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DAILY INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ALERTS

22nd September 2008

INTELLIGENCE & SITUATION REPORTS

China: Food Safety Chief Steps Down

2320 GMT - China's food safety watchdog chief stepped down Sept 22 after failing to stop the contamination of baby formula that has sickened nearly 53,000 children and left four dead.

Colombia: Army Claims To Have Killed FARC Commander

2059 GMT - The Colombian army has said it killed a Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) commander in an airstrike. The army said Jesus Agudelo "El Paisa" Rodriguez, leader of the FARC's 34th front, was killed in an airstrike on the border of the Antioquia and Choco departments. The operation followed a four-month intelligence operation aimed at locating Rodriguez. Rodriguez was known for ordering the death of former Antioquia Gov. Guillermo Gaviria Correa, along with one of the governor's advisers and seven soldiers. All were FARC captives.

U.N/Afghanistan: U.N Extends Mandate For Afghanistan Forces

1932 GMT - The U.N Security Council on Sept 22 unanimously approved an extension on the mandate for NATO-led forces in Afghanistan, extending the mission to October 2009. The council's resolution acknowledges efforts by NATO-led forces to minimize civilian casualties and urges them to make "additional robust efforts" toward this end. Russia had pushed for the resolution to include language condemning an increase in civilian deaths in Afghanistan, but both the Russian and U.S. envoys to the United Nations said they were pleased with the final text.

Pakistan: Operations In Tribal Areas To Intensify

1922 GMT - Pakistan's government has said it will intensify a crackdown on militants in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas, according to unnamed Interior Ministry officials. Additional security personnel will be committed for a large operation in the area, set to begin within 48 hours, and operations in Swat, Bajaur and other tribal agencies will continue. After consultations involving Pakistan's prime minister, adviser on the interior and other officials, authorities reportedly decided "not to show any sign of weakness" in combating insurgents.

Kuwait: Concern Expressed Over Arms Sales To Iraq

1803 GMT - Kuwaiti Defense Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak al-Sabah said Kuwait has told the United States that it was concerned over arms sales to Iraq.

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Bolivia/Chile: Officials Could Meet Soon

1755 GMT - Chilean officials plan to meet with Bolivian officials to discuss Bolivia's demands for access to the Pacific Ocean. The meeting, which has not been scheduled, would be dependent on Bolivia agreeing to sell natural gas directly to Chile.

Russia: Russia Wants U.S, Canada In Security Treaty Talks

1724 GMT - Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on Sept 22 said Moscow wants the United States and Canada to take part in the development of a new European security treaty. Lavrov made the statement after meeting with Irish Foreign Minister Michael Martin in Dublin. Russian President Dmitri Medvedev proposed the idea of holding an all-Europe summit to prepare a new security treaty in June.

Afghanistan/Pakistan: Joint Military Force Proposed

1700 GMT - Afghanistan has proposed setting up a joint military task force with Pakistan to fight insurgents on both sides of the countries' shared border, according to Afghan Defense Minister Abdul Rahim Wardak. Wardak said there are 10.000 to 15.000 "full-time" insurgents in Afghanistan, not including those that operate in Pakistan's tribal regions. Escalating violence in the border area has strained U.S, NATO and Afghan troop capabilities, Wardak said. Violence has increased threefold from 2005 to 2007 and will be at its worst yet in 2008, he added.

Italy/Venezuela: ENI Signs Agreement With PDVSA

1658 GMT - Italian oil and natural gas company ENI signed on Sept 22 a memorandum of understanding with Petroleos de Venezuela S.A (PDVSA), which would allow ENI to explore and develop two areas offshore in Venezuela, according to an ENI press release. Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez was on hand for the signing. The development will comprise "an integrated business venture consisting of exploration, production, liquefaction and marketing activities linked to a new LNG train".

Mexico: Obrador Calls For Rally

1646 GMT - Former Mexican presidential candidate Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador called on citizens to participate in a Sept 28 rally to be held at Mexico City's Angel of Independence monument. Obrador said that, at the rally, he will present a "plan of salvation" for Mexico involving "collective solutions coming from the people".

