



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 SUMMARY

CHECHNYA

Referendum is delayed; Russian soldiers are killed

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC)

Violence threatens peace; Rebels support UN investigation

ERITREA AND ETHIOPIA

Border demarcation to start in May

ETHIOPIA

Financial support resumes for Ethiopia

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS

U.S. is suspected of torture; Afghan females are subject to educational limitations;
Ethiopian government cracks down on universities

MACEDONIA

Defense commission argues

NEPAL

Highest-ranking security official is assassinated; Government prepares special task force;
King Gyanendra's interim administration is questioned

PHILIPPINES

Peace talks are threatened by continued violence; Violence continues between
government and rebels

UPDATE SOURCE ABBREVIATIONS

AP	=	Associated Press (www.ap.org)
AFP	=	Agence France Presse (www.afp.com)
AllAfrica	=	AllAfrica Global Media (www.allAfrica.com)
BBC	=	British Broadcasting Corporation (http://news.bbc.co.uk)
CNN	=	Cable News Network (www.cnn.com)
DPA	=	Deutsche Presse-Agentur (www.dpa.com)
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)
NCN	=	New Congo Net (www.marekinc.com/NCN.html)
PANA	=	Pan African News Agency (www.panapress.com)
UPI	=	United Press International (www.upi.com)
VOA	=	Voice of America (www.voanews.com)
Xinhua	=	Xinhua News Agency (www.xinhuanet.com/english/index.htm)

CHECHNYA

Referendum is delayed: President Vladimir Putin advised organizers of a constitutional referendum in Chechnya January 24 that they needed to do more to educate voters. At a meeting with Central Election Commission Chief Alexander Veshnyakov, Putin said every resident of Chechnya should be educated about the contents of the proposed constitution before participating in a vote on the referendum. Putin stated that the people would have the chance to take power in their own hands and that the constitution would create legitimate bodies. Lord Judd, the envoy who reports on Chechnya to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, had been studying the Chechen referendum and said that the referendum was merely a formality that did not offer a political solution to the conflict. Although Chechen rebels have branded the referendum a sham, Russia insisted it was a possible solution to the conflict. The referendum was scheduled March 23 as a way for Moscow to find an end to its involvement in Chechnya. Since 1999, Moscow has engaged in the second war in Chechnya in response to a wave of terrorist bombings in Russia, allegedly carried out by Chechen rebels. (ITAR-TASS; Moscow Times, January 27, 2003)

Russian soldiers are killed: Seven Russian soldiers were killed January 27 by rebel gunfire and landmines while attacking suspected insurgent positions in four regions of the republic. Russian forces used heavy artillery while Chechen rebels utilized guerilla-like tactics, including hit-and-run attacks, remote-controlled mines, and booby traps. Rebels have had often attacked Russian soldiers despite being vastly outnumbered by them. Chechens presented reasons for the killings, claiming they were “accidental.” While the death toll has continued to rise, the Chechens and the Russians have not stopped their long disputed war over Chechen independence. (BBC, January 16; Times of India, January 28, 2003)

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC)

Violence threatens Peace: Violence in the northeast Ituri and Kivu provinces sponsored by Uganda and Rwanda threatened the peace process in the DRC. The Commissioner-General in charge of peace in the Great Lakes region, Vital Kamerhe, insisted that pressure be placed on Rwanda and Uganda by the international community so that both countries would respect the peace process and the transitional government. Uganda fostered a new rebellion under the name Union Patriotic Congolese (UPC) led by three Ugandan generals in Ituri. In the eastern province of Kivu, Rwanda created a militia composed of Hutus released from Rwandan prisons who wanted to continue the war and exploit the DRC’s gold and coltan mines. Jean-Pierre Bemba, the leader of the Liberation Movement of Congo (MLC), supported by Uganda, was reported to be sending troops into the Central African Republic. This action was unprecedented because of Bemba’s proposed participation in the transitional government as one of the four vice-presidents, as agreed to in the December 2002 Pretoria agreement. The goal of the Pretoria accord was to integrate military officers from warring factions and to continue the Inter-Congolese dialogue. It was hoped these efforts would facilitate a draft constitution and the framework for a transitional government. The renewed violence posed a threat towards the ongoing effort to end the conflict that began in August 1998

when President Laurent Désiré Kabila's main sponsors, Rwanda and Uganda, turned against him and began supporting anti-government rebellion. President Kabila countered the rebellion with the assistance of troops supported by Angola, Zimbabwe, and Namibia. Kabila was assassinated in January 2001 and his son, Joseph Kabila assumed the Presidency. Joseph Kabila has made strides towards a peaceful resolution of a conflict that has killed more than 3 million people in the four-year war. (AllAfrica, January 21, 2003)

