Overview

Uganda developed from the 19th century kingdom of Buganda, which was declared a British protectorate in 1894. The protectorate was extended to other traditional kingdoms in 1896 and the rest of the country brought under central administration by 1914. British administration followed the principles of indirect rule, which included special measures of autonomy for the Baganda. African representation in government increased steadily after 1945. This met some resistance from the traditionalists and separatists among the Baganda. Uganda became independent in October 1962 under a constitution that safeguarded the autonomy of Baganda and the other kingdoms. Milton Obote, leader of the Uganda People's Congress (UPC), was elected Prime Minister, with the Kabaka (Buganda monarch)
as non executive President. Milton Obote moved against the Kabaka of Buganda in 1966. A new centralised constitution stripped the kingdoms and monarchical institutions of their powers. In 1971 Obote was ousted in a military coup. Idi Amin then established a brutal dictatorship which lasted until 1979. It was finally removed with military assistance from Tanzania. Hastily organised elections in 1980 returned Obote's UPC to power on a disputed mandate. 'Obote II' relied heavily on the support of the army and soon became embroiled in a savage guerrilla war against Yoweri Museveni's National Resistance Army (NRA). Obote was overthrown in an army coup in 1985. General Tito Okello established a short-lived military council but in January 1986, the NRA occupied Kampala and Museveni was installed as President. One million Ugandans had been killed by war; two million uprooted as refugees; 500,000 seriously injured; and the economy was in ruins.

Former British East African colony

It's great beauty led Sir Winston Churchill to refer Uganda as the "Pearl of Africa"of it's views of lush vegetation in great abundance.

In late 1950s, however, a Lango schoolteacher namely Appolo Milton Obote of the Acholli tribe, managed to put together a loose coalition headed by the Uganda Congress Party (UCP) which led Uganda to independence in October, 1962 on the promise that the Bugandas would have autonomy.

Entebbe, meaning for "Seat" was formerly the capital of Uganda but lost that status to Kampala about when independence began to be discussed, the Buganda tribe were considered secession.

Achieved independence in 1st March, 1962 under the headship of Khabaka Muteissa, (king of the Bugandas). The premiership comes to Mr. Apollo Milton Obote a former Lango schoolteacher of the Acholli tribe, in late 1950s, however, he managed to put together a loose coalition headed by the Uganda Congress Party (UCP) which led Uganda to independence on the promises that the Bugandas would have autonomy.

The Khabaka, (king of the Bugandas) was the new nation's head of state when the premiership still in the hands of Milton Obote. It soon became obvious that Milton Obote had no intention of continuing power-sharing with the Khabaka Muteisa, king of the Bugandas, it meant that a confrontation was inevitable.

The PM Milton Obote moved fast, arrested several cabinet minsters and ordered the then Army chief of staff, Brigadier General Idi Amin Oumi, to storm the Khabaka Muteisa's palace, but the raid resulted in the flight to exile to UK of the Khabaka where he died in 1969.
On the 15th April, 1966 following the coup, Milton Obote has sworn into office as president of "Republic of Uganda".

In 1967 President Milton Obote with a new constitution abolished all local kingdoms including the Bugandan monarchy along with those of the kingdoms of Bunyoro, Ankole, Ba-Toro, and the Busoga, that earned them sympathy and significance among their native Ugandans as traditional rulers of their time. Example the Omukama (king of Ba-Toro) traditionally makes him the most powerful woman or man in Toro, one of Uganda's five traditional kingdoms. But President Milton Obote had violently at least in the case of the Kabaka (king of the Buganda's) abolished Uganda's traditional monarchies. Events in Uganda then started to go seriously wrong after that, President Milton Obote had rewrite a constitution to consolidate virtually all his powers at his hands, he then began to nationalise foreigners investment assets. The British government, who had probably suffered most from Obote's nationalisation program, were among the first to act fast against the regime in Uganda. A chestfull medal-decorated senior Army Brigadier General in the Ugandan Army namely Idi Amin Oumee then commander of the presidential bodyguard, deposed the president Mr. Milton Obote while he was on a Commonwealth Heads of Governments Meeting (CHOGM), in Kuala Lumpur Malaysia. The British were among the first to recognize the new regime of Brigadier General Idi Amin, then Milton Obote went into exile in Tanzania. It was a bit common knowledge back then that the British played a major role in bringing General Idi Amin to power because of Milton Obote's move to the left.

A onetime Non-commissioned officer Idi Amin Oumee who joined the British colonial regiment, East African forces of "Kings African Rifles" in 1946, rose to power from lower ranks of Uganda's military, and eventually held until the rank of Major-General and commander of the Ugandan army then commander of the presidential bodyguard prior to taking power in the military coup in January, 1971, deposed the president Mr. Milton Obote while he was away for a Commonwealth Heads of Governments Meeting (CHOGM), in Kuala Lumpur Malaysia.

General Idi Amin Oumi (Dada), known as the “Butcher of Uganda” and the most notorious of all African dictators, imposed a reign of terror on the Ugandan people and sadistically displayed his tyrannical power to the international press. He pompously described himself as “His Excellency, President for Life, Field Marshal, Al Hadji, Doctor Idi Amin, VC, DSO, MC, Lord of All the Beasts of the Earth and Fishes of the Sea, and Conqueror of the British Empire in Africa in General and Uganda in Particular.” General Idi Amin built no dams or any infrastructural development by damned the Ugandan people for 8 years until he was forced into exile (KSA). He left a legacy of death, destruction and ethnic division in Uganda.
The East African nation of Uganda has several coups and foreign invasions since independence. The state of Uganda has survived numerous dictatorial regimes giving rise to the most notorious being that of General Idi Amin Oumi in 1971 to 1979.

Origins of name: Derived from the name ‘Baganda’, which is the country’s largest ethnic group, ‘Buganda’ is the name of the Kingdom, and “the Kabaka” is head of the traditional monarch.

A Republic in East Africa

Uganda is an inland state in East Africa. Meaning geographically a landlocked country in the Eastern central Africa. Is believed one of the most beautiful countries in Africa, with fantastic natural scenery. At early nineteenth century the region now known as Uganda, comprised of several separate kingdoms, inhabited by various peoples, it grouped together a wide range of ethnic groups with different socio-political and socio-cultural systems. Made a British colony in 1888, which that ended after 74 years of colonial rule. The British explorers paved the way for European missionaries and eventually British colonialism to make Uganda part of the British empire. Before independence Uganda was a prosperous and cohesive country. In Uganda traditional monarchs were to be protected by colonial authorities of the time and in various communities of Uganda for generations. Of course, it was well known in many including ex-British-African colonies traditional kingships under traditional methods exist alongside elected governments in many African countries like Angola, the Congo, Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa and Zambia. The British colonial administration had a devastating impact on the traditional monarchies and Uganda’s traditional cultural practices and beliefs.

The people of Uganda as a nation had had that kind of see-saw existence right from the beginning when the British or their agents first arrived in that part of East Africa. Ugandans started life as a modern nation under the rule of a private company as the British did the same to India. However, Uganda was promoted from private company-rule to a British protectorate in 1894, and 20 years later in 1914, Britain finally succeeded in cobbled together what is today’s Uganda from the traditional kingdoms that existed in the area before their arrival in the mid-1860s of the British explorers, Richard Burton and John Hanning Speke. The two explorers were looking separately for the source of the River-Nile, and having traced the river from it’s mouth in Egypt, Speke finally located the source at Jinja, 4, 000 miles away in Uganda, flowing majestically from Africa’s largest lake Nalubaale, which Speke cheekily and some would say arrogantly renamed the falls after his queen, Victoria. As Uganda’s independence neared, Great Britain granted self-government to Uganda in 1961, after the first-ever elections in the country were held on 1st March, 1961. The elections saw the emergence of Benedicto Kiwanuka of the
Democratic party as the first chief minister of Uganda. However, a year later, Kiwanuka was swept aside in the independence elections in which no single party had a winning majority. However, thus, a Lango schoolteacher of the Acholli tribe, namely Apollo Milton Obote, managed to put together a loose coalition headed by the Uganda Congress Party (UCP) which led Uganda to independence in October, 1962 on the promise that the Bugandas would have autonomy, had had the most votes, headed the ruling coalition that saw him becoming the executive prime minister, and the king of Bugandas, Kabaka Edward Mutesa II (head of the Kabaka yekka party), becomes ceremonial president, with William Wilberforce Nadiope, the Kyabazinga (paramount chief) of the Busogas, as vice president. No wonder that fragile coalition lasted for only four years, as on 15 April, 1966, Milton Obote abrogated the independence constitution, following a power struggle arising from accusations that he and his deputy then army commander, Brigadier General Idi Amin and two of his ministers Adoko Nekyon and Felix Onama, had been involved in gold smuggling from the Congo. “As from this moment”, Milton Obote announced in a Parliament surrounded by heavily-armed troops and armoured personnel carriers, with Uganda airforce helicopters hovering intimidatingly above it, “the constitution which we had from 9th October, 1962 is here by abrogated”.

In fact, Milton Obote had suspended the constitution on 22 February, seven whole weeks before finally abrogating it on 15th April. He proceeded to tell Parliament on that fateful day: “we are also not members of parliament … Now therefore, we, the people of Uganda here assembled in the name of all the people of Uganda do resolve, and it’s hereby resolved, that the constitution that came into effect on the 9th day of October, 1962 be abolished; and it is hereby abolished accordingly and the constitution now before us is to be adopted and it is hereby adopted this day, 15th April, 1966”. Yet almost all the MPs in the August House had not seen, let alone read, the new constitution which they were being asked to adopt. Aware of these embarrassing facts, Prime Minister Milton Obote proceeded to tell the MPs that “fairly soon you will find your copies in your pigeonholes”. Though, Mr. Obote claimed that his action was “in the interest of national unity and public tranquility”, nothing could be farther from the truth. On 3rd March, he had dismissed Kabaka Mutesa as state president and Nadiope as vice president, and this had set in train a series of unpleasant events. A new law that accompanied the abolition of the constitution outlawed Uganda’s various local kingdoms, and thus rendered Buganda, the most dominant kingdom in the land, “stateless”. Inaddition, a draconian Preventive detention Act was rushed through to deal with people who might show any inclinations for “feudalism”. Thus, stripped off his presidential powers, King (Kabaka) Edward Mutesa refused to pass the new “unitary” constitution, and on 30th May, he asked Obote’s government
to remove its headquarters and capital of the nation from Buganda soil. The PMsaw this as a plot to topple his government, and immediately ordered his right-hand man Brigadier General Idi Amin, to use the army to invade King Mutesa’s palace. The Buganda crisis, and by extension Ugandan crisis, was born just four years after independence. A year later, in September, 1967, without holding an election, Milton Obote became executive president when the country was declared a republic.

Edward Frederick Mutesa - Early Life as The King (Kabaka) & head of State of Uganda

Edward Frederick Mutesa was the first president of a newly independent Uganda and the kabaka (king) of the BaGanda people. He was deposed by Apolo Milton Obote in 1966, after which he went into exile in Britain.

Date of birth: 19 November 1924

Date of death: 21 November 1969, London

Edward Frederick William David Walugembe Mutebi Luwangula Mutesa (to give his full name) comes from the BaGanda people, the largest ethnic group in Uganda. Mutesa attended King's College in Budo, one of the region's most prestigious schools. Mutesa succeeded his father (Daudi Cwa II) as kabaka (king) of the East African state of Buganda (the largest of four kingdoms in what is now Uganda) in 1939 but waited until he had reached 18 before having his coronation (1942). He completed his education in Britain at Magdalene College, Cambridge, and underwent military training in the officer training corps -- gaining a commission as captain with the Grenadier Guards.

Opposing the British Rule: Mutesa, known to the western press (and by the ruling elite in Uganda) as King Freddie was initially unpopular among his people -- he was seen as being under the influence of the British resident and a pawn of the British government. Mutesa's prime minister (katikiro) was also unpopular with the people. But in the early 1950s, the British government proposed creating a federation of states in East Africa, uniting Uganda, Tanganyika and Kenya.

In 1953, seeing the privileged poison of Buganda within the protectorate of Uganda under threat, Mutesa II openly opposed the British (in the hope of gaining support from an increasingly alienated BaGandan population) -- he demanded the separation of Buganda from the rest of Uganda and a timetable for independence for the kingdom.

When he refused to pass on formal British recommendations to his parliament (the Lukiko) in what became known as the Kababa crisis of 1953, Mutesa was arrested and then deported by the British authorities.
Deposed as kabaka by the British in 1953, his role was filled by a British appointed regent.

Returning a Hero: Bugandan leaders arranged with British agreement for his return in 1955 as a constitutional monarch. Returning as a national hero Mutesa held particular sway over both the BaGandan people and the Bugandan government. He was particularly influential in the constitutional negotiations ahead of Ugandan independence.

Mutesa boycotted the pre-independence elections in 1960 in protest against the lack of autonomy for Buganda and formed a royalist party, the Kabaka Yekka, which allied with Obote's Ugandan People's Congress (UPC). The coalition won the first national elections in 1962 and Obote took over the post of first minister, becoming prime minister with independence of Uganda on 9 October 1962.

Edward Mutesa as head of State: With independence, prime minister Obote hoped to gain the support of the Bugandan people by proposing Mutesa for the non-executive position of president of the forthcoming republic of Uganda. (Mutesa remained constitutional monarch, but had no executive powers form the role.) Whilst in power Mutesa worked to turn the Bugandan people against the previously 'stateless' northern people of Uganda, again in the hope of gaining an independent kingdom. Obote, however, arranged for two counties to be transferred from Buganda to neighboring Bunyoro -- the coalition between Kabaka Yekka and the UPC collapsed.

Opposition to Obote's Rule: Shortly afterwards a crisis hit Uganda's government with the opposition accusing complicity by the UPC in the smuggling of gold from neighboring Zaire. Obote responded to the accusation by suspending the constitution and assuming almost complete power over the government. Mutesa publicly rejected a proposed constitutional change which would give Obote the executive post of head of state, and ordered all Ugandan troops out of Baganda (which included the country's capital, Kampala). Obote ordered Mutesa's arrest and the kabaka's palace was stormed by the army led by then Colonel Idi Amin. Mutesa fled to Britain and Obote took the opportunity to depose Mutesa as both president and king of Uganda on 2 March 1966, abolishing all the four traditional kingdoms the following year.

Exile: Edward Mutesa fled to Great Britain in 1966, and remained there until his death (by alcohol poisoning) in 1969. After the overthrow of Obote by Idi Amin on the 25th January 1971, Mutesa’s body was allowed to return to Uganda where he was given a state funeral.

Brigadier General Idi Amin Oumi, and the Success in the King's African Rifles
Idi Amin received little formal education: sources are unclear whether or not he attended the local missionary school. However, in 1946 he joined the King's African Rifles, KAR (Britain's colonial African troops), and served in Burma, Somalia, Kenya (during the British suppression of the Mau Mau) and Uganda. Although he was considered a skilled, and somewhat overeager, soldier, Amin developed a reputation for cruelty - he was almost cashiered on several occasions for excessive brutality during interrogations.

He rose through the ranks, reaching sergeant-major before finally being made an effendi, the highest rank possible for a Black African serving in the British army. Amin was also an accomplished sportsman, holding Uganda's light heavyweight boxing championship from 1951 to 1960.

A Hint of What was to Come?

As Uganda approached independence Idi Amin's close colleague Apolo Milton Obote, the leader of the Uganda People's Congress (UPC), was made chief minister, and then prime minister. Obote had Amin, one of only two high ranking Africans in the KAR, appointed as First Lieutenant of the Ugandan army. Sent north to quell cattle stealing, Amin perpetrated such atrocities that the British government demanded he be prosecuted. Instead Obote arranged for him to receive further military training in the UK.

A Willing Soldier for the State

On his return to Uganda in 1964, Idi Amin was promoted to major and given the task of dealing with an army in mutiny. His success led to a further promotion to colonel. In 1965 Obote and Amin were implicated in a deal to smuggle gold, coffee, and ivory out of the Democratic Republic of the Congo - the subsequent funds should have been channeled to troops loyal to the murdered DRC prime minister Patrice Lumumba, but according to their leader, General Olenga, never arrived. A parliamentary investigation demanded by President Edward Mutebi Mutesa II (who was also the King of Buganda, known colloquially as 'King Freddie') put Obote on the defensive - he promoted Amin to general and made him Chief-of-Staff, had five ministers arrested, suspended the 1962 constitution, and declared himself president. King Freddie was finally forced into exile in Britain in 1966 when government forces, under the command of Idi Amin, stormed the royal palace.

Coup d'Etat

Idi Amin began to strengthen his position within the army, using the funds obtained from smuggling and from supplying arms to rebels in southern Sudan. He also developed ties with British and Israeli agents in the country. President Obote first responded by putting Amin under house
arrest, and when this failed to work, Amin was sidelined to a non-executive position in the army. On 25 January 1971, whilst Obote attended a Commonwealth meeting in Singapore, Amin led a coup d'état and took control of the country, declaring himself president. Popular history recalls Amin's declared title to be: "His Excellency President for Life, Field Marshal Al Hadji Doctor Idi Amin, VC, DSO, MC, Lord of All the Beasts of the Earth and Fishes of the Sea, and Conqueror of the British Empire in Africa in General and Uganda in Particular."

The Hidden Side of a Popular President

Idi Amin was initially welcomed both within Uganda and by the international community. King Freddie had died in exile in 1969 and one of Amin's earliest acts was to have the body returned to Uganda for state burial. Political prisoners (many of whom were Amin followers) were freed and the Ugandan Secret Police was disbanded. However, at the same time Amin had 'killer squads' hunting down Obote's supporters.

The followed Amin Era

Poetic justice was, however, served when on 25th January, 1971, Idi Amin used the same army to topple Obote's government in a coup d’ etat when the president was away attending a commonwealth heads of government conference in Kuala Lampour, Malaysia. General Idi Amin’s coup later turned out to have been a British creation.

From 1971 until 1979, General Idi Amin Dada ruled Uganda with an iron fist; estimates assume 300,000 people died under his dictatorship. In 1974, Dada agreed to let French filmmaker Barbet Schroeder make a portrait of him. The result is an eye-opening film that should not be missed by anybody with an interest in the human capacity for evil.

Up close, the monster doesn't resemble anything so much as a rich, loudmouthed uncle - the guy you tried to get away from at family reunions when you were a kid. One absolutely chilling sequence shows Amin as avuncular tour guide on a river cruise, shooing crocodiles and waving at elephants. Moments later, prompted by Schroeder's careful questioning, he laughs off comments he had made about Hitler not killing enough Jews. This is a jovial uncle who likes to murder, maim, and joke about it.

"Idi Amin Dada" is a frightening document on the banality of evil: apparently, stupidity, carelessness, and a certain freedom from doubt are all it takes to send hundreds of thousands to their deaths. General Dada was no Darth Vader or Dr. Evil, no grandiose murder with plans and doomsday machines - he's a small-minded, undereducated bully in a fancy uniform going on and on (and on) about his "revolutionary" government, always with a smile on his face.
When the film premiered in France, Idi Amin requested that Schroeder take out several short scenes that illuminated the reality behind the dictator's friendly façade. When Schroeder refused to comply, Amin rounded up 150 French citizens in Uganda and threatened to kill them. Schroeder made the changes and informed audiences that they were, in fact, watching a movie co-edited by Idi Amin himself. Only after his fall from power, the film was restored to its original version. Criterion included a documentation on the changes, along with a useful Ugandan timeline and an interview with Barbet Schroeder.

The UK wanted Milton Obote out for attempting to nationalize the mainly British businesses in the country. Sadly, Idi Amin became a huge embarrassment, not only for himself and Ugandans but his British sponsors. He declares himself life president and gave himself absolute power. His eight-year rule is generally accepted to have been the darkest period in Uganda’s post-independence history, although some blame Milton Obote for changing the constitution in the first place. Idi Amin created “economic decline, serious social disintegration, and massive human rights violations” as one writer has pointed out. With Idi Amin himself outed in 1979, thanks largely to the involvement of the Tanzanian army, Uganda experienced a further seven years period of utter chaos, frequent changes of government, brutal abuses, and intensive armed rebellions which were only halted when the current president, and his National Resistance Army (NRA) took power on 29th January, 1986, could be described as as Uganda’s nightmare. Yoweri Museveni’s NRM government now has a peaceful environment in which to bring prosperity to the country.

The onetime Non-Commissioned Officer Idi Amin Oumee who joined the British colonial regiment, East African forces of "Kings African Rifles" in 1946, rose to power from lower ranks of Uganda's military, and eventually held the rank of Major-General and commander of the Ugandan army prior to taking power in the military coup of the January, 1971, deposing president Appolo Milton Obote, believed he was a son of rural peasantry, many say he grew-up with only two years of primary education. In the 1950s, when Uganda was under the British rule, he fought under the British against the Mau-Mau uprising in Kenya, and other British administered territories like in the Ogadien, then known as "Hawd-Reserve Area" of Ethiopia served as army sergeant. In 1962, he was a platoon commander, and early that year he led an assault on a village across the border in Kenya. The colonial government of Kenya demanded that Idi Amin be tried for the atrocity, three Kenyans had been murdered and the town unnecessarily brutalized, but the Ugandan leader of the time, Mr. Apollo milton Obote, and the British colonial army command in Uganda chose to not to prosecute Idi Amin, because he was one of only two commissioned officers at the time in Uganda, when Uganda became
independent in October, 1962, Idi Amin rose to deputy commander in the Ugandan army, and then commander of the presidential bodyguard in the latter time. The northern Uganda where Amin came from, differed ethnically from the South. So, General Idi Amin’s regime quickly began Uganda’s first reign of terror turned from intolerance to brutality, suspended all political activities and the army was empowered to shoot on sight any one suspected of opposition to the regime, eventually turned to absolute tyranny, in which thousands of people died, his rule was characterised by gross human rights abuses, political repressions, ethnic persecution, extra-judicial killings, nepotism, corruption and gross economic mismanagement.

Also a prime target was the 70,000 strong Asian community. General Idi Amin told “he has dreamt”, to a gathering in northeastern Uganda that unless he takes an immediate action, Uganda’s economy will be taken over. Though, the people who are not Ugandans should leave the country. In August, 1972, they were given 90 days to leave the country with virtually nothing but the clothes they wore. General Amin, then turned on the British and nationalised, estimated USD 500 million worth of investments in tea plantations and other industries without compensation. In the early 1973, Amin’s government issued the “Properties and Businesses (Acquisition) Decree”. Under it, Asian properties were expropriated by the government and sold. The government agreed to pay the Asians to pay who lost their properties, and indeed set up a fund at the central bank, the Bank of Uganda. The Asians who left for Canada and England were paid through the Uganda High commission for the value of their properties and 30 % as disturbance allowance.

Over the next eight years of his rule, large numbers of people killed as a result of his regime is estimated by international observers and human rights groups to range from 300,000 to 500,000 often in horrifying ways; bludgeoned to death with sledge hammers and iron bars to be given to hungry Crocs onto the Nile river or tortured to death or disfigured in prisons and police stations throughout the country, prime targets of Idi Amin’s death squad were the Achollis, clan members belongs to ex-president Milton Obote and the Lango tribe, who were decimated in waves of massacres, whole villages were wiped out. Next, he turned on the professional classes, University professors and lecturers, doctors, lawyers, business people, military officers even cabinet ministers who might have posed a threat to Amin were dragged from their offices and shot or simply never seen again. He had an early support for his regime coming from the UK, Israel, and apartheid-South Africa.

On the 4th July, 1976 an Air-France passengers plane with 248 passengers was hijacked by Palestinian and German terrorists, and flown to Entebbe, Uganda. "Operation-Thunderbolt Entebbe" was a counter-
terrorist hostage rescue mission carried out by the Special Forces of the Israel Defence Forces (IDF). The IDF acted on intelligence reports provided by the Israeli intelligence agency known as Mossad. In the wake of the hijacking by members of the militant organizations, Revolutionary cells and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), along with the hijackers threats to kill all the hostages if their prisoners release demands were not met. These plans by the IDF were included preparation for armed resistance from Ugandan armed forces. The operation took place at night, as Israeli transport planes carried 100 commandoes over 2,500 miles (4,000 km) to take away to the Entebbe Airport in Uganda for the rescue operation in absence of General Idi Amin who he was confered with OAU summit in Port louis, Mauritius. The military operation, which took a week of planning to launch, lasted only 90 minutes, and 102 hostages were rescued in absence of President Idi Amin, he had been in Mauritius to handover a yearly conference chairmanship. Five Israeli commandoes were wounded and one, the deputy commander Lt. Colonel Jonathan Netanyahu was killed. All the hijackers, three hostages and 45 Ugandan soldiers were killed, about 30 ex-Soviet-built MIG-17s and MIG-21s of the Ugandan Air Force were ablazed. And one hospitalised hostage also killed by the Ugandan army officers at the latter.

President Idi Amin Oumi entitled himself as, Marshal, Al-Hadji, Doctor, Idi Amin Dada, VC, DSO, MC, Conquerer of the British empire in Africa in General, and Uganda in particular". The self-decorated General Amin is known to had four white-men carried him into a meeting, sitting on a chair, as he calls himself the "white-mans burden". A total reversal and a mockery of the famous "white-mans burden" of European colonialists of years past.

President Amin had about 17 children from four presidential wives namely, Sara, Medina, Keidy, and Nora. General Amin nicknamed "boaster dadda" or "Supersize Amin" by western media, in power since 25th of January, 1971 was overthrown by the Tanzanian invading Army after the Ugandan army rolled-across northwestern Tanzania virtually unopposed and annexed more than 1,200 square km of the Kagera, territory of Tanzania, meanwhile the Ugandan Airforce bombed the lake Victorian ports of Bukoba and Musoma, then Tanzanian president Julius Nyerere ordered a full-scale counter-attack that led to the Uganda-Tanzania conventional war of the 30th April, 1978, by the following spring, however, President Nyerere had managed to mobilize a 50,000 strong peoples militia joined with the many exiled Ugandan liberation groups based in Tanzania, then the two armies were met, East Africa's supposedly best equipped and best trained Ugandan army threw down it's weapons and fled and the Tanzanians puhed forward into the hearts of Uganda, and Kampalla city fell without a fight to the demise of Amin's regime in April, 1979, exactly a year after the Ugandan invasion to Tanzania. General Idi Amin fled to
Libya, where he remained temporarily until Colonel Muammar Al-Qadhafi threw him out to go to Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, where he found a safe haven until his death in 2003, at age 80.

Once again Uganda slid into chaos and gangs of armed bandits roamed the cities across Uganda, killing and looting. Food supplies ran out and hospitals could no longer function. Nevertheless, thousands of exiled-Ugandans began to answer the new president's call to return home and help with reconstruction of Uganda. Professor Yousuphu Kironde Lule, a former political science lecturer at the Makerere University, was installed as president with Julius Nyerere's blessing, but when he began speaking-out against him, he was replaced by Geoffrey Binaissa, a US educated veteran lawyer, meanwhile Milton Obote bided his time in Dar-es-salam. Acting-president Godfrey Binaisa quickly came under pressure to set a date for a general election and a return to civilian rule.

In February, 1979 a transitional government was formed under a renowned academician called, Yusufu Kironde Lule who was provisional president of Uganda b/n 13 April and 20, June 1979, as the leader of the defeating UNLF forces, Yusufu Lule was installed as president of Uganda by neighbouring Tanzania, whos forces toppled Idi Amin Umee with help from the UNLF after his failed attempt to annex portions of Tanzania. Professor Yusufu Kironde Lule was the first of a swift succession of Ugandan leaders before the eventual return to power of Appolo Milton Obote in 1980 for second time. In June, 1979, following a dispute over the extent of presidential powers Yusufu Kironde Lule replaced by Geoffrey Binaissa, a former lawyer later himself died of cancer under controversial house arrest by the late president Julius Kambarage Nyerere, of Tanzania, his backer on the war against the regime of General Amin, then Mr. Geoffrey Binaissa, a former lawyer replaced him as president briefly until the self-exiled Mr. Milton Obote made a political comeback as president from Tanzania/Zambia for a period of time from 17th December, 1980 to 27th July, 1985, (he died in October, 2005) which of course this time Uganda was under series of civil war & repression, as a result of a civil war known as the Ugandan "Bush-war". However, in 1983, under a new president Milton Obote, the expropriated properties Act was instituted to provide for the transfer of exproprieted properties to their former owners. That's how some Asians came back and repossessed their properties for which they had already been compensated.

In July, 1985 the civilian government of Milton Obote was again deposed by the Ugandan military led by General Tito Lutwa Okello, an Acholi himself, which he in turn was overthrown by National Resistance Movement of Yoweri Museveni during the Ugandan Bush-war in 1986, where he eventually captured power since he won a five year guerilla war, he sworn-in as president of Uganda in January, 1986. Then long after
president Yoweri Kaguta Museveni who had taken power at this time after
by chasing out Obote’s second government returned the properties to
their original Asian owners. President Yoweri Museveni has also restored
the traditional kingdoms which his predecessors had banned it starting
from 1967, but he still has been adamant that kings restrict themselves to
cultural duties and keep out of politics. The government recognition does
not grant any executive power but allows the monarchs to determine
cultural and social issues affecting their people. According to the newly
enacted constitution of 1995, the government of Uganda has promulgated
a non-party presidential and legislative elections, held in May, 1996,

Side note: The Lords Resistance Army (LRA) sprouted as a rebel
movement in late 1980s among the ethnic-Acholis in the marginalised
northern Uganda. The LRA is known as a cult group that follows the self-
proclaimed spiritual powers of it's leader, Joseph Kony, who is wanted by
the ICC for persecution of civilians and for atrocities committed. Joseph
Kony who born in Odek in northern Uganda, and his LRA rebels have
targeted civilians and terrorised civilians for more than two decades in
Uganda and other neighboring countries, the rebel LRA leader thought to
have over 60 wives, and over 42 children. As recent, on the 6th October,
2005, it was announced by the International Criminal Court (ICC) that
arrest warrants had been issued for five members of the LRA leadership
for crimes against humanity following a sealed indictment. A week later on
the 13th October, 2006, the Hague based, International Criminal Court
(ICC) Chief- prosecutor released details on Joseph Koni's indictment,
including his associates, Vincent Oti, Raska Lukwiya, Okot Odiambo, and
Dominic Ongwen. There are 33 charges, 12 counts are crimes against
humanity, which include murder, enslavement, sexual enslavement and
rape, there are another 21 counts of war crimes which include murder,
cruel treatment of civilians internationally directing an attack against a
civilian population, pillaging, inducing rape, and forced enlisting of children
into rebel ranks. The LRA has brought misery to northern Ugandan
villagers across the region for more than two decades. The rebel LRA
group originated in Uganda 20 years ago initially claimed to be fighting to
install a theocracy in the country based on the Biblical 10 commandments.
But the rebels now roam across parts of South Sudan, Central African
Republic, as well as northeastern parts of the Congo. The rebel-LRA leader
Joseph Kony is wanted by the International Criminal Court (ICC), and now
lives an itinerant life, crossing between the South Sudan and the Central
African Republic. In 2008, he was about to sign a peace deal with the
Ugandan government, negotiated by the South Sudanese officials, but at
the last period he refused to lay-down arms. For many years the LRA had
linked with Khartoum in the region as a proxy against the SPLA, backed
by Uganda. A combined Ugandan Peoples Democratic Forces (UPDF) and
the SPLA forces pushed them into the Congo where they are melting out terror.

Joseph Kony
He was indicted on 8th July, 2005 on 12 counts of war crimes against humanity and 21 counts of war crimes with regard to the situation in Uganda. He is the leader of the Lords Resistance Army LRA, an armed group which has been waging a war against the Ugandan government since 1987. According to the Hague, the Netherlands based International Criminal Court ICC arrest warrant issued for him, since 1st July, 2002 the LRA has engaged in a cycle of violence and established a pattern of brutalisation of civilians by acts including murder, abductions, sexual enslavement, mutilation as well as mass burnings of houses and looting of camp settlements. Joseph Kony is still at large.

Dominic Ongwen
He indicted on 8th July, 2005 on three counts of crimes against humanity and four counts of war crimes as a military commander of Sinia Brigade and a member of the leadership of the LRA commander. He remains at large.

Okot Odhiambo
A policymaking leadership member of the Lords Resistance Army, Okot Odhiambo was indicted on 8th July, 2005 on three counts of crimes against humanity and seven counts war crimes.

Vincent Otti
He was indicted on 8th July, 2005 on 11 counts of crimes against humanity and 21 counts of war crimes. He was second in command in the LRA but in December, 2007, LRA leader Joseph Kony confirmed that Vincent Otti had died amid reports that he had ordered his execution. But because Otti's death has not been independently verified, the ICC still considers him to be at large and proceedings against him are ongoing.

Raska Lukwiya
A former general in the Lords Resistance Army (LRA), Raska Lukwiya was indicted on 8 July, 2005 on one count of crimes against humanity and three counts of war crimes. On 12 August, 2006 the Ugandan military killed Lukwiya in a battle with LRA forces. Following the confirmation of his death, the ICC terminated proceedings against him on 11 July, 2007.

A small group of combat-equipped US forces to deploy to Central Africa to provide assistance to regional forces that are working toward the removal of the LRA leader Joseph Kony, from the battlefield. News came recently US troops deployment to Central Africa to help battle the Lords Resistance
Army (LRA). The United State takes of sending "Special Forces" into central Africa to catch the rebel leader Joseph Kony. Until now no foreign power has shown interest in the bloody carnage carried out by the LRA guerillas over the last decades. After years of killing, maiming, raping and looting in northern Uganda and beyond, the LRA is now a spent force and is said to numbered no more than 400 members. The anti-LRA military drive is fully sponsored by the US itself. As recent events, the United States is to send combat troops to help fight the Lord Resistance Army (LRA) rebels. The combat forces will use hi-tech equipment to assist in what analysts say is a "kill or capture" term for spies, hit-squads and intelligence officers.

One of Uganda's most wanted men once again narrowly escaped capture in October, 2011. Joseph Kony, the leader of the Lord Resistance Army (LRA), was taking a bath in Ndjema in the Central African Republic when the Ugandan forces arrived. The Ugandan army spokesperson said Joseph Koni fled after his guards fired warning shots. The Ugandan army only got a basin and a towel and was convinced that it was Kony himself bathing since there was a lot of security around. Nonetheless it is not the first time the Uganda Peoples Defence Forces (UPDF) has narrowly missed Joseph Kony by a whisker. The UPDF has spent over 20 years trying to capture him in vain. Joseph Kony went into the bush in 1985, and now he and his top commanders are wanted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for war crimes and crimes against humanity. In early 1991, the Ugandan army launched "Operation-North" with the objective of defeating Kony's forces, which were then operating from the forests in northern Uganda. The operation ended up making the rebels more brutal.

In early 2002, the Ugandan army once again launched "Operation-Iron Fist" in southern Sudan. The army even claimed that it had got Kony's "Kaunda suit", but the man was nowhere to be found. Faced with a lot of fire, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) shifted their bases to South Sudan. The operation, which was sanctioned by the autonomous South Sudan government, did not eliminate the LRA either. Then in December, 2008 the Ugandan army launched "Operation-Lightning Thunder" in the Garamba National Park in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) where joseph Kony was holed up at the time. This operation was involved by Lt. Colonel Muhozi Kainerugaba, president Museveni's son and commander of the Special Forces. The army rehome with a guitar, a wig, three rifles and cooking utensils. The LRA had made a clean exit before they could be captured. Operation Lightning Thunder (OLT) had enlisted the support of the South Sudan army, the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and the Congolese army. Previously, Kony would kill civilians in northern Uganda and then either run to the forests of South Sudan or the forests of the Congo. With these two armies on board, it was assumed that Joseph Kony could be surrounded. But the Congolese army was
disorganized and Kony was able to move onwards to the Central African Republic where he continues to sow mayhem as he raids villages in search of food and supplies. The military operations disorganise his forces and weaken him for a time, but over the years Joseph Kony has proved that he can always regroup and resume fighting. Political analysts say Joseph Kony is to the LRA what Jonas Savimi was to the UNITA in Angola. To end the LRA's terror, the observers say, Joseph Kony must be eliminated. In October 2011 in an official notification to the US Congress, President Barack Obama announced that he had sent a squad of US combat troops to Uganda "to catch or kill" Kony. He explained that the rest of the roughly 100 military personnel would be deployed over the next month to Uganda as well as to the neighbouring countries of South Sudan, the Congo, and the Central African Republic (CAR). President Obama's notification says the US forces are in the region to assist with "the goal of removing from the battlefield Joseph Kony and other senior leadership of the LRA". The troops would only use force in self-defence and would not engage in direct combat. In May, 2010 the US Congress passed a bill, the Resistance Army Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act of 2009, which called for comprehensive US efforts in mitigating and eliminating the threat posed by the LRA to civilians and regional stability.

Joseph Kony, 49, started his war in the mid-1980s as Uganda was going through one of its worst conflict periods. As Joseph Kony entered his 20s, General Tito Okello, an Acholi like Joseph Kony, was Uganda's President, during the time which known as "the war of bushes". General Tito Okello's presidency was ended quickly by a group of rebels, mostly from the south and west of the country, led by Yoweri Museveni. Tribal sentiment heightened as General Okello's followers spread the belief that Yoweri Museveni and his fighters aimed to eliminate northerners. When Yoweri Museveni finally captured power, rebel remnants of the fallen regime of Tito Okello regrouped into the Uganda People's Democratic Army (UPDA). And Kony joined the UPDA forces as a "spiritual mobiliser". Eventually, the UPDA signed a peace agreement with the government. Joseph Kony, possibly not happy with the turn of events, left and started his own grouping. He was aged 23. But he was not the only ambitious one. His cousin, Alice Lakwena, formed her own rebel outfit, the "Holy Spirit Mobile Forces". Alice Lakwena's forces were later defeated by the government. Disappointed and frustrated, some of the remnants of the Holy Spirit Mobile Forces joined Kony's group, which was originally known as the "United Holy Salvation Army", then later changed to the "Uganda Christian Democratic Movement", and finally to the "Lord's Resistance Army". In August 2006, the LRA leader had a rare meeting with religious and cultural leaders from northern Uganda. "I would like to declare our political agenda," Joseph Kony told the group that included journalists. "We are fighting for the Ten Commandments of God, are they obeyed?"
The first attempts to hold peace talks between the government of Uganda and the LRA started in 1993 and collapsed in 1994. Other talks started in 2007 and the parties even signed a cessation of hostilities agreement. The former Mozambican President Joachim Alberto Chissano, was appointed the Special envoy of the UN secretary-general to mediate the process. The LRA then demanded that the International Criminal Court (ICC) warrants against Joseph Kony and his senior commanders be dropped or there would be no peace deal. The government of Uganda said they could only approach the ICC after signing the comprehensive peace agreement. In April, 2008 Joseph Kony never turned up on the day of signing of the final peace agreement. In December of the same year, Uganda launched Operation-Lightning Thunder. The fighting was back on. Kony has since cut-off all communication.

Side note: A Ugandan lady in the name of Alice Auma, was an Acholi spirit-Medium, she's known for a traditional ethnic religious role, as the head of the Holy spirit movement, led a millenial rebellion against the Ugandan government forces under president Yoweri Museveni from August, 1986 until November, 1987. The primary spirit she purportedly channeled was that of a dead Italian army officer called "Lakwena", Acholi meaning for "messenger", which the ethnic-Acholi believe to be a manifestation of the Christian "Holy spirit", would announce in his commanding voice that he had possessed her precisely because she was a woman and a sinner, who had never got beyond seventh year in primary school: he was making an example of a hard case, saving her first, before he saved the wicked Acholi in general. The combined persons of Alice Auma channeling the spirit Lakwena is often refered to as "Alice Lakwena". The Holy Spirit Mobile Forces (HSMF) numbered at their peak 10, 000 souls to fight back the National Resistance Movement (NRM) under president Yoweri Museveni. After the HSMF were badly defeated by the NRM troops in 1987, Alice Lakwena fled to Kenya, lived in the Ifo refuge camp near Dadaab in northern Kenya for the remainder of her life, and claimed to have been abandoned by the spirits, and many of her followers at last joined the insurgent Lord Resistance Army (LRA) under Joseph Koni, who was reported to be her cousin. She died on the 17th of January, 2007 after being sick briefly with an unknown sickness. In 1986, the Lord Resistance Army (LRA) under Joseph Koni, a highschool dropout launched a guerrilla war against the Ugandan army, Joseph Koni insists that he and the LRA are fighting for the "Ten Commandments", the LRA is engaged in violent campaign to establish theocratic government in Uganda, which he claims is based on the "Ten commandments". The LRA has abducted and forced an estimated 66, 000 children to fight for them, and has also forced the internal displacement of over 2 million since it's rebellion began in 1986.
Under President Yoweri Museveni’s leadership, Uganda has become a confident and outspoken regional power through it's military role in Somalia, which upto now has preserved the TFG of Somalia as a moderate alternative to Islamic extremism, it's effective campaign against the rebel Lord Resistance Army (LRA) and it's related commitment to rebuild it's northern part, Uganda under president Yoweri Museveni and his National Resistance Movement (NRM) has made remarkable progress over the past 24 years. The country has gone from total economic collapse in the aftermath of Idi Amin's despotism to being an African success story, building unprecedented domestic peace, economic growth, and making substantial progress towards democracy. Museveni and the ruling-NRM have not fully embraced multi-party politics or allowed meaningful political alternatives as they are now more entrenched in government and state institutions than during the days of his "one-party" system. The NRM's near total accumulation of power has led it to poor governance, corruption, and rising ethnic tensions, a combination that threatens its stability. The opposition would improve governance in Uganda, currently, a coalition of all but one of Uganda's main opposition parties looks likely to nominate a joint opposition opposition candidate for the February, 2011 election, probably the leader of the Forum for Democratic Change (FDC), who he lost to Museveni in 2001 and 2006. The coalition is demanding the dissolution of the partisan Electoral Commission of Uganda, constituted by the incumbent president Museveni, and the acceptance of specific electoral reforms. The Press and civil society have enjoyed relative freedom under the NRM government, harassment and intimidation of those critical of the regime has risen in recent years. Believed, up to a dozen journalists and media-outlets were charged with sedition, and shutdown by the authorities for allegedly inciting violence that left up to 27 dead and more than 100 injured. Ethnic tensions, always present in Uganda in varying degrees, have also sharpened as Museveni and opposition politicians on all sides have cultivated ethnic-based support.

Traditional kingdoms in modern Uganda:

BUGANDA: is a sub-national kingdom within Uganda. The kingdom of the Ganda people, Buganda is the largest of the traditional kingdoms in present-day Uganda, comprising all of Uganda's Central Region, including the Ugandan capital Kampala. The 5.5 million Baganda (singular Muganda; often referred to simply by the root word and adjective, Ganda) make up the largest Ugandan ethnic group, representing approximately 16.9% of Uganda's population. Buganda has a long and extensive history. Unified in the fourteenth century under the first king Kato Kintu, the founder of Buganda's Kintu Dynasty, Buganda grew to become one of the largest and most powerful states in East Africa during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. During the Scramble for Africa, and following unsuccessful attempts to retain its independence against British
imperialism, Buganda became the centre of the Uganda Protectorate in 1894; the name Uganda, the Swahili term for Buganda, was adopted by British officials. Under British rule, many Baganda acquired status as colonial administrators, and Buganda became a major producer of cotton and coffee. Following Uganda's independence in 1962, the kingdom was abolished by Uganda's first Prime Minister Apollo Milton Obote in 1966. Following years of disturbance under Obote and dictator Idi Amin Oumi, as well as several years of internal divisions among Uganda's ruling National Resistance Movement under Yoweri Museveni, the President of Uganda since 1986, the kingdom was finally restored in 1993. Buganda is now a kingdom monarchy with a large degree of autonomy from the Ugandan state, although tensions between the kingdom and the Ugandan government continue to be a defining feature of Ugandan politics. Since the restoration of the kingdom in 1993, the king of Buganda, known as the Kabaka, has been Muwenda Mutebi II. He is recognised as the thirty-sixth Kabaka of Buganda. The current queen, known as the Nnabagereka, is Queen Sylvia Nagginda.

BUNYORO: is a kingdom in Western Uganda. It was one of the most powerful kingdoms in East Africa from the 16th to the 19th century. It is ruled by the Omukama of Bunyoro. The current ruler is Solomon Iguru the 27th Omukama (king) of Bunyoro-Kitara. The people of Bunyoro are also known as Nyoro or Banyoro (singular: Munyoro) (Banyoro means "People of Bunyoro"); the language spoken is Nyoro (also known as Runyoro). In the past, the traditional economy revolved around big game hunting of elephants, lions, leopards, and crocodiles. Today, the Banyoro are now agriculturalists who cultivate bananas, millet, cassava, yams, cotton, tobacco, coffee and rice. The people are primarily Christian.

BATORO: the Toro Kingdom is located in modern Uganda-crowned its current ruler, Rukidi IV, on 12 September 1995. Rukidi was the world's youngest monarch at the time, being only three years old. The boy was awakened at 2AM, then led to the palace where the rites would take place. At the entrance, Rukidi and his entourage engaged in a mock battle with a "rebel" prince, then entered to the accompaniment of the Omujaguza, the traditional Toro war-drum. Once inside, Rukidi was led to the regalia room, where the Omusuga, or head of royal rituals, called upon the gods to strike the boy dead if he was not of royal blood. Once the Omusuga was satisfied as to the new king's lineage, Rukidi was permitted to ring the royal bell, then he sounded the Nyalebe or sacred drum, following which he was blessed with blood from a slaughtered bull and a white hen. As morning broke, women (who had been barred from the ritual up to this time) were admitted to the palace. The king was seated upon the lap of a virgin girl, and was fed with a royal meal of millet dough. A coronation oath was administered with the boy lying on his side, in accordance with Toro tradition. At 10AM, the king, wearing a jewel-studded crown, was led
to St. John's Anglican Cathedral where he was crowned by Anglican Bishop Eustance Kamanyire. Rukidi was given a Bible by the local Roman Catholic prelate, then returned to his palace where he was presented with a centuries-old copper spear and leather shield. Following this the king led a procession of Toro notables to inspect the royal corral, then concluded his coronation by greeting his subjects from a traditional shed.[9]

BUSOGA: is a traditional Bantu kingdom in present-day Uganda. It is a cultural institution that promotes popular participation and unity among the people of Busoga, through cultural and developmental programs for the improved livelihood of the people of Busoga. It strives for a united people of Busoga, who enjoy economic, social and cultural prosperity. It also continues to enhance, revamp and pave the way for an efficient institutional and management system for the Kyabazinga kingship. "Busoga", literally translated to "Land of the Soga", is the kingdom of the 11 principalities of the Basoga/Soga (singular Musoga) people. The term Busoga also loosely refers to the area that is generally indigenous to the Basoga. The kingdom's capital is located in Bugembe, which is near Jinja, the second largest city in Uganda. As of June 2007, Busoga Kingdom is composed of seven politically organised districts: Kamuli, Iganga, Bugiri, Mayuge, Jinja, the newly created districts of Kaliro and Busiki. Each district is headed by democratically elected chairpersons or Local Council Five, while municipalities are headed by an elected mayor. Jinja is the industrial and economical hub of Busoga. The Busoga area is bounded on the north by the swampy Lake Kyoga which separates it from Lango, on the west by the Victoria Nile which separates it from Buganda, on the south by Lake Victoria which separates it from Tanzania and Kenya, and on the east by the Mpologoma River, which separates it from various smaller tribal groups (Padhola, Bugwere, Bugisu, etc.). Busoga also includes some islands in Lake Victoria, such as Buvuma Island.

ANKOLE: also referred to as Nkore, is one of four traditional kingdoms in Uganda. The kingdom is located in the southwestern Uganda, east of Lake Edward. It was ruled by a monarch known as The Mugabe or Omugabe of Ankole. The kingdom was formally abolished in 1967 by the government of President Milton Obote, and is still not officially restored. The people of Ankole are called Banyankole (singular: Munyankole) in Runyankole language, a Bantu language. On October 25, 1901, the Kingdom of Nkore was incorporated into the British protectorate of Uganda by the signing of the Ankole agreement. Due to the reorganisation of the country by Idi Amin Oumi, Ankole no longer exists as an administrative unit. It is divided into six districts: Bushenyi District, Ntungamo District, Mbarara District, Kiruhura District, Ibanda District and Isingiro District. The underlying conflict derives from Buganda's persistent attempt for a greater political role with the ultimate goal of establishing a Bugandan monarchy within
the Ugandan state, which the president has repeatedly stated he will not allow. The president's view is that "local Kings" are unelected and would lack political accountability. Indeed a semi-autonomous internal state would not only be a political threat to him but could also ultimately threaten Uganda as a united nation-state.

In mid-February, 2011 - Uganda, which holds presidential elections seems to be very little chance that Mr. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni will lose, and little chance that mass demonstrations could drive him from power. As Ugandan opposition politicians have talked about a possibility of launching protests if Museveni wins. In the meantime, the Government of Uganda ordered phone-companies to intercept text-messages with words or phrases including, "Egypt", "bullet" and "people-power" ahead of the elections that some fear may turn violent. President Yoweri Museveni has been declared the winner of presidential elections, extending his 25 years in power. He took 68% of the vote in polls, the Electoral Commission of Uganda announced with his challenger Mr. Kizza Besigye 26%, but the opposition candidate alleges election fraud and has rejected the results. The governing- NRM party has been accused of using state resources to bribe voters. Colonel Dr. Kizza Besigye, Museveni's arch-rival, was a Field-doctor to Mr. Yoweri Museveni during his days as a bush-rebel as which brought the latter to power in January, 1986, but they later fell-out, the opposition candidate has run against his former boss in three presidential elections and lost for three times - in 2001, 2006, and has now lost the latest poll in February, 2011, which the opposition said was rigged. A conservative Ugandan politician said "it's very possible", the Tunisia-Egyptian style protests would spread to sub-Saharan Africa. In his own country, Police fired tear-gas against people protesting alleged vote-rigging in the February presidential election that saw the incumbent president Yoweri Museveni, 66 he who had been in power since 1986, win again. He threatened his political opponents, "I will deal with them decisively and they will never rise again", promising at point to "bang them into jails and that would be the end of the story". About five people have been killed since riots have swept across the Ugandan capital, Kampala, as protesters called for an Egyptian-style uprising against their authocratic president, the riot sparked by a rise in fuel prices and the cost of living, began on 11th April, 2011. The Ugandan government must immediately end the excessive use of power against protesters, said human rights groups, after police has fired live rounds at crowds of protesters in different parts of the the country. But president Yoweri Museveni, who was incontrol of the country for quarter a century, has met the protests with a show of force. Dr. Kizza Besylge, leader of the opposition party, Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) was arrested after a walk-to-work protest against high food prices in the capital, Kampala, what he calls a corrupt government, he has been charged with unlawful
assembly and will appear in court on 27th April, 2011. civilians were fought-back, blocking roads with burning tyres and pelting vehicles with rocks. Uganda's former Lords Resistance Army (LRA) rebel commander, holding a rebel-rank of Colonel, Thomas Kwoyelo, was charged and remanded to Gulu prison on 53 charges of crimes against humanity in connection with the two decades bloody civil war which claimed several thousands of lives, caused untold suffering and loss of property in northern Uganda. He becomes the first former top rebel leader to face trial before the new International Crime Division of the High Court of Uganda, a division which has it's origins in the inconclusive Juba Peace Agreement of 2006 which nevertheless, led to the end of the LRA insurgency in northern Uganda-when the LRA shifted operations from northern Uganda and southern Sudan to the jungles of eastern Congo, Mr. Thomas Kwoyelo was captured after he was injured in a firefight with the Ugandan Peoples Defence Forces (UPDF) troops in March, 2009. Since it's independence on the 9th of October, 1962, the constitution of Uganda amended two times in 1995 and 2005 the latter one removed presidential term limits and legalised a multi-party political system in Uganda. Since the conclusion of the February, 2011 general elections, the Ugandan government have maintained a blanket-ban against all forms of public assemblies and demonstrations, on grounds of ensuring public security. Accordingly, the Ugandan government announced that any person found associating with the opposition or engaging in any acts that are designed to overthrow the government like those being committed by others, will be deemed to have committed the same offence as the proponents of the plot. Ugandan President Yoweri Musevei's son has suddenly been promoted in the army raising speculation that he is being groomed to take over from his father, as the question of succession continues to haunt a number of African states.

Side note;-Ugandan officials, international experts tackle Ebola outbreak that's killed 14. Medical teams in Uganda are trying to track down anyone who came into contact with patients infected with the Ebola virus, which has killed at least 14 people there this month, authorities said. Ugandan authorities did not initially detect an Ebola outbreak because patients weren't showing typical symptoms of the lethal virus, the nation's health minister told the CNN. "This is very, very important, to trace every contact and to watch them for an incubation period of 21 days," World Health Organization spokesman Gregory Hartl said. The teams -- consisting of officials from Uganda's ministry of health, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the WHO -- are part of an aggressive approach to try to stamp out the outbreak of the highly infectious virus. Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni spoke on state and private television Sunday urging his countrymen to be cautious. "I therefore appeal to you to be vigilant. Avoid shaking of hands; do not take on burying somebody
that has died from symptoms which look like Ebola. Instead, call the health workers to be the ones to do it. And avoid promiscuity because these sicknesses can also go through sex," he said. This month's outbreak in western Uganda initially went undetected because patients did not show typical symptoms, Health Minister Dr. Christine Ondoa told CNN on Sunday. Patients had fevers and were vomiting, but did not show other typical symptoms, such as hemorrhaging. The Ebola virus is a highly infectious, often fatal agent spread through direct contact with bodily fluids. Symptoms can include fever, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, headache, a measles-like rash, red eyes and, at times, bleeding from body openings. But diagnosis in an individual who has only recently been infected can be difficult since early symptoms, such as red eyes and skin rash, are seen more frequently in patients who have more common diseases, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Uganda's Ministry of Health declared the outbreak in Kibaale district Saturday after getting confirmatory results from the Uganda Virus Research Institute identifying the disease as Ebola hemorrhagic fever, Sudan strain. The fatality rate for those infected with that strain is about 65%, Hartl said. "One can recover, but there's no medicine that can help one recover, so you just have to pray that your own body is strong enough," he said. Patients with symptoms of Ebola infection had been reported early in the month in Kibaale district. Some people delayed seeking treatment, in part, because they believed that "evil spirits" had sickened them, according to a report from district health authorities. "This caused civil strife among the community, requiring police intervention to quell the animosity," the Health Ministry said. An emergency team of 100 volunteers was undergoing training Monday to help spread the word in vulnerable communities about the disease and its transmission, the Uganda Red Cross Society said in a statement. Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF), also known as Doctors Without Borders (DWB), was helping set up an isolation center at Kibaale's hospital. National health authorities say that in addition to the 14 deaths, at least six other people have been infected. Nine of the deaths were from a single household in the village of Nyanswiga, according to WHO. A medic who had treated other victims is among the dead, Ondoa said. Officials were trying to determine the extent of the outbreak, CDC spokesman Tom Skinner said Sunday. The Atlanta-based organization was sending about five people to join CDC staffers permanently based in Uganda, he said. "These outbreaks have a tendency to stamp themselves out, if you will, if we can get in and ... stop the chain of transmission," he said. In Kibaale, a national task force has been mobilized in an effort to stem the outbreak. As of Monday, two people with the virus remained hospitalized in stable condition, said WHO. One was a 38-year-old woman who had attended to her sister, the medic who died, and the other was a 30-year-old woman who had helped bury another victim. Though both patients had symptoms that included fever,
vomiting, diarrhea and abdominal pain, neither had shown signs of hemorrhaging, the ministry said. One patient suspected of being infected with the virus ran away from a hospital Sunday morning, but was tracked to her home and returned to the hospital in Kibaale, Catherine Ntabadde, a spokeswoman for the Uganda Red Cross in Kampala, told CNN in a telephone interview. "The concern is where she could have gone to when she ran away," she said. Health officials urged the public to report any suspected cases, to avoid contact with anyone infected and to wear gloves and masks while disinfecting bedding and clothing of infected people. Officials also advised avoiding public gatherings in the affected district. The WHO did not recommend any travel or trade restrictions be applied to Uganda because of the outbreak. The U.S. Embassy in Kampala issued an emergency message for U.S. citizens that said the outbreak appeared to be centered in Nyamarunda sub-County, Kibaale district, although one suspected victim is reported to have traveled to Kampala for treatment at Mulago Hospital, where he died on July 22. It urged avoiding contact with dead animals, especially pride “bushmeat”.

Side note: Uganda's deadly Ebola outbreak under control, says MSF' The outbreak of the deadly Ebola virus in Uganda appears to be under control, says the medical charity Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF). The last confirmed death from Ebola took place 11 days ago, MSF epidemiologist Dr Paul Roddy told the BBC. But he warned that if a pocket of the virus was missed it could erupt once more. He said there had been 19 confirmed and probable deaths during the outbreak. "We are still receiving admissions of individuals that meet the clinical and epidemiological case definitions, but we have not had a laboratory-confirmed Ebola death in 11 days, and the last identified individual that we received with a positive laboratory confirmation was six days ago," said Dr Roddy. Dr Roddy said that if there were no confirmed cases for 42 days the outbreak could be considered contained. The outbreak started in the town of Kagadi in western Uganda. There is no known cure for Ebola, but patients can be treated for their symptoms with antibiotics, drugs for pain relief and for other diseases like malaria, to strengthen their resistance. Dr Roddy said a possible source of the virus was the bat population, which might have transmitted it to monkeys, which would have been killed as "bush-meat" by hunters. Uganda has seen three major Ebola outbreaks over the past 12 years. The deadliest was in 2000 when 425 people were infected. More than half of them died. Symptoms include sudden onset of fever, weakness, headache, vomiting and kidney problems. Meantime, Scientists researching the lethal ebola virus have told the BBC that a commercial vaccine to prevent the onset of infection may never be developed. Two companies with leading vaccine candidates have had their funding from the Pentagon suspended in recent weeks. An expert said it was now "unlikely" a prophylactic vaccine would ever be used to prevent outbreaks.
of the disease. Ebola is often described as the most frightening disease on Earth. The virus causes a severe haemorrhagic fever, where victims bleed both internally and externally. The virus attacks white blood cells and blood vessels, causing a rash, red eyes, severe abdominal pain and vomiting. Overall we've made great progress but unfortunately we are still far away from commercial use. It is hard to say when a vaccine might be available, if ever”, says Dr. Heinz FeldmannRocky Mountain Laboratories. In recent weeks, an outbreak in western Uganda claimed the lives of at least sixteen people. There is no specific treatment and the virus can kill up to 90% of those who become infected. Efforts to develop a vaccine have been funded in the main by the US Department of Defense and the National Institutes of Health. They have poured millions of dollars into scientific research because of concerns that the virus could be turned into a biological weapon. As a result of this funding, several vaccine candidates have been developed and have shown themselves effective in animal trials. Two companies, Sarepta and Tekmira have begun human safety trials of their vaccines. But in recent days, both companies have been told by the Defense Department to temporarily stop work on their vaccines due to funding constraints. It is expected that a decision to either resume testing or completely terminate the contracts will be made by early September. Scientists say their understanding of the nature of the virus has markedly improved over the past decade, the chances of turning that knowledge into a vaccine are very dependent on money. Ebola is one of the most feared viruses known to science.

London 2012 - Olympics marathon in the Olympic arena’

Stephen Kiprotich - Son of Subsistence Farmers! Reigning World & Olympic Champion!

Uganda's Stephen Kiprotich won the Olympic men's marathon, beating Kenya's Abel Kirui and Wilson Kipsang. Kiprotich led at the 37km mark, despite appearing to suffer discomfort in his leg minutes earlier, and went on to win Uganda's first medal at London 2012 at a record time of 2:08:01. His record time was 26 seconds clear of Kirui in second, with Kipsang a further 70 seconds back. Britain's Lee Merrien finished 30th and team-mate Scott Overall was 61st. Kipsang had taken up the running after Brazil's Franck de Almeida's early break and led at the halfway stage. Kiprotich and Kirui caught him up to leave a three-way fight for the gold medal. The Ugandan looked to be struggling with an injury to the back of his leg, but unexpectedly surged to the front and pulled away. The smile broke out across Stephen Kiprotich's face in the final few metres as the sacrifices he has made for his athletics career came to rich fruition in London. The Kenyans thought they had it won but it was not to be. Kiprotich crossed the line with the flag of Uganda over his shoulders. He ran the race of his life”, said Steve Cram BBC athletics commentator "It
means a lot to Uganda," said Kiprotich. "Since Munich-1972 we have never won a gold medal, so they are very happy." Uganda's last Olympic champion was 400m hurdler John Akii-Bua, who won gold at Munich, then West Germany in 1972". Meantime, Uganda Olympic champion Kiprotich given hero's welcome' Crowds in Uganda have given a hero's welcome to Stephen Kiprotich, the country's first Olympic gold medal winner in 40 years. Stephen Kiprotich, a prison warden who won the men's marathon on the closing day, was then presented with a cheque for $80,000 (£51,000) by President Yoweri Museveni. He was also promoted nine ranks to become an assistant superintendent in the prisons service. Mr Museveni promised that more would be done to invest in athletes in future. The BBC correspondent in Entebbe says people lined the street as Kiprotich waved from an open-top car with the personalised number plate "UG GOLD". At one stage the convoy was forced to stop by the crowds blocking the road on the way to State House, where Kiprotich had breakfast with the president, she says. After Kiprotich was presented with the cheque, he asked the president if he would build a house for his parents in north-eastern Kapchorwa district. Mr Museveni agreed that a three-bedroom house would be constructed. The president also admitted that funding in sports had suffered as the country had concentrated on development projects such as building schools and roads. But he promised that in future all athletes who won international medals would receive a 1m Ugandan shillings (about $400) monthly stipend to help them train. A high-altitude training school would also be built, he promised.

Correspondents say the reaction in Uganda to Kiprotich's victory has been euphoric. The state-owned Vision Media Group set up a fund to raise prize money for the runner after he won the marathon and in three hours raised more than $100,000 - it aims to make it to $500,000. Uganda's last Olympic champion was 400m hurdler John Akii-Bua, who won gold at Munich in 1972. Coming two months before the 50th anniversary of Ugandan independence celebrations, Kiprotich's gold has lifted the mood of the country. It has to be recalled that over 200 countries competed in the London -2012 Olympics of which over 43 were African states, boasting an impressing combined number of athletes in a broad range of prominent sporting disciplines – track and field. The golden Stephen Kiprotich, of course, adds joy to golden jubilee.

Side note: September, 2012: Prisoners conjugal rights on a debate, as anti-gay pastor gets conviction' African prison bosses are contemplating allowing prisoners to be allowed sex visitations, in the hope that this will stop homosexuality in detention centres. The prison chiefs meeting in Kampala, Uganda, say that if prisoners continue to be denied their conjugal right HIV and Aids will increase, while homosexuality, a crime in many African countries, will be rampant. "The continuous denial of sex to married prisoners is accelerating homosexuality and HIV and Aids
prevalence among inmates," the prison chiefs, meeting under the banner of the African Correctional Services Association (ACSA), said in a joint statement. ACSA said the denial of prisoners' conjugal rights was a human rights violation and have called for judicial reviews to have prisoners being allowed conjugal visits. The body's chairman, Zambia's commissioner of prisons, Percy Chato, said denying inmates their sexual rights is detrimental to their rehabilitation and health.

"Enjoying sex is the best human right for inmates," he said. "Denying them conjugal rights does not help in rehabilitating them. They end up in homosexuality." Uganda's Minister of Internal Affairs, Hilary Onek requested governments to construct places where prisoners can have sex. "The purpose of imprisonment is to rehabilitate offenders into law abiding citizens. It is, therefore, not fair to punish them to the extent of denying them sex," he said. Africa's special rapporteur on prisons and conditions of detention, Medi Kaggwa said homosexuality in prisons could be traced to denial of conjugal rights visitations. "Lack of conjugal rights in African prisons has led to an increase in homosexuality," he said. Meanwhile, a Ugandan anti-gay campaigner could find himself in prison, where gay sex is reportedly high. Martin Ssempa, who was instrumental in Uganda's controversial anti-homosexual laws that sought severe punishments, including life prison sentence or the death penalty for homosexuality, was convicted for tarnishing a pastor's reputation by claiming that he was engaged in sodomy. Ssempa was convicted together with four pastors and a musician, local media reported. HIV and Aids rates are reportedly higher among prison populations where inmates are separated on gender.

Source: The Africa Report

Updates: Ugandan opposition leader arrested' Uganda opposition leader, Kizza Besigye was Monday afternoon arrested after he tried to address his supporters at several rallies planned around the city. Besigye, who has had his fair share of run in with law enforcement agents, was whisked away to Kampala Central Police Station, where he is being held, under heavy guard. Kampala police chief, Adrew Kawesa said police had warned members of the opposition against holding rallies before the Independence celebrations, which will take place on October 9. "We cannot entertain illegal rallies. We advised them not to hold any rallies until after October 9th," he explained. "Whoever tries to address a rally will be arrested." Kampala mayor, Erias Lukwago and some councillors, who were also preparing to hold rallies in the city, were also arrested.

Opposition leaders had planned to hold several rallies to protest that despite half a century of independence, there was still repression in the country, while they accuse the government of corruption. Police had early in the morning deployed heavily at Besigye's home in the outskirts of the Kampala, to block him from traveling to the city to hold his planned rally
but he somehow managed to elude the security officials. Opposition FDC spokesman, Wafula Ogutu condemned the crackdown, saying President Yoweri Museveni boasts that he brought democracy to the country, but does not allow members of the opposition to express themselves in the public. Kizza Besigye was whisked away to Kampala Central Police Station after he tried to address his supporters. Source: The African Report
October 1, 2012

Updates: On October 9, Uganda celebrates 50 years of independence. More than 26 years since the NRM came to power after two decades of civil war and military rule, its government can boast the longest period of sustained peace and economic development in the country’s history. How successfully it has been able to resolve the myriad problems of Uganda's past is another question entirely. What President Yoweri Museveni's government has achieved is an expansion of a development agenda that has gradually crept across much of the country. Roads, schools, health facilities, even power from the Bujagali dam, have been accompanied by the double-edged assurance of security. Millions were lifted out of poverty and their children sent to school under a pioneering universal primary education policy. The country's strategy to fight the HIV/AIDS pandemic became a model for other African states. But for many who grew up in the NRM era, income disparities, the lack of job opportunities and the increasing polarisation in the country's politics are leading to widespread disillusionment. "I'm not enthusiastic. I used to understand what it meant to be a Ugandan. I don't any more. And I'm not being unpatriotic, but if I can't have that sense of connection it can't be forced on me. "They now have classes for patriotism in the schools, but people feel cheated. We can't keep living with the fear that the place will fall apart again," says the writer David Kaiza. On a hill in Kampala, a young man who works in a hotel is trying to organise a boda boda taxi for a harried guest. "I will get you my friend, wait one minute," he says helpfully. "You know, he used to work here for 10 years. But he saved up USh3m ($1,200) and bought the bike. With a boda, you can make even USh15,000 in one day. After everything," he says, talking about costs, that comes to about $5. As commentators, the country celebrates its golden jubilee of independence soon, perhaps now is the exact time for all Ugandans to take stock of the past and ponder the future – what kind of country they would want to leave for future generations.

Updates: Ritual murders stalk central Uganda' Thousands of Ugandans from the central region have abandoned their homes following an upsurge of suspected ritual murders. This follows reports that over 30 people had been killed by unknown assailants who allegedly suck blood from their victims. The murderers allegedly break into the victims' homes at night. Police say their investigations have revealed that the suspects use a chemical known as chloroform, which they spray into the houses through
ventilators. Chloroform is a chemical that was used years ago to sedate patients. The substance renders a person who inhales it unconscious. The victims, according to locals, including entire families, are slaughtered like animals. What puzzles villagers is that in most cases the victims' property is left intact. "We no longer sleep in our houses," said 45-year-old Tamale Lwazi, a resident of Wakiso district. Wakiso is one of the five districts where such killings have been reported. "We make our children and wives assemble in one area in the village and men move around all night hunting for the killers," Lwazi added. But police have expressed concern about villagers who are now taking the law into their own hands by killing and burning the alleged killers. "At times they arrest innocent people and kill them instead of handing them over to the local police" said Willy Odong, a police officer. The latest ritual killings have added to East Africa's infamous history of witchcraft. Witchdoctors have often been linked with the killing and dismembering of albinos for their body parts, which the use to make charms. Some groups in the region have a longstanding belief that body parts of albinos bring good luck. There have been reports of young Tanzanian girls suffering from albinism who were allegedly raped by men who believed they offered a cure for HIV/AIDS. Meanwhile, Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni has expressed concern about the deaths in the central region. Museveni instructed police to speed up investigations into reports of the alleged ritual murders. The killings have become a security threat in some parts of the country and there is urgent need to fight against it," he said. "I get reports that people are being killed. If they really kill people, we shall get them because that is the work of the police." So far seven people suspected to be involved in the killings have been arrested. Police has also dismissed rumours that the killings were being perpetrated by a new rebel group, saying that their investigations show that the murders were not connected to the rebels.


Updates: Uganda's Media Council bans State of the Nation play' Uganda's authorities have banned a play that criticises President Yoweri Museveni's government, the play's co-director John Ssegawa has said. He said the Media Council had ordered performances of State of the Nation to be halted until a review was held. The play highlights alleged corruption and poor governance in Uganda, ruled by Mr Museveni since 1986. Last month, a UK theatre producer was arrested in Uganda for staging a play about gay people without permission. David Cecil was released on bail and ordered to surrender his passport. He was charged with "disobeying lawful orders" for staging The River and the Mountain, a comedy drama about a gay businessman killed by his employees, in the capital, Kampala. Homosexual acts are illegal in Uganda. 'Money embezzled' State of the Nation was staged earlier this month at the national theatre in Kampala, but the Media Council has now asked for further performances to be
suspended, Mr Ssegawa said. "It is critical of those in charge as they are the governors of the country and the state of the country is not good," he is quoted by the AFP news agency as saying. "They [the regulatory body, the Media Council] told us that we cannot go ahead with the play until they have reviewed it." State of the Nation was produced to coincide with the 50th anniversary of Uganda's independence, which was celebrated on 9 October. Last week, the Republic of Ireland's government suspended financial aid to the Ugandan government because of alleged fraud. A draft report by the Ugandan auditor-general found that millions of dollars had been transferred from Primer Minister Amama Mbabazi's office into private accounts. This included more than $5m (£3.2m) in aid from the Republic of Ireland's government. It reacted by suspending all aid to the Ugandan government. The UK's Daily Mail newspaper reports that the UK government had also cut aid, but only to Mr Mbabazi's office. "We take these allegations extremely seriously... We have set up an independent audit to investigate alleged fraud," the newspaper quotes a spokesman for the Department for International Development as saying. Mr Mbabazi has denied any wrongdoing and has promised a thorough investigation. He said Ugandan taxpayers money had also been stolen "The theft was massive. We regret it," he is quoted by Uganda's state-owned New Vision newspaper as saying. "We condemn that act in the strongest terms and want to assure everyone that all the necessary measures to bring those responsible to book will be carried out." October 31, 2012

Accession to power of president Yoweri Kaguta Museveni - 29th January, 1986 through armed resistance.

Tentative election calendar - Presidential/Parliamentary, February.

Uganda – Timeline Diaries updates and related key notes:

1500 - Bito dynasties of Buganda, Bunyoro and Ankole founded by Nilotic-speaking immigrants from present-day southeastern Sudan.

Capital: Kampala

City is spread over a series of hills

1890: HQ of British colonial administration

1962: Capital of independent Uganda

Estimated Population: NA

1700 – The Bugandas began to expand at the expense of the Bunyoro.

1800 - Buganda controls territory bordering Lake Victoria from the Victoria Nile to the Kagera river.
1840s - Muslim traders from the Indian Ocean coast exchange firearms, cloth and beads for the ivory and slaves of Buganda.

1862 - British explorer John Hanning Speke becomes the first European to visit Buganda.

1875 - Bugandan King Mutesa I allows Christian missionaries to enter his realm.

1877 - Members of the British Missionary Society arrive in Buganda.

1879 - Members of the French Roman Catholic White Fathers arrive.

1890 - Britain and Germany sign treaty giving Britain rights to what was to become Uganda.

1892 - Imperial British East Africa Company agent Frederick Lugard extends the company's control to southern Uganda and helps the Protestant missionaries to prevail over their Catholic counterparts in Buganda.

1894 - Uganda becomes a British protectorate.

1900 - Britain signs agreement with Buganda giving it autonomy and turning it into a constitutional monarchy controlled mainly by Protestant chiefs.

1902 - The Eastern province of Uganda transferred to the Kenya.

1904 - Commercial cultivation of cotton begins.

1921 - Uganda given a legislative council, but its first African member not admitted till 1945.

Founder-president: Apollo Milton Obote -

A School Teacher by profession

Leader at independence in 1962

Toppled by General Idi Amin Oumi in January 1971

Returned as president in 1980

Ousted again in 1985 coup


1962 - Uganda becomes independent with Milton Obote as prime minister and king (Kabaka) of Bugandas as head of state with the Bugandas enjoying considerable autonomy.

1963 - Uganda becomes a republic with Buganda's King Edward Mutesa as head of state.
1966 – Apollo Milton Obote ends Buganda's autonomy and promotes himself to the presidency.

1967 - New constitution vests considerable power in the president.

1971 – President Milton Obote toppled in a coup led by Army chief of staff Brig. General Idi Amin

(African History Expert) Idi Amin Oumi: Timeline -

Key Events in the Life of Idi Amin Dada

Biography: Idi Amin Dada Despotic president of Uganda in the 1970s

Date of birth: 1925, near Koboko, West Nile province, Uganda

Date of death: 16 August 2003, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

An Early Life: Idi Amin Dada was born in 1925 near Koboko, in the West Nile Province of what is now the Republic of Uganda. Deserted by his father at an early age, he was brought up by his mother, a herbalist and diviner. He was a member of the Kakwa ethnic group, a small Islamic tribe that was settled in the region.

Idi Amin Dada, who became known as the 'Butcher of Uganda' for his brutal, despotic rule whilst president of Uganda in the 1970s, is possibly the most notorious of all Africa's post-independence dictators. Amin seized power in a military coup in 1971 and ruled over Uganda for 8 years. Estimates for the number of his opponents who were either killed, tortured, or imprisoned vary from 100,000 to half a million. He was ousted in 1979 by Ugandan nationalists, after which he fled into exile.

In 1925: Idi Amin Dada was born in 1925 near Koboko, in the West Nile Province of what is now the Republic of Uganda.

In 1946: Idi Amin Dada joins the King's African Rifles, KAR -- Britain's colonial African troops. (He served in Burma, Somalia, Kenya -- during the British suppression of the Mau Mau -- and Uganda)

In 25th January, 1971: General Idi Amin Dada takes power in Uganda by military coup while the existing president, Milton Obote, is at a Commonwealth meeting in Singapore. (This is a pre-emptive strike since President Obote has arranged for General Amin to be arrested and replaced as chief of staff.) Obote is accused of corruption and tribalism by the new government.

In 27th August 1972: General Idi Amin orders Asians who were not Ugandan citizens estimated around 60,000 Asians - to leave the country in 90 days. The President expels 60,000 Asians whos most of them have British citizenship and confiscates their assets. He further insists that they depart Uganda by flying East African Airways.
In 14th September 1972: The US halts a $3 million loan to Uganda after Idi Amin praises Hitler in a telegram sent to Kurt Waldheim, UN Secretary-General, and Golda Meir, Israeli premier.

In 17th September 1972: Uganda engages in border clashes with Tanzania. An invasion by over one thousand troops, exiled supporters of the former Ugandan President Apolo Milton Obote, attack from Tanzania. President Idi Amin responds by bombing Tanzanian border towns.

In 11th July 1972: Over 100 Peace Corps personnel are ordered to leave Uganda by General Idi Amin.

In 24th March 1974: General Idi Amin Dada, Ugandan president, crushes an attempted coup. It is later reported that over 50 army officers were killed following the failed coup.

June 11, 1975: President Idi Amin’s sharp critic Denis Hills sentenced to death on this day.

(UGANDA News) British professor and author Denis Hills, a former military officer who found academics along his journey, traveled to Uganda in 1963 to resume his teaching duties. On this day in 1975, Hills incurred the wrath of dictator General Idi Amin and was ordered to die for treason. Hills barely escaped with his life. Idi Amin seized power of Uganda in January, 1971, when Hills was already long established in the African nation. Hills taught at Makerere University in Kampala. The professor was writing a book titled “The White Pumpkin,” in which he openly criticized Amin’s vicious rule and called him a “tyrant.” This “capital offence” led to his arrest in April 1975. Hills was charged with espionage and treason and was tried and sentenced to die by a firing squad.

