



Peace & Justice Update  
*March 28, 2008*  
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The countries for the Peace & Justice Updates have been chosen as areas of focus at the Institute.

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## SOURCE ABBREVIATIONS

The Age	=	The Age ( <a href="http://www.theage.com.au">www.theage.com.au</a> )
AfricaFocus	=	AfricaFocus ( <a href="http://www.africafocus.org">www.africafocus.org</a> )
AFP	=	Agence France-Presse ( <a href="http://www.afp.com">www.afp.com</a> )
AllAfrica	=	AllAfrica Global Media ( <a href="http://www.allafrica.com">www.allafrica.com</a> )
American Chronicle	=	American Chronicle ( <a href="http://www.americanchronicle.com">www.americanchronicle.com</a> )
Amnesty International	=	Amnesty International ( <a href="http://www.amnesty.org">www.amnesty.org</a> )
Asian Tribune	=	Asian Tribune ( <a href="http://www.asiantribune.com">www.asiantribune.com</a> )
AP	=	Associated Press ( <a href="http://www.ap.org">www.ap.org</a> )
AWID	=	Association for Women's Rights in Development ( <a href="http://www.awid.org">www.awid.org</a> )
BBC	=	British Broadcasting Corporation ( <a href="http://news.bbc.co.uk">news.bbc.co.uk</a> )
BBC Monitoring	=	BBC Monitoring International Reports ( <a href="http://www.monitor.bbc.co.uk">www.monitor.bbc.co.uk</a> )
CBC News	=	CBC News ( <a href="http://www.cbc.ca">www.cbc.ca</a> )
Christian Monitor	=	Christian Monitor ( <a href="http://www.christianmonitor.org">www.christianmonitor.org</a> )
CIA	=	CIA - The World Factbook ( <a href="http://www.cia.gov">www.cia.gov</a> )
Concord Times	=	The Concord Times ( <a href="http://www.concordtimesl.com">www.concordtimesl.com</a> )
Crisis Group	=	International Crisis Group ( <a href="http://www.crisisgroup.org">www.crisisgroup.org</a> )
The East African	=	The East African ( <a href="http://www.nationmedia.com/eastafrican/current">www.nationmedia.com/eastafrican/current</a> )
eKantipur	=	Kantipur Online ( <a href="http://www.kantipuronline.com">www.kantipuronline.com</a> )
eng24.kg	=	News Agency 24 ( <a href="http://eng.24.kg">http://eng.24.kg</a> )
EU	=	European Union ( <a href="http://www.europa.eu.int">www.europa.eu.int</a> )
Financial Times	=	Financial Times News ( <a href="http://www.ft.com">www.ft.com</a> )
FMM	=	Free Media Movement ( <a href="http://www.freemediasrilanka.org">www.freemediasrilanka.org</a> )
Guardian	=	Guardian Unlimited Network ( <a href="http://www.guardian.co.uk">www.guardian.co.uk</a> )
The Hindu	=	The Hindu Newspaper ( <a href="http://www.hinduonnet.com">www.hinduonnet.com</a> )
HRW	=	Human Rights Watch ( <a href="http://www.hrw.org">www.hrw.org</a> )
Herald Tribune	=	Herald Tribune ( <a href="http://www.iht.com">www.iht.com</a> )
ICC	=	International Criminal Court ( <a href="http://www.icc-cpi.int">www.icc-cpi.int</a> )
ICG	=	International Crisis Group ( <a href="http://www.crisisweb.org">www.crisisweb.org</a> )
ICTY	=	International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia ( <a href="http://www.un.org/icty">www.un.org/icty</a> )
IHT	=	International Herald Tribune ( <a href="http://www.iht.com">www.iht.com</a> )
Independent	=	The Independent ( <a href="http://www.independent.co.uk">www.independent.co.uk</a> )
IndiaTimes	=	India Times ( <a href="http://www.timesofindia.indiatimes.com">www.timesofindia.indiatimes.com</a> )
IPS News Agency	=	Inter Press Service News Agency ( <a href="http://ipsnews.net">ipsnews.net</a> )
IRIN	=	Integrated Regional Information Network ( <a href="http://www.irinnews.org">www.irinnews.org</a> )
ISN	=	International Relations and Security Network ( <a href="http://www.isn.ethz.ch/index.cfm">www.isn.ethz.ch/index.cfm</a> )
IWPR	=	Institute for War & Peace Reporting ( <a href="http://www.iwpr.net">www.iwpr.net</a> )
Kathmandu Post	=	The Kathmandu Post ( <a href="http://www.nepalnews.com.np">www.nepalnews.com.np</a> )
Jurist	=	The Jurist ( <a href="http://jurist.law.pitt.edu">jurist.law.pitt.edu</a> )
LA Times	=	Los Angeles Times ( <a href="http://www.latimes.com">www.latimes.com</a> )
Library of Congress	=	The Library of Congress ( <a href="http://www.loc.gov/index.html">www.loc.gov/index.html</a> )
Monitor	=	The Monitor ( <a href="http://www.monitor.co.ug">www.monitor.co.ug</a> )
Nepal News	=	Nepal News ( <a href="http://www.nepalnews.com">www.nepalnews.com</a> )
Nepali Times	=	Nepali Times ( <a href="http://www.nepalitimes.com">www.nepalitimes.com</a> )
New Vision	=	New Vision ( <a href="http://www.newvision.co.ug">www.newvision.co.ug</a> )
News24	=	News24 ( <a href="http://www.news24.com">www.news24.com</a> )
NYT	=	The New York Times ( <a href="http://www.nytimes.com">www.nytimes.com</a> )
PANA	=	Panafrican News Agency ( <a href="http://www.panapress.com">www.panapress.com</a> )
Peace Africa	=	Peace Africa ( <a href="http://www.allafrica.com/peaceafrica">www.allafrica.com/peaceafrica</a> )
PDO	=	People's Daily Online ( <a href="http://english.peopledaily.com.cn">english.peopledaily.com.cn</a> )
Prensa Latina	=	Prensa Latina, Latin America News Agency ( <a href="http://www.plenglish.com">www.plenglish.com</a> )

