

The Call for Doro Paco

(Revised)

Background . On 13 June , 2020 , a special convocation of Acoli elders took place at Gang Kal (the seat of Ker Kwaro Acoli) in Gulu , under the auspices of Wang-oo , with the support of Ker Kwaro Acoli and Acoli Religious Leaders Peace Initiative (ARLPI) . The elders in attendance included : the Prime Minister of Ker Kwaro Acoli (Hon. Ambrose Olaa) ; Archbishop John Baptist Odama ; Bishop MacBaker Ochola II ; Bishop Benoni Y. Ogwal-Abwang ; Rwot Okwonga Yusuf Adek ; Mego Gladys Oyat ; Ladit Apollo Lawoko ; Ambassador David Mwaka ; Professor Hon J. J. Otim ; Mego Rosalba Ato Olwa ; Vicar General , Monseigneur Matthew Odong ; Hon. Zachary Olum ; Ladit Peter Oweka ; Hon. J. L . Okello-Okello (Chair , Wang-oo) ; and Ambassador Olara Otunnu . Also attending were Hon Okin P.P. Ojara (Chair , APG) ; Hon. Mego Betty Aol Ocan (LoP) ; Hon Lilly Adong ; RDC, Gulu (Major Santo Okot Lapolo) ; LC 5 Chair , Gulu (Ojara Mapinduzi) ; and LC 5 Chair , Omoro () . The meeting was chaired by Justice Galdino Moro Okello .

In their reflection , the elders were particularly struck and moved by the sheer magnitude of the fundamental breakdown (*too paco*) , societal malaise and multifaceted trauma which have taken a deep and scarring toll on Acoli society . This painful legacy of over twenty years of war and camp internment in Acoliland manifestly calls for extraordinary attention and extraordinary action of redress .

In view of this unprecedented situation , a key outcome of the meeting at Gang Kal was therefore the decision to constitute a council of elders to serve as a special convocation for *doro paco* .

Name for the consultative convocation . This consultative convocation of elders shall be known as “Council of Elders for *Doro Paco* “ (“Doro Paco”, for short) .

The role of Doro Paco . The role of Doro Paco is to provide reflection , guidance and direction on fundamental and pivotal issues affecting the wellbeing and future of Acoliland .

Composition of Doro Paco . Doro Paco is to be composed of men and women of serious moral conviction and integrity, broad experience and insights , humility and objectivity , who share a selfless preoccupation and burden for the wellbeing and future of Acoliland . These men and women are to be invited , in their individual and personal capacities , from both the homeland community and Acoli diaspora . Ideally , this should be a rather select and relatively small convocation of elders .

Auspices for Doro Paco . Like the convocation of 13 June , 2020 , in the immediate , Doro Paco will convene its consultations under the auspices of Wang-oo , with the support of Ker Kwaro Acoli , Acoli Religious Leaders Peace Initiative (ARLPI) , and the collective of the eight LC5 Chairs whose jurisdictions cover Acoliland .

Preoccupations for Doro Paco . The preoccupations for reflection , guidance and direction by Doro Paco will encompass overarching , pivotal issues , that impact on the wellbeing and future of Acoliland . These include the following critical concerns .

1. Addressing the deep and widespread breakdown of fundamentals (*too paco*) in Acoli society today , in all its manifestations .
2. Reviving and promoting Acoli civilization , as it relates to culture and the arts , traditions and moral values , history and language , etc.
3. Promoting holistic , quality and equitable development , with particular focus on the crucial sectors of health , education , agriculture and land development ; in effect , charting a reconstruction agenda for rebuilding Acoliland .
4. Building acute awareness , responsibility and stewardship for the protection and conservation of the natural environment in Acoliland .
5. Addressing issues of land (land development , land disputes , land-grabbing , etc) .
6. Combatting all attempts to foment futile internal divisions and conflicts within Acoli society ; this has been perpetrated chiefly through the cynical manipulation of confessional and clan

affiliations , and also the promotion of east-west divide . Doro Paco will work diligently to build respect , solidarity and harmony among the Acoli community as one , undivided people , sharing a common heritage and a common destiny .

7. Promoting and inculcating honest , service-centred and values-based leadership , in all sectors and at all levels of society . Doro Paco may convene special sessions for reflection and discussion with particular categories of leaders , as necessary.
8. Calling out unacceptable personal and official conduct , especially by leaders , and calling to order those concerned .
9. Restoring cohesion and joint responsibility in Acoli families . This means , among other imperatives , re-engagement of men to fully reassume their responsibilities and duties within families . This also entails restoring priority to serious parenting , to ensure proper upbringing of children and youth , in a nurturing environment , marked by education , discipline and moral values . All these responsibilities and duties must be jointly shouldered by both the men and women in the families .
10. Reversing the trends of rampant social ills , which are today wreaking untold havoc in Acoliland ; these major and rampant social ills include corruption , alcoholism , easy resort to violence , youth delinquency , teenage pregnancy , etc .
11. Joining hands (*teno kwot*) between the homeland community and Acoli diaspora , in order to stimulate much-needed reconstruction and development , and tackle together the grave challenges facing Acoliland today .
12. Steadfastly working to ensure mutual respect , good neighbourliness and harmonious rapport with neighbouring communities , and all other communities in Uganda .

Overarching priority on the younger generations . In all this , there is an imperative . In designing responses to the preoccupations outlined above , it is imperative that , in all strategies and interventions , top priority is given to the situation of the younger generations and the youth ; to their training and development , their engagement and mentoring , their discipline and leadership . Quite simply , the younger generations and the youth have to be at the centre of rebuilding Acoli society . This is absolutely necessary ; it is also the only way to ensure the sustainability and future of this enterprise.

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Postscript .

- a. Ideally , Doro Paco should be a very select , small convocation , the full compliment of which should not exceed thirty-five elders (35) at any given time ; this is inclusive of diaspora members .
- b. Doro Paco should have a Chair and two Vice-Chairs .
- c. There should be a Steering Committee for Doro Paco , consisting of seven (7) members , with a Chair and Vice-Chair . The role of the Steering Committee should be to plan and organise the convening , work and deliberations of Doro Paco .
- d. Certain leaders (e.g. LC5 Chairs , APG Chair , etc) may be invited to attend particular sessions of Doro Paco , as necessary , in their ex officio capacities .
- e. Needless to say , all deliberations and communications should be conducted in Lwo . It may be necessary , however , to translate certain documents into English , mainly for the benefit of some younger persons in the diaspora , who may not be conversant with Lwo .

Olara Otunnu

20 June , 2020

