

108 1 August 2012

July 2012 Trends



Deteriorated Situations

India (non-Kashmir) (p.5)
Madagascar (p.3)
Mali (p.4)
Syria (p.10)
Tajikistan (p.5)



Improved Situations



Unchanged Situations

Afghanistan (p.5), Armenia (p.8), Azerbaijan (p.8), Bahrain (p.10), Bangladesh (p.5), Belarus (p.8), Bolivia (p.9), Bosnia (p.7), Burma/Myanmar (p.6), Burundi (p.2), Central African Republic (p.2), Chad (p.2), Colombia (p.9), Côte d'Ivoire (p.3), Cyprus (p.9), Democratic Republic of Congo (p.2), Ecuador (p.9), Egypt (p.11), Eritrea (p.2), Ethiopia (p.2), Georgia (p.8), Guatemala (p.9), Guinea (p.4), Guinea-Bissau (p.4), Haiti (p.9), Indonesia (p.6), Iran (p.10), Iraq (p.11), Israel/Occupied Palestinian Territories (p.10), Jordan (p.11), Kashmir (p.6), Kazakhstan (p.4), Kenya (p.2), Kosovo (p.7), Kyrgyzstan (p.5), Lebanon (p.10), Liberia (p.4), Libya (p.11), Macedonia (p.7), Malawi (p.3), Mauritania (p.12), Mexico (p.9), Moldova (p.8), Morocco (p.12), Nagorno-Karabakh (Azerbaijan) (p.8), Nepal (p.6), Nigeria (p.4), North Caucasus (Russia) (p.8), North Korea (p.5), Pakistan (p.6), Philippines (p.7), Rwanda (p.2), Saudi Arabia (p.11), Senegal (p.4), Serbia (p.8), Somalia (p.2), South Sudan (p.3), Sri Lanka (p.6), Sudan (p.3), Thailand (p.7), Timor Leste (p.7), Tunisia (p.12), Turkey (p.9), Uganda (p.3), Ukraine (p.8), Uzbekistan (p.5), Venezuela (p.10), Yemen (p.11), Zimbabwe (p.3)

August 2012 Watchlist



Conflict Risk Alerts



Conflict Resolution Opportunities

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 140 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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Africa

Central Africa

➡ **Burundi** Commission investigating extrajudicial killings 18 July ordered arrest of Gihanga chief of police, intelligence services officer. Court 24 July sentenced anti-graft activist to 5 years in prison for “false declarations” under anti-corruption law after 7 Feb letter in which he alleged judges paying bribes for appointments.

- “Anti-graft activist given five-year jail term”, AFP, 24 July 2012.

➡ **Central African Republic** Justice Minister, Chief of Staff, police Director General dismissed in post coup-attempt purge. LRA reportedly proved responsible for March, June attacks in Bakouma region; latest attacks suggest group moving west.

- “LRA Attack near hunting reserve”, Human Rights Watch, 9 July 2012.

➡ **Chad** ICJ 20 July ruled Senegal must prosecute or extradite to Belgium former Chadian President Habré for crimes against humanity. President Déby early July reportedly escaped coup attempt; several army, presidential guard officers arrested; authorities claimed arrests “mere disciplinary measures”. Trade Unions 17 July began strike over salaries.

- “Senegal told to prosecute ex-president of Chad”, *New York Times*, 20 July 2012.

➡ **Democratic Republic of Congo** M23 early July took control of several towns in N Kivu, pushing back FARDC; M23, FARDC clashed again 25-26 July, FARDC retreated. 2 civilians killed, 2 injured 18 July when MONUSCO bombed M23 troops. President Kabila 12 July met with Rwandan counterpart at ICGLR summit in Addis Abeba, agreed on creation of internationally-backed military force to combat M23 rebels. Raia Mutomboki Mai-Mai 19 July attacked Walikale town, killed Rwandophones.

- Alain Déléroz, “Francophonie: aller ou ne pas aller à Kinshasa”, *Libération*, 2 July 2012.
- “Thousands flee heavy fighting between Congo army, rebels”, Reuters, 24 July 2012.

New Crisis Group Africa Report N°188, *Black Gold in the Congo: Threat to Stability or Development Opportunity?*, 11 July 2012. Renewed oil interest in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) could nurture communal resentments, exacerbate deep-rooted conflict dynamics and weaken national cohesion.

➡ **Rwanda** International pressure on Rwanda increased following UN report accusing govt of supplying weapons, ammunition, fighters to M23 rebellion in violation of UN arms embargo: U.S. 21 July announced cut to military aid; Netherlands, UK announced budget support suspension; Sweden, Germany froze aid late month.

- “Rwanda at 50: overcoming tragedy but playing a risky game”, Al Jazeera, 14 July 2012.

Horn of Africa

➡ **Eritrea** UN Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea report 13 July documented reduced Eritrean govt support for al-Shabaab, reported involvement in arms, human trafficking; UNSC 25 July extended Group’s mandate to Aug 2013. U.S. 5 July imposed sanctions on Eritrean intelligence officer Col. Tewolde Negash and Col. Taeme Goitom, alleging they assisted al-Shabaab, other Islamist militants.

- “Eritrea ‘reduces support’ for al-Shabab”, Al Jazeera, 17 July 2012.

➡ **Ethiopia** Speculation over PM Zenawi’s health intensified when he failed to attend 12 July AU summit in Addis Abeba: Deputy PM Desalegne said Meles unwell, illness not serious but reports Meles critically ill continue; govt 22 July blocked publication of weekly Fetehe newspaper, reportedly over article on health of Meles, govt said paper inciting national insecurity, endangering govt. At least 18 killed, tens of thousands displaced when ethnic clashes over land erupted 28 July in south. Police 21 July again violently clashed with Muslims protesting state interference in religion in Addis Ababa, several arrested. Journalist Eskinder Nega sentenced 13 July to 18 years in prison, opposition leaders Andualem Arage, Berhanu Nega and Andargachew Tsige jailed for life under terrorism laws.

- “Ethiopia promises details of PM Meles’ health”, VOA, 17 July 2012.

➡ **Kenya** Security intensified in Nairobi, Mombasa and border towns as al-Shabaab militants warned of large-scale attacks in Kenya during Ramadan. 17 killed 1 July in attack on churches in Garissa; Muslim leaders offered Muslim patrols to protect churches from attack. 3 police killed 16 July in Liboi near Somalia border; at least 4 injured 18 July in grenade attacks on restaurant, shop in Wajir; 6 injured 26 July in bomb attack on Dadaab refugee camp. AMISOM 6 July formally assumed command of Kenyan troops in Somalia. Appeal Court 31 July upheld IBEC decision setting March 2013 election date. ICC 9 July announced Deputy PM Uhuru Kenyatta, MP William Ruto to be tried April 2013, 1 month after presidential elections. High Court 25 July overturned 2010 ban on separatist Mombasa Republican Council (MRC).

- “Kenyan Muslims offer Christians protection from attacks”, VOA, 4 July 2012.

➡ **Somalia** National Constituent Assembly 25 July began 9-day meeting on draft constitution. UN Monitoring Group report to UNSC documented high-level corruption, diversion of humanitarian aid, continued charcoal export despite UN ban, alleged Transitional Federal Govt (TFG) President Sharif gave pirate kingpin diplomatic passport to shield him from arrest; President Sharif criticised Group, said Coordinator Matt Bryden “against the restoration of peace in Somalia”, refuted allegations; PM said allegations “absolutely and demonstrably false”. 3 aid workers kidnapped 11 July in semi-autonomous Puntland region. Puntland security forces 21 July said boat carrying explosives, weapons from Yemen confiscated 20 July, Yemeni arrested; Security Ministry 31 July announced 53 terrorism, piracy suspects arrested. At least 20 al-Shabaab militants reportedly killed 12 July in Kenyan airstrikes, Gedo region; scores killed 28-29 July when govt troops clashed with al-Shabaab in Gedo; 4 killed 27 July in 2 bomb attacks, Baidoa. Al-Shabaab 22 July executed 3 men accused of being UK, U.S. spies.

- “Somalia assembly meets to form new government”, Al Jazeera, 25 July 2012.

➡ **South Sudan** S Sudan 9 July marked first anniversary of independence with series of celebrations. Month saw increasing signs of economic crisis as foreign currency supplies ran low, consumer prices continued to rise, infrastructure projects continue to stall due to shortage of funds. Negotiations with Sudan on security, oil, border demarcation failed ahead of 2 Aug deadline (see Sudan).

