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State Responsiveness to Public Security Needs: The Politics of Security Decision-Making

Uganda Country Study

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CSDG

CONFLICT, SECURITY & DEVELOPMENT GROUP

About this study

Security sector reform (SSR) has moved rapidly up the international aid agenda during the past decade. There is growing recognition that SSR is fundamentally a political activity and that, to be effective, external assistance must be carefully tailored to the political and institutional context in which it is being delivered.

This Uganda study was part of a comparative research project (which included Nigeria and Sri Lanka) which had two aims: firstly, to enhance understanding about who makes decisions about security, the factors which influence decision-making, and the consequences for the security of people; and secondly, to suggest ways of incorporating such knowledge more effectively into UK SSR programming.

The study was conducted by the Conflict, Security and Development Group at King's College London in collaboration with the Centre for Democracy and Development in Nigeria, the Social Scientists' Association in Sri Lanka, and the Centre for Basic Research in Uganda.

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CSDG worked closely on the Uganda study with the Centre for Basic Research (CBR) which is a research and training organization based in Kampala. Established in 1988, CBR is a centre of excellence on sustainable development issues. CBR conducts basic and applied research of social, economic and political significance to Uganda in particular and Africa in general, so as to influence policy, raise consciousness and improve quality of life.

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CSDG's **Governance and Security** programme is concerned with how international assistance in the security domain (notably the SSR agenda) can be better tailored to the political context and the needs of aid recipients.

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Abbreviations and acronyms

ADF	Allied Democratic Front
CLO	community liaison officer
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
ESO	External Security Organization
Fronasa	Front for National Salvation
GBP	British pound
GDP	gross domestic product
GSU	General Service Unit
IBEACo	Imperial British East Africa Company
ISO	Internal Security Organization
JATT	Joint Anti-Terrorism Taskforce
JLOS	Justice Law and Order Sector
KAP	Kalangala Action Plan
LARP	Logistics and Accounting Reform Programme
LC	local council
LDF	Local Defence Force
LDU	Local Defence Unit
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
MoD	Ministry of Defence
NCO	non-commissioned officer
NRA	National Resistance Army
NRM	National Resistance Movement
NRMO	National Resistance Movement Organization
NSC	National Security Council
PART	physical accessibility ratio of territory
PEAP	Poverty Eradication Action Plan
PGB	Presidential Guard Brigade
PIN	Popular Intelligence Network
PPU	Presidential Protection Unit

PSF	private security firm
PSU	Public Safety Unit
SPF	Security Policy Framework
SRB	State Research Bureau
SSR	security sector reform
UDES	Uganda Defence Efficiency Study
UGX	Ugandan shilling
UNLA	Uganda National Liberation Army
UNLF	Uganda National Liberation Front
UPDF	Uganda Peoples Defence Forces
UPF	Uganda Police Force
USD	United States dollar
VCCU	Violent Crime Crack Unit

Chapter 1
Introduction

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Aim of the study

This study examines security decision-making in the state domain in Uganda, and the factors that determine whether this process is responsive to the needs of different groups in society. The study is part of a broader comparative research project that includes case studies of Nigeria and Sri Lanka.[1] The overall aim of the project is to generate new insights into how decision-making works in different institutional and political contexts and to contribute to the development of donor strategies for supporting security sector reform (SSR) that are better attuned to the factors that affect state responsiveness in the security domain.

1.1.2 Framing the 'problem' of state responsiveness

For the purpose of this project, 'security' is defined in a broad sense to mean the state of affairs in which individuals and social groups are able to exercise their legitimate rights and freedoms in a safe environment.[2] We approach security through a public policy lens rather than as a concern of the security agencies and uniformed security services alone, as has traditionally been the case, and privilege a people-centred rather than a state-centred under-standing of security.

We take this approach because we are interested in what weight those who make decisions about security policy give to the different military and non-military threats facing the population, and how they choose between the coercive and non-coercive policy options available to the state to address these threats. In particular, we are interested in how decisions are influenced by different understandings of security, how different groups in society assert their 'demand' for security and whose interests are secured in the policy process.

The notion of responsiveness implies a relationship among those who make security policy, those who are tasked with implementing it (the 'providers' of security) and those who are, or should be, the beneficiaries of the services whose provision makes it possible to attain security. The nature of the relationship among these actors is key in determining how much

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1   This study is co-ordinated by the Conflict, Security and Development Group (CSDG) at King's College London. For further information on the larger project, see CSDG, 'State Responsiveness to Public Security Needs'.

2   Ibid.

leverage different social and political groups have to demand public services that will increase their security, and whether policymakers or the providers of security-generating services can be held accountable for omissions in their responsibilities. Analysis of how policymakers, providers of security-related services (both in the state and non-state domain) and different groups in society interact is therefore central to understanding state policy responsiveness.

Where the relationship among these three sets of actors is weak or conflictual, or indeed the state is, by acts of commission or omission, the *cause* of its population's insecurity, then it is also essential to understand how people cope with the security shortfall. While many studies highlight the existence of parallel formal and informal security structures, what is less clear is how these two levels are connected, and what happens to people who fall into the gap between the two. We therefore need to know more about why certain social groups are able to secure protection from the state, while others are excluded or prefer to rely on either informal sources of security or their own personal strategies to protect themselves.

The notion of *responsiveness* as we use it in this paper is therefore a measure of how those with security decision-making authority respond when a country's population or sections of it are confronted with security problems. Responsiveness is a function of the capacity of the citizenry to articulate their preferences, the capability of the state to process and respond to these preferences in a timely manner, the form and quality of the response, and whether it reflects an attempt by government to meet the demands of the diverse groups in society equitably.

There are three interrelated factors that may be seen to have a *direct* bearing on state responsiveness in the security domain: firstly, the inclination of political elites and policy-makers to adopt courses of action that address the specific needs and preferences of insecure groups; secondly, the institutional capability of the state to assess these needs, to devise appropriate policy responses and to implement this policy; and thirdly, the nature of relations that bind political elites and their populations, which ultimately have a bearing on whether the latter participate in decision-making and can hold decision-makers accountable when policy does not meet their needs.

These more *proximate* factors, however, only provide part of the picture when seeking to understand the factors that affect state responsiveness to security problems. There are important historical and structural factors that shape and condition state capacity to address security problems, making it necessary, we argue, to situate any assessment of state responsiveness in a broader context. In the case of Uganda, the stage of state-building in which the country finds itself, its level of sociopolitical cohesion and economic development, and the government's relationship with external actors all have a crucial bearing on the orientation and capacities of the state in the security domain.

1.1.3 Our key propositions

Amidst greater diversity, the three countries forming part of this comparative project share a number of broad characteristics relating to their stages of development, levels of socio-political cohesion and political stability. They are lower- to middle-income developing countries, are former British colonies that gained their independence in the past 60 years

and are currently facing serious internal civil conflicts. In all three cases, the state security apparatuses face serious challenges in responding effectively to the security needs of the population. These cases therefore provide fertile ground for a comparative analysis of security decision-making processes.

We examine three broad propositions:

■ Firstly, decision-making authority in the security domain is diffuse, forcing central authorities to accommodate competing sources of decision-making authority at different levels of the state structure and outside the state domain in order to implement security policy.

■ Secondly, different groups in society exercise their 'demand' for security more through informal relationships (class, kinship, and ethnic and other ties) rather than formal political processes and accountability mechanisms, which affects the state's ability to provide security as a public good.

■ Thirdly, the nature of the state's relationship with external actors (including donors, and regional and global powers) impacts on the political and policy environment for security decision-making, with consequences for the state's ability to maintain sovereignty over security matters and respond to the security needs of people.

1.2 Methodology

The research adopted a multi-method approach, combining desk-based and primary research. The methodology was qualitative in nature. In the first phase of the research, six micro-case studies were carried out, which examined specific decision-making events in the recent past. The aim was to provide a stronger empirical base on the micro-politics of security decision-making in Uganda in different institutional contexts, which could support the analysis contained in the broader country study. These case studies adopted a variety of methods, including secondary research, focus groups and key informant interviews.[3]

Selection of the micro-case studies was guided by a number of criteria. We sought case studies that would be representative of the diversity of security challenges facing Uganda, provide a perspective on how security decision-making works at different levels of the state system, and illustrate the ways in which state and non-state actors interact in decision-making processes. Case studies were also selected to explore how current patterns of decision-making have different consequences for the diverse groups that make up Ugandan society. In practice, we had to be flexible, because there are very few researchers working on security issues in Uganda. This meant that we started by identifying a small group of researchers with an interest in the project and then selected themes that matched as closely as possible their areas of knowledge and expertise.

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3   For a more detailed discussion, see ibid.

The themes examined and the case study dealing with each theme were the following:

1)   the oscillating government security policy positions towards Northern Uganda during 2002–05 (Kasaija & Ssenkumba, 'Carrot and Stick');

2)   the emergence of the Arrow Boys militia group in the Teso region in 2002 (Wadala, 'The Politics of Security Decision-Making in Uganda');

3)   the dynamics of forceful disarmament in the Karamoja region during 2004–06 (Muhereza, 'The Politics of Security Decision-Making in Uganda');

4)   the factors that led to the establishment of the Violent Crime Crack Unit (VCCU) in Kampala in 2002 (Ssenkumba, 'Decision-Making in the Provision of Public Security in an Urban Setting');

5)   donor influence over security decision-making (Hendrickson, 'Donor Influence on Security Decision-Making in Uganda'); and

6)   Parliament's oversight role during the military deployment in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) starting in the late 1990s.[4]

The research, particularly at case study level, was constrained by the extreme sensitivity of security issues in Uganda. This made it difficult to carry out field research in some cases, particularly in northern Uganda and the Karamoja region. In both regions, government security forces and agencies are active in addressing security threats. For this reason, it was not only dangerous to travel in many districts, but the case study authors were conscious that they needed to be cautious about asking too many questions about security. Furthermore, few of the decision-making 'events' that were examined have been carefully documented, reflecting not only the sensitivity of the issues, but the fact that security decision-making is by its nature often an ad hoc process. The lack of incentives to record and document decision-making is accentuated by the fact that – as we argue in this paper – security decision-making at the strategic, governmental level is largely centralized in the person of the president and a close group of associates.

1.3 Structure of the report

Section 2 examines the historical and structural factors that have shaped the Ugandan state's responsiveness to its population's security needs in the post-independence era. Section 3 identifies a number of socioeconomic and political factors that, it is argued, are crucial to understanding the challenges facing actors in the contemporary Ugandan state as they seek to discharge their public functions. The paper then summarizes briefly, in section 4, the key security challenges that currently face Uganda, and then provides an overview of the various statutory and non-statutory security forces that constitute the state's primary policy instrument for addressing security problems. Section 5 maps out Uganda's formal decision-making

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4   This case study was not completed due to the death of Prof. Dent Ocaya-Lakidi in July 2007.

machinery, and then – drawing upon the case study findings – identifies five key themes that we consider particularly helpful for understanding how decision-making works in practice today. In section 6, we return to our three propositions, to sum up the key findings of the study, before we, in section 7, consider the implications for external actors seeking to support reform processes in Uganda's security domain. We conclude with a brief assessment of how we feel the notion of responsiveness can contribute to an assessment of the politics of security decision-making in Uganda and other countries. ■

Chapter 2
Historical and structural determinants of state responsiveness

2.1 The colonial roots of responsiveness deficits

2.1.1 Uganda: an artificial and externally derived polity

Like most sub-Saharan African countries, Uganda has been in existence in its present form for just over four decades, after being created from local communities that inhabited the area, organized either as kingdoms, as in the southern half of the country,[5] or as smaller non-centralized societies, especially in the north and east. The process of military occupation, delimitation and partial consolidation of Uganda began in the last quarter of the 19th century, when, following the industrial revolution, European powers parcelled out the African continent into 'spheres of influence' for commercial and geostrategic reasons. After being conquered, the space that constitutes Uganda remained under British military occupation until 1962, when by declaration the 'country' became independent.

Uganda was formed, firstly, through the forceful despoliation, dissolution and amalgamation of pre-existing kingdom states and their involuntary union with adjoining non-centralized communities, and, secondly, through the precipitous bestowal of sovereignty that was not matched with actual capabilities for independent existence. From its inception, therefore, Uganda's legitimacy as a state derived not from the internal consent of the people that came to be its citizens, but from international agreements among European states, beginning with the Berlin Conference of 1884. The delimitation of borders without any consideration for the realities on the ground, but on the basis of rules of occupation and partition; the organization of government according to European colonial theory and practice, and staffed entirely by Europeans at all levels of decision-making; the establishment of economies primarily for servicing imperial needs – all such factors set the stage for much of the instability Uganda continues to experience.

Part of Uganda's instability stems from its origins as an externally derived state, having come into existence following the outward expansion of European powers in the aftermath of the industrial revolution in the middle of the 19th century, as has already been pointed out. As a political unit, Uganda did not result from internally generated territorial aggregation, a process that is more likely to produce internally stable and cohesive states. Neither was its

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5   These include the kingdom areas of Buganda (and its tributary territory Busoga), Bunyoro, Nkore and Toro.

emergence preceded by a process of state formation. Rather, its delimitation into an administrative entity disregarded the socioeconomic, political and demographic realities on the ground. The casual and insensitive naming of the country sums up the spirit in which Uganda was brought into existence.[6] Apart from that, and with far-reaching implications on future security and stability, the country emerged as a delicate agglomeration of diverse and differently endowed communities, and, arguably, it has continued to exist in its present form by courtesy of the recognition it derives from other states.

2.1.2 Favouritism and marginalization

The ethnic heterogeneity outlined above has furnished the infrastructure for policies and practices that add to the insecurity of the communities that constitute the country. The historical evolution of the state and economy of Uganda has been marked by the preferential treatment of some communities and the systematic neglect of others, resulting in uneven development and the lopsided distribution of social services. This is typified by the marginalization of the north of the country, in addition to the systemic discrimination endured by certain religious groups arising from the Anglican bias of the country's political set-up.

The north–south divide and 'human security'

The 'north–south divide' – as the relative neglect of the north of the country compared to the south has been dubbed[7] – can be traced back to the early days of the establishment of colonial rule, when it became increasingly apparent that the inclusion of the Acholi, Karamoja, Lango and West Nile regions in the emerging protectorate was not part of imperial Britain's plans.[8] The original intention was to establish a protectorate that was coterminous with the Kingdom of Buganda. Including other communities in the 'protectorate', both kingdom and non-kingdom areas, was an afterthought and only incidental to the requirement of defending Buganda (in the Swahili language, 'Uganda') and, most importantly, dominating the strategically vital Nile valley. The original intention of the colonial enterprise was never to create a country that included these communities,[9] as was made clear by a dispatch from the British Foreign Office in London to the East African consulate in which a colonial official

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6   Upon reaching Buganda, the early European explorers and their Swahili interpreters referred to the Kingdom as 'Uganda', which was Swahili for the land of the Baganda or Ganda. The Kiswahili language lacks the 'B' noun class, employing instead the 'U' prefix for, among others, the names of countries, hence the Swahili word for America is 'Umarekani' and England is 'Uingeleza'. In the case of what is now known as Uganda, the naming of the rest of the territory after the small portion that is home to a mere 16.7 per cent of the country's population would be comparable to referring to the whole of the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland as England, in total disregard for the existence of the Scottish, Irish and Welsh.

7   Also known as the 'Northern Question' (Gingyera-Pinycwa, 'Is there a Northern Question?', 44–65).

8   These plans were only altered by imperial rivalry and the need to exclude other empire builders from establishing themselves anywhere close to the Nile (Karugire, *The Roots of Instability in Uganda*, 32).

9   When elements opposed to the British occupation of Buganda found shelter in neighbouring Bunyoro, this kingdom was invaded and made part of the protectorate; when the same elements spilt over into Ankole, it was made part of the protectorate by 'agreement'. When the deposed kings of Bunyoro and Buganda set up camp in the north to resist Britain militarily, the north and east were occupied simultaneously.

stated that 'This Protectorate [Uganda] will extend only over the territory which is included in Uganda proper [i.e. Buganda] bounded by Koki, Ankoli [sic], Bunyoro and Busoga'.

Accordingly, orders were issued to military commanders to 'confine . . . military operations and occupation of Bunyoro or other places not included in the protectorate to such measures as are indispensable for the defense of Uganda'.[10]

In the thinking of one of the key colonial governors, Hesketh Bell, other areas like Karamoja and Acholi (the best examples of contemporary Uganda's responsiveness deficits) were to be avoided because the 'tribesmen were so primitive that they would provide more interest to the anthropologist than to the administrator'.[11] This is the same Bell who is also known for the proclamation that remains the historical embodiment of irresponsiveness to other communities: 'My policy is going to be "Uganda for the Baganda".'[12]

The northern districts of Uganda were systematically denied all opportunities for social advancement, including education, opportunities for economic development, and physical and administrative infrastructure, or other amenities that would fall within the fold of what is commonly called 'human security'. The excuse for the neglect of the north in the education sector was that 'its stage of development was not yet of the order to make full use of such facilities'.[13] A similar excuse was given for denying the northern districts direct representation in the protectorate's legislature, with the colonial governor remarking that 'their tribal and administrative organizations have not yet . . . advanced to the stage requiring the creation of centralized native executives'.[14]

Denial of representation is the most effective means of blunting responsiveness, since the latter is always the consummation of the former. Likewise, born out of the systematic denial of representation as demonstrated above is a congenitally unresponsive polity. It is this early disinclination of governments in Uganda to ensure legitimate representation and uniform development for the whole country that compelled one of the legislators to warn, albeit patronizingly, of future instability by noting that 'we have to educate these backward people . . . so some kind of homogeneity is achieved between the backward and the advanced people of Uganda . . . so that the future of this country is not put in jeopardy'.[15]

On the economic front, Uganda was demarcated into 'productive' and 'non-productive' zones, corresponding with the geoethnic north–south divide. This was followed by a deliberate policy of turning the north into a labour reservoir for the cash crop economy of the south, and also the recruitment grounds for the armed forces. Upon successfully encouraging cotton production in the northwestern district of West Nile, an agricultural officer was roundly told off by the colonial director of agriculture and reminded about the policy and need 'to refrain from actively stimulating the production of cotton or other economic crops

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10   Cited in Karugire, *The Roots of Instability in Uganda*, 15.

11   Barber, pp. 54–65, cited in Sathyamurthy, *The Political Development of Uganda*, 270.

12   Bell, *Glimpses of a Governor's Life*, 159.

13   Karugire, *A Political History of Uganda*, 140.

14   *Proceedings of the Legislative Council*, official record, January 1956, p. 41, cited in ibid., 141).

15   Ibid.

in outlying districts on which it is dependent for a supply of labour for carrying out of essential services in the central or producing districts'.[16]

It is this systematic sectioning off of communities that populate almost half of the country that today coincides with the fault lines of protracted social conflict and civil war.

2.1.3 Evolution of the uniformed services: differential ethnic recruitment and innate unresponsiveness

The policies and patterns established in pre-independence days set the framework for developments many years after independence, especially in the armed forces, where the recruitment doctrines and preferences of the early colonial days still endure. Where recruitment practices had an ethnic bias, as was invariably the case, there has also been a spillover effect into political development, given the central role of the armed forces in the country. In the case of Uganda, the foundation for the 'security sector' was laid in the last two decades of the 19th century, when Britain confirmed its interest in the heartland of the future Uganda protectorate by initially nominating a group of merchants under the British East African Company, later the Imperial British East Africa Company (IBEACo), to manage the new possession. The primary mission of the company was to ascertain the resources that existed in the British sphere of influence.

The IBEACo created a military force of about 3,000 Sudanese Nubian mercenary soldiers to protect its business interests.[17] According to the colonial officers on the ground, the Sudanese made the best material for soldiering in Africa, a conviction that was later reinforced by the 'martial tribes' doctrine, which, in the case of Uganda, favoured the recruitment of the Nilotic and Sudanic communities of the north of the country, in addition to the Nubians. Added to that was yet another determinant of colonial-style responsiveness: the remoteness of the home region of the potential recruit from the areas of likely civil disorder. By some coincidence, 'martial' characteristics were to be found in communities that inhabited mountainous or arid border areas remote from the administrative and economic centres that were always the focus of anti-colonial activity, and it was important that 'local sympathies would not interfere with the performance of duty'.[18] The Nubian recruits from Sudan were prioritized as enlistees, 'because they were an entirely alien mercenary element who did not have any sentimental attachment to Uganda and could be trusted to be brutal without any reserve or compunction'.[19]

16   Mamdani, *Politics and Class Formation in Uganda*, 52; Lwanga-Lunyiigo, 'The Colonial Roots of Internal Conflict in Uganda', 35.

17   These were remnants of Egyptian garrisons in the Equatorial Province (which covered the present-day West Nile and Acholi in Uganda), cut off from the rest of Egypt by the Sudanese nationalist uprising, the Mahdist rebellion of 1883. On estimates of their strength, see Lwanga-Lunyiigo 'The Colonial Roots of Internal Conflict in Uganda', 25.

18   Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict,* 447. This policy was pursued in other British colonies. Gutteridge ('Military and Police Forces') observes that in Ghana, 60 per cent of the colonial military at independence had been recruited from the northern nationalities; while in Nigeria, the Hausa were dominant; and in Sierra Leone, the northern Karankos, Mandingos, Fula and Limbe filled the ranks.

19   Lwanga-Lunyiigo, 'The Colonial Roots of Internal Conflict in Uganda', 28.

To further affirm the requirement for remoteness and, if possible, hostility to the population of the zone of assignment, nascent Uganda's military personnel were never known as soldiers, but were called 'rifles'. Simply interpreted, they were mere automatons and appendages of their expatriate commanders, and they were not called upon to use their own judgement or discretion in the performance of their duties, hence the naming of the military as the 'King's African Rifles', later 'Uganda Rifles'.

While the explorer and adventurer H. M. Stanley described the raw material for laying the foundation of Uganda's security sector as 'fawning, crafty rogues who have made perfidy their profession',[20] H. H. Johnston, Uganda's first colonial commissioner from 1889 to 1900, observed that, 'themselves ex-slaves, they had all the cruelty and unscrupulousness of the Arab slave traders whose names, principles and religion they had inherited'.[21] Responsiveness is not likely to have been a key consideration in the construction of such a blunt instrument of force.

When the Nubian soldiers fell into disfavour following the 1897 mutiny, they were replaced by Indian and Swahili troops, none of whom was indigenous to Uganda. Hence, the motivation of the country's architects, namely the creation of safe conditions for economic exploitation, remained the principal determinant of the composition, mission and ethos of Uganda's embryonic security establishment, and remained so for many years, even after the country became independent.

Apart from restricting the talent pool from which personnel for the armed forces were enlisted, ethnic recruitment has hurt the security of the country by undermining public acceptance of the military and the government. And 'because individual careers may span twenty or thirty years, the composition of a government body is difficult to change without taking drastic, irregular, and sometimes provocative steps'.[22] 'Drastic, irregular, and sometimes provocative steps' have remained a feature of Uganda's political landscape and a principal mechanism of the transfer of power, with deleterious effects on the capacity of the nascent state to govern. In the absence of government, responsiveness is unthinkable and, as demonstrated, the precursors of weak government can be partly traced to the early beginnings of the Ugandan state.

