



Peace & Justice Update
April 27, 2007
(Volume 15, Number 10)

The countries for the Peace & Justice Updates have been chosen as areas of focus at the Institute.

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The Peace & Justice Updates are written by the Spring 2007 interns at the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice at the University of San Diego. The interns are Rebecca Deedman, Nick Diamond, Daniela Loor, and Gabriella Stumpf. All are seniors at the University of San Diego.

SOURCE ABBREVIATIONS

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| ADNKI | = | ADNKI (www.adnki.com) |
| AfricaFocus | = | AfricaFocus (www.africanfocus.org) |
| AFP | = | Agence France-Presse (www.afp.com) |
| AI | = | Amnesty International (www.amnesty.org) |
| AllAfrica | = | AllAfrica Global Media (www.allafrica.com) |
| Asian Tribune | = | Asian Tribune (www.asiantribune.com) |
| AP | = | Associated Press (www.ap.org) |
| B92 | = | B92 Net (www.b92.net/eng/) |
| AWID | = | Association for Women's Rights in Development (www.awid.org) |
| BBC | = | British Broadcasting Corporation (http://news.bbc.co.uk) |
| BBC Monitoring | = | BBC Monitoring International Reports (www.monitor.bbc.co.uk) |
| BICECA | = | Building Informed Civic Engagement for Conservation in the Andes-Amazon (www.biceca.org) |
| B92 News | = | B92 News (www.b92.net/eng/news) |
| CBC News | = | CBC News (www.cbc.ca) |
| CIA | = | CIA - The World Factbook (www.cia.gov) |
| EU | = | European Union (www.europa.eu.int) |
| Guardian | = | Guardian Unlimited Network (www.guardian.co.uk) |
| The Hindu | = | The Hindu Newspaper (http://www.hinduonnet.com/) |
| HRW | = | Human Rights Watch (www.hrw.org) |
| ICC | = | International Criminal Court (www.icc-cpi.int) |
| ICG | = | International Crisis Group (www.crisisweb.org) |
| ICTY | = | International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (www.un.org/icty) |
| IHT | = | International Herald Tribune (http://www.iht.com/) |
| IndiaTimes | = | India Times (www.timesofindia.indiatimes.com) |
| Independent | = | The Independent (www.independent.co.uk) |
| IPS News Agency | = | Inter Press Service News Agency (http://ipsnews.net) |
| IRIN | = | Integrated Regional Information Network (www.irinnews.org) |
| IWPR | = | Institute for War & Peace Reporting (www.iwpr.net) |
| Kantipur Online | = | The Kantipur Online (www.kantipuronline.com) |
| Kathmandu Post | = | The Kathmandu Post (www.nepalnews.com.np) |
| Khaleej Times | = | Khaleej Times (www.khaleejtimes.com) |
| KL | = | KosovaLive (www.kosovalive.com) |
| Jurist | = | The Jurist (http://jurist.law.pitt.edu) |
| LA Times | = | Los Angeles Times (www.latimes.com) |
| Monitor | = | The Monitor (www.monitor.co.ug) |
| Nepal News | = | Nepal News (www.nepalnews.com) |
| Nepali Times | = | Nepali Times (www.nepalitimes.com) |
| New Vision | = | New Vision (www.newvision.co.ug) |
| News24 | = | News24 (www.news24.com) |
| NYT | = | The New York Times (www.nytimes.com) |
| PANA | = | Panfrican News Agency (www.panapress.com) |
| Oxfam Great Britain | = | Oxfam Great Britain (www.oxfam.org.uk) |
| Reuters | = | Reuters (www.reuters.com) |
| RSF | = | Reporters sans frontières (www.rsf.org) |
| SEAPA | = | Southeast Asian Press Alliance (www.seapabkk.org) |
| SERBIANNA | = | Serbianna.com (www.serbianna.com) |
| ST | = | Sudan Tribune (www.sudantribune.com) |

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| UN News Center | = | UN News Center Homepage (www.un.org) |
| UNESCO | = | UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (www.unesco.org) |
| UNHCHR | = | UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (www.unhcr.ch) |
| UNICEF | = | UN Children's Fund (www.unicef.org) |
| UNIFEM | = | UN Development Fund for Women (www.unifem.org) |
| VOA | = | Voice of America (www.voanews.com) |
| WP | = | The Washington Post (www.washingtonpost.com) |
| Web India | = | Web India (www.webindia123.com) |

