



# CHRONOLOGY OF ARMAMENTS, DISARMAMENT AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY 2009

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This chronology lists the significant events in 2009 related to armaments, disarmament and international security. In addition to the headline-grabbing events, such as the end of the conflict in Sri Lanka and North Korea's nuclear test, it also records the less publicized, but no less important, advances and setbacks in arms controls and international security.

Dates are according to local time. Keywords are given in the margins. Abbreviations are explained below.

## 2 January

Sri Lankan Government forces capture the town of Kilinochchi, in the north part of Sri Lanka, following heavy fighting with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) rebels. Kilinochchi has been held by the LTTE since 1999 and is an important political symbol for the Sri Lankan Government.

## 3–18 January

Following massive Israeli air strikes on the Gaza Strip since the offensive started on 27 December 2008, Israeli ground forces enter the area. Heavy fighting takes place in Gaza City between the Israeli forces and Hamas. According to Palestinian and human rights groups, up to 1400 Palestinians have been killed since the offensive began; 13 Israelis have been killed. (See also **18 January** and **16 October**.)

## 15 January

The 3000 Ethiopian forces supporting the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of Somalia withdraw completely from Mogadishu, Somalia.

## 16 January

The UN Security Council unanimously adopts Resolution 1863, renewing the authorization for the African Union (AU) Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) for a period of six months; expressing its intention to deploy a UN peace operation to follow on from AMISOM; and authorizing the establishment of a trust fund and logistic support package.

## KEYWORDS

Sri Lanka

Israel; Gaza Strip

Somalia; Ethiopia

AU; UN; Somalia

**18 January**

Israel; Gaza Strip

On 17 January Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert announces a unilateral ceasefire in the Gaza Strip from 18 January, declaring that Israel has achieved the goals it set when launching the military operation on 27 December 2008. On 18 January Hamas declares its own truce, demanding the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the Gaza Strip within one week and the opening of all crossings for the entry of humanitarian aid and food. On 21 January Israel completes its troop withdrawal from the Gaza Strip.

**20 January**

DRC; Rwanda

Rwandan troops cross into eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) to assist Congolese Government forces in disarming the Rwandan Hutu Democratic Liberation Forces of Rwanda (Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda, FDLR) rebels. During the joint military operation the National Congress for People's Defence (Congrès National pour la Défense du Peuple, CNDP) rebel leader Laurent Nkunda is arrested on 22 January when fleeing into Rwanda.

**21 January**

Israel; Laws of war

The Israeli Army announces that it will investigate the allegations made by several NGOs that it used white phosphorus illegally during its three-week military operation in the Gaza Strip. Under Protocol III of the 1981 Certain Conventional Weapons Convention, the use of white phosphorus is not allowed in areas where civilians are concentrated.

**22 January**

USA

US President Barack Obama signs executive orders closing the US detention camp at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, within a year; closing the Central Intelligence Agency's secret prisons; requiring a review of military trials for terror suspects; and requiring all interrogations to follow the non-coercive methods specified in the Army Field Manual.

**25 January**

Sri Lanka

Sri Lankan Government forces capture Mullaitivu, the last stronghold of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) rebels in north-eastern Sri Lanka. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) estimates that 250 000 civilians are trapped by the fighting and warns of a major humanitarian crisis.

**26 January**

The first trial at the International Criminal Court (ICC) opens in The Hague, Netherlands. At the trial the leader of the Union of Congolese Patriots (Union des Patriotes Congolais, UPC), Thomas Lubanga Dyilo, is charged with war crimes, consisting of enlisting and conscripting children under the age of 15 years and using them to participate actively in hostilities in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) between 2002 and 2003. Lubanga Dyilo was arrested in 2006.

ICC; DRC

**27–28 January**

Hamas breaks the ceasefire declared on 18 January by attacking an Israeli frontier patrol; Israel responds immediately by renewing its air strikes on the Gaza Strip border with Egypt.

Israel; Gaza Strip

**30 January**

The North Korean Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of Korea declares that all military and political agreements with South Korea are 'dead', accusing the South Korean Government of having pushed relations to the 'brink of a war'.

North Korea; South Korea

**3 February**

Iran launches its first domestically built satellite into orbit. Iran states that the satellite is meant for research and telecommunications purposes, but Western states express concern that the technology could be used in the development of ballistic missiles.

Iran; Satellites

**6 February**

A British and a French nuclear submarine collide in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. Both countries report no injuries.