2.1.4 Independence: precipitous decolonization and the decapitation of central authority

As elsewhere in the colonial world, the pre-independence state in Uganda was a dual entity run by expatriate officials assisted by indigenous auxiliaries. In the military, a British commanding officer was aided by a native non-commissioned officer (NCO),[23] while the police

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20   Stanley, *In Darkest Africa,* 188.

21   Cited in Lwanga-Lunyiigo, 'The Colonial Roots of Internal Conflict in Uganda', 26.

22   Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, 445.

23   A British air marshal was to remark that 'in East Africa we took it for granted for too long that the only possible officer material for African units was European' (Slessor, 1962, vi–ix, cited in Omara-Otunnu, *Politics and the Military in Uganda*).

force was run by expatriate inspectors and superintendents assisted at a distance by indigenous sub-constables. In the administration of justice, the colonial judge had an African trainee attorney and court clerk in support, while a ministerial head of department was closely assisted by a native under-secretary.

The hasty granting of independence and sudden departure of the colonial officials amounted to the decapitation of the state structure. The speedy nature of the process of independence set the stage for much of the unsurprising instability that was to characterize the post-independence era, as local politicians were left to manage a delicate ethnopolitical balance that they did not create and could not cope with, either in terms of capacity or resource availability.[24] This decapitation created a void at all levels of government, whether in the civil service, the executive, the judiciary or the armed forces. This void was filled by the former aides of the departed expatriates in a process that saw the senior NCO of the ethnically biased military becoming commanding general of the armed forces, the police constable becoming the inspector general of police, the trainee attorney becoming the chief justice and the under-secretary becoming the minister. In such a situation, where the public sphere was presided over by a class that was clearly out of its depth, it would only have been a surprise if self-rule were not to have been characterized by incompetence and low levels of responsiveness, however defined.

The opening of the Queen's Commissions (as the granting of officer rank in the British armed forces during the reign of a queen is called) to the Africans in the Uganda Rifles happened 60 years after the force was formed, right on the eve of independence. The first two commissions granted to Ugandans were given during the transition period when direct elections had taken place and after the chief minister of the first government under self-rule had assumed office. Although commissions were open to 'all persons of any race who are qualified by age and education',[25] this rule did not apply to Uganda's first two officers.

The change of ministerial oversight over the military forces did not only involve the transfer of responsibility from an expatriate to an indigene. With a sense of anticipation of the future mission of the post-independence Ugandan military, the outgoing colonial authorities shifted the Uganda Rifles from the Ministry of Security and External Affairs to the Ministry of Home (Internal) Affairs some six months before the formal declaration of self-rule.[26] It was already being made clear that the role of the military and the thrust of its responsiveness in independent Uganda was not going to be defence against external attack, but rather to serve as the central government's instrument of domestic policy, particularly in quelling internal dissent.

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24   Upon gaining independence on 9 October 1962, Uganda did not even have the financial resources to retire the colonial civil servants and ship them back to their home country. In order to do so, the new government had to immediately apply for its first loan grant (Nyamugasira, 'Aid Conditionality, Policy Ownership and Poverty Reduction', 1).

25   Chief of staff, East African Command, 2 January 1960, quoted by Omara-Otunnu, *Politics and the Military in Uganda,* 43. The first senior NCOs to be promoted were Lts. Shaban Opolot and Idi Amin.

26   Omara-Otunnu, *Politics and the Military in Uganda,* 45–46.

2.2 Post-independence period

2.2.1 The Obote I government, 1962–71

The first post-independence government upheld, and within a short period of time worsened, the ethnic imbalance in the armed forces. Two factors accounted for this, the first of which was the coincidence between the ethnicity of the executive prime minister, Milton Obote, and the groups that were favoured for enlistment by the colonial establishment. Obote was a Nilotic, belonging to the Langi sub-ethnic group of northern Uganda.[27] The second factor that determined the post-independence composition of the armed forces was that the very process of creation of the young country was one of setting groups against one another, leading to extreme polarization of the political class that left no room for the politics of compromise. As an observer of the country's evolution has noted:

> up to the eve of independence, Uganda politics had revolved around local issues and there had not emerged a political party which had purely national aims nor indeed national leaders – these were parties and leaders aiming at striking down some section of the country or uplifting some other section but always at the expense of someone else in the country.[28]

The character of the security forces reflected those tensions and embodied the delineation and hardening of ethnic boundaries by the country's architects. The first government sought to resolve those tensions by the use of force, and therefore set out on a path of nurturing military, police and internal security organizations that were suited for this purpose. Force became the arbiter in key political contests and the principal medium of responsiveness to political opponents and non-integrated social groups. In reference to the predominant ethnic group in the country, the new prime minister is remembered for hinting on the need to 'crush Buganda'[29] and how a 'good Muganda is a dead one'.[30] In a climate like this, in which key political and social groups were not only just indifferent to one another, but exhibited deep-seated resentment and hostility, there was a lot more at stake than just responsiveness.

The first four years of independence saw further enlistment of personnel from the north of the country. By 1969, 141 (88 per cent) of the 171 officers in the Uganda Army were Nilotic, Sudanic and Nilohamitic ethnicities and mainly Luo; and whereas the population of the north was a mere 19 per cent of the national total, 61 per cent of the force was from that region.[31] The military was supported by a secret police organization, the General Service Unit (GSU), which was formed following an administrative order of Prime Minister Obote, reporting directly to him and headed by his cousin. Under the Prime Minister's Office was also a paramilitary unit, the Special Force, dominated by personnel from Obote's home district to supplement the GSU.

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27   Together with the neighbouring Acholi and Alur, the Langi are part of the Luo speakers.

28   Karugire, *A Political History of Uganda,* 168.

29   *Uganda Argus*, 3 February 1960, 3, cited in Dinwiddy, 'The Search for Unity in Uganda', 501.

30   See also MRG, *Uganda,* 27.

31   Omara-Otunnu, *Politics and the Military in Uganda,* 80–82.

2.2.2 The Amin years, 1971–79

Immediately after the successful execution of his coup d'état in 1971, Idi Amin launched a major recruitment drive for the armed forces. Within a space of three months, he implemented the equivalent of a mobilization for war, more than doubling the strength of the military. He achieved this by recruiting more than 10,000 men, the core of which consisted of 4,000 ex-Anyanya fighters from southern Sudan and some former Zairean freedom fighters.[32] By 1977, the strength of the military was 21,000, 75 per cent of which were foreigners, thus complicating problems of communication, training and discipline.[33] With this pattern of recruitment, the mercenary soldier reclaimed his place, as in the colonial days.

In addition, educational requirements for recruitment were suspended, thus attracting the labourers, the unemployed and all manner of tramps. The larger part of the remainder hailed from West Nile, Amin's own ethnic base, with at least 40 per cent of them being Muslim. The first two years of Amin's rule were marked by a process of purging the military, the civil police and civil service of Acholi and Langi and replacing them with individuals from his home region, West Nile, and co-ethnics from across the border in Congo and Sudan. Amin's close bodyguards were Palestinians.[34] These purges did not merely involve the loss of employment, but also the loss of life: Langi and Acholi personnel were murdered at various military installations around the country.[35] Those that survived the massacres escaped with their military equipment, specifically small arms, to neighbouring Sudan and Tanzania to prepare to fight to reinstate Milton Obote.

Amin set up two internal security forces: the State Research Bureau (SRB) and Public Safety Unit (PSU). Apart from 'intelligence gathering', the SRB had no known functional brief, code of conduct or financial support, and had unlimited powers over the lives of any individual in Uganda. The PSU dealt with the increased cases of burglary, highway robbery and general brigandage that resulted from the steady collapse of the economy.[36] Through its ever-changing directors, it was answerable only to the president, and its personnel found their way into many government departments and public and private institutions, including foreign diplomatic missions in Uganda.

By 1979, 15,000 personnel staffed the three organizations, of which 3,000 were permanent and the rest informers.[37] The SRB and PSU were responsible for the murder of as many as 300,000 people. Amin's reign ended in 1979 at the climax of a military campaign by a combined force of Tanzanian troops and Uganda exiles who made up the Uganda National Liberation Front (UNLF), with the Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA) as its military

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32   Ibid., 107–8. Zaire was the name of the present-day DRC at the time.

33   Byrnes, *Uganda*.

34   His closest advisor was an English mercenary, Bob Astles.

35   In Obote's home district, Lango, Amin's soldiers burnt peasants in their huts and killed infants by placing them in mortars and ordering their mothers to pound them with pestles. After that, the parents would be executed (*Monitor* [Kampala], 1997. 'One Day, Partyists Will Be Butchered'. 10 November).

36   The PSU replaced the paramilitary Special Force of the Obote days. It was at the expense of the civil police, the Uganda Police Force, which suffered the same ravages as the military in terms of purging personnel from 'undesirable' ethnic groups.

37   Byrnes, *Uganda*; Khiddu-Makubuya, 'Paramilitarism and Human Rights', 148.

wing. Tanzania's involvement was in retaliation for Amin's attempt to annex part of the territory of that country. As the military disintegrated, it abandoned large stores of weaponry that ended up in the hands of civilians, especially in the northeastern region of Karamoja, where, for the first time, the locals gained access to modern firearms. At least 10,000 soldiers retreated to Zaire and Sudan and formed themselves into insurgent groups, prominent among which were the West Nile Bank Front, the Former Uganda National Army and the Uganda National Rescue Front, which continued to operate in the West Nile region until 2004.

2.2.3 The immediate post-Amin era, 1979–85

The first post-Amin president, Yusuf Lule, ruled for 68 days and was deposed by the military commission of the UNLF. One of the factors that hastened his downfall was his attempt to formulate a policy of building a national military force by drawing recruits from all parts of the country according to the size of ethnic groups in relation to the country's population. He also set new standards of literacy and civic education for the military and police. This move was interpreted, and probably rightly so, as an attempt to give the majority Baganda, the president's own ethnic group, larger representation in the security forces. Non-Baganda, especially the officers from the north who knew that the military was traditionally their niche and stood to lose from this policy, opposed it and engineered the sacking of the president.

The next president, Godfrey Binaisa, appointed in June 1979, served for just under a year and was toppled when he attempted to limit the influence of military officers from northern Uganda. This was followed by a fraudulent national election that saw Obote return to power. During the elections, he kept taunting his opponents to show him their generals. Several rebel movements emerged instead to challenge the outcome of the poll. The main group was the National Resistance Movement (NRM) under Yoweri Museveni.[38] President Obote's government and the military, the Acholi- and Langi-dominated UNLA, failed to suppress the insurgency, and Obote was once again overthrown by his generals, who were themselves overthrown by the National Resistance Army (NRA), the military wing of the NRM. The government forces were ill-trained, poorly clothed and fed, irregularly paid and badly led foot soldiers who had no discipline to execute a counter-insurgency campaign. They caused the deaths of up to 300,000 people in the failed campaign.

2.2.4 The NRM period, 1986–the present: reconstitution of the state and recurrent instability

The principal question that faced Uganda in the wake of the NRM's seizure of power after a five-year guerrilla campaign was whether the new government would be capable of establishing minimum order and halting the anarchy and the slide towards disintegration that the

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38   Museveni's Front for National Salvation, Fronasa, was part of the umbrella UNLF. He was a member of the military commission of the UNLF, minister of defence and, subsequently, minister for regional co-operation in the transitional government. He contested and lost the rigged 1980 elections as a candidate of the Uganda Patriotic Movement, whose president he was. During the campaigns, he insistently and openly warned that he would 'go to the bush' if the elections was rigged.

country seemed to be poised for by the end of 1985. The NRM faced four main challenges: the first was to reconstitute the atrophied state; the second was to halt the cycle of violence and insecurity that had marked the existence of the country throughout its colonial and post-colonial history; the third was to rehabilitate and expand the economy, which had ground to a halt;[39] and the fourth was to build a military force that respected the rights of the population.

The NRM based most of its policy initiatives on the 'Ten-Point Programme', the second point of which pledged to restore security of person and property.[40] For much of the population, the NRM was a welcome relief from the insecurity and political uncertainty that had gripped the country throughout the Amin years and in the five years that followed his deposition. The NRM itself was a product of these circumstances, and having been in existence for only five years, it had not yet widened its political base to include communal groups outside the central, western and southern regions, where it had spent most of its time prior to taking over government.

Added to this were the historical legacies of the country's north–south divide and the associated ethnic polarization, and the new reality that the predominantly Bantu (southern)-led and -manned NRA had dislodged a predominantly Nilotic regime by defeating a military force that was manned almost exclusively by personnel from the north and east of the country. The defeat of the UNLA set in motion a series of events that eventually led to the outbreak of a civil war that, through many phases, has lasted up to the present day, with far-reaching effects on the livelihood and physical safety of the people in the affected regions. The last 20 years have seen no less than 15 rebel groups emerging from different parts of the country, but especially from the north and east (see Annex B).

Recurrent instability

The demonstration effect of the success of the NRA/NRM immediately led to the eruption of armed insurgencies across the country, the main one being the largely anticipated Acholi-based counter-offensive against the new government. The longest surviving insurgent group is the exclusively Acholi Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). The LRA has dislocated the lives of millions of people in its zones of operation and damages relations between Uganda and its regional neighbours.

In terms of Uganda's long-term stability and the texture of relations between the principal communal groupings in the country, the NRM's accession to power was a critical watershed. It marked the first decisive shift of politico-military pre-eminence from the elites of the north of the country to those of the south. In the process, a dispensation that was nurtured over the many decades of the country's existence was completely upset. For regions of the country

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39   The rate of decline of the economy between 1973 and 1986 was 2.6 per cent per annum. The country has yet to recover from the economic decline of the 1970s: the 1979 GDP was 80 per cent of the 1970 level, and the insecurity of the early 1980s did not help matters. By 1984, the country was registering a negative growth rate of -4.2 per cent, -1.5 per cent in 1985 and -2.3 per cent by early 1986 (Byrnes, *Uganda*).

40   Museveni, *Sowing the Mustard Seed,* 217.

that had dominated the uniformed services, this shift was a source of all-round insecurity and uncertainty. The Acholi, who constituted only 4 per cent of the national population, had previously made up 30–40 per cent of the 35,000-strong UNLA, the force that was defeated by the NRA.[41] For the Acholi community, service in the military was 'the greatest single source of cash employment, the equivalent of a major industry'.[42] At least 20–30 per cent of Acholi families had a male member in the uniformed services.

2.3 Multiple crises of Uganda's political development

One only gets half the picture of the sources and nature of the deficits in state responsiveness in Uganda if its statehood and nationhood are taken as a given. Uganda is an artificial construct whose existence as a colony for 70 years still exceeds its existence as a sovereign political entity. Uganda, like other former colonies in Africa, had in fact not been originally designed to exist as an independent, self-sufficient entity, but as an organic extension of Great Britain. Uganda's penultimate colonial governor captured this by remarking that the colonial system 'was, moreover, a system which looked at the problems and interests of each area or tribe. It was not conceived in the framework of building up a state or nation'.[43]

After coming into existence by mere declaration or fiat, and not by internal organic accretion, the hasty creations of colonialism are still largely nations and states in the making, and there is no guarantee that many will continue to exist in their current form or as originally contrived by their foreign architects. It may not be unrealistic to suggest that the future shape of Uganda's large neighbour to the north – the Sudan – will depend on the outcome of the 2011 referendum in the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement-controlled south. It is very likely that the inhabitants of this region might opt for autonomy, a prospect that may have far-reaching implications for Uganda's future territorial integrity in light of the questions that continue to be asked by political elites in the north about the benefits their communities stand to gain from continued citizenship in a united Uganda. Prominent politicians especially from the Acholi region have hinted at a future 'Nilotic state' based on share nationhood with kith and kin across the border once Southern Sudan gains autonomy.[44]

Therefore, a realistic assessment of the character and capacities of the Ugandan state has to take into consideration its age as a polity and the sociopolitical transition that it is still undergoing. Arguably, it has served no purpose to take the nationhood and statehood of an entity like Uganda for granted. Ascribing to it attributes and capabilities that, by virtue of its age, it could never possibly possess has created several complications. Firstly, it has ended up being denied the real support that it requires to build the basis for empirical statehood. Like other countries with a similar history, Uganda was tranquillized into believing that empirical statehood could be created retroactively from juridical statehood. Secondly,

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41   Ofcansky, *Uganda,* 4.

42   Ibid., 9.

43   Cohen, *The British Policy in Changing Africa,* 26.

44   The largest clan of the Acholi community, the Palotaka, is to be found in the Eastern Equatorian region of southern Sudan.

synthetic statehood has only served to harm the destinies and lives of the diverse communities that were rather unnaturally brought within the fold of the Ugandan 'nation' as its 'citizens'. The critical questions of identity, institutionalization, sociopolitical integration, the formula for participation, distributive capacity, central state penetration into the uncharted countryside and state legitimacy were all left to chance. Those attributes constitute the 'software' and operating system of security. Figure 1 summarizes the relationship between those attributes and security.

In circumstances where the citizenship of groups and individuals is still contested; their own identification with the 'nation' is still questionable; and with the legitimacy, reach and presence of the central state authorities in question, references to 'responsiveness' and 'service

Figure 1 Functional aspects of responsive statehood
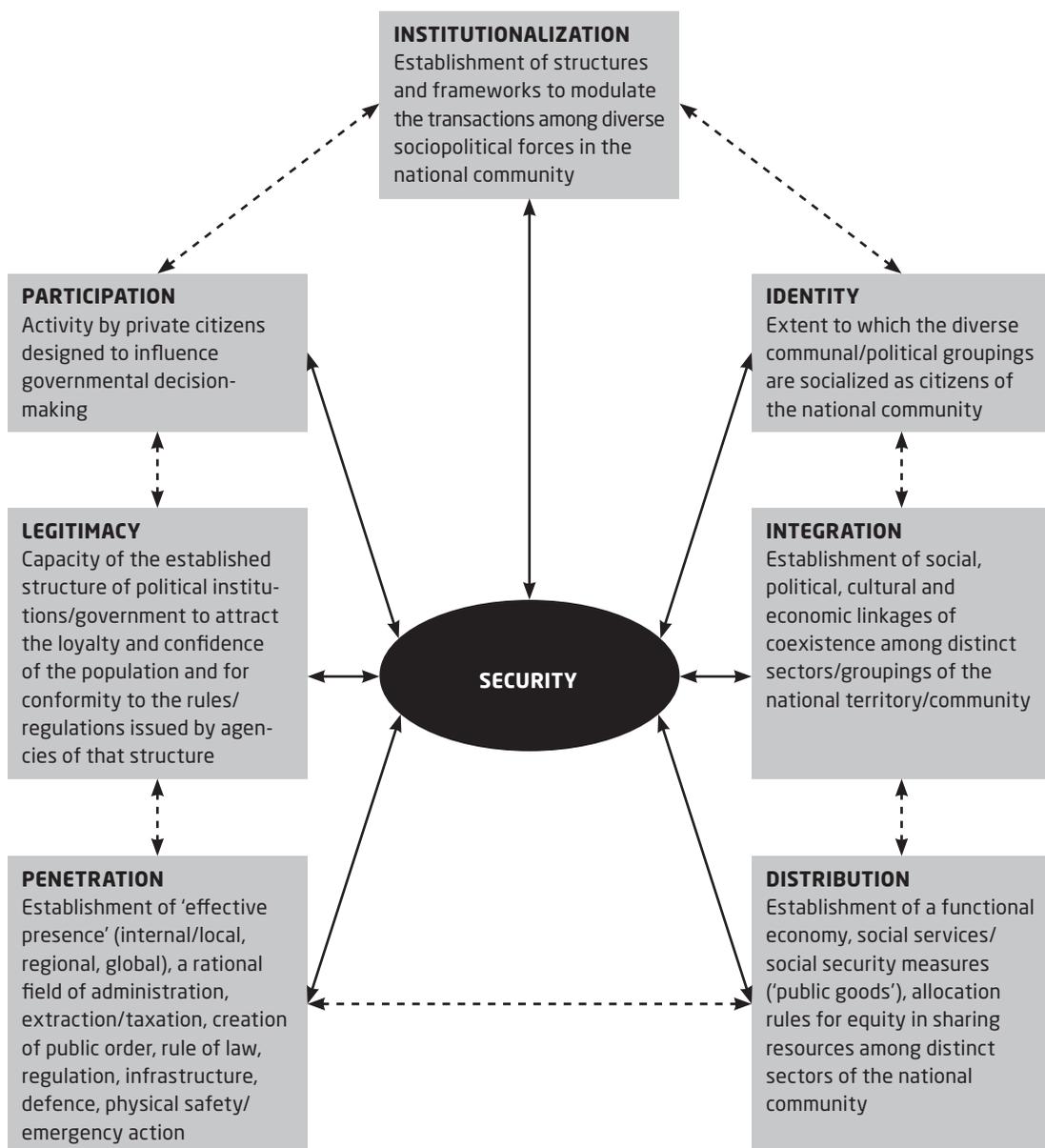
provision' could easily amount to putting the cart before the horse. Uganda's path of political evolution has been one of the 'critical accumulation of nation-building challenges over very short spans of time', and unlike the older, slowly developing Western European states, a recently created country like Uganda has had to contend with a multiplicity of issues all in one phase: participation, institution-building, the development of a supra-ethnic and trans-cultural identity, the integration of diverse communal groups, resolving the problems of providing 'public goods', the expansion of the field of central state reach and other crises of political evolution. All these simultaneous demands leave little or no time to reach even temporary institutional solutions to one set of challenges before another one crops up.[45] 'Irresponsiveness' has to be partly understood in this context. It is only the recognition of this fact that will make it possible to set realistic expectations and make accurate judgments of realistic support for the late modernizers like Uganda. ■

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[45]   Rokkan, 'Dimensions of State Formation and Nation-building', 574. In this analysis, Rokkan underlines the fact that the 'irresponsiveness' and insecurity of 'countries' like Uganda partly arises not so much from inherent weaknesses, but mainly from unrealistic expectations set by outsiders and the fallacy of comparing them with the finished products of the global north. He notes that: 'The older systems developed in a multi-centred international environment without any dominant models of successful development, with very slow transportation networks and without any technologies for quick mass mobilisation. The late comers are faced with highly visible models of successful development, strong and polarised outside centres of economic and ideological influence, rapid means of communication in and out of each system and advanced technologies of mobilisation.' He highlights the 'slow and stepwise phase movements in the West and, most significantly, in Japan', and compares these with 'the sudden and often explosive concatenations of critical issues in the great majority of the emerging polities of the twentieth century'.

Chapter 3
Factors that shape responsiveness in contemporary Uganda

Decision-making takes place within particular country settings that depend on prevailing social, economic, political and international realities. Countries have diverse political systems and forms of government, in addition to being endowed with varying levels of socioeconomic development. This broad context determines the framing of issues, the setting of agendas and subsequently the policy outputs of a political system. Even for the same political system, 'policy-making differs whether the political situation is stable and the government is working according to business as usual or whether a crisis is precipitating policy change'.[46] Given Uganda's history of protracted social conflict and political turmoil, policy formulation and decision-making has always been crisis driven, with obvious implications for responsiveness.

