

# Chronology

## Pre-colonial period

Luo-speaking peoples enter the territory of contemporary Uganda from southeastern Sudan in the late fifteenth to early sixteenth century, reportedly conquering local people and setting up a series of new dynasties, of which the western kingdom of Bunyoro is the largest. By the mid-seventeenth century, Bunyoro suffers disastrous military defeats after efforts to expand. Buganda uses this opportunity to extend its borders westwards from its stronghold on the northwest corner of Lake Victoria, doubling its size and starting to emerge as the dominant kingdom in the region. By the mid-nineteenth century, Buganda and Bunyoro are the most powerful of the Bantu kingdoms in the Great Lakes region and are well positioned to trade with Arab travellers' trading initiatives. European expeditions arrive in search of the source of the Nile in the early 1860s, marking the beginning of contact that increases first with missionary activities in the following decades and, in 1890, with the formation of the Imperial British East Africa Company. In the last decades of the century, conflict between followers of Islam and Christianity – and Catholic versus Protestant – for predominance intensify, while the Buganda and Bunyoro kingdoms are continually at war.

## The colonial period, 1894-1962

A British Protectorate over Uganda is formally declared in 1894. An indirect rule policy enables the kingdoms to retain some of their institutional structure, though British manipulation eventually weakens their legitimacy. Britain gives Buganda a privileged status under a treaty in 1900, resulting in unequal development of the regions and considerable resentment towards Buganda in the period leading up to independence. Cultural differences between the northern and eastern peoples versus the southern and western peoples, exacerbated by colonial policies, make it difficult to foster a sense of unified Ugandan nationalism. When political parties begin to emerge in the 1940s, they are differentiated primarily by religion rather than ethnicity or political ideologies and most are as concerned with maintaining privilege as with achieving independence. In 1960 Buganda declares unilateral independence. Although this declaration is ignored, Milton Obote – leader of the Uganda People's Congress – seeks an alliance with the Buganda-based Kabaka Yekka or 'King alone' party. The Democratic Party – which draws its support from the Catholic population – wins the most seats in the 1961 Legislative Council elections amid a boycott by most of the Buganda population. Yet the UPC/KY alliance is able to form the government on 9th October 1962 and Milton Obote becomes the first prime minister of a newly independent country.

## Post-independence period, 1962-1970

As a part of the alliance agreement, in 1963 Kabaka Mutesa II (the Bugandan king) becomes President. In 1964 Milton Obote accedes to the demands of mutineers in the army, possibly weakening the position of civilian government. Later that year a section of the army led by Idi Amin Dada supports a Simba uprising in what is now the Democratic Republic of Congo (Zaire). In 1966, a dispute between Obote and Mutesa II over the constitutional status of Buganda results in Baganda people ordering the central government out of the capital city of Kampala, which is in Buganda territory. Following clashes with the army at the palace, Mutesa II escapes into exile. In 1967, Obote pushes through a constitution abolishing the monarchy and declaring Uganda a Republic. In 1969, Obote announces an ideological 'Move to the Left' that antagonises much of the military, administrative and political leadership of Uganda – as well as the British government, worried that their continued influence in the country will be undermined. Obote also continues to promote a pan-Africanist, non-aligned, and pro-Arab foreign policy.

## The Idi Amin years, 1971-79

### 1971

In January tensions between Maj. Gen. Idi Amin Dada and Obote escalate. While Obote is at a Commonwealth conference in Singapore, Amin deposes him in a bloody coup d'état. Obote is given asylum in Tanzania. Amin launches a purge of the army. Thousands of Acholi and Langi soldiers and officers are massacred. Some sectors welcome the overthrow of the Obote government, particularly in Buganda, but enthusiasm is short-lived.

### 1972

Ugandan exiles invade Uganda from Tanzania in September. The incursion is repulsed by the Uganda Army, which inflicts heavy losses on the insurgent forces. Gen. Amin responds with further arrests, torture, and killings of soldiers and intelligentsia. Security forces abduct and murder the leader of the Democratic Party and Chief Justice Benedicto Kiwanuku. Gen. Amin declares an 'economic war' based on ideas of 'Africanisation' or 'Ugandanisation', and orders non-citizen Asians (and later even those with citizenship) to leave the country. Tanzania and Uganda sign an agreement in Mogadishu, Somalia, to cease mutual hostilities and to deny the use of Tanzanian soil by Ugandan exiles for aggression against Uganda.

