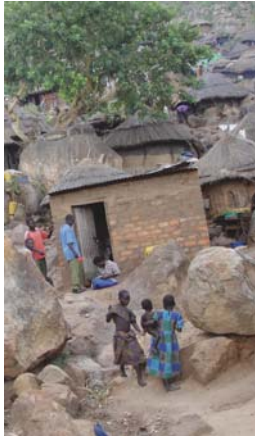




# JUSTICE AND PEACE NEWS

Newsletter of the Justice and Peace Commission of Archdiocese of Gulu - "If you want peace, work for Justice"

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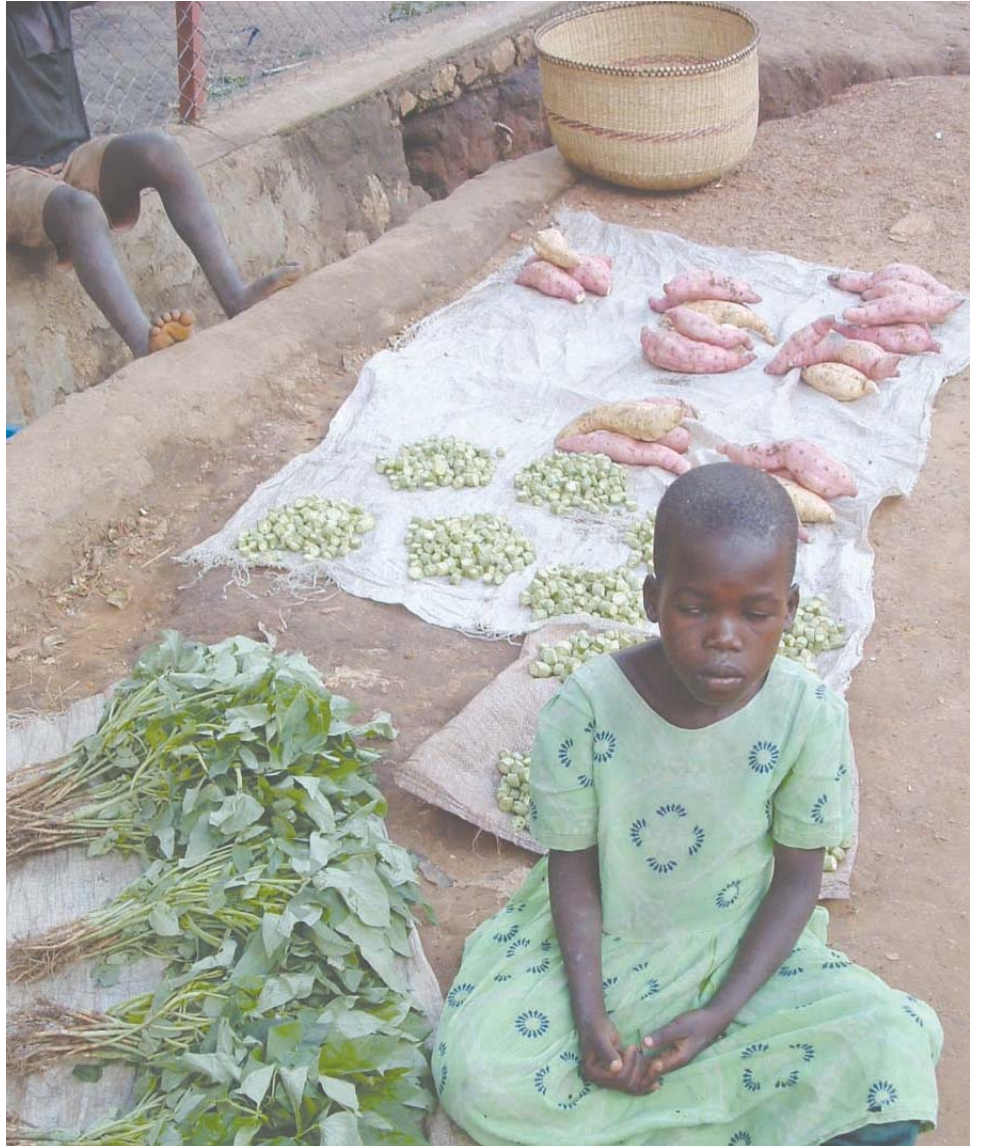
Dispalced persons venture villages in the north.

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This child's photo recently taken when selling in the market in Kalongo Town Council near St. Joseph's Hospital. It was at the time when other children were in Schools. She said the money will be used to buy salt and other scholastic materials. Many children have not benefited from the Universal Primary Education in the north because of numerous problems associated with war and isplacement. There is no peace and normal life in the camps to create enabling environment for children. Children are made to take care of homes while parents go to look for food. They are sent to sell things for earning a living. 2006 Primary Seven Examination results were not favouring children from northern Uganda. They compete with other pupils in peaceful areas where there are electricity for reading, enough food, good house to sleep in, security & other basics of life.

