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The countries for the Peace & Justice Updates have been chosen as areas of focus at the Institute. The International Human Rights section is intended to focus on aspects of international law. For information on specific cases of human rights abuses, please visit [www.hrw.org](http://www.hrw.org) or [www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org). The Gender and Peace section highlights events in peace-building that pertain to gender and human rights.

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## UPDATE SOURCE ABBREVIATIONS

ABC-CBN	=	ABC-CBN ( <a href="http://www.abc-cbnnews.com">www.abc-cbnnews.com</a> )
ADNKI	=	ADNKI ( <a href="http://www.adnki.com">www.adnki.com</a> )
AfricaFocus	=	AfricaFocus ( <a href="http://www.africafocus.org">www.africafocus.org</a> )
AFP	=	Agence France-Presse ( <a href="http://www.afp.com">www.afp.com</a> )
AI	=	Amnesty International ( <a href="http://www.amnesty.org">www.amnesty.org</a> )
AllAfrica	=	AllAfrica Global Media ( <a href="http://www.allafrica.com">www.allafrica.com</a> )
Angola Press	=	Angola Press ( <a href="http://www.angolapress-angop.ao">www.angolapress-angop.ao</a> )
AOL News	=	AOL News ( <a href="http://aolsvc.news.aol.com">http://aolsvc.news.aol.com</a> )
Ashraq Al-Awsat	=	Ashraq Al-Awsat ( <a href="http://aawsat.com">http://aawsat.com</a> )
Asian Tribune	=	Asian Tribune ( <a href="http://www.asiantribune.com">www.asiantribune.com</a> )
AP	=	Associated Press ( <a href="http://www.ap.org">www.ap.org</a> )
AWID	=	Association for Women's Rights in Development ( <a href="http://www.awid.org">www.awid.org</a> )
BBC	=	British Broadcasting Corporation ( <a href="http://news.bbc.co.uk/">http://news.bbc.co.uk/</a> )
BBC Monitoring	=	BBC Monitoring International Reports ( <a href="http://www.monitor.bbc.co.uk">www.monitor.bbc.co.uk</a> )
Cambodia Daily	=	The Cambodia Daily ( <a href="http://www.cambodiadaily.com">www.cambodiadaily.com</a> )
CBC News	=	CBC News ( <a href="http://www.cbc.ca">www.cbc.ca</a> )
Channel 4	=	Channel 4 ( <a href="http://www.channel4.com">www.channel4.com</a> )
CIA	=	CIA - The World Factbook ( <a href="http://www.cia.gov">www.cia.gov</a> )
CNS	=	CNS News ( <a href="http://www.CNSNews.com">www.CNSNews.com</a> )
Colombo Page	=	Sri Lankan Online News ( <a href="http://www.colombopage.com">www.colombopage.com</a> )
Daily News	=	Sri Lanka Daily News ( <a href="http://www.dailynews.lk">www.dailynews.lk</a> )
Daily Tribune	=	Daily Tribune ( <a href="http://www.tribune.net.ph">www.tribune.net.ph</a> )
Diamonds	=	Diamonds Net ( <a href="http://www.diamonds.net">www.diamonds.net</a> )
EU	=	European Union ( <a href="http://www.europa.eu.int">www.europa.eu.int</a> )
Guardian	=	Guardian Unlimited Network ( <a href="http://www.guardian.co.uk">www.guardian.co.uk</a> )
HRW	=	Human Rights Watch ( <a href="http://www.hrw.org">www.hrw.org</a> )
ICC	=	International Criminal Court ( <a href="http://www.icc-cpi.int">www.icc-cpi.int</a> )
ICG	=	International Crisis Group ( <a href="http://www.crisisweb.org">www.crisisweb.org</a> )
ICTR	=	International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda ( <a href="http://www.ictr.org">www.ictr.org</a> )
IndiaTimes	=	India Times ( <a href="http://www.timesofindia.indiatimes.com">www.timesofindia.indiatimes.com</a> )
Independent	=	The Independent ( <a href="http://www.independent.co.uk">www.independent.co.uk</a> )
IRIN	=	Integrated Regional Information Network ( <a href="http://www.irinnews.org">www.irinnews.org</a> )
Kathmandu Post	=	The Kathmandu Post ( <a href="http://www.nepalnews.com.np">www.nepalnews.com.np</a> )
Khaleej Times	=	Khaleej Times ( <a href="http://www.khaleejtimes.com">www.khaleejtimes.com</a> )
KI	=	Khmer Intelligence ( <a href="http://www.khmerintelligence.org">www.khmerintelligence.org</a> )
Kantipur Online	=	Kantipur Online ( <a href="http://www.kantipuronline.com">www.kantipuronline.com</a> )
Jurist	=	The Jurist ( <a href="http://jurist.law.pitt.edu/">http://jurist.law.pitt.edu/</a> )
LA Times	=	Los Angeles Times ( <a href="http://www.latimes.com">www.latimes.com</a> )
Lanka Web	=	Lanka Web ( <a href="http://www.lankaweb.com">www.lankaweb.com</a> )
Manila Times	=	Manila Times ( <a href="http://www.manilatimes.net">www.manilatimes.net</a> )
Monitor	=	The Monitor ( <a href="http://www.monitor.co.ug">www.monitor.co.ug</a> )
MONUC	=	MONUC ( <a href="http://www.monuc.org">www.monuc.org</a> )
Nepalnews	=	Nepal News ( <a href="http://www.nepalnews.com">www.nepalnews.com</a> )
Nepali Times	=	Nepali Times ( <a href="http://www.nepalitimes.com">www.nepalitimes.com</a> )
News Russia	=	News Russia ( <a href="http://newsfromrussia.com">http://newsfromrussia.com</a> )
News Flash	=	News Flash ( <a href="http://www.newsflash.org">www.newsflash.org</a> )
New Vision	=	New Vision ( <a href="http://www.newvision.co.ug">www.newvision.co.ug</a> )
News24	=	News24 ( <a href="http://www.news24.com">www.news24.com</a> )
News Blaze	=	News Blaze ( <a href="http://www.newsblaze.com">www.newsblaze.com</a> )

