# LISTENING

# CHILD SOLDIERS

**Pre-listening activities**

1. **In pairs/groups discuss the following questions.**

What do you imagine under the term ***child soldier***?

Have you encountered the problem of child soldiers while on mission?

How could so-called child soldiers be brought back to normal life, if at all?

1. **Match the following words with their definitions**.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a) abduction | 1. Someone who keeps others down by severe and unjust use of force or authority |
| b) conscription | 1. To withdraw one's support or help from, especially in spite of duty, allegiance, or responsibility; desert |
| c) oppressor | 1. To become gradually less until little remains |
| d) indictment | 1. To initiate or conduct a criminal case against |
| e) prosecute | 1. To give up or abandon |
| f) surrender | 1. To desert one's country, cause, allegiance, etc., esp. in order to join the opposing forces |
| g) dwindle | 1. Illegal carrying or enticing away of a person, esp. by interfering with a relationship, as the taking of a child from its parents. |
| h) custody | 1. A set of written criminal charges issued against a party, where a grand jury, under the guidance of a prosecutor, has found that sufficient evidence exists to justify trying the party for that crime. |
| i) abandon | 1. The state of being detained or held under guard, especially by the police |
| j) defect | 1. Compulsory enrolment, especially for the armed forces; draft. |

**Listening activities**



1. **Listen and answer the following questions.**

A) Why is the story of Dominic Ongwen so noteworthy?

B) His sister described Dominic as being: a) competitive and single-minded

b) responsible and reserved

c) bold and daring

C) What happened to Dominic when he was 10 years old?

D) How did the interviewed children perceive their leader?

E) How did Kony treat Ongwen?

F) What is likely to be a mitigating circumstance in Ongwen’s trial?

G) What legal circumstance sets D. Ongwen apart from the rest of his former LRA comrades?

H) What is Ongwen’s message to his former child-soldier colleagues?

1. **Listen again and decide whether the statements below are true or false.**
2. Dominic himself is thought to have participated in the beatings and killings of some younger children. T/F
3. Children who decided to leave the camp were allowed to do so. T/F
4. In court, a lot of top LRA commanders were indicted. T/F
5. Along with Kony and Ongwen, several former child-soldiers were accused. T/F
6. Human Rights Watch is blamed by Ugandans for not caring for their children’s welfare T/F
7. The blanket amnesty’s goal is to encourage the soldiers who are not so devoted to Kony to defect. T/F
8. The amnesty scheme has been successful to a certain extent. T/F

**Post-listening activities**

1. **Collocations**

**Put the following words together to form collocations and use them in context.**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | going on | a | violence |
| 2 | inflict | b | example |
| 3 | a think- | c | violence |
| 4 | a shining | d | list |
| 5 | follow | e | mutilations |
| 6 | a short | f | sb’s orders |
| 7 | bring | g | choices |
| 8 | tough | h | tank |
| 9 | murders or | i | day in the jail |
| 10 | withstand | j | up the point |
| 11 | do a single | k | trial |

**Answer key**

**Pre-listening activities**

II. a7; b10; c1; d8; e4; f5; g3; h9; i2; j6

**Listening activities**

III.

A) For the first time in the court’s history, a man is going on trial who was once a victim of that same crime.

B) b; ….as a shy boy, eager to please. He used to make crafts and sell them to pay his own school fees.

C) He was abducted by the Lord’s Resistance Army.

D) As a violent cult leader who claimed to have spiritual powers.

E) Joseph Kony promoted Ongwen higher than anyone abducted into the ranks. Kony held up Ongwen as a shining example, a role-model for the other fighters.

F) He either had to follow the rules of LRA, or die. These were tough choices

G) Unlike his former comrades, he doesn’t fall under a Ugandan amnesty law. Ongwen was indicted by the ICC; thus, he doesn’t qualify for amnesty.

H) He appeals to his former comrades to abandon Kony and accept the amnesty they qualify for. He is also luring them out of Kony’s grip by mentioning the comfort of sleeping in (a regular) bed.