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UPDATES

AFGHANISTAN

Insurgent attacks spread into eastern provinces: At least 11 people were killed and 10 wounded in a suicide bombing and two separate bomb explosions April 22. The first bomb exploded in a crowded market in the southeastern town of Khost, killing six civilians and wounding at least 40 others. An hour later a suicide bomber blew himself up after being chased by policemen from the scene of the explosion, killing three more civilians and injuring several others. Later that day, a roadside bombing in Mehtar Lam, capital of the eastern province of Laghman, hit an Afghan intelligence service vehicle, killing the four security officers inside. Deputy governor Mohammad Kazim Allayar reported April 23 that an intelligence service employee was kidnapped and beheaded by Taliban members in Ghazni province. Additionally, in the eastern Paktia province, suspected Taliban militants attacked policemen April 26 and the ensuing clash left five militants and a police officer dead. There have been more than 40 suicide bombings this year in Afghanistan, a threefold increase over the same period in 2006. The latest surge in violence came as North Atlantic Treaty Organization and Afghan troops launched in March their largest-ever offensive last month as they sought to eradicate Taliban militants from Helmand province. U.S. and NATO troops have occupied Afghanistan since a U.S. - and British-led operation ousted the Taliban from power in October 2001. (WP, April 22, 23, 2007)

Troops surround Taliban insurgents: The security chief of Uruzgan province, General Muhammad Qasim, reported April 24 that Afghan and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) troops had been surrounding over 200 Taliban members for three days, with members possibly including military commander Mullah Dadullah, in a southern village in Uruzgan's Charcheno district. Afghan officials demanded that the Taliban surrender or face military action. NATO spokeswoman Lt. Col. Angela Billings said that she had no information about the fighting in Uruzgan. Deputy interior minister Abdul Hadi Khalid stated that Dadullah, who leads the Taliban insurgency in the south, may be among the senior Taliban commanders reported at the meeting. However, Dadullah's spokesman, Shahabuddin Atal, denied the claim, stating that Dadullah was nowhere in the area, and rejecting Qasim's report, saying that no senior Taliban commander was surrounded. Dadullah was a commander during the Taliban's rule and is a close aide to Taliban supreme leader Mullah Omar. Earlier this year Dadullah threatened to launch a large spring offensive that would involve many suicide bombings. This year has been the bloodiest since a U.S. - and British-led operation ousted the Taliban from power in late 2001. The allied troops have responded to the surge in violence by stepping up operations in the south, most noticeably with Operation Achilles which was launched in March to eliminate Taliban strongholds in the southern Helmand province. (WP, April 23, 24, 2007)

GUATEMALA

Upcoming elections begin to exact high price: Presidential candidates prepared for the May 2 official start of campaign season as political parties announced their endorsements. The incumbent conservative party, Great National Alliance (GAN), composed of three smaller parties, announced its support for Alejandro Giammattei. Meanwhile center-leftist Alvaro Colom from the National Unity of Hope party (UNE) led the polls with around 20 percent. Also in the presidential race was indigenous Quiché Mayan leader and Nobel Laureate Rigoberta Menchú, backed by a leftist coalition comprised of Together for Guatemala (EG) and the newly created Winaq party. She was to run against the rightist Patriot Party (PP) candidate, General Otto Pérez Molina, who has been accused of perpetrating massacres in Menchú's native Quiché region. Although official campaigning had not yet begun, the upcoming September elections had already begun to take their toll on Guatemala's security. The

campaigning process has been responsible for the deaths of 20 political leaders. Violence has reached such heights that political parties are having a difficult time finding candidates willing to campaign in certain departments. In eastern Juliapa district and its municipalities, for example, UNE and the Patriotic Party (PP) cannot find representatives for fear of being assassinated. The Supreme Electoral Court (TSE) therefore asked to meet with newly appointed Interior Minister Adela Torrebiarte—founding member of the nonprofit organization Anguished Mothers, formed in the 1990s to pressure authorities to do more about a wave of kidnappings—and Defense Minister José Cecilio Leiva to discuss the creation of a new security system that would be used before, during and after elections. The most recent case of politically related violence was in Masagua April 15 when local UNE leaders were shot on their way home from a political event. The assailant still remains at large. Impunity remains a major problem in Guatemala in the wake of a 36-yearlong civil war that left a legacy of violence. (Inside Costa Rica, April 17, 2007)

