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[AUTISTIC ENEMY IMAGES]
THE CASE OF KONY 2012

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"I have not set off this little work with pompous phrases, nor filled it with high-sounding and magnificent words, nor with any other allurements or intrinsic embellishments with which many are wont to write and adorn their works; for I wished that mine should derive credit only from the truth of the matter, and that the importance of the subject should make it acceptable."

- Niccolò Machiavelli, 1513 -

Acknowledgements

Summary

On February 5th 2012, Invisible Children launched the campaign Kony 2012 with the release of a 30 minute film. It focussed on the victims of a civil war which started in northern Uganda 26 years ago and which has since then spread to (present day) South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Central African Republic. The war is characterized by war crimes and crimes against humanity, including murder, rape, mutilation and abduction of civilians, children included. Within days of its release the film attracted millions of viewers, making it the biggest viral phenomenon in web history (Bariyo, 2012). Invisible Children managed to achieve what no news agency or documentary maker had been able to do in the 26 years of the conflict's history; it managed to focus the attention of 'the international community' on a conflict that few people outside of the conflict affected area had heard of before. It was able to do so by focussing the campaign's story on a small part of the conflict, the LRA and its leader Joseph Kony, and relating the conflict to high emotional values held by the target audience. By using a variety of manipulation techniques that include the techniques of identification and labelling, simplification, repetition, personification and visual referencing, a powerful autistic enemy image was created. It made it easy for an uninformed audience to subscribe to the enemy image of the LRA and in particular Joseph Kony being solely responsible for the atrocities committed in the conflict against children and innocent civilians. In Kony 2012, Invisible Children omitted to show how the colonial roots of the conflict, as well as the numerous other parties (other than the Ugandan and US governments and the ICC) that are involved of which many have been accused of having committed similar crimes. Nor did it tell the history of the conflict and the continuous failure of military intervention or the existence of opportunities for a peaceful resolution and the obstacles that the ICC arrest warrants issued against the LRA leadership form in this process. This intense focus on Joseph Kony and his use of children in the conflict, combined with compelling storytelling and manipulation techniques lead Kony 2012 to create a very strong one sided view, an autistic enemy image, of Joseph Kony and the LRA in the minds of the viewer.

By analysing the goals and interests of the main parties involved in the conflict it becomes evident that several parties, including the Ugandan government, the United States government and Invisible Children itself benefitted from the effects of the autistic enemy images created by the Kony 2012 campaign. The autistic enemy images that many have subscribed to and that have generated such a vast media attention have helped legitimize imperial and colonial objectives of the foreign parties involved in the conflict. In case of the United States government the campaign is a welcome development that will help it legitimize its expansion of military and

political influence in Central Africa and for Invisible Children it means a continuation and potential expansion of its activities to other regions. These underlying interest focusing on the expansion of political and military influence, and the transfer of western culture and values onto non-western populations indicate imperial and colonial tendencies of the US government and Invisible Children.

The Kony 2012 campaign, through its use of autistic enemy images and manipulation techniques may be a continuation of colonialism and used as a legitimisation for imperialism, but perhaps at its very core Invisible Children's call for the defence of basic values, human rights and a desire for peace, that are supported by the vast majority of cultures around the world is not colonial at all but very human.

Contents

Glossary of terms

CAR	Central African Republic
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
EDF	Equatorian Defence Force
GoSS	Government of South Sudan
HSM/ HSMF	Holy Spirit Movement/ Holy Spirit Mobile Forces, led by Alice Lakwena
Kony 2012	The film made by Invisible Children and centrepiece of the Kony 2012 campaign.
Kony 2012 campaign	The worldwide campaign of Invisible Children to make Joseph Kony and his Lord's Resistance Army famous in order to move individuals to exert pressure on their governments to take action against him. The campaign includes among other things the film Kony 2012, posters and bracelets but is dominated by a public discussion through social media.
ICC	International Criminal Court
Invisible Children	The non-profit organization behind the Kony 2012 campaign.
Joseph Kony	The leader of the Lord's Resistance Army, suspected of war crimes by the International Criminal Court
LRA/ M	Lord's Resistance Army/ Movement (the movement being the political wing)
NRA/M	National Resistance Army/ Movement, led by Yoweri Museveni, currently the ruling political party in the Ugandan government
SPLA/M	Sudan People Liberation Army/ Movement
SSIM	South Sudan Independence Movement
UNLA	Ugandan National Liberation Army, led by Milton Obote
UPDA	Ugandan People's Defence Army (successor of the UNLA)
UPDF	Ugandan People's Defence Force (official army of Uganda, formed out of the NRA)

Introduction

On March 5th 2012 the Kony 2012 campaign by the US based advocacy group Invisible Children was launched with the release of the film Kony 2012. Through social media the film rapidly spread on the internet and became the "the fastest-growing viral phenomenon in Web history" (Bariyo, 2012). Within days of its release the film was viewed more than 100 million times on Youtube alone (Invisible Children, 2012A). In the 30 minute film, Invisible Children tries to mobilize the audience to support their governments to take (military) action to stop the rebel group the Lord's Resistance Army and its leader Joseph Kony who have been waging a civil war in Central Africa for decades. Kony, along with three of his commanders, has been indicted by the International Criminal Court on account of war crimes and crimes against humanity including murder, rape, (sexual) enslavement, torture and forced enlistment of children (International Criminal Court, n.d.). Invisible Children uses a myriad of manipulation techniques to convey its message to the audience and move them to take action. It is part of a growing trend distinguished by Walton (2007) in Western democracies, and particularly in the United States, in which media, politicians and advocacy groups focus on emotional manipulation and the polarization of discourses to influence the public towards supporting certain public affairs. A great risk however is formed by the lack of knowledge about the conflict by the majority of Invisible Children's audience. To inform the audience and move them to take action Kony 2012 focuses on two aspects; Joseph Kony and the use of children in the conflict. The conflict however has been going on for 26 years (United Nations Security Council, 2006) and is far more complicated than can be adequately explained in 30 minutes. The spatiality of the conflict only adds to its complexity. At its roots it is a tribal war originating from inequality and marginalisation of some by others based on the remnants of colonial constructions. Over the past three decades the conflict has spread into four sovereign nations in Central Africa, it has become part of the 'War on Terror' and has drawn the attention of the 'international community'. A one-sided portrayal of a complex conflict such as this can easily lead to autistic enemy images and cause people to support processes they may otherwise would not support.

In the Kony 2012 campaign it is up to the 'uninvolved foreigner' from distant lands to help steer this conflict to a desirable outcome, by military and political means. This research aims to analyse the goals, values and manipulation techniques behind the Kony 2012 campaign, the autistic enemy images they have created and compare them to a more objective analysis of the conflict. Doing so may help uncover any potential imperial or colonial tendencies in the campaign and in those individuals and institutions that subscribe to its message.

As social media appear to be here to stay, it is not inconceivable that similar campaigns to raise public awareness and support to act on issues of social injustice will occur again in the future and that they too will support on autistic enemy images. This thesis tries to expand the scientific knowledge about the use of autistic enemy images in social media campaigns and their effect on post colonial agenda's by analysing the case of Kony 2012. Its results may be used to compare and analyse future mass public appeals through social media in order to discover trends and developments and provide insight to social scientists and policy makers. The results of this research may also prove to be useful for post colonial thinkers and researchers in the field of (Western) norms, values and images and their influence and application in the world. In addition by applying the theories of autistic enemy images and post colonialism to a case study it will help to make these theories and the insights that can be derived from them more accessible to a general public.

Chapter 1 Theoretical framework

One of the cornerstones of this research is based on theories of enemy images and specifically autistic enemy images. Holt and Silverstein (1989), who analysed the concept of enemy images in scientific literature, define enemy images as "scornful stereotyped images of people not like themselves" in which images are to be understood as "concepts, beliefs, attitudes, values, stereotypes, emotions (particularly fear and hatred), motives, and intentions". Their definition is closely related to Wecke's (1987) definition of enemy images as "a conception of the other based on the aspect of enmity". Wecke also added that such conceptions of the other become enemy images when they are regularly used. Being conceptions of the other they are therefore not necessarily based on reality, this however does not exclude the possibility that they are in fact fully in agreement with reality. It is the inclusion of the aspect of enmity that distinguishes enemy images from imaginative geographies, which too are based on stereotyped conceptions and beliefs of distant lands and the 'other' and which likewise do not necessarily conform to reality (Gregory, 2000). Being different from each other they are not mutually exclusive, rather imaginative geographies can be used as a foundation from which enemy images can be constructed and shaped.

An autistic enemy image arises if an enemy image is based on such a one-sided portrayal of an enemy that any information relating to reality is subjugated by the conceived image of the enemy through selective attention and inattention of the subscriber to that enemy image (Wecke, 2011). It then becomes very difficult or even undesirable for the subscriber of this image to be open for reality checks and information that portrays the enemy in a way that does not match the current enemy image. All information that does not match the autistic enemy image is deliberately or unintentionally ignored. It is the combination of these conceptions or stereotypes with an uncertainty of what is reality and what is not which make autistic enemy images so useful to rally people to a cause and thus so dangerous. The potential of autistic enemy images can perhaps best be summarized by use of the Thomas theorem which states: "if men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences" (Wecke, 2001).

Individuals who hold autistic enemy images often do not create them themselves, although they may contribute to them, but subscribe to existing images made by social constructions. Advocacy groups, political movements and other social institutions use discourses, defined by Foucault as meanings set within a knowledge system or language (Foucault, 1983), to construct enemy images which in some cases can be so focussed that they become autistic enemy images. One characteristic of this process is worked out by Hugh Rank in his model on benefit seeking

behaviours in communication contents based on the perception of 'good' and 'bad' and the possession of it (Rank, 1984). From this model it can be derived that the creator of an enemy image in his discourse aims to intensify the 'bad' and minimise the 'good' of the other's actions while intensifying the 'good' and minimise the 'bad' of his own actions.

Traditional media models, such as the propaganda model of Chomsky and Herman, state that the major sources of information such as government institutions and press agencies; large media companies; and advertisement interests of media dictate the content of the media and thus which discourses are used in mass media channels that reach large groups of people (Klaehn, 2002). However with the increase of private internet access and the advent of social media it has become possible for individuals and small organisations to reach a large audience with limited resources. Although using different means than traditional media, these formerly powerless individuals and groups in the world of mass communication, rely too on manipulation techniques to convey their message and construct the desired discourses. This is part of a growing trend distinguished by Walton (2007) in Western democracies, and particularly in the United States, in which media, politicians and advocacy groups focus on emotional manipulation and the polarization of discourses to influence the public towards supporting certain public affairs. Both Wecke (n.d.) and Rank (1984) have identified several key manipulation techniques that can be used to construct discourses and through those autistic enemy images including: identification, labelling, using fallacies, personalization, simplification, withholding of context, one sided representation, referencing to primary values and rights, reversing subject and object, using statements of seemingly trustworthy individuals and organisations, and fine tuning the message to the target audience.

Enemy images can serve a variety of functions to those who construct them and to those who subscribe to them (Wecke, 1987). Among others they often serve the function of serving as an instrument of economic (efficient) thinking which helps the holder of the enemy image to make a judgement regarding complex situations. Enemy images can also be useful in motivating people to support or participate in a certain action; they can create cohesion in a group; and help built an identity of one that is different from the 'other'. By focusing public attention on one enemy, enemy images can be used to distract attention from other, internal, problems and can be used to justify one's own behaviour which otherwise would be more difficult or impossible to legitimize. In case of the justification function, legitimacy can be understood in both the sociological definition of legitimacy, based on a majority support, but also in the policy-

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oriented definition which recognizes legitimacy if the means lead to the desired result (Wecke, 2008).

Reasons for wanting to construct or support an autistic enemy image in the case of the Kony 2012 campaign can be identified by analysing the potential benefits in reaching specific goals held by the organisations and institutions that are involved in the conflict. Some of these goals, particularly those of foreign organizations and states which have become involved in the conflict, can be identified as colonial or imperial. In this thesis imperialism is to be understood as the exertion of economic and political influence in foreign lands (Said, 1994) whereas colonialism, although no longer associated with the physical act of colonisation by means of creating settlements in distant lands, is to be understood as more than the exercise of economic and political subordination but also includes the exercise of western cultural power and values (Barnett, 2006).

Chapter 2 Methodology

It is evident without any in-depth analysis that certain manipulation techniques are used in the Kony 2012 campaign and that they have the potential to lead to autistic enemy images. To establish a good base for referencing the images created in Kony 2012 to and create an indication of reality, the report will start out with a brief synopsis of the conflict by analysing its historical causes, the major events, parties involved in and developments of the conflict. It is however not an attempt to give a detailed account of the 26 years of the conflict. Throughout the conflict the Ugandan government under Museveni has waged a successful propaganda war against the LRA, supporting its own views of the conflict and silencing the LRA. The long history of the conflict and the atrocities that have been committed have led to an abundance of sources yet few of them can be seen as objective accounts due to one sided portrayals of the conflict (almost always the side of the Ugandan government or the civilian victims of the war). There are even fewer researchers who have attempted and succeeded in interviewing active members of the LRA, portraying their side of the story. Schomerus (2007) has succeeded in this and so have several others succeeded in giving an objective account of the conflict. This includes amongst others; Atkinson (2009) and Schomerus & Tumutegyereize (2009) who give a detailed account of Operation Lightning Thunder and the events following and leading up to it; Apuuli (2004) who focuses on the events causing and (at the time of writing) potential consequences of the involvement of the ICC; and Le Sage (2011) and a report from the conflict research institution Crisis Group (2008) who give a more general overview of the conflict. Cross referencing statements and reported events however remained important due to the difficult accessibility to accurate data these researchers must undoubtedly have faced too.

