Featured Stories

Latin America and the Caribbean
Guatemala – New members elected to the UN Security Council

Middle East and North Africa
Tunisia – Election results show moderates take majority
Yemen – Women burn veils to protest regime

South and South East Asia
Sri Lanka – Controversy arises during President’s visit to Commonwealth meetings

East Africa
Kenya – Nairobi hit with two grenade attacks
The countries for the Peace & Justice Update have been chosen as areas of focus at the institute.

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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 fall 2011 term are:

*Felicia Gomez (University of San Diego), Andy Paul (University of Colorado - Boulder), Meghan Auker Becker (Swarthmore College) and graduate intern Shabnaz Yousefia (University of San Diego)*
## SOURCE LIST

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UPDATE SUMMARY

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN
COLOMBIA
FARC attack targets Colombian military, killing 10

GUATEMALA
New members elected to the UN Security Council

HAITI
Cholera vaccinations begin, one year after outbreak

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA
IRAQ
U.S. scales back diplomatic programs due to fiscal and security concerns

LIBYA
Aftermath of Gadaffi’s death

TUNISIA
Election results show moderates take majority and declare country “open for business”

YEMEN
Women burn veils to protest regime

SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST ASIA
INDIA
Millions of aborted girls cause gender imbalance

NEPAL
Prime Minister hopeful following visit to India; government expressed doubt

PHILIPPINES
Mindanao clashes displace thousands
Murdered priest and peace advocate mourned in Mindanao

SRI LANKA
Controversy arises during President’s visit to Commonwealth meetings

CENTRAL AND EAST AFRICA
KENYA
Nairobi hit with two grenade attacks

SOMALIA
Al-Shabab claims to have killed more than 70 AU soldiers
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

COLOMBIA

FARC attack targets Colombian military, killing 10

Ten soldiers were killed in an ambush October 22 in Tame, a municipality in the northeastern region of Arauca. The incident marked the second attack blamed on Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) rebels within 48 hours as well as the heaviest loss by security forces in more than a year.

The ambush was allegedly carried out by the FARC who opened fire and launched gas bottles at a military convoy, killing more than ten soldiers and immediately leaving the scene. At least two soldiers reportedly survived the attack, but were sent to the hospital and have yet to be released.

A similar attack occurred against the military, October 21, when alleged FARC rebels attacked an army patrol with mortar fire, killing more than ten soldiers. The attack followed the style of a hit and run attack.

President Juan Manuel Santos recently replaced the entire military command in response to the continual hit and run attacks allegedly committed by the FARC. The attacks come a week before the nationwide mid-term election October 30, further supporting the idea that the FARC is behind the attacks, as they are usually associated with “staged attacks in the run up to elections.”


Please send comments to Felicia Gomez at feliciagomez-12@sandiego.edu.

GUATEMALA

New members elected to the UN Security Council

Guatemala, Morocco, Pakistan and Togo were elected to the UN Security Council October 21 to serve as non-permanent members for a two-year term, from the beginning of 2012 to the end of 2013.

The five new members will replace Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Gabon, Lebanon and Nigeria and serve alongside the five permanent members: Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States.

Guatemala was the only certain winner going into the election as it ran unopposed for the sole seat for Latin America and the Caribbean. Morocco and Pakistan were also elected in the first round,
while Togo was elected in the third. After 16 rounds of voting October 21, the fifth seat was awarded to Azerbaijan, after Slovenia, its rival for the position, withdrew from the race. The seats are reserved for three countries from Africa and Asia-Pacific (with two of the seats going to African states), one country from Eastern Europe, and one country from Latin America and the Caribbean.

Multiple rounds of voting are common in Security Council elections, as to win a country must receive a two-thirds majority of the UN General Assembly’s votes. In 2007, a race between Guatemala and Venezuela went 47 rounds before Panama was offered as a compromise Latin America candidate.

The new makeup puts Pakistan on the council alongside its regional rival India, which like Colombia, Germany, Portugal, and South Africa is serving a two-year term that wraps up at the end of 2012. They last served on the Council at the same time in 1977, before either had nuclear weapons. Their joint presence next year will raise the number of nuclear-armed states in the Council to seven.

According to Evelyn Leopold of the Huffington Post, the politically divided council is likely to split on controversial issues, with Pakistan, India, and Azerbaijan expected to join Russia and China in blocking American and European efforts to sanction such nations as Syria and Iran or take a tough line on Sudan.