Pakistan: Militant Group Claims Responsibility For Marriott Attack

1640 GMT - Pakistani militant group Fidayeen-e-Islam claimed responsibility for the Sept 20 suicide bombing attack on the Marriott hotel in Islamabad. In a recorded message in English, the militant group said the aim of the attack was to push the U.S "crusaders" out of Pakistan. The group claimed that some 250 U.S Marines were killed in the attack, as were several NATO officials.

Germany: Finance Minister Proposes International Authority

1628 GMT - German Finance Minister Peer Steinbrueck has proposed that there should be "an international authority that will make the traffic rules for financial markets".

Cuba/Vietnam: Ministers Discuss Banking, Industry, Agriculture Cooperation

1615 GMT - Cuban Minister of Government Ricardo Cabrisas Ruiz and Vietnamese First Deputy Prime Minister Nguyen Sinh Hung met Sept 22 in Hanoi to discuss building cooperative strategies in banking, industry and agriculture. The two reportedly also discussed expanding cooperation in the oil and gas sectors and in tourism.

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France: Troops To Be Reinforced In Afghanistan

1558 GMT - French Prime Minister Francois Fillon said France plans to send 100 more troops and more drones and helicopters to Afghanistan to reinforce its military force of 2.600 there.

E.U: Downward Trend In Jobless Rate Stalls At 6.8%

1553 GMT - The unemployment rate of E.U citizens has stalled at 6.8%, with the rate remaining the same in the second quarter of 2008 as it was in the first quarter, according to a European Commission report. The report indicated that the downward trend in jobless rates since 2004 "seems to have come to an end".

Egypt: Conflicting Reports On Kidnapped Tourists

1544 GMT - Four kidnappers who seized tourists who were on a safari in Egypt have moved their captives outside Egyptian borders, according to Egyptian Tourism Minister Zoheir Garrana. A conflicting report from news agency said the tourists, who were kidnapped when they strayed over the Sudanese border, had been freed and were heading toward the Egyptian city of Aswan. Differing reports put the number of tourists at 11 to 19, and some reports say they were seized Sept 22, while others say they were abducted over the weekend.

Vietnam/Estonia: Ministers Discuss Trade, Economic Ties

1542 GMT - Vietnamese Deputy Foreign Minister Nguyen Quoc Cuong and Estonian Deputy Foreign Minister Matti Maasikas met Sept 22 in Hanoi to discuss strengthening ties in economics, trade and investment. Cuong added: "Vietnam is willing to assist Estonia in expanding its relations with other members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations".

Iraq: Al-Sadr Has Put Militia On Hold

1533 GMT - Iraqi Shiite leader Muqtada al-Sadr has put his militia, the Mehdi Army, on hold and has said that members of his al-Sadrist movement will not run in upcoming elections and instead will back independent candidate groups, according to al-Sadr spokesman Salah al-Ubaidi. Al-Ubaidi added that al-Sadr froze his militia in part to allow space for Baghdad and the United States to reach a security agreement that would lead to a U.S troop withdrawal by the end of 2011. "If the agreement has positive points and a defined deadline, then I'm sure we will support it" al-Ubaidi said.

U.S/Iraq: Negotiators To Continue Security Deal Talks

1523 GMT - U.S negotiators will soon return to Baghdad to continue talks with Iraqi officials on a security deal that has stalled over the issue of immunity for U.S troops. David Satterfield, the U.S State Department coordinator on Iraq, and Brett McGurk, the National Security Council's director for Iraq, are set to arrive in Baghdad, a U.S Embassy spokeswoman told. If an agreement on the deal is not reached, the alternative will be to ask the U.N Security Council to extend the mandate that governs U.S troop presence in Iraq, Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshiyar Zebari told. The current mandate expires at the end of 2008.

Bangladesh: JMB Threatens Police Over HT Arrests

1514 GMT - Bangladeshi militant group the Jamaatul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) threatened Sept 21 to bomb law enforcement offices if 10 leaders of the Hizb ut-Tahrir militant group arrested Sept 18 are not released by Sept 23. The group threatened that any excessive response by the government would be met with "anarchy" and the country would become "another Taliban Afghanistan".

