

# REVOLUTIONARY AND DISSIDENT MOVEMENTS OF THE WORLD



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# REVOLUTIONARY AND DISSIDENT MOVEMENTS OF THE WORLD

4th edition

Edited by Bogdan Szajkowski

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# Introduction

This is the fourth edition of *Revolutionary and Dissident Movements*, a work that first appeared (under the title *Political Dissent*) in 1983. The volume is a companion to the Publishers' *Political Parties of the World*, the sixth edition of which will be published during the course of 2004. While *Political Parties of the World* is a guide to legal political parties, the focus of *Revolutionary and Dissident Movements* is in contrast the activities of groups which seek to challenge, by extra-legal means, most commonly violent, the stability of the state. Its coverage includes movements seeking autonomy or secession, groups of the extreme left or right acting outside the constitutional framework, proscribed parties, and governments-in-exile, as well as terrorist organizations with a pan-national agenda. Those movements that come to power or achieve legal status by definition cease to be a concern of this book, though coverage is provided of certain very recent transitions.

When the first edition was published in 1983 four categories of revolutionary and dissident movements predominated. The first category was that of civil society organizations attempting to achieve broader political freedoms in one-party states, particularly in the countries of the Soviet bloc and its allies. The second was that of organizations engaged in struggles against colonial rule, or more particularly to achieve dominance within the states recently created by decolonization. The third group consisted of extreme left-wing organizations seeking to overthrow capitalism, ranging from numerous mainly peasant-based insurgent movements in Asia and Latin America to groups recruiting particularly among students such as the Red Brigades, the Red Army Faction and similar in Western Europe. The fourth group was that of the just-emerging Islamist movements, many of them inspired by the Iranian Revolution of 1979.

Some broad trends may be distinguished in the following two decades. Firstly, the collapse of communist rule in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and of one-party regimes influenced by the communist model in the Third World, has reduced the world-wide salience of civil society organizations in the first category. Similarly, extreme left-wing terrorist activity or popular insurgencies have dwindled to insignificance in most of the world: where they survive they are often today only semi-political in character, being often little more than fronts for drug smuggling and racketeering.

In the early 1980s the post-colonial conflicts were predominantly between groups contending for power within the framework of the states established at decolonization on the basis of colonial boundaries. Thus while, for example, the Organization of African Unity had backed liberation movements throughout Africa, its axiomatic principle was the inviolability of borders established by the colonial powers. Twenty years later, however, the principal source of conflict in Africa is that involving the struggles between the states created at decolonization and their minority populations seeking secession or autonomy who reject the legacy of the colonial dispensation. In many parts of the world, indeed, the principal dynamic of political conflict is the desire of ethnic minorities to achieve self-determination.

In this continuing struggle defeats are more common than successes but a slow process of fragmentation of the states of the world is underway. While relatively few secessionist

movements have achieved full recognition in the sense of establishing internationally recognized states, as for example was the case with East Timor in 2002, the present volume gives evidence of numerous secessionist and autonomist movements that de facto control their territory as securely as many of the member states of the United Nations and which elect presidents and parliaments with as much effective local sovereignty as some internationally recognized governments. The concept of failed states and the increasingly explicit recognition, particularly by the world's major powers, led by the United States, that many member states of the United Nations are little more than hollow shells, has opened a new era of uncertainty. The implicit assumption of the colonial powers that the states created by decolonization would be a permanent legacy has now largely evaporated. Indeed, as the example of Iraq shows, even states created as a legacy of earlier decolonization, in that case the Ottoman Empire, are now increasingly seen as potentially impermanent.

Intermeshing with the challenge to the world order of states has been that provided by the unrelenting rise of Islamist politics. Through a whole swathe of the most geopolitically sensitive areas of the world – from North Africa through the Middle East and on through Central and South Asia and reaching to Indonesia – Islamist movements challenge the legitimacy of states whose borders were in many cases drawn up under the influence of Western powers concerned with their own strategic interests. The Islamist perception of the injustice of a world order which has been created in the image of a non-Islamic view of the world, has come to threaten the stability of regimes throughout this great arc of instability. Furthermore the increasing willingness of Islamist groups to strike outwards against Western interests in the Islamic world, and indeed against the countries of the West themselves, has made the insecurity of the region a problem not just for the region itself, but one of global concern.

In so doing, the Islamist movements have set in motion forces that work in two directions. On the one hand, the West, led by the United States, has determined to root out and destroy those organizations which directly attack Western interests, a determination given immense intensity by September 11th and resulting in the overthrow of two governments within the space of eighteen months by the United States. On the other hand, the strength of Islamist sentiment has for the first time led the West to engage with the issue of whether the political order it has supported in the Middle East as a supposed guarantor of stability might not in fact be dysfunctional and indeed a source of many of the problems of international terrorism that the West seeks to confront.

The September 11 attacks have intensified the ongoing debate on what constitutes "terrorism". Numerous definitions have been proposed. The following one embodies the most significant dimensions of contemporary terrorism:

"The use of violence, often against people not directly involved in a conflict, by groups operating clandestinely, which generally claim to have high political or religious purposes, and believe that creating a climate of terror will assist attainment of the objectives."<sup>1</sup>



While scholars and analysts may differ on particular applications, there appears to be a substantial consensus that method (as opposed to say, historical background, goals or context) is the most important criterion. If, in undertaking a given operation for political purposes, an armed group specifically intends to place civilian non-combatants in harm's way, it is safe to argue that the group is committing a terrorist act.<sup>2</sup>

The September 11 terrorist attacks on the United States differed fundamentally from the more familiar politically motivated terrorism. In the recent past the "old" terrorist groups (e.g. the Irish Republican Army (IRA), the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), or the Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARC)) with nationalist or social-revolutionary objectives and involved in insurgencies and civil wars, were cautious about the use of indiscriminate violence in their campaigns. They calculated that the deployment of indiscriminate violence would undercut their claims to legitimacy and alienate potential sympathizers. Instead they tended to rely on limited attacks to discredit political authorities.<sup>3</sup> In this they attempted to expose the authorities' impotence and draw international attention to their cause. In their overall strategy the "old" terrorists attempted to preserve their eligibility to bargain at the negotiating table and ultimately to have "a role in successor governments".<sup>4</sup> In very many cases such groups have succeeded in achieving their goals of legitimizing their demands through the political process and in some cases have become the governing elites.

The "new" Islamist terrorist groups (e.g. *Al-Qaeda*, *Jemaah Islamiyah*, *Laskar Jihad*, *Abu Sayyaf*, *Harakat-ul-Mujahideen*) have placed themselves entirely outside a politically negotiable framework. For example, *Al-Qaeda* has not presented negotiable political demands. Its aims are the complete reshaping of global political and military realities – the establishment of a pan-Islamic Caliphate. More importantly the absence of a plausible political agenda from *Al-Qaeda* and its tentacle terrorist groups has a symbiotic relationship with the lack of any constraint on mass violence. They want to hit at soft and symbolic targets and create maximum terror. The "new" terrorist groups exemplified by *Al-Qaeda* represent a mass-casualty terrorism.

Although *Al-Qaeda* claims Islamic roots it is in fact more specifically grounded in Wahhabism.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, closer examination shows that its claims are based on very selective interpretations of what it perceives to be the basic tenets of Islam. Osama bin Laden has in fact re-defined the tenets of Islam in order to legitimize his terrorism. The five pillars of Islam (profession of faith, prayer, pilgrimage, fasting during Ramadan, and the giving of alms – *zakat*) have been supplemented by jihad, or engaging in the "holy war" against infidels or persons perceived to be attacking the community of Muslims.<sup>6</sup> He has enshrined the need for jihad as part of daily life. The religious and operational importance of jihad is fundamental to Bin Laden, *Al-Qaeda* and its tentacle groups. It should be remembered that it was the jihad forged by Bin Laden and his allies, who doggedly resisted the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, that was an important factor in the defeat of Soviet forces in that country and the subsequent withdrawal of the Red Army in 1989.

The ideologue of *Al-Qaeda*, Ibrahim al-Faraj, in *The Neglected Obligation (Faridah al-Gha'iba)* calls jihad the most decisive pillar of Islam. Al-Faraj "uses Islamic texts to show that jihad"<sup>7</sup> against enemies of Islam and those who call themselves Muslim but are not in fact proper Muslims is valid. To kill them is legitimate. "Apostate Muslim rulers must be annihilated first, before the purified Islamic com-

munity turns its guns against the 'far enemy' – Israel".<sup>8</sup> Jihad means heroic martyrdom that brings redemption.

As Steven Simon and Daniel Benjamin have pointed out, for Bin Laden, the Saudi government is apostate and must be overthrown; the situation of true Muslims is dire; jihad is now incumbent on all Muslims as individuals; and the battle demands ruthlessness and is, at root, a war of civilizations. The three proximate symptoms of the emergency are the infidel occupation of Arabia and the Al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem, and the suppression of Iraq – the only Muslim military power capable of challenging this Christian and Jewish onslaught. Since the United States is seen as the principal malefactor in each of these situations, Bin Laden has extended the conflict to the United States.<sup>9</sup> In February 1998 he issued a fatwa, stating:<sup>10</sup>

"The ruling to kill the Americans and their allies – civilians and military – is an individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do it, in order to liberate al-Aqsa Mosque and the holy mosque from their grip, and in order for their armies to move out of all the lands of Islam, defeated and unable to threaten any Muslim."<sup>11</sup>

Bin Laden pursues a multi-front campaign 'extending to all 'fields of jihad'. For him this is a geo-religious conflict'<sup>12</sup> in order "to recoup the territorial losses Islam has suffered"<sup>13</sup> since medieval times. His intention is to reclaim also, what he calls al-Andalus, conquered by the Moors in 711 but re-captured by Ferdinand and Isabella, the Catholic monarchs, in 1492.

The integration of the multiple fields of jihad has allowed for the creation of global network of skilled agents recruited around the world. "The ideological commitment of recruits was evaluated in local mosques. Those who passed proceeded to Afghanistan, where their operational skills and technical aptitude were assessed".<sup>14</sup>

One of the most unique operational aspects of *Al-Qaeda* in building its coherent worldwide presence is that it hijacked countries – first Sudan<sup>15</sup> and subsequently Afghanistan.<sup>16</sup> In both cases Bin Laden exploited the political, military and economic weaknesses of the regimes in power at that time and gave financial and military support to radical Islamic factions in order to gain control over their respective countries.

In Sudan Bin Laden financed the infrastructure and weapons, including chemical agents, of the National Islamic Front and made it dependent on his facilities, networks and international contacts. "In return *al-Qaeda* acquired the trappings of sovereignty, including access to official travel documents, import and export licensing and protection from action by other governments".<sup>17</sup>

In Afghanistan, where the diplomatically isolated and economically bankrupt Taleban had struggled to extend its authority over the whole country, Bin Laden provided the regime with money, military support and a degree of mis-conceived international respectability. In return Bin Laden received a secure base from which to carry out his war with the West. In both cases, these dependent relationships were underpinned by a shared religious ideology and congruent diplomatic objectives.<sup>18</sup> The territorial refuge and the high degree of military, political and economic sovereignty secured in Afghanistan gave *Al-Qaeda* the capabilities for its worldwide operations. It was clearly a critical dimension in the launch of one of the decisive strikes in the war on terrorism – the removal of the Taleban regime.

However, it is quite clear that even a complete success in Afghanistan cannot destroy the threat from *Al-Qaeda*. In comparison with other terrorist groups and organizations *Al-*

*Qaeda* has unique features: it is profoundly anti-Western and especially anti-American; it has no evident state sponsors; it is transnational; and it is supremely elusive. The terrorism of *Al-Qaeda* is hidden, it blends into the vast Islamic crowd spread around the world. Since the defeat of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan “*Al-Qaeda* cells can operate self-sufficiently to a degree”,<sup>19</sup> and the size of its network remains speculative. *Al-Qaeda* and its tentacle organizations represent the global jihad movement using terror over other available methods. The global jihad comprises a system of informal networks, loosely linked underground cells, with support centres scattered around the world. Each has its leadership, its own funding and structure. These networks lack central command but are bonded by similar ideological foundations and similar agendas that form the backbone of co-operation. Each is working towards the same goal – to destroy the democratic secular world and to impose an Islamic caliphate run along the style of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. Thus, for example, the clearly stated objective of *Jemaah Islamiyah* is to establish an Islamic caliphate in Southeast Asia that would encompass the Philippines, Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia and even Cambodia and parts of Australia.

Each of the constituent groups of the global jihad movement also has a specific local focus, an agenda based on local factors, often seen in their terms as primarily defensive rather than offensive. They see themselves as men with their backs to the wall, fighting off Western incursions into their societies. They argue that Western oppression and centuries of Western belligerent actions have led to the humiliation and degradation of the Islamic world.

The terrorist actions of the “new” terrorist groups should not be seen as a symmetric warfare as such. Critical to the understanding of *Al-Qaeda* and its tentacle organizations is the dimension of a violent political activism in the best tradition of propaganda. The glamour and grandiosity of their terrorist acts attracts the attention of media throughout the world and gives them instant publicity. The perpetrators of terrorist attacks clearly cannot bring down Western political or economic structures. What they can do though, and where they have been very successful, is to radicalize, mobilize and unify alienated and discontented individuals and groups throughout the Islamic world.

Wars between states are easier to understand, and if it is territory that is in dispute, they are easier to settle.<sup>20</sup> This of course is not the case with the war on terrorism. In this war the United States and its allies are fighting an enemy that has no strategic purpose in anything it does. It lacks realistic goals and war aims. The essence of the war on terrorism is that it is rooted in a clash between Western modernity and failed and threatened Islamic fundamentalism. All this has understandably made the “war on terrorism” proclaimed by the USA an unprecedented operation not only in military but also political terms.

The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, submitted by President George W. Bush to the US Congress on Sept. 20, 2002, was the first attempt by the Bush administration to outline a comprehensive national security approach after September 11. It marks a watershed in US foreign policy. The strategy reverses the fundamental principles that have guided successive American presidents for more than 50 years.

The document emphasized that the policy of deterrence that constituted the mainstay of US foreign policy during the Cold War was no longer workable. “With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, our security envi-

ronment has undergone profound transformation”.<sup>21</sup> New deadly challenges have emerged from rogue states and terrorists. “We must be prepared to stop rogue states and their terrorist clients before they are able to threaten or use weapons of mass destruction against the United States and our allies and friends”.<sup>22</sup> The document admits that it has taken the United States “almost a decade” to comprehend the true nature of this new threat.<sup>23</sup>

“Given the goals of rogue states and terrorists, the United States can no longer solely rely on a reactive posture as we have in the past. The inability to deter a potential attacker, the immediacy of today’s threats, and the magnitude of potential harm that could be caused by our adversaries’ choice of weapons, do not permit that option. We cannot let our enemies strike first.”<sup>24</sup>

The report argues that during the Cold War, especially following the Cuban missile crisis, the United States faced a generally risk-averse adversary. Deterrence was an effective defence. Weapons of mass destruction were considered weapons of last resort whose use risked the destruction of those who use them. Today, however, “deterrence based only upon the threat of retaliation is less likely to work against leaders of rogue states more willing to take risks, gambling with the lives of their people, and the wealth of their nations”.<sup>25</sup>

“Our enemies see weapons of mass destruction as weapons of choice. For rogue states these weapons are tools of intimidation and military aggression against their neighbours. These weapons may also allow these states to attempt to blackmail the United States and our allies to prevent us from deterring or repelling the aggressive behaviour of rogue states. Such states also see these weapons as their best means of overcoming the conventional superiority of the United States.

Traditional concepts of deterrence will not work against a terrorist enemy whose avowed tactics are wanton destruction and the targeting of innocents; whose so-called soldiers seek martyrdom in death and whose most potent protection is statelessness.”<sup>26</sup>

The strategy enshrines the doctrine of pre-emptive action, fleshing out that the USA must confront emerging threats before they materialize.<sup>27</sup> “In the new world we have entered, the only path to peace and security is the path of action”.<sup>28</sup> The document argues that:

“For centuries, international law recognized that nations need not suffer an attack before they can lawfully take action to defend themselves against forces that present an imminent danger of attack. Legal scholars and international jurists often conditioned the legitimacy of pre-emption on the existence of an imminent threat – most often a visible mobilization of armies, navies, and air forces preparing to attack. We must adapt the concept of imminent threat to the capabilities and objectives of today’s adversaries. Rogue states and terrorists do not seek to attack us using conventional means... Instead, they rely on acts of terror and, potentially, the use of weapons of mass destruction...”<sup>29</sup>

The new National Security Strategy of the United States of America firmly locates the greatest danger to the USA in the relationship between failing states and terrorist cells. “We are menaced less by fleets and armies than by catastrophic technologies in the hands of the embittered few. We must defeat these threats to our Nation, allies, and friends”.<sup>30</sup> The strategy aims to “turn adversity into opportunity”, pursuing “a distinctly American internationalism”<sup>31</sup> that reflects US values and interests.

The document outlines US international policies in the economic and political spheres that would be deployed in

realization of the new strategy. The strategy is essentially unilateralist in its implications. In stark contrast to President Bill Clinton's policies, which saw international coalitions as the only hope for addressing financial and military instabilities around the globe, the strategy declares that the USA "will, if necessary, act pre-emptively".<sup>32</sup> "While the United States will constantly strive to enlist the support of the international community, we will not hesitate to act alone, if necessary, to exercise our right to self-defence..."<sup>33</sup>

Wary of accusations that America intends to act with what one senior British politician described as "more than a hint of imperialism"<sup>34</sup> President Bush insisted that the United States was not acting only for itself. "...We do not use our strength to press for unilateral advantage. We seek instead to create a balance of power that favours human freedom..."<sup>35</sup>

At the heart of the Bush security strategy is US military supremacy. The document emphasizes that the United States will not allow anyone to close the military lead established by the USA since the collapse of the Soviet Union. It states US determination to do everything possible to maintain its status as the sole world's superpower. A key pillar of American national security would be to "dissuade future military competition".<sup>36</sup> "Our forces will be strong enough to dissuade potential adversaries from pursuing a military build-up in hope of surpassing, or equalling, the power of the United States".<sup>37</sup> The essential role of American military strength is to "build and maintain our defence beyond challenge".<sup>38</sup> <sup>39</sup> With Russia financially strapped the Bush strategy is clearly aimed at China, a rising military power which is increasing both its conventional and nuclear capacities.

Significantly, the new security strategy makes it clear that the USA rejects the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and stipulates that the United States "will take actions necessary to ensure that our efforts to meet our global security commitments and protect Americans are not impaired by the potential for investigations, inquiry, or prosecution" by the ICC.<sup>40</sup>

The document also makes a link with the clash of civilizations theory stating explicitly that "the war on terrorism is not a clash of civilizations. It does, however, reveal the clash inside a civilization, a battle for the future of the Muslim world. This is a struggle of ideas and this is an area where America must excel".<sup>41</sup>

Notwithstanding the level of activity and significance of *Al-Qaeda* and its ilk, the range of movements profiled in this volume should give warning against the limitations of seeing the world through the prism of Western preoccupations. While the challenge of "international terrorism" by Islamist groups understandably preoccupies Western governments and media, it remains the case that by far the greatest source of political violence in the world as a whole is the insurgencies by groups pursuing limited objectives concerned with their own ethnic groups or communities and in conflict with national governments. The toll of such insurgencies can be immense without commanding the awareness and concern of the West except in those few cases where the states affected become the breeding ground for a broader regional or global terrorist threat.

It is also self-evidently the case that while the world's political movements may at any time be divided between the

legitimate or illegitimate, the line of division is subject to constant revision. Numerous of those organizations included as revolutionary and dissident in earlier editions of this book are now legally constituted and in some cases hold power themselves, especially in Africa and what was the communist bloc. This book illustrates the contradictions and dilemmas of the dynamics of political change. The existence and potency of revolutionary and dissident movements reflects their role in the process by which states and empires are challenged and the world continually re-made. The emphasis placed on the role of the United Nations and other international bodies by the Great Powers in the period after World War II, reflected to a considerable degree the desire to cement and solidify aspects of the world order favoured by these powers. Once the European Powers had rid themselves of their no longer wanted colonies, and once the immediate threat of global conflict had ended with the conclusion of the Cold War, it seemed desirable to proclaim the end of history. Henceforth, it was widely supposed, the principal remaining tasks of those who ran the world were to ensure good governance, democratic habits and other Western values within the context of the states that gathered in the UN General Assembly.

The belief in the ability to manage the world through international institutions has since September 11th come into fundamental conflict with the more visceral conviction, most formidably represented by the US neo-conservatives, that the world remains a primeval jungle in which strength and force and unilateral ruthlessness will come to prevail. The view that the withdrawal of direct Western military and political control through decolonization would leave the non-Western world nonetheless accepting and open to Western political culture has come to seem increasingly suspect. To Islamists, for example, that Western political culture and the international institutions built upon it have come to seem merely another form of colonialism. In one sense, it may well be argued, the US and British decision to invade and occupy Iraq in 2003 represented a repudiation of the Western post-colonial consensus view of the world and a recognition that the struggle for ideological hegemony might of necessity once again take on a military and colonial dimension.

Governments throughout the world now face a double-sided challenge: from vigorous internal insurgencies on the one hand and on the other from the increasing readiness of the USA as the only remaining superpower to regard existing states as no longer sacrosanct if they seem dysfunctional in terms of the US programme for the world. It may be that we are entering an intensified period of political "creative destructionism" in which many more states than Afghanistan and Iraq are tested, found wanting and ripped apart to be re-made. Inescapably, in any such scenario the opportunities and scope for insurgent organizations to ride this tide will increase. Whatever the course of the "war on terrorism" proclaimed by the USA, this global flux will create an environment in which revolutionary and dissident movements will continue to emerge and flourish. Their role will remain, as it has been throughout history, at once both profoundly creative and profoundly destructive.

*Bogdan Szajkowski*

<sup>1</sup> International Institute for Strategic Studies, 'Defining Terrorism', Strategic Comments, vol. 7, issue 9, November 2001.

<sup>2</sup> Jonathan Stevenson, 'Pragmatic Counter-terrorism', Survival, vol. 43, no. 4, Winter 2001-02, p. 45.

<sup>3</sup> Steven Simon and Daniel Benjamin, 'The Terror', Survival, vol. 43, no. 4, Winter 2001-02, p. 5.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Wahhabism, a revival of orthodox Sunnism, was constructed by

Muhammad ibn Abd al Wahhab (1703-92) who became the leader of the Wahabiya. He felt that the Muslim community in which he lived had become decadent through such innovations as the veneration of saints, and recalled it to a stricter observation of the original Islam in its pure form. In 1744 al Wahhab sealed a religious-political alliance with Muhammad ibn Saud (d. 1765), ruler of the Dariyya (close to the modern city of Riyadh). By the beginning of the 19th century, this fusion of military and religious zeal had generated a powerful resistance that successfully challenged Ottoman rule in Central Arabia and eventually helped establish a unified nation-state in 1932. In the last century the Wahhabi movement has inspired Muslims also outside Saudi Arabia in upholding the puritanical form of Sunnism.

<sup>6</sup> The word jihad means “striving” and the connotation of fighting comes from the Quranic phrase “striving in the way (cause) of Allah”. Strictly it has much wider connotations, including spiritual struggle within believers against temptation and sin.

<sup>7</sup> Steven Simon and Daniel Benjamin, op. cit. p. 7.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Steven Simon and Daniel Benjamin, op. cit. pp. 7-8.

<sup>10</sup> Fatwa in Islamic law or theology is an official pronouncement, decision, judgement or ruling by a recognized authority. The power of a fatwa is likely to depend on the status of the authoritative figure or body which issues it, and whether contradictory fatwas are issued by rival authorities. The process is relatively informal in Islam compared, for example, with doctrinal and canon law judgements within the Roman Catholic Church, because of the much tighter structure of authority within the latter.

<sup>11</sup> Steven Simon and Daniel Benjamin, op. cit. p. 8.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Steven Simon and Daniel Benjamin, op. cit. p. 9.

<sup>15</sup> Osama bin Laden moved to Khartoum in late 1990 after confrontation with the Saudi establishment. In 1994 the Saudi government revoked Bin Laden's citizenship.

<sup>16</sup> By 1996 the Sudanese government became increasingly uneasy about Bin Laden's activities and this resulted in his expulsion from the country. In early 1996, after the Taleban seized control of Kabul, Bin Laden returned to Afghanistan.

<sup>17</sup> Steven Simon and Daniel Benjamin, op. cit. p. 10.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. p. 14.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. p. 9.

<sup>20</sup> G. John Ikenberry. *American Grand Strategy in the Age of Terror*. Survival, Volume 43, Number 4 (2001), p. 29.

<sup>21</sup> The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, p. 13.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, p. 14.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, p. 15.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> The idea of pre-emptive action was put forward by US Secretary for Defence Donald Rumsfeld in a speech in January 2002 and echoed by President Bush in his address at the West Point Military Academy, New York, June 1, 2002.

<sup>28</sup> The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, p. iv.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, p. 1.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, p. 15.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, p. 6.

<sup>34</sup> Charles Kennedy, Leader of the Liberal Democratic Party, emergency statement to the Conference of the Liberal Democratic Party, 24 September, 2002.

<sup>35</sup> The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, p. iii.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid, p. 29.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid, p. 30.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid, p. 29.

<sup>39</sup> Since the demise of the Soviet Union instead of easing its spending on defence, like many NATO countries, the Pentagon has increased it. The US defence budget for 2003 is \$355 billion, an increase of six per cent. Washington spends as much on defence as the next eight largest military powers combined. The 2003 budget of all 17 European members of Nato amounted to only \$160 billion.

<sup>40</sup> The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, p. 31.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

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# Afghanistan

**Capital:** Kabul

**Population:** 26.8 m

King Zahir Shah was deposed by his cousin, Mohammad Daud, in a bloodless coup in 1973, putting an end to the Afghan monarchy. The King went into exile in Italy. However, in April 1978, Daud was killed in a coup which installed the (Marxist) People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) in power. Since that time Afghanistan has been in a state of almost continuous civil conflict. Divisions soon developed within the PDPA, which split into the *Khalq* ("Masses") and *Parcham* ("Flag") factions. In December 1979, Soviet troops invaded the country, deposing Hafizullah Amin, the *Khalq* leader, and replacing him as President by Babrak Karmal, the leader of *Parcham*.

The Soviets remained in occupation of the country to shore up the regime, facing sustained opposition from mujaheddin ("holy warriors") guerrilla fighters, who in turn received weapons from abroad, notably the USA, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. The introduction of US-made Stinger anti-aircraft missiles in 1987 particularly helped the rebels. Radical Muslims recruited from around the world by the ISI (Pakistan's inter-services intelligence agency) also fought alongside.

The costly occupation proved deeply unpopular in the Soviet Union, where determination to remain in Afghanistan progressively weakened as the end of the Cold War approached and the internal unity of the Soviet Union itself began to falter. In 1987 the monopoly on power of the PDPA was ended, the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan was renamed the Republic of Afghanistan, and Dr Muhammad Najibullah Ahmadzai was elected President. On April 14, 1988, an agreement on Soviet withdrawal was signed in Geneva, with the last Soviet forces withdrawing during 1989. The civil war continued, however. In February 1989, in Peshawar, Pakistan, the seven-party Alliance of Afghan Mujaheddin announced the establishment of an Afghan Interim Government (AIG) with Sebghatullah Mojadeddi, head of *Jebhe e Melli e Nejat e Afghanistan* as President, but this was not recognized by the Iran-based mujaheddin groups or many of the other factions within the country. Despite international pressure the AIG rejected any compromise with Najibullah.

Mujaheddin forces gradually closed in on Kabul, the principal groups including the *Jamiat e Eslami*, whose military leader was Ahmad Shah Massoud (an ethnic Tajik) and with its stronghold in the Panjshir valley (close to the northern border, where Afghanistan adjoins Tajikistan), the Pashtun-dominated Islamic Party (*Hezb e Eslami*, led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar), and ethnic Uzbeks loyal to Rashid

Dostum. The PDPA (renamed *Watan*, Homeland Party Government) remained in power in Kabul until April 1992, when President Najibullah was finally deposed and the **Islamic State of Afghanistan** was proclaimed. Mujaheddin leaders signed the Peshawar Accord, agreeing to a power sharing period of transitional rule leading to elections. In June Professor Burhanuddin Rabbani (president of *Jamiat e Eslami*) was declared transitional President of the Islamic State of Afghanistan for six months, being subsequently confirmed for a further two years by a Council of Wise Men. Hekmatyar became Prime Minister.

## Assumption of power by Taleban

However, the country was not unified as despite all agreements, rival guerrilla groups fought for the control of the capital. Two coalitions were built: one supporting *Jamiat* (led by Rabbani and Massoud) and a second one around *Hezb e Eslami* (led by Hekmatyar). As the battle for Kabul intensified, both coalitions broke up. In 1994 a new movement, the **Taleban** (Islamic students), formed by young people, mostly born in Pakistan and raised and trained in Islamic schools in Pakistan, appeared as another force and were backed by Pakistan with the blessing of the USA. They openly fought for the establishment of their version of a true "Islamic state" and for stabilization of the country and the end of civil war.

In October 1994, Kandahar fell to the Taleban, led by Mullah Mohammad Omar. In 1996, Osama bin Laden, one of the thousands of foreign recruits who had backed the anti-Soviet mujaheddin in the 1980s and had founded *Al-Qaeda* as an organization for foreign fighters, travelled back to Afghanistan and established a friendship with Mullah Omar. By the end of 1996, the Taleban controlled most of the country after having conquered Kabul and Jalalabad. Mullah Omar was elected as *Amir al Momeneen* (head of the Faithful) and in October 1997 the **Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan** was proclaimed by the Taleban. In 1998, the Taleban captured the northern opposition bastion of Mazar-e-Sharif, the stronghold of Rashid Dostum, and controlled 90 per cent of Afghanistan. In 1998, all the groups associated with *Al-Qaeda* issued a manifesto under the aegis of "The International Islamic Front for Jihad against Jews and Crusaders" in a meeting at Khost. *Al-Qaeda*, possessing financial resources and with several thousand militant fighters based inside the country, came to be seen as an important force underpinning the Taleban regime.

Despite the consolidation of Taleban control in



Kabul and much of the country, civil war continued and mujaheddin based in Iran, Pakistan and Northern Afghanistan resisted the Kabul regime. The **United National Islamic Front for the Salvation of Afghanistan (UNIFSA)** with Burhanuddin Rabbani as chairman, was the most representative movement, made up of 13 parties opposed to the Taleban including the *Harekat e Eslami Afghanistan* (Islamic Movement of Afghanistan), *Hezb e Eslami* (Islamic Party), *Hezb e Wahdat e Eslami*, *Jamiat e Eslami Afghanistan* (Islamic Afghan Society), *Jonbesh e Melli* (National Front) and *Mahaz e Melli e Eslami* (National Islamic Front). Among these groups, *Hezb e Wahdat* soon joined the Taleban. In 1996, the main opposition to the Taleban came from the *Jonbesh* of the Uzbek commander Rashid Dostum in the North around Mazar e Sharif, the presidential group around Rabbani and Massoud, mainly ethnic Tajiks from *Jamiat e Eslami* and Shias in the centre of the country. Rabbani and the Islamic State of Afghanistan, although no longer in power in Kabul, retained the recognition of the UN and much of the international community.

By 2000, when most of the territory of Afghanistan was controlled by the Taleban, only the North-East remained unconquered, controlled by commandant Ahmad Shah Massoud. The latter was the head of a coalition named the **Northern Alliance (NA)** including mainly northern Uzbeks and Tajiks with only a few Pashtouns (the largest community in Afghanistan, representing 40-50 per cent of the population and providing the strongest base of the Taleban). The NA was supported by Iran and Russia.

### US-led occupation

On Sept. 9, 2001, Massoud sustained fatal injuries in a suicide bombing by two Arabs posing as journalists. Following the terrorist attacks in the USA on Sept. 11, of which Bin Laden and *Al-Qaeda* were judged the perpetrators, the USA applied pressure on the Taleban to surrender Bin Laden. On Sept. 20, President George W. Bush told the US Congress that: "The Taleban must act and act immediately. They will hand over the terrorists, or they will share their fate". When this pressure failed, overt military operations were launched by the USA ("Operation Enduring Freedom"), in conjunction with the NA and other international allies, principally the UK, on Oct. 7. This led to the fall of Kabul by Nov. 13 and the rout of the Taleban throughout the country over the following few weeks. The Taleban proved easily defeated, US forces not sustaining a single combat casualty until the main conflict was over, on Jan. 4, 2002. Neither Mullah Omar nor Bin Laden was captured, however, and some Taleban and *Al-Qaeda* forces dispersed into remote parts of the country and Pakistan's North-West Frontier region.

An international conference held near Bonn in December 2001 laid the basis for the future administration of Afghanistan. A wide range of Afghan groups participated in the conference, those who did not par-

ticipate including Rabbani (who was forced to resign from his nominal position as President of Afghanistan) and Hekmatyar. The conference agreed the establishment of an interim administration led by Hamid Karzai (a Pashtoun), with members of the NA taking the majority of other key positions. The Bonn agreement provided for the interim administration to pave the way for the creation of a transitional government by a *loya jirga* of tribal and other leaders within six months. The resultant *loya jirga*, held in June 2002 under UN auspices and involving 1,559 delegates, named Karzai as head (President) of the transitional government, while other posts in the government were distributed to take account of the various ethnic groups, but with ethnic Tajiks of the NA retaining control of most posts relating to foreign affairs, defence and national security. The government also included some exiled technocrats and women.

To assist the restoration of stability in Afghanistan, the UN Security Council on Dec. 20, 2001, unanimously authorized (initially for six months) the deployment of a peacekeeping mission, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). There are currently 22 countries contributing to ISAF but the force has under 5,000 troops and its operations are confined to Kabul, countries providing troops having been reluctant to become embroiled in conflicts with local commanders and militias. The ISAF mandate has most recently been extended until December 2003 with NATO taking over command in August 2003. ISAF forces have faced occasional attacks, the most serious of which was on June 7, 2003, when four German soldiers were killed in a suicide bombing.

### Opposition to the Karzai government

The Karzai government has exercised only weak central control, its writ seeming often not to run beyond Kabul (where it has the stabilizing support of ISAF). The government has only an embryonic national army of 4,000 men at its disposal. US forces (totalling some 10,000 as of July 2003) continue generally low-level counter-insurgency operations in parts of the country, but much of Afghanistan is under the de facto control of local warlords, and the USA has in practice chosen to work with such warlords (providing weapons and money) in rooting out Taleban remnants, thereby reinforcing their local power and influence.

A prominent example of a quasi-sovereign warlord is that of the governor of Herat, Ismail Khan, who having partially lost his power under the Taleban now organizes life in Herat and surrounding areas as he wishes, while not acting as an overt opponent to Karzai. There is, as there has been since the Soviet occupation, a pattern of fluctuating alliances. Moreover, even groups participating in government may have dissident positions in their region or may fight each other. Recently, this has been the case with *Jamiat* and *Jonbesh* in Marzar e Sharif.

Some forces are still active against Afghan military and non-military targets in the South, Southeast and

East of the country. The main opposition comes from elements linked to the Taleban and Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and forces associated with *Al-Qaeda*. These groups have been linked to the killing and wounding of numerous Afghans and foreigners, including the assassination of the Afghan Vice President in July 2002. However, these sporadic attacks have not amounted to a sustained challenge to the Karzai government in Kabul or the US-led occupation. By the end of March 2003 only 28 soldiers from the forces of the USA and its international coalition allies had been killed by hostile fire since the start of the campaign in October 2001.

### Islamic Party (Hezb e Eslami)

*Leadership: Gulbuddin Hekmatyar*

Under its principal leader, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, *Hezb e Eslami* came to be regarded in the 1980s as the most fundamentalist and uncompromising of the major mujaheddin groups. It was a very centralized party, organized on military lines, although subject to factionalism. It has taken an anti-imperialist and anti-US position and at one time proposed a federation with Pakistan, which country gave the party strong backing. It is predominantly based in the Pashtoun community.

*Hezb e Eslami* was in continuous confrontation with other parties. After the mujaheddin took power in Kabul in 1992, Hekmatyar was named as Prime Minister of the Islamic State of Afghanistan. However, *Hezb e Eslami* continued to fight Rabbani's government and the defence minister of that time, Ahmad Shah Massoud. From 1994, Pakistan withdrew its support for Hekmatyar, who instead sought and received support from Iran, where he took refuge after the Taleban came to power.

Prior to Sept. 11, 2001, Hekmatyar proposed a blue print for ending the crisis to the Taleban and the Northern Alliance. According to his plan, sharia (Islamic law) had to be the supreme law in Afghanistan, an elected parliament had to be formed and a government and independent judiciary based on democratic principles and sharia had to be set up. Following the US-led invasion Hekmatyar called for a jihad against foreign troops and the overthrow of the Karzai government. In April 2002, police in Kabul carried out a wave of arrests of individuals thought to be linked with *Hezb e Eslami*, Afghan officials claiming this had been done to prevent terrorist attacks. In January 2003, US-led forces were reported to have killed at least 18 *Hezb e Eslami* adherents in battles near the Pakistan border in Kandahar province. Reports suggested Hekmatyar (who had been

expelled from Iran in March 2002) was operating clandestinely in remote parts of Afghanistan. In February 2003, the US State Department announced that Hekmatyar had been designated as a "global terrorist".

### Taleban

The Taleban ("Seekers") were originally young people trained in rural based madrasas (religious schools), mostly in Pakistan. They emerged in the 1990s as a second generation of mujaheddin around Mullah Omar. They declared their aims to be the restoration of peace, disarmament of the population, the enforcement of sharia law and the defence of the integrity and Islamic character of Afghanistan. Mullah Omar enjoyed strong support from within Pakistan and especially the *Jamiat e Ulema*, a fundamentalist party (see Pakistan entry).

The Taleban found support principally among the predominantly Sunni Pashtouns, traditionally the dominant group in Afghanistan. The Taleban progressively established control of most of the country, including Kabul, by the end of 1996. They implemented a repressive interpretation of sharia law and a form of strict fundamentalism never previously applied in Afghanistan. Women were denied access to education, health and work, and dissidents and minorities such as the Shia Hazaras were persecuted. In 1998, they were joined by a breakaway faction of *Hezb e Wahdat*. They had also the backing of Bin Laden and his financial support and at the same time protected him.

The Taleban were dispersed by the US-led military action at the end of 2001. However, Mullah Omar disappeared and is still hiding, and recent reports have indicated that scattered elements of the Taleban have been re-grouping, being responsible for attacks in isolated southern areas of the country, many of which had become inaccessible to foreign aid workers as a result. In June 2003, however, Hamid Karzai declared: "I am not worried about the resurgence of the Taleban. The Taleban movement... is finished, is gone".

### Al-Qaeda

Al-Qaeda's infrastructure of bases within Afghanistan was destroyed by US-led military action. Combatants linked to *Al-Qaeda* were subsequently detained by the USA at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba (see USA entry). Reports have suggested that *Al-Qaeda* remnants have found sanctuary, together with the Taleban, in isolated mountainous areas close to Pakistan as well as in the North-West Frontier area of Pakistan itself.

*Firouzeh Nahavandi*

## Albania

**Capital:** Tirana

**Population:** 3.5 m

After the then communist government had in December 1990 bowed to popular pressure by authorizing the formation of parties to compete with the rul-

ing Party of Labour of Albania, the Republic of Albania was proclaimed under an interim constitution adopted in April 1991 (replacing the Socialist People's

Republic of Albania in existence since 1946). Under a new democratic constitution approved overwhelmingly by referendum in November 1998, supreme political authority is vested in the People's Assembly (the unicameral legislature), whose 140 members are elected for a four-year term. The President is elected by the Assembly for a five-year term once renewable; the Assembly also approves the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers designated by the President.

In a general election held in June and July 2001 the ruling Socialist Party of Albania (PSS) won the largest number of seats (73), although its majority in the Assembly decreased. The People's Assembly in June 2002 elected Gen. (ret'd) Alfred Moisiu as the new President. Moisiu was the consensus candidate of both main parties, the ruling PSS and the opposition Democratic Party of Albania (PDS).

The repressive and xenophobic communist regime dominated by Envar Hoxha from 1945 until his death in 1985 and controlled by Hoxha's *Sigurimi* (secret police) made any overt and organized political or other type of opposition or dissent impossible until 1989, when the collapse of communism in the rest of Central and Eastern Europe severely disrupted the communist regime. The period of transition after the end of communist rule in 1990 has proven difficult as successive governments have tried to deal with high unemployment, a dilapidated infrastructure and widespread gangsterism. Organized crime, involving drugs trafficking, and the trafficking in women, children and would-be immigrants to countries in the European Union, has continued to be a major problem despite measures to combat it.

Electoral legislation adopted in February 1991 banned "extremist" parties and those based exclusively in ethnic minorities. Though ethnically homogeneous (over 90 per cent Albanian), the country is linguistically and culturally divided into southern Tosks, currently dominant demographically and politically, and northern Ghegs, who are in fact the majority of the Albanian people, if the ethnic Albanian diaspora in the neighbouring countries of the former Yugoslavia are included in the equation. A popular and violent rebellion which erupted in southern Albania in early 1997 graphically highlighted the north-south divide. The rebels, a heavily-armed assortment of civilians, ex-communist soldiers and criminals, managed to take control of much of southern Albania in March 1997 and order was only restored following the deployment of an Italian-led multinational protection force. The unrest had erupted in the southern port of Vlore following the collapse of pyramid schemes. In a pattern repeated in a large number of southern towns, the rebels broke into military armouries and seized large quantities of guns, ammunition and grenades. In some towns, members of the police and the army (many of whom were victims of the collapsed pyramid schemes) sided with the rebels and voluntarily handed over their weapons.

Religion, banned in 1967 but re-legalized in 1991, has undergone a marked and highly politically signifi-

cant revival, both as regards Islam (70 per cent of the total prior to 1967) and Christianity (20 per cent Albanian-ethnic Greek-Orthodox and 10 per cent Roman Catholic prior to 1967). Thus, it was no accident that the Albanian revolution of 1990 began in the northern city of Shkoder, which is predominantly Gheg, Catholic, anti-communist, and pan-Albanian in its strong nationalism as regards the Ghegs of neighbouring Kosovo and Macedonia.

Although there are around six million Albanians in the world, only just over half that figure are resident in Albania. Around two million live in the countries of the former Yugoslavia, with the majority in Kosovo (a province of Serbia in which 90 per cent of the population are ethnic Albanian), and the rest in western Macedonia and southern Montenegro. The sheer size of this diaspora, and particularly that of the Kosovar Ghegs in former Yugoslavia, has meant that it has always exercised an important influence on politics and society in Albania, despite the efforts of Hoxha's communist regime to hermetically seal off the country from the outside world during the post-war period.

The birthplace of modern Albanian nationalism (the Prizren League of 1878), and nominally part of Albania from its independence from Turkey in 1912 to Yugoslavia's creation in 1918, **Kosovo** and the Gheg north of Albania are the true political epicentre of the Albanian nation, if not the post-1918 Albanian state. The latter, ruled by a Gheg monarchy for most of the inter-war period, was dominated by the largely Tosk communist regime from 1945-90. Hoxha, though happy to use the grievances and revolts of the "anti-communist" Kosovar Ghegs against the Yugoslav "revisionists", was never seriously interested in bringing about a "Greater Albania" in the Balkans. For the Kosovars, the option of secession from Yugoslavia in favour of a reunification with Albania was not an attractive one as long as hardline Stalinism existed in the old country. However, 1990, Albania's "Year of Revolutions", brought about dramatic changes to the situation and, as the Kosovars' conflict with the Serbs worsened, they began to espouse secessionism or the reconstitution of a "Greater Albania". From early 1998 the regime of Slobodan Milosevic Yugoslavia faced growing insurrection by separatists in Kosovo and mounting international concern over escalating violence between ethnic Albanians and Serbian security forces. The insurrection was led by the **Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA)**. The KLA was alleged to include among its members a number of Albanian nationals, especially former army officers, policemen and members of the state security forces. According to Serbian accounts, the primary KLA training camps in Albania were Ljabinot near the capital Tirana, and Tropoja, Kuks and Bajram Curi near the Yugoslav-Albanian border. Serbia claimed that these locations were also the headquarters for the command and units of the Albanian army and police for the north-eastern part of Albania. In March 1999 forces under the command of NATO launched a bombing campaign against Serbian government targets, forcing the withdrawal of

Serbian forces from Kosovo, which was placed under interim UN administration.

In February 2001 ethnic Albanians in Macedonia also launched an armed insurrection in the north of the country, claiming that the mainly Muslim Albanians (who comprised around a quarter of the population of Macedonia) were oppressed by the Christian Slav majority. The insurrection was led by the National Liberation Army (NLA), which was reportedly based in Kosovo, a short distance north of the border with Macedonia. Fighting between Macedonian government troops and the NLA ended in August 2001 following the signing of an agreement that provided for the implementation of political reforms demanded by the rebels. After the signing of the agreement NATO forces were deployed in the country to supervise the disarming of the NLA. The aims of the group had been the subject of considerable speculation, with many

Macedonians suspecting it wanted to make ethnic Albanian areas part of a "Greater Albania" including neighbouring Kosovo.

Since the end of collapse of communism in Albania, the concept of a "Greater Albania" has been present but only on the margins of Albanian politics. None of the platforms of the major political parties, left or right, have included the idea of a "Greater Albania" or a union with Kosovo. Only a few minor parties, such as the royalist Movement of Legality Party (PLL) and the extreme nationalist Party of National Restoration (PRK) have openly advocated the unification of all Albanian-populated lands in the Balkans. However, the existence of such ideas even on the margins of Albanian politics has caused some concern in the international community.

*D. J. Sagar*

## Algeria

**Capital:** Algiers

**Population:** 32.3 m

The People's Democratic Republic of Algeria gained independence from France in 1962 following an eight-year armed rebellion led by the National Liberation Front (*Front de Libération Nationale*, FLN). The FLN leader, Ahmed Ben Bella, was elected as the first President but was deposed in 1965 by Houari Boumedienne, who held the government and party leadership until his death in 1978. In 1976 Boumedienne introduced a new constitution, which provided for an executive presidency elected by a popular vote for a five-year term and confirmed the FLN as the sole ruling party of the socialist state.

Following social unrest and economic recession in the late 1980s, constitutional changes were agreed by referendum in February 1989 to allow a qualified multi-party democracy. Opposition parties were permitted provided that they were not based on a single religion, race, region or sex, nor received foreign funding. Among the parties recognized were the Front of Socialist Forces (*Front des Forces Socialistes*, FFS), a veteran Berber-based opposition group; the Rally for Culture and Democracy (*Rassemblement pour la Culture et la Démocratie*, RCD), also based in the Berber community; the Islamic Salvation Front (*Front Islamique du Salut*, FIS - see below); the Movement for Democracy in Algeria (*Mouvement pour la Démocratie en Algérie*, MDA), founded in 1984 by ex-President Ben Bella; and the Socialist Vanguard Party (*Parti de l'Avant-Garde Socialiste*, PAGS), descended from the Algerian Communist Party of the 1930s. The only party known to have been refused recognition at that time was the Algerian People's Party (*Parti du Peuple Algérien*, PPA), successor to

the Algerian National Movement (*Mouvement Nationale Algérien*, MNA), which broke with the FLN in the early 1950s.

In December 1991, 49 parties contested the first round of voting in parliamentary elections. This resulted in the FIS winning 188 of the 430 parliamentary seats outright. Anticipating a landslide victory for the FIS, which had campaigned on a radical Islamist platform, the authorities intervened to cancel the second round of voting in January 1992. The parliament never came into being, a state of emergency was declared, and a military-backed High State Committee (HSC) chaired by Mohammed Boudiaf assumed presidential powers. The FIS was subsequently banned and in July 1992 Boudiaf was assassinated, triggering a civil conflict that has claimed more than 100,000 lives. Militant Islamists launched an armed campaign, often characterised by extreme brutality, against the military establishment, which used fierce repression in response.

In January 1994 the HSC was disbanded and Gen. Liamine Zéroual was appointed as head of state, having previously served as Defence Minister. He inaugurated a National Transition Council the following May as an interim legislature, but attempts to promote political dialogue with the FIS proved unsuccessful. The FIS was not permitted to participate in the November 1995 multi-party presidential elections which returned Zéroual with 61 per cent of the vote. In November 1996 constitutional changes were approved in a referendum by over 85 per cent of voters. These provided for a bicameral parliament comprising an upper Council of the Nation (*Majlis al-Oumma*) of 144 members – one-third appointed by the President and two-thirds indi-

rectly elected by a college of local authority representatives – and a lower National People's Assembly (Majlis Ech Chaabi al-Watani) of 380 members, elected for a five-year term by a system of proportional representation. The referendum also affirmed the proscription of political parties based on religion, language, gender or region. In multi-party Assembly elections in June 1997, the new pro-Zéroual National Democratic Rally (*Rassemblement National Démocratique*, RND) won the largest number of seats, although the parliament's legitimacy was marred by allegations of corruption. The FLN took third place and became a junior partner in a coalition government that was nevertheless seen to be controlled by the military establishment.

Following President Zéroual's decision to stand down from office early, former Foreign Minister Abdelaziz Bouteflika was elected to the presidency with the backing of the military on April 15, 1999, after the six opposition candidates withdrew alleging fraud. Soon after, President Bouteflika introduced a "civil concord" plan based on a ceasefire announced in October 1997 between the military authorities and the armed wing of the FIS – the **Islamic Salvation Army** (*Armée Islamique du Salut*, AIS). The peace initiative included an amnesty for Islamist rebels who renounced violence, and won wide support in a referendum which took place in September 1999. Having declared a permanent end to its guerrilla war against the government, the AIS disbanded in January 2000. However, some armed groups still opposed the civil concord; in particular, the **Armed Islamic Group** (*Groupe Islamique Armé*, GIA) and the **Salafist Group for the Call and Combat** (*Groupe Salafiste pour la Prédication et le Combat*, GSPC) continued their violent campaign (see below).

Islamic extremist activity was partly overshadowed in 2001 by popular pressure for greater democracy. In April over 50 demonstrators were killed in serious clashes between security forces and **Berber protesters** in the Kabylie region (east of Algiers) following the death of a Berber youth in police custody. The unrest initially reflected Berber resentment at ethnic discrimination by the authorities. (The Berber people, making up around a quarter of the country's population, have a distinct language and culture and have resisted government Arabization programmes). However, the protests broadened over the following months into a general anti-government movement, extending throughout Kabylie and into Algiers, denouncing corruption, political repression and economic hardship. Hostility towards the government was further aggravated in November when more than 600 people were killed in floods in Algiers, provoking more riots over the insufficient response of the authorities. Parliamentary elections on May 30, 2002, resulted in a revival of the FLN, which was returned with 199 seats (compared with 62 seats in the outgoing parliament), and the collapse of the ruling RND to less than 50 seats. The elections were marred by strikes and violence and a low turnout (46%, compared with 65% in 1997), particularly in the Kabylie. The Berber

parties – the FFS and the RCD – used the unrest to denounce the entire political system as corrupt and led a campaign to boycott the poll.

Although the 1999 rebel amnesty and search-and-destroy operations by the security forces appear to have reduced Islamist ranks, the insurgency continued throughout 2002, with regular reports of civilian massacres, widespread human rights abuses, and bomb attacks (in particular, an explosion in Larba, south-east of the capital, in July on the 40th anniversary of Algeria's independence from France, when about 40 people were killed and 100 injured).

Elements of the Algerian Islamist movement have been linked to the *Al-Qaeda* extremist network responsible for the terrorist attacks on the United States on Sept. 11, 2001, and have been increasingly identified with terrorist activities in Europe.

### **Armed Islamic Group (Groupe Islamique Armé, GIA)**

This extreme armed group emerged in 1992 calling for a Jihad or holy war to overthrow the military regime and the establishment of an Islamic state. It condemned the more moderate members of the Islamic Salvation Front (*Front Islamique du Salut*, FIS) and targeted the security forces, prominent public figures and foreign nationals. Mainly active in the central and western parts of the country and in the Algiers region, the GIA is split into semi-autonomous groups or brigades. It has largely recruited young men from the most disadvantaged social groups, but also includes former fighters trained in guerrilla tactics in such places as Afghanistan, Yemen and Chechnya.

The GIA has been responsible for some of the worst terrorist attacks in Algeria since the outbreak of violence in 1992, alienating the general population and discrediting the Islamist movement. It was believed to be responsible for the hijacking of a French airliner and killing of three passengers at Algiers airport in December 1994 and a series of terrorist attacks in France in 1995 in retaliation for the shooting of those hijackers by French security forces in Marseilles.

In July 1995 one of the GIA's leaders, Djamel Zitouni, was assassinated. Antar Zouabri emerged as the new leader of the main faction, and under his leadership atrocities on an unprecedented scale took place in 1997, aimed at punishing the civilian population for betraying the movement. The GIA refused to join the October 1997 ceasefire brokered between the government and FIS military wing (although many members reportedly surrendered to the Algerian authorities under the 1999 amnesty). In 1998 a faction of the group formed the Salafist Group for the Call and Combat (*Groupe Salafiste pour la Prédication et le Combat*, GSPC – see below). Zouabri was killed by security forces in February 2002 and his replacement, Abou Tourab Errachid, was also reportedly killed in June 2002.

In the aftermath of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks against the United States, the GIA appeared on the US list of alleged international terrorist organizations. Some Algerian sources have suggested that links between the *Al-Qaeda* terrorist network and the Algerian Islamist movement have existed since the early 1990s.

### **Islamic Salvation Front (Front Islamique du Salut, FIS)**

*Leadership.* Abassi Madani (president); Ahmed Ali Belhadj (vice-president); Annuoar Haddam (spokesman in exile)

The FIS developed from Islamist groups that were active in Algeria, particularly on university campuses, from the early 1970s. Following its official recognition in 1989, the FIS quickly emerged as a significant opposition force and government critic, relying on a network of mosques and other institutions to extend its influence in poor urban areas. It took 55 per cent of the popular vote in the 1990 municipal elections.

Campaigning for the values of Islam in political and social life, the FIS contested all seats and took 47.5% of the vote in the first round of voting in the 1991 parliamentary elections (see above). With the certainty of an absolute majority to follow, the FIS announced plans to call an early presidential election and a programme of constitutional reforms before the second round of voting was cancelled and the military assumed power. In January 1992 the party leaders were arrested and in March the FIS was banned following a court ruling for violation of the 1989 law proscribing party formation based on religion. In June 1992 Madani and Belhadj, convicted of conspiracy against the state, were sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment, and thousands of FIS members were arrested and detained in desert concentration camps.

Although the moderate faction of the FIS condemned violence, the Islamist initiative passed to extreme splinter groups, notably the radical Armed Islamic Group (*Groupe Islamique Armé*, GIA – see above), which launched a campaign of terror against the security forces. In 1994 attempts by the Zéroual government to forge a political dialogue with the FIS failed, despite the release of two senior FIS officials and the temporary transfer of Madani and Belhadj from prison to house arrest. The FIS responded by creating its own military wing, the *Islamic Salvation Army* (*Armée Islamique du Salut*, AIS). In January 1995 the FIS signed a draft peace plan with other opposition parties at a conference in Rome, which called for political negotiations to end the violence. However, this was rejected by the government. Further direct contacts broke down in mid-year and the FIS called for a boycott of the November 1995 presidential elections.

In April 1997 the FIS took part in new talks with opposi-

tion parties in Madrid, which called for the opening of a peace dialogue. Although the FIS boycotted the June 1997 parliamentary elections, the new RND-led government conditionally released Madani and Belhadj from prison the following month in a gesture of conciliation. In October 1997, although Madani was returned to house arrest, the AIS declared a unilateral ceasefire. In June 1999 the AIS announced a permanent end to its armed struggle and, despite the government's earlier refusal to legitimize the FIS, used the amnesty under the "civil concord" (see above) to disband in January 2000. Some of its members were integrated into the national army and others joined a new *Wafa* party (although this was refused official recognition).

On July 2, 2003, the government released Abassi Madani and Ali Belhadj. It was reported that Madani (now 72 and under house arrest since 1997) had agreed, as a condition of his release, to take no part in any form of political activity.

### **Salafist Group for the Call and Combat (Groupe Salafiste pour la Prédication et le Combat, GSPC)**

*Leadership.* Hassan Hattab

A breakaway faction of the Armed Islamic Group (*Groupe Islamique Armé*, GIA – see above), the GSPC was formed in 1998. It is active in the regions east and south of Algiers and the Kabylie. It directs its armed operations mainly against the security forces, claiming to avoid civilian targets. In the aftermath of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks against the United States, the GSPC appeared on the US's list of alleged international terrorist organizations. Since then, there has been increasing evidence of GSPC activity abroad, and a number of arrests of alleged members by police have taken place across Europe.

Algerian military and security sources blamed the GSPC for the seizure in March 2003 of several groups of Western tourists in a southern desert region. On May 13, 17 of the tourists were released unharmed in an operation by Algerian special forces near the southern town of Tamanrasset that reportedly resulted in the deaths of at least nine militants. Following the apparent payment of a ransom by the German Government, the remaining 14 hostages (nine of them German) were released on Aug. 18, one hostage having died in captivity.

*Richard German & Elizabeth Taylor*

## **Andorra**

**Capital:** Andorra la Vella

**Population:** 71,000

Under its 1993 constitution the sovereignty hitherto vested in the President of the French Republic and the Bishop of Urgel (in Spain) was transferred to the "parliamentary co-principality" of Andorra and the powers of the co-princes were greatly reduced. The unicameral legislature, the General Council of the Valleys, is elected by universal suffrage of all Andorran citizens,

although most residents are ineligible to vote, being French or Spanish citizens. The General Council in turn selects the head of government who appoints a Cabinet. Political parties were formally legalized by the 1993 constitution although informal political groupings had existed previously. There are no reports of illegal political activity in Andorra.

# Angola

**Capital:** Luanda

**Population:** 13.1 m

Angola achieved independence from Portugal in 1975 as the People's Republic of Angola, following a 14-year liberation struggle and the collapse of the former colonial regime in Portugal. Independence was followed, however, by a further protracted civil war between the previous liberation movements, the **Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA)**, which controlled the government in Luanda and constituted itself as the sole ruling party, and the **National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA)**. In the 1970s and 1980s the conflict had a Cold War dimension, with the MPLA receiving Soviet bloc backing, including substantial Cuban military assistance, while UNITA received support from South Africa and the USA.

In 1988, with the Cold War coming to an end, agreement was reached providing for the withdrawal of Cuban and South African troops. The Bicesse Accords of 1991 provided for an end to the civil war and the implementation of a multi-party system; the country was renamed the Republic of Angola in August 1992 and elections followed in September 1992, resulting in most of the seats in the Parliament (National Assembly) being taken by the MPLA (129) and UNITA (70). José Eduardo dos Santos of the MPLA was at the same time elected President. UNITA disputed the results, however, and conflict continued with renewed intensity. Further negotiations resulted in the signing of a cease-fire and power-sharing agreement in Lusaka in November 1994 (the Lusaka Protocol). In 1996 the Parliament elected in 1992 extended its own mandate for a further four years and in April 1997 UNITA members finally took up their seats in the Assembly and their posts in a Government of Unity and National Reconciliation. However, the civil war renewed with increased intensity in late 1998; in January 1999 the government formally abandoned the Lusaka agreements and in October 2000 the mandate of the 1992 Parliament was extended indefinitely. After major gains by government forces and the death of the UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi, the two sides on April 4, 2002, signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on implementation of the 1994 Lusaka Protocol, with the backing of the UN and the "troika" of observer countries (Portugal, the USA and Russia). This was widely interpreted as marking a definitive end to the war.

By this time the conflict had left more than 1,500,000 casualties, four million internally displaced people (a third of the population), and close to half a million refugees in neighbouring countries. Angola is now at peace, with the exception of the low intensity while highly destructive insurgency that remains in the

oil-rich northern Province of Cabinda (see below).