Queen Elizabeth II of Britain and Prime Minister Harold Wilson corresponded with Amin in a request for leniency. Amin was wary of Britain’s intervention in rescuing Hills, and he begun to suspect that the country was conspiring to invade his nation along with other nations. The ‘capital offence’ Dennis Hills had committed was tactlessly comparing Field Marshall, Conqueror of the British Empire and Life President Idi Amin Dada with Emperor Nero and describing him as a “village tyrant” in a leaked pre-publication manuscript of his book, ‘The White Pumpkin.’

Dennis Hills was sentenced to face a firing squad at Clock Tower. The Queen of Britain Elizabeth and her then-Prime Minister, Harold Wilson (later Baron Wilson of Rievaulx), wrote to Amin asking for clemency. Lt-Gen Sir. Chandos Blair and another of Amin’s former commanding officers were sent out to seek – unsuccessfully – a change of heart but Idi Amin wanted a stage on which to bargain. It was all very difficult as the moody maverick began to fantasize that an invasion of Uganda was being planned by Britain, Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, and Israel. James Callaghan
(who later became UK Prime Minister and retired as Lord Callaghan of Cardiff) feared for the rest of the British community but correctly insisted on a firm promise that Dennis Hill would be released before he agreed personally to visit Kampala. It was on the intervention of another Life President, Field Marshal Mobutu Sese Seko of the then-Zaire that they eventually stabilized the situation. Hills did apologize for what he wrote, but published the book in 1976 and added the words “village tyrant” back in to the text. Denis Hills died in April 2004 at the age of 90.

In 28th July 1975: General Idi Amin Dada is elected Yearly Chairman of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU)

In 29th June 1976: Flight 139, an Air France A-300B Airbus, hijacked by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO Al-Fatah) lands at Entebbe Airport with 256 hostages. The PLO demands the release of 53 prisoners.

In 3rd July, 1976: Israeli paratroopers attacked the airport at Entebbe and freed almost all the hostages from flight 139 hostages.

In 5th July 1976: General Idi Amin threatens retaliation over the Israeli raid at Entebbe Airport after his arrival from Port Louis, Mauritius OAU summit.

In 28th July 1976: Following Ugandan President Idi Amin Dada's support for the pro-Palestinian hijackers at Entebbe airport earlier this month, Britain breaks off diplomatic relations.

September 1976 – General Idi Amin declares himself president for life and claims parts of Kenya.

In 7th February 1977: Amnesty International accuses General Idi Amin of the execution of thousands of Ugandans.

In 16th February 1977: The Most Reverend Janani Luwum, Anglican archbishop of Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, and Boga-Zaïre, is killed whilst under arrest for sedition and arms smuggling. Although the

In 25th February 1977: 240 US citizens in Uganda are held hostage by General Idi Amin Dada.

In 1st March 1977: Field Marshal Idi Amin Dada releases the Americans held hostage in Uganda since 25 February and suggests they leave the country.

In 18th June 1977: It is reported by the international press that President Idi Amin is in hiding after being wounded in an assassination attempt.

In October, 1978: Field Marshal Idi Amin Dada attempts to annex the northern Tanzanian province of Kagera with the help of Libyan troops.
In 29th March 1979: Field Marshal Idi Amin Dada flees towards his tribal homeland of Kakwa as his rule of Uganda crumbles.

In 1978 - Uganda invades Tanzania with a view to annexing the Kagera region.

In 13th April 1979: In turn Tanzania invades Uganda, unifying the various anti-Amin forces under the Uganda National Liberation Front and forcing Amin to flee the country; Professor Yusufu Kironde Lule installed as president, but is quickly replaced by a lawyer in the name of Godfrey Binais.

The incumbent, Field Marshal Idi Amin Dada, is departing for Libya following his failed invasion of northern Tanzania. Ugandan rebels backed by the Tanzanian army, seizes the capital Kampala. Yusufu Kironde Lule former Professor of Makarere University now leader the Uganda National Liberation Front, UNLF, is declared the new president (prior to national elections). Idi Amin is said to be seeking exile in Saudi Arabia.

Transitional President Godfrey Binaisa overthrown by the Ugandan army.

In 12th March 1980: Dr Apollo Milton Obote, the ex-president of Uganda now living in exile in Tanzania, confirms that he will be running for president.

Milton Obote becomes president after a controversial elections.

1985 – President Milton Obote deposed in a military coup and is replaced by General Tito Okello.

1986 - National Resistance Army rebels took over Kampala and installed Yoweri Kaguta Museveni as president.

1993 – Yoweri Museveni restores the traditional kings, including the king of Buganda, but without political power.

1995 - New constitution legalises political parties but maintains the ban on political activity.

1996 – President Yoweri Museveni returned to office in Uganda's first direct presidential election.

1997 - Ugandan troops help depose Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire, who is replaced by Laurent Desire Kabila.

1998 - Ugandan troops intervene in the Democratic Republic of Congo on the side of rebels seeking to overthrow Laurant Kabila.
June 1, 1999: Religion and tribalism combine to create a persistent rebellion in the north, which was aided by Sudan. But now the northern rebels have been worn down, and the unrest is just about done with. Final peace deal with LRA rebels proved impossible to negotiate. Ugandan army got permission to enter Congo to try and finish the rebels off. The chase continues.

July 10, 1999; Members of the Karamojong tribe ambushed an army patrol, killing fourteen soldiers and wounding twelve.

Rebels in the bush have proved difficult to eliminate, mainly because the rebels have increasingly operated like bandits rather than a political movement. Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) is the principal organized rebel force. This group is actually a combination of two separate organizations; Tablīq Islamist sect and the National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (NALU). The ADF has been fighting the government since November 1996. The ADF maintain bases in the Ruwenzori Mountains, which lay astride the border between Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). It is this use of the Congo as a hiding place that brought Ugandan troops into the current Congolese civil war.

July 13: In an operation typical of the unsettled situation in Uganda, 23 people died as troops, local vigilantes and rustlers died during an attempt to recover stolen livestock. Cattle raiding between tribes is an ancient tradition. But it became much more widespread since the 1970s, when tribal warriors got their hands on AK-47s and other modern small arms.

July 20, 1999; Government troops raided a rebel camp in northern Uganda, killing three rebels, including for Ugandan brigadier general Opon Acak, and captured three. About three dozen other rebels escaped. General Acak had founded a new rebel movement recently, calling for traditional multi-party democracy in Uganda.

July 29, 1999; Government troops seize, at gunpoint, a hundred stolen cattle from Karamojong tribesmen.

August 12, 1999; The government has sent 4,000 troops in the northwest where tribal strife has killed over a hundred people in the last two weeks. Most of the fighting is between rival clans of the Karamojong tribe, which considers cattle rustling a traditional activity. But the fights over stolen cattle often turn into massacres, as happened in this case. Over 70 children were slaughtered in raids on villages by clan warriors.

August 14, 1999; The army has orders to shoot on sight any members of the Karamojong tribe seen carrying guns outside their villages. The army is demanding the ringleaders of the raids that killed over a hundred people. The army is reluctant to disarm the Karamojong, because armed tribes in neighboring Kenya and Sudan would then attack the defenseless
Karamojong. All the tribes in the region have long standing feuds that have, in the past, led to the extermination of the weaker tribes. The army also noted that 5,000 heavily armed Turkana tribesmen were reported moving into Uganda from Kenya.

August 20, 1999; Uganda has accused it's erstwhile ally Rawanda of attacking Ugandan troops in order to capture Ugandan backed Congolese rebels leader Wamba dia Wamba.

August 24, 1999; Army troops fought a group of rebels of the Allied Democratic Fromt (ADF), 450 kilometers west of the capital, Kampala. One soldier and 15 rebels were killed. All of the dead rebels were armed. The ADF rebels had been terrorizing the area for several days, after crossing the Congolese border. The ADF maintains bases in the Congo. The ADF has been active for some two years.

August 25, 1999; A Sudanese transport flew over northern Uganda, was fired on by government anti-aircraft guns, then turned around and flew back to the Sudan. Relations between Sudan and Uganda have been strained for some time. Rawanda and Uganda agreed to exchange a hundred prisoners of war taken during the three day battle between their forces in the Congo between the 14th and 17th of August. As many as 200 Ugandan soldiers died in that battle.

August 28, 1999; A bomb exploded in a suburb of Kampala. It was the ninth bomb explosion in Kampala this year. The earlier bomb attacks have been linked (by the Ugandan government) to "terrorist groups based in western Uganda."

August 31, 1999; Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni said Rwanda must keep the Mweya ceasefire agreement of August 17th. He warned Rwanda to that the UPDF (Uganda's military) in the Congo would attack "if provoked" by Rwandans. Fighting between Ugandan and Rwandan forces in the Congo broke out on August 14th at the Bangoka airport. Uganda backs the Congolese Rally for Democracy (RCD) faction headed by Ernest Wamba dia Wamba. Rwanda backs a Goma, Congo-based faction of the RCD headed by Emile Ilunga. Museveni said Uganda believes the Rwandans started the fighting because they intended to assassinate Wamba dia Wamba. Uganda says it lost 38 soldiers in the fighting and estimates the Rwandans lost 100.

September 6, 1999: Ugandan government sources said that Ugandan troops would be withdrawn from the Democratic Republic of Congo city of Kisangani. The aim was to decrease the possibility for renewed clashes between Ugandan and Rwandan troops in the Congo.

September 8, 1999; Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) rebels raided a village in Kabarole district (western Uganda) and killed 5 people. The ADF was
formed from the remnants of the National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (NALU) and the Islamic-oriented Tabliq movement. The Ugandan government says the ADF has bases in the Ruwenzori mountains, on the border between Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

September 11, 1999; Congolese government forces accused rebels of launching several attacks against government positions throughout the country, in violation of the August 31st Lusaka ceasefire agreement. The most serious attacks occurred near Kabinda.

September 13, 1999; Over 400 people were slain in northeastern Uganda in what has been described as a series of "revenge attacks." The fight took place between the Bokora and Methaniko clans. Government sources said the Bokora sought revenge for a cattle-rustling raid launched by the Matheniko in July.

September 15, 1999; New reports suggest that 600 people were killed in Kalosarich as tribal fighting over cattle rustling continued in northeast Uganda.

September 21, 1999: Ugandan special riot police attacked the headquarters of the "Word Message Warning Church" -- a doomsday cult located in the town of Bukoto, north of Kampala. Violence continues throughout Uganda, with new threats to foreigners. An American missionary was murdered outside of Kampala.

October 10, 1999; Uganda and Rwanda continued their efforts to rebuild relations after the August "microwar" fought by their respective forces in the Congo. Uganda is sending a delegation to Rwanda to discuss how to restore trust between the two nations.

October 11, 1999; Tribal fighting continues in Uganda. Warriors of the Matheniko tribe attacked several Bokora villages in August, killing 140 people. Bokora warriors retaliated on 11 Sept, killing 400 members of the Matheniko tribe.--Stephen V Cole

October 11, 1999; The Ugandan government freed 147 ex-rebels. The former rebels were members of the Uganda National Resistance Front II (UNRF-2). Most of the rebels come from the West Nile region in northwestern Uganda. In 1997 UNRF-2 separated from the West Nile Bank Front (WNBF). The WNBF was originally commanded by a former senior Ugandan Army officer loyal to Idi Amin. The Ugandan government appears to believe it has defeated the WNBF separatist movement. In 1997 the Ugandan Army and allies in the Sudan People's Liberation Army launched several operations against the WNBF.

October 14, 1999; Uganda and Rwanda told warring rebel factions inside the Democratic Republic of Congo that the factional fighting must stop.
October 17, 1999; Western press sources said the Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni had started backtracking on his pledge to return Uganda to multi-party politics by 2007. Apparently Museveni has no timetable, but rather will reintroduce multiparty politics when it is "safe" to do so. At the moment Museveni runs a "no party" system. Museveni has blamed the fractious political parties for Uganda's internal conflicts. Most of the parties divide along tribal and regional lines. While Museveni's National Resistance Movement is the closest thing Uganda has to a national, multi-tribal organization, it is also controlled by one man -- President Museveni.

October 19, 1999; Two people were killed when anti-government rebels ambushed a bus in Queen Elizabeth National Park. The Ugandan government believes the rebels are part of the National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (NALU) and possibly members of the Islamist Tabliqs sect. Earlier, Ugandan government sources said the commander of Ugandan military operations in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) had been recalled to Kampala.

October 25, 1999: The Ugandan National Rescue Front (i.e., the rebels) has been forced to relocate its training bases out of Democratic Congo (ex-Zaire) because of heavy pressure from Ugandan Army units operating there. New bases have been set up near Juba in southern Sudan. -- Stephen V Cole

November 2, 1999: The Ugandan government announced the arrest of Geoffrey Nzito, the king of a tribe of pygmies living in the Semilike forest area of western Uganda. The pygmy leader is charged with collaborating with Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) guerrillas.

December 10, 1999; Elements of the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) rebel groups attacked five towns in Uganda. 12 people were reported slain.

December 11, 1999; Ugandan Army units counter-attacked and killed 6 ADF rebels bear the town of Bundibugyo.

December 25, 1999; ADF guerrillas attacked the Ugandan government barracks at Hakitara, near Fort Portal. The ADF also attacked Ugandan troops near Bundibugyo. One of the ADF targets was a cattle herd -- a classic African cattle raid, this time with the raiders using AK-47s.

December 28, 1999: Ugandan government forces claim they have killed between 80 and 90 Allied Democratic Front (ADF) guerrillas in operations over the last 30 days. A government spokesman also said recently captured ADF equipment appeared to be "new" -- implying the rebels are receiving new weapons and supplies from outside of Uganda. The Ugandan government also said the Lord's Resistance army (LRA) had infiltrated new guerrillas into north Uganda from their bases in Sudan.
Four LRA members had been killed in a clash with Ugandan troops. The government spokesman estimated that 200 LRA members were in the infiltrating force -- a sizeable number for the LRA, indicating a major troop movement. The Ugandan government also believes elements of the Uganda National Rescue Front II (a splinter guerrilla organization that has operated in northwest Uganda) was also preparing to attack from the Sudan. FYEO reported two weeks ago on the Sundanese-Ugandan accord to mutually end support of guerrilla organizations operating from one their territories. One way to read the 200-man LRA move is that Sudan's Khartoum government has told the LRA to leave the Sudan. That is possible, but unlikely. The Ugandans have portrayed the move as an infiltration. At this point in time the Sudan-Uganda agreement is a piece of paper without force.

2000 - Ugandans vote to reject multi-party politics in favour of continuing Museveni's "no-party" system.

January 1, 2000 The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) launched another attack near the northern Ugandan town of Gulu. At least 10 people were killed. The Ugandan Army now says as many as 500 LRA rebels entered Uganda in mid-December. The LRA is supported by Sudan's Khartoum government. Recall the FYEO report that Uganda and Sudan signed an agreement December 8. The agreement said that Sudan would stop supporting anti-Ugandan rebels and Uganda would stop supporting anti-Sudanese rebels. It is still possible that the LRA moved out of Sudan because the Sudanese told the LRA they would no longer support them. However, the operations in Uganda appear to be aimed at causing havoc rather than establishing new base camps -- in other words, a repetition of past LRA action in Uganda.

January 8, 2000 How bad is AIDS in central Africa? The US Information Service now estimates that Uganda alone has has 1.5 million people carrying HIV, and "more than 100,000" AIDS cases. Uganda has 1.7 million "AIDS orphans" -- children who have lost their parents to the epidemic. Oddly, several health organizations say Uganda has had success in curtailing a rise in HIV infections. One report says that "prevalence rates" have been cut in half over the last seven years.

January 10, 2000 The Ugandan Army said 13 people died in several fights with the Allied Democratic front. The firefight took place in western Uganda. In one of the fights an ADF unit attacked a Ugandan army detachment near Kikura.

January 17, 2000 To and from. On January 14, LRA rebels captured 30 Ugandans on the same day Sudan's Khartoum government released 58 Ugandan prisoners. Meanwhile, the Ugandan military continues to fight a war on two fronts. On January 15, a Ugandan spokesman said several
hundred more members of the LRA were positioned to enter Uganda from Sudan. The new group may include LRA leader Joseph Kony. Meanwhile, on January 16, Allied Democratic Force (ADF) rebels in western Uganda killed 10 people in a raid on a refugee camp. On January 17, the ADF killed another two dozen people.

January 20, 2000 Ugandan military sources said that the Ugandan Army had blunted the LRA's latest attempt to cross the border from Sudan. A spokesman said the Ugandan Army thwarted an infiltration attempt conducted by approximately 250 LRA guerrillas in the northern Kitgum district. The spokesman also said Ugandan intelligence believed the 250 guerrillas had retreated to a camp inside Sudan, near the town of Jubelein (60 kilometers south of Juba, in southern Sudan.) As reported last month in FYEO, 200 to 300 LRA guerrillas infiltrated Uganda in early December. They have been operating in the Kitgum and Gulu districts.

January 23, 2000 Uganda sent another two Army battalions to the western part of the country (around Fort Portal) to block raids by rebels of the Allied Democratic Forces.--Stephen V Cole

February 1, 2000 FYEO has been waiting for the shoe to drop. Looks like it dropped. The Ugandan government said that the "peace agreement" signed in December with Sudan isn't being implemented by Khartoum. Uganda cited Sudanese failure to release Ugandan prisoners and stop support of rebels fighting Uganda. The Lord's Resistance Army (which is supported by Khartoum) started a new operation in Uganda at the end of 1999 and the operation continues. Uganda claims the LRA has kidnapped over 10,000 children in the last 5 years.

February 16, 2000 The Ugandan government said it intends to send more troops to the DRC. Most of them will go to the Ituri region (northeastern DRC). An army spokesman said the troop increase was necessary due to renewed ethnic fighting in the region between the Hema and Lendu tribes. The Ugandan Army statement also said the deployment would help "curtail inflow of arms from non-state actors like the Mai-Mai and agents of Kinshasa" and alleged that Kabila's regime had used ethnic conflict "between the Hema and Lendu ethnic groups for purposes of propaganda against Uganda." A western press report said the Hema-Lendu conflict was supposedly kicked off 20 years ago when a wealthy Hema bought land in the Lendu area - and the land turned out to have gold ore. The Lendu have since demanded "taxes" on the land.

March 9, 2000 The Lords' Resistance army is active again in northern Uganda. On March 7 LRA guerrillas killed 12 people and wounded another three dozen. The biggest attack was on a refugee camp in Kitgum district. (One western press source called the camp "Padibe camp." ) A Ugandan government spokesman said around 30,000 people were in or near the
camp. On March 4 a Ugandan government spokesman said the LRA kidnapped two priests from the Catholic mission at Opit.

March 12, 2000 Kampala is involved in two external wars (DRC and Sudan) and two internal wars (against the LRA and rebels in western Uganda). Now, an older nemesis returns. Some extremely virulent form of hemorrhagic fever has broken out in Uganda. The symptoms are said to be similar to the Ebola virus -- bleeding, vomiting, severe headaches and body pain. The latest report says 17 have died in the northwest corner of Uganda.

March 13, 2000 More signs that the Uganda-Sudan rapprochement isn't taking. Uganda issued statements that Sudan must stop "oppressing" its non-Muslim southerners if the Uganda-Sudan peace process is to continue. Uganda estimates that 300,000 Sudanese refugees are now inside Uganda. They present Uganda with a huge problem. However, the problem isn't created by the refugees. Uganda's President Yoweri Musevini says its Sudanese (Khartoum) policy. Museveni also said that the LRA is an "artificial creation" by Sudan and Sudanese support for the LRA must end.

March 14, 2000 The leader of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) Joseph Kony, has rejected Ugandan government offers of amnesty. Kony is calling for negotiations. It appears Kony, who says he gets policy direction from God via dreams, is now emphasizing his ethnic connections. Many LRA supporters come from the Acholi tribes.

March 23, 2000 After the bodies of over 400 members of a Christian cult were identified by authorities as either murder victims or participants in a mass suicides, the Ugandan government announced that it would crack down on "dangerous cults." The bodies of 235 members of the Restoration of the Ten Commandments of God cult (led by Joseph Kibwetere) were found in mid-March. Since then, another two hundred bodies have been found.

March 28, 2000 Upon further investigation is appears that the mass deaths of cult members were not suicide, but mass murder. Hundreds of additional bodies are showing up in various locations.

April 21, 2000 Approximately 1000 US military personnel will participate with Ugandan, Kenyan, and Tanzanian forces in a five-week exercise called Natural Fire 2000. The exercise will take place on the Kenyan coast. Most of the exercise will consist of building medical support infrastructure in the region.

April 22, 2000 An aid convoy of Catholic Relief Service trucks moving through northern Uganda was ambushed by Lord's Resistance Army rebels. One man in the convoy was killed. The convoy of 19 trucks was
returning from south Sudan. The LRA is a client force of the Sudanese Muslim government in Khartoum. LRA strikes against aid convoys in Uganda not only cause Uganda trouble but they strike at medical and food support for southern Sudanese.

April 25, 2000 The Ugandan Army announced that it would withdraw two 700-man battalions from the Democratic Republic of Congo. The Army spokesman said the battalions had been in the "Lume area" of the DRC, not far from the Ugandan border.

April 28, 2000 The Bank of Uganda (Uganda's central bank) announced that for the first time since its creation in 1966, the bank had turned a profit. The bank's only shareholder is the government of Uganda. The bank said it made around $13 million. Why the profit now? A bank spokesman said "structural reforms." FYEO will try to keep an eye on this. This could be a case where IMF pressures on a Third World central bank to reduce corruption, stop making bad loans to cronies of politicians, and cleaning up non-performing loans is working.

April 29, 2000 Rebels with the allied Democratic Forces (ADF) operating in western Uganda (Ruwenzani Mountains) captured a Ugandan Army captain assigned to a key military staff. According to one western press report, the ADF is demanding 30 million Ugandan shillings ($20,000) as ransom for the officer.

May 15, 2000 It looks like Uganda and Rwanda are going to avoid a war. The latest reports indicate both nations are pulling most of their forces out of the DRC city of Kisangani. The pullback agreement says both nations can have 215 soldiers in Kisangani to patrol the airport, bridges and road junctions until U.N. observers arrive. Rwandan President Paul Kagame and Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni Apparently negotiated the deal. Uganda accuses Rwanda of starting the latest round of fighting. An AFP report gave a tactical picture of the situation in Kisangani. The Rwandan army controls the Tshopo Bridge north of Kisangani, which gives it the ability to block Ugandan reinforcements. Both sides have entrenchments around the Bangoka airport, 15 kilometers northeast of the city.

May 17, 2000 Members of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) killed three people in the town of Barogal, near the northern city of Gulu.

May 19, 2000 The Ugandan Army attacked elements of the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), an anti-Ugandan guerrilla group. The combat took place in eastern Congo, near the Ugandan border. The Ugandan Army claimed it captured five ADF commanders in the firefight.

June 7, 2000 It looks like the ceasefire and withdrawal from Kisangani didn't occur as planned. Maybe its hard to leave a diamond town after all. On June 5 several sources reported that Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA)
troops and Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) troops were once again fighting again in and around the northeastern Congo (DRC) city of Kisangani. On June 6, Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni confirmed that the battle was continuing and accused Rwandan forces of renewing the conflict in Kisangani. On June 7, Rwanda asked the UN Security Council for an emergency meeting to help end the fighting between Rwandan and Ugandan forces in Kisangani, DRC. Rwanda accused Uganda of starting the fighting in Kisangani.

June 10, 2000 The UN ceasefire (arranged June 9) collapsed and battles between Rwandan and Ugandan forces in Kisangani continued, including artillery fire. Rwanda said its troops had driven Ugandan forces out of Kisangani. A DRC (Kabila government in Kinshasha) spokesman said that over 1,000 civilians had been killed and around 3,000 wounded in the five days of renewed fighting between Rwandan and Ugandan troops. The Red Cross said the toll was 150 dead and 700 wounded.

June 11, 2000 Rwanda said that its troops would conduct a "unilateral withdrawal" from Kisangani.

June 12, 2000 The ICRC provided an update on the casualties caused by the recent fighting between Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA) troops and Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) in Kisangani. 160 killed, 1200 wounded, some 18,000 displaced. There were also reports of looting by soldiers, and one accusation from a Kisangani resident that Ugandan troops had used civilians as "human shields" during the fighting.

June 15, 2000 The UN said that at least on more infantry battalion would need to be added to the proposed peacekeeping force in order to patrol Kisangani. That might increase the troop requirement from around 5,500 to 6,300 or more.

June 16, 2000; After several days of political posturing (agreeing to withdraw from Kisangani, then backtracking) Rwanda and Uganda said they would withdraw from the city. A UN source said the deal calls for Rwandan and Ugandan troops to withdraw 100 kilometers from Kisangani. The UN Security Council is trying to draft an agreement that would have Rwanda and Uganda withdrawing completely from the Congo. Rwandan leaders have said that their forces won't withdraw from the DRC until they are assured that Hutu "genocide militias" (such as the Interahamwe) won't attack Rwanda from the DRC.

June 17, 2000 Rwanda claimed it was withdrawing its forces from Kisangani, but accused Uganda of reneging on the withdrawal deal.

June 18, 2000: Scotch the withdrawal. It looks like more fighting around Kisangani is brewing. Uganda accused Rwanda of reinforcing units and positions in and around Kisangani. A Congolese Rally for Democracy
(RCD) spokesman countered by saying that Uganda was sending six battalions to Kisangani. AFP reported that diplomats in Kisangani had seen "Ugandan tanks" in the area. Uganda denied the allegations of the RCD and said that the RPA (Rwanda Patriotic Army) was guilty of truce violations. A Ugandan spokesman said that the RPA was sending troops toward Kisangani. The troops were coming from Kivu, Kabalo, Walikale, and Kileme.

June 20, 2000: Tensions are rising, at least along the border. Rwanda accused Uganda of massing troops along the countries' border. This comes despite the news of a UN-confirmed withdrawal from Kisangani.

July 1, 2000: Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni engineered a referendum to endorse his "no-party" system of government in Uganda. 91 percent of the voters nixed a multiparty system. (4.3 million voted for Museveni's position, 442,000 against.) However, "no-party" looks increasingly like "one-party." The voter turnout was right at 51 percent. The vote took place June 29. Along with Ghana's Jerry Rawlings, Museveni has been one of sub-Saharan Africa's more interesting and progressive "strongmen." However, Museveni's resistance to returning Uganda to multi-party democracy doesn't bode well. Museveni originally insisted on "no parties" in 1986 as a means of preventing tribal conflict and sectarian (Muslim versus Christian) violence. Despite the "no party" veneer, Museveni's "National Movement" (which grew out of his National Resistance Movement guerrilla organization) essentially operates as a party. There are three political parties in existence: the Democratic Party (DP), the Ugandan People's Congress (UPC), and the Conservative Party (CP). These three parties had urged a boycott of the vote. One UPC member said that the 50 percent turnout was a victory for those pressing for a boycott.

August 2, 2000; Uganda claimed that it had withdrawn another "two planeloads" of troops from the DRC. An AFP report said that Uganda ultimately planned to withdraw five battalions from the Congo (each battalion with 756 troops). The Ugandans have been using the DRC town of Buta as an assembly point for withdrawing forces.

September 9, 2000 Uganda announced a major victory over the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) rebel group which operates in western Uganda. The Ugandan Army claims to have captured a senior ADF leader, Isa Lubega (alias given as Twatera Emudu).

October 5, 2000: The Ugandan health ministry released a report that said since 1982 around 838,000 Ugandans have died from AIDS. 754,200 were adults, 83,800 were children under the age of 12. 411,382 of the adults were women. The health ministry estimates that 1,438,000 people in
Uganda (seven percent the population) are currently HIV positive. In 1999 112,000 new AIDS cases were diagnosed.

October 6, 2000: A terrorist grenade attack in Kampala killed one person and wounded six. The attack took place in the Kampala suburb of Kasubi. Similar attacks from 1997 through 1999 killed 40 people.

October 10, 2000: Agence France Press (AFP) ran a detailed report that pointed to links between Angola's UNITA rebels and the Ugandan military. Uganda backs the Congolese Liberation Movement (MLC), which is a major opponent of the DRC's Kabila regime. The report had a real jaw dropper - the MLC, which needs additional troops, may be seeking troops from UNITA. What would be the payoff to UNITA? If the Kabila regime is toppled in the Congo, and a government favorably influenced by Uganda takes power in Kinshasha, the DRC would provide UNITA with new bases for prosecuting its war in Angola.

October 11, 2000: LRA rebels killed eight people in attacks around the city of Gulu. In at least one of the attacks the LRA guerrillas used "stick grenades."

October 18, 2000 The reports started in early October- a mysterious disease killing people in the Ugandan countryside, particularly in the Gullu area. The disease has been identified as the dreaded Ebola virus. As of October 18, the Ugandan government reports 39 people have died from the viral outbreak.

October 23, 2000 Over 150 cases of Ebola have now been reported in Uganda. As of October 22, 54 Ugandans have died.

November 2, 2000: The Ugandan government says 81 people have now died from Ebola fever, and over 250 people have been struck by the disease.

November 15, 2000: Uganda reported that the Ebola death toll is now 113.

November 20, 2000: Ebola is a virus that is also found in primates (monkeys and apes.) Once you have it, symptoms appear in 2-21 days. The Sudan strain is fatal 60 percent of the time, the Zaire version is fatal 90 percent of the time. Like AIDS, it is spread by contact with an infected persons body fluids. Patients have to be handled carefully and even dead victims can still infect. Ebola is an RNA virus, which means it mutates rapidly. If a strain develops that can be spread by airborne particles (sneezing, coughing, etc.), then the disease will hit a lot more people. Good medical care can help patients survive long enough to fight off the disease, but this does not guarantee survival. Currently, Ebola exists in Sudan, Congo and, recently, Ivory Coast. If someone with Ebola gets on
an airplane and travels to a more densely populated area, like North America, Asia or Europe, the disease could spread worldwide in a pandemic that could kill millions.

November 30, 2000: Uganda reports that its Ebola death total is now 149. New cases are reported in southwestern Uganda. This is a new strain has people worried, because it is much less lethal than earlier ones (as many as 40 percent of the victims survive) and takes much longer (up to three weeks) to finish with those infected. The original strain of Ebola operated much faster, killing over 90 percent of its victims within a few days. The new strain allows victims to travel farther before falling sick, and spreading the virus. If Ebola mutates again, to a form that kills only a third of its victims but incubates for a month or more, it could quickly depopulate Africa. This type of mutation, from very to less lethal, is common with diseases.

December 20, 2000: The Ugandan government said the number of confirmed deaths from Ebola fever had reached 163.

December 28, 2000: A Ugandan government spokesman claimed the Ugandan forces had killed Cobra Obedi Birungi, a senior commander in the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) rebel group. Some 45 other guerrillas were killed in the fight. The Ugandan report said the Ugandan Army attacked an ADF position on Kija Hill (Kitagwenda county in Kamwenge district). The ADF group was on its way to a base area in the Rwenzori Mountains (Uganda-DRC border area). The ADF has been active since 1996. The ADF allegedly receives some support from the DRC (Kabila) government.

January 5, 2001: The Ugandan government announced that on January 20 it will institute a policy of disarming Karamojon tribe cow herders in eastern Uganda. Some members of the Karamojong have been promoting the massive "gun control" project. The Karamojong (a pastoralist tribe) have a long tradition of cattle raiding. However, the availability of weapons (particularly automatic weapons) have turned the inter-clan cattle raids into small wars. While spears are deadly, assault rifles simply slay too many. One Ugandan government source says that the Karamojong estimate 500 Karamojong have died in cattle raids in the last two years, an unbearable death toll. The huge death toll is directly attributable to automatic weapons. Some Karamojong object to turning in their weapons, saying disarmament will leave them open to cross-border attacks by the Turkana tribe (which lives in Kenya). The Ugandan Army (Ugandan Peoples Defense Forces) has promised to beef up patrols in the area and stop any Turkana incursions.

January 20, 2001: The Ugandan Army is proceeding to enforce the "gun control" agreement reached with border tribes in the Karamoja region. A Ugandan Army spokesman said the government expects to collect around
20,000 weapons in the Moroto and Kotido districts. Five army battalions are involved in the operation.

January 26, 2001: The Ugandan government said that Uganda had achieved its objectives inside the DRC and would consider pulling out its troops. Recall Uganda made a similar statement last fall. However, in the wake of Laurent Kabila’s assassination, this could be a signal from Kampala that Uganda is interested in negotiating a withdrawal agreement from the Congo.

February 8, 2001: The LRA is once again attacking Christian targets in Uganda. Ugandan military sources and NGO sources reported the rebels from the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) attacked a Roman Catholic missionary facility (the Pajule Catholic Mission) in Kitgum District. No one was reported injured, in part because a Ugandan military unit in the area responded quickly. The LRA unit (reports suggest a patrol, or looting detachment more likely) fled down a road. There were no reports of military casualties.

February 20, 2001: Ugandan Army Brigadier-general Wamala Katumba (current commander of Ugandan forces in the DRC) said that Uganda still intends to withdraw two infantry battalions (approximately 1500 men, with support troops) from the DRC. The two battalions will be drawn from the Buta area (in northeastern DRC). On the same day, an RCD rebel spokesman accused the DRC government (Joseph Kabila) of continuing to support Rwandan Hutu militias operating in eastern Congo. The RCD said the DRC government had air-dropped weapons to the militias (apparently within the last week). The DRC government had promised to end support of Rwandan Hutu militias. The airdrops were to Mai-Mai and Interahamwe militias located near Lilengwe and Kilembwe. What lies behind the air drops. The first is that no one is really in control in Kinshasha. The second follows from the first: several leaders DRC government) particularly the military forces) have an agenda other than peace.

March 12, 2001 How things change. The Ugandan government issued a statement which listed Rwanda as a country hostile to Uganda. Uganda believes Rwanda has sponsored terrorist activity in Uganda. Rwanda and Uganda were formerly close allies.

March 18, 2001 Uganda reported another attack in its western provinces, this time near the town of Kasese. Eleven people died an 50 vehicles were destroyed. The attackers also destroyed two gasoline stations, one a Shell station and the other owned by Total. The report said around 30 rebels struck from the Ruwenzori Mountains.

March 27, 2001: The Ugandan government said Lords Resistance army (LRA) guerrillas killed ten civilians when the guerrillas ambushed their
vehicle on the Paraa-Pakwach road (Gulu district). The dead were identified as students.

April 17, 2001: It looks as if Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni regarded by many in the West as a tough but well-intentioned African leader--is behaving more and more like a typical strong man. At the minimum, there's a lot of political infighting going on in Kampala. Museveni defeated Kizza Besigye in the March presidential elections. Since then Besigye has claimed he has been harassed by Museveni. Now, Besigye's wife, Winnie Byanyima (who is a member of Uganda's parliament), has been accused of sedition by the Museveni government. Byanyima got on TV in Kenya and alleged that Museveni is helping train Hutu Interahamwe guerrillas to fight Rwanda's Tutsi president (and former Museveni ally) Paul Kagame.

April 21, 2001 The Ugandan Supreme Court denied an opposition political party's appeal to have last months presidential election annulled. The official election results stand. President Yoweri Museveni won 69.3 percent of the vote, Kizza Besigye got 27.8 percent. Besigye and his supporters accused Museveni of rigging the election.

May 12, 2001: President Yoweri Museveni took the oath office for his second five-year term. Museveni was first elected in 1996, after Uganda's new constitution came into force. Museveni has actually been in charge since 1986. The new constitution gives a president a maximum of two-five year terms.

May 30, 2001: Uganda reported 27 Ugandans returned to Uganda after being freed by the LRA. The 27 were flown to Uganda from Sudan. The report said five of the returnees were born in captivity. The people were returned as part of the 1999 repatriation agreement.

June 1, 2001: A Ugandan government spokesman claimed that the Ugandan Army has killed 300 Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) guerrillas since December 2000. The same report claimed 329 ADF guerrillas had either been captured or had surrendered in the same time span. If the numbers are accurate, this means the Ugandan government is making real progress in combating the insurgency, which began in 1996.

June 3, 2001: The Ugandan government reported that local Ugandan defense units (this usually refers to village militias and police) defeated an attack launched by Rwandan Interahamwe Hutu rebels. The attack took place near the DRC border and near the Bwindi Impenetrable Forest National Park. At least 20 Hutu rebels took part in the attack. A subsequent report confirmed that the Hutu force entered Uganda from the DRC.

June 15, 2001: An update. The Ugandan Army announced that around 600 Karamojong warriors had been killed in firefights since February
The government is trying to disarm the Karamojong, to stop banditry and cattle rustling.

June 24, 2001: Uganda reported that Ugandan Army troops attacked an LRA camp inside Sudan. 22 LRA rebels died in the attack. However, four people the LRA group had abducted also died in the attack. The Ugandan statements said its troops moved 20 kilometers into Sudan to attack the camp near the village of Lumarati.

June 25, 2001: Rwanda and Uganda may be moving to another confrontation. Rwanda said 50 Ugandan army and police officers are seeking political asylum in Rwanda. One senior Ugandan officer requesting asylum was identified as Colonel Samson Mande, a former Ugandan military attache in Tanzania. Apparently Mande was court-martialed in Uganda earlier this year.

June 28, 2001: The UN (specifically, UNICEF) said that 33 abducted Ugandans will be returned to Uganda. The 33 will be sent to Uganda from Khartoum, Sudan. The 33 were abducted by the LRA. Two of the returnees have been held since 1990.

July 13, 2001: The Ugandan Army reported that on July 12 it re-deployed units in the northeastern corner of the DRC to help stop a province-wide witch hunt. Western sources now report that around 800 people have died in the witch hunt, most of them hacked to death or lynched. Reports of witch hunts and witch trials near the DRC city of Aru began appearing in late June. The Ugandan military now confirms that the witch hunts and killings have become wide-spread. A subsequent report said 70 people had been arrested for participating in witch killings.

July 22, 2001: Uganda announced the arrest of 28 people allegedly involved in a series of bombing attacks that have killed 67 people and injured 262. The attacks began in 1997. Ugandan police also seized seven kilos of potassium chloride, six kilos of TNT, and assorted bomb-making equipment. Ugandan government officials claim the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) had coordinated the bomb-making group and said the group was part of an urban terror campaign waged by the ADF. A subsequent report said that some of the bomb-makers may have been trained in Kenya by the ADF. One of the suspects admitted to setting off a bomb on July 7 in the Ugandan town of Jinja. The is led by Jamil Mukulu.

August 20, 2001: Sudan (once again) claims it has stopped aiding the LRA. A Sudanese official said that Sudan stopped giving the LRA ammo and other supplies in December 1999.

August 25, 2001: Ugandan press sources report Ugandan opposition leader Kizza Besigye has been missing for a week. Besigye is a retired
army colonel who challenged Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni in the March elections.

August 27, 2001: End of the mystery. Ugandan opposition politician Kizza Besigye, reported missing last week, has turned up in the US. He says he fled Uganda because he feared arrest by the Museveni government. Besigye headed the Reform Agenda Movement (political party) in Uganda.

August 29, 2001: Uganda reported its troops fought with a Rwandan Hutu rebel group in Kisoro District (southwest Uganda).

September 3, 2001: LRA guerrillas killed five people when they attack a vehicle on the Bibia-Adjumani road (inside northern Uganda) about five kilometers from the Sudan border. The vehicle belonged to Catholic Relief Services.

September 15, 2001: Uganda said it was deploying troops to northeastern Uganda to battle Karamojong tribal warriors who attacked a refugee camp, killed 18 people, and stole cattle. The camp is located near Ngariam. The governmnet is concerned the raid will further provoke Teso tribespeople, who have already attacked several innocent Karamojong in retaliation.

September 27, 2001: The Ugandan government reported that Ugandan security personnel had seized the registration documents of a company that may be linked to Osama Bin Laden. The name of the firm is Taba (U) Limited. (NOTE: That's the way the firm was listed in the Ugandan report and wire service report.) The Ugandan report said that Taba is a subsidiary of Taba investment of Saudi Arabia, in which Bin Laden may hold an interest. Taba was registered in Uganda in February 2001 as an investment firm.

October 1, 2001: Police arrested seven Pakistanis and a Zambian and accused them of working for the Bin Laden organization.

October 10, 2001: Bubonic plague has broken out in the northeast, killing 14. Local medical personnel say the outbreak can only be contained if people across the border in Congo are treated as well.

October 16, 2001: The government has dismissed press reports that Uganda and Rwanda are about to go to war. Press stories assert that Britain and South Africa have been approached for aid. All this activity is in the wake of battles fought between Ugandan and Rwandan troops in Congo in 1999 and 2000.

October 17, 2001: New reports confirm earlier Ugandan government statements (from October 11) that bubonic plague has broken out in Ugandan areas border in the DRC. The Ugandan government says medical liaison teams are currently deployed in the sub-counties of Kangu,
Nyapea, Zeu, Ayak and Pageya. These are located in the northwestern district of Nebbi. At least 14 people have died from the plague outbreak.

October 19, 2001: For the first time since last March, Ugandan troops in Congo have moved closer to positions held by Rwandan soldiers. The reason for this movement is apparently the rumors that Rwanda is preparing to attack Uganda.

November 5, 2001: Rwanda And Uganda - On The Brink Of Africa's Newest War? - Uganda and Rwanda, never the most-comfortable of allies in the DR Congo War (1998 - 2001), are on the verge of their own nasty little fight. Envoys from the two countries will meet at the New York City UN headquarters on 8 November, two days after the expected meeting between Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni and Rwandan President Paul Kagame in London mediated by British Prime Minister Tony Blair and his Secretary for Overseas Development, Claire Short.

If diplomacy fails, the two armies would most likely fight it out in the Democratic Republic of Congo's (DRC's) Nord-Kivu province, rather than on their shared border. Ugandan and Rwandan units had fought each other before in 1999 and 2000, in the DR Congolese city of Kisangani (about 500 kilometers/300 miles from either country).

The situation soured on 28 August, when newspapers in both capitals published a letter reportedly written by Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni to Secretary Short, complaining of Rwanda's plans to attack. Museveni accused Rwanda of using dissident Ugandan army officers to recruit young Ugandans to join three military training camps situated around the Rwandan capital Kigali. Museveni also feared that Rwanda had built a force of 100,000 while re-equipping and positioning itself in a hostile fashion.

The potential epicenter for this new war is the DR Congo town of Kanyabayongo in the Nord-Kivu province, atop a mountain that juts above the Rwindi plain. The town is about 60 kilometers (37 miles) west of the Ugandan border and 140 kilometers (85 miles) by road north of Goma.

Goma is the headquarters for the Rwandan-backed rebel group Congolese Rally for Democracy (RCD). At the end of October, Rwandan troops in South Kivu and parts of North Kivu Provinces had infiltrated into areas controlled by the Ugandans. One advance was moving toward Kanyabayonga (around 150km south of Butembo) and another in the direction of Lake Edward. The AFP reported Rwandan government forces along the Kabasha escarpment (overlooked by Kanyabayonga) and on the main north-south road. Civilians also reported Rwandan soldiers stationed to the west, at Kibirizi, and at Vitshumbi, to the east and on the shores of Lake Edward.
Ugandan People's Defense Forces (UPDF) units took up positions in Loufo (about 10 kilometers/six miles to the northwest), Kirumba (15 kilometers/ten miles north) and Lutunguru (40 kilometers/25 miles northwest). The UDPF's 77th Battalion had been in Kanyabayonga, but withdrew via Butembo, Beni and was at home station in Mbarara.

Meanwhile, the UPDF reported withdrawing it's 35th Battalion from Buta, in accordance with the Lusaka ceasefire agreement on the DRC. Uganda had already withdrawn 11 battalions from DRC (previously stationed in Kanyabayonga, Bafwasende and Bafwabwoli, Isiro, Lisala, Basankuusu, Gbadolite, Dongo and Gemena). However, the Ugandan newspaper "The Monitor" suggested that the UDPF was being less-than-truthful about troop movements.

However, former UDPF Chief of Logistics and Engineering (CLE), Col. Fred Bogere, wrote in an internal army report titled "Budget Sensitisation Circular" that combat readiness had been seriously undermined by lack of resources and corruption. However, UDPF Chief of Staff MG James Kazini insisted that the army was in good enough shape to defend the country.

On the 24 October, Ugandan Defense minister Amama Mbabazi told his Parliament that that UDPF had not deployed on the Rwanda border, although some units were moved in south-west Uganda - after dissident UDPF officers LTCs Anthony Kyakabale and Samson Minande declared war on Uganda.

Ugandan Defense Minister Amama Mbabazi met with his Rwandan counterpart, Colonel Emmanuel Habyarimana, on 29 October in Kabale. Uganda withdrew one battalion from the Kikagati border point (near Tanzania) and redeployed it 25km away at Nshungezi.

Communications in the DRCongo are spotty, at best. In a complaint to the UN peacekeeping mission in the DRC (known by its French acronym, MONUC) on 22 October, Uganda asserted that Rwandan troops and their allies had seized control of Kanyabayonga on the 20th (following a three-day assault). By the 25th, the UN Mission had determined that the reports were "groundless". - Adam Geibel

November 15, 2001: Uganda plans to improve its military by improving housing and establishing a staff college to train senior officers.--Stephen V Cole

November 17, 2001: More authoritarian politics in Uganda. The Ugandan government now has charged two aides of former presidential candidate Kizza Besigye with treason. The two aides (and two other alleged accomplices) are charged with plotting a coup. (Regular StrategyPage readers will recognize Besigye as Ugandan President Yoweri Musevenis chief rival.) The four men are now under arrest.
November 25, 2001: Agence France Press (AFP) reported (from sources in the DRC) that five Ugandan soldiers were killed by bow-and-arrow armed tribesmen inside the DRC. The attackers were members of the Ngiti tribe and the tribesmen believed the Ugandan soldiers had killed a member of their tribe. The five Ugandan troops were part of a 36-man platoon. 300 Ngiti tribesmen attacked the platoon.

November 27, 2001: Uganda reported the Lords Resistance Army (LRA) murdered three people in northern Uganda. One of the people killed was a Roman Catholic priest, Father Peter Obore Oromo. Father Oromo worked in southern Sudan (diocese of Torit). The LRA ambushed his car as Father Oromo was returning from a visit to Kampala.

December 5, 2001: It's carrot and stick. Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni promised Karamojong herders development aid if they turn in their weapons, per a disarmament program begun by the government earlier this year. Specifically, Museveni promised new schools, an immunization program for the people, and better veterinary service for their cattle herds. This follows a Ugandan government statement (December 1) that the Karamojong needed to turn in 40,000 weapons (small arms) by the end of the year.

December 7, 2001: Uganda announced it intends to establish local militia forces to help stop cross border raid along the Sudan and Kenya borders. Ultimately, Uganda plans to create 292 militia units that would provide local defense and be able to reinforce Ugandan Army detachments. (The size of the units appears to vary widely, though one report said some of the units may have as many as 140 militiamen assigned to them.)

December 15, 2001: Karamojong cattle rustlers ambushed a convoy that included soldiers guarding Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni. Museveni was visiting a camp in the area. Museveni is visiting the region to promote his tribal disarmament program. Three soldiers were injured in the ambush and were evacuated by helicopter to a military hospital. A subsequent report said the ambush occurred at Kamusalaba Junction on the road from Moroto to Nakapiripiriti (northeastern Uganda). So far, the herders have turned in 11,000 weapons.

December 20, 2001: Uganda and Rwanda have agreed to exchange military observers. The idea is that misunderstandings could be avoided (and promises not to support guerrillas attacking the other country could be monitored) by having military officers in each other's border regions. -- Stephen V Cole

December 21, 2001: A Ugandan spokesman said the Karamojong had agreed to turn in their weapons (once estimated at 40,000) within the
next 12 months. This appears to be a revision of the original government demand that weapons be turned in by January 2002.

December 27, 2001: The Ugandan government said it will deploy more troops to the Sudanese and Kenyan borders. The reason: increased cross-border attacks by nomadic herders and arms trafficking. StrategyPage has reported that the Ugandans were beginning to create a border militia force. This latest government statement indicates regular army units will also be moved. The Ugandan statement specifically named the Turkana and Pokot tribes of Kenya, and the Didinka (Dinka), Toposa and Tipesi tribes of Sudan as carrying out the raids.

December 30, 2001: Uganda's Minister of Defense Amama Mbabazi issued a statement with a promise: the year 2002 will be the year Uganda finally destroys two rebel groups that have plagued it for years. In an interview with AFP, Mbabazi said (quoted): "I don't expect the LRA to survive beyond 2002." Mbabazi said Sudan still supports the LRA, but that support is weakening. This may be a public indication that Sudan is finally willing to implement the agreement Khartoum and Kampala reached nearly two years ago to stop supporting insurgencies in one another's country. The Ugandan government also vowed to finish off the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) which operate in western Uganda (and has bases in the DRC). Mbabazi indicated the US-led "war on terrorism" was part of Sudan's change of heart, vis a vis the LRA.

January 5, 2002: Sudan and Uganda have agreed to speed up plans to form a joint border monitoring force.--Stephen V Cole

January 7, 2002: The SPLA and the Sudan Peoples Democratic Front (SPDF) announced that they are once again a united front. A decade ago the SPLAs John Garang and Riek Machar (head of the SPDF) had a falling out and the SPLA split. The SPLA and SPDF have fought one another on several occasions. In fact, the SPDF reached a peace accord with Khartoum in 1997 and Machar was once Omar al-Bashirs assistant president. As noted in StrategyPage at the time, Machar resigned from the government in 2000 and went back to being a rebel. Were not ready to make too much of this report politically, though there are indications that the SPLA and SPDF are trying to cooperate in the field against the Khartoum government. Were not ready to make too much of this report politically, though there are indications that the SPLA and SPDF are trying to cooperate in the field against the Khartoum government. For what its worth, the Sudanese government immediately slammed the merger as an escalation of military operations by the rebels. A Khartoum spokesman predicted that Garang would have Machar killed (according to the AFP report the spokesman said Garang would have him liquidated).
January 10, 2002: The Sudanese government (Khartoum) claimed its forces stopped an SPLA attack in the Nuba Mountains. The government statement said an SPLA platoon-size force struck in the Rasu area. The report said Sudanese forces killed three guerrillas in the firefight.

January 17, 2002: A Sudanese government (Khartoum) spokesman claimed American forces boarded a Sudanese state-owned cargo ship. The Al-Ubaid was reportedly boarded while sailing from Salala, Oman, to Jedda, Saudi Arabia. The Sudanese government objected to the US action and demanded an explanation. So here's an explanation well provide for Khartoum: The US Navy is fighting the War on Terror and Sudan is still high on Washington's usual suspect list.

January 19, 2002: The Sudanese government (Khartoum) and the SPLA agreed to another ceasefire. This one affects the Nuba Mountain region and is supposed to last for six months. The ceasefire was agreed to during talks in Buergenstock, Switzerland, between SPLA and Khartoum negotiators. This ceasefire will be monitored by an official truce monitoring group that includes Khartoum, SPLA, and international observers. The addition of international observers, in an official capacity, is a first. Will this work? Within hours after the announcement that the ceasefire agreement had been reached, the Sudanese government issued a statement saying the presence of foreign monitors was too big an advantage for the rebels.

January 23, 2002: The Sudanese government (Khartoum) announced that its forces were observing the ceasefire in the Nuba Mountain region.

January 29, 2002: The Sudan Peoples Democratic Front (SPDF) issued a statement claiming its forces killed 167 Sudanese government troops in battles near the towns of Pul Tutni and Mirmir. In another report, the SPDF claimed its troops hit a Sudanese government convoy near the town of Kuac on January 25, and killed around 100 government troops. There was no independent confirmation of the claims.

January 30, 2002: The Sudanese government (Khartoum) said that its South Sudan Coordination Council (SSCC a oversight committee appointed in 1998 to monitor south Sudan) had decided to postpone a much-discussed regional referendum on independence. The referendum will not be held until March, 2004 at the earliest. The referendum was originally scheduled for this year. The SPLA does not participate in the SSCC, for several reasons. The SPLA did not sign the interim accord that established the SSCC. The SPLA also regards the organization as Khartoum controlled.

February 13, 2002: Several sources (including the US government) reported that Sudanese government aircraft bombed the town of Akeum (Bahr al-Ghazal province) February 11. The airstrike apparently took place
right after a WFP food delivery. One report said the WFP warehouse was the target. At least two people were killed in the air raid. The US denounced the strike as a direct attack on a civilian target and said that the air attack breaks Khartoums pledge to the US to stop bombing civilian targets for four weeks. On February 13 the UN office in Khartoum protested the attack. On the same day the Sudanese government said that it regretted the attack (which confirmed that it did take place). Khartoum blamed the air strike on a technical error. On February 15 a number of reports appeared in the press that said five people died in the village of Nimne (south Sudan) when a Sudanese government airplane dropped three bombs. That attack also allegedly took place on February 11. (One of the reporting organizations was Doctors Without Borders. Apparently, one of the men killed was a Sudanese who worked for Doctors Without Borders.)

February 15, 2002: The town of Akuem was bombed hours after a food airdrop by the U.N. World Food Program. Two children were killed. On Thursday, the Sudanese government described the attack in Akuem as a regrettable accident. The State Department condemned the attack and said it violated a promise by the Sudanese government to temporarily halt the bombing of civilian targets.

February 22, 2002: The Sudanese government (Khartoum) claimed that it had re-captured the airfield at Nial Diu and driven back an SPLA unit in the area.

February 28, 2002: The Sudanese government (Khartoum) confirmed the helicopter attack earlier this month that killed 17 civilians. The government called the attack a mistake. The government admitted the helicopter opened fire on a WFP aid delivery.

March 1, 2002: The SPLA announced that it was merging with the Sudan Alliance Forces (SAF). The SAF is a resistance group based in northern Sudan, with base camps near the Eritrean border. The SAF is led by Abdel Aziz Khalid. Khalid once served as a brigadier general in the Sudanese Army.

March 11, 2002: The Sudanese government (Khartoum) said that it had reached an agreement with the SPLA that would make aid operations in south Sudan more secure. The agreement was brokered by the US State Department and includes a new monitoring regime to insure compliance by Khartoum. In effect, this agreement re-establishes the ceasefire agreement of January 22.

March 19, 2002: The Sudanese government (Khartoum) said it is moving forces to the Sudan-Eritrean border. SPLA rebels and allies are reported massing in the area (near Garoura). How large is the mobilization? Thats
unclear, but a subsequent report said local militia units were ordered to report for training. The degree of SPLA involvement is also uncertain. The Beja ethnic group (many are nomads) who live in the region have fought against the Sudanese government in the past. The SPLA did claim that its northern forces had attacked the town of Kassala in November 2000.

March 21, 2002: No surprise here. Sudan's President Omar al-Bashir announced that the referendum on south Sudanese independence would be postponed for another two years.

March 23, 2002: The Sudanese government (Khartoum) accused the SPLA and its allies of "kidnapping" 11 Sudanese-national UN employees working in an international-sponsored polio vaccination program. The alleged kidnappings took place in the Dakwahr (Dakwair) area. There were no independent confirmations of Khartoum's accusations. Medical aid and support for refugees are constant issues in the Sudanese civil war. The Khartoum government is regularly accused (with justification) of bombing medical relief sites. This time Khartoum is alleging that the shoe is on the other foot. Agitprop? Probably, but SPLA renegades and bandits (who may be part-time rebels) have struck relief sites in the past.

March 25, 2002: The Sudanese slaving issue is back on the front burner. The US says it intends to send an investigating team to Sudan in April to investigate (and document) slavery, abductions, and forced servitude.

March 29, 2002: The SPLA claimed its troops captured the government garrison town of Nial Dhiu and killed around 300 government (Khartoum) soldiers. The garrison is near the town of Bentiu, in a major oil producing area.

April 3, 2002: The Sudanese government (Khartoum) issued a statement saying that it would support using oil as a weapon to help the Palestinian cause. The Sudanese statement supported threats by Iran and Iraq to lead an oil boycott.

April 7, 2002: Jihad time in Khartoum. The Popular Defense Forces (a pro-Khartoum militia force that operates as an adjunct of the Sudanese Army) issued a press statement calling for the Sudanese people to join a holy war against Israel. The PDF statement said it would open its training bases to holy warriors who would go to fight for Palestine against Israel.

April 9, 2002: The Sudanese government (Khartoum) accused the SPLA of a series of ceasefire violations in the Nuba Mountains. The accusations were made in the Sudanese parliament. Political grandstanding? Of course, and with a purpose. The new accusations come just as the International Monitoring Unit (IMU), an international ceasefire inspection group assembled to monitor the situation in the Nuba, is preparing to begin operations in Sudan.
April 10, 2002: The Sudanese government (Khartoum) once again officially denied that slavery exists in Sudan. The Sudanese government told an international fact-finding committee investigating slaving in Sudan that abductions of women and children, however, do occur.

April 12, 2002: The Sudanese government (Khartoum) accused the SPLA of more ceasefire violations. This time Khartoum specified an attack on the town of Wau (south Sudan). The Khartoum statement said the SPLA fired two Katyusha (yes, two) rockets at Wau and injured two civilians.

April 19, 2002: On April 15 the SPLA said that the Sudanese government (Khartoum) had moved several thousand troops from the Nuba Mountains into south Sudan's Upper Nile area (an oil producing area). On April 19 the SPLA accused Khartoum of violating the ceasefire agreement by shelling several villages in Western Upper Nile province. Specifically, the SPLA charged the government with violating the Agreement on the Protection of Civilians (APC).

April 25, 2002: Sudanese government mechanized infantry columns supported by helicopter gunships launched a massive local offensive in three southern provinces, forcing hundreds of thousands of civilians from their homes.

The Sudan People's Liberation Army and Christian Solidarity International reported that Khartoum's forces attacked rebel-held villages in Bahr el-Ghazal and Western and Eastern Upper Nile provinces on 20 April. Heavy fighting also reported on the road between the towns of Wau and Gogrial, 620 miles southwest of Khartoum.

Apparently, it took a few weeks for Khartoum to move all their pieces into position.

Sudan People's Liberation Movement spokesman Samson Kwaje told the press on 15 April that the offensive that started in late March had intensified and that "the government has launched a massive military offensive in Western Upper Nile and Bahr el Ghazal region". - Adam Geibel

April 26, 2002: The United State's Department of State is deploying a contract-administered Quick Reaction Demining Force to Sudan, to conduct mine clearance operations in the Nuba Mountains. The advance party left on 19 April and the press conference announcement was on the 24th.

The main body (two squads of 10 persons each, four mine detection dogs, and additional support personnel) are expected to arrive in approximately two weeks.

Refugees and internally displaced persons had relocated into areas where mines are known to exist or suspected of being mined. The US-sponsored
Quick Reaction Force's mission in Sudan would be implemented by the RONCO Consulting Corporation, a Washington-based commercial demining company.

The Government of Sudan estimated that between 1989 and 2001, 1,135 persons became mine victims in the Nuba Mountains, while "Save the Children, USA" believes that an additional 25 mine related incidents occurred in the same mountains between December 2000 and February 2002. According to estimates published by the United Nations, there are between 500,000 and two million landmines in Sudan, laid by both the government and rebel groups.

The Quick Reaction Demining Force's mine clearance operations will lessen the likelihood of additional casualties and contribute to the success of the first phase of the recently concluded cease-fire between the Government of the Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army.

Whether the State Department realizes that Khartoum has restarted the war with it's current offensive is unknown. - Adam Geibel

April 29, 2002: Over the last year there have been a number of wire service stories and NGO reports about the rate of civilian casualties in the Sudanese civil war. Doctors Without Borders offered another report, and one worth mentioning since it sums many of the other reports quite well. The Doctors Without Borders report has this quote (from AFP): "All parties to the Sudan conflict use violence against civilians -- including rape, murder and assault -- and deny access to humanitarian aid as tactics of war, which have resulted in enormous civilian mortality rates." Heres another good quote: "Thousands of people have died from diseases that can be treated, even during conflict. It is the way the war is waged that limits access to medical services." The Doctors Without Borders report also condemned attacks on health workers. Sure, many NGOs have a track record for scare headlines and overstatement, in order to attract international attention to a particular crisis (or in more cynical cases, attract attention to themselves). That is not the case here. You can go to the bank with this particular Doctors Without Borders statement. What they're reporting is the hard, awful truth.

May 1, 2002: Here's a report that is not at all surprising, but it does demonstrate how oil politics have become a central issue in the Sudanese civil war. The Sudanese government said that it has no plans to share oil revenue with the SPLA. Not only no, but heck no. Apparently someone somewhere (a diplomat with a knack for careful leaking?) has suggested that Khartoum and the SPLA explore some kind of agreement on oil production.
May 9, 2002: The SPLA (or, more correctly, the SPLAs humanitarian organization, the Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Association) issued a statement that said the risk of starvation was increasing in south Sudan. The statement identified the Wau and Gogrial area of Bahr al Ghazal as being particularly vulnerable. The statement called on the Sudanese government (Khartoum) to lift a ban on aid flights into these areas.

May 11, 2002: NGOs (among them, the Catholic Church) report that the LRA attacked six villages in south Sudan and killed 470 people. The attacks occurred over a seven day period (May 3-9). The villages are located in the Imotong Mountains (Eastern Equatoria state). AFP said the Catholic Church report identified the villages as Isuhak, Lohui, Idiefe, Obeyok, Kubaya, and Lotele. A subsequent report said the LRA rebels were fleeing Ugandan troops operating in south Sudan.

May 16, 2002: The advocacy group "European Coalition on Oil in Sudan" accused the Khartoum government of using the violent tactics to enable foreign oil firms to explore for oil and export it unhindered by Southern Sudanese rebels.

The dichotomy of 21st and 19th century warfare means and methods serving side by side is alive and well in the Sudan. The report focuses on mass government clearances of civilians conducted in oil development in Ruweng County and in the Western Upper Nile, citing brutal attacks by Khartoum's forces backed by helicopter gunships and horseback-mounted proxy militias.

After two visits by investigative teams in 2002, the group estimated that 130,000 homeless Sudanese were now on the move in search of safety. The group's broad charges are not new and the U.S. State Department in March accused government forces and militia allies of pursuing a "scorched earth policy" around oil fields. Adam Geibel European Coalition on Oil in Sudan online at, http://www.christianaid.org.uk/world/where/eagl/sudan/ecos.htm

May 26, 2002: Sudan, besides having a long-running civil war with the SPLA in the south and several northern resistance factions, also experiences bouts of other tribal violence. On several occasions StrategyPage has reported bandit activity or trouble with nomadic herdsmen. The herdsmen long preceded European-style national boundaries and they are tough to track. AFP recently reported on a Sudanese government (Khartoum) announcement that 63 Sudanese herdsmen were killed in what was described as tribal clashes. The battles occurred in the Central African Republic (CAR). Apparently a rumor that a Sudanese had killed the relative of a CAR official kicked off the clash. More likely, the battle was a fight over water rights or an attempt to settle an
old score. These tribal clashes actually occur with some frequency, but go unreported because journalists and NGO aid organizations are not present. No one is around except the nomads. The word filters back, though, sometimes through NGO medical channels (and where did you get this wound?) or government police networks. (Austin Bay)

May 27, 2002: The SPLM/A said Antonov transports bombed the villages of Tam, Riboor, Chotol-ler and Norieh in the Western Upper Nile state on 24, 25 and 26 May, despite Khartoum’s agreement to protect civilians. The SPLA claims that 17 civilians were killed and scores of others wounded.

A 22 May government air raid on the Rier (Western Upper Nile, South Sudan) area has a casualty toll of at least 15 dead and nearly 120 injured, many of them children. The area struck by the government air raid is a traditional gathering place for thousands of displaced from the region. An Antonov-32 bomber dropped 16 bombs in a series of sorties between 02.00 (23:00 GMT) and 08.30 (05:30 GMT). After receiving reports from the East African nation, Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) spokesman Dan Eiffe told Reuters in Nairobi that "it is one of the most brutal and horrific attacks ever in southern Sudan".

Rier is located south of Bentiu, near the access road to the Block 5A oil concession, where oil companies have been forced to suspend operations. Fighting has been raging for months between government forces and the SPLA in oil-rich Unity State/western Upper Nile.

No immediate comment about the 22 May raid was made by President Omar Hassan al Beshir's governement, but by 25-26 May Khartoum denied the SPLA charges.

On 26 May, the pro-government Southern Sudan Defence Force militia denied reports that government planes bombed Rier and accused the SPLA of shelling the town of Mayom, near Rier. - Adam Geibel

May 28, 2002: Here's an interesting Sudanese ploy. Khartoum is now asking the UN to move the headquarters of south Sudan relief operations from Lochikio, Kenya, to areas under (Khartoum) control. Khartoum has long maintained that certain organizations use UN aid operations to assist the SPLA. For most aid organizations, such a move would be a disaster, and it would be a worse disaster from the tribes of south Sudan. Khartoum really doesn't want any aid organizations providing food in certain rebel areas.

May 29, 2002: The Sudanese government (Khartoum) claimed its forces had driven an SPLA faction from the town of Qessan (near the Ethiopian border). The SPLA had controlled the area since 1997. The government report claimed Sudan Army troops captured a large quantity of ammo and
several vehicles. With the growing Sudan-Ethiopia political rapprochement, it follows that the Sudanese Army would take the opportunity to try and clean up rebel resistance along the Ethiopian border.

May 31, 2002: Responding to a government (Khartoum) claim of success near the Ethiopian border, the SPLA claimed it had conducted a tactical withdrawal from the town of Qessan.

June 11, 2002: The SPLA (Sudan Peoples Liberation Army) took the key southern town of Kapoeta, claiming that it is the most significant military victory in the last two years. SPLA spokesman Samson Kwaje claimed that Kapoeta, about 80 kilometers from the border with Kenya, was taken by surprise and that the SPLA seized tanks, artillery and heavy machineguns. The Khartoum government confirmed the loss in a statement carried by local media on the 10th.

Khartoum had considered the town unconquerable, since it is surrounded by mine fields and had one of the three major garrisons of the regular military forces.

The Sudanese Army admitted that Kapoeta town was subjected to an intensive shelling and continuous attacks since the 8th, but that their forces repulsed the attack. The attacks continued on the morning of the 9th until 13:30, when government forces withdrew to an alternative position "dictated by conditions with the aim of containing the situation". - Adam Geibel

June 13, 2002: The war on the ground continues, and so does the political war. The SPLA denied that it had violated the Sudan ceasefire when its forces took the town of Kopoeta on June 9. The SPLA claimed that the ceasefire applied to the Nuba Mountains and that there is no ceasefire agreement governing either south Sudan or eastern Sudan. The SPLA was responding to a Sudanese government (Khartoum) claim that it had violated the ceasefire. The SPLA accused the Khartoum government of violating the Nuba Mountains ceasefire and continuing to interfere with relief aid (food and medicine) arriving in the Nuba region. The SPLA also pointed out that the government had recently conducted offensive operations in Southern Blue Nile state and took the town of Geizan. In a follow-up report on the Kopeta attack, the SPLA claims its troops killed 200 government soldiers and took 28 prisoner. The SPLA had 13 troops killed in the assault.

June 17, 2002: The Sudanese government (Khartoum) and the SPLA opened a new series of peace talks. The Khartoum government began by insisting that Sudan remain unified. The Khartoum statement did say that there should be equality of different regions. Khartoum has apparently
decided to quit accusing the SPLA of violating a ceasefire (see past reports of the SPLA victory at Kapoeta).

June 20, 2002: A clarification on a previous report. An SPLA spokesman confirmed that a Sudanese government (Khartoum) force had taken an SPLA-occupied town in Unity State. The town is now identified as Mankin (which is near a major oilfield). There have been several small actions in the area for the past month, with government forces conducting what appear to be local offensives intended to push SPLA forces away from the oilfields. Note that this is occurring as Khartoum and the SPLA are conducting a new round of peace negotiations.

June 24, 2002: As the peace talks begin, the battles continue. NGO and western press sources confirm an SPLA claim that a Sudanese government AN-12 (transport rigged as a bomber) struck the town of Malwalkon (Bahr el Ghazal Province) on June 23. Four people were killed and seven wounded in the airstrike. The casualty figures are "soft" --there may be more. The SPLA report said that the AN-12 dropped six bombs, several of them falling near a relief aid center. AFP reported that its SPLA source said some of the killed and injured were near a Doctors Without Borders facility. WFP and UNICEF also have operations in Malwalkon. Why hit a town with international facilities just as peace negotiations are gearing up? Never underestimate the presence of stupidity in war. There is also habit. The Sudanese Air Force has a long record for attacking towns with international aid facilities. A major faction in the Khartoum government (this includes the radical Islamist elements) believes that the international relief aid operations provide direct support and assistance to the SPLA. (Austin Bay)

July 1, 2002: The SPLA claimed that five people were killed and seven wounded when a Sudanese government AN-12 bombed a small village near Kapoeta. One NGO source supported the claim.

July 3, 2002: Middle East Newsline (MENL) claimed that a Bush Administration source is saying that the Sudanese government (Khartoum) is now making headway against the SPLA. This report runs counter to a number of on-the-ground reports coming out of south Sudan. However, the MENL report says the reason Khartoum is seeing more success is increased cooperation from Ethiopia and Uganda. Recall Uganda and Sudan cut a deal which said they would not aid rebels. Sudan has let Uganda chase the LRA inside south Sudan. The tit for tat has been a drop in Ugandan support for the SPLA. The MENL report indicates the same situation is occurring vis a vis Ethiopia.

July 11, 2002: More intra-tribal fighting in Sudan, in the city of Khartoum no less. The Sudan government reports two groups belonging to the same south Sudan tribe, the Nuer (both groups living in Khartoum), have
engaged in a series of deadly fights. The first occurred July 7, in a Khartoum market. Three died in that incident. Six more people were killed in fighting July 10-11. Sudan reported that Khartoum police have now arrested hundreds of Nuer. AFP said the fights began with a fistfight between two Nuer tribesmen in a refugee camp outside Khartoum. A fine on the defendant levied by a tribal court didn't satisfy the plaintiff. Out came guns, knives, canes, and spears, and the violence escalated.

July 16, 2002: Sudan has protested the presence of armed SPLA rebels in Kampala and its environs, warning that this could stand in the way of normalizing relations between Uganda and the Sudan. The SPLA staged a two-day event (19-20 May) to mark the 19th anniversary of its 1983 formation, under the auspices of the Pan-African Movement at Kampala's Pope Paul Memorial Community Center.

The SPLA claimed to have won an overwhelming victory over two government battalions and their support troops converging close to Lafon. The SPLA told the press on 14 July that at least 800 to 900 men were exterminated during the fighting, which lasted about 90 minutes. The SPLA claimed that the government forces were regrouping in Lafon in order to attack the city of Kapoeta, conquered by the rebels in June. Lafon is about 220 kilometers North of the Kenyan border and 160 kilometers West of Kapoeta.

The oilfields of the Western Upper Nile earn Khartoum an estimated $1 million a day, which inspires the government to use whatever means necessary to eliminate the threats to their revenue. Human rights activists have accused Sudan of orchestrating a terror campaign in Western Upper Nile, while trying to establish a 'cordon sanitaire' for the international companies operating in the oilfields. In June, helicopter gunships were flying so low in the area around Mankien (12 kilometers from the front line) that they were virtually skimming the tops of the straw huts.

Nigeria's Ambassador to Sudan Ambassador Usman Bello told a Nigerian journalist that the Sudanese crisis is not a religious one, but then contradicted himself later in the interview. Meanwhile, Nicola Rigby of the Christian Aid NGO aid organization told the BBC that "this isn't war: more like ethnic cleansing or genocide". - Adam Geibel

July 21, 2002: Sudanese government peace adviser Ghazi Salah Eddin Attabani and Sudanese People's Liberation Army spokesman Samson Kwaje told the press on 20 July that they had reached an agreement on how to resolve the major issues in Sudan's long-running civil war. The latest round of talks in the Kenyan town of Machakos (48 kilometers southeast of Nairobi) were attended by observers from Norway, Britain and the United States.
Talks would resume next month, to draft a final peace deal. The guidelines covered the separation of state and religion, as well as self-determination for the southern Sudanese (which had been one of the rebels' key demands). The two parties agreed to a "period of self-determination for six months" for the government and the rebels during which the constitutional framework will be put in place without interference from either side. In January, the SPLA and the government signed a six-month ceasefire in a first step towards ending the conflict.

However, there was also recent skirmishing and bombing indicative of future operations. A few days prior to the agreement, SPLA rebels commanded by John Garang seized the strategic location of Lafon (around 220 kilometers north of the Kenyan border and 160 km west of Kapoeta). In the southern Sudan, Khartoum's forces continued conducting air raids. The latest occurred on the 19th, but this time the Russian-made Antonovs did not drop bombs. They flew at low altitude, terrorizing the local population and systematically swept over various villages of East Equatoria from 09:00 until 14:00 hours. The residents were forced to seek shelter in makeshift bunkers for several hours.

Local sources believed that these flights were photo reconnaissance to pinpoints the exact position of the rebel camps and posts, with Khartoum preparing a large-scale offensive to regain control of the two key strongholds. Kiwala, Ikotos and Isoke, already hit by previous air raids, were home to numerous SPLA structures. Government warplanes also dropped 12 bombs on Ikotos on the 19th, wounding two civilians. The Antonov bombers were also seen over the area on five occasions on the 15th, but did not drop any bombs. - Adam Geibel

July 22, 2002: A follow-up on the Sudanese-SPLA peace deal. The Khartoum government has promised the SPLA that in six years a vote will be held on secession. The deal includes six years of southern autonomy (prior to the vote). The autonomous period frees the south from Islamic law imposed by Khartoum. This new peace agreement does break new ground. The autonomy provision meets many of the southern rebels demands. The peace agreement demonstrates (to the United States) that Khartoum is willing to be something besides a terrorist-harboring, radical Islamist government. The SPLA may also be feeling a resource squeeze since Uganda appears to be living up to its agreement with Sudan to shut down support for the SPLA. Of course, Khartoum has a very bad record when it comes to living up to its promises. A real ceasefire agreement has proven to be illusive there are a lot of rebel organizations and Khartoum-backed Islamic militias that have their own agendas, and those agendas dont include peace. Another difficult problem will be divvying up the oil wealth. The SPLA wants a cut of the petro-dollars, and Khartoum has given no serious indication its willing to deal on that issue. (Austin Bay)
July 31, 2002: File under "we told you so". On 30 July, aid workers and SPLA rebels said that the Sudanese military had launched a major offensive against rebels in the south, days after announcing a breakthrough in peace talks. Sudanese President Bashir had just concluded a two-day official visit to Uganda on the 26th, during which his host Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni brokered a historic meeting between the Sudanese leader and SPLA's Dr John Garang.

On that very same day, the SPLA claimed that more than 1,000 civilians had been killed since the government began its attack in Western Upper Nile region. Analysts figure the attacks are aimed at clearing the local population out to secure existing or potential oilfields.

Government forces supported by three helicopter gunships overran Tiam (435 miles southeast of Khartoum), forcing the 250 SPLA troops there to retreat. SPLA spokesmen said that nearly all the town's 3,000 civilians were trapped during the attack, while the few who managed to escape told the press that at least 1,000 others were killed by the government soldiers.

World Vision workers were attacked on the 29th at Waat (510 miles south of the capital of Khartoum), one was killed and three were abducted by a government-allied militia. A fifth aid worker managed to hide from the assailants and was evacuated.

August 2, 2002: Khartoum denied SPLA allegations that it had launched a major offensive, claiming that both government- and rebel- allied militias were involved in "low-level skirmishes" to gain territory ahead of the possible ceasefire agreement. Humanitarian sources told the UN that while there was every indication that large numbers of civilians had been killed in the 27-28 July weekend fighting, the SPLA's estimate of 1,000 dead appeared to be inflated.

In the southern Sudan, a government Antonov overflew the village of Ikotos (East Equatoria) five times on the morning of 1 August without dropping any bombs. This was perceived as an intimidation tactic, as well as a reconnaissance flight. A Nuer militia group loosely aligned with the Sudanese government also released one of three World Vision employees they have held hostage in the Upper Nile province since 29 July. - Adam Geibel

August 3, 2002: A follow-up on the reports of new fighting between the SPLA and the Sudanese government: Despite the peace accord Sudan (Khartoum) is now saying that the recent fighting in Western Upper Nile State has produced 7000 refugees in the area. The Sudanese official report said the fighting in the area was limited.
August 9, 2002: More tit for tat accusations by Khartoum and the SPLA: On August 8 the Sudanese government accused the SPLA breaking a ceasefire agreement and launching an attack on the town of Lafon (south Sudan, not far from Kapoeta on the Kenyan border). On August 9 the SPLA denied the accusations. The SPLA statement said the Sudanese government had attacked Lafon on August 3 and drove SPLA forces from it. The SPLA claimed its attack (August 7) was a counter-attack. The SPLA said its counter-attack was successful. On August 5, the SPLA accused the government of preparing to launch a new offensive in Eastern and Western Equatoria provinces.