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Pakistan: Five Arrested In Punjab Province

1503 GMT - Authorities in Pakistan arrested five people in Punjab province Sept 21 and 22 in connection with the Sept 20 Marriott Hotel bombing. One of the people detained was the imam of the main Jamia mosque in Kharian, Qari Muhammad Ali, according to sources.

India: Nuclear Fuel Deals Planned With France, Russia

1502 GMT - Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh will likely sign a deal with France for nuclear fuel supplies while he is visiting the country, according to Indian External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee. India is expected to make a similar deal with Russia when Russian President Vladimir Putin visits India later in 2008, Mukherjee said. He made the statements at a convention on Indo-U.S nuclear cooperation in the city of Kolkata. Mukherjee said even though the nuclear deal with the United States is still pending, it will not stop India from making bilateral deals on nuclear fuel supplies.

Israel: Livni To Offer Barak "Full Partnership" In New Coalition

1450 GMT - Tzipi Livni, the newly elected leader of the ruling Kadima party, met Sept 21 with Labor party leader Ehud Barak and plans to make him a "full partner" in a future coalition government, according to unspecified private conversations held by Livni. She is prepared to set aside differences over the preservation of the core of the previous government and to reach a new understanding with Barak, sources said.

Pakistan: American Schools In Islamabad Closed

1431 GMT - American schools in Islamabad have been closed following a blast there, although schools in Karachi and Lahore will remain open.

Pakistan: Mehsud Denies Taliban Role In Hotel Attack

1430 GMT - Pakistani Taliban commander Baitullah Mehsud on Sept 22 denied that the Taliban had any role in the Sept 20 attack on the Marriot Hotel in Islamabad. Mehsud reportedly said the Taliban do not believe in killing so many locals in an attack.

Pakistan: Operations Against Militants To Continue

1428 GMT - North West Frontier Province Governor Owais Ahmed Ghani said that military operations in tribal areas against militants will continue for an additional five months.

Egypt/Jordan: Mubarak, Abdullah To Meet

1425 GMT - Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Jordanian King Abdullah II are set to hold a short meeting Sept 23 in Cairo, according to unnamed Jordanian sources. The leaders are expected to discuss recent regional developments, including Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni's win in the Kadima party primary elections.

Estonia: Former Defense Official Arrested On Spying Suspicion

1417 GMT - Estonian authorities have arrested former Defense Ministry head of security Herman Simm on suspicion of spying and treason, according to a spokesman for the State Prosecutor's Office. Simm, who worked with the Defense Ministry from 1995, led a team that set up a security system to guard secret information while Estonia prepared to join the European Union and NATO in 2004. Baltic News Service has reported that Simm worked for Russia.

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Thailand: Muslims, Government Work Toward Ending Conflict

1417 GMT - Talks mediated by Indonesia between the Thai government and representatives from the Muslim south that took place in Bogor have resulted in advances toward bringing peace to the region after years of conflict. A second round of talks will be held Nov 1, with a third round slated for later in November.

Russia/Venezuela: Gazprom, Petroleos de Venezuela Sign Agreement

1406 GMT - Russia's Gazprom and Venezuela's Petroleos de Venezuela have signed an agreement that would provide for a joint analysis of data on the Blanquias Este y Tortuga project and the subsequent development of hydrocarbon deposits there.

Russia: Putin Wants Greater Guarantees Of Bank Deposits

1401 GMT - Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin said Sept 22 that he wants greater guarantees of insured deposits in banks. Putin also said that banks with high credit ratings would be allowed to contest the right to have looser federal treasury funds put on their deposit accounts. He has reportedly instructed the government and the Central Bank to investigate the issue.

Russia/Syria: Russian Warship Report Baseless

1342 GMT - A Sept 19 DEBKA report saying 10 Russian warships have docked off the Syrian port of Tartus is baseless, sources in the Turkish coast guard and in Syria told Sept 22.

Pakistan/Afghanistan: Afghan Diplomat Kidnapped

1338 GMT - Gunmen in Peshawar, Pakistan, on Sept 22 abducted the Afghan consul general in Peshawar after ambushing his car and killing his driver, according to police. The consul general was on his way home from his office when the gunmen attacked, an official at the Afghan consulate in Peshawar said.

