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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 Crisis Group's reports and briefing papers that have been published in the last month.

CrisisWatch is compiled by Crisis Group's Brussels Research Unit, drawing on multiple sources including the resources of our some 130 staff members across five continents, who already report on some 60 of the situations listed here. Comments and suggestions can be sent to crisiswatch@crisisgroup.org.

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April 2011 Trends



Deteriorated Situations

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Belarus (p.8) Sudan (South) (p.3)
Bosnia (p.7) Syria (p.10)
Burkina Faso (p.4) Thailand (p.6)
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Improved Situations



Unchanged Situations

Afghanistan (p.5), Albania (p.7), Algeria (p.11), Armenia (p.7), Azerbaijan (p.8), Basque Country (Spain) (p.8), Benin (p.3), Bolivia (p.9), Burundi (p.2), Central African Republic (p.2), Chad (p.2), Colombia (p.9), Côte d'Ivoire (p.4), Cyprus (p.8), Democratic Republic of Congo (p.2), Djibouti (p.2), Ecuador (p.9), Egypt (p.11), Ethiopia (p.2), Georgia (p.8), Guatemala (p.9), Guinea (p.4), Haiti (p.9), India (non-Kashmir) (p.5), Indonesia (p.6), Iran (p.10), Iraq (p.10), Israel/Occupied Palestinian Territories (p.10), Jordan (p.11), Kashmir (p.5), Kazakhstan (p.4), Kenya (p.2), Kosovo (p.7), Kyrgyzstan (p.5), Lebanon (p.10), Liberia (p.4), Macedonia (p.7), Madagascar (p.3), Mali (p.4), Mauritania (p.12), Mexico (p.9), Morocco (p.12), Myanmar/Burma (p.6), Nagorno-Karabakh (Azerbaijan) (p.8), Nepal (p.6), Niger (p.4), Nigeria (p.4), North Caucasus (Russia) (p.8), North Korea (p.5), Oman (p.11), Pakistan (p.6), Philippines (p.6), Rwanda (p.2), Saudi Arabia (p.11), Serbia (p.7), Somalia (p.2), Sri Lanka (p.6), Tajikistan (p.5), Timor-Leste (p.7), Tunisia (p.12), Turkey (p.9), Turkmenistan (p.5), Uzbekistan (p.5), Venezuela (p.10), Western Sahara (p.12), Yemen (p.11), Zimbabwe (p.3)

May 2011 Watchlist



Conflict Risk Alerts

Syria
Yemen



Conflict Resolution Opportunities

Côte d'Ivoire
Yemen

Crisis Group

Crisis Group is an independent, non-profit, non-governmental organisation, with some 130 staff members on five continents, working through field-based analysis and high-level advocacy to prevent and resolve deadly conflict. Crisis Group'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, Crisis Group produces regular analytical reports containing practical recommendations targeted at key international decision-takers, and backed up with high-level advocacy. Crisis Group is co-chaired by former European Commissioner for External Relations Lord (Christopher) Patten and former U.S. Ambassador and Vice Chairman of Hills & Company Thomas R. Pickering, and its President and Chief Executive is former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Louise Arbour.



CENTRAL AFRICA

➤ **Burundi** Police, intelligence services targeting suspected former rebel National Liberation Forces (FNL) thought to be responsible for series of summary executions: 3 FNL killed in Kanyosha, 2 killed in Ngagra 28 March and 2 killed in Isale 15 Apr. Local rights group reported state-sponsored executions of suspected FNL members also in Rweza, Buyenzi and Kabezi. FNL 6 Apr retaliated against ruling CNDD-FDD, killing 2 members in Isale. Reports emerged mid-Apr that corpses discovered in Ruvubu River, Muyinga province; exact number disputed. Local prosecutor 13 Apr sought life sentence for journalist charged with treason for criticising security services. Legislature 25 Apr voted on controversial new law requiring re-registration of existing opposition parties.

- [“Political tensions blamed for wave of killings in Burundi”](#), AFP, 7 Apr. 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°169, [Burundi: From Electoral Boycott to Political Impasse](#), 7 Feb. 2011.

➤ **Central African Republic** PM Touadera 22 Apr named new govt comprising 2 ministers from opposition disowned by party. Following end March ethnic fighting, army and govt-allied Union of Democratic Forces for Unity (UFDR) 10 Apr clashed with rebel Convention of Patriots for Justice and Peace (CPJP) in northern town Sikikédé; 27 reported killed. Former president and runner-up in Jan presidential poll Ange Felix Patassé died 5 Apr in hospital in Douala.

- [“Fighting kills 27 in Central African Republic: rebels”](#), AFP, 11 Apr. 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°167, [Dangerous Little Stones: Diamonds in the Central African Republic](#), 16 Dec. 2010.

➤ **Chad** Voting took place 25 Apr in presidential election widely expected to secure fourth term for incumbent President Déby; results expected 9 May. AU observers said turnout less than 51%; follows opposition plans to boycott poll.

- [“Turnout low for Chad presidential vote- Observers”](#), Reuters, 28 Apr. 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°78, [Chad's North West: The Next High-risk Area?](#), 17 Feb. 2011.

➤ **Democratic Republic of Congo** Election Commission 30 Apr announced national elections to take place 28 Nov. Despite earlier parliament rejection 11 Apr of electoral reform proposals, leading opposition candidate Vital Kamerhe said content overall with new electoral calendar but remained concerned about transparency of vote. Main opposition Movement for Liberation of Congo (MLC) 18 Apr appointed Thomas Luhaka as party leader, replacing Francois Mwamba. Etienne Tshisekedi, leader of extra-parliamentary opposition Union for Democracy and Social Progress, 24 Apr addressed estimated 50,000 during first political rally since return to Kinshasa. East saw continued pockets of insecurity: in North Kivu Mai Mai 2-3 Apr attacked Masereka; FARDC killed 3 Apr during operations against rebel ADF; FDLR 16 Apr attacked FARDC in Kalehe, South Kivu. LRA continued attacks on villages and FARDC in Haut and Bas-Uele districts, Oriental Province.

- [“Congo to hold national elections 28 Nov”](#), Reuters, 30 Apr. 2011.

➤ **Rwanda** During week-long commemoration of 1994 genocide, Justice Minister Tharcisse Karugarama 12 Apr announced UN International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) to start examining evidence 16 May against Felicien Kabuga and Protais Mpiranya, wanted for role in genocide; both remain at large. Belgian authorities 18 Apr arrested Mathias Bushishi, former magistrate wanted for helping plan massacre of Tutsis; East African Community 19 Apr appointed Health Minister Richard Sezibera as new Secretary-General. National Geology and Mining Authority 21 Apr refuted claims by NGO Global Witness that govt does little to prevent illegal trade of minerals from DRC.

- [“UN's Rwandan genocide court to hear cases against Kabuga and Mpiranya in May”](#), Bloomberg, 12 Apr. 2011.

HORN OF AFRICA

➤ **Djibouti** Incumbent Ismael Omar Guelleh 8 Apr won presidential election with 80%; high turnout. Opposition boycotted poll protesting constitutional changes that allowed Guelleh to run for third term. Constitution Council 13 Apr validated results.

- [“Why the world should keep an eye on Djibouti”](#), *Economist*, 14 Apr. 2011.

➤ **Ethiopia** 1,600 Eritrean refugees 20 Apr gathered in Addis Ababa calling for democratic rule in Eritrea; in noticeable escalation of rhetoric FM Hailemariam Desalegn next day openly declared support to Eritrean rebel groups fighting to overthrow Eritrean President Isaias. Following series of mass arrests, govt 30 March confirmed 121 members of banned rebel armed group Oromo Liberation Front detained as further evidence being gathered. Human Rights Watch 6 Apr indicated detention of members of 2 Oromo ethnic opposition parties politically motivated, urged govt to release those detained.

- [“Ethiopia says to work for Eritrea 'regime change'”](#), Reuters, 21 Apr. 2011.

➤ **Kenya** Rising fuel costs triggered 19 Apr protests despite govt announcement previous day of 20-30% tax cuts on fuel. Nairobi chief magistrate Gilbert Mutembei 12 Apr cleared suspended Higher Education Minister William Ruto of fraud charges related to illegal sale of land. Following court ruling, Ruto 25 Apr announced decision to run for president on United Democratic Movement ticket. Previously Ruto, 5 others 7-8 Apr appeared before ICC in relation to 2007-2008 post-election violence. Truth Commission 11 Apr commenced first public hearings to investigate some 3,000 killings at Wagalla airstrip in northeast during 1984 govt crackdown on ethnic Somalis.

- [“The odd couple”](#), *Economist*, 14 Apr. 2011.

