

1 July 2006, N°35

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 nearly 120 staff members across five continents, who already report on some 50 of the situations listed here. Comments and suggestions can be sent to crisiswatch@crisisgroup.org.

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Africa

Crisis Group Africa Report N°112, *Beyond Victimhood: Women's Peacebuilding in Sudan, Congo and Uganda*, 28 June 2006. Countries in crisis and the wider international community must do much more to support women's involvement in solving Africa's deadliest conflicts. In Sudan, Congo and Uganda, women's organisations and leaders do remarkable work, under difficult circumstances, especially in community organisations and informal conflict resolution mechanisms. Still, women remain marginalised in formal peace processes and post-conflict governments. The international community needs to offer sustainable support rather than just rhetoric. It is not merely a question of equity: women make a difference because their approach to security is often more inclusive and addresses social and economic issues that would otherwise be ignored. Peace agreements, post-conflict reconstruction and governance work better when women peace activists are involved.



CENTRAL AFRICA

- Burundi Prospects for peace between government and FNL rebels uncertain despite mid-June provisional agreement to end hostilities. Negotiations on permanent ceasefire, due to be concluded 1 July, faltered amidst FNL claims facilitating countries (S. Africa, Tanzania, Uganda) threatened military action if failed to sign. EU called for probe into allegations of graft in aid program, threatening to withdraw financial support. UN Security Council extended ONUB to end of 2006.
 - "Burundi peace talks flail", News24, 30 June 2006.
 - "Burundi rebels will not rush to sign deal", AlertNet, 22 June 2006.
 - For background, see Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°31, *Elections in Burundi: A Radical Shake-Up of the Political Landscape*, 25 Aug. 2005.
- Central African Republic Situation remained bleak in lawless northwest with armed gangs killing dozens in village raids. Chad rebels launched cross-border raid; clashes with CAR troops and African peacekeepers killed over 40.
 - "Chad rebels attack inside Central African Republic", Sudan Tribune, 28 June 2006.
 - "Silent crisis in northwest lingers", IRIN, 7 June 2006.
- Democratic Republic of Congo Situation remained tenuous as country struggled to prepare for 30 July elections. Several major political parties continued to demand negotiations to ensure free and fair process. Official campaigning began 30 June, amid warnings from UN Security Council delegation over dangerous nationalist rhetoric. First day of campaign marred by unrest: 12 killed when police opened fire on anti-government protest in Matadi. 800 EU soldiers with UNSC mandate began deployment to Kinshasa, expected fully operational by 29 July; 1,200 troops to stand by in Gabon. UNSC extended MONUC mandate to end September. Clashes between soldiers, peacekeepers and militias persisted in Ituri, where estimated 4,000 remaining militiamen given new 30 June disarmament deadline. Ethnic

Lendu militia threatened to kill 7 Nepalese peacekeepers taken hostage in May, but 2 released 27 June.

- "First vote in decades tests Congo's fragile truce", *Washington Post*, 22 June 2006.
 - "UN accused over Congo village massacre", *Observer*, 18 June 2006.
 - For background, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°108, *Congo's Elections: Making or Breaking the Peace*, 27 Apr. 2006.
- Rwanda Former Justice Minister Ntamabyariro became most senior official charged with genocide in Rwandan courts 19 June. UN tribunal asked for international assistance tracking down genocide suspects still at large abroad, ahead of 2008 tribunal deadline.
 - "Tribunal seeks Ireland's help in tracking down genocide suspects", IRIN, 22 June 2006.
 - Uganda Government delayed entering into talks with LRA rebels brokered by South Sudan's government in Juba, saying 14-man LRA delegation lacked capacity for serious negotiations. ICC insisted peace efforts should not impede arrest and prosecution of indicted rebel leaders, while South Sudan VP Machar said ICC should give peace process chance before any legal proceedings. Government ruled out direct negotiations with indicted rebels in line with ICC position, despite President Museveni's May statement guaranteeing LRA chief Kony's safety if he surrendered. First televised interview with Kony aired on BBC. Dozen LRA fighters killed in separate clashes with Ugandan and South Sudanese forces.
 - "I will use the Ten Commandments to liberate Uganda", *The Times*, 28 June 2006.
 - "Fresh hope for peace in northern Uganda?", *Christian Science Monitor*, 26 June 2006.
 - For background, see Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°35, *A Strategy for Ending Northern Uganda's Crisis*, 11 Jan. 2006.
- ### HORN OF AFRICA
- Chad Relations with Sudan worsened while insecurity along border increased. Government forces and Chadian FUCD rebels renewed fighting. Janjaweed continued attacks on border towns and Sudanese SLA rebels continued to infiltrate refugee camps to forcibly recruit civilians, causing 10,000 to flee to Darfur within month. President Déby accused Sudan of exporting war and called for greater international support. Déby announced "internal political dialogue" with opposition after temporary civil servant strike. Unidentified rebels launched raid into northeast Central African Republic, clashing with CAR forces and peacekeepers; reports suggest Chadian and northern CAR rebels formed alliance.
 - "Armed groups maraud along Sudan border", Human Rights Watch, 22 June 2006.
 - "As army pursues rebels, militia massacres fill the vacuum", IRIN, 9 June 2006.
 - Ethiopia Ethnic conflict in south escalated as 100 reported killed in land clashes between Guji and Borena groups and up to 90,000 displaced. Regional mediators sought to resolve separate inter-clan dispute that killed 39 in Daroor.
 - "90,000 displaced by clan violence in Ethiopia", Sudan Tribune, 30 June 2006.
 - "Ethnic conflict claims 100 lives in the south", *The Reporter*, 17 June 2006.

- ↓ Ethiopia/Eritrea Blow to border dispute resolution as Eritrea refused to attend Boundary Commission meeting in The Hague 15 June, citing Ethiopia's failure to implement 2002 agreement. 111 Ethiopian People's Patriotic Front rebels, allegedly from Eritrea, reported killed by Ethiopian forces; Asmara denied reports. UN report found Eritrea providing military support for Somali-based insurgents attacking Ethiopia and for groups linked to Somali Islamic Courts militia.

 - "Ethiopia kills 111 rebels - state news agency", AlertNet, 27 June 2006.
 - "UN report implicates Eritrea in support for Al-Itihad", *The Reporter*, 17 June 2006.
 - For background, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°101, *Ethiopia and Eritrea: Preventing War*, 22 Dec. 2005.

- ↓ ↘ Somalia Islamic Courts militia seized control over Mogadishu 8 June, driving out U.S.-backed Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism; later consolidated control over most of south. Talks in Khartoum between Courts and transitional government led to mutual recognition and de facto ceasefire 22 June. But choice of radical cleric Hassan Dahir Aweys to head new Consultative Council of Islamic Courts may prove explosive and derail further talks. U.S. ruled out direct relations with Aweys and highlighted fears country could become radical Islamist training ground. IGAD and AU pressed ahead with plans for peace support mission over strong objections of Courts militia, while Courts claimed Ethiopian military incursion as Ethiopia consolidated border presence.

 - "Somali Islamists seek expansion, ratify radical", AlertNet, 29 June 2006.
 - Comment by John Prendergast (Crisis Group), "Our failure in Somalia", *Washington Post*, 7 June 2006.
 - For background, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°100, *Somalia's Islamists*, 12 Dec. 2005.

- ↘ Somaliland (Somalia) President Royale toured 5 East African countries to campaign for AU membership in wider pursuit of international recognition.

 - Comment by Suliman Baldo (Crisis Group), "The other Somalia with no war", *The Nation* (Nairobi), 30 June 2006.
 - For background, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°110, *Somaliland: Time for African Union Leadership*, 23 May 2006.

