



The Joan B. Kroc
INSTITUTE FOR
PEACE & JUSTICE

Peace & Justice Update
April 10, 2003
(Volume 5, Number 10)

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.

The Peace & Justice updates are written by the Spring 2003 interns at the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice at the University of San Diego. The interns are Keelia Bannon (Saint Mary's College of California), Anna Gabriele (University of San Diego), and Diana Vlasova (University of San Diego).

UPDATE SUMMARY

CHECHNYA

EU envoy arrives in Grozny; Police discover mass grave; Violence continues; Bus explodes killing eight

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC)

Massacre occurs in Ituri; MONUC denounces activities in Ituri and Kivu; Peace progresses

ERITREA AND ETHIOPIA

Isayas talks with visiting EU delegation

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS

Serb leader pledges to arrest war crime suspects; PACE promotes war crimes tribunal on Chechnya

MACEDONIA

Insecurity continues

NEPAL

Maoist leaders hold public meeting; King urges support for peace process; Maoists establish preconditions for talks

PHILIPPINES

Bombings in Davao; MILF, government violence continues

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) |
| 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

EU envoy arrives in Grozny: Representatives of the European Union's (EU) foreign policy office visited the capital of Grozny April 8 to discuss the results of the March 23rd referendum for a new constitution. The delegation headed by Greek Ambassador Dimitrios Paraskevopoulos, included Italian Ambassador Gianfranco Facco Bonetti, and Deputy of the European Commission Delegation in Russia Vincent Picket, who all met with Akhmad Kadyrov, head of the pro-Russian administration. Paraskevopoulos stated that economic partnership, common legal ideals, respect for human rights, and democratic values united the EU and the Russian Federation. The three ambassadors planned to visit the Combined Army Group headquarters of the Russian military in Khankala April 9. Since 2000, the EU representatives have visited the Republic of Chechnya multiple times to monitor the situation and make recommendations. The representatives also visited Nazran, capital of the neighboring republic of Ingushetia, April 7 and held talks with President Murat Zyazikove about the treatment of the Chechen refugee population. Russian forces entered Chechnya in 1999 after Chechen rebels were accused of several apartment bombings in the Russian capital of Moscow. (AFP, BBC, April 8, 2003)

Police discover mass grave: Three mass graves with dismembered bodies were found on the outskirts of Emasuli, a village in the northern Nadterechny district. Pro-Russian Chechen police stated the remains were found under a thin layer of soil with no identification and they were unable to disclose the number dead. Two other decapitated corpses were found in the capital of Grozny. Russian troops and Chechen rebels blamed each other for a series of mass graves discovered since 1994, and human rights groups said that both groups had been responsible for numerous kidnappings, torture, and murders. (AFP, ITAR-TASS, April 7, 2003)

Violence continues: A car exploded in the capital of Grozny April 7, killing five law enforcement officers and three civilians. The vehicle exploded after hitting a landmine approximately 500 feet from the press ministry building, leaving a crater approximately 13 feet in diameter. Since the morning of April 7 Russian troops shelled several districts of Chechnya, while Chechen rebels killed five Russian soldiers and wounded 12 in attacks. Russian troops pulled out of Chechnya in 1996 following a 20 month campaign against separatists but returned in 1999. (AP, BBC, April 7, 2003)

Bus explodes killing eight: Eight people died and at least nine people were hospitalized April 3 when a radio-controlled bomb exploded on a bus in Grozny. Kadyrov blamed the blast on unnamed forces who were opposed to peace in Chechnya. Kadyrov said these forces realized that their influence was being undercut by political processes set in motion by the March 23 referendum. (AFP, AFX, BBC, April 4, 2003)

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC)

Massacre occurs in Ituri: Approximately 1,000 members of the Hema community were killed in three hours April 3 in the town of Drodro in the northeastern Ituri region. Representatives from the UN Organization Mission in the DRC (MONUC) supplied the area with medicine and other provisions and began investigating the mass killing that left

approximately 49 survivors who had suffered bullet and machete wounds. MONUC also discovered 20 mass graves that allegedly contained approximately 250 bodies. The motive of the attack was not determined, but suspected to be linked to Hema and Lendu ethnic tensions, that originated over disputes involving land and natural resources, such as tea and coffee farms, and cattle. The Hema and Lendu have backed rival warlords in the civil war between government troops and rebel factions which has continued to prevent peace and unity within the country. 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. (BBC, IRIN, United Nations, April 7, 2003)

