

CrisisWatch

A monthly bulletin by the ICG on current and potential conflicts around the world



1 December 2003, N°4

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** ICG reports and briefing papers that have been published in the last month.

CrisisWatch is compiled by ICG's Brussels Research Unit, drawing on multiple sources including the resources of our more than 90 staff members across five continents, who already report on some 40 of the situations listed here. Comments and suggestions as to how the bulletin might be improved (addressed to crisiswatch@crisisweb.org) would be much appreciated.

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The International Crisis Group

is an independent, non-profit, multinational organisation, with over 90 staff members on five continents, working through field-based analysis and high-level advocacy to prevent and resolve deadly conflict. ICG'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, ICG produces regular analytical reports containing practical recommendations targeted at key international decision-takers, and backed up with high level advocacy. ICG is chaired by former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari, and its President and Chief Executive is former Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans.



Africa

CENTRAL AFRICA

➡ Burundi Mixed month for Burundi. Positive development with largest Hutu rebel group, FDD, signing final peace agreement with government on 16 November, endorsing political, defence and security power sharing arrangements reached in earlier agreements. Government reshuffled to include four FDD leaders as ministers. But last remaining Hutu rebel group, FNL, continues fighting, shelling capital Bujumbura, and causing estimated 12,000 civilians to flee.

- ["Burundi rebels fire mortars near president's home"](#), Reuters AlertNet, 25 Nov. 2003.
- ["Burundian rebels join government"](#), BBC, 24 Nov. 2003.
- ["Government, rebel group sign final peace pact"](#), IRIN, 17 Nov. 2003.
- ["Burundi war far from over despite gains - analysts"](#), Reuters AlertNet, 14 Nov. 2003.
- For background, see ICG Africa Report N°70, [Refugees and Displaced Persons in Burundi – Defusing the Land Time-Bomb](#), 7 Oct. 2003 and ICG Africa Briefing, [The Burundi Rebellion and the Ceasefire Negotiations](#), 6 Aug. 2002.

➡ Central African Republic UN agencies warned CAR could face severe food crisis in next four months, resulting from displacement of 1.5m of 3.8m population during civil war which ended in March 2003. 200,000 remain internally displaced.

- ["CAR: Focus on the impact of war on herdsman"](#), IRIN, 26 Nov. 2003.
- ["Central African Republic faces food crisis – UN"](#), Reuters AlertNet, 13 Nov. 2003.

➡ 🇷🇺 Democratic Republic of Congo Situation improving but still dangerous. In significant move, leader of Rwandan Hutu rebel group in Congo, FDLR, and over 100 followers surrendered to Rwandan officials 15 November. Remains to be seen if move leads to surrender of other FDLR leaders. DRC and Rwanda presidents met with South Africa's President Mbeki in Pretoria 27 November and committed to repatriation of remaining Rwandan Hutus in eastern Congo to Rwanda within 12 months. UN MONUC mission to deploy more widely, with focus on Ituri province, city of Kisangani and Kivus region.

- ["Congo tries to unite enemies"](#), *Christian Science Monitor*, 25 Nov. 2003.
- ["Rwandan rebel surrender lifts peace prospects"](#), CNN, 16 Nov. 2003.
- ["Congo war leaves legacy of chaos"](#), *Scotland on Sunday*, 16 Nov. 2003.
- ["MONUC to develop new deployment strategy"](#), IRIN, 14 Nov. 2003.
- For background to the conflict in Ituri, see ICG Africa Report N°64, [Congo Crisis: Military Intervention in Ituri](#), 13 June 2003.

➡ Rwanda Eight ministers and senior officials from former government went on trial before International Criminal Tribunal, charged with planning genocide. President Paul Kagame met with new tribunal prosecutor, Hassan Jallow, 13 November,

and pledged cooperation. U.S. relaunched \$5m reward for capture of suspected leaders of genocide still at large. Surrender of Rwandan leader of Hutu rebel group in DR Congo greeted as positive step by government – hopes that other DRC-based Rwandan Hutu rebels will follow lead.

- ["War crimes charges for Rwandans"](#), *The Guardian*, 28 Nov. 2003.
- ["Kagame and Kabila say they'll finish implementing peace deal within 12 months"](#), Voice of America, 27 Nov. 2003
- ["Time to lay down the machetes"](#), *The Economist*, 20 Nov. 2003.
- ["Kigali, UN Tribunal to mend relations"](#), IRIN, 13 Nov. 2003.
- For background to recent elections, see ICG Africa Report N°53, [Rwanda at the End of the Transition: A Necessary Political Liberalisation](#), 13 Nov. 2002. For background to ICTR, see ICG Africa Report N°69, [The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda: Time for Pragmatism](#), 26 Sept. 2003.

➡ Uganda Rebel group Lords Resistance Army (LRA) continues vicious campaign in north. Over 100 civilians killed in Lira district, some beheaded, 300,000 forced to flee since August. Senior UN official claims humanitarian situation in north Uganda worst in world. President Museveni criticised foreign donors for imposing limits on military spending, hampering efforts to counter LRA.

- ["Rebels kill 12 in Lira district"](#), IRIN, 18 Nov. 2003.
- ["Museveni wants rebel leaders dead"](#), BBC, 14 Nov. 2003.
- ["Rebels kill scores in Uganda massacre – Army"](#), Reuters, 8 Nov. 2003.
- For background see IRIN web special report on ["Crisis in Northern Uganda"](#), Sept. 2003.

HORN OF AFRICA

➡ Ethiopia/Eritrea Little movement in border dispute. Members of independent international border commission met with representatives of Eritrea and Ethiopia in the Hague 19 November, but process remains stalled. International community engaging in shuttle diplomacy to resolve impasse. Government suspended country's independent journalists association.

- ["Envoys try to end Ethiopia-Eritrea border stalemate"](#), Reuters AlertNet, 20 Nov. 2003.
- ["Feature – where demarcation should have started"](#), IRIN, 20 Nov. 2003.
- ["Government urged to "stop harassing" private press"](#), IRIN, 17 Nov. 2003.
- For background see, ICG Africa Report N°68, [Ethiopia and Eritrea: War or Peace?](#), 24 Sept. 2003.

➡ Somalia UN urged Somalia's neighbours to uphold arms embargo against country. UN panel also claimed al Qaeda using Somalia for training and arms smuggling. 3 days of fighting between rival clan groups in central Somalia left over 50 dead.

- ["UN urges Somalia neighbours to uphold arms ban"](#), Reuters AlertNet, 18 Nov. 2003.
- ["Terrorists 'would use WMD if they could'"](#), *The Scotsman*, 17 Nov. 2003.
- ["Over 50 killed in fighting in central region"](#), IRIN, 17 Nov. 2003.
- For background, see ICG Africa Report N°66, [Somaliland: Democratisation and Its Discontents](#), 28 Jul. 2003 and ICG Africa Report N°59, [Negotiating a Blueprint for Peace in Somalia](#), 6 Mar. 2003.

- ↳ Sudan Concern over growing conflict and humanitarian crisis in Darfur region, western Sudan – hundreds of thousands remain displaced, threatened by Arab militias. Rebels in Darfur claim 210 killed in fighting with militias during last week of November. Human Rights Watch also accused government and foreign oil companies of complicity in displacing hundreds of thousands in southern oil region of Western Upper Nile.
- [“Heavy fighting reported in west Darfur”](#), IRIN, 28 Nov. 2003.
 - [“Sudan enters a new era”](#), *Washington Times*, 27 Nov. 2003.
 - [“Sudan: Oil companies complicit in rights abuses”](#), Human Rights Watch report, 25 Nov. 2003.
 - [“Concern grows over deteriorating situation in Darfur”](#), IRIN, 14 Nov. 2003.
 - For background, see ICG Africa Report N°65, [Sudan Endgame](#), 7 Jul. 2003.