- [“South Sudan struggles as foreign currency dries up”](#), *Wall Street Journal*, 22 July 2012.

➡ **Sudan** Anti-govt protests over continuing financial crisis, govt abuses that began in June significantly reduced this month following govt crackdown on opposition. Opposition groups 4 July signed pact calling for overthrow of President Bashir’s NCP regime; police 6 July tear-gassed worshippers leaving mosque to protest, 8 July tear-gassed protesters Khartoum; over 100 journalists 18 July protested media censorship, intimidation in Khartoum. Court 25 July charged 2 protesters with membership of organisation that incites violence against regime following 4 July arrests in Khartoum. Negotiations with S Sudan failed: President al-Bashir refused to meet with his counterpart, Salva Kiir, in Addis Abeba, following invitation from AUHIP to bridge gap over outstanding issues before 2 Aug deadline. UN 31 July extended UNAMID mandate to July 2013. At least 8 reportedly killed, over 50 injured when anti-govt protesters clashed with police 31 July in Nyala, Darfur. Darfur Regional Authority late month called for improved security measures to protect IDPs following surge in violence; army 24 July said wounded Darfur rebels receiving medical treatment in S Sudan following clash with JEM. 6 killed 28 July in tribal clashes, S Darfur. AU 28 July suspended govt-SPLM-N talks over humanitarian access to Blue Nile, S Kordofan; govt said SPLM obstructing negotiations. SPLM-N 30 July said 3 civilians killed, 21 wounded in aerial bombing, Blue Nile.

- [“Arab Spring’ protests wane, but activists remain optimistic”](#), *Christian Science Monitor*, 20 July 2012.

➡ **Uganda** FM Okello Oryem said LRA mainly in DRC; AU, UN meeting 25 July called in response to fears rebellion in E DRC could allow LRA to regroup; head of planned AU force Col. Dick Olum 25 July said force does not yet have sufficient troops, funding, equipment. Army mid-month said talks underway with DRC govt to allow Ugandan pursuit of rebel dissidents in E DRC, forces “on standby”. President Museveni, chair of ICGLR, late month called emergency summit to discuss DRC conflict; govt 30 July denied rumours army backing M23 rebels.

- [“Uganda tries to chase rebels in Congo”](#), *Wall Street Journal*, 13 July 2012.

Southern Africa

➡ **Madagascar** SADC 16 July issued 31 July deadline for President Rajoelina, former president Ravalomanana to finalise outstanding roadmap issues; rivals 25 July met without reaching agreement. Ravalomanana’s wife deported to Thailand 27 July following attempt to return to Madagascar; Ravalomanana said Rajoelina untrustworthy, deportation “flagrant violation” of resolutions reached during talks; SADC 31 July condemned attempt to return. Attempted mutiny successfully quashed by army 22 July; lead mutineer, negotiator killed; opposition radio station Free FM 24 July closed citing military intimidation for having broadcast mutineers’ statements. Ravalomanana served with summons 17 July for

South African lawsuit filed by victims of 2009 violence leading to his overthrow. Rajoelina 18 July suspended 5 pro-Ravalomanana ministers over 3-month boycott of cabinet meetings.

- [“Madagascar deports ousted leader’s spouse to Thailand”](#), AFP, 27 July 2012.

➡ **Malawi** Commission of Inquiry report into 2011 killings publicly released 10 July, criticised excessive police force, blamed media for spreading violence; President Banda 20 July declined to commit to adoption of report’s recommendations, promised prosecutions of perpetrators. Banda 6 July pardoned 377 prisoners as part of Independence Day celebrations; decision followed by prison protests, 7 prisoners escaped, 8 further reportedly shot dead.

- [“Malawi President non-committal on ‘healing and reconciliation’ recommendations”](#), News Time Africa, 20 July 2012.

➡ **Zimbabwe** Constitution Select Committee (COPAC) 19 July handed final constitution draft to GPA principals; draft proposes presidential term limits, requires parliamentary consultation on appointments, dual citizenship not included. EU 23 July agreed to lift ban on direct development aid; pledged to lift most sanctions if “peaceful and credible” referendum on new constitution held. Supreme Court 13 July released decision forcing by-election date to be set by end Aug for 3 parliament seats vacated in 2009 by MDC-M defections to MDC-T; Justice Minister Patrick Chinamasa 19 July announced polls would be held in further 35 vacant seats. Parliament 10 July passed legislation establishing human rights commission, laws prevent investigations of violations occurring before Feb 2009. 2 MDC-T activists charged 14 July with assaulting Zanu-PF supporter in Mashonaland West province; further 2 activists charged 15 July with distributing party newsletter in Masvingo province; all later granted bail. Soldiers 14 July prevented MDC-T rally in Darwendale, MDC-T SG Tendai Biti said party would respond to any Zanu-PF violence in next elections; Zanu-PF youths 22 July disrupted second rally, 11 MDC officials including district chairperson reported critically injured.

- Piers Pigou, [“Lifting Zimbabwe sanctions might aid reform before elections”](#), *Guardian*, 19 July 2012.
- [“Britain and EU to lift sanctions against Robert Mugabe’s allies”](#), *Telegraph*, 23 July 2012.

West Africa

➡ **Côte d’Ivoire** FRCI, ethnic Malinkés/Dioulas 20 July attacked UN-guarded IDP camp hosting ethnic Guerés, reportedly in response to 17 July killing of 4 Duékoué residents which locals blamed on camp-dwellers; residents claimed camp under control of former pro-Gbagbo militia which frequently robbed neighbouring houses; UNOCI, govt 21 July blamed each other for security lapses. Govt 13 July met with opposition Ivorian Popular Front (FPI), marking first real attempt to resume political dialogue; FPI continued to demand Gbagbo liberation. In second prison break in 2 months, 12 inmates escaped from Abidjan’s main prison 9 July. Court 10 July charged 2 Gbagbo allies on count of genocide, bringing to 8 total number of people charged with genocide.

- [“UN deplores attack against camp for internally displaced”](#), UN News, 21 July 2012.



Guinea President Condé 2 July said polls to be held before year-end, calendar to be established with electoral commission and International Francophonie Organisation. Condé 14/18 July met with opposition leaders Mouctar Diallo, Lansana Kouyaté; National Transitional Council Opposition UFDG leader Cellou Dalein Diallo toured Lower, Middle Guinea; several local authorities tried to impede meetings/rallies. Court 2 July charged number of suspects involved in July 2011 attack against Condé's house, including UFDG VP Oury Bah (in absentia) and Captain Alpha Oumar Diallo "AOB" but acquitted former Chief of Staff Nouhou Thiam, other military associates of former transitional president General Sékouba Konaté; attorney general lodged appeal against decision.

- "Guinea President Conde says elections due by year-end", Reuters, 3 July 2012.



Guinea-Bissau Angolan ambassador to UN 2 July said new elections might be acceptable but Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CPLP) at 20 July summit maintained demand for resumption of interrupted electoral process, called for high-level discussion on Guinea-Bissau at UN, barred transitional authorities from attending summit. UNSC 30 July expressed concern over reported increase in drug trafficking since April coup, called for consensual, inclusive and nationally-owned process to restore constitutional order. Body of MP Roberto Cacheu, disappeared since 26 Dec attempted coup, found 28 July near Dingal; ousted PM Carlos Gomes Júnior denied involvement.

- "Ban Ki-moon alerta para aumento do narcotráfico na Guiné-Bissau desde golpe de Estado", RTP, 21 July 2012.



Liberia Govt early July launched first large-scale military operation since war ended in effort to target mercenaries using country as base to launch raids into Côte d'Ivoire; President Johnson Sirleaf 12 July said could soon reopen border. Opposition party Congress for Democratic Change 7 July convened meeting attended by 5 political parties, including ruling Unity Party, to discuss need to reform electoral laws and constitution to avoid suspicion during elections.

- "Is setting up a war crimes court in Liberia timely?", Heritage, 2 July 2012.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°88, *Liberia: Time for Much-delayed Reconciliation and Reform*, 12 June 2012.