With a solid background of the conflict established the report turns to the Kony 2012 campaign. As the familiar saying goes 'an image says more than a thousand words', this is definitely true for the fast paced 30-minute documentary by Invisible Children, making it difficult and highly time consuming to accurately analyse Kony 2012 to its fullest and relate the other aspects of the campaign to it. To overcome this the content analysis is split into 5 steps that each dig to a deeper level.

Step 1: determines the goals expressed in Kony 2012 and other Invisible Children sources

Step 2: analyses the norms and values that Invisible Children and its supporters subscribe to

Step 3: uses discourse analysis to determine the enemy images created by Invisible Children

Step 4: determines how media and propaganda models apply to Kony 2012

Step 5: uncovers the manipulation techniques used in the Kony 2012 campaign

Steps 1, 2 and 3 depend for a substantial part on quantitative analysis of the film Kony 2012. By counting how often certain words or phrases are repeated it becomes possible to establish the importance of those phrases to the creation of specific images. It is sometimes difficult however to capture the full context of certain words or statements in a quantitative matter as they may be spread out over a long sentence or are individually not very strong but depend on their context, including sounds and images displayed, to gain strength. In the quantitative analysis these are counted only once and where applicable discussed in more detail. In the report, references to statements and the time at which they are made in Kony 2012 (a transcript of which is included in the appendix) are marked as such: [00.00].

Step 3 uses discourse analysis to determine the enemy images created in the Kony 2012 campaign. As Foucault described discourse as meanings set within a knowledge system or language (Foucault, 1983), it is this report's goal to uncover those meanings from the words that are used in Kony 2012 to describe Joseph Kony and the LRA. But also the meanings that can be deducted from the use of images, video fragments and sounds that support the written and spoken statements in Kony 2012. From these meanings the enemy images that the campaign creates become clear. The theories and work of Wecke on enemy images is of great importance to relate the knowledge gathered from the discourse analysis to the construction of enemy images.

Mc Luhan stated "the medium is the message" (Wecke, 2001). In step 4 the effects, limitations and benefits of social media to the Kony 2012 campaign are analysed. The analysis is performed by comparing the characteristics of Kony 2012 to the characteristics of Chomsky & Herman's propaganda model and Hugh Rank's model on benefit seeking behaviours in communication contents.

With the goals, values, discourses and media models uncovered a careful analysis can be made of the different manipulation techniques that are used in Kony 2012. Again the work of Wecke and Rank will be of great importance as they have both identified numerous manipulation techniques used in other media campaigns that may also be applied in the Kony 2012 campaign. By quantifying the manipulation methods, a sense of their importance to the campaign can be discerned. With all the goals, values, manipulation techniques and enemy images of the Kony 2012 campaign known and analysed any potential imperial or colonial tendencies can be uncovered.

Chapter 3 Findings

3.1 Conflict background

Before the Kony 2012 campaign was launched, only relatively few people outside the conflict area were familiar with Joseph Kony, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and the war crimes and crimes against humanity that they are suspected of. Because of this it is one of Invisible Children's goals to make Kony and the atrocities committed by him and the LRA known in order for people to appeal to their governments to step in and take action. One of the risks of Invisible Children's approach is that the organisation tries to convince an uninformed audience of the severity of the conflict and try to move them to take action based on a 30 minute film. However, the conflict between the Ugandan People's Defence Force (UPDF) and the LRA has been going on since 1986 (Schomerus & Tumutegyereize, 2009; United Nations Security Council, 2006) and is highly complex, making it an almost impossible tasks to create an accurate image of the conflict for people to make a deliberated decision. To get its message across within the limits of social media, characterized by short, to the point messages, Invisible Children focuses on two aspects; Joseph Kony and his use of children in the war. Such and other manipulation techniques have the inherent danger that they can lead to autistic enemy images and undeliberated action from an uninformed audience. Although this paper is also limited by space and time constraints in describing the conflict it will attempt to give a synopsis of the major events, parties and developments of the conflict in order to serve as a reference base for the analysis of the images created in the Kony 2012 campaign.

The history of the LRA and the grounds on which it emerged date back to the colonial era when present day Uganda was a protectorate of the British Empire. Under colonial rule, the people in southern Uganda received more investments en development from their colonial masters than the people in the north, who (specifically those of the Acholi tribe) were stereotyped as warriors and subsequently ended up occupying significant portions of the military and police forces (Le Sage, 2011; Atkinson, 2009). This polarization between the north and south continued after Uganda's independence under the mostly northern dominated governments of Milton Obote (whose rule was interrupted by the coup of Idi Amin) and Tito Okello. During these northern dominated governments, Yoweri Museveni's southern National Resistance Army/ Movement (NRA/M) fought against Obote's Ugandan National Liberation Army (UNLA) and finally overthrew them after an internal coup within the UNLA which briefly led to Tito Okello's rule (Atkinson, 2009). This was however not the end of the war but it did cause the battlefield to shift to northern Uganda where the remainder of the UNLA had retreated to and had reformed into

the Ugandan People's Defence Army (UPDA) (Le Sage, 2011). According to Finnström (In Atkinson, 2009, p.6) within two years there were twenty seven different rebel groups fighting Museveni's new government as it were again the northern tribes, specifically the Acholi and the Langi, that were being marginalized. After the subsequent defeat of the UPDA many of its members would eventually join the Holy Spirit Movement/ Holy Spirit Mobile Forces (HSM/ HSMF) and shortly after that was defeated the LRA (Le Sage, 2011). The LRA is today the only remaining rebel force that has not yet been defeated by the NRM government and continues to forcefully resist it (Apuuli, 2005).

Next to the marginalisation of the tribes in northern Uganda the Holy Spirit Movement was also a major influence in the forming of the LRA (Le sage, 2011). The Holy Spirit Movement and Holy Spirit Mobile Forces also fought against the marginalisation of the people in northern Uganda by Museveni and gathered wide support among the Acholi and other Nilotic tribes. A key characteristic of this movement though was that its leader, Alice Lakwena, who professed to be guided by a messenger of the Holy Spirit. Kony, a former altar boy, also claimed to be guided by a higher spirit in his fight to free the Acholi from the Museveni regime (Le Sage, 2011; Schomerus, 2007). When after some initial success against the NRA, the HSMF were defeated, Kony absorbed much of the HSMF remnants in his newly formed Lord's Resistance Army.

A third major influence on the LRA was the war in southern Sudan. In 1994 the LRA moved across the border from northern Uganda into southern Sudan and Eastern Equatoria state, home to a large Acholi population, in particular. According to the Ugandan government this move was due to increased military pressure from the UPDF (the official Ugandan army, reformed from the NRA after Museveni took power) however many scholars believe that there was also a significant political motivation behind the move (Atkinson, 2009; Le Sage, 2011; Schomerus, 2007). In its fight against the Sudan People's Liberation Army/ Movement (SPLA/M) who were fighting for an independent South Sudan, the Sudanese government in Khartoum used several rebel groups, including the LRA, as proxy forces. In return the Sudanese government supplied the LRA with weapons, resources and military training (Le Sage, 2011; Schomerus, 2007). The LRA was a particularly interesting proxy for the Sudanese government as it was fighting against the SPLA as well as the Ugandan government which was supporting the SPLA (Schomerus & Tumutegyereize, 2009). While fighting the SPLA the LRA joined forces with other rebel groups supported by the government of Sudan including the Equatorian Defence Force (EDF) and the South Sudan Independence Movement (SSIM) who fought against the SPLA/M because they saw

it as Dinka (one of the largest tribes in southern Sudan) dominated (Le Sage, 2011; Crisis Group, 2008; Schomerus, 2007).

When the U.S. government placed the LRA on its Terrorist Exclusion List in 2001 it increased pressure on the government in Khartoum to step up its efforts in the international War on Terror. As a result the government of Sudan and the government of Uganda signed an agreement allowing the UPDF to pursue the LRA on Sudanese territory. In march 2002 as part of Operation Iron Fist some 10.000 Ugandan forces moved into southern Sudan to attack LRA bases supported by a further 30.000 troops deployed in northern Uganda's Acholi, Teso and Lango regions (Atkinson, 2009). Despite the efforts of the UPDF the LRA remained in southern Sudan and stepped up its efforts in northern Uganda.

The government in Khartoum however continued to support the LRA as the civil war against the SPLA continued up until 2005 (Atkinson, 2009) when the SPLA and the government in Khartoum signed the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) which ended the civil war and would eventually culminate in a referendum for secession in January 2011. After the signing of the CPA in 2005 the LRA moved westwards into Central and Western Equatoria and eventually set up a base in Garamba National Park in the northeast of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) (Atkinson, 2009). 2005 was also the year in which the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued the arrest warrants for Joseph Kony and four other top LRA commanders, increasing international attention to the conflict (ICC, n.d.).

In 2006 after numerous failed peace initiatives the newly formed Government of South Sudan (GoSS) facilitated peace talks upon request of the LRA, known as the Juba peace talks (Le Sage, 2011). Numerous obstacles including the credibility of the LRA/M delegation; the actions of Riek Machar (the GoSS facilitator); the ICC arrest warrants who frightened LRA leadership from participating personally; and the initial reluctance of the Ugandan government to participate limited their effect (Crisis Group, 2008; Schomerus, 2007). However after this rough start some progress was made as the LRA moved out of northern Uganda and Eastern and Central Equatoria which led to a period of relative calm (Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative, 2010).

In 2008 the Ugandan government, after increasing violence from all sides including LRA, UPDF, and SPLA (Schomerus, 2007), launched Operation Lightning Thunder. Two things distinguished this new military offensive from earlier attempts. The first is the international effort supporting it. Ugandan forces were supported by the militaries of South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo and the United States. A second advantage in favour of Operation Lightning Thunder

came from Khartoum's reduced support of the LRA after it signed the CPA with the GoSS. Despite these benefits, Operation Lighting Thunder has not produced any significant results to date. It has succeeded in destroying the LRA base camp in Garamba National Park but this has led to the scattering of the LRA over southern Sudan, the DRC and even into the Central African Republic (CAR), spreading the conflict into new regions that were left unaffected prior to Operation Lightning Thunder (Schomerus & Tumutegyereize, 2009; Crisis Group, 2008). Today the LRA is believed to comprise of some 300 to 400 fighters split up in ten units and spread out over the Haut Uélé Province in north-eastern DRC, south-eastern CAR and Western Equatoria in South Sudan (Le Sage, 2011).

Over the years the conflict has affected millions of civilians. Accounts on the number of people affected vary greatly and are difficult to confirm due to difficult access, censorship and diverging definitions of the term 'victim'. Often reports don't provide independently verified numbers but refer to the number of victims running into the "tens of thousands" (Atkinson, 2009; Schomerus & Tumutegyereize, 2009). Accounts of the number of Internally Displaced People (IDP's) in Uganda range up to 1.8 million of which 90% was forced to relocate by the Ugandan government under the guise of protecting the people in 'protected villages' (Atkinson, 2009; Crisis Group, 2008). A 2005 study by the World Health Organisation and the Ugandan Ministry of Health concluded that the harsh conditions in these camps claimed an estimated 1.000 lives *per week* (World Health Organisation, 2005). Almost all parties in the conflict including the LRA, the Ugandan army (the UPDF) and the South Sudanese army (the SPLA), have been accused of war crimes and crimes against humanity that include charges of killing, mutilating and abducting civilians and the use of child soldiers (Schomerus, 2007). The LRA have however repeatedly used such tactics on a structural basis.

Finding a peaceful solution to the conflict is complicated as several parties, of which foremost the Ugandan government, do not recognize the LRA and their political wing the Lords Resistance Movement (LRM) as a viable negotiating partner. This can mainly be attributed to the highly successful propaganda campaign waged by the Ugandan government against the political motivations of the LRA/M portraying them as incoherent or nonexistent. The LRA's actions involving violence against civilians have not been beneficial in getting their political agenda established either, despite their regular publication of political manifestos (Schomerus, 2007). According to Finnström (in Schomerus, 2007) the LRA's political manifesto's have over the years repeatedly called for, amongst others: multiparty politics, the protection of human rights, nationwide socio-economic balance, free elections, and ending corruption. While other

manifesto's focus on topics such as agriculture, health, education and infrastructure. Despite this political side of the LRA/M being effectively silenced the manifesto's are widely know within northern Uganda and are widely supported by large parts of the population. The Acholi people in particular feel a close connection to the LRA and at times seek its protection against the UPDF, the SPLA (in case of Sudanese Acholi's) and other armed groups (Crisis Group, 2008).

Further degradation of the LRA as a reliable negotiating party comes from the LRA soldiers and middle level commanders who maintain a fair degree of autonomy (Crisis Group, 2008). Schomerus (2007) concluded from interviews with active LRA fighters that "they do not fight the war for the chairman [Kony]"but "see themselves as fighters for their people, the Acholi, whom they believe to be marginalized, abused, and excluded from Uganda's development by an oppressive regime". This is also believed to be true for the large numbers of Sudanese LRA fighters that have joined the LRA's ranks, voluntary or by abduction, throughout the years. It is because of this that parties in the peace process, including the Ugandan government, wish to reach out to these middle level commanders as they exert a substantial influence in the LRA's daily actions (United Nations Security Council, 2006). Not unimportant is also that these middle level commanders are not indicted by the ICC and can therefore potentially be persuaded to support peace deals that would not be accepted by top level LRA commanders who do have ICC arrest warrants out for them.

