



**Peace & Justice Update**  
*November 14, 2008*  
*(Volume 20, Number 7)*

The countries for the Peace & Justice Updates 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.

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

*The Peace & Justice Updates are written by the Fall 2008 interns at the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice at the University of San Diego.*

*The interns are Elisabetta Colabianchi (University of San Diego), Chris Groth (University of San Diego '06), Carolyn Smith (University of California, San Diego), and Ali Wolters (University of San Diego).*

## SOURCE LIST

AFP	=	Agence France-Presse ( <a href="http://www.afp.com">www.afp.com</a> )
AfricaFocus	=	AfricaFocus ( <a href="http://www.africafocus.org">www.africafocus.org</a> )
AI	=	Amnesty International ( <a href="http://www.amnesty.org">www.amnesty.org</a> )
AllAfrica	=	AllAfrica Global Media ( <a href="http://www.allafrica.com">www.allafrica.com</a> )
Aljazeera	=	Aljazeera ( <a href="http://www.english.aljazeera.net">www.english.aljazeera.net</a> )
Amnesty International	=	Amnesty International ( <a href="http://www.amnesty.org">www.amnesty.org</a> )
Andina	=	Agencia Peruana de Noticias ( <a href="http://www.andina.com.pe">www.andina.com.pe</a> )
AP	=	Associated Press ( <a href="http://www.ap.org">www.ap.org</a> )
APN	=	Asia-Pacific News ( <a href="http://www.apn.btbttravel.com">www.apn.btbttravel.com</a> )
Asian Tribune	=	Asian Tribune ( <a href="http://www.asiantribune.com">www.asiantribune.com</a> )
AWID	=	Association for Women's Rights in Development ( <a href="http://www.awid.org">www.awid.org</a> )
BBC	=	British Broadcasting Corporation ( <a href="http://www.news.bbc.co.uk">www.news.bbc.co.uk</a> )
BBC Monitoring	=	BBC Monitoring International Reports ( <a href="http://www.monitor.bbc.co.uk">www.monitor.bbc.co.uk</a> )
Bernama	=	Malaysian National News Agency ( <a href="http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v5/index.php">www.bernama.com/bernama/v5/index.php</a> )
Bloomberg	=	Bloomberg ( <a href="http://www.bloomberg.com">www.bloomberg.com</a> )
Business Day	=	Business Day ( <a href="http://www.businessday.co.za">www.businessday.co.za</a> )
California Now	=	California Now ( <a href="http://www.canow.org">www.canow.org</a> )
CBC News	=	CBC News ( <a href="http://www.cbc.ca">www.cbc.ca</a> )
CENS	=	China Economic News Service ( <a href="http://www.cens.com">www.cens.com</a> )
CFR	=	Council on Foreign Relations ( <a href="http://www.cfr.org">www.cfr.org</a> )
CIA	=	CIA - The World Factbook ( <a href="http://www.cia.gov">www.cia.gov</a> )
CNN	=	CNN ( <a href="http://www.cnn.com">www.cnn.com</a> )
Colombia Reports	=	Colombia Reports ( <a href="http://www.colombiareports.com">www.colombiareports.com</a> )
Daily Dispatch Online	=	Daily Dispatch Online ( <a href="http://www.dispatch.co.za">www.dispatch.co.za</a> )
Daily Star	=	The Daily Star ( <a href="http://www.thedailystar.net">www.thedailystar.net</a> )
DPA	=	Deutsche Presse-Agentur ( <a href="http://www.dpa.de/index.html">www.dpa.de/index.html</a> )
DREF	=	International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund ( <a href="http://www.ifrc.org/dref">www.ifrc.org/dref</a> )
Economist	=	The Economist ( <a href="http://www.economist.com">www.economist.com</a> )
EFE	=	EFE ( <a href="http://www.efc.com">www.efc.com</a> )
EU	=	European Union ( <a href="http://www.europa.eu.int">www.europa.eu.int</a> )
Global Voices	=	Global Voices Online ( <a href="http://globalvoicesonline.org">http://globalvoicesonline.org</a> )
Guardian	=	Guardian Unlimited Network ( <a href="http://www.guardian.co.uk">www.guardian.co.uk</a> )
Guatemala Times	=	The Guatemala Times ( <a href="http://www.guatemala-times.com">www.guatemala-times.com</a> )
Himalayan Times	=	The Himalayan Times ( <a href="http://www.thehimalayantimes.com">www.thehimalayantimes.com</a> )
Holiday	=	The Holiday ( <a href="http://www.weeklyholiday.net">www.weeklyholiday.net</a> )
HRW	=	Human Rights Watch ( <a href="http://www.hrw.org">www.hrw.org</a> )
IANS	=	Indo-Asian News Service ( <a href="http://www.ians.in">www.ians.in</a> )
ICC	=	International Criminal Court ( <a href="http://www.icc-cpi.int">www.icc-cpi.int</a> )
ICG	=	International Crisis Group ( <a href="http://www.crisisweb.org">www.crisisweb.org</a> )
IDMC	=	Internal Displacement Monitoring Center ( <a href="http://www.internal-displacement.org">www.internal-displacement.org</a> )
IHT	=	International Herald Tribune ( <a href="http://www.iht.com">www.iht.com</a> )
Independent	=	The Independent ( <a href="http://www.independent.co.uk">www.independent.co.uk</a> )
India Times	=	India Times ( <a href="http://www.timesofindia.indiatimes.com">www.timesofindia.indiatimes.com</a> )