France; UK; Submarines

Kyrgyzstan announces its decision to close the US military base at Manas, near Bishkek. The Manas base was set up in 2001 to assist the US military operations against al-Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan. The decision is reversed on 25 June when the Kyrgyz Parliament ratifies a treaty allowing the base to serve as a key support base and transit hub for NATO forces in Afghanistan.

Kyrgyzstan; USA; Military bases

**16 February**

The provincial government of the North West Frontier Province of Pakistan and a local militant leader, Sufi Mohammad, sign an agreement (the Nizam-e-Adal regulation) creating a separate system of justice based on sharia law in the Malakand division, which includes the Swat Valley region. The agreement is an attempt to stop the Taliban uprising that started in the region in 2007. Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari claims that peace has to be restored in the Swat Valley before he approves the regulation.

Pakistan; Islam

**17 February**

Sudan; Darfur

Meeting in Doha, Qatar, the Sudanese Government and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) rebel group in Darfur sign a declaration of good intent, under which the parties agree to end attacks on refugee camps and to exchange prisoners. The negotiations will continue under the auspices of the Government of Qatar.

Cambodia; War crimes

The trial of the former Khmer Rouge leader, Kaing Guek Eav ('Duch') opens at the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC) in Phnom Penh. Duch is charged with crimes against humanity during the 1975–79 'Democratic Kampuchea' period. The ECCC was set up by the UN and the Government of Cambodia in 2003. On 31 March Duch admits his responsibility for crimes committed at Tuol Sleng prison.

USA; Afghanistan

US President Barack Obama authorizes the deployment of an additional 17 000 military personnel to Afghanistan. The troops will be deployed to 'meet urgent security needs' in southern Afghanistan.

**4 March**Sudan; Darfur; War crimes;  
ICC; NGOs; Aid

The Pre-Trial Chamber I of the International Criminal Court (ICC), The Hague, Netherlands, issues a warrant for the arrest of Sudanese President Omar Hassan al-Bashir on charges of crimes against humanity and war crimes in Darfur. The ICC states that it has insufficient evidence to charge al-Bashir with genocide. This is the first arrest warrant ever issued by the ICC for a sitting head of state. In response, the Sudanese authorities order 10 foreign aid agencies, to leave Sudan.

NATO; Russia;  
NATO–Russia Council

Meeting in Brussels, the foreign ministers of the NATO member states agree that the formal cooperation with Russia in the NATO–Russia Council, suspended in August 2008 as a protest against Russia's war with Georgia, will resume.

**11 March**

France; NATO

French President Nicolas Sarkozy announces that France will return to the integrated military command of NATO, which it withdrew from in 1966 due to a controversy over US influence in Europe.

**15 March**

EU; UN; CAR; Chad; Sudan

The European Union's EUFOR Tchad/RCA peacekeeping mission hands over its operations to the UN Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT) in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 1834 (2008).

**17 March**

Meeting with Russian Defence Ministry officials, President Dmitry Medvedev announces that Russia will begin a comprehensive military rearmament from 2011. Its primary task will be to enhance the combat preparedness of the Russian forces, especially the strategic nuclear forces. Medvedev expresses concerns over NATO's expansion close to Russia's borders.

Russia; Armed forces

Two US female journalists, together with their Chinese guide, are detained by North Korean soldiers at the China–North Korea border when reporting on North Korean refugees in north-eastern China. In June the two women are sentenced to 12 years of hard labour. On 4 August the two are pardoned and released following mediation by former US President Bill Clinton.

North Korea; China; USA

**19 March**

China and Viet Nam agree to set up a hotline between their foreign ministries, and to focus on negotiations to solve the outstanding maritime issues in order to maintain peace and stability in the South China Sea.

China; Viet Nam; CBMs

**21 March**

Following ratification by Kazakhstan on 11 December 2008, the 2006 Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone in Central Asia (Treaty of Semipalatinsk) enters into force.

Central Asia; NWFZ

**23 March**

Meeting in Goma, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the Congolese Government, the National Congress for People's Defence (Congrès National pour la Défense du Peuple, CNDP) and other armed rebel groups in North and South Kivu provinces sign peace agreements. The agreements envisage an end to hostilities, transformation of armed groups into political parties, the return of displaced persons and refugees to their homes, and integration into national political life of the leaders of all armed groups.