August 22, 2002: Early in the afternoon of 19 August, the Sudanese Air Force executed an air raid in East Equatoria, when a Antonov bomber dropped five bombs on the villages of Isoke and six on Hiyala. The bombs struck the Isoke village school and destroyed several huts, while those hitting Hiyala destroyed numerous homes. - Adam Geibel

August 31, 2002: On 30 August, the Sudanese Air Force dropped an unconfirmed number of bombs on the villages of Isoke and Hiyala, in East Equatoria (Southern Sudan). This succeeded in stampeding the population into the bush. The Sudanese army claims that Hiyala (only 25km from the government stronghold at Torit) is still a rebel base, but the Catholic news agency MISNA claims that the village only hosts a displaced persons camp, assisted in the past by a Norwegian NGO and currently closely followed by the World Food Program. - Adam Geibel

September 1, 2002: The SPLA claimed it captured the Sudanese garrison town of Torit (Eastern).

September 2, 2002: Follow-up on the fall of Torit: The Sudanese Army had accused the SPLA of shelling it's positions at Labolo and Torit (1200 kilometers south of capital) on 31 August. The Catholic news agency MISNA reported that the fighting commenced in the early morning hours near Torit, when the Sudanese forces attacked several SPLA posts. The rebels' counterattack carried them inside the city, at around 13:30 local time 31 August. There was no official death toll after the fighting, while the London-based Arabic daily newspaper "al-Hayat" said the army admitted losing Torit to the SPLA. The rebels lost their former headquarters at Torit to government forces in 1992, so this may turn into a major victory for the SPLA. The garrison town controls one of the main roads to the Khartoum government-held town of Juba (Sudan's southern capital). - Adam Geibel

September 3, 2002: The SPLA issued a press release that accused the Sudanese government of breaking off peace negotiations "for flimsy reasons". The SPLA also accused the Sudanese government of continuing a heavy aerial bombing campaign in south Sudan.
September 5, 2002: Kenya's President Daniel arap Moi predicted that the Sudan-SPLA peace negotiations would resume. Moi, who has been personally involved in getting the negotiations moving, did not give a timetable for resumption of the talks.

September 6, 2002: Sudan's President Omar Hassan al-Bashir told hundreds of supporters on 5 September that the Khartoum government would press ahead with "jihad" in the South until peace was achieved (even though the government tries to play down the religious aspect of the war). A general mobilization has been ordered: local sources told the Catholic news agency MISNA that a recruitment campaign is underway in the Sudanese capital, where authorities are now recruiting university and high school students. Khartoum has already deployed regular troops accompanied by Popular Defence fighters to the Juba area (over 1,200 km South of the capital).

The government suspended peace talks in Kenya with the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) on 2 September, after the rebel group captured the strategic town of Torit. The government candidly noted that their troops had managed to drive back two waves of rebel assaults on the town, destroying five tanks and killing many rebels but in the face of a third wave of 9,000 rebel fighters backed by heavy weapons, they had to withdraw from Torit.

On the 3rd, Sudanese First Vice-President Ali Osman Mohamed Taha said that the government would not return to peace talks with the rebels without a commitment to suspend military action first. One unnamed Western diplomat said contacts were still going on between the two sides which looked promising, which just proves that "denial isn't just a river in the Sudan". - Adam Geibel

September 8, 2002; And tit for tat. The SPLA told the Sudanese government (Khartoum) that if Sudan wanted more war, the rebel SPLA was prepared to give it to them. The SPLA statement said SPLA troops were positioned to defend Torit against any government counter-attack. The SPLA also said that it had driven around 8,000 Sudanese government troops and militia from Torit after the government forces attacked SPLA positions outside of Torit.

September 9, 2002 The government is looking for more volunteer "holy warriors" to fight in the south. Volunteers have not been as abundant as in the past.

September 10, 2002: Government bombers continue to strike rebel held towns.

September 16, 2002: In an incident indicating government weakness, the government loudly claimed that Israel was supplying the southern rebels
with weapons. There's never been any evidence for that, and the government is thought to be making those claims to encourage other Moslem nations to provide more weapons for Sudan.

September 17, 2002: Peace talks remain halted as the rebels continue their advance. The rebels want to renegotiate the July deal so that rebel controlled territory would include areas thought to contain oil deposits.

September 22, 2002: Interviews in Nairobi, Kenya, with aid workers returning from south Sudan confirm several StrategyPage conclusions regarding the Sudanese government's aerial bombing campaign. Here is a typical attack, as described by one aid worker who was bombed several times in late 2000 while working on a food relief program in Bahr el Ghazal (BEG in relief worker lingo). The "converted" AN-12 transport appears flying very low and very slowly. The engines have a high, "ringing whine." The plane will either circle slowly or fly over the village. People on the ground can see the Sudanese Air Force personnel in the back of the plane. The Sudanese Air Force personnel literally push the bombs out of the plane. One relief worker told me "They (the aircraft personnel) can see us. They know we are not guerrillas or with the SPLA. Then they push out the bombs any way." One relief worker described for me the process of digging a slit trench as a place to hide during an air attack. Preparing a slit trench is SOP for aid workers in several places in south Sudan. (Austin Bay)

September 23, 2002: The SPLA accused the government of bombing civilians areas again.

September 25, 2002: The government has launched attacks in the south, and claimed that territory has been taken. If this offensive follows the usual pattern, the government will claim gains, then later admit they lost territory as the rebels counterattacked.

September 26, 2002: Uganda has protested attacks on its troops by Sudanese warplanes near their border.

September 27, 2002: The SPLA claims to have killed over a thousand army troops in the last six days. The SPLA has offered a "temporary" ceasefire if the government will stop interfering with food aid shipments. Today the government ordered food aid flights from Kenya to stop (otherwise, government fighters would shoot down the transports.)

October 1, 2002: The rebels are willing to stop attacks in the south in a ceasefire, but not completely halt military operations. Meanwhile, the government is able to keep foreign food aid out of many rebel held areas, causing hunger and threatening widespread starvation.
October 2, 2002: The government withdrew from peace negotiations in Kenya because the rebels were still advancing in the south and had captured the town of Torit.

October 3, 2002: The government denies that it's troops in the east along the Eritrean border are falling back before a rebel attack. The eastern offensive is led by the National Democratic Alliance, an organization that includes northern and southern rebel groups. Eritrea denies the accusations. There has not been any major military action in this area for several years.

October 4, 2002: The government accuses Eritrea of sending rebels troops and weapons for a new rebel offensive in eastern Sudan. The government has seen the rebels using weapons (artillery and tanks) and equipment the rebels have never had before.

The government has agreed to restore the ceasefire in the south, where the rebels have been advancing despite vigorous government military operations. The peace talks are to resume on October 14th.

October 5, 2002: The eastern offensive is along a 180 kilometer stretch of the border with Eritrea and so far has overrun the government garrisons in the towns of Hamashkurb and Shallob and were advancing marching on the larger town of Kassala.

October 6, 2002: The government's going back and forth on a ceasefire in the south has interrupted food supplies to refugees and put some half million southern civilians at risk of starvation. The government continues to seek the expulsion of pro-rebel civilians from areas containing oil fields. This has become the major point of contention between the rebels and the government. The oil fields are in the south, but the northerners are keeping all the oil revenue for themselves and using that money to pay for troops to keep the southern oil fields by force. The rebels want a referendum in the south so the people can decide who will rule them, and who gets the oil money.

October 9, 2002: More on the Sudanese success in Torit. Sudan claims its troops broke through a series of SPLA fortifications (trenches?) outside of Torit on October 8. Sudanese forces and Muslim militia allies had been pressuring the SPLA positions for nearly two weeks. However, the rebels unified command claims its forces have taken Rassai, on the road between Khartoum and Port Sudan. If true, this cuts the supply line from the sea to the capital.

More claims of Sudan Air Force Antonov attacks. The SPLA said five people died and 11 were wounded October 8 when a Sudanese Antonov bombed the relief station at Yabus. Six bombs struck the town. At least one struck in the central market. October 8 (Tuesday) is market day in Yabus.
October 12, 2002: Government troops are still fighting to retake the town of Old Raassai, which they say is held by rebel and Eritrean troops. Eritrea continues to insist that it has nothing to do with the fighting.

October 13, 2002: The government has signed a ceasefire with SPLA rebels, and will continue peace negotiations.

October 15, 2002: It's time to reload in the Sudan. On 14 October, the government and rebels failed to reach agreement on the terms of a temporary ceasefire agreement. The rebels' bone of contention concerned the eastern front along the Eritrean border, which the government wanted excluded from the agreement. The rebels wanted to include all of Sudan, before the official resumption of peace talks in Kenya began.

On the 15th, the rebels announced that they had signed the agreement and that both parties were committed to ceasing hostilities throughout the country for the duration of the talks, as well as ensure a military stand-down of their respective forces "including allied forces and affiliated militia". Both sides would signal this to their respective forces, which would come into effect at midday on the 17th. The talks were expected to last until 16 November.

The recent campaigns have been something of a seesaw: the Sudanese Army captured the key town of Torit on 8 October, at the same time the rebels claimed to have cut the main highway linking Khartoum to Port Sudan on the Red Sea. The government's massive campaign (a combined force of about 1,500 regular Government troops and militia) moved down from Juba and during the seven days of heavy fighting, the rebels claim to have shot down two helicopter gunships and one MiG 29.

The army also claimed to have retaken four locations in the eastern Sudan's Southern Blue Nile area (on the border with Ethiopia). The Fourth Division "inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy in personnel and seized all its arms and equipment" and vowed to recapture Hamashkoreib, near Eritrea. After government troops retook Torit, Khartoum suspended peace talks being held in Kenya.

The Sudan Peoples' Liberation Army 20th Independent Command special commando forces (under the order of Commander George Athor Deng) destroyed the main oil well at Heglig, in southern Sudan's Western Upper Nile, on 29 September. This was done to stop the flow of the oil from Southern Sudan to the North and frustrate the Khartoum government from earning revenue from oil exploration in the area. - Adam Geibel

October 19, 2002: More ceasefire politics. The Sudan government is once again hedging on the ceasefire agreement. Or should that be agreements? The Khartoum government says that the ceasefire does not apply in eastern Sudan. Sudan says that it has been fighting Eritrean troops who
back rebel forces in east Sudan, and that the ceasefire with the SPLA applies only in the south. The fighting in the east occurred October 17. Sudanese forces attacked Old Rissai, located near the Eritrean border.

October 21, 2002: The government accused rebels of breaking the truce, but from the descriptions of the looting and raiding the government described, the depredations could be the result of bandit activity.

October 23, 2002: Police and students clashed in the capital. Students back the war against southern rebels, but also protest the one-party system of government in the country.

October 25, 2002: The government and rebels accused each other of violating the truce. The accusations are probably true, as both the government and rebels have problems keeping in touch with their combat units. And on both sides, the commanders of combat units tend to operate with a great deal of independence. Indeed, units on both sides are often indistinguishable from the bandits that are sometimes encountered in the bush. The peace talks are working mainly because the US has taken sides. Millions of dollars in assistance are going to rebel organizations and money of Sudanese organizations, suspected of being involved in terrorist operations, is being blocked. The US also enacted a law that calls for sanctions against the Sudanese government if the government did not negotiate with the rebels in good faith.

November 6, 2002: Several sources report more Sudanese government (Khartoum) troop activity in east Sudan. Reports say the Sudanese have built-up units in Kassala state, near the Eritrean border.

November 13, 2002: The threats continue. The Sudanese government (Khartoum) has been criticizing Eritrean support for Sudanese rebels, in particular, alleging that Eritrea helped rebels organize an October offensive. Now Sudans ambassador to Ethiopia has suggested the Sudan might go to war with Eritrea. Sudan is also accusing Eritrea of digging trenches on its border with Sudan.

November 19, 2002: The end of Operation Iron Fist? Well, it appears the end of "permitted" cross-border operations by the Ugandan Army. Following hard on the heels of Ugandas allegation that Sudan (Khartoum) continues to back the LRA, the BBC reported that Sudan will no longer allow the Ugandan Army to operate in its territory. The BBC report said the agreement wasnt renewed "because Uganda had not given a time limit for their presence or specified where they would be operating." This strikes us as a bit of diplo-hokum. Sudan had set the time limits when Operation Iron Fist began in March, then kept extending the time limit. Sudan also denied that it is continuing to back the LRA, but the Ugandan government isnt buying that. This means the Ugandan Army is now
operating illegally inside Sudan. Don't expect the Ugandans to halt those operations. (Austin Bay)

November 25, 2002: We think this Khartoum claim may be very true. The Sudanese government says that US-sponsored peace proposals designed to end Sudan's civil war favor the SPLA and other rebel groups. Specifically, Khartoum accuses the US of putting pressure on the government rather than the rebels. Khartoum says the US demand that a truce in the Nuba Mountains be extended to further the delivery of humanitarian aid only tests the (Sudanese) government and not the SPLA. Indeed, the US opposes the Khartoum government, which in the past has protected Al Qaeda and other international terrorist groups. The SPLA is another potential US ally on the ground, somewhat analogous to Afghanistan's anti-Taliban Northern Alliance. (Austin Bay)

November 28, 2002: The Sudanese government (Khartoum) accused the SPLA of abducting civilians near Raga. Usually its the SPLA accusing Khartoum of that activity. The Khartoum claim said the abductions (and some executions) occurred in October, just before the Sudanese Army liberated Raga from the SPLA.

November 30, 2002: Oil revenues, which only began with the first oil shipments in 1999, now account for 41 percent of government income. In the first nine months of 2002, the government received $527 million in oil revenue. The oil fields, which could hold as much as three billion barrels, are now pumping 250,000 barrels a day. This is to increase to 450,000 barrels by 2005. A major reason the government is making peace is because the rebels are threatening the oil fields, and all the riches the oil can provide.

December 13, 2002: The government and the SPLA are maneuvering over who will control the central Nuba mountains. This area, and its half million population, has usually been outside the battle area, but claimed as controlled by the SPLA rebels. Meanwhile, the government is using its growing oil wealth to lure rebel commanders back to the government side.

December 17, 2002: The five major rebel factions from southern Sudan got together over the weekend and agreed to fix all their differences and unite against the government.

December 28, 2002: The government has agreed to extend the cease fire until next March and begin negotiations with the rebels next week. Details to be worked out include the extent of local autonomy and division of oil revenue. If agreements can be reached on these points, the 19 year old civil war may be over.

January 3, 2003: On January 1 the SPLA accused the government of conducting a major attack in the West Upper Nile area (an oil producing
A subsequent report said the government used 1500 troops in the operation. The SPLA reported it captured 125 soldiers. Government helicopters also allegedly shot up several villages. The SPLA said the government attack was part of a plan to capture the area so that the Lundin Oil (Sweden), OMV Sudan Exploration (Austria), China National Petroleum Company (Chinese), and Petronas Carigali (Malaysia) oil companies could begin exploring the area. These companies have working agreements with Sudapet, Sudan’s state petroleum company. The specific areas were identified as the Block 4 field (which lies in part in Kordofan, Unity and Bahr al-Ghazal states) and Block 5A (in Unity and northern Bahr al-Ghazal states).

January 8, 2003: The Sudanese defense minister, General Bakri Hassan Salih, arrived in Uganda on 8 January to discuss further cooperation on the war on LRA rebels. The Sudanese military will deploy special units in the South along the Ugandan border, to search for the rebel's training camps. - Adam Geibel

January 9, 2003: The Sudanese government (Khartoum) issued a statement insisting that it does not possess weapons of mass destruction (WMD). The statement was a response to a CIA analysis that Syria, Libya, and possibly Sudan are all seeking WMD.

January 21, 2003: The army said SPLA rebels had attacked their positions in the south. The attacks were repulsed and condemned as a violation of the ceasefire. The rebels are divided into many factions, some led by men who are not ready for peace. There are also many pro-government paramilitary groups with different agendas, but these have been kept under tighter control.

January 23, 2003: The peace talks that were supposed to begin in January 15th have been delayed by numerous minor issues.

January 24, 2003: The Sudanese government (Khartoum) accused the SPLA of attacking Sudan military positions in the Faradis area (Unity State). The Sudanese statement said the SPLA intended to destabilize the peace process.

January 29, 2003: The Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) resumed peace talks with the government on January 28, after walking out the day before in protest of a government offensive in Western Upper Nile (Wahdah State).

"Intense fighting" took place for an hour around midday on January 27, between Sudanese government air and ground units against the SPLA. The fighting had spilled over from the day before and saw the SPLA under heavy shelling abandoning the city, while government troops continued their offensive into the surrounding countryside.
US State Department spokesman Richard Boucher in a statement issued later that same day, telling the Sudan that "any ongoing offensive by the Government ... constitute a flagrant violation of the cessation of hostilities ... If these reports are true, the government risks losing its credibility as a serious partner for peace with both the United States and the international community". The US-led Civilian Protection Monitoring Team (CPMT) was en route to the scene of the reported attacks to conduct an investigation.

The fighting around and south of the garrison town of Leer forced the NGO "Doctors Without Borders - Holland" to evacuate five staff members from projects in Thonyor and Dablual, located about 20-25 km (or two hours' walk) away. Around Dablual, MSF staff had been helping refugees who had fled fighting north of Leer (over 800 km south of the capital) on January 24.

Over the last four weeks, fighting in Wun (Wahdah State) had been concentrated in Mayom county and around the oil fields south of Bentiu. Several villages had been burnt down, and five major towns previously under SPLA control had been retaken, since 31 December 2002. There appeared to be a deliberate attempt to attack relief sites in Mayom county, which cut off the locals from humanitarian assistance.

Around the oil fields, government forces appeared to be clearing the road from Mirmir to Leer and perhaps also from Leer to Adok, by pushing back the SPLA and any local residents who might harbor the rebels. Can anyone say "Scorched Earth Policy"? - Adam Geibel

February 6, 2003: On February 4 the Sudanese government (Khartoum) and the SPLA reached a new (if tentative) ceasefire agreement. One element of the new agreement is a communications committee that will be informed of all troop movements in advance. The agreement also requires the Sudanese government to end work on a new highway in the oil field region until a final peace agreement is signed (because the highway is not only a target for the SPLA but a means of moving government troops). Though it isn't a new promise, the ceasefire deal creates a new verification and monitoring committee that is supposed to have unhindered access to battle areas where ceasefire violations have occurred. Both sides also agreed to hand back areas over which they have gained control since October 2002.

February 9, 2003: The US accused the Sudanese government of being most responsible for civilian casualties caused in the last month of the war in Sudan. The US spokesman blamed allied militias working with the Sudanese government and military for inflicting heavy casualties on civilians.
February 26, 2003: The Front for the Liberation of Darfur (FLD), yet another Sudanese rebel group, took control of the capital of Jebel Marrah province. The capital is named Gulu (not to be confused with Gulu in north Uganda). Western reports said the FLD put at least 300 fighters into the fight for Gulu. For years the Sudanese government (Khartoum) has armed the nomadic Arabized (and Muslim) tribes of Darfur. These militias have attacked the Zaghawa and Fur tribes in Darfur. Now the FLD is striking back, allegedly on behalf of the minority tribes.

March 4, 2003: The Sudanese government (Khartoum) and the SPLA are talking again in Nairobi, Kenya. This time there are very specific discussions about Sudan’s Blue Nile state, South Kordofan (Nuba Mountain region), and Abyei. At the moment the government controls roughly 80 to 90 percent of these regions, but the SPLA is active in them. In any peace agreement, the SPLA wants these areas to be given more political autonomy.

March 6, 2003: A spokesman for the emerging rebel movement in Sudan’s Darfur province said that the rebel Sudanese Movement for Justice and Equality (SMJE) doesn’t want to secede from Sudan. The movement, however, does want to end the Khartoum government’s internal colonialism. The SMJE says it is not part of the SPLA, and its members are mostly Muslim. However, they accuse the Sudanese government of stealing resources from Darfur.

March 7, 2003: Government forces and government-sponsored militias are attacking the oilfields of Western Upper Nile, in an effort to dislodge the SPLA rebels and expand oil industry development. The primary victims of the violence are civilians.

Continuous patrols and raids by government-sponsored militias along the Bentiu-Adok oil road are also discouraging the return of civilians, who were displaced by the fighting in January and early February. This is another violation of the current ceasefire agreement.

The Brussels-based NGO "International Crisis Group" has documented several attacks by government-sponsored militias in Western Upper Nile since the February 4 agreement. On the 22nd and 16th, about 1100 government-sponsored militiamen under the command of Peter Gadet made three-pronged attacks out of Mankien, targeting nearby villages. On the 13th, government-sponsored militias attacked three villages close to a newly constructed road built to facilitate oil industry development.

The Sudanese government conducted similar military offensives in violation of the October 2002 cessation of hostilities agreement in January 2003 and December 2002. - Adam Geibel
For a deeper analysis of Sudan's peace process and the military conflict, please see the ICG's briefing, "Sudan's Oilfields Burn Again: Brinksmanship Endangers the Peace Process, 10 February 2003" at, www.crisisweb.org.

March 9, 2003: Oil revenues continue to fuel the Sudan government's campaign against the Southern Christian rebels, no matter who's pumping it out of the ground. Canada's Talisman Energy Inc. signed a deal to sell its 25 percent stake in the Sudan's Greater Nile Oil production and pipeline project for $750 million to ONGC Videsh Ltd., a subsidiary of India's national oil company. The Canadians had invested $750 million by mid-2000, so despite rising global oil prices it's obvious that they're cutting their losses and running.

The Indian company is known to have operations in Russia, Iran and Libya with turnover of $2 billion. The Sudanese government considers the deal to have been done with the consent of all and that "everybody is happy". Beijing's China National Petroleum Corporation has a 40% interest, Malaysia's Petronas 30% and 5% is held by the Sudan National Petroleum Corporation.

That same day, the Darfur Liberation Front (DLF) claimed to have downed a government helicopter in North Darfur. The province's governor (who is in charge of the province's security) and another unidentified official aboard both survived the crash. - Adam Geibel

March 14, 2003: The Darfur rebels are now calling themselves the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A). They will no longer go by the Darfur Liberation Front (DLF). A SLM/A spokesman also claimed that the groups forces had retaken the town of Gulu in Jebel Marrah province (part of Darfur). Based on the claim the fight was a big battle. The SLM/A claims to have killed 195 government troops (out of a force of approximately 450 in Gulu). The rest of the Sudanese government garrison ran away.

March 27, 2003: The Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A, former Darfur Liberation Front) said its forces had taken the Sudanese Army garrison town of Tina, in the Darfur region. The rebels claimed their forces killed 56 government soldiers. In another announcement, the SLM/A said it was in control of the Sudan-Chad border area. Who is behind the SLM/A? One wonders if they arent receiving aid from Chad, on the long chance Sudan will break up. If anyone has any inside skinny on the SLM/A, drop us a note.

March 30, 2003: Talks between the government and the SPLM [Sudan People's Liberation Movement] on relief committees will resume on April 6 (instead of today) under the auspices of the IGAD [Inter-Governmental Authority on Development]. These negotiations will focus on security
arrangements, while the previous ones tackled issues of national wealth and power sharing.

Peacemaking efforts between the government and the SPLM rebels have resulted in some improvements, but many problems continue. The United Nations special human rights investigator for Sudan says there has been little improvement in conduct either by the government or rebel forces since its civil war began more than 20 years ago.

The Islamic regime in the Sudan is also allowing mosques in Khartoum to echo the cry of "Jihad" heard from other radical Islamic activists around the world. During Friday prayers on the 27th, the Minister of Guidance and Endowment expressed that the war in Iraq "is fought so that Israel could become the biggest military and economic power". - Adam Geibel

April 1, 2003: Fresh and intense clashes claiming "many victims" have been reported between government forces and Sudan Liberation Army Movement (SLA-M) rebels in the western Darfur region over the past few days. While Chadian papers are reporting the fighting, Sudanese papers claim that Chad had closed its eastern borders to prevent infiltration of "armed groups" and stationed troops at frontier posts.

April 3, 2003: Uganda reported seven civilians and one Ugandan Army officer died when the LRA (Lord's Resistance Army) ambushed a truck on the road between Kitgum and Gulu. 16 other people were wounded.

April 4, 2003: Uganda accused Rwanda of sending two brigades of infantry to the Congos Ituri region. Specifically, Uganda said the Rwandan brigades are in the towns of Bunyantenge and Muhanga (North Kivu province).

April 6, 2003: Army troops have killed at least 30 rebels in northern Uganda, only days after a three-week cease-fire expired. On the 5th, helicopter gunships attacked LRA camps in Pader and Gulu districts. The highest estimates were that 60 rebels were killed, but troops are still in the area searching.

Meanwhile, about 68,000 civilians have been forced to displace to government "protected camps," which are actually left fairly unprotected. One small sign of hope was the return over 50 ex-LRA rebels, who have been hiding in Kenya since 1987 returned home and entered rehabilitation courses that same day. - Adam Geibel

April 13, 2003: Catching up on other combat actions in northern Uganda: On April 7 the Ugandan Army killed five LRA thugs in the village of Omelo-Kuru (Gulu District). The army also freed 11 abducted civilians. One report said the Ugandan forces employed an attack helicopter in the operation. On April 9 the LRA struck back. LRA thugs ambushed a civilian convoy near the village of Miri-Miri. One of the vehicles was a bus. Ten people
died and 11 were wounded. One of the dead included a Ugandan Army officer.

April 17, 2003: Saddam Hussein's regime is said to be linked to the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), an Ugandan rebel group with ties to other anti-western Islamic organizations. Secret Iraqi Intelligence Service dossiers detailing Iraq's charge d'affaires in Nairobi, Fallah Hassan Al Rubdie, discussions with the ADF were found in their Baghdad headquarters, among shredded papers.

A senior ADF operative outlined his group's efforts to set up an "international mujahadeen team in one letter to the Iraqi spy chief. Its mission, he said," will be to smuggle arms on a global scale to holy warriors fighting against US, British and Israeli influences in Africa, the Middle East, Asia and the Far East". The April 2001 letter was signed by a "Bekkah Abdul Nassir, Chief of Diplomacy ADF Forces", who offered to "vet, recruit and send youth to train for the jihad" at a center in Baghdad described as a "headquarters for international holy warrior network".

The documents provide the first hard evidence of ties between Iraq and African Islamic terrorism. Both the Lords Resistance Army (LRA) and Allied Democratic Forces rebels, who have been fighting the Ugandan government while receiving Sudanese support, reportedly had some of their fighters trained in Al Qaeda camps in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The Sudan-Congo-Ugandan border region is porous, lawless and a perfect place for international mischief. A senior Ugandan army officer once remarked that it was possible for a terrorist to carry "anything" all the way from the Chadian/Libyan border to East Africa without being stopped by any central authorities. A few years ago, Osama bin Laden exploited this same axis of lawless to infiltrate western Uganda and set up Al Qaeda cells in Buseruka and the Rwenzori Mountains straddling the Congo-Uganda border.

The key figure behind the ADF is widely acknowledged to be a fundamentalist Islamic cleric, Sheikh Jamil Mukulu. According to the Ugandan government and western intelligence sources, Sheikh Mukulu became friendly with Osama bin Laden in the early to mid-Nineties, when the Al Qaeda chief was living in Khartoum.

Al Qaeda operatives trained in Sudan and Afghanistan had a loose alliance with the ADF, which the Ugandan Army discovered after recovering some of Al Qaeda's documents after it overrun ADF camps in the Rwenzoris. Uganda then tried to draw the world's attention to Al Qaeda's presence and plans in the Great Lakes region. Everyone was sceptical - from the media to foreign governments, including the United States. Then came September 11th, 2001. - Adam Geibel
April 18, 2003: Cattle rustlers killed seven people when they ambushed a vehicle in Nakapiripiriti district. Ugandan government sources said the rustlers are from the Kenyan Pokot tribe. Army operations against the rustler incursions continue.

April 22, 2003: After an emergency meeting in the northern town of Gulu with senior army commanders and Presidential Peace Team members, President Museveni ordered the Ugandan army to resume military operations against LRA rebels in northern Uganda's Pader district, which has been designated as a safe zone for the last six weeks.

The rebels aren't waiting around for the army to hit them. During a heavy downpour on the 21st, they ambushed a convoy of 13 vehicles at 3 p.m. near a village about 60km north of Gulu town. An RPG hit the lead army truck, killing three or four troops (including one officer). When the shooting stopped there was a total of eight killed and 17 wounded, the majority of them civilians. Others were abducted by the LRA.

The three new Mi-24s will obviously play a crucial role in this new offensive, but President Museveni warned the army to stop deploying unqualified personnel and loading explosives on the newly acquired helicopter gunships.

Late on the 20th, one of the newly acquired Mi-24 helicopter gunships suffered a midair mishap during a test flight over the Atol Hills in northern Uganda, 40km north east of Gulu town. A grenade went off in the cabin, killing two airmen and wounding the other three. The explosion was due either to poor handling or a grenade launcher could have gone off (AGS-17 belt fed grenade launchers, which have been mounted in some gunship doors, can be tricky if the ammunition is bounced around).

The cabin was reportedly slightly damaged since the crew absorbed most of the blast. Ugandan officers reported that the helicopter landed leaking fuel at the army outpost at the Atto Hill Health Center, 20km northeast of Gulu. Air Force engineers have since been sent to repair the helicopter.

The army had been relying on one combat and one spotter helicopter for strikes against the rebels in northern Uganda, although an Ugandan Member of Parliament claimed that an army gunship had raided towns his constituency on 15 April and 18 April, killing more than 100 people. - Adam Geibel

April 27, 2003: Uganda had withdrawn 1,650 troops from the Congo, with only heavy equipment and their guards left to take a three-week long drive home from Bunia. Considering that some of these troops hadn't been home in five years, they would probably be demobilized. Meanwhile, the buildup against the LRA (Lord's Resistance Army) continues. In northern Uganda, three new battalions were deployed in Kitgum and
Pader districts under the command of the 5th Infantry Division. However, the Ugandan vacuum hasn’t been filled and MONUC officials said they were not ready to take over the security of Bunia town, which is already being eyed by the Lendu and UPC militias. Only 200 Uruguayan peacekeepers are in the town. - Adam Geibel

May 6, 2003: Uganda reported its security forces killed four LRA thugs and captured one in a firefight near the village of Lalogi (30 kilometers southeast of Gulu). The Ugandan report said the security forces ambushed the LRA unit as it was trying to move several kidnapped civilians.

May 8, 2003: Here’s an update on reports of refugees fleeing the DRC and coming into Uganda. Its worse than the Ugandan government first thought. Uganda now estimates 60,000 DRC civilians have fled into Uganda from the, primarily, the Ituri region. Most of the refugees are Hema tribesmen. The Hema are the Lendus traditional enemy. Lendu militias are still attacking civilians around Bunia in the DRC. A subsequent report said that there may be another surge of refugees heading for Uganda, following new fighting in the DRC on May 7.

May 9, 2003: Six LRA rebel officers, including "Gilver Battalion" commander Colonel Wilfred Ocan Bunia, were killed in a firefight with the army near Gulu. The 41st battalion started the battle at about 3:00pm the day before. The LRA denied that Bunia had been killed, despite the army's recovery of the body and it's presentation to the press. - Adam Geibel

May 10, 2003: The Ministry of Health has put the nine northern districts bordering Sudan on a "high Ebola alert." The Ugandan Army's medical teams in northern Ugandan and inside of Sudan were also briefed on the threat to their troops. - Adam Geibel

May 11, 2003: The LRA has abandoned its bases in southern Sudan and crossed into Uganda, apparently trying to escape the suspected Ebola outbreak. Around 700 rebels (an unusually large deployment since the government acquired Mi-24 helicopter gunships) were spotted moving south towards the town of Kitgum.

Over 60 people, including 44 seminarians of St. Mary's Seminary Lacor, 8 kilometers west of Gulu town, were abducted by LRA rebels in the early morning hours. Villagers crowded into towns to escape roaming rebel bands looting and abducting children are now living with unsanitary conditions making the population ripe for any outbreak of anything. - Adam Geibel

May 13, 2003: LRA leader Joesph Kony is now suspected to be in the Kitgum area, with about 300 fighters and 600 captives. Locals fear that they may carry the Ebola virus. World Health Organization biologists arrived in the border region to establish exactly what illness killed at least
seven people in Sudan in the past two weeks. Health officials in Kitgum believe the real death toll is 45 and say that all the symptoms - fever, diarrhea and vomiting blood - are characteristic of Ebola. If confirmed, it would be the region's third outbreak in as many years. - Adam Geibel

May 24, 2003: The Ugandan government said its troops killed at least 19 LRA thugs in a series of firefight in Kotido district (northern Uganda, the Karamoja region on the Sudan and Kenyan borders). An LRA force struck a market area in (or near) the village of Abim. In the fight at Abim three LRA thugs, two Ugandan soldiers, and at least four civilians died. The Ugandan soldiers pursued the LRA force and killed another 16 or 17 of the attackers. There was no independent confirmation of the claims. The Ugandan 3rd Infantry Division was on alert because the LRA had threatened to attack Abim's 100-bed hospital. LRA threats against hospitals and schools are common. However, the threats, the alert, and the resulting battle suggest the Ugandans are receiving reasonably good intelligence about LRA intentions. It looks like the Ugandan Army had a rapid reaction force ready to move when the LRA struck. (Austin Bay)

May 28, 2003: Uganda reported an LRA attack on the village of Pajure (near Kitgum). One person died in the attack and at least seven were wounded. The government said another 35 people were kidnapped in a series of LRA raids near Gulu.

May 29, 2003: Uganda reported 14 people died and at least 12 were wounded in another LRA bus ambush. This one occurred on the highway between Karuma and Packwach. The ambush was near a national park, an attack apparently designed to scare off tourists. A fuel truck was also attacked on the road between Packwach and Nebbi. This was an attack west of the Nile, not your typical LRA attack (most are east of the Nile, in the Gulu region). The fuel truck belonged to a Chinese company that is improving the road. That road desperately needs improvement. I've been on it, just east of Nebbi. The poor road limits the Nebbi region's ability to ship food and goods to Kampala. Launching an attack west of the Nile sends a message to the Ugandan government. The LRA is saying despite recent government successes, the LRA can extend the war to other parts of Uganda. (Austin Bay)

June 5, 2003: LRA thugs murdered 13 civilians near a refugee camp at Pabbo in northern Uganda. The LRA thugs used machetes to hack the people to death. Meanwhile, Ugandan President Yoweri said that since May 2002, Ugandan forces have killed approximately 3500 LRA rebels.

June 6, 2003: The Ugandan government fired a Ugandan Army major general. Major General James Kazini faces charges of plundering (theft) in the DRC. Kazini is one of several senior officers and officials from the DRC, Uganda, Rwanda, and Zimbabwe who a UN investigation team has
charged with massive theft during the Congo war. The arrest indicates that the Ugandan government now believes the charges can be substantiated. Early on, Uganda rejected the charges as false.

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June 10, 2003: An LRA land mine blew up a bus in Pader district (near the village of Lacek Ocot). Five civilians were killed and 19 wounded. A Ugandan military statement said the mine was laid just before the bus arrived, indicating the LRA wanted to specifically hit the bus. The Ugandan Army has been mine-sweeping the main roads in northern Uganda, as a counter to the LRA strategy which seeks to both terrorize the population and restrict economic activity. It appears the LRA wants to show the government that it can still pick and choose targets. Counter-mine operations are difficult to begin with. Most Ugandan roads are unpaved, making it fairly easy to conceal anti-vehicular mines. (Austin Bay)

June 12, 2003: Sudan and Uganda have extended the agreement that permits Ugandan military operations in south Sudan. The Sudanese government (Khartoum) will continue to permit Ugandan forces to attack LRA thugs and their bases in south Sudan. This extension runs through August 31, 2003. The policy has been in place since March 2002.

June 13, 2003: On June 12 the government reported a major battle on the border between Lango and Pader districts. Seven Ugandan troops were killed. The government said 20 LRA thugs died in the extensive firefight. The government also took seven LRA prisoners. Helicopters supported the Ugandan troops. On June 13 the Ugandan government reported its troops ambushed and killed three LRA thugs. On the same day the LRA allegedly burned 200 homes in northern Apach district.

June 16, 2003: President Museveni accused Sudan of secretly arming Joseph Kony’s Lord’s Resistance Army. Predictably, the Sudanese government denied these charges and pointed out that the LRA also attack Sudanese villages. Under the "Operation Iron Fist" agreements, the Ugandan army has three more months to operate in southern Sudan. The protocol signed on June 11 allows them to stay until August 31. Meanwhile, the LRA killed 18 people during a raids in the northern district of Apac. - Adam Geibel
June 17, 2003: On June 16 several Ugandan church leaders joined other Ugandan groups and accused the Sudanese government (Khartoum) of continuing to supply the LRA with weapons. One analyst said the increase in attacks on civilian vehicles indicated the LRA had received new munitions.

June 18, 2003: The Ugandan Parliament, in it's first closed session since 1996, received a Defense ministry briefing on who was supplying arms and munitions to the LRA. The LRA continue to attack civilian settlements in the north, having killed three and set over 380 grass-thatched huts ablaze in the latest raid. - Adam Geibel

June 19, 2003: After ordering helicopter gunships to attack LRA-occupied areas in Katakwi the evening before, the 3rd Division commander requested reinforcements to deal with the increased threat in his area of operations. While he considered the 19th Battalion a very good unit, they just didn't have enough troops to properly pursue the rebels. The LRA launched their attack in Katakwi on the morning of 16 June. - Adam Geibel

June 20, 2003: At 3.00 p.m., an army column of three Mambas (mine-protected vehicles) and two Armored Personnel Carriers was ambushed by LRA rebels in Achomai forest reserve. The rebels were beaten off, leaving two dead behind. The unit had been heading towards Amuria, to investigate a suspected LRA camp. Rebels from another nearby LRA camp started moving, most likely to reinforce their comrades. - Adam Geibel

June 21, 2003: Helicopter gunships, tanks and armored vehicles were deployed in east-central Soroti region, as the army moved against suspected LRA rebels. Army Commander Maj-Gen Aronda Nyakairima arrived in Soroti on the afternoon to coordinate the operation. The two helicopter gunships pounded rebel hideouts in Katakwi District for about one hour, where the rebels had retreated to after clashes with the army the 20th.

In the morning, the army rushed two truckloads of soldiers to Amuria, reinforcing the unit that had been in action against LRA rebels since the day before. - Adam Geibel

June 27, 2003: And another rough week passes in northern Uganda. On June 24 LRA thugs abducted approximately 100 schoolchildren near the town of Soroti. The LRA also attacked Soroti. On June 25 and 26, Ugandan Army troops freed several dozen of the abducted children. On June 27 the Ugandan Army caught up with the LRA gang. Twelve LRA rebels were killed in two firefight and four captured. In the firefight near Abarilera (Katakwi district) ten LRA thugs died. Two were killed in a firefight in the
village of Acowa. The LRA increased activity suggests that the LRA is being resupplied. Whos responsible? The Ugandan government says its Sudan.

July 1, 2003: The Ugandan government said LRA thugs killed three people. The LRA ambushers fired an RPG at a passenger bus. At least eight other people were wounded in the attack. The attack occurred on the road between Lorido and Kotido (northeast Uganda).

July 5, 2003: Uganda said that a group of senior military officers had visited Sudan to discuss Ugandas claims that Sudan is still supporting the LRA with weapons and supplies. The Ugandan military delegation in Khartoum included the Ugandan Army chief of staff. The statement said the Ugandans had evidence to show the Sudanese. The statement did not say with whom the delegation met, but its a good bet they met with their counterparts in the Sudanese military and intelligence services.

July 11, 2003: Come and gone, but the message lingers. US President George W. Bush spent four hours in Uganda. He spoke with Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni and focused on his African AIDS initiative. But remember Uganda is once again sparring with Sudan over alleged Sudanese support for the LRA rebels in northern Uganda. Bushs visit sends a message to Sudan. The US regards Uganda as a major player in sub-Saharan Africa.

July 19, 2003: Uganda reported on July 16 that 27 people had died in fighting from July 13 through July 15. The Ugandan military claimed at least 24 were LRA thugs. 13 of the LRA died by drowning when a rope bridge they were using collapsed. The LRA unit was fleeing a Ugandan Army unit. On July 19 two civilians died when the LRA attacked a displaced persons camp in Gulu district. The Ugandan military reported it had freed 47 abducted civilians in various anti-LRA operations.

July 20, 2003: The Ugandan Army will permanently station 3,000 soldiers in Obalanga, to check the infiltration of the LRA into the Teso region. Obalanga has been the point of entry for the rebels, who first hit Teso on June 15 and there have been an estimated 80,000 people displaced in Teso since that date.

Two more battalions would be stationed at Kapelebyong, Katakwi district and Ogwete in Lira district. However, that same night the LRA abducted over 100 people from Moroto county, Lira district.

The strength of the "Arrow Group" would also be increased. This voluntary unit musters former Uganda People's Army rebels from Teso and demobilized soldiers who have offered to fight the rebels.

One of the factors frustrating the efforts to defeat the LRA are the 'ghost soldiers' on many units payrolls, to the point that President Museveni has
ordered an inquiry. Unscrupulous officers have been signing for an estimated 4,000 deserters and collecting their pay and ration allotments, which of course go right into those officers' pockets. There were also graft problems with worthless military hardware, rotten food rations, undersize uniforms and outright embezzlement by paymasters. - Adam Geibel

July 22, 2003: Frustrated with the LRA, the secretary general of Uganda's national council for traditional healers and herbalists association (Nacotha) to use killer bees and diseases such as smallpox to help beat the rebels. They also offered to equip the Ugandan Army with magic charms, making the individual soldiers invincible. Their offer was a direct response to a junior Defense Minister's appeal for the nation's spiritual support in the fight against the LRA rebels.

The army battled the LRA near Apala (20 kms north of Lira) for several hours in the late afternoon, supposedly losing 30 soldiers to an unknown number of rebels. - Adam Geibel

July 23, 2003: The Russian pilot of the MiG-21 that crashed on the 15th was reportedly seen "drinking heavily" the night before the crash, but the army spokesman said that there was no credible information of that charge. International navigation regulations prohibit pilots from operating an aircraft (or performing other safety sensitive functions) within eight hours of consuming alcohol, or if they have an alcohol concentration of 0.04 or higher. Witnesses also reported that the pilot was engaged in aerobics over water, contrary to normal practice. - Adam Geibel

July 24, 2003: The LRA first conducted their surveillance of Teso region using people who posed as mentally deranged, before attacking Katakwi and Soroti districts. Considering the number of atrocities that the LRA has perpetrated upon the Ugandan people, how could anyone be sure they were pretending?

Uganda's Prime Minister also noted that Kony is protected by people who had been alienated both internally and internationally. The Government was ready to use a third party to negotiate an end to the conflict, if Kony was willing. The former leader of the Uganda National Rescue Front rebels, Major General Ali Bamuze, said he would try to persuade Kony to renounce his rebellion and negotiate with the Government.

Ugandan civilians are tired of being 'sitting ducks' for psychopathic rebels. The Langi tribe have requested government-issued weapons, to protect themselves from LRA raids. But the Langi have to first convince government fears that, once armed, the Langi would set out to recover their cattle from Karamoja and then rebel against the Government. An Amuria politician also asked the Government to give Kumi firearms, so they could help the army pursue the rebels.
The controversial reserve force commander General Saleh was also put on the defensive for his expensive plan to make the refugee camps more permanent by building water points, schools, police and health centers. Most of the civilians stuck in those camps just want to go back to their villages, whether a settlement is negotiated with the LRA or they're defeated. - Adam Geibel

July 25, 2003: The Ugandan army admitted that on the 15th, a gunship on its way to support troops engaged in the pursuit of an LRA group fired on a funeral procession by mistake. While flying over the area near the Moroto River on the border between the Lira and Katakwi districts in the north, it passed over the funeral procession for a man killed during a rebel raid. The mourners saw the helicopter and ran for cover in huts or in the forest along the road. The gunship crew took them for rebels and opened fire to prevent their escape, killing nine and wounding more.

Since the Ugandans' recently got them, their gunships have been flying many missions against the LRA. On the 9th, a Hind flying in support of the 5th Division hit a rebel hide-out north of Kitgum town and forced them to flee towards Sudan border. - Adam Geibel

July 28, 2003: The LRA movement in Uganda may not be large, but their effect on the population is ruinous. The United Nations' World Food Program has appealed to donors for an additional $54 million, to cope with new humanitarian demands brought on by a spreading insurgency in northern Uganda. They estimated that 100,000 tons of food will be needed to feed 1.6 million people. Between January and June almost $59 million was spent on food aid, while the additional funds will keep the WFP operating until March 2004.

Northern Ugandan political leaders want the President to name those he recently accused of aiding the rebels and have counter accused Army officers not from the North of being unconcerned about ending the rebellion.

The Ugandan 3rd Division and Teso militia have been locked in running battles with LRA rebels in Morungatuny for ten days. About a week ago, the Teso militia even found the remains of a person who had 'juju' (black magic) pasted on his body and his head chopped off. They could not identify him but strongly suspect he was an LRA witchdoctor.

The Ugandans might have a new problem to deal with, as well. Taban Amin, son of the former Ugandan dictator Idi Amin Dada, is training a new rebel group of about 400 men in the north Ugandan West Nile province and intends to attack the government. This is not too far from the Congo's Ituri region, where EU peacekeepers are intervening between Hema and Lendu tribesmen. - Adam Geibel
August 2, 2003: The Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) claimed to have captured the strategic town of Kutum (the second largest in western Sudan's Northern Darfur state) and now controls it. The rebels noted that this was just another step towards the capture of Al-Fashir town, in western Sudan.

The fighting started at 9AM and ended at 4PM on the 1st, with about 600 rebel troops taking part. The rebels claimed that 510 government soldiers were killed, many more wounded and three government gunships shot down, while only 15 SLM soldiers were killed in the fighting. Flying gunships during the rainy season is nothing new, as the Sudanese government had also put up a trio of Mi-24s during the 2002 rainy season.

Sudan is preparing for the worst floods in a century. Heavy rains that have fallen in the Ethiopian and Eritrean highlands since 28 July are saturating Sudans seasonal waterways and rivers, washing away roads and disintegrating buildings. - Adam Geibel

August 5, 2003: The Russian Vertikal-T airline intends to file a lawsuit against the Sudanese authorities who detained their Mi-26T. The Russian helicopter was scheduled to leave early on the 4th, but was delayed by a thunderstorm. The "Halo" heavy lift helicopter then flew to Luxor, Egypt, and from there continue on to the Congo. - Adam Geibel

August 7, 2003: The Ugandan Army said its troops killed six LRA thugs in the town of Acowa (Katakwi district) on August 6. A mobile group using APCs and supported by a helicopter gunship caught the LRA unit in the open. One other LRA thug died in a shootout in Agoya (also in Katakwi).

August 11, 2003: Occasionally the Ugandan government issues weekly and monthly casualty updates on the war in northern Uganda. Over time it appears that Uganda is making an effort to sort through initial government and press reports, which are usually unreliable, and provide more reliable figures that reflect the human and economic costs. That's a laudable effort anywhere, but particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. Uganda has said it intends to professionalize the military and this is a small but definite indication that someone is taking professionalization seriously. Uganda, of course, is open to outside journalists and has a cadre of home-grown journalists, so government claims do get scrutinized. The NGOs operating throughout Uganda are another means of checking claims. From August 3 through August 9 Uganda reported thirty-nine people were killed in the war with the LRA. The Ugandan government claims 19 LRA killed (most apparently in the armor and helicopter-supported "mobile group" action last week). Sixteen civilians died during the seven day span. One Ugandan soldier died in action and one was wounded. The government also claimed its troops freed 97 abductees, half of them in an operation on August 9. What do the numbers mean? Once again, given Uganda's
population and fragile economy, this is a major, draining war. A Ugandan government spokesman said that the LRA has broken down into smaller groups of ten to 15 fighters. One reason is the increasing number of helicopter gunships operating over the savanna. Another reason is food. The Ugandan government believes the LRA rebels are currently short of food. That means the LRA has broken down into squad-sized "forage parties" --- in this case meaning food-stealing bandit gangs. Note, too, that Uganda has been complaining bitterly to Sudan about alleged Sudanese support for the LRA. That "diplomatic offensive" began in the Spring. It’s conceivable the diplomacy has had some effect on LRA supplies. (Austin Bay) Editor's note: In Austin Bay's new novel, The Wrong Side of Brightness, you'll meet Major Ran Pildi, of Ugandan military intelligence.

August 13, 2003: Some Ugandan church leaders have suggested the government, with the help of international peacekeepers, open "relief corridors" into northern Uganda. The church leaders say the problems experienced by refugees (sometimes called "displaced people" since they are internal refugees, ie, haven't crossed a border) in northern Uganda are increasing. One of the groups promoting this policy is the Acholi Religious Leaders' Peace Initiative. Much of north Uganda is Acholi tribal country. Some Acholi are sympathetic to the LRA. This particular group has tried to act as a contact between the Ugandan government and the LRA.

August 16, 2003: Idi Amin, the sadistic thug, torturer, and mass murderer who ran Uganda from 1971 to 1979, died under hospital treatment in KSA.

Side note: The former Ugandan dictator, Idi Amin Dada, known as the 'Butcher of Uganda' for his brutal rule whilst president in the 1970s, died in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia on 16 August 2003. According to news reports at the time, he died from "multiple organ failure". He was been buried in Saudi Arabia even though the Ugandan Government had said they would allow him to buried there. Amin, a muslim convert, put to death at least 250,000 Ugandan Christians, most of them Anglicans, but he hated Catholics as well. He also murdered thousands of Ugandans of Asian descent before forcing them into exile and expropriating their property. Ugandan tribes who werent "cousins" of his small Kakwa tribe and their allies were regularly threatened, then robbed. The total number of people Amin and his goons killed in Uganda is somewhere between 300,000 and 400,000, out of a 1970s population of ten million. Amin didn't confine his brutality to Uganda. He became an ally of Libyas Muhammar Qaddafi. Amin considered war with Kenya and actually went to war with Tanzania.

August 26, 2003: Uganda reported that Karamojong warriors launched a cattle raid against the village of Abako (Lira district). The Karamojong
warriors left four people dead in the attack. Several dozen cattle were taken in the raid. The Ugandan government reported its troops recovered 46 head of cattle and four submachine guns.

September 2, 2003: Looks like the brief respite in northern Uganda is over. The Ugandan government reported that LRA thugs killed at least 39 civilians in various incidents in northern Uganda, running from August 29 to September 1. The biggest assault took place on September 1 when the LRA attacked a bus in Soroti district (northeastern area). 25 civilians died in the attack. Another report said the LRA attacked a village in Soroti district August 30 and "hacked to death" (with machetes or other long knives) eight people. In that incident a nearby Ugandan Army unit chased the LRA group and freed two civilians the LRA had abducted from a school. (Austin Bay)

September 3, 2003: A follow-up on an earlier report: the Ugandan government has claimed that a large LRA force entered northern Uganda from Sudan. The LRA group had at least 100 fighters and was led by Commander Odiambo. A subsequent report said the infiltrating group may have up to 150 fighters.

September 4, 2003: The Ugandan government said it will ask the US for permission to use US-supplied counter-terror funds to fight the LRA. Specifically, Uganda wants to use the dedicated aid funds to purchase new, modern weapons. This follows a report that new light weapons have turned up in LRA hands.

September 8, 2003: LRA thugs attacked a Catholic mission parish in the Apac district (north Uganda). The thugs beat up the priest and kidnapped six children. A Ugandan Army unit chased the LRA force, freed the kidnapped children, and killed four rebels.

September 11, 2003: The Ugandan military said its troops freed 111 children from the LRA (Lord's Resistance Army) during the first ten days of September. During that time period 18 LRA fighters were killed and 15 captured. Four Ugandan soldiers died and two were wounded. (These figures include the action mentioned on September 8.)

September 14, 2003: The LRA (Lord's Resistance Army) has created a vicious system of kidnapping young (8-10 years old) children and turning them into soldiers. Those that refuse or prove incapable, are simply killed. The children are ignorant and easily indoctrinated. A dozen adults can control several hundred kids in this way. The child soldiers are inept and undisciplined, and usually flee when faced by trained soldiers. But well led and disciplined soldiers are rare in Africa.

September 20, 2003: Uganda reported that 22 people died in a series of cattle raid in northeastern Uganda. A Karamojong cattle raiding party
struck a village in the Teso region. An NGO source said the Karamojong group had at least 500 warriors, many armed with automatic weapons.

September 27, 2003: There has been another serious outbreak of violence in northern Uganda. The LRA attacked three villages, from September 25 through September 27. At least 26 people died. Two Ugandan Army soldiers and five civilians died in an attack on the village of Burcoro September 26.

October 7, 2003: The Ugandan government reported ten people died in three different shootouts. The big shootout was in Wangduku (Pader district, north Uganda) on October 5. Four LRA thugs died along with two government troops. Another two LRA thugs were killed near Lapanya Hill (same district). On October 4 two LRA thugs died in a shootout near Awere. On October 7 the Ugandan Army reported that its troops rescued at least 145 civilians (most of them children) who had been abducted by the LRA. The civilians had been kidnapped in various LRA operations between October 1 and October 7. The kidnappings occurred in the Lango, Acholi, and Teso regions. Another 22 of the civilians were freed after the firefight in Wangduku October 5.

October 14, 2003: The Ugandan government claimed LRA thugs killed 22 civilians when the LRA attacked a market place in Alanyi (a village in Lira district). Some 17 people were reportedly wounded. The government said the LRA group walked into the village and opened fire on the crowd. The Ugandan government also said the LRA had released 404 abducted civilians in north Uganda's Pader district. The government press statement said the captives were freed because a Ugandan battalion was chasing the LRA group that was holding the civilians.

October 15, 2003: The Ugandan army detachment guarding Kitgum High School (about six kilometers outside of the town) ambushed and repulsed a group of LRA rebels who were about to launch a night attack. There were no reports of confirmed casualties. - Adam Geibel

October 18, 2003: The government announced that the Arrow Group militia will be deployed to guard settlements in the Teso region, while the army continues to chase rebels at the front. They will be deployed to guard schools, IDP camps, health centers and along roads.

The Arrow Group can be as much of a liability as an asset. The Ugandan Army took over leadership positions of the 1,000 man group on the 14th (the same day that 22 civilians were slaughtered after they mistook a rebel group for Arrow members and didn't run into the jungle). Also that same day, authorities found the bodies of 17 rebels near a village in northeastern Uganda that an Arrow Group unit had killed. The village had
been attacked on the 10th and at least 16 civilians were killed by the rebels.

The Arrow Group are volunteers, but the government announced their plans to begin paying the militia in Teso a token monthly salary. Nominal rolls had been created with the names of the militia against the number of the rifles issued, to avoid paying non-existing fighters. The government had also secured combat uniforms, footwear and drugs for them.

President Museveni also asked Britain for signals intelligence they have gathered on the Lord’s Resistance Army, such as telephone calls and satellite images revealing the location or movement of rebel groups. - Adam Geibel

October 20, 2003: Helicopter gunships were deployed against LRA rebels who attacked a village in Soroti, torched 14 huts and killed three people. The army thinks these rebels are under LRA commander Charles Tabuley and not a new group operating in the area.

The Government also approved the creation of 10 more Internal Displaced Person’s (IDP) camps in Kitgum district. Kitgum had seven camps while Gulu had 33 and Pader 12. More camps have since sprung up following the insurgency in Teso. By July 2003, there were over one million people in the camps in north and northeastern Uganda. - Adam Geibel

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October 30, 2003: The Ugandan government said that LRA thugs killed 13 people in northern Uganda. The government statement said the LRA "bludgeoned" the civilians to death in Lira district. A western press source said that meant the LRA thugs clubbed the civilians to death. Several of the victims were found with their hands tied behind their backs.

October 31, 2003: Uganda asked the UN to be on the lookout for camps and supply lines of the rebel Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), the National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (NALU) and the Peoples' Redemption Army (PRA). This followed the confirmation by the Congo's minister for regional cooperation on October 23, of the presence of Ugandan rebel
training camps in the northeastern North Kivu Province (between Beni and Kasindi).

Ugandan troops had clashed with rebels across northeastern Uganda over the previous three days, killing 33 of them in three separate battles. On the 29th, the European Union's representative in Uganda said that he doubted that Uganda's 17-year civil war with rebels in north would be ended by military muscle. - Adam Geibel

November 2, 2003: The Ugandan army is puzzled by an attack by Karimojong warriors that left more than 50 Local Defense Unit (LDU) personnel missing without a trace. Out of more than 70 LDUs in the area, only 20 turned up saying their comrades had been killed. One theory is that the attack could have been staged to hand over the guns to the warriors. - Adam Geibel

November 3, 2003: Ugandan troops in Pader district are pursuing LRA rebels believed to be carrying the body of 'Brig' Charles Tabuley, who was killed on October 29. Tabuley was killed in a fierce battle in the Teso region. The rebels are apparently taking the body to Kony's hideout in Southern Sudan or for burial in Palabeck in Kitgum district. The Ugandan military thinks the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) will be seriously weakened by Tabuley's death, as he was the Number Two man in their hierarchy.

Armed only with bows, arrows and stones, Amonyu villagers repulsed rebels who had crossed over the Congo border and stormed the village to kidnap three people (including the village vice-chairman). The rebels managed to steal 17 goats as they retreated under pressure from residents. These armed rebels claimed to have been following a robber who had crossed to Uganda. - Adam Geibel

November 4, 2003: A disturbing find in the clothes of dead LRA rebels are recent color photos of themselves. So proud are they of their attacks on civilian targets, that they posed in front of burning buses. This indicates that they must have access to photo shops in Kampala or Soroti, since processing facilities do not exist in the southern Sudan. Motivated either by sympathies or fear, a technician must have seen these developed photos emerging from the processor and handed over the photos to the rebel contacts, without informing anyone. - Adam Geibel

November 9, 2003: Human Rights Watch estimated that since 1987 over 20,000 children have fought as soldiers in the Ugandan governments war with rebels in northern Uganda. Most of the child soldiers fought for the LRA, but the Ugandan government has had 12 year-olds serving with security units protecting villages.
November 10, 2003: The army says it has reoccupied the Ruwenzori Mountains, to stem any rebel attacks from the Congo. The Uganda army believes that there are small pockets of PRA in North Kivu and ADF rebel remnants on the western shore region of Lake Albert and in Ituri province. The army was reportedly securing the bases they had used in the 1996-2001 fight against the ADF, who first attacked the Uganda on 13 November 1996.

The head of the Lira district (270km north of Kampala) regional government alleged LRA rebels have been raiding villages daily, and over 100 civilian bodies were between November 8th and 5th. The army estimated the total was only 42 on the 8th. A Roman Catholic priest said that the rebels had attacked at least five villages, forcing more than 3,000 people to flee. The raids started on the 5th, when the rebels hit the villages of Aranyi and Awapinyin (about 250km north of Kampala) at dawn, killing 21 people with machetes, clubs and rifles.

On November 5th, Ugandan troops killed one LRA rebel while seizing an assortment of arms and ammunition in a Pentecostal church in Kaberamaido district. The rebels were playing loud music to lure civilians from their hideouts when the army ambushed them, although some escaped with injuries. Army officials said the rebels had been ordered to kill civilians, in retaliation for the killing of their senior officer Charles Tabuley on October 29.

Adam Geibel

November 18, 2003: Uganda reported LRA thugs killed 12 people in an attack in Lira (north central Uganda) on November 18. On November 17 the LRA killed 53 people in the same area. NGO sources supported the government claim on the number of civilian casualties. One of the November 17 attacks was on the Ngeta National Teachers College (in Lira). 13 people at the college died in the attack. A subsequent report cited a mass movement by refugees in the region. One of the wire services quoted a witness as saying "We are in total confusion. I passed by thousands of people trekking to Lira town...Who is going to save us? We are like Iraqis, who when one person is killed, everybody talks about it, but here we are talking of hundreds killed and nobody talks about it." That's the quote. The quote makes more sense if read as We aren't like Iraqis... On November 16 The Ugandan Army reported its troops killed 25 LRA thugs in fighting in northern Uganda. There was no independent confirmation of the report.

November 20, 2003: The army said that it has killed 462 LRA rebels over the last three months, while 275 surrendered, 147 were captured and 2,481 kidnap victims were rescued. The army also recovered 249 assorted rifles, 48 landmines, 220 bombs and a large quantity of ammunition. The Army admitted to losing 37 soldiers killed and 52 wounded, during the
same time period. They also released a list of 46 LRA rebel commanders killed since June. - Adam Geibel

November 21, 2003: United Nations aid agencies decided to expand their activities in northern and eastern Uganda, after a recent visit by senior UN relief officials found a dramatic increase in the area's humanitarian problems. The number of internally displaced people in the north has risen from 600,000 to more than 1.3 million.

Meanwhile, the LRA raid another village 380 kilometers north of the capital Kampala. - Adam Geibel

November 22, 2003: LRA rebels killed five people in the north - one an army officer, the other an infant. Fighting in the Teso region caused a fresh wave of panic and put even more civilians on the road. - Adam Geibel


One of the most vicious costs of the LRA's campaign is their insidious targeting of children. The Rachele Rehabilitation Center in Lira, currently the region worst-affected by fighting, is trying to reintegrate 50 northern Ugandan girls into society. Abducted by Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebels to be their fighters and concubines, these children not only have to be mothers before their time but also deal with social stigmata. While trying to heal 50 children is only a drop in Uganda's bucket of woe, at least it's a single step in the right direction.

However, northern Uganda also has a very high HIV/AIDS rate and almost overwhelming poverty to burden its people. The week before, 30 local politicians walked out of parliament to protest how the government was handling the war against the LRA. - Adam Geibel

November 24, 2003: Some elements in the Ugandan rebel Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) group have contacted MONUC in the Congo and have expressed their willingness to end their rebellion and go home. However, recent Ugandan intelligence reports indicated that ADF and the West Nile Bank Front (WNBF) rebels were regrouping and preparing for an attack on Uganda from eastern Congo. - Adam Geibel

December 10, 2003: Uganda reported its troops freed 90 abducted civilians from the LRA. The civilians were taken throughout northern Uganda, though most were freed after a Ugandan Army attack on an LRA camp. Ugandan troops captured two LRA thugs in one attack. Uganda also issued a statement that claimed the Ugandan Army (UPDF, Ugandan Peoples Defense Force) had contained the LRA in the Lira, Lango, and Teso regions or northern Uganda. That being noted, the LRA launched an
ambush in Katakwi district. The LRA group shot up a vehicle and killed nine people. The truck was on its way to the cattle market in Acowa. A subsequent report (from the Ugandan military) confirmed the attack. At least 20 LRA rebels were in the group conducting the ambush. The LRA group retreated toward Oblanga.

December 16, 2003: The Ugandan defense ministry issued a report on ghost soldiers in the army. The highest number of ghosts exists in northern Uganda. What are ghosts? They are soldiers reported on the rolls for pay purposes who in fact are either no longer in uniform or never existed. The commanders of these "ghosts" take the money for themselves. It's an ancient scam. The worst abuses occurred from 1996 to 1998 when the Ugandan Army was creating Local Defense Units (LDUs) in the northern districts of Kitgum, Gulu, and Pader. Battalion commanders reported non-existent recruits for these units and then pocketed the pay. The Ugandan report also said the numbers of men serving in the Rwenzori mountain-based Alpine Brigade was highly inflated. The report is part of Ugandas attempt to professionalize the army as well as eliminate governmental corruption.

December 22, 2003: Uganda reported that its program to integrate former members of Idi Amin's rogue army into the Ugandan Army is continuing. A 600-troop contingent entered Uganda two weeks ago. Ultimately, as many as 10,000 former Amin supporters who have been living in the DRC are now in Uganda or will be within the next month. A Ugandan spokesman said many of the rebels had belonged to a splinter faction called the West Nile Bank Front (WNBF). A total of 22 rebel groups have been fighting the Ugandan government since Yoweri Museveni came to power in 1986.

December 23, 2003: While the rebel LRA (Lord's Resistance Army) gets most of the attention when reporting violence in Uganda, it is but one of 22 armed rebel groups known to be fighting the government. The government's Amnesty Commission reported that, in the past three years, 10,000 rebels had applied for amnesty. The majority of these were from the LRA (3,848), Uganda National rescue Front II (2,902), West Nile Bank Front (1,990) and Allied Democratic Forces (659).

Some groups have all but disappeared. For example, the Allied Democratic Forces, which operated in western Uganda between 1996 and 2001, now consists of a few diehards in some parts of eastern Congo.

Other major rebel groups that are still active include the Action Restore Peace (ARP), the Uganda Democratic Army/ Alliance (UDA/F), Uganda Federal Democratic Front (UFDF) and Uganda Freedom Movement (UFM), Citizen Army for Multi Party Politics (CAMP), the National Union for the Liberation of Uganda (NALU), National Federal Army (NFA), the Ninth
October Movement (NOM), the People's Redemption Army (PRA), Force Obote Back (FOBA) and Former Uganda National Army (FUNA).

Some groups, like Holy Spirit Movement (HSM) of Alice Lakwena, went through some changes and emerged as a new organization, in this case the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) of Joseph Kony.

Most of the rebel groups are operating out of bases in the southern Sudan or the Democratic Republic of Congo. Some members live in Kenya and Europe (where it's easier to get your message out to the Western media.)

December 25, 2003: Ugandan troops clashed with a group of LRA rebels near the Sudan border, suggesting that the group had recently infiltrated from Sudan another indication that Uganda harbors doubts about the agreement with Sudan to police rebel forces along their mutual border.

December 28, 2003: Ugandan Members of Parliament from northern Uganda continue casting all sorts of derision on the Army's claim that the LRA has been defeated, pointing out that if only 500 rebels are causing all the trouble then Uganda's Army is surely in deep trouble. Army Commander Major General Kazini vowed to resign if he had not killed Lord Resistance Army (LRA) leader Joseph Kony by 31 December. On the 28th, the leader of the rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), Joseph Kony, telephoned a radio station to say he is ready to enter peace talks with the Ugandan government. President Museveni had set certain preconditions for talks, including that a ceasefire be agreed; that the LRA undertake to stop kidnapping and killing civilians; and that the entire LRA force confine itself to only three sites in southern Sudan where the group has bases. However, anyone really thinks peace is about to break out should note that the LRA ambushed a car and a fuel tanker in separate incidents that same day. There was no word on the exact civilian casualty account.

The Army went to their highest level of combat readiness in mid-December. The "Standby Class One" message to all units country-wide ordered all soldiers not to leave their barracks, be in uniform all the time and arms should be within easy access. Several tank units from Gulu and more artillery units from Nakasongolo Air Base were transferred to Mbarara. An army spokesman claimed that the alert was simply a normal preparation for the Christmas season. - Adam Geibel

December 29, 2003: LRA rebel leader Joseph Kony phoned a Ugandan talk radio show and called for new peace negotiations. He accused the Ugandan government of botching previous attempts to negotiate a settlement. Kony rarely appears anywhere or talks in public. Two former LRA officers confirmed that the caller was Kony. Kony also accused the government of committing atrocities.
January 9, 2004: The US and the developed world worry quite correctly about biological terror attacks. However, parts of the world, particularly sub-Saharan Africa, constantly struggle with endemic diseases. The dual plagues of AIDS and malaria are constant menaces. These diseases stunt economic development. They also exact a huge social toll. These sad facts speak for themselves and demonstrate why so many sub-Saharan African states face instability and poverty even as the regional wars subside.

UNICEF reported that Uganda has 1,731,000 orphans. That breaks down as follows: 1,144,000 have lost their fathers, 902,000 their mothers and 315,000 both parents. Here's another telling statistic: 42 percent of the orphaned children lost a parent or parents to HIV/AIDS. In other words, AIDS (not war) is Uganda's biggest killer of parents. The UNICEF report looked at over 40 sub-Saharan countries. The UN report said that the number of orphans is even stretching the capacity of what has been the social safety net in sub-Saharan Africa, the extended family. Here's the important quote: "The responsibility of caring for orphaned children is a major factor in pushing many extended families beyond their ability to cope." (Austin Bay)

January 11, 2004: The fighting with LRA rebels in the north continues, with at least 23 LRA members killed over the weekend. The army has been particularly successful in using light aircraft to spot rebels (traveling by foot or truck) and then radio army units on the ground to arrange an ambush. Each of these ambushes usually results in many of the "rebels" (who are actually children kidnapped by the adult LRA members) surrendering and being returned to their families. Just attacking rebels from the air is less effective, as the people on the ground quickly run into the bush and avoid taking many casualties.

January 12, 2004: The two controversial MI-24 helicopter gunships, which were returned to Belarus for overhaul are back in the country ready for deployment against the LRA. Recent victories against the rebels have been attributed to the pinpoint strikes by MI-24 helicopters, often deployed in combined arms operations with infantry units supported by mortars.

The undisclosed cost of the overhaul was paid by the Government and "those implicated in the earlier deal of bringing in un-overhauled choppers will face prosecution." In 1997, the Government paid over $7 million to purchase two attack helicopters in serious need of overhaul.

The last combined air-ground operation was both a success and setback for the army. An air raid on January 5 on a top rebel commanders' meeting at the confluence of River Aswa and River Agago (in an area about 80 kilometers from Gulu, the nearest sizable town) killed two senior LRA officers. Lieutenant Colonels Opio Makasi, commander of the LRA's 2nd Battalion of the Twinkle Brigade, was one of the dead.
Later that morning, an Mi-17 chopper (known locally as a "Surambaya") flying journalists to the spot crashed when ash and debris kicked up by the rotor wash disoriented the pilot. All 16 about the chopper (including the three journalists) were injured, and a soldier on the ground securing the landing zone was cut in two by one of the aircraft's blades.

The jungle meeting was to be chaired by "Brig" Vincent Otti, the vice-chairman of the Lord's Resistance Movement/Army. Nine other rebels were killed in the fierce ground and air bombing attack that morning. Vincent Otti is considered a high value target by the army, number two after Joseph Kony. During the attack, the army captured 18 rebels and rescued 20 child captives. Since December 31, 2003, 39 LRA rebels have been killed. - Adam Geibel

January 15, 2004: The LRA killed 12 women and six men in a nighttime raid on a village Northern Uganda. Most of the dead were women. Under pressure from the Ugandan army advancing after the end of heavy rainstorms, some LRA rebels slipped over the border into Sudan. There are now only about 500 LRA rebels, down from 3,000 at the same time last year.- Adam Geibel

January 18, 2004: Uganda's Defense minister claims that LRA rebel leader Joseph Kony is desperately looking for other contacts to supply him with arms, after Sudan dumped him. The Sudanese Government had promised to punish its soldiers who were having unsanctioned deals with Kony - who is currently suspected to be holed up in Himatong mountains in southern Sudan. Since the beginning of this campaign, the army has killed 928 LRA rebels (among them many LRA officers), captured 791 rebels and rescued 7,299 captives, while 88 soldiers died in the combat, 141 were injured and four went missing.- Adam Geibel

January 20, 2004: An army unit moving the corpse of Yadin Tolbert Nyeko, the LRA's acting commander, repulsed a rebel assault intended to recover their leader's body. The day before, Yadin was killed by a helicopter gunship rocket while trying to escape troops that had surrounded him. The surrounding forest burnt down from the expended ordnance and the army hauled off Yadin's body while leaving 17 other rebels' bodies for the carrion.

Meanwhile, some of the 86 LRA rebels who were recently granted amnesty are protesting the lack of promised financial and physical aid. They gathered at an Amnesty commission office in northern Uganda to demand the cash, mattresses, blankets, hoes, pangas, axes and seeds they were promised to help them resettle. The Ugandan government figured that it was cheaper to buy off the fighters than hunt them down, but they now need to follow up on their duties or risk alienating not only those who surrendered, but those who might give up as well. - Adam Geibel
January 22, 2004: The Ugandan army has forced the rebels to split into small groups and Deputy LRA chief "Brigadier" Vincent Otti is hiding in the southern Sudan, frantically seeking medical assistance for his injured from a Sudanese army detachment. Sudanese and Ugandan diplomats have met over questions about what aid the LRA is getting inside of Sudan. - Adam Geibel

February 3, 2004: An Ugandan government committee's investigation has revealed that almost one in five soldiers in the military is a 'ghost'. The personal files from most units indicates a difference between a payable strength of 55,588 and file returns from 45,497 soldiers (or 10,091 non-existent soldiers, that 'someone' is collecting pay and benefits). Most of the 'ghost' soldiers are created within auxiliary militia forces mobilized to fight alongside the army. - Adam Geibel

February 5, 2004: About 300 to 350 LRA rebels gained access to the Abia refugee camp in Lira by pretending to be government soldiers and militias and killed over 50 internally displaced persons (IDPs, more commonly known as refugees) in a camp near the northern town of Lira on 5 February. A 12-man militia squad tried to repulse the rebels, but the attack only stopped when the army sent reinforcements in an armored personnel carrier. - Adam Geibel

February 9, 2004: The Ugandan army announced that they had killed the rebel commander who had attacked the Abia refugee camp, in an ongoing pursuit of that particular rebel band. The Ugandans will also redeploy inside southern Sudan to pursue Lord's Resistance Army rebels when the rainy season ends later in the month. - Adam Geibel

February 19, 2004: During a battle raging into the evening, the LRA lost 25 fighters at Okee Bridge on the Pader-Lira border (supposedly from a group of about 100). Reports from Kitgum say LRA leader Joseph Kony has instructed his soldiers to seal off most of the access routes to the district.

The Ugandan army said that 37 rebels died in fighting the day before when government soldiers backed by helicopter gunships attacking an LRA unit, rescuing civilian captives and recovering ammunition. - Adam Geibel

February 20, 2004: The army said it captured a 12.7mm gun in Pader after an attack on an LRA hideout (evidence that the rebels are hauling heavier hardware around for their raids). District authorities in Kitgum and Gulu are trying to mobilize the young men to join newly formed militias (the Frontier Guards and Elephant Brigade, respectively) to help the army fight the rebels. In Kitgum, they want to raise about 5,000 LDUs (or local defense units). - Adam Geibel
February 21, 2004: In the most devastating attack on civilians in northern Uganda for nearly 10 years, LRA rebels stormed a camp for 4,800 internally displaced persons (IDPs) and killed over 200 civilians (as well as a soldier and government militiamen). The Cuka Dek Orit parish camp in Erute North county, is off the main road set back in the bush, about 360 kilometers north of Kampala. Also known as Barlonyo camp, it is 26 kilometers north of Lira.

The rebels, camouflaged in Amuka militia uniforms, first fired a recoilless rifle into a barracks where 35 Amuka militiamen were housed before moving into the camp. Most of the refugees who died were burned alive, when the rebels set fire to their thatched huts after ordering them into their houses at gunpoint. Others trying to flee were shot, bludgeoned or hacked to death by rebels wielding clubs, machetes and AK-47s.

The army claims that by housing the displaced in the camps, it is able to guard them against rebel abductions conducted by the LRA to fill its fighting ranks. This is the largest number of civilians killed in one place, at the same time by the rebels since the April 1995 Atiak raid (during which 240 were killed). - Adam Geibel

February 23, 2004: Hundreds of terrified refugees in northern Uganda fled from their devastated camp towards the nearby Ogur trading center, where several thousand who had earlier escaped the latest rebel attack were already encamped. An army spokesman said that the recent army attacks on the rebels had prompted the deadly raid. The LRA had been losing heavily and sought revenge by killing defenseless civilians. - Adam Geibel

February 24, 2004: The International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague announced that they will investigate the IDP camp massacre. The ICC is the UN's permanent tribunal mandated to try war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. In January this year, the ICC's Prosecutor announced that he was considering launching a probe of the LRA rebels, after President Museveni demanded it.

The army is also investigating the source of heavy weapons now in the possession of the LRA rebels. They now say the rebels attacked the Cuka Dek Orit parish camp with 12.7mm (.50 caliber) antiaircraft guns, B-10 antitank and rocket propelled grenade launchers. Other arms used by the rebels are 60mm mortars and light machine guns. In January, another 12.7mm antiaircraft gun was captured from the rebels at Okidi (eight kilometers south west of Kitgum). In the past, the LRA has received supplies of weapons and ammunition through Sudanese sources. - Adam Geibel
February 28, 2004: The Ugandan Army killed 146 Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebels in several engagements throughout the Lira and Pader districts over the last three days. Two infantry battalions with support from a helicopter gunship killed 30 rebels in two fierce skirmishes on the 26th in Pader district.

The army killed 92 rebels between February 18-20, while 56 rebels defected and 15 surrendered. The army also rescued 302 abductees and recovered 10 anti-tank mines, a 12.7mm anti-aircraft, two light machine guns, two 60mm mortars with ten shells, three RPGs, two rifles, three B10 recoilless rifles and 65 head of cattle. This brings to 290 rebels killed since January 2004, while 18 rebels were captured alive, 82 defected and 444 civilian captives were rescued.

The US State Department released a human rights report on the 26th, which highlights the suffering of northern Ugandans at the hands of the Lord's Resistance Army. LRA raids claimed 3,000 lives during 2003 alone.

March 1, 2004: The army was pursuing the LRA's Odhiambo and Raska Lokwiya groups, who are believed to have been behind the attack on Barlonyo internally displaced person (IDP, or "refugees" in plain English) camp, between the Orama and Agago Rivers. The massacre of over 200 refugees on February 21 embarrassed the army and sparked public anger that the government could not prevent it, but there are few signs of a new strategy to defeat the LRA.