Inside Costa Rica	=	Inside Costa Rica ( <a href="http://insidecostarica.com">http://insidecostarica.com</a> )
IOL	=	IOL South Africa News ( <a href="http://www.iol.co.za">www.iol.co.za</a> )
IPS News Agency	=	Inter Press Service News Agency ( <a href="http://www.ipsnews.net">www.ipsnews.net</a> )
IRIN	=	Integrated Regional Information Network ( <a href="http://www.irinnews.org">www.irinnews.org</a> )
IWPR	=	Institute for War & Peace Reporting ( <a href="http://www.iwpr.net">www.iwpr.net</a> )
Jurist	=	The Jurist ( <a href="http://www.jurist.law.pitt.edu">www.jurist.law.pitt.edu</a> )
Kaiser	=	The Henry J. Kaiser Foundation ( <a href="http://www.kaisernetwork.org">www.kaisernetwork.org</a> )
Kantipur Online	=	The Kantipur Online ( <a href="http://www.kantipuronline.com">www.kantipuronline.com</a> )
Kathmandu Post	=	The Kathmandu Post ( <a href="http://www.nepalnews.com.np">www.nepalnews.com.np</a> )
KBC	=	Kenya Broadcasting Corporation ( <a href="http://www.kbc.co.ke">www.kbc.co.ke</a> )
LA Times	=	Los Angeles Times ( <a href="http://www.latimes.com">www.latimes.com</a> )
Living in Peru	=	Living in Peru ( <a href="http://www.livinginperu.com">www.livinginperu.com</a> )
Media Club	=	Media Club ( <a href="http://www.medioclubsouthafrica.com">www.medioclubsouthafrica.com</a> )
Media for Freedom	=	Media for Freedom ( <a href="http://www.mediaforfreedom.com">www.mediaforfreedom.com</a> )
Medical News Today	=	Medical News Today ( <a href="http://www.medicalnewstoday.com">www.medicalnewstoday.com</a> )
MercoPress	=	Merco Press ( <a href="http://www.mercopress.com">www.mercopress.com</a> )
Miami Herald	=	Miami Herald ( <a href="http://www.miamiherald.com">www.miamiherald.com</a> )
Mongabay	=	Mongabay ( <a href="http://www.mongabay.com">www.mongabay.com</a> )
Monitor	=	Monitor Online ( <a href="http://www.monitor.co.ug">www.monitor.co.ug</a> )
MONUC	=	MONUC ( <a href="http://www.monuc.org">www.monuc.org</a> )
Nations Online	=	Nations Online ( <a href="http://www.nationsonline.org">www.nationsonline.org</a> )
Narcosphere	=	The Narcosphere ( <a href="http://narcosphere.narconews.com">http://narcosphere.narconews.com</a> )
Nepal Monitor	=	Nepal Monitor ( <a href="http://www.nepalmonitor.com">www.nepalmonitor.com</a> )
Nepal News	=	Nepal News ( <a href="http://www.nepalnews.com">www.nepalnews.com</a> )
Nepali Times	=	Nepali Times ( <a href="http://www.nepalitimes.com">www.nepalitimes.com</a> )
New Age	=	The New Age Daily ( <a href="http://www.newagebd.com">www.newagebd.com</a> )
New Nation	=	The New Nation ( <a href="http://nation.ittefaq.com">http://nation.ittefaq.com</a> )
New Vision	=	New Vision ( <a href="http://www.newvision.co.ug">www.newvision.co.ug</a> )
News24	=	News24 ( <a href="http://www.news24.com">www.news24.com</a> )
Newstrack India	=	Newstrack India ( <a href="http://www.newstrackindia.com">www.newstrackindia.com</a> )
NYT	=	The New York Times ( <a href="http://www.nytimes.com">www.nytimes.com</a> )
OSAC	=	Overseas Security Advisory Council ( <a href="http://www.osac.gov">www.osac.gov</a> )
Oxfam Great Britain	=	Oxfam Great Britain ( <a href="http://www.oxfam.org.uk">www.oxfam.org.uk</a> )
PA	=	Press Association ( <a href="http://www.pressassociation.co.uk">www.pressassociation.co.uk</a> )
PANA	=	Panafrican News Agency ( <a href="http://www.panapress.com">www.panapress.com</a> )
Prensa Latina	=	Prensa Latina ( <a href="http://www.plenglish.com">www.plenglish.com</a> )
Prensa Libre	=	Prensa Libre ( <a href="http://www.prensalibre.com">www.prensalibre.com</a> )
Radio Nuevitas	=	Radio Nuevitas ( <a href="http://www.radionuevitas.co.cu">www.radionuevitas.co.cu</a> )
Resolve Uganda	=	Resolve Uganda ( <a href="http://www.resolveuganda.org">www.resolveuganda.org</a> )
Reuters	=	Reuters ( <a href="http://www.reuters.com">www.reuters.com</a> )
RSF	=	Reporters sans frontières ( <a href="http://www.rsf.org">www.rsf.org</a> )
SABC	=	South African Broadcasting Corporation ( <a href="http://www.sabc.co.za">www.sabc.co.za</a> )
SA Terrorism Portal	=	South Asian Terrorism Portal ( <a href="http://www.satp.org">www.satp.org</a> )
SEAPA	=	Southeast Asian Press Alliance ( <a href="http://www.seapabkk.org">www.seapabkk.org</a> )
Sky News	=	Sky News ( <a href="http://www.news.sky.com/skynews">www.news.sky.com/skynews</a> )
ST	=	Sudan Tribune ( <a href="http://www.sudantribune.com">www.sudantribune.com</a> )
St. Petersburg Times	=	St. Petersburg Times ( <a href="http://www.tampabay.com">www.tampabay.com</a> )
Star Online	=	The Star Online ( <a href="http://www.thestar.com.my">www.thestar.com.my</a> )