Prensa Libre	=	Prensa Libre ( <a href="http://www.prensalibre.com">www.prensalibre.com</a> )
Oxfam Great Britain	=	Oxfam Great Britain ( <a href="http://www.oxfam.org.uk">www.oxfam.org.uk</a> )
RadioFreeEurope	=	RadioFreeEurope, Radio Liberty ( <a href="http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2007">www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2007</a> )
ReliefWeb	=	Relief Web ( <a href="http://www.reliefweb.int">www.reliefweb.int</a> )
Reuters	=	Reuters ( <a href="http://www.reuters.com">www.reuters.com</a> )
RSF	=	Reporters sans frontières ( <a href="http://www.rsf.org">www.rsf.org</a> )
The Rising Nepal	=	The Rising Nepal ( <a href="http://www.gorkhapatra.org">www.gorkhapatra.org</a> )
SDUT	=	San Diego Union Tribune ( <a href="http://www.signonsandiego.com">www.signonsandiego.com</a> )
The Star	=	The Star.com ( <a href="http://www.thestar.com">www.thestar.com</a> )
Transparency Int.	=	Transparency International ( <a href="http://transparency.org">transparency.org</a> )
UNESCO	=	UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization ( <a href="http://www.unesco.org">www.unesco.org</a> )
UNFPA	=	United Nations Population Fund ( <a href="http://www.unfpa.org">www.unfpa.org</a> )
UNHCHR	=	UN High Commissioner for Human Rights ( <a href="http://www.unhcr.ch">www.unhcr.ch</a> )
UNICEF	=	UN Children's Fund ( <a href="http://www.unicef.org">www.unicef.org</a> )
UNIFEM	=	UN Development Fund for Women ( <a href="http://www.unifem.org">www.unifem.org</a> )
UN News Center	=	UN News Center Homepage ( <a href="http://www.un.org">www.un.org</a> )
VOA	=	Voice of America ( <a href="http://www.voanews.com">www.voanews.com</a> )
Web India	=	Web India ( <a href="http://www.webindia123.com">www.webindia123.com</a> )
WP	=	The Washington Post ( <a href="http://www.washingtonpost.com">www.washingtonpost.com</a> )

## UPDATE SUMMARY

### COLOMBIA

Ecuadorean killed in Colombian cross-border raid;  
Colombia continues to defend raid.