Afghanistan: Taliban Kidnap 140 Laborers

1330 GMT - Taliban militants on Sept 21 kidnapped more than 140 civilian laborers in Afghanistan's western Farah province, according to Farah Gov. Rohul Amin. The laborers, who were involved in constructing an army base in Farah, were seized while traveling by bus in the province's Bala Boluk district. Amin said authorities are negotiating for the workers' release and want to resolve the situation without bringing in the military.

Russia/Venezuela: Gazprom To Produce LNG In Venezuelan Offshore

1324 GMT - Russian state energy firm Gazprom will export some of the natural gas produced as part of a joint venture in Venezuela's continental shelf as liquefied natural gas (LNG), the company said Sept 22 in a statement. The statement did not say where the LNG would be shipped, how much would be produced or how much it was expected to cost.

Chile/Bolivia: Bachelet Calls Meeting On Bolivia

1316 GMT - Chilean President Michelle Bachelet has called for South American leaders to meet in New York on Sept 24 to discuss the crisis in Bolivia. Bachelet will be in New York to attend the U.N General Assembly. Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez reportedly will not attend the meeting on Bolivia. Chile's government made no immediate comment on the situation.

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India/Pakistan: Shots Exchanged On Kashmir Border

1315 GMT - Indian border forces fired "unprovoked" shots across the Line of Control separating the Indian-controlled part of Kashmir from the Pakistani-controlled part, and Pakistani troops returned fire, according to a Pakistani army spokesman.

Syria: Massing Troops On Lebanese Border

1310 GMT - Syria has moved almost 10.000 troops to the Abbudiya region along its border with Lebanon to help prevent smuggling and other criminal activity, according to a Lebanese army spokesman.

Russia/Belarus: "Stability-2008" Military Exercises Begin

1308 GMT - Russia's armed forces on Sept 22 began conducting the "Stability-2008" strategic command staff exercises, according to the Russian Defense Ministry press service. The exercises are taking place under the command of Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov and will last until Oct 21. Serdyukov said the exercises will be conducted in various areas of Russia and Belarus, with the cooperation of the Belarusian Defense Ministry.

Russia/Ireland: Lavrov On Ireland Visit

1258 GMT - Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov will visit Ireland on Sept 22 to meet with Irish Prime Minister Brian Cowen and Foreign Minister Micheal Martin, according to a Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman. The leaders will discuss bilateral relations, political contacts and international issues, as well as Russia-E.U relations and European security, the spokesman said. Lavrov will leave Dublin late Sept 22 for New York, where he is set to attend the U.N General Assembly.

Egypt: 10-15 Foreign Tourists Kidnapped

1257 GMT - Kidnappers abducted 10 to 15 foreign tourists in Aswan, Egypt, and may have transported them to Sudan, according to unnamed Egyptian security sources. The Italian Foreign Ministry said five of the abductees were Italians, while Egyptian sources said two of them might have been Israelis.

South Africa: Interim ANC Leader Chosen

1245 GMT - Deputy leader of the South African ruling party the African National Congress (ANC), Kgalema Motlanthe, is expected to be named as an interim party chief following the resignation of President Thabo Mbeki, according to anonymous ANC lawmakers. Motlanthe reportedly would hold the office until April 2009, when the ANC will hold a parliamentary caucus and elect a new leader.

Russia/Venezuela: Russian Navy Ships Bound For Venezuela

1244 GMT - A Russian navy squadron set off for Venezuela on Sept 22 to take part in joint military exercises with Venezuela's navy, according to a Russian navy spokesman. The nuclear-powered Peter the Great cruiser and three other ships departed from the Northern Fleet base of Severomorsk. The deployment comes after two Russian bombers spent a week in Venezuela.

UAE: \$14 Billion Fund Created To Improve Liquidity

1238 GMT - The central bank of the United Arab Emirates is making \$14 billion available to increase liquidity for its banks in the face of a global credit crisis, according to a statement e-mailed by the central bank. The bank is also considering other credit support measures, the statement said.

Spain: Car Bomb Kills Soldier

1233 GMT - One soldier was killed and another person wounded Sept 22 when a car bomb went off in the Spanish town of Santona, near Basque country, according to a government spokesman. The blast

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occurred near a military installation. A man identifying himself as part of Basque separatist group ETA had called authorities before the blast.

