

CrisisWatch

A monthly bulletin by the ICG on current and potential conflicts around the world



1 October 2003, N°2

CrisisWatch:

- **summarises** briefly developments during the previous month in some 70 situations of current or potential conflict, listed alphabetically by region, providing references and links to more detailed information sources (all references mentioned are hyperlinked in the electronic version of this bulletin);
- **assesses** whether the overall situation in each case has, during the previous month, significantly deteriorated, significantly improved, or on balance remained more or less unchanged;
- **alerts** readers to situations where, in the coming month, there is a particular risk of new or significantly escalated conflict, or a particular conflict resolution opportunity (noting that in some instances there may in fact be both); and
- **summarises** ICG reports and briefing papers that have been published in the last month.

CrisisWatch is compiled by ICG's Brussels Research Unit, drawing on multiple sources including the resources of our more than 90 staff members across five continents, who already report on some 40 of the situations listed here. Comment and suggestions as to how the bulletin might be improved (addressed to crisiswatch@crisisweb.org) would be much appreciated.

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September 2003 Trends



Deteriorated Situations

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Improved Situations

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October 2003 Watchlist



Conflict Risk Alert

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| Côte d'Ivoire (p.3) | Nepal (p.6) |
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| Israel/Occupied Territories (p.9) | Iraq (p.10) |



Conflict Resolution Opportunity

Sudan (p.3)

The International Crisis Group

is an independent, non-profit, multinational organisation, with over 90 staff members on five continents, working through field-based analysis and high-level advocacy to prevent and resolve deadly conflict. ICG's approach is grounded in field research. Teams of political analysts are located within or close by countries at risk of outbreak, escalation or recurrence of violent conflict. Based on information and assessments from the field, ICG produces regular analytical reports containing practical recommendations targeted at key international decision-takers, and backed up with high level advocacy. ICG is chaired by former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari, and its President and Chief Executive is former Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans.



Africa

CENTRAL AFRICA

↓ Burundi Peace talks between government and largest Hutu rebel group (FDD) collapsed on 16 September. Fighting between FDD and other main Hutu rebel group (FNL) near capital forced an estimated 47,500 to flee homes. Government imposed curfew on parts of capital. FNL rebels killed at least eight civilians and four soldiers in fighting on 21 September.

- ["Rebel fighting displaces 47,500 civilians"](#), IRIN News.org, 25 September 2003.
- ["12 killed as Burundi civil war continues"](#), *The Guardian*, 23 September 2003.
- ["Burundi peace summit ends in disagreement"](#), Reuters, 16 September 2003.
- For background to the ceasefire, see ICG Africa Briefing, ["The Burundi Rebellion and the Ceasefire Negotiations"](#), 6 August 2002 at www.crisisweb.org

↙ Central African Republic National reconciliation talks commenced 15 September, to run to end of month. Defence minister announced on 30 September that former fighters and militiamen are about to be demobilised and reintegrated into civilian life.

- ["Defence ministry reveals demobilisation plan"](#), IRIN News.org, 30 September 2003.
- ["Mutiny leader testifies at national reconciliation talks, seeks forgiveness"](#), IRIN News.org, 26 September 2003.
- For background, see ["Country Profile - Central African Republic"](#), BBC News, 27 May 2003.

↙ Chad Negotiating security pact with Nigeria to clamp down on smuggling, human-trafficking and cross border banditry.

- ["Security pact negotiated with Niger and Chad"](#), IRIN News.org, 4 September 2003.

↙ Democratic Republic of Congo UN mission to DRC (MONUC) took over from French-led peacekeeping force (IEMF) in Bunia on 1 September. MONUC has Chapter VII mandate and is tasked to establish peace and security in troubled Ituri and Kivus regions. MONUC currently has 2,500 troops, expected to increase to 4,000. Spokesman for transitional government accused members of former rebel movement RCD-Goma - now part of transitional government - of fomenting new rebellion.

- ["RCD-Goma members accused of fomenting new rebellion"](#), IRIN News.org, 26 September 2003.
- ["UN continues to boost troop strength in Bunia"](#), UN News Centre, 11 September 2003.
- For background to the conflict in Ituri, see ICG Africa Report N°64, ["Congo Crisis: Military Intervention in Ituri"](#), 13 June 2003 at www.crisisweb.org

↙ Rwanda Paul Kagame sworn in as president on 12 September after winning first direct universal suffrage elections since 1994. EU observer team had strong reservations about openness and fairness of electoral environment. Voting in parliamentary elections commenced on 30 September. New prosecutor of International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), Hassan Jallow, commenced four-year term on 15 September.

- ["Rwandans vote in landmark poll"](#), BBC News, 30 September 2003.

- ["Rwanda prosecutor starts work"](#), BBC News, 15 September 2003.
- Rodrique Ngowi, ["Kagame sworn in as Rwanda's president"](#), *The Guardian*, 12 September 2003.
- For background to the August elections, see ICG Africa Report N°53, ["Rwanda at the End of the Transition: A Necessary Political Liberalisation"](#), 13 November 2002 at www.crisisweb.org



ICG Africa Report N°69, ["The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda: Time for Pragmatism"](#), 26 September 2003 (Report in French, executive summary and recommendations also in English).

The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), which has been given a new lease on life by the recent UN Security Council decision to grant it its own prosecutor and additional judges, needs to become more efficient quickly. The new prosecutor should complete all his genocide-related investigations by 2004 so the court can conclude the initial proceedings by 2008. However, he must also keep a close eye on the progress of the Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA) dossiers. The ICTR prosecutor must be ready to indict RPA members if the Kigali Government fails to act, because reconciliation in Rwanda ultimately requires that all who committed terrible crimes in 1994 have their day in court.

↙ Uganda Government accused Sudan of supporting Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebels. Fighting continues between Ugandan armed forces and LRA rebels in north. Cabinet proposed removing constitutional two-term limit for president – paving way for President Yoweri Museveni to stand for re-election. Cabinet also proposes increasing powers for president and restricting parliament's powers.

- ["Uganda cabinet for removal of president's term limit"](#), Reuters AlertNet, 23 September 2003.
- ["Uganda openly accuses Sudan of backing rebels"](#), Reuters AlertNet, 12 September 2003.
- ["Uganda's child rebels"](#), *The Economist*, 4 September 2003.
- For background see IRIN News.org web special report on ["Crisis in Northern Uganda"](#), September 2003.

HORN OF AFRICA

↙ ✂ Ethiopia/Eritrea International Boundary Commission will soon attempt to demarcate border, although elements in Ethiopian Government have signalled reluctance to cooperate – calling for new body to rule on disputed areas. Eritrea opposes call. Mandate of UN peacekeeping mission (UNMEE) renewed for another six months. UNMEE urged both governments to speed up steps to demarcate border.

- ["Feature: A question of timing"](#), IRIN News.org, 29 September 2003.
- ["UN warns of Horn failure"](#), BBC News, 18 September 2003.
- ["UNMEE mandate extended"](#), IRIN News.org, 15 September 2003.



ICG Africa Report N°68, ["Ethiopia and Eritrea: War or Peace?"](#), 24 September 2003. The next few weeks will go far to determining whether Ethiopia and Eritrea resume their war or solidify their peace agreement. Ethiopia must decide whether to allow demarcation of the border to begin in October 2003 despite its reservations over the international Boundary Commission's final and binding ruling that the town of Badme, the original flashpoint of the war, is on the Eritrean side...

