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BRIEFING



## Historical roots of militarised conservation: the case of Uganda

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### SUMMARY

This briefing engages the militarised conservation literature. Three factors key to understanding present militarised conservation in Uganda are discussed: colonial legacies, the country's post-colonial history of war and conflict, and the current militarisation under the Museveni government as exemplified in the military collaboration between the Uganda Wildlife Authority and the Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces. It argues that the debate about militarised conservation in today's Uganda has to be situated within the widening mandate of the military institution under the Museveni government, which came to power through the military path and then gradually militarised significant sections of society more broadly.

### Introduction

Green militarisation has been defined as the extension of military approaches, personnel, equipment, techniques, partnerships and technologies to wildlife conservation (Lunstrum 2014; Duffy 2016a). The use of military and paramilitary actors and technologies is documented in countries such as South Africa (Lunstrum 2014; Shaw and Rademeyer 2016), Botswana (Henk 2005, 2006; Humphreys and Smith 2011), Tanzania (Mabele 2017; Weldemichel 2020), Central African Republic (Lombard 2016), Mozambique (Massé and Lunstrum 2016; Massé, Lunstrum, and Holterman 2018) and Congo's Virunga (Marijnen and Verweijen 2016). Scholarly opinion on the militarisation of conservation practices is divided. On the one hand, some scholars show why militarised approaches to conservation are gaining prominence (Henk 2005, 2006; Hübschle and Jooste 2017; Mogomotsi and Madigele 2017). On the other hand, some scholars are critical of militarised conservation (e.g. Duffy et al. 2019).

It has been noted in the literature that the prominence of militarised approaches to conservation can be traced to the 1980s, which witnessed increased poaching in parts of Africa (Henk 2005, 176; Humphreys and Smith 2011, 135). This mounted pressure on several African governments to deploy the military and employ military-like responses to solve the poaching crisis (Shaw and Rademeyer 2016). One such military response was shoot-to-kill policies and the use of a combination of actors such as rangers, paramilitaries and armies. For example, in Kenya in 1988, Zimbabwe in 1987 and Tanzania in 1989, sitting presidents at the time authorised shoot-to-kill polices

(Duffy 2014). In Tanzania, Operation Uhai of 1989 was a declaration of war against elephant poaching (Mabele 2017). This argument notwithstanding, not many studies have been conducted that focus on militarised approaches before the 1970s and 1980s. A section of this paper traces militarisation in British colonial Uganda.

Against this background, this briefing contributes to debates on violent political economies around conservation and militarised conservation. It draws on colonial archival collections, secondary historical scholarship, and interviews and personal communications with a wide range of actors. I show that the colonial state was a military state, and this is reflected in the early application of forceful measures in conservation. In the current setting, I argue that there is one major shift that is crucial to militarised conservation: the military collaboration between Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) and the army, Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces (UPDF). This collaboration started as a presidential directive in the early 2000s when the president tasked the army with providing support to the conservation body. Below, I discuss some challenges of this collaboration that relate to rangers who are trained as conservationists working alongside soldiers whose orientation is warfare. I furthermore argue that to understand the militarisation of wildlife protection, we have to situate the phenomenon within the widening mandate of the military institution in Uganda. Having come to power through a guerrilla struggle, the military plays a preeminent role under the Museveni government. This makes militarisation not unique to conservation but rather common to the broader Ugandan society. The briefing comprises four sections. The first section revisits debates on militarised conservation. The second traces militarised conservation in Uganda's colonial era. The third looks at post-colonial Uganda and the dynamics of protecting wildlife amidst conflict. Finally, the fourth section discusses the dynamics of military administration collaboration and the implications for conservation practices.

