



UNITED STATES INSTITUTE OF PEACE

PREVENTION

PREVENTION NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2010

MISSION

USIP's Center for Conflict Analysis and Prevention designs and manages the Institute's efforts to prevent the outbreak of violent conflict.

The Center also conducts timely, policy relevant analysis of countries and regions where the threat to peace and stability is particularly acute.

- First tier priorities include the Korean Peninsula, Pakistan, and Iran
- Second tier priorities include Kenya and Lebanon.

In addition, the Center conducts research, identifies best practices, develops new tools for preventing violent conflict, and supports related training and education efforts.

CALENDAR

November 3-4: Conference convened by Oxfam on "Early Warning for Protection" in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

November 11-12: G20 Summit in Seoul, South Korea

November 13-14: 18th APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in Yokohama, Japan.

November 15: International Symposium on "Preventing Genocides and Mass Atrocities: Goals and Challenges of International Cooperation," Paris, France.

November 16: Launch of the USIP-Stimson Center Iran Working Group Report.

November 18-19: USIP convenes 4th U.S. - China Project on Crisis Avoidance & Cooperation Track 1.5 conference in Washington, D.C.

December 1: Launch of "The Iran Primer: Power, Politics, and U.S. Policy," published by USIP in partnership with the Woodrow Wilson Center.

December 6-7: Global Conference on Preventive Action by EastWest Institute in Brussels, Belgium.

December 8: USIP-lead public program on internal Israeli politics and the Israel-Palestinian peace process.

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Dear Colleagues,

This issue of the Center for Conflict Analysis and Prevention Newsletter provides an update of our country specific work including on Iran, Pakistan, North Korea, and Lebanon, publications and events. The Center has launched a new seminar series on civilian protection in partnership with the Brookings Institution. This seminar series provides an opportunity to explore different concepts and approaches to protection in today's world and the implications for those working in support of peacebuilding, development, humanitarian response, and security. Each seminar includes about 40 invited participants from diverse backgrounds and organizational affiliations discussing the issues under the Chatham House rule.

The first seminar, "Understanding protection: concepts and practices" was held on 14 September, and explored different meanings of civilian protection. Speakers included senior U.S. government officials, and representatives from the UN, ICRC, Catholic Relief Services, and the Afghan embassy. About 45 people participated, including Congressional staffers from the House and Senate foreign relations/affairs committees.

The second seminar, "Communities protecting themselves," took place on 28 October. It focused on protection on the ground, with a particular emphasis on how communities protect themselves in dangerous situations and the relationship between community-based protection and external actors. Case studies examined community self-protection mechanisms in the eastern DRC (arguably the most unprotected place on the planet), in Burma/Myanmar and in Colombia as indigenous communities seek to negotiate neutral spaces among warring parties. It also included a real-time video feed with UNHCR in Kenya.

The final seminar will focus on the question "What is the international community's role in protecting civilians?," and will be held in January or February 2011. It will include reflections by representatives from the UN, U.S. government, international organizations, diplomats, and academics. The final report of this series on protection of civilians will include summaries of the discussions at the three seminars (without attribution) as well as the case studies and other background materials.

Abiodun Williams

Vice President

Center for Conflict Analysis and Prevention



SPOTLIGHT

U.S.-Iran Relations



Map of the Islamic Republic of Iran.
Source: CIA World Factbook Map Collection.

In their new co-authored book, “American Negotiating Behavior”, Richard Solomon and Nigel Quinney highlight a fundamental dynamic that animates U.S. diplomacy: most of the heavy lifting that U.S. diplomats do is done before they sit down at the international negotiating table. Whatever terms they bring to that table are largely determined by the dynamics of democratic politics and bureaucratic negotiation in Washington itself. As a result, there is little wiggle room for the give and take that many consider the essence of U.S. diplomacy. When it comes to U.S.-Iranian relations, this rule of thumb applies, but in ways that by necessity reflect the distinctive history of those difficult relations. On the Iranian side, foreign policy has long been constrained by the ideological and institutional parameters of Iran’s Islamic Republic, which was partly founded on hostility to U.S. political, strategic, and even cultural power. This fact of life is one that Iranian leaders dare not ignore, particularly when a rising elite of ultra-hardliners is attempting to stamp out all internal competitors.

