

1 July 2007, N°47

## 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 some 130 staff members across five continents, who already report on nearly 60 of the situations listed here. Comments and suggestions can be sent to [crisiswatch@crisisgroup.org](mailto:crisiswatch@crisisgroup.org).

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## June 2007 Trends



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## July 2007 Watchlist



### Conflict Risk Alerts

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### Conflict Resolution Opportunities

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## Africa


### CENTRAL AFRICA

-  Burundi Peace process back on track after 9-month deadlock as President Nkurunziza and Palipehutu-FNL rebel leader Agathon Rwaswa agreed 17 June to reactivate September 2006 deal. Government agreed to release FNL political prisoners; asked FNL to provide detailed list of members held, accelerate assembly of troops and identify assembly sites. Limited progress made during talks within Joint Framework for the Monitoring and Follow-Up (MCVS) of September 2006 ceasefire agreement. Political scene dominated by negotiations between government and opposition FRODEBU and sidelining of supporters of arrested ruling CNDD-FDD party chairman Hussein Radjabu. FRODEBU called for Nkurunziza resignation, attempted impeachment and joined boycott of new parliamentary session with Radjabu supporters and Leonard Nyangoma's CNDD. Simultaneously, FRODEBU continued negotiations with government over integration of its ministers in cabinet.
  - ["Burundi embraces peace as it joins regional bloc"](#), *East African Standard*, 24 June 2007.
  - ["Grappling with a looming political crisis"](#), IRIN, 22 June 2007.
  - ["Government, rebels to revive stalled peace accord"](#), IRIN, 18 June 2007.
  - For background, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°120, *Burundi: Democracy and Peace at Risk*, 30 Nov. 2006.

-  Central African Republic Insecurity continued in north. International NGOs called for urgent deployment of UN force to protect civilians. Aid operations suspended in north west after Médecins Sans Frontières staff member killed 11 June, in alleged mistake by Popular Army for the Restoration of Democracy.
  - ["Law and order collapsing as civilians flee violence and killings"](#), Amnesty International, 26 June 2007.
  - ["Red Cross, UNHCR warn of increased violence in Central African Republic"](#), AP, 5 June 2007.

-   Democratic Republic of Congo Prospect of escalated conflict heightened in east, although tension between opposition and government eased in Kinshasa. National Assembly passed law on rights and duties of political opposition 14 June. Senate extended opposition MLC leader (and Senator) Jean-Pierre Bemba's leave of absence to end July. Eastern "mixage" of dissident general Laurent Nkunda's troops with army units widely seen as failed as dissidents refused to integrate top command. President Joseph Kabila made major changes to security forces replacing some put in place by transition's power-sharing agreement as well as officers accused of corruption - seen as preparation for new offensive against Nkunda. Army began sending weapons to Goma, Beni and Kisangani early June; reports also indicated shipments to local militia and Rwandan FDLR, while Rwanda allegedly had helped Nkunda recruit. Clashes between army and FDLR rebels continued. UN Security Council delegation called for diplomatic and political action to settle looming Kivus crisis. 2 soldiers arrested for killing journalist of UN-sponsored Radio Okapi in Bukavu 15 June.

- ["Congo president chides UN forces over eastern violence"](#), AlertNet, 25 June 2007.
- ["Violence hampering aid efforts in the east"](#), IRIN, 22 June 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°44, *Congo: Staying Engaged after the Elections*, 9 Jan. 2007.


-  Republic of Congo First-round legislative election vote marred by delays, logistical problems and protests 24 June. 40 parties boycotted polls but main opposition participated. Second round vote 22 July.

- ["First-round polls marred by poor organization"](#), IRIN, 28 June 2007.

-  Rwanda ICTR announced plans to transfer cases of 16 genocide suspects to Rwandan courts in attempt to reduce backlog of 27 cases. ICTR President Dennis Byron urged UN Security Council to discuss tribunal or another mechanism to proceed with unfinished cases after 2008.

- ["Officials from UN war crimes tribunals urge help in arresting fugitives"](#), UN News, 18 June 2007.

- ["Genocide court wants Rwanda to take 17 future cases"](#), Reuters, 18 June 2007.


-  Uganda Talks between Ugandan government and LRA in Southern Sudanese capital Juba led to agreement on contentious third agenda point - accountability and reconciliation - 29 June. Both parties agreed national legal and institutional frameworks provide "sound basis" for ensuring accountability and reconciliation. Internal Affairs Minister and Chief Negotiator Ruhakana Rugunda stated Uganda would seek review of ICC indictments of 4 LRA commanders. LRA rebels continued to delay assembly in Ri-Kwangba, on Sudan/DRC border, as required by Cessation of Hostilities Agreement, scheduled to expire end June.

- ["Uganda rebels in new peace move"](#), BBC, 30 June 2007.

- ["Rights leaders meet Oti"](#), *New Vision*, 25 June 2007.

- For background, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°124, *Northern Uganda: Seizing the Opportunity for Peace*, 26 Apr. 2007.


### HORN OF AFRICA

-  Chad French FM Bernard Kouchner 11 June urged President Deby to allow international peacekeeping troops and UN police along border with Sudan to secure region. Deby remained noncommittal, repeatedly stating he wants police and gendarmes, not soldiers. Meeting of foreign ministers in Paris 25 June reiterated call for force in Chad. Kouchner announced French air support to humanitarian organisations supplying refugee camps in east, with airlift of aid supplies starting 17 June. Libya organised Tripoli negotiations between Khartoum-backed Chadian rebel leaders and N'Djamena 23 June. Rebels continued to demand inclusive political dialogue, non-starter for Deby.

- ["Chad rebels say Tripoli peace talks deadlocked"](#), Reuters, 23 June 2007.

- ["France begins humanitarian airlift in eastern Chad"](#), Reuters, 17 June 2007.

- For background, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°111, *Chad: Back towards War?*, 1 June 2006.

-  Ethiopia Federal High Court found 38 opposition members guilty 11 June on charges including "outrages against the

constitution" in connection with 2005 election violence. Human rights groups condemned trial. Some defendants reportedly signed deal for release. PM Zenawi announced crackdown on ONLF in Somali region of Ethiopia early June. ONLF accused government 25 June of bombing 3 villages, killing 40. Aid agencies corroborated government crackdown in area.

- "Ethiopia rebels say govt kills 40 in air raids", Reuters, 25 June 2007.
- "Jailed Ethiopians 'to be freed'", BBC, 25 June 2007.
- "In Ethiopian desert, fear and cries of army brutality", *New York Times*, 18 June 2007.

- ↳ Ethiopia/Eritrea Ethiopian PM Zenawi announced 28 June strengthening army in preparation for attack by Eritrea. Military build-up reported on both sides. Ethiopian FM Seyoum Mesfin wrote to UNSG Ban Ki-moon 7 June reiterating Ethiopia's acceptance of April 2002 Boundary Commission demarcation decision – but called for number of preconditions and blamed Eritrea for lack of progress. Asmara continued to reject dialogue and dismissed letter saying it puts too many conditions on demarcation.
  - "Eritrea scorns Ethiopia's invasion accusation", AlertNet, 1 July 2007.
  - "Ethiopia 'ready for Eritrea war'", BBC, 29 June 2007.
  - "Eritrea rejects Ethiopia acceptance of UN border decision", *Sudan Tribune*, 16 June 2007.

