



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

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ADNKI	=	ADNKI (www.adnki.com)
AfricaFocus	=	AfricaFocus (www.africafocus.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)
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)
HRW	=	Human Rights Watch (www.hrw.org)
ICC	=	International Criminal Court (www.icc-cpi.int)
ICG	=	International Crisis Group (www.crisisweb.org)
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)
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)
New Zealand Herald	=	The New Zealand Herald (www.nzherald.co.nz)
News24	=	News24 (www.news24.com)
NYT	=	The New York Times (www.nytimes.com)
Prensa Libre	=	Prensa Libre (www.prensalibre.com)
PANA	=	Panafrican 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)
SMH	=	Sydney Morning Herald (www.smh.com)
ST	=	Sudan Tribune (www.sudantribune.com)
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)
Xinhua	=	Xinhua News Agency (www.xinhuanet.com/english)
WP	=	The Washington Post (www.washingtonpost.com)
Web India	=	Web India (www.webindia123.com)

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CAMEROON

SDF National Chairman charged with murder: Social Democratic Front (SDF) party chairman Ni John Fru Ndi was indicted by the Mfoundi High Court July 9, along with 22 SDF militants, for involvement in the murder of Gregoire Diboule. Diboule, a supporter of a faction leader opposed to Ndi, fell victim to a power struggle within the party when Fru Ndi allegedly ordered party militants to disrupt a convention May 26, 2006 in Yaoundé. The SDF is the leading opposition party in Cameroon. The murder charges come after a scheduled SDF Parliamentary Group press conference, which was interrupted by police, pushed for the release of the now-accused militants. Not including Fru Ndi, the prisoners have been held in pre-trial detention for two years at Kondengui Maximum Security Prison. Fru Ndi said about the detentions, "it shows the kind of lopsided justice system we have in the country." SDF lawyers argue that the state's charges, in conjunction with the two-year pre-trial detention, violate Article 221 of the new criminal procedure code. (Africa News, July 11, 2008)

Women's network concludes three-day empowerment workshop: The Cameroon Grassroots Women Educational, Economic and Social Advancement network, CAGWEESA, recently ended a three-day workshop in the northwestern city of Bamenda, intended to empower its 60 female attendees. The women participated in sessions informing them of their rights and workshops on HIV/AIDS and poverty. In one session, lawyer Batholow Fofung explained the importance of will-writing and the necessity of birth and marriage certificates for inheriting husbands' property. Fofung's session was aimed at helping the women assist HIV/AIDS patients and protect their own rights. The women were also shown how to make soap and process foodstuffs, enabling them to improve food security for them and their families. At the end of the conference, the attendees vowed to return to their communities as watchdogs against female abuse and proponents of women's rights. (The Post (Buea), July 14, 2008)

COLOMBIA

Despite success of recent hostage raid, approximately 700 remain captive: The July 3 undercover and bloodless operation to rescue 15 hostages from Colombia's left-wing guerilla group, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), garnered attention for having freed Ingrid Betancourt and three American defense contractors—all of whom had been held captive for six years—in addition to several others. FARC's remaining political hostages now total 25. However, the same week as Betancourt's rescue, a lower-profile release was secured for Norwegian-Colombian university professor Alf Onshuus. He was taken captive in January and released by payment of ransom in full. Henry Mance, reporting for the BBC in Bogotá, illustrates the difference between these two different types of hostages. Political hostages like Betancourt, Mance said, are used to further the FARC's political agenda, while victims like Onshuus are used to leverage economic benefits and finance FARC's operations. "All the pressure from the government, from the media and from the FARC is about the political hostages," says Olga Lucía Gómez, director of the nongovernmental organization País Libre. The Ministry of Defense estimates that 700 hostages are still in captivity on ransom. Betancourt, though remaining in France for security reasons, has pledged her efforts to mobilize international action on behalf of the remaining hostages. Massive marches are scheduled for July 20 in both Colombia and France, which Betancourt herself will lead. (BBC, July 5; Los Angeles Times, July 15, 2008)

South Korea and Colombia meet for cooperation on energy and resources: Foreign Minister Fernando Araujo arrived in Seoul on Sunday, July 13 for a three-day visit including meetings with President Lee Myung-Bak, Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan and economic minister Lee Yoon-ho. Myung-hwan and Araujo met July 14 to discuss a host of bilateral issues, including cooperation between the Republic of Korea and Colombia on energy and resources, as well as infrastructure. Over 600 South Koreans currently live in Colombia, and large corporations such as LG Electronics have invested in the country. In 2007, Korea exported \$1.2 billion worth of goods to Colombia, including home electronics, textiles and automobiles, and imported \$120 million in nickel and coffee. Korea expects continued economic cooperation and stated that Araujo's meeting will allow for even further discussion on collaborative growth opportunities. (Korea Herald, July 15)