News Update Service	=	News Update Service ( <a href="http://www.newsupdate.com">www.newsupdate.com</a> )
NYT	=	The New York Times ( <a href="http://www.nytimes.com">www.nytimes.com</a> )
PANA	=	Panafrican News Agency ( <a href="http://www.panapress.com">www.panapress.com</a> )
Oxfam Great Britain	=	Oxfam Great Britain ( <a href="http://www.oxfam.org.uk">www.oxfam.org.uk</a> )
Reuters	=	Reuters ( <a href="http://www.reuters.com">www.reuters.com</a> )
Rising Nepal	=	Rising Nepal ( <a href="http://www.risingnepal.com">www.risingnepal.com</a> )
RSF	=	Reporters sans frontières ( <a href="http://www.rsf.org">www.rsf.org</a> )
SEAPA	=	Southeast Asian Press Alliance ( <a href="http://www.seapabkk.org">www.seapabkk.org</a> )
SMH	=	Sydney Morning Herald ( <a href="http://www.smh.com">www.smh.com</a> )
ST	=	Sudan Tribune ( <a href="http://www.sudantribune.com">www.sudantribune.com</a> )
UN News	=	UN News Center Homepage ( <a href="http://www.un.org">www.un.org</a> )
UNESCO	=	UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization ( <a href="http://www.unesco.org">www.unesco.org</a> )
UNHCHR	=	UN High Commissioner for Human Rights ( <a href="http://www.unhcr.ch">www.unhcr.ch</a> )
UNICEF	=	UN Children's Fund ( <a href="http://www.unicef.org">www.unicef.org</a> )
UNIFEM	=	UN Development Fund for Women ( <a href="http://www.unifem.org">www.unifem.org</a> )
VOA	=	Voice of America ( <a href="http://www.voanews.com">www.voanews.com</a> )
Xinhua	=	Xinhua News Agency ( <a href="http://www.xinhuanet.com/english">www.xinhuanet.com/english</a> )
WP	=	Washington Post ( <a href="http://www.washingtonpost.com">www.washingtonpost.com</a> )
Web India	=	Web India ( <a href="http://www.webindia123.com">www.webindia123.com</a> )

## **UPDATE SUMMARY**

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## **BURUNDI**

Government names new officials following week of violent protests: President Pierre Nkurunziza announced October 19 that the officials of the National Commission for Demobilization, Reintegration, and Reinsertion had been dismissed and replaced following a week of violent protests over slow pay for ex-militants. The former officials were involved in the controversy over names appearing on demobilization lists that failed to include over 100 members of the armed group, Guardians for Peace, who subsequently raided city streets in the capital, Bujumbura. The newly-selected commission emphasized hopes to better communicate with former rebel groups. “The new team is championing a spirit of collaboration at all levels of the demobilization program, with close contact with the demobilized persons,” said Brig-Gen Silas Ntiguriwa, the commission’s new executive secretary. Regarding the ex-militants’ demand for demobilization pay, Ntiguriwa announced that reinsertion packages would not be monetary, but rather would focus on material aid. The government also charged the commission with the task of demobilizing the National Liberation Forces (FNL), the last remaining rebel group in Burundi and what the United Nations operations in Burundi have called the “last obstacle” to peace in the country following 12 years of war. (IRIN, October 20, 2005)

Military and human rights body disagree over recent report of abuses: A human rights monitoring group in Burundi, Iteka, reported its concerns October 19 over increased civilian attacks by rebel and national army forces. Iteka’s leader, Jean-Marie Vianney Kavumbagu, called upon the government to quickly and effectively prosecute any forces involved in “[extra-judicial] executions, torture, and inhuman treatment” of civilians during continued skirmishes north of the capital city of Bujumbura. He stressed that despite fighting with the National Liberation Forces (FNL), nothing outside the rule of law should be permitted from government forces, especially when civilians are involved. Army spokesman Major Adolphe Manirakiza strongly contested Iteka’s report as “groundless,” claiming that the army had not killed, tortured, or otherwise compromised the rights of any civilians. However, Iteka reported a dozen civilian casualties as a result of army movements and more than 20 civilians killed by the FNL in September alone. The United Nations announced October 12 that it was concerned with such reports of rights abuses and ongoing fighting, and would keep its 5,500 peacekeepers in Burundi until the FNL is fully demobilized. (IRIN, October 21; Reuters, October 12, 20, 2005)

## **CAMBODIA**

Human Rights Watch and global unions criticize prime minister for continued arrests of civil society leaders: After the recent arrests of radio station director Mam Sonando, and of Rong Chhun, president of Cambodia’s Independent Teachers’ Association, Human Rights Watch (HRW) and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) criticized Prime Minister Hun Sen for imprisoning the men for criticizing the new supplemental border treaty with Vietnam. Guy Ryder, the ICFTU General Secretary, responded to the arrests October 19 by saying, “Freedom of expression is a human right and a pre-requisite for the operation of truly free trade unions. This government must change its contemptuous stance toward this most basic of civil liberties if it wants to be taken seriously by the international community.” Human Rights Watch Asia Director Brad Adams stated October 18, “This is the most severe assault on dissent in Cambodia since the aftermath of Hun Sen’s coup in 1997.” While Hun Sen continued to uphold his claim to arrest and file a suit against anyone who accused him of selling Cambodian territory to Vietnam, human rights activists and opposition party members began fleeing to

neighboring Thailand to escape arrest. Warrants had already been issued for four members of the government monitoring organization, the Cambodia Watchdog Council. The border treaty, signed by Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen and Vietnamese Prime Minister Phan Van Khai, readjusted the border between the two countries, giving Vietnam some Cambodian land. (HRW, October 18; ICFTU, October 19, 2005)