# Displaced venture villages in north

**The relative peace that has returned to northern Uganda has spurred thousands of internally displaced people to start moving from camps back to their villages. However, the returnees face enormous challenges as they try to resettle in their former homes.**

This report is from the UN office for the coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (IRIN).

"We came back to the village, but the place was all bushy," Ajorama Akot said as she helped her husband Valentino Omach fix the roof of their new hut at Palenga in Bobi sub county, 24 km from Gulu town, Gulu District. "We had to clear the bush."

Three heads of cattle grazed nearby. Cattle were once a cherished symbol of wealth for the region's Acholi people, but they were virtually wiped out during two decades of war - effectively destroying the source of money for education and family welfare, and a source of protein for thousands of peasant families.

Buoyed by the presence of soldiers at a nearby military unit, Ajorama was excited to be home after leaving 10 years ago to seek refuge in the south, across the River Nile.

Under a tree, a radio played local music - prompting some young, apparently intoxicated soldiers to start a dance with locals.

Near the village, a group of women with children strapped to their backs sweated in the midday sun to clear an 8.5 km stretch of road from Palenga to Lera Obaro.

The road is one of those ear-

marked for reopening under a new food-for-work programme. "This is a short cut to our homes and land," Jennifer Amito, a 24-year-old mother of one, said.

"It will also be used by our children to go to school at Palenga camp and by us to access the health unit and market."

Liker Amito, Constantine Odoch and Watmon Oyaro had joined in to clear the road.

At the entrance to his makeshift hut, Odoch said they had returned to the village two weeks ago and decided to build together in one spot near the military unit, in order to access their ancestral land - located 1 km to 3 km from the new settlement. Oyaro was also planning to grow crops for cash and food.

Nine roads in Gulu and the new district of Amuru, totalling 38 km, are being re-opened to enable people to access their homes, schools and clinics.

Five other roads of 19.3 km are being re-opened in the district of Lira, further southeast, while work has yet to begin in the other war-affected districts of Kitgum and Pader.

The project is a brainchild of the United Nations World Food Programme and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Women comprise the bulk of the work-force, using hand hoes and sickles in a food-for-work or tools-for-work road-clearing exercise.

"The community has also started to clear areas around schools and clinics as these facilities await rehabilitation," Roberta Russo, UNHCR spokeswoman in the region, said.

## Undeterred

Since July, when the notorious rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) started talking peace with the Ugandan government, security in northern Uganda has improved considerably.

The talks, mediated by the government of southern Sudan in the capital, Juba, yielded a truce, raising hopes of an end to a vicious 21-year insurgency that has killed tens of thousands and displaced nearly two million.

Jennifer Amito participates in a WFP/UNHCR road clearing to improve access to northern Ugandan villages

Under the truce, LRA rebels are supposed to assemble at two points in Sudan to allow the talks to be concluded.

However, considerable suspicion remains - especially given that two LRA leaders face indictments for war crimes by The Hague-based International Criminal Court.

Many northern Ugandans fear the rebels will never make peace unless the indictments are dropped and LRA deputy commander Vincent Otti has repeatedly said the LRA will not come out of their bush hideouts while the arrest warrants remain in force.

Ugandan officials say despite the slow pace of the talks, the security situation in the war-ravaged region has improved dramatically.

As a result, ordinary people in Gulu have seized on the lull in clashes to try to rebuild their lives.

Undeterred by challenges such as damaged infrastructure and unexploded ordnance, many of the civilians returning to their villages are trying to find their bearings again.

In Gulu town, the night life that was characterised by the presence of hordes of children who used to leave their homes every evening in the villages to sleep in the relative safety of town - the "night commuters" - has been replaced by revellers whiling away the evenings in bustling pubs and discos.

"After years of civil war there is hope for peace following historical talks with government," a local resident said.

There are lingering reminders of the past. William Kidega, a young businessman dealing in agricultural produce in the town, said despite the relative peace, some soldiers on foot patrol harassed civilians and stole their money.

"I have never seen this situation; we move as late as we want these days," he explained. "The only problem is that sometimes the army beats you up and steals the money you have. This is a cause for concern."

The army denied the claims, saying soldiers on patrol sometimes questioned those walking at night because criminals have taken advantage of the security situation to waylay people and rob them.

"In some incidents we have recorded some deaths. An operation recently yielded some guns and military equipment from these thugs," army spokesman Lt Chris Magezi said.

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# IDPs longing for original homes

The government, which says it is supporting the returnees, insists it is determined that the civilians get back to their villages by the end of the year. Where there are delays, it blames recent torrential rains instead of security concerns.