TSN	=	Tanzania Standard Newspapers ( <a href="http://www.dailynews.habarileo.co.tz">www.dailynews.habarileo.co.tz</a> )
Telegraph	=	Telegraph ( <a href="http://www.telegraph.co.uk">www.telegraph.co.uk</a> )
Times of India	=	Times of India ( <a href="http://www.timesofindia.indiatimes.com">www.timesofindia.indiatimes.com</a> )
UDW	=	Upside Down World ( <a href="http://www.upsidedownworld.org">www.upsidedownworld.org</a> )
UN News	=	UN News Center ( <a href="http://www.un.org/news">www.un.org/news</a> )
UNESCO	=	UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization ( <a href="http://www.unesco.org">www.unesco.org</a> )
UNHCR	=	UN High Commissioner for Refugees ( <a href="http://www.unhcr.org">www.unhcr.org</a> )
UNICEF	=	UN Children's Fund ( <a href="http://www.unicef.org">www.unicef.org</a> )
UNIFEM	=	UN Development Fund for Women ( <a href="http://www.unifem.org">www.unifem.org</a> )
USDS	=	U.S. Department of State ( <a href="http://www.state.gov">www.state.gov</a> )
VOA	=	Voice of America ( <a href="http://www.voanews.com">www.voanews.com</a> )
Web India	=	Web India ( <a href="http://www.webindia123.com">www.webindia123.com</a> )
Winnipeg Sun	=	Winnipeg Sun ( <a href="http://www.winnipegsun.com">www.winnipegsun.com</a> )
WP	=	The Washington Post ( <a href="http://www.washingtonpost.com">www.washingtonpost.com</a> )
Xinhua	=	Xinhua News Agency ( <a href="http://www.xinhuanet.com/english">www.xinhuanet.com/english</a> )
Zee News	=	Zee News ( <a href="http://www.zeenews.com">www.zeenews.com</a> )

## UPDATE SUMMARY

### **BANGLADESH**

Tensions between Bangladesh and Burma shift to land borders.  
Questions arise prior to elections.

### **COLOMBIA**

Plan Colombia receives dismal report.  
Colombia and U.S. try to recover from human rights abuse scandal.

### **DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO**

Nkunda's rebels close in on strategic town.  
Increased foreign involvement feared.

### **GUATEMALA**

Criminal gang kills 16 in bus fire.  
Kaibiles take up peacekeeping role in the DRC.

### **NEPAL**

Constituent Assembly regulations finalized; constitution drafting expected to begin soon.  
Army Integration Special Committee to be restructured.

### **PERU**

Amnesty International criticizes new bill marking a step back for human rights.  
Peru prepares to sue Yale over Inca artifacts.

### **SOUTH AFRICA**

Refugee camps are closing for xenophobia victims.  
SADC holds regional summit in Johannesburg.

### **UGANDA**

Karamojong women oppressed by traditions.  
Police arrest suspected gunmen terrorizing residents.

## **BANGLADESH**

Tensions between Bangladesh and Burma arise on land borders. The Bangladeshi newspaper, *The Daily Star*, reports that Burmese troops have mobilized along the Bangladeshi border, and also that some intelligence indicates that troops were being withdrawn as of November 10. The Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) are likewise stationed along the border with Burma. BDR Director General Major General Sakil Ahamed met with security officials along the border and visited several of the troops' outposts November 10. This comes after last week's dispute over maritime boundaries in the Bay of Bengal. Bangladesh stated that a Burmese oil exploration mission incurred into their naval boundaries. According to Bangladesh's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the dispute was resolved when the exploration fleet was withdrawn. The oil exploration vessel, accompanied by Burma's warships, belonged to Korean company Daewoo, and reportedly did not withdraw from the Bay of Bengal until completing its exploration mission. Bangladesh dispatched diplomats to Burma to resolve the issue; three rounds of talks have been held, with a fourth scheduled to be held in Dhaka November 10 to 14. According to Bangladesh Foreign Advisor, Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, the negotiations went well for both countries: "Bangladesh has always wanted to establish close relations with Myanmar [Burma] and our policy will be directed towards that end." (*Daily Star*, November 11, 2008).