GUATEMALA

Gang members acquitted; main prosecutor killed: Thirteen gang members were acquitted July 10 of killing four Guatemalan police officers in prison in 2007. The police officers were murdered in a maximum security facility less than a week after being jailed themselves for murdering three visiting Salvadoran legislators February 19, 2007. The combined murders caused the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in Guatemala, Anders Kompass, to label Guatemala a "failed and collapsed state" on March 6, 2007. Prosecutor Alfredo Solórzano said he would pursue an appeal to the acquittal which was granted based on "lack of proof." During proceedings, Solórzano had recommended to the court a sentence of 203 years per defendant. On July 14, just a few days after the acquittal, secondary prosecutor Juan Carlos Martínez was murdered in an ambush near the village of El Guayabo. As a member of the District Attorney's Office of Crimes Against Life, Martínez was involved in the investigation of the murdered civil national police (PNC) officers in 2007. The PNC has begun an investigation into his death. (Global Insight, July 11; Prensa Libre, July 10, 14, 2008)

Colom's administration marked by public discontent: On July 14 the Guatemalan newspaper Prensa Libre revealed the results of polls taken six months into President Álvaro Colom's administration. The results showed that 68.5 percent of those surveyed disapproved of the president's leadership. Despite the government's protests that it is being prematurely judged, 64.8 percent of those interviewed thought that positive change should be evident after six months. Other poll results may also be of some concern to the ruling National Unity of Hope (UNE) party: rural areas, its key voting constituency, showed an even higher percentage – 87.7 percent – of disenchantment with the administration and its perceived failure to live up to key campaign promises. Prensa Libre conducted a previous analysis July 13 when Fernando Solís, a sociologist; Alvaro Pop, a political analyst; Miguel Gutiérrez, an economist; and Helen Mack of the Myrna Mack Foundation participated in a dialogue on Colom's first months. Mack expressed concerns with security and justice, specifically regarding the civilian security system. She also asserted that "no matter how many have insisted, the Army continues being the one that receives a bigger share of the budget, more capacity-building of its people; they are given more transfers of the budget and are resorted to as a supposed savior in security." Solís criticized the Social Cohesion project run by the president's wife, Sandra Torres de Colom, as only addressing the economic crisis and not the root problems such as education. Gutiérrez also weighed in on the financial

crisis, calling Guatemala's economic cabinet "out of date." He further remarked Guatemala has one of the highest inflation rates in Latin America, at 13.56 percent over the past 12 months. ([Latinnews Daily](#), July 14; [Prensa Libre](#), July 13, 14)

NEPAL

Constituent Assembly passes fifth amendment: The legislative session of Nepal's Constituent Assembly (CA) passed the fifth amendment to the interim constitution July 13, allowing important government posts to be decided by majority voting. The newly approved policy marks a shift away from the rigid consensus-based approach that has been a benchmark of practices over the last three years. Of key importance is the amendment's stipulation that the president, vice-president and prime minister can be chosen by simple majority if no political understanding can be reached among parties. Speculation is high that the last remaining obstacle to government formation has now been removed, and the CA pledged July 14 to select a president within 48 hours. The assembly has been working for months since April elections to fill the presidential post, but has been hindered by the various parties' disagreements. The amendment also provides for the acting opposition leader of the CA to take a position on the Constitutional Council, although a move backed by the Nepali Congress to include an opposition member in the National Defense Council was blocked. Reports state that, in addition, the bill includes clauses on the nationalization of the Nepali Army and rehabilitation and integration of former Maoist fighters. However, Sunday's CA meeting was boycotted by the 152 representatives of the ethnic Madhesi parties, amid claims that their voice was being ignored and that stipulations of a February agreement with the Maoists for proportional representation in the army were not being honored. ([Himalayan Times](#), July 13; [Nepalnews.com](#), [ANI](#), July 14)

Nepalgunj police hold officials hostage: A two-day hostage situation at a battalion in western Nepal ended when the police officers responsible surrendered. The siege began July 12 when an estimated 500 junior officers at the Riot Control Battalion in Nepalgunj took over the compound and held seven of their superiors captive, demanding better working conditions. The low-ranking policemen accused department heads of being corrupt and feeding them poorly. Once the government made clear its refusal to negotiate, the hostage-takers were told to surrender or face consequences. Their decision was hastened when the Armed Police Force stormed the compound Sunday night. After giving themselves up, some riot officers fled the scene. Of those who remained, two sub-inspectors and two head constables were being charged with instigating the hostage situation. Eleven others have been suspended, and an additional 19 are under investigation. The remaining policemen, many of whom are asking for mercy, will face charges of indiscipline. The senior officers were released unharmed. This is the second such revolt in the span of a month. In June, officers at the same location took 16 fellow policemen hostage, also claiming ill treatment. Home Secretary Umesh Mainlani said that officials are currently analyzing ways to improve working conditions for the police forces, but he made no indication that the corruption charges will be addressed. ([AP](#), [BBC](#), [Nepalnews.com](#), 14 July)

