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## CrisisWatch:

- summarises briefly developments during the previous month in some 70 situations of current or potential conflict, listed alphabetically by region, providing references and links to more detailed information sources (all references mentioned are hyperlinked in the electronic version of this bulletin);
- assesses whether the overall situation in each case has, during the previous month, significantly deteriorated, significantly improved, or on balance remained more or less unchanged;
- alerts readers to situations where, in the coming month, there is a particular risk of new or significantly escalated conflict, or a particular conflict resolution opportunity (noting that in some instances there may in fact be both); and
- summarises Crisis Group's reports and briefing papers that have been published in the last month.

*CrisisWatch* is compiled by Crisis Group's Brussels Research Unit, drawing on multiple sources including the resources of 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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Sudan



### Conflict Resolution Opportunities

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## Africa

### CENTRAL AFRICA

↳ Burundi Peace talks between Palipehutu-FNL and government suffered major setback. FNL delegation to MCVS (Joint Framework for the Monitoring and Follow-Up) fled Bujumbura 21-24 July and asked to broaden scope of negotiations to include specific guarantees regarding army integration and government positions. FNL reaffirmed commitment to ceasefire agreement but resumption of violence remains possibility from both sides. Political rifts continued: 16 July inauguration of cabinet boycotted by 40 opposition MPs and 17 ruling CNDD-FDD party legislators, claiming cabinet reshuffle not sufficient to overcome institutional crisis over removal of party chairman Hussein Radjabu.

- [“Diplomats ask Burundi rebels to rejoin truce team”](#), Reuters, 31 July 2007.
- [“Burundi opposition MPs boycott cabinet swearing-in”](#), Reuters, 16 July 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°120, [Burundi: Democracy and Peace at Risk](#), 30 Nov. 2006.

↳ Central African Republic EU initialised plans 23 July for peacekeeping mission to CAR and Chad to protect refugees in Darfur border region.

- [“EU takes first step for Chad Darfur refugee force”](#), Reuters, 23 July 2007.

↳ Democratic Republic of Congo Risk of escalated conflict in east remained as military and munitions build-up continued in the Kivus. Government operations against insurgent Gen. Laurent Nkunda stalled due to logistical and financial problems. After high-level international delegations, including UN Security Council and EU Development Commissioner, President Kabila indicated 11 July he would exhaust peaceful options but demanded Nkunda leave DRC. Nkunda consolidated control over large areas of North Kivu, coercing communities to join his CNDP movement. Clashes between Banyamulenge insurgents and army in South Kivu mid-July likely to exacerbate situation in North Kivu. Parliament passed law granting opposition leader same status as minister of state. Opposition MLC president Jean-Pierre Bemba’s medical leave from Senate expired 31 July, with no agreement on how to secure his return to Kinshasa.

- [“Congo opposition chief Bemba says won’t go home yet”](#), Reuters, 1 Aug. 2007.
- [“Only just staying in one piece”](#), *Economist*, 26 July 2007.
- [“Rogue general threatens DRC peace”](#), BBC, 24 July 2007.
- Comment by François Grignon (Crisis Group), [“Difficile transition vers la démocratie et la paix au Congo”](#), *Le Monde*, 21 July 2007.

Crisis Group Africa Report N°120, [Congo: Consolidating the Peace](#), 5 July 2007. An unimpressive first half-year of Congo’s elected government has left the peace process in danger, especially in the volatile East, and democracy fragile. While the transition helped unify the divided country and improved security in much of it,...



...governing institutions remain weak, abusive or non-existent. The government must make good on promises to respect opposition rights and stop using repressive violence. Donors must stay engaged and condition their aid on acceptance of a political framework addressing security and governance challenges. They should press for a comprehensive peace initiative in the East and increased cooperation with the UN mission, especially in the Kivus where renewed war threatens.

↳ Rwanda Belgian court sentenced former general Bernard Ntuyahaga to 20 years’ prison for 1994 murder of 10 peacekeepers. Relations between France and Rwanda warmed as Kigali publicly welcomed Paris’s decision to arrest 2 men indicted by ICTR.

- [“New dawn for Paris-Kigali?”](#), *East African*, 31 July 2007.

↳ Uganda Peace talks between Ugandan government and Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) staggered forward. Following 29 June agreement on reconciliation and accountability parties recessed to prepare for negotiations over possible mechanisms. Security in South Sudan improved after 800-1,000 LRA combatants moved from Eastern Equatoria to LRA’s base west of Garamba National Park in DRC. MONUC plans to monitor and deter possible LRA infiltration into DRC territory. But Uganda and Sudan failed to attend meeting of new joint mechanism established to coordinate efforts against LRA.

- [“Can traditional rituals bring justice to N Uganda?”](#), IWPR, 25 July 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°124, [Northern Uganda: Seizing the Opportunity for Peace](#), 26 Apr. 2007.

### HORN OF AFRICA

↳ Chad EU member states agreed 23 July to start planning for possible 3,000-strong peacekeeping mission as part of broader UN mission. UN peacekeeping chief Jean-Marie Guéhenno said UN would train and support Chadian police while EU would protect civilians, humanitarian workers and UN mission. EU mission will not be deployed without UN Security Council resolution and clear exit strategy. French FM Kouchner said interim EU mission would eventually hand over to UN peacekeeping force. Talks between government and 4 Chadian rebel factions in Tripoli, and between government and Chadian non-armed political opposition in N’Djamena, both stalled.

- [“EU prepares for hard-core Chad mission”](#), ISN, 26 July 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°111, [Chad: Back towards War?](#), 1 June 2006.

↳ Ethiopia Situation deteriorated in Ogaden region. Government claimed trying to flush out Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) militias while reports of villages burnt and population moved into “protected” areas. WFP warned restrictions on trade and movement of aid due to military operations could cause humanitarian crisis. ICRC given 7 days to leave region 24 July by regional government for allegedly “consorting with rebels”. ONLF claimed ambush on military convoy killed 43 government soldiers 2 July. Opposition members held in detention for 2 years and found guilty in June, released following signing of document admitting guilt - 1 group leader said he signed under duress.

- "Government denies looming humanitarian crisis in Somali region", IRIN, 26 July 2007.
- "Ethiopian rebels say they kill 43 govt troops", Reuters, 3 July 2007.

➡ Ethiopia/Eritrea UNSG Ban Ki-moon's 18 July report noted significant Eritrean troop buildup inside, and Ethiopian troop build-up adjacent to, Temporary Security Zone (TSZ). Both sides also placed further restrictions on UNMEE. Boundary commission planned meeting for early September after receiving positive signals from both sides, but Ethiopia suggested would attend only if minimum conditions - Eritrean withdrawal from TSZ - met by time of meeting.

- "Ban Ki-moon calls for efforts to break Ethiopia-Eritrea peace process stalemate", UN News, 20 July 2007.

➡ Somalia National Reconciliation Congress began 15 July in Mogadishu. Security worsened there after congress started - UN reported 10,000 fled city. Chairman of Reconciliation Committee invited opposition based in Asmara, but chairman of ICU Sheikh Sharif rejected clan-based process. AU Peace and Security Council extended AMISOM mandate for 6 months; still to be approved by UN. UNSC unanimously adopted resolution 1766 23 July extending mandate of group of experts monitoring flow of arms by 6 months. Group issued report stating Eritrea had sent weapons to the Shabaab insurgents during monitoring period; denied by Eritrea.

- "Somali gunmen attack Ethiopians", BBC, 31 July 2007.
- "Reconciliation is as elusive as ever", *Economist*, 19 July 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°45, *Somalia: The Tough Part Is Ahead*, 26 Jan. 2007.

