

126 1 February 2014

January 2014 Trends



Deteriorated Situations

Afghanistan (p.5) Nagorno-Karabakh (Azerbaijan) (p.7)
Bangladesh (p.5) South Sudan (p.3)
Egypt (p.11) Tajikistan (p.8)
Iraq (p.10) Thailand (p.6)
Kyrgyzstan (p.8) Ukraine (p.8)
Lebanon (p.10)
Libya (p.11)



Improved Situations

Philippines (p.6)
Tunisia (p.12)



Unchanged Situations

Algeria (p.11), Armenia (p.7), Azerbaijan (p.7), Bahrain (p.11), Burundi (p.1), Cameroon (p.2), Central African Republic (p.2), Chad (p.2), China/Japan (p.4), Colombia (p.9), Côte d'Ivoire (p.4), Cyprus (p.8), DR Congo (p.2), Ethiopia (p.2), Georgia (p.7), Guatemala (p.9), Guinea (p.4), Guinea-Bissau (p.4), India (non-Kashmir) (p.5), Indonesia (p.6), Iran (p.10), Israel-Palestine (p.9), Kashmir (p.5), Kazakhstan (p.8), Kenya (p.2), Korean Peninsula (p.4), Kosovo (p.7), Madagascar (p.3), Mali (p.4), Mauritania (p.11), Mexico (p.9), Morocco (p.11), Mozambique (p.3), Myanmar (p.6), Myanmar/Burma (p.10), Nepal (p.5), Niger (p.4), Nigeria (p.4), North Caucasus (Russia) (p.7), Pakistan (p.5), Rwanda (p.2), Somalia (p.2), Somaliland (p.3), Sri Lanka (p.6), Sudan (p.3), Syria (p.10), Turkey (p.8), Uganda (p.3), Uzbekistan (p.9), Venezuela (p.9), Yemen (p.11), Zimbabwe (p.3)

February 2014 Watchlist



Conflict Risk Alerts

South Sudan (p.3)
Thailand (p.6)



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.

To search past issues of CrisisWatch visit our databases and resources page at www.crisisgroup.org.

Board of Trustees

Chair

Thomas Pickering

Co-Chairs

Ayo Obe
Ghassan Salamé

President and CEO

Louise Arbour

Executive Committee

Morton Abramowitz
Cheryl Carolus
Maria Livanos Cattau
Frank Giustra
Lord (Mark) Malloch-Brown
George Soros
Pär Stenbäck

Kofi Annan
Nahum Barnea
Samuel Berger
Micheline Calmy-Rey
Wesley Clark
Sheila Coronel
Mark Eyskens
Joschka Fischer
Lykke Friis
Jean-Marie Guéhenno
Lena Hjelm-Wallén
Mo Ibrahim
Asma Jahangir
Wadah Khanfar
Wim Kok
Ricardo Lagos
Joanne Leedom-Ackerman
Lalit Mansingh
Benjamin Mkapa
Laurence Parisot
Karim Raslan
Paul Reynolds
Javier Solana
Liv Monica Stubholt
Larry Summers
Wang Jisi
Wu Jianmin
Lionel Zinsou

Chairmen Emeriti

Martti Ahtisaari
George J. Mitchell

President Emeritus

Gareth Evans

Crisis Group is an independent, non-profit, non-governmental organisation, with some 140 staff members on five continents, working through field-based analysis and high-level advocacy to prevent and resolve deadly conflict. Crisis Group's approach is grounded in field research. Teams of political analysts are located within or close by countries at risk of outbreak, escalation or recurrence of violent conflict. Based on information and assessments from the field, Crisis Group produces regular analytical reports containing practical recommendations targeted at key international decision-takers, and backed up with high-level advocacy. Crisis Group is chaired by former U.S. Ambassador and Vice Chairman of Hills & Company Thomas R. Pickering, and its President and Chief Executive is former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Louise Arbour.

Africa

Central Africa

➡ **Burundi** Constitutional Court 7 Jan partially invalidated provisions of controversial media-control law; Union of Burundian Journalists (UBJ) denounced restrictive measures still in effect. Opposition UPRONA 20 Jan declared intent to appeal to constitutional court over controversial land law passed in Dec. UNSG 28 Jan proposed renewal of BNUB mandate despite govt resistance.

- “Quand plusieurs responsables de la CNTB sont de l’Uprona”, IWACU, 20 Jan. 2014.

➡ **Cameroon** 120 additional police deployed to border region following 31 Dec attack on Ondikiby by CAR militants. Clashes between CAR armed groups spilled over border in Garoua-Boulai district 20 Jan; Cameroon army killed 6 including 3 CAR soldiers. Military police confirmed Cameroonian forces 15 Jan repelled Nigerian Boko Haram fighters who tried to cross border; 5 killed.

- “CAR fighting spills into Cameroon”, VOA, 20 Jan. 2014.

➡ **Central African Republic** Interim President Djotodia and PM Tiangaye forced to resign 10 Jan at ECCAS summit in Chad; National Transitional Council 20 Jan elected Bangui mayor Catherine Samba-Panza as new interim president, regional banking official André Nzapayake named PM 25 Jan. PM 27 Jan named new 20-member govt, mostly technocrats. 3 ministries retained by Seleka, 1 given to anti-balaka. Attacks, particularly by anti-balaka “self-defence” groups targeting Muslims, continued: Muslim former minister Joseph Kalite assassinated 24 Jan; scores killed in Bangui and NW despite increase of MISCA numbers to 4,500. Rwanda began deploying pledged contingent of 800 troops to reinforce mission. MISCA soldier killed, 4 injured in grenade attack in Bangui 22 Jan. EU FMs 20 Jan approved joint military force of 500 troops to deploy by end-Feb for 6 months to assist MISCA; ECCAS 31 Jan pledged \$100mn. UNSC 28 Jan authorised deployment of EU troops, use of force, set sanctions regime; also extended and reinforced BINUCA mandate. Discussion on potential transformation of MISCA into UN peacekeeping force: Samba-Panza and rights organisations support proposal, AU reluctant. UN established commission to investigate rights abuses; U.S. Sec State Kerry 26 Jan threatened sanctions against CAR spoilers. Seleka reportedly regrouped 30 Jan in Sibut, following departure of scores of fighters from Bangui; Samba-Panza denounced secessionist intent.

- Thierry Vircoulon, “Central African Republic: The Third Government in Thirteen Months Gets Under Way”, *The African Peacebuilding Agenda*, 21 Jan. 2014.
- “UN Security Council approves EU force intervention”, *Guardian*, 29 Jan. 2014.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°962, *Central African Republic: Better Late than Never*, 2 Dec. 2013.

➡ **Chad** President Déby 3 Jan condemned attacks against Chad nationals in CAR; thousands repatriated throughout month. UN rights team 14 Jan said evidence suggested collusion of Chadian citizens, including peacekeepers, in CAR violence; govt refuted

allegations. Some 200 ex-Seleka escorted back to Chad late-Jan, govt said intends to prosecute mercenaries.

- “ONU : le Tchad réfute les allégations assimilant ‘à tort ses militaires en mission en RCA aux ex-Séléka’”, *Tchadinfos*, 20 Jan. 2014.

➡ **DR Congo** Army and MONUSCO 18 Jan launched offensive in east against ADF-NALU; 14 Jan repulsed Mai Mai Sheka attack on Pinga in N Kivu; 4 soldiers killed, 3 civilians injured. Army 6 Jan clashed with Mai Mai Kata Katanga in Lubumbashi and Pweto, 26 killed. 3 rebels, 1 ranger killed 12 Jan in clash between Virunga Park rangers and suspected FDLR. Army commander credited with defeat of M23 killed in N Kivu 2 Jan; several military officers including one general arrested. Regional summit 15 Jan reaffirmed commitment to implementing Feb 2013 DRC cooperation framework and support to UN Special Envoy Mary Robinson. Robinson 11-12 Jan visited DRC, praised preparation of electoral roadmap, draft amnesty law and new DDR efforts. Blast 24 Jan in arms depot in Mbujyi Mayi, 20 injured. Over 40 fighters from different groups surrendered to MONUSCO in N Kivu late Jan.

- “M23 rebels regrouping?”, *Independent*, 18 Jan. 2014.

➡ **Rwanda** Patrick Karegeya, former intelligence chief and co-founder of Rwanda National Congress (RNC) group of opposition leaders in exile, found dead in Johannesburg 1 Jan; 4 Rwandan suspects reportedly arrested in Mozambique, awaiting extradition to South Africa. U.S. condemned killing. UK 20 Jan stopped aid payments pending murder investigation results. UNSC 23 Jan discussed report on DRC, accused Rwanda of cooperation with M23; Kigali strongly denied.

- “Washington met en garde le Rwanda sur le respect de la démocratie”, *AFP*, 17 Jan. 2014.

Horn of Africa

➡ **Ethiopia** Third round of Ethiopia-Sudan-Egypt talks on Nile waters 4 Jan in Khartoum ended in failure as Ethiopia rejected Egypt’s “principles of confidence building” document on grounds it contravened 2013 Cooperation Agreement signed by 6 Nile nations excluding Egypt.

