Featured Stories

Africa
South Sudan – New United Nations Mission to South Sudan begins work

Middle East/North Africa
Libya – United States finally recognizes Libyan rebels but meets with Gaddafi’s envoys

Asia
Philippines – Allegations of election fraud continue

Latin America and the Caribbean
Colombia – Colombian military bombs and raids FARC arms factory
The countries for the **Peace & Justice Update** have been chosen as areas of focus at the institute.

**Source information:** Information presented in this update is condensed from wire and newspaper reports from Lexis/Nexis and from electronic sites on the World Wide Web. Complete bibliographical information is unavailable from these services, but every attempt has been made to properly cite information and give credit to source materials. This update is intended for use by IPJ staff and associates for informational purposes only. As the material in this update is condensed, and does not directly quote the primary source, information from the update should not be quoted. Any opinions expressed herein solely reflect the views of the individual Update author(s) and in no way reflect the official views and/or positions of the IPJ, its staff, or the University of San Diego.

**Update subscriptions:** Electronic subscriptions to the **Peace & Justice Update** are free; simply send an email to updates@sandiego.edu and include the word “subscribe” in the subject line.

---

*The Peace & Justice Updates are written by the interns at the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice at the University of San Diego.*

*The interns during the summer 2011 term are:*

*Carmyn Chapman (University of San Diego), Kelli Killion (University of San Diego), Cameron Khodabakhsh (University of San Diego), Amol Nadkarni (George Mason University) and graduate intern Sara Nettleton (University of San Diego)*
SOURCE LIST