Questions arise prior to elections. The Election Commission (EC) has decided to extend the registration deadline for political parties participating in upcoming elections indefinitely. The EC was unable to process all requests for political party registration by the third deadline it had set of November 10, and decided to extend the registration period. According to the chief of the commission's technical evaluation committee, N.I. Khan, the "[registration of parties] is a continuous process. Whenever the process will be completed, the parties will be given registration certificates." Khan reported that parties not having registered prior to November 20, the last date for the submission of nomination papers, would not be allowed to contest in the parliamentary elections December 18 and would have to wait five years. According to Khan, "If the process is completed on November 25, they will get registered on that day but cannot participate in the next polls." The technical evaluation commission of the EC has deemed 32 out of 107 parties eligible for registration with the EC. These announcements are eliciting concerns about the legitimacy of the December 18 elections. The Awami League (AL), one of Bangladesh's two major political parties, is unhappy at the EC's deferral of registration dates. However, others are concerned that the recent moves by the EC will swiftly bring the AL to power as the Caretaker Government has reactivated courts to try major political party leaders and the alliance party, Jamat-e-Islami, for corruption cases; the party is trying to decide if it will contest in the parliamentary elections. Bangladesh is currently ruled by a military-backed Caretaker Government; the December 18 parliamentary elections are meant to restore the country to democracy. (*Holiday*, November 10; *New Age*, November 11; *New Nation*, November 11, 2008).

## **COLOMBIA**

Plan Colombia, receives dismal report. Plan Colombia, The U.S. aid package, has failed in trying to halve illegal narcotics production, according to a report released November 5 by the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO). The report on the effectiveness of nearly \$5 billion in U.S. interagency aid was requested by vice-president elect, Senator Joe Biden, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The GAO report indicates that Colombia's coca cultivation increased by fifteen percent between 2000 and 2006 and that Colombia is still the world's largest producer of cocaine. Much of the U.S. aid package is directed at coca eradication efforts, training of Colombian

security forces, and the use of equipment and intelligence to combat drug production and trafficking. The report did find that Plan Colombia has increased security in the country: kidnapping and murder rates have decreased and the threat of leftist guerrillas appears to be diminishing. U.S. officials have said that the \$660 million in aid for the 2008 fiscal year will have to be trimmed due to the financial crisis. This announcement comes after the Colombian army has come under fire for extrajudicial killings. The GAO report recommends aid cuts, turning over the responsibility of aerial eradication to Colombian military aviation units, and “developing a joint plan for turning over operational and funding responsibilities for U.S.-supported programs to Colombia.” The report also states that “Colombia’s security gains are not irreversible as long as rebels remain a threat.” The proliferation of narcotics production and trafficking has fueled and funded Colombia’s long-standing civil war. (BBC, November 6; NYT, November 6, 2008).

Colombia and United States try to recover from human rights abuse scandal. According to President Álvaro Uribe and Defense Minister Juan Manuel Santos, measures to stop human rights abuses by the Colombian army will be implemented immediately. This announcement comes after 27 army officials were dismissed due to involvement in extrajudicial killings – the practice of killing civilians to be presented as combat kills. The Commander and head of the Colombian army, Mario Montoya, resigned amid the scandal as well. Uribe’s measures include placing a delegate in “every division, brigade, or battalion of the army” to receive complaints of possible abuses by the army and to “control and inspect” those complaints. The administration’s appointed delegates will begin their posts and start taking complaints from civilians directly following their commission. Uribe said that the delegates will report to him directly about the complaints each week. In the case of the 27 dismissals former army officials have yet to be arrested or charged, although Uribe has promised a full investigation and jail for those found guilty. The new Commander of the army, Oscar González announced November 10 that he will implement measures to punish those responsible for extrajudicial killings: “That is a promise to the Colombian people,” the general announced to Caracol Radio. According to CNN, the U.S. government has suspended military aid for three Colombian army units allegedly involved in the most recent illegal killings. Of the 27 Colombian army officials dismissed for their involvement in the killings, 15 “had received ‘some form of individual training’ from the United States in recent years.” As a condition of the aid, the U.S. government is responsible for vetting the brigades to make sure “they do not violate human rights.” Of the several implicated Colombian brigades, many had received U.S. assistance in the past, but the assistance had been suspended prior to the recent scandal because of concerns for human rights violations. According to the Colombian attorney general’s office, there are currently 780 cases, in which 1,137 civilians were killed, being investigated for extrajudicial killings committed by the armed forces between January 2003 and September 2007. (Colombian Reports, November 6, 10; CNN, November 5, 2008).

## **DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO**

*Developing situation: The situation in the eastern DRC continues to change. The information contained in this story should only be considered accurate as of November 14, 2008.*

Nkunda’s rebels close in on strategic town. The rebel National Congress for the People’s Defense (CNDP), led by former general Laurent Nkunda, began closing in on Kanyabayonga, a strategic town in the far northern portion of Nord Kivu province.<sup>1</sup> According to the United Nations

---

<sup>1</sup> A detailed map of the region can be found on page 15.

Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC), forces from the Congolese Army (FARDC) have been engaged in acts of looting and rape in Kanyabayonga beginning November 10. Similar incidents of violence were reported to have also occurred in the neighboring towns of Kaina and Kirumba, as well as in small villages along the road linking the three towns. The insecurity in and around Kanyabayonga has forced humanitarian organizations to halt their operations in the area, and MONUC sent a patrol to the town to evacuate trapped aid workers. The FARDC troops were reported to have gone on the rampage after being forced to retreat from their base near Nyanzale. Civilians in Kanyabayonga were outraged at the actions of the FARDC, and even members of the pro-government Mai Mai militia were critical of the actions of their army allies. Citizens across the country generally express little confidence in the ill-equipped and ill-trained national army. MONUC announced November 13 that the FARDC had sent a new contingent of troops to Kanyabayonga in an attempt to calm the situation. MONUC also noted that it had increased the number of peacekeeping troops in the town, although it is unclear how many are present and whether the MONUC and FARDC troops would be able to fend off any potential CNDP attack. Independent sources have confirmed that the CNDP recently seized the village of Mirangi, the last community on the road heading north before entering Kanyabayonga. The area, located approximately 110 miles north of the provincial capital of Goma, is a strategic hub because it is located at the intersection of several main roads in the northern portion of Nord Kivu. According to statistics from the UN and Human Rights Watch, over 250,000 people have been displaced and over 100 civilians killed in Nord Kivu since the latest round of fighting began in late August. (AFP, November 11, 13; AP, November 13; BBC, November 13, 14; Reuters, November 14; UN News Service, November 13, 2008)