Such peace deals could rely on the Amnesty Act adopted by the Ugandan government in 2000 which provides amnesty to LRA members who give up their weapons and surrender. Thousands of LRA fighters have since then surrendered and benefitted from this Act, greatly reducing the LRA's numbers and thereby helping to regain peace in the region (Amnesty International, 2011). The Amnesty Act however also means that prosecution for crimes that these LRA members may have committed is no longer possible and may therefore go unpunished to the detriment of justice. Because of the ICC arrest warrants issued against the top level LRA commanders surrender under the Amnesty Act is no viable option for them as the Ugandan government is obligated to hand over the indicted criminals to the ICC once they are captured or have surrendered.

3.2 Kony 2012 campaign content analysis

3.2.1 Goals as expressed in the film Kony 2012
As Jason Russell states, after the emotional scene in Kony 2012 in which former LRA child soldier Jacob tells his story, Russell and his friends were so moved by the atrocities committed by the

LRA that they pledged to do "everything they can to stop them [the LRA]" (Invisible Children, 2012A, [7.36]). This pledge in itself is so broad that it does not mean much to anyone, not even to Russell himself as he continues shortly after his statement. It is therefore important to gain insight into the goals expressed by Invisible Children in the Kony 2012 campaign as it will provide a better understanding of the motivations, ideas and world views of the Invisible Children organisation and the people who subscribe to its views.

Defining the goals expressed in Kony 2012 is however a long and tedious activity as the goals are used a great number of times throughout the film, formulated differently and communicated by means of speech, visual images and music. There is such diversity in the expression of the film's goals that the viewer likely won't remember the exact formulation of the goal statements but more their general notion and intend. It is therefore more practical to divide the goals into four main categories that the goal statements relate to:

- Create a better world
- Stop Joseph Kony and the LRA
- Restore LRA affected communities
- Make Joseph Kony famous

Creating a better world

The first goal category to be distinguished relates to the desire to create a better world for future generations. Kony 2012 starts with a several minutes long introduction explaining that the world as 'we', or more specifically "governments and older generations" (Invisible Children, 2012A), know it is changing rapidly by the introduction of new technology including social media and new means of communication. On the one hand this has some wonderful benefits, as represented in the film by people communicating and sharing their stories through social media. On the other hand it also makes people witnesses to social injustice from around the world as reporting them is no longer limited by agenda setting practises from governments and large press agencies. As Jason Russell puts it "the game has new rules" followed by expressing that it is mankind's common responsibility to stand up against these social injustice by stating "Who are you to end a war? I'm here to tell you; who are you not to." (Invisible Children, 2012A [1.30] [3.41]). His desire is to make the world a better, less complicated, place for future generations to grow up in (Invisible Children, 2012A [3.24]), a statement repeated twice near the end of the film at [28.33] and [28.59]. This goal is still very vague but essential as it shows the fundamental

belief expressed by the organisation that this witnessing of atrocities by distant outsiders puts a moral demand on people to act on behalf of suffering strangers.

Stop Joseph Kony and the LRA

The second goal category and arguably the most important goal underlying the film's message is to stop Joseph Kony and the LRA. It is this message which is repeated over and over again throughout Kony 2012 from the moment Jason Russell states his pledge to Jacob to do everything they can to stop the LRA. In total this goal is repeated 25 times throughout the film in different formulations involving the phrases to 'stop', 'arrest' or 'capture' at [7.36], [7.49], [7.55], [8.41], [9.34], [12.50], [12.55], [12.58], [13.04], [13.07], [13.11], [13.13], [13.17], [13.26], [13.54], [15.18], [15.36], [18.00], [19.33], [20.08], [20.30], [21.42], [22.26], [23.58] and [28.06] (Invisible Children, 2012A). On top of that several times this goal is formulated as bringing Kony to justice, at [13.28] and [13.36] by Ugandan politician Santo Okot Lapolo and later on at [26.42] and [28.19]. Another Ugandan politician, Norbert Mao, formulates the goal to stop the LRA as "to ensure that this mindless killing and slaughter is ended" (Invisible Children, 2012A [13.43]). In a quote from a statement by Barack Obama used in Kony 2012 the goal is formulated as "the removal of Joseph Kony from the battlefield" (Invisible Children, 2012A [18.45]) followed by an interview fragment of Susan Rice (US Ambassador to the United Nations) stating "[to] end this threat once and for all" (Invisible Children, 2012A [19.06]).

Alongside spoken statements of the goal to arrest Joseph Kony, the film also transfers this message through the use of images. At [12.21] a list is shown of "the world's worst criminals" indicted by the ICC (Invisible Children, 2012A). The video starts the list at the bottom showing the names and faces of people such as Laurent Gbagbo and Muammar Gaddafi. It then quickly flashes by many other names in a blur to give the impression of a long list of criminals, to finally end at the top of the list with the name and picture of Joseph Kony at number one, creating the impression that Joseph Kony has been identified as the 'worst of the worst' by an expert, impartial international agency and that he therefore must be stopped. Shortly afterwards the video focuses on the conversation between Jason Russell and his toddler son Gavin, whereby Gavin immediately and without hesitation points at a picture of Joseph Kony when asked "We should stop who?", showing that even a small child knows that Joseph Kony must be stopped (Invisible Children, 2012A [13.11]). Several minutes later at [16.53] the video shows hundreds of Invisible Children protesters chanting together "this war must end" while in the bottom quarter of the screen the text of their chanting is displayed almost like a karaoke machine, imprinting the message both visually and audibly on the viewer (Invisible Children, 2012A). Fragments of a

U.S. House of Representatives meeting from a C-SPAN broadcast (a US political news station) shows the topic of the debate "Disarming 'Lord's resistance Army' in Uganda" at [18.10] and [18.26], followed by a highlighted sentence of a letter from Barack Obama stating the mission of U.S. soldiers in Uganda will be to assist in "the removal of Joseph Kony from the battlefield" (Invisible Children, 2012A [18.41]. Other video fragments show Invisible Children supporters holding banners 'demanding justice' [19.43]; a typed message that Joseph Kony knows about the plan to stop him [19.55]; a repetition of the ICC's Worst criminals list [21.28]; and a potential future cover page of the New York Times stating "Kony captured" [22.23] (Invisible Children, 2012A).

The key here is the number of times that the goal to stop Joseph Kony and the LRA is repeated. With 32 spoken and 10 visual repetitions of this goal during a 30 minute film, the message is firmly implanted in the viewer's mind. Another important factor is formed by the people who make these statements, not just Jason Russell as spokesperson for Invisible Children, but also prominent politicians including Barack Obama and experts such as Luis Moreno Ocampo, head prosecutor of the International Criminal Court. Statements from such outsiders of the Invisible Children organization that support the goal to stop Joseph Kony create a sense of legitimacy to its message and help create a feeling of confidence that this is indeed the right thing to do as even 'the experts' agree (Wecke, n.d.).

Restore LRA affected communities

Less prominent than actually stopping Joseph Kony and the LRA, restoring the damage to local communities caused by Joseph Kony and the LRA (though no mention is made regarding damage done by other parties in the conflict, creating the image that the LRA is solely responsible for all damage done in the entire 26 year long conflict) can be identified as a third goal category. Although images of the damage done are shown throughout the film, and particularly images and statements regarding the abduction of children and their use as sex slaves and child soldiers by the LRA, there is remarkably little mention of goals aimed at restoring this damage done. The only vocal references to this third goal category comes at [13.34] from Ugandan Politician Santo Okot Lapolo when he states that the first priority is "to rescue our children", followed by Invisible Children at [15.36] as Jason Russell states "We were committed to […] rebuild what he had destroyed" (Invisible Children, 2012A). This is remarkable because in a statement on their website Invisible Children notes that the reconstruction and reintegration programs are an equally important part of their mission (Invisible Children, 2012B). One would thus expect more than two references to this goal in the film Kony 2012. The film does briefly explain what

Invisible Children has done so far in Northern Uganda to restore the damage done (Invisible Children, 2012A [15.37] – [16.20]), such as rebuilding schools, creating jobs and building an early warning radio network made possible through their 'TRI' program (abbreviation unknown) to which viewers are suggested to financially contribute at the end of the film as one of the four things they can do to help. The film however does not emphasize the goal of rebuilding LRA affected communities and reintegrating formerly abducted children back into society, making it a minor goal compared to stopping Joseph Kony. This adds to the creation of the idea that once Joseph Kony has been removed, the abducted children will come home and all will be well.

Make Joseph Kony famous

The fourth goal category to be distinguished focuses on making Joseph Kony famous and according to Invisible Children is the first step to realizing the other goals, in particular stopping Joseph Kony (Invisible Children, 2012A [21.42]). Once again this goal is repeated numerous times in various forms. It starts with the creation of the idea that, before the Kony 2012 campaign started, Joseph Kony, the LRA and the victims of the conflict were "invisible" (Invisible Children, 2012A [18.20], [19.21], [22.38], [22.51], [22.52], [22.53]) in the eyes of the international community and the policy makers in Washington DC as "national security or financial interests are not at stake" (Invisible Children, 2012A [13.55], [14.07]). Following from this idea stems the notion that Joseph Kony should be made 'visible' in order for the world to act against him. Making him visible or in other words putting Joseph Kony and the LRA on the agenda of policy makers, requires large scale public attention according to Invisible Children. To support this claim various statements in the film by Jim Inhofe, Jason Russell, Russ Feingold and John Prendergast show the importance of large numbers of people calling attention to a subject in order to get a response from politicians and get them to act, thereby emphasizing the need to make Joseph Kony famous (Invisible Children, 2012A [20.37], [24.04], [24.13], [24.20]). All in all nine references are made in Kony 2012 that include phrases stating the goal to make Joseph Kony 'visible', 'know', 'famous', 'a celebrity', 'a household name' or 'world news' at [22.57], [23.00], [23.30], [23.39], [23.49], [24.50], [25.29], [25.56], [26.20].

During these statements, images and video fragments are shown of the various campaign efforts that have already been made to make Joseph Kony famous, including putting up posters, flyers, stickers, yard signs, newspaper headlines, magazine covers and large demonstrations of Invisible Children supporters. In particular the images shown between [24.50] and [28.18] are important which portray the supposed status quo of marketing in the embodiment of the flashy advertising campaigns of big consumer good brands and the vast amounts of information that they subject

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people to, or in the definition used in Kony 2012 "the propaganda we see all day, every day that dictates who and what we pay attention to" (Invisible Children, 2012A [24.54]). By means of a statement from Shepard Fairey (the artist behind the iconic 'Hope' poster of the 2008 Obama presidential election campaign) the film tries to inspire the viewer that even with limited means and no direct access to conventional media such as television or publicized printed media, a small group of people can convey a message to a big audience. Even more, as this campaign strategy goes against the status quo in which big corporations, media companies and governments 'dictate' what information is shown to the general public, the film portraits the Kony 2012 campaign actions related to the Cover the Night event as being risky and on the fringe of what is legally possible, perhaps even illegal, but therefore adventurous at the same time. It does so by means of a rapidly changing video montage of images, video fragments and pop music [26.20 – 27.01] of Invisible Children supporters (exclusively young adults) putting up posters, banners and stickers in the dark, in tunnels, on rooftops and other public places while their friends light up their surroundings with flares, adding to the dramatic image. Some have their faces covered as if protecting their identity from the authorities, further enhancing the adventure atmosphere appealing to young adults.

The four goal categories outlined in Kony 2012 suggest a linear solution process. If Joseph Kony, the LRA and the atrocities they have committed are widely known, then governments, particularly the US government, will be moved to intervene by military means and put a stop to this social injustice. Once Joseph Kony has been arrested and handed over to the International Criminal Court to be trialled for his crimes, the abducted children can return home and the damage to LRA affected communities can be permanently restored. As this chain of actions will set a precedent for handling other cases of social injustice, it will have helped in creating a better world for everyone (Invisible Children, 2012C). This linear solution process is made particularly clear in the film between [21.11] and [22.34] when Jason Russell makes the case that in order for the US government to maintain its military intervention in the conflict, the American public and the rest of the world need to know about Joseph Kony and support the effort to arrest him.

3.2.2 Norms and values in Kony 2012

Underlying the message and goals of Kony 2012 are several norms and values that are shared by many cultures around the world, making the Kony 2012 campaign easier for people from around the world and not just the USA to subscribe to. Also amongst normally diverging and even polarized sub-cultures the campaign's message taps into these deep rooted values to form a goal that "we can all agree on" as Jason Russell puts it when referring to the different views that

normally exist between Democrats and Republicans in American politics (Invisible Children, 2012A [24.11]).

The film starts off with the idea that "humanities greatest desire is to belong and connect" (Invisible Children, 2012A [00.35]). This used to be possible only within a person's direct environment as the means to connect with one another were limited but which has now become possible on a global scale through the internet and the advent of social media. It is now possible to connect with people and maintain social network that cross the globe. It is through these connections that people see what happens to other people and express their empathy. So too is the case when people witness social injustice via these networks and relate that to their own norms and values.