Abidjan = Abidjan (www.abidjan.net)
Affaires Stratégiques = Affaires Stratégiques (http://www.affaires-strategiques.info/)
AFP = Agence France-Presse (www.afp.com)
Africa Review = Africa Review (www.africareview.com)
Afrique Avenir = Afrique Avenir (www.afriqueavenir.org)
AI = Amnesty International (www.amnesty.org)
Al-Jazeera = Al-Jazeera (http://english.aljazeera.net)
All Africa = AllAfrica.com (www.allafrica.com)
Analyst = The Analyst (http://www.analystliberia.com)
AP = Associated Press (www.ap.org)
APA = African Press Agency (www.apanews.net)
Asia News = Asia News Network (www.asianewsnet.net)
Asian Tribune = Asian Tribune (www.asiantribune.com)
AsiaOne = AsiaOne (http://www.asiaone.com/A1Home/A1Home.html)
BBC = British Broadcasting Corporation (www.news.bbc.co.uk)
BBC Monitoring = BBC Monitoring International Reports (www.monitor.bbc.co.uk)
BBC Mundo = BBC Mundo (www.bbc.co.uk/mundo)
Bloomberg = Bloomberg (www.bloomberg.com)
CBS = CBS News (www.cbsnews.com)
CFR = Council on Foreign Relations (www.cfr.org)
Chicago Tribune = Chicago Tribune (www.chicagotribune.com)
CIA = CIA - The World Factbook (www.cia.gov)
CNN = Cable News Network (www.cnn.com)
Colombia Reports = Colombia Reports (www.colombiareports.com)
CPJ = Committee to Protect Journalists (www.cpj.org)
CSM = Christian Science Monitor (www.csmonitor.com)
Daily Mirror = Daily Mirror (www.dailymirror.lk)
Daily Monitor = Daily Monitor (www.monitor.co.ug)
Daily Nation = Daily Nation (www.nation.co.ke)
Daily Observer = Daily Observer (http://www.liberianobserver.com)
DNA = Daily News Agency (www.dnaindia.com)
DOJ = U.S. Department of Justice (www.justice.gov)
Economist = The Economist (www.economist.com)
EFE = EFE (wwwefe.com)
El Diario de Hoy = El Diario de Hoy (www.elsalvador.com)
El Heraldo = El Heraldo (www.elheraldo.hn/)
El Tiempo = El Tiempo (www.eltiempo.com)
Enough = Enough (www.enoughproject.org)
Euronews = Euronews (www.euronews.net)
Financial Times = Financial Times (www.ft.com)
GovTrack = GovTrack (www.govtrack.us/)
Guardian = The Guardian (www.guardian.co.uk)
Guatemala Times = Guatemala Times (www.guatemala-times.com)
Haitian Times = Haitian Times (www.haitiantimes.com)
Hill = The Hill (www.thehill.com)
Himalayan Times = The Himalayan Times (www.thehimalayantimes.com)
Hindu = The Hindu (www.hindu.com)
Hindustan Times = Hindustan Times (www.hindustantimes.com)
Honduras Weekly = Honduras Weekly (www.hondurasweekly.com)
HRW = Human Rights Watch (www.hrw.org)
iAfrica = iAfrica (http://iafrica.com)
IANS = Indo-Asian News Service (www.ians.in)
IAPA = Inter American Press Association (www.sipiapa.org)
ICG = International Crisis Group (www.crisisweb.org)
IHT = International Herald Tribune (www.iht.com)
Independent = The Independent (www.independent.co.ug)
Informer = The Informer (www.theinformer-lr.com)
IPS News Agency = Inter Press Service News Agency (www.ipsnews.net)
IRIN = Integrated Regional Information Network (www.irinnews.org)
Jeune Afrique = Jeune Afrique (http://www.jeuneafrique.com)
Justice News Flash = Justice News Flash (www.justicenewsflash.com)
E-Kantipur = Kantipur News (www.ekantipur.com)
Kuwait Times = Kuwait Times (http://www.kuwaittimes.net/)
LAHT = The Latin American Herald Tribune (www.laht.com)
La Prensa = La Prensa (www.laprensa.hn)
La Prensa Grafica = La Prensa Grafica (www.laprensagrafica.com)
LA Times = Los Angeles Times (www.latimes.com)
Latin America Press = Latin America Press (www.latinamericapress.org)
LBO = Lanka Business Online (www.lankabusinesssonline.lk)
Liberian E-Mansion = Liberian Executive Mansion (www.emansion.gov.lr)
Miami Herald = The Miami Herald (www.miamiherald.com)
Mindanews = Mindanews (http://www.mindanews.com/)
MSF = Médecins Sans Frontière (www.msf.org)
Monitor = The Monitor (www.monitor.co.ug)
NACLA = North American Congress on Latin America (www.nacla.org)
Nepal News = Nepal News (www.nepalnews.com)
New Times = The New Times (www.newtimes.co.rw)
New Times BPB = New Times Broward-Palm Beach (www.browardpalmbeach.com)
New Vision = The New Vision (www.newvision.co.ug)
Observer = The Observer (http://www.observer.ug/)
Oxfam = Oxfam International (www.oxfam.org)
Patriote = Le Patriote (www.lepatriote.net)
Prensa Libre = Prensa Libre (www.prensalibre.com)
Press TV = Press TV (www.presttv.ir)
Relief Web = Relief Web (www.reliefweb.int)
RSF = Reporters without Borders (www.rsf.org)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>URL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>República</td>
<td>Republica (<a href="http://www.myrepublica.com">www.myrepublica.com</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reuters</td>
<td>Reuters (<a href="http://www.reuters.com">www.reuters.com</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rewmi</td>
<td>Rewmi (<a href="http://www.rewmi.com">www.rewmi.com</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFI</td>
<td>Radio France Internationale (<a href="http://www.rfi.fr">www.rfi.fr</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RTT News</td>
<td>RTT News (<a href="http://www.rttnews.com">www.rttnews.com</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Asia News</td>
<td>South Asia News Magazine (<a href="http://www.southasia.net">http://www.southasia.net</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Dept.</td>
<td>U.S. Department of State (<a href="http://www.state.gov">www.state.gov</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudan Tribune</td>
<td>Sudan Tribune (<a href="http://www.sudantribune.com">www.sudantribune.com</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday Leader</td>
<td>The Sunday Leader (<a href="http://www.thesundayleader.lk">www.thesundayleader.lk</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIME</td>
<td>Time (<a href="http://www.time.com">www.time.com</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Times Live</td>
<td>Times Live (<a href="http://www.timeslive.co.za">www.timeslive.co.za</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Times of India</td>
<td>Times of India (<a href="http://www.timesofindia.indiatimes.com">www.timesofindia.indiatimes.com</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Times Online</td>
<td>Times Online (<a href="http://www.timesonline.co.uk">www.timesonline.co.uk</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN News</td>
<td>UN News Center (<a href="http://www.un.org/news">www.un.org/news</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>UN Educational, Scientific, &amp; Cultural Organization (<a href="http://www.unesco.org">www.unesco.org</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>UN High Commissioner for Refugees (<a href="http://www.unhcr.org">www.unhcr.org</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>UN Children's Fund (<a href="http://www.unicef.org">www.unicef.org</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNIFEM</td>
<td>UN Development Fund for Women (<a href="http://www.unifem.org">www.unifem.org</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNMIL</td>
<td>United Nations Mission in Liberia (<a href="http://unmil.org">http://unmil.org</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VOA</td>
<td>Voice of America News (<a href="http://www.voenews.com">www.voenews.com</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web Newswire</td>
<td>Web Newswire (<a href="http://www.webnewswire.com">www.webnewswire.com</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPFD</td>
<td>World Press Freedom Day 2010 (<a href="http://www.wpfd2010.org">www.wpfd2010.org</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WSJ</td>
<td>The Wall Street Journal (<a href="http://www.wsj.com">www.wsj.com</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP</td>
<td>The Washington Post (<a href="http://www.washingtonpost.com">www.washingtonpost.com</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xinhua</td>
<td>Xinhua News Agency (<a href="http://www.xinhuanet.com/english">www.xinhuanet.com/english</a>)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
UPDATE SUMMARY

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

COLOMBIA
Colombian military bombs and raids FARC arms factory

CUBA
U.S. Congress still fighting to set travel restrictions; Chávez returns to Cuba for care

GUATEMALA
Human rights violations emerge again concerning frontrunner Pérez Molina

HAITI
MINUSTAH launches Operation Phoenix; Martelly begins Kay Pam housing project

CENTRAL ASIA, MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

AFGHANISTAN
Taliban video shows mass execution of Pakistani police officers

IRAN
Iran to expedite uranium enrichment at nuclear plants

LIBYA
United States finally recognizes Libyan rebels but meets with Gaddafi’s envoys

SYRIA
Syrian security forces continue killing during funerals

YEMEN
Fighting erupts in Yemeni capital; pressure mounts against Saleh

SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

NEPAL
Maoist Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal issues proposal at Central Committee Meeting

PHILIPPINES
Allegations of election fraud continue
SRI LANKA
Government policies make reconciliation more difficult than ever

CENTRAL AND EAST AFRICA

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO
DynCorp to train DRC army

KENYA
Aid to be provided for Somali famine; Kenyan railroad receives new funding; poached ivory is confiscated and burned

SUDAN
New war crimes reported

SOUTH SUDAN
New United Nations Mission to south Sudan begins work
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

COLOMBIA

Colombian military bombs and raids FARC arms factory

The Colombian air force bombed a major arms factory belonging to the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) July 17. The military claimed four rebels were killed and two female combatants were captured during the bombing. The arms factory was located in the Arauca department, near the Venezuelan border.