➤ **Somalia** Transitional Federal Govt (TFG) 24 Apr unilaterally announced plans to postpone elections to 2012 saying insecurity is top priority; move despite 19 Apr call by UN SRSG Augustine Mahiga to hold elections for president, speaker of parliament by Aug 2011 when TFG mandate expires. At least 30 killed 20-21 Apr during heavy fighting between govt troops and Al-Shabaab in Busaar, near Kenyan border. Unidentified gunmen 16-17 Apr fired on worshippers at mosque in Puntland; at least 6 killed, dozens injured. International Maritime Bureau 14 Apr said piracy at all-time high with 50% increase in attacks in first quarter compared to 2010, noted dramatic rise in attackers' use of violence. UNSG Ban, FM Mohammed Abdullahi Omar 18 Apr appealed for comprehensive response during piracy conference in Dubai.

- Comment by Rashid Abdi (Crisis Group), “[Rethinking the Cure: Towards a Land-Based Solution for Somali Piracy](#)”, Maritime Counter Piracy Conference, 11 April 2011
- “[Somali govt postpones vote to 2010 amid security crisis](#)”, Reuters, 24 Apr. 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°170, *Somalia: The Transitional Government on Life Support*, 21 Feb. 2011.

↓ **Sudan (Northern)** Month saw military build-up in Abyei, mounting tensions ahead of South Kordofan elections in May, continued fighting in Darfur, internal NCP tensions. UNMIS commander early Apr said North and South militarising Abyei; U.S. special envoy Princeton Lyman said build-up “could lead to war”. Both sides 13 Apr agreed to withdraw unauthorised forces from Abyei, create Joint Technical Committee to monitor redeployment. President Bashir 27 Apr declared Abyei would remain part of North after South secession in July; meanwhile early draft of South Sudan transitional constitution claims Abyei as territory. In South Kordofan, militia 13 Apr killed at least 17, burned over 350 houses in el-Faid town ahead of delayed gubernatorial and state assembly elections scheduled 2 May; Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM) claim National Congress Party (NCP) candidate and ICC indictee Ahmed Haroun mobilising militia to attack its supporters; NCP equally accuse SPLM of mobilising forces to intimidate NCP. In Darfur, Rebel Justice and Equality Movement, Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) rebels led by Minni Minnawi, SLM Unity 10 Apr clashed with SAF in Sago Talag, N Darfur, inflicting “substantial” SAF casualties. Election commission 24 Apr announced Darfur referendum to determine status to take place 1 July. Darfur peace mediators 27 Apr submitted final draft peace agreement to govt, rebel groups; parties to respond 7 May. NCP 19 Apr rejected calls to extend post-referendum interim period required under Comprehensive Peace Agreement. UN 27 Apr renewed UNMIS mandate until 9 July 2011. Amid ongoing internal NCP divisions, Bashir 26 Apr removed Salah Gosh from national security committee for talking with opposition parties.

- “[Rifts within ruling party topple top presidential security adviser](#)”, *Sudan Tribune*, 26 Apr. 2011

↓ **Sudan (South)** Increased fighting between govt and rebel militias mid month saw more than 165 soldiers, rebels, northern tribesman and civilians killed in 7-day period. New rebel group South Sudan Liberation Army (SSLA) led by former Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) general Peter Gadet Yak urged overthrow of President Salva Kiir’s govt in 11 Apr “Mayoum Declaration”, called for national broad-based govt. At least 30 killed 19 Apr during SPLA clash with suspected forces loyal to renegade Gadet in Unity state. In Jonglei state, SPLA said killed at least 55 rebel fighters led by General Gabriel Tanginye 23 Apr; Tanginye reportedly surrendered next day. WFP 27 Apr announced suspension of operations in 7 of 11 Jonglei counties due to violence. Fighting reported 23 Apr between Thuyic and Gong ethnic groups in Rumbek state left 10 dead. Human Rights Watch 19 Apr said SPLA and Olony rebel group responsible for more than 60 mainly civilians killed during 6-7 March clashes in Upper Nile state triggered by govt’s anti-insurgency campaign. 27-28 Apr meeting of leaders of all political parties to review draft constitution for independent South Sudan ended without consensus.

- “[Violence persists in South Sudan as independence nears](#)”, *New York Times*, 25 Apr. 2011.

Crisis Group Africa Report N°172, *Politics and Transition in the New South Sudan*, 4 April 2011. Now that South Sudan’s referendum is complete and its independence from the North all but formalised, focus must increasingly shift to the political agenda at home.



↓ **Uganda** Month dominated by govt clampdown on “walk to work” protests initiated by opposition leaders to demonstrate against rising food and fuel costs. At least 2 killed, dozens injured 29 Apr as violence erupted in Kampala between troops and protesters following news that police 28 Apr violently arrested Kizza Besigye, leader of opposition Forum for Democratic Change; President Museveni 30 Apr vowed to “defeat” wave of demonstrations, unrest.

- “[Two killed, scores hospitalised in Uganda riots](#)”, Reuters, 29 Apr. 2011.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

↓ **Madagascar** De facto leader Andry Rajoelina 20 Apr returned from series of talks with leaders in Mozambique, Namibia and Zambia. Follows 31 March meeting in Zambia where SADC Troika postponed its decision on SADC mediators’ roadmap, recommended an extraordinary summit of all regional heads; date yet to be announced.

- “[Coups leader wraps up shuttle diplomacy tour of region](#)”, AP, 20 Apr. 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°166, *Madagascar: Crisis Heating Up?*, 18 Nov. 2010.

↓ **Zimbabwe** Arrests, intimidation targeting opposition activists continued including 15 Apr arrest of MDC-M’s co-minister for national healing Moses Nzila Ndlovu, detained for “addressing illegal memorial service” marking 1980s Gukurunhundi massacres. Following 31 March SADC Troika on Politics, Defence and Security, SADC issued strong communiqué condemning clampdown on political opposition, demanding immediate end to violence, intimidation. Days later police in Harare used teargas against church congregation, arrested pastors. PM Tsvangirai 18 Apr denounced President Mugabe’s long-standing plans to nationalise foreign-owned firms; Mugabe said recent govt notice giving foreign mining companies until 9 May to submit plans on share transfer was part of broader economic empowerment program. MDC Congress convened 30 Apr ahead of vote for party’s top leadership.

- “[Tsvangirai denounces Zimbabwe nationalization plans](#)”, Reuters, 18 Apr. 2011.

Crisis Group Africa Report N°173, *Zimbabwe: The Road to Reform or Another Dead End?*, 27 April 2011. Intensified violence against those deemed to be ZANU-PF enemies has exposed the limitations of Zimbabwe’s much delayed reform process and threatens to derail the Global Political Agreement (GPA).



WEST AFRICA

↓ **Benin** President Boni Yayi sworn in for second term 6 Apr following disputed March election; 3 Apr announced postponement until 30 Apr of planned legislative polls due to disputes over candidate registration.

- “[Benin president sworn-in for second term after disputed vote](#)”, AFP, 6 Apr. 2011.

➡ **Burkina Faso** Further wave of unrest began 14 Apr as members of presidential guard mutinied in capital Ouagadougou over non-payment of wages. Looting, rioting spread to at least 3 other cities over following days before self-proclaimed army spokesman 18 Apr called for end to violence, solution through dialogue. Reports said dozens injured, several raped, govt buildings ransacked. Protests by shopkeepers 15 Apr, students 18 Apr saw further damage, military facilities burned. In attempt to halt continued unrest, President Compaoré 15 Apr dismissed govt, military leaders; 18 Apr named Luc-Adolphe Tiao new PM; 22 Apr appointed himself defence minister. Police 27 Apr staged mutiny in capital which next day spread to several other cities. Tens of thousands of civilians staged peaceful protest 14 Apr against rising prices, poor living conditions. Coalition of 34 opposition parties 30 Apr released joint statement calling on Compaoré to step down.

- [“Police join in popular unrest”](#), *New York Times*, 28 Apr. 2011.

➡ ✎ **Côte d'Ivoire** Five-month election crisis ended as forces loyal to president-elect Alassane Ouattara 11 Apr arrested former president Laurent Gbagbo after 10-day siege of presidential residence. Arrest followed increasingly robust action by UNOCI, French forces acting under civilian protection mandate in UNSC resolution 1975. Reports suggested brutal reprisal attacks by pro-Ouattara forces before and after arrests including operations against remaining Gbagbo supporters, particularly in Yopougon area of Abidjan. Ouattara 22 Apr ordered all troops back to barracks in bid to end attacks, restore stability. Pascal Affi N'Guessan, leader of Gbagbo's Ivorian Popular Front, 16 Apr urged end to violence, moves toward reconciliation. Ouattara 13 Apr called for ICC investigation into atrocities by both sides, promised truth and reconciliation commission; govt 27 Apr launched preliminary investigations into Gbagbo and some 100 close associates over alleged rights abuses. Signs of split in pro-Ouattara coalition emerged 20 Apr as mainly northern Forces Republicaines de Côte d'Ivoire clashed with Abidjan-based “Invisible Commando” militia; commando chief Ibrahim Coulibaly killed 27 Apr. UNSC renewed arms embargo mandate, targeted sanctions until Apr 2012.

