



Peace & Justice Update
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The countries for the Peace and Justice updates have been chosen as areas of focus at the Institute. The International Human Rights section is intended to focus on aspects of international law. For information on specific cases of human rights abuses, please visit www.hrw.org or www.amnesty.org

Source information: Information presented in this update is condensed from wire and newspaper reports from Lexis/Nexis and from electronic sites on the World Wide Web. Complete biographical information is unavailable from these services, but every attempt has been made to properly cite information and give credit to source materials. This update is intended for use by IPJ staff and associates for informational purposes only. As the material in this update is condensed, and does not directly quote the primary source, information from the update should not be quoted.

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UPDATE SOURCE ABBREVIATIONS

AP	=	Associated Press (www.ap.org)
AFP	=	Agence France Presse (www.afp.com)
BBC	=	British Broadcasting Corporation (http://news.bbc.co.uk)
CNN	=	Cable News Network (www.cnn.com)
DPA	=	Deutsche Presse-Agentur (www.dpa.com)
EFE	=	Agencia EFE (Spanish New Agency)
HRW News	=	Human Rights Watch News (www.hrw.org)
IRIN	=	Integrated Regional Information Network (www.irinnews.org) (UN Dept. of Humanitarian Affairs Information Network: www.unog.ch)
JED	=	Journaliste En Danger
NCN	=	New Congo Net (www.marekinc.com/NCN.html)
PANA	=	Pan African News Agency (www.panapress.com)
Xinhua	=	Xinhua News Agency (www.xinhuanet.com/english/index.htm)

AFGHANISTAN

Heavy offensive fighting in the northeast: U.S. Army ground troops began their first offensive attacks against Taliban and Al-Qa'ida fighters March 2 and engaged in heavy fighting in northeast Afghanistan where opposition strongholds have remained in the mountainous region. Afghan fighters have been leading the attacks against the Taliban and Al-Qa'ida forces and recently another 2000 allied troops from Canada, France, Germany, and the U.S. comprise the majority and substantial military effort in the U.S. "war on terrorism." Over 350 bombs and missiles have been dropped since the March 2 offensive and an estimated 150 Al-Qa'ida have been killed, while the U.S. has reported eight casualties. Military efforts in Afghanistan aimed at capturing Al-Qa'ida and Taliban fighters began following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in the U.S. that resulted in more than 3000 deaths and have been linked to Osama bin Laden's Al-Qa'ida terrorist network. (New York Times, March 5, 2002)

CHECHNYA

Interior Ministry conducts security operation in Grozny: Members of the Chechen Interior Ministry began a large-scale operation March 1 in the capital of Grozny to search for persons involved with armed rebel groups, which resulted in 60 arrests. The search focused on the markets around Grozny, which have become a main area for crime in the city. In addition to the search of the markets, temporary security posts were placed at most crossroads for police to thoroughly check the documents of all drivers and passengers. Police also searched apartments where Chechen rebels were reported to be hiding. Russian security forces returned to Chechnya in September 1999 after the apartment bombings in Moscow. The war between Russia and Chechnya from 1994-1996 left Chechnya with de facto independence. (BBC, March 4; Interfax News Agency, March 2; ITAR-TASS, March 1, 2002)

U.S. to pledge \$64 million to train Georgian security forces: A senior defense official announced March 1 that the U.S. has proposed to spend \$64 million for U.S. special forces to train approximately 1,200 Georgian soldiers and to provide them with light weapons, vehicles, and communication equipment in order to fight the "next front in the war on terrorism." The U.S. and Russia have stated that Chechen rebels as well as members of terrorist organizations had taken refuge in the Pankisi Gorge region between Chechnya and Georgia. The Boston Globe stated March 2 that Georgian officials were "reluctant to stir up armed militants in an area thick with civilians and just 150 miles from the capital." The government of Georgia said that it has plans to reinforce its police forces in the gorge before sending in combat troops. Five U.S. military advisors arrived February 27 in the Georgian capital of Tbilisi to discuss the operation. (AP, March 1; The Boston Globe, March 2, 2002)

Human rights group accuses Russia of abuses: Human Rights Watch said February 28 that Russian forces in Chechnya "arbitrarily detain, torture, and kill civilians in a climate of lawlessness." The group issued a 51-page report that discussed in detail a series of Russian military operations that left hundreds of people detained and tortured. The report stated that dozens of military sweeps have been conducted throughout Chechnya since July 2001 during which Russian forces reportedly sealed off villages and ran identity checks and searches. The Russian human rights group, Memorial, also documented that many Chechen civilians have