Under these conditions, Iranian leaders prefer a foreign policy of tactical delays, obfuscation and constant maneuvering over any coherent strategy seeking to resolve the U.S.-Iranian conflict. Indeed, as the speech that Iran’s president gave two weeks ago before a near empty hall of the United Nations amply demonstrates, in their efforts to shore up their legitimacy with their own domestic base, some of Iran’s hard-liners would rather rub salt into a deep American wound than openly signal Washington that they are ready to talk seriously about the nuclear issue. Confidence building measures at home would seem to require confidence destroying measures abroad.

While the U.S. approach to Tehran echoes some of the deep wounds that American policy makers and diplomat have sustained during the thirty plus years of our arduous relations with the Islamic Republic, there is nothing in the national, constitutional or historical DNA of the U.S. that rivals the political, cultural, and most of all ideological forces that make it so risky for Iranian leaders to pursue U.S.-rapprochement.

That said, the U.S. approach to Iran does and in fact must reflect the push and pull of both domestic and bureaucratic politics. Indeed, the speeches and actions of Iran’s hard-line leaders have helped to accentuate and even solidify an array of voices inside and outside the Beltway for whom engagement with Tehran seems like a dangerous dream. Ahmadinejad’s verbal attacks on the “Zionist entity” have rightly provoked widespread fears, not only within the American Jewish community, but also within a diverse range of other religious and political groups. Tehran’s failure to address the concerns about its nuclear program has strengthened those U.S. policy makers inside and outside the government who view concessions on enrichment as a slippery slope to an Iranian nuclear arms capacity. Lastly, and certainly not least, the effort of Iran’s leaders to repress a home grown human rights movement has spurred the efforts of Iranian Americans and even more so, U.S. human rights groups, to resist any opening to Tehran that might be seen as sacrificing Iran’s Green Movement.

These trends have complicated U.S. efforts to engage Iran, and in that context, to find a peaceful solution to the conflict over the nuclear issue. Indeed, Tehran’s actions, and even more so its rhetoric, have invited a U.S. policy that relies on the punishing effect of sanctions, not only to induce Tehran’s cooperation, but also to help sustain domestic consensus regarding how to deal with Iran. The result is a U.S. Iran policy that is tactically effective but



not as strategically clear as it might be. We know what we do not want, but we still hesitate to outline, either publically or even in private, an ultimate vision of U.S.-Iranian relations that we might find politically and strategically acceptable.

This state of affairs cannot be sustained indefinitely. Sanctions have hurt Iran's economy and slowed its efforts to produce what might be a nuclear weapons capacity. But it is far from certain that they will force Iran's compliance. Thus we are left with two possibilities: a march to armed conflict, or a policy of containment aimed at reducing the strategic costs to Washington of a nuclear Iran.

These are not encouraging options. Seeking a different path forward, the U.S. Institute of Peace and the Stimson Center are working on a final report of their joint Iran Working Group. The findings and recommendations of that report will hopefully invite renewed discussion about the challenges of engaging a difficult adversary.

OVER THE HORIZON— HIGHLIGHTS

Anticipated Instability in Pakistan

Pakistan stands devastated by the worst flooding in its history. Over 20 million people are affected and countless still remain without shelter. The civilian government in Pakistan has come under severe criticism for its failure to respond adequately to the flood situation. The political circles are speculating about a forced change in the set up in Islamabad. While it remains unclear whether this will happen, and if so whether it will be a constitutional or an extra-constitutional change, it is obvious that civil-military tensions are on the rise again in Pakistan. This does not bode well for the country's stability. The coming months may well end up leading to greater political instability, which will affect not only rehabilitation and recovery of the flood victims but also the military's efforts against terrorism. Should this happen, the Pakistan-U.S. equation, already dented severely due to the accidental death of three Pakistani security personnel in the September 30 attack by NATO helicopters within Pakistani territory, would suffer further.