Mali Interim President Dioncounda Traoré 27 July returned to Bamako, announced creation of new transitional institutions; PM Cheick Modibo Diarra 28 July refused to resign. Islamist rebel groups now control north after 11 July ousting of MNLA Tuaregs from last stronghold; MNLA said no longer seeking independent state but rather "Quebec-style autonomy". Self-defence groups Liberation Forces of North Mali (FLN), Ganda-Koy/Ganda-Izo militias, Alliance of Timbuktu Region Communities, Armed Forces Against Occupation (FACO) and Circle for Reflection and Action (CRA) 21 July announced creation of new front to liberate North. U.S. Asst Sec for African Affairs Carson 19 July met with transitional authorities, urged authorities to accept ECOWAS intervention force. Transitional govt 9 July announced creation of 1,200-strong elite corps to safeguard institutions. Algerian security forces 23 July killed 20 suspected MUJWA militants near Tinzawaten; MUJWA 19 July freed 3 Western hostages abducted 10 months ago, still holding 4 Algerian hostages. Director of daily L'Indépendant, Saouti Haidara, arrested 12 July.

- "Mali braced for military intervention amid fears it could become 'next Somalia'", Guardian, 6 July 2012.

New Crisis Group Africa Report N°189, *Mali: Avoiding Escalation*, 18 July 2012. Calls for military intervention in Mali are increasing but it could sink the state, which is already on the brink of dissolution, further into chaos.



Nigeria Boko Haram (BH) 9 July claimed responsibility for attacks on 14 villages around Jos which left scores dead, including several prominent politicians; BH reportedly warned Christians to "embrace Islam" or risk being attacked; other reports claim Fulani herdsmen responsible for attacks. Army 14 July announced "Operation sweep and search" in response; Secretary of Fulani group Mobgal Fulbe Development Association, Ahmed Yandeh, denounced operation as deliberate effort to drive Fulani out of region. Following 25 July killing of 2 Indian expatriates in Maiduguri, security forces 27 July arrested 26 suspected BH militants, killed 2 in separate raid. Suspected BH militants 15 July attacked 3 police stations in Damaturu. Bomb targeting Christian churches in Kogi state exploded 15 July; multiple bombs including suicide-bomb targeting police stations in Sokoto exploded 30 July, at least 5 dead. Rocket fired at Jos Muslim school 16 July killed child; Christian leaders 14 July condemned 13 July attempt to kill key Islamic leader which left 5 dead. Gunmen 19 July killed 5, including policeman, in Kano; 4 Igbo traders killed by armed men same day in Maiduguri; attacks took place day after lifting of state of emergency declared on 31 Dec 2011 in 4 northern states.

- "Nigerian military plans major operation after Jos attacks", *Christian Science Monitor*, 16 July 2012.



Senegal President Macky Sall's Benno Bokk Yaakkar coalition won 1 July legislative elections, took 119 of 150 seats. MFDC leaders Salif Sadio and Cesar Badiate Atoute said ready for discussion with President Sall under Sant'Egidio mediation, 24 July met in Guinea-Bissau to start dialogue. Following reiteration of extradition demand by ICC, authorities 20 July said will create special court to try former Chadian president Habré. Following AQIM threat of retaliation if Senegal contributes to intervention in Mali, security forces 5 July arrested 3 Senegalese, 7 Mauritians suspected of belonging to AQIM.

- "Sant'Egidio, notre sauveur?", La Gazette, 19 July 2012.

Asia

Central Asia



Kazakhstan Security forces deployed 25 July to Janaozen to prevent "possible disorders" after reports of possible new mass protests demanding release of relatives jailed over Dec 2011 violence; authorities 3 July released dissident theatre director Bolat Atabaev, leading youth activist Zhanbolat Mamay after June arrest for "inciting social hatred"; UN Human Rights chief Pillay 12 July urged independent international investigation into violence. In Almaty: 10 July explosion in house killed 8; police said case terrorism-related; gunmen 28 July killed 2 police officers, 6 suspects killed 30 July in shootout with police.

- "UN's Pillay urges Zhanaozen riot inquiry", BBC, 12 July 2012.



Kyrgyzstan 1 Uzbek, 1 Kyrgyz border guard killed during 17 July clashes in Osh following altercation with local Kyrgyz repairing road between Jalalabad oblast and Uzbek Namangan region;

Kyrgyzstan said troops fired on by Uzbek guards; Uzbekistan said Kyrgyz guards launched "armed bandit attack". UN Human Rights chief Pillay 10 July warned corruption, ethnic discrimination main problems in Kyrgyzstan. Court 3 July fined ethnic Russian journalist \$1,100 for "inciting ethnic hatred"; Minister of Social Development Ravshan Sabirov arrested 5 July on corruption charges; Grand Mufti Jalilov resigned 17 July amidst corruption allegations; PM Babanov 19 July sacked senior state drug control staff for "inefficient performance"; criminal case opened 21 July against MP Ata Zhurt and former minister for transport Nurlan Suleimanov for misuse of office.

- "Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan trade blame for deadly border shootout", Eurasianet, 19 July 2012.

➡ **Tajikistan** Month saw escalating fighting in Gorno Badakhshan Autonomous Province (GBAO), centred around regional capital Khorog; govt 24 July imposed communications blackout, launched large-scale security operation targeting fighters loyal to former opposition fighter and Ishkoshim border-guard chief Tolib Ayombekov; accused Ayombekov of ordering 21 July killing of GBAO head of State Committee for National Security (GKNB) General Nazarov, running drug and tobacco smuggling; Ayombekov said Nazarov's killing an "accident", argued govt wants to purge region of former field commanders; govt stated 48 killed in operation, including 30 rebels, 17 govt troops and 1 civilian, further 40 rebels arrested, including 8 Afghan citizens. Govt 25 July called ceasefire, began negotiations with rebels; President Rahmon offered amnesty to rebels who surrender, excluding 3 accused of Nazarov murder and Ayombekov. During 25 July discussions with President Rakhmon, Afghan President Karzai promised to deploy additional troops along border. Chief prosecutor for district near Khorog injured 24 July in car bombing. Islamic Revival Party (IRP) 30 July claimed regional head Sabzali Mamadrizoyev murdered following detention by security forces in Khorog. Authorities 16 July announced arrest of suspect in June murder of president's brother-in-law Safarov.

- "Tajikistan clashes: 'many dead' in Gorno-Badakhshan", BBC, 24 July 2012.

➡ **Uzbekistan** 1 Uzbek, 1 Kyrgyz border guard killed 17 July during border clashes; Uzbek border guard commander dismissed over incident (see Kyrgyzstan). Leader of opposition Free Peasants party Nigora Hidoyatova 13 July fled country; authorities allegedly preparing to charge her with seeking to overthrow govt. Court 23 July jailed Kazakh national for 5 years for allegedly attempting to smuggle Islamic extremist materials into country. Sweden's Chief Public Prosecutor 18 July accused Uzbek secret service of involvement in Feb attempted assassination of Uzbek opposition cleric Imam Nazarov. Human rights defender Akramkhodzha Mukhitdinov murdered 25 July in Tashkent province.

- "Voice of dissent flees Uzbekistan", RFE/RL, 20 July 2012.

North East Asia

➡ **North Korea** DPRK 20 July said it was re-examining its nuclear program due to U.S. hostility. Vice Marshal Ri Yong-ho relieved of post in ruling Korean Workers' Party 15 July; replaced by Hyon Yong-chol. Kim Jong-un appointed 17 July as marshal of army.

- "North Korea: we're not changing!", *Wall Street Journal*, 30 July 2012.

New Crisis Group Asia Report N°230, *North Korean Succession and the Risks of Instability*, 25 July 2012. Despite last week's abrupt shuffle at the top of the military leadership, Kim Jong-un appears to be firmly established as the new leader of North Korea, completing a faster and smoother power transition than many experts anticipated.

South Asia

➡ **Afghanistan** International donors 8 July pledged \$16bn over 4 years conditional on reform, counter-corruption efforts; donors called for govt to set election date by early 2013, indicated aid will be withheld if President Karzai fails to appoint replacements for Supreme Court Justice Azimi, 2 other judges whose terms expire Nov 2012. Karzai 26 July issued decree listing reforms aimed at tackling corruption. French troops 30 July handed Nijrab base to Afghanistan as part of withdrawal, transition. 23 killed, including several suicide bombers, 9 July in series of attacks on security installations, Kandahar. Department of Women's Affairs chief, 7 others killed 13 July in car bombing. At least 22 killed 13 July in Samanfan province including former Junbesh leader and MP Ahmad Khan Samanfani, provincial head of NDS and deputy police chief in suicide bomb attack on wedding of prominent MP. Independent Human Rights Commission 16 July expressed concern over civilian casualties in northern provinces. Karzai 19 July met with UK PM Cameron, Pakistan PM Ashraf in effort to reopen Islamabad-Kabul dialogue.