The issue of Palestine’s full membership in the United Nations will also be contested: Palestine is willing to accept a U.S. veto if they can get the required minimum nine votes as a sign of support for another attempt in the future; however, as Guatemala has never recognized a Palestinian state, the new council may also be less inclined to support the Palestinians’ request for UN membership.


Please send comments to Meghan Auker Becker at megtab@sandiego.edu.

HAITI

Cholera vaccinations begin, one year after outbreak

A year after a cholera epidemic broke out in Haiti plans to begin vaccinating people against the disease are finally underway.

Beginning in January, Boston-based Partners in Health (co-founded by UN Deputy Special Envoy to Haiti, Paul Farmer) will provide vaccines to 100,000 Haitians living in two vulnerable
communities: a neighborhood in Port-au-Prince and an isolated rural village in the lower Artibonite Valley region, where the disease was first detected.

The director of Partners in Health, Dr. Louise Overs, said, “I believe the first step is to get started. As we show success, we can use that experience not just to show it’s possible but do it while strengthening the Haitian health care system.”

Meanwhile, Doctors without Borders was also considering administering its own cholera vaccination project in Haiti in the near future. It would involve several hundred thousand people in northern villages too remote for life-saving treatment to reach.

The current plan includes 200,000 dosages of the vaccine – enough for only 100,000 people (in a country of 9.5 million), but that is all the manufacturer can currently offer. Questions remained as to whether and how fast the maker of the vaccine, Schanchol, would be able to make more.

For months after the epidemic began, Haitian authorities and the World Health Organization/Pan American Health Organization argued that logistical challenges and fears of social unrest made a nationwide cholera vaccination program impractical and unwise, citing the possibility of riots if there was not enough of the vaccine for all. However, new Haitian president Michel Martelly recently voiced his support for the vaccination and the World Health Organization and the Pan American Health Organization also seem to have dropped their opposition.

The WHO estimates there are approximately 5 million cases of cholera worldwide per year and around 130,000 deaths. There are currently epidemics raging in Angola, Zimbabwe and Haiti, where nearly half a million Haitians have already been affected by the disease and more than 6,500 have died. However, there is no “global stockpile” of the cholera vaccine.

Additionally, with or without the vaccine, doctors urge those in Haiti to take precautions against cholera infection. However, this is becoming more and more difficult as improvements in clean drinking water and sanitation have been slow to nonexistent. For example, in March, about half of the residents of a displaced persons camp near Port-au-Prince had access to safe water. Now that number has dropped to only seven percent.


Please send comments to Meghan Auker Becker at megtab@sandiego.edu.
MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

IRAQ

U.S. scales back diplomatic programs due to fiscal and security concerns

In addition to the final withdrawal of troops announced October 21, the U.S. also plans to scale back plans for diplomatic, economic, and cultural programs once deemed vital to steadying Iraq and building a long-term alliance between the two countries.

Recent plans to establish consulates in cities like Mosul and Kirkuk have been indefinitely postponed and the opening of diplomatic offices in the Shiite-dominated south was rejected outright.

American officials emphasized that they still plan to increase diplomatic and cultural programs, but the expansion of a diplomatic presence will be much smaller than imagined. Sources cited budgetary constraints as well as a growing awareness that the decision to withdraw U.S. troops makes it much harder for diplomats to safely do their work. The State Department said that without the American soldiers, many diplomatic staff would have to hire contract security guards and concluded that the cost of security outweighed the benefit of having diplomats and officers in the field.


Please send comments to Meghan Auker Becker at megtab@sandiego.edu.

LIBYA

Questions arise in aftermath of Gaddafi’s death

Deposed dictator Moammar Gaddafi and his son Mutassim were secretly buried in the desert early October 25, according to the interim National Transitional Council (NTC) government. Both had been found and killed in a final push by NTC forces on Gaddafi’s Mediterranean hometown of Sirte. Obligated to Muslim *fatwa* or religious rules on burial, the NTC approved a burial ceremony, which was also done in secrecy.

The government opted for a secret rather than public burial due to fear of his burial ground becoming a shrine to his followers and the possibility of a future movement against the new government being formed.
Details as to Gaddafi’s death are still unclear. Ambiguous reports about him being shot in the crossfire have arisen, and videos exist of him still alive and surrounded by rebels. He was later to be taken to the town of Misrata at which point he was officially declared dead. The interim Libyan government is under pressure from the international community to provide clearer answers relating to Gaddafi’s death.