Human rights

The main goal of the Kony 2012 campaign is to stop Joseph Kony and the LRA as they are being accused of numerous war crimes and the violation of human rights. Throughout the 26 year long conflict hundreds of thousands of people in northern Uganda, and later on in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Central African Republic and southern Sudan (present day South Sudan), have been denied basic human rights that entitle them to live in safety without fear for their lives (Crisis Group, 2008). One value that Kony 2012 particularly appeals to concerns the notion that children should not actively be part of violent conflicts, that they should be free from fear of being abducted, tortured, killed or used in any way in a violent conflict. The film even gives the impression that every child, no matter where he is born, should have a 'care free' childhood, a safe home and education. Invisible Children uses graphic images and video fragments to show that the children affected by the LRA are being denied these basic human rights. Between [4.16] and [7.57] the film shows the first encounter between Jason Russell and Jacob, a former LRA child soldier (Invisible Children, 2012A). The interview takes place in a shelter in Gulu, northern Uganda where Jacob speaks about his experiences with the LRA, how they treat children and how his brother was murdered by the LRA when he tried to escape. He concludes with the statement that he would rather be dead than alive as he can see no future for himself, a very powerful statement which emphasizes the severity of the situation. The emotion of Jacob's story is enhanced through video editing, by selecting the most emotional and shocking parts of the story, increasing the focus on those parts through slow transitions between video fragments and black screens, allowing the gravity of what has just been portrayed to the viewer to sink in. Sound echoing [7.20] and the sound of Jacob crying [7.11] to [7.27] while the film only shows a black screen without any visual images is used to further enhance this effect. Slow, dramatic

violin music is added between video fragments and during parts of the interview to enhance the emotional impact of the story.

Numerous repetitions later on in the film reinforce and built on the testimony of Jacob about the atrocities committed by the LRA. These repetitions include statements regarding kidnapping children [10.08], [10.44], [10.58], [12.49]; having them mutilate and kill other people, including their own parents [10.14], [11.17], [11.23], [12.44], [18.07], [18.14]; forcing children to do things against their will [10.27]; using girls as sex slaves and boys as child soldiers [11.07], [12.45], [28.40]. These statements are visually supported by video fragments and images of children being abducted [10.41]; pictures of people with mutilated faces [11.19]; boys carrying weapons [10.58], [11.13], [11.23], [16.55]; children forced to stay in overcrowded shelters for safety [18.15]; and men (supposedly LRA soldiers) posing with young girls [11.07].

Justice

It is the abuse of these values relating to human rights and in particular the abuse of the value that children should have a childhood free from fear of being abducted or killed that leads Invisible Children to plea to another common value; justice. As Joseph Kony and the LRA have committed crimes against humanity they must be held accountable for their actions and face trial. Throughout the film the organization and other interviewee's express the claim that justice, in the form of stopping the LRA's actions and bringing the accused before the International Criminal Court to face trial, should be brought to Joseph Kony and the LRA (Invisible Children, 2012A [13.28], [13.36], [21.15], [26.42], [28,19]).

Important to note about the Kony 2012 campaign that it is a group of individual outsiders, the Invisible Children organization and their supporters, who are demanding this justice. These are individual people representing themselves who are making this claim and are not a government or other authority. As Jason Russell states, 'it is no longer the few with the money and power who dictate the priorities of their governments but it are the people themselves who see each other and protect each other' (Invisible Children, 2012A [27.06]).

Peace

Another underlying value is the desire for peace. In the film Kony 2012, Luis Moreno Ocampo the head prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, states that in the past Joseph Kony has proven himself to be unwilling to commit to a peaceful resolution of the conflict by using peace talks to rearm and continue hostilities (Invisible Children, 2012A [12.07]). Peace is a value directly underlying the main goal of the Kony 2012 campaign; to end the conflict by stopping

Joseph Kony and the LRA. The peace symbol is therefore a recurrent sign throughout the campaign both in the printed form of an inverted Y with one long and three short legs and the hand symbol with a stretched index and middle finger while the other fingers are folded into the palm of the hand. In the film Kony 2012 this symbol is used at [8.55], [8.57], [14.56], [17.07], [17.27], [17.29], [17.31], [19.47], [25.22], [25.55], [26,04], [26,09], [28.12] and [28.27]. At [12.03] in the film a printed version of the peace symbol is transformed into the image of a machine gun to symbolize and visually support the statement that Joseph Kony uses peace talks to rearm and regroup his LRA forces. The peace sign is also printed on the 'Action Kit' boxes that are part of the Kony 2012 campaign [26.07]. Finally the film ends with the suggestion to join Invisible Children's "army for peace" [29.47].

3.2.3 Enemy images

The Kony 2012 campaign is designed to convey the message that Joseph Kony and the LRA are 'the worst' and must be stopped to a large audience that is not only targeted to receive this message but also to subscribe to it and spread it onward. In order for the campaign to be successful there can be no ambiguity about the intentions and actions of Joseph Kony and the LRA which becomes apparent from the discourse used in the Kony 2012 campaign. This is however not the only specifically constructed discourse used in the film. Another discourse is constructed that describes the change in the status quo that it is no longer the people with the money and the power who dictate the priorities of their governments but that it is now up to the people themselves to determine where those priorities should lie. Speech, sound, written texts, images and video fragments are used to construct the discourses that convey the messages and goals of the film.

Discourse relating to Joseph Kony and the LRA

As the film creates a firm connection between Joseph Kony and the Lord's Resistance Army the discourse relating to one, particularly Joseph Kony, reflects on the other. When, after a long introduction, the film focuses on the main subject it wants to address it begins with an emotional interview of Jacob of the atrocities he, his brother and fellow refugee children had suffered at the hands of the LRA. It immediately associates the LRA with a negative discourse of killing children [4.58], [5.04], [5.07], [6.51]; kidnapping children [5.13], [5.23]; causing children to run for their lives [4.26], [5.25] or even giving up the will to live [6.21] to [6.46] (Invisible Children, 2012A). During the interview video fragments of refugee children are shown, on the move with their belongings or sleeping in overcrowded shelters with slow, dramatic violin music playing in the background and ending with the sound and image of Jacob crying for his lost

brother, emphasizing the suffering caused by the LRA. The LRA is also described as a rebel movement [4.54], [5.17], [8.42], [10.59], [16.13]. The connotation of 'rebel movement' can sometimes be positive, for example in the case of the rebel movement that in 2011 overthrew Muammar Gaddafi in its fight for freedom, a positive value, thus leading to a positive connotation. However because of the connection already made between the LRA and the above mentioned atrocities the connotation of 'rebel movement' in the case of the LRA is negative and linked with the image of a dissident movement that uses violence to cause fear and instability in a sovereign nation.

Joseph Kony, as the internationally recognized leader of the LRA (International Criminal Court, n.d.), is used as the focus point in the Kony 2012 campaign despite that Invisible Children in a statement on their website acknowledge that the LRA in its current form is a fragmented organisation and that there are several other LRA commanders indicted by the ICC for similar war crimes and crimes against humanity (Invisible Children, 2012D). As Jason Russell explains who Kony is to his toddler son Gavin they continually refer to Kony as "the bad guy" [9.34], [9.38], [9.46], [9.48], [9.56], and refer to the children kidnapped by Joseph Kony as "the nice guys" [10.22] (Invisible Children, 2012A). During this scene Jason Russell presents Gavin with two pictures, the first one is of Joseph Kony which portrays him in military uniform with a very stern, almost angry face (a stereotypical bad guy), followed by a picture of Jacob whom is portrayed in a classroom with
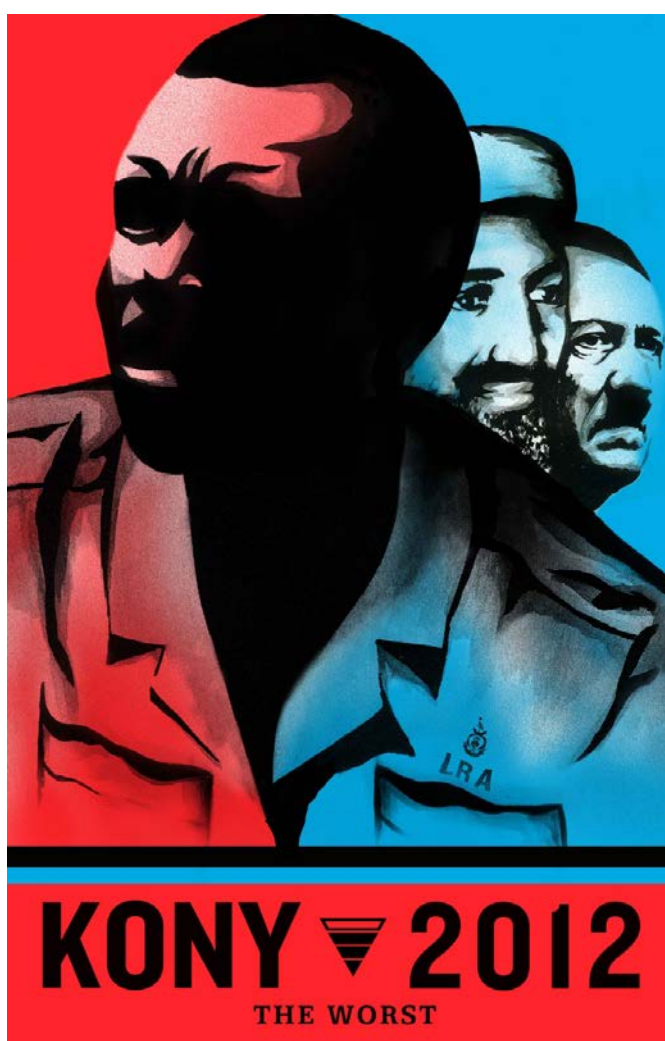

Figure 1 Poster of the Kony 2012 campaign depicting Joseph Kony with Osama Bin Laden and Adolf Hitler watching over his shoulder. (Invisible Children, 2012E).

a broad smile on his face (a stereotypical nice guy). Throughout the film images and video fragments of Joseph Kony consistently portray him with such a stern expression [12.34], [12.40],

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[20.22], [20.25], [21.34], [21.42], [22.23], [23.32], [27.48] sometimes with blood red eyes [10.53], [11.50], [26.57], [28.06] or posing while showing of a group of young girls (which in combination with the comments of the narrator create the impression to be his sex slaves) [10.08], [11.30], [26.58]. On the posters portraying Joseph Kony used in the Kony 2012 campaign this same stern expression is used [22.19]. The posters depict Joseph Kony with Osama Bin Laden and Adolf Hitler looking over his shoulder and the words "the worst" written under his image creating the image that Joseph Kony's crimes are equally bad or perhaps even worse than those of Bin Laden or Hitler (see figure 1). This particular poster is shown several times in the film Kony 2012 [22.19], [23.04], [25.32], [25.35], [25.37], [25.44], [26.21], [26.35], [26.44], [26.45], [26.54], [26.57] as well as video fragments relating the acts of social injustice committed by Kony to those of Hitler [21.10]. In the film Joseph Kony, like the LRA, is connected with numerous war crimes and crimes against humanity including; kidnapping children [10.08], [10.44], [10.58], [12.49]; having them mutilate and kill other people, including their own parents [10.14], [11.17], [11.23], [12.44], [18.07], [18.14]; forcing children to do things against their will [10.27]; using girls as sex slaves and boys as child soldiers [11.07], [12.45], [28.40]. In the film he is also described as; someone who abuses peace talks to rearm [12.02], [12.09]; a (perverse [12.32]) criminal [11.51], [12.40], [13.07], [23.06], [23.30], [27.48]; a mindless killer [13.43]; a threat to the region [19.06]; but also as someone who is difficult to capture [20.29]; someone who can expand his forces were it not for international pressure [20.37]; and who is infamous yet invisible on the agenda of the international community [22.51], [22.52], [22.53].

All these connections to negative acts create a very negative enemy image linked to the name Joseph Kony which also reflects back on the LRA as a whole. Making it difficult to distinguish whether individual LRA members, and particularly child soldiers, are perpetrators or victims.