"We have trucks full of food stranded in the east because some roads are impassable or have had their bridges swept away by the heavy rains," the minister for disaster preparedness, Musa Eweru, said.

"The government is committed to see people return home."

## Enormous task

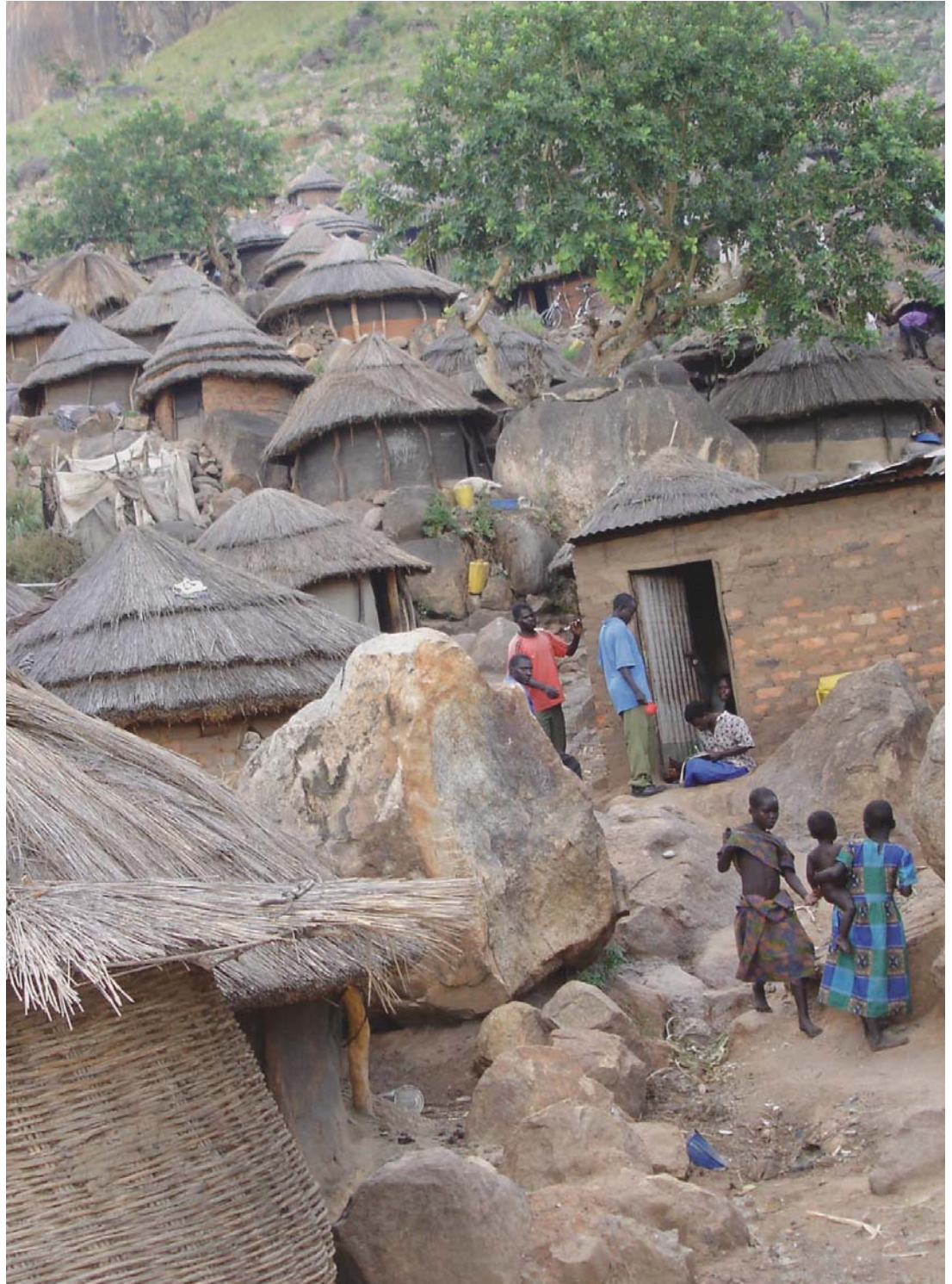
The returnees admit that making their villages habitable again is an enormous task. The authorities have put in place security and the army decides which areas are safe enough, while UN and other relief agencies are looking at their immediate social services needs. But there is still a fear of the unknown.

Law and order needs to be strengthened around the villages, to avoid anybody taking advantage of the vulnerable returnees.

So far, the government has deployed police to take over civil policing from the army and agencies are providing support to the men in uniform.

Ordnance believed to be buried across the region needs to be removed. To avoid casualties, the army is trying to educate civilians not to touch any abandoned metal objects.

"I want to move in permanently in January, but I will first move in alone, then my wife and the children will follow later," Oyaró said.