- ↓ Sudan Implementation of Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) faltered as rebel divisions widened. Members of SLA Minawi faction announced suspension of DPA implementation, suggesting tacit split with Minawi ahead of his delegation's visit to Khartoum for talks. Violent clashes between SLA factions further hindered Darfur humanitarian access. Joint commission inaugurated to monitor DPA ceasefire, but no action taken. President Bashir continued to refuse "colonial" UN Darfur peacekeeping mission, suggested alternate Sudanese force. UNSG Annan to press matter at AU Summit 1 July, but other UN official said no force feasible before January 2007. ICC lead prosecutor announced compilation of "Darfur crimes database", said will prosecute "large-scale atrocities"; Sudan claimed ICC has no jurisdiction. South Sudan President Machar continued to arrange peace talks between Uganda and LRA rebels, as alleged LRA attack on Juba killed 9. In east, Khartoum signed ceasefire pact 19 June and agreed to July talks with Eastern Front rebels demanding greater autonomy.

 - "The dying Darfur Peace Agreement", ISN, 29 June 2006.

- Comment by Colin Thomas-Jensen (Crisis Group), "Real peace in Sudan", TomPaine.com, 19 June 2006.
- Comment by John Prendergast (Crisis Group), "Sudan: Divide and destroy in Darfur", AllAfrica.com, 7 June 2006.

Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°39, *Darfur's Fragile Peace Agreement*, 20 June 2006. The 5-May peace agreement has little chance of bringing any stability to Darfur without the parties' strict compliance and decisive international community action in support of the peacekeeping mission. The deal depends heavily upon the goodwill of the parties, including the Khartoum government, which has broken many commitments in the past. International actors must shore up security provisions, improve return and recovery packages for displaced persons, bring in those who have yet to sign, and rapidly deploy UN peacekeepers with Chapter VII authority. Significant violence has continued since the DPA was concluded, and the agreement will not hold unless the peacekeepers of the AU, and soon the UN, can deal robustly with the many spoilers seeking to undermine it.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- ↘ Zimbabwe Main opposition MDC faction leader Tsvangirai unveiled "roadmap" 9 June, calling for President Mugabe to accept new constitution, resign and allow transitional government to organise elections under international supervision, or face "mass action". Mugabe repeated threat of crackdown on protests. Former ruling ZANU-PF member Daniel Shumba officially launched new opposition United People's Party. Economic crisis with massive inflation continued.

 - "Zimbabwe workers brace for nationwide strikes", ZimOnline, 28 June 2006.
 - "Zimbabwe between past and future", openDemocracy, 23 June 2006.

Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°38, *Zimbabwe's Continuing Self-Destruction*, 6 June 2006. With the economy in free fall, the potential end of Robert Mugabe's presidency looming, and divisions in both the ruling ZANU-PF party and the opposition MDC, unrest and violence threaten. ZANU-PF wants to avoid a popular vote by using its legislative control to establish a "transitional presidency" and appoint Mugabe's successor. The military's rising influence is also troubling. Opposition forces need to present a unified front against an increasingly desperate and dangerous government. The international response to the growing deterioration has been ineffective. African leaders and institutions must come to terms with the situation.

WEST AFRICA

- ↘ Côte d'Ivoire Slow progress made toward October elections and crucial disarmament process delayed. Pro-government militias in west failed to hand over weapons, citing security concerns, while integration talks between government and ex-rebel forces stalled. UN Security Council increased strength of UN peacekeeping mission by 1,500: half the figure UNSG Annan had requested to ensure stability before polls.

 - "Talks between rebel and government forces fail", IRIN, 30 June 2006.
 - "Militias fail to show for disarmament", IRIN, 16 June 2006.
 - For background, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°109, *Côte d'Ivoire: Peace as an Option*, 17 May 2006.

- Guinea Country crippled after leading unions called "indefinite" general strike 8 June; crisis ended 9 days later when government agreed to pay raise for workers. Strike led to clashes 12 June between students and security forces, killing 11 in 3 cities and prompting military patrols in capital.

 - "Police confirm 11 killed in strike violence", IRIN, 16 June 2006.
 - "The next crucible of implosion in West Africa?", *Concord Times*, 14 June 2006.
 - For background, see Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°37, *Guinea in Transition*, 11 Apr. 2006.

- Liberia Positive signs of stabilisation continued. UN Security Council lifted timber but maintained diamond sanctions, acknowledging increased fiscal control over resource industries but seeking further reforms; also partially lifted arms embargo to equip new national police and security forces. Truth and Reconciliation Commission began to investigate human rights violations in 14-year civil war 22 June.

 - "Lifting of UN timber ban gives hope for economic revival", IRIN, 21 June 2006.
 - "Security Council draws back on arms embargo", IRIN, 15 June 2006.
 - For background, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°107, *Liberia: Resurrecting the Justice System*, 6 Apr. 2006; and Briefing N°36, *Liberia: Staying Focused*, 13 Jan. 2006.

- Mali Government announced peace deal with Tuareg rebels 30 June following Algerian-brokered talks between rebels and government. Rebels reportedly dropped demands for greater autonomy for northeast in exchange for poverty reduction; signing expected early July.

 - "Tuareg rebels in Mali peace deal", BBC, 30 June 2006.
 - "Mali says nears peace deal with desert rebels", AlertNet, 27 June 2006.

- Nigeria President Obasanjo agreed to withdraw troops from Bakassi peninsula within 90 days, ceding disputed region to Cameroon after talks brokered by UNSG Annan; sections of Nigerian majority in peninsula threatened violent resistance. Kidnappings of foreign workers by MEND rebels continued in Niger Delta region but all later released: 5 Nigerian soldiers died in kidnapping raid. Military deployed to Onitsha after clashes between police and Biafran separatist group killed 8; soldiers later killed 2, arrested 69. Ruling PDP party argued over successor to Obasanjo in April 2007 elections; police sealed party offices, and Obasanjo fired 8 aides of rival VP Abubakar.

 - "Nigerian oil dispute flares into full-scale revolt", AlertNet, 28 June 2006.
 - "Why Obasanjo dropped Atiku's impeachment move, opted for aides sack", *Vanguard*, 25 June 2006.

- Senegal Fighting intensified in Casamance region along border with Gambia between rival factions of Movement of the Democratic Forces of Casamance; 100 rebels reported killed.

 - "Fighting surges between Casamance rebel factions", IRIN, 15 June 2006.

- Sierra Leone Former Liberian President Taylor transferred to The Hague to face war crimes charges before Sierra Leone Special Court, after UK agreed 15 June to house him if convicted. Political parties began campaigning for 2007 polls; opposition leader Margai stoned by supporters of ruling SLPP

party in visit to Kono. New UN peacebuilding commission announced redevelopment as working group subject.

- "Mixed feelings over Charles Taylor's transfer to The Hague", AllAfrica, 20 June 2006.
- "Liberia's Taylor flown to The Hague to face war crimes charges", *Washington Post*, 20 June 2006.
- For background, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°87, *Liberia and Sierra Leone: Rebuilding Failed States*, 8 Dec. 2004.

Asia/Pacific

CENTRAL ASIA

- Kazakhstan Trial of 10 accused of opposition leader Sarsenbaev's February murder opened in Taldykorgan 14 June; 2 key defendants, former Senate staff chief Yerzhan Utembayev and former police officer Rustam Ibragimov, denied charges. Parliament approved new media legislation; OSCE said law would severely restrict media and should be withdrawn. Opposition Alga party activists clashed with police outside Justice Ministry 6 June: appealing against ministry's rejection of party's registration but Supreme Court upheld decision. Local elections in 10 cities and 49 districts, first such polls, set for October after President Nazabaev decreed one third of local administration heads should be elected.

