

1 October 2005, N°26

CrisisWatch:

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

CrisisWatch is compiled by Crisis Group's Brussels Research Unit, drawing on multiple sources including the resources of our more than 110 staff members across five continents, who already report on some 50 of the situations listed here. Comments and suggestions can be sent to crisiswatch@crisisgroup.org.

To search past issues of *CrisisWatch* visit our [databases and resources](#) page at www.crisisgroup.org

September 2005 Trends



Deteriorated Situations

Côte d'Ivoire (p.3)
Iran (p.11)
Iraq (p.11)
Kyrgyzstan (p.4)
Mozambique (p.3)
Thailand (p.7)



Improved Situations

Liberia (p.3)
Mauritania (p.12)
North Korea (p.6)
Philippines (p.7)



Unchanged Situations

Afghanistan (p.5), Albania (p.7), Algeria (p.11), Angola (p.3), Armenia (p.8), Azerbaijan (p.8), Bangladesh (p.5), Basque Country (Spain) (p.9), Belarus (p.9), Bolivia (p.9), Bosnia & Herzegovina (p.7), Burundi (p.2), Central African Republic (p.2), Chad (p.2), Chechnya (Russia) (p.8), China (internal) (p.6), Colombia (p.10), Cyprus (p.9), DR Congo (p.2), Ecuador (p.10), Egypt (p.11), Ethiopia/Eritrea (p.2), Georgia (p.8), Guinea (p.3), Guinea-Bissau (p.3), Haiti (p.10), India (non-Kashmir) (p.5), Indonesia (p.6), Israel/Occupied Territories (p.10), Kashmir (p.5), Kazakhstan (p.4), Kenya (p.2), Kosovo (p.7), Lebanon (p.10), Macedonia (p.8), Moldova (p.9), Myanmar/Burma (p.7), Nagorno-Karabakh (Azerbaijan) (p.8), Nepal (p.5), Nigeria (p.4), North Caucasus (Russia) (p.9), Northern Ireland (UK) (p.9), Pakistan (p.6), Rwanda (p.2), Saudi Arabia (p.11), Serbia & Montenegro (p.8), Sierra Leone (p.4), Somalia (p.3), Sri Lanka (p.6), Sudan (p.3), Swaziland (p.3), Syria (p.10), Taiwan Strait (p.6), Tajikistan (p.4), Tanzania (p.2), Turkey (p.9), Turkmenistan (p.4), Uganda (p.2), Ukraine (p.9), Uzbekistan (p.4), Venezuela (p.10), Western Sahara (p.12), Yemen (p.11), Zimbabwe (p.3)

October 2005 Watchlist



Conflict Risk Alert

Iraq
Nepal
Somalia



Conflict Resolution Opportunity

Nepal

Board of Trustees

Chair
Lord Patten of Barnes

President and CEO
Gareth Evans

Executive Committee
Morton Abramowitz
Emma Bonino
Cheryl Carolus
Maria Livanos Cattau*
Yoichi Funabashi
William Shawcross
George Soros
Stephen Solarz*
William O. Taylor
*Vice-Chair

Adnan Abu-Odeh
Kenneth Adelman
Ersin Arioglu
Diego Arria
Zbigniew Brzezinski
Victor Chu
Wesley Clark
Pat Cox
Ruth Dreifuss
Uffe Ellemann-Jensen
Mark Eyskens
Leslie H. Gelb
Bronislaw Geremek
I. K. Gujral
Carla Hills
Lena Hjelm-Wallén
James C.F. Huang
Swanee Hunt
Asma Jahangir
Shiv Vikram Khemka
James V. Kimsey
Bethuel Kiplagat
Wim Kok
Trifun Kostovski
Elliott F. Kulick
Joanne Leedom-Ackerman
Todung Mulya Lubis
Ayo Obe
Christine Ockrent
Friedbert Pflüger
Victor Pinchuk
Surin Pitsuwan
Itamar Rabinovich
Fidel V. Ramos
Lord Robertson of Port Ellen
Mohamed Sahnoun
Ghassan Salamé
Salim A. Salim
Douglas Schoen
Pär Stenbäck
Thorvald Stoltenberg
Grigory Yavlinsky
Uta Zapf
Ernesto Zedillo

Chairmen Emeritus
Martti Ahtisaari
George J. Mitchell

Crisis Group

Crisis Group is an independent, non-profit, non-governmental organisation, with over 110 staff members on five continents, working through field-based analysis and high-level advocacy to prevent and resolve deadly conflict. Crisis Group's approach is grounded in field research. Teams of political analysts are located within or close by countries at risk of outbreak, escalation or recurrence of violent conflict. Based on information and assessments from the field, Crisis Group produces regular analytical reports containing practical recommendations targeted at key international decision-takers, and backed up with high level advocacy. Crisis Group is chaired by former European Commissioner for External Relations Lord Patten of Barnes, and its President and Chief Executive is former Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans.



Africa

CENTRAL AFRICA

- ↳ Burundi Electoral process ended with successful elections for local heads of villages 23 September. Spokesman for last remaining rebel group, National Liberation Forces (FLN), stated armed conflict now over; denied initiating attacks against government that killed 1. FLN refused to recognise new government's legitimacy; splinter group later called on FLN leader to accept President Nkurunziza's offer of negotiations. UN Security Council pledged support for "Forum of Partners" to help consolidate peace and promote development in Burundi. South Africa to withdraw over 300 troops protecting political leaders following August elections.

 - ["Burundi's rebels remain reluctant to open peace talks"](#), SouthScan, 29 Sept. 2005.
 - ["Rebels willing to negotiate peace, but only with ethnic leaders"](#), IRIN, 15 Sept. 2005.
 - For background, see Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°31, ["Elections in Burundi: A Radical Shake-Up of the Political Landscape"](#), 15 Aug. 2005.

- ↳ Central African Republic Unidentified armed group attacked northern CAR village 27 September; up to 3,000 reportedly fleeing to Chad; UNHCR refugee camp in Chad reaching capacity; new camp to be constructed.

 - ["CAR refugees flee mystery attacks"](#), BBC, 7 Sept. 2005.

- ↳ Chad Sudanese Janjaweed militia attacked villages in eastern Chad, killing 36; 8 attackers, 2 Chadian soldiers killed in ensuing clash. Continuing insecurity in northern CAR prompted repatriation of 1,500 Chadian refugees.

 - ["Deby accuses Janjawid of killing his civilians, vows punishment"](#), IRIN, 29 Sept. 2005.

- ↳ Democratic Republic of Congo Deadline for all foreign rebels to leave DRC voluntarily expired 30 September; army to begin using force but lacks capacity to do so. Crisis as DRC soldiers in east deserted posts; most soldiers reportedly tricked by leaders into deserting. UN Security Council authorised deployment of additional police personnel and equipment to MONUC for 2006 general elections; to decide on UNSG request for 2,580 more MONUC personnel end October. Ugandan Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebels and deputy leader in DRC; MONUC and DRC army met LRA who refused to give up arms; Uganda threatened to invade to disarm rebels. Nigerian government ordered withdrawal of 120 Nigerian police after sex abuse accusations.

 - ["Foreign rebel groups ignore deadline to leave"](#), IRIN, 29 Sept. 2005.
 - ["Kabila to push out Interahamwe"](#), *The New Times*, 18 Sept. 2005.
 - For background, see Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°25, ["The Congo: Solving the FDLR Problem Once and for All"](#), 12 May 2005.

- ↳ Kenya Near-daily clashes between "Yes" and "No" supporters ahead of 21 November constitutional referendum; 2 MPs arrested for inciting mayhem.

- ["Violent youths disrupt referendum rally"](#), *The Nation*, 22 Sept. 2005.

- ↳ Rwanda Hutu rebels (FDLR) delayed disarmament in DR Congo, provoking international calls for military solution. Local militia destroyed huts in Rwandan refugee camp in southwest Uganda over land disputes; 250 families homeless. Belgian priest Guy Theunis, first European arrested on genocide charges, pleaded innocent. Former media director of radio station notorious for anti-Tutsi broadcasts arrested in Gabon on genocide charges.

 - ["Belgium seeks Rwanda priest case"](#), BBC, 27 Sept. 2005.
 - ["Congo: Deal with the FDLR Threat Now"](#), Crisis Group Statement, 14 Sept. 2005.