- [“Alassane Ouattara takes charge but can he keep the peace?”](#), *Economist*, 20 Apr. 2011.

- For latest report, see Crisis Group Africa Report N° 171, *Côte d'Ivoire: Is War the Only Option?*, 3 March 2011.

➡ **Guinea** At least 1 killed, several injured 3 Apr as security forces forcibly dispersed rally in support of returning opposition leader Cellou Diallo. Diallo 8 Apr called for release of 67 opposition activists arrested for participation in rally; court 13 Apr jailed 7, handed down lesser sentences to 27 others. Minister of territorial administration 13 Apr announced creation of new electoral commission, electoral register, pledged to hold already overdue legislative elections before year-end.

- [“Old problems linger for Guinea's new president”](#), Reuters, 21 Apr. 2011.

- For latest report, see Crisis Group Africa Report N° 164, *Guinea: Reforming the Army*, 23 Sept. 2010.

➡ **Liberia** Massive influx of refugees from Côte d'Ivoire continued; almost 150,000 registered since end-Nov start of crisis. Security forces 6 Apr arrested 95 armed men attempting to cross into Liberia, 11 Apr arrested alleged leader of mercenary recruitment ring. UN SRSG Ellen Løj 18 Apr warned of serious threat of contagion from Côte d'Ivoire.

- [“Rebel recruitment ring busted”](#), AllAfrica, 11 Apr. 2011.

➡ **Mali** President Touré 4 Apr appointed country's first female PM, Cisse Mariam Kaidama, following late-March resignation of Modibo Sidibe. France 19 Apr warned of “very elevated” risk of hostage-taking by al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), particularly in southeast. Security services 21 Apr said AQIM building new base near Mauritanian border, promised increased vigilance.

- [“Mali's president names country's first woman PM”](#), Reuters, 4 Apr. 2011.

➡ **Niger** Following 12 March run-off election, Mahamadou Issoufou 7 Apr sworn in as president ending 14 months of military rule. Issoufou same day appointed as PM ethnic Toureg Brigi Rafini, 21 Apr appointed full cabinet. Defeated presidential candidate Seini Oumarou reportedly declined cabinet position.

- [“Junta hands over to President Mahamadou Issoufou”](#), BBC, 7 Apr. 2011.

➡ **Nigeria** President Jonathan, People's Democratic Party (PDP) candidate, re-elected 16 Apr winning 59% in presidential poll; Muhammadu Buhari of Congress for Progressive Change (CPC) gained 32%. Observers described election as “credible” but results triggered significant deadly post-election violence. Rights group 24 Apr reported at least 500 killed as Muslim supporters of Buhari attacked churches, homes and police stations, sparking Christian reprisals across at least 6 northern states including Kaduna, Kano and Bauchi. Largely peaceful governorship elections held 26 Apr in majority of 36 states; 28 Apr in Kaduna and Bauchi after Election Commission's 2-day postponement citing security concerns. Suspected Islamist sect Boko Haram members 24 Apr killed 3, injured 14 in Maiduguri bomb blast; Boko Haram statement same day vowed to continue fight until Muslims regain freedom, called on govt to embrace Islam and adopt “laws of Qur'an”.

- Comment by Kunle Amuwo (Crisis Group), [“Nothing Short of Credible Elections Will Be Acceptable”](#), *Nation*, 4 April 2011

- [“President urges unity after election riots”](#), Reuters, 18 Apr. 2011.

- For latest briefing, see Crisis Group Africa Briefing N° 79, *Nigeria's Elections: Reversing the Degeneration?*, 24 Feb. 2011.



CENTRAL ASIA

➡ **Kazakhstan** President Nazarbaev 3 Apr secured landslide presidential election victory in poll heavily criticised by international observers. Election Commission 4 Apr announced 89.9% turnout with Nazarbaev taking 95.5% of votes; OSCE said polls marred by “serious irregularities”. Nazarbaev 11 Apr announced plans to create 2-party parliament by forming new pro-business party in “revolution from above”. Nazarbaev 11 Apr appointed son-in-law Timur Kulibayev to head Samruk-Kazyna fund, stock company that controls 70% of economy, fuelling suspicions he is grooming Kulibayev as his successor. 4 Apr operation to detain 3 members of organised criminal group in Almaty left 11 elite interior force agents injured. Indian state oil and gas company 16 Apr announced purchase of 25% of Satpayev block, oil rich region of Caspian Sea; Kazakhstan signed deal with India same day on export of uranium to India.

- [“Kazakhstan plans two-party system via ‘revolution from above’”](#), *Telegraph*, 11 Apr. 2011.

- For latest report, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°201, *Central Asia: Decay and Decline*, 3 Feb. 2011.

➤ **Kyrgyzstan** Prosecutor-General Kubatbek Baybolov fired end March, 1 Apr accused first vice-PM Babanov and members of provisional govt of corruption, and national security service of unauthorised wiretapping. Pre-empting no confidence vote, Babanov 14 Apr announced temporary resignation until 14 May when investigation commission scheduled to rule on Baybolov's allegations. Opposition Ar Namys party late month engaged in negotiations to join ruling coalition. Supreme Court 27 Apr rejected former President Bakiyev's request to replace judge in trial against him and 27 associates. Publication of international commission report on June 2010 Osh violence delayed; parts of report leaked to media 25 Apr, prompting accusations of bias from former provisional govt members. Prosecutor General launched criminal investigation into anonymous book claiming Osh events were genocide against Uzbeks.

- ["One year later, Kyrgyz revolution under threat"](#), EurasiaNet, 11 Apr. 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°193, *The Pogroms in Kyrgyzstan*, 23 Aug. 2010.

➤ **Tajikistan** Interior ministry said security forces 14 Apr killed militant leader Abdullo Rakhimov and at least 16 others in Rasht valley; group allegedly behind Sept 2010 attack on military convoy in Kamarob gorge. Former United Tajik Opposition militant Shokh Iskandarov, believed to be responsible for govt's recent military successes in Rasht valley, appointed region's deputy police chief. Kyrgyz-Tajik relations remain tense after series of border incidents: 8 Apr attacks on Kyrgyz trucks by group of young Tajiks, 18 Apr protests over detention of Kyrgyz citizen previous day by local Tajik officials. Govt continued attacks on religious expression, demolishing mosque in southern provincial capital Qurghontepa over alleged violation of new law barring people under 18 from public worship. Severe energy rationing lifted 17 Apr; followed unusual protest 8 Apr near energy supplier HQ.

- ["The growing threat of militants in a corner of Central Asia"](#), RFE/RL, 21 Apr. 2011.

➤ **Turkmenistan** Govt 6 Apr barred group of doctors from attending training program in U.S.. Over 40 Turkish construction firms reportedly denied payment for govt construction projects; 25 threatened to sue, prompting bilateral negotiations. Govt abolished mandatory school exam on "Rukhama", ideological treatise by former president Saparmurat Niyazov (Turkmenbashi). China Development Bank 26 Apr agreed to provide Turkmengaz \$4.1bn loan to develop South Yolotan gas field.

- ["New dilemma for Turkmen students abroad"](#), RFE/RL, 7 Apr. 2011.

➤ **Uzbekistan** Following March revelations on German govt payments to regime for use of Termez airbase, hub for International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) troops transiting to Afghanistan, reports emerged that Berlin agreed in 2010 to more than double payments to Tashkent for base use; rights groups increased criticism of Germany. During late Apr visit to China President Karimov secured \$1.5bn credit line for domestic banks, large currency swap to boost trade, help to construct Uzbek spur of Central Asia-China gas pipeline. U.S. 25 Apr warned citizens of risk of terrorist attacks by Islamist militants in Uzbekistan.

- ["Germany sharply boosts payments for air base"](#), EurasiaNet, 22 Apr. 2011.

NORTH EAST ASIA

➤ **North Korea** In latest war rhetoric following Nov 2010 shelling of Yönp'yöng island, Pyongyang 22 Apr threatened to fire at sites in South where NGOs 26 Apr launched balloons with propaganda to North, 24 Apr threatened to "wipe out" U.S., S Korea. Warning came amid diplomatic push by S Korea, U.S. and China to jump-start 6-party talks on Pyongyang's nuclear weapons program. Former U.S. president Jimmy Carter 26 Apr led delegation of former international leaders The Elders on 3-day visit to N Korea to discuss non-proliferation, humanitarian food aid. Carter 28 Apr accused U.S., S Korea of human rights violations by withholding food aid to North; U.S officials 30 Apr denied accusation, said N Korean govt responsible for plight of its people. U.S. 19 Apr imposed sanctions on N Korea's Tongbang Bank (Bank of East Land) over transactions with blacklisted N Korean arms maker alleged to have exported torpedoes to Iran. N Korea's state news agency 14 Apr reported govt preparing to indict an American detained on unspecified charges, saying man has already "admitted his crime"; U.S. confirmed his detention, called for release on "humanitarian grounds". WFP 29 Apr announced emergency food program to feed estimated 3.5 million people.

