The countries for the Peace and Justice updates have been chosen as areas of focus at the Institute. The International Human Rights section is intended to focus on aspects of international law. For information on specific cases of human rights abuses, please visit [www.hrw.org](http://www.hrw.org) or [www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org). The Gender and Peace section highlights events in peace building and human rights that pertain to gender.

**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 biographical 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.

*The Peace & Justice updates are written by the Fall 2003 interns at the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice at the University of San Diego. The interns are Lara Cunanan (University of Arizona), Kimberly Edmunds (Emory University), Mercede Goates (University of San Diego), Michael James (University of California, San Diego), and Vanessa Lucas (University of San Diego).*
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UPDATE SOURCE ABBREVIATIONS

AP = Associated Press (www.ap.org)
AFP = Agence France Presse (www.afp.com)
AllAfrica = AllAfrica Global Media (www.allAfrica.com)
BBC = British Broadcasting Corporation (http://news.bbc.co.uk)
BBC Monitoring = BBC Monitoring International Reports (www.monitor.bbc.co.uk/)
CDC News = Center for Disease Control News (www.thebody.com)
CNN = Cable News Network (www.cnn.com)
CPJ = Committee to Protect Journalists (www.cpj.org)
DPA = Deutsche Presse-Agentur (www.dpa.com)
HRW News = Human Rights Watch News (www.hrw.org)
IWPR = Institute for War and Peace Reporting (www.iwpr.net)
IRIN = Integrated Regional Information Network (www.irinnews.org)
NCN = New Congo Net (www.marekinc.com/NCN.html)
PANA = Pan African News Agency (www.panapress.com)
RSF = Reporters Sans Frontieres (www.rsf.org).
TASS = ITAR-TASS News Agency (www.itar-tass.com/english/)
UPI = United Press International (www.upi.com)
VOA = Voice of America (www.voanews.com)
WPS = What the Papers Say (www.wps.ru:8101)
Xinhua = Xinhua News Agency (www.xinhuanet.com/english/index.htm)
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC)
International Criminal Court focuses on DRC: Luis Moreno-Ocampo, Chief Prosecutor for the International Criminal Court (ICC), announced that his office would conduct investigations addressing genocide and crimes against humanity in the DRC. Ocampo stated that a portion of the investigation would focus on corporate involvement in fueling the DRC’s civil war. Ocampo said he believed that crimes against humanity had occurred in the Ituri region that were directly connected to control of raw materials such as cobalt and diamonds. The ICC believed that profits from the sale of these materials financed the civil war. Purchasers of these materials could be charged with complicity in war crimes and genocide. The investigation, scheduled to begin next year, could name the U.S., Canada, Britain, Russia, Finland, Zimbabwe, and Hong Kong as having been economic contributors to the conflict in the DRC. Throughout the course of the war, from 1998 until 2000 the conflict involved direct participation and finances from over six foreign states. The conflict claimed the lives of more than 3.0 million people. (Deutsche Presse-Agentur, September 23; IRIN, September 26; Washington Post, September 23, 2003)

African leaders convene at UN: UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan organized a meeting at UN headquarters for African leaders to discuss better relations between states in the Great Lakes region of Africa. The meeting came after the DRC transitional government had been put in place. Attendees included the presidents of Burundi, DRC, Mozambique, the prime minister of Rwanda, and the foreign ministers of Angola, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda. Annan hoped that the meeting would produce agreements regarding topics such as non interference in one another’s affairs, mutual respect for sovereignty, ceasing support for armed groups, ending the illegal exportation of natural resources from DRC, and respect for human rights. (AllAfrica, September 24; Washington Post, September 26; Xinhua News Agency, September 25, 2003)