- ↳ Tanzania Violent clashes between supporters of ruling Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) and opposition Civic United Front in Zanzibar ahead of 30 October elections. Concerns remain of backlash over fraudulent voter registration and accusations of rigged outcome. CCM party official and 4 family members killed in allegedly politically motivated arson attack. Pre-election violence reported in other Tanzanian districts.

 - ["Fresh political violence erupts in Zanzibar"](#), *Mail & Guardian*, 27 Sept. 2005.

- ↳ Uganda In positive step for peace process, Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) leader Joseph Kony resumed contact with conflict mediators. But clashes continued between Ugandan army and LRA, killing 24 rebels. About 60 LRA fighters left northern Uganda, attacked villages in southern Sudan, before crossing into DR Congo 19 September; Uganda threatened to take action if DRC army/MONUC did not disarm rebels. 15 killed in inter-clan fighting in northeast, while 250 Rwandan families homeless after militia demolished huts in southwest refugee camp.

 - ["Disarm LRA rebels or we invade, Museveni tells Kinshasa, MONUC"](#), IRIN, 21 Sept. 2005.
 - Comment by Don Cheadle and John Prendergast (Crisis Group), ["The nightmare of northern Uganda"](#), *International Herald Tribune*, 12 Sept. 2005.
 - For background see Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°23, ["Shock Therapy for Northern Uganda's Peace Process"](#), 11 Apr. 2005.

HORN OF AFRICA

- ↳ Ethiopia/Eritrea Eritrea warned would re-start war with Ethiopia if UN fails to resolve border dispute. UN Security Council extended mandate of UN mission until March 2006, expressing concern over high troop concentrations near border. Ethiopia's election board confirmed PM Meles Zenawi's coalition won clear victory in disputed May election; government rejected opposition proposal to form unity government. Zenawi instead announced willing to open talks with main Ethiopian guerrilla movement, Oromo Liberation Front. Police arrested over 40 opposition members prior to planned protests early October.

 - ["Opposition members arrested ahead of planned demo"](#), IRIN, 28 Sept. 2005.
 - ["Eritrea warns of renewed war with Ethiopia"](#), CNN, 22 Sept. 2005.
 - For background, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°68, ["Ethiopia and Eritrea: War or Peace?"](#), 24 Sept. 2003.

- ☛ Somalia Tensions escalated as President Abdullahi Yusuf massed loyal militia at temporary base in Jowhar; opposition warlords in Mogadishu accused him of plotting military assault, debated whether to attack. UN's Jowhar office temporarily occupied raising doubts president and PM could establish authority. Somaliland held parliamentary elections 29 September; authorities arrested 4 Somali militants, including al Qaeda member. Pirates who seized ship carrying UN food aid July refused to release hostages, hijacked second ship.
- "Somaliland in first vote for MPs", BBC, 29 Sept. 2005.
 - "Mogadishu-based leaders meet near Jowhar", IRIN, 26 Sept. 2005.
 - For background, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°95, *Counter-Terrorism in Somalia: Losing Hearts and Minds?*, 11 July 2005.

- ☛ Sudan New national unity cabinet sworn in 22 September; President al-Bashir's ruling National Congress Party, fronting for Sudan's hard-line Islamist movement, retained key ministries including defence and energy; former rebel Sudan People's Liberation Movement given foreign ministry. South's legislature officially inaugurated 29 September. Sixth round of Darfur peace talks between Sudanese government and 2 Darfur rebel groups opened mid-month in Nigeria. But violence spreading and clashes between government forces and rebels could jeopardise talks: Arab militias killed 34 in attack on refugee camp North Darfur; government threatened retaliation after Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) rebels overran South Darfur town of Sheiria 20 September; attack by Arab nomads killed 40 in retaliation for August SLA raid. NATO agreed to extend mission to airlift AU troops to Darfur by month. UN Security Council extended UNMIS mandate to March 2006.
- "Discord in eastern Sudan threatens the peace accord with the south", *The Economist*, 29 Sept. 2005.
 - "Sudan swears in unity government", BBC, 22 Sept. 2005.
 - For background, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°96, *The Khartoum-SPLM Agreement: Sudan's Uncertain Peace*, 25 July 2005, and Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°30, *Garang's Death: Implications for Peace in Sudan*, 9 August 2005.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- ☛ Angola Concern over increasing incidents of politically-motivated violence between ruling MPLA and opposition UNITA parties as Angola prepares for first post-war poll; parties agreed to hold simultaneous presidential/legislative elections mid-2006.
- "The long road to recovery", *The Economist*, 22 Sept. 2005.
- ☛ Mozambique Violent clashes between supporters of ruling FRELIMO Party and former rebel movement RENAMO over disputed municipal elections erupted 4/5 September: 12 reportedly killed, 47 injured. Wave of detentions in northern town of Mocimboa da Praia following unrest.
- "Twelve killed in FRELIMO-RENAMO skirmish", IRIN News 8 Sept. 2005.
 - "Mocimboa da Praia detentions condemned", All Africa, 22 Sept. 2005.
- ☛ Swaziland Government warned pro-democracy activists that security forces would block planned October march to protest new constitution that concentrates power in King

Mswati III. Police disrupted student march 8 September, seriously injuring 10.

- "March planned to protest new constitution", IRIN, 20 Sept. 2005.

- ☛ Zimbabwe President Mugabe defended urban demolition to UN General Assembly as effort to boost law and order. Government paid IMF \$120 million 1 September; IMF granted Zimbabwe 6 month reprieve from expulsion in exchange for implementation of broader economic reforms. Mugabe signed into law constitutional changes that create senate, allow nationalisation of land and empower state to withdraw passports as government considered regulation requiring Zimbabweans to have exit visas to leave country.
- "Mugabe blames Western sanctions for Zimbabwe's crisis", Zimonline, 15 Sept. 2005.
 - "Exit visas undemocratic, say civic groups", IRIN, 15 Sept. 2005.
 - For background, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°97, *Zimbabwe's Operation Murambatsvina: The Tipping Point?*, 17 August 2005.

WEST AFRICA

- ☛ Côte d'Ivoire Peace process on brink of collapse as ex-rebel Forces Nouvelles rejected South African President Mbeki as AU mediator and UN accepted elections will not be held as planned 30 October. South Africa suggested FN main obstacle to peace; FN accused South Africa of bias towards Gbagbo and covert weapon sales to government, in breach of UN embargo. Nigerian President Obasanjo called for renewed engagement of Ecowas regional body; Gbagbo rejected suggestion and did not attend Ecowas talks held Abuja 30 September; Ecowas recommendations to be submitted to AU 6 October. Former Ivorian President Henri Konan Bedié - deposed in 1999 - returned to country 12 September.
- "Fear of renewed fighting in Cote d'Ivoire", *Business Day*, 23 Sept. 2005.
 - "SA role under review", BBC, 21 Sept. 2005.
 - For background, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°90, *Côte d'Ivoire: The Worst May Be Yet to Come*, 24 Mar. 2005.

- ☛ Guinea Instability persisted as opposition Front Républicain pour l'Alternance Démocratique alliance called for President Conté's resignation in favour of government of national unity.
- "Opposition calls for president's resignation", IRIN, 12 Sept. 2005.
 - For background, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°94, *Stopping Guinea's Slide*, 14 June 2005.

- ☛ Guinea-Bissau UNSG Annan called for more international assistance to ease transition to presidency of "Nino" Vieira. Ruling PAIGC party accepted defeat in previously disputed July presidential election 27 September.
- "Bissau election result accepted", BBC, 28 Sept. 2005.

- ☛ Liberia Positive development as government approved long-awaited Governance and Economic Management Assistance Programme 14 September following pressure from donor countries. Last-minute Supreme Court ruling on registrations of 2 candidates put 11 October date for presidential elections into doubt. UN Security Council extended UNMIL mandate until 31 March 2006, rejecting UNSG Annan's recommendation for

12-month extension. Presidential candidate George Weah said UN military presence needed until 2010.

- [“Questions surround Liberia’s October election”](#), Voice of America, 22 Sept. 2005.
- [“Anti-graft plan endorsed to cheers from world donors”](#), IRIN, 15 Sept. 2005.
- For background, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°87, [Liberia and Sierra Leone: Rebuilding Failed States](#), 8 Dec. 2004.

