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### Victims Continue to Demand Justice

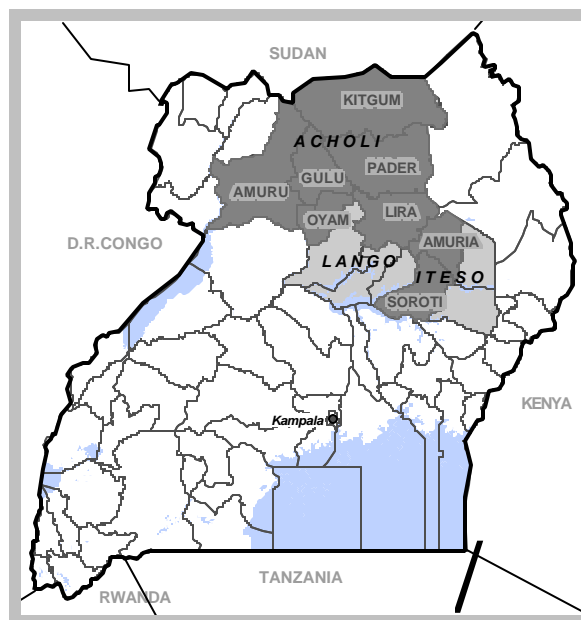
#### *New Survey on Peace and Justice in Northern Uganda*

**NEW YORK, August 16, 2007**—A report released this week during government consultations on the Juba peace talks offers new evidence of exposure to violence in Northern Uganda and documents victims' attitudes toward peace and justice.

Researchers from the Berkeley-Tulane Initiative on Vulnerable Populations (a joint project of UC Berkeley's Human Rights Center and Tulane's Payson Center for International Development) and the New York-based International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) released a research note based on 2,875 interviews with adults in the 8 Northern Ugandan districts most affected by the conflict between the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebel group and the Ugandan military. The note provides preliminary results for a larger study to be released in September.

The survey found that 20% of the population surveyed reported being forcibly abducted or taken away by the LRA for a week or more; 25% reported being beaten by the LRA; and 5% said they had been maimed. The common LRA tactic of forcing abductees to commit crimes, including murder and mutilation, was further documented: 14% of respondents reported being forced by the LRA to loot; 7% to beat or injure and 3% to kill a civilian. "The numbers on abduction are highly significant," said Dr. Patrick Vinck, Director of the Berkeley-Tulane Initiative. "They show the unparalleled phenomenon of abductions committed by the LRA."

Most respondents wanted those responsible for war crimes and violations of human rights to be held accountable. They distinguished between LRA leaders and lower-ranking LRA members, who, in many cases, had themselves been abducted as civilians. Only a minority (17%) said that the rank-and-file should face trial and/or punishment. Many wanted to see LRA leaders face trials and/or punishment such as imprisonment or death (41%), although many others (52%) also indicated that they favored options including forgiveness, reconciliation, and reintegration into communities. Respondents also indicated a greater comfort level with living in the same communities with former low-ranking LRA members than with returned LRA leaders.



The research also found that the population has been victimized by those whose duty it is to protect them: 9% of the respondents said their property had been stolen or destroyed by the Uganda People's Defense Force (UPDF); 6% reported being beaten by the UPDF; and 3% reported that a family member was killed by the Defense Force. Respondents were less forgiving of the UPDF than of the LRA leaders and rank-and-file because "they [the UPDF] knew the law and their duty is to protect civilians." More than 55% of respondents said that the UPDF should face trials and/or be punished.

Prosecutions were seen as the best mechanisms to deal with those responsible for the crimes, including domestic prosecutions (28%) and prosecution by the International Criminal Court (29%). Approximately 60% of respondents had previously heard of the ICC, and 67% believed that the ICC should be involved in responding to the atrocities that have been committed in Northern Uganda. However, most respondents also said that they favored a process that included some form of amnesty because some of the LRA members had been forcibly conscripted. Approximately half of the respondents regarded traditional ceremonies as useful for the reintegration of former LRA members. Nearly all respondents wanted the truth about what happened in Northern Uganda to be determined.

"These striking results point to the need for a comprehensive justice strategy in Northern Uganda," said ICTJ Senior Associate Marieke Wierda. "They also indicate relatively high levels of support for the approach taken at the Juba peace talks in the Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation signed by the Government of Uganda and the LRA in late June."