



Peace & Justice Update
November 30, 2007
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The countries for the Peace & Justice Updates have been chosen as areas of focus at the Institute.

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SOURCE ABBREVIATIONS

The Age	=	The Age (www.theage.com.au)
AfricaFocus	=	AfricaFocus (www.africafocus.org)
AFP	=	Agence France-Presse (www.afp.com)
Al-Jazeera	=	Al-Jazeera (english.aljazeera.net)
AllAfrica	=	AllAfrica Global Media (www.allafrica.com)
American Chronicle	=	American Chronicle (www.americanchronicle.com)
Amnesty International	=	Amnesty International (www.amnesty.org)
Antara News	=	Indonesian News Portal (www.antara.co.id/en)
Asian Tribune	=	Asian Tribune (www.asiantribune.com)
AP	=	Associated Press (www.ap.org)
The Australian	=	The Australian (www.theaustralian.news.com.au)
AWID	=	Association for Women's Rights in Development (www.awid.org)
B92	=	B92 Net (www.b92.net/eng/)
BBC	=	British Broadcasting Corporation (news.bbc.co.uk)
BBC Monitoring	=	BBC Monitoring International Reports (www.monitor.bbc.co.uk)
The Canadian	=	The Canadian (http://www.agoracosmopolitan.com)
Canberra Times	=	The Canberra Times (canberra.yourguide.com.au)
Cape Times	=	The Cape Times (www.capetimes.co.za)
CBC News	=	CBC News (www.cbc.ca)
Christian Monitor	=	Christian Monitor (www.christianmonitor.org)
Civil.ge	=	UNA Georgia Online Magazine (www.civil.ge)
CIA	=	CIA - The World Factbook (www.cia.gov)
Concord Times	=	The Concord Times (www.concordtimesl.com)
Crisis Group	=	International Crisis Group (www.crisisgroup.org)
Daily News	=	Daily News, Sri Lanka (www.dailynews.lk)
The East African	=	The East African (www.nationmedia.com/estafrican/current)
einnews	=	The Russia News Service (www.einnews.com)
eKantipur	=	Kantipur Online (www.kantipuronline.com)
eng24.kg	=	News Agency 24 (http://eng.24.kg)
EU	=	European Union (www.europa.eu.int)
Financial Times	=	Financial Times News (www.ft.com)
FMM	=	Free Media Movement (www.freemediasrilanka.org)
Gazeta	=	Gazeta (www.gazeta.ru/english)
Georgia Today	=	Georgia Today (www.georgiatoday.ge)
Guardian	=	Guardian Unlimited Network (www.guardian.co.uk)
Ha'aretz	=	Ha'aretz (www.haaretz.com)
The Hindu	=	The Hindu Newspaper (www.hinduonnet.com)
HRW	=	Human Rights Watch (www.hrw.org)
Herald Tribune	=	Herald Tribune (www.iht.com)
ICC	=	International Criminal Court (www.icc-cpi.int)
ICG	=	International Crisis Group (www.crisisweb.org)
ICTY	=	International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (www.un.org/icty)
IHT	=	International Herald Tribune (www.iht.com)
Independent	=	The Independent (www.independent.co.uk)
IndiaTimes	=	India Times (www.timesofindia.indiatimes.com)
IPS News Agency	=	Inter Press Service News Agency (ipsnews.net)
IRIN	=	Integrated Regional Information Network (www.irinnews.org)
IRNA	=	Islamic Republic News Agency (www2.irna.ir/en/news)
ISN	=	International Relations and Security Network (www.isn.ethz.ch/index.cfm)
IWPR	=	Institute for War & Peace Reporting (www.iwpr.net)

