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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.

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September 2010 Watchlist



Conflict Risk Alerts



Conflict Resolution Opportunities

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CENTRAL AFRICA

➡ **Burundi** Following victory in 28 June election, President Pierre Nkurunziza (CNDD-FDD) officially inaugurated 26 Aug. Formation of new govt announced 29 Aug, meeting constitutional requirement for 60:40 share between majority Hutu (14 CNDD-FDD ministers out of total 21) and minority Tutsi (including 3 UPRONA ministers); UPRONA Terence Sinunguruza named as first VP, CNDD-FDD Gervais Rufyikiri second VP. Amid persistent rumours that groups disgruntled with election process have set up base in Rukoko swamp and Kibira forest (former FNL area), army claim 50 unidentified gunmen 8 Aug conducted overnight looting raids on 2 villages north of Bujumbura; no casualties reported. Exchange of fire 26 Aug between police and armed group; at least 1 killed. Amnesty International 23 Aug released report alleging national intelligence services torture of 12 opposition members during election period June and July, called on authorities to investigate. Police 9 Aug raided main office of MSD opposition, arrested 6 activists; MSD president Alexis Sinduhige fled country. After being deposed 1 Aug from FNL leadership position Agathon Rwasa described raids, arrests as “provocative”, could have “unfortunate consequences”.

- “Burundi president names government”, AFP, 30 Aug. 2010.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°155, *Burundi: Ensuring Credible Elections*, 12 Feb. 2010.

➡ **Central African Republic** President Bozizé 30 July postponed first round of presidential election due to insecurity and lack of funding from international community. Opposition parties and former rebel groups 11 Aug formally approved new date, 23 Jan 2011, with second round in March; international donors claim timeframe unrealistic, question long gap between first and second rounds. UNSC consultations on MINURCAT 10 Aug: FM Antoine Gambi warned MINURCAT withdrawal would have harmful consequences; SG Ban noted earlier request from President Bozizé to assist with strengthening security forces, recommended UN focus on helping build state security capacity. CPJP claimed responsibility for 30 Aug attack on army base, SE Mbomou. Human Rights Watch 11 Aug released report detailing ongoing LRA atrocities in CAR and DRC (see Uganda). Defence minister Jean-François Bozizé 18 Aug pledged to capture LRA leader Joseph Kony with help from Uganda, U.S and France. U.S. deployed 19 soldiers to Obo, SE, France pledged technical assistance for army.

- Comment by Thierry Vircoulon (Crisis Group), “*Afrique centrale : cachez ces 50 ans...*”, *Jeune Afrique*, 6 Aug. 2010.
- “*Bangui demande l’aide de la France, de l’Ouganda et des Etas-Unis pour arreter Kony*”, RFI, 19 Aug. 2010.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°69, *Central African Republic: Keeping the Dialogue Alive*, 12 Jan. 2010.

➡ **Chad** Improved Chad-Sudan relations maintained over month. Group of 189 rebels signed ceasefire agreement with govt 9 Aug, returned to Chad from Sudan; main rebel group coalition Union des forces de la résistance (UFR) reported those returning included injured or handicapped rebels.

President Deby 11 Aug criticised French military presence in Chad, requested financial compensation. National Assembly 18 Aug abolished repressive law on press, introduced new laws; media groups claim still too repressive. Main opposition coalition 27 Aug threatened to boycott 2011 elections, accusing govt of failing to implement 13 Aug accord laying down conditions for conduct of poll.

- “Chad’s opposition threatens to boycott 2011 poll”, AFP, 27 Aug. 2011.

Crisis Group Africa Report N° 162, *Chad: Beyond Superficial Stability*, 17 Aug. 2010.

The approaching elections could be important steps toward reviving democracy in Chad, but only if President Idriss Déby opens political space for the opposition beforehand.

➡ **Democratic Republic of Congo** Month saw sporadic clashes between army and rebel factions in East, rebels targeting UN base, mass rape of civilians by rebels, and leak of draft UN report detailing massive violations of human rights and possible genocide 1993-2003. In North Kivu at least 179 women raped by FDLR and Mai Mai militia during four day period following 30 July rebel occupation of Luvungi and at least 3 other villages, Walikale territory; UN investigating lack of response by nearby peacekeepers. Over 50 suspected Mai Mai rebels attacked MONUSCO base 18 Aug at Kirumba, Lubero territory; 3 peacekeepers killed, 7 injured. Heavy fighting reported in NE Beni 14 Aug despite 3 Aug govt claim FARDC operation “Ruwenzori” had freed areas previously held by Ugandan ADF/NALU armed group. In Ituri district of Province Orientale heavy fighting since 15 Aug south of Bunia between FARDC and Popular Front for Justice in Congo (FPJC) triggered mass displacement. Draft UN OHCHR report leaked to media 26 Aug detailing war crimes committed in DRC by security forces of Angola, Mobutu’s Zaire, Uganda, Chad, both Kabila govts, Zimbabwe, Rwandan Patriotic Army, ex-FAR and Interahamwe (later FDLR), Mai-Mai and other rebel groups between 1993-2003; recommends new truth and reconciliation commission and mixed tribunal to investigate worst crimes (see Rwanda). NGO Enough 10 Aug issued report detailing LRA slaughter of some 100 civilians and abduction of at least 570 in Bas-Uele over past 15 months. Human Rights Watch 11 Aug also released report describing LRA ongoing atrocities in DRC and CAR (see Uganda, CAR). Former electoral commission chair 9 Aug announced 2011-2013 election road map.

- “*L’acte d’accusation de dix ans de crimes au Congo RDC*”, *Le Monde*, 26 Aug. 2010.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°73, *Congo: A Stalled Democratic Agenda*, 8 Apr. 2010.

➡ **Rwanda** Presidential poll 9 Aug saw President Kagame and Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) re-elected for second 7-year mandate; secured 93% of votes, with 97.5% turnout. Head of Unified Democratic Forces (FDU) Victoire Ingabire 12 Aug called on international community to reject result, citing absence of credible opposition participation. International observers including Commonwealth, AU, concluded elections held in peaceful atmosphere without major incident; commended National Electoral Commission but highlighted concerns regarding freedom of expression, regretted “lack of critical opposition voices”. U.S. 13 Aug expressed concern over pre-election suppression of opposition. Grenade blast in

Kigali 11 Aug killed 2, injured 7; police made 3 arrests, army claim to have uncovered network behind attack. Diplomatic tensions with South Africa persisted surrounding investigation into exiled Gen Faustin Nyamwasa's June shooting in Johannesburg; South Africa 5 Aug recalled its ambassador but denied link to shooting. Lt-Col Rugigana Ngabo, brother of exiled Nyamwasa, arrested 20 Aug, family say no information of his whereabouts. Draft UN OHCHR report leaked 26 Aug claims UN investigators uncovered mass human rights abuses 1993-2003, including joint Rwandan Patriotic Army and Laurent Kabila-led AFDL massacre of Hutu refugees in DRC 1996-1997 (see DRC); quotes unidentified source saying Kagame fought to cover up report. FM Mushikiwabo in 3 Aug letter to UNSG described report as "fatally flawed" and "incredibly irresponsible", threatened to withdraw Rwandan troops from UN peacekeeping missions.

- "President Kagame's win in Rwanda", *New York Times*, 11 Aug. 2010.

HORN OF AFRICA

➡ **Eritrea** Opposition groups early month held week-long conference in Addis Ababa, agreed to establish parliament in exile; followed June formation of military coalition to overthrow current govt.

- "Opposition conference in Ethiopia vows to bring democracy to Eritrea", *Sudan Tribune*, 2 Aug. 2010.

➡ **Ethiopia** At least 10 reportedly killed 17 Aug in fighting between Ethiopian troops and Somali militia in Somali region. High court jailed 30 on terrorism charges late month.

- "10 people killed as Ethiopian troops clash with Somalia clan militia", *Garowe Online*, 17 Aug. 2010.

