

CrisisWatch

A monthly bulletin on current and potential conflicts
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July 2014 – Trends

↓ Deteriorated situations

[Afghanistan](#), [Iraq](#), [Israel/Palestine](#), [Libya](#), [Pakistan](#), [Somalia](#), [South Sudan](#)

↑ Improved situations

August 2014 – Watchlist

💣* Conflict risk alerts

[Libya](#), [Syria](#)

☺ Conflict resolution opportunities

CrisisWatch summarises 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 sources. It 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. It identifies situations where, in the coming month, there is a risk of new or significantly escalated conflict, or a conflict resolution opportunity (noting that in some instances there may be both). It also summarises Crisis Group's reports and briefing papers published the previous month.

Arrows and alerts: Up, down and side arrows signify, respectively, improved, deteriorated or unchanged situations. Conflict Risk Alerts (identified with bombs) or Conflict Resolution Opportunities (with doves) are used in addition to arrows: a bomb signifies a risk of escalated violence; a dove an opportunity to advance peace. Both bombs and doves tend to be used where events are moving fast.

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Africa

Central Africa

➔ **Burundi** Deputy and former chairman of opposition UPRONA Charles Nditije, excluded 30 June after internal power struggle, 12 July said he had survived assassination attempt in Bujumbura. Amnesty International 29 July published report denouncing shrinking political space in Burundi.

- [“La guerre des chefs se poursuit à l’Uprona”](#), RFI, 13 July 2014.

➔ **Cameroon** Nigerian Islamist sect Boko Haram (BH) attacks continued: 8 July attacked gendarmerie post in Zina; 11 July attacked military post in Bonderi; 24-25 July launched large attack on Bargaram killing 10 Cameroonian soldiers. Attack in Kolofata 27 July left 16 dead, 20 kidnapped including wife of Deputy PM Amadou Ali and Mayor-local religious leader “Lamido” of Kolofata. 22 BH sentenced to prison by Maroua military court 24 July. Troop levels along Nigeria border increased by 3000. Refugee influx from Nigeria continued: influx from CAR causing tensions in east.

- [“Le Cameroun se réorganise militairement face à Boko Haram”](#), RFI, 22 July 2014.

➔ **Central African Republic** Regional summit held 21-23 July in Brazzaville; ended with ceasefire agreement but no disarmament plan; several stakeholders boycotted including Seleka delegation led by Daffhane, third-in-command, who only attended first day morning session. Seleka, renamed Front populaire pour la renaissance de la Centrafrique following 10 July meeting in Birao, remains divided; anti-balaka also divided, disorganised, casting doubt on representativeness of delegation at Brazzaville. Both groups exerting increasing control over territories; reports traders visiting anti-balaka-held Carnot/Berbérati diamond fields. Inter-communal tensions continued, particularly along unofficial frontline: Muslim fighters 7 July attacked cathedral sheltering refugees in Bambari, at least 26 killed; grenade thrown at mosque in Paoua, north-west, where new armed group Revolution & Justice seeking to assert control. Seleka fighters attacked in Batangafo, north, 30 July; attackers reportedly anti-balaka or former anti-balaka.

- [“Brazzaville: à peine signé, l’accord sur la Centrafrique déjà menacé”](#), RFI, 24 July 2014.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°219, [The Central African Crisis: From Predation to Stabilisation](#), 17 June 2014.

➔ **Chad** French President Hollande visited Ndjamenia 18 July following 14 July launch of new French counter-terrorism operation “Barkhane”; Ndjamenia to be strategic centre for 3,000 personnel deployed across Sahel. Federation of magistrates 26 July asked President Déby to remove Justice Minister from office, citing contempt of court.

- [“Hollande au Tchad pour installer l’état-major de l’opération Barkhane”](#), RFI, 18 July 2014.

➔ **DR Congo** Saïd Djinnit appointed UN Special Envoy for the Great Lakes region 17 July, replacing Mary Robinson. Govt 11 July presented final updated ver-

sion of national disarmament plan to potential donors. Joint SADC – ICGLR meeting held in Luanda 2 July agreed to six-month timeframe for demobilisation and reintegration of FDLR fighters; mid-term evaluation of progress. Demobilisation of FDLR currently stalled, govt 16 July decided to temporarily transfer former FDLR rebels to Kisangani ahead of formal relocation process. 4th list of amnesties made public by govt 9 July, 315 persons on list including 68 M23 members. After many delays, DRC mission to identify and register M23 combatants (agreed in Dec 2013 Nairobi declaration) allowed to visit Rwanda. Tshatshi military camp in Kinshasa attacked 22 July, 7 attackers and 2 presidential guards reportedly killed.

- [“Saïd Djinnit nouvel envoyé spécial pour les Grands Lacs”](#), RFI, 18 July 2014.

➔ **Rwanda** PM Habumuremyi dismissed 23 July, successor Anastase Murekezi sworn in 24 July.

- [“Rwanda dismisses prime minister, appoints replacement”](#), VOA, 24 July 2014.

Horn of Africa

➔ **Ethiopia** Leader of opposition “Ginbot 7” group Andargachew Tsige, arrested in Yemen 23 June, reportedly extradited to Ethiopia early month; Andargachew convicted in absentia along with 12 other Ginbot 7 leaders of plotting coup following disputed 2005 elections. 4 opposition party members arrested throughout month for alleged connections with terrorist organisations.

- [“Yemen ‘extradites’ Ethiopia opposition leader”](#), Al Jazeera, 5 July 2014.

➔ **Kenya** Attacks by Al-Shabaab continued including at least 29 killed 5 July in Hindi, Lamu county and Gambi, Tana River county; 7 killed, 8 injured 18 July in Witu town, Lamu county; 4 killed 20 July in Mombasa; 2 suspected militants killed 25 July same place. 2 tourists killed by gunmen in Mombasa 6 July and 24 July; police blamed killings on normal “thuggery” amid ongoing Al-Shabaab warning for tourists to stay away. Opposition rally 7 July remained peaceful, failed to put pressure on govt. Targeted killings of Ogaden clan members increased last 2 months; 2 killed early July. Herdsman killed, 140 livestock stolen by Samburu raiders in Meru county.

- [“Gunmen kill at least 29 in latest raids on Kenyan coast”](#), Reuters, 6 July 2014.

↓ **Somalia** Al-Shabaab attacks increased during Ramadan: some 40 govt and security officials killed throughout month including 5 killed 5 July in suicide attack on parliament entrance in Mogadishu; 2 lawmakers killed, 1 injured 3 and 23 July in capital; 4 killed 5 July in attack on restaurant in Balad Hawo, Gedo region; at least 4 members of Ras Kamboni militia killed 12 July in Kismayo. Somali Federal Govt (SFG) fired police and intelligence chiefs following 8 July breach of security by 3 Al-Shabaab militants; militants repulsed and killed by security forces. Mogadishu mayor Hassan Mohamed ‘Mungaab’ 26 July survived attempted assassination. Kenyan fighter jets 24 July bombed Jilib, Middle Juba; AMISOM claimed two “senior” commanders of Al-Shabaab killed in airstrikes. Tensions over contested federal state formation continued in south-central. Tribal violence over land continued in Hiraan region; over 21 killed 10-15 July in clashes between rival clan mili-

tias near Beledweyne. SFG 30 July announced formation of new semi-autonomous state consisting of Galgaduud and Mudug regions, Puntland authorities next day suspended co-operation with SFG, called on Puntland MPs and ministers in Mogadishu to return.

- [“Somali president’s palace under attack from al-Shabab”](#), BBC, 8 July 2014.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°99, [Somalia: Al-Shabaab – It Will Be a Long War](#), 26 June 2014.

➔ **Somaliland** President 5 July created new “Haysimo” region with provincial capital of Taleh, following increased tensions with Puntland over Sool and Sanaag border regions. FM 3 July announced talks with Somali Federal Govt (SFG) planned for Aug.

- [“Somaliland president names historic town of Taleh as new region”](#), Garowe Online, 6 July 2014.