SIERRA LEONE

Police arrest suspects in \$30 million drug case: Police in Sierra Leone have made the country's largest drug seizure ever, apprehending a 700 kg (1,545 lbs) stockpile of cocaine valued at \$30 million July 14. Officials uncovered the stash hidden in a seemingly abandoned

plane disguised to look like a Red Cross transport at the Lungi International Airport north of Freetown. In addition to the drugs, several assault rifles were uncovered. The pilot and crew of the plane had already fled, but were apprehended a day later and included several nationals from Colombia, Venezuela, Mexico and the United States. A number of locals were also taken in for questioning. Michael Schulenburg, who heads the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), told Reuters, "It's drawn attention to the fact that we have to do more. There must be many more flights like this. It's something that governments can lose control over." (BBC, Reuters; July 14)

High Court issues bench warrant for former ombudsman: The Sierra Leone High Court has issued a bench warrant for the arrest of former Ombudsman Francis Gabbidon after he failed to appear in court July 11 on charges stemming from funds misuse. From 2001 to 2007, Gabbidon is reported to have falsely represented individuals employed by the Office of the Ombudsman in order to gain access to the public funds entrusted to them. Gabbidon has been indicted on 168 counts of misappropriation of funds by Sierra Leone's Anti-Corruption Commission. He has been reported missing since July 10, but days later told the *Concord Times* in Freetown that he was willing to surrender. "I did not show up on Friday because they wanted to arrest me unnecessarily. I am in town, and I will not go anywhere. I will surrender myself on Monday." (All Africa, *Concord Times*; July 14; *Afriquenligne*, July 12)

SRI LANKA

Two Indian fishermen allegedly killed by Sri Lankan Navy: Two Indian fishermen were killed in the Pal Straits off the northern coast of Sri Lanka in an attack apparently carried out by the Sri Lankan Navy. The one surviving fisherman, K. Murali, has claimed that it was the Sri Lankan Navy that had fired, unprovoked, on the boat, killing S. Vasagan and N. Narayanswamy. However, the Sri Lankan Navy has denied any involvement in the shooting. Navy Officials stated that the "Navy was nowhere in the Gulf of Mannar Sea yesterday, as it was a Sunday and [it] was monitoring suspicious boat movements within Sri Lanka waters through radar located in their base in Talaimannar." The same sources within the Navy said that the most likely culprits of the attack are the Sea Tigers, the naval force of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). In response to the attacks the Communist Party of India (CPI) has announced that it will engage in protests and will picket the Sri Lankan Deputy High Commission in Chennai. The issue threatens to strain diplomatic relations between Sri Lanka and India ; CPI state secretary D. Pandiyan has called for the Sri Lankan central government to raise the issue of the Sri Lanka Navy's assault during the upcoming South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Summit, an eight-day meeting which will begin in Colombo July 27. (*Asian Tribune*, July 14; *Khaleej Times*, July 13; *Sify News*, July 12)

President "ready" for peace if LTTE lay down their arms: Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa has stated that he is ready to begin peace talks with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) as long as the Tigers agree to take the first step and lay down their arms. A statement appeared on the Sri Lankan Defense Ministry's web page quoting Rajapaksa as saying "I am ready today. Let them keep their weapons down, because whenever they are weak they are ready for talks." According to the statement, no deadline has been set

regarding Tamil disarmament. This call for talks comes after failed internationally-led attempts in Geneva and Oslo. In January of this year the Government pulled out of a Norwegian-mediated ceasefire due to continuing LTTE attacks. The civil war in Sri Lanka has been ongoing since 1983 and has left nearly 70,000 dead and many more displaced. ([Bloomberg](#), [Sri Lanka Ministry of Defense](#), July 13, 2008)