- "Afghanistan suicide bomb kills prominent MP at wedding", BBC, 14 July 2012.

➡ **Bangladesh** Court 15 July jailed 253 patients and hospital workers over involvement in Feb 2009 mutiny. 20 injured 8 July in clashes between student organisations Bangladesh Chhatra League and Islami Chhatra Shibir in Sylhet. Student killed 15 July in factional clash between Bangladesh Chhatra League supporters in Rangpur over leadership of its Rajshahi University unit. Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Chhatra Shibir 19 July clashed with police in Motijheel, dozens injured, 8 arrested; activists demanded immediate release of leaders arrested on various charges including war crimes.

- "Bangladesh urged to stop mass trials of 2009 mutineers", BBC, 4 July 2012.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°226, *Bangladesh: Back to the Future*, 13 June 2012.

➡ **India (non-Kashmir)** 20-27 July clashes between Bodo tribesmen, Muslim Bengali migrants in Assam state killed 56, displaced thousands, triggered military intervention to contain riots, impose curfew on most troubled areas; violence started when unidentified men killed 4 Bodos, provoking retaliation against Muslims against backdrop of territorial disputes. 1 killed, 6 injured in army convoy blast 31 July in Assam. 23 July clashes between Muslims, Hindus in north killed 1. Police 28 June killed 17 Maoist rebels in Chattisgarh state, arrested 2; rights activists 11 July claimed victims local tribesmen. Court 30 July sentenced 21 Hindus to life imprisonment for death of 11 Muslims during 2002 sectarian violence. Garo National Liberation Army (GNLA) rebel chief Sangma arrested 31 July. Indian FM Mathai 4 July met Pakistan counterpart Jilani to discuss peace, security; India 5 July said Pakistan should prosecute authors of 2008 Mumbai attacks.

- "What lies behind Assam violence?", BBC, 26 July 2012.

➡ **Kashmir** 5 killed, 7 injured during 30 June-6 July military operation against militants in Handwara-Kupwara belt. Unidentified gunmen 3 July shot dead policeman in Pulwama district. Gun attacks 4 July killed 2 police officers in Srinagar, a week after fire destroyed historic Sufi shrine.

- "Seventh day of Kashmir gun battle: 5 militants dead", *Hindustan Times*, 6 July 2012.

➡ **Nepal** Govt missed 22 July deadline to amend electoral provisions; all-party agreement on elections remains elusive. Nepali Congress district presidents 31 July endorsed document considering new parliamentary elections as best option to end current political crisis. Govt 15 July announced partial budget through ordinance despite opposition criticism, demands PM Bhattarai resign. Maoist combatants 6 July boycotted screening for army integration claiming unfair entry standards. Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) 21 July announced investigations into alleged financial irregularities; protests, factionalism 17-21 July disrupted party's seventh plenum. Student wing of breakaway Mohan Baidya-led Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (CPM-N) 16, 23 July vandalised Kathmandu, Sunsari schools, buses for charging high fees, having "foreign" names. CPM-N 29 July called for intensified anti-govt protests. Ruling coalition member Madhesi Janadhikar Forum (Ganatantrik) split 1 July. Nepali Congress leader Govinda Raj Joshi sentenced 25 July to 18 months jail for corruption

- "Preserving the agenda", *Kathmandu Post*, 11 July 2012.

➡ **Pakistan** Govt early July reopened NATO supply routes to Afghanistan following U.S. apology for Nov 2011 U.S. airstrike that killed 24 Pakistani soldiers, 31 July signed deal with NATO to allow convoys until Aug 2015. Defence of Pakistan coalition 8 July began protest march from Lahore to Islamabad; gunmen 24 July fired on NATO supply convoy in Khyber, killed driver, wounded 2. Supreme Court 25 July granted new PM Ashraf additional 2 weeks to request reopening of corruption case against President Zardari. Kabul late July accused military of unprovoked cross-border shelling, killing 7 civilians; Pakistan denied claim, said shelling in response to Afghan militant attack; ISAF 25 July condemned shelling, 10 killed 24 July in drone strike, N Waziristan. 11 killed 26 July in bomb attack on market, Bajur tribal area. At least 9 killed, 16 wounded 21 July in suicide bomb attack on anti-Taliban militant commander's compound, Kurram tribal district. FM Jilani met with Indian counterpart 4-5 July to discuss terrorism, Kashmir; Jilani rejected renewed accusations of Pakistan state agency in 2008 Mumbai attacks.

- "Contempt of court or democracy?", *Al Jazeera*, 20 July 2012.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°227, *Aid and Conflict in Pakistan*, 27 June 2012.

➡ **Sri Lanka** Lawyers, judges, court officials 20 July boycotted courts following attack on Mannar magistrate's court by protestors, alleged intimidation of judge by senior govt minister. Journalists, activists, opposition leaders 12 July protested media intimidation after Defence Secretary Rajapaksa threatened Sunday Leader editor with death, legal action. U.S., EU, rights organisations 1 July condemned police raid on 2 opposition websites, arrest of staff; govt announced regulation, censorship measures including new powers to fine, imprison staff. Tamil National People's Front (TNPF) 17 July held protest in Jaffna over June killing of Tamil prisoner, hospitalisation of others following prison protests. 4 Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) members including Chairman and

Vice-Chairman of Akuressa Pradeshhiya Sabha sacked following allegations of involvement in wave of sexual assaults against women, children. University teachers 4 July went on strike to demand increased govt funds for education. Allegations emerged mid-month of state involvement in facilitating outflow of Tamils seeking asylum from N, E. Govt mid-month announced 8 Sept date for provincial council elections in Eastern, North-Central, Sabaragamuwa provinces; President Rajapaksa 11 July said elections for northern provincial council to be held Sept 2013.

- "Sri Lankan journalists protest against state media suppression", *Guardian*, 12 July 2012.

South East Asia

➡ **Indonesia** Unidentified gunmen 1 July killed village head in Arso Timur, Keerom, fired on army commander's vehicle, injuring driver. Inter-ethnic violence in Mimika, Papua 25 July killed 4 tribesmen. 2 suspected terrorists arrested 12 July in Poso, Central Sulawesi. E Java Shiite leader sentenced 12 July to 2 years in prison for blasphemy.

- "Media warned on Papua as death toll increases", *Jakarta Post*, 3 July 2012.

New Crisis Group Asia Report N°228, *How Indonesian Extremists Regroup*, 16 July 2012. Almost ten years after the 2002 Bali bombing, Indonesian extremists are weak and divided but still finding partners for new operations.

➡ **Burma/Myanmar** Resignation of VP Tin Aung Myint Oo 4 July officially announced; retired general Myint Swe nominated 10 July as replacement, but not confirmed due to possible constitutional issues. President Thein Sein 11 July claimed military no longer involved in policy-formation, 18 July discussed govt policies with opposition Group of Friends of Democracy Parties leaders. During Cambodia visit, Thein Sein 13 July met U.S. Sec of State Clinton, discussed ending economic isolation following 11 July announcement of end to U.S. investment ban; sanctions easing condemned by rights groups. UNHCR head Guterres 12 July met with Thein Sein, rejected proposal to resettle some Rohingyas in UNHCR camps or third country to resolve ethnic tensions. UN Special Rapporteur Quintana 30 July-1 Aug visited Rakhine state to investigate June ethnic violence. Sword-wielding mob 25 July murdered NLD member in Magwe; 2 arrested, 1 allegedly USDP member. Authorities 6-7 July reportedly detained 23 political activists prior to 50th anniversary commemorations of military crackdown on students, all later released. Thein Sein 3 July authorised release of 20 political prisoners. Censorship board 31 July indefinitely suspended 2 journals for violating media restrictions.

- "Rights groups assail U.S. decision on Myanmar", *International Herald Tribune*, 12 July 2012.

New Crisis Group Asia Report N°231, *Myanmar: The Politics of Economic Reform*, 27 July 2012. Political transition and economic reconstruction are deeply entwined in Myanmar, and the government, the country's elites and the international community must embrace both for the dramatic reforms underway to succeed.