 - "Beijing makes further economic inroads into Central Asia", RFE/RL, 21 June 2006.
 - "Sarsenbayev murder trial opens in Kazakhstan", ISN, 19 June 2006.
 - "Opposition group denied registration", RFE/RL, 6 June 2006.

- Kyrgyzstan Bilateral negotiations over rent increase on U.S. Manas airbase ended without deal. 25 June parliamentary by-election in Kurshab, Osh province, cancelled after large-scale clashes between candidates' supporters. Supreme Court refused refugee status for Rasuljon Pirmatov, 1 of 4 in Kyrgyz detention having fled Uzbekistan after 2005 Andijon massacre; UNHCR appealed against deportation and for resettlement elsewhere. Supreme Court also upheld acquittal of 6 police suspected of killing 6 civilians during 2002 protests in Aksy.

 - "Kyrgyz voter clash prompts election debate", ISN, 29 June 2006.
 - "Ethnic Uzbeks intensify civil rights advocacy effort", EurasiaNet, 7 June 2006.
 - For background, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°109, *Kyrgyzstan: A Faltering State*, 16 Dec. 2005.

- Tajikistan Border guards accused Uzbekistan of sheltering rebels and refusing to demarcate minefields amidst worsening relations. Meanwhile, court in Sogd province gave 4 Uzbek citizens sentences up to 16 years for spying; Uzbek authorities also reportedly arrested a Tajik for espionage. 2 alleged members of Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan arrested.

 - "Are Uzbek-Tajik relations at a new low?", RFE/RL, 19 June 2006.
 - For most recent report, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°33, *Tajikistan's Politics: Confrontation or Consolidation?*, 19 May 2004.

- Turkmenistan Rights groups expressed concern over detention and mistreatment of activists, journalist and relatives

ahead of EU Parliamentary 19-23 June visit. Government accused foreign nationals including French diplomat, OSCE official and BBC journalist, of participation in plot against government. Government threatened to cut all gas supplies to Russia unless prices raised; talks with Ukraine also ended without gas deal 30 June.

- [“The Achilles’ heel of European energy security”](#), RFE/RL, 30 June 2006.
- [“Europe’s black dance in Turkmenistan”](#), OpenDemocracy, 27 June 2006.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°85, [Repression and Regression in Turkmenistan: A New International Strategy](#), 4 Nov. 2004.

➤ Uzbekistan Authorities accused by Tajik border guards of sheltering rebels and refusing to demarcate minefields. 4 Uzbek citizens sentenced in Tajik court for spying, while Uzbek authorities reportedly arrested a Tajik on similar charge. Senior opposition Birlik party activist Mamarazhab Nazarov arrested 22 June, reportedly on fraud charges. Clampdown on foreign NGOs continued; President Karimov authorised increased penalties for inciting ethnic or religious hatred, citing some religious groups’ “aggressive proselytizing activities”. Jailed opposition leader Sanjar Umarov reported in disciplinary cell, prompting concerns about detention conditions.

- [“Relative says jailed Uzbek oppositionist in disciplinary cell”](#), RFE/RL, 9 June 2006.
- [“US NGO closed, two more under scrutiny”](#), IRIN, 1 June 2006.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°45, [Uzbekistan: In for the Long Haul](#), 16 Feb. 2006.

SOUTH ASIA

➤ Afghanistan Civilian, military and insurgent casualties continued to rise steeply amid intense fighting. U.S.-led coalition and Afghan forces launched Operation Mountain Thrust 15 June aimed at extending government control to south and east: over 60 suspected Taliban fighters reported killed. President Karzai criticised for appointment of police officers with history of corruption and brutality and ordering 2 former governors in south to rearm their illegal militias. Commander of NATO-led security force pledged new tactic of “people-friendly force” to take effect when NATO assumes control from U.S. in July. NATO reportedly to increase troops from 9,000 to 17,000 by end July. Taliban claimed responsibility for explosion of vehicle carrying workers to coalition base in Kandahar, which killed 10. 2 attempted car bomb attacks targetted U.S. forces during U.S. Sec. State Rice’s visit 28 June.

- [“Distempered days”](#), *The Guardian*, 28 June 2006.
- [“Afghanistan and its future”](#), EurasiaNet, 26 June 2006.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°116, [Afghanistan’s New Legislature: Making Democracy Work](#), 15 May 2006.

➤ Bangladesh Clashes between police and protestors broke out during 13-14 June strike called by 14-party alliance led by Awami League (AL). Opposition demanded electoral reforms including removal of allegedly biased election commissioner and participation of AL in caretaker administration due to govern from October until January 2007 elections. Police later battled demonstrators trying to march to election commission

offices in several towns. UN electoral assistance mission “deeply troubled” by high level of political violence.

- [“Activists clash with police in Bangladesh”](#), Reuters, 20 June 2006.
- [“Bangladesh strike turns violent”](#), BBC, 14 June 2006.

➤ India (non-Kashmir) Government held separate talks with representatives of 2 northeastern separatist groups, ULFA and NSCN-IM, 22 June. New Delhi said would consider releasing 5 ULFA leaders in goodwill move that would pave way for further talks. Series of attacks in northeast in run-up to talks killed 10: ULFA denied responsibility. Government and NSCN-IM held “fruitful” talks in Netherlands 22 June. Maoist violence continued: 7 villagers killed 20 June in Chhattisgarh; 6 Maoists killed in 28 June police raid. In Andhra Pradesh, 6 Maoists killed including key leader, M. Ravikumar. Sectarian tensions continued in northern Uttar Pradesh: 2 killed 18 June in arson attack on Muslim homes in Pratapgarh after shooting of Hindu village leader.

- [“Displaced by India’s red threat”](#), BBC, 30 June 2006.
- [“NSCN-IM, centre hold ‘fruitful’ talks”](#), *The Hindu*, 26 June 2006.

➤ Kashmir Sporadic violence continued throughout Indian-controlled Kashmir. 8 militants reportedly killed attempting to cross into Indian controlled territory 30 June. Previously militants attacked villagers in Udhampur district, killing 1 and mutilating 2 on suspicion of being informers. 8 Indian labourers from Bihar shot dead by suspected militants in Anantnag district. All Parties Hurriyat Conference called protest against alleged desecration of Koran and mosque by Indian security forces: 2 killed in demonstrations. Second bus service began linking Indian and Pakistani controlled areas but mutual accusations over failed prisoner swap dampened optimism.

- [“Eight killed in Kashmir violence”](#), *Dawn*, 27 June 2006.
- [“Second Kashmir bus service begins”](#), BBC, 20 June 2006.

Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°51, [India, Pakistan and Kashmir: Stabilising a Cold Peace](#), 15 June 2006. Kashmir remains a potential flashpoint. Although the ceasefire is so far holding, the normalisation process between India and Pakistan is reversible. Unless the two nuclear-armed powers work harder at advancing it, a resumption of conflict remains possible. Pakistan must end support for militancy in Kashmir. India should reduce its heavy security presence in order to remove a major source of Kashmiri disaffection. Both sides would save their soldiers’ lives and neutralise Pakistani spoilers by agreeing to resolve the dispute over the Siachen Glacier. Above all, the two neighbours need to end the cycle of mutual recriminations and prove to Kashmiris that they value their welfare over narrow interests. Progress is likely to remain frustratingly slow, and international support is essential to sustain the process and consolidate its gains.

➤ Nepal Month saw some positive steps toward lasting peace but several fundamental problems still to be overcome. PM Koirala and Maoist chief Prachanda met 16 June. Koirala announced would dissolve parliament and form new interim government including Maoists. Mainstream parties signed 8-point agreement with Maoists reaffirming both sides’ commitment to multiparty democracy, arms supervision by UN and elections to constituent assembly. But process not yet clear and Prachanda reportedly retracted support for foreign

supervision of arms. Harsh Maoist criticism of Nepalese Army also sparked controversy. Government scrapped contentious anti-terrorism laws and dropped cases against many detained Maoists; 190 rebels reportedly released. Parliament formally removed royal veto, reducing king to ceremonial monarch.