Colombian fighter jets bombed the suspected bomb-making factory and soldiers carried out a raid. The arms factory belonged to the FARC’s 10th front, which is active in the border region. The operation also resulted in the seizure of mines, 300 mortars, and over one ton of explosives.

The identities of the rebel fighters have not yet been confirmed. Reports of who were among the dead remained unclear. The defense minister, Rodrigo Rivera, indicated that FARC leader Luis Eduardo Lopez Mendez, alias Efren Arboleda, could be one of the rebels killed in the attack. “At the moment they are talking about Efren, who is the main boss of the FARC in the whole region,” said Rivera.

However, Rivera stressed that the death of Efren could not be confirmed. Efren’s girlfriend, alias Viviana, was rumored to be in custody and wounded or among the dead. Rivera could not confirm the whereabouts of Viviana. “At the moment we are doing reconnaissance at the site of the bombing to confirm,” Rivera said.

President Juan Manuel Santos praised the military for their success. “I congratulate the armed forces for a new hit against the FARC in Arauca,” President Santos posted on Twitter. The President has taken a strong position against the left-wing rebel group, indicating that he will not enter peace talks unless the FARC stops its violent attacks and releases all of its hostages.

The bombing and raid represented efforts on behalf of the Colombian government to end militarily the violent conflict between government troops, the FARC and paramilitary groups that has continued for forty years. The government has made considerable inroads against the FARC and the rebel group’s numbers have declined from 17,000 in 2002 to fewer than 8,000.

Sources: BBC, July 17; Colombia Reports, July 17; Colombia Reports, July 18; RTT, July 18

Please send comments to Sara Nettleton at snettleton@sandiego.edu
CUBA

U.S. Congress still fighting to set travel restrictions; Chávez returns to Cuba for care

In the U.S. Congress, an amendment to an upcoming appropriations bill has reopened the debate on travel restrictions to Cuba. The amendment, crafted by Florida Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart, reinstated Cuba travel restrictions to the level they were under President George W. Bush. Under the Bush administration’s restrictions, Cuban-Americans had one trip every three years for “family reunifications,” a cap of $1,200 per year was placed on remittances to relatives and a tighter definition of “family” was used.

President Barack Obama threatened to veto any bill that would undermine or reverse his restrictions on Cuba July 13. The Administration announced that it opposes section 901 of H.R. 2434 because the section would reverse the President’s policy on family travel and remittances to Cuba.

The Administration stated, “This section would undo the President’s efforts to increase contact between divided Cuban families, undermine the enhancement of the Cuban people’s economic independence and support for private sector activity that come from increased remittances from family members.” The Administration explained that the section would “isolate the Cuban people and make them more dependent on Cuban authorities.”

The amendment’s wording was approved by a voice vote in the House Appropriations Committee, demonstrating that there was no strong opposition. H.R. 2434 funds the Treasury Department and other agencies for the upcoming 2012 fiscal year. Under the Republican-controlled House, the bill will be approved unchanged. Because the Senate usually does not draft its own version of the Treasury budget bill, the House-Senate conference committee, which includes members appointed by congressional leaders, will be left with the task to create a compromise.

In other news, Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez returned to Cuba July 16 to receive more treatment for his cancer. During a telephone call, Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff offered for Chávez to receive treatment in Brazil from the same medical team that treated her cancerous lymphoma as São Paulo has one of the most renowned cancer-treatment hospitals in Latin America. Rousseff went as far as to suggest that two of Brazil’s best doctors assist Chávez’s doctors in Caracas.

Michael Shifter, President of the Inter-American Dialogue in Washington, argued, “Fidel Castro is one of the few people in whom Chávez has utter faith and trust. He is prepared to entrust his health to Fidel, even if he could get better treatment elsewhere.” Analysts also have postulated that Chávez was counting on Cuban officials to only disclose limited information about his illness and prognosis.

Sources: Miami Herald, July 21; NY Times, July 18; White House, July 13.

Please send comments to Kelli Killion at kkillion@sandiego.edu.
GUATEMALA

Human rights violations emerge again concerning frontrunner Pérez Molina

On July 20, the indigenous organization Waqib Kej presented a letter to the UN denouncing former Army General and presidential candidate Otto Pérez Molina. Pérez Molina was allegedly involved in acts of genocide and torture during Guatemala’s civil war.

He has faced these allegations before, but little concrete evidence has been presented to date. Pérez Molina, a candidate from the right-of-center Patriot Party, is favored in the polls to win the presidency in the September 11 election. He has capitalized on the violence in the country through his anti-crime stance.