3.1 Socioeconomic determinants of responsiveness

Responsiveness is a relational, as much as a reciprocal phenomenon involving exchanges among communities and the policy elites that preside over them. The relationship is two-way, entailing, on the one hand, the generation and transmission of demands and influences (stimuli) by the community, and on the other hand, responses to the 'stimuli' by the policy elite. Hence, the level of responsiveness is dependent on the nature and intensity of the influences reaching the policy elite. In absence of these influences, responsiveness will depend on the level of self-motivation of the elite in identifying and addressing the needs of their constituents. By shaping the priorities of communities, socioeconomic underdevelopment stands out as one of the principal determinants of both the type and intensity of demands placed upon the policy elite by their populations.

In a transitional and largely agrarian country like Uganda, not only is the character of demands radically distinct from what one sees in industrial settings, but additionally, they are by their nature channelled to the political system through dissimilar means. The channelling of influence in more developed countries takes the form of interest and pressure group politics: influence is exerted before the passing of laws and formulation of policies. By contrast, in less developed and transitional countries, individual and group demands (however the

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46   Grindle and Thomas, *Public Choices and Policy Change*.

Table 1 Level of socioeconomic development and dominant responsiveness style[47]

Modes of political participation	STYLE OF RESPONSIVENESS			
	Symbolic responsiveness	Service responsiveness	Allocational responsiveness	Policy responsiveness
Nature of demands/ inducements	Material particular-istic inducements play a very minor role, except among a limited number of local power holders	Non-ideological & particularistic demands, individual inducements (material rewards, jobs, licences, patronage, favours & welfare payments – associated with 'corruption')	Indivisible rewards, e.g. public works, schools (pork barrel or communal inducements)	Broad policy & ideological concerns (defence & security, tax regime, subsidy programmes)
Sociopolitical context	'Traditional' political systems, very low income, largely pre-industrial, rural societies, non-monetized economy	Low-income countries, rapid socioeconomic & political change, rising expectations, low levels of political institutionalization, low integration of the sociopolitical system	Middle-income countries	High income, highly urbanized industrial countries, high on the Human Develop-ment Index
Strategies of influence/means of interest articulation	Pleasing, placating or winning favours from a notable, landlord, prominent kith & kin, or local official	Mobilized participa-tion, demands channelled to the political system at the implementation stage, predominance of 'machine politics', 'contacting' to solve individual problems, violence (riots, revolts, coups d'état, assassinations, revolutions) is a popular method of participation	Autonomous partici-pation through electoral activity, lobbying, organiza-tional activity based on regional blocs	Autonomous partici-pation, predominance of citizens groups (political parties, pressure groups, lobbies), demands are channelled at the legislative stage of the policy cycle
Basis of loyalty/ social organization	Political ties are determined by traditional patterns of deference (vertical ties) to established authorities	Pragmatic relations (kinship, ethnicity, patronage), indi-vidual, family or small-group focus, decision-makers and their supporters relate via personal loyalty, minimal overlap among the political, economic & social systems	Community or locality orientation, ethnic concentration	Horizontal or occupational & class ties (arising from a high level of socio-economic development)
Government decision-making style	Absolutism	Decision-makers have a high degree of latitude in determining policy	Conferral politics	Predominance of policy processes & ideological concerns, elaborate legislative/ party systems

Uganda: shaded column

47   Synthesized from Johari, *Comparative Politics,* 483–84; Huntington and Nelson, *No Easy Choice*, 12–13; Eulau and Karps, 'The Puzzle of Representation', 241–47; and Scott, 'Corruption, Machine Politics and Political Change', 1146–47.

groups may be defined) are pressed at the enforcement stage. These differences in channelling influence have a bearing on the style and focus of responsiveness. Moreover, the nature of the demands of the majority of the populations of transitional nations is not amenable to the legislative process. Even when such demands are made by a wider grouping, because society is not yet integrated into a homogeneous nation-state, they are likely to refer to a 'primordial' grouping such as an ethnic or linguistic community, or at most a regional bloc. For the term 'responsiveness' to be meaningful, it is important that it is applied with due consideration for the social, economic and political context of the countries and regions being analysed. Table 1 is an attempt to match the style of responsiveness with the level of socioeconomic development.

3.1.1 General underdevelopment

In any political setting, the priorities of the citizenry influence the nature of the demands that they place on the policy elites and, correspondingly, the responsiveness of these elites. The level of socioeconomic development, measured in terms of the education standard, income and levels of consumption and urbanization, among other indicators of socioeconomic mobilization, directly affect the demands and priorities of communities. Moreover, central government responsiveness is a measure of, and the flip side of, the extent to which significant sections of the population are involved in 'activity by private citizens designed to influence governmental decision-making' or political participation.[48]

A population with many of its members afflicted by ill-health or living in conditions of absolute poverty will be constantly engrossed in the daily struggles to meet the bare necessities of life and may not be concerned about policy issues. Equally so, low levels of education are a barrier to popular engagement in matters of broader public policy concern, thus limiting the level of interaction between governments and their constituencies. The age profile, especially the median age in addition to the standard of education of a population, have a bearing on the level of participation of wider society in politics, with a corresponding impact on state responsiveness. The higher those parameters are, the more likely that the average population will be politically attentive. An older, more educated and more well-to-do population is likely to have a greater sense of belonging, community cohesion and awareness. An assessment of the style of government and the nature of transactions between the policy elites and the broader population would be incomplete without a broad survey of some of those parameters.

Low level of socioeconomic mobilization

Uganda is ranked as the 145th out of 177 on the UN Human Development Index, making it one of the least developed countries in the world. The average Ugandan is a member of one of the country's 56 ethnic groups and lives for just over 50 years, earning about USD 300[49]

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48   Huntington and Nelson, *No Easy Choice,* 4.

49   USD = US dollar.

per year during his or her working years. The country's gross domestic product (GDP) per capita is USD 1,478, compared to the USD 6,000 that is the threshold at which developing countries are known to make an irreversible transition to liberal democracy.[50] The structure of Uganda's economy still largely mirrors that of Britain on the eve of the Glorious Revolution of 1688, which saw the beginnings of modern English parliamentary democracy. At that time, Britain's national income contributed by industrial production was 21 per cent,[51] just under Uganda's present figure of 22.1 per cent.[52] Economic factors such as the structure and output of national production briefly hinted at above have a decisive influence on responsiveness: after all, responsiveness boils down to matching ends with means.

Uganda's very low level of urbanization places additional limits on how much the country's population can be mobilized on a sustained basis to participate in politics, and to thereby have a meaningful impact on government decision-making. About 90 per cent of Uganda's population live in rural areas, the equivalent of France's situation on the eve of the 1789 revolution[53] or that of England's during the 1381 peasant revolt. The population of Kampala, Uganda's largest city, is about the same as that of England in the first decade of the 19th century.[54] As in any other underdeveloped country, the population's location in the rural countryside is closely tied to limited economic productivity and poverty. About 40 per cent of Uganda's population live below the poverty line, just under the 1688 proportion of the population of England and Wales that could not live on their income and had to depend on charity and poor relief;[55] while 80 per cent are agricultural workers, mostly in the subsistence sector. As Huntington notes,

> People who are really too poor are too poor for politics and too poor for protest. They are indifferent, apathetic, and lack exposure to the media and other stimuli which would arouse their aspirations in such a manner as to galvanise them into political activity.[56]

In this socioeconomic reality, the daily efforts of the vast majority of the population are geared towards meeting the demands of daily survival, leaving very little time for politics. The pressing needs of such a population tend to force people to privilege service responsiveness over broader issues of policy and legislation. The majority of the demands of such a population tend to be channelled to the political system not before laws are passed, but rather

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50   Fukuyama, 'Do We Really Know how to Promote Democracy?', 6.

51   Mitchell and Deane, *Abstract of British Historical Statistics,* 366.

52   CIA, *CIA World Fact Book.*

53   In 1789, the population of France was 25 million, 23 million of whom were peasants (Peacock, *A History of Modern Europe,* 3), which is very similar to Uganda's situation for much of the 1990s.

54   The population of Kampala currently stands at about 1.2 million, whereas that of London in 1801 was about 1.12 million, rising to 1.6 million in 1821. This level of urbanization was actually much higher than Uganda's current level, given that the population of Great Britain then was about 13 million and that of Uganda now is about 30 million (Mitchell and Deane, *Abstract of British Historical Statistics,* 19, 24–27).

55   Mathias, *The First Industrial Nation,* 24–26.

56   Huntingtn, *Political Order in Changing Societies,* 52.

Figure 2 Causal links between socioeconomic development and citizen influence on decision-making

| Economic development | → | Alterations in social structure/ class stratification, prolifera- tion of civic associations, increased group membership, urbanization | → | Changes in the distribution of political attitudes & cognitions |

| Higher governmental respon- siveness to popular preferences | ← | Increase in citizen influence on governmental decision- making | ← | Expansion of political participation |

Source: Adapted from Nie et al., 'Social Structure and Political Participation', 808

at the enforcement stage. Exertion of influence at the enforcement stage will often take the form of 'corruption', in contrast to pressure group politics in countries where populations live way above the poverty line and do not demand anything else from their political representatives other than effective policy outputs. The structures, methods and characteristics of competitive political organizations in Uganda bear very close resemblance to what has been dubbed 'machine politics', in which the central mechanism is dominated by a single individual who relates to political and social groups by patronage. It is not likely that such a socioeconomic reality can foster the conditions in which complex policy issues can receive sustained attention from the population, with obvious implications for the style of government.

Lack of information[57]

'Effective states require engaged societies that demand change and hold governments accountable for such delivery.'[58] Like most underdeveloped countries, Uganda has unique demographic and informational characteristics that not only limit societal engagement, but also increase the prominence of decision-makers at the state level in the policy process, while also limiting their capacity to make enlightened decisions. Societal engagement may be difficult to attain in conditions where the majority of the population are illiterate and live in physical isolation in inaccessible rural areas with restricted access to information on the programmes and policies of the central government.

At least 88 per cent of Ugandans live in scattered communities in the rural countryside, making the country one of the least urbanized in the world. The remoteness of the centres of power and the resulting lack of capacity to influence central government policy processes by such populations are compounded by the limited availability of information. This is well captured by the 2002 Uganda population and housing census, according to which 49 per

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57   Data on informational characteristics is taken from the UN Statistics Division website, http://unstats.un.org/unsd/ default.htm.

58   World Bank, *Building Effective States.*

cent of the population depend on word of mouth as their major source of information.[59] In line with those findings, a UN survey has established that Uganda is the 35th country from the bottom of the index of the number of radios receivers per thousand inhabitants.[60] According to the findings of this survey, only 47.8 per cent of Ugandans own a radio, 0.7 per cent own a television and 0.7 per cent have access to the print media.[61] Additionally, the country's circulation of newspapers and periodicals is one of the lowest in the world. While every one thousand Ugandans have access to 2.7 newspapers or periodicals, the ratio in the developed industrialized countries with politically active populations is in excess of 200 print media pieces per thousand inhabitants.[62] Access to information is further hampered by low levels of literacy. Uganda's literacy rate is about 68 per cent, just about the rate for England and Wales in 1850.[63] The literacy rates for most developed countries are close to 100 per cent.[64]

As already hinted at, policymakers face the same paucity of information that the general populace has to live with. 'As a result', note Grindle and Thomas, policymakers in countries like Uganda 'must frequently rely more on intuition and experience than on solid information when making decisions'. Reliance on shrewdness, intuition, experience and pragmatism only serves to degrade the quality of policies by making them subjective, politically oriented and liable to protracted contestation. This creates conditions for extreme polarization and selectivity in attention to group needs, especially in contexts of zero-sum politics, as was the one that obtained in Uganda for much of the country's history. But of more import to decision-making is the additional consequence that the inadequacy of information leads to the formulation of subjective policies. In a political climate dominated by subjectivity and intractable contestation, the quality of policy outputs may cease to matter: 'political power tends to be the central determinant of policy outcomes and implementation.'[65]

Physical isolation of the population

To further complicate the informational isolation of Uganda's rural population, much of the countryside is accessible by neither road or rail; this in a country that is already constrained by being landlocked. Uganda has approximately the same surface area as the United Kingdom, but a comparison of the two country's physical accessibility ratio of territory (PART) by roadway reveals that, while for every one square kilometre of territory in the United Kingdom there are 1.6 km of roadway (all of which is paved), Uganda has only 0.29 km, only 30 per

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59   Uganda Government, *Uganda Population and Housing Census,* iv.

60   For every 1,000 Ugandans, there are 121 radio receivers, compared to 2,084 receivers for the United States and 1,454 for the United Kingdom.

61   Republic of Uganda, *Uganda Population and Housing Census,* 31.

62   Compared with Norway (the highest in the world) at 569; the United Kingdom, 326.4 and the United States, 196.

63   Uganda's literacy rate is close to Britain's a century and a half ago. According to Stephens ('Literacy in England, Scotland, and Wales', 555), the adult literacy rate for England, Scotland and Wales in 1850 was 61 per cent, increasing to 88 per cent in 1870 (higher than Uganda's projected 85 per cent for 2009/10 [Republic of Uganda, *Uganda Population and Housing Census,* 30]) and 100 per cent by 1900.

64   For details of Uganda's human development indicators, see the 2006 Human Development Index at http://hdr.undp.org/hdr2006/pdfs/report/HDR06-complete.pdf.

65   Grindle and Thomas, *Public Choices and Policy Change,* 46.

cent of which is paved.[66] This reflects a similar trend for railroads, airports and inland water-ways, making the country's rural countryside even more inaccessible, given its landlocked status.

An illiterate, largely rural and physically isolated population is limited in how much it can hold the political elites accountable for their actions and omissions. Such a population can only either lull policy elites into complacence or furnish fertile ground for absolutism to thrive. Either way, the cause of responsiveness will not be served.

Unfavourable demographic profile

The age distribution of a country's population has a bearing on the extent to which that country's political elites will be amenable to the views and preferences of the population. Uganda ranks lowest in the world for some of the key demographic indicators that have a bearing on the levels of political participation, namely median age, the dependence ratio and the proportion of the population above the age of 65.

With a median age of 14.9 years, Uganda has a smaller politically aware and active population than any other country in the world.[67] The country compares in no way with the average of 40 years for the developed industrial countries. Up to 50.2 per cent of the country's population are below the age of 14. The country's 'infant bulge' narrows the active political audience and thus sets limits on representative democratic institutions and processes.[68] This 'infant bulge' sets limits on politically eligible citizens, in addition to constricting the population base from which a vibrant civil society, interest groups, political parties and other civic organizations can emerge. A low median age structurally constrains responsive-ness by limiting 'voice' and autonomous political participation. More than anything else, such a demographic profile can only breed aloofness and paternalism on the part of the political class.

The minority status precludes a large proportion of the citizenry. Responsiveness is a function of 'voice', and the latter is directly proportional to the median age. A young and transient population dominated by minors and dependents can only provide fertile ground for inertia and a limited impetus to decision-makers to be responsive to popular preferences. Related to the low median age is a high dependence ratio of 111 dependents per 100 workers, the highest in the world. Apart from being an additional indicator of limited voice, a high dependency ratio is a reflection of limited economic potential. Responsiveness is above all else a relationship between ends and means: an agrarian country with a high dependency is necessarily a country with limited economic means and structural limitations to responsiveness.

66   The ratio (PART) has been coined by the authors to ease the comparison of national transportation infrastructure. Data on the transportation infrastructure is derived from the CIA, *CIA World Fact Book*.

67   Uganda's median age remains way below the 1900 global average of 20 years. The global average today stands at 28 years.

68   This study uses the term 'infant bulge' as an alternative to the commonly employed 'youth bulge', and the former term is inapplicable to countries like Uganda, Chad, the Central African Republic, Niger and the territory of the Gaza Strip where minors (children below the age of 15) are the dominant group. The age range for youths is 15–24.

3.1.2 Corruption and graft

Corruption is the tendency for individuals and groups to fend for themselves at the expense of the wider public. One of the principal manifestations and catalysts of Uganda's underdevelopment has, for many years, been the propensity of individuals in positions of responsibility to privilege their private interests over those of the public. This frailty has taken on particular prominence in Uganda in the last two decades, given the serial involvement of highly placed public officials in corruption scandals. The fact that corruption and graft still persist in spite of the openness about their existence in the media and in government circles calls into question the methods being used to diagnose, report and stem the problem.

Whereas there is no doubt that corruption and graft have deleterious effects on government performance in Uganda, it is highly questionable whether they are a primary problem in their own right, rather than being a symptom of a deep-seated malaise. Therefore, there is need for a nuanced and rigorous approach to understanding how corruption affects responsiveness in Uganda's security domain.

How irresponsiveness begets irresponsiveness: the case of military pay

A comparison between the terms of service of a private in the Ugandan Peoples Defence Forces (UPDF) and his East African counterpart shows that the Ugandan private earns UGX 180,000,[69] while the Kenyan or Tanzanian one earns the equivalent of UGX 400,000, just under the current monthly pay of a Ugandan lieutenant.[70] It is also worth noting that the Ugandan military is one of probably only a few in the world that does not pay its recruits for the first 6–12 months of initial entry training.

Beyond the East African region, one sees that, on average, for every one GBP[71] a Ugandan soldier earns, his British counterpart earns GBP 30. Of course, there are obvious differences in the cost of living of public servants in the two countries. However, those differences may not easily explain the disparity. The benefit a Uganda soldier or public servant gets from residing in a country with a low cost of living is easily cancelled out by several other factors. For example, whereas a brigadier in the British Army will be part of a nuclear family connected to self-sufficient kith and kin, his/her Ugandan counterpart will belong to a large extended family, and he will probably be the very first individual from his lineage or clan to ever hold a public office (in a country where the annual income per capita is GBP 150 and where out of every five members of the population, two are absolutely poor, some of whom are the Ugandan officer's relatives).

By virtue of his public stature, the Ugandan officer doubles as the head of his clan. The non-existence of social welfare institutions requires the senior military officer to be, for example, his clan's funeral director in addition to being the first point of call for members of the extended family seeking medical attention, in a country with no national health service.

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69   UGX = Ugandan shilling.

70   *New Vision* (Kampala), 2007. 'Defence Budget: Uganda Measures Poorly against Others'. 26 August.

71   GBP = British pound.

Table 2 Annual pay of British and Ugandan service personnel (GBP)

	ANNUAL PAY	
Rank	**UK**	**Uganda**
General		4,891
Lt. General		4,463
Maj. General		4,070
Brigadier	84,756	3,725
Colonel	72,828	2,901
Lt. Colonel	62,894	2,215
Major	46,774	2,165
Captain	37,294	1,498
Lieutenant	29,148	1,350
2nd Lt.	26,318	966
O/Cdt.	14,217	663
WO1	38,345	926
WO2	35,660	850
S/Sgt.	33,501	665
Sgt.	29,885	663
Cpl.	26,516	651
L/Cpl.	21,770	637
Private	14,217	632
Recruit	12,161	0

Source: Uganda military pay grades: interviews with individual UPDF officers; British military pay scales:
http://www.armedforces.co.uk/army/listings/l0104.html

And because the country also has no department of work and pensions equipped with job centres to link employment seekers to employers, or housing/unemployment benefits offices, the 'big man' caters for all these and other needs. That same senior officer may also be shouldering the burden of HIV/AIDS, either as a sufferer or as a carer for HIV/AIDS orphans.[72] As can be seen from the table above, the annual pay for the commander of the UPDF holding the rank of lieutenant general is 20 per cent of that for a section commander in the British Army holding the rank of lance corporal.

What is evident here are, firstly, the glaring gaps in the remuneration of public officials and, secondly, the shifting of the burden of social security and welfare from the state to the shoulders of very poorly paid public servants. Corruption has to be partly understood within the wider context of these imbalances and whatever it is that corrupt practices have engendered. The welfare and commitment of public officials has a direct bearing on the functioning of institutions and, by implication, the quality of responsiveness. Far from being a cause of

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72   Twenty per cent of the households in Uganda are fostering one or more HIV/AIDS orphans.

responsiveness deficits, as is commonly claimed, much of the corruption afflicting the public sector in Uganda is a secondary or tertiary symptom of other underlying failings.

3.1.3 The HIV/AIDS epidemic

The HIV/AIDS epidemic has already been widely acknowledged not just as a public health crisis, but also as a threat to the security of nations and the physical safety of their citizens.[73] Its wide-ranging effects not just on individuals, families and communities, but also on economic and political institutions, the military, police forces and intelligence services, have been widely commented on, yet there is surprising silence on the likely impact of the epidemic on the functioning of key state institutions. High rates of HIV/AIDS infections contribute to the basic processes of state collapse in several ways: economies are transformed or destroyed, and there is an increase in crime; political institutions dissolve at both the local national levels; and social institutions such as the family, the education system or health care are damaged. Therefore, an assessment of the capabilities, stature and responsiveness of the public institutions of an HIV-impacted polity like Uganda would be incomplete without a close examination of the cross-cutting effects of the epidemic.

Uganda stands out prominently as a country that has suffered the worst effects of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, with 213 people from all sections of society dying of AIDS-related illness every 24 hours. Although earlier gloomy predictions of the likely impact of HIV/AIDS have been questioned, its effects on institutional capacity, economic performance, decision-making/implementation processes, capacity for political management and the sheer viability of some nation-states remain valid concerns.[74]

By killing off or incapacitating skilled and experienced personnel and depleting the labour force in a country like Uganda that derives its earnings from agricultural activities, the epidemic is eroding the capacity of institutions across the board. According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, it is estimated that Uganda will have lost 14 per cent of its agricultural labour force to HIV/AIDS by 2020.[75] The reverberations on responsiveness are as obvious as they have been neglected hitherto.

The more direct effects of HIV/AIDS can be summed up as:

- blunting the effectiveness of core physical safety institutions, thus weakening national security capabilities;

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73   See, among others, De Waal, 'AIDS-Related National Crises'; De Waal, 'Why the HIV/AIDS Epidemic is a Structural Threat to Africa's Governance and Economic Development'; De Waal, 'How will HIV/AIDS Transform African Governance?'; Ostergard, 'Politics in the Hot Zone', 333–50; Yeager and Kingma, 'HIV/AIDS: Destabilizing National Security and the Multi-National Response'; Sarin, 'A New Security Threat'; Altman, 'AIDS and Security'; Elbe, *Strategic Implications of HIV/AIDS*; Singer, 'AIDS and International Security'; ICG, *HIV/AIDS as a Security*; and ICG, *HIV/AIDS as a Security Issue in Africa: Lessons from Uganda*.

74   For example, Whiteside et al., 'AIDS, Security and the Military in Africa'. In this publication, the authors discount earlier scenarios authored mainly by themselves, but still emphasize that: 'More serious attention needs to be directed to the ways in which the HIV/AIDS epidemic erodes institutional capacity, creates poverty and despair and intensifies dependence on international aid' (p. 216).