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...Demarcation of the border is a crucial component of the peace process and must be followed to its conclusion, especially as the two countries face massive humanitarian crises. The governments of Ethiopia and Eritrea, as well as the international community, should simultaneously seek creative ways to reduce the humanitarian impact on affected local populations and so make implementation more politically palatable to both parties.

➤ Somalia Delegates at peace talks in Kenya adopted charter for new government on 15 September. President Hassan of Transitional National Government (TNG), which controls small area of Mogadishu, abandoned talks and has rejected charter. TNG's mandate expired on 13 August. Breakaway Somaliland not represented at talks.

- Andrew Highland, "Delegates plan government for Somalia", *The Guardian*, 16 September 2003.
- "Somalia leader storms out of peace talks", Reuters AlertNet, 16 September 2003.
- For background, see ICG Africa Report N°59, *Negotiating a Blueprint for Peace in Somalia*, 6 March 2003 and ICG Africa Report N°66, *Somaliland: Democratisation and Its Discontents*, 28 July 2003 at www.crisisweb.org

➤ Sudan Peace talks in Kenya between Sudanese Government and rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army going well. Parties signed agreement on 25 September on security arrangements for six-year transition period – removing significant obstacle to ending conflict. Uganda claims Sudan arming Lord's Resistance Army rebels in Uganda. Parties agreed to renew for two months ceasefire due to expire at end of September.

- "Sudan deal brings war's end closer", *The Guardian*, 26 September 2003.
- Marc Lacey, "Sudan and rebels take big step to peace", *International Herald Tribune*, 26 September 2003.
- For background, see ICG Africa Report N°65, *Sudan Endgame*, 7 July 2003 at www.crisisweb.org and comment by John Prendergast and David Mozersky (ICG), "Going to Hell?", *The Observer*, 24 August 2003.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

➤ Angola Continued fighting between government and separatist rebels in oil-rich Cabinda enclave.

- "Separatist tensions run high in Angola's Cabinda", Reuters AlertNet, 19 September 2003.
- For background, see ICG Africa Report N°61, *Angola's Choice: Reform or Regress*, 7 April 2003 at www.crisisweb.org

➤ Comoros Islands Continued instability. French journalist arrested and two suspected French mercenaries held in custody in alleged coup plot. Leader of an opposition party arrested on 22 September.

- "French newsman held in suspected Comoros plot", Reuters AlertNet, 26 September 2003.

➤ Swaziland King Mswati III, sub-Saharan Africa's last absolute monarch, facing increasing opposition to his rule. Banned political party, PUDEMO, announced it would adopt more aggressive tactics to achieve political reform. Swaziland has been under state of emergency for over 30 years.

- "Rising concern over draft constitution as day of decree approaches", IRIN News.org, 26 September 2003.

- "Heightened political tensions over monarchy's rule", IRIN News.org, 16 September 2003.
- For background, see "Celebrating 30 oppressive years", *The Economist*, 15 May 2003.

➤ Zimbabwe Government shut down only private daily newspaper. Charged five of paper's directors and plans to charge its journalists for operating without licence. President Mugabe to be excluded from Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Nigeria in December as Zimbabwe still subject to Commonwealth sanctions. Zimbabwe's vice president, Simon Muzenda, died on 20 September. Government issued new temporary banknotes, valid only to 31 January 2004. Government plans to set up special courts to deal with economic and financial crimes.

- "Zimbabwe to set up special courts to deal with economic crimes", *Independent Online*, 29 September 2003.
- Andrew Meldrum, "Zimbabwe arrests banned journalists", *The Guardian*, 26 September 2003.
- "Zimbabwe issues new 'money'", iAfrica.com, 24 September 2003.
- Editorial, "The Tyranny of Robert Mugabe", *The New York Times*, 22 September 2003 (subscription).
- "Commonwealth dumps Mugabe", AllAfrica.com, 19 September 2003.
- For background see ICG Africa Briefing, *Decision Time in Zimbabwe*, 8 July 2003 at www.crisisweb.org

WEST AFRICA

➤ Côte d'Ivoire Rebels announced on 23 September they would suspend participation in power-sharing government and disarmament program because of stalling by president. One, possibly two, rebel ministers chose to remain in government, defying orders of rebel leaders to withdraw. At least 23 killed in fighting between rebels and looters in rebel held town of Bouake. French committed to keep troops in Côte d'Ivoire until 2005. Border with Burkina Faso reopened after year-long closure. President appointed ministers of Defence and Internal Security – in accordance with peace process.

- "Second rebel minister may break ranks and stay in cabinet", IRIN News.org, 26 September 2003.
- "Rebels in Ivory Coast pull out of government", *International Herald Tribune*, 24 September 2003.
- "French troops to stay in Ivory Coast till 2005", CNN.com, 17 September 2003.
- For background, see *Trapped between Two Wars: Violence Against Civilians in Western Côte d'Ivoire*, Human Rights Watch report, August 2003.

➤ Guinea President Lansana Conte confirmed he will seek new seven-year term in December elections. 69-year-old Conte, ill with diabetes and heart problems, has ruled since 1984 coup. Thousands of Liberians have fled into Guinea since mid-September to escape ongoing instability in Liberia.

- "Liberians continue fleeing into Guinea despite peace deal", Voice of America, 23 September 2003.
- "Lansana Conte confirms bid for new presidential term", IRIN News.com, 15 September 2003.
- For background on region, see ICG report on [Liberia](#) below.

➤ Guinea-Bissau Tumultuous month with new civilian leader now installed following military coup against President Kumba Yalla on 14 September. Yalla elected president in January

2000, but had repeatedly delayed scheduled elections since then. Coup, led by General Verissimo Correia Seabra, Chief of Staff of armed forces, met with widespread popular support. Businessman Henrique Rosa sworn in as interim president on 28 September. Parliamentary elections to take place in six months, followed by presidential elections 12 months later. Group of unidentified men attacked army barracks in town east of capital on 26 September. Attack repelled.

- [“New president for Guinea-Bissau”](#), CNN.com, 28 September 2003.
- [“Two killed as army repels assault on barracks”](#), IRIN News.org, 26 September 2003.
- Karyna Silva Gomes, [“Guinea-Bissau calm on day following coup”](#), *The Guardian*, 15 September 2003.

↳ Liberia UN approved peacekeeping force of 15,000 troops for Liberia. UN force to take over from ECOWAS on 1 October – but full UN force will not deploy for several months. Former President Charles Taylor trying to run Liberia from exile in Nigeria. Nigerian President Obasanjo warned Taylor against interfering in Liberia in breach of asylum conditions. Obasanjo also stated that Taylor did not have sovereign immunity – implying Taylor could be handed over to Sierra Leone Special Court if Nigeria so decides. Sekou Conneh, leader of LURD rebels, returned to Liberia from exile in Guinea. Government and rebel troops continue to commit atrocities against civilians in countryside.

- [“Thousands still fleeing harassment by gunmen”](#), IRIN News.org, 26 September 2003.
- [“LURD leader Sekou Conneh returns from Guinea”](#), IRIN News.org, 23 September 2003.
- [“UN approves 15,000 Liberia peacekeepers”](#), *The Washington Times*, 19 September 2003.
- [“Nigeria warns Taylor not to interfere in Liberia”](#), Reuters, 17 September 2003.
- For background, see ICG Africa Report N°62, [Tackling Liberia: The Eye of the Regional Storm](#), 30 April 2003 at www.crisisweb.org

↳ Mauritania 129 army officers went on trial for June coup attempt in which 15 people were killed.

- [“Mauritania coup trial”](#), *The New York Times*, 7 September 2003.