**CONGESTION:** This is part of the congestion camps in Kalongo, Pader district. The relative peace that has returned to northern Uganda has spurred thousands of internally displaced people to start moving from camps back to their villages. However, the returnees face enormous challenges as they try to resettle in their former homes.



# JPC unites its northern youth

Justice and Peace Council is organising a get together for the youth not only for those hailing from the north but also other Provinces. The Theme for the gathering, code named 'Youth Cultural Week' is: **Peace -Unity in Diversity**.

In 2001, Justice and Peace Commissions of the four dioceses of the Ecclesiastical Province of Gulu, Gulu Archdiocese, Nebbi, Arua and Lira (GANAL) decided to work together to address its common challenges for peace and reconciliation.

The jurisdiction covers the sub-regions of Lango, Acholi and West Nile, which through the history of this country was caught in a cycle of violence, leading to suspicion, mistrust, revenge and counter revenge. As a way far realizing the goal of unity for the region, two activities;

- (i) Peace Week and
- (ii) Youth Cultural Week

were agreed upon as a means of providing the space for social interaction, dialogue and engagement among the communities and tribes in northern Uganda to re-build their broken relationships for peace and reconciliation.

The Peace week is marked on the occasion of the World Day of Peace which falls on January 1. This year, it was on January 8th to 12th January.

Meanwhile, the "Youth Cultural Week" is to be marked during the first term's school holidays. The first will be hosted by Gulu Archdiocese during the first term's holidays for students.

The subsequent ones will be hosted by Arua (2007), Lira (2008) and Nebbi (2009) respectively.

During the first Provincial Peace Week held in Adjumani, Arua diocese from 2<sup>nd</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> January 2006, four concurrent workshops were conducted for Youth, Women, Veterans and Elders/Cultural Leaders for each from Lango, Acoli and West Nile to tell their stories and listen to each other.

The youth in their feedback to the plenary reported;...adult elders are not telling as the whole story of what happened leading to the broken relationship among the tribes in the Province. They either tell us about the killings by the former President Idi Amin with the co-opted people from West Nile for Acholi and Lango. And then how the people of West Nile were forced into exile in the early 1980s with the details explaining why, especially when they were seen as perpetrators...."

It is with this in mind that each youth delegation comprising of equal number of male and female would be accompanied by at least four adults to listen and learn together, while providing responses to the concerns of young people.

The activity under "Youth in Peace building" will be characterized with activities that would provide for social interaction, learning, community work and solidarity, religious, socio-cultural, games and sports.

An overview of conflict transformation and peace building, looking at conflict analysis and techniques and skills for peace building (negotiation, mediation, reconciliation, dialogue, tolerance, etc) will be given to the youth.

This year's inaugural event will be hosted in conjunction with Gulu District Local Government.



Below, Sacred Heart girls. The Schools has Justice and Peace Club. Above, Part of the bishops from north Province

# What Acholi Juba meet would have focused on

People feel the Conference called by Acholi Paramount Chief in Juba, was good and sought to pronounce the dire concern of the Acholi people towards the stalled Juba peace talk and demanded that both the LRA/M and the Government of Uganda should return to the talking tables.

Clearly, the overall objective of this Conference must have also been to generate some consensus on how the roles Acholi people, who are the very VICTIM of this 21 years tragedies should be accommodated in promoting peace, reconciliation and development in the sub-region.

This brings us to focus three related elements of the issues as follows: (a) The stalled Juba peace talk, (b) The issue of Acholi unity, and (c) The challenges of Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development.

People appreciate the GoU, GoSS, the LRA, the Donor community, all actors for trying to bring and embrace peace in northern Uganda.

But the mother of all of questions is - why did the Juba talk stall? Before we answer that, let us look at the light sides.

1. People are particularly appreciative of the fact that the Juba Peace talks have brought a temporary halt in the 20 years of wasteful loss of innocent lives in the Acholi sub-region, following the signing of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement.

This modest success of the Juba Peace Talks has clearly demonstrated that a negotiated peaceful settlement to bloody conflict is possible, in spite of the difficulties.

Any failure to comprehensively handle the problem, its root causes and the structural environment in which it is occurring,

including not respecting and honoring the whole process could irreversibly shatter it and dash all hopes of peace in the region.

2. People are in particular concerned that statements by some of the major stakeholders (President Bashir, Vice-President Kiir, President Museveni all threatening to take military action against the LRA while the later threatens to resume war if attacked) undoubtedly threatens the current Cessation of Hostilities Agreement.

In this regard, the Conference was good to have come out clear and appeal to all the stakeholders to refrain from making provocative statements which are tantamount to a resumption of hostilities, thus violating the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement.

Enough is enough folks. Let us do everything within our power to save the lives of innocent civilians from the brunt of this senseless war.

