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 or www.amnesty.org

**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 Summer 2003 interns at the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice at the University of San Diego. The interns are Greg Anglea (University of California, San Diego), Carolina Cometto (Pomona College), Viany Orozco (University of California, Berkeley), and Abigail Ross (University of Southern California).*
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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)
CDC News = Center for Disease Control News (www.thebody.com)
CNN = Cable News Network (www.cnn.com)
DPA = Deutsche Presse-Agentur (www.dpa.com)
HRW News = Human Rights Watch News (www.hrww.org)
IRIN = Integrated Regional Information Network (www.irinnews.org)
NCN = New Congo Net (www.marekinc.com/NCN.html)
PANA = Pan African News Agency (www.panafrican.com)
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)
BURMA/MYANMAR
Tobacco company resists pressure to close plant: Despite increasing pressure from the British government, British American Tobacco (BAT) insisted June 26 that it would not close its plant in Burma unless full-scale sanctions were imposed. While there is no British ban on investment in Burma, the government has decided to pressure BAT as a means of denouncing the military regime’s May 30 detention of opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi. BAT is currently the only British multinational to invest in the country; other foreign firms have recently pulled out due to pressure from human rights and democracy activists. The military has been in control of the government since 1962, despite Suu Kyi and the National League for Democracy’s victory in the 1990 elections. Suu Kyi has been placed under house arrest on and off for the last 10 years. (BBC, Financial Times (London), June 26, 2003)

Burmese exiles arrested in Thailand: The Thai government arrested 11 Burmese exile activists June 26 who planned to demonstrate outside the Burmese embassy in Bangkok for the release of opposition leader Suu Kyi. The arrests came after Burma’s military junta issued a warning that exiled dissidents planned to kidnap the Burmese ambassador to Thailand. The activists arrested denied any plans to kidnap officials. They stated that they had been planning a June 30 protest to mark Suu Kyi’s month-long detention. Thailand has pressured Burma repeatedly to free Suu Kyi. After the arrests, however, Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra said that Thailand would not allow foreign groups to use its territory to carry out hostile attacks against neighboring governments. He called for a review of the UN High Commission for Refugees’ procedures for granting refugee status to Burmese dissidents. Thailand is currently home to nearly one million illegal immigrants from Burma. (The Nation (Thailand), June 29; Reuters, June 27, 2003)

CHECHNYA
Four killed in shooting: Masked gunmen opened fire on a crowd of Chechen villagers June 30 as they were collecting unemployment payments at the building of the local administration in Starye Atagi, 12 miles south of the capital Grozny. Four people were killed and at least eight wounded. Despite Russian claims that the situation in Chechnya has been stabilizing, fighting has persisted in the republic with deadly clashes and Russian air and artillery assaults reported almost daily. The 1994 Chechen war ended in a 1996 peace accord that granted Chechnya de facto independence. Fighting resumed in 1999 when Russian troops entered Chechnya after a series of rebel attacks on the neighboring Republic of Dagestan, and Moscow apartment bombings that Russia attributed to Chechen rebels. (AP, Reuters, June 30, 2003).

Russia seeks extradition of blacklisted Chechen leader: Russia announced June 28 that it was seeking the extradition of radical Chechen leader Zelimkhan Yanderbiyev from Qatar. The UN recently added Yanderbiyev to its list of people and organizations linked to the Taliban and al-Qaeda, requiring all UN member states to freeze Yanderbiyev’s funds, ban financial support, and forbid him from entering their territory. Yanderbiyev, who was briefly acting president of Chechnya in 1996 after the republic’s first separatist war ended, has been considered one of the most radical Chechen leaders. He severed ties
with moderate rebel leader Aslan Maskhadov in November 2003, ruled out negotiations with Russia, and called instead for “all means and methods” to be used against Russian troops. (AFP, June 26, 28, 2003)

Rebels flee Pankisi Gorge: Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze announced June 30 that all Chechen rebels had fled his country’s Pankisi Gorge, a territory that borders Chechnya. In early June, Russian President Vladimir Putin urged Georgian authorities to crack down on Chechen rebels believed to use the Pankisi to stage attacks inside neighboring Russian territory. Georgia began a series of raids in the northern Pankisi Gorge August 2002 after admitting Chechen fighters were hiding among the thousands of refugees who fled the war in their homeland. Shevardnadze added that Russian and Georgian border guards, as well as special forces trained by U.S. troops as part of the U.S. “war on terror,” remained on high alert. (AFP, June 30, 2003).