↳ Niger Negotiating security pact with Nigeria to clamp down on smuggling, human-trafficking and cross border banditry.

- [“Security pact negotiated with Niger and Chad”](#), IRIN News.org, 4 September 2003.

↳ Nigeria Several people died in fighting in oil city of Warri in Niger delta.

- [“Violence reignites in Niger delta”](#), BBC News, 18 September 2003.
- For background, see [“Nigerian leader promises healing”](#), BBC News, 29 May 2003.

↳ Sierra Leone UN extends mission (UNAMSIL) to March 2004. Failure to address corruption remains a concern. Special Court has called for international community to ensure Charles Taylor arrested and handed over for trial.

- [“UN council hails growing Sierra Leone stability”](#), Reuters, 19 September 2003.



ICG Africa Report N°67 [Sierra Leone: The State of Security and Governance](#), 2 September 2003. Since the successful elections on 14 May 2003, the donor community and the people of Sierra Leone have grown increasingly frustrated with stagnating reform and recovery. UNAMSIL is due to depart by December 2004 but the police and military are still fragile, so it would be wise to have contingency plans. The situation in neighbouring Liberia also remains a security risk. There is no systematic plan of decentralisation, and local elections scheduled to take place by the end of the year are likely to be postponed. Efforts to address rampant corruption have proved fruitless and Sierra Leone’s diamond mines remain poorly monitored with illegal mining and smuggling still estimated to produce hundreds of millions of dollars that are unaccounted for and unavailable to help rebuild the economy.

Asia /Pacific

CENTRAL ASIA

↳ Kazakhstan Corruption allegations continue to dog region’s wealthiest country. Former Mobil Oil exec. sentenced in New York to four years in prison on charges relating to bribery scheme involving U.S. consultant James Giffen, accused of giving kickbacks to Kazakh Government in exchange for oil contracts. Pro-government “Fatherland” party swept local council elections held on 20 September. Dariga Nazarbayeva, president’s daughter, announced creation of new pro-government political party, with herself as head.

- Amanjol Smagulov, [“President’s daughter makes play for power”](#), IWPR, 26 September 2003.
- Dmitry Solovyov, [“Kazakh govt dismisses oil corruption allegations”](#), Reuters, 19 September 2003.

↳ Kyrgyzstan Dissatisfaction with government remains high, particularly in south. President Akayev vowed not to run for fifth term in 2005, but there is speculation that Akayev’s wife, or even daughter, may be groomed to succeed him. Journalist, reportedly investigating high-level corruption, found dead; police say no evidence of foul play.

- [“Kyrgyzstan should investigate journalist’s mysterious death”](#), Freedom House press release, 24 September 2003.
- [“Kyrgyz first lady viewed as possible presidential contender”](#), Eurasianet.org, 15 September 2003.
- For background, see ICG Asia Report N°59, [Central Asia: Islam and the State](#), 10 July 2003; and ICG Asia Report N°37, [Kyrgyzstan’s Political Crisis: An Exit Strategy](#), 20 August 2002 at www.crisisweb.org

↳ Tajikistan Year’s large poppy harvest in Afghanistan has led to increased number of drug trafficking-related incidents. On 1 September, alleged Afghan traffickers killed Tajik police officer and took another hostage. Russian troops guarding Tajik-Afghan border seized record amounts of heroin in August.

- [“Alleged Afghan drug traffickers kill one police officer, take another hostage in Tajikistan”](#), Eurasianet.org, 3 September 2003.
- For background, see ICG Asia Report N°59, [Central Asia: Islam and the State](#), 10 July 2003 and ICG Asia Report N°51, [Tajikistan: A Roadmap for Development](#), 24 April 2003 at www.crisisweb.org

➤ Turkmenistan European Parliament considering resolution on human rights in Central Asia's most repressive country. President Niyazov continues to limit population's access to information, restrict travel abroad, and sanction human rights abuses. 77-year-old father of rights activist sent into internal exile in retaliation for daughter's dissent.

- "Father of human rights activist forced into internal exile", IRIN News.org, 8 September 2003.
- "European Parliament looks at human rights in Turkmenistan", RFE/RL, 5 September 2003.
- For background, see ICG Asia Report N°44, *Cracks in the Marble: Turkmenistan's Failing Dictatorship*, 17 January 2003 at www.crisisweb.org and *Amnesty International Annual Report 2003*.

➤ Uzbekistan Government stepping up persecution of dissenters. Journalist Ruslan Sharipov remains in prison; in letter smuggled out claims to have been tortured to confess to charges of homosexuality and sex with minors. Heavy-handedness on part of security services, including widespread use of torture, risks further radicalising segments of the Muslim population. Little danger of conflict in short term, but continuing repressive policies here, as elsewhere in region, risk future unrest.

- "Uzbek activist confessed 'under torture'", IWPR, 12 September 2003.
- Galima Bukharbaeva, "Rights crackdown mars Uzbek independence day", IWPR, 8 September 2003.
- For background, see ICG Asia Report N°59, *Central Asia: Islam and the State*, 10 July 2003 and ICG Asia Report N°58, *Radical Islam in Central Asia: Responding to Hizb ut-Tahrir*, 30 June 2003 at www.crisisweb.org

SOUTH ASIA

➤ Afghanistan Attacks by extremists against U.S. forces, government troops and aid workers continue in south. Four Afghans working for Danish NGO killed on 8 September; two other aid workers killed on 24 September while delivering clean drinking water to village in Helmand province. Growing tension between Kabul and Islamabad: Afghan Government accuses Pakistan of doing too little to prevent militants from regrouping in Pakistan. Both have agreed to reinforce troops on border to monitor crossings. Battles between local commanders in north continue to cause displacement and civilian casualties. Demobilisation and reintegration program delayed by government failure to reform defence ministry. Draft constitution to be unveiled in early October. American special envoy Zalmay Khalilzad named U.S. ambassador. NATO experts to study feasibility of expanding ISAF mandate beyond Kabul; Germany announced readiness to deploy 250-450 troops to northern city of Kunduz. More than 100 Taliban fighters killed since Coalition Operation Mountain Viper launched on 25 August.

- "Afghanistan: NATO looking to expand security force beyond Kabul", RFE/RL, 18 September 2003.
- "Afghans say senior Taliban among 15 rebels killed", Reuters AlertNet, 15 September 2003.
- "Germany sends troops to scout out expanding Afghanistan mission", Deutsche Welle, 11 September 2003.
- "Aid workers in peril", IWPR Afghan Recovery Report No. 75, 9 September 2003.
- For background, see ICG Asia Report N°62, *Afghanistan: The Problem of Pashtun Alienation*, 5 August 2003 at www.crisisweb.org



ICG Asia Report N°64, *Peacebuilding in Afghanistan*, 29 September 2003. Building a stable and peaceful Afghanistan requires that more attention be paid to local disputes. Those that frequently flare into violence typically derive from one of three causes – land and water claims, ethnic division, or family strife, particularly over the role of women. Local commanders often exploit them to consolidate their positions, further weakening the authority of the Afghan Transitional Administration in Kabul. Although these disputes attract less attention than the resurgent Taliban threat, they are as important because they produce an environment of insecurity that destroys all quality of life for ordinary civilians and allows extremism and criminality to thrive. Reconciliation initiatives need to be promoted actively at three interdependent levels: sustained international engagement, security sector reform by the Afghan Government, and local measures that will remain the only means for solving many problems.