- “Ethiopia rejects Egypt proposal on Nile as dam talks falter”, *Bloomberg*, 8 Jan. 2014.


➡ **Kenya** Western embassies early-Jan issued new travel advisories on heightened risk of terrorist attacks following grenade attack on popular bar in Diani beach targeting New Year’s celebrations that injured 10. Media reported Al-Shabaab broadening recruitment drives beyond Muslim-dominated NE and coastal regions. Inter-tribal violence in NE continued: 4 Gabra community members killed early Jan by Borana tribe assailants in Moyale, Marsabit county; security forces deployed but failed to prevent large-scale raid by Borana from across Ethiopian border.

- “Six feared dead in Marsabit raid”, *Nation*, 7 Jan. 2014.



➡ **Somalia** New PM Abdiweli Sheikh Ahmed 17 Jan named cabinet, approved by parliament 21 Jan; both President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud and PM vowed fresh offensive against Al-Shabaab. 4,395 Ethiopian troops formally merged into AMISOM 22 Jan; U.S. 10 Jan announced secret deployment of small number of military advisers since Oct. Al-Shabaab attacks, bombings continued.

Kenyan airstrike on Al-Shabaab training camp in Garbarahey, Gedo region, killed 30 militants 10 Jan; U.S. drone strike 26 Jan reportedly killed 3 Al-Shabaab militants including senior intelligence commander Sahal Carabey. Puntland MPs elected Abdiweli Gas new president of Puntland autonomous region by 33 to 32 votes. Gas unveiled new 46-member cabinet 28 Jan, presidential race losers given crucial portfolios; expected to improve relations with Somali Federal Govt (SFG) but risks increasing tensions with Somaliland. Puntland security forces 25-26 Jan launched attacks against Al-Shabaab bases near Bosaso and Galgala town, killing 7 fighters. AMISOM at SFG request 30 Jan halted 2 conferences in Baidoa aimed at forming autonomous states in south. SFG and Somaliland resumed talks in Turkey 16 Jan (see Somaliland).


- [“Somali parliament approves cabinet nominees”](#), Sabahi, 22 Jan. 2014.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°97, [Somalia: Puntland's Punted Polls](#), 19 Dec. 2013.

 **Somaliland** Separatist Somaliland regional administration and Somalia Federal Govt (SFG) 19 Jan signed accord after 3 days of meetings in Turkey: committed to meeting once every 3 months, formulated roadmap for continuation of talks. Opposition groups denounced agreement, threatened to open own talks with SFG.

- [“Somalia and Somaliland agreed on some crucial points in the Turkey talk”](#), All Africa, 20 Jan. 2014.

  **South Sudan** Govt 28 Jan announced treason charges against 7 opposition politicians including former VP Riek Machar over alleged Dec coup attempt, raising fears over fate of ceasefire agreed 23 Jan between govt and armed opposition following IGAD mediation. Machar said treason charges were govt attempt to derail peace process, called for President Kiir's resignation. 23 Jan deal included agreement on release of political detainees held by govt but failed to address underlying causes of conflict; 7 of 11 detainees released to Kenya 29 Jan, other 4 to stand trial for treason; govt late Jan said 4 detainees would be released in time to participate in peace talks scheduled to begin 7 Feb. Armed opposition, govt late-Jan accused each other of violating ceasefire; UN 27 Jan called for “robust” monitoring of ceasefire. Ongoing clashes in Unity State forced thousands to flee late-Jan. Fighting continued throughout IGAD mediation as govt forces backed by Ugandan army retook major towns seized by armed opposition in Dec including Bor 18 Jan, oil capital Bentiu 10 Jan and Malakal 20 Jan. AU 16 Jan affirmed commitment to begin investigation of rights abuses; UN ASG for Human Rights Ivan Šimonovic visited 17 Jan, said both sides committed atrocities. UN estimates 770,000 displaced in fighting since Dec 2013; nearly 70,000 inside UN bases. UN USG for Humanitarian Affairs Valerie Amos visited late-Jan, highlighted dire humanitarian situation. David Yau Yau, Murle rebel leader, signed peace agreement with govt late-Jan.


- [“Minister says S Sudan rebellion was treason”](#), Al Jazeera, 29 Jan. 2014.

 **Sudan** Ongoing sporadic protests against fuel and bread shortages; finance minister admitted Central Bank facing shortage of hard currency. President Bashir's long-awaited speech on political reform 27 Jan failed to set out specific reform plan despite reports that ruling National Congress Party (NCP) had begun discussions with opposition on postponing 2015 elections for 2 years, amending elections law, changing composition of electoral commission. Conflict in Darfur, S Kordofan and Blue Nile continued. Bashir 6 Jan visited Juba, discussed deploying joint force to protect oil-

fields in S Sudan. S Sudan opposition forces accused Justice and Equality Movement of fighting alongside S Sudan govt in Unity state (see S Sudan).


- [“Bashir seeks political, economic ‘renaissance’ for Sudan”](#), AFP, 28 Jan. 2014.

New Crisis Group Africa Report N°211, [Sudan's Spreading Conflict \(III\): The Limits of Darfur's Peace Process](#), 27 Jan. 2014. If Darfur is to have durable peace, all parties to the country's multiple conflicts need to develop a more holistic means of addressing both local conflicts and nationwide grievances.


 **Uganda** Govt 16 Jan admitted military support to S Sudan's govt after earlier claim Ugandan army in S Sudan to evacuate Ugandan nationals; MPs 14 Jan endorsed govt decision to deploy army in S Sudan. Media 27 Jan reported “open letter” from LRA leader Joseph Kony calling for talks; govt said doubtful Kony seriously seeking peace. Opposition leader Kizza Besigye arrested again 24 Jan after reported confrontation with police outside his home in Kampala.

- [“Uganda admits combat role in South Sudan”](#), Al Jazeera, 16 Jan. 2014.


Southern Africa

 **Madagascar** Electoral commission 3 Jan confirmed Hery Rajaonarimampianina, candidate backed by outgoing President Rajoelina, won 53.5% in 20 Dec presidential vote; Jean-Louis Robinson, backed by ousted President Ravalomanana, took 46.5%. Robinson alleged irregularities in polls, but 17 Jan lost bid to have results nullified, indicated intention to appeal to SADC, AU. Rajoelina 22 Jan said he may seek PM post, raising fears of renewed tensions. Following Rajaonarimampianina's inauguration 24 Jan, grenade explosion at Mahamasina stadium killed 1, injured 33. AU 27 Jan lifted suspension of Madagascar, imposed following 2009 coup.

- [“Outgoing Madagascar president and ex-coup leader may seek PM job”](#), Reuters, 22 Jan. 2014.

 **Mozambique** Army 14 Jan exchanged fire with 12 RENAMO guerrillas following attacks in Mavume, Inhambane. RENAMO forces early Jan killed 6 riot police in Homoine district; 15 Jan killed 1, injured 5 in ambush on convoy in Sofala province. UN 16 Jan said RENAMO will likely face international ban should attacks continue. RENAMO 13 Jan boycotted new call for political dialogue, sticking to demands for presence of observers, facilitators and mediators. RENAMO leader Afonso Dhlakama 29 Jan said group will participate in presidential elections scheduled Oct 2014.

- [“Renamo boycotts yet another dialogue session”](#), All Africa, 13 Jan. 2014.

 **Zimbabwe** Amid continued economic downturn, govt budget cuts and cash shortages, 2.2mn people reported to be in need of food assistance. UN World Food Programme 14 Jan announced cut in food aid for 1mn Zimbabweans; govt admitted lack of funds to feed population, reportedly requested aid from UK. Justice ministry 16 Jan reported delay in setting up key state institutions due to lack of funds. Finance minister 17 Jan claimed country being sabotaged by foreign banks refusing to offer credit. Civil servants 22 Jan reluctantly accepted salary increase offer following weeks of talks with govt. Battle to succeed President Mugabe stepping up following Nov ZANU-PF provincial executive elections: provincial chairpersons aligned to victor Joice Mujuru facing resistance from executive and provincial co-ordinating committees loyal

to opponent Emmerson Mnangagwa. In 25 Jan State of Nation address MDC-T leader Morgan Tsvangirai criticised govt, called for new elections. Mugabe elected first deputy chair of AU executive council 30 Jan.

- “Zimbabwe’s economy still stuck in a rut”, *Mail & Guardian*, 24 Jan. 2014.

West Africa

➡ **Côte d’Ivoire** Ivorian Popular Front (FPI) National President Pascal Affi N’guessan 7 Jan said President Ouattara not “eligible” in 2015 elections, implied because he is “not Ivorian”, renewing tensions between camps; 16 Jan meeting between minister for dialogue and FPI senior members described as “very tense”. Govt 15 Jan requested 3 more months to respond to ICC on transfer of former “young patriots” leader Blé Goudé. Ouattara 6 Jan asked Dozo traditional hunters, blamed by UN for summary executions and rights abuses, to end paramilitary activities.