Prime Minister neglects hiring lawyer to defend him in U.S.-based lawsuit: Prime Minister Hun Sen reportedly neglected to hire a lawyer to defend himself against the September 16 lawsuit brought about by opposition party leader, Sam Rainsy, and other Cambodian nationals in the United States. Reports note that if the Prime Minister failed to present a defense, the plaintiff's lawyer would be allowed to ask the court for a default judgment entitling the plaintiffs to the amount of money the lawsuit requested of Hun Sen. The lawsuit, which accuses Hun Sen of committing various human rights abuses, from the time of the 1970s genocide to the 1997 grenade attacks on an opposition party demonstration. The suit was filed in the state of New York and served to Hun Sen during his visit to the World Summit at the United Nations in September of this year. (KI, October 20, 2005)

China gives prime minister an ultimatum: Prime Minister Hun Sen cut short his three-day trip to China after Chinese Vice President Zeng Qinghong expressed discontent towards Hun Sen's recent treatment of Cambodia's former King Norodom Sihanouk. Zeng stated October 18 that unless Hun decides to restore Cambodia's national unity under the former king, China would refuse Hun Sen the additional foreign aid he requested. The Chinese government continued to express its support for the monarchy by inviting the current King Norodom Sihamoni and his father Norodom Sihanouk for a state-sponsored visit to China. Hun Sen recently deprecated the former king for criticizing his October 10 border treaty with Vietnam, and threatened to abolish the monarchy in Cambodia. (KI, October 24, 2005)

### **DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO**

Militias disarm as government forces continue to move eastward: The United Nations Mission to the Congo, MONUC, announced October 24 the successful demobilization of over 1,000 former rebels in the eastern Ituri province. Major Hans-Jakob Reichen, military spokesman for the UN in the eastern provinces, said most of the rebels were from the Congolese Revolutionary Movement, but that more rebel groups were expected to disarm as Congolese and UN forces pushed eastward. During the week of October 16, more than 30 rebels were killed near the gold mining town of Mongwalu, where Congolese officials say the Union of Congolese Patriots (UPC) have continued to extract gold to sell to Uganda. Despite continued fighting, however, MONUC officials have voiced confidence in the disarmament efforts. The national disarmament program pays militants \$100 per weapon, with an additional monthly stipend of \$25 for a period of one year. Those who surrender can choose to join the national army or return to their homes as civilians. Former rebel leaders who agreed to disarm have been given a place in the transitional government. (AP, MONUC, October 24, 2005)

Schools reopen after teachers strike ends: More than 230,000 teachers returned to work October 19 for the first time in nearly two months, allowing schools to finally open. The strike, which began September 5 when teachers unions protested low pay, came to an end when President Joseph Kabila announced a pay raise of \$14-15 per year for all teachers. "We have stopped the

strike because the president allowed us to take part in negotiations on the new [national] budget at the parliament level,” said Laurent Mozamboka Sekeseke, deputy secretary of the Congolese Teachers Trade Union, known as SYECO. The union said the strike was necessary to force the government to honor a December 2004 agreement with the country’s civil servants in which it agreed to pay primary school teachers at least \$208 per year and teachers of upper grades \$2,000 per year. Although both sides spoke favorably of the new agreement, SYECO warned that teachers would again strike if the pay increases were not forthcoming by December 31. (IRIN, October 19, 2005)

Violence over diamond mining begins anew: In spite of tighter control of mines by the Congolese army, violence has returned to the diamond trade in the country, United Nations officials said October 21. A UN investigation was launched following a report from the East Kasai region of fighting between rival diamond gang thieves known as “suicidaires” in which at least 13 people were killed. The fighting occurred in the MIBA mine, in which the South African diamond company De Beers owns a minority stake. UN officials and local rights groups agree this was only the latest in an increasing number of incidents at diamond mines in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The city of Mbuji Mayi in southern DRC is home to dozens of diamond mines and has been the site of numerous violent confrontations between police and diamond gangs. Exacerbating the situation, according to the local groups, is the advent of new mining missions in the diamond-rich fields of the south, including 30 new mining sites announced the week of October 23 by Gravity Diamonds Limited and SouthernEra. Diamonds and other minerals have often been suggested as a cause of continued violent conflict in the Great Lakes region. (Diamonds, October 19, 21; Reuters, October 21, 2005)

International Crisis Group warns of renewed violence as elections near: On October 19, the International Crisis Group (ICG) released a comprehensive report on the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), entitled “A Congo Action Plan.” In this, its latest report, the ICG focused on five objectives it deemed critical for peaceful transition until the end of elections in June 2006. The objectives comprised free and fair elections; good governance and justice; an integrated national army and police force; disarmament, demobilization, and repatriation of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR); and fulfillment of the United Nations Mission to the Congo (MONUC) mandate to protect civilians. In recent weeks, several heads of state, including President Paul Kagame of Rwanda, have echoed the ICG’s warning that violence may return to the DRC if the upcoming elections are not handled properly and with the full support of the Congolese people. (AllAfrica, October 22; ICG, October 19; Xinhua, October 22, 2005)