- ↳ Somalia Violence escalated across country. Blasts in Mogadishu, Baidoa and widespread attacks targeting Transitional Federal Government (TFG) officials or troops also killed numerous civilians. Government imposed curfew in Mogadishu mid-June in response to escalating violence. 5 killed in Baidoa cinema explosion 15 June. Police opened fire on crowd waiting for food aid in Mogadishu 26 June killing 5. Clan clashes in Kismayo led TFG to threaten military intervention. Burundi promised deployment of peacekeepers in July; pledges by other countries still unfulfilled. UN Security Council stressed need to plan possible UN takeover from AU. Somali National Reconciliation Congress postponed to 15 July. Chairman of Reconciliation Committee contacted remnants of Islamic Courts in Doha and Asmara; positive step in terms of inclusion at Congress. Delay seen as stalling by TFG to avoid loss of power while Islamists refused to participate until Ethiopian troops leave.
  - "Somali PM wants UN peacekeepers", BBC, 29 June 2007.
  - "Thousands flee Mogadishu amid renewed violence", UNHCR, 27 June 2007.
  - "Somalia imposes curfew as killings mount", *Mail & Guardian*, 21 June 2007.
  - For background, see Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°45, *Somalia: The Tough Part Is Ahead*, 26 Jan. 2007.

- ↳ Somaliland (Somalia) 14 killed in clan fighting 1 June in disputed Buhodle district between Somaliland and Puntland.
  - "14 die in clan battle in northern Somalia", Garowe Online, 1 June 2007.

- ↳ Sudan Small steps forward but no promise of short-term security improvement in Darfur. Khartoum agreed, again, to allow hybrid AU/UN force in Darfur after high-level meeting in Addis Ababa 11 and 12 June, reconfirmed following UN Security Council delegation visit 17 June. But UN command and control publicly rejected by President Bashir 19 June. New force would still not be operational until well into 2008. UN

Special Envoy to Darfur Jan Eliasson outlined new 3-part AU/UN roadmap for Darfur to UNSC 8 June: convergence of initiatives under AU/UN lead; pre-negotiation on positions of Khartoum and non-signatories to Darfur Peace Agreement; and peace negotiations. Eliasson and AU Special Envoy Salim Salim aim for new negotiations by August. France hosted meeting of over 15 FMs from concerned countries 25 June but no significant progress. Oxfam announced permanent withdrawal from Gereida in Darfur, citing reluctance by authorities to improve security. SPLM initiative to unify Darfur rebel movements postponed as key groups refused to attend, and confusion within SPLM over who is invited. Other initiatives to unite Darfur rebels being pursued by Asmara and various NGOs. AU Peace and Security Council extended AMIS mandate until end of year 22 June. Sudanese presidential adviser, responsible for Darfur affairs, Majzoub al-Khalifa, killed in road accident 27 June.

- "Darfur tests new French resolve", BBC, 26 June 2007.
- "Darfur rebels accuse Khartoum of attacks", *Mail & Guardian*, 21 June 2007.
- "The oil factor", *Economist*, 21 June 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°125, *Darfur: Revitalising the Peace Process*, 30 Apr. 2007.

## SOUTHERN AFRICA

- ↳ Comoros Islands Anjouan island government held elections 10 June in defiance of postponement ordered by federal government and African Union (AU). Order followed unrest after federal government installed new leader for Anjouan. Violence peaked 5 June when former coup leader Mohamed Bacar's forces opened fire on crowd awaiting new leader's plane. AU declared poll results "null and void" 19 June after Bacar claimed victory and named new government. AU ministerial delegation, indicating willingness to use force if necessary, flew to Moroni 25 June demanding new elections, disarmament and integration of Anjouan gendarmerie into national army.
  - "African Union flies in to demand elections", allAfrica.com, 25 June 2007.
  - "Bacar defies African Union and the Union government", IRIN, 15 June 2007.

- ↳ Lesotho Curfew imposed mid-month in Maseru after spate of attacks on cabinet ministers' homes; lifted 22 June. Dispute between opposition and government over allocation of seats after February elections still unresolved.
  - "Curfew lifted in Lesotho", Independent Online, 24 June 2007.

- ↳ Zimbabwe Officials from ruling ZANU-PF and opposition MDC held SADC-backed mediation talks in Pretoria mid-month, first real face-to-face talks in 4 years. But government also taking parallel steps to tighten grip on power by proposing constitutional amendments. Talks set to reconvene in July. South African President Mbeki expected to brief SADC leaders on progress in mediation effort early July. As talks began, 5 men including serving and retired army officers were charged with treason for alleged coup attempt to overthrow President Mugabe and replace with ZANU strongman Emmerson Mnangagwa – who strongly denied involvement. Leaked internal memo from Heads of Agencies Contact Group said country could face "total economic collapse" by year's end, as currency plummeted.
  - "Zimbabwe currency crashes", *Mail & Guardian*, 22 June 2007.



- [“Zimbabwe court cleared before ‘coup’ case hearing”](#), AlertNet, 22 June 2007.
- [“Zimbabwe’s political dialogue overshadowed”](#), *Financial Times*, 17 June 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°122, [Zimbabwe: An End to the Stalemate?](#), 5 Mar. 2007.

## WEST AFRICA

- Cameroon UNHCR noted increased spillover of insecurity and refugees from Central African Republic. Suspected rebels from CAR killed 1 civilian and seized 22 in Landou and Ouro Kessoum 24 June; Cameroon sent Rapid Intervention Battalion to east to combat insecurity.
  - [“Gunmen kill one, kidnap 22 in Cameroon near CAR”](#), Reuters, 27 June 2007.
  - [“CAR rebel attacks hamper refugee aid in Cameroon – UN”](#), Reuters, 12 June 2007.

- Côte d’Ivoire Rocket attack on PM Guillaume Soro’s plane 29 June killed 4 but Soro spokesman and President Gbagbo said would not affect peace accord; arrests made but no clear responsibility for attack emerged. Progress continued on implementing 4 March Ouagadougou peace accord. President Laurent Gbagbo appointed judges to conduct mobile court operations for national identification; government freed civilian and military prisoners through amnesty for crimes committed as part of civil conflict; and reappointment of regional administrators in north began 18 June. Leader of loyalist Young Patriots militia, Charles Blé Goudé, visited Forces Nouvelles stronghold of Bouaké 9 June and pledged to “make peace”. First meeting of Permanent Concertation Framework was held in Yamoussoukro 12 June, attended by Gbagbo, Soro, RDR party leader Alassane Ouattara, and former President (and presidential candidate) Henri Konan Bédié. Disarmament and reintegration of military yet to begin.
  - [“Ivory Coast ex-foes vow to pursue peace after attack”](#), Reuters, 30 June 2007.
  - [“Northerners reserve judgment on Gbagbo-Soro accord”](#), IRIN, 29 June 2007.
  - [“UN to stay and support elections”](#), IRIN, 20 June 2007.

Crisis Group Africa Report N°127, [Côte d’Ivoire: Can the Ouagadougou Agreement Bring Peace?](#), 27 June 2007. The Ouagadougou Peace Agreement could pave the way for reunification, but the political crisis is yet to be resolved and continues to threaten stability in West Africa. For now, the accord is merely a compromise between two armed leaders: President Laurent Gbagbo and PM Guillaume Soro, head of the rebel Forces Nouvelles. The government should seek the support of the international community to institute mobile courts for issuing identification documents and carrying out the electoral census, disarmament and security sector reform.

- Guinea National Assembly approved commission to investigate January-February 2007 violence. PUP appointed businessman Mamadou Sylla, whose release from prison by presidential intervention triggered the violence, honorary president of party alongside President Lansana Conté.
  - [“PM committed to ‘free and fair’ elections in December”](#), allAfrica.com, 13 June 2007.
  - For background, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°121, [Guinea: Change or Chaos](#), 14 Feb. 2007.

- Guinea-Bissau UN called on international community to pay \$20 million budgetary shortfall, or risk seeing reform efforts unravel. Civil servants threatened nationwide strike after 5 months without salary.
  - [“Pushers’ paradise”](#), *Economist*, 7 June 2007.

