



Peace & Justice Update
July 20, 2007
(Volume 16, Number 3)

The countries for the Peace & Justice Updates have been chosen as areas of focus at the Institute.

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SOURCE ABBREVIATIONS

ADNKI	=	ADNKI (www.adnki.com)
AfricaFocus	=	AfricaFocus (www.africafocus.org)
AFP	=	Agence France-Presse (www.afp.com)
AI	=	Amnesty International (www.amnesty.org)
AllAfrica	=	AllAfrica Global Media (www.allafrica.com)
American Chronicle	=	American Chronicle(www.americanchronicle.com)
ANN	=	Afghan News Network (http://afghannews.net/)
Asian Tribune	=	Asian Tribune (www.asiantribune.com)
AP	=	Associated Press (www.ap.org)
The Australian	=	The Australian (www.theaustralian.news.com.au/)
AWID	=	Association for Women's Rights in Development (www.awid.org)
B92	=	B92 Net (www.b92.net/eng/)
B92 News	=	B92 News (www.b92.net/eng/news)
BBC	=	British Broadcasting Corporation (http://news.bbc.co.uk)
BBC Monitoring	=	BBC Monitoring International Reports (www.monitor.bbc.co.uk)
Cape Times	=	The Cape Times (www.capetimes.co.za)
CBC News	=	CBC News (www.cbc.ca)
CIA	=	CIA - The World Factbook (www.cia.gov)
Concord Times	=	The Concord Times (www.concordtimesl.com)
Daily News	=	Daily News, Sri Lanka (www.dailynews.lk)
einnews	=	The Russia News Service - http://www.einnews.com/kyrgyzstan/
eng24.kg	=	News Agency 24 (http://eng.24.kg/)
EU	=	European Union (www.europa.eu.int)
FMM	=	Free Media Movement (www.freemediasrilanka.org)
Gazeta	=	Gazeta (www.gazeta.ru/english/)
Guardian	=	Guardian Unlimited Network (www.guardian.co.uk)
The Hindu	=	The Hindu Newspaper (www.hinduonnet.com/)
HRW	=	Human Rights Watch (www.hrw.org)
ICC	=	International Criminal Court (www.icc-cpi.int)
ICG	=	International Crisis Group (www.crisisweb.org)
ICTY	=	International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (www.un.org/icty)
IHT	=	International Herald Tribune (www.iht.com/)
Independent	=	The Independent (www.independent.co.uk)
IndiaTimes	=	India Times (www.timesofindia.indiatimes.com)
IPS News Agency	=	Inter Press Service News Agency (http://ipsnews.net)
IRIN	=	Integrated Regional Information Network (www.irinnews.org)
IRNA	=	Islamic Republic News Agency - http://www2.irna.ir/en/news
ISN	=	International Relations and Security Network (www.isn.ethz.ch/index.cfm)
IWPR	=	Institute for War & Peace Reporting (www.iwpr.net)
Kantipur Online	=	The Kantipur Online (www.kantipuronline.com)
Kathmandu Post	=	The Kathmandu Post (www.nepalnews.com.np)
KDD	=	KyrgyzstanDailyDigest (www.eurasianet.org/resource/kyrgyzstan/)
Khaleej Times	=	Khaleej Times (www.khaleejtimes.com)
KL	=	KosovaLive (www.kosovalive.com)
Jurist	=	The Jurist (http://jurist.law.pitt.edu)
LA Times	=	Los Angeles Times (www.latimes.com)
Mehr	=	The Mehr News Agency - http://www.mehrnews.com/en/