Crisis Group Africa Report N°98, [Liberia’s Elections: Necessary but Not Sufficient](#), 7 September 2005. Liberia’s October presidential and legislative elections are welcome progress, but not the end of the country’s transformation. The process could fail if Liberians refuse to implement an intrusive economic governance mechanism, or international partners pull out early. The U.S., UN, EU and World Bank need to stay the course. Working with the Economic Community of West African States and the African Union, they must rebuild shattered institutions and infrastructure and ensure security by maintaining the UN peacekeeping mission and gradually training new Liberian security forces. Long-term issues also need to be addressed, including citizenship, reintegration of ex-combatants, decentralisation of government, transitional justice, judicial reform and possibly constitutional reform. Elections are just one step on a long road to recovery.



↳ Nigeria Separatists threatened to sabotage oil installations should Mujahid Dokubu-Asari, head of Niger Delta People’s Volunteer Force, arrested Port Harcourt 20 September, not be released. Idama oil-flow station stormed by 100 separatists day of arrest; subsequently reopened under army protection. President Obasanjo agreed to anti-corruption investigation after accused of taking bribes. Governor of oil-rich Bayelsa state arrested in UK in money laundering investigation. Thousands marched in Lagos protesting 30% fuel price rise.

- [“Security men terrorise villagers as Chevron resumes production”](#), *The Vanguard*, 26 Sept. 2005.
- [“Nigerian march against fuel hikes”](#), BBC, 14 Sept. 2005.

↳ Sierra Leone UN Security Council approved UN Integrated Office for Sierra Leone 31 August, due to replace existing UNAMSIL peacekeeping mission 1 January 2006.

- [“UN approves assistance team to move in after peacekeeper exit”](#), IRIN, 1 Sept. 2005.
- For background, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°87, [Liberia and Sierra Leone: Rebuilding Failed States](#), 8 Dec. 2004.

Asia/Pacific

CENTRAL ASIA

↳ Kazakhstan President Nazarbayev, Senator Kaisarov, opposition candidate Tuyakbai and Ak Zhol party leader Baimenov announced would run in 4 December presidential elections. Nazarbayev warned foreign and Kazakh NGOs would be monitored during campaign and international financing of candidates not permitted; U.S. embassy agreed to inform authorities of electoral-support activities. Almaty housing protest broken up by riot police 18 September.

- [“Kazakhstan’s leader clears the decks for another presidential run”](#), Eurasianet, 9 Sept. 2005.

↳ Kyrgyzstan Tensions worsened as political groups and criminal elements competed for power. Dismissal of Prosecutor-General Beknazarov on 19 September sparked large demonstrations in his home Aksy region, with demands for President Bakiev’s resignation and threats to march on Bishkek; Beknazarov subsequently called for calm. MP and Osh businessman Bayaman Erkinbaev shot dead in Bishkek 21 September prompting MPs to demand right to bear arms and resignation of law-enforcement chiefs. Earlier in month, 100 protestors seized Prosecutor-General’s Karasuu office amidst allegations of foot-dragging in murder investigation of Erkinbaev business rival. Parliament overwhelmingly confirmed Feliks Kulov as PM 1 September and began reviewing ministerial nominations. Outside parliament, moves to trigger dissolution referendum continued; ex-PM Tanaev arrested attempting to leave country. Russian Defence Minister Ivanov announced military aid, joint 2006 anti-terrorism exercises and investment in Russia’s Kant airbase. Bakiev, while confirming U.S. would retain use of Manas airbase, said financial conditions of basing agreement would be reviewed.

- [“Kyrgyzstan’s revolution at risk”](#), Eurasianet, 26 Sept. 2005.
- [“Gunmen in Kyrgyzstan assassinate top legislator”](#), *International Herald Tribune*, 23 Sept. 2005.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°97, [Kyrgyzstan: After the Revolution](#), 4 May 2005.

↳ Tajikistan Trial of opposition leader Mahmadrizi Iskandarov continued; Supreme Court granted motion allowing Iskandarov to call further witnesses. Russia transferred full responsibility for security of Afghan border to Tajik forces 1 September; EU pledged assistance. Tajik authorities arrested dozen suspected members of Hizb ut-Tahrir in Sughd province and uncovered arms cache in eastern Jirgatal district.

- [“Opposition under pressure in Tajikistan”](#), Eurasianet, 19 Sept. 2005.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°33, [Tajikistan’s Politics: Confrontation or Consolidation?](#), 19 May 2004.

↳ Turkmenistan Authorities strongly denied Russian media reports of U.S. plans to open military base. Major shake-up of oil and gas sector continued with reported sentencing of former executives Veliyev and Charyev on corruption charges.

- [“Turkmenistan base rumor likely part of Russian disinformation campaign”](#), Eurasianet, 7 Sept. 2005.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°85, [Repression and Regression in Turkmenistan: A New International Strategy](#), 4 Nov. 2004.

↳ Uzbekistan Government account of May Andijon events claimed Islamist infiltration from bases in Kyrgyz territory, with intention to take control of Ferghana valley; disputed by rights groups and Kyrgyz authorities. Trial of 15 accused of instigating Andijon events - including 3 Kyrgyz citizens - began 20 September. EU set to agree 3 October arms embargo and visa restrictions on individuals it holds responsible for Andijon events. UNHCR airlifted 11 Uzbek refugees in Kyrgyz detention to Europe; 4 remain. 6 U.S. senators wrote to Sec. Defense Rumsfeld asking him to withhold \$22m payments for use of Karshi-Khanabad airbase, until Uzbek cooperation with U.S. renewed. Uzbekistan ran joint anti-terrorist exercises with

Russian forces. Tashkent court ordered shutdown of U.S.-run NGO Internews.

- ["Military exercises with Russia timely for Tashkent"](#), RFE/RL, 23 Sept. 2005.
- ["Burying the truth"](#), Human Rights Watch report, 20 Sept. 2005.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°38, [Uzbekistan: The Andijon Uprising](#), 25 May 2005.

SOUTH ASIA

➤ Afghanistan Historic National Assembly lower house (Wolesi Jirga) and 34 provincial council elections held 18 September with almost 6,000 candidates including 582 women; final results expected 22 October. Voter turnout 8 million compared to 7.3 million in-country votes for presidential election. Concern single non-transferable voting system and framework hostile to political parties will produce fractured democratic bodies. Vote touted as end of Bonn process started November 2001: UN Security Council voted to extend NATO-led ISAF force for another year. Sporadic attacks in south and east preceding vote killed at least 12 but violence less than expected. Candidate killed 27 September in Balkh province; concern "assassination clause" in electoral law, giving seat to next on list, may prompt more violence. Suicide bomber killed 12 at Kabul military training centre 28 September. Afghan and U.S. security forces continued operations: 7 U.S. soldiers killed, 5 in helicopter crash 25 September; French soldier killed by land mine 18 September. Taliban claimed responsibility for deaths of UK security expert and 2 Japanese tourists. President Karzai called for shift in international counter-terrorism strategy from military operations inside Afghanistan to targeting guerrilla training camps and financial support outside country.

- ["Taliban warns of more suicide attacks"](#), *International Herald Tribune*, 29 Sept. 2005.
- ["Putting steel into Karzai"](#), *The Economist*, 22 Sept. 2005.
- Comment by Joanna Nathan and Mark Schneider (Crisis Group), ["Will U.S. abandon Afghanistan?"](#), *The Washington Times*, 16 Sept. 2005.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°101, [Afghanistan Elections: Endgame or New Beginning?](#), 21 July 2005.

➤ Bangladesh Investigations into 17 August bomb attacks continued; over 400, mostly Jamatul Mujahideen Bangladesh members, reportedly arrested. Police and protesters clashed in Dhaka during nationwide strike to protest rise in fuel prices and August blasts. Bomb injured 5 at Dhaka University.

- ["Concern mounts over Bangladesh madrassas after bombs"](#), *Daily Times*, 29 Sept. 2005.
- ["Bangladesh bombs spotlight Islamic 'Holy Warriors'"](#), AlertNet, 27 Sept. 2005.

➤ India (non-Kashmir) Violence and demonstrations continued in northeast and Naxalite belt. Over 40 killed in various incidents in northeast involving separatist groups, students and security forces. Maoist attacks on security forces and civilians continued: 15 village security group members in Jharkhand state killed; landmine in neighbouring Chhattisgarh state claimed 23 police; 5 civilians later abducted and killed. Government announced plans to combat Maoist violence by improving development and security for 9 affected states.

