



UNITED STATES INSTITUTE OF PEACE

# PREVENTION

## PREVENTION NEWSLETTER

JULY 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

**May 31:** USIP-Punjab University Co-hosted event "Pakistan-US Relations: The India Factor" in Lahore, Pakistan.

**June 2-5:** USIP supported Pugwash Track-II dialogue between India and Pakistan in Islamabad, Pakistan.

**June 19-27:** African Union Summit in Kampala, Uganda

**June 25-26:** G8 Summit in Muskoka, Canada

**June 26-27:** G-20 Summit in Toronto, Canada

**June 27:** Referendum on New Constitution in Kyrgyzstan

**June 28:** Burundi will hold presidential elections

**July 1:** USIP Conference: "Preventing Violent Conflict: Principles, Policies, and Practice."

**July 9:** UN General Assembly Debate on the "Responsibility to Protect"

**July 18:** Second Round of Presidential Elections in Guinea

**Late July:** USIP Event: "Verifying new START". USIP will convene a panel of experts to assess the verification provisions of the "New START" treaty as well as their impact on the ratification process.

**Mid-August:** 'USIP Event Week' in Pakistan. USIP will host four events with Pakistani partners on various aspects critical to the US-Pak relationship.

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## Dear Colleagues

Conflict prevention is widely endorsed in principle including by governments, international organizations, regional organizations and civil society groups. In the words of the new National Security Strategy: "the untold loss of human life, suffering, and property damage that results from armed conflict necessitates that all responsible nations work to prevent it." Yet it is a principle that is too rarely put into serious practice. While various local, national and international actors tend to be highly reactive, USIP is in a unique position to focus on emerging conflicts and to develop effective strategies for prevention. Indeed, conflict prevention is one of the Institute's strategic goals.

All conflict management and peacebuilding efforts have a preventive dimension as they aim to prevent conflicts from escalating, spreading or recurring. These efforts, which can be considered forms of *secondary prevention*, are part of USIP's own programs to address and transform approaches to international conflict. However, the central focus of the Center for Conflict Analysis and Prevention (CAP) is on strategies to prevent tensions or disputes from escalating into large-scale violent conflict, which can be regarded as *primary prevention*. The work of CAP is predicated on the assumption that there are unique challenges and opportunities associated with preventing the initial onset of full-blown conflict. We are committed to meeting these challenges and seizing these opportunities in innovative and practical ways.

The Prevention Newsletter, which will be published bimonthly, will provide highlights of CAP's conceptual work, its region specific work aimed at helping to prevent conflicts in Africa, the Middle East, South and Northeast Asia, and the special projects on genocide prevention and non-proliferation. It will also provide Over the Horizon thinking on trends in different regions, as well as CAP events, working groups and publications. I hope that you find this Newsletter useful, and welcome your comments and suggestions.

Abiodun Williams  
Vice President  
Center for Conflict Analysis and Prevention



# SPOTLIGHT

## Korean Peninsula

### Overview

The primary source of instability on the Korean peninsula is North Korea. The reclusive state continues to pose a serious risk in terms of spillover effects from its nuclear proliferation activity, its chronic regime instability, and its periodic naval clashes with its southern neighbor. North Korea's deteriorating state structure is resulting in more unpredictable activity that threatens U.S. interests in Northeast Asia. This presents major dilemmas for U.S. policymakers. The central dilemma is how the involved countries will deal with North Korea's sinking of South Korea's warship, the *Cheonan*, during an uncertain leadership succession process in Pyongyang.

### Recent Developments

Tensions on the Korean Peninsula rose rapidly on May 20, 2010 following the South Korean government's release of the findings of its international investigation into the March 26 sinking of the *Cheonan*. The investigation team—composed of experts from South Korea, the United States, Australia, Britain, and Sweden—officially stated that: "The evidence points overwhelmingly to the conclusion that the torpedo was fired by a North Korean submarine. There is no other plausible explanation."

On May 24, South Korean President Lee Myung-bak announced that Seoul would suspend inter-Korean trade, block North Korean cargo ships from accessing South Korean shipping lanes, and prepare to refer the *Cheonan* incident to the UN Security Council. Pyongyang, in turn, expelled South Korean officials from the inter-Korean Kaesong Industrial Complex, just north of the demilitarized zone. It also announced that it would cut a naval hotline with South Korea designed to prevent accidental skirmishes. On June 4, South Korea submitted a letter to the Security Council president asking the Council to "deter recurrence of any further provocation by North Korea." While few observers take North Korea's threat of an all-out war seriously, many experts are concerned that the sinking of the *Cheonan* may be indicative of a North Korea that is emboldened by its perception of itself as a nuclear weapons state that can now carry out limited strikes without fear of retaliation.