## **GENDER AND PEACE**

Conference on protection of women during wartime takes place in Romania: Representatives from various war-torn countries met in Bucharest, Romania October 19 to discuss UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and how its implementation could benefit women victimized by war. The UN-backed conference provided the opportunity for women’s rights activists to give testimonies and express concerns about women’s lack of protection during wartime. The UN Population Fund (UNFPA) also stated that Resolution 1325 had increased female participation in politics in countries like Afghanistan, Liberia, Iraq, and Sudan. Following the recent increase in women’s suffrage statistics, many conference attendees expressed the belief that Resolution 1325 could therefore be used as a tool to increase female security in conflict zones. One expert on

women and security, Sanam Anderlini stated, “Because [Resolution 1325] is international law, it’s a very powerful tool.” UN Security Council Resolution 1325 was passed in 2000 to ensure gender equality and the participation of women in peace building efforts. (UN News, October 19, 2005)

UN and World Bank to discuss reintegration impact on women in Africa: A meeting conducted by UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the World Bank was to be held from October 31 through November 2 to discuss the impact that demobilization and ex-combatant reintegration programs would have on women in the African Great Lakes region. Civil society organizations, female ex-combatants, and experts on demobilization and re-integration were to create concrete methods in which the World Bank could address the impact its programs have on the women and girls living in countries such as Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Burundi, and Uganda. Because the bank lacks conclusive gender-specific data on the reintegration programs, the meeting would provide the opportunity for women’s rights activists to speak for women adversely affected by ex-combatants returning to the civilian population. In addition, UNIFEM planned to urge the bank to take into account women’s economic, physical, and psychological needs when implementing its programs. (UNIFEM, October 25, 2005)

UN Inter-Agency Task Force issues report on gender equality in peacekeeping: The UN Inter-Agency Task Force recently issued a report on specific ways to increase gender equality and women’s security in UN peacekeeping operations. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan supported the comprehensive plan regarding the UN Security Council Resolution 1325, as it included ways in which women could take part in peace negotiations and agreements. The report also included budget distribution methods for the gender-based initiatives the Task Force intends to achieve. (UN News, October 18, 2005)

## **INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS**

Global inquiry begins into effects on human rights of campaigns against terror: Prominent international lawyers and judges working with the Geneva-based International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) announced October 19 the beginning of an 18-month inquiry into the effects global campaigns against terrorism have had on human rights. The chairman of the commission, former South African Chief Justice Arthur Chaskalson, said the undertaking was prompted by growing international concern from human rights groups and civilians that many governments were undermining the rule of law in their battles against terrorism. “The fight against terrorist acts has led to repeated allegations of torture, indefinite and secret detentions, often without charge or trial, the reduction of defense rights, and threats to freedom of expression around the world,” said Chaskalson. Although most of those reacting to the commission expected that a specific focus on the United States’ “War on Terror,” Chaskalson and other members said they would look at the experiences of a number of countries. Several governments, including Switzerland, Norway, and Spain have already stated their support for the commission, constituted of Chaskalson; former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and President of Ireland Mary Robinson; Pakistan Supreme Court lawyer and rights activist Hina Jilani; Thai law professor Vitit Muntarbhorn; Swiss lawyer Stefan Trechsel; Argentinian judge Raul Zaffaroni, United States law professor Robert K. Goldman; and Egyptian international law expert Georges Abi-Saab. (Reuters, October 19, 2005)

String of abuses in Saddam trial peaks with murder of defense lawyer: The trial of former President of Iraq, Saddam Hussein, began October 19 amid criticism from numerous human rights groups over the manner in which the Supreme Iraqi Criminal Tribunal had proceeded. Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International have been particularly concerned with reports that the lawyers of Hussein and his co-defendants were not informed of the exact charges brought against their clients or when the trial was set to begin, nor given adequate time to prepare a witness list. Other rights groups have also expressed alarm over the tribunal's not having to show guilt beyond a reasonable doubt, as well as mandatory death sentences to be carried out within 30 days of final judgment. These concerns were at least partially addressed during the opening session in which Hussein appeared confused and indignant at the court. His lawyers were able to successfully move to adjourn the trial until November 28 in order to better prepare a defense. Soon afterward, however, Sa'dun al-Janabi, defense lawyer for co-defendant Awad Hamad al-Bandar al-Sa'dun, was abducted from his office in Baghdad. The next day, his body, with bullet wounds to the head, was found lying in a street in Ur, north of Baghdad. The incident underscored the concerns of rights groups that the trials of Hussein and former ministers of Iraq would not be conducted in accordance with international law and would potentially shift focus from the charges against the defendants to the abuses of the prosecution. Hussein and his ministers have been charged with numerous crimes against humanity, including 140 counts of murder following an assassination attempt on Hussein outside the village of al-Dujail in 1982. (AI, October 21; BBC, HRW, October 19, 2005)

## **LIBYA**

Libyan nationals fear deportation from UK: Libyan nationals residing in Britain fear deportation to Libya following an October 18 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the United Kingdom and Libya. The MOU allowed the UK to deport terrorist suspects to Libya if the government gave diplomatic assurance that the deportees would not be mistreated. Among the first suspects expected to be deported were five former members of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG), recently added to the British government's list of banned terrorist organizations. The LIFG, allegedly founded in part by Osama bin Laden, led a large-scale revolt against the Qaddafi regime in 1995 and reportedly attempted to assassinate the Libyan leader in 1996. Human rights groups said that British ministers were "dangerously misguided" in believing that Libya would respect the MOU since both Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International charged that Libya still routinely mistreats political prisoners, and warned that any understanding reached with Libya was worthless. United Nations (UN) Special Rapporteur on Torture Manfred Nowak told UK Home secretary Charles Clark that the UK was in danger of breaching the UN Convention against Torture and Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. (ADNKI, October 19; Ashraq Al-Awsat, October 24; Channel 4, October 24; CNS, October 21, 2005)