➡ **Kenya** Month saw peaceful conduct of constitutional referendum, controversy over visit of Sudanese President Bashir, and release of long-awaited census findings. Despite rising tensions and growing security concerns ahead of 4 Aug constitutional referendum, electorate voted peacefully 67% in favour of constitutional amendments. Signalling end of 20-year debate, President Kibaki 27 Aug presided over promulgation of new constitution. Attendance by ICC-indictee Sudanese President Bashir provoked widespread consternation. FM Wetangula dismissed criticism, Kofi Annan 29 Aug called on Kenya to "clarify" its position. PM Odinga said visit "misguided", govt would apologise to ICC (see Sudan). National Assembly Speaker Kenneth Marende 13 Aug opposed move by Orange Democratic Movement to exclude MPs who voted against constitution from participating in the Implementation Oversight Committee. Govt 31 Aug released long-delayed census, results include tribal numbers observers fear could prove contentious.

- "Free and fair", *Washington Post*, 9 Aug. 2010.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°137, *Kenya in Crisis*, 21 Feb. 2008.

➡ **Somalia** Fighting intensified in Mogadishu as al-Shabaab 23 Aug declared "new massive war" against internationally-backed govt, launching deadly attacks on MPs and AMISOM troops, while several killed in Puntland clashes. At least 80 killed and dozens injured during 23-30 Aug clashes triggered by al-Shabaab attacks on govt positions: al-Shabaab 24 Aug stormed Mogadishu hotel killing at least 35, including 6 MPs; 4 AMISOM peacekeepers killed 30 Aug during al-Shabaab

shelling of presidential palace, 8 civilians killed, 25 wounded 31 Aug by roadside bomb. At least 10 suspected anti-govt militants killed 21 Aug as two separate explosive devices detonated prematurely; govt reported 3 Pakistanis, 2 Indians, 2 Afghans, 1 Algerian among dead. On Ethiopian border, 21 al-Shabaab killed 4 Aug during clashes sparked by govt attack on militia base. In semi-autonomous Puntland at least 30 Islamist militants led by Mohamed Said Atom and more than 5 govt troops killed during 5 days of clashes starting 8 Aug along northern coast; al-Shabaab continue to distance themselves from Puntland insurgents despite Atom's pledged allegiance.

- "Somalia's once stable Puntland hit by insurgency", AP, 19 Aug. 2010.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°74, *Somalia's Divided Islamists*, 18 May 2010.

➡ **Sudan** Tensions persisted following late July violent confrontations in Darfur IDP camps between supporters of opposing groups in Doha peace-talks; 8 dead, dozens injured, thousands sought refuge in UNAMID base. In response to UN refusal to hand over 6 IDPs accused of instigating violence, govt from 2 Aug blocked humanitarian access to main Kalma camp in south Darfur, housing 90,000 IDPs. President Bashir 7 Aug threatened to expel UNAMID if it hindered work of authorities. Breakthrough in impasse on South Sudan Referendum Commission (SSRC) as SPLM 23 Aug said it would accept appointment of northerner as secretary-general of commission on condition deputy is from the south; move breaks deadlock over which commission head Mohamed Ibrahim Khalil had threatened to resign 15 Aug. During South Sudan visit U.S. Special Envoy Scott Gration 21 Aug pledged U.S. commitment to support "credible" on-schedule referendum. Pressure group "Abyei Referendum Forum" 18 Aug called for international intervention to break deadlock over formation of commission to supervise Abyei referendum. President Bashir 27 Aug attended promulgation of new Kenyan constitution, signalling Nairobi's compliance with AU's July instruction not to apprehend ICC-indicted Bashir (see Kenya).

- "South Sudan rulers break independence vote deadlock", Reuters, 23 Aug. 2010.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°159, *Sudan: Regional Perspectives on the Prospect of Southern Independence*, 6 May 2010.

➡ **Uganda** Chief of Military Intelligence (CMI) James Mugira 12 Aug presented four Ugandan men described as "masterminds" of al-Shabaab 11 July bomb attacks on Kampala. Search still on for additional accomplices; capital remains on "high-alert" although CMI said another attack "unlikely". Human Rights Watch 11 Aug issued report citing 697 LRA abductions over past 18 months in CAR and DRC, claiming many civilians brutally killed, urging U.S.-led strategy on civilian protection (see CAR).

- "CAR/DR Congo: LRA conducts massive abduction campaign", Human Rights Watch, 11 Aug. 2010.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°157, *LRA: A Regional Strategy beyond Killing Kony*, 28 Apr. 2010.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

➡ **Madagascar** Following late-July civil society agreement to organise national conference, de facto leader Rajoelina invited coalition of some 90 political parties which had convened to reach political agreement for talks 9-11 Aug. Agreement

signed 13 Aug sets dates for constitutional referendum 17 Nov, parliamentary elections 16 March and first round of presidential polls 4 May; Rajoelina to remain in power until new president elected, will appoint consensual PM from list provided by political parties. Number of signatories grew to some 160 over course of month. 3 main opposition parties yet to agree, boycotted discussions, organised conference to find common position. Civil society organised talks between coalition of parties and opposition but talks collapsed 27 Aug. Planned national dialogue postponed from end-Aug to 13 Sept. SADC stated support for national dialogue, announced creation of office to support it, but maintained sanctions. Political parties 22 Aug submitted proposed names for PM to Rajoelina. Former president Ravalomanana sentenced in absentia to life hard labour 27 Aug for Feb 2009 killings by presidential guards of Rajoelina supporters. Verdict rejected by Ravalomanana; observers fear ruling may complicate resolution of crisis.

- [“Madagascar parties, president sign deal on elections”](#), VOA, 14 Aug. 2010.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°156, [Madagascar: Ending the Crisis](#), 18 March 2010.

➡ **South Africa** ANC proposing new laws to create tribunal to regulate media and outlaw leaking or publication of information deemed classifiable by govt; media groups charge threats to press freedom.

- [“South Africa’s road to Zimbabwe”](#), *Financial Times*, 18 Aug. 2010.

➡ **Swaziland** Repression by King Mswati III’s regime against independent media and opposition under pretext of combating terrorism continued, largely unchallenged by international community. 2 suspected petrol bombers charged with terrorism and treason denied bail 6 Aug; claim to have been tortured into confessing. Police claim attacks masterminded by banned opposition Swaziland Youth Congress.

- [“Swaziland faces a long struggle for freedom”](#), *Guardian*, 8 Aug. 2010.

➡ **Zimbabwe** Constitutional consultations continue to be marred by allegations of violence and intimidation, and logistical problems including lack of resources. Adopting recommendations by South African President Zuma, SADC summit 17 Aug set deadline for full implementation of Dec 2008 Global Political Agreement, giving parties 30 days to resolve outstanding issues; no penalty specified for missing deadline. Also called for roadmap for elections in 2011, amid widespread fears that early elections could lead to violence. Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) chair 26 Aug said country not ready for elections in 2011; challenges include chaotic voters roll, underfunded ZEC. Zimbabwe leaders 21 Aug reached agreement on 27 outstanding issues. President Mugabe 20 Aug said will not concede to more political reform until “evil” U.S., EU sanctions lifted. Legislation introduced in U.S. Congress aiming to update sanctions to reflect political changes. MDC-T reported increased assaults on its officials and supporters over past 2 months. Kimberly Process-sanctioned auction of diamonds from controversial Marange fields 11 Aug raised \$72m, earned govt \$30m; boycotted by major U.S.-based diamond trading network charging lenient application of Kimberly standards. Finance minister Tendai Biti 29 Aug announced Central Bank to lay off 85% of staff.

- [“MDC advises caution on elections”](#), ZimOnline, 19 Aug. 2010.

- For latest report, see Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°70, [Zimbabwe: Political and Security Challenges to the Transition](#), 3 March 2010.

WEST AFRICA

➡ **Cameroon** Situation remains stable amid govt’s continued denial it exerts undue influence on electoral commission (ELECAM) ahead of expected Oct 2011 presidential elections. Opposition party Social Democratic Front 22 Aug denounced govt manipulation of ELECAM, refused to participate in voter registration unless ELECAM reformed. Voter registration commenced 24 Aug, week later than official start date. President Biya returned to Cameroon 31 July amid high security; media cite fear of possible coup attempt.

- [“Voter registration begins ahead of 2011 presidential election”](#), APA, 25 Aug. 2010.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°161, [Cameroon: The Dangers of a Fracturing Regime](#), 24 June 2010.