Rebels support UN investigation: The rebel movements MLC, backed by Uganda, and Congolese Rally for Democracy-National (RCD-N) were accused January 15 of cannibalism and other human rights violations in reports published by the UN Organization Mission in the DRC (MONUC). The government requested that the UN Security Council establish an international tribunal to try suspected human rights violators. The rebel groups said they agreed, however, they requested that the period of investigation be extended to include crimes committed since 1996. The leader of MLC, Jean-Pierre Bemba, stated that the rebels wanted the massacre of 200,000 Rwandan Hutus in the city of Kisangani in 1996, in Mbandaka in 1996 and 1997, in Zongo 1999, and in the towns of Ankoro and Kamina in 2002, to be investigated by the UN Security Council as violations of human rights. (IRIN, January 21, 2003)

ERITREA AND ETHIOPIA

Border demarcation to start in May: The United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) decided that the physical demarcation between the two countries would start in May. The demarcation of the disputed border was to cost approximately \$7.6 million, but so far only \$3 million had been raised. The UNMEE Mine Action Coordination Center (MACC) was continuing to coordinate road and de-mining clearance activities in preparation for the demarcation. The Program Manager of MACC, Phil Lewis, was scheduled to visit Addis Ababa February 3-7 to discuss procedural issues concerning demarcation with Ethiopian authorities. Although the dispute over the exact border location had been resolved since the signing of the peace treaty December 12, 2000, the actual demarcation was not scheduled to start until May. The UNMEE was established December 2000 as part of the Algiers peace agreement. The Algiers Agreement called on both Eritrea and Ethiopia to terminate military hostilities and refrain from the threat or use of force against each other. (BBC, Xinhua, January 25, 2003)

ETHIOPIA

Financial support resumes for Ethiopia: The UK Department for International Development (DFID) pledged its first round of support to Ethiopia January 27. The UK International Development Secretary of State, Clare Short, signed a \$98 million pledge of financial support for the Ethiopian government's spending budget. DFID would also make available a total of \$52.5 million for humanitarian assistance, \$49 million for technical assistance, and \$16 million to help the government implement its programs. The pledge included a ten-year partnership between the UK and Ethiopia. DFID expected spending to be \$73.9 million for the 2002/2003 year. DFID was hoping to decrease poverty and increase development through both the monetary assistance given and cooperation from the Ethiopian government. Short stated in the Addis Tribune that

the UK provided the aid because Ethiopia was suffering from desperately high levels of poverty and would not be safe from repeated famine without sustainable economic development. This assistance would help attempts to resolve remaining issues between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Ethiopia and Eritrea fought a two-year war that began in 1998 and ended when they signed a peace accord in Algiers in December 2000. (Addis Tribune, January 24, 2003)

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS

U.S. is suspected of torture: The Washington Post reported the possibility that Al-Qaeda detainees either in U.S. custody, or in U.S. allied countries such as Pakistan, Jordan, Morocco and Uzbekistan, had been subjected to torture and other mistreatment. This possibility was strengthened by the fact that thousands of people arrested and detained with U.S. assistance were being held in countries known for inhumane treatment of prisoners. If the allegations were found to be true and the U.S. shown to have been aware of such mistreatment, the U.S. would have violated international law as well as The Convention against Torture. Human Rights Watch asked President Bush to investigate The Washington Post's allegations. Failure to take effective steps to end the torture of Al-Qaeda suspects would make the U.S. criminally liable under international law. (Human Rights Watch, December 27, 2003)

Afghan females subject to educational limitations: The western province of Herat announced new rules regarding female education. New statutes prohibit men from teaching female students in private schools, and require gender segregation in all schools. The head of Herat's educational department accounted for these laws by saying the old method was contrary to Islamic law. With additional support by Herat's governor, women and girls faced, and would continue to confront, severe limitations to receiving a proper education. Since men have taught most private courses, females who previously attended private schools were recently expelled from these courses. Human Rights Watch asked the UN Mission in Afghanistan to pressure Herat to overturn its educational restriction on females. Since their overthrow in 2002, the Taliban denied ever losing control of the Herat region. This claim, along with Herat's historical reputation as having one of the leading schools of sacred Islamic calligraphy, has provided a possible explanation for the current treatment of females in Herat's education system. (afghan-network.net, November 12, 2002; Human Rights Watch, January 16, 2003)

Ethiopian government cracks down on universities: The government has committed mass extrajudicial killing and arbitrary arrests aimed at educators, students, and intellectuals. Although government officials admitted to harsh treatment, they have not prosecuted those responsible for such acts. Student opponents of government restrictions at Addis Ababa University went on strike April 2001 to demand academic freedoms, one of which was the right to publish a student newspaper. During that strike, more than 40 were killed and thousands arrested. The government instituted a system known as "gimgema," which entails keeping academics in line with government ideology. Since 1998, Ethiopia and adjacent country Eritrea have had violent political encounters over border regulations. Unstable political relations with Eritrea have added to internal Ethiopian turmoil, and since professors and students are among the most politically active

and educated in Ethiopian society, they pose a threat to government authority and control. Therefore, the government has taken restrictive measures to suppress activists in the education sector. Many professors, students, and intellectuals fear for their academic and intellectual futures. (Human Rights Watch, January 24, 2003)