Monitor	=	The Monitor (www.monitor.co.ug)
Nepal News	=	Nepal News (www.nepalnews.com)
Nepali Times	=	Nepali Times (www.nepalitimes.com)
News Afghanistan	=	Afgaha.com- News- Afghanistan (http://afgha.com/)
New Vision	=	New Vision (www.newvision.co.ug)
News24	=	News24 (www.news24.com)
Novosti	=	RIA Novosti (http://en.rian.ru/)
NYT	=	The New York Times (www.nytimes.com)
Pajhwok	=	Pajhwok Afghan News (www.pajhwok.com)
PANA	=	Panafrican News Agency (www.panapress.com)
PDO	=	People's Daily Online (http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/)
PINR	=	Power and Interest News Report (www.pinr.com)
Oxfam Great Britain	=	Oxfam Great Britain (www.oxfam.org.uk)
RadioFreeEurope	=	RadioFreeEurope, Radio Liberty (www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2007/)
Reuters	=	Reuters (www.reuters.com)
RSF	=	Reporters sans frontières (www.rsf.org)
Scotsman	=	The Scotsman (http://news.scotsman.com)
SC-SL	=	The Special Court for Sierra Leone (www.sc-sl.org)
SEAPA	=	Southeast Asian Press Alliance (www.seapabkk.org)
SERBIANNA	=	Serbianna.com (www.serbianna.com)
SLCMP	=	Sierra Leone Court Monitoring Program (www.slcmp.org)
The SMH	=	The Sydney Morning Herald (http://www.smh.com.au/)
SomaliNet	=	SomaliNet (www.somalinet.com/)
The Star	=	The Star.com (www.thestar.com/)
ST	=	Sudan Tribune (www.sudantribune.com)
TamilNet	=	TamilNet (www.tamilnet.com)
TCA	=	Times of Central Asia (www.timesca-europe.com/)
TP	=	Turkish Press (www.turkishpress.com)
Transparency Int.	=	Transparency International (http://transparency.org/)
UNESCO	=	UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (www.unesco.org)
UNHCHR	=	UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (www.unhcr.ch)
UNICEF	=	UN Children's Fund (www.unicef.org)
UNIFEM	=	UN Development Fund for Women (www.unifem.org)
UN News Center	=	UN News Center Homepage (www.un.org)
VOA	=	Voice of America (www.voanews.com)
Web India	=	Web India (www.webindia123.com)
WP	=	The Washington Post (www.washingtonpost.com)
Xinhua	=	Xinhua (http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2007-07/08/)

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UPDATES

AFGHANISTAN

Bin Laden praises martyrs on internet video: On July 15, IntelCenter, a U.S. intelligence group that monitors terrorist messages, found what appears to be a new video clip of Osama Bin Laden praising “all martyrs of Islam”. The video clip, posted on a militant web site, is the first message from Bin Laden in more than a year. The undated clip is part of a 40-minute video featuring fighters who are supposedly with al-Qaeda in Afghanistan paying tribute to fellow militants who have recently been killed there. In the brief clip, Bin Laden glorified all those who have died in the name of jihad. “Even the prophet Muhammad had wished to be a martyr,” he said. The authenticity of the video has not been verified, but it appeared on a website commonly used by Islamic militants and carried the logo of as-Sahab, al-Qaeda’s media production wing. Al-Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden, believed to be hiding in northwestern Pakistan, has been wanted by U.S. intelligence since the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks he and his fundamentalist group allegedly orchestrated. (American Chronicle; The Scotsman, July 16; 2007)

Karzai pardons adolescent would-be suicide bomber: President Hamid Karzai pardoned a 14-year-old would-be suicide bomber from Pakistan July 15 in the presidential palace in Kabul. The boy was on a mission to assassinate Arsala Jamal, the governor of Khost province, when he was caught on a motorcycle and wearing a suicide vest in the provincial capital. A Muslim boy sent to a madrassa by his father to learn the Koran, he instead received in-depth training on how to drive a car and perform suicide bombings. According to the boy he did not want to carry out the attack but still crossed the Afghan-Pakistani border where he was met by a man who gave him a suicide vest and ordered him to carry out the murder plot. Karzai stated, “His family thought their child was learning Islamic studies. That is not his fault, nor his father’s. The enemies of Islam wanted him to destroy his life and those of other Muslims. I pardon him and wish him good life.” Afghanistan has suffered a wave of suicide attacks against Afghan, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and U.S.-led forces over the past two years by Taliban insurgents and al-Qaeda allies. (BBC, July 16; The Sydney Morning Herald, July 17; 2007)

KOSOVO

Russia rejects third UN resolution: Russia has rejected the latest resolution on Kosovo’s final status. The United States and the European Union (EU) which had sponsored the resolution have called it the “final attempt” to reach agreement over this issue with Moscow. The latest draft resolution entails handing the administration of Kosovo over to the EU after the 120-day negotiation period and having NATO-led troops remain in the province to help maintain security. Russia’s ambassador to the United Nations, Vitaly Churkin, has said that the changes to the prior resolutions did little to hide the sponsors’ intention to push for Kosovo’s independence as “almost the entire text and maybe particularly the annexes are permeated with the concept of the independence of Kosovo.” Russia opposes any move towards Kosovo’s independence and has made clear Serbia must consent to any solution before Russia will give its approval in the Security Council. The issue of Kosovo’s final status has been a controversial topic since it became a UN-administered province in 1999. (AP, July 16; IHT, July 17; Reuters, July 18; 2007)

