

A monthly bulletin by **Crisis Group** on current and potential conflicts around the world

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**1 October 2009, N°74**

## CrisisWatch:

- summarises briefly developments during the previous month in some 70 situations of current or potential conflict, listed alphabetically by region, providing references and links to more detailed information sources (all references mentioned are hyperlinked in the electronic version of this bulletin);
- assesses whether the overall situation in each case has, during the previous month, significantly deteriorated, significantly improved, or on balance remained more or less unchanged;
- alerts readers to situations where, in the coming month, there is a particular risk of new or significantly escalated conflict, or a particular conflict resolution opportunity (noting that in some instances there may in fact be both); and
- summarises Crisis Group's reports and briefing papers that have been published in the last month.

*CrisisWatch* is compiled by Crisis Group's Brussels Research Unit, drawing on multiple sources including the resources of our some 130 staff members across five continents, who already report on some 60 of the situations listed here. Comments and suggestions can be sent to [crisiswatch@crisisgroup.org](mailto:crisiswatch@crisisgroup.org).

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## September 2009 Trends



### Deteriorated Situations

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## October 2009 Watchlist



### Conflict Risk Alerts



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Armenia/Turkey

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Crisis Group is an independent, non-profit, non-governmental organisation, with some 130 staff members on five continents, working through field-based analysis and high-level advocacy to prevent and resolve deadly conflict. Crisis Group's approach is grounded in field research. Teams of political analysts are located within or close by countries at risk of outbreak, escalation or recurrence of violent conflict. Based on information and assessments from the field, Crisis Group produces regular analytical reports containing practical recommendations targeted at key international decision-takers, and backed up with high-level advocacy. Crisis Group is co-chaired by former European Commissioner for External Relations Lord (Christopher) Patten and former U.S. Ambassador and Vice Chairman of Hills & Company Thomas R. Pickering, and its President and Chief Executive is former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Louise Arbour.



## CENTRAL AFRICA

➡ **Burundi** National Assembly 19 Sept adopted new electoral code by vote of 98 to 1, marking step forward in election process. Followed govt-opposition compromise: govt conceded to demands to hold communal elections prior to presidential polls, but retained controversial multiple ballot system. Electoral commission 3 Sept announced elections to cost \$43m, 83% expected to come from donors. Further signs of dissent within ex-rebel FNL: 2 senior leaders expelled from party late Aug, 15 Sept accused Rwaswa of dictatorial drift.

- ["l'Assemblée adopte à la quasi-unanimité un nouveau code électoral"](#), AFP 11 Sept. 2009.
- For background, see Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°63, [To Integrate the FNL Successfully](#), 30 July 2009.

➡ **Central African Republic** Preparations for presidential and legislative elections, set for March 2010, stalled 3 Sept when opposition coalition suspended participation in electoral commission over "unconstitutional" provisions in electoral code, calling for its annulment. Constitutional court 25 Sep called on govt to modify code. Ex-President Ange-Félix Patassé, from exile in Togo, late Aug announced intention to return and "potentially" run in elections as head of opposition MPLC, raising prospect of intra-party divisions. First sensitisation phase of DDR process ended 4 Sept after 3-week awareness-raising tour in Bangui and north. DDR challenges underscored over month, as opposition FDPC re-established check points around north's Kabo town in protest at arrest of 2 officers. APRD commander Lakoué announced disarmament conditional on prior removal of bandits linked to Chadian general Baba Laddé from central north. Ugandan army continued operations against LRA in southeast, claimed to have captured 2 senior commanders, killed 10 fighters including Lt. Col. Santo Alit, member of LRA Juba peace team.

- ["Uganda admits to military operations in CAR"](#), *Mail & Guardian*, 8 Sept. 2009.
- For background, see Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°55, [Central African Republic: Untangling the Political Dialogue](#), 9 Dec. 2008.

➡ **Chad** President Déby continued drive to reach out to rebel groups with visit to eastern Chad early month. Govt 4 Sept announced integration of rebel group National Movement (NM) into national army. Former president Goukouni Weddeye late Aug returned from exile in Algeria, announced commitment to "work for peace", held talks with Déby on reconciliation. Press 12 Sept reported \$3.1m govt corruption case, implicating education ministry, treasury dept; govt fired several treasury staff.

- Comment by Daniela Krosiak (Crisis Group), ["Chad: The Oil Effect?"](#), openDemocracy, 18 Sept. 2009.
- Comment by Louise Arbour (Crisis Group), ["Chad: No Exit?"](#), *Foreign Policy*, 4 Sept. 2009.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°65, [Chad: Escaping from the Oil Trap](#), 26 Aug. 2009.

➡ **Democratic Republic of Congo** FARDC announced it had captured 3 FDLR strongholds across S Kivu following

intense fighting around 20 Sept; claimed 13 rebels killed, including base commander. FDLR 15-16 Sept launched attacks on villages in Walikale, S Kivu, before clashing with Mai Mai militias; 4 FDLR, 3 civilians killed. OCHA 16 Sept reported some 200 families fled region in wake of attack. 7 FDLR rebels killed by MONUC 29 Sept in N Kivu clash. LRA fighters conducted series of raids on N Kivu villages 17 Sept, abducting 30, killing 20 civilians. ICC 3 Sept suspended conditional release of ex-opposition MLC leader Jean-Pierre Bemba pending decision on his host country ahead of trial. Wanted genocidaire Ndahimana, arrested in DRC Aug, transferred to ICTR 20 Sept. UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Pillay said Oct-Nov 2008 violence in N Kivu may amount to war crimes, implicated both govt and ex-rebel CNDP troops. Congolese court sentenced 2 Norwegians to death 8 Sept for espionage and murder.

- Comment by François Grignon (Crisis Group), ["Les FDLR doivent désarmer"](#), *Le Soir*, 18 Sept. 2009.
- ["UN rights chief sees possible war crimes in Congo"](#), Reuters, 9 Sept. 2009.

➡ **Gabon** Ali Ben Bongo, son of long-standing ruler Omar, declared President by interior minister 3 Sept after Aug elections, gaining 41% of the vote; opponents Andre Mba Obame and Pierre Mamboundou gained just under 25% each. Election approved by constitutional court. Libreville and Port Gentil erupted in 2 days of protests from 2 Sept, including widespread looting and arson targeting French sites over French association with Bongo dynasty; 300 arrested, several killed before troops restored order 4 Sept. 16 opposition candidates 17 Sept issued statement alleging "grave irregularities and fraud", calling for recount, urging constitutional court to review verdict. Constitutional Court began recount 30 Sept; opposition announced boycott after their request to oversee recount denied.

- ["Gabon quiet, inspects damage of post-poll clashes"](#), Reuters, 4 Sept. 2009.

➡ **Rwanda** ICTR began trial of ex-planning minister Augustin Ndirabatware for genocide, crimes against humanity; prosecution alleged Ndirabatware convened 1994 meetings to "spread the gospel" of genocide and collaborated to bankroll killings with fugitive businessman Felicien Kabuga. Former Kivumu mayor and genocide suspect Gregoire Ndahimana transferred to ICTR following 11 Aug arrest in Congo, plead not guilty 29 Sept. Burundian authorities reported several hundred Rwandan Hutus fled to Burundi late month. In New York 21 Sept, President Kagame stressed major progress in relations with Congo.

- ["Rwandan accused of using donor funds for genocide"](#), AP, 23 Sept. 2009.

➡ **Uganda** Kampala hit by violent riots 10-11 Sept, as thousands hit streets in support of King Mutebi of Buganda region after President Museveni early month denied king access to city of Bugerere, which had announced intention to break from Buganda. 27 killed, over 100 arrested; 4 radio stations taken off air for "inciting violence". Museveni and King Mutebi met for talks 30 Sept. Opposition leader Ogenga Latigo 23 Sept accused President Museveni of reliance on military and, citing high number of troops still in Kampala, precipitating crisis to increase military presence. Ugandan military 7 Sept confirmed Ugandan army pursuing LRA in CAR, 9 Sept announced Ugandan forces had rescued 100 kidnapped youths, killed

several commanders (see CAR).

- ["Riots in Uganda: a sign of things to come?"](#), *Time*, 17 Sept. 2009.
- For background, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°146, [Northern Uganda: The Road to Peace, with or without Kony](#), 10 Dec. 2008.

## HORN OF AFRICA

➡ **Eritrea** Regional bloc IGAD 19 Sept urged global sanctions on Eritrea for backing Islamist rebels in Somalia. Following 17 Sept visit to Asmara by EU Special Representative to Sudan Torben Brylle, EU expressed deep concern over human rights abuses, called for release of political prisoners. Earlier in month Eritrea, EU signed €122m agreement on development programs through to 2013.