MONUC denounces activities in Ituri and Kivu: MONUC representatives criticized the Rwandan-backed rebels, Rassemblement Congolais pour la Democratie-Goma (RCD-Goma), April 1 after the rebel group captured two towns March 29 in the Ituri region. Representatives from MONUC stated that the offensive by RCD-Goma coincided with the signing of agreements the week of March 26 by the main RCD group, other rebel groups, and the government in Sun City, South Africa to work towards peace. The attacks by RCD-Goma allegedly displaced a number of civilians and might have increased tensions in the problematic area of Ituri. MONUC representatives also condemned attacks on three MONUC bases in the north Kivu province. Protesters looted equipment from buildings on the MONUC bases and property was destroyed. There was also an anti-MONUC march April 1 in the city of Beni. Representatives from MONUC described the activities as unacceptable and a violation of international agreements, and had contacted rebel groups in an attempt to determine the reasons behind the attacks. MONUC arrived in 1999 after the conflict in the DRC began to assist in matters of repatriation and peacekeeping. (IRIN, April 1, 3, 2003)

Peace progresses: Following his swearing in April 1 as head of state for a period of two years, President Joseph Kabila publicized the new constitution agreed upon April 2 in Sun City, South Africa. The new transitional government would also include representatives of rebel groups and the political opposition. Democratic elections were scheduled for two years after the implementation of the transitional government. The new leaders of the DRC were reminded by many, including South African President Thabo Mbeki, that lasting peace depended upon the implementation of the agreements reached through the Inter-Congolese dialogue. A commitment towards peace was furthered April 4 with the inauguration of the Ituri Pacification Commission (IPC), a grouping of 177 representatives from different communities and militia groups that have fought for control of the resource-rich Ituri district. The main task of the IPC would be to create a new administrative authority to maintain law and order and assure the withdrawal of Ugandan troops from Ituri. The new transitional government and the IPC have attempted to unite the DRC and peacefully resolve the conflict. (BBC, April 7; IRIN, April 4, 2003)

ERITREA AND ETHIOPIA

Isayas talks with visiting EU delegation: President of Eritrea Isayas Afewerki met with an European Union (EU) delegation April 4 led by Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Affairs, Paul Nielson. During the talks, the two sides discussed bilateral relations between Eritrea and the EU, the current drought situation in Eritrea, and the Eritrea-Ethiopia peace process. Nielson said that the EU supported the ruling of the Eritrea-Ethiopia border commission and that he would work for the immediate implementation of the ruling. The two-year border dispute between Eritrea and Ethiopia that resulted in tens of thousands of deaths ended with the signing of the December 2000 Algiers agreement. An independent border commission established by the UN issued a report April 15, 2002 demarcating the Eritrean and Ethiopian border. (BBC, April 4, 2003)

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS

Serb leader pledges to arrest war crime suspects: Serbia's new prime minister, Zoran Zivkovic, pledged April 7 to arrest all war crimes suspects wanted by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia in The Hague, The Netherlands. Zivkovic's government imposed a major police crackdown aimed at organized crime, which gave police and the courts higher authority to detain suspects without filing charges for up to 30 days. The crackdown has yielded more than 7,000 detentions and several hundred criminal indictments. Zivkovic assumed office March 18 after Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic was shot and killed March 12 by police Lieutenant Coronel Zvezdan Jovanovic, a member of the secret service's Special Operations Unit. (AP, April 7; Independent, UPI, April 8, 2003)

PACE promotes war crimes tribunal on Chechnya: Lawmakers in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) in Strasbourg, France passed a resolution April 2 on the establishment of a war crimes tribunal for Chechnya. PACE, the primary monitor for human rights in Europe, warned that Russia's failure to toughen prosecution of human rights violations in the republic would result in PACE's proposal of a war crimes court for Chechnya to the international community. Top officials, like Russian Presidential Aide Sergei Yastrzhembsky and Speaker of the Lower House of the Parliament Gennady Seleznyov, rejected PACE's April 3 resolution deeming it judicially meaningless. However, Russian Senator Mikhail Margelov stated that Russia was committed to retain involvement in PACE and was not going to "slam the door" on PACE's vote favoring a court for Chechnya. Since 1994 Russian troops have been accused of committing mass human rights violations during a three-and-a-half year war to subdue a Chechen insurgency for independence. (AFP, Xinhua, April 3; BBC, April 7, 2003)

