggala supported Besigye in the 2001 elections after he himself was not nominated. Sebaggala is currently pursuing a master's degree in politics and economics in the UK. He hopes to run for the position of mayor of Kampala in the 2005 elections. Following this he hopes to contest the 2006 presidential elections. [31f]

Judiciary

5.44 The Constitution provides for an independent judiciary. The President has extensive legal powers that influence the exercise of independence. The President nominates, for the approval of Parliament, members of the Judicial Service Commission, which makes recommendations on appointments to the High Court, the Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court. The lower courts remained understaffed and weak. [2]

5.45 The highest court in Uganda is the Supreme Court, followed by (in descending order) the Court of Appeal, which also functions as the Constitutional Court for cases of first instance involving constitutional issues. The High Court, the Chief Magistrate's court, and local council (LC) level 3 (subcounty) courts, LC 2 level (parish), and LC level 1 (village) courts. LC court decisions could be appealed to magistrate's courts; however, often there were no records made at the village level, and defendants were not aware of their right to appeal. A minimum of six justices may sit on the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeal or Constitutional Court. [2]

5.46 Bribery and corruption are widespread amongst officers of the lower courts and the LCs, have been described as the most corrupt apparatus of the state. There is also a military court system. [31ag]

5.47 All non-military trials were public. The average time in pre-trial detention is 2 to 3 years. The case backlog in the High Court continued to diminish; the number of criminal cases pending decreased from 149 in 2001 to 87 in 2002. Most courts rarely observed the constitutionally prescribed limits on pre-trial detention. The civilian judicial system contains procedural safeguards, including the granting of bail and the right of appeal to higher courts; however, an inadequate system of judicial administration and a lack of resources, resulting in a serious backlog of cases, have circumscribed the right to a fair trial for many years. [2] For example, a woman was released from custody by the High Court in June 1999 after having been imprisoned since 1991 without trial. She was accused of murdering her husband, but whenever she was scheduled to appear in court, no representative from the Prosecutor's office ever appeared, so she was remanded on each occasion. [31ac]

5.48 Many defendants cannot afford legal representation. The Constitution requires that the Government provides counsel for defendants accused of capital offences, but there is rarely enough money to retain adequate representation. The Uganda Law Society (ULS) operates Legal Aid clinics in four regional offices. The Foundation for Human Rights Initiatives practice public-interest law from offices in Kampala. [2]

5.49 In July 2002, the Chief Registrar of the High Court announced that Chief Magistrates Courts would start handling cases of defilement and rape and shall have high powers to grant bail. It was agreed that the age of consent remains 18, but the sentence reduced to life imprisonment. The number of Chief Magistrates is to be increased from 29 to 59 in order to handle the backlog of cases in courts. [50ak]

Treason

5.50 The Constitution provides for bail in all but capital cases and cases of treason. If the case is presented to the court before the expiration of this period, the Constitution does not limit pre-trial detention. The Government continued to arrest people on treason charges. On 7 September 2002, security forces arrested and charged 14 opposition youths with treason in Gulu. The case was pending at the end of 2002. [2]

5.51 In the past, numerous human rights abuses were committed in connection with treason cases, including political detention, detention without charge, detention in unregistered and unofficial places of remand, and mistreatment, including torture. In May 2002, Dennis Murindwa, Besigye's cousin who was charged with treason for the alleged recruitment of youths into rebel activity, was released when the court found he had been held beyond the mandatory 48 hours and then reportedly left the country. At the end of 2002, prison officials reported that there were more than 120 persons detained on charges of treason. During 2001, no former rebels in prison on treason charges were pardoned, but there were applications pending. [2]

5.52 Detainees included members of the Islamic Tabliq group, some of whom were released and then rearrested. [2] In July 2002, fifteen Tabliq Muslims were acquitted of treason by the High Court on 12 July 2002. On their release they were taken to a religious leader for counselling and then were allowed home. [31m]

Legal Rights/Detention

5.53 Members of the security forces at times arrested and detained citizens arbitrarily. Under to the Constitution, a suspect must be charged within 48 hours of arrest and be brought to trial or released on bail within 120 days (360 days for a capital offence). The Constitution also provides that detainees should be informed immediately of all the reasons for their detention; however, in practice the authorities did not enforce these procedural protections. Prolonged pre-trial detention remained a problem. Poor judicial administration, lack of resources, a large case backlog, and lengthy trial delays limited due process rights, including the right to a fair trial; however, some detainees received amnesty and were released. [2]

5.54 Legal and human rights groups, including the UHRC, strongly criticised the excessive length of detention without trial, in many cases amounting to several years, for alleged offences under other laws, which both violated the constitutional rights of the detainees and substantially contributed to prison overcrowding. Pre-trial detainees comprised 70 percent of the prison population. The average time in pre-trial detention was between 2 and 3 years. An estimated 11,300 of the approximately 17,500 persons being held in the central prisons and in the local government-run prisons were pre-trial detainees. During 2002, the UHRC heard several cases brought by prisoners challenging the length of their detention. [2]

5.55 In 2002, a tough anti-terrorism law came into force. The Anti-Terrorism Act has a broad definition of terrorism, describing it as the "use of violence or threat of violence with intent to promote or achieve political, religious, economic and cultural or social ends in an unlawful manner." The law carried a mandatory death sentence for those found to be terrorists. It could threaten also the legitimate work of journalists who publish material considered "likely to promote terrorism." [35c]

Death Penalty

5.56 Defilement carried a maximum sentence of death; however, during 2002 rapists were sentenced to death. [2]

5.57 On 16 August 2002, a Special Police Constable in Nakasongola District was found guilty and sentenced to death for the murder of a fish dealer in 2000. On 24 June 2002, the High Court in Jinja convicted six persons of the mob murder of four persons in Kamuli District in 2000 and sentenced them to death. Bright Gabula Africa, whose death sentence for treason (plotting an armed coup) was upheld by the Supreme Court in 1995, remains imprisoned pending the outcome of his appeal to the Advisory Committee on the Prerogative of Mercy, a largely autonomous constitutional body. [2]

5.58 The law establishes a court-martial appeals process; however, the sentence passed by a military court, which could include the death penalty, could be appealed only to the High Command. [2] In March 2003, the Ugandan army executed three soldiers in public after they were found guilty of murdering several civilians near the northern town of Kitgum. The Ugandan army has been known to execute its own soldiers. In 2002, two young soldiers were executed after being found guilty in a field court martial of murdering an Irish priest and his two Ugandan employees. [69p]

5.59 In August 2001 leading Human Rights campaigner Livingstone Sewanyana called for the abolition of the death penalty as part of the Government's ongoing constitutional review. [68o] In October 2001, the Director of Operations in the Uganda Prison Service, Mr Moses Kakungulu, proposed that the execution of convicts be privatised if the death penalty cannot be abolished. Kakungulu said the hanging of convicts brutalises the prison service whose role is simply to reform and rehabilitate offenders into good citizens. [50c]

5.60 Amnesty International condemned the execution of two UPDF officers carried out on 25 March 2002. They said that the executions were done without recourse to a fair and independent trial. Amnesty International also condemned the use of the death penalty as a form of punishment by the Ugandan army. The international human rights organisation stated that they were further alarmed by reports, which indicate that the Ugandan army might be considering this extreme type of measure to discipline soldiers. [72]

Internal Security

5.61 In August 2001, the Uganda People's Defence Forces was estimated to number 50,000 to 60,000 men including paramilitary forces (a border defence unit of about 600 men, a police air wing of about 800 men, about 400 marines and local defence unit totalling about 15,000 men). Disruptive activity by rebel groups in northern and western Uganda, in conjunction with Uganda's military involvement in the Democratic Republic of the Congo from the middle of the 1998 resulted in higher levels of military expenditure during the 1990s. [1]

5.62 The Internal Security Organisation (ISO) remained under the direct authority of the President. Although the ISO primarily was an intelligence-gathering body, its operatives occasionally detained civilians. The Chief of Military Intelligence (CMI), under UPDF control, detained civilians suspected of rebel and terrorist activity. The police were organised as a national force under the authority of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. All security forces were under government control and were responsive to the Government. Members of the security forces committed numerous serious human rights abuses. [2]

5.63 In August 1998 the Government said that they had sent troops across the border in the DRC. This, they stated was not to join the fighting in the rebellion, but merely to establish a buffer zone along the border to prevent raids by the ADF. [26] The Government of the DRC began action in the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in the Hague claiming that Uganda was in the DRC illegally and has caused harm to DRC citizens by their actions. [66a]

5.64 In 1999 all warring sides in the Democratic Republic of the Congo signed a peace agreement in Lusaka, Zambia. The Lusaka Cease Fire Agreement is designed to bring democracy to the DRC and provides for a cessation of hostilities, the establishment of a commission to investigate cease fire violations, work out mechanisms to disarm militias and monitor the withdrawal of foreign troops. [40] President Museveni threatened to withdraw from the accord stating that "owing to the indifference to Africans suffering in the world and to the ideological confusion and fragmentation in Africa he had decided to withdraw from the Lusaka peace process". [67d] However, he did not do so in the end. Uganda therefore is still committed to the Lusaka Agreement. By April 2001, Uganda had withdrawn over 3,000 troops from the DRC. [69g]

5.65 A UN report released earlier in April 2001 implicated Uganda, members of the president's Government and his family in the alleged plundering of resources from the DRC. The Porter Report showed that since the military occupation of areas of the Congo, at the beginning of 1998, Ugandan exports of gold and diamonds sharply increased, although gold production in the country remained level and Uganda has no diamond production at all. [20] Appearing before a state enquiry, on 16 August 2001, President Museveni denied the UN allegations and the Government criticised the report for inconsistency and inaccuracy and has refuted the allegations made in the report. [69g]

5.66 For most of 2002, the UPDF continued to occupy the northeastern parts of the DRC, where it trained, equipped, and supported several rival rebel groups. The Ugandan involvement fuelled conflict among different communities. Members of the UPDF continued to be involved in highly profitable business in the northeastern DRC, such as the exploitation of timber, diamonds, and gold, as well as collecting fees for the "protection" of farms and trucks. [35b]

5.67 The Sun City Accord, a power-sharing agreement between the Congolese government and the Ugandan-backed Movement for the Liberation of Congo (MLC) concluded in April 2002, did not end the war in the northeastern DRC. [35b] In August 2002, the Governments of the DRC and Uganda reached an accord whereby Uganda agreed to withdraw its remaining troops, without condition, from the DRC and the two countries will normalise relations. [69j] The Congolese Government laid down a deadline, in the agreement signed by both presidents on 6 September 2002, of the end of 2002 for the withdrawal of Ugandan troops from the DRC. [69k]

5.68 In February 2003, the Porter Commission recommended that President Museveni reprimands Army Commander Maj. Gen. James Kazini and other senior UPDF officers. [50s]

5.69 On 6 March 2003, violent clashes broke out between the Union of Congolese Patriots and the UPDF. This comes days after the signing of an agreement by both parties making a commitment to refrain from military activities to further deteriorate their relations. [42b] On 10 March 2003, the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for the DRC, Namanga Ngongi, dispatched a delegation to assess the situation following the clashes. [42a]

5.70 There continued to be sporadic lawlessness in the Karamoja region due to traditional cattle-rustling activities and the wide availability of arms. In August 1999, the UPDF reported finding the bodies of at least 140 people, including 70 children, close to the borders with Sudan and Kenya in the remote northeastern region. [66b] They blamed the Karamojong, backed by 500 Turkana tribesmen from just over the border in

Kenya. The UPDF were ordered to shoot on sight any armed Karamojong warriors found "loitering" by the highway. [62]

5.71 For years northeastern Uganda has been insecure due to cattle rustling by armed Karamojong amongst themselves and against neighbouring tribes such as the Pokot (a tribe found in both Uganda and Kenya). Violence erupted in December 2002 when raiders from the Pokot tribe killed ten people in an attack on their Karamojong rivals and fled with 800 heads of cattle. Peter Lokeris, a government Minister in charge of the Karamoja region said the attackers from Pokot had fled towards Kenya pursued by the Ugandan army. [53]

5.72 During 2002, there were unconfirmed reports of politically motivated killings by government forces, and members of the security forces and the police committed unlawful killings. Security forces sometimes used excessive force, which resulted in deaths. [2]

5.73 There were some reports that security officials harassed and or detained Muslims. On 12 July 2002, 15 Tabliq Muslims who were acquitted of treason by the High Court were rearrested by the Joint Anti-Terrorism Task Force on allegations that they had made contact with ADF rebels. The suspects were remanded for further questioning. [2]

5.74 The police occasionally treat criminals in a degrading and inhumane manner. The Government investigated some cases of abuse, and tried and punished some offenders. In May 1999 the Government launched a Judicial Commission of Inquiry into police corruption. The Commission probed a wide range of police abuses, including abuses committed by senior police officials. The inquiry resulted in the arrests of several police officers on charges of abuse, rape, extortion and robbery including a police officer accused of raping a 16 year old girl. In May 2001, the independent Judicial Commission of Inquiry submitted its report to the Minister of Internal Affairs. During the course of the investigation, the Commission uncovered incidents of killings, brutality, theft and robbery by police in general, and by the CID in particular. During 2002, four police officers interdicted in the 2001 inquiry were reinstated. Three others retired while the other was dismissed following a investigations by a police disciplinary committee. [2]

5.75 Unlike 2001 there were no reports of Rwandan Hutu rebel attacks in the country. There were no developments in the case of the Rwandan Hutus who killed two civilians in 2001 in Kisoro District. [2]

Security Forces

5.76 The Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF) was the key security force. The Constitution provides for civilian control of the UPDF, with the President designated as Commander in Chief; a civilian served as Minister of Defence. During 2002, the Government withdrew a significant portion of the UPDF from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC); however, security forces remained active in Bunia and border areas.

