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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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May 2011 Trends



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June 2011 Watchlist



Conflict Risk Alerts

Sudan (Northern)
Yemen



Conflict Resolution Opportunities

Crisis Group

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CENTRAL AFRICA

- ➡ **Burundi** President Nkurunziza 18 May pledged to end ongoing rural violence by end-June, 2 May promised inquiry into 2010 electoral violence and killings in recent months. UN human rights representative 20 May expressed concern over alleged extrajudicial killings March-Apr of former rebel National Liberation Forces. At least 9, including 3 soldiers, killed 26, 28, 30 May by unidentified men in Bujumbura rural district. In meeting with UN HCHR 3 May, officials promised truth and reconciliation commission to begin work by Jan 2012, will investigate events since 1972. Court 16 May acquitted journalist charged with treason for criticising security services. Security forces 12 May detained Gabriel Nduwayo, chief suspect in 2009 killing of deputy chair of corruption watchdog OLUCOME. Splits emerged in opposition UPD 24 May, as party president dismissed secretary general, executive secretary, suspended consultative council in apparent attempt to prevent leadership challenge.
- [“Burundi president promises justice for political violence”](#), AFP, 18 May 2011.
 - For latest report, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°169, [From Electoral Boycott to Political Impasse](#), 7 Feb. 2011.

- ➡ **Cameroon** Opposition Social Democratic Front 13 May said it will disrupt planned Oct presidential poll, citing govt repression, electoral tampering; 18 May promised to support any popular political unrest against ruling Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (CPDM). Former CPDM member Esther Dang 17 May announced candidacy for presidency, second ex-ally of incumbent President Biya to do so.
- [“Cameroon opposition vows to disrupt presidential vote later this year”](#), AP, 13 May 2011.

- ➡ **Central African Republic** Following rigged Jan elections, head of EU delegation 6 May met President Bozizé, requested more formal political dialogue, applying article 8 of Cotonou agreement. Security in NE precarious. Unidentified armed men 3 May ambushed NGO vehicle on road to Ndiffo. Suspected Sudanese, Chadian bandits attacked NGO compounds in Birao 22 May, Ndélé 24 May. Relations between govt and UFDR former rebels strained over lack of govt support in fighting rebel Convention of Patriots for Justice and Peace (CPJP), replacement of UFDR minister. CPJP set to meet mediation team end-month. Presidents Bozizé, Deby (Chad) and Bashir (Sudan) 23 May agreed joint border patrols. LRA 3 May attacked SE village Balifondo; several villagers killed, others abducted; 7 May fired on NGO vehicle on Zemio-Mboki road. Curfew imposed in 3 districts of capital Bangui after at least 2 people reported killed, several injured 31 May in violence directed at Muslims.
- [“Central Africa PM says peace a priority”](#), SAPA, 19 May 2011.
 - For latest report, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°167, [Dangerous Little Stones: Diamonds in the Central African Republic](#), 16 Dec. 2010.

- ➡ **Chad** Electoral commission 9 May declared incumbent Idriss Déby winner of 25 Apr presidential election, with 89% of vote. Opposition leaders rejected result following boycott of polls; electoral commission claimed 64% turnout, AU said less than 51%. Govt officials 18 May announced Chad will not recognise Libyan rebel Transitional National Council or enforce any ICC

arrest warrants against Libyan officials. Spokesman warned fighting in Libya is increasing instability across Sahel. UN report 13 May said security situation improved since end-2010 with withdrawal of international peacekeepers, but warned of continued humanitarian, displacement crises.

- [“Chad's Deby wins re-election in boycotted poll”](#), Reuters, 10 May 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°78, [Chad's North West: The Next High-risk Area?](#), 17 Feb. 2011.

- ➡ **Democratic Republic of Congo** Coalition of 26 opposition parties 6 May said electoral calendar, announced end-Apr, “unconstitutional and unrealistic”. Elections currently set for 28 Nov, despite constitutional requirement that elections be held 90 days before end of current mandate, therefore by 6 Sept; opposition also said revision of voter registration lists unlikely to be complete by 30 June deadline. Month saw increased violence in east, including 8 May failed attack on Education Minister Léonard Mashako Mamba. Reports 24 May said Mai Mai commander Luc Yabili offered surrender in return for MONUSCO protection; local FARDC commander refused offer. FARDC forces 1 May killed Union of Congolese Patriots (UCP) member General Floribert Kisembo; govt claimed Kisembo planned rebellion, UCP alleged political assassination. Independent U.S. study found 400,000 rapes committed in 12-month period in 2006-7.
- [“Growing insecurity raises concerns in the DRC”](#), VOA, 31 May 2011.

Crisis Group Africa Report N°175, [Congo: The Electoral Dilemma](#), 5 May 2011. Faced with the dilemma of respecting the constitutional deadline and organising botched elections, or ignoring that deadline and sliding into a situation of unconstitutional power, the Congolese authorities have chosen the first option.

- ➡ **Rwanda** International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) 17 May handed down custodial sentences to 4 former senior military commanders, including ex-army chief Augustin Bizimungu, for their involvement in 1994 genocide. Congolese armed forces 26 May said Bernard Munyagishari, militia leader during genocide, arrested in North Kivu. UK police 12 May warned 2 Rwandan dissidents living in London of “imminent threat” of assassination by Rwandan govt; Rwanda said allegations “without foundation”. Opposition Rwandan National Congress same day called for resignation of President Kagame, alleging repression, extrajudicial killings.
- [“Rwanda genocide: ex-army chief given 30-year sentence”](#), BBC, 17 May 2011.

HORN OF AFRICA

- ➡ **Djibouti** Sudanese President Bashir 8 May attended inauguration of President Guelleh despite arrest warrant by ICC and Djibouti being signatory to Rome Statute, drawing criticism from ICC and EU. FM 14 May announced plans to send troops to Somalia by June despite warning of reprisals from al-Shabaab.
- [“Djibouti unapologetic on receiving Sudanese president”](#), *Sudan Tribune*, 19 May 2011.
- ➡ **Eritrea** NATO naval forces 4 May intercepted ship transporting weapons to Eritrea from North Korea in violation of UN sanctions. Sudan and Eritrea 11 May agreed to abolish entry visas, facilitate traffic of goods across border.
- [“Human tsunamis and the world refugee system”](#), Pambazuka News, 5 May 2011.

➡ **Ethiopia** Unidentified gunmen 13 May ambushed UN convoy in Ogaden region leaving 1 UN staff dead, 1 injured, 2 missing. Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) and Ethiopian govt traded accusations of responsibility, also over killing of 100 civilians in region 10-15 May. UN suspended aid operations in region. ONLF 26 May said it seized town of Galalshe in Jigjiga region from govt, freed 2 missing WFP employees.

- [“When a humanitarian convoy is attacked in Ethiopia, who is to blame?”](#), Ogaden Online, 25 May 2011.

➡ **Kenya** Ethiopian Merrille tribesmen 2 May reportedly killed at least 40 Kenyan Turkana villagers near Todonyang on border; President Kibaki 12 May met Ethiopian PM Meles to resolve dispute amid Turkana reprisals; Kenya sent troops to secure border following reports up to 2,500 Merrille had settled in N Kenya since attacks. ICC Prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo 11 May released initial evidence against 3 post-election violence suspects including suspended Higher Education Minister William Ruto and journalist Joshua Arap Sang. Ruto and Sang 18 May requested ICC pre-trial chamber reprimand Moreno-Ocampo over “baseless” allegations in cases against them. Court of Appeals Justice Philip Waki 20 May defended ICC process, called for creation of local tribunal to try other suspects. Moreno-Ocampo 29 May accused govt of creating “climate of fear”. ICC 30 May refused govt request to halt trial. Cabinet 19 May approved 2 crucial bills driving constitutional implementation process.

- [“Kenyan government loses bid to stop Hague trials”](#), Reuters, 30 May 2011.

➡ **Somalia** Month saw continued power struggle within Transitional Federal Government (TFG), deepening divisions between President Sheikh Sharif and Parliamentary Speaker Sharif Hassan over extension of TFG and Parliament mandate, and election timetable. TFG 9 May barred MPs from travelling abroad; U.S. expressed concern over stifling of political discussion, UN 25 May warned TFG it risks losing international support. Pro-TFG militias supported by AMISOM and regional states continued to make significant gains in south, centre. Heavy fighting continued in Mogadishu and on Kenyan, Ethiopian borders. Fighting reported between Ras Kamboni Brigade and al-Shabaab 23 May around Haawina in Jubba Valley. In Mogadishu, TFG and AMISOM troops closed in on al-Shabaab stronghold of Bakara Market. Renewed fighting raised tensions in Puntland, as militants loyal to Mohammad Said Atom attacked govt forces in Galgala Mountains leaving at least 26, mostly insurgents, dead. Puntland authorities 10 May warned rebels against declaring independence in breakaway region Ras Assayr. Aid groups 13 May warned of potential humanitarian crisis resulting from extreme droughts, insecurity.