Russia: Finance Ministry Loaning \$60 Billion To Top Banks

1233 GMT - The Russian Finance Ministry is expected to provide \$60 billion to improve liquidity for Russia's top three banks, VTB, Gazprombank and Sberbank in a series of special auctions beginning Sept 22. The money will be loaned for three months at an annual interest rate of 8.75%, and 25 other banks will be allowed to take part in the auction as well. The top three banks have promised to use the money for loans to smaller banks.

Pakistan: Troops Fire At U.S Helicopters Again

1219 GMT - Two U.S helicopters crossed the border from Afghanistan into Pakistan and were turned back by firing from Pakistani forces, according to an unnamed Pakistani security official. The incident, which reportedly occurred Sept 21 near Lowara Mandi in the North Waziristan tribal region, comes a week after another incident was reported in the same area. Sources reported that the military did not officially confirm the Sept 21 incident took place.

Singapore/South Korea: Defense Ministers To Meet

1155 GMT - Singaporean Defense Minister Teo Chee Hean traveled to South Korea on Sept 22. Teo and South Korean Defense Minister Lee Sang Hee are set to meet Sept 25 to discuss regional and international security issues.

South Korea/Norway: Defense Technology Agreement Signed

1150 GMT - South Korean Vice Defense Minister Kim Jong Cheon and his Norwegian counterpart Espen Barth Eide signed an agreement Sept 22 helping pave the way for exchanges of defense technology, according to South Korean Defense Ministry officials.

Japan: Aso Chosen As LDP Leader

1145 GMT - Former Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Aso won the leadership election in the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) on Sept 22, and is expected to be elected Prime Minister on Sept 24. Aso reportedly plans to keep most of the party leadership but is expected to name former Chief Cabinet Secretary Hiroyuki Hosoda as LDP secretary-general.

South Korea/Russia: Presidents To Meet

1136 GMT - South Korean President Lee Myung Bak is set to visit Russia from Sept 28 to Oct 1 to discuss energy and aerospace cooperation and North Korean denuclearization and economic development with Russian President Dmitri Medvedev.

China/Australia: Sinosteel Purchase Of Murchison Stake Approved

1132 GMT - Chinese metal firm Sinosteel received approval Sept 21 from Australian Treasurer Wayne Swan to purchase up to a 49.9% stake in Australian mining firm Murchison Metals. Swan said the move will preserve diversity of ownership in developing mining in the western Australian region of Yilgarn.

China/U.S: Bush, Hu, Talk On Phone

1127 GMT - U.S President George W. Bush and Chinese President Hu Jintao spoke on the phone and discussed bilateral relations and the crisis in the U.S financial markets. Bush reportedly said Washington will continue to take all necessary steps to stabilize global financial markets. Hu said China is ready to increase cooperation and dialogue with the United States.

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China: Government Raises Estimate Of Milk Poisonings

1109 GMT - Some 53.000 children in China have gotten sick from contaminated milk powder, according to government figures. The number is a significant increase from earlier reports.

Israel: Iranian Nuclear Program "Gallop" Forward

1105 GMT - Iran is improving its uranium enrichment work and is "galloping toward a nuclear bomb" Israeli Brigadier-General Yossi Baidatz, the head of the research department for Israel's military intelligence told Israel's Cabinet on Sept 21. Iran has activated 4.000 centrifuges since the beginning of 2008, he said, adding that Tehran has produced roughly 1.000 pounds of low-level enriched uranium, one-third to one-half the amount needed to create a nuclear bomb.

AFRICA NEWS

Africa - The Forgotten Heroes of Humanitarian Assistance: Often the forgotten heroes of humanitarian assistance, pilots play a critical role in making sure that aid gets to where it is needed most around the world - and sometimes they pay the ultimate price.

Africa - Global Financial Crisis; Central Banks Spell Bailout Plans: In a bid to relieve the financial turmoil currently sweeping across the world, central banks are announcing rescue plans. From the Americas and Europe to Asia and Africa, the crisis is prompting nations to inject huge funds into the banking system in an effort to fuel economic activity.