- “Ouattara met en garde les dozos et annonce l’entrée des femmes à l’école de la Gendarmerie”, *Koaci*, 6 Jan. 2014.

New Crisis Group Africa Report N°212, *Côte d’Ivoire’s Great West: Key to Reconciliation*, 28 Jan. 2014. Working to reduce tensions in western Côte d’Ivoire, a flashpoint for ethnic, political and economic rivalries, is imperative to ensure lasting stability and pave the way for national reconciliation.

➡ **Guinea** Newly elected National Assembly (NA) inaugurated 13 Jan; ruling Rally of Guinean People’s (RPG) Claude Kory Kondiano elected NA president; 4 VPs elected 16 Jan. PM Mohamed Saïd Fofana 15 Jan tendered his resignation and cabinet’s; in surprise move, President Condé 19 Jan reappointed Fofana as PM. Govt, EU 8 Jan reached agreement to fight illegal maritime activities.

- “Le nouveau gouvernement a été formé”, *Jeune Afrique*, 21 Jan. 2014.

➡ **Guinea-Bissau** Preparations for 16 March presidential elections hampered by insufficient resources. Political parties 5 Jan agreed to extend registration to end-Jan, but National Assembly failed to approve extension. Controversy within PAIGC over presidential candidate continued: potential candidate Braïma Camara contested regional primaries results, forcing re-run: powerful anti-Camara front “Aliança”, created 21 Dec, 15 Jan refused to attend mediation convened by President Nhamadjo, UN and AU. Former PM Gomes Júnior registered to vote in Cape Verde 28 Dec, prompting rumours of imminent return; 29 Jan asked UNSG Ban to guarantee personal security upon return to Bissau.

- “Seeking post-poll stability in Guinea-Bissau”, *IRIN*, 16 Jan. 2014.

➡ **Mali** Security in North remained volatile: gunmen 11 Jan attacked military camp in Aguelhok, repelled by MINUSMA peacekeepers; 5 peacekeepers injured by landmine 20 Jan near Kidal. French forces 23 Jan killed 11 jihadis north of Timbuktu; 2 bombs exploded 24 Jan in Kidal. Despite incidents, France pressed for reducing contingent in N Mali; following popular discontent govt and France postponed signing new military agreement initially planned 22 Jan. MNLA spokesperson 8 Jan reiterated 22 Dec statement by MNLA, HCUA and MAA accusing govt of not respecting 18 June Ouagadougou agreement, called for organisation of inclusive peace talks. Algerian authorities mid Jan organised meeting with armed groups and govt ahead of President IBK’s official visit to Algiers, concluding with agreement to establish bilateral N Mali committee; MAA and MNLA declined to attend, accused Algiers

of inviting “wrong” pro-govt MAA representatives. Ruling “Rally for Mali” (RPM) candidate Issaka Sidibé elected president of National Assembly 22 Jan where, following Supreme Court’s 31 Dec release of legislative election results, President IBK’s RPM has 66 of 147 seats.

- Jean-Herve Jezequel, “Le Mali après Serval: éviter la rechute”, *Jeune Afrique*, 29 Jan. 2014.

New Crisis Group Africa Report N°210, *Mali: Reform or Relapse*, 10 Jan. 2014. President Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta’s current legitimacy and a strong international presence give Mali a unique opportunity to engage in serious reforms and inclusive dialogue. However, the window for change is narrow and dangerous political habits are resurfacing.

➡ **Niger** Protests in Niamey over living standards continued; several journalists detained late Jan. Security operation along Mali-Niger border to deter MUJAO from using zone launched mid-Jan by French military in cooperation with Malian and Nigerien forces. Authorities 25-27 Jan detained 4 journalists for alleging President Issoufou is corrupt.

- “Niger and France reach impasse on uranium talks”, *EurActiv*, 7 Jan. 2014.

➡ **Nigeria** Attacks by Islamist sect Boko Haram (BH) continued in NE killing over 250, mostly in rural villages, despite govt military operations that reportedly killed over 70 militants in early Jan. Tensions in Rivers State rose: Governor Rotimi Amaechi 1 Jan warned of build-up of illegal arms in state; State High Court bombed 6 Jan; police 26 Jan arrested 19 suspected BH. Movement for Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) claimed responsibility for attack on military patrol boat in Bayelsa State 25 Jan, threatened future attacks to reduce oil production “to zero by 2015”. Security Service 27 Jan arrested deputy head of main opposition coalition Nasir el-Rufai following his warning of electoral violence in Feb 2015 presidential polls; released same day. Ruling People’s Democratic Party (PDP) National Chairman resigned 16 Jan after months of political intrigue.

- “Death toll in northeast Nigeria attack rises to 85”, *Reuters*, 28 Jan. 2014.

Asia

North East Asia

➡ **China/Japan** Diplomatic dispute over Japanese PM Abe’s 26 Dec visit to Yasukuni shrine continued. Nearly 40 Chinese envoys worldwide took to local media to denounce Abe’s action as attempt to alter post-WWII world order; Japanese ambassadors criticised China as destabilising actor in region. Abe 22 Jan said “military expansion in Asia” must be restrained; compared China-Japan relations to Germany and UK before WWI, drawing rebuke from Chinese FM Wang who called Japan “troublemaker”, pointing to past aggression. During UNSC debate 29 Jan Chinese envoy said Abe’s Yasukuni visit “closed door to dialogue”. Japanese Self Defence Force held drill simulating recapturing island from enemy nation 12 Jan; Chinese vessels same day entered waters of disputed islands in East China Sea. China’s State Oceanic Administration confirmed increasing maritime forces with aircraft, patrol boats.

- “Abe uses Davos forum to warn of China militancy”, *Japan Times*, 23 Jan. 2014.

Korean Peninsula Amid moves to consolidate Kim Jong-un's control following Dec execution of his uncle Chang Song-t'ae, reports emerged Chang's extended family also executed in Dec. Kim's New Year message referred to uncle's purge, economy, called for improved inter-Korean relations. DPRK 16 Jan referred to annual U.S.-ROK combined military drills planned Feb-April as prelude to war, 17 Jan called on ROK to end "all acts of provocation and slander". ROK President Park 18 Jan ordered "airtight security" against DPRK. DPRK 24 Jan sent open letter to ROK calling for reconciliation and end to hostile acts; ROK asked DPRK to prove sincerity through action. DPRK 24 Jan accepted ROK's proposal to reschedule cancelled family reunions, but failed to respond to ROK's proposed dates of 17-22 Feb. ROK completed live-fire exercise on 2 north-western islands without incident despite DPRK warnings. ROK 15 Jan approved \$400,000 in private humanitarian assistance to DPRK. U.S. announced sending 800 more troops, 40 battle tanks and armoured vehicles to ROK in Feb. After months of negotiations ROK agreed to pay \$866mn for maintenance of U.S. troops in ROK as part of new Burden Sharing Agreement, 5.8% increase over 2013.

- "North Korea says it wants 'atmosphere of reconciliation and unity'", CNN, 24 Jan. 2014.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°254, *Fire on the City Gate: Why China Keeps North Korea Close*, 9 Dec. 2013.

South Asia

Afghanistan Taliban attack on restaurant in Kabul 17 Jan killed at least 21, including 13 foreigners, among them IMF country head and 4 UN staff members, in worst attack on foreign civilians since 2001. Taliban attacks continued: suicide bombers 4 Jan attacked NATO HQ in Shinwar district, killed 1; assault on NATO base outside Kandahar 20 Jan killed 1; suicide bomber detonated bomb next to police bus in Kabul 12 Jan, injuring 6 police. National Directorate of Security 8 Jan reportedly averted assassination attempt on deputy director, arrested 3 suspects. Internal political pressure on President Karzai to sign Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA) with U.S. continued; tensions between U.S. and Afghanistan increased 25 Jan when Karzai said would not sign deal unless peace talks with Taliban restarted. Karzai 9 Jan defied U.S. by authorising release of 72 prisoners from former U.S.-run Bagram prison.

- Graeme Smith, "Grabbing the Wolf's Tail", *New York Times*, 16 Jan. 2014.
- "Taliban groups launch attacks in Pakistan and Afghanistan", *Guardian*, 20 Jan. 2014.

Bangladesh Awami League (AL) govt held elections 5 Jan despite boycott by BNP, 18 small parties, sparking further political uncertainty. More than 20 killed in election day violence. Govt claimed voter turnout 48%, some media assessed only 22%, suggesting instances of fraud. 154 of 300 seats contested only by AL candidates. AL won 233 seats; parliamentary opposition to be led by Jatiya Party with 33 seats. BNP absent from parliament for first time since 1991. PM Sheikh Hasina 6 Jan announced crackdown on opposition unrest, but lifted restrictively heavy security around BNP leader Khaleda Zia's house. Sporadic protests and deadly clashes between opposition supporters and police continued, including 3 killed in clashes with police in SE 26 Jan. Human Rights Watch criticised authorities' use of excessive force, crackdown on opposition, extrajudicial killings by security forces of opposition supporters. Some reports suggesting Hindu minority being

increasingly targeted by govt opponents. Court 30 Jan sentenced Jamaat-e-Islami president Motiur Rahman Nizami and 13 others to death for arms smuggling in 2004; Jamaat supporters staged protest following verdict.