- [“The transition settles into drifting conflict”](#), Garowe Online, 19 May 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°170, [The Transitional Government on Life Support](#), 21 Feb. 2011.

➡ **Somaliland** Sool, Sanaag & Cayn (SSC) militia 26 May reportedly ambushed Somaliland forces near Gambadhe, Sool region, multiple casualties. Somaliland 24 May replaced Somali shilling with new currency.

- [“Somaliland recognition is within reach”](#), Somaliland Press, 10 May 2011.

➡ **Sudan (Northern)** Following build-up of tensions, month saw clashes between N and S Sudan security forces in Abyei precipitate invasion by Sudanese Armed

Forces, undermining confidence between North and South and threatening renewed conflict; and increased tensions regarding military control in Blue Nile and South Kordofan and presence of armed forces. Early month clashes between sides left 14 dead; N and S Sudan 5 May agreed on joint military withdrawal, both sides to refrain from claiming Abyei in draft constitutions. President Bashir later reiterated Abyei belonged to North. SAF being escorted out of Abyei by UN attacked 19 May; Khartoum blamed South, next day invaded Abyei in breach of existing agreements, prompting tens of thousands of residents to flee south. S Sudan 22 May declared seizure “act of war”, but S Sudan President Kiir 26 May assured that S Sudan would not retaliate. Bashir rejected UN calls for immediate withdrawal. At late-month talks in Addis Ababa officials from N and S Sudan agreed to preliminary border security agreement. Reported SAF request for SPLA forces from Blue Nile and S Kordofan to redeploy south also fuelled tensions. In S Kordofan elections early month, National Congress Party (NCP) candidate and ICC-indictee Ahmed Haroun announced winner of gubernatorial poll; NCP won 33 assembly seats vs. 21 for the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM). SPLM refused to accept results, alleged fraud. In Darfur, SAF airstrikes on villages 17-18 May killed at least 10. At Doha talks, Liberation and Justice Movement and govt close to agreement on draft peace deal presented late Apr, but stuck on VP position, referendum on future status. In Khartoum, opposition forces, including Islamist leader Hassan Turabi, manoeuvring in anticipation of worsening political, economic situation.

- [“Sudan threatens to occupy 2 more disputed regions”](#), *New York Times*, 29 May 2011.

Crisis Group Africa Report N°174, [Divisions in Sudan’s Ruling Party and the Threat to the Country’s Stability](#), 4 May 2011. Unless Sudan’s grievances are addressed by a more inclusive government, the country risks further violence and disintegration even after the South’s independence becomes official in July.



➡ **Sudan (South)** Tensions flared with N Sudan over Abyei, exacerbated by Northern invasion and control of area in breach of existing agreements, tens of thousands of Abyei residents fled south (see North Sudan). Government of South Sudan (GoSS) 5 May passed draft transitional constitution – without reference to Abyei – despite opposition objections over undemocratic measures: constitution stipulates president will serve 4 years starting 9 July, no term limit, no date for new elections; has powers to dismiss elected officials, state parliaments. UN 25 May proposed new peacekeeping force for S Sudan, UNMISS; Khartoum 28 May said UNMIS mandate to end 9 July. Clashes between govt forces and renegade generals continued in Unity state, including with Peter Gadet 8-9 May; GoSS claimed 100 rebels killed. At least 80 killed 10 May following rebel attack on cattle herders.

- [“South Sudanese wait, fret about how to get home”](#), Reuters, 24 May 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°172, [Politics and Transition in the New South Sudan](#), 4 April 2011.

➡ **Uganda** Month saw continued “walk to work” protests against soaring fuel and food prices, and govt crackdown on protesters. Police 10 May detained opposition leader Norbert Mao, 12 May dispersed thousands protesting inauguration of President Museveni for fourth presidential term, leaving 5 dead. Opposition Forum for Democratic Change leader Kizza Besigye,

returning from hospitalisation in Kenya for injuries sustained in protests late Apr, placed under house arrest 19 May. Musenevi 24 May appointed Amama Mbabazi as PM, despite bribery allegations against him. Police 16 May arrested 4 Somalis suspected of being al-Shabaab members, 2 days after militant group warned of further attacks.

- [“Key political risks to watch in Uganda”](#), Reuters, 3 May 2011.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

➡ **Madagascar** De facto leader Andry Rajoelina early month visited Europe, Southern Africa to rally support for High Authority of the Transition (HAT) election plans; announced he would run in presidential elections, reversing previous pledge not to stand, said elections must take place this year. Former president Zafy's Rodobe movement instigated daily rallies starting in Anosy 18 May aiming to reclaim public control of transition. 19-20 May SADC summit communiqué called for all-inclusive political process to find lasting solution in June. All parties claim communiqué favours their position.

- [“Little ‘extraordinary’ about latest SADC summit”](#), IPS, 23 May 2011.

➡ **Zimbabwe** SADC South African facilitation team early May met with negotiators from ZANU-PF and both MDC formations to develop elections roadmap; significant progress reported around key issues including sanctions, constitution, media and electoral reform. In rare concession ZANU-PF negotiators agreed possible time range from 2012 to 2013, however, ZANU-PF politburo meeting 10 May reiterated position insisting on elections in 2011. Central Bank governor Gideon Gono 15 May said no budget for elections this year. Extraordinary SADC summit 20 May deferred discussion on Zimbabwe until June, agreed to dissolve tribunal. Attempts by SADC mediator South African President Zuma's team to meet security chiefs rebuffed by ZANU-PF as foreign interference; ZANU-PF negotiators also reportedly told they cannot engage in discussions about security sector reform. Tensions within ZANU-PF reportedly intensifying amid speculation over Mugabe succession. Arrests of civil society activists continue.

- [“Mugabe backtracks to buy time ahead of SADC summit”](#), AllAfrica, 13 May 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°173, [The Road to Reform or Another Dead End?](#), 27 Apr. 2011.

WEST AFRICA

➡ **Burkina Faso** Widespread unrest continued, with protests by military, students, teachers. Soldiers rioted in garrison town Po 14-15 May, capital Ouagadougou 23 May, second city Bobo-Dioulasso 31 May, in apparent demand for higher pay. Students 23-24 May staged violent protests throughout country, damaged govt buildings in Ouagadougou, in support of teachers striking for higher wages; govt 25 May agreed to all teachers' union demands. Govt mid-month announced 3-month cut in prices of basic goods.

- [“Burkina Faso's long-serving president moves to placate critics”](#), *Guardian*, 17 May 2011.

➡ **Côte d'Ivoire** Month saw return of some stability following formal investiture 6 May, inauguration 21 May of President Alassane Ouattara. Ouattara pledged unity govt, promised legislative elections by year-end; 22 May announced current PM Soro will retain post. Interim leader of former president Gbagbo's Ivorian Popular Front 25 May said party may not join govt until Gbagbo,

other senior figures released. Govt 4 May claimed last remnants of militia loyal to Gbagbo defeated in Yopougon district, Abidjan; UN reported fighting later month in west. Ouattara 1 May appointed former PM Banny as head of Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 18 May requested ICC investigation of events during 5-month crisis. UN HRC 10 May reported discovery of mass graves in Yopougon. Amnesty International 25 May reported war crimes, crimes against humanity by supporters of Ouattara and Gbagbo during crisis, violations ongoing in west.

- [“In belated inauguration, Ivory Coast's president urges unity”](#), *New York Times*, 21 May 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°171, [Côte d'Ivoire: Is War the Only Option?](#), 3 March 2011.

➡ **Guinea** Political tensions remain high as court 12 May handed down 2-year custodial sentences to 3 bodyguards of opposition leader Cellou Diallo following “unlawful” Apr rally, and unidentified men in uniform 11 May raided Diallo's home in purported search for weapons. At least 25 killed 2 May in ethnic clashes in SE town Galakpaye.

- [“At least 25 dead in Guinea communal violence”](#), AFP, 5 May 2011.