75   Quoted in Topouzis et al., 'Strategy Paper on HIV/AIDS for East and Southern Africa', 6.

Figure 3 HIV/AIDS prevalence in the military and general population in Uganda

PREVALENCE (%)

YEAR
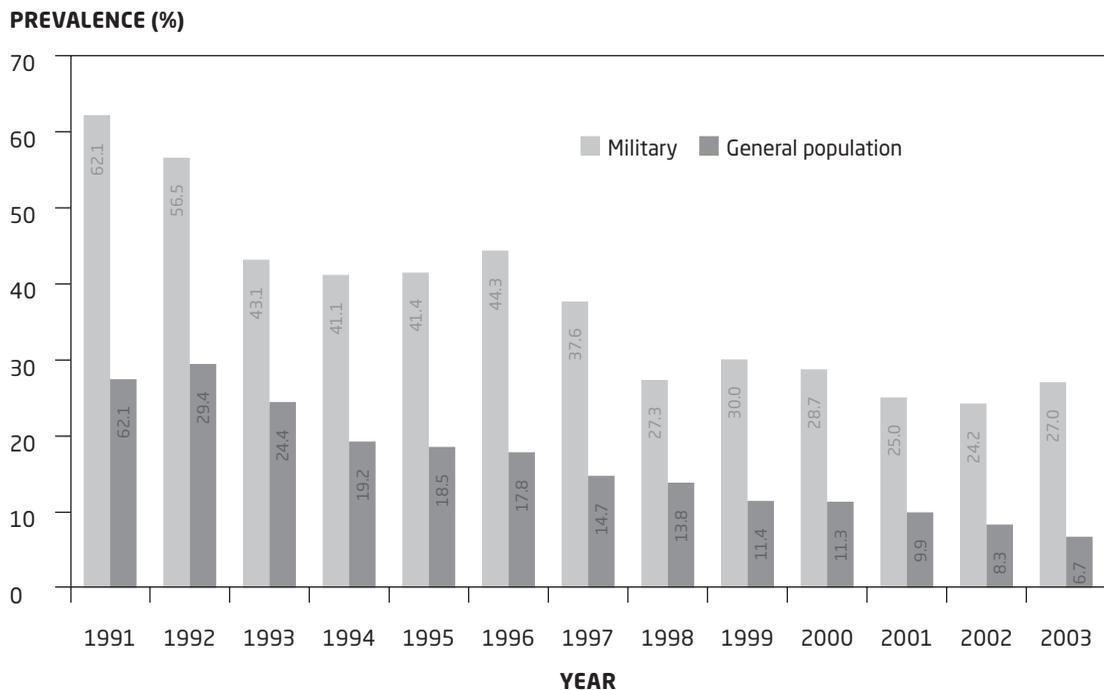
Source: Bwire and Musinguzi, 'Trends of HIV in the Ugandan Military 1991–2003'

■ increasing vulnerabilities due the effects of ill-health and death on economic produc-
tivity and community cohesion;

■ multiplying the demands on the central government by increasing the number of up-
rooted and desperate citizens who are likely to resort to criminality; and

■ causing the breakdown of government structures by eroding key institutions, the civil
service, public administration structures and nascent civil society organizations.

HIV and the armed forces

In Uganda, as anywhere else, HIV/AIDS mostly affects teenagers and young adults in the
15–49 years age cohort. Since the military is a concentration of individuals in this age bracket,
it is here that the impact of the epidemic is felt most. As a matter of fact, AIDS is now the
leading cause of death in the military and police forces in some African countries, including
Uganda, accounting for more than half of all deaths of service members.[76]

A voluntary survey of 3,000 members of the UPDF completed in 2001 showed that the
prevalence within the organization was 27 per cent,[77] the equivalent of a battalion of infected
personnel per brigade. This is four times the prevalence among the general populace.[78] The

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76   Fidas and Noah, 'The Global Infectious Disease Threat and Its Implications for the United States'.

77   ICG, *HIV/AIDS as a Security Issue in Africa: Lessons from Uganda*, 6. On the same page, the report further alludes to a
      prevalence rate of 70 per cent. This is a misrepresentation of data on HIV/AIDS as a mortality factor.

78   It is already an established fact that military forces are generally two to five times more likely too contract sexually
      transmitted diseases than the civilian population, the risk rising to fifty times more likely during conflict (UNAIDS,
      'AIDS and the Military: A UNAIDS Point of View').

situation with the police force is less severe, but equally grim. According to a superintendent of police in charge of the HIV/AIDS control project in the force, up to 13 per cent of the police officers in Kampala are HIV-positive.[79] When this is combined with the impact of the epidemic on other sectors of society, the result is an all-embracing degradation of security force readiness.

HIV/AIDS as a financial burden

Healthlink Worldwide estimates that the cost of HIV/AIDS therapy per patient, depending on whether the drugs are generic or branded, is between USD 350 and USD 6,000 per year.[80] At the established prevalence rate of 27 per cent, about 15,000 personnel, the equivalent of 20 battalions, may be infected with HIV.[81] The cost of treatment and maintenance for such a large number of infected personnel is beyond the means of a country like Uganda, yet the dilemma is that the military has the duty to provide health support to its members and their families. If Uganda is to live up to its contract with its 15,000 or so servicemen that may be infected with HIV/AIDS, the country would have to incur an annual expenditure of UGX 9.45–162 billion, which is over 40 per cent of the UGX 377 billion budgeted for defence and security, over 30 per cent of the health expenditure plan and 162 per cent of the estimated wage bill for the UPDF for the 2007/08 financial year,[82] while at the national level, it is estimated that providing triple-combination anti-retroviral treatment to all people leaving with HIV would cost 61 per cent of GDP.[83] Thus, the country's dearth of resources to effectively combat the HIV/AIDS threat poses serious challenges that have ramifications in all areas of national well-being, not least in that of responsiveness to security emergencies.

Impact of HIV/AIDS on mission readiness

Due to its effects on the health of personnel, HIV/AIDS has an impact on the readiness of military forces by affecting recruitment/replacement, training/career progression, deployment and sustainability. The epidemic has this impact through shrinking the population base from which new personnel can be enlisted, reducing the opportunities for preparing serving personnel for higher responsibilities, reducing their availability for duty and increasing the costs of supporting afflicted individuals.

Sero-surveys carried out among members of the general population in the 16–19 years age cohort have revealed that the epidemic has reduced the recruitment/replacement pool by about 20 per cent.[84] In addition, HIV has been reported to be reducing the size and growth of Uganda's labour force and military recruitment pool. By 2010, it is estimated that there will be approximately two million people less than would have been the case without the

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79   *The Monitor,* 2005. '*Uganda AIDS: Does ABC Work?* 27 September.

80   Cited in Sagala, 'HIV/AIDS and the Military in Sub-Saharan Africa', 61.

81   The present strength of the UPDF is 55,000 (Republic of Uganda, *White Paper on Defence Transformation,* 31).

82   *New Vision,* 2007. 'Defence Budget: Uganda Measures Poorly against Others'. 26 August.

83   Hogg et al., 'One World, One Hope'.

84   Mugerwa, 'Correlates of HIV-1 Infection Rates in Military Recruits in Uganda'.

HIV epidemic. This amounts to 12 per cent of the projected manpower base for military recruitment.[85]

HIV prevalence among service personnel has a profound impact on how the military is organized and its posture in responding to, containing and resolving conflicts. The physical stress associated with military duty hastens the onset of full-blown AIDS, which will lead to opportunistic infections that include respiratory disease, diarrhoea, skin ailments and central nervous system symptoms. Studies carried out on combat personnel indicate that diarrhoea, for example, causes a sharp drop in job performance. Of surveyed personnel, 62 per cent required medical care, 31 per cent required intravenous rehydration and 17 per cent were confined to bed for two median days, resulting in 3.7 days of complete work loss per 100 person-months.[86] According to an International Crisis Group report, personnel living with HIV have limited endurance and became lethargic, while other studies report instances of depression, short-term memory loss,[87] cognitive dissonance and suicidal tendencies.[88]

As De Waal notes, organizations such as the military and police 'are classic cases of long career path organisations reliant on skilled, specialised and experienced personnel, and the integrity of units that have served together for extended periods'.[89] This is especially the case with specialist branches and services that utilize aircraft, and technology-intensive combat support elements such as air defence, field artillery and armour. Air forces may lose viability, since the cost of training several personnel for every available slot to make allowance for HIV/AIDS attrition may be prohibitive. Crews and squads of weapons systems operate most effectively when individual teams are kept intact, both during training and in the field. The death or incapacitation of a long-serving intelligence officer who is well versed in the workings of an adversary may determine battlefield outcomes. Therefore, in the context of a country like Uganda, evaluation of the real impact of HIV/AIDS on readiness and, by implication, responsiveness has to be taken beyond the numbers of those who fall sick and die, to include their position in the organizations of which they are members. In a context of chronic shortfalls in skills and experience, the death or incapacitation of one officer can ground a weapons system, just as it could spawn the collapse of an institution.[90]

At the operational and tactical levels, the efficacy of even the most formidable military ultimately hinges on the integrity of its combat units, especially for infantry-based militaries like the UPDF. In turn, the integrity of combat units relies on the soundness of their smallest building blocks, the fire teams. A fire team is made up of two riflemen who look out for each other and provide the first line of combat and combat service support to each other. Within a fire team, when one service member sustains an injury, his 'buddy' provides him with the

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85   Bollinger et al., 'The Economic Impact of AIDS in Uganda', 11.

86   Sanders et al., 'Military Importance of Diarrhea'.

87   ICG, *HIV/AIDS as a Security Issue in Africa; Lessons from Uganda'*, 7.

88   Heinecken, 'HIV/AIDS, the Military and the Impact on National and International Security'.

89   De Waal, 'How will HIV/AIDS Transform African Governance?'

90   In 1983, the death in a helicopter crash of the chief of staff and operational commander of the UNLA, Maj. Gen. David Oyite Ojok, is known to have marked the beginning of the collapse of the national military force in its campaign against Museveni's NRA.

Figure 4 Burdens imposed by HIV/AIDS on the Ugandan military
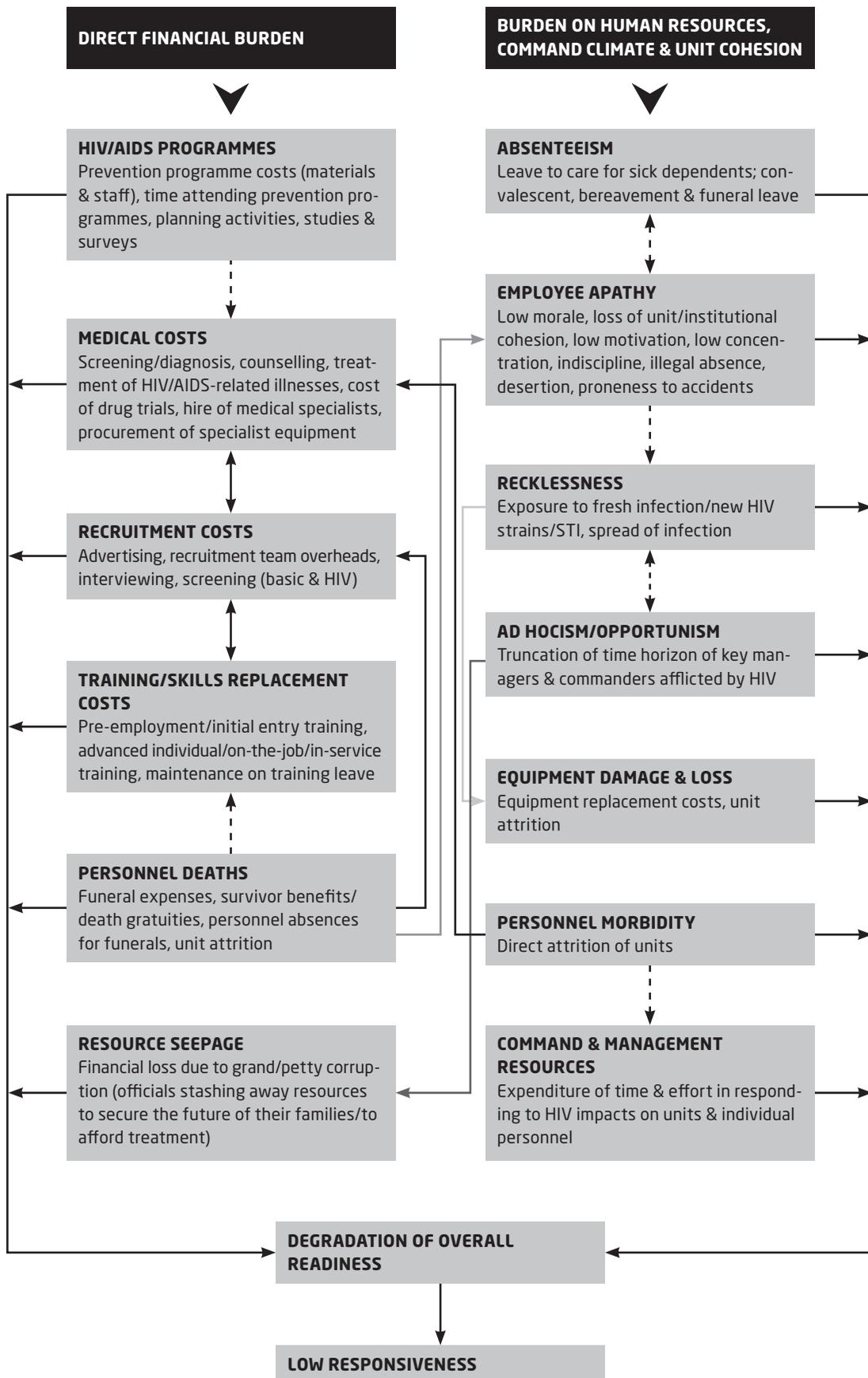
first line of medical support, including first aid and evacuation from further danger. Combat evacuation and first aid involve exposure to the blood and other body fluids of the injured and all the associated risks. If frontline personnel are apprehensive about each other's HIV sero-status, they may grow reluctant to come to one another's aid when they incur battlefield injury because of the fear of being exposed to HIV infection. Thus, HIV/AIDS occasions the crumbling of the basic building blocks of military organizations by, firstly, thinning out the glue that holds fighting units together through rupturing the bonds of mutual support between individual soldiers. Secondly, when soldiers develop the perception that because of their suspect HIV sero-status, even their 'buddies' will not come to their aid if they are injured in battle, they will have limited inclination to take risks in the face of the enemy. Such soldiers will not be 'responsive' to the bidding of their commanders, and military personnel that are unresponsive to the orders of their immediate superiors make for military forces that are unresponsive to their role of defending their countries against external aggression and internal subversion. Figure 4 deals with the burdens that HIV/AIDS imposes on the military.

Impact of HIV/AIDS on political participation and institutional capacity

The characteristically small size of the national elite in Uganda and the even smaller size of the politically dominant group undermine the robustness and responsiveness of the political system in the face of devastation by HIV/AIDS. The country's unstable political past and the violent jostling for power set the stage for the formation of groups of counter-elites with restricted membership. At the apex of these organizations, a clear example of which is the National Resistance Movement Organization (NRMO), power is based on narrow, uninstitutionalized and highly personal networks that include soldiers; former schoolmates; party, government, business and civil society leaders; and kinship groups. It is these networks that are being emasculated by HIV/AIDS as it kills off or incapacitates 'trusted' inner members of elite circles. The failure to fill the resulting gaps is bound to result in uncertainty, followed by the closing of ranks by the survivors, increased reliance on a smaller circle of loyal comrades, intolerance of dissent, the centralization of power, and underhand methods of co-optation and buying of support.[91] Some of these tendencies are already evident in the functioning of the Ugandan state.

Reduced life expectancy of key individuals in government, the military and bureaucracy, added to the need to procure costly life-saving anti-retrovirals for themselves and their family members and also to salt away resources to sustain one's family after one's death, 'distorts the incentives and deterrents for opportunistic or corrupt behaviour'. Some individuals have few alternatives to meet these immediate and future demands except through taking commissions on departmental and government procurement programmes or the diversion of public funds. More importantly, the effective management of complex organizations like states requires key actors to have a stake in the future and to have a long-term perspective. HIV/AIDS shortens life spans and truncates the time horizons of those that are

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91   De Waal, 'How Will HIV/AIDS Transform African Governance?', 15.

directly affected, compelling them to focus on the situation right in front of them, with far-reaching implications for responsiveness.

Changes in the incentive structure sparked off by HIV/AIDS are not confined only to the political, military and bureaucratic elite. Ordinary citizens, most of them with limited means to deal with the ravages of the epidemic, are equally affected. A study on the impact of the epidemic on governance in East and Southern Africa has noted that HIV is undermining political participation by

> *weakening the capacities and effectiveness of the largely voluntary civil society organizations that are at the vanguard of grass-roots democratization. It is also possible that, where large numbers are battling for survival in the face of HIV/AIDS, whether people are themselves sick or caring for sick dependents, [or attending funerals] they will have less time and energy for political participation of most kinds.*[92]

As already noted, participation encompasses all those activities by private citizens aimed at influencing governmental decision-making, be it electoral activity, particularized contacting, rioting, armed resistance or the organization of civic groups. The exiting by individuals and communities from such activities blocks most avenues available to ordinary citizens to influence policy processes, with direct implications for governmental responsiveness.

3.1.4 Aid dependency

At least half of Uganda's recurrent expenditures are met using aid donations. More than anything else, this level of dependence on unearned income is a manifestation of the country's economic underdevelopment and limited capabilities. But of relevance to decision-making, aid dependency has contradictory consequences: on the one hand, freeing government from dependence on its own population to raise revenues and, on the other, making political elites less inclined to heed the preferences of domestic constituencies.[93]

In the long run, unearned state income reduces the need for government to exert itself politically or organizationally. Elites of an aid-dependent country such as Uganda are likely to have minimal incentives to develop regulatory, administrative, extractive and technical capacity. As Moore notes, 'a state that has a number of distinct and effective services to assess and collect income, property, customs and turnover taxes from a wide range of citizens is working more for its income than a state that receives large annual cash disbursements from aid'.[94] A state of the first type will attempt to develop an extensive, elaborate and differentiated bureaucratic apparatus to collect its income, and it will have an interest in providing physical safety, justice, law and order to its citizens to enable them to improve their productive capacity and thus enhance their taxability.

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92   Gordon et al., 'A Study to Establish the Connections between HIV/AIDS and Conflict', 13.

93   See, for example, Knack, 'Aid Dependence and the Quality of Governance'; Moore, 'Revenues, State Formation, and the Quality of Governance in Developing Countries'; Ross, 'Does Taxation Lead to Representation?'; and Moss et al., 'An Aid Institutions Paradox?'.

94   Moore, 'Political Underdevelopment', 23.

Related to the foregoing, dependence on unearned income removes the need by governments to nurture an effective civil service. This may partly explain why, for example, President Museveni was able to mention openly to World Bank officials that, 'though he was going along with their plans to reform the civil service, deep down in his heart he was not in it'.[95] It is equally not surprising that, globally, Uganda is ranked sixth amongst countries most hit by the brain drain. According to the World Bank, 36 per cent of the country's graduates live abroad.[96] Out migration may be a result of pull factors within the countries and regions that attract emigrants; but it may also result from push factors spawned by the feeling that one's potential contribution is not valued by a complacent policy elite that is content only with a minute group of 'good cadres' that are assigned to interact with aid donors and other funding agencies. Resources that donors intend for use on public projects may be used to co-opt or neutralize political opponents;[97] while the building of armed forces and intelligence services may overshadow the strengthening of the machineries of other public institutions. Arguably, much of the freedom of action that political elites in aid-dependent countries exhibit can be partly attributed to the fiscal emancipation that derives from aid disbursements.

In addition, aid increases the resources available to central government, which, in conditions of limited social mobility, as in Uganda, heightens the attractiveness of state power by competing elites. When non-productive elites develop the perception that economic advancement is only possible through accessing state power, then political contests become a matter almost literally of life and death.[98] Equally, those that are holding tenuously onto power may have little incentive to focus on anything else, citizen preferences and concerns included.

Moreover, aid dependence has a deleterious effect on transparency and, subsequently, accountability, both of which are crucial facets of responsiveness. Where, as in Uganda, government depends largely on resources from outside the country, it becomes relatively easy to hide the expenditure of such resources from public view. This may not happen if revenue is mobilized from the citizenry. If revenue is mobilized from within the country, the population will be automatically disposed to engage directly in politics and will wish to influence the spending of their money.[99]

When political elites are fiscally emancipated from reliance on their populations, they find it unnecessary to defer to the latter's policy preferences. The principal victim is responsiveness. The freedom that the political elites enjoy, thanks to unearned income, renders any

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95   *The East African* (Nairobi), 2001. 'Uganda's Civil Service Is Dying – So What?' 8–14 October. Available from http://charlesobbo.com/articles533.html.

96   *The People's Daily*, 2005. '36 Percent of Uganda's College-educated Citizens Live Abroad'. 30 October. Available from http://english.people.com.cn/200510/30/eng20051030_217731.html.

97   Much attention may also be paid to building robust armed forces and intelligence apparatuses to keep everyone else in line.

98   According to the Parliament of the Republic of Uganda, the 2001 presidential and parliamentary elections claimed at least 17 lives and involved 1,216 incidents of violence (*Report of the Parliamentary Committee on Election Violence,* 144–48).

99   Indeed, in the now-mature liberal democracies, past attempts by monarchs to raise greater levels of revenue when they could no longer depend on prerogative taxes (such as taxes from royal lands, feudal aids, proceeds from justice and taxes on the clergy) led to the creation of varieties of political representation, including parliaments. As Bates and Lien observe, 'in both England and France it was the taxation of moveable property that promoted the conferral of political representation by revenue-seeking monarchs' ('A Note on Taxation, Development, and Representative Government', 55).

demands for 'accountability to the citizens' rather specious: the citizens do not pay the piper and therefore cannot call the tune. Indeed, as would be expected, aid-dependent governments tend to be responsive largely to the demands of donors.[100] In the absence of popular pressures from tax-paying asset bearers to compel governments to yield progressive policies in exchange for revenues, any reference to responsiveness is bound to be hollow and unrealistic.

3.2 Political factors

3.2.1 Post-liberation politics and legacies of the guerrilla heritage

Much of the approach to statecraft and political management of Uganda's ruling party, the NRMO, is a reflection of the rebel origins of the NRM and the revolutionary background of its leaders. The NRM is one of the few sub-Saharan African ruling political organizations that are led by political elites that ascended to power through revolutionary warfare based on guerrilla strategy and tactics.[101] Recognition of this fact is crucial to the understanding of the NRM elite's approaches to decision-making. Like similar movements elsewhere, the NRM was a spin-off of the deep-seated weaknesses in Uganda's statehood inherited from colonialism and is therefore a derivative of the structural features and historical setting of the country. But more important still, insurgent organizations like the antecedents of the NRMO owe their existence and character to individual initiative and charisma. Whether in China, Vietnam, the former Yugoslavia, Cuba or Uganda, the significance of the personal initiative of those that have inspired revolutionary organizations has had a long-term effect on the style of government of those countries.

Balancing radical reform with the functioning of 'established' structures

The general thrust of the ideological position of the NRM and its predecessor organizations, the Front for National Salvation (Fronasa) and later the Uganda Patriotic Movement – both of them successively led by Yoweri Museveni – was to shift the country away from the political and economic order established by the colonial administration, in what Museveni promised to be 'a fundamental change and not a mere change of guards'.[102] The NRM was therefore committed to dismantling the established political and bureaucratic structures. Thus, the doctrine and rhetoric of the organization's leaders was essentially anti-establishment, and hence averse to the common practices and procedures of bureaucracy and mainstream

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100   Likewise, there is limited inclination to defer to popular preferences by governments that rely on revenue from strategic natural resources such as oil. Such revenue is also unearned income. This can partly explain the style of government in oil-rich countries.