- ["Carter acknowledges deep divide between Koreas"](#), *New York Times*, 28 Apr. 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°200, *China and Inter-Korean Clashes in the Yellow Sea*, 27 Jan. 2011.

SOUTH ASIA

➤ **Afghanistan** Violent protests against U.S. pastor's burning of Quran continued early month, spread across the country from Mazar-e Sharif where 7 foreign UN workers killed 1 Apr. At least 30 killed in protests, including 7 in Kandahar 2 Apr; President Karzai criticised for fuelling protests by condemning otherwise little-reported Quran burning. 13 Apr Taliban suicide blast killed 10 in Kunar, including tribal elder and ex-military commander supportive of govt. Taliban 31 Apr announced "spring offensive" from 1 May targeting international, Afghan troops. Top Kandahar police chief killed in suicide blast 15 Apr; Taliban suspected. After 16 Apr meeting in Kabul, Karzai and Pakistan PM Gilani announced joint commission to hold talks with Taliban (see Pakistan). U.S. 26 Apr confirmed "Abdul Ghani", al-Qaeda number 2 in Afghanistan, killed in Apr airstrike. Some 500 prisoners, mostly Taliban fighters, escaped Kandahar prison 25 Apr.

- Comment by Candace Rondeaux (Crisis Group), ["Cleaning Up Afghanistan's Banking System"](#), *Foreign Policy*, 4 Apr. 2011.
- ["Explaining the inexplicable: murder at Mazar"](#), *Foreign Policy*, 4 Apr. 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°117, *Afghanistan's Elections Stalemate*, 23 Feb. 2011.

➤ **India (non-Kashmir)** Govt increased security in Northeast ahead of Assam assembly elections, but polls passed relatively peacefully. 3 paramilitary troopers killed 2 Apr by KPLT militants in Karbi Anglong, Assam. 7 paramilitary troopers killed 15 Apr by unidentified gunmen in Manipur. Maoists urged boycott of Bihar local elections, 20 Apr killed 1 police, 1 civilian at polling station.

- ["As India rises, northeast state wracked by chaos"](#), AP, 3 Apr. 2011.

➤ **Kashmir** Moulana Showkat Shah, head of moderate separatist party Jamiat-e-Ahle Hadith, killed in 8 Apr blast outside Srinagar mosque; police 17 Apr arrested 3 members of hardline separatist group Saut-ul-Haq. Female candidate in Jammu & Kashmir local elections, held during month, killed 16 Apr by unidentified

gunmen; police said suspected Lashkar-e-Taiba militants.

- [“Blast kills Muslim leader in Indian Kashmir”](#), Al Jazeera, 8 Apr. 2011.

➡ **Nepal** Madhesi Janadhikar Forum-Nepal, largest party from Tarai plains, 31 March agreed to join new UML-led govt. UNSG Ban 29 Apr urged all parties to ensure completion of new constitution before 28 May deadline. Newly-appointed Energy Minister Gokarna Bista (UML party) survived assassination attempt 12 Apr in Kathmandu; motives, perpetrators unknown. Indian FM Krishna arrived in Kathmandu 20 Apr for 3-day visit.

- [“We want to strengthen the relationship with India”](#), *Hindu*, 28 Apr. 2011.

Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°120, [Nepal's Fitful Peace Process](#), 7 Apr 2011. Nepal is entering a new phase in its fitful peace process, in which its so-called “logical conclusion” is in sight: the integration and rehabilitation of Maoist combatants and the introduction of a new constitution.



➡ **Pakistan** Relations with U.S. increasingly strained: army chief General Kayani, PM Gilani continued to criticise U.S. drone strikes; intelligence agency ISI asked CIA for more involvement in Pakistani operations. U.S. Adm. Mike Mullen 20 Apr accused ISI of “long-standing relationship” with militant Haqqani network, which supports Taliban in Afghanistan. U.S. govt report to Congress 5 Apr criticised Pakistani army’s offensive against militants in northwest as lacking structure, lack of capacity to hold areas cleared of militants. Gilani, Kayani and ISI chief Lt-Gen Ahmad Shuja Pasha visited Kabul 16 Apr: agreed to upgrade joint “Pakistan-Afghan Peace and Conciliation Commission” to hold talks with Taliban. At least 50 killed 3 Apr in 2 suicide attacks on Sufi shrine in Dera Ghazi Khan, Punjab; no claim of responsibility. During early month visit, UK PM Cameron called for “fresh start” to bilateral relationship, pledged US\$1bn in education aid. Over 100 people reportedly killed in targeted killings in Karachi during month.

- [“An inside look at the U.S.-Pakistan feud over drones”](#), *TIME*, 23 Apr. 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°203, [Reforming Pakistan's Electoral System](#), 30 March 2011.

➡ **Sri Lanka** UN panel of experts 25 Apr released report on accountability in Sri Lanka; finds “credible evidence” govt, LTTE committed serious violations amounting to war crimes during final stage of 2009 civil war, says govt shelling responsible for most of “tens of thousands” civilian deaths. Report recommends independent international investigation, but UNSG Ban 25 Apr said he first needs consent of Sri Lankan govt or mandate from UN Human Rights Council, GA or UNSC, where China and Russia likely to veto. FM Peiris 13 Apr said report “biased”, “fundamentally flawed”, warned UN against releasing it; President Rajapaksa 17 Apr called for mass protests against UN on 1 May; UN criticised, said protests could endanger its staff. U.S. State Dept annual report on human rights 9 Apr said President Rajapaksa’s family “dominates” politics, accused security forces of “unlawful” killings. Police 25 Apr shut down Lanka eNews website, arrested 1 of its journalists; part of continuing govt harassment of independent media.

- [“UN chief should establish international inquiry”](#), Human Rights Watch, 25 Apr. 2011.

SOUTH EAST ASIA

➡ **Indonesia** Suicide bomber killed himself, injured 26 in 15 Apr attack on mosque inside Cirebon police station. Police 21 Apr

prevented Easter terrorist attack on church outside Jakarta, suspects arrested were involved in March letter-bombs. Rights groups mid-month criticised lenient sentences in trials related to anti-Ahmadiya violence. In Papua, 2 employees of U.S. mining company Freeport 8 Apr killed by unidentified gunmen; followed non-fatal shooting incident 6 Apr.

- Comment by Sidney Jones (Crisis Group), [“Three Strategies for Jihad - and more Prevention Needed”](#), *Tempo Magazine*, 6 Apr 2011
- [“Indonesia ‘suicide bomber’ wounds 28 in mosque blast”](#), BBC, 15 Apr. 2011.

Crisis Group Asia Report N° 204, [Indonesian Jihadism: Small Groups, Big Plans](#), 19 Apr 2011. Violent extremism in Indonesia increasingly is taking the form of small groups acting independently of large jihadi organisations.



➡ **Myanmar/Burma** Govt 31 March confirmed ex-ruler Than Shwe had relinquished all formal power during 30 March transition to nominally civilian govt, but unclear what extent of Than Shwe’s future influence will be. In 30 March inaugural speech, new President Thein Sein set out govt’s policy for coming terms, called for cooperation with “good-hearted” elements of opposition; said will work to end high-level corruption in govt. Jia Qinglin, fourth highest-ranking Chinese govt official, visited Myanmar 5 Apr. EU 12 Apr renewed Myanmar sanctions, but suspended visa ban on FM, civilian members of new govt, to encourage dialogue. U.S. President Obama 15 Apr appointed Pentagon official Derek Mitchell as first ever Myanmar special envoy, subject to Senate confirmation; opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi welcomed nomination.

- Comment by Jim Della-Giacoma (Crisis Group), [“New Tactics Needed in Burma”](#), *GlobalPost*, 20 Apr 2011
- [“Than Shwe still in control but progress possible: former US envoy”](#), *Irrawaddy*, 19 Apr. 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°118, [Myanmar's Post-Election Landscape](#), 7 March 2011.

➡ **Philippines** At talks with govt 27-28 Apr, MILF reiterated that breakaway commander Ameril Umbra Kato was an “internal problem”, has banned him from using MILF name. Malaysian facilitator Othman Razak, who govt accused of pro-MILF bias, replaced by Tengku Abdul Ghaffar Mohammad. At least 11 killed, hundreds displaced in 3 Apr clashes between MILF and supporters of Maguindanao (Mindanao) governor Esmael “Toto” Mangudadatu. Following March harassment of Philippine Department of Energy ship by Chinese vessels, govt 5 Apr filed formal complaint with UN over China’s claims to sovereignty over South China Sea. 2 Abu Sayyaf militants killed 16 Apr in clash with military on Basilan. Army 20 Apr claimed Marvin and Gelita Capones, top communist New People’s Army commanders, surrendered in Samar.

- [“Renegade barred from using MILF name”](#), *Inquirer*, 29 Apr. 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°119, [The Philippines: Back to the Table, Warily, in Mindanao](#), 24 March 2011.