## **NEPAL**

Supreme Court issues stay order: The Supreme Court issued a stay order until October 30 of the implementation of the recent law suppressing the media, and asked the government not to take any action to cancel the operating license of Kantipur FM Radio. The government had been ready to cancel the station's license October 26 for broadcasting news-oriented programs despite the media ordinance. The radio station had been required to provide a written clarification within 24 hours, stating the reasons why its license should not be canceled. On October 19, a three-

member delegation of the Ministry of Information and Communications entered the Kantipur FM building with two separate letters asking the station to follow the recently promulgated media law and to disconnect the outside transmission. Later that day, dozens of policemen entered the station's control room and seized satellite uplinking equipment, although Kantipur FM had legal documents from the ministry to broadcast in the eastern region of the country. The same day, a group of publishers and editors formed the Struggle Network Committee to defy the new press law. On October 23, Kantipur FM Radio brought its case to the Supreme Court against the government attack and the seizure of the transmission equipment. FM radios have continued broadcasting their usual news bulletins under the title of "informative programs." Chief Justice Dilip Kumar Poudel told media personnel to go to court directly if the government interfered with FM radio stations or other media. ([Kantipur Online](#), October 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26; [Kathmandu Post](#), October 21, 24; [Nepalnews](#), October 25, 26, 2005)

Registration for municipal elections begins: On October 19 the Election Commission (EC) invited all political parties and organizations to register for municipal elections February 8, 2006. The same day the seven-party alliance decided to boycott the elections in an "active and effective" manner. Former Chief Election Commissioner Surya Prasad Shrestha said October 21 that conducting the upcoming elections without the mainstream political parties would further aggravate the existing conflict. Shrestha added that the country was not asking for mayors but for a reliable government presenting all political parties and that an interim government could be formed to conduct the elections. EC spokesperson Tejmuni Bajracharya said that the forthcoming municipal elections would not be recognized as party-less elections even if nationally recognized parties boycotted them. On October 26 the Defend Human Rights Movement, Nepal, an alliance of over two dozen human rights groups, called upon the general public to boycott the elections for municipalities and House of Representatives. Since the call for registration, nineteen different political parties that favor King Gyanendra have taken registration forms. Nepal Sadbhavana Party stated it would take active part in the elections and called upon all sides to take part in the municipal polls. ([Kantipur Online](#), 21 October; [Kathmandu Post](#), October 19, 22, 23; [Nepalnews](#), October 26; [Rising Nepal](#), October 25, 2005)

China gives military support to army: In a meeting with Nepal's Chief of Army Staff General Pyar Jung Thapa in Beijing October 21, Chinese Defense Minister Cao Gangchuan said that bilateral relations have witnessed smooth progress and he pledged to provide the equivalent of approximately \$1 million in military aid to the Royal Nepalese Army (RNA). China's aid comes at a time when India, the United States, and the United Kingdom have suspended the supply of arms to Nepal. Thapa told journalists October 25 that China had great confidence that Nepal was able to resolve the ongoing conflict on its own. ([Kantipur Online](#), October 21, 25, [Nepalnews](#), October 25, 2005)

## **PHILIPPINES**

Agreement on ancestral domain raises controversy: Agreements between the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the government on the issue of ancestral domain in southern Philippines were criticized by Mayor Celso Lobregat of Zamboanga City October 25. According to Lobregat, terms in the mutual agreement, which grants the MILF the right to impose taxes and create military and police forces are a "complete sell-out" of Mindanao. He pointed out that President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's decision was unilateral and compromised the unity of

Mindanao by “chopping up” the land “under the guise of ancestral domain,” while designating areas to be independently governed by the MILF. Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita denied the allegations, pointing out that the accord was still a draft, set to be firmed up by December. While the accords have been well received by the international community, some radio stations in Mindanao are already calling for protests against the agreement. The agreement reached during the September 15 and 16 peace talks in Malaysia was meant to resolve the long-standing issue of ancestral domain in southern Philippines by addressing matters of resource ownership and autonomy. (Daily Tribune, October 25; ABC-CBN, October 26, 2005)

Europe provides aid to displaced communities in southern Philippines: The European Commission (EC) said October 20 it had agreed to provide US\$598,000 in aid to internally displaced people, returnees, and host populations affected by 30 years of internal conflict. The funds were intended to improve access to safe water and sanitation and to enhance public health, food security and protection in the Central Mindanao Region. Furthermore, food security would be enhanced through the distribution of agriculture and fishing inputs. Internally displaced people would be provided with accurate information about their rights as well as with support to community protection plans and their implementation mechanisms. These efforts followed the positive outcome of last month’s talks in Malaysia during which the government and MILF came closer to reaching agreements on important issues regarding land rights and ownership of resources. The funds were to help reinforce the July 2003 truce which had been triggered by the protest of thousands of displaced in southern Philippines; the protest has been called the “Bakwit power” or the power of the evacuee. (News Flash; Europa, October 20, 2005)

Mindanao’s 30-year conflict costs Philippines \$3 billion: Three decades of armed conflict in Mindanao cost the government approximately \$3 billion in economic losses, a United Nations Development Program (UNDP) report revealed October 26. “These figures are significant to the economies of the affected areas, but they are not large from the viewpoint of the national economy,” UNDP declared. Human Development Network executive committee chair, Solita Collas Monsod, related the existence of armed conflict to poverty and inequality, pointing out that the frequency of armed conflict “is directly related to disparities in electric power, reliable water supply, and levels of adult education.” She insisted that the government assumes a “consistent and coherent policy” broad enough to apply to all regions of the Philippines, putting particular focus on education. (Manila Times, October 26, 2005)