## Colonial period – Origins of the Civil War

During the last twenty years of colonial rule, three distinct streams of Angolan nationalism and anti-colonialism crystallized in three separate liberation movements. These were the MPLA, UNITA and the **FNLA (National Front for the Liberation of Angola)**. Writings on the Angolan nationalist struggle dating from the 1950s and 1960s emphasize the role that class, education and ideology as well as ethno-linguistic and regional cleavages played in the origins and development of these anti-colonial movements. These cleavages, which prevented the formation of a single united anti-colonial front, would erupt during the colonial war (1961-1974), with several instances of actual armed confrontation occurring between the MPLA and the FNLA before Angola's independence.

The **MPLA** corresponded to a Luanda-Mbundu stream, representing the second largest ethno-linguistic group in the country. With a predominantly urban leadership and orientation, the MPLA was to a large extent a creation of mestizo (mixed race) and assimilated black intellectuals from Luanda, benefiting from a strong tradition of political affirmation going back to the late nineteenth century. This movement was formed in Luanda in 1956 as an off-spring of the Angolan Communist Party, mirroring to a large extent the political polarization between right and left that characterised the situation in Portugal itself.

What later came to be known as the **FNLA**, was strongly rooted in the Bakongo nationalist stream. The Bakongo are the third largest ethno-linguistic group in Angola and populate the extreme north-west of the country, the Zaire and Uige Provinces. Less influenced by Portuguese culture and politics, and with a strong regional individuality, anti-colonial feelings ran deep among the Bakongo. By the 1950s, a group of Bakongo royalists, known as the Matadi group, began thinking about the revival of the historical kingdom of the Kongo. Banned by the Portuguese colonial authorities, these activists moved to Leopoldville, where political activism flourished among Angolan Bakongo emigrants. In July 1957, the UPNA (Union of the Populations of Northern Angola) was created. However, this movement's ethnic undertone and its aim of resurrecting the kingdom of Kongo, led its leadership to gradually embrace the goal of liberation for Angola as a whole. Subsequently, the UPNA changed its name to UPA (Union of the Populations of Angola) and Holden Roberto, its leader, concentrated on giving the UPA a broader political and diplomatic base. He opened the

leadership of the UPA to other ethnic groups in order to form a more nationally representative ethnic leadership.

The totalitarian nature of (the Portuguese dictator) Salazar's regime, which worsened with the 1957 deployment in all colonies of the International Police for the Defence of the State (PIDE), and the refusal of the colonial regime to contemplate negotiations with a view to self-determination, were the context in which the Angola war of independence began, in the form of three separate armed uprisings in 1961. The first uprising began in January in the Province of Malange, growing out of a strike by cotton workers, to which the colonial authorities reacted with mass arrests and repression. On March 15, 1961, northern Angola became the scene of a major insurrection by large numbers of Bakongo peasants joined by local plantation contract workers. In the morning of June 4, 1961, several hundred MPLA supporters attacked Luanda's main political prison killing seven colonial police officers. The reaction of the colonial authorities was brutal.

On March 27, 1962, Holden Roberto announced the formation of the FNLA (National Front for the Liberation of Angola) and barely a week later the establishment of a Revolutionary Government of Angola in Exile (GRAE). These moves by the FNLA's leadership were largely interpreted as a pre-emptive act intended at guaranteeing the predominance of the FNLA as the true nationalist front in face of growing MPLA activities and efforts to enlarge its support constituency.

In July 1964, the GRAE's Foreign Minister, Jonas Malheiro Savimbi (an assimilated Ovimbundu from the Bié Province of Angola) resigned, accusing the FNLA's leadership of privileging the Bakongo and of effectively being a proxy of the United States. In addition, Savimbi disagreed with Roberto's liberation strategy, believing that a true liberation movement should base itself inside the country and complement military actions with intensive political recruitment. In March 1966, Savimbi announced the formation of an entirely new organization, **UNITA (National Union for the Total National Independence of Angola)**. Appealing first to his own ethno-linguistic group, the Ovimbundu of the central plateau of Angola, Savimbi also attracted supporters from the eastern and southern regions, notably from the Lunda and Chokwe ethno-linguistic groups for whom the formation of UNITA ended their perceived second-class status within the MPLA and the FNLA.

In July 1974, two months after the fall of the fascist regime in Lisbon, the II Provisional Government promulgated Constitutional Law no. 7/74, which recognized the right to self-determination and independence of the colonies. The government in Lisbon decided to transfer power to the "sole and legitimate representatives of the territories subject to de-colonization, their liberation movements". Under pressure from Jomo Kenyatta, Secretary General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the three leaders and Portugal met and signed the Alvor Agreement on Jan. 15, 1975. This agreement recognised the three liberation

movements as the "sole legitimate representatives of the peoples of Angola", setting the independence date for Nov. 11, 1975.

### **Consolidation of power by MPLA**

All three parties moved ahead of independence to gain military advantage on the ground, supported by external patrons and fuelled by growing arms supplies. The FNLA, backed by Zaire and receiving economic and military aid from the United States, moved troops to northern Angola. The MPLA, despite being worn down by factional infighting, secured control of Luanda with the assistance of Soviet weaponry, advice and training as well as thousands of Cuban troops. By May, the MPLA was fighting UNITA in the South. The Cubans would become a critical factor with repercussions both in the internal development of the civil war, and the escalation of the regional interstate war with South Africa. By July 1975, the fighting had escalated with the MPLA driving the FNLA from Luanda and UNITA leaving for sanctuary in the southern part of the country.

On Nov. 11, 1975, the MPLA declared unilaterally the independence of the People's Republic of Angola. Regional legitimacy for the MPLA government was promptly negotiated within the OAU and in February 1976, 41 of the 46 OAU member states recognized the legitimacy of the MPLA government. Also in February 1976, following the Clark amendment (see below), the US Congress barred military aid to both UNITA and the FNLA. During 1976, the FNLA, which had a training camp in Zaire, lost the support of President Mobutu under an agreement concluded between the governments of Angola and Zaire in Brazzaville on Feb. 28, 1976, where each side undertook not to allow on its territory any military activity against the other. On May 5, Zaire closed the FNLA headquarters in Kinshasa. Holden Roberto, however, did not leave Zaire until Nov. 12, 1979 (after a non-aggression pact had been concluded between Angola, Zaire and Zambia on Oct. 12, 1979). Thereafter the FNLA carried out no further significant military activities and effectively disintegrated, its soldiers surrendering to the government in return for clemency, leaving the conflict a two-way struggle between the MPLA and UNITA.

After consolidating its hold on power in the capital and the other main cities, the MPLA established a one party state and in 1977 officially adopted Marxism-Leninism as its guiding ideology. It retained its strategic alliance with the USSR, Cuba and other parts of the Soviet bloc until the demise of Communism at the beginning of the 1990s.

### **Resistance by UNITA**

Meanwhile, Savimbi focused on creating economic, social and political instability in the central highlands in order to make it virtually impossible for the MPLA to achieve its nation-building project in large parts of Angola. Early in 1976, UNITA's forces were driven



southwards by the Cuban-supported MPLA and UNITA was forced to evacuate the last of its positions and to resort to guerrilla warfare in the bush. On May 10, 1976, UNITA made public a manifesto calling for an intensification of the armed struggle “against the regime imposed by the Cubans and Russians”, and stating there would be no dialogue with the MPLA as long as it was supported by foreign troops. It threatened to attack the Benguela railway and to sabotage all other forms of communication; it also proposed to reorganize its own military and political structure and create an armed people's militia.

By the early 1980s this policy was proving successful, in part because South Africa's military interventions, while helping UNITA to ward off attacks by the MPLA, were sufficiently infrequent so as not to alienate the local inhabitants. South Africa's 32 Battalion, also known as its “Foreign Legion”, was deployed almost constantly in southern Angola between 1975 and 1988. In the United States the Senate voted on June 11, 1985, and the House of Representatives on July 10, 1985, to repeal the Clark Amendment of 1976 which had prohibited military and financial support for UNITA (after the US Central Intelligence Agency had been providing covert military aid to UNITA). From 1986, the Reagan administration provided sophisticated military assistance to UNITA, as part of its global strategy of arming “anti-Communist” insurgent movements fighting against Soviet allies in the Third World. By November 1986 reports suggested that UNITA had succeeded in opening a northern front in the guerrilla war, which had hitherto been confined largely to the east and south of the country. UNITA forces operating in the northern Angolan provinces of Zaire and Uige obtained supplies including US military equipment via Zaire.

### **1991 Bicesse Peace Accords**

Partly because of these external factors, which reinforced and escalated the fighting, efforts by the international community to bring about peace did not start until a favourable external context for peace making was created by the changes in both South Africa and the former Soviet Union. The first step towards detente in Angola came at the end of the 1980s, as the Cold War ebbed and the white minority regime in South Africa sought ways of extricating itself from both Namibia and southern Angola. In December 1988, Angola, Cuba, and South Africa signed the New York Accords, under which Cuba promised to withdraw all its forces from Angola whilst South Africa pledged to hold elections in Namibia. The withdrawal of the 50,000 Cuban troops from Angola took place between January 1989 and May 1991 and was monitored by a small mission of unarmed United Nations military observers, known as the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM).

In June 1989 Zaire's President Mobutu contrived to arrange a meeting between Angolan President dos Santos and Savimbi, on which occasion the two men

shook hands and signed the Gbadolite Declaration, providing for a cease-fire to take effect two days later. By the end of the month the agreement had collapsed. The initiative was renewed following an informal March 1990 agreement by US Secretary of State James Baker and his Soviet counterpart at the time, Eduard Shevardnadze, to co-operate in bringing about a negotiated settlement.

Talks between the Angolan government and UNITA then began in April 1990 under the good offices of the Portuguese government and with both the USA and the USSR encouraging compromise. The talks came to a successful conclusion with the signing of the Bicesse Peace Accords in May 1991. The Bicesse Accords comprised four documents: the cease-fire agreement; the Washington Document (which guaranteed UNITA's political existence after a cease-fire); the Estoril protocol (six documents covering rules surrounding the elections; the structure of the joint politico-military commission responsible for implementing the peace accords; internal security; administrative structures; the structure and integration of a single army; the political rights of UNITA after the cease fire); and an agreement on the basic political principles for the establishment of peace in Angola. Fair multi-party elections were to be held no later than November 1992.

Under the Accords, the MPLA remained the legitimate and internationally recognized government, retaining responsibility for running the state during the interim period and for setting the date of elections. The UN Security Council subsequently offered the parties the possibility of keeping in Angola the existing mission that was verifying the withdrawal of the Cuban troops in order to supervise the cease-fire, under the denomination UNAVEM II.

### **The 1992 Elections – Resumption of Conflict**

Initial euphoria surrounding the mutual observance of the cease-fire soon gave way to apprehension and the elections, which took place on Sept. 29-30, 1992, went ahead in extremely unstable conditions. In a high turnout poll for what were Angola's first democratic elections, the MPLA won an absolute majority of seats in the National Assembly with 54% of the votes compared to 34% for UNITA and 12% for the minor parties. José Eduardo dos Santos won 49.6% of the votes in the presidential contest, against 40.1% for Jonas Savimbi and 10.3% for other candidates. However, UNITA claimed widespread fraud and accused the government of “stealing the elections”. Following a fraud investigation in which UNITA participated, the United Nations declared that the elections had been “generally free and fair”.

UNITA refused to accept the results, withdrew its generals from the high command of the Angolan Armed Forces (FAA) and mobilized its forces. Angola slid back into war and even the UNAVEM II presence could not prevent the peace process quickly degenerating into what became the most serious and

bloody phase of the civil war. In fact, the period of resumed conflict in 1992-94 was to prove even more destructive than the preceding 16 years of fighting. For the first time major cities were engulfed in the conflict and at its height, more than 1,000 people a day were dying as a direct result of fighting or because of war-related hunger and disease. Between October 1992 and November 1994 as many as 300,000 people (almost 3 per cent of the total population) are thought to have died as a result of fighting. By 1994 one-third of the population required humanitarian assistance, over two million people depended on food aid for survival, 1.25 million were internally displaced and 300,000 were living in neighbouring countries as refugees.

By mid-1994, the war stood at a standstill. The government recaptured many of the areas it lost to UNITA in 1992-93 and the government army was greatly strengthened by the purchase of \$3.5 billion worth of arms and ammunition. In an effort to recapture many of the areas it lost to UNITA in 1992-93, especially UNITA-held diamond mines and strongholds, the government launched sustained offensives. Nevertheless, the prospect of a renewed rural guerrilla war now coupled with conventional warfare that could last for years forced the government to consider the forging of a cease-fire agreement through negotiations. For UNITA, continued war would have meant the loss of further territory, and it had no longer any realistic prospect of gaining power by military means. Savimbi also had to reconsider his position in face of growing international and regional pressures. In addition, UNITA's supply of military spare parts and fuel ran low.

#### **1994 Lusaka Protocol**

Pre-negotiations began in Lusaka in October 1993 under UN mediation and resulted in the signing on Nov. 20, 1994, of the Lusaka Protocol. The Lusaka Protocol was based on a balance between two fundamental aspects: the disarmament of UNITA and its transformation into a political party and, on the other hand, the guaranteeing of UNITA participation in a government of unity and national reconciliation through power-sharing. As well as assigning important ministerial and other posts to UNITA, the government offered one of two new vice-presidential posts to Jonas Savimbi. The Lusaka Protocol also provided for the 70 UNITA deputies elected in 1992 to take their seats in the National Assembly, and for the participation of UNITA officers and troops in the national armed forces. By reaffirming the 1991 Bicesse Peace Accords, the Protocol set forth the details of a cease-fire, a second round of presidential elections, demilitarization, disarmament, the formation of a unified army and national police force, and national reconciliation. The mandate as well as the size of the UN peace-keeping operation in Angola, now renamed UNAVEM III, was considerably enlarged. UN Security Council resolution 976 of February 1995 authorized the establishment of UNAVEM III and approved the deployment

of up to 7,000 peacekeeping troops.

The Lusaka Protocol enjoyed a relative degree of success in its first year, despite numerous delays in implementation. While the cease-fire was respected, allowing for a degree of humanitarian relief to be deployed to the close to three million people in need, the divisions between the two belligerents continued unabated. In April 1997, the **Government of National Unity and Reconciliation** was sworn in and UNITA saw 11 of its officials given government posts. UNITA actively maintained a combat ready army, however, paying lip service to demobilization, and despite UN sanctions was able to secure large shipments of arms by paying for them with diamonds from areas under its control. According to some sources, UNITA was receiving up to US\$400 million a year from the illegal trade in diamonds.

#### **Resumption of War – Death of Savimbi**

In December 1998, in view of the unwillingness of Jonas Savimbi to abide by his commitments under the Lusaka Protocol, the government launched an offensive. This last phase of the war was specifically intended by the government to seek "peace through war". The Angolan government's bellicose stance resulted from the belief that Jonas Savimbi had ceased to be a trustworthy interlocutor, a belief that enjoyed the support of the international community, for whom UNITA's leader had become a true "pariah".

Although the Angolan government has notably shied away from public triumphalism, from a purely military perspective the FAA's eastern advance ("Operation Restauro") was a resounding success, even though it had catastrophic humanitarian consequences, a result of scorched-earth tactics used by both sides. In September and October 1999, the FAA captured Bailundo and Andulo, two traditional UNITA strongholds, and during 2000 and 2001, it gradually forced UNITA to abandon its conventional military capability. In fact, by the end of 2001, UNITA had lost the bulk of its conventional forces and was forced to resort to small-scale guerrilla incursions reminiscent of its early days, with an operational force that most analysts estimated at the time as not higher than 15,000 men. The government of Angola coupled this military pressure with strategies to demoralize UNITA. Amongst others, the government declared a general amnesty in November 2000 in an attempt to lure UNITA soldiers into surrendering. Just before Savimbi was killed by government forces in an ambush on Feb. 20, 2002, UNITA had attempted a return to the negotiating table, perhaps a reflection of its weakness on the battle-field.

#### **Ending of the Civil War**

Savimbi's death (as well as that of other prominent UNITA leaders including its Vice-President, General Antonio Dembo) came in the context of the prospect of imminent military defeat for UNITA. Immediately

following Savimbi's death, President dos Santos seized the moment by declaring a unilateral truce, announcing on March 14, 2002, a 15-point peace plan. The plan officially halted any military activities of an offensive nature against UNITA, gave assurances that a "blanket amnesty" would be passed in Parliament covering all individuals involved in the war, and promised a comprehensive re-integration programme for all demobilized soldiers. It also promised the speedy approval of a new Constitution being discussed in Parliament, which inter alia would define the necessary conditions for elections to be held. The President's initiative paved the way for the beginning of negotiations between the military delegations of the government and UNITA, with a view to the peaceful resolution of the conflict. War weariness, disorientation at the loss of its top leadership, hunger and disease left UNITA with no alternative but to sit at the negotiation table.

### **UNITA at the end of the War**

At the time renewed negotiations began, UNITA was fractured and divided, perhaps more than ever in its history. UNITA had for years been splintered over a number of questions, not least whether to pursue war or to make peace. These divisions came to the fore with a vengeance following the death of Savimbi, with prominent UNITA officials bidding for leadership of a unified UNITA. The divisions that surfaced were not limited to UNITA's splinter group, **UNITA Renovada**, which under the leadership of Jorge Valentim had broke away from Jonas Savimbi in 1998 and had been recognized by the Angolan government as the sole legitimate UNITA. This recognition allowed UNITA *Renovada*, as the main opposition party, to benefit from the substantive provisions of the Lusaka Protocol, including UNITA's headquarters in Luanda and various houses for its leadership; police protection by the government; and, finally, the crucial granting of party funds. Renovada's members remained part of the Government of Unity and National Reconciliation, occupying the positions that, under the Lusaka Protocol, were supposed to belong to UNITA as the largest opposition party.

That at the time 53 of the 70 UNITA members of parliament refused to join the *Renovada* faction is evidence of its lack of support among the vast majority of UNITA members. In fact, even though the majority of UNITA's parliamentarians remained in the capital after Savimbi's late 1998 return to war, they trod a very thin line in the complex political game in Luanda. While a large number of them remained secretly loyal to Savimbi, others founded new political parties as was the case with N'zau Puna and Tony da Costa Fernandes, who founded the Democratic Reflection Tendency, or the most prominent of all, Jorge Valentim and Eugenio "Manuvakola", who created the UNITA-*Renovada* party.

Within the military wing of UNITA, uncertainty and controversy after Savimbi's death surrounding

whether or not its Vice-President, General Antonio Dembo, was also dead, had led to conflicting claims to the movement's leadership just before negotiations with the government were to begin. Declarations coming from different UNITA quarters indicated that UNITA had lost the ability to co-ordinate policy and evaluate the post-Savimbi situation in a coherent fashion. In fact, UNITA's representatives in Europe accused the government of holding the negotiating team prisoner and declared that the team had no legitimacy to negotiate on behalf of UNITA. These events appeared to have been largely a result of the lack of adequate communication between UNITA's military wing and its representatives abroad. Once communication was re-established and UNITA's representatives in Luanda and abroad obtained a clear picture of the situation on the ground, they recognized the legitimacy of the negotiating team. In addition, as the death of Dembo was confirmed, UNITA's Secretary General, General Paulo Lukamba ("Gato"), assumed a caretaker role creating what became known as UNITA's Management Commission.

### **Disarmament and Demobilization of UNITA**

These controversies did not slow the pace of negotiations, however. As a matter of fact, the belligerents' military commanders achieved in a fortnight the very difficult task of drafting the "Memorandum of Understanding" (MOU), signed by the parties on April 4, 2002, which covered all aspects of a military nature necessary for a peaceful resolution to the conflict. The MOU effectively replaced annexes 3 and 4 of the 1994 Lusaka Protocol, which remained for both parties the accepted and legitimate framework for peace in Angola. This instrument defined an amnesty law for all crimes committed within the framework of the armed conflict; the modalities of the cease-fire; the disengagement, quartering and conclusion of the demilitarization of UNITA's military forces; the integration of UNITA military personnel; the integration of UNITA officers into the national police; the demobilization of excess UNITA military personnel and disbanding of UNITA military forces and finally, the vocational re-integration of demobilized personnel of the ex-UNITA military forces into national life.

The institutional structure created to steer the process was also a reflection of a highly asymmetric situation on the ground, giving the government the responsibility to manage, coordinate and finance the whole process. The two institutional structures created to oversee the coordination and management of this process (the Joint Military Commission and the Technical Group) were presided over by a representative of the FAA. Consequently, the government of Angola assumed single handedly the management and financing of the quartering, disarmament and demobilization of UNITA, concerned by the need to secure its military advantage and the maintenance of the cease-fire as well as its expressed wish to proceed with the disbanding of UNITA's military forces as rapidly as possible.

The quartering, demilitarization and demobilization of UNITA began immediately following the signature of the MOU. However, while the MOU planned a total of 80 days for the completion of the quartering, disarmament and demobilization of 50,000 UNITA soldiers in 27 quartering areas, no one, including UNITA's Management Commission (see below), anticipated the number of soldiers and their family members that presented themselves in the quartering and adjacent family reception areas. In fact, by July 27, 2002, a total of 85,585 UNITA soldiers were quartered in 35 quartering areas and approximately 280,261 family members were gathered in family reception areas in 16 Angolan Provinces. These quartering and family areas were headed by a representative of the FAA, with day to day management of the camp assumed by UNITA.

Although positively interpreted as evidence of UNITA's political will to comply with the provisions of the MOU, the unforeseen growth in the numbers of UNITA soldiers and their family members gathered in quartering and family reception areas created serious logistical problems for which the government and humanitarian partners were unprepared. The levels of malnutrition and disease evidenced by a vast number of UNITA soldiers and their family members arriving at quartering and gathering locations contributed to a dire humanitarian situation. Malnutrition rates were initially very high, with mortality rates well above emergency thresholds and in some places a famine situation. The United Nations and other NGOs have been accused of being slow to react (famously by Médecins Sans Frontières), as the UN's Organization for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (OCHA) insisted on first securing government permission to enter the quartering areas. This may reflect, in part at least, the government's reluctance to significantly involve the United Nations in the process after the experience of Lusaka. On the other hand, the remoteness and inaccessibility of a large number of these quartering locations may partially explain the difficulties involved in tackling the critical situation described.

Nevertheless, responsibility for assistance to ex-combatants was firmly the responsibility of the FAA, while family members could be supported by NGOs and humanitarian agencies. The World Food Programme (WFP) took the lead in providing food aid, while other international and local NGOs have been active in distribution of food, non-food items, seeds and tools and family tracing and reunification activities. Conditions have generally now stabilized, resulting in the closure of therapeutic feeding centres and the withdrawal of many NGOs. The WFP continues to distribute food aid to populations in the gathering areas, as does the government. Seeds and tools have also been provided, although following a lengthy debate between agencies as to the potential political and social effects of this. It was feared that this may result in the creation of permanent "UNITA settlements", in a situation where conflicts have already

been reported between ex-combatants and surrounding communities.

Although the quartering process was still ongoing, albeit slowly, the Joint Military Commission made public on July 11, 2002, that the demobilization of 84,000 ex-soldiers would begin in earnest on July 20, when a number of UNITA soldiers (approximately 5,000) would be integrated into the FAA and the National Police in accordance with a selection process that had been initiated. The Joint Military Commission went ahead with the integration of the agreed UNITA contingent into the FAA while the conclusion of the demobilization stalled, leading presidential spokesman Victor Carvalho to announce that demobilization had been "postponed sine die" and that technical teams were being sent to the quartering areas to assess the situation. Yet, less than two weeks later, on Aug. 2, 2002, the Joint Military Commission announced that the demobilization and demilitarization process was complete and that UNITA military forces had ceased to exist, having been administratively absorbed into the FAA and only awaiting reintegration. At an official ceremony to mark the extinction of UNITA armed forces, government and UNITA officials announced the formal end of rebellion, and Defence Minister General Kundi Pahyama observed that "from now on, the conditions have come together for stability in Angola".

However, eye-witness accounts have pointed out that the demobilization process was far from complete at this date. The demobilization and demilitarization of ex-combatants has in practice been largely ad hoc in nature, a result of the scale and complexity of the operation as well as the government's announced priority of closing all quartering areas as rapidly as possible. As of March 2003 there were still 30 gathering areas, with only slightly more than 20 per cent of the estimated total either resettled or moved to transit camps. The future of social and economic reintegration and of reconciliation with communities is still impossible to predict as very few ex-combatants have as yet returned home, those who have being primarily women family members.

### **Political Aspects of National Reconciliation**

The process that began with the signature of the MOU on April 4, 2002, was largely limited to the resolution of "all outstanding military issues under the Lusaka Protocol". However, the Joint Military Commission's lack of a mandate to deal with the political aspects of national reconciliation was eventually recognized by all parties involved, including the "Troika" of observer countries (Portugal, United States and Russia). Because at the centre of the current peace process was the completion of all outstanding issues stemming from the 1994 Lusaka Protocol, not limited to military and security related issues, the parties agreed on the need to "move one level up" and resurrect the Joint Commission envisaged in the Lusaka Protocol.

The resurrected Joint Commission retained its origi-

inal composition under the Lusaka Protocol, comprising representatives of the Angolan government, UNITA, the troika of observer countries and, as chair, the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative, Ibrahim Gambari. The first meeting of the Joint Commission was held on Aug. 26, 2002. There were hopes that the Joint Commission would perhaps go beyond the outstanding tasks specified in the Lusaka Protocol, and allow for a truly inclusive national reconciliation process. However, the Joint Commission's activities focused almost exclusively on negotiating UNITA's participation in government (both central and local government) and the regulation of UNITA as a political party. And once this was finally agreed upon, the Joint Commission wound itself up on Nov. 20, 2002, leaving behind, disillusioned and disappointed, Angolan civil society and opposition parties who during the process were consulted only once. It became clear that the issue of enlarging Angola's peace process beyond those who had participated in armed hostilities (the belligerents) was not a realistic possibility. Issues such as the decentralization of power, social welfare and reintegration programmes, the economy, and freedom of speech and association, were not tackled. The government's stance has been that reconciliation will only come about through the normal functioning of Angola as a democratic and multi-party state, where the rule of law and good governance are respected, with the National Assembly as the *locus par excellence* of societal, political and ultimately structural change. The debate on national reconciliation has been largely deposited at the door of the constitutional revision commission within the National Assembly.

Most analysts and observers believe that there is little likelihood of a resumption of hostilities in Angola. The situation on the ground was transformed by the government's sweeping military successes and the death of Savimbi. This differs markedly from the circumstances at the time of the 1991 Bicesse Peace Accords or the 1994 Lusaka Protocol, both of which were undertaken in a situation where neither party was capable or perceived to be capable of militarily defeating the other.

UNITA has officially reunited, following the resignation of UNITA-Renovada's leader Eugenio Manuakola in July 2002. Under the leadership of General Paulo Lukamba "Gato", UNITA has undertaken an internal reorganization process, nominating a 41-member standing commission and a 270-member political committee to replace the interim "management commission" that assumed the leadership of the movement after Jonas Savimbi's death on Feb. 22, 2002. The presidency of UNITA is now held by Isaias Samakuva.

### CABINDA

The end of the civil war between UNITA and the MPLA government has left only, as extra-legal movements in the country, the separatist factions in the northern province of Cabinda.

Cabinda has an area of approximately 2,800 sq miles and is separated from the rest of the country by a strip, some 60 km wide, of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC, known from 1971-97 as Zaire) along the lower Congo river. Cabinda borders the Congo Republic (Congo-Brazzaville) to the north and north-northeast and the DRC to the east and south. The town of Cabinda is the chief population centre. According to a 1995 census, Cabinda has an estimated population of 600,000, approximately 400,000 of whom live in neighbouring countries. Population estimates are, however, highly unreliable.

Portugal first claimed sovereignty over Cabinda in the 1885 Treaty of Simulanbuco, which gave Cabinda the status of a protectorate of the Portuguese Crown at the voluntary request of "the princes and governors of Cabinda". The territory was subsequently integrated administratively by the Portuguese into the colony of Angola but its separate prior history has been advanced by Cabindan separatists in their cause. Cabindans also cite their separate cultural and ethnic identity. From an ethnic point of view, the Cabindans belong to the Bakongo ethnicity and the Kikongo ethno-linguistic group. The Bakongo comprise the majority of the population in both Uige and Zaire Provinces of Angola. However, this shared ancestry did not prevent Cabindans from developing a very different culture as well as a variant of the Kikongo language. Cabindans, in their vast majority, consider themselves different, separate and not Angolan. The argument of ethno-cultural specificity as a basis for self-determination is, and has been, vehemently opposed in Luanda, however, where the official viewpoint has been that Angola, as a nation composed of a mosaic of peoples and languages, must be grounded on a common vision, where ethno-cultural differences do not jeopardise the unity of the State.

Underlying the conflict is Cabinda's critical economic significance to Angola. This derives from its considerable offshore oil reserves, which are estimated as accounting for nearly 60 per cent of Angola's oil production (oil in turn accounting for more than 85 per cent of Angolan government revenues). Most of the oil along its coast was discovered by the Cabinda Gulf Oil Company (CABCOG) from 1968 onwards. It is estimated that oil exports from the province are worth the equivalent of US\$100,000 per annum for every Cabindan but it remains one of the poorest provinces in Angola. An agreement in 1996 between the national and provincial governments stipulated that 10 per cent of Cabinda's taxes on oil revenues should be given back to the province, but Cabindans often feel that these revenues are not benefiting the population as a whole, largely because of corruption.

### Creation of Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda

In the early 1960s, several movements advocating a separate status from Angola for Cabinda came into being. The **Movement for the Liberation of the**

**Enclave of Cabinda (MLEC)** was formed in 1960 under the leadership of Luis Ranque Franque. Resulting from the merger of various émigré associations in Brazzaville, the MLEC rapidly became the most prominent of the separatist movements. A further group was the Alliam (Alliance of the Mayombe), representing the Mayombe, a small minority of the population.

In August 1963 these movements united to form a common front, the **Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda** (*Frente de Libertação do Enclave de Cabinda*, **FLEC**) and the leadership role was taken by the MLEC's Ranque Franque. FLEC's formation was in part the result of the support of Congo-Brazzaville's President Youlou for the merger of Cabinda's separatist movements. Mimicking the strategy adopted by the FNLA, FLEC went on to create a "government of Cabinda in exile" on Jan. 10, 1967. However, in marked contrast with the FNLA, the FLEC's efforts to mobilize international support for its "government in exile" met with little success. In fact, the majority of OAU members, concerned that this could encourage separatism elsewhere on the continent and committed to the sanctity of African state borders, firmly rejected recognition of the FLEC's government in exile. This did not prevent Gabon, Uganda and the Central African Republic, among others, from openly supporting the FLEC. More importantly, the FLEC subsequently received moral, organizational and material support from Zaire and Congo-Brazzaville, its neighbours. The support of these two countries was largely prompted by their interest in Cabinda's rich potential. The spectre of Cabinda's occupation by one of its neighbours has remained at the epicentre of Luanda's policy on Cabinda.

### Angolan independence and Cabinda

When, in January 1975, Angola's three liberation movements (MPLA, FNLA and UNITA) met with the colonial power in Alvor, Portugal, to establish the modalities of the transition to independence, FLEC was not invited. Later, in the course of Angola's turbulent decolonization process, Ranque Franque proclaimed the independence of the "Republic of Cabinda" in Kampala on Aug. 1, 1975, at an OAU summit. Zairian President Mobutu Sese Seko called for a referendum on the future of the Cabinda enclave, a position backed by Congo-Brazzaville. Subsequently, and for much of the 1970s and 1980s, FLEC engaged in a low intensity, guerrilla-type war, attacking government troops and economic targets or creating havoc by kidnapping foreign employees working in the province's oil and construction businesses. In fact, for the first fifteen years of Angola's independence, the government had, at any point, approximately 2,000 troops stationed in Cabinda. Cuban troops (prior to their withdrawal from Angola during 1990-91) were deployed to guard Cabinda in support of Angolan government forces.

In 1977, a split with the original FLEC led by

Ranque Franque gave rise to the creation of the Military Command for the Liberation of Cabinda (CMLC). During the 1980s, further divisions arose with the formation of the **Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda – Armed Forces of Cabinda (FLEC-FAC)** and **FLEC-Renewed (FLEC-R)**, each pursuing different strategies for independence. FLEC-R is reported to have been created in 1984 under the leadership of Antonio Bento Bembe.

Several of these factions urged Cabindans to boycott the 1992 elections. As a result, only between 7% and 12% of Cabindans voted in what was the first (and until now the only) democratic election in Angola. The boycott strategy was largely a reaction to the law on political parties enacted in May 1991, which effectively disqualified any of Cabinda's movements or political groupings from becoming candidates in the parliamentary elections. This law dictates that, in order to be allowed to register, a party must have support in at least 10 of the 18 provinces. In addition, it clearly prohibits the formation of parties that are "local and regional in character, foster tribalism, racism, regionalism or other forms of discrimination against citizens or affect national unity and territorial integrity." Not surprisingly, the vast majority of Cabindan separatists saw the 1992 elections as a matter for Angolans, not Cabindans.

While the various factions of the FLEC refused to be part of Angola's first multi-party elections, Luis Ranque Franque adopted a more conciliatory tone vis-à-vis the government in Luanda, suggesting that open dialogue was perhaps the best strategy. Received by the President and the government, Franque moved closer to the government's proposal of a special status for the province. A solution along the lines of a "large autonomy" (following the Portuguese model of governance in the Madeira and Azores archipelagos) was considered. One of the practical achievements of this rapprochement was that the government authorized the opening of a FLEC office in Cabinda, which later became known as the "FLEC Interior", under the coordination of Belchior Tati.

### Intensification of conflict in 1990s

When full-scale civil war erupted after Savimbi's rejection of the 1992 election results (see above), FLEC-FAC escalated its activities. This prompted the government to deploy close on 15,000 troops in the province at the beginning of 1993. By mid-1993, FLEC-FAC was thought to be in control of much of the rural interior of Cabinda, but not of Cabinda town, home to half of the enclave's population. FLEC-FAC achieved this with a force reported to be no larger than 600 to 1,000 armed men. The escalation of hostilities in Cabinda at a time when the government was facing its toughest military challenge yet from UNITA, prompted the President to announce, in March 1994, that talks with FLEC-FAC were about to begin. These talks did not, however, take place.

During 1997 and 1998, Angolan Armed Forces (FAA)

operations in Cabinda increased, particularly in villages suspected of supporting the separatists. The situation rapidly deteriorated, with FLEC-FAC and FLEC-R responding in kind. Sir Nigel Rodley, Special Rapporteur of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, in September 1998 noted widespread reports of acts of torture and ill-treatment by the regular army, as well as by members of the paramilitary group of the *Polícia da Intervenção Rápida* (PIR, Rapid Intervention Police). The separatist cause was greatly weakened in 1997 by the downfall of President Mobutu in Zaire and the re-seizure of power by Denis Sassou-Nguesso in Congo-Brazzaville. In fact, Angola's intervention in Congo-Brazzaville in support of Sassou-Nguesso was largely a consequence of that country's support for both UNITA and the Cabindan separatists.

### **Position of oil companies**

During the early days of Cabinda's struggle, the oil companies were perceived to be sympathetic to, if not supportive of, Cabinda's self-determination cause, reinforcing the Angolan government's perception that the issue was one of foreign plots to gain control of its oil riches. However, although its predominantly offshore location has given it some protection, the oil industry has suffered as a result of separatist action, mostly by FLEC-FAC and FLEC-R, with abductions of foreign workers constituting a particular problem. During 1999, FLEC-R kidnapped four foreign workers (two Portuguese and two French citizens), only to release them after several months, having failed to attract the attention of the international community. FLEC-FAC also increased its activities during 2000 with the more widely-publicized kidnapping of three Portuguese workers employed by a construction company, while FLEC-R kidnapped another five Portuguese civilians. These hostages were not freed until June 2001, following the diplomatic intervention of the governments of Gabon and Congo-Brazzaville. In general, oil companies have sought to remain detached from the conflict and not to take sides. The foreign employees of the oil companies live in Malongo, a gated compound some 15km from Cabinda town; they travel by helicopter from the airport to their compound.

### **Government offensive in 2002-03**

Angola's Minister of the Interior (and now Prime Minister) Fernando da Piedade Dias dos Santos, once again appealed to the FLEC separatists in August 2001 to end hostilities so that a peaceful solution to the "Cabinda problem" could be found. This led to exploratory contacts between the leaders of the FLEC-FAC and the government in December 2001. Although these were "talks about talks" – that is, on the possibility and modalities of negotiations – there was no progress beyond the initial contact. In early 2002, the government expressed its willingness to hold "broad

consultations" on the status of Cabinda, but the FLEC-R faction saw any such dialogue as premature.

The death of Jonas Savimbi and the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the government and UNITA in April 2002 led directly to a renewed government offensive against the separatists, taking advantage of the freeing up of military resources previously used in combating UNITA. In addition, the Angolan government allegedly used newly incorporated UNITA soldiers against the various FLEC factions. Militarily, the FLEC-FAC, under the presidency of N'Zita Henriques Tiago and the military command of Estanislau Bomba, presented the strongest resistance to the FAA's advance. Based predominantly in the northern centre of the province, it has operated mostly in Buco-Zau, Belize and Micongue. The FAA gradually advanced to the heart of the rebel-held territory, however, and by the end of October 2002 it had destroyed Kungo-Shonzo, the FLEC-FAC's main base in the municipality of Buco-Zau. Situated 110 km from Cabinda city, Kungo-Shonzo had been in existence since 1979.

At the end of December 2002, the FAA likewise claimed it had captured the bastions of FLEC-R and seized considerable quantities of arms and ammunition. At the end of February 2003, General Armando da Cruz Neto, Chief of Staff of the FAA, stated that FLEC-R had "ceased to operate since late 2002". On June 8, 2003, the Angola Press Agency reported that Francisco Luemba, Chief of Army Staff of the FLEC-FAC, together with six other high-ranking officers, had surrendered to government authorities. The war in Cabinda was now over, at least according to official Angolan sources. There is, however, no official cease-fire between any of the belligerents.

The way in which the 2002-03 counter-insurgency operation in Cabinda was pursued was inspired by the successful tactics of the 1988-2002 war against UNITA, and the consequences for Cabinda's civilian population have been almost identical to those suffered by the general civilian population. Cabinda's "year of war" resulted in the displacement and indiscriminate abuse of thousands of civilians, in summary executions, rape and torture, in the destruction of property and in the pillage of villages, with both sides responsible for human rights abuses. The conflict was fought throughout the province largely because the insurgency was seen as having the implicit blessing of the majority of Cabindans.

### **Position of main factions**

**FLEC-FAC** asserts that its self-proclaimed "Federal Republic of Cabinda" under the presidency of N'Zita Henriques Tiago is the only lawful "sovereign power" in Cabinda. It claims to control 85 per cent of the territory of Cabinda. In fact, however, not only have the most prominent military commanders of the FLEC-FAC now surrendered to the government, but FLEC-FAC's External Relations Secretary, Liberal Nuno, has withdrawn his political support for the leader of the

movement, President N'Zita Tiago. Liberal Nuno accused N'Zita Tiago of being the greatest obstacle to peace in the province by persisting in a logic of war, citing the position taken by N'Zita Tiago at a meeting with government officials in Paris on Jan. 9, 2003, when he refused to accept some form of autonomy for Cabinda. FLEC-FAC's Secretary-General, Alexandre Tati, however, accused Liberal Nuno of being an agent of the Angolan government.

With its headquarters in France, **FLEC-R** has also created a "government in exile", whose self-appointed Prime Minister is the Reverend Anny Antônio da Silva Kitembo. This "government in exile" is described in a "Charter of the Front for the Liberation of the State of Cabinda". According to article 7 of the charter "the FLEC's main objective is the struggle for liberation by diplomatic means, because of the overwhelming armaments of Angola on our National Territory". On April 25, 2003, FLEC-R's Prime Minister in Exile called on Portugal to help the territory conduct a plebiscite on the territory's future, since FLEC-R still sees Cabinda as a Portuguese protectorate. FLEC-R has evinced a stronger inclination to accept some sort of autonomy for Cabinda and has on several occasions called for a cease-fire. It has also been engaged in a number of attempts at negotiation (Libreville in 1995, for example).

FLEC-R has, however, been weakened by multiple splits. The creation of a "**FLEC-Platform**" broke the movement and its leadership in two. Antonio Bento Bembe now leads FLEC-Platform, and Anny da Silva Kitembo, FLEC-R. FLEC-Platform claims to be the natural descendant of the original FLEC created by Luis Ranque Franque in the early 1960s. It sees itself as flowing from the transformation of the "old" Renewed faction to include (since April 2002) all internal and external forces, civil society and the churches. However, according to most observers, FLEC-Platform is no more than a loose coalition.

Although intermittent negotiations have taken place since the 1980s Luanda has consistently made it clear that it will not contemplate secession on the part of Cabinda, emphasizing instead the desire for "national reconciliation". However, President Eduardo dos Santos declared in October 2002 that a peaceful solution to the conflict in Cabinda, through the granting of autonomy to the province, was in sight and the government, in the aftermath of its military victories

of 2002-03, stated that it was prepared to enter into "dialogue" with the armed factions. Between and within the separatist factions there have been deep and persistent divisions over the issue of autonomy versus independence and the government has claimed this fragmentation means there is no representative negotiating partner. D. Paulino Fernandes Madeca, Bishop of Cabinda, has repeatedly said that the problems between the various FLECs have contributed significantly to the protracted nature of the conflict. Bishop Madeca, one of the staunchest supporters of the self-determination cause, has tried several times to mediate between the factions, to no avail.

There are those who consider that, as a result of its open defence of Cabinda's self-determination cause and its strong condemnation of government operations in the province, the Catholic Church (in the pronouncements of Bishop Madeca and Father Jorge Casimiro Congo, among others) has fuelled rather than ameliorated the conflict. This is often contrasted with the role of the Catholic Church during most of the civil war in the "mainland", which could at best be described as one of "non-interference". Notwithstanding its staunch support of the self-determination cause, Cabinda's Diocese has actively pursued a peaceful, negotiated settlement to the war in the province.

Internationally, the separatists have often asked the Portuguese government to intervene in the situation. In fact, the kidnapping of several Portuguese workers in the enclave during 1999 and 2000 by both the FLEC-FAC and FLEC-R had precisely the intention of forcing the Portuguese government to become involved in the Cabinda issue. However, Lisbon has historically viewed Cabinda as an internal Angolan problem. The regional context changed dramatically in the late 1990s, particularly in Congo-Brazzaville and the DRC – a change that was actively pursued by Luanda. If previous regimes were at one time sympathetic to the Cabinda cause, particularly that of Pascal Lissouba in Brazzaville, which actively supported it materially and diplomatically, this situation does not pertain today.

*Joao Porto*

## Antigua and Barbuda

**Capital:** St John's

**Population:** 68,000

Antigua and Barbuda, consisting of the Caribbean islands of Antigua, Barbuda and Redonda (the last-named being uninhabited) became an independent state within the Commonwealth on Nov. 1, 1981, with the British monarch as head of state, represented by a Governor-General. The bicameral parliament consists

of a 19-member House of Representatives elected for five years by universal adult suffrage, and a Senate of 17 appointed members.

In a general election held on March 9, 1999, the Antigua Labour Party (ALP), continuously in power since 1976, won a sixth successive term in office, win-



ning 12 seats in the House of Representatives. The opposition United Progressive Party (UPP) won four seats, with the regionalist Barbuda People's Party winning one seat. The turnout was 63.6 percent. However, there were accusations that widespread bribery, multiple voting, and unbalanced coverage on the part of the state-owned media had marred the elections. The UPP accepted the results, but threatened to boycott the next election unless reforms of the electoral system were implemented. The government, in turn, promised to

introduce such reforms by the end of 2001. However, the reform process was not completed until early 2003.

There are no reports of illegal political movements in Antigua and Barbuda. In August 2001, the US Treasury Department and the inter-governmental Financial Action Task Force (FATF) stated that Antigua and Barbuda had met their concerns regarding money laundering.

*Peter Clegg*

## Argentina

**Capital:** Buenos Aires

**Population:** 37 m

Argentina has been under civilian and democratic government since December 1983, having previously experienced repeated military intervention and prolonged periods of military rule. There has been no significant military unrest since December 1990. Under the 1994 revision of the Constitution of 1853, after a transitional period ending in 2003, the legislature comprises a Chamber of Deputies of 257 members elected directly for four years, with half of the seats renewed every two years, and a 72-member Senate of three members from each of the 23 provinces and the federal district (Distrito Federal), chosen for six-year terms with one-third of the seats renewable every two years. Executive power is vested in the President who, with the Vice-President, is directly elected for a four-year term. The President is assisted by an appointed Cabinet. Since the 1940s, the most significant political stream has been represented by Peronism, the legacy of President Juan Domingo Perón (in power 1946-55 and again in 1973-74), which has embraced factions from the far-left to the far-right.

In the presidential election of Oct. 24, 1999, Fernando De la Rúa of the Radical Civic Union (UCR) won 48.5 per cent of the popular vote and took office on Dec. 10. He was forced to resign on Dec. 20, 2001, following violent street demonstrations against his economic policies. Following a period of confusion, in which three other people served briefly as President, Congress, on Jan. 1, 2002, chose Eduardo Duhalde of the Peronist (Justicialist) Party (PJ) to serve as President for the remainder of the term 1999-2003.

Elections in October 2001 had given the Justicialists control of both houses of Congress. With all 72 seats in the Senate contested results were: PJ 40, UCR 24, Front for A Country in Solidarity (Frepaso) 1, Alternative for a Republic of Equals (ARI) 1, others 6. Partial elections for the Chamber gave the PJ overall 116, UCR 71, Frepaso 17, ARI 17, AR 9, others 27.

Presidential run-off elections scheduled for May 18, 2003, were abandoned following the withdrawal of one of the two candidates, Carlos Menem, with Néstor Kirchner, described as a centre-left Peronist, assuming

the presidency on May 25.

### Human Rights Issues

The question of the violation of human rights during the military regimes from 1976 to 1983 centred on the fate of thousands of persons who had disappeared after being arrested in the so-called "dirty war" against alleged subversive and terrorist activities. According to a report submitted to the President on Sept. 20, 1984, by a National Commission on the Disappearance of Persons, at least 8,960 persons (who were named) had gone missing after the 1976 military coup. The report also described in detail the torture, abduction and murder of men, women and children on the basis of testimony from relatives and others, and also the way in which repression was systematically organized by the military authorities.

The new civilian government undertook to punish those guilty of violations of human rights and also passed a law against torture, which came into force on Oct. 26, 1984. The government's measures were, however, resisted by large sections of the armed forces, and in December 1986 the Senate and Chamber of Deputies passed a "Full Stop" Law (*Punto Final*) imposing deadlines for bringing new cases of alleged human rights violations to court. Sentences passed in such cases included life imprisonment imposed on Dec. 9, 1985, on Gen. Jorge Rafael Videla (a former President) and Adml. Eduardo Emilio Massera, and 25 and 14 years in prison for two former Buenos Aires police chiefs in December 1986.

The Supreme Court on June 23, 1987, upheld by four votes to one a "due-obedience" law signed on June 8, which exempted most military officers from prosecution for human rights violations, on the ground that they were acting under orders.

In October 1989 President Carlos Menem granted pardons for many of the military officers convicted of crimes and in late December 1990 pardons were extended to, among others, former Presidents Videla and Viola, and to Massera. The pardons provoked

widespread demonstrations in Buenos Aires.

Since that time, however, the courts have ruled that some crimes were not covered by the 1978 amnesty, though it has proved difficult in practice to pursue such cases. In March 2000 Navy Capt (retd) Alfredo Ignacio Astiz, who had boasted in the magazine *Tres Puntos* of his crimes during the “dirty war”, received a three-month suspended sentence for “violating public peace”. In April 2000 the President dismissed all the members of the highest military court, the Consejo Supremo de las Fuerzas Armadas, after they had claimed jurisdiction in all military cases involving theft and clandestine adoption of children, a crime not covered by the amnesty.

In 2001 President Fernando De la Rúa signed a decree giving automatic indefinite protection against extradition requests to former members of the armed forces. On July 25, 2003, however, following a successful request by a Spanish magistrate, Baltazar Garzón, to Mexico to extradite a former Argentinian officer on charges of genocide and torture against Spanish citizens, the new Kirchner government would henceforth be revoked the decree so that individual cases would be left to the jurisdiction of the courts.

### **Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo (La Asociación Madres de la Plaza de Mayo)**

*Email. madres@satlink.com*

This grouping, founded in April 1977, consists principally of the mothers of persons who disappeared under the military juntas of 1976-83. The organization takes its name from the square in Buenos Aires in front of the presidential palace where every Thursday silent demonstrations are held to demand the return alive, or an official admission of the death, of those who have disappeared. In 1982 these vigils developed into more pronounced anti-government demonstrations, but after the fall of the military government in 1983 had been entirely peaceful until in December 2001 they had the misfortune to be caught up in anti-government demonstrations and several of the Mothers were killed by the security forces.

Despite moves by the civilian government to address the human rights situation the Mothers have, since 1984, maintained that progress has been both too limited and too slow. Demanding the trial and conviction of all those guilty of human rights crimes they have deplored the government's “political solution” of limiting state prosecution of human rights violators to the military commanders and former junta members and, subsequently, of excluding cases in which “due obedience” was being exercised by subordinate officers. They have, however, had limited success in tracing missing relatives and in particular those children of the detained who were adopted by military families.

### **LEFT-WING MOVEMENTS**

#### **Everyone for the Motherland (Movimiento Todos por la Patria, MTP)**

About 50 members of this previously unknown left-wing group founded in May 1986 participated in an attack on the La Tablada barracks (the headquarters of the Third Infantry

Regiment) in the suburbs of Buenos Aires on Jan. 23, 1989. Thirty-one guerrillas, seven soldiers and two policemen were killed during the operation by security forces to recapture the base. The attack appeared to have been carried out to pre-empt a feared military coup. Among the guerrillas killed was Jorge Baños, a prominent human rights lawyer. On Jan. 31, Fr Antonio Puigiane, a priest and leader of the MTP, gave himself up to the authorities. The authorities later claimed that the MTP was linked with Nicaragua and Cuba and that one of its leaders was Enrique Gorriarán Merlo, a former leader of the People's Revolutionary Army (ERP, see below).

On Oct. 6, 1989, 11 of those involved in the La Tablada incident were sentenced to life imprisonment, while seven others received prison terms of between 10 and 20 years. On July 2, 1999, Gorriarán Merlo was sentenced to life imprisonment by a federal court for his role in the attack. The human rights pressure group, Amnesty International, has compiled evidence that MTP members had been tortured, illegally executed or had disappeared during their period of military detention.

#### **Montonero Movement (Movimiento Montonero)**

*Website: movimientomontonero.org*

As an openly left-wing Peronist urban guerrilla group, under the leadership of Mario Eduardo Firmenich, the Montonero Peronist Movement (*Movimiento Peronista Montonero*, MPM), named after irregular cavalry forces of the 19th century, began guerrilla activities in 1970, with the objective of overthrowing the military government and securing the return of Gen. Juan Domingo Perón.

After the election of the (Peronist) President Hector Cámpora in April 1973, the MPM and the (Peronist) Revolutionary Armed Forces (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias*, FAR), led by Roberto Quieto, declared that they would respect the new government even though only a battle had been won and the “war” was “not finished”. On June 28, 1973, it was reported that the Montoneros had decided to lay down their arms and support President Cámpora. At a mass rally organized to celebrate the return from exile of Lt-Gen. Juan Domingo Perón on June 20, 1973, there were armed clashes between the Montoneros and the FAR in which at least 34 people were killed. The MPM and the FAR joined together on Oct. 13, a day after the inauguration of Perón as President.

The period of peaceful co-existence with the government was short-lived, as on Sept. 6, 1974, the MPM announced its intention to return underground to wage a “popular war” against the government as a result of aggression by the police and security forces. As violence increased, in March 1976 the armed forces seized power. On April 20, 1977, Firmenich announced in Rome that the MPM and the Authentic Peronist Party (*Partido Peronista Auténtico*, PPA) had merged to form a Supreme Council of Peronist Montoneros. However, the MPM suffered heavy losses in the ensuing years in the face of increased government pressure and infiltration by the security forces. It was virtually inactive between 1980 and 1982 and in early 1983 military sources asserted that it had been completely defeated.

On Oct. 19, 1983, a Montonero leader, Carlos Dante Gullo, was among 242 detainees whose release had been

authorized following the implementation of the Law of National Pacification. He had been imprisoned for eight years and had frequently been tortured. At Easter 1987 a Montonero contingent openly demonstrated with other groups in support of the democratic government. In October 1989, 64 former Montoneros were among the prisoners granted an amnesty, partly in response to pressure from some sections of the Peronist Party. Firmenich, however, remained in prison until late December 1990 when he, too, was pardoned by President Menem. He has since died of the effects of torture. The movement survives as a left-wing pressure group.

#### **People's Revolutionary Army (ERP)**

The ERP was formed in July 1970 as the armed wing of the (nominally Trotskyist) **Workers' Revolutionary Party**

(*Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores*, PRT). It had affiliations with the Tupamaro guerrillas in Uruguay. Its first major operation was the abduction, on March 21, 1972, of Dr Oberdán Sallustro, director-general of the Fiat Concord company, and his assassination on April 10 after he had, according to an ERP statement, been tried by a "people's court". The ERP was effectively disbanded after 1976 in the face of government repression, although one of its former leaders, Enrique Gorriarán Merlo, who was alleged to have been involved in the assassination of the former Nicaraguan dictator, Anastasio Somoza Debayle, in Paraguay in 1980, later proved to have been a key figure in the left-wing *Everyone for the Motherland* (MTP, see separate entry).

*Peter Calvert*

## Armenia

**Capital:** Yerevan

**Population:** 3.3 m

The former Soviet Republic of Armenia declared its independence from the USSR in August 1991. It has an elected executive President, a position held since 1998 by Robert Kocharian (non-party, re-elected in March 2003), and a unicameral National Assembly. Elections to the Assembly held on May 25, 2003, resulted in a coalition government being formed with the participation of three parties: the Republic Party of Armenia (HHK), the *Orinats Yerkir* (Country of Law) Party and the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (*Dashnaktsutun*).

Of the three South Caucasian independent republics created at the dissolution of the Soviet Union – Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia – only Armenia has been spared from ethnic conflict on its territory. Armenia has, however, been embroiled in a conflict with neighbouring Azerbaijan over Nagorno Karabakh, an enclave within Azerbaijan with a majority Armenian population where there was bitter fighting in the early 1990s and where the Armenian population has, since a ceasefire in 1994, enjoyed *de facto* independence (see Azerbaijan entry).

Armenia was the first of the Soviet Caucasian republics in which the process of *glasnost* and *perestroika* generated a nationalist upsurge. In early 1988, the Karabakh Committee was formed in Yerevan to promote Armenian claims. The refusal of Moscow to support these claims led to a steady decline in support for the Communist Party and growth in pro-independence sentiment. Disillusioned with Moscow's policy on Nagorno Karabakh, Armenia's drive towards independence grew stronger at the beginning of 1990 with the amendment of the republic's constitution to allow it to veto Soviet laws that ran counter to its interests. In June 1990, the Armenian National Movement

(ANM) defeated the Communist Party in elections and Levon Ter-Petrossian became the chairman of the Armenian Supreme Soviet. In August 1990, the Armenian Supreme Soviet passed a declaration of sovereignty that envisaged the formation of an Armenian army, independent foreign policy and a separate currency, while the decision on secession from the Soviet Union was overwhelmingly supported at a referendum held in September 1991, prior to the complete dissolution of the Soviet Union at the end of the year. Ter-Petrossian was confirmed as the country's president in elections in November 1991.

The conflict over Nagorno Karabakh dominated Armenia's domestic and foreign policy agenda following independence. As the conflict involved a combination of separatism and irredentism, Armenia's support for the claims of the Karabakh Armenian secessionists put it at odds with the international community, reinforcing the country's isolation. In an effort to reduce that isolation, Armenia's foreign policy in 1991-92 emphasized the establishment of normal relations with Turkey, the principal supply route to the country. President Levon Ter-Petrossian refused to make the 1915 genocide of Armenians at the hands of the Turks a diplomatic issue, leading to the resignation in 1992 of his diaspora-born foreign minister, Raffi Hovannisian.

The government also significantly retracted from the 1988-90 calls for the unification of Armenia and Karabakh, and declined to recognize Karabakh's independence. Within this context, the government of the Armenian National Movement (ANM) and President Ter-Petrossian faced challenges to its position both from the old communist nomenklatura and from opposition political movements, principally *Dashnaktsutun*, which has been fiercely critical of the ANM's political

line. The rift deepened and in December 1994, prior to the 1995 elections, *Dashnaksutiun* and eight other parties were banned.

### **Banning of Armenian Revolutionary Federation 1994-98**

The nationalist **Armenian Revolutionary Federation Dashnaksutiun (ARF)**, known as the **Dashnak Party**, was banned from 1994 until 1998. It has been an important political force in the country.

The origins of the Dashnak Party go back to the nineteenth century and the beginning of the political and institutional expression of Armenian nationalism. It played an important role in the creation and administration of the short-lived independent Armenian Republic in 1918. Following the fall of the republic under Bolshevik pressure in 1921, the Dashnaks went into exile where they remained until the end of Communist rule in 1990.

The party enjoyed considerable support in Armenia and among Armenian communities of the diaspora. Its candidate in the November 1991 presidential election won only 4% of the vote but it demonstrated strong support for its intense criticism of government policy towards Nagorno Karabakh as the conflict continued. In December 1994 the party's activities in Armenia were suspended by President Ter-Petrosian, who accused the ARF of sheltering a secret terrorist cell, *Dro*, whose members allegedly engaged in terrorism, sabotage, and drug-dealing with the aim of destabilizing the country and overthrowing the government. The ARF chairman, Vahan Hohvannissian, and thirty other ARF members were arrested and put on trial (known as the *Dro* trial) on charges of drug trafficking and murder. In January 1995, the Armenian Supreme Court formally suspended the party's activities. The court ignored the charges of terrorism, however, and instead suspended the party on the grounds that it had violated a ban against foreign nationals belonging to Armenian political parties.

Spread all over the world, the ARF consists of several decentralized territorial organizations, each one having its own central committee. The ban on the ARF's activities forced the party to amend its statutes as regards the Armenian territorial organization, which was granted a higher degree of autonomy. The Dashnak leaders, however, were reluctant to see the split of their party, while Armenian authorities expected to see a complete separation between Dashnak structures in the diaspora and in Armenia.

In 1996 and 1997, the government carried out negotiations with ARF leaders aimed at reinstating the party. The discussions yielded no tangible results. The government did allow party members access to previously confiscated equipment thereby allowing the publication of a Dashnak-affiliated newspaper, *Hoyots Ashkar*. The authorities, however, did not officially lift the ban on other Dashnak-affiliated newspapers.

The fate of the ARF was in fact determined by the approach of President Ter-Petrosian at the end of

1997 and beginning of 1998 over the Nagorno Karabakh issue. The Minsk Group, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) mediating forum, had sought to come up with a formula for Nagorno Karabakh autonomy without removing the region from Azerbaijan's sovereignty. This approach fell short of the ARF demand for full independence of the region. When President Ter-Petrosian sought to accept the Minsk Group formula, he was confronted with the opposition of his government and was forced to resign. In February 1998, he was replaced by Prime Minister Robert Kocharian, appointed by Petrossian in 1997 and a former president of Nagorno Karabakh, who together with Defence Minister Vazgen Sargsian took a harder line on the Karabakh issue, adopting a position closer to that of the ARF. The ban on the ARF was lifted and Hohvannissian and other ARF leaders released. In March 1998, the newly legalized ARF and the *Yerkrapah* bloc led the Justice and Unity Alliance, a five-party coalition, in support of Kocharian who won the elections with 60 percent of a second-round vote. Following the elections Hohvannissian became a presidential adviser and the party obtained two ministerial portfolios in the new government. In the May 2003 elections, the ARF won a total of 11 seats in the 131-deputy parliament and obtained three ministerial portfolios in the new coalition government, one portfolio more than in the outgoing government.

Within Nagorno Karabakh, the Nagorno Karabakh wing of the ARF won 9 of the 33 seats in legislative elections in June 2000.