SOUTHERN AFRICA

- ↳ Angola Delivery of humanitarian assistance impeded by landmines, poor roads and approaching wet season. DR Congo and Congo-Brazzaville military chiefs offered full co-operation to Angola to deal with secessionists in oil rich province of Cabinda. Continued human rights abuses by Angolan army alleged in Cabinda, denied by government.
- [“Cabinda separatists outflanked”](#), IRIN, 28 Nov. 2003.
 - [“Angola: Special report on land rights”](#), IRIN, 27 Nov. 2003
 - [“Progress despite broken bridges and landmines”](#), IRIN, 24 Nov. 2003.
 - For background, see ICG Africa Report N°61, [Angola's Choice: Reform or Regress](#), 7 Apr. 2003.
- ↳ Comoros Islands Government troops fired on demonstrators protesting against government policies: at least 15 protesters wounded. Five arrested for alleged coup plot.
- [“Five held for Comoros coup bid”](#), News24.com, 28 Nov. 2003.
 - [“Troops open fire on protest march”](#), IRIN, 27 Nov. 2003.
- ↳ Swaziland Presentation of new constitution, due 14 November, delayed for further review. Commonwealth team criticised October elections as largely devoid of meaning. King appointed friends and family to join elected members of assembly.
- [“Swaziland's new constitution on hold”](#), *The Guardian* (AP), 14 Nov. 2003.
 - [“Commonwealth calls for democratic reforms”](#), IRIN, 6 Nov. 2003.
 - For background, see [“Celebrating 30 oppressive years”](#), *The Economist*, 15 May 2003.
- ↳ Zimbabwe Zimbabwe's economy deteriorated further, government continued to deal harshly with dissent. Police now seizing foreign currency from tourists and businesses. Official inflation reached 526%, unemployment 70%. Dozens arrested and detained for several days for protesting against President Mugabe, subsequently charged and released. Commonwealth banned Mugabe from attending December heads of government meeting in Nigeria. Mugabe threatening to pull out of Commonwealth.
- [“Mugabe threatens to pull out of Commonwealth”](#), *The Scotsman*, 29 Nov. 2003.

- [“Zimbabwe activists win reprieve”](#), BBC, 21 Nov. 2003.
- [“Zimbabwe seizes foreign currency”](#), *The Guardian*, 17 Nov. 2003.
- For background see ICG Africa Briefing, [Decision Time in Zimbabwe](#), 8 Jul. 2003.

WEST AFRICA

- ↳ Côte d'Ivoire Rebels declare state of emergency in north of country, claiming army is preparing to attack them. President Gbagbo called on rebels to lay down arms. French peacekeeping troops clashed with about 100 Ivorian government troops who entered demilitarised zone 30 November and broadcast demand that Gbagbo attack rebels. UN SG Kofi Annan warned country may slip back into conflict. West African leaders trying to find solution to crisis - urged UN to consider replacing stretched ECOWAS forces with UN peacekeeping forces. Human Rights Watch accused pro-government militias of killings and torture of citizens in government controlled parts of country.
- [“Ivoriens besiege French military”](#), BBC, 1 Dec. 2003.
 - [“Militias commit abuses with impunity”](#), Human Rights Watch press release, 27 Nov. 2003.
 - [“Annan warns country may slip back into conflict”](#), IRIN, 25 Nov. 2003.
 - [“Ivory rebels declare emergency”](#), BBC, 18 Nov. 2003.

 ICG Africa Report N°72, [Côte d'Ivoire: “The War Is Not Yet Over”](#), 28 November 2003. There are ominous signs that the Côte d'Ivoire peace process initiated in January 2003 has broken down. If the country goes back to war, it could well take all West Africa with it, endangering even recent progress in Sierra Leone and Liberia. The international community that has endorsed the peace accords brokered by France should take a greater interest in their implementation. The immediate need is to press President Gbagbo to welcome back into the “Reconciliation Government” ministers from the rebel groups who walked out in September to protest the president's unilateral measures. The Security Council needs to take a leading role: the UN presence should be upgraded to a full peacekeeping mission that subsumes 1,400 West African troops under the umbrella of an expanded operation and steps up cooperation with the UN peace operation in Liberia.

- ↳ Guinea Tension rising as 21 December presidential elections approach. Supreme Court announced only one candidate, largely unknown, permitted to challenge President Conte in election. Conte warned army against coup. Subsequently dozens of soldiers reported to have been arrested and detained. Opposition parties announced boycott of elections. Opposition politician arrested after “insulting” Conte, released after two days.
- [“Dozens of arrests in Guinea army”](#), BBC, 28 Nov. 2003.
 - [“Outspoken opposition leader released from jail”](#), IRIN, 17 Nov. 2003.
 - [“Easy poll for ill Guinea leader”](#), BBC, 12 Nov. 2003.
 - For background on region, see ICG Africa Report N°62, [Tackling Liberia: The Eye of the Regional Storm](#), 30 Apr. 2003.



➤ Guinea-Bissau President Henrique Rosa requests UN Security Council backing for transitional government and for assistance in paying public service wages. Election, in wake of September 2003 coup, due by March 2004.

- [“Transitional President calls on the UN for help”](#), IRIN, 19 Nov. 2003.

➤ Liberia Stability slowly being restored but much still to be done. Large areas of country totally devastated. UN peacekeepers began expanding operations beyond capital Monrovia. Estimated 55% of population malnourished. Mains electricity restored to parts of Monrovia for first time in decade. Nationwide disarmament and reintegration program due to start 7 December – and some soldiers have already disarmed - but talks between former government militias and rebel groups broke down 28 November. Still sporadic fighting in countryside. Nigeria’s President says ex-President Taylor will be surrendered to Liberia for war crimes trial if requested by Liberia. Human Rights Watch briefing paper says Guinea armed rebel LURD forces.

- [“Liberian disarmament under threat”](#), BBC, 28 Nov. 2003.
- [“38,000 men with guns desperately need jobs”](#), *International Herald Tribune*, 27 Nov. 2003.
- [“Nigerian leader says he’s willing to surrender Taylor”](#), *International Herald Tribune*, 26 Nov. 2003.
- [Weapons Sanctions, Military Supplies, and Human Suffering: Illegal Arms Flows to Liberia and the June-July 2003 Shelling of Monrovia](#), Human Rights Watch briefing paper, 3 Nov. 2003.



ICG Africa Report N°71, [Liberia: Security Challenges](#), 3 Nov. 2003. Whether Liberia takes advantage of its best chance for peace in years and West Africa regains stability depends on bold action by the UN, which needs to shape a comprehensive regional security strategy while rapidly building its peacekeeping force up to strength. The forced departure of former president Charles Taylor on 11 August 2003 after six years of tyranny offers Liberians a chance to reconstruct their country. The arrival of a United Nations force with a robust mandate, which will soon develop into the international body’s biggest peacekeeping operation, is welcome by all who want to see peace in West Africa. But creating that peace will not be easy. Liberia is a broken state, and the drive to create peace is taking place in an environment of insecurity.

➤ Mauritania Presidential elections held 7 November. Incumbent of 19 years, President Taya, re-elected with 67% of vote. Leading opposition candidate Mohamed Haidalla received 19%. Taya promptly arrested Haidalla and his deputy campaign director for allegedly plotting coup. At least 12 opposition figures now in detention.

- [“Ruler of Mauritania courts U.S. opinion”](#), *The Guardian* (AP), 23 Nov. 2003.
- [“Lawyer: another opponent now arrested in Mauritania crackdown”](#), CNN, 19 Nov. 2003.
- [“Fears of militant Islam haunt Mauritania”](#), Reuters AlertNet, 18 Nov. 2003.
- [“Incumbent reported winner in Mauritania”](#), *The Guardian* (AP), 8 Nov. 2003.

➤ Niger Government continues crackdown on media. Director of one newspaper jailed for “defamation” for 6

months. Three radio journalists briefly detained for broadcast on dispute between farmers.