## **RWANDA**

Genocide alleged mastermind appears before tribunal: Colonel Theoneste Bagosora, accused of planning the 1994 genocide of 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus, took the witness stand October 24 at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) in Arusha, Tanzania. The prosecution has said Bagosora opposed concessions his government made to Tutsi rebels at 1993 peace talks and vowed to “prepare the apocalypse.” The former head of the Rwandan army responded confidently that such accusations were “malicious and baseless.” While he did not deny taking over command of the country for a short time following the death of President Juvenal Habyarimana in a plane crash April 6, 1994, Bagosora said he had nothing to do with apparent orders to begin the genocide. The accusations against Bagosora and co-defendants Anatole Nsengiyumva and Aloys Ntabakuze were first brought to the ICTR in January 2005 by Romeo Dallaire, a Canadian general who led United Nations peacekeeping forces in Rwanda

during the genocide. During the 10 years of its existence, the ICTR has indicted 81 people, convicted 22, and acquitted three. (IRIN, Reuters, October 24, 2005)

Former president begins appeal of post-genocide conviction: The appeal case of Rwanda's first post-genocide president, Pasteur Bizimungu, has reached the country's highest court and been set to begin October 25. Bizimungu was appealing his conviction on June 7, 2004 of inciting civil disobedience and embezzlement, for which he was sentenced to 15 years in prison. Throughout the initial trial and the appeals process, the Hutu ex-president has maintained that the charges were politically motivated and a direct result of his attempts to set up a political party. The appeal was delayed when arguments arose between the defense and prosecution over which court had jurisdiction over the case. Ultimately, the defense won the right to hear the case in the High Court of Rwanda. Bizimungu was popularly elected following the 1994 genocide in which 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were killed. In 2000, he resigned amid political tension with his more powerful and outspoken vice-president, Paul Kagame, who later assumed the presidency. (Reuters, October 19, 2005)

Canada prosecutes Rwandan asylum seeker as first case under international law: Nearly a decade after arriving in Toronto, Canada and applying for political asylum, Desire Munyaneza appeared in court after being indicted on numerous counts related to the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. Munyaneza listened October 19 as the charges were read to him, which included two counts of genocide, two counts of crimes against humanity, and three war crimes, all allegedly perpetrated during his service with the Interahamwe militia. "It was a surreal moment for me and for the other members of the Rwandan community here in Canada, who have been involved in seeking justice for 10 years now, and we just never thought this moment would ever come," said Jean-Paul Nwinlinkwaya, who lost his father and brothers in the genocide. The case against Munyaneza has been pending since 2000 when Canada became a signatory to the United Nations International Criminal Court (ICC). Munyaneza will be the first person tried under the new legislation, which allows Canada to hear the cases of international criminal suspects. At the time of the genocide, he was living in the city of Butare, where many Tutsis and moderate Hutus were killed. (BBC, October 20, 2005)

### **SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO**

Serbian prime minister vows never to accept an independent Kosovo: Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica stated October 22 that he would never accept an independent Kosovo. The statement came just before the Prime Minister departed for New York to head Serbia's delegation at a United Nations Security Council session devoted to the topic of Kosovo's future. Kosovo has been administered by the UN and NATO since the 1999 war in which NATO intervened to stop ethnic cleansing of Albanians or Serbs. However, Kosovo remains a province of Serbia and Montenegro and "is an integral part of Serbia, always has been, and must remain that way" according to Kostunica. Kostunica went on to state that Serbia was ready to compromise and would be willing to give "substantial autonomy" to Kosovo but that compromises would only happen as long as Kosovo remained within Serbia's boundaries. (AP, October 22, 2005)

UN overrides Serbia and decides to open talks on Kosovo's independence: The United Nations Security Council decided over the vocal objections of the Serbian delegation October 24 to begin talks on the future of Kosovo. The move to open talks marked the official beginning of Kosovo's

move towards independence from Serbia and Montenegro. The Security Council hoped that after the appointment of a UN envoy, “conditional independence” for the ethnic Albanian majority could become a reality within a year. This was the recommendation made by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, and adopted by the council. The Serbian delegation, led by Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica, was given the opportunity to make its case before the Security Council. During the presentation, Kostunica argued that “dismemberment of a democratic state and the change of its internationally recognized borders against its will are options not to be contemplated.” In the end, however, the Security Council did just that, and independence for Kosovo now appears imminent. (BBC, October 24; Independent, October 25; Guardian, October 25, 2005)

Nine arrested for murder of Kosovo Albanians: The Serbian government arrested nine policemen, charging them with the murder of 48 Kosovo Albanians. The victims were killed in 1999 and buried along with hundreds of others in a mass grave located just outside Belgrade. This was the first arrest connected with the mass grave, which was discovered in 2001. The grave contained the remains of over 800 hundred victims, and was located within a police compound. Currently Serbia and Montenegro is beginning the process which one day could lead it to full European Union membership. One of the main criteria for entry is to more fully cooperate with international law by arresting suspected war criminals. (Reuters, October 26, 2005)

### **SRI LANKA**

Police accused of human rights violations: On October 24 the Hong-Kong based Asian Legal Resource Centre accused Sri Lankan police of committing “catastrophic levels of torture.” Extracts of the 180-page hearing report were released as UN Human Rights Committee hearings on Sri Lanka, scheduled for November 7-25, draw near. The report denounced the collapsing of key institutions such as the police, prosecutors, and the judiciary and also revealed the lack of torture prevention methods and the absence of state-sponsored programs to help rehabilitate physically and psychologically tortured victims. “Police in Sri Lanka often operate, not like professional law enforcement agents, but [like] thugs or gangsters, and this gang behaviour is often displayed through abuse, use of violence, and torture” said the report. Finally, the report urges the UN to pressure the government to implement measures such as endorsing a witness protection law and establishing a permanent special body to investigate torture. (News Russia; News Update Service, October 24, 2005)