Should North Korea conduct another conventional attack, the international community's view of it may decisively shift from a weak state with chronic food shortages and a decrepit economy to a clear and present danger to peace and security. This radical shift would undermine Chinese efforts to stabilize North Korea through Communist Party of China-Workers' Party of Korea institution-building projects, and eventually bring North Korea back to the stalled Six-Party Talks. Of all the countries and players involved in the phase following the South Korean-led investigation, China will likely face the biggest challenge as it seeks to maintain its balanced approach to the Korean Peninsula. The first major test of China's balanced Korean Peninsula approach will be the UN Security Council, where South Korea and the United States are pressuring Beijing to support a tough measure against North Korea.

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## CAP's Korean Peninsula-focused Activities

CAP addresses Korean Peninsula issues in two ways. The first is through the Korea Working Group (KWG), which brings together policymakers, as well as leading analysts from the government, NGO and think tank communities to address pressing policy issues in the political, security, social, and economic fields related to Korea. By convening these regular meetings, CAP has been able to provide an important channel for policymakers and analysts from the United States and Asia who are working on different facets of North Korea policy to share differing perspectives on urgent policy matters. In addition, the KWG convenes workshops and conferences—both closed and open to the public.

The second way that CAP addresses Korean Peninsula issues is through its Northeast Asia Track 1.5 projects—the U.S.-China Project on Crisis Avoidance and Cooperation (PCAC) and the U.S.-South Korea-Japan Trilateral Dialogue in Northeast Asia (TDNA). Bringing together government and military officials, along with policy experts from China, South Korea, Japan and the United States, CAP convenes a recurring Track 1.5 channel to facilitate much-needed “policy R&D” on a range of chronic issues.

## CAP's Focus on Over the Horizon Issues

A core aspect of CAP's policy work regarding the Korean Peninsula is monitoring and assessing the potential impact that upcoming events and current trends will have on peace and stability in the region. From this perspective, CAP is closely following the domestic and international factors that are influencing the direction of how the *Cheonan* incident is being addressed in national policies and in the UN Security Council. Following a serious setback in the June 2 local elections in South Korea that were viewed as a referendum on President Lee Myung-bak's hard-line approach to North Korea, his ruling Grand National Party has begun a measured drawdown of its tough measures with mixed results. With South Korea hosting the G20 in November 2010 and the 2nd Nuclear Security Summit in 2012, all eyes will be on North Korea because of its long-standing practice of seeking to divert the spotlight from Seoul in the lead up to a high-profile international event. During the 2002 World Cup co-hosted by South Korea, the two Koreas clashed in a deadly naval skirmish in the NLL. Prior to the 1988 Olympics in Seoul, the North Koreans bombed a South Korean airliner in 1987 to scare tourists away from Seoul.

As the *Cheonan* crisis unfolds, CAP will continue to proactively engage U.S. and Asian policymakers in two key ways. First, by facilitating structured analyses of the complex interplay of security issues that are evolving rapidly drawing on its Track 1.5 channels and networks. Second, CAP is convening timely briefings for policymakers in a closed, off-the-record setting so that the merits and drawbacks of nascent proposals to prevent further crisis escalation and to enhance crisis management capabilities on the Korean Peninsula are effectively communicated.

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## HIGHLIGHTS

### Lebanon

At the end of May 2010, Lebanon completed its municipal election cycle, bringing to a close a series of political milestones over the past two years including the election of a



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new president, parliamentary elections and the formation of a consensus cabinet. Taken together, these political exercises have helped to establish a period of internal stability, but with little prospect for the passage of much-needed political reforms. Instead, Lebanon’s focus has turned to the region as heightened tensions with Israel have brought renewed fears of another war with Israel. Mona Yacoubian, director of the Lebanon Working Group, recently completed a research trip to Lebanon to gain greater insights into the internal and regional challenges Lebanon faces.

## Côte d’Ivoire

In February 2010, Côte d’Ivoire’s presidential elections were postponed for the sixth time, because 429,000 names on the registry were suspected to be fraudulent—possibly, foreign—names. It revived the questions of citizenship and identity. Things worsened with the dispute on whether the rebel Forces Nouvelles (FN) should disarm before or after elections. USIP, along with the Community of Sant’Egidio, and George Mason University’s Institute for Conflict Analysis and Prevention, invited prominent civil society and religious leaders to Washington to devise strategies for resolving the political impasse. The resulting Washington Appeal celebrated Cote d’Ivoire’s diversity, urged Ivorians to look beyond the immediate elections to resolve deep-seated problems, and called for a wider role for civil society. Going forward, there should be a quick resolution to the controversy over the 429,000 names; the FN must have an incentive to disarm, given the rents they collect for controlling the north and the lack of opportunities for disarmed soldiers; and the threat of violence from the political opposition must be defused. The international community can help hasten the resolution of this crisis by funding reintegration programs, supporting efforts to educate Ivorians on the rules of citizenship, and assisting with security measures to protect Ivorians with northern sounding names.