ERITREA-ETHIOPIA
Ethiopia wants new boundary commission, Eritrea says no: Prime Minister of Ethiopia Meles Zenawi sent a letter September 22 to the UN Security Council asking for the creation of a new boundary commission. Zenawi claimed, September 30, that the Boundary Commission had violated the Algiers Agreement by not delineating the border accurately according to the agreed-upon standards of colonial treaties and applicable international law. Although Ethiopia refused to abide by the Boundary Commission’s ruling, Zenawi insisted that it would only use peaceful methods in resolving the current dispute. Eritrea stated that Ethiopia’s refusal to accept the ruling was a violation of the Algiers Agreement because each party had previously agreed to accept the Commission’s findings as “final and binding.” Eritrea did not want the establishment of a new Boundary Commission and called for international sanctions against Ethiopia for its delay in the border demarcation process. The border town of Badme was a contested area during the war between Eritrea and Ethiopia from 1998 to 2000. Badme remained a point of contention throughout the delineation process and the awarding of the town to Eritrea caused great concern in Ethiopia. The Algiers Agreement, created to end the two-year war, was signed December 12, 2000 and outlined the border demarcation process. The
Boundary Commission appointed under the agreement released its decision April 13, 2002; however, demarcation of the border was delayed twice by Ethiopia. The next scheduled date for demarcation was to be October of this year. (AFP, September 23, 24; AllAfrica, September 30; BBC Monitoring, September 23; IRIN, September 24, 25, 26, 2003)

**GENDER AND PEACE**

**Saudi women submit petition for reform:** More than 300 people, including 51 women, signed a petition entitled “In Defense of the Nation,” which called for wide-ranging reforms to be implemented, condemned acts of violence, and highlighted the absence of popular participation in decision-making. The petition was the third one like it to be submitted to Crown Prince Abdullah this year. However, it is unprecedented for such a petition to be signed by women in Saudi Arabia, where women are very restricted in their activities and in the way they dress in public. (BBC, September 30, 2003)

**Ugandan women work for peace:** For years war has ravaged Uganda, taking its toll on the youth of the country. The United Nations Children’s Fund estimated that in the last 12 months, 8,400 children have been abducted by rebel groups including the Lord’s Resistance Army and sent to fight in the civil war. In response to the situation, Ugandan women have developed organizations that promote peace and nonviolence. Last year, the Gulu Women Movement for Peace (GWMP) was founded with mission of retrieving Uganda’s abducted children and providing them with psychological support. Thus far, 50 children have been recovered through the efforts of the organization and parents of the missing children. Members of GWMP, along with other women from throughout the country, attended a ceremony in Limuru to recognize the International Day of Peace September 21 and to discuss ways to bring peace to Uganda. In addition, the women attended a four-day conference on peace and reconciliation organized by People for Peace and the Uganda Gender Resource Center. (Inter Press Service, September 24, 2003)

**GUATEMALA**

**Mob attacks journalists:** Presidential candidate Efrain Rios Montt held a rally in Ixcan September 24. During the rally, a fight broke out between supporters of Rios Montt and a small group protesting Rios Montt’s human rights record. When photographers and reporters tried to record the fight and interview those involved, Rios Montt supporters turned on the journalists. Those injured included two journalists from Nuestro Diario, Central America’s most-read daily newspaper and two others from Prensa Libre, Guatemala City’s daily paper. Prior to the rally, citizens’ groups in Ixcan had warned it could provoke violence because government-sponsored human rights violations were common in Ixcan during the civil war of 1960-1996. Rios Montt was in power for 18 months beginning March 1982, during which some of the worst human rights violations occurred including the massacre of thousands of Maya Indians. (AP, September 25, 2003)
INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS
Abuse of refugee women in Nepal: Bhutanese refugee women in Nepal faced gender-based violence and discrimination in accessing aid. In refugee camps, the women were subjected to rape, domestic violence, sexual and physical assault, and trafficking. Rations were distributed through the male heads of household, often forcing women to stay with abusive husbands to receive goods. The Nepalese system of refugee registration has denied women equal access to food, shelter, and supplies. Over 100,000 Bhutanese refugees have been living in Nepalese camps since they were arbitrarily stripped of their citizenship and forced to flee Bhutan in the early 1990s. (HRW, September 24, 2003)

Thailand imprisons Burmese dissidents: Fifteen Burmese activists were arrested in front of the Burmese embassy in Thailand September 18. The activists staged a demonstration marking the anniversary of a 1988 coup that brought Burma’s current military government to power. Human Rights Watch stated that the activists were arrested solely for attempting to express their political opinions. The activists planned to call for the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the Nobel Peace laureate and leader of the Burmese government’s opposition party, who has been in custody since May 30. As many as two million Burmese citizens reside in Thailand. Most are members of ethnic groups that have been subjected to severe human rights violations in Burma. (HRW, September 25, 2003)