- ["Naxal threat forces 10,000 to leave home"](#), *Times of India*, 23 Sept. 2005.
- ["India plans anti-Maoist strategy"](#), BBC, 19 Sept. 2005.

➤ Kashmir Talks between Indian PM Singh and Pakistani President Musharraf on sidelines of UN General Assembly reaffirmed commitment to "peaceful settlement of all issues" but failed to advance stalled negotiations. Singh held talks with moderate faction of All Parties Hurriyat Conference separatist alliance 5 September; vowed to reduce Indian troops if violence and infiltration end. Politicians from Indian- and Pakistan-controlled Kashmir held direct talks: separatist leaders from both sides yet to be allowed to join official peace process. Deadly clashes continued between Indian security forces and militants in Indian-administered Kashmir. Foreign ministers of Pakistan and India to meet 3 October.

- ["Pakistan, India seek to nudge peace process"](#), *The Boston Globe*, 29 Sept. 2005.
- ["Kashmir panel wants India-Pakistan to speed up talks"](#), AlertNet, 17 Sept. 2005.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°79 [India/Pakistan Relations and Kashmir: Steps toward Peace](#), 24 June 2004.

➤ Nepal Situation in flux, with both resolution and escalation of conflict possible. Maoists announced 3-month ceasefire 3 September in bid to win support of mainstream political parties. National Human Rights Commission said violence reduced by 90% since ceasefire but government has not reciprocated. Pitched battles between pro-democracy protesters and police erupted almost daily throughout month: police detained hundreds protesting against King Gyanendra. UN accused authorities of violating international human rights standards. Over 20,000 marched for peace in Kathmandu 21 September. FM Ramesh Nath Pandey reassured UN General Assembly of Gyanendra's "unflinching" commitment to democracy and intent to hold local elections in April 2005, national parliamentary elections by April 2008. King had cancelled proposed New York trip after strong international opposition, including U.S. pressure.

- ["Bring 'decisive' pressure on King, Indian delegation tells Nepal"](#), *Indian Express*, 30 Sept. 2005.
- ["Nepali king promises national elections"](#), *International Herald Tribune*, 22 Sept. 2005.
- ["Heat on the king"](#), *The Economist*, 8 Sept. 2005.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°99, [Towards a Lasting Peace in Nepal: The Constitutional Issues](#), 15 June 2005, and Briefing N°36, [Nepal: Responding to the Royal Coup](#), 24 Feb. 2005.

Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°41, [Nepal: Beyond Royal Rule](#), 15 September 2005.  The Maoists' unilateral ceasefire could lead to resolution of Nepal's civil war, but only if the international community changes its approach, especially towards the divisive monarchy. In the seven months since the royal coup, violence has increased significantly. Encouraging cooperation between the palace and the political parties has proved a dead end. However, the coup also unintentionally prompted tentative dialogue between political parties and the Maoist insurgents, helping develop an agenda for negotiations. There may still be a place for the monarchy in a new Nepalese political constellation, but efforts should now be concentrated on restoring peace and democracy, not preserving or defining the royal role.

↪ Pakistan Bombs in Lahore 22 September killed 9. Continuing unrest in Balochistan including 2 blasts in Kalat targeting infrastructure. Security forces claimed 35 suspected al Qaeda-linked militants killed North Waziristan near Afghan border end September; operations increased after 2 officials killed in Miranshah 5 September. Provisional agreement on dispute with religious schools over registration after both sides accepted to place demand on non-disclosure of funding and non-interference in curricula before parliament. Musharraf assured government's support to curb violence against women but denounced those who singled out Pakistan for criticism provoking reaction from rights groups.

- ["Pakistan madrasas agree to register, show funding"](#), *Financial Express*, 23 Sept. 2005.
- ["Musharraf's remarks condemned: Rape victims"](#), *Dawn*, 17 Sept. 2005.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°95, [The State of Sectarianism in Pakistan](#), 18 April 2005.

Crisis Group Asia Report N°102, [Authoritarianism and Political Party Reform in Pakistan](#), 28 September 2005. Instability will worsen unless the Musharraf government cedes real power to civilians and removes curbs on moderate parties. But mainstream parties must become serious about reform to steer Pakistan towards democracy and stability. Marginalisation of moderates has allowed religious parties to fill a vacuum; their growing strength, if unchecked, could erode regional stability. Despite the 1990s' flawed democratic transition, moderate parties remain the most credible alternative to authoritarianism and safeguard against the religious lobby's anti-Western agenda, but they need to reform internal structures, broaden participation and improve the grassroots. The international community must press the government to hold free and fair elections, insist it stop unlawful arrests and detention of opposition leaders and be prepared to cut aid if it does not.



↪ Sri Lanka Increased international attention on perilous ceasefire failed to halt violence in north and east. UNSG envoy Lakhdar Brahimi visited in attempt to keep peace process on track. LTTE rejected offer by Norwegian peace-brokers to hold talks at international airport. Government extended state of emergency for month. LTTE claimed 3 rebels killed in east by soldiers: army blamed LTTE faction. Military claimed LTTE shot dead Hindu priest in north 14 September; 2 ethnic Tamils, 1 Sinhalese killed in east 1 October. Presidential poll set for 17 November. Government/LTTE aid-sharing deal remained suspended by Supreme Court.

- ["EU bans Tamil Tigers over murder"](#), BBC, 27 Sept. 2005.
- ["Friends of Sri Lanka seek to bolster cease-fire"](#), ReliefWeb, 19 Sept. 2005.

NORTH EAST ASIA

↪ China (internal) Exiled World Uighur Congress warned Beijing's treatment of Uighurs in Xinjiang risks turning area into "time bomb": China's top security official reportedly warned of new crackdown on separatism in region.

- ["China given warning on Xinjiang"](#), BBC, 30 Sept. 2005.
- ["The cauldron boils"](#), *The Economist*, 29 Sept. 2005.

↪ North Korea Surprise development on last day of 6-party talks in Beijing as deadlock on text of joint statement of principles broken. Pyongyang promised to give up nuclear weapons and programs, in exchange other 5 parties expressed willingness to provide energy assistance and security guarantees. Washington and Tokyo agreed to work to normalise ties with Pyongyang, which also pledged to rejoin NPT. According to statement, North Korea has right to civilian nuclear program - main sticking point between Washington and Pyongyang - if it regains international trust. Lack of detail in agreement highlighted by next day NK demand for light-water reactor before dismantlement to start. Fifth round of talks due in November.

- ["North Korea signals desire to negotiate"](#), *International Herald Tribune*, 23 Sept. 2005.
- ["Nuclear reaction"](#), *The Guardian*, 21 Sept. 2005.
- For background, see Crisis Group Report N°100, [Japan and North Korea: Bones of Contention](#), 27 June 2005.

↪ Taiwan Strait Beijing warned Washington against helping Taiwan protect itself from missile attack; also repeated commitment to "no first use" policy and pledged not to engage in nuclear arms race. Head of main opposition Kuomintang party promised to forge direct links with mainland if party returns to power in 2008.

- ["US warnings on arms bill unhelpful"](#), *Taipei Times*, 30 Sept. 2005.
- ["China warns US over Taiwan arms"](#), BBC, 1 Sept. 2005.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°75, [Taiwan Strait IV: How an Ultimate Political Settlement Might Look](#), 26 Feb. 2004.

Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°42, [China and Taiwan: Uneasy Détente](#), 21



September 2005. China and Taiwan should seek progress on modest steps to improve the cross-strait. Taiwan politics are sharply divided, with President Chen Shui-bian's administration still strongly committed to a pro-independence agenda despite recent setbacks like the December 2004 legislative elections. Beijing, while flexible in certain respects on some issues, remains constrained by nationalism and leadership sensitivities from attempting reconciliation with Chen. The U.S. rightly favours cross-strait dialogue in order to ease tensions and preserve the status quo. While no major changes in the three governments' policies are foreseen, moderate moves, including enhanced bilateral economic and personnel exchanges, would be beneficial and could even lead to a revival of formal dialogue.

