

The Lord's Resistance Army

The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) is one of Africa's most notorious armed rebel groups, having operated across Uganda, South Sudan, Sudan, the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. When they entered the Juba Peace Talks with the Ugandan Government in 2006, the peace deal seemed like a gift to fighters who had for years barely been surviving in Central Africa's jungles. Yet the talks failed. Why? Based on exclusive interviews with LRA fighters and their notorious leader Joseph Kony, Mareike Schomerus provides insights into how the LRA experienced the Juba Talks, revealing developing dynamics and deep distrust within a conflict system and how these became entrenched through the peace negotiations. In so doing, Schomerus offers an explanation as to why current approaches to ending armed violence not only fail but how they actively contribute to their own failure, and calls for a new approach to contemporary peacemaking.

MAREIKE SCHOMERUS, PhD, is a researcher and commentator, as well as co-editor of volumes on African secessionism and the borderlands of South Sudan. Her recent work merges behavioural science with the qualitative study of violent conflict, political contestation and governance.

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-48592-0 — The Lord's Resistance Army
Mareike Schomerus
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

The Lord's Resistance Army

Violence and Peacemaking in Africa

Mareike Schomerus



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-48592-0 — The Lord's Resistance Army
Mareike Schomerus
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,
New Delhi – 110025, India
79 Anson Road, #06–04/06, Singapore 079906

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108485920
DOI: 10.1017/9781108662505

© Mareike Schomerus 2021

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2021

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Schomerus, Mareike, author.

Title: The Lord's Resistance Army : violence and peacemaking in Africa / Mareike Schomerus.

Other titles: Violence and peacemaking in Africa

Description: Cambridge ; New York, NY : Cambridge University Press, 2021. | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2020037934 (print) | LCCN 2020037935 (ebook) | ISBN 9781108485920 (hardback) | ISBN 9781108725354 (paperback) | ISBN 9781108662505 (epub)

Subjects: LCSH: Lord's Resistance Army. | Insurgency–Uganda. | Juba Peace Talks–History. | Peace-building–Africa–International cooperation. | Uganda–Politics and government–1979– | Civil war–Africa.

Classification: LCC DT433.285 .S43 2021 (print) | LCC DT433.285 (ebook) | DDC 967.6104/4–dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2020037934>

LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2020037935>

ISBN 978-1-108-48592-0 Hardback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Contents

<i>List of Figures</i>	page vi
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	vii
<i>Note on the Text</i>	viii
<i>List of Abbreviations and Acronyms</i>	ix
1 Introduction: Seeking Peace with the Lord's Resistance Army	1
2 The Lord's Resistance Army: A Continuum of War, Peace and Information	32
3 The Juba Peace Talks with the Lord's Resistance Army in 2006: 'While Talking, There Is Troop Movement'	70
4 'Am I an Animal?': Identity, Rules and Loss in the Lord's Resistance Army	111
5 The Juba Peace Talks with the Lord's Resistance Army in 2007: 'We Don't Know If We Can Trust'	136
6 'Reach Out a Hand and Pull It Back': The Lord's Resistance Army's 'Connect/Disconnect' Meets International Galvanic Surges	157
7 The Juba Peace Talks with the Lord's Resistance Army in 2008: 'Maybe We Came Too Close to the Enemy'	194
8 'LRA Has Already Become a System': Representation and Distrust in the Lord's Resistance Army	228
9 'We Are All Learning in This Peace Process': Peacemaking and the Legacy of the Juba Peace Talks with the Lord's Resistance Army	261
<i>References</i>	288
<i>Index</i>	312

Figures

1.1 Joseph Kony and his deputy Vincent Otti, June 2006	<i>page 3</i>
3.1 Vincent Otti and Dominic Ongwen, July 2007	79
3.2 Jan Egeland meets the LRA while journalists wait out of earshot, November 2006	100
3.3 A UN helicopter arrives in the village of Nabanga, November 2006	106
3.4 Map of areas of LRA movement. Redrawn by Cox Cartographic Ltd from Conciliation Resources	108
4.1 Vincent Otti draws the coat of arms of the Lord's Resistance Army	112
6.1 Vincent Otti presents himself for a press conference, September 2006	189
7.1 Joseph Kony and Okot Odhiambo, June 2006	195
7.2 Women demonstrating at the re-opening ceremony, January 2008	203
7.3 Dignitaries and delegates wait for the final signing ceremony, April 2008	207
7.4 David Nyekorach Matsanga resigns from the LRA/M delegation, April 2008	209

Acknowledgements

Many people have had a role in bringing this book to life. It lies in the complicated nature of writing about violent conflict that I will never be able to thank some of those people for what they have done. So rather than mentioning just a few by name, I would like you to know that if you played a part, I am grateful to you.