“disappeared” since the Russian forces returned to Chechnya in September 1999. In defense of past criticism on Russian actions in Chechnya, Russian President Putin’s Special Representative on Human Rights in Chechnya, Vladimir Kalamonov, said January 31 that he was “pleased by the pace of investigations” and that “no crime would be left unpunished.” Human Rights Watch urged the UN High Commission on Human Rights to adopt a resolution condemning violations in Chechnya and also called on the U.S. government to “raise the matter” with the Russian government. (AFP, Human Rights Watch, February 28, 2002)

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC)

UN calls for immediate cease-fire: The UN Security Council called for an immediate halt to fighting March 4 between government troops and Rwandan-backed rebels in eastern Congo. The Council encouraged the withdrawal of government troops from the region and recommended the introduction of additional UN peacekeepers to serve as monitors. While a 1999 UN monitored cease-fire has held throughout most of the country, fighting has regularly flared up in the east, as it did again February 21, just days before the opening of the Inter-Congolese dialogue in Sun City, South Africa. The current war in DRC began in August 1998 when Laurent Desiré Kabila’s main sponsors, Rwanda and Uganda, turned against him and began supporting an anti-government rebellion. Kabila countered the rebellion with the assistance of troops supplied by Angola, Zimbabwe, and Namibia. (AP, February 5; Reuters, February 4, 2002)

Inter-Congolese dialogue begins: After a two-year delay, some 300 representatives from the government in Kinshasa, three armed rebel groups, and various civil society organizations arrived February 25 in Sun City, South Africa for the formal start of the Inter-Congolese dialogue. The talks, scheduled for 45 days, were briefly suspended on the second day and have suffered various postponements through the first week due to an ongoing debate over which political parties should be allowed to participate. Jean-Pierre Bemba, leader of the Congolese Liberation Movement (MLC) who traveled to the talks despite his February 19 assurance that the MLC would not attend, said he is unhappy that the representatives from opposition political parties were chosen without the consultation of the MLC, as required by a 1999 cease-fire agreement. The Inter-Congolese dialogue, mandated by the 1999 Lusaka peace accord, was designed to bring together government, rebel, and civil society representatives to establish peace and political unity in the DRC. An earlier round of talks in Ethiopia in October 2001 was abandoned when the government walked out, claiming there was insufficient funding and representation of parties. None of the neighboring foreign countries with troops in Congo has been invited to the peace talks. (AP, February 27; New York Times, February 26, 27; Reuters, February 27, 28, 2002)

UN launches radio broadcasting: The UN mission in the DRC (MONUC) began radio broadcasting March 4 in an effort to fill an “information void” resulting from poor infrastructure, widespread illiteracy, and the general absence of a national media. Head of public information for MONUC, David Smith, said the UN will strive only to provide funding and the technology for the broadcast, known as Radio Okapi, without providing broadcast content. Smith said the radio broadcast would be “a voice for Congo by Congolese” and could even serve as a platform for criticizing the UN’s role in the country. Named after the okapi, an animal related to the giraffe and unique to the area, Radio Okapi has been a partnership between the UN and the

Hirondelle Foundation, a Swiss charitable organization that has helped to establish radio broadcasting in Kosovo, East Timor, and the Central African Republic. The radio program was designed to outlast the UN presence in the DRC, a country in which information distribution has been strictly controlled and where expensive local newspapers have only a few thousand readers in a population of approximately 50 million people. (Reuters, February 24, 2002)

GUATEMALA

Guatemala's peace process under scrutiny: Members of the international community gathered in Washington D.C. February 12 for a meeting hosted by the Inter-American Development Bank and pledged continued financial support in Guatemala while they raised questions and expressed concerns over the lack of progress in the country's peace process. The goal of the meeting was to draft realistic measures the country could pursue to accelerate continued peace efforts. Guatemalan President Alfonso Portillo reiterated the government's continuing support of the 1996 peace agreement. The UN's target dates for achieving peace measures in the agreement were pushed back from the original 2000 date to 2004. A UN representative said "the population barely feels the effects of peace, which compromises the sustainability and the strength of the peace process." The international community pledged \$1.3 billion dollars toward Guatemala's reconstruction efforts following the end of the civil war. (Financial Times, February 13, 14, 2002)

MACEDONIA

Former rebels join political committee: Ethnic Albanian ex-rebels joined members of Macedonia's main political parties February 27 in the formation of a "coordinative body" designed to represent their community's interests and push for full implementation of the August 2001 Ohrid peace accord that ended the eight-month civil war. A former leader of the National Liberation Army (NLA) rebel group, Ali Ahmeti, who joined the coordinative body in a formal ceremony, said in an interview that "the priority of [the group] is to realize the Ohrid agreement and other obligations that will arise from it." Ahmeti's attendance at the ceremony marked his first public appearance outside his old rebel headquarters in the mountain village of Sipkovica. Macedonian officials opposed the creation of the new body and accused ethnic Albanian leaders of attempting to form parallel government institutions that could endanger the peace process. The eight-month conflict began in January 2001 in an effort by the NLA to obtain greater political rights for ethnic Albanian minorities. (Reuters, February 27, 2002)