### **Parliamentary shooting**

In October 1999, five men opened fire on a session of Parliament with automatic weapons. They killed the Prime Minister, the Speaker of the Parliament, the two deputy speakers, the minister for special projects, and three deputies, and wounded the Minister of Privatization and four other deputies. By the end of 1999, 19 persons, including a National Assembly deputy, the then presidential chief of staff and advisor, and the deputy chief of state television were imprisoned. The court hearing for the accused defendants started in February 2000. Four of the accused, including the deputy, the presidential advisor and the television chief, were released and charges against them dropped. The Military Prosecutor admitted that the evidence against them was insufficient. One additional detainee was released on bail for health reasons, and another was found dead in his cell in September 2000.

In late 2001, police detained Musheg Saghatelian, an opposition politician and former prison chief, after he accused President Kocharian of masterminding the murders. A court sentenced Saghatelian to seven years of imprisonment, which was reduced on appeal to six years.

*Nadia Milanova*

# Australia

**Capital:** Canberra (ACT)

**Population:** 19.8 m

The Commonwealth of Australia (a member of the Commonwealth) is a parliamentary democracy with the British monarch as (non-executive) head of state represented by a Governor-General. It comprises six states as well as the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) and the Northern Territory. Legislative power is vested in a (federal) Parliament consisting of the British monarch, a 76-member Senate whose members serve six-year terms and a 150-member House of Representatives elected for three years by universal adult suffrage. There is a Cabinet headed by a Prime Minister, responsible to Parliament. Five of the constituent states have their own bicameral legislatures, while Queensland, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory each have a Legislative Assembly.

As a result of elections held on Nov. 10, 2001, and a by-election on Oct. 19, 2002, seats in the federal House of Representatives were distributed as follows: Liberal Party 68 and its coalition partner the National Party 13, Australian Labor Party 64, Country Liberal Party one, Australian Greens one, independents three. Each of these groups is also represented in the Senate where they are joined by representatives from the Australian Democrats and Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party.

Various small political organizations of the extreme right are active, especially in regional Australia, where Pauline Hanson's populist-conservative One Nation Party gathered considerable support in the late 1990s. Currently, however, the party is fragmented and in decline. This also appears to be the case with the **AUSI (Australians United for Survival and Individual) Freedom Scouts**, an American-style militia that claimed to have 3,000 members and a hidden arsenal of machine guns, mortars and artillery pieces in readiness for an imagined Indonesian invasion. Restrictive gun ownership legislation introduced in the wake of the 1996 Port Arthur massacre has curtailed both membership and activities, which according to Australian Federal Police sources were never as great as the Freedom Scouts claimed.

After the terrorist attacks in the United States of Sept. 11, 2001, the government introduced a package of legislation into the parliament designed to strengthen the nation's counter-terrorism capabilities. The legislation included measures dealing with the financing of terrorism, terrorist acts, border protection, and significantly increasing the powers of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO). While the parliament passed the other bills, the Senate, which the government does not control, refused to pass the ASIO bill without substantial amendments designed to protect citizens' rights. Also following Sept. 11, members of the Australian Islamic community reported rising levels of physical and verbal abuse and a mosque in Brisbane was destroyed by arson. These actions appeared to be the work of individuals acting alone rather than of members of organized political movements.

Shortly after the bombing of two nightclubs in Bali (Indonesia) on Oct. 12, 2002, in which almost two hundred people were killed, including more than eighty Australians, the government introduced legislation to ban *Jemaah Islamiah*, the organization thought to be responsible for the deaths, along with four other groups: the Abu Sayyaf Group, Armed Islamic Group, Salafist Group for the Call and Combat and *Harakat Ul-Mujahideen*. Police and ASIO raids on a number of Muslim homes resulted in a small number of arrests of people alleged to have associations with *Al-Qaeda* and *Jemaah Islamiah*.

Australia sent military forces to participate in the US-led invasion of Iraq in March 2003, citing the threat from weapons of mass destruction and terrorism, notwithstanding a vote of no confidence in the Howard government's policy on Iraq adopted by the Senate on Feb. 5. On May 14, 2003, the government announced a budget including substantial provision for upgrading domestic security.

*Rae Wear*

# Austria

**Capital:** Vienna

**Population:** 8.1 m

The First Republic of Austria was founded in 1919 following the demise of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in World War I, and Austria was re-established in the Second Republic after World War II. The constitution of the Second Republic proscribes any attempt to revive the Nazi Party.

The formation of a coalition government between the conservative Austrian People's Party (*Österreichische Volkspartei*, ÖVP) and the right-wing-populist Freedom Party of Austria (*Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs*, FPÖ) in February 2000 caused great domestic and international controversy, with the other EU member states isolating Austria diplomatically for several months. This was the first time since the creation of the Second Republic that representatives of the historical so-called "third camp" – the German nationalists – had formed part of the Austrian government. The FPÖ was founded in the 1950s as a right-wing party embracing elements of Nazi ideology. Under the leadership of Jörg Haider (from 1986) it adopted a populist (Austrian) neo-patriotism but has never cut its ideological and organizational ties to the extreme right (see neo-Nazi groups below).

Difficulties in working with the FPÖ were cited by the Chancellor (head of government), ÖVP leader Wolfgang Schüssel, in calling early elections held in November 2002. In these, the FPÖ share of the vote dropped to 10.2 per cent, having been 26.9 per cent at the previous general election in October 1999, with the ÖVP taking most of the former FPÖ votes: nevertheless, the election results led to the continuation of the coalition between the ÖVP and FPÖ.

## Neo-Nazi Groups

The political influence of the Austrian extreme right does not lie so much in the number of its members, but in the involvement in Austrian politics and government through personal and institutional relations with the FPÖ. This growing influence has been reflected, for example, in the level of opposition to prospective Czech membership of the EU on the grounds of the (never repealed) so-called Beneš decrees of post-war Czechoslovakia that expropriated the Sudeten Germans who had sided with the Nazi occupation of that country.

The **Arbeitsgemeinschaft (Aktionsgemeinschaft)**

**für Demokratische Politik**, in existence since 1963, comprises a small number of activists but has several publications, with regular contributions denying the Holocaust. It networks with extreme right-wing groups internationally and has good contacts with and regularly supports the FPÖ in election campaigns.

An important position in the relationship between the FPÖ and the extreme right is held by the publication *Aula*, linked to the party, that combines regular contributions by FPÖ and other democratic right-wing politicians as well as those from the extreme right and has established a forum for the inclusion of the extreme right in public debate. Since the establishment of the ÖVP-FPÖ coalition, *Aula* is granted regular public funding through the media support program of the government. *Aula* also serves as a platform on a European level: in 2002 the periodical organized a meeting of European right-wing and extreme right parties (e.g. the *Vlaams Blok* in Belgium and the Hungarian Justice and Life Party, MIEP) with the aim of coordinating European politics of the populist and extreme right.

The group **Kritische Demokraten**, with its periodical *Fakten*, is another link between the FPÖ and the extreme right-wing; the founder and editor, Horst Jakob Rosenkranz, a former activist of the neo-Nazi NDP (*Nationaldemokratische Partei*), is also an activist of the regional FPÖ, his wife being a long time FPÖ-member of the regional parliament and since the 2002 elections an MP at the national level.

A direct link between the German NDP and the Austrian extreme right is the **Österreichische Landsmannschaft**, with a number of neo-Nazi publications; it is especially active in attempts to support and influence the organization of the German minorities in the new democracies of the region and has been granted support for these activities by the government since 2000.

A few prominent representatives of the extreme right-wing have been sentenced by the courts under the *Wiederbetätigungsverbot* (banning neo-Nazi propaganda) – as, for example, Gerd Honsik, the founder of the **Ausländer Halt** movement, who for this reason emigrated to and continues his publications from Spain.

*Andreas Pribersky*

# Azerbaijan

**Capital:** Baku

**Population:** 7.8 m

Azerbaijan declared its independence from the USSR in August 1991. It has an elected executive president, with Haidar Aliyev of the New Azerbaijan Party (YAP), having held that position since 1993, being most recently re-elected in November 1998. The YAP also holds an outright majority in the 125-seat National Assembly, which is elected for a five-year term, most recently in November 2000. There have been widespread charges of electoral malpractice and there has been considerable continuity in the state bureaucracy from the Communist era, Aliyev himself having formerly been the first secretary of the Communist Party in Azerbaijan in the Soviet period.

The movement for independence gained momentum in 1988 and was largely in reaction to the national movement in the Armenian-inhabited autonomous region of Nagorno Karabakh. As a result of armed hostilities in 1992-94 in and around Nagorno Karabakh, an estimated 16 to 20 percent of the territory of Azerbaijan is currently under the control of Armenian forces outside of the state jurisdiction of Azerbaijan. This issue has continued to dominate Azerbaijan's national politics ever since the country gained its independence and has a considerable impact on its economic and social development. The three presidents in power since Azerbaijan gained independence – Ayaz Mutalibov, Abulfaz Elchibey and Haidar Aliyev – came to power against the background of popular anxiety about the spread of hostilities. As this has been the predominant issue of Azerbaijan's politics, the presidents' credibility has been judged in light of their capacity to handle the Nagorno Karabakh issue. The conflict and Azerbaijan's military defeat were the immediate cause for the removal of Mutalibov and Elchibey from power and the re-emergence of Haidar Aliyev as Azerbaijan's leader in 1993.

Linguistic and ethnic heterogeneity and sectarian divisions further complicate Azerbaijan's development. Some of the ethnic minorities within Azerbaijan, such as the Talysh of the Lenkoran area, are oriented towards Iran. Lezgins are drawn to their kin in Dagestan within the Russian Federation. Sectarian divisions exist between the Shia south and more Sunni north. There are also differences emerging between political parties advocating secular nationalism and parties oriented toward Islam. These divisions, leading to a lack of national cohesion and purpose, make difficult the ongoing processes of state- and nation-building.

The political life of Azerbaijan has been dominated by a nationalist and, to varying degrees, pro-Turkey and pro-West philosophy. Differences have existed as regards Azerbaijan's policy towards Iran. The philosophy of the Azerbaijan Popular Front (APF), in govern-

ment after independence until 1993, had anti-Iranian dimensions, while Haidar Aliyev has favoured a more balanced approach to relations with Azerbaijan's neighbours.

## NAGORNO KARABAKH

From 1923, under Soviet rule, Nagorno Karabakh enjoyed the status of an autonomous region under Azerbaijani administration, but its majority (Christian) Armenian population complained of discrimination and economic mismanagement by the Azeris. Mounting Armenian discontent in Nagorno Karabakh in the late 1980s, encouraged by the weakening of the Soviet Union and the general spread of ethnic and nationalist politics within its borders, in turn provided impetus to the Azerbaijani national movement and galvanized Azerbaijani nationalism.

On Feb. 20, 1988, deputies from Nagorno Karabakh appealed to the Supreme Soviet to transfer the control of the territory from Azerbaijan to Armenia. The request was turned down on March 23. On July 20, the Nagorno Karabakh regional Soviet voted for the region to be detached from Azerbaijan and to be incorporated in Armenia under the name Artsakh. In 1989, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR established a special form of administration in Nagorno Karabakh under the leadership of a special committee with full legislative and executive powers, removing the autonomous region from Azerbaijani jurisdiction. On Dec. 1, 1989, the Armenian parliament and the Council of Artsakh both voted for the reunification of Artsakh and Armenia. The number of clashes between the Armenian and Azerbaijani communities increased. Unrest in Baku and pogroms against Armenian families broke out, leading to the introduction of Soviet troops in Azerbaijan on Jan. 19, 1990. On their side, Armenians expelled the Azerbaijanis from Armenia, a move that resulted in the influx of 200,000 refugees. While the dismantling of the Soviet Union was gaining momentum, it was decided to create the **Republic of Nagorno Karabakh**. On Dec. 10, 1991, 99 percent of the population voted in favour of independence. Elections to the parliament of Nagorno Karabakh were held on Dec. 28 and the republic was proclaimed on Jan. 18, 1992. By mid-1992, Karabakh Armenian troops had forced out all of the Azeri population of Nagorno Karabakh.

The conflict reached its highest point in 1992-93. In June 1992, Karabakh Armenian forces captured the Lachin corridor connecting Nagorno Karabakh with Armenia. The Kelbajar Province of Azerbaijan was

seized in April 1993, Agdam was captured in July 1993. In October 1993, Karabakh Armenian forces seized the Zangelean province. By that time, one-fifth of Azerbaijani territory was under Armenian control, and the conflict had reached the border with Iran in the Khoda Afarin region.

Since May 1994 a cease-fire has been in effect and except for minor skirmishes and flare-ups, hostilities have been avoided. Nagorno Karabakh has continued to play a pivotal role in the domestic politics of Azerbaijan as well as neighbouring Armenia. The OSCE-sponsored Minsk Group, the main negotiating forum on the conflict co-chaired by the USA, Russia and France, has put forward several peace plans to resolve the status of Nagorno Karabakh, none of which has been found acceptable by all parties to the conflict.

Meanwhile, Nagorno Karabakh has adopted all the appurtenances of statehood with president, parliament, and the normal range of ministries and departments of state. Since independence, there have been three parliamentary elections and two presidential elections, with Arkady Ghukasyan being re-elected as president with 88.4% of the vote on Aug. 11, 2002. The Nagorno Karabakh Defence Army is reckoned to be 20-25,000 strong.

## OTHER SECESSIONIST AND INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENTS

### Talysh independence movement

The Talysh, who are Muslim, primarily of the Shia branch, number about 200,000, of whom 130,000 live in the south-eastern part of Azerbaijan near the Iranian border.

In 1993, the Talysh population challenged the central authorities for three months. During the civil strife, the Talysh-Mugan republic was proclaimed in Lenkoran, a port near the Iranian border. There were fears of a new ethno-territorial conflict in the region. The leader of the Talysh independence movement, Colonel Alikram Humbatov, was arrested and sent to jail. He was expected to be released in an amnesty in 2000 but this did not happen.

### Lezgin organization "Sadval"

The Lezgin issue has always been considered a serious potential source of instability in Azerbaijan. The Lezgins are a Caucasian people divided by the border between Azerbaijan and the Dagestan Autonomous Republic of the Russian Federation. Wahhabism is popular among Azerbaijan's Lezgins who have complained of the denial of their cultural and language rights and of economic deprivation.

*Sadval* (Unity), a Lezgin organization, has campaigned on Lezgin issues. Some extremists in the ranks of *Sadval* have called for armed struggle, independence and the creation of a united Lezginstan within the Russian Federation. In 1993, the organization staged large-scale demonstrations and clashes with the police and tensions between Lezgin and Baku started to mount. At the same time, there were some indications of Russia's interest to put pressure on Azerbaijan by exploiting the Lezgin issue.

*Sadval* claimed responsibility for a 1994 bomb blast in the Baku metro. The government moved to suppress *Sadval* and convicted some of its members of terrorist offences.

## ISLAMIST MOVEMENT

### Islamic Party of Azerbaijan (IPA)

*Leadership: Alikram Aliyev (chairman)*

Azerbaijan is the only country of the former Soviet Union where the Shiite branch of Islam is dominant. Estimates vary between 60 and 70 percent of the Muslim population. They form a majority in the southern regions bordering Iran, in central Azerbaijan and in Baku. Politically, however, since the beginning of the 1990s the parties in power in Azerbaijan have opted for a nationalist, pro-Turkey and pro-Western model of government in contrast to some assumptions expressed that the country might become a stronghold of Islamist traditions.

The main proponent of the Iranian model in Azerbaijan is the Islamic Party of Azerbaijan (IPA), founded in 1991 in the village of Nordaran, not far from Baku. The IPA has based its ideology on the belief that Azerbaijan can achieve its social and economic independence through Islamic laws and principles. By the end of 1994, the party had set up branches in more than 70 districts and towns with a total membership of 50,000. The party launched the training of brigades made up of Shiite Azeris, which led to the refusal of Azerbaijan's authorities to renew its registration in 1995 on charges of activities judged as hostile to the interests of the state.

In May 1996, the party leader and three deputies were arrested. In 1997, they were sentenced to ten years' imprisonment on charges of spying for Iran. In November 1999, President Haidar Aliyev signed a decree pardoning three of the leaders, Alikram Aliyev, Vagif Gasymov, and Hajiada Nuriyev, saying that they had shown "repentance for their crimes".

Hajiada Nuriyev was arrested for a second time on Nov. 24, 2001, on the Azerbaijan-Iran border. On June 10, 2002, the IPA chairman Alikram Aliyev was arrested again. In September 2002, the party leadership took a decision to organize mass demonstrations unless Aliyev is freed.

*Nadia Milanova*



# Bahamas

**Capital:** Nassau

**Population:** 302,000

The Commonwealth of the Bahamas, a member of the Commonwealth, with the British Monarch as head of state represented by a Governor-General, has a bicameral parliament consisting of (i) a 40-member House of Assembly elected for five years by universal adult suffrage, and (ii) a 16-member Senate to which nine members are appointed on the advice of the Prime Minister, four on that of the Leader of the Opposition and three at the Governor-General's discretion. The Prime Minister and the Cabinet are collectively responsible to Parliament.

A general election held in May 2002 resulted in the opposition Progressive Liberal Party (PLP), led by Perry Christie, gaining a convincing victory and putting an end to 10 years in opposition for the party. The PLP won 29 seats compared with four in the 1997 election, while the ruling Free National Movement (FNM) saw its representation drop from 35 seats to just seven. Independents won the remaining four seats. Over 90 percent of the electorate participated in the election.

Incoming Prime Minister Christie promised to govern with "clean hands", a reference to the PLP's campaign allegations of government corruption. In addition, Christie wanted to blunt FNM charges that lead-

ing figures in his party were still involved with organized crime, particularly drug trafficking. The PLP governed the Bahamas from independence in 1973 until 1992, when the electorate voted the party out after allegations were made linking the then-prime minister, Lynden Pindling, with Colombian drug lords. However, in December 2002 the US Ambassador to the Bahamas criticized the authorities and particularly the criminal justice system for being too easy on drug traffickers. The tensions between the Bahamas and the USA were reduced somewhat later in December, when it was announced that a joint operation between the two countries had successfully dismantled an important cocaine smuggling network linking the Bahamas to south Florida.

Prior to the election, the then Bahamian finance minister, William Allen, signed a tax information-sharing accord with the US, building on previous measures to improve transparency in the offshore sector. These provisions were praised by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), which removed the Bahamas from its list of uncooperative jurisdictions.

*Peter Clegg*

# Bahrain

**Capital:** Manama

**Population:** 656,000

The State of Bahrain is a monarchy that has been fully independent since 1971, having previously been a British protected state. The Sunni Muslim Al-Khalifa family has ruled the country (which has a Shia majority) for more than two centuries. The 1973 Constitution provided for the creation of an elective National Assembly; elections for this were held in 1974 but the Assembly was dissolved by the Emir in 1975. In 1993 the Emir established an appointed 40-member Consultative Council. A range of clandestine groups emerged, based mainly in the Shia population, and there were many arrests and secret trials of dissidents in the 1990s.

King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa (who had succeeded his father as Emir in March 1999) in October 2000 announced a new National Charter of Action. The Charter outlined four main political reforms: the creation of bicameral parliament with an upper house of

appointed members and a lower house with elected members; the creation of an independent judicial system; the granting of full suffrage to male and female citizens; and the transformation into a constitutional monarchy, with the Emir (Prince) as King.

The Charter received 98 per cent approval in a national referendum (in which 90 per cent of the population went to the polls and in which women were allowed to vote for the first time) in February 2001. In addition the Emir released political prisoners, including the Shi'ite opposition leader, Sheikh Abdul Amir Al-Jamri, and granted permission for the return of 108 people in exile. Among those allowed to return was Mansour Al-Jamri, the head of the London-based **Bahrain Freedom Movement**. Jamri, the son of Sheikh Abdul Amir Al-Jamri, told Reuters that: "We are planning to redefine the role of our movement on the basis of our assessment (of the situation in

Bahrain)". Newspapers in Bahrain said that hundreds of prisoners who had been recently released would be given jobs and training by the government.

Municipal elections were held in May 2002. More women voted than men (51% against 49%) but none of the 31 women candidates won a seat to the five councils. Candidates linked to Shia groups swept 20 of the 30 council seats in the first round of the municipal vote. Most of the winners were connected to the Shia-based **Islamic National Accord Association (INAA)** or the Sunni-based Islamic National Forum Association (INFA).

In October 2002 parliamentary elections were held. However, four major political groups were suspicious of the reforms and called a boycott of the election. The boycott call was spearheaded by the Islamic National Accord Association (INAA), *Jamiat Al-Wafaq*, the main political group representing Bahrain's majority Shia Muslim population. "Of course, we will be outside parliament, which will be born handicapped and will be unable to grow and evolve normally", said the INAA leader, Sheikh Ali Salman. Although only 51.28% of the 238,636 registered voters voted, the turnout was widely seen as above expectations in view of the boycott call.

Shi'ite Muslim opposition leaders complained that single-member districts do not take into account the country's demographics. The Sunni Muslims are the minority (35%) whereas the majority of the population are Shi'ite Muslims (65%). This appears one reason that the new reform has allowed nationals of other Gulf Cooperation Council states (Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates) living in Bahrain, and other foreign residents who own property in Bahrain, the right to vote. Other criticisms included that some districts contain as many as 12,000 registered voters, while others have as few as 500, and that voters' passports were to be stamped after the vote, making boycotters readily identifiable in the future.

Some opposition groups and analysts suggested that the decision to undertake reforms reflected Bahrain's weak international position (its only strategic importance deriving from its location as the home of the US Fifth Fleet) and need to secure domestic stability. Qatar, as an old rival neighboring state, had gained international credibility by holding municipal elections in March 1999 and it was thought the King wanted to put Bahrain on an equal footing with Qatar. The reforms received international endorsement, which was seen as significant in terms of Bahrain's limited resources and dependence on assistance from neighboring states, such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and United Arab Emirates.

The opposition has criticized the National Charter on a number of grounds. Amongst these, both chambers in the bicameral legislature will have equal power in terms of legislation. This means that the King will have the ultimate say because, in practice, he can exercise veto power through his control of the appointed chamber. Accordingly, the elected chamber would not

have the power to make law. In a response to such criticism, the King has guaranteed that the lower house would have full law-making powers.

Bahrain's new pluralist reform appears to have postponed the debate over the need to legalize political parties within the state system, which was and still is a long-standing opposition demand. "This law, which denies the political societies their right to take part in political life, will only hinder the reform process," a National Democratic Action Society (NDAS) statement said. While this ban appears to hinder the process of reform, Bahrain's political groups can field candidates in elections, organize their activities, and campaign freely.

### Political groups

Of Bahrain's political groups, the **Arab-Islamic Wasat (Centre) Society (AIWS)** supports the principles of the National Charter of Action and favours the promotion of democracy, human rights and respect for the role of Islam. It is also strongly modernist in orientation, campaigning on an anti-sectarian platform, and has promised to curtail the influence of tribal affiliations. Party leaders have also reconfirmed the importance of women being an equal partner to men in national action. The **Democratic Progressive Forum (DPF)** was licensed on Sept. 30, 2001. It is a leftist group running on a platform of strengthening democracy. The Forum has its antecedents within the Communist Party (CP), with several of its founders being former CP members. The DPF is chaired by Ahmad Al-Thawadi, a former exile who returned home after being pardoned by the King. The aim is to promote the principles of the National Action Charter, support the democratic reform project and strengthen the democratic involvement of all citizens, including women. The **National Action Charter Society (NACS)** was licensed on March 20, 2000, and seeks to promote the goals and principles of the National Charter. The **National Democratic Action Society (NDAS)** was the first political group to be licensed in any Gulf Cooperation Council state, and has a left-wing political agenda, that is broadly secular and represents nationalist and Arab Ba'athist political trends. It is chaired by a former Marxist, Abdul-Rahman Al-Nuaimi, who returned to Bahrain from exile under Sheikh Hamad's amnesty. Another leading personality is Vice-Chair Dr Munira Fakhro, a university lecturer specializing in women's rights, who played a leading role encouraging women to participate in the democratic process. The **National Islamic Forum (NIF)** was established in March 2000 with a programme based on strengthening and reconfirming the Arab-Islamic basis of society. It seeks to uphold the democratic gains and promote the political involvement of the people. Many of the organization's founders are from Bahrain's Sunni community.

The **Islamic National Accord Association (INAA, Jamiat Al-Wafaq)** led by Sheikh Ali Salman, is viewed as the principal opposition force. It has campaigned

under the slogan “the homeland is for all and all are for the homeland”. Many of the INAA's supporters, like Sheikh Salman himself, are from Bahrain's Shia community. It ran strongly, emerging as the leading force, in the May 2002 municipal elections but boycotted the October 2002 parliamentary elections saying that the legislature did not have legislative powers. Salman said, however, that the group was committed to using “legitimate means” to continue the reform process.

Among leftist groups are the **National Liberation Front of Bahrain (NLF/B, *Jabhat al-Tahrir al-Watani al-Bahraniyah*)** and the **Popular Front in Bahrain (PFB, *Jabhah al-Sha'biyah fi al-Bahrayn*)**.

The establishment of political societies is but one feature of the recent reforms that have allowed civil

society to flourish. Numerous other non-government campaigning organizations have been set up since the people endorsed the National Charter of Action in February 2001. Among the most prominent have been the Bahrain Human Rights Society, the Supreme Council for Bahraini Women, and the Organization Against Normalization with Israel. Campaigning on single-issue platforms, these organizations have had a real input in to the political process, be it through holding public discussions and meetings, consultations with the government or by being members of Bahraini delegations to international forums.

*Ibrahim J. Al-Sharifi*

## Bangladesh

**Capital:** Dhaka

**Population:** 130 m

Bangladesh achieved its independence from Pakistan in 1971 as the outcome of bitter military conflict. Under the 1972 Constitution, Nationalism, Democracy, Secularism and Socialism were adopted as the four cardinal state principles. On Aug. 15, 1975, however, the President, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who had led the country to independence and was widely regarded as the Father of the Nation, was assassinated along with his family members by a group of young military officers. Thereafter the military became an important factor in Bangladesh politics. The constitution was amended so that secularism was dropped as a state principle and replaced by absolute faith in the Almighty Allah.

The country was governed by military and quasi-military rulers until December 1990 when General Hossain Mohammed Ershad was ousted by a popular movement. Since then the country had been under civilian rule with a parliamentary system. The parliament is a single chamber body with 300 elected members. Formerly thirty additional seats were reserved for women, but this provision expired in April 2001 and has not been renewed since then, despite protests and calls by women organizations to increase the number of reserved seats for women. In 1996, through the 13th amendment to the constitution, the country adopted a “caretaker government” formula. Under this system, three months prior to the holding of elections, power is handed over by the government to a neutral group of eminent persons. The caretaker government is responsible for the day-to-day affairs of the government and the holding of elections.

A general election held on Oct. 1, 2001, resulted in victory for the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP). It was accompanied by widespread violence, resulting in more than 100 deaths, following several years of tension between the two main parties, the BNP and the Awami League, both of which had at times boycotted

Parliament while the other was in power.

### CHITTAGONG HILL TRACTS

Situated in the south-eastern Hills of Bangladesh, the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) constitute some ten per cent of the total land area of Bangladesh. According to the Bangladesh census report of 1991 (the last published report) the population of the area was approximately 974,000. Out of this the Hill people constituted 500,000 and Bengalis 470,000. There are thirteen ethnic groups in the CHT. The Hill people are of Sino-Tibetan descent belonging to the Mongolian groups. They closely resemble the people of north-east India, Myanmar and Thailand rather than the Bengali population of Bangladesh.

After the independence of Bangladesh the Hill people, under the leadership of Manobendra Narayan Larma (Larma), demanded political and economic autonomy and recognition of their cultural distinctiveness as well as the right to continue with their traditional system. Their demands were rejected by the state. This led to the formation of a regional political platform, the **Parbattya Chattagram Jonoshonghoti Samity (PCJSS, United People's Party)** by Larma on March 7, 1972. Subsequently a military wing, the *Shanti Bahini* (peace force) was added to it. The party sought assistance from India, which it was denied at that time. Following the political changes in Bangladesh in 1975 and the military takeover of political power, the attitude of India changed. Larma crossed over to India and with military assistance from India the *Shanti Bahini* began military operations from its bases in India. A full-blown insurgency ensued in the CHT by 1977 and the region went under full military control under the command of the General Officer Commanding (GOC) of the 24 Division of Chittagong.

The PCJSS through its ideological and organizational framework undertook to organize the Hill people on a nationalistic agenda. The party operated through a complex organizational mechanism. The nineteen-member central committee was its apex body, with its members elected every three years by members of the party. It was the main decision making and executive organ. Under the central committee were the political and military affairs branches. Headed by a member of the central committee, the political affairs branch was entrusted with the task of publicity and control of its affiliated grass-root level organizations. These included the *Gram Panchayat* (village council), *Jubo Samity* (youth association) and *Mohila Samity* (women's association). The armed cadre had two wings. The *Shanti Bahini* was the centrally controlled guerrilla army of the PCJSS. Its auxiliary, the militia, maintained law and order and provided security to villages that were under the party's control. The *Shanti Bahini* claimed that about 15,000 fighters had joined the force. Dhaka put the figure at between 5,000 and 7,000 with about 1,200 weapons. There was also a reserve force of some 50,000 trained youths presumably organized into militia units. The Hill youths, predominantly the Chakmas, and the Hill people who had taken shelter in the refugee camps in India provided a pool for manpower to *Shanti Bahini*.

During the insurgency period massive violations of human rights took place, which included cases of rape, abduction, torture, forcible eviction and also massacres allegedly carried out by Bangladesh security personnel. The Bengalis also made allegations of torture, forced extortion and killings by the *Shanti Bahini*. The region also witnessed large-scale state sponsored Bengali settlement in the region. Between 1979 and 1984 about 400,000 Bengalis were settled by evicting the Hill people. These evicted people either became internally displaced persons or crossed over to India, thus becoming international refugees. Consequently, apart from political and economic autonomy, withdrawal of Bengali settlers from the Hills and settlement of the land issue became crucial demands of the PCJSS.

Peace negotiations were opened by the Bangladesh government in 1985. International as well as internal pressures from the military and human rights activists prompted the move. The *Shanti Bahini* responded positively. On Dec. 2, 1997, a peace accord was signed between the PCJSS and the Government of Bangladesh. The accord, though hailed internationally as a positive step towards peace, polarized the Bengalis as well as the Hill people both within and without the Hills. The opposition political parties regarded the accord as unconstitutional and a compromise on national sovereignty. They also accused the govern-

ment of having turned the Bengalis in the Hills into second-class citizens. Among the Hill people a faction of the *Pahari Chatra Parishad* (PCP, Hill Students' Forum), *Pahari Gono Parishad* (PGP, Hill Peoples Forum) and Hill Women's Federation (HWF) accused the PCJSS of having compromised the interests of the Hill people. They rejected the accord as a compromise accord, since it contained no provisions for Bengali withdrawal or demilitarization of the region. It was apparent that in view of the omission of the Bengali settlers issue the question of land would also remain unresolved, though a Land Commission was formed by the accord. This dissident faction floated a political party, the **United People's Democratic Front (UPDF)**, in December 1998 and vowed to carry on the movement for full autonomy. The latter according to them implies that apart from foreign policy and defence the rest of the issues of the CHT would remain within the jurisdiction of the local government of the CHT. The CHT today is effectively polarized between the two political fronts, the PCJSS and the UPDF. Both factions accuse each other of terrorist activities, forced extortions, abduction and attacks on each other. According to military and political analysts the CHT has entered into a second phase of conflict with the signing of the accord.

## LEFT-WING ORGANIZATION

### East Bengal Sarbohara Party (EBSP)

The **East Bengal Workers' Movement (EBWM)** was formed on Jan. 8, 1968, under the leadership of Siraj Sikder. It declared East Bengal to be a colony of Pakistan and called for a national liberation struggle against the Pakistani ruling class. It also chalked out a programme for establishing a Sovereign, Democratic, Peaceful, Neutral and Progressive Republic of East Bengal. From 1968-70 the EBWM intensified underground activities in East Bengal. On June 3, 1971, the EBWM transformed into the **East Bengal Sarbohara Party (EBSP)**. During the war for Bangladeshi independence it had wanted to fight jointly with the *Mukti Bahini* (liberation forces) but it was rejected by the Awami League, the party leading the liberation movement. After the independence of Bangladesh, the EBSP theoretically, militarily and organizationally became the main challenge to the Awami League regime. It launched massive operations in different parts of the country. In January 1975 Siraj Sikder was captured and brutally killed by the Awami League regime. After his death factionalism crept into the party. By the end of 1983, a faction of the party led by Ziauddin had changed the name of the party to Bangladesh Sarbohara Party. From time to time the party still carries out guerrilla and terrorist activities in the western and southern parts of Bangladesh.

*Amena Mohsin*

# Barbados

**Capital:** Bridgetown

**Population:** 268,000

Barbados, a member of the Commonwealth with the British Monarch as head of state represented locally by a Governor-General, has a 30-member House of Assembly elected for five years by universal adult suffrage and a 21-member appointed Senate. The Prime Minister and Cabinet are responsible to Parliament. Barbados has enjoyed political stability since independence, with a two-party system in which the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) and Democratic Labour Party (DLP) have alternated in power, while sharing much common ground. There have been no signs of internal political opposition outside existing legal parties or pressure groups. In a general election held on May 21, 2003, the BLP under the leadership of Owen Arthur retained power by winning 23 seats in the Assembly. However, only 56.7 percent of eligible voters cast ballots, the lowest turnout since the country gained its independence in 1966.

A new Anti-Terrorism Bill was passed in May 2002, which includes a mandatory fine of up to US\$1

million for anyone convicted of being involved in terrorist activity. The government also introduced an amendment to the constitution for the application of the death penalty or life imprisonment where a death occurs in a terrorist-related incident. The changes were a direct response to the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the USA. In other developments during 2002, Barbados was removed from the list of countries considered to be uncooperative tax havens by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). However, allegations were subsequently made that a number of public and private sector officials had placed large sums of money in overseas bank accounts. On March 1, Prime Minister Arthur stated that the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) was investigating one high-ranking Barbadian public servant.

*Peter Clegg*

# Belarus

**Capital:** Minsk

**Population:** 10.5 m

The Belarusian Soviet Socialist Republic (BSSR) declared its independence from the Soviet Union on Aug. 25, 1991. Following the declaration the Communist Party was suspended and its assets frozen. On Sept. 19 the BSSR was renamed the Republic of Belarus. Post-independence politics in Belarus have been dominated by prolonged and bitter struggle between reformist forces trying to promote democratic transformation and preserve the country's independence and the former communist establishment determined to prevent change and aiming at the union of Belarus with the Russian Federation. Since 1994, Aleksandr Lukashenka has held the presidency and his authoritarian policies have generated considerable dissent.

Stanislau Shushkevich was elected Chairman of the Supreme Soviet (Parliament) of independent Belarus in September 1991. Shushkevich, a nuclear physicist, was not a career politician, and only entered politics in the late 1980s when investigating the government's mishandling of the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster. Although Shushkevich advocated only a moderate reform programme he was committed to the concept of an independent Belarusian state. However, his powers as the Chairman of parliament were limited.

The real power lay with Vyacheslau Kebich, the Prime Minister and a member of the old communist nomenklatura, who opposed any significant change. Kebich remained head of government until 1994. The promotion of substantive democratic and economic reforms was stifled further by the Supreme Soviet elected in March – April 1990 within the framework of the Soviet Union, in which the Communist Party of Belarus had won 267 seats.

In early 1993 a Collective Security Pact which included an economic and defence union with the Russian Federation, was presented to and passed by the communist-dominated Supreme Soviet, despite strong opposition from nationalist members led by Shushkevich. The proposal was pushed by Kebich and the head of parliament's anti-corruption committee, Aleksandr Lukashenka. In January 1994 Shushkevich was voted out of office as Chairman of the Belarus parliament, in a no-confidence vote.

On March 1, 1994, the Supreme Soviet finally approved a new constitution establishing a "unitary, democratic, social state based on the rule of law" and the principle of the division of powers between the executive, legislative and judicial branches. The con-

stitution established the Supreme Council of the Republic of Belarus, consisting of 260 deputies elected every five years, as the sole legislative body and instituted the post of President of the Republic as Head of State and Government and the commander-in-chief of the armed forces. The constitution gave the President extensive powers, including the right to set up and abolish ministries and to appoint and dismiss, with the consent of the Supreme Council, the Prime Minister, his deputies, and members of the Cabinet.

The first elections for the post of President took place in July 1994 and were won by Lukashenka, who took 81.7 per cent of the votes in the second round. The former state farm director campaigned on a non-party populist platform, promising to address the issue of corruption in government, to reduce inflation, and to achieve closer ties with Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Thereafter Lukashenka embarked on the process of strengthening and extending his powers.

In May 1995 parliamentary elections and a referendum were held. The electoral law required a turnout of 50% in a particular constituency and for the winning candidate to collect at least 50% of the vote. These rather stringent provisions were agreed by the Communist Party of Belarus (re-legalized in February 1993) which expected the rules would restrict the number of opposition deputies elected to parliament. In the first round only 18 deputies were elected, with a further 102 in the second round. However, the total of 120 fell 54 short of the required quorum. Throughout 1995 Lukashenka issued a series of presidential decrees, a number of which were blocked by the Constitutional Court. In early November Lukashenka declared that he would ignore Court decisions. An attempt was made to resolve the stalemate by holding a further round of elections under new provisions. These reduced the required turnout from 50% to 25%. In late November and December an additional 78 deputies were elected, bringing the total number for the 1995 parliament to 198.

The referendum conducted at the same time as the parliamentary elections amended the 1994 constitution. It approved the reinstatement of the old Soviet flag and national symbols (without the hammer and sickle). It elevated Russian to the status of a national language (along with Belarusian, as provided by the 1994 constitution). It also approved economic union with Russia and gave the President the right to dissolve the parliament in the event of the chamber violating the constitution.

Subsequently President Lukashenka embarked on actions aimed to weaken the legislature even further. In August 1996 he demanded that parliament extend his term of office from five to seven years and adopt legislation creating a second legislative chamber, whose members he would appoint, and limiting the powers of the Constitutional Court. Several political parties condemned these demands as unconstitutional. The emerging opposition to Lukashenka included the Belarusian National Front, Social Democratic Party,

United Civic Party, Belarusian Labour Party, and Belarusian Party of Communists. When the parliament refused to meet Lukashenka's demands, the President called another referendum. Held on Nov. 24, 1996, the referendum, by a large majority, extended his term of office until the year 2001.

Under the constitution as revised in 1996, the system of checks and balances is heavily skewed in favour of the President, who now enjoys vast control over the legislature and the courts and who is largely unhindered by their authority. The President gained the right to appoint half the members and the head of the Constitutional Court, as well as the head of the Supreme Court. The constitution provides for the virtual merger between the executive and judicial branches, requiring all lawyers to be members of the state-run bar association. Indeed, not only does the President exercise exceptionally broad influence on the parliament, he can often bypass it altogether.

The revised constitution provides for the establishment of a new, bicameral parliament, called the National Assembly (Natsionalnoye Sobranie) made up of the Chamber of Representatives (Palata Predstaviteley) consisting of 110 members who are elected every four years, and the Council of the Republic (Soviet Respubliki) comprising 64 members, 56 of whom are elected indirectly. The six Belarusian oblast and the city of Minsk each supply eight seats which are elected by secret ballot by majority system by the local councils. The remaining eight seats are appointed by the President. Under the presidential constitution's article 143, the outgoing parliament and the President were supposed to negotiate to form the first Chamber of Representatives from among the members of the existing parliament. Instead the President and a group of about 110 deputies loyal to him, announced the formation of the Chamber of Representatives without inviting the other members of the Thirteenth Supreme Soviet to participate. The Chamber of Representatives subsequently duly approved Lukashenka's new constitution. In practice, since 1996 the Belarusian parliament has had only a ceremonial function. Around 60 deputies of the 1995 parliament, loyal to the 1994 constitution, have rejected the President's decision to dissolve the chamber and have continued to meet for sessions.

In February 1999 all the main opposition parties, independent trade unions and several NGOs established the **Congress of Democratic Forces** for the purpose of unifying all democratic forces in Belarus. As President Lukashenka's term of office, under the 1994 constitution, expired on July 20, 1999, the opposition organized alternative presidential elections on May 16, 1999. According to the opposition electoral commission over four million people, or some 53 per cent of eligible voters, took part in these elections. However, these figures could not be independently confirmed.

Belarus held parliamentary elections on Oct. 15, 2000. They were intended to provide replacements for deputies elected to the Supreme Soviet in 1995, whose

mandates had expired under either the 1996 constitution or the pre-1996 constitutional arrangements. The elections to the House of Representatives were the first national elections since the referendum on constitutional change was held in 1996. The main opposition parties announced an anti-election campaign, Boycott 2000, and hundreds of opposition activists were detained and fined for distributing anti-election materials. The majority of seats (81) were won by nominal non-partisans supporting the President, while pro-presidential parties took 16 seats (Communist Party of Belarus 6; Agrarian Party of Belarus 5; Republican Party of Labour and Justice 2; Liberal Democratic Party of Belarus 1; Social Democratic Party of Popular Accord 1; and Belarusian Socialist Sporting Party 1) and 13 seats remained vacant due to low electoral turnout.

The results of the elections were not recognized by the European Union and the United States. The OSCE election observers reported that the required 50 per cent threshold was not met in more than a third of the constituencies. They also established strong evidence that the nationwide turnout was about 40 per cent, rather than the 60 per cent claimed. And they documented 80 different methods employed to manipulate the vote count. The OSCE declared that these elections “were neither free, fair, nor democratic” and that “the Thirteenth Supreme Soviet (the parliament elected in 1995) ...should continue to be accepted by the international community as the legitimate parliament of Belarus”.

The presidential election held on Sept. 9, 2001, was won by Lukashenka with 75.62 per cent of the vote. Official results gave the chairman of the Belarusian Trade Union Federation, Uladzimir Hancharyk, 15.39 per cent, and the leader of the Liberal Democratic Party, Siarhiej Hajdulievich, 2.48 per cent. Lukashenka declared that he had won an “elegant victory”, but Hancharyk disputed the official results, claiming that he had received 40 per cent of the vote and Lukashenka 44 per cent. In such a case, according to Article 79 of the Electoral Code, a run-off between the two should have taken place. The United States and countries of the European Union chose to ignore Lukashenka's second inauguration ceremony in Minsk, declaring the elections neither free nor fair. The OSCE Limited Election Observation Mission concluded that “the entire 2001 presidential election process has been marked by grave flaws and consistent interference by Belarusian authorities”. According to the OSCE the election process “failed to meet the OSCE commitments for democratic elections”. The result was warmly welcomed by Russia, however.

The country has experienced increasing restrictions on academic freedom. There is a ban on all political organizations in academia, except for the state-run and heavily pro-presidential Belarusian Patriotic Union of Youth.

One important aspect of the regime's totalitarian control has been its ruling that requires all political parties, trade unions and NGOs to register and period-

ically re-register with the Ministry of Justice. With each re-registration more restrictions are imposed on these organizations and fewer organizations are able to function legally. NGOs that are in any way critical of the government or President are harassed and have difficulties in operating. The OSCE opened an office in Minsk in 1998, headed by Han-Georg Wieck. He was accused by the Belarusian government of spying and supporting the opposition. Lukashenka ordered a scaling down of the OSCE's scope of operations in Belarus in 2002, following the critical assessment of the 2001 presidential election, a request refused, so in response the government withdrew or failed to renew visas, severely curtailing the OSCE presence in Belarus.

In November 2002 Lukashenka indicated that he might ask for another amendment to the constitution that would allow him to stand for re-election for a third term in 2006. Currently the constitution allows Belarusian citizens to serve only two presidential terms.

There have also been increasing violations of the freedoms of expression and assembly in Belarus. In January 1995 a new law on the press was passed, which gave draconian powers to the State Committee on the Press. In August 1996, Radio 101.2, which had been critical of government policy, was closed down by the authorities, and the frequency given to the pro-presidential Belarusian Patriotic Union of Youth. During 2002 the government closed down several opposition papers including *Pahonia*, *Nasha Svaboda*, *Svobodnye novosti*, and *Mestnoye vremya*.

The passage of the Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations established a privileged position for the Orthodox Church – one of the main supporters of President Lukashenka and an open advocate of his policies – at the same time violating the rights of other confessions. It allowed for persecution and deportation of Roman Catholic priests and has prevented some Catholic parishes from holding religious ceremonies.

Lukashenka has introduced his own system of personal rule, where governance by decree dominates the law; the separation of powers between the legislature, the executive and the Constitutional Court is non-existent; and parties and other interest organizations are completely marginalized. In addition, the mass media have become “nationalized” and a prospective union with Russia set in motion. In April 1994 both countries agreed to form a monetary and economic union and in 1995 signed a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation. President Boris Yeltsin of Russia and President Lukashenka on April 2, 1996, signed a Union Treaty that established the Commonwealth of Sovereign States. The treaty, entitled “On deepening integration and comprehensive drawing together”, provides for the creation of an Inter-parliamentary Congress with 50 parliamentarians from each side, an executive body called the Integration Committee and a Union Court. On Dec. 8, 1998, the next step was taken when Yeltsin and Lukashenka signed a treaty on the creation of a Union State – a formal confederation between Belarus and Russia. Under the treaty the two countries com-

mitted themselves to create a High Council consisting of their presidents, prime ministers and parliamentary speakers. The agreement also proposes the eventual merger of the two countries' currencies. Both presidents stated that the Union is "open for others to join".

A draft treaty on the Russo-Belarus Union was prepared in March 1999, by which a bicameral union parliament would be created, with the upper chamber having equal representation of both member states. The draft referred to the creation of a President of the Russia-Belarus union. Since the election of Vladimir Putin as the President of the Russian Federation in March 2000, however, the Russo-Belarus Union has been put on the back-burner by the Russians. In August 2002 President Putin proposed fundamental changes to the Union, which were roundly rejected by Lukashenka. Putin suggested the formation of either a union state, with Belarus very much a constituent part of the Russian Federation, or establishing a loose union similar to the European Union. Putin's proposals were a heavy blow to Lukashenka's ambitions. The Russian Federation extends substantial subsidies to Belarus.

There is an indication from limited opinion polls conducted during 2000-03 that the broad support enjoyed by Lukashenka during the past eight years is slowly being eroded by growing economic problems – the consequence of Soviet-style economic planning, inefficiency and growing international political and economic isolation. His authoritarian rule has, however, had devastating effects on Belarus society. Intense persecution of anybody who dares to criticize his regime, the disappearance without trace of many of his critics, the torture and long prison sentences to which many opposition activists have been subjected, have left Belarus society deeply brutalized and disoriented.

Following the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the USA, allegations were made that Belarus is a leading supplier of military equipment to "rogue states" and that these weapons find their way to terrorist organizations in the Middle East, Balkans and Central Asia.

## OPPOSITION PARTIES

### **Belarusian Christian Democratic Union**

This party advocates sovereignty, independence, democracy, and rebirth of national Christian traditions. It has a membership of some 600. The party was denied registration in 1999.

### **Belarusian Party of Greens**

Led by Professor Oleg Gromyko, the party has a membership of 620 and stands for the independence of Belarus, regeneration of national traditions, and the abolition of the army.

### **Belarusian Labour Party (Belaruskaya Rabochaya Partiya, BRP)**

*Leader: A Buchvostov*

Established in 1992, this party has its origins in the trade unions. Its strongest bases are the main urban centres and in particular the cities of Minsk and Gomel. In its programme it emphasises the primacy of independence and sovereignty and it advocates a social market economy, step-by-step

reforms and privatization. It is an anti-Lukashenka party and has frequently organized protests against the current regime. The BRP is a member of the Consultative Council of Parties.

### **Belarusian Popular Front (Belaruski Narodny Front, BNF)**

*Leadership. Vincuk Viacorka (chairman)*

The Front was established in 1989 as an umbrella organization uniting various groups that supported the independence of Belarus from the Soviet Union. Throughout the post-independence history of the country it remained the principal political movement advocating Belarusian independence, constitutional order, the importance of the Belarusian language and national culture, the rebirth of civil society, and democratic and economic reforms.

The BNF's founding chairman, Zianon Paznyak, has since 1996 been living in exile in the United States and in 1999 Vincuk Viacorka (previously deputy chairman) took over the leadership of the BNF (supporters of Paznyak then establishing the Conservative Christian Party). In 1999 the party took a leading role in organizing the unofficial alternative presidential elections. The party has around 10,000 members and plays a central role in the national opposition, frequently organising demonstrations and protests. The BNF is a member of the Congress of Democratic Forces.

### **Belarusian Social-Democratic Party (Hramada)**

The Belarusian Social Democratic Party (*Hramada*) emerged in March 1991 as a revival of the Revolutionary *Hramada* (Assembly) Party, founded in 1903, which had called for the creation of a Belarusian state but been banned after the declaration of the Soviet Socialist Republic in January 1919. Its programme advocates an independent Belarus, which does not rule out membership in the CIS, and a market economy with state regulation of certain sectors. It has faced considerable harassment but participated in the 2000 legislative elections.

### **Party of Communists of Belarus (PKB)**

*Leader: Sergei Kalyakin*

This faction formed from the Communist Party of Belarus (KPB) claims 20,000 members. The PKB is an anti-Lukashenka organisation and is a member of the Consultative Council of Parties.

### **Social Democratic Party "Narodnaya Hramada"**

*Leadership. Nikolai Statkevich (chair)*

This party has a membership of around 2,000.

### **United Civic Party (UCP)**

*Website: [www.ucpb.org](http://www.ucpb.org)*

*Leadership: Stanislaw Bogdankevich (chairman)*

Established in 1995, the UCP has a liberal conservative programme and is a member of the European Democrat Union. The UCP has about 4,000 members and draws its main support from small and medium sized businesses. The party is member of the Consultative Council of Parties and is actively engaged in the anti-Lukashenka campaign.

### **United Social Democratic Party**

Founded in November 1990, this was the first political party



in independent Belarus other than the communist party. It seeks an independent Belarus, democracy, freedom of ethnic expression, and a market economy. It was de-registered by the authorities in 1999.

Other opposition parties include the Belarusian Christian Democratic Party, Belarusian Republican Party, Belarusian Social Sport Party, National Democratic Party of Belarusians, and Peasant Party.

### OTHER MAIN ORGANIZATIONS

#### Association for Legal Assistance to the Population (ALAP)

This association provides assistance to those arrested and maltreated by the authorities. Although the association was registered by the Ministry of Justice in August 1999 it has been the subject of intimidation and threats ever since.

#### Belarusian Association of Prisoners of the Lukashenka Regime

Established in March 1998 it aims to help victims of political repression, extends support to political prisoners and their families, and informs the international community about human rights violations in Belarus.

#### Belarusian Helsinki Committee

*Leadership. Tatyana Protko (chair)*

*Website. helsinki.home.by*

Registered by the Ministry of Justice in November 1995 the BHC is a voluntary, independent, and non-political, non-

governmental organization whose main objective is “the protection of Human Rights declared by the Helsinki agreements and other international treaties on Human Rights in the Republic of Belarus”.

#### Belarusian Human Rights Association

This was refused registration in November 1999.

#### Charter 97

*Website: www.charter97.org*

Established on Nov. 11, 1997, by one hundred democracy activists including politicians, economists, cultural figures, trade unionists, journalists and members of the old parliament which Lukashenka disbanded after the November 1996 referendum. Charter 97 is a non-party, democratic movement, whose main aim is the restoration of democracy and the rule of law in the country. Its name recalls Charter-77, founded in Prague 20 years earlier in opposition to communist dictatorship. It issues regular news and press releases of persecution, harassment and developments among the democratic opposition in Belarus.

#### Viasna Human Rights Centre

*Website. www.spring96.org*

*Leadership. Ales Byalatski (chair)*

This is a human-rights organization that publishes regular reports on violations of human and civil rights in Belarus and commentaries on major political events in the country. It has faced police harassment.

*Bogdan Szajkowski*

## Belgium

**Capital:** Brussels

**Population:** 10.3 m

The Kingdom of Belgium is a constitutional monarchy with a multi-party parliamentary democracy. The parliament is bicameral and consists of the 150-seat Chamber of Representatives, directly elected for a four-year term by proportional representation, and the 71-member Senate, 40 of whose members are directly elected by proportional representation with the remainder elected by the members. Political parties are organized on the basis of the country's linguistic communities (Flemish, French and German). Belgium is a federal state, having three regions (Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels), each with a government and legislature with powers in the social and economic fields, and the three linguistic communities (each of which has its own council) for cultural purposes. The constitutional monarch, as head of state, has limited powers, with central executive authority residing in the Prime Minister (the head of government) and the Council of Ministers being responsible to the federal parliament.

As a result of elections held on May 18, 2003, seats in the Chamber were distributed as follows: Flemish Liberals and Democrats 25 (15.4% of the vote), Socialist Party and Spirit (Flemish) 23 (14.9%), Flemish Christian Democrats 21 (13.2%), Socialist Party (French) 25 (13%), Flemish Bloc 18 (11.6%), Liberal Reformist Movement (French) 24 (11.4%), Humanist Democratic Centre (ex-French Christian Democrats) 8 (5.5%), New Flemish Alliance 1 (3.1%), Ecologists (French) 4 (3.1%), National Front (French) 1 (2%).

Successive reforms between 1970 and 1998 devolved substantial legislative power to regional entities in respect of economic development, agriculture, public works and education. These measures were intended to reduce tension between the French (Walloon) and Flemish-speaking communities which had become increasingly intense, leading to occasional outbreaks of violence in the 1970s.

Belgium experienced a wave of violent attacks in

the 1980s against several supermarkets causing the death of several people. Those responsible were never found.

Turkish Kurdish groups have been active in Belgium and supporters of the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK) occupied the Greek embassy in Brussels after the capture by the Turkish authorities in 1999 of the PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan. Other Turkish groups are present on Belgian territory and their occasional confrontations have been violent. These groups include the extreme left DHKP (formerly Dev Sol, see Turkey entry) which counts about 100 members several of whom were arrested in 1999 in possession of weapons and false documents in Knokke, the Grey Wolves (extreme-right movement) which counts about 250 to 300 members, and militant Islamists.

After the terrorist attacks on the USA of Sept. 11, 2001, the Belgian Justice Ministry prosecuted 23 presumed Islamic terrorists accused of preparing bomb attacks against a military base and of being involved in the network which organised the assassination of Ahmad Shah Massoud in Afghanistan. Massoud's assassins were recruited in Belgium and travelled to Afghanistan with false Belgian passports.

Following the 2003 election the incoming government of Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt announced that it would repeal a law, in effect since 1993, whereby Belgian courts claimed "universal jurisdiction" in respect of allegations of war crimes. This had led to tensions with various countries whose present and former officials had faced legal action, and had resulted in the recall for a time of the Israeli ambassador. The US administration had also warned that it would withdraw funding for a new NATO headquarters in Brussels if cases were pursued against US officials.

### EXTREMIST FLEMISH GROUPS

#### **Flemish Militant Order (Vlaamse Militanten Orde, VMO)**

The VMO, formed in 1950, was involved in militant action against French-speaking groups in various disputes over linguistic areas, in particular in the district of Voeren (Fourons), which was in 1962 transferred from the (Walloon) province of Liège to the Flemish province of Limburg. This transfer was opposed by militant Walloon groups, including a "Back to Liège" movement led by J. Happart. Following armed confrontations in the district in August and October 1979, a 1934 law banning the maintenance of uniformed private armies was invoked against the VMO.

An appeal court in Ghent confirmed on May 26, 1983, that the VMO was illegal under the 1934 law. The court also confirmed 33 prison sentences passed on May 4, 1981, when a total of 105 persons had been given prison terms ranging from five days to one year. The sentences confirmed included a one-year prison-term imposed upon the group's leader, Bert Erikson, who was later reported to have announced that he would disband the VMO. (The government had, however, confirmed on June 5, 1981, that Voeren would remain part of Flemish territory). The VMO was a more extreme nationalist organization than the two Flemish nationalist

political parties--the People's Union (*Volksunie*, today the New Flemish Alliance) and the more radical Flemish Bloc (*Vlaamse Blok*).

#### **Action Committee for the Flemish Language (Taal Aktie Komiteit, TAK)**

This Flemish extreme-right wing movement organized violent actions against French-speaking citizens living in regions with special status (*communes à facilités*), i.e. French-speaking villages located on the Flemish region territory.

#### **Westland New Post (WNP)**

WNP, also called the *Westland National Socialistische Ordnung* (WNSO), was an extreme-right movement created in 1979 and led by Paul Latinus (who committed suicide in 1984). It organized several violent actions. It has been dissolved.

### EXTREME LEFT-WING GROUPS

#### **Fighting Communist Cells (Cellules combattantes communistes, CCC)**

The CCC first emerged in October 1984 with a spate of bomb attacks directed against the Brussels offices of US and West German multinational concerns supplying NATO and against centre-right party offices in Brussels and Ghent. After announcing that its "armed struggle against the imperialist bourgeoisie" was to be directed not against the people but against the enemies of the people, the CCC declared after Jan. 15 that in a new campaign human life would not be respected. Thereafter an explosion in Brussels on May 1, 1985, killed two firemen and injured 13 other people.

There followed further numerous bomb attacks by the CCC from October 1985 onwards, mainly on banks, NATO installations and premises of firms supplying NATO. In a letter sent to the media in November 1985, the CCC described its aim as the destruction of the Belgian state and the establishment of a Marxist-Leninist dictatorship of the proletariat.

CCC activities subsided in 1986 following a series of arrests by Belgian police of suspected CCC activists. Four of these activists were sentenced to life imprisonment with hard labour by a court in Brussels in October 1988. The three men, Pierre Carette, Bertrand Sassoye, Didier Chevolet, and a woman, Pascale Vandegheerde, were found guilty of orchestrating a bombing campaign during 1984-85. The movement was dissolved during that period. In 1997, a stock of weapons that belonged to the CCC was discovered.

#### **Socialist Revolutionary Brigades (Brigades socialistes révolutionnaires, BSR)**

A group using this name claimed responsibility for the kidnapping in Brussels on Jan. 14, 1989, of the former Belgian Prime Minister, Paul Vanden Boeynants. The abduction was accompanied by a demand for a ransom, two-thirds of which was to be paid to the poor through charity organizations. However, the police suspected that the BSR might be cover for a criminal, rather than political, act. Vanden Boeynants was later released unharmed and a Brussels lawyer was charged in March 1989 with involvement in the kidnapping.

**Armed Revolutionary Proletarian Forces (Forces Armées Révolutionnaires Prolétariennes, FRAP)**

This organization was created in 1984 with strong connections with CCC and Direct Action (France).

**OTHER MOVEMENTS****Animal Liberation Front (ALF)**

The ALF is an organization composed of anarchists and ecologists whose objective is to defend and protect animals and their actions are defined as “eco-terrorism”. It was responsible for several attacks (fires) against fast-food restaurants in 1998 and 1999 (Quick and MacDonald restaurants in the Flemish region).

**European Arab League (Ligue Arabe Européenne, LAE)**

After the murder of a young professor of the Islamic religion in November 2002, several violent riots involving young people and the police services were recorded in the city of Antwerp. The LAE was created shortly before these events by Abou Jajah in order to “monitor” the activities of the police services and prevent any racist actions against immigrants in the city. Abou Jajah was arrested for disturbing the public order but released four days later. Currently, the LAE is considered to be close to the extreme-left Belgian Workers' Party (*Parti des Travailleurs de Belgique*, PTB).

*Florence Terranova*

## Belize

**Capital:** Belmopan

**Population:** 236,000

Belize, formerly British Honduras, achieved independence from the United Kingdom as a state within the Commonwealth on Sept. 21, 1981, with the British monarch as head of state, represented by a Governor-General. There is a bicameral National Assembly consisting of a House of Representatives of 29 elected members and a Senate of nine appointed members. The Prime Minister and Cabinet are responsible to the National Assembly. In a general election held on March 5, 2003, the People's United Party (PUP) under the leadership of Prime Minister Said Musa was re-elected, taking 26 seats in the House of Representatives.