Given the potential for instability and violence inherent in such situations, CAP has been monitoring these events closely. During October, CAP held two public events on Pakistan's floods to analyze the current situation and the needs and requirements to ensure efficient relief and recovery. CAP is also publishing a Special Report on water management and hydro-politics in Pakistan. Another Special Report examining the state of democracy in Pakistan, its key strengths and weaknesses, and mechanisms to strengthen civilian rule will also be published this year. In addition, CAP held briefings for Hill staff on the current situation in Pakistan and its implications for U.S. policy.

Leadership Succession in North Korea

On September 28, the Workers' Party of Korea (WPK) convened its party conference in Pyongyang. Just prior to the opening of the party conference, Kim Jong-il's third son, Kim Jong-un, was promoted to the rank of four-star general. The highlights of the party conference were the reappointment of Kim Jong-il as the General-Secretary of the WPK and the appointment of Kim Jong-un as a Vice Chairman of the WPK's Central Military Commission.



*Disaster Relief in Pakistan.
Source: Free Military Photos.*



Kim Jong-un's promotion and appointment are a major component of launching the "rising generation" of the WPK. Kim Jong-il has, in practice, created a mirror version of the Communist Party of China's (CPC) leadership structure. Prior to the party conference, the CPC had been implementing a number of economic development deals with the WPK – deals that Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao had signed during his October 2009 visit to Pyongyang. The "rising generation" will now have more opportunities to work directly with their CPC counterparts in institution- and capacity-building activities in North Korea. However, as Kim Jong-un's elevation marks the *beginning* rather than the completion of his grooming process, the designated successor will need to develop his leadership capabilities on an accelerated timetable before assuming more senior leadership roles. Should his father die before the completion of this grooming process, Kim Jong-un may become a trigger for instability if powerful North Korean figures see an opportunity to assume greater control of a regime led by a weak leader.

Rising Tensions in Lebanon

Beirut witnessed a distinct increase in tensions in October as elements across Lebanon's diverse political spectrum brace for impending indictments to be issued by the UN Special Tribunal for Lebanon (STL). Speculation has been rife that the indictments will name several members of the Lebanese Shiite militant organization Hezbollah. This outcome could in turn trigger a collapse of the fragile consensus government, or worse, sectarian violence in the streets of Beirut and beyond. The tribunal crisis encompasses far more than what the legal jargon of indictments and false testimony might suggest. Explicitly or implicitly, it embodies all the complex challenges that confront Lebanon. Dialogue efforts, both internally and regionally, could play a critical role in preventing Lebanon's potential slide into civil strife.

Arab-Israeli Flash Points

Although Mideast peace talks are teetering, U.S. efforts to prevent renewed violence continue at full pace. Flash points—in Jerusalem, Gaza, and along the Lebanese-Israeli border—have all too often been triggers of broader conflict. Quiet U.S. efforts to manage these "flash points" may be more vital now given the slow pace of peace talks and the poor communication between Israeli and Arab leaders. The behind-the-scenes efforts to freeze settlement building, demolitions and other provocative Israeli measures in Jerusalem; the continuing campaign to open up access to Gaza and prevent rocket attacks on Israel; and the international communities' work to contain periodic flare-ups along the Lebanese-Israeli border are all critical, even if they do not make daily headlines. For the U.S. and other third parties, one of the most difficult challenges in peacemaking is to maintain this kind of constant effort to manage flash points without losing sight of the need to address the underlying drivers of conflict via a broader peace process aimed at resolving this seemingly unending conflict.

Implementing Kenya's 2008 National Accord

On August 4, Kenyans overwhelmingly approved the proposed reforms to the constitution by a vote of nearly 70 percent. The 27-member Constitutional Implementation Oversight Committee (CIOC) —led by Mohammed Abdikadir— now faces the challenge of implementing the constitution. As the administrative and governance reforms are adopted, the CIOC will have to contend with the parliamentarians that opposed the constitution. Although it has been denied by the supporters of the new constitution, there is the possibility that amendments will have to be made to the new constitution's provisions to accommodate



those opposed to the reforms. Moreover, MP William Ruto, the leader of the 'no' campaign faces an investigation by the International Criminal Court for his role in the organization of postelection violence; it further complicates how, if at all, the constitutional reforms will be accommodated to address concerns of those opposing the new constitution.