Acholi and other tribes are calling for restraint by those who are rattling their sabers, thus threatening the modest peace that was brought in by the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement.

3. Cross section of people were in Juba at a time when the Juba Peace talks have virtually ceased to exist amidst accusations and counter accusations by the protagonists in the conflict. Much as people are not fully informed of the substance of the accusation and counter accusations between the combatants, they strongly urge that every effort must be made to arrest the collapse of the peace talks.

People strongly feel that a thorough assessment is necessary for understanding why after more than 20 years of the north-

ern Uganda conflict, it does not want to end. There is simply no sign of light at the end of the tunnel to its end!!

How long should people continue to travel in such darkness after so many efforts and years of trying?

As victims of the conflict, people really would like to know the roles played by the various stakeholders of the conflict, in particular the GoU, LRA/M, GoSS, the GoS, donor communities, Acholi leaders as well as the mediator - Dr Riek Macaar himself.

It is people's belief that the outcome of such an objective assessment might lead to a different and pro-Acholi (victims) perspectives and a redefinition of the fundamental problem underlying the endless war.

Otherwise, any attempt to simply call for a resumption of the peace talks on a business as usual approach, will lead to another miserable failure.

4. With the above line of thoughts in mind, across section of Acholi as to why the peace talks have not succeeded and may not succeed at all are as follows:

(i) The government of Uganda has for long created a perception that LRA/M people are always wrong, therefore, to end the conflict, the LRM/A must surrender or be defeated in one way or the other.

The GoU has for years been promoted and the donor community (especially those from the western democratic countries) had accepted the idea that the problem has been only the LRA, no one else. To solve it,



**Acholi Paramount Chief David Onen Acana II organised the meeting**

one simply need to eliminate the LRA/M.

In the last few years, however, mounting evidence has cast strong doubts in the minds of many people about the validity of the perception that the LRA/M is the primary cause of the war. Instead, the LRA/M is nothing but a symptom of what is fundamentally wrong by the past and current systems of governance.

(ii) The GoSS should advise UPDF to leave its territory. This will bring confidence on the side of the LRA/M.

(iii) The UN, African Union, IGADD should be among the body to monitor cessation of hostility agreement in the future, as well as deploy an international forces in northern Uganda in order to give confidence to both parties.

(iv) People have strong feeling that if and when the peace talks resume, civil society should be allowed to participate in the peace talks, not as individual observers and consultants, but as a third team of negotiators

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# What Acholi Juba meet would have focused on

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along side the LRA and the GoU.

People feel that this is essential to ensure that the peace process is not reduced simply to the negotiation of the best terms for the LRA and the GoU while the interests of the victims/survivors of the war are left out.

After all, for whom is the peace being sought, if not for the victims of the conflict?

Furthermore, the participation of civil society will help eliminate the problem of the mushrooming of individuals and interest groups who claim to represent civil society in Juba or in any other parts of northern Uganda.

These individuals and groups, if anything, have only helped to spread more confusion and thus ruining the peace process.

## **Acholi unity or disunity?**

Acholi unity needed because of people's hard belief that they can not continue to speak as individuals on life or death issues like the current Juba Peace.

Fortunately, Acholi have structures at home such as the Ker Kwaro Acholi, the District Councils, the Acholi Parliamentary Group, and the Acholi Religious Leaders etc, which they could use.

Views from people are strong

that Acholi should have an all inclusive Acholi meeting every year or every other year to re-enforce their commitments to unity, and to their community. Hence, people talked to feel that there should be a call for a committee to be set up for that purpose.

## **Acholi Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development**

1. For the last twenty years, the people of Acholi have known no peace, development and stability in their area. Meaningful livelihoods do not exist, and human lives are unnecessarily lost every single day.

Assets and other resources have been destroyed. Even the abundant and fertile soil cannot be cultivated because the people are confined in Internally Displaced Peoples (IDP) camps.

Hunger, poverty and disease are rampant in the camps and contribute more to death. In fact, a whole generation of children and youth has grown up under these conditions and the prospect for the future looks grim for that generation.

On this background, most Acholi see that a clear post conflict reconstruction and recovery agenda with the total involvement of Acholi be discussed.

2. Much as total peace in Northern Uganda remains elusive, poverty continues to be a major challenge in the Acholi sub region. Overcoming these challenges is a gigantic task that will not only require massive injections of time and resources - but also a clear vision and strategy for the way forward.

Supporters of this arguments believe that, the Acholi Diaspora has a big role to play and they must play it well. However, a major obstacle for the Acholi

Diaspora to play a meaningful and significant role is the lack of awareness and information of the various investment opportunities and/or constraints that exist, as well as the absence of strategic planning of economic activities in Acholi.