➡ **Guinea-Bissau** Paris Club group of creditors 10 May agreed to cancel over \$250mn owed by Guinea-Bissau. Attorney-General 18 May called for international assistance to tackle drug trafficking; call followed 15 May resignation of Lucinda Barbosa, head of judicial police, who claimed death threats, lack of govt support. 2 killed, 20 injured 9 May in inter-communal violence in Djaal, north-east of Bissau.

- [“Paris Club cancels \\$256 mn of G. Bissau's debt”](#), Reuters, 10 May 2011.

➡ **Liberia** Security forces continued to intercept alleged mercenaries attempting to enter Liberia from Côte d'Ivoire, including 12 arrested 23 May. Ahead of Oct 2011 presidential elections, National Elections Commission (NEC) 9 May announced de-registration of 8 political parties for failure to meet basic requirements; 24 other parties approved for participation. NEC 24 May announced August referendum on lowering residency threshold for candidates.

- [“Liberian police arrest 12 ‘mercenaries’ at I Coast border”](#), AFP, 23 May 2011.

➡ **Niger** Appeals court 10 May ordered release of ex-President Mamadou Tandja, held on graft charges, citing prohibition on trying former heads of state in Nigerien law. Parliament 18 May announced amnesty for perpetrators of Feb 2010 coup which removed Tandja from power.

- [“Niger court drops charges against ex-President Tandja”](#), BBC, 10 May 2011.

➡ **Nigeria** President Jonathan 11 May appointed 22-person panel to probe post-election violence in 7 northern states, headed by Islamic cleric Sheikh Ahmed Lemu; appointment rejected by Christian Association of Nigeria in northern states and Abuja. Pro-democracy Northern Coalition for Democracy and Justice (NCDJ) 12 May announced it had petitioned ICC to commence criminal charges against CPC presidential candidate Muhammadu Buhari and secretary general Buba Galadima for role in post-election killings. Opposition Action Congress of Nigeria, Congress for Progressive Change and All-Nigerian People's Party rejected Jonathan's alleged invitation to participate in govt of national unity, citing need for strong opposition.

- [“Nigeria launches probe into deadly election violence”](#), AFP, 11 May 2011.



Asia/Pacific

CENTRAL ASIA

➤ **Kazakhstan** 2 bomb attacks raised fears of terrorist activity: suicide bomber 17 May killed himself, injured 3 bystanders in blast outside Aqtobe security services building. First known suicide attack in Kazakhstan; govt denied “terrorist act”, claimed bomber member of organised criminal group, arrested his wife, reportedly member of conservative religious organisation. 2 killed 24 May after car exploded outside Astana security service building; police denied suicide bombing, said “spontaneous explosion” cause; no claim of responsibility. Clashes between police and residents over illegal land seizures near Almaty 1-2 May. PM Masimov 6 May dismissed head of customs service, police arrested key customs official, following reports of smugglers operating freely along Chinese border. Govt 3 May ratified agreement allowing U.S. to transport supplies, personnel to Afghanistan. Parliament 19 May adopted law sending 4 Kazakh troops to Afghanistan as part of NATO force; prompted warning from Taliban.

▪ “Two killed in car blast in Kazakhstan”, AFP, 24 May 2011.

➤ **Kyrgyzstan** Independent Kyrgyz Inquiry Commission (KIC) 3 May submitted report on 2010 ethnic violence in south: estimated death toll at 470, majority (74%) ethnic Uzbeks; said security forces “complicit” in violence, govt failed to protect citizens; violence not tantamount to genocide, but certain attacks on Uzbek neighbourhoods in Osh could equal “crimes against humanity” if proven in court. Govt said report disproportionately blamed ethnic Kyrgyz for violence, claimed it would fuel ethnic tensions. Parliament 26 May declared KIC chair Kimmo Kiljunen persona non grata. UNHCHR Navi Pillay 4 May urged govt to follow up on report findings with own investigation. PM Atambaev 10 May signed decree providing financial compensation to families of victims of 2010 violence; preliminary information shows likely pro-Kyrgyz bias in compensation distribution. Deputy PM Babanov 16 May resumed office after being cleared of corruption charges; hasty investigation raised doubts over its impartiality.

▪ “Report implicates Kyrgyzstan officials in ethnic violence last year”, *New York Times*, 4 May 2011.

▪ For latest report, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°193, *The Pogroms in Kyrgyzstan*, 23 Aug. 2010.

➤ **Tajikistan** Court 4 May sentenced 5 people to 30 years or life in prison for role in Sept 2010 jailbreak; all had previous convictions on terrorism charges. Interior minister 15 May said army killed 2 members of banned Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan militant group in Rasht valley; both had escaped during Sept jail break. Freedom House 2 May named Turkmenistan as one of world’s 10 worst countries for press freedom. 5 May media reports suggested Russia in talks with Tajikistan to deploy 3,000 troops along border with Afghanistan. Govt price controls in Dushanbe exacerbated food crisis. Authorities late May ordered internet providers block access to website of Akbar Turajonzoda, popular Islamic preacher and govt critic.

▪ “Four jailed for life over Tajik jailbreak”, RFE/RL, 4 May 2011.

Crisis Group Asia Report N°205, *Tajikistan: The Changing Insurgent Threats*, 24 May

2011. Tajikistan, Central Asia’s poorest state and a key logistical link for international forces in Afghanistan, faces a growing security threat from both local and external rebels.



➤ **Turkmenistan** President Berdymukhammedov dismissed influential head of election commission Myrat Garriyev, reasons unclear; 10 May appointed commission’s former deputy chairman Orazmyrat Niyazliyev as new head. New U.S. Ambassador Robert Patterson 16 May presented his credentials; first U.S. ambassador in 5 years. President made 2-day state visit to Uzbekistan 5-6 May. EU delegation visited country late Apr to assess human rights situation ahead of June EU vote on possible Partnership and Cooperation Agreement strengthening EU-Turkmenistan trade. Govt presented its first report to UN Committee Against Torture (CAT) 17-18 May; information provided said to be incomplete, lacking basic data; CAT recommendations to be released early June.

▪ “Expanded EU-Turkmen relations are on the horizon”, Eurasianet, 13 May 2011.

➤ **Uzbekistan** Yusuf Juma, poet-activist arrested in 2008 for anti-govt writing, released 19 May; Human Rights Watch said at least 13 human rights defenders, “numerous” other govt critics still imprisoned. Rights groups urged German govt to press Uzbekistan on human rights as Deputy FM Norov 24-26 May visited Berlin; visit comes amid recent revelations that Germany paid regime for use of Termez airbase. Govt 18 May announced oil and gas prospect deals with India. Freedom House 2 May named Uzbekistan as one of world’s 10 worst countries for press freedom.

▪ “Released Uzbek poet says torture common in Uzbek jails”, RFE/RL, 24 May 2011.

NORTH EAST ASIA

➤ **North Korea** Leaked UN report 14 May claimed Iran and N Korea have swapped ballistic missile technology, transferred through China, in violation of UN sanctions; Beijing denied, 17 May blocked release of report indefinitely. U.S. human rights envoy Robert King 24 May started 7-day visit to evaluate possible resumption of food aid, suspended since 2009; senior WFP official in Pyongyang 19 May urged S Korea to resume food aid, Seoul rejected, claimed food crisis “exaggerated” by regime. Amnesty International 3 May said N Korea likely holds some 200,000 prisoners in camps with “inhuman” conditions. S Korea 3 May staged live-fire exercises on Paengnyŏng and Yeonpyeong islands; first such drills since N Korea’s Dec 2010 shelling of Yŏnpyŏng. U.S., S Korea said likely to hold combined military exercise on Paengnyŏng in July. China 23 May confirmed N Korean leader Kim Jong-Il made late month visit, ostensibly to study China’s economic model, court ongoing economic and political support from Beijing. S Korean President Lee Myung-Bak 9 May said willing to invite N Korea to 2012 international nuclear summit if Pyongyang first commits to giving up nuclear weapons. Seoul 3 May claimed North behind Apr cyber attack on S Korean bank Nonghyup; Pyongyang denied.

▪ “US envoy arrives in North Korea”, Al Jazeera, 24 May 2011.

▪ For latest report, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°200, *China and Inter-Korean Clashes in the Yellow Sea*, 27 Jan. 2011.