- ["Nepal's Maoist rebels oppose arms monitors"](#), AlertNet, 30 June 2006.
- ["Nepal rebel leaders meet ruling alliance members"](#), *Times of India*, 27 June 2006.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°115, ["Nepal: From People Power to Peace?"](#), 10 May 2006.

➡ Pakistan Violence in restive Federally Administered Tribal Areas and Balochistan province continued to intensify. Military raided suspected militant camp in North Waziristan 10 June, killing more than 30. Region experienced first suicide attack 2 June in Bakakhel, which claimed 5 soldiers; another killed 6 soldiers 26 June. Temporary ceasefire offer made month-end by tribal leaders in attempt to facilitate negotiations with military. In Balochistan, 5 militants reportedly killed in military raid on rebel camp in Dera Bugti district 11 June: Baloch regional party leader Nawab Akbar Bugti claimed 12 civilians also killed.

- ["Tribesman released in Waziristan"](#), BBC, 29 June 2006.
- ["Islamabad wrestles with its own neo-Taliban dilemma"](#), RFE/RL, 9 June 2006.
- For most recent report, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°46, ["Pakistan: Political Impact of the Earthquake"](#), 15 Mar. 2006.

➡ ➡ Sri Lanka Violence continued to surge throughout north and east, risking escalation into full scale combat. Attacks included 15 June mine blast on bus carrying civilians in North Central Province, killing 64. Government blamed LTTE and launched retaliatory air strikes against rebel headquarters in Kilinochchi and positions in north and northeast. Catholic clergy blamed government forces for attack on church in Pesalai 17 June; 5 killed. LTTE suicide bomber killed third most senior army officer Major General Parami Kulathunga and 3 others 26 June. LTTE demanded removal of Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission monitors from Sweden, Denmark and Finland by early September in reaction to EU placing LTTE on terror list in May, but agreed to protect monitors in north.

- ["Sri Lanka's uncivil war"](#), *Boston Globe*, 29 June 2006.
- ["Suicide attack kills Sri Lankan general"](#), *The Guardian*, 26 June 2006.
- Comment by Mahinda Rajapaksa, ["Taming the Tigers"](#), *Wall Street Journal Asia*, 1 June 2006.

NORTH EAST ASIA

➡ China (internal) Closed trial of *New York Times* researcher Zhao Yan, accused of leaking state secrets, ended in Beijing 16 June; verdict delayed until 25 July.

- ["China delays NYT researcher's case a month"](#), *Washington Post*, 23 June 2006.
- ["China applies pressure to Uyghur separatists"](#), ISN (RFE/RL), 15 June 2006.

➡ North Korea U.S. intelligence suggesting NK preparing to test intercontinental ballistic missile caused widespread alarm and strong statements from Washington and Tokyo. U.S. announced it would deploy interceptor missiles in Japan. NK delegate to UN said North wants to negotiate directly with Washington: Pyongyang issued invitation to Assistant Sec.

State Hill to visit, but offer quickly rebuffed. Japan's House of Representatives passed bill allowing economic sanctions if NK fails to help resolve abductions dispute.

- ["Preemption and North Korea"](#), *Washington Times*, 28 June 2006.
- ["Really bad ideas on Korea"](#), *International Herald Tribune*, 26 June 2006.
- For most recent report, see Asia Report N°112, ["China and North Korea: Comrades Forever?"](#), 1 Feb. 2006; for background, see N°108, ["North East Asia's Undercurrents of Conflict"](#), 15 Dec. 2005.

➡ Taiwan Strait President Chen Shui-bian's political difficulties continued but renewed sovereignty pledge - not to allow Taiwan to "become second Hong Kong". Chen survived recall vote in parliament but over half of legislature voted against him (two-thirds majority needed to force referendum). James Soong of opposition People First Party vowed to pursue no-confidence vote against government (which would only require simple majority). Relations with China improved slightly as sides agreed to start cross-Strait flights during holidays.

- ["Taiwan's president, mired in scandals, survives recall vote"](#), *Washington Post*, 27 June 2006.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°42, ["China and Taiwan: Uneasy Détente"](#), 21 Sept. 2005.

SOUTH EAST ASIA

➡ Indonesia Radical cleric Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, former leader of Jemaah Islamiyah, released after serving 26 of 30-month sentence. Human rights groups raised concerns over enactment of district-level regulations inspired by Sharia law and which may discriminate against women. 56 MPs signed petition urging head of parliament to write to president requesting these be revoked, while 134 MPs signed counter-petition. EU unlikely to extend Aceh Monitoring Mission beyond September but will send election observers to monitor local polls, doubtful before November. Concerns in Aceh that draft Aceh government law, to be passed July, does not sufficiently reflect spirit or letter of August 2005 Helsinki peace accord.

- ["Spread of Islamic law in Indonesia takes toll on women"](#), *New York Times*, 27 June 2006.
- ["GAM wants to see content of revised governance bill"](#), *Jakarta Post*, 27 June 2006.
- For most recent report, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°114, ["Terrorism in Indonesia: Noordin's Networks"](#), 5 May 2006.

➡ Myanmar/Burma Army attacks on ethnic minority villages continued. Military junta postponed chairmanship of ASEAN regional bloc for second time after pressure from member countries. UN envoy Gambari reported government willing to engage with UN on "whole range of issues" following May visit. Opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi, under extended house arrest, allowed previously denied visit by doctor. EU, Asian, U.S. and UN human rights rapporteurs paid homage to Suu Kyi at inaugural meeting of UN Human Rights Council.

- Comment by Ibrahim Gambari, ["A crack in the Burmese door"](#), *International Herald Tribune*, 21 June 2006.
- ["Burma mulls its next move in ASEAN"](#), *The Nation*, 12 June 2006.

➡ Philippines Government troops and MILF rebel group involved in fresh clashes on Mindanao, as peace talks remained stalled. Explosion at Maguindanao market 23 June

killed 7 in suspected attack on local governor known for support of President Arroyo. MILF denied responsibility but National Police chief ordered arrest of 2 MILF commanders. Opposition parties filed impeachment claims against Arroyo, citing fraud in 2004 election and corruption. At least 25 killed in land dispute between tribesmen and Muslim clan in south.

- [“Hundreds flee fighting in Philippine south”](#), AlertNet, 30 June 2006.
- [“Arrest of 2 MILF commanders sought for Maguindanao blasts”](#), *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 27 June 2006.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°110, *Philippines Terrorism: The Role of Militant Islamic Converts*, 19 Dec. 2005.

➤ Thailand Political uncertainty in Bangkok and southern violence continued. National Reconciliation Commission released report 5 June recommending shift from hard-line security response in south, and focus on justice and reconciliation through creation of 2 government agencies. As parliamentary debate began on report, 50 bombs exploded simultaneously at police stations, government offices and checkpoints in south, killing 3. Public prosecutors announced would submit petition to constitutional court charging 5 political parties, including governing Thai Rak Thai and opposition Democrat Party, with fraud in 2 April elections. Constitutional court decision to uphold fraud charges would dissolve political parties; decision in early July.

- [“Thai prosecutor calls for political parties to dissolve”](#), *International Herald Tribune*, 27 June 2006.
- [“NRC report could be left on shelf”](#), *The Nation*, 21 June 2006.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Reports N°105, *Thailand's Emergency Decree: No Solution*, 18 Nov. 2005; and N°98, *Southern Thailand: Insurgency, Not Jihad*, 18 May 2005.