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC)
Transition government now in place: President Joseph Kabila signed June 30 a decree that set up a transitional government as agreed on in the 2002 Pretoria Agreement. According to Agence France Presse, the final obstacle to nominating this government was removed June 29 when the DRC Government, the Rassemblement Congolais pour la democratie-Goma (RCD-Goma,) and the Mouvement pour la Liberation du Congo (MLC) agreed on the formation of a unified military which divided the leadership posts of the military branches among the three groups. Jean-Pierre Bemba, MLC leader, was named one of the four vice presidents in the new government along with RCD leader Azarias Ruberwa, government representative Abdoulaye Yeorida Ndombasi, and political opposition leader Arthur Z’Ahidi Ngoma. The transition government, which according to news reports was praised by the international community and parties within the DRC, was to oversee elections that have been scheduled to take place within 24 months of June 30. The conflict in the DRC began in August 1998 when President Laurent Desire Kabila’s main sponsors, Rwanda and Uganda, turned against him and began supporting an anti-government rebellion. The 2002 Pretoria Agreement, signed by the DRC’s armed political groups, the government, unarmed political opposition parties and civil society, represented a reconciliation process to end the conflict in the DRC, and stated that President Kabila was to remain president of the DRC and would be assisted by 4 vice-presidents. (AFP, June 30, July 1; IRIN, June 30; UN News, July 2, 2003)

ERITREA AND ETHIOPIA
Kofi Annan calls for sustained cooperation: UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan stated in a report released June 30 that Eritrea and Ethiopia needed to actively cooperate to demarcate their border and normalize relations for reconstruction, development, and stability to be possible. He noted that current efforts have been collaborative and respectful, but have not focused on long-term peace. The peace process between the two countries has been weakened since the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission (EEBC) clarified its previously ambiguous boundary decision March 21 and awarded the disputed town of Badme, which has a majority Ethiopian population, to Eritrea. The EEBC was created following the December 2000 Algiers Peace Agreement, which ended a two-year border war that resulted in tens of thousands of deaths subsequent to Eritrea’s 1993
Ethiopian ruling party members reject border decision: Nineteen ruling party members from the Tigray People’s Liberation Front petitioned Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi June 26 to reject the EEBC’s March 21 boundary ruling, which awarded the disputed town of Badme to Eritrea. Meles dismissed their petition June 26 and threatened to discharge anyone who rejected the EEBC’s decision. However, in a meeting with Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs Ramon Miguel the same day, Meles called the ruling a “mistake.” Meles requested that Spain, a member of the UN Security Council, and therefore indirectly implicated in the UN-sponsored EEBC decision, help rectify Ethiopia’s disadvantage by supporting their food security program. Ethiopia and Eritrea have not normalized relations since the December 2000 Algiers Peace Agreement which ended the two-year border war, but have continued to cooperate in the peace process. (BBC, June 26, 27, 2003)

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS

Public-private initiative launched to treat neglected diseases: The Drugs for Neglected Diseases Initiative (DNDi), a partnership of public research institutes and medical activist groups such as Medecins Sans Frontieres, was founded July 1 to develop new drugs and treatments for diseases classified as neglected by world health officials. The World Health Organization said only ten percent of the world’s health research was aimed at ninety percent of the global disease burden. The neglected diseases included Kala-azar, Sleeping sickness, and Chagas disease, which has primarily infected inhabitants of poor, developing nations. Of the $60 billion spent on medical research by the U.S. last year, only 0.001 percent went towards neglected diseases. The DNDi said, “People affected by these diseases cannot afford to buy drugs and are thus off the radar screen of drug companies.” The DNDi has sought $250 million over the next twelve years to research and develop treatments; they would seek governmental and private donations. The three deadly diseases threaten 350 to 500 million people each year. (Financial Times, June 30; One World (South Asia), June 26, 2003).

Chaos reigns in Baghdad: U.S. military patrols have failed to prevent guerilla actions, mass lootings, and vigilante justice, according to London’s The Guardian. While the U.S. has supervised the reconstitution of the Iraqi police, local neighborhoods have formed militias aimed at both protection and extortion. The looting of police offices has resulted in confidential documents concerning the names of suspected criminals being sold to the families of their victims for $50. One reporter, John S. Burnett, compared the organization of militias to that which he saw in warlord-dominated Somalia. Electricity remained absent or inconsistent throughout Baghdad, further destabilizing the region. Head of the U.S. administration in Iraq, Paul Bremer, June 29 said, “We dominate the scene and we will…impose our will on the country.” Yet many men have continued to stand guard on their rooftops at night, armed with Kalashnikovs, not fully convinced of the U.S.’s ability to provide protection. The U.S. went to war with Iraq March 2003 with the stated purpose of removing a cruel dictator in possession of weapons of mass
destruction (WMDs); WMDs have yet to be found. (The Guardian (London), June 30; The International Herald Tribune, June 27; New York Times, June 30, 2003)