- "Another beating", *Economist*, 11 Jan. 2014.

India (non-Kashmir) Twin bombs exploded during Republic Day celebrations 26 Jan in Imphal city, Manipul state, no injuries. Several Maoists reported killed in clashes with security forces including in Jamui, Chhattisgarh districts. Ethnic Bodo rebels killed 5 bus passengers in Assam 18 Jan.

- "Powerful bombs rock Imphal on Republic Day", PTI, 26 Jan. 2014.

Kashmir Tensions on Line of Control (LoC) lessened following Dec discussions between senior Indian and Pakistani military officials on restoring 2003 ceasefire, fewer clashes. Pakistan described as "provocative and regrettable" 13 Jan remarks of newly-appointed Indian army Chief General Bikram Singh admitting killing of 10 Pakistani soldiers in retaliatory fire across LoC in Dec, and warnings that India would retaliate in same way against further ceasefire violations. Gen Singh also ruled out withdrawing army from Indian-administered Kashmir or repealing controversial Armed Forces Special Power Act. Pakistani troops reportedly violated ceasefire 26 Jan; Indian troops did not retaliate. Pakistani and Indian commerce ministers 18 Jan agreed on measures including uninterrupted trade across Wagah/Attari border and more liberal visa policy for businessmen; Pakistan promised to grant India Non-Discriminatory Market Access by late Feb, instead of more controversial Most Favoured Nation status.

- "Optimism ahead of India-Pakistan trade talks", VOA, 17 Jan. 2014.

Nepal Newly elected Constituent Assembly (CA) members sworn in 21 Jan, 2 months after elections, amid sit-in protest by 3 dozen UCPN-Maoist MPs; party leaders 22 Jan vowed to draw up new constitution within year. Differences between Nepali Congress (NC) and Communist Party of Nepal Unified Marxist-Leninist (CPN-UML) concerning new presidential elections resolved after Supreme Court 24 Jan ruled interim president could remain in place until constitution formation. Leading party NC started negotiations on power sharing and distributing key CA posts with runner-up in elections CPN-UML. President Yadav 26 Jan pressed political parties to form consensus govt in 7 days. Sushil Koirala seen as most likely next PM following appointment as NC leader 26 Jan. Supreme Court 3 Jan ruled serious human rights violations may not be covered by amnesties in future truth and reconciliation commission.


- "Nepal lawmakers take oath of office", *Hindu*, 21 Jan. 2014.

Pakistan Militant attacks intensified: 19 Jan suicide bomb attack on military convoy in Bannu, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, killed at least 20 soldiers and injured 30; suicide attack next to Pakistan's military HQ in Rawalpindi 20 Jan killed at least 14, including 7 soldiers; 3 polio vaccination workers killed in Karachi 21 Jan; at least 3 security personnel killed in Karachi 29 Jan. Awami National Party member killed 12 Jan in Peshawar; 6 killed in attempted attack on prominent PML-N member in Swat same day; senior Pakistan Tehrik-e-Insaf member shot dead in Lahore 11 Jan; senior counter-terrorism official killed in Taliban attack in Karachi 9 Jan. Growing pressure on PM Sharif to take action against Pakistani Taliban. Pakistani airstrikes in N Waziristan 20-21 Jan killed 40 including 4 Taliban leaders. Sharif 29 Jan reiterated commitment

to initiate dialogue with Taliban. Sectarian violence continued in Karachi and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. Gunmen 4 Jan killed 2 senior members of Sunni extremist group Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat in Islamabad. 15-year-old killed 5 Jan in Hangu preventing suicide bomber's attack on his school in Shia-majority neighbourhood; 29 Shia pilgrims killed 21 Jan after Lashkar-e-Jhangvi suicide bomber drove car with explosives into bus near Quetta; 3 Shias shot dead in Karachi same day in attack claimed by Sunni extremists.


- "Pakistan is in the grip of chaos", BBC, 25 Jan. 2014.

New Crisis Group Asia Report N°255, *Policing Urban Violence in Pakistan*, 23 Jan. 2014. Jihadi and criminal violence is wreaking havoc in Pakistan's provincial capitals, eroding stability and public confidence in the government's ability to restore law and order and enforce the writ of the state, while exposing Pakistan's religious minorities to ever intensifying confessionally-driven violence.


 **Sri Lanka** U.S. Ambassador for Global Criminal Justice Stephen Rapp visited 6-11 Jan, travelled extensively in north; media reported Rapp promised TNA and other Tamil leaders that U.S. will introduce resolution at March UNHRC meeting calling for international investigation into alleged 2009 war crimes. Rapp and U.S. Ambassador Michele Sisson 9 Jan posted photo of school playground to Twitter, said "site of killing of hundreds of families by army shelling"; U.S. embassy confirmed post was official U.S. govt statement. Officials and pro-govt media reacted angrily but govt declined to protest remark officially. UK 16 Jan reiterated commitment to backing international investigation if govt fails to initiate credible and independent inquiry by March. Presidential secretary late-Jan travelled to Geneva and Washington to present reported progress in implementing recommendations of Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC). Over 50 skeletons recovered from mass grave discovered late Dec in Mannar district dating from late 1990s to 2004; contradictory reports over whether area under LTTE or Sri Lankan security forces control during period. No improvement in tense relations between Northern Provincial Council and central govt despite 4 Jan promise by President Rajapaksa to Northern Province chief minister to appoint new chief secretary to council. Radical Buddhist groups led by monks 12 Jan attacked at least 3 evangelical Christian churches in Hikkaduwa.

- "Sri Lanka rejects growing calls for UN war crimes investigation", *Telegraph*, 30 Jan. 2014.


South East Asia

 **Indonesia** Diplomatic relations with Australia further strained as Indonesia moved warships to border after Australian apologised for inadvertent incursions into Indonesian waters while carrying out border control policy. Authorities reported anti-terror police foiled planned bomb attack in Surabaya, E Java 20 Jan, arrested 2 suspected members of Central Sulawesi-based terrorist cell led by fugitive leader Santoso; also shot dead 6 suspected terrorists linked to Santoso's group in raid near Jakarta 31 Dec. Court jailed Sigit Indrajit, arrested ahead of May 2013 foiled Myanmar embassy plot, for 7.5 years. Govt 28 Jan reported it was finalising draft revision to 2001 Papua Special Autonomy Law, met with Papua and W Papua governors. 1 soldier, 3 guerrillas killed in security operation in Puncak Jaya 24 Jan.

- "Indonesia's terrorists appear weakened", *Wall Street Journal*, 3 Jan. 2014.

 **Myanmar** Karen National Union armed group delegation met with President Thein Sein and commander-in-chief in Naypyitaw 5 Jan to discuss plans for meeting between govt and all armed groups in Karen State capital Hpa-an, now scheduled 20 Feb. Allegations emerged 15 Jan of massacre by authorities and local Rakhine Buddhist villagers of Rohingya villagers several days earlier in remote part of N Rakhine State; govt denied. Major meeting of thousands of Buddhist monks in Mandalay 15 Jan resolved to push for adoption of law restricting inter-faith marriage, ban on MPs not from recognized national race. President 2 Jan issued pardon reducing prison sentences for all detainees; 13,274 inmates released including some political prisoners; estimated 33 political prisoners remain. Following end-Dec deadline for public submissions, Constitutional Review Joint Committee announced it had received some 300,000 suggestions for amendment of 2008 constitution; due to report to legislative speaker end-Jan. President 2 Jan backed appropriate changes to section 59(f) which sets out requirements for presidential candidates, though unclear on specific language and whether this would allow Aung San Suu Kyi to be a presidential candidate. Myanmar formally took over as ASEAN Chair for 2014.

- Anagha Neelakantan, "New Attacks on Muslim Villagers in Myanmar's Rakhine State", *Resolving Conflict in South East Asia*, 26 Jan. 2014.
- "UN urges Maungdaw investigation", AFP, 25 Jan. 2014.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°142, *Not a Rubber Stamp: Myanmar's Legislature in a Time of Transition*, 13 Dec. 2013.

 **Philippines** Govt and Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) 25 Jan announced agreement on 4th and final annex of Oct 2012 govt-MILF Framework Agreement for Muslim-majority areas in south. Annex on normalisation of security details disarming of 11,000-strong rebel force and creation of security force for area, paves way for final comprehensive peace agreement to be signed, ending 4 decades of conflict. Includes amnesty/pardon for MILF rebels convicted of rebellion-related charges. At least 2 rebels killed in clashes in S Maguindanao 27 Jan between govt forces and fighters from Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF), one of several groups opposing govt-MILF deal. Police trying to arrest group leader came under fire 26 Jan. Govt reported around 40 rebels killed in late-Jan offensive, BIFF denied deaths. 2 explosions in Basilan province 26 Jan, at least 3 wounded. Military 20 Jan reported seizure of 44 IEDs from suspected leftist rebels in Agusan del Sur province.

- "A fragile peace", *Economist*, 30 Jan. 2014.