Femicides on the rise in 2007: At least 156 women were killed in Guatemala in the first quarter of 2007, according to a report drafted by Guatemala's Congressional Committee on Women released April 24. The document stated that crimes against women had increased by 24.8 percent against the same time period last year. Nineth Montenegro, president of the committee and member of the political party Together for Guatemala—Encuentro por Guatemala (EG)—lamented that the government had failed to effectively address the femicides and expressed concern that no progress had been made in the majority of the investigations. In the past five years, over 2,500 women have been murdered, with 572 deaths occurring in 2006 alone, according to Guatemala's Information Reports Center. The victims' ages ranged from 16 to 40 years old and in a large number of cases the victims were raped, strangled, decapitated or otherwise mutilated. Many of the cases are not investigated and the government's inattention to the matter has bred a culture of impunity. Much of the violence is reminiscent of the 36-year war that left 200,000 dead and fostered a tolerance for crime. (Inside Costa Rica, April 25; PrensaLibre, April 17, 2007)

KOSOVO

Leaders comment on Kosovo situation, U.N. mission: In separate April 23 statements, Serbian President Boris Tadic and Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica enunciated the position of Serbia and the expected role of the United Nations in determining Kosovo's final status. Tadic issued assurances that while Serbia opposed Kosovo's independence, it would not employ violence to keep from relinquishing its southernmost province, and warned that the threat of renewed fighting between ethnic Serbs and Albanians was not an adequate justification for any decision on Kosovo's status. Meanwhile, Kostunica expressed confidence that an upcoming United Nations mission would recommend abandoning a proposal for Kosovo's independence after recognizing that autonomy for the ethnic Albanian majority would allow it to abuse the rights of the Serb minority and prevent over 40,000 Serb exiles from returning to Pristina. Kostunica's comments follow April 20 predictions by Kosovo Prime Minister Agim Ceku that the mission would find in favor of the proposal, currently under review by the United Nations Security Council. Submitted to the council March 26 by U.N. special envoy Martti Ahtisaari, the proposal calls for Kosovo's independence after a period of European Union oversight, and grants Kosovo the right to establish its own constitution, flag, national anthem and army. The council will review reports from the U.N. mission, which plans to visit Belgrade and Kosovo April 25-28, before making a final decision on Kosovo's final status by June. Backed by ally Russia, Serbia has lobbied to prevent independence for Kosovo, which the U.N. has administered since a 1999 conflict between Albanian secessionists and Serb Special Forces. (B92, April 23; Serbianna, April 20, 2007)

Albanian arrested in connection with murder of war crimes trial witness: In an April 20 police operation, United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) forces apprehended ethnic Albanian Osman Zyberaj, suspected of having shot and killed a witness to crimes committed during the 1999 Kosovo

conflict. Zyberaj had been named one of two assailants in a 2005 attack against two brothers who testified against former Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) commander Selim Krasniqi. Zyberaj attacked the witnesses, Albanian brothers Hasan and Nazim Rrustemi, in a central Kosovo market, shooting and killing one and injuring the other. The brothers had provided evidence of Krasniqi's detaining and beating ethnic Albanians accused of collaborating with Serb counterinsurgency forces during the conflict. The 2005 trial led to convictions and seven-year prison sentences for Krasniqi and two co-defendants. Zyberaj's arrest follows an April 5 decision by the Serbian Supreme Court to uphold a 13-year prison sentence for former KLA member Anton Lekaj, convicted of abducting, torturing, and killing Roma during the conflict. It also comes amid the trial of former Kosovo Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj, charged with torturing and killing Serbs, Roma, and Albanian collaborators during his time as a KLA commander. KLA guerrillas fought Serb forces in an Albanian-led movement for Kosovo's independence. Independence for Kosovo is now officially under consideration by the United Nations Security Council. Serbia continues to oppose Kosovo's independence, which it sees as a threat to the province's ethnic Serb minority, while Kosovar Albanian leaders have embraced it. (KL, April 24; Serbianna, April 23, 2007)