Unilateral declaration of independence to bypass UN discussed as possibility: On July 13 Kosovar Albanians told Western diplomats who have been negotiating with Russia to stop their fruitless efforts to gain Russia and Serbia’s consent, and to prepare for a unilateral declaration of independence. Kosovo President Fatmir Sejdiu has promised that Kosovo will become independent within its current borders and has stated that alternative routes to independence should be sought if there is no foreseeable solution through the UN Security Council. The EU announced July 12 that it could

withdraw the issue of Kosovo's final status from the UN Security Council if no agreement could be reached with Russia. European Union foreign policy chief Javier Solana made the announcement July 16 after Russia rejected the third draft resolution, though he has expressed hopes that the issue of Kosovo's final status would be decided in the context of the United Nations. In hopes of discouraging support for such a declaration, Serbia has drafted a parliamentary resolution that threatens an "energetic" response to any country which recognizes Kosovo as an independent state. Kosovar Albanians have begun to speak of the inevitability of a change in status with or without the desired UN approval. A unilateral declaration of independence has the potential to destabilize the region and cause tensions to escalate into violence. Kosovo has been an UN-administered province since 1999; 90 percent of its two million inhabitants are ethnic Albanians, the majority of whom favor independence. (AP, July 16; Reuters, July 13, 17; 2007)

KYRGYZSTAN

Concern over extremist groups leads to stricter laws: Kyrgyzstan has announced that it plans to tighten regulation and surveillance of religious groups within its borders. The religious composition of the people of Kyrgyzstan is 75 percent Muslim, 20 percent Russian Orthodox, and 5 percent other. As many as 2,100 religious organizations are currently registered according to director of the State Agency for Religious Matters; up to 400 more are reportedly operating illegally. Kalmatov has stated these illegal groups are causing "great difficulties" and have led to increasing concerns about extremist groups in Kyrgyzstan. Kyrgyz law requires all religious groups to be registered and to have an operating charter. The authorities are entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring these registered groups do not violate the law. The groups currently operating illegally include Reverend Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi's Transcendental Meditation movement, and Hizb ut-Tahrir (Party of Liberation). The government detained one of the local leaders of Hizb ut-Tahrir, Alisher Iminzhanov, in southern Kyrgyzstan July 17. Iminzhanov was detained in the city of Osh as part of a wider effort to dismantle the activities of extremist organizations, according to the Interior Ministry. Hizb ut-Tahrir is an outlawed extremist group that advocates establishing a worldwide Islamic state. As of yet, the government has not provided details regarding the new, tougher legislation. The government of this Central Asian country has expressed increasing concerns over religious extremism and Islamic extremism in particular. Kyrgyzstan has struggled with political turmoil since it gained independence from the former Soviet Union in 1991. (AP, July 12; einnews; July 17; 2007)

Government moves to strengthen ties with Iran: Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad issued a decree July 14 for the implementation of a treaty on legal cooperation in civil and criminal law recently signed by Iran and Kyrgyzstan. The treaty provides equal rights for nationals of each country within both countries and for the extradition of suspects and individuals convicted of crimes in absentia. On July 15, in a meeting with Kyrgyz Deputy Foreign Minister Kadyrbek Sarabayev, Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki called for closer cooperation between Iran and Kyrgyzstan regarding customs and the transit of goods. Mottaki has recently spoken of the 15 years of positive cooperation and relations the two countries share and of how, in his view, closer cooperation should enhance their mutual economic and commercial transactions. Iranian Commerce Minister Masud Mir-Kazemi spoke July 16 of building a foundation for further cooperation through investment and increased ties between the two nations' private sectors. The largely rural Central Asian state has also been working to strengthen cooperation with China and Russia in recent weeks. (IRNA, July 15; Mehr, July 14, 16; 2007)

NEPAL

Political parties register with Election Commission: On July 14 and 15, a total of 15 parties were registered with the Election Commission (EC) as contestants for the November 22 constituent assembly elections. A total of almost 100 parties have applied to the EC and most are awaiting a decision on whether they will be granted party status for the polls. Eleven political parties were registered with the EC on July 14 and four more parties did likewise the next day. Those that registered Sunday include six that are currently part of the interim governing coalition – the Nepali Congress, Communist Party of Nepal (United Marxist Leninist), Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), Nepali Congress (Democratic), Nepal Sadbhawana Party (Anandi Devi) and the Nepal Workers and Peasants Party (NWPP). The election is the centerpiece of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between the former seven-party government and the Maoists which was signed November 2006 to end Nepal's ten-year civil war. After the CPA, the Maoists laid down their arms and joined parliament and government. Once elected, the constituent assembly will decide the fate of the monarchy and write a new national constitution, under whose terms the next general elections will be conducted for a new parliament. ([nepalnews](#), July 16; 2007)