  **Thailand** Political turmoil intensified as People's Democratic Reform Committee (PDRC) 13 Jan began series of protests aiming to "shut down Bangkok", stepping up efforts to overthrow PM Yingluck's caretaker govt and force cancellation of 2 Feb general election; further violence anticipated on election day. Protest-related violence increased, including 1 killed, 35 injured in grenade attack on PDRC march 17 Jan; dozens injured by 2 grenades at PDRC's Victory Monument protest site 19 Jan. Govt imposed state of emergency in Bangkok and surrounding provinces beginning 22 Jan. Amid deteriorating security, pressure growing on govt to delay poll, including repeated calls from Election Commission. Constitutional Court 24 Jan ruled govt could postpone poll; govt 28 Jan said election will take place as scheduled. Anti-govt protesters 26 Jan turned out at polling stations to prevent people from advance voting; protest leader and former New Politics

Party politician Suthin Tharatin was shot dead outside polling station in SE Bangkok. United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship (main Red Shirt organisation) 26 Jan said Red Shirts will enter Bangkok within hours if election is postponed. Ongoing violence in southernmost provinces included: 1 ranger killed, 5 injured in 2 bomb attacks in Narathiwat Province 21 Jan; Buddhist monk, ranger and civilian killed in 2 separate attacks in Pattani province 24 Jan; IED blast killed 2 police and injured 3 in Than To District, Yala same day.

- Crisis Group Alert, [Thailand: Conflict Alert](#), 13 Jan. 2014.
- Morton Abramowitz, [“Thailand on the Brink”](#), *National Interest*, 28 Jan. 2014.
- [“The show must go on”](#), *Economist*, 29 Jan. 2014.

Europe and Central Asia

Balkans

- **Kosovo** Newly-elected mayor of Mitrovica refused to take office 13 Jan, calling Nov local elections “major scam by international community”; new polls set for 23 Feb. Member of Mitrovica municipal assembly shot dead by unknown assailant in N Mitrovica 16 Jan.
 - [“Kosovo increases security after killing of Serb assembly member”](#), *SE Times*, 20 Jan. 2014.

Caucasus


- **Armenia** Opposition parties unified over public hostility to law adopted by ruling Republican party mandating payroll deductions to be put into privately run retirement accounts; several protests against law during month. Constitutional Court 24 Jan suspended enactment of legislation pending final ruling regarding its constitutional legality.
 - [“Call for general strike and 80,000 rally voiced in Armenia”](#), *Panorama.am*, 29 Jan. 2014.
- **Azerbaijan** Musavat Party withdrew from National Council of Democratic Forces opposition alliance, established in 2013.
 - [“Is Azerbaijani opposition alignment still viable?”](#), RFE/RL, 11 Jan. 2014.
- **Nagorno-Karabakh (Azerbaijan)** Sudden, serious escalation in fighting starting 20 Jan along various front-line areas, with both sides blaming other, and return to hostile rhetoric by officials and in media. Details surrounding 20 Jan clashes unclear, with Armenia claiming Azerbaijan attempt to break through front lines, vowing “retribution” after 1 Armenian soldier killed. Azerbaijan defence ministry 24 Jan declared it had deployed air force units over front line areas, confirmed by Armenia; same day said it repelled Armenian incursion near Line of Control, 1 Azerbaijani captain killed. Armenian defence ministry 24 Jan reported clashes along border near Georgia, 1 civilian wounded. Azerbaijani media 27 Jan reported another Azerbaijani officer killed in fighting. N-K de facto authorities reported conscript killed by Azerbaijani sniper fire 28 Jan. At regularly-scheduled meeting between countries’ FMs in Paris 24 Jan OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs expressed concern, called on sides to cease military actions.
 - [“Another Armenian soldier killed in Karabakh”](#), *Azattyun*, 29 Jan. 2014.

- **Georgia** Parliament 23 Jan passed unanimous resolution citing “extreme concern” over developments in Ukraine, adding “Russia will not be able to force either Georgia or Ukraine to reject their European choice”. Amid ongoing dispute over Russian “borderisation” of administrative boundary lines along breakaway Georgian regions, President Margvelashvili 20 Jan expressed indignation over Russian announcement it would extend “border zone” 11km deeper into Abkhazia to maintain security for Feb Sochi Winter Olympics, said move politically motivated, contravened international law. Head of Russian-backed South Ossetia (SO) entity Leonid Tibilov unexpectedly dismissed cabinet 20 Jan, citing delays in reconstruction, social and economic problems, also acknowledging reported misappropriation of at least \$1bn in Russian funds; mentioned growing signs that Russia and SO may agree on de facto Russian “annexation” of SO, said no need for referendum as called for by opposition.
 - [“Is South Ossetia heading for a new political crisis?”](#), RFE/RL, 28 Jan. 2014.

- **North Caucasus (Russia)** Tightened security measures in and around Sochi ahead of Winter Olympics 7-23 Feb, with deployment of tens of thousands of police and military, drones and anti-missile systems, security forces on combat alert. U.S. to move 2 warships into Black Sea. Security forces conducted search for Islamist militant widow Ruzanna Ibragimova and 3 other women suspected of being potential suicide bombers in Sochi restricted area; authorities 25 Jan said Ibragimova not there. Caucasus Emirate, Islamist insurgency organisation, declared expansion of their “state” to Sochi and Krasnodar Kray and creation of “Vilayat Cherkessia”. Caucasian Knot website reported 986 victims of NC insurgency in 2013, including 529 killed; also 187 victims of 3 suicide bombings in Volgograd, 44 killed. Highest number of victims in Dagestan (641), then Kabardino-Balkaria, Chechnya. Insurgent group Vilayat Dagestan 20 Jan claimed responsibility for Dec Volgograd bombings in which 34 people killed, threatened to strike Olympics; National Anti-terrorist Committee blames Dagestan’s Buynaksk insurgency. 6 civilians found shot dead in 4 vehicles in Stavropol Kray, southern Russia 8/9 Jan; 4 vehicles booby-trapped, CTO regime introduced in 2 districts, 3 Kabardino-Balkaria residents suspected in killings. Over a dozen suspected militants killed in special operations and clashes with security forces in Dagestan including militant leader Makhmud Aliyev and suspected female suicide bomber 18 Jan. 4 suspected militants, 3 police killed in special operation in Khasavyurt district 15 Jan. 16 people injured by bomb in Makhachkala 17 Jan. Chechen President Kadyrov 16 Jan reported evidence that Caucasus Emirate leader Doku Umarov is dead; also made tough statements against “Wahhabis”, followed by wave of detentions and searches of men with beards and women in hijabs.
 - [“Welcome to Sochi, the security Games”](#), *CNN*, 27 Jan. 2014.


New Crisis Group Europe Report N°228, [Too Far, Too Fast: Sochi, Tourism and Conflict in the Caucasus](#), 30 Jan. 2014. The recent bombings in the south of Russia could prove a precursor to more violence and instability in the Caucasus if Moscow does not abandon repression for political dialogue.

Eastern Europe

 **Ukraine** Crisis as pro-Europe Euromaidan protests escalated, govt crackdown resulted in deadly clashes between protesters and police and growing political confrontation with opposition. Parliament 16 Jan passed draconian new anti-protest laws, also amended Criminal Code restricting free speech; law criticised by opposition as illegal, condemned internationally. Hundreds of protesters clashed with police 19 Jan; 2 protesters shot dead in clashes with police 22 Jan, third died later from injuries; another protester found dead bearing signs of torture. Dozens of demonstrators arrested, jailed since protests started, several missing. President Yanukovich 20 Jan called for dialogue, in talks with opposition offered truce if protesters refrained from violence, remove barricades; opposition rejected offer, called for snap presidential elections, changes to constitution. Protesters seized govt offices in Kiev and several other cities including in east. Govt resigned 28 Jan in attempt to resolve crisis, parliament same day overturned 16 Jan anti-protest law. Parliament 29 Jan passed amnesty law for protesters; opposition rejected condition of amnesty that protesters vacate occupied govt buildings, continued to call for Yanukovich's resignation. EU foreign policy chief Ashton visited 29 Jan for talks with Yanukovich; Russia 29 Jan said it would defer fulfilment of \$15bn aid package to Ukraine until new govt formed. Amid international condemnation of violence and calls for dialogue, concerns also voiced over disunity within opposition, lack of strategy, role of extreme right element.

- "Praying for peace", *Economist*, 1 Feb. 2014.

Western Europe/Mediterranean

 **Cyprus** Start of reunification negotiations continue to be stalled over wording of joint statement. UN special envoy Downer 15 Jan met with negotiators from both sides for final round of contacts ahead of informal briefing with UNSC 22 Jan. Business groups from both communities, Greece and Turkey 9 Jan called for "comprehensive and permanent solution" on island.

- Hugh Pope, "Leveraging Resolution", *IP Journal*, 3 Jan. 2014.
- "National Council meets as efforts on resumption of talks continue", *Cyprus Mail*, 8 Jan. 2014.