ICG Asia Report N°65, *Disarmament and Reintegration in Afghanistan*, 30 September 2003. As Afghanistan embarks on its ambitious New Beginnings Program to demobilise large numbers of commanders and fighters, greater international engagement in the process is essential. This disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DR) process must succeed if the shattered country is ever to achieve an acceptable level of stability. Without it, none of the key elements of the political process agreed at the Bonn conference in late 2001 – including the adoption of a new constitution, judicial reform, and elections – can be meaningfully implemented. The three main components of a successful DR process for Afghanistan are: active involvement of an international security force, significant economic incentives, and an understanding of Afghan militia command structures.

➤ India (non-Kashmir) Police arrested four in connection with Mumbai blast of 25 August that killed 52 people, and shot dead its alleged mastermind. Cache of over 20,000 AK-47 rounds seized in Kolkata, which police say was bound for Kashmir. Violence continues in northeastern state of Manipur where security forces shot dead at least 13 rebels in two separate incidents. 12 (11 of whom were police) were killed in landmine explosion in Bihar state. Government blamed attack on outlawed Naxalite groups. Peace talks with Naga separatists commenced 17 September in Amsterdam.

- "Hydra's head: Will the gang of four arrested for the recent blasts lead to the rest of the iceberg?" *Outlook Magazine*, 15 September 2003.
- "Indian police shoot dead Bombay blast mastermind", Reuters AlertNet, 12 September 2003.
- "Naxalites set up land mine blast in Bihar, 11 policemen dead", *Indian Express*, 8 September 2003.
- "Arms swoop in Calcutta", BBC News, 3 September 2003.

➤ Kashmir Surge in violence casts shadow over progress in Indo-Pak normalisation. Sources say September fatalities exceed 300 – mostly rebels. War of words in UN General Assembly as Indian PM Vajpayee accused Pakistani President Musharraf of "terrorist blackmail", calling latter's offer of ceasefire an admission that Pakistan supports militants. Fragile situation in Kashmir dealt another blow as All Party Hurriyat Conference (separatist umbrella group) split. Kashmiri militant groups warned of more violence in valley.

- ["India kills 15 Islamic militants"](#), CNN.com, 29 September 2003.
- ["India attacks Kashmir 'blackmail'"](#), BBC News, 25 September 2003.
- ["Kashmiri hardliners name leader"](#), BBC News, 15 September 2003.
- For background, see ICG Asia Report N°41, ["Kashmir: The view from Srinagar"](#), 21 November 2002 at www.crisisweb.org

Maldives Unprecedented anti-government riots rocked capital, Malé, after police killed three prisoners (a fourth died later) during jail riot. Amnesty International accused President Gayoom, about to seek sixth term in office, of running repressive government.

- Jamie Wilson and Linda MacDonald, ["Trouble in paradise: riots and arrests rock the Maldives"](#), *The Guardian*, 25 September 2003.
- ["Maldives: President must act now to end the cycle of systematic repression"](#), Amnesty International press release, 23 September 2003.

Nepal Violence continues unabated since talks between government and Maoist rebels collapsed on 27 August, with more than 400 dead since breakdown in ceasefire. Maoist-initiated general strike demanding abolition of monarchy brought country to virtual standstill for three days. Little progress made in instituting all-party government or restoring normal democratic process, and anxiety increasing about possible fall of government. Rebels announced would cease hostilities during nine-day Hindu festival of Dashain, beginning on 2 October.

- ["Five killed as strike called by Maoists shuts Nepal"](#), Reuters AlertNet, 18 September 2003.
- ["Nepal rebels 'suffer heavy losses'"](#), BBC News, 17 September 2003.
- For background, see ICG Asia Report N°57, ["Nepal: Obstacles to Peace"](#), 17 June 2003 at www.crisisweb.org

Pakistan Several violent incidents in Karachi: seven killed by unknown assailants on 2 September and bombs exploded on 3 September in Sunni seminary and 19 September in office complex. Authorities detained a number of South East Asian students on suspicion of terror links. A tape attributed to Ayman al-Zawahri, Osama Bin Laden's deputy, called for Pakistanis to overthrow President Musharraf. Kashmir violence undermining chances of normalising relations with India - Pakistani foreign minister cancelled scheduled October visit.

- ["Pakistan condemns 'al Qaeda' tape"](#), BBC News, 29 September 2003.
- Amir Zia, ["Pakistan arrests four more Indonesian students"](#), Reuters AlertNet, 23 September 2003.
- ["Pakistan minister cancels planned trip to India"](#), Reuters AlertNet, 17 September 2003.
- ["Seven killed in Karachi"](#), BBC News, 2 September 2003

Sri Lanka LTTE (Tamil Tigers) pulled out of Japanese-led aid talks on 10 September. Row between Sri Lankan president and prime minister over conduct of negotiations could threaten efforts to end 20-year conflict.

- ["LTTE counter proposals by mid-October"](#), *The Hindu*, 19 September 2003.
- ["Strain grows between Sri Lanka president, PM"](#), Reuters AlertNet, 19 September 2003.

NORTH EAST ASIA

China (internal) China upped its rhetoric against militants in northwestern province of Xinjiang, claiming Uighur separatists train in Pakistan. Russian officials, fearful of damaging relations with China, denied visa to Dalai Lama. Latter says ready to return to Tibet after 45-year exile if permitted by Beijing.

- ["China marks Sept. 11 with charges against separatists"](#), Reuters AlertNet, 11 September 2003.
- Luke Harding, ["Dalai Lama eyes end to 45-year exile"](#), *The Guardian*, 5 September 2003.

North Korea Sabre-rattling has resumed since six-way multilateral talks held in August ended inconclusively. North Korea said was uninterested in holding further talks and announced was taking measures to increase nuclear deterrent. On 19 September IAEA had urged DPRK to dismantle nuclear program, but latter rejected demands four days later, calling IAEA a "political maid" of U.S. DPRK denounced deployment of new U.S. Patriot missiles in South Korea. Meanwhile, U.S. unveiled plans to fly new spy plane along DMZ. Chinese Government transferred control of border with DPRK from police to army; unconfirmed reports say it sent 150,000 troops to border region to control refugee flows.

- ["N. Korea: no talks, more nukes"](#), CNN.com, 30 September 2003.
- ["N. Korea rejects IAEA nuke demands"](#), CNN.com, 23 September 2003.
- George Jahn, ["IAEA urges North Korea to abandon nukes"](#), *The Guardian*, 19 September 2003.
- ["North Korea slams US missile move"](#), BBC News, 19 September 2003.
- For background, see ICG Asia Report N°61, ["North Korea: A Phased Negotiation Strategy"](#), 1 August 2003 at www.crisisweb.org and comment by Michael O'Hanlon, ["Think Bigger on North Korea"](#), *The Washington Post*, 17 September 2003.

Taiwan Strait Taiwan failed again in bid to regain seat at UN. Taiwanese authorities took symbolically significant step of issuing passports with "Taiwan" emblazoned on front.