One of Gaddafi’s other sons, Saif al-Islam, was reported to have escaped the battle in Sirte in a military convoy and is still at large.

There have been comments in the international community that the NTC has already proven itself to be no better than Gaddafi in its stance on human rights. “This is a test. The NTC has repeatedly said that they will distinguish themselves from the Gaddafi regime in terms of the respect [for] human rights and the rule of law,” as U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Jeffrey Feltman pointed out, demonstrating another belief that the clean state starts now that Gaddafi is gone. “Now is the time for them to begin actions that will help them reinforce these words.”

Sources: BBC; Reuters, Oct. 25, 2011.

Please send comments to Andy Paul at ajpaul@sandiego.edu.

TUNISIA

Election results show moderates take majority and declare country “open for business”

The moderate Islamist Ennahda party has risen to the fore of October 23 elections, the first democratic elections in Tunisia’s history. Ennahda Secretary General Hamadi Jebali was elected the country’s next Prime Minister.

Aged 62, Jebali has been both an engineer and a journalist, helped to co-found Ennahda, and served a 16 year prison sentence for his outspoken criticism of the former regime headed by Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali. Ben Ali controlled Tunisia for 23 years until he was ousted during the early phase of the “Arab Spring” which hit Tunisia first and then proliferated to neighboring North African and Middle Eastern countries.

The new government has made it clear that it is focused on dealing with pertinent issues of rebuilding the country and fighting poverty. In order to do so, according to the government, liberal social and economic policies are to be implemented to attract regional and foreign investment. Further, the tourist industry is poised to play a major role in newly reformed Tunisia.
Tunisia’s largest secular party, the Congress for the Republic (CPR) had successful negotiations with Ennahda and supported them for their moderate Islamism. In order to encourage tourism at Tunisia’s beaches and demonstrate his moderate stance, Jebali has asserted that there will not be a “bikini ban,” and anything to “handicap tourism” is unapproachable.

As a result of successful elections, many are accepting the new Tunisia as a success story for the “Arab Spring,” which managed to topple Ben Ali and ten months later establish a new and moderate government.

Sources: BBC; Reuters, Oct. 26, 2011.

Please send comments to Andy Paul at ajpaul@sandiego.edu.

YEMEN

Women burn veils to protest regime

Hundreds of women set fire to their traditional veils October 26 to protest the government’s brutal use of violence against the country’s popular uprising, as clashes in the capital and the province of Taiz killed 25 people the night before.

In the capital Sanaa, women made a pile of veils (known as makramas) in the street which they then covered in gas and set alight. They chanted, “Who protects Yemeni women from the crimes of the thugs?” and handed out leaflets reading, “Here we burn our makrama in front of the world to witness the bloody massacres carried out by the tyrant Saleh.”

The act of women burning their clothing is a symbolic Bedouin tribal gesture signifying an appeal for help to tribesmen. Protester Ruqaiah Nassar said, “We will not stay quiet and will defend ourselves if our men can’t defend us. Tribes must understand they will not be respected by Yemeni women if they stay quiet while their women are being attacked by the Saleh regime.” More than 60 women were attacked in October alone by government forces.

The protest came as clashes have intensified between President Ali Abdullah Saleh’s forces and renegade fighters who have sided with the protesters in demands that the president step down. Despite an October 26 ceasefire announcement by Saleh, fighting continued, killing more than 25 civilians, tribal fighters, and government soldiers.

Women in Yemen have played a key role in the uprising against Saleh’s authoritarian rule since the beginning of the protests in March, inspired by other Arab revolutions. Their contributions were
recognized earlier this month when Yemeni activist Tawakkul Karman was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, along with two Liberian women, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and Leymah Gbowee, for their work promoting peace, democracy and women’s rights.

President Saleh has refused to relinquish power after eight months of protests against his 33-year rule. He has said he is willing to sign a deal brokered by the Gulf Cooperation Council to hand over power in exchange for immunity from prosecution; however, he has yet to do so.

Sources: Time, Oct. 27; BBC; CNN; CBS; Yemen Post, Oct. 26, 2011.

Please send comments to Meghan Auker Becker at megtab@sandiego.edu.

SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

INDIA

Millions of abortions of girls cause gender imbalance

Ancient cultural values and modern medical technology have led to millions of gender-selective abortions in India, according to a study by the Center for Global Health Research. Ultrasounds to determine the baby’s sex and traditional preference for boys mean that hundreds of thousands of girls are never being born, skewing birth rates and potentially leading to a shortage of potential wives in the future.