- Liberia Auditor-General John Morlu accused President Johnson-Sirleaf’s administration of being “3 times more corrupt than its predecessor”. Government rejected allegations and summoned Morlu before parliament 26 June. UNSC panel of experts reported Liberian government not enforcing UN’s travel ban and assets freeze targeting associates of former president Charles Taylor, and Taylor may maintain access to considerable wealth through investment holdings in Liberia and Nigeria. Major UNHCR repatriation operation ended 30 June; over 100,000 refugees returned.
  - [“Liberia probe into graft remarks”](#), BBC, 21 June 2007.
  - [“More than 100,000 Liberians repatriated with UNHCR help”](#), UNHCR, 5 June 2007.
  - For background, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°107, [Liberia: Resurrecting the Justice System](#), 6 Apr. 2006.

- Mali President Amadou Toumani Touré inaugurated for new 5-year term 8 June. Opposition leader Oumar Mariko called for electoral commission to be dissolved for allegedly tolerating widespread fraud. Constitutional court approved list of candidates for 1 July legislative elections. Unrest on Mali-Niger border continued with attack on security post of Tin-Zaouatine by rebel Tuareg contingent 1 June.
  - [“Mali teacher, journalists sentenced over essay”](#), AP, 26 June 2007.
  - [“Législatives 2007: La cour constitutionnelle fait le menage”](#), *L’Essor*, 4 June 2007.

- Niger Insecurity mounted in northern region of Agadez with surge in attacks from recently formed Tuareg Mouvement des Nigériens pour la Justice (MNJ). 15 government soldiers died in attack on army outpost in Tazerzait region 22 June. Government and rebel forces agreed to halt military action during ICRC visit to MNJ camp (from 26 June) to care for wounded fighters. President Mamadou Tandja refuses to recognise MNJ. Government of PM Hama Amadou dismissed 31 May over fraud accusations. Former infrastructure minister Seini Oumarou to replace Amadou despite opposition complaints Oumarou implicated in same corruption scandal.
  - [“Aid for captured Niger soldiers”](#), BBC, 26 June 2007.
  - [“Niger still blaming ‘bandits’ for unrest”](#), Independent Online, 26 June 2007.

- Nigeria Appointment of new ministers delayed by in-house haggling in ruling People’s Democratic Party (PDP) and attempts by President Umaru Musa Yar’Adua to bring opposition into government. Leading opposition candidates, former VP Atiku Abubakar and Mohammedu Buhari ruled out participation in government until election petitions are determined, but their parties (Action Congress and ANPP) began formal talks with PDP 26 June towards forming government of national unity. Supreme Court sacked new Anambra State Governor, Andy Uba (PDP), and reinstated his predecessor in 14 June ruling seen as evidence of independence of highest court. Niger Delta militants and Yar’Adua government made conciliatory gestures: MEND and NDV announced suspension of some hostilities; militants freed 25 hostages between 11-16 June; court granted bail on health

grounds to NDPVF militia leader Mujahid Dokubo-Asari 14 June. Peace initiatives threatened by continued violence: soldiers and militants battled over oil facilities with over 30 killed. Post-election violence continued with 2 prominent Yar'Adua supporters killed in month.

- "Army recaptures Nigerian oil base", BBC, 21 June 2007.
- "Nigerian unions to begin general strike Wednesday", Reuters, 18 June 2007.
- Crisis Group Africa Report N°126, *Nigeria: Failed Elections, Failing State?*, 30 May 2007.

Senegal Casamance violence continued. Government soldiers clashed with MFDC in Sindian 20 June and official wounded 25 June by suspected MFDC fighters. Legislative elections held 3 June, marred by opposition boycott and turnout rates under 35%. President Abdoulaye Wade's PDS-led coalition took 131 (increase from 90) of 150 seats. Wade appointed former budget minister, Cheikh Hadjibou Soumare, new PM 19 June.

- "Cinq blessés; dont un sous-prefet, dans une attaque en Casamance", AFP, 25 June 2007.
- "Deux militaires sénégalais blessés dans un accrochage en Casamance", AFP, 20 June 2007.

Sierra Leone Trial of Former Liberian President Charles Taylor by Special Court of Sierra Leone (SCSL) opened 4 June in the Hague. Taylor, charged with 11 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity, boycotted proceedings; failed to appear again 25 June, citing lack of funds for adequate defence team. Judge ordered SCSL to bolster Taylor's team by 31 July. Court delivered first verdicts 20 June against 3 Armed Forces Revolutionary Council militia leaders guilty on 11 counts of war crimes, including first legal condemnation of recruitment and use of child soldiers. Following mediation by Liberian President Johnson-Sirleaf, Guinean troops began to withdraw from disputed Yenga region 11 June ending 7-year presence. Parliament dissolved 25 June in preparation for postponed 11 August parliamentary and presidential elections.

- "Withdraw troops from Lilema", *Analyst*, 12 June 2007.
- "Sierra Leone: Landmark convictions for use of child Soldiers", Reuters, 20 June 2007.
- "Justice at last?", *Economist*, 31 May 2007.

## Asia/Pacific

### CENTRAL ASIA

Kazakhstan President Nazarbayev called early parliamentary elections for 18 August, dissolving lower house 20 June. Opposition Naghyz Ak Zhol and All National Social Democratic parties agreed to merge 23 June; still dwarfed by pro-presidential Nur Otan party. Astana continued to seek extradition of Rakhat Aliyev, ex-minister and now ex-son-in-law of Nazarbayev, from Austria on abduction charges. Aliyev arrested then freed on bail in Vienna; said his signature forged on divorce papers.

- "Main Kazakh opposition parties unite ahead of early parliament election", AP, 25 June 2007.
- "Kazakh leader grips power ever more tightly", Reuters, 8 June 2007.

Kyrgyzstan PM Atambayev returned from medical treatment abroad after alleged May poisoning. Supreme Court reopened investigation into 2002 Aksy police shooting of 6 protestors. Protests calling for U.S. withdrawal from Manas airbase died down after U.S. Sec. Defense Gates' 5 June Bishkek visit, suggesting agreement on continued use of base. Opposition leader Kulov launched campaign for referendum on confederation with Russia 2 June.

- "Kyrgyz PM says Turkish doctors confirm he was poisoned", AP, 18 June 2007.
- "Kulov confederation plan slated", IWPR, 16 June 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°55, *Kyrgyzstan on the Edge*, 9 Nov. 2006.

Tajikistan Parliament approved presidential amnesty, marking tenth anniversary of end to civil war, reducing prison sentences for many former opposition combatants. Law will not affect those serving life sentences, or for terrorism, multiple murders, abductions or human trafficking. Explosion outside Supreme Court 16 June; Dushanbe chief prosecutor suggested it was terrorist attack.

- "Tajik president declares amnesty for former militants", AP, 20 June 2007.
- "Explosion breaks windows at Tajik Supreme Court", Reuters, 16 June 2007.

Turkmenistan President Berdimuhamedov ordered audit and closure of secretive fund of predecessor Niyazov set up in 1993 and managed by German banks. Relations with Azerbaijan improved: Berdimuhamedov met counterpart Aliyev on sidelines of St Petersburg CIS Summit 9 June; agreed joint exploration of Kapaz/Serdar oil field on contested Caspian Sea floor and reopening of Turkmen embassy in Baku, closed since 2001.

- "Turkmen president closes fund operated by autocratic predecessor", AP, 23 June 2007.
- "Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan probe rapprochement", Eurasianet, 18 June 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°60, *Turkmenistan after Niyazov*, 12 Feb. 2007.

Uzbekistan Andijon Court released rights activist Gulbahor Turayeva 12 June, suspending 6-year term, in exchange for confession denouncing work of other activists.

- "Uncertainty grips Uzbekistan as leader's term ends", Reuters, 15 June 2007.
- "Activist from Andijan released on parole", Human Rights Watch, 15 June 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°54, *Uzbekistan: Europe's Sanctions Matter*, 6 Nov. 2006.