↓ **South Sudan** Heavy fighting resumed: govt mid-July attacked 3 towns in Unity state including WFP food distribution site; SPLA-IO 19-21 July reclaimed control of Nasir; army 25 July retook town. Nasir attack condemned by IGAD, UN, AU, U.S.; no condemnation of govt offensive. SPLA-IO 22 July attacked Jonglei’s Ayod town; fighting ongoing. Both sides preparing for more intensive combat Mid-July request by Jonglei’s community leaders for UNMISS to relocate Nuer civilians from Bor to home areas or refugee camps prompted fears of another attack on UN base. Hundreds of Northern Bahr el Ghazal armed youth 16 July joined SPLA-IO; sporadic fighting continued in Northern and Western Bahr el Ghazal. Equatorians reiterated calls for federal govt structure to break “Dinka-dominated” power as tensions increased and clashes reported between Central Equatoria Mundari youths and Presidential Guard in Juba; SPLM-IO 16 July introduced 21-state scheme based on 1956 boundaries; some senior govt officials firmly opposed to federalism and increase in number of states but plan popular among many. IGAD-led peace talks expected to resume after over a month of hiatus delayed again; govt 29 July tried to exclude 10 political parties from talks; transitional govt agreed to as part of 10 June agreement unlikely to be established by 10 Aug deadline. Peace agreement with David Yau Yau’s South Sudan Democratic Movement/Army-Cobra Faction (SSDM/A-CF) now law; creates and gives special status to Jonglei’s Greater Pibor Administrative Area (GPAA), though tensions remain high around Boma and Pibor Town. EU 10 July announced sanctions against army general Santino Deng and SPLA-IO military leader Peter Gadet for ceasefire violations; renewed arms embargo. Amnesty International 17 July called for UNSC embargo amid reports of massive Chinese weapons transfer to Kiir’s govt. UNSC 25 July said South Sudan food crisis worst in world.

- Crisis Group Conflict Alert, [“Halting South Sudan’s Spreading Civil War”](#), 7 July 2014.
- Jérôme Tubiana, [“Civil Society and the South Sudan Crisis”](#), In Pursuit of Peace, 14 July 2014.
- [“South Sudan rebels break ceasefire – Unmiss”](#), BBC, 21 July 2014.

➔ **Sudan** National dialogue committee, comprised of govt and opposition parties, 24 July agreed on roadmap for process: talks to start early Aug, to last 1 to 3 months; dialogue still boycotted by National Umma Party (NUP) and Sudanese

Congress Party (SCP). Popular Congress Party (PCP) leader al-Turabi 28 July asked for April 2015 elections to be delayed. Media repression increased; armed men 19 July raided offices of *Al-Tayar* Daily; State Minister for Information Yasir Youssef 17 July said press censorship necessary for political stability. EU 9 July expressed concerns over detention of opposition party members, youth activists, human rights defenders and journalists. Opposition unified as regime toughened: SPLM-N 10 July signed MoA with Sudanese Revolutionary Awakening Council (SRAC), led by Darfur Arab militia chief Musa Hilal; Hamar and Ma'aliya Arab tribes 10 July signed agreement to end fighting in East Darfur and West Kordofan, after clashes over land and oil areas; SRF and opposition delegation 16 July urged EU to support demands for comprehensive political solution and return to democracy. Despite progress, splits in rebel Abdel-Wahid Mohammed al-Nur's Sudan Liberation Army (SLA-AW); 150 killed and 100 injured in Misseriya Arab intra-tribal clashes in West Kordofan early July. UN 3 July started investigations into allegations of UNAMID mismanagement, misreporting of facts, failure to protect civilians in Darfur; 16 July reported 7 million in need of aid amid nationwide violence and increasing refugee inflows from S Sudan.

- ["Sudan's parties agree on roadmap for national dialogue: presidential aide"](#), Sudan Tribune, 25 July 2014.

➔ **Uganda** Security situation worsened in western Uganda with 90 confirmed dead 8 July in attacks on police stations and barracks in Kasese, Ntoroko and Bundibugyo districts. Govt and police refuted claims attackers from rebel group Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), blamed tribal monarch of Rwanzururu 3 mass graves with some 30 bodies discovered by govt forces in Bundibugyo district 22 July.

- ["Three mass graves discovered in Uganda"](#), *Wall Street Journal*, 22 July 2014.

Southern Africa

➔ **Madagascar** PM Kolo 3 July declared 40% of budget lost to corruption, promised reforms. Reassembled Tiako I Madagasikara (TIM) opposition party pushed for return of former President Marc Ravalomanana; return reportedly opposed by President Hery Rajaonarimampianina. 2 journalists arrested 23 July for alleged defamation of minister, 50 journalists same day led protest in Antananarivo; journalists released 25 July.

- ["Les attentes déçues de la société civile"](#), RFI, 21 July 2014.

➔ **Mozambique** Govt, RENAMO 29 July reached consensus on RENAMO integration in security forces and RENAMO pledge to future disarmament; peace agreement signature expected early Aug; RENAMO leader Dlhakama 29 July welcomed progress, left Gorongosa hideout. RENAMO spokesperson Antonio Muchanga arrested 7 July, Dlhakama 10 July called arrest provocation.

- ["Peace in sight in Mozambique"](#), *Deutsche Welle*, 30 July 2014.

➔ **Zimbabwe** Ruling ZANU-PF infighting continued between VP Joice Mujuru and Justice Minister Emmerson Mnangagwa; First Lady Grace Mugabe endorsed 28 July as next leader of party's Women's league prompting concerns she could

succeed husband in 2018. Information Minister Jonathan Moyo, Environment Minister Saviour Kasukuwere questioned late July over unidentified anti-regime Facebook blogger. Transform Zimbabwe leader Jacob Ngarivhume 18 July denounced harassment and crackdown on opposition after being detained alongside 13 others 12 July for holding unauthorised public gatherings. Amid continued economic downturn and threats of street protests by civil society groups, IMF 8 July highlighted some progress in economic reforms, called for greater transparency in mining and diamond industries. Mugabe 2 July called for white farmers to leave country; Mnangagwa 10 July downplayed rant as “misunderstanding”.

- [“A Mugabe dynasty for Zimbabwe?”](#), IOL News, 31 July 2014.

West Africa

➔ **Burkina Faso** Amid continued tensions over possible referendum to amend constitution and remove 2-term limit, President Compaoré 13 July said undecided about running in 2015 elections. U.S. 9 July stressed need to respect democratic process; 17 July pledged \$1mn to support free, fair and transparent elections.

- [“Blaise Compaoré: ‘Il faudra bien partir un jour...’](#)”, *Jeune Afrique*, 21 July 2014.

➔ **Côte d’Ivoire** Opposition Ivorian Popular Front (FPI) leader and presidential hopeful Pascal Alli N’Guessan 4 July restructured party leadership ahead of 2015 presidential elections, attempted to remove General Secretary and pro-Gbagbo hardliner Laurent Akoun; Akoun 15 July called decision illegal, reiterated calls for Gbagbo’s release and role in party. Ongoing tensions between govt and FPI: FPI 3 July said some 1,000 supporters still detained, many tortured; 9 July rejected new Independent Electoral Commission (IEC). Fearing Ebola outbreak, border authorities 11 July blocked 400 Ivorian refugees returning from Liberia, UNHCR called decision “unacceptable”. French President Francois Hollande 17 July visited Abidjan, said Côte d’Ivoire now “inspires confidence”, discussed economic and security cooperation.

- [“Le FPI dans la tourmente”](#), RFI, 16 July 2014.

➔ **Guinea** Restart of govt-opposition talks on electoral process and opposition return to parliament 4 July; verbal agreement reached 5 July quickly vaporised as opposition 11 July accused govt of omitting key verbal deals in concluding statement; opposition 12 July submitted own version, signature pending. As Ebola killed hundreds, tensions continued between authorities and health organisations; Red Cross, WHO, MSF reported denied access to villages around Guéckédou. Guinea was declared in full conformity with Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI) 2 July.

- [“Processus électoral bloqué”](#), *Nouvelle Tribune*, 13 July 2014.

➔ **Guinea-Bissau** Newly-appointed PM Pereira 4 July announced cabinet, dominated by PAIGC factions; opposition Party for Social Renewal (PRS) obtained 5 ministerial portfolios. Vaz 10 July attended ECOWAS Summit in Accra, received body’s political and possibly financial support for reforms. Following June fact-finding mission, EU 15 July resumed cooperation with Guinea-Bissau while main-

taining demands for progress toward security, renewal of army leadership, fight against impunity. U.S. 15 July invited Guinea-Bissau to Aug U.S.-Africa Summit. Former São Tomé President Miguel Trovoada appointed new UN SRSG for Guinea-Bissau 16 July.

- [“Formation du premier gouvernement du régime de José Mario Vaz”](#), AFP, 5 July 2014.

➔ **Liberia** Rioters 3-4 July attacked iron ore mine in Yepeka, Nimba County, held staff hostage, shot and injured several security forces. Govt 27 July closed all but major border crossings due to ongoing Ebola outbreak, restricted public gatherings.

