



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)
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

Ingushetia sets up polling stations: Polling stations have been scheduled to be set up on the border between Chechnya and Ingushetia by March 23 to provide 17,000 refugees, living in five tent camps in Ingushetia, the opportunity to participate in the referendum for a new Chechen constitution. Additional mobile polling stations, operating as branches of the stationary ones, would also be located directly along the border. Authorities of the two republics agreed to take steps to provide referendum participants with means of transportation to the polls. The referendum and new constitution were proposed to end the conflict that began in October 1999, when Russian troops entered the capital of Grozny in response to a wave of terrorist bombings in Russia, allegedly carried out by Chechen rebels. (chechnyafree.ru, February 17; [ITAR-TASS](#), February 16, 2003)

Death toll is reported: In a statement issued February 17, the office of Russia's defense ministry stated that law enforcement casualties totaled approximately 4,570 with another 15,550 wounded in Russia's anti-terrorist campaign in Chechnya from October 1, 1999 to December 23, 2003. Russian losses had been difficult to verify because the Russian federal command has only documented soldiers who die on the battlefield. Others who were taken to hospitals outside Chechnya were not registered in official figures compiled by the Kremlin. Human rights groups said as many as 20,000 civilians in Chechnya may have been killed, but there were no government figures citing civilian deaths. A Kremlin official responsible for Chechen media affairs estimated that approximately 15,000 Chechen guerillas were killed in fighting, since Russia sent troops into Chechnya in 1999. ([AFP](#), [Global News Wire](#), [Interfax](#), [RusDataDialine](#), February 17, 2003)

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC)

Ugandan troops to withdraw: Presidents Yoweri Museveni of Uganda and Joseph Kabila of the DRC agreed during a February 14 meeting in Luanda, Angola on the complete withdrawal of Ugandan troops by March 20 from the DRC. Both presidents stated that their first priority was peace and promised to continue working together towards achieving that goal. This was the last step in an agreement between Uganda and the DRC that began February 11 in Tanzania, which was an amendment to the Luanda Accord of September 6, 2002 and was intended to provide a new framework for the Ituri Pacification Commission (IPC) that was expected to begin operations February 25. The IPC would include two representatives from the DRC, two from Uganda, and two from the UN Mission in DRC. The conflict in the DRC began in August 1998 when President Laurent Désiré Kabila's main sponsors, Rwanda and Uganda, turned against him and began supporting an anti-government rebellion, which Kabila countered with the assistance of troops supported by Angola, Zimbabwe, and Namibia. More than 3 million people have died in the four-year war. ([AllAfrica](#), February 17; [IRIN](#), February 13, 2003)

Rebels deny recruiting child soldiers: The Union of Congolese Patriots (UPC) denied February 17 allegations that they had recruited child soldiers. SOS aid workers reported that children constituted approximately half of the rebel force operating in the northeast Ituri region. UPC leader, Thomas Lubanga, said that the children in its ranks were

orphans who only performed light manual labor, and denied that children were forcibly recruited. Lubanga also said that the UPC has requested assistance for the orphans from Save The Children, but received little response. According to a UN report issued in December 2002, approximately 300,000 children have been recruited as soldiers, fighting in 41 different countries. The UPC splintered off from the Congolese Rally for Democracy- Liberation Movement and has associated with the ethnic Hema, who have been fighting the Lendu for control over the Ituri province. (BBC, February 17, 2003)

ERITREA AND ETHIOPIA

New mines being laid along border: Phil Lewis, head of Mine Action Coordination Center, stated February 14 that new landmines were being laid along Eritrean roads that were recently cleared by UN teams. Lewis said that three out of the four landmine accidents February 10 were caused by newly laid mines, along the “temporary security zone” extending 15 miles into Eritrean territory along the border. A passing vehicle set off one landmine and a second killed two adolescents. The mine clearance team estimated that approximately 275,000 mines were still buried along the border. Mine explosions in the security zone have killed 21 people and maimed 64 others, adding to the approximately 4,200 military and civilian casualties since the signing of the December 2000 Algiers Agreement that ended the two-year border dispute between Eritrea and Ethiopia that resulted in tens of thousands of deaths. (AFP, February 14, 2003)