Jose Miguel Insulza, Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS), announced his concern about the political tension and violence in the upcoming elections. Insulza said, “The magnitude of the challenges facing Guatemala today, especially those from the action of organized crime, makes it imperative that the election is another example of national unity to strengthen democracy and respect civic institutions.”

Since May 2011 the start of the election period, more than 30 candidates for offices, ranging from local councils to mayoral races have been murdered and members of the Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE) have received death threats. The first round of voting is scheduled for September 11 and the runoff will be held November 6 if no candidate receives over 50 percent of the votes in the first election.

On Tuesday, July 19, the Association of Judges and Magistrates of Guatemala called for the dismissal of Francisco Dall’Anese the head of the Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG). Carlos Aguilar, president of the association, reported that the request is based on Dall’Anese’s statements about the judges lacking objectivity and impartiality. Diego Alvarez, spokesman for the CICIG, stated that call for dismissal by the association is allowed and will be considered.

Sources: Foreign Policy, July 21; Reuters, July 20; Associated Press, July 19.

Please send comments to: kkillion@sandiego.edu.

HAITI

MINUSTAH launches Operation Phoenix; Martelly begins Kay Pam housing project

The UN Stabilizing Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), supported by the United Nations Police (UNPol), the Formed Police Unit of the UN (FPU), and in conjunction with the National Police of Haiti (PNH), launched Operation Phoenix July 14.
Operation Phoenix is aimed at securing key areas in the districts of Cité Soleil, Bel-Air and Martissant and is designed to ensure a long-term presence in these neighborhoods in order to build trust among residents, the PNH and MINUSTAH.

In Operation Phoenix, peacekeepers have performed further outreach or “civil-military” actions for the benefit of the population, according to Major General Luiz Ramos. The idea of civil-military is to be reflected in three days of activities, beginning July 15, planned in Operation Phoenix for the removal of debris in the streets, the installation of dental and medical clinics and the repair of roads in the three districts of Port-au-Prince.

At St. Theresa College Davila in the district of Cité Soleil, on the morning of July 15, 500 kits of food were distributed to residents and 1,000 other kits were expected to be distributed in the following two days. In one of the college’s rooms, dozens of children received school kits containing a bag, stationery and other supplies.

The children also attended a screening of a film in Creole, which was produced especially for them. A nursing staff composed of five physicians and military contingents saw patients. The patients were diagnosed and were given medicine necessary to treat simple or “Level 1” diseases.

In other news, President Michel Martelly announced the launch of the Kay Pam project July 19. Kay Pam, which is Haitian Creole for “My House”, originally was intended to be launched June 13, but was delayed when Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Bank of National Credit (NLC) Guiteau Toussaint was murdered in his home June 12. Kay Pam is aimed at assisting the middle class by providing shelter. Charles Castel, Governor of the Bank of the Republic of Haiti (BRH), argued that the reconstruction of public buildings with greater security will act as a catalyst for private investment.

Castel outlined three major areas on which the housing development will focus. First, construction will be focused on is the development of new neighborhoods on the outskirts of Port-au-Prince, featuring the development of schools, clinics and other services. Second will be the restructuring and urbanization of existing neighborhoods, including providing road access and basic services such as water, electricity, green space and community services.

The project has identified areas of high risk and has determined not to build in those areas. The third aspect of housing development focused on high-density urban areas, seeking to alleviate the problem by increasing building height.

Sources: MINUSTAH, July 15; Haiti Libre, July 16, July 19; Le Matin, July 19.

Please send comments to: kkillion@sandiego.edu.
CENTRAL ASIA, MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

AFGHANISTAN

Taliban video shows mass execution of Pakistani police officers

The Taliban insurgency has released a video showing the killing of 16 Pakistani police officers by firing squad July 18. The officers were captured in a raid in a northwestern province in June thought to have killed six Afghan children in the Swat province of Pakistan.

The clip showed a Taliban military commander angrily denouncing the 16 men for their actions, declaring that they are “enemies of Allah’s religion.” Following the speech, the commanders killed the commanders with a quick burst of gunfire, later continuing to shoot each man one-by-one in case they appeared to still be alive. No Taliban group has yet claimed responsibility for the video.

The execution of the Pakistani officers has appeared to be a response to Pakistan’s alleged filming of the death of seven young Afghan men in the Swat province. The Pakistani military has denied that the film was authentic. The two countries have long been in conflict following the Taliban’s siege of the Upper Dir district of Pakistan in 2009. In two days of fighting since June 1, at least 28 Pakistani militiamen were killed, and at least 45 Taliban insurgents were also killed.

Upper Dir is part of Pakistan's northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province and borders the region where the military waged a major offensive to put down a local Taliban insurgency in the provinces of Lower Dir, Buner and Swat in 2009.

Taliban and other Al-Qaeda-linked militants have attempted to carve out their own territory on both sides of a destabilized Afghanistan-Pakistan border dating back to the 1980s.


Please send comments to Cameron Khodabakhsh at ckhoda@sandiego.edu

IRAN

Iran to expedite uranium enrichment at nuclear plants

Iran announced that it is installing newer and faster centrifuges at many of their major nuclear plants on July 19. The foreign ministry also mentioned that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the UN nuclear watchdog, has “full supervision” of the operation.