- [“Liberia marks independence anniversary amid Ebola and economic challenges”](#), VOA, 25 July 2014.

➔ **Mali** First phase of Algerian-led negotiations between govt and 6 rebel armed groups started 16 July; rebel MNLA-HCUA-MAA coalition refused to meet with CPA, CM-FPR and MAA splinter group, 24 July signed 2 separate yet almost identical roadmaps, next round of negotiations to start 17 Aug. FM Abdoulaye Diop 16 July reiterated govt’s willingness to make concessions, though firmly rejected rebels’ bid for independent state of Azawad. 45 Malian soldiers and 41 detained rebels exchanged 15 July ahead of talks. Fighting continued despite negotiations: govt 11 July reported increased jihadi infiltrations and rebel movements in north; dozens reported killed in clashes between MNLA and MAA splinter group around Anefis and Tabankort 11 and 13 July. New ceasefire – third since fighting erupted last May – signed 24 July; jihadi group Al-Mourabitoune 14 July killed French legionnaire in suicide attack north of Gao; various clashes reported around Tabankort, Akaskaza and Tabricha 21-24 July, including MNLA assault on Tuareg camp 21 July. Former jihadi MUJAO leader arrested 29 July. French Defence Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian 13 July announced end of SERVAL operation, to be replaced by broader Barkhane operation against radical Islamist movements in the Sahel; 16 July signed new defence cooperation treaty with Malian govt. Air Algeria flight crashed 24 July around Gossi, 118 onboard killed; investigations ongoing.

- [“Alger: pendant les négociations, les combats continuent au Mali”](#), RFI, 24 July 2014.

➔ **Niger** Late May uranium deal between govt and French nuclear company AREVA continued to fuel civil society discontent: unions early July denounced unequal deal, layoffs, salary cuts. 10 NGO activists opposing AREVA detained 18 July ahead of visit by French President Hollande to discuss security challenges.

- [“Niger activists arrested over Areva protest before François Hollande visit”](#), *Guardian*, 18 July 2014.

➔ **Nigeria** Govt reported modest gains in fight against Boko Haram (BH) while terrorist attacks continued. Military 11 July reported destruction of BH bases in Balmo Forest, Bauchi and Jigawa States; govt 15 July extradited from Sudan alleged mastermind of 14 April Abuja attack; same day announced arrest of senior BH member. Over 400 people killed in BH attacks; including 56 killed 1 July in Maiduguri, Borno State; 24 security forces killed, 45 women kidnapped, over 50 BH members killed 4 July in Damboa, Borno State; 45 killed 14 July in Askira-Uba area, Borno State; 100 killed 18 July around Damboa, Borno State; 60 killed 19 July in Gaidamgari village, Borno State; 82 killed 23 July in Kaduna, Kaduna state in 2

bomb attacks targeting moderate Muslim cleric and former military ruler now senior opposition All Progressives Congress member; 50 killed 27 July in Garkida, Adamawa State. BH leader Abubakar Shekau 13 July released video claiming responsibility for 25 June explosion in Lagos which killed 5 people, govt previously claimed explosion was accident; Shekau also pledged solidarity with Islamic State (formerly ISIL), al-Qaeda, Taliban. President Jonathan's 16 July request to parliament for approval of \$1 billion external loan to help fight BH remained unanswered. Nigeria, Niger, Chad, Cameroon 23 July announced formation of 2,800-strong joint regional force. Ethnic violence continued; over 50 killed 14 July by suspected Fulani tribesmen in Gidandawa district, Zamfara State; at least 10 killed same day in Pilgani district, Plateau State. Four-month national conference ended 14 July without major agreements, including on revenue sharing.

- ["Suicide bombs in Nigeria's Kaduna kill 82, ex-leader Buhari targeted"](#), Reuters, 23 July 2014.

Asia

North East Asia

➔ **China (internal)** First ever vice-ministerial anti-terror talks between U.S. and China held 15 July in Beijing, co-chaired by Chinese Vice FM Cheng Guoping and U.S. State Department Coordinator for Counterterrorism Tina Kaidanow: consensus reached on deepening cooperation. Guangzhou public security bureau 14 July announced creation of special anti-terror police force in wake of 6 May knife attack and other attacks across country. Police 28 July clashed with assailants in Xinjiang's Kashgar Prefecture; incident described as terrorist attack by state media; over 20 killed and 70 arrested according to Uighur advocacy group.

- ["China's account of bloodshed in far west is disputed"](#), *New York Times*, 29 July 2014.

➔ **China/Japan** Japanese govt 1 July announced reinterpretation of constitution's Article 9, effectively lifting ban on collective self-defence. Japanese PM Abe 14 July called for meeting with Chinese President Xi at Nov APEC summit in Beijing; Chinese and Japanese officials reportedly held secret meeting to discuss possibility mid-July. China's central archives 3 July began publishing alleged confessions of 45 WWII Japanese war criminals. Xi 7 July became first president to participate in commemoration of 1937 Marco Polo Bridge Incident that marked start of Second Sino-Japanese War.

- ["Is Xi Jinping trying to provoke anger against Japan?"](#), BBC, 7 July 2014.

New Crisis Group Asia Report N°258, [Old Scores and New Grudges: Evolving Sino-Japanese Tensions](#), 24 July 2014. The deterioration in relations between China and Japan has spiraled beyond an island sovereignty dispute and risks an armed conflict neither wants. A November regional summit is a fence-mending opportunity – if the two countries' leaders rise above nationalism and manage multiple flashpoints.

➔ **Korean Peninsula** Korean People's Army (KPA) conducted ballistic tests throughout month: 2 Hwasŏng missiles fired 9 July 40km from demilitarised zone (DMZ); 2 more fired 13 July near Kaesŏng city; 100 artillery shells fired into Sea of Japan 14 July, only few hundred meters from DMZ. KPA 5 July conducted joint ground, naval, air, and air-defence exercises, simulating assault on ROK island. ROK and U.S. 16 July conducted 5-day naval exercise in ROK south-western sea despite DPRK protest; 21 July held 2-day trilateral exercise with Japan south of Cheju Island. DPRK launched "peace offensive": state-media called for end to confrontation with ROK. ROK announced 3 billion won for NGO projects in DPRK, first use of state funds for NGOs in DPRK since 2010 imposition of sanctions. Delegation of 38 ROK officials and corporate representatives visited DPRK 15-22 July to conduct survey for potential ROK investment in Russia-DPRK railway link to

DPRK north-eastern port city of Rajin. DPRK and Japan 1 July held talks, agreed on lifting Japanese sanctions in return for investigation into fate of Japanese nationals abducted by DPRK agents. Asia Pacific Group on Money Laundering (APG) 18 July unanimously accepted DPRK as observer.

- Daniel Pinkston, [“No Such Thing as a Free Ride? ROK Missile Defence, Regional Missile Defence and OPCON Transfer”](#), In Pursuit of Peace, 29 July 2014.
- [“N. Korea fires short-range ballistic missile into East Sea”](#), *Korea Herald*, 26 July 2014.

South Asia

↓ **Afghanistan** Election crisis deepened after presidential candidate Abdullah Abdullah rejected preliminary results of second round of voting, announced by Independent Election Commission 7 July: former Finance Minister Ashraf Ghani received 56.4%, Abdullah 43.6%. Abdullah’s supporters next day urged him to declare parallel govt. U.S. Sec State Kerry 11-12 July met candidates, agreement reached on 8-point technical framework for auditing all ballot boxes. Audit began 17 July, complicated by delays, procedural disagreements between candidates; postponed 26 July until early Aug. Agreement also reached on political plan for national unity govt with representatives of losing team in key positions; details, including possibly including revived slot of PM, still to be settled. Violence continued across country including: 8 air force personnel reported killed in suicide bombing 2 July in Kabul; 4 insurgents killed in suicide attack on Kabul airport 17 July; suicide bomber 22 July killed 4, including 3 foreign advisors, outside airport. At least 14 Taliban reported killed 5 July after storming security base in north-eastern Badakhshan province; 5 NATO troops among 16 killed in 8 July suicide attack in eastern province of Parwan; at least 28, mostly insurgents, killed 9 July in attacks on governor’s house, police HQ in Kandahar.

- Graeme Smith, [“Ghani’s Win ‘Only a Partial Victory’”](#), In Pursuit of Peace, 8 July 2014.
- [“Disputed Afghan election to be recounted in full”](#), Reuters, 12 July 2014.