Fishermen protest on tsunami’s 300<sup>th</sup> day: Thousands of fishermen protested October 24 against the lack of government efforts to rehabilitate their industry. During the protest, which also marked 300 days since the tsunami of December 26, 2004, fishermen complained about the government’s ban on construction of buildings within a given distance of the sea. Some of these bans limited the possibility of construction to up to 656 feet away from the sea. Though such limits have been considerably reduced since October 15, fishermen asked to know, “What happened to the money foreigners gave,” as one banner said. The fishermen also asked for money to rebuild their livelihoods. “Now that a decision has been taken, please give us the money so that we can resume our normal lives,” said one of the protest organizers, L. Jayatilleke. These requests come in the wake of a General Auditor’s report revealing corruption in distribution of aid received. (AOL News, October 24, 2005)

Cease-fire increasingly strained by LTTE's civilian military training: The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) declared October 24 that an existing cease-fire would collapse if the Prime Minister and ruling party's presidential candidate, Mahinda Rajapaksa, went forward with his promise to amend the cease-fire and monitoring mechanism if elected. This amendment would contradict the Ceasefire Agreement, according to which the government and the LTTE are equal partners. The situation was further aggravated by a revelation October 22 that the LTTE had started giving military training to civilians in areas under LTTE control. According to sources, so far six batches of civilians have been given such training. With upcoming elections drawing near, relations between the government and the LTTE have been tense. Both presidential candidates affirmed they wanted to achieve peace though without succumbing to the LTTE's demand for self-determination. LTTE's Peace Secretariat head S. Puleedevan said "We have no choice at all with these two candidates [because neither one is] going to deliver anything tangible to the Tamil People." (Colombo Page, October 22, 24, 2005)

## **SUDAN**

Darfur peace talks adjourn until November: The African Union (AU)-mediated peace talks to end the Darfur conflict adjourned for a month October 20 with mediators and delegates saying modest progress had been made. The sixth round of talks between Darfur rebels and the government has inched forward since opening September 18 as rebel disunity, escalating violence in the western Sudanese region, and deteriorating relations between Sudan and the AU threatened progress. Much of the negotiation centered on technical points rather than substantive issues of wealth and power-sharing needed to end the 32-month conflict. The parties did reach agreement on human rights and fundamental freedoms and guidelines for power-sharing. Preliminary discussions were also held on the federal system of governance according to a joint statement made by the delegates and mediators. The statement read in part: "We are confident that even though modest progress was made during this session, the foundation had been laid to enable us to move forward on the substantive issues on the agenda for the power-sharing negotiations, during the next round." An agenda was also agreed for negotiations on wealth-sharing and informal consultations to be held on security arrangements as well as negotiations for a permanent cease-fire in the region. Sudanese Foreign Minister Lam Akol said the next round of talks, scheduled to begin November 20 would include members of the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) and a new joint government position. Akol was appointed as part of the new coalition government between Khartoum's ruling National Congress Party and the former southern rebel SPLM. (Reuters, October 20, 2005)

Darfur rebel groups postpone general meeting: The Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A) announced October 24 that it would postpone the official opening of its second general meeting, due to be held October 25 in the SLM/A-controlled area of Darfur, until October 28. The move followed requests to that end from the United States, the European Union, and other parties scheduled to act as observers at the meeting, as well as a delay in the arrival of some participants from overseas. Low-level SLM/A members began talks October 25 in Muhajiria, the largest rebel-held town in Darfur. The head of the conference's preparatory committee, Ibrahim Ahmad Ibrahim, said that the conference was being held upon the request of SLM/A members and leaders to unify the movement, achieve peace in the region, and resolve differences. Referring to the meeting as a call "by the grassroots of the movement," he urged that all of the

SLM/A leadership attend, as voting on the movement's leadership would take place. The two SLM/A leaders, Secretary-General Minni Arcua Minnawi and President Abdel Wahed Mohamed el-Nur have rarely presented a unified front at the peace talks and have publicly differed over issues such as control of troops on the ground. Meanwhile, African Union (AU) official spokesman Nour al-Din al-Mizni said the AU would participate in the general meeting following an invitation by the SLM/A. "We have confirmed we will be participating for the sake of the movement's unity," he added. ([BBC](#), October 25; [Reuters](#), October 23, 2005)

Vice president names southern cabinet: The president of the new government of southern Sudan, Salva Kiir Mayardit, announced October 23 the formation of the first autonomous southern cabinet since the January 9 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between the northern government and the southern Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM). The new cabinet, which will sit in the southern capital of Juba, consists of 20 ministries and seven advisors while another two portfolios – army affairs and rural cooperation and development – are yet to be filled pending further consultations. The new cabinet included the vice-president of the southern government, Riek Machar, named the minister for housing and lands; SPLM official Nhial Deng Nhial, who was named minister for regional cooperation; and Daniel Awet Akol, who was to lead the ministry of the interior. Rebecca de Mabior, widow of former SPLM chairman and first vice-president of Sudan John Garang, was given the post of minister of roads and transportation. Senior SPLM member Pagan Amun was appointed diplomatic affairs advisor to the president of the southern government. Under the CPA, 70 percent of the representatives of the southern government are from the SPLM, with the ruling northern National Congress Party (NCP) and other southern parties each taking 15 percent. The peace deal provided for a six-year period of interim rule under a national unity government established September 22 which was to remain in place until elections in the next three to four years. The agreement also provided for an autonomous south, with its own army, government, and constitution during the six-year interim period. ([Reuters](#), October 23, 24, 2005)

