



Peace & Justice Update
July 26, 2002
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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

AFGHANISTAN

Southern leaders hold regional meeting; U.S. soldiers guard Afghan leader

CHECHNYA

Rebel leaders consolidate; IHF accuses Russia of strategic executions; Commission finalizes draft of constitution

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC)

Peace deal underway with Rwanda; COHR denounces appearance-based detentions; Journalist is banned from rebel-controlled area

ERITREA-ETHIOPIA

Annan calls for adjusting UNMEE mandate; Ethiopia told to withdraw settlement from Eritrea

GUATEMALA

UN demands an end to impunity

MACEDONIA

Dutch radio accuses U.S. of aiding terrorists

MADAGASCAR

President creates commission to pursue former leader; Country withdraw from ACP meeting

NEPAL

Government rejects peace talk offer; UK creates defense package; Police discover Maoist helipad and training camps in jungle

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS

New UN rights chief is selected; Croatian court releases war crimes suspects; EU extends Zimbabwe travel ban

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)
Xinhua	=	Xinhua News Agency(www.xinhuanet.com/english/index.htm)

AFGHANISTAN

Southern leaders hold regional meeting: Southern Afghan governors met July 14 to discuss a proposal that would require U.S. troops to seek permission from Afghan governors before attacking suspected Al-Qaeda and Taliban units in the region. Gul Agha Sherzai, governor of Kandahar, led the meeting attended by only three of the six governors. The governors also discussed a proposal to create a 500-man rapid reaction force and a 3,000-man border control force that would draw fighters from the six provinces. Sherzai said that both proposals would help U.S. troops fight Al-Qaeda and Taliban soldiers in southern Afghanistan. Hamid Karzai responded to the border control and rapid reaction force proposals by saying that the central government would control the forces. Karzai also disagreed with Sherzai's first proposal requiring U.S. troops to seek the governors' permission before attacking suspected terrorists. The proposals were drafted in response to the U.S. air strike in the Afghan province of Uruzgan July 1 that killed 48 people and injured 117. U.S. military forces have been in Afghanistan since the U.S. launched the "war on terrorism" in response to the September 11 attacks in New York City and Washington D.C. that resulted in more than 3,000 deaths. (AP, July 15, 2002)

U.S. soldiers guard Afghan leader: U.S. troops were asked July 22 to guard Afghan leader Hamid Karzai's presidential palace in the capital of Kabul amid increased security threats. Approximately 50 U.S. soldiers, including U.S. Special Forces, were involved in the security operation that protected Karzai's palace. Since Karzai was elected leader at the Loya Jirga, Afghanistan's grand council, June 2002, soldiers loyal to Defense Minister Mohammad Fahim, the Northern Alliance commander who forced the Taliban out of Kabul in November 2001 have served as Karzai's personal security force. Concerns over Karzai's security heightened after the killing of Vice President Abdul Qadir July 6 outside his office compound in Kabul. Karzai was elected in June 2002 to lead Afghanistan for 18 months. (AP, July 22, 2002)

CHECHNYA

Rebel leaders consolidate: A joint news conference was held July 22 between rebel leaders Shamil Basayev and Aslan Maskhadov, according to the Russian television station NTV. The News conference was reportedly filmed in early July 2002, refuting Russian military claims that Basayev was killed in April 2002. According to Maskhadov and Basayev during the news conference a six-day meeting of the Majlisul Shura of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria, council of the Chechen rebel leaders, began June 27 and established Basayev as head of both groups' military units. This public consolidation ended a split between the two leaders, leaving only rebel leader Ruslan Gelayev's unit outside of this newly established central control. The 1994 to 1996 conflict between pro-independence rebels and the Russian government was renewed in October 1999, when Russian troops invaded the capital of Grozny in response to a wave of apartment bombings in Russia, which were attributed to Chechen rebels. (Interfax News Agency, July 19, 20; BBC, Izvestia, July 23, 2002)