Discourse relating to the change in status quo

Another discourse is constructed in the film Kony 2012 surrounding the notion that it is no longer the "few [people] with the money and the power [who] dictate the priorities of their government and the stories in the media" (Invisible Children, 2012A [27.06]). Instead throughout the film Invisible Children argues that through the advent of the internet and social media people across the world are now connected to one another and that it is now the people who can influence the priorities of their governments. Luis Moreno Ocampo refers to this as "Facebook world" in which people across the globe care for each other (Invisible Children, 2012A [27.37]). Numerous times the film voices statements, each time in different formulations, that it is up to individual people to join together and change the world [3.41], [8.15], [8.47], [14.30],
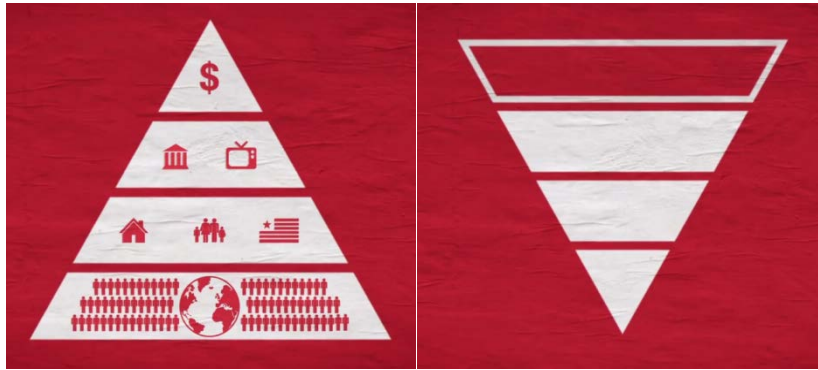
Figure 2 On the left is the supposed old system in which the rich and powerful (top layer) determine the priorities of the government and media (layer two) which affect the nation's people (layer three). The fourth layer represents the people of the World who are now connected to each other and in the right figure represent the top layer in the decision making structure. (Invisible Children, 2012A)

[14.50], [15.25], [15.28], [15.58], 16.07], [16.37], [17.32], [20.44] and shows images and video fragments supporting these statements of people protesting in front of government buildings and rebuilding LRA affected communities [13.52], [14.41], [14.57], [15.13], [15.28], [17.26], [18.19]. Among those images is also an upside down triangle which represents 'the people' who speak out about what should be done by the governments and institutions that represent them which in turn should lead to the desired change (see figure 2). The logic behind this is that if people know and care about injustice, then it becomes in the interest of politicians to act on it [13.20], [17.45], [18.18], [18.35], [19.00], [19.21], [22.06], [24.13], [24.20] where in the past governments would only act to situations that affected the country's national security or financial interests [13.56], [14.07]. According to Invisible Children this change in status quo, or as Jason Russell refers to it "the game has new rules" [1.30], [28.06], will "shape history" [8.28], [19.37], [27.55], [28.25].

Remarkable is that the Kony 2012 campaign focuses mostly on 'younger generations'. Although the campaign heavily relies on social media to spread the campaign message to a wider audience, typically the domain of younger people, its success indirectly meant that there was a rapid and wide spill over effect to conventional media, thereby also reaching 'older generations'. This focus on younger generations however becomes most apparent as each and every scene in Kony 2012 depicting Invisible Children supporters are, without exception, young people (under an estimated age of 35, but mostly even younger) who voice this call to stop social injustice. Jason Russell refers to this group as Invisible Children's "army of young people" (Invisible Children, Kony2012A [16.24]. Whereas Joseph Kony and the LRA are identified with negative values, this 'army of young people' are identified with positive values as they stand up for human rights, justice and peace.

3.2.4 Media and propaganda models
Mc Luhan stated "the medium is the message" (Wecke, 2001) and social media have been a vital aspect of the Kony 2012 campaign. People are able to share the Kony 2012 video with everyone

in their online networks by a simple click of their mouse button. This method is further enhanced by Invisible Children's efforts to persuade 20 celebrities and culture makers and 2 policy makers to talk about the Kony 2012 campaign. Some of these celebrities such as singer Rihanna and billionaire Bill Gates have millions of followers on Twitter (Twitter, 2012), a single message by them reaches a huge number of people. It is this media strategy that enabled Invisible Children to spread its message across the world at an unprecedented rate, becoming the fastest growing viral video to date (Bariyo, 2012). In turn this attracted the attention of traditional news media and within days of Kony 2012's release many major news agencies across the world had covered its success, leading of course to more attention to the film. Kony 2012's success is contrary to the propaganda model of Chomsky and Herman which states that the large media companies; the major sources of information such as press agencies and government institutions; and advertisement interests of media dictate the content of the media (Klaehn, 2002). Invisible Children has proven that the message of a small, independent organisation can reach the masses without the traditional requirements for media propaganda.

Jason Russell stated in Kony 2012 "we are making Kony world news by redefining the propaganda we see all day, every day that dictates who and what we pay attention to" (Invisible Children, 2012A [24.50]). This redefining of propaganda has led to a carefully constructed film consisting of several stages with a logical sequence of events that guide the viewer to a logical conclusion. It starts with an introduction of the notion of "Facebook world" followed by an introduction of the main characters of the film Jason Russell, Gavin and Jacob (the good guys) and Joseph Kony and the LRA (the bad guys). Then comes the main goal of the film; the need to stop Joseph Kony and put an end to the atrocities he is responsible for. The logical next step follows soon after in which Jason Russell explains how Kony can be stopped, and the 'young people from Facebook world' spring into action. The film concludes with a vision for the future and a repetition of the four things the viewer can do himself to help stop Joseph Kony.

Hugh Rank has developed a model of basic benefit seeking behaviours in communication contents, based on the perception of 'good' and 'bad' and the possession of it (Rank, 1984). This is reflected in Kony 2012 as Invisible Children tries to intensify the image of its own 'good' in its plea for international intervention, while minimising the 'bad' of the potential negative effects of military intervention and the negative image surrounding the supposed 'good' guys represented by the Ugandan Peoples Defence Force who themselves are accused of war crimes. Similarly it intensifies the 'bad' image of Joseph Kony and the LRA through the application of statements, testimonies, graphic images and video fragments, and minimise Kony's 'good' by

completely ignoring any potential mitigating circumstances. According to Rank this perception of 'good' versus 'bad' through intensification and minimisation can be achieved through several key manipulation techniques.

3.2.5 Manipulation techniques

As described above, Invisible Children adds strength to its campaign message to move the audience to subscribe to its views and goals. For this it uses specific discourses and the manipulation techniques of *identification* and *labelling* that use these discourses. However, many more manipulation techniques identified by Rank (1984) and Wecke (n.d.) can also be identified in the Kony 2012 campaign.

From the analysis of the goals, norms and values and discourses used in the campaign one of the most prominent manipulation techniques used that becomes evident is *repetition*. This is most clearly visible in the campaign's messages concerning the main goals; stopping Joseph Kony and the LRA and making Kony famous as well as the discourse used to built the image that Kony is "the worst". Spoken and written references to these messages are *repeated* over and over again and are supported by sounds, images and video fragments.

This claim itself that Kony is 'the worst' is a *fallacy*, and thus another manipulation technique used by Invisible Children, as Jason Russell supports this claim by stating that it is the "perversity of Kony's crimes [that] made him first on the [International Criminal] court's list" (Invisible Children, 2012A [12.32]). In reality the International Criminal Court does not maintain a list in which criminals are ranked according to the severity of their crimes, but rather an overview of current cases. These cases are listed on the ICC's website in order of referral to the court. As Uganda was the first country to refer a case to the ICC in 2004, the case involving Joseph Kony and four other LRA commanders is the first case mentioned on the website (International Criminal Court, n.d.) and thus not related to their crimes as being 'the worst'.

The *personalization* of the atrocities committed in the conflict in the persona of Joseph Kony is also intended to strengthen the message of the campaign and give the campaign a focal point. Much of the killing, kidnapping and plundering, among other crimes committed, is unlikely to be done solely by Joseph Kony personally but rather by those under his command. Yet, depicting Kony as the *personalization* of the crimes makes it easier for viewers to identify with the conflict and subscribe to its solution; Stop Kony and the conflict will end.

This proposed solution is however a great *simplification* of the complexity of the conflict. The idea that the conflict can be ended by simply removing Joseph Kony is appealing for people less

well informed about the complexity of the conflict. It supports the proposition that a few relatively straightforward actions, as proposed by Invisible Children as a linear solution [21.41] to [22.34], can solve the problems caused by Joseph Kony (Invisible Children, 2012A). After all who would oppose ending the conflict and returning all the abducted children home by stopping Joseph Kony if all it takes is sending in foreign soldiers to support the Ugandan Peoples Defence Force (UPDF) in its hunt for the LRA? However the viewers support would likely be far harder to win if other aspects of the conflict were known (*withholding of context* and *one sided representation of the conflict*) including; the allegations of war crimes against the UPDF and other armed groups involved in the conflict (Schomerus, 2007); the realization that a large part of the LRA's combatants are the very children that need to be rescued and that they may well be killed in the process of stopping Kony by military means; the believe that the LRA is currently a decentralized organization made up of semi-autonomous groups of combatants who remain even if Kony is removed (Le Sage, 2011); and the fact that it was the UPDF with US support that launched Operation Lighting Thunder against the LRA while the peace process was still ongoing, albeit not smoothly due to violent incidents from all sides (Schomerus & Tumutegyereize, 2009). Heavy international criticism against this *simplification* in Kony 2012 has caused Invisible Children to release several statements and a second film rectifying some images created in Kony 2012 and pleading for an (undefined) comprehensive solution (Invisible Children, 2012D; Invisible Children, 2012F).

Another manipulation technique, one not identified by Wecke and which I will refer to as *visual referencing*, is used very often in close cooperation with repetitive oral statements. It encompasses supporting positive or negative oral statements with visual material in order to link audible input to a visual image in the mind of the viewer. When Jason Russell speaks of 'national security' and 'financial interests' the film shows the image of an American flag waving in the wind and the image of stockbrokers in a dealing room respectively (Invisible Children, 2012A [14.02], [14.05]). These images directly link the statements made by Russell to already existing positive or negative views and values associated by the viewer with national security and financial interests. Similarly applied include pictures of Ugandan children playing and smiling when Russell speaks about the right of every child to a childhood free from fear [28.44]; video fragments of people on the phone when speaking about calling politicians to get their attention [24.15]; advertisements of large international brands when talking about the daily propaganda that people are subjected to [24.52]. Almost every scene in Kony 2012 is edited to support the spoken statements and narration, this is far more than compared to other documentaries covering similar topics such as 'The Children's War' by Journeyman Pictures (2003). When

someone is being interviewed and making a statement in Kony 2012, the film shows him or her only briefly and fills up large parts of the time it takes to make the statement with *visual referencing* to enhance the creation of the intended image. It is the familiar saying 'an image says more than a thousand words' put into practise.

A slightly different application of *visual referencing* in the film is used at [11.44]. In this scene when Jason Russell completes his statement about the 30.000 children abducted by the LRA throughout the conflict, Jacob's image is shown in a Photoshoped picture as one face in a seemingly endless group of abducted children (Invisible Children, 2012A). At the same time the sound of Jacob crying, as played earlier in the film during Jacobs emotional interview in which he told about his experiences with the LRA, is played on the background. The combination of Jacob's image and the sound of him crying while being displayed as part of that endless group of abducted children connects the emotional story of Jacob with the fate of all those abducted children in the mind of the viewer.

Kony 2012 relies heavily on *references to primary values and rights* held by the viewer. Kony 2012 starts with a long introduction of the birth and childhood of Jason Russell's toddler son Gavin, using this as a representation of the care free childhood of most children in Western countries in order to put the atrocities committed to the children affected by the LRA further in perspective. By continuously referring to these atrocities that violate these values and rights, Invisible Children intends to tap into a solid foundation for the campaigns message and goals. Especially by *over accentuating* the violation of a child's right to a fear free childhood by the LRA's actions of killing, kidnapping, abusing and using children as sex slaves and child soldiers in its war effort.

By *reversing subject and object* through interviews and statements of young (Western) people, the film tries to influence the viewer by confronting him with statements of his peers. If someone's peers support the goal convincingly it becomes easier for the viewer to identify himself with it and join his support. Many interviews and statements in Kony 2012 are also made by well known politicians and people who can be considered experts on the subject such as Luis Moreno Ocampo, the head prosecutor of the ICC. By having these 'outside experts' give statements that confirm the message and support the goals of the campaign *inspires trust in the campaign's message.* Through the '*Halo effect*' (Wecke, n.d.) part of the trust generated from the statements of these outside experts is transferred to other statements made by Invisible Children.

Kony 2012 is a fast paced, well edited documentary that is *finely tuned to appeal to its target group*. The campaign is built around social media; it uses references to popular culture (via the music used in Kony 2012 and the artwork of Shepard Fairey who designed the campaign posters); it creates an image of adventure for the 'Cover the Night' campaign; and it creates the idea that it is up to young people to change the world.

Chapter 4 Discussion

On February 5th 2012, Invisible Children launched the campaign Kony 2012 with the release of a 30 minute film. It focussed on the victims of a civil war which started in northern Uganda 26 years ago and which has since then spread to three neighbouring countries. The war is characterized by war crimes and crimes against humanity, including murder, rape, mutilation and abduction of civilians, children included. Within days of its release the film attracted millions of viewers, making it the biggest viral phenomenon in web history (Bariyo, 2012). Invisible Children managed to achieve what no news agency or documentary maker had been able to do in the 26 years of the conflict's history; it managed to focus the attention of 'the international community' on a conflict that few people outside of the conflict affected area had heard of before. It was able to do so by focussing the campaign's story on a small part of the conflict, the LRA and its leader Joseph Kony, and relating the conflict to high emotional values held by the target audience. By using a variety of manipulation techniques that include the techniques of identification and labelling, simplification, repetition and visual referencing, a powerful autistic enemy image was created. It made it easy for an uninformed audience to subscribe to the enemy image of the LRA and in particular Joseph Kony being solely responsible for the atrocities committed in the conflict against children and innocent civilians. As the above analysis of Kony 2012 reveals, the film shows only the atrocities in graphic detail committed by the LRA and personifies this in Joseph Kony. The film does not show or tell what events led to the conflict; which numerous other parties are involved (other than the Ugandan and US governments and the ICC); which of these parties are also contributors to the harm against civilians; how the conflict developed; what the effects were of previous military action against the LRA; or what obstacles and opportunities for a peaceful resolution exist. This intense focus on two aspects of the conflict combined with the compelling storytelling and manipulation techniques lead Kony 2012 to create a very strong one sided view, an autistic enemy image, of Joseph Kony and the LRA in the minds of the viewer.