➡ **Thailand** Violence flared along Thai-Cambodian border late month: at least 14 soldiers, 1 civilian killed in clashes from 22 Apr, tens of thousands displaced on both sides; both sides agreed to ceasefire 28 Apr following military-led talks, but fighting broke out again 29 Apr leaving 1 soldier dead. UK-based NGO 6 Apr accused army of using cluster munitions in Feb clashes with Cambodia; army 7 Apr admitted using Dual Purpose Improved Conventional Munitions, but claimed it did not classify them as cluster munitions. Tens of thousands of

anti-govt “red shirts” 10 Apr gathered to mark anniversary of deadly 2010 protests in Bangkok; Dept of Special Investigation said it would press charges against 18 “red shirt” leaders for anti-royalist remarks made during protest. PM Abhisit 26 Apr said border clashes with Cambodia will not delay elections to be held either 26 June or 3 July. National Security Council 11 Apr said Thailand intends to repatriate some 100,000 Burmese refugees back to Myanmar, did not specify timeframe. In South, govt 12 Apr extended emergency rule, in effect since 2005, for 3 months. 3 civilians, 1 suspected militant killed 9 Apr in separate incidents across Yala province; 1 ranger killed by car bomb 18 Apr in Yala.

- “[Thai, Cambodia cease-fire breaks; toll rises to 16](#)”, AP, 29 Apr. 2011.

Crisis Group Asia Briefing N° 121, [Thailand: The Calm Before Another Storm?](#), 11 Apr 2011. Nearly a year after the crackdown on anti-establishment demonstrations, Thailand is preparing for a general election.



➡ **Timor-Leste** During visit to Timor-Leste, Australian Defence Minister Smith 14 Apr said decision on possible withdrawal of Australian troops to be taken after 2012 Timorese elections. Indonesian President Yudhoyono 30 March expressed “unconditional” support for Timor-Leste’s bid to join ASEAN; followed late March visit by PM Gusmao to Indonesia, during which govts took steps to improve bilateral relationship through series of trade and development agreements.

- “[Indonesia supports East Timor’s bid to join ASEAN](#)”, VOA, 30 March 2011.

Crisis Group Asia Briefing N° 122, [Timor-Leste: Reconciliation and Return from Indonesia](#), 18 Apr 2011. The unresolved status of thousands of former refugees who fled across the border following a 1999 vote for independence remains a challenge to Timor-Leste’s long-term stability.



Europe

BALKANS

➡ **Albania** Coalition of local observers 21 Apr issued report warning of increased fear and tensions ahead of 8 May local elections, amid incidents of violence between supporters of rival campaigns during month. Tirana municipal official shot dead in capital 4 Apr; candidate in Balldre municipality in north shot, injured 2 Apr; explosion in Socialist Party official’s apartment 17 Apr.

- “[Albania enters election campaign amid tensions](#)”, Balkan Insight, 8 Apr. 2011.

➡ **Bosnia** Political crisis intensified, with legal status of Federation entity (FBiH) govt still unclear and still no state-level govt. 2 main Croat parties, HDZ and HDZ 1990, launched Croat National Assembly 19 Apr, responding to their exclusion in March from FBiH govt. Assembly plans to convene inter-municipal and inter-cantonal Croat council, denied criticisms that it violates constitution. Republika Srpska (RS) parliament 13 Apr decided to call referendum on High Representative (HR)-imposed laws, especially on “biased” state court and Prosecutor; also passed 28 conclusions attacking legitimacy of HR

and Bosnian institutions, and declared HR had violated law by suspending election commission’s March ruling that FBiH govt was formed illegally. HR, Peace Implementation Council, FBiH parliament condemned decisions. At trilateral summit hosted by Serbia 26 Apr with Turkey and Bosnia’s tripartite presidency, Serbian President Tadic made firm statement that Serbia would not support referendum on independence in RS. VP of Croatian Peasant Party-New Croatian Initiative shot dead 17 Apr.

- “[Bosnian Serbs challenge central judiciary system](#)”, AFP, 13 Apr. 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Europe Briefing N°59, [Bosnia: Europe’s Time to Act](#), 11 Jan. 2011.

➡ **Kosovo** Following late March annulment of Feb election of Behgjet Pacolli as president, and opposition threats of boycott if Pacolli ran again, parliament 7 Apr elected deputy director of Kosovo police Atifete Jahjaga as president. Selection, which solved govt crisis created by late March constitutional court ruling, followed agreement between govt coalition and main opposition LDK party previous day. Parties also agreed to rewrite constitution to make president directly elected by voters, and hold new presidential elections within 18 months of new constitution; established 2 working groups 22 Apr. Census took place 1-15 Apr except in North where full boycott in place. Belgrade, Pristina held 3rd round of direct talks in Brussels mid Apr, addressing freedom of movement issues. Head of Serbian delegation Borko Stefanovic 23 Apr said Serbia “not running away from” idea of partition; Kosovo delegation head Edita Tahiri 26 Apr reiterated only technical issues could be discussed at talks. Serbia 20 Apr sent proposal for investigation into allegations of organ trafficking in Kosovo and Albania following 1998 conflict to UNSG Ban. Local judges and prosecutors returned to District Court of Mitrovica North for first time since being forced out in 2008.

- “[Kosovo swears in top woman cop as president](#)”, AFP, 7 Apr. 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Europe Report N°211, [North Kosovo: Dual Sovereignty in Practice](#), 14 March 2011.

➡ **Macedonia** Preparations for 5 June early parliamentary elections, officially announced 15 Apr, included election of new president of State Election Commission, dissolution of parliament. Opposition SDSM called for political party representatives to replace state administration workers in local electoral committees, continued boycott of parliament. SDSM 20 Apr proposed President of National Council for EU Integration Radmila Sekerinska as their candidate for PM. European Parliament 7 Apr adopted resolution on Macedonia’s progress on EU membership calling for opening of accession negotiations.

- “[Macedonian ruling party leads opinion poll](#)”, Balkan Insight, 18 Apr. 2011.

➡ **Serbia** Tens of thousands of opposition Progressive Party (SNS) supporters rallied in Belgrade 16 Apr, demanding early elections in 2011. SNS leader Tomislav Nikolic launched hunger strike 16 Apr; ended after a week.

- “[Nikolic’s hunger strike: what is the impact?](#)”, SE Times, 25 Apr. 2011.

CAUCASUS

➡ **Armenia** Thousands of opposition supporters attended rally in Yerevan 8 Apr, fourth such protest this year. Addressing rally, Armenian National Congress (HAK) leader Levon Ter-Petrosian gave President Sargsyan further ultimatum with 28 Apr deadline to release “political prisoners”, conduct probe into

March 2008 post-election violence, and give opposition movement access to Liberty Square, or HAK will move from “dialogue” to more active protest. Authorities 26 Apr gave permission for further opposition rally; several thousand joined opposition demonstration in Liberty Square 28 Apr. Special Investigative Service 22 Apr said it would conduct “thorough review” of its investigation into 2008 post-election violence, following 20 Apr call by Sargsyan. Parliament speaker and others 29 Apr made request to Sargsyan to consider release of prominent opposition figure Sasun Mikaelian. U.S. Ambassador 15 Apr said U.S. would not renew Millennium Challenge funding when it ends in Sept. Parliament 12 Apr ratified defence agreement signed with Russia Aug 2010.

- [“Armenian president signals more overtures to opposition”](#), RFE/RL, 28 Apr. 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Europe Briefing N°60, *Armenia and Azerbaijan: Preventing War*, 8 Feb. 2011.

➡ **Azerbaijan** Rights groups, U.S. embassy voiced concerns over govt crackdown on activists ahead of unsanctioned 2 Apr anti-govt rally organised by opposition movement Public Chamber, with over 20 reportedly arrested. Security services forcibly dispersed anti-govt protesters 2 Apr, arrested dozens; opposition claimed over 5,000 attended rally. Police 17 Apr suppressed second, unauthorised rally; dozens reportedly detained, including 3 Swedish journalists later deported. Foreign diplomats held meeting with opposition members in Baku 8 Apr, prompting criticism by pro-govt MPs, call for probe into foreign diplomats’ activities. Defence ministry 20 Apr announced indefinite postponement of joint military exercises with U.S.; observers suspect link to Baku’s grievances over Nagorno-Karabakh, U.S. criticism of its rights record.

- [“Opposition protest results in wave of arrests”](#), Eurasianet, 4 Apr. 2011.

➡ **North Caucasus (Russia)** Leader of Kabardino-Balkaria-Karachai (KBK) wing of NC insurgency Asker Dzhabiev and at least 9 other KBK militants reported killed by security forces 29 Apr on border between Kabardino-Balkaria and Stavropol. Several other insurgents reported killed by security services over month, including militant leader Israpil Velijanov and 3 others 17 Apr in Dagestan; Kazakh militant in Dagestan 20 Apr; 2 militants, including Arab commander “Muhannad”, 21 Apr in Chechnya; and 6 militants in Dagestan 28 Apr. At least 13 law enforcement officers killed in Dagestan over month, also 1 former, 1 current imam. Warlord Doku Umarov reported to be alive despite rumours he was among 19 militants killed by security forces late March. KBK militant 20 Apr posted online video response to recent attacks by informal anti-wahhabi militia “Black Hawks”.