➤ Timor-Leste Political and security situation remained tense. PM Alkatiri resigned 26 June after mass demonstrations and President Gusmao threatened to resign if he stayed in office: sparked new violence in Dili. Foreign and Defence Minister Ramos-Horta resigned in objection to ruling Frelitin party support for Alkatiri but appeared ready to resume duties if asked. Former Interior Minister Lobato arrested for arming rebels; Alkatiri claimed immunity to avoid investigation. Rebels agreed to disarm; Australian troops began process 16 June. Australian government pushed for greater UN involvement but U.S. opposed deployment of UN peacekeepers to replace Australian-led contingent. UN appointed 3-member commission of inquiry to investigate April-May violence. UN mission extended until 20 August.

- [“Ousted E. Timor leader summoned”](#), *International Herald Tribune*, 28 June 2006.
- [“Saving Timor: Where responsibility lies”](#), ISN, 20 June 2006.
- For most recent report, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°50, *Managing Tensions on the Timor-Leste/Indonesia Border*, 4 May 2006.

PACIFIC

➤ Fiji Plans to cut army from 3,000 to 1,700 rejected by home ministry after concern from military leaders. Commonwealth election observers accused military of having attempted to influence result of May election.

- [“Election observers caution Fijian military”](#), ABC, 13 June 2006.

➤ Solomon Islands PM Sogavare dismissed police, tourism and culture ministers after being criticised for having appointed them while they remain in detention for inciting April riots.

- [“Jailed Solomon Islands MPs sacked”](#), *New Zealand Herald*, 13 June 2006.

Europe

BALKANS

➤ Albania Stabilisation and Association Agreement signed with EU in Luxembourg 12 June.

- [“Another fresh start for Albania”](#), *Southeast European Times*, 19 June 2006.
- For most recent report, see Crisis Group Europe Report N°153, *Pan-Albanianism: How Big a Threat to Balkan Stability?*, 25 Feb. 2004.

➤ Bosnia & Herzegovina Contact Group announced plans to replace High Representative (HR) with EU-led mission June 2007. HR Schwarz-Schilling to continue as EU representative; move supported by Serbs, opposed by Bosniaks. Republika Srpska leadership opposed constitutional reform proposals of Council of Europe. Ethnic Croats and Muslims clashed in Mostar after Croatia World Cup match. Cabinet appointed 10 to new commission to investigate war crimes against Serbs and other groups in Sarajevo; PM Terzić's refusal to form body had led to Serb boycott of parliament from May. Second round of EU Stabilisation and Association Agreement talks concluded 16 June; EU warned police reform delay could jeopardise talks.

- [“Bosnia wants EU pact before top official's role ends”](#), AlertNet, 28 June 2006.
- [“New clash in scarred Bosnia city”](#), BBC, 14 June 2006.
- For background, see Crisis Group Europe Report N°164, *Bosnia's Stalled Police Reform: No Progress, No EU*, 6 Sept. 2005.

➤ Kosovo Sudden departure of UNMIK Chief Soren Jessen-Petersen 30 June, and North Kosovo Serb measures to sever ties with Kosovo central authorities, prompted fears of instability ahead of status decision. Jessen-Petersen announced 12 June would step down with no successor designated and called for early decision on status. Russia hardened stance against early status determination. UNMIK postponed municipal elections until after status decision. 3 northern Serb-majority municipalities declared “state of emergency” in reaction to shooting incidents in north, including 1 June murder of Serb youth they say ethnically motivated. Serbs announced boycott of regional police and demanded role for police from Serbia, threatening formation of own defence militias otherwise. In effort to calm north, KFOR accelerated reopening of base, UN sent 500 extra international police and withdrew Albanian officers. Some Serbs returned to west Kosovo, but elderly returnee found shot dead 20 June. 82 pro-independence protestors arrested for picketing UNMIK HQ 9 June; 116 arrested for blocking highway ahead of Serbian PM Kostunica's visit. Kostunica visited site of 1389 battle of Kosovo Polje, declaring Kosovo will always be part of Serbia.

- [“Serb PM pays symbolic visit to Kosovo”](#), Reuters, 28 June 2006.

- [“Jessen-Petersen to leave UNMIK post by month’s end”](#), Southeast European Times, 13 June 2006.
- [“UN to bolster police force in Kosovo”](#), *International Herald Tribune*, 7 June 2006.
- For background, see Crisis Group Europe Report N°170, *Kosovo: The Challenge of Transition*, 17 Feb. 2006.

- ↳ Macedonia Campaign for 5 July general election marred by violence. Series of incidents between 2 main Albanian parties, Democratic Union for Integration (DUI) and Democratic Party of Albanians, included several shootings, a bulldozer attack on DUI’s Saraj office 15 June and grenade attack on DUI’s Struga office 17 June. U.S. Ambassador Milovanovic and EU Special Representative Fouéré held meeting with party leaders 20 June resulting in joint statement denouncing violence. NATO Secretary General de Hoop Scheffer had earlier warned election must be “110% free and fair” or could jeopardise Euro-Atlantic integration.
 - [“Campaign violence taints Macedonian image”](#), BIRN, 30 June 2006.
 - [“NATO calls for end to Macedonia poll violence”](#), AlertNet, 27 June 2006.
 - For background, see Crisis Group Europe Briefing N°41, *Macedonia: Wobbling toward Europe*, 12 Jan. 2006.

- ↳ Montenegro Parliament declared independence 3 June. Iceland led international recognition, with Russia, all regional countries, EU and U.S. following. Serbia belatedly recognised Montenegro 15 June and moved to dissolve joint institutions. UN and OSCE accepted Montenegro as member.
 - [“Montenegro becomes 192nd UN member”](#), ISN, 29 June 2006.
 - [“Montenegro gets Serb recognition”](#), BBC, 15 June 2006.

- ↳ Serbia Government unsettled by Montenegrin independence, but parliament proclaimed Serbia legal successor to State Union on 5 June; vote boycotted by opposition. Serbia belatedly recognised Montenegro 15 June and dissolved joint institutions. Ivana Dulic-Markovic appointed deputy PM following May resignation of Miroslav Labus. PM Kostunica told by UK PM Blair to prepare for Kosovo independence. Kostunica made provocative 28 June visit to Kosovo on historic Kosovo Polje anniversary and declared Kosovo will always be part of Serbia. President Tadic undertook goodwill tour of region. Second protected witness in Djindjic assassination trial found dead 3 June.
 - [“A newer, smaller Serbia tries to cope with changes”](#), *International Herald Tribune*, 8 June 2006.
 - [“Serbian government criticised after key Djindjic trial witness killed”](#), Southeast European Times, 5 June 2006.

Crisis Group Europe Briefing N°43, [Southern Serbia: In Kosovo’s Shadow](#), 27 June 2006. Despite the current calm in Serbia’s Presevo Valley, there is potential for retaliatory violence related to the final status decision on neighbouring Kosovo later this year. Important progress has been made since the insurgency ended in 2001, but fresh action is needed to avoid negative spill-over from Kosovo’s looming independence. The international community and Kosovo politicians should continue to make clear that Kosovo will not be partitioned, and the Presevo Valley will remain within Serbia. The Serbian government should abandon partitioning Kosovo and revitalise the Coordination Body charged with overseeing...



...southern Serbia. The balance of policing responsibilities should be shifted to the multi-ethnic police from the paramilitary, nationalist Gendarmerie. All parties should take security measures to prevent targeting of minority groups.