## **The case for and against militarised conservation**

Different arguments have been put forward to explain the prominence of militarised conservation in contemporary Africa. The extinction of species and the sense of urgency to do something (i.e. avoid the extinction of species) often come up in declarations justifying the militarisation of conservation (Duffy et al. 2019, 70). Extinction narratives can be used to legitimise the use of violence (Weldemichel 2020). The debate on the threat of species' extinction is also connected to the argument that rangers are confronted with heavily armed poachers and thus have to use counter-force, leading to 'securitisation'. Increasingly, conservationists devote time to emphasising that 'poaching is an organized-crime problem' (Bluwstein 2016, 692). Mogomotsi and Madigele (2017) argue that parks are war zones where rules and principles of war ought to be implemented, while others are of the view that organised poaching is a form of 'low-intensity warfare' (Henk 2005, 177). The framing of environmental crimes as organised crime has implications for the expansion of the use of force (Kelly and Ybarra 2016) or even legitimising the involvement of foreign ex-military private contractors in anti-poaching training (Duffy 2016b; Lombard 2016). Neumann (2004) notes that governments have been able to justify militarised responses by arguing that poachers are well equipped and highly organised. Militarisation is thus seen as a way to tackle well-equipped and well-organised poaching gangs (Humphreys and Smith 2011).

The fight against poaching may also be interpreted from a national security narrative or as ‘part of a broad response to both external and internal threats to the state’ (Humphreys and Smith 2014, 800). The poaching and wildlife trafficking problem has been framed as a threat to national/state security (Clinton 2012; Lunstrum 2014). In Botswana, for example, the Botswana Defence Force’s involvement in anti-poaching started as a response to deter armed groups from neighbouring states that were violating Botswana’s borders (Henk 2005). In addition to this, the framing of poaching and rhetoric by actors (e.g. state representatives) at local to global levels can shape militarisation. Commonly cited examples of war rhetoric by state actors include Major General Johan Jooste, who was hired by South African National Parks to oversee anti-poaching in Kruger National Park. He is quoted as using phrases such as ‘take the war to armed bandits’ and ‘forcefully pushing back the frontiers of poaching’, which can be seen as declaration of war (Shaw and Rademeyer 2016, 180; see also Büscher and Ramutsindela 2016, 4; Hübschle and Jooste 2017; Humphreys and Smith 2014, 796–798; Lunstrum 2014, 823).

Critics of militarised conservation (see Duffy et al. 2019 for an overview) have raised several arguments on what militarisation does to wildlife, communities living near wildlife and those tasked with implementation. It erodes trust between rangers and communities, and can lead to a cycle of militarisation as different actors engage in deadly force (Lunstrum 2014). Others argue that militarised approaches offer no solutions to the issues that cause wildlife crimes in the first place (Duffy et al. 2016). They can ‘escalate conflict between rangers and poachers, and lead to the alienation of local communities’ (Duffy et al. 2015, 346). Militarisation produces short-term protection, pits local communities against wildlife (Duffy 2016a) or causes a ‘sense of resentment among communities’, as shown in the case of Tanzania (Weldemichel 2020, 15). This affects voluntary compliance from locals (Stern 2008).

### **Tracing militarised conservation in Uganda’s colonial era**

Influenced by Duffy (2014, 2016a) and Lunstrum (2014), who define green militarisation through the extension of military actors, approaches, personnel, equipment, techniques, training, technologies and partnerships to conservation practices, in this section I trace militarised practices in Uganda’s colonial-era conservation. Neumann (2004, 813) has engaged in the debate of militarised conservation in British colonial Africa by looking at the case studies of Zimbabwe, Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania and Botswana, and shows that African parks at the time increasingly became arenas of deadly violence and war was a ‘common model and metaphor for conceptualising’ biodiversity protection.