In the 2011 census, there were only 914 girls for every 1,000 boys under the age of six, with some rural districts having less than 700 girls per 1,000 boys. Today’s ratio is the highest imbalance since the country won independence in 1947.

Globally, 16 million girls have “gone missing” from the world’s population due to sex-selective abortions in the last thirty years, according to the calculations of Mara Hvistendahl, author of Unnatural Selection.

Valerie Hudson, a professor of political science at Brigham Young University, speculated that a variety of factors lead to sex-selective abortion and infanticide, including the tradition of dowry whereby families must offer a substantial payment to a prospective husband for their daughter; restrictive property laws where inheritance is only passed down from father to son; male dominated funeral rites; and parental hopes that the male children will support them through old age.

By 2020, an estimated 15 to 20 percent of men in some regions of northwest India will lack female counterparts, potentially causing strife and competition. Some speculate that young men who lack
family commitments could have negative impacts on levels of violent crime and riots and could exacerbate problems of human trafficking, prostitution, and polyandry.

Laws banning sex-selective abortions were enacted in 1994, but they are not always enforced. Studies have shown that while sex ratios at birth can be relatively balanced, between birth and age six, girl children are often neglected, less likely to be immunized, less likely to be taken to a health center, and more likely to be chronically malnourished.

In some areas of India, however, the situation is improving. Cash incentives, laws against gender-selective abortions, harsh punishments for infanticide and increasing economic opportunities have all played a role, but perhaps most notable is the recent rise in grassroots efforts. Some communities in Punjab and elsewhere are taking collective pledges not to kill or abort girls, considering the practice a source of shame and an example of backwardness.


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NEPAL

Prime Minister hopeful following visit to India; others in government express doubt

Following a four-day visit to India that began October 20, Prime Minister Baburam Bhattarai expressed confidence in its results. “An atmosphere of trust between the two neighbors is the most important thing and I feel that my goodwill visit was greatly successful in this regard,” he said.

One of Bhattarai’s stated goals for the visit was “erasing misunderstandings” about India’s support of Nepal. The support package, offering $1 billion through the Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (BIPPA), was ultimately signed by Bhattarai.

The agreement is aimed at boosting infrastructure in Nepal as well as its export economy and decreasing the trade deficit between the neighbor nations. Bhattarai aims to make Nepal more “investor friendly.”

However, according to the Nepal Intellectual Forum, Bhattarai’s visit was not as effective as he has expressed. The Forum’s general secretary Surendra K.C. revealed his disappointment with Bhattarai for signing the BIPPA proposal.

Maoist Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal, the head of Bhattarai’s party, also expressed his distaste for BIPPA, and radical factions of the party have called it “anti-national.”
Bhattarai asserted that he had the interest of the betterment of Nepal as his main motive in signing the agreement.

While some Nepali politicians are against accepting aid from India due to the notion that it will give India more power and presence in Nepali politics, some welcomed the package. If proper measures are not taken to ensure its appropriate use, however, it is expected that the aid will fuel corruption.

Corruption and the embezzlement of state resources including aid have been a major issue in Nepal’s new government following the conclusion of the war in 2008 between Maoists and the former monarchy.

Sources: The Rising Nepal (Gorkhapatra); Republicá; The Kathmandu Post, Oct. 23; Republicá, Oct. 26, 2011.

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PHILIPPINES

Mindanao clashes displace thousands

Recent clashes between government forces and Muslim fighters in the southern Philippines have forced over 16,000 people to flee their homes looking for safety.

The Philippine military launched air strikes October 24 against dozens of suspected fighters in an attempt to eliminate so called “criminal elements” in areas claimed by the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and to find commanders of both MILF and the much smaller Abu Sayyaf group, accused of killing soldiers and carrying out kidnappings for ransom. Nineteen soldiers and nine Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) fighters have been killed in the violence so far.

Villagers from Al-Barka, Payao, and outlying towns have fled as bombings, air raids and government troops have been deployed in the area. Al Raheed Sakalahul, the vice governor of the province said, “They fear getting caught in a crossfire if another encounter erupts.”

Despite the violence, peace talks continue between the government and MILF. However President Benigno Aquino III’s spokesperson said that “the problem of suspects falling into MILF sanctuaries complicates the issue of peace negotiations.” Recent efforts by Philippine authorities to arrest several current and former commanders of MILF sparked deadly clashes with troops last week, also complicating the already shaky peace negotiations and the 2008 truce.