It is easier to publicly thank those who pushed the book over the finish line: thanks to my brother Hajo for great cover design. Thanks to two very kind and enthusiastic reviewers who might never know how much their words meant to me. And thanks to Maria Marsh and Daniel Brown at Cambridge University Press for their much-appreciated support.

Note on the Text

Most of the events described here took place before South Sudan became independent in 2011. Prior to independence, it was referred to as southern Sudan, which is reflected here.

The terms Lord's Resistance Army/Movement (LRA/M) are for ease of reading used as if they describe strictly organised entities – they do not. What they do represent is analysed in more detail in Chapter 8.

The text uses a mixture of anonymisation and attribution. This either reflects the type of permission given by the interviewee or whether a statement was given as a matter of public record or privately.

At times I use square brackets in direct quotations to clarify idiomatic expressions or figures of speech. All photos were taken by me.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AFRICOM	United States Africa Command, unified combatant command under the United States Department of Defense, created in 2007 by presidential order
Agenda 1	Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities between LRA and GoU, first signed in August 2006 and periodically renewed
Agenda 2	Agreement on Comprehensive Solutions
Agenda 3	Agreement on Justice and Accountability
Agenda 4	Agreement on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
Agenda 5	Agreement on a Permanent Ceasefire
APG	Acholi Parliamentary Group
AU	African Union
AURTF	African Union Regional Task Force, established to fight the LRA
CAR	Central African Republic
CHMT	Cessation of Hostilities Monitoring Team
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CoH	Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (Agenda 1)
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration
DPA	Department of Political Affairs (UN) now Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
ESO	External Security Organisation, Uganda's intelligence agency
EU	European Union
FADRC	Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo; DRC's army

x List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

FPA	Final Peace Agreement, the chapeau document to be signed by President Museveni and Joseph Kony to validate all previously signed Agenda items
GoS	Government of Sudan (Khartoum)
GoSS	Government of southern Sudan (Juba) between 2005 and 2011
GoU	Government of Uganda
HQ	Headquarters
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICG	International Crisis Group
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IOM	International Organization for Migration
JIF	Juba Initiative Fund, established by the UN to attract donors to contribute to the Juba Talks
LC	Local Council (administrative unit in Uganda)
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
LRM	Lord's Resistance Movement
MONUC	Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies en République démocratique du Congo; UN Mission in the DRC until 2010
MONUSCO	United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (follow-up to MONUC since 2010)
MP	Member of Parliament
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NCA	Norwegian Church Aid
NRA	National Resistance Army (original name for Uganda's army)
NRM	National Resistance Movement (Uganda's ruling party under President Museveni)
UNOCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OIF	Operation Iron Fist, conducted by the Ugandan army against the LRA in 2002
OLT	Operation Lightning Thunder, conducted against the LRA from December 2008 to March 2009, when it was renamed to Operation Rudia
RDC	Resident District Commissioner (Uganda)
SAF	Sudanese Armed Forces (army of the Khartoum government)

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

xi

SESG	Special Envoy of the Secretary-General (UN)
SPLA	Sudan People's Liberation Army
SPLM	Sudan People's Liberation Movement
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UN	United Nations
UNLA/F	Uganda National Liberation Army/Front
UNMIS	United Nations Mission in Sudan
UNRF II	Uganda National Rescue Front II
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNSG	United Nations Secretary-General
UPC	Uganda People's Congress; opposition party and party of former president Obote
UPDA	Uganda People's Democratic Army
UPDF	Uganda People's Defence Force (current name of Uganda's army)
US/USA	United States of America
VP	Vice President
WNBF	West Nile Bank Front

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-48592-0 — The Lord's Resistance Army
Mareike Schomerus
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)