#### ***Military game wardens and the use of ex-military in anti-poaching***

The British colonial state was a military state, and this shaped its conservation practice; examples of this in British colonial Uganda include the hiring of game wardens with military backgrounds, early application of forceful measures in conservation and recruiting ex-military for conservation. One observes the appointment of game wardens with significant military accomplishments. As Kinloch notes, the period between the two world wars witnessed East Africa’s great game wardens, the majority of whom were ‘decorated ex-soldiers of outstanding ability’ (1988, xviii). Examples include Captain

F. K. T. Caldwell, sent from the Kenya colony to reorganise Uganda's Game Department in December 1924. In 1925, Lieutenant Colonel C. R. S. Pitman took charge of the game department. Upon leaving the Royal Military College Sandhurst in 1909, he had been assigned to the Indian army and was awarded the Military Cross and Distinguished Service Order during the Great War (Pitman 1931). Pitman's successor, Major Bruce Kinloch, was also a former British military officer. British soldiers, who were by nature militarised, established and ran game departments (Day 2020, 360). Other examples are Major R. E. P. Wyndham who was appointed game ranger in May 1953, a graduate of the Royal Military College Sandhurst and a member of the Indian Army under the Rajputa rifles where he received the military medal for gallantry. He was the commander of a parachute battalion of the Indian Airborne Division (Uganda Protectorate 1955). Ralph Dreschfield, a Uganda Protectorate attorney general, convinced Ken Beaton to run Uganda's newly created parks in 1952. The two met during the war in the army in East Africa (Willock 1964). Several examples can also be cited regarding the hiring of ex-military service men (askaris) from the Kings African Rifles (KAR). This was a British colonial regiment engaged in Britain's operations and conquest. These ex-military assisted the Game Department in anti-poaching operations. As Neumann notes, 'the main recruiting grounds for park guards and game scouts have been the army, police, and prisons where military-style discipline and tactics are common' (2004, 828). In cases when game guards were dismissed, grew old or died, they could easily be replaced by ex-askaris of the KAR. 'Three Guards were dismissed for misdemeanours, and Acholi and ex-military recruits have replaced them [...]' (Uganda Protectorate 1956, 64). A review of archival collections reveals that one of the reasons these ex-military recruits were preferred for conservation enforcement was their military backgrounds.

### ***Game ordinances and legal notices***

Militarised conservation has historical roots in the colonial era, especially the British conquest of sub-Saharan Africa (Neumann 2004). The British outlawed hunting and enacted game preservation laws and ordinances that removed the hunting rights of locals (Duffy 2014, 829). Colonial administration perceived locals as environmental destroyers, and this advanced a justification for their removal or restriction from protected areas (Marijnen and Verweijen 2016). The enactment of complex and lengthy conservation legislation in British colonial territories restricted African hunting methods (MacKenzie 1988). In Uganda, the British introduced game ordinances and legal notices that prohibited the use of and access to wildlife. An example was the Sleeping Sickness Ordinance of 1908 that had provisions for the prevention of sleeping sickness (Uganda Protectorate 1908). Sleeping sickness led to mass evacuations, and some of the vast areas left behind by local populations were later reserved as protected areas. Legal Notice No. 45 amended schedules of Game Ordinance and drastically reduced the number of wildlife species permitted to be hunted, killed or captured by licence holders (Uganda Protectorate 1951). Legal Notice No. 159 created the new Queen Elizabeth National Park, and Legal Notice No. 162 created the new Murchison Falls National Park (Uganda Protectorate 1953). Legal Notice No. 190 of 1961 prohibited the use of bows, arrows and spears for hunting of certain animals. Other legislation was also enacted for the establishment of national parks, for example the National Parks Ordinance passed by the Legislative Council in 1952.

### ***Surveillance, home searches and informant networks***

As noted by Adams (2019), surveillance technologies are central to the application of coercive conservation. From the Game Department reports, another early trace of militarisation was the surrounding of poachers' huts and home searches to confiscate illegal rifles, wire snares, foot traps, spears, gin traps and bushmeat. The statement below summarises the use of surveillance and home searches in anti-poaching during Uganda's colonial era: 'After a cross-country night march the poacher's village was surrounded by a strong force of Game Guards and Scouts [...]. An ambush was laid for the hunter who was caught red-handed with the illegal 303 rifle' (Uganda Protectorate 1951, 6).