Both sides have said that they remain committed to peace in Mindanao despite the recent violence. Next month’s peace talks in the Malaysian capital are expected to continue as scheduled.
Murder of priest/peace advocate mourned in Mindanao

A memorial mass for Father Fausto Tentorio, an Italian missionary priest murdered in the Philippines October 17, was held in Rome October 26. The mass coincided with the funeral held the same day in Kidapawan, Philippines.

Tentorio worked for over 32 years in the Philippines, before being killed by an unknown assassin as he prepared to travel to a meeting of priests in the diocese of Kidapawan. The identity of the assailant and the motive for the murder remain unknown, but many believe the priest was killed for his efforts to defend the rights of the indigenous people of Mindanao.

Panlipadan! Mindanao, a network of advocates for the environment and patrimony, claimed the “brazen killing” of Tentorio was the latest assault on yet another defender of the environment, indigenous people and human rights.

Tentorio worked as the coordinator of the Tribal Filipino program and had advocated for indigenous rights and against mining in the region, angering many powerful people.

Tentorio is the third missionary from the Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions (PIME) to be killed in the Philippines and the island of Mindanao. In 1985, Tullio Favali was killed in Tulunan by a group of private armed guards and in 1992, Salvatore Carzedda was killed in Zamboanga. In 2007, Giancarlo Bossi was kidnapped by a splinter group of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, but was released after two months of captivity. In 1998 Luciano Benedetti was kidnapped by a Muslim group, similarly freed after being held for more than two months.

Kidnappings have become a somewhat regular occurrence on the island of Mindanao. Teachers, students, soldiers, missionaries and wealthy-businessmen have all been targeted in the past. A notable kidnapping involved humanitarian Merlie Mendoza, who was abducted by the militant separatist group Abu Sayyaf and held hostage for two months in 2008.

The Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines said those responsible for the killing of Tentorio and the 19 soldiers killed in an unrelated incident, should be brought to justice. In a statement made by the president of the Conference Tandag, Surigao del Sur Bishop Nereo Odchimar, he said that although they oppose an all-out war and have not given up on peaceful means to solve the problems in Mindanao, he admitted that the reactions of those pushing for a full offensive were valid.
Controversy arises during President’s visit to Commonwealth meetings

President Mahinda Rajapaksa arrived in Perth, Australia October 24 in order to participate in Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) 2011 set to be held October 28. The Commonwealth of Nations, which used to be known as the British Commonwealth, is comprised of 53 member nations representing 1.8 billion people – roughly 30 percent of the world’s population. CHOGM occurs every two years.

Rajapaksa’s government reacted negatively to an 11-member Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group (EPG) proposal of the establishment of several new safeguards to address human rights issues in Commonwealth countries including an Office for Commissioner for Democracy, the Rule of Law and Human Rights. South Africa and India had reportedly demonstrated distaste for the EPG plan as well.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE), who had significant international clout in several Commonwealth nations, including the UK and Australia, have been actively demonstrating their ongoing dissatisfaction with Rajapaksa’s negligence in addressing gross human rights violations that occurred during the conclusion of the war that occurred between his Sinhalese government and members of the Tamil minority.

Due to its track record in human rights, Sri Lanka’s membership in the Commonwealth of Nations has been a hotly contested issue. The LTTE had reportedly attempted to get Sri Lanka suspended from the Commonwealth in 2009. Movements in other member nations, including Australia, have also attempted to have Sri Lanka’s commonwealth status retracted.

Bruce Haig, a former Australian diplomat to Sri Lanka, remarked on the suspension of other Commonwealth nations: Zimbabwe had their membership suspended for “basic transgression of the human rights of many of its citizens,” and Fiji’s membership is currently suspended “for lesser crimes and for far less than Sri Lanka is guilty.”

Additionally while in Australia, Arunachalam Jegatheeswaran, an Australian citizen born in Sri Lanka submitted an official accusation against Rajapaksa for his actions during the war with the LTTE to the Melbourne Magistrates court.
Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard remarked that, “These allegations [have] come to light since the Sri Lankan High Commissioner has come to Australia. These allegations are now being looked at by the Australian Federal Police.”

In order for official proceedings to take place, the Australian Federal Police will have to be presented with sufficient evidence connecting Rajapaksa to crimes against humanity, which would then be forwarded to the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions and then finally approved by the Attorney General.