SUDAN

ICC requests presidential indictment: The International Criminal Court's lead prosecutor recommended July 14 that genocide charges be filed against Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir. Three years after an initial investigation was requested by the United Nations, Luis Moreno-Ocampo asked a court panel Monday to approve the indictment, stating that enough evidence had been compiled to indicate al-Bashir's complicity in Darfur's four-year campaign of violence. Ten charges have been raised, including counts of genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. Al-Bashir is accused of being the mastermind behind a targeted campaign of murder, rape and deportation. If passed, this would be the first ICC indictment of an acting head of state and the third related to the Sudanese conflict. In May 2007 the court issued warrants for the arrest of Ali Kushayb and Ahmad Harun for their involvement in atrocities committed in Darfur. Neither has been released to the court for criminal proceedings, and government officials say they will not hand over al-Bashir even if a warrant is issued. Rumors of the pending charges sparked government-sponsored protests over the weekend as thousands lined the streets of Khartoum, marching and chanting in support of the president. Government officials in Sudan have accused the ICC of attempting to undermine the peace process in Darfur. With the president labeled a criminal, they said, rebel groups might now refuse to recognize al-Bashir as a valid political figurehead with whom they will negotiate. Even UN field operators have expressed fears that, if handed down, the indictment could cause a backlash against already insecure peacekeeping forces in the region. The international organization has stressed its continuing reliance on Sudan to provide support and protection for UNAMID forces in Darfur, but has already acted to pull out all non-essential staff. However, prosecutor Ocampo has countered such claims by saying that the indictment is necessary to prevent the slow deaths of Darfur's refugee population. Clashes between rebels and the Sudanese army began in 2003, and government-backed Janjaweed militias began attacking civilians soon after. The UN estimates that 300,000 have been killed and another 2.5 million displaced as a result. A peace agreement was signed in 2006, but violence continues throughout the area. ([BBC](#), 12 July; [ABC](#), [AP](#), [CNN](#), 14 July 2008)

Peacekeepers ambushed in Darfur: Joint United Nations-African Union (UNAMID) forces were attacked July 9 in the Darfur region of western Sudan, leaving seven troops dead. The convoy of 73 peacekeepers was ambushed while on patrol in north Darfur by some 200 assailants on horseback and in armored sport utility vehicles equipped with machine guns. The assault lasted for two hours and claimed the lives of five Rwandan soldiers, one Ugandan police officer, and one Ghanaian police officer. Twenty-two others were wounded. UNAMID spokeswoman Shereen Zorba said that the UN is outraged. Zorba reiterated that the peacekeeping mission's goal is to alleviate civilian suffering in Darfur, not to be brought into the region's conflict. No group has yet taken responsibility for the attack. Khartoum has claimed that rebel factions are responsible, but some UN officials said they believe it was the work of the government-supported Janjaweed militias. The assault came

as a serious blow to the UN-AU force, which has already been plagued with shortages of crucial equipment needed to operate and also faces a lack of cooperation by the government of Sudan. UNAMID currently has 9,000 troops deployed in Darfur, but there has been contention by the Sudanese government over whether all 26,000 of the mission's mandated peacekeepers will be allowed into the country. Sudanese officials have requested repeatedly that the force be composed mainly of African Union soldiers. ([AP](#), [BBC](#), 9 July; [CNN](#), 10 July 2008)

UGANDA

Government awaits invitation to resume peace talks in South Sudan: LRA chief negotiator Nyekorach Matsanga announced Wednesday July 9 that the LRA has proposed a new date for its leadership to sign a comprehensive peace agreement in mid-July. Matsanga was under direction of Joseph Kony to announce the LRA's new position to resume the peace negotiations. The Ugandan government now awaits only the invitation of Chief Mediator Riek Machar of South Sudan to resume the peace talks. However, there is confusion regarding Matsanga's legitimacy, due to his removal and re-installment by Kony after the peace talks faltered in May. In a statement delivered in Nairobi, Kenya, Matsanga issued Kony's reassurance to the mediators, the African Union, and the international community, of his intent to work toward a peace agreement. Matsanga also denied his alleged authorship of a letter written to President Museveni which urged the execution of Kony and asserted that this was the only way to end the conflict in Northern Uganda. Internal Affairs Minister Ruhakana Rugunda, on the other hand, made it clear that there are no more negotiations to be made. "The talks between the LRA and the government have been completed and the final peace agreement has been agreed and initialed by all the parties," Rugunda said, indicating that all that remained was for Kony to sign the agreement. ([BBC Monitoring Africa](#), [Daily Monitor](#), July 11, 2008)

Kenyan refugees threatened by food shortage: Victims of post-election violence in Kenya, now refugees living in western Uganda since fleeing home in January, are appealing for more food as rations are dwindling. There is enough food to last another month, according to a report published by a privately-owned Kenyan newspaper, and two weeks have passed without any further supply deliveries. Joseph Githu, the spokesman for the refugees, stated that the World Food Program last provided food rations over a month ago, consisting of maize, beans, and cooking fat. Following their relocation from Mulanda to the Masindi district, the refugees were each allocated an acre of land for cultivation, but were allegedly provided no seeds. Though many want to return home to Kenya, they are skeptical about the government's willingness to address their plight. In response, Minister of State for Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Refugees Musa Ecweru has pledged efforts to ensure the Kenyan refugees are provided basics including food and other items. Ecweru has committed his ministry to solving the problem with the continued help of the World Food Program. ([The Standard](#), July 15; [UBC Radio Kampala](#), July 16, 2008)