3. An effort was made in 2005, through the Acholi Economic Consultative Forum in Stockwell- London to look at the various investment opportunities in Acholiland, on understanding the current economic situation in Acholi after many years of insecurity and neglect by the various authorities as well as looking at ways and means to improve mutual knowledge, identification of opportunities and coordination issues.

Acholi land issues should be discussed though it should not be mixed with peace talks. There should be the formation of an Acholi Land Trust - to manage our land in trust.

A strategy to net work for strategic investments in Acholi, established with a coordinating secretariat responsive to a formalised Acholi Development Agency.

Better access to financial and other resources to promote greater advances in the strategic sectors of education, agriculture and healthcare - through the creation and establishment of Acholi Reconstruction and Development Bank.

It is important to note that all the above key economic development issues relevant to the prosperity of Acholi people and the socio-economic development of our land. Let people do it!!

4. Some people are not happy with the GoU recovery programme for northern Uganda because the various and key stakeholders were not consulted.



**Rwtot Onen Acana II**

# Pope Benedict Speaks out against Designer Babies



Pope Benedict sixteenth:

A common objection to "designer baby" technology is based on the ethics of human experimentation. Modern bioethical codes such as the Declaration of Helsinki condemn experiments on humans that are unnecessary, dangerous, or without the subjects' consent. A report by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) voices these concerns in the context of inheritable genetic modification, concluding that this technology "cannot presently be carried out safely and responsibly on human beings" and that "pressing moral concerns" have not yet been addressed

Pope Benedict XVI has warned against genetic engineering and other scientific practises that allow people to select designer babies by screening them for defects while still in the womb.

Speaking on Saturday February 24, during a congress organized by the Pontifical Academy for Life on the theme "The Christian Conscience as Support of the Right to Life," the Pope

lamented that a new form of eugenics is striking the most developed countries, where an "obsessive quest for the 'perfect child'" leads to the elimination of embryos.

This quest, noted the Holy Father, leads to "legalizing euthanasia," multiplying at the same time the pressure to "legalize forms of living together; alternatives to marriage, closed to natural procreation."

"Ever stronger are the pressures to legalize abortion in the countries of Latin America and in developing countries" he said in remarks published by ZENIT

He added that he right to life must be supported by everyone, because it is the fundamental right with regard to the other human rights.

It is a Christian's duty, he said, "to mobilize, to address the many attacks to which the right to life is exposed."

Eugenics was, quite literally, an effort to breed 'better human beings' - by encouraging the reproduction of people with "good" genes and discouraging those with "bad" genes.

Eugenicists effectively lobbied for social legislation to keep racial and ethnic groups separate, to restrict immigration from southern and eastern Europe, and to sterilize people considered "genetically unfit."

Elements of the American eugenics movement were models for the Nazis, whose radical adaptation of eugenics culminated in the Holocaust.

# Lesson to learn from Juba talks

Six months ago peace talks in Juba were the best opportunity in over a decade to end the war.

However, while this potential remains true, events of the last months have sparked skepticism. All parties - the Government, LRA and the international community - have, by their obstinacy, obstructed the progress of negotiations.

At the current stalemate, the parties remain blind to their interests in a politics of peace: a blindness whose legacy will only be more blood and bad faith.

The Juba process has been hailed as historic for good reason. Government efforts to end the war militarily have never provided security, and have not allowed for the social and political roots of the conflict to be addressed.

In Juba, the confluence of a strategic third-party mediator, international pressures on both parties, and Kampala's newfound flexibility gave the talks serious potential to succeed.

The breakthrough Cessation of Hostilities (CoH) Agreement, negotiated in August and renewed in November has brought relative calm to northern Uganda, allowing more than 300,000 displaced persons to return home. The CoH expired in February.

Hundreds of thousands more have left the "protected camps" for decongestion camps: an important step on the road to return. This progress underlines the high stakes of ensuring the peace talks succeed.

President Museveni and the Government have received much praise for their openness to these negotiations, especially

given pressures from the International Criminal Court (ICC) and its supporters. This is deserved, however this acclaim may be averting scrutiny of recent decisions made by Kampala.

Security officials monitoring Cessation of Hostility Agreement in southern Sudan have accused both the UPDF and the LRA for violating the CoH Agreement. This comes after the CoH Monitoring Team reported that, on November 30, a UPDF helicopter dropped bombs near Opari, which is very close to Owinji-ki-bul.

These violations not only perpetuate mistrust between the parties; they also call into question the commitment of the parties to fully seeking a peaceful resolution.

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***while most commentators agree that Juba is the right venue for these talks, flexibility is needed to build LRA confidence***

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Moreover, while most commentators agree that Juba is the right venue for these talks, flexibility is needed to build LRA confidence.

Therefore, the Ugandan government should not completely dismiss LRA concerns as irrational. Instead, the Government could provide space to reassess and renegotiate the technical details for talks.