➡ **Côte d’Ivoire** PM Soro 5 Aug announced presidential election overdue since 2005 will take place 31 Oct. During 7 Aug ceremony to mark 50 years independence, President Gbagbo criticised international pressure for elections. Electoral commission spokesman Bamba Yacouba confirmed new timetable including finalising voter lists 20 Aug-2 Sep, releasing definitive voters’ list 12 Oct, and distributing electoral cards 9-15 Oct. Ex-rebel Forces Nouvelles (FN) 14 Aug endorsed new calendar. UN released report 27 Aug on grave human rights abuses in aftermath of deadly Feb protests.

- [“Ivory Coast election may not resolve its conflict”](#), Reuters, 25 Aug. 2010.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°158, [Côte d’Ivoire: Securing the Electoral Process](#), 5 May 2010.

➡ **Guinea** Announcement of date for 2nd round of presidential elections allayed concerns about delays in process, but observers flag divisive nature of polls, possible exacerbation of latent ethnic tensions. Ad hoc commission tasked to investigate flaws in 27 June first round submitted recommendations end July; election commission subsequently requested deferral of 2nd round. Official mediator Blaise Compaore visiting 3 Aug urged 2nd round to take place as soon as possible. Following 3 Aug Supreme Court ruling, presidential decree confirmed 19 Sept date for 2nd round. PM seeking change to electoral code, called for enhanced role of Ministry of Territorial Administration in election organisation; triggered criticism from various quarters, including electoral commission, lead candidate Cellou Diallo.

- [“Guinea proposes electoral law change before vote”](#), AP, 19 Aug. 2010.

➡ **Guinea-Bissau** Continued strained relations between govt and international partners. EU 4 Aug stated lack of respect for rule of law has crippled work of EU-SSR mission, announced withdrawal in Oct; could resume under certain conditions, including due process for 1 Apr mutiny suspects. Nigerian President Jonathan 18 Aug announced ECOWAS special meeting 19 Sept to address political situation. President Sanha 19 Aug presided over parliamentary session on national dialogue to include army, political parties, unions and civil society organisations; expected to pave way for Jan 2011 national reconciliation conference.

- [“EU pull-out hits Guinea-Bissau reforms”](#), BBC, 4 Aug. 2010.

➔ **Mali** Sahelian intelligence heads met in Bamako 7 Aug to strengthen cooperation, information sharing. Al-Qaeda in Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) 10 Aug kidnapped 2 Malians, 1 killed 12 Aug. 2 Malians detained during July joint Mauritanian-French military operation released 12 Aug (see Mauritania). 12 Aug testimony of ex-AQIM member disclosed collusion between AQIM and some Malian officials. AQIM 23 Aug freed 2 Spanish aid workers kidnapped Nov 2009; unconfirmed reports of €3.8m ransom paid by Spanish govt and prisoner swap for Malian extradited by Mauritania.

- [“Spanish al Qaeda hostages freed, due home”](#), Reuters, 23 Aug. 2010.

➔ **Niger** Former PM Oumarou 2 Aug charged and released on bail following late July arrest for corruption. National Movement for a Developing Society 9 Aug announced Oumarou their candidate in Jan presidential elections; first round polls scheduled 31 Jan. New draft constitution adopted 12 Aug, to be voted on in 31 Oct referendum; limits president to 2 5-yr terms, reinstates position of PM. West African regional court 3 Aug said it will decide 17 Sept on legality of detaining former president Tandja, held since Feb ousting.

- [“Ex-Niger PM charged, released no bail in corruption probe”](#), AFP, 2 Aug. 2010.

➔ **Nigeria** Controversy over whether President Jonathan should stand for Jan 2011 presidential election continued; governing PDP party 12 Aug decided Jonathan has right to contest polls in spite of being southerner, but opposition to his candidacy continued. Anxiety continued over late preparations for elections. Electoral commission chair Attahiru Jega 19 Aug said delays in enacting new electoral laws could delay polls. Senate and lower house approved \$585m budget for polls; Jonathan 20 Aug signed new electoral bill into law. In Niger Delta rehabilitation programme for militants continued, however security situation remained tenuous, with late July and early Aug incidents, including 1 Aug killing of 7 by unidentified armed men in Bayelsa state capital, fuelling fears of violence ahead of 2011 polls. Situation in north around Jos also remained fragile. Police 7 Aug shot 3 people dead as mob threatened to burn down police station in Tafawa Balewa, Bauchi state. Borno state police 19 Aug reported arrest of 5 men attempting to bring weapons from Chad to Jos. Suspected members of Islamic sect Boko Haram killed 3 police officers late Aug in separate incidents in Yobe and Borno states.

- [“Deadly Nigerian clashes in north as elections loom”](#), AFP, 28 Aug. 2010.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°60, [Nigeria: Seizing the Moment in the Niger Delta](#), 30 April 2009.



Asia/Pacific

CENTRAL ASIA


➔ **Kazakhstan** 2 inmates died, 101 injured, 80 hospitalized 11 Aug after maiming themselves in prison riot in town of Granitny, northern Kazakhstan. Followed 9 Aug self-inflicted injury by 6 other inmates in protest of conditions in same prison; and 30 July incident involving 6 in Almaty prison. Prominent prisoners' rights activist sentenced to jail 29 Aug on allegedly politically

motivated charges of hooliganism.

- [“Kazakhstan’s uncertain future in the customs union”](#), EDM, 16 Aug. 2010.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°97, [Islamists in Prison](#), 15 Dec. 2009.

➔ **Kyrgyzstan** Serious weakening of central govt after provisional President Otunbayeva failed to oust mayor of southern city of Osh, Melis Myrzakmatov, appointed by former President Bakiyev. Visiting Bishkek 18 Aug, Myrzakmatov stated govt directives have no jurisdiction in south. Despite official announcement 20 Aug that Myrzakmatov will step down, latter returned to Osh same day backed by Azimbek Beknazarov, Vice Premier on Judicial Affairs, stated pressures to resign unsuccessful. In another challenge to govt authority, businessman Umat Baryktabasov, charged with “attempting to seize power” in 2005, demanded PM post 5 Aug. Some 1,000 of his supporters demonstrated before parliament; several hundred prevented from entering capital. Protests dispersed after brief clashes with security forces, Baryktabasov and over 20 others detained on charges of planning coup. Continuing ethnic tensions as govt 1 Aug suppressed large-scale fight between Kyrgyz, Tajik and Uzbek youth in Batken region. President Otunbayeva 5 Aug admitted security forces committed abuses against ethnic Uzbeks during June unrest. Govt 9 Aug lifted state of emergency in south, announced parliamentary elections will be held 10 Oct. Continuing political opposition to OSCE advisory police mission in south. Negotiations on deployment reportedly stalled late month. Former governor of Naryn province shot dead in Bishkek 14 Aug. UN World Food Program said 1.4 million experiencing food shortages; situation likely to worsen in winter due to rising grain prices.

- Comment by Louise Arbour (Crisis Group President), [“The Void in Asia’s Heart”](#), *The Guardian*, 26 Aug. 2010.
- [“More trouble brewing in Kyrgyzstan: Osh boss defying Bishkek”](#), EurasiaNet, 19 Aug. 2010.

Crisis Group Asia Report N° 193, [The Pogroms in Kyrgyzstan](#), 23 Aug. 2010. 

Without prompt, genuine and exhaustive measures to address the damage done by the pogroms, Kyrgyzstan risks another round of terrible violence.

➔ **Tajikistan** Authorities 23 Aug announced 25 prisoners, including Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan militants and opposition members, escaped from high-security prison in Dushanbe, killing at least 5 guards. Escapees include Afghan, Russian nationals. Senior security official 20 Aug dismissed Kyrgyz concerns over infiltration of Islamic militants from Tajikistan into Kyrgyzstan. Madrasah leader and students in district near Dushanbe arrested early month for alleged illegal religious activity. 5 newspapers banned 5 Aug for alleged criticism of President. Hizb-ut-Tahrir activist sentenced to 14 yrs jail in north 14 Aug.

- [“Prison break in Tajikistan could have political ramifications”](#), EurasiaNet, 23 Aug. 2010.

➔ **Turkmenistan** Govt banned Turkmen students from resuming studies at Kyrgyz universities after June violence in country; followed govt barring hundreds of students from continuing studies at Bishkek’s American University in 2009.

