



**enough**

The project to end genocide and crimes against humanity

# The Lord's Resistance Army in Central Africa

A short timeline

May 2009

Yoweri Museveni, leader of the National Resistance Army, overthrows President Milton Obote and becomes president of Uganda. After taking power, President Museveni, a southerner, begins systematically rooting out 'enemies' hailing from the Acholi ethnic group of northern Uganda.



President Yoweri Museveni

AP Photo

1986

Alice Lakwena, a young Acholi woman from northern Uganda declares herself to be under the orders of Christian spirits, creates the rebel group the Holy Spirit Mobile Forces, and declares war against Museveni's government.

Another rebel group, the Uganda People's Democratic Army, or UPDA, launches a rebellion against Museveni. Joseph Kony, reportedly a cousin of Alice Lakwena, serves as a Catholic preacher to the UPDA.

Lakwena is defeated, and she flees to Kenya. Kony recruits her remaining forces and forms the Uganda People's Democratic Christian Army, which later becomes the Lord's Resistance Army, or LRA.

1987-88

Kony, despite claiming to defend the rights of the Acholi in northern Uganda by waging war against the Ugandan government, launches a campaign of extreme brutality against them, murdering and mutilating civilians, pillaging villages, and abducting children to fill his ranks.



LRA Leader Joseph Kony

AP Photo

1991

The Sudanese government begins to provide direct support to the LRA. In return, the LRA supports Khartoum's war against the Sudan People's Liberation Army in southern Sudan.



SPLA Rebels in Southern Sudan

IRIN

1993-4

1996



Protected village in northern Uganda

IRIN

Stating its intent to prevent looting and abductions by the LRA, the Ugandan government forces more than two million people into 'protected villages.' A humanitarian emergency ensues as the conflict continues and conditions in these squalid camps worsen.



President George W. Bush

AP Photo

The U.S. government places the LRA on a list of terrorist organizations.

2001

President Museveni requests that the International Criminal Court, or ICC, investigate crimes against humanity and war crimes committed in northern Uganda.

2002

2003

With cooperation from the Sudanese government, Ugandan forces launch "Operation Iron Fist," a cross-border operation into southern Sudan meant to definitively defeat the LRA. The mission fails and the LRA responds with brutal attacks against civilians in both northern Uganda and southern Sudan.



AP Photo

LRA rebels in the bush in northern Uganda

The ICC issues arrest warrants for Joseph Kony and four of his top commanders. The LRA shifts its base of operations to northeastern Congo, underscoring the regional dimensions of the conflict.

2004

2005

LRA rebels kill more than 330 civilians, mostly women and children, in a single attack. The government and the LRA hold face-to-face negotiations, but fail to sign a peace agreement.



IRIN

An internally displaced woman in northern Uganda.



AP Photo

Museveni (right) and LRA leader, Dr. James Orbita

Museveni initiates the Peace, Recovery, and Development Plan, or PRDP, to promote reconstruction and development efforts in northern Uganda as the region begins to recover from two decades of war. However, northern Ugandans express frustration with the lack of implementation of the plan.

2006

2007

The Ugandan Parliament votes to remove presidential term limits and Museveni wins Uganda's first multiparty elections since his rise to power in 1986. Peace talks between the Ugandan government and the LRA, mediated by the Government of Southern Sudan, begin in Juba, Sudan.



AP Photo

President Museveni



Enough/Julia Spiegel

Uganda and Congolese soldiers side by side in northeastern Congo

Ugandan, Congolese, and southern Sudanese militaries launch a joint military offensive, "Operation Lightning Thunder," against the LRA in northeastern Congo. The offensive fails to apprehend Kony and his top commanders. In retaliation, the LRA kills hundreds of civilians in a series of attacks in northeastern Congo.

April 2008

December 2008

The Juba Peace Talks are suspended indefinitely after Kony refuses to sign a final peace agreement.



Enough/Julia Spiegel

Women calling for peace in northern Uganda