Given the length of the process, many doubt that Australia will pursue prosecution of Rajapaksa.

Sources: BBC, Feb. 8; The Island, Oct. 23; Tamil Net, Oct. 25, Reuters, October 26, 2011.

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EAST AFRICA

KENYA

Nairobi hit with two grenade attacks

The capital city of Nairobi was hit by two grenade attacks October 24. The first attack happened at a local bar around 1:15 a.m., wounding twelve people. The owner, Samson Njoroge, and Kenyan police have stated that the explosion occurred after a man threw the grenade at approximately 1:00 a.m. The police have yet to arrest anyone or to blame al-Shabab. Njoroge also remarked that his bar was a “common-man’s place” and indicated that he was completely surprised by the attack. The weapon used in the attack was a Russian-made F1 grenade, which is also the same type of weapon used in an attack on a Nairobi bus station in 2010.

The second attack occurred at a blue-collar, crowded bus stop which killed one person and injured more than eight people. People were trying to board a matatu, the primary mode of transportation for Kenya’s working class, when the bomb exploded.

The two attacks came after the Kenyan government invaded southern Somalia and the U.S. issued a warning that the terrorist group, al-Shabab, would carry out “reprisals in response to Kenyan troops’ invasion,” specifically targeting shopping malls and night clubs where foreigners would likely congregate.

On October 26, Elgiva Bwire Oliacha, also known as Mohammed Seif, was arrested and found guilty of nine charges including the grenade attack at the crowded bus stop. He also stated that he is
a member of al-Shabab. A Kenyan police officer noted that Oliacha will return to court on Monday to possibly face more charges including the other grenade attack on the bar. Authorities discovered six guns, 13 grenades and hundreds of bullets inside of Oliacha’s house during his arrest, which he admitted to possessing in court.

While many believe al-Shabab to be behind both attacks, many also disagree. Al Jazeera’s correspondent, Peter Greste, remarked that the first explosion didn’t follow al-Shabab’s norm, as it didn’t involve “high profile targets” and there were no claims of responsibility. Also a Nairobi based security official stated that “throwing grenades isn’t their style, though the fact that the grenades came so close to the U.S. embassy warning was hard to ignore.” Eric Agade, a restaurant worker, also noted that “this is not al-Shabab. Al-Shabab will target somewhere big. This is such a small target.”

Since the invasion of Kenyan troops, Somali President, Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, has indicated that he is opposed to Kenya’s invasion and coupled this idea with the statement, “Somalia’s government and its people will not allow forces entering its soil without prior agreement.”

It has also been reported that Kenyan security services are cracking down on Nairobi’s large Somali population. The week of October 21, two doctors were charged with engaging in terrorist activities.


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SOMALIA

Al-Shabab claims to have killed more than 70 AU soldiers

Somalia-based Islamist militant group al-Shabab claimed to have killed more than 70 African Union (AU) soldiers stationed in Somalia and has put the dead bodies on display for reporters on the outskirts of Mogadishu, in the al-Shabab controlled territory of El-Maan. The African Union insisted that this figure is not true calling al-Shabab’s actions a propaganda stunt.

The troops allegedly put on display were Burundian AU peacekeeping soldiers who were killed by al-Shabab during a battle between the two groups October 20. Abu Omar, a commander of al-Shabab stated, “we can confirm that more than 150 Burundian soldiers were killed in the battle. We can confirm to you that 76 of the bodies are currently in our custody and the battle lasted about six
hours.” Photographs of the display indicate that there were at least 20 bodies dressed in AU military uniforms, along with Bibles and crosses that belonged to the dead. Witnesses reported having seen at least 60 peacekeepers killed during the battle and noted that the corpses didn’t have typical Somali features.

The amount of soldiers killed during the battle remains a mystery, with al-Shabab claiming 70 were killed, while the AU claims ten, and the Burundi military said only six had died. A United Nations official noted that the AU and Burundian military figures were too low, saying that the number of deaths is probably closer to 20. If the number estimated by al-Shabab is correct, it would be the largest loss for the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM) since its inception four years ago. AMISOM has deployed troops in Somalia to protect the weak transitional federal government.

The AU claims that only ten of its soldiers died during the attacks and two were missing, insisting that al-Shabab dressed the dead corpses in AU uniforms as part of a propaganda stunt. Colonel Ankunda of the AU stated, “The truth is the pictures were cooked up. We have no soldiers who died in that operation in the magnitude that they displayed.”


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