In September 2002, the government faced a serious crisis after serious allegations of corruption were made against the immigration department, particularly in relation to a contentious scheme for the sale of Belizean passports to foreigners. The practice, which has provided the Belizean government with a signifi-

cant revenue stream over the last twenty years, came in for criticism after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the USA. The authorities had promised to end the scheme in January 2002, but in fact the immigration authorities continued selling passports until July. The revelations cost the minister of police and immigration his post, while the director of immigration was suspended.

Guatemala has asserted a claim to sovereignty over Belize since the colonial period, resulting in the retention of a small British military presence as a guarantee of Belize's security. However, Guatemala has not engaged in cross-border insurgency or other aggressive action and the claim has not led to domestic instability, having no base of support among the Belizean population.

*Peter Clegg*

## Benin

**Capital:** Porto Novo

**Population:** 6.8 m

Formerly known as Dahomey, Benin achieved independence from France in August 1960. Civilian government was interrupted frequently by military interventions, culminating in the seizure of power by Mathieu Kérékou in October 1972. Kérékou reconstituted the country as a “people's republic”, under a Marxist-Leninist regime based on a single legal political organization, the Benin People's Revolutionary Party (*Parti de la révolution populaire du Bénin*,

PRPB). Social and economic problems dogged Benin's subsequent development. Mounting dissatisfaction was reflected in several coup attempts against the regime through the 1970s and 1980s, some of which were attributed to the illegal Dahomey Liberation and Rehabilitation Front (*Front de libération et de réhabilitation du Dahomey*, FLRD), an opposition movement established in France after the October 1972 military takeover.

Popular discontent came to a head during 1989, with prolonged public service strikes. In February 1990 Kérékou allowed a "National Conference of Active Forces of the Nation" which drew up a new constitution and provided for multi-party elections. An interim civilian government was appointed, and the Conference passed a resolution to change the country's name to the Republic of Benin. The PRPB was dissolved in April 1990 and the new pluralistic constitution was adopted by referendum the following December. This provided for an executive President, directly elected for a five-year term by universal suffrage, who appoints the Council of Ministers. Legislative authority is vested in a unicameral National Assembly (*Assemblée Nationale*) of 83 members, elected for a four-year term by universal adult suffrage according to a department-based system of proportional representation and which may not be dissolved by the President.

In March 1991 Kérékou (standing without party attribution) was defeated at the polls for the presiden-

cy by Nicéphore Soglo (backed by a coalition of parties) and retired without dissent after 19 years in power. In April 1991 a freely elected multi-party National Assembly was inaugurated. The following year President Soglo became identified with a new Benin Renaissance Party (*Parti de la Renaissance du Bénin*, PRB). The next legislative elections in 1995 were contested by over 30 organizations and resulted in the PRB becoming the largest single party, but facing a majority of anti-Soglo representatives. In further parliamentary polling in March 1999, the PRB increased its representation to 27 seats. Kérékou regained the presidency in elections in March 1996, defeating Soglo in the second round, and retained it in March 2001, despite Soglo's claims of voting irregularities, with 84% of the vote in the second round. Legislative elections in March 2003 were won by a coalition of parties supporting the President.

*Richard German & Elizabeth Taylor*

## Bhutan

**Capital:** Thimphu

**Population:** 2.2 m

Bhutan is an hereditary monarchy with limited structures for power-sharing. There is a National Assembly but there are no legal political parties.

### The issue of citizenship

Estimates by the UN Population Division and the British and US governments for 2002 all put the size of Bhutan's population at somewhat over 2 million. In contrast, the official estimate of the government of Bhutan in 2002 was 750,000. While this difference derives partly from the use of different base figures, the source of the discrepancy is ultimately political, stemming from the desire of Bhutan's establishment to exclude large numbers of ethnic Nepalese immigrants in the south of the country from citizenship. Bhutan's security problems derive in part from ethnic and religious rivalry and challenges to the attempt by the dominant ethnic group to preserve its hegemony.

The original inhabitants of Bhutan are known as the Drukpas, who are related to the Tibetans and named after their practice of the Drukpa form of Mahayana Buddhism, Bhutan's state religion, which is closely related to the Buddhism of Tibet. The three ethnic sub-groups of the Drukpas are the Ngalongs of the west, the Sarchops of the east and the Khengs, of which the Ngalongs form the dominant group. Ethnic Nepalese, whose religion is Hinduism, have settled in southern Bhutan since the 19th century, engaged largely in agriculture and logging. They are known as southern Bhutanese or Lhotshampas. From 1960 to 1980 there

was a large influx of Nepalese migrants into the south, drawn by economic development projects and the free health and education services available in Bhutan. The Lhotshampas had a higher birth rate than the Drukpas and their increased numbers aroused fears among the Drukpa establishment of being swamped by Nepalese Hindus and that the unitary Buddhist character of the Bhutanese state would be destroyed. Bhutan's first Citizenship Law in 1958 granted citizenship to all adults who owned land and had been resident in Bhutan for at least 10 years. Soon after this Bhutan granted asylum to some 6,000 Tibetans fleeing the aftermath of the failed 1959 rising against Chinese rule. These were eventually dispersed around the country as a guard against subversive activities and by 1985 most Tibetan refugees had chosen Bhutanese citizenship, with a minority moving to India.

The sense that Drukpa Bhutan was under siege from Nepalese immigration led first to the adoption in 1985 of a new Citizenship Law that considerably tightened citizenship qualifications with the intention of excluding many ethnic Nepalese classed as economic migrants. The government followed this in 1989 by introducing a number of measures, based on Ngalong customs, intended to reinforce the Drukpa Buddhist national cultural identity and to discriminate against the Hindu Lhotshampas. These included the adoption of national dress in public, the adoption of Dzongkha as the national language and as the second teaching language in schools (after English) and the end to instruction in Nepali in schools. From 1988,

through the application of the new Citizenship Law, the government expelled many ethnic Nepalese from south Bhutan, most of whom fled to Nepal. Protests were organized in 1990 by Nepalese militants against the expulsions, which were sometimes violent, and occasional bombings and murders of officials were answered by a repressive campaign by the security forces, with credible reports of torture in custody and rape. The number of Nepalese who had been formally expelled was swollen considerably by those who fled or were coerced by officials to migrate to Nepal. The government also moved Drukpa people from other parts of Bhutan into southern districts from which Lhotshampas had been evicted. By June 1993, when the exodus petered out, there were approximately 80,000 refugees living in camps in eastern Nepal that had been administered by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) since 1991. By September 1999 the camps contained 96,835 people but the increase was largely due to births within the camps.

From 1994 the governments of Bhutan and Nepal held some 12 ministerial meetings to discuss repatriation of refugees but remained deadlocked on the criteria for verification of Bhutanese citizenship until the intervention in December 2000 of high-level officials of the administration of US President Bill Clinton. This resulted in a simplification of registration procedure and the commencement by Bhutanese and Nepalese officials in March 2001 of verification interviews. However, on Jan. 1, 2003, the camp management committee in Khudunabari refugee camp in Nepal announced that the refugees would begin an indefinite hunger strike because the results of the verification procedure, which had so far covered only 12 per cent of the inhabitants of the camps (now numbering 110,800, according to UNHCR) had still not been disclosed.

The measures taken against the Lhotshampas in 1988 can also be seen in the context of unrest in Nepal resulting from the campaign of the then dissident pro-democracy movement and also of the activities of the Gurkha National Liberation Front (GNLF) demanding a separate "homeland" in northern areas of the Indian state of West Bengal. The King and government of Bhutan feared a Nepalese encirclement, recalling that the neighbouring state of Sikkim, also formerly a Buddhist kingdom with close similarities to Bhutan, had lost both its independence and its monarchy in 1974-75, culminating in its incorporation after a referendum in the Union of India in April 1975, largely through the agitation of an ethnic Nepalese majority.

Although the remoteness and isolation of Bhutan, and in particular southern Bhutan, has meant that independent observers have found it difficult to verify local accounts, there is evidence of an insurgency in southern Bhutan in the early 1990s, infiltrated by exiled ethnic Nepalese, that resulted in at least 73 deaths. This strategy gave way late in 1995 to that of "peace marches" of exiles from Nepal, which were usually turned back at the border. The government, meanwhile, character-

ized all political opponents as ngolops – "anti-nationals" – effectively pre-empting the possibility of dialogue. This term was applied first to the Lhotshampas and from 1994 to Sarchops who supported the exiled **Druk National Congress (DNC)** (see below).

### Constitution

The Wangchuk dynasty of Bhutan was established under King Ugyen Wangchuk in 1907 with the support of the British, who had first concluded a treaty with Bhutan in 1865. In 1910 an Anglo-Bhutanese treaty effectively made Bhutan a British protectorate by placing responsibility for Bhutan's foreign relations in the hands of the government of British India. After India achieved independence in 1947 this treaty was replaced by the Indo-Bhutan Treaty of Friendship, under which Bhutan agreed to seek India's advice in the field of foreign relations, although it was not bound to follow such advice. In 1979 at both the conference of the Non-Aligned Movement and at the UN General Assembly Bhutan voted against India's interests and in support of Chinese policy. The current monarch, King Jigme Singye Wangchuk, succeeded to the throne in 1972 on the death of his father King Jigme Dorji Wangchuk, who became King in 1952.

The Kingdom of Bhutan has a 150-member National Assembly (Tsogdu Chenmo), established in 1953 by a decree of King Jigme Dorji Wangchuk, to which 105 members are elected for a three-year term according to a Basic Law proposed by the King and adopted by the Tsogdu in 1995. Each constituency in the Assembly consists of a group of villages, each of which is entitled to nominate a candidate (generally suggested by district officials) by consensus. If more than one candidate emerges in the constituency the district development committee holds an election in which each family has one vote at a public meeting; the successful candidate wins by a simple majority. Additionally, 10 seats in the Tsogdu are reserved for Buddhist bodies and the remaining 35 for ministers, officials and the nine members of a Royal Advisory Council (established by King Jigme Dorji in 1965). There is also a six-member Council of Ministers (established by King Jigme Dorji in 1968), formerly appointed by the King but since July 1998 elected by the Tsogdu. There are no legal political parties.

To appease mounting pressure to adopt a democratic system of government, in July 1998 King Jigme Singye introduced by royal decree a package of constitutional reforms. He himself stepped down as Chairman of the Council of Ministers (the Cabinet), while remaining head of state. The Council of Ministers, hitherto appointed by the King, would now be elected by the Tsogdu, although the King would continue to nominate ministers. King Jigme Singye had already on June 26 dissolved the old 22-member Council, dismissing some long-serving ministers. The chairmanship of the new Council would rotate among its members on an annual basis. The Tsogdu elected on July 1 a new six-member Council, including for the

first time two members of the Sarchop community. Furthermore the King empowered the Tsogdu with the right to require him to step down in favour of the Crown Prince by a two-thirds majority vote, although commentators saw this as an unlikely eventuality. This measure restored a practice adopted by the King's father but subsequently dropped by Jigme Singye. The opposition umbrella organization, the United Front for Democracy in Bhutan (UFDB, see below) dismissed the reforms as window dressing, arguing that the indirect election of the Tsogdu and the pervasive influence of the King and the Ngalong establishment at all levels of the state structure, including the judiciary, meant that the legislature would never vote against the King's policies or to dismiss government officials.

In September 2001 King Jigme Singye Wangchuk established a committee to draft a written constitution to replace the 1953 royal edict under which Bhutan had hitherto been governed. The drafting was inaugurated on Nov. 30 in a traditional ceremony. The committee held its fifth meeting in October 2002, to consider modes of multi-party democracy. After six meetings it presented a draft constitution to the King in December 2002. A consultation period was to follow, although few details of the proposals were available to the media. Rongthong Kinley Dorji, self-exiled president of the DNC (see below), had issued a statement from India in October 2002 cautiously welcoming the work of the committee, noting that its chairman, Chief Justice Lyonpo Sonam Tobgye, was a member of the Sarchop community. It was also reported in January 2003 that Chief Justice Tobgye was supervising the drafting of a formal written penal code to be submitted to the King and the Tsogdu.

### **Bhutan State Congress (BSC)**

Ethnic Nepalese founded the BSC, Bhutan's first political party, in 1952 in emulation of the Nepali Congress Party, campaigning for democracy with citizenship rights and political representation for ethnic Nepalese. It was thought to have received funding from both the Nepali and Indian Congress parties. The inclusive 1958 Citizenship Act, giving citizenship to many Nepalese immigrants, is said to have been a response to the BSC's campaign that intended to head off the wider demands for democracy. The party is now defunct.

### **Bhutan People's Party (BPP)**

A successor organization to the People's Forum on Democratic Rights (PFDR), this pro-democracy party, based in Nepal and backed by the Nepalese Congress Party (NCP) and the Marxist-Leninist faction of the Nepalese Communist Party, supports the rights of the large Nepalese minority within Bhutan. In August 1988 Hindu Nepalese customs were banned and subordinated to Buddhist Bhutanese customs.

The BPP was the lead organization in the often-violent campaign of the early 1990s, in which dozens of people died and schools and other infrastructure were blown up. The former secretary-general of the BPP, D.K. Rai, was convicted of terrorist acts in May 1992 and sentenced to life imprisonment.

Teknath Rizal, the leader of the BPP and a former Cabinet minister, was extradited from exile in Nepal and arrested in 1989, being convicted of treason and sentenced to life imprisonment in November 1993. The authorities released Rizal on Dec. 17, 1999 (together with 40 other political prisoners) but he was effectively confined to a hotel in the town of Phuntsholing in south-western Bhutan and prevented from conducting political activity. Prevented also from working and from receiving treatment for diabetes in Bhutanese hospitals, Rizal was supported by human rights organizations such as Amnesty International (AI). In an interview with the Nepalese magazine *Newslook* on Dec. 16, 2002, Rizal expressed doubts over the genuineness of the constitutional changes set in motion by King Jigme Singye Wangchuk. Nevertheless, he emphasized the continuing relevance of the monarchy, saying, "the King is irreplaceable for the unity of the country".

### **Bhutan National Democratic Party (BNDP)**

The BNDP was formed in February 1992 in Kathmandu, Nepal, partly from former supporters of the BPP. Its president was R.P. Basnet, a former senior trading official in southern Bhutan.

### **Bhutan Gurkha National Liberation Front (BGNLF)**

The BGNLF is a pro-refugee party and organizes demonstrations on the borders of Bhutan and Nepal.

### **Bhutanese Appeals Movement Co-ordinating Council (BAMCC)**

The BAMCC is focused on championing the repatriation of the ethnic Nepalese refugees in the UNHCR-run camps in Nepal.

### **Druk National Congress (DNC)**

The DNC was founded in 1994 by Rongthong Kinley Dorji (also styled Keunly or Kunley), a Bhutanese businessman who had fled to Nepal in 1991 after being accused of defaulting on loans and of acts against the state. The government of Bhutan demanded Dorji's extradition, but it was not until he visited Delhi in India in April 1997 that he was arrested by the Indian authorities, remaining in detention until his release on bail in June 1998. Since then he has been kept under house arrest by India. It is notable that Dorji is a Buddhist Sarchop, so that he cannot, like the Hindu Lhotshampa dissidents, be accused of attempting to undermine Bhutan's Buddhist identity. The DNC has conducted a grassroots pro-democracy campaign in eastern Bhutan. A report released in January 1998 by the London-based human rights organization Amnesty International (AI) concluded that there were many credible reports of arbitrary detention, torture and harassment by the security services among the Sarchop community in eastern Bhutan. Among some 150 people detained in 1997 were dozens of Buddhist monks and religious teachers. AI also found that many people had been convicted of ngolop activities through unfair legal process under the vaguely worded 1992 National Security Act.

### **United Front for Democracy in Bhutan (UFDB)**

The UFDB is an umbrella organization comprising the BPP,

the BNDP and the DNC. Its president is Rongthong Kinley Dorji and its chairman is Thinley Penjore.

### Non-governmental organizations

The government regards human rights organizations established by ethnic Nepalese exiles as political parties and consequently illegal. These include the Human Rights Organization of Bhutan, the People's Forum for Human Rights in Bhutan and the Association of Human Rights Activists – Bhutan.

### Indian separatist groups

Since 1998 the most serious threat to security in Bhutan has been posed not by ethnic Nepalese and pro-democracy groups but by incursions into southern Bhutan by guerrillas of two armed separatist organizations from the Indian state of Assam, the **United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA)** and the **National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB)**, both of which maintain camps in the ill-charted forests of the border region to stay out of reach of the Indian army.

It is thought that the ULFA has been operating in Bhutan since 1992, but its presence increased from 1995 as it was deprived of former bases in Bangladesh in a crackdown by the Bangladesh government. Apart from the presence of the guerrillas Bhutan was also concerned over incursions into its territory by Indian armed forces in pursuit of the separatists. In May 1998 there was a serious incident involving Indian troops in Sarpang district and in November Bodo guerrillas ambushed a Bhutanese army convoy, killing four soldiers. The Indian militants have also committed a number of armed robberies and raided police stations for arms. Their presence both disrupts trade and erodes government authority in the border districts.

Bhutan has nevertheless resisted Indian pressure to conduct joint operations against the guerrillas, apprehensive over the consequences of an open conflict, including the implications of a sanctioned Indian military presence on its territory. The Royal Bhutan Army (RBA), about 8,000 strong, is a lightly armed and inexperienced force. King Jigme Singye warned in a public address on March 31, 2001, that a conflict with the guerrilla movements would have grave consequences for Bhutan, not only in terms of casualties but also economically. The government held negotiations with ULFA in November 1998, May 1999 and June 2001 in attempts to persuade it to dismantle its camps. In the latter round of talks the ULFA, which also claimed that its camps were on "undemarcated" territory, undertook to remove them from Bhutan by Jan. 1, 2002. However, it was reported that by the deadline ULFA had merely relocated four of at least nine camps within Bhutan.

Militants reportedly killed 15 Bhutanese travellers in Assam on Dec. 20-21, 2001. Pressure from India to act against the guerrillas continued, with the chief minister of Assam saying that the security threat from Bhutan was being ignored. There were claims in the Indian media that Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agency, already believed to be operating in Bangladesh, had also gained a foothold in Bhutan. It was reported in on Jan. 6, 2003, that an RBA patrol had killed four NDFB guerrillas in a gun battle in Manas forest in southern Bhutan. It was reported on Jan. 8 that in three separate encounters in southern Bhutan 10 Indian soldiers and seven NDFB militants had been killed. It was unclear whether these incidents were the result of joint operations between the Indian and Bhutanese forces.

*Tim Curtis*

## Bolivia

**Capital:** La Paz

**Population:** 8.3 m

The Republic of Bolivia has an executive President elected for a five-year term by universal adult suffrage and a bicameral Congress consisting of a 130-member Chamber of Deputies and a 27-member Senate, similarly elected for five years. Bolivia's history has been punctuated with repeated military coups and from 1964-82 there was a succession of military regimes with only brief spells of civilian government. Since 1982, however, Bolivia has had a civilian government. Hugo Bánzer Suárez, a former General who had previously led Bolivia as a military dictator from 1971-78 after taking power in a coup, was elected President in 1997. He stood down because of ill health in August 2001, being succeeded for the remainder of his term by Vice-President Jorge Fernando Quiroga Ramírez.

The first round of the presidential election (from which Quiroga was constitutionally barred from standing), held on June 30, 2002, was inconclusive. Evo Morales, the charismatic 42-year old president of the coca growers association, running as the candidate of the Movement Towards Socialism (MAS), won 20.94% of the popular vote and came a close second to former President (1993-97) Gonzálo Sánchez de Lozada of the centre-right Revolutionary Nationalist Movement (MNR). Manfred Reyes Villa of the New Republican Force (NFR) took 20.91% of the vote, former President Jaime Paz Zamora of the Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR) 16.32% and Johnny Fernández, of the Civic Solidarity Union (UCS), 5.6%, despite being disqualified because of unpaid

tax. As no candidate won more than half the popular vote, Congress was required to elect a President, choosing between the first- and second-placed candidates. Strong pressure from the United States and the decision of the MIR to back the millionaire former president, resulted on Aug. 4 in the choice of Gonz  lo S  nchez de Lozada by Congress by 84 votes for 43.

Results of the concurrent June 30 legislative elections were, for the Senate: MNR 12, NFR 5, MAS 5, MIR 5; and for the Chamber of Deputies: MNR 33, MIR 30, NFR 29, MAS 22 and UCS 5. The sharp increase in indigenous representation meant that for the first time facilities had to be installed for simultaneous translation into the country's three main indigenous languages, Aymara, Quechua and Guaran  .

### **Association of Coca-growers (Cocalero)**

*Leadership: Evo Morales (president)*

Under the US-led campaign to outlaw coca growing (the "Dignity Plan"), coca production for the manufacture of cocaine was drastically reduced during the 1990s. There was, however, strong opposition to the policy from a combination of indigenous groups and small farmers, resulting in rural unrest and demonstrations and with this issue meshing with a range of other grievances. By April 2001 the government again faced widespread though peaceful demonstrations. The protesters complained that the government had not honoured agreements made in October 2000. They demanded inter alia higher wages for public sector workers, abandonment of water privatization, rescinding of the Agrarian Reform Law and an end to the destruction of coca plantations in Chapar   (it was, later admitted, however, that the belief that the B  nzer government had virtually eradicated illegal coca production in Chapar   was false). On April 30 the government accepted the mediation of Church authorities and talks proceeded despite the deaths of two protesters in sporadic clashes with police. At the end of June the erad-

ication programme was suspended following clashes between troops and peasants in Yungas and protests continued after the new government of Jorge Quiroga took office.

On Jan. 15, 2002, farmers at Sacaba, Department of Cochabamba, attempted to re-open a coca leaf market closed by presidential decree; subsequently at the end of January seven people were killed in a clash nearby. On Feb. 9, with the assistance of mediation efforts by religious leaders, the government agreed to allow the markets to stay open for legal dealings in coca leaf. Meanwhile legislators had voted on Jan. 24 to strip the president of the Cocalero (coca-growers association), Evo Morales, of his parliamentary immunity from prosecution for alleged incitement. However, in response to increasing military activity in Chapar  , there were clashes between troops and cocaleros which led the government to transfer coca eradication efforts to the National Police.

Morales, running as the candidate of the Movement Towards Socialism (MAS), subsequently took 20.94% of the vote in the presidential elections held on June 30, 2002, winning strong support from the indigenous peasant class. In his campaign he pledged to expel US Drug Enforcement Administration officers from Bolivia and US government officials warned that aid to Bolivia would be cut off if he were elected, branding him a left-wing ideologue and apologist for terrorism. In August 2002, therefore, Congress chose Gonz  lo S  nchez de Lozada as the new President. However, Morales' strong performance at the polls was widely seen as likely to mean the incoming government would soft-pedal on the coca eradication programme and in an important concession to the indigenists, on Sept. 1 the decision was reported to redistribute some 500,000 ha of agricultural and 700,000 ha of forestry land to 11,000 landless families. The programme would cost an estimated US\$2,500 million.

*Peter Calvert*

## **Bosnia and Herzegovina**

**Capital:** Sarajevo

**Population:** 3.8 m

The Republic of Bosnia & Herzegovina declared its independence from the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) in March 1992 and was admitted to the UN in May 1992. Its pre-independence ethnic composition by main group was 44% Muslim (or "Bosniak"), 31% Serb and 17% Croat, a mixture which precipitated a bloody conflict from 1992-95 (Bosniaks and Croats having supported independence in a 1991 referendum while the majority of Serbs opposed it). Bosnian Serbs, with support from Serbia and the Serb controlled Yugoslav National Army, during 1992 seized large swathes of territory, ethnically cleansed non-Serbs (leading to the largest refugee crisis in Europe since World War II) and proclaimed their intention to incorporate the land they controlled in a

"Greater Serbia". In 1993 a separate war between Croats and Muslims broke out in parts of the remaining territories, which was resolved with US mediation in March 1994, when the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina was established on the Muslim and Croat controlled territories.

A shift in the military balance, assisted by US-led air attacks that forced Serb forces to abandon their three-year long siege of Sarajevo, paved the way to the ending of military conflict through the Dayton Agreement of November 1995. The Agreement specified that the Republic of Bosnia & Herzegovina would remain a single sovereignty but would consist of two "entities", namely the Federation of Bosnia & Herzegovina (comprising 51% of the country's territo-



ry) and the Bosnian Serb Republic (Republika Srpska, RS) of Bosnia & Herzegovina (comprising 49%). The Agreement made provision for the return of all refugees as a precondition for reconstruction and redevelopment, a process which is still underway.

The administration of Bosnia & Herzegovina has some aspects of an international protectorate. Implementation of the Dayton Agreement is underwritten by the "Contact Group" consisting of representatives of the USA, Great Britain, Germany, France and Russia. A High Representative, based in Sarajevo, is elected by and reports directly to the Contact Group. The Office of the High Representative (OHR) oversees all aspects of the implementation of the Agreement and has wide ranging powers and responsibilities to intervene in domestic politics. The international community also maintains a military (NATO-led SFOR stabilization force) presence in the country. SFOR strength has been progressively reduced but still stood at 12,000 in mid-2003. Bosnian politics are additionally considerably affected by the operations of the International Tribunal for War Crimes in Former Yugoslavia, established by the UN in 1993 and based at The Hague, which has resulted in the indictment and in some cases arrest and conviction of prominent (particularly Serb) political leaders.

Under the complicated Dayton structure power-sharing is institutionalized. The central government is primarily responsible for foreign relations, trade and customs, monetary policy and communications. It is headed by (i) a three-person Presidency – one Muslim, one Croat and one Serb elected from the three ethnic communities for four-year terms, and (ii) a Council of Ministers, headed by a Premier. The Council of Ministers is responsible to a bicameral Parliament (Skupstina), consisting of (i) an upper 15-member House of Peoples (Dom Naroda) indirectly elected for a two-year term by the legislatures of the "entities" (10 from the Federation of Bosnia & Herzegovina and five from the Serbian Republic), and (ii) a 42-member House of Representatives (Zastupnicki Dom) directly elected for a two-year term from each "entity" (28 from the Federation and 14 from the Serbian Republic).

The Federation of Bosnia & Herzegovina is headed by a President and Vice-President, each elected by the Federation's legislature for four-year terms and drawn alternately from the Muslim and Croat communities. The Federation's President, with the agreement of the Vice-President, nominates the Federation Prime Minister and Council of Ministers for endorsement by the bicameral legislature, consisting of an indirectly-elected upper House of Peoples of 74 members, of whom at least 30 must be Muslims and at least 30 Croats, and a directly-elected House of Representatives of 140 members. The Serbian Republic of Bosnia & Herzegovina is headed by a President, who is directly elected for a four-year term and who nominates the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers for approval by the directly-elected unicameral 83-member People's Assembly. Under the Dayton accord, all elections in Bosnia & Herzegovina are organized and verified by

the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). The 2002 elections were the first to be organized by the authorities of Bosnia & Herzegovina rather than the OSCE.

Bosnia & Herzegovina exists in a unique legal context in which the ultimate authority still rests with the international community. The international administration underwrites stability but its frequently authoritarian rule, with the High Commissioner able in many areas to rule by decree, has caused domestic resentment and also been criticized externally as absolving Bosnian leaders from taking responsibility for achieving democratic power-sharing and social and economic progress. Against this background, the nationalist parties have consolidated their grip on power in their respective entities and the implementation of the Dayton Agreement has been obstructed by the resistance of radical nationalists working within the official existing political structures.

### **Nationalist obstruction of the implementation of the Dayton Agreement**

The international community has repeatedly expressed concern at the powerful resistance to reforms and an overall lack of support for a unified multi-ethnic state. In August 2001, a new elections law was adopted whose provisions limited the eligibility of certain persons to participate in the elections based on decisions of the High Representative, the Provisional Election Committee (PEC) and other international authorities. In all 356 persons were held ineligible to be candidates. Article 19.9B of the law excludes political parties from certification if top party positions are held by persons banned by the High Representative or PEC. As a result of this, the (Muslim) Party of Democratic Action (SDA) and the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) replaced some influential people in their leadership structures.

Replacing a moderate alliance, the candidates elected in the October 2002 general elections come primarily from the three nationalist parties of the respective ethnic entities. Each of these parties was founded in a four-month period in 1990 as the former Yugoslav federation began to disintegrate. They are the Muslim SDA, which was led by Alija Izetbegovic from its foundation until 2001, Izetbegovic being wartime President of Bosnia; the Serbian Democratic Party (SDS), which was formerly headed by Radovan Karadzic, its wartime leader; and the Croatian HDZ, which was an offshoot of the Croatian party of the same name which led Croatia to independence in 1991. The joint presidency is shared by Sulejman Tihic from the SDA, Mirko Sarovic from the SDS and Dragan Covic from the HDZ. Showing their support for the nationalist parties in the 2002 elections, the three ethnic groups undermined Western attempts to marginalise hardliners and to endorse a moderate ruling coalition.

It is believed that the nationalist parties have established parallel power structures and criminal linkages.

On May 28, 2003, US President George W. Bush issued an executive order freezing the assets of 150 individuals believed to be obstructing the peace process for their own ends. The list includes, among others, Radovan Karadzic and Ante Jelavic, a former leader of the HDZ and a member of the tripartite presidency elected in 1998. Earlier, in March 2003, the USA blocked the assets of Momcilo Mandic and Miroslav Cicko Bjelica, two Bosnian Serbs believed to be close to Karadzic.

### **BOSNIAN SERBS**

Republika Srpska (RS) has been accorded the status of a constituting entity of Bosnia & Herzegovina alongside the Federation of Bosnia & Herzegovina. It occupies a wide swathe of territory, almost half the total of Bosnia & Herzegovina, comprising areas which had a pre-war Serbian majority or such a majority as a result of wartime expulsions. It includes only one of the principal cities, Banja Luka (from which some 80,000 Muslims and Croats were expelled in the 1992-95 war), reflecting the pre-war mainly Muslim or ethnically mixed composition of larger towns such as Sarajevo, Zenica and Tuzla which were never taken by Serb forces.

The obstructionism of Bosnian Serbs to the implementation of the Dayton Agreement manifests itself in a number of areas, such as the refusal to support Bosnia's central authorities and the lack of cooperation as regards the return of refugees. In particular, the Bosnian Serb leaders have not cooperated with the international community in relation to the indictment and arrest of war criminals, Radovan Karadzic being the most notable among them. Karadzic is widely known to reside in the RS but SFOR efforts to detain him have to date proved futile in the face of apparent tip-offs about imminent raids. Although SFOR was able to weaken the extremist power structures in the RS, many of the individuals responsible for the events in 1992-95 have stayed in power at the local levels of the RS government.

The RS was formerly dominated politically by SDS leaders Radovan Karadzic, Momcilo Krajisnik and Biljana Plavsic. Karadzic was removed from his formal position in the RS government and the SDS party in 1996 but he was able to retain his power base, helping him to elude prosecution. Both Krajisnik and Plavsic have appeared before the Hague Tribunal. Plavsic gave herself in in January 2001 (being sentenced in February 2003 to 11 years' imprisonment after pleading guilty to crimes against humanity), while Krajisnik was apprehended by SFOR in April 2000. The principal wartime military commander of the RS was Gen. Ratko Mladic, also indicted at the Hague, who is generally understood to be in Serbia, where he enjoys the protection of powerful forces within the security establishment.

In March 2003, the High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, launched a campaign to undermine the support network that has allowed Radovan Karadzic to

evade arrest. The High Representative designated two individuals, Momcilo Mandic and Milovan Bijelica, and two companies, Manco Oil and Privredna Banka Srpsko Sarajevo, as being obstructionist. Mandic had acted as Karadzic's financier, while Bijelica had served as Karadzic's go-between with the outside world. In a separate decision, the High Commissioner removed Bijelica from his position as Chairman of the Srpsko Sarajevo Municipal Assembly. In July, the High Representative dismissed two more individuals: Dragomir Vasic was removed from his position as member of the RS National Assembly and councillor in the Zvornik Municipal Assembly and Djojo Arsenovic was removed from his position as member of the RS National Assembly for assisting individuals to elude prosecution. In July 2003, the assets of 12 individuals, including the wife, brother and son of Radovan Karadzic, were frozen by decision of the High Representative.

### **BOSNIAN CROATS**

Despite general calls for consolidation of a common state, the HDZ leaders have repeatedly made statements advocating either "cantonization" of Bosnia & Herzegovina or the creation of a "third entity" as a means of granting Croats full equality in the state structure. In the 2002 election campaign, however, the HDZ leaders abandoned this rhetoric in favour of the idea of creating strong municipalities, although the party's election manifesto refers to the "third entity" option. This dubious approach left room for much suspicion and speculation, especially when the HDZ politicians already have a history of activities to create a Croat mini-state in Bosnia, an ambition that took shape in the course of the Bosnian war when Croat forces, turning on their Muslim allies and with strong support within the ruling Croatian HDZ, seized areas of territory and partitioned the Herzegovinian capital, Mostar.

In March 2001 the then High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, removed Ante Jelavic (HDZ) as a member of the Presidency of Bosnia & Herzegovina and barred him from holding any other official or elected public office. Ante Jelavic was also barred from running in elections and from holding posts in official parties, so he ceased to be president of the HDZ. Activities of Ante Jelavic aimed at undermining the Dayton agreement were stated as the main reason for the decision of the High Representative. These included the staging of a rally on March 3, 2001, in Mostar under the name of the "Croat National Assembly" where the participants established what the High Representative saw as unconstitutional and illegal parallel structures. In a press release related to his decision, the High Representative expressed his view that Ante Jelavic was concerned with "the well-being and position of extreme nationalists and perhaps criminal elements in his party" rather than with the well-being and position of the Croat people. The UN Security Council applauded the actions of the High

Representative and condemned the efforts of the extreme Croat nationalists to proclaim self-governance in areas controlled by Bosnia's Croat minority.

In 2003, the HDZ took some steps to clean its ranks of extreme nationalists. In June 2003, the HDZ Main Board unanimously adopted a decision to suspend Ljubomir Cesc Rojs from the party membership. Rojs is on the US list of individuals obstructing the peace process. At the Eighth Congress of the party in April 2003, claiming to speak on behalf of the Hague indictees Janko Bobetko, Ante Gotovina and Mirko Norac, Rojs called for a return to the values of the Tudjman-Gojko Susak regime.

Among the staunchest opponents of Bosnia's Croat-Muslim Federation was Mladen Naletilic, commonly known as "Tuta", who founded a paramilitary Convicts' Brigade responsible for some of the worst atrocities against Bosniak and Serb communities during the war. On March 21, 2000, the Croatian government extradited Mladen Naletilic to the Hague to be put on trial by ICTY. His arrest provoked an outpouring of support within the Croat community of Herzegovina, which remains a stronghold of extreme nationalists agitating for a Croat mini-state or "third entity" in Bosnia & Herzegovina.

### BOSNIAN MUSLIMS (BOSNIACS)

The wartime links of Alija Izetbegovic's Party of Democratic Action (SDA) with paramilitary elements, especially Islamic volunteers from Iran and Afghanistan, are seen by the international administration as an impediment to the rule of law. Though the SDA and Izetbegovic's successors have shown support for the Dayton Agreement, the party has been under scrutiny for the existence of political-criminal structures growing out of the wartime links.

A number of senior Bosnian Muslim politicians and businessmen are listed on the US executive order freezing the accounts of individuals believed to obstruct the peace process. Hasan Cengic, a former deputy defence minister of the Federation of Bosnia & Herzegovina, is seen as one of the individuals most responsible for the management of wartime funds coming from external sources. In 1996, the United States compelled his removal on suspicion of blocking the implementation of a defence law calling for a joint command for the Muslim-Croatian forces. He was

nevertheless able to retain his power base among the hard-line SDA representatives and established a private business empire.

Bakir Alispahic is the other senior Bosnian Muslim politician named on the US list. He is a former Federation interior minister and the first director of the Agency for Investigation and Documentation (AID), and was implicated in organizing the Pogorelica camp, 40 kilometres northwest of Sarajevo. On May 1, 2002, the Supreme Court of the Federation ordered the arrest of Bakir Alispahic and two other former senior AID officials, Irfan Ljevakovic and Enver Mujezinovic, and two former senior police officials, Edhem Veladzic and Ejub Ikic, charged with abuse of office, terrorism and espionage, as well as involvement in terrorist training. The arrests followed an investigation in April 2002 of the three former AID officials when they were accused of co-operating with the Iranian Intelligence and Security Ministry (MOIS) in setting up a terrorist training camp in Pogorelica, which is now disbanded. The camp was spotted in 1994 and on Feb. 15, 1996, NATO-led peacekeepers raided the camp and arrested three Iranian instructors. Soon after the raid on the Pogorelica camp, Alispahic left both the interior ministry and AID and set up his own business.

The listing of the names of Hasan Cengic and Bakir Alispahic was rejected as "wrong" by the SDA leadership in May 2003. Seada Palavric, SDA Vice President, stressed that "the same list should not include the names of Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic on one side, and Hasan Cengic, Bakir Alispahic and Senad Sahinbasic Saja on the other, because such act equated them".

Indigenous Islamist sentiment in Bosnia is not a significant force. However, an estimated 3,000 Islamic fighters joined the Bosnian army in the 1992-95 war; after the Dayton agreement most left but an estimated 300 remained. Following the Sept. 11 attacks in the USA, SFOR troops in October 2001 raided the Sarajevo offices of the Saudi High Commissioner for Aid to Bosnia and premises in Zenica seeking evidence of *Al-Qaeda* activities. Six suspects were detained including the alleged head of *Al-Qaeda* operations in Europe; all were released by the courts for lack of evidence in February 2002 but then seized by the USA and transferred to Guantanamo Bay.

*Nadia Milanova*

## Botswana

**Capital:** Gaborone

**Population:** 1.6 m

The Republic of Botswana achieved independence from the UK in 1966. Under its 1966 constitution, executive power is vested in the President as head of

state, elected for a renewable five-year term by an absolute majority of the elected members of the National Assembly, which has legislative authority.

Under a constitutional amendment adopted in 1997 (but not retrospectively applicable to the then current incumbent), no person may serve more than two presidential terms. The President appoints a Vice President from among the members of the Assembly as well as members of the Cabinet, over which he presides. The National Assembly, also having a term of five years, consists of 40 members directly elected from single-member constituencies by universal suffrage of those aged 18 and over, as well as four members elected by the elected Assembly members (from a list of eight submitted by the President). There is also a 15-member House of Chiefs, composed of representatives of the principal ethnic groupings, which considers draft legislation on constitutional or chieftaincy matters (but has no veto) and may make representations to the President on tribal matters.

In elections for the elective seats in the National Assembly in October 1999, the Botswana Democratic Party won a large majority of the seats. Festus Mogae, who had succeeded to the presidency in April 1998 on the resignation of Sir Ketumile Masire, began his first

full term as President in October 1999, when he was elected by the members of the new National Assembly.

Botswana has long been regarded as one of the success stories of Africa, and its domestic stability – due in part to the strong allegiances among the country's eight principal ethnic groups – is in contrast to the turmoil amongst its neighbours in the region. Continued and increasing political instability in Zimbabwe has raised the spectre of renewed flows of refugees, a problem that persistently beset relations between the two countries throughout the 1980s and 1990s. During the 1980s, relations with South Africa were seriously strained because of the latter's policy of regional destabilisation, during which opponents of the apartheid regime were targeted and killed. A number of these attacks occurred in Botswana. The relaxation of the political climate within South Africa from 1990 onwards, led to a gradual improvement in relations between the two countries.

*D. J. Sagar*

## Brazil

**Capital:** Brasilia

**Population:** 176 m

The Federative Republic of Brazil consists of 26 states and one Federal District. Executive power is exercised by a President, directly elected by universal adult suffrage for a four-year term. There is a bicameral National Congress consisting of a Senate and a Chamber of Deputies. Each state and the Federal District directly elect three Senators for an eight-year term by simple majority. There are 513 federal deputies in the lower chamber, directly elected by proportional representation for a four-year term, with seats allocated to each state on the basis of population.

After 21 years of military rule Brazil returned to democracy in 1985. The first civilian President, José Sarney, was indirectly elected. His successor, Fernando Collor de Mello, was elected directly in 1989. Collor resigned moments before he was impeached for corruption by Congress in 1992. His vice-president, Itamar Franco, served as President for the rest of the term. Fernando Henrique Cardoso was elected in 1994 and re-elected in 1998. Luis Inácio Lula da Silva, of the left-wing Workers' Party (PT), was elected President on Oct. 27, 2002, in a run-off election, with 61.3% of the vote, having won the first round on Oct. 6 with 46.4% of the vote. Lula, who had led the creation of the PT in the early 1980s as the political voice of the "combative" wing of the labour movement, achieved office on a platform that significantly toned down the left-wing rhetoric that had dominated his previous unsuccessful presidential bids in 1990, 1994 and 1998. He presides over a coalition

government and the PT, which took 91 of the 513 seats in the Chamber of Deputies in the October 2002 elections, is the largest single party in the legislature.

### **Death squads, organized crime and terror**

Brazil did not experience left-wing insurgency of the sort seen in numerous other Latin American countries in the 1970s and 1980s, and politically-motivated revolutionary or dissident groups are not currently active in Brazil. However, there are substantial areas of the country in which the rule of law is very weak, due to the presence of death squads and violent organized crime, protected by corrupt politicians and state officials. Amnesty International reports that death squads, composed of off-duty police officers, are active in at least half the states in Brazil, targeting human rights and environmental activists, politicians, journalists and justice officers investigating official corruption, and vulnerable sectors of the population such as homeless and landless people. In very few cases are those responsible brought to justice.

Organized crime, chiefly drug and arms trafficking, contraband, cargo and vehicle theft, has reached such proportions in certain areas, that the authorities have effectively lost control. In Rio de Janeiro, the so-called Red Command gang and its two main rivals have made the shanty-towns no-go areas for the police. In the last two years, however, Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo (where the main gang is known as the First

Command of the Capital) have undertaken more audacious coordinated actions, directly challenging the authorities and aimed at creating terror in the general population. The head of the Red Command, Luiz Fernando da Costa (better known by his nickname Fernandinho Beira-Mar, or “Freddy Seaside”) has trained with the Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARC). In September 2002 his gangs seized control of Rio de Janeiro's main prison, killing rivals. In December 2002 and February 2003, he orchestrated from his prison cell one-day “shut-downs” of transport and commerce in the city. Similarly, in February 2001, First Command of the Capital orchestrated the largest prison riots in Brazilian history, involving over 25,000 inmates and taking thousands of family members hostage in over 30 prisons in the state of São Paulo. This “Colombianization” of organized crime is posing serious challenges to the law enforcement agencies in Brazil, as police are ill-trained, ill-equipped and them-

selves frequently involved in illicit dealings with criminals.

In January 2002, Celso Daniel, campaign manager of the PT and the mayor of Santo André, was kidnapped and murdered. The PT stated that his murder, and that of another PT mayor the previous September, could have been politically motivated, and press reports at that time suggested that an organization called the “Brazilian Revolutionary Action Front” had issued threats against PT officials engaged in building ties with centre-right parties. No evidence has subsequently emerged of the existence of any such organization, however, and it has since generally been accepted, including by the PT, that the murders were most likely the result of common criminal kidnappings that went wrong.

*Fiona Macaulay*

## Brunei Darussalam

**Capital:** Bandar Seri Begawan

**Population:** 336,000

The Sultanate of Brunei (Negara Brunei Darussalam), which had been a British protectorate since 1888, became internally self-governing in 1959 and a fully independent sovereign state within the Commonwealth on Jan. 1, 1984. The Sultan of Brunei is head of state and also Prime Minister of an 11-member Cabinet. There is also a Legislative Council (non-elective since 1962) whose 20 members nominated by the Sultan. Successive Sultans have ruled substantially by decree since 1962 and political organization and activity has barely existed.

Following the crushing of a rebellion in December 1962 (see below under *Parti Ra'ayat Brunei*, PRB) Sultan Sir Omar Ali Saifuddin III imposed a state of emergency under which all political parties were banned and the government was empowered to detain people without trial. Six of those detained for their part in the rebellion were not released until 1990. Sheikh Ahmad Azahari, the leader of the PRB, went into exile in Malaya. Saifuddin decided in 1963 against joining the Federation of Malaysia. No elections have been held since 1962, and on the achievement of full independence in 1984, Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah (who had succeeded his father Saifuddin in 1967) declared that there would not be any move towards democracy. However, a *Parti Kebangsaan Demokratik Brunei* (PKDB, Brunei National Democratic Party), a moderate loyalist party with principles based on Islam and liberal nationalism and committed to achieving a system of parliamentary democracy, was formally launched in September 1985, having been registered by the government in May 1985.

A breakaway party from the PKDB, the *Parti*

*Perpaduan Kebangsaan Brunei* (PPKB, Brunei National Solidarity Party), was formed in February 1986 and was also registered by the government. This party favoured closer co-operation with the government than the PKDB and also, unlike the PKDB, opened its membership to Chinese and other non-Muslim groups.

In March 1988 the government dissolved the PKDB, officially because it had breached its terms of registration by opening connections with a foreign organization, the Pacific Democratic Union (of regional centre-right parties). The government detained two of its leaders, Abdul Latif Hamid and Abdul Latif Chuchu, until March 1990. Latif Hamid died in May 1990. In the same year the government began to propagate *Melayu Islam Beraja* (Malay Islamic Monarchy), a combination of traditional Brunei values and a closer adherence to the tenets of Islam, as the state ideology, in response to increasing social problems, such as alcohol abuse. In 1994 a government-appointed constitutional committee recommended the re-introduction into the Constitution of an elected legislature, but there have been few signs that this recommendation will be implemented. However, in February 1995 the government permitted the PPPKB to hold a general assembly at which former PKDB leader, Abdul Latif Chuchu, was elected party president, a position which he soon had to relinquish because it contravened the terms of his release from prison. Furthermore the PPPKB was also, in May 1998 permitted to hold a general assembly at which Hatta bin Zainal Abidin was elected party president.

Although Brunei was frequently mentioned in 2002

by security analysts as one of a number of target countries of *Jemaah Islamiah* (JI), a south-east Asian Islamic militant network, there appeared to be no evidence that JI was active in Brunei.

### **People's Party of Brunei (Parti Ra'ayat Brunei, PRB)**

Established in 1959, the PRB, led by Sheikh Ahmad Azahari, won all the elective seats in the Legislative Council in August 1962, but on Dec. 8 of that year a "North Borneo Liberation Army" linked with the PRB carried out a revolt, with the object of preventing Brunei's entry into the then proposed Federation of Malaysia. By Dec. 17 the revolt was suppressed with the help of a British task force. A state of emergency had been declared on Dec. 8, the PRB was banned and hundreds of its members were arrested. Azahari escaped into exile in Malaysia. The Constitution was suspended on Dec. 20, and the Legislative Council was dissolved. Thereafter the Sultan (who eventually declined in July 1963 to join Malaysia) ruled by decree.

The PRB subsequently operated from exile in Malaysia,

with the use of facilities in Sarawak (East Malaysia). In 1976 there were still 37 political detainees in Brunei, most of them PRB members arrested in 1962. At the United Nations the PRB has been one of several petitioners for the granting of "the inalienable right of the people of Brunei to self-determination and independence". In a resolution initiated by Malaysia and adopted by the UN General Assembly on Nov. 28, 1977 (with Britain not participating in the vote), the British government was called upon "to facilitate expeditiously the holding of free and democratic elections in Brunei and the lifting of the ban on all political parties and the return of all political exiles to Brunei".

Three members of the PRB imprisoned since 1962 were released on Independence Day, Jan. 1, 1984, with further releases of prisoners in subsequent years through to 1990. The party secretary-general, Zaini bin Ahmad, having escaped from detention in 1973 and fled to Malaysia, returned to Brunei in 1994 to be reconciled with the Sultan, while Azahari has remained in exile.

*Tim Curtis*

## **Bulgaria**

**Capital:** Sofia

**Population:** 7.8 m

Communist rule ended in Bulgaria in 1990, with multi-party elections held in June and the Republic of Bulgaria proclaimed as a multi-party parliamentary democracy in November, replacing the People's Republic which had existed since the Bulgarian Communist Party (BCP) came to power after World War II. There is an elected President, who serves a five-year term, and a unicameral National Assembly of 240 members elected for a four-year term. Presidential elections held in November 2001 were won by Georgi Parvanov, then leader of the Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP, the social democratic successor party to the former Bulgarian Communist Party). In legislative elections in June 2001, 120 of the 240 seats were won by the newly formed National Movement Simeon II (NMSS), led by Simeon Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, who as Tsar Simeon II had been deposed in 1946 at the age of nine. NMSS is a right-wing formation espousing national renewal rather than the restoration of the monarchy.

On only a few occasions since independence in 1879, have revolutionary movements played a pivotal role in Bulgaria's political development. Nevertheless, their philosophical underpinnings leave long trails some of which are reflected in today's politics. Many of these movements' themes have been borrowings from Western Europe or Russia, adapted to local circumstances. Communism appeared in the late 19th century, very quickly splintering into two movements, "narrow" socialists, in effect revolutionary communists who rejected any accommodation with other

political forces and "broad" socialists who espoused a form of social democracy. Fascism was briefly popular in the 1930s and early 1940s (all the more influential because its leader was a former Prime Minister) as was to a lesser extent anarchism. Of the home-grown movements, a revolutionary form of agrarianism, committed to the establishment of a peasants' dictatorship, was popular among sections of the Agrarian party which formed Bulgaria's first post-World War I government, overthrown by a right-wing coup in 1923.

At the same time a Macedonian nationalist movement, the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO), began a bloody campaign of terror and assassination. IMRO was suppressed by a group of army officers who seized power in a second coup in 1934. The rebels of 1923 and 1934 represented a radicalised version of a long-standing tradition of authoritarian conservatism which advocated that democracy was only possible after the people had been brought to a popular understanding of democracy by an educated, "benevolent and paternalistic" governing elite. This was a view given weight by the chronic instability of the Bulgarian political system (the 1934 government was the 50th since independence), a circumstance brought about, in the view of the 1934 plotters, by the activities of political parties, which were judged to have put their own considerations before the national interest. One of their first moves, therefore, was to proscribe political parties, a tenet continued by their successor, King Boris. With

the exception of a brief revival between 1945 and 1947, independent political formations remained banned until 1989.

Many of these themes were reconstituted after 1989, some in the form of independent parties and some as factions of what were until recently Bulgaria's two biggest political parties, the Bulgarian Socialist Party and the Union of Democratic Forces (UDF). Although their influence for much of the last thirteen years has been on the fringes of politics, recent changes in the political system may provide more fertile ground for their revival. To understand why this may be so, it is necessary to trace briefly the development of Bulgaria's post-1989 political development.

The peaceful unseating in November 1989 of the country's Communist leader, Todor Zhivkov, who had been in power since 1954, by a group of reformers marked the beginning of Bulgaria's reform process. In quick succession the reformers announced that the Communist Party would abandon its leading role, that multi-party elections would be held and that the party would change its name to the Bulgarian Socialist Party. Little of this found favour, however, with the bulk of the BSP's mostly elderly and conservative membership and the party embarked upon an unresolved struggle, a re-enactment in many respects of the old "broad" and "narrow" debate, between reformers and conservatives, a struggle which took precedence over the need to reform the party in the face of changed geopolitical and economic circumstances. The failure of the hardline Moscow coup in 1991 strengthened the reformers' hand a little but it was not until a BSP government was forced to resign in 1997 as a result of an economic crisis, that the reformers gained enough support to lobby effectively for the construction of a social democratic programme.

The polarization of the BSP into "broad" and "narrow" factions was replicated in the UDF. The UDF was formed in December 1989 as a loose coalition of dissident groups from two distinct strands, independent anti-communist dissidents and liberal reformers from the Communist Party. Radicals from the former groups, in a viewpoint in many ways reminiscent of conservative thought in the inter-war years, saw "decommunization", the dismantling of the BSP's structures in parliament and in the institutions of government, as a necessary prelude to the establishment of democratic structures. The UDF, from this viewpoint, was a social movement whose parliamentary role was subordinate to a wider duty to decommunize the country. A second faction of more pragmatic reformers, mostly from the liberal wing of the former Communist Party, saw the parliamentary arena and the UDF's role in it as paramount and were willing to work with the BSP on a reform agenda.

Partly as a result of the inability of the BSP to reform itself, the UDF split during parliamentary discussions on a new constitution in 1991. A number of radicals refused to sign the new constitution and at the same time gained control of the party structures. The now radicalised UDF won a slim majority in the elec-

tions of that year, and formed a government which pursued an agenda of decommunization at the expense of economic reform. It was brought down by a vote of no confidence a year later and, when neither the UDF nor the BSP were able to form a government, an independent "government of experts" was formed. An election was finally called in 1994, but the UDF's programme of further decommunization found little sympathy with a population suffering considerable economic hardship and the BSP won a clear victory. In 1995, a change of leadership started the party on a long (and not yet complete) path of organizational and political restructuring that saw its registration as a unitary Christian Democrat party in 1997. The UDF decisively won the 1997 election and governed until 2001 when it lost an election to NMSS.

Until 1997, then, the political system was characterised by a non-negotiable communist/anti-communist divide, a schism to which other shades of political opinion were largely subordinate. The moves towards Christian democracy by the UDF in that year and social democracy by the BSP later marked the beginnings of a more pluralist political landscape, a change further impelled by the creation of NMSS. This is a political landscape, however, in which public disaffection with both post-1997 governments has run high. Voted in on large popular votes, the approval ratings of both governments fell soon after election, demonstrating a recurrent pattern of high public expectations of government, followed quickly by disappointment and loss of credibility as the government failed to alleviate pressing socio-economic and political problems, particularly low living standards and corruption. The result has been in effect a political vacuum in which more radical themes may flourish.

A number of such themes have emerged in Bulgaria since 1989. A pan-Islamic Turkish Democratic Party (leader Adem Kenan) has emerged in Southern Bulgaria which advocates the creation of a federation of Bulgarians and Turks in Bulgaria, in which all predominantly Turkish areas should be given administrative and cultural autonomy. Of the older themes, on the far left, a number of revolutionary communist and Marxist parties have maintained a small, if persistent, presence gaining between them less than 1 per cent of the vote in the 2001 election. Two other older themes have also proved durable and are detailed below.

### **RADICAL NATIONALIST GROUPS**

Radical nationalist groups advocate the assimilation of minorities, particularly ethnic Turks. The biggest of these are the Committee for the Defence of National Interests (CDNI), which claims that the 'Turkish community...was originally ethnically Bulgarian and had been forcibly "Turkified" during Ottoman rule'. The parliamentary wing of the CDNI, the Fatherland Party of Labour, has contested all post-1989 elections, either independently or in coalition with the BSP, gaining one seat in 1990 and three in 1994. Its support comes principally from ethnic Bulgarians living in Turkish

majority areas. Its leader (chairman) is Mincho Minchev

The Bulgarian National Radical Party, which in 1994 claimed a membership of 34,000, has also contested national elections since 1989, rarely gaining more than 1 per cent of the vote. Its programme is similar to the CDNI, although in 1995 and 1996 it flirted briefly with a number of skinhead groups, collectively called Blood and Honour, which have links with National Socialist groups in Germany, but has since cut most ties. Its mostly elderly membership is drawn from the larger cities. Two other extreme right-wing parties are still active, the Liberal Democratic Party (an offshoot of Vladimir Zhirinovsky's LDP in Russia) and the Bulgarian Democratic Forum, founded in 1989 and claiming to be the successor to the pre-war fascist movement.

### MACEDONIAN NATIONALIST GROUPS

In the 2001 census some 5,071 people registered as Macedonian, mostly in Sofia and the Pirin district of southern Bulgaria. Of the organizations that claim to represent this group, the largest is IMRO-UMS (Union of Macedonian Societies). It registered as a political party in 1990 and was part of the UDF until 1997. It governed in coalition with the UDF as a separate party

until 2001 and is currently a parliamentary right-of-centre party led by Krassimir Karakachanov.

A number of other organizations have emerged, however, whose legal status has not been so clear. A separate UMS emerged in 1989 intended to develop Macedonian culture and provide political representation. An offshoot separatist organisation, UMS-Illinden (president, Kiril Ivanov), split from UMS in 1990 and by 1998 was demanding an independent Pirin Macedonia and the removal of Bulgarian "occupation" troops from Pirin. It claimed 10,000 members in the mid-1990s but its current strength is unclear. It was refused registration in 1990 and remains proscribed.

A 1999 offshoot of the latter group, UMS-Illinden-Pirin (leader: Ivan Singartiiski), claims to be a non-separatist democratic party committed to working to preserve the spiritual values, traditions and culture of the population of the Pirin Mountains' area. It was allowed to register as a political party in 1999, and won two village mayorships in the local elections of 1999. However the Constitutional Court annulled its registration in 2000 and its leadership has announced that it will take its case to the European Court of Human Rights.

*Duncan Brown*

## Burkina Faso

**Capital:** Ouagadougou

**Population:** 12 m

For most of the period from its independence from France in August 1960 until 1991, Burkina Faso was subject to military rule interspersed with sporadic civilian government. In August 1983 a radical left-wing regime was installed by Capt. Thomas Sankara. He was later deposed and killed in a further violent coup (the fifth since independence) on Oct. 15, 1987, led by Capt. Blaise Compaoré at the head of a Popular Front, which replaced Sankara's National Revolutionary Council.

Compaoré has since remained in power, although his military regime gave way to multi-party democracy from 1991, in keeping with the African trend. A new constitution was approved by referendum in June 1991, providing for a directly elected executive President and a popularly elected Assembly of People's Deputies (*Assemblée des Députés Populaires*). A ban on political organizations was lifted. Nevertheless, opposition parties boycotted the presidential elections in December 1991, which Compaoré won as sole candidate in an unconvincing

28 per cent voter turnout. The assassination of a leading opposition figure, Clement Ouedraogo, in mid-December, meanwhile led to the postponement of the legislative elections until May 1992. These were won by the pro-Compaoré Organization for Popular Democracy-Labour Movement and several smaller allied parties in the Popular Front, despite opposition claims of ballot rigging. The next Assembly elections in 1997 returned a new pro-Compaoré organization – the Congress for Democracy and Progress (*Congrès pour la Démocratie et le Progrès*, CDP) – with an overwhelming total of 101 of the 111 parliamentary seats. The presidential elections on Nov. 15, 1998, returned Compaoré to power for another seven-year mandate with over 87% of the vote, although several opposition parties again boycotted the poll. Further legislative elections on May 5, 2002, resulted in another victory for the CDP, but with a much-reduced return of 57 seats.

*Richard German & Elizabeth Taylor*



# Burundi

**Capital:** Bujumbura

**Population:** 6.3 m

Burundi was granted independence as a monarchy in 1962, having previously been administered by Belgium since the termination of German rule during World War I, first under a League of Nations mandate and from 1946 as a UN trusteeship. The monarchy was overthrown in 1966 and the Republic of Burundi declared. Since independence Burundi's principal security problem has related to tensions between the majority Hutu (about 84 per cent of the population) and minority Tutsis (15 per cent), the latter traditionally being the dominant ethnic group. These tensions resulted in open conflict in 1972, when there was substantial loss of life. In the light of this, the regime of President Jean-Baptiste Bagaza (who came to power in 1976) officially proscribed any reference to Hutu or Tutsi, declaring all citizens to be Burundi.

After a coup in 1987 that overthrew Bagaza, Maj. Pierre Buyoya, a Tutsi, came to power. Buyoya published a National Unity Charter in May 1990, under which Burundi moved to civilian rule and "controlled" multi-partyism. However, the period of transition only served to unleash conflict between the Hutu and Tutsis. Presidential elections held in June 1993 resulted in victory for Melchior Ndadaye (a Hutu) and subsequent legislative elections were won by the (Hutu) Burundi Front for Democracy (FRODEBU), marking an end to centuries of rule by the Tutsi minority.

President Ndadaye was killed in an attempted coup by militant Hutu dissidents in October 1993 and he was succeeded in January 1994 by Cyprien Ntaryamira, a Hutu and a member of FRODEBU. Three months later Ntaryamira himself died in an unexplained air crash near Kigali (together with the President of Rwanda) and was succeeded by another Hutu and FRODEBU member, Sylvestre Ntibantunganya.