### 1973

Security forces execute scores of Ugandans (accused of being guerrilla infiltrators) in their hometowns throughout the country. Yoweri Museveni establishes the Front for National Salvation (FRONASA), a guerrilla movement, to fight the Amin regime.

### 1974

Internal discontent grows among the ranks of the Ugandan Army. Troops loyal to Amin suppress a revolt under Brig. Charles Arube. He and Michael Ondoga, a former Minister of Foreign Affairs, are murdered.

### 1976

Britain severs diplomatic ties with Uganda.

### 1977

The killings of Archbishop Janani Luwum and three cabinet ministers on February 17 mark the climax of Amin's bloody repression. In September Amin publicly executes people accused of plotting against his government.

### 1978

Relations between Tanzania and Uganda deteriorate. Ugandan invades and annexes Kagera region of Tanzania. Tanzania launches a counter offensive.

## The UNLA years, 1979-85

### 1979

The Tanzanian People's Defence Forces (TPDF) and armed groups of Ugandan exiles – Kikosi Maalum and FRONASA – inflict successive defeats upon the invading Ugandan army and pursue them deep into Ugandan territory. In March, Ugandan opposition groups hastily convene a Unity Conference in Moshi, Tanzania and form the Uganda National Liberation Front / Army (UNLF/ UNLA) Yusuf Lule is elected Chairman. In April, TDPF and Ugandan exiles topple Amin and install a Unity Government with Lule as President. Later, the National Consultative Council (NCC) of the UNLF relieves President Lule of his duties in June, citing incompetence and ethnic nationalism. Godfrey Binaisa, former Attorney General, takes over as President.

### 1980

#### May

President Binaisa retires UNLA chief of staff Lt. Col. David Oyite Ojok from the army and posts him to Libya. The UNLF Military Commission, led by Paulo Muwanga, rejects the decision and deposes Binaisa. On 27 May, former President Milton Obote returns to Uganda.

## June

Yoweri Museveni, Vice Chairman of the Military Commission, founds a new political party, the Uganda Patriotic Movement (UPM) to contest the December elections.

## October

Former Uganda Army exiles loyal to Amin raid UNLA positions in West Nile.

## December

General elections are held. The UPC is declared the winner, with Milton Obote as President and Muwanga as Vice President with allegations of widespread irregularities. The Democratic Party (DP) contests the result but takes its place in parliament as the opposition. Museveni claims that the results were rigged and opts to wage a guerrilla war to reverse the outcome of the elections.

## 1981

UNLA forces in West Nile come under increased pressure from the Uganda National Rescue Front (UNRF). Museveni's Popular Revolutionary Army (PRA) attack the UNLA training school in Kabamba in February, marking the beginning of their insurgency against Obote's government.

## June

The last remaining Tanzanian troops are withdrawn. The security situation in Luwero and West Nile deteriorates.

## 1982

Armed opposition groups, Uganda Freedom Movement (UFM), National Rescue Front (UNRF) and National Resistance Movement (NRM) unite as the Uganda Popular Front (UPF) and attack government installations in and around Kampala.

## March

The NRM/A establishes de facto control over a large area of the 'Luwero triangle'. Obote asks the International Committee of the Red Cross to leave Uganda after its reports of civilian massacres. All foreign journalists are ordered out of the country.

## July

The UNLA launches massive cordon and search operations against NRM/A in Luwero District and civilians are cordoned into camps in areas under government control.

## September

Rwandan refugees come under attack in Ankole for their perceived support of the NRA and approximately 80,000 are evicted from their homes.

## 1983

## December

Army Chief of Staff, Maj. Gen. Oyite Ojok and several senior army officers die in a helicopter accident when visiting the UNLA frontline.

## 1984

## March

UNLA operations force 20,000 civilians to flee Karamoja. NRA attacks on government and public transport vehicles on the Northern Highway intensify.

## August

President Obote controversially appoints Brigadier Smith Opon Acak as the new Army Chief of Staff, drawing protest and creating divisions among senior army officers. The US State Department claims that up to 200,000 have been killed through the war in Luwero blaming the government for a 'scorched earth' policy.