Border demarcation to start in east: During high-level talks that began February 8 and were hosted by the Independent Eritrea and Ethiopia Boundary Commission (EEBC) it was determined that the demarcation of the border between Eritrea and Ethiopia would start from the eastern regions of the two countries. Ethiopia had called for clarifications to the border ruling issued by the EEBC in April 2002, including details of the western sector of the border, containing the disputed village of Badme where the border conflict began in 1998. During the talks the EEBC ordered both sides to replace their current liaison officers who work with the commission in implementing the demarcation. The UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea dismissed criticisms that both countries had been leveling allegations at each other regarding the demarcation that would start in May 2003. (AllAfrica, February 17, 2003)

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS

Afghanistan joins the ICC: The government of Afghanistan deposited its ratification February 10 at the UN to take effect May 1, making it the 89th nation to join the International Criminal Court (ICC). Afghanistan’s entrance into the ICC would hold the military and militias accountable for offenses committed since July 2002 that Afghanistan’s underdeveloped justice system may not be able to send to trial for prosecution. The 85 nations, who ratified the Rome Treaty of 1998, finished electing the court’s 18 judges February 7, who were scheduled to be sworn in March 11 at The Hague, The Netherlands. The ICC was created to prosecute those accused of genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity only when a country was unable to provide a trial. (AP, AP Worldstream, February 10, 2003)

AI urges Kenyan government to uphold human rights: Amnesty International (AI) sent a memorandum February 18 to the Kenyan government urging newly-elected leaders to uphold fundamental human rights and freedoms by introducing appropriate legislation in parliament as well as by taking any other necessary administrative steps. Among a variety of concerns, AI focused on human rights as they pertain to torture and ill treatment by law enforcement officials, violence against women, and impunity given in alleged human rights abusers. To safeguard Kenyans against long-term human rights violations, AI advocated judicial and constitutional reforms. The new government of Kenya was elected in December 2002 with aspirations to include basic human rights in Kenyan society. ([Amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org), February 18, 2003)

Milosevic trial continues: Former Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic reached the first-year anniversary February 12 of his trial in front of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in The Hague, The Netherlands. Prosecutors have not yet finished presenting their case, but Chief Justice Richard May has imposed a May deadline for closing arguments. The prosecution hoped to obtain testimony from former U.S. envoy Richard Holbrooke, who helped negotiate the 1995 Dayton peace accords that ended the wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia, but arrangements for his testimony have been delayed. The absence of key testimonials as well as probable future appeals by either Milosevic, who has acted as his own attorney, or the prosecution would continue to prolong the case. The accounts of atrocities in the early years of the Bosnian civil war from 1992 to 1995 prompted the creation of the ICTY in May 1993, which was given responsibility to prosecute offenses including genocide and crimes against humanity. ([Edmonton Journal](http://www.edmontonjournal.com), [ONASA News Agency](http://www.onasa.com), February 12, 2003)

MACEDONIA

Explosion destroys courthouse: An explosion destroyed a courthouse February 14 and damaged surrounding homes in Struga in western Macedonia, but no casualties or injuries were reported. The rebel Albanian National Army (ANA) took responsibility for the blast, and the commander of the ANA, Valdet Vardari, told the Albanian media in Macedonia that the aim of the new offensive was to gain rights for Albanians that had not been achieved in previous efforts. The ANA said it would carry out its activities in areas inhabited by Albanians outside of Albania, including Macedonia. The Albanian Foreign Ministry condemned the terrorist act on the courthouse in Macedonia and spokesperson Agim Neza stated that such acts aimed to undermine the efforts to stabilize the region, countered the spirit and hampered the implementation of the Ohrid Agreement. Neza confirmed that the Albanian government did not recognize the ANA or its violent activities. Vardari stated February 5 that the ANA would start a new offensive in Macedonia and that the rebel army does not recognize the 2001 Ohrid Agreement that ended the seven-month conflict in Macedonia when ethnic Albanians took up arms against the government in February 2001 to fight for the rights of the ethnic Albanian minority. ([BBC](http://www.bbc.com), February 15, 16, 17, 2003)