➡ Somaliland (Somalia) Authorities announced no representatives from Somaliland would attend National Reconciliation Congress in Mogadishu. Interior Minister said anyone attending would face charges of "national treason". 3 opposition politicians arrested for forming party; only 3 parties allowed by law.

- "Breakaway Somali republic arrests 3 politicians", Reuters, 28 July 2007.

➡ Sudan UN Security Council voted unanimously 31 July to begin sending joint UN/AU force of 26,000 troops and police to Darfur. Resolution 1769 includes Chapter VII mandate to justify use of force to protect civilians and gives command and control to UN; new UNAMID force to take command of region from 7,000-strong AU mission (AMIS) by end of year "at the latest". But conflict threatens in north as hydro-electric dams displace communities and local resistance to projects becomes increasingly militant: Merowe dam contested mostly by Manassir tribe; Kajbar dam by Nubian community. Several violent clashes between Nubians and government reported. Merowe reservoir to be flooded in August which could displace as many as 70,000 who refuse to leave. Tripoli meeting on Darfur chaired by UN and AU 15 July agreed second phase of AU/UN road map to begin: pre-negotiation phase to create necessary conditions for full negotiations. AU/UN called for talks amongst Darfur rebels to start in Arusha 3 August. New movement, United Front for Liberation and Development (UFLD) consisting of 2 SLM factions, RDFF, NMRD and SFDA, announced intention to join. SLM faction leader Abdul Wahid refused to attend. CPA implementation fell further behind as 9 July deadline missed for all Sudanese SAF units to be redeployed from South and

SPLA redeployed from North, save those operating in Joint-Integrated Units.

- "UN backs new Darfur peace force", BBC, 1 August 2007
- "Darfur rebels to hold peace talks", *Guardian*, 26 July 2007.
- "Stopping murder in Darfur", *Economist*, 25 July 2007.

Crisis Group Africa Report N°130, *A Strategy for Comprehensive Peace in Sudan*, 26 July 2007. Implementing the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), which ended Africa's longest-running civil war in 2005, is the key for transforming the oppressive governmental system that is at the root of all Sudan's conflicts into a more open, transparent, inclusive and democratic one. The ruling National Congress Party (NCP) has sabotaged the CPA at every turn. International efforts have lacked leadership and focused almost exclusively on Darfur at the expense of Sudan's other brewing conflicts. A more balanced approach is urgently needed. If the CPA fails, Sudan can be expected to return to full-scale war, with devastating consequences for the entire region.

## SOUTHERN AFRICA

➡ Comoros Islands AU-sanctioned talks in Pretoria between federal and Anjouan authorities failed to achieve agreement on new elections. Some AU ministers called for new elections on all islands, while head of Peace and Security Council reminded self-proclaimed Anjouan leader Mohamed Bacar AU retained authority to remove him if deemed obstacle to peaceful resolution. Central bank froze public accounts in Anjouan. Bacar invited federal government for talks; Moroni declined.

- "Anjouan president invites national government for dialogue", VOA, 31 July 2007.
- "AU accuses renegade Anjouan leader of blocking peace bid", AFP, 27 July 2007.

➡ Lesotho 3 Lesotho Defense Forces officers and 2 civilians charged with high treason in Magistrate's Court 10 July following June political unrest in capital. Botswana President Ketumile Masire flew to Maseru with mandate from SADC to break stalemate over allocation of government seats.

- "Lesotho coup suspects in court", SABC News, 24 July 2007.
- "Lesotho: Masire seeks to mediate as tensions grow in Maseru", allAfrica.com, 11 July 2007.

➡ Madagascar President Marc Ravalomanana dissolved national assembly 6 months early 26 July, claimed no longer reflected national representation under new April constitution. Elections due within 60 days. Opposition politician and Fianarantsoa Mayor Pety Rakotoniana arrested 24 July on theft charges 8 months after supporting attempted coup.

- "Madagascar leader dissolves parliament", SAPA-AFP, 24 July 2007.
- "Malagasy police arrest opposition politician", Reuters, 24 July 2007.

➡ Swaziland Thousands of striking public sector workers demanded multi-party democracy, March 2008 elections, bringing Manzini and Mbabane to standstill 25-26 July.

- "Swazis strike for multi-party democracy", Independent Online, 25 July 2007.

➡ Zimbabwe President Mugabe announced legislative plans 24 July to consolidate presidential and parliamentary elections;



require only parliamentary vote to replace president who resigns between elections; and require all businesses to be at least 51% Zimbabwean-owned. Acute food, gasoline shortages followed late-June government order to halve prices: at least 3,000 businesspeople arrested, many imprisoned, for non-compliance. SADC-backed mediation between ruling ZANU-PF and opposition MDC stalled in Pretoria as ZANU-PF representatives hardened stance against new constitution, failed to attend scheduled meetings. South African mediators denied rumours of process collapse. MDC still divided as Morgan Tsvangirai faction announced it would launch campaign in September; faction led by Arthur Mutambara withdrew from Save Zimbabwe coalition.

- [“Mugabe boosted by rivals’ poll split”](#), *Financial Times*, 30 July 2007.
- [“Mugabe wants power to name successor”](#), *Mail and Guardian*, 25 July 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°122, [Zimbabwe: An End to the Stalemate?](#), 5 Mar. 2007.

## WEST AFRICA

➤ Cameroon Insecurity in remote North province continued to spill over from CAR. Security forces killed 12 bandits from CAR and Chad 14 July but failed to free 13 children held for ransom. 11 Cameroonian hostages held by unidentified gunmen in CAR freed by CAR military after gun battle 11 July. Ruling CPDM party won large majority in 22 July municipal and legislative polls; opposition claimed massive fraud.

- [“Landslide victory for Cameroon’s ruling party in marred election”](#), AP, 24 July 2007.
- [“Cameroon forces kill kidnapers, 13 children missing”](#), Reuters, 16 July 2007.

➤ Côte d’Ivoire President Gbagbo visited Forces Nouvelles (FN) stronghold of Bouaké for first time since end of war for 30 July weapon burning ceremony as symbolic start for disarmament process. Tensions had heightened following failed 29 June assassination attempt on PM Guillaume Soro in Bouaké. FN commander publicly accused French and UN peacekeepers of failing to ensure Soro’s safety, while peacekeepers denied responsibility for airport security. UN Security Council extended mandate of UNOCI and French peacekeepers to mid-January 2008. Donors’ conference agreed to €295 million aid package to support peace process.

- [“Ivory Coast’s Gbagbo visits rebel HQ after war”](#), Reuters, 30 July 2007.
- [“A peace plan under threat”](#), *Economist*, 19 July 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°127, [Côte d’Ivoire: Can the Ouagadougou Agreement Bring Peace?](#), 27 June 2006.

➤ Guinea-Bissau UNSC expressed concern 10 July over increase in organised crime, drug trafficking, proliferation of small arms. President Vieira announced 1-year postponement of 2008 legislative elections due to financial constraints.

- [“Wanted Bissau rights campaigner calls for UN guard”](#), Reuters, 28 July 2007.
- [“Guinea-Bissau polls postponed”](#), IOL, 18 July 2007.

➤ Guinea Civil society groups and 2 trade unions issued statements 3 July criticising PM Lansana Kouyaté for lack of progress on key issues, including corruption and electoral process. Union leaders pledged continued support for Kouyaté 10 July after he promised to respect previous agreements.

- [“Government stalls on probe into alleged abuses”](#), IRIN, 11 July 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°121, [Guinea: Change or Chaos](#), 14 Feb. 2007.