➔ **Bangladesh** Tensions between ruling Awami League (AL) and opposition Bangladesh National Party (BNP) remained high: Information Minister Hasanul Haq Inu 11 July accused BNP leader Khaleda Zia of conspiring to seize power with “killers” who participated in 1971 war crimes, 1975 military coup and more recent terrorist plots. Zia renewed calls for mass protests against govt to begin after Eid holiday late July, repeated demands for early elections under non-partisan caretaker govt. Special court trying Zia, her son Tarique Rahman, and others in two graft cases delayed recording deposition of prosecution witness to 3 Sept. Permanent Court of Arbitration at The Hague 7 July ruled on maritime boundary dispute with India, awarded Bangladesh nearly 80% of Bay of Bengal.

- [“Anti-government protests in Bangladesh likely to increase as BNP attempts to rebuild momentum”](#), IHS Jane’s Intelligence Weekly, 27 July 2014.

➔ **India (non-Kashmir)** Month saw several Maoist insurgent attacks including: 1 police killed in gunbattle in Bihar state 4 July; insurgents late month reportedly killed 4 civilians, including 2 village heads, in Odisha state; govt forces 23 July

killed commander in Jharkhand state, at least 11 insurgents reported killed 28 July in Bastar state. Bodies of 4 abductees, kidnapped by suspected militants, discovered in Assam state mid-month; 1 killed in suspected militant bomb blast targeting police station in state's Goalpara district 23 July; militant reported killed by paramilitary forces in Karimganj district next day.

- ["11 Maoists killed in Bastar encounter"](#), *Hindu*, 30 July 2014.

➡ **Kashmir** Several incidents of cross-border violence including: Indian army 3 July reportedly killed 3 militants along Line of Control (LoC); Pakistani troops 16 July reportedly fired on Indian border outposts killing soldier; Pakistani civilian reported killed in Indian mortar shelling days later near Punjab border, another Pakistani killed 23 July in Shakargarh; 2 reported killed, including 1 Indian soldier, in separate border incidents 22 July. Lashkar-e-Tayyaba militant reported killed 9 July during joint army-police operation in Kupwara district. 1 police shot dead by militants in Bijbehara town 25 July, another killed in grenade blast during protest in Sopore next day. Pakistani Finance Minister Ishaq Dar 17 July said govt willing to negotiate reduction of negative list of tradable items from India if bilateral dialogue revived, including on Kashmir dispute; commerce ministers scheduled to meet 24 July in Bhutan during eighth SAFTA ministerial council meeting, Indian minister did not attend.

- ["2 policemen killed in Kashmir clashes: Tulmulla under curfew"](#), *Hindu*, 26 July 2014.

➡ **Nepal** Deputy PM Bam Dev Gautam 15 July said new constitution to be introduced 22 Jan 2015, preceded by local elections same month. 5-party Maoist alliance 22 July agreed in principle to talks with govt aimed at settling political disputes.

- ["Nepal to hold local election in mid-January next year"](#), *Xinhua*, 16 July 2014.

⚠ **Pakistan** Army operations against tribal militants continued in N Waziristan, causing mass displacement, humanitarian assistance inadequate. Military 15 July claimed to have killed 447 militants, destroyed 88 hideouts; also claimed clearing 80% of N Waziristan's administrative HQ, Miramshah town, of militants; claim later denied. FATA Disaster Management Authority registered nearly 1mn IDPs fleeing operations by 22 July, majority to neighbouring Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. Military in control of humanitarian response, aid distribution limited: access restricted for foreign aid organisations and local NGOs; reports charity fronts of jihadi organisations allowed to conduct relief activities. Estimated 25,000 residents fled FATA's Bajaur Agency ahead of anticipated military strikes following 12 July attack killing 3 security personnel; military later reached accord with Bajaur-based militias who pledged to confront anti-state militants themselves. U.S. drone campaign continued in N Waziristan: several reported strikes including 7 suspected militants killed 10 July; 20 killed 16 July; 11 killed 19 July. Police and paramilitary operations continued in Karachi, including 5 suspected militants killed 15 July. Security forces 17 July raided militant safe house near PM Sharif's home in Lahore, 1

security official, 1 suspect killed. Controversial Protection of Pakistan Bill, criticised for threatening constitutionally protected rights and violating obligations under international law, signed into law 11 July; Senate amendments enhanced some judicial oversight, limited validity to 2 years.

- [“Militants slip away before Pakistan offensive”](#), *Wall Street Journal*, 17 July 2014.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°257, [Education Reform in Pakistan](#), 23 June 2014.

➔ **Sri Lanka** Month saw continued fallout from mid-June attacks on Muslim persons and property in SW: official statements endorsed Buddhist nationalist claims Muslims started violence, Sinhalese equal victims. Justice Minister and Sri Lanka Muslim Congress leader Rauff Hakeem continued probing incident after late June alleging police complicity in attacks, accusing officials of falsifying autopsy reports in cases of 3 Muslims shot dead, possibly by police or off-duty security personnel. Many criticised dispatch of military to rebuild damaged areas fearing destruction of evidence, undermining of independent fact-finding efforts. No leaders or known activists of radical Buddhist group widely blamed for instigating violence, Bodu Bala Sena (BBS), among more than 100 suspects arrested; police questioning of BBS leader Galagoda Aththe Gnanasara 2 July widely seen as public relations move. President Rajapaksa 17 July appointed international legal experts to “advise” ongoing commission of inquiry into missing persons, expanded commission’s mandate to include range of war crimes during civil war, including LTTE abuses; move criticised as attempt to undermine ongoing UN OHCHR investigation. Rajapaksa 11 July reappointed retired general G.A. Chandrasiri as northern province governor despite promising Tamil National Alliance he would be replaced by civilian.

- [“Sri Lanka to investigate war crimes; appoints foreign experts”](#), Reuters, 17 July 2014.

South East Asia

➔ **Indonesia** General Elections Commission 22 July declared Joko Widodo winner of presidential election; opponent Prabowo Subianto pledged to appeal result via Constitutional Court.

- [“Ex-general in Indonesia to challenge election results, citing irregularities”](#), *New York Times*, 23 July 2014.

➔ **Myanmar** Court 10 July sentenced 4 journalists and CEO of local news journal to 10 years imprisonment, hard-labour for alleging military facility in Magwe region manufacturing chemical weapons; sentence appealed, condemned domestically and internationally. Aung San Suu Kyi’s National League for Democracy (NLD) 23 July announced expectation of reaching 10 million signatures on petition to revoke military’s veto capability on constitutional amendments, part of NLD push for amendment to Article 59 (F) which prevents Suu Kyi from being elected president. 2 dead, over 12 injured in anti-Muslim violence 1-2 July in Mandalay fol

lowing rumour Muslim shop owner raped female Buddhist employee; curfew imposed 3 July. Aid agency MSF invited to resume critical health operations in Rakhine State 24 July after gov halted its operations in Feb.

- [“Curfew imposed after deadly clashes between Buddhists, Muslims in Myanmar”](#), CNN, 7 July 2014.

➔ **Philippines** Opposition parties and left-wing groups 24 July filed complaint with House of Representatives calling for impeachment of President Aquino after he 28 April signed Enhanced Defence Cooperation Agreement with the U.S. without approval of Congress. Aquino also came under fire for Disbursement Acceleration Program (DAP), portions of which Supreme Court deemed unconstitutional 1 July. Chief of the Philippines Armed Forces Lieutenant General Gregorio Catapang 24 July denied possibility of military involvement or coup. Conflict continued in Mindanao: 17 Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF), 1 soldier killed 21 July during fight in Cotabato City. 4 police captured 10 July by communist New People’s Army (NPA) in Alegria town; 11 day ceasefire implemented 22 July by NPA, release of prisoners held by NPA set for 25 July cancelled. 5 killed 25 July in clash between govt. troops and members of Islamic militant group Abu Sayyaf on Basilan Island; further 19 killed 28 July in ambush on Jolo Island. President Aquino late July met with Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) Chief Murad Ebrahim, discussed peace process including MILF opposition to reported alterations to proposed Bangsamoro Basic Law, submission to congress due 28 July delayed, new round of govt.-MILF negotiations continued 1 Aug; Law would replace Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindano with new political entity.

- [“New AFP chief on military coup: so ‘80s”](#), *Philippine Star*, 24 July 2014.

➔ **South China Sea** Philippines FM 18 July called for meeting with Brunei, Malaysia and Vietnam to encourage unity over disputed territories in the South China Sea. 6 Vietnamese fishermen detained 3 July by Chinese ship; Chinese coast guard 15 July deported 13 fishermen on one ship, another vessel seized; Vietnamese PM Nguyen Tan Dung approved 16tn Vietnamese dong budget to build 32 new vessels and support fishermen. China 15 July announced contentious oil rig to be moved from disputed waters to avoid typhoon season; U.S. Senate 10 July passed resolution calling for withdrawal of rig, followed by 14 July phone call between Obama and Xi.