Foreign Ministry Spokesman Ramin Mehmanparast repeatedly referred to the installments and the program on the aggregate as “peaceful.” He also mentioned that most of the enrichment work
would move from the main plant in Natanz to a smaller plant site in Fordo, a town 90 miles south of Tehran.

Such developments defied many Western countries’ demands that Iran halt its uranium enrichment program. The UN Security Council has thus far imposed four rounds of sanctions on Iran over its refusal to halt enrichment, and several Western countries have followed suit with multiple rounds of sanctions of their own.

Furthermore, many Western countries alongside Israel have suspected Iran of possessing a nuclear program designed to develop nuclear weapons. Iran has consistently denied the claim, alleging that the program is designed only for peaceful purposes such as creating nuclear energy and medical isotopes.

France was quick to condemn the new installments. A statement released by the French Foreign Ministry stated, “Iran is engaging in a new provocation by announcing the imminent installation of next-generation centrifuge… [It] clearly confirms the suspicions of the IAEA and of the international community about the finality of a program with no credible civilian application.”

Diplomatic relations between the West and Iran have been at a lull since the last attempts to negotiate in December. The previous talks occurred in hopes of providing a solution to Iran’s nuclear program dispute, though such talks were to no avail. Such talks do not appear to be any added incentive for the West to come to the negotiating table.

Sources: The BBC, Press TV, AFP, PBS Newshour, July 19

Please send comments to ekhoda@sandiego.edu

LIBYA

United States finally recognizes Libyan rebels but meets with Gaddafi’s envoys

The United States officially recognized the Libyan rebels as the country’s legitimate government July 15. The move is significant, as it could give the cash-strapped rebels access to more than $30 billion in frozen assets that once belonged to Muammar Gaddafi.

In a statement, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said, “The United States views the Gaddafi regime as no longer having any legitimate authority in Libya… and so I am announcing today that, until an interim authority is in place the United States will recognize the Transitional National Council (TNC) as the legitimate governing authority for Libya, and we will deal with it on that basis.”

The TNC “expressed its gratitude and respect to the people of the United States” which it called “the promoter and protector of democracy and freedom across the world.” In addition, the TNC
offered assurances, “including the promise to pursue a process of democratic reform that inclusive both geographically and politically.”

The U.S. announcement was accompanied by an agreement among thirty Western and Arab nations taking part in a meeting in Istanbul to recognize the Libyan rebels after five months of failed fighting. Many of the nations at the meeting had already individually recognized the TNC as the legitimate government in Libya. According to Italian Foreign Minister Franco Frattini, the decision left Gaddafi “no other option” but to step down from power.

The move to recognize the TNC came after a plan was outlined by Libyan rebel leaders to send representatives to the Istanbul meeting to dispel doubts among Western powers about their ability to govern. The Libyan rebel representatives expressed excitement after the announcement but also frustration and caution at the limited helped they had received.

Ali Tarhouni, the rebels’ Minister of Finance and Oil, noted that the international recognition that the rebels received would not result in an immediate infusion of funds, which they desperately need. The Libyan Rebel Minister of Information added that the opposition needs money but more importantly it needs weapons, which the Western powers refuse to supply. In addition, the rebels might be barred from using money from frozen assets to buy weapons.

While addressing a televised rally in the town of Zlitan, Gaddafi rejected the move by the US and the West stating, “Trample on those recognitions, trample them under your feet… They are worthless.”

According to the U.S. State Department, U.S. officials held face-to-face talks with representatives of Muammar Gaddafi’s government July 19. A statement by the State Department said “the message was simple and unambiguous, Gaddafi must leave power so that a new political process can begin that reflects the will and aspirations of the Libyan people.”


Please send comments to Amol Nadkarni at anadkarni@sandiego.edu.

SYRIA

Syrian security forces continue killing during funerals

Syrian security forces killed 15 people during a funeral in the central city of Homs July 19. Pro-government forces drew fire as funeral processions for 10 protesters who were killed Monday continued at the Khaled Bin al-Waled mosque. According to a human rights activist, who wished to be unnamed, among those killed were the mother and son of a protestor who had died.
“The security forces started shooting at the funeral processions, then people ran for cover, some hiding behind the mosque, others behind parked cars,” he continued. “An army tank then ran over cars, smashing seven.”

In a speech to Damascus University in June, President Bashar al-Assad called for a national dialogue including promoters and those in the nascent opposition movement. Those against the Assad regime, however, contend that the President ought not to be taken seriously given that his security forces continue to open fire on the protestors.

Anti-regime protests in Syria began March 2011 as part of what is now known as the “Arab Spring,” a movement of pro-democracy protests occurring all over the Middle East and North Africa. President Assad has since unleashed his security forces on these protestors, killing at least 1,300 civilians and arresting at least 12,000, according to several human rights groups.

Many Western countries, including the United States, France, and Britain, have fiercely condemned the attacks and imposed sanctions on government officials.


Please send comments to ckhoda@sandiego.edu

YEMEN

Fighting erupts in Yemeni capital; pressure mounts against Saleh

Fighting broke out in Sanaa between government forces and opposition supporters July 18, resulting in six deaths according to opposition sources. The fighting was the first to occur in Sanaa since President Ali Abdullah Saleh flew to Saudi Arabia to be treated for burn wounds from a failed assassination attempt in June.