- ["Nations press for sanctions against Eritrea"](#), *Independent*, 19 Sept. 2009.

➡ **Ethiopia** Protests over electoral conditions ahead of 2010 polls increased; opposition 10 Sept alleged arbitrary arrests and harassment by govt hampering campaign. Ruling EPRDF party formally rejected President Zenawi's June resignation offer, confirming his presidential candidacy. ONLF rebels 17 Sept warned oil firms not to enter Ogaden "war zone". Further reports on Ethiopian involvement in Somalia: ONLF 22 Sept dismissed accusation of support for Somalia's Islamist forces. Local report Ethiopian troops withdrew from Beledweyne in Somalia late Aug after seizing town 2 days earlier.

- ["Ethiopia opposition says its members being jailed"](#), *Mail & Guardian*, 10 Sept. 2009.

Crisis Group Africa Report N°153, [Ethiopia: Ethnic Federalism and Its Discontents](#), 4 Sept. 2009. Ethiopia's governing coalition must improve democratic practices or risk pre-election violence that could destabilise the region. This background report examines potential for a violent eruption of conflict ahead of the June 2010 elections amidst rising ethnic tensions and dissent.



➡ **Kenya** Controversy sparked by President Kibaki's 31 Aug reappointment of anti-corruption commission chief Ringera, accused of failing to prosecute high-level offenders; MPs allege re-appointment violates his contract; Ringera resigned 30 Sept. Kibaki conducted major reshuffle of police senior ranks in apparent bow to international condemnation surrounding Feb publication of UN rapporteur Alston's damning report on police violence. Govt confirmed inability to create tribunal for election violence by ICC's 30 Sept deadline. ICC chief prosecutor Ocampo mid-month met with govt to propose 3-pronged strategy involving ICC trials for crimes against humanity, trials by special tribunals for other crimes and continuation of truth and reconciliation commission, though stressing latter should not stray beyond mandate; 30 Sept confirmed prosecution to go ahead. U.S. issued letters to 15 high-level officials threatening sanctions over obstruction of anti-corruption and judicial reforms. Worst drought in over a decade affecting most of country; govt reported water shortages fuelling clashes between pastoralist farmers in central regions.

- ["Militias, gangs and vigilantes in Kenya"](#), openDemocracy, 2 Sept. 2009.

➡ **Somalia** FM Ali Ahmed Jama 3 Sept announced several senior figures in Islamist group Hizbul Islam had agreed to join President Sheikh Sharif's administration after negotiations.

Heavy fighting continued across Mogadishu and south. Early month mortar fire into residential areas in Mogadishu's port area killed at least 5 civilians; govt and AU troops control in city reportedly reduced to a few blocks. U.S. helicopters killed alleged terrorist Saleh Ali Nabhan and several al-Shabaab fighters in 14 Sept attack near Roobow village in south. Followed by defiant 16 Sept call by al-Shabaab leadership for foreign reinforcements and 17 Sept suicide attacks on AMISOM Mogadishu base, in which govt police chief and some 20 peacekeepers killed; Hizbul Islam leader Dahir Aweys urged further attacks. Some 17 others, mainly combatants, killed in fighting between al-Shabaab and govt forces outside of Yet town 21 Sept before al-Shabaab took control. Reports of fighting between al-Shabaab and Hizbul Islam in Kismayo late month. Reports Somali refugees crossing Kenyan border at rate of 7,000 per month.

- ["Somali insurgents vow revenge for US killing of leader"](#), *Guardian*, 15 Sept. 2009.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°64, [Somalia: The Trouble with Puntland](#), 12 Aug. 2009.

➡ **Sudan** U.S. Envoy Gration arrived in Juba 9 Sept for further talks between SPLM and NCP delegations to build on "roadmap" agreed in Aug, but parties failed to make progress on 2 most contentious election issues of census results and rules governing 2011 secession referendum. Govt of South Sudan (GoSS) stepped up disarmament drive in and around Juba ahead of Gration's visit. At least 20 killed in reportedly heavy fighting around Korma, North Darfur, between govt troops and SLA-al Nur faction after days of military build up. President Bashir followed with late month call on Darfur rebel groups to join talks, scheduled to reopen Oct. 1 UNAMID peacekeeper killed, 2 wounded in 29 Sept attack on convoy. Over 100 killed in tribal clashes in south's Jonglei State late month, bringing death toll from southern tribal fighting since Jan to over 2,000; aid groups report women and children targeted. GoSS 23 Sept announced hundreds of troops deployed to secure region. SPLM continues to accuse NCP of distributing arms to destabilise south. Vicious attacks by LRA rebels on southern villages continued, with UN reporting 7 raids over month. Speculation over NCP internal tensions following President Bashir's mid-Aug removal of General Salah Mohammed Abdalla (Gosh) from powerful post as director of intelligence and security.

- ["Darfur: Neither all-out war nor a proper peace"](#), *Economist*, 3 Sept. 2009.
- For background, see Africa Report N°152, [Justice, Peace and the ICC](#), 17 July 2009.

## SOUTHERN AFRICA

➡ **Madagascar** Aug power-sharing deal in tatters after Andry Rajoelina 8 Sept unilaterally formed "national unity" government, claiming presidency and appointing 31 mostly staunch supporters to cabinet posts; opposition parties denounced move and offer of participation. Regional and international bodies leading mediation effort immediately rejected "any unilateral solution", called for new talks. Followed by further protests in the capital in support of ousted President Ravalomanana; forcefully dispersed by police. Transitional govt PM Roindefo 29 Sept said Madagascar may withdraw from SADC after group blocked Rajoelina from speaking at UNGA.

- ["SADC rejects new Madagascar government"](#), *Mail & Guardian*, 11 Sept. 2009.

- **Zimbabwe** One year anniversary of signing of Global Political Agreement marked by deepening frustration among MDC party over power-sharing failures. Party officials at 11 Sept convention pressed for GNU walk-out if outstanding issues not quickly resolved, while MDC leader and PM Tsvangirai at 13 Sept party rally in Bulawayo implied right to disengage, though actual risk thought low. Rivalry between ZANU-PF Mujuru and Mnangagwa factions continued to intensify, focusing on party allocation of posts at 11 and 16 Sept youth and women's league conferences and possible readmission of renowned former information minister Moyo. ZANU-PF dealt significant blow 11 Sept by high level defection of women's league chair Thenjwe Lesabe to ZANU. Some thawing in external relations: U.S. delegation arrived 2 Sept, and high-level EU delegation 3 Sept; both stressed support to govt but maintaining stance on targeted sanctions. IMF end-Aug released \$400m in support to boost foreign currency reserves, part of agreement reached at G20 summit to help member states manage global recession - no shift in IMF policy. UK 11 Sept announced govt prepared to resume support to land reform program. In diplomatic boost for Mugabe, SADC at early month summit called for removal of all Zimbabwe sanctions.
- "Tsvangirai impatient for reform", *Financial Times*, 13 Sept. 2009.
  - For background, see Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°59, *Zimbabwe: Engaging the Inclusive Government*, 20 April 2009.

## WEST AFRICA

- **Côte d'Ivoire** Fears increased over further delay in long-awaited presidential polls, set for 29 Nov, as electoral commission missed 15 Sept deadline for publishing provisional voter lists; no new deadline given. UNSG Ban 29 Sept warned of major obstacles to poll, including disarmament of militias, reintegration of former rebels. Burkina Faso President Compaoré travelled to President Gbagbo's home town during mid-Sept state visit; the 2 formerly hostile leaders reportedly signed significant cooperation deal.
- "Ivorian election body confirms delay in poll lists", Reuters, 15 Sept. 2009.
  - For background, see Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°62, *Côte d'Ivoire: What's Needed to End the Crisis*, 2 July 2009.
- **Guinea** At least 157 killed when security forces opened fire on large demonstrations in capital 28 Sept protesting junta leader Dadis Camara's candidacy in upcoming presidential polls and military govt; reports of extreme sexual violence by security forces against protesters; several opposition figures, including presidential contender and former PM Cellou Dalein Diallo, reportedly arrested. Authorities banned "subversive" gatherings in wake. UNSC, AU, EU, France and U.S. condemned violence. Rallies followed mid-month announcement by Rally for Defence of the Republic party, formed to back Dadis after Dec 2008 coup, nominating Dadis as candidate in Jan election; now widely believed he intends to run. International Contact Group 3 Sept called on Dadis not to stand, while AU 18 Sept threatened to impose sanctions in Oct. Up to 20,000 rallied in earlier anti-Dadis protests in Diallo's former stronghold of Labe, north of Conakry, 23 Sept; Diallo, expected to stand for opposition United Democratic Forces of Guinea (UDFG), earlier welcomed back from European trip by large crowds in Conakry. 300 demonstrated in Conakry 23 Sept against AU sanctions.
- Comment by Richard Moncrieff (Crisis Group), "Repression

and Violence Are a Danger to the Whole Region", *Independent*, 30 Sept. 2009.