- [“Manila urges unity for South East Asian nations in China sea dispute”](#), Reuters, 18 July 2014.

➔ **Thailand** Ruling junta National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO) tightened grip on power. Interim charter adopted 22 July granted amnesty to coup makers and outlined 200-member national legislative assembly, 250-member national council, 35-member constitution drafting committee; Section 44 grants NCPO authority over interim govt. NCPO 15 July suspended elections for all local administrative organisations. National Anti-Corruption Commission 17 July found former PM Yingluck Shinawatra negligent in administration of rice-pledging scheme, recommended prosecution; NCPO same day approved Yingluck’s request to travel abroad. NCPO 2 July established 5 panels to monitor local and international media for criticism of junta, authorised legal action against journalists and

outlets for “inappropriate content”; 18 July reiterated ban on criticism in all forms of media. Red Sunday group leader Sombat Boongamanong, arrested 5 June, released 2 July on bail after lèse-majesté charge; *Same Sky* editor Thanapol Eawsakul 5 July detained second time since coup over Facebook posts, 9 July released after signing pledge to cease expressing political opinions. Multiple attacks in Southern provinces through July including: 13 July killing of Buddhist woman in Tak Bai District; 17 July fire fight in Pattani killed three militants, wounded four police; 20 July bombing near Rangae train station in Narathiwat; 25 July vehicle-borne IED attack in Betong, Yala, killed two, injured 42.

- [“Thai King approves interim constitution”](#), *Wall Street Journal*, 22 July 2014.

Pacific

➔ **Fiji** Regional leaders at Pacific Island Forum (PIF) held 29 July to 1 Aug agreed to lift Fiji’s ban from PIF if Fijian elections scheduled for Sept are free and fair.

- [“Fiji allowed to rejoin Pacific Island Forum after ‘fair’ elections”](#), *Shanghai Daily*, 1 Aug 2014.

Europe and Central Asia

Balkans

➔ **Bosnia** Dutch court 16 July ruled Netherlands liable for 300 Bosnian Muslims killed in Srebrenica massacre. Genocide anniversary commemorated mid-July.

- [“Dutch state liable for 300 Srebrenica massacre deaths”](#), AP, 16 July 2014.

New Crisis Group Europe Report N°232, [Bosnia’s Future](#), 10 July 2014. While the physical scars of the 1992-1995 Bosnia war have healed, political agony and ethnic tension persist. Real peace requires a new constitution and bottom-up political change.

➔ **Kosovo** Political crisis sparked by June elections continued: newly-formed opposition bloc 17 July elected head of Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) Isa Mustafa Speaker of Parliament after Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK) deputies had declared parliamentary session adjourned; PM Hashim Thaci filed complaint with Constitutional Court. No progress achieved in EU-led talks 23 July on controversial Mitrovica bridge. EU investigative team 29 July said it found evidence of crimes against humanity committed by high-ranking Kosovo Liberation Army members during and after 1990s war with Serbia.

- [“Kosovo lawmakers struggle for control of parliament”](#), Reuters, 17 July 2014.

➔ **Macedonia** Ethnic Albanian protesters 4 July clashed with riot police during rally against jailing of several Muslims for murder of ethnic Macedonians in Skopje; 20 police, several protesters injured; 6 ethnic Albanians sentenced 30 July to 3 years in prison for participation in violent protests.

- [“Police and Albanians clash in Macedonia over murder trial”](#), Reuters, 4 July 2014.

Caucasus

➔ **Armenia** PM Abramian 17 July said Armenia to sign agreement joining Russia-led Eurasian Economic Union in Oct. Country’s ascension to Moscow-led Customs Union put off several times over Armenian trade provision objections; sceptics say signing may not happen at all. OSCE representative on media freedom late July expressed concern over 26 June court ruling forcing media outlets to disclose sources. Prominent Armenian-Russian businessman arrested mid-July in Russia, claimed charges politically motivated.

- [“Hayrapetyan Case: online petition launched in support of jailed Russian-Armenian businessman”](#), ArmeniaNow.com, 29 July 2014.

➔ **Azerbaijan** FM Elmar Mammadyarov 1-3 July visited China for trade and diplomatic talks. Crackdown on rights figures continued: opposition activist Omar Mamedov 4 July sentenced to 5 years prison on drug charges; Reporters Without Borders 11 July criticised trial as “politically manipulated”. Chairman of opposition Musavay party youth wing reportedly detained 23 July; prominent activists Leyla

Yunus and husband Arif Yunus called in for questioning 30 July, reportedly charged with treason and other crimes. Jailings condemned by UK minister for Europe and other European bodies.

- [“China, Azerbaijan pledge stronger ties”](#), Xinhua, 1 July 2014.

➔ **Nagorno-Karabakh (Azerbaijan)** Skirmishes continued with several reports of deaths, injuries, and continuing escalations including alleged ceasefire violations: de facto Nagorno-Karabakh/Armenian authorities 11 July claimed Azerbaijani soldier involved in commando raid in Kelbajar area captured, 14 July said forces “neutralised saboteurs” from Azerbaijan who killed ethnic Armenian teenager missing since 4 July. 1 killed, 3 injured including mayor of Armenian city Armavir when car hit landmine in Armenian-occupied Azerbaijani district 22 July. OSCE mediators late July expressed “serious concern” over increased tensions, targeted killings.

- [“Mediators voice concern over ‘targeted killings of civilians’”](#), RFE/RL, 24 July 2014.

➔ **Georgia** Georgian prosecutors 28 July filed charges against former president Mikhail Saakashvili for abuse of power; U.S. 29 July expressed concern. Ongoing political tensions between loosely affiliated Georgian Dream coalition and opposition United National Movement (UNM) following June local elections: former President Saakashvili charged in absentia 28 July for “abuse of office” over 2007 crackdown on protesters. Several foreign govts emphasised due process needed to be rigorously followed in trials of former govt. Ex-Tbilisi mayor and opposition figure Ugulava detained and jailed 3 July on similar charges awaiting trial. PM Irakli Garibashvili 31 July said judicial proceedings will be “objective and transparent”. Incident near Armenian Tbilisi church in mid-July with men wielding steel bars, concerns about long-dormant ethnic issues and response by police. EU Association Agreement ratified 18 July. Court in breakaway South Ossetia region 18 July jailed Georgian for spying.

- [“Prosecutor brings criminal charges against former Georgian President”](#), RFE/RL, 29 July 2014.

➔ **North Caucasus (Russia)** Assembly of Peoples of the Caucasus NGO head Ruslan Kutayev sentenced 7 July to 4 years imprisonment on controversial drug possession charge and banned from political activities including attending public assemblies and participating in public events for further year after sentence ends; NGO Freedom House called sentence “political retribution”. Counter-terrorism operations ongoing in Dagestan: 5 suspected militants and 1 police officer killed, 4 police wounded 6 July in central Untsukul district; 2 suspects killed 8 July. Police officer shot dead 9 July in Khasavyurt, Dagestan. Unknown assailants 9 July stabbed retired head of branch of Dagestan’s counter-Extremism Centre in Kizilyurt to death. Two alleged insurgents killed in a CTO in a village mosque in Tsumadinsky district, Dagestan. Former mayor of Makhachkala 9 July sentenced to 10 years imprisonment on terrorism charges. Situation deteriorated in Ingushetia: police and military officer’s envoy attacked 2 July in Sunzhensky district, 1 officer killed, 7 injured; 4 police officers injured in attack in Nazaran central hospital 6 July; MIA

officers attacked 27 July in Nazran district, 1 police officer killed, another 2 injured. Member of Karachay-Cherkessia's parliament shot dead 15 July, 2 local residents identified as possible assailants.

- ["Respected Chechen political figure jailed for four years"](#), RFE/RL, 7 July 2014.

Eastern Europe

➔ **Belarus** President Lukashenka's office 30 July announced Belarus will host Ukraine-Russia talks focusing on securing access to site of Malaysian airliner crash. Trial of Belarusian human rights activist Andrey Bandarenkabegan started 29 July.

- ["Belarus to host Ukraine-Russia talks"](#), Reuters, 30 July 2014.