One clash began when demonstrators left their designated protest area where they had been camped for several months, seeking to increase pressure on Saleh to leave office. According to one source, “Hundreds of youths marched out of the sit-in area, but were confronted by security forces and gunmen in civilian clothes who fired on them. They killed one protestor and wounded eight others.”

In the north of the capital, a family of five was killed by shelling during clashes between the Republican Guard forces and opposition tribesman. The opposition has become extremely frustrated as daily demonstrations, now in their sixth month, have been unable to persuade Saleh to end his three decades of rule and step down.
The United States has tried to diminish the turmoil within Yemen by pressing Saleh to accept a transfer of power plan outlined by the Gulf Arab countries. However, Saleh has insisted that he will return to Yemen to lead a dialogue with the opposition and oversee a transition of power.

Most critics and analysts believe that this is just a stalling tactic that Saleh is trying to use to extend his stay as president. In a letter published in Yemen’s state-backed newspaper, Saleh said that the country needed a national dialogue to overcome the crisis and was quoted as saying, “We stress the importance of dialogue that depends on peaceful means to solve our problems no matter how difficult and complicated they are, just as we stress solving our differences through democratic methods.”

Sources: MSNBC, July, 18.

Please send comments to: anadkarni@sandiego.edu.

SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

NEPAL

Maoist Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal issues proposal at Central Committee Meeting

Unified Communist Party of Nepal (UCPN-Maoist) Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal submitted his new proposals in a Central Committee (CC) meeting July 17. The CC meeting had been delayed since June 24, ostensibly due to the need for more planning stemming from the differences over the agenda for the CC between the chairman and the vice-chair duo of Mohan Baidhya and Baburam Bhattarai. The two vice-chairs pressed for "appropriate" work divisions among the leaders, blaming the party chief for holding all the main and crucial responsibilities.

At the CC meeting Dahal, the chief of the largest party in Nepal, laid out his new three-topic document. In the document, Dahal highlighted plans to complete the basic issues of the peace process and to prepare the first draft of the constitution by August 31.

Maoist spokesperson Dina Nath Sharma said to reporters after the meeting, “the chairman presented his document with three topics entitled peace and constitution building process and the government; intra-party struggle; and current plan and programs.” In addition, Sharma stated that the CC meeting would make important decisions on work division and number of party representatives sent to the government.

Dahal proposed in his document that if the post-August 31 situation went well and the peace and constitution process concluded successfully, the party general convention should be held by May of 2012 and a district level convention should be started by August.
A meeting of office bearers held before the CC meeting resulted in changes to Dahal’s three page long document. The office bearers annulled the task force formed to recommend party representatives inducted into the cabinet because of too much division within the task force. The issue of the change of Maoist representatives in the government was also under discussion in the meeting. According to one office bearer, some of the suggestions made in the meeting had yet to be incorporated into the chairman’s document.

At the CC meeting, Dahal raised the issue of regrouping Maoist PLA personnel in order to speed up the peace process and prepare the first draft of the new constitution, as described in the five-point deal signed by the three major political parties May 28. The Maoists have proposed the integration of ten thousand People’s Liberation Army troops into the state security forces.

Sources: The Rising Nepal July 17.

Please send comments to: anadkarni@sandiego.edu.

PHILIPPINES

Allegations of election fraud continue

A new investigation of electoral fraud has been launched, seeking to determine if the 2004 presidential elections and the 2007 midterm elections in Mindanao were fraudulent. The Commission on Elections (Comelec) Chairman Sixto Brillantes Jr. waited for an affidavit signed by suspended Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao Gov. Zaldy Ampatuan that would implicate former President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo in the 2004 and 2007 elections. Ampatuan’s statement would provide the link between President Arroyo and former election officer of Maguindanao, Lintang Bedol.

Bedol also submitted an affidavit and has alleged that President Arroyo facilitated fraud in both elections. “If Ampatuan corroborates Bedol’s statement, it will no longer be hearsay. The question is - is he the Ampatuan who directly knows what Arroyo supposedly did? What if he just heard it from his father (Andal Sr.)? Then it becomes double hearsay,” Brillantes said. Comelec planned to explore any supplemental affidavits submitted by Bedol, as the statement currently on record is hearsay because it replicates what has been printed in the media.

Three new witnesses have come out supporting Bedol’s claim of election fraud. Acting election officer Saliao Amba of the province of Shariff Saydona Mustapha, former election officer Magsaysay Mohamad of the province of Sultan sa Barongis, and computer voters’ list technician Salonga Edzela, all from Maguindanao, submitted individual affidavits July 18 that describe the irregularities of the 2007 midterm election.
Their statements corroborated Bedol’s testimony. However, for their testimony to carry weight, the three witnesses must provide their statements in person. It has been reported that the witnesses are hiding in a safe house to avoid persecution.

Despite this abundance of witness testimony, Brillantes indicated that President Arroyo’s legal team may request that the case be dropped because the statute of limitations is five years from the time a crime is committed, which would exonerate Arroyo of the 2004 charges. Brillantes said that the time limit should be counted from the time President Arroyo stepped down from office because she was immune from suit as standing president.

