

WCI Headlines

July 2008

Liberia

Summary Analysis:

Due to the rise in armed robbery, Liberian President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf has signed a bill declaring capital punishment for perpetrators. Amnesty International has criticized this decision but the Liberian government has been desperate to decrease rising crime levels. In early July Monrovia experienced some of the country's worst flooding which caused large amounts of damage. The Gender Ministry and other Liberian Women's groups continue to influence policy change through the government and the TRC. Economic growth and infrastructure strengthening are two of the central goals that Liberia continues to strive.

Focus Areas:

Post-Conflict Situation

- Liberia Child Soldier's voices heard
 - <http://allafrica.com/stories/200807250006.html>
- New Armed Robbery Bill declares capital crimes
 - <http://allafrica.com/stories/200807250008.html>
- UNMIL soldiers linked to trade of military hardware
 - <http://allafrica.com/stories/200807231006.html>
- Liberia declared most zero-tolerant of corruption of the post-conflict nations
 - <http://allafrica.com/stories/200807231002.html>
- Liberian National Reconciliation Efforts at a critical crossroad
 - <http://allafrica.com/stories/200807221170.html>

Economy

- Liberia Resource Development Company plans to infuse money into National Oil Company
 - <http://allafrica.com/stories/200807230873.html>
- Belgium Government donates to Gender Ministry
 - <http://allafrica.com/stories/200807231003.html>

- Political Parties women launch assistance fund
 - <http://allafrica.com/stories/200807230874.html>
- TRC asks for an extension of the mandate
 - <http://allafrica.com/stories/200807180842.html>
- Women's group presents to TRC
 - <http://allafrica.com/stories/200807160742.html>

Environment

- Floods in Monrovia some of Liberia's worst
 - <http://allafrica.com/stories/200807220618.html>
 - <http://allafrica.com/stories/200807211307.html>
- Electricity said to reach outskirts by 2010
 - <http://allafrica.com/stories/200807180835.html>
- Economic growth emphasized as contingent upon National Development
 - <http://allafrica.com/stories/200807170815.html>
- Firestone linked to pollution and worker abuse
 - <http://allafrica.com/stories/200807311118.html>

Community

- 161st Independence day celebration kicks-off
 - <http://allafrica.com/stories/200807220981.html>
- Rapist Convicted
 - <http://allafrica.com/stories/200807211305.html>
- Concerns over rising crime rates, especially armed robbery
 - <http://allafrica.com/stories/200807150960.html>
- Gender Ministry seeks legislation to ban the sale of alcohol to children
 - <http://allafrica.com/stories/200807311212.html>

Regional/International Relations

- President Johnson-Sirleaf visits Namibia to build partnership
 - <http://allafrica.com/stories/200807141747.html>
- President Johnson-Sirleaf shares reflections on leadership with top South African women
 - <http://allafrica.com/stories/200807130057.html>

- Amnesty International calls for repeal of death penalty law recently signed by President Johnson-Sirleaf
 - <http://allafrica.com/stories/200807290037.html>

Sri Lanka

Summary:

Violence continues to plague Sri Lanka as the international community attempts to work with the Sri Lankan government to end the armed conflict with the LTTE. The cost of the war on civilians and their communities is increasing as the government enforces a strong offense against terrorism. The President is both accused of human rights abuses and supported as a human rights proponent, as the legitimacy of the government continually debated. The LTTE proposed a weeklong ceasefire but the details of the ceasefire and the government reaction are yet to be determined.

Focus Areas:

Conflict

- Tamil school children seek shelter when hearing planes above
 - http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/in_pictures/7521952.stm
- Cost of War on Families
 - http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/7521197.stm
- Sri Lankan Tigers announce ceasefire
 - <http://english.aljazeera.net/news/asia/2008/07/2008721202345784423.html>
- Sri Lankan Government army claims to have killed 5,000 Tigers this year
 - <http://english.aljazeera.net/news/asia/2008/07/2008720165317892447.html>
- Sri Lankan Government army captures important LTTE base- Vidattaltivu
 - <http://english.aljazeera.net/news/asia/2008/07/2008716103458312169.html>
- UNP party leadership crisis worsens
 - <http://www.nation.lk/2008/07/27/news11.htm>

Regional/International Relations

- High security measures taken for SAARC summit
 - <http://www.dailynews.lk/2008/07/25/sec01.asp>
- Former High Commissioner to Sri Lanka claims Sri Lankan president is a protector of human rights

- <http://www.dailynews.lk/2008/07/25/news02.asp>
- Indo-Lankan electricity power line is endorsed supporting a bilateral power exchange between the two countries
 - <http://www.dailynews.lk/2008/07/25/news11.asp>

Community/Environment

- New program developed to settle shanty dwellers
 - <http://www.dailynews.lk/2008/07/25/news23.asp>
- Damage caused by floods
 - <http://www.dailynews.lk/2008/07/25/news40.asp>

Malawi

Summary Analysis:

As many areas of Africa are facing food crises, Malawi remains one of few countries able to help its people through its crop production programs. More traditional methods of farming techniques are widespread but newer methods, such as weather derivatives, financial contracts based on the weather, are also being used. Strides have also been made in the fight against HIV/AIDS in Malawi. New systems for tracking the spread of the disease and programs aimed at lessening the transmission of the disease from mother to child have proven to be successful and hold promise for the future. On the political front this month, corruption has been highlighted – from a judge publicly not accepting money from former President Muluzi, to the search of a radio station on the basis of airing anti-Mutharika songs and material.