- "Guinea bans 'subversive' meetings", BBC, 30 Sept. 2009.
  - For background, see Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°58, *Guinea: The Transition Has Only Just Begun*, 5 March 2009.
- **Guinea-Bissau** President Malam Bacai Sanha inaugurated 8 Sept following July election, pledging to "shed light" on March killings and tackle corruption, drug trafficking. Chinese Assistant FM Zhai Jun in 23 Sept visit announced \$8.9m technical and aid package as part of new cooperation deal.
- "Guinea Bissau set to celebrate President-Elect Sanha's inauguration", VOA, 8 Sept. 2009.
  - For background, see Africa Briefing N°61, *Guinea-Bissau: Beyond Rule of the Gun*, 25 June 2009.
- **Liberia** UNSC 15 Sept voted to extend UNMIL mandate into 2010 to assist with planned 2011 elections. UNMIL police officer killed 24 Sept by unknown gunmen in Monrovia.
- "Mixed reaction to UNMIL extension", IRIN, 17 Sept. 2009.
  - For background, see Africa Report N°148, *Uneven Progress in Security Sector Reform*, 13 Jan. 2009.
- **Mali** Security forces 16 Sept intercepted arms traffickers allegedly supplying Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) in north. EU, U.S. 5 Sept added Mali to Al-Qaeda watch list.
- "Mali, face à des menaces transnationales", *Le Républicain*, 17 Sept. 2009.
- **Niger** President Tandja stepped up campaign against opposition, as newly formed coalition Coordination of Forces for Democracy and the Republic (CFDR) continued to protest his 3rd term bid. 39 opposition figures arrested 5 Sept, leading figure Mahamadou Issoufou charged with embezzlement 14 Sept, 159 opposition members under investigation for corruption. Tandja imposed travel ban on all MPs 3 Sept. Leading rights activist Marou Amadou, detained for opposing Aug referendum, released 15 Sept. CFDR 9 Sept announced boycott of 20 Oct legislative elections. ECOWAS parliament called on ECOWAS and AU to intervene to restore constitutionality.
- "Niger 'must return to democracy'", BBC, 10 Aug. 2009.
- **Nigeria** Govt officials announced talks held 1 Sept with 3 MEND leaders on govt amnesty and DDR offer, open to 4 Oct; talks reportedly covered MEND requirements for Delta development, personal security, withdrawal of govt troops from Ijaw-speaking areas. Govt insists some 6,000 have so far accepted offer, though doubts over effectiveness of process underscored by protests in Beyelsa State capital over non-payment of disarmament funds. MEND 15 Sept extended 3-month ceasefire beyond amnesty deadline to 15 Oct, though promising to resume attacks without govt action to address "root causes" of Delta unrest. MEND 29 Sept named mediation team to negotiate with govt. Signs of internal MEND divisions over participation in program. In north, head of Kano State prison expressed fears Islamist group Boko Haram (BH) preparing raids to free BH inmates arrested in June. Son of infamous former president Sani Abacha, Muhammad Abacha, announced plans to contest Kano governorship in future polls. Senior politician in Kaduna State kidnapped for ransom by unknown assailants 21 Sept.
- "Nigerian militants extend ceasefire", *Financial Times*, 16 Sept. 2009.
  - For background, see Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°60, *Nigeria: Seizing the Moment in the Niger Delta*, 30 April 2009.



## Asia/Pacific

### CENTRAL ASIA

➡ **Kazakhstan** Ruling Nur-Otan party 14 Sept proposed legislation allowing President Nazarbaev to remain president for life. Court 3 Sept sentenced prominent human rights activist Yevgeny Zhovtis to 4 years in jail for manslaughter. U.S., OSCE spoke out against sentence, OSCE (to be chaired by Kazakhstan starting Jan 2010) and Ombudsman called for fair appeal; several rallies held in his support. Independent newspaper "Respublica" ordered to pay \$400,000 for libel against state-run BTA bank, prompting further OSCE criticism. Demarcation issues discussed at informal Caspian summit 11 Sept. Military exercises involving Kazakh, U.S., UK troops began in south 14 Sept; Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) members started military exercises in north 17 Sept.

- "Zhovtis case turning into test of Astana's OSCE credibility", EurasiaNet, 10 Sept. 2009.

➡ **Kyrgyzstan** President Bakiev announced changes to division of power among govt bodies 1 Sept, including transfer of some presidential powers to govt, elimination of presidential advisory offices and State Secretariat, and 2 new entities - Supreme Assembly and Presidential Council. Govt clamped down on opposition: key leader Bakytbek Beshimov fled to U.S. citing death threats; opposition deputy Kubanychbek Kadyrov stripped of immunity, to be tried for inciting violence during July presidential election. Former PM, presidential candidate Almazbek Atambaev elected to chair opposition United People's Movement (OND). PM Chudinov 10 Sept said U.S. to provide \$21m for Antiterrorist Centre and strengthen border security. Joint operation involving border troops from Russia and all Central Asian states apart from Turkmenistan concluded 20 Sept, amid increasing attention on threat to Northern Distribution Network and regional security. First official regional Islamic school opened in south 7 Sept. Heads of national security council and state security committee proposed reinstatement of death penalty. Authorities tightened border control with Tajikistan after 26 Sept skirmish in border village.

- "Doubts about Kyrgyz political reform plan", IWPR, 16 Sept. 2009.

Crisis Group Asia Report N°176,  
*Women and Radicalisation in Kyrgyzstan*,



3 Sept. 2009. If Kyrgyzstan does not tackle the social and economic causes of popular discontent, many more women will join radical Islamist groups such as Hizb ut-Tahrir. Religious women feel unrepresented by a political system that is largely secular, often deeply suspicious of practising Muslims and ignores their economic needs.

➡ **Tajikistan** Russian defence minister 12 Sept visited Dushanbe, reportedly discussed increase in payments for military facilities. Senior defence official 17 Sept warned fighting between coalition forces, Taliban in Afghanistan may spill over into Tajikistan. Indian President Patil 8 Sept visited Tajikistan to discuss cooperation on energy, regional security. President Rakhmon appointed daughter as deputy FM.

- "Rising Taliban threat prompt regional border cooperation", EurasiaNet, 15 Sept. 2009.

- For latest report, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°162, *Tajikistan: On the Road to Failure*, 12 Feb. 2009.

➡ **Turkmenistan** Talks between President Berdymukhammedov and Russian President Medvedev 13 Sept failed to produce agreement on resumption of Turkmen gas flows to Russia, interrupted April. During informal Caspian summit in Kazakhstan, President 12 Sept emphasized commitment to diversification of gas export routes. Visiting early Sept, Venezuelan President Chavez discussed energy, including plans for possible global gas cartel. Several Chinese workers injured, some 200 Turkmen workers detained following 12 Sept clash at energy company in east.

- "Turkmenistan grabs energy spotlight as Caspian leaders gather", RFE/RL, 12 Sept. 2009.

➡ **Uzbekistan** Joint Afghan-international operation against Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan militants active in northern Afghanistan commenced 12 Sept. Third person died following 29 Aug shootout between security forces, gunmen in Tashkent, unknown number detained; authorities reported slain were terrorists. Trial began of suspects accused of involvement in May terror attacks. Following 8 Sept visit by ODIHR head, OSCE praised progress on rights, announced increased cooperation. Reports that EU and Uzbekistan normalized relations following mid-Sept meetings of FM Norov and EU External Relations Commissioner in Brussels. Citing unpaid debts, Uzbekistan suspended gas supplies to Tajikistan, 3 southern regions of Kyrgyzstan.

- "EU-Central Asia cooperation gathers pace", RFE/RL, 16 Sept. 2009.

### NORTH EAST ASIA

➡ **China (internal)** Urumqi, capital of northwestern Xinjiang province, again brought to standstill 3 Sept as tens of thousands of Han Chinese demonstrated over unconfirmed rumours of syringe stabbings by ethnic Uighur, demanding govt action; govt quickly restored order, said 5 killed; state media reported 75 arrested. Xinjiang authorities 16 Sept claimed to have foiled bomb plot involving 20 explosive devices, indicated suspects Uighur. Beijing 1 Sept announced 2,800 of estimated 37,000 Kokang refugees displaced by Aug Burma violence had returned (see Myanmar/Burma).