Peace and Security in Chad

USIP is co-sponsoring a two-day meeting in N'djamena organized by the Comité de Suivi de l'Appel à la Paix et à la Réconciliation Nationale au Tchad—a network of civil society organizations led by Delphine Djiraibe, the 2004 recipient of the RFK Human Rights Award. This "Conference on Peace and Security in Chad: Challenges and Perspectives" will take place early November. As a follow-on to USIP's May 20, 2010 conference on Chad, co-organized with the International Peace Institute, it will focus on domestic and regional security dynamics; the 2007 August 13th Agreement; and justice and human rights issues. The workshop is timely as the UN mission charged with securing the Chad-CAR border will draw down by December 31, 2010 and legislative, local, and presidential elections are scheduled to take place in the first quarter of 2011.

USIP Nonproliferation & Arms Control Pilot Course

In collaboration with the USIP Academy for International Conflict Management and Peacebuilding, USIP's Nonproliferation and Arms Control Program completed the first run of a pilot course from September 20-24, 2010 on key issues in nonproliferation and arms control. The course, "Time of Transition: 21st Century Issues in Strategic Arms Control and Nonproliferation," provided a concise overview of the major building blocks of strategic arms control, nuclear nonproliferation, as well as new and emerging issues in U.S. nuclear policy. A diverse group of U.S. and international students from government, academia, and the NGO community participated in the week-long course, which included several exercises, group discussions, and guest lecturers to help sharpen their critical skills in assessing arms control and nonproliferation issues and their broader impact. USIP will host two more iterations of this course in 2011, and is currently developing two new pilots: Advanced Issues in Strategic Arms Control and Advanced Issues in Nuclear Nonproliferation. The new pilot courses will be delivered in July and August 2011, respectively.



Village in Chad.

Source: © Ecoimagesphotos | Dreamstime.com

WORKING GROUPS

- The **Korea Working Group (KWG)** provides an important channel through which USIP informs policymakers and analysts about major developments on the Korean Peninsula. Based on key findings from USIP's ongoing research interviews with Chinese government think tank analysts, KWG director John Park conducted briefings for senior Congressional staffers and State Department officials in mid-October. These briefings focused on China's supporting role in the accelerated North Korean leadership succession process via the Communist Party of China-Workers' Party of Korea channel – a largely underexamined relationship with major implications for the U.S.' North Korea policy.
- The **Lebanon Working Group** continues to meet and address numerous topics relating to both regional tensions and internal developments inside Lebanon. On September 29, USIP, together with the International Foundation for Electoral

PUBLICATIONS

- Abiodun Williams, "World Leaders Tackle Global Poverty, Security Issues at United Nations General Assembly," USIP on the Issues, 21 September 2010.
- Jacqueline M. Klopp, Patrick Githinji, and Keffa Karuoya, "Internal Displacement and Local Peacebuilding in Kenya," USIP Special Report, September 2010.
- Semira Nikou, "Iran's Subsidies Conundrum," USIP Peace Brief, September 2010.
- John Park, "North Korea's Leadership Succession: The China Factor," USIP On the Issues, 28 September 2010.
- Dorina Bekoe, "Persistent Challenges to Long-Term Peace in Côte d'Ivoire," USIP Peace Brief, October 2010."

Systems (IFES), hosted a panel discussion entitled "Prospects for Political Reform in Lebanon: Opportunities and Challenges." The panel featured Lebanon's Minister of Interior and Municipalities, Ziad Baroud, as well as Tamara Wittes, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, and Richard Chambers, Lebanon Chief of Party for IFES.

- The **USIP-CAP Working Group on Future Threats and Conflict Prevention in Eurasia** provides strategic foresight to U.S. policy in the region. On September 22, the Working Group met to discuss the customs union between Russia, Kazakhstan, and Belarus.



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