Too much rigidity from Kampala gives people the sense that the Government's commitment to their peace is partial itself.

Finally, claims by the UPDF that

northern Uganda will be secure regardless of what takes place in Juba does not sound well.

While the LRA may not be able to return to Uganda en force, people still lack faith in the ability and will of the UPDF to provide security for their return home. Government's "responsibility to protect" means a responsibility to fully and flexibly engage the peace talks, if for nothing more than to win the trust of the suffering people so they can then return home.

The displacement nightmare increasingly undermines Uganda's international reputation, and will be an impediment to a successful CHOGM meeting in November.

LRA intransigence and political maneuvering have also presented significant obstacles to

the process. First, it has become increasingly clear that the LRA is far from a united body. Divisions between the High Command, negotiating team, and external wing are undermining the LRA's ability to present a coherent, and even consistent, political agenda.

In addition, security officials have alleged that LRA rebels committed several of the recent attacks on civilians near Juba, violating the CoH Agreement. But other report said it was the act of Sudanese militia.

Given increasing international scrutiny and mounting pressure

on the ICC to deliver arrests, the LRA is foolish to abandon this opportunity, which may likely be their last, to secure a peaceful end to the war.

The waning confidence and growing hostility of the parties has put the mediator in a nearly impossible situation. However, current intractability of the situation can also be blamed on the international community, which has retained a largely passive position.

The current impasse highlights the critical need for external confidence-building, inducements, sanctions and technical assistance to rejuvenate the peace process.

Among other actions, the international community could strengthen the CoH Monitoring Team, inject accountability into the process, assist the mediator, sanction "spoilers" in the LRA external wing, and bolster security for the displaced.

Generic statements from the diplomatic community do not go far enough; only serious action will bring regional stability in not only Uganda, but also Sudan and DR Congo.

Six months after the outbreak of optimism around these talks, a return to open conflict may loom near.

A failed Juba process will leave all parties to face a legacy of disappointment and devastation.

Yet, our hope still resides in the parties realizing that their self-interests lie in peace. Unfortunately, the people of northern Uganda, caught between these fires, have been waiting for that realization for now twenty-one years.



# HIV/AIDS drugs & the victims in the camps

Camp life might be squalid and cramped, but the camps and nearby towns in this desperately poor region offer greater access to health facilities, which is crucial to the success of intense drug regimes like antiretroviral (ARV) therapy.

If currently stalled peace talks to end 20 years of fighting between rebels and the government in northern Uganda succeed, 1.2 million displaced people will be on their way home; good news for those desperate to rebuild their lives, but a new challenge for the authorities struggling to provide treatment to those living with HIV.

Joy Akello, 27, is HIV-positive. She cares for her one-year-old child, also infected, in Gulu district's Lalogi camp. "At the moment I live a five-minute walk from the health centre," she said. "I can get treatment when I fall ill, but my village is a two-hour walk and then a truck ride ... I need to go back, but I need the drugs."

Report by the IRIN indicated that HIV prevalence in north-central Uganda (Apac, Gulu, Kitgum, Lira and Pader districts) averages about 8.2 percent, compared to 6.7 percent nationally.

The government has not come up with a post-war plan to devolve health services to the rural north once the camps start emptying, to the concern of health workers.

Robert Ochola, coordinator of HIV/AIDS activities at St Joseph's mission hospital in Kitgum district, which provides ARVs to most residents

who need them in Kitgum town and the surrounding camps, said the general consensus among nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) and the government was that services would increasingly be made available at sub-county level, giving rural populations improved access.

"When the [security] situation subsides we hope to ... [extend services to] community-based organisations and sub-county health centres," he told IRIN/PlusNews.

"So far, we have failed to reach populations far outside the camps and towns because of the war."

Displaced people in the region are receiving the life-prolonging drugs via large hospitals in major towns and a few clinics in camps.

An estimated 1,700 people are enrolled in the ARV programme at St Mary's Hospital in Lacor, Gulu's biggest medical facility.

Kimera Mutebi, manager of the Gulu office of The AIDS Support Organisation, one of the oldest HIV NGOs in Uganda, said that they were supplying ARVs to 1,500 HIV-positive people and were preparing for the eventuality that their patients would move away from Gulu.

"When the war ends we know they will be scattered all over the north. We have planned for community AIDS support agents, along with expert clients and local nurses, to be trained in distributing ARVs to people in their homes and local clinics," he added.

"Our field officers will also go to central places in the region, where they can provide the drugs."

Patrick Onen, one of a group of people living with HIV in Kitgum's Akwang camp, agreed that bringing HIV services closer to patients was key, but said there were wider considerations.

"Sometimes people get so weak ... [that they] can't even make it to the sub-county centre, so provisions should be made for transportation," he suggested.

"Maybe they could have a phone helpline in parishes, so people who need the drugs delivered can have them, or bicycles could be provided for them to reach the centres."