- ["Taiwan fails again in UN bid"](#), BBC News, 18 September 2003.
- For background, see ICG Asia Report N°53, ["Taiwan Strait I: What's Left of 'One China'?"](#), 6 June 2003; ICG Asia Report N°54, ["Taiwan Strait II: The Risk of War"](#), 6 June 2003; and ICG Asia Report N°55, ["Taiwan Strait III: The Chance of Peace"](#), 6 June 2003 at www.crisisweb.org

SOUTH EAST ASIA

Indonesia More than 15 men suspected of links to Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) arrested in central Java; Hambali's younger brother arrested in Karachi together with five Indonesian and 13 Malaysian suspected JI members. Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, alleged spiritual leader of JI, sentenced to four years for treason, but acquitted of leading JI - both Ba'asyir and Attorney General's Office appealing sentence. Bali bomber Ali Imron given life sentence. Indonesian police warn that JI planning further bombings. Christian-Muslim tensions simmer in Poso. Peace seems to have held in Maluku in recent months where fighting between Christians and Muslims has claimed at least 5,000 lives since 1999; Government lifted three-year state of emergency on 15 September after new governor installed without incident. Military operation against separatist Free Aceh Movement (GAM) - launched mid-May after peace negotiations broke down

- looks likely to continue. Indonesian military claims 900 GAM separatists, 66 military and 304 civilians killed since most recent campaign began, but independent access to verify these or other data remains highly restricted.

- ["Police: Bali bomb-maker planning more attacks"](#), Reuters, 23 September 2003.
- ["Aceh under martial law: Unnecessary and dangerous restrictions on international humanitarian access"](#), Human Rights Watch briefing, September 2003.
- ["Indonesia lifts state of emergency in riot-ravaged Maluku islands"](#), ReliefWeb, 15 September 2003.
- ["TNI to deploy more troops to Papua"](#), *The Jakarta Post*, 4 September 2003 (subscription).
- ["Indonesia court sentences cleric Bashir to 4 years"](#), Reuters AlertNet, 2 September 2003.
- For background, see ICG Asia Report N°63, ["Jemaah Islamiyah in South East Asia: Damaged but Still Dangerous"](#), 26 August 2003 at www.crisisweb.org

- ↳ Myanmar (Burma) Aung San Suu Kyi underwent surgery on 19 September; released from hospital on 26 September into house arrest. UN envoy Razali Ismail arrived in Rangoon on 30 September, urged government to release Suu Kyi from house arrest and commence substantive talks with opposition.
 - ["UN envoy in Burma to revive talks"](#), BBC News, 30 September 2003.
 - Comment by Richard Lugar, ["Seeds of trouble from Burma"](#), *The Washington Post*, 28 September 2003.
 - Aye Aye Win, ["Burma's opposition leader back home after surgery"](#), *The Scotsman*, 27 September 2003.
 - ["Analysts fear for Suu Kyi"](#), *The Age*, 21 September 2003.

- ↳ Philippines July ceasefire between government and MILF holding – informal discussions took place on 6-7 September in Kuala Lumpur resulting in agreement to hold fresh round of formal peace talks in October following arrival of Malaysian-led ceasefire observation team. 31-year war has thus far cost over 120,000 lives. Eduardo Ermita, chief government negotiator in peace talks with Muslim rebels, appointed as new defence secretary.
 - ["Manila remains optimistic of peace settlement with MILF soon despite setbacks"](#), Channelnewsasia.com, 23 September 2003.
 - ["Manila says talks with rebels to resume in October"](#), Reuters AlertNet, 8 September 2003.

PACIFIC

- ↳ Solomon Islands Security situation continuing to improve. Australian-led multinational intervention force maintaining order and disarming population. 3,400 weapons turned in, now searching for illegal arms. Mission likely to last longer than originally planned. Harold Keke, leader of Guadalcanal Liberation Front (GLF), and top commanders on trial for murder.
 - ["Downer hails Solomon's operation"](#), News.com.au, 23 September 2003.
 - ["Solomon Islands warlord Keke back in court"](#), ABC Online, 11 September 2003.
- ↳ Papua New Guinea Australia to deploy administrators, public sector specialists and 200 police to address growing lawlessness. Deployment is condition of Australian aid program of U.S. \$220 million. PNG Government unhappy at conditionality of Australian aid.
 - ["PNG, Australia relations tense after Downer comment"](#), ABC Online, 23 September 2003.
 - Hugh White, ["Thin blue line amounts to PNG takeover"](#), *The Age*, 24 September 2003.

Europe

BALKANS

- ↳ Bosnia & Herzegovina Concerted international pressure led on 25 September to adoption by local authorities of draft law on defence reform that, if endorsed by parliament, will provide for state command over entity armies and pave way for BiH to join NATO's Partnership for Peace early next year. Draft laws on intelligence and indirect tax reform also await parliamentary endorsement. New commission to unite Mostar began work on 25 September. SFOR continues to uncover arms caches left over from war. Remains of some 500 people have been discovered in single mass grave in NE Bosnia – assumed to be Muslim wartime victims of Serbs.
 - ["Almost like one country"](#), *The Economist*, 25 September 2003 (subscription).
 - ["Bosnia must complete reforms to stay on EU course: Solana"](#), EU Business, 24 September 2003.
 - Russ Baker, ["Can foreigners fix Bosnia?"](#), *Christian Science Monitor*, 19 September 2003.
 - ["Regional NATO chief says Bosnia stability fragile"](#), Reuters AlertNet, 18 September 2003.
 - For background, see ICG Balkans Report N°146, ["Bosnia's Nationalist Governments: Paddy Ashdown and the Paradoxes of State Building"](#), 22 July 2003 at www.crisisweb.org
- ↳ Kosovo New UNMIK chief Harri Holkeri secured backing of the Contact Group for talks on technical issues between Belgrade and Kosovo's ethnic Albanian leadership to start in Vienna mid-October. Unready and disunited, Kosovo politicians responded with buck-passing and threatened non-attendance, arguing UN administration must transfer them more governmental competencies if they are to negotiate with Belgrade on equal footing. If talks take place, will be first since NATO's 1999 bombing. Insecurity over Kosovo's future status contributed to failure of UN weapons amnesty program.
 - ["First talks between Serbs, Albanians"](#), *Arab Times*, 29 September 2003.
 - ["Democratic standards still lacking in Kosovo – UN"](#), Reuters AlertNet, 18 September 2003.
 - ["Fag-ends or freedom fighters"](#), *The Economist*, 11 September 2003.
 - For background, see ICG Balkans report N°143, ["Kosovo's Ethnic Dilemma: The Need for a Civic Contract"](#), 28 May 2003 at www.crisisweb.org



ICG Europe Report N°148, ["Two to Tango: An Agenda for the New Kosovo SRSG"](#), 3 September 2003. While the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) is in its fourth year, the current period is one of the most sensitive since the war. Recent fatal attacks on Kosovo Serbs and a UN policeman show that stability is not yet deep-rooted. There is growing frustration with the poor state of the economy and with delays in addressing final status issues. The new Special Representative of the UN Secretary General (SRSG), former Finnish Prime Minister Harri Holkeri, inherits a legacy of confrontation and tension between UNMIK and Kosovo's elected Provisional Institutions of Self Government (PISG). This crucial relationship has become dangerously strained just as final status discussions approach and PISG is assuming more responsibility. He will need to instil a new attitude of respect for local elected officials and a reflex for consultation rather than unilateral action.