IV. A-T; B-F; C-F; D-F; E-F; F-T; G-T

**Post-listening activities**

V. 1k; 2a/c; 3h; 4b; 5f; 6d; 7j; 8g; 9e; 10a/c; 11i

**Tapescript**

International Criminal Court To Try Former Child Soldier With War Crimes

AUDIE CORNISH, HOST:

The International Criminal Court in The Hague was founded 13 years ago to prosecute those who commit war crimes, especially the crime of abducting and conscripting children as soldiers. But for the first time in that court's history, a man is going on trial who was once a victim of that same crime. NPR's Gregory Warner reports on the complicated case of Dominic Ongwen. GREGORY WARNER, BYLINE: There's an account by his younger sister that describes him as a shy boy, eager to please. He used to make crafts and sell them to pay his own school fees. But not much is known about this period in the life of Dominic Ongwen, before he was abducted at age 10 by the Lord's Resistance Army. That's when his new life began deep in the Ugandan forest under the psychopathic rebel leader Joseph Kony. Any child who was caught trying to escape the forest would likely have been beaten to death by the other children, Ongwen no exception. LEDIO CAKAJ: He would've certainly been involved in the beating, if not death, of others, particularly younger children. WARNER: Ledio Cakaj has been studying the LRA for close to a decade. He's interviewed dozens of former child soldiers about their experience. Kony, he says, was a cult leader claiming spiritual powers, and violence was the currency of survival.

CAKAJ: And the ability to not only inflict but also withstand violence.

WARNER: Ongwen grew up in the image of his oppressors. As a teenager he allegedly became a fearless leader of raiding parties abducting more children and subjecting them to initiations as cruel as his own. Joseph Kony promoted him higher than anyone abducted into the ranks. Paul Ronan runs a think tank called Resolve that studies the LRA.

PAUL RONAN: Kony was able to hold him up as a shining example of what you could achieve if you stayed in the LRA and followed his orders.

WARNER: But in the end it was this favored status and the widely circulated legend of his notorious rise that earned Dominic Ongwen an indictment in 2005 by the International Criminal Court in The Hague. The court had been created to prosecute those who abduct children as fighters, but only a handful of top LRA commanders besides Joseph Kony himself were indicted. Ongwen was the only one on that short list who'd been a child soldier himself.

CAKAJ: This is the point that many people in northern Uganda bring up, which is to say the Ugandan government failed in protecting our kids, including Ongwen.

WARNER: Who were then instructed in the doctrine of the LRA.

CAKAJ: And then he had to either follow those rules and survive or, frankly, die. So to a certain extent we're holding him responsible for being alive, particularly if you understand the story of people who are not here anymore because they either refused or were unable to perform the same way Ongwen did.

WARNER: The details of these tough choices will almost certainly be part of Ongwen's defense when his trial begins later this year. Thirty-five year-old Ongwen was turned over to U.S. custody this month. Conflicting reports say he either surrendered or was captured by another rebel group. But whatever his fate in court in The Hague, what's interesting is how different that fate is from his former LRA comrades who fall under a Ugandan amnesty law. Amnesty means that no matter how many murders or mutilations those other rebels committed, they can walk out of the forest back to civilization and not do a single day in jail. The aim of that blanket amnesty is to lure lesser fighters out of the forest and in part, it's worked. According to Ugandan reports, Kony's force has dwindled to a few hundred fighters. But because of the ICC indictment, Ongwen doesn't qualify for amnesty. This is the voice of Dominic Ongwen heard for the first time in a radio address he recorded in a hotel in U.S. custody. In it he appeals to his former comrades to abandon Kony and accept the amnesty they qualify for.

(SOUNDBITE OF RADIO ADDRESS)

DOMINIC ONGWEN: (Foreign language spoken).

RONAN: Just one line from the radio message that he recorded. He says, "all of you out in the bush, you won't believe the bed that I'm sleeping in now," which is just a testament that one of the things that he thinks might help people decide to defect is that, hey, you get to sleep in a bed.

WARNER: No wonder. It was likely Ongwen's first mattress in 25 years. Gregory Warner, NPR News, Nairobi.

(MUSIC)

ROBERT SIEGEL, HOST:

This is ALL THINGS CONSIDERED from NPR News.

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