U.S. supports warlords in Afghanistan: Human Rights Watch asked U.S. President George W. Bush to end support to regional warlords in Afghanistan, who have been responsible for many human rights violations, including trafficking of women and extra-judicial killings. The U.S. government provided arms and money to warlords who joined the fight against the Taliban after September 11, 2001. The U.S. supported the national government and the warlords at the same time, which given more room for human rights abuses. The U.S. has been working on the re-building of Afghanistan since it led the overthrow of the Taliban in 2001. (HRW, September 23, 2003)

ISRAEL/PALESTINE
Barghouti defends Palestinian uprising: Palestinian uprising leader Marwan Barghouti used his final address to the judges in the closing of his trial on murder charges to defend the Palestinian intifada of the past three years. Barghouti, accused of killing 26 people, is a senior figure in Yasser Arafat’s Fatah faction. He has previously insisted that Israel did not have the right to try him. Barghouti said that he was a political figure uninvolved in violence. His conduct infuriated Israelis distressed by attacks linked to Fatah militants. A verdict was expected November 10. However, Hezbollah, a Lebanese-based guerilla group, demanded Barghouti’s release in exchange for the return of a captive Israeli businessman and the bodies of three soldiers. Barghouti is second only to Arafat in popularity among the Palestinians and it was speculated that he could succeed Arafat. (The Guardian, September 30; Reuters, September 29, 2003)
KOREAN PENINSULA

New talks over nuclear program in limbo: Diplomats from the U.S., Japan, and South Korea recently concluded two days of consultations in Tokyo over joint strategy towards North Korea’s nuclear weapons program. South Korea’s president was confident that progress would be made at a new round of multilateral talks with North Korea and was pushing to finalize a timetable. The last round of talks, the six-nation conference August 27-29, came to a loggerhead over North Korea’s refusal to drop its nuclear program. North Korea blamed the U.S., faulting its refusal to soften its hostile stance towards North Korea. A North Korean foreign ministry spokesman stated that North Korea would not make any promises about the next round of six-party talks, and at the same time, stated that it was taking “practical measures” to strengthen its nuclear program. The U.S. Assistant Secretary of State expressed hope for a new round of talks, though he could not say when they would be. The crisis over North Korea’s nuclear program has been ongoing since North Korea announced reactivation in February 2003. (BBC, BBC Monitoring, September 30; BBC, October 1, 2003)

KYRGYZSTAN

Kyrgyz parliament’s lower house passes amnesty bill: The Legislative Assembly passed four laws September 25 amending the state’s Criminal Code, including a law granting amnesty to about 7,000 convicts. Over 500 prisoners were to be released under the new amnesty law, and the prison terms for approximately 4,500 convicts who committed only minor crimes were to be reduced. (BBC Monitoring, September 25, 2003)

Child labor use growing: Children and adolescents are increasingly being relied on as a source of labor. In villages throughout southern Kyrgyzstan children are turning to making mud-brick as a source of income for their poor families. Children have also been working in the tobacco, cotton, and rice fields. Health officials cited their work as the root of many of the illnesses and injuries these child laborers face, such as back and cardiovascular problems, ruptures, rheumatism, and various catarrhal diseases. One local administration official stated that the tobacco industry in the region depended on women and children. Children work in the service industry at cafes, bakeries, and diners, where they work alongside adults for up to 12 hours a day, while being paid half the adult pay. The United Nation’s Children’s Fund (UNICEF) implemented a 2000-2004 cooperation program with the Kyrgyz government on child development and adolescent welfare for which $6.5 million was allocated. The goal of the program is to provide better conditions for the survival, growth, and development of children. (IRIN, October 1, 2003)