Government to provide security for Maoist leadership: Senior Maoist leaders have been assigned government security personnel for their protection. Twenty-six central committee members of the Maoists, including supremo Prachanda and second-in-command Baburam Bhattarai, are to be assigned a special police team headed by a Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP). Fifty police officers have been assigned to protect Prachanda and the Maoist party headquarters. These personnel have been authorized to bear a total of 10 assault rifles and seven pistols. While the plainclothes Nepal Police team will be providing external security for Maoist leaders and their residences, internal security will be handled by armed Maoists. The assignment of state police to guard the top leaders of the former rebel Maoists is a significant development in relations between the state and the former insurgents. The state security apparatus and the Maoists were at war with each other as recently as 15 months ago. ([eKantipur](#), July 16; 2007)

PHILIPPINES

Anti-terror legislation draws flak: A new Human Security Act promulgated July 14 has come under widespread criticism from various quarters. The chief critics of the new law have been left-leaning Filipino lawmakers and the country's influential Roman Catholic Church. The Human Security Act has defined 12 violent criminal deeds – including murder, kidnapping, arson, piracy and rebellion – as terrorism. Leftist lawmakers fear that any legitimate expression of public unrest such as labor strikes, demonstrations and civil disobedience could be classified as rebellion and thus deemed terrorist acts which could invite harsh consequences. The vague and broad legislation could be a “recipe for authoritarian rule,” said House of Representatives member Satur Ocampo. Representative Ocampo is leading a group of like-minded congressmen who filed a bill July 15 to repeal the Act. Opponents of the Act have further expressed worries that it could embolden rogue elements within the Filipino armed services accused of carrying out summary executions and causing disappearances of mainly leftist and communist political activists since President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo came to power in 2001. Arroyo and her administration have defended the law as a necessary tool to fight terrorists by restricting their funding and preventing actions such as attacks on infrastructure. The Philippines government has been engaged in long-running battles with a host of communist and Muslim separatist groups throughout the island nation. ([BBC](#), July 15, 2007; [AP](#), July 16; 2007)

Tension mounts between rebels and government forces: A ceasefire between the Philippines government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) rebels was in danger of collapse as the government moved an extra battalion of marines to the island of Basilan July 13 following the deaths of

14 marines and four rebels July 11. The MILF maintains that the massing of forces by the government constitutes a violation of the ceasefire and a needless provocation. The 14 marines were killed as they were looking for an Italian priest kidnapped June 10 by unidentified armed elements. The government has claimed that it has a list of the rebels responsible for the beheadings and has asked them to be handed over, failing which it has threatened to “apply all options available.” The MILF has admitted to the killings of the marines, citing the latter’s entry into territory controlled by the MILF without permission and in violation of the terms of the ceasefire agreement. The MILF has been engaged in hostilities with the Philippines government since 1981 when it was formed. (Reuters Africa, July 15, 2007; PDO, July 16; 2007)

SIERRA LEONE

UK agrees to imprison Taylor if he is convicted: On July 13 the United Kingdom and the Special Court for Sierra Leone, with the backing of the UN, signed a sentence enforcement agreement that cements the UK’s commitment to imprison former Liberian president Charles Taylor if he is convicted by the court. Fear of inciting violence in West African nations prompted authorities to move Taylor’s trial off-site to The Hague. For similar reasons, Taylor will be held in Britain if convicted of war crimes. Britain commended the trial as a vital step in ensuring stability and peace in Sierra Leone. Taylor, who faces 11 counts of war crimes, has been rescheduled to appear in court August 20. He and his legal team have postponed the trial twice after demanding time to assemble an adequate defense. This latest agreement is the most recent cooperation between Britain and Sierra Leone. Eight years after having intervened to bring an end to the nation’s civil war, the former colonial power is demonstrating support for the Special Court, a key element in Sierra Leone’s attempts to rebuild and establish peace and stability. (Reuters, UN News, July 13; 2007)