### SOUTH ASIA

Afghanistan Series of 5 bombings 15-17 June, many in areas where insurgents have little support base, may signal change in tactics: largest attack yet in Kabul on police bus 17 June killed at least 24. Alleged Taliban spokesman pledged further attacks on capital. U.S. Sec. Defense Robert Gates said Iranian weapons being smuggled across border to Taliban insurgents; President Karzai dismissed claims. Anger over civilian casualties caused by international forces mounted following deaths in Chora district of Uruzgan and airstrikes in Helmand. President Karzai condemned "indiscriminate and imprecise operations" 23 June and demanded more

coordination with Afghan authorities. 160-member EU Police mission (EUPOL) launched 17 June to support Afghan National Police; interior ministry reported 300 local police killed in last 3 months. UNODC report said opium production grew by 49% in 2006 and that country now accounts for 92% of world's illicit opium production.

- "Taliban turn gunshots to Afghan police", *Christian Science Monitor*, 25 June 2007.
- "Taliban threatens more attacks in Kabul", RFE/RL, 21 June 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°59, *Afghanistan's Endangered Compact*, 29 Jan. 2007.

➤ Bangladesh Government announced 3-week overhaul of electoral registry: photographs and fingerprints to be collected for all eligible voters in effort to block fraud. Former minister Amanullah Aman sentenced to 3 years on corruption charges in first major sentencing. Former PM Sheikh Hasina barred twice from leaving country as she continues to face corruption charges, as does former PM Khaleda Zia. Both deny all charges.

- "BNP reformists' proposal aims at excluding Khaleda", *Daily Star*, 26 June 2007.
- "Bangladesh starts project to stop poll cheats", Reuters, 10 June 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°121, *Bangladesh Today*, 23 Oct. 2006.

➤ India (non-Kashmir) Round-the-clock curfew imposed on north eastern town of Moreh, where clashes between Kuki and Meitie ethnic groups killed 11 and led to closure of Myanmar border post. Maoists called 2-day strike 26-27 June in Bastar, Chhattisgarh state, to protest fuel and resource exploitation. Maoists also blamed for 1 July attack on 2 Bihar police stations and blew up railway station 27 June in West Bengal state.

- "India police on alert as Maoists call strike", Reuters, 22 June 2007.
- "Eleven killed in tribal clashes in northeast India", Reuters, 10 June 2007.

➤ Kashmir Normalisation process slowed due to ongoing political turmoil in Pakistan. India said it would maintain troop levels along border of Jammu and Kashmir, citing increase in cross-border militancy.

- "India to maintain troop levels on Kashmir border with Pakistan", Bloomberg, 25 June 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°51, *India, Pakistan and Kashmir: Stabilising a Cold Peace*, 15 June 2006.

➤ Nepal Constituent assembly poll date set for 22 November. Parliament passed amendment enabling it to abolish monarchy by two-thirds vote if king hinders polls. Another law passed mid-month earmarks spots for women and ethnic minorities in the half of assembly seats to be elected by proportional representation (roughly 250). UN began process of Maoist combatant verification. Unrest and strikes continued in Tarai plains.

- "Nepal approves key poll law to calm ethnic groups", Reuters, 15 June 2007.
- "Nepal's monarchy faces new threat", BBC, 14 June 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°132, *Nepal's Maoists: Purists or Pragmatists?*, 18 May 2007.

⚠️ Pakistan Popular discontent with President Musharraf increased further. Demonstrations in support of suspended Chief Justice Iftikhar Chaudhry continued across country, attracting tens of thousands. Government confirmed opposition activists detained ahead of planned protests. Supreme Court hearing on Chaudhry's challenge to suspension order and misconduct forced continues. Week-long protest and foreign criticism forced Musharraf to suspend legislation targeting broadcasting outlets critical of his government 10 June. Opposition again rejected suggestions Musharraf eligible for re-election by outgoing legislature; expressed concerns elections will not be free and fair, claiming that voters list disenfranchised more than 20 million. Insurgency-related violence continued: militants ambushed vehicle in Quetta killing 6 soldiers and 3 civilians 14 June; airstrike by unconfirmed source killed 32 pro-Taliban militants North Waziristan 19 June - Pakistan denied claims it was U.S. missile attack launched from Afghanistan. 10 Pakistani civilians killed as NATO fired across border in battle with pro-Taliban insurgents 23 June.

- "Afghan fight crosses Pakistani border, killing 10", Reuters, 23 June 2007.
- "Hearing on merits of CJ's petition begins", *Dawn*, 12 June 2007.
- Crisis Group Alert, *Pakistan: Emergency Rule or Return to Democracy?*, 6 June 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°130, *Pakistan: Karachi's Madrasas and Violent Extremism*, 29 Mar. 2007.

➤ Sri Lanka Government began expulsion to Vavuniya of 400 ethnic Tamils from Colombo 7 June, on suspicions of aiding LTTE plot bombings. Supreme Court blocked moves next day and half of those evicted immediately returned to capital. 2 Red Cross workers found dead outside Colombo after being picked up by men who claimed to be police. International panel (IIGEP) set up to monitor government's Commission of Inquiry into human rights abuses issued first public report 11 June: criticised inclusion of attorney general as Commission counsel and absence of witness protection program. Fighting continued with limited gains by military on eastern front, where fiercest fighting concentrated in Thoppigala, site of LTTE stronghold. Dozens killed in fighting near Vavuniya, while naval battles continued off northern coast.

- "Questions remain on massacre in Sri Lanka", *New York Times*, 24 June 2007.
- "Sri Lanka troops 'kill 30 rebels'", BBC, 20 June 2007.
- "Court blocks Sri Lanka's effort to expel Tamils from capital", *New York Times*, 9 June 2007.

Crisis Group Asia Report N°135, *Sri Lanka's Human Rights Crisis*, 14 June 2007. The international community must press the warring sides for urgent action to address widespread human rights abuses in Sri Lanka as a first step to restoring a climate in which the long conflict can ultimately be resolved. Both the Sri Lankan government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) have been committing abuses since they resumed their war in 2006. The international community should support a resolution in the UN Human Rights Council, reassess aid policies and support more international involvement in monitoring abuses. Human rights protections need to be a key part of the government's political strategy for ending the conflict.





## NORTH EAST ASIA

- North Korea Progress made as Pyongyang invited IAEA inspectors to Yongbyon nuclear reactor and agreed plan for verifying shutdown 29 June. Timing to be decided by 6-Party talks. Move came after funds unfrozen as part of February agreement finally received 25 June, and surprise visit by U.S. envoy Christopher Hill to Pyongyang 21 June. Hill, most senior U.S. official to visit since 2002, said on return NK understood highly enriched uranium issue needs satisfactory resolution and talks may resume week of 10 July. Seoul resumed food aid. Missile testing continued; 2 fired from west coast 7 June; unconfirmed reports of third test 19 June.

  - "UN agrees deal over North Korea reactor", *Guardian*, 29 June 2007.
  - "U.S. envoy in surprise visit to North Korea", *Financial Times*, 21 June 2007.
  - For background, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°62, *After the North Korea Nuclear Breakthrough: Compliance or Confrontation?*, 30 Apr. 2007.
- Taiwan Strait Taiwan vowed to hold referendum on joining UN under own name despite Chinese and U.S. opposition. Legislature approved budget authorising spending on parts of long-delayed U.S. arms package 15 June; funds to be directed to purchase of maritime patrol aircraft and anti-missile defence equipment upgrade.

  - "Taipei tries new path to gain seat at the UN", *International Herald Tribune*, 19 June 2007.
  - "Taiwan passes funding for U.S. weapons", *Financial Times*, 17 June 2007.

## SOUTH EAST ASIA

- Indonesia Indonesian counter-terrorism police arrested Islamist terrorist network Jemaah Islamiyah leader Zarkasih alias Nuaim and military commander Abu Dujana in central Java 9 June. District election campaign in Bireuen district, Aceh marked by low-level violence; GAM candidate won with over 60% of vote.