From 1994 Hutu guerrilla groups launched a campaign against the Tutsi-dominated armed forces. Mounting insecurity culminated in a further military coup in July 1996 that brought Buyoya back to power. Buyoya was officially sworn in as President in June 1998. Peace talks facilitated by former South African President Nelson Mandela resulted in the signing in July 2001 of the Arusha power-sharing agreement designed to end the civil war. Under the terms of the agreement, a new transitional government was formed in November 2001, composed of members of both the Tutsi and Hutu ethnic groups. It was agreed that President Buyoya would hold the presidency for a term limited to only 18 months at the start of a three-year transitional period. The transition was relatively orderly and in April 2003 Domitien Ndayizeye, leader of the FRODEBU, replaced Buyoya as President. However, Hutu rebel opposition to the Arusha peace

process – and in particular to Tutsi control of the armed forces – continued, led by hardline factions of the two main militias, the Forces for the Defence of Democracy (FDD) and the Forces for National Liberation (FNL).

**National Council for the Defence of Democracy/Forces for the Defence of Democracy (Conseil national pour la défense de la démocratie/Forces pour la défense de la démocratie, CNDD-FDD)**

*Leadership: Col Jean-Bosco Ndayikengurukiye (faction leader); Pierre Nkurunziza (faction leader).*

The (Hutu) Forces for the Defence of Democracy (FDD) was founded, along with the National Council for the Defence of Democracy (CNDD), by Léonard Nyangoma, a former Interior Minister, in 1994 following the assassination of President Melchior Ndadaye, a Hutu, the previous year. The CNDD was largely made up of Hutu intellectuals from the southern Bururi area. However, many of the FDD fighters came from other parts of the country and this led to divisions within the group. In May 1998, the chief of the general staff of the FDD, Jean Bosco Ndayikengurukiye, proclaimed himself leader of the organization, toppling Nyangoma. Ndayikengurukiye was himself replaced as leader in 2001 by Pierre Nkurunziza, but continued to retain the support of a minority faction. The CNDD-FDD has sought to restore Hutu dominance of the presidency, the government and the legislature and also the armed forces. Elements within the group have long contended that without control of the armed forces, formal political control by Hutu parties was useless.

The FDD is relatively well-armed, and has reportedly been assisted at times by the governments of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Zimbabwe and elements of the Tanzanian government. The FDD has also entered into loose, informal alliances with the (Burundian Hutu) Palipehutu-Forces for National Liberation (Palipehutu-FNL), the (Rwandan Hutu) *Interahamwe* and ex-Rwandan Armed Forces (ex-FAR) and (Congolese) Mayi-Mayi militiamen.

The FDD claims to have about 30,000 fighters at its disposal, but many analysts believe its strength to be between 5,000 and 7,000. The FDD has carried out operations throughout Burundi, but they are not believed to have any substantial bases inside the country itself. Many of the FDD's casualties are civilians, but the militia also has a record of attacking strategic and military targets. There has traditionally been a strong FDD presence in regions bordering Tanzania and in Hutu refugee camps inside Tanzania. The FDD was forced to reduce its presence in the DRC during 2002, largely as a result of shifting regional political alliances, but nonetheless appears to have retained important bases in the country.

During 2002 the Burundian government signed cease-

fire agreements with both CNDD-FDD factions; firstly, in October, with the faction led by Ndayikengurukiye (the so-called Jean-Bosco faction) and secondly, in December, with the faction led by Nkurunziza. The groundwork for peace had been laid in July 2001 when Hutu and Tutsi representatives agreed to share power in an interim administration. However, the cease-fire agreement with the dominant Nkurunziza faction was short-lived and FDD fighters under Nkurunziza's control launched a series of attacks on Bujumbura in mid-April 2003, killing some 20 people. The attacks were launched to coincide with the implementation of the 2001 Arusha peace accords, under the terms of which President Buyoya (a Tutsi) had agreed to hand over the presidency over to Domitien Ndayizeye, the leader of the main Hutu political party, the Front for Democracy in Burundi (FRODEBU) in late April. The handover went ahead as planned, despite continued attacks by fighters loyal to Nkurunziza, who had said that he would suspend attacks only if the Tutsi-led army disarmed. A new Cabinet appointed by President Ndayizeye in May included a member of the Jean-Bosco faction of the CNDD-FDD, namely Gaspar Kobako, Minister of Public Works and Equipment.

### **National Liberation Front (Front pour la libération nationale, Frolina)**

*Leadership: Joseph Karumba (chairman)*

The National Liberation Front (Frolina) is a small but long-established Hutu rebel group which opposes "Tutsi domination". It emerged as a splinter group of the Palipehutu-Forces for National Liberation (Palipehutu-FNL), with which it still retains close links. Frolina's armed wing is the *Forces armées du peuple* (FAP). Like Palipehutu-FNL, Frolina derives its support from the plain area along Lake Tanganyika and the central Muramvya region. Again following the lead of the main Palipehutu-FNL faction, Frolina accepted the terms of the 2001 Arusha peace accords and, accordingly in May 2003, entered the government of President Ndayizeye. Frolina's Rodolphe Baranyizigiye was appointed as Minister for Youth, Sports and Culture.

### **Party for the Liberation of the Hutu People (Palipehutu) – National Liberation Forces (Parti pour la libération du peuple hutu (Palipehutu) – Forces nationales de libération (Palipehutu-FNL)**

*Leadership: Agathon Rwaswa (faction leader); Alain Mugabarabona (faction leader).*

The Party for the Liberation of the Hutu People (Palipehutu) was established in the Burundian refugee camps of Tanzania in the early 1970s, and its armed wing, the *Forces nationales de libération* (FNL), began a series of cross-border raids into

Burundi. Later, other Hutu militias were formed, including Frolina (see entry), but Palipehutu-FNL remained the most effective anti-government force. Neither Palipehutu-FNL nor any other militia managed to capture and hold territory for any significant length of time, but they were able to move with ease within the country with the assistance of the predominantly Hutu rural population. Palipehutu-FNL's influence grew over the years, and in 1993 its members and supporters were instrumental in securing victory for the (Hutu) President Melchior Ndadaye and the (Hutu) Burundi Front for Democracy (FRODEBU), thereby interrupting centuries of rule by the Tutsi minority.

After the attempted coup by militant Hutu elements within the armed forces in October 1993, Palipehutu-FNL members, many of whom had become FRODEBU members, were instrumental in the massacres of Tutsi civilians, and were themselves particularly targeted in the counter-attack by the armed forces. Many were killed, while others were arrested and imprisoned. Those that escaped the counter-attack returned to the armed struggle in 1994, their numbers supplemented by fresh recruits from Tanzanian refugee camps. Many in the FNL militia are Seventh Day Adventists, and interpret their mission in spiritual terms. Attacks on Tutsis are often perpetrated while attackers sing religious songs.

Unlike the other main Hutu rebel group, the National Council for the Defence of Democracy – Forces for the Defence of Democracy (CNDD-FDD), Palipehutu-FNL has never had any significant presence in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and has not chosen to forge serious links with factions and armies fighting in the Congolese civil war. The Burundian government has often alleged the covert support of the Tanzanian government for FNL, but this has always been strongly denied by Tanzania. However, factions of the Tanzanian government appear to exercise some influence.

In 1998 Cossan Kabura seized control of the FNL, but he himself was ousted as leader of the militia in 2001 by Agathon Rwaswa, who refused to enter into peace negotiations with the government. In June 2002 Rwaswa's forces launched a series of attacks on military positions around Bujumbura, the most sustained assault by rebels since 1993. Following the attacks a small FNL faction led by Alain Mugabarabona broke away from Rwaswa and subsequently signed a cease-fire agreement with the government and embraced the Arusha peace process, accepting in May 2003 a post in the new Cabinet of President Ndayizeye. Accordingly, Cyrille Hitinuka was appointed as Minister of Civil Service.

*D. J. Sagar*

## **Cambodia**

**Capital:** Phnom Penh

**Population:** 11.7 m

The Kingdom of Cambodia achieved its independence from French rule in 1953. Norodom Sihanouk vacated

the throne in 1955 but continued to rule as Prince. Under Sihanouk Cambodia steered a non-aligned

course, but in the late 1960s, in the context of the Vietnam War, the country came to be used as a supply line for North Vietnamese forces (the Ho Chi Minh Trail). In March 1970 Sihanouk was deposed by Marshal Lon Nol, his Premier, in what was widely seen as a US-backed coup. The country was then re-named the Khmer Republic. In 1975 Chinese-backed *Khmer Rouge* gained control, in 1976 re-named the country Democratic Kampuchea (DK) and under Pol Pot waged a three-year campaign of revolutionary terror of almost unparalleled ferocity. In January 1979 the DK regime was overthrown by Vietnamese forces supported by the troops of the Kampuchean National United Front for National Salvation (KNUFNS) and the People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK) was subsequently proclaimed under the leadership of the Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Party (KPRP). Civil war continued for a decade, with the *Khmer Rouge* now in alliance with Sihanouk against the Vietnamese-backed government. In 1989 the Vietnamese withdrew, the country was renamed the State of Cambodia and a peace process ensued culminating in the Paris Peace Accords of October 1991. After UN-sponsored elections in 1993, the country once again became the Kingdom of Cambodia, with Sihanouk returning to the throne.

### 1980s civil war – Peace agreement

Despite controlling most of Cambodia, the PRK government was not recognized by an overwhelming majority of the states of the United Nations on the grounds that the government was “installed” by Soviet-backed Vietnamese forces in January 1979. From 1982-89 the UN General Assembly annually reiterated its recognition of the *Khmer Rouge*-dominated Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK, renamed in early 1990 the “National Government of Cambodia”). While the *Khmer Rouge* numerically and politically dominated the CGDK, that body also comprised the Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF), under the political tutelage of Son Sann, and the Royalist FUNCINPEC group (*Front Uni Nationale pour un Cambodge Indépendant, Neutre, Pacifique et Coopératif*) under the leadership of Prince Sihanouk. The military wing of this body was known by its French acronym ANS, or *Armée Nationale Sihanoukiste*.

The civil war was settled primarily by the decision of the leading members of the Security Council (the sponsors of the contending factions) to frame the conditions for a settlement. The objective was to allow the USA, China and the Soviet Union to disengage tactically to obtain the strategic objective of rapprochement. It was this withdrawal of Vietnamese forces from Cambodia in September 1989 that set in motion a train of events which eventually led to the formulation of the United Nations peace plan, signed on Oct. 23, 1991. This instrument provided for the country to be administered by the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) pending democratic

elections and the formation of a new government. A Supreme National Council (SNC), originally formed in September 1990 and chaired by Prince Sihanouk, supposedly embraced the main contending factions. However, amid continuing hostilities, the *Khmer Rouge*, known since the early 1980s as the Party of Democratic Kampuchea (PDK), boycotted UN-supervised elections in May 1993.

The elections to the 120-member Constituent (later National) Assembly, held between May 23 and 28, 1993, were legitimized by a 89.56 per cent voter turnout. The results were as follows: FUNCINPEC 58 seats (with 45.5% of the vote); Cambodian People's Party (CPP, the re-named KPRP) 51 (38.2%); Buddhist Liberal Democratic Party 10; National Liberation Movement of Cambodia (Molnaka) 1. A coalition government of FUNCINPEC, the CPP and two smaller parties was formed and on Sept. 21, 1993, a new constitution was promulgated re-establishing the monarchy in the context of a pluralistic, liberal and democratic political system. Three days later a seven-member Throne Council elected Sihanouk to resume the throne he had vacated 38 years earlier.

This process represented the first stage of transition from outlawed to constitutional political representation for two of the three exiled organizations, FUNCINPEC and the KPNLF. The remaining party, the *Khmer Rouge*, had withdrawn from the electoral process in June 1992, and formally departed the country in April 1993. Nominal power distribution was via an unwieldy joint prime ministership between “first” Prime Minister Norodom Ranariddh (of FUNCINPEC) and “second” Prime Minister Hun Sen (of the CPP). Similar power-sharing structures existed down to sub-provincial levels.

The power-sharing issue lay at the heart of the struggle for control by Ranariddh's FUNCINPEC and explains party disillusionment with its leadership and with the CPP's continuing hold over power. The *Khmer Rouge* still existed as an organization but began to splinter. A key member, Ieng Sary, split in favour of Hun Sen, and Ranariddh realigned with the remaining element, upping opposition to the CPP. Ranariddh was also caught illegally smuggling weapons disguised as machine parts into the country, and was rumoured to be preparing further military activity with the *Khmer Rouge*. The outcome of the escalating tension was a violent confrontation between the police, militia and military forces of Ranariddh and Hun Sen in Phnom Penh on July 5, 1997. Ranariddh fled the country, and after two days of intense fighting, relative calm returned to the city. Ranariddh remained in self-imposed and voluntary exile and was replaced through internal party election by another FUNCINPEC official, Ung Huot, as first Prime Minister. Ung Huot's policy stood in stark contrast to his predecessor's. According to the new incumbent, accommodating Hun Sen and the CPP permitted a “win-win” situation to develop, and, indeed, peace followed the conflict.

Cambodians managed the 1998 elections, rather than a supervisory force, as had been the case with the

UN-run elections in 1993. Despite the composition of the National Election Commission (NEC), suggesting a pro-CPP bias to some, the elections went as peacefully as their predecessors and indeed, voter turnout surpassed the 1993 figure. This time, however, the CPP won and, in a mirror version of the 1993 poll, the losers challenged the CPP over the validity of the vote. The contest remained deadlocked until November, amidst riots in Phnom Penh by supporters of the main parties. In the end, a solution was reached in the creation of an unelected Upper House, the Senate. This institution provided extra parliamentary seats for FUNCINPEC and facilitated rewards for loyalty in the tradition of the deeply entrenched politics of patronage and clientelism at all levels of society in Cambodia. It also meant that Ranariddh could take the helm of the National Assembly as the CPP holder, Chea Sim, would be prepared to vacate it in exchange for the leadership of the new Senate. Since this body was created, although relatively superficial in terms of the normally democratic functioning of a Western Upper House, it has provided a release for political tension.

As of 2003 there are currently no extra-constitutional political entities active in Cambodia. Those forces that were illegal and extra-constitutional have been either legitimized through institutionalised participatory politics or have been disbarred because of a refusal to participate under such rules, and thence outlawed by the legislature. Since some of the original extra-constitutional groups enjoyed considerable international legitimacy, and since some others have a long history in Cambodian politics, their disappearance warrants some scrutiny.

### **Khmer Rouge/Communist Party of Kampuchea (CPK)**

The *Khmer Rouge* (or *Khmers Rouges*) is just one of several terms applied to the organization that became notorious for its extreme experiment in agrarian and socio-economic revolution under Pol Pot between 1975 and 1978. Its political party origins derived from the formation of a Cambodian communist organization in 1951 subsequently described as the Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Party (KPRP). In 1952 (prior to full independence) Cambodian communists formed a "government of national resistance" led by Son Ngoc Minh, but following the 1954 Geneva Agreements the armed struggle by communists in Cambodia all but ceased. Some communists formed legal organizations (i.e. the Party of the Masses – Pracheachon) to contest elections to the National Assembly in 1955, others infiltrated Prince Norodom Sihanouk's Popular Socialist Community (*Sankum Reastr Niyum*), and still others went underground, some in Cambodia itself and some in North Vietnam.

On Sept. 30, 1960, Cambodian communists held their second congress (alternatively described as the founding congress of the CPK) which resulted in the formation of a "Marxist-Leninist Party in Cambodia" led by Tou Samouth as its general secretary. The party decided to combine revolutionary armed violence with "legal, semi-legal and illegal struggle". Its leadership included Saloth Sar (Pol Pot) and Ieng Sary, both members of a group of young, radical intel-

lectuals who had returned from Paris in the 1950s. The developing Sino-Soviet confrontation of this period led to a conflict within the CPK between supporters of North Vietnam and the Maoists, the latter group probably led by Pol Pot. In July 1962 Tou Samouth disappeared, possibly murdered on Pol Pot's orders, and Pol Pot was elected CPK general secretary in February 1963. At some time between February and July 1963 the CPK leadership (including Pol Pot, Ieng Sary and Son Sen) went into hiding in the Cambodian countryside and their names were not mentioned in any Cambodian press reports until 1971. However, Pol Pot was thought to have made visits to Hanoi and Beijing in 1965-66. CPK forces (often described as *Khmer Rouge*, *Khmer Viet-minh* or *Khmer Hanoi*) launched a peasant revolt in 1968 in which they were joined by a number of Cambodian communists who had remained as members of Prince Sihanouk's Popular Socialist Community, including Khieu Samphan.

Following the overthrow of Prince Sihanouk's regime in 1970 by rightists opposed to his overt and tacit support for the North Vietnamese (including permitting the use of Cambodia for the Ho Chi Minh trail, vital for movements of supplies from North Vietnam to the National Liberation Front forces operating South of the 17th parallel), the CPK supported the Prince's Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia (GRUNC) and formed with him the National United Front of Cambodia (FUNC). In 1973 Pol Pot began to purge the CPK of pro-Vietnamese elements, and when in April 1975 GRUNC forces finally gained control of the whole of Cambodia, the dominant political organization in the country was a pro-Chinese, anti Vietnamese CPK, whose members were drawn entirely from Pol Pot's supporters. However, it was not until September 1977 that it was officially disclosed that the ruling organization in Democratic Kampuchea (as the country had been renamed under its new January 1976 Constitution) was the CPK led by Pol Pot.

In May 1978 the first vice-chairman of the State Presidium, So Phim, reportedly launched a revolt in the southeastern provinces against the Pol Pot regime. In December the pro-Vietnamese Kampuchean National United Front for National Construction and Defence (KNUFNCD) was formed in the "liberated" eastern zones and began working towards the overthrow of the ruling regime. The KNUFNCD leader, Heng Samrin (a CPK official), took effective control of the country when, with the aid of Vietnamese forces, the Pol Pot government was overthrown in January 1979 under the banner of the Kampuchean National United Front for National Salvation. A CPK "reorganization" congress was immediately held by the new leadership, wherein it was decided to revert to the name of Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Party (KPRP) to distinguish it from Pol Pot's party. The state was renamed the People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK), to help further distinguish it from Pol Pot's Democratic Kampuchea. The Pol Pot government had in 1979 transferred its headquarters to the Thai border, where it announced the formation of a Patriotic and Democratic Front of the Great National Union of Kampuchea, the purpose of which was to rally all elements opposed to the Vietnamese-backed KPRP regime. In the light of the creation of this Front, the CPK central committee announced on Dec. 6, 1981, that it had been decided at a party congress on Sept. 3-6, 1981, to dissolve the party "in order to conform with the

new strategic line which does not pursue socialism and communism". However, Prince Sihanouk maintained a year later that the CPK still existed, with Pol Pot as general secretary. This view found wide acceptance and support. Following its alleged dissolution the CPK was referred to as the Party of Democratic Kampuchea (PDK), or as the *Khmer Rouge* or, in the political vernacular, "DK" (Democratic Kampuchea). Not only was communism officially renounced, but later in the decade, as there was increasing questioning of the moral validity of the PDK's occupation of Cambodia's seat at the UN, the party adopted environmentalism and promised to protect tigers and rare plants. By 1986, the party had developed further splits, and "Brother Number 3", Ieng Sary, was effectively separated from political influence, taking up residence in Pailin, north western Cambodia, which became his personal fiefdom, rich in logging and gem mining until recently. This was to become important a decade later, as the new government-to-be in Phnom Penh, led by two Prime Ministers, vied for influence over the *Khmer Rouge*.

The party sought political power through military confrontation as an ultimate objective. However, the nature of armed conflict in Cambodia was determined in part by the climate. Whilst on the one hand, the *Khmer Rouge* guerrilla army (known officially as the National Army of Democratic Kampuchea – NADK) gained ground in the wet season, when government armour became bogged down, in the dry season, heavy artillery from fixed positions gave the government forces the upper hand. Thus, achieving permanent political authority over a wide area was not achievable through military operations.

Under UN auspices a power-sharing entity was created known as the Supreme National Council (SNC), comprising 12 members, six of which were from the de facto government in Phnom Penh. The other six comprised two members each from the three parties of the CGDK, renamed the National Government of Cambodia (see above). The SNC would own the sovereignty of Cambodia while a huge multinational military and civilian task force called the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) would prepare for elections and fulfill the elements of its mandate enshrined in the Paris Peace Agreement (PPA). This mandate was, amongst other things, to include the disarmament and demobilization of 75 per cent of all four parties' armed forces, and the creation of a neutral political environment by separating the parties from any organs of state they might be able to co-opt to influence the outcome of the elections.

Prior to the arrival of the 22,000 strong UNTAC force, leading elements of the *Khmer Rouge* returned to Cambodia for the first time since their defeat in January 1979. Despite resistance from many levels to the inclusion of the *Khmer Rouge* in any position of legitimacy and authority, the format had been fixed in stone by Chinese and US demands that they be included, and the result was access to political power and decision making for the PDK. The purpose of inclusion, it was argued by some, was to create a "neutral political environment" amongst all "legitimate" contenders for power in preparation for a free and fair election to be conducted under United Nations' auspices. It was not expected that the *Khmer Rouge* would enjoy the popular support of a significant proportion of the Cambodian population, but it was anticipated that they would gain some sort of access to a

National Assembly determined by the popular plebiscite. None of this was to be the case, however. Initial indications that the *Khmer Rouge* would cooperate with the UN operation did not last. UNTAC failed to persuade the PDK that they had separated the incumbent Cambodian People's Party (CPP – formerly the PRPK) from the organs of State. As a result, the *Khmer Rouge* claimed that there could be no neutral political environment as long as these conditions remained. The CPP retained almost all civil and political power, ran the administrative structures under the noses of their UN watchdogs, and created uneven conditions that were also challenged by some of the other contestants. Because of this, on April 13, 1993, just a month before the elections were scheduled to run, the PDK locked its offices in Phnom Penh and departed once more to Bangkok.

Despite this, and the attendant fears of a meltdown during much-anticipated electoral violence, the *Khmer Rouge*/PDK did not actively attempt to prevent the elections in any meaningful way. Nearly 90 per cent of the electorate turned out and returned the Royalist FUNCINPEC party, the political wing of the *Armée Nationale Sihanoukiste*, in first place with the CPP coming second (see above). After significant inter-party conflict, a Royal Government of Cambodia was pronounced which, in July 1994, constitutionally outlawed the *Khmer Rouge* through legislative decision. However, this was not the end of the *Khmer Rouge*. The tenuous nature of the balance of power between the two main legitimate, parliamentary parties, FUNCINPEC and the CPP, forced the former to seek allies against their coalition partner. Meanwhile, the CPP sought to end the *Khmer Rouge* issue by enticing the National Army of Democratic Kampuchea (NADK) to leave its political masters and integrate into the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces, with amnesties all round. This also applied to CPK political representatives who wanted to defect. They were offered many incentives, including cash and government appointments.

More dangerous, however, was the use of the *Khmer Rouge* as an ally by FUNCINPEC. FUNCINPEC sought to recreate the anti-Phnom Penh alliance of the Cold War in order to redress what it saw as an imbalance in grass roots power sharing between it and the CPP. However, Hun Sen of the CPP had also been directly involved in generating contacts with the *Khmer Rouge* and in late 1996, Ieng Sary came over to the government with about half the remaining *Khmer Rouge* troops. They marshaled in and around Pailin and left Son Sen, Khieu Samphan, Pol Pot and Ta Mok (Chit Chhoeun) isolated as the core leaders of the *Khmer Rouge*. This tipped the scales of power firmly in the CPP's direction, and Ranariddh continued to negotiate in secret with some of the remaining elements of the *Khmer Rouge*. His failure to successfully redirect the balance of power resulted in his abortive coup attempt to overthrow Hun Sen in July 1997 (above), although some still believe wrongly that the "coup" was instigated by Hun Sen, or his senior supporters.

The period 1997-98 saw dramatic changes as the *Khmer Rouge* effectively tore itself apart. On June 10, 1997, Pol Pot ordered the murder of his chief military commander, General Son Sen, along with 14 of his family, for daring to consider defection to the government. In response to this, a senior military guerrilla, Ta Mok ordered the capture of Pol Pot, not because he found the death of Son Sen distasteful, but

because his own name appeared on the same death list. Ta Mok is a well-known one-legged soldier also known as “the Butcher”. Nine days later on June 19, Pol Pot was placed under house arrest by forces loyal to Ta Mok and was subsequently tried by a “people’s tribunal” which on July 25 sentenced him to life imprisonment. Even Khieu Samphan, a long-time ally of Pol Pot from the French days, denounced his erstwhile ally.

Pol Pot died on April 17, 1998, before demands for him to stand trial before some form of international tribunal could crystallise. The remainder of the organization splintered further in the following months. Khieu Samphan and Ieng Sary were granted amnesties by Phnom Penh and allocated their own fiefdoms, in return for co-operation with and non-resistance to the CPP-dominated government in Phnom Penh. Ta Mok remained at large until arrested on March 6, 1999. He was imprisoned pending trial by the military court of Phnom and the Assembly extended the pre-trial period when the end of the initial 6-month period loomed.

By 2002, the issue of bringing some of the remaining *Khmer Rouge* leaders to trial was highly contentious. The Cambodian government claimed jurisdiction whereas others have argued that the programme of the *Khmer Rouge* in the 1970s constituted not just a domestic crime of genocide to be challenged under national jurisdiction but also a wider crime against humanity that deserves to be confronted internationally. In February 2002 the UN abandoned plans to bring surviving *Khmer Rouge* leaders to justice before joint trials with Cambodia, concluding that the Cambodian government’s conception of how such a court might work would not guarantee its independence and impartiality. UN officials were reported as believing that the government wished to protect *Khmer Rouge* leaders who were now supporting it. However, more recently, an agreement has been reached to try some *Khmer Rouge* members, such as the man who ran Tuol Sleng, the key interrogation centre in Phnom Penh, for crimes against humanity. The composition is to be a joint arrangement with UN and Khmer judges, but this process has once again been temporarily derailed by problems in establishing government in the wake of the contested July 2003 elections.

### **Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF)**

The KPNLF was allied with the *Khmer Rouge* in the CGDK the 1980s civil war. Unlike the *Khmer Rouge* however, it subsequently entered constitutional politics, in 1992 forming the Buddhist Liberal Democratic Party (BLDP).

The KPNLF was established in France in March 1979 (and was formally established in Kampuchea in October 1979) with the object of uniting all non-communist resistance to the Vietnamese-backed regime that had taken power in Phnom Penh at the start of the year. Initially it condemned the *Khmer Rouge*, demanding that the *Khmer Rouge* leaders should go into exile and that the KPNLF should have a majority in an anti-Vietnamese coalition government. Son Sann (the KPNLF leader), who had been Prime Minister under Prince Norodom Sihanouk in 1967, stated on Sept. 9, 1980, that the Front would fight the Vietnamese separately on condition that the *Khmer Rouge* would not attack KPNLF forces or their supply routes. By 1981 the Front claimed to

control 9,000 armed men (although other estimates ranged from 3,000 to 6,000) and to have received arms from China. The KPNLF was also equipped with US-made weapons (believed to have come from the Thai army).

During the following years the KPNLF continued resistance from its strongholds near the Thai border. The 1984-85 dry-season offensive against the CGDK forces was the heaviest undertaken by the combined Vietnamese and PRK forces; by March 1985 most of the main CGDK bases along the Thai-Kampuchea border had been overrun. On Jan. 11, 1985, Son Sann announced that he had ordered his troops to abandon attempts to recapture bases lost to the Vietnamese. He admitted that the Front was not strong enough to fight a conventional war against “the third strongest army in the world”. Instead of trying to defend fixed bases, Son Sann said, his forces would adopt guerrilla tactics (in the style of the *Khmer Rouge*) and strike at internal PRK targets. The KPNLF was subsequently riven for a period by power struggles among its leadership.

The KPNLF was included in the SNC power-sharing body established under UN auspices and the BLDP was founded in 1992 as its successor. As signatory to the 1991 Paris Peace Agreement, the KPNLF was obliged to disarm and canton its troops still under arms. However, the withdrawal of the most dangerous military element, that of the National Army of Democratic Kampuchea (the PDK/*Khmer Rouge* military component) from the cantonment and demobilization process caused the others to be wary. In the end, very few troops were subject to this element of the Agreement, as the *Khmer Rouge* policy of passive non-consent and active military withdrawal had a contagious effect amongst the other bodies.

Unlike the PDK, however, the BLDP participated fully in the political process, emerging from the 1993 election with 3.81 per cent of the vote and 10 seats in the Assembly. The BLDP campaign emphasized the centrality of Buddhist culture and religion in what is a predominantly (95%) Buddhist nation. The party entered power-sharing arrangements but was largely sidelined by the powerful CPP and FUNCINPEC and went into a rapid decline, exacerbated by factionalism. The issue of leadership succession in the BLDP caused infighting as Son Sann’s health deteriorated (he died in 2000). By 2001 there were two parties claiming the legacy, one led by Ieng Mouly and the other by Son Sann’s son, Son Soubert. The party names divided further but none achieved any substantial poll in the commune (2002) or assembly (2003) elections.

### **FUNCINPEC (Front Uni Nationale pour un Cambodge Indépendant, Neutre, Pacifique et Coopératif)**

FUNCINPEC was launched in March 1982 by Prince Sihanouk as the political wing of the Sihanoukist National Army (ANS, *Armée Nationale Sihanoukiste*), then in conflict with the KPRP in Phnom Penh. In June 1982 FUNCINPEC joined the *Khmer Rouge* and the KPNLF (see above) in the CGDK. Although under the titular leadership of Prince Sihanouk, the CGDK was dominated by the *Khmer Rouge*. Chinese and US pressure persuaded the exiled parties of the need to coalesce, and, once united, they provided the CGDK with an umbrella of legitimacy.

A UN Framework Document, signed in August 1990, established the Supreme National Council (SNC – see above) including the CGDK members and the government in Phnom Penh. Prince Ranariddh became the representative of FUNCINPEC in the power-sharing body while Sihanouk's position as 13th person and chair above all parties as final adjudicator, returned him effectively to the same hierarchical position he enjoyed – and exploited – before his own exile in 1970, without having to become embroiled in individual, internal party politics.

On the strength of the Paris Peace Agreement of Oct. 23, 1991, FUNCINPEC and the other CGDK parties were authorized to return to Phnom Penh. For the duration of the preparatory period, the elites tolerated one another's presence; some claim that FUNCINPEC threw over the *Khmer Rouge* and allied with the CPP against a new common enemy. At the grass roots level, it was a different story. The contest for power between FUNCINPEC against the entrenched CPP party members and political office holders in the provinces, communes and villages, became intense. CPP members viewed their challengers as illegitimate on the grounds that most of them had not been in the country for the last decade. As a consequence, numerous individuals in the CPP, sometimes backed by the forces of the State, responded with deadly violence. Many FUNCINPEC politicians lost their lives.

FUNCINPEC generally, and Ranariddh in particular, campaigned from a Royalist platform. As much as possible was done to associate Ranariddh with his often-venerated father, Prince Norodom Sihanouk. One general theme was that a vote for Ranariddh was a vote for Sihanouk. Another was of a return to an imagined “golden era of peace” that emphasized Cambodia's serenity before its involvement in the war in Viet Nam and with the *Khmer Rouge* and conveniently excluded the brutality with which Prince Sihanouk treated opposition and the routine appropriation of private and public sector resources that undermined peasant and national development.

The strategy seems to have served FUNCINPEC well, although some explain their electoral victory as a consequence of a negative CPP strategy regarding maintaining the war against the *Khmer Rouge*. Either way, Prince Ranariddh became First Prime Minister in the subsequent coalition government of FUNCINPEC, the CPP, the BLDP and the National Liberation Movement of Kampuchea (Molinkha). This did not happen with any great ease, however. Although FUNCINPEC won 58 seats to the CPP's 51, power was divided on a 50-50 basis. This was because the CPP refused to accept such a loss, and they threatened a return to conflict if different terms were not accepted. Sihanouk brokered a new arrangement, temporarily rejected by the US Mission in Phnom Penh, but accepted later by the Cambodian parties, if reluctantly on the part of Ranariddh.

The 1993 distribution of political power provided for a duplication of positions throughout the government. There would be a first Prime Minister (Prince Ranariddh) and a second Prime Minister (Hun Sen). Nominally, Ranariddh out-ranked Hun Sen. Each Ministry received a new vice-minister, appointed from the ranks of whichever party was not represented at the top level. This model was extended to the provincial level as well. This did not translate well in prac-

tice. Although FUNCINPEC took more seats in the National Assembly, this was counterbalanced by the preponderance of the CPP's political power throughout the country at lower levels.

By 1996, relations had all but disintegrated between the CPP and FUNCINPEC. Many in the latter were concerned about poor leadership on Ranariddh's part, and his failure to secure a share of grass roots power from the entrenched CPP. The CPP exploited these splits and in an attempt to force the CPP to accept grass roots equality in power-sharing, Ranariddh threatened to walk out of government after the 1996 FUNCINPEC Congress (the first since the 1993 elections). When Hun Sen chided him to leave, Ranariddh was forced to create again the old alliance with the remnants of the *Khmer Rouge*, still outlawed but holed up in the north-west of Cambodia. After this failed and the CPP secured a mass desertion from the *Khmer Rouge* under Ieng Sary, tensions rose yet further. Ranariddh smuggled weapons disguised as machinery and was caught out. *Khmer Rouge* documents recovered later from Anlong Veng reveal that the Prince was working in collusion with the *Khmer Rouge* to attempt to remove the CPP from power, and on July 5, 1997, extreme violence erupted in Phnom Penh between the militias, police and military of the CPP and FUNCINPEC. The CPP quickly reasserted its authority over two days and Ranariddh fled into exile.

FUNCINPEC then appointed to its presidency, through an internal election, the Foreign Minister, Ung Huot. The party retained its position of leadership in the Assembly and continued to function in Ranariddh's absence. Indeed, levels of hostility between the heads of the two parties declined markedly, but the party itself further splintered, eventually into eight parties, some of which were pro-CPP. Ranariddh was eventually allowed back into the country after receiving an amnesty from the King for the crimes he committed in smuggling and co-operating with an illegal organisation (the *Khmer Rouge*). He then led his party to a creditable second place in the 1998 polls, where he reassumed leadership of FUNCINPEC (Ung Huot had departed to lead his own party, which got less than 1% of the vote. He demanded a recount). However, the Prince was unhappy with the outcome of the voting and challenged the CPP on irregularities and recounting, alongside another former ally-turned-opponent, Sam Rainsy, this issue being resolved with the creation of a Senate (see above).

Ranariddh has since returned to elite power in Cambodia. After the 1998 polls, which he only huffily participated in to begin with, his party realigned with Hun Sen's CPP under the condition that it “behaved” itself. This meant accepting the CPP's sustained hegemonic position in Cambodian politics. Lack of support for FUNCINPEC at grass roots level was reiterated in the 2002 commune elections in which the CPP won commune chief positions in almost all of the more than 1,600 “khums”. However, coalition and opposition parties did win places on the councils of many of these communes, slightly diluting the CPP's hold over the country. Since the failure of FUNCINPEC to wrest power from the CPP in 2002, support for the party has declined to the point that he barely mustered 20 per cent of the popular vote, less than half what he got in 1993. He is seeking a joint opposition model in conjunction with the party that has absorbed much

of the vote he lost, the eponymously named Sam Rainsy Party (SRP), but Hun Sen is refusing to accept this solution.

*David Roberts*

## Cameroon

**Capital:** Yaoundé

**Population:** 16 m

Cameroon was a German colony (Kamerun) until the end of World War I when it was divided between Britain and France in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty of Versailles. After World War II, a United Nations Trusteeship plan continued the division. On Jan. 1, 1960, the (Eastern) French section of the trusteeship achieved independence, becoming the Republic of Cameroon, and on May 5, 1960, Ahmadou Ahidjo, a Muslim, was elected President. On Feb. 11, 1961, the UN organized a plebiscite whereby North British Cameroon voted by over 60 per cent of the votes cast for incorporation into Nigeria while West Cameroon to the south, by a substantial majority of 233,571 against 97,741, opted for merger with the Republic of Cameroon. West Cameroon re-unified with the rest of Cameroon to become the Federal Republic of Cameroon. Under Ahidjo a one party state was established from 1966 under the Cameroon National Union, the same party (known since 1985 as the *Rassemblement Démocratique du Peuple Camerounais*, RDPC, or Cameroon People's Democratic Movement, CPDM) thereafter retaining power to this day.

A further referendum on constitutional change in May 1972 re-emphasized the need for national unity (the vote being officially recorded as 3,217,056 for the government proposals and only 158 against) and brought about the re-naming of the country as the United Republic of Cameroon. Under the 1972 constitution, the President was to be both head of state and head of government with broad executive powers to appoint the Prime Minister (later Vice President), provincial governors, and the Cabinet.

President Ahidjo resigned in 1982 and Paul Biya, who had been Vice President, was elected in his place. To consolidate his authority Biya (a Christian) removed most of Ahidjo's northern, and by implication Muslim, allies and replaced them with southern confidants. On April 6-9, 1984, an attempted coup by elements in the Republican Guard, purportedly master-minded by northern Muslims loyal to Ahidjo, was put down by forces loyal to President Biya. Ahidjo, then in self-imposed exile in Senegal, was forced to resign his position as chairman of the ruling party. More than 1,000 arrests were made and during 1984-85 more than two hundred people were sentenced to death for their alleged involvement in the attempted coup. Ahidjo died in Dakar, Senegal in 1989.

### Introduction of multi-party system

By the early 1990s President Biya was confronted by the demands for a multi-party system sweeping much of Africa. Legislation was adopted legalizing opposition parties but prohibiting the foundation of parties on a tribal or regional basis. Numerous parties, mostly very small and transient, have been established since that time.

Multi-party elections have been held each five years since 1992 but the RDPC has remained in power. In elections held in June and September 2002, it took 149 of the 180 seats in the National Assembly. The other seats were won by the Social Democratic Front (SDF), taking 22, the Democratic Union of Cameroon (UDC) 5, the Union of the Peoples of Cameroon (UPC) 3, and the National Union for Democracy and Progress (UNDP) 1. President Biya, the leader of the RDPC, has held office continuously since 1982, being re-elected for a further seven-year term in October 1997 with 92.6 per cent of the vote.

### Union of the Peoples of Cameroon (Union des populations camerounaises, UPC)

This party was banned in Cameroon in 1955 and thereafter divided into a Marxist wing and a nationalist (struggle) wing. The nationalist wing led by Ruben Um Nyobe embarked on a rebellion inside Cameroon. Um Nyobe was killed by government forces in September 1958 after which large members of the faction surrendered. The Marxist wing of UPC was led by Dr. Félix Moumié (then in Cairo). In June 1959, he announced that the "revolution" would continue, and guerrilla warfare followed. He died in Geneva on Nov. 3, 1960.

After independence, the party competed in the Assembly elections in 1961 but subsequently went underground in armed opposition to the regime and was held responsible for protracted unrest until 1970, when its leader, Ernest Ouandié, was captured by security forces. He was subsequently tried for "attempted revolution" and other crimes along with the Roman Catholic Bishop Albert Ndongmo and others. Ouandié was sentenced to death and executed on Jan. 15, 1971. The death sentence on Bishop Ndongmo was commuted to life imprisonment and he was subsequently allowed to leave the country and officially reprieved on May 17, 1975. In August 1985, President Biya allowed him to return to Cameroon.

Ouandié was succeeded as leader of the UPC by M. Woungly-Massaga and the UPC survived in exile, with its base in Paris. It regained legal status in 1991 with a social



democratic programme but immediately split into two factions. It won three seats in the 2002 elections.

### **Social Democratic Front (SDF)**

*Leadership: John Fru Ndi*

The Social Democratic Front started as a dissident group named Study Group 89, initially described by its founders as a think-tank in order to evade the security agencies of the Biya regime. Its initial concern was to address the “anglophone problem” – the marginalization and repression of the English-speaking minority based in West Cameroon. The party was launched on May 26, 1990, in Bamenda in West Cameroon.

The party claimed to have won the 1992 presidential elections and that the harassment and detention of the SDF presidential candidate John Fru Ndi by security agents was one of the ploys through which the SDF was robbed of victory. In

the May 1997 parliamentary elections, the SDF won 43 seats in the National Assembly in spite of the claims of massive electoral fraud by the ruling party, and it retained its position as the leading opposition party in the 2002 elections.

### **Southern Cameroons National Council (SCNC)**

*Leader: Sam Ekontang Elad*

The SCNC began in 1993 as the All Anglophone Conference and was based in the city of Buea, the former administrative capital of West Cameroon when it was a part of Nigeria. In December 1999 it proclaimed the establishment of the “Federal Republic of Southern Cameroons” and in April 2000 named a judge, Frederick Ebong Alobwede, as its “president”. The SCNC has, however, not had a committed leadership or a convincing strategy of action to rally support.

*Obioma Iheduru*

## **Canada**

**Capital:** Ottawa

**Population:** 31.5 m

The Dominion of Canada has as its head of state the British monarch, represented in Canada by a Governor General. The head of government is the Prime Minister. The legislative assembly (Parliament) consists of the 301-member House of Commons, popularly elected through universal adult suffrage for a period of up to five years, and the 104-member Senate, whose members are appointed by the Governor General on the advice of the federal government. Canada's ten provinces have elected assemblies and governments while its three territories have elected legislative councils.

A federal election held on Nov. 27, 2000, resulted in the Liberal Party of Canada, in office since 1993, retaining power with 172 seats. Several other parties elected members to the House of Commons: Canadian Reform Conservative Alliance 66, *Bloc Québécois* 38, New Democratic Party 13, and the Progressive Conservatives 12. Parties with an important presence at the provincial level include, in addition to the main national parties, the Saskatchewan Party in Saskatchewan, the *Parti Québécois*, which held power in Quebec from 1976-85 and again from 1994 until losing at the polls to the Liberals in April 2003, and the Yukon Party, in office in the territory from 1992-96 and then elected again in 2002.

In the aftermath of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the USA, the activities of Middle Eastern based groups dominated Canadian security concerns, in particular *Al-Qaeda* (with arrests of alleged “sleepers” being made) but also *Hezbollah*, a Lebanese based organization. Following September 11 the government of Canada urgently brought in a new anti-terrorism bill, C-36, the Anti-Terrorism Act, which provided the government with a new range of powers including the ability to compel suspects to provide testimony in terror-

ism cases or face time in jail. In addition, the Canadian budget announced on Dec. 10, 2001, included increased provision for a range of counter-terrorism-related activities, including airline and infrastructure security, intelligence-gathering, improved security on the US-Canadian border and enhanced screening of visitors, immigrants and refugee claimants. Introducing his budget, the finance minister, Paul Martin stated: “what will change – what must change – is our ability to identify and exclude those who come to Canada fraudulently for whatever reason”.

The position of *Hezbollah* proved particularly controversial as the Canadian government initially adopted a policy of distinguishing between its military and humanitarian wings by allowing the latter to conduct fund raising within Canada. By late 2002, after considerable pressure from the Jewish-Canadian community, Canada added *Hezbollah's* humanitarian wing to its banned list.

## **SEPARATIST MOVEMENTS**

### **QUEBEC**

#### **Mouvement de Libération Nationale du Québec (MLNQ)**

While support for Quebec separatism remains a significant force among Quebec's francophone majority it is directed at achieving this end democratically through the *Parti Québécois* (PQ) at the provincial level and the *Bloc Québécois* at the federal level. PQ-sponsored referendums resulted in narrow defeats for separatism in 1980 and 1995 and the separatism issue has been generally downplayed by the PQ in more recent years. Support for more radical organizations advocating violence, like the dormant Front de *Libération du*

*Québec* (FLQ), founded in 1963 and responsible for a wave of bombings and kidnappings in the 1960s and 1970s, has largely disappeared. The only remnant of this period is the *Mouvement de Libération Nationale du Québec*, founded in the late 1990s by Raymond Villeneuve, a former member of the FLQ who spent time in prison for his role in the death of a security guard killed by a bomb in the 1960s. The membership of Villeneuve's party is under 300 and it has primarily been known for its clashes with English rights supporters in Quebec.

## WESTERN CANADA

### Western Canada Concept

Founded in 1980 by Doug Christie, a Vancouver lawyer, this right-wing movement was inspired by anger in western Canada, primarily in Alberta, toward the federal government under the Liberal Party and Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, and sought independence for the region. Support for the movement subsequently dissipated, especially with the election to government in 1984 of the Progressive Conservative Party with strong representation from western Canada. Twenty years later support for the Western Canada Concept and separatism in general was on the rise, again particularly in the province of Alberta. Fuelling the support for separatism was the stranglehold on national office held by the Liberal Party and the federal government's introduction of a law requiring the registration of all firearms and its ratification of the Kyoto Protocol, the latter strongly opposed in a province with a strong oil and gas sector. In an October 2002 poll, twenty percent of Albertans favoured separation in the event the Kyoto Protocol was ratified while 89 percent said they were "more inclined" to separation. Elsewhere in the west, concern has been expressed by government agencies over the possibility of individuals or small groups modelling themselves after militia organizations in the United States seeking to challenge the power of the federal government over issues such as taxation and the courts.

## ABORIGINAL MOVEMENTS

Historically Canada's diverse Aboriginal communities have not generated radical political challenges to the Canadian state. Instead, Aboriginals have sought to further their cause within the existing political system through organizations like the Assembly of First

Nations and through such mechanisms as the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples that issued its final report in 1996. Occasional clashes between Aboriginals and Canadian authorities (the 1990 standoff at Oka, Quebec being the best example) have proven to be exceptions to the more moderate path. The Warrior Society, closely connected to the events at Oka, continues to be active, primarily among the Mohawk in Quebec, although it remains on the fringe of Aboriginal society and has been unable to capitalize on dissatisfaction with the policies of the federal and provincial governments. Instead, some of this discontent has been channeled into a new Aboriginal political party at the provincial level in Saskatchewan (First Nations Political Party) although this peaceful entity has also received little support.

## TAMILS AND SIKHS

Although not involving activities directed at undermining the Canadian state, because of its multicultural nature Canada has long experienced radical activity within ethnic communities inspired by conditions in the countries of origin. Two communities of note in this respect have been Sikh Canadians and Tamil Canadians. Within the former have been supporters of an independent Sikh nation in India. It was the cause of Sikh independence that allegedly inspired the bombing of an Air India jet in 1985 in the worst case of terrorism in Canadian history (see India entry). In 1998 the editor of a Punjabi language publication that had been critical of more radical elements within the Sikh-Canadian community was murdered in British Columbia, his killers rumoured to have ties to either the *Babbar Khalsa* or the International Sikh Youth Federation.

In the case of the Tamil Community in Canada, there has been some support for movements pursuing independence from Sri Lanka. Of particular concern to the Canadian government have been non-profit groups and other organizations raising funds on behalf of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), although with the growing possibilities of peace in Sri Lanka the problem appeared to be dissipating (see Sri Lanka entry).

*Steve Hewitt*

# Cape Verde

**Capital:** Praia

**Population:** 410,000

The Republic of Cape Verde (República de Cabo Verde) became independent from Portugal in July 1975. In common with the other former Portuguese territories in Africa, in the first years of independence Cape Verde had a Marxist-oriented regime which grew

out of the main liberation movement of the colonial period. Ideology was worn relatively lightly by the governing (and sole legal) party, the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde, the *Partido Africano para a Independência da Guiné e Cabo*

*Verde* – PAIGC. The country's first president, Aristides Pereira, a veteran of the anti-colonial struggle in the mainland territory of Guinea-Bissau, took a distinctly pragmatic approach to internal development and diplomatic relations. In 1980 the governing party became the PAICV – *Partido Africano para a Independência de Cabo Verde* – following a breach with Guinea-Bissau with which Cape Verde had hitherto had a nominal commitment to unification.

In the febrile atmosphere in the run-up to independence in 1975 two parties had emerged to challenge the dominance of the PAIGC. The Democratic Union of Cape Verde (UDCV: *União Democrática de Cabo Verde*) was an anti-independence party which sought to maintain the link with Portugal. The other opposition grouping of the immediate pre-independence period was the People's Union of the Cape Verde Islands (UPICV: *União do Povo das Ilhas de Cabo Verde*). The UPICV was a radical leftist party.

Neither the UDCV nor the UPICV survived into the post-independence period. Since the move to a multi-party system in the early 1990s, however, there has

been considerable party formation, realignment and dissolution.

The process of democratization in Cape Verde culminated in the introduction of a new constitution in September 1992. Its principal effect was to confirm formally the country's move to a multi-party democratic system already underway from 1990. Cape Verde's first open presidential election took place in 1991 when the PAICV's Aristides Pereira was replaced by António Mascarenhas Monteiro of the centre-right Movement for Democracy (*Movimento para a Democracia*: MPD). The PAICV recaptured the presidency in March 2001 when another veteran of the liberation struggle, Pedro Pires, narrowly defeated the MPD candidate.

Cape Verde is one of the most genuinely pluralist polities currently to be found in Africa, and political opposition is therefore expressed exclusively by constitutional means.

Norrie MacQueen

## Central African Republic

**Capital:** Bangui

**Population:** 3.6 m

The Central African Republic achieved its independence from France in 1960. It has a history of instability and unconstitutional seizures of power, most recently in March 2003.

A one-party state was established in 1962. Military rule was imposed in 1966 by Col. Jean-Bedel Bokassa, who created the Central African Empire in 1977 but was deposed in 1979 by former President David Dacko, under whom the country again became the Central African Republic. Military and then semi-military rule from 1981 under Gen. André Kolingba was replaced by a multi-party system in the early 1990s, as in many other African countries. The Constitution approved by referendum on Dec. 28, 1994, provided for a semi-presidential system with a strong President and a weak Prime Minister, with the President elected for a six-year term and the National Assembly (Assemblée Nationale), from 1998 having 109 seats, for a five-year term.

President Ange-Félix Patassé won the first pluralist presidential elections after twelve years of rule by Gen. André Kolingba, in the second round of elections on Aug. 19, 1993; he also won the subsequent elections on Sept. 19, 1999 (with 51.6% of the votes). Legislative elections to the National Assembly in 1993 and 1998 led in each case to his party, the Central African People's Liberation Movement (*Mouvement de Libération du Peuple Centrafricain*, MLPC), becoming the largest single party but without an overall majority. Patassé's government had to rely on some

smaller coalition partners and "independent" candidates, some of whom had to be "convinced" by force or money. Twelve political parties had representation in Parliament, the MLPC holding 47 out of 109 seats. The former "parti unique", the Central African Democratic Rally (*Rassemblement démocratique centrafricain*, RDC), with ex-President Kolingba as chairman, remained the strongest opposition party. This party secured 20 seats in the 1998 legislative elections followed by the *Mouvement pour la Démocratie et le Développement* (MDD) of another former head of state, David Dacko (8 seats).

After a period of prolonged instability, Patassé was deposed in March 2003 in an almost bloodless coup, staged while he was out of the country, by Gen. François Bozizé, who dissolved the National Assembly and suspended the Constitution. Bozizé established a Transitional National Council and announced this would preside over a transitional period lasting 18-30 months. Patassé went into exile in Togo, where he had previously been in exile during the 1980s.

### Instability from the mid-1990s to 2003

The Central African Republic experienced a series of three army mutinies in 1996-97, with the mutineers seeking to force Patassé to step down. French troops played an important role in controlling the situation, but finally were considered a party to the conflict themselves after engaging in acts of retaliation. On

Jan. 25, 1997, the Bangui Peace Accord was signed to end a nascent civil war in the capital opposing Patassé's supporters (mainly from the north-western savanna region) and supporters of Kolingba and others (mainly from the southern forest and river populations). A tentative "ethnic cleansing" took place in parts of the capital Bangui, with some neighborhoods becoming completely ethnically homogeneous. Patassé created his own party militias ("Karakos") between the first and the second mutiny.

African peace-keepers arrived and were replaced by a UN peacekeeping force (Mission des Nations Unies en RCA, MINURCA) about one year later. The UN brokered the entry of mutineers into the government on April 7, 1997. Civil unrest remained intense. In particular, the inability to pay salary arrears for civil servants (then up to 18 months) undermined the stability of the country.

In reaction to the growing ethnic polarization of politics triggered by the mutinies, a new alliance, the *Union des Forces Acquisées à la Paix* (UFAP), was established in 1999 but met with very limited success. A dangerous result of the rather smoothly organized 1999 presidential elections was that MINURCA could regard its mission as being accomplished; it was replaced by a small governance support unit. Soon the assumption proved wrong that with those elections the CAR would return to stability. The unusually successful MINURCA mission was apparently ended too soon. In Parliament, an impasse over the distribution of posts in its Bureau triggered a boycott of plenary sessions by a united front of 52 opposition MPs in late 1999. A motion of no confidence against the government was introduced by 45 opposition MPs only a few weeks later – with no success. A second motion of no confidence in April 2000 was linked to new corruption allegations against some ministers. The confrontation continued. The MLPC accused the *Parti de l'Unité Nationale* (PUN) of ex-Prime Minister Jean-Paul Ngoupande of planning to overthrow the government in a violent coup d'état. PUN leader Ngoupande and Charles Massi of the *Forum Démocratique pour la Modernité* (FODEM) on their side reported widespread intimidation. A new youth movement began to erect barricades in Bangui in November 2000 and the ephemeral *Flambeau Centrafricain* (FLAC) engaged in street battles with the police. The mysterious deaths of ex-Prime Minister Jean-Luc Mandaba (Oct. 22, 2000, probably poisoned) and his son (Nov. 12) may have triggered the revolt. The FLAC asked Patassé to resign. Patassé immediately hinted at contacts between FLAC, Massi and Ngoupande.

The political turmoil was accompanied by social unrest. From September 2000, the trade unions called continuously for action to protest against 29 months of salary arrears. After a short pause a civil service strike resumed on May 6, 2001. An attempted coup d'état took place on May 28, 2001. The rebels stormed the presidential residence and tried to control the nerve centres of the capital, particularly the radio station. Fighting raged in several parts of the city. The army

Chief of Staff, Abel Abrou, and the commander of the Gendarmerie, the dreaded general François N'Djadder Bedaya, were shot, but no other major objective of the rebels was achieved. The loyalists regained the upper hand in the coming days, supported by at least 300 troops of the rebel leader Jean Pierre Bemba from the neighboring Democratic Republic of Congo (from the *Mouvement pour la Libération du Congo*, MLC) and Libyan forces and helicopters. Kolingba publicly announced that he would back the rebellion, which reinforced the interpretation as being a Yakoma uprising (Kolingba being of the Yakoma ethnic group). The "Karako" militia close to Patassé "eliminated" several sympathizers of Kolingba. Bangui's southwestern districts of Bimbo, Petevo, Fatima and Bruxelles, where the mutineers were hiding, were the targets of intense shelling. The total number of casualties was officially established at 57, but might have exceeded 500 deaths. A man-hunt against Yakoma families began, houses in specific (southern) parts of the capital were destroyed and 80,000 inhabitants fled either to the country-side or, predominantly, crossed the river Oubangui into the Congolese town of Zongo. Rebels from the rank and file (estimated between 600 and 800) had fled the country with their arms and represented now a permanent threat.

A new military challenge appeared with the dismissal and subsequent accusation of the chief of staff, Gen. François Bozizé, of being implicated in a new coup plan. Bozizé refused to accept an arrest warrant, defected with about 100 troops, engaged in street battles in the northern neighborhoods of Bangui (traditionally supporting Patassé) and moved to the north of the country. After taking weapons from several Gendarmerie barracks and a number of skirmishes, involving additional Libyan troops and aircraft as well as pro-government militia, Bozizé went into exile in Chad (and shortly thereafter to France).

His troops came back to Bangui in a surprise attack on Oct. 25, 2002. Heavy fighting, once again involving Libyan troops and up to 1,000 MLC fighters on Patassé's side destroyed parts of northern Bangui. These pro-government forces fought back the rebels, who still controlled parts of the north of the country by the end of 2002. The MLC fighters were subsequently accused of looting and of killing some 150 Chadian cattle herders. This new escalation complicated the political game substantially. Firstly, Bozizé had hitherto been a prominent supporter of Patassé from the important Gbaya ethnic group. His prosecution and subsequent rebellion seriously endangered the unity of Patassé's power base. Secondly, since the Chadian authorities showed sympathy with him, an uneasy relationship with the neighbour to the north emerged. According to Chad some 230 nationals were killed between September 2001 and August 2002 by "mercenaries" under the command of warlord Abdoulaye Miskine, hired by Bangui. Faced with this deterioration of regional security, hectic diplomatic activity beginning in early December 2001 included Libyan-led initiatives in the framework of the Community of

Sahel and Saharan States (CEN-SAD/COMESSA)) and a Gabon-led initiative in the framework of CEMAC (Central African Economic and Monetary Community). A small (Sudanese) peacekeeping force was deployed in February 2002, Libyan troops remaining in Bangui to protect Patassé while CEMAC tried to bring in additional peace-keepers from its member-states. Patassé subsequently seemed isolated internally while enjoying external support from MLC and Libya and in March 2003 he was deposed by Bozizé (see below).

## REBEL AND DISSIDENT ORGANIZATIONS

### Rebels close to François Bozizé

Bozizé, who seized power in the capital in March 2003, has a rich history of political activism. He was a leader of the *Mouvement centrafricain de libération nationale*, MCLN, a movement founded as a pro-Libyan party in August 1980. The MCLN claimed responsibility for a bomb explosion in July 1981. Bozizé moved closer to the MLPC and was involved in a pro-Patassé coup attempt of March 3, 1982. He fled the country and was exiled in Benin. Benin's authorities handed him over on July 24, 1989, to the Kolingba government without a formal extradition request. He spent over two years in prison without trial under particularly harsh conditions (maltreatment, held incommunicado for over one year) and was only released during the political opening in late 1991. Although considered close to Patassé he stood himself as a candidate and received only 1.5% of the votes in the 1993 presidential elections.

Patassé appointed Bozizé chief of staff after the death of his predecessor Abrou during the May 2001 coup attempt by Kolingba. Bozizé's core supporters (some 300 men) reportedly came from his home region (North West) and predominantly from the Gbaya ethnic group. This meant that Patassé's original power base was split and some of the pro-Kolingba rebels joined this rebel group.

In March 2003 Bozizé's forces with strong Chadian backing took power in Bangui, meeting little opposition, while Patassé was attending a CEN-SAD heads of state meeting in Niger. Forces loyal to Bemba, who had previously supported Patassé, were reported to have escaped back to Congo without mounting resistance. Bozizé's men subsequently joined forces with CEMAC troops, already in the capital, to establish security.

### Rebels close to former Head of State André Kolingba

*Leader: André Kolingba*

Kolingba claimed responsibility for the May 2001 attempted coup d'état, but his political party, the RDC, never endorsed

that decision. The RDC was founded as the then only legal party in 1986 by Kolingba. It was the strongest opposition party in Parliament. Its activities were suspended for several months in 2001 by the Minister of the Interior, but the party resumed its activities in Parliament later on (see below). The followers of Kolingba come predominantly from the South and more particularly from his Yakoma people. Most of the actual fighters are likely to have been previously involved in the mutinies of 1996. In June 2001 the national radio broadcast a list of about 200-300 names of soldiers who did not report back to their barracks, most of them again with Yakoma names. Some of the rebels (less than 600) sought refuge in the neighboring Democratic Republic of Congo while others returned (and may in some case have joined Bozizé's men). A clear actual figure is difficult to obtain. Kolingba himself sought refuge in Uganda.

Following the seizure of power by Bozizé in March 2003, Bozizé stated that Kolingba's security would be guaranteed if he returned from exile. However, some undisclosed conditions should be fulfilled first. Kolingba toured the capitals of the region looking for advice. In May Bozizé restored Kolingba's army rank of lieutenant general by presidential decree.

### Civilian parties in open opposition to President Patassé

Charles Massi, leader of the small opposition party FODEM, was condemned to death in absentia for plotting against the regime in August 2002. His party is still legal. In March 2002 he created a *Front pour la restauration de l'unité nationale et de la démocratie* (FRUD) in exile with former mutineer (of the second mutiny in 1996), Isidore Dokodo. Massi openly admitted sympathy with the two armed movements led by Kolingba and Bozizé and tried to coordinate the opposition against Patassé.