5.77 The UPDF also increased its activities in the north in "Operation Iron Fist" against the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebels and conducted operations destroying LRA sanctuaries in southern Sudan with the permission of the Sudanese Government. UPDF soldiers and members of Local Defence Units (LDU's), assigned to the Reserved Forces, assisted the police in rural areas. LDU's operated under the authority of the Ministry of Internal Affairs but lacked a legal mandate. [2]

5.78 War broke out in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in August 1998, Congolese Tutsis as well as the Governments of Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda all relied on the Rwandan military presence for protection against hostile armed groups operating out of the eastern part of the DRC. These groups included, among others, the Allied of Democratic Forces (ADF). In the ensuing war, elements of the armed forces of Rwanda and Uganda operated inside the DRC in support of the Rally for the Congolese Democracy (RCD) and the Movement for the Liberation of the Congo (MLC). [24]

UGANDA COUNTRY REPORT

OCTOBER 2003

COUNTRY INFORMATION & POLICY UNIT**VI HUMAN RIGHTS****VIA HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES**Part IPart II**6. HUMAN RIGHTS****6A. HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES****Overview**

6.1 The Government's human rights record remained poor and there continued to be numerous, serious problems. Movement domination of the political process limited the rights of citizens to change their government. [2]

6.2 The Ugandan political landscape in 2002 was characterised by continued conflict over the "movement" system, by which Uganda is governed. As a result, political and civil rights were violated, though on a somewhat lesser scale than during the violent election year 2001. Uganda was a major player in armed conflicts in the region, which continued during most of 2002. The occupation by the UPDF of the northeastern part of the DRC began to be scaled back in September 2002 and the UPDF fought a major military offensive against the rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in northern Uganda and southern Sudan. In both wars, civilians were victims of widespread abuse. [35b]

6.3 Uganda's human rights record was also tainted by its involvement in two armed conflicts. The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), which had been waging a war in northern Uganda and committing gross human rights violations since 1989, had been supported by the Sudan government in retaliation for Uganda's support of the Sudanese rebels, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A). Under United States (U.S.) pressure the Sudan government cut off assistance to the LRA. In March 2002, with the permission of the Sudan government, the UPDF launched a major offensive against the LRA in southern Sudan - "Operation Iron Fist." The initial plan to eliminate the LRA failed, as the LRA fled to mountains in southern Sudan and then crossed back into Uganda. These military operations had a horrendous impact on the civilian population in northern Uganda and southern Sudan. [35b]

6.4 The Government passed amnesty legislation in January 2000 to encourage anti-Government forces to lay down their weapons. Whilst it has had some success with the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) rebels, only a handful of active LRA rebels have taken advantage of the Amnesty. [16b]

6.5 The UPDF committed fewer abuses in the DRC, where they significantly reduced their presence during 2002. The Government at times did not respect freedom of speech and of the press, and restricted freedom of assembly and association. [2]

6.6 Security forces killed several persons during 2002. On 21 March 2002, two UPDF soldiers in Kotido killed Father Declan O'Toole, his driver, and his cook. On 25 March 2002, the soldiers received a court martial and were subsequently executed. [2]

6.7 On 10 April 2002 the UPDF killed 10 Karamojong warriors during a gun battle to recover illegal guns in Kotido District. The UPDF Commanding Officer of Karamoja, Col. Sula Ssemakula, confirmed the killings; however, Ssemakula did not indicate whether any action would be taken against the responsible soldiers. [2]

6.8 There were some reports that security officials harassed and or detained Muslims. On 12 July 2002, 15

Tablig Muslims who were acquitted of treason by the High Court were rearrested by the Joint Anti-Terrorism Task Force on allegations that they had made contact with ADF rebels. The suspects were remanded for further questioning. Muslims occupied positions of authority in local and central government; however, some Muslim leaders claimed that the number of positions did not reflect their percentage of the population. [2]

6.9 The Government worked with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to combat the practice of female genital mutilation (FGM) which occurred on a limited basis. There continued to be limits on worker rights. Forced labour, including by children continued and child labour was common, mostly in the informal sector. There were reports of trafficking in persons. Vigilante justice remained a problem. [2]

Human Rights Monitoring

6.10 Numerous human rights groups operate in Uganda. Among them are The Foundation for Human Rights Initiative; a chapter of FIDA; the Prisoners' Aid Foundation, which monitors prison conditions; the National Organisation of Civic Education and Election Monitoring, which deals with problems related to civil society and political rights; Human Rights Focus, based in the northern town of Gulu; the National Association of Women's Organisations of Uganda (NAWOU), an umbrella group; the International Federation of Human Rights; and the Human Rights and Peace Centre, based at Makerere University. These groups operate without Government restriction and have investigated and published their findings on human rights cases. [2]

6.11 HURINET, a human rights network and an umbrella organisation for nine human rights organisations active in the country also continued to be active. The Government allowed visits by international human rights NGOs including Amnesty International and the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC). The Government also co-operated with the UNHCR. Government officials were generally co-operative and responsive to NGO views. They frequently attended conferences and seminars hosted by NGO'S on social problems. The Government also continued to co-operate with NGOs on legal and prison reforms. [2]

Uganda Human Rights Commission

6.12 The Constitution established the UHRC as a permanent independent body with quasi-judicial powers. Under the Constitution, the UHRC may subpoena information and order the release of detainees and the payment of compensation for abuses. The UHRC Human Rights Tribunal headquarters received 409 new complaints during 2002, including some against senior government leaders and military and police officials. The Soroti office received 405 complaints and the Gulu office received 372. Of the 409 complaints received at headquarters, 335 were pending investigations while twenty-five were referred to other bodies. One was awaiting for judgement before the tribunal and 7 were ruled as no violation. Twenty-one of the cases were resolved through mediation, 6 were determined not to be human rights cases. Nine complainants lost interest, two were time barred while two were dismissed for lack of evidence. The remaining case was dropped when the respondent died. [2]

6.13 The UHRC Tribunal awarded compensation to several persons who had been abused by police. On 16 April 2002, the UHRC Tribunal awarded approximately \$18,000 (33 million shillings) to James Kamengo as compensation for torture and inhuman degrading treatment by Lugazi Police, Mukono District in 1999. On 22 May 2002, the UHRC Tribunal awarded approximately \$16,000 (30 million shillings) to Private Godfrey Birungi as compensation for having been detained for 3 years, tortured, and deprived of his property by the UPDF in 1997. On 29 August 2002, the UHRC tribunal awarded approximately \$2,222 (4 million shillings) as compensation to Yitzach Ocircan, whom police arrested, detained, and tortured for 12 days in 1998. [2]

Insurgency

6.14 Rebel attacks continued to be a problem for the Government. The main rebel group involved is the LRA, based in southern Sudan and operating in northern Uganda. The Government claim to have now defeated the ADF who were based in the Rwenzori Mountains on the border with the DRC to the west. The ADF were most active in the late 1990s. [16b]

6.15 The LRA, under the leadership of Joseph Kony, is the longest running insurgent organisation, with links back to the resistance against Museveni in northern Uganda since 1986. The group practices a combination of spiritualism and black magic to intimidate its members and appears to have no political aims beyond opposition to Museveni. The LRA have conducted a brutal campaign of atrocities against the local Acholi population, in punishment for failure to support their cause. [16b]

Amnesties

6.16 In December 1999 Parliament passed a bill granting a general amnesty to all rebels who had been fighting to overthrow the Museveni Government and who were prepared to renounce rebellion. [1] An Amnesty Act was passed in January 2000 with a date of commencement of 21 January 2000. The Act provided for an "amnesty for Ugandans involved in acts of a war-like nature in various parts of the country and for other connected purposes". The Act was to remain in force for 6 months and on expiry it may be extended by statutory instrument. [38]

6.17 The law is unconditional and open to all levels within the rebel movements. Despite formal notification the amnesty remains in force. [47b] The amnesty covers any Ugandan residing within or outside of the country. [68j]

6.18 In April 2001, more than 50 Allied Democratic Forces rebels were freed in the first application of the amnesty law. As reported in the 'New Vision' Ugandan newspaper on 22 August 2001 over 5,000 current and former rebels have appealed to the Ugandan Amnesty Commission to be allowed to return peacefully to their homes but the outcome is yet unknown. [68q] On 30 August 2001, the Amnesty Commission chief Justice Onega said that rebels convicted of treason were eligible for pardon under the amnesty initiative. Increasing numbers of LRA combatants have taken up the offer of amnesty over recent months. This may be as a result of increased information about the amnesty being made available in Northern Uganda. [68p]

6.19 Between July 2000 and January 2002, 1671 rebels had surrendered under the amnesty law and were issued with certificates by the Amnesty Commission. According to the Amnesty Commission over 700 other rebels based in Sudan had sent "signals" that they were willing to surrender under the law. [50p] According to the Government-owned newspaper, the New Vision, dated 16 July 2002, the First Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Internal Affairs said that during the last financial year the Amnesty Commission had granted amnesty to 5,000 people. They also expect to grant another 6,000 persons who have reported. [50ah]

6.20 In January 2003, the International Organisation of Migration (IOM) office in Kenya launched a programme to screen former LRA rebels who wish to apply for amnesty and return to Uganda. [68j] As reported by the UN Integrated Regional Information Network on 28 January, a total of 358 Ugandans had registered with the IOM to take advantage of the amnesty. [68k]

Freedom of Speech and the Media

6.21 The Constitution provides for freedom of speech and of the press; however, the Government at times did not respect these rights in practice. On occasion people were arrested for criticising the Government. On 8 February 2002, police in Kampala questioned MP Michael Mabikke over seditious statements he allegedly made about President Museveni on 31 January 2002. He was released after 6 hours and was issued with a warning. [2]

6.22 Most public media generally were free and outspoken. There were many privately-owned publications and broadcasters. The New Vision, a government-owned daily newspaper with a circulation of 35,000, was of fairly high quality and sometimes included reports critical of the Government. The independent Monitor newspaper, with a daily circulation of approximately 30,000, was consistently critical of the Government. The East African, a Kenya-based weekly publication, which provided extensive reporting on the country, continued to circulate without government hindrance. [2]

6.23 A print media law and a broadcast media law require journalists to be licensed and to meet certain standards, such as holding a university degree in journalism or the equivalent. The law also provides for a Media Council that can suspend newspapers and deny access to state information; the Media Council was staffed but not operational during 2002. By the end of 2002, Government officials began to enforce the law. In November 2002, President Museveni ordered stations to stop interviewing "exiled political dissidents" who failed to renounce terrorist and subversive activity, specifically opposition leader Kizza Besigye. [2]

6.24 In February 2003 the Director for Information in the President's Office told journalists that the Freedom of Information Act, which intends giving access to information held in state possession, will be in place at the end of 2003. [50m]