- Macedonia At least two gunmen killed in clash with Macedonian security forces near Kosovo border (Brest). Shadowy Albanian National Army claimed responsibility. Police vowed to hunt down ethnic Albanian militants. The incident appears to have destabilised – temporarily – Macedonia's ruling coalition. EU agreed to deploy 200-strong police force in Macedonia by 15 December.
- "EU approves police force for Macedonia", EU Business, 29 September 2003.
 - "Fag-ends or freedom fighters", *The Economist*, 11 September 2003.
 - "Macedonia police vow to root out militants", Reuters AlertNet, 8 September 2003.
 - For background, see ICG Balkans Report N°135, *Moving Macedonia Toward Self-Sufficiency: A New Security Approach for NATO and the EU*, 15 November 2002 at www.crisisweb.org

- Montenegro Montenegrin politics continue to be overshadowed by allegations of smuggling and human trafficking.
- For background, see ICG Balkans Report N°142, *A Marriage of Inconvenience: Montenegro 2003*, 7 May 2003 at www.crisisweb.org

- Serbia Attack on army vehicle in southern Serbia on 24 September, one officer wounded. Government announced presidential elections to be held on 16 November – despite failure to adopt new constitution to replace Milosevic era constitution or election law. Two elections in late 2002 failed to pick president due to low voter turnout. Presidents of Croatia and Serbia & Montenegro, during first visit by Croatian president to Serbia since war, apologised for "all the evils" committed by their countries during 1991-1995 war. One war crimes suspect arrest on 25 September.
- "Presidential elections announced, but many call vote unnecessary", RFE/RL, 19 September 2003.
 - "Presidents of Croatia, Serbia-Montenegro apologize for wartime 'evils'", RFE/RL, 10 September 2003.
 - For background, see ICG Balkans Report N°145, *Serbian Reform Stalls Again*, 17 July 2003 at www.crisisweb.org

CAUCASUS

- Georgia OSCE election monitoring experts arrived in Tbilisi ahead of 2 November parliamentary elections. Run-up to vote characterised by incidents of violence and widespread pessimism that elections will be fair. Increasing crime levels also raising concern. Justice minister resigned after mass jail break on 10 September; over 50 prisoners remain at large. U.S. announced cut in aid to Georgia, particularly to energy sector. Kidnappings and sporadic confrontations between guerrillas and Abkhazian forces reported in recent weeks. New PM approved by parliament in breakaway province of South Ossetia.
- "Georgian Security Council discusses election campaign violence", RFE/RL, 29 September 2003.
 - Natalia Antelava, "United States cuts development aid to Georgia", Eurasia Insight, 29 September 2003.
 - "Battering ram used in jail break", *The Guardian*, 12 September 2003.
- Nagorno-Karabakh OSCE Minsk Group reportedly planning attempt at kickstarting peace talks after Azerbaijani presidential election of 15 October. PM Ilham Aliyev, son of ailing president Heydar Aliyev and likely successor, expected to adopt hard line on dispute.

- "OSCE Minsk Group to unveil revised Karabakh peace proposal", RFE/RL, 19 September 2003.

EASTERN EUROPE

- Moldova Talks on dispute with breakaway region of Transdniestria remain stalled. EU still discussing possibility of sending peacekeepers to region. Russian troops appear likely to remain despite agreement promising pull-out by year's end.
- Roland Eggleston, "OSCE envoy says delays threaten timetable for draft constitution", RFE/RL, 19 September 2003.
 - Elizabeth Piper, "Soviet pride boosts Dnestr 'nation's' might", Reuters, 17 September 2003.
 - For background, see ICG Europe Report N°147, *Moldova: No Quick Fix*, 12 August 2003 at www.crisisweb.org
- Russia (Chechnya) Kremlin-backed candidate, Akhmad Kadyrov, looks set to win 5 October presidential election in Chechnya after two key opponents dropped out of race. Rebels vow to continue violence in run-up to vote. Six Russian soldiers killed in attacks on 18 and 19 September and seventh in landmine blast, days after truck bomb at security building in southern Russia killed two and wounded 25. Chechnya's acting president admitted to hospital with case of poisoning – unknown whether poisoning was deliberate.
- Editorial, "Remember Chechnya", *The Washington Post*, 26 September 2003.
 - Yuri Bagrov, "Seven Russian troops killed in Chechnya", *The Guardian*, 19 September 2003.
 - "Blast wrecks Russian security building", BBC News, 15 September 2003.
 - Susan B. Glasser, "Two major candidates off Chechen ballot", *The Washington Post*, 12 September 2003.

WESTERN EUROPE

- Corsica French justice minister visited Corsica on 1 September following upsurge in violence in August. Suspected separatist bomb damaged supermarket on 5 September.
- "Bomb blast damages supermarket in Corsica", *Kansas City Star*, 5 September 2003.
 - "Minister calms Corsica fears", BBC News, 1 September 2003.
 - For background, see "Corsica defeat leaves Paris empty-handed", *The Washington Times*, 7 July 2003.
- Cyprus Unlikely to be any progress in UN-led efforts to reunify Cyprus until December elections in Turkish Cyprus. Greek Cypriot president says he believes decisions about Cyprus are made by Turkey, not Turkish Cypriot leader.
- "Possibility of progress to end Cyprus division rests with Turkey, Greek Cypriot president says", *San Francisco Chronicle*, 25 September 2003.
- Northern Ireland Members named to International Commission for monitoring ceasefire – tasked specifically with monitoring loyalist and IRA paramilitary activities. Legislation setting up commission passed on 18 September. Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern warned that time is running out to finalise plans for elections in Northern Ireland if they are to be held this year. Unionist leader David Trimble and Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams have had

several meetings to discuss the restoration of the devolved power-sharing government.

- "Ahern: Clock ticking on Northern Ireland elections", *Newsday*, 24 September 2003.
- Brian Walker, "Ceasefire monitor gets legal approval", *The Belfast Telegraph*, 18 September 2003.
- Rosie Cowan, "Northern Ireland monitors named", *The Guardian*, 5 September 2003.

Spain (Basque region) Basque prime minister presented autonomy plan to region's parliament – Spanish Government said plan illegal. Basque regional government filed a challenge in the European Court of Human Rights against Spanish anti-terror law banning Basque separatist party Batasuna. One member of terrorist organisation ETA killed and two policemen wounded in shootout on 14 September.

- "Basque PM presents autonomy plan to parliament", Reuters AlertNet, 26 September 2003.
- "ETA ambush wounds 2 police, 1 guerrilla killed", Reuters AlertNet, 15 September 2003.
- "Challenge to Basque party ban", BBC News, 10 September 2003.

Latin America /Caribbean

LATIN AMERICA

Bolivia Trade unions have launched indefinite general strike, protesting government plans to export natural gas to U.S. Peasants in mountain region set up roadblocks.

- Grace Livingstone, "Unions in Bolivia go on strike", *The Guardian*, 29 September 2003.
- "Bolivia gas plans trigger unrest", BBC News, 16 September 2003.

Colombia Bomb outside nightclub in southern city of Florencia on 28 September killed ten and injured 50 – FARC rebels blamed. Eight foreign tourists kidnapped, one British tourist later escaped – leftist rebel group ELN claimed responsibility. FARC stepped up attacks in north, bombing freight train and blowing up gas pipeline. Heavy fighting between right-wing paramilitaries caused hundreds to flee homes in north. Human Rights Watch reported more than 11,000 child soldiers may be fighting for rebels and paramilitaries. President Uribe strongly criticised NGOs and human rights groups after they challenged government's human rights record.

- "Colombia ELN rebels say they kidnapped foreigners", Reuters, 29 September 2003.
- T. Christian Miller, "Blast in Colombia nightclub district kills 10, injures 50", *Boston Globe*, 29 September 2003.
- "Hundreds flee as rival militias clash in Colombia", Reuters, 22 September 2003.
- "Child combatants in Colombia", *The Economist*, 18 September 2003.
- For background, see ICG Latin America Report N°4, *Colombia's Humanitarian Crisis*, 9 July 2003 at www.crisisweb.org



ICG Latin America Report N°5, *Colombia: Negotiating with the Paramilitaries*, 16 September 2003. The Uribe administration's decision to negotiate the demobilisation of the main paramilitary group, the United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia (AUC), is a high risk-high gain strategy that will test the government's skill and its good faith. This report raises questions about the motives for the process, its feasibility under conditions of ongoing warfare and ensuring that the disarmament of the paramilitaries is accountable, just and transparent. The report also presses the Colombian Government to sever remaining links between its military and the paramilitaries and to pursue more vigorously those paramilitary groups that refuse to enter negotiations. Although the process faces heavy odds, if it does succeed it would demonstrate to the insurgents of the FARC and the ELN that a negotiated solution to the conflict is a real possibility.