The Party of National Unity (*Parti de l'Unité Nationale*, PUN) of Jean-Paul Ngoupande, who lives in France, has also been accused of siding with the rebels. Both parties repeatedly asked for the resignation of Patassé.

In early December 2002, a platform of opposition parties was formed in Paris. Reportedly the leaders of the PUN, FODEM and *Front Patriotique pour le Progrès* (FPP) were amongst those who signed a common declaration. A few days later the headquarters in Bangui disclaimed having joined the rebellion.

The RDC was suspended "for three months" after the attempted coup d'état of May 28, 2001; it was then neither forbidden nor formally rehabilitated and its MPs take part in voting procedures in the National Assembly.

*Andreas Mehler*

# Chad

**Capital:** N'Djaména

**Population:** 9 m

Chad, which achieved independence from France in 1960, has experienced ever since a history of civil unrest and outright civil war. It is an artificial and highly fragmented nation, in which there is considerable antagonism between and among northern and southern groups that lack a common identity. The state has never achieved a monopoly of power, a circumstance exacerbated by foreign interventions, notably by France and Libya. Though to a certain extent reduced since the assumption of power by Idriss Déby in 1990, numerous politico-military movements – rather than dissident or revolutionary groups per se – have been of considerable significance.

The early years after independence, 1960-79, saw Southern dominance in the country's capital N'Djaména. In 1975, the one-party regime of Ngarta (formerly François) Tombalbaye was overthrown by a military coup d'état led by General Félix Malloum, another Southerner. Malloum failed to settle the conflict with the Libyan-backed northern rebels of the *Front de libération nationale du Tchad* (FROLINAT) and suffered military defeat in the first battle for N'Djaména in 1979. With Libyan support, Goukouni Oueddei, and the Gouvernement d'union nationale de transition (GUNT) held power in the capital 1980-82 after the second battle for N'Djaména in 1980. GUNT and Oueddei, however, were replaced by Hissène Habré, previously a leading figure in the FROLINAT close to Oueddei, and his French-backed forces in 1982.

Subsequently, Oueddei continued the civil war in the North with Libyan backing, and in January 1984 France declared Chad south of the 16th parallel to be an exclusion zone, effectively dividing the country into two with the South, including N'Djaména, held by Habré and the GUNT and Libyan forces controlling the North. In early 1987 major offensives by forces supporting Habré and strong French (and US) military support succeeded in driving the Libyans out of the country, save for the Aouzou strip, claimed by Libya, on the northern border. (In August 1989, Chad and Libya agreed to settle the border dispute peacefully and to put the case to the International Court of Justice at The Hague, this eventually ruling in favour of Chad in 1994.) Though renewed fighting in the North occurred in 1988, the major threat to Habré's rule emerged from within his government. In 1989, Idriss Déby, another Northerner and hitherto advisor to the president, defected after a failed coup attempt and gained military victory over Habré in early December 1990.

Giving in to international pressures (and reflecting the move towards pluralist politics through much of Africa at that time) Déby promised to introduce a

multi-party system and a transition to democracy. It took six years, however, until the staging of a constitutional referendum and (severely flawed) presidential and (in 1997) parliamentary elections, won by Déby and his *Mouvement patriotique du Salut* (MPS). Déby managed to renew his mandate by (once more rigged) electoral victories in 2001 and 2002. Within that rudimentary democratic framework numerous politico-military movements have continued to pose an – albeit reduced – challenge to the central government, in recent years mainly by the northern *Mouvement pour la démocratie et la justice au Tchad* (MDJT). Strongly personalist and with only a shallow ideological base, the *raison d'être* of these groups and their leaders has been access to (and survival in) power in the capital. Although regionally based (and often backed by neighbouring countries) they have hardly ever aimed at secession (or even federalism/autonomy) but instead have sought participation in the government and incorporation of their rank and file in the Armée Nationale Tchadienne (ANT), using their military potential as a bargaining chip.

Respective peace and reconciliation agreements were signed with the *Comité de sursaut national pour la paix et la démocratie* (CSNPD, in 1992 and 1994), factions of the *Mouvement pour le développement et la démocratie* (MDD, in 1996 and 1999), the *Forces Armées pour la République Fédérale* (FARF, several agreements in 1997 and 1998) and, most recently, with the MDJT on Jan. 7, 2002, all of them more or less providing for integration of their military personnel in the ANT and government positions for leading figures. Personalism and factionalism, however, have made comprehensive implementation highly uncertain; once transformed into legal movements and parties (or incorporated into the ruling MPS), extralegal policy options are never fully abandoned and the return to violence and/or factional defections have been rife. The government, for its part, has shown limited commitment to share power substantially and has resorted repeatedly to military repression, human rights violations, or, allegedly, assassination of main rebel leaders (see below).

## **Movement for Democracy and Justice in Chad (Mouvement pour la démocratie et la justice au Tchad, MDJT)**

The MDJT was launched in late October 1998 by the former defence minister and ally to President Déby, Youssouf Togoïmi, who had resigned from the government in 1997. It is based in the north-west Tibesti region and said to be supported by neighbouring Libya. The MDJT has constituted the most serious challenge to President Déby in recent years,

engaging in repeated heavy fighting with government troops from November 1998 through to 2001 (interspersed with several failed peace efforts), even though the MDJT has only an estimated 800 fighters. Following defections of leading figures in October 2001 a congress of the movement in December in Libya renewed Togoïmi's mandate but forced him – reflecting Libyan pressure – to set up peace talks with the government. Subsequently, the MDJT entered into negotiations and signed a peace treaty with the government on Jan. 7, 2002, that could not halt, however, renewed (but rather sporadic) fighting during the following months. In early September Togoïmi was seriously wounded when his car hit a landmine in the Tibesti. He died on Sept. 24, 2002, in a hospital in Libya. Subsequently, Hassan Mardigue, the hard-line supreme military commander took over the presidency thus defeating Maurice Hel-Bongo, the more moderate vice-president, who earlier had called for renewed negotiations with the government. After defections by senior officials during the first half of 2003 the movement's future is uncertain.

#### **Coordination of armed movements and political parties of the opposition (Coordination des mouvements armés et partis politiques de l'opposition, CMAP)**

This group is an umbrella organization of 13 minor politico-military movements and (exiled) political parties that was formed in Benin on Dec. 3, 1999, and at a subsequent meeting in Paris the same month (Dec. 21), including “rebel celebrities” such as the former GUNT and FROLINAT veteran Goukouni Oueddei and the former leader of the *Mouvement pour la démocratie et la reconstruction du Tchad* (MORENAT), Antoine Bangui, now heading the *Front extérieur pour la rénovation* (FER). Lacking credible military potential and cohesion, and therefore of limited significance, the CMAP entered into negotiations with the government in December 2001, claiming to seek peace after the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11 in the USA. On Feb. 3, 2002 a general meeting in Paris ended in the breakaway of Dr Ley-Ngardigal Djimadoun, secretary general of the *Action Tchadienne pour l'Unité et le socialisme* (ACTUS) and of Jean-Prosper Boulada of the *Front uni pour une alternance démocratique au Tchad* (FU/ADT) who clashed with the FNTR's leader Ahmat Yacoub after both Oueddei and Bangui apparently had left the group before. Bourkine Louise Ngaradoun, of the *Rassemblement pour le progrès et la justice sociale* (RPJS), became interim president. By the end of April 2002 the remnants of the CMAP announced they would suspend the talks with the government, accusing the latter of having acted against “good faith”. In June 2002, FNTR, one of the few CMAP members with troops on the ground in Chad (see below) announced the end of the armed struggle, which meant a further weakening of the CMAP's political weight. On Sept. 6, 2002, the CMAP was joined by the *Convention populaire de résistance* (CPR), which was created on Aug. 8, 2001, in Paris. CPR's military wing called *Forces populaires de résistance* (FPR) had clashed with government troops in the East near the Sudanese border in November 2001.

#### **National Resistance Army (Armée nationale de**

#### **résistance, ANR)**

This movement is led by Mahamat Garfa, a former chief of staff and cabinet minister in the Déby government, who defected from the regime in September 1994, taking several hundred men with him. The ANR (the Garfa section being formerly known as the *Forces Nationales de la résistance*, FNR) had remained quiet over recent years, but in late 2002, however, the FONALT (*Forces des organisations nationales pour l'alternance et des libertés au Tchad*), one of the eight groups of which the ANR is now seemingly composed, claimed to have inflicted serious casualties on the government troops in the south-east in November 2002, near the Central African Republic and Sudan, where its main base seems to be. The government rejected these allegations and counter-claimed full control over the respective area. However, in late 2002 government and ANR officials entered into negotiations. A peace accord was signed in Libreville (Gabon) on Jan. 10, 2003.

#### **National Front for a Renewed Chad (Front national du Tchad renoué, FNTR)**

*Leadership. Ahmat Yacoub (secretary general)*

The Nigeria-based *Front National du Tchad renoué* (FNTR) was founded in 1996 and operates in the Ouaddai region near the Sudanese border. In October 1997 FNTR dissidents signed a reconciliation agreement with the government. In 1998 eight French and Italian tourists were abducted by FNTR forces (and freed by government troops shortly afterwards). FNTR helped to set up CMAP in December 1999 and is led by Ahmat Yacoub (who is the secretary general). Though it is one of the few CMAP members that have military forces (approximately and self-claimed up to 600) on the ground in Chad, it has been weakened after attacks on government troops in Ouaddai in July 1999. Celebrating its 6th anniversary on June 6, 2002, it announced the return to peaceful policies, albeit still criticising the Déby government. Elected as the FNTR's new president was Mahamat Moussa Abdelchafi.

#### **Movement for Democracy and Development (Mouvement pour la démocratie et le développement, MDD)**

This group, operating in the Lake Chad region in the west of the country (with bases in Niger, Nigeria, and Cameroon), was set up 1991 following Habré's military defeat by Déby's troops in 1990. Originally a coalition of FAO (*Forces armées occidentales*) and Habré forces, it has suffered from heavy factionalism. The two factions fell apart and attacked each other after a failed attack on the capital in early 1992 but reunited formally subsequently. In 1992 (June 24 and Sept. 8), two peace agreements were signed but failed by the end of the same year. On Aug. 30, 1995, the MDD split again into two factions of which one, led by Ibrahim Malla Mahamat, is still loyal to the former head of state Habré (who has sought exile in Senegal). In late September 1996 an MDD splinter group called “group of patriots” rallied to the government. Staying out of the (flawed) democratic process until 1996, in the mid-1990s the MDD was the major politico-military movement before being replaced by FARF, but in recent years it has lost significance. Sporadic attacks were launched during the following years. A recon-

ciliation agreement with the other major MMD faction of Moussa Medella (formerly FAO) was announced on July 4, 1999. Rumours of cross border infiltration in 2000-01 in the Lake Chad region, rather than noteworthy military operations, indicate the MDD's ongoing existence albeit at a rather low level of activity.

#### **Action Front for a Federal Republic (Front d'action pour une république fédérale, FARF)**

This group was an offshoot of Moïse Ketté's CSNPD under the guidance of Laokein Bardé Frisson, a former military officer in the GUNT, that broke away when the CSNPD rallied to Déby in 1994. Like the CSNPD, FARF was based in the southern Logone prefectures and operated mainly from the Central African Republic. Although FARF favoured federalism it did not differ significantly from other politico-military movements. According to international human rights groups FARF was guilty of severe human rights violations (against civilians), especially in March 1997, though government troops have also usually responded harshly to guerrilla attacks. The government achieved an agreement on Aug. 28, 1996, with a splinter group naming itself the "patriotic wing" that transformed later on into the *Front patriotique pour la démocratie* (FPD). A first major peace accord with the FARF was reached in mid-April 1997, but was abandoned after a blitz on the presidential guard by FARF troops on Oct. 30, 1997, in Moundou. A new treaty on May 6, 1998, confirmed the agreement of April 1997 providing for a general amnesty, integration of the FARF forces into the ANT and the withdrawal of the presidential and nomad guard from the Logone prefectures. The FARF transformed into a political party called the *Forum des alliances* (instead of *Front d'action*) pour une république fédérale. After it

became clear subsequently that Laokein Bardé had been killed on April 8 by government troops, however, a new treaty was on Nov. 30, 1998, signed with FARF-VA (*victimes d'aggression*), led by his brother Dienembaye Bardé. Integrated into the ANT, most of the former FARF forces were sent to the Democratic Republic of Congo in 1998 to back Laurent Kabila's regime.

#### **Committee of National Upswing for Peace and Democracy (Comité de sursaut national pour la paix et la démocratie, CSNPD)**

CSNPD was a southern-based rebel organization, operating from the neighbouring Central African Republic, that ambushed government troops from 1992 on, and was led by Moïse Ketté, a lieutenant attached to Habré. Following a second peace agreement (after a failed one in 1992) on Aug. 10, 1994, the CSNPD became a legal party and joined government (Ketté being promoted to lieutenant-colonel and joining the cabinet as tourist and environment minister) but was catapulted out of it after campaigning against the constitutional referendum in 1996. Ketté did not return to the maquis but rallied to the government again, becoming security advisor to the presidency. After being removed from this position in March 2000 Ketté formed the *Mouvement de résistance pour le changement démocratique du pouvoir* (MRCDP). By August attacks on the civilian population and clashes with government troops in the south were reported. Ketté was killed in an ambush (or murdered) by government troops in early September 2000.

*Matthias Basedau*

## Chile

**Capital:** Santiago

**Population:** 15.2 m

The Republic of Chile has an executive President directly elected for a four-year term by universal adult suffrage and a bicameral National Congress, comprising a 49-member Senate and a 120-member Chamber of Deputies. The President appoints and heads a cabinet.

Chile returned to civilian rule in 1990 with the swearing-in of Patricio Aylwin Azócar as President on March 11, 1990. This marked the end of military rule, imposed after the overthrow of President Salvador Allende on Sept. 11, 1973. The commanders of the armed forces formed a four-member junta which ruled the country through emergency provisions. From 1974 the Commander in Chief of the army, Gen. Augusto Pinochet Ugarte, served as head of state and President. Marxist parties were banned and the activities of other political parties restricted.

In the mid-1980s restrictions on opposition parties were eased to allow political parties to operate more openly. In accordance with the Constitution intro-

duced by the regime in 1980, the government presented Pinochet as the sole presidential candidate to a plebiscite on Oct. 5, 1988, but his candidacy was rejected by 54.7 per cent of the votes cast. Elections were subsequently held in December 1989, and Aylwin, a Christian Democrat representing a 17-party *Concertación de Partidos por la Democracia* (CPD) was elected with 55 per cent of the vote. The *Concertación* has won each of the subsequent presidential elections, but control of Congress has altered, due in large part to the presence of appointed senators, a legacy of Pinochet's 1980 Constitution.

The transition process included negotiations on constitutional reform. Although the Constitution retains some authoritarian characteristics, the prohibition of groups propagating violent or totalitarian ideologies was eliminated. In March 2000 Ricardo Lagos Escobar was installed as Chile's first Socialist President since Salvador Allende.



In 1998 a Spanish investigating magistrate sought the extradition of Pinochet from the United Kingdom. Pinochet maintained that he had immunity from prosecution under a domestic Chilean amnesty of 1978, a position supported by the Chilean government, which maintained that a trial of Pinochet would be damaging to the country's internal stability. Although the UK Law Lords (the highest court) ruled against Pinochet, the British government allowed him to return to Chile on March 8, 2000, citing Pinochet's deteriorating health. In July 2002 Chile's Supreme Court ruled that Pinochet was too mentally incapacitated to face trial in Chile.

Despite the tremendous progress made since the transition to democracy, some groups continue to reject the current system. While some legitimate and politically active groups, such as the Communist Party, base their objection on the retention of authoritarian legacies within the country's institutional structure, more radical groups combine this political rejection with a tactical embrace of violent insurrection.

### **Manuel Rodríguez Patriotic Front (Frente Patriótico Manuel Rodríguez, FPMR)**

*Website. [www.fpmr.org](http://www.fpmr.org)*

This movement, named after a guerrilla leader of the independence era and also known as the Rodríguez Militia (*Milicias Rodríguezistas*), is an outgrowth of the Communist Party of Chile (PCCh). The Front was founded in the early 1980s with a mandate to conduct violent resistance to the Pinochet regime. In late 1983 it destroyed a power generator blacking out much of Santiago. In a manifesto issued in December 1984 the FPMR offered its support to the demands of political parties for a return to democracy, and to those of trade union organizations for economic reforms, but it also called for widespread actions of sabotage and "armed propaganda" in order to hasten the fall of the Pinochet regime. Thereafter the organization carried out numerous bomb attacks, armed robberies and attacks on railway lines and at premises of US-based multinational companies.

In August 1986 the Chilean security forces uncovered the largest clandestine arsenal ever found in Latin America, comprising over 70 tonnes of munitions valued at over \$10 million and including weapons originating from the Soviet Union, the United States and Cuba for use by the FPMR.

On Sept. 7, 1986, the FPMR carried out an attempt to assassinate President Pinochet. Pinochet escaped with only slight injuries (but the attack left five of the President's guards dead and 10 injured). The military retaliated by declaring a state of siege, arresting opposition leaders, shutting opposition magazines, and killing five members of the Front. The assassination attempt signaled the creation of deep divisions both within the Front and among opposition forces. Its most significant legacy was the isolation of the PCCh, which had sided with the Front, from the emerging opposition coalition.

In June 1987, secret police killed twelve FPMR members located throughout Santiago. Known as "Operation Albania", the murders would have unexpected legal repercussions in the 1990s.

As the democratic transition gained momentum, the FPMR split, with some members following the PCCh line of

participating in the democratic process while others maintained a commitment to the armed struggle, even well beyond the restoration of democratic government. On March 21, 1990, General Gustavo Leigh, a founding member of the former junta, was shot and seriously wounded. The FPMR claimed that Leigh had been targeted because he was responsible for repression during the military regime. In April 1991, Senator Jaime Guzmán (Independent Democratic Union, UDI), one of the founders of the new Chilean right and designers of the 1980 Constitution, was assassinated in Santiago by members of the FPMR. A few weeks later the government, eager to prove its grasp on the country's internal security, launched an investigation into the group's activities. Eventually some of the participants in the Guzmán assassination were arrested. On Dec. 31, 1996, however, four FPMR members staged a dramatic prison escape by helicopter from a maximum security prison. One of the escapees, Patricio Ortiz Montenegro, requested asylum in Switzerland, which was granted despite extradition requests from the Chilean government.

In December 1997 the Supreme Court re-opened the "Operation Albania" investigation. The court ruled that the 1978 Amnesty Law, designed by the military government to provide immunity from prosecution for crimes committed during the regime, did not apply in this case, opening the doors for further investigations and more liberal interpretation of that law. Ultimately, this decision would affect the courts' handling of Pinochet himself.

Early in 2002 one of the 1996 prison escapees, Mauricio Hernández Norambuena, was arrested in a botched kidnapping attempt in Brazil together with a MIR activist (see below). The arrests, and the \$10 million ransom that was being demanded, led to speculation in Chile regarding the level of activity in which both the FPMR and the MIR continue to engage. Moreover, other FPMR members who had been involved in the Guzmán assassination and the Brazilian kidnapping plot, were not apprehended, and were thought to have escaped to Cuba, causing a tense, embarrassing and damaging diplomatic incident between Cuba and President Ricardo Lagos.

### **Movement of the Revolutionary Left (Movimiento de la Izquierda Revolucionaria, MIR)**

*Website. [www.mir-chile.8m.com](http://www.mir-chile.8m.com)*

The MIR, established in 1965 by an extreme left-wing Trotskyist group committed to guerrilla activities, was made illegal by the government of the day, headed by Christian Democratic president, Eduardo Frei Montalva (1964-70). The MIR conditionally supported President Allende but repeatedly called for more radical policies than those the *Unidad Popular* government was willing or able to implement. Its secretary general, Miguel Enríquez, demanded the abolition of parliament, its replacement by a "people's assembly", and the takeover of farms and factories without compensation.

Following the 1973 coup the MIR went underground. MIR militants were killed or exiled and some received military training in Cuba, reflecting the group's shift to Castroist thinking. An offer of a truce, said to have been made by the Armed Forces Intelligence Service, was publicly refused. On Oct. 5, 1974, Enríquez was killed in a gun battle with troops

in Santiago. He was replaced by Andrés Pascal Allende, nephew of the overthrown President. On Jan. 8, 1975, a group of 12 army officers were given prison sentences of up to 15 years for collaboration with the MIR. On Nov. 10, 1975, the government announced that it had arrested 15 MIR members in connection with an "Operation Red Boomerang", designed to infiltrate 1,200 extremists into southern Chile from Argentina in collaboration with the Argentinian People's Revolutionary Army (ERP). The organizers of this operation were said to have included A. P. Allende.

From 1976 onwards MIR guerrillas were involved in numerous terrorist activities. During 1980 alone they claimed to have carried out more than one hundred armed attacks, and in clashes with security forces casualties were suffered on both sides. MIR members were, in particular, accused of involvement in the killing of a former intelligence chief in 1980 and of a military commander in 1983.

The MIR described as its ultimate objective the creation of a single revolutionary party (*Partido Unico de la Revolución*) embracing all existing left-wing and popular parties and movements. In mid-January 1981 the MIR leadership stated that it had joined with exiled leaders of the Popular Unity formations in signing a declaration providing for joint opposition to the Pinochet regime. During a clandestine press conference held in Santiago on Aug. 5, 1986, A. P. Allende, who had secretly returned from exile, announced that the MIR would accept the formation of an "emergency government", but not the idea of a "social pact" to secure a future democracy. This caused a division, with the creation of a "renovated MIR" which supported the less radical position.

On May 7, 1987, it emerged that the MIR was split into an MIR national secretariat supporting A. P. Allende's policy of conducting clandestine guerrilla warfare and the central committee in Chile, which sought to maintain a dialogue with all democratic sectors of society. Weeks before the 1989 elections, MIR leader Jecar Neghme Cristi was assassinated by unknown gunmen, assumed to be members of right-wing paramilitary groups.

The split in the movement intensified with the return to democracy, with some factions prepared to join left-wing coalitions while others said that they would collaborate with the Manuel Rodríguez Patriotic Front to continue the armed struggle. At least one former MIR member became a minister in Patricio Aylwin's cabinet. A.P. Allende retired in the early 1990s.

In the 1990s the MIR has been involved in radical social causes. It has supported the efforts of indigenous groups (Mapuche-Pehuenche) in opposing development projects in southern Chile, such as the Ralco hydroelectric dam.

In February, 2002, Alfredo Canales Moreno, an MIR member, was among a group arrested for a kidnapping attempt in Brazil. Canales had fled Chile while free on bail in 1995.

MIR publishes the newspaper *El Rebelde* ([www.elrebelde.8m.com](http://www.elrebelde.8m.com)).

## EXTREME RIGHT-WING AND ULTRA-NATIONALIST MOVEMENTS

Ultra-right militias with links to the security forces were responsible for a number of attacks on left-wing

organizations and politicians during the dictatorship. Members of such groups were assumed to have carried out the 1989 killing of a MIR spokesman (see MIR).

With the advent of the internet, and the arrest of Pinochet in October 1998 (see above), many pro-Pinochet groups appeared with a goal of putting pressure on the national political system as well as on international public opinion. Among these are the Intransigent Nationalist Commando (*Comando Intransigente Nacionalista*) and the Chilean Anti-Communist League (*Liga Chilena Anti-Comunista*).

There are several ultra-nationalist groups operating at the fringes of political life in Chile. They tend to be supportive of the military regime and Pinochet, and some became more vocal after Pinochet's arrest in London in October 1998. These groups include the National Syndicalist Movement, tied to Fatherland and Freedom, and the 5 September Committee (*Comité 5 Septiembre*).

Among the ultra-right are also groups which include former Nazis or Nazi sympathizers. These include the Chilean Nazi Movement (*Movimiento Nazi Chileno*), the Guardian of the Andes, the New Society Fatherland Movement (*Movimiento Patria Nueva Sociedad*). Although these groups are not illegal, they do not operate within the nation's parliamentary framework. Moreover, following much national and international pressure the government banned an international Nazi congress that was to have taken place in southern Chile in April 2000.

### September 11 Commando (*Comando 11 de Septiembre*)

This group claimed responsibility for the murder of four members of the Chilean left, three of whom were found dead on Sept. 8, 1986, after having been taken from their homes during curfew hours the previous day by unidentified armed men. A spokesman for the group described it as "the antithesis" of the Manuel Rodríguez Patriotic Front and said that one member of the left would be killed for every guard who had died in the Sept. 7, 1986, assassination attempt against the President.

The September 11 Commando also claimed responsibility for four bomb explosions in Santiago on Sept. 4, 1990, to coincide with the reburial of the former President, Salvador Allende. The bombs caused no casualties and only minor structural damage.

### Fatherland and Liberty (*Patria y Libertad*)

Fatherland and Liberty emerged from a group of ultra-nationalist organizations characterized by their rejection of liberal democracy. Having attempted an entry into traditional party politics, the election of Salvador Allende spurred some ultra-nationalists to channel their efforts into subversive, and sometimes terrorist, activity. Founded by Pablo Rodríguez, some of its members emerged from the Nazi movement. Supportive of Pinochet, it disbanded after the 1973 coup, but became increasingly critical of the regime's economic policies.

*Robert Funk*

# China

**Capital:** Beijing

**Population:** 1.27 b

The People's Republic of China (PRC) is, under its Constitution of Dec. 4, 1982, “a socialist state under the people's democratic dictatorship led by the working class and based on the alliance of workers and peasants” in which “all power belongs to the people” and “the organs through which the people exercise state power are the National People's Congress (NPC) and the local people's congresses at different levels”.

All Chinese citizens above the age of 18 years have the right to elect and to be elected (except persons mentally ill or deprived of their political rights). The NPC and its permanent body, the Standing Committee, “exercise the legislative power of the state”. The Standing Committee *inter alia* supervises the work of the State Council, i.e. “the central people's government” and “the executive body of the highest organ of state power”. Article 4 states that all nationalities (ethnic groups) are equal, but prohibits “any acts that undermine the unity of the nationalities or instigate their secession”.

The preamble to the 1982 Constitution contains several references to the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and also mentions the existence of “a broad patriotic united front” under the leadership of the CCP. Eight existing minor political parties date back to before the PRC's proclamation on Oct. 1, 1949, and are composed mainly of intellectuals. The 1982 Constitution states that the guiding ideology of the PRC is Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought, while an amendment the NPC approved in March 1999 adds Deng Xiaoping Theory. Official figures referring to June 2002 put the number of CCP members at 66,355,000, of whom 11,598,000, or 17.5 per cent, were female and 4,146,000, or 6.2 per cent, belonged to the ethnic minorities (the November 2000 census put the ethnic minorities at 8.41 per cent of China's total population). The 9th NPC, elected in 1998, had 2,979 deputies, of whom 650, or 21.81 per cent, were female, while 428, or 14.37 per cent, belonged to ethnic minorities.

Regulations on state secrets adopted in 1951 were reissued on April 10, 1980, when such secrets were defined as secret information on virtually all aspects of military, political and economic affairs, and punishment as a counter-revolutionary was provided for anyone who sold or divulged such information to “enemies at home or abroad” or to “domestic and foreign profiteers”.

On April 5, 1976, serious clashes with police broke out in Tiananmen Square, in the centre of Beijing, chiefly aimed at protesting the removal of memorials to Premier Zhou Enlai and mourning his death (Jan. 8,

1976) as well as opposing the extreme left faction in the CCP leadership, later dubbed the “gang of four”, who had been Zhou's enemies. The demonstrations were the first major spontaneous demonstrations in PRC history and immediately condemned as a “counterrevolutionary political incident” by the left. In December 1978, after the fall of the “gang of four” in October 1976, they were rehabilitated, with the CCP leadership describing them as entirely revolutionary.

After the death of Mao Zedong (Sept. 9, 1976), his ideological brainchild the Cultural Revolution declined greatly in status, the CCP discrediting it entirely in June 1981. Meanwhile, a reformist group gained ascendancy in December 1978. The leader of this faction was Deng Xiaoping (1904-97). Although he achieved great domination over the PRC state, in fact he never occupied the very highest positions in the CCP or the government, other than being chair of the CCP's Central Military Commission from 1982 to 1989. He even retired from the CCP's Central Committee altogether in 1987.

Although Deng Xiaoping's leadership style was much more tolerant of dissent than Mao Zedong's, he was still authoritarian by nature and had no intention of allowing any resistance to the CCP he saw as threatening its power. In a speech at a forum on the principles for the CCP's theoretical work on March 30, 1979, Deng put forward “four cardinal principles”, these being “keeping to the socialist road, upholding the dictatorship of the proletariat, upholding the leadership of the CCP and upholding Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought”. Opposition to these principles was dubbed “bourgeois liberalization”.

At the end of 1986 a major student movement challenged the CCP's authoritarianism but resulted in the dismissal of the liberal general secretary of the CCP, Hu Yaobang, the position being the highest in the organization since the abolition of the chairmanship in 1982. However, Hu's death in mid-April 1989 sparked off a much more serious wave of student dissent, which expressed itself in enormous demonstrations persisting for over six weeks. Deng Xiaoping reached the conclusion that the student demonstrations threatened CCP rule and used his position as Central Military Commission chair to suppress the demonstrators by military force on June 4, 1989 (see below.)

The aftermath of the suppression of the student movement saw the appointment of Jiang Zemin as CCP general secretary on June 24. Jiang became Central Military Commission chair in November 1989 and PRC president in 1993. A strong supporter of Deng Xiaoping's reformist policies, Jiang took the

decision to “corporatize” the state-owned enterprises (SOEs) in 1997, opening them up to market forces and allowing privatization of smaller SOEs, and in 2001 allowed private capitalist entrepreneurs to join the CCP. The 16th CCP Congress of November 2002 formally approved his theory of the “three represents”, which holds that the CCP represents the most advanced forces of production, advanced culture and the broad masses of the people, something of a departure from the Marxist-Leninist notion that the party is the vanguard of the workers. At the same time, he stepped down as general secretary, being replaced by Hu Jintao, the first time an orderly transition of CCP power had taken place in the PRC.

### HONG KONG AND MACAU

In mid-1997 Hong Kong's sovereignty returned to China. Formerly a British colony, an agreement was signed with Britain in 1984 by which Hong Kong would, for 50 years, retain the economic and social system the British had imposed. Close economic ties have also moderated anti-PRC sentiments within the Chinese population, though elements of strong opposition remain, many of the overwhelmingly Chinese population being refugees from the mainland. Hong Kong under British administration enjoyed a relatively high level of freedom of political expression, with functioning political parties (although without representative government) and in general Beijing has not sought to alter the status quo, also drawing on the support of the powerful business community, which has favoured continuity and stability. Administrative authority in Hong Kong is exerted primarily through the Chief Executive, elected, with guidance by Beijing, by an 800-member committee dominated by business leaders. There is in addition a Legislative Council, with limited powers, comprising 60 members, 54 of whom are elected directly from geographical or functional constituencies. The Democratic Party, which has consistently won the largest number of seats of any party in legislative elections since its foundation in 1991, has pressed for full democracy in Hong Kong and the observance of human rights on the mainland and has not been suppressed.

The Hong Kong judicial system and media have remained independent of direct control from Beijing. However, proposed anti-secession legislation published by the Hong Kong administration in September 2002 drew criticism as seeming to tighten restrictions on freedom of expression. Following unprecedented mass demonstrations against the planned legislation, organized by a coalition of professional societies, civic groups, religious bodies, political parties and unions, the Hong Kong government withdrew the bill on Sept. 5, 2003, officially to allow time for further study.

The small enclave of Macau also returned to China at the end of 1999, having been a Portuguese territory since 1557. It has, however, seen little by way of the development of pro-democracy and opposition politics and there are no political parties as such.

### INTERNAL OPPOSITION GROUPS

#### Falungong

The most prominent extra-legal organization in China currently is the *Falungong*, also called *Falun dafa* (literally “Great Law of the Law Wheel”).

The *Falungong* leader, New York-based Li Hongzhi, is apocalyptic in doctrine, teaching the moral decadence of humanity, with himself as the saviour of the universe. *Falungong* practitioners emphasize truthfulness, benevolence, and forbearance and practice rigorous discipline, based on meditation and special breathing and other bodily exercises.

Li Hongzhi founded *Falungong* in 1992, but it first launched into the news when, on April 25, 1999, over 10,000 practitioners demonstrated outside the leadership compound in Beijing. PRC estimates gave the number of *Falungong* practitioners as about two million, including members of the CCP, but the *Falungong* itself estimates 70 million adherents in China and 30 million elsewhere. On July 22, the PRC Ministry of Civil Affairs banned the *Falungong* as an “evil cult” (*xiejiao*), condemning it for inciting disturbances, making doomsday predictions about the imminent end of the world and jeopardizing social stability. A media campaign began accusing the movement of being responsible for many deaths by opposing standard medical procedures, inducing mental diseases and encouraging suicide. Large-scale arrests of practitioners began. An official Chinese government spokesman claimed that the number of practitioners arrested or required to disperse for attempting to demonstrate in Beijing between the end of June and of October 1999 had reached 35,792. On Oct. 7, the first cases of *Falungong* practitioners dying in police custody were reported outside China.

On Jan. 23, 2001, five people attempted to set themselves on fire in Tiananmen Square, central Beijing, one of them dying on the spot, and a 12-year old girl a few weeks later. Chinese authorities accused the five of being *Falungong* adherents (although *Falungong* sources outside China denied the claim) and used the incident to launch an accelerated propaganda campaign against the *Falungong*, winning over many former adherents and sympathizers. The demonstration of April 25, 2001, commemorating the second anniversary of the demonstration that brought the movement to public notice, was quite small and attended mainly by adherents from the margins of society. However, the *Falungong* retain mastery of technology and continuing influence. In 2002 practitioners hacked into local cable television networks to show videos of pro-*Falungong* footage. This reached a climax at the end of June when they cut into broadcasts of the World Cup soccer finals and major domestic and international news broadcasts. However, a series of court cases against the hackers resulted in extremely severe prison sentences, ranging up to 20 years.

In Hong Kong, the *Falungong* remains legal and extremely active. On Aug. 15, 2002, a Hong Kong court fined 16 *Falungong* practitioners for obstructing pedestrians in a demonstration, the first time prosecutions had succeeded there. The judge denied that religion had any bearing on his verdict, but some observers saw a sign of mainland influence on Hong Kong courts.

See also under “External Opposition”, below

### **Independent labour movement**

The 1975 Constitution included a nominal freedom to strike, but this right is found neither in the 1982 Constitution, nor in the Trade Union Law of 1992, which defines the All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU) as being the country's only legal trade union organization. In 1989, the authorities did all they could to prevent workers from participating in the student struggle; they threatened wage deductions for those who joined and rewarded those who refused. The fact that independent labour movements are thus extra-legal in China has not prevented the eruption of occasional strike action. The opening of the economy to market forces is among the factors increasing redundancies and unemployment in the state-owned enterprises, a further factor leading to workers' strikes and demonstrations.

The most serious industrial unrest in the PRC's history took place in 2002. In Liaoyang, Liaoning province, discontent over dismissals and corruption resulted in two weeks' demonstrations in March, with four labour leaders being arrested. Early in 2003 the state brought two of the demonstrations' leaders, Yao Fuxin and Xiao Yunliang, before the courts, charging them with subversion. In May, both were sentenced to prison terms, Yao for seven years and Xiao for four. In March and April 2002 tens of thousands of workers protested in the oil town of Daqing, in Heilongjiang province. At the end of June 2002 paramilitary police broke up strikes in the Nanxuan Wool Textile Factory in Shuikou, Guangdong Province, where three days of battles between thousands of workers and security guards had left many people injured. The unrest ended with the local government promising that management would pay workers' salaries within five days and all medical costs for injured workers.

Several features of these strikes and demonstrations are notable. They are mainly aimed at rectifying labour problems, such as mass redundancies, poor welfare support and poor labour conditions, but in several cases they have assumed a directly political colour, with attacks on corrupt officials.

Secondly, the response of the authorities has been twofold. On the one hand, they have clamped down on them severely by sending in armed police, with casualties sometimes resulting. They have arrested some labour activists, with a few being imprisoned and even tortured. On the other hand, state intervention has also taken the form of promises to ensure back payment of salaries and medical costs.

Thirdly, these strikes and demonstrations have given rise to underground and illegal trade unions, very definitely aiming to be independent of the CCP. There is also some evidence of organization that spans different provinces and social sectors, raising the possibility that workers might join up with fellows in areas outside their own and with such groups as farmers and students to fight abuse by CCP cadres. In the long run, this last feature could prove the most important of these listed here.

### **Beijing Workers' Autonomous Federation**

Formed on May 19, 1989, by Han Dongfang and a small number of other workers, this was the first truly independent labour organization since 1949 and claimed to represent 100,000 workers. Its Provisional Outline, adopted on May 25, stated the goal of addressing workers' political and economic needs, and not merely their welfare. It was to monitor CCP activities and to protect all its members' legal rights. It was declared "counter-revolutionary" on June 2, and its leaders hunted down and arrested after June 4. Han Dongfang spent two years in prison and went to the United States. On July 19, 1993, he was placed on a list of those denied re-entry into China and when he tried to return he was forcibly expelled to Hong Kong, where he has continued to engage in labour activism, even after Hong Kong came under Chinese administration in 1997.

Similar organizations in other cities, e.g. Hefei, were also suppressed after June 4.

### **Student protest and dissent**

The student protests of late 1986 were the catalyst for the initiation of a campaign against "bourgeois liberalization" which, apart from Hu Yaobang's dismissal as CCP general secretary on Jan. 16, 1987, involved expulsion from the CCP for several senior figures alleged to be the advocates of corrupting Western values. On Jan. 22 it was announced that a new Media and Publications Office had been established under the direction of the State Council in order to increase the state's censorship of published material with a view to eliminating trends towards bourgeois liberalization.

The student dissent and demonstrations of April to June 1989 were by far the largest extra-legal demonstrations in the history of the PRC. Focused on Tiananmen Square they initially commemorated Hu, who died on April 15 and had become a symbol for a more liberal set of policies, but then they began to demand a dialogue with the regime. China's main newspaper, the People's Daily, responded with a harsh editorial on April 26, which only inflamed the students. Protests mounted in Beijing and many other Chinese cities. Some students in Beijing embarked upon hunger strikes to force the government to dialogue. Although the authorities responded harshly in a few places, such as Xi'an, in general the demonstrators were treated with toleration. Groups of employees in the media and even in the Public Security Bureau joined processions of demonstrators in Beijing. The students formed their own autonomous federation in Beijing, as did industrial workers.

From May 15 to 18 Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev visited China for an historic visit to mark the end of the Sino-Soviet dispute, but arrangements were greatly disrupted by the presence of so many people on Tiananmen Square, a severe embarrassment to China's rulers. On May 18 Premier Li Peng debated with student representatives on television, being scolded by them, especially by the young Uygur education student Wuerkaixi. On May 20, after bitter debate within the leadership and against the advice of

Zhao Ziyang (the party general secretary), Li Peng declared martial law in the capital, making it clear that he regarded the protests and the organizations they set up (see below) as illegal. For a short time the authorities seemed unable to implement martial law, but early in the morning of June 4 troops stormed Tiananmen Square with high casualties and suppressed the student movement.

Many of the protest leaders, including Wuerkaixi, escaped abroad either immediately or after a few months' delay, whilst others on the government's wanted list were arrested over the next year. Student leaders were often given relatively light sentences, although some received up to 13 years in jail. Workers who took part in the disturbances were treated more harshly. From June 1990 the regime began releasing people it had arrested, but it made it absolutely clear that, in the eyes of the current leadership, appeals for greater political and human rights in China would receive short shrift. Major purges took place within the party and armed forces. Zhao Ziyang was replaced as general secretary by Jiang Zemin, and most of his closest advisers were imprisoned. The party sought to ensure that it did not succumb to the internal fissures that had ended the power of ruling communist parties throughout Eastern Europe in the preceding months.

#### **Beijing College Students' Autonomous Federation**

Formed on May 1, 1989, this represented an attempt by the students to form their own organization without interference by the authorities. It aimed to establish a dialogue with the government that would be "sincere, equal, open and direct". It called for an objective analysis of the contributions and mistakes of Hu Yaobang, fair reporting of the student movement, protection of civil rights guaranteed by the Constitution, punishment of bribery and speculation by officials, a new law on journalism, improvement of conditions of service and pay for teachers and intellectuals, and a review of government mistakes. It was crushed with the June 4 suppression of the student movement, and those leaders who were caught were imprisoned.

#### **TIBETAN DISSIDENTS**

Resistance against Chinese rule was widespread in the Tibetan areas during the 1950s, culminating in a rebellion in Lhasa in March 1959. Although Chinese forces put it down quickly, the Tibetan spiritual leader, the 14th Dalai Lama, succeeded in escaping to India, where he set up a government-in-exile in Dharamsala. Tibetan resistance groups received active US support from the mid-1950s until 1974 (i.e. following the decision of the USA to normalize its relations with China). Resistance persisted during the Cultural Revolution years (1966 to 1976), when destruction of traditional cultures and persecution of religion reached its height all over China, but strict censorship formed a clamp on information reaching the outside world. In May 1980, Hu Yaobang, who was to become CCP general secretary in June 1981, visited Tibet and in effect apologized for disasters committed under Chinese rule, but

made no concessions to granting independence. A period of relative liberalism followed. However, demonstrations for independence erupted from Sept. 27 to Oct. 6, 1987, again several times in 1988, and yet again from March 5 to 7, 1989, the last ones resulting in the imposition of martial law for the first time in the PRC's history. All these demonstrations were suppressed by the Chinese authorities and resulted in casualties. This series of disturbances was one major factor leading to condemnation of China by the US and other governments for human rights abuses and to the prevalence of human rights diplomacy in the following period.

In Tibet itself, the Chinese authorities adopted a policy of zero tolerance of separatism combined with a push towards economic growth and prosperity. This policy succeeded in reducing the number of demonstrations and quieting overt opposition. However, in 1995 a major controversy erupted between the Dalai Lama and the Chinese authorities over the selection of the 11th Banchen Lama, the 10th having died in January 1989. China's choice was enthroned in December 1995, but the Dalai Lama's nominee disappeared. Chinese authorities refused access to him, claiming he was following the life of a normal Tibetan boy, but outside opponents dubbed him the world's youngest political prisoner.

Those seeking independence for Tibet are generally organized only very loosely. Their loyalty is to the Dalai Lama and to the Tibetan government in exile, rather than to opposition political groups. Such organization as exists is focused on specific monasteries, with authorities keeping a keen eye on those with the reputation for dissidence, such as the Drepung outside Lhasa. Despite their much smaller number than monks, nuns have been active in organizing opposition to Chinese rule and in taking part in demonstrations.

See also under "External Opposition", below

#### **XINJIANG DISSIDENTS**

On Oct. 9, 1980, a secretary of the Communist Party of the Xinjiang (previously Sinkiang) Uygur Autonomous Region confirmed that there had been "events harmful to unity between nationalities and between the Army and the people". According to earlier unofficial reports there had been armed clashes between Uygurs and Chinese officials and soldiers in April 1980, apparently caused by Uygur resentment against mass immigration of Chinese into the region. The Uygurs are the main people of Xinjiang. Strong believers in Islam, they constituted about 46 per cent of Xinjiang's total population at the end of the twentieth century.

In 1990 nationalist groups planned an uprising in six cities for the 17th day of Ramadan (April 13). They were forced into premature action and serious disturbances on April 5 and 6, led by a charismatic religious student named Zahideen Yusuf intent on a "holy war" against the infidel Chinese, left at least 22 people dead, including the leader. Authorities attributed the

disturbances to the East Turkestan Islamic Party, a body aiming to separate Xinjiang from China and set up an independent East Turkestan Republic. Although they were quickly suppressed, their impact was significant, with riots continuing throughout the decade, especially in 1995 and 1997. On Feb. 5 and 6, 1997, disturbances erupted in the city of Yining (known to the Uygurs as Gulja) calling for independence and resulting in the deaths of at least 16 people, with executions following. In May, Xinjiang government leader Ablait Abdurexit, blamed the “Party of Allah”, which he said had been founded in 1996.

Following the terrorist attacks on the USA of Sept. 11, 2001, the Chinese authorities stepped up their crackdown against separatism. Already in March they had begun a “political re-education campaign” for Muslim clergy in charge of mosques while in April a national “Strike Hard Campaign” against crime began, in Xinjiang one of the key points being “separatist terrorist forces”. In October, China ratified the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, which the United Nations General Assembly had adopted in December 1997, and the Shanghai Convention on Fighting Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism, signed by the six members (China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

In January 2002, the PRC's State Council issued a lengthy report alleging there had been over 200 terrorist incidents in Xinjiang from 1990 to 2001, resulting in the deaths of 162 people of all ethnic groups. The report named two illegal parties it charged with “taking the road of armed struggle” and “conducting various terrorist activities in densely populated areas”, these being the East Turkestan Islamic Party and the East Turkestan Opposition Party. The report also stated that Xinjiang separatists had received training in Afghanistan and finance from Osama bin Laden's network as part of a “holy war” to establish a religious state and warned against “double standards” being applied (implicitly by the USA) in the war against terror.

A report issued by the US Department of State's Counterterrorism Office in May 2002, entitled “Patterns of Global Terrorism 2001”, commended China's counter-terrorism activities, though it also stipulated that no counter-terrorism campaign could “serve as a substitute for addressing legitimate social and economic aspirations”. The report noted two groups it claimed were “cause for concern” the East Turkestan Islamic Party, set up in the early 1980s, and the East Turkestan Liberation Organization. When Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage visited Beijing late in August 2002, he stated that this body, also called the Eastern Turkestan Islamic Movement, had been added to the US list of foreign terrorist organizations. It is by far the most persistently mentioned and strongest of Xinjiang's opposition Uygur groups.

Numerous other illegal groups have received mention at one time or another, with the claims increasing since Sept. 11. Most appear to be very small or with

short lives. Rarely are specific leaders known. It appears that the main concentrations of these groups are in the southwest of Xinjiang, in the area of the towns of Kashgar and Khotan, and in the northwest, in the area around Gulja.

See also under “External Opposition”, below

## EXTERNAL OPPOSITION

There are numerous bodies outside China aiming to promote human rights and democracy in China itself. The following are among the most important.

### Alliance for a Democratic China

A Chinese student announced in New York on Nov. 17, 1982, that a journal called *China Spring* was to be established as the organ of the Chinese democratic movement. Its activities were to be confined to publishing material critical of the communist regime as selected by an editorial board, half of whom were said to be resident in China. The journal promotes “freedom, democracy and human rights” in China. The Alliance is still based in New York.

Website: [www.chinaspring.org](http://www.chinaspring.org)

### Falungong

The *Falungong* leader Li Hongzhi left China in 1996. On July 29, 1999, the PRC Ministry of Public Security issued a notice for his arrest, but since he lived in New York, and the United States refused to repatriate him, he remained outside Chinese jurisdiction. The fact that Li lives under foreign protection, yet enjoys extensive support within China itself, is a major reason why the CCP regards the *Falungong* as a threat to the state.

*Falungong* retains great support among Chinese diasporas, especially in Western countries. It claims that over the decade or so following its founding by Li Hongzhi in 1992 it attracted tens of millions of adherents in over 40 countries. In November 1999 the United States Congress voted unanimously to condemn China for its suppression of the *Falungong*, human rights abuses against its practitioners and infringements of religious freedom. Chinese leaders who travel abroad frequently encounter hostile demonstrations from practitioners and their supporters.

Website: [www.falundafa.org](http://www.falundafa.org) is the general web address. However, *Falungong* and its leader have an extensive network of websites all over the world, especially in the United States.

### Front for a Democratic China (FDC)

An organization set up at inaugural conference in Paris in September 1989 and aiming to link émigrés from the 1989 protest movement and to struggle for democracy in China, including the overthrow of the CCP. The main leaders include Wan Runnan, founder (1984) of the large private Stone Company, which gave substantial subsidies to the student movement of April to June 1989.

### Human Rights in China (HRIC)

Human Rights in China was set up by Chinese scientists and scholars in March 1989 as an international non-governmental organization. Believing human rights to be universal, it

aims to promote human rights in China, to facilitate human rights activism among Chinese both inside and outside China, and to educate the international community about human rights in China. Based in New York, it carries out and publishes activist-oriented research on issues relating to human rights in China.

Website: [www.hrichina.org](http://www.hrichina.org)

### External groups supporting the Tibetan opposition

External opposition to Chinese rule in Tibet enjoys considerable support, focusing on the Tibetan government in exile in Dharamsala, India, and its leader the 14th Dalai Lama, who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989. The Dalai Lama has travelled widely since the 1980s, meeting prime ministers, presidents and other dignitaries, though some have heeded protests from the Chinese government and declined. Chinese leaders travelling overseas frequently encounter protest demonstrations from activists promoting an independent Tibet and condemning Chinese human rights abuses there. Although no governments recognize the Tibetan government-in-exile, it maintains information offices in many major cities throughout the world.

There are also numerous organizations throughout the world promoting Tibetan independence and human rights. These have gained greatly through the spread of Tibetan Buddhism in the West. The following organizations are major representatives only.

### Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy

*Patron: The 14th Dalai Lama*

Based in Dharamsala (India), this Centre was founded in January 1996, being registered as a non-governmental organization on May 4, 1996. Claiming independence from the Tibetan government in exile, it functions under a governing body of 13 members from various sectors who act as independent trustees. It aims to monitor and research human rights in Tibet, and lobby international bodies to highlight human rights in Tibet. It publishes extensively, including annual reports on human rights in Tibet the preceding year.

Website: [www.tchrd.org](http://www.tchrd.org)

### Tibet Information Network (TIN)

Based in London, but with offices in the United States and Asia, TIN has provided extensive information about Tibet since 1989, the year when the imposition of martial law placed great difficulties on independent research and travel

in Tibet. TIN focuses on reports from within Tibet itself, including protest literature prepared by underground groups. According to its website it "is not a campaigning organization and has no specific political agenda", but restricts itself to providing objective information and research about Tibet. However, its publications are generally condemnatory of Chinese rule.

Website: [www.tibetinfo.net](http://www.tibetinfo.net)

### External groups supporting the Uyghur opposition

There are numerous external Uyghur opposition groups aiming for independence or far greater autonomy for Xinjiang, but their leadership is highly fragmented and disunity is a historical problem that remains unresolved. There is no leader coming anywhere near the Dalai Lama in terms of external influence, fame or prestige.

Probably the best known of the external Uyghur spokesmen are Erkin Alptekin and Arslan Alptekin, the two sons of Isa Yusuf Alptekin, a leader in pre-1949 Xinjiang, all three of whom escaped from China in 1949 and based themselves in Turkey. Another group based in Turkey is the Organization for Turkestan Freedom, which claimed responsibility for an unprecedented explosion on a commuter bus in Beijing on March 7, 1997. It argued that only in this way was it possible for the "Uyghur people to take revenge against communist China's oppression".

Late in 1999, the Uyghur exile groups held the first East Turkestan National Congress in Munich, Germany, in order to organize themselves against China more effectively and place greater pressure on Western governments on behalf of their cause. The suspicion against Islam that followed the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks did nothing to help the National Congress. Meeting on Oct. 17, 2001, in Brussels, it issued a statement first condemning the attacks on the World Trade Center and expressing condolences to the American government and the families of the victims, and only then condemning the Chinese authorities for their "state terrorism" against "East Turkestan". As chairman of the Eastern Turkestani Union in Europe, Erkin Alptekin reacted coldly to the announcement of late August 2002 that the United States had frozen the assets of the East Turkmen Islamic Movement.

Colin Mackerras

## Colombia

**Capital:** Bogota

**Population:** 43.2 m

The Republic of Colombia has an executive President elected by direct popular vote for a four-year term and a bicameral Congress consisting of a 102-member Senate and a 161-member House of Representatives,

both elected for four-year terms by universal adult suffrage.

Elections to Congress held on March 10, 2002, were characterized by apathy and widespread abstention.



tion. In the new Senate the Liberals (PL) gained seats, but won only 28, to 13 for the Social Conservatives (PSC), Coalition Party 6, National Movement 6; the balance of power being held by no less than 38 minor parties which gained at least one of the 49 remaining seats. The Chamber of Deputies followed a similar pattern, the PL obtaining only 54 seats and the PSC 21. Alvaro Uribe Vélez, a dissident former Liberal Party (PL) member running as candidate of the right-wing Colombia First coalition, secured 53.04% of the votes to secure an unprecedented outright win in the first round of the presidential elections held on May 26. The official candidate of the outgoing Liberal Party, Horacio Serpa Uribe, drew only 31.72%. The Social Conservative (PSC) candidate, Juan Camilo Restrepo, had withdrawn after the legislative elections and the party then endorsed Uribe. On June 11 the PL agreed to support the new government, ensuring it a large majority in both houses of Congress.

A major advance in normalizing Colombian society appeared to have been achieved in 1990 with the signing on March 9 of the final peace treaty between the government and the April 19 Movement–M-19 (*Movimiento 19 de Abril*), one of the principal left-wing guerrilla groups most active during the 1980s. However, although the apparent success of the peace agreement with M-19 prompted other guerrilla movements to open similar negotiations with the government, these were not successful. During the 1990s the situation deteriorated into open civil war. Meanwhile the power of the “Medellín cartel”, who had issued a declaration of “total war” against the government for its efforts to eradicate the drugs trade, was broken, as was to some extent that of the “Cali cartel” which had replaced it. Insurgent organizations, and in particular the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), displaced them in using drug-related money to finance acts of violence.

US concerns regarding Colombia have focused on its role as the source of 90% of the cocaine used in the USA. Under the “Plan Colombia” substantial military assistance has been provided (making Colombia the largest recipient of US military aid outside the Middle East), although this was until 2002 officially designated for counter-narcotics activity rather than counter-insurgency per se. However, despite the scale of the insurgency, under which the FARC have controlled large areas of territory, Colombia's own spending on its military forces has been modest, accounting for under 2% of GDP, and its armed forces have lacked the numbers and the capability to secure a decisive victory over the insurgents. Many small towns and rural areas, in particular, have lacked an effective police or military presence. In 1998 President Andrés Pastrana officially ceded control to the FARC of a 42,000 sq km so-called demilitarized zone, nominally as a venue for peace talks, in which the FARC exercised effective control and consolidated their power. The FARC achieved a measure of legitimacy, engaging in continued peace talks, establishing representation in some Latin American states and being omitted

from a list of terrorist organizations drawn up by the European Union in the wake of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the United States, despite being termed a terrorist group by the USA. In February 2002, however, in part reflecting mounting domestic dissatisfaction with the government's policy in the face of continuing FARC terrorist activity, and in part reflecting the changed international environment following Sept. 11, Pastrana ordered his troops to re-take the demilitarized zone. The popular vote for Alvaro Uribe in the May 2002 presidential elections was seen as endorsement of Uribe's calls for a firmer policy in dealing with the insurgents. While the principal towns were captured, however, large parts of the zone, an area the size of Switzerland, remained under FARC control into 2003, as did substantial other rural parts of the country.

## RIGHT-WING GROUPS

### United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia (*Autodefensas Unidas por Colombia*, AUC)

*Leadership:* Carlos Castaño, Iván Roberto Duque, Salvatore Mancuso, Vicente Castaño, (*Dirección Política y Militar, DIPOM*).

*Website:* [colombia-libre.org/colombialibre/pp.asp](http://colombia-libre.org/colombialibre/pp.asp)

A significant contributor to a rising death-rate in recent years has been the operations of the self-styled United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia (AUC), a confederation of right-wing paramilitary forces which was classified by the USA as a terrorist organization on Sept. 10, 2001. It claimed at the time to have as many as 10,000 members.

It first came to public notice when, following the studied insult to the President by the FARC in January 1999 (see below), right-wing death squads rampaged through villages across the country killing some 150 civilians. Operations were stepped up following the Los Pozos agreement on Feb. 9, 2001 (see below), in the belief that the FARC was yielding to intensified military pressure. In April alone, 80 civilians died in such incidents, though in May one of the AUC's senior commanders, Francisco Javier Correa González, was captured by security forces. By June a FARC attack on the AUC headquarters in the Nudo de Paramillo highlands, which drew army units into a series of ambushes, had been succeeded by a nationwide FARC offensive in which some 200 died. On July 11 the AUC murdered 16 businessmen in Boyacá, and when on July 27, the two alleged AUC leaders were arraigned in Bogotá, it was only on the formal offence of the theft and destruction of identity documents. In July 2002, following the elections, the leader of the AUC, Carlos Castaño, regrouped his organization to purge it of the associations which had led the US government to regard it as a terrorist organization financing its operations from drug trafficking, and promised to support the new government if it was unable to fight the guerrillas alone.

### Death Squads (*Escuadrones de la Muerte*)

These right-wing terror groups have been held responsible for numerous killings of alleged left-wing activists since the early 1980s. Their structure and organization alike remain shadowy but they are believed to consist largely of off-duty members of the police and armed forces. They were respon-

sible for the collapse of the first agreement between the government and the main guerrilla movement when they targeted activists and members of the Patriotic Union (UP), formed as the legal arm of the FARC (see separate entry). On March 22, 1990, the president of UP, Bernardo Jaramillo, was shot dead by a hired gunman.

In 2001 a number of prominent Liberals were targeted by the death squads. On Sept. 30 the body of Consuelo Araújo Noguera, a popular former Minister of Culture and wife of the Attorney general, Edgardo Maya Villazón, was found near Valledupar. She had been kidnapped on Sept. 24. Two Deputies, Luis Alberto Colmenares and Octavio Sarmiento, both Liberals, were assassinated in early October.

### **Death to Kidnappers (Muerte a los Secuestradores, MAS)**

This group emerged in 1982 in the city of Medellín, its avowed aim being to act against guerrilla groups which carried out abductions to finance their operations. Its victims included suspected guerrillas, trade unionists and peasants. The MAS is thought to have been linked from its formation to the drug trade and to have received financial backing from drug dealers.

In 1989 MAS was accused of killing José Antequera, a leader of the left-wing Patriotic Union, at Bogotá airport on March 3, 1989, and of involvement in a number of other political murders of UP and Communist Party (PCP) members. It was also alleged to have been involved in the death on Feb. 26, 1990, of Silvia Dussan, a journalist working for the BBC (London).

## **LEFT-WING GROUPS**

### **Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias Colombianas, FARC)**

*Leadership: Manuel Marulanda Vélez ("Tirofijo")*

*Website: [www.farc-ep.org](http://www.farc-ep.org)*

Among several independent republics set up during the period of "La Violencia" (1946-53) was that of Gaitania (later called Marquetalia, in the department of Tolima). It was founded in 1949 by Fermín Charry Rincón (a member of the central committee of the Communist Party, also known as Jacobo Frias Alape). He was killed in January 1960 and was succeeded by Manuel Marulanda Vélez (also called Pedro Antonio Marín or Tirofijo – "Sure Shot"). Marquetalia was occupied by the Colombian army in May 1964, but its guerrillas decided to continue their struggle and in April 1966 set up the FARC under the leadership of M. Marulanda Vélez and other members of the Communist Party's central committee.

Between 1976 and 1980 FARC members were involved in a number of armed attacks and in clashes with army units. An amnesty offer made by President Turbay Ayala was rejected by the FARC on June 17, 1980. However, although it continued its attacks, the FARC showed interest in an amnesty offer of President Betancur, which came into force in November 1982, and early in 1983 FARC delegates had talks with a presidential armistice commission.

Nevertheless the FARC commenced insurgency activities together with the April 19 Movement (M19) in June 1983, and in November 1983 it reached agreement on forming a political alliance with the M-19 and the (pro-Castro)

National Liberation Army (ELN, see separate entry).

### **Failure of 1980s Peace Efforts**

In October 1983 the FARC proposed a ceasefire to become effective on Jan. 20, 1984, and a truce from Jan. 20, 1985 (which would give it time to demobilize its forces and to form a political party). Agreement was reached with the peace commission on March 28, 1984, for a ceasefire to take effect on May 28 of that year, on terms including the demilitarization of rural areas. The ceasefire was to run until Dec. 1, 1984, but on a FARC request of Sept. 9, it was (on Nov. 28) extended until Dec. 31, 1985.