CAUCASUS

- ↳ Armenia Tigran Torosian elected new chair of Armenian parliament 1 June. Independent A1+ television company evicted from state-funded Academy of Sciences building and editor-in-chief of independent *Zhamanak Yerevan* newspaper arrested on charges of draft evasion, in what observers claim state campaign against independent media.
 - [“Newspaper staff protest editor’s arrest”](#), Armenia Liberty, 27 June 2006.
 - [“Banned TV forced out of Yerevan offices”](#), Armenia Liberty, 19 June 2006.
 - For most recent report, see Crisis Group Europe Report N°158, *Armenia: Internal Instability Ahead*, 18 Oct. 2004.
- ↳ Azerbaijan 6 October 2006 date set for repeat local elections in 141 municipalities where results of December 2004 polls annulled. Decision came shortly after Council of Europe threatened Azerbaijan with exclusion from Congress of Local and Regional Authorities if re-runs not held by year-end. Police dispersed demonstration outside Iranian embassy 9 June, briefly detaining 10 activists protesting recent violence against Azeri minorities in Iran.
 - [“Azerbaijani police break up protest against Iran”](#), RFE/RL, 16 June 2006.
 - [“Some democratization slippage”](#), EurasiaNet, 13 June 2006.
 - For most recent report, see Crisis Group Europe Briefing N°40, *Azerbaijan’s 2005 Elections: Lost Opportunity*, 21 Nov. 2005.
- ↳ Chechnya (Russia) Rebel leader Abdul-Khalim Sadulaev killed by pro-Moscow forces 17 June. Rebels named Doku Umarov new leader and notorious field commander Shamil Basayev as deputy. Exiled rebel foreign minister Akhmed Zakayev appealed for release of 4 Russian diplomats taken hostage in Iraq in revenge for Russia’s action in Chechnya; all later killed.
 - [“Chechen rebels appoint new leader”](#), ISN, 19 June 2006.
 - [“Chechen youth rallies to back pro-Moscow warlord”](#), AlertNet, 14 June 2006.
- ↳ North Caucasus (non-Chechnya) Ingushetia saw increasing political violence and lawlessness. Musa Nalygiyev, head of special operations police in Ingushetia, killed with his 3 children and 2 others by unknown gunmen 9 June; in almost simultaneous attack senior local administrator Galina Gubina, coordinator of ethnic Russian return program, also shot dead. Ingushetian health minister survived attack by unknown gunmen 1 June; 3 security force members killed in other attacks. Army launched offensive in south 11 June; 3 rebels reported killed while separatists claimed at least 15 soldiers died. In Daghestan, 2 senior police officers killed 21 June. In Kabardino-Balkaria, parliament approved Russian Andrei Yarin as new PM after resignation of Gennady Gubin and government.
 - [“Ingushetia: Just who’s behind the violence?”](#), IWPR, 15 June 2006.
 - [“Ossetians - Russia’s best friends in the Caucasus”](#), AlertNet, 11 June 2006.

- Georgia President Saakashvili met Russian President Putin before St. Petersburg G-8 summit amidst deteriorating relations; pledged to continue dialogue, but both later made accusatory statements on Georgia's breakaway regions. On South Ossetia, international donors conference in Brussels raised €7.9 million to finance rehabilitation of conflict zone; Georgia pledged to match sum and Russia promised €3 million. Georgian minister of interior met with his de facto South Ossetian counterpart within Joint Control Commission for first time. On Abkhazia, UNSG's Group of Friends on Georgia met with officials in Tbilisi and Sukhumi 23-25 May, welcoming resumption of Coordinating Council. First meetings of Council's working groups on security and IDP postponed until July.
- "Russia, Georgia leaders talk but no agreement", AlertNet, 13 June 2006.
 - "Abkhazia rejects Georgia's autonomy offer", ISN, 12 June 2006.
 - For most recent report, see Crisis Group Europe Report N°173, *Conflict Resolution in the South Caucasus: The EU's Role*, 20 Mar. 2006.

- Nagorno-Karabakh (Azerbaijan) Second round of OSCE Minsk Group-mediated talks between Armenian and Azeri presidents in Bucharest failed to produce agreement on principles 4-5 June. Follow-up meeting between foreign ministers in Paris also failed. Minsk Group co-chairs said suspending intensive mediation efforts until sides demonstrate political will to overcome differences. Matthew Bryza replaced Steven Mann as American OSCE Minsk Group co-chair.
- "Mediators take the process public", RFE/RL, 30 June 2006.
 - "What is the sticking point in the peace talks?", RFE/RL, 12 June 2006.
 - For background, see Crisis Group Europe Report N°167, *Nagorno-Karabakh: A Plan for Peace*, 11 Oct. 2005.

EASTERN EUROPE

- Belarus Government announced ban on officials from EU, U.S. and other countries that imposed visa ban on senior Belarus officials in May. U.S. extended sanctions on President Lukashenko and 9 officials, freezing U.S.-based assets and banning business links. Russia and Belarus held largest ever joint military exercise 17-25 June. At least 30 opposition protestors detained outside Russian embassy 16 June.
- "U.S. moves on Belarus leader", *International Herald Tribune*, 19 June 2006.
 - "Belarus bars Western officials", AlertNet, 8 June 2006.
- Moldova Leaders of separatist republics of Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Transnistria met 14 June, pledging mutual cooperation and praising Russian "peacekeeping" efforts throughout region. Moldovan PM Tarlev travelled to Moscow to negotiate new gas deal with Gazprom; latter announced 46% price increase. World Bank pledged to increase aid to help counter losses arising from Russian wine ban and increased gas prices. Transnistrian officials arrested 5 Moldovan police officers on spy charges 14 June. Moldovan Interior Minister Papuc said detentions were "provocation"; all 5 later released. OSCE Chairman De Gucht said Russian-led peacekeeping operation in Transnistria should be transformed into "internationally mandated, recognised operation".
- "Moldova disappointed with progress in EU ties", AlertNet, 22 June 2006.

- "Transnistria detains Moldovan police", RFE/RL, 16 June 2006.
- For background, see Crisis Group Europe Report N°157, *Moldova: Regional Tensions over Transnistria*, 17 June 2004.

- Ukraine Our Ukraine party, Socialists and Bloc Yulia Tymoshenko agreed to form "orange" coalition with Tymoshenko as PM, ending months of uncertainty following March elections. However, appointment of PM and parliamentary speaker delayed by Party of Regions' blocking parliamentary sessions from 27 June. After announcing coalition agreement, Tymoshenko pledged to revisit controversial January Russian gas deal. Protests by anti-NATO demonstrators in Crimea led to withdrawal of U.S. troops on short-term assistance mission and cancellation of planned 12-country joint military exercises with NATO.
- "Ukraine coalition deal confirmed", BBC, 22 June 2006.
 - "U.S. reservists pull out of Ukraine", *International Herald Tribune*, 11 June 2006.

WESTERN EUROPE/MEDITERRANEAN

- Basque Country (Spain) PM Zapatero announced government will start talks with ETA. Earlier, at least 200,000 people protested in Madrid against talk plans, and main opposition Popular Party broke off cooperation with government over what it called "surrender" to ETA and Basque nationalist party Batasuna. ETA couple sentenced to 50 years prison for pivotal 1997 murder of Basque conservative councillor Miguel Angel Blanco.
- "Zapatero announces ETA talks", *International Herald Tribune*, 29 June 2006.
 - "Madrid marchers reject Eta talks", BBC, 10 June 2006.
- Cyprus Turkish Cypriot property commission ruled on 3 of 16 cases brought by Greek Cypriots, reinstating their property in north in 2 cases and offering compensation in third. Rulings came day before deadline set by European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) for effective functioning of commission. ECHR to decide whether to transfer 1,400 claims to commission; Greek Cypriot government rejected process. UN Security Council extended UNFICYP peacekeeping mission until 15 December. Turkish PM Erdogan stated 16 June Turkey would not open ports and airports to Cyprus unless isolation of Turkish Cypriots ended; said prepared for suspension of EU membership talks. Earlier in month, Greek Cypriots threatened to block Turkish accession progress, but backed down after EU reminded Ankara of obligation to normalise relations with Greek Cypriot government. EU approved opening of office in July in north to distribute 139m euro aid package.
- "Turkish land offer rejected by Greeks", *Washington Times*, 26 June 2006.
 - "Turkey rebuffs Cyprus over ports", BBC, 16 June 2006.
 - For background, see Crisis Group Europe Report N°171, *The Cyprus Stalemate: What Next?*, 8 Mar. 2006.
- Northern Ireland (UK) Orange Parade in Glengormley marred by violence, after attack on marchers saw 2 injured and 4 arrested 27 June. UK PM Blair and Irish PM Ahern held talks with political parties: said November devolution deadline "last chance" for process. NI Secretary Peter Hain intervened 12 June to appoint Jim Wells (DUP) and Francie Molloy (Sinn Fein) as rotating chairs of Stormont Preparation for

Government committee, but said no debate until committee could agree on issues for assembly discussion.