6.25 Uncensored Internet access is widely available through three commercial service providers in the major cities, although its price was prohibitive for all but the most affluent non-institutional users. There are now over a dozen internet cafes in Kampala and other cities and several NGOs offer Internet access. [2]

6.26 At the end of 2002, there were at least 50 radio stations, mostly private, operating throughout the country. Monitor FM radio, belonging to the Monitor publications group, continued to operate throughout the raid and closure of the Monitor newspaper. In December 2002, the Secretary of the National Broadcasting Council, a governmental body, informed three radio stations that they must stop broadcasting from off-site locations. [2] In January 2003, Reporters sans frontiers protested at the Government's crackdown on live outside radio broadcasts of the views of ordinary Ugandans. The Ugandan Minister of Information Basoga Nsadhu said that the law only allowed stations to broadcast from their studios, not from outside them. [52]

6.27 The Government did not restrict academic freedom. There were two public and more than nine private universities. Students and faculty sponsored wide-ranging political debates in open forums. On 14 October 2002, Makerere University students organised a demonstration to protest the police raid on the Monitor newspaper. [2] Police spokesman vowed to stop the planned demonstration. [31r] However, the students cancelled it. [2]

Journalists

6.28 The Constitution provides for freedom of the press and the Government generally respects this right; however, there were instances where the Government infringed on these rights. Police at times harassed and detained journalists for several hours by holding them at police stations for several hours of questioning. The media are generally free and outspoken, and there are many privately owned publications and broadcasters. [2]

6.29 In October 2002, the police raided the independent Monitor newspaper. The police, who did not obtain a search warrant, confiscated computers, mobile phones, diskettes, and print materials. Two editors and a journalist were charged with publication of false information that was considered a threat to national security. [2] A reporter was arrested over a story he had written about a UPDF helicopter crashing while fighting LRA rebels in the Adilang Hills. [31o] On 10 October 2002, police sealed off the Monitor premises following the publication the story, preventing the publication of the newspaper. [31o] The Monitor subsequently was closed down but reopened 1 week later. [2]

6.30 The raid carried out on the premises of the Monitor newspaper was condemned by Amnesty International. Amnesty International were concerned that the raid represented the Government's continued infringement to press freedom since early 2002. [44]

6.31 On 6 February 2002, the Human Rights Network (HURINET) strongly condemned the beating of two journalists by military policemen. The two New Vision journalists had gone to witness an eviction exercise involving the Military Police. HURINET Co-ordinator described the beating as unfortunate and a violation of the citizens' human rights. [31w]

6.32 A print media law and a broadcast media law require journalists to be licensed and to meet certain standards, such as holding a university degree in journalism or an equivalent. The law also provides for a Media Council that can suspend newspapers and deny access to state information; the Media Council was staffed but not operational during 2002. Government officials began to enforce the Media Law by the end of 2002. [2]

Freedom of Religion

6.33 The Constitution provides for freedom of religion, and the Government generally respects this right in practice; however, the Government imposed some restrictions. During 2002 Government policy continued to contribute to the generally free practice of religion; however, local authorities banned some churches suspected of being cults and also some night time religious meetings for security reasons. Several members of religious groups suspected of being cults were arrested and detained for illegal assembly. [7]

6.34 The generally amicable relationship among religions in society contributed to religious freedom. However, the backlash from the killing of more than 1,000 citizens in 2000 at the hands of a religious group (Movement for the Restoration of the Ten Commandments of God) resulted in negative public attitudes toward minority Christian groups that are viewed as cults. [7]

6.35 Christianity is the majority religion. Muslims account for approximately 16 percent of the population. A variety of other religions, including traditional indigenous religions, Hinduism, the Baha'i Faith, and Judaism, are practised freely and, combined, make up approximately 18% of the population. Muslims are mainly Sunni,

although there also are Shi'a followers of the Aga Khan among the Asian community. Several branches of Hinduism are also represented among the Asian community. There are few atheists. [7]

6.36 In many areas, particularly in rural settings, some religions tend to be syncretistic. Deeply held traditional indigenous beliefs commonly are blended into established religious rites or observed alongside such rites, particularly in areas, which are predominantly Christian. [7]

6.37 There were reports that local government officials dispersed meetings of religious groups and, on occasion denied groups the right to assemble for security reasons. Religious groups and foreign missionaries, like other NGOs, had to register with the Government. The Government continued to refuse registration to the World Last Message Warning Church, due to continuing suspicions following the 2000 cult killings of more than 1,000 citizens in Kanungu. The Government appointed a Commission of Inquiry to investigate the killings; however, the Commission's investigation was delayed due to lack of funds. [2]

6.38 There were no reports that the Government refused registration to any other religious organisations. [2]

6.39 Local authorities banned at least one religious group because it forbade members from seeking medical treatment. On 7 March 2002, Nebbi Resident District Commissioner (RDC) banned all activities by a religious group called the "Jurwo Ni Mungu," or "Believers in God," following reports that 10 members of the group had died after refusing to seek necessary medical treatment. On 13 March 2002, those arrested were charged with unlawful assembly and remanded to prison pending trial. On 13 March 2002, Otuga Regenaro, the group's leader, also was arrested for unlawful assembly; he remained in prison pending trial at the end of 2002. [7]

6.40 Prisoners are given the opportunity to pray on days appropriate to their faith. Muslim prisoners usually are released from work duties during the month of Ramadan. [7]

Religious Groups

Movement for the Restoration of the Ten Commandments of God

6.41 On 17 March 2000 several hundred members of The Movement for the Restoration of the Ten Commandments of God were burnt to death at the sect's headquarters in Kanungu in southwest Uganda. The incident was initially treated as a mass suicide, however as further bodies of cult members were found buried in the gardens and beneath the floorboards of houses used by the sect it became clear that cult members had been massacred. [29] On 28 July 2000 the police announced that most of the hundreds of people who died at Kanungu, whose bodies had been found in buried pits had been poisoned to death. Hundreds of bodies were discovered in various places in the country including Kampala where the cult had branches. [64a]

6.42 This group focused on upcoming Armageddon at the end of 2000 (not the end of 1999 as previously thought); it was a group based on Christianity, seemingly composed mainly of disenfranchised Roman Catholic clergy and lay people. On March 17, 2000, several hundred members died in a fire at the group's church; the ensuing investigation has literally turned up hundreds of bodies. The number of deaths caused by this group, whether by coerced suicide or outright murder, has surpassed the death toll of the Jonestown tragedy. [15]

6.43 Credonia Mwerinde, a former prostitute who reportedly founded the sect in the late 1980's (some reports say it was not established until 1994), warned followers that the world was about to end, but said her followers would enter an ark and be saved. The sect had been predicting that the world would end on 31 December 1999. When the end did not come, sect leaders rescheduled the date for the end of June 2000. [71b] However Father Dominic Kataribabo, one of the 12 'apostles', talked of another date - 17 March 2000. On this date sect members entered their church in Kanungu. The doors were locked and the windows boarded and nailed shut from the outside. Villagers said there was a huge explosion at about 10.00am followed by the screams of people beating on the wooden windows. [36]

6.44 A lack of forensic expertise made it impossible to establish how many people perished in the fire. [71b] By 28 July 2000 the death toll from the fire was put at 500. Local officials said it was not known whether any of the cult leaders died with their followers or whether any survivors had fled. [63a]

6.45 Investigations following the fire led to mass graves of sect members being discovered on the property of

various members of the sect, including the homes of Father Kataribabo in Rugazi and Joseph Nyamwinda in Bushenyi District. On 31 March 2000 police arrested Robert Mutazindwa, an assistant resident district commissioner who was formally in charge of Kanungu. This was the first arrest made in connection with the deaths. President Museveni accused district and regional officials of suppressing intelligence reports on the activities of the cult and said he had heard reports that the official arrested was a cult member. [36]

6.46 By 1 April 2000 a total of 389 bodies had been found; all bodies exhumed had been killed within a period of two months. This lends weight to the theory that sect leaders decided to kill their members after their prediction that the world would end in 2000 failed to materialise. In a telephone interview on 28 July 2000, Police Spokesman Asuman Mugenyi said that the death toll in the cult killings registered at 778. However, the motive behind the massacre remained unknown. Speculation has included a financial scam, pressure on the cult to return members' property, and a fanatical belief. [29]

6.47 On 2 April 2000 a prayer meeting was held in Kanungu for victims of the cult. Vice-President Dr Kazibwe who was in attendance said there was "overwhelming evidence" that what happened in Kanungu and other locations were "callous, well-orchestrated mass murders, perpetrated by a network of diabolical, malevolent criminals masquerading as holy and religious people". She also said that the total number of dead at Kanungu and other sites would surpass 1,000. Dr Kazibwe apologised on behalf of the Government for the fact that the cult's activities had escaped the scrutiny of senior officials, she said that those at a lower level who had failed to pass on information or take action would be punished. The Catholic Archbishop of western Uganda said he was not convinced that sect leader, Joseph Kibwetere was dead. [71a]

Freedom of Assembly & Association

6.48 The Constitution restricts freedom of assembly, particularly for political groups. Permits were not required for public meetings; however, groups were required to notify the police prior to such gatherings. Police denied permission to hold public rallies to several non-Movement groups during 2002; however, in practice many groups held rallies and large gatherings, only a few were declared illegal or disrupted by authorities. On 1 February 2002, opposition members Paul Ssemogerere of the Democratic Party (DP), Karuhanga Chapaa of the National Democrats Forum, Muhammed Kibirige Mayanja of the Justice Forum, and James Rwanyarare of the UPC, held a meeting in Kampala to discuss President Museveni's remarks on political parties. There was no interference by the authorities. [2]

6.49 The Constitution forbids any activities, which interfere with the Movement system. The Government interpreted this provision to undermine political groups' interests. The Constitution bans political parties from holding national conventions, issuing platforms, endorsing candidates, or opening branch offices outside the capital, and on several occasions, police disrupted or intervened and dispersed opposition demonstrations and other events. On 6 June 2002, the President approved the Political Organisations Act (POA), which regulates political party activities. The POA permits political parties to establish their headquarters and operate in Kampala; however, the law does not allow parties to operate or campaign at the district level or below. On 2 July 2002, the opposition DP and lobbying group Reform Agenda filed a petition in the Constitutional Court to challenge the constitutionality of the POA. [2]

Employment Rights

6.50 The Constitution provides for the right of every person to join workers' associations or trade unions; however, at times the Government did not respect this right in practice. The Government continued to refuse registration to the Uganda Allied Teachers' Union. Employers often did not observe the requirement to recognise a union. The right to form unions extended to civil servants; however, many "essential" government employees were not permitted to form unions, including police, army, permanent secretaries in the ministries, heads of departments and state-owned enterprises, school principals, and other management-level officials. The Government failed to enforce the rights of some employees to join unions in newly privatised industries and factories. [2]

6.51 The Constitution provides the right to strike; however, the Government seldom defended this right and government policy required labour and management to make "every effort" to reconcile labour disputes before resorting to strike action. This directive presented unions with a complicated set of restrictions. [2]

6.52 The law prohibits forced or bonded labour, including by children; however, a lack of resources prevented

the Government from enforcing this prohibition effectively in practice. There was strong evidence that prison officials hired out prisoners to work on private farms and construction sites, where often they were overworked. During 2002, there were reports that the UPDF used children to help find LRA landmines, camps, and arms caches [2]

6.53 The law prohibits employers from hiring workers below the age of 18; however, child labour was common, especially in the informal sector. The Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development enforced the law on child labour; however, financial constraints limited its enforcement. Demographics contributed to the problem of child labour; half of the population was under 15 years of age. Many children left school and went into agricultural or domestic work in order to help meet expenses or perform the work of absent or infirm parents, a situation common throughout the country. The problem was acute particularly among the large orphan population. [2]

6.54 The Government made efforts to decrease the incidence of child labour during 2002. On 13 August 2002, the Government signed an agreement with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) to continue the 1998 International Program for the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC). Under the programme, approximately 2,600 children were identified and withdrawn from hazardous work and were provided with alternatives, such as returning to school or taking vocational training. [2]

6.55 In 2001, the Government ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour and incorporated its provisions into the draft Employment Bill 2000 to comply with international standards; however, the law was not passed by the end of 2002. [2]