Shortly after the release of Kony 2012 critiques were raised by concerned viewers. Some of it concerned comments on the way Invisible Children and its directors (this includes Jason Rusell) managed the organisation's finances and organisational transparency. Other critiques were raised about "the white man's burden" and why uninvolved Westerners had to get involved possibly even with military means. Critiques on the data and statements presented in Kony 2012 that made it to the 'mainstream' discussion (taking place through social media) and that were taken over in reporting by other media were limited. The three main critiques related to the content were; that the number of 30.000 children kidnapped by the LRA mentioned in Kony

2012 were the total of the entire conflict and not the number per year (despite that this claim has never been made by Invisible Children in the film or any other form and that no factual data on exact number of victims is known in the first place); that the LRA has been pushed out of Uganda years ago and that the conflict is now all but over in Uganda (despite that this is already briefly mentioned in Kony 2012); and that the Ugandan army itself has also committed war crimes and crimes against humanity. The major problem with these critiques is that in the 'mainstream' discussion very few of these critiques are supported by any evidence. Even fewer go deeper into the conflict's history or background and present a more nuanced image.

Rash, emotional and unsubstantiated criticism can be expected in any social media campaign, especially one that builds heavily on important cultural values of the audience. However the lack of substantiated critiques and nuancing images can further be explained by the very effective propaganda war waged by the Ugandan government against the LRA/M throughout the entire conflict. It has consistently dominated the information available surrounding the LRA/M; denying the existence of the group's political manifesto's or questioning their authenticity and blocking LRA statements from being published by the media while using the media to spread its own version of the conflict's developments. As Kony stated in 2006 in an interview with Schomerus (2007) "People are fighting with propaganda … [all information comes] from Museveni's side or from some other people, because I do not have proper propaganda machineries". As with many armed conflicts the international media were largely dependent on the government for their information (Luyendijk, 2006), the Ugandan government's views and discourses on the LRA thus found their way to help shape international public opinion while those of the LRA were left out. These 'official' discourses portrayed the LRA as a group of "irrational maniacs" led by an "insane messiah" who murder, rape, plunder and abduct civilians (Atkinson, 2009; Schomerus, 2007). Many aid agencies working on the ground with affected communities were willing to accept this 'official' information (Schomerus, 2007) or did not want to get involved in public discussions on what really happened. In case of advocacy groups reporting on the conflict the focus is often put on the victims and less on the perpetrators. Some, as with non-advocacy aid agencies, because they rather focus on helping the victims and others because they depend on the approval or goodwill of the government to carry out their work. Researchers gathering data and publishing more objective accounts of the conflict do produce publicly available data, but this knowledge is often published within scientific circles only and requires a fee to be accessed by the general public. Because of this after 26 years of conflict little objective information is readily available to check Invisible Children's claims against. With the bulk of available information closely related to or based on the Ugandan

government's official information it forms the ideal basis for autistic enemy images to develop further. When this autistic enemy image is combined with the image, or what Said defines as the 'imaginative geography' (Gregory, 2000), of the Ugandan people as helpless victims of the LRA for 26 years without even the sovereign Ugandan government being capable of protecting its own civilians, making them in need of international (military) support, military intervention may become to appear a legitimate course of action. Legitimacy in this case is not necessarily to be understood as the 'everyday' sociological definition of legitimacy based on a majority support, but predominantly as a policy-oriented definition that claims legitimacy if the means lead to the desired result (Wecke, 2008).

With a compelling story formed by manipulation techniques and little sources available to nuance it, the target audience becomes highly susceptible to this enemy image and becomes more easily to move to action. In the case of Kony 2012 this becomes evident from the high number of times the video was shared and forwarded to other people, and to a lesser extend the number of people who subsequently signed Invisible Children's petition to the United Nations and the African Union pleading for military intervention and those who participated in the 'Cover the Night' event. As an enemy image takes a more autistic form, reality checks regarding that enemy image become more difficult and less wanted by the holders and creators of that enemy image, reinforcing their hold (Silverstein & Holt, 1989).

The analysis of the conflict's history in chapter two already showed that the conflict is far more complicated and nuanced than the autistic enemy image sketched by Invisible Children shows. But also the values held by the audience that Invisible Children appeals to require more attention. Human rights can be considered universally accepted based on their definition and legitimisation through the United Nations and so can the rights of the child, which amongst other rights state that children should not directly be involved in armed conflicts. In 2002 the United Nations raised the age definition of a child actively participating in armed conflicts from 15 to 18 years (UNICEF, 2003). Singer (2006) also found that almost all traditional societies, including many African cultures, hold values that exclude children from warfare. What defines a child in one culture, or even by the United Nations, however does not necessarily hold true for all societies. According to Schomerus, people in Acholi society are no longer considered children but youth between the ages of 13 and 30 (Schomerus, 2007). This is of course no excuse to the methods employed by the LRA and other armed groups, but it is important in understanding the actions and use of children and youths by them. As Schomerus concluded from observations of and interviews with active LRA fighters that although over the years thousands of children were

abducted by the LRA, the actual fighting forces comprised predominantly out of people in their late teens and early twenties, an age at which they are no longer considered to be children in the Acholi communities that many belong to. Younger children that are abducted are often released after having served as porters. It are often only the teenagers and young men and women that actually have the physical strength to receive military training and can survive in the bush that are forced or choose to stay for a longer time (Schomerus, 2007).

Justice and peace are two other values that the Kony 2012 campaign relies on, values shared by various Acholi religious leaders (Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative, 2010). Justice in this case is defined by Invisible Children as the prosecution by the International Criminal Court of those responsible for the atrocities committed by the LRA, most importantly the four remaining LRA commanders that have outstanding ICC arrest warrants. No mention is made by Invisible Children regarding the intention or need for the prosecution of perpetrators of similar acts that belong to other parties involved in the same conflict. In order for a trial to take place the defendants have to appear for the ICC and thus either need to surrender or be captured. This however means that the LRA leadership can no longer count on a resolution through the Amnesty Act or (local) traditional justice systems, two non-violent reconciliation methods, both pre-dating the 2005 ICC arrest warrants, that were being explored prior to and during the Juba peace process (Apuuli, 2004). According to Schomerus, the warrants of arrest issued by the ICC against the LRA's leadership have thus become an obstacle in the peace process and as long as these warrants remain the LRA is unlikely to fully disarm and dismantle (Schomerus, 2007). In order to put the indicted LRA commanders to trial, the African Union Forces recently deployed in South Sudan in an effort to stop the LRA have orders to capture Kony and hand him over to the ICC (Aljazeera, 2012). Increased military efforts such these, like previous military interventions against the LRA, will most likely result in further loss of civilian lives in search for justice (Branch, 2012; Apuuli, 2004). If international efforts seek justice through military intervention whereas local efforts seek a non-violent resolution to the conflict the question arises whether such justice is worth more than peace.

As the enemy image of Joseph Kony, 'the worst criminal of all' who can only be stopped by an international military effort, appears to be detrimental to a peaceful resolution of the conflict and against the wishes of the affected communities (Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative, 2010; Apuuli, 2004), it becomes important to know who does benefit from such an autistic enemy image and an approach to end the conflict through military intervention.

The Ugandan government held off international interference in its conflict with the LRA for the first 18 years of the conflict, calling it an internal state issue of rebellion and thus not an issue warranting international interference. However as the LRA began to move towards other regions in Uganda and southern Sudan, and with the turmoil surrounding the forming of a Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the SPLA and the government of Sudan, the Ugandan government saw the establishment of the ICC as a potential mean to make it easier for the UPDF to get clearance to pursue the LRA over Ugandan national borders (Apuuli, 2004). The ICC arrest warrants could be used as a means to pressure the governments of (South) Sudan, DRC and CAR to allow external (initially Ugandan) military forces to pursue the LRA into their territories. Although this process has been initiated long before the Kony 2012 campaign started (United Nations Security Council, 2006), its message will help built the legitimacy for military action against the LRA in the eyes of the 'international community'. The discourse on the LRA used in the Kony 2012 campaign is also similar to the discourse of the Ugandan government used to sow fear and cultivate political support against the LRA in regions outside northern Uganda (Atkinson, 2009). The Ugandan government also benefits from a prolonged military conflict as it legitimizes several strategic actions including an untransparant defence budged and a significant military presence in the North of Uganda, home to large groups of minorities who have rebelled against the current government in the past.

The discourse and subsequent autistic enemy image created by the Kony 2012 campaign also benefits the US government which has been involved in the conflict since at least 2001 when it put the LRA on its Terrorist Exclusion List, pressuring the Sudanese government to cooperate with the efforts in the War on Terror and help put a stop to the LRA operating in southern Sudan (Le Sage, 2011). Several years later the US was also involved in Operation Lightning Thunder (Atkinson, 2009). This US involvement goes back much further than is suggested in Kony 2012, which gives the impression that it was not until late 2011 that the US got involved in the conflict (Invisible Children, 2012A [18.30]). An autistic enemy image held by the US public, put forth by US citizens themselves, will help legitimize actions taken by the US government against the LRA, including open military involvement in the conflict. Increased US involvement also helps to strengthen the bond with the Ugandan government, a US friendly government and key regional ally in combating the Al-Shabaab (an Al-Qaeda linked group) insurgency in Somalia (U.S. Africa Command, 2012).

For Invisible Children in turn arguing a military solution is a solution that best meets the organisation's requirements. It is a solution that its target audience, Western and predominantly

American youths, are familiar with and have grown up with (the US intervention in Somalia, the second Gulf war, the Balkans, Afghanistan, the third Gulf war); one that is legalized through international law by the ICC arrest warrants; and one that is supported by the national governments in the region. Peace talks on the other hand are a long and time consuming process and which because of the ICC arrest warrants have been even further complicated, diminishing the chances of stopping Kony within Invisible Children's time frame ending at December 31st 2012 (Invisible Children, 2012A [8.36]). If a military solution proves successful in stopping Joseph Kony, Invisible Children can claim its campaign a success, however if it proves unsuccessful than it can claim the often heard argument that it was due to a lack of resources and commitment (Le Sage, 2011). Even in the case of a partial success; Kony captured, but the conflict ongoing via LRA splinter groups or local militia (many former rebels themselves) not willing to return the weapons handed to them by the Ugandan government (Apuuli, 2004), Invisible Children can still claim success as Kony himself has indeed been stopped. A successful campaign would benefit the organisation's long term survival. First to expand its programs in northern Uganda and other affected regions to rebuilt the damage done by the LRA, and second, to open the possibility to turn its attention to other conflicts around the world involving child soldiers. The autistic enemy image of Joseph Kony and the LRA which incriminates only them, further serves Invisible Children as it is for a large part depend on the support and approval of the Ugandan government to carry out its work in the affected communities. If Invisible Children was to highlight the war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by the Ugandan government and the UPDF, this support may be withdrawn.

The above analysis shows that for at least these three parties involved in the conflict there are serious underlying interests at stake which, at the very least, lie alongside their public motivation in supporting the Kony 2012 campaign. Especially in the case of the United States' support of the Kony 2012 campaign's message and enemy images an imperialist motivation can be discovered. If imperialism can be defined as the exertion of economic and political influence in foreign lands, regardless of the United States' self image of a "righter of wrongs around the world in pursuit of tyranny and the defence of freedom" (Said, 1994), its political and military influence in Central Africa can be defined as imperialistic. By tapping into the public sentiment and support for (military) action against the LRA it can (partially) legitimize it's military built up in Central Africa, a key region in the war on terror when it comes to allied governments (U.S. Africa Command, 2012). Military assistance will help strengthen ties with these allied governments and thus help to expand its political influence in the region.

There is a strong discourse in Kony 2012 that supports a change in the status quo on who dictates the priorities of governments, stating that it is now 'the people' themselves who are now 'connected' to each other that choose what their government's should focus on. Although people are indeed now connected and can more easily convey their opinions to their political leaders, it are still organisations, of which Invisible Children is just one, who set the main agenda of such public movements based on specific internal goals beneficial to the organisation and not necessarily the goals of the people they claim to represent and the people they aim to help. Under the guise of making the distinction between the old generations, or status quo, in which the rich and powerful decide what to do for their benefit or self defence, the new generation is taking over and does 'the right thing' by using the latest technology combined with human values (Invisible Children, 2012A [19.42]), almost as if to signify that the colonial era is in the past and that Western involvement, or at least that of 'the Western public', is now based on peaceful motifs and human rights. However, colonialism is defined as more than the exercise of economic and political subordination but also includes the exercise of western cultural power and values (Barnett, 2006). And it are these western values and cultural views which dominate the Kony 2012 campaign. Although basic human rights have some cross cultural significance, the definition of children and the views of what a childhood should be defined like as expressed by Invisible Children are very western views indeed. Similarly the strong claim for justice, in the form if ICC trials of the indicted LRA commanders, put forward in Kony 2012 conflicts with and trumps local desires for peace. By having Kony 2012 narrated by Jason Russell, the American founder of Invisible Children and using only a few interviews of (biased) Ugandan's and no affected people from South Sudan, DRC or CAR, the voices and values of those directly affected are effectively silenced in favour of views and expressions matching the values held by the American organisation. Ugandan journalists say this has "mischaracterized the war in Uganda" and has built an image of the affected communities as being too helpless to end the conflict by either military or peaceful means (Uganda Speaks, 2012; Webb, 2012). Such imagined geographies help Invisible Children get its message across to its audience but does not help that same audience to make the decision whether or not to support the campaign based on accurate information (Gregory, 2000).