- "Protesters demand China's Xinjiang leader resign", Reuters, 3 Sept. 2009.

➡ **North Korea** N Korea issued further mix of threats and overtures to international community, hinted at willingness to resume 6-party talks. In letter to UNSC, reported 4 Sept in state press, Pyongyang announced country in "concluding stages" of uranium enrichment, denounced UNSC sanctions. Following early month tour of regional states (excluding NK) by U.S. envoy Stephen Bosworth, U.S. announced open to dialogue but as path towards, not alternative to, 6-party talks. During visit by Chinese delegation NK Leader Kim Jong-il 18 Sept said open to "bilateral and multilateral" talks. Pyongyang 1 Sept restored traffic crossings to S Korean factories, but relations strained after NK 7 Sept conducted emergency dam release killing 6 S Koreans; Seoul condemned lack of warning.

- "N. Korea suggests possible return to nuclear talks", *New York Times*, 18 Sept. 2009.

- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°169, *North Korea: Getting Back to Talks*, 18 June 2009.

- ➡ **Taiwan Strait** Taiwan interior minister 25 Sept announced exiled Chinese ethnic Uighur leader Rebiya Kadeer would not be allowed to visit as planned in Dec. Govt 4 Sept announced will drop its annual bid to join UN. Both moves likely to ease tensions with Beijing after Aug Dalia Lama visit.
- [“Taiwan denies visit by exiled Uighur leader”](#), VOA, 25 Sept. 2009.

## SOUTH ASIA

- ➡ **Afghanistan** Allegations of fraud in 20 Aug presidential elections favouring mainly President Karzai intensified, raising prospect of further violence, particularly if Karzai declared 1st round winner. Independent Election Commission (IEC) 16 Sept announced final uncertified results; Karzai won 54.6% of votes, main challenger Abdullah Abdullah 27.75%, turnout 37.8%, but no winner officially announced. IEC 8 Sept had ordered recount of 10% of polling places; EU observers 16 Sept said at least one third of ballots showed evidence of fraud. Head of U.S. forces and ISAF Lt. Gen. Stanley McChrystal 21 Sept said Afghan mission “likely to fail” without troop increase; U.S. govt yet to make definite decision. Govt claimed 4 Sept NATO airstrike killed at least 100, including 30 civilians, in Kunduz province. At least 16 killed, including deputy director of govt intelligence agency, in 2 Sept Laghman suicide blast; Taliban claimed responsibility.
- [“Don’t need a weatherman...”](#), *Economist*, 24 Sept. 2009.
  - For latest report, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°175, [“Afghanistan: What Now for Refugees?”](#), 31 Aug. 2009.

- ➡ **Bangladesh** Court 7 Sept announced corruption trial against opposition BNP leader, ex-PM Khaleda Zia to start 25 Oct. Supreme Court 13 Sept rejected military trials for suspected BDR mutineers, govt said civilian trials will be “fast-tracked”. Army 8 Sept rejected rights groups’ reports that deaths in custody of 41 BDR suspects were due to torture.
- [“Bangladesh ex-PM Khaleda faces graft charge”](#), Reuters, 7 Sept. 2009.

- ➡ **India (non-Kashmir)** At least 24 Maoist rebels, 1 police killed in 18 Sept Chhattisgarh clash. Several killed, including at least 3 CPI(M) officials, by Maoists in Lalgarh district, West Bengal throughout month. PM Singh 15 Sept said police campaign against Maoists largely unsuccessful, violence on rise in several states. Police 21 Sept arrested top Maoist commander Kobad Gandhi.
- [“Indian PM says fight against Maoists is failing”](#), Reuters, 15 Sept. 2009.

- ➡ **Kashmir** Infiltration attempts by militants across LoC continued to rise ahead of winter months when border inaccessible; at least 10 soldiers, militants killed in clashes along LoC during Sept. Police 28 Sept killed 3 members of Lashkar-e-Tayyiba militant group in Tral area. Thousands protested in Shopian 9 Sept after leading activist behind calls for investigation into Indian troops’ alleged rape, murder of 2 women in May found dead; state govt 10 Sept said case handed over to state investigative agency CBI. Pakistan, India FMs met 27 Sept, but no agreement on resumption of peace talks.
- [“Infiltration attempts across LoC increasing”](#), *Hindu*, 24 Sept. 2009.

- ➡ **Nepal** Tens of thousands of Maoist supporters held anti-govt protests throughout month, including at least 15,000 in Kathmandu 11 Sept; sporadic violence in clashes with police. 3 killed in 6 Sept blast; police 7 Sept arrested 3 members of

Hindu militant NDA, including alleged leader. Govt early month declared VP Jha as “inactive” in position, took away his state privileges after he refused to retake oath of office in Nepali; Supreme Court Aug ruled earlier oath in Hindi invalid.

- [“Demonstration effect”](#), *Economist*, 17 Sept. 2009.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°173, [“Nepal’s Future: In Whose Hands?”](#), 13 Aug. 2009.

- ➡ **Pakistan** Govt announced most of displaced from Apr military offensive now returned to Malakand district, including Swat valley, but sporadic clashes with militants continued in region throughout month. Army 1 Sept launched offensive against Taliban in Khyber region, reported more than 150 militants killed during month. Army 11 Sept arrested Taliban spokesman Muslim Khan, 22 Sept commander Mohammad Nasim Shah; 1st arrests of top Taliban commanders since offensive began Apr. Army denied accusations of extrajudicial killings of captured militants in Swat. Religious affairs minister Hamid Saeed Kazmi survived 2 Sept Islamabad attack by unidentified gunmen. At least 30 killed in 17, 18 Sept Kohat suicide blasts, no claim of responsibility. 27 killed in 26 Sept suicide attacks in Bannu, NWFP capital Peshawar, Taliban claimed responsibility. U.S. Senate 24 Sept passed bill to triple Pakistan non-military aid to US\$1.5b per year.
- [“Pakistan army said to be linked to Swat killings”](#), *New York Times*, 14 Sept. 2009.
  - For background, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°93, [“Pakistan’s IDP Crisis: Challenges and Opportunities”](#), 3 June 2009.

- ➡ **Sri Lanka** UN delegation during mid-month visit expressed “strong concern” over slow resettlement process of some 280,000 IDPs held indefinitely in govt-run internment camps, lack of freedom in camps; President Rajapaksa 18 Sept reiterated plans to resettle “70-80%” of IDPs by end 2009. Govt 17 Sept admitted half of some 10,000 released from Menik Farm camp early month had been resettled in different camps. At least 3 refugees wounded trying to escape Menik Farm 27 Sept after govt troops opened fire. Late Aug jailing of anti-govt journalist J.S. Tissainayagam for 20 years drew widespread international criticism. 2nd instalment of US\$2.6b IMF loan to be considered Oct after IMF 22 Sept said “satisfied” with Sri Lanka’s economic performance.
- [“World leaders should demand end to detention camps”](#), Human Rights Watch, 22 Sept. 2009.
  - For latest report, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°172, [“Sri Lanka’s Judiciary: Politicised Courts, Compromised Rights”](#), 30 June 2009.

## SOUTH EAST ASIA

- ➡ **Indonesia** Noordin Top, suspected mastermind of July hotel bombings and previous Bali, Jakarta attacks, killed 17 Sept during police raid, along with 3 other suspected terrorists; 3 arrested. Senior Muslim figures 25 Sept pledged support for govt counter-terror efforts at thousands-strong Solo rally. President Yodhoyono 16 Sept intervened to temporarily shelve controversial state secrets parliamentary bill, voiced support for beleaguered Anti-Corruption Commission. Violent incidents continued in Papua, with shots fired near Freeport mine 9, 13, 16 Sept, injuring 4. Spokesman for armed Papuan separatist group arrested on subversion charges. Indonesian Human Rights Committee NGO 2 Sept expressed concern at rising rights violations, displacement in Papua. 14 Sept

passage of harsh Shari'a-influenced bylaw in Aceh caused alarm in Jakarta; implementation appears unlikely after Home Minister 16 Sept called for review.

- "Dialogue vital to solve Papua conflicts: Rights activists", *Jakarta Post*, 14 Sept. 2009.
- "Topped", *Economist*, 18 Sept. 2009.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°95, *Indonesia: Noordin Top's Support Base*, 27 Aug. 2009.