➡ **Philippines** MILF 6-9 July held assembly of Bangsamoro leaders at main base in Central Mindanao ahead of 16-18 July peace negotiations with govt. Police 16 July attempted raid in Butig, Lanao del Sur province, allegedly in pursuit of terrorists hiding in MILF area;

MILF rebels 24 July referred incident to International Monitoring Team, said raid could undermine truce agreement. Clan violence between MILF commanders in Maguindanao province displaced more than 360 families; MILF 27 July claimed truce brokered. Spate of attacks on rubber plantation in Basilan blamed on disgruntled workers collaborating with violent extremist Abu Sayyaf Group: 6 rubber workers killed 11 July; 12 soldiers, 9 ASG members killed 26 July. Voter registration 9-18 July in Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao declared success despite some reported irregularities. Govt 5 July said it had lodged protest over China's late-June declaration of development of Sansha City in disputed area of S China Sea; Chinese govt 22 July announced establishment of military garrison in area. ASEAN member states 21 July agreed to 6-point principles on conduct in S China Sea.

- "MILF protests PNP raid, likens foray to Al Barka incident", GMA News, 25 July 2012.

➡ **Thailand** Constitutional Court 13 July dismissed opposition case alleging govt's proposal to redraft constitution an attempt to overthrow monarchy. Red shirt demonstrators in Chiang Mai 20 July stoned opposition leader Abhisit Vejjajiva's car. In compliance with 2011 ICJ ruling, Thailand, Cambodia 18 July withdrew troops from disputed Preah Vihear temple, soldiers replaced with police. King Bhumibol Adulyadej 9 July pardoned U.S. citizen jailed in Dec 2011 for 2.5 years for lese majesté; yellow shirt leader Sondhi Limthongkul 10 July appeared in court on lese majesté charges for quoting red shirt speech in 2008; trial commenced 17 July of man arrested March 2011 for selling copies of documentary questioning future of monarchy. PM Yingluck Shinawatra 31 July met with security agencies to address escalating militant violence across south: in Yala attacks throughout month killed 5 soldiers, 3 village officials in Raman, Yaha districts; police 11 July killed 1 militant in Muang district; 2 villagers killed 26 July in Bannang Satar district. In Narathiwat: 5 security officers, 2 villagers, 2 militants killed in violence throughout month in Joh I Rong, Rangae, Rueso, Sungai Kolok, Cho Airong districts. In Pattani: 1 defence volunteer 19 July shot dead in Khok Pho district; 4 soldiers killed 28 July in Mayo district.

- "Thailand court backs government's reform plans", VOA, 13 July 2012.

➡ **Timor Leste** In 7 July parliamentary elections incumbent PM Gusmão's National Congress for Timorese Reconstruction party won 30 of 65 seats in National Assembly, 15 July announced coalition with Partido Democrático, Frente Mudança; announcement followed by unrest in Dili; 1 student 16 July killed by police.

- "One killed in E Timor post-poll protests", AFP, 16 June 2012.

Europe

Balkans

➡ **Bosnia** Party for Democratic Action (SDA) 19 July blocked PM Bevanđić's attempt to remove 3 SDA members from govt following June SDA decision to oppose budget and consequent coalition dissolution; SDA leader Sulejman Tihić 16 July said PM should step down as no longer has support of MPs who put him in power. Social Democratic Party (SDP) VP Komšić 23 July resigned over SDP support for implementation of European Court of Human

Rights (ECtHR) Sejdić-Finci ruling on ethnic minorities. 13 July inter-party constitutional reform discussions failed to reach agreement. ICTY prosecution 3 July lodged appeal against June dismissal of genocide charge against Radovan Karadžić; District Court 17 July sentenced former Croatian Defence Council member to over 5 years in prison for war crimes in Derventa; Banja Luka district court early-month sentenced former Bosnian Serb policeman to 8 years in prison for 1992 war crimes in Gradiška.

- "Bosniak party blocks ministerial sackings in Bosnia", Balkan Insight, 20 July 2012.

New Crisis Group Europe Briefing N°68, *Bosnia's Gordian Knot: Constitutional Reform*, 12 July 2012. Only thorough constitutional reform can resolve Bosnia and Herzegovina's deep political crisis and implement a landmark European Court of Human Rights decision to put an end to ethnic discrimination.

➡ **Kosovo** International Steering Group 2 July announced Kosovo achieved preconditions for independence, granted full sovereignty from Sept with closing of International Civilian Office; Serbian President Nikolić 10 July said Kosovo should not expect to control northern Serb-dominated region; Minister of Interior Bajram Rexhepi 23 July promised no new police intervention in the north, but sought integration of region. PM Taçi 8 July held symbolic meeting with Serbian opposition leader Boris Tadić at Dubrovnik regional summit; Serbian govt boycotted meeting due to Kosovo presence. EU High Representative Ashton 25 July called for resumption of Kosovo-Serbia talks in meeting with PM Taçi. Deputy PM Kuçi 10 July returned to post after parliament amended disputed legislation causing June resignation. Deputy PM Bukoshi, Deputy Finance Minister Haraqija 9 July resigned amid ongoing corruption investigations. In Mitrovica, municipal building stoned 4 July; opening of govt office 9 July met with protests by locals. 3 armed attacks 18 July targeted Kosovo police officer's home, radio station, private bank in Serb-controlled Zubin Potok.

- "Steering group grants Kosovo full sovereignty", RFE/RL, 24 July 2012.

➡ **Macedonia** UNSG Ban 25 July promised personal engagement in resolving name dispute with Greece; Macedonia 7 July proposed greater cooperation through joint committee, no Greek response. Law suits initiated early-month against President Ivanov, MPs of ruling parties for reinstating provision in new 20 June lustration law; previous version annulled by Constitutional Court in March.

- "Macedonia awaits Greek reply to olive branch", Balkan Insight, 10 July 2012.

➡ **Serbia** Progressive Party, Socialists, United Regions of Serbia 10 July signed coalition agreement; EU accession named priority. Progressive Party 22 July announced 19-member multi-party govt, pledged "zero-tolerance" on corruption, crime. President Nikolić 19 July claimed secret agreements reached by predecessor's negotiating team on Kosovo helped to "seal Kosovo's independence", 23 July sought UN involvement in Kosovo talks, but asked for respect for Serbia's sovereignty over Kosovo. During regional visit, U.S. Asst Sec of State Gordon 6 July told Serbia it must accept Kosovo's independence, called on Serbia to stop supporting illegal security structures in N Kosovo; senior Kosovo govt official 17 July claimed Serbia maintaining police network of hundreds in N Kosovo. Constitutional court 10 July ruled some aspects of law on autonomous northern province Vojvodina unconstitutional.

Serbia 10 July indicted 12 people for attack on U.S. embassy during 2008 riots over Kosovo's independence.

- "EU accession is priority of new Serbian government", SE Times, 12 July 2012.

Caucasus

➡ **Armenia** Hundreds attended 3 July funeral of military doctor Vahe Avetyan who died after severe beating in Yerevan restaurant by bodyguards of oligarch and senior Republican Party of Armenia (HHK) MP Ruben Hayrapetyan; Hayrapetyan forced to resign from Parliament following national outcry.

- "Harsnaker owner resigns from parliament following Avetyan murder", Armenian Weekly, 3 July 2012.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Europe Report N°217, *Armenia: An Opportunity for Statesmanship*, 25 June 2012.

➡ **Azerbaijan** Authorities 4 July charged ethnic Talysh newspaper editor Gilal Mamedov with treason for allegedly collaborating with Iranian intelligence. European Council President Van Rompuy 5 July met President Aliyev, called for improvement in civil, political rights. Former President Mutalibov 9 July returned to country following 2-decade exile in Russia.

- "Why did Azerbaijani authorities arrest Talysh activist?", RFE/RL, 2 July 2012.

➡ **North Caucasus (Russia)** In Dagestan this month at least 8 Interior Ministry officials, 30 suspected militants, 10 civilians killed including: Interior Ministry officer, 7 militants killed during 13 July security operations near Utamysh village; 6 militants killed in Makhachkala during shoot-out with security forces. Policeman killed 11 July in Sunzhensky district, Chechnya. At least 3 security force members, 4 suspected militants, civilian killed in Ingushetia, including 2 soldiers during 21 July ambush on military convoy. In Kabardino-Balkaria 2 police officers, 3 suspected militants killed in Nalchik; Karachay-Cherkessia police officer killed 27 July in Malokarachaevsky district.

- "Security operation against militants in Daghestan ends", RFE/RL, 21 July 2012.