  - "Indonesian militant leader says group will not die", Reuters, 25 June 2007.
  - "Indonesia captures head of terror network", *Financial Times*, 15 June 2007.
  - For background, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°63, *Indonesia: Jemaah Islamiyah's Current Status*, 3 May 2007.
- Myanmar/Burma Ambush attacks on buses in Karen and Karenni states 21-22 June killed 27. Attacks came amid reports of increase in clashes between Karen and Shan State armies; state media said ethnic guerrilla forces responsible. National Convention due to resume 18 July to finalise new constitution. In first such meeting in years, U.S. Asst. Sec. State Eric John met with junta in Beijing, pushed for release of opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi. ICRC made rare public denunciation of international humanitarian law violations by Myanmar authorities.

  - "ICRC denounces major and repeated violations of international humanitarian law", ICRC, 29 June 2007.
  - "Myanmar rebels kill 27 in bus attacks –media", Reuters, 25 June 2007.
  - For background, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°58, *Myanmar: New Threats to Humanitarian Aid*, 8 Dec. 2006.

- Philippines Government negotiator Silvestre Afable resigned abruptly as talks between Manila and Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) due to resume after postponement during May elections. Move possibly a sign of Manila taking harder line. Government-appointed replacement, Catholic priest Eliseo Mercado, forced to resign before taking up post after MILF objections. EU team in country to provide technical assistance to end extrajudicial killings.


  - "Manila peace negotiator quits after rebel protest", Reuters, 20 June 2007.
  - "Military tags Moro rebels in Davao bus bombing", *Daily Inquirer*, 17 June 2007.

- Thailand Violence continued unabated in restive south; coup leader Sonthi claimed insurgency "never more deadly". Killing of 4 Buddhist teachers prompted indefinite closure of several schools 11 June. Over 500 Muslim protesters blocked road in Raman, Yala 13 June accusing Thai security forces of murder of local Muslim religious teacher. Bomb killed district chief (most senior civilian official killed in conflict) and 2 soldiers 19 June. Political crisis continued in Bangkok: ousted PM Thaksin supporters and pro-democracy activists held nightly protests but numbers dropped significantly by month-end. Political parties allowed to resume activity 5 June although ban on formation of new parties remains, preventing re-formation of Thaksin's disbanded Thai Rak Thai. Coup leaders demanded Thaksin return to Thailand to face corruption charges after family accounts worth US\$1.6bn frozen 11 June.

  - "Junta orders Thaksin back to Thailand", AP, 19 June 2007.
  - "Schools torched in South Thailand", BBC, 14 June 2007.
  - For background, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°129, *Southern Thailand: The Impact of the Coup*, 15 Mar. 2007.

- Timor-Leste Parliamentary elections held 30 June without major incident. Campaign period marred by 3 June shooting in Viqueque district of 2 CNRT supporters by police (one off-duty). Series of house burnings and intimidation displaced over hundred families from Ermera district. President Ramos-Horta asked International Security Forces to stop search for fugitive rebel soldier Alfredo Reinado 19 June and called on prosecutor-general to discuss terms for Reinado's surrender and weapons handover under mediation of Catholic Church.

  - "East Timor elections appear to go smoothly", Reuters, 30 June 2007.
  - "E Timor defiant on boost to forces", *Australian*, 14 June 2007.

Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°65, *Timor-Leste's Parliamentary Elections*, 12 June 

2007. Elections held 30 June could strengthen political institutions and be an important part of nation-building, yet the key issues underlying the civil unrest in 2006 remain unresolved. The new Congresso Nacional de Reconstrução de Timor-Leste (CNRT) party is likely to come to power, but there are concerns over some CNRT proposals to distribute money quickly to alleviate poverty and its failure to discuss key ministries.

## PACIFIC

- Fiji Government expelled New Zealand High Commissioner Michael Green; Auckland promised tougher sanctions. Cabinet agreed to early 2009 elections. Deputy commander Esala Teleni appointed police commissioner.

  - "Europe and Australia say Fiji sanctions to remain", Reuters, 25 June 2007.

- ↳ Solomon Islands New police commissioner Jahir Khan revived plans to rearm police, beginning with protection forces for PM Sogavare. Australian-led assistance mission RAMSI reiterated its disapproval.
  - [“Solomons police want to rearm”](#), *Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 June 2007.



## Europe

### BALKANS

- ↳ Albania Parliament failed, for second time, to hold presidential vote 27 June after no candidate presented.
  - [“Albania’s political squabbling threatens parliament’s election of new president”](#), AP, 20 June 2007.
- ↳ Bosnia & Herzegovina Republika Srpska (RS) PM Dodik threatened to sue Bosniak presidency member Silajdzic over alleged comment that RS result of genocide and should not be recognised as entity. Silajdzic and Croat presidency member Komsic called on international community to re-examine BiH’s constitutional structures, referring to February ICJ ruling on Bosnian Serb genocide role. 16 June meeting to restart constitutional talks collapsed. International Peace Implementation Council declared “severe deterioration” in political situation 19 June. Srebrenica survivors launched civil case against Dutch government at Dutch Supreme Court 4 June. Miroslav Lajcak, High Representative as of 1 July, appointed EU Special Representative 18 June. Study issued new mortality figures for 1992-5 war: at least 97,207 killed.
  - [“Bosnia war dead figure announced”](#), BBC, 21 June 2007.
  - [“EU says Bosnian police reform key to accession process”](#), AP, 20 June 2007.
  - For background, see Crisis Group Europe Report N°180, [Ensuring Bosnia’s Future: A New International Engagement Strategy](#), 15 Feb. 2007.
- ↳ Kosovo International deadlock over Kosovo status continued as U.S. and European attempts to overcome Russian opposition to independence failed: Presidents Bush and Putin to meet 1-2 July. At 6-8 June G8 Summit Moscow rejected French proposal of 6-month delay, opposing automatic independence provision if further Pristina-Belgrade talks fail. Contact Group minus Russia met in Paris 12 June; agreed on need for timely UNSC resolution. EU FMs suggested 21 June new Pristina-Belgrade negotiations in Brussels during 4-6 month delay; still hopeful of UNSC resolution. Bush explicitly supported independence during 10 June visit to Albania; hinted unilateral recognition as possible last resort. In Kosovo, majority Albanians began debate over unilateral moves and possible pre-status 2007 parliamentary elections. Tsar Lazar Guard volunteers bussed under heavy Kosovo police control to Gazimestan monument near Pristina for 28 June Battle of Kosovo commemoration; passed peacefully. Vetevendosje movement held 30 June protest without incident; leader Albin Kurti re-detained after breaching house arrest terms.
  - [“Protest mocks Kosovo leaders, demands independence”](#), Reuters, 30 June 2007.
  - [“Fears abound over stalled Kosovo status”](#), ISN, 26 June 2007.
  - For background, see Crisis Group Europe Report N°182 [Kosovo: No Good Alternatives to the Ahtisaari Plan](#), 14 May 2007.

- ↳ Macedonia Parliament rejected no-confidence motion by opposition 7 June.
  - [“Bid to topple Gruevski administration in Macedonia fails”](#), Southeast European Times, 8 June 2007.
  - For background, see Crisis Group Europe Briefing N°41, [Macedonia: Wobbling toward Europe](#), 12 Jan. 2006.
- ↳ Serbia ICTY Prosecutor Carla Del Ponte praised new government’s cooperation with tribunal after 4 June Belgrade visit. EU invited Serbia to restart Stabilisation and Association Agreement negotiations 7 June; talks resumed 13 June. War crimes suspect Vlastimir Djordjevic arrested in Montenegro 17 June with support from Serbian authorities. In Sandzak, police arrested 3 suspected of involvement in Islamist militant organisations in Novi Pazar 7 June; discovered large weapons cache 11 June.
  - [“Del Ponte praises Serbia’s cooperation with tribunal”](#), IWPR, 23 June 2007.
  - [“Serbia says it will not trade Kosovo for EU or NATO”](#), Reuters, 12 June 2007.
  - For background, see Crisis Group Europe Briefing N°46, [Serbia’s New Government: Turning from Europe](#), 31 May 2007.