 **Turkey** Tensions over 17 Dec corruption raid targeting PM Erdoğan's inner circle deepened. Govt reacted by reshuffling thousands of prosecutors and policemen allegedly behind corruption investigation. Govt 7 Jan sent draft legislation to parliament aiming to enhance executive authority over judges, prosecutors, prompting criticism from U.S., EU. Anti-govt protests formed in major cities: thousands 11 Jan protested in Ankara. Investigation widely seen as instigated by U.S.-based cleric Fethullah Gülen, reflecting internal battle between formerly allied governing AKP and Gülen's Islamic movement fighting over control of state institutions; Erdoğan called investigation foreign-backed "coup attempt" by "parallel state". Peace process between govt and Kurdish insurgency PKK remains fragile, with occasional flare-ups of violence continuing in SE, but ceasefire officially continues. Military court 6 Jan dropped investigation into deaths of 34 Kurdish civilians in military air strike in 2011. Protests erupted 15 Jan over building of new military outpost in Sirnak in SE, several protesters injured. All


5 pro-Kurdish BDP deputies on trial for alleged involvement with Kurdish Communities Union released 3-4 Jan. FM Davutoğlu 19 Jan denied allegations that Turkey supported al-Qaeda in Syria; army 28 Jan opened fire on al-Qaeda-linked militants in N Syria destroying several vehicles, reportedly in retaliation for cross-border fire from Syria; police 14 Jan detained 28 suspects in raid against al-Qaeda. Amid EU concerns over judicial independence in Turkey, Erdoğan 21 Jan visited Brussels for first time in 5 years, renewed commitment to Turkey's EU path.

- Hugh Pope, "No Drawbridge to Turkey", *IDEE*, 7 Jan. 2014.
- "Turkish corruption probe row deepens", *BBC*, 7 Jan. 2014.


Central Asia

 **Kazakhstan** French court 9 Jan approved extradition of fugitive Kazakh banker and opposition figure Mukhtar Ablyazov to Russia or Ukraine; Ablyazov, accused of embezzling \$6bn from BTA Bank, said accusations politically motivated. Human Rights Watch 9 Jan warned Ablyazov "at serious risk of ill-treatment", likely to be denied fair trial if returned to Kazakhstan. FM 20 Jan said Kazakhstan to step up financial, political commitments to Afghanistan to counter security threats after withdrawal of NATO troops.


- "Kazakhstan sees threat from Afghan instability", *Wall Street Journal*, 20 Jan. 2014.

 **Kyrgyzstan** Tensions at Kyrgyz-Tajik border escalated as 11 Jan clashes between border forces left several guards on both sides injured, prompted both countries to send additional troops to area. Clashes reportedly broke out over Kyrgyzstan's construction of new road through disputed border territory in Ferghana Valley that would bypass Tajik enclave Vorukh. Kyrgyzstan reported Tajik border troops fired mortars, rocket-propelled grenades to hit transformer station, water pump inside Kyrgyz territory, claimed attack premeditated; Tajikistan alleged Kyrgyz border guards fired first. Kyrgyzstan reportedly closed all border crossing points to Tajikistan, 14 Jan withdrew ambassador. Following talks countries agreed to withdraw additional troops from disputed area late Jan; vice PMs met in Bishkek 30 Jan. Former Osh mayor Melis Myrzakmatov 15 Jan lost ballot in Osh city council against pro-presidential candidate Aitmamat Kadyrbaev. Myrzakmatov said elections "held completely unfairly, completely unlawfully"; addressing 15 Jan mass rally of supporters vowed to start "real political struggle" soon. Close ally of President Atambayev appointed mayor of Bishkek 15 Jan; was only candidate in elections.

- Alina Dalbaeva, "Central Asia: A Dangerous Thirst", *Across Eurasia*, 28 Jan. 2014.
- "Week after Tajikistan-Kyrgyzstan border clash, no resolution in sight", *Eurasianet*, 19 Jan. 2014.

 **Tajikistan** Sharp deterioration in relations with Kyrgyzstan following violent clashes at border (see Kyrgyzstan).

- "Central Asian states must unite to halt the spread of jihadism", *Financial Times*, 20 Jan. 2014.

 **Uzbekistan** President Karimov 14 Jan pledged to boost defence capabilities in response to increasing regional tensions, particularly after withdrawal of NATO troops from Afghanistan; said draw-down posed serious threat to Uzbekistan and region.

- "Karimov prepares for terrorists", *RFE/RL*, 24 Jan. 2014.

Latin America

➤ **Colombia** 9th round of peace talks between govt and FARC ended 23 Jan; negotiations to restart 3 Feb; FARC 14 Jan published detailed proposal for state-funded “National Programme to Substitute Illicit Uses of Coca, Poppy and Marijuana Crops”, drawing on ideas already formulated during ill-fated 2002 Caguán talks, including suspension of aerial fumigation, community-driven alternative development plans, creation of legal market for coca, poppy and marijuana crops. Month-long unilateral FARC ceasefire ended 15 Jan; violations occurred, but generally well-respected. 1 killed, over 60 injured in FARC motorcycle bomb attack in Pradera (Valle) 16 Jan; unusually strongly-worded Secretariat communiqué 23 Jan acknowledged attack, expressed “rejection and disapproval” for high civilian impact. Military reacted with offensive killing 27 FARC fighters and capturing 21 19-22 Jan. Prosecutor General Alejandro Ordóñez 13 Jan rejected appeal against Dec decision to remove Bogotá mayor Gustavo Petro from office; several Bogotá court decisions subsequently suspended removal, offering lifeline for Petro to stay in office until 2 March recall referendum. According to list published 18 Jan by left-wing movement Patriotic March, 29 members killed between April 2012-Jan 2014; 3 members allegedly forcefully disappeared. Conservative Party thrown into turmoil over 26 Jan convention decision to elect former defence minister Marta Lucía Ramírez as candidate for May presidential poll.

▪ [“Farc rebels present drug regulation plan”](#), BBC, 14 Jan. 2014.

➤ **Guatemala** Authorities 11 Jan seized private plane with Costa Rican registration carrying nearly half a tonne of cocaine, reportedly belonging to Sinaloa cartel, in NE Izabal dept. Appeals court 10 Jan affirmed lower court ruling that would nullify not only trial but also indictment of General José Efraín Ríos Montt for genocide and war crimes thereby further delaying retrial, already postponed till Jan 2015. President Pérez Molina dropped criminal complaint filed in Dec against editor of daily *elPeriodico* José Ruben Zamora, though indicated 10 Jan he would ask special media tribunal to investigate alleged misconduct. VP Baldetti pursuing separate complaint against Zamora for “psychological violence” before court specialising in crimes against women. Joint police/military operation 10 Jan in 6 departments detained 37 people accused of operating smuggling ring.

▪ [“Guatemala nabs cocaine-laden plane from Venezuela”](#), Reuters, 12 Jan. 2014.

➤ **Mexico** Interior Minister Osorio Chong 8 Jan vowed to reestablish order in Michoacán state, where local vigilante groups have clashed with alleged members of Knights Templars drug cartel since early 2013; Chong said federal and state forces would jointly patrol Tierra Caliente region. Soldiers sent to disarm vigilantes in Antúnez town reportedly opened fire 13 Jan, killing at least 2. Govt 14 Jan named federal commissioner Alfredo Castillo to coordinate security in Michoacán, 27 Jan said federal forces had arrested 110 people in 12 days, including Knights Templar leader Dionisio Loya Plancarte aka “El Tío”. Govt and self defence groups 27 Jan signed agreement to integrate vigilantes into legal security units called Rural Defence Corps. Army and police forces early-month retook control over prison in Guerrero state after gunfight left 9 people dead. Chihuahua State Attorney General’s Office 15 Jan announced

arrest of Ángel Salvador Taboada Villanueva aka “el Conejo” in connection with March 2011 murder of Juan Francisco Sicilia, son of poet-turned-activist Javier Sicilia. Govt 28 Jan announced creation of Anti-Kidnapping Unit to coordinate efforts at local and federal levels. Security forces 30 Jan captured Jalisco New Generation drug cartel’s second-in-command Ruben Oseguera Gonzalez aka “El Menchito”.

▪ [“Es momento de un plan de urgencia” para Michoacán: Crisis Group en CNN](#), Aristegui Noticias, 23 Jan. 2014.

➤ **Venezuela** High-profile murder of former Miss Venezuela Mónica Spears and ex-partner 6 Jan forced politicians to intensify efforts toward solving country’s chronic insecurity crisis: President Maduro 8 Jan met with opposition governors of Miranda and Lara states Henrique Capriles and Henri Falcón and other state governors and mayors of 79 most crime-affected municipalities to work on “national pacification law”, to be finalised within month. Maduro 9 Jan announced changes to political and military leadership: 7 ministers, including industry, labour and education, replaced, General Gregorio Bernal Martínez appointed new head of Bolivarian National Intelligence Service (Sebin). Maduro also named retired military Manuel Eduardo Pérez Urdaneta and Ronald Blanco La Cruz as new director of National Police and head of National Security University (UNES) respectively, raising concerns over long-term fate of civilian police reform underway since 2009.