The Ugandan government plans to exhume the victims, to give them a proper funeral and establish an exact death toll for the attack. Local officials are still claiming that more than 230 people were slaughtered, compared to a government figure of 84 dead.

Any time civilians are stampeded by a massacre, the logistical nightmare of feeding them returns. The United Nations emergency feeding agency had to provide 40 tons of food (enough for 5,000 people for a month) to the 4,000 or so camp refugees now gathered at a health center five kilometers from the old camp.

March 15, 2004: Thousands of Ugandan soldiers rolled into southern Sudan's eastern Equatoria province over the March 13-14 weekend in pursuit of LRA rebels. The move comes after Sudan extended by three months (up to May 31) the protocol under allowing Ugandas to carry out search-and-destroy raids against the rebels. Unfortunately, the renewed agreement still prohibits the Ugandans from using helicopter gunships inside of Sudan. The string of recent army victories had been attributed to the Mi-24 helicopter gunships' firepower.
The LRA will have a 'home field' advantage, having mastered the southern Sudan's terrain. This has been given as the reason why the rebels were able to evade the army the last time they crossed the Sudanese border.

According to a 17 year old prisoner who escaped from rebel captivity in 2003, LRA leader Joseph Kony has become a Muslim and given the name Mohammad. Kony has been indentified as a Christian fundamentalist who based his revolt on the Ten Commandments. Children abducted by the LRA also claim that Kony insists on Islamic conduct in the southern Sudanese camps. Supposedly, some LRA officers are resisting the religious conversion. Whether these teenaged accusers can be believed remains to be seen, since accusations that the homicidal lunatic Kony is now a follower of Islam could simply be an attempt to garner support against the LRA.

- Adam Geibel

March 17, 2004: The Ugandan Army commander sacked over 50 paymasters, part of army's efforts to rid themselves of 'ghost' (or non-existent) soldiers whose salaries were collected and kept by unscrupulous officers. The inflated rolls of various units gave planners false impressions about their capabilities.

- Adam Geibel

March 20, 2004: Government troops backed by helicopter gunships fought fierce battles with rebels in northern Uganda, in the remote Ugandan area of Bibia (80 kilometers from the northern town of Gulu). In running battles, the army claimed to have killed 56 out of a group of 100 or more that had crossed into Uganda on the 19th. This group led by Vincent Otti, a High Value Target who unfortunately survived the attacks.

- Adam Geibel

March 22, 2004: The Army killed three rebels, captured nine and six AK-47s, while rescuing 19 abductees. The night of the 21st, five members of a smaller rebel group operating in northern Uganda were killed and eight captured. The army believed that the larger group was planning to attack civilians in Kitgum District.

- Adam Geibel

March 25, 2004: The army showed off 40 malnourished civilians rescued from the LRA and displayed weapons captured during fighting on March 20/21, when 92 rebels were killed. The 4th Division's commander said that intelligence indicated that the rebels now have less than 1,000 fighters in the bush but added that "the political elite are manipulating this rebellion, otherwise in six months, this war would be over."

Meanwhile, the army is cracking down on soldiers who fail to protect civilians from rebel raids. The day before, an unidentified captain was arrested after rebels killed 12 civilians in a March 19 attack on a camp in the North. The charges are that he had failed to radio for help in time, organize his detachment to fend off an attack and some of his officers
were drunk. The northerners accuse the army, which is manned mostly by southerners, of being poorly motivated and believing that Kony's fighters have supernatural powers. - Adam Geibel

March 26, 2004: The Sudanese government allowed Ugandan jets to bomb LRA rebels positions inside southern Sudan. The Ugandan mission was to eliminate rebel leaders, mostly targeting Joseph Kony or his deputies Vincent Otti and Abudema. Sudan's restriction on use of helicopter gunships was a major impediment to Operation Iron-Fist in southern Sudan in 2002. - Adam Geibel

April 17, 2004: The Ugandan and Sudanese governments continue to cooperate against the LRA and on refugee issues. At the moment, improving relations with Uganda is one of the few bright diplomatic spots for Sudan (which may illustrate the mess Sudan faces). The reasons for cooperating against the Lords Resistance Army are more obvious-- Joseph Kony's mad-dog group, though probably funded by "sources in Sudan," has spread chaos in Sudanese territory as well as Uganda. In a recent statement, one Sudanese governmental official touted Sudan's efforts against the LRA. There's a "background" political reason for that: Sudan wants to get off the "terror list" kept by the United States. The other reason for Sudan-Uganda cooperation is refugees. On April 16, Uganda and Sudan reached a tentative refugee repatriation agreement. The refugees are a big burden on Uganda, where over 200,000 south Sudan refugees reside. The UN recently estimated that Uganda has 223,000 Sudanese refugees in Uganda. Though there is an "ebb and flow" of refugees, a few of the Sudanese refugees have been in Uganda for two decades. Refugees cost money, even when international aid defrays most of the expenses. Sudan still has several thousand Ugandan refugees (the number is hard to pin down). Some of these Ugandans originally fled Idi Amin's regime in the late 1970s. Uganda and Sudan have also agreed to cooperate on several trade and development issues.

April 21, 2004: The LRA has been unable to regain the support it long had from the Islamic conservative government of Sudan. LRA, long a self-described heretical Christian organization, tried to reposition itself as Islamic radicals, but the Sudanese government didn't believe them. The LRA had become a problem in southern Sudan, where LRA gunmen had begun to pillage Sudanese. This was not a problem in the past, because the Sudanese government was fighting separatist Christian tribes in southern Sudan. But now the Sudanese government has made peace with the southern rebels, and cracking down on the LRA is part of the deal.

April 24, 2004: Over 20,000 civilians in the north have fled their homes because of an increase of LRA raids. The LRA, pursued for the last two months by army patrols, have dispersed into smaller units and are foraging for food. The LRA used to have camps in southern Sudan, where
the rebels, aided by kidnapped Ugandan civilians, grew their own food. But the Sudanese army has shut down these camps, and allowed Ugandan army units to pursue LRA fighting into southern Sudan.

May 1, 2004: About a hundred LRA fighters, dressed in captured army uniforms, attacked a refugee camp in northern Uganda, killing 35 civilians, and wounding another 18. The rebels then looted the camp and fled. The LRA violence has, in the last 18 years, caused some 1.5 million Ugandans to flee their homes.

May 8, 2004: Sudanese and Ugandan troops are continuing to cooperate in hunting down groups of LRA fighters, who are apparently heading north to a former camp in southern Sudan. Captured LRA members indicate that there are weapons buried around the old camps, and the rebels want to retrieve them to arm more men and boys. The LRA is hard to find, as they usually travel in groups of a few hundred people, with half or more of those being kidnapped civilians forced to act as porters (carrying food). For the last three months, the Ugandan army has been aggressively going after several remaining LRA units.

May 9, 2004: The US government has warned its citizens to consider leaving northern Uganda because of suspicion that the LRA will begin targeting Americans. There are hundreds of American aid workers and missionaries in northern Uganda.

May 17, 2004: Several dozen LRA fighters attacked a refugee camp in northern Uganda. The Pagak camp holds 12,000 people, and the LRA killed 29 and kidnapped some to carry the food they were after. Several dozen huts were burned and, when the army arrived on the scene, three LRA men were killed by the troops. The LRA have been regularly attacking refugees and villagers for food and other supplies.

May 19, 2004: A Ugandan army Mi-24 helicopter gunship operating just across the border in southern Sudan, came upon a large LRA unit, returning from a raid and hauling a lot of loot with them. The helicopter, one of five the Ugandans have, attacked and killed over fifty of the rebels as the LRA men scattered into the bush. Ugandan troops later arrived on the scene to count the bodies and collect weapons and documents.

May 21, 2004: There are 1.6 million refugees in northern Uganda, being terrorized by several thousand LRA (Lords Resistance Army) gunmen (although not all have guns, some just have knives or machetes.) The LRA wander around in small groups (a few dozen men), looting for their food and largely evading army patrols. LRA keep their units up to strength by kidnapping adolescents and younger children. They have taken at least 10,000 children in the last two years. Many of the kids die from abuse or disease. Those that survive are indoctrinated into the LRA cause
(overthrow the government and establish a more God fearing one, or something like that.) The rebels will also kidnap adults, especially women, to help carry looted food. But it will then kill the women porters when the raiding party is safely away from pursuing army or police patrols.

Uganda's defense budget has gone up 48 percent in the last two years, to about $191 million. Donor countries are protesting the increase, but a lot of it has to do with the expense of buying, and operating more trucks and helicopters. This transportation is needed in order to make it possible for the army to chase down LRA rebels in the north. An Mi-24 helicopter gunship uses about $52,000 worth of fuel a month (for about 60 hours of air time.) The Mamba APCs (armored personnel carriers) from South Africa consume about a gallon of fuel for every three kilometers traveled. Most of the money for the 50,000 man army goes to payroll. The lowest ranking troops, who make up 80 percent of the army, get $70 a month. That takes 16 percent of the defense budget. The Ugandan army operates at a cost of some $3,800 per soldier per year. The United States Army spends over $100,000 per soldier per year.

Like many African countries, Uganda is dependent on foreign aid to cover much of its government expense. About half of Uganda's annual government spending comes from foreign aid. Many donor countries are getting tired of the corruption and inefficiency that is still common in countries like Uganda. This "donor fatigue" has, for example, led to a lack of contributions for food supplies for refugees from LRA fighting in the north. As a result, some refugees are getting starvation rations.

May 22, 2004: LRA thugs raided a village in northern Uganda, destroyed 180 homes and killed 25 civilians. Army troops took out after the raiders once they were alerted.

May 27, 2004: A gunship caught LRA out in the open near the Sudan border, and killed ten of them.

May 28, 2004: The rebels of south Sudan have made peace with the Sudanese government. This means that the Sudanese army will be able to help shut down LRA camps in southern Sudan. The Sudanese government admitted that it had armed the LRA and left them alone as long as they were hostile to the Sudanese rebels. The Sudanese government didn't care how much mayhem the LRA caused inside Uganda. But the government of Uganda, aided by the UN and other major nations, kept the diplomatic heat on Sudan for years to get the Sudanese to admit their connection with the LRA and stop it.

May 31, 2004: The LRA in southern Sudan appear to be preparing to move their camps, to put them in more remote areas and break them up into smaller camps. The survival of the LRA depends on the effectiveness
of the Sudanese army in finding and destroying these camps. The Ugandan army has been allowed to chase LRA groups into southern Sudan. But the Ugandans do not have sufficient ground or air forces to seek out all the LRA camps along the border. If the Ugandan and Sudanese armed forces are able to work together, the LRA could be destroyed in a year or two.

June 3, 2004: The LRA has kidnapped over 30,000 people, mainly young children and teenagers, in the last 15 years. Over 12,000 have been taken in the last two years. After being terrorized and indoctrinated, these kids become the fighters of the LRA. Some 90 percent of LRA's fighters were "recruited" in this way.

June 4, 2004: About a hundred LRA men attacked a refugee center in the north, killing 23 civilians. Two rebels were killed by soldiers, and two soldiers were wounded. The refugee camps are sprawling affairs, and rebels will attack the portion of it farthest from where the soldiers camp is. The LRA men kill and terrorize the refugees, grab food and other useful goods, and take some of the refugees to carry the loot. They try and get away before the soldiers show up, but don't always succeed.

The army has a problem with the refugee camps, because sometimes rebels live in the camps (with members of their own tribe). The rebels do this because little food is being grown the north because of rebel activity. Relief agencies supply food for the refugee camps.

June 5, 2004: The army reports that the LRA lost nearly 400 men in May. These include those rebels killed (147), captured (18) or surrendered (215). Rebels killed nearly 200 civilians in the same month. The army freed 270 civilians being held captive by the rebels. The violence also left 55 civilians and nine soldiers dead. Constant pressure by the army and police in the last two years, and Sudanese cooperation in closing LRA camps across the border, has reduced LRA strength to less than a thousand armed men and teenagers.

June 8, 2004: About a hundred LRA rebels attacked a refugee camp in the north, killing 25 people.

June 18, 2004: In the last five weeks, LRA attacks on refugee camps killed about 125 people. The rebels have been reduced to living off such attacks, where they seek food, and captives to help carry it. The LRA leaders have been holding secret negotiations with the government. Apparently there is some hope that the LRA leadership can be split with offers of amnesty to some. The Ugandan army also believes that the LRA has been getting money and material aid from some tribal groups in the north, and these negotiations might result in LRA leaders coming up with names and evidence to back this up.
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June 25, 2004: Jackson Achama, a senior LRA leader, surrendered to the government after first giving up in Sudan. It is hoped that this will induce other LRA leaders to surrender. In the last two months, 13 LRA leaders, and hundreds of gunmen, have surrendered. Only a few thousand of LRA fighters and camp followers are thought to still be active.

June 27, 2004: The government reported that the LRA had kidnapped 8,000 children and teenagers in the past year. The kids are indoctrinated to join the LRA as gunmen, porters or camp followers. Those who resist are killed. All this violence has also created 1.6 million refugees.

July 1, 2004: Since April 29th, 204 LRA rebels and commanders have accepted amnesty and surrendered. However, the government says that LRA leader Joseph Kony, and his key aides, would not be eligible for amnesty, and would be prosecuted.

July 7, 2004: The government is demanding that Sudan stop supporting LRA rebels. Uganda has obtained proof that LRA camps are operating near Sudanese army bases in southern Sudan. This is in violation of an agreement between Uganda and Sudan, that calls for Sudanese troops to arrest LRA members found in southern Sudan. After the Ugandan protest, the LRA troops moved south, and away from Sudanese army troops. Sudan denied any support of the LRA, or any other Ugandan rebels.

July 8, 2004: The government announced that, in the last two months, seven LRA leaders had surrendered, along with 200 of their troops. The army says it is negotiating with many more LRA leaders, working out the terms of their surrender and rehabilitation. Meanwhile, LRA raids on villages and refugee camps in the north continue, leaving an average of two civilians a day dead.

July 12, 2004: LRA rebels killed eleven civilians in the north, over the weekend, usually while they were raiding for food and other supplier.

July 13, 2004: Another 300 former members of the LRA were inducted into the army, after undergoing military and political training. Providing these benefits to LRA rebels who surrendered is expected to encourage more rebels to give up. However, the rampant corruption in the
government is also thought likely to make the money, to pay these former rebels, to disappear eventually. This will leave the former rebels unhappy, and willing to do something about it.

July 16, 2004: The army believes that the LRA (Lord's Resistance Army) is near the end of its existence. The areas where the LRA long had bases in northern Uganda, and southern Sudan, are now regularly patrolled by troops, and LRA groups kept on the run. As a result, more and more LRA leaders and troops are surrendering. While LRA leader Joseph Kony is staying in southern Sudan, where he apparently still has some friends in the Sudanese army.

July 17, 2004: European aid donors are threatening to cut contributions if the government does not do something about corruption. Half of the government budget comes from foreign aid, and over half the budget appears to be stolen. This has been going on for over a decade and has become accepted by the one party leadership as a convenient way to insure the loyalty of senior government officials. But it cripples economic development projects, infrastructure building and public services in general. While the government has used the war against the LRA rebels in the north to distract people, the LRA is fading away, and more attention is being focused on the corruption.

July 21, 2004: LRA members continue to surrender in the north, and no organized LRA groups appear to remain in the north. The last of the LRA units have apparently fled north into Sudan.

July 24, 2004: The government has asked Israel to provide training to improve security and military intelligence. Israel usually provides this kind of assistance, and gains another ally, and can gather more information on hostile Islamic nations (like Sudan.)

July 26, 2004: The army operations in the north have driven the LRA out of Uganda, and forced the rebels to spend most of their time across the border in southern Sudan. This means the LRA must raid Sudanese villages for food and other supplies. They have done a lot of this in the last few weeks, leaving 40 or more people dead. This has included members of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), the rebel group that just negotiated a peace deal with the Sudanese government. The Sudanese army refuses to attack the LRA, and apparently provides these Ugandan rebels with some support (weapons and ammunition.) The Ugandan army has a deal with Sudan that allows Ugandan troops to pursue LRA rebels into southern Sudan. But it's another matter if the LRA gunmen are just operating inside Sudan, and have not just crossed the border.
July 29, 2004: The Ugandan army moved 200 kilometers into Sudan to make a surprise attack on the main camp of LRA leader Joseph Kony. While the troops killed 120 rebels, captured 28 (including four of Kony's 30 wives), Kony and over a hundred followers were able to flee. While the Ugandan army is allowed to operate against the LRA in southern Sudan, it had to get special permission to move that deep into the country. This permission was secretly granted, and the Ugandan troops attacked the LRA camp from several directions.

August 6, 2004: The United States is pressuring Sudan to cooperate in capturing the leader of the LRA. The U.S. got Sudan to agree to arrest the LRA leader, Joseph Kony, by today, but that did not happen. Kony has been hiding out in southern Sudan, leading occasional raids into Uganda. Kony has earned the protection of the Sudanese government by helping in the fight against Sudanese rebels.

August 19, 2004: Lt. Col. Michael Anywar, the chief communications officer of the LRA, surrendered to the army.

August 21, 2004: LRA (Lord's Resistance Army), which is now entirely based in southern Sudan, tried to enter Sudan but was blocked by numerous Ugandan army units on the border. A second group of LRA are further north inside Sudan. There appear to be only a few hundred armed LRA left.

August 27, 2004: In clashes with the LRA along the Sudanese border, at least a dozen rebels were killed by army patrols and aircraft. The army has succeeded in keeping the LRA out of Uganda. The government, and many people in northern Uganda, believe that the LRA is on its last legs.

August 31, 2004: The LRA, despite their recent defeats by the army in Uganda and southern Sudan, continues to raid villages and seize children for indoctrination and incorporation in their armed forces. In the last two years, some 12,000 children have been taken by the LRA. Many, perhaps a third, were quickly dead, either killed for resisting the LRA recruitment offer, or from disease and privation.

September 1, 2004: Ugandan troops attacked the LRA headquarters in the Katire valley in southern Sudan. The senior LRA commanders escaped, as did over a hundred of the rebels.

September 2, 2004: The army feels that it will have destroyed the LRA soon. LRA representatives are said to be negotiating with Ugandan officials to arrange a formal end of the LRA rebellion.

While the army has been successful in going after the main LRA camps, there are many smaller LRA groups wandering around. But the army strategy is to destroy whatever central control the LRA has, reducing the
smaller groups to the status and function of bandits. There are plenty of bandits in northern Uganda.

September 12, 2004: Operations against the LRA continue in northern Uganda and southern Sudan. So far this year, 1,255 LRA rebels had been killed, 163 captured and 993 surrendered. Some 2,200 children, kidnapped by the LRA and forced to serve them, were rescued. Conditions have become peaceful enough in the north that some 260,000 refugees are returning to the homes and farms. Some eighteen years of LRA violence have caused entire villages to empty out and the villagers fled to other parts of Uganda.

The LRA is thought to have been reduced to a force of about 200 armed men, plus another few hundred support people (mostly kidnapped and enslaved villagers, usually children.) A year ago, the LRA was thought to have about 2,000 armed men. But aggressive Ugandan attacks against LRA camps in southern Sudan killed or dispersed LRA fighters. The army is now hunting the remaining LRA forces, and expects to destroy the organizations before the end of the year.

September 18, 2004: The government rejected the LRA offer of a truce, made on the 15th via a rebel radio station. The government is willing to negotiate the surrender of the remaining rebels, but not stop its campaign.

September 20, 2004: A weekend of attacks on the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) camps in southern Sudan has left at least 30 rebels dead. The Ugandan army, with Sudanese permission, has been searching southern Sudan for the remaining LRA members, including the groups founder and leader, Joseph Kony.

September 21, 2004: Police clashed with nomadic Karamojong cattle rustlers in eastern Uganda, killing seven of the tribesmen. The rustling has been going on for centuries, but has gotten more lethal in the past decade as cheap (under $50) AK-47s became available throughout Africa. This was an aftereffect of the end of the Cold War, as former communist nations sold off millions of surplus weapons.

September 22, 2004: The two year offensive against the LRA has left several thousand dead, caused 500,000 civilians to flee their homes and led to the LRA kidnapping another 10,000 teenagers to fill their ranks. The LRA has been reduced to a few small (under a hundred people) groups, each slogging through the bush in southern Sudan, carrying weapons and food with them. The Ugandan army has helicopters, and trackers on the ground in trucks, pursuing the remaining LRA groups.

September 28, 2004: While the Lord's Resistance Army appears to be on it's last legs, there are still 1.8 million internal refugees in northern
Uganda. The economic and social problems caused by the LRA rebellion (and a similar one started by LRA leader Kony's aunt in the 1980s), are in addition to the long time poverty of northern Uganda, especially compared to the more prosperous southern part of the country. In the end, part of the problem is tribal.

September 29, 2004: LRA leader Joseph Kony, and about 150 of his followers, have been forced back into northern Uganda by aggressive Ugandan army patrolling in southern Sudan. This was confirmed when a group of LRA were attacked in Uganda, leaving 17 rebels dead and 12 captured, including one of Kony's sons.

October 4, 2004: The government is recognizing one the major threats to peace, the increased gun trade, and is cracking down on it. Gunrunning is now a major target for police actions and the illegal sale of ammunition, especially for the thousands of illegal AK-47s in the country, is not tolerated.

October 5, 2004: In the north, ten LRA members were killed, and six captured. But another nine LRA men in the group escaped. The government suffered no casualties, largely because a helicopter gunship took part in the operation.

October 16, 2004: The army found another LRA camp and attacked it with a helicopter gunship and troops on the ground. Nine rebels were killed and three captured. Others escaped, and some may have been wounded.

October 17, 2004: The army feels that it can hunt down, and kill or capture, the last of the LRA, by the end of the year. More than at any time in the past, this may be possible. The LRA is down to a few groups, composed of less than a thousand fighters. Every week, a few more LRA members come out of the bush and surrender, and provide more information on what is going on within the remaining LRA units. Some of the remaining LRA leaders want to surrender, but are fearful of being killed by subordinates of hard core LRA supreme leader Joseph Kony. After 16 years of fighting, the army wants to be done with Kony and his mindless, and extremely violent, revolution. It's a fight to the death, and the odds are against the LRA.

November 13, 2004: The Ugandan government and what remains of the LRA's leadership are once again discussing peace talks. There have been rumors since late summer than another series of peace talks was in the offing. On November 10 the Ugandan government said that the LRA had "communicated" to the Ugandan government in late October that it would consider talks if the talks were held outside of Uganda. Another statement (November 9) from one of the government emissaries said that the LRA leaders considered the Ugandan government's response to the peace bid
to be "disappointing." That could be because the Ugandan government believes it has substantially destroyed LRA base areas in southern Sudan. The LRA requested that the Ugandan government give the LRA negotiating team passports and guarantee the team that its members could return to Uganda. This indicates that the LRA is indeed squeezed and its ability to move leaders out of northern Uganda through Sudan to a "third nation" is, at best, unreliable. Other reports indicate that the people of northern Uganda (particularly in the Gulu and Kitgum areas) will believe peace is at hand when they see some results. Several NGOs reported that every night thousands of people leave their homes in the countryside and seek refuge from LRA attacks in the towns (which usually have a garrison or at least a strong police presence). This has been going on for several years. One NGO with personnel in the Kitgum area reported that every night 15,000 to 18,000 people come into the town of Kitgum to escape the threat of LRA attacks and kidnappings.

November 17, 2004: The government has designated "ceasefire zones" where LRA rebels can collect. This follows a November 14 declaration by the Ugandan government that it would begin a seven-day "suspension of military operations" as part of a pending peace deal. The "suspension of operations" began November 15 at 1800 hours and will run through November 23. On November 16 Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni declared that LRA rebels could move via "eight safe routes" (corridors) in northern Uganda to areas where the LRA rebels can assemble for further negotiations. Apparently the looming deal also includes a "collection area" in southern Sudan. This looks like a looming victory for the Ugandan government.

November 20, 2004: An unidentified LRA source issued a statement confirming that its negotiators had met "face to face" with Ugandan government representatives. The latest meeting took place in Gulu district. Ugandan sources report that LRA leader Joseph Kony is believed to be in north Uganda. Kony was hiding in south Sudan, but attacks on LRA base camps in Sudan forced him to move back into Uganda. The Ugandan media is rife with speculation of a lurking political deal that would bring Kony and his followers "out of the bush."

November 24, 2004: Ugandan media are reporting that some LRA units have accepted the "limited ceasefire" agreement and moved to designated "safe zones" in northern Uganda. The ceasefire ended November 23, but it appears it is still being observed for the moment. A Ugandan military spokesman, however, reported that LRA rebels had "not shown a willingness" to continue negotiations. The same report said that LRA leader Joseph Kony had been heard on military radios talking to his subordinates in northern Uganda. Kony now wants 100 days of ceasefire before pursuing the peace negotiations. One Ugandan newspaper quoted
an "LRA commander" as saying that Kony is trying undermine the ceasefire and scotch a peaceful political settlement. Kony has allegedly ordered LRA rebel units to return to Nisitu area in south Sudan. The LRA had several bases around Nisitu.

Clearly the Ugandan military suspects that Kony is trying to use the ceasefire to reconstitute LRA forces. The LRA leadership cadre is also splintering, which give the Ugandan government at least a small political victory.

Meanwhile, on Uganda's western front, the Ugandan Army reported the discovery of a large arms cache belonging to the People's Redemption Army (PRA). The PRA rebels are commanded by Col. Edson Muzoora. Militiamen belonging to the Armed Forces of Congolese People (a Congolese rebel group) had found the weapons inside the Congo near the Ugandan border. The militiamen then tipped off the Ugandan Army. If it looks like Congolese rebels policing Ugandan rebels--well, it is, and that's an old but often effective game. The Congolese rebel group operates in the Congolese Aru region. A Ugandan military spokesman said that a Ugandan customs officer had been arrested in connection with the arms cache and smuggling weapons to the PRA.

December 12, 2004: Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) killed seven Sudanese civilians. On December 10 the LRA thugs attacked the village of Rajaf in Sudan's Bahr el-Jebel State. Eight people were wounded in the attack. The LRA thugs stole food as well as livestock. The report stated that one source of the information was the regional hospital in Juba, Sudan, where the wounded were taken and treated. This is another indication of Uganda's military success against the LRA and increasing political success. A number of LRA members have turned themselves in to the Ugandan government. LRA leader Joseph Kony reportedly ordered his fighters to pull back into Sudan. The problem is, the Ugandan military has destroyed most of the LRA's base structure in south Sudan. Now the LRA thugs are once again pillaging Sudanese villages.

December 27, 2004: It's another sign that the government believes it is on the verge of politically defeating the LRA. On December 24, Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni offered to meet "face to face" with LRA leader Joseph Kony. This is the first Museveni has made the offer. Museveni has said he would never negotiate with Kony and the LRA terrorists. However, during 2004 the military made real progress against the LRA. While the amnesty for LRA rebels hasn't been as productive as the government expected, Kony had to retreat into south Sudan. Uganda claimed a major victory December 26 against an LRA band in northern Uganda. An army infantry unit, supported by armed helicopters, killed 21 LRA thugs and captured six more. The battle took place in the Lango area. A military spokesman indicated that the LRA band was ordered to move into the
area by radio-- which suggest radio intercept played a key role in positioning Ugandan Army troops for the firefight. The Ugandan government said the LRA band was not in a "safe" or "peace zone" where LRA rebels can lager without fear of Ugandan attack.

January 8, 2005: The Ugandan government reported "several skirmishes" January 5 and 6-- clear violations of the ceasefire agreement. The government also said "several" LRA rebels had been killed, but insisted that peace talks are continuing. Meanwhile, the army has moved a unit next to one of the "safe zones." The government said the move was intended to prevent LRA attacks coming from the assembly zones. While solid casualty figures would be useful in determining just how minor the "skirmishes" were, the fact that the Ugandan government insists it is still pursuing peace negotiations is encouraging. Still, the "end game: of Uganda's long-running war with the LRA will be a long end game. One reason is that an entire generation of LRA rebels only knows the life of armed guerrillas. The civilian equivalent of that life is banditry.

January 22, 2005: The Ugandan government reported that the army killed 20 LRA rebels in a battle on January 17, near the Sudanese border. Troops encountered 30 LRA fighters, killing 20 LRA and capturing three. Another four LRA rebels later surrendered and that one of those who surrendered was identified as an LRA intelligence officer. The army also hit another LRA unit on January 19 and eight rebels were killed in the fight. The Ugandan military is believed to be conducting operations against the LRA in south Sudan. The Ugandan military said in early January that it believes the LRA is using the ceasefire to reorganize. The army operations may be part of a "hammer and anvil" strategy, to push holdout LRA units into Ugandan blocking positions or ambushes in Sudan--which would utterly frustrate "reorganization." Despite the military operations, the Ugandan government says it still supports the ceasefire and peace process.

January 31, 2005: There has been renewed fighting in northern Uganda. Over the last six weeks it is clear that the core leaders in the LRA are continuing to fight. In the last week, troops in northern Uganda have killed at least 17 LRA members. On January 28, Sudanese SPLA rebel leader John Garang (after signing the peace deal he's no longer the same type of rebel) said that he would work to end the fighting in Uganda. Garang visited northern Uganda and expressed his "unreserved willingness to help" end the Ugandan conflict. Garang indicated his forces (SPLA) would not "tolerate the presence" of the LRA (ie, in Sudanese territory where the SPLA operates). Garang admitted that in the past the Sudanese government had supported the LRA. Since Garang is now part of the Sudanese government, he believes he is in position to stop any overt (and perhaps covert) Sudanese support of the LRA. At the minimum,
Garang's attitude increases the political pressure on holdout LRA factions. The LRA can now expect SPLA forces to participate in counter-LRA operations in Sudan.

February 25, 2005: Though the current ceasefire expired on February 22, the Ugandan government said that peace talks with the LRA are continuing. The government said that meetings with LRA leaders, who have surrendered, are being conducted near Gulu. The objective is to explore political solutions -- and bring holdout hard core LRA fighters in from the bush. The government reported that some of the LRA leaders will use a local radio station to "address directly" the rebels still bearing arms. The government estimated that the active LRA force has shrunk to 400 fighters. Though there is no way to precisely confirm the figure, former commanders are prime intelligence sources. Meanwhile, military operations continue, and the LRA is still killing unarmed civilians. NGO sources reported that late on the evening of February 21 LRA thugs killed three people at the Alokolum refugee camp north of the town of Gulu. If the time of the attack is accurate, then the LRA attacked before the ceasefire had expired. A Ugandan military spokesman later claimed that the attack had a special message -- the mother of an LRA leader who had surrendered to the government was living in the camp. The government spokesman claimed she was the target of the attack. The Ugandan government acknowledges that it is pursuing a "dual strategy" -- negotiations and combat operations. Call it "talk and fight."

March 14, 2005: LRA rebels killed seven people in northwest Uganda. Some 18 people were wounded in the attack which occurred on the night of March 9. Approximately 15 LRA rebels conducted the attack and then fled into nearby hills. The attackers killed one man with a weapon then killed the other six with axes and machetes. This may indicate the LRA splinter group was short of ammunition, or the civilians were completely defenseless (or both). On March 11 the Ugandan military announced that it would beef-up its presence in Adjuman. The military gave no specific figures or named specific units. Uganda also claimed its troops had killed 185 LRA rebels since January 1. A subsequent report said a local Ugandan official in Adjuman district had killed their victims "in a most horrible manner." It looks as if the LRA is splintering. Desperate holdouts, however, are still capable of terrorizing the civilian population.

Ugandan army this week deployed troops in north-western Adjuman district where Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebels attacked villages and killed six people, an army spokesperson said on Saturday.

More than 1.6-million people have been forced from their homes during the LRA's 18-year war against the government that has been marked by brutal attacks against northern Uganda's civilian population.
March 23, 2005: More bad news from northern Uganda. The holdout LRA factions are attempting to sow as much terror as possible in the villages and refugee camps around the northern Ugandan city of Gulu. It appears that the rebels are trying to send a message that they are still there, and have not gone away. To emphasize this, there was an LRA attack on a refugee camp at Paicho where four civilians were killed. (Paicho is northeast of Gulu.) Survivors reported an LRA thug "hacked off a woman's lips" during the raid. An attack like this is an atrocity meant to incite fear and outrage. LRA factions have also kidnapped from 50 to 60 people from refugee camps around Gulu since March 16. The army believes that the LRA faction committing most of the atrocities is under the control of LRA deputy commander Vincent Otti. The size of Otti's command is not known, but is not believed to be large. Some believe this group is only about a dozen men, although northern officials believe it could contain as many as 300 people (fighters and slaves). Though the government says LRA holdouts are shrinking in number, the viciousness of their attacks has not diminished.

March 24, 2005: While Ugandan president Yoweri Museveni has been above average (by African standards) in running the country, the enthusiasm for democracy sweeping the planet has arrived. There was an anti-Museveni demonstration in the capital. The first such event in a long time. Museveni, for all his good habits, does not allow opposition political parties to operate freely. The current constitution only allows him two terms as president. Museveni is trying to get the constitution changed to allow him to be president-for-life.

March 25, 2005: The army and Acholi tribal leaders are feuding over efforts by the tribe to not have LRA leaders tried as war criminals. Underneath the violence in northern Uganda are tribal rivalries.

April 6, 2005: Two years ago Uganda began a program to "professionalize" its military. The program included a new training regimen, but one key element was firing and prosecuting corrupt officers and NCOs. One of the biggest problems was "ghost soldiers" -- troops carried on the unit payrolls but not present for duty. Corrupt officers would put the non-existent troops' pay into their own pockets. Did the reforms work? Apparently not-- at least not to the satisfaction of Ugandan president Museveni. On April 4 Museveni announced another program to end graft. One report quoted Museveni as saying "Don't let corruption get into the army. Don't let in the weevils." Colorful language-- but real change means prosecuting officers, and some of them will be quite senior. As for the war with the Lords Resistance Army (LRA), there has been a drop off in the last ten days in LRA attacks and abductions. The Ugandan Army claimed in early March that the LRA had been broken into small "factions." Though the LRA splinters were still attacking refugee camps
and murdering civilians, the remaining fanatics were retreating. 29 LRA rebels surrendered to the army in the last week of March. There have been "lulls" in LRA action in the past.

April 15, 2005: Looks like the lull in fighting has ended -- with a bloodbath. The Ugandan government claimed that its troops killed at least 21 LRA fighters in an army offensive. The Ugandan Peoples Defense Force (UPDF, the Ugandan Army) began the offensive April 8. Major clashes occurred throughout Uganda's northern border region on April 8 and April 9. Firefights took place on in several areas. The Ugandan military said that its troops suffered no casualties.

There were over half a dozen firefights, dispersed (by Ugandan standards) over a large area, and no army casualties, suggesting the Ugandan Army had very good intelligence on rebel locations as well as strength. Given the number and rank of LRA leaders who've surrendered since January 1, this isn't surprising. Old hideouts have been compromised as well as infiltration routes and tactics. The Ugandan government is winning, at least as long as the Sudanese government refrains from reinforcing the LRA.

May 2, 2005: LRA continues to kidnap, or kill, people in the north.

May 27, 2005: The LRA killed eight refugees in the north, apparently as part of a terrorism program, to discourage people from cooperating with police and the army.

May 31, 2005: The Ugandan military now believes the LRA (Lord's Resistance Army) has 400 armed guerrillas-- down from 3,000 the end of 2004. The Ugandan military has destroyed the LRA's five biggest camps in Sudan, in operations that began in 2004. The Ugandan government also maintains that the LRA is no longer able to rely on abductions to increase its number of fighters. Although the new report didn't go into details, the political decision to give amnesty to some members of the LRA's senior leadership has also had an effect. Demobilized LRA guerrillas have been encouraging holdouts to also put down their arms.

June 8, 2005: Army corruption, and LRA leaders fearful of prosecution for war crimes, is keeping the LRA in business. Army officers have stolen much money by maintaining phantom soldiers in their units, and taking the pay of the non-existent troops. Those soldiers who are on duty generally come from the south, and don't speak the languages of the northern tribes. This makes it difficult to get information from locals, and increases the likelihood of soldiers abusing civilians. But by sending more and more infantry battalions to the north, along with helicopter and warplane units, the LRA has been beaten down. But the LRA is not gone, because the UN wants to prosecute the LRA leadership as war criminals.
With that kind of incentive, the LRA leaders have nothing to lose by continuing to fight. The UN, and other NGOs, are unlikely to back off on the war criminal bit, because it is more fashionable to have war crimes trials than it is to cut deals with warlords to stop the killing.

June 20, 2005: LRA attacked villagers in the north, killing four of them.

June 21, 2005: An Army patrol caught an LRA commander, Opiro Anaka, at night and killed him and his girlfriend.

June 24, 2005: About twenty members of the LRA crossed the Sudanese border and attacked a large refugee camp. It was a raid for captives and food, but the army drive off the raiders and are pursuing them.

June 26, 2005: The LRA remains under pressure, but still survives. The most senior leaders are reluctant to surrender, because of the threat of war crimes trials. So they fight on, probably until all of them are hunted down and killed or captured.

July 8, 2005: The army announced that the LRA chief of staff, the eldest son of LRA leader Joseph Kony, was killed, along with another LRA leader. This happened three weeks ago, and at first the army did not realize who they had killed in the gun battle.

July 10, 2005: The LRA appears to be shattered, and reduced to banditry in order to survive in the bush.

July 20, 2005: Uganda promised earlier this month to send 50 policemen to Sudan's Darfur region as part of the African Union (AU) peacekeeping effort. For nearly two decades Uganda and Sudan engaged in an on-again off-again war, as Sudan supported the LRA gangs in Uganda, and Uganda provided support for the SPLA in southern Sudan. That began to change in 2002. and 2003. The Ugandan policemen may prove to be an effective element in the AU force. Uganda has a lot of experience dealing with Sudanese-sponsored Islamist militias.

July 21, 2005: On the Kenyan border, Kenyan police and tribesmen fought with a large group of Ugandan cattle rustlers, killing forty of them. The 90 Ugandan Karamojong raiders were detected after they crossed the border, and ambushed shortly thereafter. The Karamojong, armed with AK-47s, frequently raid Kenyan cattle herds, and the police have been keen on catching them at it.

July 22, 2005: The UN accuses Uganda of sheltering Congolese rebel groups. Uganda denies it.

August 20, 2005: There have been two major firefights with LRA holdouts. On August 15 the Ugandan Army attacked an LRA base in Uganda's Kitgum distirct. Ten LRA fighters were killed in the attack. On August 17,
another Ugandan force attacked an LRA base in south Sudan (Imatong Mountains area). Both attacks had helicopter gunships providing support. The attack in Sudan killed from "15 to 20 LRA thugs." Since the spring, LRA activity in Uganda has been sporadic. Uganda's "peace offensive" -- which included a limited amnesty-- led several LRA leaders to surrender. The two attacks on base areas indicate that Uganda has some fairly good intelligence on base camp locations and supply routes, the kind that former leaders can provide.

August 29, 2005: The government estimates that deaths from violence in the north, among refugees, are running at about 5,000 a year. That means that the 1.6 million refugees are suffering an annual death rate of over 300 per 100,000 population. This is six times the death rate of the most violent nation, South Africa, and nearly as high as the death rate for American soldiers fighting in Iraq. Government records show that for every death from violence among the northern refugees, there are nine deaths from disease. The Acholi tribe in northern Uganda has suffered at the hands of both the LRA and the Ugandan military and has suffered most of the deaths up there.

September 6, 2005: In the north, troops caught up with groups of LRA rebels over the last two days, and killed at least 16 of them.

September 9, 2005: There are reports that LRA leader Joseph Kony is once again talking to peace negotiators. Kony apparently contacted one negotiator in late August. The Ugandan military is now saying that the LRA is a beaten force.

September 12, 2005: The army has asked the Sudanese government for permission to pursue LRA fighters "deeper into Sudan." The army believes that several hold-out LRA leaders had moved to base camps "above the Red Line." The Red Line demarcates the zone inside Sudan where Ugandan units can patrol and conduct "hot pursuit" strikes. There was no comment from the Sudanese government but Sudan has continued to renew the agreement permitting Ugandan military operations south of the Red Line. The Red Line generally follows the Juba-Jabuleni-Tolit road.

September 13, 2005: LRA fighters have attacked targets in south Sudan, using Uganda as a base. Up to 40 LRA rebels allegedly left Uganda and moved north. The LRA attacked the villages of Loka and Lainya on the Juba-Yei highway, in an area northeast of Yei.

September 14, 2005: Fourteen LRA gunmen attacked the Openzinzi Prison in Adjumani, Uganda. 100 prisoners fled, some of them with LRA connections. Ugandan police and military units managed to re-arrest a number of escapees, but at last report at least half of the escapees were unaccounted for.
September 17, 2005: Sudanese security forces (former SPLA units) had moved out of Yei in an attempt to interdict a large group of LRA fighters. An LRA spokesman denied the September 13 attack occurred.

September 20, 2005: Some 50 LRA fighters left northern Uganda and moved into the Congo (DRC).

September 21, 2005: It is entirely possible that LRA fighters are retreating into Sudan and the Congo. Ugandan offensives in Sudan have destroyed several LRA base camps and LRA leadership defections in northern Uganda have improved the Ugandan army's intelligence. The "attacks" near Yei may have been looting expeditions by LRA fighters who are fleeing north.

September 22, 2005: Along the borders of Kenya and Sudan, the army has been forcing tribesmen to give up their AK-47s. In the last decade, a flood of cheap (as little as $20) Cold War surplus AK-47s have come to the region, allowing even teenage boys to tote an assault rifle as they watched herds of goats. This led to a much higher body count when tribes carried out their traditional cattle raids. In the past, spears and bows caused few casualties. But with assault rifles, entire families, and villages, were being wiped out. With the border region on the verge of being depopulated, the army began seizing AK-47s. But the tribesmen knew that losing their assault rifles, while neighboring tribes (in Uganda, Kenya or Sudan) still had theirs, could be fatal. This was made clear when it got around what had happened to those tribes that got raided after the army took their AK-47s. Now the tribesmen hide their AK-47s when the army is around, and bring them out the rest of the time.

September 25, 2005: Army pressure has driven most of the LRA out of northern Uganda, with the remnants fleeing to southern Sudan and eastern Congo.

September 27, 2005: The government (with UN observers) destroyed 3000 small arms. Most of the weapons were either collected or seized by Ugandan troops in the Karamoja region. The Karamoja tribe has been involved in several minor skirmishes with the army. The well-armed tribe also conducted several cattle raids against neighboring tribes. Three years ago the government began a serious program aimed at removing automatic weapons from the area. The government says there are 50,000 illegal weapons in the Karamoja region.

September 28, 2005: The UN confirmed that Uganda's Entebbe International Airport will be used as a base to deploy UN peacekeeping troops in southern Sudan. The Entebbe Airport is capable of handling very large transport aircraft, including 747 freighters.
October 1, 2005: The Ugandan government has long sought international condemnation of the LRA, particularly a declaration that the LRA is a criminal organization. The International Criminal Court (ICC), which was set up to prosecute international cases of genocide, will soon issue criminal indictments of LRA leaders.

October 4, 2005: In a remote area of the north, LRA rebels killed five civilians. It was thought that all LRA gunmen were outside the country (in Sudan or Congo). On the Congolese border, several hundred Congolese troops showed up, to try and chase LRA members back into Uganda, where the Ugandan army is waiting for them. Some 2,000 Congolese troops are on the way to the border.

October 5, 2005: The LRA appear to have broken up into small groups of 10-20 people, making it more difficult to ....

October 6, 2005: The army confirmed that they had killed LRA leader Brigadier Dominic Ongwen. They had to bring in other LRA members (who had accepted the amnesty) to identify the body of Ongwen (who was killed last week). October 7, 2005: The UN and Congolese troop deployment in the Congo’s northeast has forces the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) to withdraw. Uganda reported that as many as 400 LRA supporters had fled Uganda for the Congo. On September 29, Uganda told the Congo that unless the Congo took action against the LRA rebels, Uganda would consider sending forces into the Congo. With the aid of UN forces (primarily helilift), the Congo began deploying troops earlier this week. Initial reports said the Congo had sent 1000 troops to the town of Aba. The troops were supported by at least one helicopter gunship. Now Uganda reports that the LRA rebels have left the Congo and moved into Sudan. The LRA unit began withdrawing from the Congo on October 6. The move into Sudan means the Ugandan military will pursue and attack the rebels. The Sudan government allows the Ugandan military to conduct operations against the LRA in south Sudan.

October 8, 2005: The UN criminal court has issued warrants for the arrest of five senior LRA leaders on war crimes charges. Now Uganda can urge foreign nations to execute the warrant if these LRA big shots show up in their territory. Uganda is still offering amnesty to some of these guys, and the important thing is to get the word, about the warrants, out to the scattered LRA bands, to put pressure on the senior LRA people.

October 10, 2005: Former Ugandan president Milton Obote died. Obote -- considered by some to be a dictator, by others a great leader-- was in exile in Zambia. Obote was a major figure in the Ugandan independence movement of the early 1960s. Obote is the president the definitely notorious Idi Amin overthrew in 1971. Obote returned to power in 1980 but was replaced by current president Yoweri Museveni in 1985. Obote
remains a divisive figure in Uganda, but will be buried in northern Uganda (in Obote’s Langi home tribal area). Obote had been the political favorite of many northern Ugandans but Museveni supporters and some human rights groups have accused Obote of involvement in the infamous Luwero (also Luweero) Triangle atrocities in 1983. At the time the Ugandan military (under Obote) had many Acholi and Langu tribesmen (both tribes are from northern Uganda). The Luwero District, north of the capital of Kampala (but located in southern Uganda), was a major area of support for Museveni’s National Resistance Army (NRA).

October 11, 2005: Sudan has agreed to allow Ugandan troops to wander all over southern Sudan in pursuit of LRA rebels. There are apparently fewer than a thousand armed LRA members left.

October 16, 2005: The International Criminal Court (ICC) arrest warrants for Lord’s Resistance Army leader Joseph Kony, and four of his top commanders specify the charges against the rebels. Kony faces 33 specific accusations, including 12 counts of crimes against humanity for rape and sexual enslavement. LRA may have abducted over 30,000 children during the last 19 years, forcing over a million civilians to flee their homes in terror. The remnants of the LRA are operating along the Sudanese and Congolese borders.

October 21, 2005: Uganda held a meeting in its capital, Kampala, that included security personnel and government representatives from the Congo, Rwanda, and Burundi.to discuss the continuing turmoil in the Congo. The group will meet again (though one scheduled for this week was cancelled). The UN has been urging these four African governments to do a better job of coordinating security measures. The countries agreed to impose "financial restrictions" on militias in the eastern Congo. Actions against the militias could include travel bans and prosecution of militia leaders (presumably in courts in the four countries). At times all four nations have backed various militias and rebels in the Congo’s civil war. Even if Uganda, Burundi, Rwanda, and the Congo do begin to cooperate -- and withdraw covert support for the militias-- the war won’t end overnight. Tribal rivalries play a large role in the fighting. However, jailing militia leaders and ending financial support will diminish the militias’ power and influence.

October 26, 2005: LRA gunmen made at least three attacks on foreign aid workers in the north, causing some aid organizations to cease operations.

October 30, 2005: The rogue militias still operating in the northeastern Congo threaten stability throughout the region. That also provides a sanctuary, of sorts, for Ugandan LRA rebels and outlaws of all types. Until law and order can be brought to the region, and bandits will continue to cripple commerce.
November 5, 2005: LRA leader, Joseph Kony, and a small number of followers, are believed to have crossed into the Congo.

November 12, 2005: Ugandan and Sudanese troops are operating together in southern Sudan, to hunt down Ugandan LRA rebels.

November 14, 2005: Rioting broke out in the capital after the rest of the main political rival, Kizza Besigye, of president Yoweri Museveni. Besigye returned from exile last month, in the belief that Museveni was going to allow political opposition. That is apparently not the case.

November 15, 2005: the army reported that another LRA senior commander, Maj. Joseph Opio, had surrendered. Opio had been under intense military pressure and had accepted the Amnesty program. The government uses these surrenders to promote the amnesty program, while insisting that the most senior LRA leaders (like Kony) are criminals. This is an attempt to induce surrenders but also further fracture the LRA.

November 17, 2005: In western Uganda, at least 300 civilians, and 51 members of the Congolese Revolutionary Movement, fled across the border from the Congo. UN peacekeepers and Congolese border are moving along the Ugandan border, disarming, often by force, rebels. In Uganda, the army disarmed the Congolese rebels it came across.

November 18, 2005: The army disputed UN and Congolese claims that Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebels had left the Congo. Uganda believes some LRA, under the command of Vincent Otti, remain in the Congo. Otti is the LRA's deputy leader, second to Joseph Kony. The UN and Congo have repeatedly sent troops into the area, including along the Congo-Sudan border. The last thing the Congo needs is a Ugandan military strike across the border.

November 20, 2005: President Yoweri Museveni is increasingly seen as just another dictator. He seized power in January, 1986 and plans to run for president again next year, refusing to allow opposition candidates to stand against him.

November 24, 2005: Between November 19 and November 24, either bandits or the LRA conducted three ambushes of civilian vehicles in northern Uganda. 20 people were killed. One of these occurred in Pader district, where 12 people were killed. The Ugandan government later said the Pader attack was conducted by the LRA. There has been an increase in ambushes directed at humanitarian assistance convoys. The dirt roads in northern Uganda are fairly easy for government motorized forces to patrol. However, they are also ideal "mine territory." Rebels can quickly emplace several small mines after the military or police patrol passes. These are harassment attacks, and discourage the police and military
patrols. The attack in Pader district, however, appears to be a set ambush using light weapons.

November 27, 2005: The latest political crisis in Uganda could fuel a broader civil war. It has certainly led to charges that Ugandan president Yoweri Museveni is "in decline" and on the verge of copying Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe. Museveni had his main political rival, Kizza Besigye, arrested on charges of treason. Besigye was arrested by the Ugandan military in early November. Besigye's arrest led to two days of rioting. On November 24 the Ugandan government charged Besigye with terrorism instead of treason. Presidential elections in Uganda are scheduled for early 2006.

December 10, 2005: Sudanese government sources said that Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) leader Joseph Kony is interested in a peace deal with Uganda. These reports have circulated before, however, this time Sudan identified Sudan's First Vice-President Salva Kiir as the go-between. A Ugandan news website indicated that the Ugandan government found the "peace deal" to be suspicious. In December 2004 Kony floated another peace offer. One government minister noted that both peace offers came "in the dry season." The dry season is the government's prime season for military operations. It's easier for light armor to operate off roads (less mud) and aerial observation is improved. In fact, many of Uganda's main roads in the north are unpaved. During the rainy season they also turn to mud.

December 11, 2005: The Ugandan Peoples Defense Forces (UPDF, the Ugandan army) claimed that its troops killed four LRA rebels in a firefight at Lipon-Kitgum near the Sudan-Uganda border. The LRA band may have been the group involved in several car and truck ambushes in south Sudan. The statement said that the UPDF's 5th Division was participating in a "dry season offensive" against the LRA. The dry season is the best time for larger-scale military operations.

December 14, 2005: Uganda's Electoral Commission ruled that Ugandan opposition leader Kizza Besigye (who is currently in jail) can run as a presidential candidate in Uganda's 2006 general elections. Besigye was arrested November 14. Besigye's arrest has exacerbated political and tribal frictions, which in the past had led to warfare in Uganda. The decision to allow Besigye to run as a candidate may assuage some of the anger.

December 15, 2005: Troops are searching for a group of five LRA rebels, after an ambush that left eight civilians dead.
December 16, 2005: LRA rebels, returning from Uganda, killed ten Sudanese civilians a few kilometers from the border. The LRA is a growing problem in southern Sudan, where they also attack relief operations.

December 17, 2005: An agreement has been signed with Uganda that enables Ugandan and Sudanese troops to operate closely together, including joint operations in southern Sudan, against LRA rebels. Ugandan military aircraft will also be able to use Sudanese airports at Yei and Juba.

December 18, 2005: The LRA has agreed to peace talks, using the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM) to mediate.

December 19, 2005: Ugandan LRA bands operating in the south Sudan have attacked humanitarian aid workers. The LRA continues to maintain base camps in south Sudan. Uganda frequently launches cross-border raids against the camp, with the explicit approval of the Sudanese government.

December 21, 2005: Uganda said that it "respects" the International Court of Justice's ruling that it owes the Congo compensation for waging war inside Congolese territory. The court said that the Congo was due approximately ten billion dollars in damages. Ugandan soldiers operated in the Congo for over five years (1998-2003), most of the time in or near Bunia in the northeastern Congo and close to the Ugandan border. The Congo petitioned the court, claiming that Uganda violated the Congo's sovereignty and "plundered" natural resources (specifically gold and diamonds, but also wood). Interestingly enough, Uganda did not immediately reject the call for compensation, thought there is little (if not zero) likelihood Uganda will pay ten billion dollars. For one thing, the Ugandan military denies that it was involved in plundering the Congo. Individual officers and soldiers may have participated but looting was not a Ugandan military policy. A similar situation occurred in the southern Congo, where Congolese factions paid for Zimbabwean soldiers by selling minerals to pay the Zimbabwe government.

January 3, 2006: The Ugandan military reported that it killed four LRA rebels in fighting in Kitgum district. In Gulu district five LRA died in a firefight along the River Gwen. No date was reported for the River Gwen fight, but it was between January 1 and January 3. The Ugandan military has been patrolling the River Gwen area quite extensively.

January 4, 2006: LRA rebels attacked a village in Gulu district. They killed three civilians and abducted another eight people.

January 9, 2006: Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni has been extolled as an example of "the good strong man" in sub-Saharan Africa. US President Bill Clinton praised Museveni for leading Uganda’s efforts to fight HIV infection and build a sound economy. The U.S. has also praised
Uganda. However, Museveni isn't aging well. The jailing of presidential rival Kizza Besigye has increased tribal and political tension within Uganda. Several European nations which support projects in Uganda are considering reducing support. Great Britain has already reduced aid. Britain wants fair elections in Uganda and the shenanigans involving Besigye do not bode well. On his part, Besigye has called for the formation of a new opposition coalition, with Besigye’s Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) party as the center of the new anti-Museveni alliance. Besigye says the Ugandan government is corrupt and calls Museveni the chief "criminal." Another opposition leader, Abed Bwanika promises to end the war with the LRA through negotiations. Bwanika said that Museveni has failed to end the war and this is a reason to deny Museveni re-election.

The bottom line is Uganda is increasingly unstable politically. Museveni has said one of his achievements is providing Uganda with a stable government.

January 11, 2006: An LRA attack in the town of Adjumani (near the Sudan border) killed three people and wounded 12. The Ugandan government reported that 15 LRA rebels attacks a night club in the town. The attackers opened fire on the dancers then fled.

Sudanese intelligence officers are apparently still aiding the LRA. Many in the Sudanese military want to wreck the peace plan in south Sudan. The LRA is a "tool" to cause trouble.

January 12, 2006: A senior UN official condemned both the LRA and the Ugandan military for "atrocities" committed in northern Uganda. The UN reported that conditions in "displaced persons camps" are deteriorating.

January 16, 2006: President Yoweri Museveni is losing support throughout the country. Still, opposition leader Kizza Besigye may not be able to defeat Museveni in the upcoming presidential elections (scheduled for February 2006). Museveni is running for a third term.

January 19, 2006: An exploration well drilled by an Australian company reportedly found "oil shows" in the Hoima district of western Uganda. Sudan has significant oil reserves. Many companies are looking for oil in central Africa (for example, the Central African Republic). Volatile political circumstances (ethnic conflict and war) and the cost of transporting crude have limited exploration and development. The rise in oil prices, however, makes some of the prospects economically viable. Oil is obviously a source of revenue for impoverished countries. However, oil facilities are also targets for rebels and bandits.

January 30, 2006: The Ugandan military said that its forces killed five LRA rebels in a firefight that took place in south Sudan. Ugandan troops frequently operate in south Sudan, with the permission of the Sudanese
government. A Ugandan military spokesman said that the Ugandan Army was conducting an "intensified" operation against the LRA along the Uganda-Sudan border.


February 1, 2006: The fighting in northern Uganda has created a permanent "internal refugee" problem. The UN and NGOs operating in Ugandan now estimate that there are 1.3 million IDPs (internally displaced persons) in northern Uganda. There are approximately 200 IDP camps in northern Uganda (specifically in the Kitgum, Pader, Apac, Lirs and Gulu districts). The LRA frequently raid the IDP camps for supplies and slaves.

February 11, 2006: Ugandan troops stopped an LRA attack along the Pabbo-Atiak road in northern Uganda. Two LRA rebels died in the firefight.

The Ugandan military reported that its troops killed one LRA rebel in Uganda’s Apac district (northern Uganda).

February 14, 2006: Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni has ordered the Ugandan military to step up its operations against the LRA in northern Uganda. Museveni’s statement comes after the Sudan government issued a statement urging tribal militias and security forces in south Sudan to attack the LRA rebels still inside Sudan. This looks like an attempt by Sudan and Uganda to "squeeze" LRA holdouts. It may also explain why at least one LRA group has moved into the northeastern Congo and the increase in firefights between Ugandan military forces and the LRA along the Sudan-Uganda border. Uganda also reported that one of its units operating inside Sudan killed one LRA rebel and captured two others near Biliniang, Sudan, in an operation that ended on February 11.

A Ugandan military spokesman said that Ugandan troops ambushed an LRA unit inside Sudan and killed four LRA rebels. The ambush took place in the western part of Sudan’s Equatorial province. The Ugandan military thinks the LRA unit was trying to enter the Congo.

Pre-election violence continues to increase. At least three people died when unidentified gunmen opened up on an opposition rally in Kampala. Two other people died in a separate incident, also in Kampala, when police tried to disperse an opposition rally of "several thousand supporters of Kizza Besigye. The police used tear gas and live ammunition.

February 15, 2006: The UN urged Congo's neighbors to cooperate with UN officials who are trying to stop illegal trafficking in the Congo's mineral resources. The statement referred to a "number of countries" that were not fully cooperating with the UN. That is being interpreted to mean
Rwanda and Uganda. Allegedly, Uganda continues to aid the illegal export of gold from the Congo.

February 17, 2006: Rumors continue to circulate that an attempted assassination occurred in northern Uganda on either February 14 or February 15. One rumor has it that Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni’s motorcade was fired on by at least three weapons, one of them a light machine gun.

February 23, 2006: The Ugandan military claimed that it had stopped an LRA attack in northern Uganda. Three LRA rebels tried to ambush a vehicle carrying polling materials. (It is election day in Uganda.) A small Ugandan force killed one rebel. The attack took place near the village of Anaka.

February 25, 2006: On February 24 four Ugandan soldiers were wounded in a grenade attack that took place in a market in Kampala. Initially, police reported they were investigating the incident but had no suspects. One civilian was also wounded in the attack. On February 25 a senior police official accused the opposition Forum for Democratic Change of causing the incident. The FDC denied the charge. Police also reported finding a cache of 18 molotov cocktails in a "hidden stockpile." The Museveni government has been accusing the FDC of planning to "sow trouble" during and after the election. The FDC says that it is dedicated to non-violent political change.

February 27, 2006: President Yoweri Museveni had been re-elected. This would be Museveni’s third term. The vote was held on February 23 and took two days to tabulate. Over seven million votes were cast. The Ugandan government said Museveni won 59 percent of the vote, beating Dr.Kizza Besigye. Besigye, however, "rejected" the results. EU election observers said that the election was free and fair. Museveni wins but then in some ways he does not. Besigye was jailed and harassed prior to the election. Besigye's followers remain angry. Protests began to occur in Uganda, including a major one in Kampala. Besigye's party is named The Forum for Democratic Change. If the name sounds a bit like Zimbabwe's Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) -- it's no accident. Museveni's critics compare him to Zimbabwe's dictator, Robert Mugabe. The comparison is a bit unfair-- Mugabe has run Zimbabwe into the ground. Museveni can make a good argument he has stabilized Uganda. But Mugabe is an aging leader who didn't know when the quit. That's what Museveni's critics say he has become. --Austin Bay

March 8, 2006: Ugandan troops operating in southern Sudan "intercepted" an LRA group on the Yei-Marada Road near the Sudanese town of Yei. The LRA fighters were en route to the Congo. One LRA rebel was captured. In
a separate incident, two LRA fighters were killed in a firefight along the River Ayago.

March 9, 2006: The Ugandan military said troops in its 4th Division discovered an LRA in southern Sudan. The Ugandans found explosives (including mortar rounds) and one G3 automatic rifle.

March 12, 2006: A LRA rebel captured last week by the Ugandan military has said that LRA leader Joseph Kony intends to leave the southern Sudan and link up in the Congo with the LRA's second-in-command, Vincent Otti. It was also revealed that the March 8 firefight near the town of Yei was supported by a Ugandan helicopter gunship. The LRA rebel, identified as a second lieutenant, was wearing a uniform. The captured rebel is quoted as saying that his unit was sent by Otti to meet Kony and help Kony cross the Nile River. The captured rebel is also quoted as saying that "life in Garamba" (ie, the Congo national park) is fine for the LRA. The LRA fighters live on wild game and "every two weeks" go into the southern Sudan to "loot" villages. If this information proves accurate, then the Ugandan military now has a very good idea on where Otti is inside the Congo. The captured rebel's alleged statements also conflict with the Ugandan government's assertions last month that Kony was holed up inside the Congo. The UN Mission in the Congo (MONUC) has conducted several operations in and around Garamba, with the objective of capturing Otti and driving the LRA out of the Congo.

March 15, 2006: In Eastern Uganda, Kenyan cattle rustlers crossed the border and were confronted by armed tribesmen, reinforced by army troops. In a week of skirmishing, five rustlers and fifteen Ugandans died.

March 19, 2006: As LRA rebels moved from southern Sudan to Congo, the Ugandan government said Ugandan troops would go into Congo to get the LRA, if the Congolese army did not go after the LRA. Ugandan troops in southern Sudan forced the LRA to move, and Congo was the most likely place to go because Congo is in chaos, and Uganda does not have permission to send troops into Congo.

March 21, 2006: Sudan renewed it's agreement that allowed Ugandan troops to enter southern Sudan in pursuit of LRA rebels.

Meanwhile, Congolese refugees continue to cross into Uganda, to escape the fighting in Congo. The LRA in the Congo are just another bunch of armed guys wandering around doing whatever they want.

March 25, 2006: While the government has identified and got international arrest warrants on the five top leaders of the LRA, there are still several groups of LRA gunmen wandering around northern Uganda, terrorizing millions of people. Thousands of people a month are still being killed because of the LRA operations. Meanwhile, the Ugandan
government has problems with a corruption scandal. This distracts the
government from dealing with the situation in the north, which is one
reason why the LRA has been a problem up north for two decades.

April 6, 2006: The UN reported that the Ugandan military is once again
confiscating weapons from Karamajong tribal herders. The Ugandan
government established a policy in 2003 to disarm the Karamajong, who
were using automatic weapons in cattle raids on other tribes. The
Ugandan government also offered a bounty for weapons turned in. In the
last year the Karamojong have clashed with several other ethnic groups,
including the Pokot, Kenya's Turkana people and the Toposa who live in
south Sudan.

April 7, 2006: The Ugandan supreme court ruled that the recent
presidential election (which current president Yoweri Museveni won) was
legal. Opposition leader and losing presidential candidate Dr Kizza Besigye
called the ruling a "perpetual route to perpetual dictatorship." Beisgye also
said that he and his supporters in the Forum for Democratic Change were
"ruling out" war against Museveni (ie, civil war). An African publication
asked Besigye if Uganda was "ripe for war." Beisgye said that he did not
want a repetition of the warfare that followed past contested elections
(like 1980).

April 8, 2006: Uganda called for the arrest of LRA rebel holdouts now
hiding in the Congo.

April 9, 2006: The refugee situation in northern Uganda has improved. In
2004, between 30 and 40 civilians were killed each month in and around
the northern Ugandan town of Gulu. From October 2005 to the end March
2006, an average of about ten a month were killed. The number of people
seeking protection from LRA attacks around Gulu has also dropped
dramatically. In 2003 the refugee camps around Gulu housed from 30,000
to 40,000 civilians at any given time. The numbers have dropped to a few
hundred. This reflects the drop in LRA attacks, and the LRA's move from
south Sudan to the Congo. However, the area is still suffering from food
shortages. Poverty is endemic, because the war destroyed farms and
wrecked local businesses. The LRA regularly abducted children from towns
and refugee camps, to serve as hostages and occasionally serve as
soldiers. No one knows how many were abducted, but a commonly
accepted figure is 25,000. While many have returned, there has been no
full-accounting of the missing.

April 26, 2006: The Ugandan Army said it had attacked a rebel base
belonging to the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF). One rebel was killed and
two were wounded. The base was in Uganda near the Congo border. The
Ugandan military said that it had killed eight other ADF rebels in
operations earlier in April. Most of the operations took place in the
Rwenzori Mountains (western Uganda). The Ugandan military has been chasing a group of approximately 40 ADF rebels who have moved back and forth across the Uganda-Congo border. In the past the ADF has cooperated with the Congolese Revolutionary Movement (MRC), an anti-Congo government militia which operates in northeastern Congo. In 1998 The Ugandan military crossed the Uganda-Congo border to fight the ADF in Congo's Ituri region. The ADF is now a hodge-podge rebel coalition. Members of the National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (NALU) are the core of the ADF. The NALU originally drew its members from tribes in central Uganda. The NALU is vehemently opposed to Uganda's president Yoweri Museveni. Uganda claims there are some Islamist elements involved with ADF as well, drawn from Ugandan Muslims in northwestern Uganda. There are also reports that Rwandan Hutu militiamen joined the ADF in the Congo.

April 29, 2006: The UN is investigating reliable reports that Ugandan Army troops have crossed the Uganda-Congo border. The Ugandan troops are supposed to be pursuing LRA rebels. On April 26 a Congolese Army unit reported that it encountered Ugandan troops near the town of Aba (northeast Congo). On April 27 the UN said that the Congolese forces and Ugandan forces "clashed" south of Aba. One Ugandan soldier may have been killed (a Congo government report said the death was unconfirmed). Uganda denied that the firefight occurred, but a Ugandan military spokesman in Kampala said that Uganda have moved military units closer to the Uganda-Congo border. UN peacekeepers in the Congo have been pursuing the LRA, which has a base in the Garamba National Park area. Uganda has said that it now believes almost all LRA rebels are in the Congo, having left base areas in Sudan and northern Uganda.

May 2, 2006: In the last two weeks, approximately 15,000 Kenyan herders had moved across the Kenya-Uganda border into Uganda. The reports said the herders fear attacked by various armed cattle-raiding tribes and militias. There are several dozen casualties.

May 18, 2006: Ugandan sources reported that Sudan had passed on a "peace offer" from LRA leader Joseph Kony. The offer was supposedly made sometime before May 12. Specifically, Sudan's vice-president Salva Kiir (who is also head of the Sudan Peoples Liberation Army, SPLA) informed Ugandan president Yoweri Museveni of the offer when he visited Kampala on May 12.

May 22, 2006: The Ugandan government said that if a "peace initiative" from LRA leader Joseph Kony ended the insurgency, Ugandan would guarantee Kony's "safety." Kony is currently under indictment by the International Criminal Court (ICC). Ugandan president Yoweri Museveni said that Kony had until August 1 to end the LRA rebellion.
May 23, 2006: A Ugandan security guard fired on civilians living in a displaced persons camp in Uganda’s Lira district (northern Uganda). The guard (described as member of a local defense militia) killed ten people and wounded 30 more. Apparently the man had been drinking and got in a fight over a woman. He was armed with an automatic rifle. The Ugandan government has armed a number of local and tribal militias in northern Uganda. The militias' job is too provide "first line" protection against LRA rebels. The LRA often raids the camps to take hostages and steal supplies. These militias are usually poorly trained and lack discipline. This kind of rampage is what happens with poorly trained, unsupervised troops.

May 26, 2006: For the first time in years LRA rebel leader Joseph Kony appeared in the news. Kony actually appeared on a DVD, which shows Kony meeting with Riek Machar, the vice-president of South Sudan (the SPLA dominated region in southern Sudan). Machar is supposedely seen giving Kony a check for $20,000. The date of the alleged meeting is not made clear, though a subsequent western wire report said it was recorded in early May. Machar reportedly gave Kony the money to encourage him to reach a peace agreement. Another interpretation is that Machar is paying the LRA protection money --ie, paying Kony so that the LRA will not launch attacks in south Sudan. In the DVD Kony reportedly says he is "fighting for peace."

May 30, 2006: The Ugandan government once again claimed that LRA leader Joseph Kony is hiding inside Congo (DRC, Democratic Republic of Congo). Uganda also said that it believes some Congolese military forces are allowing the LRA to hide inside Congo.

June 1, 2006: Interpol issued five arrest warrants for LRA chief Joseph Kony and his number two, Vincent Otti. The Interpol warrants are "Red Notices." While technicly non-binding warrants, the notices amount to an alert that those named in the warrants are subject to extradition ---in this case, extradition to the International Criminal Court (ICC) for war crimes. The ICC indicted the LRA leaders in 2005. The ICC does not have a police force.

June 2, 2006: Police and security forces arrested ten suspected members of the rebel Allied Democratic Force (ADF) in western Uganda. Ugandan security forces had been pursuing the ADF "unit" for several days. The ADF is linked to rogue militias operating the eastern Congo.

June 8, 2006: Acholi tribal leaders believe international arrest warrants for LRA leaders, issued on June 1, will make peace harder to achieve. While the LRA are largely regarded as scoundrels, many Acholi are suspicious of the Ugandan government. The Acholi are in the north, Kampala, the capital, is in the south. Other tribes in Uganda say that the LRA is an
Acholi movement. Certainly many Acholi have fought with the LRA, but many have also suffered from LRA depredations.

June 20, 2006: The Ugandan military began disarming a group of Pokot tribal warriors who crossed into Uganda in May from Kenya. The Ugandan government said about 3,000 Pokot fighters entered Uganda with approximately 20,000 cattle. Kenya has been disarming the Pokot (who have a reputation as rustlers) and the Pokot fled the Kenyan military and police operation. The Ugandans see the Pokot as a problem, too. A Ugandan spokesman claimed a group of Pokot stole 45 head of cattle in Uganda earlier this month.

A retired Ugandan Anglican bishop said that the war in "northern Uganda" was a "genocide." The retired Anglican bishop of Kitgum, Macleord Ochola, said both the Ugandan military and the LRA had committed crimes against innocent people.

June 21, 2006: Ugandan sources reported a soldier "went wild" in a suburb of Kampala and killed four people, including two policemen and another soldier. The Ugandan government deployed police and the Violent Crime Crack Unit (VCCU). The killer escaped.

June 22, 2006: The district commissioner of Lira district claimed that the LRA has been driven out of Lira and Apac districts.

The Ugandan government also reported that a new oil well with oil in "commercial quantities" had been drilled near Lake Albert.

June 23, 2006: The Ugandan government wants a UN-backed force to deal with the LRA. Ugandan also wants the UN to pressure Congo and Sudan to cooperate with Uganda in fighting the LRA. Ugandan has received cooperation from UN peacekeepers in Congo, but the Ugandan government claims the LRA still has a base in northeastern Congo.

June 26, 2006: The Sudanese government reported that over the weekend Sudanese forces attacked and killed four Ugandan LRA fighters in south Sudan. The Sudanese Army killed three LRA rebels and the police killed one. The incident took place in Sudan's Central Equatorial state. Uganda has been encouraging the Sudan government to root out LRA holdouts still in south Sudan.

June 27, 2006: Teenage (under-18 year old) soldiers are to be discharged from the army. Despite low pay and precarious living conditions, a job in the army is seen as an attractive proposition by many young Ugandans. But, bowing to UN pressure, the army will stop taking those under 18, and will find and discharge under-18 soldiers.

July 18, 2006: Ugandan security forces reported they engaged ADF rebels in Hoima district (western Uganda). One ADF rebel was killed and one
arrested. The Ugandan report said that the ADF is "regrouping" inside the Congo (DRC).

July 23, 2006: The Ugandan government threatened to attack LRA "forces" inside the Congo (Democratic Republic of Congo) if the current Sudan-mediated negotiations fail to conclude with a satisfactory peace agreement. Uganda also has said that Congo lets the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF?another anti-Museveni group) use Congolese territory as a base area.

July 28, 2006: For the past two months stories and rumors have circulated of an impending "deal" between Uganda's government (led by Yoweri Museveni) and the Lord Resistance Army (LRA). The problem is, similar rumors have come and gone since the late 1990s. On July 5 Ugandan president Yoweri Museveni said that it was possible that LRA leader Joseph Kony might get some form of amnesty if peace talks actually produced peace. The problem is that Kony is under indictment by the International Criminal Court in The Hague. Ugandan representatives have met with LRA negotiators in the Sudanese town of Juba (south Sudan) and a new round of talks began in Juba on July 14, with South Sudan's vice-president, Dr. Riek Machar, serving as chief mediator for the talks. On July 18 the LRA negotiators demanded that the Ugandan government create "safe zones" in Gulu and Kitgum (north Uganda). The Ugandan government rejected the LRA's ceasefire proposal. Uganda has demanded that the LRA cease "all forms of terrorism" and stop "all forms of hostilities." The government also says the LRA must "dissolve itself" and turn in its weapons. The peace talks in Juba were "adjourned" on July 24.

July 30, 2006: Over the last two days, there have been unexpected meeting between LRA leader Joseph Kony and a Ugandan political delegation somewhere on the Sudan-Congo (DRC) border. Kony and his followers are now being offered amnesty if they give up.

August 31, 2006: The government believes that if a permanent peace agreement is reached with the LRA, northern Uganda faces years of post-war reconstruction. It is more than a matter of rebuilding destroyed villages. Refugees living in camps must be given enough aid to start their lives again. Some farms and homesteads have been abandoned for several years and that means supplying new farm implements and supplies. Another problem is northern Uganda's transportation network. It largely consists of dirt roads, but these roads have deteriorated through lack of use and maintenance, because of fear of LRA landmines. The political implications of a successful peace agreement are difficult to estimate, but the Acholi tribe of northern Uganda has never trusted the Ugandan government (located in southern Uganda in Kampala). The LRA now has a political organization, the Lord's Resistance Movement. The
LRM has a number of Acholi members who are trying to appeal to the Acholi tribe for support. The LRM is talking about creating a common "northern Ugandan" political agenda. A pan-northern political alliance is unlikely for a number of reasons (including inter-tribal rivalries). Still, this is an indicator that if a resilient peace agreement is reached, the LRA intends to become a political party.

September 1, 2006: Uganda reported that LRA rebels were "trickling" into protected camp areas in south Sudan, per the August 26 truce agreement.

September 2, 2006: The truce between the Ugandan government and the LRA (signed on August 26, 2006) appears to be holding. The truce went into effect on August 29. The build-up to this particular ceasefire agreement deviated from past "pre-ceasefire" discussions. For one thing, Sudanese vice-president and former rebel leader Riek Machar acted as mediator. The LRA's Joseph Kony also emerged to talk to reporters. LRA rebels will not be assembling in northern Uganda (that was a feature of a previous ceasefire agreement). Instead, LRA rebels will rendezvous in south Sudan. Sudanese forces in south Sudan (which are largely composed of former Sudanese rebels who fought with the SPLA) will monitor the LRA's actions and act as a "buffer" between the LRA and Ugandan military units. Uganda still has military units conducting anti-LRA operations inside south Sudan. The Ugandan government and the LRA intend to pursue further peace negotiations. September 12 is Uganda's supposed "deadline" for concluding a peace agreement, but the Ugandan government is already hinting that its September 12 date could be extended. That indicates the peace talks are making some progress. If the peace negotiations fail, however, the truce agreement says the LRA rebels will be allowed to leave the assembly areas in south Sudan. Both the Ugandan government and the LRA have agreed to cease military activities. Interestingly enough, they also agreed to suspend "hostile media and propaganda campaigns" International pressure on the LRA has also increased since 2004. Both Kony and LRA deputy commander Vincent Otti have been indicted for war crimes by the International Criminal Court. The LRA base area in the Congo (DRC) continues to operate, but UN peacekeeping forces have launched several sweep operations in the area. Uganda has accused the UN forces of failing to stop the LRA. That statement is literally true, but the UN forces in the Congo are not the LRA's ally. Current press reports and reports from Uganda have both Kony and Otti hiding out in the Congo's Garamba National Park region (not far from the border of Sudan and Uganda). September 13, 2006: Because the truce with the LRA continues to hold, the government has extended its "peace deal" deadline. The government had originally said that a final deal had to be reached by September 12. The government appears to have used the threat to goad LRA rebels into moving into the assembly areas in south Sudan. At this point, it looks like both sides are interested in
reaching a firm peace agreement that will end the war. The government has asked the UN to "delay action" on a resolution that calls for "joint military action" against the LRA. Uganda has supported that action and said it was necessary to fully enforce criminal indictments against LRA leaders. However, at this point it time it looks like that government believes the resolution would throw a wrench into the peace process. LRA rebels continue to trickle into the south Sudan assembly camps, many coming into Sudan from the Congo. Getting to the areas is tough because of inadequate roads. Also, the rebels are moving on foot. The government said that it expects most of the LRA rebels to reach the assembly points in south Sudan by September 19.