MACEDONIA

Insecurity continues: Four ethnic Albanians were wounded in a shootout in the western town of Tetovo, threatening stability in the area despite recent progress. The shooting stemmed from an argument in front of an Albanian University in the nearby village of Mala Recica. Ethnic Albanian rebels took up arms against the Macedonian government to fight for the rights of the ethnic Albanian minority in February 2001. The seven-

month conflict ended with the signing of the Ohrid Agreement. (DPA, April 2; Financial Times, April 3, 2003)

NEPAL

Maoist leaders hold public meeting: Leaders of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoists) held their first public rally April 3 since the start of the Maoist insurgency at the Tundikhel Open Air Theatre in the capital of Kathmandu with approximately 20,000 people in attendance. Coordinator of the Maoist negotiating team, Dr. Baruram Bhattarai, warned the government during the rally of backlash if peace negotiations failed to produce results. Bhattarai accused the government of not showing flexibility to make peace talks a success, as well as of violating the code of conduct agreed upon March 13 by the government and Maoists. Bhattarai further expressed his support of a constituent assembly to draft a new constitution since, he argued, the present constitution was invalid due to King Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev's October 4, 2002 dismissal of former Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba. In addition to remarks about the present government, Bhattarai shared his vision of an upcoming parliament with a new model of democracy, which would have an equal representation of all religions, castes, community, and gender. The government and Maoists declared a ceasefire January 29 with hopes to end the seven-year Maoist insurgency that has resulted in with more than 7,800 deaths. (AFP, Press Trust of India, April 3; BBC, April 4, 2003)

King urges support for peace process: Addressing a reception April 4 hosted by the citizens of Dhangadi in the district of Kailali west of Kathmandu, King Gyanendra spoke of his commitment to multi-party democracy and called on the country as well as political parties to support prospective peace talks between the government and Maoists in order to preserve "national integrity." The king also called for a transparent government representing the people. Nepal's major political parties, the Nepali Congress and the Communist Party of Nepal-United Marxist-Leninist, boycotted the civic reception stating the King's October 4, 2002 dismissal of former Prime Minister Deuba was illegal and unconstitutional. This appearance was the second reception since the King was crowned after the assassination of his brother King Birendra Bir Bikram Sahadev June 1, 2001. (ABC Radio Australia News, April 5; DPA, Nepalnews, April 4, 2003)

Maoists establish preconditions for talks: Chief Maoist negotiator Bhattarai stated April 7 that the Maoists would be ready to proceed with peace talks if the government released five senior central committee members under detention. Government representative for peace talks, Colonel Narayan Singh Pun, stated April 6 that the government would not release the rebel prisoners. Prime Minister Lokendra Chand stated April 2 that talks would start only after the formation of an official monitoring team for the peace talks, and the time had not yet come to form such a team according to Chand. Bhattarai said Chand's statement was an attempt to delay peace talks. (BBC, April 7; Financial Times, Nepalnews, April 3, 2003)

PHILIPPINES

Bombings in Davao: A bomb exploded April 2 near a congested wharf in the southern city of Davao killing approximately 13 people and wounding 30 others. The explosion

was blamed on the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), but the group denied responsibility for the attack. Police suspected that five Indonesian men, linked with Jemaah Islamiah, a militant Islamic group accused of the Bali bombing in October 2002, were responsible for the blast. Intelligence reports associated the five suspects with the MILF. Bombs exploded April 3 outside of three mosques in the primarily Muslim districts of Davao. Property was damaged by the blasts but no one was injured. The southern region of the Philippines, especially the island of Mindanao, which is primarily Christian, has suffered continual clashes between Muslim separatists, including the MILF, and government troops. (AFX, New York Times, April 3; AP, BBC, April 2, 7; April 3, 2003)

MILF, government violence continues: The MILF continued attacks in Mindanao April 1 despite the ongoing talks between rebels and the government. Approximately 80 armed members of the MILF attacked a residential area near the town of Midsayap and wounded 12 civilians, using six civilians as human shields as they retreated. In a separate attack in the town of Mlang, also March 31, five civilians were injured when rebels fired rocket-propelled grenades into a crowded house. Six MILF members were killed April 3 in clashes with government. MILF rebels looted and burned 34 houses in the town of Datu Piang April 2 owned by people the MILF alleged were assisting the government monitor MILF activities. Renewed hostilities began in the Mindanao region February 8 and have left more than 200 people dead and have displaced approximately 100,000. Peace talks initially began in January 1997 but were repeatedly delayed due to hostilities between the MILF and the government. The MILF launched an offensive against the government in 1978 in order to create an independent Muslim state. (DPA, April 3; Financial Times, April 1,3; Xinhua News, April 1)