SOUTH EAST ASIA

↪ Indonesia Positive developments in Aceh offset by bombings in Bali being reported 1 October as *CrisisWatch* going to press. Aceh peace process continued to unfold smoothly. First stage of disarmament and troop withdrawals ended: GAM turned in 25% of weapons, 6,000 troops and additional 1,300 paramilitary mobile brigade (Brimob) police reportedly withdrawn. Aceh Monitoring Mission made first ruling, saying GAM responsible for armed clash wounding 2 soldiers. 3 bombs detonated in Bali 1 October; early reports 22 dead, casualty figures expected to increase. Attacks against churches and Ahmadiyah sect in West Java raised concerns about growing Islamic radicalisation and police inaction. Military presence in Papua steadily growing. Long-awaited

Papuan People's Assembly to be established early October after key figures previously threatened to pull out. Navy fired on Chinese fishing vessel in Arafura Sea 19 September, killing 1; 10 crew remain in detention.

- ["Bali bombs kill 22, injure many"](#), BBC, 1 Oct. 2005.
- ["Indonesia: Aceh observers say faster disarmament, troop withdrawal is possible"](#), ReliefWeb, 27 Sept. 2005.
- ["First phase of Aceh pact completed"](#), *International Herald Tribune*, 25 Sept. 2005.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°40, [Aceh: A New Chance for Peace](#), 15 August 2005.

Myanmar/Burma UN human rights expert submitted report to UNSG Annan calling for immediate democratic reforms. U.S. reportedly expected to raise Myanmar at UN Security Council in October; follows declaration by former Czech President Vaclav Havel, and Bishop Desmond Tutu calling for Security Council action. FM Nyan Win told UN General Assembly his country would achieve "new era" of democracy more quickly without outside pressure.

- ["US demands action on Burma's military junta"](#), *The Guardian*, 30 Sept. 2005.
- ["Overdue in Myanmar"](#), *International Herald Tribune (Boston Globe)*, 28 Sept. 2005.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°34, [Myanmar: Update on HIV/AIDS Policy](#), 16 Dec. 2004.

Philippines Government and Moro Islamic Liberation Front negotiators reported breakthrough on major issue of "ancestral domain" in informal talks, which resumed after Congress dismissed impeachment calls for President Arroyo on charges of election fraud. National Democratic Front (NDF), political wing of insurgent Communist Party (CPP), denied resumption of peace talks, citing government failure to compel U.S. and EU to remove CPP-NDF (and its military arm NPA), from terrorist organisation lists: NPA resumed attacks on economic targets.

- ["Philippine-Muslim rebel peace talks in Malaysia make major breakthrough"](#), AFP, 17 Sept. 2005.
- ["CPP-NPA-NDF want 'terror' tag removed prior to peace talks"](#), inq7.net (AFP), 10 Sept. 2005.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°80, [Southern Philippines Background: Terrorism and the Peace Process](#), 13 July 2004.

Thailand Daily violence intensified in south, increasingly directed toward Muslim civilians. Fear generated by emergency decree resulted in confrontations between authorities and villagers caught between soldiers and insurgents 30 August and 23 September: 131 Narathiwat residents fled to neighbouring Malaysian state of Kelantan 30 August, reportedly fearing persecution by military after rumours of extra-judicial killings. 2 months after emergency decree, following 18 months of martial law, security agencies no closer to understanding who is responsible for violence.

- ["Bangkok struggles to end separatist violence in Southern Thailand"](#), *Asian Tribune*, 1 Oct. 2005.
- ["Fear and loathing in the Thai south"](#), Asia Times Online, 29 Sept. 2005.
- For background, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°98, [Southern Thailand: Insurgency, Not Jihad](#), 18 May 2005.

Europe

BALKANS

Albania New PM Sali Berisha sworn in 11 September; appointment welcomed by U.S. and EU. Tenth round of Stabilisation and Association Agreement negotiations with EU started 29 September.

- ["EU, US urge Albania's Berisha to implement reforms"](#), Southeast European Times, 15 Sept. 2005.
- For background, see Crisis Group Europe Report N°153, [Pan-Albanianism: How Big a Threat to Balkan Stability?](#), 25 Feb. 2004.

Bosnia & Herzegovina Bosnia missed chance to begin Stabilisation and Association Agreement negotiations with EU due to obstruction from Republika Srpska on police reform. High Representative began to take measures aimed at weakening ruling Serbian Democratic Party.

- ["EU hopes hit by Serb police reform rejection"](#), IWPR, 23 Sept. 2005.
- ["The 11th hour for Bosnian Serbs"](#), RFE/RL, 22 Sept. 2005.

Crisis Group Europe Report N°164, [Bosnia's Stalled Police Reform: No Progress, No EU](#), 6 September 2005. International strategy for Bosnia will derail unless key obstacles to police reform - the Serbian Democratic Party (SDS) and Belgrade - are confronted in the weeks before the EU decides whether to start integration negotiations. The international community needs to make clear there will be no negotiations until there is serious reform; it will ban the SDS unless there is reform; and it will put heavy pressure on Belgrade both to give up its Greater Serbia aspirations and use its influence to support reform. If police reform is left unfinished, ethnic chieftains will retain control of the instruments of state violence, and the potential for new hostilities will remain.

Kosovo Uncompromising, nervous mood among Kosovo Albanians as key status discussions approach. UNSG envoy Kai Eide's assessment on whether progress in institution-building, rule of law, decentralisation, and treatment of minorities sufficient for start of final status negotiations expected early October. Eide hosted Vienna meeting between Kosovo and Serbian ministers to discuss decentralisation, 16 September. Final status talks expected by end of year; former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari tipped as status envoy. President Rugova diagnosed with lung cancer; launched proposal for composition of Kosovo status negotiating team. Opposition PDK demurred, proposed resolution for independence in parliament. New head of Serbia's Kosovo co-ordination centre Sanda Raskovic-Ivic called on Serbs working in UNMIK institutions to return to Serbian state and structures. New Serb regional police commander of Gjilan/Gnjilane wounded in 28 September shooting. Gracanica Serbs held roadblock protest after 4 Serbs arrested for war crimes 18 September. International Telecommunications Union declined UNMIK's request for separate Kosovo telephone code.

- ["UN effort to rebuild Kosovo loses steam"](#), *International Herald Tribune*, 30 Sept. 2005.
- ["Serbia explains its Kosovo status position"](#), Southeast European Times, 23 Sept. 2005.

- [“Eide report triggers standards debate”](#), IWPR, 23 Sept. 2005.
- For background see Crisis Group Europe Report N°163, [Kosovo after Haradinaj](#), 26 May 2005.

Crisis Group Europe Report N°165, [Bridging Kosovo's Mitrovica Divide](#), 13 September 2005. The international community must end ambiguous policies toward Mitrovica to resolve Kosovo's final status. It has decreed Kosovo should not be partitioned, but for 6 years, Belgrade has done precisely that at the Ibar River. The international community should roll that back, but to attain a unified, multi-ethnic Kosovo it also needs to offer Serbs practical autonomy and security against Albanian domination, while making clear there can be no secession or return of Belgrade's rule. More resources and energy should be put behind a compromise program, beginning with appointment of a Special Commissioner for Mitrovica. The UN and NATO must regain the security initiative north of the Ibar. Mitrovica's transformation would increase chances for a unified, multi-ethnic Kosovo.



➤ Macedonia Government of PM Buckovski survived no confidence vote in parliament 23 September. Western Balkan countries signed declaration for regional strategy to fight organised and economic crime, including cooperation of police forces and intelligence.

- [“Macedonia pushes for NATO membership in 2008”](#), Southeast European Times, 22 Sept. 2005.
- For background, see Crisis Group Europe Briefing N°37, [Macedonia: Not out of the Woods Yet](#), 25 Feb. 2005.

➤ Serbia & Montenegro PM Kostunica appointed hard-liner Sanda Raskovic-Ivic as new head of Kosovo co-ordination centre, who called for Serbs to leave UNMIK structures and provisional government. Belgrade began purge of “disloyal” Serbs from Serbian-controlled municipalities in Kosovo. Defence Minister Prvoslav Davinic offered resignation 8 September over high profile corruption scandal involving purchase of unnecessary equipment at inflated prices. Supreme Court Judge Ljubomir Vuckovic and Deputy Prosecutor Milan Radovanovic arrested 15 September in aggressive move against corruption in judiciary. Head of Montenegrin Interior Ministry's General Criminal Division, Slavoljub Scekic, assassinated 30 August in Podgorica. U.S. told Serbia that Ratko Mladic must be transferred to Hague, while EU threatened to delay Stabilisation and Association Agreement negotiations.