Increased foreign involvement feared. Reports from Nord Kivu are signaling a potential increase in foreign involvement in the region, a development which could turn the localized conflict into a wider regional war. Journalists have reported that soldiers paid by the Rwandan army are present in the eastern DRC and fighting alongside the rebel National Congress for the People's Defense (CNDP), led by former general Laurent Nkunda. A Rwandan presidential aide stated that it was possible that demobilized Rwandan troops were involved in the current fighting, although the government in Kigali continued to deny playing a role in the conflict. The *BBC*, citing eyewitness accounts, has reported that Angolan and Zimbabwean troops are already on the ground in the eastern portion of the country. Residents of Goma have told reporters that there are soldiers in the area wearing Congolese Army (FARDC) uniforms but speaking Portuguese. Reporters from the Associated Press have provided similar accounts. Despite these observations, the *BBC* cautions that the evidence is not entirely conclusive, since some Congolese troops did fight in Angola during that country's civil war and do speak Portuguese. Angola has denied that it currently has troops in the DRC, but Angola's Deputy Foreign Minister, Georges Chicoty, announced November 12 that his country was mobilizing troops for a potential deployment to the DRC. Analysts have warned that the overt introduction of Angolan troops into the conflict could prompt other countries, most notably Rwanda, to follow suit. Angola has been a staunch ally of President Joseph Kabila, and its army is one of the largest and most highly trained in sub-Saharan Africa. The *BBC* has also provided details from an interview with a Zimbabwean army deserter who stated that "about 250" Zimbabwean soldiers remained in the DRC in 2003 after the conclusion of the civil war. It has been reported that, in addition to serving alongside the FARDC in Goma, these soldiers have also been used to protect mining centers near Lubumbashi and as guards for President Kabila. During the country's 1998-2003 civil war, the Congolese Army received support from Angola, Zimbabwe, and Namibia, and the rebel groups were backed by Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi. The *BBC* reported that soldiers from Chad and the Central African Republic were also involved in the current conflict.

The outside involvement of these foreign countries highlights the important role that natural resources play in this conflict. During the previous fighting, the Ugandan and Rwandan backed rebels controlled territory rich in coffee, gold, and tin in the east of the country, while Angola and Zimbabwe were provided with access to diamond and copper mines in the southern and western regions of the country in exchange for military support. (AP, November 13; BBC, November 13, 14; Bloomberg, November 14, 2008)

## **GUATEMALA**

Criminal gang kills 16 in bus fire. An incident involving a bus fire November 9, originally thought to be caused by a car accident has now been confirmed as intentional murder. The bus, carrying 15 Nicaraguan nationals and one Dutch tourist, was en route to Guatemala from Nicaragua. The passengers were mostly migrant workers and vendors who go to Guatemala to buy products that they would then sell back in Nicaragua. The bus was diverted off route to a rural road in the city of La Reforma in the eastern province of Zacapa. It has been reported that a criminal gang is responsible for the murders. Police spokesman Donald Gonzalez said that the attackers “were looking for drugs, money, or some other contraband.” He also reported that sections of the bus were torn away as if in search for secret compartments. Police found empty shell casings and traces of gasoline near the scene, indicating that the victims were shot first and then set on fire, which explained why there were no signs that they had tried to escape the fire. In March of 2008, a similar incident occurred wherein a gang set fire to several vehicles, killing 11 people near where the November 9 incident took place. In a notorious incident being researched by the International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG), three Salvadoran members of the Central American Parliament, and their driver, were found burned in their car on a rural road in eastern Guatemala in February 2007. The Zacapa province is infamous for gang violence and drug trafficking, which have grown in recent years. (AP, November 10; AFP, November 10; Newstrack India, November 11; Xinhua, November 11, 2008)

Kaibiles take up peacekeeping role in the DRC. Seventy-two Kaibiles, soldiers from a specialized unit of the Guatemalan army, have been moved to the front line at Goma, Nord Kivu, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). They were transferred from Bunia in Ituri province so that they could continue working alongside other peacekeeping forces of the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). Jorge Ortega, military spokesperson, said that their mission is to protect the civil population displaced along the Rwandan and Ugandan borders. The soldiers are in the DRC under legal constraint as peacekeepers for the United Nations, and as such are expected to uphold the rules of the mission. In 2006, eight Kaibiles were killed in Garamba during a failed secret mission to capture or kill Vincent Otti, then deputy commander of the Ugandan rebel group, Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA). The Kaibiles have historically been linked to numerous human rights violations including the 1982 Dos Erres massacre in which 58 soldiers disguised as guerrillas brutally murdered inhabitants of Dos Erres – bashing in the skulls of children and raping the women before killing them. The Commission for Historical Clarification (CEH)’s final report describes the nature of training conducted at the Kaibil Center, which involved eating live animals and drinking their blood. In 1996, President Alvaro Arzú stated that he intended to preserve the Kaibiles for peacetime and restricted their fighting to the war on drugs domestically. However, in the 1996 Peace Accords, signed shortly after Arzú’s statement, the Kaibiles’ purpose was limited to defense from external attacks. The Roman Catholic Church’s Interdiocesan Project for the Recovery of Historical Memory recommended in its 1998 report “Guatemala: Never Again” that the group be dissolved. The group, however, has refused to disband the Special Forces Training