A process of reintegrating guerrillas into civilian life began on Dec. 1, 1984, and on May 28, 1985, the FARC founded a political party (the Unión Patriótica, UP). It also agreed to hand over to the authorities a list of those who had deserted after the truce to a splinter group, the Ricardo Franco Front. In September 1985 the FARC requested that the ceasefire be extended until September 1986, and it agreed not to engage in armed campaigning during the forthcoming elections in which the UP was taking part.

Progress towards a final peace settlement, which the FARC had supported since 1982, appeared to falter shortly after the new Liberal administration took over in 1986. On Sept. 19, 1986, the FARC presented a list of violations of the truce to the new government, and claimed that 300 UP members had died in the 30 months of the ceasefire. In January 1987 speculation that extreme right-wing groups were trying to provoke the FARC into giving up the ceasefire followed claims that a total of 342 members of the UP had been killed over a period of 10 months.

In June 1987 some 2,000 Colombian soldiers were despatched to "exterminate communist guerrillas" after a 200-strong force of suspected FARC guerrillas had ambushed and killed 27 soldiers, wounding 42 others, in the south-eastern jungles of Caquetá. On June 24 the President announced that the ceasefire would effectively end in those areas where the FARC operated, if evidence of the group's involvement was substantiated. There followed an upsurge in FARC guerrilla activity in late 1988. On Oct. 21, 1989, the FARC joined with the EPL in peace talks with the government and in February 1990 a commission was set up to try and carry out a process of normalization like that for M-19. However, the group remained ambivalent about the peace talks and although it offered a ceasefire during the election period, guerrilla activity continued with the death of 17 soldiers on March 5. On April 30 about 30 guerrillas were killed in an army operation to destroy FARC encampments.

On Dec. 9, 1990, the army captured the FARC headquarters at Casa Verde in Meta department, reportedly killing 60 guerrillas for the loss of 20 soldiers, although the group's leadership escaped. In late December and early January there was a renewed guerrilla offensive in concert with the ELN in eight departments with attacks against security forces and bombing of power lines.

### **FARC Operations 1994-98**

Following the inauguration of Ernesto Samper Pizano (PL) as President in August 1994 indications came from both the

FARC and the ELN that they were prepared to enter into dialogue. Despite an attack on Nov. 3 on a police caravan, killing 11 officers and one student in a school bus that was caught in the crossfire, the President announced, on Nov. 17, that his government was prepared to enter into peace talks without preconditions. On May 18 and 19, 1995, the President made a series of offers to guerrilla groups on their acceptance into regular political life with representation in a new single-chamber Congress. The FARC accepted the proposals in principle but continued their attacks in the La Uribe region; later attacks on anti-drug headquarters in Cali and Bogotá confirmed suspicions that they were collaborating with the Cali cartel. Meanwhile large parts of the country remained paralysed by the resumption of guerrilla activity. Following the ambush on April 15, 1996, by the FARC of a military convoy near Puerres, in which 51 soldiers were killed, a state of emergency was proclaimed, extended by 90 days from April 29 and finally terminated on July 29. Meanwhile massive popular protests at the effects of the coca eradication programme had spread across the southern Departments of Guaviare, Putumayo, Caquetá, Meta and Cauca, leading to the deaths of at least 18 in clashes with police and troops. Though agreement was reached with the Putumayo growers, the President insisted that violence in Caquetá was fuelled by "hidden interests" and talks were suspended on Aug. 23. Both protests and guerrilla violence continued at a high level into the new year.

The President's appointment on Feb. 4, 1997, of Guillermo González Mosquera to the key post of Defence Minister, however, came under attack, on account of his alleged links with drug interests. Criticism was resumed when 16 soldiers died in a clash with FARC guerrillas soon after the FARC had released photographs of 60 soldiers they were still keeping hostage. Evidence was circulating that González had in 1989 accepted a campaign contribution from a leading drug trafficker and on March 16 he resigned, to be replaced subsequently by Gilberto Echeverri Mejía. Echeverri openly advocated talks with guerrillas and paramilitaries to end a decade of violence. Following mediation by the Church, the International Red Cross and former US President Jimmy Carter, President Samper ordered the evacuation of troops for a month from a large part of the Department of Caquetá and the hostages were released on June 15. The affected area was re-occupied on June 23 after public expressions of discontent from senior military commanders, notably Generals Haroldo Bedoya Pizarro and Manuel José Bonnet, after two soldiers and 18 guerrillas had died in a clash between the FARC and the army in Uraba on June 17.

Gen. Bedoya was dismissed on July 24, after President Samper, in his annual message to Congress on July 20, had promised stricter controls on the armed forces. He was replaced by Gen. Bonnet. Though senior officers denounced the move and accused the President of truckling to the demands of the USA, the President then proposed a Peace Commission to negotiate terms with both the FARC and the ELN. On Aug. 21 the FARC command agreed to enter into talks. However the assassination on Aug. 8 of Senator Jorge Cristo (PL) was attributed to the ELN, which had earlier declared leading politicians legitimate targets and on Sept. 4 Gen. Bonnet launched a major offensive against the FARC,

this claiming the deaths of more than 600 guerrillas and effectively putting an end to the peace process, though President Samper, by again offering an amnesty to the FARC on Sept. 24, apparently wished to keep it alive. On Oct. 16 the government rejected a peace plan sponsored by Juan Manuel Santos and supported by leading figures as it would have required President Samper to step down. However on Nov. 1 the ELN released three hostages as the government announced a temporary ceasefire, a move seen as a prelude to formal talks with both the ELN and the FARC. All politicians were reminded of their vulnerability when the President's press secretary was kidnapped by "the extraditables" early in December.

Negotiations between government and the FARC continued fitfully in early 1998 and most of the hostages taken in March 1997 were freed or managed to escape. On May 24 some 350 convicts escaped after an FARC attack on San Isidro prison, where one of their leaders was detained. In May paramilitaries killed 11 suspected guerrillas at Barrancabermeja, a stronghold both of the ELN and the Popular Liberation Army (EPL). A further 25 taken hostage were also killed later. Then, in an unprecedented move, President-elect Andrés Pastrana Arango met personally with Manuel Marulanda Vélez on July 9 and agreed a timetable and conditions for negotiations on peace with the FARC. A show of strength at the beginning of August to greet the new president, however, left some 200 dead in a string of attacks across the country.

### Creation of Demilitarized Zone, 1998

Despite this, in October 1998 President Pastrana secured congressional support before reaching agreement in turn with the ELN and FARC on a timetable for dialogue. Despite an ELN attack on Oct. 18 on the Orensa oil pipeline, which destroyed two villages in Antioquia and killed at least 66 people, and a costly FARC offensive at the beginning of November, his government then went ahead with plans to evacuate a large area in which to hold talks with the FARC, much to the fury of the armed forces. The President even went in person to open talks with the FARC at an agreed jungle location on Jan. 7, 1999. The FARC leader, Marulanda, however, failed to turn up.

Meanwhile the President had made further concessions to the FARC concerning the withdrawal of troops in the south and on Feb. 18 even proposed the disbandment of the *convivirs*, civilian self-defence units set up to protect rural areas. On March 10 the FARC admitted that its forces had murdered three US civilians who had been working with the U'wa community in the Northeast. Despite this, two senior generals accused of links with the paramilitaries were retired and an unannounced meeting did take place between the President and Marulanda on April 30, following which talks with FARC began on May 6 with a representative of the armed forces taking part for the first time. However when the President declared permanent the military withdrawal from Meta and Caquetá, the Defence Minister, Rodrigo Lloreda Caicedo, resigned on May 26 with the backing of some 20 generals.

Soon afterwards, on June 7, the political reform bill, giving the President broad powers to further the peace process,

was defeated in Congress. Its members were not alone in believing that too many concessions had already been made and on July 12 the President called off a visit to Boyacá after warning that his assassination was planned. A nationwide offensive by the FARC followed and by September spillover from the conflict had spread into Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru, Brazil and Panama, all of which mobilized forces to contain the conflict. The United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia (AUC, see separate entry), accusing Panama's National Guard of being in collusion with the guerrillas, had also threatened reprisals. On Oct. 24, as massive demonstrations took place for peace, the government reopened negotiations with the FARC. A third round of negotiations began in November and the FARC called a Christmas truce, following, however, an attack on Dec. 12 on a naval base at Jurado in which some 50 marines died.

On April 13, 2000, the FARC did agree to discuss a ceasefire, but when they proposed to levy a so-called "peace tax" the chief government negotiator resigned and was replaced by Camilo Gómez, one of the President's inner circle. On April 30 the FARC made a second attempt to relaunch itself as a political party, the Bolivarian Movement for a New Colombia. Talks resumed with the government on Sept. 22 but stalled when in October 58 soldiers died in northern Antioquia and were suspended by the FARC on Nov. 18 in protest at the US-backed "Plan Colombia". Later, on Dec. 29, Diego Turbay, president of the Congressional peace commission, and six of his colleagues died in an ambush in the FARC demilitarized zone.

#### **Unsuccessful negotiations in 2001**

Negotiations continued throughout the year 2001 without success. Military critics of the 1998 concession (renewed in December 2000) of a demilitarized zone felt that it merely allowed the guerrillas a safe haven and had led to no significant concessions on their part. On Jan. 29 the FARC further showed its intransigence by declaring all US military advisers in the country "legitimate targets", though two days previously it had released some one hundred hostages, some of long-standing. However at Los Pozos on Feb. 9, following 15 hours of face-to-face talks, President Pastrana and Marulanda apparently reached an agreement on new confidence building measures. The FARC agreed to cease kidnappings for ransom and to exchange prisoners, starting with the surrender to the authorities of 62 child soldiers, and on March 13 it was reported that agreement had been reached on the composition of an international facilitating commission to oversee the implementation of the Los Pozos agreements.

Then on May 9 the FARC successfully freed several of their members from prison and a series of bomb attacks, in which 12 people were killed and hundreds wounded, aroused fears that the guerrillas had simply switched tactics. In June, 42 police and army personnel were released by the FARC to the Red Cross. In turn the government released 15 FARC prisoners on June 16 and the FARC a further 224 prisoners at La Macarena on June 28. Suspicions were again aroused, however, when on Aug. 11 three men suspected of being members of the Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA) were arrested at El Dorado Airport, Bogotá, and

charged on Aug. 22 with possessing false passports and training FARC members in urban warfare. The FARC, too, did not discontinue the kidnappings that had, in recent years become an important source of income. Following a new agreement with the FARC on Oct. 5 the President announced the extension of the FARC demilitarized zone, to the great annoyance of the security forces. But on Oct. 18 the FARC responded by demanding that troops be withdrawn from the area around the demilitarized zone, following this up with other fresh demands which were also rejected.

#### **Military Offensive in Demilitarized Zone, 2002**

Three frustrating years of peace talks finally broke down on Jan. 13, 2002, when the FARC refused to agree to a ceasefire. On Feb. 20 troops entered the demilitarized zone. They quickly seized the town of San Vicente del Caguán, meeting with no resistance from the retreating guerrillas, who had precipitated the breakdown by hijacking a civil airliner and kidnapping Senator Jorge Eduardo Gechem Turbay, president of the Senate peace commission. However they were not able to mount an effective presence over the whole of some 16,000 square miles with a population of about 100,000. Thousands fled in well-founded fear of reprisals from right-wing paramilitaries and the rebels quickly resumed their guerrilla tactics, blocking roads and kidnapping Ingrid Betancourt, presidential candidate of the Green Oxygen Party, on the road near Florencia (Betancourt remaining a hostage as of June 2003). At least 117 civilians, some 40 of them children, were killed at Bojaya, Department of Choco, on May 2 when a mortar round fired by FARC guerrillas at right-wing paramilitaries who had occupied the town towards the end of April, demolished the church in which they were sheltering. The guerrillas subsequently overran the town while Colombian gunboats coming to the rescue along the Atrato River were pinned down by rebel fire, and more than a hundred casualties were evacuated by the Red Cross. It was one of the worst incidents in 38 years of civil war.

While the Colombian military gained control of the principal towns of the demilitarized zone, the FARC remained in control of wide parts of the mostly mountainous and jungle area, as well as of some other parts of the country. In February 2003, the FARC kidnapped three US citizens, described by the State Department as specialist contractors, when their plane crashed in FARC-controlled territory on an intelligence-gathering mission; this was reportedly the first time the FARC had captured US citizens working for the US government. Former Defence Minister, Gilberto Echeverri Mejía, was kidnapped by FARC while on a peace march in April 2002 and held hostage for more than a year until killed on May 5, 2003, during the course of a failed rescue bid by army special forces in which nine other hostages also died. The army stated that the hostages had been executed before the arrival of government forces and all the rebels had escaped. In the aftermath of this incident, President Uribe stated that he would release FARC prisoners in exchange for other hostages only if they were sent abroad.

Though still theoretically left-wing, observers generally agree that since 1997 the FARC has in practice lost any claim to political motivation and has degenerated into a ter-

rorist movement dedicated solely to its own self-enrichment through kidnapping for profit and dealing in narcotics. It is estimated to have an annual income of \$200 - \$300 million from drug trafficking, "taxation", protection rackets and kidnapping. Estimates of its armed fighters are in the 6,000 to 17,000 range.

### **National Liberation Army (Ejército de Liberación Nacional, ELN)**

*Leadership. Manuel Pérez Martínez, Commander-in-Chief ELN*

*Website: [www.web.net/eln/](http://www.web.net/eln/)*

Established in January 1965, the ELN at first operated in the department of Santander (northeastern Colombia) under the leadership of Fabio Vasquez Castaño and with the support of a (pro-Chinese) Workers', Students' and Peasants' Movement (MOEC). It repudiated the pro-Soviet Communist Party on Aug. 1, 1967, after that party had condemned guerrilla warfare as "an erroneous form of revolution".

Earlier, on Jan. 7, 1966, Fr Camilo Torres Restrepo, a former Dominican priest who had advocated a "Christian revolution" to overthrow the existing social order, disclosed that he had joined the ELN, explaining that, as all lawful means of obtaining redress were barred to the people, he would pursue the armed struggle in the country until the people had gained power; however, on Feb. 15, 1966, he was killed in a clash between guerrillas and an army unit. Torres' memory continues to provide inspiration for the movement.

In June 1975 ELN guerrillas were reported to be active in several departments, and a major military operation was launched against them in the northern Bolívar department. By September 1980 the ELN was officially stated to have fewer than 40 active members, nevertheless during 1981 it stepped up its activities near the Venezuelan border. On Nov. 22, 1983, ELN members kidnapped the brother of President Betancur, and made several demands, including an increase in the monthly minimum wage, a price freeze on consumer goods, a reduction in public service prices, the release of political prisoners, the arrest of MAS (Death to Kidnappers, see separate entry) suspects and the demilitarization of rural areas. The hostage was later released unharmed.

The group refused a ceasefire in 1984 and in 1986 was reported as operating in several departments. It claimed responsibility for attacks on the Caño Limón-Coveñas oil pipeline owned by the Colombian Petroleum Enterprise, and in the 1990s the oil pipeline was damaged at regular intervals causing disruption and loss of revenue to the state oil company as well as serious environmental damage.

President Samper's peace initiative in November 1994 was greeted positively by the ELN representative, Francisco Galán. However in February 1995 it mounted a cross-border raid into Venezuela, killing eight Venezuelan marines and wounding four. The Venezuelan government responded on March 15 by sending 5,000 troops to round up and deport illegal Colombian immigrants in the frontier zone. The Colombian government in turn responded by mobilizing some 6,000 troops on the Venezuelan border; the President stating that he would gladly co-operate with the Venezuela government but would not recognize its claim to a right of "hot pursuit", which a later incident in October suggested it was exercising regardless. On May 18 and 19 the President

made a series of offers to guerrilla groups on their acceptance into regular political life with representation in a new single-chamber Congress. The ELN, which on May 20 again bombed the main Caño Limón-Coveñas oil pipeline, offered a series of counter-proposals including the possibility of talks. Finally, in talks in Spain in March 1998, a preliminary agreement was reached between the government and a new ELN leadership. Following the death from hepatitis B on Feb. 14 of its founding leader, the Spanish-born former priest Gregorio Manuel Pérez Martínez, a collective leadership had been formed with José Nicolás Rodríguez Bautista as political, and Antonio García as military, commander.

However talks with the new government headed by President Pastrana were abruptly broken off by the ELN on Feb. 16, 1999. Then on April 12 activists hijacked an Avianca Fokker 50 airliner during an internal flight from Bucaramanga to Bogotá; 15 of the 46 passengers were still held hostage at the year end. The ELN kidnapping of members of a church congregation in Cali on June 30, however, rebounded when it was vigorously condemned by the Church and the hostages were released, the last three not until Dec. 10.

On April 20, 2000, the government agreed to create a second demilitarized zone in parts of Bolívar and Antioquia for talks with the ELN. Unlike the FARC zone this would be subject to restrictions including international verification. The proposal was held up by local protests but finally endorsed by the paramilitary United Self Defence Forces of Colombia (AUC) on May 28, by which time peace talks with the FARC had again been suspended. Talks with the ELN took place in Geneva on July 24-25.

The release of 43 prisoners on Dec. 23, 2000, enabled government negotiators to agree terms for talks in a new demilitarized zone in the Middle Magdalena. However these talks broke down in mid-March 2001 following military operations in Bolívar Department and it was reported on April 3 that ELN and FARC commanders were conducting joint operations in the proposed zone. On April 16, 92 Colombian employees of the US corporation Occidental Petroleum were kidnapped on their way home from work on the Caño Limón-Coveñas oilfield in the Department of Arauca. Most were soon released, but in October Occidental Petroleum suspended oil drilling after the Caño Limón-Coveñas pipeline had been blown up for the 133rd time since January. Meanwhile, on Aug. 7, the President had suspended negotiations with the ELN when it became clear there was no realistic possibility of a deal being struck before the 2002 elections and on Aug. 17 signed legislation giving the armed forces increased powers to detain civilians and to give orders to the civil authorities. However the ELN remained active, justifying its activities by a nationalist claim to be resisting the forces of globalization.

### **Simon Bolivar Guerrilla Co-ordination Board (Coordinadora Guerrillera Simón Bolívar, CGNSB)**

This body was set up in October 1987 by six Colombian guerrilla groups as a central unified command. The groups were the M19, the National Liberation Army (ELN), the People's Liberation Army (EPL), the Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARC), the Workers'

Revolutionary Party (PRT) and the Quintin Lame Commando. It superseded an earlier National Guerrilla Coordinating Board set up in 1985. By early 1991 it consisted of only the FARC and ELN, the other groups having reached peace agreements with the government.

Following the election of Ernesto Samper Pizano (PL) as President in 1994 the new government faced a revitalized guerrilla movement, coordinated by the CGNSB, which had

stepped up attacks in the last weeks of the outgoing presidency. In April 1996 it proclaimed an "armed strike", leading to a series of incidents resulting in some 40 deaths. Other joint operations between the FARC and ELN were not specifically ascribed to it, and in some cases appear to have been the work of local commanders.

*Peter Calvert*

## Comoros

**Capital:** Moroni (on Grande Comore)

**Population:** 614,000

The Comoros comprise Grande Comore (Njazidja), Anjouan (Nzwani) and Moheli (Mwali). The predominantly Muslim islands achieved independence from France in 1975, although neighbouring Mayotte (largely Christian) chose to remain under French administration. Politically, the Comoros have been very unstable, enduring over 20 coups or attempted coups since independence, instigated mainly by groups based abroad, particularly in France. Against that background, the left-wing regime of Ali Soilih from 1976–78 gave way to one-party rule by the Comoran Union for Progress through the 1980s – under the increasingly authoritarian presidency of Ahmed Abdallah, backed by a notorious French mercenary Bob Denard – before a multi-party democratic system was introduced in 1989–92. Political tensions continued however, prompting another coup attempt in 1995 before presidential and legislative elections in 1996 brought Mohamed Taki Abdoukarim and a supporting alliance of parties within a National Rally for Development (*Rassemblement National pour le Développement*, RND) to power.

In 1997 a growing perception on Anjouan and Moheli that Grande Comore absorbed an unfair share of government expenditure and foreign aid led to separatist agitation on those islands. In July 1997 Anjouan and Moheli both seceded from the federation, seeking to re-establish ties with France (and, like Mayotte, to enjoy the economic trimmings of a French overseas territory). The Comoran Government based in Moroni despatched about 300 troops to invade Anjouan. The force landed on Sept. 3 but, having met strong resistance from the well-prepared separatists and lost an estimated 40 soldiers, was withdrawn by President Taki to Grande Comore several days later. Meanwhile, France declined to intervene, rejecting the separatists bid for *rattachement* (and the heavy expenditure that would entail). In October 1997 the inhabitants of Anjouan voted overwhelmingly for independence. The Organization of African Unity (since superseded by the African Union) tried to mediate, sending military observers to maintain order and chairing an inter-

island conference in April 1999. The Anjouan separatists' refusal to sign up to an outline agreement reached at the conference sparked protests in Grande Comore, targeted violently at the minority Anjouan community. On April 30, 1999, the army headed by chief of staff Col. Azali Assoumani seized power in a bloodless coup. The federal assembly was dissolved and the constitution suspended.

Col. Assoumani sought to resolve the secessionist crisis through a confederal arrangement. On Feb. 17, 2001, the Fomboni Accord on national reconciliation was signed by representatives of the military government and the three islands. The accord provided for the preparation of a new constitution envisaging greater autonomy, under which each island would have its own President and legislative assembly while respecting the unity and territorial integrity of the Comoros state. There would also be a rotating union President (initially from Grande Comore) and a union legislature comprising appointed and directly elected members. The new constitution was approved in a national referendum in December 2001.

Presidential elections for the autonomous islands of Anjouan and Moheli were held on March 31, 2002. Col. Mohamed Bacar secured the Anjouan poll outright, while Mohamed Said Fazul won the runoff election for the Moheli presidency on April 7, 2002. Col. Bacar had come to power in Anjouan in a coup in August 2001, ousting Said Abeid Abderemane who had previously taken control by force in July 1999. Voting for the union presidency took place on April 14, 2002. Despite a boycott by two of the three candidates due to allegations of irregularities, Col. Assoumani's victory was confirmed on May 8. In Grande Comore, Abdou Soule Elbak was elected President in a second round of voting on May 19, defeating the official candidate put forward by Col. Assoumani. A political tussle has since persisted over how the separation of powers between the union and island Presidents should operate.

*Richard German & Elizabeth Taylor*

# Congo

**Capital:** Brazzaville

**Population:** 3.0 m

Three years after independence from France in 1960, the Congo became a one-party state under a Marxist-Leninist National Movement of the Revolution (*Mouvement national de la révolution*, MNR). Following a military coup in 1968 led by Marien Ngoubai, the MNR was superseded by the Congolese Party of Labour (*Parti congolais du travail*, PCT) as the sole ruling party, and the country was renamed (in 1970) the People's Republic of the Congo. Factional rivalries within the PCT during the 1970s were reflected in the assassination of Ngoubai in 1977 and the replacement of his successor, Jacques-Joachim Yhombi-Opango, only two years later by Denis Sassou-Nguesso.

A new constitution approved in 1979 provided for a popularly elected National People's Assembly, consisting of candidates nominated by the PCT. As head of state and chairman of the PCT central committee, Sassou-Nguesso remained the country's dominant figure through the 1980s, although opposition within the party and the army led to a serious rebellion in July 1987. In 1990, under popular pressure, the PCT gave in to demands for political change and a transition to multi-partyism. It abandoned its monopoly of power and renounced Marxism-Leninism in favour of democratic socialism. The country subsequently reverted to its former name of Republic of the Congo.

Following a national conference in 1991 to consider the political future of the state, a referendum in March 1992 gave overwhelming approval to a revised constitution recognizing a multi-party system. The constitution provided for an executive President, directly elected for a five-year term with power to appoint the Prime Minister. Legislative authority was vested in a bicameral parliament consisting of a National Assembly (*Assemblée Nationale*) and Senate (*Sénat*). Presidential elections in August 1992 saw the defeat of the incumbent Sassou-Nguesso of the PCT by Pascal Lissouba, leader of the Pan-African Union for Social Democracy (*Union Panafricaine pour la Démocratie Sociale*, UPADS). Legislative elections in 1993, giving pro-Lissouba parties a majority, provoked armed skirmishes between rival dedicated militias supporting government and opposition figures. Despite attempts at reconciliation and moves to integrate the militias into the official security forces, further fighting escalated into open civil war from June 1997 in the run-up to presidential elections.

Confrontation was centred in the capital, Brazzaville, which was split into three zones occupied by the militias of the three leading figures – the

Cocoye forces loyal to President Lissouba, former President Sassou-Nguesso's Cobras, and the Ninja militia supporting Bernard Kolelas of the opposition Congolese Movement for Democracy and Integral Development (*Mouvement Congolais pour la Démocratie et le Développement Intégral*, MCDDI). Lissouba appointed Kolelas as Prime Minister in August 1997, and their joint forces appeared to be making gains until Angolan troops intervened in support of Sassou-Nguesso, who proclaimed himself President on Oct. 25, 1997. The previous elected parliament was dissolved and replaced in January 1998 by a 75-member National Transitional Council (NTC, appointed by the President) pending the approval of a new constitution and the organization of fresh elections.

Some reports noted the passive attitude of France (the former colonial power and having substantial investments in the Congo) to the overthrow of Lissouba, in contrast to its practice of intervention in other former colonies. Lissouba had favoured opening the exploitation of offshore oil reserves to US companies, which had led to hostility from French interests.

The uneasy calm during 1998 was shattered in December when fighting and looting broke out in the Pool region around Brazzaville. Sassou-Nguesso claimed it was an attempted coup by the militias loyal to Lissouba and Kolelas (both of whom had fled the republic). However, following setbacks for the rebels during 1999, a peace agreement was reached between the Sassou-Nguesso regime and the militias at the end of the year, heralding a national dialogue and a period of relative stability.

A new constitution, providing for a directly elected presidency with executive powers and a seven-year mandate and a bicameral parliament, was approved in a national referendum in January 2002. Presidential elections were then held on March 10, in which Sassou-Nguesso won 89 per cent of the vote amid opposition claims of ballot rigging. From the end of March, fighting resumed between government forces and Ninja militia rebels, largely centred on Brazzaville and the volatile region of Pool. In two rounds of legislative elections for the new 137-member National Assembly on May 26 and June 23, 2002, Sassou-Nguesso's PCT won 53 seats, while a further 30 went to parties supporting the PCT. Senate elections on July 11 resulted similarly in a majority for the President and his allies.

*Richard German & Elizabeth Taylor*

# Democratic Republic of the Congo

**Capital:** Kinshasa

**Population:** 52 m

The former Belgian Congo achieved independence in 1960. Mobutu Sese Seko took power in a military coup in 1965 and renamed the country Zaire in 1971. He retained power until 1997, ruling through the Popular Movement of the Revolution (*Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution*, MPR) which was the sole legal party until 1990, when the introduction of a multi-party system was announced. After 1990, however, there was persistent political conflict between Mobutu and opposition groups who organized a National Conference that for a time appointed its own rival "Cabinet".

## Overthrow of Mobutu by Kabila

In the wake of the 1994 Rwanda genocide, long-standing ethnic tensions between Tutsi and Hutu inhabitants in the east of Zaire worsened, exacerbated by the arrival of Rwandan Hutu militia forces (the *Interahamwe*), largely responsible for the genocide, who had fled Rwanda following the ascension of a Tutsi-led government. These Hutu militia forces soon allied with the Zairian armed forces to launch a campaign against Congolese ethnic Tutsis in eastern Zaire, triggering the development of armed Tutsi militias.

In October 1996, the Banyamulenge (Congo Tutsis), led by Laurent-Désiré Kabila, and other rebel groups formed the **Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo** (*Alliance des forces démocratiques pour la libération du Congo*, AFDL) and began a revolt against the Mobutu regime. The AFDL made dramatic military gains against the Zairian army, entering the capital Kinshasa on May 17, 1997. Mobutu fled to Morocco (where he subsequently died) and Kabila declared himself President.

The AFDL was in fact an opportunistic alliance, launched from Rwanda and gathering very different groups. Kabila himself was a long-term opponent of Mobutu, and led a Tanzania-based guerrilla movement, the **Revolutionary Party of the People** (*Parti révolutionnaire du peuple*, PRP). Another opponent, André Kisasse Ngandu, who organised an underground resistance in Uganda on the slopes of the Ruwenzori volcano, the **National Council for Resistance and Democracy**, also joined the alliance but was assassinated four months after the start of the war. Two other groups were formed, by Tutsis from North Kivu (the **Democratic Alliance of the People**, with Douglas Bugera as leader), and by Banyamulenge Tutsis from South Kivu (the **Revolutionary Movement for the Liberation of Zaire**, led by Masasu Nindaga), both movements acting as proxies for Rwanda.

Most of the military resources were supplied by neighbouring countries, Uganda and Rwanda, while Angola also authorized military forces of Congolese origin, refugees from the 1960s, to join the Front. These three countries justified their intervention by security considerations: Rwanda considered that it was within its rights to pursue Hutu refugees involved in the 1994 Rwandan genocide in camps on Congolese territory, and all countries were of the opinion that the dictatorship of Mobutu had to be removed by force. This movement also had the covert support of the USA.

With Mobutu's overthrow the name of the country was changed from Zaire to the Democratic Republic of Congo. When Kabila was sworn in as President, he promised to lead the country toward general elections within three years. In the meantime he suspended all existing political parties and concentrated most power in his own hands. However, lacking a proper army, he had to rely on troops and instructors put at his disposal by Rwanda in exchange for Rwandan political supervision that became more and more difficult to accept.

## Revolt against Kabila

In July 1998 Kabila, who suspected betrayal, decided to send back to Rwanda most of the Rwandan officers serving as instructors and commanders of the new army. However, on Aug. 2 these officers returned and launched a military revolt, presented as a revolt by Tutsis of Congolese origin, the Banyamulenge. The revolt involved units of the nascent Congolese army, Rwandan and Ugandan officers, and troops coming from these two countries. After three weeks, the political wing of this military movement was launched and presented itself as the **Congolese Rally for Democracy** (*Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie*, RCD). The members of this political movement had been recruited by Rwanda among dissatisfied and disappointed supporters of Kabila, and they were joined by Congolese Tutsis acting on behalf of the interests of Rwanda.

Within a few weeks, 40 per cent of the territory had been seized by the rebels, but the fall of Kinshasa, the capital, was prevented by the intervention of Angola, Zimbabwe, and Namibia, which came to Kabila's aid. This intervention internationalised the war, which turned into a scramble for control of Congo's mineral and other resources by its neighbours. A few months later, elements of the RCD who no longer accepted Rwandan control created another movement with the support of Uganda, which lent them some military



units and military instructors: the **Movement for the Liberation of Congo** (*Mouvement pour la libération du Congo*, MLC) was formed by a Kinshasa businessman, Jean-Pierre Bemba, who gathered around him a small group of former Mobutuists and started to recruit troops in the province of Equateur, fief of his family.

After one year of conflict, negotiations in Zambia resulted in the Lusaka ceasefire agreements, concluded on July 10, 1999. These agreements inter alia provided for the deployment of observers along the ceasefire line and the disarmament of armed groups operating in Kivu among which were perpetrators of the 1994 Rwanda genocide. Following the Lusaka agreements the UN authorized the deployment of ceasefire observers and the creation of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC). These agreements put the government on the same level as the rebels (Kabila was regarded as a leader of one of the factions) and never came into real effect.

On Jan. 16, 2001, when the political situation was at a complete impasse, President Kabila was assassinated by one of his bodyguard. When his son Joseph took over, he made a spectacular u-turn: unlike his father, he accepted the deployment of a United Nations force, and permitted the functioning of political parties and press freedom. This change of direction encouraged Western support for the Kinshasa government and led to pressure for the withdrawal of foreign troops.

#### Agreement on power-sharing

On Feb. 25, 2002, an inter-Congolese dialogue opened in Sun City, South Africa, with the objective of laying the basis of a future political transition and involving the government, rebel movements, civil society and representatives of political parties. The talks were adjourned in April 2002 after a so-called “partnership for peace” was agreed between the government and the MLC to the exclusion of the RCD, which remained in control of much of the eastern part of the country.

Factional fighting continued in 2002 and 2003 against a background of continuing negotiations on the formation of a transitional coalition government. The framework for a power-sharing government in which Kabila would remain President was agreed by December 2002. In May 2003 wholesale killing took place around the north-eastern town of Bunia, the capital of Ituri province, in clashes between militias of the Hema and Lendu ethnic groups, apparently exacerbated by the fact that Uganda had armed both sides and then withdrawn. The circumstance that 700 ill-equipped Uruguayan UN peacekeepers did little more than observe the killing led to comparisons with the UN's failures in situations such as Srebrenica (Bosnia) in 1995 and Rwanda in 1994. On May 30, the UN Security Council authorized the deployment of an emergency French-led EU peacekeeping force to Bunia for a three-month period to Sept. 1, with a man-

date to stabilize the local situation and protect civilians and displaced persons. The intervention accelerated international efforts to underpin peace efforts.

On June 29, 2003, the government and main rebel factions reached an agreement on sharing posts in a national army, the issue which had delayed conclusion of the agreement to form a coalition government. Following this a new power-sharing government was sworn in on July 17, 2003, in Kinshasa. Joseph Kabila remained as President, recognized by all parties. However, he had to share power with four vice-presidents, including the leaders of the two main rebel movements. The presidential “family” chose as its nominee for vice-president Abdoulaye Yerodia N'Domassi, an old friend and companion of Laurent Désiré Kabila; the unarmed political opposition put forward Arthur Zahidi N'Goma, leader of the Forces of the Future, and Jean-Pierre Bemba represented the MLC and Azarias Ruberwa, a Tutsi from South Kivu, represented the main RCD (RCD-Goma).

This delicate balance of power was also reflected in the composition of the new government, a coalition in which the main actors in the conflict were represented: not only the above-cited groups, but also other rebel groups. These included the **RCD-ML** (*Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie – mouvement de libération*) headed by Mbusa Nyamwisi, which had initially been supported by Uganda but then allied to the government, and the **RCD National** of Roger Lumbala, backed by Uganda. The **Mai-Mai** fighters, opposed to any foreign presence in the country, and symbol of the national resistance, also became part of the government and of the integrated army. Civil society was put in charge of some institutions like the Observatory of Human Rights and the National Press Council.

Among unresolved issues are that of how the various rebel forces are in practice to be integrated into a national army. In addition, it remains to be seen whether the various former rebel factions will allow access to the resources of the territories under their de facto control; various of the factions had signed contracts to exploit resources with foreign mining companies. Elections are due to be organized within the next two years. MONUC's strength has been increased to 10,700, with a strengthened mandate under chapter 7 of the UN Charter, allowing its troops to enforce and impose peace.

The number who have died as a result of fighting and (accounting for the greatest number) its consequences in terms of famine and disease since 1997 is put at some two to three million.

#### Political Opposition

There is a plethora of opposition parties outside the newly formed coalition. These include several parties claiming to be in the tradition of Patrice Lumumba (the first Prime Minister of the Independent Republic of Congo, who was murdered in 1961). Some parties are associated with individuals who were high government officials in the Mobutu era before falling out

with Mobutu and then becoming leading dissidents, such as Bernardin Mungul Diaka (*Rassemblement Démocratique pour la République*, RDR) and Jean Nguza Karl I. Bond (*Union des fédéralistes et des Républicains Indépendants*, UFERI-Nguza). Other parties led by prominent Mobutu era dissidents include the *Union pour la Démocratie et le Progrès Social* (UDPS) of Etienne Tshisekedi, who was elected “Prime Minister” in 1992 by the opposition

National Conference. *The Union pour la République et la Démocratie* (URD) is led by Léon Kengo wa Dondo, Prime Minister in the late Mobutu era transition period, who retains considerable influence in opposition circles. The Mobutu era ruling party, the *Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution* (MPR) also survives.

*Colette Braeckman & Cédric Likin*

## Costa Rica

**Capital:** San José

**Population:** 4 m

The Republic of Costa Rica is a democratic multi-party state with an executive President elected for four years by universal adult suffrage. He appoints, and presides over, a Cabinet. Legislative power is held by a unicameral Legislative Assembly similarly elected by universal adult suffrage.

In the second round of presidential elections held in April 2002, Abel Pacheco de la Espirella of the centre-right Social Christian United Party (PUSC) won a comfortable victory over Rolando Araya Monge of the National Liberation Party, PLN, by 58% to 42% of the vote. However, in the first round of voting held in February of that year, the PUSC failed to secure a decisive majority in Congress, winning just 19 of the 57 seats in the Assembly, only two more than the PLN. The Citizen Action party (Acción Ciudadana) won 14

seats, breaking the hold maintained by the two main traditional parties. In the previous general elections held in 1998, between them the PUSC and the PLN won 92% of the presidential vote and 76% of the legislative vote.

Under its 1949 Constitution, Costa Rica has no army, and successive governments have reiterated the country's commitment to neutrality. This commitment was strained during the 1980s by the presence of “contra” rebels on the border with Nicaragua. During the return to democracy throughout the rest of the region in the late 1980s and early 1990s, Costa Rica was in the forefront of efforts to produce a regional peace settlement to the conflicts.

*Michael Lanchin*

## Côte d'Ivoire

**Capital:** Yamoussoukro

**Population:** 16 m

Côte d'Ivoire achieved its independence from France in 1960. It was then for three decades a de facto one-party state, under President Félix Houphouët-Boigny and his *Parti Démocratique de la Côte d'Ivoire* (PDCI), though with little by way of organized dissent and with the country enjoying a reputation for comparative stability and prosperity. In 1990, however, widespread demonstrations and protests, reflecting domestic issues and also the wider demand for democracy in much of Africa at that time, led Houphouët-Boigny to concede political pluralism and elections. The resultant elections, held in October-November 1990, were nonetheless won resoundingly by Houphouët-Boigny and the PDCI. Houphouët-Boigny's successor as PDCI leader, Henri Konan Bédié (like Houphouët-Boigny, a Christian southerner), in turn won 95.3% of the vote in October 1995 presidential elections (which were boycotted by most opposition parties) and the following month the PDCI

retained its overwhelming majority in the legislature.

### 1999 Military Coup

Progress toward multi-party politics in the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire suffered an irreparable setback after a Dec. 24, 1999, military coup d'état against Henri Konan Bédié that brought to power General Robert Guei and a ruling junta, the National Committee of Public Safety (*Comité National de Salut Public*, CNPS). The military overthrow emerged in the midst of rising discontent among Ivoirians of northern descent and migrant workers subjected to discrimination and assault by southerners and government security forces. Bédié had created and applied a new policy of cultural nationalism, called Ivoirité, that likely contributed to his violent demise and self-imposed exile.

During a short-lived reign of ten months, the CNPS guided the public toward the approval of the

Constitution of the Second Republic and new Electoral Code, voted by referendum on July 23, 2000. Several of the initial coup leaders were condemned, jailed or forced into exile and few of the military demands (i.e., boots, socks, clothing, housing) were met. General Guei ignored appeals from the international community not to run as a candidate for the presidency (because it violated Article 50 of the Electoral Code that prohibited military officers from standing for office for six months), formed his own party based in the western region (Union for Development and Peace in Côte d'Ivoire – UDPCI), and competed against a list that excluded candidates from major parties. The Supreme Court rejected heavily supported candidates such as Emile Bombet of the *Parti Démocratique de Côte d'Ivoire* (PDCI) and Alassane Ouattara of the *Rassemblement des Républicains* (RDR). On the ballot was Laurent Gbagbo, head of the *Front Populaire Ivoirien* (FPI), a minority party composed mostly of Bete peoples based in the western region, who had collaborated with Guei to the exclusion of potential challengers.

Guei suspended the Electoral Commission when he learned from exit poll data that Gbagbo was leading in the elections. Gbagbo then proclaimed himself president after a successful appeal to the public to chase General Guei out of town. Following the elections, the bodies of 57 persons were found in a common grave in the outskirts of Abidjan, near Yopougon. Several remained unidentified although northern opposition leaders claimed they were casualties of the xenophobia fomented by Bédié and Gbagbo. A contingent of about 200 men from the armed forces settled with Guei in the western region where they were perceived as a continuing threat to the Gbagbo regime.

Turbulent political rallying preceded the legislative elections held on Dec. 10, 2000. State-sponsored repression by the gendarmerie and death squads circulating after curfew threatened political opponents of the government. The RDR boycotted the legislative elections because of the government's failure to ensure the security of their supporters and called for new elections. Over 300 persons were killed in skirmishes between political opponents and security forces. The National Assembly was seated anyway with the FPI and PDCI holding the majority of seats. Municipal elections in which all parties participated in March 2001 reflected a truer distribution of party support within the nation (RDR 27%, PDCI 27%, FPI 25%, remaining Independent).

The Reconciliation Forum, held from Oct. 10 through Dec. 18, 2001, moderated by former ambassador and government manager under the junta, Seydou Diarra, solicited a dialogue among civil society organizations, seeking solutions to underlying economic, social and religious problems. It raised Ivoirian hopes for peace between the major contenders for power. Guei, Ouattara, Bédié and Gbagbo each gave testimony, recording for posterity the decisions that led to the round of political chaos – one of the most incriminating faults against each regime being the denial of citi-

zenship to former prime minister in the last government under Félix Houphouët-Boigny, Alassane Ouattara. A meeting of the “big four” in Yamoussoukro reaffirmed the Forum proposals for the return to democratic procedures and fair elections. Despite Gbagbo's rocky presidency – characterized by mass rallies against foreign workers, feigned attempts to implement democratic rule, and a mounting record of human rights abuses – France's Socialist government stood behind the Ivoirian regime. It encouraged international financial institutions (i.e., World Bank, IMF), the European Union, and the United States to resume development aid, which they did in December 2001. Gbagbo's participation in the Forum had seemed to suggest that his regime was leading the country toward stability.

### Revolt in North and West

While Gbagbo fumbled with notions of reform, supporters of repressed candidates, including Ivoirians of northern descent and migrant Burkinabe laborers subject to xenophobic aggression, found new interlocutors among military mutineers. The mutineers successfully occupied and controlled the northern half and a portion of the western region of the country after a failed coup attempt of Sept. 19, 2002. General Guei was killed in the attempted coup, but the main wing of mutineers denied responsibility. Within weeks, Guillaume Soro, spokesperson for the Patriotic Movement of Ivory Coast (MPCI), the political wing of the mutineers along with the two main splinter groups – Ivoirian Patriotic Movement of the Greater West (MPIGO) and the Movement for Justice and Peace (MJP) operating in the western zones from Touba to San Pedro – announced from the rebel-controlled town of Bouaké their demands for the removal of Gbagbo and the return to democratic rule. French military intervention created a stalemate between government forces and mutineers after interventions by African heads of state and unsuccessful mediation with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) failed to end an increasingly violent civil war, human rights violations, and regional insecurity. Over 3,000 French soldiers were deployed to protect the international community, evacuate French citizens, and impede the advance of rebels toward Abidjan. The civil war threatened coffee and cocoa exports and interfered with regional trade to landlocked countries that depend on Côte d'Ivoire's ports.

By invitation of the French government, now led by Jacques Chirac, all contesting parties met outside Paris, in January 2003, to hammer out a peace accord that President Gbagbo did not embrace until international pressure forced his hand. The Linas-Marcoussis Accords, signed by nine participating political parties and rebel groups on Jan. 24, 2003, in the presence of representatives of African states, international financial institutions and organizations (IMF, World Bank, UN, African Union, European Union, ECOWAS), affirmed the territorial integrity of the nation and determined that a reconciliation government should replace Gbagbo's current cabinet in order to restore

administrative and public services, ensure an independent judiciary, provide amnesty and reintegrate the mutineers, and restructure and disarm the military. A steering committee composed of international observers was put in place to monitor their progress. Gbagbo selected Seydou Diarra as his new Prime Minister with the approval of the Ivoirians present at the Linas-Marcoussis Roundtable. The results of the negotiations were announced formally to African heads of state and several ministers at the Conference Center on Kleber Avenue in Paris from Jan. 25-26, 2003. ECOWAS forces, it was agreed, would replace the French as peacekeepers.

Gbagbo began backpedaling on the agreements within hours of his return to Abidjan. Massive street demonstrations were organized to protest the Accords and condemn the French. Government forces threatened a continuation of the war if the terms of military disarmament and rebel reintegration proceeded, and the First Lady, Mme. Gbagbo, expressed outright rejection of the agreement. Two weeks later, Gbagbo addressed the public to announce that he had been overzealous in his earnestness to achieve peace for Ivoirians and had made a "mistake." Asking for forgiveness at a massive public gathering, he guaranteed that under no conditions would he compromise the Constitution, but Seydou Diarra as the new Prime Minister would be welcomed and the public should wait to see the new government he would propose. Although several suggestions were not heeded, eventu-

ally an extensive list of 41 ministries, assigned proportionately to each party and rebel group, was accepted.

It was not until mid-April 2003 that conditions were set to receive the new designees and provide for a secure transition, though the candidates for positions in Defence and Internal Security remained highly disputed. The arrest of rebel Sergeant Ibrahim Coulibaly, a.k.a. "IB" (also a ringleader in the 1999 coup), in France on Aug. 23, 2003, for allegedly planning to assassinate Gbagbo, may have urged the government toward a resolution. Coulibaly was released after three weeks for lack of evidence, but not before René Amani (former Director General of the Stabilization Fund under Houphouët-Boigny) was appointed as the new Minister of Defence and Bléou Martin (a law professor and founding member and current president of the Ivoirian League for Human Rights) as Minister of Internal Security on Sept. 12, 2003. The *Forces Nouvelles* (former rebel forces) immediately rejected Gbagbo's appointments and threatened to never disarm. The success of the new coalition government will be judged by the Defence Minister's ability to "disarm, demobilize and reintegrate" the mutineers and organize a unified military capable of defending the national interest; while the Internal Security Minister must guarantee to stabilize relations between the nation's citizens and guest workers.

*Jeanne Maddox Toungara*

## Croatia

### Capital: Zagreb

The Republic of Croatia declared its independence from the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) in June 1991 and subsequently secured its sovereignty as an outcome of conflict with the Yugoslav National Army, being admitted to UN membership in May 1992.

The first multi-party elections were held in 1990, when Croatia was still part of the SFRY, these being won by the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ), whose nationalistic leader was Franjo Tudjman. Soon after it came to power, the HDZ started to work for the secession of Croatia from Yugoslavia. This led to a revival of the ideology of the ustasha, a virulently right-wing Croatian nationalist movement which had underpinned the Independent State of Croatia (NDH) established under Nazi auspices in 1941-45. That state was founded on racist laws and during the period of its operation (from 1941 to 1945) there were wholesale massacres and other atrocities against Jews, Serbs and Gypsies. This orientation of the HDZ on the one hand, and Slobodan Milosevic's Great-Serbian ambitions in the former Yugoslavia on the other, caused fear and insecurity among the Croatian Serbs. At the time, they

### Population: 4.3 m

constituted 11.3% of the total Croatian population, but were a majority in the Krajina region. The Serbs rebelled and, with the help of the Yugoslav National Army, occupied about one-third of the Croatian territory, naming this area the Republic of Serbian Krajina. The war in Croatia lasted from the summer of 1991 until the fall of 1995 (although Zagreb was largely unaffected by the conflict). UN peace-keeping forces sought to stabilize conditions in Croatia from the spring of 1992 until the beginning of 1998. Croatia recovered the greater part of its territory during two military actions: Flash (May 1995) and Storm (August 1995). The rest of the territory – the so-called Croatian Podunavlje, was returned to the country during the peaceful reintegration process led by the UN, which was completed on Jan. 15, 1998. The HDZ, led by President Tudjman, continued to govern the country until the end of 1999. Tudjman died in December 1999, and his party lost the January 2000 elections. The new government was made up of six parties that had formed a coalition in order to defeat the HDZ, with the Social Democratic Party of Croatia (SPH)

emerging as the strongest party in the legislature.

With changes in the Constitution that were accepted in November 2000, Croatia amended the presidential system and established a parliamentary-style democracy with the Prime Minister and Cabinet fully responsible to the legislature (although the President retained substantial powers in the defence and foreign policy spheres, and continued to be directly elected for a five-year term). Stjepan Mesic, of the Croatian People's Party (HNS) was elected President in February 2000. In March 2001, Croatia ended the two-chamber Parliament and established a unicameral Parliament (Sabor) consisting of 151 members, who are elected for a four-year term. Since the death of Tadjman, the government has sought to steer Croatia closer to the European mainstream (with a view to membership of the European Union) and has ended tacit support for the separatist aspirations of Bosnian Croats in Herzegovina.

There are no forbidden political parties in Croatia, and there are no parties that act outside the legal system. However, numerous Veterans' Unions of the Homeland War exhibit political ambitions and often engage in activities that extend to the limits of the law, and sometimes even cross these limits. These Unions fiercely oppose the cooperation between Croatia and the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), based at The Hague and established under a 1993 UN resolution to prosecute those responsible for war crimes committed in the territory of the former Yugoslavia since 1991. Union members have displayed their dissatisfaction by barricading roads and have often openly threatened top state officials. Their actions have drawn support from within

the right-wing parties such as the Croatian Democratic Union, the Croatian Bloc, the Croatian Party of Rights (HSP), and even the Croatian Social Liberal Party (HSLs). Hostility to cooperation with the ICTY has also been demonstrated by sections of the Roman Catholic Church (which was influential in the rise of the HDZ) and there have been allegations that former General Ante Gotovina, indicted at The Hague for crimes during the 1995 re-occupation of the Krajina, has been sheltered by clerics. Continuing sympathy for ustasha doctrines has been reflected in the proliferation of ustasha regalia and erection of monuments to the leader of the World War II Independent State of Croatia, Ante Pavelic.

Once in a while, there are terrorist actions or threats in Croatia, but the police have not been able to find the individuals or groups responsible for the deeds. In 2001, there were two bomb explosions in Zagreb, one in front of the Municipal Government building and the other at the Zagreb cemetery Mirogoj, under the monument celebrating the victims of the fascist regime. In 2000 and 2001, President Mesic received several threatening letters from a group calling itself the Croatian Revolutionary Brotherhood.

In August 2000, a bomb explosion in Gospić killed Milan Levar, a prominent witness at the Hague Tribunal, who had testified to war crimes committed by the members of the Croatian Army. The individuals responsible for this political murder were never found by the police.

*Dragutin Hedl*

## Cuba

**Capital:** Havana

**Population:** 11.3 m

Fidel Castro Ruz came to power in January 1959 as leader of a coalition of revolutionary forces which overthrew the Batista regime. He subsequently consolidated his position on the basis of a Marxist-Leninist programme, with support from the Soviet Union, and from 1961 political organizations outside the ruling party (known from 1965 as the Communist Party of Cuba, PCC) were not permitted. Under a Constitution approved in a referendum in February 1976 the Republic is defined as a socialist workers' state in which the entire people own the basic means of production, while the Communist Party is recognized as Cuba's only legal political party.

Fidel Castro is both head of state and government (being Prime Minister from February 1959 until February 1976 when the office was abolished and President since December 1976). Fidel's brother, Raúl, is first Vice-President and minister of defence, and has

been selected by his brother as his immediate successor as president. The National Assembly elects the President and Vice-President, and the last elections held on March 6, 2003, saw Fidel and Raúl re-elected with 100 per cent of the legislative vote.

Under the 1976 Constitution (as revised in 1993) a 609-member National Assembly of People's Power is elected directly from lists approved by special candidacy commissions to serve five-year terms. Most of the candidates are Communist Party members; they need to obtain an overall majority in a first ballot, failing which a second (run-off) ballot is held. The most recent elections for the legislature were held in January 2003, with the Communist Party gaining 97.6 per cent of the vote and 100 per cent of the seats in the Assembly. Under the Constitution the National Assembly and its associated Council of State have supreme authority in the Cuban system. However, as

the Assembly meets only twice a year for a few days at a time, the 30-member Council of State is the real source of legislative power. Fidel Castro, who leads the Council of State, also heads the Council of Ministers, a body that oversees the executive and administrative functions of the Cuban state.

In addition to the national political institutions Cuba has an extensive system of provincial, municipal and local assemblies. There are 14 provincial assemblies and in the last elections held at the same time as the National Assembly vote, all 1,199 candidates who ran unopposed were elected. 169 municipal assemblies also exist, together with a large number of People's Councils, the latter being a new tier of government introduced as part of the constitutional changes in 1993.

Although Dr Castro controls most aspects of Cuban life via the Communist Party and centralized state structures including an acquiescent judiciary, a number of changes to the political system have been made over the past decade. The 1993 constitutional reform programme introduced a number of significant modifications to the electoral system, while the level of participation in national policy debates has been extended. Furthermore, long-standing restrictions on religious organizations have been relaxed, and a new generation of politicians has gained access to the upper levels of government, including a number of economic modernizers.

Nevertheless, Cuba remains a totalitarian state with the Ministry of Interior the principal organ of state security and control. The basis of Cuba's authoritarianism comes via a constitutional provision, which states that civil liberties can be denied to anyone who opposes the "decision of the Cuban people to build socialism". The practical effect of this has been an intolerance of domestic dissent, with the rights to freedom of expression, association, assembly, movement and press strictly controlled. These restrictions are enforced via imprisonment, exile abroad, house arrests, travel restrictions, threats, surveillance and politically motivated dismissals from work. There is little judicial oversight of these state-sponsored activities, while due process is regularly denied to Cuban citizens. The number of political prisoners in Cuba is currently estimated to be between 200 and 1,000. The lower estimate includes only those considered to be prisoners of conscience serving custodial sentences, while the higher number includes those who have committed other politically motivated crimes and those detained for short periods by the police. These estimates, however, are considerably less than those for the early part of Castro's rule, when the range was between 2,000 (a Cuban government figure) and 20,000 (a CIA estimate). Cuba retains the death penalty for a wide range of offences, although an unofficial moratorium on its use was declared in 2001. However, at the end of 2002, more than 50 people remained on death row and in April 2003 three men who hijacked a Havana Bay ferry in a failed bid to cross the Florida Straits were executed after being found guilty of ter-

rorism charges and allegedly having links with anti-Castro exiles in Miami.

Because of the continued repression on the part of the Cuban state, there was little internal opposition to the Castro regime during the 1990s. There was one significant anti-government uprising in Havana during August 1994, when people protested against the difficult economic conditions after the collapse of the Soviet Union (which had heavily subsidized the Cuban economy). The discontent was resolved, and no further major incidents took place during the rest of the decade. During this time organized domestic opposition was limited to a small number of human rights groups and proto-parties. However, this was to change from the beginning of 2001 with the ascendancy of two opposition fronts: the "All United" movement incorporating Oswaldo Payá Sardiñas' Varela Project, and the Assembly to Promote Civil Society in Cuba. Crucially, however, for the unity of the opposition forces the Assembly did not support the belief of the Varela Project sponsors that it is possible to achieve democratic change in Cuba via the current Constitution and government legislation.

## CUBAN-BASED OPPOSITION FRONTS

### All United

*Leadership: Oswaldo Payá Sardiñas*

Under the leadership of Oswaldo Payá and his Cuban Liberation Movement, a number of internal opposition groups came together to form the "All United" movement in November 1999. The group's primary function was to oversee the Varela Project – a petition to bring about changes through a referendum. The project was established in March 2001 and named after Felix Varela, a 19th century Cuban priest who called for Cuba's independence from Spain. It was based on a provision in the Cuban Constitution (Article 88) that allows for citizens to introduce legislative initiatives to be decided by national referendum when accompanied by the signatures of at least 10,000 registered voters. The project proposed five reforms: democratic elections, free speech, free enterprise, free assembly and freedom for political prisoners. In May 2002, the organizers of the project, led by Payá, presented more than 11,000 signatures to the National Assembly calling for a referendum on civil and political reform. The initiators of the project received a boost later in the month when former US President Jimmy Carter on a visit to Cuba made direct reference to Varela, and stated that Cuba should allow democratic changes and grant basic political freedoms.

The official response to the Varela Project was swift, and ultimately overwhelming. On June 18, 2002, the Cuban government announced that nearly 99 per cent of the country's 8.2 million legal voters had signed a counter petition supporting constitutional amendments that would prevent reforms to the country's political, economic and social system. The announcement was then followed by a Special Session of the National Assembly on June 26, which amended the Constitution to make socialism irrevocable. Then on Jan. 24, 2003, the legislature officially invalidated the Varela Project's attempt to hold a referendum on political and eco-

conomic reforms. The reaction of the Cuban authorities increased in severity during March and April 2003 when 78 pro-democracy and human rights activists were arrested, charged and convicted for “mercenary activities and other acts against the independence and territorial integrity of the Cuban state”. Many of the people arrested had links to the Varela Project and were given the harshest sentences. For example, the longest sentence of 28 years’ imprisonment was given to a local Varela Project coordinator. Oswaldo Payá was not arrested, due to his high international profile after receiving the European Parliament’s Andrei Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought in December 2002. Nevertheless, he remained under constant surveillance, received threats and was the subject of harassment. The Cuban authorities defended and stood by the jailings, despite widespread international criticism. On April 29, 2003, notwithstanding this criticism, Cuba was re-elected to the United Nations Human Rights Commission.

### **Assembly to Promote Civil Society in Cuba**

*Leadership: Martha Beatriz Rogue Cabello*

Martha Beatriz and colleagues from the Cuban Institute of Independent Economists established the Assembly in March 2002. The Assembly, which consists of more than 250 organizations but excluding Varela Project supporters (see entry above), has not met as a single entity. However, the Assembly has undertaken a number of initiatives in support of its aims that include: a reinstatement of civil society, the education of the citizenry in the principles of democracy, the development of a non-violent civil struggle movement, and the building of a self-renewing pluralist and participative democratic process. In October 2002, for example, the Assembly called for all dissident groups to participate in a campaign to promote the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in order to inform people of their rights and to highlight violations by the Cuban authorities. However, as with the Varela Project participants, the Cuban authorities incarcerated Martha Beatriz and other leading figures of the Assembly in March and April 2003. Martha Beatriz is now serving a 20-year sentence, while the activities of the Assembly to Promote Civil Society in Cuba have been curtailed severely.

## **CUBAN-BASED DISSIDENTS**

Until the round-up of dissidents in the spring of 2003 the Cuban authorities had tolerated a degree of opposition activity, beyond the two major opposition fronts described above. The acceptance of this indicated that Castro and his administration believed that support for the dissidents would be undermined when their links with the Cuban exile community in the US became clear. Support for dissident organizations comes from both official US government agencies and émigré groups. One of the most significant émigré groups is the Cuban American National Foundation (see below), which has been accused of having links with discredited officials from the Batista regime and with extremist anti-Castro groups who support violent action. Nevertheless, a number of Cuban-based dissident organizations have established a role for themselves

within Cuban society. A number of the most important are profiled below.

### **Cuban Commission for Human Rights and National Reconciliation**

*Leadership: Elizardo Sánchez Santacruz*

This human rights organization has been active since mid-1987 under Sánchez, a former teacher of Marxist philosophy at Havana University. Sánchez is the only founding member of the Cuban human rights movement still living in Cuba. Crucially, he has maintained a stubborn insistence on rejecting violence as a way of resolving Cuba’s political problems. The Commission’s objectives are to ensure the observance of human rights and to achieve national reconciliation. However, Sánchez and the Commission came under increased scrutiny in March 2003 when its membership began tracking the arrests of Cuban dissidents during the crackdown. Two of Sánchez’s lieutenants were subsequently arrested and are currently serving long prison sentences because of alleged ties to Amnesty International and other international human rights organizations.

### **Cuban Human Rights Committee**

*Leadership: Gustavo Arcos Bergnes*

Founded by Ricardo Bofill Pages (a dissident imprisoned for many years by the Castro regime), this human rights organization has been in operation since 1984. Bofill, described in the Cuban press as “a traitor manipulated by the CIA”, left Cuba in October 1988 to seek medical treatment in Europe. Arcos, a former revolutionary comrade of Castro and later ambassador to Belgium, assumed his position within Cuba and has continued to promote the organization’s aim of achieving a peaceful and democratic transition. In particular, the committee calls for an amnesty for all political prisoners and a guarantee that Cubans can leave and return to the country without restrictions. Since the establishment of the Varela Project, Arcos has given his support to the “All United” movement (see entry).