DRC

**24 March**

French Defence Minister Hervé Morin announces that France will compensate those suffering health problems linked to radiation and resulting from the more than 200 nuclear weapon tests that France carried out from 1960 to 1996 in Algeria and Polynesia. France has previously not recognized any link between the testing and radiation-related sickness.

France; Nuclear testing;  
Radiation

**27 March**

USA; Afghanistan; Pakistan

US President Barack Obama presents the new US strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan. Its goal is to disrupt, dismantle and defeat al-Qaeda in both countries and to prevent their return in the future. A standing, trilateral dialogue between Afghanistan, Pakistan and the USA will be launched together with enhanced intelligence sharing and military cooperation; US troops will be deployed to train Afghan security forces; and substantial help will be given to rebuild the Afghan civilian infrastructure, assisted by the UN and international aid organizations. Ambassador Richard Holbrooke is appointed the Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan. (See also **1 December**.)

Pakistan; Terrorism

A bomb explodes at a mosque in Jamrud, in the Khyber region, Pakistan, killing at least 48 people and injuring more than 70. The sectarian violence linked to al-Qaeda and Afghan and Pakistani Taliban groups has escalated across Pakistan since an attack on the Sri Lankan cricket team in Lahore on 3 March.

**30 March**

Pakistan; Terrorism

The Manawan police training academy in Lahore, Pakistan, is attacked by gunmen from the Pakistani Taliban group led by Baitullah Mehsud. The attack kills several civilians, policemen and insurgents. After eight hours of heavy fighting the security forces recapture the academy. Mehsud states that the attack is in retaliation for the continued US unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) air strikes and there will be further attacks 'until the Pakistani government stops supporting the Americans'. There have been more than 35 US air strikes in North and South Waziristan since August 2008, killing around 340 people.

**1 April**

Russia; USA; Arms control

Meeting in London, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev and US President Barack Obama issue two joint statements on further reducing and limiting strategic offensive weapons in accordance with the obligations under Article VI of the 1968 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). They decide to replace the 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) with a new legally binding agreement before the START Treaty expires in December 2009; to agree to work bilaterally and internationally to resolve regional conflicts; to support the continued Six-Party Talks on North Korea's nuclear programme; and to start a dialogue on security and stability in Europe.

NATO; Enlargement;  
Albania; Croatia

Albania and Croatia become members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).



## 1 April

After taking office, the new Israeli Foreign Minister, Avigdor Lieberman, states that the Israeli Government is not bound by the commitments made by its predecessors, such as the 2007 Annapolis Agreement for a two-state solution of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, but only by the 2003 Road Map for Peace.

Israel; Palestinian territories

## 3–4 April

At its 60th anniversary summit meeting in Strasbourg, France, and Kehl, Germany, NATO issues the Strasbourg–Kehl Summit Declaration launching the process to develop a new Strategic Concept to define NATO's longer-term role in the new security environment of the 21st Century. It decides to modernize its capabilities; engage with other international organizations and countries, including on missions and operations; and welcomes the French decision to fully participate in NATO. It adopts the Declaration on Alliance Security, reaffirming the basic values, principles and purposes of the alliance. Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen is appointed NATO's next Secretary General.

NATO

## 5 April

North Korea launches a missile carrying a satellite from its launching site, Musudan-ri, on the east coast of the country. North Korean officials claim that the launch was successful and that the satellite is in orbit. Reports from South Korea claim that the missile has broken up and fallen into the sea. (See also **13 April**.)

North Korea; Missiles

In a speech in Prague, Czech Republic, US President Barack Obama outlines his vision of a nuclear weapon-free world. He pledges to reduce the US nuclear weapon stockpile, to work to bring the 1996 Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) into force, to make new efforts to secure sensitive nuclear materials within four years, and to engage with Iran by presenting it with a choice between access to peaceful nuclear energy or isolation by maintaining its current nuclear strategy. Obama states that as long as Iran poses a potential nuclear threat, the USA will continue to work on the missile defence system to be situated in Poland and the Czech Republic.

Nuclear weapons; Nuclear disarmament

## 13 April

The UN Security Council unanimously adopts a statement condemning North Korea's 5 April missile launch as a contravention of Security Council Resolution 1718 (2006), and demands that North Korea not conduct further launches. On 14 April North Korea responds that it is permanently leaving the Six-Party Talks on its nuclear programme; informs the IAEA that it will no longer cooperate with the agency; asks nuclear inspectors to leave the country immediately; and states that it is taking steps to reactivate its partially dismantled nuclear facility at Yongbyon.