➤ Liberia Rival security forces clashed 9 July, first in presidency of Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf: nearly 50 wounded during confrontation between national police force and police unit in charge of security at Monrovia port. Incident sparked by national police force’s attempts to investigate alleged fuel theft; UN troops intervened. Presidential investigation committee concluded Police Chief Col. Munah Sieh bore responsibility. Retd. Gen. Charles Julu among 5, including former Speaker of the House George Koukou, arrested in connection with alleged coup plot; Julu and Koukou charged with treason 20 July. Hundreds of ex-combatants protested inadequate DDR programs at UNDP Monrovia offices 16 July.

- [“Strangled TRC”](#), *Analyst*, 25 July 2007.
- [“Julu, Koukou charged”](#), *Inquirer*, 23 July 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°107, [Liberia: Resurrecting the Justice System](#), 6 Apr. 2006.

➤ Mali Legislative elections held 1 July. Voting peaceful but turnout barely over 20%. President Amadou Toumani Touré’s Alliance for Democracy won 125 of 147 seats; main opposition Front for Democracy in Mali only 15.

- [“President’s coalition sweeps Mali legislative polls”](#), Reuters, 26 July 2007.

➤ Niger Northern conflict between government and Mouvement des Nigériens pour la Justice (MNJ) Tuareg rebel group continued. MNJ claimed responsibility for deaths of 10 soldiers 23 July and 4 July attack on electricity company for uranium mines; later released Chinese hostage and 3 soldiers, but called on mining companies to withdraw expatriate staff “for their own safety”. 4 soldiers reportedly killed by MNJ landmine near Agadez 31 July. Nigerian military made first public statement on MNJ 10 July, claiming they benefit from external support. Government warned journalists against focusing on MNJ attacks. RFI local broadcasts suspended for month following 18 July interview with former army officer-turned-rebel Kindo Zada who announced joining MNJ. Burkina Faso FM Djibril Bassolet said Ouagadougou willing to mediate though Niamey has ruled out negotiations.

- [“Landmine kills four soldiers in northern Niger”](#), Reuters, 1 Aug. 2007.
- [“Thousands march against desert rebellion in Niger”](#), Reuters, 21 July 2007.

➤ Nigeria Political stalemate and Niger Delta insecurity continued. President Yar’Adua named 39-member Government of National Unity 26 July. All Nigeria People’s Party endorsed government despite opposition by presidential candidate, Muhammadu Buhari. Action Congress rejected participation and presidential candidate Atiku Abubakar refused 2 ministerial posts and continued petition challenging Yar’Adua presidential victory. Electoral court ordered Yar’Adua to respond to Abubakar’s petition within 14 days 19 July. Clashes between Benue State ethnic Tiv and Kuteb communities over land dispute killed dozens and displaced thousands. Clashes between Niger Delta militants and security forces continued with apparent new kidnapping tactic targeting children. NDPVF militia leader Dokubo-Asari conveyed ceasefire conditions 19 July, including release of impeached Bayelsa State governor Dieperere Alamieyeseigha (sentenced

to 2-year jail term 26 July) and general amnesty. Gunman shot dead Sunni cleric in north western city of Sokoto 18 July, sparking Sunni-Shiite clashes that left at least 1 dead. Police charged 112 Shiites in connection with unrest, trial to continue 9 August. President Yar'Adua ordered retirement of 40 top military generals, including 5 service chiefs.

- "Nigeria forces generals to retire", BBC, 31 July 2007.
- "Villagers flee communal fighting in central region", IRIN, 25 July 2007.
- "Shilly-shally", *Economist*, 19 July 2007.
- Crisis Group Africa Report N°126, *Nigeria: Failed Elections, Failing State?*, 30 May 2007.

➤ Senegal Fighting continued in Casamance region between rebel factions and government soldiers. Attack by suspected MFDC fighters on Casamance highway wounded regional administrator and Chinese citizen.

- "Braquage en Casamance, un sous-préfet et un chinois grièvement blessés", *Wal Fadji*, 26 June 2007.

➤ Sierra Leone Police reported upward trend in campaign violence before 11 August presidential and parliamentary election; announced tougher measures, but admitted insufficient resources. 10 July campaign start marred by several incidents. PMDC accused SLPP supporters of attacking its Freetown offices 10 July, denied by SLPP. UN's Sierra Leone Peace Building Fund approved 4 new projects 12 July targeting judicial sector, National Election Commission, armed forces and security sector. Former Liberian President Charles Taylor appeared in The Hague before Special Court for first time 3 July. UK agreed to imprison him if found guilty. Special Court announced first sentences 19 July: 3 rebel leaders convicted of using child soldiers, enslavement, rape and murder; sentenced to 45-50 years each.

- "United Nations calls for peaceful elections", *Concord Times*, 26 July 2007.
- "SLeone police alarmed at upsurge in pre-poll violence", AFP, 12 July 2007.

Crisis Group Africa Report N°129, *Sierra Leone: The Election Opportunity*, 13 July 2007. Heightened political tensions could lead to Sierra Leone's destabilisation if elections next month are not free and fair. Sierra Leone is still a fragile state in which peace will not be consolidated unless the new authorities tackle multiple sources of popular discontent. The new National Electoral Commission must adjudicate allegations of fraud promptly and fairly. All political parties should instruct their officials that violence, and calls to violence, will be investigated and appropriately punished. International partners will have to engage immediately with the new administration to make clear that tackling corruption is a prerequisite to long-term support.



## Asia/Pacific

### CENTRAL ASIA

➤ Kazakhstan Campaigning began for 18 August local and parliamentary elections. President Nazarbayev's daughter Darigha Nazarbayeva dismissed from deputy chairmanship of his Nur Otan party and excluded from party's electoral candidate list.

- "Local elections overshadowed by national polls", IWPR, 24 July 2007.
- "Campaigning starts in Kazakhstan", BBC, 18 July 2007.
- "President's daughter to stand down", IWPR, 9 July 2007.

➤ Kyrgyzstan Internal security stepped up ahead of 16 August Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Bishkek Summit. Deputy Governor of Osh arrested on aid embezzlement charges 20 July; local supporters threatened to block roads. State Agency for Religious Affairs announced drafting laws to tighten restrictions on religious activity.

- "State clampdown on radical religious groups", IWPR, 18 July 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°55, *Kyrgyzstan on the Edge*, 9 Nov. 2006.

➤ Tajikistan Trial of 14 suspected IMU members continued in Sughd province. Authorities announced 23 July had foiled attacks on Dushanbe with arrest of 7 suspected IMU members over last 6 months. UN Tajikistan Office of Peacebuilding (UNTOP) ended 7-year mission 31 July.

- "Tajikistan says foils attack plot, arrests 7", Reuters, 23 July 2007.
- "Too little cash for landmine clearance", IWPR, 4 July 2007.

➤ Turkmenistan First law on presidential powers and duties published 4 July. Publication signalled new openness, but law still praises late President Niyazov. Social Security legislation restoring pensions cut under Niyazov came into force 1 July. Presidential decree abolished domestic travel permit system.

- "Berdymammedov continues government shake-up", IWPR, 16 July 2007.
- "Pension reform falls short of expectations", IWPR, 9 July 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°60, *Turkmenistan after Niyazov*, 12 Feb. 2007.

➤ Uzbekistan In step to boost popularity before due, but unannounced, December presidential elections, government announced 25% increase in minimum wage, pensions, student stipends and state salaries from 1 August. Human Rights Watch office effectively closed after international staff accreditation refused. Tashkent court found 8 females guilty of Hizb ut-Tahrir membership 9 July, set 3-year sentences but suspended jail for all but one. Authorities closed independent weekly newspaper *Odam Orasida*, citing media law breaches.