➡ **Myanmar/Burma** U.S. Sec State Clinton 23 Sept announced plans for engagement with junta, said sanctions will continue alongside direct talks. Asst Sec State Campbell 28 Sept confirmed start of dialogue, pledged increased humanitarian assistance, 29 Sept met with Burmese UNGA delegation. Burmese opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi 24 Sept announced support for U.S. policy shift, said opposition groups need to be part of talks. Speaking before UNGA, PM Gen. Thein Sein 28 Sept demanded end to "unjust" sanctions; met with UNSG Ban. Military govt 18 Sept announced amnesty for 7,114 prisoners, coinciding with 21st anniversary of junta takeover; 25 political prisoners released, including 2 journalists, NLD member Nine Nine. UNSG Ban, NLD welcomed amnesty, continued to call for Suu Kyi release. Suu Kyi's lawyers 3 Sept filed appeal against her Aug house arrest conviction; court to deliver verdict 2 Oct. China 1 Sept said 2,800 of estimated 37,000 Burmese refugees displaced by Aug conflict between govt and Kokang rebels had returned. UNHCR 2 Sept reported no response from China to its request for access to refugees. Seven small bombs exploded in Yangon suburbs 16, 17 Sept; no casualties, no claim of responsibility.

- "Burmese opposition supports new U.S. approach", *New York Times*, 24 Sept. 2009.

Crisis Group Asia Report N°177, *China's Myanmar Dilemma*, 14 Sept. 2009. After two decades of failed international approaches, Western countries and China must find better ways to work together to push for change in Myanmar. While many believe that China is the key to pushing Myanmar toward political reform, its influence is overstated. China shares the aspiration for a stable and prosperous Myanmar, but differs from the West on how to achieve these goals.



➡ **Philippines** Govt, MILF 15 Sept signed "Framework Agreement" outlining formation of International Contact Group to moderate planned talks, comprising Organization of Islamic Conference, EU, NGOs. MILF chair El Haj Murad Ebrahim said resumption of talks awaits establishment of Civilian Protection Mission. Army commander reported at least 34 Abu Sayyaf militants killed since 20 Sept start of assault on rebel stronghold in Sulu; 15 of deaths occurred during 21 Sept ambush on military killing 8 govt soldiers. Abu Sayyaf blamed for 29 Sept blast killing 2 U.S. troops, 1 Philippine marine. 3 kidnapped teachers held by rebels since March released 23 Sept. Senate 23 Sept passed resolution requesting govt renegotiate or terminate U.S.-Philippines Visiting Forces Agreement which it argues violates constitution; accuses U.S. troops of engaging in combat operations in Mindanao, violating agreement. Following 8, 11 Sept New People's Army (NPA) attacks on military, killing 3 civilians, NPA rebels 15 Sept cancelled suspended peace talks, called for fresh attacks after govt refusal of amnesty. Police 5 Sept announced arrest of 2 NPA leaders.

- "Veteran Philippine mujahedeen says he wants peace", AFP, 20 Sept. 2009.
- For background, see Crisis Group's Asia Briefing N°88, *The Philippines: Running in Place in Mindanao*, 16 Feb. 2009.

➡ **Thailand** Estimated 26,000 "red shirt" supporters of former PM Thaksin rallied in Bangkok 19 Sept to mark 3rd anniversary of his overthrow. Speaking to crowd by radio, Thaksin said Thailand becoming failed state; 6,000 police, army deployed, no reports of clashes. Army 18 Sept ruled out possibility of new coup. Dozens injured 19 Sept in northeastern Si Sa Ket province in clashes between villagers and 4,000 anti-Thaksin "yellow shirts" rallying at Preah Vihear temple, site of border dispute with Cambodia; state of emergency declared in Kantharalak district, riot police sent in. Cambodian PM Hun Sen 28 Sept said any Thais illegally crossing border would be shot. National Counter Corruption Commission 7 Sept said former PM Wongsawat and police Gen Wongsuwan criminally negligent in Oct 2008 crackdown of anti-Thaksin protesters. Violence continued in south: 11 killed, 20 wounded in shootings, bombings, military raids 2-3 Sept; 1 policeman killed, 12 civilians wounded by bomb in Yala 4 Sept; several soldiers, civilians killed in shootings, bombings across deep south over month. King Bhumibol hospitalised 19 Sept with fever, fatigue.

- "Where power lies", *Economist*, 17 Sept. 2009.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°170, *Recruiting Militants in Southern Thailand*, 22 June 2008.

➡ **Timor-Leste** UN, opposition, local judges criticised govt over its Aug decision, after Indonesian pressure, to release Maternus Bere, former Suai commander of Indonesia-era Laksaur militia indicted by UN Serious Crimes Unit for crimes against humanity. Appeals Court president Ximenes 9 Sept said release illegal, courts to investigate. UN OHCHR 15 Sept said normal legal procedures were not followed. Opposition Fretilin party 14 Sept pushed parliamentary censure motion over issue, threatened to force early elections. President Ramos-Horta 16 Sept continued to defend release, said UN "out of touch". TNI Commander Gen Santoso, during first visit by Indonesian military commander since independence, 3 Sept announced plans for increased military cooperation.

- "Growing anger at release of man accused of war crimes", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 17 Sept. 2009.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°87, *Timor-Leste: No Time for Complacency*, 9 Feb. 2009.

## PACIFIC

➡ **Fiji** Acting PM Ganilau called 1 Sept suspension of Fiji from Commonwealth "disappointing", again rejected Oct 2010 election deadline set by group. Commonwealth envoy Paul Reeves met regime leaders in Suva, pushed dialogue on electoral, constitutional issues; barred from meeting opposition leaders. EU 24 Sept announced 6-month extension of sanctions. Military leader Bainimarama 26 Sept defended 2006 coup and 2014 election timeline before UNGA, criticised apparent decision to exclude Fijian military from UN peacekeeping operations.

- "Amnesty: Fiji's military regime rules by fear", AP, 7 Sept. 2009.



## BALKANS

➡ **Bosnia** Month saw confrontation between Office of the High Representative (OHR) and Republika Srpska (RS) after High Representative Valentin Inzko 18 Sept used Bonn powers to impose 8 laws, mostly dealing with electric transmission utility – which RS trying to pull out of – and Brcko district. RS PM Dodik 23 Sept announced RS will withdraw all representatives from state govt if OHR imposes more laws. RS govt 24 Sept rejected laws they said OHR had illegally “attempted” to impose. Inzko argued his decisions “merely technical”, not against RS. Peace Implementation Council 24 Sept issued calming statement calling on RS to “reconsider” decision, warning direct challenges to OHR authority a direct challenge to Dayton. Council of Ministers 30 Sept adopted 2 key documents required for EU visa liberalization road map. Bosniak officials criticised Serbian President Tadic’s 8 Sept visit to Pale. NATO Joint Endeavour 2009 exercise launched 3-17 Sept in Banja Luka. Dodik criticised for denying wartime massacres in Sarajevo, Tuzla.

- “[Bosnia’s international envoys spring into action](#)”, Balkan Insight, 21 Sept. 2009.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Europe Briefing N°54, [Bosnia: A Test of Political Maturity in Mostar](#), 27 July 2009.

➡ **Kosovo** EULEX and Serbia 11 Sept signed policing protocol allowing for exchange of information on cross-border crime, in face of continued opposition from Kosovo govt; strong international pressure on Pristina to allow protocol to go forward. Some 1,000 Kosovo Albanians protested protocol 14 Sept; 2 EULEX vehicles attacked 16 Sept. 2 further protocols on customs and judiciary in pipeline, required for Serbia to fulfil requirements for visa-free travel to EU. EULEX 17 Sept requested MoU for access to information held by Kosovo police. In ongoing unrest over reconstruction of Albanian homes in north Mitrovica, Serbs and Albanians clashed early Sept; no injuries. Some 100 Serbs protested reconstruction, EULEX 7 Sept. EUSR Feith 16 Sept announced creation of 3 new Serb-dominated municipalities following 15 Nov local elections.

- “[EULEX: deal will boost organised crime fight](#)”, SEE Times, 14 Sept. 2009.
- For background, see Crisis Group Europe Report N°200, [Serb Integration in Kosovo: Taking the Plunge](#), 12 May 2009.

➡ **Macedonia** Parliament 10 Sept passed law regulating work of civil servants, last in series of measures needed for EU accession bid, ahead of anticipated EC report on reform progress in Oct. EU Enlargement Commissioner Rehn said Macedonia has serious chance of receiving recommended start date for EU accession talks this autumn if progress continues. Row over new encyclopaedia ethnic Albanians claim distorts history.

- “[Macedonia’s Ivanov upbeat on future](#)”, SEE Times, 1 Sept. 2009.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Europe Briefing N°52, [Macedonia’s Name: Breaking the Deadlock](#), 12 Jan. 2009.