- [“Russia says it killed ‘al-Qaeda’ emissary in North Caucasus”](#), Jamestown Foundation, 22 Apr. 2011.

➡ **Georgia** 1 Russian soldier, 2 Georgians killed 8 Apr in shootout in Gali region near de facto Abkhazia-Georgia border; Moscow alleged Georgians were security personnel from interior ministry, Tbilisi denied, said incident a dispute between criminal groups. Abkhazia 11 Apr called alleged Georgian actions “terrorism”, warned of increasing tensions in region. No independent observers allowed to investigate. Russian FM Lavrov in 25 Apr trip to South Ossetia (SO) said Russia ready to protect SO from Georgian “military provocations”. ICJ 1 Apr ruled it had no jurisdiction to hear Georgia’s case against Russia regarding abuses during Aug 2008 war, citing failure of parties to negotiate before proceeding to Court. President Saakashvili 1 Apr

called for intensified security following end-March foiled terrorist attack in western city Kutaisi, blamed on “external forces”. U.S. annual human rights report 8 Apr identified some improvements in Georgia but noted continued abuse of prisoners, arbitrary detentions and restrictions on freedom of speech.

- [“Russian border guard killed in Abkhazia: report”](#), AFP, 8 Apr. 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Europe Briefing N°58, *Georgia: Securing a Stable Future*, 13 Dec. 2010.

➡ **Nagorno-Karabakh (Azerbaijan)** 3 Armenian servicemen killed, 2 wounded as result of intensified cease-fire violations 29 Apr. Armenian defence ministry 30 Apr said it will take “large-scale punitive” actions on line of contact against Azerbaijani “acts of sabotage”. Minsk Group co-chairs visited Yerevan, Nagorno-Karabakh (N-K) and Baku 11-14 Apr to discuss “next steps for reaching agreement on the Basic Principles”; 14 Apr said time had come for finalising and endorsing Principles, moving onto drafting of peace agreement. Co-chairs also presented to Armenian and Azerbaijani representatives draft mechanism for investigation of incidents along front lines. Armenian, Azerbaijani, Russian FMs held talks in Moscow 22 Apr. OSCE mediators 11 Apr released executive summary of report on Oct 2010 field assessment mission to N-K: estimate some 14,000, mostly Armenian refugees, live in occupied territories close to N-K; called on parties to avoid activities that would prejudice final settlement, change character of disputed areas.

- [“Armenia to take ‘punitive actions’ on line of contact”](#), Tert.am, 30 Apr. 2011.

EASTERN EUROPE

➡ **Belarus** 13 killed, 149 injured in explosion in Minsk subway station 11 Apr. Several arrested in connection with blast, all from NW city Vitsebsk; President Lukashenko 13 Apr announced 2 suspects had confessed to staging attack, as well as 2 attacks in 2008, 2005; formally charged with terrorism late month. Also ordered security services to interrogate “political actors” over attack, stoking fears blast could be used as pretext for new crackdown on opposition. Opposition activist in West detained and questioned about attack 21 Apr. UNSC issued statement condemning “apparent terrorist attack”. OSCE 5 Apr expressed concern over govt harassment of media. EU FMs 12 Apr failed to agree on whether to impose tougher economic sanctions on Belarus following Dec 2010 post-election crackdown on opposition. Former opposition presidential candidate Andrey Sannikau went on trial 27 Apr over role in post-election protests. Amid continuing economic crisis, govt continued negotiations with Russia over proposed loan.

- [“A faltering ruble, long lines and a bomb attack rattle Belarus”](#), *New York Times*, 17 Apr. 2011.

WESTERN EUROPE/MEDITERRANEAN

➡ **Basque Country (Spain)** Ahead of 22 May regional and local elections, tens of thousands again demonstrated 2 Apr, calling for legalisation of new pro-independence party Sortu, denied legal status by Supreme Court late March. Govt 27 Apr took steps to ban Bildu party, also suspected of ETA links. Several suspected ETA members arrested over month. ETA 16 Apr reaffirmed “clear commitment” to ending armed conflict.

- [“Eta makes its move on the mainstream”](#), *Independent*, 19 Apr. 2011.
- ➡ **Cyprus** Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot leaders met 6, 14 and 27 Apr to discuss chapter on security issues and ways to

move forward with reunification negotiations. Debate on how to conduct an island-wide population census remains source of contention between sides. Pointing to lack of progress in talks, UNSG Ban early Apr indicated wish to meet with leaders mid-June, in what would be third trilateral meeting since Nov 2010. UN special envoy Downer spoke of "progress" in talks, but said "long way to go". Greek Cypriot president Christofias 13 Apr urged EU to press Turkey to change intransigent stance on talks, 20 Apr complained to UNSG Ban and EU officials of Turkish "arrogance" towards Cyprus. Some 3,000 Turkish Cypriot demonstrators, mostly from unions, 7 Apr protested for third time this year against Ankara-backed economic austerity measures in the north.

- "Christofias supports Turkish Cypriot protests", *Today's Zaman*, 18 Apr. 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Europe Briefing N°61, *Cyprus: Six Steps toward a Settlement*, 22 Feb. 2011.

➤ **Northern Ireland** Catholic police officer killed by car bomb in Omagh 2 Apr. 3 arrested; group calling itself "the IRA" 22 Apr claimed responsibility for attack, vowed to embark on bombing campaign. Fears of further violence around 5 May elections for Northern Ireland Assembly, mid-May visit by Queen. Several large arms finds, foiled bomb attacks over month.

- "New Irish terror groups are threat to UK, warn police", *Guardian*, 24 Apr. 2011.

➤ **Turkey** 1 protester killed, dozens wounded 20 Apr during clashes between pro-Kurdish demonstrators and police in SE provinces. Protests sparked after High Election Board 18 Apr banned 12 Kurdish politicians from contesting 12 June parliamentary elections for previous convictions regarding alleged involvement in terror-related activities; board 21 Apr reversed decision on 8 candidates. 35 members of pro-Kurdish party BDP, including local officials, arrested 25 Apr for suspected links to outlawed PKK in SE Hakkari province; around 20,000 protested detentions. PM Erdoğan 13 Apr rejected allegations of govt curbs on media freedom; hundreds of journalists 15 Apr protested March detention of journalists, lack of freedom of expression. 7 suspected PKK militants killed 1 Apr by security forces in Hatay province near Syrian border. Security forces 28 Apr killed 7 PKK rebels during ongoing operations in east of country. Erdoğan 26 Apr called Syrian President Assad, urged restraint in crackdown on protesters; ambassador to Damascus met Syrian PM Safar, expressed concern over loss of life (see Syria).

- "Kurds renew their movement for rights and respect in Turkey", *New York Times*, 21 Apr. 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Europe Report N°208, *Turkey's Crises over Israel and Iran*, 8 Sept. 2010.



Latin America / Caribbean

➤ **Bolivia** Labour protests continued: 2 weeks of large-scale street demonstrations, strikes, road blocks ended 18 Apr after govt and main umbrella union COB reached agreement to raise health and education wages by 11%. Govt 19 Apr announced will accept U.S. aid to verify destruction of coca plantations along border with Brazil.

- "Un precario acuerdo pone fin a 12 días de huelga contra Evo Morales", *El País*, 19 Apr. 2011.

➤ **Colombia** Victims Law (providing reparations to victims of guerrillas, paramilitaries and state agents) 6 Apr passed third commission debate in Congress, leaving law 1 debate from passing. Relations with Venezuela improved: President Santos signed 16 economic agreements with Venezuelan President Chávez 10 Apr. Govt 13 Apr announced extradition of suspected Venezuelan drug trafficker Walid Makled to Caracas, despite U.S. request for his extradition there. Santos 12 Apr said he believed FARC camps in Venezuela had disappeared; later toned down remarks following criticism from, among others, ex-president Uribe. Santos, U.S. President Obama 7 Apr announced timeframe for implementation of U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement: discussion in U.S. Congress to begin 15 June, 90-day deadline for ratification. Congress 14 Apr began debating bill regulating security agencies; follows 2009 wiretapping scandal. FARC 27 Apr killed 5 police in 2 incidents, including car bomb in Cauca.

- "Walid Makled's extradition case highlights warming Venezuela-Colombia ties", *Christian Science Monitor*, 8 Apr. 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Latin America Briefing N°23, *Improving Security Policy in Colombia*, 29 June 2010.

➤ **Ecuador** Govt 5 Apr expelled U.S. ambassador after she claimed in WikiLeaks cable that President Correa had knowingly appointed ex-police chief who was involved in corruption; U.S. 7 Apr expelled Ecuadorean ambassador, 14 Apr suspended bilateral dialogue.