September 8, 2006: Kenya turned over custody of 25 Ugandan rebels to the Ugandan government. The 25 men allegedly belong to the Uganda Freedom Front. Kenyan police arrested the men in late July. They were charged with "unlawful presence" in Kenya. The Ugandan Freedom Front is led by a Ugandan Army deserter.

September 9, 2006: An LRA spokesman told the press that Ugandan military and security forces were deploying along the routes used by LRA rebels to reach assembly areas in south Sudan. The LRA accused the Ugandan government of "obstructing" the rebels' movement. The Ugandan government rejected the accusation and said that Ugandan forces had been instructed to provide food and aid to rebels who were moving toward assembly areas.

September 10, 2006: A UN spokesman said that security in northern Uganda had improved significantly since Sudan-brokered truce agreement between the Ugandan government and the LRA went into effect. In late August the Ugandan government announced that it would begin a $330 million aid and recovery program for war-wrecked northern Uganda. Much of the money will come from international donors. Northern Uganda needs it. Rebuilding villages is a priority, but to make effective use of the aid will require improving the road network.

Ugandan police said they found 32,000 rounds of submachine gun ammunition in the Lwamunda Forest Reserve area. The police described the ammunition as rusted and unusable. The jungle reserve is in Mpigi district, which is in the Luweero Triangle. The Luweero Triangle was a battleground during the 1980s in the war that pitted current president Yoweri Museveni against then-president Milton Obote.

September 11, 2006: The Sudan government reported that "several hundred" LRA guerillas had gathered in the two "safe zone" assembly points in southern Sudan. The two assembly points are located at Ri-Kwangba (western assembly area, near the Congo border) and at Owiny Ki-Bul. LRA deputy commander Vincent Otti is supposedly in the camp at
Ri-Kwangba. September 22, 2006: The Ugandan government said that if peace talks with the LRA failed its forces were prepared to "pursue" the LRA. However, the Ugandan government also acknowledged that former LRA members would have to be "reintegrated into the society."

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September 24, 2006: LRA leader Joseph Kony remains inside the Congo (DRC). Uganda claims that the LRA has a base camp inside the Congo’s Garamba National Park (northeast Congo).

September 25, 2006: The ceasefire has continued to hold, which seems to have surprised both the Ugandan government and the LRA. The LRA rebels continue to arrive in the two south Sudan assembly areas (Owiny-ki-Bul and Ri-Kwangba). It appears that at least 1000 LRA rebels have entered the assembly areas. Early reports that senior LRA commander Vincent Otti was in Ri-Kwangba were apparently untrue. Still, the Ugandan government said it remains "encouraged" and has re-extended its deadline to begin peace negotiations. The peace negotiations do matter, particularly if the negotiations lead to an agreement that will "demobilize" LRA fighters and allow them to return to Uganda. The sticking point will be LRA leader Joseph Kony and his cohorts like Otti, who are under indictment for war crimes by the International Criminal Court. Kony and Otti have no interest in a peace deal that sends them to jail. The Ugandan government is in a bind since it was instrumental in bringing the criminal charges. For its part, the LRA said that it "rejects" the Ugandan government's peace negotiating team that is scheduled to attend opening
talks later this week in Juba, Sudan. The LRA also accused the Ugandan government of sending troops to "threaten" LRA rebels who were in the Owiny-ki-Bul assembly camp. Sudan has let Ugandan troops enter Sudan to conduct operations against the LRA. Another LRA spokesman said the camp as being "besieged" by the Ugandan military.

September 30, 2006: LRA negotiators, who suspended peace talks earlier this week after accusing the Ugandan government of undermining the ceasefire, returned to the bargaining table. The LRA had accused the Ugandan military of "surrounding" and "besieging" the Owiny-Kibul assembly area (safe zone cantonment area) in Sudan. Ceasefire monitoring teams had agreed to investigate the allegations.

October 2, 2006: The Ugandan government said that it believes the LRA received new supplies of weapons during summer 2006. It is also possible that LRA rebels who have not entered the south Sudan cantonment areas are receiving new weapons and equipment. Ugandan critics of the Cessation of Hostilities agreement claim that the LRA will use the negotiating period to re-arm, The Ugandan government said that some of the LRA rebels who have entered the south Sudan "safe zones" have been arriving with new weapons, specifically new AK-47 assault rifles. A few of the rebels were wearing brand new military fatigues. There are also indications that the LRA has received new communications equipment. Who is supplying the new equipment? Ugandan intelligence says it does not know, but some of the new AK-47s have Arabic inscriptions on them.

October 4, 2006: The Cessation of Hostilities Monitoring Team (the group charged with monitoring the ceasefire agreement) said that Sudanese near the Owiny-Kibul assembly area (safe zone) in south Sudan reported that on at least one occasion LRA rebels entered the assembly area then left. On September 16, approximately 45 LRA rebels entered the assembly area. The rebels accepted food available in the area, then left.

October 6, 2006: The Uganda-LRA ceasefire agreement (officially called the Cessation of Hostilities agreement) continues to hold. That said, the rhetorical fire between the LRA and the Ugandan government has increased. Both sides have accused the other of violating the ceasefire agreement and both sides fear being double-crossed. One source reported the Ugandan Army (Ugandan Peoples Defense Force) had increased its activities in south Sudan. The EU has been asked to provide increased humanitarian aid for northern Uganda and encourage both the LRA and the Ugandan government to work toward a comprehensive peace agreement. LRA negotiators now claim that the LRA has 10,000 fighters under arms. Ugandan and Sudanese sources say the LRA has between 1,000 and 2,000 fighters.
October 8, 2006: Only about ten percent of northern Uganda is considered "dangerous." That means convoys need at least one truckload of armed guards when traveling through these areas. The danger is now coming from bandits and cattle thieves (a traditional practice between tribes), rather than the LRA. However, some groups of LRA are moving away from the assembly points (where the gunmen are supposed to receive their amnesty and rehabilitation goodies.)

October 19, 2006: The UN reported that approximately 300,000 Ugandans have left camps in northern Uganda and returned to their homes since the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement was signed August 26.

October 26, 2006: Uganda said it had increased the number of troops on its border with the Congo (DRC). A Ugandan military spokesman said that Uganda is concerned about rebels in the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) attempting to cross the border from bases in the Congo.

October 29, 2006: Some 22 Ugandan soldiers were killed in an ambush in the Karamoja region. The battalion commander died in the ambush. The soldiers were part of a force engaged in a disarmament program disarming Karamojong tribesmen, who had engaged in cattle rustling. The Ugandan military temporarily suspended the disarmament operation pending an investigation of the incident. Eleven Karamojong warriors died in a firefight after the ambush. This was the second biggest ambush in the region. In 1999, 65 unarmed soldiers were slain in an ambush near Kotido.

October 30, 2006: Some 1,000 heavily armed Kenyan Turkana warriors had slipped into Uganda in the Karamoja region. The Turkana had over 5000 head of cattle (presumed stolen in Kenya).

November 1, 2006: The Ugandan government and LRA representatives signed a "ceasefire extension" to the August 26 Cessation of Hostilities Agreement. The extension gives LRA rebels another month to enter assembly areas in Sudan.

November 2, 2006: A group of former LRA fighters have formed a "cooperative society" in order to qualify for resettlement funds and loans through Uganda's "Bonnbagaggawale" (wealth for all) relief and development program. The former LRA fighters intend to return to farming in northern Uganda.

The Ugandan government ordered its military to continue a disarmament program in the Karamoja region. The program was temporarily suspended after attacks by Karamojong warriors killed 22 Ugandan soldiers on October 29.
November 4, 2006: Uganda and Sudan have agreed to a partial withdrawal of Ugandan troops from Sudan. Uganda will withdraw troops from a base at Palotaka, which was established in March 2002. The phased withdrawal is part of the new ceasefire agreement. This is the most compelling indication to date that the Ugandan government believes the peace process will lead to a final settlement with the LRA.

November 12, 2006: LRA leader Joseph Kony met with UN representatives. The meeting was held near the Ri-Kwangba assembly area in south Sudan. The UN representative asked Kony to release all abducted children held by the LRA. Kony denied that there were any children in the LRA. Kony insisted that the LRA was composed only of adult combatants. Kony's denial is false on its face. Many (most) African guerrilla fighters employ abducted civilians as laborers and supply bearers. Often the abducted are children.

November 15, 2006: Soldiers from the Ugandan Army (UPDF, Uganda Peoples Defense Forces) are apparently operating "inside Somalia." The Ugandan troops were helping train supporters of the Somali Transitional Government. Uganda belongs to IGAD (Intergovernmental Authority on Development), an East African regional development cooperative. The Ugandan troops were supporting the Transitional Government as part of an IGAD-initiated training team. The Ugandan soldiers are not deployed as a fighting force but are "entitled to defend themselves" if attacked. The presence of Ugandan troops in Somalia is another indicator that an attempt by the Islamic Courts in Somalia to destroy Somalia's Transitional Government could produce a wider regional war.

November 16, 2006: The UN Security Council demanded that the Lords Resistance Army (LRA) immediately release all "woman and children" abductees still under rebel control.

November 17, 2006: The government denied it had sent any troops to Somalia, although it says a battalion of peacekeepers are being trained for deployment to Somalia.

November 18, 2006: LRA leader Joseph Kony appears sincere in his efforts to end the years of rebellion in northern Uganda. The main problem, then, would be getting the word to all the LRA bands still wandering around the area. Some of the LRA followers will turn into bandits, but that's fairly normal after a rural rebellion like this is defeated.

November 29, 2006: The LRA accused the Ugandan Army of ambushing an LRA guerrilla force in south Sudan. The alleged attack took place near Owiny Ki-bul (one of the south Sudan assembly areas). The LRA alleged that three people were killed in the firefight. The LRA said the guerrillas were heading for the assembly area, as part of the ceasefire agreement.
December 1, 2006: The LRA's Joseph Kony warned that his rebels would go back to the bush and "go back to war" if the peace process fails. Kony was speaking from a camp inside Congo (probably in the Garamba National Park area). Kony was referring to the entire Ugandan peace process but he made his statement after the LRA negotiating team in Juba, Sudan left the peace talks. The LRA quit the peace talks on November 29 after accusing the Ugandan Army of attacking an LRA column in south Sudan.

The army arrested three soldiers who had organized a cattle theft ring in Karamojong tribal territory (Karamoja). The soldiers are accused of using military resources and troops to steal over one hundred cattle. The theft has resulted in attempts by the Karamojong to recover the cattle. A small-scale tribal war has broken out because of the theft. The Karamojong are known to steal cattle themselves. However, the Ugandan military has been trying to stop the "tradition" of cattle raiding as well as "demilitarize" the Karamojong region. Cattle theft with spears is one thing, but cattle theft and raiding with assault rifles has raised the cost in human life. The government may use the trial to make a public example of the three soldiers.

The government says there would be peace in northern Uganda because of the negotiations between President Yoweri Museveni and LRA leader Joseph Kony.

December 6, 2006: The army is "on the alert" for refugees fleeing from the Congo. The government said that it had reports of a new series of fights between the Congolese Army and a rebel faction led by "dissident" General Laurent Nkunda. NGOs reported a wave of refugees were fleeing toward the Ugandan border. Some 12,000 refugees had already crossed the border into Uganda, to escape the fighting in the Congo.

December 8, 2006: Another meeting with LRA leaders is held in southern Sudan. December 12, 2006: The president held direct talks with LRA commanders, in an attempt to finally end years of violence in the north.

December 9, 2006: Uganda is willing to provide troops for an African Union (AU) peacekeeping force in Somalia. Uganda has indicated it would provide at least one battalion of peacekeepers. The Ugandan parliament must approve the mission and there is some debate within Uganda about committing the troops. Uganda does not want to become part of a wider regional war if an intense (rather than low-grade) war between Somali and Ethiopia erupts.

December 11, 2006: Uganda and Rwanda have been discussing increasing military cooperation. At the moment the discussion is focusing on training issues. Both nations are interested in officer "exchange" training
programs, with the intent of moving to joint training exercises. Rwanda and Uganda have both been emphasizing "professionalizing" their respective officer corps. In part that means weeding corrupt officers out of the military. It also means promoting based on performance, not political and tribal connections.

December 18, 2006: The Ugandan government and the LRA extended the truce (Cessation of Hostility Agreement). The truce period will now run through February 28, 2007. With a few exceptions, the truce has held since it went into effect in August. A Ugandan spokesman said that the LRA would have another month (presumably January 2007) to continue to assemble in the south Sudan assembly areas of Ri-Kwangba and Owiny Ki-Bul.

December 20, 2006: NGOs operating in south Sudan and in Uganda have now had a chance to assess the Uganda-LRA peace process. While peace is no guarantee, the consensus view is that unlike earlier peace negotiations, this time both the LRA and the government appear to be serious about reaching an agreement. That's in line with a UN assessment made earlier this fall. The Anglican Church in Uganda has continued to encourage the peace process. There is an interesting twist developing as negotiations within Uganda expand. LRA leaders are reluctant to attend peace negotiations because of the International Criminal Court (ICC) warrants. The LRA's senior commander, Joseph Kony, is currently under indictment by the ICC. Three other senior commanders are also under indictment. Acholi tribal leaders in northern Uganda are conducting some talks on behalf of the LRA. Some LRA members have characterized the fighting in northern Uganda as a war by Kampala against the Acholi. That characterization has some truth to it. Many of the LRA's cadres came from the Acholi tribe, which is a dominant tribe in the north. However, the LRA rebels also attack the Acholi. One read on this is that a number of Acholi leaders simply want the war to stop.

Peace talks between the LRA and the government resumed in Juba, Sudan. The south Sudan government is mediating the talks.

December 21, 2006: Uganda has sent 16 police officers to serve in East Timor as peacekeepers.

The government has offered to send ten bulls to the LRA rebels in the south Sudan assembly areas. The bulls would be offered as Christmas presents. Slaughtering a bull and sharing in a feast is regarded as a statement of friendship. In tribal peace negotiations among the Nuer and Dinka tribes (south Sudan), offering a bull by the chiefs symbolizes public reconciliation.
December 23, 2006: The government believes that LRA leader Joseph Kony is willing to face a trial in Uganda, in lieu of a trip to the International Criminal Court (ICC). Kony's indictment is viewed by many observers as a potential problem in the peace process. Making a deal with the ICC is difficult, but a deal by Kony with the government (in regards to his crimes) is possible. Kony has continually denied any wrong-doing. Kony regards the ICC as being "biased" against him. Of course at one time Uganda's government was his sworn enemy, and it was the government that pressed the ICC for the indictments. But political maneuvering is replacing combat and it may take a "judicial deal" to keep the peace process moving.

December 26, 2006: There are still about 130,000 internal refugees living in UN camps in northern Uganda. While 350,000 internal refugees up north have left the camps, those that remain (and who were supposed to have left by the end of the year) fear that there are still LRA bands, or just a lot of bandits, in the areas where their empty villages are. Actually, there bandits about in the north, and some of them used to run with the LRA. The UN is trying to raise $300 million to run the refugee camps for at least another year.

December 29, 2006: The government accused LRA rebels of attacking the Ugandan Peoples Defense Force's (UPDF ?" the Ugandan Army) chief liaison officer in Juba, Sudan. The attack (called an ambush) took place on a road east of Juba. The UPDF officer was identified as Major Richard Otto. The statement said that Major Otto escaped the attack and wounded one of the rebel attackers. The LRA denied that its fighters had attacked Major Otto and insisted that a UPDF unit had attacked an LRA unit in southern Sudan. That said, both sides invoked the peace agreement (Cessation of Hostilities Agreement), indicating they intend to continue the peace process. LRA rebels are still filtering into the two south Sudan assembly areas.

December 31, 2006: The Ugandan government said that two of the most significant "achievements" in Uganda during the year 2006 were : (1) the successful test well in western Uganda which proved Uganda has oil reserves and (2) the peace process with the LRA. The government believes the peace process will ultimately end the "insurgency in the north" (i.e., northern Uganda).

January 2, 2007: The government said that it is prepared to send a battalion of infantry to Somalia to serve as peacekeepers. The battalion will have at least 1,000 soldiers, indicating that it is a battalion task force (ie, a battalion operating with attached support troops). In early December Uganda indicated it was willing to supply peacekeepers to an African Union-sponsored force in Somalia. A Ugandan contingent would provide more than peacekeepers. It would politically reinforce Somalia's
Transitional Government. The Transitional Government contends that it is the internationally recognized Somali government (which it is). Ugandan participation would also take the "Ethiopian edge" off of the current war in Somalia. Uganda is a predominantly Christian country, but many Ugandans are Muslim (particularly the tribes living in northern and northwestern Uganda). Uganda is Kenya's neighbor to the west, while Somalia forms most of Kenya's eastern border.

January 6, 2007: The World Food Program said that it estimated 230,000 internally-displaced persons (IDPs) returned to their homes in northern Uganda during the year 2006. The August 2006 Uganda-LRA truce is the primary reason for the return. While the Uganda-LRA truce has been shaky, the peace process has held together. Uganda now faces the hard job of reintegrating the returned IDPs. That means reviving farms and small businesses that in many cases no longer exist.

January 10, 2007: The president of Sudan said that his government wanted all LRA bases removed from Sudan. The statement said that Sudan was prepared to help "eliminate" the LRA and that Sudan would pursue "a military solution" if LRA fighters did not choose peace. For years Uganda accused Sudan of backing the LRA, and Uganda has lots of evidence to back up the accusation. However, Sudan later let the Ugandan Army conduct anti-LRA operations in south Sudan. Sudan encouraged the August Uganda-LRA truce and its "south vice-president" has mediated the continuing talks. However, over the past three months, an increasing number of ambushes, murders, and robberies in south Sudan have been attributed to LRA fighters. It appears the Sudan government is sending the LRA a clear message that it must rein in its forces.

January 13, 2007: The government has asked the UN to help provide support for its peacekeeping battalion slated for deployment in Somalia. The government wants money to pay for personnel, but is also requesting body armor and "other military gear" appropriate to deployment in a war zone. The Ugandan force is a "battalion-plus" - a 1000-troop task force. The parliament has not approved the mission but is expected to do so by the end of January. However, Uganda's main opposition party, the Forum for Democratic Change, opposes the deployment, as does its leader, Kizza Besigye. When Uganda first offered to raise and send the peacekeeping contingent, it indicated the battalion would be used to protect Somalia's Transitional Government, then located in Baidoa. Since then the Ethiopian and Transitional Government offensive against the Islamic Courts has driven the Islamist militias into a corner of southern Somalia. Mogadishu, however, remains very unstable. It is not clear if Uganda will permit its battalion to deploy in Mogadishu. Still, there are many places in central and southern Somalia a reliable task force would be useful in security, convoy, and stability operations. Ugandan forces have a lot of experience
in what is sometimes called "counter-bandit" operations -patrolling roads, escorting convoys, and protecting the local population from raiders. That experience is useful in most of sub-Saharan Africa. But the bureaucrats are moving too slowly to get the peacekeepers into Somalia when they could do the most good.

January 17, 2007: The LRA announced that its deputy commander, Vincent Otti, had left Sudan and returned to the LRA's base "inside Congo" (i.e., the Garamba National Park area). Ugandan sources in northern Uganda also reported that several groups of LRA rebels had returned to northern Uganda from Sudan.

January 19, 2007: The Ugandan government said the majority party had approved the government's plan to send a peacekeeping battalion to Somalia. The "straw vote" by members of the National Resistance Movement parliamentary caucus means that it is all but certain that the Ugandan parliament will approve the deployment. Ugandan is considering increasing the size of the troop contingent to 1500 troops. The original proposal called for a 1000-man battalion task force.

January 21, 2007: The LRA issued a statement that said it will not continue to participate in the peace talks in Sudan with Uganda. The statement criticized Sudan's Riek Machar (the peace talks mediator) and said that Sudan was no longer a "suitable" venue for the peace talks. The LRA's distrust of the Sudan government has increased in recent weeks, after Sudan accused LRA fighters of participating in ambushes in south Sudan. The LRA, however, did indicate that it would continue the peace process with the Ugandan government but would only do so outside of Sudan. Needless to say, the LRA position greatly complicates the peace process because the LRA demobilization sites are located in south Sudan. Kenya, Rwanda, and even the Congo could serve as venues for continuing negotiations. On January 12 an LRA spokesman said that the LRA would support talks in Kenya. It is possible that northern Uganda itself could serve as a demobilization site, but the LRA distrusts the Ugandan Army. Sudan said that it would guarantee the LRA fighters safety inside the demobilization sites. Look for this discussion to continue.

January 24, 2007: LRA commander Joseph Kony has apparently agreed to continue the peace negotiating process with the Ugandan government. However, Kony believes that the International Criminal Court warrants for his arrest (issued in 2005) restrict his ability to negotiate. The international warrant certainly limits Kony's ability to go to Kenya, where in all likelihood he would be arrested. February 9, 2007: The African Union has provided funds for the Ugandan peacekeeping force in Somalia. The AU contributed $11.6 million (US). Uganda will send 1,400 troops, including some armored vehicles. Uganda has said that the troops could be in Somalia up to nine months.
February 5, 2007: The Ugandan government said that it was deploying 1000 policemen in the police Anti-Stock Theft Unit to the eastern portion of Pader district. The area has been plagued by cattle rustlers.

February 8, 2007: Sudan's Eastern Equatoria state ordered LRA rebels to leave the region. The LRA was accused of launching attacks and committing crimes in Sudan. These LRA were not participating in the peace talks sponsored by the Sudanese government. Two months ago the LRA was accused of participating in several ambushes in south Sudan of Sudanese civilians. There were also reports of robberies and vehicle thefts. Forcing the LRA to leave southern Sudan is potentially a major setback for the Uganda-LRA peace process. That noted, the Ugandan government has been saying it will continue to negotiate with the LRA and is even willing to consider dropping criminal charges against senior LRA members. The Ugandan government, however, favors continuing the talks in Juba. On February 4, Uganda said that it would take "South Africa and Kenya three months" to "understand the issues of Uganda." The LRA said in January that it would no longer conduct negotiations in southern Sudan. Kenya and South Africa have been suggested as other venues for negotiations, but the LRA commanders also fear that international criminal warrants could be served on them in Kenya and South Africa. Kenya has indicated that it would not host peace talks. The Kenyan government wants the talks in Juba to continue. Uganda has good relations with south Sudan (which is increasingly creating its own regional policy?one slightly different from the Sudan government). Uganda has been negotiating a "bilateral cooperation agreement" with the government of south Sudan. This is basically a trade agreement proposed by South Sudan.

February 19, 2007: The army returned 1,100 cattle stolen cattle to herdsmen in the Karamoja district. The cattle had been stolen by approximately 200 Karamojong warriors. The army recovered the cattle after a firefight with the warriors. At least 80 warriors died in the fight. The soldiers were supported by recon helicopters. The return of the cattle caps a difficult week in Karamoja. On February 12 the Karamojong warriors fired on a group of soldiers and killed four. The army reinforced the brigade (about 2000 troops) in the area and counter-attacked. The cattle were recovered as part of the operation.

February 22, 2007: The LRA said that all of its forces had left the two assembly areas in south Sudan: Ri-Kwangba and Owiny Ki-Bul. Both areas are near the Sudan's border with the Congo. The LRA rebels have "security concerns." But LRA rebels are leaving the assembly areas, which were a key part of the peace negotiations. The ceasefire expires at the end of February. However, both the government and the LRA have indicated they intend to keep the peace process going.
February 28, 2007: The government has contacted representatives of the Islamic Courts militia in Somalia to "discuss" Uganda's peacekeeping deployment in Somalia. The Ugandan peacekeepers will not disarm (the Islamists) but "help the transitional government" (of Somalia) do so. The Ugandans stress that their forces are not a threat to the Islamic Courts. The United States is paying for the peacekeeping mission, via the African Union.

February 28, 2007: The LRA said that it would not renew the ceasefire which was due to expire on February 28. However, the LRA, the Ugandan government, and mediators in Sudan all say that they are interested in continuing the peace process.

March 4, 2007: The head of the Ugandan military is in Ethiopia. He will help coordinate the arrival of Ugandan peacekeepers in Somalia. The Ugandan contingent will deploy 1605 soldiers. The peacekeeping contingent's armored vehicles will be shipped by sea from the Kenyan port of Mombasa to Mogadishu, Somalia.

March 6, 2007: Peace negotiations with the LRA could recommence as early as March 7. The LRA had tentatively agreed to restart peace talks with Uganda, in Sudan. This agreement to "return to Sudan" represents a change in policy by the LRA. Ten days ago the LRA said that it would no longer conduct peace negotiations in Sudan. After a recent attack on civilians inside Sudan, South Sudan officials said that the LRA was not welcome. The Sudan government later said that the LRA was still invited to conduct peace talks in Sudan. The Acholi tribe in northern Uganda has been consulted about the LRA peace talks. Apparently, the Acholi have put pressure on the LRA leadership to continue with the peace talks. The war in northern Uganda has hurt the Acholi tribe. The Acholi have suffered at the hands of both the LRA and the Ugandan security forces. Many LRA members are Acholi, which has enabled Acholi tribal leaders to contact the LRA leadership and encouraging the LRA to continue to pursue a peaceful, political solution to the civil war.

March 16, 2007: LRA negotiators said they would send representatives back to peace talks in Juba, Sudan, if the Sudanese government provides "increased security." The LRA contends that Sudan allowed Ugandan military forces to approach "assembly areas" (safe zones) where LRA fighters were collecting.

March 21, 2007: Sudan reported that "a suspected LRA attack" took place in Eastern Equatoria. One person was killed. However, 2000 to 3000 people fled the area because of the violence. The South Sudan government is still trying to encourage negotiations between Uganda and the LRA. However, LRA gangs - and that is what they are - continue to launch attacks. The LRA groups are probably after food and supplies, but
that thought doesn't help the south Sudanese who are victims of the violence. The LRA contends that its fighters aren't safe in Sudan.

March 23, 2007: The commander of Uganda's African Union-sponsored peacekeeping force in Somalia said that Somalia needs more peacekeepers and needs them quickly. The Ugandan peacekeepers have their headquarters at the international airport outside Mogadishu. At the moment Uganda has 1500 troops in Somalia. That number may increase slightly. Burundi has promised 1700 peacekeepers but that force may be weeks from deploying (because of equipment shortages).

March 27, 2007: LRA guerrillas have left south Sudan and returned to bases in the Congo (Democratic Republic of Congo), apparently inside Garamba National Park.

An army commando unit ambushed a group of Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) rebels in western Uganda. The ADF force was trying to infiltrate from the Congo. Four ADF rebels died in the firefight. The Ugandan troops had been pursuing ADF rebels since mid-March and have killed 61 ADF rebels during that period. The army had been blocking infiltration routes along the Semliki River. This "quiet offensive" has been very successful, although it is very tough to confirm the numbers. However, in March, Uganda sent the Congolese government and UN representatives of MONUC (UN peacekeepers in the Congo) a number of messages about ADF infiltration. MONUC had promised to take action against the guerrilla groups.

April 2, 2007: At least 18 people died in a "tribal clash" in northeast Uganda. The violence was sparked by a cattle raid, which is all too common in the area. Apparently Jie tribesmen attacked Bokora tribesmen. The Jie claimed the Bokora had stolen over 400 head of cattle. The gun battle lasted six hours, and only ended when a Ugandan Army helicopter gunship arrived in the area.

April 3, 2007: Mozambique and South Africa have joined Kenya as new sponsors of the Uganda-LRA peace talks. The government of South Sudan had been encouraging other African countries to use their diplomatic influence to keep the peace process going. The three governments will likely send mediation teams to Juba, Sudan, when peace talks reconvene on April 13.

April 4, 2007: The National Mine Action Program is now in full operation in northern Uganda. From February 9 to April 2, the de-mining teams in northern Uganda had removed over 200 land mines and unexploded ordnance. The unexploded ordnance includes RPG rockets and hand grenades.
April 8, 2007: Families of Ugandan peacekeepers killed in Somalia will receive a death benefit of approximately $50,000 from the African Union. This is an enormous sum for the average Ugandan. The AU is paying for the peacekeeping operation. Uganda has around 1600 troops in Somalia, and is, at the moment, the only AU force in Somalia. Malawi and Ghana have agreed to send troops. Burundi has promised 1700. Nigeria has promised 850 soldiers.

April 12, 2007: A riot broke out in Kampala, with three people killed. One of the dead was an ethnic Indian Ugandan who was reportedly stoned to death. The rioters were objecting to an Indian-owned company's plan to build a sugar plantation in a forest reserve. Ethnic Indians in East Africa are often resented for their success in business.

April 13, 2007: A former president of Mozambique, Joaquim Chissano, met with LRA leader Joseph Kony. Chissano urged the LRA to continue to pursue peace negotiations with Uganda. Chissano is currently serving as a UN representative and observer for the peace talks.

April 14, 2007: The LRA and the Ugandan government agreed to extend their ceasefire.

April 15, 2007: The military said that its offensive against the Allied Democratic Force (ADF) in western Uganda will continue. The army has now either killed or captured 65 ADF rebels since the offensive began in late March. Most of the fighting has occurred in Bundibugyo District. The offensive has consisted of a series of cordon and search operations. The army reported that it has received excellent local intelligence during the offensive (meaning civilians have supplied the army units with information on the ADF's whereabouts).

April 17, 2007: Ugandan police broke up a large political protest. The police action included tear gas and shooting. The protest was sparked by the arrest of two Ugandan members of Parliament who were accused of inciting attacks on ethnic Indians in Uganda.

April 18, 2007: The AU (African Union) is sending eight observers to the Ri-Kwangba LRA assembly area in south Sudan. The observers will stay there indefinitely. The AU has agreed to provide the observers in response to LRA rebel claims that LRA fighters are threatened by the Ugandan military. The observers come from Tanzania, South Africa, Mozambique, and Kenya.

April 21, 2007: The International Criminal Court (ICC) believes that LRA rebels are "re-arming and regrouping." The ICC arrest warrants for four senior LRA leaders remain in force. Those warrants are a point of contention in peace process between the LRA and Uganda. For example,
LRA Joseph Kony face 33 charges of crimes against humanity and war crimes. Kony wants those charges dropped as part of a peace deal.

April 22, 2007: The Congo's army and UN peacekeepers in the Congo (serving with MONUC) will help "monitor" LRA rebel groups moving from the Congo to assembly areas in south Sudan. Uganda has sought the Congo's help in keeping tabs on LRA rebels which use base areas inside the Congo. Uganda also got another concession from the Congo. The Congolese government agreed that it deploy a brigade near the Ugandan border to help control rebels belonging to the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF). Uganda has reported its forces have killed over 65 ADF rebels since beginning a "counter-ADF" offensive in late March. The ADF rebels infiltrate from bases in the Congo.

May 1, 2007: Peace talks officially resumed on April 26 between the LRA and the Ugandan government. However, on April 28 the LRA accused the Ugandan military of attacking an LRA group in southern Sudan. Uganda denied the accusation but the LRA withdrew its negotiation team from the peace talks in Juba, Sudan. However, UN officials begun a round of "short shuttle" diplomacy, moving between the LRA and the Ugandan negotiators. Sudan's government was included in the talks. The UN, along with Kenya, South Africa, and Mozambique, argues that the talks have already allowed almost 1.5 million Ugandan refugees to return to their homes. The UN does not want Uganda's "northern war" to start again. The peace talks began in July 2006 and led to a ceasefire in August 2006.

May 2, 2007: The LRA and the government signed "the second phase" of a peace agreement as part of the continuing peace process. This "Agreement on Comprehensive Solutions," will be part of an eventual "final settlement." The new agreement addresses land distribution and resettlement issues, including the right of refugees to return to their homes in northern Uganda. Interestingly enough, this interim agreement also said that "LRA leaders, combatants, and personnel" should be provided with protection "during the transition from conflict to peace." The LRA claims that it is being harassed by Ugandan military forces in south Sudan. The language, however, is vague enough to ask this question: does it include protection of LRA leaders from International Criminal Court warrants? Senior LRA leaders have been indicted for war crimes.

May 9, 2007: Peace negotiators have worked out how the remaining LRA fighters will surrender themselves and their weapons. LRA fighters in south Sudan have been given two corridors to move through, to Uganda and assembly areas. The estimated 800 LRA fighters will have seven days to reach the assembly areas and surrender. May 8, 2007: Uganda has established an Anti-Stock Theft Unit (ASTU) to deal with tribal cattle raids. The unit operates as a guard force in the Karamoja area and along the border of south Sudan, with the specific mission of keeping Lango-Sudan...
tribesmen from launching cattle raids into Uganda. So far around 1300 ASTU members have been recruited, most of them from districts in the area. Since the tribesmen got access to cheap AK-47s, the cattle raids, which are an ancient tradition, have gotten a lot bloodier. The army confiscated over 46,000 "illegal weapons" in the Karamoja region in the last year. The weapons confiscation program has been going for three years. Most of the weapons were seized in operations designed to stop or control cattle raiders in the region. The army found several weapons dumps during its "cordon and search" operations in the Karamoja border region. You have to wonder if some of the cattle raiders are also engaged in weapons smuggling.

May 22, 2007: LRA rebels kidnapped four civilians in Central Equatoria state.

May 25, 2007: Uganda claims a group called the Peoples Resistance Army (PRA) is operating in the eastern Congo. In 2005, the UN reported that the PRA was an "armed group" operating in the Congo, but there is very little data on the PRA. One of Uganda’s main opposition political leaders is accused of belonging to the PRA. The opposition leader said that the PRA is a fake organization created by the government.

May 26, 2007: The government justifies sending troops to Somalia as part of its "duty" as a member of the African Union (AU). Uganda has taken a great deal of criticism from Eritrea and a number of predominantly Muslim states for deploying peacekeeping troops to Somalia. Several Ugandan opposition parties also oppose the deployment. They see it as a way to criticize the government. The defense ministry has made an interesting point regarding its peacekeeping force. They argued that if the AU had a "standing peacekeeping force" then Uganda would not have had to send 1500 troops to Somalia. A permanent AU-sponsored peacekeeping force for operations in Africa is an idea suggested at least thirty years ago.

May 27, 2007: Senior LRA (Lord's Resistance Army) commander Vincent Otti stated that the "war will continue" if International Criminal Court indictments against him and other LRA leaders are not dropped. Otti also said that the LRA would overthrow the government if the indictments were not dropped. Otti was interviewed in an LRA camp inside the Congo's Garamba National Park.

June 1, 2007: Many Ugandans are wondering why other African Union states have failed to deploy peacekeepers in Somalia. Early on, Burundi and Nigeria promised to send troops; Ghana and Malawi later said they would send contingents. The mission’s high degree of difficulty may be one reason; the nations may not want to get into street fighting in Mogadishu. Some Ugandans are speculating that Uganda should have coordinated with other African nations before quickly committing to send
troops. The number of disgruntled voices in Uganda is increasing. Opposition parties are describing the Ugandan deployment as "another Iraq."

June 5, 2007: The LRA will have an additional three weeks to move its fighters to the Ri-Kwangba assembly area in Sudan, and the LRA had agreed to make the move. Meanwhile, Sudanese reports of LRA rebels marauding in south Sudan continue to crop up. The South Sudan government wants the Ugandan war settled so that it can get on with its own developmental programs.

June 8, 2007: Due to pressure from the business community, the government is considering opening an embassy in Somalia. Trade and business development are two major reasons.

June 10, 2007: For several years the Ugandan government has had a "weapons turn-in" program in the Karamoja tribal region (northeastern Uganda). The Karamoja are cattle herders who occasionally engage in smuggling and raiding. Many tribal warriors acquired cheap automatic weapons, which made their raids a lot more deadly than when all that was used was spears and bows.. Uganda’s program has had mixed successes, mainly because the government did not keep pace with the rising price of weapons. As recently as three years ago an AK-47 sold for around $200, which is a lot of money in that part of Africa. Now AK-47s sell for between $500 and $600. So the government will offer more money for weapons. Meanwhile, the guys with guns have turned their attention from rustling to hijacking, and convoys carrying food are being ambushed with greater frequency. The region has been suffering from a drought and more and more people are depending on outside food aid. Food is always a useful commodity, but in an area afflicted by starvation it is a precious commodity. This could be an indication of even more trouble in northeastern Uganda.

Is the figure credible? Yes. The second point (that ten percent of the population in some regions was abducted) is in line with reports from NGOs working in northern Uganda. There were many reports of entire villages being looted and the villagers being abducted to serve as "support personnel" (carrying weapons, ammo, food, etc).

June 20, 2007: A study by U.S. researchers estimates that the LRA abducted between 50,000 and 75,000 people, from 1986 to 2006. Young women are often used by LRA commanders as "wives," and up to 10 percent become pregnant while in captivity, contributing to the length of their stay. In some LRA-occupied regions, as many as 10 percent of the inhabitants were abducted. While some eventually returned to their communities, others died in captivity. A summary of the report can be
June 29, 2007: In talks held in Juba, Sudan, the Ugandan government and LRA representatives agreed to use traditional tribal reconciliation and peace ceremonies as part of the peace process in northern Uganda. This new agreement will also require reparations, restitution, compensation for deaths and damages. It is not clear how the reparations will be determined. Tribal ceremonies played a role in peace-making in south Sudan, prior to Sudan's 2005 comprehensive peace agreement.

July 2, 2007: Uganda has agreed to rely on Ugandan law to adjudicate "war crimes" committed within Uganda by LRA rebels. This agreement has been in the works for some time. This is a way of finessing the International Criminal Court's (ICC) indictments of senior LRA leaders. There is some question as to whether or not the ICC will agree to drop the indictments even if Uganda claims jurisdiction.

July 4, 2007: The United Nations has helped build an airfield near the Congo's Garamba National Park and not far from the Sudan-Congo border. The airfield has a diplomatic mission: to facilitate negotiations between Uganda and the LRA. The exact location of the airfield is "confidential" but diplomats and locals know where it is. The airstrip can handle small, fixed-wing aircraft. Diplomats and aid officials can fly in and out of the area in Cessnas. Previously, officials had to use helicopters. Building the airfield publicly recognizes the LRA's new "permanent headquarters" in Garamba. For over three years, Uganda has been claiming that the LRA used the area as a base.

July 9, 2007: Uganda held a retirement ceremony for 200 soldiers. The retirements are part of a military restructuring program. Ugandan officers are allowed a maximum of 36 years service. However, some of the men retired had been in the service since 1962.

July 12, 2007: Parliamentary representatives and tribal leaders in the Acholi tribe (sometimes they are the same thing) have gathered a list of "crimes and atrocities" committed by the LRA and the Ugandan Army. The document will be presented at the Uganda-LRA peace talks in Juba, Sudan. It appears the Acholi tribe is demanding "compensation" from the Ugandan government for the crimes committed by both the LRA and the Ugandan Army. That means the Ugandan government pays for the war crimes of both sides. Many southern Ugandans will be suspicious of the claims. While the Acholi suffered from LRA atrocities, many Acholi also fought with the LRA. That noted, the Acholi need help. The Acholi and other northern tribes say that the "displaced person camps" the Ugandan government created to house refugees were also part of the Ugandan government's counter-insurgency strategy. Many tribespeople were forced
to live in the camps. Paraphrasing Mao, the Ugandan government was trying to deny the LRA rebels the "sea" where the guerrilla "fish" swam. All of this noted, the crimes committed against the Acholi and other northern tribes deserve to be examined. Several Ugandan religious leaders advocate the establishment of a "reconciliation commission" ?"possibly one similar to South Africa's reconciliation commission.

July 19, 2007: The Karamojong disarmament campaign and weapons turn-in program has had some significant effects on the cost of weapons. The cost of an AK-47 has quadrupled since May 2006. Back then, you could buy an AK-47 in Karamojong land for $180-200. The going price now is around $750 (or 1.2 million Ugandan shillings). The price of ammunition has also increased. Why is this good news? It makes mayhem more expensive. When the Karamojong were rustling with spears, that was one kind of problem. Spears are deadly but they don't kill like automatic weapons.

July 24, 2007: The Army said that a captain was killed in an ambush conducted by Karamojong tribesmen. Two soldiers were also wounded. The Ugandan force (part of the Army's 19th Battalion) reported it was chasing a "gang" that was planing a raid into Kenya. Most likely the raiders were going to steal cattle. Kenya has been reporting theft and assaults by raiders crossing the Uganda-Kenya border. Kenya and Uganda have both traded allegations about these attacks. Uganda claimed it arrested a Kenya security guard who was involved in a theft in Uganda. Kenya has said that the Ugandan Army has crossed the border into Kenya and that within the last month, rogue Ugandan soldiers had robbed a Kenya business. It is possible that Ugandan soldiers have chased cattle thieves cross the border.

July 25, 2007: The rebel LRA (Lords Resistance Army) claimed that it needs an infusion of money in order to continue to participate in the ongoing peace talks in Juba, Sudan. More delay tactics or a shakedown? Possibly. However, the LRA may have a legitimate case. The LRA statement said that it needs the money to pay for travel by LRA leaders. It also needs cash to fund other diplomatic activities involving "reconciliation" in northern Uganda. The LRA is also fighting the International Criminal Court's indictments of its senior leadership. That requires lawyers.

July 30, 2007: Uganda is having another bout of "sand versus the sown" ethnic warfare. The pastoralist Balaalo tribe have clashed with the Bagungu, who are farmers. Earlier this summer the Balaalo began moving their cattle to new pasturage and the movement crossed Bagungu farmland in Uganda's Buliisa district. The Bagungu accused the Balaalo of "trampling" their property. The Bagungu also told government leaders that
their tribe has "lost confidence" in the Ugandan government's ability to protect them and their farms. One reason was a decision by a Ugandan court which ruled that the government could not immediately evict the Balaalo from Buliisa land. A Ugandan government official reported that the Bagungu were planning on attacking the Balaalo. President Yoweri Museveni then personally intervened to stop the violence. While the politics are complicated, Museveni appeared to back the Bagungus' damage claims. Tensions continue, but the last thing Uganda needs is another tribal conflict.

August 5, 2007: Congolese military officers returned four captured Ugandan soldiers. The Ugandans were captured on July 29 when Congolese soldiers claimed the Ugandans illegally crossed the border.

August 9, 2007: The army said that one of its units exchanged gunfire with a group of Pokot cattle herders near the Kenyan border. One tribesman was killed. The troops captured 15 more herders and claimed they had been involved in a series of cross-border attacks and cattle raids.

August 10, 2007: The government announced that it would fund a new "consultative process" in northern Uganda in order to facilitate the peace negotiations with the Lords Resistance Army.

August 11, 2007: Soldiers from the Congo had occupied a disputed island (Rukwanzi Island) in Lake Albert. The problem began on August 3 when a British geologist was killed in an attack near the island. The Congo said that its soldiers were responding to shots fired from Uganda. On August 9 the Congo admitted its soldiers were involved in the shootout. Rukwanzi Island is used as an anchorage by Congolese fisherman, but Uganda claims the island based on colonial maps. Uganda has discovered oil near Lake Albert.

August 15, 2007: With reports circulating that Congolese security personnel have been "harassing" Ugandans who are sailing on Lake Albert, the Ugandan government has advised Ugandan citizens to stay away from Rukwanzi Island. This advisory comes as Ugandan and Congolese military officials are trying to conduct a joint investigation of the August 3 shooting on Lake Albert, and calm tensions in the region. Those tensions have spawned some interesting speculation and rumors. The Congo government is supposedly concerned that Congolese opposition leader Jean-Pierre Bemba may use Uganda as a base for launching attacks into the Congo. That sounds far-fetched, but it is the kind of rumor that the Ugandan government could use to its advantage in negotiations over the Lake Albert incident. Officially, Congo has apologized for the Lake Albert incidents. But the Congolese government doesn't have complete control over troops and officials in the Lake Albert area.
September 3, 2007: Nearly a hundred poachers surrendered to security forces. The line between bandit activity (like poaching) and guerrilla activity is often very hazy. The poachers operated as a loosely knit group with a leader—a gang might be an apt description, but gangs sometimes morph into guerrilla bands. The poachers said they had been buying ammunition from Ugandan Army soldiers. This is another example of military corruption and indicates that the Ugandan Army's "professionalization program" has a way to go. Extensive poaching is one reason the Ugandan government is looking for investors in "game ranching." Wild animals would be "raised" on these Ugandan ranches. Tribal hunters would be allowed to hunt on the ranches and sell the game meat, which fetches high prices in many African cities. This would turn a "crime" into a legitimate industry. Exotic game ranches exist in the U.S. and elsewhere, and they have been financially successful. It's likely that international big game hunters would want to hunt on Uganda's game ranches, which would also create jobs. However, hunting is a tradition and in Uganda disgruntled local hunters present a political problem as well as a police problem. The game ranches might be part of the solution. -- Austin Bay

September 5, 2007: The United States just nudged the LRA (Lord's Resistance Army). The U.S. was now ready to help "apprehend rebels" (ie, LRA fighters) if the on-going peace talks failed. The US believes said that existing UN resolutions provided a basis for providing assistance to Uganda. The peace process continues, but the LRA is once again accusing the south Sudan government (which is sponsoring the talks) of favoring the Ugandan government.

September 7, 2007: Many refugees are beginning to return to northern Uganda, particularly the Gulu region. This was the center of the LRA war. Many of the "internally displaced persons" (IDPs) were farmers. The Ugandan government and various NGOs want to help get them back into the farming business, which means supplying the returnees with farm tools and seeds. The young people who were abducted, however, present a vexing problem. Many of them essentially served as supply carriers for the LRA, or simply lived in refugee camps. They lack the skills to farm, and some of them are no longer so young. Twenty-somethings returning home but lacking employable skills are a recipe for future trouble.

September 18, 2007: Uganda and Rwanda traded accusations about the People's Redemption Army (PRA). Uganda claims that the rebel organization is supplied and supported by Rwanda. Rwanda rejects the accusation. Uganda claims Rwanda agreed to end support of the PRA in 2003.

September 19, 2007: The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) believes plans for a joint Congo-Uganda attack on LRA bases in the Congo would be treated
as "a declaration of war." The LRA will withdraw from the current peace process and "bring war back to Uganda" if Congolese and Ugandan forces attacked their base in Garamba National Park (northeast Congo).

September 29, 2007: Violence in the Karamoka region has diminished. The army believes the drop is due in large part to the disarmament program. The government has also been encouraging the Karamojong tribe to become farmers. The Karamojong are traditionally pastoralists (cattle raisers). They also operate as cattle rustlers. Rustling, unfortunately, often morphs into smuggling and other banditry.

October 4, 2007: The army has increased its troop strength along the Kenyan and south Sudanese borders. The new troop deployment is part of an agreement with the Karamojong tribe to protect the region from cattle rustlers operating from Kenya and Sudan.

October 7, 2007: Uganda's Buganda tribal region (basically central Uganda, an area sometimes called Baganda) is once again talking about forming its own country. Every so often Uganda's regions talk of secession. The Buganda claim that the government has taken Bugandan land without just compensation. They also claim that the government has favored other parts of Uganda in terms of investment. The Buganda have a king who actually has a large compound outside of Kampala, and some Buganda assert that the government has the long-term aim of weakening the King's traditional power. There are approximately six million Buganda, and their complaints cannot be ignored.

October 9, 2007: Ugandan peacekeepers deployed in Somalia reported a grenade was thrown at a "detachment position" in Mogadishu. There grenade caused no casualties.

October 11, 2007: The government has asked "the international community" to once again put political pressure on the LRA to fulfill its commitment to the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (the official name of the peace process accord signed by the LRA and Uganda). The LRA was supposed to assemble in south Sudan. However, the senior LRA leaders have returned to their bases in the Congo (in Congo's Garamba National Park, a huge jungle region).

October 18, 2007: Uganda has 1600 troops in Somalia as a peacekeeping force, and has been providing security for the Somali Transitional National Government. Ugandan forces are deployed at the Mogadishu airport and at the seaport. Ugandan military "force protection" in Mogadishu has improved. Ugandan personnel use armored vehicles when moving about outside their camps. There are no plans to increase or decrease the number of peacekeepers in Somalia, though opposition political leaders have been pressuring the government to withdraw the troops.
October 18, 2007: Senior army commanders met with representatives of the UN's MONUC Congo peacekeeping force to discuss how to "dislodge" rebel groups operating along the Congo-Uganda border. Ugandan specifically mentioned the LRA (Lords Resistance Army). The Ugandan military statement describing the meeting used the phrase "joint operations" to describe possible Ugandan Army and Congolese military operations against rebel groups.

October 20, 2007: The army is coordinating operations with UN peacekeepers (MONUC) across the border in Congo. MONUC is launching an offensive against Ugandan rebels (Allied Democratic Forces, or ADF), near Lake Albert. Ugandan troops are deployed to intercept and arrest any ADF rebels that flee across the border to get away from MONUC.

October 22, 2007: Some 8,000 Congolese fled across the Uganda-Congo border into Uganda to escape attacks by militiamen under the command of dissident Congolese general Laurent Nkunda.

October 23, 2007: Opiyo Makasi, a senior commander in the LRA, surrendered to UN peacekeepers in the Congo. The UN confirmed the surrender. Makasi was identified as the LRA's chief of operations and logistics. Makasi surrendered in the Congo's Orientale province. Makasi is not one of the LRA commanders indicted by the International Criminal Court.

October 27, 2007: Apparently, the LRA is selling food aid bought with funds provided by Switzerland, Austria, Denmark, and Sweden. The aid is delivered to LRA assembly areas in South Sudan. Peace negotiators are concerned that if the reported diversion of food aid is true that the LRA could use the money to buy weapons.

October 29, 2007: The EU, Canada, Holland, Denmark, and Sweden have contributed $7.7 million to help pay for the costs of the peace talks between Uganda and the LRA. The money will go into the Juba Initiative Fund, which was established last summer to support the peace process. The UN will handle disbursement of the funds.

November 2, 2007: Uganda is buzzing with a rumor that two of the LRA's top commanders have had a falling out. The LRA's top leader, Joseph Kony, is supposed to have had a major disagreement with LRA deputy commander Vincent Otti. Kony is believed hiding out at an LRA base in the Congo's Garamba National Park (northeast Congo). The LRA has split into factions before. Some of the splinters were quite tiny – a handful of people. However, Kony and Otti are the two political powerhouses in the LRA. A rift between them is politically significant and could affect the peace negotiations. It's also believed that a pro-Otti faction and a pro-
Kony faction engaged in a firefight on October 10. Over 30 people were allegedly slain in the fight.

November 3, 2012: Somalia said that his country relies on AMISOM’s peacekeeping force to defend it and stabilize the country. He also made it clear that the Ugandan Contingent (Ugandan Army component of AMISOM) plays a major role in fighting the Al Shabaab Islamist militia and the war against Al Shabaab is at a critical moment. The withdrawal of Ugandan soldiers would place Somalia at risk. The Ugandan Army (Ugandan Peoples Defense Forces, UDF) has around 5,000 soldiers in Somalia. AMISOM has 17,600 peacekeepers on duty. The Somali government said that it has not yet heard anything officially from the Ugandan government regarding threats by Uganda to withdraw its peacekeeping contingent. Uganda is angry at a UN report which accuses it of supporting Congolese rebels. The Somali government was responding to a report that the Ugandan government is seriously considering withdrawing Ugandan security forces from regional peacekeeping efforts in Somalia and the Central African Republic (CAR). The Ugandan forces in the CAR are pursuing the Lords Resistance Army. Uganda also has soldiers in South Sudan who are participating in the anti-LRA operation.

November 12, 2007: Ugandan Army soldiers reported they fought a battle with members of the Congo rebel militia the FDLR. The firefight took place along the Congo border. Apparently several FDLR militiamen were observed crossing the border. The Ugandan troops tried to arrest the militiamen. Four FDLR militiamen were killed in the exchange of gunfire. The UN and Congo have been trying to get both Rwanda and Congo to help contain Nkunda's operations and deny him supplies.

November 15, 2007: A spokesman for LRA senior commander Joseph Kony denied reports that LRA deputy commander Vincent Otti was dead. However, the spokesman said that Otti was under arrest.

November 17, 2007: Islamic fighters in Somalia have been threatening to attack Uganda’s peacekeeping contingent in Ethiopia. On November 15 an Islamist group made a specific threat to "target" African Union troops. In Somalia that means Ugandan troops. Today an attack took place in Mogadishu (the "K-4" neighborhood). Uganda reported that one Islamist fighter died in the firefight. There were no Ugandan casualties.

November 19, 2007: Rumors continue to swirl that LRA deputy commander Vincent Otti is dead. The UN's special peace negotiations envoy to the Juba peace talks, Joachim Chissano, was quoted late last week as saying that it is "possible" that Otti is dead. The LRA continually suffers from factional disputes, but a split between LRA commander Joseph Kony and Otti represents a major breakdown. Chissano and the UN are very worried this deep split will harm or halt the peace process.
November 30, 2007: An LRA defector is insisting that LRA deputy commander Vincent Otti was "executed" in October 2007. The order to kill Otti was given by the LRA's senior leader, Joseph Kony. According to the defector, Otti's execution took place on October 2. A Ugandan spokesman said that if the report proves to be true it will not change Ugandan policy. Uganda intends to "continue the peace process" with the LRA.

Seven LRA fighters surrendered to UN troops in Congo's Ituri province. The UN will repatriate the LRA fighters to Uganda. The LRA fighters surrendered under terms of the amnesty promised by the Ugandan government.

December 7, 2007: Despite demands by domestic political opposition leaders, Uganda continues to "hold steady" its peacekeeping force in Somalia. Currently 1,600 Ugandan soldiers are serving in Somalia.

December 8, 2007: An outbreak of Ebola virus, that began in September has, continued to spread. At least 30 people have died from the disease. Another one hundred to three hundred people are described as "at risk" of contracting the disease. Four medical workers have died from it. Disease is a huge problem in developing countries, but Central Africa is one of the world's "disease incubators." Medical skills are scarce in most developing countries. The loss of medical personnel to an epidemic not only has immediate effects (ie, fewer doctors and nurses to treat victims), but the loss degrades long-term development efforts.

December 15, 2007: Uganda and Congo agreed to reestablish full diplomatic relations in 2008. Congo and Uganda have diplomatic contacts on a daily basis, but formal, full relations were broken during the Congo civil war because Uganda was supporting insurgent groups, primarily in the Congo's Ituri province. The Congo also accuses Uganda of "plundering" Congolese natural resources.

December 17, 2007: An Ugandan religious leader belonging to the Uganda Joint Christian Council (UJCC) said that an LRA negotiating team in Kampala had promised to release abducted women and children as a "sign of the LRA's commitment to peace." No one has an accurate number of how many abductees the LRA still holds, though the figure is thought to be several hundred.

Uganda said that its Ugandan security personnel had arrested 20 Rwandans who are suspected of belonging to a Rwandan Hutu militia force operating in the eastern Congo. The men were found at a refugee camp inside Uganda. Earlier this year Uganda reached an agreement with the Congo to help police rebel and militia activity in the Uganda-Rwanda-Congo border area.
December 22, 2007: New rumors continue to appear regarding the disappearance and apparent death of LRA deputy commander Vincent Otti. The latest is that Otti arrived at an LRA base in the Congo sometime in October. He was arrested then executed by the personal guards of LRA commander Joseph Kony. The charge against him was "spying."

December 25, 2007: The government is trying to get Congo to cooperate in dealing with the Lords Resistance Army (LRA), if the Uganda-LRA peace process completely stalled. Talking in public about this "what if" serves a political purpose, i.e., to prod Kony into returning to peace negotiations. Kony remains at an LRA base inside the Congo. He has objected to a January 31, 2008 deadline the Congolese government has given the LRA to leave its territory. The LRA says the Congolese government is acting on behalf of the Ugandan government to violate the cessation of hostilities agreement.

December 27, 2007: A group of LRA rebels attacked the town of Duru in the Congo (near the Congo-Sudan border). The LRA rebels looted the several buildings in the town then fled.

December 28, 2007: The military reported that on November 13 its troops had intercepted a weapons shipment made by the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) guerrilla group. Ugandan security personnel captured a motorboat.

December 31, 2007: The Army announced that it plans to recruit 4,000 new officer cadets and soldiers. In the last 18 months the military has retired 1,600 soldiers. Some of this is normal attrition, but a number of the retirements were part of a program to improve the military's professionalism.

January 4, 2008: Ugandan business leaders and security personnel have begun complaining about Uganda's "over reliance" on Kenya as a transportation hub and route for supplies. Uganda is landlocked and Kenya's port of Mombasa is economically vital to Uganda. When post-election trouble erupted in Kenya, shipments to Uganda through Kenya were drastically curtailed. Several Ugandan government sources and news media outlets reported that gas stations ran out of gas and air flights (i.e., domestic flights in Uganda) were grounded due to lack of aviation fuel. For several years Uganda has contemplated improving its railroads and adding rail connections throughout eastern Africa. A long-term disruption of traffic to Mombasa would damage severely Uganda's economy. Uganda will be looking for other alternatives? including possible connections through Rwanda to Tanzania. One Ugandan newspaper said that when Kenya sneezes, Uganda catches a cold."Kenya and Uganda have a close relationship, but the violence in Kenya has told Ugandan planners that they cannot take Kenyan stability for granted.
January 9, 2008: Uganda and the Congo are coordinating plans to expel the LRA’s Joseph Kony from his base camp in the eastern Congo. Kony is in the Garamba National Park. To put the Uganda-Congo decision in a political context, the "coordinated expulsion" is designed to pressure Kony into returning to the Juba peace talks.

January 10, 2008: The army captured eleven armed men belonging to the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) rebel militia across the border in Congo. The eleven were disarmed and turned over to Congolese border guards. FDLR militiamen have frequently crossed the border to attack and loot Ugandan villages for food and other goods.

January 14, 2008: Some 4000 to 6000 Kenyan refugees have crossed the Uganda-Kenya border. The government has begun providing food supplies for the refugees. The Ugandan Red Cross is running several refugee reception centers to help the Kenyans. At the moment the number of refugees has not overwhelmed Uganda's capacity. However, continuing violence in Kenya could change the situation.

January 21, 2008: The government denied accusations by Kenyan opposition leaders that it was sending soldiers to Kenya to help support Kenyan president Mwai Kibaki. The rumor had caused great consternation in Kenya – which may have been the reason it was spread.

January 27, 2008: It is believed that LRA rebels in the Congo's Garamba National Park are "reorganizing." This appears to refer to reorganizing the LRA's political cadres. A few days ago it was confirmed that former LRA deputy commander Vincent Otti was dead. Otti had been a major advocate of engaging the Ugandan government in peace talks. There have also been rumors of changes in the LRA's peace negotiations team. Uganda has threatened to attack the LRA's bases in Garamba if the LRA does not agree to a peace deal by January 31.

January 29, 2008: The Ugandan government agreed to extend its January 31 "deadline" for the IRA to sign a peace treaty. LRA spokesmen have been accusing the Ugandan government of preparing to return to war. The peace negotiations are scheduled to resume later this week.

January 30, 2008: Another wave of Kenyan refugees have left Kenya and entered Uganda, fleeing ethnic violence in the wake of a recent election. In the past, the refugee traffic has gone the other way. Refugees fleeing LRA violence in northern Uganda have sought temporary safety in Kenya. The big flood was during Idi Amin's reign of terror in the 1970s. Kenya protected thousands of Ugandans, including educators and religious leaders.

February 4, 2008: The government denied accusations that Ugandan soldiers were involved in the violence in Kenya. This charge has been
made several times in the last three weeks by various Kenyan groups in western Kenya.

The US military's Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) has been helping pay the costs for drilling water wells in northern Uganda (Lira, Pader and Kitgum districts).

February 7, 2008: Because of alleged LRA attacks in South Sudan, several senior South Sudan leaders have called on the government of South Sudan to quit acting as mediator in the peace talks between the LRA and the Ugandan government.

February 8, 2008: In northern Uganda, food supplies for IDPs (internally displaced persons) are low. This will affect the Ugandan government's resettlement and returnee programs. The programs are part of the peace process with the LRA.

February 10, 2008: Peace mediators at the Juba peace talks said that they have teams investigating charges by the Government of South Sudan (GOSS) that LRA rebels have launched numerous attacks on civilians in South Sudan. South Sudanese officials have asked the Ugandan government to help stop the raids. This is something of a conundrum. If the Ugandan Army helped stop LRA movements in Sudan it would be accused by the LRA of violating the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (the current document that frames the Uganda-LRA peace process).

February 12, 2008: The renewed peace negotiations are not going well. The LRA negotiating team staged a walkout, protesting what it called U.S. interference. The LRA negotiators were referring to an American proposal made this year that senior LRA leaders (like Joseph Kony) should surrender to the Ugandan government. The LRA has also unveiled a new demand. The LRA wants 35 percent of the Ugandan Army's command slots to be allotted to "people from northern and eastern Uganda." The core cadres of the LRA come from the Acholi tribe, which lives in northern Uganda.

February 19, 2008: The Ugandan government said that it had signed a deal with the LRA that crimes committed by LRA commanders during the war would be "tried under a special division of the High Court of Uganda." The deal is an attempt to circumvent the indictments of senior LRA commanders by the ICC.

LRA negotiators quit the Juba peace talks after the Ugandan government said that it would not promise positions in the government to LRA rebels. The LRA is also at odds with the mediation teams and the Ugandan government over finances. Since mid-2007 the LRA has complained that it lacks the funds to support its end of the negotiating process.
February 21, 2008: The International Criminal Court (ICC) announced that it would continue to seek the arrest of senior LRA leaders. Despite an agreement by the government of Uganda and the LRA that indicted LRA leaders would be tried in Ugandan courts, the ICC argued that its warrants are still in force. Essentially the ICC is saying that only ICC judges can decide to drop ICC arrest warrants. The LRA has taken the position that it will not agree to a final peace treaty until the ICC indictments are dismissed.

February 22, 2008: The LRA signed a peace deal with the government. Key terms are government protection, for LRA leaders, from prosecution. LRA leaders will also receive government jobs. The terms take effect once the LRA disarms.

February 23, 2008: The ICC decision to continue to pursue its warrants has direct ramifications on the Uganda-LRA peace process. If the LRA does sign a peace agreement, the senior members of the LRA risk facing arrest and trial in an international court. This is the dilemma that most "insurgent wars" confront; over the course of the conflict, war crimes are committed. The ICC indictments of LRA senior commanders are very telling. The leaders are charged with murder, sexual abuse of children and kidnapped women, looting and abduction (mostly of women and children). Judicial institutions in countries like Uganda are at best described as "fragile." That is usually a euphemism for several traits, like corruption, minimal competence, and extraordinary influence of government elites or the military on judicial decisions. The ICC is certainly part of the Uganda-LRA peace process. Maybe they need a negotiator at the table. (Austin Bay)

February 27, 2008: The LRA once again condemned the International Criminal Court arrest warrants for several senior LRA leaders. The LRA has asked the government (its enemy) to demand that the ICC drop the warrants. An LRA spokesman said the warrants had to be dropped if there was going to be a final peace agreement.

March 1, 2008: The government and the LRA reached a series of agreements that mediators claim will "frame" a final peace agreement.

March 5, 2008: The government and the LRA claim they are about to sign a final peace deal, but many Ugandans remain skeptical. The talks have been going on in some form or another since 2006. The LRA has yet to fully demobilize. The critics, of course, have good reason to be suspicious. LRA senior commander Joseph Kony has never appeared at the peace talks, which leaves him with some "wiggle room" in any peace agreement. Kony says he can't show up as long as he remains under indictment by the International Criminal Court (ICC). Uganda is also catching flak from NGO organizations. Uganda has agreed to try Kony in a Ugandan court.
NGOs like Amnesty International say this internal agreement "circumvents international law." Ironically, in this case the ICC indictment hinders peace negotiations and reconciliation efforts – if you happen to believe Kony wants peace.

March 8, 2008: Old rebel wars still cost money. The AlliedDemocratic Forces (ADF) are currently in disarray, occasionally mounting small forays into western Uganda. However, the ADF was once a force with influence and the ability to challenge the government. That was back in the early 1990s. Now Ugandans who had relatives killed during the ADF rebellion want the Ugandan government to "compensate" them for losses. The ADF was particularly active in Uganda's Kibaale district. The government hasn't got that much money. The Ugandan peacekeepers in Somalia are costing more than the government can afford, and money is being sought from the UN to keep the force going.

March 12, 2008: Rebels from the LRA attacked the town of Obo in the Central African Republic (CAR) and kidnapped 80 people. The attack took place sometime during the first week of March. The latest report said "several" people were murdered by rebels wielding machetes. If the report is accurate, it suggests that at least one LRA group has moved from the northeastern Congo and/or south Sudan, likely due increased security presence by Congolese and Sudanese forces.

March 20, 2008: Ugandan media began reporting in mid-March that LRA leader Joseph Kony has moved from Congo to the Central African Republic (CAR). Subsequently, one Ugandan government source confirmed the reports. "Where is Kony?" is a question the Ugandan press asks on a regular basis. The reports look like another rumor, but in light of the March 12 report of an LRA attack in the CAR, it is an interesting rumor. Nevertheless, a Ugandan delegation from northern Uganda (Kony's home turf) is scheduled to have a meeting with him in the Congo.

March 21, 2008: Police reported more trouble between Bakonzo tribe farmers and Basongora herders. One person was killed in the village of Rwehingo (western Uganda).

March 24, 2008: The government reported that on February 12 security personnel arrested a Somali, Ali Abdi Hassan, suspected of belonging to Al Qaeda, at the capitals Entebbe Airport.

March 27, 2008: Government and LRA leaders at the Juba talks have agreed to sign a peace treaty on April 5. The LRA and the Ugandan government have agreed to extend the ceasefire. Apparently Uganda intends to ignore the International Criminal Court (ICC) warrants for senior LRA officials. Ugandan and the LRA have come very close to signing a formal peace agreement in the past. Reaching a peace agreement
should not be dismissed – that means something. However, the real test will come when it comes to dealing with details (like ICC warrants) and implementing the peace agreement on-the-ground. For example, Uganda and the LRA agreed to establish "safe corridors" for LRA rebels in northern Uganda, and the LRA quickly accused the Ugandan Army of violating the agreement. The various ceasefire agreements have been broken, and LRA units continue to make trouble in South Sudan.

April 11, 2008: The Ugandan government reported that 22 Karamojong warriors were convicted of illegal weapons possession. The men were arrested last month. For several years the government has tried several disarmament programs, including buying automatic weapons from the Karamojong. Now the police have started arresting the heavily-armed tribesmen.

April 13, 2008: Uganda and the Lords Resistance Army were supposed to sign a final peace agreement on April 5. Wait and see is the best advice when the LRA talks peace. April 5 came and went but on April 7 negotiators reported that LRA commander Joseph Kony had agreed to sign the new "comprehensive" peace deal (Final Peace Agreement is the official name) on April 10. Some of the diplomatic rewards for completing the peace agreement turned up in the press. For example, the LRA stated that although it is on the US's "terrorist organization list", the US had approved visas for several LRA representatives to come to New York for a UN meeting. Then April 10 came and went. Kony did not sign the peace agreement. Kony demanded "clarification" of the judicial proceedings he and his subordinate commanders will face. Kony and several other LRA leaders face international criminal warrants. Kony then fired several members of the LRA's negotiating team. On April 11 the Uganda government "suspended indefinitely" completing the peace agreement with the LRA. The Ugandan government also stated that unless the South Sudanese mediation team informed it that the LRA was ready to sign the peace treaty it would allow the ceasefire agreement to expire on April 15. The Government of South Sudan's Vice President, Riek Machar, heads the mediation team. Letting the ceasefire agreement expire is a big deal – it is a public statement that says the war has begun again.. The Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (ceasefire deal) has provided the political framework for the tentative peace that holds in northern Uganda.

April 21, 2008: Uganda complained that UN peacekeepers in Congo had failed to stop a faction of the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) from operating in eastern Congo. Uganda remains concerned that the ADF is attempting to reorganize. Over the last two years Uganda occasionally reports ADF "infiltrators" slipping into Uganda from Congo. The last big firefight between Ugandan security forces and the ADF took place in late March, 2006. Despite the complaint, there is some security cooperation,
however. A Congo security force captured an ADF fighter on April 19 and turned him over to Ugandan police.

April 22, 2008: An LRA faction had entered the a village south of the town of Yambio and kidnapped three people. The LRA thugs also looted the town, stealing machetes and hoes. The machetes make sense – the LRA uses them as weapons. As for the hoes? Who knows.

April 29, 2008: Uganda accused UN soldiers operating in eastern Congo of "arming ADF" rebels. The Ugandan statement did not provide any evidence to support the accusation. A MONUC spokesman denied the accusation.

May 9, 2008: Uganda's main negotiating team said that it would give the LRA "one more chance" to sign the peace agreement. The peace deal was originally supposed to be signed by April 10; however, it wasn't. On April 28 the LRA rejected a government "peace ultimatum."

May 13, 2008: The LRA is once again conducting a kidnapping campaign. In the last month or so, 300-400 people have been abducted by the LRA in south Sudan, Congo, and in the Central African Republic (CAR). Could the Uganda-LRA war re-ignite? The fact is, it has never quite subsided. At the moment it looks as if surviving LRA cadres are spread over a very wide area—and are not concentrated in northern Uganda. They are robbing and looting villages from the CAR to Sudan in order to survive.

May 19, 2008: The army reported that they captured 14 men, in the last three weeks, who attempted to enter Uganda from the Congo. Interestingly enough, two of the men belonged to the pro-Rwandan Hutu Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR). The other 12 had quit the militia run by pro-Tutsi commander Laurent Nkunda. Uganda has been worried about infiltration from the LRA and Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) rebel organizations. The latest wave, however, appears to be tribal militiamen who have had it with the various Congolese wars.

May 21, 2008: The US believes the peace process is over. Rumors are that LRA leader Joseph Kony has backed away from reaching a permanent peace agreement.

May 26, 2008: There are Ugandans who have said this was always the case, that is, that LRA commander Joseph Kony would never reach a peace agreement with the Museveni government. Now there are reports that Kony has clearly and unmistakably said he will never sign a peace deal with the Ugandan government. Apparently, Kony has decided to end the Juba peace process, which has gone on for some 22 months. Kony has apparently heard rumors that various commando groups are looking for him (one story specified US commandos). He also fears that he will be arrested and remanded to the International Criminal Court (ICC) for trial.
That fear of Kony's is based in reality. Uganda sought the indictments, got them, then the indictments have proved to be an obstacle to reaching a peace deal. The ICC warrants are still in force. Kony could be arrested and tried on murder charges.

May 29, 2008: The army denied charges that its peacekeeping troops in Somalia have sold weapons to Islamist rebels. The Ugandan statement described the charges as "ridiculous." Uganda has approximately 1600 soldiers serving with African Union peacekeepers in Somalia.

July 26, 2008: Along the Sudanese border, an army patrol ran into a group of 30 Sudanese tribal warriors, smuggling weapons. A battle broke out, and eight of the warriors were killed, while the rest fled back to Sudan. Several automatic weapons were recovered. This gun battle in the bush is part of a disarmament campaign along the Sudanese border. This has been successful, removing about two thirds of the 40,000 illegal guns held by tribesmen in the last seven years. Most of the weapons were recovered through a government "weapons turn-in" program in the Karamoja tribal region (northeastern Uganda). The Karamoja are cattle herders who occasionally engage in smuggling and raiding.

Many tribal warriors acquired automatic weapons when cheap, Cold War surplus AK-47s flooded into Africa from East Europe in the 1990s. This made tribal raids a lot more deadly than when all that was used was spears and bows. Uganda's program has had mixed successes, mainly because the government did not keep pace with the rising price of weapons. As recently as four years ago an AK-47 sold for around $200, which is a lot of money in that part of Africa. Now AK-47s sell for over $700.

So the government offered competitive prices for weapons. Meanwhile, the guys with guns have turned their attention from rustling to hijacking, and convoys carrying food are being ambushed with greater frequency. The region has been suffering from a drought and more and more people are depending on outside food aid. Food is always a useful commodity, but in an area afflicted by starvation it is a precious commodity. This could be an indication of even more trouble in northeastern Uganda. So the government has increased patrols, and the troops have orders to fire on any tribesmen carrying automatic weapons (which are illegal, semiautomatic hunting rifles are OK).

June 21, 2008: South Sudan's Vice-President Riek Machar has reportedly written LRA commander Joseph Kony and asked him to open "direct channels" to him so that the peace process can continue.

June 28, 2008: The Lords Resistance Army is in tatters. The latest Ugandan military figures claim the LRA has only 600 to 700 fighters. The
intelligence is based on statements by LRA defectors and former LRA prisoners (for the most part kidnapped or abducted women and children). Essentially the LRA is down to one unit: Joseph Kony's bodyguards. This used to be called a "brigade" and was named Control Altar

July 1, 2008: South Sudan's Vice-President Riek Machar said that the Ugandan Army cannot operate in South Sudan and should leave. South Sudan had accused the Ugandan Army of killing a Sudanese citizen in a military operation in June.

July 9, 2008: LRA holdouts accused Uganda of attacking LRA bases inside the Congo. The LRA accusation got even more complicated when an LRA spokesman accused Ugandan soldiers of impersonating Sudanese soldiers and crossing into Congo from South Sudan. Uganda denied the allegations.

July 16, 2008: Uganda, responding to allegations that the Ugandan Army had attacked Sudanese civilians, said that the LRA should leave South Sudan, not the Ugandan Army.

July 22, 2008: The Ugandan government is playing fast and loose about peace negotiations. Uganda claims that it is "waiting on Joseph Kony" to sign the peace agreement, but if he fails to sign, it will "consult" with the Congolese and Sudanese governments about "how to deal with the LRA." If this sounds like a big stick (a war threat), well, it is.

July 24, 2008: Relations between the Government of South Sudan (GoSS) and Uganda are increasingly strained. This is a bit unexpected. Uganda was a major supporter of the SPLA (Sudan Peoples Liberation Army, which forms the core of the GoSS). Trade between Uganda and GoSS has increased. Uganda and the SPLA cooperate against the LRA. However, GoSS officials or spokesmen now issued at least three statements that the South Sudanese believe the Ugandan Army has sent troops into South Sudan and had them "masquerade" as LRA rebels. The masquerade has gotten out of hand. One of these attacks took place in early June. Another allegedly took place on June 30. The June 30 attack was a large one, involving at least 30 attackers. That would indeed be a large-scale effort for the LRA, which has withered to a hard core cadre. Another incident occurred on July 23. GoSS accused the Ugandan Army of an attack on a camp site that left ten people dead. On the same day, however, GoSS president Salva Kiir stated that the Ugandan Army had not been "expelled" from South Sudan.

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are depending on outside food aid. Food is always a useful commodity, but in an area afflicted by starvation it is a precious commodity. This could be an indication of even more trouble in northeastern Uganda. So the government has increased patrols, and the troops have orders to fire on any tribesmen carrying automatic weapons (which are illegal, semiautomatic hunting rifles are OK).

Many tribal warriors acquired automatic weapons when cheap, Cold War surplus AK-47s flooded into Africa from East Europe in the 1990s. This made tribal raids a lot more deadly than when all that was used were spears and bows. Uganda's program has had mixed successes, mainly because the government did not keep pace with the rising price of weapons. As recently as four years ago an AK-47 sold for around $200, which is a lot of money in that part of Africa. Now AK-47s sell for over $700.

July 26, 2008: Along the Sudanese border, an army patrol ran into a group of 30 Sudanese tribal warriors, smuggling weapons. A battle broke out, and eight of the warriors were killed, while the rest fled back to Sudan. Several automatic weapons were recovered. This gun battle in the bush is part of a disarmament campaign along the Sudanese border. This has been successful, removing about two thirds of the 40,000 illegal guns held by tribesmen in the last seven years. Most of the weapons were recovered through a government "weapons turn-in" program in the Karamoja tribal region (northeastern Uganda). The Karamoja are cattle herders who occasionally engage in smuggling and raiding.

August 1, 2008: The African Union reported a Ugandan soldier serving with the AU peacekeeping force in Somalia was killed by a "roadside bomb." The soldier was traveling in a six-vehicle convoy outside of Mogadishu's international airport. The Ugandan peacekeeping force is headquartered at the airport. The AU report indicated the bomb was an IED-type (improvised explosive device) as was hidden "in a pile of garbage." Yes, sounds a bit like Iraq. The AU force has around 2600 soldiers. Uganda has 1600 soldiers in Somalia.