North Korea; Nuclear programme; IAEA; UN

**16 April**

Chechnya; Russia

Russia's Anti-terrorist Committee announces that the 1999 decree authorizing the 'counterterrorism' operation in Chechnya is rescinded in order 'to create conditions to further normalize the situation' in the republic.

USA; Laws of war

Following the release of four memos on the techniques used by Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) agents to interrogate terrorism suspects, issued by the Office of Legal Counsel between 2002 and 2005, US President Barack Obama states that agents who used these techniques in good faith on legal advice from the Department of Justice will not be subject to prosecution.

**20–23 April**

Sri Lanka

More than 100 000 civilians flee the last stronghold of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) rebels as the Sri Lankan Government forces continue their 'final offensive' against the rebels in the north of the country. The rebels claim that the government forces have killed and injured several thousand civilians. On 22 April the army claims that two senior LTTE rebels have surrendered, and after a meeting in the UN Security Council UN officials accuse the LTTE of using civilians as human shields and urge them to lay down their weapons.

**21 April**

Burundi

Following a ceremony on 18 April where the leader of the Party for the Liberation of the Hutu People–National Liberation Forces (Parti pour la libération du peuple Hutu–Forces nationales de libération, Palipehutu–FNL) rebel group, Agathon Rwasa, surrendered his weapons and uniform to the African Union (AU), the AU starts to disarm 21 000 Palipehutu–FNL rebels as part of the 2006 peace agreement. At the same time, Palipehutu–FNL officially becomes a political party.

**23 April**

Iraq; Terrorism

In three separate suicide bomb attacks, in Baghdad and Diyala Province, Iraq, at least 80 people are killed and 120 more are injured.

**25 April**

North Korea; Nuclear programme; UN; Sanctions

Following the UN Sanctions Committee's decision on 24 April to impose sanctions on three North Korean companies involved in the arms trade, and to update the list of goods and technologies already banned, North Korea's state media report that reprocessing of spent nuclear fuels rods has been resumed at the Yongbyon reactor. On 29 April North Korea threatens to conduct nuclear missile tests unless the UN apologizes for its condemnation of the 5 April rocket launch.





### 30 April

Abkhazia, Russia and South Ossetia sign, an agreement under which Russia pledges to protect the borders of Abkhazia and South Ossetia until they have established their own border service. The agreement is for five years, with an automatic extension for another five years. The EU, NATO and the USA condemn it as a breach of the August 2008 Georgia–Russia agreement brokered by the EU.

Russia; Abkhazia; South Ossetia

### 5 May

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) confirms that US air strikes in Farah, Afghanistan, targeted at Taliban militants, have killed ‘dozens’ of civilians. Afghan officials claim that as many as 150 people have been killed.

USA; Afghanistan; Taliban

### 5–8 May

The Pakistani Government claims that Taliban militants have broken the peace agreement signed on 16 February and launches an army offensive in an attempt to eliminate 4000–5000 Taliban militants from the Swat Valley, Pakistan. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that 550 000 people have been displaced in the Swat Valley region since August 2008 due to the escalating violence, and that the new fighting will displace thousands more.

Pakistan; Taliban; Terrorism

### 6 May–1 June

NATO holds, under the Partnership for Peace (PFP) programme, a series of military exercises in Georgia. Russia calls the exercises ‘an overt provocation’.

NATO; Georgia; Russia

### 17 May

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) rebels announce that the ‘battle has reached its bitter end’ and that they are laying down their arms, thus ending a 26-year conflict. On 18 May Sri Lankan Government forces kill the LTTE’s founder, Velupillai Prabhakaran, together with other top LTTE leaders. For the first time since 1983 the government armed forces now control all of Sri Lanka’s territory. On 19 May President Mahinda Rajapaksa formally declares peace in the country.

Sri Lanka

### 19–21 May

Officials from the Russian and US governments meet in Moscow, Russia, to start talks on the replacement treaty for the 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), which will expire in December 2009.

Russia; USA; Arms control

**25 May**

North Korea; Nuclear weapons; Nuclear testing

North Korea carries out an underground nuclear weapon test in Kilju, Hamgyong province, at 09.54 local time. North Korea states that the test was successfully conducted ‘as part of the measures to bolster up its nuclear deterrent for self-defence’. The international community condemns the test.

**26 May**

France; UAE; Military bases

France opens a military base in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), its first permanent base in the Middle East. The base will host up to 500 French troops.