SOUTH ASIA

➤ **Afghanistan** U.S. troops 2 May killed al-Qaeda head Osama bin Laden in Pakistan (see Pakistan); President Karzai called on Taliban to lay down arms, govt accused Pakistani intelligence service ISI of sheltering bin Laden. Egyptian militant Saif al-Adel allegedly named interim al-Qaeda leader. Thousands 2 May

attended Kabul protests against govt's proposed talks with Taliban; rally organised by former spy chief Amrullah Saleh. Scores killed as Taliban early month launched "spring offensive": at least 11 civilians killed in unsuccessful attempt to seize Kandahar city 6-8 May; suicide attack on Kabul hospital 21 May killed at least 6; 13 mainly security personnel killed in 18 May Jalalabad suicide blast; 36 construction workers killed in Paktia 19 May. 7 killed 28 May, including top police commander Gen. Daud, in Taliban suicide attack on Takhar governor's compound. UK PM Cameron 17 May said UK will remove 400 troops from Afghanistan in 2011. India PM Singh visited Kabul 12 May: pledged \$500mn in aid, expressed support for Afghan-led peace talks with Taliban. At least 12 killed 18 May after police opened fire on protests against NATO allegedly killing 2 female civilians in Takhar; Karzai 29 May issued "final warning" to U.S. after another 14 civilians killed in NATO airstrike in Helmand. Taliban 23 May denied reports its leader Mullah Omar had been killed.

- ["The Taliban's spring offensive picks up steam"](#), GlobalPost, 19 May 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°117, [Afghanistan's Elections Stalemate](#), 23 Feb. 2011.

➡ **Bangladesh** Human Rights Watch 10 May accused UK-trained paramilitary force Rapid Action Battalion of extrajudicial killings, torture; govt denied. Opposition party Jamaat-e-Islami leader Motiur Rahman Nizami 5 May admitted to War Crimes tribunal that he was involved with Pakistani forces during 1971 independence war, but only under "death threat".

- ["It was a genocide"](#), Daily Star, 6 May 2011.

➡ **Kashmir** India 2 May said killing of al-Qaeda head Osama bin Laden "underlined concern" Islamabad supports terrorist groups; Delhi expressed similar concern following militant attack on Karachi naval base 22-23 May (see Pakistan). David Headley, U.S. citizen accused of involvement in 2008 Mumbai terror attack, 23 May testified in U.S. court that ISI provided financial, military support to Lashkar-e-Tayyba militants carrying out attack.

- ["David Headley alleges Pakistan role in Mumbai attacks"](#), BBC, 23 May 2011.

➡ **India (non-Kashmir)** Maoists 3 May killed 11 police in Jharkhand landmine attack; 7 police in Chhattisgarh May; 12 May blew up house of Jharkhand MP Kameshwar Baitha, previously suspected of supporting Maoists. Police 1 May arrested 3 senior Maoist regional leaders in Bihar. In Assam, Congress party won May state elections, widely seen as endorsement of Congress' pro-negotiation stance with ULFA separatist militants.

- ["Pakistan must 'wake up' and tackle terror: India PM"](#), AFP, 29 May 2011.

➡ **Nepal** Potential political crisis averted in short-term after all parties 29 May agreed to extend Constituent Assembly by 3 months, originally due to expire 28 May. Deal included commitment to progress on "main parts" of peace process, release of draft constitution, resignation of PM Khanal by new 28 Aug deadline. Differences over interpretation began immediately, including on when PM Khanal should resign in favour of consensus govt. Largest opposition party Nepali Congress (NC) originally opposed extension, pushing for Maoist agreement on integration and rehabilitation of Maoist fighters, handover of their weapons. Negotiations on more detailed deal fell through due to last-minute demands by Madhesi parties and differences within NC. UNSG Ban praised deal, urged parties to complete peace process by new deadline. UN OHCHR 6 May condemned appointment of Maoist Agni Sapkota as minister of information

and communications, suspected of kidnapping, murder during civil war; Sapkota denied charges.

- ["Nepal averts crisis over constitution deadline"](#), *New York Times*, 29 May 2011.
- For latest briefing, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°120, [Nepal's Fitful Peace Process](#), 7 April 2011.

➡ **Pakistan** U.S. killing of al-Qaeda head Osama bin Laden led to deterioration in already strained relationship with U.S., loss of credibility for govt and army; Taliban unleashed wave of high-profile revenge attacks in which at least 200 killed, many targeting security forces. U.S. troops 2 May killed bin Laden in raid on compound in Abbottabad, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK). In face of strong U.S. pressure to explain bin Laden's presence in Pakistan, govt, military leadership and intelligence agency ISI denied any knowledge of his whereabouts before raid, criticised operation as infringement of sovereignty. U.S. Adm Mike Mullen 18 May said no evidence Pakistani leaders knew of bin Laden's whereabouts; U.S. Sec State Clinton 28 May echoed during visit to Pakistan, expressed "strong commitment" to bilateral relations. PM Gilani 31 May ordered independent probe headed by Supreme Court judge into "intelligence failure"; opposition had criticised earlier announcement of military-led probe. At least 98 killed 12 May in bomb attack targeting paramilitary forces in Charsadda, KPK; Taliban claimed revenge attack for bin Laden's death. Taliban killed 10 security personnel in 22-23 May assault on Karachi naval base; 3 suspects, including ex-navy commander, arrested 31 May. 15 killed as Taliban 21 May bombed NATO fuel trucks along Afghan border in KPK. Taliban 20 May car bomb attack on U.S. officials' convoy in Peshwar, KPK, left 2 Americans injured; 25 May suicide attack on police criminal investigation department in Peshawar killed 5 police. In Karachi, unidentified gunmen 16 May killed Saudi diplomat, following 14 May grenade attack on Saudi consulate building.

- Comment by Mark Schneider (Crisis Group), ["The bin Laden Aftermath: Pakistan's Investigation"](#), *Foreign Affairs*, 6 May 2011.
- ["Humiliation of the military men"](#), *Economist*, 12 May 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°203, [Reforming Pakistan's Electoral System](#), 30 March 2011.

➡ **Sri Lanka** Govt yet to offer detailed response to Apr UN panel of experts report calling for international mechanism to examine alleged war crimes by LTTE, govt forces during 2009 end of civil war; Western govts, EU during month called on govt to act on panel's recommendations, but stopped short of endorsing international investigation. Following FM Peiris' visit to India mid-month, New Delhi 17 May in strongly-worded statement urged govt to lift emergency regulations, investigate alleged human rights violations during civil war. Court 12 May lifted block of pro-opposition website Lanka eNews. Student unions 19 May petitioned Supreme Court to end new program requiring all university students to undergo three weeks' "leadership training" by military.

- ["Sri Lanka urged to scrap emergency two years after war"](#), BBC, 18 May 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°191, [War Crimes in Sri Lanka](#), 17 May 2010.

SOUTH EAST ASIA

➡ **Indonesia** Police 13 May killed 2 suspected members of small extremist group Tim Hisbah in Central Java; 1 civilian killed in crossfire. Police Apr-May arrested 16 others suspected of involvement in 15 Apr suicide attack on police station mosque. Prosecutors 9 May demanded life sentence for JAT leader Abu

Bakar Ba'asyir, on trial for terrorism-related charges. In Papua, military post in Puncak Jaya attacked by unidentified gunmen 11 May, no casualties. Thousands 3 May demonstrated for independence referendum in Jayapura on anniversary of UN's handover of Papua to Indonesia.

- Comment by Sidney Jones (Crisis Group), "Implications of Bin Laden's Death for Indonesia", *Jakarta Post*, 4 May 2011.
- "Indonesia seeks life in jail for cleric", *Al Jazeera*, 9 May 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Asia Report N° 204, *Indonesian Jihadism: Small Groups, Big Plans*, 19 April 2011.

➡ **Myanmar/Burma** Govt 16 May announced 1-year cut from all prison terms: some 14,600 released, but only 47 political prisoners; rights groups criticised as too limited. Govt 6 May made formal request to chair ASEAN in 2014, ASEAN yet to confirm; rights groups urged against. Following mid-month visit, UNSG Chief of Staff Vijay Nambiar said "encouraging signs" from new govt, but urged it to implement its promises of development, limiting corruption. 2 killed in 18 May train bombing outside Naypyidaw; police blamed Karen National Union militants. Karen and southern Sporadic clashes between ethnic armies and govt troops continued in Karen and southern Shan states; hundreds displaced.

- "Asean in quandary over Burma's request to head bloc", *Irrawaddy*, 11 May 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N° 118, *Myanmar's Post-Election Landscape*, 7 March 2011.