IHF accuses Russia of strategic executions: The International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights (IHF) issued a July 23 report accusing the Russian military of a campaign of executions designed to deliberately reduce the Chechen Republic's male population. The report alleged that young Chechen men were routinely abducted and killed during special operations carried out by the Russian military, with approximately 50 to 80 bodies recovered each month. The IHF stated that the reported mortality rates were conservative estimates based on research by human rights groups and civilian reports. A new Russian military order in March 2002 set strict procedural rules designed to moderate special operations, including measures requiring troops to identify themselves to Chechen civilians. However, according to human rights groups, federal troops have ignored these regulations, undermining the possibility of an accountability process. Newly appointed Russian Human Rights Envoy Abdul-Khakim Sultygov pledged to introduce new rules for special operations July 18, but has yet to gain the trust of human rights organizations. (AFP, BBC, July 23, 2002)

Commission finalizes draft of constitution: Chechnya's constitutional commission announced the finalization of a draft of the republic's constitution July 19, and a constitutional referendum was scheduled for the end of 2002. Presidential elections would follow six months after the adoption of a new constitution, and parliamentary elections would be held six months after the election of a President. The draft declared Chechnya as a democratic and equal member territory of the Russian Federation governed by law, with Russian and Chechen as the two official languages. The Russian government appointed the current Chechen administration June 8, 2000. (ITAR-TASS, July 19, 2002)

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC)

Peace deal underway with Rwanda: Representatives of the DRC and Rwandan governments agreed July 22 to present both countries' presidents an agreement that would include the complete withdrawal of all Rwandan troops from the DRC, and the disarmament of the ethnic Hutu militias operating in eastern DRC. Adolphe Onusumba, leader of the Goma-based, Rwandan-backed Congolese Rally for Democracy (RCD-Goma), said that he was being briefed on the deal and that his representatives might meet with the DRC government to discuss the agreement. He also stated that any deal needed to include all of the "Congolese belligerents, opposition parties, and civil society" to be effective in ending the conflict. RCD-Goma was left out of the April 2002 Sun City, South Africa peace agreement made between the DRC government and the Democracy Movement for the Liberation of the Congo. The current civil war in the DRC began in August 1998 when President Laurent Desiré Kabila's main sponsors, Rwanda and Uganda, turned against him and began supporting an anti-government rebellion. Kabila countered the rebellion with the assistance of troops supplied by Angola, Zimbabwe, and Namibia. More than 3 million people have died in the four-year war. (BBC, IRIN, July 23, 2002)

COHR denounces appearance-based detentions: The Congolese Observatory of Human Rights (COHR) denounced July 23 the four-year detention of 26 individuals for their Rwandan appearance, who were being held in the Makala Central Prison of Kinshasa.

COHR also protested the conditions the individuals were subjected to during their time in the prison. The prisoners were reportedly young soldiers who were recruited in the eastern DRC province of North Kivu in 1996 at the start of Laurent Desiré Kabila's offensive against former dictator Mobutu Sese Seko. They were transferred to the capital of Kinshasa for military training, but were then allegedly detained for their Rwandan appearance after Kabila's decision to oust all Rwandan officers and troops from his administration. (IRIN, July 23, 2002)

Journalist is banned from rebel-controlled area: Reporters Without Borders protested July 22 the banning of BBC correspondent Arnaud Zajtman from the area controlled by the RCD-Goma. Reporters Without Borders stated that the ban of Zajtman was an obstruction of press freedom and an effort at retaliation for unfavorable reporting by Zajtman. Zajtman had obtained oral permission from RCD's-Goma's secretary-general to enter the area, but later received an email banning him for his offensive references to RCD-Goma key leaders. Reporters Without Borders also stated that RCD-Goma would continue to harass media personnel in the area who attempted to retain independence. Reporters Without Borders was established to preserve the right of freedom of expression for all press personnel worldwide. (Reporters sans frontières, July 22, 2002)

ERITREA-ETHIOPIA

Annan calls for adjusting UNMEE mandate: UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan called for an adjustment of the mandate of the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) July 21 to help implement the recent ruling on the border between the two countries. Annan said that UNMEE could help with the expeditious and orderly implementation of the border ruling, issued April 13 by the independent Boundary Commission based in The Hague, Netherlands. The new mandate would entail mine clearance, cooperation between the parties on technical modalities for transferring territorial control, and providing administrative and logistical support to the Boundary Commission. Special Representative to Ethiopia and Eritrea Legwaila Joseph Legwaila stated July 19 that UNMEE has the human resources to carry out de-mining, but lacks the funds and that hiring private companies to the de-mining of the border would be cheaper, but Legwaila believed that UNMEE de-miners are needed to carry out the process fully. The disputed border between Ethiopia and Eritrea is the most heavily mined region in the world with tens of thousands of mines littering the area for demarcation. 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. (IRIN, July 22, 2002)