MACEDONIA

Defense commission argues: Tensions were apparent during a session of the Assembly's defense commission assembly when an amendment shortening the duration of army enlistment was proposed. The concern voiced by Liberal Party Deputy Slobodan Danevski was that the security situation in Macedonia might not be stable enough for such a cutback, referring to the continued presence of NLA forces. Gezim Ostreni, Democratic Union for Integration (BDI) deputy supported the amendment. In response to Danevski's remark, Talat Xhaferi, BDI deputy and former UCK commander, reminded his fellow commission members that they were all deputies elected by the people, not generals of rebel factions any longer. Macedonia has struggled with internal conflict between government forces and ethnic Albanian rebels who took up arms against the Macedonian government to fight for the rights of the ethnic Albanian minority in February 2001. The conflict ended in August 2001 with the Ohrid Accord ending a seven-month civil war in Macedonia. (BBC, Financial Times, January 17, 2003)

NEPAL

Highest-ranking security official is assassinated: Armed Police Force Chief Krishna Mohan Shrestha, his wife Nudu, and bodyguard Surya Regmi were gunned down January 26 by assailants while walking near their home in Lalitpur on the outskirts of Kathmandu. Officials believed the attack was carried out by Maoist rebels. One assailant, Krishna Hari Sainju, was wounded during the attack and remained at the crime scene while the others fled. Based on information provided by Sainju, three people were arrested and hundreds were still to be questioned. Shrestha was the first inspector general of the 15,000 Armed Police Force, a group formed approximately two years ago to fight the rebel insurgency. Further, Shrestha's assassination marked the highest-ranking security official to be killed since the commencement of the Maoist insurgency in 1996. More than 7,800 people have died in the 7-year struggle by Maoists to overthrow Nepal's constitutional monarchy and establish a communist republic. (AFP, January 27, 2003)

Government prepares special task force: The government organized a "united special task force" consisting of approximately 20,000 security personnel representing both army and police forces. Using joint forces would make monitoring Maoist activity more effective and maximize coordination between the two security groups. The task force was created to provide increased security in Nepali districts with sizable Maoist activity. All security personnel were to be equipped with newly acquired weapons recently purchased from the U.S. and Belgium, and were to undergo training at Amlekhgunj military training center. An unnamed high-level security official told The Kathmandu Post that it would be the largest operation ever due to the joint efforts of army and police personnel. Deployment was anticipated for February 2003. Since February 1996, Maoist rebels have tried to overthrow the constitutional monarchy and establish a "people's

republic.” The joint task force was the government’s most recent attempt to deal with the insurgency. (Kantipur Online, January 15; The Kathmandu Post, January 14, 2003)

King Gyanendra’s interim administration is questioned: After Sunday’s assassination January 26 of Police Chief Shrestha, home minister Ram Bahadur Thapa was pressured to resign. This outward request came as a result of his failure to prevent the assassination. The government’s difficulty in upholding law and order added to negative feelings towards the government and were specially directed at King Gyanendra’s dismissal of the elected prime minister and appointment of Lokendra Bahadur Chand October 4, 2002. Chand promised to restore democracy and suppress the Maoist rebellion. Shrestha’s death was evidence that the government has been unsuccessful in dealing with the Maoists. Many political parties are opposed to King Gyanendra’s government for fear of the country’s democratic future. (AFP, January 27; VOA, January 21, 2009)

PHILIPPINES

Peace talks are threatened by continued violence: The Philippine government warned the communist rebels, the National People’s Army (NPA), to cease violent attacks and resume peace talks. The government stated that if the NPA was sincere in its desire for peace, it would stop attacks on civilian targets such as telecommunications sites and public transport facilities. Philippine President Gloria Arroyo suspended peace negotiations June 2001 after the NPA assassinated two Philippine legislators. After the talks were suspended the NPA stepped up attacks on isolated military, police, telecommunications, and power facilities. According to NPA spokesman Gregorio Rosal, the rebels remain hopeful that President Arroyo would resume negotiations before the end of her term. The 11,000-member NPA has been waging a 33-year Maoist guerrilla campaign for communism against the Philippine government. (Agence France-Press, Xinhua News, January 10, 2003)

Violence continues between government and rebels: Rebels from Abu Sayyaf clashed with Philippine army scout rangers and troops from the U.S trained light reaction company in Sulu January 14. Abu Sayyaf terrorists have been named international terrorists by the U.S. and are held responsible for the kidnapping and murder of several Filipinos, Americans, and other foreign tourists since April 2000. Commander of the Philippine army, Colonel Alexander Aleo, stated that Abu Sayyaf leader Isnilon Hapilon might have been wounded in the clash. Government troops pursued rebels into the jungle. Aleo was confident that the rebels would not escape. Colonel Douglas Lengenfelder, commander of U.S. troops in Zamboanga City, stated that Abu Sayyaf guerrillas were still a threat to American troops in Mindanao. Under a counter-terrorism operation, four Philippine army battalions, and other troops will be trained by the U.S. Abu Sayyaf was linked with al-Queda and named as the smallest but most violent Muslim rebel group in the southern Philippines and has been involved in conflict with the government over the creation of an independent Muslim state since 1978. (Deutsche Presse-Agentur, January 16; Financial Times, January 15; The Straits Times, January 9; Xinhua News, January 11, 2003)