Court established to hear election-related cases: Christiana Thorpe, Chairperson and Commissioner of the National Electoral Commission, announced that courts would be introduced to address concerns surrounding the national elections next month. On July 16, the courts began to hear cases in four cities. With elections less than one month away and election-related violence escalating, the courts hope to enforce the rule of law and discourage malpractices. In the past weeks, Sierra Leone has seen the violent targeting of major parties’ headquarters, conflicts over campaign slogans and increased public participation in campaigns. The specialized courts intend to hear relevant cases in a timely manner, rendering the process more expedient than it would have been if all cases were to wait for the High Court itself to hear them. Thorpe expressed the hope that, as a division of the High Court, these courts would be imbued with similar authority. The new branch extends the reach of the national justice system leading up to the August 11 elections, and is the latest effort by the government to promote stability and the rule of law. (Concord Times, July 12; 2007)

SOMALIA

Peace talks delayed, president reaffirms commitment to fight rebels: The twice-delayed national peace conference scheduled to commence Sunday, July 15 was again postponed to allow delegates sufficient time to arrive. The national reconciliation meeting, organized by the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in Mogadishu, seeks to attract over 1,000 clan leaders, former warlords, local elders, and politicians. It seeks to reconcile differences, negotiate disarmament, and coordinate natural resource distribution among these representatives. The conference enjoys security provided by the Ethiopian army, a fact that precludes various officials, particularly some from the influential Hawiye clan from attending. This clan allegedly maintains ties to the ousted Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) which sought to impose Sharia law in Somalia in late 2006. Supporters of the UIC have engaged in guerrilla warfare against the TFG since the latter resumed power in January 2007. The conference did convene July 16

with partial attendance, and President Abdullahi Yusuf reaffirmed his commitment to fight Islamist insurgents until their complete elimination. The insurgents aim to overthrow the government and expel the Ethiopian army. (BBC, July 15; SomaliNet, July 15; 2007)

Alternate conference scheduled by government dissenters: On September 1st Somali politicians, local elders, religious leaders, and businessmen opposed to the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and its Ethiopian allies were to hold a peace conference, parallel to one currently being held in Mogadishu. These officials reject the TFG's national reconciliation meeting scheduled to resume July 17. Their alternate conference, based in Asmara, Eritrea aims to “form a coalition whose objective is to liberate the country” from Ethiopian influence. Conference hosts hold that Ethiopia illegally invaded the country last December, now artificially sustains the current illegitimate administration, and dominates its policies. Yusuf Hassan Ibrahim, chairman of the preparatory committee, and other dissenters organized the meeting in reaction to the TFG's conference. They argue the conference is misguided because it focuses on reconciling clan differences rather than on actual issues hindering peace such as inclusion and national policy. Formed in 2004, the TFG embodies the 14th attempt to create a legitimate, centralized government in Somalia though its authority is undermined by sympathizers of the formerly ruling Union of Islamic Courts administration, who have repeatedly attacked government security forces. (AP, July 11; ST, July 12; 2007)

SRI LANKA

Government official murdered in eastern region: On Monday, July 16, Herath Abeyweera, chief secretary of the Eastern Province, was shot and killed in his office. The assassination followed the government's July 11 declaration of victory in the eastern region, where the Sri Lankan Army has made significant territorial gains. Spokesmen of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) had warned at the time of continued guerrilla attacks despite the take-over. Though no one has claimed responsibility for Monday's assassination, the government has blamed the LTTE and consequently arrested eight Tamil suspects. President Mahinda Rajapaska has publicly condemned the attack, deeming it “yet another act of savagery by the Tamil Tigers.” A blow to the government's confidence after its eastern advance, the attack pierces the façade of government control in the region. (BBC, TamilNet, July 17; 2007)

Australia changes position on LTTE suspects: After previously condemning suspected Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) backers as members of an international terrorist group, Victoria state Supreme Court Judge Bernard Bongiorno has insisted on presumed innocence for three suspects. Warning that misconduct in these cases would threaten the integrity of the nation's entire criminal justice system, Judge Bongiorno noted that unlike the European Union and the United States, Australia has not officially declared the LTTE a terrorist organization. He implied that abandoning the principle of presumed innocence would have been done for the purpose of political expediency. Instead, Judge Bongiorno set bail at 100,000 Australian dollars (USD 87,400) for each suspect. All three men were consequently released, including Arumugam Rajeevan, arrested earlier this month on charges of fundraising for the Tamil Tigers. (BBC, TamilNet, July 17; 2007)