### GUATEMALA

Four Belgian tourists taken hostage;  
Eleven die in drug-related violence.

### NEPAL

Election violence threatens polls;  
Tibetan refugees protest in Nepal.

### UGANDA

Government and LRA agree on new final peace agreement date;  
Conference held in Kampala to discuss land conflicts.

## COLOMBIA

Ecuadorean killed in Colombian cross-border raid: On March 23, Colombian Defense Minister Juan Manuel Santos confirmed that an Ecuadorean man was among those killed by Colombian forces during the March 1 raid on a Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) rebel camp. The man's body was taken to Colombia after the raid and found to be that of Franklin Aisalia Molina, whom Santos and the Colombian government have declared a criminal who helped the FARC cross the border to hide in Ecuador. Molina's family has denied any relationship between the FARC and their deceased relative. Before this announcement by Santos, Ecuadorean President Rafael Correa had threatened that diplomatic relations would be further weakened between Ecuador and Colombia if the body was proven to be that of an Ecuadorean. After the affirmation, Correa announced that he would appeal to the Organization of American States to determine the most appropriate plan of action. In an attempt to thwart claims that Colombia violated international laws, Santos remarked, "Anyone who is in a terrorist camp is taking a very high risk, because it's a legitimate military target." The March 1 raid into Ecuador resulted in the death of over twenty FARC members, including the guerrilla group's second-in-command, Raúl Reyes. The raid was the government's first successful attempt to kill one of the leading members of the secretariat, the ruling body of the FARC. (Associated Press, March 24; International Herald Tribune, March 25; BBC, March 25, 2008).

Colombia continues to defend raid: Colombian officials recently stated that a March 1 cross-border raid into Ecuador was justified because the Colombian military was attempting to combat a terrorist group. President Álvaro Uribe announced in a statement Sunday, March 23, "The government (of Colombia) reminds the world that the camp of Raúl Reyes was used by terrorists to act against the security of the Colombian people." Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez condemned these remarks and expressed his fear that these new declarations would revive the tensions in the region, specifically between Colombia and its border nations, Venezuela and Ecuador. Chávez announced, "It has cost us plenty to get back on the path of good relations. We don't want a new escalation of tensions between us." This announcement arrives days after an agreement by the Organization of American States demanding that Colombia take full responsibility for the raid and vows to never penetrate another nation's border. Following the March 1 raid into Ecuador, many Latin American nations cut ties with Colombia, leaving it with relatively little support for its actions, besides its backing from the United States. Ecuador and Venezuela also mobilized troops to their shared borders with Colombia in fear that the raid would escalate into a full-blown war. Since then, diplomatic ties have been reestablished among the nations, but have remained unsteady. (Reuters, March 23, March 25, 2008).

## GUATEMALA

Four Belgian tourists taken hostage: After 40 hours in captivity, four Belgian hostages were released to police officials March 16. Smiling and relaxed, they arrived in Guatemala City amid much fanfare and media attention. Two days earlier, the four had been traveling 155 miles northeast of Guatemala City along the Río Dulce river when farmers armed with machetes abducted them along with their Guatemalan guide and boat operator. The farmers then took the six hostages to the remote town of Río Dulce. These farmers had captured 29 police officers in February. As before, in exchange for the hostages they demanded the legalization of their lands as well as the release of Ramiro Choc, an indigenous leader arrested February 14 for invading lands. They threatened to hold the hostages until President Álvaro Colom agreed to talk to them about Choc's release. In response, authorities refused to meet any of the farmers' demands unless the hostages were first released. The day after the abduction police officers arrested a handful of farmer activists in a scuffle, and ultimately the