- [“Albanians scorn Belgrade's new South Serbia boss”](#), IWPR, 23 Sept. 2005.
- [“Supremely buyable?”](#), Transitions Online, 22 Sept. 2005.
- For background, see Crisis Group Europe Briefing N°39, [Serbia: Spinning its Wheels](#), 23 May 2005.

CAUCASUS

➤ Armenia Parliament adopted internationally-endorsed plan for constitutional changes; referendum date not yet finalised. Opposition groups rejected amendments as leaving too much power to presidency, but disagreed on whether to boycott referendum. Ardarutiun opposition bloc to continue selective parliamentary boycott. Joint Russian-Armenian military exercises based on invasion scenario ended 13 September.

- [“Russia tightens grip on Armenian energy sector”](#), Eurasianet, 28 Sept. 2005.
- [“Challenges ahead for Armenia's constitutional vote”](#), Eurasianet, 14 Sept. 2005.
- For background, see Crisis Group Europe Report N°158, [Armenia: Internal Instability Ahead](#), 18 Oct. 2004.

➤ Azerbaijan Azadlyg opposition bloc claimed 20,000 took part in 10 September rally ahead of November parliamentary elections; opposition said 100 arrested and 50 wounded in clash with police at 25 September rally. Electoral commission chairman Panahov said electoral law changes suggested by Council of Europe Venice Commission impractical; 2,038 candidates registered for vote. Opposition groups claimed crackdown intensifying: U.S. criticised detention of Said Nuri - deputy chairperson of Yeni Fikir youth organisation linked to Azerbaijan Popular Front (APF) party; police claimed explosives seized in raid on APF Baku headquarters; Ukrainian Sergei Yevtushenko - advisor to Ukraine's foreign minister and Pora activist - deported 17 September. President Aliyev announced plans to double military expenditure to \$600m.

- [“Preelection tensions mount”](#), RFE/RL, 30 Sept. 2005.
- [“Azerbaijan police break up rally”](#), BBC, 25 Sept. 2005.
- For background, see Crisis Group Europe Report N°156, [Azerbaijan: Turning Over a New Leaf?](#), 13 May 2004.

➤ Chechnya (Russia) As part of restructuring of Chechen resistance movement, deputy PM Zakaev empowered as chief Chechen negotiator. At least 22 Russian and Russian-backed Chechen forces killed in separate incidents across Chechnya; rebel commander Akhmad Avdorkhanov killed 12 September.

- [“Russia puts clamps on rights unit”](#), *International Herald Tribune*, 19 Sept. 2005.

➤ Georgia President Saakashvili accused Russia of engaging in effective annexation of breakaway regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, and called for greater UN involvement. Some Georgian MPs accused Russian peacekeepers of criminal activity. Russian and Georgian representatives held “constructive” talks on peacekeeping operation in Moscow, 28 September. South Ossetian officials said 10 wounded by shells fired at Tskhinvali 20 September during 15th anniversary celebrations of de facto independence also attended by Abkhaz leader Sergey Bagapsh. Tbilisi rejected accusations of involvement and said South Ossetia in breach of demilitarisation agreements; South Ossetia suspended involvement in Joint Control Commission. Sporadic gunfire on Georgian villages reported 21 September. Government signed \$300m Millennium Challenge Account aid deal with U.S.

- [“Heading for a new revolution?”](#), RFE/RL, 8 Sept. 2005.
- For background, see Crisis Group Europe Briefing N°38, [Georgia-South Ossetia: Refugee Return the Path to Peace](#), 19 April 2005.

➤ Nagorno-Karabakh (Azerbaijan) Minsk Group Russian co-chair expressed concerns over arms race between Baku and Yerevan. Following January 2005 resolution, PACE held NK hearing 12 September. Situation in occupied territories included in 60th UN General Assembly; Armenia threatened withdrawal from OSCE mediated negotiations if any further UN discussions or votes on issue. On the ground, exchanges of fire increased and OSCE suspended monitoring after near shooting. Azerbaijani soldier reported killed 6 September.

- [“Nagorno-Karabakh needs resolution”](#), Voice of America, 1 Sept. 2005.

- For background, see Crisis Group Europe Reports N°158, *Armenia: Internal Instability Ahead*, 18 Oct. 2004, and N°156, *Azerbaijan: Turning Over a New Leaf?*, 13 May 2004.

Crisis Group Europe Report N°166, *Nagorno-Karabakh: Viewing the Conflict from the Ground*, 14 September 2005. All sides in the conflict need to prepare their people for peace much better if high-level peace talks are to bear fruit. There is need to counter hate propaganda and unlock the potential for confidence building and dialogue between average Azeris and Armenians. Neither community appears ready to agree to the kind of settlement being considered by the Azerbaijani and Armenian foreign ministers in OSCE-sponsored negotiations. No peace process will succeed unless leaders from all sides start actively selling the idea to their people. Rising military expenditures and increasing ceasefire violations are ominous signs that time for a peaceful settlement may be running out.



- ↳ North Caucasus (Russia) Continued spill-over of violence from Chechnya: bomb derailed freight train North Ossetia; further bombs detonated in Nazran and Malgobek, Ingushetia. Violence worst in ethnically-fragmented Dagestan: 4 killed in explosion in capital Makhachkala 2 September; 6 policemen killed in separate incidents.
 - *"Torture, 'disappearances' and alleged unfair trials in Russia's North Caucasus"*, Amnesty International briefing, 30 Sept. 2005.

EASTERN EUROPE

- ↳ Belarus Bomb explosions in Vitebsk wounded 48: nationalist Belarus Popular Liberation Army claimed responsibility. EU parliament and Council of Europe separately condemned regime's persecution its opponents, journalists and civil-society activists. Remaining independent newspaper *Narodnaya volya* to be closed in further crackdown.
 - *"Lukashenka criticizes U.S. 'unipolar' world dominance"*, RFE/RL, 15 Sept. 2005.
- ↳ Moldova Stalled talks on Transnistria's future to resume October, with U.S. and EU participation. President Vladimir Voronin met President Yushchenko to discuss Ukraine's efforts to settle dispute. EU agreed to send monitors to secure Ukraine-Moldova border through Transnistria in first EU deployment in former USSR. Moldova-Ukraine asked OSCE to oversee December Transnistrian elections. Transnistria celebrated 15 years of self-proclaimed independence 2 September.
 - *"EU monitors for Moldova-Ukraine"*, BBC, 20 Sept. 2005
 - For background, see Crisis Group Europe Report N°157, *Moldova: Regional Tensions over Transnistria*, 17 June 2004.
- ↳ Ukraine Political turmoil deepened as President Viktor Yushchenko sacked PM Tymoshenko and cabinet 10 September amid infighting and accusations of corruption. Parliament approved president's new candidate for prime minister, Yuriy Yekhanurov, 22 September, after initial rejection. Yushchenko named new cabinet primarily of technocrats. Investigations found no evidence supporting allegations of corruption against certain top officials. Parliamentary commission investigating murder of opposition

journalist Heorhiy Gongadze concluded former President Kuchma organised his abduction.

- *"Yushchenko announces members of new cabinet"*, RFE/RL, 28 Sept. 2005.
- *"Yushchenko hit again with political setbacks"*, *International Herald Tribune*, 21 Sept. 2005.