Ethiopia told to withdraw settlement from Eritrea: The Ethiopia-Eritrea Boundary Commission (EEBC) ordered the Ethiopian government July 17 to stop a resettlement programme on Eritrean territory. An EEBC investigation team had found evidence of a recent tent settlement, housing some 90 persons in the western region of Ethiopia, 0.4 miles west of the delimitation line established by the Commission's April 13 border ruling. The order was issued in response to an Eritrean letter dated June 7 urging the Commission to adopt interim measures ordering Ethiopia to stop settling its nationals on territory that was determined by the April 13 ruling to fall within Eritrean sovereignty. (BBC, July 22, 2002)

GUATEMALA

UN demands an end to impunity: The UN called on the government of Guatemala July 22 to end impunity for paramilitaries accused of atrocities during the country's 36-year civil war to and investigate attacks against human rights groups that have sought prosecution of those paramilitaries. UN Special Representative on Human Rights Hina Jilani stated that the situation has become very dangerous and that "activists and their families have been threatened at gunpoint." She also stated that many human rights advocates have had phone calls intercepted and their houses and offices ransacked. Some human rights advocates have accused those with close ties to the government of threatening them. Under the 1996 peace agreement, amnesty was given to army officers and paramilitaries for war crimes. No high-ranking military officers have been brought forward to stand trial for human rights violations since the end of the 36-year civil war that left more than 200,000 people dead. (www.worldnn.com, July 22, 2002)

MACEDONIA

Dutch Radio accuses U.S. of aiding terrorists: Dutch Radio July 19 accused the U.S. government of "aiding and abetting terrorists" in Macedonia during the nation's seven-month civil war in 2001. Based on reports by a Dutch military firm, Dutch Radio stated that the U.S. used the services of Military Professional Resources Inc. (MPRI) to assist and train mercenaries and Albanian rebels of the National Liberation Army (NLA) during its struggle with the Macedonian government. MPRI also reportedly trained Macedonian government forces during the civil war. MPRI was established as a private military company that has no political or ideological attachments to any groups, and has trained rebels in other Balkan states, such as Bosnia, Kosovo, and Croatia as well as other governments such as Nigeria and Colombia. The Macedonian conflict began in February 2001 after the NLA took up arms against the Macedonian military to fight for the rights of ethnic Albanians. (UPI, July 17, 2002)

MADAGASCAR

President creates commission to pursue former leader: President Marc Ravalomanana stated July 22 his intention to arrest former President Didier Ratsiraka and try him for "encouraging terrorism and ordering theft" from the country's central bank. Ratsiraka fled Madagascar July 5 for exile in France after numerous countries recognized Ravalomanana as President. Ravalomanana stated that fighting government corruption and boosting the economy were his primary goals for the country, but that building a commission to arrest Ratsiraka was also a key issue. Ravalomanana's announcement was the most recent development in the ongoing crisis that emerged when Ratsiraka refused to relinquish power after Madagascar's high court declared Ravalomanana president April 29 following a recount of votes in the December 2001 elections. (BBC, July 22, 2002)

Country withdraws from ACP meeting: Madagascar was forced to withdraw from the African Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) council of ministers meeting July 19 due to opposition from other African ministers. Two delegates representing the two rival presidents were present at the meeting and were told they could not participate in the

summit largely due to influence from the African Union (AU). The AU froze Madagascar's seat June 21 and refused to recognize either adversary as legitimate leader of the country until new elections were held. The ACP, an inter-governmental organization with representatives from 78 countries, met to discuss regional solidarity, mutuality of purpose, and derivation of benefits through the industries of trade and investment. (The Post, July 19, 2002)