Guatemala Former general and coup leader, Efraim Rios Montt, registered as presidential candidate for 9 November elections.

- For background, see "Guatemala's election row", *The Economist*, 31 July 2003.

Peru Ex-President Alberto Fujimori commenced broadcasting radio messages to Lima from exile in Japan – prelude to intended political comeback. Intelligence chief resigned over state-sponsored spying on journalists. Imprisoned leader of MRTA rebel group says group has renounced armed conflict and wants to become political party.

- "Jailed Peru rebel chief lays down arms", *The Guardian*, 18 September 2003.
- "Peru's intelligence chief resigns amid spy scandal", Voice of America, 18 September 2003.
- "Radio return for Peru's Fujimori", BBC News, 13 September 2003.
- For background, see "Terrorism in Peru", *The Economist*, 17 July 2003.

Venezuela Opposition petition for referendum on rule of President Chavez rejected by National Electoral Council. Opposition to collect signatures for second petition. Bomb exploded outside Caracas barracks of presidential guard: no one injured. President Chavez blamed dissident military officers. Roman Catholic Church rejected Chavez claim it was involved in 2002 attempted coup. Chavez suspended oil exports to Dominican Republic, alleging exiles in DR plotting coup.

- "Venezuela's Roman Catholic Church rejects Chavez accusations of coup plotting", *San Francisco Chronicle*, 22 September 2003.
- Fabiola Sanchez, "Blast leads to tighter Venezuela security", *The Guardian*, 19 September 2003.
- "Venezuela electoral body denies referendum petition", *The Washington Post*, 12 September 2003.
- For background to the recall, see "Recalling the revolution", *The Economist*, 21 August 2003.

Middle East /North Africa

EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

Israel/Occupied Territories Power struggle between Arafat and PM Abbas ended with Abbas's resignation; Ahmed Qureia, speaker of Palestinian parliament,

appointed new PM. Three-year anniversary of intifada passed on 28 September with no peace in sight. Israeli attacks on Hamas leaders continued; Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, spiritual leader of Hamas, among targets. Suicide bombings also continued: attacks on Israeli café and bus stop on 9 September killed 15. Israel threatened to expel – and possibly kill – Arafat, drawing international condemnation. U.S. vetoed UN Security Council resolution urging Israel to cease threats against Palestinian leader. Meanwhile, U.S. and Israeli officials held talks in Washington aimed at reaching agreement on route of controversial security fence in West Bank.

- [“Israeli-U.S. accord on barrier reported”](#), Agence France-Presse, 23 September 2003.
- [“US vetoes UN Arafat resolution”](#), BBC News, 16 September 2003.
- [“Suicide bombers kill 15 in Mideast”](#), CNN.com, 10 September 2003.
- Conal Urquhart and James Burke, [“Road map to peace in crisis as Palestinian leader quits”](#), *The Observer*, 7 September 2003.
- Comment by Hussein Agha and Robert Malley (ICG), [“Ditch the Road Map. Just get there, already”](#), *The Washington Post*, 7 September 2003.
- For background, see ICG Middle East Report N°16, [The Israeli-Palestinian Roadmap: What a Settlement Freeze Means and Why it Matters](#), 25 July 2003 and ICG Middle East Report N°14, [A Middle East Roadmap to Where?](#), 2 May 2003 at [www.crisisweb.org](#)

➡ Jordan Authorities arrested two men accused of anti-U.S. terror plot. Central Bank retracted decision to freeze accounts of Hamas after angry reactions, including from parliament, but freeze may be reinstated. King Abdullah met U.S. President George W. Bush at Camp David; promised democratic reforms.

- [“Jordan arrests two in alleged anti-U.S. plot”](#), CNN.com, 28 September 2003.
- Heba Kandil, [“Jordan likely to restore pro-U.S. bank ban on Hamas –sources”](#), 24 September 2003.
- Jackson Diehl, [“Jordan’s democracy option”](#), *The Washington Post*, 21 September 2003.
- For background, see ICG Middle East Briefing, [Red Alert in Jordan: Recurrent Unrest in Maan](#), 19 February 2003 at [www.crisisweb.org](#)

➡ Lebanon Israeli jets attacked suspected Hizbollah gun position in southern Lebanon on 3 September. Raid was first since 10 August, when shells fired by Hizbollah killed one Israeli and wounded five others, breaking period of calm along border. Incident between Lebanese army and Hizbollah guerrillas left one guerrilla dead after troops intervened in dispute between Hizbollah and rival Shiite party. Government on defensive after ordering banks to reveal accounts of Hamas members whose assets U.S. wants frozen. Prisoner swap between Hizbollah and Israel appears likely.

- [“Deal is near on exchange of prisoners, Sharon says”](#), *International Herald Tribune*, 24 September 2003.
- [“Hamas shocked by Lebanese probe for assets”](#), Reuters AlertNet, 22 September 2003.
- [“Israeli jets fire on Lebanon”](#), BBC News, 3 September 2003.
- For background, see ICG Middle East Briefing, [Hizbollah: Rebel Without a Cause?](#), 30 July 2003 at [www.crisisweb.org](#)

➡ Syria Washington renewed demands for better cooperation from Syria in war on terror. U.S. says Syria supporting terrorists, pursuing WMD, and allowing anti-Coalition fighters to cross into Iraq. Syria denied allegations it has been operating spy ring at Guantanamo Bay.

- Julian Borger, [“Syria denies US spy ring”](#), *The Guardian*, 25 September 2003.
- Brian Knowlton, [“Syria still helping terrorists, U.S. official says”](#), *International Herald Tribune*, 17 September 2003.
- For background, see ICG Middle East Briefing, [Hizbollah: Rebel Without a Cause?](#), 30 July 2003 at [www.crisisweb.org](#)

GULF

⚠ Iran Tension increasing over issue of Iranian nuclear program. IAEA set 31 October deadline for Tehran to enable UN to verify it is not building nuclear weapons. Matter may be referred to Security Council if Iran deemed non-compliant. Concern that standoff playing into hands of Iranian hardliners and could escalate, with risk of Iran pulling out of Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Elsewhere, Iran-UK relations on rocks after several shooting incidents outside British embassy in Tehran and last month’s arrest by UK of former Iranian ambassador to Argentina.

- Louis Charbonneau, [“UN steps up Iran nuclear probe ahead of deadline”](#), Reuters AlertNet, 23 September 2003.
- [“Iran vows to increase military strength”](#), BBC News, 22 September 2003.
- [“It’s all gone dreadfully wrong”](#), *The Economist*, 18 September 2003.

⚠ Iraq Vigorous diplomatic manoeuvring at United Nations as U.S. pushes resolution authorising multilateral force for Iraq and seeks help in bearing cost of reconstruction. U.S. president Bush failed to garner support from foreign leaders in two days of talks at UN. France urging quick turnover of power to Iraqis; U.S. says proposed timeframe unrealistic: Colin Powell announced six-month deadline for new Iraqi constitution, with elections to follow sometime in 2004. In Iraq, violence continued. Aquila al-Hashimi, member of Iraqi Interim Governing Council, died after being shot by gunmen on 20 September. Two days later, a second suicide bombing outside UN headquarters killed two. UN continues to withdraw staff from Iraq. 192 Coalition soldiers, including 172 Americans, have died since 1 May, declared end of combat operations.