People Trafficking

6.56 The law prohibits trafficking in persons; however, there were reports that persons were trafficked to, from, or within the country. The Criminal Code prohibits slavery with penalties of up to 10 years' imprisonment and requires the CID to combat trafficking. The CID did not keep records on the magnitude of the trafficking problem and it was unknown if its efforts were effective. In urban areas, some children were involved in the commercial sex industry, particularly in border towns and in Kampala. There were no reports that government officials were complicit in the trafficking during 2002. [2]

6.57 Unlike in 2001, there were no reports that the country acted as a transit point for trafficking in persons. [2]

6.58 The LRA abducted civilians for training as guerrillas; most victims were children and young adults whom the LRA forced into virtual slavery as guards, labourers, soldiers, and sex slaves. On 5 March 2002, the Government and Sudan signed an agreement in Khartoum for the Government of Sudan to stop supporting the LRA and permit the UPDF access in southern Sudan to pursue the LRA. The protocol was extended several times. [2]

Freedom of Movement

6.59 The Constitution provides for freedom of movement within the country, foreign travel, emigration, and repatriation; however, the Government at times limited them in practice. Some local officials reportedly demanded payment of fees for permission to change a place of residence. A married woman must obtain her husband's written permission on her passport application if children are travelling on her passport. [2]

Internal Relocation

6.60 Attacks by LRA terrorists and armed Karamojong raiders caused many Acholis and Iteso to leave their homes for urban centres, Internally Displaced Persons camps, and villages guarded by the UPDF and LDU's. Although the armed Karamojong raiders did not attack the Acholi during 2002, increased incursions by the Karamojong raiders led to the displacement of approximately 79,600 persons, particularly in Katakwi, Kotido and Kapchorwa Districts. It was estimated that about half of Katakwi, Kotido, Gulu, Kitgum and Pader district populations were in IDP camps or protected villages, due to attacks by LRA or Karimojong warriors. [2]

6.61 According to the UN Office of the Co-ordinator for Humanitarian Affairs there were 814,199 IDPs as a result of violence in the north and northeast at the end of 2002. In the north, government forces continued their policy of maintaining so-called protected villages with UPDF detachments nearby as a means of protecting civilians and denying support to the LRA. Despite substantial NGO and donor community

assistance, conditions worsened due to increased LRA activity in the north. The Government failed to provide adequate security to the protected villages or IDP camps, which were the targets of large-scale rebel attacks. [2]

Refugees

6.62 There were no laws that provide for the granting of asylum or refugee status in accordance with the provisions of the 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol; however, the Government granted such status in practice. The Government co-operated with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and with other humanitarian organisations in assisting refugees. The Government continued to provide first asylum as well as land for temporary resettlement to citizens from neighbouring countries and extended this practice to significant numbers of refugees during 2002. [2]

6.63 As a result of regional conflict, Uganda hosted close to two hundred thousand refugees at the beginning of 2002, coming principally from Sudan, Rwanda, and the DRC. The Ugandan government estimated in 2002 that as many as fifty thousand refugees lived in Kampala. These refugees suffered from a variety of protection problems, stemming partly from the government's preference that refugees reside in camps. Some refugees, including victims of torture, suffered from a lack of medical assistance on the part of UNHCR and its local subcontractor. Other refugees faced insecurity at the hands of agents linked to their original persecutors. [35b]

6.64 In July 2003, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the governments of Rwanda and Uganda signed a tripartite agreement on the voluntary repatriation of thousands of Rwandan refugees living in Uganda. It is estimated that 2.5 million people fled Rwanda during and after the 1994 genocide that claimed the lives of at least 800,000 Rwandans, mostly Tutsis and politically moderate Hutus. Up to 26,000 Rwandans are presently reported to be in refugee camps mostly in western Uganda. [68dd] It is the intention of the government of Uganda to repatriate 25,600 Rwandan refugees following this agreement. [68ee]

UGANDA COUNTRY REPORT

OCTOBER 2003

COUNTRY INFORMATION & POLICY UNIT

VIB HUMAN RIGHTS - SPECIFIC GROUPS

Part I

Part II

Part III

6.B Human Rights Specific Groups

Ethnic Groups

6.65 The Constitution prohibits discrimination based on factors of ethnicity; however, the Government did not enforce the law effectively in matters of locally or culturally accepted discrimination against certain ethnic groups. Race was not a factor in national politics. The continued instability in the north led to violations of the rights of some Acholi, an ethnic group, which comprises a significant part of the population. Most violations of

Acholi rights resulted from LRA actions. [2]

6.66 There are over 20 ethnic groups of which Baganda, Banyankole and Basoga are the largest. Approximately 99% of the population is of African origin, and 1% European or Asian. [8]

6.67 There is a major ethnic division between Bantu groups who live mainly in the south, and Nilotic groups who live mainly in the north. The main Bantu groups which make up about two thirds of the population are the Ganda, (Baganda, the largest tribe with 16% of the population), Soga (8%), Nyoro, Nkole (Banyankole 8%), Toro, Chiga (Kiga), Gisu, Gwere and Nyole (Banyuri). The West Nile tribes have only 6% of the population and are divided into the Lugbara, Alur and Madi tribes plus the smaller Kakwa. This smaller ethnic group ruled the country from 1971 - 1979. [16a]

6.68 There are distinct tensions between ethnic groups in Uganda, particularly between the north and the south, and this is one element used to explain the relative wealth and development in the south as opposed to the poverty and lack of resources in the northern districts. Membership of a marginalised Ugandan ethnic group does not automatically imply exclusion or discrimination. [3]

6.69 The principle Nilotic groups are the Acholi, Langi, Karamojong, Teso, Madi and Kakwa. In the early years of independence there was an important community of about 70,000 Asians of Indian and Pakistani origin and about 10,000 Europeans. However, since the expulsion of "non citizens" (as they were described by the Amin Government) in 1972, both these groups have fallen to negligible sizes. The most widely spoken indigenous language is Luganda (the language of Baganda) although English and Swahili are widely used as common languages. [11]

Acholi

6.70 The Acholi account for around 4.6% of Uganda's population. They live primarily in the districts of Gulu and Kitgum, in northern Uganda where communications are poor and villages isolated. [11]

6.71 Civil strife in the north led to the violation of the rights of members of the Acholi tribe, who primarily resided in the northern districts of Gulu and Kitgum. Both government forces and the LRA terrorists, who themselves largely were Acholi, committed abuses. LRA fighters in particular were implicated in the killing and kidnapping of Acholi tribe members. [2] The Government has responded by setting up "protected villages" which are guarded by UPDF forces. Whilst there have been reports of criticism of the UPDF for the sometimes heavy handed way in which they operate in protecting the population, there is little evidence to dispute that the "protected village" tactic has resulted in fewer attacks and abductions of civilians. However, they do generate problems of their own, such as preventing farmers from tending their land or planting crops. [14a]

6.72 There is no credible evidence to suggest that the Government persecutes the Acholi people or that UPDF personnel routinely target Acholi people as being rebels or rebel sympathisers. There are Acholi living in Kampala, a multi-ethnic city, and in all areas of Uganda. All citizens, including Acholi, are free to reside anywhere they wish and there is no formal obligation to register with the local authorities. All citizens, including Acholi, are entitled to vote. [14a] There are a number of Acholi MPs, some of whom are outspoken critics of the Government, such as Norbert Mao (MP for Gulu Municipality) and Ronald Reagan Okumu (sic) (MP for Aswa District). [37]

6.73 There is no evidence to suggest that the Acholi are systematically denied access to education or medical services although attacks by the LRA on schools and hospitals, for example, can interrupt the delivery of such services. Nor is there evidence to suggest that the Acholi are singled out for questioning about terrorism. In Acholiland it is obvious that investigations into acts of terrorism by the security forces will naturally involve interviewing Acholi, but it should be noted that the Acholi are predominantly the victims of LRA terrorism. [47a]

6.74 A full examination of the conflict in northern Uganda and the position of the Acholi is contained in "The Bending of the Spears", which is attached as source. The continued instability in the north led to violations of the rights of some Acholi. Most violations of Acholi rights resulted from LRA actions. [51]

Karamojong

6.75 The Karamojong descended from a group of people referred to as the Nilotes. They migrated from an area near the Nile Valley in Southern Sudan and Ethiopia. A portion of these groups settled on the high, dry

plateau of Karamoja. Karamoja lies mostly in the northeastern region of Uganda and nearly straddles Uganda's border with Kenya. They built a culture revolving around the herding of cattle and the raiding of cattle from neighbours has been part of the Karamojong culture for centuries. [6]

6.76 During 2002, raids by armed Karamojong raiders in Katakwi, Kotido, and Kapchorwa districts in the northeast resulted in more than 50 deaths. The raids reportedly exacerbated ethnic tensions in the northeast. In December 2001, the Government began a disarmament program for the Karamojong raiders, which caused confrontations between the Karamojong and the UPDF in its efforts to enforce the program. The Government continued its disarmament program for the Karamojong to stop the raids and killings. Unlike 2001, there were no reports that the Karamojong raiders killed relief workers in road ambushes. The Karamojong ethnic group in the northeast has a cultural practice of claiming unmarried women as wives by raping them; however, no cases of this practice were reported in 2002. An undetermined number of women were victims of abduction and rape by rebel forces [2]

6.77 In January 2003, President Museveni directed the UPDF to flush out all armed Karamojong based in the northeast who were found grazing their cattle in the neighbouring districts. [66h]

6.78 In January 2003, Peter Lokeris, Karamoja Development Minister stated that more than 100 people had starved to death, in December 2002, in a famine in the Karamoja region. This followed a drought in 2002, which resulted in a failed harvest. The UN World Food Programme (WFP), who was distributing food in the region, said that it had been overwhelmed by the situation. [48] In February 2003, the UN WFP said it would start delivering food worth US\$1.8 million to the region where now some 300 people have reportedly died from hunger-related diseases. [68m]

Women

6.79 Domestic violence against women, including rape, remained common. According to the 2001 Law and Advocacy for Women Projects Report on Domestic Violence, wife beating ranked highest among the Acholi people at an estimated 80%. The Bakiga ranked second with 75%. There were no laws that specifically protect women from battery or spousal rape, although there was a general law concerning assault. Law enforcement officials, reflecting general public opinion, continued to view wife-beating as a husband's prerogative and rarely intervened in cases of domestic violence. Women remained more likely to sue for divorce than to file assault charges against their husbands. [2]

6.80 Traditional and widespread societal discrimination against women continued, especially in rural areas. Many customary laws discriminate against women in the areas of adoption, marriage, divorce, and inheritance. In most areas, women could not own or inherit property, nor retain custody of their children under local customary law. Divorce law requires women to meet stricter evidentiary standards than were required for men in order to prove adultery. Polygyny was legal under both customary and Islamic law, and a wife had no legal status to prevent her husband from marrying another woman. In some ethnic groups, men also could "inherit" the widows of their deceased brothers. [2]

6.81 Women did most of the agricultural work but owned only 7% of the agricultural land. There were limits on a married woman's ability to travel abroad with her children. [2]

6.82 There were active women's rights groups, including FIDA, Action for Development, the National Association of Women Judges (NAWJ), Akina Mama Wa Afrika, the Forum for Women in Democracy, and NAWOU, which promoted greater awareness of the rights of women and children. Women as Partners for Peace sponsored a forum to discuss democracy and conflict resolution. FIDA continued with its program on proposed reforms of outdated and discriminatory laws. [2]

6.83 Uganda became a signatory of the Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women in July 1980. In their first annual report on 31 May 1995 (14th Session) covering Uganda many issues were raised. Among these one of the issues raised concerned the fact that women did not enjoy the right to extend their citizenship to their children born outside the country unlike male citizens. The Committee also wanted to know why it was that 49 percent of households were headed by a single woman. [27] In October 2000, the Committee reviewed the progress in advancement of women's issues. It was noted then that the human rights of women and girls were being increasingly respected although obstacles to their advancement were numerous. [46]

6.84 A study conducted in January 2003, in the Rakai District, by John Hopkins University showed that about one in three women experienced some form of verbal or physical threat from their partners. Fifty per cent of

the women said that they had received injuries as a result. [68f]

6.85 In February 2003, the German Government donated \$80,000 to Enterprise Uganda to support a project of gender sensitisation and business services training for women in Uganda. The donation was to enable women entrepreneurs to improve their business careers and raise better incomes for themselves. [31f]