and Operations Center located at El Infierno “Hell” in Petén department. The Kaibiles were established in 1975 as a special unit force, trained by U.S. special forces for counter-insurgency operations. (Global Voices, November 6; Narcosphere, October 9; Prensa Libre, November 8; Reuters, September 11, 2008)

## **NEPAL**

### Constituent Assembly regulations finalized; constitution drafting expected to begin soon.

The 50-member Rules and Regulations Drafting Committee responsible for developing the Constituent Assembly (CA) and Legislature-Parliament regulations finalized the rules of procedure and presented them for approval November 10, a significant step towards drafting the new constitution. CA Chair Subash Nemwang announced that the regulations would be discussed and presented for further deliberations beginning November 11. Each CA member will have 72 hours to review the regulations and submit amendment proposals. A session will then be held November 14 to finalize the regulations, which are expected to be approved by the CA. Negotiations over the regulations were concluded once it was determined by the four largest political parties – the Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (CPN-M), the Nepali Congress (NC), the Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML), and the Madhesi Janadhikar Forum (MJF) – that the regulations would not make any reference to the contentious issue of a party whip system. It was agreed that the parties would rely on their own respective party statutes regarding the whip position and party discipline. The compromise, dubbed by one politician a “the middle road” solution, came after the MJF, joined by several smaller Madhesi political parties, argued that CA members should be allowed to vote their consciences, rather than face pressure from a whip system, when voting on clauses in the new constitution. The proposed regulations also provide details regarding the upcoming drafting of the new constitution. The main Constitutional Committee (CC) will be made up of 61 CA members, and will have representation from all political parties based on the number of members represented in the CA. The constitution will be written largely based on concept papers developed by ten different subject committees. Three administrative committees will also be developed, with their primary task being to interact with and seek suggestions from civil society organizations. The subject and administrative committees will each be comprised of 43 CA members. According to the draft version of the regulations, all issues pertaining to the new constitution will require a two-thirds majority or unanimous support. CA members will be able to comment and provide feedback when the subject committees submit their concept papers, and then again when the CC drafts a full version of the constitution. The constitution drafting process is currently scheduled to be completed by May 27, 2010. (Kantipur Report, November 10; Kathmandu Post, November 8; Nepal News, November 10; Nepali Times, November 10; The Himalayan Times, November 9, 11, 2008)

### Army Integration Special Committee to be restructured.

The two leading parties in the ruling coalition – the Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (CPN-M) and the Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML) – agreed November 11 to restructure the Army Integration Special Committee (AISC) in an effort to persuade the main opposition Nepali Congress (NC) party to join the committee. Following the announcement, CPN-UML General Secretary Jhala Nath Khanal emphasized the importance of involving the NC in the AISC, but he also rejected recent calls by the NC for the committee's dissolution. The CPN-M and CPN-UML previously agreed to revise the Terms of Reference for the committee, also in an attempt to convince the NC to reconsider its decision. These developments were reached at a time when the

UN continues to emphasize the importance of resolving the army integration issue. UN Special Representative for Nepal Ian Martin recently called on all political parties to cooperate on the “very important and quite difficult” issue of army integration. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the UN Security Council have also recently released statements stressing the importance of compromise between all political parties regarding the overall peace process, of which the army integration issue is considered an important piece. One of the major points of contention involves the interpretation of Article 146 in the interim constitution, which calls for the representation of “major political parties” from the CA to be formed into a committee to “supervise, integrate, and rehabilitate” the combatants of the Maoist Army. The text does not, however, clarify which parties are to be considered “major political parties.” During a meeting November 7 with Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal, Terai Madhesh Loktantrik Party (TMLP) chairman Mahantha Thakur expressed his displeasure that smaller parties, including the TMLP, were not included in the AISC. The TMLP and the NC previously threatened to disrupt proceedings in the Constituent Assembly (CA) unless the government reconsidered the structure of the AISC. Finance Minister Baburam Bhattarai (CPN-M) recently stated that the government is willing to include representatives from outside of the four leading political parties if the decision is made based on political consensus. Leaders from the NC have warned of a potential civil war if the Maoist combatants are integrated en masse into the Nepali Army. The CPN-UML and the Madhesi Janadhikar Forum (MJF) – both partners in the ruling coalition with the CPN-M – have attempted to forge a middle ground solution between the positions of the CPN-M and NC. (Kantipur Report, November 7, 11, 13; Kathmandu Post, November 7, 8; Nepal News, November 7, 11, 13; The Himalayan Times, November 6, 2008)