Côte d’Ivoire

Former rebels the New Forces (Forces Nouvelles de Côte d’Ivoire, FNCI) hand over 10 zones in the north of Côte d’Ivoire to civilian administrators appointed by President Laurent Gbagbo. The handover is part of the 2007 Ouagadougou Political Accord and its complementary agreements.

**27 May**

North Korea; South Korea; PSI

Following South Korea’s announcement on 26 May that it will fully join the US-led Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), North Korea announces that it is no longer bound by the terms of the 1953 ceasefire agreement. North Korea states that South Korea’s actions are a ‘declaration of war’.

Pakistan; Taliban; Terrorism

A suicide bomb attack on a police building in Lahore, Pakistan, kills at least 26 people and injures more than 200. The Pakistani Taliban claim responsibility for the attack and state that it is a response to the ongoing military operation in the Swat Valley. (See **5–8 May**.)

**29 May**

CD; Arms control

After 12 years of stalemate the Conference on Disarmament (CD), Geneva, Switzerland, adopts by consensus document CD/1863 containing a programme of work for its 2009 session. According to the document the CD will establish working groups on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation issues, including a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT).

**12 June**

UN; North Korea; WMD

The UN Security Council unanimously adopts Resolution 1874, condemning North Korea’s nuclear weapon test on 25 May; strengthening the sanctions against the country by blocking funding for nuclear, missile and proliferation activities; widening the ban on arms imports and exports; and calling on member states to inspect and destroy all banned cargo to and from North Korea if there are reasonable grounds to suspect a violation. Following the adoption of the resolution, on 13 June North Korea declares that it will weaponize its extracted plutonium stock and start enriching uranium.



### 13 June

Following the presidential election in Iran on 12 June, in which President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is re-elected, hundreds of thousands of people take to the streets to protest against what they perceive as a fraudulent election. At least eight people are killed and several wounded by security forces in the largest demonstrations since the 1979 Iranian revolution.

Iran

### 14 June

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announces that Israel is ready to endorse the creation of a Palestinian state as long as it is demilitarized and the Palestinians accept Israel as a Jewish state with Jerusalem as the capital. Palestinian officials reject the Israeli conditions for a two-state solution.

Israel; Palestinian territories

### 17 June

Following a North Korean threat of a 'thousandfold' retaliation against the USA and its allies if provoked, Chinese President Hu Jintao and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev issue a statement urging North Korea to return to negotiations on its nuclear programme. The two leaders express 'serious concerns' over the escalating tensions on the Korean peninsula.

North Korea; China; Russia;  
WMD

### 27 June

The first NATO–Russia Council meeting at the ministerial level since 2008 is held on Corfu, Greece. It agrees to restart the military-to-military contacts between NATO and Russia, even though 'fundamental differences remain on Georgia'.

NATO; Russia;  
NATO–Russia Council

### 28 June

Meeting on Corfu, Greece, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) foreign ministers launch the Corfu Process to advance the dialogue on European security challenges.

OSCE

Manuel Zelaya, President of Honduras, is overthrown in a military coup and forced to leave the country. The coup sparks large demonstrations both for and against Zelaya, and several people are injured. The Organization of American States (OAS), the UN and the countries in the region condemn the coup and the OAS suspends Honduras from its activities. Mediation talks in July, led by Costa Rican President Oscar Arias, end without result. The EU and the USA suspend their aid to Honduras.

Honduras

### 30 June

The withdrawal of US combat troops from cities and villages in Iraq is completed and the security duties are handed over to the new Iraqi forces. Approximately 131 000 US troops remain in Iraq.