➡ **Thailand** PM Abhisit 10 May dissolved parliament, called general elections for 3 July. Fears of election violence fuelled 11 May when MP for opposition Pheu Thai Party injured in shooting outside Bangkok. Pheu Thai 16 May named Yingluck Shinawatra, sister of ex-PM Thaksin, as its PM candidate. At least 3 soldiers killed as clashes along Cambodian border continued 1-2 May; Abhisit met Cambodian PM Hun Sen at 8 May ASEAN summit, but Thailand continues to condition deployment of Indonesia observers on Cambodia first withdrawing all troops from disputed areas. In South, suspected militants 4 May killed 4 Muslim civilians in Yala province; 7 May killed 7 soldiers, 1 police officer in 2 separate bombings. 2 Buddhist monks killed 16 May by roadside bomb in Yala. Police 20 May killed 4 militants, including 1 allegedly senior leader, in Yala.

- "Shirt v shirt", *Economist*, 5 May 2011.
- For latest briefing, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N° 121, *The Calm Before Another Storm?*, 11 April 2011.

➡ **Philippines** Following early month arrests of 3 alleged members of militant Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) in Manila and Isabela City, police said ASG trying to infiltrate urban communities. Singaporean detained in Malaysia 6 May for allegedly channelling funds, logistical support to insurgents in southern Philippines; MILF denied any connection to suspect. In clashes with communist New People's Army, military killed 5 rebels in Cagayan 12 May, 8 rebels in Central Luzon 13 May. Chinese Defense Minister Liang Guanglie visited Philippines 23 May amid tensions over South China Sea.

- "Philippines arrests suspected terrorist linked to al-Qaida", *VOA*, 6 May 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N° 119, *Back to the Table, Warily, in Mindanao*, 24 March 2011.

➡ **Timor-Leste** 3 soldiers convicted then pardoned in May 2006 murder of 8 police officers dismissed from military 27 May following disciplinary proceedings. PM Gusmão 17 May accused UN of interfering in country's sovereignty after leaked UNMIT

document called his leadership a potential threat to independence of parliament, judiciary; UNMIT 20 May said internal presentation does not represent its "official views". Court 9 May cleared deputy PM Jose Luis Guterres of corruption charges.

- "Gusmao accuses UN of trampling on Timor", *AFP*, 20 May 2011.
- For latest briefing, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N° 122, *Reconciliation and Return from Indonesia*, 18 April 2011.



BALKANS

➡ **Albania** Local elections took place 8 May against backdrop of campaign violence in lead-up; uncertainty over outcome of Tirana mayoral race fuelled tensions between rival sides. Initial results put opposition Socialist party candidate and incumbent mayor Edi Rama ahead of ruling party candidate, Interior Minister Lulzim Basha, by 10-vote margin out of some 250,000 votes. Instigating controversial recount, Central Election Commission (CEC) 18 May overturned Rama's majority. Rama called for popular revolts against govt; hundreds of opposition supporters clashed with police outside CEC building. CEC 23 May declared Basha winner with 81-vote lead. Electoral College rejected Socialist appeal against legality of recount; expected to rule on Tirana vote early June.

- "Protests, international concern over Albania's election crisis", *Sofia Echo*, 22 May 2011.

➡ **Bosnia** Potentially most dangerous post-war crisis avoided as EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton 13 May brokered last-minute compromise between Republika Srpska (RS) and Office of High Representative (OHR). RS president Dodik agreed to cancel referendum on state court and prosecutor and OHR-imposed laws, set for mid-June; Ashton pledged talks on reforming judiciary starting early June. Decision followed sustained international pressure on Dodik to cancel vote, threat by HR Valentin Inzko to annul vote; RS had reportedly been planning to withdraw from state institutions if Inzko acted against poll. Observers note EU move undermined OHR, RS challenge to OHR largely unresolved. Lingered conflict over legitimacy of FBiH authorities continues to obstruct formation of state-level authorities; initial session of Bosnian parliament took place 20 May. 26 May arrest of major war crimes suspect Ratko Mladic (see Serbia) welcomed by Bosniak and Croat parties; RS president Dodik said it would not affect stability in RS, where thousands rallied against arrest 31 May.

- "EU accused of undermining the international envoy to Bosnia", *European Voice*, 1 June 2011.

Crisis Group Europe Briefing N° 62, *Bosnia: State Institutions under Attack*, 6 May 2011.



Bosnia faces its worst crisis since war ended in 1995. Violence is probably not imminent, but there is a real prospect of it in the near future unless all sides pull away from the downward cycle of their maximalist positions.

➡ **Kosovo** Chief Serbian negotiator in Pristina-Belgrade dialogue Borko Stefanovic in Pristina mid May; visit marred by violent demonstrations led by Self-Determination party. Belgrade and Pristina held 4th round of direct talks in Brussels 17-18 May. Serbia's Interior Minister Ivica Dacic 15 May told Kosovo

newspaper partition “only solution”; later clarified this not official policy. EULEX 17 May arrested man in Zubin Potok in North over organised crime, triggering angry response from local Serbs; several hundred blocked main road and bridge. Kosovo police mid month decided to rotate station commanders in Northern municipalities; Serb authorities rejected move.

- [“Kosovo partition comment sparks uproar”](#), SE Times, 18 May 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Europe Report N°211, [North Kosovo: Dual Sovereignty in Practice](#), 14 March 2011.

- ➡ **Macedonia** Ahead of 5 June general election, increasing tensions between 2 rival coalitions led by ruling VMRO-DPMNE and opposition Social Democrats (SDSM), who accuse each other of election fraud. A1 TV station 9 May reported govt ordering civil servants to provide lists of voters who would vote for ruling party. VMRO-DPMNE denied allegations, threatened to sue A1; public prosecutor pledged to investigate.
 - [“Macedonian parties run contrasting campaigns”](#), Balkan Insight, 23 May 2011.

- ➡ **Serbia** Ratko Mladic, Bosnian Serb military leader during 1992-95 Bosnian war accused of commanding Srebrenica massacre and siege of Sarajevo, arrested near Belgrade 26 May, extradited to The Hague 31 May to stand trial at ICTY for genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity. Arrest welcomed across Balkans and internationally as major step towards post-war reconciliation and integration for region, removes major obstacle to Serbia’s progress on EU accession. Several thousand protested arrest in Belgrade 29 May, clashed with police.
 - Comment by Sabine Freizer (Crisis Group), [“What the arrest of Ratko Mladic means”](#), CNN, 26 May 2011.
 - [“Serbia arrests Ratko Mladic to ‘lift stain’ of Bosnia atrocities”](#), Guardian, 26 May 2011.

CAUCASUS

- ➡ **Armenia** Govt continued policies to neutralise opposition movement, with 2 May release of Aram Bareghamyan, Armenian National Congress (HAK) member imprisoned following March 2008 unrest; following 26 May approval by parliament of general amnesty, 2 more prominent opposition members freed from jail. HAK announced it remains committed to holding snap presidential and parliamentary elections, but will consider negotiations with govt. Justice Minister 20 May ruled out early elections.
 - [“Armenian opposition leaders freed”](#), ArmeniaLiberty, 27 May 2011.

- ➡ **Azerbaijan** European Parliament 12 May condemned recent crackdowns on opposition protests, expressed “deep concern” over attacks on civil society, journalists; criticized govt for arrests since March of up to 200 opposition protesters, imprisonment of opposition members and threats to close down NGOs, called for immediate release of prominent opposition figures, newspaper editor Eynulla Fatullayev. Ruling New Azerbaijan Party (YAP) rejected EP report as distorted and biased; Fatullayev released 26 May under presidential pardon for dozens of prisoners. Court 2 May charged Vidadi Isgandarli, rights activist and former parliamentary candidate, with election violations. Opposition activist who advocated anti-govt protests via Facebook imprisoned for 2.5 years for alleged drug possession. Baku police 6 May clashed with protesters demonstrating against 2010 ban on hijab in schools.
 - [“European Parliament slams Azerbaijan on rights”](#), RFE/RL, 12 May 2011.
 - For latest report, see Crisis Group Europe Briefing N°60, [Armenia and Azerbaijan: Preventing War](#), 8 Feb. 2011.

- ➡ **North Caucasus (Russia)** Warlord Doku Umarov 9 May named Ibragimkhalil Daudov new head of Dagestan insurgency wing. U.S. 26 May designated Umarov’s Caucasus Emirate as terrorist organisation, offered \$5mn reward for information leading to Umarov’s capture. Several security officers, militants killed in clashes in Dagestan. Clashes also reported in Chechnya: Moscow 4 May reported security forces had killed top al-Qaeda militant in Chechnya, Turkish national Doger Sevdet; 12 May launched large-scale counter-insurgency operation in S Chechnya. Decapitated body of North Ossetian poet Shamil Dzhigkaev found 26 May. KBR rebel leader Buzzhigit Khadzhiev killed May 23. Astemir Mamishev, suspect in Dec 2010 murder of KBR mufti, killed May 10. Czech police 3 May reported Apr discovery of suspected NC terrorist cell; suspects accused of being members of Dagestan-based Jamaat Shariat.
 - [“Kremlin counter-insurgency efforts deepen local animosity in Dagestan”](#), EDM, 16 May 2011.