- [“Few Turkmen, Uzbek students return to Kyrgyz university”](#), RFE/RL, 26 Aug. 2010.

- **Uzbekistan** Govt 1 Aug raised tariffs for trucks crossing into Tajikistan by 14% in second increase this year tightening economic blockade; 14 Aug cut gas supply by 50% citing payment arrears. Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan announced leader Tahir Yuldash died Aug 2009, named successor Usmon Odil. 9 members of religious "Nurchilar" movement sentenced to 5 yrs jail, fines 16 Aug.
- "IMU announces longtime leader dead, names successor", RFE/RL, 17 Aug. 2010.

NORTH EAST ASIA

- **China (internal)** 7 people killed, 14 wounded in 19 Aug explosives attack in Aksu City, Xinjiang province; officials 20 Aug said 1 attacker killed, 1 arrested, both members of Uyghur ethnic group.
- "Blast kills seven in China's Xinjiang", BBC, 19 Aug. 2010.

- **North Korea** Tensions increased on peninsula as South Korea held its largest ever anti-submarine drill 5-9 Aug near disputed sea border; in response North Korea (NK) 9 Aug fired some 130 shells near Northern Limit Line (NLL); about 30 shells landed south of NLL. U.S. criticised actions as "chest-thumping"; NK also seized 8 Aug South Korean fishing boat for allegedly poaching in exclusive economic zone. South Korea and U.S. held 11 day combined military exercise from 16 Aug, NK 15 Aug threatened "merciless counterblow". Despite strained relations South Korean President Lee in 15 Aug Liberation Day speech proposed 3-stage unification process; North's Committee for Peaceful Reunification 17 Aug rejected proposal as "ridiculous rhetoric". NK official news agency 19 Aug said gov't had reached "full consensus" with China on resumption of 6-party talks on nuclear arms program following visit by China's special envoy on Korean Peninsula affairs; South Korea and U.S. want NK to admit responsibility for March sinking of South Korean naval ship before considering resumption of talks. NK and UN Command 10 Aug held 4th round of talks on sinking of Cheonan. U.S. 30 Aug expanded economic sanctions targeting NK leadership; South Korea welcomed measures but offered \$8.4m flood aid to NK, first large scale aid since March sinking of SK ship.
- "Duty calls", *Economist*, 19 Aug. 2010.
 - For latest report, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°101, *North Korea under Tightening Sanctions*, 15 March 2010.

- **Taiwan Strait** Taiwan's legislature 17 Aug approved China trade pact, 7 weeks after both govts signed Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA), most significant economic agreement with China in 60 years; opponents in Taiwan believe pact will make it economically dependent on China, undermine sovereignty.
- "Taiwan's legislature approves China trade pact", AP, 17 Aug. 2010.

SOUTH ASIA

- **Afghanistan** Independent Election Commission 18 Aug announced more than 900 polling centres will be closed due to security fears during 18 Sept parliamentary elections. At least 4 candidates killed by suspected Taliban in run-up to vote; 5 campaign workers for female candidate killed by unidentified gunmen in Herat 29 Aug. President Karzai 17 Aug issued decree banning all foreign private security firms within 4 months, must hand over responsibility to national

police; U.S. expressed concern ban could affect aid and development work. UNAMA 10 Aug reported civilian casualties in Afghanistan up by 31% since 2009, but proportion caused by ISAF forces significantly lower with Taliban responsible for 76%; Taliban rejected, proposed joint commission to investigate civilian deaths. Netherlands 1 Aug officially ended mission to Afghanistan, withdrew its 2,000 troops. UNSC 2 Aug deleted 45 of 488 individuals from Taliban/al-Qaeda "blacklist". Gunmen 7 Aug killed 10 aid workers, including 8 foreigners, in Badakhshshan province; perpetrator unknown.

- "U.S. concerned over Afghan voter turnout, violence", Reuters, 26 Aug. 2010.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°190, *A Force in Fragments: Reconstituting the Afghan National Army*, 12 May 2010.

- **Bangladesh** Govt-backed tribunal 2 Aug sentenced 4 top Jamaat-e-Islami party leaders to prison for "war crimes" committed during 1971 independence war. 14 ex-BDR border guards 2 Aug convicted to up to 6 years in prison over role in Feb 2009 mutiny; 215 BDR members in total now jailed. Govt 20 Aug cancelled parole of opposition party BNP leader Khaleda Zia's son, wanted since Dec 2007 for graft; BNP called for nationwide protests.
- "Islamist leaders in Bangladesh jailed for 1971 'war crimes'", *Times of India*, 2 Aug. 2010.

- **India (non-Kashmir)** Police killed 5 Maoists in 4 Aug Chhattisgarh gun battle; suspected Maoists 5 Aug killed local Bharatiya Janata Party leader in Jharkhand. Govt 19 Aug rejected Maoist offer of talks and 3-month ceasefire in face of continued Maoist violence. Assam militant separatist group ULFA late July held first direct talks with gov't since 1992; gov't said meeting "constructive", further talks planned.
- "No credible response yet from Maoists on talks: Chidambaram", *Times of India*, 26 Aug. 2010.

- **Kashmir** At least 40 demonstrators killed in clashes with police as anti-India protests continued; more than 63 killed since start of protests 11 June, worst since separatist revolt first broke out 1989; situation appeared to have calmed by end-month. India Home Minister Chidambaram 6 Aug alleged Pakistani involvement in demonstrations. 2 Lashkar-e-Taiba militants, 1 soldier killed in 16 Aug Rajouri district gun battle. Pakistan President Zardari criticised UK PM Cameron's claim that Pakistan ignoring "home-grown" terrorism, made during early month visit to India.
- "Five killed as Indian troops fire into Kashmir crowds", *Guardian*, 2 Aug. 2010.
 - For latest report, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°106, *Steps Towards Peace: Putting Kashmiris First*, 3 June 2010.

- **Nepal** Country still without effective gov't after Constituent Assembly failed to pick new PM in 6 and 23 Aug votes; neither Maoist leader Prachanda nor Nepali Congress party candidate Ram Chandra Poudel won required majority as UML and alliance of 4 Tarai-based parties continued to abstain and call for consensus gov't. UNMIN 4 Aug expressed "deep concern" over early month moves by both Nepalese Army and Maoists to recruit new soldiers, in breach of 2006 peace agreement.
- "Summer reruns", *Economist*, 26 Aug. 2010.
 - For latest report, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°184, *Nepal: Peace and Justice*, 14 Jan. 2010.

➤ **Pakistan** President Zardari criticised internally over slow govt response to devastating floods that have killed at least 1,600 and displaced over 17 million since late July; concerns raised about extremist groups exploiting alienation resulting from untimely and inadequate relief efforts. UN initially criticised international response, but close to 70% of US\$460m requested now pledged. At least 86 people killed in early month violence in Karachi, triggered by 2 Aug assassination of MQM party MP Raza Haider; MQM blamed Pashtun-dominated Awami National Party for killing, but govt said Taliban responsible. Gunmen 14 Aug killed 16 ethnic Punjabis in 2 separate attacks in Balochistan province; separatist militants suspected. At least 36 killed in 23 Aug S Waziristan suicide blasts.

- "Floods expose civilian-military divide in Pakistan", AP, 20 Aug. 2010.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°185, *Reforming Pakistan's Civil Service*, 16 Feb. 2010.

➤ **Sri Lanka** Govt's own panel investigating civil war started public hearings 11 Aug; 5 Aug U.S. State Dept report raised serious concerns about impartiality and effectiveness of panel. Ex-army chief Sarath Fonseka 13 Aug convicted in court martial of involvement in politics while in the military, stripped of his military rank; still faces 3 separate criminal cases. 2 prominent opposition MPs 6 Aug defected to pro-govt UPFA block; 30 Aug decision by chief Muslim party to support govt's proposed constitutional changes guarantees required two-thirds majority for passage. The Elders group 3 Aug criticised govt's post-war conduct, including clampdown on domestic critics, refusal to cooperate with international war crimes investigation, continued marginalisation of Tamil minority. Rights groups raised concerns over increasingly tight govt restrictions on NGO access to northern areas previously under LTTE control.

- "Sri Lanka general who defeated Tamil Tigers convicted in court martial", *Guardian*, 13 Aug. 2010.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°191, *War Crimes in Sri Lanka*, 17 May 2010.