### CAUCASUS

- ↳ Armenia Republican Party, despite winning outright majority in May parliamentary elections, signed coalition agreement with Prosperous Armenia Party (BHK) and cooperation deal with Armenian Revolutionary Federation Dashnaksutyun (ARF) 6 June. BHK and ARF to have 3 ministerial portfolios each. Constitutional Court rejected opposition appeals for partial recounts and reruns of polls.
  - [“Opposition decries high court verdict on election appeals”](#), Armenia Liberty, 11 June 2007.
  - [“Pro-establishment forces wrap up power-sharing process”](#), Armenia Liberty, 6 June 2007.
- ↳ Azerbaijan FM Mammadyarov welcomed Russian President Putin’s proposal to U.S. at 6-8 June G8 Summit to establish joint missile defense system at Russian Gabala radar base in Azerbaijan. Defence minister Abiyev and Russian counterpart signed joint protocol on continued base use 20 June. Police forcibly dispersed small group of journalists protesting media crackdown in Baku 14 June.
  - [“Azeris angry at Putin radar offer”](#), IWPR, 14 June 2007.
  - [“Police break up journalists’ demonstration in Baku”](#), RFE/RL, 14 June 2007.
- ↳ Chechnya (Russia) Russian military court sentenced 4 soldiers (3 in absentia) to 9-14 years prison, overturning earlier acquittals for 2002 murder of 6 Chechen civilians. European Court of Human Rights ordered Russia to pay compensation to relatives of activist and family killed by security services in 2003. Clash between traffic police and army unit in Grozny left at least 5 dead 20 June.
  - [“Rights situation may be improving”](#), RFE/RL, 21 June 2007.
  - [“Shootout in Chechnya between police, defense ministry unit kills at least 5, wounds 6”](#), AP, 20 June 2007.
- ↳ North Caucasus (non-Chechnya) In Ingushetia, 1 police and 2 civilians killed by gunmen near Nazran 15 June;



suspected militant killed 17 June. In Kabardino-Balkaria, 2 militants killed by special forces in Nalchik 27 June. In southern Russian city Stavropol, protestors demanded eviction of Chechens, alleging 3 June murder of 2 Russian students revenge attack for 24 May Chechen student death in ethnic clashes.

- "1 police officer, 2 civilians killed in attack in southern Russia", AP, 16 June 2007.
- "Ethnic tensions mounting in restive Stavropol", RFE/RL, 7 June 2007.

➤ Georgia Security situation in South Ossetia remained tense with mutual detentions of locals, reports of nightly shooting and repeated obstruction of OSCE and Joint Peacekeeping Force (JPKF) patrols. JPKF deployed to prevent clashes over creation of new bypass roads by both sides. 2 Ossetians, 1 Georgian injured in shooting incidents 28 June. South Ossetian capital Tskhinvali and some Georgian villages left without water 25 May-8 June after dispute over repairs in Georgian-administered supply area. In Abkhazia, de facto FM Shamba said would not resume talks with Tbilisi unless latter honoured 1994 Moscow ceasefire agreement, withdrew Abkhaz government-in-exile from Kodori gorge and released Gali district official Davit Sigua. Government-backed legislation for 2008 start to repatriation of Meskhetian Turks deported in 1944 approved in initial parliamentary reading 22 June.

- "Prime minister defends territorial integrity", RFE/RL, 11 June 2007.
- "Calm urged in S Ossetia water row", BBC, 4 June 2007.

Crisis Group Europe Report N°183, **International Crisis Group** WORKING TO PREVENT CONFLICT WORLDWIDE  
**Georgia's South Ossetia Conflict: Make Haste Slowly**, 7 June 2007. Frequent security incidents in Georgia's breakaway region of South Ossetia could degenerate into greater violence unless all sides resume substantive dialogue and avoid pressing unilateral efforts to end the stalemate. Resentful of Russia's role in the resolution process, Tbilisi is eager to change the negotiation and peacekeeping format as well as the status quo on the ground. But focusing on containing Russia, however legitimate, will not resolve inter-ethnic issues and satisfy Ossetian aspirations and fears. The Georgian government needs to work on changing perceptions, through bilateral efforts and by embarking on a substantive dialogue with the de facto authorities in South Ossetia.

➤ Nagorno-Karabakh (Azerbaijan) No breakthrough as Azerbaijani and Armenian Presidents Aliyev and Kocharian met during 9 June St Petersburg CIS Summit, despite optimism of OSCE Minsk Group negotiators. Armenian-Azerbaijani delegation of intellectuals, led by 2 countries' Moscow ambassadors, visited Stepanakert and Yerevan 28 June. Azerbaijani army captured Armenian soldier 11 June; claimed he did not want to return. Campaigning for de facto 19 July presidential elections began.

- "Standstill, time-out, stalemate, or deadlock?", RFE/RL, 22 June 2007.
- "Warning Armenia anew, Azerbaijani president vows to strengthen military forces", AP, 22 June 2007.

## EASTERN EUROPE

➤ Belarus EU suspended trade preferences 21 June, citing Minsk's failure to reform labour rights. U.S. renewed

sanctions against President Lukashenka and 9 officials. UN Human Rights Council took Belarus off special watch list, reportedly under Russian pressure, despite last rapporteur's warning of 2006 deterioration.

- "Belarus says EU scrapping of tariffs will hurt ordinary Belarusians", AP, 18 June 2007.
- "Rapporteur says UN sends 'wrong' message to Belarus", RFE/RL, 19 June 2007.

➤ Moldova Ruling Communist Party retained majority in 3 June municipal elections, but lost key Chisinau mayorship to Liberal Party rights activist; poll not held in Transnistria. Tiraspol authorities released last 2 Popular Moldovan Front political prisoners, jailed in 1992. No agreement on U.S.-NATO proposal of multinational peacekeeping force to replace Russian troops in Moldova and Georgia at emergency meeting in Vienna on Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty 12-15 June. President Voronin met Russian President Putin for talks 22 June; no major progress on Transnistria recorded.

- "Liberal activist ousts Communist in race for mayor of Moldova's capital", AP, 18 June 2007.
- "U.S. pushes for peace force in Moldova", AP, 5 June 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Europe Report N°175, *Moldova's Uncertain Future*, 17 Aug. 2006.

➤ Ukraine Early parliamentary elections for 30 September confirmed after parliament approved necessary legislation. President Yushchenko requested EU observers. Visa facilitation agreement with EU signed 18 June. Moscow denied entry to senior Yushchenko aide after Kiev deported leader of Russia's nationalist Eurasia movement.

- "Ukrainian president wants EU observers at September elections", AP, 21 June 2007.
- "Ukraine slams Russia for expelling top official", RFE/RL, 6 June 2007.

## WESTERN EUROPE/MEDITERRANEAN

➤ Basque Country (Spain) ETA declared end to 15-month ceasefire 5 June. Day later former ETA leader Jose Ignacio de Juana Chaos, under house arrest since March, re-jailed. Batasuna leader Arnaldo Otegi also arrested, to start 15-month sentence for glorifying terrorism. PM Zapatero admitted government held secret talks with ETA before December 2006 Madrid airport bombing.

- "Former Eta separatist re-jailed", BBC, 6 June 2007.
- "Basque separatist group ETA calls off cease-fire", AP, 5 June 2007.

➤ Cyprus UN Security Council extended UNFICYP mission to December 2007; called on sides to immediately engage with stalled 8 July 2006 process of twin-track political and technical talks to allow fully-fledged negotiations. Landmark dispute between British owners of house in North and original Greek Cypriot owners of land referred by British judges to European Court of Justice.