Children

6.86 The Government demonstrated a commitment to improving children's welfare. Education received the largest percentage of the budget. During 2002, the Government did not enforce effectively the 1996 Children's Statute, which outlines broad protections for children. Government efforts to enforce the statute's provisions were hampered by the large proportion of the population that was below 18 years of age (50 percent of the country's population was under 15), staffing and fiscal constraints on the judiciary, and cultural norms. The law stipulates parents' responsibilities and provides extensive protection for children in a wide variety of areas, including financial support, foster care placement, adoption, determination of parentage, and treatment of children charged with offences. [2]

6.87 The law prohibits children from taking part in any activity that was likely to injure the child's health, education, mental, physical, or moral development; however, the Government often did not enforce these prohibitions. The Children's Statute also requires children with disabilities to be treated and given necessary special facilities; however, inadequate funding often hampered the enforcement of this provision. In August 2002 the Ministry of Gender reported that knowledge on the rights of children of the 1996 Children's Statute was poor in most parts of the country, particularly in rural communities. [2]

6.88 The Government continued the Universal Primary Education (UPE) program, which provided free education up to the seventh grade; however, education was not compulsory. According to official statistics, there was a 95% enrolment rate; however, this figure widely was believed to be inflated as a result of both school dropouts and a tendency of some schools to inflate attendance figures for funding purposes. Since the implementation of UPE, primary school enrolment increased from 2.9 million in 1996 to 7.2 million during 2002. [2]

6.89 Girls and boys theoretically had equal access to education in the lower grades; however, the proportion of girls in higher school grades remained low because families traditionally favoured boys when making financially related educational decisions. Boys were more likely to finish primary school and perform better on the PLE. The Government continued several programs to promote a national plan for the education of girls. Only 54% of adult women were literate compared with 74% of adult men. [2]

6.90 Child abuse remained a serious problem, particularly the rape of young girls or defilement. Defilement applied to all cases of sexual contact outside of marriage involving girls younger than 18 years of age, regardless of consent or the age of the perpetrator. The perpetrators of rape often were family members, neighbours, or teachers; however, only a small fraction of these cases was reported. In August 2002 the district of Mbarara's Department of Education established a hotline for the public to report defilement cases by teachers. Many cases frequently were reported in newspapers; a payment to the girl's parents often settled such cases. During 2002, there were 5,554 reported cases of defilement, of which 3,178 were investigated. Defilement carried a maximum sentence of death; however, no court sentenced rapists to death during 2002. [2]

6.91 Since the outbreak of hostilities in northern Uganda, the LRA have abducted Ugandan children, trained them in southern Sudan and forced them to fight in the front lines. Abductions continued in 2002, albeit on a lesser scale than in previous years. As protection, parents in affected areas sent their children to towns, where they stayed overnight in hospitals, schools or other places under poor conditions. Despite the return of the LRA to northern Uganda in May 2002, few child soldiers managed to escape their captors. The LRA did release some one hundred sick and elderly people including children with their mothers in June 2002. [35b]

6.92 In the current military campaign against the LRA (Operation Iron Fist), there have been reports of the UPDF recruitment of children in northern Uganda to fight the LRA in southern Sudan. Paradoxically, "protected villages", set up in response to the on-going abductions by the LRA, have often served as recruiting grounds for child soldiers and "wives" (often cases of early marriage, defilement and rape). In a joint statement to the Security Council on Operation Iron Fist, Uganda and Sudan agreed that they would "spare no efforts in order to safeguard and maintain the safety of innocent civilians and the repatriation of abducted children, through the co-ordination and assistance of the concerned international humanitarian organisations. But as the conflict has dragged on, Uganda admitted that its forces were unable to protect

civilians in south Sudan and children have been killed rather than rescued during UPDF attacks on the LRA. [23]

6.93 In February 2003, the international NGO, Action Against Hunger in Pabbo said that the deteriorating humanitarian situation in northern Uganda is placing children under the age of five years at a high risk of mortality. The WFP who were distributing food in the region said that the humanitarian situation was getting worse. [68t] WFP said that over 31 per cent of children under the age of five years were suffering from acute malnutrition in Anaka camp in Gulu district. [68s]

6.94 In February 2003, the European Development Fund gave Sh3.5 billion to seven districts for constructing schools, health centres and wells under the Micro Project Programme (MPP). The seven districts to benefit are Apac, Busia, Adjumani, Nabbi, Moyo and Bugiri. [50v]

6.95 There were an estimated 2 million orphaned children (children missing either or both parents). This large number of orphans resulted from previous civil wars, the internal displacement of persons, and HIV/AIDS. [2]

6.96 Most schools used corporal punishment; however, the beating of secondary school students was prohibited. On 9 August 2002, a court sentenced a primary school teacher to 3 weeks imprisonment in Luzira Prison for caning student Elizabeth Uwimeza and causing bodily injury. The teacher also was ordered to pay \$111.00 (200,000 shillings) to the victim after serving the sentence. [2]

6.97 The LRA abducted many children and used them as guards, labourers, soldiers, or as sex slaves. Most LRA fighters were themselves abducted children who were coerced into becoming rebels. [2]

6.98 The Government has banned the activities of migrant witchdoctors after numerous cases of alleged child sacrifice and abuse, which the police are apparently unwilling to investigate. There were increased allegations and some confirmed reports of ritual killings of children during 2002. On 17 June 2002, police in Luwero arrested four persons in connection with a ritual murder of a girl whose body was discovered in a shallow grave near a shrine in Nakikoota Village. Investigations in the case were pending at the end of 2002. [2]

Child Care Arrangements

6.99 According to the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development in Uganda there are no state owned orphanages in Uganda, and neither does the state sponsor any such institutions. According to the Ministry, the Government has no long or medium term plans to establish child care facilities. [47c]

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

6.100 There was no law against the practice of FGM, but the Government and women's groups working with the UN Population Fund continued to carry out programs to combat the practice through education. These programs received strong government support and some support from local leaders. The programs emphasised close co-operation with traditional authority figures and peer counselling. During 2002, significant press attention to these ongoing efforts brought public attention to the problem. [2]

6.101 FGM was practised by the Sabiny tribe, located in the rural Kapchorwa District, and the Pokot tribe (also known as the Upe), which inhabited the northeastern border with Kenya. There are approximately 10,000 Sabiny and 20,000 Upe who live in the country. Among the Sabiny, initiation ceremonies involving FGM are carried out every 2 years. During 2002, initiation ceremonies took place in Kapchorwa. The NGO REACH recorded a total of 586 women who underwent FGM. These figures were down from the 621 reported in 2000. [2] Kapchowra LC5 chairman Nelson Chelimo commended the NGOs in the region for backing the campaign against the practice. [50u]

6.102 Sabei Elders Association chairman, William Cheborion said that 75 per cent of the Sabiny are now opposed to the practice. He went on to say that the number of people supporting FGM is now very small. Cheborion said that their target for elimination of the practice is 2006. [31v]

Homosexuals

6.103 Under the Ugandan Penal Code homosexuality is illegal for men. Homosexual acts between women are not mentioned. The maximum penalty for homosexuals in Uganda is life imprisonment. [57] Section 140

of the Penal Code criminalises "carnal knowledge against the order of nature" with a maximum penalty of life imprisonment. Section 141 prohibits "attempts at carnal knowledge" with a maximum penalty of 7 years' imprisonment. Section 143 punishes acts of, procurement of, or attempts to procure acts of "gross indecency" between men in public or private with up to 5 years' imprisonment. [45]

6.104 In September 1999, President Museveni called for the arrest of homosexuals for carrying out "abominable acts". This comment followed the wedding of two gay men. [57]

6.105 In March 2002, while accepting an award for his Government's successful campaign against HIV/AIDS, President Museveni said "we don't have homosexuals in Uganda so this is mainly heterosexual transmission". [21] In December 2002, the Bishop of Mukono Diocese cautioned Christians against homosexual organisations that want to join the church in the pretext of funding them. [50t]

Uganda National Rescue Front (UNRF II)

6.148 The United National Rescue Front II operates from Sudanese bases and were also supported by the Government of Sudan. In mid-January 1999 the UNRF (II) killed 7 people and abducted 56 civilians, mostly school children, in an attack in Arua district. It was reported that the UNRF II have split into two factions, the original led by Juma Oris and the breakaway group by Ali Bamuzes. There were no credible reports that UNRF II was responsible for the death of civilians during 2000. [31ab]

6.149 On 19 April 2002, approximately 1,350 UNRF-II rebels based in Southern Sudan returned to the country with their families to negotiate resettlement terms under the Amnesty Program. [2] In May 2002, the Government of Uganda sent a nine-member team led by the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Internal Affairs to talk peace with the UNRFII rebels in Yumbe District. [50aa] After four days of talks the two sides agreed to formalise a cease-fire agreement. [28f] The peace process started in 1998. On 15 June 2002, the Government of Uganda and the UNRF signed a formal cease-fire agreement. [68x]

6.150 In September 2002, Nasur Ezaga, the elderly former chairman of the UNRF returned to Uganda after having spent the last 13 years in exile in Sudan. He said that his return was testimony that the government of Uganda was interested and serious about the peace process. [28b]

6.151 On 24 December 2002, a peace deal was signed between the Government and the UNRF rebels after over five years of negotiations between the two sides. In the peace deal about 700 of the rebels would be integrated into the Ugandan army while the remainder will be given resettlement packages. The UNRF rebels had not been a serious destabilising threat in recent years. [69a]

6.152 There were no credible reports that UNRF II was responsible for the death of civilians during 2001. UNRF II has been inactive for years and is returning to the country under the amnesty programme. [2a]

National Army/Union for the Liberation of Uganda (NALU/NULU)

6.153 NALU was an ADF- affiliated group. They have claimed responsibility for terrorist attacks that resulted in fatalities. [12] They were based in western Uganda, the home area of its leader, Amon Bazira, who was killed in mysterious circumstances in Kenya in 1993. [32] Its aims were unclear and most of its operations were aimed against the local peasant population. It faded from view in 1994 and was thought defunct, most of the members having been absorbed into the ADF. However, they re-emerged in 1997 under the leadership of Jafari K Salimu and issued both a manifesto dedicated to overthrowing the Government and an invitation to President Museveni to meet them. It is still unclear whether the President ever received the invitation. [30]

6.154 NALU/NULU had threatened further atrocities against both Ugandans and nationals of western countries that have supported President Museveni. NALU repeatedly claimed responsibility for bomb attacks that occurred in or around Kampala since 1997 in which at least fifty-five people lost their lives. [65b] During UPDF's operations in the Rwenzori region in February 2002, when 20 ADF rebels were killed by UPDF operations, 12 former fighters of NALU reported to the UPDF. [50o]

CAMP

6.155 The Citizens Army for Multiparty Politics (CAMP) was originally led by Brigadier Smith Opon Acak, (who had been Obote's army chief of staff). He was shot by the UPDF in July 1999 when they raided his camp near the town of Lira in northern Uganda. Of the 43 others present, 4 were captured and the others escaped. [66f]

6.156 There were no credible reports that CAMP were responsible for the death of civilians during 2001. They have been inactive for years and are returning to the country under the amnesty program. [2a]

Unknown Group

6.157 A new group of Kenyan refugees opposed to the Kenyan Government has been operating in the Nakivale refugee camp in Uganda, led by Kenyan Lt. Raphael Osumba. Name or aims are not known. [66c]

Rebel Groups

The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA)

6.106 The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) originally had a Christian basis although there have been unsubstantiated rumours that its current leader, Joseph Kony, a cousin of the founder, may have converted to Islam in Sudan. It is an offshoot of the Uganda People's Defence Army, which signed a peace agreement with the Government in 1988. [4] The LRA is active in northern Uganda, specifically the districts of Gulu and Kitgum and is said to be the most brutal rebel group in sub-Saharan Africa. Their favoured method of recruitment is to abduct local children, which means mostly Acholi, brutalise them then force the boys to join their ranks and the girls to serve either as prostitutes or 'wives' for the officers. [5] One boy who escaped estimated that he had been forced to kill over 300 people. [25a]