- [“Civil society wants journalist released”](#), IRIN, 17 Nov. 2003.

➤ Nigeria Muslim militants burnt to ground 13 churches and several houses in north of country – no deaths reported. Ethnic Ijaw militants attacked and occupied two offshore oil rigs, driven off by navy. In subsequent attack, militants took 7 foreign oil workers hostage 28 November – released after 2 days. Decision of International Court of Justice that Nigeria cede disputed territory, particularly oil rich Bakassi peninsula, to Cameroon causes tension.

- [“Foreign hostages freed in Nigeria”](#), BBC, 1 Dec. 2003.
- [“Nigeria says no deal yet with Cameroon on Bakassi”](#), AllAfrica.com, 26 Nov. 2003.
- [“Muslim rioters burn 13 churches in north Nigeria”](#), Reuters AlertNet, 20 Nov. 2003.

➤ Sierra Leone UN says Sierra Leone’s human rights record has improved markedly over last year, but still some security concerns. Liberia’s interim president expressed regret for his country’s role in Sierra Leone’s civil war.

- [“Marked progress in human rights – OHCHR says”](#), IRIN, 6 Nov. 2003.
- [“Bryant regrets Sierra Leone war”](#), BBC, 6 Nov. 2003.
- For background, see ICG Africa Report N°67, [Sierra Leone: The State of Security and Governance](#), 2 Sept. 2003.

Asia/Pacific

CENTRAL ASIA

➤ Kazakhstan Media under fire in region’s wealthiest country. Editor of independent paper “SolDat” banned from journalism for five years following conviction on financial charges unrelated to his writing. Supreme Court rejected appeal of Sergei Duvanov, opposition journalist accused of rape and jailed in January after flawed trial.

- [“Kazakhstan: Opposition journalist barred from practicing craft for five years”](#), RFE/RL, 19 Nov. 2003.
- [“Creative editing and other obstacles for the Kazakh opposition”](#), Transitions Online, 14 Nov. 2003.
- For background, see ICG Asia Report N°66, [Youth in Central Asia: Losing the New Generation](#), 31 Oct. 2003.

➤ Kyrgyzstan Security services claimed terrorist attack on U.S. airbase foiled; arrested three alleged Hizb ut-Tahrir members. U.S.-funded independent printing house opened 14 November in Bishkek. Activists hope new printer will increase media freedom and limit state press’s ability to censor opposition. Tension persists on Uzbek border.

- [“Kyrgyzstan: Boost for media freedom”](#), IWPR, 15 Nov. 2003.
- [“Bomb attack on coalition airbase reported foiled by Kyrgyz security”](#), Eurasianet.org, 5 Nov. 2003.
- For background, see ICG Asia Report N°66, [Youth in Central Asia: Losing the New Generation](#), 31 Oct. 2003; and ICG Asia Report N°37, [Kyrgyzstan’s Political Crisis: An Exit Strategy](#), 20 Aug. 2002.

- Tajikistan Land mines laid by Uzbekistan along common border continue to kill and maim civilians. Two Tajiks killed and three injured while gathering wood in frontier area 4 November.
- ["Tajik youth, his father killed by land mines on Uzbek border"](#), Eurasianet.org, 6 Nov. 2003.
 - For background, see ICG Asia Report N°66, *Youth in Central Asia: Losing the New Generation*, 31 Oct. 2003 and ICG Asia Report N°51, *Tajikistan: A Roadmap for Development*, 24 Apr. 2003.
- Turkmenistan New law prohibiting unregistered religious activity came into effect 10 November, effectively banning all faiths but Sunni Islam and Russian Orthodox Church. Reporters Without Borders said RFE/RL correspondent under constant harassment from police. President Niyazov continues to run region's most repressive regime.
- Comment by Arkady Dubnov, ["Turkmenistan: The more things change..."](#), Eurasianet.org, 20 Nov. 2003.
 - ["Ashgabat takes further steps to suppress religious faiths"](#), RFE/RL, 14 Nov. 2003.
 - For background, see ICG Asia Report N°66, *Youth in Central Asia: Losing the New Generation*, 31 Oct. 2003 and ICG Asia Report N°44, *Cracks in the Marble: Turkmenistan's Failing Dictatorship*, 17 Jan. 2003.
- Uzbekistan Lower than expected cotton harvest will further undermine economic situation. No sign of relaxation of damaging restrictions on private trade. Human rights activists under continued pressure: Freedom House representatives harassed and threatened by local authorities in Namangan 21 November. Tension persists on borders: Uzbek residents of Sokh exclave, located on Kyrgyz side, demanding land corridor to Uzbekistan. Meanwhile, Uzbek land mines on frontier with Tajikistan killed two Tajik civilians and injured three others 4 November. Continuing repressive policies in Uzbekistan, and difficult economic situation, risk future unrest.
- ["Uzbekistan must stop intimidating human rights workers"](#), Freedom House, 24 Nov. 2003.
 - ["Justice only in heaven' - the death penalty in Uzbekistan"](#), Amnesty International, 18 Nov. 2003.
 - For background, see ICG Asia Report N°66, *Youth in Central Asia: Losing the New Generation*, 31 Oct. 2003 and ICG Asia Report N°46, *Uzbekistan's Reform Program: Illusion or Reality?*, 18 Feb. 2003.

SOUTH ASIA

- Afghanistan Grip of central government outside Kabul still weak; insecurity hampering reconstruction and political progress. Fighting between Afghan factions in north continues despite plans to recall commanders Atta and Dostum to Kabul. Government team dispatched to merge their forces and integrate them into national army. Serious concern about power vacuum in southern Zabul province, scene of deadly clashes this month. French UNHCR worker killed 16 November in Ghazni; car bomb exploded outside Kandahar UNAMA office 12 November; UN humanitarian operations now suspended in several southern and eastern provinces. 11,500-strong U.S.-led coalition force continues to focus on south and east where regrouped Taliban forces target internationals and Afghan police and troops; also launched new counter-terror campaign in northeast. At Brussels NATO meeting 30 November U.S. defence chief Donald Rumsfeld indicated U.S.

would like NATO eventually to take over military mission. Draft constitution unveiled 3 November leaves fundamental rights subject to future legislation, concentrates power in presidency and fails to delineate respective powers of centre and provinces. Process widely criticised as rushed and favouring those already in power; similar fears expressed about upcoming electoral process. Border with Pakistan, calm since July, saw renewed clashes 2 November.

- ["NATO takes steps to expand its role in Afghanistan"](#), Associated Press, 30 Nov. 2003.
 - ["Northern Generals pledge obedience"](#), IWPR Afghan Recovery Report N°81, 13 Nov. 2003.
 - ["Here's your new constitution"](#), *The Economist*, 6 Nov. 2003.
 - For background, see, ICG Asia Report N°64, *Peacebuilding in Afghanistan*, 29 Sept. 2003; ICG Asia Report N°65, *Disarmament and Reintegration in Afghanistan*, 30 Sept. 2003.
- India (non-Kashmir) Violence surged in northeast where some 30 banned insurgent groups (separatist and communist) operate. At least 57 killed (mostly Biharis) and hundreds of homes torched this month in Assam, in clashes between locals and Hindi-speaking Bihari settlers. 500 arrests made and 600 additional troops deployed. Also in Assam, nine died when NDFB Bodoland separatist guerillas clashed with civilians and 14 more died in fighting between Kuki and Karbi tribal groups. In Manipur, separatist militants kidnapped and murdered seven-year-old daughter of state minister and 11 rebels killed in gun battle between rival groups. Hindu-Muslim clashes in Gujarat - site of bitter fighting in 2002 - killed four and injured dozens in several incidents this month.
- ["The parties flex their muscles"](#), *The Economist*, 20 Nov. 2003.
 - ["Fire in the belly"](#), *Outlook India*, 24 Nov. 2003.
 - ["Manipur curfew after child murder"](#), BBC, 13 Nov. 2003.
 - ["Three wounded in explosion in India's Gujarat"](#), Reuters AlertNet, 12 Nov. 2003.