- "State expenditure rise swallowed by inflation", IWPR, 17 July 2007.
- "Hizb Ut-Tahrir gains support from women", RFE/RL, 11 July 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°54, *Uzbekistan: Europe's Sanctions Matter*, 6 Nov. 2006.

### SOUTH ASIA

➤ Afghanistan Robust military offensive continued in south while insurgent suicide attacks and kidnappings with increasing violence occurred in provinces surrounding Kabul. 23 South Korean Christians kidnapped in Ghazni province by Taliban, who demanded 8 militants held by Kabul; 2 hostages killed by end month. Also in Ghazni, 4 judges from neighbouring Paktita kidnapped; bodies found 31 July. 2 Germans with 5 Afghan colleagues seized in neighbouring Wardak. Chancellor Merkel pledged Germany would "intensify its engagement" despite kidnappings. 4 July bombing killed 6 Canadian troops in

Kandahar. Reports of civilian casualties in air strikes by international forces continued; NATO said considering using smaller bombs. Suicide attacks by militants continued in Uruzgan and Helmand in south and in Faizabad in north.

- [“Taliban move closer to Kabul”](#), *Christian Science Monitor*, 24 July 2007.
- [“NATO sees ‘tribal’ nature to Taliban insurgency”](#), RFE/RL, 20 July 2007.
- [“Failure in Afghanistan risks rise in terror, say generals”](#), *Observer*, 15 July 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°59, [Afghanistan’s Endangered Compact](#), 29 Jan. 2007.

↪ Bangladesh Government moved against heads of country’s 2 leading parties. Awami League’s Sheikh Hasina arrested 16 July, charged with extortion 24 July. BNP’s Khaleda Zia, PM until October 2006, due in court 26 August on charges of tax evasion. Election Commission published roadmap for elections by end 2008; state of emergency continues.

- [“Bangladesh’s deepening crisis”](#), ISN, 26 July 2007.
- [“Bangladesh ex-PM formally charged”](#), BBC, 24 July 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°121, [Bangladesh Today](#), 23 Oct. 2006.

↪ India (non-Kashmir) 24 policemen killed in 9 July clash with Maoist fighters in Chhattisgarh. 31 July Nagaland talks with Delhi saw indefinite extension of ceasefire by National Socialist Council of Nagaland separatists, subject to progress in new round of peace talks.

- [“NSCN \(I-M\), Centre agree on ceasefire”](#), *Hindu*, 1 Aug. 2007.

↪ Kashmir Little progress at security talks between India and Pakistan cut short 4 July by violence at Islamabad Red Mosque. Summer increase in low-level violence included several attacks by suspected separatist militants on Hindu pilgrims. Indian Defence Secretary Shekhar Dutt recommended relocation of 20,000 troops from private and civic property in Jammu & Kashmir. Proposal would maintain current levels of troops involved in counter-militancy efforts along Line of Control.

- [“Indian panel recommends troop reduction in Kashmir”](#), *Daily Times*, 26 July 2007.
- [“India, Pakistan security talks make little progress”](#), Reuters, 4 July 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°51, [India, Pakistan and Kashmir: Stabilising a Cold Peace](#), 15 June 2006.

↪ Nepal Coalition government partners including Maoists insist 22 November constituent assembly elections will go ahead. But confused messages continue, with UN verification of Maoist combatants stalled as they demand progress in other parts of peace deal, including security sector reform. Budget passed with cuts to royal allowances; economic growth targets revised down. Home Minister Krishna Prasad Sitaula threatened security crackdown in Tarai plains but preliminary talks with some groups underway.

- [“Army seek to allay Maoist fears”](#), BBC, 23 July 2007.
- [“Nepal urges Madhesi rebels to join peace talks”](#), Reuters, 14 July 2007.

Crisis Group Asia Report N°136, [Nepal’s Troubled Tarai Region](#), 9 July 2007. Violent unrest in Nepal’s Tarai plains could generate a new conflict if weaknesses in the country’s peace process are not addressed. The discrimination and political exclusion of Madhesis have led to increasing tension and threaten the fragile Nepali peace process. The political elite had largely ignored disquiet brewing in the region. The national political process must be made more inclusive and responsive, and constituent assembly elections in November must be free and fair if worsening violence is to be avoided.



↪ Pakistan Seizure of Lal Masjid (Red Mosque) by security forces sparked waves of retaliatory violence across border regions, as political and security crisis worsened further. Pakistani army commenced week-long siege of Red Mosque to end 6-month standoff with barricaded radical clerics and student followers 3 July. At least 16 killed first day of confrontation; thousands of militants surrendered 4-5 July whilst hundreds remained. Army stormed mosque 10 July following failed negotiations with mosque leaders; over 70 militants killed, including leader Abdul Rashid. Islamist backlash ensued with intensified attacks on security forces killing at least 180. Attacks coincided with 15 July announcement by militant leaders in North Waziristan they had suspended September peace agreement with Islamabad in response to increased troop deployment in area; government forces claimed 18 deaths in late-month fighting near Miranshah. Bomb attack killed 15 in anti-government rally in Islamabad 17 July; PPP workers likely target. Further suicide bombing in Islamabad 27 July targeted police and killed 14 near Red Mosque. President Musharraf suffered further blow with Supreme Court decision to reinstate suspended Chief Justice Iftikhar Chaudhry 20 July. Musharraf met former PM Benazir Bhutto in Abu Dhabi talks 27 July that could foster power-sharing deal; Bhutto publicly reiterated calls for Musharraf to step down as military chief.

- [“Ruling rekindles hope in Pakistan”](#), *Financial Times*, 22 July 2007.
- [“Showdown at the mosque”](#), *Economist*, 12 July 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°130, [Pakistan: Karachi’s Madrasas and Violent Extremism](#), 29 Mar. 2007.

Crisis Group Asia Report N°137, [Elections, Democracy and Stability in Pakistan](#), 31 July 2007. Military rule in Pakistan is producing a failing state that will endanger its own and regional security unless democracy and rule of law are restored in free and fair elections this year. The growing pro-democracy movement is leaving President Musharraf with few choices, and the judiciary can no longer be counted on to endorse unconstitutional acts. The end of the military regime is now a matter of time, but the transition could either be orderly and democratic or violent. International actors, especially the U.S., should use their considerable leverage to persuade the generals to give up power, offering political and material incentives if they do and sanctions if they choke democratic change.



↪ Sri Lanka Fall of former LTTE stronghold Thoppigala 11 July marked government forces’ dominance over eastern part of country. LTTE forces continue to hold large parts of north, where new attacks on army forces continued in Mannar district



and Jaffna. Apparent close of eastern front may prompt increased use of guerrilla attacks by LTTE on strategic targets. Karuna faction announced it had no intention to disarm, despite plans to compete in local government elections scheduled for eastern province in coming months.

- [“Tamil Tiger eastern base ‘taken’](#)”, BBC, 11 July 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°135, [Sri Lanka’s Human Rights Crisis](#), 14 June 2007.

## NORTH EAST ASIA

North Korea Progress made towards denuclearisation; IAEA confirmed closure of Yongbyon nuclear reactor 16 July and 4 other nuclear sites 18 July. 6-party talks held 18-20 July failed to yield deadline for disarmament; subsequent NK demand for lightweight nuclear reactors may complicate talks. 3-day high-level military talks between North and South broke down 26 July over disputed western sea border. South Korea dispatched last in series of heavy fuel oil shipments under disarmament deal to NK 29 July.

- [“Border row derails Korean talks”](#), BBC, 26 July 2007.
- [“Tempting Mr Kim”](#), *Economist*, 19 July 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°62, [After the North Korea Nuclear Breakthrough: Compliance or Confrontation?](#), 30 Apr. 2007.