- "US expels Ecuadorean ambassador Luis Gallegos", BBC, 7 Apr. 2011.

➤ **Guatemala** Court 8 Apr granted divorce to Sandra Torres from President Álvaro Colom, allowing her to stand in Sept presidential elections; opposition candidate Otto Pérez Molina criticised decision as "electoral fraud". Police, U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency 30 March captured Juan Alberto Ortiz Lopez, allegedly one of country's leading drug traffickers.

- "El fin de un matrimonio y el comienzo de una campaña presidencial", BBC, 9 Apr. 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Latin America Report N°33, *Squeezed between Crime and Impunity*, 22 June 2010.

➤ **Haiti** Provisional electoral council (CEP) 20 Apr declared Michel Martelly winner of March presidential run-off vote with 68%. Low 23% turnout; Martelly to be inaugurated 14 May. Martelly's Repons Pezyizan party only won 3 seats in lower house, none in Senate, necessitating collaboration with ruling Inité party. U.S. 22 Apr questioned CEP's declaration of 19 legislative candidates winners, most from Inité party, despite their low tallies in preliminary results; OAS-CARICOM observers 29 Apr recommended annulling final vote count for contested seats, accepting preliminary results. International Organisation for Migration 1 Apr reported some 680,000 left in post-earthquake camps, down from 1.5mn in July 2010, but said still desperate lack of housing.

- Comment by Bernice Robertson and Kimberly Abbott (Crisis Group), "Five Tasks for Haiti's New Pop Singer President", *Christian Science Monitor*, 21 Apr. 2011.
- "Martelly courts diaspora, pushes education fund to help rebuild Haiti", *Miami Herald*, 25 Apr. 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Latin America/Caribbean Report N°32, *Haiti: Stabilisation and Reconstruction after the Quake*, 31 March 2010.

➤ **Mexico** Police 6-15 Apr found mass graves containing at least 183 bodies in San Fernando, Tamaulipas, thought to be

migrant workers kidnapped by Zetas cartel; 16 police arrested 13 Apr, suspected of providing protection for cartel; navy 16 Apr arrested alleged Zetas leader in San Fernando. Police 21 Apr found additional mass grave of 104 bodies in Durango. President Calderón 3 Apr named Marisela Morales Ibáñez from his PAN party new Attorney General; followed highly-criticised predecessor Arturo Chávez Chávez's 31 March resignation.

- "How did it happen twice?", AP, 16 Apr. 2011.

➡ **Venezuela** Social tensions continued to rise with hundreds of anti-govt protests during month; local NGO reported protests taking increasingly radical form. President Chávez late March published decree arming National Bolivarian Militias and creating militia officer corp independent of army; militia already numbers tens of thousands, critics say biased towards Chávez's PSUV party. Relations with Colombia improved (see Colombia): Colombian govt 13 Apr announced extradition of suspected Venezuelan drug trafficker Walid Makled; Makled claims links between PSUV, military and drug-traffickers in Venezuela. Alleged head of FARC in Europe captured and deported to Colombia 25 Apr.

- "Central obrera antichavista llama a apoyar nueva huelga de hambre", Infolatam, 2 Apr. 2011.



Middle East / North Africa

EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

➡ **Israel/Occupied Palestinian Territories** Fatah, Hamas 27 Apr reached tentative reconciliation agreement; under Egypt-brokered deal interim unity govt to be formed, with presidential, legislative elections within 1 year. Israel rejected any govt including Hamas, said PA could not have peace with both Israel and Hamas. Flare-up in cross-border violence 7-10 Apr after Israeli school bus hit by rocket from Gaza; 1 teenager later died from wounds. 140 rockets fired by Gazan militants, 19 Palestinians killed in Israeli retaliation before UN- and Egypt-mediated informal ceasefire agreed 10 Apr. Italian activist killed 14 Apr in Gaza after being kidnapped by Salafi-Jihadist group demanding release of a Salafi leader; 2 suspects killed, 1 injured in 19 Apr raid by Hamas security forces. Ahead of 12 Apr donor's conference UN, IMF and World Bank said PA is ready to run independent state. 2 Palestinian youths arrested early Apr for 11 March murder of Israeli settler family near Nablus.

- "Surprise Palestinian unity deal challenges Israel", Reuters, 28 Apr. 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Middle East Report N°104, *Radical Islam in Gaza*, 29 March 2011.

➡ **Lebanon** Security forces 21 Apr killed 2 people in gunfight with local residents over construction of illegal housing in southern port Tyre. 2 inmates killed 5 Apr after security forces stormed country's largest prison to end riot over living conditions. National Security Council 21 Apr banned rallies for and against Syria's regime for failing to meet "legal conditions". Previously unknown group "The Renaissance and Reform Movement" 6 Apr claimed responsibility for 23 March kidnapping of 7 Estonian tourists; police officer and suspected kidnapper killed 11 Apr in shootout. Acting-PM Hariri 7 Apr accused Iran of interfering in Lebanon's, other Gulf States' internal affairs, attempting to create "Iranian protectorate".

- "In Lebanon, a more patient protest", *New York Times*, 13 Apr. 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Middle East Report N°100, *Trial by Fire: The Politics of the Special Tribunal for Lebanon*, 2 Dec. 2010.

➡ **Syria** Sharp escalation in violence during month with some 550 civilians killed since start of anti-regime protests last month; over 110 protesters killed 22 Apr in worst day of bloodshed. Troops and tanks deployed 25 Apr in Deraa, besieged city where revolt began, in violent crackdown. Over 300 members of ruling Baath party resigned late month in protest at ongoing military assault on Deraa. UNSC 28 Apr failed to agree on joint statement condemning repression; UNHRC 29 Apr voted to investigate alleged crimes committed against civilians. U.S. 29 Apr imposed targeted sanctions against regime officials. President Assad 22 Apr lifted 48-year state of emergency, however protesters demanded end of Baath party monopoly, establishment of democratic political system. Authorities blamed armed groups, infiltrators and Sunni Muslim militant organisations for provoking violence by firing on civilians and security forces.

- "Syrian forces kill 62, U.S. toughens sanctions", Reuters, 29 Apr. 2011.

GULF

➡ **Bahrain** Heavy security presence throughout month, despite virtual cessation of protests following March crackdown; wave of arrests of pro-democracy activists, medical workers. Opposition leaders, rights groups alleged prisoners beaten, tortured by security forces; 4 reported to have died in custody. Military court 28 Apr sentenced 4 protesters to death for killing 2 policemen during March demonstrations.

- "Bahrain's rulers tighten their grip on battered opposition", *New York Times*, 6 Apr. 2011.

Crisis Group Middle East Report N°105, *Popular Protests in North Africa and the Middle East (III): The Bahrain Revolt*, 6 April 2011. Manama's crackdown and Saudi Arabia's military intervention are dangerous moves that could stamp out hopes for peaceful transition in Bahrain and turn a mass movement for democratic reform into an armed conflict, while regionalising an internal political struggle.



➡ **Iran** President Ahmadinejad 4 Apr called on Saudi Arabia to withdraw troops from Bahrain; Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) previous day condemned Iranian attempt to aggravate sectarian tensions (see Bahrain). U.S. 14 Apr accused Iran of helping Syria suppress anti-govt protests; Iran and Syria both rejected claims (see Syria). FM Salehi 9 Apr praised Iraq for 8 Apr deadly raid on camp of Iranian exiles considered terrorists by Tehran (see Iraq). Supreme leader Ayatollah Khamenei 17 Apr rejected resignation of Intelligence Minister Moslehi in rare public disagreement with Ahmadinejad, who had earlier accepted resignation. Security forces 21 Apr killed 4 militants of "extreme" Wahhabi religious group in western Kurdistan province.

- "Iranian leader asserts power over president", *New York Times*, 23 Apr. 2011.

➡ **Iraq** At least 125 wounded in clashes 17-18 Apr between protesters and security forces in city of Sulaimaniya, semi-autonomous Kurdistan. Authorities in Kurdish province of Sulaimaniyah 18 Apr announced ban on unauthorised protest; one week

earlier federal govt banned street protests in Baghdad. Tens of thousands of supporters of radical Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr in Baghdad 9 Apr protested U.S. military presence; al-Sadr threatened to reconstitute Mahdi army if U.S. did not withdraw by year-end. U.S. senior military official Adm Mike Mullen 22 Apr warned Iraq has only weeks to decide on withdrawal. 34 killed by security forces in 8 Apr raid on Iranian dissident camp in Diyala province; U.S. denounced “unacceptable” military action. Arab League 20 Apr again postponed annual summit originally scheduled for March in Baghdad.

- Comment by Joost Hiltermann (Crisis Group), “[Waiting for Baghdad](#)”, *New York Review of Books*, 22 Apr. 2011
- “[Iraq must decide within weeks if U.S. troops will stay past 2011, top official says](#)”, *New York Times*, 22 Apr. 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Middle East Report N° 103, *Iraq and the Kurds: Confronting Withdrawal Fears*, 28 March 2011.