➡ **Georgia** Police 11 July announced seizure of thousands of satellite dishes set to be distributed by opposition broadcaster Maestro TV as part of investigation into vote buying by opposition Georgian Dream coalition ahead of Oct parliamentary elections; scuffles occurred same day between Georgian Dream activists, ruling party supporters in Karaleti. Ruling United National Movement (UNM) called on opposition to sign joint pledge ensuring free and fair elections. FM Vashadze 16 July complained of "intensive militarisation" by Russia in breakaway regions of Abkhazia, S Ossetia. In Abkhazia, Gali Military Registration and Enlistment Officer Beslan Kirtadze killed 11 July by unknown gunmen. In S Ossetia, chief investigator with Prosecutor General's Office, investigating 3 July attack on State Security employee, abducted 9 July in Tskhinvali, later found killed.

- "Parliamentary campaign features ground-breaking political shift", Eurasianet, 16 July 2012.

➡ **Nagorno-Karabakh (Azerbaijan)** Presidential election held 19 July in breakaway region; incumbent Bako Sahakian declared winner with 66%; Azerbaijan said move "illegitimate" and undermined

negotiating process, warned all foreign observers would be considered personae non gratae. Azerbaijan 20 July said soldier killed on border by Armenian sniper.

- "Defeated challenger says Karabakh election was 'free but not fair'", RFE/RL, 21 July 2012.

Eastern Europe

➡ **Belarus** UN Human Rights Council 6 July created Belarus investigator post based on concerns over torture, abuse of prisoners; OSCE 16-17 July conducted elections assessment mission. Authorities 18 July announced probe of jailed opposition leader Zmitser Dashkevich for disobeying prison administration, potentially adding extra year to 2-year sentence if convicted. Security services 13 July detained student after he posted online picture of teddy bear carrying pro-free speech sign, one of several hundred reportedly dropped from airplane early-July; President Lukashenko late July dismissed army chief, Defence Minister.

- "Belarus gets UN human rights investigator", RFE/RL, 6 July 2012.

➡ **Moldova** Parliament 12 July banned "hammer and sickle" symbol; Communist Party leader Vladimir Voronin warned against dividing Moldovan society, hoped law would be overturned by Constitutional Court. U.S. Senate 18 July voted to lift Cold War-era trade restrictions on Moldova. PM Filat late month ordered investigation into desecration of Russian soldiers' graves, memorial, said perpetrators would be severely punished.

- "Moldova to prohibit Communist insignia", Turkish Weekly, 16 July 2012.

➡ **Ukraine** Tymoshenko tax trial postponed to 14 Aug following her refusal to appear in court. As part of effort to strengthen people-to-people contacts in context of strained political relations, EU, Ukraine 23 July signed amended visa facilitation agreement improving mobility; Secretary of National Security and Defence Council Adriy Kluyev 25 July described move as important step on road to European integration. Parliament 30 July rejected opposition proposals to amend Bill giving Russian status of official language in certain regions; opposition staged walk-out in protest.

- "New trial of Ukraine's Tymoshenko put off to August 14", Reuters, 31 July 2012.

Western Europe/Mediterranean

➡ **Cyprus** Cyprus assumed EU's 6-month rotating presidency 1 July. Turkish Cypriot leader Erdoğan 29 June said reunification talks with Greek Cypriots would continue after February 2013 Republic of Cyprus (RoC) presidential elections if deadline to negotiations set, embargoes on N Cyprus removed. UNSC 19 July extended UNFICYP peacekeeping mandate for 6 months, called on both sides to return to negotiations. RoC Minister of Commerce Syklitis 25 July revealed natural gas in RoC's EEZ not extractable until 2017. Turkey 13 July carried out naval exercises in RoC's EEZ; RoC spokesman said govt appealing to UN over provocation.

- "In Cyprus, a new generation inherits a conflict", CBS, 30 July 2012.

➡ **Turkey** Pro-Kurdish BDP-led demonstrations in Diyarbakır 14 July demanding end to PKK leader Öcalan's solitary confinement deteriorated into clashes with police; 87 detained, several wounded including BDP deputy. Clashes between PKK and govt

forces left at least 36 dead: 15 police officers wounded 14 July in ambush on convoy near Van; 15 PKK militants killed 25 July by security forces in S-E; 2 soldiers killed 29 July in clash with PKK in Hakkari province. PM Erdoğan 14 July ruled out negotiations with PKK prior to disarming. Iraqi PM al-Maliki 17 July warned Turkey against further violations of airspace following Turkish cross-border sorties against PKK in N Iraq. Syrian Kurds including group affiliated with PKK 22 July took control of several villages on border with Turkey; PM Erdoğan 25 July said Turkey has natural right to intervene in case of “terrorist formations”. 8 Turkish police officers, 14 Syrian refugees injured in 17, 21 July riots at Kilis and Islahiye refugee camps over food, water shortages. Wreckage of fighter jet shot down by Syrian forces found 4 July along with bodies of 2 pilots.

- “For Ankara, fears of a Kurdistan rising”, Eurasianet, 30 July 2012.

Latin America

➡ **Bolivia** Indigenous groups in Malku Khota protested against Canadian mining firm citing environmental concerns, seized 5 engineers; 1 killed, 12 injured in subsequent clashes with police; President Morales 10 July announced revocation of mining concession in move to end conflict.

- “Conflictos por minas suman y hay 10 heridos”, *Los Tiempos*, 18 July 2012.

➡ **Colombia** Clashes early month between FARC, armed forces left 6,000 displaced in Cauca dept; indigenous communities 10 July issued security forces, FARC ultimatum to leave territory, mid-July destroyed police and FARC barricades, 17 July clashed with anti-riot police after indigenous group forced soldiers to abandon post near Toribio municipality. Govt, indigenous leaders 23 July started dialogue to resolve crisis; FARC 25 July said will leave Cauca dept “once security forces and neo-paramilitaries leave area”. Army 30 July killed 4 FARC in northern Bolívar dept. “Anti Restitution Army” 5 July issued death threats to 13 human rights defenders involved in land restitution process. ELN early July said seeking political end to conflict, called for “open dialogue without conditions”, 30 July claimed responsibility for kidnapping of journalist Élide Parra Alfonso, environmental engineer Gina Paola Uribe. New political coalition launched 5 July by former President Uribe and allies in opposition to Santos govt.

- “In war-torn Colombia, an indigenous revolt hopes to bring peace”, *Miami Herald*, 16 July 2012.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Latin America Report N°41, *Dismantling Colombia's New Illegal Armed Groups: Lessons from a Surrender*, 8 June 2012.

➡ **Ecuador** Amnesty International 17 July said judicial system being used by authorities to clamp down on indigenous and farmers’ leaders in attempt to prevent protests on environmental, land issues. Reporters Without Borders, Committee to Protect Journalists 17 July expressed concerns over further radio, TV station closures by govt.

- “Ecuador must allow closed stations to resume broadcasts”, Committee to Protect Journalists, 17 July 2012.

➡ **Guatemala** Govt 30 June inaugurated 2 new military bases in Petén dept, San Juan Sacatepéquez, said will establish 9 more in effort to “increase state capacity to combat drug trafficking and organised crime”. Congress 19 July passed law creating separate investigative police force which will operate outside of National Civil Police; opposition parties said law passed without adequate consideration of costs, constitutionality. Police reported 15% decrease in homicides during first half of 2012 compared with 2011 but said several departments along border with Honduras, El Salvador experienced increase.

- Javier Ciurizza, “Una policía de la cual sentir orgullo”, *Siglo21*, 21 July 2012.
- “CICIG respalda creación de dirección de investigación criminal”, *AGN*, 21 July 2012.

New Crisis Group Latin America Report N°43, *Police Reform in Guatemala: Obstacles and Opportunities*, 20 July 2012. To stem the violence that kills thousands of Guatemalans each year, the government must find the resources and will to carry out long-stalled reforms of the national police.

➡ **Haiti** President Martelly 3 July published presidential order appointing 9 members of Supreme Judiciary Council (CSPJ), elections announced for year-end; electoral council members yet to be named. Appeal hearing on human rights charges against Jean-Claude Duvalier set for 23 July reportedly postponed indefinitely. Clashes over 23 July land eviction in Marigot left 8 civilians, 5 policemen dead; Marigot residents called on MINUSTAH to investigate deaths.

- “Haiti gov’t vows to hold elections this year”, *AP*, 24 July 2012.

