

Getting to Peace? Negotiating with the LRA in Northern Uganda

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Abstract Getting to peace is not a straightforward process. In Uganda, internal conflict has raged for more than 20 years between the Government and the Lord's Resistance Army. The construction of a comprehensive negotiated settlement is at the mercy of conflicting ideologies and influences at the international, national and grassroots levels. This paper examines the Juba peace talks, the major actors in the negotiation process, and tension between prosecution and amnesty.

Keywords Peace · Conflict · Uganda government · Lord's resistance army

Background and History of Current Conflict

Uganda's modern history has been filled with conflict and violence, since it declared Independence from the British in 1962. The first term of the country's first Prime Minister, Milton Obote, was characterized by significant numbers of riots and armed attacks (Berg-Schlusser and Siegler 1990). Much of this violence was in protest of his consolidation of power throughout the country.

In 1971, Obote was overthrown by his army commander, General Idi Amin Dada. Amin seized power and began a reign of terror, systematically murdering and torturing those he considered to stand in his way (Wright 1996). He targeted those who were seen to have supported Obote, especially people of Acholi and Langi descent, many of whom had tended to dominate the military. In 1972, more than 70,000 Asians who living in Uganda were expelled, and their property and businesses confiscated. Throughout Amin's period in office, soldiers and police

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