- Kashmir Hope tempered by scepticism as ceasefire on Line of Control (LOC) began midnight 26 November - first formal ceasefire since start of insurgency in 1989 but longer term significance remains to be seen. Pakistani PM Jamali announced unilateral ceasefire on LOC 23 November, one month after India's surprise peace initiative proposing 12 concrete steps toward Indo-Pak normalisation. Indian offer included restoration of further transport links and renewal of sporting ties; but, crucially, no discussion on Kashmir itself. After stumbles over preconditions, Indian Deputy PM Advani ready for unconditional talks with All Party Hurriyat Conference (umbrella organisation for Kashmiri separatist groups). PM Vajpayee agreed to attend long-delayed SAARC regional summit in Islamabad in January 2004 but ruled out bilateral talks. Pakistan offered 30 November to allow direct overflights, banned since January 2002, opening way for full resumption of air links. Meanwhile violence continues unabated in the valley. Kashmiri rights groups reports that abuses by Indian security forces fuelling indigenous recruitment into extremist groups. Government sources estimate 40,000 casualties since 1989; separatists claim more than 80,000.

- ["Kashmir ceasefire - will it last?"](#), BBC, 25 Nov. 2003.
- ["Hurriyat conference offered unconditional talks"](#), *Hindustan Times*, 21 Nov. 2003.
- ["India grapples with changes in the Kashmir insurgency"](#), *The New York Times* (subscription), 16 Nov. 2003.

- For background, see ICG Asia Report N°41, *Kashmir: The view from Srinagar*, 21 Nov. 2002.

➤ Maldives Situation seems stabilised after capital, Malé, rocked by unprecedented anti-government riots in September. After October referendum reinstated President Gayoom (sole candidate) for sixth five-year term, he sacked attorney general and another cabinet minister for attempting to register a political party (opposition parties are banned).

- "Maldives leader sacks 'reformers'", BBC, 12 Nov. 2003.

➤ Nepal Bloody conflict dragging on since collapse of talks between government and Maoist rebels 27 August. More than 1,000 killed since breakdown of ceasefire. Rebels continue to insist on new constitution reducing role of King; monarchist government refuses. PM's party joined opposition calls for his resignation 20 November because no progress made in instituting all-party government or restoring normal democratic process. Worrying new government policy of arming villagers to defend themselves against 'evil Maoist terrorists' threatens to broaden conflict. Vague discussion of local elections being held within year but unlikely prospect in current security environment.

- "Nepal PM must go says his party", BBC, 20 Nov. 2003.
- For background, see ICG Asia Briefing, *Nepal: Back to the Gun*, 22 Oct. 2003.

➤ Pakistan Karachi and Quetta appear stabilised after bouts of sectarian violence in recent months. Hunt for militants in northwest continues; dozens of militants rounded up in raids across the country, including hundreds of illegal Afghan immigrants in Quetta, after outlawed organisations regrouped under new names. Groups banned in recent weeks were, for most part, already banned and Lashkar-e-Taiba, key Kashmiri militant group, only put under surveillance, raising questions about seriousness of crack-down. U.S. has lauded government's efforts; Afghanistan says Pakistan should do more.

- "Pakistan Islamists reject ban on militants", Reuters AlertNet, 18 Nov. 2003.
- Comment by Hussain Haqqani, "In Pakistan, the army is just another party", *Indian Express*, 12 Nov. 2003.
- For background, see ICG Asia Report N°49, *Pakistan: The Mullahs and the Military*, 20 Mar. 2003.

➤ Sri Lanka Ceasefire holding but peace process also on hold as country paralysed by political crisis. Days after LTTE (Tamil Tigers) finally presented power-sharing proposal to government, President Kumaratunga suspended parliament, took control of defence, interior and media ministries and deployed troops to guard government buildings 4 November. Move read by many as attempt to undermine PM Wickremesinghe who president has criticised for compromising security by conceding too much to rebels. Norway suspended mediation efforts until crisis resolved. Agreement reached 18 November in meeting between PM and president to form peace committee to work out mechanics of power-sharing. PM offered broader role for president in peace process; she responded by setting 15 December deadline for resolution of stand-off, offered deal on sharing defence responsibilities which Wickremesinghe then rejected. Talk of snap election if stand-off not resolved by mid-December. EU envoy, Chris Patten, met Kumaratunga, Wickremesinghe and, controversially, LTTE chief, Prabhakaran, on trip planned before political crisis.

- "Sri Lanka protests over EU envoy", BBC, 25 Nov. 2003.

- "Sri Lanka Parliament reopens to uproar, budget", Reuters AlertNet, 19 Nov. 2003.

NORTH EAST ASIA

➤ China (internal) Chinese military held anti-terror exercises in Tibet, ostensibly to practice fighting "terrorists" aligned with Dalai Lama. Repression of devout Muslims continues in northwestern province of Xinjiang.

- "Chinese troops stage anti-terror exercises in Tibet", Reuters AlertNet, 17 Nov. 2003.
- "China's high-stakes war on terror", BBC, 3 Nov. 2003.

➤ ✎ North Korea Despite verbal sparring between Washington and Pyongyang, expectation that six-way talks will resume 17-19 December in Beijing on basis of written multilateral security guarantee linked to North Korean steps on dismantling nuclear program. U.S. Secretary of Defence Rumsfeld and Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly conducted East Asian tours to prepare for multilateral talks. Pyongyang announced 6 November it had a nuclear deterrent powerful enough to deter any U.S. attack and was ready to use it; in part a response to U.S. announcement of suspension of KEDO power station project. U.S. reiterated had no intention of attacking North Korea. U.S. also announced plans to reposition its troops stationed in South Korea further from the border.

- "North Korea slams 'evil' title", *The Age*, 22 Nov. 2003.
- "Date for nuclear talks uncertain", *International Herald Tribune*, 20 Nov. 2003.
- "Former Negotiator Warns Bush: Last Chance for Diplomacy with North Korea", *Arms Control Today*, Nov. 2003.
- For background, see ICG Asia Report N°61, *North Korea: A Phased Negotiation Strategy*, 1 Aug. 2003.

➤ Taiwan Strait Chinese officials responded sharply to Taiwanese President Chen Shui-ban's calls for new constitution and right to hold referendums, saying moves toward independence could make use of force "unavoidable". Threat to use force first since 2000. In step thought designed to boost re-election chances by provoking China, President Chen set timetable for referendum on new constitution (December 2006) and implementation (May 2008). But Taiwanese parliament voted down controversial bill allowing referendum on independence; instead passed watered-down version permitting such a vote only in extreme circumstances. China cut ties with Kiribati after island chain recognised Taiwan.

- "Beijing softens tone on Taiwan legislation", *International Herald Tribune*, 29 Nov. 2003.
- "China ratchets up threats before Taiwan's elections", *The Guardian*, 20 Nov. 2003.
- "Chen wants new Taiwan constitution by 2008", *The Straits Times*, 12 Nov. 2003.
- For background, see ICG Asia Report N°53, *Taiwan Strait I: What's Left of 'One China'?*, 6 June 2003; ICG Asia Report N°54, *Taiwan Strait II: The Risk of War*, 6 June 2003; and ICG Asia Report N°55, *Taiwan Strait III: The Chance of Peace*, 6 June 2003.