Focus Areas:

Agriculture and Environment

- Malawi Sets Pace in Crop Production
 - <http://allafrica.com/stories/200807211020.html>
- Derivatives Used to Hedge Against Bad Weather
 - <http://allafrica.com/stories/200807180815.html>

Politics and Elections

- Judge Who Rejected Muluzi's Bribe
 - <http://allafrica.com/stories/200807240059.html>
- Immigration Authorities Search Joy Radio Station, Threaten to Deport Manager Over Critical Coverage
 - <http://allafrica.com/stories/200807150870.html>

Social

- Continent Worst Hit by Oil Prices
 - <http://allafrica.com/stories/200807170989.html>
- New Study Holds Great Promise for Saving Lives by Significantly Reducing Transmission of HIV via Breast-Feeding
 - <http://allafrica.com/stories/200807150545.html>
- HIV/AIDS and the Workplace – Enterprises Leading the Way
 - <http://allafrica.com/stories/200807040763.html>
- Infection Connection – Tracking the Spread of HIV in Malawi
 - http://www.sas.upenn.edu/home/news/SAS_Spring08.pdf

Colombia

Summary:

Drastic changes have occurred in the conflict between Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) this month, largely due to the release of high-profile hostage Ingrid Betancourt, a former presidential candidate who was kidnapped in 2002. The success of the rescue mission which freed Betancourt and fourteen other hostages at the beginning of this month, along with the release of eight other FARC hostages on July 25, point to the continuing decline of FARC's organization and mobilization power. In addition, FARC continues to be criticized by the leaders of various other countries for their unwillingness to release the rest of their hostages. However, troubles still exist in the Colombian government, as several government officials are found to have ties to paramilitary groups.

Conflict:

- Colombia hostage Betancourt freed
 - <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/7486552.stm>
- U.S. military says it tracked hostages in Colombia
 - http://www.cnn.com/2008/WORLD/americas/07/04/hostage.hunt.ap/index.html?eref=rss_topstories
- Bold Colombia Rescue Built on Rebel Group's Disarray
 - <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/04/world/americas/04rescue.html>
- FARC rebels denounce 'betrayal'
 - <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/7502705.stm>
- Army kills five ELN guerrillas and rescues hostages
 - <http://colombiareports.com/2008/07/14/army-kills-five-eln-guerrillas-and-rescues-hostages/#more-1910>
- Colombia protests against FARC kidnappings

- <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/southamerica/colombia/2437899/Colombia-protests-against-Farc-kidnappings.html>
- FARC turns over 8 hostages to Red Cross
 - <http://www.cnn.com/2008/WORLD/americas/07/25/farc.hostages/>

International relations:

- Uribe and Chavez hail 'new era'
 - <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/7502362.stm>
- Brazil, Colombia Plan Accord to Fortify Military Ties
 - http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601086&sid=aN3LyMHYyuJU&refer=latin_america
- Nicaragua's FARC offer rebuffed
 - <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/7512998.stm>
- Ecuadorian leader calls FARC rescue lucky
 - http://www.upi.com/Top_News/2008/07/15/Ecuadorian_leader_calls_FARC_rescue_lucky/UPI-85121216168871/
- House Republicans push for Colombia pact vote
 - <http://www.reuters.com/article/politicsNews/idUSN1648117020080716?sp=true>

Politics:

- Senator says 410 politicians plotted with AUC paramilitaries
 - <http://colombiareports.com/2008/07/16/senator-says-410-politicians-plotted-with-auc/>
- Former congresswoman sentenced for “para-politics”
 - <http://colombiareports.com/2008/07/16/former-congresswoman-sentenced-for-parapolitics/>
- Vote Sought to Permit 3rd Presidential Term
 - http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/23/world/americas/23briefs-VOTESOUGHTTO_BRF.html?ref=world

Economy:

- Colombian industrial output down 4.3% in May
 - <http://www.reuters.com/article/marketsNews/idUSN1725965620080717>

Social/Cultural:

- Children on Colombia’s Caribbean coast die of hunger
 - <http://colombiareports.com/2008/07/16/children-on-colombias-caribbean-coast-die-of-hunger/>

Ethiopia

Summary Analysis:

Conflict between Ethiopian troops and the incumbent Eritrean government against the Somali rebels continues to raise the number of casualties on all sides. Heavy fighting and lack of access to the Somali region of Ethiopia has forced some humanitarian groups like the Swiss Médecins Sans Frontières to withdraw from the region. In addition, Ethiopia's humanitarian crisis continues to worsen as disease outbreaks threaten to add to the effects of drought and malnutrition.

Focus areas:

Conflict

- 18 Ethiopian troops die in Somalia
 - <http://afp.google.com/article/ALeqM5iSAoCYreM4efdsrklkrHplCwb-bA>

Economy

- Need to cut spending to limit macroeconomic imbalances
 - [http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601116&sid=aAWZqhZ_rdg4&refer=afri
ca](http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601116&sid=aAWZqhZ_rdg4&refer=afri
ca)

Political

- The Swiss Médecins Sans Frontières withdraws from the Somali region
 - <http://allafrica.com/stories/200807100641.html>
- New Media Law that may still threaten Free Expression
 - <http://allafrica.com/stories/200807100008.html>

Social/Cultural

- Arm worms, Hail and Floods increase the effects of drought
 - <http://africa.reuters.com/top/news/usnBAN345573.html>
- UN reports that Ethiopia needs \$211 million in Additional Food Aid
 - [http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601116&sid=ahmDGK02HO1w&refer=a
frica](http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601116&sid=ahmDGK02HO1w&refer=a
frica)
- The Ethiopian Media Women Association (EWMA) launches a book on women in leadership
 - <http://allafrica.com/stories/200807160491.html>
- USAID gives \$50million to Pathfinder International for Health projects

- <http://allafrica.com/stories/200807160487.html>
- Health Crises heighten Humanitarian Despair
 - <http://allafrica.com/stories/200807141736.html>