▪ [“Crime and impunity”](#), *Economist*, 8 Jan. 2014.

Middle East and North Africa

Eastern Mediterranean

➤ **Israel-Palestine** U.S. Sec State Kerry continued parallel dialogues with Palestinian Authority (PA) President Abbas and Israeli PM Netanyahu on principles forming framework for negotiations; 23 Jan said final agreement would include complete removal of Israeli troops from Palestinian territory and Palestinian recognition of Israel as Jewish state. Both sides expressed reservations: Netanyahu said he would not accept any reference to Jerusalem, hardened demands regarding settlement blocks Israel wants to keep; Abbas said no deal without E Jerusalem as Palestinian capital but 28 Jan said could accept 3-year Israeli military presence in WB. Israel 10 Jan announced construction plans for 1,400 settlement homes in WB and E Jerusalem. Abbas 21 Jan said PA will not negotiate with Israel longer than agreed 9 months; PLO committee 25 Jan agreed on taking Palestinian plight to UN if talks fail. PM’s office 28 Jan said in event of agreement settlers should be able to stay under Palestinian sovereignty, provoking vitriolic debate in Israel, Palestinian rejection. Steps towards Hamas-Fatah reconciliation: Gaza PM Haniyeh 6 Jan announced hundreds of Fatah members exiled since 2007 could return to Gaza; Hamas 8 Jan freed 7 Fatah prisoners. Rockets fired at Israel from Gaza and Israeli reprisals spiked; Hamas 21 Jan deployed forces to prevent additional rocket fire on Israel. Israeli attacks killed at least 8 Palestinians in Gaza Strip, 29 Jan killed alleged Palestinian gunman north of Ramallah. Shin Bet 22 Jan arrested 3 Palestinians allegedly involved in planned al-Qaeda attack on U.S. embassy. Former PM Ariel Sharon died 11 Jan.

▪ [“Palestinians express reservations on Kerry’s ideas”](#), AP, 6 Jan. 2014.

➡ **Syria** First round of long-awaited Geneva II talks produced no agreement on confidence-building measures or allowing aid to besieged areas in Homs, no progress in discussing solution to conflict; next round scheduled for 10 Feb. Opposition Syrian National Coalition (SNC) agreed to participate, though increasingly in disarray ahead of talks; less than half members 18 Jan voted to attend, over third withdrew from session. Talks began 22 Jan with Syrian govt delegation rejecting SNC demands for President Assad's removal from power and creation of transitional govt; Assad 19 Jan said "significant" chance he will seek new term in summer 2014 election. In lead-up to talks govt escalated systematic starvation and barrel bombings of rebel-held areas, killing scores. On rebel side clashes between Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and other groups intensified after Islamic Front (IF) 1 Jan accused ISIL of killing popular rebel commander and being worse than Assad regime. Opponents of ISIL gained control of most of Idlib province and towns west of Aleppo city; ISIL consolidated presence east of Aleppo and in Raqqa province; fierce fighting continues for control of towns between Aleppo and Turkish border. ISIL 27 Jan rejected reconciliation initiative endorsed by other rebel groups. Syrian Observatory for Human Rights 23 Jan estimated nearly 1,400 killed in rebel fighting since beginning of month; UN received reports of "mass executions". Syria 1 Jan missed UN-endorsed deadline for transfer of "priority chemicals" under Sept resolution, first batch shipped out 7 Jan; only 4.1% reportedly shipped out by end Jan, UNSG Ban 28 Jan called delays unnecessary, U.S. 30 Jan warned Syrian efforts had "seriously languished". Govt 8 Jan reported 2 rebel attacks on chemical sites, first such report. Unconfirmed reports Israeli air force 26 Jan bombed base in Latakia. U.S. 27 Jan announced resuming deliveries of non-lethal aid to non-armed opposition groups, suspended Dec; Reuters reported U.S. had already resumed delivery via Jordan of light and anti-tank weapons to "moderate" rebel groups in S Syria.

- Peter Harling and Sarah Birke, "[The Arab World into the Unknown](#)", Arabist, 14 Jan. 2014.
- "[Why Syria's Assad enters Geneva talks in a position of strength](#)", Al Jazeera, 23 Jan. 2014.

➡ **Lebanon** Month saw escalation in targeting of Shia neighbourhoods with attacks by radical Sunni groups in retaliation for Hizbollah's military involvement in Syria. Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant claimed car-bombing in S Beirut 2 Jan killing 5; Jabhat al-Nusra (JN) claimed 21 Jan bombing in same neighbourhood killing 4, also 16 Jan bombing in eastern Hermel killing 4, 25 Jan rocket attack jointly with fellow al-Qaeda-linked Abdullah Azzam Brigades (AAB), no casualties. Head of AAB died in military custody 4 Jan reportedly of kidney failure. Further clashes in Tripoli between supporters of rival Syrian groups, 5 killed by sniper fire 21 Jan. Rocket fire on Aarsal near Syrian border 17 Jan, 7 killed. Amid continued political deadlock over formation of new cabinet, trial over 2005 killing of former PM Rafik Hariri began in The Hague; Hariri's son Saad Hariri, currently in The Hague attending trial, vowed to return to Lebanon for Nov elections.

- "[New Beirut car bombing against Hezbollah kills 4](#)", AFP, 21 Jan. 2014.

Gulf

➡ **Iran** P5+1 and Iran 10 Jan agreed on implementation of 6-month Joint Plan of Action (JPA) signed in Geneva in Nov. Plan took effect 20 Jan; IAEA confirmed Iran halted 20% uranium enrichment, also provided better access to IAEA inspectors, stopped installing new centrifuges, suspended construction of heavy water reactor in Arak; EU and U.S. initiated sanctions relief in return, in accordance with deal. Implementation agreement included specification that Iran gains access to \$4.2bn of blocked assets in 8 instalments, first planned 1 Feb; also specified exact nature of JPA's research and development provision. P5+1 and Iran to reconvene 18 Feb in Vienna for negotiations on final comprehensive agreement. IAEA 29 Jan inspected Gachin uranium mine in accordance with separate Nov Iran-IAEA agreement. U.S. Senate push to impose new sanctions appearing to lose momentum. Diplomatic row over "Geneva II" talks on Syria as UNSG Ban 19 Jan invited Iran to participate, 21 Jan withdrew invitation following U.S.; U.S. warned companies Iran still "not open for business" due to remaining sanctions. Violence in eastern border region continued; Baluchi Sunni separatist group Jaish al-Adl 25 Jan claimed attack on Revolutionary Guards killing 7.

- "[World powers, Iran eye February start to nuclear settlement talks](#)", Reuters, 13 Jan. 2014.

➡ **Iraq** Month saw security further deteriorate in Anbar province following 30 Dec govt demolition of Sunni protest camp in Ramadi and negotiated withdrawal of govt forces from province: as govt forces withdrew, Islamic militants from Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) 1 Jan seized key areas of Anbar's main cities, Ramadi and Falluja. Fierce clashes followed between ISIL and govt forces backed by local allies, killing scores including over 100 killed in Ramadi and Falluja 3 Jan; despite local tribes, clerics and former officers regaining control of the city, govt made no distinction between Falluja locals and ISIL militants, announced Falluja in hands of ISIL, calling for national, international support in "war on terror". UNHCR 24 Jan said 65,000 fled fighting in Falluja, Ramadi in past week alone fearing clashes between army, locals and ISIL militants. Govt forces 29 Jan regained control of areas west of Baghdad after weeks of fighting; militants next day attacked transport ministry building. PM Maliki 16 Jan requested new arms, training from U.S.; U.S. VP Biden 26 Jan said Maliki has U.S. support, Senate signed off on long-stalled sale of Apache helicopters. Bomb attacks across Iraq continued: at least 73 killed 15 Jan, 27 killed 20 Jan in Shia neighbourhoods of Baghdad. Govt estimated 1,013 killed during month, highest number since April 2008. 26 hanged on terrorism charges 21 Jan; UN criticised "conveyor-belt of executions". Kurdistan Regional Govt 8 Jan announced plans to sell 2mn barrels of oil to Turkey via newly-built pipeline by month's end; PM Maliki 12 Jan threatened to cut region's share of federal budget, Oil Minister Luaibi 17 Jan said govt preparing legal action against Kurdistan, Turkey.

- "[Maliki's Anbar Blunder](#)", *Foreign Policy*, 15 Jan. 2014.

➡ **Bahrain** Opposition groups 9 Jan withdrew from national dialogue talks; talks reconvened next day following intervention by Crown Prince, parties agreed to basis for further negotiations. Hundreds protested in Shiite village Diraz 17 Jan saying talks meaningless.

- "[Bahrain's Crown Prince makes his move](#)", *Foreign Policy*, 20 Jan. 2014.