## **PERU**

Amnesty International criticizes new bill marking a step back for human rights. A bill proposed in Congress November 6, could, if passed, grant amnesty to alleged perpetrators of human rights violations. The bill would not only grant amnesty to members of the military and the police involved in past human rights violations, but would also create a commission to propose amnesties for any military or police personnel currently under investigation. Irene Kahn, Amnesty International’s Secretary General, urged Peru November 7 not to approve the bill, claiming that “if approved, this bill would be a major step backwards for the rule of law in Peru as it would effectively grant impunity for individuals who could be responsible for human rights violations.” Khan also noted, “we’ve witnessed the negative impact amnesty laws have had in Chile and Peru and across the countries in the region in the past. The illegality of such amnesty laws has been recognized by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACHR).” The new bill has been supported by 20 members – from various political parties – of the 120 members of Congress. In 1997, Peru passed an amnesty law, later repealed in 2002. The 1997 amnesty law was not supported by IACHR, which condemned two well-know acts: the massacre of 15 women, men and children in Barrios Altos, Lima in 1991 and the forced disappearance and murder of nine students and a La Cantuta University lecturer in 1992. Amnesty International recommends that the Peruvian government brings the perpetrators of human rights violations to trial rather than granting them amnesty. (Amnesty International, November 10; Andina, November 9, 2008)

Peru prepares to sue Yale over Inca artifacts. Peru has approved a plan to sue Yale University for thousands of Inca artifacts excavated nearly 100 years ago by U.S. explorer, Hiram Bingham. Bingham rediscovered Machu Picchu in 1911 and sent the Inca artifacts to Yale University, which is said to have more than 45,000 relics, including ceramics, textiles, bones and jewelry. Peru has threatened to sue Yale before, and after years of negotiations the two reached an agreement last year.

However, the agreement is wavering as the main roadblock has been over the exact number of pieces taken by Bingham with the permission of the Peruvian government at the time of the excavation. Yale spokesman, Thomas Conroy, said the university would defend any lawsuit and believes a suit would not serve the best interests of the public both in Peru and internationally. Conroy further added that the university continues to believe “cooperation and collaboration would provide a better framework for satisfying the multiple interests in the archaeological material excavated by Bingham at Machu Picchu.” In 2006, Peru demanded the return of the collection of artifacts, claiming that they had been loaned to Yale immediately after they had been discovered and were to be returned after one year. The Machu Picchu ruins date back to the 15<sup>th</sup> century and are Peru’s main tourist attraction. The Peruvian government has said they want the artifacts returned in time to celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup>-year anniversary of its discovery in 2011. (AP, November 9; BBC, November 10; PA, November 9, 2008)

## **SOUTH AFRICA**

Refugee camps for xenophobia victims are closing. Refugee camps inhabited by victims of xenophobic attacks last May have recently cut supplies and some have shut down. The government closed the Youngsfield refugee camp in Wynberg, a southern suburb of Cape Town, in October. Refugees claim they have been rejected by the government of South Africa as well as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Even though the Youngsfield camp has been closed, refugees refuse to leave because they fear reintegrating into their former communities. Initially, the refugees were told they would be moved to Blue Waters camp in the Muizenberg suburb of Cape Town until they were repatriated, but now that camp is also in the process of being shut down. The spokesperson for the city of Cape Town, Pieter Cronje, stated that there was never an official plan and that the camps were never meant to be permanent solutions. He continued that if the refugees refused to leave, then the city would proceed by taking legal action. The Joint Refugee Committee of Western Cape has written a letter to the United Nations, calling for the repatriation of over 400 refugees currently living in safety sites. The letter asks that the government not force refugees to reintegrate into communities where xenophobia persists and where murder and rape are prevalent. Most of the refugees are from the neighboring countries of Mozambique, Malawi, and Zimbabwe; the majority are single women and children. The large number of refugees in these camps is due to the attacks in May 2008, which were instigated by armed local South African gangs who claimed the immigrants were taking away jobs and creating other problems in their country. During the two weeks when the attacks took place, over 60 were murdered, hundreds were injured, and thousands were displaced or forced to return to their country of origin. (IOL, November 3, 6, 11, 2008)

SADC holds regional summit in Johannesburg. On November 9, the Southern African Development Community (SADC), a group of 15 nations of southern Africa, opened a regional summit focused on the current Zimbabwe deadlock. The proposed solution to the impasse included the sharing of the home affairs ministry, which controls the police. South Africa’s interim President Kgalema Motlanthe stated, “The political leadership in Zimbabwe owe it to the people of Zimbabwe first, therefore we urge the three parties to build on the achievement made thus far, and reach an agreement on the outstanding issues, including Ministry and Home Affairs.” The outcome of the meeting disappointed many including the United States. The proposal has already been rejected by Morgan Tsvangirai, leader of Zimbabwe’s Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), who stated that the proposal should be “about giving the responsibility to the party that won an election and has compromised its position to share a government with the party that lost.” Zimbabwean

