



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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PHILIPPINES

Peace talks stall; Peace talks may resume; Communists, government clash

UPDATE SOURCE ABBREVIATIONS

| | | |
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| 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

Russia cuts troops deployed in Chechnya: Russian Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov told President Vladimir Putin March 3 that a military group of approximately 1,300 servicemen and 200 armaments were to be withdrawn from Chechnya starting March 4. Ivanov believed that the withdrawal would not impact the security situation in Chechnya and explained that the contingent to be withdrawn consisted of a field-engineering battalion, an artillery unit and interior troop units. Between 30,000 and 35,000 interior troops would remain in Chechnya on a temporary basis. Ivanov added that some non-military facilities and materials, including tractors, tents, stoves, and beds, would be turned over to people in the Chechen government and heads of district administrations. Russian forces withdrew from Chechnya in 1996 after a failed 20-month campaign, leaving Chechnya with de facto independence. Russian troops returned in 1999 after a series of rebel attacks and deadly apartment bombings that the Kremlin attributed to Chechen rebels. (AFP, ITAR-TASS, March 4, 2003)

Chechen rebels kill seven: Seven policemen died March 2 in a Chechen rebel attack on the motorcade of Chechnya's pro-Moscow administration chief Akhmad Kadyrov. Four of Kadyrov's security men, three Chechen elite interior ministry policemen, and one assailant died during a gun battle in the town of Argun, 10 miles east of Grozny. Kadyrov denied that he was targeted in the attack. Chechnya's pro-Moscow general, Vladimir Kravchenko, stated that the administration chief's motorcade had been ambushed as he accompanied a police team that had gone to capture a rebel group suspected of hiding in a village outside of Argun. Chechen administration officials blamed the attack on fighters loyal to rebel leader Shamil Basayev. Kadyrov, who fought against the Russians in the first 1994-1996 Chechen war, could be a contender in the Chechen presidential elections due to be held in late 2003 or early 2004. (AFP, March 3; The Guardian, March 4, 2003)

Russian forces kill five gunmen: Russian federal forces killed five gunmen and arrested another five February 23 during special operations to eliminate armed gangs in Chechnya. Among those killed were four Turkish mercenaries and the leader of a Chechen rebel group, the Argun, Adlan Demiev. In addition to the killings, soldiers of the United Army Group in the North Caucasus warded off eight terrorist attacks in the capital of Grozny and several rural districts, while joint groups of federal forces and local police officers seized 36 caches containing large quantities of weapons and raided two bases of gunmen. (BBC, chechnyafree.ru, February 21, 2003)

Georgia launches initiative in Pankisi Gorge: Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze said February 24 that Georgian special forces launched a new initiative to regain control of the Pankisi Gorge that focused on keeping Chechen fighters out of the region. According to Shevardnadze, the main task was to maintain stability in the Pankisi Gorge and prevent armed groups from Chechnya and other regions to penetrate into the Pankisi Gorge from neighboring Chechnya. The first phase of the operation was launched in August 2002, under increasing pressure from Russia, who accused Georgia of sheltering Chechen rebels in the gorge and threatened to carry out its own attacks against the rebels

on Georgian territory. The new initiative has focused on forcing suspected rebels to return to their homeland. ([AFP](#), [ITAR-TASS](#), [Xinhua](#), February 24, 2003)

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC)

Neighbors obstruct peace process: Defense Minister of the DRC Irung-A-Wan accused Burundi, Rwanda, and Uganda February 20 of being the main obstacles towards effective peace in the DRC. He stated that these countries' military forces have continued to occupy the DRC and were exploiting the country's natural resources. He also said that the three countries have continued to support rebel groups such as the Ugandan-backed Congolese Liberation Movement (MLC), which has violated various peace agreements such as the December 2000 Pretoria accord. The leader of the MLC, Jean-Pierre Bemba, also warned of trouble in the peace process February 24, stating that if the Pretoria accord failed, a new agreement would have no credibility and a new war would begin. Bemba's other grievances were that the government and the UN Organization Mission in the DRC (MONUC) planned to partition the country, which would be contrary to the MLC agenda. He also accused MONUC of failure to disarm militia groups and failure to condemn the government for arming ethnic militias. 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, Namibia, and Zimbabwe. More than 3 million people have died in the four-year war. ([AllAfrica](#), February 20, 24, 2003)