SUDAN

Darfur rebel groups unite to negotiate with Khartoum: Various rebel groups in Darfur have formed an umbrella organization to initiate future negotiations with Khartoum, following a month and a half of negotiations in Asmara, Eritrea. The United Front for Liberation and Development (UFLD) consists of five groups: Sudan Liberation Army/Movement (Khames Abdalla Command), Sudan Liberation

Movement/Army (Unity Command), Revolutionary Democratic Front Forces, National Movement for Reform and Development, and Sudan Federal Democratic Alliance. Darfur rebels fractured into over a dozen groups after a faction within the Sudan Liberation Movement signed the controversial government peace deal, May 2006. The UN and the African Union intend to begin peace negotiations by August, which would potentially include the new Darfur umbrella group. The UFLD proposes to establish a unified administrative structure with a Leadership Council (LC) to lead negotiations, create a Joint Military Command, and rotate the chairmanship of the LC among the various rebel leaders. Not all rebel factions, including the Justice and Equality Movement and the Greater Sudan Liberation Movement, have joined but the UFLD has extended the invitation to all. Darfur insurgents have been fighting government forces and their Janjaweed militias since 2003 to protest their exclusion from a 2005 peace deal that put an end to the 22-year civil war between northern and southern Sudan and to demand more political and economic leverage. (Reuters; ST, July 14; 2007)

Khartoum arrests opposition figures over alleged sabotage plans: Mubarak al-Fadil, the former minister of tourism, and various retired military generals were arrested July 14. Al-Fadil, former presidential assistant, now serves as the current chairman of the opposition Umma Party (Reform and Renewal). The Libyan government reportedly informed Khartoum that al-Fadil had recruited its help to purchase weapons and instigate enough violence within the capital to “call on the international community for immediate intervention.” This situation could have potentially made it impossible for President Omar al-Bashir of the ruling National Congress Party to retain power. Independent analysts claim the arrests were politically motivated and intended to undermine the growing unity of al-Fadil’s Umma Party. Al-Fadil reversed his pro-government stance after being fired in 2004 for visiting the U.S. as a delegate of the Umma Party (Reform and Renewal) without consulting President al-Bashir. His criticisms of the government’s role in Darfur and his attempt to unite and empower the other half of the Umma Party threaten the government, which perceives him as a rising political adversary. (AP, July 16; ST, July 14, 15; 2007)

UGANDA

Peace Talks bring positive changes: On July 14, Uganda observed a year since the beginning of the Juba peace talks between the government and Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA). The date was an important milestone in the ongoing process from war to peace for northern Uganda, and the attempt to bring stability and normality to the lives of the internally displaced persons hoping to return safely to their homes. In the area of the Karuma Falls Bridge, the gateway to northern Uganda, there was once a military police roadblock which is now gone and people are again free to cross back and forth. In the past vehicles were only allowed to cross northwards during the day, but now about 30 percent of internally displaced persons have returned to their villages. Many schools, health centers and roads previously abandoned have now been re-opened, and the so-called night commuter centers have been closed. Yet despite the progress and the return home of hundreds of thousands of internally displaced persons, Ugandans still feel fearful and hope the progress can be sustained in order to ultimately bring a secured end to the 21-year-old conflict between the LRA and the Ugandan government. (All Africa; BBC; New Vision, July 16; 2007)

Former health minister on trial: On July 15, the judge in the embezzlement trial of former Health Minister Jim Muhwezi announced that the case would be adjourned until late October. Muhwezi is accused of embezzling almost \$4.3 million, and with four other former senior government officials is also charged with abuse of office, specifically of misusing grants from the Global Alliance for Vaccinations and Immunizations and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. The judge adjourned the trial in order to allow a new prosecution team more time to study the evidence; the accused were first charged and released on bail in May. Muhwezi, a close ally of President Yoweri

Museveni, has been under suspicion before. While state minister for primary education in the 1990s, he was questioned in parliament over his personal wealth, and eventually lost his ministerial portfolio. In 2001 he returned to government as minister of health, but soon thereafter investigations began regarding the fate of the Global Fund monies, and he was dropped from the cabinet. The Global Fund halted \$150 million in grants to Uganda August 24, 2005. Accountability has been one of the greatest challenges facing the government. In Transparency International's 2006 annual report, Uganda received a score of 2.7, with a score of ten meaning "uncorrupt" and one, "highly corrupt." This represents a challenge to Uganda's previous reputation for clean government. (BBC, July 17; New Vision, July 15; The Monitor, July 16; Transparency International, July 19; 2007)