SOUTH EAST ASIA

➤ **Indonesia** Country's most high-profile radical cleric Abu Bakar Basyir arrested 9 Aug, accused of funding Aceh militant training camp raided by police Feb; Basyir's 3rd arrest since 2002. In Papua, widespread anger over arrest of Baptist pastor Socrates Sofyan Yoman after he accused army of inciting violence in Puncak Jaya district. President Yudhoyono 4 Aug for first time alleged that candidates may have caused 2010 local election violence.

- Comment by Sidney Jones (Crisis Group), "What Is the State of Indonesia's Fight against Terror?", CNN, 13 Aug. 2010.
- "Arrest of a smiling extremist", *Economist*, 12 Aug. 2010.

Crisis Group Asia Briefing N° 108, *Indonesia: The Deepening Impasse in Papua*, 3 Aug. 2010. The Indonesian government needs urgently to address discontent in Papua, its easternmost region, and recognise that the root of the problem is political, not economic.



➤ **Myanmar/Burma** Govt 13 Aug set 7 Nov date for general election. At least 12 senior junta officials stepped down 28 Aug

to stand in elections; unclear if junta no.3 Thura Shwe Mann among them, but state media 31 Aug denied reports that junta leader Than Shwe had left post. Govt-run Election Commission 19 Aug announced stringent poll restrictions: candidates must seek permission to campaign 1 week in advance; speeches that "tarnish" military rule forbidden. Pro-democracy UDP party head Phyo Min Thein resigned 5 Aug, said election rules too biased towards junta. UWSA, largest armed ethnic group, 2 Aug said it will ban any "election activities" in areas under its control in northeast. U.S. 18 Aug said will back creation of UN-led commission to investigate war crimes by junta. 2 killed in 6 Aug blast in Myawaddy, Karen militants suspected.

- "Myanmar media confirm junta chief retains power", AP, 31 Aug. 2010.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°105, *The Myanmar Elections*, 27 May 2010.

➤ **Philippines** 2 killed in 4 Aug bomb blast at Zamboanga airport, likely target Sulu province governor Saku Tan wounded; police investigating possible Abu Sayyaf involvement, Tan blamed political rivals. Fighting erupted 7 Aug between 2 MILF commanders in Datu Piang, displacing some 5,000; govt-MILF talks to resume in Sept after end of Ramadan; govt 31 Aug confirmed Malaysia will continue to facilitate talks. Maguindanao massacre trial of some 200 suspects to start 1 Sept. Escalating violence by communist New People's Army (NPA) continued: 8 police, 1 local politician killed in 21 Aug Northern Samar province attack; 5 soldiers killed in Agusan del Sur province 25 Aug. Govt said attacks "undermine" proposed peace talks with NPA and extended Arroyo govt counter-insurgency plan "Oplan Bantay Laya" for 6 months.

- "Philippines eyes peace with Muslim rebels", AFP, 15 Aug. 2010.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°103, *Philippines: Pre-election Tensions in Central Mindanao*, 4 May 2010.

➤ **Thailand** Govt 16 Aug lifted state of emergency in 3 provinces, still in effect in Bangkok and 6 other provinces. Public prosecutors 11 Aug indicted 19 "red shirt"-leaders on terrorism charges for role in March-May protests; trial started 16 Aug. PM Abhisit 3 Aug approved annual military promotion list that reportedly installs General Prayuth Chan-ocha, who played key role in suppressing "red shirt" protests, as army commander. Supreme Court 11 Aug rejected ex-PM Thaksin's appeal against seizure of US\$1.4bn assets. Govt 23 Aug announced it will resume diplomatic ties with Cambodia after Thaksin resigned as economic advisor to Phnom Penh, but tensions continued over Preah Vihar temple on joint border.

- "Thailand's Red Shirt leaders appear in court", AP, 16 Aug. 2010.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°192, *Bridging Thailand's Deep Divide*, 5 July 2010.

➤ **Timor-Leste** President Ramos-Horta 20 Aug pardoned or commuted sentences of 23 rebels convicted of involvement in Feb 2008 attack on him and PM Gusmão. During late July visit, Indonesia FM Natalegawa denied knowledge of alleged harassment by Indonesian army (TNI) of villagers along joint border. Gusmão 18 Aug reportedly cut short visit to disputed Naktuka area (Oecusse) due to TNI presence.

- "President pardons rebels who shot him", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 Aug. 2010.



BALKANS

➡ **Bosnia** EU Council 11 Aug extended by 1 year mandate of Valentin Inzko, EUSR and High Representative of international community for BiH responsible for implementation of Dayton Agreement. Council of Ministers 19 Aug adopted rule book on police coordination, one of remaining conditions for EU visa liberalisation, ahead of 31 Aug finalisation of EU progress report.

- “Lone preacher”, *Telegraph*, 1 Aug. 2010.

➡ ✎ **Kosovo** Intensive EU efforts aimed at producing UNGA resolution acceptable to Serbia and Kosovo to serve as basis for future dialogue, ahead of 9 Sept UNGA discussion of Serbia's 28 July draft resolution. German FM Westerwelle 27 Aug, UK Foreign Secretary Hague 31 Aug visited Belgrade to push for changes to draft. Resolution text currently states unilateral secession not acceptable means to solving territorial disputes and calls for new talks on Kosovo on “all open issues”. Kosovo FM Hyseni 4 Aug formally asked UNSC to replace Resolution 1244 with new document following 22 July ICJ ruling on Kosovo's declaration of independence. President Sejdiu and PM Thaci 16 Aug sent letter to all UN member states asking them to recognise country's independence, reject Serbian resolution condemning unilateral secession. PM Thaci 18 Aug informed EUSR Feith that Serbian officials banned from visiting Kosovo due to provocations during previous visits; Serbian minister for Kosovo Bogdanovic, due to visit Kosovo 19 Aug, called ban a political provocation. Serbian Constitutional Court 10 Aug ruled that 2003 govt decision granting bonuses to some 45,000 Kosovo Serbs working in parallel govt institutions was unconstitutional, provoking anger among Kosovo Serbs. Officials 20 Aug said payments to continue. 6 injured 28 Aug in explosions in Serb majority municipality of Novo Brdo and Kosovo North. NATO 5 Aug announced start of transfer of protection of Serb Orthodox Churches to Kosovo police. Govt early month announced plans to invest €500,000 in infrastructure projects in North.

- “ICG, ‘Kosovo-Serbia land swap under active consideration’”, *BalkanInsight*, 27 Aug. 2010.

Crisis Group Europe Report N° 206, **Kosovo and Serbia after the ICJ Opinion**, 26 Aug. 2010. The development of more realistic, if not yet fully public, attitudes in Kosovo and Serbia suggest a win-win resolution of their dispute is feasible if both sides promptly open talks with the aim of reaching a comprehensive compromise.

➡ **Macedonia** PM Gruevski 19 Aug reaffirmed govt commitment to resolving name dispute, ahead of expected meetings between Greek and Macedonian parties and UN mediator Nimetz on sidelines of UNGA in Sept; Nimetz expected to offer new proposal to resolve name dispute.

- “Fresh push expected in Macedonia ‘name’ row”, *BalkanInsight*, 24 Aug. 2010.

➡ **Serbia** Serbian FM Jeremic 11 Aug announced Serbia unlikely to convince enough govts to support its 28 July draft resolution to UNGA calling for renewed negotiations with

Kosovo on “all open issues”. German FM Westerwelle 27 Aug, UK Foreign Secretary Hague 31 Aug visited Belgrade to push for changes to draft (see Kosovo).

- “Serbia ‘seeks compromise’ on Kosovo resolution”, *BalkanInsight*, 30 Aug. 2010.

CAUCASUS

➡ **Armenia/Turkey** Turkish FM Davutoğlu 26 Aug confirmed country's participation in NATO's disaster relief exercise to be held in Armenia 11-17 Sept; denied reports of possible temporary border opening during drills.

- “Turkey says Armenia border won't open during NATO exercise”, *Today's Zaman*, 27 Aug. 2010.