UN attempts to counter armed groups: UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan met with Presidents Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, Paul Kagame of Rwanda, and Joseph Kabila of the DRC February 21 during the Africa-France summit to discuss the advancement of peace in the DRC. It was agreed that the widespread increase of armed groups was destabilizing the situation and undermining the peace process. Annan and the presidents agreed that stability could be achieved by establishing a broad-based government, formed through the Inter-Congolese dialogue, which could then control all parts of the country. Annan stated February 21 that MONUC might have to be strengthened to control the proliferation of armed groups. MONUC was created by the UN Security Council in November 1999 to act as liaison between the DRC and other signatories to the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. ([AllAfrica](#), February 21, 2003)

UPC captures UPDF commissar: The Union des Patriotes Congolais (UPC) rebel movement based in northeastern DRC captured the Uganda People's Defense Force (UPDF) Chief Political Commissar Brig Kale Kaihura March 1 along with eight of his body guards in response to the killing of two UPC soldiers by UPDF forces. Kaihura was released five hours later despite threats issued by the UPC that they would hold the hostages until the UPDF withdrew from the northeastern town of Bunia. After Kaihura's release UPC Leader Thomas Lubanga and Kaihura signed an accord in an attempt to calm rising tensions between the two groups. After losing support from Uganda, the UPC formed an alliance with the Goma-based, Rwandan backed Rassemblement Congolais pour la Democratie January 6. ([AllAfrica](#), March 2, 3; [IRIN](#), March 3, 2003)

ERITREA AND ETHIOPIA

Eritrea urges France to pressure Ethiopia: Eritrean President Isayas Afewerki and French Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin met during the two-day 22nd Franco-African summit that began February 20 to discuss the ongoing peace process in Eritrea and Ethiopia. Afewerki urged France, as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, to exert pressure on Ethiopia to continue supporting the peace process, stating that the government of Ethiopia has delayed and hindered the process. France has contributed troops to the UN peacekeeping forces in Eritrea and Ethiopia that were deployed after the signing of the December 2000 Algiers Agreement that ended a two-year border dispute. (BBC, February 22, 2003)

UN mission blames dissidents for laying mines: The United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) said February 21 it believed rebel groups were laying new mines in the buffer zone that separates the two countries in an attempt to destabilize the Eritrean government. There had been six explosions in the security zone since February 7, and according to UNMEE spokeswoman Gail Bindley Taylor Sainte, all six incidents were either suspected or confirmed as being from newly-laid mines. 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 Algiers Agreement. (AllAfrica, BBC, February 21, 2003)

International community urges peace: The European Union (EU) and the U.S. handed over diplomatic notes March 4 to Eritrea and Ethiopia urging continued momentum of the peace process. The documents were issued after a two-day high-level meeting in London between both governments, hosted by the independent Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission (EEBC). Ethiopia was reported to have issued a lengthy document, seeking further clarification of the April 2002 EEBC border ruling. A senior diplomat stated that the EU and the U.S. wanted to make sure that the attention of the two countries was firmly focused on the peace process. (BBC, March 4, 2003)

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS

Serb nationalist surrenders: Leader of the Serbian Radical Party Vojislav Seselj surrendered February 24 to the international war crimes tribunal in The Hague, The Netherlands. Judge O-Gon Kwon charged Seselj February 14 with crimes against humanity and breaches of the laws and customs of war between August 1991 and September 1993 in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, and the Vojvodina province in northern Serbia. Seselj had been accused of being personally responsible for crimes such as murder, extermination, torture, and the pillage and destruction of secular and religious property aimed at removing Croat, Muslim, and other non-Christian Serb populations in order to create a homogenous Serbian state. First gaining popularity as a leader of a paramilitary group promoting Serb rebel forces in 1991, Seselj told a crowd estimated of 10,000 supporters February 23 that his trial was to attain victory from the tribunal as well as reveal an international anti-Serbian conspiracy. In addition, Seselj urged his supporters to not allow authorities in the Serbian capital of Belgrade to arrest and turn over other prominent Serb war crimes indictees such as former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic. The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia was

established May 25, 1993. (AFP, February 24; Independent, February 25; UPI, February 23, 2003)