Taiwan Strait UN rejected Taiwan’s application for UN membership under its own name 24 July, citing adherence to 1971 resolution recognizing Taiwan as part of China. President Chen Shui-bian plans to hold referendum on joining UN despite rejection and opposition from U.S., Beijing. Taiwanese army said looking to buy 30 Boeing Apache attack helicopters from U.S. in deal worth \$1.5bn, subject to approval of U.S. government and Taiwanese legislature.

- [“UN rejects Taiwan membership bid”](#), BBC, 24 July 2007.
- [“Taiwan military chooses Boeing over Bell in US\\$1.5 billion helicopter deal”](#), AP, 10 July 2007.

## SOUTH EAST ASIA

Indonesia Former members of Aceh’s separatist rebel movement GAM established local political party under GAM negotiator Tengku Nazaruddin 7 July. Constitutional Court struck down 2 Dutch-era articles in penal code prohibiting public expressions of “hostility, hatred or contempt for the government” 17 July.

- [“Indonesia’s constitutional court scraps centuries-old ban on freedom of expression”](#), AP, 17 July 2007.
- Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°63, [Indonesia: Jemaah Islamiyah’s Current Status](#), 3 May 2007.

Myanmar/Burma Final session of Constitutional Convention to draw up constitutional guidelines opened 18 July; expected to run for 6 weeks. U.S. Senate extended sanctions against Myanmar for further year on basis of poor human rights record 24 July. Philippines appealed to government for release of opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi by ASEAN November summit.

- [“Final constitutional convention begins in Myanmar”](#), AP, 17 July 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°58, [Myanmar: New Threats to Humanitarian Aid](#), 8 Dec. 2006.

Philippines Ceasefire between government and Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) increasingly strained by further

violence. Up to 30 insurgents and 14 Marines killed in 10 July ambush by MILF forces on Basilan island; 10 were beheaded. MILF said government forces had breached ceasefire protocols, admitted involvement in ambush but denied role in beheadings. MILF announced “maximum restraint” policy to avoid escalation of clashes, launched pleas to Manila and donor governments to prevent Philippine army “punitive actions”. Giancarlo Bossi, Italian priest held hostage 1 month in Mindanao by gunmen he says were members of Abu Sayyaf, freed 19 July.

- [“Gov’t-MILF team to Basilan to probe Marine beheadings”](#), *Inquirer*, 26 July 2007.
- [“Philippine forces clash with insurgents”](#), *Financial Times*, 12 July 2007.

Thailand Communal relations remained tense in south. Government stepped up arrests and foot patrols in response to June violence. Military-backed commission approved draft constitution 6 July, will submit to national referendum 19 August. Supreme Court agreed to hear corruption and abuse of power charges against former PM Thaksin Shinawatra 14 August; he refused to return to Bangkok for trial and government froze additional \$16.4 million assets believed to be controlled by him. National Legislative Assembly began debate 16 July on controversial internal security bill that would institutionalise role of military in politics, but bill withdrawn for further revision same day. Ban on formation of new political parties lifted 18 July. Anti-coup protests continued: several thousand Thaksin supporters clashed with police 22 July.

- [“Thai draft constitution approved”](#), BBC, 6 July 2007.
- [“Thai police clash with demonstrators”](#), AP, 22 July 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°129, [Southern Thailand: The Impact of the Coup](#), 15 Mar. 2007.

Timor-Leste Period since 30 June parliamentary elections characterised by political uncertainty and sporadic violence. Vote proved inconclusive: Fretilin, led by former PM Mari Alkatiri, received most votes with 29%; CNRT, under former President Xanana Gusmao, won 24%. Gusmao is seeking to form government in coalition with other parties (ASDT/PSD and PD), while Fretilin insists on constitutional right to form minority government and former PM Mari Alkatiri announced intention to run for PM 1 August. New parliament inaugurated 30 July. President Ramos-Horta now has to decide who has constitutional right to form government.

- [“East Timor’s ousted prime minister wants his job back”](#), AP, 1 Aug. 2007.
- [“Troops to stay in East Timor - Australian PM”](#), Reuters, 26 July 2007.
- For background, Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°65, [Timor-Leste’s Parliamentary Elections](#), 12 June 2007.

## Europe

### BALKANS

Albania Deputy leader of ruling Democratic Party, Bamir Topi, sworn in as president 24 July after parliament elected him in fourth round of voting; vowed to stay above party politics.

- [“New Albanian president sworn in”](#), *Southeast European Times*, 25 July 2007.

➤ Bosnia & Herzegovina Slovak diplomat Miroslav Lajcak became new High Representative 2 July. In first major decision, sacked senior police official, suspended 35 police officers and ordered their passports confiscated along with those of 57 others suspected of involvement in 1995 Srebrenica massacre. Lajcak reportedly warned would invoke Bonn powers to impose police reform if no agreement reached by September. State and entity PMs agreed on public administration reform 12 July.

- "Lajcak will use Bonn powers if police reforms still stalled in BiH", Southeast European Times, 16 July 2007.
- "Bosnia's new peace overseer acts against suspects in Srebrenica massacre", AP, 10 July 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 status continued as 1-2 July U.S.-Russia summit in Kennebunkport produced no agreement. Moscow rejected watered-down U.S. and EU draft resolution; latter suspended UNSC consultations 20 July. U.S. official told BBC 16 July U.S. to recognize Kosovo within 2007, but Sec. State Rice, meeting Pristina's Unity Team 23 July, said U.S. to recognize after Contact Group-sponsored talks process. Contact Group met 25 July in Vienna to discuss plans for new round of Belgrade-Pristina talks to last at least 4 months: decided U.S., EU and Russia should mediate, but no start date, deadline or agenda agreed. Brussels appointed German diplomat Wolfgang Ischinger EU mediator. UNSG Ban Ki-moon warned against further delays. UNMIK head Joachim Rucker called for clear roadmap on status; local and general elections now due November. Demands grew in Pristina for independence date; Unity Team split between PM Ceku and opposition politician Surroi, who want to set date, and President Sejdiu and opposition leader Thaci, content to wait for U.S. and EU decision. Remarks by French FM Kouchner, later corrected, caused Pristina to fear West may relax opposition to partition. Bus carrying villagers of Albanian enclave north of Mitrovica set off grenade 27 July.

- "New Kosovo talks must deliver quick solution -U.S.", Reuters, 25 July 2007.
- "U.N. urges clear roadmap for Kosovo", Reuters, 25 July 2007.
- "Kosovo Serbs get new political party", Southeast European Times, 12 July 2007.
- Crisis Group Europe Report N°182, *Kosovo: No Good Alternatives to the Ahtisaari Plan*, 14 May 2007.

➤ Macedonia Ethnic Albanian opposition Democratic Union for Integration briefly left parliament, accusing government of altering agreed terms for changes in parliamentary procedures ensuring minority safeguards, before parliamentary business resumed. Government and opposition leaders agreed to reform of prosecution office, one of contentious issues in judicial reform, 1 July.

- "Two ethnic Albanian parties walk out of Macedonian parliament session", Southeast European Times, 17 July 2007.
- "Macedonian government and opposition agree on judicial reforms", Southeast European Times, 5 July 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Europe Briefing N°41, *Macedonia: Wobbling toward Europe*, 12 Jan. 2006.

➤ Serbia Belgrade hardened position on Kosovo as parliament approved resolution 24 July, affirming province as

"inseparable" part of country and warning of "appropriate actions" in line with international law if constitution violated.

- "Serbs to back 'united front' resolution on Kosovo", AlertNet, 24 July 2007.
- Crisis Group Europe Briefing N°46, *Serbia's New Government: Turning from Europe*, 31 May 2007.