➡ **Armenia** Defence Minister Ohanian 10 Aug announced Armenia to acquire long-range precision weapons due to risk of war with Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh. Armenian and Russian presidents 20 Aug signed military agreement extending Russian military presence in country in return for security guarantees; drew criticism from Armenian opposition. Ohanian downplayed implications of reported Russian plans to sell air defence missiles to Azerbaijan (see Azerbaijan).

- “The wider implications of the Russian-Armenian defense deal”, *RFE/RL*, 24 Aug. 2010.

➡ **Azerbaijan** During mid-month visit by Turkish President Gul, countries signed treaty of “strategic partnership and mutual cooperation”; Gul said Turkey will continue to support Azerbaijan in conflict with Armenia over Nagorno-Karabakh. Reports emerged Russia to sell 2 S-300 missile systems to Azerbaijan. International criticism of Supreme Court 20 Aug decision to uphold Nov 2009 sentences against 2 youth activists arrested Aug 2009.

- “Turkey's Gul visits Azerbaijan: a case of sound and fury?”, *Eurasianet*, 17 Aug. 2010.

➡ **Chechnya (Russia)** Split within North Caucasus (NC) guerrilla movement following 1 Aug announcement by insurgent leader Doku Umarov he is standing down in favour of deputy Aslanbek Vadalov. Umarov withdrew resignation next day, but Chechen command structure repudiated oath of allegiance to him. Other NC military units reiterated support for Umarov, denounced Chechen guerrillas' inactivity. 10-12 guerrillas, 5 security force members reported killed, many injured in 29 Aug attack on Tsentoroy, home village and stronghold of pro-Moscow Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov.

- “‘Palace coup’ reveals split between Umarov and rebel commander Aslanbek Vadalov”, *EDM*, 13 Aug. 2010.

➡ **North Caucasus (non-Chechnya)** Intense clashes between guerrillas and govt troops across region. Security forces in Dagestan 21 Aug killed suspected mastermind of March Moscow subway bombings and commander of Dagestan guerrilla front Magomedali Vagabov; 4 other militants also killed in operation. Other violence in Dagestan included deputy mayor of Kizlyar injured in suspected assassination attempt 23 Aug; beheaded body of senior FSB officer found. President Medvedev 11 Aug dismissed Dagestan Interior Minister General Ali Magomedov. In Ingushetia, military base attacked by unknown assailants 13 Aug; no casualties reported. At least 20 wounded 17 Aug by bomb in café in Pyatigorsk, administrative centre of North Caucasus Federal District. Suspected suicide bomber 17 Aug killed at least

1 policeman, wounded 2 others at North Ossetia police checkpoint. In Kabardino-Balkariya capital Nalchik 5 guerrillas killed 28 Aug, after 23-hour fire-fight.

- [“Daghestan deterioration epitomizes Medvedev’s North Caucasus dilemma”](#), RFE/RL, 19 Aug. 2010.

➡ **Georgia** Russian President Medvedev 8 Aug visited Abkhazia on second anniversary of Aug 2008 Georgia-Russia war, promised full political, economic and security relations with breakaway republic. U.S. officials 11 Aug claimed Russia had S-300 air-defence missiles stationed in Abkhazia for past 2 years; followed Russian announcement same day of missile deployment. FM Vashadze 25 Aug accused Russia of deploying S-300 missiles in South Ossetia; Russia denied. In sign of economic recovery after war, govt announced 5.5-6% growth in first half of year.

- [“Pressure on Abkhaz leader intensifies”](#), RFE/RL, 25 Aug. 2010.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Europe Report N°205, [South Ossetia: The Burden of Recognition](#), 7 June 2010.

➡ **Nagorno-Karabakh (Azerbaijan)** Following last month’s reports Russia put forward “new version” of Madrid principles in June, Russian FM Lavrov 27 Aug said Russia proposed adopting non-binding document on basic principles leaving out “two or three” uncoordinated issues. Armenian FM Nalbandian 18 Aug reiterated Yerevan ready for talks on “latest version”. Azerbaijani Defence Ministry reported 3 Armenian, 2 Azerbaijani soldiers killed 31 Aug when Armenian troops allegedly crossed line of contact.

- [“Russian-Armenian defense pact ‘will prevent new war in Karabakh’”](#), RFE/RL, 18 Aug. 2010.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Europe Briefing N°55, [Nagorno-Karabakh: Getting to a Breakthrough](#), 7 Oct. 2009.

EASTERN EUROPE

➡ **Belarus** 2 activists detained briefly 1 Aug for public display of country’s historic flag replaced in 1995 by modified Soviet-era flag. 3 activists detained over month for distributing anti-govt materials. Belarusian and Russian presidents exchanged accusations over alleged remarks made by President Lukashenko over Georgia’s breakaway republics.

- [“Russian, Belarusian leaders trade barbs in new row”](#), RFE/RL, 14 Aug. 2010.

➡ **Moldova** Acting president Ghimpu 19 Aug called for unity within ruling coalition Alliance for European Integration ahead of mid-Nov elections. Followed reports of plans by Moscow to break up alliance, support formation of new political coalition consisting of former parliamentary chairman Lupu’s Democratic Party and former President Voronin’s Communist Party.

- [“Moscow seeks political allies in Moldova ahead of referendum and elections”](#), EDM, 16 Aug. 2010.

➡ **Ukraine** Speaking at 24 Aug independence day ceremony, President Yanukovich called for reform of constitution to strengthen presidential powers, in order to push through reforms. Journalist Vasyl Klymentyev, well known critic of authorities, reported missing 12 Aug after receiving threats. Interior minister 26 Aug said security forces suspected of involvement in case.

- [“Ukrainian president calls for more powers, as country marks independence day”](#), RFE/RL, 24 Aug. 2010.

WESTERNEUROPE/MEDITERRANEAN

➡ **Cyprus** Greek Cypriot President Christofias met Turkish Cypriot counterpart Erođlu 10 Aug, 31 Aug to continue discussions on property chapter in continued reunification talks: no signs of progress, agreed to meet 3 times before 14 Sept UNGA. Turkey PM Erdoğan 15 Aug reaffirmed 2010 as Turkey’s deadline for negotiations, Erođlu 16 Aug said end of year would be “turning point” and possible “parting of the ways”. Christofias 24 Aug warned of “disunity” on Cyprus issue on Greek Cypriot domestic front.

- [“Cypriot reunification talks continue”](#), SETimes, 5 August 2010.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Europe Report N°201, [Cyprus: Reunification or Partition?](#), 30 Sept. 2009.

➡ **Northern Ireland** Spate of bomb attacks throughout month in attempt by dissident Republicans to derail peace process. No-warning bomb 4 Aug injured 3 children in Lurgan, police called bomb “obvious attempt to kill police”; hours later police investigating 3 other bomb alerts in same area attacked with petrol bombs; 3 men arrested 25 Aug. NI security forces 4 Aug defused car bomb targeting army major in Bangor, first attack directly targeting army since March 2009. 200lb car bomb exploded outside Derry police station 3 Aug, following telephone warning by man claiming to represent Real IRA; suspected Continuity IRA member same day threw bomb at police station in Co Armagh.

- [“The bombs of August”](#), *Economist*, 19 Aug. 2010.

➡ **Turkey** After 3 month intensification in attacks by Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK), group 14 Aug declared unilateral ceasefire until 20 Sept for Ramadan, said ceasefire could last longer if Turkish govt satisfies certain conditions; govt 18 Aug said would never negotiate with an “illegal organisation”; PM Erdoğan 23 Aug said state bodies (inc intelligence institutions) may talk to jailed PKK leader Ocalan. Prior to ceasefire, 4 civilians killed 1 Aug by alleged PKK roadside bomb in southeast Turkey; 3 PKK rebels, 1 police officer killed 3 Aug in attack on southeast Siirt police station; 1 soldier, at least 6 PKK rebels died 5 Aug in clashes in eastern Agri province; 3 soldiers killed 8 Aug in southeast by alleged PKK landmine explosion. Turkey and Israel 10 Aug agreed to 4-person investigation into Israel’s 31 May deadly raid on Gaza-bound flotilla, reporting directly to UNSG and headed by former New Zealand PM Palmer. Turkey 12 Aug established own national commission on raid to draft report to be given to UN panel. Turkish govt and military agreed to compromise 5 Aug after political stand-off over military’s role in alleged 2003 anti-govt coup: military agreed not to promote 11 senior officers accused of involvement in coup plot, in return govt annulled arrest warrants against 102 officers.