Africa - Ending the Continent's Food Crisis: Africa's food crisis can be alleviated by modernising agriculture and reforming supply chains so that small-scale farmers get cheaper fertiliser and high-yield seeds, experts and officials at a conference in Oslo have argued. But so far, they say, funding is lacking.

Africa - Continent's Export Trade Lagging Behind, Says U.N: Africa export performance, though improved in recent years has lagged way behind due to lack of supply capacity a new study report by United Nations Trade and Development (UNCTAD) has revealed.

Africa - Mbeki to Lead High-Level Meeting on Continent's Development: President Thabo Mbeki is expected next week to lead a high-level meeting with African leaders to review the continent's developmental needs as well as the implementation of its development goals.

Nigeria - MEND Declares Ceasefire: The military Joint Task Force (JTF) in Rivers State is not sucked in by yesterday's unilateral ceasefire declared by the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) in its "oil war", and said it would treat the group's move with caution.

Nigeria - Oil State Chiefs Move to Contain Militants: Amid the fears that the 'oil war' declared by the militant group, Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta, MEND, may spread from Rivers State, other states of the region, weekend, took steps to contain the rampaging militants.

Nigeria - Bloody Week in the Niger Delta: Even by the usual violent standards of Nigeria's conflict-ridden, oil-rich southern Niger Delta region, it has been a bloody seven days, with dozens of civilian casualties and many more wounded or displaced, according to local observers, in clashes in Rivers state between the military and rebel fighters.

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Nigeria - "Oil War" Militants Shun Talks with Elders: The declaration of "Oil War" by the main militant group in the Niger Delta, Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), sparked off gun duels between the militants and the Joint Task Force, JTF, on several fronts in the region yesterday leaving at least 10 suspected militants dead.

Nigeria - Dike Pledges Co-Operation with Other Service Chiefs: Chief of Defense Staff, CDS, Air Chief Marshall Paul Dike yesterday evening promised to work in concert with other Service Chief to ensure good welfare package for Officers and men of the Joint Task Force, JTF, in the Niger Delta even as he charged the JTF to stop harassing pressmen in the course of their duty.

Nigeria - Defense Chief Visits Bayelsa: The Chief of Defense Staff, Air Chief Marshal Paul Dike yesterday made a surprise visit to Yenagoa the Bayelsa State capital saying the military high command was tinkering with the idea of establishing a brigade headquarters in the predominantly riverine state.

South Africa - EuroCopter Upgrades Cape Facility: European helicopter manufacturer, EuroCopter, has completed a R2-million upgrade of its service and maintenance facility at Cape Town International Airport, enabling it to better support a rapidly expanding southern African customer base and fleet.

South Africa - Mbeki Hands in Resignation: President Thabo Mbeki formally announced his early resignation in an address televised live in South Africa on Sunday night.

South Africa - ANC to Name New President Today: The African National Congress (ANC) would announce its candidate to replace President Thabo Mbeki today, party treasurer-general Mathews Phosa said last night.

South Africa - Defiant to Bitter End, Mbeki says "I Did Not Meddle": In A final swipe at his accusers, President Thabo Mbeki last night absolved himself and his government of ever interfering in the work of the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) and the criminal justice system.

South Africa - Night of Long Knives: South Africa woke up to a new political reality today after the final humiliation of President Thabo Mbeki, who has been fired from his job by the ANC.

South Africa - Mbeki "Toxic" to New Political Party: President Thabo Mbeki's involvement would be the "kiss of death" to any attempts to form a strong alternative to the ruling African National Congress (ANC) in the aftermath of his recall by his party.

Uganda - Defense Force on High Alert over LRA Rebels: The Uganda People's Defense Forces are ready to strike back in case of any fresh incursion of LRA rebels into the country, according to the army spokesman.

Uganda - Former Rebels Harass Abducted "Wives": Girls who were abducted and forcefully given as wives to LRA commanders are still being pursued by their "bush husbands", a study by two researchers attached to the Feinstein International Centre in the U.S has revealed.

Uganda - How the Girls Were Captured, Distributed: While doing the study, Carlson and Mazurana were also able to gain deep insight into the deliberate and well orchestrated methods that the LRA used to sexually abuse the girls. "Our evidence reveals that the crimes committed against these females were

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not haphazard, but were methodically organised by the senior leadership of the LRA. The presence of forced wives in the LRA served to bolster fighter morale".

