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. The Gender and Peace section highlights events in peacebuilding that pertain to gender and human rights.

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.
UPDATE SOURCE ABBREVIATIONS

AFP  =  Agence France Presse (www.afp.com)
AP   =  Associated Press (www.ap.org)
AllAfrica = AllAfrica Global Media (www.allAfrica.com)
AI   =  Amnesty International (www.amnesty.org)
Balkan News = Balkan News (www.balkanews.net)
BBC  =  British Broadcasting Corporation (news.bbc.co.uk)
BBC Monitoring = BBC Monitoring International Reports (www.monitor.bbc.co.uk)
BCG  =  Balkan Crisis Group (www.iwpr.net)
Guardian = Guardian Unlimited Network (www.guardian.co.uk)
HRW = Human Rights Watch News (www.hrw.org)
ICG  =  International Crisis Group (www.crisisweb.org)
IPS  =  Inter Press Service (www.ips.org)
IRIN = Integrated Regional Information Network (www.irinnews.org)
IWPR = Institute for War and Peace Reporting (www.iwpr.net)
Kantipur Online = Kantipur Online (www.kantipuronline.com)
Latinnews Daily = LatinNews Daily (www.latinnews.com)
Los Angeles Times = Los Angeles Times (www.latimes.com)
Le Monde = Le Monde (www.lemonde.fr)
Le Jour = Le Jour (www.lejour.ci)
M2   =  M2 Presswire (www.presswire.net)
Monitor = The Monitor (www.monitor.co.ug)
Nepali Times = Nepali Times (www.nepalitimes.com)
New Vision = The New Vision (www.newvision.co.ug)
Reuters = Reuters (www.reuters.com)
RSF  =  Reporters Sans Frontières (www.rsf.org)
Santiago Times = The Santiago Times (www.tcgnews.com/santiagotimes)
UNICEF = UN Children’s Fund (www.unicef.org)
UN News Center = UN New Center Homepage (www.un.org)
U.S. Dept. of State = U.S. Department of State (www.state.gov)
UPI  =  United Press International (www.upi.com)
VOA  =  Voice of America (www.voanews.com)
Xinhua = Xinhua News Agency(www.xinhuanet.com/english/index.htm)
UPDATE SUMMARY

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COLOMBIA
Paramilitary groups agree to disarm: Three outlawed paramilitary groups announced August 12 that they would disarm and demobilize immediately. The Banana Bloc, the Centaur Block, and the Northern Bloc of the Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (AUC) agreed to move approximately 10,000 troops into temporary concentration zones where they would be demobilized and reintegrated into Colombian society. The agreement was a victory for President Alvaro Uribe and his government, which had experienced little success since beginning negotiations with the paramilitary groups July 1. In the past, the government and paramilitary forces had been unable to agree on a demobilization plan due to the Uribe administration’s stipulation that AUC leaders accept a 5-10 year prison sentence. The paramilitary groups of the AUC were founded in the 1980s to combat leftist rebels but have since become active participants in Colombia’s drug trade and other illegal activities. (AP, Latinnews Daily, August 13; Xinhua, August 14, 2004)

FARC warns that hostages are at risk: The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) announced August 17 that the government’s anti-rebel offensive, Plan Patriota, was putting southern-held hostages at risk. The Marxist rebel group’s second in command, Raul Reyes, stated that the Colombian Army’s offensive was endangering the lives of dozens of kidnapped civilians, military personnel and U.S. citizens. Vice President Francisco Santos countered Reyes saying that the only people at risk were the rebels. Although the government would not halt Plan Patriota, President Uribe decided to conduct prisoner exchanges with the FARC, reversing his previous policy. Plan Patriota, involving approximately 15,000 Colombian soldiers, has been the most aggressive military offensive of the 40-year civil war against the estimated 17,000 rebel irregulars. (AFP, August 17; AP, August 18; BBC, August 19, 2004)

VENEZUELA
Chavez wins recall election: Venezuelans voted overwhelmingly August 15 to keep Hugo Chavez as the nation’s president. With more than 58% of the total votes, Chavez supporters declared victory and insisted that the President had a clear mandate to continue his leftist, anti-imperialist administration. Although the election was deemed free and fair by both the Carter Center and the Organization of American States (OAS), opposition leaders claimed the results were fraudulent and would not be accepted by the Venezuelan people. Quick counts performed by international observers from the Carter Center and the OAS corresponded to within 1% of the official results released by the Consejo Nacional Electoral, the national body responsible for organizing and regulating the referendum. Opposition groups, however, claimed that exit polls by their observers showed President Chavez garnering only 40% of the vote and that 25% of the new electronic voting machines had corrupted software programs that prevented the machines from recording anti-Chavez votes. Although some opposition leaders admitted defeat and joined President Hugo Chavez in encouraging reconciliation, many Venezuelans and international observers feared that violence and division would continue. The referendum was the culmination of tensions that have polarized Venezuelan society along class lines since Chavez began his leftist social spending programs and purging of Venezuelan elites in 1998. (AP, BBC, August 16, 19; UPI, August 16; NYT, August 17, 2004)
BALKANS