## 1985

## July

The UNLA Northern Brigade under the command of Brig. Baizilio Olara Okello overthrows Milton Obote on 27 July. Lt. General Tito Okello Lutwa is sworn in as Head of State. They invite Museveni and other fighting groups to join a government of national unity. FUNA, UFM, FEDEMU and UNRF join the Military Council. The NRM refuses to do so, demanding special recognition and concessions.

## August - December

Peace talks between the Okello government and the NRM commence in Nairobi chaired by Kenyan President Daniel Arap Moi. On 17 December they sign a peace agreement in Nairobi. Weeks later the NRM withdraws from the agreement and intensifies its military campaign against the Okello government.

## Museveni and the National Resistance Movement

### 1986

#### January

On 25 January, the NRM/A overthrows the Military Council. Yoweri Museveni is sworn in as President two days later and unveils the 'Ten Point Programme' as the new government's principle governance and policy framework. Many 'northerners' are lynched in Kampala and other parts of the south.

#### March

The Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) attacks Acholi refugees in southern Sudan.

#### April

The NRA establishes control over the whole country.

#### May

The NRM/A directs all ex-UNLA soldiers to surrender and report to Army posts.

#### July

The defeated ex-UNLA establish the Uganda People's Democratic Army / Movement (UPDA/M).

#### August

NRA / FEDEMU / UFM execute scores of civilians at Namokora, Akilok, Oryang and Padibe.

#### September

Alice Auma 'Lakwena' forms the Holy Spirit Mobile Force (HSMF) to oppose the government.

#### October

Mistrust of the NRM/A and the SPLA is widespread in Acholi and support for the resistance fighters is strengthened. In late October, elder Tiberio Okeny Atwoma leads the Good Will Peace Mission into the bush of Acholi and Sudan to initiate peace talks with the UPDM/A.

#### November

On 3 November, the Good Will Peace Mission makes contact with the UPDA. The team proceeds to southern Sudan to meet UPDA top commanders. The Peace Mission and UPDM/A issue a joint communiqué declaring willingness to negotiate and accept a comprehensive amnesty.

#### December

The HSMF attacks NRA positions, winning several major battles.

### 1987

#### January

A combined UPDA/HSMF force attacks the NRA in a fierce battle at Corner Kilak in southern Kitgum. The 4-day battle results in over 1,600 HSMF/UPDA deaths and over 200 NRA dead. Around 1,000 UPDA fighters surrender.

#### January – April

Joseph Kony forms the core of his fighting group aligned within the HSMF movement.

#### February

The Peace Mission returns to Uganda and recommends negotiation with the UPDA fighters but not its political wing, the UPDM. Insurgency begins in Teso.

#### May

The government introduces amnesty laws in response to the Peace Mission's reports.

#### July

The NRA executes 97 civilians at Kona Kilak.

#### August

'Karamojong' cattle raiders sweep through Kitgum and eastern Gulu looting most of the region's livestock, estimated at over 300,000, and in the process effectively destroy the economic base of Acholi society. Many Acholi perceive NRA complicity in the raids.

#### November

The NRA defeats the HSMF in Jinja, halting their march on the capital. Alice Lakwena flees to Kenya and remnants of her followers return to northern Uganda. Museveni gives the go-ahead for his brother, Maj. Gen. Salim Saleh, to talk to the UPDA.

## End of UPDA war as LRA emerges

### 1988

The United Holy Salvation Army, led by Joseph Kony, arises out of the collapsed Holy Spirit Movement.

#### March

On 17 March 1988, an NRA delegation led by Salim Saleh and a UPDA delegation meet in Gulu and agree a ceasefire. This paves the way for the first peace negotiations.

## April

On 9 April, the UPDA presents a memorandum to President Museveni, who in response promulgates a Presidential Pardon to succeed the lapsed amnesty laws. Acholi communities in Kampala, Jinja and Entebbe meet and support the peace process but urge inclusion of all factions – including the HSM and UPDM external wing. In mid-April, members of HSM and NRA meet to explore common ground for peace. Talks collapse when NRA mobile forces attack Kony before talks begin. On 30 April the LRA attacks government positions at Bibia, after which there are no direct negotiations for years. Fighters in Teso District take advantage of the Presidential Pardon to end their insurgency.