The heavy criticism following the release of Kony 2012 may have lessened the impact of the campaign but it has failed to bring the complexity of the conflict to the attention of the general public. Invisible Children's campaign message to stop Joseph Kony and the atrocities committed against children by him and the LRA remains strong and, as Invisible Children claims: "[stopping Kony] is something we can all agree on" (Invisible Children, 2012A [24.10]).

Chapter 5 Conclusions

The methods employed by the LRA are indeed horrific and are not excused by the reasons for their actions or by the fact that other parties in the conflict have committed similar offences. It remains however that Invisible Children singled the LRA out in a conflict which is far more complex than becomes evident from the Kony 2012 campaign. The organisation used a myriad of manipulation techniques to create an autistic enemy image of Joseph Kony and the Lord's Resistance Army that defied predominantly western norms and values in order to rally its audience to its cause of pressuring western governments to put a stop to Joseph Kony. It was through this autistic enemy image and the manipulation techniques that created it, in combination with Invisible Children's strategy to target 20 'culture makers' and 12 'policy makers' to promote the campaign, that have enabled the campaign's message to reach more than 100 million viewers in just a few days after its release. An objective image of the conflict would likely not have had the same effect as the complexity of the conflict would have prevented the presentation of a clear solution in a few 'easy' steps. Too many enemy images would have to be created to cover all the parties involved that can be accused of committing atrocities, and too many mitigating circumstances could have been presented that would have denigrated these enemy images. A single autistic enemy image with a single linear solution presented to solve the problem was the key to gathering the massive response witnessed after the release of Kony 2012, despite the fact that the LRA is just a small part of a much larger conflict. As Invisible Children states on its website in response to critical questions as to why Joseph Kony was singled out "the LRA crisis is not 'more important' than other human rights abuses […] Our goal is that the apprehension and subsequent trial of Kony and his top commanders will set a precedent for how conflict and mass atrocities are dealt with in the future." (Invisible Children, 2012C). This goal cannot be achieved by Invisible Children through a social media campaign without the use of autistic enemy images.

Several parties involved in the conflict, including the Ugandan government, the United States government and Invisible Children itself benefitted from the effects of these autistic enemy images on the public and used it to legitimize underlying interests and objectives. For the United States government the campaign is a welcome development that will help it legitimize its expansion of military and political influence in Central Africa and for Invisible Children it means a continuation and potential expansion of its activities to other regions. These underlying interest and transfer of western culture and values indicate imperial and colonial tendencies of the US government and Invisible Children.

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The Kony 2012 campaign, through its use of autistic enemy images and manipulation techniques may be a continuation of colonialism and used as a legitimisation for imperialism, but perhaps at its very core the defence of basic values supported by the vast majority of cultures around the world, embodied in the United Nations declaration of Human Rights, it is not colonial at all but very human. As becomes evident from the numerous testimonies from victims and members of affected communities gathered by human rights organisations and advocacy groups such as the Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative and Invisible Children there are certain values that are shared by many people. Common needs so vital to all human beings that they can perhaps be considered as values shared by all of humanity: human rights and a desire for peace.

As to the autistic enemy images portraying the conflict, the existence of the LRA may not be the biggest problem, it is rather the result of the underlying problem of the marginalisation of peoples based on tribal heritage. After the end of colonial rule the borders of the many newly formed states were not compliant with pre-colonial divisions of space. Many tribes now had to govern a new country together with other tribes who previously never had to cooperate. Other tribes, such as the Acholi, were split up over multiple countries. These new power structures led to the marginalisation of some people by others. Autistic enemy images may prevent the exposure of the true issues at the heart of a problem that may help lead to durable peace. Even without Joseph Kony or even the LRA entirely, there will still be marginalized populations in Uganda, South Sudan, the DRC and the CAR due to the existing tribal societies and unbalanced representation in national governments. Many armed groups in the conflict, including government forces of the GoSS (the SPLA) and Uganda have been proven to commit war crimes and crimes against humanity, including arming and fielding child soldiers (Atkinson, 2009; Schomerus, 2007). Eliminating the threat to civilians posed by the LRA is at best only a part of the solution to end crimes against humanity in the conflict between the LRA and the government of Uganda and the other conflicts in the region that are entwined with it.

Kony 2012 has made the word witness to a conflict in which atrocities have been committed that cannot be denied, leading to one very important question: does witnessing such atrocities oblige us to act?

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Appendix 1: Kony 2012 transcript

Completed and edited by the author, based on the transcript from Lybio (2012).

[Start of film]

NOTHING IS MORE POWERFUL THAN AN IDEA
WHOSE TIME HAS COME
WHOSE TIME IS NOW

[Jason Russell]
Right now there are more people on Facebook than there were on the planet 200 years ago. Humanities greatest desire is to belong and connect and now we see each other. We hear each other:

[Youtube video sounds of family]
Grandpa I love you
I love you
Why – why won't it take a picture?

[Jason Russell]
We share what we love and it reminds us of what we all have in common.

[Youtube video sounds]
Alive and well after 7 1/2 days. **[news report]**
If you believe in yourself you will know how to ride a bike. Rock n' roll. **[child speaking]**
So not technically your device is on. Can you tell – oh it's exciting. **[doctor speaking]**

[Jason Russell]
And this connection is changing the way the world works. Governments are trying to keep up.

[Youtube video sounds]
And now we can taste the freedom.

[Jason Russell]
And older generations are concerned.

[Youtube video sounds]
Many people are very concerned about tomorrow
Cause it could get worse next year.

[Jason Russell]
The game has new rules. The next 27 minutes are an experiment but in order for it to work you have to pay attention.

♪ **[Slow, soothing background music starts playing]** ♪

♪ **[Sounds from video of Gavin's birth]** ♪
baby cries
Oh he's cute. He's really cute. Wow! Congratulations.
Oh I can hear him.

[Jason Russell]
Every single person in the world started this way, he didn't chose where or when he was born but because he's here he matters.

[Jason Russell in video of Gavin's birth]

We've been waiting for you.
You made it.

[Jason Russell]

My name is Jason Russell and this is my son Gavin. He loves jumping on the Trampoline, being a Ninja and dancing.

[Jason Russell]

What are you doing?

[Gavin]

Making a snow angel.

[Jason Russell]

How do you do that?

[Gavin]

You do this: de de de – de de de

[Jason Russell]

Just like his dad, he likes being in movies. ACTION!

[Gavin]

Look up people look up – RUN!! It's a bomb.

[Jason Russell]

And he likes making movies.

[Gavin]

Daddy watch this. I think we got the video.

[Jason Russell] [3.24]

But he was born into a pretty complicated world. And as a dad I want him to grow up in a better world than I did. And because of the course of events in my life I see a way to get there. It has become my job.

[Jason Russell] [3.41]

Who are you to end a war? I'm here to tell you: Who are you not to?

[Jason Russell]

Hey Gavin, what's up?

[Jason Russell]

Years, before Gavin was born the course of my life was changed entirely by another boy. And who's this right here?

[Gavin]

Jacob.

[Jason Russell]

Who's Jacob?

[Gavin]

Jacob is our friend in Africa.

[Jason Russell]

It's almost been ten years since Jacob and I have been friends.

It's okay they're nice, they are different than sharks.

[Jason Russell]
But when my friends and I first met him in Uganda in central Africa it was in very different circumstances. He was running for his life.

♪ **[The background music changes to dramatic music]** ♪

[Jason Russell]
Ah – you go to school here?

[Jacob]
Yes

[Jason Russell]
That's how you know English so well.

[Jacob]
I know

[Jason Russell]
Ya

[Soldier]
(Hello)

[Jason Russell]
How many nights have you stayed here?

[Jacob]
Yes

[Jason Russell]
That's how you know English so well.

[Soldier]
You are making our work here very difficult. You stop that thing now.

[Jason Russell]
The night I met Jacob he told me what he and other children in Northern Uganda were living through.

[Jacob]
We worry the rebels when they arrest us again then they will kill us. My brother tried to escape then they killed him using a panga. They cut his neck.

[Jason Russell]
Did you see it?

[Jacob]
I saw.

[unnamed child]
We fear that if we sleep at our home we can be abducted by the rebels because our home is far away from town.

[unnamed child]
They will catch us then they will take us there in the bush. We come here to save our life.

♪ **[Dramatic music increases between unnamed child and Jason Russell speaking]** ♪

[Jason Russell]
I cannot believe that.

[Unnamed lady]
You cannot believe it?

[Jason Russell]
This has been going on for years?
If that happened one night in America it would be on the cover of Newsweek

[Jason Russell]
What is it that you want to be when you grow up?

[Jacob]
For me, I wanted to be a lawyer but I don't have money to pay my school fees so that I learn and then become a lawyer.

[Jason Russell]
After spending a few weeks with Jacob, he told me something that I would never forget.

[Jacob]
It is better when you kill us and if possible, you can kill us, you kill us. For us, we don't want now to stay – because

[Jason Russell]
You don't want to stay on earth?

[Jacob]
We are only two, no one is taking care of us. We are not going to school, so

[Jason Russell]
You would rather die than stay on earth?

[Jacob]
Yes. I

[Jason Russell]
Now, even now?

[Jacob]
Even now. How are we going to stay in our future? You see.

[Jason Russell]
He told me more about his brother and what he would say to him if he were still alive.

[Jacob]
I love you. But now I miss you. So it is better when we meet we are going to – even if – we are not going to meet but we may meet in heaven, you see? So it is better. I will not talk much, it will start something because if I saw my brother once again. I don't (cries)

[Jason Russell]
Hummh?

[Jacob]
(cries)

[Jason Russell]
That's okay, Jacob, it's okay

[Jacob]
(cries)

♪ **[Sad music playing]** ♪

[Jason Russell]
Everything in my heart told me to do something and so I made him a promise.

[Jason Russell] [7.36]
We are also going to do everything that we can to stop them.

[Jacob]
Okay.

[Jason Russell]
Do you hear my words?

[Jacob]
Yes.

[Jason Russell]
Do you know what I mean?

[Jacob]
Yes.

[Jason Russell]
Hmm?

[Jacob]
Yes.

[Jason Russell] [7.49]
Hmm. We are, we're going to stop them. We're going to stop them. I made that promise to Jacob, not knowing what that would mean but now I do. Over the past 9 years, I have fought to fulfil it. And the fight has led me here, to this movie your watching because that promise is just not about Jacob or me its also about you, and this year 2012 is finally the year we can fulfill it, and if we succeed we can change the course of human history but time is running out, to level with you, this movie expires on DECEMBER 31st 2012 and it's only purpose is to stop the Rebel Group The L.R.A. (Lord's Resistance Army) and their leader Joseph Kony. And I'm about to tell you how we are exactly gonna do it.

♪ **[active music playing]** ♪

[Image of Kony 2012 bracelet with the text "stop at nothing" shown] [8.53]

[Video shows Kony 2012 logo]
KONY 2012

♪ **[music stops]** ♪

[Jason Russell]
So the thing is – my son Gavin – I've never really explained to him what I do, he knows I work in Africa but he doesn't know what the war is about or who Joseph Kony is. So I'm gonna explain it to him for the first time, today. That's what we're doing.

[Jason Russell]
So Gav, are you ready?

[Gavin]
Ya

[Jason Russell]
I'm gonna ask you some questions

[Gavin]
Ok

[Jason Russell]
And you can just look at me and answer the questions, today.

[Gavin]
I'm kind of nervous.

[Jason Russell]
What do I do for a job?

[Gavin] [9.34]
You stop the bad guys from being mean.

[Jason Russell]
Who are the bad guys?

[Gavin]
Um…

[Jason Russell]
Do you know where they –

[Gavin]
Star Wars people.

[Jason Russell]
Star Wars people? -

[Gavin]
Yeah.

[Jason Russell]
- Those are the bad guys?

[Gavin]
Yeah.

[Jason Russell]
Can I tell you the bad guy's name?

[Gavin]
Yeah.

[Jason Russell]
This is the — This is the guy, Joseph Kony.

[Gavin]
He's the bad guy?

[Jason Russell]
Yeah. -Who's this? -

[Gavin]
Jacob.

[Jason Russell] [10.08]
Joseph Kony — He has an army, okay? And what he does is he takes children from their parents and he gives them a gun to shoot and he makes them shoot and kill other people.

[Gavin]
But they're not gonna do what he says because they're nice guys, right?

[Jason Russell] [10.27]
Yeah, they don't want to do what he says, but he forces them to do bad things. What do you think about that?

[Gavin]
It's sad.

[Jason Russell] [10.44]
I couldn't explain to Gavin the details of what Joseph Kony really does. Because the truth is, Kony abducts kids just like Gavin. For 26 years, Kony has been kidnapping children into his rebel group, the LRA… …turning the girls into sex slaves… …and the boys into child soldiers. He makes them mutilate people's faces. And he forces them to kill their own parents. And this is not just a few children. It's been over 30,000 of them. And Jacob was one of those children. As if Kony's crimes aren't bad enough, he is not fighting for any cause, but only to maintain his power. He is not supported by anyone, and he has repeatedly used peace talks to rearm and murder again and again.