101   The NRA/M was the first guerrilla movement in Africa to carry out a successful insurgency (also commonly referred to as protracted people's war or partisan warfare) against an indigenous regime. Others are Eritrea, Ethiopia, Chad and Rwanda. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the resulting historical irrelevance of the Non-Aligned Movement may have compelled the NRM and other similar movements to take a more pragmatic approach, but most of its basic organizational features, especially the fusion of the political and military realms of the state, remained unchanged.

102   Inaugural speech, 26 January 1986.

management. The structures that the NRM could not completely overhaul and restaff with 'cadres' were either sidelined from decision-making or consigned to an uneasy coexistence with the new government. Policy-making structures inherited from the bush days became the alternative apparatus. The NRM/NRA succeeded on the basis of inspiring its followers by way of demonstrating to them that the bold and imaginative employment of unconventional methods with minimal resources could bring down a neo-colonial government with its well-supplied conventional military force. Contempt for standard and established procedures and structures has thus remained a mobilizational tool and an enduring trait of the key leaders of the NRM.

Indeed, commonplace practices in organizational management and decision-making are at times dismissed as counter-revolutionary and reactionary, with the preference being for revolutionary tactics of organization and methods of work. The doctrine of revolutionary methods of work had a purpose to serve and was dictated both by the conditions under which the NRA operated and the broader mission of forging a new national consciousness. This doctrine will maintain its appeal at least until the first generation of former guerrilla leaders vacates the political scene. As one observer has noted: 'The very process of struggling for liberation . . . may generate political practices that prefigure undemocratic outcomes in the wake of revolutionary success.'[103]

Centralization/personalization of authority

Secondly, 'the leader and the movement are so closely associated that it is hard to conceive of one without the other'.[104] The NRM and the UPDF (formerly the NRA), the two organizations that form the core of the current government, were single-handedly and personally moulded and nurtured by President Museveni from the early 1970s through the years of the emergence of the NRM as a major political force in Uganda. As a successful guerrilla leader, Museveni doubled as the overall field commander of the NRA (renamed the UPDF after the promulgation of the 1995 constitution) and the chairman and chief publicist of the political wing, the NRM. As is common among all guerrilla organizations, the formative years of the NRA were clandestine and secretive, because of the tight conditions under which it operated before taking over power. It is those conditions that dictate the centralization of authority structures. Bush-period legacies of centralization, tight control, fusion and the overlapping of authority that were dictated by the requirements of executing a guerrilla campaign have in many ways become the principal management doctrine of the NRM and have continued to linger on long after the former rebel organization assumed state power.

Because of the differences in scale and complexity between a band of guerrillas or a liberated zone and a state government, employing the methods of management of the former in the running of the affairs of government, as is often the case long after guerrilla movements have seized state power, creates peculiarities in policy management. In the case of Uganda,

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103   Dorman, 'Post-liberation Politics: African Perspectives'.
104   Ibid., 9.

the president's extensive personal authority and the additional power derived from the constitution give him wide-ranging powers as commander-in-chief of the armed forces, and also chairman of most of the organs of the national security system, which include the National Security Council, the UPDF high command and the Defence Forces Council. The president is also the chairman of the ruling NRMO. He appoints cabinet ministers, heads of commissions, high court judges, permanent secretaries, ambassadors, heads of all the security organizations and political heads of the country's 56 districts. A polity that finds sound reasons to centralize power to the degree demonstrated above has to accept that it must make significant trade-offs with respect to the management of the policy cycle in general, and to decision-making in particular. The configuration of power that is associated with this level of centralization sets obvious limits, particularly for those who wish to initiate reform, especially from outside.

Paralysis of decision-making initiative and organizational inertia

As Clapham has pointed out, organizations with guerrilla origins 'allow their leaders a great deal of choice over how they should be organised and how they should operate'.[105] This at times creates organizational inertia, especially when the taking of even the most minor decisions has to await the attention of the highest office. This practice stifles the initiative of policy managers, in addition to causing paralysis in decision-making, with implications for the quality and timeliness of service delivery.

3.2.2 Political system, form of government and decision-making

The specific features of the NRM as a former insurgent organization and their impact on the configuration of political power combine with pre-existing formulations within Uganda's constitution to reinforce the intensity of the centralization of authority in the state government. Two of these formulations are those related to the country being run as a unitary (as opposed to a federal) state and the presidential system of government, as distinguished from the parliamentary or cabinet system. Arising from these two constitutional provisions is a style of policy management that has the potential of limiting the extent to which the preferences of broad constituencies are accommodated. What remains unclear is whether these limitations on space for popular policy preferences in the security or any other domains can be mitigated by simply focussing on the character of political regimes or their individual incumbents, or by merely jiggling security-related institutions. Such is the impression that most prevailing reformist initiatives create. They overlook the inherently undemocratic orientation of the existing constitutional order and how this enhances the concentration of power at the centre. The fixation on the character of transitory regimes is often at the expense of an appreciation of the fact that the constitutional order pre-dates those regimes or their incumbents, and will certainly outlive them.

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105   Clapham, *African Guerrillas,* 8.

Effects of unitary government policy management

The state in Uganda is organized under a unitary government. Such a government has been in place since 1966, when the 'federal' independence constitution collapsed.[106] Although there are several tiers of local government, they owe their existence to the central government and hold power at its discretion. The essential feature of a unitary system such as the one in Uganda is the concentration of all powers in the hands of the central government, with implications for decision-making. With this concentration of power, unitary governments, wherever they exist, are inherently autocratic and exclusionist, compared to federal systems where power is distributed between two types of government. Further, excessive centralization takes decision-making autonomy away from lower units. The common result is the neglect of local affairs, given the common tendency of the centre to become detached from the priorities of outlying regions. Neglect of local affairs is especially common in countries like Uganda, where a unitary state presides over an ethnically heterogeneous population.

Presidentialism versus parliamentary government

In the presidential system such as the one that is in operation in Uganda, policy-making power is divided between the two directly elected bodies, the presidency and the legislature.[107] However, executive authority (administrative, managerial, law-making and decision-making authority) in Uganda is vested in the president. Chapter 7, Article 99(1) of the constitution states that: 'The executive authority of Uganda is vested in the President.' This is in addition to Article 98(1), according to which: 'There shall be a President of Uganda who shall be the Head of State, Head of Government and Commander-in-Chief of the Uganda Peoples.'

More than just expressing the possible wish for a regime to concentrate decision-making authority in a single office or for the president to personalize power, these constitutional provisions clearly set the stage for the over-centralization of power, irrespective of the democratic credentials of the chief executive. This point is often disregarded by reform initiatives that focus on executors of 'security sector' policies (the military, the police, intelligence services, etc.), while paying little or no heed to the constitutional sources of the authority wielded by key decision-makers. ■

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106   The pseudo-federal independence constitution became unworkable as a result of the failure to co-exist by the government of Uganda and that of the centrally located Kingdom of Buganda. Put simply, the constitution had to fail because of its Orwellian orientation that meant that all political units in the new state of Uganda were equal, but Buganda was more equal than the rest.

107   The common system for distribution of policy-making power in the developed Commonwealth countries is the parliamentary/cabinet system.

Chapter 4
The nature and limitations of current responses to insecurity

4.1 The security environment

4.1.1 Internal insecurity

Uganda continues to face protracted conflict, due to the LRA insurgency in the northern districts of Acholi. Confrontations between the rebels and government forces and rebel abductions of civilians subsided considerably following the launching in July 2006 of peace negotiations in Juba with the direct support of the African Union, the UN and the Government of Southern Sudan. The peace talks have proceeded in fits and starts, with the LRA in early 2007 citing insecurity of its personnel due to attacks by government forces. The LRA also demanded a change of venue for the peace talks from Southern Sudan to Kenya and, more recently, to other countries.

The western districts on the border with the DRC continue to be affected by the presence of the Allied Democratic Front (ADF) insurgents who continue to operate with ease from across the border.

No end seems likely to the long-standing insecurity in the Karamoja region, in spite of (or perhaps because of) the intensification by the government of efforts to disarm the armed pastoralists forcefully in an exercise that began in 2001.[108] Cattle raids amongst Karamoja communities, usually involving the loss of lives, continue to plunge the region deeper into anarchy. This has made the livelihoods of the population of the region even more precarious, worsening the effects of decades of socioeconomic marginalization. This is exacerbated by the cross-border raids by the Karimojong and other pastoral communities into neighbouring Sudan and Kenya. This is in the context of the collective threat of ecological scarcity that all these pastoral communities continue to face. The many decades of civil conflict in southern Sudan and the collapse of civil order in Somalia have been a contributing factor to the insecurity in Karamoja.

The easy availability of small arms and the commercialization of cattle raiding has only served to worsen the intensity and violence of communal strife in a region where an AK-47 costs the equivalent of USD 57 and a round of ammunition costs 12 US cents.[109] Violence in

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108   This issue is examined more carefully in the Muhereza case study, 'The Politics of Security Decision-Making in Uganda'.
109   *New Vision*, 2007. 'Cheap Guns Flood Borders'. 19 March. Available from http://www.newvision.co.ug/PA/8/13/555044.

the region is not confined only to Karamoja, but continues to affect all neighbouring districts and to amplify the effects of the LRA insurgency in the adjacent areas of Acholi and Lango.

The availability of small arms has not only affected Karamoja and neighbouring districts, but has spilt into the rest of the country, leading to widespread armed criminality, especially in the large urban centres. Abundant small arms and large numbers of irregularly immobilized military personnel and militias who are poorly managed or unofficially created continue to fuel insecurity in all regions of the country and to overwhelm the meagre capacities of the police force. It is believed that the country has at least 400,000 illegal small arms, half of which are in the hands of the LRA and the Karamojong.[110]

Violent confrontations between security forces and opposition groups continue to fuel fears of the potential of internal instability as the country goes through the ongoing political transition that marked the freeing of political parties.

4.1.2 Regional security

Uganda and its regional neighbours have similar sources of domestic insecurity, many of which have continued to intermesh across borders to create a volatile regional security environment. In the north, the LRA has become a serious threat to regional peace and security by extending its operational bases beyond southern Sudan to neighbouring northeastern DRC. Within southern Sudan, the LRA was for many years used by the government in Khartoum to destabilize the resource-rich south, and remains a threat to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. Throughout the 1990s, the government in Khartoum funded the LRA as a means to pressure the southern-based rebel forces and as a proxy to destabilize northern Uganda as a reprisal against Uganda for its alleged support for the Sudan Peoples Liberation Army.

In 2006, the LRA expanded its zone of operation to cover parts of eastern DRC, and set up camps in Garamba National Park. There are other reports that the LRA is also operating as far afield as the Central African Republic, where it is aiding rebels fighting the Bangui government.[111]

The presence of the LRA in eastern DRC has heightened the persistent tensions between the governments of Uganda and the DRC, especially as President Museveni has threatened to authorize the UPDF to launch attacks across the border to flush the insurgents out of their hideouts. The Government of Uganda continues to threaten that it will deploy its military on the territory of its vast neighbour if the Kinshasa government does not take steps to deny the rebels sanctuary.[112] Uganda has previously intervened in the DRC together with Rwanda and Burundi, sparking off a conflict that sucked in four additional countries and threatening to spawn a regional conflagration. A recent ruling by the International Court

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110   *New Vision,* 2007. '400,000 Small Arms in Uganda'. 16 March. Available from http://www.newvision.co.ug/D/8/13/554531.

111   *New Vision,* 2007. 'Kony Heads to Central African Republic'. 19 February. Available from http://www.newvision.co.ug/D/8/12/550033/MONUC,%20LRA.

112   *Sunday Vision* (Kampala), 2007. 'Uganda Threatens to Enter DRC'. 1 April. Available from http://www.newvision.co.ug/D/8/13/557287/MONUC,%20LRA.

of Justice requires Uganda to pay reparations for its plunder of the DRC's resources during this intervention.

The Hutu Interahamwe seeking refuge in the DRC from Rwanda continue to pose a threat not just to their mother country, but also to the population of the districts of south-western Uganda. The ability of other Hutu rebel groups such as the Forces Democratiques de Liberation du Rwanda or Democratic Liberation Forces of Rwanda to use Uganda as a staging post and transit route has remained a source of irritation in the relations between Uganda and Rwanda and a justification by the latter to host members of the People's Redemption Army, a dissident group that is opposed to the government in Kampala. Relations between the two countries were excellent until their militaries clashed during their joint occupation of the DRC. Ever since, the two countries have had uneasy relations that have at times moved them close to all-out war. Mutual suspicions between Uganda and Rwanda have recently been eased following the signing of the Nairobi pact on security, stability and development and the exchange of dissidents.

The presence of the Islamist ADF in eastern DRC from the mid-1990s and its ability to launch incursions into Uganda with ease was one of the reasons that prompted President Museveni to back the rebel forces of Laurent Kabila to depose President Mobutu of Zaire (later the DRC). The ADF was able to establish itself in the vast and undergoverned eastern DRC, not so much because of complicity by the Kinshasa government, but largely due to the inability of the Zairean state to effectively police the territory under its jurisdiction. It is with this realization that the newly installed President Laurent Kabila and President Museveni agreed in 1997 on the deployment of the UPDF in areas that the government in Kinshasa had no capacity to police, in what subsequently developed into an illegal occupation. The ADF still operates from bases in eastern DRC, and in spite of the confidence-building measures and commitments made at the recent summits, Uganda still maintains that it has the right to deploy its forces unilaterally in eastern DRC in order to take on the rebels.[113]

It is yet to be seen how successful the governments of the Great Lakes region will be in implementing the regional pact on security, stability and development signed by foreign ministers of the 11 core countries in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania in November 2004 and its subsequent signing by the respective heads of state at an international conference in Nairobi in December 2006.[114] The pact spans issues related to security, democracy and good governance; economic development and regional integration; and humanitarian and social affairs. The Dar es Salaam meeting identified major sources of regional instability, including the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, border insecurity, large numbers of irregularly disbanded former combatants and the lack of defence and security co-operation among countries in the region.

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113   Ibid.

114   The countries are Angola, Burundi, the Central African Republic, the DRC, the Republic of Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.

4.2 State capabilities: an overview of key actors, their reach and interrelations

4.2.1 Statutory security forces

The military: Uganda Peoples Defence Forces (UPDF)

The UPDF is the principal arm of the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and forms the core around which most of the security apparatus is constituted.[115] The UPDF is largely a light infantry force with its roots in the tradition of leftist liberation movements of the 1970s. It has evolved over a period of 30 years, starting off as Fronasa, which was formed by Museveni and trained in Tanzania and Mozambique in the 1970s in preparation for the war that deposed Idi Amin in 1979. In 1981, it was renamed the NRA, which went on to wage a successful Maoist insurgency, overrunning the capital, Kampala in 1986 to bring Museveni to power. The 1995 national constitution renamed the NRA the UPDF to de-link it, at least in name, from the ruling NRM.

One of the factors that continues to hamper the effectiveness of the UPDF is its inability to outgrow its origins as an irregular force and an embodiment of the will and vision of its founder, President Museveni. Strong personal loyalties continue to bind Museveni and the commanders that fought with him in the early days of Fronasa and the NRA. Many of these commanders occupy key positions in the UPDF today, in spite of the fact that they lack the formal training required to manage a modern military organization. This has impacted heavily on the force's effectiveness and probity. Moreover, the UPDF was born as an organ of a political organization. Even after ceasing to be a guerrilla organization, it has remained subordinate to the NRM, although the latter has since become a political party.

The slow pace of the regularization of the UPDF is in large part attributable to Museveni's need to maintain a firm grip on the force. He has achieved this by carefully maintaining the loyalty of key officers, thus strengthening the UPDF's central role as an arbiter in political contests. This has been highlighted by the increasing prominence of the Presidential Guard Brigade (PGB) – formerly the Presidential Protection Unit (PPU) – as a semi-autonomous military force. The PPU was originally a small unit of about 200 personnel tasked with providing for the security of the president without the need to divert personnel from combat units. In the last five years, its strength has been raised to at least 10,000, about 20 per cent of the national military.[116] The president's son is the commander of the PGB's motorized infantry component, and according to some, the de facto commander of the PGB.[117]

During the debate on the UPDF Bill in 2003, there was an attempt by elements close to the president to make the PGB 'a separate, independent armed force inorganic to the UPDF'. However, this did not receive endorsement from the country's legislators,[118] causing the public to interpret the move as the manifestation of Museveni's intention to build a personal mili-

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115 Personnel of the Internal and External Security Organizations are secondees from the UPDF, and since 2001, the inspectors general of police have been drawn from the military.

116 Barkan, 'A Success that Has Peaked', 7. See also *Monitor*, 2004. 'Museveni Has 10,000 Guards'. 24 March.

117 See *New Vision*, 2003. 'PPU Becomes Presidential Guard Brigade'. 24 Februrary; and Barkan, 'A Success that has Peaked', 7.

118 *New Vision*, 2004. 'MPs Oppose PGB Autonomy'. 22 September.

tary force.[119] There have also been recurring queries by the legislators on the source of funding for the unit, with reports that it was being budgeted for under State House rather than the MoD (the latter is supposed to fund all military formations in the country).[120] This confirms the common perception that the PGB is a de facto independent force outside the realm of mainstream civil oversight.

Uganda Police Force (UPF)

The UPF, in existence for the last 100 years, has suffered from the effects of political instability, just like all other national institutions. Years of institutional collapse depleted whatever there was of the rudimentary capacity and leadership of the force inherited from colonialism, to the point that, by the time of the emergence of the NRM government, the UPF was only 8,000 strong, dropping further to 5,000 following the mandatory discharge of officers that were considered unfit for further service in the late 1980s.[121] The force remains saddled by the long-standing shortages in all aspects of its functioning, ranging from manpower, housing,[122] training and means of mobility to pay. The current strength of the force is reported to be 15,000.[123] According to the UN, the optimum ratio of police personnel to the population for effective policing is 1:450.[124] With the current population of 28 million, Uganda's ratio is 1:1,866. According to international standards, the current population should be policed by at least 62,000 police officers. This implies that the UPF is currently undermanned by more than 300 per cent, with the unstable northern region of the country having a much lower policing ratio than the national average, as the table below shows.

Table 3 Policing in northern Uganda

Sub-region	Police to population ratio
Northwest (Arua, Adjumani, Moyo, Nebbi, Yumbe)	1:5,129
Central northern (Pader, Kitgum, Gulu, Lira, Apac)	1:4,803
Northeast (Amuria, Katakwi, Kaberamaido, Soroti, Kumi, Pallisa, Sironko, Kapchorwa)	1:2,884
Karamoja (Moroto, Nakapiripirit, Kotido)	1:7,202
Regional average	**1:5,004**
National average	**1:1,866**

Source: Republic of Uganda, *Our North*, 16

119   *Monitor*, 2005. 'Museveni Building Own Army'. 23 August.

120   *Monitor*, 2001. 'Defence Lacks Funds for PPU'. 26 October.

121   Biddle et al., *Uganda Police Project Evaluation*.

122   See *Monitor*, 1999. 'Nsambya Police Live in Mortuary, Kitchen'. 18 September. Available from http://allafrica.com/stories/printable/199909180041.html.

123   *New Vision*, 2002. 'Police Must Grow'. 2 February.

124   This ratio is traceable to the constabulary requirements in the American Zone of Occupation in Germany at the end of World War II, and has since been adopted as a doctrinal template for international policing. A force of 2.2 police personnel per thousand Germans (the equivalent of a ratio of 1:450) was found to be adequate for the limited objectives of enforcing public order, controlling black market transactions and performing other basic policing functions (Quinlivan, 'Force Requirements in Stability Operations').

Figure 4 Ratio of police staff to one million members of the population by region

NUMBER OF STAFF
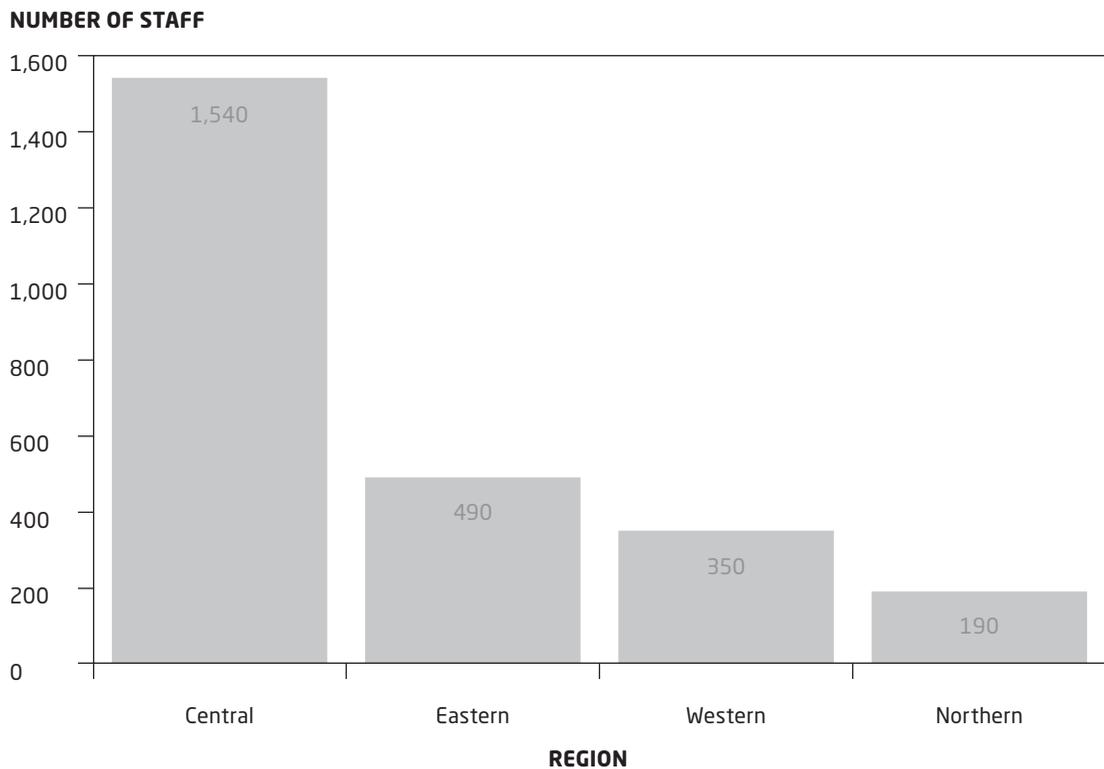
Source: Republic of Uganda, 'A Criminal Justice Baseline Survey', 78

In 2002, although the UPF needed 576 vehicles to carry out its basic missions, it had only 256 – less than half of what was required.[125] This lack of transportation assets compelled the inspector general of the force to personally appeal to the business community for financial resources for the purchase of vehicles for the force.

The generally low operational capacity of the UPF has been partly manifested by the escalation of violent crime, especially in the large urban centres. In 2003, this resulted in the formation of a largely military task force, the Violent Crime Crack Unit (VCCU), to augment the police. The formation of the VCCU and the increased secondment of UPDF personnel to the UPF continue to cause concerns about the future of the professional integrity of the police force. There are media reports that up to 1,200 military personnel may already be assigned to the force.[126] For the last five years, the force has been under the command of serving generals seconded from the UPDF.[127]

The intelligence agencies

The two main intelligence organizations are the Internal and External Security Organizations (ISO and ESO, respectively), established in 1987 by a legal instrument, Statute 10 of the Security

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125   *New Vision,* 2002. 'Police Needs 576 Vehicles'. 19 June.