The Jakarta Post	=	The Jakarta Post (www.thejakartapost.com)
Kathmandu Post	=	The Kathmandu Post (www.nepalnews.com.np)
KL	=	KosovaLive (www.kosovalive.com)
Jerusalem Post	=	Jerusalem Post (www.jpost.com)
Jurist	=	The Jurist (jurist.law.pitt.edu)
LA Times	=	Los Angeles Times (www.latimes.com)
Mehr	=	The Mehr News Agency (www.mehrnews.com/en)
The Messenger	=	The Georgian Messenger (www.messenger.com.ge)
Monitor	=	The Monitor (www.monitor.co.ug)
Nepal News	=	Nepal News (www.nepalnews.com)
Nepali Times	=	Nepali Times (www.nepalitimes.com)
The New Citizen	=	The New Citizen (www.thenewcitizen-sl.com)
New Vision	=	New Vision (www.newvision.co.ug)
News24	=	News24 (www.news24.com)
Novosti	=	RIA Novosti (en.rian.ru)
NYT	=	The New York Times (www.nytimes.com)
PANA	=	Panafrican News Agency (www.panapress.com)
Peace Africa	=	Peace Africa (www.allafrica.com/peaceafrica)
PDO	=	People's Daily Online (english.peopledaily.com.cn)
PINR	=	Power and Interest News Report (www.pinr.com)
Oxfam Great Britain	=	Oxfam Great Britain (www.oxfam.org.uk)
RadioFreeEurope	=	RadioFreeEurope, Radio Liberty (www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2007)
ReliefWeb	=	Relief Web (www.reliefweb.int)
Reuters	=	Reuters (www.reuters.com)
RNZI	=	Radio New Zealand International (www.rnzi.com)
RSF	=	Reporters sans frontières (www.rsf.org)
The Rising Nepal	=	The Rising Nepal (www.gorkhapatra.org)
Russia Today	=	Russia Today (www.russiatoday.ru)
SDUT	=	San Diego Union Tribune (www.signonsandiego.com)
Scotsman	=	The Scotsman (news.scotsman.com)
SC-SL	=	The Special Court for Sierra Leone (www.sc-sl.org)
Scoop	=	The Scoop Independent News (www.scoop.co.nz)
SEAPA	=	Southeast Asian Press Alliance (www.seapabkk.org)
SLCMP	=	Sierra Leone Court Monitoring Program (www.slcmp.org)
The SMH	=	The Sydney Morning Herald (www.smh.com.au)
The Star	=	The Star.com (www.thestar.com)
TCA	=	Times of Central Asia (www.timesca-europe.com)
Torres News	=	Torres News (www.torresnews.com.au)
Transparency Int.	=	Transparency International (transparency.org)
UNESCO	=	UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (www.unesco.org)
UNFPA	=	United Nations Population Fund (www.unfpa.org)
UNHCHR	=	UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (www.unhcr.ch)
UNICEF	=	UN Children's Fund (www.unicef.org)
UNIFEM	=	UN Development Fund for Women (www.unifem.org)
UNIOSIL	=	UN Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (www.uniosil.org)
UN News Center	=	UN News Center Homepage (www.un.org)
VOA	=	Voice of America (www.voanews.com)
Web India	=	Web India (www.webindia123.com)
WP	=	The Washington Post (www.washingtonpost.com)
Xinhua	=	Xinhua (http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2007-07/08)
Yediot Ahranot	=	Yediot Ahranot (www.ynetnews.com)

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GEORGIA

Saakashvili defends phone taping: opponents outraged: Twenty-four hours after Nov. 7 protests in Tbilisi, Georgian officials released an audiotape of opposition leader Shalva Natelashvili, speaking with Russian embassy employees in what the Georgian government alleged was a Russian plot to destabilize the country. Natelashvili was summarily charged with espionage and “conspiracy to overthrow the government” but the charges were later dropped by the prosecutor’s office. The incident highlighted one of many recent cases in which phone tapping was used to bring charges against alleged criminals. The General Prosecutor’s Office typically releases the taped phone conversations to television stations so that they can air them to the public. In a statement Nov. 18, President Saakashvili defended the practice of tapping private telephone conversations, claiming, “People should know that those who are not committing any crime will face no problem in this respect, but, if someone wants to destroy our homeland, or commit a crime, they should not be upset by the fact that the state protects itself and people learn about it.” Critics argued, however, that in some cases law enforcement agencies have manipulated, edited or even fabricated conversations to incriminate suspects. ([Civil.ge](#), Nov. 6, 8, 18, 2007)