Sources: ABS CBN, July 20; GMA News; July 20; Inquirer News; July 20

Please send comments to Sara Nettleton at snettleton@sandiego.edu

SRI LANKA

Government policies make reconciliation more difficult than ever

The government of Sri Lanka defeated the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) two years ago, but reconciliation between the two groups remains elusive. According to the think tank Crisis Group, President Mahinda Rajapaksa’s Sinhalese nationalist post-war policies have discriminated against the minority Tamil population and hamper prospects for reconciliation between the Sinhalese and the Tamils.

Crisis Group asserts that the Sri Lankan government prevents minority groups from participating in economic and political decisions and has continued to claim that the war was not an ethnic conflict but was instead focused on fighting terrorism. “President Rajapaksa and his powerful brothers continue to repress the media and political opponents, while manipulating elections and silencing civil society,” said Robert Templer, Crisis Group’s Asia Program Director.

Temper’s statements were not unwarranted. A Tamil political party has threatened to withdraw from upcoming local elections on the grounds that party members have been harassed and threatened by the military and opposition party members. The Tamil National Alliance requested that foreign monitors be present at the polls, but the elections commission turned down the request.

Since the war ended in 2009, the military has continued to have a strong presence in the north and east of the country. Crisis Group claimed that democratic activities in these areas have been suppressed because the military has taken over administrative tasks that should be carried out by civilians.

Killings and disappearances have continued in these regions. “Sri Lanka may be ‘post-war’, but it will never be ‘post-conflict’ until all its people are free to build a credible narrative of its past and to
play meaningful roles in their own governance,” Alan Keenan, Crisis Group’s Senior Analyst on Sri Lanka said.

The Sri Lankan government and the LTTE were engaged in a thirty year ethnic conflict which ended in the defeat of the LTTE. Displacement has remained a widespread problem and many families continue to search for missing relatives. A UN panel of experts has condemned both sides for war crimes committed in the final stages of the war.

Sources: PhilStar, July 18; Crisis Group, July 18

Please send comments to Sara Nettleton at snettleton@sandiego.edu

CENTRAL AND EAST AFRICA

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

DynCorp to train DRC army

The private security firm DynCorp has been given a contract to train the army of the Democratic Republic of Congo as a part of the US Africa Peacekeeping Program (Africap). DynCorp was awarded the one-year contract by the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of African Affairs June 1. The DynCorp program in the DRC will consist of training for basic leadership and focuses on mid-level military communications, logistics, and engineering.

The President of DynCorp International, Steve Schorer, stated that the organization has had success in training to enhance leadership and is prepared to apply such experience to the government program of the DRC. “We are proud to continue our work in promoting peace and stability in Africa,” Schorer said.

Africap first contracted with DynCorp International in 2003 with a $500 million funding ceiling to support regional stability by improving the ability of African countries to manage and resolve conflicts. The program has since sponsored security assistance work in Africa aiming to enhance regional peace and stability. DynCorp also works closely with the United States military, holding military contracts with U.S. operations in Afghanistan and Iraq.

DynCorp’s contract in the DRC comes in the months before fall elections. It will be crucial to build security stability before presidential and legislative elections take place November 27, 2011.

For the November elections the Congolese Parliament adopted a new electoral law July 15, aimed at streamlining the election process. Both the Senate and National Assembly voted for the new law. The most important change to the election process concerned the way in which deputies in districts are elected.
Prior to the new law, every district used proportional representation for elected deputies. Under the new law, in districts where any deputy receives an absolute majority, he or she will gain all the allotted seats. The bill will also revise Kinshasa’s electoral districts and implement new campaign rules.

Sources: Defense Web: July 19; Crisis Group: July 15; US Dept of State: Feb 6, 2008

Please send comments to Carmyn Chapman at carmynchapman@sandiego.edu

KENYA

Aid to be provided for Somali famine; Kenyan railroad receives new funding; poached ivory is confiscated and burned.

The worst drought experienced by East African nations in half a century continues to take an extreme toll on the people of Somalia and Kenya. More than 10 million people have been affected in East Africa. On July 19 the United Nations officially declared a state of famine in two regions of southern Somalia.

As a result of this declaration, aid agencies have increased their material aid presence in the region. The United States has pledged $28 million to Somali relief, in addition to the $431 million already provided to the Horn of Africa. The United Nations World Food Program has asked for $1 billion in aid, of which it has only received a total donor amount of $200 million.

The drought has been the worst in southern Bakool and Lower Shabelle regions of Somalia, where famine resurfaced for the first time in nineteen years. Among the threats of dehydration, malnutrition and weather overexposure, people in southern Somali and near the Kenyan border still need protection from armed groups. The conditions from famine resulted from conflict, poor harvest, and high numbers of displaced persons. Areas of Kenya were also included in the declared famine.

Shelterbox, an international relief charity providing necessities to people in disasters, has arrived with aid for Kenyans and Somalis affected by this crisis. The organization Shelterbox provided Shelterboxes for the famine victims, each containing a tent for a family as large as ten people, as well as water purification tools and blankets. One of the first priorities in the region was for people have access to water and medication.

In other news, the Kenyan railroad earned a new lifeline with funding from the African Development Bank. Funding for the railway in the amount of £24.8m was made to improve
dangerous railways, specifically those running between Mombasa to Lake Victoria. Critics previously labeled it the “lunatic line” due to the high cost of construction both financially and in human life.