WESTERN EUROPE/MEDITERRANEAN

- ↳ Basque Country (Spain) 2 bombs in northern Spain blamed on ETA militants. ETA claimed responsibility for 5 bomb attacks in June-July 2005 in letter to Basque newspaper *Gara*.
 - *"ETA bomb undermines Spanish peace hopes"*, ABC News (Reuters), 27 Sept. 2005.
- ↳ Cyprus Cyprus dismissed suggestions at UN summit reunification deal should be reached before scheduled start of EU membership talks with Turkey 3 October. EU resolved crisis stemming from Turkish refusal to recognise Cyprus with agreement that recognition required before end of accession negotiations.
 - *"Cyprus deals with disappointment"*, BBC, 28 Sept. 2005.
 - *"Cyprus wants no deadline for reunification accord"*, AlertNet, 18 Sept. 2005.
- ↳ Northern Ireland (UK) Independent International Commission report confirmed IRA decommissioning completed 26 September. British government declared Ulster Volunteer Force's (UVF) 1994 ceasefire invalid 13 September, following 3 nights of rioting blamed on UVF and Ulster Defence Association that injured 60 police officers; violence stemmed from re-routing of contentious Orange Order Whiterock parade 11 September. Dissident republicans blamed for attack 21 September on Police Board vice-chairman in Londonderry.
 - *"IRA guns: The list of weapons"*, BBC, 26 Sept. 2005.
 - *"UK declares UVF 'enemy of peace'"*, CNN, 13 Sept. 2005.
- ↳ Turkey Tensions rising in Kurdish southeast despite Kurdish rebels' (PKK) August call for ceasefire: army-PKK clashes killed at least 23; dozens arrested after police clashed with demonstrators demanding release of rebel chief Abdullah Ocalan. Turkish leaders accused PKK of causing unrest in order to influence EU accession talks. PKK extended ceasefire until talks' scheduled start-date 3 October, calling PM Erdogan to follow up on promises for democratic reforms in Kurdish areas. Explosion on bus in southwest 19 September killed 2. 38 supporters of banned pan-Islamist party Hizb ut-Tahrir arrested while attempting to demonstrate outside mosque. EU failed to agree on terms for start of accession talks, as Austria demanded alternative to full membership; emergency meeting to be held 2 October.
 - *"Turkey's Kurd rebels to stay 'inactive' till Oct 3"*, AlertNet, 21 Sept. 2005.
 - *"A standoff threatens EU-Turkey negotiation"*, *International Herald Tribune*, 20 Sept. 2005.



Latin America / Caribbean

- ↳ Bolivia Student and opposition protests continued in build-up to December elections. Controversial court ruling redistributing

parliament seats may delay poll and affect presidential favourite Evo Morales' campaign, who earlier pledged to legalise coca cultivation. Police sent to remove Landless Campesinos Movement in Santa Cruz and Pando.

- "Dispute puts Bolivia vote on hold", BBC, 23 Sept. 2005.
- "Bolivia convulsed by student riots, Landless Campesinos", Latina Prensa, 21 Sept. 2005.
- For background, see Crisis Group Latin America Report N°12, *Coca, Drugs and Social Protest in Bolivia and Peru*, 3 Mar. 2005.

Colombia FARC rejected government's latest proposal to negotiate hostage exchange citing lack of security for negotiators. Government accused France of meddling in internal affairs by hosting unauthorised hostage talks with FARC. Smaller leftist group ELN accepted Venezuelan offer to facilitate peace talks after government freed senior ELN leader for 3 months in peace gesture. 17 killed during combat between FARC and far-right paramilitaries in Putumayo province. FARC suspected of destroying electrical towers in south, leaving over 2.3 million without electricity; shot down plane spraying coca fields killing pilot.

- "Rebels reject offer on prisoner-exchange talks", CNN, 16 Sept. 2005.
- "Colombia rebel released for talks", BBC, 8 Sept. 2005.
- For background, see Crisis Group Latin America Report N°14, *Colombia: Presidential Politics and Peace Prospects*, 16 June 2005.

Ecuador Ousted President Lucio Gutierrez requested asylum in Colombia; granted 90-day safe conduct. Defence ministry acknowledged army destroyed Colombian rebel camp near border, despite denying Colombian armed groups operate in Ecuador.

- "Ecuador targets Colombian rebels", BBC, 23 Sept. 2005.

Haiti Preparations for elections overshadowed by kidnappings and violence. Over 30 presidential candidates registered but provisional electoral council warned elections may be delayed without international help. Ousted President Aristide's Lavalas party, with widespread support in Port-au-Prince slums, barred from registering jailed priest Gerard Jean-Juste. Jailed former PM Yvon Neptune formally charged 20 September with suspect evidence of masterminding killings of political opponents 2004. UN-based Core Group of foreign ministers and MINUSTAH expressed concern on electoral preparations, lack of police reform and disarmament of illegal groups, and prosecution of government opponents.

- "Haiti: Annan chairs high level panel to help prepare for elections, development", UN News, 18 Sept. 2005.
- "Haiti vote attracts 30 candidates", BBC, 16 Sept. 2005.
- For background, see Crisis Group Latin America/Caribbean Briefing N°8, *Can Haiti Hold Elections in 2005?*, 3 Aug. 2005.

Venezuela President Hugo Chavez vowed to improve tense relations with Washington; prior to announcement, Chavez criticised President Bush at UN summit for Iraq war, applauded by General Assembly, and later claimed had evidence of U.S. plans to invade Venezuela.

- "Chavez: Sometimes gone too far with words", CNN, 18 Sept. 2005.
- For background, see Crisis Group Latin America Briefing N°5, *Venezuela: Headed Toward Civil War?*, 10 May 2004.

Middle East / North Africa

EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

Israel/Occupied Territories Palestinian celebrations and chaos followed withdrawal of last Israeli troops from Gaza Strip 12 September. Withdrawal from 4 West Bank settlements completed 21 September. Egypt and Palestinian Authority (PA) pledged to seal porous Gaza border. PM Ariel Sharon called on Palestinians to make next peace move; reiterated view of Jerusalem as Israel's "undivided and eternal capital". 5 Palestinians, including 2 children, died in West Bank raid against Islamic Jihad organisation near Tulkarm 16 September. 21 killed in explosion in Hamas rally same day; Israel and PA rejected Hamas suggestion of Israeli involvement. Subsequent escalation of violence: 40 rockets launched from Gaza against Israel; 6 known militants killed in Israeli air-raids which continued despite announcement from Mahmoud Zahar, Hamas leader in Gaza, rocket launches would be stopped. By month-end over 400 alleged Hamas and Islamic Jihad members arrested in Israeli "First Rain" operation in West Bank. Earlier in month, U.S. Sec. State Rice signalled U.S. accepted possible Hamas participation in planned January 2006 Palestinian legislative elections, rejected by Israel. Israel's Supreme Court ordered government to alter route of several portions of separation barrier while leaving it within West Bank; construction of wall around Jerusalem continued. Sharon narrowly fended off leadership challenge by Likud rival Binyamin Netanyahu 26 September.

- "Disasters avoided, for now", *The Economist*, 30 Sept. 2005.
- "Israel continues Gaza offensive", *International Herald Tribune*, 28 Sept. 2005.
- For background, see Crisis Group Middle East Report N°44, *The Jerusalem Powder Keg*, 2 Aug. 2005.

Lebanon Country consolidated realignment from Syrian to Franco-American axis with visit of U.S. Sec. State Rice to Beirut and growing isolation of pro-Syrian President Lahoud; Maronite Patriarch appeared to withdraw support from Lahoud, but president pledged to serve out term until 2007. Rice called for Hizbullah disarmament, but did not denounce integration into Lebanon's cabinet, marking possible acceptance of Hizbullah transformation into political party. Investigation into murder of former PM Rafiq Hariri continued with UN investigator visiting Damascus at Syria's invitation. 1 killed in Beirut explosion 16 September; 25 September bomb seriously injured anti-Syrian television journalist May Chidiac. Authorities foiled apparent car-bombing attempt 1 October.

- "Lebanon vows to tackle 'terror'", Middle East Online, 26 Sept. 2005.
- "UN questions Syrian officials in Hariri probe", CNN, 20 Sept. 2005.
- For background, see Crisis Group Middle East Report N°39, *Syria After Lebanon, Lebanon After Syria*, 12 Apr. 2005.

Syria U.S. air strikes 30 August against suspected militant targets on border with Iraq killed at least 47: U.S. believed al Qaeda operative Abu Islam also killed. Following deal with government, Detlev Mehlis, head of UN inquiry into death of

former Lebanese PM Hariri, visited Damascus to question government officials.

- [“Damascene subversion”](#), *The Guardian*, 19 Sept. 2005.
- For background, see Crisis Group Middle East Report N° 24, [Syria Under Bashar \(II\): Domestic Policy Challenges](#), 11 Feb. 2004.

GULF

Iran International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) voted to report Iran to UN Security Council for violating its obligations under Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT). China and Russia abstained in vote, called for further diplomacy; Venezuela only country to vote in favour; India, in surprise move, voted against Iran. President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad claimed “inalienable right” to produce nuclear energy in 17 September speech to UN. Iran warned may halt snap inspection access and consider withdrawing from NPT.