New railway opens link for Georgia to the rest of Europe: The presidents of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey announced the launch of construction for the Baku-Akhalkalaki-Kars railway Nov. 21, and praised the project as a “geo-political revolution.” According to President Mikheil Saakashvili of Georgia, “the railway link will help the Samtshke-Javakheti region in eastern Georgia overcome economic isolation and become an important transit point and economically active center.” Georgia, which has been isolated from the rest of Europe’s major railway links since railway between Georgia and Abkhazia was shut down in the early 1990s, would also become a route for Chinese cargo that has traditionally used the Trans-Siberian railway. According to Irakli Ezugbaia, chief of the Georgian state-run Railway Company, construction is slated for completion in 2010 with twenty-nine kilometers of track constructed from Akhalkalaki to the Turkish border, and 192 kilometers of existing track repaired in Georgia. In a speech Nov. 19 at the National Museum in Georgia, President Saakashvili spoke enthusiastically of the potential to create more international transport projects stating that a “shorter route to Europe that goes via Russia” already existed and that he was hopeful that it would be made available after the conflict with Abkhazia was resolved. Whether the railway had the potential to foster a future agreement between the two sides, however, was not addressed. ([Civil.ge](#), Nov. 19, 21, 2007)

INDONESIA

Demands made for the government to evaluate security personnel in Papua: Activists demanded Nov. 26 that the Indonesian government evaluate the performance of security personnel in Papua. Poengky Indarti, the director of external relations at the Indonesian Human Rights Monitor, stated that over the past year there had been a massive deployment of troops in Papua. “The excessive numbers of security personnel in Papua [do] not guarantee security...” she said. Indarti continued, “In the past year we found eight cases of human rights violations in Papua... Four of the cases involved Indonesian military and another two involved the National Police.” Human rights violations included assassinations, violence and intimidation. In addition, there have been conflicts between troops from different units and between troops and local people. Indarti claimed that these security and human rights problems were rooted in the authorities’ inaccurate perceptions of alleged security threats. Yusman Conoras, a representative of the Papua NGOs (Nongovernmental

organizations) Cooperation Forum, said problems also came from the lack of troop professionalism and their failure to understand local culture. Activists stated the security approach to Papua should not only address national security but also human security improvement. (The Jakarta Post, Nov. 27, 2007)

Deforestation deals a bad hand to Papua: According to Frederick Sagisolo, chief of the Knasaimos people of the western region of Papua, local communities have suffered from the demand for cheap timber. “The Knasaimos people... do not see nature as something to be destroyed. The forests here provide for our needs... The way we manage our land, however, has been disturbed by outsiders coming here to log trees,” said Sagisolo. He explained that as soon as the “wood company” began logging, the values of the community changed from solidarity to competition for money from the company. The Tanah Merah district has seen many oil palm projects involving the Korean company, Korindo, which has caused tensions between exploiters and land owners. The Boven Digoel district of Papua is an area where major plans on oil palm plantations have been carried out. In order to increase biofuel production, the government has planned to clear forests in order to establish up to five million hectares of new plantations in Papua by 2012. If these plans were to be completed, there would be an influx of non-Papuan migrants into Papua to satisfy the need for labor to the palm oil industry. Papua’s key local concerns related to these issues have been land rights and ethnic politics. Indonesia and other developing countries have demanded that rich countries compensate them for the cessation of deforestation to reduce carbon emissions. The World Bank was to present on this project to reward developing countries who protect their tropical forests at the U.N. Climate Conference in Bali Dec. 13 and 14. (The Canadian, Nov. 27; BBC, Nov. 26; ICG, July 19, 2007)