➔ **Moldova** Parliament 2 July ratified Association Agreement with EU; Russia's deputy PM said move violates rights of people of breakaway Transdniestral region, Russia same day announced sanctions on Moldovan imports. Russia and Transdniestral 3 July signed series of cooperation agreements. Moldova's Council for TV and Radio 4 July suspended Russia 24 TV channel's broadcast license, placed sanctions on 4 Moldovan broadcasters. FM Natalia Gherman 29 July announced Moldova will participate in Sept NATO summit for the first time.

- ["Moldova's ban on Russia TV channel will have negative impact on relations with Russia"](#), ITAR-TASS, 4 July 2014.

➔ **Ukraine** Malaysian Airlines flight MH17 shot down over Donetsk region 17 July, reportedly by Russian-made SA-11 surface-to-air missile, killing all 298 on board; pro-Russian rebels denied involvement, variously blamed U.S. or Ukrainian govts. Pressure increased on Russia; EU and U.S. announced further sanctions, including economic ones late July. Rebels controlling area around crash site impeded investigation efforts in days following incident; later reportedly agreed to allow access to site, investigation hindered by heavy fighting in area; international investigative team reportedly reached site late month. Continued fighting between pro-Russian rebels and govt forces in Luhansk and Donetsk regions: rebels 5 July abandoned northern Donetsk town of Slovyansk, withdrew to Donetsk city; main rebel commander Igor Girkin-Strelkov complained of inadequate Russian military support before retreat. Govt forces captured small rebel garrisons elsewhere in east but lost several warplanes, including in days leading up to MH17 incident; another 2 jets downed 23 July. Ukrainian security sources mid-month estimated rebel strength varying from 6,000 to 20,000 fighters, govt forces at 50,000 nationwide. Signs emerged of concern within Russia's political elite over economic and diplomatic price of supporting rebels: following late June articles in pro-Kremlin media criticising Strelkov, statements from radical nationalists expressed disappointment with Putin; several statements from senior Russian govt officials noted damaging effect of sanctions on banking system. Human Rights Watch 24 July accused army of shelling civilian areas, reports denied by govt. PM Yatseniuk 24 July tendered

resignation over failure of parliament to increase funding for army, address country's energy problems; 2 parties quit governing coalition same day; parliament 31 July voted to reject Yatseniuk's resignation, increase funding for army.

- ["Ukraine premier stays on, envoys agree on crash site route"](#), Reuters, 1 Aug. 2014.

Western Europe/Mediterranean

➔ **Cyprus** Despite UNSG Ban's 1 July call to intensify efforts toward comprehensive settlement, no tangible progress as island marked 40 years of physical partition: Turkish Cypriot leader Derviş Eroğlu, Greek Cypriot President Nicos Anastasiades met 7 and 24 July; Eroğlu 7 July submitted 5-step roadmap for negotiations including referendum in 2014; Republic of Cyprus spokesman Christodoulides 16 July said roadmap unacceptable, contradicts UN framework; Anastasiades 13 July said country opposed to partition. Turkish PM Erdoğan 15 July, President Gül 20 July reiterated Turkey's commitment to political Cyprus solution. Greek Cypriot group 14 July filed war crimes case against Turkey before ICC.

- ["Cyprus after 40 years of division"](#), Al Jazeera, 20 July 2014.

➔ **Turkey** Govt-PKK peace process inched forward: new bill approved by parliament 10 July and President Gül 15 July gives state negotiators immunity, allows use of third-parties in talks, mentions work underway for militants' rehabilitation. Jailed PKK leader Öcalan 10 July said legal framework "positive start to establishing a great peace". Hundreds of PKK fighters reported crossing into Syria mid-July to join armed wing Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) in battle against Islamic State (IS, formerly ISIL) jihadists around Kobane. 3 Turkish soldiers, 2 YPG killed near Ceylanpinar on Syria border 21 July; Turkish army said militants tried to enter illegally, PKK said they were ambushed. Turkish soldiers 19 July shot dead Syrian Kurdish man crossing into Şırnak province from Syria. Tensions in south-east from Syrian spillover worsened with anti-refugee protests and attacks on Syrian businesses in Kahramanmaraş and Adana provinces 13-14 July. PM Erdoğan 17 July accused Israel of attempting "systematic genocide" in Gaza, called for ICC trial; FM Davutoğlu 18 July met with Palestinian Authority (PA) leader Abbas, 25 July with Hamas leader Meshaal, 26 July attended Paris multilateral talks. Israel 18 July reduced diplomatic delegation in Turkey amid growing protests. Govt media ban on June kidnapping of 49 Turkish diplomatic staff and family in Mosul by IS continued. Dozens of police officers and chiefs detained late July over alleged spying on PM Erdoğan and entourage, arrests seen as political move ahead of 10 Aug presidential elections.

- ["Turkey approves framework for PKK peace talks"](#), Al Jazeera, 10 July 2014.

Central Asia

➔ **Kazakhstan** Kazakh air force 10 July conducted large-scale military exercises along Kazakh-Chinese border. 4 sentenced 22 July to 6-12 years prison for recruiting fighters for Syria's rebel army. Same sentence for similar charges pronounced 21 July in Shymkent against a group of four.

- ["Kazakh helicopter squadron completes tactical flight exercises"](#), Tengri News, 21 July 2014.

➔ **Kyrgyzstan** Water and energy tensions with neighbours continued: Tajikistan 10 July launched mortar attack against Kyrgyzstan following tensions over water in Vorukh enclave (Tajik territory surrounded by Kyrgyzstan's Batken province); Kyrgyz and Tajik vice PMs met 11 July to discuss conflict, agreed on joint commission to investigate events. Kyrgyz and Tajik govts 28 July agreed to joint patrolling of common border to avoid more clashes. Kazakh PM Masimov visited Bishkek 12 July, discussed possible reduction of scheduled water released from Kyrgyzstan to Kazakhstan following 70% shortfall in water for irrigation in Chui province, northern Kyrgyzstan. Interior Minister Suranchiyev 3 July warned religions extremism on rise, at least 80 Kyrgyz citizens fighting alongside rebels in Syria. Ousted President Bakiev sentenced 25 July to life in prison in absentia for 2010 killing of protesters.

- ["Tajik-Kyrgyz commission to investigate violence near Vorukh exclave"](#), RFE/RL, 11 July 2014.

➔ **Tajikistan** Alexander Sodikov, Tajik national resident in Canada, arrested 16 June on spying accusations, released 22 July, asked to remain in Dushanbe while investigation continues. Opposition leader from Gorno-Badakhshan province, Saodatsho Adolatov, sentenced 30 July to 5 years jail for inciting hatred.

- ["Detained Tajik researcher released, asked to stay in Dushanbe"](#), RFE/RL, 23 July 2014.

➔ **Uzbekistan** Aman Sagidullaev, leader of separatist movement Alga Karakalpakstan and former minister on Karakalpakstan Agricultural Department, declared wanted 3 July; Sagidullaev accused of stealing over \$1mn. Uzbekistan's National Security Forces purged early July; 40 officers reportedly arrested or dismissed. 6 alleged Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) members reportedly sentenced 7 July to 9-15 years jail for terrorism.

- ["Mass dismissals, arrests reported in Uzbek national security service"](#), RFE/RL, 3 July 2014.

Latin America

➔ **Colombia** Govt and FARC 17 July reached agreement on mechanisms for victims' participation in transitional justice discussions; Cuba-based peace talks will resume 12 Aug, with first victims' delegation expected in Havana 16 Aug. Three regional forums held 4-18 July prepared inputs amid heated debate over the alleged underrepresentation of FARC victims. National Liberation Army (ELN) 4 July celebrated 50th anniversary with string of attacks and three-day "armed strike" in north-eastern stronghold regions. President Santos 29 July warned intensifying guerrilla offensive could lead to rupture of talks; Southern Putumayo department particularly hit, with repeated FARC attacks on oil and transport trucks causing significant environmental damage. Police 20 July detained leader of FARC's 30th Front in Cauca Valley. Dissident group of demobilised EPL guerrillas asked in 25 July open letter to join current peace process. Jailed AUC leader "Macaco" 25 July called for revision of transitional justice rules amid growing concerns over approaching liberations of paramilitaries having served 8-year maximum prison sentences ordered under special legislation. President Santos 20 July inaugurated newly elected Congress likely to play crucial role in implementing future peace agreements.

- ["Columbia's new legislature brings fresh challenges to peace process"](#), *Miami Herald*, 18 July 2014.

➔ **Ecuador** Attorney General Galo Chiriboga 9 July highlighted ongoing security crisis in northern provinces bordering Colombia during meeting with security agencies, reported homicide rates far exceeding national average in San Lorenzo, Esmeraldas province, and Putumayo, Sucumbíos province.