[Luis Moreno Ocampo; prosecutor ICC]
Kony different times proposed peace and then just regained strength and attacked

[Jason Russell]
This is the head prosecutor for the International Criminal Court. In 2002, when the court was started, their job was to find and demand the arrest of the world's worst criminals. Although there are a lot of warlords, murderers, and dictators in the world, the perversity of Kony's crimes made him first on the court's list.

[Luis Moreno Ocampo; prosecutor ICC] [12.44]
Kony is the first guy indicted by the ICC. The crimes basically are crimes against humanity and war crimes committed against the civilian population including murder, sexual slavery, rapes, abductions. We need to plan how to arrest Kony, start to plan and it has to be serious. In fact, the only way to stop Kony is to show him we're going to arrest you.

[Jason Russell]
What do you think we should do about him?

[Gavin] [13.04]
We should stop him.

[Luis Moreno Ocampo; prosecutor ICC] [13.07]
The criminal here is Kony, stop him and then solve other problems

[Jason Russell] [13.11]
We should stop who?

[Gavin] [13.13]
Him.

[Jason Russell] [13.17]
It's obvious that Kony should be stopped. The problem is, 99% of the planet doesn't know who he is. If they knew, Kony would have been stopped long ago.

[Santo Okot Lapolo; Ugandan politician] [13.28]
Let the world, let the international community take justice to him there, follow him wherever he is. First, to rescue our children and secondly to deliver the justice.

[Norbert Mao, Ugandan politician] [13.43]
We are determined to cooperate with any friend of Uganda to ensure that this mindless killing and slaughter is ended.

[Jason Russell] [13.54]
When my friends and I came home from Uganda, we thought that if the government knew, they would do something to stop him. But everyone in Washington we talked to said there is no way the United States will ever get involved in a conflict where our national security or financial interests aren't at stake.

[John Prendergast, Enough project] [14.07]
No administration — Republican, Democrat, Obama, Bush, Clinton, doesn't matter — would do enough because it's simply not an important enough issue on the radar screen of American foreign policy.

[Jason Russell]
Since the government said it was impossible, we didn't know what else to do but tell everyone we could about Jacob and the invisible children. Show this movie to as many people as possible in such a way that we can't be ignored. And when we did, people were shocked, and their awareness turned into action. We started something — a community.

[Woman]
I have friends that have been living in this conflict their entire life. Fight for that because that is what is gonna change this world, and that is what defines us.

[Jason Russell]
We got creative, and we got loud.

[All]
It's not over! It's not over! It's not over!

[Jason Russell] [15.18]
And as the LRA began to move into other countries, Jacob and other Ugandans came to the U.S. to speak on behalf of all people suffering because of Kony. Even though Uganda was relatively safe, they felt compelled to tell the world that Kony was still out there and had to be stopped.

[Jacob]
I'm here so proud advocating for the people who are back at home and this change we are going to make is going to last forever.

[Jason Russell] [15.36]
We built a community around the idea that where you live shouldn't determine whether you live. We were committed to stop Kony and rebuild what he had destroyed. And because we couldn't wait for institutions or governments to step in, we did it ourselves with our time, talent, and money. So we rebuilt schools.

[Jolly Okot, Country Director Invisible Children]
The best you can offer a child is by letting them be independent and that was providing education.

[Jason Russell]
We created jobs.

[Peter King, Mentor, Invisible Children]
I have seen the lives of those who have been hopeless, now they have hope.

[Jason Russell]
And we built an early warning radio network on the front line of the war to protect villages from rebel attacks.

[Man]
To update real time what's happening on a war zone 8,000 miles away.

[Jason Russell]
All of this was funded by an army of young people who put their money toward their belief in the value of all human life. They gave a few dollars a month of what little they had to a program called TRI and proved that a bunch of littles could make a big difference. And as a result, the unseen became visible.

[Large group of young adults chanting together]
We've seen these kids
We've heard their cries
This war must end
We will not stop
We will not fear
We will fight war

♪ Stars hide your fires ♪
♪ These here are my desires ♪
♪ And I won't give them up to you this time around ♪
♪ And so ♪
♪ But you… ♪
♪ …rightfully mine ♪

[Banner display] [17.26]
Deliver your voice

[Young adult male speaking]
I've talked to people from Mexico, from Canada, from every other state that I can think of. We're all doing this for the exact same reason and we're all coming from completely different places. This is what the world should be like.

[Jason Russell] [17.45]
So, with hundreds of thousands of people with us, we went back to Washington, D.C., and we met with congressmen and senators one by one on both sides — Republicans, Democrats — and they all agreed with us. Joseph Kony's crimes had to be stopped.

[Jim Inhofe, Senator (Republican, Oklahoma)] [18.07]
With all the problems that are out there, none is more severe than one that — that mutilates and takes the lives of little kids.

[Susan Davis, U.S. Representative (Democrat, California)] [18.14]
These young members of the Invisible Children Organization know that no child should live in fear of being abducted or killed.

[Jim McGovern, U.S. Representative (Democrat, Massachusetts)] [18.20]
So they were determined to become their voice. They realized that these African children and families were invisible to Washington policymakers. So they decided to make them visible.

[Jason Russell] [18.45]
And what I was told would never happen suddenly became possible.

"In furtherance of the Congress's stated policy, I have authorized a small number of U.S. forces to deploy to Central Africa to provide assistance to regional forces that are working toward the removal of Joseph Kony from the battlefield. Sincerely, Barack Obama."

[Cheers And Applause]

[unnamed reporter]
The surprise announcement came in a letter from the White House. The U.S. President's decision commits U.S. troops to help…

[Susan Rice, US Ambassador to the United Nations] [19.06]
Through advice and assistance — not putting Americans into combat — to help the countries of the region end this threat once and for all. And that was a worthwhile investment.

[Cheers And Applause]

[Jolly Okot, Country Director Invisible Children]
We used to think we could not do it and now when I see we can do it. I am overwhelmed (cries)

[Crowd ululating]

[Jason Russell] [19.21]
After eight years of work, the government finally heard us. And in October of 2011, a hundred American advisers were sent into Central Africa to assist the Ugandan army in arresting Kony and stopping the LRA.
It was the first time in history that the United States took that kind of action because the people demanded it. Not for self-defence, but because it was right.

[Display of high frequency radio report of current LRA activity by a 14 year old LRA escapee] [20.08]
"Joseph Kony now knows of the United States' plan to stop the LRA and he is going to change his tactics to avoid capture, now that the great power is after him."

[Jason Russell] [20.30]
We've come so far. But Kony is still out there. He's recently changed his tactics, making it even more difficult to capture him. And international support could be removed at any time.

[Jim Inhofe, Senator (Republican, Oklahoma)] [20.37]
If we take the pressure off, if we're not successful, he is going to be growing his numbers. People forget and you've got to remind them and it takes numbers to remind them and if interest wanes, then it'll just, it'll go away and I'd end up standing out there alone trying to do something to support completing the mission. It's got to be 2012.

[Luis Moreno Ocampo; prosecutor ICC]
It's not bad for the youth, it's bad for the world if we fail. It's not important just for Ugandan people it's important for everyone.

[21.09] display image of Hitler and images of death

[Jason Russell] [21.11 – 22.34]
It's hard to look back on some parts of human history. Because when we heard about injustice, we cared, but we didn't know what to do. Too often we did nothing. But if we're going to change

that, we have to start somewhere, so we're starting here with Joseph Kony because now we know what to do. Here it is. Ready? In order for Kony to be arrested this year, the Ugandan military has to find him. In order to find him, they need the technology and training to track him in the vast jungle. That's where the American advisers come in. But in order for the American advisers to be there, the U.S. government has to deploy them. They've done that, but if the government doesn't believe that people care about arresting Kony, the mission will be cancelled. In order for the people to care, they have to know. And they will only know if Kony's name is everywhere. This is the dream. Kony arrested for all the world to see, and the abducted children returned home. -Here's the biggest problem.-

[Gavin]
Yeah.

[Jason Russell]
Do you want to know what it is?

[Gavin]
Yeah. -

[Jason Russell] [22.38]
Nobody knows who he is.

[Gavin]
Nobody knows, but — but I know who he is because I see him on this picture right now.

[Jason Russell] [22.51]
He's not famous. He's invisible. Joseph Kony's invisible. Here is how we're going to make him visible. We are going to make Joseph Kony a household name not to celebrate him, but to bring his crimes to the light. And we are starting this year, 2012. We are targeting 20 culture makers and 12 policymakers to use their power for good. Let's start with the 20 culture makers. Celebrities, athletes, and billionaires have a loud voice, and what they talk about spreads instantly.

[George Clooney, actor] [23.30]
I want. I'd like indicted war criminals to enjoy the same level of celebrity as me. That seems fair. That's our objective, is to just shine a light on it.

[Jason Russell] [23.39]
If our goal is to get Kony's name known, the known should join us. We are targeting 20 of the most diverse and influential culture makers to speak out about Kony and make him famous.

[Man]
Oprah. -

[Woman]
Mark Zuckerberg.

[Man #2]
Ryan Seacrest. -

[Women #2]
Bono.

[Jason Russell] [23.58]
Then we're going after policymakers — the ones that have the authority to see Kony captured. They decide if the advisers stay or leave. So we need to remind them that in this election year of fighting and name-calling, no matter what side you're on, this is something we can all agree on.

[Russ Feingold, former US Senator (Democrats, Wisconsin)] [24.13]
If a senator or congressman notices 25 phone calls on any issue on any given day, it is noted.

[John Prendergast, Enough project] [24.20]
When citizens by the hundreds of thousands start demanding that our government do something, suddenly it becomes in the national interest of the United States government to respond to this problem.

[Jason Russell] [24.50]
We've identified the 12 policymakers that could change the game regarding Kony, so we're targeting them. On our Website, we've made it easy to write them directly, call them, meet with them, and get their attention. If my son were kidnapped and forced to kill, it would be all over the news. So we are making Kony world news by redefining the propaganda we see all day, every day that dictates who and what we pay attention to.

[Shepard Fairey, artist and designer of the Kony 2012 campaign posters]
A lot of people feel powerless to communicate their ideas. They think that: Okay, you know, I'm not a corporation. I don't own my own magazine or news station. I just don't have any say. But seeing what I've done, I think it's empowered a lot of people to realize that one individual can make an impact. And I actually want to demystify and say, "Here are these really simple tools. Go out and rock it."

[Jason Russell]
And that's just what we intend to do.

♪ I can't stop ♪

[Jason Russell] [25.29]
Our goal is to change the conversation of our culture and get people to ask, "Who is Joseph Kony?" We have printed hundreds of thousands of posters, stickers, yard signs, and fliers that are right now, today, being put up in major cities all over the world. We have thousands of "Kony 2012" bracelets that we want everyone to wear this year only. Each bracelet has a unique I.D. number. Input that number and you enter the mission to make Kony famous. You can geotag your posters and track your impact in real time. Everything you need is in a box called the Action Kit. It has two bracelets — one for you and one to give away. And if you want to help fund our lifesaving programs, donate a few dollars a month through TRI and you can have the Action Kit for free. Start making Kony famous today, but all of these efforts will culminate on one day — April 20th — when we cover the night. This is the day when we will meet at sundown and blanket every street in every city till the sun comes up. We will be smart, and we will be thorough. The rest of the world will go to bed Friday night and wake up to hundreds of thousands of posters demanding justice on every corner.

♪ I can't stop ♪
♪ I can't stop ♪
♪ I can't stop ♪

[Jason Russell] [27.06]
It's always been that the decisions made by the few with the money and the power dictated the priorities of their government and the stories in the media. They determine the lives and the opportunities of their citizens. But now there is something bigger than that. The people of the world see each other and can protect each other. It's turning the system upside down, and it changes everything.

[Luis Moreno Ocampo; prosecutor ICC] [27.37]
We are living in a new world, Facebook world in which 750 million people share ideas, not

thinking in borders, it's a global community, bigger than the U.S.. Joseph Kony was committing crimes for twenty years and no one cared. We care.

[Jason Russell] [27.55]
We have reached a crucial time in history where what we do or don't do right now will affect every generation to come. Arresting Joseph Kony will prove that the world we live in has new rules, that the technology that has brought our planet together is allowing us to respond to the problems of our friends.

[Man speaking via webcam to Jason Russel] [28.19]
When it ends finally by bringing Kony justice, it should be celebrated like worldwide.

[Jason Russell] [28.33]
We are not just studying human history. We are shaping it. At the end of my life, I want to say that the world we've left behind is one that Gavin can be proud of, a place that doesn't allow Joseph Konys and child soldiers, a place where children, no matter where they live, have a childhood free from fear.

[Gavin]
I'm gonna be like you, Dad.

[Jason Russell]
When you grow up?

[Gavin]
Yeah. -

[Jason Russell]
Are you sure?

[Gavin]
I'm gonna come with you to Africa.

[Jason Russell] [28.59]
The better world we want is coming. It's just waiting for us to stop at nothing.

[End of spoken message, continued in writing:]

Clock counting down to 0

Nothing is more powerful than an idea whose time has come
Nothing is more powerful than an idea whose time is now
Now

There are three things you can do right now
Sign the pledge to show your support
Get the bracelet and the action kit
Sign up for TRI to donate a few dollars a month, and join our army for peace

Above all share this movie online, it's free
Find it all at Kony2012.com

[End of film]