6.107 Rebel activity in the north of Uganda has been active since President Museveni took power in 1986. Violent attacks by the LRA, starting in the middle of the 1990s forced about three quarters of the Acholi to flee their homes in the Gulu and Kitgum/Pader Districts in the north of Uganda. [9] In 1986, Alice Auma (also known as 'Lakwena' - Acholi for 'messenger') created a force which became known as the Holy Spirit Movement. It was based on the powerful combination of local ideas about the spirit world and Christian beliefs and Auma mobilised deserting soldiers from the UPDA, Acholi and Langi citizens to fight against the Government. She attracted many followers because her group offered her own design of cleansing rituals, which would stand in place of the traditional *Mato Oput* (in which a warrior is cleansed after combat and simultaneously pacifies the spirits of his victims). [58]

6.108 The returning soldiers were unable to complete *Mato Oput* as a token of the victim is needed (anything from a severed head to a tunic button will serve) and they had been forced into committing such numerous atrocities that obtaining and preserving individual relics was completely impossible. [58]

6.109 The absence of the cleansing rituals agitated the *cen* (the vengeful spirits of the slain), which in turn led to a torrent of misfortune descending on the Acholi, such as AIDS and the loss of their power and status in the country. It was into this vein that Alice tapped. In November 1987 her forces were comprehensively defeated and she fled into exile, but a charismatic cousin, Joseph Kony, emerged to take the leadership under disputed circumstances. He presided over a dramatic change in the character of the movement, marginalising it and ranging it against not only the Government but also those Acholi who did not actively support him. He also renamed the group The Lord's Resistance Army and introduced the policy of child-abduction. [58]

6.110 The LRA was reportedly backed by the Sudanese Government as a direct response to the perceived backing by the Ugandan Government of Sudanese rebel group Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) based in southern Sudan. The Sudanese Government had supplied military equipment and a safe haven for the LRA and in return uses the LRA as a militia group to fight the SPLA and destabilise Uganda. [5] Kony appointed a London-based spokeswoman for the group, Josephine Apira. [31ad]

6.111 According to a Human Rights Watch Report - "LRA Conflict in Northern Uganda and Southern Sudan, 2002" - The LRA behaviour has changed since it left Uganda in 2000; in previous years, the LRA carried out mutilations of those it believed to be government informers. In 2002 this no longer appeared to be the case. [10]

Aims of the LRA

6.112 The LRA appears to have no political aims beyond opposition to Museveni but they are conducting a vicious campaign of terror to punish the local Acholi population for failing to support their cause. This includes massacres of whole villages, the abduction of children who are then forced to fight with the LRA, ambushing vehicles, laying of mines and looting shops. [19]

6.113 The LRA has a reputation for abducting children in order to forcibly conscript them, to force them to carry looted supplies and to sexually exploit them. [9]

6.114 In advance of President Museveni's referendum campaign visit to Gulu and Kitgum on 24 May 2000, LRA rebels were reported to have abducted some 200 children aged between 8 and 15. As the children were taken across into Sudan a fresh infiltration of 100 rebels crossed into Uganda in an attempt to divert the attention of the UPDF. [31d] On 23 May 2000 it was reported that the UPDF had killed 16 rebels and captured a further 5 during operations in the region. In the course of his campaign meetings on 24 May 2000 President Museveni referred to an agreement signed with Sudan in December 1999 to disarm and disband armed opposition groups based in each other's countries. He said that Uganda fulfilled its part of the bargain by releasing all Sudanese POWs but Uganda was still waiting for the Sudanese Government to stop LRA leader Joseph Kony using bases in southern Sudan. [49a] The President added that if the Sudanese failed to stop LRA activities within their country, Ugandan forces would pursue rebels into Sudan. [50b]

6.115 Uganda has since released dozens of prisoners of war and Sudan had begun the process of returning thousands of children being held by the LRA at bases in Sudan. [22a]

6.116 In June 2001 one of the senior LRA rebel commanders abandoned the rebellion and came out of the bush in Gulu. [50j]

6.117 LRA attacks decreased during 2001, however, there were numerous LRA attacks on villages and displaced person camps in which persons were killed, injured, raped or abducted. During 2001, LRA attacks resulted in approximately 115 deaths, including children, numerous injuries and the destruction of homes and property. Unlike previous years there were no reports that the LRA used landmines in 2002. [2a] In October 2001, three rebels of the LRA escaped from their camp in Sudan and surrendered to the UPDF. Reports from Southern Sudan said that the rebels were facing acute food and drug shortage. [50e]

6.118 In August 2001 Sudan's President Omar al-Bashir appointed an envoy to Kampala and said he was no longer backing the LRA. [65a]

6.119 On 5 March 2002, the Government and Sudan signed an agreement in Khartoum for the Government of Sudan to stop supporting the LRA and permit the UPDF access in southern Sudan to pursue the LRA. The protocol was extended several times, including in December 2002. [2]

6.120 In February 2002, seven top LRA commanders who defected from Sudan promised to work with the UPDF in their search for Kony. [50m] Following the killing of three more people and the injuring of eight more in the northern town of Gulu, the Ugandan Army sent more troops into Sudan in pursuit of the LRA. [69i]

Latest LRA attacks

6.121 In March 2002, the Ugandan army began to carry out a military campaign called "Operation Iron Fist" to flush out the LRA from their bases in southern Sudan. Operation Iron Fist was launched in co-operation with the Sudanese Government. The overall commander of the campaign, Brigadier Nyakairima Aronda, said he was in no doubt that despite the difficult terrain the LRA and Joseph Kony would be defeated. [69u] According to the Human Rights Watch Report - "LRA Conflict in Northern Uganda and Southern Sudan, 2002 - LRA abuses against the southern Sudanese escalated after the start of Operation Iron Fist. [10]

6.122 Since March 2002, when the operations against the LRA began, thousands of parents in northern Uganda desperately tried to find out what happened to their children who were abducted by the group. Programme manager of the Children and Adolescents Project of the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, Allison A Pillsbury, said that parents were concerned that their children had been sacrificed in a war that does not distinguish between hostage and fighter. [70] Uganda admitted that its forces had been unable to protect civilians in southern Sudan and children have been killed rather than rescued during the military attacks on the LRA. [23]

6.123 In June 2002, Ugandan military sources said that a group of 300 armed rebels and 200 family members had entered Kitgum District on 9 June 2002. This group was under the control of Vincent Otti, who is one of Kony's most senior and brutal commanders. Reports from Kitgum District indicated that the rebels had been suffering in the previous weeks from lack of food and water. The rebels had raided a trading centre at Pangira in the Lokum Sub-Country of Kitgum District. This raid provided for several of the abducted LRA members to escape. They are currently being debriefed by the Ugandan army and would be benefiting from the existing Government amnesty. The remaining LRA rebels and captives are reportedly still in southern Sudan. **[69t]** On 12 June 2002, security sources said that Otti had entered Atiak sub-district on the Gulu road, on 9 June 2002, with 700 fighters. The group had entered Uganda from Atepi, near Kitgum. **[50af]**

6.124 In June 2002, Ugandan military sources said that the LRA had attacked Cwero Camp. The sources also confirmed that 100 rebels under the command of Major Kwayelo had, earlier in the week attacked another camp for internally displaced people near the village of Pabo in Gulu District where they burnt more than 500 huts. The LRA made several attacks throughout July 2002. These included a Catholic Mission where three teachers were abducted and a pupil killed in the attack (as reported on 9 July 2001); **[69s]** Six people were killed when the LRA attacked a UN-run refugee camp in Adjumani District north-western Uganda (as reported on 10 July 2002) where between 50 and 100 rebels burnt more than 100 houses before looting the camp's dispensary. **[69s]**

6.125 In early August 2002, according to the International Rescue Committee (IRC), the LRA issued an ultimatum for the UN and aid agencies to pull out of northern Uganda and southern Sudan. The NGOs operating in northern Uganda ignored the ultimatum. **[68z]** An army spokesman said that on 17 August 2002, Vincent Otti, who is second in command of the LRA, was wounded during a clash in Gulu District. **[61a]** On 18 August 2002, the Ugandan army said they had discovered two mass graves at Awich, Aswa County in Gulu near the battle scene where Otti was wounded. **[50ad]**

6.126 The LRA continued to commit numerous atrocities, including the use of landmines. The LRA increased attacks and the looting and burning of private homes, schools, and IDP and refugee camps. The LRA continued to abduct children and, at clandestine bases, forced them into virtual slavery as guards, concubines, and soldiers. In addition to being beaten, raped, and forced to march until exhausted, abducted children were forced to participate in the killing of other children who attempted to escape. There also were numerous LRA attacks in which persons were killed and injured and homes and property were destroyed. **[2]**

6.127 There were an estimated 7,800 abductions overall from the north during 2002. On 14 September 2002, LRA rebels abducted two elderly Italian priests and several citizens. The priests were released the next day, and some of the citizens were released by the end of September 2002. The fate of the others was unknown. **[2]**

6.128 According to a UN report in September 2002, unrelenting attacks by the LRA have created a "horrendous" humanitarian situation and stretched local resources in northern Uganda beyond their limits. The report also added that the main towns in the region - Kitgum, Gulu and Pader - had become overcrowded with displaced people seeking refuge in hospital grounds, schools, churches and shop verandas. **[68y]**

6.129 In December 2002, while the Ugandan army claims it had won the war in the north of Uganda the WFP said it is greatly concerned about the situation where they say 800,000 people were now dependent on their food aid. **[69o]**

6.130 In January 2003, the United States of America gave US\$3 million to the Government of Uganda to fight the LRA. **[50x]**

6.131 In a meeting held in January 2003 between the Sudan People's Armed Forces and the UPDF it was agreed that Sudanese government troops would be deployed in camps previously occupied by the LRA in southern Sudan in order to avert any attacks against Uganda. **[50w]**

6.132 Also in January 2003, Joseph Kony expressed interest in having cease fire talks with the authorities. Kony also called for direct talks with President Museveni but only in the presence of a third party mediator. **[69n]**

6.133 On 8 February 2003, the Ugandan Red Cross Society said they were suspending their relief operation in the north of the country after one of their convoys was ambushed. Six Red Cross volunteers were injured -

three of them seriously. [69m] In a report on 13 February 2003 the Red Cross said they hoped to resume activities in the north, but, they will need guaranteed security for their staff. [68v] However, they resumed activities on 15 April 2003. [50an]

6.134 A protocol signed by the governments of Sudan and Uganda at the weekend of 22 - 23 February 2003 said that the SPLA would not be allowed to carry arms while in Uganda. This is in return for Sudan's commitment to flush out the LRA rebels from their bases in southern Sudan. [50z]

6.135 Two boys, aged 14 and 16 years, who were abducted forcibly by the LRA and compelled to commit acts of violence were charged with treason late in 2002. The NGO Human Rights Watch (HRW) called for the government of Uganda to drop the charges. Both boys had reported to HRW that they were abducted by the LRA and forced to fight against the SPLA rebel group and the UPDF. [68u]

6.137 On 1 March 2003, the LRA declared an immediate cease fire that was swiftly welcomed by Lieutenant Salim Saleh, a member of the government's peace team. [69f] However, just a few hours after this announcement the LRA broke its own cease fire. Since 1 March 2003, when the ceasefire should have come into effect over 46 people were abducted, seven were killed (which includes two UPDF soldiers) and a number of motor vehicles burnt. [50ac]

6.138 At the end of March 2003, peace talks between the two sides still had not taken place. [69c]

Allied Democratic Forces (ADF)

6.139 The ADF is led by a Muslim, Jamir Mukulu and operates in western Uganda. Historically it has used Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) territory for its bases. However, the ADF was initially severely crippled by the establishment of Laurent Kabila's Government in the DRC in May 1997 and by its subsequent provision to the UPDF of access to rebel bases in the DRC. [4]

6.140 It was reported that The United Arab Emirates was the ADF's main arms supplier. Iran, another Islamic State, was also supplying arms to the ADF via an Islamic foundation based in South Africa. In western Uganda, the ADF conducted an abusive campaign in the Rwenzori mountain region, where they brutalised and killed civilians and looted. Hundreds of civilians were killed in ADF raids and ambushes on unprotected civilian homes throughout 1999. Some of those killed by the ADF were mutilated, sometimes by beheading. [35]