Iraq; USA



UN; OSCE; Georgia; Peacekeeping operations	<b>30 June</b>  The UN Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) and the OSCE Mission to Georgia withdraw from Georgia after Russia's refusal to extend their mandates. UNOMIG has been deployed in Abkhazia since 1993, and the OSCE Mission has been in South Ossetia since 1992.
USA; Afghanistan	<b>2 July</b>  The US Army launches Operation Khanjar, a major offensive against Taliban militants in Helmand province, south-western Afghanistan, involving 4000 US soldiers and 650 Afghan troops. It is the first such operation under US President Barack Obama and differs from previous operations as the US forces will remain in the secured areas and build bases to provide security for the local population.
UN; North Korea; Missiles	<b>2–4 July</b>  North Korea test-fires four short-range cruise missiles and seven ballistic missiles. On 6 July the UN Security Council condemns the tests as violations of three existing resolutions and as posing a threat to regional and international security.
China; Ethnic minorities	<b>5 July</b>  Around 150 people are killed and more than 800 injured in serious ethnic riots between Muslim Uighurs and Han Chinese in Urumqi, Xinjiang, China. More than 1400 people are arrested. The Uighurs protest against the Han Chinese control of the province, and the protests are among the most serious since the Tiananmen Square protests in 1989. On 7 July the Chinese authorities deploy thousands of security forces to attempt to end the growing violence.
Russia; USA; Arms control; Missiles	<b>6 July</b>  In Moscow US President Barack Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev sign the Joint Understanding for the START Follow-on Treaty, committing their countries to reduce strategic warhead numbers to 1500–1675, and strategic delivery vehicles to 500–1100. The reductions are to be achieved within seven years after the new treaty is signed, which is to occur before the START Treaty expires in December 2009, and to include 'effective' verification measures. Obama and Medvedev issue a joint statement on missile defence issues, agreeing to a joint study on ballistic missile threats and establishing the Joint Data Exchange Center to serve as the basis for a multilateral missile-launch notification regime. (See also <b>5 December</b> .)
Africa; NWFZ	<b>15 July</b>  Following Burundi's ratification, on 22 June, the 1996 African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Pelindaba) enters into force.

**16 July**

British Prime Minister Gordon Brown issues a statement on nuclear non-proliferation together with the new British strategy, *Road to 2010*, outlining how the UK will play a leading role in tackling nuclear issues.

UK; Nuclear weapons

**18 August**

Georgia's withdrawal from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) takes effect. President Mikhail Saakashvili announced the withdrawal in August 2008 following the Georgian–Russian war.

Georgia; CIS

**19 August**

A series of bomb attacks in Baghdad, Iraq, kills 95 people and injures about 300. Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri Maliki orders a security review.

Iraq; Terrorism

**1 September**

The Commonwealth of Nations fully suspends Fiji from the organization after its lack of progress towards a return to constitutional democracy since the 2006 military coup. Fiji was partly suspended from the organization in December 2006.

Fiji; Commonwealth of Nations

**4 September**

At least 90 people, including many civilians, are killed in a NATO air strike in Kunduz province, northern Afghanistan, when the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) attacks two fuel tankers, previously hijacked by the Taliban.

Afghanistan; NATO

**9 September**

The chief prosecutor at the International Criminal Court (ICC) announces that the ICC has started a preliminary examination of alleged war crimes in Afghanistan. The examination focuses on the actions of the US-led coalition forces, the Taliban and al-Qaeda.

Afghanistan; ICC

**17 September**

US President Barack Obama announces a revision of the USA's 2007 plan for missile defence deployment in the Czech Republic and Poland. He recommends a new 'phased, adaptive approach' to missile defence, based on revised assessments of Iranian missile plans: Iran is more rapidly developing short- and medium-range ballistic missiles than previously projected. Advances have also been made in US capabilities and technologies.

USA; Missile defence

**17 September**

Yemen; Terrorism

More than 80 people are killed in a government air raid on a camp for displaced persons in northern Yemen. Government officials claim that rebels fired from the camp. Violence in Yemen has escalated since government forces launched an operation targeting Shia rebels in August.

**24 September**

UN; NPT

The UN Security Council, with 14 heads of state and government present, unanimously adopts Resolution 1887, the first comprehensive action on nuclear issues since the mid-1990s. The Security Council reaffirms its strong support for the 1968 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT); calls on states not yet signatories to the treaty to accede to it; and calls on the states parties to fully comply with their obligations and to set realistic goals to strengthen the treaty at the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

**25 September**

UN; IAEA; Iran

US President Barack Obama, French President Nicholas Sarkozy and British Prime Minister Gordon Brown accuse Iran of building a secret underground uranium enrichment facility. The accusation follows a statement by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) after its receipt of information from the Iranian authorities, on 21 September, regarding a 'new pilot fuel enrichment plant'. In March 2008 the UN Security Council threatened to impose sanctions on Iran unless it stops all uranium enrichment activities.

**28 September**

Guinea; ECOWAS; EU; Arms embargoes

An opposition protest meeting against the military leader Moussa Dadis Camara in Conakry, Guinea, ends in a violent attack on the demonstrators by Guinean security forces. More than 150 people are killed and over 1000 are injured according to a local human rights organization. The international community condemns the excessive violence used. On 17 October the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) imposes an arms embargo on Guinea, and on 27 October the Council of the EU adopts Common Position 2009/788/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against the Republic of Guinea, including an arms embargo.