NAM accuses Israel of war crimes: During a two-day summit held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia that started February 20, the 114-nation Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) condemned the alleged systematic violations of human rights and other reported abuses in Palestinian territories by Israelis. Israel had reportedly confiscated Palestinian lands and buildings, and carried out extrajudicial executions and mass civilian killings. UN Palestinian representative Naser Alqedwa said legal remedies left open the possibility of prosecutions by the International Criminal Court due to be inaugurated March 2003. Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon had already been accused February 13 by 23 Palestinians in a Belgian appeals court for supporting a 1982 massacre in Beirut by an Israeli-allied Christian militia. Although forced by an Israeli tribunal to resign his post as defense minister at the time, Sharon was never prosecuted for his actions. NAM was established in September 1961 to address solutions to global problems caused by colonialism and economic hardships. (AFP, February 21, 23; BBC, Financial Times, February 24, 2003)

ICTR sentences father and son involved in genocide: The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) February 19 found Elizaphan Ntakirutimana, a 78 year-old pastor, and his son Gerard Ntakirutimana, a 45 year-old doctor, guilty of genocide, complicity in genocide, conspiracy to commit genocide, and crimes against humanity. Both men were held responsible for the April 16, 1994 killings of approximately 5,000 ethnic Tutsis by ethnic Hutus at the Mugonero complex, a Seventh-Day Adventist compound in Kibuye, Rwanda. Both were accused of leading Tutsis to churches under the pretense of offering refuge and then lead Hutus to come and kill them. ICTR judges sentenced Elizaphan to 10 years imprisonment and Gerard to 25 years, which caused some to say that the sentences were too short for the crime committed while others argued false testimony. The father and son pleaded not guilty and were planning an appeal. Approximately 1,000 of the 50,000 Tutsis who lived near the Mugonero complex survived, which contributed to a massacre that killed an estimated 800,000 Tutsis and Hutus in Rwanda during a 100-day span in 1994. (AllAfrica, February 21; Birmingham Post, Guardian, February 20, 2003)

UN officials prosecute former Indonesian military chief: The Serious Crime Unit of the UN Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) stated February 25 that former Indonesian Defense Force Commander, referred to as General Wiranto, and six other senior generals have been indicted of crimes against humanity committed in East Timor 1999. The crimes included murder, deportation, and persecution directed against civilians in the territory who supported independence of the area from Indonesia. Wiranto and the other indictees have been accused of funding, arming, training, and directing militias, while drawing from Indonesian central government funds. Human rights groups have held Wiranto responsible for many army-backed killings. Indonesian Foreign Minister Hasan Wirayuda contended that since UNMISET had served as a national court in East Timor, it did not have authority to impose arrests of persons held in Indonesia due to the lack of an extradition treaty with East Timor and Indonesia. More

than 1,000 people were killed in 1999 by pro-Indonesian militias protesting the UN-sponsored referendum to establish East Timor as an independent nation. (AFP, February 25; Channel NewsAsia, February 26; Japan Economic Newswire, February 25; New Zealand Herald, February 27, 2003)

MACEDONIA

Rebel forces present: Macedonian Defense Minister Vlado Buckovski stated February 22 that the Albanian National Army (ANA) was not operating within Macedonia and that there was not a threat of destabilization of the republic or the region. The Macedonian National Security Council contradicted Buckovski February 28 by confirming the existence of armed groups, specifically the Albanian National Army (ANA). According to the government ANA did not have a unified command, had not launched a specific political platform, did not have substantial financial resources, and did not have the support of the citizens or the power to destabilize the country. The council recommended that the relevant institutions continue with all necessary measures to further strengthen the country's stability. Representatives of NATO, OSCE and the EU were confident that the ethnic Albanian terrorists, ANA, would not stage a spring offensive in Macedonia and also stated that the international community would respond adversely to such an attack. The EU rapid reaction force would replace the NATO force in Macedonia in April 2003. In addition the EU had secured approximately 11 million dollars to fund infrastructure and decentralization projects throughout Macedonia aimed at reducing poverty, enhancing health services, and environmental management. The ANA was allegedly established as the military wing of the Albanian National Unity Front, an organization aimed at creating an Albanian nation. The ANA attempted to establish two training camps in November 2002, in the cities of Tetevo and Kumanovo. The ANA announced February 5 that it would begin a new offensive in Macedonia, and that the ANA did not recognize the 2001 Ohrid Agreement that ended the conflict in Macedonia that began when ethnic Albanians took up arms against the government in February 2001 to fight for the rights of the ethnic Albanian minority. (BBC, February 22; Financial Times, February 20, 22, 26, March 1 2003)