- [“The great mediator”](#), *Economist*, 19 August 2010.



Latin America / Caribbean

➡ **Bolivia** Potosí department, traditional stronghold of ruling MAS party, paralysed from early Aug as more than 100,000 demonstrated against govt over protracted border

dispute with Oruro department; protests ended 16 Aug after govt conceded to main Potosí civic group's demands of infrastructure developments, commission to solve border dispute; UNOHCHR 11 Aug said dispute had led to "serious human rights violations". President Morales 8 Aug announced army to be used in fight against drug trafficking.

- "La huelga de tres semanas en Potosí fractura al partido de Morales", EFE, 18 Aug. 2010.

➡ **Colombia** Relations with Venezuela and Ecuador improved following President Santos' 7 Aug inauguration (see Venezuela and Ecuador). Constitutional Court 17 Aug suspended agreement allowing U.S. use of military bases in Colombia due to procedural flaws. First car bomb since Jan 2009 exploded in Bogotá 12 Aug, injuring 9; 2 suspects arrested, but leadership and motives behind incident remain unknown. FARC 23 Aug addressed open letter to regional body UNASUR reiterating willingness to negotiate with govt; Santos 14 Aug said "conditions" to negotiate not currently in place.

- Comment by Mark Schneider (Crisis Group), "New Leader Must Tackle Security Reforms", *Miami Herald*, 10 Aug. 2010.
- "Colombia's Santos, Chavez restore ties after talks", Reuters, 10 Aug. 2010.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Latin America Briefing N°23, *Improving Security Policy in Colombia*, 29 June 2010.

➡ **Ecuador** In sign of rapprochement with Bogotá, President Correa attended Colombian President Santos' 7 Aug inauguration; Santos agreed to share evidence seized during March 2008 airstrike on FARC camp inside Ecuador with Quito, key Ecuadorean condition for re-establishing diplomatic ties. Ecuador, Colombia FMs met 26 Aug, agreed to restart bilateral commissions.

- "Aprueban Ley de Educación Superior", BBC, 5 Aug. 2010.

➡ **Guatemala** High level official of RENAP, body charged with issuing voter registration cards for 2011 general elections, stepped down 24 Aug amid accusations of mismanagement and corruption investigation; followed several other high-profile RENAP dismissals in recent months. Former Costa Rican attorney general Francisco Dall'Anese Ruiz 1 Aug took up post of director of UN-sanctioned commission against impunity (CICIG). CICIG 6 Aug ordered capture of several former high-level officials, including former director of prisons and presidential candidate Alejandro Giammattei and 18 others for involvement in 2007 extrajudicial executions of prisoners.

- "New challenges for anti corruption commission", Inter Press Service, 27 Aug. 2010.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Latin America Report N°33, *Guatemala: Squeezed between Crime and Impunity*, 22 June 2010.

➡ **Haiti** Provisional electoral council (CEP) 20 Aug rejected 15 of 34 candidates for 28 Nov presidential election, including hip hop star Wyclef Jean and several other candidates linked to diaspora; CEP facing mounting criticism over perceived bias towards President Préval. In surprise move, Préval 7 Aug endorsed head of govt construction company Jude Célestin as official candidate of ruling INITE party over ex-PM Jacques Édouard Alexis. Ex-President Aristide's Fanmi Lavalas (FL) party for first time facing prospect of split vote as several ex-FL members bidding for president under different banners. Post-earthquake reconstruction commission IHRC 17 Aug announced US\$1.6bn in rebuilding projects, first major lot of

projects announced since commission created March.

- "Haiti commission earmarks \$1.6 bln for recovery", Reuters, 17 Aug. 2010.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Latin America/Caribbean Report N°32, *Haiti: Stabilisation and Reconstruction after the Quake*, 31 March 2010.

➡ **Mexico** 72 migrant workers found dead in Tamaulipas 24 Aug; lone survivor said they were massacred by Zetas drug cartel after refusing to pay extortion or take part in smuggling; govt 25 Aug promised full investigation. Govt 3 Aug said some 28,000 killed in drug violence since army first deployed against cartels Dec 2006, up 3,000 from previous estimates; President Calderón 10 Aug admitted govt strategy against drug cartels could be "reworked", including complete overhaul of police force, but military would still be used. Govt 30 Aug fired 3,200 police, 10% of total force, over alleged corruption and ties to drug trafficking. Fears raised about increasing cartel control of 2nd city Monterrey: suspected Zetas 14-16 Aug blocked road access to city centre, attacked soldiers; Edelmiro Cavazos, mayor of Santiago town near Monterrey, found dead 18 Aug, 7 police connected to "drug gang" arrested 20 Aug. Ex-president Vicente Fox 9 Aug called for legalisation of drugs; Calderón 3 Aug said still opposed to legalisation, but for first time called for "fundamental debate" on issue. Alleged leading drug kingpin Edgar Valdez of Beltran Leyva cartel arrested 31 Aug. UN, OAS 24 Aug said Mexico most dangerous country for media workers in Americas, some 60 journalists killed since 2000.

- "Mexico launches federal probe of migrant massacre", AP, 28 Aug. 2010.

➡ **Venezuela** De-escalation of tensions with Colombia: at 10 Aug meeting President Chávez and Colombian President Santos decided to re-establish diplomatic ties, set up committees to restore bilateral trade, improve border security. Amid growing debate on rising urban homicide rates ahead of 26 Sept legislative elections, govt 17 Aug demanded influential pro-opposition newspapers cease publication of violent images, citing "child protection"; provoked accusations of censorship from opposition, media groups. Chávez 8 Aug threatened to reject U.S. Ambassador-designate Larry Palmer after he criticised "low morale" of Venezuelan armed forces, Chávez's denial of presence of Colombian rebel camps inside Venezuela. Chávez reiterated FARC "has no future through armed struggle", urged release of hostages.

- "Gobiernos de Colombia y Venezuela acuerdan su reconciliación", *Ultimas Noticias*, 11 Aug. 2010



Middle East / North Africa

EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

➡ **Israel/Occupied Palestinian Territories** Israel PM Netanyahu and PA President Abbas agreed 20 Aug to restart direct peace talks beginning 2 Sept with 2 day peace summit in Washington, first direct negotiations in 20 months. Egyptian President Mubarak and Jordan's King Abdullah also invited; however, Palestinian chief negotiator Erekat warned Palestinians would withdraw if settlement construction resumed after scheduled 26 Sept end to 10 month limited

moratorium on building. Hamas' military wing claimed responsibility for killing of 4 Israelis 31 Aug near Hebron, West Bank; U.S. condemned attack, warned "enemies of peace" would attempt to disrupt peace talks. Senior Israeli officer, at least 2 Lebanese soldiers, 1 journalist killed in 3 Aug border clash between IDF and Lebanon army; UNIFIL 25 Aug report reiterated 4 Aug conclusion that IDF soldiers were on Israeli side of UN-defined border. Israel 2 Aug announced decision to cooperate with UN investigation into 31 May deadly raid on Turkish-owned aid flotilla; Deputy PM Meridor 3 Aug said choice was made "primarily" to improve Israeli-Turkish relations. 2 IDF soldiers injured 17 Aug by mortars fired from Gaza; in response Israeli Air Force 18 Aug bombed suspected weapons manufacturing site and 3 smuggling tunnels.

- Comment by Robert Malley and Peter Harling (Crisis Group), "Middle East: Beyond Moderates and Militants", *Foreign Affairs*, 27 Aug. 2010.
- "Many clocks tick as Israel, Palestinians open talks", Reuters, 29 Aug. 2010.

Crisis Group MENA Report N° 97, *Drums of War: Israel and the 'Axis of Resistance'*, International Crisis Group WORKING TO PREVENT CONFLICT WORLDWIDE, 2 Aug. 2010. The Israeli-Lebanese border is exceptionally calm and uniquely dangerous, both for the same reason: fear that a new round of hostilities would be far more violent and could spill over regionally.