The Game Department would also institute joint patrols with the police, provincial administration and other departments to hunt for armed poachers. The use of informant networks is cited in the literature as a manifestation of militarised conservation (Duffy 2016b; Büscher 2018). During the colonial administration, it was also common practice to pay informants for information leading to the arrest of armed poachers and the recovery of illicit firearms and ammunition. For example, 100 shillings (Shs; around \$14 at the time) was paid for information on the recovery of a shotgun, and Shs 500 (around \$70 at the time) for a rifle between 1954 and 1955. These were locally made shotguns, and ammunition was obtained from those with licensed guns or from chiefs (Uganda Protectorate 1951). The report of the game ranger for the western range notes thus:

The Police and Administration have done wonderful work in Toro and Mubende in getting illicit firearms and rifles, and prosecuting cases of infringement of the game laws. [...] It is expected that more will be brought in as a result of the Assistant Resident having been given a special vote for rewards for information leading to the arrest of owners of these weapons. (Uganda Protectorate 1956, 64)

The punishment regime for breaches of game laws depended on the offence. For example, fines in 1924/25 ranged from Shs 20 (\$3.60) to 2000 (\$360 at the time) and jail sentences ranged from seven days to four months (Uganda Protectorate 1926). Specific fines captured in the reports included Shs 30 (\$8.1 at the time) for killing a colobus monkey without licence and a Shs 400 (\$108 at the time) fine to local chiefs convicted of organised hunting (Uganda Protectorate 1934). In extreme cases such as armed poachers killing game guards, the sentence was death by hanging (Uganda Protectorate 1953).<sup>1</sup>

The Game and Fisheries Department (hereafter referred to as the Game Department), apart from using game rangers, guards, scouts, honorary rangers, chiefs, police, and provincial and district officials, also relied on other government workers from different departments (surveyors or tsetse fly control) to serve as informants. One of several examples on the use of other government officials as informants is highlighted here:

A surveyor working in Mubende District near the Nabakazi River had a good view of an illegal hunting party operating. He was sitting on top of a hill when he happened to see them about half a mile away across the river. He saw the hunter, who was armed with a 303 rifle, go into a small patch of swamp, heard a shot [...]. The poachers then saw the surveyor and made off at top speed. (Uganda Protectorate 1951, 8)

### ***Aerial reconnaissance***

There was also use of aerial reconnaissance, for example two-seater Auster light aircrafts for aerial surveillance. Although this was mainly used for spotting concentrations of game, it also doubled for monitoring poachers in areas covered with thick vegetation, for example the Lake Albert Range. In fact, it is noted in annual reports that the inception of air reconnaissance had forced owners of illegal rifles to limit their use given their danger of being caught (Uganda Protectorate 1956).

In sum, colonial-era conservation enforcement and legislation acted as the basis for evicting and controlling local populations. Breaches of game ordinances were punished with fines and jail sentences, and even harsher sentences for armed poachers.

### **Post-colonial Uganda and the complexities of wildlife conservation amidst conflict**

In post-colonial Uganda, conservation practices in the years after attaining independence, specifically the Obote I period (1962–1971), were largely a reproduction of the colonial state. The 1971 military takeover by Idi Amin Dada coincided with large-scale and organised poaching in eastern and southern Africa. The Game Department's annual report for 1971 highlights cases of weapons fired between rangers and poachers:

some of these gangs were quite hostile, at times armed with automatic or home-made guns and in many cases resisting arrest. As a result of these incidents, it is regretted to have to report that in one incident two poachers were killed and one seriously injured during an exchange of fire between Game Guards and Poachers. (RoU 1971, 4)

Subsequent game warden reports after 1971 highlight more exchanges and violent encounters between rangers and poachers. The training of game guards in 'modern field combat' and military tactics to face poachers, fully equipping them with weapons and ammunition, are emphasised in Game Department reports. Equally emphasised is the militarisation and war rhetoric by the minister for tourism and wildlife as a response to the mass slaughter of elephants by poachers. One observes the use of phrases such as 'deal firmly with anybody who contravenes the Game Act', 'discharge authority without fear or favour' (RoU 1975, ii), and 'those that continue to do so [poaching] are digging their own graves' (RoU 1976, iii), among others. President Idi Amin for his part issued a decree on 3 December 1975 authorising a shoot-to-kill policy (shoot on sight) for those found killing elephants, and death by firing squad for those guilty of elephant poaching (Kinloch 1988). Rhetoric by state authorities has been shown in the literature and current context to shape and redefine militarisation of conservation.