➡ **Yemen** National dialogue launched March 2013 officially concluded 25 Jan; new federal political system endorsed, president's term extended by 1 year to oversee constitution drafting and referendum before elections. Dialogue outcomes included "solutions document" that agrees on federalism in principle and empowers President Hadi to appoint small negotiating team to determine number of federal units. Document failed to win support of entire Hiraak (southern secessionist movement) delegations. Security continued to deteriorate. Houthi representative Ahmed Sharaf el-Din killed 21 Jan on way to conference. In North Huthis and Salafis 11 Jan agreed to ceasefire after months of clashes in Dammaj; Salafi spokesman 13 Jan said at least 210 Salafis killed in fighting in last 2 months; fighting between Huthis and various opponents continued in other areas including Jawf, Amran, Sadaa and Sanaa governorates. Tensions in south continued: clashes erupted 17 Jan between armed residents and military al-Dalia governorate; southern separatists demonstrating against national dialogue 27 Jan clashed with troops in Ataq, 4 wounded. Tribesmen attacks on oil infrastructure in Hadramout and Shabwa continued. Suspected al-Qaeda militants 16 Jan attacked military camp in al-Baydah, killing 9 soldiers; 31 Jan killed 17 soldiers in 2 attacks in Hadramout. Unknown assailants 19 Jan killed Iranian diplomat in Sanaa. 3 suspected al-Qaeda killed in drone strike in Marib province 24 Jan.

- "Yemeni factions hold national dialogue", Al Jazeera, 26 Jan. 2014.

North Africa

➡ **Algeria** President Bouteflika hospitalised in France mid Jan renewing fears over his health. Bouteflika 17 Jan said elections scheduled for 17 April; Islamist parties Movement of Society for Peace (MSP) and Front for Change announced boycott. Ruling National Liberation Front (FLN) Sec Gen Amar Saadani reiterated Bouteflika likely candidate for polls; ex-PM Ali Benflis announced intention to run. Security forces 8 Jan killed 8 suspected terrorists near Bouira.

- "Algerian politicians divided over Bouteflika's fourth term", Al-Monitor, 26 Jan. 2014.

➡ **Egypt** Official results of 14-15 Jan referendum on amended constitution indicate over 98% in favour, turnout almost 39%. Outlawed Muslim Brotherhood (MB), Islamist Alliance for Support of Legitimacy (ASL) campaigned for boycott; Strong Egypt Party campaigned for "no", some members arrested. Monitoring NGOs reported violations during two-day voting period, influencing voters and voting registration errors. Interim President Adli Mansour 26 Jan announced presidential elections to take place within 3 months, before parliamentary elections. Supreme Council of the Armed Forces 27 Jan approved defence minister Abdelfattah el-Sisi to run for presidency, after President Mansour promoted him from colonel-general to field marshal. Clashes between supporters of ousted President Morsi and security forces increased ahead of and during referendum; 17 killed and 60 injured 3 Jan, 3 killed 10 Jan, 11 killed 14 Jan. Deadly clashes between protesters and security forces continued after referendum, with at least 49 killed in worst incident 25 Jan, anniversary of 2011 uprising. Several bomb attacks in Cairo including 3 attacks 24 Jan killing at least 5, injuring 60. Gunmen shot dead senior interior ministry official in Cairo 28 Jan. Multiple attacks continued in Sinai Peninsula, including first-ever use of surface-to-air missile by militants 27 Jan

to bring down military helicopter, killing 4; Ansar Beit al-Maqdis group claimed responsibility. Arrests of MB supporters continued, including 444 arrested 15 Jan on charges of rioting and weapons possession, 63 jailed 9 Jan. U.S. Sec State Kerry 18 Jan expressed concern about limits of freedom of assembly and expression. MB lawyers 6 Jan petitioned ICC to investigate alleged crimes against humanity by military govt since July 2013. Amnesty International 23 Jan reported human rights violations and state violence on "unprecedented scale" since July 2013.

- Peter Harling and Yasser El Shimy, "Egypt's Quest for Itself", Orient XXI, 13 Jan. 2014.
- "Widespread boycotts as Egyptian voters back new constitution", *Guardian*, 16 Jan. 2014.

➡ **Mauritania** Malian President IBK visited 12 Jan, signed agreement to boost military cooperation and information sharing in regional fight against terrorist and armed groups.

- "La Mauritanie et le Mali relancent leur coopération en misant sur la sécurité", RFI, 13 Jan. 2014.

➡ **Morocco** Security forces 25 Jan uncovered jihadi cell led by Spanish army veteran who fought in Afghanistan with al-Qaeda.

- "Morocco to punish takfirists", Magharebia, 22 Jan. 2014.

➡ **Libya** Political tensions remained high with General National Congress (GNC) still deadlocked over new transition roadmap and motion of no-confidence in PM Zeidan; majority of GNC members favour Zeidan's removal, but key group refuses to hold no-confidence vote until successor agreed upon. Islamist Justice and Construction party 22 Jan quit Zeidan govt after failing to win support for no-confidence vote. Gunmen 14 Jan opened fire on GNC, demanded Zeidan's resignation, threatened use of force against cabinet. Popular calls to dismiss GNC by 7 Feb. GNC 30 Jan set 20 Feb as date for election of constitution-drafting panel. Main oil export terminals in east remained closed. Following govt fire on Maltese tanker accused of heading to federalist-controlled al-Sidra port 4 Jan, federalist movement leader Ibrahim Jedran's self-appointed Barqa (Cyrenaica) Council 6 Jan announced it would ensure safety of any tanker entering "Cyrenaican waters". Religious authorities 15 Jan issued fatwa to free ports "by all possible means". Over 86 killed after clashes erupted 9 Jan between Tebu and Awlad Sulayman tribesmen in Sebha and Murzuq, south. Govt 18 Jan ordered deployment of security forces following alleged show of force by Qadhafi loyalists in Sebha. At least 30 killed 13-18 Jan in clashes in Tripoli western suburbs and Aijelat between state security forces and criminal gangs accused of being pro-Qadhafi. Targeted violence continued, extending throughout Libya: UK and New Zealand nationals murdered 2 Jan in Sabratha; gunmen 11 Jan killed deputy industry minister in Sirt; gunmen 15 Jan killed political activist Amr Habil in Derna; deputy PM Sadiq Abdul-Karim survived assassination attempt in Tripoli 29 Jan. 2 Italians kidnapped 18 Jan in Derna; South Korean trade envoy kidnapped in Tripoli 20 Jan, released 23 Jan. Egypt evacuated embassy and Benghazi consulate following 25 Jan kidnap of 5 diplomats and embassy employee; hostages released 26 Jan in exchange for Egyptian release of Sabaann Hadia, prominent Islamist rebel commander, arrested 24 Jan in Alexandria.

- "Tripoli declares state of emergency in Libya's south", *Financial Times*, 19 Jan. 2014.



Tunisia New constitution signed into law 27 Jan, day after passing National Constituent Assembly vote with 200 of 216 votes. Constitution clears way for new general elections, most secular democratic constitution in Arab world. Radical religious groups criticised secular orientation of constitution; internal tensions in Islamist an-Nahda party over compromises made to achieve breakthrough. PM Jomaa sworn in 10 Jan to replace an-Nahda-led Troika govt; Jomaa's new caretaker cabinet approved by parliament 29 Jan. Scattered clashes and attempts to attack govt and political parties across country. Some opposition secularists appeared intent on "de-Islamising" administration, encouraging judges to start trials against an-Nahda ex-ministers over corruption accusations, links to terrorist groups. Protests over economic hardships increased: crowds protested new taxes in Tunis 10 Jan, tens reportedly arrested after clashing with police; same day man killed in clashes near Algerian border after protesters tried to storm customs office.

- "Tunisia's constitution: A success story?", Al Jazeera, 27 Jan. 2014.

Crisis Group Offices

Brussels brussels@crisisgroup.org
+32 2 502 9038

Washington washington@crisisgroup.org
+1 202 785 1601

New York newyork@crisisgroup.org
+1 212 813 0820

Crisis Group's international headquarters is in Brussels, and the organisation has offices or representation in 34 locations: Abuja, Bangkok, Beijing, Beirut, Bishkek, Bogotá, Bujumbura, Cairo, Dakar, Damascus, Dubai, Gaza, Guatemala City, Islamabad, Istanbul, Jakarta, Jerusalem, Johannesburg, Kabul, Kathmandu, London, Moscow, Nairobi, New York, Port-au-Prince, Pristina, Rabat, Sanaa, Sarajevo, Seoul, Tbilisi, Tripoli, Tunis and Washington DC.

Crisis Group is also currently covering some 70 areas of actual or potential conflict (through analysts operating from regional or field bases, or consultants). In Africa, this includes, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Uganda and Zimbabwe; in Asia, Afghanistan, Burma/Myanmar, Indonesia, Kashmir, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Nepal, North Korea, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Taiwan Strait, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan; in Europe, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cyprus, Georgia, Kosovo, Macedonia, North Caucasus, Serbia and Turkey; in the Middle East and North Africa, Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel-Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, Western Sahara and Yemen; and in Latin America and the Caribbean, Colombia, Guatemala, Haiti and Venezuela.

"I very much appreciate the work that International Crisis Group is carrying out around the world. Your continuous monitoring of the situation in the most fragile, conflict-prone and conflict-affected countries and regions is highly valuable for the European External Action Service (EEAS)."

Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission, July 2012