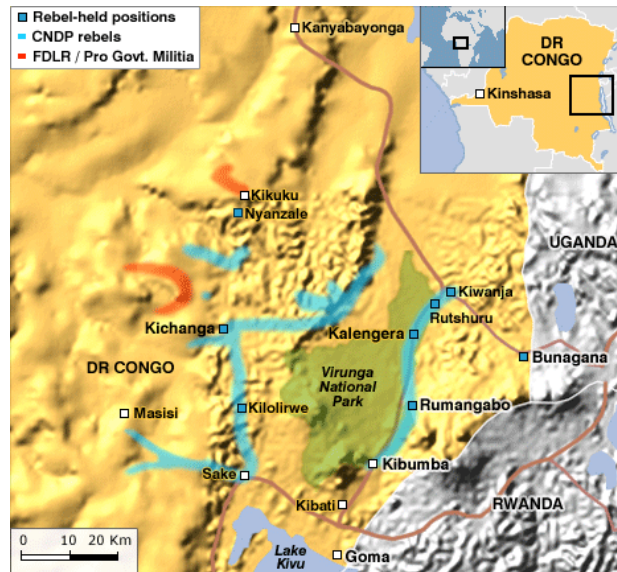
President Robert Mugabe has not changed his stance on important cabinet positions and said that the opposition should accept joint control of the ministry. Mugabe unilaterally appointed members of his Zanu-PF party to key ministries, excluding the MDC. According to *Reuters*, Tsvangirai stated that Mugabe's Zanu-PF party ended negotiations last week by carrying out violence. The government of South Africa announced that it would take a tougher stand on the political stalemate, which represents a change from the "quiet diplomacy" strategy of former President Thabo Mbeki. The summit comes during the current economic crisis in Zimbabwe, which has caused millions of Zimbabweans to flee into neighboring countries, principally South Africa. Those who have remained in Zimbabwe face a lack of food aid in addition to a cholera outbreak caused by the breakdown of basic services in the country. (Bernama, November 11; Reuters, November 9)

## UGANDA

Karamojong women oppressed by traditions. One of Uganda's leading newspapers, *The Daily Monitor*, released a featured story November 11 covering the ongoing struggles faced by women in Karamoja, a region in northeastern Uganda. The story illuminated how the Karamojong's strong cultural traditions have suppressed the rights of women. Anna Ayopo, a young woman from Lolochat in Nakapiripirit district said, "Life is hard for us here as women, whereas men find solace on their stools, as women we are expected to go to the gardens to look for food, if the huts leak we are expected to repair besides building them but amidst all this you are not supposed to attend clan/village meetings and not expected to divorce even when the husband does not want you. In this tradition the men are really kings." The Domestic Relations Bill, which has failed to be approved for more than a decade, would grant women and girls greater equality in marriage, divorce and property, as well as make marital rape illegal. However, the Karamojong are so strongly set in their traditional and cultural values – the values in which their traditional justice system is rooted – that many people continue to be oppressed by the traditional courts. The courts are usually presided over by traditional chiefs that have been reported to hang criminals and jail others in pits dug in the ground as punishment. Felix Apo Oroma, a local advocate at the center for legal assistance in Karamoja and the first person to disrupt the traditional justice system, present in Karamoja for more than 100 years, claimed that "because of its remoteness, many Karamojong still live traditional lifestyles governed by local rules and customs." The Association for World Education – Uganda Chapter (AWE-UC), a local NGO, is working to change the Karamojong's lifestyle through providing information about the rule of law and democracy. The traditional system is biased against women, as girls as young as 13 are being married off and those women who are rejected by their husbands are expected to remain alone rather than find another man, as this is seen by the community as adultery. Apo also said that when a woman is found committing adultery she is to appear before the traditional justice system, where she is "undressed before the clan council of elders, villagers, clansmen and her own children and then whipped thoroughly before being excommunicated from the clan." Apo further described, "The women are not given a platform to speak out and tell their side of the story in a court presided over by only men and many...such women have either deserted their villages for town or committed suicide." Mary Amodoi, program officer for AWE-UC field office in Nakapiripirit, confirmed that the traditional justice system is responsible for the gross human rights abuses against the vulnerable women in Karamoja. Through the sensitization in the community about the rule of law, democracy and human rights through drama, songs and school visits they are attempting to work against the system. (HRW, June, 1, 2005; Monitor, November 11, 2008)

Police arrest suspected gunmen terrorizing residents. Armed robbery has been on the increase in urban areas and on highways in the central region since August. Moses Kafeero, Central Region Police Publicist, confirmed the return of criminals November 5 and said that the police have launched an operation to arrest those terrorizing the region. An emergency meeting was held November 3 at the Central Police Station in Kampala to formulate a strategic plan to better secure the region. On November 3, a body of a taxi driver was dumped in the Wakiso District, after being shot and killed by armed robbers in Kampala. In the same district of Wakiso, two armed robbers attacked the Commissioner of Planning in the Ministry of Health, Francis Runumi's home in Entebbe, October 29. On November 5, police in the district of Jinja, arrested three suspected robbers and recovered stolen property. According to Jinja District Police Chief, John Cohen Arinaitwe, the three gunmen have been "very notorious and very dangerous. We suspect they had been carrying firearms to terrorize innocent residents. We have not recovered any firearms but we have intensified the operation and we shall arrest many more suspects." Police are also looking for unidentified gunmen who murdered a motorcyclist in Jinja November 2. The police warned "that there is a clear trend that robbers normally step-up their illegal operations during the period leading to Christmas." According to the *New Vision*, the police are currently holding 22 men suspected of terrorizing Kampala and its suburbs, three of whom earlier escaped after an attempted robbery at Sunrise Supermarket in Bukoto and resurfaced November 7, alleged to have bribed the commandant of the Rapid Response Unit for release. (Monitor, November 8; New Vision, November 9, 10, 11, 2008)

North Kivu  
Map current as of November 14, 2008



Source: BBC News