➡ **Serbia** EU Enlargement Commissioner Rehn 17 Sept advised Serbia not to apply for EU membership until Serbia-EU Interim

Trade Agreement is unblocked. Govt 25 Sept submitted report on fulfilment of conditions required for EU visa liberalisation. Failed attempt to hold Pride Parade in Belgrade 20 Sept led to major offensive by govt against far-right, nationalist groups.

- “[Serbian president at UN balances outreach to West, anger on Kosovo](#)”, RFE/RL, 25 Sept. 2009.

## CAUCASUS

➡ **Armenia/Turkey** Following break-through 31 Aug agreement on protocols to normalise relations, draft protocols to be signed by FMs in Switzerland 10 Oct before going to national parliaments for ratification. Turkish PM Erdogan 18 Sept said Turkey will not reopen border with Armenia as long as Nagorno-Karabakh (N-K) dispute unresolved; Yerevan accused Erdogan of acting against “letter, spirit and aims” of agreement, reiterated Armenia rules out linkage between rapprochement with Turkey and N-K conflict.

- “[Turkey to re-establish ties with Armenia](#)”, VOA, 30 Sept. 2009.
- For background, see Crisis Group Europe Report N°199, [Turkey and Armenia: Opening Minds, Opening Borders](#), 14 April 2009.

➡ **Armenia** As part of planned internal political consultations, President Sarkisian held meeting with over 50 opposition leaders 17 Sept regarding rapprochement process with Turkey (see Armenia/Turkey). Meeting boycotted by Heritage party, which is calling for referendum on issue, and Armenian National Congress (HAK). Rapprochement agreement drew criticism from number of sources over month including hardline Dashnaksutiun party; and support including from prominent genocide scholar. Addressing thousands attending HAK rally 18 Sept, former President Ter-Petrosian called for opposition unity.

- “[Opposition faction blasts text of Armenia-Turkey deal, makes case for referendum](#)”, Armenia Now, 29 Sept. 2009.

➡ **Azerbaijan** Amid dispute with Turkmenistan over Caspian Sea demarcation and oil and gas resources, Baku 1 Sept criticised Turkmen announcement previous day of plans for naval base on Caspian sea, called for demilitarisation of Caspian. Trial of 2 activists jailed in July on charges of hooliganism began, continuing to attract criticism from rights and media freedom organisations, govts and EU, citing attempts to silence dissent.

- “[Turkey again links Armenia ties with Karabakh peace](#)”, RFE/RL, 30 Sept. 2009.

➡ **Chechnya (Russia)** Gunmen killed 2 police officers at police checkpoint east of Grozny, 3 police wounded by suicide bomber in Grozny, 12 Sept. 6 people injured in suicide attack by police car in Grozny 16 Sept. President Kadyrov 24 Sept claimed U.S., UK intelligence services involved in Chechen insurgency in attempt to split Russia up; 26 Sept launched defamation suit against head of human rights group Memorial in Moscow court. Human Rights Watch 27 Sept accused Moscow of contributing to climate of impunity in Chechnya.

- “[Insurgents strike in Chechnya, Dagestan, Ingushetia and Kabardino-Balkaria](#)”, EDM, 18 Sept. 2009.

➡ **North Caucasus (non-Chechnya)** Russian regional development minister 11 Sept announced reduction in aid to North Caucasus due to economic crisis. Ingushetia President Yevkurov 2 Sept urged public vigilance against suicide bombers, 14 Sept said 90% of insurgents killed in Ingushetia recently “foreign



mercenaries"; followed reported FSB killing of senior Algerian militant in Dagestan 31 Aug. Prosecutor General 8 Sept said attackers responsible for June assassination attempt on Yevkurov identified, 2 killed shortly after attack. Violence continued, including in Dagestan deputy prosecutor-general shot dead 10 Sept, district governor gunned down 27 Sept. In Karachayevo-Cherkessia republic, leading Muslim cleric shot dead 20 Sept.

- "Al-Qaida seeks to 'rekindle Chechnya war'", UPI, 16 Sept. 2009.
- For background, see Crisis Group Europe Report N°192, *Russia's Dagestan: Conflict Causes*, 3 June 2008.

➡ **Georgia** Georgian court 1 Sept sentenced captain of Turkish Abkhazia-bound tanker seized by authorities Aug to 24 years for illegal border crossing and smuggling, amid mounting tensions over Georgia's sea blockade of Abkhazia. Abkhazia leader Bagapsh 2 Sept threatened to "destroy" Georgian ships entering Abkhazia's "territorial waters" in response to Georgian "piracy"; Georgia said would hold Russia responsible for any attacks. Russia 15 Sept said it will detain any Georgian ships found off Abkhazian coast without permission, 21 Sept announced it had started patrolling waters. EU-sponsored report on Aug 2008 conflict 30 Sept said war started by Georgian attack, in response to months of Russian provocation. In 7th round of Geneva talks since Aug 2008 war, Georgian, Russian officials 17 Sept agreed to work towards deal on non-use of force, disagreed on international security arrangements. Russia 15 Sept signed 49-year deal with Abkhazia and South Ossetia (SO) for formal establishment of military bases with 1,700 troops. Venezuelan president Chavez in Moscow 10 Sept announced recognition of Abkhazia and SO. Abkhaz Orthodox Church 15 Sept officially split from Georgian Orthodox Church. Georgian authorities blamed explosion at train station in Zugdidi 15 Sept on terrorists.

- "Uncomfortable conclusions for Georgia", BBC, 30 Sept. 2009.
- For background, see Crisis Group Europe Briefing N°53, *Georgia-Russia: Still Insecure and Dangerous*, 22 June 2009.

➡ **Nagorno-Karabakh (Azerbaijan)** Positive comments from Azerbaijan 3 Sept regarding progress in resolution of N-K conflict; senior presidential aide said there could be movement in resolving dispute before Turkey-Armenia border opened. 5 Armenian soldiers killed in clash with Azerbaijani forces near N-K 10 Sept. Azerbaijani athletes participated in sporting event in Armenia for first time since fall of Soviet Union. Turkish PM Erdogan at UNGA 22 Sept urged international mediators to speed up efforts to resolve N-K dispute (see Armenia/Turkey).

- "Karabakh IDPs emerge to promote Baku's peace plan", Eurasianet, 25 Sept. 2009.

## EASTERN EUROPE

➡ **Belarus** Over 20 activists detained following anti-Russia protests in Minsk 9 Sept, same day as arrival of Russian troops ahead of joint Belarusian-Russian military maneuvers "West 2009" beginning 18 Sept. Police broke up unsanctioned opposition rally numbering some 40 in Minsk 16 Sept, arrested some 20 protesters. EU presidency Sweden 17 Sept called on govt to improve human rights, democracy, refrain from use of force in dealing with peaceful demonstrations, avoid usurping media freedoms.

- "RF, Belarus presidents to hold one-on-one talks", ITAR-TASS, 29 Sept. 2009.

➡ **Moldova** Amid confrontational atmosphere between Communists and pro-European coalition AIE, Constitutional Court 9 Sept threw out Communist Party complaint contesting selection of Mihail Ghimpu as Speaker following their late-Aug parliament walkout. Acting President Voronin resigned 11 Sept. Communists 15 Sept said may vote for AIE presidential candidate (AIE needs 8 Communist votes to elect president) if coalition adheres to their social program, does not pursue NATO membership. Ghimpu recognized as acting president by Constitutional Court 17 Sept, nominated Vlad Filat PM. Filat immediately announced intention to adopt austerity measures to qualify for IMF assistance. New govt approved by parliament 25 Sept; Filat announced priorities include European integration, late-month visited Brussels. Parliament election for President expected Oct.

- "EU signals readiness to resume full ties with Moldova", RFE/RL, 25 Sept. 2009.

➡ **Ukraine** PM Tymoshenko and Russian PM Putin struck deal 1 Sept for Ukraine to import less Russian gas than previously agreed, avoiding potential fines; successful negotiation fed speculation Moscow may back Tymoshenko in Jan presidential elections. Russian media 8 Sept reported Moscow may lend Ukraine \$2b ahead of election, to be discussed at Oct meeting between Tymoshenko and Putin. Tymoshenko said Ukraine has sufficient stocks of natural gas to ensure smooth transit to Europe.

- "Ukraine's options to counter Russia are limited", RFE/RL, 23 Sept. 2009.

## WESTERN EUROPE/MEDITERRANEAN

➡ **Basque Country (Spain)** 13 members of Basque parties D3M and Askatasuna, banned Feb for "ETA links", prosecuted for belonging to ETA 7 Sept.

- "Basque village caught in Eta purge", BBC, 4 Sept. 2009.