Police kill seven suspected terrorists: Police killed seven men March 2 who had opened fire at a police patrol near the capital city of Skopje. Although authorities could not positively identify those killed, Interior Minister Ljube Boskovski announced at a press conference that they were suspected members of an Islamic terrorist group thought to be planning attacks in Skopje on Macedonian officials and on the embassies of Germany, Great Britain, and the U.S. A statement released by the police said that security forces at the scene of the clash found uniforms with shoulder patches bearing NLA insignia, implying a link between the suspected terrorists and the rebel group that disbanded last year. Western officials said they were skeptical of the official reports from the Interior Ministry and the police, largely because Macedonian officials had not informed them of any existing threat to their embassies and they had not seen evidence

suggesting a link between the NLA and fundamentalist Islamic terrorist groups. The NLA and other rebel groups abandoned their eight-month civil war in August 2001 and surrendered thousands of weapons to NATO troops in exchange for political reforms granting greater rights to ethnic Albanians. ([Reuters](#), February 2, 3, 2002)

NEPAL

Government defends state of emergency extension: The government announced February 28 that despite recent attacks, the extension of the state of emergency issued February 21 would successfully “crush” the six-year rebellion. Nepalese army and police forces have implemented heightened security since November 2001, when the government labeled the Maoist rebels terrorists and issued the first state of emergency. Defense Secretary Padam Kumar Acharya said “more than 15,000 Maoist rebels had surrendered to security personnel or local authorities since the state of emergency was [first] imposed.” The government launched offensive and defensive operations against the Maoist rebels after they killed approximately 150 police officers, soldiers, and government officials February 16. The police operation killed approximately 76 Maoist rebels over the weekend of February 22. More than 2,600 people have been killed since the Maoist rebels began fighting in February 1996 to replace the constitutional monarchy with a “People’s Republic.” ([AFP](#), February 28, 2002)

Ruling and opposition parties propose constitutional amendment: The President of the ruling Nepali Congress party, Girija Prasad Koirala, and the General Secretary of the main opposition party, the Communist Party of Nepal (CPN-UML), Madhav Kumar Nepal, signed a nine-point agreement March 3 on an amendment of the Constitution to help combat corruption within the government. The amendment would include limiting the size of the Parliamentary Cabinet to no larger than 10 percent of the total number of the parliamentary seats and would give the prime minister power to call for general elections at any time. The Parliamentary Cabinet decided March 4 to form a judicial commission to probe the property holdings of all the post-1990 high-ranking government officials including political appointees, prime ministers, municipal mayors, and their families. The Minister for Information and Communication, Jay Prakash Gupta, announced that the commission would submit a report within six months. [The Kathmandu Post](#) noted that since 1990, 11 governments have ruled Nepal and the Parliamentary Cabinet has been reorganized 30 times. ([BBC](#), March 1, 4; [The Kathmandu Post](#), March 5, 2002)

Rebels and police continue fighting: Three police officers and two Maoist rebels were killed March 1 in the Kanchanpur district when a group of approximately 100 rebels attacked a patrolling police team that was interrogating four unidentified persons. Joint teams of the police and the Royal Nepal Army immediately began search operations in the area of the attack. The Defense Ministry announced that the army killed 10 armed Maoist rebels March 3 in search and patrol missions in the Gorkha, Kalikot, and Lamjung districts and that they arrested six rebels in the Taplejung and Dhanusha districts after recovering 14 guns hidden in those areas. Police forces have increased security measures against the Maoist rebels since the state of emergency was extended February 28. ([BBC](#), March 4, 2002)

Student group shuts down schools: The student wing of the Maoist rebel group, All Nepal National Free Student Union Revolutionary, called for a two-day shutdown March 4 of most

schools and colleges across the country. More than 2,000 institutions closed for the day, affecting approximately 350,000 students. The Union demanded release of Maoist rebels arrested during police operations and lower fees in private schools. The group also demanded that the central government run all of the schools because there has been a growing gap between students from government and private schools that can only be “bridged by bringing all schools under government control.” Strikes called by the Maoist Students’ Union and other student organizations had affected more than 25 days of school in the past year. The Free Student Union Revolutionary group had been banned by the government after the state of emergency was introduced in November 2001. (BBC, March 4; Xinhua, March 5, 2002)

