



Global Kimeeza II: The Role of Youth in Post-Conflict Northern Uganda

Action Statement

We, the Ugandan and American participants of the *Global Kimeeza II: The Role of Youth in Post-Conflict Northern Uganda*, do affirm our moral responsibility in ending the extreme human suffering created and deepened by the conflict in Northern Uganda, a place where over twenty thousand children have been kidnapped, ninety percent of the population has been displaced, and eighty percent of the combatants are youth and children.

In view of recent peace talks between the Government of Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army, and given that youth have been both the major actors in and the major victims of this conflict, youth involvement in achieving peace and rebuilding Uganda is both timely and imperative.

We, the thirty-six participants in this fourteen-day Summit, have come from multiple universities, cities and districts in the United States and Uganda. We come from a wide range of cultural, religions and spiritual backgrounds, yet we all acknowledge that the suffering in Northern Uganda is unacceptable to the global community.

Further, through a process of democratic deliberation in breakout groups focused on the role of youth as peacebuilders, justice and forgiveness, and poverty relief and economic development, we have recognized as youth that there is a local, national and international responsibility to take the following steps towards change together, with support from the Global Youth Partnership for Africa:

1. Encourage youth to create spaces where they can engage and empower one another through dialogue on reconciliation, justice and forgiveness, through psychosocial and reintegration efforts and through the sharing and gathering of youth opinions. We can achieve this through networking, building partnerships and accessing available resources such as the District Peace Forums and reconciliation committees. These spaces give youth an avenue to communicate throughout Uganda and the international community to aid in national unity, international cooperation and multicultural exchange.
2. Reach out to community leaders, government, NGOs, CBOs and the international community through print, radio and digital media, public debate, and other advocacy events in order to take an active role in peacebuilding and reconciliation, to ensure better partnerships between youth and other stakeholders in post-conflict northern Uganda and to increase international pressure on the major actors in the peace process. Additionally, we will work to promote that youth both initiate and attend local and international peace conferences in order to make our voices heard.

3. Strengthen educational programs for all ages throughout Uganda to inform individuals of their rights and to provide an increased understanding of justice and various mechanisms for its achievement. These programs will include home outreach, formal education and efforts to heighten international awareness of issues of justice and forgiveness in Uganda.
4. Uphold culture that promotes justice and peaceful reconciliation by identifying and strengthening the capacity of traditional institutions and leaders throughout Uganda. We will also encourage the sharing and appreciation of Uganda's diverse cultural heritage through the empowerment of existing groups that promote cultural understanding and advocating for their involvement in educational and training programs.
5. Promote the restoration of local culture and break dependence on food aid by encouraging the development of agrobusiness tied to resettlement. By participating and sharing knowledge gained from agriculture-based training, youth will be prepared to lead the rebuilding of a peaceful northern Uganda.
6. Facilitate increased access to capital and markets through expansion of microfinance to rural areas and improved transport and communication infrastructure. Integrate practical and entrepreneurial training into educational curriculums to develop a generation of job-creators.

We recognize that this collaboration is a living document, and we will take further steps to adapt our efforts based on changing needs, experience and expertise.

On this day, Monday, the fifteenth of January 2007, at the Makerere University Business School, Kampala, Uganda, we the participants of the *Global Kimeeza II: The Role of Youth in Post-Conflict Northern Uganda*, do hereby pledge to take part in the above actions.