➡ **Mexico** Opposition parties 19 July accused President-elect Peña Nieto of overspending, widespread vote-buying in run-up to 1 July poll which saw him elected with 38% of votes; PRD leader López Obrador asked electoral court to annul vote; decision to be adopted 6 Sept. Leaders of “#Yo soy 132” student movement 5 July said evidence of around 1,000 irregularities given to electoral authorities and prosecutors; thousands rallied 22 July in Mexico City to protest election results. Daily Proceso 19 July reported Zetas split into hostile factions led by Heriberto Lazcano or “El Lazca” and Miguel Ángel Treviño or “Z-40”; navy 26 July arrested alleged Zetas chief Mauricio Guizar Cárdenas or “El Amarillo” in Oaxaca. Prosecutors 31 July charged 4 high-ranking army officers over suspected ties to Beltrán-Leyva cartel.

- “Mexicans in new protest at Peña Nieto election victory”, *BBC*, 22 July 2012.


➡ **Venezuela** President Chávez reportedly violated electoral rules 217 times in first week of presidential campaign compared to 165 by Capriles; violations consisted mostly of use of state funds, public buildings for campaign purposes, attacks on opponent. Candidates 19 July signed agreement to respect electoral rules/results, promote peaceful campaign. Paraguay’s Defence Minister García 28 June accused Venezuelan FM Maduro of inciting Paraguayan army revolt in order to defend ousted president Lugo. Chávez 24 July reiterated intention to withdraw Venezuela from Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACHR); OAS late June passed reforms to modernise IACHR; new IACHR Executive Secretary Emilio Álvarez Icaza stated he will engage harshest critics of system.

- Silke Pfeiffer, “Election, Chávez’s illness put Venezuela on edge”, *Miami Herald*, 1 July 2012.


- [“UCAB: Chávez violó ley electoral 217 veces y Capriles Radonski 165”](#), Ultimas Noticias, 16 July 2012.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Latin America Report N°42, [Dangerous Uncertainty Ahead of Venezuela's Elections](#), 26 June 2012.

Middle East/North Africa


Eastern Mediterranean

 **Israel/Occupied Palestinian Territories** Suicide bomber 19 July targeted bus carrying Israeli tourists in Bulgaria, killing 6; PM Netanyahu accused Iran, Hizbollah of involvement. Kadima 17 July quit coalition govt over law on military conscription of ultra-orthodox Jews. Israel released from administrative detention Palestinian footballer al-Sarsak 10 July, Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) Speaker Dweik 19 July. Israeli authorities mid-month ordered demolition of 8 Palestinian W-B villages in South Hebron Hills to create IDF training zone. Israeli officials 17 July upgraded college in W-B Ariel settlement to university. Egyptian President Mursi held talks 18 July with President Abbas, 19 July with Hamas leader Meshaal, 25 July with Hamas PM Haniyeh. Al Jazeera documentary aired early-month reported evidence of possible poisoning of former PA President Arafat; PA announced plans for post-mortem.

- Ofer Zalzberg, [“Time to update the Israel-Egypt peace agreement?”](#), CNN GPS, 13 July 2012.
- [“Five Reasons Why the Two-State Solution Just Won't Die”](#), *Foreign Policy*, 16 July 2012.

 **Lebanon** Month saw at least 3 killed by shelling from Syria, deployment of army along northern border; Syrian troops 2 July briefly abducted 2 General Security members and customs official at al-Buqaiaa crossing; President Suleiman 29 July accused Syrian forces of violating Lebanese territory. 27-28 July clashes between Alawites, Sunnis in Tripoli wounded 8. Sunni Islamists mid-month protested release of 3 army officers detained over May killing of anti-Syrian regime Sunni cleric; supporters of Michel Aoun-led Christian Free Patriotic Movement 17 July blocked main highway in Beirut in solidarity with military, called for release of remaining officers. Special Tribunal for Lebanon (STL) judge 19 July set 25 March 2013 as provisional date for trial of suspects in 2005 assassination of former PM Hariri.


- [“A spillover likely?”](#), *Now Lebanon*, 25 July 2012.

 **Syria** Month saw fierce fighting spread to Aleppo and Damascus, seizure by rebels of border crossings with Turkey and Iraq, thousands fleeing to neighbouring countries. ICRC 15 July declared Syria “non-international armed conflict”. 4 senior officials assassinated in 18 July bombing of national security HQ in Damascus, including top security chief Shawkat, Defence Minister Rajiha, intelligence chief Bekhtyar. Senior defections reported, including close-Assad confidant and Republican Guard Brig Gen Tlass, prominent tribal chief and Syrian Ambassador to Iraq Nawaf Fares. Numerous massacres reported by opposition activists, including some 200 allegedly killed by regime forces in Tremseh. Concern over Syria's unconventional weapon stockpiles increased: foreign ministry 23 July said chemical weapons to be used only against external aggression; Israel vowed to prevent any transfer to Hizbul-

lah. Russia, China 19 July vetoed UNSC Chapter VII resolution threatening sanctions. UNSC 20 July extended UNSMIS mandate for “final” 30-days, appointed Senegalese Lieutenant General Gaye as new mission head. Kurdish forces reportedly consolidated control over N-E Syria. Kurdish opposition Democratic Union party (PYD), Kurdish National Councils (KNC) mid-month met in Erbil (Iraq) under auspices of Iraqi Kurdish Regional Govt President Barzani, agreed to form Supreme Kurdish Council, popular defence forces.

- [“Inside Aleppo: Rebels repulse Syrian tanks, civilians dodge shells”](#), *Christian Science Monitor*, 30 July 2012.

Gulf

 **Bahrain** Interior Ministry 13 July said bans on opposition rallies aimed to prevent disruption, street violence; Shiite opposition al-Wefaq member Abduljalil Khalil rejected ban as policy to end rallies demanding reforms; thousands clashed with police during 20-27 July demonstrations against ban; 28 countries condemned ongoing rights violations through joint declaration during 28 June UNHRC Geneva debate. Crown Prince Salman 31 July ordered police to exercise restraint in dealing with protesters. Govt reform program continued with 11 July issuance of Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI) Interim Report. Authorities 3 June said 15 policemen charged with mistreatment of prisoners after investigation into reports security services tortured anti-govt protestors; Interior Ministry 29 July announced opening of investigations into possible rights violations by police during crackdowns on opposition protestors. Court 9 July dissolved Shiite Islamist political party Amal for following “hostile clerical authority” calling for violence, failing to hold general assembly. Bahrain Center for Human Rights President Nabeel Rajab arrested 9 July, charged with insulting residents of predominantly Sunni Muharraq city on Twitter, sentenced to 3 months jail. Court 5 July ruled 11-year-old accused of taking part in anti-govt protests must be monitored for 1 year.

- [“Clashes in Bahrain over opposition clampdown”](#), AP, 20 July 2012.

 **Iran** Israel accused Iranian Revolutionary Guards of orchestrating 19 July suicide bombing of Israeli tour bus in Bulgaria, warned of forceful reaction; Tehran denied involvement. U.S. Sec of State Clinton 16 July warned “all elements of American power” to be used to prevent Iranian acquisition of nuclear weapon. EU 1 July initiated oil embargo; U.S. same day placed sanctions on Iranian Central Bank, 12 July blacklisted 15 entities involved in Iranian weapons program, circumventing sanctions. Experts from P5+1, Iran met in Istanbul 3 July; deputies of European, Iranian chief negotiators 24 July met in Istanbul. Iranian Parliamentary committee 3 July submitted draft law blocking shipments of oil through Hormuz Straits to countries supporting sanctions, same day conducted medium-range missile tests. Former interior minister Abdollah Nouri 12 July called for popular referendum on fate of nuclear program. Several hundred protesters 23 July protested in Neishabour against rising prices due to sanctions, chanted anti-govt slogans.

- Ali Vaez, [“Why the next round of Iran nuclear talks could yield results”](#), *Al-Monitor*, 2 July 2012.
- [“Gulf sabers rattle as Iran sanctions bite”](#), Reuters, 6 July 2012.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Middle East Briefing N°34, [P5+1, Iran and the Perils of Nuclear Brinkmanship](#), 15 June 2012.

➡ **Iraq** Kurdistan early-July began exporting crude oil to Turkey; Chevron Corp 19 July announced oil contract with Kurdistan; central govt 15 July called moves illegal, barred Chevron from oil deals with central govt. Kurdish separatists blamed for 20 July bombing of pipeline from Kirkuk to Turkish port Ceyhan. Govt 17 July warned Turkey against violating airspace, threatened to lodge complaint with UNSC. PM Maliki, parliamentary speaker al-Nujaifi 12 July met in first meeting since start of political crisis. 15 Baquba neighborhood officials resigned 27 July in protest against govt's inability to protect them from al-Qaeda. Bombings killed, wounded many throughout month; al-Qaeda-linked Islamic State of Iraq claimed responsibility for 23 July attack killing over 107, wounding at least 268, as part of new "Destroying the Walls" campaign. National Security Advisor al-Fayadh 31 July announced Iranian dissident group Mujahadin-e Khalq (MEK) must re-locate from Camp Ashraf to former U.S. military base.