SOUTH EAST ASIA

➤ Indonesia Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) regrouping after arrests and reportedly planning new attacks; new operations chief Aris Sumarsono, alias Zulkarnaen, still at large. Attacks by

suspected Muslim radicals continue in Central Sulawesi despite deployment of 3200 extra police and soldiers. In Papua, 22 killed, including Free Papua Movement (OPM) leader Yustinus Murib, in clashes between rebels and government troops this month. Governor of West Irian Jaya, new province carved out of Papua, was formally installed by Minister of Home Affairs. Full scale military operation against separatist Free Aceh Movement (GAM) ongoing; military emergency declared in mid-May extended for six months on 6 November. EU, U.S. and Japan responded immediately with joint statement of concern, urging political settlement; dismissed by Jakarta as "regrettable interference". Access to province still almost entirely closed to foreigners, including humanitarian workers. GAM called for European mediation but Jakarta has ruled out ceasefire unless rebels renounce independence demand and disarm. Communal violence erupted in Bangka, southern Sumatra, 25 November, first day of Islamic Idul Fitri festival, two dead.

- "Dying for peace", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 22 Nov. 2003.
- "Poso falling back into cycle of violence", *The Jakarta Post*, 19 Nov. 2003.
- "New terror chief planning attacks", *The Boston Globe* (AP), 19 Nov. 2003.
- "Indonesian rights panel suspects abuses in Papua", Reuters AlertNet, 14 Nov. 2003.



ICG Asia Report N°67, *The Perils of Private Security in Indonesia: Guards and Militias on Bali and Lombok*, 7 Nov. 2003. Untrained, unaccountable, and politically-affiliated private security forces in Indonesia have the potential to cause conflict in the run-up to the 2004 elections. Civilian security groups on the neighbouring islands of Bali and Lombok arose to carry out protection and crime-fighting functions that the police were unable or unwilling to undertake. However, these private security forces often exacerbate rather than reduce security problems, especially when they are linked to particular religious, ethnic, or political groups. The lack of any system of control, supervision, or regulation over them means they all too easily become a law unto themselves, and their existence serves to weaken police credibility and undermine the state as the final guarantor of security in a democratising country. The Indonesian government and donors interested in assisting police reform should work toward the disbanding of these private security organisations.

➤ Myanmar (Burma) UN human rights envoy Paulo Pinheiro reported significant deterioration since March to General Assembly following 3 - 8 November investigative trip. U.S., EU, Japan and UN continue to demand Suu Kyi release and substantive talks with opposition, dismissing government road map to democracy as non-participatory, non-transparent and lacking timeline. Pinheiro reported after meeting Suu Kyi that she will refuse liberty until 35 NLD colleagues arrested in connection with 30 May violence released. Eight of these 35 released November 9, but 27 still incarcerated. Five other NLD leaders released 25 November.

- "Junta frees five allies of Suu Kyi", *The Guardian*, 25 Nov. 2003.
- "UN envoy warns Burma on rights", BBC, 10 Nov. 2003.
- For background, see ICG Asia Report N°52, *Myanmar Backgrounder: Ethnic Minority Politics*, 7 May 2003.

➤ Philippines Anti-government sentiment rising in wake of President Arroyo's u-turn announcement to run in 2004

elections. Fernando Poe, film actor and close friend of deposed President Joseph Estrada, also announced intention to run. Government declared military "red alert" 3 November to preempt instability from opposition-led impeachment bid against chief justice; military vowed to stay neutral. Three-hour siege by two armed men (including former aviation official with links to July mutineers) at Manila airport 8 November protesting corruption resulted in deaths of both. Thousands took to streets 11 and 14 November calling for president to step down. Formal peace negotiations with MILF expected to resume soon after Malaysia agrees to send team of 25 observers to Mindanao. Despite July ceasefire, government forces clashed with MILF rebels 11 November, killing 13, including two rebels and two police.

- "Opposition in Philippines Seizes Moment to Make Some Noise", *The Washington Post*, 23 Nov. 2003.
- "Govt, MILF talks after Ramadan", *Today*, 21 Nov. 2003.

PACIFIC

➤ Papua New Guinea Australia to deploy administrators, public sector specialists and 200-300 police to address growing lawlessness, as condition of U.S.\$220 million Australian aid program. PNG government unhappy at conditionality of Australian aid but formal agreement expected at December bilateral meeting. Opposition leader and former PM, Mereke Morauta, called for Australia to strengthen conditionality. Draft constitution, proposed by Bougainville leaders to resolve final status of semi-autonomous province, being considered by Bipartisan National Committee. Secessionist conflict claimed 20,000 lives between 1988-97.

- "Canberra urged to be 'harsh' on PNG", *The Australian*, 24 Nov. 2003.
- "Work on Bougainville document on track", *The Nation*, 6 Nov. 2003.

➤ Solomon Islands Security situation stabilising. Australian-led multinational intervention force completed troop withdrawal from Weather Coast, one of two major trouble spots. Rapid reaction force will remain on high alert in Townsville, Australia, deployable within 24 hours. 300 arrests made over course of mission including leaders of all main rebel groups and 3,700 weapons collected and destroyed. Millions pledged for reconstruction at 20 November donors meeting in Honiara.

- "Troops withdraw Solomon hotspot", CNN, 19 Nov. 2003.
- "EU Pledges Aid to Reformed Solomons", *Australian Financial Review* (subscription), 25 Nov. 2003.

Europe



BALKANS

➤ Bosnia and Herzegovina NATO-assisted defence restructuring continues: integration of Serb and Bosniak-Croat armies under single national command finally underway, 7,500 soldiers to be disarmed and 1,000 metric tons of weaponry destroyed by year-end. European Commission feasibility study gives Bosnia good chance of beginning negotiations for EU Stabilisation and Association Agreement in 2004. One notable shortcoming is cooperation with ICTY. Officials stated that NATO Partnership for Peace

membership and European integration hinged on Karadzic arrest. Funding secured for new domestic war crimes court to begin work early 2004.

- "EU hopes Bosnia ready for association talks in 2004", Reuters AlertNet, 18 Nov. 2003.
- "Financing local justice", Transitions Online, 3 Nov. 2003.
- For background, see ICG Balkans Report N°146, *Bosnia's Nationalist Governments: Paddy Ashdown and the Paradoxes of State Building*, 22 Jul. 2003.

➤ Kosovo Representing Contact Group, U.S. Under Secretary of State Grossman indicated during Pristina visit that final status could be examined 2005 if reforms on-track. Initiative gave renewed impetus to strained partnership between UN administration and Kosovan provisional government institutions. But by month-end relations were again strained by UNMIK's failure to find workable way forward with privatisation process it suspended in October. At Musutiste 14 November KFOR troops fired in air when ethnic Albanian villagers threw stones at convoy of Serb refugees visiting pre-war homes. Two Kosovo Protection Corps members were among six arrested for 24 November murder of two Kosovan police officers at Rausic – murdered officers were among first wave of Kosovan police given responsibility for investigating serious crimes.

- "U.S. envoy outlines Kosovo strategy", *The Guardian* (AP), 5 Nov. 2003.
- For background, see ICG Balkans report Report N°148, *Two to Tango: An Agenda for the New Kosovo SRSG*, 3 Sept. 2003.

➤ Macedonia Prime Minister Cervenkovski sacked four cabinet ministers for incompetence 1 November, approved by Parliament 5 November. Voluntary disarmament program commenced 1 November. EU military monitoring mission "Concordia" scheduled to wind up 15 December by which time 200-strong EU police mission "Proxima" will be largely deployed. President Boris Trajkovski announced Skopje's plans to apply for EU membership by February 2004 at Berlin conference 15 November.

- "Macedonia's reshuffle dismissed as stunt", *IWPR Balkan Crisis Report* N° 467, 7 Nov. 2003.
- For background, see ICG Europe Report N°149, *Macedonia: No Time for Complacency*, 23 Oct. 2003.