- "Europe ruling on Cyprus villa row", BBC, 19 June 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Europe Report N°171, *The Cyprus Stalemate: What Next?*, 8 Mar. 2006.

➤ Northern Ireland (UK) Prosecutors said insufficient evidence to charge former police officers over 1998 murder of lawyer Pat Finucane, despite proof of police collusion. Government warned Ulster Defence Association would lose

£500k state funding unless began disarming. Shaun Woodward appointed new Sec. State for NI. British army withdrew from Bessbrook base in NI drawdown.

- [“No officers to be charged over Finucane murder”](#), *Guardian*, 25 June 2007.
- [“Warning to UDA: give up your arms or the money runs out”](#), *Observer*, 3 June 2007.

→ Turkey Political situation remained tense ahead of 22 July parliamentary elections. President Sezer referred proposal to elect president by popular vote to referendum, but blocked government moves to hold referendum 22 July. Security situation in south east further deteriorated as increased rebel attacks saw over 50 killed, including 4 June rocket and grenade attack on military base in Tunceli which killed 7 soldiers. 14 injured in bomb explosion in Istanbul 10 June. Army and government reiterated threats of major military operation into Northern Iraq against PKK; NATO, EU called for restraint. EU agreed to open 2 new negotiating chapters with Turkey on statistics and financial control, but delayed opening of talks on economic and monetary policy after French objections.

- [“Turkey warns of plans to invade northern Iraq”](#), *Guardian*, 30 June 2007.
- [“EU ‘faces backlash from Turkey’”](#), BBC, 30 June 2007.

↓ United Kingdom Burning car crashed into Glasgow airport 30 June after 2 unexploded car bombs found in central London 29 June. Police linked incidents, arrested 4; new government raised terror alert to highest level.

- [“PM defiant over ‘al-Qaeda threat’”](#), BBC, 1 July 2007.

## Latin America / Caribbean

→ Bolivia Constituent Assembly (CA) likely to ask for extension of 6 August deadline to present new constitution; nothing approved in over 10 months. Tensions continued to rise in CA over ruling MAS party proposal to consider 36 indigenous groups as nations and include autonomy for indigenous peoples in new constitution. Eastern lowland regional governments see move as undermining regional autonomy won in July 2006 referendum.

- [“El MAS moviliza a sus bases y pide 60 días para la Asamblea”](#), *La Razón*, 26 June 2007.
- [“Evo Morales insiste en versiones de golpe en Bolivia”](#), *Los Tiempos*, 22 June 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Latin America Briefing N°13, [Bolivia's Reforms: The Danger of New Conflicts](#), 8 Jan. 2007.

→ Colombia Government released some 150 FARC prisoners including FARC “foreign minister” Rodrigo Granda. French President Sarkozy requested Granda's release in hopes of hostage swap to include former Colombian presidential candidate and dual French-Colombian citizen Ingrid Betancourt. FARC said killed 11 deputies in failed hostage rescue 18 June; government denied any attempt. Standoff continued between FARC and government on demilitarisation of Florida and Pradera (key FARC demand). Government blamed FARC for 9 bombs in Buenaventura that killed 3; army retaliated killing at least 7 in La Julia; air force bombed Meta, at least 30 dead. ELN negotiator said group would consider hostage release if ceasefire signed with government in Havana talks due early July.

- [“Released Farc man leaves Colombia”](#), BBC, 19 June 2007.
- [“FARC rebel release: ‘smokescreen’ or ‘humanitarian’?”](#), *Christian Science Monitor*, 7 June 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Latin America Report N°20, [Colombia's New Armed Groups](#), 10 May 2007.

→ Ecuador Following blocking of various bills by legislature, President Rafael Correa called for Constitutional Assembly, due to convene in October, to dissolve Congress. Correa also decreed state of emergency in prisons to hasten construction of new ones. Suit by Correa against newspaper *La Hora* over critical op-ed raised fears of curbs to freedom of press.

- [“Correa: Asamblea debe disolver el Congreso”](#), *El Universo*, 24 June 2007.

→ Haiti Improved security situation in Gonaïves following arrests and joint MINUSTAH/HNP operations; gang leader St Just Adecla killed 20 June in unexplained circumstances. Gang member Yoyo Piman killed by MINUSTAH forces 12 June in Cité Soleil while resisting arrest. Plans to create 2 new prisons announced by PM Alexis 20 June. Public transport strike over rise in petrol prices 12-13 June. President Préval to appoint commission to examine possibility of creating national security force to eventually replace MINUSTAH.

- [“Haiti studies creation of security force”](#), *LA Times*, 21 June 2007.
- Crisis Group Latin America/Caribbean Briefing N°15 [Haiti: Prison Reform and the Rule of Law](#), 4 May 2007.

→ Venezuela President Hugo Chávez stood by closure of private channel RCTV as student protests continued. Tension with U.S. increased during OAS summit in Panama after U.S. Sec. State Rice criticised measures to reduce freedom of press and Venezuelan FM Nicolás Maduro denounced U.S. human rights violations in Guantánamo. In visit to Moscow, Chávez announced arms purchase from Russia in “strategic and economic alliance”; also spoke of weapons purchases from Belarus and China. Earlier in month, Chávez warned military to prepare for guerrilla war against U.S. in case of invasion.

- [“Be ready for guerrilla war against the US, Chavez tells army”](#), *Guardian*, 26 June 2007.
- [“Venezuela's Chavez may buy submarines”](#), Reuters, 21 June 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Latin America Report N°19, [Venezuela: Hugo Chávez's Revolution](#), 22 Feb. 2007.

## Middle East / North Africa

### EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

→ Israel/Occupied Territories Internal Palestinian conflict split Hamas-ruled Gaza from Fatah-controlled West Bank. Intense fighting claimed over 100 before 14 June complete Hamas takeover of Gaza. President Mahmoud Abbas branded Hamas “murderous terrorists”, sacked Hamas-led government and replaced it with emergency cabinet led by PM Salam Fayyad 17 June. U.S. President Bush and Israeli PM Ehud Olmert agreed to support Abbas government; funding resumed as Quartet (U.S., EU, UN, Russia) lifted aid embargo and Israeli cabinet agreed 24 June to release frozen tax funds

withheld since Hamas' January 2006 election victory. Fatah gunmen, primarily from Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade, went on reprisal rampage in West Bank. Olmert announced plans to release 250 jailed Fatah members at 25 June Egypt summit, attended by Abbas and leaders of Egypt and Jordan. Israel launched Gaza attacks from 20 June, killing over 30. Israeli troops also raided Nablus and Jenin refugee camp in West Bank, clashing with Fatah and Islamic Jihad militants. Former PM Shimon Peres elected Israeli president after rivals withdrew. Ehud Barak won 51.2% of second round vote in Labour party leadership; approved defence minister, replacing Amir Peretz, 13 June. Former UK PM Tony Blair appointed envoy for Middle East Quartet 27 June.

- "Israel kills 7 in series of Gaza air strikes", Reuters, 30 June 2007.
- "Can Tony Blair help make peace?", *Economist*, 28 June 2007.
- "Egypt backs Abbas by organizing a summit meeting", *International Herald Tribune*, 21 June 2007.
- "Welcome to 'Palestine'", *Independent*, 16 June 2007.
- For background, see *After Mecca: Engaging Hamas*, Crisis Group Middle East Report N°62, 28 Feb. 2007.

Lebanon Fierce battles between Lebanese army and Fatah al-Islam group continued throughout month in Nahr al-Bared refugee camp north of Tripoli, Ain al Hilwe camp near Sidon and latterly in Tripoli itself: military reported over 200 killed since fighting started 20 May. Lebanese Salafi jihadis have so far condemned Fatah al-Islam and its ideology, but have been recruiting elsewhere and built power bases in other refugee camps. MP Walid Eido became seventh anti-Syrian figure to be assassinated since 2005; his son and 8 others also died in 13 June blast. Eido's death leaves anti-Syrian bloc with slim majority of 3 in parliament. Governing coalition continued to refuse to give opposition one-third of cabinet seats needed for veto power. 6 UN peacekeepers from Spain and Colombia killed after their vehicle was hit by explosive device 24 June; Hizbollah denied responsibility. 2 Katyusha rockets fired by local Salafi jihadi group in Lebanon exploded near northern Israeli border town of Kiryat Shmona 18 June.