- ["San Lorenzo tiene la tasa más alta de crímenes del país, informa Galo Chiriboga"](#), *La Republica*, 9 July 2014.

➔ **Guatemala** President Pérez Molina 25 July visited Washington, met with U.S. President Obama, Honduras and El Salvador counterparts, discussed detention of migrant children at U.S. border, efforts to deter illegal migration, development and security in Central America, and asked the U.S. to grant "Temporary Protected Status" (TPS) to Guatemalan migrants. Former guerrilla leader Fermín Felipe Solano Barillas sentenced 4 July to 90 years in prison for the massacre of 22 indigenous villagers in 1988; first conviction of former leftist guerrilla for human rights abuses during decades-long conflict. Task Force Chortí, composed of 200 police and 100 soldiers, 10 July began operations to combat drug trafficking, smuggling along borders with Honduras and Belize.

- ["Central American leaders meet Barack Obama to criticise US border policy"](#), *Guardian*, 26 July 2014.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Latin America Report N°52, ["Corridor of Violence: The Guatemala-Honduras Border"](#), 4 June 2014.

➔ **Mexico** President Peña Nieto 7 July announced joint border program with Guatemala designed to safeguard human rights, combat crime along border; Mexico to create "integrated attention centres" to coordinate flow of goods and people,

facilitate legal migration for Guatemala and Belize citizens. Leader of governing Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) in Nuevo Urecho, Michoacán state, killed 25 July by suspected drug cartel gunmen. Senate late July passed 4 bills to reform national oil company Pemex and state-owned power company CFE, set up regulatory bodies to oversee direct foreign investment in energy sector. Over 30 police officers arrested 26 July in Michoacán, accused of links to organised crime.

- [“Mexico arrests 32 policemen for alleged organised crime ties”](#), *Telegraph*, 28 July 2014.

➔ **Venezuela** Opposition leader Ramon Aveledo resigned 29 July as opposition alliance remained divided over how to oppose President Maduro’s regime: more radical wing continued to push for constitutional assembly; moderates led by Henrique Capriles advocate focus on building electoral support. Ruling United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV) also divided: Rafael Ramírez, energy minister and chairman of state oil corporation, increasingly influential following June sacking of planning minister and radical leftist Jorge Giordani. Party congress held late July elected Maduro as party leader; calls from dissidents to debate internal democracy, corruption accusations brushed aside. Military gaining influence: keynote speech at 5 July independence day ceremony in parliament given for first time by military general, Vladimir Padrino López, who declared the military to be “chavista”, or supportive of left-wing political ideology of former president Chávez. U.S. 30 July announced travel ban on 24 high-ranking Venezuelan officials including cabinet ministers citing human rights abuses during crackdown on opposition protests. Former intelligence chief Gen Hugo Carvajal arrested 23 July in Aruba on U.S. drugs charges, freed following Venezuelan pressure.

- [“Bases se alzan contra el PSUV”](#), *El Nacional*, 11 July 2014.

Middle East & North Africa

Eastern Mediterranean

↓ **Israel-Palestine** Israel 8 July launched "Operation Protective Edge" in Gaza: more than 1400 Palestinians, 64 Israelis, including 61 soldiers, reported killed throughout month. Escalation followed June kidnapping and murder of 3 Israeli youths in W Bank and 2 July revenge torture and murder of Palestinian teen by vigilante Israelis in E Jerusalem. Israel held Hamas responsible for triple murder, launched air strikes 1 July following discovery of bodies previous day; several Hamas militants killed in air strikes in days leading up to announcement of army operation. Israel mid-month started ground operations; Hamas launched rockets, used tunnels in attempts to attack Israeli communities near Gaza. Attempts at reaching ceasefire agreement failed throughout July: proposals by Egypt rejected by Hamas, Qatar-led proposal rejected by Israel. Egypt proposed cessation of hostility as prerequisite for negotiation of long-term ceasefire; Hamas insisted on agreeing to ceasefire modalities before halting rocket fire, said aspects left undecided during fighting would never be addressed. 3-day humanitarian ceasefire announced 1 Aug reportedly collapsed same day. Several Palestinians reported killed by Israeli army during protests in W Bank including 8 killed in separate incidents 24-25 July; another killed by suspected settler 25 July. 4 reported killed in Israeli air strikes in S Syria 15 July following cross-border rocket fire. Rocket attacks, shelling across Lebanese border mid-month, no casualties (see Lebanon).

- Ofer Zalberg, "[Israel's Hamas Challenge: The Third Way](#)", Times of Israel, 6 July 2014.
- Nathan Thrall, "[How the West Chose War in Gaza](#)", *New York Times*, 17 July 2014.
- "[Israel declares Gaza truce over, 50 die in Gaza shelling](#)", Reuters, 1 Aug. 2014.

New Crisis Group Middle East Briefing N°39, [Gaza and Israel: New Obstacles, New Solutions](#), 14 July 2014. To break the violent impasse, Israel must change its policy toward Hamas and work toward a lasting ceasefire, recognising how much its own stability depends on the stability of Gaza.

➔ **Lebanon** Army "security plan" continued to hold despite presidential, governmental and parliamentary paralysis: security and intelligence measures intensified including checkpoints, raids of houses, and arrests of dozens of Islamists in Aarsal, Tripoli, Saida and other areas. Security officials claimed jihadi networks discovered planning suicide attacks against Lebanese officials and civilians; 28 charged with belonging to jihadi group Islamic State (formerly ISIL, see Iraq) 7 July. Continued clashes between Syrian rebels and pro-Syrian regime fighters in eastern border areas: scores reported killed mid- to late month. Cross-border rocket fire from south into Israel mid-month, Israeli forces retaliated with shelling; no casualties reported.

- "[Lebanon charges 28 with planning suicide attacks: agency](#)", Reuters, 7 July 2014.

➔ **Syria** Month saw northern armed opposition facing most dangerous situation since start of uprising: rival rebel group Islamic State (IS) (formerly ISIL, see

Iraq) defeated other rebels and gained territory, oil and manpower in eastern province Deir al-Zour. Regime forces made progress encircling rebels in Aleppo: rebels increasingly disorganised and poorly armed, state backers' modest increase of support for moderate factions failed to compensate for cuts in funding to allied group Islamic Front. Observers expressed fears moderate opposition setbacks in Aleppo could provide opportunity for IS to recapture ground in city's northern countryside and push further west. IS and regime forces increasingly drawn into direct confrontation as consequence of respective gains including: IS mid-month reportedly killed hundreds seizing control of gas field east of Homs, seized regime bases in Raqqa and Hassakeh provinces late month. Al-Qaeda linked rebel group Jabhat al-Nusra mid-month indicated intention to establish Islamic emirate of their own: sought to gain ground in Idlib province at expense of other rebels. Exile opposition group Syrian National Coalition (SNC) 9 July elected Hadi al-Bahra President; 22 July voted to dissolve "interim" govt, form new one within 1 month. Staffan de Mistura 10 July appointed UN special envoy to Syria, replacing Lakhdar Brahimi.

- Noah Bonsey, "[Why Triumphant Jihadis In Iraq Will Help Assad Crush Opposition In Aleppo](#)", Huffington Post, 21 July 2014.
- "[Islamic State consolidates control of eastern Syria with fall of Deir el Zour](#)", McClatchy, 14 July 2014.

Gulf

➔ **Bahrain** Govt 7 July asked visiting U.S. Assistant Sec State Tom Malinowski to leave country prematurely following meeting with Shiite opposition group al-Wefaq; later charged group's leader with "violating political association law", requested 3-month court suspension of activities of al-Wefaq, 2 other opposition groups. 1 police killed in bomb blast south of Manama 4 July, authorities blamed "terrorists".

- "[Bahrain charges opposition leader over meeting with U.S. diplomat](#)", Reuters, 10 July 2014.

➔ **Iran** Nuclear negotiations between Iran and P5+1 extended until 24 Nov after parties failed to reach comprehensive agreement before 20 July deadline. Non-stop bargaining 2-20 July failed to bridge differences, most importantly on extent of uranium enrichment: each party stuck to maximalist opening gambits wrongly assuming other side desperate for deal. FM Zarif 14 July signalled Iran prepared to maintain operating centrifuges at current level of 9,400 SWU until 2021 when fuel contract with Russia expires, then increase capacity to 190,000; P5+1 rejected idea as "unworkable". Extension deal included agreement all parties will uphold obligations under Nov 2013 Joint Plan of Action. Iran additionally to convert 25kg of stockpile of 20% enriched uranium in oxidised form into fuel for Tehran Research Reactor, blend down stocks of material enriched to less than 2%; in exchange to be allowed access to further \$2.8 billion of restricted assets.