➡ **Cyprus** Resumption of reunifications talks between Greek Cypriot leader Christofias and Turkish Cypriot leader Talat, scheduled for 3 Sept, postponed by Greek Cypriots after 2 Sept failure to open Limnitis/Yesilirmak crossing; diplomats blamed provocations by Greek Cypriot hardliners. Talks resumed 10 Sept, discussing govt and power sharing, including election of president and vice-president of the "united republic". UN envoy Downer 17 Sept announced leaders' decision to accelerate pace of meetings, meeting twice a week in 2 consecutive weeks in Oct; expressed "cautious optimism", praised leaders' commitment to successful outcome. Disagreements emerged late month over issue of Turkish settlers in Cyprus, and over Christofias' criticism of Turkish Cypriot side in speech to UNGA. Next meeting scheduled 7 Oct; representatives and experts to meet before to discuss proposals on executive power, narrow differences. Following meeting with Turkish PM Erdogan, UNSG Ban 24 Sept expressed optimism.

- "Cyprus peace talks intensify", EDM, 15 Sept. 2009.

Europe Report N° 201, *Cyprus: Reunification or Partition?*, 30 Sept. 2009.



Negotiating Greek and Turkish Cypriot leaders must join forces and embrace a collaborative, federal reunification of the island in the next few months, or see their efforts overtaken by the unstoppable dynamic of a hostile partition.

➡ **Northern Ireland** Ulster Defense Association 8 Sept pledged to give up arms within 6 months. Army diffused 272kg

bomb found close to border with Ireland 8 Sept; dissident republicans suspected. Failed pipe bomb attack on car in Londonderry 21 Sept also blamed on dissident republicans.

▪ [“Hanging in there”](#), *Economist*, 17 Sept. 2009.

➡ **Turkey** Over 20,000 Kurdish demonstrators 2 Sept called for peace talks with rebel PKK, greater language rights in Diyarbakir, Istanbul demonstrations; 10,000 marched again in Diyarbakir, 25 Sept. 10 soldiers killed in 3 separate clashes with PKK 8-9 Sept in Hakkari, Siirt provinces. Army leaders 18 Sept requested extension of mandate for anti-PKK operations in northern Iraq past Oct expiry date. Govt 7 Sept imposed \$2.5bn fine on critical Dogan media group for unpaid taxes; critics suggested political motive; EU, OSCE expressed concern for media freedom 10, 16 Sept. First session held 7 Sept in third indictment of ongoing “Ergenekon” coup plot case. 6 suspects in 2003 al-Qaeda Istanbul bombings arrested 16 Sept. Agreement with Syria on ending visa requirements, economic cooperation signed 16 Sept.

▪ [“Turkish media group is fined \\$2.5 billion”](#), *New York Times*, 9 Sept. 2009.

▪ [“Kurds rally for their rights”](#), Al Jazeera, 2 Sept. 2009.



## Latin America / Caribbean

➡ **Bolivia** Ex-Cochabamba prefect Manfred Reyes Villa now main opposition candidate for Dec presidential elections after several other candidates stepped down. Villa 1 Sept named ex-Pando governor Leopoldo Fernández as VP running mate; Fernández still imprisoned, accused of instigating Sept 2008 violent Pando clash that killed 20, mostly pro-Morales supporters. Govt 10 Sept nationalised 3 electricity providers by decree. U.S. State Department report 16 Sept stated Bolivia “failed demonstrably” to reduce cocaine production, said aid will continue.

▪ [“Los ex prefectos se convierten en única alternativa a Morales”](#), Infolatam, 8 Sept. 2009.

➡ **Colombia** House of Representatives 2 Sept approved by 1-vote margin bill to hold referendum on whether to allow President Uribe to run for 3rd term May 2010; bill still has to pass Constitutional Court. Police 2 Sept captured influential FARC commander and mine expert Alberto Chaparro; FARC has increased landmine use considerably 2008-9. Govt 18 Sept announced closure of secret police (DAS) by end 2009, to be replaced by new civilian intelligence agency; DAS had earlier been accused of spying on judges, journalists, opposition. Uribe 19 Sept said would accept FARC release of 24 remaining high-profile hostages gradually, reversing demand all released simultaneously. Venezuela, Ecuador again criticised Colombia-U.S. military base deal at mid-month UNASUR summit.

▪ [“Closer to Uribe 3.0”](#), *Economist*, 3 Sept. 2009.

▪ For background, see Crisis Group Latin America Briefing N°21, [The Virtuous Twins: Protecting Human Rights and Improving Security in Colombia](#), 25 May 2009.

➡ **Ecuador** Ecuador, Colombia FMs 22 Sept held 1st official talks since diplomatic relations cut off after Colombia’s March 2008 airstrike on FARC camp inside Ecuador; said direct talks on all contentious issues, including improving border security, would continue Oct. Indigenous CONAIE group 28 Sept

launched “indefinite” protests against govt over new water law; 1 killed in clashes with police.

▪ [“Colombia y Ecuador acuerdan restablecer el contacto diplomático”](#), *El País*, 25 Sept. 2009.

➡ **Haiti** UN Special Envoy to Haiti Bill Clinton 9 Sept called on donors to fulfil pledges, said only US\$21m of total \$760m pledged at April donors conference disbursed. Quorum ensured in Senate after 11 new senators sworn in 4 Sept.

▪ [“U.N. envoy Bill Clinton chides donors over Haiti aid”](#), Reuters, 9 Sept. 2009.

➡ **Honduras** Deposed President Zelaya 21 Sept made unannounced return to capital Tegucigalpa, said for “peaceful dialogue”. De facto govt imposed curfew, ordered troops surround Brazilian embassy where Zelaya took refuge; thousands of Zelaya-supporters gathered outside embassy, at least 2 killed in clashes with troops. De facto President Micheletti and main political parties 25 Sept started dialogue with Zelaya, but called off after Zelaya continued calls for street protests; Micheletti still opposes widespread international calls for Zelaya’s return to presidency until 29 Nov elections. Micheletti 28 Sept declared 45-day “state of siege” by decree, effectively suspending civil liberties; but later said would revoke decree after strong criticism from within own party, Congress. Govt 28 Sept closed 2 pro-Zelaya media outlets.

▪ [“Honduran power brokers pushing for end to crisis”](#), AP, 30 Sept. 2009.

➡ **Peru** Police 21 Sept announced capture of influential Shining Path commander Brandy Maldonado Vásquez. Several military personnel killed in suspected Shining Path attacks during month, including 2 pilots 3 Sept when rebels shot down helicopter in Acobamba district.

▪ [“La policía peruana detiene a un alto mando de Sendero Luminoso”](#), *El País*, 21 Sept. 2009.

➡ **Venezuela** Govt mid-month announced US\$2.2bn weapons deal with Russia; U.S. said a “serious challenge to stability” in region. Opposition, Inter-American Press Society said press freedoms increasingly threatened after govt 6 Sept revoked licenses of 29 private radio stations, announced new probe into pro-opposition TV station Globovisión.

▪ [“US fears Latin American arms race”](#), AFP, 14 Sept. 2009.

▪ For background, see Crisis Group Latin America Report N°27, [Venezuela: Political Reform or Regime Demise?](#), 23 July 2008.



## Middle East / North Africa

### EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

➡ **Israel/Occupied Palestinian Territories** U.S. push to revive Israeli-Palestinian peace talks produced no breakthrough despite 22 Sept New York meeting between President Obama, Israeli PM Netanyahu, Palestinian PM Abbas; meeting came after leaders’ talks with U.S. envoy Mitchell during 13-18 Sept trip to region. Israeli govt announced plans to continue construction in E Jerusalem, W Bank including 455 new units 7 Sept despite U.S., Palestinian calls for settlement freeze; Netanyahu 14 Sept said construction to be “scaled down” but not

frozen. 15 Sept Goldstone report to UN Human Rights Council on Dec-Jan Gaza offensive accused Israeli army of violations of international law including intentional targeting of civilians, called for full investigation; report also called for investigation of possible war crimes by Hamas. Fatah central committee 14 Sept announced acceptance of Egyptian reconciliation proposal, including delaying Palestinian elections planned for Jan; Hamas leader Meshal 28 Sept said Hamas ready to sign final draft with minor adjustments in Oct. Hamas, Israel 30 Sept agreed release of 20 Palestinian women detainees in exchange for video tape showing captured Israeli soldier Shalit is alive. 2 gunmen killed 19 Sept by Israeli shell in N Gaza following rocket fire into Israel; Israeli airstrike 25 Sept killed 3 militants east of Gaza city. Palestinian rioters 27 Sept clashed with security forces at Jerusalem's Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif.

- "Off the hook, for now", *Economist*, 24 Sept. 2009.
- For background, see Crisis Group Middle East Report N°89, *Israel's Religious Right and the Question of Settlements*, 20 July 2009.