- Joost Hiltermann, "Violence in Iraq? It's the politics, stupid!", CNN GPS, 30 July 2012.
- "Kurds push back as Obama reportedly sides with Baghdad in oil dispute", *Foreign Policy*, 23 July 2012.

New Crisis Group Middle East Report N°126, *Déjà Vu All Over Again: Iraq's Escalating Political Crisis*, 30 July 2012. To overcome Iraq's current political crisis and prevent the breakdown of the entire post-2003 order, Prime Minister Maliki and his opponents both will have to agree to painful compromises.

New Crisis Group Middle East Report N°127, *Iraq's Secular Opposition: The Rise and Decline of Al-Iraqiya*, 31 July 2012. The demise of Iraq's Al-Iraqiya Alliance, at threat of marginalisation, would remove the country's sole credible political representative of a very important community: the secular, non-sectarian middle class.

➡ **Saudi Arabia** Heightened security in Eastern Province after killing of 2 during 8 July demonstrations sparked by detention, wounding of opposition Shiite cleric Nimr al-Nimr by govt forces; activists reported several demonstrators wounded, detained during 27 July clashes with security forces in Qatif.

- "Shooting the sheikhs", *Economist*, 14 July 2012.

➡ **Jordan** Amended version of elections law approved 23 July by royal decree; PM Tarawneh said Independent Election Commission (IEC) expected to announce Dec date for parliamentary elections; opposition parties 24 July said changes to law insufficient, called for boycott. Human Rights Watch 7 July criticised Jordan for discriminating against Palestinian refugees fleeing Syria.

- "Countdown for polls has started — PM", *Jordan Times*, 25 July 2012.

➡ **Yemen** Progress made towards implementation of transition plan; UN Envoy Ben Omar 12 July said National Dialogue to start in November; President Hadi 14 July announced 25-member technical committee to prepare for National Dialogue Conference. Protestors 13 July demonstrated in Sanaa, called for ouster of corrupt govt officials from former regime. Tribesmen loyal to former President Saleh 29-30 July occupied Interior Ministry demanding jobs in police force, 31 July clashed with govt forces, at least 15 killed. Month saw several attempted assassinations of security officials, including 22 July attempt against Hadramaut air force commander Colonel al-Rusaishan. Political security service officer Ghazi Baidha killed 19 July in Radda; bomb 19 July killed top security officer Colonel al-Mawzai in Aden; gunmen killed deputy director of central prison in Taiz; suicide bomber 11 July killed at

least 10 at Sanaa police academy; security forces 22 July diffused bomb outside intelligence services building in Aden. Suspected Ansar al-Sharia militants 31 July attacked police station in Jaar, killing 2. Govt forces continued to target al-Qaeda-linked militants in South; at least 5 killed in airstrike 24 July. Security forces 7 July killed 4, wounded 18 at demonstrations by separatists in South. Red Cross worker released 13 July by Ansar al-Sharia following 2 month captivity. Gunman from al-Jalal tribe reportedly abducted Italian embassy security agent in Sanaa 29 July.

- "Yemen's power vacuum could provide window for secessionists", *Christian Science Monitor*, 18 July 2012.

New Crisis Group Middle East Report N°125, *Yemen: Enduring Conflicts, Threatened Transition*, 3 July 2012. Flawed as it is, Yemen's political settlement avoided a potentially devastating civil war and secured President Ali Abdullah Saleh's resignation, but now the challenge is to address longstanding political and economic grievances.

North Africa

➡ **Egypt** Tensions continued between newly-elected President Mursi and military council (SCAF): Mursi 8 July ordered parliament to reconvene, reversing June decision by Supreme Court to dissolve parliament; Supreme Court 10 July overturned presidential decree; SCAF warned Mursi to respect laws, constitution; Parliamentary Speaker al-Katatni same day adjourned parliamentary session pending ruling by high appeals court on implementation of Supreme Court ruling; President Mursi 11 July emphasised commitment to judicial process and dialogue, 24 July appointed water minister Hisham Qandil, a non-partisan technocrat, as PM. U.S. Sec of State Clinton 14 July held first meeting with President Mursi, voiced support for full transition to civilian rule; SCAF warned no-one would prevent it fulfilling role as Egypt's protector. Authorities 23 July began releasing prisoners detained by military during revolution. Public Prosecutor 16 July ordered former President Mubarak back to prison after improvements in health. Former spy chief and VP Suleiman died 19 July of heart attack in U.S.

- "Morsy catches country off guard with surprise choice for prime minister", *Egypt Independent*, 25 July 2012.

➡ **Libya** National Transitional Council (NTC) 30 July announced 8 August power transfer to newly elected General National Congress. Elections for 200-seat General National Congress took place 7 July; National Forces Alliance led by ex-interim PM Jibril won 39 out of 80 seats reserved for political parties, Muslim Brotherhood gained 17. Month saw pre-election violence by groups seeking more autonomy for East: election material in Benghazi destroyed 1 July; election material storage centre in Ajdabiya attacked 5 July; helicopter carrying election material 6 July struck by anti-aircraft fire near Benghazi killing 1; local militia 5-8 July shut down major oil exporting terminals in El-Sider, Ras Lanuf, Brega. Govt 2 July freed 4-member ICC defence delegation; ICC defence lawyer Melinda Taylor said fair trial for Saif Qadhafi impossible in Libya; Saif 31 July appealed for ICC trial, claimed execution following Libya trial would be murder. Former intelligence chief Buzaid Dorda, currently on trial, 10 July claimed underwent improper interrogation, right to meet privately with lawyer denied. President of Libya Olympic Committee freed 22 July after 1-week detention by gunmen in Tripoli. 7 Iranian Red Crescent staff abducted 31 July

by unknown armed group in Benghazi. Khamis Qadhafi reportedly sighted 25 July in northern Mali purchasing weapons, recruiting.

- [“Libya's long road to democracy”](#), Al Jazeera, 8 July 2012.



Mauritania Court 3 July sentenced 2 Salafi extremists to 3 years jail for inciting youth to join AQIM camps in N Mali; MUJWA 19 July freed 3 Western hostages in exchange for Salafis held in Nouakchott prison, \$2-3 million ransom. Coordination for Democratic Opposition, including Islamist Tawawssul party, 18 July reiterated demand President Abdel Aziz step down. Police 15 July violently dispersed worker strike in copper mine, 1 killed, several injured. Militants of Initiative for Abolitionist Resurgence (IRA) 24 July staged demonstration calling for release of IRA head, Biram Ould Abeid, detained since May for burning Islamic Maliki legal texts condoning slavery.

- [“Tawassul, islamistes mais pas trop”](#), Jeune Afrique, 25 July 2012.



Morocco Court 9 July jailed 20 February Movement activist for 4-years for “occupation of non-public space”. Ruling Justice and Development Party (PJD) 14-15 July held 7th national conference with over ten thousand attending, including Palestinian Hamas leader Khaled Meshaal; PM Benkirane re-elected secretary general.

- [“Benkirane seul candidat possible à la tête du parti?”](#), Au Fait Maroc, 11 July 2012.



Tunisia Military court 19 July sentenced in absentia former president Ben Ali to life imprisonment, former interior minister Rafik Belhaj Kacem, former security chief Ali Seriati, 38 security officials to up to 20 years jail over deaths of protesters during revolution. Ennahda 12 July held first congress in country in 24 years; 16 July re-elected Rached Ghannouchi as party chief. Anti-corruption minister Mohammed Abbou 1 July resigned after accusing govt of failing to do enough to combat corruption. Govt 18 July granted license to Islamist group Hizb al-Tahrir allowing it to become legal

political party. National Body for the Reform of Information and Communication 4 July announced it was disbanding over govt censorship.

- William Lawrence, [“Tunisia must address economic woes to avoid unrest spilling over”](#), *Guardian*, 7 July 2012.
- [“Tunisia's Ben Ali sentenced to life in jail”](#), Al Jazeera, 19 July 2012.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Middle East/North Africa Report N°124, [Tunisia: Confronting Social and Economic Challenges](#), 6 June 2012.

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