➤ Serbia Political crisis continues. PM Zivkovic dissolved Parliament 13 November and called new parliamentary elections. Third attempt at presidential elections failed 16 November due to low voter turnout (32%), boycotted by two largest opposition parties: Kostunica's DSS and the G17+ party of Miroslav Labus. Ultranationalist presidential candidate Nikolic won 46% of vote raising concerns for 28 December parliamentary elections. Former Croatian Serb leader Milan Babic indicted by ICTY 18 November. War crimes prosecutor Vukcevic insists on domestic competence to try all cases, but ICTY prosecutor Carla del Ponte adamant The Hague try senior figures. Ratko Mladic (indicted 1995) still at large with Belgrade denying knowledge of his whereabouts after he escaped police dragnet.

- "Serbia-Montenegro: Is Belgrade's Failed Presidential Poll A Warning Sign Ahead Of Parliamentary Elections?", *RFE/RL*, 18 Nov. 2003
- "Report Says Mladic 'Escaped from Serbia Last Month'", Reuters, 14 Nov. 2003.

- For background, see ICG Balkans Report N°145, *Serbian Reform Stalls Again*, 17 Jul. 2003.

CAUCASUS

➤ Azerbaijan New president Ilham Aliyev showing no signs of acquiescing to calls by OSCE, Human Rights Watch and others for investigation into irregularities and violence during and after 15 October election. Arrests and dismissals of opposition supporters continue, and government cracking down on independent press.

- "OSCE official calls for Azerbaijan probe", *The Guardian*, 20 Nov. 2003.
- "Assault on Azeri press", *IWPR*, 6 Nov. 2003.

➤ Georgia Peaceful revolution swept President Eduard Shevardnadze from power, but risk of violence and fragmentation of country remains. Uprising, dubbed "Rose Revolution" and led by 35-year-old lawyer Mikheil Saakashvili, spanned three weeks of mass protests against fraudulent 2 November elections; culminated 22 November when Saakashvili and supporters stormed parliament while Shevardnadze delivered speech inside. Georgian police and interior ministry troops offered no resistance. After visit from Russian Foreign Minister Ivanov, and call from U.S. Secretary of State Powell, Shevardnadze resigned following day. Presidential elections set for 4 January 2004: Saakashvili expected to win. Aslan Abashidze, authoritarian leader of autonomous region of Ajara, declared state of emergency and partially closed border with rest of Georgia. Concern that Ajara will follow secessionist regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia in demanding independence; Russia, in slap to Tbilisi, hosted leaders of three regions for talks in Moscow.

- "U.S. and Russia share an interest in Georgia, but aims could clash", *International Herald Tribune*, 29 Nov. 2003.
- "A moment of truth", *The Economist*, 27 Nov. 2003.
- "Abashidze challenges new regime", *IWPR*, 25 Nov. 2003.
- "Georgians party as president steps down", *CNN*, 24 Nov. 2003.

➤ Nagorno-Karabakh OSCE Minsk Group reportedly planning attempt at kickstarting peace talks in coming weeks, but group's efforts have brought little progress to date.

- "OSCE Minsk Group delays planned visit to South Caucasus", *RFE/RL*, 7 Nov. 2003.
- For background, see "Timeline: Azerbaijan", *BBC*, (updated 21 Oct. 2003).

EASTERN EUROPE

➤ Moldova Russia presented proposal for resolution of dispute with Transdniestria region, sidestepping OSCE-led mediation process. Signing ceremony scheduled for 25 November cancelled by Moldovans at last moment after pressure from U.S. and EU, who were dissatisfied with proposed federal structure, in particular influence it would have given Transdniestrian separatist leadership over Moldovan economic and foreign policy. Peace process now back to square one under OSCE auspices. Anti-government demonstrations sparked by collapse of agreement continue. Evacuation of Russian military equipment from Transdniestria resumed after months-long pause, but troop withdrawal unlikely before second half of 2004.

- "Moldovans protest over peace plan", *BBC*, 30 Nov. 2003.

- ["Moldovan peace plan collapses"](#), *The Guardian* (Reuters), 26 Nov. 2003.
- For background, see ICG Europe Report N°147, [Moldova: No Quick Fix](#), 12 August 2003.

- ➡ Russia (Chechnya) Newly-installed Chechen president Akhmad Kadyrov set end of winter deadline for security forces to wipe out remaining rebels, but attacks continue despite government's apparent optimism. Nine Russian soldiers and four policemen died in separate incidents in neighbouring Ingushetia. Chechen envoy Akhmed Zakayev granted asylum in Britain after judge rejected Russian extradition request. Italian PM Berlusconi widely criticised for comments supporting Putin on Chechnya.
- ["Chechen envoy granted UK asylum"](#), BBC, 29 Nov. 2003.
 - ["EU dismay at Berlusconi comments"](#), BBC, 7 Nov. 2003.
 - Policy brief by Dmitri Trenin, ["The Forgotten War: Chechnya and Russia's Future"](#), CEIP, Nov. 2003.

WESTERN EUROPE/MEDITERRANEAN

- ➡ Corsica Corsican nationalists FLNC announced unilateral ceasefire in surprise move 14 November after surge of violence since failed July autonomy referendum.
- ["Nationalists announce ceasefire in Corsica"](#), Reuters AlertNet, 12 Nov. 2003.
 - For background, see ["Corsica defeat leaves Paris empty-handed"](#), *The Washington Times* (UPI), 7 Jul. 2003.
- ➡ Cyprus U.S. and EU keen to broker reunification before Greek Cypriot part of island joins European Union May 2004. Progress unlikely, however, until after 14 December elections in Turkish Cyprus – last round of talks broke down in March with Turkish Cypriot leadership insisting on two state solution. Greek Cypriot leader Tassos Papadopoulos requested UN sponsorship of new peace talks 26 November. UN SG Kofi Annan called for six-month extension of UN peacekeeping force on the island.
- ["Cyprus peacekeepers extended 6 months"](#), *The Washington Times* (UPI), 24 Nov. 2003.

- ➡ Northern Ireland Good Friday peace agreement and continued functioning of Northern Ireland Assembly thrown into doubt by 26 November election result. Hardline unionist and nationalist parties gained ground: 30 of 108 seats went to anti-agreement Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), 27 for Trimble's Ulster Unionists; Sinn Fein won 24 seats, six more than moderate Social Democratic and Labour Party. No new executive government can be formed without agreement of both DUP and Sinn Fein, so no resolution likely while DUP continues to refuse to work with Sinn Fein. Assembly still suspended; DUP to hold talks with Blair 1 December but unlikely power-sharing government will resume in near future.
- ["The defeat of compromise"](#), *The Observer*, 30 Nov. 2003.
 - ["Trimble fights on as Paisley counts spoils"](#), *The Observer*, 30 Nov. 2003.

- ➡ Spain (Basque region) Plan to become 'free-associated state' (sovereign state associated with Spain) approved by Basque regional government 24 October causing considerable tension. Plan to be debated by regional parliament and if approved, put to referendum. Central government declared moves unconstitutional, filed appeal 13 November with

Constitutional Court and passed law 28 November criminalising calling of referendum without permission of central government. Two ETA suspects arrested by French police 17 November; Spanish police captured 12 alleged leaders following day.

- ["Basque leader may face jail if he calls referendum"](#), Reuters AlertNet, 28 Nov. 2003.
- ["Spain arrests 12 ETA suspects"](#), CNN, 18 Nov. 2003.
- ["Spain appeals Basque autonomy plan"](#), *The Washington Times*, 13 Nov. 2003.

- ➡ Turkey Devastated by four truck bombs in six days; 61 killed and 750 injured. Two Istanbul synagogues attacked 15 November, then British Embassy (killing Consul General) and HSBC Bank 20 November. Three Turkish militant Islamist groups linked to al Qaeda claimed responsibility for attacks; 21 arrested and many more being interrogated. 22 suspects that had fled to Syria extradited 30 November. Kurdish rebels attacked military outpost in southern Turkey 5 November, killing one soldier. Political wing of Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK or KADEK) renamed itself People's Congress of Kurdistan (KONGA-GEL) 11 November, claims to seek political solution but refuses to disband military wing; Ankara dismissed move as political stunt.
- ["Syria expels Turkey bomb suspects"](#), BBC, 30 Nov. 2003.
 - ["A grim city nurtured Turkey's bombers"](#), *International Herald Tribune*, 27 Nov. 2003.
 - ["An Islamist facing Islamic terrorism"](#), *The Economist*, 27 Nov. 2003.
 - ["Turkish Kurd rebels say won't dissolve armed wing"](#), Reuters AlertNet, 15 Nov. 2003.