- ["Blair warns of 'last chance' for power-sharing"](#), *The Guardian*, 29 June 2006.
- ["Trouble flares at Orange parade"](#), BBC, 28 June 2006.

👉 Turkey Several bomb attacks in east and southeast left child dead; southern resort blast, claimed by Kurdistan Liberation Hawks, killed 4 tourists. At least 13 soldiers and 17 PKK rebels killed in southeast clashes. New anti-terror legislation adopted by parliament 29 June. 2 military police officers sentenced to nearly 40 years each for November 2005 Semdinli bombing; EU urged wider investigation into links of military hierarchy to attack. Trial brought by military against journalist Perihan Magden for defending conscientious objection adjourned to 27 July. First round of EU accession talks concluded on science and technology 12 June. Step nearly blocked by Cypriot veto, but EU agreed to Nicosia's demand Ankara be reminded of obligation to normalise relations with Greek Cypriot government. Greek and Turkish FM's agreed to adopt confidence-building package after May warplane crash, but Turkey signalled may seek compensation for incident.

- ["Turkey told EU talks will halt unless Cyprus deal is agreed"](#), *The Guardian*, 1 July 2006.
- ["Long jail terms for Kurd attack"](#), BBC, 19 June 2006.



Latin America / Caribbean

👉 Bolivia Tense build-up to 2 July referendum on regional autonomy and election of constitutional reform assembly, as opposition accused Venezuela of supporting President Morales's MAS party, and mass rally held in Santa Cruz in favour of decentralisation. Morales pressed ahead with agrarian reform, giving peasant farmers 2.2 million hectares of public land despite breakdown in talks with landowners. 1 killed during police operation to evict illegal occupants from private land.

- ["150,000 Bolivians rally to demand autonomy"](#), *Washington Post*, 29 June 2006.
- Comment by Joseph Stiglitz, ["Who owns Bolivia?"](#), *Daily Times*, 23 June 2006.
- For background, see Crisis Group Latin America Report N°15, ["Bolivia at the Crossroads: The December Elections"](#), 8 Dec. 2005.

👉 Colombia Turnaround in rebel strategy as FARC announced ready to negotiate with President Uribe, but stipulated government must first withdraw from rebel-dominated southern provinces and suspend Plan Patriota. FARC violence continued; rebel commander killed in clash with military in Santander. FARC declared war on leftist ELN rebels after attacks in contentious Arauca province. AUC spokesman warned of potential conflict as paramilitaries would prefer to die in combat than serve jail terms called for in newly amended Justice and Peace Law; Peace Commissioner Restrepo and others tried to defuse tensions. UN reported coca cultivation rose 8% in 2005, despite increased crop eradication.

- ["Farc 'wants Colombia peace talks'"](#), BBC, 24 June 2006.
- ["FARC rebels declare war on smaller insurgent group"](#), CNN, 12 June 2006.
- Crisis Group Latin America Report N°16, ["Colombia: Towards Peace and Justice?"](#), 14 March 2006.

Crisis Group Latin America Report N°17, ["Uribe's Re-election: Can the EU Help Colombia Develop a More Balanced Peace Strategy?"](#), 8 June 2006. To end Colombia's 40-year armed conflict, its re-elected president needs to balance security efforts with policies addressing the war's root causes, lawfully reinserting ex-combatants and advancing peace talks with the guerrillas. Following Álvaro Uribe's 28 May landslide victory, a comprehensive three-tier National Peace and Development Strategy is needed to complement military efforts. Uribe needs not only to maintain military pressure on the insurgents, particularly the FARC, but also to recognise the need for a political response that focuses on a peace strategy and addresses key regional/municipal development issues. The international community, particularly the EU, which has long emphasised more balanced policies, should encourage Uribe to do this, and if he does, contribute decisively to progress toward peace during the next four years.



👉 Haiti PM Alexis's new 6-party coalition cabinet sworn in 9 June. New outbreak of violence in Port-au-Prince slums left dozen dead and kidnappings increased as police continued crackdown on banditry. Haiti reinstated to Caricom after 28-month suspension, while EU increased development aid.

- ["Gangs kill three Haitian police, nine others"](#), ABC News, 15 June 2006.
- ["New Haitian cabinet takes office"](#), BBC, 10 June 2006.
- For background, see Crisis Group Latin America/Caribbean Briefing N°10, ["Haiti after the Elections: Challenges for Préval's First 100 Days"](#), 11 May 2006.

👉 Peru Presidential runoff poll 4 June deemed free and fair by EU and OAS. Former President Garcia won with 53% of vote, defeating nationalist candidate Humala whose party won largest share of seats in April congressional elections. Venezuelan President Chavez declared Garcia's victory fraudulent, aggravating relations between countries.

- ["Peru approves free-trade pact with U.S."](#), CNN, 28 June 2006.
- ["Peru election won't end Chavez's influence"](#), *Washington Post*, 5 June 2006.

👉 Venezuela Government received arms and purchased jet fighters from Russia, circumventing U.S. embargo. National Assembly discussed bill banning foreign funding that could effectively curb work by NGOs. Washington opposed Venezuelan bid for seat on UN Security Council.

- ["Venezuelan assembly acts to curb outside funds"](#), *Miami Herald*, 23 June 2006.
- ["Venezuela denies UN misuse claim"](#), BBC, 22 June 2006.



Middle East / North Africa

EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

👉👉 Israel/Occupied Territories Tensions rose dramatically as Israeli military launched operation in Gaza Strip following kidnapping by Palestinian militants of Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit. Hamas called for soldier not to be harmed but released in exchange for Palestinian prisoners. Israeli PM Olmert rejected negotiations for release and threatened escalation. Israeli troops entered Gaza 28 June, 3 days after Palestinian raid on Kerem Shalom army post;

subsequently arrested 8 Palestinian ministers and at least 20 legislative council members in West Bank. Earlier, Hamas and Fatah reached agreement on "Prisoners Initiative" implicitly backing 2-state solution and avoiding prospect of 26 July referendum promised by Abbas if Hamas rejected document. At least 13 Palestinian civilians killed in Israeli air strikes in Gaza in month. Hamas ended informal 16-month ceasefire following killing of 7 members of Palestinian family on Gaza beach by suspected Israeli shelling. EU announced temporary aid mechanism to channel €100 million to Occupied Territories, bypassing Hamas-led government.

- "Hamas says Israel wants to topple it", *International Herald Tribune*, 30 June 2006.
- "Israelis batter Gaza and seize Hamas officials", *New York Times*, 29 June 2006.
- "Hamas 'implicitly accepts Israel'", BBC, 27 June 2006.