126   *East African,* 2005. 'Growing Concern as Ugandan Army "Infiltrates" Police Force'. 23 November.

127   The formation of the VCCU is the subject of Ssenkumba's case study ('Decision-Making in the Provision of Public Security in an Urban Setting').

Organisations Statute of 1987.[128] The ISO is responsible for 'internal' security, with a four-tier structure down to the village level running parallel to the local government hierarchy. The ESO is responsible for security abroad.

State-approved community policing: Local Administration Police and Local Defence Forces

The ascendance of the NRM on Uganda's political scene has been marked by a radical transformation of the structure of local government, justice and policing systems with the introduction of local councils (LCs), formerly called resistance councils.[129] A legislative bill, the Local Council Courts Bill of 2003, conferred upon the councils executive and judicial powers. Among the functions of LCs is the mobilization of communities under their jurisdiction on matters related to law and order, law enforcement through the LC-funded and recruited Local Administrative Police, and providing physical safety through the locally enlisted Local Defence Forces (LDFs), who were constituted into Local Defence Units (LDUs). The councils also vet potential military enlistees, gather criminal data, serve as local courts, provide psychosocial care to victims of crime and promulgate by-laws that reflect local needs.

Community liaison officers and crime prevention panels

Community liaison officers (CLOs) were the outcome of the community policing programme initiated in 1989 as a joint project between the Uganda government and the UK government. Community policing emerged as a means of '[m]obilizing rural settlements that are distant from the towns to participate in policing themselves [which] becomes an effective way of according the rural poor access to justice'.[130] CLOs – also characterized as the 'soft link between the police and the public'[131] – are mainly involved in educating the public on the law and basic aspects of crime detection and prevention through FM radio talk shows, newspapers, and workshops and seminars in schools and communities. They have also been instrumental in initiating dialogue between the police and communities on security and setting up neighbourhood watch schemes. By the mid-1990s, CLOs had trained about 560 'crime preventers' and established neighbourhood schemes ('crime prevention panels') in several rural and urban communities.

Private security firms (PSFs)

From the early 1990s, the low capacity and limited reach of the UPF resulted in the rapid proliferation of commercial security companies. This was in response to an increased need

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128   This was the first time ever in the history of the country that security organizations were not established by an administrative decision of the chief executive.

129   All adults, even non-citizens, resident in a village are members of the village council and directly elect a nine-person committee to administer the affairs of their locality and to elect higher-level committees at the parish (LC2), sub-county (LC3) and district levels.

130   Rugumayo, 'The Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders', 5.

131   Tindifa and Kiguli, 1997, cited in Davis et al., 'Community Policing: Variations in the Western Model in the Developing World', 294.

for policing following the influx of foreign investors into the country, the escalation of levels of violent crime and the realization by the police force itself that it lacked the capacity to keep pace with demands for the provision of physical safety. In September 2000, the inspector general of police declared that the police force was to withdraw from acting as guards and escorts to the public and to relegate these services to PSFs. The inspector general further indicated that 'the police was to concentrate on public security in the form of foot and mobile patrols'.[132] The members of the wider public responded to the resulting gaps in policing by providing for their personal safety especially through acquiring firearms[133] and hiring the services of private guards. This turned the private security sector into one of the fastest growing and most lucrative businesses in the country.

PSFs currently operate in the large urban centres, mainly in Kampala, where they outnumber the regular police by a factor of two. They also have a presence in rural areas, where they guard commercial plantations, quarries and mineral extraction operations. By the end of 2004, there were at least 87 licensed PSFs staffed by 18,000 personnel, compared to the national police force, whose current strength is 15,000.[134] The clientele of the PSFs include public authorities, small businesses, medium-sized and large businesses, banks and other financial institutions, residential customers, international governmental and non-governmental organizations, high commissions and embassies. The UPF has the sole responsibility for the regulation and operational control of PSFs, under the oversight of an officer of the rank of assistant commissioner of police. PSF control by the UPF is based on the statutory authority of the Police Statute of 1994.

Auxiliary forces

The UPDF Act of 2005 defines auxiliary forces simply as home guards, LDFs and vigilantes.[135] In practice, auxiliary forces are armed groups whose members are drawn from local communities. Auxiliaries are mobilized and trained to provide support to the military as part of the reserve forces. They augment or support regular units working in the local community. The best known example of auxiliaries in Uganda are the LDFs, which became a common feature of security provision in Uganda after 1986 as part of the restructuring of local government by the NRM. The NRM government's alteration of local administration by introducing popularly elected local councils[136] – previously the nine-member resistance committees – also included a secretary for defence under whom all matters to do with LDFs fall.[137] The secretary for defence at the parish level is responsible for identifying members of the local communities who can volunteer for basic military training for subsequent assignment to LDUs.

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132   *New Vision,* 2000. 'Police to Stop Guarding Public'. 6 September.

133   The ISO at one time estimated that the population of the city was in possession of thousands of firearms (*Monitor*, 1999. '10,000 Civilians in Kampala Have Guns'. 23 May).

134   See Baker, 'Post-conflict Policing', 7 and *Monitor*, 2006. 'Can Private Guards Be Trusted?'. 23 May.

135   Part I – Preliminary, Section 2, Interpretation.

136   At the village, parish, sub-county and district levels.

137   There are about 10,000 parishes in the country.

A declaration by the president in a military radio message in 1989 subsequently made LDUs part of the National Reserve Force, with further confirmation being given in public speeches and at rallies.[138] Although the auxiliaries, especially the LDFs, are responsible for protecting their own villages, it is the primary duty of the military to train, arm and command them. In non-emergencies such as routine patrols in the villages, the local council secretary for defence deploys them, and makes arrangements for remuneration for their services from financial contributions from the communities they serve. In parts of the country affected by insurgency and rebellion, LDFs and other auxiliaries operate with the military, either in their own units or as fillers for under-strength units. Auxiliaries are often drafted en masse to participate in large-scale military operations. An example of this was when LDFs from the east of the country were deployed in 1996 to fight the ADF rebels in the west of the country and in 1997 in the DRC.

Apart from the auxiliary forces that are stipulated by law, there are also several militias that have emerged, at times uncontrollably, in response to the increase in the levels of anti-government insurgency and banditry. There are at least a dozen such forces with varying degrees of training and discipline in different parts of the country.[139] In zones of military operations, some of these militia groups are indistinguishable from insurgents and bandits, while others are a source of livelihood insecurity. The Africa Centre for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture Victims in its reports of 2000 and 2002 named LDFs as the worst abusers of human rights, ahead of the military, the police and the Prisons Services, in that order.[140]

As is indeed the case in many sub-Saharan African countries, the functioning of Uganda's security sector is characterized by a wide gap between constitutional stipulations and practical realities. Although the existence of LDUs and other auxiliary forces pre-dates the constitution by a decade, it makes no provisions for these forces, yet they have become a key element in the country's security sector. The constitution of Uganda states that 'no person shall raise an armed force except in accordance with this constitution'.[141] The constitution does not provide for any of these forces, let alone the National Reserve Force, which is supposed to comprise such forces.

Undoubtedly, auxiliaries remain a key asset in providing security, both locally and at the national level. However, the casual accessioning, training and arming of these forces, in addition to the perennial disregard for their welfare, has at times exacerbated the very problems they were created to solve.

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138   See, for example, *Monitor,* 2000. 'Museveni Says LDU is UPDF Reserve'. 18 April and UN Integrated Regional Information Networks, 2001. 'Museveni Directs UPDF to Control Karamoja Vigilantes'. 24 September.

139   They include the home guards and frontier guards (northern Uganda), the Nyekundiire (southwestern Uganda), special police constables (national), local administration police (national), vigilantes (Karamoja), anti-stock theft units (eastern Uganda), the 'Arrow Boys' (Teso region) and the Amuka/Rhino militia (Lango region),

140   *New Vision,* 2002. 'LDUs Named Worst Rights Abusers'. 27 June; *New Vision,* 2002. 'Security Organs Accused of Torture'. 27 June.

141   Republic of Uganda, Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, Article 208(4).

4.2.2 Non-statutory security arrangements

Unofficial private security firms

In addition to state-regulated PSFs, some parts of the country, especially the large urban centres, have witnessed the emergence of unofficial groups that provide services for a fee. Many of these groups are a spin-off from the 1990s training programmes in crime prevention and detection conducted by community liaison officers of the UPF. The training was aimed at reducing the policing burden on the undermanned and ill-equipped UPF and involving communities in local policing. However, some of the crime preventers, as they were called, took on a life of their own and gave themselves illegal policing powers in and outside their neighbourhoods for commercial gain.[142]

Non-state-sanctioned militia forces: the karachuna of Karamoja

Decades of the marginalization and isolation of the Karamoja region and its treatment as a 'special district' have not only kept it out of the mainstream of national development, but have also enabled the people of the region to maintain their traditional structures, especially in decision-making. The decision-making structure is based on the democratic age-set system of power, in which the elders, in consultation with the wider community and with the endorsement of fortune tellers and seers, make decisions on declarations of war, accepting the terms of peace, the relocation of the village from one site to another and the movement of herds. The male youth, or *karachuna*, are the implementers of these decisions. When a reigning age set becomes depleted from mortality or disability, the decision-making powers pass down to the next age set in line.

In recent years, this traditional decision-making structure has become increasingly weaker, with the balance of power shifting to favour the male youth, who do not want to view themselves as merely implementers of the will of the wider community, but as independent agents in their own right. One observer from the region has noted:

> *With the adoption of modern technology in the form of the guns in the hands of the Karimojong, there is a great shift in the traditional power structure. The gun has radically changed the capacity of the young to influence and discipline each other. In this process, the elders have lost their capacity to impose sanctions and order vis-à-vis a group of recalcitrant people who are armed and often living outside the mainstream society.*[143]

They seek to exploit their power as implementers by using threats and violence, and this has taken their role as providers of physical safety out of the control of the elders and beyond the reach of the government, turning them into an independent militia. Government no longer perceives traditional warriors as cultural cattle rustlers, but as 'a big threat', an

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142   Baker, 'Post-conflict Policing', 35.
143   Ngorok, *Power Relations in Karamoja,* 2.

organized group with a command structure, and with the capacity to carry out sustained attacks against government forces.[144]

State-sanctioned paramilitary and intelligence organizations

The security apparatus in Uganda has been characterized by the proliferation of agencies, some of them starting off as operational arms and task forces of the formal security structures. Many have become independent actors and very often vehicles of civilian victimization. The majority of these groups are formed with the approval of certain sections of the state, but without statutory authorization. They are often disowned by the state when their operations attract public disapproval or when no government department wants to pick up the bill for their maintenance.[145] They include the Kalangala Action Plan (KAP), the Popular Intelligence Network (PIN), the Black Mamba Hit Squad, the Joint Anti-Terrorism Taskforce (JATT) and the VCCU.

Kalangala Action Plan[146]

KAP gained prominence during the 2001 electoral season. It was an armed paramilitary/militia launched by President Museveni in October 2000[147] and headed by the senior presidential advisor on political affairs, Major Kakoza Mutale.[148] It is especially active in the run-up to presidential, parliamentary and local government elections, in which it moves ahead of Museveni to assemble enthusiasts in addition to campaigning for his loyalists and intimidating/terrorizing opposition politicians and their supporters, with operatives claiming that they are doing so on the orders of the president. KAP has also been implicated in electoral violence, illegal arrests, abductions of opposition politicians, unauthorized exhumations of the remains of the deceased and extortion.[149] It draws its membership from retired military personnel and NRM loyalists, and even legislators.[150] Museveni is reported to have described KAP as a 'political action group of the Movement which helps in gathering intelligence in disturbed areas',[151] although opposition politicians refer to it as a 'terrorist organisation'

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144   *New Vision,* 2006. 'Karamojong a Threat, Says Nankabirwa'. 8 November. Available from http://www.newvision.co.ug/D/8/13/531045/karachuna.

145   See for example, *Monitor,* 1999. 'UPDF Disowns Major Mutale'. 12 May. Available from http://allafrica.com/stories/199905120143.html; *New Vision,* 2002. 'KAP Not Part of Defence Ministry'. 6 July. Available from http://www.newvision.co.ug/D/8/13/39083/kalangala%20action%20group; and *New Vision*, 2002. 'State House Doesn't Fund Mutale's KAP'. 21 June. Available from http://www.newvision.co.ug/D/8/13/38736/kalangala%20action%20group.

146   KAP had partner groups, the 'Civic Defence Teams' and 'Labeja' in the northern region of Acholi (Rukooko, 'Protracted Civil War, Civil Militias and Political Transition in Uganda', 225) and the Kampala-based 'Mulyankota Development Association Group' (*New Vision*, 2005. 'Mutale Trains New Morale Team'. 15 February. Available from http://www.newvision.co.ug/D/8/13/418269/kalangala%20action%20group.

147   *Monitor,* 2002. 'Museveni "Leader" of Kalangala Action Plan'. 7 March.

148   Kakoza Mutale headed a rebel group, Vumbula, which operated in the Luwero Triangle in the 1980s. The group later allied itself with the NRA.

149   *New Vision,* 2004. 'Mutale Group Faces Probe'. 24 August.

150   In preparation for the 2006 presidential elections, more than 150 members of the national legislature were reported to have registered as members of the KAP (*New Vision*, 2005. '150 MPs Join Kakoza Mutale's Kalangala Action Plan'. 20 April. Available from http://www.newvision.co.ug/D/8/12/429967/kalangala%20action%20group.

151   *New Vision,* 2002. 'Mutale Blasts Tumukunde'. 15 May; Available from http://www.newvision.co.ug/D/8/12/10240.

that, in a move that threatened to spark off the formation of political party militias, they were preparing to confront by force of arms.[152] Relations between KAP and the UPF have not been easy, with reports of confrontation between the two organizations.[153]

Black Mamba Hit Squad

This is known to be part of the military's intelligence branch. The group gained prominence in November 2005, when its operatives sealed off the premises of the High Court in the country's capital to arrest a key opposition politician, Col. Kiiza Besigye, and alleged rebel suspects whose bail application had been approved. This action by the group served to further strain the uneasy relations between the judiciary and the government.

Joint Anti-Terrorism Taskforce & Violent Crime Crack Unit, formerly 'Operation Wembley' task force

These two agencies were constituted by the state from personnel of the statutory security organs in response to various public safety crises. The JATT was formed in the late 1990s, mainly in response to a spate of bombings in the country's capital by agents of the Islamist rebel group, the ADF. It was further strengthened in 2002 by the enactment of the Anti-terrorism Act. It draws its membership from the formal security organizations. The VCCU came into existence in 2002, following the near breakdown of public order especially in the large urban centres due to armed criminality resulting from the widespread availability of small arms. Both organizations have been widely criticized for the illegal detention and torture of suspects and high-handedness.

Popular Intelligence Network

PIN was founded by the National Reserve Force commander, Lt. Gen. Akadwanaho (Salim Saleh), a brother of President Museveni, in 1996 in Gulu, but it was fully implemented by presidential assistant Major Kakoza Mutale of KPA as a loose network of members of the civilian population in the Acholi region to expose LRA collaborators. The activities of PIN in the Acholi region were suspended due to Mutale's excesses.[154] As an intelligence-gathering concept, PIN was revived and successfully employed in Teso in 2003 to deal with the incursions of the LRA in the region.[155] ■

152 *New Vision,* 2005. 'UPC Likens Mutale's Group to Terrorists'. 17 February. Available from http://www.newvision.co.ug/D/8/13/418634/kalangala%20action%20group; *New Vision,* 2005. 'FDC to Start Anti-Mutale Youth Brigade'. 15 February. Available from http://www.newvision.co.ug/D/8/12/418261/kalangala%20action%20group.

153 *New Vision,* 2006. 'Police, Maj. Mutale Clash in Masindi'. 2 March. Available from http://www.newvision.co.ug/D/8/18/484876/kalangala%20action%20group.

154 See for example, *New Vision,* 1999. 'Amnesty Implores Museveni on North'. 18 March.

155 During the Anti-LRA campaign in Teso, PIN was the guide for the UPDF and the local militia, the Arrow Boys (*New Vision,* 2003. 'Arrow Group-People's Power against Kony's Rebels'. 20 August).

Chapter 5
Security decision-making dynamics

5.1 The formal decision-making machinery

5.1.1 The legal framework

The core defence and national security institutions are provided for by Articles 208–22 of the country's constitution.[156] The sixth schedule ('Functions and Services for which Government is Responsible') of article 189 further stipulates that the government is responsible for defence, security, and the maintenance of law and order. In accordance with Article 219 of the constitution, the National Security Council Act of 2000 was passed by the legislature to establish the National Security Council (NRC) as an advisory body to the president on all matters relating to national security. The NRC is purported to be the lead agency in decision-making with regard to defence and security.[157]

Additional legal instruments include Statute No. 13, The Police Statute of 1994; Statute No. 10, the Security Organizations Statute of 1987, which provides for the establishment of the intelligence organizations (the ISO and ESO); Supplement No. 8 of 1997, 'The Control of Private Security Organizations Regulations'; and the Uganda Peoples Defence Forces Act of 2005.

5.1.2 Policy instruments

There is little evidence to suggest that any past governments in Uganda ever pronounced themselves in any detail on the country's security policy, which is probably one of the legacies of political instability. It is only in the 1990s that attempts were made to initiate a debate on defence and security policy. However, this was motivated more by the need to address Western donor concerns regarding transparency in the expenditure of development assistance to the Government of Uganda than by any conviction on the part of government that there was a need for a democratically formulated policy on securing the country.

With increasing Western donor pressure for openness in defence spending, the government initiated several programmes in the 1990s to rationalize the administrative and resource management procedures within the MoD. Donors funded two studies that were intended to identify problems and make recommendations for reforms that could be carried out by the government, with external assistance. The first study was the Logistics and Accounting

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156 Republic of Uganda, The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda.
157 Act 12, Supplement No. 9 of 23 June 2000.

Reform Programme (LARP), carried out in 1997 with World Bank support; while the second was the Uganda Defence Efficiency Study (UDES), conducted in 1998 with UK support.[158] In 2001, the UK government supported a workshop to review the recommendations of the two studies and develop a plan for defence reform. The outcome was the Uganda Defence Reform Programme, of which the first phase was a defence review supported by the UK government.

The Defence Review was conducted during 2002–04 under the auspices of the Defence Reform Unit, located within the MoD. The key policy outputs of the review process were a Security Policy Framework (SPF), a Defence Policy and a *White Paper on Defence Transformation*.[159] The SPF was based on an assessment of the military and non-military threats that Uganda could expect to face in the future. It specifically addressed how these threats could be met, including the roles and responsibilities of different government departments, agencies and security actors. The aim of the SPF was to provide a basis for discussion on how Uganda could develop a more integrated cross-governmental approach to security provision, though it was not intended to be a formal national security policy.

The Defence Policy was Uganda's first formal policy statement ever to clarify the roles and responsibilities of defence in meeting the country's security needs. It identifies a number of broad missions that the UPDF must be prepared to undertake, as well as key 'modernisation themes' where reform will need to focus in order to provide the capability required to fulfil those missions. The government's wider vision for defence transformation is laid out in the *Defence White Paper*.[160] This constitutes the fulfilment of the president's pledge made during the 2001 election campaign to professionalize the UPDF, and more urgently so, to equip the force to execute an effective campaign against the insurgents in the north of the country.

The initial impetus for the Defence Review – and the two studies that preceded it – came from donors who were concerned that rising levels of defence spending would crowd out other areas of spending that, in their view, were deemed as key to poverty reduction, including on health and education. Little progress, as a consequence, was made in implementing the findings of either the LARP or UDES studies, neither of which met the priorities of the Government of Uganda at the time, which was for additional military expenditures, primarily for the purposes of acquiring military equipment. The aim of the Defence Review was to provide a more rational and scientific framework for assessing defence needs and, in so doing, to develop a plan for defence transformation that would both meet Uganda's security needs and be affordable within a medium-term expenditure framework.

While there was a general consensus between government and donors at the outset of the Defence Review that defence spending might need to rise following the Review, views

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158   The key objectives were to maximize the efficiency of defence spending and identify economies in resource use for possible redeployment to non-defence areas. The recommendations were primarily technical in nature, reflecting, on the one hand, the extreme political sensitivity of engaging with the military and, on the other, an assumption that the desired goals could be achieved by internal UPDF reforms. Wider questions concerning the role of the UPDF in Ugandan political life and the economy or the issue of civil control were not addressed in any depth in either the LARP or the UDES.

159   MoD, *White Paper on Defence Transformation*. For a critical review of lessons learned from the Defence Review process, see Hendrickson, *The Uganda Defence Review*.

160   Ibid., 11.

differed on how the money should be spent. While addressing personnel of one of the combat units of the UPDF, the junior minister of defence revealed that '[t]he Ministry of Defence is preparing a comprehensive policy document for donors to approve and support increase in the defence budget', further adding, 'the Government wanted the donors to either bless the increment of the budget or directly support it with grants'.[161]

At the end of the Review, donors turned down government's proposal to increase defence spending by approximately 30 per cent to UGX 392 billion, due to a concern that its spending priorities were not justified by the findings of the Defence Review. Government subsequently reached an understanding with the donors on a budget of UGX 350 billion. Government also agreed to increase transparency on classified spending and to develop a more detailed corporate plan spelling out its plans for defence reform and how this would be financed.

The current status of the defence reform programme would suggest that government may not be committed to implementing the findings of the Defence Review. Government has cited a lack of funds,[162] and there are also evident challenges that relate to institutional capacity within the defence sector more generally, as well as the Defence Reform Secretariat (formerly Unit) tasked with leading the reform process.[163]

But more telling may be the views of the president himself, whose support for the reform process is indispensable if it is to make progress. An indication of the president's thinking on the broader issue of external involvement in Uganda's internal affairs was given in a letter to the UK secretary for international development in 2005, in which he stated:

> What I find unacceptable, however, is for some of you to continue to think, and even say, that because of the modest sums you give a country like Uganda, you are entitled to exercise suzerainty over our sovereignty issues (foreign affairs, politics and defence) our persistent but polite rejections of that position not withstanding. What Uganda and Africa need most is independence in decision making and not subservience, satellite status or dependency status.[164]

The 'sovereignty issues' that the president refers to in this letter cover core matters related to the management of the defence sector and security more broadly, and reflect a recurring theme in his public statements.[165] In light of the fact that security decision-making authority is concentrated in the Presidency, this suggests that unless the president has ownership of current policy frameworks within the defence sector – which represent an attempt to strengthen

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161 *New Vision,* 2005. 'Defence Budget may Rise'. 24 December. Available from http://www.newvision.co.ug/D/8/13/88692/donors,%20defence.

162 Republic of Uganda, *Defence Policy Statement for Financial Year 2006/07.*

163 Discussions are currently under way between the UK and Uganda governments about a follow-up programme of assistance for Defence Review implementation. In addition, the United Kingdom may broaden its support for SSR. A final decision has not yet been made on what this will consist of.

164 *New Vision,* 2005. 'Budget Cuts: Museveni Writes to UK'. 24 December. Available from http://www.newvision.co.ug/D/8/459/472671/museveni%20donors.