Latin America /Caribbean

LATIN AMERICA

- ➡ Bolivia Country stable after October riots and resignation of President Sanchez de Lozada. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan pledged greater UN attention to region, following visit to Bolivia. Latin American neighbours also pledged assistance.
- ["UN, Latam prepared to aid Bolivia after revolt"](#), Reuters AlertNet, 14 Nov. 2003.
 - Comment by ousted Bolivian president, Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada, ["The best choice for Bolivia"](#), *The Washington Post*, 13 Nov. 2003.
 - For background see ["An angry people bring down their president"](#), *The Economist*, 20 Oct. 2003.
- ➡ Colombia Government shake-up following 25 October elections has seen resignations of defence, interior and environment ministers. Armed forces commander and police chief also resigned and another general sacked. Resignations have damaged perceived strength of President Uribe. Colombia also facing economic problems. 800 members of rightwing AUC paramilitary group disarmed in public ceremony. Leftist ELN rebels released two of seven foreign tourists taken hostage in September. Other leftist rebel group, FARC, blamed for grenade attacks on two Bogota bars 15 November, killing one and injuring over 70.

- ["Colombia's paramilitaries"](#), *The Economist*, 28 Nov. 2003.
- ["Rising peace hopes in Colombia"](#), *International Herald Tribune*, 27 Nov. 2003.
- ["Resignations hurt leader in Colombia"](#), *International Herald Tribune*, 14 Nov. 2003.
- ["Debt puts Colombia in jeopardy"](#), *International Herald Tribune*, 12 Nov. 2003.
- For background, see ICG Latin America Report N°5, [Colombia: Negotiating with the Paramilitaries](#), 16 Sept. 2003.



Latin America Report N°6, [Colombia: President Uribe's Democratic Security Policy](#), 13 November 2003. More than any of his predecessors, President Alvaro Uribe has made combating the insurgents the overriding priority and defining objective of the Colombian government. Through modest achievements on the ground a sense of public security has begun to be re-established. However, Uribe's "Democratic Security Policy" (DSP), the long-term strategy promised to lend coherence to the security effort, has been stalled for nearly a year by political infighting and fundamental arguments over how best to bring the 40-year conflict to a close. Without some serious modifications, it is doubtful that it will achieve its goal.

- ↳ Ecuador President Gutierrez facing accusations he received \$30,000 in campaign contributions from alleged drug lord for last year's elections.
 - ["Ecuador's president denies receiving campaign contribution from suspected drug trafficker"](#), *Voice of America*, 22 Nov. 2003.
- ↳ Guatemala Ex-dictator Rios Montt unsuccessful in bid for presidency, coming distant third in 9 November elections. Run-off election between leading two candidates, Oscar Berger and Alvaro Colom, to be held 28 December.
 - ["Guatemala turns a page"](#), *International Herald Tribune*, 18 Nov. 2003.
 - ["Guatemala ex-ruler accepts election defeat"](#), *The Guardian* (AP), 15 Nov. 2003.
- ↳ Peru President Alejandro Toledo apologised for estimated 70,000 deaths during 20 year fight against Shining Path (Sendero Luminoso) rebel group. Peru's Congress approved new charges against ex-President Fujimori, lifted his presidential immunity. Fujimori, in exile in Japan, still plans to run in 2006 presidential elections. Prominent leader of Shining Path captured by army.
 - ["Peru President proposes reparation plan for victims of human rights abuses"](#), *San Francisco Chronicle* (AP), 21 Nov. 2003.
 - ["Lawmakers approve multiple charges against Peru's ex-President, Alberto Fujimori"](#), *San Francisco Chronicle* (AP), 13 Nov. 2003.
- ↳ Venezuela President Chavez alleged yet another coup plot by opposition after weapons caches seized 7 November. Competing recall drives lead to continued tension. Chavez supporters sought signatures during campaign from 21-24 November to recall 38 anti-Chavez politicians. Opposition campaigning for signatures from 28 November-1 December for referendum to recall Chavez.

Each side accused other of planning violence during campaigns.

- ["Venezuelans riven over drive to replace Chavez"](#), *International Herald Tribune*, 29 Nov. 2003.
- ["Venezuelan President urges calm ahead of signature drives"](#), CNN, 16 Nov. 2003.
- ["Venezuela's Chavez alleges plot to topple government after agents seize weapons"](#), *San Francisco Chronicle* (AP), 7 Nov. 2003.



Middle East /North Africa

EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

- ↳ Israel/occupied Territories Diplomatic activity behind scenes as pressure mounts for both sides to make concessions. Growing sense that time running out on Quartet-backed Roadmap. UN Security Council unanimously passed resolution 19 November endorsing Roadmap, but other initiatives, including "Geneva Initiative", gaining momentum. Launched 1 December by group of Israelis and Palestinians led by Yossi Beilin and Yasser Abbed Rabbo, Initiative offers full blueprint for settlement following on from Camp David and Tabah negotiations discontinued in January 2001. Four former heads of Israeli Shin Bet security service warned Sharon's policies risk "near-catastrophe", echoing October comments by army chief. New government of Palestinian PM Ahmed Qurei approved; Arafat retained control of security services. Islamic Jihad and Hamas said to be considering truce, but talks with Egyptian mediator at preliminary stage. Violence diminished in November, though sporadic attacks continued.
 - ["Killing of two Israeli soldiers casts doubt on truce efforts"](#), *The Washington Post*, 19 Nov. 2003.
 - ["New Palestinian cabinet approved"](#), BBC, 12 Nov. 2003.
 - ["Can the bloody stalemate be broken?"](#), *The Economist*, 6 Nov. 2003.
 - For information on [Geneva Initiative](#), see ICG web site www.crisisweb.org
 - For background, see ICG Middle East Report N°2, [Middle East Endgame I: Getting to a Comprehensive Arab-Israeli Peace Settlement](#), 16 July 2002; ICG Middle East Report N°3, [Middle East Endgame II: How a Comprehensive Israeli-Palestinian Peace Settlement Would Look](#), 16 July 2002; and ICG Middle East Report N°4, [Middle East Endgame III: Israel, Syria, Lebanon – How Comprehensive Peace Settlements Would Look](#), 16 July 2002.
- ↳ Jordan Political situation stable. No significant changes from last month.
 - For background, see ICG Middle East Briefing, [The Challenge of Political Reform: Jordanian Democratization and Regional Instability](#), 8 Oct. 2003.
- ↳ Lebanon Negotiations ongoing between Hizbollah, Israel, and German mediators over possible prisoner swap. Deal would see about 20 Lebanese prisoners and some 400 Palestinians freed in exchange for Israeli businessman and bodies of three soldiers, but Hizbollah insisting on release of Samir Kantar, Lebanese man imprisoned for killing Israeli family in 1979.
 - ["Hizbollah meets mediators on Israel prisoner swap"](#), Reuters AlertNet, 17 Nov. 2003.

- For background, see ICG Middle East Briefing, [Hizbollah: Rebel Without a Cause?](#), 30 July 2003.

➤ Syria U.S. Senate approved sanctions bill threatening tough measures if Syria found to be supporting terror groups or pursuing WMD. In Beirut, leader of Hizbollah, Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, said his fighters would retaliate if Israel attacked Lebanon or Syria; Israeli airstrike near Damascus in October was first attack in 30 years.