Although the camps have made it easier to provide access to healthcare, the scarcity of skilled staff has raised questions over the feasibility of decentralised services.

## Need to improve existing services

A 'health centre four' (HC-IV) - a large, county-level facility - is located at Lalogi camp and serves about 100,000 people in 14 camps.

"They [the HC-IVs] are not really operational; we really lack manpower. You go and you find only one health worker," said John Luwa, the Gulu district health focal point.

"Sometimes beneficiaries will go and they won't even find one."

The problem is one of pay and working conditions. "They [health workers] are overwhelmed and overworked, there isn't accommodation; that is a major factor and our priority."

According to clinical officer Bernard Odong, Lalogi camp's HC-IV has only 17 out of 44 positions filled. "As it is, we share a room between three people.

We are away from our families and can barely afford to travel home when we have leave."

At St Joseph's, Ochola said a great deal of training would be necessary before HIV prevention and treatment initiatives could reach areas as remote as the Uganda-Sudan border, where few healthcare workers have so far dared to go.

Speaking to IRIN/PlusNews, Ugandan health minister Dr Stephen Malinga acknowledged that "health workers are not as well paid as [others] - these people are running away ... so I think salary increases will be in the pipeline."

Peace talks between the Lord's Resistance Army and government began in July 2006 but have hit trouble, with both sides accusing each other of violating a truce agreement.

Should negotiations resume, the government would be under increased pressure to prepare for the displaced to return home, and the expansion of services in the neglected north.

# ICC names Sudan minister Dafur war crime suspect

In naming Ahmed Haroun, a government Minister, as a war crimes suspect the ICC has transformed a long-running disagreement with Khartoum into a head-on collision. For four years the Sudanese government has denied backing the Janjaweed militia.

But the message from ICC prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo is clear. He has evidence that Darfur's worst atrocities were orchestrated by the Sudanese government through Mr Haroun and not the actions of rogue Arab militia.

As the Minister responsible for the Darfur portfolio in 2003 and 2004 Mr Haroun was regularly in Darfur. According to the ICC he was recruiting, funding and personally arming the Arab Janjaweed militia and encouraging them to target civilians.

The ICC says that during a

public meeting in 2003, Mr Haroun said that as part of his job he had been given "all the power and authority to kill or forgive whoever in Darfur for the sake of peace and security."

'Colonel of colonels' Ahmad Haroun is still a minister in the Sudanese government.

As minister of state at the Ministry of humanitarian affairs Mr Haroun is now part of a department that is supposed to help Darfur's two million war displaced. Luis Moreno Ocampo's report is the result of 21 months of research

The other man named is Darfur militia leader Ali Kushayb. ICC said, at the peak of his powers, Ali Kushayb was one of the most powerful of Darfur's commanders.

Mr Kushayb commanded thousands of men in mid-2003. According to the ICC,

Mr Kushayb ordered his men to mass rape, kill and torture the local population.

Under its terms of reference the ICC can only step in when a country's judicial system has proved unwilling or incapable of putting people on trial.

Mr Kushayb is thought to already be in the custody of the Sudanese government for attacks committed in Darfur but Mr Moreno-Ocampo said his evidence related to different incidents.

'One-sided,' Despite numerous reports of human rights abuses committed by Darfur's rebel movements none of their leaders were named by Mr Moreno-Ocampo.

For the Sudanese government that will be seen as further confirmation of the one-sided attitude that they believe the international

community has taken to the conflict.

Sudan's president regularly complains that rebel ceasefire violations are not condemned with the same severity as government attacks.

There is little prospect of either Ahmad Haroun or Ali Kushayb appearing in court soon. Sudan has always maintained that its own courts are capable of trying Darfur's war criminals.

"We would never accept that any Sudanese national stand trial outside the national legal framework," Justice Minister Ali al-Mardi said, "even if he was among those who took up arms and fought against the government."

Mr al-Mardi dismissed the allegations against his fellow minister. He said that Mr Haroun had been in charge of the police service and had never handed out money or weapons to the militia in Darfur.

New approach In recent weeks, the African Union and the United Nations had taken an increasingly conciliatory stance towards Sudan.

Special envoys visited and, despite evidence of continued government bombing, praised Khartoum's expressed commitment to a negotiated not a military settlement.

Being positive was all part of a new effort to re-energise the peace process and try and achieve a new ceasefire on the ground.

But that may count for little now. By linking the government directly to Darfur's worst atrocities, ICC prosecutors may have finally shattered Sudan's fragile relationship with the international community.

Aid agencies and UN operations are already assessing what Mr Moreno-Ocampo's words mean for their safety of their operations.



President of Sudan Omar El-Bashir Inspects Guard of Honour. ICC has named his minister as dafur War Crime Suspect

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