KOSOVO

Last round of Kosovo talks begin: The final round of talks between Serb and Kosovar negotiators began Nov. 26 in Baden, Austria, with the Serb delegation led by President Boris Tadić and Prime Minister Vojislav Koštunica, and the Kosovo Albanians represented by President Fatmir Sejdiu and outgoing Premier Agim Çeku. The talks were scheduled to last three days, after which members of the mediating Contact Group Troika were to submit a report to the U.N. secretary general. The Serb delegation had put forth proposals in the last round of talks for a high degree of autonomy for the province, but opposed the Kosovar delegation’s proposal for complete independence. Serb and Kosovar officials reiterated these positions prior to the commencement of the current round. The current phase of the internationally-mediated negotiations over the future status of Kosovo began in September and was scheduled to end Dec. 10 with a recommendation on the next step from U.N. Secretary General, Ban-ki Moon. (B92, Nov. 23, 25, 26, 2007)

United Nations to decide on continuation of talks: European Union foreign policy chief Javier Solana stated Nov. 23 that if no compromise was made on the status of Kosovo by Dec. 10, then the decision on the continuation of the process will be made by the U.N. Secretary General. The news came amid intermittent reports in recent months that the United States and certain member-nations of the European Union would recognize a unilateral declaration of independence made by Kosovar officials after Dec. 10. Serb Prime Minister Vojislav Koštunica reiterated Nov. 24 that such a unilateral move would be a violation of the U.N. Charter, and Serb Foreign Minister Vuk Jeremić stated Nov. 23 that Serbia would use all means short of force to prevent such an outcome. The Russian Federation has supported the Serb position of opposing an independent Kosovo, and had earlier indicated that it would veto any U.N. Security Council resolution affirming such

independence. The New York Times editorial staff, among other analysts, has advocated that Washington recognize an independent Kosovo, without U.N. approval if necessary. (B92, Nov. 23, 24, 2007)

NEPAL

Maoist donation collections ignite fear in local communities: The recent decision by Maoists to intensify donation collection drives has sparked anxiety among local business owners and farmers in various districts in Nepal. According to the Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (CPN-Maoist) the donations are intended to raise funds for the party by targeting first class hotels, business companies and trading firms in Kathmandu Valley, Gandaki, Lumbini, Biratnagar, Magarat and Tharuwan regions. The Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI) was outraged by the campaigning and warned that it was an attempt by the Maoists to “institutionalize extortion.” A representative from the CPN-Maoist financial department responded by stating, “The Maoists have no intention of compelling donors to participate and they’ve made plans to make income-expenditure statements public every six months.” Despite these attempts to stress the voluntary nature of these donations, however, members of the community remained unconvinced. Prakash Shrestha, President of the Hotel Association of Nepal (HAN), has stated, “The Maoists have not left the business community with any ground to believe they will fulfill the commitments they make,” adding that the “institutionalization of this donation drive means intensification of the compulsion to pay whenever the party demands it.” Many have likened these tactics to those used by Maoists during Nepal’s ten-year insurgency when threats of violence were habitually used against community residents and leaders to force financial and economic support. (eKantipur, Nov. 23, 25, 2007)

Nepal rises in Human Development Index but remains behind in other areas: Despite the uncertainty brought on by delayed Constituent Assembly elections and the persistent instability of Nepal’s Terai region, a recent global report by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) listed improvements in Nepal’s standard of living, education status and longevity. According to the Human Development Report (HDR) for 2007/08, “the life expectancy of Nepalis at birth has increased from 62.1 years to 62.6 and gross enrollment for primary, secondary and tertiary education rose from 56.1 percent to 58.1 percent.” As a result of these improvements, HDR stated that Nepal’s status in the Human Development Index (HDI) rose two places to a rank of 142 out of 177 countries in the world in 2007. Although these improvements have provided encouragement, Nepal remained well below other countries in a number of important areas. The same report listed Nepal’s HDI of 0.534 as “below the regional average of South Asia and substantially below the average of HDI for all developing countries.” Moreover, the report stated that in terms of the Human Poverty Index (HPI), Nepal ranked 84th out of 108 developing countries. Adult literacy, access to safe water sources and gender equality all remain extremely low. (eKantipur, Nov. 28, 2007)

PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

Major conference in Annapolis begins: The first major Israeli-Palestinian conference in seven years began Nov. 27 in Annapolis, Maryland, with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and United States President George Bush taking center stage. Representatives from a dozen Arab states were also in attendance, including Saudi Arabia and Syria, which have no diplomatic relations with Israel. President Bush announced during the conference that Israeli and Palestinian leaders had made a “joint understanding” to conclude a peace agreement before the end of 2008. He also announced that the two sides would take up bi-weekly meetings beginning Dec. 12 to address the issues of a settlement. The three leaders made many statements of hope and optimism about the prospects for a settlement. However, other officials and politicians in

Israel and the Palestinian territories were more pessimistic. Mark Regev, spokesman for the Israeli foreign ministry, said it would be “artificial and unrealistic to think you can solve all the issues in a few days,” while Michael Tarazi, former advisor to the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), said, “it would be a mistake to think that anything meaningful is going to come out of these talks.” Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians demonstrated in the West Bank and Gaza Strip against the conference, according to Jerusalem Post, where Hamas leader and ex Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh expressed the “conviction of the Palestinian people that the Annapolis conference is useless.” (Al-Jazeera, Nov. 27; Jerusalem Post, Nov. 27; New York Times, Nov. 27, 2007)

After initial delay, Israel approves plan to cut power to Gaza: The Israeli government decided Nov. 22 to move forward with a plan to withhold electricity to the Gaza Strip, an act deemed a war crime by human rights groups. The plan was scheduled to go into effect Dec. 2, and Shlomo Dror, a spokesman for the Israeli military, said that there would only be minor cuts causing no damage. The initial decision to cut power to Gaza was put on temporary hold by Israeli Attorney General Menachem Mazuz while the Israeli High Court requested a justification from the government. According to the Israeli paper Yediot Ahranot, “Israeli officials have said the utilities cutbacks were a way of persuading the Palestinian population to pressure Palestinian militants to stop their daily rocket barrages at southern Israel. But State officials have also said that the cutbacks were part of the final stages of Israel’s disengagement from Gaza.” Gaza depends on Israel for about half its electricity, and its main power generator was destroyed by an Israeli airstrike in 2006. (Yediot Ahranot, Nov. 22, 2007)

SIERRA LEONE

Policies enacted to increase diamond wealth: In an effort to clean up the diamond mining sector, President Koroma banned the export of mineral samples Nov. 20. He asserted that the samples were being exported with insufficient controls, facilitating the ease of illegally shipping these commodities out of the country. Mohamed Mansaray, director of the Geological Survey Division at the Ministry of Mineral Resources, did not agree with the ban, stating, “We have no facilities here so all the samples have to be exported for analysis.” Mansaray has been preparing a paper to send to the president to explain that without sampling, companies will not know what minerals Sierra Leone has. Koroma also announced plans to introduce legislation to ensure that most of the country’s diamonds are cut and polished locally before being exported. According to Koroma, “It will not only add value but it will enhance employment opportunities.” The fight over control of the diamond fields fueled the civil war which ravaged the country from 1991-2002. Koroma won run-off elections Sept. 2007 with a promise to stamp out corruption throughout the country. (Reuters, Nov. 21, Nov. 23; Standard Times Press, Nov. 25, 2007)

Violence erupts in Kono District and Freetown: Youth supporters of the ruling All People’s Congress (APC) party and the opposition Sierra Leone People’s Party (SLPP) clashed in the diamond-rich eastern province of Kono Nov. 21. The violence erupted when an SLPP youth activist returned to the town and refused to uphold a promise made before the Sept. 2007 presidential elections: to drink himself to death with a gallon of locally distilled rum if the APC won. Rival youths from the APC party stormed his residence with the rum and when he refused to drink, they beat him and forced the rum into his mouth. The APC youths also reportedly attacked an elderly man whom they believed to be in support of the SLPP, and raped a young mother. These actions infuriated youth supporters of the SLPP and led to a fierce fight in the village, which caused several people to flee. The police came to the scene and employed tear gas to disperse the crowds. Several arrests were made and it was reported that four houses were destroyed as a result of a fire.