- [“The high price of hounding Iran”](#), Asia Times Online, 29 Sept. 2005.
- [“Iran threatens to bar nuclear inspectors”](#), *International Herald Tribune*, 26 Sept. 2005.
- For background, see Crisis Group Middle East Briefing N° 18, [Iran: What Does Ahmadi-Nejad's Victory Mean?](#), 4 Aug. 2005

Iraq Situation heading toward de facto partition and full-scale civil war. Dramatic escalation in violence throughout country as parliament signed-off on final amendments to draft constitution after rushed process deepened rifts; referendum set for 15 October. Sunni militant group “al Qaeda in Iraq” claimed increased violence in retaliation for offensive on Syria/Iraq border that killed over 140 insurgents. Wave of violence began with death of 114 in Baghdad suicide bomb 14 September, culminated in coordinated blasts in Balad north of Baghdad killing over 100 29 September; at least 400 mostly Shiites killed in month. Large areas of northwest city of Qaim taken over by insurgents while further escalation around Basra in south; 16 killed in blast 8 September; 3 British soldiers killed by separate roadside bombs; UK army forced to rescue 2 soldiers working covertly in Basra further adding to tensions. 3 Iraqi journalists and 1 Kurdish MP also killed in violence. 1,516 Coalition soldiers, including 1,401 Americans, and thousands of Iraqis killed by hostile fire since declared end of combat 1 May 2003.

- [“Pentagon concedes Iraq uncertainties”](#), *International Herald Tribune*, 30 Sept. 2005.
- [“The south is a mess too”](#), *The Economist*, 22 Sept. 2005.
- Comment by Joost Hilterman (Crisis Group), [“Iraq: Constitutional process goes awry”](#), *Arab Reform Bulletin*, Sept. 2005.
- For background, see Crisis Group Middle East Report N°42, [Iraq: Don't Rush the Constitution](#), 8 June 2005.

Crisis Group Middle East Briefing N°19, [Unmaking Iraq: A Constitutional Process Gone Awry](#), 26 September 2005. Without a constitution based on national consensus, Iraq will slide toward full-scale civil war and dissolution. The rushed constitutional process has deepened divisions between Shiites, Kurds and Sunni Arabs. Only a strong U.S.-led initiative to assuage Sunni Arab concerns can now stop Iraq's violent break-up. This would require that: the U.S. sponsor negotiations to reach agreement prior to 15 October; the parties agree to limit to four the number of governorates that could become a region *cont'd...*

...*cont'd* through fusion, thereby assuaging Sunni Arab fears of a supra-Shiite region in the South; and all parties agree Iraqis will not be excluded from public office or managerial positions on the basis of mere membership in the Baath party. There is no guarantee this last-ditch effort will halt the country's collapse, but the U.S. cannot afford not to try.

Saudi Arabia Third most-wanted militant, Zaid Saad Zaid al-Samari, killed in clash with police in Dammam. U.S. allowed country 6-month extension to show improved treatment of religious minorities.

- [“Bush delays action against Saudi Arabia”](#), *The Guardian*, 30 Sept. 2005.
- For background, see Crisis Group Middle East Report N°31, [Saudi Arabia Backgrounder: Who are the Islamists?](#), 21 Sept. 2004.

Crisis Group Middle East Report N°45, [The Shiite Question in Saudi Arabia](#), 19 September 2005. Saudi Arabia should act decisively to defuse rising sectarian tensions. King Abdullah, who has shown a willingness to tackle this issue in the past, has the opportunity to take the required steps. As a result of the war in Iraq, Sunni-Shiite distrust has deepened. Like their Iraqi co-religionists, Saudi Shiites have intensified their push for better official representation and religious freedoms. Meanwhile, Sunni suspicions have deepened and a rising number of jihadi militants have taken their cause to Iraq - many will likely return to the Kingdom in search of a new battlefield. To avert a crisis, Saudi Arabia should increase Shiite representation in government, lift remaining restrictions on religious rituals, encourage tolerance in mosques and schools, and muzzle statements and activities that incite violence against them.

Yemen President Ali Abdullah Saleh ordered amnesty for jailed Zaidi rebels and compensation for exiled Zaidi family.

- [“Yemen pardons ex-ruling family”](#), Middle East Online, 26 Sept. 2005.

NORTH AFRICA

Algeria Official results of 29 September referendum on Charter for Peace and National Reconciliation stated 97% voted in favour of measure put forward by President Bouteflika. Opposition groups disputed 79% turnout figure. In run-up to vote, Salafi Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC) attacks killed at least 29 - including 19 soldiers. Madani Mezrag, former leader of Islamic Salvation Army said he expected most GSPC militants to surrender if charter passed. French police arrested 9 suspected GSPC-affiliated terrorists Paris 26 September.

- [“Algeria's peace charter gets overwhelming ‘yes’”](#), Middle East Online, 30 Sept. 2005.
- For background, see Crisis Group Middle East/North Africa Report N°29, [Islamism, Violence and Reform in Algeria: Turning the Page](#), 30 July 2004.

Egypt President Mubarak pledged economic and political reform following re-election with 88.6% of vote in first multi-candidate presidential elections. Official figure for turnout remarkably low at 23%. Second place candidate Ayman Nour awarded 7.6% of vote, though al-Ghad party claimed he won 30%. Opposition candidates called for re-run claiming results

rigged, media biased and pointing out ban on NGO monitoring of vote. U.S. Sec. State Rice welcomed poll as "one step...towards full democracy". Israel's unilateral pull-out from Gaza Strip caused thousands of Palestinians to enter Egyptian territory; border subsequently sealed by Egyptian forces.

- "How Mubarak won the election", *The Guardian*, 13 Sept. 2005
- For background, see Crisis Group Middle East/North Africa Briefings N°s 12 and 13, *Islamism in North Africa: Legacies of History and Egypt's Opportunity*, 20 April 2004.

➤ Mauritania Colonel Vall, head of governing military council, announced general amnesty for political crimes 2 September, excluding 20 alleged to have worked with Algerian Salafi Group for Preaching and Combat. Refugees from 1989 interracial violence between Arab and black Africans (estimated at 20,000 in Senegal and 7,000 in Mali) called on government to support structured return.

- "Refugees hope to end 16 years of exile", IRIN, 22 Sept. 2005.
- "Political exiles flocking back to Mauritania", Middle East Online, 12 Sept. 2005.
- For background, see Crisis Group Middle East/North Africa Report N°41, *Islamism in North Africa IV: The Islamist Challenge in Mauritania: Threat or Scapegoat?*, 11 May 2005.

➤ Western Sahara UN expressed concern over 35 Western Saharan prisoners on hunger strike in Moroccan custody; Polisario Front asked for UN intervention.

- "Give it another try", *The Economist*, 22 Sept. 2005.

International Crisis Group

WORKING TO PREVENT
CONFLICT WORLDWIDE

At a luncheon in New York on
Monday, November 28th, 2005
The International Crisis Group

will celebrate its
10th Anniversary
honouring:

James Wolfensohn

President of the World Bank 1995-2005

Paul Rusesabagina

On whose real-life heroism the film *Hotel Rwanda* was based

Mark Malloch Brown

Chef de Cabinet of the Secretary-General
of the United Nations

For ticket information, please contact Devika Milner at
dmilner@crisisgroup.org or on +212 813 0820

International Crisis Group

420 Lexington Avenue | New York City | 212.813.0820

Advocacy Offices

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

Field Offices

Crisis Group has regional or local field offices in Amman (amman@crisisgroup.org), Belgrade (serbia@crisisgroup.org), Bishkek (bishkek@crisisgroup.org), Bogotá (bogota@crisisgroup.org), Dakar (dakar@crisisgroup.org), Dushanbe (dushanbe@crisisgroup.org), Islamabad (islamabad@crisisgroup.org), Jakarta (jakarta@crisisgroup.org), Kabul (kabul@crisisgroup.org), Nairobi (nairobi@crisisgroup.org), Pretoria (pretoria@crisisgroup.org), Pristina (pristina@crisisgroup.org), Seoul (seoul@crisisgroup.org), Skopje (skopje@crisisgroup.org) and Tbilisi (tbilisi@crisisgroup.org).

Crisis Group also has a field presence (with analysts operating from regional offices) in Albania, Algeria, Angola, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bahrain, Burundi, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea, Haiti, Iran, Iraq, Israel/Occupied Territories, Kashmir, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Mauritania, Moldova, Morocco, Myanmar/Burma, Nepal, the Philippines, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Swaziland, Syria, Thailand, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Uzbekistan, Yemen and Zimbabwe.