August 15, 2008: The army plans on establishing a new "Special Forces" organization. The Ugandan Peoples Defense Force (UPDF) will use elements of the Presidential Guard brigade and the Joint Anti-Terrorism Task Force as building blocks. Ultimately the Ugandan special forces will have airborne, airmobile, and what one source described as "marine" components. Uganda has no seaport but it has many lakes and rivers. Several of Uganda's most promising oil fields are on or near Lake Albert (Congo border area). In fact, one of the main missions of the new Ugandan special operations units will be protecting "strategic assets" (like oil wells and presumably major airfields).
August 21, 2008: And LRQ senior commander Joseph Kony is once again saying he will consider signing a comprehensive peace agreement with Uganda. For the last two weeks mediators in South Sudan have reported that Kony had a new negotiating team. However, the International Criminal Court (ICC) warrants remain a big problem for the LRA. An LRA spokesman said that the ICC warrants remain a problem.

August 24, 2008: An LRA spokesman accused South Sudan of attacking LRA positions near the Congo border. The LRA spokesman said that elements of the Sudan Peoples Liberation Army (SPLA – which is South Sudan's military) launched the attack.

August 26, 2008: The government has reached a deal with the World Bank that will provide almost three million dollars for "demobilizing and resettling" former LRA and ADF guerrillas. The money will help finance the demobilization project that currently involves around 24,000 people (former guerrillas, family members, and some individuals identified as "collaborators"). The project is designed to help reintegrate former rebels into society. This is also a project Uganda can pursue with or without a final peace agreement. As it is, most Ugandans appear to believe any deal reached with the LRA will be broken – most likely by the LRA. A private poll conducted this summer concluded that around 70 percent of Ugandans think the LRA would violate a peace deal. 29 percent think the government would break the deal.

August 27, 2008: The parliament is getting serious about battling government corruption, which is endemic in this part of the world. Two government ministers are under investigation for arranging a land purchase, by the government, of overpriced land owned by one of the ministers. Several million dollars was, in effect, stolen in this deal. The question is, can even parliament make the accusations stick in court. Those accused of stealing from the government have lots of other corrupt officials, including prosecutors and judges, available to help, for a price.

September 6, 2008: LRA senior commander Joseph Kony failed to show up to speak with peace negotiators and sign the comprehensive peace agreement. His failure to show is no surprise, really. He has been pulling this stunt for several years.

September 8, 2008: For the second years in a row Uganda's Karamojo region (largely peopled by Karamojong tribes) is suffering a crop failure. The area has suffered from both drought and floods (too little and too much). The government now estimates that three-quarters of the populace may face famine (the region has approximately one million people). For the last six years the military has been trying to "calm things down" in Karamojo. The tribes are famous for their love of firearms and cattle rustling. The Karamojong themselves are herdiers. A government-
sponsored "weapons turn in" program had some success, but anti-crime operations by the army had more. The famine puts lives at risks but in Karamojo it may mean a new bout of "cattle wars" is on the horizon.

September 13, 2008: LRA fighters have returned to the Congo and bases in or near the Garamba National Park. The LRA rebels are apparently growing food. A little farming makes a lot of sense?the LRA rebels are cut-off from any real supplies unless they launch forays into Congo, Uganda, or Sudan to steal food. LRA leader Kony has warned that his men will fight if Congolese troops or UN peacekeepers come after him in his Congolese hideout. Kony says he is still willing to sign a peace deal, but will stay in the bush even after that is done. There are only a few hundred LRA gunmen left, and only a few dozen core members that Kony can really depend on. Northern Uganda is at peace after years of LRA depredations, but still shattered and nervous from all the LRA violence. But while the government has won, LRA has not admitted defeat.

September 29, 2008: Two ethnic groups in Karamoja (Jie and Dodoth) clashed after a cattle raid. Three people died in a heavy firefight. The Dodoth accused the Jie of conducting the raid.

October 2, 2008: A Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) spokesman accused the government of reneging on promises made as part of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement. The LRA has objected to a recent statement by a senior government official that the rebels should be "starved" in their camps. What the government said (on September 28) was that food aid groups and NGOs should stop supplying food to the LRA camps.

October 14, 2008: Over the last month Uganda has been increasing the alert level of its police forces and military units. The government said that it has received "threats" because it has a peacekeeping force deployed in Somalia as part of the African Union peacekeeping contingent. Attacks within Uganda, perpetrated by Islamist terror groups, were a major worry when Uganda agreed to organize the force. Domestic opponents of the force said that Uganda would become a target. Advocates argued Uganda was already a target for radical Islamists since Uganda had supported South Sudan's fight against the Sudanese Islamist government (Khartoum) and had cooperated with the US in The War on Terror.

October 21, 2008: The ICC has asked the Congolese government to provide "detailed information" on the steps it is taking to arrest indicted LRA leaders.

October 23, 2008: Uganda was selected to serve as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council. Its term will begin in January 2009.

October 25, 2008: The government and a UN report claim that the LRA abducted an increasing number of people during the month of September.
The government believes this is a return by the LRA to "forced recruitment," a tactic used by the LRA throughout the war with Uganda.

October 26, 2008: The government said that 11 members of the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) rebel group and two members of the LRA received amnesty. The former guerillas were required to "denounce their rebellions." The Ugandan government has an amnesty commission that grants amnesty to former rebels. The 11 ADF and two LRA fighters received blanket amnesty.

October 31, 2008: At least 600 Congolese refugees fled into Uganda from the Congo (Democratic Republic of Congo). Since October 28, 8,500 refugees have crossed the border from Congo into Uganda. Most of the refugees are in Uganda's Kisoro district (which lies on the Uganda-Congo border).

November 2, 2008: Everybody shares war in central Africa. Congolese Army troops killed nine LRA rebels after 30 to 50 LRA fighters attacked the small village of Dungu, in the Congo. What's odd about this is that Dungu is over 100 kilometers from Sudan. LRA contingents have been moving from Sudan to Congo and back. The LRA has also attacked villages in the Central African Republic.

An alert issued by the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) said that "terrorists" intend to strike targets in Uganda, primarily infrastructure targets. The alert follows several weeks of claims by the government that Islamist terrorists may hit targets in Uganda since Uganda provides troops for the African Union peacekeeping force in Somalia.

November 5, 2008: The government believes that Uganda's new seat on the UN Security Council will give it another diplomatic chit in its war with the Lords Resistance Army. The LRA's leaders – and specifically, its commander, Joseph Kony?have repeatedly said that the International Criminal Court warrants for war crimes against them are an impediment to peace. Uganda, which sought the indictments, offered to hold trials in Uganda. This dismayed many in "the international community" who support the ICC, but the government thought it might be an offer Kony could not refuse. But refuse he did. Now Uganda will have more political swing in the UN and, who knows, might try and find a way to enforce the warrants. Uganda formally takes its seat on the Security Council on January 1, 2009, but some of the benefits of an impending UNSC seat are already appearing. (Austin Bay)

November 13, 2008: Since the Museveni government came to power in 1986 it has confronted Uganda's traditional "north-south" divide. The war with the LRA in some ways reflects this division. The LRA largely comes
from the Acholi tribe in northeastern Uganda. Museveni is a southerner. Museveni has, in the view of northerners, favored southern tribal groups. This is one reason the government's "recovery and reconciliation program" (part of the peace process with the LRA) has focused on "reconstruction" efforts in northern Uganda. However, the northerners aren't "sold" on the government's sincerity. The Ugandan press makes that evident. This is one reason LRA die-hards refuse to surrender. They think if they can hang on long enough, government reconciliation programs will fail and the north will be ready to rebel again. This is why LRA senior commander Joseph Kony still claims the LRA is fighting "against the marginalization of the north" (ie, northern Uganda).

November 14, 2008: While the Congo has numerous troubles already in eastern Congo, LRA raids in Congo in September (which killed at least 200 people) have led to new regional security talks between Uganda and the Congolese government. The Government of South Sudan may also be involved. The Government of South Sudan knows that the Sudan government (in Khartoum) has used the LRA as a "tool" against Uganda. If trouble erupts between north and south Sudan the LRA could be a "north Sudanese tool" for use against the south. A UN report described the LRA attacks in Congo were "systematic." The LRA guerrillas abducted approximately a hundred Congolese children. They also abducted children in a series of attacks in Sudan. This is an old LRA tactic. The children was used to carry supplies. Over time they may become "LRA recruits."

Several thousand more civilians have fled the Congo violence, and crossed into Uganda. So far, about 15,000 refugees have arrived.

November 28, 2008: Uganda's internationally-directed mediation team issued a statement designed to put pressure on the LRA's Joseph Kony. Negotiators said that Kony "must" sign the peace agreement by the end of November 2008. However, the mediation team did not say what would happen if Kony does not sign the agreement. Congo and Uganda have indicated they would take combined military action against the LRA. Of course, the LRA appears to have anticipated this. LRA cadres are now operating in the Central African Republic. Will the demand motivate Kony? He still faces arrest warrants issued by the International Criminal Court. An LRA spokesman said on November 27 that Kony would sign it.

December 1, 2008: Another promise broken -- but few actually believed LRA commander Joseph Kony would sign the peace agreement. Kony reneged on promises made to peace mediators and said he would not sign "a final peace agreement" until the International Criminal Court (ICC) warrants for his arrest are dropped. The source for the report on Kony's rejection was Riek Machar, vice-president of South Sudan. Macahr is still serving as the chief peace mediator between the government and the LRA.
December 13, 2008: The government has taken a tougher position on the International Criminal Court (ICC) warrants charging LRA leaders with war crimes. At one time the government was discussing trying Joseph Kony and other indicted LRA commanders in Uganda, or in some way adjudicating the charges against the LRA leader inside Uganda. Now the government insists that ICC warrants will only "be deferred" after Kony agrees to a permanent peace agreement and actually signs it.

December 15, 2008: What does the LRA's latest refusal to sign a permanent peace agreement mean? One line of thinking says "not much, same old same old." There is a lot of support for that analysis. The LRA has proved it can defend its hideouts inside Congo's Garamba National Park. There is evidence that it has established temporary bases in the Central African Republic. With north and south Sudan's peace agreement under stress, LRA bands may have greater freedom of action in south Sudan as Sudan Peoples Liberation Army (SPLA) forces focus on their old foes to the north. However, there are a couple of other political actors to consider, at least signals that political conditions in December 2008 aren't what they were in April 2008 when the LRA said it would sign a final peace accord. The LRA attacks on Congolese villages hardened the Congo government's attitude. Congo and Uganda have discussed "joint operations." No one is quite sure what that means, but it could mean a "free hand" for the Ugandan Army to operate against LRA forces in Garamba. South Sudan knows that the north (central Sudanese government) used the LRA as a tool against Uganda, and the LRA could be used as a "northern tool" against South Sudan. That realization may mean a larger anti-LRA coalition is in the works. Sure, similar threats have been made before. The UN peacekeepers in Congo attacked the LRA in Garamba and the LRA survived. But Congo and South Sudan increasingly see Uganda's LRA problem as becoming their LRA problem.

December 17, 2008: Looks like the joint attack is on. Ugandan aircraft bombed LRA positions in Congo (Garamba National Park). The air attacks were carried out with "the support" of the Government of South Sudan and the Congolese government. Ugandan troops have moved into the park and are advancing on known LRA camps. Could this be the end for Kony and his cunning cronies? Could be, and even if it isn't, as a declared international war criminal, there are few places left to run.

December 18, 2008: The Ugandan Army reported that "several" LRA camps in northeastern Congo (Garamba National Park, specifically) have been successfully attacked. The army estimates that "70 percent" of the LRA bases have been destroyed. The report said that the LRA's "main camp" (ostensibly the one used by Joseph Kony as a headquarters) had been destroyed.
December 19, 2008: A senior UN diplomat involved in the Uganda-LRA negotiations said that he supported the Ugandan counter-LRA offensive. The diplomat's statement said the goal of the offensive was to "force" LRA senior commander Joseph Kony to sign the permanent peace agreement. This statement is a huge political plus for the government. It isn't unexpected, however, since UN forces in Congo have supported the Congolese Army in its operations against the LRA and LRA sanctuaries.

December 24, 2008: The government now describes the December 14 attack on LRA positions in Congo as a "joint attack" – meaning conducted with Congolese forces.

December 25, 2008: Congolese and Ugandan government and press sources reported numerous attacks by the LRA on villages in northeastern Congo. An estimated 400 Congolese civilians have been killed.

The government accused the LRA of "hacking to death" 45 people in a church in the Congolese town of Doruma. First reports suggest that 400 people were killed in several attacks on the Christmas Day in the immediate area, with around 200 slain in Doruma. The grisly report of mass murder by machete has a propaganda-information warfare element, but in the past the LRA has used machetes ("pangas" is the local word) and other edged weapons to kill en masse. One reason is that it saves ammunition.

The Ugandan military said that it would reinforce units operating in Congo.

December 27, 2008: LRA rebels reportedly raided the village of Bitima along the Congo-Sudan border. 13 people were killed.

December 31, 2008: AUN peacekeeper operating in northeastern Congo killed a Ugandan Army soldier in an accidental shooting incident in Dungu, Congo. The peacekeeper accidentally fired his machine gun as a Ugandan vehicle was passing near the UN position (a "forward operating base."). The operation in the Dungu area is a "coalition" operation, with coalition forces drawn from Congo, Government of South Sudan, and Ugandan military units.

January 3, 2009: Ugandan operations against the LRA continue inside Congo. The government acknowledges that the "peace process" has stopped. And it blames the LRA's senior commander, Joseph Kony. Responding to criticism that it had "too often chosen the war option" ("war option" is a phrase that crops up in the Ugandan press), the government pointed out right after it began the new offensive against the LRA on December 14, 2008, that the "peace process" had been going on for two years. Kony had agreed to sign a "final peace agreement" in April 2008 and failed to do so. The government believes it has the support of most of the people of Uganda to attack the LRA and eliminate it, or at least
eliminate Kony and then seek negotiations with LRA commanders who have laid down their arms. The big question in Uganda is how northern Ugandans (particularly the Acholi tribe) will react to the offensive against the LRA into the Congo. The government points out that southern Sudan and Congo are both supporting the action.

January 6, 2009: The government believes its offensive against LRA strongholds inside Congo have been largely successful. Both UN and Congolese sources report that the LRA’s retreat towards the Central African Republic (CAR) continues. The Congo and various NGOs operating in northeastern Congo estimate that the LRA cadres retreating toward the CAR killed around 430 people in attacks on December 25 and 26. The UN and Ugandan military estimate that Kony still has 650 fighters. Since the "joint attack" began on December 14, 2008, the LRA forces have broken down into very small groups. There have been reports of LRA activity in the CAR for over a year and that the LRA was preparing to move to the CAR. It now looks like the LRA, at least at a very general level, was prepared to retreat from northeastern Congo in the event of attacks on its bases.

Uganda has begun a two year term on the UN Security Council, and is urging the UN to be more aggressive and flexible in dealing with violence in Africa. Uganda is particularly interested in getting UN peacekeepers more involved in taking down murderous outfits like the LRA, and out-of-control situations like Somalia. Uganda, however, wants Africans calling the shots on how Western muscle is used. Thus Uganda does not back removing the inept and oppressive government of Zimbabwe. African governments in general, do not want to establish a precedent for non-Africans removing corrupt and ineffective African governments, mainly because there are so many of them.

January 8, 2009: LRA depredations in Congo led to several hundred civilians being kidnapped, and up to 500 more killed. Thousands of civilians fled their homes to escape the LRA rebels, who continue to move towards the Central African Republic (CAR).

January 16, 2009: The LRA has conducted a series of vicious attacks on towns and villages in the Congo. Since January 1, LRA fighters have also attacked several villages in South Sudan. The Congolese government claims at least 500 Congolese citizens have been killed by the LRA since mid-December, when the “joint” Congo-Uganda counter-LRA offensive began.

January 20, 2009: The Congo-Uganda joint offensive against the LRA has failed to nab LRA commander Joseph Kony. Ugandan Army (UPDF) “underestimated” the size of Kony’s forces inside Congo. Based on the LR movements since mid-December, it also appears that the LRA had
prepared plans to withdraw from a large-scale Ugandan attack on its
camps inside Congo, with the Central Africa Republic (CAR) a possible
refuge.

January 21, 2009: The government continues to wrestle with the problem
of “reintegrating” former LRA fighters. Many of them are former
abductees, in other words, victims of the LRA themselves. A few,
however, are guilty of what are clearly war crimes: theft, murder, arson,
and rape. The government wants to make certain the northerners who
had sentimental attachment to the rebels’ calls for a separate northern
state don’t feel punished. The government wants re-settled former
fighters to become economically productive (hence the “farm skills
training” programs the government is funding). However, a lot of
Ugandans think the criminal acts should be punished.

January 25, 2009: The government and several oil companies believe
Uganda has a “world class” oil field. The oil field, named “Buffalo-Giraffe”
(hey, this is Africa), may have 400 million barrels of recoverable oil. The
oil field is in the Lake Albert Rift Basin. Ugandan commentators fear that
Uganda could catch “the oil disease” – oil cash going into the pockets of
corrupt elites rather than being used for investment.

January 29, 2009: A UN investigation confirmed that LRA guerrillas had
killed 100 civilians in the village of Tora (in Congo on the south Sudan
border). The murders took place on January 16.

February 2, 2009: The government said the Ugandan Army operating in
the Congo had rescued 119 Congolese who were abducted by the LRA.
The number represents the total number of rescued since December 2008.

February 4, 2009: The government said that Ugandan soldiers serving
with peacekeeping forces in Somalia did not kill “dozens of civilians.”
Authorities in Mogadishu, Somalia had accused the Ugandans of firing into
a crowd and killing 36 people. Uganda has around 1600 soldiers serving
with AMISOM (acronym for the African Union’s peacekeeping mission in
Somalia) and has announced it plans to add another battalion (around 700
soldiers) to its peacekeeping contingent sometime this year. The Ugandan
contingent has been serving in Somalia since March 2007. Six Ugandan
soldiers have died while performing peacekeeping duties in Somalia.

February 6, 2009: First it was guns and gangs, now it’s drought. For years
the government’s main worry in the Karamoja region was cattle-raiding by
gangs with a lot of automatic weapons. Karamoja is one of Uganda’s
poorest areas and some of the raiders, when arrested, told the military
and police they were stealing to survive. The “weapons turn in” program
had mixed results but the area became a bit more peaceable. Now severe
drought afflicts Karamoja and stealing to survive may really become a
necessity. It's estimated that 970,000 people in Karamoja could starve (to be specific, the people are in an “at risk” situation).

February 15, 2009: Two senior LRA leaders, Okot Odhiambo and Dominic Ongwen are reportedly discussing surrender terms with negotiators in south Sudan. Both men are wanted for war crimes by the International Criminal Court (ICC). Their alleged crimes include rape, murder, and forcing children to fight as soldiers. The government believes that more senior LRA leaders may quit the organization -- a pay-off of the attack on LRA bases inside Congo.

February 16, 2009: The Congo government extended the mandate allowing Ugandan forces to operate inside the Congo against LRA rebels.

February 22, 2009: Despite assertions by the Congolese government that Ugandan forces will begin withdrawing from the Congo by the end of February, it appears some residual Ugandan force will remain in the Congo. Officially, Uganda is looking at a February 28 withdrawal date. However, the LRA may have killed 900 to 1000 Congolese civilians since mid-December 2008 when the joint anti-LRA operation began. The Congolese civilians are complaining to the UN, to the Congolese government, and to the press. A quick Ugandan withdrawal would leave the Congolese in northeastern Congo vulnerable.

February 26, 2009: The LRA's bloody reprisals against Congolese civilians and the brutal retreat of LRA units towards the CAR (attacking and looting villages in the process) has been a political disaster for the LRA. Previously, the LRA had been able to rely on sympathetic northern Ugandan tribes (particularly the Acholi) for political support. Northern Ugandans fear political domination by southern Uganda. Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni is viewed by many as an autocrat (which he is) but poll the Acholi and they see him as a dictator. That noted, sympathies for the LRA are fading, and LRA Joseph Kony in particular. So what will end this LRA’s latest campaign of violence and looting? Likely the arrest of Kony. The International Criminal Court (ICC) warrants for his arrest (for war crimes) remains active.

March 3, 2009: Members of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) have moved into the Central African Republic (CAR). LRA fighters attacked a CAR security patrol near the "tri-border" area (Congo, Sudan, and CAR). At least two CAR soldiers died in the attack. The Ugandan government now believes that LRA senior commander Joseph Kony has slipped out of Cong and avoided a trap laid by Congolese and Ugandan forces in the Congo's Garamaba National Park.

March 5, 2009: The government claimed that it had captured a senior LRA commander, Thomas Kwoyelo. The statement identified Kwoyelo as “the
highest ranking LRA prisoner” to be captured by Ugandan troops operating in the Congo.

March 9, 2009: The presence of many Ugandans in Iraq is making news in Uganda. At the moment several thousand Ugandans are working for private security firms in Iraq. One company acknowledges that it has hired 1,200 Ugandans and they are currently performing security services in Iraq. Hiring Ugandan guards is far less expensive than hiring an American guard. According to one report, Ugandans make $600 a month. It isn’t quite fair to compare a Ugandan guard to an experienced American contractor (who is likely to be a former US soldier) but for many jobs former Ugandan soldiers who know how to use light weapons (especially Kalashnikovs) argue they can do the job.

March 12, 2009: A government spokesman said that a potential “deferral” of the International Criminal Court’s (ICC) warrant for the arrest of Sudan’s president Omar al-Bashir should depend on whether or not Sudan actually carries out its various promises to bring peace to Darfur. This appears to be a way of floating the idea that the same deal might be offered to senior LRA commanders who are currently under indictment for war crimes and crimes against humanity by the ICC. The phrase used is interesting. "Deferment should be tied to performance" (ie, implementation of peace agreements).

March 14, 2009: Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) peace negotiators have told South Sudanese mediators that they want to start a new round of talks in late March with the aim of reaching a final peace settlement. The talks would be held in Tanzania. The LRA spokesman specifically said that they want to find a way for LRA senior commander Joseph Kony to sign the peace deal. If it sounds like same old same old, it is. However, the LRA has lost the use of its bases in Congo’s Garamba National Park (on the Ugandan border). It may still be able to bring forces back into Uganda, but right now the LRA militiamen are a bigger threat to villages in northeastern Congo, south Sudan, and the Central African Republic. The spokesman also demanded that the International Criminal Court (ICC) drop its warrants for the arrest of LRA commanders, including Kony. The LRA has said that the warrants are “not conducive“ to reaching a peace deal.

March 18, 2009: Kenya and Uganda have both promised to keep police and troops from tiny (one acre) Migingo island in Lake Victoria. Both nations have long claimed the island, which little value (except as a place for a few fishermen to set up camp). For several years, the disputed ownership of the island has repeatedly caused diplomatic crises. Before that, the island was underwater. But a prolonged drought caused the water levels to decline, revealing the two large rocks that comprise Migingo island. The problem is that Uganda has more of Lake Victoria
within its borders, but Kenya has more fishermen out there working the waters. Fish stocks in Lake Victoria are declining, which is liable to become a more contentious issue than possession of some rocky islets.

March 19, 2009: The LRA, through representatives in Kenya, is once again calling for new peace negotiations. The LRA statement said that LRA fighters inside the Congo "want to go home" to Uganda but maintained that the LRA was still strong and capable of resistance. The representatives claim that Uganda's offensive in the Congo failed to destroy LRA units. Uganda now estimates that its forces killed at least 100 LRA fighters. This is somewhat lower than earlier estimates which put the LRA death toll at 150.

March 22, 2009: Ugandan commanders reported that Ugandan Army forces in Congo had completed their withdrawal. Twelve Ugandan soldiers died during the anti-LRA operation (code named "Lightning Thunder") that involved forces from South Sudan, Congo, and Uganda. The Congolese government has promised the Congolese Army units will continue to pursue LRA cadres. Both Ugandan and Congo claim that the LRA was badly damaged by the Ugandan offensive and that remnant LRA bands have scattered. That may be true but isn't necessarily good. Reports from the Central African Republic (CAR) indicate that LRA cadres remain in the southeastern corner of that country, having fled the Congo during the Ugandan offensive. Kony's location, as always remains uncertain. Rumors have him in Congo, Sudan, and the CAR. There may be something to the rumors. It's likely Kony, forced from his sanctuary in Congo's Garamba National Park, is constantly moving.

March 24, 2009: Ugandan agreed to send another battalion of peacekeepers to Somalia to serve with the African Union (AU) force. Uganda has around 1600 troops in Somalia (two battalions plus some support personnel). The government indicated that the troop increase would be around 800, bringing the force in Somalia to somewhere between 2400 and 2500 soldiers.

March 25, 2009: The LRA now says that the International Criminal Court's (ICC) decision to indict Sudan's president Bashir demonstrates that ICC indictments are a "stumbling block" in peace negotiations. That's the argument Bashir is making in Sudan, and it is an old one made by the LRA since its senior commander, Joseph Kony, was indicted by the ICC.

Reports traced to refugees suggest that the LRA has received some supplies from outside the Congo, one report alleging the LRA received an airdrop of supplies. That rumor led to a statement from South Sudan that it believed the Sudanese government was still supplying the LRA. The Sudanese national government denied the allegation. Ugandan military sources also think the LRA has received some supplies. Who knows?
Everyone knows that the LRA looted the towns and villages it attacked during the retreat from the Ugandan military offensive -- in other words, the LRA supplied itself by stealing from the vulnerable civilians whose deaths human rights activists deplore.

April 5, 2009: Human rights activists have called the Uganda, Sudan and Congo combined three-month-long offensive against the LRA a "failure." Why? Because those same activists estimate over 800 civilians in the Congo were killed during the operation, most of them by the LRA. The NGOs lambast the Ugandan and Congolese forces for failing to protect vulnerable civilians. Indeed, that is one way to rate an operation -- the cost to civilians caught in the crossfire. However, LRA cadres had attacked vulnerable Congolese villages before -- villages that weren't protected by Congolese forces (military or police) or UN peacekeepers operating in the Congo. The criticisms follow an announcement by the UN made two weeks ago that it would deploy a battalion to northeastern Congo to protect civilians in the area. It does seem clear that the LRA still has fighters operating in the Congo. If anyone knew where the LRA bands were at any time, the LRA would have been wiped out years ago. But the LRA operates like bandits, keeping on the move, and often attacking any villages they encounter, for supplies and slaves.

April 8, 2009: Uganda and Kenya continue to spar over Migingo Island in Lake Victoria. The Ugandan Army (Uganda Peoples Defense Forces) arrested nine Kenyan fisherman earlier this week essentially because they had not received permission from the government to fish in Ugandan territory. Kenya, however, claims that the island lies within its territory. At the moment Ugandan forces occupy the island. A lot of people do not rate this confrontation as particularly serious; Uganda and Kenya continue to discuss building a pipeline through Kenya to transport oil from Uganda’s recently discovered oil fields. However, the dispute recalls the August 2007 firefight between Uganda and Congo over Rukwanzi Island in Lake Albert. That left two people killed, a Congolese and a British citizen.

April 12, 2009: The LRA said that its commander, Joseph Kony, will under no circumstances sign the negotiated peace agreement as it currently exists. Kony is quoted as saying that the current peace agreement will simply lead to his arrest for war crimes by the International Criminal Court (ICC). The LRA argues that the government wants to war to continue and really has no interest in a peace treaty.

April 17, 2009: The government acknowledged that some Ugandan military forces are still operating inside the Congo. The force is described as “small.” The stay-behind force is serving in a liaison role with the Congolese Army. However, the Ugandan Army also acknowledged that a Ugandan officer was killed in the first two weeks of April when a Congolese Army unit fought with LRA rebels.
April 20, 2009: The Ugandan Army (Uganda Peoples Defense Force, UPDF) said that it is investigating charges that the Catholic Church aid agency, Caritas, illegally delivered supplies to LRA fighters. The army said that in late March security officials in south Sudan “intercepted” a convoy of 13 trucks that were taking food from Uganda to eastern Congo. The report from Sudan identified the food on board the trucks as food provided by Caritas. During the long on and off peace negotiations, Caritas has provided food (with Ugandan government approval) to LRA rebels in assembly areas in south Sudan.

April 27, 2009: The Banyoro tribe (western Uganda) has asked the government to recognize the validity of a 1955 colonial agreement which gives the tribe rights to mineral resources on their property. Tribal land rights are a very complex issue in Uganda. The discovery of oil in western Uganda has made it more complex.

April 28, 2009: The government ordered the Ugandan Army to lower the Ugandan flag on Migingo Island (Lake Victoria). Kenya and Uganda both claim the island and it has sparked a sharp political dispute between the two countries. The government has decided to pursue a diplomatic solution. A demarcation panel may rule soon on which country owns the island.

The government reported that fights have broken out in northern Uganda among returning Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). The cause of the trouble is disputes over who owns the land. There have also been violent fights between IDPs and locals, who took over the land when the refugees fled. Returning IDPs was an important part of the government’s peace deal with Acholi tribes who were sympathetic to the LRA.

May 4, 2009: The leftovers of twenty years of war plague the peace, and in northern Uganda it remains a fragile peace. The tribes of northern Uganda confront an unexploded munitions (unexploded ordinance, UXO) problem. The government reported that people continue to turn up LRA ammunition caches, Usually it is a few rifle rounds but sometimes hand grenades turn up. One village, Palukere, had a reputation as a haven for LRA fighters. Farmers around Palukere report finding hidden mortar shells, mines, and rocket-propelled grenades. An unexploded aircraft bomb (delivered by the Ugandan military) turned up near Palukere. The Ugandan Mine Action Center (a mine disposal operation) has identified two minefields that must be cleared. “Deminers” are active around the globe. For example, “forgotten” mines turn up in Cambodia and Vietnam.

June 7, 2009: The Uganda Army (UPDF) and national police reported more violence in Moroto district (eastern Uganda, near the Kenya-Uganda border). This is Karamojong tribal country and is primarily a cattle-herding (pastoralist) area. Over the last ten year the Karamojong have presented
the government with a number of problems. One was a love of AK-47s and the tendency to use them to resolve tribal disputes. The government started a "weapons turn in program" that proved to be reasonably successful in reducing intra-tribal violence. Cross-border cattle raiding (gangs moving from Kenya to Uganda, and occasionally South Sudan) has also plagued the area. It looks like another round of "raiding violence" is occurring, with Karamoja clans both victims and instigators. During the last month authorities have reported numerous murders by armed gangs in Moroto. The raiders attack villages and cattle pens. They also ambush and murder locals who are grazing their cattle. The government estimates it needs another 600 policemen in the area. In May the government increased emergency food support for the Karamoja because of agricultural failures this past spring.

On June 3 the government reported a firefight with cattle rustlers operating in Kitgum (northeastern Uganda -- north of Moroto). The cattle raiders are attacking IDPs (internally displaced persons, ie refugees) returning to northern Uganda after the end of the LRA war. The government reported that many of the raiders come from Kotido district, which is another predominantly Karamojong area. The army is repositioning forces to cover routes on the border used by cattle raiders.

June 10, 2009: UN sources and Congolese administrators report another series of attacks by Lords Resistance Army (LRA) rebels in northeastern Congo. Several villages in Orientale Province (Dungu region) were "burned and looted." The LRA cadres are trying to do several things. The first is supply themselves and that means stealing food. The second is to intimidate Congolese civilians so thoroughly they will no longer be an intelligence source for Congolese, UN, and Ugandan forces. During the Uganda-Congo-South Sudan combined offensive in December 2008, Congolese civilians provided good intelligence about LRA movements as the LRA cadres fled Garamba National Park (Congo).

June 12, 2009: The government asked Congo to quit work on a border post located on disputed territory near Lake Albert. Both countries have oil exploration and development projects in the area. The oil basin in the Lake Albert regional contains at least a billion barrels in recoverable reserves and perhaps more. The Congolese post is just outside of Goli, a Ugandan town in Nebbi district (West Nile Province). Uganda and Congo have several border disputes and the Ugandan and Congolese governments are publicly committed to resolving the disputes peacefully. The latest incident, however, the government calls a "provocation" that violates the agreement to resolve the economic and geographic demarcation issue peacefully. In fact, a joint survey is currently underway. Congolese border police say the new manned post is necessary to stop smuggling. In general, if a watershed leads to the Nile, that area
belongs to Uganda. If it leads to the Congo River (west), the area is Congolese. There are many areas where it’s tough to determine the watershed with precision. If you're watering bananas, this is one kind of problem. If you are dividing rights to a huge oil reservoir, billions (over twenty billion to the winning government) of dollars are involved.

June 12, 2009: The Ugandan Army (UPDF) said it had arrested 11 people in the Gulu and Pader districts (northeastern Uganda). The people are charged with "rebel activity." Gullu and Pader are in Acholi tribal country and were key areas of conflict during the long war with the Lords Resistance Army. The army statement said several of the people detained were former LRA fighters and that the detainees were forming a "new rebel group." The new rebel organization has no formal name.

June 13, 2009: The government confirmed that Uganda has oil reserves of two billion barrels.

June 19, 2009: The former Archbishop of the Church of Uganda has asked that the government of Yoweri Museveni re-start peace negotiations with the Lords Resistance Army. The retired archbishop's request follows a similar appeal by the European Union Council to revive talks with the LRA. The war between the LRA and the government began in 1986. Formal peace talks began in 2006. In spring 2008 the LRA was supposed to sign a final peace agreement but LRA senior commander Joseph Lony reneged on the deal. Kony faces arrest and prosecution by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for war crimes.

June 21, 2009: Recently 134 Ugandan soldiers had graduated from the Counter-Terrorism Course run by the US Combined Joint Task Force - Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA). CJTF-HOA is headquartered in Djibouti.

June 23, 2009: Food crises have a national security dimension throughout the world, but in sub-Saharan Africa this is particularly true. In Uganda, hunger and food shortages in Karamoja tribal regions have led to cattle rustling and looting, and Karamoja raiding parties use automatic weapons. At the moment, parts of West Nile province (northwestern Uganda) and several districts in northeastern Uganda bordering Sudan report severe food shortages. In Karamoja regions (Kenyan border) food shortages are described as "famine level."

July 2, 2009: Uganda is considering passing a law that would permit trying LRA leader Joseph Kony in a Ugandan national court, using the International Criminal Court indictment for war crimes. This sounds technical, but the ICC has said there is a way to make this work. Presumably Kony would be tried in Kampala instead of The Hague, Netherlands. The Uganda venue might be more attractive to Kony; he would have supporters on hand and as these things go, if Kony signed a
permanent peace agreement, the government might urge the court to be lenient.

July 3, 2009: A senior military commander asked the Kenyan government to disarm Pokot tribal warriors who are conducting cattle raids across the Kenya-Uganda border into Uganda. The Ugandan military is trying to disarm Pokot and Karamojong tribesmen in order to reduce violence and stop cattle rustling in the area.

July 13, 2009: The government said it would arrest Sudan president Omar al-Bashir if he entered the country. The International Criminal Court (ICC) has issued a warrant for Bashir's arrest. The charge is war crimes in Darfur.

July 16, 2009; Is the Uganda Peoples Front (UPF) for real? The "new" rebel group may also go by the name Popular Patriotic Front -- or is that another rebel organization, preparing to operate in western Uganda (around the oil fields)? The government claims the UPF exists and has roots in the north. The government has an alleged UPF "organization document" available on the internet. Last month the government claimed that former Lords Resistance Army supporters in northern Uganda (Gulu was mentioned) were planning on starting a new resistance group. The accused northerners say the government is lying. The government claims that the would-be rebels have a three-part agenda: (1) remove President Yoweri Museveni from power and end his dictatorship; (2) create a democratic government; (3) "peaceably" transfer power in Uganda via elections to "succeeding" democratic governments.

July 27, 2009: The UN reported an "influx" of some 1900 Congolese refugees into south Sudan (from Congo). The refugees were fleeing attacks on their villages by Ugandan rebel LRA bands operating in the Congo.

July 28, 2009: The government said that security units had deployed near the Rwanda-Uganda border in order to stop attacks on Rwandan refugees by Ugandans. The trouble began in April. Rwandan refugees claim that 70 refugees have been killed (some hacked to death with machetes) since April. Ugandan police have verified the claim. Many of the Rwandans are Tutsi and Hutu who escaped during the 1994 Tutsi genocide in Rwanda and do not want to return home. The government says the trouble began in a dispute over land rights with native Ugandans.

July 31, 2009: The Ugandan Army engaged in a heavy firefight with Jie tribe warriors in Karamoja Sub-region (Moroto district). The Jie tribesmen had attacked a location near the town of Lolelia in an attempt to steal cattle. Six tribesmen were killed in the firefight.
August 11, 2009: Kenya said it does not plan to disarm tribes living along its "sensitive" borders with Uganda, Sudan, and Ethiopia. Uganda has been pressuring Kenya to help disarm tribesmen conducting cattle raids along the border. The Kenyan government claims its tribes are "peaceful," especially when compared to Uganda's Karamojong who are "killing themselves" with raids and banditry. Kenya would consider large-scale tribal disarmament initiatives if both Sudan and Ethiopia cooperated. Kenya is concerned that if it takes light automatic weapons away from tribes like the Turkana, traditional enemies across the border, like the Karamojong, will attack them. This is actually very similar to what Uganda said last month. Uganda acknowledged that efforts to stop illegal weapons trafficking in the Karamoja region are not going to work if the tribes cannot protect their communities. Cattle raiding has increased as food shortages have increased throughout the region due to prolonged drought. The situation is one of constant, low-grade tribal war that reaches across international boundaries. Ugandan military and police units have begun protecting some tribal livestock in "guarded kraals" in barrack areas. The army, however, does not want this job since husbanding livestock is time consuming and isn't a military mission.

August 15, 2009: A senior LRA peace negotiator, David Matsanga, operating out of Nairobi, Kenya, has resigned. Matsanga did this because he may run for president of Uganda in 2011. The reason he gave for his resignation is interesting. The LRA no longer operates from northern Uganda. It is based in east Congo and perhaps the Central African Republic. It also has (likely) some camps in south Sudan. Matsanga says those areas are "outside his mandate" as a peace talks representative.

August 19, 2009: The government is rejecting claims that the Army (UPDF) committed "atrocities and genocide" in north Uganda during its war with the LRA. These claims have been made by human rights NGOs in the past. However, a former UN under-secretary is also making the charges that evidence exists that the military committed significant human rights abuses during the long war against the LRA. The government takes these claims seriously, for many reasons. One is that the peace process in north Uganda remains tentative and perilous. The Acholi (a northern tribe) do not trust the government. A second reason is that several senior LRA commanders, including senior commander Joseph Kony, have been charged with war crimes by the International Criminal Court (ICC). The government initially wanted those charges made. Subsequently, they have proved to be something of a problem during negotiations with the LRA since the senior LRA leaders face jail if they surrender. If the LRA can be charged, perhaps senior government leaders can be as well. The ICC sword may cut both ways.
August 31, 2009: Uganda now has 2700 troops deployed with the African Union peacekeeping mission in Somalia (AMISOM).

September 3, 2009: The government reported that on September 1, seven gunmen entered northern Uganda (Moyo district) and at gunpoint forced a group of Ugandan farmer to uproot their crops. The gunmen told the farmers they were on Sudanese territory. One source claimed the gunmen were South Sudanese soldiers, from the Sudan Peoples Liberation Army (SPLA). On September 2, the Government of South Sudan (GoSS) said it was completely unaware of the incident. On September 3, Ugandan demonstrators, protesting the government's failure to protect them, shut down a customs post at Afogi. A spokesman for a group of Sudanese merchants (“border traders”) said they feared reprisal attacks from angry Ugandans. The incident instantly strained relations between South Sudan and Uganda, though they are allies against both the LRA. During the Sudan civil war, Uganda provided long-term support to the south Sudanese.

September 5, 2009: The Government of South Sudan (GoSS) said it is investigating the incident that occurred on the South Sudan-Uganda border on September 1. The GoSS said that it believe policeman attacked the border farm, not soldiers as first reported. The GoSS said that it intended to keep “excellent relations” with Uganda.

September 7, 2009: The Ugandan Army (UPDF, Ugandan Peoples Defense Force) reported that its forces have pursued LRA cadres into the Central African Republic (CAR). The pursuit is part of the “continuing offensive” against the LRA. The offensive began on December 15, 2008 with a strike on LRA camps in the Congo's Garamba National Park. Most Ugandan units withdrew in March 2009 from the Congo, but Uganda kept liaison officers and intelligence units there to monitor the LRA. How does the army supply its light units engaged in anti-LRA recon and strike operations? Uganda actually lacks the equipment to conduct sustained parachute airdrop operations, but the Ugandan Peoples Defense Air Force (UPDAF) has had training in conducting humanitarian aid airdrops. US Air Forces-Africa (17th Air Force, air component of AFRICOM) has trained the UPDAF to do this. Uganda has had to deliver aid by parachute drops in northern Uganda. The same skills quickly translate to supplying a light infantry unit operating along the CAR-Congo border. All the UPDAF needs (to make it completely legal) is overflight permission from the Congo and CAR government. The Congolese government is Uganda's ally against the LRA, so presumably overflight rights from Kinshasha can be easily obtained.

September 8, 2009: The East African Community (EAC) is trying to help Uganda and Kenya resolve their border dispute which centers on Migingo Island in Lake Victoria. The EAC consists of Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi,
Kenya, and Tanzania. An attempt to conduct a joint border survey failed earlier this year.

The government claimed that “criminals” among the demonstrators had tried to burn police stations in the area. The government cryptically claimed unresolved security issues were the reason it denied the Bugandans permission to visit the area north of the capital. The government also shut down a radio station owned by the Kingdom of Buganda. Five people died in the protests and armed confrontations.

September 11, 2009: Police and military units confronted Bugandan tribe protestors in Kampala. The government reported that police opened fire on “pockets of trouble” outside Kampala where protestors were building barricades and setting fire to stacks of automobile tires. The protests broke out earlier in the week when the King of Buganda was denied permission to visit a tribal area north of Kampala.

September 19, 2009: Five Ugandan soldiers serving with the African Union peacekeeping force in Somalia (AMISOM) were killed when Somali Islamists belonging to the Al Shabaab organization detonated two car bombs. A total of 17 peacekeepers were killed in the attack.

September 24, 2009: A spokesman for the LRA said that senior LRA commander Joseph Kony had contacted the government. Kony allegedly wants the government to agree to a ceasefire and then resume peace talks. The spokesman also said that Kony believes the Juba peace accord is “dead” and the peace deal must be renegotiated. Yes, this announcement has been made on a regular basis by the LRA for the last four or five years. In fact, on September 4th the LRA withdrew from peace negotiations mediated by South Sudan – the “negotiate then withdraw from negotiations” oscillation. Though the LRA’s official announcement did not address this issue, diplomats in the region believe Kony wants a peace agreement that will guarantee he will not be arrested and prosecuted for war crimes by the International Criminal Court (ICC). The ICC charged Kony with 33 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity. At one time the Ugandan government indicated that it was willing to consider a deal with Kony where he would face trial in Ugandan courts. That suggestion never went past the discussion stage because the ICC would not retract the indictments.

September 25, 2009: The government reported that around 1.2 million Internally Displaced People (IDPs) have returned to their homes since the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement was signed in 2006 with the Lords Resistance Army (LRA). Most of the 1.2 million were living in protected camps in northern Uganda. Another 600,000 IDPs, however, have not returned to their homes. “Homes” is not the word the government uses, since many of the IDPs homes have been destroyed or (in some cases)
have been taken over by squatters. The government uses the phrase “area of origin” – meaning the district or sub-district in which the IDPs originally lived. Another recent report indicated the IDPs who have not returned have not done so because they face land disputes with squatters or with other tribes. The drought has also made food resources scarce and farming difficult. It is a hard choice, but in the camps the IDPs do receive food aid and emergency assistance.

The Bugandans accuse the government (specifically, they accuse President Yoweri Museveni's National Resistance Movement, NRM, political party) of playing off one tribe against another, in a manner similar to the British colonialists. The Bugandans argue that the NRM's policies are aimed at minimizing Bugandan influence with the intent of eventually dividing the Bugandans politically and ending their autonomous rights. The Bugandans also accuse the government of favoring the Bunyoro tribe in a long-running land dispute between the Bugandans and Bunyoros. Tribal politics is a big deal in Africa, because there are still over 500 major tribes active (with tribal leadership in place and operational) and most African nations possess several dozen tribal groups, who are quite serious about preserving their traditions, and political power.

September 30, 2009: The Bugandans are protesting again, and Bugandan protests are always big trouble in Uganda. Bugandans are demanding autonomy for their tribe. If “Buganda” (also called Baganda) looks a lot like “Uganda,” it's because the British colonialists used the tribe's name to describe the region. The Bugandans were the dominant ethnic group in what is now southern Uganda, and the King of the Bugandans still has a tribal court located in Kampala, the capital. When Uganda achieved independence in 1962, the Bugandans were granted a degree of autonomy (a “semi-federal” relationship with the government).

October 15, 2009: Police officials in Uganda's Karamoja region banned the sale of home-made gin in the region. The police say Karamoja warriors get drunk on the gin and then become more violent. Also, many local arms smugglers may be involved in the gin business.

October 20, 2009: The military began joint training exercise Natural Fire 10. The exercise involves 1200 personnel from five East African countries and the United States. The exercise is designed to improve the ability of the participating forces to operate together and to improve their ability to respond to a humanitarian crisis (e.g., natural disaster, wave of refugees, food crisis). Uganda, Kenya, Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania, and the US are participating in the exercise, which will last ten days. The exercise has a regional security angle (training involving convoy operations and operating vehicle checkpoints is on the schedule), but will also include working on engineering projects and running medical programs. Around 450 US troops will deploy during the exercise.
October 23, 2009: A senior Al Shabaab spokesman (Somalia Islamist group) threatened to launch suicide bomber attacks on Uganda and Burundi. The spokesman threatened to bomb targets in Kampala (Uganda's capital) and in Bujumbura (Burundi's capital). Both Uganda and Burundi have troop contingents serving with African Union peacekeeping forces in Somalia.

October 24, 2012: The government announced that it is reconsidering its participation in the Somalia AMISOM peacekeeping mission because of what it called a false accusation by the UN that it is supporting the Congolese M23 rebel movement.

October 27, 2009: Three LRA fighters surrendered to the army in West Nile province (northwestern Uganda). One of the rebels who surrendered said that they had been in the Central African Republic (CAR) in early October near the town of Obo. Their group was attacked and its senior commander killed. There was no information on who conducted the attack against the LRA group, though past statements from the defense ministry have suggested Ugandan intelligence detachments are monitoring LRA movements in eastern Congo and along the CAR border. The defense ministry also reported that though there have been no recent LRA attacks inside Uganda, there are indications that some LRA groups have recruited fighters from South Sudan and the CAR. This is the kind of information that defectors and surrendering fighters provide.

October 30, 2009: Police and security forces discovered and deactivated a bomb found in a building located on a major city street in the capital. The discovery of the bomb follows threats by the Somali Islamist group Al Shabaab that it would conduct terror strikes in Uganda.

November 5, 2009: A senior LRA leader, commander Charles Arop surrendered to a Ugandan Army (UPDF) intelligence unit which is operating with the Congolese Army in the eastern Congo. Ugandan liaison officers and detachments continue to operate with the Congolese Army in its fight against the LRA. Arop said he fled an LRA base in Congo's Garamba National Park in December 2008, as Ugandan and Congolese troops launched their joint offensive. Arop initially had around 100 LRA fighters with him. Since then the men with him have either surrendered or been killed. This suggests that that the Congolese Army managed to keep the pressure on Arop's contingent, forcing it to constantly move. Arop is accused of directing a massacre in the Congo town of Faradje on December 25, 2008, as his fighters raided the town. Over 140 people were killed in the Faradje incident. This means it is very likely Arop will face war crimes charges.

November 9, 2009: Though senior government officials publicly scorned threats by Somali Islamists to attack targets in Uganda, the security
agencies are taking precautions. Though many doubt Al Shabaab has “the reach” to put its own suicide terrorists into the capital, Ugandans have long accused Sudan's Islamist government of propping up the Lords resistance Army (LRA). Given Islamist connections throughout East Africa, it is not a big leap of the imagination to think that Somalia’s Al Shabaab Islamic terrorist group could use Sudanese intelligence as a resource to attack Uganda. The government does not want to frighten away visitors (especially tourists who will spend hard currency), which in part explains the official scorn.

November 18, 2009: The UN Security Council condemned LRA attacks in the Congo, CAR, and southern Sudan. The council resolution, however, also commended governments for improving the ability of their security forces to take coordinated actions against the LRA. The council has directed MONUC (UN Mission in the Congo), UNMIS (UN Mission in Sudan, monitoring the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement), MINURCAT (UN Mission in the CAR and Chad), UNAMID (African Union-UN “hybrid” peacekeeping force Darfur) and BONUCA (another UN operation in the CAR) to also coordinate efforts. Presumably this will improve intelligence sharing.

An official spokesman said that a Special Forces unit operating in the CAR has killed a senior LRA commander. The firefight took place on November near the village of Obo (eastern CAR, near Sudan border). The government spokesman identified the slain LRA commander as Okello Okutti.

November 19, 2009: Security officials reported the military killed 34 Karamojong tribal warriors in a series of firefights that occurred on November 13 and 17. Approximately 200 warriors attacked two villages, attempting to steal cattle. A military unit tried to stop the attacks by negotiation but the warriors fired on the unit. The military said it suffered two wounded in the firefights.

November 20, 2009: Nine LRA fighters surrendered to Congolese forces. The Ugandan military reported the defectors were turned over to the control of a Ugandan in the Congo (UPDF 69th Battalion).

November 24, 2009: West Equatoria state in Sudan reported a series of attacks by LRA militiamen. The LRA has killed at least seven people in the Nzara area. The Government of South Sudan (GOSS) has repeatedly complained to the Ugandan government about the LRA attacks. At least 200 Sudanese have been killed in alleged LRA attacks since January 2009. There is a domestic Sudanese political angle, too. The GOSS and many south Sudanese claim the LRA is still supported by the national government (of Sudan). The LRA attacks are part of a plan to disrupt the 2010 Sudanese national elections.
The Central African Republic is reporting another firefight between LRA rebels and Ugandan Army forces. There appear to have been a series of skirmishes in mid-November. Around November 18th, an LRA force of approximately 40 militiamen attacked the village of Djemah. Villagers said the LRA had guns and machetes. The attackers killed 11 people. A Ugandan military unit was informed of the attack and it counter-attacked the LRA near the Ngoangoa River. The various reports of this incident provide further evidence that Ugandan special operations teams are operating quite openly in the CAR. So far the CAR government has not officially acknowledged the Ugandan soldiers' presence.

November 25, 2009: The African Union (AU) admits that Burundian and Ugandan troops serving as peacekeepers in Somalia have not been paid for at least five months. The troops last received a paycheck in May 2009. The AU blames donors who have failed to meet financial pledges to support the force. Uganda has lost 37 soldiers since it sent a contingent to serve with UNISOM. Burundi has lost 43.

November 26, 2009: The government is considering a European Union (EU) proposal to deploy 200 EU trainers to Uganda. The EU group will train Somali police and soldiers, perhaps as many as 2000 over 12 months. Uganda sees this as being in its own interest, since it provides the largest peacekeeping troop contingent in Somalia.

November 28, 2009: The King of Buganda (the tribe) and his tribal government are opposing a new country-wide land law. The law gives tenants more rights to oppose a landlord's attempt to evict them. The Buganda tribe controls several large parcels of land in Uganda. The Bugandans claim this is another attempt by the national government to limit traditional tribal rights and powers. This has led to violence and could lead to more. Bugandan tribesmen rioted in September.

December 1, 2009: The government is responding to criticism from South Sudan, Congo, the Central African Republic (CAR), and the UN regarding the LRA. Earlier this year the government contended the LRA had been defeated in northern Uganda. Now, given LRA attacks elsewhere in east and central Africa, the government is clarifying that statement. The Ugandan Army now describes the LRA as “diminished but not yet defeated.” The LRA, the government insists, is not a threat in northern Uganda, but it still (obviously) has active cadres. Analysts in Africa are debating the exact number, but South Sudanese have said that the LRA has up to six forces (cadres), with perhaps a total of 500 fighters. The army is also being more forthcoming about anti-LRA operations outside of Uganda. The army now openly admits it has special forces teams deployed in the CAR (see report of November 19). The new openness is likely spurred by UN calls for closer and more public cooperation in the region,
among nations under attack and in cooperation with various UN peacekeeping operations.

December 8, 2009: A comment by the minister of defense that the tactic of confining civilians to camps in northern Uganda during the height of the war with the LRA was (quote) "an effective military tool for counter-insurgency" has led to new demands for a review of those camps. Most of them were in the Gulu area (which was the heart of the LRA insurgency). The government had argued that the camps were established to protect the civilians, who were “soft targets” as far as the LRA was concerned. Critics said the government forced the civilians to enter the camps. Several human rights organizations also accused the government of failing to provide services (like food and medical aid) to the camps. The first camps were established in late 1996. At the time the government did say having civilians in those camps would allow the Ugandan Army to more freely engage the LRA.

December 14, 2009: The US ambassador to Uganda said that the US intends to help Uganda fight the Lords Resistance Army (LRA).

December 17, 2009: The government reported that three marine police officers (ie, officers assigned to patrol Ugandan lakes) had allegedly fired on a group of Kenyan fisherman. Two Kenyans were wounded in the incident, which occurred on Migingo Island. Migingo is in Lake Victoria. Both Kenya and Uganda claim the island and its fishing ground. The two countries have agreed to resolve the dispute. Uganda maintains a police camp on the island. Kenya accuses Uganda of allowing Ugandans (and occasionally Ugandan police) to physically intimidate Kenyan fishermen.

December 18, 2009: The Italian oil company Eni recently acquired the rights to Uganda’s oil fields. Ordinarily this would cause little comment, except Libya is a major investor in Eni. Libya under Col Mohammar Qaddafi has a bad record for interfering in sub-Saharan African politics. Qaddafi sent Libyan forces to Uganda in 1978-79 to support Ugandan dictator Idi Amin. Qaddafi’s support for Amin is not forgiven nor forgotten.

December 21, 2009: The whispers about getting the International Criminal Court (ICC) to drop war crimes charges against LRA commander Joseph Kony are getting fainter and fainter. For awhile several diplomats made the argument that there would be no agreement as long as Kony faced trial and imprisonment. Kony made the argument, too. He said the charges had to be dropped. Over the years, Kony also said a lot of other things, among them being he would sign a peace deal. He hasn't. The LRA massacres in the Congo (DRC) and South Sudan have solidified disgust and contempt for Kony. The attacks in the CAR only further contribute to a regional hatred for the LRA. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay made a statement on the subject, saying that LRA leaders had
to be tried for their crimes. Pillay added this: "The brutality employed (by the LRA) during the attacks was consistent, deliberate and egregious."

December 29, 2009: Reports of LRA (Lords Resistance Army) activity in southeastern Central African Republic (CAR) continue to crop up. Both CAR and Ugandan government sources report that the LRA are hungry and without food. Uganda now openly admits it has military units in the CAR, hunting the LRA.

January 19, 2010: The Government of South Sudan (GoSS) promised to fight the LRA and drive its cadres out of southern Sudan. Sudan’s Western Equatoria state has suffered numerous LRA attacks. The GoSS has reinforced its military forces in Western Equatoria state.

January 21, 2009: The UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights issued a statement that said LRA attacks in Sudan may be considered as “crimes against humanity” because of the “consistent brutality” displayed in the attacks. A recent study by the UN said that between December 2008 and March 2009 the LRA launched at least 27 attacks in southern Sudan. These attacks resulted in the deaths of 81 people, and 18 children were kidnapped. Many more people (no number given) were wounded or raped. Approximately 38,000 Sudanese fled LRA attacks. The study reported the LRA fighters typically operate in “groups of from five to 20.” This report tracks with Ugandan and Congolese reports that the LRA has “splintered” into small groups (following the December 2008 attack on LRA bases in Congo’s Garamba National Park). The groups are armed with AK-47s and various “bladed weapons” (eg, machete). Most of the attacks in Sudan were conducted with the bladed weapons. Survivors reported the LRA used firearms on people who tried to flee. Survivors also said the LRA thugs often mutilated the bodies of the dead. Kidnapping (abduction) in sub-Saharan African conflicts often becomes enslavement, with the kidnapped serving as porters (for ammo and food) or even sex slaves. This is another reason several international agencies advocate charging the LRA with war crimes. As it is, the International Criminal Court (ICC) has charged several senior LRA leaders with war crimes.

January 27, 2010: Somali Islamists killed one Ugandan soldier serving with African Union peacekeeping forces in Somalia. Uganda now has around 3000 soldiers in Somalia.

January 28, 2010: A bipartisan group in the US Congress asked the US administration to fulfill goals outlined in the Northern Uganda Recovery and Lords Resistance Army Disarmament Act of 2009. (Yes, that is the US legislation's name. You can't make this stuff up.) The US law is intended to help Uganda help reintegrate former LRA fighters into Ugandan society.
and help Uganda's northern areas (the area where the LRA operated) recover from the long war.

January 29, 2010: Uganda faces its own domestic election discontent, with rhetoric reflecting some of the same doubts voiced in South Sudan about Sudan's upcoming national elections. Opposition members from the Forum for Democratic Change party (FDC) issued a statement that said they believe the upcoming elections will not be fair. In other words, FDC senior members think the government intends to cheat in the 2011 national elections.

February 1, 2010: The government is warning its opponents to refrain from exploiting tribal divisions in upcoming elections. The politically correct word in Uganda is “sectarianism,” but instead of referring to religious differences it means tribal differences (though religion can be involved as well). That said, a number of government opponents continually point out that many key government jobs have gone to people who are from west Uganda and have close personal ties to the president.

February 7, 2010: More Ugandans are openly complaining about governmental corruption and corruption in the ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM). Complaints about corruption are not new, but as new elections approach the opposition knows it has an issue with national appeal and is urging investigations into corrupt practices and people in road construction contracting and in health care services. There have also been complaints about “ghosts” in the defense ministry --- which likely refers to “ghost soldiers” on the payroll. “Ghost soldiers” either do not exist or they are former soldiers who are no longer in service but their names remain on a unit roster. Why? Corrupt military and police commanders collect the ghosts' pay checks. The Ugandan military began a program several years ago to professionalize the military and weed out corrupt officers. The government's political opponents, however, don't believe the ghosts have been eliminated.

February 8, 2010: The Ugandan Army said that new reports of infiltration by the Allied Democratic Front (ADF) rebel group are not accurate. The ADF has operated in western Uganda (Rwenzori area). Army officials said that a small ADF faction still has a base in the Congo.

February 13, 2010: A group of cattle thieves in the Karamoja region ambushed an aid worker convoy. One policeman, who was escorting the convoy, died in the attack.

February 17, 2010: The government of the Central African Republic (CAR) reported that LRA rebels kidnapped 10 people. The kidnappings occurred after an LRA cadre launched an attack on two small villages. Ugandan Army special forces operate in the southeastern CAR, assisting CAR
security forces in keeping track of the LRA and occasionally ambushing LRA rebel forces.

February 18, 2010: Another group of Ugandan Army soldiers is preparing for duty in Somalia. The government reported that 1,700 troops in Battle Group Five are in a peacekeeping training course taught by French Foreign Legion instructors.

February 20, 2010: The Army continues to maintain observation posts in northern Congo. The intelligence outposts in Congo's Orientale province monitor Lords Resistance Army (LRA) activities. There have been Congolese Army operations near the towns of Duru, Ngilima, and Dungu which may have been assisted by Ugandan intelligence and special forces.

February 28, 2010: Political tension between the Baganda tribe (led by hereditary king Kabaka Ronald Mutebi II) and the Museveni government is getting worse. The Baganda are Uganda's largest ethnic group.

March 1, 2010: Lieutenant-Colonel Keinerugaba Muhoozi, the son of Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, has been appointed commander of the Presidential Guard Brigade (PGB). The PGB is an elite Ugandan Army unit of around 10,000 soldiers. The unit is in effect the president's personal army. Muhoozi is currently commanding the army's Special Forces, which comprises several thousand commando and counter-terror troops. In effect, the Presidential Guard has become part of the Special Forces. Muhoozi has received military training in both Great Britain and the US. The unit is also tasked with protecting Uganda's oil fields, which are located in the Lake Albert region (Lake Albert basin, northwestern Uganda).

March 2, 2010: Opposition leaders criticized President Yoweri Museveni's decision to make his son commander of the Presidential Guard Brigade. Regime opponents argue the Museveni is grooming his son to succeed him as president. Museveni has been in power 24 years.

March 3, 2010: A police official warned that ethnic tensions between the Bakiga and the Banyoro (in Kibaale District) are once again increasing. The ethnic groups have fought over land ownership and land use rights. There was a clash between the two groups last year that led to the burning of several homes. The Banyoro are also agitating for Banyoro-only political posts (i.e., governmental positions that can only be held by an ethnic Banyoro).

March 4, 2010: The World Bank warned the government that it must take the fight on internal corruption seriously. Failure to address Ugandan governmental and institutional corruption could lead to a cut back (potentially a cut off) in developmental aid. The World Bank believes that a “culture of impunity” exists among corrupt Ugandan officials.
March 5, 2010: It is now believed that up to 350,000 barrels of oil a day will be produced from the Lake Albert region by 2018.

March 9, 2010: An northern Acholi tribe is encouraging a new round of negotiations between the government and the Lords Resistance Army (LRA). The Acholi group is called the Acholi Religious Peace Initiative (ARPI). The ARPI contends that a formal peace agreement will forward peace and reconciliation in northern Uganda.

March 12, 2010: Lords Resistance Army (LRA) senior leaders may be hiding in western Sudan, specifically the southern part of the Darfur region. The Sudanese government denounced these reports. There is a propaganda angle for groups opposing the Sudan national government (Khartoum). Sudan's president Omar al-Bashir is under indictment from the International Criminal Court (ICC). So is LRA leader Joseph Kony. The Sudanese government at one time aided the LRA, and there is evidence that Sudanese intelligence provided logistical support, finances, and weapons. Sudan used the LRA as a tool for fighting Uganda. Uganda was aiding Sudanese rebels in south Sudan. The Sudan government has maintained it ended its support for the LRA years ago.

March 17, 2010: Tombs holding the remains of several Bugandan (Baganda) tribal kings were damaged by fire. The tombs were located in Kasubi (near Kampala). A demonstration ensued after the fire and one person was killed. Tensions remain high between the government and the Buganda as the Bugandans claim the government is denying them traditional rights.

March 26, 2010: One person died and ten people were injured as Bugandan tribal mourners gathered in Kasubi. Officials said the people were hurt in a massive stampede as they gathered at the fire-damaged Bugandan royal tombs. The government is concerned about further demonstrations. Last year Bugandans rioted to protest what they perceive as government intrusions on tribal business.

March 28, 2010: New evidence has emerged that that the Lords Resistance Army (LRA) murdered 321 people in December 2009 in the Congo. The LRA also kidnapped scores of children. It is believed that the LRA savaged the Congo's Haut Uele district (northeastern Congo) over a four day period. Allegedly the LRA cadres posed as Ugandan or Congolese military forces when they entered the villages. European media confirmed attacks occurred, but the death toll is uncertain. This is usually the case. The survivors flee into the bush and hide. No one knows how many people were killed and because of the area's relative isolation, it takes time for the word to reach outside investigators and security forces.
March 30, 2010: In eastern Uganda, the recently reported that a disease outbreak was not smallpox, but chicken pox. The initial identification (which proved false) created quite a stir in eastern Africa. Medical experts who investigated the reports said that smallpox and chickenpox can be confused, and this time, definitely were. Smallpox was declared eradicated in 1979. However, many people are not completely convinced the scourge has been eliminated and believe pockets of so-called wild smallpox may still exist.

March 31, 2010: Ugandan police said a man was under arrest for setting fire to Bugandan tribal royal tombs in early March. The police report said the man turned himself in. The suspect claimed he had received a divine vision which told him to set the tombs on fire. The police report said authorities are investigating the man's mental history. Tensions between the Buganda tribe and the national government over tribal rights continues. The tomb fires set off a series of protests.

April 12, 2010: The Ugandan Army reported that in the first week of April it engaged a Jie Karamojong tribal force in a major firefight which left 41 tribesmen dead. Jie Karamojong raiders had stolen several hundred cattle from the Dodoth. The Ugandan Army pursued the raiders and recovered over a thousand stolen cattle.

April 14, 2010: Ugandan opposition leaders and media are calling the government's decision to buy six SU-30mk2 Russian jets a huge waste of money. The government claims no deal has been signed, but a Russian website published an article that claimed a deal was in the works.

April 18, 2010: A government intelligence report stated that LRA commander Joseph Kony is most likely hiding in Sudan's Darfur region. The report said the government believes Kony left the Central African Republic.

April 21, 2010: Kizza Besigye, leader of the Forum for Democratic Change (Uganda's main opposition group) asked for international monitors in Uganda's 2011 national elections. Besigye has argued that the Ugandan government (and its National Resistance Movement party) cannot be trusted to run a fair election. Besigye also said that many Ugandans fear post-election violence could occur, similar to what occurred in Kenya in 2007.

April 22, 2010: How does the Lords Resistance Army manage to survive? Ugandans aren't the only ones who ask this question. A former LRA commander recently told Ugandan media that the LRA still receives supplies of food, medicine, and weapons. He claimed to have met with Sudan Army officers in Darfur in October 2009. Two senior Sudanese officers met with him and other members of an LRA delegation. The
subject under discussion: renewed cooperation between Sudan and the LRA. The Sudan government denies the allegations. Officially Sudanese support for the LRA ended in 1999. The Sudanese national government let the Ugandan Army begin anti-LRA operations inside Sudan in 2002 (Operation Iron Fist). However, many Ugandans continued to believe and still believe the Sudan national government (in Khartoum) provides some type of minimal assistance to keep the LRA functioning. In other words, Sudan is hedging its bet. The Government of South Sudan (GoSS), the semi-autonomous state within Sudan, could become independent in 2011, and the LRA would be a tool for the north to disrupt the south. The Ugandan Army claims that the LRA now has around 200 fighters but at any one time has several hundred kidnapped civilians providing support (like carrying equipment).

July 6, 2010: The government said it was increasing security in western Uganda. There are reports that members of the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) rebel group intend to cross the Uganda-Congo border. The ADF militia is fleeing from a Congolese Army offensive. The rebels have been hiding out in the Rwenzori Mountains.

July 11, 2010: Two bombs exploded in Uganda's capital, Kampala, killing 76 people. Another bomb was found, unused. The Somali Islamist extremist organization Al Shabaab claimed it had conducted the attacks. One of the targets was the Ethiopian Village restaurant. Ethiopia opposes Al Shabaab. Both Uganda and Ethiopia support Somalia's transitional national government. Uganda has peacekeeping soldiers in Somalia. At all three attack sites large crowds were watching the final game of the World Cup soccer tournament. The government said that it had quickly increased security forces in the capital.

July 14, 2010: The U.S. revealed that US FBI agents had deployed to Uganda to help with the investigation of the July 11 terror attacks. The U.S. does not think the danger in Uganda is severe and the State Department has not issued a travel warning. Tourists are not staying away in great numbers because of the attacks.

July 15, 2010: Al Shabaab issued a statement saying that it intends to launch more attacks on Uganda. The statement said Al Shabaab's attacks are retaliation since Uganda has troops in Somalia serving with the African Union peacekeeping contingent. Over the past two years Al Shabaab has frequently threatened Uganda with attacks on its soil. Al Shabaab also said that the July 11 attack was carried out by its Saleh Nabhan Brigade. Nabhan was born in Kenya. He was allegedly involved in the 1998 attacks on the US embassies in Tanzania and Kenya. He was slain by US special operations forces in 2009. The Al Shabaab attack is viewed by many black Africans as just one more in 2,500 years of Arab attacks on them. The Arabs were the biggest slavers in eastern Africa. After the advent of
Islam, Arab Moslems made a huge effort to convert (usually by force) any tribes that escaped slavery. Christianity came to East Africa very early, via Ethiopia. But when British and German imperialists showed up many of the tribes of the interior became Christian. The fault line, as it is called, between Islam and Christianity runs through northern Uganda. though to be fair it is a very smudged fault line. North of Uganda lies Sudan, and south Sudan is predominantly Christian and animist. The looming north-south civil war could reignite, pitting northern Moslems against the southerners. Uganda would likely be involved (perhaps overtly) as an ally of the south. Al Shabaab would unquestionably support the north.

July 16, 2010: President Yoweri Museveni said that Uganda will retaliate against the Al Shabaab Islamic extremist group which launched the terror attacks on July 11. He said members of Al Shabaab are criminals and cowards. Museveni said that Uganda will add another 2000 soldiers to the peacekeeping force in Somalia. That is one form of retaliation. Around 6000 peacekeepers are now on the ground in Somalia. Museveni has said that should be increased to 20000 soldiers.

July 18, 2010: Security personnel arrested at least 20 more people suspected of being involved in the July 11 bombing attacks. A police report said that the new group of suspects included Somalis and Ethiopians as well as Ugandans.

The government released pictures of terrorist suspects it was still seeking. Some of the terror suspects are Pakistani. The government has emails and other documents to work from. The evidence is piling up about the attack, and who was involved. There was a lot of al Qaeda involvement.

July 19, 2010: The government and the traditional kingdom of Buganda (Baganda) remain at odds. The national elections next year may well test the strength of the Bugandan king, Ronald Mutebi. The king appears to be backing opponents of President Yoweri Museveni.

July 29, 2010: There are increasing attacks on villages along the Congo border. The attackers are apparently from Congolese Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) rebels. The ADF militia has been pushed towards the Ugandan border by months of Congolese Army offensive operations. They are attacking Ugandan villages for food, and would cross the border and establish camps were it not for the heavy patrolling of the border area by the Ugandan military.

July 31, 2010: Three Kenyans, who all confessed, where charged with participating in the July 11 terror attacks.

Over 30 people have been charged as suspects in the July 11 terror attack. They included Ugandans, Kenyans and Somalis. But the confessed leaders appear to be Ugandan Moslems, who joined al Shabaab out of
despair (from personal problems) or a desire to "defend Islam" (usually from Americans, who are seen as the cause of all the world's problems). The suspects are not a very inspiring crew, but they had enough ability between them to obtain the explosives, make the explosive vests and detonators, then recruit and train the suicide bombers, and get them to three of the four targets. Many of those arrested only regret that they killed Ugandans, rather than Americans. One of the plotters inadvertently killed his own aunt. Al Shabaab has called for its followers worldwide to carry out more attacks, but because of the July carnage in Uganda, al Shabaab membership, or any connection with the group, is much more likely to get you arrested. This has caused many wannabe Islamic terrorists, or al Shabaab supporters, to back off.

As Ugandan police continue searching for Islamic terrorists, they are finding that local criminal gangs were willing to do business with groups like al Shabaab or al Qaeda. If the money was good enough, the gangsters would provide goods (weapons, explosives and such) and services (transportation, fake ID, hideouts). Apparently many Ugandan gangsters didn't get the word that doing business is not worth the trouble. The extra police attention usually discourages criminals from helping terrorists. But the corruption in Uganda (and most of Africa) is such that even during a terrorism investigation, the police can be paid to go away and look elsewhere.

Some 1,700 soldiers are undergoing three months training before they are sent to Somalia at the end of the year. These two battalions are part of the normal rotation of new forces to replace Ugandan soldiers already there. Meanwhile, an additional 4,000 troops (from Uganda, Djibouti and Guinea) are to increase the AU (African Union) peacekeeping force in Somalia from 6,000 to 10,000.

August 29, 2010: While the army managed to drive the LRA (Lord's Resistance Army) out of the country with their 2002-8 "Iron Fist" operation, and resettle over a million Ugandans living in refugee camps in northern Uganda, the LRA still exists. Often down to less than 200 gunmen, the LRA has wandered through Congo, Sudan and the CAR (Central African Republic), living off the rural population. It's believed that in the last year the LRA has killed over 1,500 people and kidnapped over 500 as part of their survival strategy. Children are indoctrinated to become LRA fighters, while adults are used as slaves. It's also believed that Sudan is providing some support to keep the LRA functioning. In other words, Sudan is hedging its bet. The Government of South Sudan (GoSS), the semi-autonomous state within Sudan, could become independent in 2011, and the LRA would be a tool for the north to disrupt the south.
September 1, 2010: The government said that it would send another 10,000 army troops to Somalia to participate in the African Union AMISOM peacekeeping force there. The government said that the terrorist attacks in July, committed by the Somali Islamic terrorist organization, al Shabaab, has strengthened its commitment to fight terror in Somalia. There is a glitch: the government wants U.S. funds to pay for the troop reinforcement.

A Ugandan Army (Ugandan Peoples Defense Force, UPDF) unit operating near the Kenyan border reported it had recovered 150 head of cattle that had been stolen by tribal raiders. The army believes the raiders were from the Pokot tribe. The army unit pursued the raiders into Kenya, with the permission of the Kenyan government. Three men were arrested and the army seized three weapons in the operation. The army continues to conduct anti-raider and rustling patrols in the region but last month the military announced it would no longer detail soldiers to help tribesmen graze their herds. This had been an assignment in the Karamojong tribal region. The military said assigning soldiers to help the tribes slows down military operations.

September 2, 2010: The Ugandan Army claimed that it killed 397 LRA rebels between July 2009 and the end of June 2010. Another 123 LRA rebels defected and 63 were captured. The army recovered 364 rifles. 32 Ugandan Army soldiers were killed in counter-LRA operations and 86 wounded.

September 3, 2010: A group of legislators in the Ugandan parliament are seeking more details about Ugandan Army operations in the Central African Republic (CAR). The government admits Ugandan special operations forces are in the CAR chasing the LRA. The parliamentarians claim that the president and executive branch have exceeded their authority by running an extended military operation in a foreign country.

September 6, 2010: Congolese security forces have passed on evidence that the Somali al Shabaab terrorist organization has links to the Ugandan rebel Allied Democratic Forces. Congolese forces found the evidence while conducting operations in the eastern Congo. The Ugandan report was vague, claiming that the Congolese found documents and supplies traceable to al Shabaab. Uganda has been fighting the ADF or ADF factions for almost two decades.

September 12, 2010: Call this one no surprise at all: The ruling party, the National Resistance Movement (NRM), announced that President Yoweri Museveni will be its candidate for president in the February 2011 national elections.
September 17, 2010: The murders of two Ugandan journalists are producing accusations from Ugandan media that the government of President Yoweri Museveni is engaged in a campaign designed to intimidate its political opponents. Police investigations have not ruled out the possibility that the murders had a political angle. In one incident a reporter was beaten to death with metal bars. There have been no arrests so far. The government has yet to investigate the riots in September 2009 in which 40 Bugandan tribal protestors were killed. Some claim the security forces illegally used lethal force (i.e., police brutality). Critics of Museveni claim that all of the incidents and accusations are part of a pattern of repression by his government and the goal is to insure his re-election.

September 20, 2010: Though the Ugandan rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) is all but inactive in Uganda, it continues to plague east and central Africa. Sudan has reported several LRA attacks in the south. LRA raiders still hit villages in the Congo. The southeastern corner of the Central African Republic (CAR) is the major hot spot. A recent report claimed that the LRA had kidnapped 700 people in the last 18 months. Most of the kidnappings occurred in the CAR. The LRA uses the people it kidnaps as laborers, to carry supplies or work at its base camps. If they can indoctrinate some of the kidnapped, all the better, they get a guerrilla fighter. They may also use the kidnapped as hostages or a source of financing, via ransom.

October 1, 2010: The government condemned a draft UN report declaring that the Ugandan Army committed war crimes in the Congo. The report claimed the crimes were committed between 1995 and 2003. The Ugandan government indicated that the accusations could lead it to decide to withdraw its troop contingent from the African Union peacekeeping force in Somalia. The Ugandan contingent is the largest component in the AU force.

October 5, 2010: The government believes its security forces have discovered a recruitment operation run by the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) rebel group. The network was operating inside Uganda, in the Mayuge and Bugiri districts. The Congolese Army attacked ADF camps along the Congo-Uganda border earlier this year.

October 6, 2010: Reversing a threat made a week earlier, the government told the UN that it is willing to increase its peacekeeping contingent in Somalia. Uganda might provide as many as 20,000 soldiers. There is a catch: Uganda does not have the money to fund the operation. Uganda regards Somalia's Islamist Al-Shabaab group as an enemy. Al-Shbaab claimed credit for helping organize the July 2010 terror attacks in Uganda's capital, Kampala. Peacekeeping duty can be a money-maker for
the armies of developing countries. The troops are supposed to be paid in hard currency (usually dollars).

October 12, 2010: The leader of Uganda's main opposition party (Forum for Democratic Change), Kizza Besigye, has demanded that several government prosecutors be forced to resign because they brought a treason case against a legal opposition group. A group of judges cleared Besigye of treason charges. Besigye argued that the indictment was just another move by Yoweri Museveni's government to suppress its opponents. Besigye contended this violated Uganda's constitution.