165 See, for instance, a talk given to US Senators at Nakasero on 1 April 2005 in which he reiterates the view that constraints on defence spending imposed by donors have set back efforts to fight the problem of 'terrorism' in northern Uganda.

approaches to defence and security planning and decision-making – they will not achieve the desired effects.

5.1.3 Principal formal actors[166]

National Security Council

The NSC was established through an Act of Parliament, the National Security Council Act 12 of 2000. The NSC is chaired by the president, and the members are the ministers of internal affairs, foreign affairs, defence, security and finance, and the attorney general. Also included on the council are the heads of the armed forces (the UPDF, the UPF and Prisons Department), the directors general of the ESO and ISO, the military's chief of intelligence, and the police directors of the Special Branch and Criminal Investigation Department.

The functions of the NSC include:

- informing and advising the president on matters relating to national security;
- co-ordinating and advising on policy matters relating to intelligence and security;
- reviewing national security needs and goals;
- receiving and acting on reports from the Joint Intelligence Committee; and
- carrying out any other function that Parliament may require of the council.

The Presidency

The Presidency provides leadership in the initiation, formulation, co-ordination and monitoring of public policies, including on defence and security, as well as managing Uganda's international relations. It plays a lead role in domestic policy formulation and responding to political instability and internal insecurity, in conjunction with other departments of government. It is the converging point and, particularly in Uganda's case, by far the dominant player in policy formulation and decision-making in the security domain.

Under the Presidency is the Department of State for Security, headed by a minister of state, which includes presidential advisors on internal and external security and defence. This department is organic to the Office of the President and plays a key role in co-ordinating national security issues. It co-ordinates an early warning system, based on reliable information, to help government departments and agencies plan proactively to curtail potential threats to the state and its citizens. The department does not play a lead role in addressing any specific threat, but has significant levels of involvement with other stakeholders in handling security threats.

Parliament

Parliament oversees defence and security issues through three of its 13 committees. The Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs oversees the activities and programmes of the

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166 The Republic of Uganda, *White Paper on Defence Transformation* lists additional departments of government with a role to play in security decision-making, especially in the wider human security context. For details, see p. 27 of the *White Paper*.

Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the UPF and the Uganda Prisons Service. Members of these committees are selected from among members of Parliament based on the parties or organizations represented in Parliament. The Committee on Presidential Affairs oversees the activities and programmes of the Office of the President, the Vice President's Office, State House, the Office of the Prime Minister, and the ISO and ESO.

Office of the Prime Minister

This office co-ordinates the implementation of government policies and is responsible for disaster management, refugees and pacification programmes. The office works together with other government departments and agencies to address threats arising out of border insecurity, political instability, human underdevelopment, internal insecurity and economic shocks.

Ministry of Defence

Through the national military force, the UPDF and its auxiliaries, the MoD plays the lead role in responding to external aggression and internal insecurity of a military nature. The MoD also addresses internal threats in aid of civil authorities.

Ministry of Internal Affairs

This ministry is responsible for the maintenance of peace, law and public order. It is also responsible for the immigration and emigration of people. The ministry plays a lead role in addressing threats to border and internal security. It also works closely with other government departments to address external threats, environment-based threats, political instability, human underdevelopment, civil disasters, economic shocks and socially related threats.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

This ministry leads in monitoring and co-ordinating Uganda's foreign interests, and in responding to any hostile policies by other countries. It takes a lead role in solving conflicts using the diplomatic approach, and is also involved in addressing threats related to border insecurity, political instability, environmental threats, civil disasters and economically related dangers.

Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development

This ministry promotes economic development and ensures macroeconomic stability and the efficient allocation of national resources to meet Uganda's strategic objectives. Its key role in the management of security is to ensure enough resources to finance security and defence activities. It has a lead role to play in managing economic shocks and poverty issues that may give rise to insecurity. The ministry is also concerned with wider issues relating to the environment, human development and civil disasters.

Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs

The key contribution of this ministry is to ensure sustained constitutionalism in Uganda. It ensures that differences are resolved in courts of law and that all citizens are given fair hearing

once in the courts of law. The ministry ensures law, order and public safety so as to create a safe environment for social and economic activities.

Ministry of Local Government

This ministry plays a lead role in responding to minor and localized civil disasters. It also works in conjunction with other stakeholders in addressing threats that fall in its area of responsibility, including border insecurity, human underdevelopment, internal disorder, economic shocks and social polarization.

5.2 Decision-making practices: case study findings

The purpose of this section is to interpret the findings of the micro-case studies as they relate to the question of security decision-making.[167] We have identified five broad themes that we consider important in understanding how decision-making works in Uganda's security domain and the implications this has for state responsiveness to public security needs. This section makes use of the empirical information from the case studies to illustrate each theme.

It is important to point out at the outset that decision-making in Uganda is not a process that is undertaken in conditions of 'politics as usual', but, rather, it takes place in a 'crisis-ridden' atmosphere, to borrow a term from Grindle and Thomas. The crisis environment engenders a particular genre of policy management that can be further characterized by paraphrasing these two analysts' view of the political economy of reform. In crisis-ridden political environments, decision-making tends to be dominated by concerns about major issues of political stability and control. Technical analysis, bureaucratic interactions, popular inclusion and international pressures often assume importance in these decisions, but usually remain subordinate to concerns about the stability or survival of the regime in power or the longevity of its incumbents.[168]

5.2.1 The prominence of particularistic agendas in 'public' security decision-making

Four of the six case studies demonstrate a tendency of security decision-makers to target security services as narrow sections of society at the expense or in disregard of the wider community. This tendency manifests itself partly through the highly publicized corruption

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167   The micro-case studies covered the following issues: (1) the oscillating government security policy positions towards northern Uganda during 2002–05 (Kasaija and Ssenkumba, 'Carrot and Stick'); (2) the emergence of the Arrow Boys militia group in the Teso region in 2002 (Wadala, 'The Politics of Security Decision-Making in Uganda'); (3) the dynamics of forceful disarmament in the Karamoja region during 2004–07 (Muhereza, 'The Politics of Security Decision-Making in Uganda'); (4) the factors that led to the establishment of the VCCU in Kampala in 2002 (Ssenkumba, 'Decision-Making in the Provision of Public Security in an Urban Setting'); and (5) donor influence over security decision-making in Uganda (Hendrickson, 'Donor Influence on Security Decision-Making in Uganda'). The study by Prof. Dent Ocaya-Lakidi on Parliament's oversight role during the military deployment in the DRC in the late 1990s was not completed due to the researcher's death in July 2007.

168   Grindle and Thomas, *Public Choices and Policy Change,* 164.

and graft of the bureaucratic and political class, the selective attention that characterizes the decision-making in response to security emergencies and the extent to which regime security is privileged over national security.

Ssenkumba's case study suggests that the government's response to rising violent crime in urban centres in 2002 was more motivated by the need to uphold foreign investor confidence, and to address the concerns of donors rather than those of local citizens in the Kampala area. The case study argues that this is not just an instance of urban bias, citing as evidence the swiftness with which government responded to attacks on foreign tourists in Bwindi, a remote corner of the rural countryside in the southwest of the country in 2001.

Despite this example, Ssenkumba corroborates the general urban bias of policy-making by pointing out imbalances in the allocation of policing resources. Out of the 13,175 police personnel in the country in 2003, at least 7,143 – or 71.3 per cent – were deployed in Kampala, but 50 per cent of the crime reported is in the central region of the country. The study shows that 16 districts and two regions do not have any police vehicles, with up to 76 per cent of all police vehicles being allocated to units in the central region. According to the study, the provision of services by the judiciary is equally skewed.

The study on the formation of the Arrow Boys militias in the Teso region indicates that part of the motivation of local communities to raise and support this militia force was the fear that government was not going to respond to their plight with the required urgency. The study further indicates that even after the local communities had endeavoured to raise a local force, the state was slow to provide adequate resources.

Selective responsiveness is not exhibited only by the state. The report demonstrates the unwillingness of the Teso community to release some of the Arrow Boys' personnel for integration into the UPDF to deal with insecurity elsewhere in the country. There were further fears that government had intended to grab land from local residents to settle cattle-owning co-ethnics of the president. The report does not show that the Arrow Boys dealt with the LRA in any way beyond merely ejecting them from the Teso region. Similarly, Kasaija's partly attributes the war in the north of the country to the attempts of the region's inhabitants to 'regain power that they lost in January 1986'.[169]

Corruption in all areas of the public sector in Uganda stands out as one of the major manifestations of the disregard of broader public interest and one of the principal manifestations of the low level of crystallization of the public ethos. The study shows that Uganda falls within the 25 per cent most corrupt countries, being ranked 117 out of 159. Major corruption scandals have been reported in the military, but no significant action has been taken against those directly implicated. Most of the culprits are senior military officers who, instead of being prosecuted, are often rewarded with promotions and higher appointments.

The study by Kasaija and Ssenkumba demonstrates that petty and grand corruption by military officers has been a major factor in prolonging the campaign against the LRA. The most notable areas of corruption have been in the procurement of military hardware

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169   Kasaija and Ssenkumba, 'Carrot and Stick', 4.

and defence supplies and in the management of the payroll. Among the many scandals in military procurement are the purchase of MI-24 helicopter gunships and the purchase and retrofitting of MIG-21 fighters, T-55 tanks and 100 mm anti-aircraft guns. The northern Uganda study indicates that chronic shortages experienced by frontline soldiers have been a primary factor in degrading the ability of the UPDF to effectively deal with the insurgency.

Ssenkumba reports that one of the principal shortcomings of the drive against urban crime was extortion and the solicitation of bribes by personnel of 'Operation Wembley' and later those of the VCCU.

5.5.2 The concentration of security decision-making authority within the Presidency

The case studies share the conclusion that the Presidency, and more still the person of the president, overshadows all other formally established actors in the management of security in Uganda.

The case studies demonstrate a significant level of autonomy on the part of the Presidency and the hegemony of the president in relation to other sectors of the state responsible for determining security policy. It is important to point out that the hegemony of the president is not confined only to decision-making in the security domain, but also extends to all other areas of state management at the central and local levels.

The case studies reveal that the autonomy of the Presidency is not necessarily a product of its high level of institutionalization, therefore giving it an edge over other structures of government. Rather, the Presidency as an institution is itself overshadowed by the person of the president. For example, it is not clear whether the minister of state for security plays a key role in shaping the output of security decisions by the president, or whether the various presidential advisors do in fact advise him. The president appears to dominate the critical phases of the policy cycle all the way from agenda-setting to implementation. The government's pursuit of the military option in resolving the rebellion in the north of the country, high-lighted by Kasaija and Ssenkumba, is a major case in point. The case study on government's policy positions with respect to the LRA insurgency highlights the common perception that in contemporary Uganda, policy is the embodiment of the will and vision of the president, but is not a product of a systematic process of agenda-setting, policy formulation, decision-making, implementation and evaluation.

Muhereza' case study on forceful disarmament in Karamoja carries several accounts of the principal role of the president in the formulation and implementation of the decision, although, in this case, there is direct involvement by Parliament in the initial tabling of the motion to carry out disarmament, followed by a statement by the minister of state for security on government's disarmament policy. The minister does not hold a substantive ministerial appointment, but is head of a department in the Office of the President.

Beyond this initial involvement of Parliament and the minister of state for security, most subsequent policy positions are attributed to the president. The four case studies dealing with decisions on the deployment of military forces attribute the prominence of the president to his designation as the commander-in-chief and chairman of the military high command

and Army Council. It is not clear whether the latter two organs play a key role in shaping the policy positions that the president pronounces, or whether they even determine the agenda of the meetings they hold. The only hint given by the study on their role in agenda setting is regarding the likelihood that they may have wished to pursue options other than the military one in dealing with the conflict in northern Uganda. The researcher indicates that they may have been overruled by the president. What comes out clearly is that the final decision in all instances is taken by the president.

Experience suggests that the national legislature is not likely to stand in the way of the president if he is determined to pursue a particular course of action. A great majority of the legislators are members of the of the president's ruling organization, the NRMO, and many are indebted to him for having helped campaign for them directly in their bid for the parliamentary seats they hold. There are also presidential nominees to the national Parliament, and these also owe their allegiance directly to the president. They include representatives of the military and members of cabinet. The presidential system as it is practised in Uganda gives the president further independence from the legislature. Apart from overshadowing the decision-making organs of the defence establishment and key branches of the state, namely the executive and legislature, there is a constant contest between the president and the judiciary, as the studies reveal.

The president views the judiciary as an 'unliberated zone' and has on occasion threatened to institute a judicial inquiry into the institution. Ssenkumba's study on the formation of the VCCU shows that the president has viewed the police in much the same light for many years. This explains the rationale for the judicial inquiry into the UPF and the subsequent policy of appointing a military general to head the institution. The case study highlights the president's determination to sideline the judiciary in the disposal of the cases of those suspected of illegal possession of firearms apprehended during the crackdown on violent crime in the large urban centres. The decision to constitute a special court martial to try these cases is attributed directly to the president.

Although the president continues to exercise a degree of hegemony, the study shows that well-organized grassroots organizations and local communities that have a clear sense of their interests can shape the behaviour of the state and determine security outcomes. The case study on the formation of the Arrow Boys militia in Teso demonstrates that responsiveness is not just a debt a paternalistic state owes to its citizens, but an aggregate of reciprocal exchanges between the citizenry and the central authority. Wadala's case study shows how the Teso social structure and the capacity for 'horizontal social mobilisation' was put in motion, not only to overshadow the state, but to decisively neutralize a rebel organization whose brutality had come to capture the imagination of the world.

The Arrow Boys' case is also one of the few instances in which a key initiative to deal with a security crisis did not involve President Museveni as the primary player. The case study also reveals that, once a decision was made by local actors to form the Arrow Boys, receiving the approval of the state and the President was secondary to the need to mobilize support within the local community. The lead organizer of the effort deserted his official post secretly without informing the president or seeking his approval. For his part, the president

constituted a special team to study the plan to form the Arrow Boys, and thereafter gave it his blessing. The study concludes that the Arrow Boys' formation radicalized security decision-making by making the state look inconsequential.

The pre-eminence of the president is attributable to many factors, including, as pointed out above, the presidential system practised in Uganda, President Museveni's personal portrayal as the philosopher president and visionary, and the leftist guerrilla origins of the ruling NRM and its tradition of 'democratic centralism'.

5.2.3 The systematic resort to irregular actors and instruments for addressing security problems

A notable finding of this study is that while Uganda has a wide range of formal mechanisms and actors for security decision-making and provision, many of the relevant actors and instruments are in practice bypassed when security policy is formulated and implemented. In part, this reflects the concentration of security decision-making authority in the Presidency, examined under the previous theme. The sheer monopolization of security decision-making and implementation tasks by the president and his closest associates logically suggests that other actors who have – or should have – a statutory role to play may end up being marginalized.

A good example of this can be seen with regard to the way in which defence and security policy is traditionally made at the highest levels. The president, in his capacity as commander-in-chief, chairs the military high command, the Army Council and the NSC, and has an official role to play in leading security policy debates. But he may just as frequently bypass these structures in favour of other informal groups of advisors, including the so-called 'historicals' consisting of his closest military commanders from the bush-war days.

But there is another dimension to this phenomenon, which relates to the frequent if not systematic resort by key decision-makers in the security sector, including the president, to irregular actors and means of dealing with security problems. What is irregular needs to be understood with respect to both the manner in which a particular decision is reached and how it is implemented. Not only are statutory actors and processes often bypassed at the decision-making stage, but the experience of Uganda's security sector is that new security bodies are often created to replace, complement or act in parallel to existing security bodies that are not seen to be working effectively. Crucially, these new irregular bodies are rarely governed by the same legal framework, if any, that, say, the UPF or UPDF are subject to.

Two of the case studies bring this trend out: Wadala's study of the Arrow Boys militia in the Teso region and Ssenkumba's study of the decision to establish the VCCU in Kampala in 2002.

As Wadala's study shows, there were multiple reasons for the government's reliance on irregular strategies for dealing with the security problem that emerged in the Teso region in 2002, after the LRA expanded its area of activity from the north. The initial impetus came from local politicians with links to the ruling NRM party, who were anxious to defend their communities from the LRA onslaught and lacked the confidence that the state security apparatus, and the UPDF in particular, was up to the task. As the drive to organize the Arrow Boys militia gained momentum, overtures were made to the central government, including

the president, to back the initiative. There were natural concerns on the part of the president, given that the power base of the Arrow Boys comprised former Uganda People's Army commanders who led a bitter insurgency against the government in the 1980s. Yet, after assurances that the Arrow Boys would not constitute an opposing power base, the president and senior military leadership acquiesced to its formation and then actively supported the training, equipping and operations of the militia group.

As noted, the initiative to form the Arrow Boys emerged locally and was, initially, kept secret due to fears that it would be resisted by the population, local opposition politicians and central government. But in the face of the rapidly growing LRA threat, caution was thrown to the winds, the plan to form the militia became public and the general response from all quarters was largely positive. Through a process of grassroots mobilization, public support in the Teso region for the Arrow Boys was quickly secured. The UPDF leadership were particularly concerned that the demands of training, equipping and managing the irregular militias would outweigh the gains of having an additional armed force to support the UPDF.

In the event, state support for the Arrow Boys eventually dwindled and they were obliged to rely on local resources to support their operations. The relationship between the UPDF and the Arrow Boys swung back and forth between co-operation and mutual recrimination and distrust, due to perceived operational deficiencies. With the defeat of the LRA, the Arrow Boys resisted UPDF pressure to disarm and restore to the state the monopoly of security provision in the Teso region. Parliament did not succeed in enacting a law to legalize the Arrow Boys, and both the MoD and the Ministry of Internal Affairs sought to absolve themselves of responsibility for managing and paying the militia forces.

The emergence of the Arrow Boys can be interpreted, in the first instance, as a consequence of weak state responsiveness to the emerging security threat in the Teso region. Yet this changed as the scope of the threat became clear and the central government moved to support the local initiative to establish a militia force that could partner (and make up for the obvious deficiencies of) the UPDF. When the motivations of the different actors are more closely examined, however, it becomes clear that the decisions to form and support the Arrow Boys are closely bound up with differing views about security (community vs. state) and the diverging political interests of local and state actors. In the final analysis, as the case of forceful disarmament in Karamoja demonstrates, the government's response to the Teso problem was largely influenced by concerns over how it would influence the national-level political discourse and prospects for the NRM (and the president) to continue their hold on power.

The formation of the VCCU offers another illustration of how, in response to an emerging security threat, government resorted to the creation of a new security body to address the perceived limitations in other policy instruments. The backdrop for the creation of the VCCU in 2002 was the 'over-crowding' of the public security sector in Kampala due to a proliferation of both state security agencies and private security actors. This proliferation is attributed to capacity limitations within the police force. In the face of a sharp rise in violent criminality, the government launched Operation Wembley, consisting essentially of a special task force headed by a serving military officer and comprising soldiers with a mandate to target armed criminals.

The factors that precipitated the launch of Operation Wembley were the escalating level of violent crime, the inability of the police to cope, and the perception that the judiciary was not taking a sufficiently hard-line approach to handling criminals. The decision to launch Operation Wembley was made by the president in an impromptu meeting convened with security agencies to discuss the breakdown of public security in Kampala. The decision was made through an ad hoc committee rather than existing mechanisms such as the National Security Council and the official District Security Committee, both of which have a mandate to address public security issues. Although there was, strictly speaking, a legal basis for a special unit of this sort to be created within the police, the constitutional and legal implications of establishing it were not addressed at the time of the decision.

Within three months of the formation of the VCCU, there was a public outcry in the press and media, with allegations made about the 'irregular' and 'illegal' methods of Operation Wembley. In response, the activities of the unit were halted and it was replaced with the VCCU in an attempt to formalize the response to violent crime. Although under control of the assistant commissioner of police and largely staffed by police personnel, the VCCU has relied on 'unconventional' and 'extreme' methods to conduct its work, which have set it apart from normal police activities. Notwithstanding its apparent success in reducing levels of violent crime in Kampala and its high level of approval among certain sections of the public as a consequence, the VCCU's methods of operation have left it open to complaints about its abuse of power.

In this light, any assessment about state responsiveness needs to go beyond the actual decision to establish the VCCU – which was a response to a pressing public security need – and factor in how the decision was implemented in practice, whose interests were actually secured by the VCCU, and the wider impact of its operations on public security in Kampala. The ad hoc manner in which the VCCU was formed and the – at least initial – disregard for statutory procedures to ensure the force had a strong legal basis made it more difficult to ensure that the force was publicly accountable for its actions and gave rise to frequent and extensive allegations of human rights abuses.

5.2.4 The incorporation of donor resources into state security strategies

The external aid and political support that donors bring to Uganda constitute a valuable resource that the government has sought to harness when responding to security problems. This is the case despite frequent protestations by government that donors have made it *more* difficult for Uganda to address its security problems, primarily by constraining defence spending. While this may have significantly limited government's room for manoeuvre on one level, the current high level of donor funding in Uganda, together with divisions within the donor community on certain key policy issues and the growing role played by aid agencies and externally-supported NGOs in service provision, particularly in the humanitarian sector, has facilitated the government's security strategies in ways that might not otherwise be possible.

The context for this is examined in Hendrickson's study on how donors influence government security policy. Since the 1990s, the major donors working in Uganda (with the exception of the United States) have increasingly moved to a policy of providing programme aid, rather than support for projects. Initially, this involved supporting sector-wide programmes. Starting in 2001, the United Kingdom, the World Bank, Sweden, Ireland, the European Union, Denmark and the Netherlands moved to a policy of providing budget support. By putting their funds directly into the central budget, they intended to make it easier for government to develop and implement its policies. Budget support thus provides government with a more predictable source of income and greater flexibility to determine how to spend it.

By bringing donors and government together to manage the budget process, its proponents argue, budget support strengthens budget systems and institutions and increases the credibility of the budget process. From the perspective of donors, budget support crucially offers them a place at the table where decisions are made about how public resources should be used. In particular, it gives a degree of legitimacy to a discussion with government on security that would otherwise have been difficult. Thus the UK-supported Defence Review resulted in an unprecedented level of openness on the problems facing the UPDF that far surpasses anything one would expected to see in donor countries themselves. This has therefore provided a crucial entry point for future discussions and assistance in the security domain, notwithstanding the challenges government is currently facing in implementing the findings of the recently completed Defence Review.

But the flip side of budget support may be less control over how donor resources are actually disbursed. The reason for this is that the aid is fungible, meaning that once it enters central government coffers, it can be spent in any way that government wishes, with some limitations. The Government of Uganda has structured its public spending programme around certain strategic priorities agreed with its donor partners. Nevertheless, the high level of donor funds provides government with greater latitude to use its own resources on areas that it deems a priority and which donors may not want to fund directly, such as the security establishment and the military in particular.

In recent years, recognizing this reality, a number of key donors, including the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Ireland, have begun to show greater interest in how government actually formulates security policy, rather than simply in levels of defence spending. The aim, through support for various reform initiatives, including the Defence Review and current participation in the government-led Defence Sector Working Group, is to have a say in how security funds are spent. While donors do not have any real say regarding the context of security policy or operational issues, and indeed have been rebuffed by government when they attempt to do so, donors do set the overall policy framework within which security policy, like all other policies, must operate.