- "Anti-Syrian lawmakers seek safety abroad amid mounting security threats", *International Herald Tribune*, 30 June 2007.
- "Six U.N. peacekeepers die in Lebanon bombing", *Washington Post*, 25 June 2007.
- "Lebanon Islamist clashes spread", BBC, 24 June 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Middle East Briefing N°20, *Lebanon at a Tripwire*, 21 Dec. 2006.

Syria Assassination of prominent Lebanese MP Walid Eido prompted increased speculation over Syria's destabilising role in Lebanon. Israeli media reported Israeli PM Ehud Olmert secretly sent messages to President Bashar Assad offering full withdrawal from Golan Heights in exchange for full peace. Deputy PM Shaul Mofaz confirmed Israel approach on possible renewal of talks.

- "Jewish settlers fear Golan withdrawal", BBC, 22 June 2007.
- "Israel 'tests' Syria peace aims", BBC, 9 June 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Middle East Report N°63, *Restarting Israeli-Syrian Negotiations*, 10 Apr. 2007.

## GULF

Iran Rare display of internal dissent followed fuel rationing as protestors set fire to petrol station and chanted anti-government slogans in north west Tehran 26 June.

Rationing imposed amid fears of UN sanctions over nuclear program. Students, lawyers and academics reported increased crackdown on civil liberties. EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana held "constructive" talks with Tehran's lead negotiator Ali Larijani in Lisbon 23 June. U.S. Sec. Defense Robert Gates accused Tehran of allowing "substantial flow of weapons" to Afghan Taliban 13 June.

- "Muzzling dissent and moving to a war footing", *Economist*, 28 June 2007.
- "A yes or a no?", *Economist*, 28 June 2007.
- "Romance versus reality", *Economist*, 14 June 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Middle East Briefing N°21, *Iran: Ahmadi-Nejad's Tumultuous Presidency*, 6 Feb. 2007; and Report N°51, *Iran: Is There a Way Out of the Nuclear Impasse?*, 23 Feb. 2006.

Iraq U.S. military announced full deployment of all extra troops, some 28,500, mostly in Baghdad, as part of "surge" strategy. U.S. apparently using new tactic of arming and empowering Sunni factions that vow to resist outside groups such as al-Qaeda. U.S. commanders and Iraqi provincial officials met 130 Sunni leaders in Tikrit who agreed to play more active role in defending their province, Salahuddin, against radical insurgent groups. Shiite al-Askari shrine in Samarra again targeted 13 June. Despite calls for calm from prominent Shia cleric, Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani, 6 Sunni mosques targeted in reprisal attacks. 80 killed in truck bomb attack on Shia mosque in central Baghdad 19 June. Ali Hassan al-Majid, ex-Baath leader in northern Iraq, sentenced to death for role in 1988 Anfal campaign against Kurds.

- "Justice, up to a point", *Economist*, 28 June 2007.
- "Plan to arm additional Sunni groups poses risks", RFE/RL, 22 June 2007.
- "Shiite rivalries slash at a once calm Iraqi city", *New York Times*, 21 June 2007.

Crisis Group Middle East Report N°67, *Where Is Iraq Heading? Lessons from Basra*, 25 June 2007. The British experience in Basra, far from being a model to be replicated, is an example of what to avoid. Following a military "surge" by coalition forces, Basra's political arena is now in the hands of actors engaged in bloody competition for resources, undermining what is left of governate institutions. It is time Washington and London acknowledge that their so-called Iraqi partners, far from building a new state, are tirelessly working to tear it down.

Saudi Arabia 11 mostly middle-ranking clerics arrested 7 June for allegedly being "funders and inciters" of terrorist activity. Committee for the Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice (religious police) criticised in local media for 4 deaths under suspicious circumstances.

- "Vicious about virtue", *Economist*, 21 June 2007.

Yemen Ceasefire deal agreed between government and Al-Houthi rebels, brokered by Qatar, 16 June after months of violence in Saada province.

- "Yemen rebels 'accept' ceasefire", BBC, 16 June 2007.

## NORTH AFRICA

Algeria President Bouteflika appointed new cabinet 4 June. Abdelaziz Belkhadem remained PM; vowed to fight terrorism. Gunmen killed 2 security guards in attack on gas



pipeline east of Algiers 22 June. 1 killed in bomb explosion near police station in Kabylie 6 June.

- "2 security guards killed by gunmen in Algeria", AP, 24 June 2007.
- "Bomb kills one in Algeria – residents", Reuters, 6 June 2007.

➡ Egypt Accusations of official intimidation and vote manipulation, and violence, marred elections for a third of seats in Shura council (upper house of parliament). After first round 11 June, which saw at least 400 Muslim Brothers arrested, group accused government of "massacring" democracy; no pro-Brotherhood independents ran in second round 18 June. Ruling National Democratic Party won 84, Tagammu Party 1, and independents 3 seats. 1 killed in polling station clashes in al-Sharqiya province 11 June. U.S. Congress Committee voted to condition \$200m of \$1.3bn military aid on police and judicial reform, and on halt of weapons smuggling to Gaza. At least 45 Muslim Brother students detained in Alexandria 30 June.

- "Egypt: a diagnosis", openDemocracy, 28 June 2007.
- "Critics sharp after charges of rigging in Egyptian elections", AP, 17 June 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Middle East/North Africa Report N°61, *Egypt's Sinai Question*, 30 Jan. 2007.

➡ Mauritania Court acquitted 20 Islamists of trying to form al-Qaeda-linked group: 1 found guilty of possessing illegal arms and false documents, given 2-year sentence. Separate trial of 14 Islamists charged with terrorist group

collaboration began 25 June; 3 defendants accused of participating in 2005 attack on army base which killed 15.

- "Second group of Mauritanian Islamists on trial for terrorism", AP, 25 June 2007.
- "Mauritanian court clears Islamists of al Qaeda plot", Reuters, 5 June 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Middle East/North Africa Report N°53, *Political Transition in Mauritania: Results and Prospects*, 24 Apr. 2006.

➡ Western Sahara UN-brokered talks in New York between Moroccan government and Polisario Front 18-19 June, first direct negotiations in 7 years, ended in continued stalemate. Parties agreed to meet in August.

- "Morocco and Polisario Front to meet again in August to try to resolve Western Sahara dispute", AP, 20 June 2007.
- "Moroccan police allegedly torture Western Sahara demonstrators as talks begin", AP, 22 June 2007.

Middle East/North Africa Reports N°65  *Western Sahara: The Cost of the Conflict*, and N°66, *Western Sahara: Out of the Impasse*, 11 June 2007. Despite some recent optimism and new talks starting on 18 June, the conflict in Western Sahara – with its heavy continuing costs on all the parties – will not be resolved without a fundamental change in the UN Security Council's approach: either fully implement self-determination by imposing a referendum with independence option, or give parties unrestricted encouragement to negotiate a solution themselves.

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**President William J. Clinton, 5 March 2007**

## Advocacy Offices

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| <b>Brussels</b>   | brussels@crisisgroup.org<br>+32 2 502 9038    |
| <b>Washington</b> | washington@crisisgroup.org<br>+1 202 785 1601 |
| <b>New York</b>   | newyork@crisisgroup.org<br>+1 212 813 0820    |
| <b>London</b>     | london@crisisgroup.org<br>+44 20 7031 0230    |
| <b>Moscow</b>     | moscow@crisisgroup.org<br>+7 095 251 4485     |

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