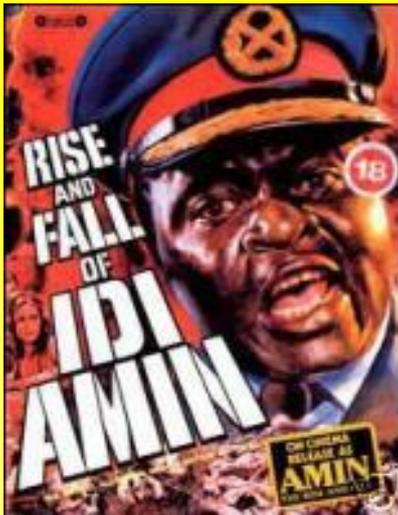


FILM EXHIBITION & DEBATE



Every Wednesday, the National Memory and Peace Documentation Centre (NMPDC) in Kitgum organises a Film Exhibition & Debate. The aim of this activity is to provide the community with the opportunity to watch an educational movie, after which we engage in a discussion.

On June 5th, before starting with the actual movie, we show the still arriving audience a short interview with Joseph Kony which was recorded during the Juba Peace Talks by an American journalist. Kony explains his motivation for fighting this war, and there upon denies the atrocities that he is accused for. After a short discussion, *The Rise and Fall of Idi Amin* was screened to balance the image of Idi Amin conveyed by last week's movie. This movie shows the chronicle of Ugandan dictator Idi Amin and his tyranic rule from 1971 to his overthrow in 1979.



DEBATE

The movie night was attended by 15 people of which one was a woman. A heated debate started after the documentary with Joseph Kony, mainly on the role of responsibility for atrocities committed:

"Although I've not so much been involved, apart from hearing the stories, it seems to me that he did not only do bad things. Especially his soldiers did bad things. But he was responsible for his soldiers also. And Kony was talking about propaganda. Why was everyone only against Kony? And not the other party? In war there are also two parties, and both commit atrocities."

"Indeed, Kony did not want to be responsible. But he was responsible for everything his soldiers did, for all the atrocities. Much as the government also did bad things, that does not mean that Kony was less responsible. Kony is trying to deny his responsibility in this interview."

"I observed two things. Kony was also responsible for these things. But in justice there is a gap. Both parties also did a lot of propaganda. There is a challenge of documentation of evidence. How will people understand what Kony has done when you only let Kony talk? Evidence has to be gathered and presented equally."

"Kony is responsible for all atrocities in Northern Uganda. This is called chain of command theory. All key figures are responsible for the behavior of the people under them."

"Indeed, there is a chain of command. When you look at the LRA war, the junior commanders are not being prosecuted. They are being given amnesty. The ICC has zeroed out 5 primary commanders. But still the ICC does not prosecute the NRA. And that is because the NRA is in power. They can defend themselves because they are the legitimate government."

With respect to *The Rise and Fall of Idi Amin*, the discussion mainly evolved around a comparison of Amin's time and the current age:

"By giving a medal to his 6-year old son a relation is established between what happened then and now. Some generals were offended that they now had to salute children. This is also happening in the current regime. Museveni should have learned."

"The film of Amin teaches me how to live. If I can put myself in the shoes of fellow Ugandans at that time, how would I have reacted. Would I be on Amin's side or would I be part of the people who felt that Amin's regime was not good. It is important to talk for the people and not only for yourself. We are the Ugandans of tomorrow and we should know our position. Are we going to stand up for right and wrong or are we going to sit back and ignore those who are suffering."

"I saw especially very bad things in this movie. Rape and tyranny. Amin considered himself to be the best. He believed that people who stood up to him deserved death. Amin took short cuts, he did not follow the proper steps. The president must follow judicial processes, even if he does not believe in the outcome. So it does seem that we [Ugandan government] are on the right track."

"I see some comparisons between Amin's government and the current. During Amin's time so many people perished as a direct effect of the government. This is also taking place in the current government, but not as openly and directly as during Amin's regime."

"Amin had no clear objectives, just like Joseph Kony. He killed his own army because he believed that they were friends of Obote. He sent away the Indians, which clearly had a bad impact on the economy. All he wanted was power, he had no vision."

"Amin ordered the killing of Acholi and Langi soldiers. But the officers were never Acholi or Langi. This is the same now. There are no officers which are Acholi or Langi. This has been a trend in Uganda since independence."