The war to overthrow Amin by the Tanzania Peoples Defence Forces (TPDF) and Ugandan exiles between October 1978 and June 1979 had a great impact on Uganda's wildlife as the powerful weaponry of fleeing soldiers was turned against wildlife. As the Game Department report notes, 'ill-equipped staff were no match for these well armed poachers' (RoU 1979, 5). Game guards outnumbered by more powerful and well-armed soldiers could do little in the face of counter-fire as they lacked guns and ammunition or had only scant ammunition, tattered uniforms and old rifles. A few cases are captured in the archives of poorly armed game guards facing off with heavily armed poachers. An analysis of the impact of the war on conservation fits in with



debates on the complexities of protecting wildlife amidst conflict. Also, the fragility of the country enabled local populations to increase poaching activities. Hunters with licences exceeded the limits of what they could hunt legally. The civilian population took advantage of the fragile security situation in the country, proliferation of arms, breakdown of law and order and the Game Department staff's lack of equipment to stamp out poaching activities:

It was very difficult to mount effective anti-poaching operations due to war. Many of the enforcement staff surrendered their firearms to the police for custody for fear of being mistaken for soldiers. The Land-Rovers which were in running condition which could have been used in this work were taken by the fleeing forces to escape in. (RoU 1979, 5)

The ravages and after-effects of war led to the collapse of the economy, which had other indirect effects – for example, lack of transportation to supervise conservation work. The rising commodity prices, inflation and high cost of living meant that game guards in charge of enforcing licences in most cases could not resist the gifts of meat and money offered by those who wanted to exceed the limits indicated on their hunting licences. Apart from decimation of wildlife, the other effects of violence were neglect and deterioration of infrastructure due to looting and lack of maintenance (RoU 1979). Overall a look at the annual reports from the mid 1970s shows the constant war between conservationists and poachers. This was worsened by the lack of adequate firearms/ammunition, finances and transport for effective patrols. One of the results of this, as indicated in the reports, was the disappearance of wildlife, for example the white rhinoceros (which had been added to the list of completely protected animals in the late 1920s).

### **Military conservation collaboration between UPDF and UWA**

In this section, I show some of the dynamics of the current partnership between the army (UPDF) and the conservation body (UWA) in anti-poaching efforts. Having come to power through the military path, the military institution under the Museveni government plays a preminent role in running state affairs. This means that militarisation is not unique to conservation but applicable to the broader spheres of Ugandan society, as discussed below. The collaboration between UWA and the UPDF started as a presidential directive in the early 2000s, after the president noted that parks were facing elements of insurgency. Since the mandate of flushing rebels out of the parks is with the UPDF, the directive was for the army to assist UWA with available personnel and ensure that parks are not used as bases for rebel activities.<sup>2</sup> It is worth noting that at the time of the presidential directive, Uganda's main protected areas housed elements of insurgency. In Murchison Falls National Park, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebels, around the 1990s to early 2000s, were ambushing vehicles on the Karuma–Pakwach highway and later started looting, abducting and killing people inside the park.<sup>3</sup> Tourist infrastructure at Paraa, including the park headquarters, was vandalised, and this ultimately forced the park administration to shift its headquarters from Paraa on the northern bank of the Nile to Mubaku on the southern bank. In Queen Elizabeth, Rwenzori Mountains and Semuliki national parks, there was the threat of the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) rebels in the 1990s. In Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, the Interahamwe rebels operating along the borders linking Uganda, Rwanda and



Congo were active. One case in point is a 1999 incident when eight foreign tourists and four Ugandan park employees were murdered by the rebels. Finally, Kidepo Valley National Park was facing armed elements from neighbouring South Sudan and Kenya.<sup>4</sup> Anti-poaching can take on a national security narrative in some cases. This larger security narrative incorporates fighting poaching as ‘part of a broad response to both external and internal threats to the state’ (Humphreys and Smith 2014, 800). In the Ugandan case, rebel groups were operating inside the national parks and from bases in neighbouring countries.