Darfur refugees free abducted aid workers: Refugees took 34 aid workers hostage in Darfur's largest refugee camp October 25, but later released all but five, UN officials and sources in the aid community said. The refugees were demanding the release of a local tribal leader in the restive Kalma camp who was arrested by authorities October 23. "We have been told that all but five Sudanese national NGO (nongovernmental organization) workers have been released," UN spokesman George Somerwill said. The hostages included workers from the Sudanese Red Crescent, the U.S. aid agency, Community Habitat Funding International, and the governmental water and sanitation agency. The five remaining hostages were understood to be from the latter body. Camp leaders hold a tight grip over the refugee population, often profiting from the distribution of food aid and obstructing attempts by agencies to count the population. ([BBC](#), [Reuters](#), October 25, 2005)

Eastern rebels to hold first talks with government: The Eastern Front rebel movement said October 23 it would meet the government of Sudan for first-ever peace talks, after fighting broke out in June between the rebels and government forces. Eastern Front rebel deputy chief, Amna Marar, said the meeting, whose venue is yet to be determined, would be held with United Nations mediation and added, "We would like Eritrea to be part of the UN mediation." Formed this year, the Eastern Front, supported by Eritrea, accuses the Sudanese government of

marginalizing the eastern region of the country, which has seen sporadic fighting since 1994. Eritrea, while acknowledging its support for the rebels, denies accusations that it provides them with military assistance. (ST, October 24, 2005)

## UGANDA

Senior opposition leader returns from exile: Uganda's main opposition leader, retired Colonel Kizza Besigye, returned from four years of self-imposed exile in South Africa October 26. A runner-up in the 2001 presidential elections, Besigye said he had returned to challenge what he called the "dictatorship" of President Yoweri Museveni in the elections expected to take place next year. Besigye did not say whether he would stand in the upcoming elections but maintained that the country's fractured opposition parties would cooperate in order to defeat the current government. "Political persecution is rampant in this country," he told a news conference at Entebbe airport, adding that his supporters had been harassed in his absence. Scores of people looked on as Besigye, who fled Uganda claiming his life was in danger, left for the capital, Kampala, in a convoy of cars stopped several times by thousands of supporters lining the road from the airport. (Reuters, October 26, 2005)

Museveni effects change in military, appoints new police chief: President Yoweri Museveni split Uganda's military into separate ground and air forces and reshuffled their commands in an effort to modernize the country's defense, army spokesman Lt. Col. Shaban Bantariza said October 24. The changes, which took effect immediately, saw former army commander Lt. Gen. Aronda Nyakairima promoted to full general and appointed to head a joint military command that will oversee the new ground and air units. Both units will additionally have a new commander. Museveni promoted close aide Brig. Kale Kaihura to major general and put him in charge of the country's police force. Uganda's military and police forces had been criticized in recent weeks for their inability to protect civilians in Northern Uganda from attacks by the rebel Lord's Resistance Army. Some critics have speculated that Museveni reformed the army in an effort to install close allies ahead of next year's general elections. (AFP, October 24, 2005)

Great Lake governments to meet over rebel threat: Representatives of the governments of Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Rwanda, and Uganda were due to meet October 27 to discuss ways of handling foreign armed groups operating in eastern DRC. The move followed two days of talks October 20-21 between the delegates in the Ugandan capital, Kampala, which resulted in calls for international sanctions against armed groups operating in the area and calls for militia fighters to be disarmed using all means necessary. Ugandan foreign minister Sam Kutesa called for Uganda to join forces with Congolese soldiers and UN peacekeepers against Uganda's rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), some of whom have recently fled into eastern Congo. The DRC government, however, rejected Kutesa's proposal to redeploy Uganda People's Defense Force (UPDF) troops to the region to hunt the LRA as well as other rebel groups there. Delegates to the meeting agreed on setting up a joint verification team to determine the exact location of the LRA in eastern Congo. Around 400 rebels accompanied by their families sought refuge in September in Garamba National Park, located in the DRC northeastern province of Orientale, following increased pressure from Sudanese and Ugandan security forces. (IRIN, October 21; MONUC, October 22; Reuters, October 20, 2005)

## ZIMBABWE

Split widens within MDC: During the week of October 21, Movement for Democratic Change's founder and leader Morgan Tsvangirai publicly announced that his party would not participate in senate elections, stating that the election would be fraudulent and therefore worthless. Tsvangirai and other government critics also believed that the elections were designed by the ruling party as a way to further tighten President Robert Mugabe's grip on power, because they were called after constitutional changes reintroduced an upper house into a parliament that had been a single-chamber institution for over 18 years. However, on October 24 twenty-two members of the MDC officially filed as candidates for the senate elections, thereby defying orders from Tsvangirai. The twenty-two candidates appeared to have the support of the MDC general secretary Welshman Ncube as well as party Vice President Gibson Sibanda. The two men have argued that boycotting the election would signal a type of surrender. Observers believe this to be the most serious internal conflict that the MDC has ever faced. ([BBC](#), October 20; [Reuters](#), October 22, 23, 24; [NYT](#), October 25, 2005)

Government opens investigation into opposition party funds: Zimbabwe's federal government has opened an investigation into whether or not the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) has received illegal funds during this past year. According to the allegations, the funds came from the governments of Ghana, Nigeria, and Taiwan. It is illegal in Zimbabwe for political parties to receive money from foreign governments. The government's attention was drawn when Job Sikhala, an MDC legislator, was quoted by local media October 24 as saying party leaders were squabbling over \$2.5 million in funds received from the above-mentioned foreign governments. Sikhala later retracted his story on television the night of October 25, saying that the original statement was made in anger over his party's current rift over the upcoming senate elections. MDC spokesman Paul Themba-Nyathi denied October 26 that the party had received money from the three countries named, stating, "The claim is a complete fabrication, devoid of all truth. The MDC has never received any donation of whatever kind from Ghana and Nigeria." Regardless of the above statement, the government was to go ahead with its opening of an investigation. ([Reuters](#), October 26, 2005)