➡ **Lebanon** Efforts to form cabinet set back as PM-designate Hariri stepped down 10 Sept after opposition rejected new cabinet proposal. Hariri reappointed as PM-designate by president 16 Sept with support of 73 out of 128 MPs; new round of consultations launched 24 Sept. 2 rockets fired into Israel from southern Lebanon 11 Sept; unverified claim of responsibility by militant group Abdullah Azzam Brigades. Israel responded with 8 shells near Tyre; no casualties reported. U.S. Middle East envoy Mitchell visited Beirut 16 Sept for talks with President Suleiman. Internal Security Forces reported alleged plot to assassinate Grand Mufti Qabbani on first day of Eid al-Fitr. Businessman Salah Ezzedine, tied to Hizbollah, charged with fraud 12 Sept in multi-million dollar pyramid scheme.

- "Way paved for new cabinet in Lebanon", *National*, 28 Sept. 2009.

➡ **Syria** Syrian, Iraqi FM's 17 Sept met for Turkish-mediated talks to defuse diplomatic tension after Iraq accused Damascus of sheltering perpetrators of 19 Aug Baghdad bombing; no tangible progress made (see Iraq). Deputy PM Mekdad visited U.S. for talks on Iraq, sanctions 27 Sept. In sign of improved relations, President Assad paid surprise visit to Saudi Arabia 23 Sept. Syria, Turkey signed accord 16 Sept to end visa requirements, strengthen economic cooperation. Syria 17 Sept appealed for UN inquiry into Mehlis report, which implicated Syria in 2005 assassination of Lebanese PM Hariri.

- "Iraq and Syria at talks in Turkey", BBC, 17 Sept. 2009.

## GULF

➡ **Iran** International tensions over Iranian nuclear activities renewed ahead of 1 Oct talks with UNSC P5+1 group after Iran 21 Sept notified IAEA of previously undisclosed second uranium enrichment facility. U.S., European states warned of further sanctions, urged Iran to cooperate; Iranian officials said IAEA would have access to new facility. Revolutionary Guards held 2-day missile tests 27-28 Sept. Protests over June re-election of Ahmadinejad as president continued, with thousands of anti-govt protesters joining official Jerusalem Day rallies in Tehran, other cities 18 Sept. Reformist leaders Musavi, Karrubi, Khatami joined marchers; some clashes with security forces reported. Students held protests at reopened Tehran universities, 28-29 Sept. Authorities maintained pressure on reformists with arrest of senior Musavi/Karrubi

aides, raids on offices 7-8 Sept; Supreme Leader Khamenei 11 Sept warned opposition to regime would be met by harsh response. Karrubi maintained call for investigation into alleged rapes of detainees despite judicial committee's 6 Sept rejection of claims. Parliament 3 Sept approved 18 of 21 cabinet ministers nominated by Ahmadinejad following earlier criticisms. 2 police, 4 gunmen reported killed in 27 Sept arrest operation, Sanandaj, Kurdistan province; officials said targeted group involved in mid-month killings of 2 pro-govt Sunni clerics, attempted assassination of 2 judges in city.

- "Iran flexes muscle ahead of talks with major powers", Reuters, 28 Sept. 2009.
- For background, see Crisis Group Middle East Briefing N°28, *U.S.-Iranian Engagement: The View from Tehran*, 2 June 2009.

➡ **Iraq** Continuing tension with Syria over PM Maliki's charge that Damascus sheltering perpetrators of deadly August bombing. Maliki 4 Sept ordered extra police to Syrian border, 6 Sept demanded UN investigation into bombing; President Talabani and deputies called for easing of tensions in 8 Sept statement. Syrian, Iraqi foreign ministers met with Turkish mediation in Istanbul, 17 Sept. U.S. VP Biden 15-17 Sept held meetings with leaders in Baghdad, Erbil in ongoing push to resolve key political disputes. Former deputy PM Barham Salih appointed PM of Kurdistan region 16 Sept. 97 members of Shiite insurgent Asaib al-Haqq group released 28 Sept. Insurgent attacks killed scores across country, particularly in north, including 23 dead in 10 Sept truck bomb in Kurdish village near Mosul; 10 police officers killed near Kirkuk, 8 Sept; 8 killed by car bomb, Kirkuk, 9 Sept.

- "Biden presses Iraqis to agree on oil, land", Reuters, 17 Sept. 2009.

Crisis Group Middle East Report N°90, *Iraq's New Battlefield: The Struggle over Ninewa*, 28 Sept. 2009. Arabs and Kurds must urgently agree to a power-sharing deal, joint patrols in disputed areas and protection of minority groups to prevent escalating violence in Ninewa from endangering what remains highly fragile and uneven progress in Iraq.



➡ **Saudi Arabia** Ismaili Shiite leader jailed in 2008 after calling for removal of Najran province governor released 21 Sept. Large groups of youths rioted 23 Sept on eve of national day in Khobar, Eastern Province.

- "Saudi Shi'ite figure freed after 18 mth detention", Reuters, 22 Sept. 2009.

➡ **Yemen** Govt offensive against Houthi-led rebels in northern Saada, Amran provinces continued for second month; fighting reported in Saada city, Harf Sufyan district between Saada and capital. Govt claimed up to 140 rebels killed as 22 Sept rebel offensive against Saada city fought back; casualty reports largely unverifiable as media access restricted. At least 80 civilians reported killed 16 Sept in govt airstrike on displaced persons camp; civilian deaths also reported in 26 Sept airstrike. Govt 1 Sept rejected Houthis' ceasefire proposal, insisting on 6 conditions set out in Aug. Rebels, govt traded accusations of blame as ceasefires to allow humanitarian aid into area rapidly broke down 4, 19 Sept; aid agencies, UN officials including SG Ban 18 Sept, appealed for access to area, warned of potential humanitarian crisis; UN estimated total 150,000 people displaced in north since 2004 including

55,000 in recent fighting. In south, armed clashes between Southern Movement supporters, security forces reported in Zinjibar 28 Sept, Dhali', Lahj, 30 Sept.

- "Yemen's north hit by bloodiest fighting in years", *New York Times*, 20 Sept. 2009.
- For background, see Crisis Group Middle East Report N°86, *Yemen: Defusing the Saada Time Bomb*, 27 May 2009.

## NORTH AFRICA

➡ **Algeria** Algeria hosted talks early Sept between military leaders from Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Algeria, producing plan for jointly tackling terrorism, cross-border crime in Sahel. 7 anti-terror gendarmerie units sent to bolster security in Kabylie region, according to 5 Sept press report. Authorities said 2 militants wounded in 25 Sept clash with security forces, Boumerdes. Official 29 Sept reported surrender of 10 militants in previous 2 weeks as part of ongoing govt reconciliation campaign.

- "Algeria deploys special gendarmes to boost Kabylie security", *Magharebia*, 6 Sept. 2009.

➡ **Egypt** 16 members of banned Muslim Brotherhood movement arrested 26 Sept, Beheira. Police 1 Sept reported discovery of explosives cache in Rafah, Gaza border. Hundreds of Coptic Christians protested at 17 Sept funeral of man murdered by beheading, calling for govt protection.

- "Egypt detains 16 Islamists in latest roundup", *AFP*, 28 Sept. 2009.

➡ **Mauritania** International Contact Group on Mauritania 13 Sept called for international assistance to Mauritania, after praising steps taken to implement Dakar Agreement, including July elections. IMF visiting delegation 17 Sept announced ready

to negotiate new assistance programme, suspended following Aug 2008 coup. NATO 25 Sept announced resumption of full cooperation with Mauritania in Mediterranean Dialogue security forum, citing political progress. World Bank 29 Sept resumed relations with Mauritania after one-year suspension, also citing improved governance. Military source 28 Sept reported arrest of 7 alleged al-Qaeda militants in remote north east.

- "NATO resumes cooperation with Mauritania", *Reuters*, 25 Sept. 2009.

➡ **Morocco** Authorities 23 Sept announced arrest of 24 suspects in alleged al-Qaeda network recruiting fighters for Iraq, Somalia, Afghanistan.

- "Morocco arrests 24 in 'terrorist network' crackdown", *AFP*, 24 Sept. 2009.

➡ **Western Sahara** UNHCR head visited Sahrawi refugee camps in Algeria 9-10 Sept as part of North African tour; proposed establishment of land corridor to Moroccan-held zone to facilitate refugee family visits. Morocco 28 Sept called for UNHCR to facilitate refugees' relocation to third countries.

- "UNHCR makes landmark visit to Sahrawi refugee camp", *Magharebia*, 10 Sept. 2009.

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Miguel Ángel Moratinos, Spanish Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, June 2007

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