The military can play a crucial role in biodiversity protection and anti-poaching (Henk 2005, 2006). In the case of Uganda, the collaboration with the army not only helped rangers with labour power but also gave a psychological boost, as poaching communities may fear UPDF soldiers more than they fear rangers.<sup>5</sup> The president’s directive for the army to support UWA was later operationalised through a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between UWA and UPDF. A Special Wildlife Integrated Force for Tourism (SWIFT) was created in the early 2000s, bringing together 400 soldiers and 200 rangers who trained for six months and were distributed among the different parks. There are two categories of soldiers, who usually serve a two-year mandate: those that are attached to UWA but remain in the parent organisation (UPDF), which pays their salaries; and those seconded, who temporarily leave the parent organisation to work with UWA, which pays their salaries and pays for their uniforms, food and housing.<sup>6</sup> Because soldiers have received different training, they come into conservation with their commanders.<sup>7</sup> Army instructors train rangers in military skills and tactics, for example fieldcraft, operating light and heavy weapons, detecting, locating and ambushing enemy bases, map reading and navigation among others. UWA, on the other hand, trains soldiers in wildlife management, tourism and other conservation-related aspects. Rangers and soldiers conduct joint patrols, and the chain of command depends on seniority/rank in a patrol unit. Importantly, UWA – just like the army – has military ranks. Further, although soldiers are placed under the conservation body (UWA), the latter has limited power over attached soldiers. For example, discipline and career growth are handled by the army, and salaries of soldiers are paid by the army, with UWA only giving allowances. Disciplinary issues and problem-case soldiers are referred to the army for action.<sup>8</sup> One major implication of this is that the conservation body works with soldiers it may not fully control.

From interviews, it emerges that there are conservation-related challenges that arise from this partnership. First of these is the army sending to UWA soldiers with a demonstrated ability to ‘shoot and fight wars’ but who are not oriented in non-combat ranger roles. This poses a challenge in deploying such soldiers for non-patrol ranger duties such as staffing park gates and handling tourists. Although the army command structure determines the choice of soldiers they deploy to UWA, the orientation of these soldiers has an impact on conservation. The other challenge relates to the recalling of commanders attached to UWA for training and redeployment by the parent organisation (UPDF) with no immediate replacements. Finally, there have been soldiers dismissed by UWA for various disciplinary offences such as poaching directly or hiring guns to poachers. Other offences mentioned during interviews include being ‘trigger happy’ and ‘engaging in fights with rangers over women’. One explanation could be the different mindset and training backgrounds of rangers as conservationists and soldiers as combatants.<sup>9</sup> The literature notes thus: ‘military actors are trained in a particular type of approach

and rules of engagement that are geared towards overlapping areas of defence, counter-insurgency and pursuing warfare. This approach differs from the role and purpose of conservationists' (Duffy et al. 2019, 70).

Army involvement in Uganda's anti-poaching offensives can be viewed from the widening mandate of the military and the nature of the Ugandan state. The president's directive on deploying soldiers to protected areas cannot be seen in isolation but must be viewed rather through the increasing roles of the military in managing state affairs (Kafeero 2019). Politicians turning to the military to settle political problems has been a post-independence feature of the state in Uganda (Khisa 2020). I highlight a few examples below. In the police force, for example, two former police bosses are army generals. Currently, the deputy inspector general of police is a soldier at the rank of major general. Others are the police chief of joint staff (also a soldier at the rank of brigadier), the director of police crime intelligence (who is a colonel), the police director of human resource development and training (who is an army brigadier) and the director of human resources and administration (who is also an army colonel). Besides this, the army has 10 seats in parliament, and army representation in parliament has been a topic of discussion for years in Ugandan circles. This widening belief in the military has also seen the deployment of serving military officers to other government departments. For example, Operation Wealth Creation (OWC), an intervention launched in 2013 to facilitate socio-economic transformation, is coordinated by a retired general who is deputised by a serving army lieutenant general. The criticism about all these deployments of military officers has been that these are civilian jobs held by soldiers who are still in active military service, contrary to Ugandan laws. The appointment of army officers has also extended to the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, National Identification and Registration Authority, among other departments.