- ➡ **Georgia** Series of daily protests calling for removal of President Saakashvili began 21 May, attracting between a few hundred and a few thousand protesters mainly from one relatively marginal party. Dozens arrested as demonstrators clashed with police; 1 police, 1 protester killed 26 May in clashes when run over by opposition activist’s motorcade; dozens injured on both sides. Parliament 20 May recognised 19th century massacre and deportations of Circassians in Sochi region by Tsarist Russia as “genocide”. 2 Georgians reported wounded 18 May by SO militias who tried to detain them close to Administrative Boundary Line. De facto Abkhazia president Sergei Bagapsh died in Moscow 29 May following surgery.
 - [“Two killed as police break up Georgia protest”](#), Financial Times, 26 May 2011.

Crisis Group Europe Briefing N°63, [Georgia: The Javakheti Region’s Integration Challenges](#), 23 May 2011. To ensure political stability and that there is no opportunity for Russia or others to manipulate local politics, Georgia needs to improve integration of its mostly Armenian-populated Javakheti region.

- ➡ **Nagorno-Karabakh (Azerbaijan)** Nagorno-Karabakh (N-K) authorities 1 May reported 3 Armenian soldiers killed 29-30 April in skirmishes along main frontline. Armenian Foreign Ministry condemned deaths; Azerbaijan rejected accusations, mid-May accused Armenian forces of violating ceasefire in Goranboy, Fizuli, Agdam regions. Growing concern from international mediators over deadly exchanges of fire along line of contact in recent months. Planned reopening of civilian airport in N-K postponed.
 - [“Three Armenian soldiers killed in Nagorno-Karabakh”](#), RFE/RL, 3 May 2011.

EASTERN EUROPE

- ➡ **Belarus** Several opposition figures given jail sentences for role in 19 Dec 2010 post-election protests, including several former presidential candidates, prompting international condemnation: EU FMs 23 May agreed to widen sanctions against Belarus over govt crackdown on opposition; U.S. President Obama 27 May said U.S. will pursue new sanctions. Amid ongoing economic crisis and dramatic currency devaluation, Russia 19 May offered \$3bn loan, conditional on Minsk selling some national assets to Moscow.
 - [“For journalists in Belarus, one of world’s least-free countries, things only getting worse”](#), RFE/RL, 3 May 2011.

WESTERN EUROPE/MEDITERRANEAN

➡ **Basque Country (Spain)** Ahead of 22 May regional and local elections, Constitutional Court 5 May overturned Supreme Court decision banning new left-wing Basque nationalist coalition Bildu. Bildu gained 25% of vote in Basque Country, second behind Basque Nationalist Party (30%) and beating governing Socialists.

- ["Bildu becomes second party with most votes in Basque Country"](#), EITB, 23 May 2011.

➡ **Cyprus** Main opposition right-wing party DISY won 22 May Greek Cypriot parliamentary elections with 34.3% of vote, beating President Christofias's communist party AKEL (32.7%). Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leaders slowly continued reunification talks without breakthroughs; possibility of reaching comprehensive settlement before year-end seen as unlikely. Leaders met 5 May to sign agreement on international treaties, 12 May to discuss police and scheduled 7 July meeting with UNSG Ban. Early May poll showed mood on the island continuing to deteriorate; UNSGSR Alexander Downer 12 May said UN hoping for deal by mid 2012.

- ["Opposition wins vote in Cyprus"](#), IOL News, 23 May 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Europe Briefing N°61, [Six Steps toward a Settlement](#), 22 Feb. 2011.

➡ **Northern Ireland** 5 May NI Assembly elections passed off peacefully; Democratic Unionist Party and Sinn Féin said outcome shows power-sharing arrangement is working. Police 12 May reported bomb attacks in NI doubled over previous year. Several attacks blamed on dissident republicans over month.

- ["Northern Ireland election joy for DUP and Sinn Féin"](#), *Guardian*, 8 May 2011.

➡ **Turkey** PM Erdoğan 3 May urged Colonel Qaddafi to "leave power immediately"; day earlier embassy in Tripoli closed. Head of Libya's Transitional National Council 23 May met FM Davutoğlu in Ankara, voiced support for Turkish roadmap for peace (see Libya). Erdoğan 11 May called on Syrian President Assad to take immediate democratic steps, said momentum toward democracy in Middle East "irreversible" (see Syria). Govt 3 May announced signing of 3 agreements with Iran, including road map for energy investments; U.S. warned Iran may exploit ties to circumvent international sanctions. Escalation in violence between PKK, security forces including 1 police officer killed 4 May in PKK attack on Erdoğan's campaign convoy in Kastamonu province; military 14 May killed 12 PKK members allegedly crossing border from Iraq. Several demonstrators, police officers injured 4 May in violent protests in SE Diyarbakır during funeral for 4 PKK militants killed Apr. Jailed PKK leader Öcalan 6 May warned gov't had until 15 June to signal breakthrough, for instance on new constitution, or risk civil war. 8 injured 26 May in suspected PKK bombing in Istanbul.

- Comment by Hugh Pope (Crisis Group), ["The 'Turkish Model' and the Middle East"](#), *Transatlantic Academy*, 13 May 2011.
- ["PKK leader threatens Turkey with 'great war'"](#), Al Jazeera, 6 May 2011.

Latin America / Caribbean

➡ **Bolivia** Court 16 May placed Beni department governor Ernesto Suárez (opposition) under house arrest due to corruption charges, but did not suspend him from carrying out duties as

governor. Beni, Santa Cruz only remaining opposition-controlled departments following Dec flight to Paraguay of former Tarija governor Mario Cossío to escape corruption charges. Parliament 6 May approved law making Bolivia world's first country to popularly elect judges for Supreme, Constitutional Courts.

- ["Bolivia ordena arresto domiciliario a gobernador de Beni por malversación de fondos"](#), teleSUR, 16 May 2011.

➡ **Colombia** Senate 24 May approved Victims Law after final debate, providing reparations to more than 4 million victims of guerrilla, paramilitary and state violence. President Santos praised "historic" legislation; Senate, Congress expected to make final ratification shortly. Attorney General 18 May charged Bernardo Moreno, former secretary of Uribe presidency, and María del Pilar Hurtado Afanador, former head of presidential security service DAS, over involvement in illegal wiretapping scandal; both close allies of ex-president Uribe. Santos 4 May admitted Colombia facing "armed conflict" rather than terrorist threat. UK thinktank 10 May released analysis of documents seized from FARC ex-no 2 Raul Reyes during March 2008 airstrike on FARC camp in Ecuador; alleged ties between FARC and Ecuador, Venezuela gov'ts (see Ecuador and Venezuela). FARC 21 May detained several passenger boats in Chocó; media reports suggested the hundreds detained were moved by local politicians to register to vote in the candidates' municipalities.

- ["El Senado colombiano aprueba una ley para resarcir a las víctimas"](#), *El País*, 25 May 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Latin America Briefing N°23, [Improving Security Policy in Colombia](#), 29 June 2010.

➡ **Ecuador** President Correa's proposed constitutional reforms, including granting gov't more power over judiciary and media, narrowly approved in 7 May referendum with 46% of vote; 42% voted against. UK thinktank 10 May alleged Correa had received \$100,000 from FARC to finance 2006 election campaign. Correa strongly denied; Attorney General 17 May announced formal investigation.

- ["Ecuador probes President Correa 'link' to Farc rebels"](#), BBC, 18 May 2011.

➡ **Guatemala** Police 15 May found decapitated bodies of 27 farm workers in northern Petén region; President Colom 17 May imposed state of siege in Petén, putting troops in charge of security; police 18 May detained alleged leader of Mexican Zetas cartel, suspected of massacre. Authorities 24 May in Cobán (Alta Verapaz) discovered dismembered body of assistant prosecutor involved in investigation of Zetas. Court 8 May cleared ex-president Portillo of embezzlement charges; Portillo still faces extradition charge to U.S. over alleged money laundering.

- ["El norte de Guatemala a merced de Los Zetas"](#), BBC, 17 May 2011.