farmers agreed to release the hostages in exchange for the release of the activists. Following negotiations, police officials transported the Belgian tourists to Guatemala City where Vice President Rafael Espada greeted them and said he would write to the Belgian government to formally apologize. Speculation arose about the negotiations after comments from Luis Chol, a member of the farmer's group that held the hostages, claiming that the farmers released the hostages because of attacks from police officials that resulted in the death of one farmer. Ronaldo Robles, the communications secretary of Guatemala's presidency, asserted no one was killed. Land disputes have been an ongoing source of conflict in Guatemala and were catalyst of the 36-year civil war that left an estimated 250,000 dead or missing. (Associated Press, Reuters, March 16, 2008)

Eleven die in drug-related violence: In the eastern state of Zacapa, a shootout March 25 left eight people dead at the scene, and three others died later in the hospital. The shootout occurred outside a hotel at a weekend holiday spot near the border with El Salvador, and involved high caliber weapons and grenades. Seven additional suspects, three Mexicans and four Guatemalans, were arrested, apparently fleeing the site of the shootings. Two victims at the scene, still clutching their M-16 rifles, were charred beyond recognition. Police authorities took blood samples to identify the victims. Authorities believe that one of the victims could possibly be Joaquín "El Chapo" Guzmán, the reputed head of Mexico's Sinaloa drug cartel, who has been evading authorities since 2001 when he escaped a maximum-security prison in the back of a laundry van. Drug prosecutor Geovanny Castro said that police officials did not have any evidence at the time to indicate that Guzmán, one of the most-wanted drug lords, was killed at the shootout. They have not ruled out the idea because three of the victims had yet to be identified. Guatemala's geographical location makes it an important transit point for the lucrative drug business. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Guatemala is believed to be a transit zone through which passes an estimated 88 percent of the cocaine headed for the United States. As a result, Guatemalan borders are rife with violence and corruption. (International Herald Tribune, Reuters, March 26; UN Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights, March 27, 2008)

## NEPAL

Election violence threatens polls: There have been many reported deaths, the most significant being the killing of National People's Front candidate Kamai Prasad Adhikari on Tuesday, March 18, in his home in Nepalgunj. Election-related violence has erupted over the past few weeks throughout Nepal, especially in the southern region of Terai, as some political parties have attempted to prevent their opponents from campaigning. The United Nations has expressed its firm stance against such violence and the necessity of the Nepali parties, including the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), which many see as responsible for much of the violence, to stop the aggression before the April 10 Constituent Assembly election. A statement issued by the UN Mission in Nepal expressed concern that the Maoists might not be willing to partake in free and fair elections. The statement said, "Violence and threats against candidates represent a serious obstacle to the creation of a free and fair atmosphere for the election, and all efforts must be made to bring those responsible to justice." Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala agreed, "If we can't hold the election we will lose our image among the international community." Monday, March 24, the ruling Seven-Party Alliance (SPA) held a meeting at Koirala's official residence in Baluwatar to discuss the increased incidence of violence. The government expressed its disapproval of these violent activities and its dedication to the April 10 election. The SPA promised to look into the recent attacks and comply more closely with the Election Code of Conduct in the future. Despite this agreement, Maoist cadres have reportedly continued to destroy the Nepali Congress's election materials and manifesto and a Maoist-Nepali Congress clash resulted in one death and over twenty injuries on Wednesday, March

26. The April 10 election will be the first in nine years and will most likely bring the 239-year-old monarchy to an end. The election, a pivotal aspect of the peace agreement signed in 2006, has already been postponed twice since the agreement was signed. ([CNN.com](#), March 19; [AFP](#), [Reuters](#), March 22; [Kantipur Online](#), March 24, March 26, 2008).

