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## RAISING AWARENESS AND THE PROFILE OF THE WAR IN ACHOLI

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We are aware that countless overtures have been made to the Uganda Government and the Lords Resistance Army by peace loving Ugandans in and outside Uganda to bring the northern war to an end peacefully. This has obviously failed. Today we no longer hear much about the war, but this does not mean that people have stopped dying or that the war has ended, far from that, the war has actually become a way of life for people in Northern Uganda.

Our role now is to try and magnify the war and bring it to the attention of the international community so that wry can influence their governments, who should be able to bring pressure to bear on the government of Uganda to end the war peacefully for the sake of the rights of the Acholi.

In order to do this we must analyse the reasons for the continuation of this war which has been going on for over ten years now. Both the Lords Resistance Army and the Government of Uganda have their own versions for continuing with this war to the finish.

We will look at the government's version since they have the moral responsibility of bringing the war to a peaceful end.

I quote the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Uganda Hon. Eriya Kategaya from the Monitor newspaper of 30<sup>th</sup> November 1996, as he was being questioned oned by the Parliamentary Sessional Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs. "that Khartoum has a policy of forcefully spreading Islam to the entire and has made sure that Uganda does not succeed in its programme, but it is not the responsibility of government to spread Islam and if it was, then we would start spreading Christianity. And if we allow this policy of theirs to be implemented then I can assure you Uganda would be next on the menu".

If this reason had any basis at all, why after ten years is not an inch of Uganda that has been Islamised. It is this kind of reasoning that has duped the governments of Britain and America into giving the Uganda government moral and physical support, when the real reason for the war is annihilation of the Acholi as a tribe. This is because successive governments have felt threatened by so called Acholi militarism, which after all is non-existent. Uganda is and will always be a Christian dominated country. Nothing can change that.

Therefore by raising awareness we must try and convince the Governments of Europe and America that their support has been misplaced and we can that by going to the ordinary British or American people to explain our plight. For in these countries it is public opinion that controls

government actions and help shape their policies.

The following are the list of activities that could help us achieve this and raise the profile of the war to an international level.

1. In London we have a Speakers Corner in Hyde Park where about 300 people from different parts of the world go every Sunday to listen to a variety of speakers. One or two people could prepare a speech including in it events that have occurred over the week in Acholi, read it out, answer questions and hand out leaflets. Similar places could be found in the USA, Sweden, and Germany.
2. We could hold lectures in universities and colleges and hand them leaflets.
3. We could hold discussions in local radios in our own areas of residence.
4. We must keep in contact with our local area MPs informing them of what is happening, and also try to hand out leaflets from door to door.
5. Uganda has embassies all over Europe and America. We could hold posters in front of them every day explaining what is taking place in Acholi. This can be done on a rotational basis, one person per day. In London Trafalgar Square is a very strategic place, full of tourists whom we could give leaflets to giving contact number for further information.
6. Finally, we could hold mass demonstrations once a month on the same day all over Europe and America ending as a protest march at the various embassies of those countries on their policies in our country Uganda. This is bound to attract massive media attention and could get us into the international news of that day.

The most important thing is to keep up the momentum as long as the war is continuing. We must do everything possible to keep the ball rolling.

I must make it quite clear that I condemn both sides in the war, for the methods they have used to achieve their points. All we want is that the death, destruction and displacement of our people to stop immediately. Only by laying down arms and talking peace can we achieve this. There is now no need to apportion blame, because the situation has blown up beyond all proportions. All we need is a solution to the problem.

THANK YOU