SERBIA
New UN official takes control of Kosovo: Soren Jessen-Petersen, a Danish lawyer and refugee expert, took over as the new UN administrator for Kosovo August 15. He was appointed by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan June 16 after his predecessor resigned in May due to ill health. Kosovo, although still part of the country of Serbia and Montenegro, has been administered by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) peacekeepers and the UN Mission In Kosovo (UNMIK). The region has been governed by a UN Security Resolution which left its political status undetermined. In 1998, the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) began a rebellion against the Serb government which had abolished Kosovo’s autonomy nine years earlier. International concern grew after Serb forces began attacking Kosovar Albanians for supporting the KLA, leading to a NATO-conducted three-month air strike on Serbia. The air strike, designed to pressure then President Slobodan Milosevic to end the violence, resulted in the June 10, 1999 handover of Kosovo to NATO troops. (AP, August 15; BalkanNews, August 16, 2004)

GENDER AND PEACE

UN appoints two women to senior posts: UN Secretary General Kofi Annan announced August 12 the appointment of two women to senior posts in the UN dealing with gender issues and humanitarian affairs. Rachel Mayanja, a national of Uganda and the current Director of the Human Resources Management Division at the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, was promoted to Secretary-General’s Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women. Margareta Wahlstrom, a national of Sweden, was appointed as the Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator. Wahlstrom most recently served as the Secretary-General’s Deputy Special Representative for the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan in charge of relief, reconstruction, and development. (UN News Center, August 12, 2004)

GEORGIA
UNICEF assists displaced women and children: The UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) provided emergency assistance to women and children in the South Ossetia region of Georgia after they were displaced due to fighting between government troops and separatist forces. UNICEF provided hygienic items, basic drugs, clothes, sport and recreational equipment. Nearly 800 displaced people, including 550 children, have received temporary accommodation in hotels and sanatoriums in western Georgia since the beginning of August when the fighting intensified. The South Ossetia province broke away from post-Soviet Georgia in 1992, following a conflict which cost hundreds of lives. Since August 1993 UN peacekeepers have been deployed to monitor a cease-fire agreement established after fighting in the area forced almost 300,000 people from their homes. (UNICEF, UN News Center, August 16, 2004)
GREAT LAKES

BURUNDI
Hutu rebels attack refugee camp: The National Liberation Forces (FNL), a Burundian Hutu rebel group currently based in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), attacked a UN refugee camp in Burundi August 14, killing more than 180 people. The camp was located within two miles of the Burundi-DRC border which was closed following the attacks. A spokesperson for the FNL claimed that Burundian government soldiers and Tutsi militias had attacked the FNL and retreated, attempting to hide in the refugee camp. The refugees at the camp were predominantly ethnic Tutsis who fled the DRC due to fighting in eastern provinces that started in May. Burundian President Domitien Ndayizeye stated that his country would work with the government of the DRC to bring the rebels to justice. The Rwandan government stated that the attack was a sign of ethnic cleansing and threatened to disarm the rebels if the DRC government failed to do so. The FNL was the only Burundian rebel group that did not sign the Arusha Accord of August 2000 and join talks for the power-sharing government. According to the Burundian and Rwandan governments, the FNL has been supported by ex-Rwandan rebels, the Interahamwe, and ex-DRC rebels, the Mayi-Mayi. (AP, August 14; BBC, August 16, 17; IRIN, August 12, 16, 2004)

RWANDA
Government sends troops to Sudan: As part of an African Union (AU) task force, 150 Rwandan troops were deployed to protect AU monitors in Darfur, Sudan. The troops were welcomed by the Sudanese government who stated that 150 Nigerian troops were to join the protective force later this month. Though the task force was to be confined to protecting AU monitors, Rwandan President Paul Kagame stated that Rwandan troops were to use force if civilians were put in danger. A representative for the government also said that Rwanda would not allow genocide to take place and would intervene if needed. In 1994, extremist Hutu groups killed more than 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus in Rwanda. Citing high ethnic tensions in the area, the current government has aimed to eradicate all ethnic divisions. (AFP, August 16; BBC, August 15, 2004)