Further violence broke out Nov. 23 in the east section of Freetown, allegedly stemming from a dispute concerning the land of the Muslim Congress Secondary School. A clash ensued between local police officers and students of the school, which led to injuries, vandalization and the burning of a police vehicle. President Koroma visited the site Nov. 26, and pledged to take swift action to restore peace to the community. In a statement recorded by Christian Science Monitor, Koroma condemned the incident as an ugly reminder of the war days of the past, and stated that there is no longer any reason for anyone to take the law into his own hands. (Agence France Presse Nov. 23; Awareness Times Nov. 23; Christian Monitor, Nov. 27; UNIOSIL, Nov. 23, 2007)

UGANDA

LRA may drop Kony: James Obita, a member of the rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) peace negotiations team said that Joseph Kony, the LRA leader, would be abandoned if he should fail to sign a comprehensive peace deal by Feb. 2008. He made these claims in an address to hundreds of refugees in the northern Ugandan town of Ngai. "We shall tell him to go and fight elsewhere, not in northern Uganda, as people are tired of the war," he said. His comments followed the reported defection of thirty rebel soldiers and their commanders from the LRA base camp in Garamba Park in northeastern Democratic Republic of Congo the week of Nov. 11. Henry Okello Oryem, the Uganda State Minister, said the rebels surrendered to U.N. peacekeepers in Congo and would be turned over to the Ugandan government. Uganda Interior Minister Ruhakana Rugunda said the government welcomed the LRA defections but also added that the peace talks would remain on course. Kony allegedly apologized to the internally displaced persons in the Lango region of northern Uganda via the peace team for the atrocities, suffering and pain inflicted on them by his fighters. "Kony has sent me to ask for forgiveness for the fear and abuse that he put on you people. He has regretted it. He will also come to apologize to you people," said Obita. Martin Ojul, the leader of the peace team, claimed that Kony told him, "I have accepted my mistakes. I want to be punished for war crimes and crimes against humanity I have committed to you people through traditional means." Lawyer and LRA peace team member Chrispus Ayena Odongo said that Kony refused to leave the jungle because of International Criminal Court (ICC) indictments against him and his lieutenants and urged the refugees to appeal to the ICC to drop the indictments. (IWPR, Nov. 19, 2007)

Genuineness of LRA peace tour is questioned by ex-rebel official: A delegation of the rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) has been touring northern Uganda and holding consultations with victims of the 21-year insurgency. However, the credibility of the reconciliation tour has been challenged by Captain Ray Apire, a former spiritual advisor to Joseph Kony, the LRA leader. He said, "Kony is not reconciling with anybody." Apire escaped from the LRA June 2004 because he claimed that the rebel army had lost its purpose, and has since lived in Gulu. He questioned the LRA delegation's links to Kony by pointing out the different responses with regards to the whereabouts of Vincent Otti, the LRA deputy commander rumored to have been killed after a fallout with Kony. "When asked about Otti, they kept saying he was sick, denying that Otti was arrested," Apire said of the LRA team. "Kony later contradicted them by saying Otti was under house arrest. This means the team is not coordinating with Kony in the bush because they don't know some of the facts." Some war victims shared Apire's suspicions about the delegation. They claimed that they were unable to speak out because the LRA delegation determined what questions would be asked and limited the number of people who could speak at each gathering. Many victims believed that Martin Ojul, the rebel team leader, was not apologizing for the LRA but was trying to create an impression that the Acholi community in Northern Uganda had forgiven Kony and was opposed to the International

Criminal Court (ICC) indictments for the LRA's top four commanders. Another cause for suspicion of the LRA team's intentions was that four out of the six members of the delegation visited their own villages as part of the tour, rather than places where rebels attacked civilians. At the end of the tour, the LRA delegation is expected to return to the Sudan-Congo border and report the results to Kony. (IWPR, Nov. 23, 2007)