## June

On 3 June, UPDA/M and NRM/A sign a peace accord in Gulu. The external wing, based in London and Nairobi, who were excluded from the negotiations, reject the agreement. The NRA steps up military operations in Acholi to crush the insurgency. The NRA at Koch Goma executes 40 civilians.

## 1989

### April

Joseph Kony's forces intensify operations. Government troops order thousands of Acholi out of their villages into camps. The NRA at Purongo executes 30 civilians.

## 1990

### February

The NRA launches a major offensive against armed groups in Teso and rounds up thousands of civilians into camps.

### July

On 14 July the NRM/A and UPDM political wing sign the Addis Agreement and exiled UPDM leader, Otema Allimadi, returns to Uganda.

## 1991

### March

On 31 March, NRA Maj. Gen. David Tinyefuza launches, 'Operation North', against Joseph Kony's army, now renamed the United Democratic Christian Movement /Army (UDCM/A).

### April - August

The northern districts of Apac, Lira, Gulu and Kitgum are sealed off and a 'media blackout' is imposed. The NRA allegedly commits human rights violations, including extra-judicial killings. 18 prominent politicians and local leaders from Acholi and Lango are detained. Reprisals against civilians by the LRA escalate, including killings, abductions and mutilation.

## Movement towards peace

## 1992

### July

The government announces the creation of the Northern Uganda Rehabilitation Programme (NURP). A similar scheme is announced for Teso, where a peace process based on cooperation with the civilian population and a presidential commission ends the conflict.

### August

Kony's UDCM/A is re-named the Lord's Resistance Movement/Army.

## 1993

### February

Pope John Paul II visits Gulu, speaks out against atrocities and calls for a resolution to the conflict.

### March

The Constitutional Commission endorses a Draft Constitution, which would prohibit political parties for another seven years. The DP and UPC oppose the draft. Insurgency in Teso district ends.

### August

Minister for the North, Betty Bigombe initiates contacts with the LRM/A.

### November

On 25 November a government delegation led by Bigombe meets with LRM/A representatives for face-to-face talks.

## Expansion of the war

## 1994

### January

After several meetings and protracted negotiations, the LRA and NRA fail to reach agreement and the Bigombe initiative appears on the verge of collapse.

### February

On 6 February, Museveni gives the LRA seven days to surrender or face military onslaught. The LRM/A retreats into southern Sudan, where they establish camps and receive military support from the Sudanese government. The LRA launches attacks in Acholi and plants landmines on roads and footpaths.

### March

Elections to the Constitutional Assembly (CA) are held.

## November

Ex-President Gen. Tito Okello Lutwa returns from exile.

## 1995

### April

Violence escalates throughout Acholi as the LRA steps up its operations. A massacre by the LRA of more than 200 people in Atyak triggers the severing of diplomatic relations between Uganda and Sudan.

### June

The CA endorses a 'no-party' political system. Deputy Prime Minister and long-time DP leader, Paul Ssemwogerere, resigns and announces his intention to contest presidential elections.

### August

The LRA invades Kitgum and abduction of children intensifies. Government helicopter gun-ships kill rebels and their captives on the way to southern Sudan.

### October

The new Constitution takes effect and the NRA is re-named as the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF). The UPDF and the SPLA conduct a joint offensive against the LRA in southern Sudan lasting until early 1996, overrunning their camps and capturing hundreds of LRA fighters.

## 1996

The security situation in Acholi worsens and civilian targets are attacked by the LRA. The attacks occur on an almost daily basis and whole villages burned.

### March

Rwot Achana leads a delegation of Acholi chiefs and elders to Rwakitura to ask Museveni to adopt a peaceful approach to ending the conflict, and to allow a delegation to establish contact with the LRA. The LRA declares a unilateral ceasefire to allow people to vote for the Inter-Political Forces Coalition opposition led by Paul Ssemwogerere.

### May

Acholi overwhelmingly vote for Ssemwogerere in the Presidential elections won by Museveni. Soon after the elections, Museveni announces his determination to defeat the LRA militarily and appoints Gen. Salim Saleh to take charge of operations in Acholi.

### June

On a government approved peace mission to the LRA, Acholi Elders Okot Ogoni and Olanya Lagony, are murdered by the LRA.