SOMALIA

U.N. Secretary-General condemns recent violence: In response to the recent wave of violence in Somalia, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon called for the reinstatement of a ceasefire and criticized attacks against Mogadishu's residential areas. Ban's April 24 remarks follow six days of fighting between Ethiopian and government forces and insurgents that killed over 250, mostly civilians, and forced thousands more to flee. The clashes have brought an end to a March 24 ceasefire that had curbed the violence while allowing for Ethiopian military officials to meet with leaders of the Hawiye clan, whose members have participated in the insurgency. The Secretary-General emphasized the importance of resuming talks, and expressed concern over pro-government forces' use of heavy artillery in densely populated areas. His comments came amid April 14 accusations by Deputy Prime Minister Hussein Aideed of genocide by Ethiopian troops, as well as plans to delay a conference on national reconciliation until June 14. They also highlight the increasing attention paid to the Somalia crisis by the U.N., which has endorsed an African Union intervention mission to the country and is currently administering aid to 20,000 internally displaced Somalis. The U.N. was extensively involved in Somalia from 1992-94, after the overthrow of military president Mohamed Siad Barre left the country in a state of lawlessness comparable to its current condition. Three successive U.N.-sponsored missions attempted to stabilize Somalia and redevelop its political structure, but withdrew after an incident in which 18 U.S. soldiers were killed and mutilated that turned public opinion against the intervention efforts. Since the Barre regime, Somalia has lacked an effective central government and consistent rule of law, but enjoyed a six-month period of stability following the 2005 takeover by the Union of Islamic Courts. Remnant forces of the Courts, which Ethiopian and government forces ousted December 26, are the primary participants in the insurgency against the Transitional Federal Government. (BBC, April 24, 2007)

Mogadishu experiences surge of attacks as government launches offensive: Despite warnings by Deputy Defense Minister Salad Ali Jelle, Mogadishu residents have been unable to escape an offensive by government and Ethiopian forces against insurgent strongholds in the city, and have been exposed to shelling and gunfire that has killed at least fifteen. Meanwhile, insurgents launched April 24 car and suicide bombings in heavily populated areas of Mogadishu, killing an additional five civilians. The April 24 bombings represent a change of tactics for the insurgents, who have traditionally engaged pro-government forces in artillery attacks and gun battles, and signify the influence of Islamist elements in the insurgency. The recent violence is some of the worst since Ethiopian and government forces broke up the Union of Islamic Courts in late December, and followed March 19-24 clashes that killed over 1,000. It also follows a six-day battle, begun April 17, that killed over 250 people and displaced

thousands more, according to reports by the locally-based Elman Peace and Human Rights Organization. The group issued initial findings after uncovering the bodies of 41 Mogadishu residents and six insurgents killed April 22, and reported its latest estimate of approximately 250 deaths following further deaths on April 23. Sudan Ali Ahmed, president of the organization, has referred to the killing of civilians as war crimes, echoing concerns by the international community that offensives by pro-government forces have resulted in crimes against humanity. Mogadishu has been reported to be littered with bodies, with hospitals unable to accommodate the wounded. Many attribute the violence to the Ethiopian troops, whom Deputy Prime Minister Hussein Aideed has accused of genocide, and whose presence has mobilized a groundswell of support for the insurgency. Having occupied Somalia since the Courts' ouster, Ethiopia has started its plans to withdraw forces from the country as they are replaced by troops from an African Union intervention mission. The A.U. mission has deployed 1,200 Ugandan peacekeepers since March 6, and expects further troop contributions from Burundi, Ghana, Malawi and Nigeria. (BBC, April 22-24; WP, April 23-24, 2007)