- Dana Milbank and Colum Lynch, [“Bush fails to gain pledges on troops or funds for Iraq”](#), *The Washington Post*, 25 September 2003.
- [“A tough sell”](#), *The Economist*, 25 September 2003.
- [“Blast near U.N. headquarters in Baghdad”](#), CNN.com, 22 September 2003.
- For background, see ICG Middle East Report N°17, [Governing Iraq](#), 25 August 2003 at [www.crisisweb.org](#)



ICG Middle East Briefing, [Iraq’s Shiites Under Occupation](#), 9 September 2003. Iraq’s Shiites, who form over half the country’s population, have undergone a major transition since the fall of the Baathist regime from persecution to political reawakening. The massive car bomb attack on 29 August that killed the prominent Shiite cleric Ayatollah Mohammed Baqir al-Hakim and roughly 100 other Iraqis has put renewed focus on the Shiite community and its role in Iraq’s politics. The struggles within the Shiite community will determine whether an organised political force can emerge as its legitimate representative and, if so, which it will be. For now the leaders of the Shiite Islamist movement have eschewed confrontation with the occupation forces, but the current middle-through which characterises the U.S. approach is far from being the best prescription.

- Saudi Arabia Security crackdown continues; 200 suspected Islamist militants have been arrested since May. Four killed in gunfight with radicals allegedly planning terror attack. Authorities focusing on blocking flow of cash to terrorist groups amid U.S. criticism of Saudi aid to Hamas. Meanwhile, last of U.S. troops left Saudi Arabia earlier in month, bringing end to 13-year presence. Saudis deny newspaper report that Kingdom considering acquiring nuclear weapons.
- ["Four dead' in Saudi gunfight"](#), CNN.com, 23 September 2003.
 - Ewen MacAskill and Ian Traynor, ["Saudis consider nuclear bomb"](#), *The Guardian*, 18 September 2003.
 - Adnan Malik, ["Saudi terror crackdown irks some Muslims"](#), Associated Press, 17 September 2003.

- Yemen Government continues to walk fine line between supporting U.S. in war on terror and appeasing largely anti-American populace. Authorities handed over to Saudi Arabia suspected al Qaeda member thought to have had role in May Riyadh bombings.
- ["Yemen hands over al Qaeda suspect to Saudi Arabia"](#), Reuters AlertNet, 17 September 2003.
 - Amnesty International report, [Yemen: The Rule of Law Sideline in the Name of Security](#), 24 September 2003.
 - For background, see ICG Middle East Report N°8, [Yemen: Coping with Terrorism and Violence in a Fragile State](#), 8 January 2003 at www.crisisweb.org

NORTH AFRICA

- Algeria Armed Islamic Group suspected in death of nine soldiers in western Algeria on 17 September. Report suggests at least 100 people are killed each month by armed groups, security forces and state-armed militias. Algerian army reportedly killed 150 Islamic rebels in latest offensive. President Bouteflika announced establishment of a commission to investigate disappearance of thousands over past decade.
- ["Algerian army kills 150 Islamic rebels – report"](#), Reuters AlertNet, 27 September 2003.
 - ["Algeria ambush mars terror talks"](#), BBC News, 18 September 2003.
 - ["Algeria - Steps towards change or empty promises?"](#), Amnesty International report, 16 September 2003.
 - For background, see ICG Middle East/North Africa Report N°15, [Algeria: Unrest and Impasse in Kabylia](#), 10 June 2003 at www.crisisweb.org

- Egypt Authorities continue suppressing dissent, most notably by Muslim Brotherhood. Government says 20 Islamist militants arrested last month planned to launch "jihad" against Coalition forces in Iraq. New ideas on political pluralism aired at conference held by ruling NDP party from 26-28 September.
- ["Egypt holds militants urging 'jihad' in Iraq"](#), Reuters AlertNet, 3 September 2003.



ICG Middle East Briefing, [The Challenge of Political Reform: Egypt After the Iraq War](#), 30 September 2003. The Iraq war has reinvigorated debate about political reform in Egypt, but the debate has unfolded in ways that neither advocates nor critics of the war predicted – emboldening domestic challenges to the regime and causing a realignment of the opposition. Both the regime and the opposition now recognise substantial reform is necessary, but a significant gap exists between their projects. Real reform will require bold steps from the regime and a corresponding evolution in the opposition parties' attitude. The U.S. would help the cause of reform best by more vigorously pursuing a just settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and de-Americanising the Iraqi occupation.

- Morocco In local elections, Islamists of Morocco's Justice and Development Party fielded candidates in only half its stronghold districts; strategy apparently due to fear of public backlash against rapid rise to power of Islamist party. Elsewhere, 27 convicted in connection with May Casablanca bombings.
- ["Morocco bombing trial"](#), *The New York Times*, 11 September 2003.
 - ["Fighting not to win"](#), *The Economist*, 11 September 2003.
- Western Sahara Morocco's King Mohammed VI reiterated commitment to cooperating with UN over Western Sahara. Polisario Front released 243 Moroccan POW's held in south-western Algeria. UN Security Council repeated its call to free 900 remaining detainees in compliance with international humanitarian law.
- ["Security Council welcomes Polisario's release of over 200 prisoners"](#), UN News Centre, 3 September 2003.

Useful links on current and potential conflicts and conflict issues:

- Amnesty International – www.amnesty.org
- Brookings Institution – www.brookings.edu
- Canadian Consortium on Human Security - www.humansecurity.info
- Carnegie Endowment for International Peace – www.ceip.org
- Centre for Human Security, University of British Columbia - www.ligi.ubc.ca/chs.htm
- Centre for International Development and Conflict Management, University of Maryland - www.cidcm.umd.edu
- Centre for Strategic and International Studies – www.csis.org
- Centre of International Relations and International Cooperation, Barcelona - www.cidob.es/index3din.html
- Council on Foreign Relations – www.cfr.org
- Department of Peace Studies, University of Bradford – www.bradford.ac.uk/acad/peace
- Eurasianet – www.eurasianet.org
- Forum on Early Warning and Early Response (FEWER) – www.fewer.org
- Freedom House – www.freedomhouse.org
- Genocide Watch - www.genocidewatch.org
- Global Witness - www.globalwitness.org
- Human Rights Watch - www.hrw.org
- International Alert - www.international-alert.org
- Institute for War and Peace Reporting – www.iwpr.net/home_index_new.html
- International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) – www.ictj.org
- International Institute for Strategic Studies – www.iiss.org
- International Peace Academy - www.ipacademy.org
- International Policy Institute, Kings College, London – ipi.sssp.kcl.ac.uk/
- Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) – www.msf.org
- Parliamentarians for Global Action – www.pgaction.org
- Peace Negotiations Watch - www.publicinternationallaw.org/peace/
- Purdue University Political Terror Scale - www.ippu.purdue.edu/global_studies/gghr/research_pts.cfm
- Saferworld - www.saferworld.co.uk
- Search for Common Ground – www.sfcg.org
- Stockholm International Peace Research Institute - www.sipri.se
- Transparency International – www.transparency.org
- United States Institute of Peace - www.usip.org

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Kofi Annan, United Nations Secretary General, 5 October 2002



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