NEPAL

Government rejects peace talk offer: Nepal's government July 20 rejected the latest offer from Maoist rebels to resume peace talks. Maoist rebel leader, Pushpa Kamal Dahal alias Prachanda, made an offer for peace July 19 in a statement that was sent to newspapers. However, the offer gave no indication as to whether the rebels would disarm if peace talks resumed, and Nepal's Assistant Home Minister Devendra Raj Kandel said that the rebels could not be trusted unless they surrender their arms. The Maoists launched an insurgency February 1996 to topple the constitutional monarchy and install a "people's republic." Since the fighting began, more than 4,700 people have been killed. (BBC, Times of India, July 20, 2002)

UK creates defense package: The government of the United Kingdom (UK) announced July 23 that they would provide more than \$4.5 million worth of defense equipment to Nepal to aid in the government's battle against Maoist rebels. The defense package would include two helicopters, explosive ordinance disposal tools, communication devices, and training for "peace support operations" and civil-military cooperation. The defense package was described as a gift that was part of a wider support package from the UK to fight against the Maoists. The funds for the package came from the Global Conflict Prevention Pool, which is managed jointly by Britain's Ministry for Defense, Foreign Office, and the International Development Department. (BBC, July 23, 2002)

Police discover Maoist helipad and training camps: An intelligence report issued July 22 by the Bihar district police stated that Maoist rebels created a helipad in the jungles of Bihar and have been using helicopters to transport their leaders and weapons. It was also reported that the rebels had set up training camps in the districts of East and West Champaran, where approximately 300 rebels were training, aided by Indian Maoists that have provided hideouts and training facilities in return for arms. In June 2002 the government of India pledged support to the government of Nepal in their fight against the Maoist rebels. (Himalayan Times, July 22, 2002)

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS

New UN rights chief is selected: Brazilian diplomat Sergio Vieira de Mello was selected to succeed Mary Robinson as the UN Commissioner for Human Rights July 22 and take office September 12, 2002. De Mello, a UN veteran who studied philosophy in Rio de Janeiro and Paris, has served as the UN Chief envoy to East Timor, the Deputy High

Commissioner for Refugees, an UN Administrator in Kosovo, and Deputy Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs. Human Rights Watch welcomed his appointment, but voiced some reservations about his lack of hands-on human rights experience. Mary Robinson, a barrister and the first female President of Ireland, was known to take controversial stands, in particular on the Middle East conflict. (AFP, July 22, 2002)

Croatian court releases war crimes suspects: Seven former Croatian military policemen charged with killing two ethnic Serbian civilians in 1992 and torturing many others from 1991 to 1995 in Lora military prison, were released from custody July 21 by a court in the southern Croatian Adriatic town of Split. A Split-based human rights group that had collected evidence on atrocities committed in Lora, warned that the men would probably go into hiding if appealed to the UN war crimes tribunal in The Hague, Netherlands. The July 21 court ruling followed the demise of a request by Croatia's State Attorney Mladen Bajic to change the venue of the trial, arguing that witnesses, reporters, and observers in Split were being intimidated. More than 60 people have been called on to testify, but all witnesses that have taken the stand have retracted earlier testimonies. Croatia's Supreme Court could overturn the court ruling if the State Attorney's office files an appeal in the next 48 hours. Croatia's government pledged to prosecute those responsible for war crimes during the recent Balkan conflict when they came to power in January 2000. (AFP, July 22, 2002)

EU extends Zimbabwe travel ban: The European Union (EU) Foreign Ministers extended a travel ban on Zimbabwean politicians June 22 to include an additional 52 members of the ruling Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (Zanu-PF) party, due to human rights violations. Since February 2002, Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe and 19 of his closest aides were already on a list of sanctions, including travel to any EU country and the freezing of financial assets in the EU. The new list included all remaining key Zanu-PF personnel, as well as President Mugabe's wife, Grace Mugabe. The extension was triggered by British demands for tougher EU action in the face of the worsening humanitarian situation in Zimbabwe, which the British government said was a result of the government's land reform policy. Zimbabwean critics of the EU's intervention have accused the British government of neo-colonial interference, while human rights groups highlighted the difficulties faced by large numbers of black farm workers as well as smaller numbers of dispossessed white farmers. Specific EU concerns included the impasse in inter-party dialogue between Zanu-PF and opposition party Movement for Democratic Change, violations of human rights, and restrictions on the media. (DPA, July 22, 2002)