MACEDONIA

EU decides to send police force: The European Union (EU) decided to send a police force to Macedonia to provide security. The mission was planned to start December 15 and last initially for one year. The police force was expected to consist of about 200 officers paid for by the member states. Macedonia has suffered from corruption, weak border management, and widespread trafficking in weapons, drugs, and women since
2001. The EU’s mandate is to combat organized crime, reform the interior ministry and create a border police. This year the EU took over the NATO-led military mission, which was sent to Macedonia during the civil war between the Slav Macedonian majority and ethnic Albanian minority in 2001. (Financial Times, September 28, 2003)

NEPAL
Rebels call for temporary truce: Maoist rebels declared a short cease-fire during the important Hindu festival of Dashain, scheduled to begin October 2. The rebel leader, Prachanda, declared the nine-day truce after pleas from both citizens and politicians, but warned that attacks might start if the government initiated any violence. The government continued with its plans to increase military spending by $24 million in response to the rebel attacks. The majority of this money was allocated to aircraft and logistics. More than 200 people have been killed since peace negotiations between the government and Maoist rebels fell apart in August. More than 8,000 have been killed since the Maoist insurgency to replace the monarchy with a communist republic began in 1996. (BBC, September 26, 2003)

SOMALIA
Further setbacks in peace talks: Djibouti, a mediator in the Somali peace talks which began last October, withdrew. Djibouti ambassador to the peace talks, Ismail Goulal, said that the technical committee of the Inter-Governmental Authority for Development (IGAD), which oversees the peace process, lacked neutrality. IGAD is made up of Somali’s neighbors Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Kenya. Ethiopian Ambassador Abdulaziz Ahmed said that the peace process was now in the hands of the Somalis and that the withdrawal would not have an impact. Ahmed further stated that any lack of neutrality should have been addressed by Somalis themselves. An observer said that Djibouti was encouraged to stay and efforts were made to bring back Transitional National Government President Abdiqassim Salad Hassan and other prominent faction leaders. Hassan and the faction leaders left the talks saying that a transitional federal charter was imposed without prior discussion. (IRIN; The Nation, September 29, 2003)

SUDAN
SPLA/M and government sign security agreement: The Sudanese government and the Sudanese People’s Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) signed an agreement on the issue of security arrangements September 25. The agreement included integrating both government and rebel forces to maintain security during the transitional six-year period of autonomy for southern Sudan. The peace talks have been ongoing for the past 10 years. Vice President Ali Osman Taha said, “I’m confident that it will bring peace and prosperity to the people of Sudan.” The SPLM/A leader, Dr. John Garang, said that both parties were committed to seeing a permanent solution to the conflict and “looking forward to resolving other key issues regarding the sharing of wealth and power with the same commitment and force.” The 20 year civil war has left more than two million
civilians dead and more than four million displaced. (AFP, September 29, The Nation, September 26, 2003)

UGANDA
Rebels attack eastern Uganda: The rebel group, Lords Resistance Army (LRA), attacked a village in eastern Uganda, and killed 20 people. At least half of the dead were reported to be members of a recently formed civilian militia group known as the Arrow Group. The LRA, which had attacked mostly in Northern Uganda over the past 17 years, recently extended their operations to the east. The decision to arm civilians three months ago followed the LRA’s expansion eastward. In another LRA attack September 26, 10 civilians were killed while farming in Amilimil, also in eastern Uganda. The LRA’s aim has been to replace the current government with one based on the Biblical Ten Commandments. Both attempts at peace talks between the LRA and the government and efforts to defeat the rebels militarily have failed. (BBC, September 28, 2003)

Ugandan army deploys forces near DRC border: After reports that a Ugandan rebel group had reorganized in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the Ugandan army sent troops to the border. The rebels, a splinter group of the Allied Democratic Front (ADF), regrouped at their former DRC bases of Kamango and Bunduguya in the northeast Ituri District. The Ugandan military stated that they might cross into the DRC if they believe it necessary. The army and the ADF fought in Bunduguya in October 2002, when the rebels reportedly lost 45 members. Uganda withdrew from the DRC in May after four years of involvement in the civil war. Although accused of exploiting the DRC’s natural resources, the Ugandan government maintained that their presence was necessary to Uganda’s security because of threats from Ugandan dissident groups in the DRC. (IRIN, September 29, 2003)