This policy framework is based around the budget and a set of strategic poverty reduction objectives agreed with donors. It is a fairly rigid policy framework determined by the need, on the one hand, to maintain overall macroeconomic stability and, on the other, to ensure that the strategic spending priorities agreed with donors are respected. Within this framework, government has limited ability to shift resources from, say, health or education

to defence, in the face of a perceived mounting security threat to the state or its population. Previous attempts by government to do so have been met by cuts in donor assistance, when donors felt that the increase in spending was not adequately justified. This was the case in 2002, when the government announced a significant increase in defence expenditure to be funded by wide-ranging cuts across the public sector.

Setting aside the question of whether these spending increases were indeed justifiable or not, this raises important questions about whether state policy is ultimately more responsive to citizens' needs or donor agendas. In the security domain, this has particular implications, examined in the case studies, for government's ability to respond to 'demands' for security coming from different political constituencies that make up its power base. In this context, donor and government agendas are often at variance, as can be seen with regard to the long-running conflict against the LRA and the ongoing demobilization and disarmament effort in Karamoja. In response to what it sees as excessive interference in security policy, government has often simply ignored donor concerns or pursued strategies to circumvent the constraints on security policy imposed by donors.

Muhereza's study on forceful disarmament demonstrates how government policy in Karamoja has been primarily influenced by the way the persisting armed conflict was seen to inform the national-level political discourse in Uganda. One of the key reasons cited by voters in regions bordering Karamoja for not voting for the NRM in the 2006 presidential elections was the government's inability to protect them from Karimojong raiders. The resoluteness of the government's policy on forceful disarmament, therefore, is explained by a short-term concern to secure the NRM's position in the face of rising political dissent. In this regard, Muhereza argues that human security issues (which have been a principal concern of donors) are only important to the government in so far as they advance state – or regime – security goals.

At the operational level, Kasaija and Ssenkumba's paper on northern Uganda demonstrates how external assistance – while in certain ways constraining government policy due to associated conditionalities – can also increase its room for manoeuvre. Government policy on the north has oscillated between using the 'carrot' and the 'stick' to bring about an end to the LRA insurgency, in large part because of consistent pressure from donors to negotiate. Despite sporadic forays into negotiations and the granting of amnesties to encourage LRA defectors, it has been the persistent conviction of the president and his senior military leadership that there is only a military solution to the conflict.

The many failings of the government's military operations in the north notwithstanding, the UPDF has been able to sustain its military activities because it has not had to consider the humanitarian consequences of its actions in this region. In each case where the UPDF's military actions have worsened the humanitarian situation, the international aid community has been there to in effect pick up the pieces. This occurred most dramatically following the launch of Operation Iron Fist in 2002, which resulted in a significant widening of the conflict and increased displacement of the northern population. Had donors not been there, this would likely have forced government to consider alternative approaches to confronting the LRA threat and caring for civilians.

Endorsement of the government's military approach has also come from another quarter, with the launch of the US-led global 'war on terror' in 2001, which has expanded the boundaries of what is permissive behaviour in the security domain. Following the US lead, Uganda has rebranded its operations in the north as a fight against 'terrorism'. In return for being part of the 'coalition of the willing' and agreeing to back the United States in its bid for US service personnel to be exempted from trial by the International Criminal Court if they commit war crimes, Uganda has increased its freedom of action in the north. This is primarily because it has been able to argue that its fight against the LRA is part of the broader struggle against terrorism. At the same time, government has adopted legislation such as the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2002, which has facilitated its ability to crack down on internal opposition members that are deemed a threat to the government.

The 'war on terror' has complicated efforts by donors to hold Uganda to account for violations of human rights, since, as donors themselves note, any criticism can be met by with the response 'what about Guantanamo? … what about Iraq?' In this context, government has become very effective at using differences in policy and approach within the donor community to its advantage. This can be seen most clearly with regard to the UK-led group of European donors, who have advocated a governance-based approach to assisting reform within the defence and wider security sector, and the US approach, which is primarily reliant on more traditional military assistance, training and support for the UPDF's operational activities. The US approach has sent signals to the government that the questions of how defence spending is managed, for instance, is not as great a concern as operational reforms that are consistent with wider US policy objectives in the region, such as the 'war on terror' or the deployment of an African-led peacekeeping force in Somalia.

5.2.5 A 'management-by-crisis' approach to decision-making

What clearly emerges from the micro-case studies that look at the management of key security events is the ad hoc nature of the responses to security needs and emergencies and an approach to decision-making that is characterized by short-term, quick-fix policy options. As the study on Karamoja notes, 'a comprehensive policy document that co-ordinates the planning of all security actors has not yet been put in place'.[170] Without such a comprehensive policy document, the actions and responses of security actors are not guided by a systematic forecast of contingencies or a coherently thought-out projection of how ongoing crises are likely to unfold. Security is managed on an ad hoc basis, and what would be normal contingencies necessarily become crises, and crises become disruptive emergencies.

Without a clearly defined plan and prioritization of goals and objectives in public policy management, it becomes difficult to distinguish between real security crises – those that are genuinely unexpected and demand immediate attention – and lower-grade events, problems and interruptions. Without contingency planning, events are given the same priority, and emergencies dictate actions, resulting in resource wastage and erosion of overall responsiveness.

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170   Muhereza, 'The Politics of Security Decision-Making in Uganda', 8.

According to the study on the formation of Teso militias, the crisis in the region resulted from the UPDF's preoccupation with dislodging the LRA from their bases in southern Sudan without a plan for how to deal with the group once it relocated inside Uganda proper.

The studies also point to the lack of continuity in security management policy, across time and in different parts of the country. Colonial and early post-independence governments identified the perennial vulnerability that the districts neighbouring the Karamoja region faced because of raids and cattle thefts by the Karimojong. They sought to deal with this long-term problem by creating local militias, an example of which was the people's militias of the early 1980s. This policy was abandoned in the wake of the overthrow of the Obote II regime in 1985, leaving the Teso region open to Karamojong raids, a contributory factor to the Teso insurgency that ended in 1992. A history of political instability and the high turn-over of governments and regimes has fostered a culture of 'slash and burn' policy practice, with an incoming regime disbanding institutions and structures that may have existed even before the government it is displacing. The resulting discontinuity in policy compels actors to constantly resort to improvisation and short-term expedients that often yield sub-standard responses.

It is also evident from the case studies that there is policy discontinuity from one part of the country to another. Whereas some regions of the country have well-developed auxil-iaries, others lack them. There is no clear policy yet on the raising, training, equipping and management of reserve forces across the country. The sheer variety of non-standardized auxiliary forces is testimony to this. The Teso region has the Arrow Boys, Karamoja has vigilantes, the Acholi region has home guards and frontier guards, the Lango region has the Amuka or Rhino Boys, and in the Kampala metropolitan area there is, among others, the 'Kiboko Brigade'.

In the absence of a policy framework based on a comprehensive forecast of plausible contingencies, it is not possible to make any meaningful plan on force structure, personnel provision, equipping, training and all other aspects of the lifecycle of the various components of the armed forces. Priorities are dictated by the emergency of the day. In the place of prop-erly structured and led units, organizations and institutions, there are hastily constituted task forces with no clear structure or chain of command. An example of this is the VCCU and its predecessor, Operation Wembley, and others in different parts of the country, as shown above. ■

Chapter 6
Our key propositions: summing up

6.1 Sources of authority

This proposition is concerned with where the sources of security decision-making authority lie in Ugandan society, particularly in a context where non-statutory and non-state actors are playing an increasingly prominent role in the security domain.

Security decision-making authority in Uganda (within the state) is derived from the constitutional-legal framework that governs the security apparatus. This legal framework vests significant decision-making authority in the president in his capacity as commander-in-chief of the armed forces, although it also imposes certain limitations. The legal framework also provides for a range of other higher institutions to play a decision-making role, of which Parliament and the National Security Council are most notable. At the lower echelons of government, both at the national and local government levels, there is an extensive institutional infrastructure for security decision-making with levels of authority that *officially* are intended to function in a manner that is consistent with the principle of subsidiarity – namely that matters ought to be handled by the smallest (or the lowest) competent authority.

The main finding of the Uganda study is that there are two contradictory impulses in security decision-making: the first, stemming from the immense concentration of power in the Presidency, has resulted in the president himself, primarily, but also some of his very closest and most loyal commanders, monopolizing key decision-making events of not only a strategic nature, but also operationally, which would normally be the competence of lower echelons of either the state administration or the security establishment. These decisions are often made without reference to a clear policy framework. In the process, other statutory actors with a mandate to make policy, and to be involved in or oversee the decision-making process are consistently sidelined.

The second impulse stems from the proliferation of irregular security actors in Uganda, most of which are state sanctioned, but which enjoy their primary legitimacy and have their power bases within their local communities or ethnic groups. These actors are not subject to the same mechanisms for oversight and control as statutory bodies such as the police or the UPDF. This proliferation of actors, combined with the weakness of management structures in the security sector, has resulted in a dispersion of decision-making authority across many actors. These actors tend to either operate outside any policy framework or, effectively, make policy on the hoof. They tend to be more driven by parochial concerns, rather than the interests of the state or the 'public'.

These informal security actors and the policy agendas that they promote often run parallel to more formal policy processes; equally, these processes may interact, particularly where state authorities at the national level seek to exert control over or rein in non-statutory actors.

From a decision-making perspective, these contradictory sources of authority, combined with the weak institutionalization of the decision-making machinery in Uganda, make it very difficult to ensure accountable or coherent decision-making, particularly with regard to the promotion of a public security agenda.

6.2 Avenues of influence

This proposition sets out to explore how interest groups affect the content of state policy in the security domain. To address this, the case studies examined the methods that groups employ to oblige the state to defer to their policy preferences in the provision of physical safety. The findings of the studies are mixed.

The common assumption is that interest groups affect the content of policy and legislation in general, through the regular input processes. Accordingly, the standard expectation is that well-formed interest structures will always be available to organize demands using institutionalized channels and to communicate those demands to decision-makers, as happens in highly urbanized and industrial countries where the orientation of the population is determined by occupational and class structures. In contexts where such structures are absent, as in Uganda, it is often assumed that the public either has little or no effect on the eventual output of government, or this is achieved through 'informal' channels.

The studies reveal an absence of organized interests through most phases of the policy cycle,[171] including the decision-making phase. However, the studies also show that individual and group demands still reach the political system. A large proportion of demands reach the state not before legislation and policy formulation, but at the enforcement stage, this being largely because security decision-making mainly takes place in situations of crisis. In addition, demands are made not on behalf of a wide grouping, but in the interests of ethnic, linguistic or regional blocs. Demands couched in those terms are particularistic in nature, and particularistic demands rarely lend themselves to national-level policy processes or translation into legislative form.

The localized nature of insecurity in Uganda has tended to preclude a pan-Ugandan policy perspective. Each of the sub-regions of the country afflicted by severe insecurity is in most cases a rural area inhabited by a homogeneous ethnic group.[172] Three of the micro-case studies focus on such areas. The country's rural character and low level of socioeconomic development furnish the sub-structure for the predominance of narrow loyalties and parochial channels for transmitting demands onwards to the central state level. Most of the demands,

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171   The policy cycle consists of five distinct phases: agenda setting, policy formulation, decision-making, implementation and evaluation.
172   Uganda is only 12 per cent urbanized.

including those related to physical safety/law and order, are community- or locality-oriented; hence the prominence and robustness of local area notables, ethnic lobbies, traditional rulers and local community networks in mobilizing and influencing the central state to respond to such needs. Conversely, one notes the relative unimportance of 'formal' actors such as parliamentarians, who are compelled to find a role within the 'informal' mechanisms to avoid losing influence, as the Teso micro-case study specifically demonstrates.

6.3 External influence

This proposition concerns how the Ugandan state's relationship with external actors (including donors, and regional and global powers) impacts on the political and policy environment for security decision-making.

The nature of Uganda's relationships with external actors, particularly the international donor community, is defined by the country's heavy dependence on aid. Aid dependency, and in particular the specific set of macroeconomic policies and accompanying poverty reduction goals agreed with donors, sets the framework for all public policy decisions, including in the security domain. While donors have little or no direct involvement in policy-making within the security domain, unlike in other sectors, the overall budget framework within which the defence sector and other security agencies operate in practice determines what kinds of policies are possible.

Within these confines, the Government of Uganda does not enjoy full sovereignty over security matters. In the face of persisting security threats, the government has consistently sought to overcome the restrictions placed upon it by the macroeconomic framework and associated donor conditionalities. It does this in a number of ways: by simply refusing to adhere to spending restrictions agreed with donors; by channelling (often covertly) more of its own resources or resources from other public sectors into the defence sector; by incorporating donor assistance (for instance, within the humanitarian domain) into its security strategies, thus allowing it to focus its own resources on its chosen (military) policy objectives; or, finally, by taking advantage of policy differences within the donor community, which allows government to in effect play one donor off against another. ■

Chapter 7
Enhancing state responsiveness: external policy orientations

Uganda offers a number of important lessons about security decision-making in an aid-dependent country afflicted by long-standing insecurity. External actors who seek a role in supporting reforms within the security domain that are intended to enhance state responsiveness to public security need to be aware, first of all, of the potentially contradictory impact that external assistance can have on efforts to strengthen the relations between policy elites and communities that allow the latter to exercise their 'demand' for the provision of services that make it possible to attain security. On the one hand, aid can serve to enhance the capacity of government to solicit the views of its populace on key areas of policy, although, on the other hand, it can serve as a disincentive for the development of the very kinds of institutions it seeks to foster, by fundamentally altering the relationship between political elites and the citizenry in ways that are not consistent with enhancing accountability.

A second prerequisite for engaging in the security domain is to understand how socio-economic underdevelopment (including associated problems of poverty, low levels of education and lack of basic information), as well as the inherent character of the NRM (subsequently the NRMO), as already demonstrated, coupled with the make-up of the population, constrain the space for constituencies seeking to promote more responsive state policies in the security domain. The amount of information available to the general population is limited, as are the incentives – in the face of more pressing livelihood concerns – to prioritize change in the way that security policy is managed. Within the non-governmental and academic domains, there is a limited pool of people who are conversant in security issues and can advocate a coherent and independent vision of reform. Similarly, opposition parties have not shown themselves to be capable of moving beyond a policy of denouncing government to defining viable alternatives to current structures for the proper management of security policy.

Where pressure for change within the security domain (along the lines favoured by donors) has been exerted most strongly, it has been budget driven (with strong donor pressure, backed by conditionality, following a donor-inspired reform plan). In this case, however, there has been a contradiction between pressures to reform the security forces and the desire of political elites (led by the president) to maintain independent control over security policy. As a consequence, the government has developed the capacity to effectively 'absorb' externally derived pressure for reform by playing along with externally supported initiatives, as the Defence Review illustrates.

While donors have achieved some success through the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) in terms of opening up the policy space for civil society and redirecting resources to the local level and the social sectors, the PEAP has had limited influence in sensitive domains like security. The same could be said of other donor initiatives in the security domain, which have largely been technical in orientation, although in the last five years, approaches have broadened both with the Justice Law and Order Sector (JLOS) programme and the Defence Review. These initiatives have primarily raised the profile of SSR within government circles, although they have made limited headway thus far in terms of opening up security policy processes to broader public debate and integrating them into government-wide planning and budgeting processes.

Even as donors have pushed for reform within the security domain since the late 1990s, there has been a countervailing push by the president to shore up the position of the security services and ensure their loyalty. Under the NRMO, the military remains a dominant instrument for resolving political disputes, in many ways understandable in the context of Uganda's turbulent history and the security problems that continue to plague the country. The building of a strong army has resulted in an unprecedented period of political stability in post-independence Uganda, although it has come at the cost of rising defence spending, the centralization of decision-making authority and an increasing reluctance by the president to tolerate donor interference in the security domain.

This suggests that while there may be a role for external assistance to support and complement national reform initiatives, such assistance cannot substitute for an internally driven process of change. This has various implications for external actors seeking to engage in Uganda's security domain with the aim of enhancing state responsiveness in the security domain. The first is to adopt a *cautious and reflective* approach. The issue is not so much about *whether* to engage – for the donor community is by virtue of its close relationship with the current government and the high levels of aid provision intricately tied in (even if indirectly) to security policy processes – but rather *how* to do so. It is not justifiable for donors to say that because they provide little or no assistance to security activities, they have little impact on policy within that domain. Experience suggests that aid in general, even if targeted at the social sectors, facilitates security policy in certain ways by freeing up government resources that might otherwise be allocated to development expenditures.

What follows then is a requirement for donors to adopt a strategic and informed approach to providing development assistance, with particular sensitivity to how aid is incorporated into or otherwise affects security policy processes. In light of this, careful analysis of the dynamics that are likely to affect reform processes needs to underpin any engagement in the security domain.

There are three different levels where this analysis could be of utility: firstly, in terms of understanding the historical and structural factors that have affected the evolution of the country's security institutions, including the legacies of colonialism. This is key to understanding *current* institutional and political trajectories that will determine how much change is possible and what kind of change is actually desirable in the circumstances. This should also lead donors to be cautious when it comes to making assumptions about the 'political

will' that exists to carry out reforms. Achieving desired policy aims that enhance public security is dependent not only on the inclination of decision-makers to make the 'right' choices, but also on adequate capacity within the system to implement decisions *and* a public whose members can effectively press home their policy preferences.

The second priority area for analysis relates to contemporary security institutions and the configuration of political power in the security domain. There is a need to understand the political drivers of change, first and foremost, before deciding how to target assistance. This is key to understanding where power really lays, and whom donors should be speaking to and seeking to influence. This is particularly important in Uganda, due to the formal/informal dualism that underpins institutions both in the security sector and the state more generally. A good example of this can be seen in the fluid relationships between regular security forces such as the UPDF and UPF and the array of militias and other non-statutory security forces that play a prominent role in Uganda's security sector.

The third priority – as noted above – is the whole area of aid security dynamics, in particular understanding how aid dependency and donor–government relations affect the incentives for reform in the security domain. The kinds of changes that donors (and many Ugandans) would like to see in the security domain are unlikely to emerge from technical consultations. In a sensitive domain like security, the PEAP is not a sufficient instrument for addressing the deep issues of social and political change within Uganda that are necessary for enhancing state responsiveness to insecurity. This underscores the importance both of political dialogue to complement technical SSR initiatives and coherence among donor partners who at times work at cross-purposes. But more fundamentally, it suggests the need to acknowledge the limitations of a state-centric SSR strategy in the absence of complementary initiatives to strengthen internal 'demand' for security. The level of internal demand for change should be a determining factor in the nature, orientation and level of donor engagement in Uganda's security domain.

The above suggests that an analysis of power and process in security policy-making can improve external interventions in Uganda's security sector. To achieve this, however, donors must put a premium on investment in the in-country capacity necessary to manage SSR engagements in an effective, sensitive and politically informed manner. This requires staff with appropriate local knowledge, skills and incentives to engage with the non-administrative aspects of programme management, including political analysis, policy development and relationship-building. Outsourcing of SSR to consultants can carry risks if it results in a divorce between the technical and political dimensions of an assistance programme and should primarily be seen as an instrument to enhance rather than substitute for a coherent cross-departmental engagement.

A dynamic and continuing analysis of the factors that will affect an SSR process should underpin all stages of donor programming cycles in Uganda and, as much as possible, seek to draw upon relevant local knowledge provided by Uganda's security research community. ■

Chapter 8
Conclusion

Responsiveness, seen as the capacity of a political system to defer to the policy preferences and needs of a population, is a critical aspect of political representation. It is not just a gauge of the efficacy of decision-making and the effectiveness of states in providing for the needs of their populations; it also gives an indication of the capacity of the citizenry to aggregate and clearly articulate their demands. As the Uganda country study demonstrates, the character of decision-making and, with it, the quality of responsiveness depends on historical factors, the country's socioeconomic set-up, its political culture and the international environment. Key to understanding the challenges the Ugandan state has faced in meeting the security needs of its population is its history of political instability, which has had a lasting effect on the country's political configuration and the essential features of its security institutions.

The nascent character of 'formal' interest structures and the resultant primacy of communal and sub-national power centres of authority, far from being an impediment to state responsiveness, can serve as a supportive avenue for shaping security policy outcomes in transitional countries like Uganda.

The study further demonstrates that responsiveness is an aggregate of reciprocal interactions between the state and the population. The disposition of states to defer to the needs of their populations is not only determined by factors internal to the political system, but is also dependent on the demands of key external actors, especially in contexts like Uganda, where there is extensive reliance on bilateral and multilateral partners for resources and diplomatic support. ∎

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Policing body	Authorizer	Powers	Key function	Links with other policing bodies	Funding
State structures					
Local Councils level 1 (LC1)	Central government; locally elected	Local law and order; courts	Courts; night patrols	Criminal cases to UPF and magistrates' courts	Local taxes and contributions, and volunteers
UPF	Central government	Unclear	Serious crime	Works with LCs, crime prevention panels and security companies	Local taxes and contributions, volunteers
Violent Crime Crack Unit (VCCU)	Military	Citizen	Organized violent crime	Independent	State
State-approved					
Crime prevention panels	UPF	Citizen	Intelligence to police; peer pressure	Work with police and LCs	State
Traders associations	Elected leaders of associations	Citizen	Security of trading area	Work with police and LCs	Volunteers
Commercial security	Private companies	Licensed by police	Guarding	Joint operations with, and inspections by, the police	Members' contributions
Illegal					
Mob justice			Assaults on alleged criminals	None	Commercial

Source: Baker, 'Post-conflict Policing', 21

Annex B Rebel movements in Uganda, 1986–the present

Organization	Zone of operation	Period of existence
Uganda Peoples Democratic Army (UPDM/A)	Central north (mainly Acholi region)	1986–87
Uganda Peoples Army (UPA)	Teso region	1986–92
Ninth October Movement/Army (NOM/A)	Eastern (Tororo, Mbale)	1986–?
Uganda Mujahdeen Movement (UMM)	Western and central regions	1996–?
Allied Democratic Front/Force (ADF)	Western and central regions	From 1996
Force Obote Back Army (FOBA)	Eastern (Tororo, Mbale)	1986
Federal Democratic Movement (Fedemo)	Central (Buganda) region	1981–?
Ruwenzururu Kingdom Freedom Movement	Ruwenzori region	1960s–94
Uganda Freedom Movement (UFM)	Central (Buganda) region	1981–88
West Nile Bank Front (WNBF) I &II	West Nile region	1979–2003
Uganda National Democratic Alliance (UNDA)	Central (Buganda) region	1994–95
National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (NALU)	Kasese district	From 1986
Uganda National Rescue Front (UNRF) I & II	West Nile region	1986–2003
Holy Spirit Movement/Holy Spirit Mobile Forces (HSM) I & II	Central north (mainly Acholi region)	1987–88
Citizen Army for Multiparty Politics (CAMP)	Central north (mainly Lango region)	1997–99
Action Restore Justice (ARJ)		
Former Uganda National Army (FUNA)	West Nile region	1979–87
Anti-Referendum Army (ARA)		1997–?
Peoples Redemption Army (PRA)	Western and southwestern	2001 to date
Uganda Salvation Force/Army (USF/A)	Kenyan border region	1998–?
Lord's Army	Central north (mainly Acholi region)	1988–89
Lord's Resistance Army (LRA)	Central north (mainly Acholi region)	1989 to date