6.141 Civilians, both adults and children, had been abducted during ADF raids to serve as porters or for forced recruitment into the rebel army. International aid agencies, including the World Food Program, Medecins sans Frontieres and Action Aid were repeatedly forced to suspend their life-sustaining humanitarian activities in western Uganda due to security threats. As a result of this the local population suffered from shortages of food, medicine and shelter. There were repeated outbreaks of cholera caused by poor sanitation and overcrowded living conditions in displaced persons camps. [35]

6.142 In July 1999, The Monitor newspaper estimated that 1500 of 2000 ADF rebels had been killed, leaving only 500 in hiding in the Rwenzori mountains and in August 1999 they allegedly wrote to the UPDF Commander in the region asking for peace talks, saying they were tired of fighting. The UPDF had guaranteed their negotiators' safety but remained sceptical as to the real intentions of the group. [31af] On 17 May 2000 UPDF forces in the DRC captured Ali Bwambale Mulima the secretary general of the ADF along with three other rebels. Mulima was later reported as saying ADF rebels were criminals begging for forgiveness. [31c]

6.143 In mid-June 2000 the UPDF were reported to have killed 12 ADF rebels and rescued 13 civilians during the clashes on the DRC border. [50d] Also in mid-June 2000 three suspected ADF co-ordinators in Masindi district, north west of the country, were arrested. [49c] In August 2001 the UPDF rescued 15 child soldiers who had been serving under the ADF. The children had been rescued in separate mop-up operations on the western slopes of the Rwenzori Mountains. [68g]

6.144 In a message delivered on 5 February 2001, by former ADF rebel, Zarome Bwambale to Zedekiya Karokora, District Commissioner of Kasese, he stated that at least 30 rebels said they wanted clearance in order to surrender. They also wanted to be reassured that their lives were safe. [31y] According to a Reuter's news report on 2 April 2001, 53 rebels from the ADF were freed in the first application of the Amnesty Law, which was enacted more than one year ago. [65d] In February 2002, as a result of intensified UPDF

operations in the Rwenzori region 20 ADF rebels and seven others, including two commanders, were captured. [50o]

6.145 As reported in May 2002 in the New Vision newspaper, since the Amnesty Law came into force over 500 ADF rebels had surrendered in Kasese. Their former Chief of Staff Chris Tushabe Benz surrendered two years ago and is now a UPDF Major. [50ab]

6.146 According to the New Vision newspaper, in November 2002 at least 43 ADF rebels were killed by the UPDF in the Ituri forest in the DRC. [28a]

West Nile Bank Front (WNBF)

6.147 The now largely defunct WNBF was mainly concerned with destabilising northern Uganda from bases in Sudan, but had linked up with Interahamwe and anti-RCD rebels around the Bunia area. The Front resumed attacks during 1998 in the northwestern region bordering Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo. [13] In September 1998, The Monitor newspaper in Kampala reported that the WNBF were active and had abducted c.220 people since August 1998 and killed several others in the Arua area. [31ab] The majority of those taken in subsequent raids over a week-long period later escaped and returned to their homes. In November 1998 WNBF rebels killed and decapitated a Muslim religious leader in Arua, reportedly in retaliation for his son's defection from the WNBF ranks. [13] It was reported in June 2001 that the group commander Juma Oris had died in March 2001 and had already been buried. He had suffered a stroke in 1999. [56b]

6C. HUMAN RIGHTS - OTHER ISSUES

Mob Violence

6.158 Incidents of vigilante justice increased and were reported almost daily during 2002. In April 2002, the Inspector General of Police Major General Edward Katumba Wamala estimated that more than 1,000 persons had been killed by mob violence since 1991 and called for an end to the practice. Mobs often targeted and attacked criminals or alleged witches. There were numerous instances in which mobs beat or burned to death petty theft suspects. On 6 July 2002, a suspected thief in Nyendo, Masaka District was cut with machetes, doused with petrol, and burned to death by a mob. [2]

6.159 Unlike 2001, authorities prosecuted persons who engaged in mob violence. On 24 June 2002, the High Court in Jinja convicted 6 persons of the mob murder of four persons in Kamuli District in 2000 and sentenced them to death. On 30 September 2002, the High Court in Kampala charged four men with the mob murder of a taxi driver who allegedly had killed a neighbour's child in Rubaga. However, there was no action taken against persons responsible for the October 2001 mob killing of a suspected thief near Kampala. [2]

6.160 In February 2002, Mpigi Resident District Commissioner cautioned residents to refrain from taking the law into their own hands. She said that if mob justice goes unpunished, a society of lawlessness would eventually emerge. She was reacting to a recent incident in which seven members of the Local Council I committee allegedly banished a resident whom they accused of having bewitched and killed five people. [31z]

Treatment of failed asylum seekers

6.161 The Ugandan Department of Immigration confirmed that only failed asylum seekers who had previously committed a crime in Uganda, and are on their wanted list, would be arrested on arrival in the country. Someone would not be imprisoned simply for being returned to Uganda as a failed asylum seeker. [14c]

Treatment of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)

6.162 NGOs were required to register with the NGO Board, which included representation from the Ministry of Internal Affairs as well as other ministries. The Government approved most NGO registrations; however, in September 2002 the Minister of State for Internal Affairs stated that the Government had deregistered 25 NGOs in the public interest, none of which were Human Rights groups. At least one of the groups, Caring for Orphans, Widows, and Elderly Association (COWE) challenged its deregistration; on 14 October 2002,

COWE was reinstated. [2]

6.163 A number of domestic and international human rights groups generally operated without government restriction, investigating and publishing their findings on human rights cases. Government officials generally were responsive to their views. Active domestic groups included the FHRI; FIDA-U; Human Rights Focus; the National Association of Women's Organisations of Uganda (NAWOU); the International Federation of Human Rights; and the Human Rights and Peace Centre of Makerere University. The Prisoners' Aid Foundation monitored prison conditions. The National Organisation for Civic Education and Election Monitoring dealt with problems related to civil society and political rights. HURINET, a Human Rights Network, and an umbrella organisation for 9 Human Rights organisations also continued to be active. The local NGO Uganda Debt Network addressed corruption. [2]

6.164 Government officials frequently attended conferences and seminars hosted by NGOs on social problems and continued to co-operate with NGOs on legal and prison reforms. The Uganda National NGO Forum was a consortium of local and international NGOs involved in advocacy. On 8 August 2002, the organisation launched the NGO Code of Conduct that provides for the self-discipline, regulation, and mechanism of restraint for NGOs. [2]

6.165 According to a Human Rights Watch report dated 2 October 2001, Uganda's parliament is due to consider a new draft law proposed by the Government that aims to increase state control over the country's NGOs. The new law would also stiffen the penalties for operating without official sanction, thus raising the possibility that legitimate NGO activities may be criminalised. [33]

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

6.166 Internal displacement in Uganda has been caused by separate armed conflicts in northern and western areas as well as violent looting and cattle raids in the east of the country since the middle of the 1990s. Conflicts have affected about a quarter of the country's 45 districts, and unrelenting attacks since June 2002 by the LRA troops in Kitgum, Pader and Gulu have displaced 50,000 additional people in northern Uganda only, according to official estimates. [9] At the end of 2002, there were 814,199 IDPs as a result of violence in the north and northeast, according to the UN Office of the Co-ordinator for Humanitarian Affairs. [2]

6.167 According to a humanitarian worker in the northern town of Gulu, all roads linking the northern districts of Gulu, Kitgum, Pader, Lira and Pakwac became unsafe due to increased rebel activity and limited the movement of relief workers. In June 2002, the Ugandan media reported that residents were fleeing camps set up by the army for internally displaced people in Gulu District. [68w] In July 2002, the Government of Uganda launched an appeal requesting over US \$21.5 million to help civilian victims of the increased attacks by the LRA. The UN Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OHCA) and other UN agencies in the region are supporting the Government appeal. [68n]

6.168 In November 2002, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) announced that they would be launching a fundraising drive for US \$70 million for humanitarian assistance in Uganda. Most of the money would go towards the displaced people in the north of the country. [28c]

Humanitarian Aid/International Assistance

6.169 The United Kingdom has a warm bilateral relationship with Uganda. There exists a significant development partnership between the United Kingdom and Uganda, which is one of the largest recipients of UK development assistance. Britain has provided around £670 million in development assistance since President Museveni came to power in 1986. The UK is Uganda's largest bilateral donor providing a 6th of all assistance. The UK also provides a substantial share of European Commission and United Nations assistance. [16b]

6.170 In December 2002, the UK gave an additional Sh3.1 billion in aid of the internally displaced people in northern Uganda, as the WFP expressed great concern about the deteriorating security situation there. The aid is to support the WFP, UNICEF and the Uganda Red Cross Society. [50am]

6.171 In March 2003, the Swedish government gave Sh430 million to 14 Ugandan human rights advocacy organisations. Some of the NGOs to benefit will include African Centre for Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture Victims, Mpigi Women Development Trust, Street Law and Concerned Parents Association. [50al]

Chronology of Major Events

1962 On **9 October** Uganda became Independent member of the Commonwealth, led by Milton Obote.

1963 On **9 October** Uganda became Republic of Uganda.

1966 In **February** Obote lead successful coup against Kabaka (King) of Buganda. In **April** Obote became executive President.

1967 In **September** a New Constitution is introduced; establishes unitary Republic and Buganda region brought under control of central Government.

1969 In **December** there was an assassination attempt on Obote: all opposition parties were banned.

1971 In **January** Obote was overthrown by army - led by Maj. Gen. Idi Amin Dada who assumed full executive powers and suspended political activity. In **February** the National Assembly was dissolved, Amin declared himself Head of State, took over legislative powers and suspended political activity. Obote fled to Tanzania.

1972 In **August** Amin declared "economic war" - mass expulsion of non-citizen Asians from Uganda.

1976 In **February** Amin declared large areas of Western Kenya were historically part of Uganda.

1977 In **February** Anglican Archbishop of Uganda and two Government Ministers were murdered.

1978 In **November** Uganda annexes the Kagera Salient from Tanzania.

1979 Invasion force comprising Tanzanian troops and Uganda national Liberation army (UNLA) gain control of southern region of Uganda. In **April** Amin's forces capitulate - Tanzanian assault force enters Kampala. Also in **April** provisional Government - National executive Council established from ranks of Uganda National Liberation front (UNLF) - President is Dr Lule. In **June** remaining pro-Amin troops defeated, Amin fled to Libya. Also in **June** Lule resigned after attempted cabinet reshuffle - succeeded by Binaisa.

1980 In **May** Binaisa overthrown by Military Commission of UNLF. In **December** Parliamentary elections contested by four parties and won by UPC with Obote becoming President for second time. Defeated parties complain of gross malpractice by UPC supporters.

1981 In **June** Tanzanian troops withdraw from Uganda.

1982 In **January** Ugandan Popular Front formed to co-ordinate from abroad activities of the main opposition groups in exile; Uganda freedom Movement (UFM), Uganda National Rescue Front and the National Resistance Movement (NRM, led by Lule) and its military wing National Resistance Army (NRA, led by Museveni).

1983 In **March** massacres occurred at refugee camps - 100,000 people displaced. Fighting between UNLA and NRA. NRA denied any involvement in massacres.

1985 In **July** Obote overthrown in military coup. Military Council, headed by Lt. Gen. Tito Okello established to lead country pending election in one year's time. In following months, opposition groups to Obote (except NRM & NRA) reach agreement with new regime and accept positions on Military Council. Amnesty declared for exiles who supported Amin. In **August** NRA (led by Museveni) entered negotiations with Government whilst simultaneously conducting military campaign to overthrow Okello. In **December** NRA and Okello Government sign peace agreement - but terms not implemented.

1986 On **26 January** NRA takes control of Kampala by force and dissolves Military Council. On **29 January** Museveni sworn in as President. In **February** Museveni announced formation of new cabinet, mainly NRA and NRM and other representatives of DP, UPC, UFM and FEDEMO. National Resistance Council (NRC) formed. In **March** all activity by political parties banned but not proscribed. In **May** Uganda People's

Democratic Movement (UPDM) formed. In **May** and **June** two commissions of enquiry appointed to investigate, respectively allegations of Government corruption and violations of human rights since independence. In **July** 80% of police force dishonourably dismissed following examination. In **December** disruption in northern and eastern Uganda by cult 'Holy Spirit'. Between **December 1986** and **November 1987**, 5,000 Holy Spirit fighters killed by NRA. Cult suppressed by **December 1987** and its leader escaped to Kenya. Remaining force regrouped and formed Lord's Resistance Army (LRA).