- Ali Vaez, "[Why Overtime in Nuclear Talks with Iran is Better than Game Over](#)", Al Jazeera, 25 July 2014.
- "[Iran nuclear talks end with deadline extended](#)", AFP, 18 July 2014.

↓ **Iraq** Army and political leadership made no tangible progress in responding to June's rebel gains in NW led by jihadi group formerly known as Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL; alternatively ISIS or Daesh), renamed Islamic State (IS) following late June announcement of caliphate. Poorly-planned 15 July army assault to recapture Tikrit ended in retreat to city's edge. IS moved to eliminate Sunni rivals in areas under its control: reports of executions, house bombings, shelling, detentions and forced displacement; also reports of destruction of shrines, mosques and other religious sites. Group's leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi made first ever public appearance delivering sermon in Mosul early July. Announcement of caliphate met with tentative criticism from non-jihadi Sunni forces supporting rebellion, most avoided direct confrontation with IS; reports of some fighting between IS and other insurgents, tribes mid-month in towns north of Baghdad. Several hundred leaders of broad array of Sunni insurgent groups reportedly met in Jordan 16 July, vowed to keep fighting to topple govt. PM Maliki continued to refuse calls to step down following April's parliamentary elections; parliamentarians 15 July elected Sunni Islamist Salim al-Jabouri Speaker of Parliament, 24 July elected Kurdish MP Fouad Masoum President. Unprecedented tension between Maliki and Kurdistan Regional Govt (KRG) following mid-June Kurdish seizure of northern city Kirkuk: Kurdish forces 11 July seized nearby oil fields, KRG President Barzani announced intention to hold referendum on independence within months; Maliki accused KRG of providing safe havens for IS, other "terrorists". Kurdish cabinet members 10 July boycotted cabinet session; Maliki next day replaced Kurdish FM Zebari with Shiite ally Hussain al-Shahristani. Army shelling of Anbar's Fallujah continued, 19 reported killed 21-22 July. Deadly bombings continued in Baghdad including at least 33 killed in IS suicide bombing 23 July. Human Rights Watch mid-month said hundreds of prisoners killed by govt forces in revenge for IS killings.

- Peter Harling, "[Taking Iraq apart](#)", *Le Monde diplomatique*, 2 July 2014.
- Joost Hiltermann, "[Kurdish Independence: Harder Than It Looks](#)", *The New York Review of Books*, 10 July 2014.
- "[Iraqi anger rises as militants attack Mosul's cultural history](#)", *New York Times*, 30 July 2014.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Middle East Briefing N°38, [Iraq's Jihadi Jack-in-the-Box](#), 20 June 2014.

➔ **Yemen** Clashes in north between Houthis and rival tribes, army units intensified early month: hundreds killed, tens of thousands displaced. Houthi fighters 8 July captured Amran city north of Sanaa, including military base of 310th brigade, aligned with Islah party and General Ali Mohsen al-Ahmar; air force bombed Houthi positions. Houthis agreed to return Amran to govt control following pressure from President Hadi, along with UNSC, U.S., EU and GCC; tensions remained high, skirmishes continued in surrounding areas. Tribal militants continued to attack critical energy infrastructure crippling oil exports, causing lengthy electricity

blackouts in Sanaa. Govt 30 July lifted diesel subsidies prompting scattered protests. Alleged al-Qaeda affiliates continued assassination campaign against security personnel in south; at least 2 soldiers, 6 militants reported killed in car bombings, clashes in Abyan 27 July.

- [“Yemen president says Houthis agree to return town to state control”](#), Reuters, 23 July 2014.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Middle East Report N°154, [The Huthis: From Saada to Sanaa](#), 10 June 2014.

North Africa

➔ **Algeria** Govt forces mid-month reportedly killed 6 suspected AQIM members, arrested 1. PM Abdelmalek Sellal 22 July met Tunisian counterpart following killing of at least 14 Tunisian soldiers by gunmen near border (see Tunisia); countries launched joint military operations including 8,000 Algerian troops. Govt 22 July announced plan to tackle crisis in southern town of Ghardaia following months of clashes between Arab and Mozabite Berbers killing 10 and damaging over 1,400 buildings.

- [“Algeria, Tunisia discuss military co-operation”](#), Magharebia, 22 July 2014.

➔ **Egypt** Govt early July implemented deep fuel subsidy cuts as part of wider aggressive campaign to reduce budget deficit, also including electricity subsidy cuts and taxes on consumer goods: resulting fuel price hikes led to few scattered protests; full impact yet to be felt by consumers, fears move could increase social tensions; measures expected to fulfil one requirement for Egypt to secure IMF assistance package. Several deadly incidents along border with Israel including: soldier killed in roadside bombing in Rafah 9 July; 2 tribal elders reported killed by suspected Islamist militants in same town 21 July; 8 reported killed, including soldier, in explosions targeting security installations 14 July; over 20 militants, 4 children reported killed in shoot-outs, mortar fire 26-27 July. At least 21 guards killed in Western Desert oasis 19 July, Sinai-based jihadi group Ansar Beit al-Maqdis blamed. Crackdown on Muslim Brotherhood (MB) continued, extended to other parties from Alliance for Support of Legitimacy (ASL) opposing 2013 military coup; senior leaders of Construction and Development, Wasat party arrested early July. ASL 3-4 July arranged demonstrations on anniversary of coup, at least 6 reported killed in clashes, bomb blast in Cairo outside presidential palace. Former PM Kandil freed from jail mid-July, first release of senior official from administration of ousted President Morsi.

- [“Egypt’s Sisi defends fuel price rise of 78% as taxi drivers stage protests”](#), *Guardian*, 6 July 2014.

⬇️ **Libya** Insecurity deepened as clashes between security units, militias left scores dead; fragmentation of newly elected parliament enhanced concerns over govt’s inability to tackle security challenges; first parliamentary session scheduled to take place in Benghazi early Aug, reportedly moved to Tobruk over security concerns. At least 94 reported killed 13-27 July in fighting between Zintan militia and security units affiliated with Islamist-leaning Libya Revolutionaries’ Operation

Room (LROR) over control of Tripoli airport. Govt 28 July called for international help to fight oil tanker fires in Tripoli harbour set ablaze by fighting, rival militias 30 July agreed on temporary ceasefire to allow firefighters to try to control blaze. At least 75 reported killed mid- to late July in Benghazi during clashes between different govt forces and militias; Islamists seized control of Special Forces base 28 July in battle killing over 50. Former General Hiftar 31 July denied Islamist claims of complete control over Benghazi; Ansar al-Sharia 30 July declared city an “Islamic emirate”. UN staff 14 July pulled out of country due to increasing violence; U.S., several other embassies evacuated throughout month; UK embassy convoy attacked 26 July on road to Tunisia, no casualties; several countries announced plans to evacuate nationals. Acting PM al-Thinni reportedly prevented from flying to Tobruk by militia controlling Mitiga airport 24 July. FM Abdel Aziz 18 July appealed to UNSC for help in tackling security problem; UNSC statement 23 July stressed need for political solution.

- [“Heavy shelling, clashes spread in Libya’s Tripoli”](#), Reuters, 31 July 2014.
- ➔ **Mauritania** Parliament 2 July passed anti-terrorism law.
- [“Mauritania passes anti-terrorism law”](#), Magharebia, 10 July 2014.
- ➔ **Morocco** Security services put on high alert early month after reports of terrorist threats from Islamist fighters returning from Syria, Iraq; Interior Minister Mohamed Hassad claimed over 1,200 Moroccans involved.
- [“Morocco goes on high alert over terror threats”](#), Reuters, 11 July 2014.
- ➔ **Tunisia** Govt forces stepped up operations against militants in west: at least 14 soldiers, 1 attacker reported killed 16 July in Mount Chambi area near Algerian border; 2 soldiers killed 26 July in El Kef region. Govt 17 July created new anti-terrorist agency; 19 July announced 63 suspected terrorists arrested in El Kef, Sidi Bouzid and Kasserine provinces. Around 40 mosques, 1 radio station, 1 TV station closed down by govt 20 July over alleged Islamist radicalism. FM Mongi Hamdi 30 July warned of possible border closure following Libya unrest, said UN presence requested.
- [“Gunmen kill Tunisian soldiers near Algeria”](#), Al Jazeera, 17 July 2014.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Middle East and North Africa Briefing N°37, [The Tunisian Exception: Success and Limits of Consensus](#), 5 June 2014.