- ["Hizbollah vows to retaliate to any Israel attacks"](#), Reuters AlertNet, 21 Nov. 2003.
- ["Syria talks despite U.S. sanctions"](#), BBC, 13 Nov. 2003.
- ["A bold vision for the Middle East"](#), *The Economist*, 7 Nov. 2003.
- For background, see ICG Middle East Briefing, [Hizbollah: Rebel Without a Cause?](#), 30 July 2003.

GULF

➤ Iran Revealed it had been carrying out secret nuclear research for 18 years, including production of low-enriched uranium and separation of plutonium, but claimed for civilian purposes. IAEA, which reviewed Tehran's disclosures, said no evidence intention was to build bomb. U.S. unhappy with this but backed off on demand that Iran's violations of Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) be referred to Security Council; instead, reached agreement with Britain, France, and Germany that future breaches be referred. IAEA resolution 26 November reflected compromise. Iran agreed to abide by NPT and Additional Protocol allowing snap inspections, and said had suspended enrichment. Nobel Prize winner Shirin Ebadi took up case of slain Canadian journalist Zahra Kazemi.

- ["One last chance"](#), *The Economist*, 28 Nov. 2003.
- ["U.S. questions Iran nuclear report"](#), CNN, 13 Nov. 2003.
- For background, see ICG Middle East Report N°18 [Dealing with Iran's Nuclear Program](#), 27 Oct. 2003 and ICG Middle East Briefing, [Iran: Discontent and Disarray](#), 15 Oct. 2003.

➤ Iraq Major revision of U.S. political plan for Iraq, as timetable for handing over sovereignty moved up and decoupled from constitutional process. Under new plan, provisional assembly to be selected by local councils by 31 May 2004, and assembly to elect executive by 30 June 2004, at which time Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) to dissolve. Adoption of permanent constitution and holding of elections left till 2005. Iraq's most powerful cleric, Grand Ayatollah Hussein Ali al-Sistani, called for elections in June 2004, but expected to compromise. New plan emerged amid mounting pressure in Washington for exit strategy. Anti-Coalition attacks said to have decreased toward end of month, but sophistication increasing; November bloodiest month since start of war. Two helicopters, and likely third, shot down by insurgents, killing 39. Attackers also targeting U.S. allies: Italian military police HQ, in Nasiriyah, bombed 12 November, claiming 25, including 19 Italians. Seven Spanish intelligence agents and two Japanese diplomats killed 29 November, and two South Korean civilians shot dead following day. Meanwhile, international exodus from Iraq continues: Spain announced withdrawal of diplomats 4 November, and CARE Australia pulled foreign staff after grenade attack on its office 22 November. 229 Coalition soldiers, including 189 Americans, killed by hostile fire since 1 May, declared end of combat operations.

- ["Spanish agents, Japanese diplomats killed in Iraq"](#), CNN, 30 Nov. 2003.

- ["U.S. plans for Iraq: A dilemma over 'exit'"](#), *International Herald Tribune*, 29 Nov. 2003.
- ["Council announces timetable for Iraqi self-rule"](#), CNN, 25 Nov. 2003.
- For background, see ICG Middle East Briefing, [Iraq's Shiites Under Occupation](#), 9 Sept. 2003, and ICG Middle East Report N°17, [Governing Iraq](#), 25 Aug. 2003.



Middle East Report N°19, [Iraq's Constitutional Challenge](#), 13 November 2003. In an atmosphere of heightened violence and instability, Iraq urgently requires a new political formula. The U.S. Administration, increasingly alarmed at the turn of events, is considering a range of options. This will be its second chance to get it right; there may not be a third. The key to a more successful transition lies in decoupling the immediate need to transfer governing authority from the longer-term task of constitution-making, with the UN having a wider oversight role in both areas. Neither unduly rushing the constitutional process nor unduly postponing the transfer of political power is desirable. Separating immediate governance from constitutional issues will enable a faster handover of authority while allowing the Iraqi people more time to debate the permanent institutions and fundamental rules of the new Iraq. The constitution-making process – including extremely difficult issues such as federalism, the territorial divisions within the country, and the role of Islam – must be done deliberately or it will be done poorly, and dangerously.

- Saudi Arabia Increasing terrorist activity causing anxiety in Kingdom. Blast at residential complex 9 November killed 17. Two days earlier, two men blew themselves up in Mecca, which was also site of police raid 3 November killing two and resulting in weapons find and several arrests: Al Qaeda suspected.
- ["Saudi blast bares a nation on edge"](#), *The Washington Post*, 22 Nov. 2003.
 - ["A bloodied kingdom"](#), *The Economist*, 11 Nov. 2003.

➤ Yemen Government captured Mohammed Hamdi al-Ahdal, senior al Qaeda leader believed to have played major role in October 2000 attack on U.S.S. Cole.

- ["Yemen says senior Qaeda suspect may hold key data"](#), Reuters Alertnet, 26 Nov. 2003.
- For background, see ICG Middle East Report N°8, [Yemen: Coping with Terrorism and Violence in a Fragile State](#), 8 Jan. 2003.

NORTH AFRICA

➤ Algeria Sporadic violence continues in country's 11-year conflict. Security forces killed ten Islamist rebels and recovered large quantity of arms 7 November. Abassi Madani, chief of banned Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) party, stated violence would end only if government authorities freed all prisoners, accounted for those missing and lifted state of emergency. U.S. General and NATO Commander James Jones said Algeria (along with Morocco and Tunisia) potential haven for Islamist extremist groups.

- ["Algeria Islamist leader urges govt peace moves"](#), Reuters Alertnet, 12 Nov. 2003.
- ["Algerian security forces kill 10 Islamist rebels"](#), Reuters Alertnet, 8 Nov. 2003.

- For background, see ICG Middle East/North Africa Report N°15, *Algeria: Unrest and Impasse in Kabylia*, 10 June 2003.

⇒ Egypt President Hosni Mubarak forced to break off speech on live television after becoming ill. Speculation swirled regarding president's health and likely successor. Front-runners believed to be son, Gamal, and intelligence chief, Omar Suleiman; Mubarak has never appointed vice-president. Elsewhere, Amnesty International called on Egypt to take further steps against use of torture.

- "Mubarak taken ill in parliament", BBC, 19 Nov. 2003.
- "Egypt: Time to implement the UN Committee Against Torture's recommendations", Amnesty International, 20 Nov. 2003.
- "A bold vision for the Middle East", *The Economist*, 7 Nov. 2003.
- For background, see ICG Middle East Briefing, *The Challenge of Political Reform: Egypt After the Iraq War*, 30 Sept. 2003.

⇒ Morocco Report to UN committee raises grave concerns over rise in torture and ill-treatment of detainees following change in 'combating terrorism' laws after May Casablanca bombings. Three journalists convicted of insulting King. Authorities charged

100 people with links to terrorism as part of crackdown on hard-line Islamists. U.S. General and NATO Commander James Jones said Morocco (along with Algeria and Tunisia) potential haven for Islamist extremist groups.

- "Morocco charges over 100 with terrorism offences", Reuters Alertnet, 3 Nov. 2003.
- "NATO general sees growing terror risk from Africa", Reuters Alertnet, 4 Nov. 2003.
- "Morocco/Western Sahara briefing to the Committee Against Torture", Amnesty International, 11 Nov. 2003.

⇒ Western Sahara Polisario Front announced release of 300 Moroccan POWs from camp in Algeria. Baker peace plan remains under consideration by all four parties involved - Morocco, Polisario Front, Algeria and Mauritania. UN Special Rep. for Western Sahara, Alvaro de Soto, toured region meeting representatives from four parties.

- "Annan's special representative in Algeria for talks on Western Sahara", UN News Centre, 18 Nov. 2003.
- "Western Sahara: POLISARIO releases 300 Moroccan prisoners of war", UN News Centre, 7 Nov. 2003.

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