1987 In **March** Andrew Kaiiya was murdered, UFM withdrew support for Government. In **June** NRC offered Amnesty to rebels, except those accused of rape or murder. In **August** UPDM joined with a faction of FEDEMO and another opposition group - UNF to seek alliance and overthrow Museveni.

EARLY 1988 Amnesty extended to rebel groups - 30,000 rebels surrender by mid April 1988.

1989 In **February** First National elections since 1980 held. Museveni appointed a Constitutional Commission to assess public opinion on Uganda's political future and to draft new Constitution. In **October** NRC approved draft legislation to extend Governments term of office by five years from January 1990.

1990 In **March** a ban on political parties was extended for a further five years. In **July** leader of UPDM - Eric Otema Allimadi signed peace agreement with Government.

1991 In **January** Prime Minister since 1986, Samsen Kisekka replaced by George Adyebo. In **April** NRA launch campaign to eradicate rebel activity in the north and east. In **May** Museveni formally invited all former expelled Asians to return.

1993 In **March** a draft Constitution was published. In **April** the NRC passed legislation authorising establishment of Constituent Assembly (CA). In **July** a Constitutional Amendment: abolition of traditional rulers revoked. In **September** nine army officers (arrested and detained between 1988 & 1990 and detained without trial) released.

1994 In **January** UNDA & UFA agreed to suspend their armed struggle, under the provision of Government amnesty. Also in **January** intensified guerrilla activity by LRA following breakdown of Government negotiations. In **March** surrender of senior members of Rwenzunuru Kingdom Freedom Movement in southwest and signified end of conflict dating from independence. On **28 March** elections to 288 member Constituent Assembly held.

1995 In **October** the Constitution was promulgated.

1996 On **9 May** Presidential election - Museveni took 74.2% of votes. In **June** Legislative elections held and Local council elections held - to replace resistance committees. In **July** Museveni appointed 57-member Government.

1997 In **February** Industrial Court upheld a 1993 pay increase award to employees of foreign-owned banks. In **March** local Government Bill passed through Parliament. In **April** Constitutional Court ruled unanimously against the Government in case of Major General David Tinnyefuza. In **August** Military authorities granted the Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC) access to military places of detention. Implementation of Children Statute began. In **November** Local Government elections began - due to be completed by end of first half 1998.

1998 Early in the year Ugandan troops were deployed in eastern DRC to counter the ADF threat but the DRC Government claimed they were supporting the rebellion. In **August** Uganda entered the DRC conflict providing military support to the rebel force - Rassemblement Congolaise pour la Democratie (RCD).

2000 On 17 January the new Amnesty Law came into effect and was open to all levels within the rebel movements. On 29 June a Referendum was held on the future of politics in Uganda. On 2 July the final result of the Referendum were announced and there was a decisive victory for the Movement system of Government.

2001 On **12 March** Presidential Election - Museveni took 69.3% of votes. On **17 August** Dr Besigye beat 24-hour surveillance by military personnel and fled to the USA.

2002 March - Sudan, Uganda sign agreement aimed at containing Ugandan rebel group, Lord's Resistance

Army (LRA), active along common border. LRA wants to run Uganda along lines of biblical Ten Commandments. Led by "prophet" Joseph Kony they have kidnapped thousands of children and displaced many civilians.

2002 In April the Ugandan army started carrying out a military campaign (Operation Iron Fist with the co-operation with the Sudanese Government) to flush out the LRA from their bases.

2002 October - Army evacuates more than 400,000 civilians caught up in fight against LRA, which continues its brutal attacks on villages.

2002 December - Peace deal signed with Uganda National Rescue Front (UNRF) rebels after more than five years of negotiations.

2003 March - Government's decision-making body recommends lifting 17-year ban on political party activity, subject to public referendum.

2003 May - Uganda pulls out last of its troops from eastern DR Congo. Tens of thousands of DR Congo civilians seek asylum in Uganda.

2003 August - Former dictator Idi Amin dies in hospital in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Political Organisations

Political parties were ordered to suspend active operations, although not formally banned, in March 1986.

Main parties

National Resistance Movement (NRM)

Founded in 1981 as the political wing of the guerrilla National Resistance Army in opposition to the Obote (UPC) Government. The NRM assumed power in 1986 and is the dominant force with the present Government. Leader: Yoweri Kaguta Museveni. Chairman: Dr Samson Kisekka.

Democratic Party (DP)

Founded in 1954 and led by Paul Ssemogerere. Main opposition party to UPC Government in early 1980's. Under Museveni's NRM-dominated Government the DP has gravitated towards an UPC alliance. The UYD (Uganda Young Democrats) is the youth wing.

Uganda Patriotic Movement (UPM)

Secretary General: Jaber Ssali

Uganda People's Congress (UPC)

Formed following independence in 1960, led by Milton Obote (in exile in Zambia). The UPC was the ruling party from 1962 until 1971 and from 1980 until 1985. UPC members are represented within the present Government. National Leader: Dr James Rwanyarare.

Other parties include:

Conservative Party (CP)

Founded in 1979. Leader: Jehoash Mayanja-Nkangi

Bazzukulu ba Buganda (Grandchildren of Buganda)

Bagandan separatist movement.

Buganda Youth Movement

Formed in 1994 and seeks autonomy for Buganda. Leader: Stanley Kato.

Movement for New Democracy in Uganda

Formed in 1994 to campaign for a multi-party political system. Based in Zambia. Leader: Dan Okello-Ogwang.

National Freedom Party

Formed in 1995 by Herman Ssemuju, an eccentric not generally considered to be a serious political figure. The NFP has no agenda, no resources and a negligible following.

Nationalist Liberal Party (NLP)

Formed in 1984 by a breakaway faction of the Democratic Party. Leader: Tiberio Okeny.

Uganda Democratic Alliance (UDA)

Formed in 1987 as a grouping of anti-Government elements. Leader: Apollo Kironde.

Uganda Islamic Revolutionary Party (UIRP)

Formed in 1993 to promote Ugandan Muslim rights. Chair: Idris Muwonge

Uganda National Unity Movement

An anti-Government formation. Leader: Alhaji Suleiman Ssalongo.

Uganda People's Democratic Movement (UPDM)

Formed in 1986 by disparate anti-Museveni forces active mainly in the north and northeast of the country: signed a peace agreement with the Government in 1990.

Chair: Eric Otema Allimadi; Sec. Gen: Emmanuel Oteng

Forum for Multi-Party Democracy

General Secretary ;Jesse Mashate.

Uganda Independence Revolutionary Movement

Formed in 1989. Leader: Maj. Okello Kolo.

Uganda Progressive Union (UPU)

Leader: Alfred Banya.

Rebel Movements:**Lord's Resistance Army (LRA)**

Led by Joseph Kony, a rebel guerrilla group claiming to be fighting a "holy war" against the Government.

Allied Democratic Forces (ADF)

Led by Jamir Mukulu, the group operates in western Uganda.

West Nile Bank Front (WNBF)

Operated in far north-western Uganda. The WNBF's agenda is unclear. WNBF now largely defunct.

Uganda Freedom Front/Army

Launched in London in February 1999 by Herman Ssemuju, disgraced and exiled eccentric lawyer/politician and former leader of the National Freedom Party. Specific aims as yet unclear.

UNRFII

An offshoot of WNBF with similar hazy objectives. Not active since 2000.

Prominent People**ALI Brig. Moses**

Currently Minister of Internal Affairs and Second Prime Minister. Charged with plotting terrorist action in April 1990. Acquitted of these charges but found guilty in January 1991 of illegally possessing ammunition. He was appointed Minister of the Interior after a cabinet reshuffle in which he swapped jobs with Rugomayo.

AMIN DADA Idi

Maj. Gen. (later field Marshall), led coup to overthrow Obote in January 1971. Died in 2003

AMIN Taban

Son of Idi. Currently commanding a unit of Ugandan rebels deployed in eastern DRC and recently named Chief of Staff of the ADF.

APIRA Josephine

London-based spokeswoman of the LRA.

BINAISA Godfrey

Successor to Lule as President of NEC from June 1979 - May 1980.

KAYIIRA Andrew

Minister of Energy and leader of UFM, charged with treason in October 1986 (charges withdrawn Feb 1987), murdered in March 1987 by unknown assailants.

LULE Dr Yusuf

President of NEC from April - June 1979.

MUSEVENI Yoweri

President of NRM Government from 1986 to present.

MUSOKE Kintu

Succeeded Adyebo as Prime Minister in November 1994.

MUTESA II

Kabaka (King) of Buganda, first president of Republic of Uganda.

OBOTE Milton

Leader of Uganda People's Congress (UPC) from 1960 and Prime Minister from 1962. Returned to office in December 1980 until July 1985.

OKELLO Basilio

Brigadier - succeeded Obote in military coup in July 1985.

OKELLO Lt.Gen.Tito

Headed Military Council established in July 1985.

ORIS Juma

Leader of West Nile Bank Front (WNBF) and former Minister of Foreign Affairs under Amin Government. Juma Oris died in March 2001. He had previously suffered a stroke in 1999.

SALEH Salim

Maj. Gen. - younger half-brother of President Museveni. He was appointed Army Commander in 1989 but was soon relieved of his position allegedly due to corruption apart from other reasons. He was then appointed to the job of Commander of the Reserve forces and went into private business. Since then he has built up a considerable business empire, including banking, property, air transport and cargo handling and a security firm among others. In 1996 he was re-appointed by President Museveni and he played a significant role in Uganda's involvement in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Saleh became involved in the 1998 Uganda Commercial Bank privatisation scandal and was forced, by Museveni, to resign. In 2001, the Porter Commission (a judicial commission set up to consider the allegations made by the UN panel into the illegal exploitation of the DRC's natural resources) exonerated Saleh of any wrongdoing over allegations that he was involved in the DRC plunder.

SSEMOGERERE Paul

Chairman of DP - won 23.7% of votes in May 1996 elections.

SSEMUJU Herman

"President General" of the National Freedom Party (NFP). Generally considered not to be a serious political figure. Had to withdraw from 1996 Presidential election through lack of support. Often claims to have foiled assassination attempts. Now President of new rebel group, the UFF/A.

Glossary

ADF	ALLIED DEMOCRATIC FORCES
CA	CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY
CAMP	CAMPAIGN FOR MULTI-PARTY DEMOCRACY
DP	DEMOCRATIC PARTY
DRC	DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (FORMERLY ZAIRE)

FEDEMO	FEDERAL DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT
FGM	FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION
FIDA	UGANDA ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN LAWYERS
GDP	GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT
IC	INDUSTRIAL COURT
ICRC	INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS
ISO	INTERNAL SECURITY ORGANISATION
LC 3	LOCAL COUNCIL - SUBCOUNTY
LC 2	LOCAL COUNCIL - PARISH
LC 1	LOCAL COUNCIL - VILLAGE
LDU	LOCAL DEFENCE UNIT
LRA	LORD'S RESISTANCE ARMY
NALU/NULU	NATIONAL ARMY (UNION) FOR THE LIBERATION OF UGANDA
NGO	NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANISATION
NRA	NATIONAL RESISTANCE ARMY
NRC	NATIONAL RESISTANCE COUNCIL
NRM	NATIONAL RESISTANCE MOVEMENT
NUSh	NEW UGANDAN SHILLING
SPLA	SUDANESE PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY
UFA	UGANDAN FEDERAL ARMY
UFF/A	UGANDA FREEDOM FRONT/ARMY (NEW GROUP IN 1999)
UN	UNITED NATIONS
UNDA	UGANDAN NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE
UNHCR	UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES
UNLA	UGANDA NATIONAL LIBERATION ARMY
UNLF	UGANDA NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT
UPC	UGANDA PEOPLE'S CONGRESS
UPDA	UGANDA PEOPLE'S DEFENCE ARMY
UPDF	UGANDA PEOPLE'S DEFENCE FORCE

UPDM	UGANDAN PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT
UPFM	UGANDA PEOPLE'S FREEDOM MOVEMENT
UNRF II	UGANDA NATIONAL RESCUE FRONT
US	UNITED STATES
Ush	UGANDAN SHILLING
WNBFB	WEST NILE BANK FRONT

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COUNTRY INFORMATION & POLICY UNIT

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Part III

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