**29 September**

ECOWAS; SALW

The 2006 Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Convention on Small Arms, Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and Other Related Materials enters into force following Benin's deposit of the ninth instrument of ratification.



### 30 September

The Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Conflict in Georgia (IIFFMCG), commissioned by the Council of the EU in December 2008, presents the results of its investigation of the origins and development of the 2008 conflict in Georgia. The report concludes that the conflict was started by a Georgian attack that was not justified by international law; that the attack followed months of provocation; and that both Georgia and Russia violated international law.

Georgia; Russia; Armed conflicts

### 1 October

The UN Security Council permanent members (China, France, Russia, the UK and the USA), Germany (the P5+1), and Iran meet in Geneva, Switzerland, for the first talks on the Iranian nuclear programme since July 2008. The meeting ends with an agreement to hold further discussions before the end of October, and with Iran agreeing to allow inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to visit its new enrichment facility.

UN; Germany; Iran

### 8 October

The African Union (AU) Panel on Darfur, established to find a peaceful solution to the conflict in Darfur, Sudan, and headed by former South African President Thabo Mbeki, submits its report to the AU in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The AU Peace and Security Council summit, held on 29 October in Abuja, Nigeria, endorses the report and its recommendations, including one to establish a new court consisting of Sudanese and foreign judges to bring justice to Darfur.

AU; Sudan; Darfur

### 16 October

The UN Human Rights Council adopts, by a vote of 25–6, with 11 abstentions, Resolution A/HRC/S-12/L.1, endorsing the recommendations made in Richard Goldstone's report on the Israeli offensive in the Gaza Strip in December 2008–January 2009. The report accuses both Israel and Palestinian militants of war crimes and demands that the parties investigate the allegations, or the cases will be referred to the International Criminal Court (ICC).

UN; Israel; Gaza Strip; War crimes

### 17 October

The Pakistani Army launches a massive air and ground offensive against al-Qaeda and Taliban rebels in South Waziristan. At least 20 000 people flee the region. Nearly 200 people have been killed in suicide bombings and attacks throughout Pakistan since 26 September .

Pakistan; Terrorism

**23 October**

IAEA; Iran

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) proposal of 21 October for a draft agreement under which Iran would send its enriched uranium to France and Russia to be turned into nuclear fuel for Iran's research reactor is approved by France, Russia and the USA. Iran responds to the IAEA on 29 October, citing 'technical and economic considerations' related to the proposal. On 25 October a team of IAEA inspectors begins an inspection of the previously secret Fordow uranium enrichment facility near Qom, Iran.

**25 October**

Iraq; Terrorism

Two coordinated car bombs close to ministry buildings in Baghdad, Iraq, kill more than 150 people and injure around 500. The attacks are the bloodiest in Baghdad since April 2007. The Islamic State of Iraq, a militant group linked to al-Qaeda, claims responsibility for the attacks, but this is not independently verified.

**26 October**Bosnia and Herzegovina;  
ICTY

The trial of the former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic opens at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), The Hague, Netherlands. Karadzic, who is charged with war crimes and crimes against humanity during the 1992–95 war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, was taken to the ICTY in 2008.

**27 October**EU; Arms embargo;  
Uzbekistan

Meeting in Brussels, the Council of the EU lifts its arms embargo against Uzbekistan, imposed in 2005, after Uzbekistan releases some political prisoners and abolishes the death penalty. The Council will also closely and continuously monitor the human rights situation in Uzbekistan and review its decision within a year.

**28 October**

UN; Afghanistan; Terrorism

Six foreign UN employees are killed and several wounded in two attacks by Taliban militants in Kabul, Afghanistan. The attacks are the deadliest on UN staff in Afghanistan since 2001.

Pakistan; Terrorism

A large explosion in a market place in Peshawar, Pakistan, kills at least 57 people and injures up to 200. The number of bomb attacks in Pakistan has increased since the military operations against Taliban militants in South Waziristan started. (See **17 October**.)





### 30 October

The UN First Committee adopts by a vote of 153–1, with 19 abstentions (Zimbabwe voted against), Resolution A/C.1/64/L.38/Rev.1, setting a timetable for the negotiation of an arms trade treaty. A UN conference on an arms trade treaty will be held in 2012 to elaborate a legally binding instrument for the transfer of conventional arms.