## CAUCASUS

➤ Armenia Law restricting re-broadcasting of foreign media failed in parliament after opponents boycotted voting.

- "Restrictive foreign-media legislation falls in parliament", RFE/RL, 3 July 2007.

➤ Azerbaijan Opposition *Bizim Yol* newspaper editor Musfiq Huseynov arrested on bribery charges. Yasamal district court dismissed defamation charges against chief editor of opposition *Azadliq* Ganimat Zahid 17 July; OSCE praised ruling. Authorities compensated Democratic Party of Azerbaijan chairman for mistreatment after 2003 arrest, in line with European Court of Human Rights ruling, 12 July.

- "Another Azerbaijani journalist arrested", RFE/RL, 25 July 2007.
- "Azerbaijan pays compensation to opposition leader", RFE/RL Newsline, 12 July 2007.

➤ Chechnya (Russia) Interior Ministry units put on alert after rebels launched attacks in Vedeno district early July, reportedly killing 4 soldiers.

- "Upsurge of fighting in Chechnya", IWPR, 12 July 2007.
- "Three Russian soldiers killed in Chechnya ambush", RFE/RL, 10 July 2007.

➤ North Caucasus (non-Chechnya) Large Russian security sweep launched in Ingushetia 25 July. Operation followed spate of violence in republic, including fatal shooting of adviser to Ingush interethnic and public relations ministry, Vakha Vedzizhev, by unknown gunmen in Karabulak 21 July and murder of 3 ethnic Russians 16 July. 1 soldier killed in rebel attack on security service headquarters near Magas 27 July. In Dagestan, 4 police killed in bomb explosion in Kizilurt 18 July; deputy mufti of central mosque, Kurbanmagomed Ramazanov, and brother killed in car-bombing in Makhachkala 26 July; Dagestan's Shariat jamaat claimed responsibility.

- "Dagestan bomb kills Muslim cleric", BBC, 27 July 2007.
- "Russian authorities launch security sweep in volatile southern province", AP, 25 July 2007.

➤ Georgia In South Ossetia, standoff between Tbilisi and Tskhinvali further entrenched, security situation more tense, with increase in exchanges of fire and concentrations of unauthorised armed personnel from both sides. Joint Control Commission (JCC) did not meet after disagreement over venue; Russian, South Ossetian and North Ossetian co-chairs met without Tbilisi 13 July. August meeting planned in Tbilisi. Also 13 July, Tbilisi established state commission, headed by PM Nogaideli, to draw up autonomy plan for region. Tskhinvali refused to participate. In Abkhazia, UN Observer Mission issued report on March 2007 rocket-firing incident in upper Kodori: joint fact-finding mission with members from all sides reached no conclusion on blame; Tbilisi called for UN observation point in gorge. Secessionist PM Alexander Ankvab survived assassination attempt 9 July. Breakaway authorities announced launch of new TV channel aiming at integration of predominantly Georgian Gali district into



Abkhazia. In Tbilisi, parliament adopted law on repatriation of Meskhetian Turks, deported in 1944. David Bakradze replaced Merab Antadze as State Minister for Conflict Resolution Issues 19 July.

- [“Georgia’s big military spending boost”](#), IWPR, 19 July 2007.
- [“Is armed conflict brewing?”](#), RFE/RL, 2 July 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Europe Report N°183, [Georgia’s South Ossetia Conflict: Make Haste Slowly](#), 7 June 2007.

➡ Nagorno-Karabakh (Azerbaijan) Bako Sahakian, former de facto security service head, supported by all major parties, won 85% of votes in 19 July de facto presidential election; main contender, former deputy FM Masis Maylian, got 12%. International community dismissed poll as illegitimate. Minsk Group Chairmen urged Armenian and Azerbaijani presidents to agree basic settlement principles before 2008 presidential elections in both countries.

- [“N Karabakh elects separatist head”](#), BBC, 20 July 2007.
- [“Upset mediators call for another Armenian-Azeri summit”](#), Armenia Liberty, 16 July 2007.

## EASTERN EUROPE

➡ Belarus Opposition-organised Sovereignty Day events 27 July led to arrests, detention of activists and politicians. President Lukashenko dismissed KGB Chairman Stepan Sukhonenko and First Deputy Head Vasily Dementey 17 July; appointed presidential security service chief Yuri Zhadobin.

- [“Belarusian president fires KGB chief and first deputy in shake-up of security services”](#), AP, 17 July 2007.
- [“Belarus says ring spying for Poland uncovered”](#), RFE/RL, 16 July 2007.

➡ Moldova European Parliament adopted nonbinding resolution 12 July condemning “severe and widespread” rights violations by Transdniestrian authorities. Appeals court overturned former defence minister Valeriu Pasat’s January 2006 conviction over sale of 21 fighter planes to U.S., releasing him from prison.

- [“EU parliament slams Transdniester rights violations”](#), RFE/RL, 12 July 2007.
- [“Former Moldovan defense minister acquitted”](#), RFE/RL, 9 July 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Europe Report N°175, [Moldova’s Uncertain Future](#), 17 Aug. 2006.

➡ Ukraine 10 parties backing President Yushchenko agreed to unite for September parliamentary elections. NATO-led multinational naval exercises held in Odessa and Yuzhny with parliamentary approval.

- [“Clear sailing expected for sea breeze naval exercises”](#), RFE/RL, 9 July 2007.
- [“Ukrainian pro-presidential parties unite for elections”](#), RFE/RL, 5 July 2007.

## WESTERN EUROPE/MEDITERRANEAN

➡ Basque Country (Spain) French police arrested Juan Cruz Maiza Artola, suspected logistics chief of ETA, and 2 others near Toulouse 26 July. ETA claimed responsibility for 2 bomb explosions along Spanish section of Tour de France cycle route 25 July.

- [“New victories against Spain’s ETA separatists”](#), *Christian Science Monitor*, 30 July 2007.
- [“Blasts hit Tour de France route”](#), BBC, 25 July 2007.

➡ Cyprus Largest party in parliament, Progressive Party of the Working People (AKEL), withdrew from governing coalition 10 July, after deciding to field candidate, Demetris Christofias, for February 2008 presidential elections. President Papadopoulos said would seek second term 23 July. Papadopoulos invited Turkish Cypriot leader Talat to discuss stalled 8 July process; Talat delayed setting meeting date after Greek Cypriot blocking of friendly football match between Turkish Cypriot and English club teams. Remains of 28 missing victims, 15 Greek Cypriot and 13 Turkish Cypriot, of 1974 conflict identified by UN Committee for Missing Persons buried in north and south 12 July.

- [“Remains of 28 identified victims of 1974 Cyprus violence buried”](#), Southeast European Times, 13 July 2007.
- [“U.N. committee identifies 28 Cypriots missing from decades-old ethnic strife”](#), AP, 2 July 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Europe Report N°171, [The Cyprus Stalemate: What Next?](#), 8 Mar. 2006.

➡ Northern Ireland (UK) British army ended 38-year NI operation 31 July; 5,000 troops will remain but police to hold sole responsibility for security. First Minister Paisley and Democratic Unionist Party ministers attended North-South Ministerial Council 17 July, meeting with Republic of Ireland counterparts for first time since body set up under 1998 Good Friday Agreement. British-Irish Council summit held 16 July.

- [“Army ends support operation in NI”](#), BBC, 31 July 2007.
- [“Meeting ‘new territory’ – Paisley”](#), BBC, 17 July 2007.