Human rights group reports child abuse in 18 countries: The World Organization Against Torture (OMCT) published country reports on child abuse in Argentina, Bahrain, Cameroon, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Haiti, Italy, Kenya, Paraguay, Spain, Sudan, Switzerland, Tunisia, Turkey, and the Ukraine. The reports centered around detention of children by government forces. Infractions cited included sexual abuse, blows to the body, cigarette burns, food and sleep deprivation, prolonged exposure to the sun, and solitary confinement. The conditions of children’s detention cells within such countries were also condemned. In many situations, children were housed with adults, kept in unhealthy cells, and made increasingly vulnerable to disease. Those children who were members of marginalized groups or socio-economic classes were found to be much more likely to receive such abusive treatment. (AllAfrica, June 27, 2003).

MACEDONIA
Tetovo University to become legitimate: Education and Science Minister Aziz Pollozhani announced June 27 that the government had made changes in the Higher Education law that created the conditions to legitimize Tetovo University by the end of the year, and that the university was also to become state-run. Pollozhani said that it was necessary to legitimize the university because a second, OSCE-sponsored university in Tetovo had not resolved the Albanian community's higher education problems. Tetovo University was founded in the early 1990s and teaches in both the Macedonian and Albanian languages, but in 1994 the government said it would not recognize the university as legitimate since the Albanian language had been forbidden in schools and government since Macedonia’s independence 1991. Macedonia has struggled with tensions between government forces and ethnic Albanian rebels who took up arms against the Macedonia government to fight for the rights of the ethnic Albanian minority in February 2001. The seven-month conflict ended August 2001 with the signing of the Ohrid Accord that called for disarmament and greater rights for the country’s ethnic Albanian minority, including language and education rights. (BBC, June 27; Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty, June 30, 2003)

NEPAL
Prachanda requests government agenda for peace talks: Maoist leader Pushpa Kamal Dahal, alias Prashanda, June 29 requested that the government release its agenda for the third round of peace talks. He also asked that the agreements reached in the past round be implemented. These included limiting the movement of the Royal Nepal Army to within five kilometers of their barracks, releasing the central committee members of the Maoist party, and publishing the whereabouts of missing comrades. Prashanda urged the people to continue putting pressure on the government to make peace with the Maoists, without which he said the talks would never resume. Maoist rebels have led an insurgency against the constitutional monarchy since 1996 that has resulted in the deaths of more than 8,000 people. (Himalayan News Service, June 29; Nepalnews.com, June 30, 2003)
Protests shut down schools: After students padlocked the administrative offices of private schools across the country June 23 and 24, the Private and Boarding Schools’ Organization Nepal (PABSON) shut down more than 8,000 schools, affecting nearly 1.5 million students. The action was directed at stopping obtrusive actions taken by student unions. The seven student unions each represented a party from the dissolved House of Representatives. During talks last week, the student unions demanded government-run schools be free, and private schools be funded by trusts. The president of PABSON said no changes could be made until the blockade on the schools ended. Talks then fell apart, and PABSON closed all its private schools. The head of UNICEF in Nepal declared schools should be “zones of peace” and free from conflict and political retribution. Since the October 2002 dissolution of the House of Representatives, political demonstrations and actions have been widespread, in the streets, in the government, and now in the schools. (BBC, June 30; Kathmandu Post, June 18, 24; Nepalnews.com, July 1, 2003).

SUDAN
Government, SPLM/A extend peace agreements: Agreements for a cease-fire in the Nuba mountains region and a cessation of hostilities agreement for all of Sudan were renewed by the government and the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) June 23. The Nuba cease-fire was to last until January 19, 2004. Conditions in the area have improved dramatically since initiation of the cease-fire January 2002. There have been no major violations and de-mining efforts allowed the entry of humanitarian aid to the Nuba people, whose population has dropped by two-thirds since 1983 as the result of conflict between the government and SPLM/A rebels. The International Crisis Group has stated that peace talks between the government and SPLM/A that exclude conflicts in marginalized areas would be unsustainable if the grievances in such areas were not addressed. The government and SPLM/A also extended a general cessation of hostilities agreement June 23 until September 30. Parties guaranteed that each would notify the other of all troop movements, combat supplies, and location of forces, and would allow a Verification and Monitoring Team to investigate any alleged attacks. President Omar al-Bashir told Juba residents June 30 that peace had arrived, reconstruction was imminent, and a united Sudan was needed. Following a 19-year civil war between the government in the primarily Islamic north and the SPLM/A in the mainly animist and Christian south, the government and the SPLM/A agreed July 2002 to allow southern Sudan six years of administrative autonomy without being subject to Islamic law, followed by a referendum to determine secession from, or unity with, northern Sudan. (AFP, June 24; AP, June 24; BBC, June 25, 30; IRIN, June 25, 26, 30; Reuters, June 24, 2003)