October 14, 2010: A new slew of rumors as to the whereabouts of LRA senior commander Joseph Kony are circulating in central Africa. The hottest one has Kony and some 200 LRA followers slipping out of the CAR and setting up a base camp in Sudan's chaotic western Darfur region. Ugandan special operations soldiers had been tracking and occasionally attacking the LRA inside the CAR. Uganda has conducted those operations with the permission of the CAR's government. Moving to Darfur makes it tougher for Uganda to keep tabs on Kony. The move into Sudan gives more ammunition to those who suspect Kony still has ties to Sudan's national government.

October 21, 2010: Uganda, the Congo, Sudan, and the Central African Republic (CAR) have agreed to create a joint military unit assigned to fight the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). The key component of the unit will be a joint operations center where military and police forces can share intelligence. The African Union has promised to help establish the organization. Nigeria and South Africa may help provide logistical support. The LRA has been dispersed but not defeated. Remnant LRA groups now attack villages over 800 kilometers (500 miles) from the Ugandan border. The LRA began as an anti-government movement in northern Uganda, organized by radicals in the Acholi tribe. The Ugandan government believed the LRA received support from Sudanese intelligence (1994-2001), to include money and weapons. The LRA may still be receiving support from the Sudan national government, which firmly opposes the potential creation of a separate South Sudan. The Government of South Sudan (GoSS) currently operates as a highly autonomous governing body. The GoSS is certainly worried about continuing LRA attacks and recently issued a statement that it fears the LRA will be used to destabilize the upcoming independence referendum. An LRA band recently raided a town in the CAR, stole food and property, abducted several women, and then burned part of a market.

November 1, 2010: So far this year the LRA has conducted at least 22 known attacks in southern Sudan's West Equatoria state. The LRA attacks displaced 45,000 people. 13,000 of the displaced are now living in a camp in the town of Ezo.
November 2, 2010: Several non-governmental aid organizations are reporting that assistance efforts in two northern Ugandan districts once plagued by the LRA are beginning to show results, albeit slowly. One project involves leasing farm land to displaced persons and in some cases disarmed and demobilized former LRA rebels. The two districts identified are the Katakwi and Pader districts. Land disputes between current occupiers and displaced persons who return to claim ownership continue to be a source of trouble. The peace deals worked out with LRA defectors all included promises of help in re-integrating into civilian life.

November 6, 2010: Al Shabaab, the Somalia militant Islamist group, once again threatened Uganda with new terrorist attacks. Al Shabaab is trying to force Uganda to withdraw its peacekeeping contingent from the African Union's AMISOM peacekeeping operation in Somalia. Al Shabaab took credit for the July 11, 2010 terror attacks in Kampala. A man identified as an Al Shabaab senior commander recently threatened revenge attacks for what he said were violent acts committed by Ugandan troops in Somalia. The Ugandan government continues to hold 34 people in prison for alleged involvement in the July terror attacks.

November 8, 2010: Ugandan security officials issued a new warning about potential terrorist attacks conducted by Al Shabaab or its allies. The warning called for increased public vigilance. A police warning in the capital, Kampala, suggested that the public avoid shopping areas and markets that have not complied with access control guidelines. The police are also increasing security checks at public gatherings.

November 9, 2010: The government announced that its Amnesty Commission would continue to support programs for former LRA fighters who applied for and received amnesty.

November 12, 2010: The Allied Democratic Forces (ADF, an ally of Al Shabaab) may be trying to set up a base inside the country. The ADF has bases inside the Democratic Republic of Congo, in the Rwenzori Mountains area. The Congolese Army conducted several anti-ADF operations in the region this past summer so it is conceivable that some ADF fighters have moved back into Uganda.

November 13, 2010: The government is taking steps to improve security at its virus and agricultural research laboratories. The complaints of lax security turned out to be legitimate. Uganda holds samples of the Ebola virus because the virus is endemic to central Africa. The country itself suffered an Ebola outbreak in 2007. Ugandan medical personnel have also reported that it often takes a long time for biological samples to reach the laboratories so that a disease can be identified. That is due, in part, to reliance on ground transportation via a primitive road network. Uganda is concerned that a terrorist group could use Ebola or some other endemic
disease as a bio-weapon. A terrorist group could raid a lab or intercept a sample enroute to a lab. The concern is legitimate, given threats against Uganda from the Somalia Islamist extremist organization Al Shabaab. The government is seeking aid from international donors to upgrade the labs' capabilities as well as improve their protection. An air delivery system for samples from distant sites would speed up sample gathering as well as reduce the possibility of attacking a courier.

November 17, 2010: Because of internal security concerns (terror threats among them), the government announced that it was suspending leave for members of Ugandan security forces (presumably including national police) until March 2011. The statement mentioned security concern for crowds gathering for holiday festivities. The July terror strikes were carried out during the World Cup football (soccer) tournament. Targets included cafes where large crowds were watching the soccer tournament.

November 19, 2010: The government now estimates that the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) has only 200 fighters. Other sources put its strength at 350 to 400. The LRA remains dangerous, having murdered around 2000 civilians in the last two years. They have hit unprotected villages in the Congo, Central African Republic, and southern Sudan. This is why many insist the government's campaign has failed. That depends on what you call failure, at least if considered from the Ugandan perspective. The LRA's ranks have been substantially diminished. In 2002 and 2003, LRA strength ran from 4,000 to 5,000 fighters. At that time the LRA had bases in southern Sudan but also maintained active cadres in northern Uganda. Northern Uganda has now been relatively free of LRA cadres for around three years. Indeed, the LRA is now a regional terrorist and criminal problem. That's terrible, and no one argues the organization should not be stopped. The LRA commits heinous crimes. But from a political perspective this means the remnant LRA has more enemies. That's fine with the Ugandan government.

December 1, 2010: A Ugandan court has dropped charges against 18 people who were arrested after the soccer World Cup terrorist bombings which occurred on July 11, 2010. But 17 other suspects will face charges. The Somalia militant Islamist group al-Shabab has claimed it orchestrated the attacks as a reprisal for Ugandan participation in the AU's peacekeeping efforts in Somalia.

December 10, 2010: American president Barack Obama has written a letter reaffirming that the U.S. supports Uganda's and other African nations' plans to disarm the LRA. The US plan appears to agree with Ugandan government demands that LRA senior commander Joseph Kony be arrested. The American president said that the US wants to achieve for goals. (1) Protect civilians in central and eastern Africa from LRA attacks. (2) Capture Kony and other LRA commanders. (3) Disarm LRA rebels
and/or encourage them to defect. (4) Provide aid to regions afflicted by LRA attacks. AFRICOM has provided some intelligence support and logistical aid to Uganda in its efforts to combat the LRA.

December 20, 2010: The government and the UN reported that if violence erupts in Southern Sudan during or after the January 9, 2011 independence referendum, 100,000 southern Sudanese could seek refuge. NGOs have begun laying up supplies in case of the refugee influx.

December 24, 2010: Another 1,800 man battalion is being sent to the African Union peacekeeping mission in Somalia (AMISOM).

January 5, 2011: With Southern Sudan's independence referendum a few days away (January 9), the subject of Ugandan support for the Sudan Peoples Liberation Army (SPLA) has become a hot topic in the Ugandan media. For several years Uganda provided supplies to the SPLA, which fought Sudan's national government to a stalemate and became the government of the semi-autonomous state of Southern Sudan. It looks like it may well become fully independent. Anyway, the majority of Ugandans still approve of their government's support of the SPLA but they do not look forward to a renewed war between Southern Sudan and the national government (northern Sudan). A new north-south war in Sudan would eventually involve Uganda and Kenya (both favoring the southerners). That may not be so. The national sentiment is that Uganda has enough on its plate already, with its peacekeeping contingent in Somalia being the biggest—and most controversial—item.

January 10, 2011: The government intends to compensate victims of the LRA rebellion in the northern Teso region. Several northern regional and tribal groups have gone to court seeking reparations for lost property and lost lives. Over the last few years the government has provided direct compensation on a selective basis. The preferred method of reinvigorating the northern economy (where most of the LRA's violence occurred) has been resettlement programs and training programs.

January 13, 2011: The Ugandan Army (Uganda Peoples Defense Forces, UPDF) says that it will maintain a presence in Southern Sudan and the Congo as long as the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) remains a threat. The military also said that it has orders to stay in the field until LRA senior commander Joseph Kony is either killed or arrested. A military spokesman also recently acknowledged that Ugandan Army forces still operate in the Central African Republic, another country that is also looking for Kony.

February 8, 2011: Ugandan Army officers in northern Uganda reported that the army has a commando unit with 950 soldiers that are prepared to stop any election violence in the area. The unit is located in Pader District,
which is a stronghold of the Acholi tribe. Many Acholi supported the Lord's Resistance Army during the civil war.

February 13, 2011: Interpol is looking for Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) leader Jamil Mukulu. The government regards the ADF as a potential ally of Somali Muslim radicals who oppose Ugandan peacekeeping forces in Somalia. The government believes the ADF intends to launch attacks in western Uganda. An Interpol warrant for an ADF leader is something of a political victory for the Ugandan government. Uganda has five battalions serving with the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), which is around 4,500 soldiers.

February 14, 2011: There is evidence that LRA rebels scattered throughout central Africa are expressing a desire to return home. The rebels come from northern Ugandan tribes, and have been in contact with their kin (thanks to cell phones all over Africa).

February 21, 2011: It appears President Yoweri Museveni has been re-elected to another term. The results of the February 18 elections are preliminary, but it appears Museveni won between 65 and 70 percent of the vote. One semi-official figure is 68 percent. All of his opponents, however, have rejected the election results Kizza Besigye, Olara Otunnu, Norbert Mao and Samuel Lubega are claiming electoral theft. Besigye, according to the semi-official tally, finished second with 26 percent of the vote.

March 1, 2011: During January and February 2011, LRA rebels launched approximately 50 attacks in the Congo, with 100 people kidnapped and 17,000 displaced. That’s a lot of action, especially for 400 rebels.

March 2, 2011: A Ugandan opposition party has decided to contest Yoweri Museveni’s election, as president, in the Ugandan supreme court. The plaintiffs will likely claim that Museveni used public funds for his own political purposes. There may also be claims of fraud.

March 3, 2011: Members of the U.S. Congress are insisting that the American government demand that the government of Sudan (ie, northern Sudan) provide evidence that it is not continuing to support the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). The U.S. leaders are insisting that this be a requirement if Sudan is going to be removed from the terrorist-sponsor list. The Sudan government provided supplies to the LRA (starting by some accounts as early as 1994) but began backing off around 2001 and it claimed that it had cut all ties after it signed the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) with Southern Sudan.

The Ugandan Army has small units in the Congo and CAR, that are there primarily to track LRA activity. In January 2011, the CAR government restricted larger operations by larger Ugandan Army formations in that
country. So the information obtained by the Ugandan Army trackers can only be used, if at all, by local security forces.

March 8, 2011: Whither the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), one of the world’s more vicious terrorists organizations – and that is saying something. Since Uganda launched its offensive against LRA bases in the Congo in December 2008, LRA capabilities have declined. The consensus among military analysts is that LRA communications have been damaged. The organization has few resources and gets hammered when it encounters military forces. Therefore it confines its attacks to unarmed or poorly armed civilians. There is also another consensus view, and it is solid fact: LRA senior commander Joseph Kony remains free and thus remains a political factor. The LRA is operating in ten to 12 groups scattered across the Congo, the Central African Republic (CAR), and Southern Sudan. It continues to kill people. Estimates vary, but from 2,500 to 3,000 people have been slain by the LRA since the December 2008 offensive.


March 21, 2011: Ugandan media reported that the Ugandan Army, the Congolese Army, and UN peacekeeping forces in the Congo are considering launching a new operation against LRA cadres in the Congo. Congolese civilians have complained about an increase in LRA activity in eastern Congo. The UN recently estimated that between 35 and 40 Congolese civilians had been kidnapped by the LRA in a time period from late February to mid-March.

March 28, 2011: The arrest of Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) rebels in the Congo is another indication that the ADF is regrouping. The Congolese Army made the arrests then turned the prisoners over to the Ugandan Army. The government has argued that the ADF has ties to both the government of Sudan (northern Sudan) and Somalia’s radical Muslim Al Shabaab organization.

March 29, 2011: Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) senior commander Joseph Kony has left the Central African Republic (CAR) and returned to the Congo. It's believed that Kony is now somewhere in the northeastern Congo, probably in Orientale Province. Kony may have arrived in early March.

March 31, 2011: A senior Ugandan Army colonel (who once commanded the Ugandan peacekeeping contingent in Somalia) was promoted to brigadier general. He has been selected to command the African Union’s East Africa Standby Brigade. The East Africa Standby Brigade (also called
East Africa Standby Force) has units from Uganda, Burundi, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Djibouti, Seychelles, and the Comoros Islands.

April 6, 2011: Opposition politicians are screaming because the government admitted that it has already spent around $400 million on Russian jet fighters. The money came from a supplementary budget fund. The government wants parliament to approve the expenditure retroactively.

April 7, 2011: Slowly but surely new information is leaking out about the jet fighter deal that opposition politicians allege involves deep corruption in the government. The government has admitted that it has bought eight jet fighters from Russia for about $93 million each. The fighters will be used to protect Uganda’s oil fields around Lake Albert. Presumably, oil revenues will pay for the fighters. The price being paid is steep for Russian jets. This is why commentators are speculating that more aircraft are involved and that the deal includes spares, training, and maintenance support. But the high price usually means there is a large amount allocated for bribes. The government also stated that it had collaborated with Algeria in the purchase (which presumably means Algeria bought more jets and Uganda got a pricing break because of a larger, combined order). Buying fighters to provide a minimal level of protection to oil production facilities does make sense, but there is also another interpretation. Southern Sudan, which becomes a separate nation in July 2011, is a Ugandan ally. The Ugandan jets could also provide Southern Sudan with a small amount of air defense, should Sudan and Southern Sudan go to war.

April 8, 2011: Uganda is an upstream Nile River nation. The upstream nations are now confronting downstream nations Egypt and Sudan (northern Sudan) over water distribution rights. Ethiopia has taken the lead in organizing the other upstream nations (Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, and soon Southern Sudan). Ethiopia has also been offering a few new diplomatic solutions that its government hopes will avoid open conflict over water issues. The Ugandan government has been a strong supporter of a new water rights treaty. But like Ethiopia, it wants to reach a deal everyone can live with without resort to war. The government acknowledged that it has been holding discussions with Egypt’s interim government over Nile water rights. At a recent meeting, the government reported that it told an Egyptian diplomatic delegation that Uganda would not support an agreement that harmed Egypt.

April 10, 2011: Opposition members of parliament complained that the government has wasted the $721 million it has spent on acquiring Russian-made jet fighters. The opposition argues that protecting the poor from the effects of rising food prices should have taken precedence.
April 12, 2011: Several Ugandan security officials are reacting to criticisms of Uganda’s arms build-up, especially the opposition criticism of the acquisition of Russian jet aircraft. The security officials argue that improving the air force and Army infantry is absolutely necessary now that Uganda is on the verge of becoming an oil exporter. One scenario isn’t so fanciful, given the years Uganda has spent dealing with the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) and the LRA: that is a proxy war with predominantly Muslim East African nations (Somalia and Sudan in the case of the ADF, Sudan in the case of the LRA).

April 14, 2011: Opposition leader Kizza Besigye was wounded in Kampala when he was hit by a rubber bullet fired by a Ugandan military police unit. Besigye was leading a demonstration against high food prices.

April 18, 2011: A survey of food prices in Kenya and Uganda shows higher oil prices have quickly led to higher food prices in African cities. Food has to be trucked from the farms into the cities and that takes gasoline. Food prices have risen between 30 to 40 percent compared to April 2010.

April 20, 2011: The Ugandan Army (UPDF) and US Army trainers from US AFRICOM completed a joint exercise code-named ATLAS Drop 201. The exercise was designed to improve Ugandan air rescue capabilities.

April 21, 2011: Opposition leader Kizza Besigye was arrested for the third time since April 1. Besigye was leading a demonstration in Kampala protesting higher food prices. The government has warned the opposition that police will stop future protests. Museveni defeated Besigye in the last presidential election. Besigye contends that the election was a fraud.

April 23, 2011: A group representing survivors of the April 20, 1995 LRA slaughter in the village of Atiak (northern Uganda, Amuru district) is demanding the government devote significant financial resources to rebuilding northern Uganda. The LRA is a sociopathically violent outfit, but Atiak ranks as one of its most vicious attacks. An LRA group attacked and drove away a contingent of Ugandan Army soldiers outside the village then forced some 300 people (mostly men, but some women and children) down to a nearby river and shot them, execution style. People in the district are predominantly from the Acholi tribe, the same tribe as most senior LRA commanders.

April 25, 2011: UN investigators reported that the LRA cadres remaining in the Central African Republic (CAR) continue to abduct children and use them in its operations. The LRA has a long record of using the men, women, and children it kidnapst to carry food and ammunition. The UN investigation focused on abducting children in the CAR and using them as soldiers, spies, porters (bearers) and even sex slaves.
May 2, 2011: Protests in the capital, Kampala, escalated on April 28 and began to subside April 30. In one demonstration (April 29) two people were killed as protesters fought with police. Military police were brought in to confront the demonstrators. Over 100 people were injured in the demonstrations. Opposition politicians called for the removal of president Yoweri Museveni and compared him to Egypt’s Hosni Mubarak. One opposition group described the protests as an Egyptian-type uprising against a dictator. The repeated arrests and releases of opposition leader Kizza Besigye (see report of April 21) certainly heightened the passions of Museveni’s critics and contributed to the rise in violence. Critics of the government are also complaining about increased inflation, higher food prices, and a spike in fuel prices.

May 11, 2011: Uganda’s main opposition leader, Kizza Besigye, has returned. The government tried to bar his re-entry. Army units deployed to the Kenya-Uganda border to block Besigye’s entry. Besigye accuses the government and recently re-elected President Yoweri Museveni of conducting a fraudulent election.

May 18, 2011: LRA attacks have forced 300,000 Congolese people to flee their homes since the beginning of this year. Most of the attacks have occurred in the Congo’s northeastern regions. It's estimated that no more than a few hundred LRA fighters are still in the field. However, they launch attacks from Southern Sudan to the Congo to the Central African Republic.

May 29, 2011: A recent oil strike in the Lake Albert region will begin yielding around 3,000 barrels (nearly 400,000 liters) a day in June. This will be used for domestic purposes.

June 12, 2011: Recent oil discoveries raised estimates of Uganda’s total recoverable reserves to 2.5 billion barrels. This is an increase of some 500-600 million barrels. For an impoverished sub-Saharan country, that represent a windfall of around sixty billion dollars at current prices. Ugandan oil has a low sulfur content. However, some of the oil is thick (waxy is the term) which makes it difficult to move by pipeline. This is why Uganda is considering building local refineries that would eventually produce over 16 million liters (four million gallons) of fuel a day.

June 21, 2011: The Army has been running demolition exercises in the Karamoja region, blowing up old stockpiles of explosives from the 1970s and 1980s. One stockpile was located at a barracks that was abandoned in 1979 by supporters of former dictator Idi Amin. The explosives are old but still quite dangerous. The stockpiles include rocket propelled grenades and other ammunition.

June 30, 2011: Soldiers operating in Katakwi and Amuria districts recovered over 400 head of cattle stolen by Karamojong tribal raiders.
Army patrols killed eight Karamojong warriors in various incidents between mid-June and the end of the month. Cattle raids have increased in the region since April. Karamojong raiders have killed 3-50 people so far in 2011. It's difficult to get news out of some of the remote areas where these raiders operate, leading to the wide range in casualty estimates.

July 6, 2011: The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA, Ugandan rebel and terrorist group) killed 26 people in the Congo during June 2011. Five people were wounded. LRA members launched 53 attacks. It appears many of the raids are launched in order to steal food and steal other supplies form Congolese villagers.

July 12, 2011: Thomas Kwoyelo, a senior LRA commander, went on trial in Kampala. He is being tried in the International Crimes Division Court. The ICDC was set up as part of peace negotiations between the government and the LRA. Kwoyelo was captured in the Congo in 2009. He is charged with murder and abduction. He is also implicated in an attack on a Congolese village (one reason the court is called international).

July 18, 2011: National police are warning that the Somali Al Shabaab terrorist organization is planning to attack Uganda again. The police said they are acting on new information that terrorists are trying to enter Uganda to conduct attacks. July 11 marked the first anniversary of the World Cup terror attacks launched by Islamist terrorists in Uganda. Ugandan peacekeepers are deployed in Somalia as part of the African Union peacekeeping force.

July 22, 2011: The government has received the two of six jet aircraft purchased from Russia. Eventually Uganda will have six Su-30MK fighters. The first jet flew in on July 11. The purchase remains highly controversial in Uganda. The opposition contends it is a waste of money. The government says it needs the jets to protect Ugandan air space and specifically Ugandan oil fields. The precise cost of the six aircraft is not known though Ugandan media say between $740 and $750 million. Uganda currently has six Russian-made MiG-21 interceptors and five MiG-23s. The Ugandan military has indicated that it intends to selectively upgrade its equipment over the next few years. Oil gives Uganda something to defend, and also pays the costs of the new weapons. The opposition wants the money spent on civilian infrastructure and economic development. The government counters that lack of military equipment and poor quality equipment hindered the war against the LRA. It was not until the Ugandan military acquired attack helicopters (Mi-24s) that it made real progress against the LRA in northern Ugandan. Critics can still point to the Ugandan military’s miserable maintenance record. The attack helicopters have a very low readiness rate. The speculation is that the new
Su-30s will suffer the same fate. They will look good in the hangar, but will rarely be aloft.

July 29, 2011: US AFRICOM believes the LRA’s senior commander will ultimately either be killed or captured alive. The hunt for Kony continues and the U.S. is now involved in supporting the efforts of the Congo, the Central African Republic, and Uganda to bring Kony to justice. Kony was reportedly hiding in Sudan’s Darfur region in 2010.

August 1, 2011: The war against the LRA left many land mines in northern Ugandan. For the past several years the government has sponsored several de-mining projects, coordinated by the Uganda Mine Center. Recently the mine center noted that it has de-miners working on a nine-kilometer long stretch just south of the Southern Sudan border (Lela-bul area). It will take at least another year to clear the mine fields.

August 17, 2011: Police in the capital broke up a demonstration. The demonstrators were conducting a candle light vigil in honor of nine protestors killed in April by the police. Opposition politicians described the police action as a brutal attack on peaceful demonstrators. Various opposition groups have stated that they will conduct more protests against the government of President Yoweri Museveni, who has been in power since 1986. Opposition groups are comparing him to former Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak. Museveni rejects the comparison.

August 22, 2011: It has been almost six years since the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) launched an attack inside Uganda. This is remarkable, but there are reasons. The LRA’s long string of atrocities has finally burned it politically in northern Uganda. Thus it comes as no surprise that the Ugandan Army’s intelligence gathering in northern Uganda has improved immensely. The LRA still terrorizes parts of the northeastern Congo and the southwestern Central African Republic. The government of Southern Sudan reports that LRA bands move about in its territory.

September 15, 2011: Uganda peace activists are accusing the government and the government of South Sudan of intentionally bungling the 2005 peace talks with the LRA. The peace activists point to Wikileaks cables which indicate the talks were uncoordinated. To some that suggests a conspiracy theory that the government wanted the talks to fail because it ultimately wants Joseph Kony killed or captured.

September 21, 2011: Opposition groups have been blasting the government for spending several hundred million dollars on Russian jet aircraft. Now members of the ruling National Resistance Movement are complaining as well. There is growing concern that corrupt officials will waste Uganda’s new oil wealth. The jet fighter purchase is an easy
political target. The Ugandan military has yet to identify the threat to Ugandan air space that requires high performance fighters to defeat.

September 30, 2011: Members of President Yoweri Museveni’s ruling National Resistance Movement are calling for presidential term limits. The members of parliament want the president limited to one six-year term. Museveni has been president for 25 years.

October 14, 2011: The U.S. government announced that US AFRICOM (Africa Command) will send a military task force of a hundred soldiers to Uganda to assist in the Ugandan military’s operations against the LRA. Most of the U.S. task force will consist of special operations personnel. The troops will provide training guidance, provide logistical advice, and will probably provide intelligence assistance as well. Teams like this can access U.S. technical intelligence data (from satellites, aircraft, UAVs, etc.).

October 17, 2011: The Ugandan military claimed that its forces operating in the Central African Republic (CAR) almost captured LRA senior commander Joseph Kony last month. A squad of Ugandan soldiers (likely a special operations team) spotted Kony in the village of Ndjema. The Ugandan troops and Kony’s bodyguards fired on one another and Kony escaped.

October 19, 2011: Police arrested Uganda’s main opposition leader, Kizza Besigye, and placed him under house arrest. Opposition groups are protesting Uganda’s deteriorating economic situation. Beisgye also continues to assert that President Yoweri Museveni stole the last election.

October 26, 2011: The U.S. Congress has been told that the deployment of a hundred troops to Uganda would be short term, likely a few months in duration. The U.S. force is not on a combat mission but is armed for self-defense.

October 28, 2011: The U.S. government deployment of a special task force to Uganda is simply fulfilling a past commitment to help Uganda defeat the LRA (Lord's Resistance Army). The deployment is part of the support promised in the 2010 LRA Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act. The LRA has displaced some 385,000 people in central Africa and launched over 250 attacks in 2011. U.S. support for Uganda has four objectives: protect civilians (a demand that UN peacekeepers have failed to meet in the Congo); arrest senior LRA commanders (especially Joseph Kony); encourage LRA members to defect, then demobilize them and retrain them for civilian life; provide relief aid to communities that have suffered from LRA attacks.

Meanwhile, Ugandan troops serving with the AMISOM African Union peacekeeping force in Somalia are asking the government to let them take
leave on a regular basis to go home to Uganda to have sex. Yes, you read that correctly. Several soldiers apparently appealed to their representatives in parliament. The Ugandan Army (UPDF) has rejected the requests for sex leave. Recently an army spokesman said that the Somali deployment is only for nine months and Ugandan soldiers should exhibit discipline, like US Navy sailors do on extended sea deployments. While Mogadishu has prostitutes, they operate clandestinely they are too vulnerable to terrorist attack is peacekeepers visit.

December 3, 2011: The government reported that some 2,300 soldiers had completed a four-month long pre-Somalia peacekeeping deployment training course. The soldier will be part of a rotation replacing Ugandan soldiers currently serving in Somalia. French, Belgian, British, and American military trainers participated in the peacekeeping training program.

December 5, 2011: Several non-governmental aid organizations have funded a radio warning system in Central Africa. The system links communities that are threatened by the LRA. The communities can warn one another about LRA movements and provide data on LRA attacks. The information is also available on line at www.lracrisistracker.com . The system links communities in South Sudan, the Congo, the Central African Republic, and Uganda.

December 10, 2011: It’s that time of year again in Uganda. The security services are warning the public to be cautious during holiday gatherings and particularly large public festivities. The national police reported that there is current intelligence indicating that the Al Shabaab Somali Islamist terrorist group intends to launch attacks during the Christmas and New Years seasons. Holiday shoppers are also threatened. Malls in Kampala and holiday markets in every community (even rural villages) are potential targets. Local police have been instructed to increase their level of vigilance. The Ugandan Army announced that it has put rapid response units on alert in areas throughout the country. Everyone in Uganda remembers the July 2010 terror attacks by al Shabaab.

December 14, 2011: The military confirmed that the Ugandan Army’s 31st Battalion is serving as the primary special operations unit involved in the hunt for senior LRA commander Joseph Kony. Elements of the 31st Battalion are openly deployed in the CAR, the Congo, and in South Sudan along the Congo-South Sudan border.

December 15, 2011: Uganda has signed an agreement with several other Central African states to combat rebel organizations operating throughout the region. The International Conference of the Great Lakes (ICGLR), of which Uganda is a member, had been discussing the proposal for several months. Rwanda and Congo were major backers of the agreement. The
other ICGLR members are Zambia, Burundi, Sudan, the CAR, Kenya, Tanzania, and the Republic of Congo (Congo-Brazzaville). The new agreement basically says that member states won’t let their neighbor’s rebel groups have sanctuaries in or operate from their national territory. The agreement will be hard to enforce. For example, there are factions within each nation (particularly the Congo, Rwanda, Sudan, and the CAR) that are committed to helping their tribal, religious, or political allies in a neighboring country. The governments are too weak to police the factions, in some instances (eg., Sudan) the government’s intelligence agencies are cooperating with rebel forces. However, the agreement is not a wasted effort. Over the last four years there has been a growing political awareness that instability in a neighboring country translates into instability at home. International revulsion at LRA depredations in Congo and the CAR played a role in this change.

December 19, 2011: Uganda and South Sudan agreed to create a joint intelligence group to monitor border security. The primary focus will be on the border between Uganda’s Karamoja region and South Sudan. Both nations are concerned about weapons smuggling and cattle raids.

December 22, 2011: American special operations troops continue to provide assistance to Ugandan Army (Ugandan Peoples Defense Force, UPDF) units hunting Joseph Kony, the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) senior commander. Kony is wanted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) on multiple charges of crimes against humanity. The U.S. had previously announced that approximately one hundred American soldiers were assigned to assist the Ugandan Army. Earlier this month the Ugandan government confirmed that it had several units deployed in the Congo, South Sudan, and the Central African Republic (the CAR). Elements of the one-hundred man U.S. force have deployed with the Ugandan units. The government reported that U.S. soldiers are at a Ugandan Army forward operating base at Obo (in the CAR) and at an undisclosed base camp in South Sudan. The U.S. special ops teams are providing communications, intelligence, logistical, and training support.

December 31, 2011: The government estimated that the LRA has approximately 250 active fighters. Recent estimates have varied from 300 to as low as 100 fighters. The LRA fighters are still capable of launching attacks on unprotected villages.

January 5, 2012: The government has asked the Congolese government to take action against Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) rebels believed to be operating in the Congo near the Uganda-Congo border. The ADF has ties to Al Shabaab.

January 18, 2012: The government said that it has evidence that Somalia’s Al Shabaab militant Islamist organization is still planning
terrorist attacks inside Uganda. Al Shabaab bills the attacks as retaliation for Ugandan participation in AMISOM. The Ugandan military says that Al Shabaab has learned that Ugandan soldiers are tough targets. Attacking Ugandan civilians (soft targets) is easier.

January 25, 2012: The latest rumors once again have LRA commander Joseph Kony hiding out in the CAR. He is supposedly in an encampment west of the Chinko River (an isolated area in the CAR). Scattered LRA attacks continue in the Congo (abductions and lootings). LRA gunmen may be responsible for the murder of three people in Barraoua, CAR on January 18. However, LRA cadres in the CAR have been comparatively quiet – gone to ground in the lingo. The presence of US Special Forces advisers has added a new psychological pressure. The US advisers carry weapons but only for self-defense. However, the advisers have access to a range of intelligence gathering capabilities Ugandan, Congolese, and Sudanese forces lack. And the LRA gunmen know it.

February 6, 2012: The Ugandan Army held a special ceremony to award medals and ribbons to current and former soldiers in commemoration of the 1981 National Resistance Army uprising.

February 15, 2012: Seven LRA gunmen ambushed two men in Kulugbangu, Congo.

February 16, 2012: The hunt for the Lord’s Resistance Army’s senior commander, Joseph Kony, has not led to his capture but Uganda has reaped some diplomatic rewards. Since November 2011, the African Union has been committed to eliminating the LRA. That rates as a political success for Uganda. South Sudan and the Congo are now active Ugandan allies against the LRA. The Central African Republic (CAR) participates in a regional system to monitor LRA activities and alert Ugandan and UN forces (ie, UN forces in the Congo). The CAR lets Ugandan forces operate in its territory against the LRA. Organizing this public and multi-national cooperation rates as a significant political achievement. Still, the LRA has shown that it can operate in a very large area, over 200,000 square miles (500,000 square kilometers) in three countries. This is a lot of territory to monitor. That’s why some 80 to 100 US special operations soldiers remain deployed at forward operating bases in the Congo and the CAR, to help gather and interpret intelligence and then guide counter-insurgency efforts.

February 18, 2012: Uganda will be playing an increasingly important role in the African Union’s peacekeeping mission in Somalia (AMISOM). Uganda will provide at least 6,000 troops (up from 5,200) and possibly more. The newly authorized total strength of Ugandan and Burundian forces is 12,000. Burundi currently deploys around 4,400 soldiers in Somalia. If the present AMISOM ratio is a rough guide, Uganda could be asked to provide
6,400 to 7,000 soldiers. Ugandan forces will continue to be deployed in Mogadishu but also establish a base area in Baidoa. The expanded AMISOM force will include Kenyans. Around 4,700 Kenyans will be assigned to southern Somalia (basically the Kismayo area).

February 16, 2012: Ugandan soldiers evicted squatters from a nature preserve in the Amuru district. One person died in the incident. The squatters claimed they had ancestral rights to live in the preserve.

March 1, 2012: The Karamojong tribe has told the government that its disarmament policy has been unfair. The government began a disarmament program among the Karamojong almost a decade ago. The program was supposed to take automatic weapons away from cattle raiders. Now the Karamojong report that while they have turned in their weapons their adversaries have not. Gunmen have stolen their cattle and they do not have guns to protect themselves and their property. They have been trying to defend what cattle they still have using bows and arrows.

March 2, 2012: Three senior government officials, including the foreign affairs minister, have denied accusations that they are involved in a major corruption scandal involving $150 million in funds. A former Ugandan vice-president was charged in the scandal in July 2011.

March 8, 2012: The International Criminal Court (ICC) stated that it remains interested in arresting LRA senior commander Joseph Kony. The ICC wants to see its warrants enforced. Kony is charged with war crimes and crimes against humanity. Kony is also the subject of a YouTube video, titled Kony 2012, which has been viewed over 20 million times.

March 10, 2012: Government critics are dismissing statements by President Yoweri Museveni and his National Resistance Movement (NRM) that they intend to stop corruption in Uganda. One critic said that the NRM cannot stop corruption unless it gets rid of itself. Currently, two senior ministers have resigned from the government because of an embezzlement scam. The corruption, favoritism, and general mismanagement were a major reason for the creation of the LRA and other rebel organizations.

March 15, 2012: The Ugandan military announced that it will build a new military garrison facility in Bukwo, near the Uganda-Kenya border. Soldiers assigned to the post will be tasked with combating cattle raiders who operate on both sides of the border. However, the announcement specifically mentioned stopping attacks by the Pokot tribe, which for the most part lives in Kenya.

March 17, 2012: The government claimed that it has new information indicating that the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) rebel movement is once
again preparing to launch new attacks. The Ugandan Army has identified three ADF base camps inside the Congo. Two of them are located in or near the villages of Mwalika and Bubuchwanga. Uganda indicated that the Congo military also has this information. The Ugandan military has been saying for several months that the ADF has been running a recruiting drive. Apparently that has paid dividends since the ADF has been running training drills in its camps. The ADF is primarily a Ugandan Muslim organization. The government has said for two years that the ADF has connections with the Somali Islamist Al Shabaab organization and the Al Shabaab July 2010 World Cup final terror attacks.

March 22, 2012: Joseph Kony and his remnant band of Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) loyalists (and terrorists) remain on the run. Still, the Ugandan military and US AFRICOM believe the deployment of 100 US soldiers (most of them special operations personnel) has put increased pressure on Kony and his faction. Others are not so sure, since attacks attributed to the LRA continue to occur in the Congo. Attacks in the Central African Republic (CAR) and South Sudan have decreased this year and since late January there have been no confirmed LRA attacks in either country. The U.S. contingent has split into small groups and these groups have operated in the Congo, South Sudan, Uganda, and the CAR. All of these nations are threatened by the LRA and all of them have forces deployed to combat the LRA. The U.S. soldiers provide intelligence and communications assistance. The U.S. is helping provide fuel, supplies, and some airlift support for the anti-LRA operation.

Having defeated and driven out of the country, Joseph Kony’s Lord Resistance Army (LRA) had laid waste to large swathes of northern Uganda:

March 26, 2012: The AU announced that it is forming a regional force to combat the LRA. The force will have 5,000 soldiers provided by Uganda, Congo, the CAR, and South Sudan. The U.S. and the European Union will pay for the force. A Ugandan colonel will have overall command of the force and the deputy commander will be South Sudanese. A joint coordinating communications center will be established in the Congo (northeastern Congo).

April 20, 2012: The government said that Ugandan military forces were prepared to intervene in South Sudan to aid South Sudan if Sudanese forces continue to attack the south. Ugandan Army officers are convinced that if Sudan gains control of large chunks of South Sudan, the LRA will move into the Sudanese-occupied territory and renew attacks on northern Uganda. Uganda maintains that the LRA serves as a proxy army for Sudan. Uganda has a small air force, consisting of eight Russian-made Sukhoi Su-30 jets. Buying the jet fighters ignited a huge controversy in Uganda. Critics said the planes were over-priced (they probably were) and
that Uganda needs other infrastructure (especially transportation infrastructure) and health care before it needs cutting-edge, high-performance aircraft. Ugandan president Yoweri Museveni, however, pointed out that you can’t wait for a war to purchase military equipment. Here’s his quote from July 2011, ”You don’t wait for war to buy military equipment in security. It’s normally advisable to buy when there is no war.” Uganda does need roads, improved digital communications, and health care. The Sudan-South Sudan War indicates it also needs high performance aircraft. Ugandan officials who backed buying the jets argued that instability in South Sudan (code word for trouble between Sudan and South Sudan) justified having aircraft that could handle potential air threats (ie, Sudanese Air Force MiGs). South Sudan has helicopters and one prop-driven transport aircraft. The Ugandan jets can provide South Sudan with an air defense capability and the Sudan government knows it. The Su-30s are multi-role jet fighter-bombers, capable of air-to-air and air-to-ground (ground attack) missions. Russians have been training Uganda’s pilot corps on the aircraft for at least a year. (Austin Bay)

April 23, 2012: The U.S. government extended the mission of 100 U.S. special operations soldiers who are assisting Ugandan troops in their hunt for LRA senior commander Joseph Kony.

April 24, 2012: The Ugandan Army continues to operate inside the Central African Republic. Operations are conducted from base camps in the CAR located at Djema and Obo. Uganda also uses a camp located at Nzara in South Sudan. Since the U.S. deployed its 100-man special operations team to help locate senior LRA commander Joseph Kony (and brought more media attention), Uganda has been much more open about its military operations in the CAR. The Ugandan Army has now let reporters accompany hunter patrols (also called hunting squads or hunter squads) deployed in the CAR (southeastern CAR). The hunter patrols have no fixed number of personnel but 60 troops (essentially two light infantry platoons) is a common figure. That’s enough to deal with most of the remnant LRA detachments. In order to evade detection the LRA has broken down into small groups (four to ten fighters is the speculation). A 60-soldier detachment can be fairly easily re-supplied by one or two helicopters. At least two hunter patrols are operating in the CAR’s Chinko River area (southeastern CAR). The Chinko River (a tributary of the Congo River) is a sparsely populated area.

April 30, 2012: The Ugandan Army accused Sudan of re-arming the LRA (Lord’s Resistance Army). Ugandan forces fighting the LRA had captured an LRA fighter wearing a Sudanese military uniform. Sudan denied the charges and accused Uganda of lying. Ugandan security officials also stated that intelligence indicates that LRA cadres are moving into Sudan’s western Darfur region, into areas controlled by pro-Sudanese government
Janjaweed militias. Ugandan sources have also reported that kidnapped people (abductees) recently rescued from the LRA (presumably in Congo and the Central African Republic) stated that they believed the Sudanese government is providing the LRA with arms and uniforms.

May 1, 2012: A UN-assisted coordination center and communications detachment located in the town of Dungu (northeastern Congo) is now helping the African Union (AU) sponsored anti-LRA force coordinate activities and intelligence. The Congolese coordination center will assist Uganda, South Sudanese, and Central African Republic security forces as well as Congolese forces. Congo recently announced that a U.S.-trained light infantry battalion has joined the anti-LRA operation and is operating in the northeastern Congo. UN peacekeeping forces in the Congo stress that their primary mission is protecting Congolese civilians from attack by the LRA.

May 4, 2012: The government announced that it will deploy another 1,700 soldiers as peacekeepers in Somalia. This reinforcement (approximately two battalion task forces) will bring the total numbers of Ugandan troops in Somalia to around 8,000. The army (Ugandan Peoples Defense Force, UPDF) indicated that the new troops will be assigned to the Mogadishu area in Somalia. Ugandan troops currently deployed in Somalia will likely move into areas where pro-government Somali forces and the Ethiopian Army cleared of Al Shabaab Islamist militias.

May 5, 2012: Despite the AU (African Union) and UN-sponsored ceasefire agreement between Sudan and South Sudan, South Sudan’s government is hedging its bets. Ugandan media reported that several South Sudanese officials have asked Uganda for assurances that it would provide military help to South Sudan if the war continues. One South Sudanese state governor asked to Uganda to be prepared for pro-active intervention in South Sudan. South Sudanese are warning Uganda that if Sudan defeats South Sudan the LRA will re-appear, once again backed by the Sudanese government.

The government of Sudan has asked that UNAMID (UN-AU hybrid peacekeeping operation in Darfur) discontinue direct flights between Darfur and Uganda. Currently UNAMID makes use of Uganda’s international airport at Entebbe. Entebbe is a major logistical base for the UNAMID operation. UNAMID also uses Kampala as a rest area for UNAMID personnel. Several flights from UNAMID headquarters in El Fasher (North Darfur state, Sudan) go straight to Entebbe. Sudan noted that Uganda-Sudan diplomatic relations have deteriorated and asked that UNAMID re-route its flights through Khartoum.

May 9, 2012: The government denied an allegation by Sudan that it supporters anti-Sudanese rebels. Uganda counter-claimed that the
Sudanese allegations are propaganda intended to divert international criticism arising from Ugandan allegations that Sudan supports the LRA. Ugandan security officials claim they have people with direct knowledge of Sudanese support for the LRA, to include a captured LRA fighter who reported that Sudan had supplied him (and presumably other LRA fighters in his contingent) with new uniforms.

May 10, 2012: Tullow, a British oil company, announced that its consortium will spend $750 million in Uganda this year on oil drilling, production, development, and new exploration.

May 12, 2012: Ugandan troops operating in the CAR captured Caesar Achellam, a senior LRA leader (he holds the rank of major-general) and one of Joseph Kony’s top lieutenants. His wife and one member of his escort group were also taken. The Ugandan soldiers set up an ambush on the River Mbou (south-eastern CAR). Achellam and a group of LRA fighters were attempting to cross the river and enter the Congo. The ambush triggered a firefight. Between ten and fifteen LRA fighters in Achellam’s group escaped.

May 13, 2012: International media have discovered that the U.S. is training Ugandan forces for peacekeeping duty in Somalia. The training at the Singo Training facility has been going on for almost five years. However, class sizes have increased. Currently some 3,000 Ugandan soldiers are undergoing training at the facility. The U.S. pays for the facility, where training is conducted by U.S. contractors.

May 22, 2012: The government expressed concern that unresolved border issues between Sudan and South Sudan will lead to a larger regional war. The government would prefer that the belligerents reach a border demarcation agreement and end the conflict. Uganda, however, has made it clear that it favors South Sudan in this dispute and has left little doubt that it is willing to be an active military ally on behalf of the south. Ugandan military leaders have declared that Uganda will not sit back if the Sudan and South Sudan conflict turns into an all-out war. South Sudan’s government has stated that it counts on Uganda’s support in a war with Sudan.

May 25, 2012: The government indicated that it will let the Amnesty Act lapse. This means it will no longer grant blanket amnesty to former members of rebel groups. Former members of rebel groups will have to go through the court system to seek amnesty or face trial for crimes. The blanket amnesty program began in 2000, and has been controversial, particularly regarding the LRA. The government originally passed the legislation in order to demonstrate that it was willing to seriously negotiate with the LRA. It was included in a peace agreement, which the LRA has never signed.
May 31, 2012: The Ugandan military accepted delivery of two more Russian-made Su-30MK2 fighter jets. The Ugandan Air Force now has six Su-30s, which completes its initial order. The deal was worth around $750 million. There had been some speculation that Uganda might buy eight of the aircraft. Opposition politicians criticized the expenditure as outrageous. The government argued that the country needed the aircraft to protect Uganda’s oil resources. The government now argues that uncontested Sudanese Air Force attacks on South Sudan have made the case that Uganda needs high performance aircraft capable of intercepting Sudanese jets.

June 2, 2012: Ugandan president Yoweri Museveni’s recent comment that he will step down before age 75 has sparked a lot of discussion in the country. Museveni has been in power since 1986. His current term expires in 2016. Museveni claims he was born in 1944, which makes him 68, though opposition politicians claim he is older. Many of Museveni’s own supporters have been quietly urging him to retire in favor of younger leaders.

June 25, 2012: The LRA attacked a French uranium mine in southeastern Central African Republic (CAR) near the town of Bakouma. The attackers stole food and laptop computers. Investigators reported that the group was positively identified as being LRA. The CAR military reported that it had fought with a rebel group near Bakouma on June 23. That group was initially identified as the Popular Front for Recovery, a rebel group from Chad.

June 26, 2012: The government arrested five Pakistanis it claimed were linked to the radical Somalia Islamist group, Al Shabaab. The government said the men were planning to launch an attack in the capital, on the second anniversary of the so called World Cup terror attacks (July 2010) which killed 79 people. The men were captured in Ntoroko district (Rwenzori Mountains, near the Congo border). The rebel Allied Democratic Forces (ADF, and ADF-NALU) had used the area as a training base. The ADF is now semi-defunct but it had Islamist political aims. In the mid-1990s it wanted to create an Islamic state in Uganda.

June 27, 2012: Ugandan peacekeepers serving in Somalia with the AU’s AMISOM mission reported that they had captured and occupied the town of Balaad. Somali Islamist Al Shabaab militiamen fled the town. The Ugandan soldiers captured one militiaman and seized several weapons. The military reported that during the month of June, Ugandan peacekeepers captured the town of Afgoye (northwest of Mogadishu) and El Fitri. They also raided the port of Elmaan and the Esaley airfield, 40 kilometers northeast of Mogadishu. Al Shabaab used the port and air field to ship in arms and foreign fighters from Yemen.
June 29, 2012: An AU (African Union) official tasked with overseeing the AU’s joint effort to destroy the LRA, reported to the UN Security Council that there is evidence that the LRA is getting weaker. However, the organization remains a threat. The report asserted that the LRA’s ability to command and control its dispersed forces has been disabled.

July 1, 2012: The government announced that the military has intelligence information which indicates the LRA commander Joseph Kony is now hiding in Sudan’s Darfur region. The government estimates that the LRA has from 300 to 500 fighters. Uganda has around 800 soldiers assigned to pursue Kony. Uganda openly acknowledges that its forces are operating in the Central African Republic and uses facilities in South Sudan.

July 2, 2012: CAR officials revealed that LRA fighters launched several more attacks between June 21, and June 25, near the town of Bakouma. LRA fighters attacked a remote hunting concession, killed two people and abducted 14.

July 6, 2012: Congolese M23 rebels attacked the Congolese town of Bungagana (on the Ugandan border). During the attack at least 2,000 Congolese civilians and 600 Congolese Army soldiers fled into Uganda. The Ugandan Army (Ugandan Peoples Defense Force, UPDF) disarmed the Congolese soldiers. They were then given refugee status.

July 8, 2012: The government announced that it expects to begin oil production sometime in 2013 (likely late 2013). The government estimates that Uganda has at least two billion barrels in oil reserves but that is a conservative figure. Test wells are being drilled in other potential oil fields. The government is looking for investors to help build infrastructure, to include local refining capacity as well as pipelines. The government wants to cooperate with Kenya in building an export pipeline. Kenya is also touting the discovery of potentially commercial oil fields. The worry in Uganda is that investors will see Kenya, with its access to the sea and already existing refining capacity, as a better investment.

July 12, 2012: Some 40 Congolese Army soldiers are being treated at Ugandan medical facilities. The Congolese soldiers were injured in fighting with the Congo’s M23 rebel movement. M23 fighters attacked a Congolese Army border garrison post and over 600 Congolese soldiers fled into Uganda. The healthy Congolese soldiers are being returned to the Congo.

The failure to bring Kony to heel, despite last year’s introduction of sophisticated international security advice and support, has frustrated the governments of Uganda, South Sudan, Congo, and the CAR. On June 29, the UN Security Council asked for more international assistance. The African Union is in the process of creating a 5,000 soldier force to combat the LRA, with units provided by Uganda, South Sudan, the Congo, and the
CAR. The force needs equipment, trainers, and funds to support training. (Austin Bay)

Kony also has a knack for moving at just the right time. Uganda contends that Kony gets intelligence tips from Sudanese intelligence and that the LRA still receives material assistance from Sudan. The Sudanese deny both allegations, vehemently.

The LRA dispersal area is huge, in square kilometers roughly comparable the state of Texas. Kony uses the vast region’s size and political divisions to his advantage. For years Kony maintained hide-outs in the territory’s most remote regions, frequently crossing international borders to hide his tracks and create diplomatic complications for his enemies. Remote certainly applies to the south-eastern CAR’s (Central African Republic) Chinko River area and Sudan’s western Darfur region, the two areas where Ugandan security officials say they believe he is likely hiding.

These small, dispersed LRA bands operate as little more than criminal gangs. The LRA bands attack poorly armed villages, steal food, and abduct civilians. For the LRA, theft and looting are logistics operations. Sometimes the abducted are used to transport booty, food, and equipment.

July 13, 2012: Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) senior commander Joseph Kony continues to evade the international effort to arrest him. Late last year that effort intensified as U.S. special operations personnel began providing intelligence data and logistics assistance to his pursuers. In the past, when military pressure increased, the LRA would disperse. The leaders would hide and the fighters would break up into small groups, with as few as four or five members each. Kony and his surviving LRA loyalists are using these tactics once again.

July 13, 2012: A soldier and a wildlife ranger were killed in a firefight with the Toposa tribe near the Uganda-South Sudan border. The Toposa live in South Sudan but have a reputation for poaching in Uganda. The Toposa attackers were suspected of hunting big game illegally in Uganda. The soldier and the ranger were part of a joint military and wildlife ranger operation that had tracked a small group of poachers. The joint patrol approached the poachers and the poachers fled but succeeded in killing the two men. Soldiers and police recovered an AK-47 assault rifle dropped by the poachers during the firefight.

July 14, 2012: Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni warned other East African countries that foreign oil companies are trying to negotiate unfair exploration and production agreements. Museveni noted that several oil companies have objected to Ugandan plans to build an oil refinery in Uganda. Ugandan intends to become a regional energy supplier.
July 17, 2012: LRA attacks in the Congo and the CAR increased during the second quarter of 2012. Between the beginning of April and the end of June the LRA launched 62 attacks in the Congo and nine in the CAR, killing 11 people while 37 were kidnapped. So far there has been no LRA attack inside South Sudan.

July 24, 2012: The government of Sudan objected to a UN proposal that would include cooperating in the international effort to fight LRA as part of the new peacekeeping mandate of the African Union-UN Mission in Darfur (UNAMID).

July 26, 2012: The government confirmed that three international oil companies are studying a new oil pipeline proposal for exporting Ugandan oil through Kenya. The estimated cost of the 1,300 kilometer pipeline is somewhere between $3 and $5 billion. Uganda estimates that it will eventually produce 200,000 barrels of oil per day.

July 31, 2012: The government denied allegations that the Ugandan military is supporting the renegade Congolese rebel group, M23.

Despite Sudan’s objections, the UN Security Council voted to approve a paragraph in the UNAMID Darfur peacekeeping force’s mandate which calls on UNAMID to cooperate and share information on the LRA. Sudan claims the LRA is not inside Sudanese territory.

August 1, 2012: The government has launched another disarmament program in the Karamojong tribal region in northern Uganda. This program is described as village-friendly. Soldiers will be approaching area security personnel and local leaders and asking them to help convince tribesmen to turn in illegal weapons. This is a major change in military policy. The new policy is an attempt to address charges of brutality by Ugandan military personnel.

August 5, 2012: The government claimed that a person abducted by the LRA in Sudan had provided credible evidence that LRA commander Joseph Kony is now in Sudan’s Darfur region. The Sudanese government continues to deny the allegations. Sudan claims that it quit helping Kony in 2005. From 1994 to 2005, however, Sudan did provide the LRA with weapons, training, money, and base camps.

August 7, 2012: Ugandan soldiers will participate in a regional exercise in Rwanda designed to train military personnel in disaster management techniques and counter-terrorism. Some 1,800 troops from several East African nations will participate in the exercise.

August 8, 2012: The government announced that it will send an air force contingent of helicopters to Somalia to support AMISOM operations. The government statement said that the Ugandan military will participate in an
upcoming attack on the Somali port of Kismayo. The attack is expected to take place before August 20.

August 13, 2012: The government reported that three Mi-24 helicopter gunships had crashed last night in Kenya en route to Somalia. Initial reports suggested that one helicopter had made a forced landing on Mount Kenya and another two had crashed. A fourth helicopter, an Mi-17, landed safely at Garissa, Kenya. The helicopters were on their way to Somalia to support AMISOM peacekeeping forces.

August 16, 2012: Two missing soldiers were found shot dead inside South Sudanese territory near the Uganda-South Sudan border (Maji-Moto area). One report claimed that the two soldiers had left their unit in order to sell chickens at a South Sudanese village market. The soldiers disappeared from their unit on August 12.

August 18, 2012: Three Ugandan Mi-24 military helicopters which crashed into Mount Kenya had deviated from their planned flight path. The helicopters were at an altitude of 3,500 meters (11,000 feet) and in thick fog when they hit Mount Kenya. The mountain is the second highest in Africa, at over 5,100 meters (17,000 feet). The official death toll is now seven soldiers killed and 15 with minor injuries. The fourth helicopter landed safely (in Garissa). A Kenyan pilot attempted to warn the helicopters that they were about to collide with the mountain. The helicopters were to be used in an operation to take the Somali seaport of Kismayo. The Al Shabaab Islamist militia still controls Kismayo.

August 23, 2012: The government reported that around 13,000 former LRA fighters have been pardoned since the Amnesty Act was implemented in 2000.

August 27, 2012: Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni promoted his son, Colonel Muhoozi Kainerugaba, to brigadier general. Kainerugaba commands Uganda’s special operations forces and is 38 years old.

August 29, 2012: The Uganda Army reported that it had seized an LRA ammunition and weapons cache after attacking an LRA camp inside the CAR on August 24. The small jungle camp was run by LRA commander Dominic Ongwen (who has been charged with war crimes by the ICC/International Criminal Court). Ugandan soldiers killed two LRA rebels during the attack and freed two abductees. Ongwen and the rest of his force escaped. Ongwen’s force was described as containing only 7-12 people. The Ugandan patrol also captured solar panels (for generating electricity), a radio set, and several military uniforms.

August 30, 2012: Joseph Kony, supreme LRA (Lord's Resistance Army) commander, continues to frustrate years of international efforts to arrest him. Uganda, however, is keeping the pressure on by conducting long-
range patrols, most of them in the southeastern Chinko River-area of the Central African Republic (CAR). The rumor mill still says that is where Kony is hiding. The area is sparsely inhabited and covered with thick jungle. The army carried out a successful raid in the CAR on August 24, and almost nabbed one of Kony’s deputy commanders, who apparently moved into Sudan’s Darfur region. The Darfur reports are sketchy but then all of the Kony sightings are sketchy. Ugandan authorities also maintain that Kony is getting support from Sudan. Sudan denies the allegation. The UN issued a statement last month which argued that the LRA’s command and control capabilities have been degraded. One reason was the surrender in May of Ceasar Acellam, who had the rank of major general in the LRA and was one of Kony’s chief military advisers. The other reason is improved surveillance. Kony has not been captured but he knows that American unmanned aerial vehicles and electronic intelligence units are looking for him and that U.S. special operations troops can provide that intelligence to Ugandan and allied forces very quickly. In late July the UN estimated that Kony’s forces have been whittled down to 150 fighters. Other sources estimate that the LRA has up to 250 fighters. The LRA fighters are operating in very small groups, some as small as four or five rebels.

September 3, 2012: The Congo believes members of the Ugandan Army (UPDF) may have been involved in the mass slaughter of a herd of 22 elephants. The elephants were killed in April 2012, in the Congo’s Garamba National Park. The elephants were each killed with one shot in the head and their ivory tusks taken from their corpses. Observers in the Congo reported seeing a Ugandan military helicopter flying low over the park about the time the mass slaughter occurred. For several years the Lords’ Resistance Army had bases inside the huge park. LRA fighters have also been accused of poaching elephants and selling the illegally-obtained ivory. Ivory sells for $1,000 a kilogram on the international black market, though reportedly Chinese buyers will pay as much as $2,500 a kilogram. China has money and its people have a huge appetite for carved ivory objects. The average weight of an elephant tusk is hard to estimate. A survey of various wildlife biologist estimates of average tusk weight found that a typical young adult elephant tusk could weigh ten kilograms, though mature adult males can grow tusks that weigh more than 50 kilograms (110 pounds). On July 9, Ugandan media reported that Ugandan customs officials had stopped an ivory smuggling operation. Ugandan customs agents seized 426 kilograms of illegal ivory at Kampala’s Entebbe international airport. The ivory was concealed in metallic suitcases which were supposed to be shipped to Indonesia. In an Asian black market that would mean the shipment was worth between $425,000 and one million dollars. On June 20 Ugandan media reported that earlier in the month customs officials seized an illegal shipment that
September 5, 2012: A Ugandan Army unit operating in the CAR killed one LRA rebel and captured another.

September 6, 2012: Ugandan Army forces severing with AMISOM (African Union Mission in Somalia) deployed near the port of Elmaan (40 kilometers north of Mogadishu). The deployment was described as part of an operation to take territory from the Islamist extremist group Al Shabaab.

September 7, 2012: A group of northern Ugandan religious leaders arrived in the CAR to speak with former LRA captives. The group also urged LRA defectors to return to Uganda.

September 12, 2012: LRA rebels ambushed a CAR (Central African Republic) Army truck convoy and killed one soldier. Six others were wounded. The attack took place in a very remote section of the eastern CAR. The region borders on Congo and South Sudan. The convoy was on the road to Obo (some 170 kilometers away). The CAR government reported that the army contingent was the lead element of an African Union military force deployment in the area. The CAR also acknowledged that the LRA had attacked two villages and abducted 55 people.

September 17, 2012: The government reported that proven oil reserves now top 3.5 billion barrels. This is a 40 percent increase over 2011 estimates. New exploratory wells are being drilled. Private industry officials have estimated that Uganda could have eight to ten billion barrels of oil, with a value of over a trillion dollars.

September 18, 2012 Terrorists target Uganda, -The Africa Report

Security intelligence in Uganda has revealed that terrorists are targeting Uganda, with attacks planned as the country prepares to celebrate its 50th independence anniversary. The East African country marks its independence on October 9. But as arrangements ahead of next month’s ceremonies move into full gear, Uganda's police chief, Lt. General Kale Kayihura issued a terror alert to the public. "The terrorists want to kill innocent civilians during the celebrations. I request all Ugandans to be very vigilant because the terrorists are increasingly targeting Uganda," Kayihura said. He said they had received reliable information about terrorist plans to attack the country. He added that two Somali suspects who were arrested in Kenya last Friday had confessed that they were preparing to strike Uganda. Police in Kenya on Friday carried out a dawn operation in the suburb of Nairobi in its counter-terrorism efforts. During the operation, which they say was successful, they recovered six bombs, 12 hand grenades, four rifles, four suicide bomb vests, six bullet proof
jackets, 40 kg of explosive material and over 400 live bullets. Some Uganda police officers went to Kenya to carry out investigations related to the arrested suspected terrorists. According to their observations, the suicide bombs recovered by Kenyan police during the operation were similar with those used by terrorists who killed over 70 people in Uganda in 2010. Uganda police spokesperson, Judith Nabakoba said they will also carry out similar operations in areas they suspect to be harbouring terror. (Text ends)

September 23, 2012: The Kony 2012 Internet video continues to attract viewers world-wide, and the global viewers continue to ask, why does the LRA commit such vicious and violent crimes, atrocities like mass murder, mass kidnapping, public rapes, and mutilation (with machetes and hand axes) of the living and the dead? The answer is cruelly simple: spectacular violence attracts media attention and it frightens defenseless Central African villagers. LRA commanders know they must do both if they and their movement are to survive. Media attention, even negative attention, gives the LRA a measure of political power. The atrocities receive deserved headlines, and deserved condemnation, but the headlines also tell Central African governments that despite their efforts (and international aid, like U.S. Special Forces advisers) the LRA remains in the field. Despite their poverty and fragmentation, LRA fighters are potent enough to launch attacks over a swath of Central Africa roughly the size of Texas. In this strategic-political respect, the intent of the LRA’s spectacular violence differs little from that of other terrorist groups like Al Qaeda; compared to their adversaries, the LRA is very weak, but its ability to wreak havoc has no bounds. Frightening defenseless Central Africans also serves the purpose of tactical survival. When the LRA left northern Uganda it left its most reliable source of food, supplies, and manpower: sympathetic members of the Acholi tribe. In Congo, South Sudan, and the CAR LRA fighters are not rebels but foreign thugs. The LRA bands must survive by looting and plundering (and perhaps air drops from Sudan, according to the Ugandan government). Theft takes less effort if the locals are already afraid. Theft also helps explain the LRA’s penchant for kidnapping (abduction). The LRA is short of personnel and the bands need load-bearers for the food they steal. They also need load carriers for their military supplies. Fear also buys silence. If the villagers know they will be killed, or have an arm sliced away, if they pass on information about the LRA to the UN, Congolese Army, or CAR national police, they are less likely to do so. For the LRA the threat of horrendous physical reprisal is a means of exerting political control. A fellow villager with a disfigured face or a missing hand serves as a bitter reminder to others that it is better to keep quiet than inform on the LRA. (Austin Bay)

September 29, 2012: The Ugandan Army officially assigned 2,000 soldiers to the African Union’s anti-LRA Regional Task Force (RTF). South Sudan
contributed 500 soldiers. In March 2012, the African Union and the UN called upon South Sudan, Uganda, the Congo, and the CAR to do a better job in coordinating their efforts to combat the LRA. The RTF is described as a regional collective effort to end the LRA insurgency.

October 9, 2012: Uganda celebrated the 50th anniversary of its independence from Great Britain. Several opposition political groups, however, boycotted the government’s official ceremonies. The opposition accused the government of corruption and of denying political freedoms.

October 11, 2012: The Ugandan Army now believes that LRA senior commander, Joseph Kony, is hiding out in the north-easter corner of the CAR, in the CAR’s Vakaga prefecture. The area is near the Sudan border. Uganda has army units in the south-eastern CAR’s Haut-Mbomou region and has increased its operations in the area. As a result, the LRA has moved. The military said its sources are abductees who have escaped from LRA bands. At the moment there are at least ten LRA bands in the CAR. Three of the bands are large, by LRA standards, with from 30 to 100 rebel fighters. The LRA is believed to have between 200 and 400 active fighters.

October 14, 2012: The government has stopped paying some Ugandan 60,000 retirees (soldiers, teachers, and government workers) after an accounting audit discovered that several hundred pension checks were going to people who did not exist. Ghost soldiers are not a new phenomenon – that is, non-existent soldiers who are on the unit rolls but whose pay goes into the pockets of corrupt officers. The same goes for ghost workers. Ghost pensioners are not a new phenomenon either but cracking down on them is. The halt in payments, however, has affected honest pensioners as well. The government hopes to begin paying pensions to non-ghosts by the end of October.

October 24, 2012: Peace activists from Congo and Uganda have asked the government to re-open peace negotiations with the Lords’ Resistance Army. Religious groups from both countries and representatives from the Acholi tribe (northern Uganda) met at a conference in northern Uganda. The groups stated that they believe that the time has come to open new peace and reconciliation talks with the rebel group. A Ugandan contingent also asked that the government reinstate the blanket amnesty policy, arguing that LRA rebels in Congo, Sudan, and the Central African Republic (CAR) would quit fighting and come home if the policy were reinstated and observed. The religious organizations have also held talks in the CAR, where the LRA is also active. The LRA drew many of its members from the Acholi tribe. The government will probably ignore the appeals because it believes the LRA is fragmenting. Access to U.S. tactical intelligence is one reason. The increasing number of anti-LRA cross-border operations is another. The government also believes it has won the political and
information battle with the LRA as well. The African Union’s multi-national Regional Task Force (RTF), which has the mission of ending the LRA’s insurgency, is expanding in size. Despite all these efforts, the LRA continues to exist and sustains itself via looting, kidnapping, brainwashing (of young captives), random atrocities, and slavery.

October 24, 2012: The government announced that it is reconsidering its participation in the Somalia AMISOM peacekeeping mission because of what it called a false accusation by the UN that it is supporting the Congolese M23 rebel movement.

November 2, 2012: Uganda to withdraw troops from Somalia' Uganda will withdraw its forces from UN-backed international missions, Security Minister Muruli Mukasa says, escalating a long-running row. Mr Mukasa said the government had sent an official to New York to inform the UN of this decision. Operations in Somalia, the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of Congo will be affected. The UN infuriated Kampala when it published an experts' report accusing Uganda of arming Congolese rebels. Mr Mukasa told a news conference: "If our efforts are going to be misinterpreted and we are going to be maligned, we want to be in a good relationship with our neighbours. "Let's stop all these initiatives. We will concentrate on ourselves. Whoever wants to cause us trouble, they will find us at our home." Uganda provides the largest contingent to the UN-backed African Union mission in Somalia (Amisom). The Amisom force has helped the Somali government gain ground against Islamist militias. Analysts say a rapid withdrawal of Ugandan troops could threaten those gains. Ugandan troops are deployed in smaller numbers to an international mission to CAR and DR Congo to hunt down the remaining elements of the Lord's Resistance Army and its leader, Joseph Kony. The LRA killed thousands of people and abducted thousands more during a long insurgency that has seen it fight in several countries. The remarks from the security minister echo a statement made in the Ugandan parliament by Prime Minister Amama Mbabazi. The BBC's Catherine Byaruhanga in Kampala says while both the prime minister and the security minister have said the decision is irreversible, there has been no official government word on the issue. The foreign and defence ministries, when contacted by the BBC, said no statements were available. A report by a UN panel of experts last month said Rwanda and Uganda were both supplying weapons to the M23 rebels in the DR Congo. Both countries denied the claims. The rebels' insurrection has forced some 500,000 from their homes since April.

November 3, 2012: Somalia said that his country relies on AMISOM’s peacekeeping force to defend it and stabilize the country. He also made it clear that the Ugandan Contingent (Ugandan Army component of AMISOM) plays a major role in fighting the Al Shabaab Islamist militia and
the war against Al Shabaab is at a critical moment. The withdrawal of Ugandan soldiers would place Somalia at risk. The Ugandan Army (Ugandan Peoples Defense Forces, UDF) has around 5,000 soldiers in Somalia. AMISOM has 17,600 peacekeepers on duty. The Somali government said that it has not yet heard anything officially from the Ugandan government regarding threats by Uganda to withdraw its peacekeeping contingent. Uganda is angry at a UN report which accuses it of supporting Congolese rebels. The Somali government was responding to a report that the Ugandan government is seriously considering withdrawing Ugandan security forces from regional peacekeeping efforts in Somalia and the Central African Republic (CAR). The Ugandan forces in the CAR are pursuing the Lords Resistance Army. Uganda also has soldiers in South Sudan who are participating in the anti-LRA operation.

November 6, 2012: The government rejected a UN investigative report which claimed that Uganda had actively supported the M23 rebel movement. M23 operates in the Congo’s eastern province of North Kivu. In the months prior to its attack on the city of Goma, M23 held an enclave on the Uganda-Congo border. The UN report quote Congolese Army sources and M23 fighters who claimed that the Ugandan Army had around 600 soldiers involved with the rebel army. Uganda contends that the 600 soldiers were Congolese Army soldiers who had fled from M23 into the Uganda. Ugandan diplomats are also pointing out that Uganda has repeatedly offered to act as a mediator in negotiations between M23 commanders and the Congolese government. There is an on-going mediation effort by the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR, a regional cooperation group). Uganda’s president currently chairs the ICGLR.

November 10, 2012: The government renewed its threat to withdraw Ugandan Army troops from UN and African Union peacekeeping operations. The government called a UN report that Uganda is aiding the M23 rebel movement in the Congo a “stab in the back.” Ugandan diplomats have been meeting with members of the UN Security Council to express the nation’s outrage. However, the UN reported that Uganda has not yet lodged an official complaint.

November 16, 2012: The government has begun to relocate some 8,000 people living near the Lake Albert oil fields to make room to build an oil refinery. The relocation program is controversial. Most of the people being relocated are farmers and their families, and they are angry at losing their land. They claim that the government is not paying enough in compensation. There are also several disagreements over surveys and land records. The planned refinery complex, which is being built by the state’s Petroleum Exploration and Production Department (PEPD), requires 29 square kilometers of space. The large area includes a small airport,
housing for workers, and stores. The government contends that the country needs the refinery because it will ultimately make more money if it can sell refined products to other east African countries. Uganda won’t simply export oil as a natural resource, it will sell refined products (value-added products). Ugandan workers will have these high-paying jobs, not someone in another country. The refinery is supposed to be completed by 2015. The Lake Albert area has between three and four billion barrels of oil. (Austin Bay)

November 20, 2012: The government is continuing to talk to the Russian state arms exporting company, Rosoboronexport. Though the acquisition of six Russian-made Su-30MK2 multi-mission combat fighters remains very controversial in Uganda, the government contends the country needs the aircraft to protect its oilfields and planned oil refining and transport infrastructure. The government points to attacks on South Sudan’s infrastructure by the Sudanese Air Force as a reason to have high-performance fighters capable of conducting air interception missions. According to Rosoboronexport officials, Uganda has expressed an interest in obtaining an option to purchase six more Su-30MK2s. Russian media have reported that Ugandan president Yoweri Museveni will discuss the aircraft when he visits Moscow in December.

November 22, 2012: The government once again firmly denied that it is involved with the Congolese M23 rebel movement. The denial came the same day several security analysts published assessments of the government’s threat to withdraw its forces from international peacekeeping and stability operations. Even critics of Uganda (several of whom have concluded the evidence that Uganda and Rwanda support M23 is overwhelming) have agreed the threat by the Museveni government is very astute diplomacy. Many of the nations criticizing Uganda have refused to send troops to Somalia but they support the AMISOM mission. Since 2007, the Ugandan Army has served as AMISOM’s primary peacekeeping force in the Mogadishu area. The government has essentially said, okay, if you want to make malign accusations against us, then you go police Somalia.

November 26, 2012: A senior M23 (a Tutsi Congo rebel group) commander has flown to Kampala, Uganda to participate in negotiations to end the M23 rebellion in the Congo (Democratic Republic of Congo). Uganda is helping facilitate the negotiations.

December 10, 2012: The Ugandan Contingent with AMISOM and Somali troops retook the Somali town of Jawahr (90 kilometers northeast of Mogadishu). Al Shabaab militia units had used Jawahr as a base.

December 11, 2012: President Yoweri Museveni met with Russian president Vladimir Putin in Moscow. Russia is interested in Uganda’s
expanding oil production. Museveni has said that Uganda is seeking additional sources of international investment. Russia is also interested in selling Uganda more Su-30 fighters.

December 13, 2012: The Ugandan Army placed units on high alert because of what it considers to be credible intelligence that Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) guerrillas will launch attacks in western Uganda. The army believes that the ADF has built several new base camps in the eastern Congo. The ADF has at least 500 to 600 guerrilla fighters under arms and is recruiting more. The military claimed that the ADF has been trying to recruit in Uganda’s Mayuge district (northeastern Uganda).

December 18, 2012: The LRA has launched 180 attacks during 2012, and 138 occurred in the Congo while 42 occurred in the Central African Republic (CAR). These attacks left 39 dead and 193 kidnapped.

December 19, 2012: There is evidence that the LRA is killing elephants (for their ivory) in the Congo’s Garamba National Park. Congolese park rangers reportedly captured some elephant tusks after a firefight with LRA guerrillas.

December 26, 2012: The African Union wants the four countries participating in the search for Lords’ Resistance Army (LRA) commander Joseph Kony to recommit themselves to capturing Kony and defeating the LRA. Uganda, the Congo, South Sudan, and the CAR have all promised to help in the regional effort to capture Kony.

January 4, 2013: The government said that it is willing to commit peacekeeping troops to the Central African Republic (CAR) to help stabilize the deteriorating situation in that country. The government said that the African Union (AU) is the logical organization to create a peacekeeping force for the CAR.

January 7, 2013: Al Shabaab militia suffered a severe defeat after AMISOM forces raided a key Al Shbaab base located in the Balidoogle area (120 kilometers northwest of Mogadishu). Ugandan soldiers ambushed an Al Shabaab unit and then raided a base camp.

The ADF’s full name is the Allied Democratic Forces-National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (ADF-NALU). The ADF formed in the mid-1990s and operated from bases in the eastern Congo. Allegedly Sudan played a role in forming the ADF and many ADF fighters were Muslim Ugandans. The ADF tried to attract support inside Uganda but largely failed. The government contends that Al Shabaab and its supporters have revived the ADF as a tool for attacking Uganda. Uganda has forces deployed with AMISOM (African Union Mission in Somalia) in Somalia. In early December the Ugandan Army reported that the ADF had at least 500 to 600 fighters. At least one source says the figure is over 1,000 fighters. These include
ADF fighters who have gone to Somalia to fight with Al Shabaab. The ADF’s senior commander, Jamil Mukulu, is allegedly hiding in Tanzania. Mukulu is a Muslim convert. ADF may have funding sources in East Africa. The ADF purportedly engages in timber smuggling (from Congolese forests) and smuggling precious minerals (specifically gold).

January 10, 2013: The Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) rebel group is expanding in East Africa. The ADF is recruiting fighters in Burundi, Uganda, and Tanzania. Since last August the ADF has been recruiting more fighters and building base camps in the eastern Congo. The ADF is now aligned with the Somali Islamist Al Shabaab militia, which Ugandan Army soldiers have been fighting in Somalia. The ADF had set up a base camp (and possibly a headquarters) near the town of Beni in the north of the Congo’s North Kivu province. The area is about 90 kilometers from the Congo-Uganda border.

January 18, 2013: The government denied claims by Sudan that Uganda is aiding rebel movements inside Sudan. Sudan has filed diplomatic complaints against Uganda with the African Union and other regional political organizations.

January 19, 2013: Egypt and Uganda called for a meeting of Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) member countries to discuss and find solutions to impending problems that are related to the sharing of the waters from River Nile. Egypt is worried about new dams being built by Ethiopia and increased use of water by upstream nations like South Sudan. Uganda is an ally of Ethiopia and South Sudan.

January 21, 2013: Ugandan Army soldiers operating in the CAR reported that they killed a man (called Binani) known to be the chief bodyguard of LRA senior commander Joseph Kony, as well as a logistics expert.

January 27, 2013: President Yoweri Museveni allegedly told senior members of his National Resistance Movement (NRM) party that the Ugandan military will not allow what he called “confusion” in the Ugandan parliament to continue. The alleged comment by Museveni fueled more rumors that the military was going to launch a coup that would throw opposition members of parliament and some NRM parliamentarians out of power (and perhaps into jail).

February 3, 2013: The European Union stated that the Ugandan military must stay out of politics. The EU statement followed rumors that the military was contemplating a coup. EU nations are major donors to Uganda.

February 4, 2013: Political leaders from northern Uganda are encouraging the government to reorganize the repatriation and integration program that they contend is not working. Northern Uganda, particularly the areas
occupied by the Acholi tribe, was the center of the LRA insurgency. The repatriation and integration programs were supposed to help war victims and former guerrillas return to civilian life. The political leaders want the government to create a special war victims compensation fund.

However, claims that the Lord’s Resistance Army is responsible for mass elephant killings are exaggerated. The likely suspects are other rebel groups operating in the Congo, South Sudan, Sudan’s Darfur region, and the CAR, though reports by Congolese game wardens that the LRA has poached elephants in the Congo’s Garamba National Park are documented. There are also numerous reports from freed LRA abductees that LRA senior commander Joseph Kony has ordered his fighters to kill elephants for their ivory. LRA fighters, however, are so scattered and hunted that many officials and wildlife protection groups believe it is difficult for the LRA to smuggle the ivory to buyers. One theory is that LRA ivory is given to local tribal chiefs in the CAR or in Darfur, who are providing protection for Kony and his men. The locals then sell the ivory to smugglers.

February 9, 2013: East African organizations that try to monitor illegal poaching in the region are reporting that elephant poaching to obtain ivory is increasing.

February 12, 2013: Ugandan troops fighting the LRA in the CAR are attempting to strike at the organizations command structure. This is the strategy advocated by advisers to the AU-sponsored regional force combating the LRA in South Sudan, the Congo, and the CAR. The Ugandan Army recently acknowledged that the LRA may still have 150 to 200 active fighters. This is lower than the 200 figure mentioned in late 2012. The military believes that its information campaign encouraging LRA fighters to defect is having an effect. The information campaign includes radio broadcasts and leaflet drops by aircraft.