➡ Turkey Ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) won decisive victory in 22 July parliamentary elections, with 46.7% vote, 341 of 550 seats. Republican People’s Party and Nationalist Action Party won 112 and 71 seats respectively. Democratic Society Party candidates, Kurdish nationalists running independently to circumvent 10% party threshold, to form 20-strong grouping. Constitutional Court 5 July rejected President Sezer’s and opposition appeals of government plans to hold referendum on direct election of president. Referendum scheduled October, but new president due to be elected by parliament within 30 days. Previous candidate, Foreign Minister Gul, signalled may run again. Trial of 18 accused of involvement in January murder of journalist Hrant Dink began 2 July. Clashes between army and PKK continued in south east, with tensions high on Iraq border where troop levels continued to increase. Turkey shelled into northern Iraq, notably with 100 shells near Zakho 18 July, day after 3 Turkish soldiers killed by roadside bomb. Baghdad accused Turkish air force of bombing Iraqi mountains.

- [“Turkish foreign minister Gul hints he will run for president again, despite opposition”](#), AP, 25 July 2007.
- [“EU welcomes Erdogan election win”](#), BBC, 23 July 2007.



## Latin America / Caribbean

➡ Bolivia Constituent Assembly (CA) due for extension until 14 December, pending approval by Congress; over 300 articles still require debate. Over 1 million protested in La

Paz 20 July over moves to restore “full capital” status to Sucre; large-scale response protests in Sucre 25 July. Marches and roadblocks set up across country throughout July. In Tarija, MAS party CA delegate led peasants setting up 16 roadblocks for 9 days to demand greater share in energy revenues.

- [“La ‘guerra’ entre Sucre y La Paz enciende Bolivia”](#), *El País*, 23 July 2007.
- [“Bolivian assembly pushes back deadline for new constitution”](#), AP, 3 July 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Latin America Briefing N°13, [Bolivia’s Reforms: The Danger of New Conflicts](#), 8 Jan. 2007.

Colombia Peace marches around country 5 July attracted reported 5 million people after FARC said late June it killed 11 provincial deputies held hostage since 2002. President Uribe repeated opposition to demilitarised zone for hostage swap with FARC. Talks with ELN resumed 18 July but stalled over issues of ceasefire and ending hostilities; next round of talks expected late August. Former paramilitary commanders “Jorge 40” and “Don Berna” gave confessions under terms of Justice and Peace Law but threatened to withdraw from process when Supreme Court ruled out prosecution on political rather than criminal charges.

- [“El jefe paramilitar Jorge 40, procesado por una matanza de 38 civiles en una aldea de Colombia”](#), *El País*, 18 July 2007.
- [“Colombia rebels ‘killed hostages’”](#), BBC, 28 June 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Latin America Report N°20, [Colombia’s New Armed Groups](#), 10 May 2007.

Ecuador Relations with Bogotá worsened again, with continued failure to reach agreement anti-coca spraying along border and 21 July mortar fired into Sucumbios province in Ecuador during clash between FARC and Colombian armed forces across border. Colombia announced again 25 July it would cease aerial fumigation.

- [“Ecuador Welcomes Colombia’s Suspension of Air Irrigation”](#), *Prensa Latina*, 25 July 2007.

Haiti Cité Soleil gang leaders Ti Bazil and Claude Jeune arrested 6 and 15 July by Haitian National Police. U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) and Haitian counter-narcotics officers arrested internationally-wanted businessman Lavaud François and extradited him on drug charges along with 2 other suspects. Former anti-Aristide leader and 2006 presidential candidate Guy Philippe went into hiding after DEA operation in Les Cayes attempted capture 17 July. Detention commission started work on around 100 urgent pre-trial cases.

- [“In Haiti, ex-rebel sought by U.S. denies drug ties”](#), AP, 23 July 2007.
- [“Haiti, U.S. to continue joint offensives”](#), AP, 20 July 2007.

Crisis Group Latin America/Caribbean Report N°21, [Consolidating Stability in Haiti](#), 18 July 2007. To consolidate real stability in the country, the government should oppose any attempt to re-establish the army. The rule of law must be strengthened through prison and justice reform, with the extent of future funding linked over time to progress in implementation. Haiti needs additional competent personnel to encourage decentralised development, limit rural exodus and support democratic...



...governance through local, participatory development projects. The international community should emphasise capacity and institution building and make Haiti a priority country for the new UN Peacebuilding Commission.

Venezuela Pro-opposition television station RCTV relaunched as cable broadcaster 16 July after losing its licence in May. President Hugo Chávez warned 22 July government would expel foreigners critical of government. Publication of constitutional reform bill pending; Chávez announced it will abolish limits on presidential re-election.

- [“Chávez busca la reelección permanente”](#), *El País*, 24 July 2007.
- [“Venezuela TV makes comeback”](#), BBC, 17 July 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 Since June takeover of Gaza by Hamas, emergency government of President Mahmoud Abbas administers West Bank and Hamas Gaza. To support Abbas, Israel released some frozen tax funds and 256 non-Hamas Palestinian prisoners. Israeli FM Tzipi Livni met new Palestinian PM Salam Fayyad 9 July. Israeli army released former Palestinian education minister Nasser al-Shaer 18 July on promise to renounce Hamas membership. Mohammed Dahlan announced resignation as national security adviser 25 July. Israeli forces continued operations in Gaza: including on 5 July killing 11; near Bureij refugee camp, with 1 soldier killed in ambush 12 July; and on 22 July killing 4. U.S. President Bush 17 July called for international meeting to restart peace talks: announced \$190m aid package for Abbas government. Israel confirmed 29 July U.S. planning 25% increase in defence aid. Former UK PM Tony Blair made first visit to region as Quartet envoy 23-24 July. Egyptian and Jordanian FMs visited Israel 25 July to present renewed Arab League peace plan. Russian President Vladimir Putin expressed support for Abbas in Moscow talks 31 July. Former Israeli PM Shimon Peres inaugurated president 15 July. BBC journalist Alan Johnston freed 4 July after 16 weeks imprisonment in Gaza by Islamist clan self-styled “Army of Islam”.

- [“Hamas cements hold over Gaza in announcing payment of civil servants’ salaries”](#), AP, 28 July 2007.
- [“Blair of Arabia”](#), *Economist*, 26 July 2007.
- [“Abbas says he hopes to reach a peace agreement with Israel in less than a year”](#), AP, 25 July 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Middle East Report N°62, [After Mecca: Engaging Hamas](#), 28 Feb. 2007.

Lebanon Lebanese troops intensified offensive against Fatah al-Islam militants in Nahr al-Bared refugee camp. Since 20 May start, fighting killed over 200 including at least 120 soldiers; almost all 30,000 camp residents have fled. Militants fired Katyusha rockets on nearby villages. France hosted talks with 14 main Lebanese political parties near Paris 14-15 July: attempt to break 8-month deadlock with presidential elections set for 25 September. French FM Kouchner in Beirut 28 July

for follow-up talks with pro-Western PM Fouad Siniora, pro-Syrian parliamentary leader Nabi Berri, Hezbollah and others. UN asked Netherlands to host special tribunal to try suspects in 2005 killing of former PM Rafiq Hariri. In videotape, al-Qaeda deputy Ayman al-Zawahri blessed 24 June roadside bomb attack that killed 6 UN peacekeepers. Bomb 16 July struck UN vehicle but no casualties. French UN peacekeeper killed 25 July in south by explosion of ordnance from 2006 war between Hezbollah and Israel.

- ["Kouchner: 'Pressure is needed' to reach Lebanon deal"](#), *Daily Star*, 30 July 2007.
- ["Intense army bombardment of north Lebanon refugee camp"](#), AP, 25 July 2007.
- ["Police officer killed, five men wounded in Muslim-Christian clash in south Lebanon"](#), AP, 22 July 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Middle East Briefing N°20, [Lebanon at a Tripwire](#), 21 Dec. 2006.