Crisis Group Middle East Report N°54, *Palestinians, Israel and the Quartet: Pulling Back from the Brink*, 13 June 2006. The Israeli-Palestinian situation is heading toward breakdown, and all actors must urgently revise their policies. Palestinians are inching toward civil war, Israelis and Palestinians are close to resuming all-out hostilities, and the international community is depriving the Palestinian Authority of vital assistance. The strategies to dislodge Hamas lack a realistic assessment of their longer-term consequences. Starved of resources, Hamas could fail, but it would not go quietly, and the resulting chaos and violence would make it hard to list its failure as anybody's success. A nuanced international approach is required with the following objectives: avoiding inter-Palestinian violence and the PA's collapse; encouraging Hamas to adopt more pragmatic policies, not merely threatening; achieving a sustained ceasefire; and preventing steps jeopardising a two-state solution.



Lebanon Head of UN investigation into murder of former PM Hariri announced progress and "potential links" between leader's murder and assassination of 14 other Lebanese political figures. UN Security Council agreed to extend commission for additional year and authorised investigation into related attacks. National dialogue resumed 29 June.

- "Participants have mixed feelings about prospects for next session of dialogue", *Daily Star*, 27 June 2006.
- "UN links al-Hariri killing to other murders", ISN, 15 June 2006.
- For background, see Crisis Group Middle East Report N°48, *Lebanon: Managing the Gathering Storm*, 5 Dec. 2005.

Syria 4 gunmen and security guard killed in clashes between suspected jihadi militants and army in Damascus 2 June: officials said "terrorist" attack halted near offices of state television and radio. President Assad claimed security operations on armed militant groups have caused many to flee to Lebanon. Israeli warplanes flew over Assad's residence in apparent warning against Syrian support for Hamas' Damascus-based political chief, Khaled Meshaal, suspected of authorising kidnapping of Israeli soldier.

- *Interview with Syrian President Bashar al-Assad*, Al-Hayat, 27 June 2006.
- "Wary of U.S., Syria and Iran strengthen ties", *New York Times*, 25 June 2006.
- For background, see Crisis Group Middle East Report N°39, *Syria After Lebanon, Lebanon After Syria*, 12 Apr. 2005.

GULF

Iran UN Security Council permanent 5 plus Germany offered incentives package 5 June. Package reportedly includes European aid in building of light water nuclear reactors, 5-year supply of nuclear fuel, agricultural technology and access to aircraft parts. In return, Iran to resume full cooperation with IAEA inspectors and suspend uranium enrichment activities until IAEA and UNSC are satisfied nuclear program solely for peaceful purposes. Ahmadinejad reiterated Iran's "definite and legitimate rights" to nuclear program but said would respond by mid-August. G-8 foreign ministers and China called 29 June for response by 5 July. U.S. warned will push for sanctions if Iran rejects package.

- "The perils of underestimating Ahmadinejad", *The Guardian*, 26 June 2006.
- "Iran maneuvering for extra incentives", ISN, 21 June 2006.
- For background, see Crisis Group Middle East Report N°51, *Iran: Is There a Way Out of the Nuclear Impasse?*, 23 Feb. 2006.

Iraq Brutal insurgency and sectarian violence continued throughout country. Al-Qaeda in Iraq leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi killed in U.S.-Iraqi operation 8 June: replaced by previously unknown Abu Hamza al-Muhajer. Widespread violence included 1 July market blast in Sadr City killing 60. PM Maliki presented national reconciliation plan in attempt to reduce sectarian violence: offers amnesty to some insurgents, militia disarmament and improvement of security forces. Plan welcomed as potential catalyst for talks leading to overall political agreement, but criticised for lack of detail on withdrawal of U.S. troops and amnesty for Saddam Hussein supporters. Mujahideen Shura Council killed 4 kidnapped Russian diplomats. U.S. and Iraqi troops began operation to retake Ramadi city from insurgents 25 June. High profile trials of U.S. troops accused of killing unarmed Iraqis began. Saddam Hussein lawyer shot dead 21 June: third defence attorney killed since trial opened in October 2005.

- "Some insurgents are asking Iraq for negotiations", *New York Times*, 27 June 2006.
- "A long road ahead in Iraq", *International Herald Tribune*, 18 June 2006.
- Comment by Joost Hiltermann (Crisis Group), "Al-Zarqawi legacy is alive and kicking", ABC News Online, 9 June 2006.
- For most recent report, see Crisis Group Middle East Report N°52, *The Next Iraqi War? Sectarianism and Civil Conflict*, 27 Feb. 2006.

Saudi Arabia Riyadh gun battle between police and militants 23 June killed 7. Officials later arrested 40 militants.

- "Saudis announce militant arrests", BBC, 23 June 2006.
- For most recent report, see Crisis Group Middle East Report N°45, *The Shiite Question in Saudi Arabia*, 19 Sept. 2005.

Yemen Long-time leader President Ali Abdullah Saleh, having vowed not to seek new term in office, announced he would run for re-election after his General People's Congress party said it could not agree on new candidate.

- "Yemeni president to stand again", BBC, 24 June 2006

NORTH AFRICA

Algeria Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC) blamed for increased attacks on military and civilian targets.

Official figures released 20 June said at least 19 killed by rebels since 1 June, including ambush of 7 soldiers near Bouira and beheading of customs official and civilian in Tipaza; other sources said 31 killed. Military killed 10 suspected rebels. Interior Minister Zerhouni estimated 200 rebels had surrendered since February under conditional amnesty of 2005 national reconciliation pact; rebels have until end of July to do so.

- [“Algeria peace pact implementation underway”](#), United Press, 27 June 2006.
- [“Algeria hit by surge in guerilla violence”](#), Reuters, 20 June 2006.
- For background, see Crisis Group Middle East/North Africa Report N°29, *Islamism, Violence and Reform in Algeria: Turning the Page*, 30 July 2004.

- ↳ Egypt Muslim Brotherhood said 110 detained and 10 injured as police broke up demonstration in support of Brotherhood member on trial for weapon charges; 31 later arrested for distributing leaflets. *Al-Dustur* editor and 2 journalists sentenced to 1-year jail terms for publishing article detailing lawsuit against President Mubarak and family. Trial of 3 journalists, charged with libel after publishing blacklist of judges implicated in election fraud, postponed to September. Mubarak promised “surge in constitutional reforms” in 2007. 24 pro-democracy activists, arrested 8 May, released after state prosecutor order. Police shot dead 2 suspected members of al-Tawhid wa 'l-Jihad, group accused of April Dahab bombings, 27 June; wife of suspect also killed.
 - [“The battle for Cairo is just as vital as the one for Baghdad”](#), *The Guardian*, 16 June 2006.
 - [“Egypt police break up protest”](#), Al Jazeera, 12 June 2006.
 - For background, see Crisis Group Middle East/North Africa Report N°46, *Reforming Egypt: In Search of a Strategy*, 4 Oct. 2005.

- ↳ Mauritania Referendum, establishing structure for March 2007 presidential election, backed by 97% with 76% turnout according to official figures 25 June; constitutional amendments limit presidents to serving two 5-year terms. Authorities detained 5 relatives of former President Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya suspected of plotting to sabotage referendum. 6 Islamists who repudiated former involvement with Algerian Salafi Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC) released by Nouakchott court 14 June; other GSPC activists still detained.
 - [“Mauritians vote to limit presidential terms”](#), Reuters, 26 June 2006.
 - [“Mauritania pardons six detained Islamists - source”](#), AlertNet, 14 June 2006.
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 - [“Morocco launches crackdown on opposition”](#), ISN, 15 June 2006.

- ↳ Western Sahara In move seen as attempt to discredit refugee camp-based Sahrawi leaders and Algeria, Morocco urged UN probe into Algerian camp conditions; followed violent camp protests after May visit of UN human rights delegation.
 - [“Morocco wants UN to probe violence in Sahara camps”](#), Swissinfo (Reuters), 2 June 2006.

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