UN; Arms trade; Treaties

### 2 November

North Korea states that it would return to the Six-Party Talks on its nuclear programme if the USA agrees to hold bilateral negotiations first. On 3 November the North Korean official news agency announces that the reprocessing of 8000 spent nuclear fuel rods to extract weapon-grade plutonium is completed.

North Korea; Nuclear programme

### 10 November

North and South Korean warships exchange fire at the disputed Yellow Sea border between the two countries.

North Korea; South Korea

### 27 November

A bomb on the Nevsky Express train causes it to crash between Moscow and St Petersburg, killing 27 people and injuring about 100. On 2 December a group of Islamists, linked to Chechen rebels, from the North Caucasus claim responsibility for the attack.

Russia; Terrorism

### 29 November

State media in Iran report on the government-approved plans to build 10 new uranium enrichment plants, similar in size to the main facility at Natanz. The Iranian announcement follows the adoption by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) of Resolution GOV/2009/82 on 27 November, urging Iran to fully comply with all of its obligations under several UN Security Council and IAEA resolutions. The UK and the USA condemn the Iranian move.

Iran; Nuclear programme; UN; IAEA

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev presents his draft European security treaty, which was originally proposed in June 2008, to the EU, NATO and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). According to a Russian Government statement, the proposal's goal is 'to create a single, indivisible space in the sphere of military-political security in the Euro-Atlantic region'.

Europe; Security

**1 December**

USA; Afghanistan

US President Barack Obama announces his decision to send an additional 30 000 troops to Afghanistan, bringing US force strength to more than 100 000 troops. The aim of the deployment is to defeat al-Qaeda, reverse the Taliban's momentum, and strengthen the capacity of the Afghan security forces and government in order to achieve a responsible transition of power. The mission is to last 18 months, and troops should begin to withdraw in July 2011. Obama also calls for more international allied forces, and on 4 December the Secretary General of NATO, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, states that at least 25 NATO countries will send 7000 extra troops to Afghanistan.

EU

The 2007 Treaty of Lisbon enters into force. It provides the EU with reformed institutions—including a permanent President of the European Council and a High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy—and working methods to tackle global challenges such as climate change, security and sustainable development.

**5 December**

Russia; USA; Arms control

The 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) expires. On 4 December a Joint US–Russian Statement on the Expiration of the START Treaty is issued in which the two states express their commitment to continue to work together in the spirit of the treaty and their firm intention to ensure that a new treaty on strategic weapons enters into force at the earliest possible date.

**8 December**

Iraq; Terrorism

A series of car bombs kill at least 127 people and wound over 400 in Baghdad, Iraq. The al-Qaeda-led insurgency is blamed for the attacks.

**9 December**

USA; Biological weapons

US President Barack Obama releases the National Strategy for Countering Biological Threats, which addresses the challenges of the proliferation of biological weapons and their use by terrorists. It focuses on promoting global health security, combating infectious disease, establishing and reinforcing norms against the misuse of the life sciences, and instituting coordinated activities to hinder such misuse.

**12 December**North Korea; Weapons;  
Illegal trade

A Georgian cargo aircraft carrying weapons from North Korea is seized while refuelling in Bangkok, Thailand. The final destination of the weapons is unclear.

**16 December**

Iran test-fires an improved version of a medium-range ballistic missile, the Sajjil-2. The international community reacts negatively to the tests, noting that they can add to the tensions over Iran's nuclear programme.

Iran; Missiles

**23 December**

The UN Security Council adopts, by a vote of 13–1, with Libya voting against and China abstaining, Resolution 1907, imposing an arms embargo on Eritrea over its role in Somalia and its refusal to withdraw armed forces following the conflict with Djibouti in June 2008. It is the first new UN arms embargo since 2006.

UN; Eritrea; Arms embargo

**25 December**

An attempted terrorist attack occurs on a passenger flight from Amsterdam, Netherlands, bound for Detroit, Michigan, USA. The suspect, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, carries explosive chemicals sewn into his underwear and claims he is acting on behalf of al-Qaeda in Yemen.

USA; Terrorism; Yemen

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### ABBREVIATIONS

AU	African Union
CAR	Central African Republic
CBM	Confidence-building measure
CD	Conference on Disarmament
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
ICC	International Criminal Court
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NWFZ	Nuclear weapon-free zone
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PSI	Proliferation Security Initiative
SALW	Small arms and light weapons
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UN	United Nations
WMD	Weapons of mass destruction

Other abbreviations are defined in the text.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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