➡ **Lebanon** Lebanese and Israeli armies clashed on border 3 Aug (See Israel/OPT). After U.S. Congressional appropriations committee 2 Aug placed hold on \$100mn appropriations to Lebanese army, Lebanon 14 Aug established fund to arm military; Iran said prepared to sell country weapons. Continued tensions over Special Tribunal for Lebanon (STL) investigation into murder of PM Rafiq Hariri. Hizbollah chief Nasrallah 9 Aug blamed Israel for assassination, 17 Aug passed evidence to STL via state prosecutor; STL 24 Aug said evidence incomplete, requested missing information. Further arrests of suspected spies over month: military court charged senior Free Patriotic Movement member General Karam 10 Aug and Colonel Jaoudeh 18 Aug with espionage for Israel. Hizbollah and Sunni al-Ahbash group clashed in Beirut 24 Aug: 3 killed including Hizbollah official. In Damascus talks late month Syrian President Assad urged PM Hariri to preserve calm, support Hizbollah. UNSC 30 Aug voted to extend UNIFIL mandate for 1 year.

- "Lebanon and Israel: If only it was just about trees", *Economist*, 5 Aug. 2010.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Middle East Report N°96, *Lebanon's Politics: The Sunni Community and Hariri's Future Current*, 26 May 2010.

➡ **Syria** U.S. envoy to IAEA 3 Aug said agency should consider pushing for special inspection of alleged nuclear arms sites in Syria. Israel 5 Aug indicted 3 men for spying for Syria; FM Muallem in letter to UNSG Ban said charges fabricated. Reports emerged late month of new military cooperation between Hizbollah and Syria.

- "IAEA should look at mandatory Syria inspection: U.S.", Reuters, 3 Aug. 2010.

GULF

➡ **Bahrain** Ongoing security crackdown ahead of 23 Oct parliamentary elections; 230 people reported arrested,

including Shiite opposition leader Abduljalil al-Singace, charged 30 Aug with attempting to overthrow gov't; gov't said detainees arrested for security and terrorism violations, not for expressing dissident political views. Arrests fuelled almost daily sectarian clashes between security forces and Shiite opposition. Public prosecutor 27 Aug banned media from reporting on detentions. Sheik Ali Salman head of Wefaq society, largest Shiite bloc in parliament, 21 Aug said crackdown had "in one week destroyed 10 years of progress". Second largest opposition party Islamic Action Society (Amal) 25 Aug voted to boycott Oct parliamentary elections, called for reform of country's political system.

- "Crackdown in Bahrain hints of end to reforms", *New York Times*, 26 Aug. 2010.

➡ **Iran** Start-up of Russian-built and supervised Bushehr nuclear plant, country's first reactor, began 21 Aug. U.S. Chairman of Joint Chiefs of staff Mullen 1 Aug said U.S. has plan to attack Iran if necessary. U.S. 3 Aug announced further sanction measures. Iran 16 Aug said it will start building 10 uranium enrichment sites in March 2011, signed new law requiring gov't to continue 20% uranium enrichment. Supreme leader Ayatollah Khamenei 18 Aug said no talks on nuclear programme with U.S. until sanctions and military threats revoked. President Ahmadinejad 20 Aug said ready for immediate nuclear fuel swap talks, reportedly said Iran would stop 20% uranium enrichment if it receives fuel supply for research reactor. Nuclear chief Salehi 30 Aug said country would produce fuel for research reactor in 1 year. Press 18 Aug banned from publishing news on opposition leaders. 3 judiciary officials reportedly suspended 15 Aug over mistreatment of prisoners following disputed June 2009 elections. Assassination attempt against Ahmadinejad reported 4 Aug, denied by state media.

- "Iran to power up nuclear reactor", Al Jazeera, 21 Aug. 2010.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°100, *The Iran Nuclear Issue: The View from Beijing*, 17 Feb. 2010.

➡ **Iraq** U.S. President Obama announced U.S. combat operations officially ended 31 Aug; U.S. 24 Aug announced drawdown to under 50,000 "advisory and assistance" troops achieved on schedule. At least 50 died 25 Aug in coordinated bombings and gun attacks targeting security forces across country, including 15 killed in bomb at Baghdad police station - claimed 28 Aug by al-Qaeda-linked group. At least 46 killed 17 Aug in suicide bomb at army recruitment centre; 2 judges killed same day in targeted attacks, both claimed by al-Qaeda affiliate. 5 police killed at Baghdad checkpoint 3 Aug; at least 6 killed same day in market bombing in Kut; over 40 died in Basra explosion 7 Aug; at least 8 soldiers killed in bombing in Diyala province 11 Aug. Deadlock in negotiations to form coalition gov't continued; Iraqi National Alliance 1 Aug broke negotiations with Maliki's State of Law. UNSC 5 Aug extended UNAMI mandate by 1 year.

- "Iraq's uncertain future", *Economist*, 26 Aug. 2010.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Middle East Report N°94, *Iraq's Uncertain Future: Elections and Beyond*, 25 Feb. 2010.

➡ **Yemen** Gov't officials 25 Aug announced army had retaken southern town of Loder after several days of fighting following 20 Aug killing of 11 soldiers in al-Qaeda ambush; at least 19 militants, 3 civilians reported killed; security officials 24 Aug said nearly 80,000 civilians evacuated from town. Al-Qaeda

suicide bomber injured 8 soldiers in southern city of Dalea 3 Aug. 3 soldiers killed 5 Aug by alleged al-Qaeda gunmen at checkpoint in southern Zinjibar. Suspected al-Qaeda gunmen 14 Aug killed intelligence officer in southern Lahej province, at least sixth such attack since June. 12 soldiers killed late month by al-Qaeda gunmen in restive southern province of Abyan. Officials reported 53 soldiers killed by al-Qaeda since May. 7 people killed 24 Aug in fighting between northern Shiite rebels and pro-govt tribesmen. Govt and northern Houthi rebels 27 Aug signed Qatari-mediated accord in Doha, sides agreed to start political dialogue and bolster fragile 11 Feb ceasefire.

- [“Yemen rebels, govt set timetable for accords”](#), AFP, 27 Aug. 2010.

NORTH AFRICA

➤ **Algeria** Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) reported 25 Aug to have executed customs officer taken prisoner in 30 June attack that killed 11 gendarmes near southern border with Mali. 4 security guards injured 1-2 Aug in 2 bomb attacks targeting Trans-Mediterranean gas pipeline. Several terrorists killed over month including at least 8 AQIM members killed by security forces in eastern Kabylie region 29 Aug. 11 members of terrorist support network, comprising local merchants and tradesmen, arrested 3 Aug in Bouria, accused of money-laundering and providing logistical support to terrorists.

- [“Hard-line Islam steps out of shadows in Algeria”](#), Reuters, 10 Aug. 2010.

➤ **Egypt** Officials 4 Aug alleged Palestinians from Gaza entered Sinai Peninsula through tunnels, launched 5 rockets at Jordan and Israel 2 Aug, killing 1 and injuring 5 in Jordanian port of Aqaba; Hamas spokesman denied claims. Security forces in

Sinai 30 Aug seized 100kg of high explosives, 250 anti-aircraft missiles bound for Gaza.

- [“Triangle of trouble”](#), *Economist*, 5 Aug. 2010.

➤ **Mauritania** Govt 12 Aug released 2 Malian al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) suspects captured during unsuccessful 22 July joint Mauritanian-French military operation to free AQIM hostage; officials said suspects received apologies, compensation. AQIM 23 Aug released 2 Spanish hostages (see Mali). AQIM suicide bomber attempting to drive explosives-laden truck into army barracks killed by soldiers in Nema, SE 25 Aug.

- [“Mauritania thwarts suicide bomb attack”](#), Magharebia, 27 Aug. 2010.

➤ **Morocco** Activists 18 Aug suspended commercial blockade of Spanish enclave of Melilla until end of Ramadan; govt has made repeated accusations of Spanish border police abuses in area govt calls “occupied territory”. Former Spanish PM Aznar visited Melilla 18 Aug, told reporters Spanish govt had “abandoned” enclave in face of “harassment” by Morocco; Spanish govt condemned visit. Interior Minister Cherkaoui met Spanish counterpart Rubalcaba 23 Aug in Rabat to ease recent tensions, discussed security cooperation. Interior Ministry 11 Aug said police had broken up cell of 18 radical Islamists planning series of attacks in country.

- [“Tensions simmer in Spanish enclave in North Africa”](#), AP, 22 Aug. 2010.

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