Crisis Group Latin America Report N°36, [Learning to Walk without a Crutch: The International Commission Against Impunity in Guatemala](#), 31 May 2011. Despite the promising beginning made by a unique hybrid legal body established by agreement with the UN, a culture of fear and impunity still prevails in Guatemala.

➡ **Haiti** President Martelly inaugurated 14 May; Martelly 20 May nominated economist Daniel-Gerard Rouzier as new PM. Provisional electoral commission (CEP) 11 May reversed results in 15 of 19 contested parliamentary seats previously awarded to Initié party in March election; U.S. criticised decision, said none of remaining seats should have gone to Initié. Independent report commissioned by UNSG Ban 4 May indicated Nepali

UN peacekeepers likely source of 2010 cholera outbreak. UN OCHA warned rainy season could revive epidemic. Martelly 5 May said he wants MINUSTAH to leave between 2012 and 2015, to be replaced by restored national army he wants to create during his tenure. Ban 16 May appointed former Chilean FM Mariano Fernández new head of MINUSTAH. Parliament 9 May approved constitutional changes allowing diaspora to vote in national elections, run for local govt office.

▪ [“New president to take power in struggling Haiti”](#), AP, 13 May 2011.

🏠 **Honduras** Return of ex-President Zelaya, ousted in June 2009 coup, raised hopes of domestic reconciliation, normalising international ties. In deal brokered by Venezuela and Colombia, Zelaya and current President Lobo 22 May signed accord dropping criminal charges against Zelaya and his allies, calling for referendum on reforming constitution. Zelaya 28 May met by thousands of supporters on return to Tegucigalpa, called for international recognition of current govt, said may return to politics. OAS SG José Miguel Insulza 23 May indicated Honduras likely to be readmitted into body; OAS to debate reinstatement at 1 June extraordinary session. Diplomatic ties with Nicaragua, broken since coup, restored 23 May.

▪ [“Homeward bound”](#), *Economist*, 26 May 2011.

🏠 **Mexico** More than 100,000 demonstrated against drug violence 8 May in Mexico City, called for resignation of public security minister Genaro García Luna; PRD party 12 May announced formal corruption allegation against García Luna. Following 2011 increase in kidnappings, killings of migrant workers, govt 12 May fired 7 govt immigration officials accused of collaborating with cartels. Police 13 May arrested Martin Beltran Coronel, suspected leader of Sinaloa cartel, in Guadalajara. 28 killed 25 May in shootout between rival drug gangs in Nayarit.

▪ [“Mexico fires 7 officials from immigration agency”](#), AP, 12 May 2011.

🏠 **Venezuela** UK thinktank 10 May alleged ties between govt and FARC, said FARC relied on sanctuaries inside Venezuela; govt rejected claims, but President Chávez 1 May said former allies had collaborated with FARC without his consent. Following alleged drug lord Walid Makled’s extradition from Colombia, opposition 10 May called for investigation into Makled’s claims of links between ruling PSUV party and drug traffickers.

▪ [“Insisten en conexión entre las Farc y el gobierno de Hugo Chávez”](#), BBC, 10 May 2011.



Middle East / North Africa

EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

🏠 **Israel/Occupied Palestinian Territories** Some 15 killed, over 400 wounded 15 May by IDF gunfire as tens of thousands of pro-Palestinian protesters marked Nakba along Israeli borders with Gaza, Syria and Lebanon (See Syria and Lebanon). Fatah, Hamas 4 May signed Egypt-mediated reconciliation deal; agreed to form unity govt, hold presidential, legislative elections within 1 year. Israeli PM Netanyahu called unity pact “tremendous blow to peace”. PA President Abbas 17 May postponed municipal elections 3 months until Oct so vote can be held in both West Bank and Gaza. U.S. President Obama 19 May in major Middle East speech proposed Palestinian state based on pre-1967 borders with mutually agreed land-swaps as peace

talks guideline; Netanyahu immediately rejected withdrawal to “indefensible” borders. Abbas 25 May said without progress will seek UN recognition of Palestinian statehood in Sept; Arab League 28 May backed UN move. Egypt 28 May opened Rafah crossing permanently for certain groups for first time in 4 years.

▪ Comment by Nathan Thrall (Crisis Group), [“Hurting Moderates, Helping Militants”](#), *New York Times*, 4 May 2011.

▪ Comment by Robert Malley (Crisis Group), [“The Arab Spring Is Driving the Hamas-Fatah Unity Deal”](#), *Washington Post*, 4 May 2011.

▪ [“You can’t make everyone happy”](#), *Economist*, 26 May 2011.

▪ For latest report, see Crisis Group Middle East Report N°104, [Radical Islam in Gaza](#), 29 March 2011.

🏠 **Lebanon** Tens of thousands of Palestinians 15 May demonstrated in Maroun al-Ras on southern border with Israel to commemorate Nakba; after some demonstrators reportedly moved toward border fence IDF gunfire killed at least 4 protesters, wounded some 100 (See Israel/OPT). Hundreds of Syrians fled into Lebanon after Syrian security forces 15 May raided border town Tall Kalakh; UNHCR 20 May said around 4,000 crossed into Lebanon since Assad regime began crackdown (See Syria). Hizbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah 25 May in first comments on Syrian uprising said overthrowing regime only serves U.S., Israeli interests. 6 UNIFIL peacekeepers injured 27 May by bomb near Sidon; UNSC condemned attack. Special tribunal for Lebanon (STL) prosecutor 6 May filed amended indictment including new evidence.

▪ [“Israeli troops fire as marchers breach borders”](#), *New York Times*, 15 May 2011.

🏠 **Syria** Rights groups reported more than 1,100 killed, over 10,000 detained, widespread torture in 10-week violent crackdown on nationwide anti-regime protests; majority in southern Hauran Plain region where uprising first erupted. 44 killed 20 May as troops backed by tanks deployed at protest sites. Officials continued to blame violence on “armed criminal gangs”, said more than 120 members of security forces killed. EU, U.S. expanded sanctions on regime, added President Assad to list of officials banned from travelling, subject to assets freeze. U.S. President Obama 17 May said Assad must allow political transition or step aside. Assad 31 May issued general amnesty for all members of political movements including Muslim Brotherhood; opposition said amnesty comes too late. EU nations 24 May proposed resolution to UNSC condemning Syria for bloody crackdown but did not include UN sanctions, intervention. 2 killed, dozens wounded 15 May by IDF gunfire as pro-Palestinian protesters commemorating Nakba entered Israeli-occupied Golan Heights. Govt condemned Israeli “criminal activities”; U.S. accused Damascus of inciting border clashes to divert attention from violent crackdown (See Israel/OPT). IAEA 24 May reported Dair Alzour site bombed by Israel in 2007 “very likely” nuclear reactor; govt 27 May reportedly offered full cooperation, will allow first inspection of site since 2008.

▪ [“Syrian troops ‘kill 44 protesters after Friday prayers’”](#), BBC, 21 May 2011.

GULF

🏠 **Bahrain** Month saw continued legal action against anti-govt protesters: military court 5 May sentenced protester to 5 years’ prison for attempted murder, 19 May sentenced 9 others, including leading Shia cleric, to 20 years for kidnapping; prosecutors 3 May charged 47 medical workers with acting against state.

Appeals court 22 May upheld 2 death sentences handed down late Apr, commuted 2 others to life imprisonment. Media repression ongoing, with journalists reportedly beaten by security forces, several journalists from formerly-independent newspaper *Al-Wasat* arrested. King Hamad 1 June lifted 3-month state of emergency, 2 weeks ahead of schedule, citing improved security situation.

- [“Bahrain hopes for normalcy with martial law lifted”](#), Reuters, 25 May 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Middle East Report N°105, [Popular Protests in North Africa and the Middle East \(III\): The Bahrain Revolt](#), 6 April 2011.

➡ **Iran** EU 23 May, U.S. 25 May extended sanctions against Iran to pressure Tehran to end nuclear program. IAEA report 24 May said it had new information alleging “possible military dimensions” to Iran’s nuclear program, director general Amano requested access to establish peaceful nature. Bahrain 23 May halted deal to import Iranian natural gas because of “blatant” interference in domestic affairs. President Ahmadinejad 14 May sacked 3 cabinet ministers, appointed caretaker ministers, including himself as interim oil minister, without seeking parliamentary approval; constitutional watchdog 20 May ruled self-appointment illegal. Govt 21 May said 30 people arrested as part of suspected CIA spy-ring. UN report 12 May accused Iran of exporting banned weapons to Syria; Syria denied allegations.