February 14, 2013: The government is considering developing alternative transportation routes to Indian Ocean seaports. At the moment, Uganda relies on the Kenyan port of Mombasa. However, violence in Kenya in 2007 and 2008, effectively blocked Ugandan access to Mombasa. The government has said that it will build an inland port on Lake Victoria to handle shipments from Tanzania’s lake port of Musoma. Railroad lines connect Musoma to two Tanzanian seaports, Tanga and Dar es Salaam. Ugandan imports and exports would move by barge on Lake Victoria between Uganda’s lake port and Musoma. Tanzania intends to add and improve other rail connections. The Ugandan lake port will be built at Bukasa, which is south of Kampala.
February 15, 2013: The Congolese Army will send 500 soldiers to help the Ugandan Army in its hunt for LRA leader Joseph Kony. The AU (African Union)-coordinated anti-LRA force now has some 3,300 soldiers.

February 19, 2013: Lords Resistance Army (LRA) activity in central Africa has declined, supporting claims by the government of Uganda and the African Union (AU) that the LRA has been weakened. A string of defections has damaged the organization. Since May 2012, 19 Ugandan fighters in the LRA have defected (many are in the Congo and the Central African Republic, CAR). These defectors were long-time, hard core LRA members. However, the LRA still remains a deadly group of thugs. The villages they attack in the CAR and the Congo are basically defenseless. Villages that are outside the operational areas of the Ugandan Army are regarded as being particularly vulnerable. The LRA abducted over 500 people in 2012 and killed at least 50.

February 20, 2013: Ugandan civilians reported heavy gunfire and possible artillery fire along the Uganda-Congo border.

February 21, 2013: The government gave official refugee status to 15 members of Eritrea’s national soccer team. In December 2012, the Eritrean soccer team was participating in an international tournament in Kampala and 17 players turned up missing. Everyone suspected they had defected and that proved to be the case. The players requested asylum, claiming they faced reprisals in Eritrea. Two players later decided to return to Eritrea. Many Ugandans supported the players’ requests.

February 24, 2013: The government agreed to support the UN’s Peace Security and Cooperation Framework. The framework affects security operations in central Africa and is designed to help countries combat rebel organizations like the Congo’s M23 group. Diplomats regarded Rwanda’s and Uganda’s agreement as essential since both countries have been accused of providing M23 rebels with support. The framework will include the creation and deployment of a new UN brigade in the Congo. The so-called Intervention Brigade will be tasked with combating rogue militias.

February 26, 2013: The government indicated that it will likely commit troops to a UN peacekeeping mission in Mali. UN Security Council Resolution 2085 (passed in December 2012) authorized the creation of the African International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA). The African Union will organize and deploy the force. At that time the UN asked Uganda to consider providing troops for the mission. Though the government statement fell short of a firm commitment, the government of Mali has officially asked Uganda to participate.

March 1, 2013: The military confirmed that it had beefed up units deployed along the Uganda-Congo border. In late February, fighting
erupted along the border. The worst fighting was between M23 Congolese rebels and a Mai Mai militia, but there was also an incident involving Congolese security forces. There were also reports of fighting between two M23 rival factions. The Ugandan Army’s 2nd Division is deployed in the border region.

March 4, 2013: The government said the military would continue to pursue LRA terrorists operating in the Central African Republic, despite the rebellion in that country. The CAR operation is vital because the military continues to believe that LRA commander Joseph Kony is most likely hiding out in the remote area of the CAR where South Sudan, Sudan, and CAR borders meet. In late 2012, rebel fighters belonging to Seleka began a series of attacks against the CAR government. Seleka means alliance in Sango (a language spoken by many CAR tribes) and it is just that -- a CAR rebel alliance. Seleka’s leaders accused the CAR government of abrogating the 2007 CAR peace agreement.

Getting the rebels to support the former government’s agreements may be difficult. Why? According to CAR sources, the government of Sudan (Khartoum) has provided Seleka with support. Uganda has repeatedly alleged that Sudanese intelligence provides support to the LRA and rumors continue to that effect. There are also reports that Kony has left the CAR and moved into Sudan, possibly the western Darfur region.

March 9, 2013: Despite repeated official assurances by the military that Ugandan forces will continue to pursue the LRA in the Central African Republic, the unstable political situation in the CAR is affecting anti-LRA operations. Ugandan Army officers have reported that the rebels have defeated the CAR government and will likely form a new national government. However, the rebels are not honoring agreements made by the current CAR government. The army is indicating that it is prepared to continue operations against the LRA in the CAR. But the UN, AU, and the Ugandan government must engage the rebel leaders and get them to agree to support the joint anti-LRA effort in their country. If the rebels do not agree to support the anti-LRA operation, several senior military officers are worried that they will be forced to withdraw completely from their forward operating bases in the CAR. The army is prepared to order its soldiers to pull back to the CAR bases located at Obo, Zemio, and Djemah. Uganda has around 2,900 soldiers deployed in the CAR.

March 11, 2013: The February 6th briefing by a senior army general continues to roil Ugandan politics. The briefing, conducted by Gen Aronda Nyakairima, followed a series of statements by senior government officials (including the president) that the army might intervene if the parliament continued to accuse the president and executive branch of corruption. Nyakairima then said that the military would not let bad politics damage the country. Nyakairima said the military would not permit turmoil in
Uganda. Opposition political leaders called the statement a direct threat. Critics said that over time the Ugandan Army has become a respected institution and Nyakakirima’s threat could undermine respect for the military.

March 15, 2013: Government officials have urged nations supporting the African Union peacekeeping mission in Somalia (AMISOM) to better coordinate their aid efforts. The government also reported that since 2010, over 3,000 Somali soldiers (Somali federal government forces, the Somali National Army) have trained at the Ugandan Army training center in Bihanga. The European Union Training Mission (EUTM) has trainers at Bihanga. The Ugandan Army also provides some of the instruction.

March 19, 2013: The UN said talks between M23 and the government of Congo will resume very quickly. The talks are being held in Uganda’s capital, Kampala.

March 26, 2013: The government, attempting to quiet fears that the anti-LRA operation in the Central African Republic is about to end, said that it intends to keep Ugandan military forces in the CAR and continue the operation. CAR rebels (in the Seleka coalition) officially seized power on March 24th. The rebels then said all foreign forces must leave the CAR. The rebels had said several times that if they took power they would demand that all foreign forces withdraw. Senior Ugandan military officers have reportedly told the government that it is essential that the new CAR government (ie, the Seleka government) support the international anti-LRA operation.

Meanwhile, the U.S. announced that it will pay a five million dollar reward for information leading to the capture LRA commander Joseph Kony.

April 3, 2013: The Ugandan Army announced that it will have to suspend anti-LRA operations in the Central African Republic based on the policies of the new CAR government (the Seleka coalition). Ugandan forces, however, will not leave the CAR. They will return to their bases in the CAR and remain in those bases until further notice.

April 5, 2013: The UN said that the Ugandan Army is still determined to continue anti-LRA operations in the CAR despite a demand by the new CAR government that foreign forces exit the country. Note that UN statement was a bit opaque and addressed Ugandan determination. At the moment anti-LRA operations have been halted. However, UN diplomats are trying to get the new CAR government to support the joint anti-LRA mission. The UN’s special representative in the CAR has encouraged the new government leaders to continue to support the AU and UN –backed operations. The special representative said that Kony must not be given a reprieve. UN and AU officials said that operations in neighboring nations to
eliminate LRA cadres and protect civilians from attack by LRA rebels continue.

The UN and the government announced that talks between M23 Congolese rebels and the Congo government have resumed in Kampala. The Ugandan government is acting as mediator in the talks.

April 8, 2013: The government and Ugandan media are reacting to reports that the latest U.S. National Intelligence report speculates that Uganda will face violent instability in 2013. The report was given to the U.S. Senate’s intelligence committee on March 12th. The Ugandan government dismissed the U.S. analysis as indicative of American ignorance of central and east Africa.

April 9, 2013: The military said that the temporary suspension of anti-LRA operations in the Central African Republic (CAR) announced April 3 would continue until further notice. U.S. advisers working with the Ugandan Army will also continue to suspend operations. The military said that the rebel leaders in the CAR had explicitly refused to cooperate with the Ugandan military and the AU-UN joint force. Meanwhile, a U.S. military spokesman called the suspension of operations in the CAR a pause. Forty U.S. advisers are currently in the CAR advising and training forces involved in the LRA hunt. Those special operations soldiers will remain in the CAR at two camps, one located near the town of Obo and the other near Diema. The U.S. forces will not be withdrawn. A total of 100 U.S. special operations troops are assigned to the anti-LRA mission. The other 60 are in Congo, South Sudan, and Uganda.

April 17, 2013: For the first time in 33 years the Karamoja town of Moroto has running water. The Moroto district had a water system built in the 1960s, but the system was damaged during the violence at the end of the 1970s. It fell into complete disrepair during the civil war in the 1980s. In 2010, the UN provided support to repair and rebuild the system. The project included new construction and new wells. Residents in Moroto attributed recurrent outbreaks of cholera to the lack of clean water. Citizens of Karamoja complain that the national government neglects their region. Karamoja is located in northeastern Uganda.

April 23, 2013: The army reported that it has suffered over 400 desertions in recent months. The army, surprising many Ugandans, published an official list naming the deserters. The army said that, although desertions have always occurred, it was worried about what it considered to be a wave of desertions. An investigation of a foiled attack on a unit headquarters (Mbuya area) revealed that several deserters planned the attack. The military wants the public to help find the deserters. The list included 37 members of the elite Special Forces Command (SFC). The military said five of the 37 SFC deserters named on the list had been
arrested in mid-April (in other words, a few days before the list was officially released). These deserters claimed they deserted because they had been forced to do hard labor. Media noted that most of the deserters from regular military units came from tribes in northern and eastern Uganda. Tribes in these regions have reported that their members serving in the military complain that they are treated very poorly compared to soldiers from southern, western, and central Uganda.

April 26, 2013: Opposition politicians have asked the military to deny LRA rebels permission to serve in the Ugandan Army unless the military is certain that the former rebels are reliable and disciplined. The opposition complaints came after media reports that an army soldier who killed ten people in a shooting incident on March, 8th was a former LRA rebel.

April 27, 2013: New reports claim that LRA commander Joseph Kony is hiding out in the Kafia Kingi region of Sudan. Kafia Kingi is a territory claimed by both Sudan and South Sudan. The enclave is (from South Sudan’s perspective) at the very western edge of South Sudan’s Western Bahr al-Ghazal state. Sudan currently occupies the enclave. Human rights organizations and the Ugandan government have frequently claimed that Sudanese military has provided the LRA with weapons, equipment, and money. The new reports (based on statements made by LRA defectors) claim that the Sudanese Army has given Kony safe haven. Kony may have used Kafia Kingi as a hideout in 2010. There are reports that he returned to the area briefly in 2011 and 2012.

May 1, 2013: Ugandan opposition politicians in parliament have vowed to investigate reports that at least two regional police commanders are using defense funds to train illegal militia forces. The militias are being formed to attack political opponents of President Yoweri Museveni. Opposition leaders identified the commander of the Kampala South police district as one of the rogue officers. Senior police officials in Kampala denied the allegations.

May 4, 2013: Kony-2012, the movie, put the spotlight on the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) and its senior commander, Joseph Kony. Efforts to capture Kony have so far failed. It’s 2013, and rumors continue to percolate through east and central Africa that Kony is now hiding in Sudan, which denies the accusation. Despite the Central African Republic’s (CAR) ongoing political troubles, the African Union and UN-backed operation to capture Kony and end LRA depredations has continued. During April Uganda suspended operations in the CAR, after claiming that it would not. In early April the leaders of the coup which toppled the CAR government in March said that all foreign forces had to leave the CAR. However, Ugandan hunter patrols are now active in southeastern CAR. The AU (African Union) and UN have commended South Sudan and Congo for their participation in the anti-LRA operation and said that these
operations have reduced the number of murders and atrocities in their respective countries. But Kony is still out there, somewhere.

May 7, 2013: Despite denials by senior government officials that the Seleka rebel takeover of the CAR government has not deterred Ugandan Army efforts to defeat the LRA, reports from the CAR indicate that it has affected combat operations. Ugandan Army troops in the CAR have reportedly withdrawn to their base camps. Security officials are worried that the suspension of hunter patrol operations will give the LRA a respite – a chance to rest and regroup.

May 12, 2013: Ugandan media reported that President Yoweri Museveni is outraged over allegations that he intends to pass power on to his son. The government warned that newspapers and radio stations reporting on the story could face severe penalties. Nevertheless, everyone is talking about the subject. On May 7, one of Uganda’s leading newspapers, the Daily Monitor, quoted part of a letter attributed to General David Sejusa which asked for an investigation into rumors that individuals opposed to Museveni’s plan to pass power on to his son are being targeted for assassination. Commentators indicated that the targeted individuals are senior security officials in Uganda. The letter was dated April 29, 2013. Ugandan media claim that Museveni believes Sejusa is conspiring with opposition leader Kizza Besigye to split the Ugandan Army into factions. Sejusa wrote another controversial letter in October 2012, one that many people read as a warning that the military could launch a coup. The 2012 letter, which appeared in the Daily Monitor, said that Uganda faced “creeping lawlessness, impunity, primitive arrogance, and insensitive behavior” and innocent people were being abused. There were rumors at the time that Sejusa would be court martialed for writing the letter.

May 20, 2013: Fifty plainclothes police raided and shutdown a major Ugandan newspaper, the Daily Monitor. The police raiders disabled the newspaper printing press and said they were engaged in searching for the source of a leak which affected national security. But the real reason the police raided the paper is political. Earlier this month the Daily Monitor published a letter which accused President Yoweri Museveni of plotting against individuals who believe Museveni intends to put his son, Brigadier General Muhoozi Kainerugaba, in power in 2016. Museveni’s political opponents and some media call this Project Muhoozi (or The Muhoozi Project). Muhoozi currently commands Special Forces Command. The elite Presidential Guard Brigade is assigned to Muhoozi’s command. He was a second lieutenant in 2000, so his rise through the ranks has been stunningly rapid. Muhoozi has also surrounded himself with several young officers who are personally loyal to him. The letter basically asked for an investigation into rumors and reports that Museveni intended to assassinate individuals in security agencies who might oppose his plan to
cede power to his son. The police broke the paper’s printing press and knocked its website off the internet. The police raid followed a warning by the Ugandan government media regulator that excessive coverage of the letter would result in penalties. The letter was allegedly written by former General David Sejusa. Sejusa is popularly known by the name Tinyefuza. He is regarded by many as a revolutionary hero and was one of Museveni’s deputy commanders in the civil war in the 1980s. Sejusa wrote the letter to Uganda’s Internal Security Organization (ISO). The ISO claims it never received the letter and that the Daily Monitor is part of a political plot. The Daily Monitor first published quotes from the letter on May 7. The letter was published at a time when Ugandan media were reporting that very deep political divisions are appearing between Museveni’s National Resistance Movement (NRM) and the Ugandan Army.

Sejusa is traveling in western Europe. He faces charges of violating the military’s code of conduct. Sejusa was Coordinator of Intelligence Services. Ugandan political analysts are arguing about Sejusa’s objective. He remains popular with many in the military. One theory is that Sejusa is positioning himself as a political alternative to Museveni and his son.

(Austin Bay)

May 21, 2013: Armed groups operating in central Africa have managed to acquire more powerful weapons which they are using to kill elephants for their ivory. The LRA has joined in and has been seen selling poached ivory to smugglers. Ivory sales appear to be a key source of LRA funds right now.

May 22, 2013: According to UN estimates, the LRA has killed more than 100,000 people in central Africa since 1987. During that time frame the LRA abducted between 60,000 and 100,000 children. LRA depredations displaced an estimated 2.5 million people.

May 23, 2013: The government now refers to General David Sejusa as a renegade. Before his letter regarding assassination rumors of Museveni critics was published, Sejusa was Coordinator of Intelligence Services (military intelligence services). Sejusa is also a military representative in parliament. Parliamentary Speaker Rebecca Kadaga’s office has received a letter from General Sejusa. Before that Sejusa took three weeks leave to travel to Europe and his leave ended May 19. Sejusa has asked the Speaker to extend his leave for three months. Apparently he does not want to add AWOL charges to the list of criminal charges he will likely face. The letter says he needs the extension because he has unfinished business in Great Britain and it is believed he might seek exile in Britain. Sejusa is believed to have said he will return to Uganda if the military is allowed to try him in what Sejusa called a fully-constituted military tribunal. He believes he will face charges of subversion, conduct prejudicial to good order and discipline, and a crime the government calls
spreading harmful propaganda. Because he is a four-star general a fully-constituted tribunal would need three four-star generals to try him.

May 24, 2013: President Yoweri Museveni fired General Aronda Nyakairima as head of the military. Nyakairima became the senior military commander in 2003. Museveni made Nyakairima minister of internal affairs, which is a civilian position. This means Nyakairima is no longer in the military chain of command. Opposition political activists claim Nyakarima’s transfer is further evidence that Museveni is already in the process of removing senior military leaders who might oppose Museveni’s alleged succession plan. The controversy over General David Sejusa’s letter regarding the rumors that Museveni intends to cede power to his son continues, as does the government’s attempt to quell media discussion of the letter. Since the May 20 raid on the Daily Monitor newspaper, the government has shutdown three more media organizations.

May 28, 2013: Police in Kampala used tear gas to break up a demonstration by journalists and writers who were protesting the government closure of the Daily Monitor newspaper. Approximately 100 journalists and writers participated in the demonstration. The government said the shutdown will continue until the newspaper staff cooperates with police. The police want to know how the newspaper obtained the letter General David Sejusa wrote to the Internal Security Organization (ISO). The letter asks the ISO to investigate reports and rumors that plotters in the government intend to assassinate security officials who might oppose President Yoweri Musveni’s alleged plan to make his son president in 2016.

May 29, 2013: Security officials and former rebels are commending the parliament’s decision to revive the LRA Amnesty Act through 2015. They believe that reinstating the act will spur more LRA defections. The amnesty program expired in May 2012. At the time the government argued that the program had run its course and was no longer needed. Several senior security officers thought otherwise, as did a number of human rights groups. Former LRA rebels said that the Amnesty Act played a role in their decision to quit fighting. The act gave them legal protections. The Amnesty Act was passed in January 2000. Between January 2000 and May 2012, 26,383 former rebels accepted amnesty and surrendered. Of that total 12,971 were LRA fighters. 2,040 were Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) rebels. The rest came from 27 other rebel groups.

May 30, 2013: The government has let the Daily Monitor newspaper resume publication. Police raided and shutdown the paper on May 20. Officials said that on May 26 President Yoweri Musveni met with the owners of the National Media Group, which owns the Daily Monitor.
newspaper. Museveni contends that the letter makes false allegations. The media group indicated that it had agreed to publish only properly sourced stories. On May 7 the Daily Monitor published quotes from a letter attributed to General David Sejusa. The letter alleged that Museveni intended to cede power to his son and that individuals who opposed the president’s plan were targeted for assassination. Media call the alleged plan Project Muhoozi. Museveni’s son is named Muhoozi Kainerugaba.

June 2, 2013: The independent newspaper the government shutdown on May 20, the Daily Monitor, published a scathing editorial which addressed media freedom in Uganda. The editorial comes after reports that the newspaper’s owners had told President Yoweri Museveni that the newspaper would now publish only stories which are “properly sourced.” The newspaper is sending a major political signal that it is not going to back down. The hard-hitting newspaper editorial described Museveni and his government as paranoid about media criticism. The newspaper said that Museveni himself was ambivalent about freedom of speech, which was slightly better than his immediate predecessors, Idi Amin and Milton Obote. The editorial said they were completely hostile to free media. Amin was quick to murder reporters, editors, and, for that matter, anyone who criticized him. However, the editorial argued that Museveni’s abuse of police power and his penchant for shutting down critical media serves the same functional goal as the policies of Amin and Obote – he intends to silence his opponents. The real kicker came when the editorial said all of Uganda’s post-independence leaders had learned this trick from the old British colonial government.

June 3, 2013: President Yoweri Museveni, who has been in power since 1986, faces political challenges on many fronts. The turmoil over General David Sejusa’s May 7th letter continues. Sejusa’s opposition to Museveni’s alleged plan to have his son succeed him likely indicates that other several senior military leaders also oppose the plan. Meanwhile, the political fight over how to handle the country’s oil boom is intensifying. That fight has several components: oil contracts, distribution of oil revenue, and worries about corruption. Opposition political leaders are incensed that Museveni has said he will make the final decision on all oil and energy contracts. Their criticism likely reflects concern in Uganda’s business community, the business owners are just reluctant to say it. Museveni asserts that he is exercising his authority as chief executive to insure the oil exploration, drilling, and service contracts serve Uganda’s national interests. Museveni says he wants to use the oil revenue to improve Uganda’s physical infrastructure, primarily transportation links (roads). New hospitals and clinics are also in the mix. According to the president’s opponents, the roads and hospitals are feel good talk to camouflage theft. The opposition points to unresolved bribery allegations made against three government officials. An investigation has gone on for almost two years and there is no
indication that a report will be issued on the investigation. Opposition politicians also complain that the contracting process is not open to parliamentary scrutiny and they accuse Museveni of favoring his political allies in contracting decisions. The opposition favors an open bidding process. While Museveni’s political opponents have focused on the corruption and cronyism allegations, oil industry analysts see another problem. Museveni has not only centralized the contracting process, he has personalized it. Which raises an important question: what happens when Museveni is no longer president? Companies signing long-term contracts need to take this into account. (Austin Bay)

June 4, 2013: The coup in the Central African Republic (CAR) earlier this year definitely stalled the coalition effort to defeat the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) and end the career of LRA senior commander Joseph Kony. The government still says that its anti-LRA operations are continuing. It is very likely that intelligence gathering does continue. However, there have been no reports of Ugandan hunter patrols conducting sustained operations in southeastern CAR. That jibes with a UN statement made in mid-May that said anti-LRA operations inside the CAR were at a near standstill. The African Union (AU) and the nations involved in the regional anti-LRA effort are urging the new CAR leadership to let the coalition return to full-scale operations. Meanwhile, the LRA and Kony appear to be in Congo, supporting themselves by poaching elephants and selling the ivory to the growing number of traders who will transport the illicit ivory to booming markets in China.

August 15, 2013: Uganda: What Will Yoweri Museveni’s Legacy Be?

By Moses Khisa: Outside its borders, Uganda has for long been synonymous with the image of former President Idi Amin. Even someone who might not locate this country on the world map will say they know Uganda because of Amin. During my student days in the Indian city of Calcutta, whenever I introduced myself as Ugandan, my hosts would immediately exclaim: "Oh, Idi Amin!" Because Amin earned the image of a "monster" ruler, the mention of Uganda tends to elicit all sorts of wild imaginations, some borne of ignorance while others made of racial prejudice. It seems, though, that Amin is beginning to lose grip over the name Uganda in the imaginations of foreigners. The new name-tag is President Museveni. While Amin was associated with fascist rule, Museveni is seen as representing Africa's presidents-for-life. Currently, Museveni holds position number four. Cameroon's Paul Biya is third, at 31 years, and comrade Bob Mugabe sits in second position, at 33 years of uninterrupted rule. The first position is now co-occupied by Equatorial Guinea's Teodore Obiang Nguema and Angola's Jose Eduardo Dos Santos. Dos Santos was recently reported "missing" but turned up in Malabo, which happens to be Obiang's capital. Mugabe and Biya are octogenarians,
at 89 (officially) and 80, respectively. Dos Santos is not in very excellent health, having spent more than a month on a private medical visit in Spain.

So, if the random course of nature claimed Mugabe, Biya, and Dos Santos anytime soon, Museveni would assume the second position, behind Nguema. Both Museveni and Nguema are in the same age bracket (again, officially) 69 and 71 respectively. But if the latter also left the stage soon, and Museveni held forte up to 2026, he will register two remarkable feats: occupy the number one slot but could also be the one who has held it longest! Since I arrived in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa last month, compared to my Indian experience, no one I have talked to has uttered the name Amin. Instead a few people have asked me about Museveni. What took me by surprise, considering Ethiopia's political history, is that some Ethiopians think Museveni has over-stayed in power. Recently I had lunch with a professor at Addis Ababa University. His first question about Uganda was whether Museveni will stand for President again. I said most likely he would. He wondered why one individual could continue being president after 30 years in power. I felt a little tickled and thought my host was being too assuming and unfair to my president. I wanted to ask, how about your late Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, who died in power last year after what some say were 21 years of iron-fisted rule? I didn't want to sound disrespectful of my host, so I held back. But my friend's remark sent me thinking about the legacies of Meles and Museveni, two of Africa's rulers who, in the 1990s, were dubbed the "new breed of African leadership." The other members of this club include Burkina Faso's Blaise Compaore, Eritrea's Isaias Afewerki, former Ghanaian President Jerry Rawlings and Rwanda's Paul Kagame.

When Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia died on August 20, 2012, Ethiopia almost ground to a halt in bereavement. In the words of one Ethiopian, the country felt empty. Almost a year later, Meles is still mourned, with portraits immortalising the man scattered in different parts of Addis Ababa. But his death did not trigger a political crisis. The ruling Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front named Meles' deputy, Hailemariam Desalegn, the new prime minister. Desalegn lacks the charisma and clout of Meles, but he is carrying on his predecessor's agenda and has acquainted himself quite well over the last one year. Ethiopians are a very proud people, and Meles unwaveringly defended the country's pride, standing up against the policy dictates of the Western financial institutions and donor countries. Today, Ethiopia boasts of arguably Africa's best national airline, Ethiopian Airlines, and one of the continent's well-planned and expansive airports.

What is more, because by law all land is public, government is able to execute large-scale infrastructural projects. Addis Ababa's road network,
with quite a few eight-lane roads and significant street-lighting, is impressive. Construction of a city transit railway-line is currently underway, and huge commercial and residential buildings are springing up in just about every corner of the capital. Construction is also underway of the much-talked-about 6,000 MW Ethiopian Renaissance electricity dam. Its cost is $4.2 billion compared to Uganda's 600MW Karuma dam at $2.2 billion. This means that producing 1MW of hydro power in Ethiopia costs $700,000 compared to $3.7 million in Uganda. Put another way, the cost of hydro-electricity generation in Uganda is five times the cost in Ethiopia. That said, as I continued to draw parallels between the two strongmen, who were apparently close friends, I couldn't help but ask three pertinent questions: if Museveni died today, would Ugandans immortalise and continue mourning him a year later? Would Vice-President Edward Ssekandi be sworn-in as the new president? And what large-scale socio-economic undertaking would shine the light on the president's three decades of service to the nation? Perhaps one can only answer the last question: the president is credited with ushering in and maintaining relative security of person and property - that is if you did not live in northern Uganda between 1986 and 2005. The author is a PhD candidate in Political Science at Northwestern University, Evanston/Chicago-USA.

August 18, 2013: Uganda: Prison Warden Stephen Kiprotich the Greatest Athlete Ever?

IAAF -2013 World Championships - The Observer (Kampala): Now that Stephen Kiprotich has become only the second person in history to win gold in the marathon at the Olympics and World Championships, he could as well have assumed first position on the list of Uganda's greatest sports personalities, writes David Lumu. When Stephen Kiprotich crossed the finishing line in IAAF-Moscow, to comfortably win by 21 seconds from Ethiopian Lelisa Desisa, it seemed as though the 24-year-old had barely broken a sweat. He looked so fresh, as if he could have maintained the finishing pace for another 10 kilometres. Most importantly, he erased the slightest doubts about his greatness and his legacy will forever be defined for winning the two most important marathon races in the world of athletics. Before winning gold at the 2012 London Olympics, most Ugandans - even those in sports circles - barely knew him because he hadn't won anything significant before. The hopes for an Olympic medal lay solely on the shoulders of Moses Kipsiro. So, a few pessimists equated Kiprotich's Olympic glory win to a flash in the pan. They reminded optimists of the young Boniface Kiprop, who had wowed the world as a junior before vanishing into virtual oblivion. Not only is the marathon the most enduring discipline in athletics, it is also the most unpredictable. That's why Kiprotich's victory on Saturday ranks among the greatest in
athletics. Which begs the question; has Kiprotich done enough to be Uganda’s greatest ever sports personality?

In terms of achievement, he has surpassed everyone - including the legendary John Akii-Bua - who won Olympic gold in the 400m hurdles in 1972. What makes Akii-Bua stand out is that he did it in world record fashion and chances are high he would have repeated the feat in 1976 had Uganda not joined the rest of Africa in boycotting the Montreal Olympics. Besides, the world championships started in 1983 long after Akii-Bua had retired. However, Akii-Bua barely made his mark at the Commonwealth Games and it could be argued that his peak lasted for just a year. Which is somehow surprising that Kiprotich has also achieved these feats in just one year. And who knows what the future holds as he continues to mature? He may not have broken or even come close to Patrick Makau's 2:03:38 record but he didn’t need to because, just like the Olympics, there are no pace-setters at the World Championships. Only the crème de la crème. However, given the fact that each country, irrespective of ranking, is only allowed to enter five athletes for the marathon, it would most likely have been a different story for Kiprotich had he been against a contingent of Kenyans. But for now, what matters is that he passed the two biggest tests in athletics and any more victories will only serve to cement his position as the greatest of all time.

September 23, 2013; Uganda Tightens Internal Security'

East Africa News: The government of Uganda has announced it is tightening its internal security following the ongoing al shabab attack on the Westgate shopping mall in Kenya. The Inspector General of Police, General Kale Kayihura said troops have been deployed to large commercial centres throughout the country as well as around its borders. On several occasions, al shabab have threatened to attack nations who provide troops to the African Union Peacekeeping Mission in Somalia (AMSOM). Since the attack by al shabab on Uganda in 2010, the country has kept a small permanent force at its kampala border to avert any unforeseen attacks. General Kayihura cautioned the public not to take alerts like this for granted. According to him the nation’s “real strength to deter such incidents and defeat these criminals lies in active community policing.” He went on to advice the people on how to be on the lookout for danger. “Always be suspicious of strange people and objects, armed or unarmed. It is because of this that Uganda has continued to survive.”

November 22, 2013: Kampala Receives High-Speed Internet from Google'

EAN Analysis: Uganda’s capital Kampala is the first African city to receive Google Fiber high-speed Internet under an initiative dubbed Project Link. Google, on Wednesday, opened its fiber-optic network to local mobile operators and internet service providers (ISP). About 100 kilometers of
fiber growing out from the centre of Kampala was installed over the last few months to connect Africa's undersea cables with existing networks. The carriers will now receive faster data speeds enabling them to build and expand services to customers. Data speeds are expected to improve by a factor of 100 in most areas of the city which is home to three million people. “With Project Link, we’re enabling local providers to access a first-class network to serve the city of Kampala,” Kai Wulff, an Access Field Director at Google wrote on the Google Africa blog. “With access to metro fiber, these providers can expand their services in order to meet the demands of a growing population of innovators and entrepreneurs, whether it’s fast connections for local hospitals or high-tech learning tools for young people in the classroom and beyond,” Wulff added.

Three service providers, Orange Uganda, Roke Telkom and One Solutions, have shown interest in using Google fiber to provide faster speeds to end users. Godfrey Kisekka, Chief Technology Officer for Orange Uganda said “We want our customers in Uganda to access the Internet without capacity constraints, so they can send large files, upload video, download software updates, and more. “The partnership with Google will enable us to expand our network capacities, thus helping us achieve our ambition to provide users with the best network coverage and high-quality services,” he explained. Roger Sekaziga, Chief Executive Officer, Roke Telkom also said his company was excited to leverage Google’s platform to scale operations and address niche markets with minimal capital expenditure.

Currently, residents of Kampala have to deal with unreliable connections and pre-broadband speeds. The city is located hundreds of miles away from the coast and therefore hasn’t benefited from the undersea cables that are bringing data to Africa’s shores and coastal towns. Africa is home to 1 billion people, but only 16% are reported to be connected to the internet. Various cities in the U.S. have benefited from similar Google Fiber initiatives. Google has also initiated Project Loon in New Zealand which involves launching Internet-beaming balloons into the stratosphere.

November 27, 2013: Rebel Ugandan military officer general David Sejusa (also known as Tinyefuza) has called on Ugandans to peacefully remove current president Yoweri Museveni. Sejusa was head of Ugandan intelligence services until he defected and fled to Great Britain in April 2013. He has now allied with the Freedom and Unity Front (FUF), which is run by Ugandan exiles opposed to Museveni. Museveni, however, has stated that Sejusa wants to start an armed rebellion.

November 29, 2013: Congolese President Joseph Kabila visited the town of Rutshuru (North Kivu province). M23 rebels occupied Rutshuru for over a year. Kabila told residents that he intends to end the 20 years of war which have plagued the Congo.
November 30, 2013: The Sheka Mai-Mai militia has told the government and the head of MONUSCO that it will disarm. The Sheka Mai-Mai is led by Sheka Ntabo Ntaberi, who refers to his group as a self-defense force. However, militiamen under his command have been accused of murder and mass rape.

December 1, 2013: The Ugandan military reported that its forces killed 14 LRA fighters in the CAR. The Ugandan Army used intelligence information provided by the U.S., which also has 100 special operations advisers assigned to help African military units fight the LRA and bring LRA senior commander Joseph Kony to justice. Among the LRA dead was Colonel Samuel Kangul, who has been identified as fourth in the LRA’s chain of command. Kangul was reportedly the LRA’s chief supply officer. The Ugandan military stopped anti-LRA operations after Seleka rebels took over the CAR in April of this year. Surveillance operations recommenced during the summer.

December 3, 2013: MONUSCO peacekeepers have now deployed drone recon aircraft in the Congo. Two Italian-made Falco surveillance drones are operating out of Goma (North Kivu province).

December 4, 2013: An estimated 1,000 M23 militia fighters are now interned in Uganda. Their final status is yet to be determined.

December 5, 2013: The Congo government and the UN continue to discuss the next target of MONUSCO’s (UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Congo) Intervention Brigade (IBDE). Several UN officials have mentioned the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), the Rwandan Hutu rebel group. The UN recently estimated the FDLR has 1,500 armed fighters and could well be a tougher opponent than the M23 rebel group the IBDE and Congolese forces defeated in early November. The FDLR is led by Hutus directly involved in the 1994 Rwandan genocide. Rebellion is one thing, genocide another. The FDLR may have no choice but to fight to the last. Uganda would like the IBDE to go after the Islamist extremist rebel group the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF). Uganda has told the UN that ADF terrorists have kidnapped around 300 people in the last year. The ADF has ties to the Somali Islamist rebel group, Al Shabaab, which is an ally of Al Qaeda. The Ugandan military says it has evidence that the ADF has received ammunition, weapons, and other supplies from Islamist groups. The weapons include heavy recoilless rifles (107 millimeter, according to one source). Uganda has peacekeepers operating in Somalia with the AU’s AMISOM force. The ADF began in 1996, as a minor opposition group run by Moslem tribesmen. It was largely destroyed in 2004, but the fanatic survivors persisted, and now support from other Islamic terrorist groups have enabled ADF to grow and become more radical.
December 8, 2013: The UN estimated that 72,000 people have fled from their neighborhoods in Bangui, the capital of CAR. Many of them have collected near the city’s international airport. The airport is also the headquarters of French military forces and the African Union peacekeeping troops in the CAR.

December 9, 2013: French soldiers in the CAR engaged militia gunmen in a series of firefights in the capital, Bangui. On December 5, the UN authorized the French contingent to reinforce African Union peacekeepers in the CAR. The French military has an offensive mandate similar to that of the UN’s Intervention Brigade (IBDE) in the Congo. The French forces have orders to disarm rival Christian and Muslim tribal militias and the French forces are allowed to use lethal force against militia groups that refuse to disarm. The Seleka rebel movement, which toppled CAR president Francois Bozize in March 2013, drew its strength from Muslim tribes, many of them from the northern CAR. Since Bozize’s government fell, however, the country has descended into chaos. Observers in Bangui indicated that the Seleka rebel commander who became the interim president, Michel Djotodia, no longer has control of Seleka’s various militia factions. There are Seleka rebels fighting with the Muslim militias in Bangui. However, no one is quite sure if a particular militia is loyal to the rebel government. Some 450-500 people have been killed in Bangui since December 5, the day a Christian tribal militia loyal to Bozize entered the city. France now has around 1,600 soldiers in the CAR.

December 10, 2013: In late November reports cropped up in the Congo, Uganda, and Central African Republic (CAR) that Joseph Kony, the notorious senior commander of the Ugandan rebel group, the Lords Resistance Army (LRA), was prepared to discuss surrender terms. The Ugandan military said it welcomed the news. Rumors regarding Kony’s impending surrender crop up every couple of years. The most serious appeared in 2006 and 2007. But he didn’t come in from the bush. The International Criminal Court (ICC) has indicted Kony on numerous charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity. At one time the Ugandan government told an LRA mediator that if Kony surrendered he would be tried in Ugandan courts, not by the ICC. Kony apparently didn’t believe the offer was real. As it is, the official Ugandan government line is that it will not protect Kony from the ICC. Not surprisingly the November reports proved to be false. LRA cadres continue to launch occasional attacks in the Congo and the CAR, though said LRA attacks reported in the region during the January-June 2013 time frame were down by 50 percent compared to 2012. In November South Sudan dispatched an army battalion to provide security in an area residents claimed was threatened by the LRA.

January 10, 2014: ION UGANDA/SOUTH SUDAN – President Yoweri Museveni risks getting stuck in Juba’ President Yoweri Museveni’s constant
pressure on the leaders of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) for them to shoulder the intervention of his troops alongside President Salva Kiir Myardit in South Sudan, is beginning to seriously upset Kenyan President and the Ethiopian Prime Minister.

March 24, 2014: US sends special forces to Uganda to hunt for brutal warlord Joseph Kony’

Four aircraft and 150 troops on their way to help search jungle for Lord’s Resistance Army chief, Washington Post reports (theguardian) - The Obama administration is sending about 150 special forces troops along with military aircraft to Uganda to help in the search for warlord Joseph Kony, the Washington Post reported on Sunday. The deployments began on Sunday night, the Post said, after the administration began to notify Congress.

In the first deployment of U.S. military aircraft to the region, at least four CV-22 Osprey aircraft will arrive in Uganda by midweek, together with refueling planes and special forces airmen to fly and maintain them, Amanda Dory, the Pentagon's deputy assistant secretary of defense for African affairs, told the Post.

The newspaper said US personnel were authorised to "provide information, advice and assistance" to an African Union force tracking Kony and his Lord’s Resistance Army. "While combat-equipped, they are prohibited from engaging LRA forces unless in self-defense," the Post said.

A 5,000-strong African Union regional task force, supported by about 100 US special forces, has been hunting Kony and his fighters. Most of them are thought to be hiding in jungle straddling the borders of Central African Republic, South Sudan and Democratic Republic of Congo.

LRA fighters, who emerged in northern Uganda in the late 1980s, are known for using extreme violence, including chopping off limbs as a form of punishment, as well as raping young girls and abducting them for use as sex slaves. LRA leader Joseph Kony is believed to be hiding out in jungle straddling the Central African Republic, South Sudan and Congo.

The Post quoted administration officials as saying the deployment did not signal the White House was weakening its criticism of new anti-gay legislation in Uganda that imposes harsh penalties for homosexuality. Since last month’s enactment of the anti-gay legislation, Washington has said it is reviewing its relationship with Uganda's government. (Text ends)

April 4, 2014: UGANDA Yueri Museveni’s son is already number two.

(ION No 1374) – President Yueri Museveni has trumping his Prime Minister Amama Mbabazi who thought that his turn was finally about to come, Mr.
Yoweri Museveni is readying to run in 2016 for a fifth presidential mandate, silencing rivals and opponents by force.

Is Uganda doing Israel's dirty work? - Why is Israel sending asylum-seekers back to Uganda?

ALJAZEERA (April 13, 2014) - While contemplating potential locations for a Jewish homeland over a century ago, Theodor Herzl - the father of modern political Zionism - proposed Uganda as a temporary refuge for persecuted Jews. Ironically, Uganda is now on the receiving end of other persecuted peoples, this time African refugees who have sought asylum in Israel only to be imprisoned in detention facilities and then returned to the African continent.

As the Israeli newspaper Haaretz reported in a February 2014 article titled "Israel secretly flying asylum seekers to Uganda", harsh conditions in the detention centres plus nominal financial compensation have facilitated the deportation of many migrants under the guise of "voluntary departure". The article quotes the Israeli director of the Hotline for Refugees and Migrants on this non-solution to refugee plight: "[I]t is known that Uganda deports asylum seekers to their countries of origin."

Also quoted is the organisation's assessment that "'[v]oluntary departure' is the result of heavy and illegal psychological pressure on detained, isolated and desperate asylum seekers, which more than once has included threats and lies". Haaretz furthermore points out that "[t]he position of the UN High Commissioner on Refugees is that people cannot be considered to be acting of their own free will if the choice they have is between detention and being sent back to their country".

Outsourcing inhumanity: The reason for the disingenuous rendering of a "voluntary" exodus of refugees is, of course, to prevent an already precarious demographic balance in Israel from tipping in favour of non-Jewish non-whites. After all, granting rights to such sectors would only jeopardise the perpetuation of Israel's ethnocracy-disguised-as-democracy.

Other Israeli methods of dealing with the apparent surplus of Africans in the country have included political incitement to anti-African violence and the forcible injection of Ethiopian women with contraceptives. As Israeli-Canadian journalist David Sheen noted, between November 2012 and May 2013 the Jewish state had approved only one asylum application from a population of approximately 60,000 non-Jewish African asylum seekers in Israel. The applicant happened to be an albino.

"When Israel rounds up and deports African refugees, it makes a mockery of the millions of Jews who died during World War II because no one would grant them shelter," Sheen has remarked. But what does Uganda
stand to gain from participating in outsourced inhumanity? A 2013 Vice magazine report details the perks of the arrangement: Weapons discounts and military training for African countries willing to take on Israel's dirty work. To be sure, Israel's long success in oppressing Palestinians and other Arabs makes its expertise quite marketable among abusive states. Uganda's interest in Israeli weapons is perhaps less than surprising given the behaviour of its own army and security forces, often characterised by torture and other human rights violations. Back in 2003, Haaretz ran a story on Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni's visit to Israel for the purpose of "arms shopping", an excursion that was said to have been "arranged by an arms merchant, Amos Golan of the Silver Shadow company, who represents IAI [Israel Aircraft Industries] and other Israeli defence industries in Uganda". Highlights of the itinerary included an air show of pilotless drones. Neoliberal polities committed to the wellbeing of the arms industry over the wellbeing of humans naturally can't be expected to waste time helping refugees find refuge. Quite auspiciously for said industry, the Israeli regime insists on referring to African asylum seekers as "infiltrators", which connotes criminality and facilitates the illusion of a steady stream of enemies that must be combated. Uganda's denial of the existence of any deportation agreement with Israel renders accountability for human life even less of an option.

Territorial entitlement: The Vice magazine article notes that, as of September of last year, approximately 40,000 of the African "infiltrators" were from Eritrea, "a country with one of the worst human rights records on Earth". The author goes on to comment, with well-directed sarcasm, that "[t]hese people aren't coming to Israel because they fancy upping their matzah intake or living on Palestinian land illegally; they're genuinely trying to escape persecution and find a way to survive".

Indeed, Israel enjoys a bit of a monopoly when it comes to the practise of setting up shop on other people's territory. The appropriation of Palestine in 1948 - the year of Israel's spontaneous foundation - incidentally set the stage for a less amicable period in Israeli-Ugandan relations. In 1976, members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the German Baader-Meinhof gang hijacked an Air France flight from Tel Aviv and diverted it to Uganda's Entebbe airport in an attempt to secure the release of prisoners held in Israel and other countries. The Israeli military then staged a bloody hostage rescue mission that was condemned by the UN Secretary General as "a serious violation of the sovereignty of a United Nations member state".

Now, under the current deportation agreement, Uganda is enlisted in none other than a mission to secure Israel's own borders, which are under threat from "infiltrators" apparently so indistinguishable from one another in their blackness that they can be repatriated to any old place in Africa.
Ugandan complicity in the dominion of a worldview predicated on apartheid and ethnic cleansing is itself a serious violation - not of borders but of human dignity. Belen Fernandez is the author of The Imperial Messenger: Thomas Friedman at Work, published by Verso. She is a contributing editor at Jacobin Magazine. The views expressed in this article are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect Al Jazeera's editorial policy.

INTRUDE: Ugandans baffled by sleeping ministers'

(August 6, 2014) Ministers and MPs caught on camera sleeping through important speeches have sparked criticism that they are not working. Kampala, Uganda - At the most recent state-of-the-nation address, Uganda's second deputy prime minister wore sunglasses too dark to enable anyone to see whether his eyes were open or closed. Moses Ali, 74, is one of the cabinet ministers who seem to have improvised a way to escape the scrutiny of nosy media cameras that have on several occasions caught senior government officials and MPs dozing when the president is delivering his address and when the national budget is read. It all started four years ago when a local tabloid splashed the pictures of sleeping ministers and MPs on its front page as President Yoweri Museveni delivered his address to the country. The paper's headline on the day was "Sleeping Nation".

The public has since come to covet these events as much as the politicians seem to dread them. TV cameras are always out for who is napping, and photographs of ministers and MPs sleeping though these important speeches - delivered annually in June - end up on social media, with many lampooning the politicians. "When I served in Museveni's government things were exciting and one would have no reason to sleep," said Professor Edward Kakonge, who served as the first minister of local government when Museveni became president in 1986. "What is happening now is a clear pointer that there is nothing exciting in there any more."

Snoring away : Whether MPs and ministers simply sleep through these events has become a key focus for the media. Some commentators have said that if government officials can doze while attending important events they know are being covered live, they can do anything in the privacy of their offices. "Sleeping is not a bad thing. Sleeping on the job is," Bernard Tabaire, a columnist for the Sunday Monitor, wrote.

"No one has yet done the count that I am aware of, but the number of our big men and women who snored away as the president delivered his annual state-of-the-nation speech ... was possibly the largest in five years." The media's prying eyes into the matter is creating problems for journalists.
Last month, NTV, a local broadcaster, beamed images that appeared to show the president himself dozing while listening to the budget speech, prompting a government spokesman to say he was "meditating". The station's reporters who had been accredited to cover the president's press conference days later were turned away, sparking speculation as to whether the station was banned from covering events presided over by Museveni.

The NTV crew on June 30 was again unable to cover the president as he presided over an event at parliament. Hellen Kaweesa, the parliament's spokeswoman, however, says that the reporters from the station missed the event because they arrived late. "The reporters came to my office and I gave them footage. We have not banned anybody from covering [presidential events at parliament]," Kaweesa told Al Jazeera.

Officials at NTV station declined to comment on the incidents for this article. Kaweesa came under fire from Museveni's spokesperson, who accused her of failing to "regulate" the media during parliamentary events. Tamale Mirundi, the president's spokesman, said that the TV station was not banned from covering presidential events but that "it should stand warned". "The president is the fountain of honour and he must be respected; under no circumstances can the president of the republic be depicted in such a manner," Mirundi said.

Government critics such as Betty Nambooze, an opposition legislator, say old age is taking its toll on the politicians. "They are too old and their attention spans have been reduced," Nambooze, 45, told Al Jazeera. Deputy prime minister Ali is one of the most senior members of cabinet, second only to Henry Kajura, 80, another deputy prime minister and minister of public service. Museveni, in power since 1986, will hit 70 this September.

However, the president has infused some youth into his cabinet. Presidency Minister Frank Tumwebaze, one of the most influential members of the cabinet, is 38. In a further dig at the government, Nambooze said: "The president never has anything new to say and his colleagues know in advance that this is the case [so they doze off]." She claims that what the politicians exhibit in public is not different from what they do in the comfort of their offices, negatively affecting the productivity of ministries. "If the honourable ministers cannot attentively listen to their boss speaking in parliament, do you expect them to pay attention to briefs from technocrats in their ministries?" asked Nambooze.

Rose Namayanja, the government spokesperson, however, claims that Nambooze's statements are made "out of ignorance of how [the] government works". "Those senior members of cabinet she is trying to disparage make tremendous contributions to the workings of
government," said Namayanja. She added that it is "natural that people will close their eyes to process" what is being said. "Managing [the] government is a mental process and it must necessarily involve thinking," she adds.

‘Regime of Sleep’ : Mathias Mpuuga, who shortly after Museveni’s re-election in 2011 led protests against the government over the rising cost of living, is having a good laugh about the situation. "President Museveni has never been delusional about it; he warned Ugandans early enough that his will be a regime of sleep and he has not disappointed," Mpuuga says.

In the earlier years when Museveni first competed for the presidency, after his government restored elections following the bush war, he bragged about pacifying the country and allowing Ugandans to sleep without worrying about violence. When he took over power in 1986, the country had had six different administrations in a space of just six years since the overthrow of Idi Amin in 1979. He therefore turned the narrative about "restoring sleep" into a key campaign catchphrase. Of the state-of-the-nation address and budget speech, Mpuuga said, "Museveni is supplying the sleep he promised Ugandans." (Text ends)

DNA: Ancient Egyptian Pharaohs related to Ugandans’

Daily Monitor (By David Sepuya Kalanzi (Posted Saturday, August 16 2014)

An ancient bust of Queen Tiye of ancient Egypt retrieved by archaeologists now at Altes Museum in Berlin, Germany, shows she was a black African. A DNA test of a group of mummies from the Amarna Egyptian Pharaohs matched the genetic profiles of the population of the Great Lakes region. This year, Ugandans have witnessed the use of DNA tests to settle prominent public cases in the media concerning the paternity of children and of celebrities who have died. What has not been known to many people is the dispute concerning the ethnicity of the ancient Egyptians by scholars in the 20th Century. This dispute has been solved scientifically by the DNA tests conducted on the mummies of the ancient Egyptians in 2012 and 2013.

In December 2012, DNA tests were conducted on the mummies of Pharaoh Rameses III and his son, which proved that they belonged to human Y chromosome group E1b1a. This is the Y chromosome group of Sub-Saharan Africans who speak Niger-Congo languages. The disclosed Y chromosome group of the Pharaoh, at the time of releasing the report, was considered as just one of the details to make the investigation scientifically solid with facts. But its revelation caused a stir equal to the purpose of the original forensic investigation. Another group of mummies
from the Amarna period of Egyptian pharaohs were tested by DNA Tribes, an American Company which specialises in conducting DNA tests, in 2013.

The conclusion of the tests were that the mummies autosomal profiles would be most frequent in the present day populations of the African Great Lakes region and Southern Africa. Subsequent analysis of the autosomal profile of the mummy of Pharaoh Rameses III also concluded that this matched the genetic profiles of the population of the Great Lakes region as well. It was reported in the DNA Tribe’s digest of February 2013, that the DNA match results of the ancient Egyptian Amarna royal mummies with the present day world regions reflect the population changes in Africa after the time of Rameses III.

One issue which remains unresolved is that of language. The language of ancient Egypt is classified as belonging to the Afro-Asiatic family of languages, which are spoken by people like the Somali and Amhara of Ethiopia, while the genetic profiles of the mummies match those of Niger–Congo language speakers. The most likely explanation is that some of the Niger-Congo speaking people, who were carriers of human Y chromosome E1b1a, moved into ancient Egypt along the Nile from the Sahara region as the region dried up and fused with the Afro-Asiatic speaking people, giving rise to the unique language of ancient Egypt.

However, these speakers of the Niger–Congo language went on to form the ruling class producing pharaohs for Egypt, while retaining the customs which they practised in common with their relatives who had migrated south into the Great Lakes region as the genetic tests have shown. The writer is a cultural heritage consultant.

THE CONNECTIONS

The strong cultural connection between the ancient Egyptians and the modern people of the Great Lakes region of Africa have long been noted for more than a century now by ethnographers (people who study ethnicity). The following examples illustrate this connection.

Female heirs. The Egyptian pharaohs, like the rulers of the Great Lakes kingdoms of East Africa, ascended to their thrones with their sisters or cousins as co-rulers. In Bunyoro and Tooro kingdoms, the sister was called the Rubuga, but is currently called the Batebe. In Buganda kingdom, she was called the Lubuga, now called Nalinya. In Buganda, this custom from antiquity of having female co-heirs is still practised in all cultural succession events. Royal drums. Secondly, in all the Great Lakes kingdoms, ceremonies were carried out at certain intervals to welcome the appearance of the new moon. Regalia such as the royal drums and twin objects were brought out on these occasions to pray for the wellbeing of the kingdoms as was done in the courts of the ancient Egyptian pharaohs.
Bows and arrows. Another custom of the pharaohs in common with the kings of Great Lakes kingdoms were the use of bows and arrows in the coronation ceremonies. The coronation rituals of the pharaohs were repeated in the Sed festivals of the pharaohs, a record of which has been kept by historians. A description of the bow and arrow part of the coronation section reads: “Next, the pharaoh was carried to the chapels of the gods Horus and Seth, where he was handed a bow and arrows with which he shot an arrow in each of the four directions” i.e. East, West, North and South.

In Bunyoro. An identical ceremony was enacted during the coronation of the Omukama of Bunyoro Kingdom. In his book: Abakama Ba Bunyoro Kitara, published in 1947, John William Nyakatura, a historian and a county chief of Bunyoro Kingdom, recorded the following ceremony for the new king: “Then the king was handed bows and arrows. He shot four arrows in all directions- one arrow was shot in the direction where the sun rises (Buganda and Busoga), the second one was shot in the direction where the sun sets, the third one in the southward direction (Nkore and Rwanda), the fourth one was shot in the northward direction (Bukedi and other countries). This action meant every rebel/rival who came from any of these directions would be killed with an arrow.

In Buganda. Buganda Kingdom in precolonial times also had a bow and arrow coronation ceremony as part and parcel of the enthronement rituals of the kings. In fact, the one of Buganda was deadly. A captive would be shot with an arrow by the new Kabaka to indicate that he would be vigorous in protecting his kingdom. The victim would then be killed by the king’s guards thereafter. Musical instruments. The similarities between ancient Egypt and the Great Lakes also extended to the material culture. Scholars have noted the resemblance of the musical instrument in ancient Egypt and the kingdoms of the Great Lakes, notably the bow- harps and flutes. This fact is mentioned in the display of Ugandan bow harps at the Uganda Museum.

The plank sewn canoes on Lake Victoria used in precolonial times were bound together using vegetative materials and were assembled in a similar way to the boats used by the ancient Egyptians on the Nile. This similarity was noticed by the scholars when British rule was established in East Africa.

Civilisation. In the 19th Century, explorers and anthropologists encountered the Great Lakes kingdoms and noted the unexpected sophistication of the societies in these kingdoms. It was assumed that Egyptian culture had influenced the culture of the Great Lakes region. In the actual fact, the direction of influence was the other way round. The anthropologists were observing a society similar to one out of which the
ancient Egyptian civilisation had emerged. Source: editorial@ug.nationmedia.com (Text ends)

Uganda TV station banned after showing that the president asleep in parliament'

(Guardian Africa Network) NTV coverage suspended 'to make them think' because Museveni was meditating not snoozing, say government officials. A television station in Uganda has been banned from covering presidential events after it broadcast images which it said showed president Yoweri Museveni snoozing in parliament. Dennis Katungi, the government's media centre manager, told AFP: "The president has habits, he meditates and they know it, and still they go out and say he was sleeping. The suspension should not be permanent. It's temporary, to make them think."

Museveni seized power in 1986 and is now one of Africa's longest serving leaders although, at the age of 69, he is far from the oldest. In 2011 he tried to appeal to the youth vote by releasing a rap song. Earlier this year he was widely condemned for signing an anti-homosexuality bill into law. Government spokesman Ofwono Opondo confirmed that NTV Uganda would be punished over the catnap claim, accusing it of a "lack of professionalism and biased coverage". He said: "We have suspended their coverage of the president as we reconsider our relationship with them." NTV Uganda, owned by the Kenyan-based Nation Media Group, told AFP it had not been informed of the sanction. Media watchdogs have expressed concern over dwindling freedom of expression in Uganda. Last year the government closed the two main independent newspapers for 10 days after they reported arguments among army generals over whether Museveni's son should succeed him.

Meanwhile police said they arrested two men who infiltrated parliament and deposited two piglets in an anti-corruption protest. Fred Enanga, a police spokesman, told AFP: "We got the two youths and the piglets. They are in our custody as we investigate how they went through security." The protesters had painted the piglets in the colours of Museveni's ruling party and had written slogans insulting MPs as corrupt on the animals, officials said. Witness Ruth Namukasa said the two demonstrators were apparently unemployed, and called themselves the "jobless brotherhood group". She added: "One of the piglets had been painted with words, 'yes, MPigs, corruption constituency.'" Earlier this year it emerged that MPs had demanded a huge pay rise, already 60 times higher than most state employees, and that the country's chief auditor had complained deputies failed to account for millions of dollars of expenses. (Text ends)

Egypt to open defence office in Kampala’
By NELSON WESONGA & FREDERIC MUSISI (August 21, 2014)

(ST) Egyptian authorities have announced plans to open a defence office in Uganda to enhance military cooperation between the two countries notwithstanding long standing differences over the sharing of the River Nile waters. The Egyptian ambassador, Mr Ahmed Abdel-Aziz Mostafa, on Tuesday said it is “rare” practice for countries to have both an embassy and another office purposely for defence matters but “Uganda was distinguished for this service by Cairo.” Mr Mostafa made the revelation at a meeting with journalists in Kampala. The defence office will officially be opened next week on Wednesday.

Uganda and Egypt have on several occasions clashed verbally over the River Nile; and the latter threatened “war” but ambassador Mostafa, said the office will deal with cooperation of the two countries on several fronts, including fighting terrorism. Egypt has refused to sign the Entebbe Accord, a framework of countries (Egypt, Sudan, Uganda, Ethiopia, Rwanda, DRC, Eritrea, Tanzania and Kenya) for the cooperative sharing of the Nile river waters. State minister for Foreign Affairs Okello Oryem said: “The office will basically deal with our UPDF here and other military related issues in the region.” (Text ends)

November 17, 2014: DAILY MONITOR NEWS President Yueri Museveni to open Civil Service College today. CSCU’s mandate is to build the capacities of Public Service institutions and human resources for improved performance in public service delivery. President Yoweri Museveni is today expected to officially open the first civil service college in Uganda. State minister for Public service Sezi Mbaguta said the college which is based in Jinja will provide quality in-service training and support public policy research and innovations for improved performance. Mr Mbaguta added the decision to establish the college was prompted by the numerous loopholes in the public sector such as corruption, poor service delivery and incompetence of some civil servants. Civil Service College Uganda (CSCU) was established on July 1 2010 under the Ministry of Public Service. The College is responsible for in-service training, strengthening public policy research, providing advisory services and supporting innovations for improved service delivery. CSCU’s mandate is to build the capacities of Public Service institutions and human resources for improved performance in public service delivery.

Ugandans don’t want me to leave – President Yoweri Museveni

DAILY MONITOR, KAMPALA: December 7, 2014

In Summary

President says if Ugandans didn’t want him anymore, he would be happy to retire
President Museveni has blamed his failure to retire on Ugandans who keep re-electing him after every five years when his term expires. He said each time he seeks to go home, Ugandans keep voting him back thus denying him the opportunity to retire.

The President made the remarks while appearing on Capital FM’s Capital Gang talk show on Saturday. He was responding to a question by Kyadondo East MP Ibrahim Ssemujju Nganda who challenged him to give Ugandans a Christmas gift by announcing the date when he will retire, just like Speaker of Parliament Rebecca Kadaga promised Ugandans she will ensure passing of the anti-homosexuality Bill before Christmas.

“Well, I don’t think Ugandans are as obsessed with my retirement as Ssemujju seems to be because when I go to ask them at the elections, five million say don’t go, you stay,” he said.

“You have heard them, singing tajakugenda tajakugenda (he won’t go). So if Ugandans really were like Ssemujju, I would be happy to retire because I am not lacking where to retire. I am a member of my party and I do what my party wants,” the President added.

After the President narrated the history of the NRM’s ideology, Bugweri County MP Abdul Katuntu challenged him to explain whether the current rift in the ruling party pitting the secretary general against him as the chairman was not caused by a power contest rather than ideological differences. Mr Museveni said he has been in power for 28 years and claimed he is not interested in power.

Museveni replied in a stammering voice attracting giggles from Mr Katuntu and Ssemujju who teased him on his honesty. “I don’t need power as a person. Power for what?” he asked.

The President, who was in a jovial mood and patiently listened to the panellists, steered clear of discussing the sacking of former prime minister Amama Mbabazi which political commentators have attributed to his perceived presidential ambition in 2016.

Ssemujju said: “The Namboole delegates’ conference is a meeting to ratify a coup by you Mr President on your party. It is to crucify Mbabazi. In this democracy which you are talking about is where Amama is being hounded from his own party.”

The President shot back, “Well I don’t know your love for Mbabazi. I have known Mbabazi for as long as you have lived, so leave issues of Mbabazi to us who know him.”

After listing his party’s achievements, the President was asked to comment on how sustainable these are, citing the scenarios in Libya and Egypt which led to the collapse of the respective regimes.
Museveni reasoned that whereas Libya did not have competitive politics, Egypt’s failure was caused by foreign interference.

“Even 50 years from now Uganda will not collapse. We have got a powerful cadreship. Why should it collapse? Forget about that and do other things. You don’t know the sort of people you are talking about,” Museveni reassured.

Museveni defended his family’s involvement in state affairs. He said his wife, the minister for Karamoja and son, Brig Muhozi Kainerugaba, the commander of the Special Forces Command were justifiably appointed.

“She has done a very good job. I had more important battles to fight than fight my wife who was supported by her area. I didn’t want her [Janet] to be involved in controversy but people in her area and herself demanded. She got the biggest winning margin in the whole country. People didn’t want to go to Karamoja, she is the one who suggested that I take her there,” Museveni defended his wife’s appointment to Cabinet.

Commenting on the embattled East African Legislative Assembly speaker Margaret Zziwa, the President blamed her woes on the “childish, infertile and petty” nature of Uganda’s representatives.

He said they will have to answer for it and proposed that maturity be factored before a Ugandan is sent to the regional assembly. He also revealed that an engineering monitoring unit had been set up at State House to check corruption in the roads sector following the Katosi road scam in which government was fleeced billions of shillings. (Text ends)

UGANDA TRENDING: “I earn very little from government but I am a rich man” – Museveni’

By Stanley Azuakola on July 29, 2015 — The president of Uganda, Yoweri Museveni, has extolled the value of agriculture by using his personal example of how despite being one of the least paid presidents on the continent, he is still a wealthy man.

Museveni addressed a rally in Bukedea district on Saturday to kick-start his working tour to promote a campaign tagged ‘Operation Wealth Creation’ which aims to ensure that every household has at least one income-generating project.

He advised his listeners and the people of Uganda to engage in modern agriculture and agro-related activities to gain individual wealth. According to the president, even though infrastructure development like schools and roads were being effected by the government, those things represented development but do not necessarily translate to individual wealth.
Being one of the largest cattle rearers and traders in the country, Museveni had a word of advice from his personal story. “Your President is one of the least paid on the continent. Although I earn little from your government, I’m a rich man from agriculture. When I tell you that commercial agriculture is wealth, am telling you what I know,” he said. He based his estimation of his salary in comparison with other African leaders, on a report by the African Review which put his salary at US$12,000, far less than that of President Paul Biya of Cameroun who earns US$610,000.

Source: Daily Monitor

COMMENORATION: IDI AMIN: The Ugandan Patriot/Soldier.

Hussein Lumumba Amin (son)

My late father fought neo-colonialism and foreign exploitation. He tried to help fellow Africans and others who suffered segregation in their own countries. He empowered Ugandans. He built Uganda. He ensured that government services, including hospitals and education institutions, functioned as designed. Teachers, doctors and civil servants promptly paid. Agricultural support with modern equipment for all districts. Acquired ad...vanced telecommunications and modern public transportation assets. Infrastructure was well maintained. Upgrades were implemented. He went to the international arena a proud African, ready to defend Africa, ready to fight Apartheid, ready to kick colonialism from the continent, ready to liberate the suffering and constantly bombed palestinian people. He protected the country.

A country where we now need to work together, live together, and strive together for a brighter future.

A country where we shouldn't allow corruption and bribery to become our gospel.

Where the corrupt are considered smart, and the hardworking are called fools.

Where irresponsible politicians decieve the people to get to office (or to remain there), then engage in public theft, emptying state coffers dry, and are subsequently protected from prosecution.

We need to curtail this shameful, unflattering corruption, plunder and lies behaviour in leadership.

Exactly 12 years ago today, on 16th August 2003, Former President of Uganda, Al-Hajji Field Marshal Idi Amin Dada, passed away.
All he wanted was to be a good father to his family, a good friend to the African people, a good soldier for his country and indeed in God did he trust.

I had a brief interview on the New Vision’s FM radio. The discussion focused on his true legacy for this country, and how an increasing number of young Ugandans consider him to be the most patriotic leader Uganda ever had. The reference for ordinary citizens in regards to sovereign Ugandan nationalism. May His Soul Rest In Peace.

**The Musevenis keep their hold on power**
After 30 years at the State House, President Yoweri Museveni, or “M7” to use his campaign nickname, is aiming at the age of 71 to obtain a fifth mandate, which he hopes to win thanks to his hold on the machinery of state and the ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM), as well as to his strong family connections. He is going to find it hard, however, given his age, to reach the end of this final mandate in 2021.

By way of preparation for the power struggle which will start after his departure, a number of members of his family, including his wife, Janet and his brother Salim Saleh, are already seeking to strengthen their power bases within NRM. For the presidential family, which is present at all levels in the regime, will not allow itself to be dispossessed of its rank. Such is the case for the first lady, who, apart from being a minister and member of parliament, has built up clan of her own around her family and her Christian Pentecostal network.

M7’s young brother, General Salim Saleh, who is a hero of the armed struggle of the 1980s, has successfully combined his private activities with his duties as presidential adviser, while still maintaining his connections within the Uganda People’s Defence Forces (UPDF) and the NRM.

Thanks to his father’s position as head of state, General Muhozi Kainerugaba, head of the Special Forces Command (SFC), has control of the security of the president and that of the country’s oil fields. His three sisters, Natasha, Patience and Diana and their respective husbands, all Christian evangelists of the Hima ethnic group, reinforce the presence of the Musevenis in business circles.

Other dignitaries, relations of Janet by marriage like Sam Kutesa, Jim Muhwezi and Henry Tumukunde, also play roles of varying importance within this presidential spider’s web.

**COUNTRY FACT FILE**

Location

In East central Africa
Official title of the state
The Republic of Uganda

Flag description:
Six equal horizontal bands of black (top), yellow, red, black, yellow, and red; a white disk is superimposed at the center and depicts a red-crested crane (the national symbol) facing the hoist side; black symbolizes the African people, yellow sunshine and vitality, red African brotherhood; the crane was the military badge of Ugandan soldiers under the UK.

Neighbours
Sudan on N., The Congo on W., Rwanda, Tanzania on S., Kenya on E. Land boundaries; total 2,698 km. Border countries; The Congo 765 km, Kenya 933 km, Rwanda 169 km, South Sudan 435 km, Tanzania 396 km.

Local division
80 Districts

Government type
Republic – presidential

Legislation chamber
Unicameral – National Assembly

Form of State
Republic

Chief of State and Head of Government is the President.

President is elected by popular vote for a five-year term. A multi-party republic with one legislative house. The National Assembly 332 seats, 215 members are elected by popular vote, 104 members nominated by legally established special interest groups i.e. women, army, disables, youth, labour unions and ex-members to serve for five-year terms.

Executive branch

Chief of State/Head of Government

Cabinet; appointed by the President from elected legislators

Unicameral National Assembly. The president is both the chief of State and head of Government. The President is elected by popular vote to serve for five-year term without presidential term limits. Re-elected 2001, 2006, 2011.

Former Rulers

1966 - 1971 Apollo Milton Obote - Head of state and government

1971 - 1979 General Idi Amin Oumi - Military head of state

1979 - Professor Yusufu Kironde Lule - Interim head of state

1979 - 1980 Godfrey Lukongwa Binaisa – Interim head of state

1980 - General Paulo Mwanga - Chairman of the Ruling Military Commission

comprised of; Saulo Musoke, Polycarp Nyamuchoncho and Yoweri Hunter Wacha Olwol.

1980 – 1985 Mr. Apollo Milton Obote back again as head of state.


1986 – Current - Ex-rebel commander turned politician Yoweri Kaguta Museveni of the National Resistance Army (NRA)

Judicial chamber

Court of Appeal ; Judges are appointed by the president and approved by the legislature. High court; Judges appointed by the president.

Capital city

Kampala city Altitudes 1210 mtrs/3969 ft

Geographic coordinates - 0.19N , 32.25E. Chosen & named by Kabaka Edward Mutesa I, King of the Bugandas. Kampala Hill, is often taken as the starting point of the city, the Luganda translation comes to Akaozi K’empala, believed Kampala Hill, commonly refered as old Kampala, through repeated usage, the name of the place eventually became Kampala, founded as a village in 1890.

Names of main towns

Jinja, Mbale, Masaka, Kasese, Gulu, Lira, Entebe, Soroti, Mbarara.

Date of Independence

October 9, 1962

Religions (Major)

Roman Catholic Christians 41 %, Protestant 42 %, Muslim 12. 1 %, traditional beliefs 3. 1 %, None 0. 9 %.

Main spoken languages
English is the official language, but Ganda or Luganda is the most widely spoken local language. Kiswahili is the language of the police and armed forces.

Currency unit

Ugandan Shillings (UGSh) = 100 cents.

Area in Km2

241,038.00 (Land area-197, 100 sq. km; Water area-43, 938 sq. km (this includes half of the total surface area of Lake-Victoria).

Country area comparison in Africa

33 out of 55 states.

Demographic terms;- 

Average annual population growth rate 3.58 % (the 4th highest in the world)

Birth rate 47.55 births per 1,000 population

Death rate 11.9 deaths per 1,000 population

Average life expectancy ; 52.98 years

Male 51.92 years ; Female 54.07 years;

Illiteracy rate (%)

Male: 22, Female: 38

Average per capita income

USD 1, 300

Population density

167.2/km2

Urban population (%)

13

Contributor groups (%)

Farming, Fishing: 24, Industry: 25, Social service: 51

Main Export Items

Coffee, cotton, maize, tea

Economy is based on
Agriculture is the most important sector of the economy, employing over 80% of the workforce. Coffee accounts for the bulk of export revenues. The country has substantial natural resources, including fertile soils, regular rainfall, deposits of gold, copper, cobalt, limestone, salt, phosphates and other minerals, and now oil. Hydro-power generated electricity is an important energy source.

Climate
Tropical; Generally rainy with two dry seasons; Semi-arid in northeast;
Extremes;
Lowest point; Lake Albert 621 mtr.
Highest point; Margherita peak (Mt. Stanley) 5,110 mtrs.
Weather of the Capital city (Kampala city) average annual temperature 26 oC.
Altitude 1210 mtrs/3969 ft
Hottest Month July 18-28 oc
Coldest Month July 46 mm average Rf.
Driest Month December to February and June to August
Measures
Metric system.
Time zone
3 hours ahead of GMT/UTC
Public holidays
1st January, 26 January, 1st May (labour day), 9 June, 9 October, 25 & 26 December, All Muslim holidays.
Ethnic groups
Bantu, Nilotic, Nilo-hamitic tribes: Buganda 17 %, Banyakole and Bahima 10 %, Basoga 8 %, Bakiga 7 %, Banyarwanda 6%, Iteso 6 %, Langi 6 %, Acholi 5 %, Bagisu 5 %, Lugbara 4 %, , Bunyoro 3 %, Batoro 3 %, Karamojong 2 %, others 18 %. Note: Asians made up the largest non-indigenous ethnic-group until August, 1972 when General Amin’s government expelled 50,000 Asians who were engaged in trade, industry and various professions. The Asians have returned in the last decades but their population has yet to reach the pre-1972 level.

Topographic & Environmental concern
Most of Uganda is high plateaus 915 mtrs/3,000 to 1830 mtrs/6,000 ft high, with high Ruwenzon range to W. (Mt. Margherita 5107 mtrs/16,750 ft volcanoes) in W., NE is arid W., SW is rainy. Lakes, Victoria, Edward and Albert much of borders. Environment: draining of wetlands for agricultural use; deforestation; overgrazing; soil erosion; water hyacinth infestation in Lake Victoria; widespread poaching.

**Economic Overview**

**Industry**

Sugar processing, cotton textiles, cement, breweries, tobacco, light consumer goods processing, steel production, processing of agricultural products i.e. cotton ginning, coffee roasting and grinding.

**Chief crops**

Coffee, cotton, tea, tobacco, cassava, peanuts, bananas, sugarcane, potatoes, corn, fish and fish products, pulses, cut-flowers : beef, goat meat, milk, poultry, dairy products,

**National resources**

Copper, gold, arable land.

**Other resources**

In 2010, in Uganda, the Chinese National off-shore Oil Company (CNOOC) further granted the sole rights to explore the "Lake-Albert Basin", known as "the epicentre of the emerging new oil zone" with estimated reserves of about four billion barrels. Exploitation & development of Petroleum crude on-shores of Lake Albert underway. The Bujagali hydro-electric dam in Jinja. Reserves of phosphates, iron ore, cobalt, limestone, sulphur & salt. Note; Uganda is fertile and well-watered country with many lakes and rivers.

**Land in use (%)**

- Arable land: 25
- Grassland: 9
- Forest woods: 28
- Other: 38
- Marine:
  - Coastline; None.

**Commercial Sea port:**
An inland state, but it's southern frontier runs through Lake Victoria. A steam service also links Ugandan port Bell of LakeVictoria. Ports of Mwanza (Tanzania) and Kisumu (Kenya) also used.

Development prospect;- 

For many Ugandans, the current economic crisis is as much a result of poor leadership as of the ripple effects of the global economic downturn. Having weathered the initial impact of the global financial crisis, Uganda’s economy had been expected to grow by at least 6 percent in 2011 because of projected strong private consumption and government expenditure, but in mid-October the government revised the growth estimate downwards to 5.5 percent. Inflation has returned with a vengeance. After falling to 4.4 percent in early 2010, the annualised rate was approaching 30 percent in late 2011, in part reflecting the near-doubling of fuel prices. This produced volatility for the Uganda shilling as speculators bought dollars to sell during times of scarcity, and the economy was soon showing its more threadbare face. Electricity rationing resumed country-wide, often lasting up to 12 hours at a time, nearly all telecommunications companies increased their mobile telephone call rates by at least 25 percent (having reduced them by 50 percent in 2010), the central bank sharply raised interest rates to 20 percent, and the trade deficit widened hugely.

Uganda continues to suffer high rates of unemployment and under-employment. This has been put under the spotlight by the perennially poor performance of agriculture, the highest-employing sector, the failure of tourism to take off as once expected and the slow development of the industrial sector. Uganda now clearly risks failing to meet many of the growth targets outlined in its 2010/11–2014/15 National Development Plan (NDP), the first of six five-year plans whose ultimate goal is to transform Uganda into a middle-income economy over the next 30 years. The NDP aims to raise the average per capita annual income of each Ugandan from $500 to $900 by 2015, reduce the proportion of people living below the poverty line from 31 percent to 24.5 percent, double GDP to $32bn, increase the share of manufacturing to 30 percent of GDP and multiply the country's electricity generation capacity from the current 550MW to 3,800MW.

Instead, the economy could see a further slide in some key sectors. Tourism has been affected by the recent unrest. Prices of food and other commodities are likely to remain high because of the increased demand from South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Fuel prices are unlikely to come down following the failure by the government to build fuel reserves that could provide a buffer against fluctuating global prices. The long-awaited start of oil production has now been shelved, with Tullow Oil executives announcing in August that the company cannot put a
timeline on commercial production because they are still in the exploration phase. President Museveni has separately claimed that oil production will start around 2014. Debate about the country’s nascent oil sector has shifted to two equally-controversial issues: the hitherto unproven allegation that three senior ministers took millions of dollars in bribes from oil companies; and the recent admission by the government in parliament that the country has not put in place the requisite regulatory framework for the oil industry. The legislation currently guiding oil and gas exploration in Uganda was passed in 1993 while the 2008 National Oil and Gas Policy, which was supposed to guide production and use of oil, has been criticised in parliament as insufficient. Measures that the government has not put in place, according to reports, include those that would guarantee transparency, inclusion of local communities, revenue management and the alleviation of environmental damage.

Despite official admissions about the difficult economic situation, the government has remained defiant that there is no economic crisis. President Yoweri Museveni believes the high food prices to be an opportunity for farmers rather than signs of a higher cost of living, and says Uganda can ride the storm by producing more food for the East African region. The country already supplies a lot of food to South Sudan as the major export to its new leading trading partner. It remains to be seen how a government that has been allocating less than 5 percent of its national budget to agriculture over the past five years can immediately revive a sector that it has long neglected but on which it now seems to pin most of its hopes. However, the finance ministry says the government intends to focus more attention on increasing agriculture productivity to cushion the poor against the adverse effects of imported inflation and to help them market their surplus commodities.