➤ Syria Syrian-Israeli peace talks failed to restart despite public statements of interest by both sides and mediation by Turkish officials and UN envoy Michael Williams. French envoy Jean-Claude Cousseran visited Damascus 18 July to discuss violence and political stalemate in Lebanon, highest-level visit in nearly 2 years. President al-Assad sworn in for second 7-year term 17 July.

- ["Israel's Olmert rejects Syria conditions for talks"](#), Reuters, 21 July 2007.
- ["French envoy discusses Lebanese political crisis in Syria"](#), AP, 18 July 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Middle East Report N°63, [Restarting Israeli-Syrian Negotiations](#), 10 Apr. 2007,

## GULF

➤ Bahrain Diplomatic tensions raised after Iranian senior adviser to Supreme Leader Ali Khamanei asserted Iranian sovereignty over Bahrain in response to usual 5 July Gulf Cooperation Council support for UAE sovereignty over Abu Musa and Tunbs islands. Iranian FM Manoushehr Mottaki rejected adviser's claim in trip to Manama 14 July. Sporadic protests in Shiite-majority areas over poverty and land rights continued.

- ["Iran and Bahrain"](#), VOA, 23 July 2007.
- ["Grievances fuel Bahraini unrest"](#), BBC, 22 July 2007.

➤ Iran IAEA inspectors arrived 30 July following talks that saw IAEA and Iran agree on framework for conduct of future negotiations and secured Iranian commitment to allow inspection of Arak nuclear plant. Talks held amid discussions of third round of UN sanctions. U.S. Ambassador Ryan Crocker and Iranian Ambassador Hassan Kazemi Qumi met in Baghdad 24 July to discuss Iraq security: second bilateral meeting in nearly 30 years. U.S. described meeting as "heated" but parties established trilateral security committee including Iraq to focus on containing Sunni insurgents. Iranian suggestion of future meetings at higher level received coolly by U.S. 25 July.

- ["Guns for sale - just point them at Iran"](#), *Guardian*, 1 Aug. 2007.
- ["UN inspectors to visit Iran nuclear site"](#), AFP, 30 July 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 Daily car bombs, shootings and suicide attacks continued while attempts made to move out of internal political and international diplomatic impasse. Worst violence saw 160 killed by bomb in mainly Shiite Amirli village north of Baghdad 7 July and 3 blasts in northern city of Kirkuk 16 July killing 85 - suggesting "surge" in Baghdad encouraging attacks elsewhere. Largest Sunni bloc, Iraqi Accordance Front, suspended membership in coalition government 1 August after 23 July demands including pardon for detainees not charged with specific crimes, commitment to human rights and disbanding of militias not met. U.S. Joint Campaign Plan indicates U.S. forces likely to remain in Iraq until summer of 2008. U.S. Ambassador to UN called on UN to play expanded role as mediator both internally and with neighbouring countries. U.S. and Iraqi officials began working on joint panel with Iran to investigate issues such as containing militias and insurgent group Al-Qaeda in Iraq. Saudi Arabia pledged to investigate possibility of opening diplomatic ties with Baghdad. Iraqi refugees causing humanitarian crisis in neighbouring countries; as many as 750,000 in Jordan, 1.5m in Syria. Rare show of positive national unity prompted by football team's Asian Cup victory.

- ["Iraq's largest Sunni Arab bloc quits Cabinet"](#), AP, 1 Aug. 2007.
- ["U.S., Iraq, Iran plan security committee"](#), AP, 24 July 2007.
- Comment by U.S. Ambassador to UN Zalmay Khalilzad, ["Why the UN belongs in Iraq"](#), *International Herald Tribune*, 20 July 2007.
- For background, see Crisis Group Middle East Report N°67, [Where is Iraq Heading? Lessons from Basra](#), 25 June 2007.

➤ Saudi Arabia Saudi nationals' involvement in Sunni militias in Iraq and Lebanon given increasing attention in U.S. media. U.S. ambassador to UN Zalmay Khalilzad suggested Riyadh not doing enough to help in Iraq - and at times "undermining the effort to make progress". U.S. preparing \$20bn arms package deal for Gulf States including Saudi Arabia.

- [" Saudis going south on Iraq"](#), *International Herald Tribune*, 29 July 2007.

➤ Yemen June ceasefire between government and Al-Houthi rebels strained after rebels missed deadlines to handover weapons and withdraw from certain positions. Positive late-month meeting between ceasefire committee and Al-Houthi leader reported. Suspected al-Qaeda suicide bomber killed 8 Spanish tourists and 2 Yemenis in Marib 2 July.

- ["Lack of security, continued conflict between Houthis and army"](#), *Yemen Times*, 25 July 2007.

## NORTH AFRICA

➤ Algeria Suicide bombing killed 10 soldiers, wounded 35 at military post in Lakhdaria 11 July; al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb claimed responsibility, threatened new attacks in North Africa. Security forces reportedly killed 44 militants 14-24 July. 1 soldier reportedly killed in ambush in village of Crete 22 July, another in 24 July bomb attack on security forces in Isser.

- ["Reports: Algerian army kills about 20 al-Qaida-allied militants"](#), AP, 24 July 2007.
- ["Qaeda vows violence campaign in North Africa-Web"](#), Reuters, 23 July 2007.



- Egypt 21 Muslim Brothers, on vacation in northern town Marsa Matrouh, arrested for planning brotherhood activities 22 July. 23 Egyptian and foreign men, reportedly members of Salafist group, arrested early July: accused of planning attacks, advocating government overthrow. Residents living within 100 metres of Gaza border protested plans to empty area to improve border security 22 July.
  - "Egypt holds 23 Islamists on terrorism charges", Reuters, 31 July 2007.
  - "Fearing attacks, Egypt beefs up airport security", Reuters, 25 July 2007.
  - "Police arrest 21 Muslim Brotherhood members in Egypt", AP, 22 July 2007.
  - For background, see Crisis Group Middle East/North Africa Report N°61, *Egypt's Sinai Question*, 30 Jan. 2007.
  
- Mauritania 6 men, including 3 Moroccans, arrested in Nouakchott 28 June on suspicion of terrorist links to al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb. Trial of 14 Islamists ended with court dropping all terrorism charges: 5 sentenced for forgery, 9 acquitted.
  - "Mauritanian Court drops terrorism charges", AP, 31 July 2007.
  - "Mauritania: 6 arrested on suspicion of terrorism", AP, 28 June 2007.

- For background, see Crisis Group Middle East/North Africa Report N°53, *Political Transition in Mauritania: Results and Prospects*, 24 Apr. 2006.
  
- Morocco Police detained 15 suspected al-Qaeda members 10 July after warnings of imminent terror attack. 2 journalists and army officer detained for alleged leak of secret intelligence on al-Qaeda plot. 11 suspected Islamists sentenced 2-4 years for planning "terrorist acts" 25 July.
  - "Moroccan journalists face trial over security leak", Reuters, 24 July 2007.
  - "Morocco detains 15 terror suspects-minister", Reuters, 13 July 2007.
  
- Western Sahara 3 police injured in bomb attack in Laayoune 30 June. U.S. backed Rabat's proposal for limited WS autonomy under Moroccan sovereignty in UN Security Council meeting 11 July. UNSC statement reaffirmed 30 April resolution, did not mention autonomy or independence.
  - "Moroccan police injured by fire bomb in W.Sahara", Reuters, 2 July 2007.
  - For background, see Crisis Group Middle East/North Africa Report N°65, *Western Sahara: The Cost of the Conflict*; and Report N°66, *Western Sahara: Out of the Impasse*, 11 June 2007.

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

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