Violence disrupts refugee camp: Hostilities between Sudanese refugees and local Turkana people in the Kakuma refugee camp of northwest Kenya ceased June 25 following a week of fighting instigated by Turkana allegations of cattle theft. Turkana villagers attacked the refugee camp using AK-47 rifles June 20 after finding one of their cows there; refugees responded using crude weapons and the ensuing fighting left nine refugees and two Turkana people dead. Approximately 30,000 refugees relocated to other parts of the camp to escape the fighting, resulting in less violent but more
overcrowded and less sanitary conditions. Tension also spilled over to refugee transit point Lokichokkio. In Kakuma, essential food, water, and health services provided by UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) staff were interrupted because of security threats. A potential humanitarian crisis was averted by a June 25 meeting between Turkana elders, refugee leaders, UNHCR, and government officials, which restored enough order to allow UNHCR to resume aid June 26. The Turkana had complained that UNHCR aid excluded them, while refugees had protested that refugee women were raped and their food rations stolen. The Kakuma camp hosts approximately 86,000 refugees, 65,000 of them Sudanese, and has had periodic skirmishes with the Turkana community since it was built in 1992 due to competition over scarce resources such as grazing land, and its being almost double the size of the local population. (Africa News, June 25; BBC, June 25, 26; IRIN, June 24, 25; UN News, June 24, 26, 2003)

UGANDA
Parliament proposes using mercenaries against rebels: Members of parliament (MPs) in defense and internal affairs responded June 26 to the recent upsurge in rebel Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) attacks by advocating that the government hire mercenaries to rout the LRA once and for all. Kasese resident district commissioner Musa Ecweru stated June 26 that after he called on former rebels of the Uganda People’s Army (UPA) to join the fight against the LRA, more than 2,000 offered to enlist. However, President Yoweri Museveni called LRA threats to overrun the town of Soroti “a joke,” and stated June 29 that MP proposals for using mercenaries was “a vote of no confidence.” Other MPs argued June 27 that the government should use more humanitarian methods in dealing with civilians, saying that to win the war with the LRA the government needed first to “win the hearts of the people.” The LRA has killed and maimed thousands of civilians in Northern Uganda and has displaced over 800,000 others since Joseph Kony reorganized it in 1988 from its earlier form as the Holy Spirit Movement/Army, founded in 1986. (BBC, June 27, 29; The Monitor (Kampala), June 30; New Vision (Kampala), June 26, 27, 28, 2003)

Presidential advisor advocates “empowerment” plan to stop LRA: In a document dated May 2003, Presidential Advisor on Political and Military Affairs in northern Uganda, Lt. General Salim Saleh, proposed a plan costing just over two million dollars that would provide people in the Acholi sub-region with economic projects and self-defense training. The plan was meant to increase civilian self-sufficiency and reduce the Ugandan army’s responsibilities in guarding homesteads, enabling them to more actively pursue the LRA. The Monitor, an independent Kampala newspaper, called Saleh’s proposal inadequate June 30. It said that the proposal focused on economic bases for rebel movement, ignored key issues of democracy and political consensus at its roots, and did not address its own limitations given the corruption prevalent in the military and government. Saleh’s proposal was in response to an upsurge in LRA violence over past weeks, which has instigated an outcry to put a stop on rebel carnage. (BBC, June 29; The Monitor (Kampala), June 28, 29, 2003)

Rebels spread HIV: According to a June 27 statement by Uganda Children’s Rights organization coordinator Stella Odongo, 80 percent of girls who returned to Gulu rescue
centers from LRA captivity tested HIV positive, and 50 percent were found with other sexually transmitted diseases such as syphilis, gonorrhea and chlamydia. Odongo noted that girls were often sexually enslaved after being abducted. Many girls did not receive treatment, as only about 10,000 to 15,000 of the 150,000 Ugandans who required AIDS treatment had access to AIDS drugs. A bill signed by U.S. President Bush May 27 which promised $15 billion over 5 years towards HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment in Africa and the Caribbean was expected to contribute to dealing with the epidemic in Uganda. However, the bill has yet to be approved in the U.S. Congress. Preventing LRA abductions would more immediately address the problem. (Canadian Press, May 27; CDC News, June 17, 23; The Monitor (Kampala), June 28, 30, 2003)