- [“Ahmadinejad’s enemies scent blood in Iran power struggle”](#), *Guardian*, 19 May 2011.

➡ **Iraq** Increase in assassinations, bombings throughout month, particularly in northern Kirkuk where 19 May triple bombing killed 27, wounded scores. Al-Qaeda in Iraq claimed responsibility for 5 May suicide bombing that killed 24 policemen in Hilla; indicated attack was revenge for U.S. killing of Osama bin Laden, vowed further revenge attacks (see Pakistan). PM Maliki 11 May said he would extend presence of U.S. troops beyond year-end deadline if majority of political blocs supported decision; thousands of supporters of Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr 26 May rallied in Baghdad against extension. Parliamentary blocs 12 May reached agreement on nomination of 3 vice presidents, one since resigned, but key defence and interior posts remain unfilled. 18 killed 8 May, including 11 senior al-Qaeda militants, in failed jailbreak in Baghdad prison.

- [“Triple bombing kills 27 at Iraqi police station”](#), AP, 19 May 2011.

➡ **Jordan** Thousands demonstrated in Amman, Tafileh 20 May against “corrupt and oppressive” govt. Reaching end of 3-month term, National Dialogue Committee 24 May passed final recommendations on political reform to govt; issues will now be considered by recently-formed Royal Commission on Constitution.

- [“Jordanians want ‘corrupt, oppressive’ govt sacked”](#), AFP, 20 May 2011.

➡ **Oman** Sporadic pro-reform protests continued, with hundreds demonstrating from 6 May in southern port Salahah; smaller protests continued in Muscat, Sur.

- [“Omani forces clear protest camps, arrest many”](#), Reuters, 14 May 2011.

➡ **Yemen** Violence escalated end month with President Saleh facing opposition on several fronts. Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)-brokered transition plan collapsed 22 May after Saleh for third time refused to sign. Saleh 25 May vowed not to step down, said he would make no more concessions to those seeking his ouster. Over 100 killed from 23 May in Sanaa in

battle between military forces loyal to Saleh and tribesmen loyal to Sadiq al-Ahmar, preeminent sheikh of Yemen’s most powerful tribal confederation. Yemeni mediation committee negotiated brief ceasefire until fighting erupted again on 31 May. In second round of fighting, military forces loyal to Saleh attacked base of defected military commander Ali Muhsin al-Ahmar. Govt forces continued use of violence against nationwide anti-regime protests throughout month as civil disobedience crippled major cities. U.S. Sec State Clinton 26 May urged cessation of violence, repeated call for Saleh to step down. Security forces 30 May stormed protest camp in southern city Taiz; as many as 50 killed. Hundreds of Islamic militants, 28 May seized control of capital of southern Abyan governorate, over 40 soldiers and civilians killed as Yemeni military tries to dislodge militants.

- [“Violence escalates across Yemen amid civil war fears”](#), BBC, 31 May 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Middle East/North Africa Report N°102, [Popular Protest in North Africa and the Middle East \(II\): Yemen between Reform and Revolution](#), 10 March 2011.

➡ **Saudi Arabia** Diplomat 16 May killed by gunmen in Karachi, Pakistan; no immediate claims of responsibility (see Pakistan). 7 al-Qaeda members returned from abroad, surrendered early month; no reason given by authorities.

- [“Gunmen on motorcycles kill Saudi diplomat in Pakistan”](#), *New York Times*, 16 May 2011.

NORTH AFRICA

➡ **Algeria** Political consultations on proposed constitutional reforms began 21 May, reform committee chairman said all political actors welcome except advocates of violence; opposition groups boycotted, described talks as “monologue against change”. Journalist killed 6 May in Kabylie region, al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) stronghold; former militant murdered by suspected AQIM 8 May in same province. 5 soldiers killed, 5 wounded 6 April in suspected AQIM bomb attack in eastern Jijel province; 7 soldiers, 3 suspected terrorists killed 13 May in attack on Jijel army barracks

- [“Algeria to hold reform talks, boycotted by opposition”](#), AFP, 20 May 2011.

➡ **Egypt** At least 12 killed, 230 injured 7 May in sectarian riots in Cairo between Coptic Christians and Muslims; security forces detained 190 for military trial (140 subsequently released), blamed Salafi and ex-regime incitement, warned it will use “iron hand” to maintain security. 2 killed, dozens injured 14 May during clashes as Christians held sit-in protest in front of state TV building from 8 May against lack of state protection. Former interior minister Habib el-Adly 5 May sentenced to 12 years in prison for corruption, awaiting trial for ordering killing of civilians. Public prosecutor 24 May announced ousted president Mubarak and 2 sons to be tried for conspiring to kill unarmed protesters, graft. Tens of thousands in 27 May nationwide protests at slow pace of democratic change; Muslim Brotherhood did not participate. Military rulers 19 May said parliamentary elections will be held by 30 Sept. FM Elaraby elected new Arab League chief 15 May. Rafah border crossing with Gaza Strip permanently opened for certain groups 28 May

- [“Muslims and Coptic Christians clash again in Egypt”](#), *New York Times*, 15 May 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Middle East/North Africa Report N°101, [Popular Protest in North Africa and the Middle East \(I\): Egypt Victorious?](#), 24 Feb. 2011.

➡ **Libya** Stalemate between govt forces and rebels continued despite some rebel gains, escalation of international military action. Rebels 11 May claimed total control of western city Misrata, including port, airport; govt shelling continued mid-late month. NATO airstrikes against govt infrastructure increased; reports said bombing 24-25 May, targeting Muammar Qaddafi's Tripoli compound, heaviest yet. Russia initially claimed attacks on Tripoli "gross violation" of UNSC civilian protection mandate, later month joined calls for Qaddafi's departure. Reports late month of several major protests in Tripoli, first since violent suppression of unrest in Feb. U.S., EU continued to develop ties with rebels: EU 22 May opened liaison office in rebel de facto capital Benghazi; U.S. 24 May announced rebel mission to be opened in Washington. South African President Zuma 30 May began mediation visit intended to secure ceasefire; reports suggest little progress by end month. ICC prosecutor 16 May requested arrest warrants for Qaddafi, Saif al-Islam, Abdullah al-Sanousi for crimes against humanity, war crimes; warrants subject to approval by Court's judges.

▪ "The colonel feels the squeeze", *Economist*, 19 May 2011.

➡ **Mauritania** 1 al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) militant killed, another arrested 19 May by security forces in NE along Malian border. FMs from Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Algeria 20 May agreed to establish joint task force to combat AQIM in shared Sahara-Sahel zone.

▪ "Sahara nations to set up desert patrol force", Al Jazeera, 21 May 2011.

➡ **Morocco** 6 arrested early May for 27 Apr Marrakech bombing, including alleged main perpetrator. Officials said suspects had loyalties to al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM); AQIM 7 May denied involvement. Thousands demanded political reform during 8 May anti-violence march in Marrakech. Police 15, 22,

29 May violently dispersed pro-democracy demonstrations led by February 20 anti-govt movement in major cities; officials said gatherings not authorised. Communication minister 23 May claimed Islamist groups manipulating pro-democracy demonstrations. Govt 26 May announced parliamentary elections to be held early on 7 Oct, 3 months after constitutional referendum; elections originally scheduled for Sept 2012. Gulf Cooperation Council 10 May invited Morocco to join 6-nation body.

▪ "Police violence reaching new levels in Morocco with Sunday beatings", CNN, 30 May 2011.

➡ **Tunisia** Overnight curfew imposed in Tunis 8-18 May following major protests early month against poor living conditions, slow pace of reform. Reports said 1,400 arrested, 300 charged with offences during curfew period. Status of planned constituent assembly elections unclear: electoral commission 24 May announced postponement until 16 Oct, citing insufficient time for preparations; interim govt same day claimed election will go ahead 24 July. 2 reported killed 23 May in unrest at Choucha refugee camp near Libyan border; security forces 24 May used tear gas to break up fighting between refugees, local residents. UN Special Rapporteur on Torture 21 May said around 300 killed, 700 injured during Dec-Jan uprising, higher than previous estimates.

▪ "Tunisia lifts curfew after mass arrests", Reuters, 18 May 2011.

▪ For latest report, see Crisis Group Middle East/North Africa Report N°106, *Popular Protests in North Africa and the Middle East (IV): Tunisia's Way*, 28 April 2011.

"ICG's recommendations help shape policy makers' thinking. Even if we don't agree with them, they force us to come up with alternatives."

Ad Melkert, United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for Iraq, May 2011

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