UGANDA
Rebel soldiers surrender: Thirty-five rebels from the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA), including three commanders, surrendered to the Ugandan People’s Defense Force (UPDF) August 15. According to Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, the surrender occurred due to military pressure exerted by the UPDF. However, Northern Uganda’s Roman Catholic Archbishop John Baptist Odama disagreed, stating that Uganda’s amnesty law was the main reason for the defections. The LRA has fought the government of Uganda for 18 years, displacing more than 1.6 million people in the north, and abducting approximately 30,000 children. (AFP, August 15, 2004)

UNHCR creates refugee database: The UN High Commissioner for Refugees began an effort to re-register refugees in Uganda using software provided by Microsoft. The new computerized database would facilitate cross-referencing, identification and monitoring of Uganda’s refugees. The approximately 220,000 refugees in Uganda have come from Sudan, Rwanda, DRC, Somalia, and Kenya. (AFP, IRIN, August 13, 2004)
**HORN OF AFRICA**

**SUDAN**

Refugees continue to flee Darfur: The UN High Commissioner for Refugees stated that up to 500 refugees from the Darfur region of Sudan recently fled into Chad. Refugees reported new attacks beginning August 8 by the Arab Janjawid militia following aerial assaults by government planes. The government agreed August 4 to protect the citizens of Darfur by creating safe areas around existing refugee camps in which no offensive military operations were to take place. The areas were to be guarded by Sudanese police forces. A UN spokesperson stated that although this agreement had yet to be implemented, the Sudanese government had made some progress toward completing the safe zones. The government denied involvement in the violence and reports that it supported the Janjawid militia. Darfur rebel groups took up arms against the government in February 2003 to demand greater political representation and access to resources. The Janjawid militia has led attacks on the rebels causing approximately 50,000 deaths and the displacement of 1.2 million. ([BBC, IRIN], August 16, 2004)

**NEPAL**

Maoists cut off capital city: A rebel blockade of Kathmandu cut off food and supplies to the city beginning August 18. Maoists said the indefinite blockade was in protest of government repression, and demanded the release of jailed rebels and compensation for guerillas killed by government forces. The All Nepal Trade Union Federation, the labor wing of the Maoist rebels, warned of serious consequences if 10 of the country’s largest businesses defied their call for a shut-down. The rebels were blamed for the bombing August 16 of the Soaltee Crowne Plaza Hotel. No one was injured, but the five-star hotel was forced to shut down. Bottlers Nepal, a Coca-Cola affiliate, Makalu Bus Service, and the country’s leading tobacco firm also closed. Maoist rebels have fought the government since 1996 to remove the constitutional monarchy and establish a communist state. ([AFP, BBC, VOA], August 17; [BBC], August 16; [BBC, Reuters], August 18, 2004)

UUMaoists threaten journalists: Maoists in western Nepal admitted to the murder of journalist and human rights worker Dekendra Raj Thapa August 11. Thapa was a reporter for state-owned Radio Nepal and was an advisor to the Committee of Human Rights and Peace Society, a leading human rights organization. In a message conveyed through the Thapa’s relatives, the Maoists threatened ten more reporters and said it was the “verdict of their ‘people’s court’ to eliminate the local journalists.” The journalists were accused of working against the Maoist’s “people's regime.” ([Kantipur Online], August 18; [Kantipur Online, Nepalnews.com], August 16, 2004)

**WEST AFRICA**

**COTE D’IVOIRE**

UN opens radio station: After months of technical and administrative maneuvering, a UN radio station started broadcasting August 13 with a speech from UN Secretary General Kofi Annan. As part of the UN’s effort to bring impartial news and messages of peace to the country, the radio station was to start transmission in rebel-held towns in the
north as well as districts in the government-controlled south. Becoming the only radio station broadcasting nationwide in divided Cote d’Ivoire, the UN radio programs intended to overcome the partisan nature of the country’s media. Jean-Victor N’Kolo, the spokesman for the UN Mission in Cote d’Ivoire (ONUCI), said that the radio station was to promote peace and national reconciliation. The ONUCI’s initial plan to start broadcasting in June was delayed by disagreements with government officials. However, after a peace summit in Ghana July 30, the authorities gave permission for the ONUCI-sponsored radio station to begin broadcasting. Cote d’Ivoire’s civil war divided the country between the rebel-held north and the government loyalist south after a September 2002 coup attempt. Despite a January 2003 peace agreement, which officially put an end to the conflict, Ivorians remained divided along ethnic and political lines. (IRIN, August 13, 2004)