## July

The Acholinet internet discussion group starts out of York University in Toronto Canada, to link the diaspora and homeland in discussions to forge a consensus for a peaceful settlement of the conflict.

## September

Col Kazini, the Division Commander in Gulu, incites a mob to lynch several suspected rebels in military custody.

## October

The LRA abducts 139 girls from St Mary's College Aboke in Lango. Sister Rachele Fassero follows the rebels into the bush and secures the release of all but 37 of the girls. Parents of the abducted girls form the Concerned Parents Association (CPA) and mount an international campaign for their release.

## November

The government institutes its policy of relocating the people of Gulu into 'protected villages'. Food, sanitation, health and education facilities are inadequate for those displaced into the camps. The UPDF allegedly uses violence to force the unwilling into the camps.

## Acholi peacemaking as war continues

## 1997

### January

The LRA massacres 400 villagers in Lamwo County, Kitgum District. The Parliamentary Sessional Committee on Defence and Foreign Affairs recommends the government continue to use military means to end the conflict. A Minority Report presents the opposite view claiming to reflect the majority view of Ugandans.

### April

Acholi living abroad and in the homeland meet at the first large gathering of Acholi in a 'Kacoke Madit' (KM) in London. KM highlights the human rights and humanitarian situation of the conflict in northern Uganda. It also brings LRM/A and government representatives face-to-face, where both sides are implored to seek a speedy and peaceful resolution of the conflict.

### June

Sister Rachele Fassera and members of the CPA meet with LRA Commanders in Juba. Although the LRA initially deny holding the Aboke girls, they later offer to release them through the ICRC in return for a government ceasefire. When the government of Uganda refuses, the LRA blame them for the breakdown in talks and hold them responsible for anything that might happen to the girls.

## August

Acholi religious leaders hold an inter-faith prayer for peace in Kitgum.

## November/December

After the KM conference, the Nairobi-based political representative of the LRM/A writes to the government proposing talks. With the mediation of the Community of Sant'Egidio Italy, the LRA meets a Ugandan delegation led by a Minister of Foreign Affairs in Rome in December 1997. The government makes the next round of talks conditional on participation by an LRA field commander but disputes within the LRA over its political representation lead to a collapse of the initiative. Museveni later dismisses negotiations with the LRA. The UPDF and SPLA launch another joint offensive inside Sudan, forcing the LRA to move its camp further north.

## 1998

### February

Muslim, Catholic and Anglican Church leaders in Acholi form the Acholi Religious Leaders' Peace Initiative (ARLPI).

### June

UNICEF estimates that 10,000 children have been abducted by the LRA.

### July

The second Kacoke Madit (KM) takes place in London. The LRA does not attend. The KM reiterates the Acholi consensus for peace and calls on the parties to the conflict to make an unambiguous commitment to a peaceful settlement, to declare a ceasefire and to accept international third party mediation. A Ministerial Mission tours war-torn southwestern and northern Uganda where the public endorses the need for a general amnesty and negotiated settlement to the conflict. US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright visits Gulu and offers US support to the Ugandan government in its conflict with Sudan.

## 1999

After several attacks in early 1999, most of the LRA return to Sudan and for nearly ten months the fighting in Gulu and Kitgum ceases. The UPDF attempts to seal the border with Sudan and many civilians start to return to their homes from the 'protected villages'.

### May

Over 8,000 people demonstrate in Gulu against Maj. Ronald Kakooza Mutale, Presidential Advisor on Political Affairs and head of a paramilitary Civil Defence Unit, for calling district leaders rebel collaborators.

## August

With the mediation of The Carter Center, the governments of Uganda and Sudan start negotiations to normalise relations and end the conflict. The LRA and the SPLA are excluded from the talks.

## September

Acholi Religious Leaders' Peace Initiative and the development agency ACORD. convene a conference on the 'Peace Research & the Reconciliation Agenda' in Gulu.

## December

Parliament passes the Amnesty Bill raising hopes of a return to peace. The Carter Centre process culminates in a Nairobi summit meeting, where the Ugandan and Sudanese governments sign the Nairobi Peace Accord on the 8 December. Shortly afterwards, the LRA attacks Gulu town and hopes for peace are undermined.