Justice cancels indictments: Justice Minister Ismail Dardhista announced March 2 that indictments against former members of the National Liberation Army (NLA) that were issued during Public Prosecutor Stavre Dzikov's time in office were to be revoked. Dardhista issued an investigation to determine if the Amnesty Law outlined in the 2001 Ohrid Agreement was being respected. After the investigation, Dardhista withdrew numerous indictments that pertained to the conflict of 2001. While the Amnesty Law did not provide protection for all individuals involved in the 2001 conflict, it did provide general amnesty for all members of the NLA. (Financial Times, March 2, 2003)

NEPAL

Government, Maoists schedule talks: Minister for Physical Planning and Construction Narayan Singh Pun stated February 23 that the government and Maoist rebels have tentatively reached consensus for peace negotiations to take place the week of March 17. The two sides declared a cease-fire January 29 and have been considering a code of conduct for the talks that was formed by the National Human Rights Commission.

Should the dialogue result in a peace agreement it would end the seven-year Maoist insurgency that began February 1996 aimed at overthrowing Nepal's constitutional monarchy and establishing a communist republic. (Deutsche Presse-Agentur, Xinhua, February 23, 2003)

Political parties, Maoists hold talks: Nepali Congress President Girija Prasad Koirala and General Secretary of the Communist Party of Nepal-United Marxist Leninist Madhav Kumar Nepal met February 19 with senior Maoist leaders Dina Nath Sharma and Krishna Bahadur Mahara to discuss how permanent peace was to be restored in Nepal. Koirala reportedly discussed that the January 29 cease-fire did not seem transparent, excluding political parties. The Maoists continued to encourage all parties, intellectuals, and others to aid the peace process. (AFP, February 20; BBC, February 19, 2003)

King appoints government officials: His Majesty Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev replaced royal advisor Keshar Jung Rayamajhi, a communist supporter of the monarchy, February 19 with Parshu Narayan Chaudhary, a 1980's supporter of a party-free, royal-led government. Chaudhary was former General Secretary of the Nepali Congress, the largest political party in Nepal that currently opposes the monarch's control of government through the October 2002 appointment of Prime Minister Chand. In addition to Chaudhary's appointment, the King assigned Krishna Ram Shrestha February 22 as attorney general. Shrestha succeeded Prem Bahadur Bista who resigned December 20, 2002 after Prime Minister Lokendra Bahadur Chand's appointment in order to allow Chand his personal choice for the position of attorney general. (AFP, February 19; Financial Times, 22, 2003)

PHILIPPINES

Peace talks stall: The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), the New People's Army, and the National Democratic Front refused to resume peace talks February 20 with the government until they were removed from the terrorist lists of several countries namely Australia, Canada, the European Union, and the U.S. The government had welcomed the terrorist label for the CPP in hopes it would force the rebels back into negotiations and cut off their foreign funding sources. Jose Maria Sison, the exiled founder of the CPP, stated February 21 that the CPP wanted to resume peace talks with the government but the government had interpreted the refusal of the CPP to surrender as a refusal to participate in peace negotiations. According to Sison, the CPP was presented with a proposal from the government to surrender or face joint combat operations from the U.S. and the Philippines. Communist rebels have been fighting the government since the late 1960s making the movement one of the longest running leftist insurgencies in Asia. (AFP, February 20, 21; BBC, February 21; DPA, February 20, 2003)

Peace talks may resume: The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the government announced February 23 that they were both willing to consider returning to peace negotiations to take place in Malaysia. The Organization of the Islamic Conference would help broker an agreement between the MILF and the government. MILF leaders declared February 23 that they would return to peace negotiations only if talks were hosted by Malaysia, and the MILF must be convinced of the government's sincerity to

enter negotiations. Renewed hostilities began in the southern Mindanao region February 8 and have left more than 200 people dead and resulted in approximately 100,000 displaced. Peace talks initially began in January 1997 but were repeatedly spoiled by hostilities between the two groups. The MILF launched an offensive against the government in 1978 in order to create an independent Muslim state. (Financial Times, February 23, 24, 2003)

Communists, government clash: Six government soldiers and two rebels were killed February 24, in a battle in the southern region of Barangay Daan Sur. Sporadic battles have occurred between the government and the rebels since the week of February 9, however the battle that occurred February 24 had the largest number of government casualties in recent times. In another battle in the Samar province five communist rebels were killed. The communist movement, which included the National People's Army, Communist Party of the Philippines, and the National Democratic Front, nearly reentered peace negotiations with the government February 20, but neither side was satisfied with initial peace proposals. (BBC, DPA, February 26, 2003)