It is estimated that 2,000 rail workers lost their lives in construction of the railroad which was completed in the late 19th century. The line was intended to open travel to the “interior” or Africa. Hopes for building the new railways included a boost for the Kenyan economy. Kenya has seen increasing inflation rates of 14.5 percent compared to January’s rate of less than 5 percent inflation. Kenya’s Vision 2030, a group working toward specific Kenyan economic and social goals hopes to see an annual growth rate of 10 percent in the next twenty years.

The standing rails in Kenya have deteriorated and the trains do not run on a strict schedule. There have been plans to replace the old tracks with newer gauge line in order to accommodate high-speed trains. In addition to faster trains, commuters will be able to enjoy a new network organizing travel in Nairobi.

On July 20 Kenyan officials led by President Mwai Kibaki holding a flaming torch burned five tons of ivory confiscated from illegal poachers. Among the flames were 335 elephant tusks and 40,000 carvings from ivory. The Kenyan Wildlife Training School sponsored the ivory burning as a part of their anti-poaching campaign. The ivory burned came from Singapore, and upon arrival in Kenya, DNA testing confirmed that it originated in Tanzania and Malawi.

President Kibaki stated that this was done in protest of “criminal networks,” and the government intended to make clear their “collective resolve to fight this crime in our region and beyond.” This was only the third time in Africa that ivory has been burned in response to illegal poaching. Previous events took place in Kenya 1989 and ambia 1992.

Sources: BBC: July 18, July 18, July 20, July 20; Voice of America: July 20

Please send comments to carmynchapman@sandiego.edu

SUDAN

New war crimes reported

Possible acts of war crimes in South Kordofan have prompted Sudan to consider allowing peacekeepers in the region. The United Nations reported that increasing violence of the Sudanese army against civilian populations is of great concern and there have been clashes between the Sudan Armed Forces and the Sudanese People’s Liberation Army.

Satellite images July 6 showed a group of approximately 1,000 Sudanese armed forces entering South Kordofan. Following this military presence were aerial attacks on civilians, churches, and abductions,
as well as further mass killing in the Nuba Mountains. Additional evidence of the violence came from satellite images which show mass graves in the border area of Sudan and South Sudan.

The increased violence and relinquished support of the UN prompted the Government of Sudan to voice thoughts on July 19 of accepting peacekeepers in South Kordofan. Sudan’s foreign minister, Ali Karti, said that if there could be an agreement among local leaders an outside force might be permitted.

These reports remained some of the last and only official reliable information able to be gathered from Sudan at the present time. The UN’s mandate for its Mission in Sudan (UNMIS), which was established during the interim period of the Government of Sudan and SPLM after signing the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement, expired July 9.

Due to security concerns in Sudan, the Security Council asked to extend UNMIS for three months, but the Secretary-General made the decision to end the program upon receiving a letter from the Government of Sudan requesting the mandate end as scheduled. The 2005 UN mission in Sudan was established to monitor the Cease Fire Agreement within the CPA and begin the process of disarmament of armed groups and to provide human rights presence.

Susana Malcorra, Under-Secretary-General of the Department of Field Support, praised the work that has been done by the mission in Sudan, stating: “I believe that the people of the Mission need to be proud of what has been done in the referendum-it was an incredible achievement.”

Sources: CNN; July 16; Sudan Tribune; July 19; UNMIS; July 9

Please send comments to carmynychapman@sandiego.edu.

**SOUTH SUDAN**

**New United Nations Mission to South Sudan begins work**

The United Nations, upon closing their mission in Sudan (UNMIS) has begun work in South Sudan. The organization’s new mission, UNMISS, in South Sudan, per U.N. Security Council Resolution 1996 will be for one year with goals of consolidating peace and security as well as promoting development in all areas of government.

The mandate included 7,000 military personnel with work being done to support state and economic development, build conflict prevention strategies and establish rule of law.

Ongoing problems for South Sudan include border disputes and conflict in the Abyei region. Tens of thousands of people have fled Abyei after the Sudan Armed Forces entered the region May 21 before the two countries split.
Displaced persons continued to flee fighting in the region while others were forced to choose between the north and south Sudan. According to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 67,000 people from the Abyei region have registered with the Commission.

People are not only being forced to leave their homes as internally displaced persons, they also faced with an even more difficult prospect of family separation. One 67-year-old Sudanese man stated, “I lost my wives and children when we fled Abyei and I [have had no] information about their whereabouts since.” South Sudanese independence has caused problems for many people who now face a lost nationality.

Sudan’s national assembly has drafted a proposal which will allow it to prevent people from South Sudan claiming Sudanese national identity. A Sudanese ministry official explained, “When our government acknowledges the secession, that means all southerners living in the north will not have a right to enjoy northern nationality.” Furthermore, Sudan has stated that it is not open to the prospect of dual nationality for any of the 800 to one million South Sudanese currently in Sudan.

Top officials from the United Nations in South Sudan have encouraged the government to establish solid foundations with complete programs for the people. Suggestions for the country to get off on the right foot came directly from the UN representative in South Sudan Hilde Frafjord Johnson. She urged South Sudan to commit to inclusive government, rule of law and structural foundations for the country. The United Nations also committed to helping South Sudan with security and to provide support to protect the population in the case that the South Sudanese army cannot.

Sources: UNMIS: July 9; Sudan Tribune: July 20; UNMIS: June 2011; BBC: July 19.

Please send comments to carmynchapman@sandiego.edu