## 2000

Insecurity persists in Acholi and approximately 400,000 people – approximately half the population – remain in the 'protected villages' where they come under repeated attack by LRA fighters.

## January

LRA fighters raid Kitgum and Gulu. The first implementation meeting of the Nairobi Accord takes place in Nairobi.

## February

The Carter Center representatives meet with Kony and LRA leaders in Nsitu, Sudan. KM and Acholi civil society representatives make presentations to the negotiating parties through The Carter Center calling for an inclusive peace dialogue.

## March

A second Nairobi Agreement implementation meeting is held in Nairobi.

## July

The governments of Uganda and Sudan meet in Lomé. The outcome is the 'Lomé non-paper'. The Carter Center hosts a joint ministerial meeting in Atlanta on 18-19 July where the Atlanta Joint Action Plan for the Implementation of the Nairobi Agreement is drawn up.

## August

A meeting on children abducted by the LRA is held in New York and a 'Partners in Support of Abducted Children' coalition is proposed.

## September

Canada hosts the International Conference on War Affected Children in Winnipeg. An 'experts' meeting is held on northern Uganda abducted children. Uganda and Sudan sign a communiqué underlining their commitment to peace and the release of all abducted children. The foreign ministers of Sudan and Uganda attend a meeting convened by Egypt and Libya in Kampala on 26-27 September. It is announced that Sudan has agreed to move the LRA 1,000 miles north of the Ugandan border.

## October

The Carter Center convenes a ministerial implementation meeting of the governments of Uganda and Sudan in Khartoum on 6-7 October. Ebola breaks out in Gulu.

## November

A follow-up ministerial meeting is convened by the Carter Center in Nairobi. The third Kacoke Madit (KM2000) is relocated from Arusha, Tanzania to Nairobi, Kenya on 24 November. It is cut short by the Government of Kenya due to concerns over Ebola.

## December

ARLPI organises a mass demonstration and prayer for peace in Gulu.

## 2001

The period leading to the presidential elections in mid-March is comparatively calm in northern Uganda.

## March

Museveni wins a second Presidential term. The majority in northern Uganda vote overwhelmingly against him. Soon after, the LRA resume attacks against civilian targets. Sudan repatriates 62 abductees who escape from an LRA camp.

## April

The Amnesty Commission holds a two-day workshop attended by a cross-section of leaders from the Acholi districts, the central government, UPDF officers and religious leaders.

A UPDF Mobile Unit twice attacks religious leaders and elders who are meeting with LRA commanders to discuss the modalities for reporting under the amnesty. Military authorities blame the mishaps on miscommunication.

## June

The Carter Center hosts another implementation meeting in Nairobi on 3 June. On the 4 June, local LC 5 Chairman, Lt. Col Walter Ochora initiates peace dialogue with a group of LRA fighters. A 'demilitarised zone' is declared by government of Uganda to facilitate movement of LRA as a confidence-building measure.

## July

ARLPI holds a three-day consultative meeting of religious leaders from northern Uganda and Sudan, under the theme "Standing together for Peace". They ask the Ugandan government to dismantle the 'protected villages' in Acholi.

## August

The LRA indicates in a letter that the ceasefire effectively in place since the beginning of June is coming to an end.

## September

Sudan re-opens its Embassy in Kampala after a six-year break in diplomatic relations with Uganda. Soon after Uganda sends a Chargé d'Affaires to Khartoum.

## November

A Nairobi Agreement implementation meeting is convened by The Carter Center in Nairobi where a letter to Kony is written inviting him to participate in the dialogue.

## December

In a meeting with the Sudanese Chargé d'Affaires in Uganda, Museveni states that unless the government of Sudan relocates Kony's rebels to the north of Sudan, the displaced population from Acholi can not go back to their homes.

## 2002

### January

Museveni visits Sudan for the IGAD summit and meets President Bashir in a pre-summit meeting. Both pledge their support to the war on terrorism.

### February

LRA launch an armed attack on Agoro taking the Local Defence soldiers stationed in the protected village and trading centre by surprise. Three soldiers and two civilians are killed, and at least one hundred camp dwellers abducted. The trading centre is looted and the military barracks burnt down. The LRA later withdraw to Sudan.

### March

10,000 UPDF troops are mobilised and there are reports of incursions into Sudan and fierce battles between the army and LRA fighters.