➡ **Jordan** Dozens injured 15 Apr as security forces, pro-govt elements attacked pro-reform protesters in central Amman. Over 80 injured same day in Zarqa, including many police, as security forces clashed with Salafi protesters calling for release of Salafis imprisoned on terror charges. Fears of violence escalated over month with attacks reported against Muslim Brotherhood, Islamic Action Front. Trials began 11 Apr of 77 pro-reform, 4 pro-govt activists for taking part in “illegal” 24 March rally. King Abdullah II 26 Apr created panel to review constitution, key demand of protesters.

- “[Jordan protests: Rise of the Salafist Jihadist movement](#)”, BBC, 22 Apr. 2011.

➡ **Oman** At least 1 protester killed, 60 detained 1 Apr in crackdown on pro-reform protesters in NE town Sohar; second protest-related death since demonstrations began late Feb. Heavy security presence in Sohar from 2 Apr prevented further mass protests, though small rallies continued. Govt 17 Apr promised \$2.1bn public spending to “satisfy” protesters’ demands. Officials 20 Apr announced pardon of 234 people detained during demonstrations. Some 3,000 protested 22 Apr in southern port Salalah in one of largest pro-reform demonstrations.

- “[Protester’s stage large Oman pro-reform demo](#)”, Reuters, 22 Apr. 2011.

➡ **Saudi Arabia** King Abdullah 29 Apr issued decree preventing media from reporting anything that contradicts Sharia law or serves “foreign interests and undermines national security”. Hundreds of Shiites demonstrated 8 Apr in eastern province for greater human rights, withdrawal of Saudi troops from Bahrain; some 30 Shiite activists arrested late month for taking part in protests.

- “[Saudi King Abdullah cracks down on press freedom](#)”, RFI, 30 Apr. 2011.

➡ **Yemen** President Saleh 23 Apr agreed in principle to Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) plan to transfer power to VP within 30 days of deal being signed in exchange for immunity from prosecution. Main opposition coalition Joint Meeting Parties (JMP) 25 Apr accepted plan in light of new guarantees from international community. Power transfer deal stalled 30 Apr as Saleh refused to sign as president, only as head of ruling party. Many protesters rejected initiative, refused to leave streets until Saleh steps down, demanded his immediate departure, prosecution for violence. At least 10 killed 27 Apr in Sanaa; more than 140 protesters killed in ongoing nationwide protests. Security situation outside of capital Sanaa deteriorated

rapidly. Al-Qaeda-affiliated militants seized control of territory in southern governorate Abyan.

- Comment by April Alley (Crisis Group), “[Yemen on the Brink](#)”, *Foreign Affairs*, 4 Apr. 2011
- “[Yemen prepares for power handover](#)”, Al Jazeera, 30 Apr. 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Middle East/North Africa Report N° 102, *Popular Protest in North Africa and the Middle East (II): Yemen between Reform and Revolution*, 10 March 2011.

NORTH AFRICA

➡ **Algeria** Almost daily peaceful demonstrations for improved social, political and economic conditions in capital Algiers. In first public speech in 3 months President Bouteflika 15 Apr promised to ensure free elections, amend constitution, end detention of journalists. UN special rapporteur on freedom of expression 17 Apr welcomed promise of reforms as positive step, warned long way to go. In deadliest violence in 2 years, al-Qaeda in Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) militants killed 20 soldiers 15-17 Apr in northern Kabylie region; killed 2 gendarmes 27 Apr in same region. Govt 11 Apr denied claims by Libyan Transitional National Council (NTC) that rebels had captured or killed more than a dozen Algerian mercenaries (See Libya).

- “[Terror attacks kill 20 Algerian troops](#)”, Magharebia, 18 Apr. 2011.

➡ **Egypt** Protesters 8 Apr returned to streets in greatest numbers since former president Mubarak’s resignation, demanded Mubarak, top regime officials stand trial. Military, police next day cleared protesters from Tahrir Square; at least 2 killed, military denied it used live rounds. Mubarak and 2 sons 12 Apr placed in detention for alleged corruption, role in deaths of protesters during uprising; following health problems Mubarak held in hospital. Other top regime figures, including former-PM Nazif, on trial for graft from 17 Apr. Military 15 Apr replaced provincial governors appointed by Mubarak in concession to ongoing demonstrations. Supreme Administrative Court 16 Apr dissolved Mubarak’s former ruling party, NDP. Formerly banned Muslim Brotherhood 30 Apr announced formation of non-theocratic Freedom and Justice Party, will contest up to half of parliament’s seats in Sept elections. Internal govt report 19 Apr said at least 846 protesters killed, 8,000 injured during Jan-Feb popular uprising; held Mubarak ultimately responsible for deaths.

- “[Egyptians find their voice after years of repression](#)”, Reuters, 27 Apr. 2011.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Middle East/North Africa Report N° 101, *Popular Protest in North Africa and the Middle East (I): Egypt Victorious?*, 24 Feb. 2011.

➡ **Libya** Fighting continued between govt forces and rebels, with neither able to strike decisive blow despite continuing international military action against Muammar Qaddafi’s forces. Ground action largely back-and-forth along central coast road, with exception of protracted siege of rebel-held city Misrata by govt troops, where rebels claim over 1,000 killed. UNHCHR 20 Apr said reported use of cluster munitions, targeting of medical facilities by govt forces could be war crimes. AU delegation 11 Apr proposed peace plan, including immediate ceasefire, negotiated transition. Qaddafi reportedly accepted; rebel Transitional National Council refused, ruling out any role for Qaddafi or sons in future govt. UK, France, Italy 19-20 Apr announced military advisory teams would be dispatched to bolster rebels. U.S. 20 Apr said it would provide \$25m in “non-lethal” assistance, 21 Apr announced start of Predator drone strikes. U.S.

22 Apr claimed 30-40% of Libyan ground forces destroyed, but confirmed war "moving towards stalemate". Qaddafi 30 Apr offered ceasefire, negotiations but refused to leave country; rebels, NATO immediately rejected call as disingenuous ploy. Qaddafi's youngest son, 3 grandchildren reported killed 1 May in NATO airstrike on Tripoli; govt accused NATO of assassination attempt, NATO denied targeting Qaddafi or family.

▪ "Stalemate looms, warns Admiral Mike Mullen", BBC, 22 Apr. 2011.

➔ **Mauritania** Police 25 Apr broke up anti-govt protest in Nouakchott; at least 20 detained in most serious clash in 2 months. Govt 7 Apr postponed 24 Apr elections for upper house of parliament after opposition party Coordination of Democratic Opposition (COD) 3 Apr complained conditions for free and transparent vote not present; other opposition parties denounced delay as ploy by ruling party.

▪ "Mauritanian police use teargas to break up protest", Reuters, 25 Apr. 2011.

➔ **Morocco** 16 killed 27 Apr in suspected-al-Qaeda bomb attack in Marrakesh; no claim of responsibility. In third day of mass protests since Feb tens of thousands in 24 Apr peaceful demonstrations in major cities demanded social and economic reform, end of political detentions. Govt 26 Apr agreed to increase public sector salaries, minimum wage. King Mohammed VI 14 Apr pardoned 190 prisoners on advice of rights council established as part of ongoing reforms.

▪ "Fatal bomb in Morocco shows signs of Al Qaeda", *New York Times*, 29 Apr. 2011.

➔ **Tunisia** High Commission 11 Apr announced 23-year election ban on top officials from ex-president Ben Ali's disbanded Constitutional Democratic Rally (RCD). Hundreds of RCD

supporters 16 Apr protested in Tunis against exclusion; transitional govt 26 Apr amended ban to 10 years. Govt 13 Apr announced 18 criminal charges filed against Ben Ali including voluntary manslaughter, drug trafficking. Govt 29 Apr rebuked Libya after pro-Qaddafi troops crossed border during clashes with rebels.

▪ "Hundreds in Tunisia protest political exclusion", AFP, 16 Apr. 2011.

Crisis Group Middle East/North Africa Report N°106, *Popular Protests in North Africa and the Middle East (IV): Tunisia's Way*, 28 April 2011. Tunisia is where it all began. It also is, by virtually every measure, where the promise of a successful democratic transition is greatest.



➔ **Western Sahara** UNSC 27 Apr extended mandate of MINURSO for 1 year. Polisario Front 19 Apr criticised UNSG Ban's report to UNSC on disputed territory for not providing human rights role for MINURSO.

▪ "No rights role yet for UN mission in W. Sahara", Reuters, 28 Apr. 2011.

"Crisis Group's reporting about Turkey and Cyprus has been agenda-setting for the European Parliament and policy makers in Brussels. Few EU policies [towards Ankara and Nicosia] have not been influenced by it."

Joost Lagendijk, former Chair of the European Parliament's EU-Turkey Joint Parliamentary Committee, September 2010

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