SRI LANKA

Monitors arrive to discuss recent ceasefire: The Norwegian retired Major General Trond Furuhojve and two other Scandinavian monitors arrived in the capital city of Colombo March 2 to oversee the recent ceasefire between the government and the opposition Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). Furuhojve, the former Special Advisor to the Permanent Mission of Norway to the UN, said that he would eventually request a team of 15 monitors from Scandinavian countries although he was not sure when they would arrive. The team would eventually consist of Sri Lankans nominated by the government and the LTTE. The government also agreed March 4 to appoint a parliamentary committee to assess the implementation of the recent ceasefire. Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe suggested that the committee be comprised of all political parties represented in Parliament. The government and the LTTE signed the ceasefire February 23, paving the way for permanent peace talks between the opposing parties. Civil war broke out in 1983 between the majority Sinhalese government and the LTTE and has resulted in approximately 64,000 deaths. (CNN, March 2; Xinhua, March 4, 2002)

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS

US ambassador criticizes tribunals’ work: In testimony February 26 before the U.S. House of Representatives’ International Relations Committee, the U.S. ambassador-at-large for war crimes issues, Pierre-Richard Prosper, said the Bush administration wants the International Criminal Tribunals for Rwanda (ICTR) and the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) to complete their work by 2007 or 2008. Although he praised the international tribunals for helping to achieve justice for the victims of war crimes and for ending impunity for those who would orchestrate and commit genocide, Prosper said the integrity of the judicial process has been compromised by allegations of mismanagement, inefficiency, and a lack of professionalism. A spokesperson for the UN, Marie Okabe, denied charges of mismanagement and corruption and said that the presidents of both of the tribunals had been in regular dialogue with the UN to identify ways to complete their remaining prosecutions before 2007. International jurists and parliamentarians responded critically to Prosper’s remarks. Justice Richard Goldstone of South Africa's Constitutional Court, who was the first chief prosecutor for the tribunals, said March 1 that talk of a concluding timetable was premature, adding that only a Security Council resolution could bring an end to the tribunals' work. In Strasbourg, France, the 43-nation Council of Europe condemned what it called unacceptable American pressure and attempts to interfere with international justice. The ICTY was created by the UN Security Council in 1993 to punish Serbs, Croats and Muslims

guilty of committing atrocities in the former Yugoslavia, and was the first experiment in enforcing international human rights law since the Nuremberg and Tokyo tribunals in the aftermath of World War II. The Security Council established the ICTR a year later to punish the perpetrators of Rwanda's state-sponsored genocide in which 500,000 people, most of them minority Tutsis, were killed. (Reuters, New York Times, March 1, 2002)

U.S. issues annual human rights report: The U.S. Department of State issued March 4 its annual, Congressionally-mandated human rights report evaluating human rights conditions worldwide. Although the report criticized the rights conditions in a number of countries allied with the US, including Afghanistan and Uzbekistan, present partners in the "war on terrorism", the report's harshest criticism was reserved for Iran, Iraq, and North Korea, those countries described by President Bush in his State of the Union Address as an "axis of evil" for their alleged support of terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The report identified Afghanistan and Peru as among the chief success stories of 2001. A change from the previous year's report was the absence of language criticizing Egypt's regular use of military tribunals for criminal prosecutions. The Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, which carries out a textual analysis of the annual report, linked the deletions to changes in the Bush administration's domestic agenda after the attacks of September 11, 2001. U.S. officials have indicated since November 2001 their intention to use military tribunals to try some of the hundreds of suspected Al Qa'ida militants detained in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. (AP, March 4; New York Times, March 4, 5, 2002)

Note: The text of the State Department's 2001 Human Rights Report may be found at <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2001>

Asian nations confer to combat trafficking in persons: A regional conference to improve cross-border cooperation in the effort to combat trafficking in human persons opened February 28 in Bali, Indonesia. Dozens of ministers and several hundred high-level delegates from 53 Asia-Pacific and Middle East countries gathered for the closed door, two-day conference co-sponsored by Indonesia and Australia. While at the conference, delegates reached agreement on a non-binding resolution in which countries pledged to improve intelligence sharing, to build stronger ties between their respective law enforcement, and to improve cooperation on border and visa issues. Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer said that the conference was not designed to produce a treaty amongst the nations but rather to promote discussion, cooperation, and coordination on the issue. A statement released at the close of the conference by the co-chairs, Foreign Minister Downer and his Indonesian counter-part, Hassan Wirajuda, stated that the ministers of the various countries in attendance generally acknowledged "the human rights dimension" of trafficking in persons. (Kyodo, Reuters, February 28, 2002)