Uganda - South Sudan Army Pursues LRA Rebels: Fears of a renewed offensive by the LRA, following the rebel group's attacks in South Sudan and eastern DR Congo, have emerged and are likely to turn the spotlight on northern Uganda's stalled peace process and the failure of Uganda, DR Congo and South Sudan to see through a regional military program to flush out the rebels.

Angola - Government and ADPA Sign Headquarters Agreement: The Angolan government and the African Diamond Producers Association (ADPA) on Friday 19 signed, here, an agreement that enables that organisation to set up its headquarters in the country in the capacity of international institution.

Angola - Government to Repair Bridges in Province's Inland: The government of eastern Luanda Norte province said that it will rehabilitate this year various bridges in the province's inland with view to facilitate the inflow of goods and people and enhance the socio-economic development of these localities.

Angola - Minds Pacification Contributed to Electoral Process Success: The Angolan Reformed Evangelical Church (IERA) on Thursday 18 in Luanda considered that the pacification of citizens' minds, coupled with a massive participation of women in the process, contributed to the success of the legislative elections held on September 05.

Rwanda - Ex-FAR Officer Ordered Soldiers, Civil Defense to Kill Ethnic Tutsis, Alleges Witness: A prosecution witness in the genocide trial against the former senior Rwandan Army Officer, Ephrem Setako, Tuesday alleged before the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) that the accused ordered soldiers and civil defense members to hunt and kill ethnic Tutsis and their accomplices on April 25, 1994.

Rwanda - Civil Society Observers Commend Elections: The Civil Society Elections Observers Mission (CSEOM) has praised the state and the National Electoral Commission (NEC) on how election campaigns and the polling exercise were conducted in the country.

Congo-Kinshasa - U.N Steps Up Emergency Aid for Children Affected By New Fighting: The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is scaling up existing emergency programs in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), where increased fighting has forced over 100.000 people to flee their homes, social services to close, and humanitarian organizations to suspend aid.

Congo-Kinshasa - New Clashes in North Kivu: The United Nations peacekeeping force in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has called for an immediate ceasefire between the Government and rebels, as new clashes broke out today in North Kivu, leading to further displacement in the troubled region.

Somalia - Latest Talks to Further Peace Deal Wrap Up in Djibouti: Two key committees set up as a part of a United Nations-brokered accord aiming to bring peace to war-torn Somalia have wrapped up their second meeting in neighbouring Djibouti, during which they discussed practical ways to carry out the June agreement.

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Somalia - 12 Killed as Insurgents Attack Airport: At least 12 people were killed Friday in Somalia's violent capital, Mogadishu, after the Islamist group al Shabaab launched mortars at Aden Adde International Airport.

Zimbabwe - Mbeki's Firing Endangers Power-Sharing: Concern mounted yesterday that the power-sharing agreement, hamstrung by a deadlock over the allocation of cabinet ministries, faced another threat after the African National Congress (ANC) asked the mediator Thabo Mbeki to resign as President of South Africa.

Zimbabwe - Power-Sharing Deal Rallies International Aid: Further evidence of the international community's desire for Zimbabwe to form a new Cabinet and speedily embark on a recovery programme came from the African Development Bank and the World Bank on Friday.

Ghana - Seven Ex-Security Heads Banned: The National Security Council has banned seven ex-security top officials after their infamous meeting with former President Jerry John Rawlings.

Kenya - 2012 Polls Worse without Reform, Warns Judge: Adopt recommendations of the Kriegler Commission for reforming the election system or perish come the 2012 poll, Kenyans were warned on Friday 19.

Sudan - New Darfur Fighting Disrupts Aid Delivery: Fresh fighting between Government and rebel forces in the north of Sudan's war-torn Darfur region has severely restricted the delivery of critical aid amid unconfirmed reports that thousands more people have been driven from their homes, the United Nations said today.

Guinea - United States, Country Enjoy Robust Relationship on Central Issues: The United States and the Guinean people and their government have a robust relationship and share a wide array of common views, even as some challenges remain, says Phillip Carter III, the former U.S ambassador to Guinea.

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