SRI LANKA

Rebels launch deadly air attack on military base: Forces of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) attacked the Palaly military base of the Sri Lankan army in the middle of the night April 24 killing at least six soldiers. The Palaly base, located in the northern Jaffna peninsula, has operated as the main headquarters for the Sri Lankan military against the LTTE in the north. It has also served as a supply base for tens of thousands of soldiers residing in the region. Rebel leader Rasiyah Ilanthiriyar claimed that the LTTE used two light aircraft to drop bombs and succeeded in hitting the airstrip and a storage depot. Cabinet minister Jeyaraj Fernandopulle later visited the site and reported that the rebels had dropped three bombs, but only one of them was on target. The air attack was only the second time the LTTE had used air power against the military since the conflict began in 1983, the first attack occurring in March of 2007 when the raided an LTTE air force base near the main airport in Colombo. The BBC reported confirmation that the rebels have been developing air capability to support their ground and naval forces when pictures were released by the Tigers of a two-seater aircraft adapted to carry bombs. Some experts have said that the LTTE may be smuggling aircraft materials into the country and assembling them in jungle bases. Although a ceasefire was brokered in 2002, the civil war drags on as violence continues to erupt throughout the country. (BBC, April 24, 2007)

Investigation into deaths of seventeen aid workers appears flawed: The bodies of seventeen Tamil civilians were found slain in the northern town of Muttur August 7, 2006; the civilians had been doing post-tsunami aid work with the Paris-based agency Action Against Hunger (ACF). The bodies were found dead, face-down, with bullet wounds. The killing occurred in the midst of fierce battles between the rebels and Sri Lankan military. ACF president Denis Metzger stated his belief that the killings were clearly deliberate, and the European Union urged authorities to begin investigating. Independent legal experts from the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) have since commented that the Sri Lankan police department investigation is seriously flawed. The ICJ, headed by senior British barrister Michael Birnbaum, reported that there has been "a disturbing lack of impartiality and transparency in the investigation." Official reports from the police department indicated that Tamil rebels were suspected of the killings, although sixteen out of the seventeen killed were ethnic Tamils. The recent ICJ report stated that the police force has not interviewed any members of Sri Lankan security forces, who are suspected of carrying out the killings, and no Tamils have been interviewed aside from members of the victims' families. It also stated that the collection of evidence has been far from complete or adequate, and cited a large number of discrepancies. Birnbaum has since called for the establishment of an independent team to investigate the deaths. He has also recommended that the Sri Lankan criminal justice system be reformed "to ensure impartial and effective investigations and independent decisions as to prosecution." Flaws in the investigation process sow a sense of insecurity in an already restive country beset by civil war since 1983. (WP, August 7, 2006; BBC, April 23, 2007)

SUDAN

Rebels accuse air force of air strike killing twenty-six civilians: According to a rebel statement from April 22, Sudanese army aircraft have bombed an area of North Darfur killing twenty-six civilians, four of them pregnant women. The bombardment came over a period of two days, said the leader of one faction of the Sudan Liberation Movement led by Ahmed Abdelshafi. The report said that two Antonov aircraft and two helicopters killed eleven civilians April 21 and fifteen civilians April 22, as well as destroying the village and a significant number of cattle. The government has not officially responded to the accusations. The rebel statement argued that the attack was an illustration of Khartoum's refusal to establish peace in the Darfur region, which has been torn apart by war since 2003. (ST, April 22, 2007)

Negotiations for U.N. peacekeepers progress as Khartoum faces U.S. ultimatum: The United States has issued an ultimatum to Sudan, demanding the government allow a fortified U.N. peacekeeping force within the coming weeks or face unilateral and international sanctions. U.S. Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte emphasized that time was running out for Sudan to consent to the U.N.-African Union (A.U.) peacekeeping force, otherwise Khartoum would face heavier sanctions as part of President George W. Bush's Plan B to end the genocide that has been taking place in Darfur since 2003. Negroponte appeared pessimistic as to whether or not President Omar Hasan al-Bashir would allow the implementation of the force and accused al-Bashir of continually putting obstacles in the way of peace. The ultimatum has no specific deadline, and the Bush administration has allowed U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon a short period of time to work with al-Bashir to secure his consent. Khartoum stated April 22 that it is willing to talk with the U.N. regarding the U.N.-A.U. hybrid force, but would not do so if the United States continued threatening sanctions. Former Minister of Foreign Affairs Mustafa Osman Ismail stated that Sudan would not bend under pressure. U.N. special envoy to Darfur Jan Eliasson stated that both Khartoum and the rebels would be willing to negotiate a settlement including the hybrid force, and emphasized that a political, not military, solution is the key to resolving the Darfur conflict. Negotiations would be a significant step toward ending the killing and displacement of millions of Darfuris over the past four years. (BBC; ST, April 23, 2007)