Tibetan refugees protest in Nepal: Since Monday, March 10, the 49<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Tibetan uprising, Tibetan refugees living in Nepal have staged hundreds of protests and demonstrations throughout the region against the Chinese rule of Tibet. While chanting slogans such as “Free Tibet” and “Chinese thieves leave our country,” the protestors marched outside the Chinese Embassy in Kathmandu, near refugee camps, and near the United Nations’ office in Kathmandu. Protests have continued almost daily since the March 10 anniversary. Nepali police have arrested over 400 people since the protests began and transported them to detention centers. The United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Nepal announced that the forced detention of the protestors is a violation of the people’s rights to peaceful assembly, to freedom from arbitrary detention, and to freedom of movement. Amnesty International has also announced its disapproval of these actions stating that “Nepal is sending a message of no-tolerance of dissent by arresting peaceful demonstrators.” Despite these criticisms, the Nepali government maintains that the protests cannot be tolerated and must be stopped. Home ministry spokesman Modraj Dottel said at a rally on Tuesday, “Nepal’s national policy recognizes ‘One China.’ We will prevent any anti-China activities that take place in our territory.” Since the Tibetan uprising of 1959, an estimated 20,000 Tibetan refugees have moved to Nepal from China. Many of the refugees live in camps or with relatives and many others have traveled through Nepal to take up residence in India, where the Tibetan spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, has lived since the uprising. ([International Herald Tribune](#), [BBC](#), [AFP](#), March 25, 2008).

## UGANDA

Government and LRA agree on new final peace agreement date: The signing date for the final peace agreement between the government and the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) has been changed from March 28 to a new tentative date of April 3. The date was pushed back because the negotiation team leader for the LRA, David Matsanga, declared “We have told the Ugandan government that they must drop the warrants. They must ask the International Criminal Court (ICC) to drop the warrants. We want to make it categorically clear that the obstacle is the warrants.” The chief mediator from Southern Sudan, Riek Machar, also pushed for a later signing date to plan a peace signing ceremony, likely to be attended by President Yoweri Museveni and the presidents from Kenya, Tanzania, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique and South Africa, as well as UN envoy and former Mozambican president, Joaquim Chissano. The Internal Affairs minister for the government, Ruhakana Rugunda, met with Matsanga March 25 to finalize the text and implementation schedule for the final agreement. The LRA negotiation team traveled March 26 for a final consultation with LRA leader Joseph Kony. Kony had reportedly moved his forces into the jungles of the Central African Republic, in the opposite direction of where his troops were meant to assemble and demobilize in the town of Ri-Kwangba by the end of March. Because of this non-compliance, the government may accept a representative authorized by the rebel high command to sign the agreement. The government stated that Kony is not necessarily needed for the signing of the final peace agreement. Although the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement was to expire March 28 and Machar had supported a decision to not formally extend it, the government and LRA have agreed to respect the truce after March 28. Peace talks have continued for over 22 months, in which five major agreements have been reached. ([The Globe](#), March 21; [Africa News](#), March 24; [BBC Monitoring Africa](#), March 26, 2008)

Conference held in Kampala to discuss land conflicts: On March 17, a three-day conference began that focused on discussing a draft report on the causes of land conflicts, providing a platform for the dissemination and discussion of a framework for land conflict prevention, especially for northern Uganda, and finding the best practices of land conflict mediation and capacity development. The conference drew participants from 48 districts in Uganda, including cultural and religious leaders among others. The conference concluded a study conducted by researchers from the nongovernmental organization Jamii Ya Kupatanisha, Makerere University department of Peace and Conflict Resolution, and the Canadian government. A senior Canadian Research Consultant, Carl Byers, said, "In northern Uganda, the source of land conflicts will emanate from lack of proper demarcations for the returnees. In the central region it is forceful eviction leading to land conflicts." The land conflicts in Uganda have been blamed on the increased number of unqualified land surveyors who failed to adhere to professional standards. The Chairman of the Surveyors Registration Board, John Musungu, said 99 percent of land conflicts are due to unregistered surveyors. Musungu stated, "We cannot give certificates to people without experience. The problem of land conflicts is already at the extreme because of inexperienced surveyors and that's why we are going to clamp down on them. We have procedures and they should be followed." Addressing the conference, President Yoweri Museveni asserted that perpetration of land conflict is due to failure by land surveyors to deal with changes that accompany modernization and industrialization. (Africa News, March 17; March 19; March 24, 2008)