## The Responsibility to Protect

At the United Nations, the General Assembly will convene an informal interactive dialogue on the “responsibility to protect” (R2P) on July 9, following the adoption of R2P at the 2005 World Summit and the 2009 General Assembly debate on the subject. The specific focus will be on early warning and assessment and the creation of a Joint Office on the Prevention of Genocide and the Promotion of the Responsibility to Protect. CAP will continue to provide expert advice to the UN as it further develops its strategy and tools to prevent genocide and mass atrocities.

## Nonproliferation and Arms Control

The Project on Nonproliferation and Arms Control builds on USIP’s nuclear policy initiatives, which include the facilitation of the 2009 Strategic Posture Commission. By engaging in a variety of research-based and public education projects, both internally and with partner organizations, USIP continues to increase its outreach to the public and engagement with policy makers on nuclear policy issues. Ongoing work includes the development of an edited volume on emerging issues in nonproliferation and arms control, as well as the development of a related course in coordination with USIP’s Academy for International Conflict Management and Peacebuilding. CAP currently partners with a number of institutions on projects related to nonproliferation and arms control, including George Washington University, the Stimson Center, the Nixon Center, and the National Defense University.

## Kenya

As Kenya proceeds toward the referendum on the new constitution in August, a number of incidents are worrying analysts about the possibility of political violence surrounding the vote and beyond. On June 10, at the launching of the 'No' secretariat—the movement against the new constitution – some politicians were arrested for using words deemed to incite ethnic hatred and violence. On June 13, at a prayer gathering in Nairobi Park, also for the 'No' campaign, three explosions killed six people and injured 131. These incidents recall the violence surrounding the 2005 referendum on the constitution, which in part laid the groundwork for the violence following the 2007 elections. Understanding this threat, USIP is in the process of designing a project that will track political violence in the lead up to the 2012 polls, with a view to using the information to defuse tension. Additionally, USIP will release a new special report in the coming weeks that addresses how local peacebuilding efforts can incorporate the challenges faced by the nation's internally displaced; the poor re-integration and restitution process for the more than 600,000 that were internally displaced following the 2007 post-election violence can serve as a trigger of violence.

## Iran

On 9 June 2010, the United Nations Security Council approved a fourth round of sanctions against Iran, despite efforts by Turkey, Brazil, and Iran to broker a deal regarding Iran's nuclear enrichment program. The difficulty in garnering international support over more targeted Iran sanctions, compounded by the Gaza-flotilla fiasco, suggests that a changing international map is producing challenges with which the United States is now only grappling. USIP's Center for Conflict Analysis and Prevention has embarked on two related projects that will provide insights into how the U.S. and its allies can meet these challenges. First, the USIP-Stimson Center Iran Task Force is examining, among other issues, Iran's efforts to avoid international pressures on its enrichment program through relations with China, Russia, Venezuela, and other states. Second, CAP's "Global Autocracy Project" is taking a look at this dynamic through a wider, global lens, paying particular attention to the role of individual populist leaders. In both cases, CAP strives to elucidate conflict prevention strategies geared to an increasingly multi-polar global system.

## Pakistan

USIP's Pakistan program is undertaking a variety of research-based and action-oriented activities to highlight priority areas for US policy makers interested in preventing conflict from spreading across this fragile state. In order to address the mutual mistrust prevalent in the Pakistan-US relationship, USIP is increasing its outreach activity. Public seminars and policy roundtables aimed at unpacking some of the controversial issues in the partnership are being held regularly, both in Washington and in Pakistan. In order to examine Pakistan's militancy challenge, the Institute is commissioning a set of research studies on various aspects of the terrorist threat confronting Pakistan. Our holistic approach to Pakistan-US relations has encouraged us to focus on conflict prevention activities between Pakistan and India – this has been a major distraction for the Pakistani state's efforts to fight terrorism. The Institute is supporting two high-level track-II initiatives between Pakistan and India. A Pugwash-led initiative aimed at discussing the key outstanding issues including terrorism met for the first time in early-June in Islamabad. A parallel initiative, the Ottawa Dialogue brings together nuclear experts to examine various aspects of the nuclear weapons programs of the two

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sides. The Dialogue began in 2009 and held its second meeting in Copenhagen in mid-June. Participants of both dialogues identified concrete policy actions to be communicated to their respective governments.

## Preventing Conflict between Israel and Iran

At the heart of the growing international stand-off with Iran is an intense, but often indirect confrontation between Israel and Iran. Despite a close, if quiet partnership under the Shah, the relationship has become intensely adversarial under the Islamic Republic—with the two sides fighting proxy wars in Gaza and South Lebanon, and the growing prospect of a preemptive Israeli strike on Iranian nuclear facilities. Since Mahmoud Ahmadinejad became president in 2005, the confrontation between these two regional powers has intensified and Iran's demonization of Israel and its increasingly anti-Semitic rhetoric has broadened the conflict to encompass not just Israel, but much of World Jewry.