Signatories refuse to implement agreement: A meeting that was to be held by Macedonian President Boris Trajkovski February 14 regarding the government's plan to implement the Ohrid Agreement was not attended by three of the agreement's signatories: Democratic Party of Albanians leader Arben Xhaferi, Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity leader Lubco Georgievski, and former leader of the Party for Democratic Prosperity Imer Imeri. According to news reports the signatories did not attend because of the controversial imprisonment of ethnic Albanian Krenar Osmani who many have believed should have been pardoned because of the amnesty law set forth in the Ohrid Agreement. (BBC, February 16, 2003)

Defense minister affirms stability will continue: Defense Minister Vlado Buckovski stated February 12 that there were no serious indications of a new conflict in Macedonia. He admitted that stability was fragile but confirmed that the government was determined to use political and diplomatic means, and force if necessary, to preserve the security and stability of the country and the region. The presidents of Albania, Macedonia, and Croatia met February 12 to discuss security in the region as well as draft a joint strategy for integration into NATO. (BBC, February 12, 13, 2003)

NEPAL

Parties boycott all-party meeting: The Nepali Congress, the Communist Party of Nepal-United Marxist Leninist, the Nepal Workers and Peasants Party, and the Nepal Sadbhawana Party and People's Front boycotted an all-party meeting called by Prime Minister Prime Lokendra Bahadur Chand held February 17 to discuss the current ceasefire and steps needed to ensure permanent peace in the country. The parties have claimed that the government has failed to restore the democratic rights of the people. The parties urged the King and the Maoists to clarify their stand on issues such as the constitutional monarchy and multiparty democracy. Apart from their dissent toward Prime Minister Chand's efforts, the four parties believed the January 29 ceasefire between the Maoists and the government was a positive step toward safeguarding Nepal's political future. Since they announced the ceasefire, the government and Maoists have tried to organize peace talks to end the seven-year struggle by Maoists to overthrow Nepal's constitutional monarchy. (Financial Times, February 17; Press Trust of India, February 13, 2003)

Chairman orders Maoists to end extortion: Chairman of the Communist Party Nepal - Maoists Pushpa Kamal Dahal released a statement February 17 ordering an end to extortion carried out by the Maoists. Dahal commanded Maoists to only accept voluntary gifts, as well as warned the general public of possible fraud by persons claiming to be Maoists. Apart from his statements aimed at rebels, Dahal expressed his dissatisfaction with government forces that have continued to target rebels, despite the ceasefire, arguing that mistrust would hurt the peace process. Dahal warned the government February 13 that any indication of conspiracy during the peace process would call for the cancellation of the ceasefire by Maoists. (AFP, February 17; Financial Times, February 13; Kathmandu Post, February 16, 2003)

PHILIPPINES

MILF refuses to return to talks: The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) stated February 14 that it would not re-enter into ceasefire negotiations as long as the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) continued to attack in Pikit, North Cotabato in the southern Philippines. President Gloria Arroyo ordered the AFP February 12 to resume military offenses to pursue criminal groups such as the Pentagon gang, known for its alleged kidnapping, but stated that the MILF would not be targeted by the AFP. Arroyo also stated that the AFP would defend themselves against any force blocking their mission to eliminate criminal groups. The government urged the MILF to turn over members of the Pentagon gang that they were allegedly protecting, constituting a violation of the 2001 ceasefire. The MILF denied allegations February 13 that they were sheltering members of the Pentagon gang and charged the government with attempting to resolve the conflict in the southern Philippines through military means rather than taking steps to resume the stalled peace negotiations. The MILF launched an offensive against the government in 1978 in order to create an independent Muslim state. (AP, BBC, February 13; Business World, February 17; Financial Times, February 13, 14, 2003)