Finally, the army has been deployed on Uganda's lakes to curb bad fishing methods. In 2017 the president established the Fisheries Protection Unit (FPU) under the army to crack down on illegal fishing in Uganda's lakes. There have been allegations of human rights abuses such as extortion, corruption and rape by soldiers enforcing the president's directives (Bareebe 2020). It is worth noting that although parliament, in December 2019, passed a motion on the immediate withdrawal of UPDF soldiers from the lakes, they refused to vacate without the president's orders. Concerns over UPDF actions on bodies of water have been raised several times on the floor of parliament, but no action has been taken. In my assessment, what all the above shows is the importance attached to the military institution and its expanding role under the Museveni government, which came to power through military means. Conservation thus becomes entangled in complex issues such as working with soldiers who have a different orientation that may not change even with training in wildlife management.

## Conclusion

In this briefing, I have attempted to engage with the literature on securitisation and conservation. One important contribution is unpacking the dynamics of the military collaboration between the conservation body and the army. The 'importance of studying military collaborations' in conservation has been stressed in the literature (Duffy et al. 2019, 70). In the case of contemporary Uganda, we cannot talk about military collaboration

in conservation enforcement without looking at ways in which the military has been involved in a wide range of public affairs as discussed above. It can be deduced that militarisation continues to evolve from the colonial era to the present and is taking on new forms. Most striking about the UPDF–UWA partnership is the fact that the conservation body works with attached soldiers that it does not discipline, whose salaries it does not pay and who remain responsible to their deploying/parent organisation (the army). This poses a dilemma, especially when the army recalls misbehaving soldiers but without informing the wildlife body of the course of action taken against them.<sup>10</sup> Another dilemma is that problem-case soldiers who are dismissed and sent back to the army in most cases are not immediately replaced, thus creating personnel gaps that the partnership aimed at solving in the first place. This indicates a broader issue of the need to rethink the contexts in which to apply military collaborations in conservation.

## Notes

1. The fines were in Ugandan shillings, so I have relied on other documents to convert them: Exchange Rate UK (2020); Hosten (2020). One explanation for the different penalty ranges could be that the colonial administration fined Europeans, Asians and Africans separately. The annual reports document these three categories of offenders separately.
2. Interview with UWA officer, 21 February 2020, Kampala.
3. Multiple interviews, January/February 2020, Pakwach. I spoke to several retired rangers including survivors of the LRA rebel attacks. Apart from rebel attacks on the Karuma–Pakwach highway, other attacks happened after the Ugandan parliament allowed transit traffic inside the park from 1 May 1997.
4. Multiple interviews, December 2019 and January 2020, Murchison Falls Conservation Area.
5. Interview with UWA officer, 21 February 2020, Kampala.
6. Regarding the two categories of ‘attached’ and ‘seconded’, the details are specified in the MoU. I endeavoured to access the MoU itself but was told that it is a ‘classified document’. However, a number of interviews were conducted with people familiar with the MoU content. Interestingly, in Murchison Falls National Park, the army has a permanent detachment with soldiers doing army work (national security) and not conservation. It is from these ‘feet on the ground’ that soldiers can be attached to UWA.
7. The soldiers seconded to UWA have an administrative commander, who is also a soldier, that they can report to in case of any issues that are not conservation related. This commander has an office at UWA. Conservation issues are handled by UWA, specifically the warden law enforcement.
8. Various interviews, December 2019 to February 2020, Kampala and the Murchison Falls Conservation Area.
9. Various interviews, December 2019 to February 2020, Kampala and the Murchison Falls Conservation Area.
10. Interview with UWA officer, 21 February 2020, Kampala.

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