American efforts to both reassure and restrain Israel vis-à-vis Iran represent a major challenge in conflict prevention. The U.S. has a long history with Israel in this regard, most famously illustrated by the 1991 Iraqi missile strikes on Israel and Washington's intense (and ultimately successful) campaign for Israeli restraint. But few previous cases have carried the kind of weight that the current crisis bears, and the international dimensions are far more complex than in previous cases. To be sure, success also hinges on preventing Iran from acquiring a nuclear capability—or even a “break-out” capability—while holding together a fractious international coalition.

Through the Institute's policy analysis work and our Washington-based expert forums we hope to improve understanding and generate new thinking about this conflict prevention challenge. Moreover, we are now laying the groundwork for quiet track two efforts between Israeli national security figures, their American counterparts and representatives from the key international and regional stakeholders.

## WORKING GROUPS

The **USIP-Stimson Center Iran Study Group** consists of four sub-groups: one on internal politics, one on regional and global dynamics, a third on energy technology and development, and a fourth on strategy and U.S. foreign policy. The latest meeting was held on June 23. Meeting in plenary, the strategic policy sub-group will present a range of scenarios and associated US policies. The viability of these scenarios/policies will be assessed from the analytical perspective of the internal politics, regional/global dynamic and energy sub-groups, with a few to sharpening the findings and recommendations that will be set out in a final report in the Fall of 2010.

The **CAP-USIP Working Group on Future Threats and Conflict Prevention in Eurasia** is intended to provide strategic foresight to U.S. policy. Adopting a forward looking approach, this working group analyzes and anticipates current and future trends located or originating in Eurasia that are likely to affect U.S. interests, and produce recommendations on what policy tools can be used to reduce and manage potential ramifications. Past Working Group meetings focused on Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova. The most recent meeting, on June 17, dealt with the deep-rooted tensions between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

The **Korea Working Group**, provides an important channel for policymakers and analysts

## PUBLICATIONS

- "Lebanon's Evolving Relationship with Syria," USIP Peace Brief by Mona Yacoubian, May 2010
- "Preventing Conflict in the "Stans", USIP Peace Brief by Jonas Claes, April 2010
- "Trends in Electoral Violence in Sub-Saharan Africa," USIP Peace brief by Dorina Bekoe, March 2010.
- "North Korea, Inc.: Gaining Insights into North Korean Regime Stability from Recent Commercial Activities," USIP Working Paper by John S. Park, May 2009
- "Preventing Violent Conflict: Assessing Progress, Meeting Challenges," USIP Special report by Lawrence Woocher, September 2009.
- "Conflict, Identity, and Reform in the Muslim World: Challenges for U.S. Engagement," Edited Volume by Daniel Brumberg and Dina Shehata, USIP Press, 2009.



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USIP provides the analysis, training and tools that prevent and end conflicts, promotes stability and professionalizes the field of peacebuilding.

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from the United States and Asia who are working on different facets of North Korea policy to share differing perspectives on urgent policy matters. The Working Group recently convened a day-long workshop with members of a visiting ROK government think tank delegation and USG officials. The workshop examined the impact of the *Cheonan* investigation and Kim Jong-il's visit to China on prospects for peace and security on the Korean Peninsula. The Korea Working Group also convenes regular briefings for senior Congressional staffers on security, diplomatic, and economic issues related to the two Koreas. The next Korea Working Group briefing will be for professional staff members of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

The **USIP-Stimson Center Space Security Working Group** seeks to provide U.S. policy makers with a forward-looking assessment of space policy issues as they relate to national security and the continued peaceful uses of space, and to consider options to pursue the objectives outlined in the Space Posture Review. The working group convenes in a mix of public and private forums. The most recent public event took place on May 12, 2010, hosted by the Stimson Center, and featured former Assistant Secretary of Defense for Global Strategic Affairs, Michael Nacht.

The **USIP Lebanon Working Group** continues to address the broad spectrum of complex issues pertaining to Lebanon, including prospects for reform, US policy towards Lebanon, and Hezbollah's domestic and regional role, through meetings, publications and outreach to various government agencies.

The **Genocide Prevention Working Group** convenes quarterly meetings on topics related to US government genocide prevention policies and strategies. In addition, the working group serves as a vehicle for analysis and recommendations on specific situations at risk of mass atrocities. The April 14 meeting of the Working Group was entitled "Enhancing Global Capacity to Prevent Genocide: Taking Stock and Pressing Forward," and featured General (ret.) Romeo Dallaire as one of the speakers.