### **Democratic Solidarity Party**

*Leadership: Fernando Sánchez López*

The Democratic Solidarity Party was established in December 1993, and has since campaigned for a plebiscite and a non-violent progression towards democracy. In 1998, for example, the party called on internal opposition groups and government representatives to engage in nation-wide dialogue – their inspiration coming from Pope John Paul’s message of solidarity and reconciliation during his visit to Cuba in May of that year. More recently, the Democratic Solidarity Party has been involved in the discussions surrounding the various projects and proposals to further democracy in the country. In particular, the party has been supportive of the work undertaken by the Assembly to Promote Civil Society in Cuba (see entry).

### **Social Democratic Party of Cuba**

*Leadership: Vladimiro Roca Antunes*

Roca, a former member of the Communist Party and of the Cuban Armed Forces, established the party in July 1996. Roca had become disillusioned with Castro’s regime, chose to renounce his ties to the administration and began to speak

out against government policies. Notwithstanding, the party's objectives are quite conservative in outlook. The underlying belief is that with state repression, the lack of freedom and the government's attempts to perpetuate itself in power, the goals of any centre-left movement must be relatively limited. In particular, the party emphasises its support for self-employed workers, farmers and small producers to be able to invest in the national economy and develop their own businesses in the service and manufacturing sectors. In more recent years, the Social Democratic Party has become affiliated to the "All United" movement (see entry), although its limited scope of ambition remains. Despite this Roca is one of the most prominent leaders of the internal opposition, having been imprisoned for co-authoring "The Homeland Belongs to Us All". The book, a socio-economic critique of a Cuban Communist Party manifesto, was published in 1997. Two weeks after publication Roca and his co-authors were arrested and subsequently imprisoned. Roca received a five-year sentence and he served four of those years in solitary confinement.

## EXILED GROUPS

### **Cuban American National Foundation (CANF)**

*Leadership: Jorge Mas Santos*

The Foundation is a lobbying group established by Cuban-Americans in 1981 under the leadership of Jorge Mas Canosa, a veteran of the abortive US-backed 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion by opponents of Castro. CANF is the largest Cuban organization in exile, and has the objective of forming a returning émigré leadership once Castro dies or is ejected from office. In order to further this aim the group has built up a wide range of connections, primarily with US right-wing and neo-conservative groups and politicians who first rose to prominence with the election of President Reagan in 1980. With these links CANF successfully lobbied for the establishment of the US Information Agency's Radio Martí (1985) and TV Martí (1990), which broadcast to Cuba news, views and information with an anti-communist and anti-Castro viewpoint.

However, the position of CANF declined somewhat after the death of Canosa in 1997. In 1998, the group's reputation was damaged after allegations were made that its members were involved in a series of mini-bombings in Havana. The CANF suffered further opprobrium in 2000 after its perceived hard-line and intransigent treatment of six-year-old Elian Gonzalez, a Cuban refugee, who was rescued from the sea off Miami. Elian was eventually returned to his father in Cuba, but not before Cuban émigrés had demanded that he should be given political asylum in the USA. In 2001, meanwhile, a split within the leadership of CANF occurred which precipitated the formation of the **Cuban Liberty Group**, led by Horacio Garcia. The new émigré group has since undertaken its own efforts to "promote democracy" in Cuba, while also criticising CANF's position on a number of issues.

Although CANF still retains considerable influence within the US government, the relationship became strained during 2003. In response to the US administration's tougher

stance in returning Cuban hijackers and migrants to Cuba, CANF has become increasingly outspoken against the Bush administration's policies towards Cuba. However, even after the crackdown on dissident activity in Cuba during April and May, CANF stopped short of calling for retaliatory measures. This was an indication that the émigré community in the US is increasingly supportive of a less confrontational attitude towards Castro's Cuba than in the past.

### **Alpha 66**

*Leadership: Andres Nazario Sargen*

The group was established in 1961 with the intention of making commando attacks against Communist Cuba after the failure of the Bay of Pigs invasion, and later to develop guerrilla forces, which would strike at Castro's regime from within. Alpha 66 has been active since the early 1960s undertaking a series of often-violent attacks against the Cuban state. In the mid-1990s it claimed responsibility for bomb attacks against three Cuban hotels and the offices of a tour agency and in 2001, Alpha 66 was implicated in attempts to ship weapons, including AK-47 assault rifles and a sniper rifle, which were to be used in a series of attacks across Cuba. However, the organization's rationale has been somewhat undermined by the activities of a co-founder of Alpha 66, Eloy Gutiérrez Menoyo. Menoyo was arrested in Cuba in 1965 after leading an expedition against the government, and spent the following 22 years in prison. On his release he began to reformulate his ideas and in 1993 made a formal break from the principles and methods of Alpha 66. Soon after Menoyo established a new organisation, Cuban Change, with the aim of bringing about a peaceful transformation in Cuba. His conversion was complete, when in August 2003, after a visit to the island with his family, Menoyo announced that he wished to remain and work for change within Cuba through a process of dialogue with the government.

### **Omega 7**

This terrorist group of Cuban exiles based in Florida was formed in 1974. The name Omega 7 derived from the fact that there were seven original members from different anti-Castro factions. The total number of individuals actively involved in the group was believed to be less than 20. The main areas of operation were in Miami, New York and New Jersey, and the primary targets were representatives of the Cuban government or any individual, organization or business that dealt with or supported the Castro government. The group used various methods of terror, including bombings, shootings and assassinations. On Nov. 9, 1984, however, Eduardo Arocena, the group's leader, was sentenced to life imprisonment for the murder of a Cuban diplomat and various other bombing and shooting attacks; he was also sentenced in Miami in May 1985 to 20 years' imprisonment after having been convicted of bombing a number of diplomatic premises (against Nicaraguan, Mexican, Venezuelan and Soviet consulates in Miami and New York between 1979 and 1983). There have been no Omega 7 attacks since 1983.

*Peter Clegg*



# Cyprus

**Capital:** Nicosia

**Population:** 870,000

The Republic of Cyprus achieved independence from the UK in 1960 on the basis of a constitution that involved power sharing between the majority Greek Cypriots and the minority Turkish Cypriots. Guaranteed by the UK, Greece and Turkey, this arrangement broke down by 1964, amid an escalation of inter-communal conflict. In 1974 the territorial division between the two communities was solidified by the military intervention of Turkey, whose forces facilitated the effective partition of the island into a Greek Cypriot sector and what in 1983 was proclaimed as the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). The TRNC's self-proclaimed "independence" in about 40% of the island's area has been recognized only by Turkey.

The Republic of Cyprus has an executive President, who is directly elected for a five-year term, and a unicameral House of Representatives, which theoretically has 80 members elected for a five-year term by proportional representation, 56 by the Greek Cypriot community and 24 by the Turkish Cypriots. Since 1964, however, the Turkish Cypriot community has declined to participate in these arrangements. Presidential elections held on Feb. 16, 2003, resulted in victory for Tassos Papadopoulos, the leader of the Democratic Party (DIKO), a veteran of the EOKA guerrilla force that fought British rule in the 1950s and who had accused the former President, Glafcos Clerides, of being prepared selling out Greek Cypriot interests in negotiations with the TRNC.

In the TRNC, Rauf Denktash, who has led the entity since its *de facto* independence, was re-elected President in 2000. The TRNC has its own 50-member Assembly of the Republic.

During 1996 a major crisis erupted between the two communities on the island, resulting in inter-ethnic clashes. On June 3, 1996, a Greek Cypriot soldier was shot dead by a Turkish Cypriot soldier in the buffer zone controlled by the UN. On Aug. 11, 1996, Greek Cypriot motorists tried to cross the Green Line into the Turkish

zone during an anti-occupation demonstration, thus sparking a skirmish with the Turkish Cypriot demonstrators and Turkish soldiers. Over 70 people were injured in the incident and a Greek Cypriot died. Further such incidents occurred in the following months.

UN-sponsored talks, aimed at producing a federal settlement that preserves Cyprus as one sovereign state, have yet to produce a definitive settlement. These talks were given great urgency in the run-up to the planned signing of a treaty of accession to the European Union on April 16, 2003, whereby Cyprus would join the EU in 2004. However, while the EU had stated its preference for a settlement of the island's division to be reached prior to signing, in the event this went ahead without any such settlement being reached, the Turkish Cypriot leaders being excluded. In January 2003 an estimated 50,000 Turkish Cypriots took part in a demonstration to oppose what they saw as Denktash's intransigent line in negotiations, while the subsequent election of Papadopoulos on the Greek side was also widely seen as having made agreement less likely. However, in a gesture of conciliation following the signing of the accession treaty, the TRNC opened its borders with the Greek part of the island.

Occasional incidents have been reported arising from the continued presence of British military facilities on the island. On July 4, 2001, Greek Cypriots clashed with riot police with at least 31 people injured at the RAF Akrotiri air base, protesting over the construction of radio masts suspected of being a health risk.

There has been little evidence of extra-parliamentary opposition to the two governments in Cyprus in recent years, although the island has at times been affected by the activities of Middle Eastern groups. The TRNC, in particular, is regarded as a centre for money laundering and its position as an unrecognized, unregulated entity has encouraged such activity.

*Luca Blasi*

# Czech Republic

**Capital:** Prague

**Population:** 10.2 m

The Czech Republic became an independent state on Jan. 1, 1993, as a result of the dissolution of the Czech and Slovak Federative Republic, which had been under Communist rule (under various names) from

1948 to 1989 and had then become a multi-party democracy. Reformist tendencies in the government of the former Czechoslovakia were brutally suppressed by a Soviet-led military invasion in 1968. However,

both the 1989 transition from Communist rule and the later dissolution of the federation with Slovakia were notable for their comparative ease and absence of violent upheaval.

The Czech Republic is a parliamentary democracy in which the President has a primarily ceremonial role as head of state. The Cabinet is headed by a Prime Minister and responsible to the lower chamber (Chamber of Deputies) of the bicameral Parliament, in which 200 members are elected for a four-year term by universal adult suffrage. The upper chamber (Senate) consists of 81 senators, elected for six-year terms, one third of them every second year. As a result of elections to the Chamber of Deputies held in June 2002, seats in the parliament were distributed as follows: Czech Social Democratic Party (CSSD) 70 deputies, Civic Democratic Party (ODS) 58, Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (KSCM) 41, Coalitions 31.

Extremist groups exist on both the right and left, though the extreme right has posed a greater problem in recent years due to its sometimes violent activities. However, today neither extremist side represents a serious threat to the political system. There has not been any significant development of terrorist activity in the Czech Republic. It is unlikely that any of over twenty recorded explosions since the start of the 1990s was carried out by an organized group rather than by isolated individuals.

### Extreme Right-wing Groups

Far-right extremism is predominantly connected with the activities of neo-nazi groups. Attacks against Romanies, foreign students and tourists from Asia and Africa were far from rare in the 1990s. The same is true of street clashes between right- and left-wing extremists. Far-right activists organized demonstrations, marches, and concerts, and published paper periodicals and electronic journals.

The far-right scene underwent various transformations. In 1992, demonstrations and marches were replaced by cultural activities, namely concerts and publishing periodicals. After the anti-semitic periodical *Politika* was banned, publishing activities went underground. The illegal papers were distributed at concerts of skinhead bands. The now defunct **Association for the Republic – Republican Party of Czechoslovakia (SPR-RSC)** was the most successful political party on the far-right. The SPR-RSC had members in the Czech parliament between 1993–98, embracing a mix of extreme right-wing politics and populism, and associating itself with French National Front leader Jean-Marie Le Pen and Russian ultranationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy. The SPR-RSC gained 5.98 per cent of the vote, and elected 14 members to the Czech National Council, in the last general elections in Czechoslovakia in 1992. In the 1996 Czech Republic elections the party won 18 seats, but this success was not repeated in the early parliamentary elections held in 1998. Having received only 3.9 per cent of the vote, the SPR-RSC failed to pass the

threshold (5 per cent) to enter parliament. Scandals and financial irregularities decreased the party's popularity among the voters. The party periodical *Republika* with its often xenophobic and racist character attracted the attention of the police.

In 2000, the SPR-RSC renamed itself as the **Republicans of Miroslav Sladek (RMS)**. The *Republika* remained as a party periodical. The former head of the SPR-RSC, Miroslav Sladek, was elected as a party leader. However, failure in the 2002 parliamentary elections (taking only 0.97 per cent of the vote) confirmed the decline and marginal position of the radicals and populists around Miroslav Sladek.

Closely linked to the Republicans were the **Republican Youth (RM)**. Members were partly recruited from the skinhead movement and cooperated with other extreme-right groups. In 2002 the Ministry of interior revoked the registration of the Republican Youth, on the grounds of its programme and also that a civic association may not act as a political movement or party.

Publication of illegal papers and racially motivated violence was typical for groups the **Hammerskins** and the **Faschos**. In 1996 the **Movement for National Consolidation (HNS)** was founded. The HNS was based on corporativism, fundamentalist Roman Catholicism, anti-semitism and racism. HNS opposed the influx of refugees and was in favour of the führer principle. It also illegally issued a periodical in continuation of the former antisemitic *Politika*. This group was also banned. The rise of various neo-nazi groups, promoters of White Power and racial wars, occurred as well. The Czech Romanies became the main target of violent activity.

The significant role of the far-right in the 1990s assisted the **Patriotic Republican Party (VRS)**. The VRS was registered by the Ministry of the Interior in 1990 as the Radical Republican Party. In 1995, the party renamed itself as the VRS. The VRS published the periodical *Vlastenec*. In 2001, the VRS was joined by members of the civic association **National Alliance (NA)**, registered in 1998) and the non-registered group **National Resistance (NO)**. The NA and NO members sought to take over the leadership of the VRS. Following a successful internal coup, the party was renamed as the **National Social Bloc (NSB)**, though this failed to register. After the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the USA, the head of the NSB, Jan Kopal, appeared publicly to justify the attacks. At the end of 2001, the NSB was registered as the **Right Alternative**.

In 1997, the illegal Czech affiliate, "**Divison Bohemia**" of the international organization Blood & Honour, was founded (B&H DB). It issued a range of skinhead periodicals of a neo-nazi, antisemitic and racist character. B&H DB became the leader of the neo-nazi movements in the Czech Republic during 1997-98, partly because the non-registered transnational organization **Bohemia Hammer Skins (BHS)** withdrew after increased police interest in its activities. As a result of state interference, B&H DB reduced its activities in the years 1998-99. Some leading indi-

viduals on the far-right, former B& H DB members, tried to found new groups and seek registration by the Ministry of the Interior as a civic association. After the failure to register the **Junge Nationaldemokraten (JN)**, the far-right extremists established the **National Resistance (NO)**. This organized public demonstrations and protest marches.

An important role was played by the civic association **Patriotic Front (VF)** and the **National Alliance (Narodni aliance, NA)**. The VF was registered as a civic association in 1993 and established on the model of skinhead groups. However, unlike the neo-nazi groups, the VF stance was more anti-German and nationalistic. The group developed relations with extreme leftist "all-slavic" groups and published the periodicals *Obrana naroda* and *Hlas narodni mladeze*. From 1999 on, the VF sought to transform itself into a regular political party. In 2000, work began to create a political party, National Consolidation (NS), but this failed when the group split into two factions. One group registered as the civic association **Vlast.cz** and took over the monthly *Narodni politika*, launched by the VF in 2000. The VF often organized public actions along with other far-right groups such as the National Alliance. The NA's aim was to transform itself into political party, the National Social Alliance, and it started publishing the periodical *Vlajka* from 1999.

In 1999, the Czech state organs ruled the Action programme of the VF and the NA's periodical *Vlajka* impermissible. The NA decided to stop issuing *Vlajka*. However, the Ministry of the Interior decided in March 2000 to ban the National Alliance. The head of the party, Vladimir Skoupy, was accused of defamation. The members of the NA joined the VRS.

In 2001, the racist and anti-semitic non-registered organization **Knights of Suncircle (RSK)** was established. The movement sought help for imprisoned members of the skinhead community. The RSK had close ties to the publisher Dr Goebbels Press, issuing neo-nazi materials of the Hitler era. A parallel female organization **Aryan Women** was also founded.

### Extreme Left-wing Groups

Left-extremist activists organize demonstrations and marches, publish periodicals, organize meetings, illegally occupy houses and engage in skirmishes with police and neo-nazi groups. Demonstrations are most often oriented against the neo-nazi movement, globalization, transnational corporations, international organizations such as NATO, the IMF and WTO, xenophobia, etc. The most visible groups are anarchists and autonomists. The radicals often coordinate their public actions or meetings with environmental movements. The second main stream on the radical left is represented by the neo-Bolshevik parties and groups.

Among anarchists, the most influential grouping is the non-registered organization **Czechoslovakian Anarchist Federation (CSAF)**. The organization was founded in 1995 as the Czech Anarchist Federation (CAF) and in 1997, after the affiliation of Slovakian members, the group was renamed as CSAF. In the framework of CSAF there are active various international environmental organizations

In 1996, the non-registered **Antifascist Action (AFA)** and in 1997 the non-registered **Federation of Social Anarchists (FSA)** were established. The AFA sought to incite clashes with skinheads. FSA's goal is to organize workers and unemployed in the fight against the contemporary social-economic order. The registered movement **Socialist Solidarity** has similar goals. **The Organization of Revolutionary Anarchists Solidarity (ORAS)** has played an important role among anarchists. Groups emerging in 2000-01 included Solidarity or Socialist Organization of Workers (SOP), GO!, Stop War!, Feminist movement of 8 March (FS8B), the ORAS group and the *Los amigos de Durrutti*. GO! (Let's globalize resistance) and Stop War! are ultra-leftist organizations.

As for neo-Bolshevik groups, the **Party of Czechoslovakian Communists (SCK)** was founded and registered in 1995. The ideology of the party is based on Marxism-Leninism.

*Premysl Rosulek*

## Denmark

**Capital:** Copenhagen

**Population:** 5.4 m

The Kingdom of Denmark is a constitutional monarchy, the oldest in Europe. The current monarch, Queen Margrethe II, succeeded to the throne in 1972. The head of government is the Prime Minister. The unicameral Danish Parliament or People's Diet (Folketing) is composed of 179 members elected for a five-year term. Of these, 175 are elected (through proportional representation) for a four-year term from Denmark, and two each are elected from the overseas

dependencies, i.e. Greenland and the Faroe Islands.

The most recent general election, held on Nov. 20, 2001, resulted as follows: Liberal Party of Denmark 56 seats, Social Democracy in Denmark 52, Danish People's Party (nationalist) 22, Conservative People's Party 16, Socialist People's Party 12, Radical Left-Social Liberal Party nine, Unity List-The Red Greens (far left party) four, Christian People's Party (Christian democratic) four. The two representatives of

Greenland are members of the Greenland social-democratic and communist parties, respectively; the two representatives of the Faroe Islands are members of the Party for People's Government (independentist) and the People's Party (conservative), respectively.

The government is formed by the Liberal Party of Denmark and the Conservative People's Party, with the support of the right-wing Danish People's Party.

### **Extreme left-wing and anarchist movements**

*De Autonome* ("The Autonomous") are anti-capitalist, civil disobedience movements that have their roots in the BZ environmental movement (BZ being short for *Besætttere*, meaning "occupiers", in the sense that they occupied buildings) of the late 1970s and particularly the 1980s. The BZ activists sought to frustrate redevelopment plans in Copenhagen by occupying condemned buildings, resulting at times in violent clashes with the police.

Movements in the "Autonomous" category are *Globale Rødder* (Global Roots), Rebel, the AFA (*Anti-Fascistisk Aktion*, Anti-Fascist Action) and the *Autonomi-Kollektivet* (formerly *Autonome Revolutionære*, the Autonomous Revolutionaries).

### **Extreme right-wing movements**

There is no law against neo-Nazi movements in Denmark. Nazi magazines can legally be printed, a fact neo-Nazis in Germany have taken advantage of, publishing their material in Denmark.

### **Danish National Socialist Movement (DNSB)**

*Leadership. Jonni Hansen (chairman)*

The DNSB is the main neo-Nazi movement in Denmark. It has its own publication, "Fatherland" and a local radio station in Greve (south of Copenhagen), *Oasen*, meaning "The Oasis". In common with other media, the station receives a financial subsidy from the Danish Ministry of Culture; in response to public criticism of this in May 2003, the Ministry noted that the station "fulfils the formal requirements in order to receive the subsidy". In the DNSB's own words on their web page, it is "the only local racist radio station in Denmark".

Every year the DNSB organizes a march on Aug. 14 to mark the death of Hitler's deputy Rüdolf Hess, the so-called Hess march. Counter-demonstrations are often staged by *De Autonome* (see above), and other anti-Nazi groups, requiring the neo-Nazis to be given police protection.

In November 2001 the DNSB ran for the first time in a county council election for the town of Roskilde (south of Copenhagen). The DNSB's candidates were led by party leader Jonni Hansen, but won no seats.

### **Islamist movement**

The issue of immigration, particularly from Muslim countries, has emerged as a significant one in recent years, and was the dominant issue in the 2001 elections. The fundamentalist *Hizb ut-Tahrir* (Liberation Party), found worldwide and banned in many Islamic countries, has a presence in Denmark. The Danish cell does not operate as a political party. Members of the movement in Denmark maintain that they are engaged in cultural activities related to Muslim culture and identity. However, it has been associated with various antisemitic activities.

The group is estimated to have approximately 1,000 members in Denmark, led by spokesman Fadi Abdullatif, a Palestinian refugee, and Emir Shamil Degirmenci. The *Hizb ut-Tahrir* publishes books, magazines, pamphlets and videos, and runs a Danish website. The admonition: "Kill [Jews – referred to as "monkeys" and "swine"] where you find them, oh banish them from where they banished you. This is the only way our relations to the violent Jewish criminals should be: enmity, war, insurrection, struggle and turmoil" – has appeared in several issues of its magazine *Khilafah* and on its website and was distributed in 2002 on fliers. At the end of 2002 Fadi Abdullatif was convicted of propagating racist propaganda and of incitement to murder Jews and given a suspended jail sentence. The Folketing unanimously adopted a declaration on Oct. 25, 2001, denouncing the organization.

### **GREENLAND**

Greenland (with a population of 56,000) is part of the Kingdom of Denmark but has had internal self-government (excluding defence and foreign affairs matters) since 1979 with its own parliament and government. It receives heavy subsidies from Denmark. Greenland joined the European Union (as part of Denmark) in 1973 but withdrew in 1985 following a local referendum. The Eskimo Botherhood (IA) leftist party was founded in 1978 to oppose the home rule arrangements then being negotiated and to demand total independence from Denmark; it also called for the restriction of citizenship to those with at least one Inuit (Eskimo) parent and the closure of the US air force base at Thule. The party has since moderated its position, follows constitutional politics and has participated in coalition governments for periods.

*Florence Terranova*

*The author thanks Jan Costanza Filidor for the translation of documents*

# Djibouti

**Capital:** Djibouti

**Population:** 473,000

Djibouti gained its independence from France in June 1977. Hassan Gouled Aptidon was chosen as the country's first president, serving for 22 years until 1999 when he stood down. From 1981 his Popular Rally for Progress (*Rassemblement populaire pour le progrès*, RPP) was the country's sole legal political organization, until a new constitution in 1992 allowed for a maximum of four registered parties. This was in turn amended in September 2002 to allow for multi-party politics (parties being subject to approval by the Interior Ministry). Executive power is vested in the President, who is directly elected for a renewable six-year term, and the Prime Minister who heads the Council of Ministers. Legislative power rests with the 65-member Chamber of Deputies, which is directly elected for a five-year term. Under Djibouti's electoral system, the group or party that polls the majority of votes in each of the country's five districts takes all their seats.

Since independence, two principal ethnic groups – the Issas in the south of the country (of Somali origin) and the Afars in the north (of Ethiopian descent) – have competed for political dominance. The introduction of a single-party system in 1981 upset the balance of political power, and by 1991 President Gouled Aptidon (an Issa) faced a serious challenge to his authority as Afar rebels began assaults on government positions in the north. Three militant groups united to form the **Front for the Restoration of Unity and Democracy** (*Front pour la Restauration de l'Unité et de la Démocratie*, FRUD).

Although three parties were registered for the December 1992 parliamentary elections (under the new constitution), the RPP took all 65 seats. Following President Gouled Aptidon's re-election in May 1993 (in polling considered fraudulent by the opposition and international observers), the government led a military campaign against the Afar rebels to regain previously lost territory. Dissension within the FRUD led to the emergence of a new moderate leadership, under Ali Mohamed Daoud, in favour of peace negotiations. In December 1994 the civil war ended with the signing of a peace agreement between the government and the FRUD providing for an immediate ceasefire. It also envisaged an alliance between the FRUD and the RPP, which led to the inclusion of two FRUD members in the government from 1995. This agreement was condemned, however, by the FRUD armed wing

led by Ahmed Dini Ahmed, which had split from the party in 1994. The RPP-FRUD alliance won all the seats in the December 1997 legislative elections, and Ismail Omar Guelleh (succeeding his uncle Gouled Aptidon) was elected to the Presidency as the RPP candidate in May 1999.

In December 2000 Gen. Yacin Yabeh Galeb, recently dismissed as the national chief of police (a post he had held since 1977), launched an unsuccessful coup attempt against the government. In 2002 he was sentenced to 15 years imprisonment.

On May 12, 2001, the government signed a definitive peace accord with Dini Ahmed (who had earlier been exiled in Yemen and had renewed military attacks against the regime), officially ending the civil war with the armed wing of the FRUD. In the wake of the accord, the government granted an amnesty to several dissident political leaders (including Moumin Bahdon Farah, a former government minister who had led a breakaway faction from the RPP in 1996), allowing them to stand in future legislative elections.

Djibouti's first multi-party legislative elections took place on Jan. 10, 2003. A bloc of four pro-government parties, known as the Union for the Presidential Majority (*Union pour la Majorité Présidentielle*, UMP), including the RPP and FRUD, won about 62% of the vote against 37% for the Union for a Democratic Alternative (*Union pour l'Alternance Démocratique*, UAD) opposition alliance, led by Dini Ahmed. Dini Ahmed claimed there had been electoral fraud and said he would appeal against the results.

In the wake of the Sept. 11, 2001, *Al-Qaeda* terrorist attacks against the United States and the consequent international "war on terrorism", Djibouti's strategic location has taken on increasing significance. In addition to the permanent French force garrisoned there, the US military and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) have deployed special operations forces and equipment in the territory, with government approval, for offensive use against Islamist militants in Yemen and the Horn of Africa. On Nov. 3, 2002, an unmanned CIA aircraft operating from Djibouti fired a missile at a car in northwestern Yemen killing six suspected terrorists.

*Richard German & Elizabeth Taylor*

# Dominica

**Capital:** Roseau

**Population:** 72,000

The Commonwealth of Dominica has been an independent republic within the Commonwealth since Nov. 3, 1978. It has a President elected by the House of Assembly, a government headed by a Prime Minister, and a unicameral House of Assembly comprising 21 members elected by universal adult suffrage, nine appointed senators, the Speaker and one ex-officio member. In the parliamentary elections held in January 2001 the United Workers' Party and the Dominica Freedom Party won enough seats (11) to form a coalition government and replace the outgoing Dominica Labour Party (10 seats).

In December 2001, Finance Minister Ambrose George was removed from his position and given a more junior cabinet brief, after an associate of his, Julian Giraud, was arrested in Puerto Rico by the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) on suspicion of money laundering. In an attempt to improve the country's image, Prime Minister Pierre Charles shut down two offshore banks, whose major shareholders had been imprisoned for money laundering. This and other measures convinced the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) in October 2002 to remove Dominica from the list of countries deemed to have failed to cooperate

fully in combating money laundering.

At the end of July 2002, Dominica's government recommenced the sale of passports to non-national "economic citizens". Sales were suspended in 2001 after the Sept. 11 attacks in the United States, with Canada and the USA expressing concern that terrorists and other criminals could abuse the scheme. The decision to restart sales was based on the need to raise additional revenues for an economy in serious difficulties.

In April 2003, the first ever piece of anti-terrorism legislation was passed in Dominica. The Suppression of Financing of Terrorism Act was designed to stop money being funneled to terrorist organizations. The act also allows for demonstrators to be punished if they participate in violent protests that cause injury or the destruction of property.

The Rastafarians, known as "Dreads" in Dominica, who had been implicated in a conspiracy to overthrow the government of Eugenia Charles in 1981, are no longer a destabilizing force in the country.

*Peter Clegg*

# Dominican Republic

**Capital:** Santo Domingo

**Population:** 9 m

Gen. Rafael Trujillo dominated the Dominican Republic from 1930, when he overthrew the elected President, until his assassination in 1961. Juan Bosch Gavino, the leader of the Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD), was elected President in 1962 but deposed in a coup the following year. In 1965, the PRD led an armed insurrection against the new regime, resulting in military intervention by the United States. Following the US intervention fresh elections were held and a new Constitution promulgated in 1966 and since then the country has been under civilian rule. During much of the following period the dominant figure was Joaquín Balaguer (previously Vice-President under Trujillo), the leader of the Social Christian Reformist Party (PRSC), who served as President until 1978 and then again from 1986-96 and had a markedly authoritarian style.

The Dominican Republic has an executive President elected by universal adult suffrage for a four-year

term and a Congress consisting of a 150-member Chamber of Deputies and a 32-member Senate. Both chambers are elected at the same time. In the last presidential elections of May 2001, Rafael Hipólito Mejía Domínguez of the centre-left PRD gained victory, when his opponent in the second round run-off withdrew. Similarly, in the parliamentary elections held in May 2002, the PRD gained the most votes, winning a majority of seats in the Senate, although falling short of a majority in the Chamber of Deputies. The Dominican Liberation Party (PLD) and the PRSC took the other seats. The vote was relatively peaceful, although one person was killed during the campaign. The election itself was declared free and fair by an observer mission from the Organization of American States.

Illegal political organizations are not currently a factor. However, in February 2003 a joint Dominican-US counter-terrorism programme was instituted, the

aim of which was to reduce a perceived threat from large-scale Haitian immigration, particularly in regard to the smuggling of drugs and arms. In a separate development during May, the Dominican government took action against the collapsed Banco Intercontinental (Baninter) Group. The government assumed administrative and editorial control of dozens of media outlets belonging to Baninter, after evidence came to light of the bank's large-scale fraudulent activities,

with losses estimated at US\$2.2 billion. However, the government was criticised for "an abuse of power", after a number of senior editors and producers were removed from their positions, and allegations were made that the new government-appointed managers had been editing out comment critical of the government.

*Peter Clegg*

## East Timor

**Capital:** Dili

**Population:** 850,000

On May 20, 2002, East Timor gained its independence as the Democratic Republic of East Timor (DRET). This ended a period of two and a half years of UN stewardship following 24 years under Indonesian military occupation and almost 450 years of Portuguese contact, from 1896 as a separate colony. Elections to a Constituent Assembly in October 2001 had resulted in victory for the leading anti-colonial party and vanguard of the resistance to Indonesian rule, FRETILIN (*Frente Revolucionário do Timor Leste Independente*) or Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor, whose historic (though not current) leader, José Alexandre (Xanana) Gusmão was elected President of the new state in April 2002.

### Fretilin as a revolutionary movement

FRETILIN traced its origins to the *Associação Social Democrática Timorense* (Timor Social Democratic Association) founded in Dili on May 20, 1974, in the last stages of Portuguese colonial rule. The ASDT emerged from a clandestine anti-colonial movement drawing its membership from the small Portuguese-educated East Timorese urban elite. Its founding president was Francisco Xavier do Amaral, a graduate of the Jesuit seminary in Macau later employed in the colonial customs service. ASDT's manifesto, calling for independence after ten years preparation, was drafted by the Timorese journalist José Ramos-Horta, who proved a consummate diplomat in support of East Timor independence and was a co-winner of the 1996 Nobel Peace Prize. ASDT's major rival, the conservative *União Democrática Timorense* (UDT), or **Timorese Democratic Union**, was also formed in this period.

In September 1974, ASDT was transformed into FRETILIN. Mirroring the name and the African "socialist" rhetoric of the contemporary independence movement in Mozambique, left-leaning FRETILIN demanded immediate independence. FRETILIN's manifesto stood for anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism, but also sought cooperation with the UN in the decolonization process. It also looked to solidarity with the Portuguese-speaking countries of the world. Domestically, FRETILIN drew its support from the ordinary Timorese people which it styled the "Maubere."

Nevertheless, FRETILIN's inner membership reflected widely different views, from the moderate Ramos-Horta, to the Marxist views of student returnee from Portugal, Abílio do Araújo, to the centrist Xavier do Amaral and Nicalau dos Reis Lobato. On May 20, 1975, they were joined by East Timor's future President and resistance hero José "Xanana" Gusmão then known as a journalist-poet. Other foundation members included future East Timor "strongman," Mari Alkatiri, a scion of Dili's small Yemeni Arab community.

In local elections organized between March and July 1975 to elect *liurais* (traditional leaders) to join a constituent assembly, FRETILIN won handsomely. But on Aug. 9, 1975, with the evident encouragement of Indonesia, the UDT staged an armed coup d'état. In the course of a bloody three-week civil war FRETILIN and its newly created *Falintil* (*Forças Armadas de Libertação Nacional de Timor Leste* – Armed Forces for the National Liberation of East Timor) emerged victorious. Having defeated the UDT, FRETILIN formed itself into the de facto government of East Timor with the rump of the Portuguese government including the Governor and his military entourage relocated to the off-shore island of Atauro.

On Nov. 28, 1975, in the face of armed Indonesian incursions, FRETILIN proclaimed a Unilateral Declaration of Independence with Xavier do Amaral appointed president of DRET. East Timor's independence proved to be short-lived, however. Beginning on Dec. 7, 1975, East Timor was subject to full-scale Indonesian invasion. Driven out of Dili, FRETILIN sought and enjoyed the broad support of the East Timor people. The conditions for a classic guerrilla war against the occupier were thus set, although tactics would change according to conditions, becoming increasingly onerous in the face of superior Indonesian armour in actions leading to the deaths of an estimated 200,000 East Timorese in the opening years of the invasion.

East Timor was formally incorporated into Indonesia on Aug. 17, 1976. A small group of FRETILIN leaders, including Alkatiri, Ramos-Horta, Abílio do Araújo, Roque Rodrigues and Rogerio Lobato, outside East Timor at the time of the Indonesian invasion, formed an external wing of the movement variously promoting the struggle in international fora, including the UN where East Timor's right to

self-determination was always upheld. Among external patrons China and, especially, Mozambique and other former Portuguese colonies offered the firmest support.

In September 1977, in circumstances unclear, Xavier do Amaral was deposed from membership in FRETILIN and its presidency and replaced by Vice President Nicalau Lobato. The charismatic Lobato was killed on Dec. 31, 1978, leaving the DRET presidency in abeyance. Xavier do Amaral would spend the next 22 years under house arrest in Jakarta, returning to East Timor only in 1999. Suffering devastating losses, reduced to two surviving central committee members (Gusmão and Mau Hunu), out of contact with the FRETILIN external mission, and, by 1978, bereft of its base in the Matabean mountains, FRETILIN/Falintil also experienced internal division, especially over tactics.

With Gusmão's election in March 1981 as head of the newly formed **National Council of the Revolutionary Resistance** (*Conselho Revolucionário da Resistência Nacional*, CRRN) and chief of Falintil, the strategy of maintaining fixed liberated zones was abandoned in favour of fully mobile guerrilla war tactics. Out of sight and out of contact with the rest of the world, the guerrillas also gained a mythic quality among East Timorese "nationalists". By the late 1980s, the armed resistance also came to liaise with an emerging clandestine movement among urban youth. The importance of the "clandestine" in the struggle was demonstrated with some pathos in November 1991 with the gunning down of hundreds of youthful demonstrator-mourners in Dili in November 1991 by the Indonesian armed forces. FRETILIN cadres also emerged active in clandestine actions among East Timorese students studying in universities in Java and Bali.

At a meeting in Portugal in March 1986, FRETILIN entered into a "convergence" agreement with the UDT in order to present a diplomatic united front. In another departure, in May 1987, Gusmão broke with FRETILIN by forming the *Conselho Nacional da Resistência Maubere* (**National Council of the Maubere Resistance**, CNRM), an umbrella organization that included all ideologies and tendencies that supported the resistance (although technically not supported by the UDT). Ramos-Horta was appointed special representative of CNRM abroad. Amid much acrimony, politico-turned-pro-Indonesia businessman, Abílio do Araújo was stripped of his leadership of FRETILIN's external wing. Drawing support from the Timorese diaspora in Portugal, Australia and Macau, South Africa-based José Guterres and Mozambique-based Mari Alkatiri stepped into the breach.

In November 1992 Gusmão was arrested in Dili, with power then gravitating to three resistance veterans, Lu Olo (Francisco Guterres), Mau Hunu and Mau Hodo. Nevertheless, the successive deaths of Falintil commanders Mau Hunu (1993); David Alex (1997); and Konis Santana (1998), pushed back the prospects for the armed resistance even further, although Gusmão would emerge in prison in Jakarta as a Nelson Mandela type figure.

In 1998 CNRM metamorphized into the **National Council of the Timorese Resistance** (*Conselho Nacional da Resistência Timorense*, CNRT), Maubere was dropped, UDT became organizationally integrated, while the imprisoned Gusmão was confirmed as President with Ramos-Horta as

Vice President. The Church, now regarded as the protector of the people and headed by Nobel Peace Prize recipient, Bishop Ximenes Carlos Belo, was also represented in the CNRT.

The collapse of the Suharto regime in Indonesia in May 1998 and his replacement by the reformist Habibie administration offered new opportunities for CNRT/FRETILIN as the emphasis changed to the political front. The presidency of FRETILIN passed to veteran resistance leader Francisco Guterres, with Mari Alkatiri taking the vice-presidency. Following an unexpected declaration by Habibie that he would accept a referendum in East Timor on its status, agreements were signed in New York on May 5, 1999, between Portugal, Indonesia, and the UN, to enable such a referendum to take place on Aug. 30, 1999. Habibie's action was bitterly opposed by sections of the Indonesian military, as well as Indonesian settlers in East Timor. As the electoral campaign unwound, FRETILIN cadres and supporters, and, indeed, ordinary East Timorese people, increasingly became targets and victims of Indonesian military and militia atrocities. In some districts all FRETILIN cadres were eliminated. In these circumstances the decision by Gusmão to disallow Falintil retaliation was seen as controversial. Reacting violently to the outcome of the referendum, held under the auspices of the UN Assistance Mission in East Timor (UNAMET) and in which some 80 per cent of East Timorese voted for independence, the Indonesian military laid waste to the country, forcing massive population movements across the border and to the mountains. In these circumstances Falintil played a protective role for the hundreds of thousands of internally displaced people.

### Post-referendum international intervention in East Timor

In response to Indonesian violence, the UN Security Council on Sept. 15, 1999, authorized the establishment of a non-UN Australian-led intervention force in East Timor (the International Force for East Timor, INTERFET). The advance guard of 11,000 troops arrived within days and by the end of the month most Indonesian troops had left the territory. On Oct. 20, 1999, the Indonesian House of Representatives reluctantly approved the result of the Aug. 30 referendum and on Oct. 25 the UN Security Council established the UN Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) with the responsibility to pave the way for independence. The INTERFET intervention also facilitated the return to East Timor for the first time in 24 years of FRETILIN leaders and supporters from the diaspora. In turn, INTERFET was transformed in February 2000 into a UN blue beret force under UNTAET.

The decision of the World Bank and UN to work with the CNRT in the early days of UNTAET reflected pressure from the CNRT and its international supporters, including concerned solidarity groups and NGOs, but it was also a pragmatic decision taken by the UN. Confronting a political vacuum in the wake of the Indonesian terror, CNRT, FRETILIN cadres and Falintil simply took over. However, some time would



pass before the UN acknowledged the right of Falintil to form the embryo of a future East Timor armed forces. In the early months of UNTAET, the UN frequently found their way blocked by East Timorese counterparts. The CNRT applied constant pressure on UNTAET to accelerate political devolution and to promote Timorization. By mid-2000, UNTAET had been obliged to create a parallel East Timor Transitional Administration (ETTA) along with a transitional Cabinet. Notable appointees in the First Transitional Government included Mari Alkatiri as Minister of Economics. Other FRETILIN returnees from Mozambique also joined the first transitional cabinet.

At the CNRT Congress held in Dili in August 2000, amid some acrimony between Gusmão and Alkatiri, the CNRT voted to dissolve itself. A number of former FRETILIN stalwarts, Ramos-Horta included, made it clear that their preferences lay with other newly created centrist parties.

FRETILIN finally played its hand in the Constituent Assembly elections of Aug 30, 2001, which were contested by 16 parties. FRETILIN won a substantial victory, taking 55 out of 88 seats with 57.4% of the vote. Alkatiri rejected the creation of a cabinet of national unity as preferred by UNTAET. As the party that launched and defended East Timor's independence struggle, FRETILIN's popularity was guaranteed. Nevertheless, fears by some of potential one party dominance undoubtedly cost FRETILIN a degree of electoral support.

Taking its place as the dominant political force in the Second Transitional Government, FRETILIN was well placed to guide the constitutional drafting process. FRETILIN President Francisco Guterres emerged as speaker of the parliament, with Mari Alkatiri appointed chief minister. FRETILIN also gained key ministries, including finance and the newly created defence portfolio (Roque Rodrigues). As expected, Ramos-Horta was appointed foreign minister, with José Guterres as deputy. After three months deliberation, the Assembly endorsed the new constitution. Notably, the FRETILIN flag and other symbols were adopted, with important FRETILIN anniversaries acknowledged. The constitution also allowed for an elected president, albeit in a largely symbolic role alongside the cabinet system with FRETILIN clearly in control. In presidential elections held on April 14, 2002, Gusmão emerged victorious in a landslide with 82.7% of the votes cast over his only rival,

Xavier do Amaral. FRETILIN neither nominated a candidate nor did it officially support either candidate, suggesting to some observers an ongoing tension between the president-elect and the party he formerly supported.

With the lowering of the UN flag over East Timor on May 20, 2002, and the proclamation of independence, popular hero Gusmão assumed the presidency of the Democratic Republic of East Timor, reclaiming, as it were, the mantle held by the now legendary Nicalau Lobato, with Mari Alkatiri confirmed as Prime Minister. FRETILIN's historic unilateral declaration of independence of Nov. 28, 1975, was celebrated.

On Dec. 4, 2002, Dili was rocked by riots, exposing contradictory security mandates between the UN and the independent government. In events still unexplained, and in the major challenge to the FRETILIN government to date, parliament was stormed, with a number of buildings burnt, including Prime Minister Alkatiri's house. The UN chief of police was stood down and foreigners evacuated for a time.

In December 2002 an Indonesian human rights court, established in January 2002 in response to international pressure to consider cases arising from Indonesian action in East Timor in 1999, sentenced the former commander of the Indonesian military in Dili, Lt.-Col. Sujarwo, to five years' imprisonment for failing to prevent attacks on the residence and office of Bishop Ximenes Carlos Belo in which 15 had been killed. This was the first conviction of a military officer by the court, which had faced criticism over a series of acquittals. The court had previously convicted (i) in November 2002, Eurico Guterres, who had led the pro-Indonesia militia *Aitarak*, and (ii) in August 2002, Abilio Soares, the former Governor of East Timor, both of whom were East Timorese. Gen. Wiranto, the chief of Indonesia's armed forces in 1999, had not been indicted.

In February 2003 UN prosecutors in Dili filed indictments for war crimes in East Timor against Gen. Wiranto but these were summarily rejected by the Indonesian authorities. At that time 180 indictments had been filed by UN prosecutors in East Timor, 106 of individuals living openly in Indonesia, but none of those indicted had been handed over by the Indonesian authorities.

*Geoffrey C. Gunn*

## Ecuador

**Capital:** Quito

**Population:** 13 m

The Republic of Ecuador has an executive President elected for a four-year term by universal adult suffrage. The President appoints a Cabinet. Legislative

power is exercised by a unicameral Congress of 100 members. The President is not eligible for re-election.

Ecuador has experienced prolonged periods of

political instability since becoming a separate republic in 1830, with the military a major factor in political life. This pattern has continued in recent years. In January 2000, Col. Gutiérrez Borbúa led a coup that sought to establish a “junta of national salvation”. This quickly collapsed but on Nov. 24, 2002, Gutiérrez was elected President with 58.7% of the vote in a run-off election against Alvaro Noboa, of the Institutional Renewal Party National Action, PRIAN, reputedly the wealthiest man in Ecuador. This followed an inconclusive first round on Oct. 21, 2002, in which Gutiérrez, as the candidate of the Patriotic Society Party (*Partido Sociedad Patriótica 21 de Enero*, PSP) had come first with 20.3% of the votes cast, Noboa second with 17.4%, León Roldós (Independent) had taken 15.43%, Rodrigo Borja (Democratic Left, ID) 14.05%, Xavier Neira (Social Christian Party, PSC) 12.19%, and Jacobo Bucaram (Ecuadorian Roldosista Party, PRE) 11.85%.

Legislative elections held on Oct. 20, 2002, produced a fragmented legislature in which the PSP and the allied Pachakutik indigenous party held only 17 seats, the largest parties being the PSC (24 seats), PRE (15), ID (13), and PRIAN (10).

## INDIGENOUS MOVEMENTS

### **Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador, Conaie)**

*Leadership.* Leonidas Iza (president)

*Website.* <http://conaie.org>

Conaie is a dissident movement founded in 1986 to give a voice to indigenous Ecuadorians (one-third of the country's population and disproportionately the poorest). As a pressure group in 1989 it obtained an agreement with the Ministry of Education on the establishment of bilingual, bicultural education. It adopted direct action in 1992 as part of the general increase in indigenist awareness throughout the continent of the impact of globalization. The announcement of an austerity package by the new President, Sixto Durán Ballén, on Sept. 3, 1992, touched off a series of violent street demonstrations in Quito and Guayaquil, and despite the mobilization of the army four days later, Conaie began a campaign of civil disobedience. Following elections in 1994, a new right-wing majority attempted to reverse 30 years of slow land reform through a Land Development Law passed on June 13. This led to massive protests from Conaie. The Court of Constitutional Guarantees ruled the law unconstitutional on June 23, with the result that in amended form it guaranteed the rights of those who directly worked land, whether as individuals or associations.

Conaie subsequently joined with other Indian organizations, trade unions and grassroots activists of the Patriotic Front, in protesting against the economic policies of President Jamil Mahuad Witt (elected in July 1998). In response, the President proclaimed a state of emergency on March 11, 1999, a partial freeze on bank withdrawals and a tough austerity programme which, following the withdrawal of support from the Social Christian Party (PSC) on March 15, passed Congress only with a bare majority and in revised form. During 1999 Ecuador, which owed \$16 billion,

defaulted on interest payments to its international creditors, who indicated that they would not provide further bail-outs without structural reform, and there was hyper-inflation.

On Jan. 18, 2000, Conaie mobilized the largest demonstration to date against Mahuad and his neo-liberal economic policies, including a highly controversial project to adopt the US dollar as the country's currency. This, when announced on Jan. 9, had instantly led to price rises of between 50 and 300%. With the connivance of elements in the armed forces, led by Colonels Lucio Gutiérrez, Jorge Brito and Fausto Cobos, on Jan. 21 Conaie supporters seized the Congress and Supreme Court buildings. While President Mahuad abandoned the Palacio Carondelet and took refuge in a nearby airforce base a “junta of national salvation” was proclaimed consisting of the Conaie leader Antonio Vargas and the former president of the Supreme Court, Carlos Solórzano, as well as Col Gutiérrez, who soon ceded his role as chair to the commander of the armed forces and acting Defence Minister, Gen. Carlos Mendoza. Following strong representations from the United States and other American states, however, on Jan. 26 Congress declared that Mahuad had abandoned his post and Vice President Gustavo Noboa Bejarano was duly sworn in as President, thus preserving constitutional forms.

The new government decided to go ahead with both the privatization and dollarization proposals, and, after further widespread unrest, on Sept. 4 Conaie announced an indefinite general strike. Though plans for the privatization of Petroecuador were suspended, the dollar finally replaced the sucre as the national currency on Sept. 8.

Serious popular protests erupted again at the beginning of January 2001, starting among indigenous peasant farmers and soon joined by public sector workers and students. The protests, once more led by Conaie, were spurred by the sharp increases in the charges for gas, electricity, petrol and public transport announced by the government of President Noboa in December 2000. Eliminating subsidies would mean that the cost of liquid propane gas (LPG) would double, at the end of a year in which inflation had reached 91%. The increases had been made in order to reduce the budget deficit in accordance with the requirements of an IMF structural adjustment package. The high command of the armed forces refused to intervene and hundreds of protesters were arrested. In the end the government did negotiate an end to the “great national mobilization”, lifting the state of emergency on Feb. 2 and restoring the subsidy on LPG.

Conaie's decision to back the candidature and social programme of former Col. Lucio Edwin Gutiérrez Borbúa was undoubtedly a major factor in his decisive victory in the second round of the presidential elections held on Nov. 24, 2002, and so become the first member of the indigenous community to hold the country's chief office.

### **United Plurinational Pachacutik Movement–New Country (Movimiento Unidad Plurinacional Pachakutik–Nueva País, MUPP-NP)**

*Website:* <http://pachacutik.org.ec>

This is an umbrella dissident organization established by Conaie and other indigenist groups in 1995; since 1996 it has established itself as a political party running candidates for local and national elections. The movement opposes the neo-

liberal economic model, the proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas and the adoption of the US dollar as the national currency. In 2002 Pachacutik supported the candidature for the presidency of the dissident former Col. Lucio Gutiérrez (see above).

### OTHER DISSIDENT MOVEMENTS

In early 2002 a loose coalition of indigenous farmers and civic groups mounted protests against the lack of investment in the Amazonian departments, seizing drilling facilities and refineries belonging both to Petroecuador and private companies in the Aucas, Sacha and Shushufindi oilfields and effectively reducing petroleum production by some fifty per cent in February. As a consequence, on Feb. 22 President Noboa proclaimed a state of emergency in the Departments of Sucumbíos and Orellana and threatened to send in troops.

In April 2002 the government ordered the arrest of environmentalists who had chained themselves to trees in the Mindo-Nambillo forest on the route of a proposed new crude oil pipeline from the Amazonian fields to the Pacific.

In recent years no armed guerrilla movements have

operated from Ecuadorian territory. However, in an exchange of fire in mid-January, 2001, the armed forces killed several guerrillas believed to be members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia*, FARC, for which see under Colombia). They had apparently crossed the border into the Department of Succumbíos as a result of the US-backed "Plan Colombia". In February, the body of a petroleum worker, one of ten kidnapped in October 2000, was discovered near Lago Agrio; soon afterwards the US oil company concerned, Helmerich and Payne, obtained the release of the seven remaining hostages in return for a ransom of US\$13m. At the beginning of September 2001 a large guerrilla base, only recently vacated, was located in Succumbíos, some 30km from Nueva Loja.

In April 2002, Richard Armitage, the US deputy Secretary of State, said that the USA believed that some elements of *Al-Qaeda* and *Hezbollah* were operating in Ecuador near the Colombian and Peruvian borders. This was the first allegation by the USA that either of these groups was present in South America.

*Peter Calvert*

## Egypt

**Capital:** Cairo

**Population:** 69.5 m

Under its 1971 Constitution the Arab Republic of Egypt is a socialist democracy with limited party pluralism. The ruling National Democratic Party (NDP) was organized by President Anwar Sadat in 1978 as the party of government in succession to the Arab Socialist Union, the party of the late President Nasser. The NDP has dominated the Majlis al-Sha'ab (People's Assembly, or parliament) since then. Sadat was assassinated in 1981, since when Hosni Mubarak has been national President, as well as chairman of the NDP.

In 1980 a constitutional amendment declared *Shar'i'a* (Islamic law) to be "the main source of all legislation"; previously it had been only "one of the important sources". Thirty Muslim Brotherhood candidates, the first to be openly elected, entered the 454-member Majlis in 1987. However in 1990, when the NDP won 348 of the 444 elective seats (10 seats being appointed) and the left-wing Nasserite National Progressive Unionist Party (NPUP) won six, other parties, including those that previously fielded Brotherhood candidates, officially boycotted the elections. In all 83 independents were elected.

Egypt's most recent parliamentary elections took place during October and November 2000. The NDP won 353 seats and 35 elected independents subsequently joined the ruling party. The chief opposition was the New Wafd Party, with seven seats, followed

by the leftist *Tagammu* (six seats), Nasserites (three) and liberal *Hizb al-Ahrar* (one). Thirty-seven non-partisans were also elected. The turnout was low and complaints of vote-rigging and ballot-stuffing ensued. These protests continued well into 2001, especially after the widespread arrest of Islamist candidates in April, before elections to the Shura (Consultative Council) in May.

A referendum in 1978 excluded from politics those convicted of political offences, campaigning against religion, corrupting political life or endangering national unity or social peace. After 1980 punishable offences included the inciting of opposition to the state's economic, political and social system and the dissemination of statements endangering national unity or social peace. A bloody Muslim/Christian clash in 1981 led to emergency security measures, including the widespread detention of members of Muslim groups and the seizure of their assets. Such measures have been periodically renewed since President Sadat's assassination in October 1981, most recently in late February 2003. So while full freedom of the press, for instance, is guaranteed in the constitution, in practice "security-related" censorship remains.

Some maintain that the official governing party, the NDP, was empowered at the expense of etiolated smaller opposition parties. It is argued that dissidence

flows not only into overtly political groups, as listed below, but also into various professional bodies, campaigning NGOs, and other outlets for civil society. Hence the potential political significance in the fact that the number of associations registered in Egypt increased from 7,593 in 1976 to 22,000 in 1999.

### Islamist Pressures

The Muslim Brotherhood was originally the strongest group opposing the regime. Later, under the fear of communism and the persuasions of Saudi money, it was gradually integrated into the framework of legitimate politics. Its previous Islamic-revolutionary role passed to small militant groups, recruited from it, loosely interconnected and often ephemeral. Such groups were inspired by the same zealots and flourished in similar places, principally Upper Egypt, the Fayyum and the more destitute quarters of Cairo. They fed on grievances and conflicts and reflected the revival of Islamic conservatism throughout the Middle East, e.g. on the position, and especially the dress, of women, resentment at Israel's ascendancy and on conflict with non-Muslim minorities. These groups carried out or attempted assassinations: Sadat was killed in 1981; there were other targets, generally ministers or officials responsible for security, in 1974, 1977, 1987 and, in 1989, the hard-line Interior Minister Zaki Badr. In 1992 militants killed a leading secular author, Farag Foda, and in 1995 they launched an unsuccessful attempt on the life of Sadat's successor, President Mubarak, in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa.

Official Muslim leaders have normally supported the government against fundamentalism, which has however been encouraged from abroad; many native fundamentalist movements in Egypt had links to similar groups elsewhere. Saudi Arabia earlier helped the Muslim Brotherhood, but interfered less during the presidencies of Sadat and Mubarak. Kadhafi's Libya and post-1979 Iran have also occasionally intervened. After the invasion of Kuwait in 1990, the government announced the arrest of terrorists sent from Jordan, Iraq and elsewhere to destabilize Egypt when it supported US action in the Gulf.

Under President Mubarak the Egyptian government sought to control imams' sermons through the auspices of the Ministry of Awqaf (religious endowments) and the long esteemed Al Azhar College. A spate of attempted assassinations of leading politicians and attacks on foreign tourists presaged a renewed bid by Islamic fundamentalists in the early 1990s. Mubarak launched a massive retaliation, initiated partly to curb a spill-over from Islamic militancy in Algeria. By and large it managed to quell the rebellion. More than 1,000 people died during the 1990s in the crackdown – guerrillas, soldiers and civilians. Some 100 activists were sentenced to death, mainly by military courts, and about half these sentences had been carried out by 1999. The remaining guerrillas are in prison, in exile or on the run.

This period culminated in a domestic truce in 1999. Many of the alleged terrorists were actually Egyptians

who had gone off to fight against Soviet forces in Afghanistan, between 1980 and 1990. It was said that returnees were "bringing the jihad home". Thwarted in their violent attempt to disrupt Egyptian civil society, many of them became involved with international terrorism. Members of Islamic Jihad, in particular, were intimately associated with the World Islamic Front (better known as *Al-Qaeda*) headed by the Saudi radical, Osama bin Laden.

According to the "blowback" theory, Islamists hitherto favoured and trained by the CIA as useful allies against Communism, were now seen as surplus to requirements. Increasingly, the West, rather than the now defunct Soviet Union, was regarded as the chief "enemy of Islam", and became the focus of radicals' anger. Hence many Egyptians – especially in the Islamic Jihad (IJ) and, to a lesser extent, in *Gama'a at-Islamiyya* – participated in international terror incidents. This was shown spectacularly on Sept. 11, 2001, when several of the ringleaders of the attacks on the World Trade Centre and Pentagon proved to be Egyptian. Though Mohammed Atta and the others were affiliated more with *Al-Qaeda* than with IJ per se, the linkage seemed clear. For instance, Osama bin Laden's deputy was former IJ leader, Dr Ayman al-Zawahri; his putative operations chief, Muhammad Atef, was also Egyptian.

In 1999 the Mubarak government launched the biggest trial of militants since the aftermath of the assassination of President Sadat in 1981. As of late 2002, at least 10,000 men suspected of links with radical groups remained incarcerated in state jails, most of them detained without any formal charge. Military trials continue, despite the precedent of a civilian court acquitting the suspected murderers of the Speaker of Parliament, Rifa'at Mahgoub (killed in 1990), because they had confessed under torture. Egypt has requested the extradition of its former militants from various European countries (19 are sought from the UK alone); but to Cairo's chagrin, the European Convention on Human Rights forbids the extradition of suspects who have been sentenced to death.

### Other Dissident Groups

Communist and other left-wing groups have also resorted to violence, usually in protest against the pro-Western policies of Presidents Sadat and Mubarak and their official relations with Israel, but sometimes against the government's economic policies and perceived injustices towards workers. Student demonstrations in 1972 and 1973 led to the creation of a string of new organizations after the party liberalization laws of 1976. Few prospered, however, as ideology ossified around established leaders who refused to move aside for newcomers.

Often external events have prompted demonstrations, which soon evolved into opportunities to criticize Egyptian domestic policies. This was true, for example, of anti-American protests in early 1991, just before Operation Desert Storm in Iraq, and again in

2002-03, and of anti-Israeli protests in October 2000, and again in April 2002, in sympathy with Palestinians involved in their new intifada.

Much the same attitudes and hostilities have characterized more recently formed secular groups loyal to Nasser's legacy and including former politicians and officers, the most active being led in part by members of Nasser's family. International human rights organizations criticized the Mubarak government for "wrongfully imprisoning" secular liberals, especially Prof. Saad Eddin Ibrahim and 27 other members of the Ibn Khaldun Research Centre, as well as so-called fundamentalists. Since the events of 9/11 there has been a renewed campaign to curb dissident activity: in the following 11 months, charges against 94 men already accused were raised. All were jailed by state security courts, hundreds more were arrested, and another 170 cases prepared.

### MUSLIM FUNDAMENTALIST GROUPS

Of these, the Muslim Brotherhood was the first and most powerful; few of the groups which issued from it can be sharply distinguished. Their ideas, methods and even their personnel were often more or less the same, but operating under different names.

#### **Atonement and Flight from Sin Society (Gama'at al Takfir wa'l Hijra)**

This movement probably emerged in 1971 after breaking away from the Islamic Liberation Party (ILP, see separate entry). In July 1977 this group claimed responsibility for kidnapping and assassinating Dr Muhammad al Dhahabi, a former Minister of Islamic affairs, and several of its members were subsequently hanged. The government then asserted that the movement had received money and arms from Libya for the abduction and murder of government ministers and other prominent people.

Those arrested for Sadat's assassination in October 1981 and the subsequent riots in Upper Egypt were reportedly members of "Holy War" (see separate entry), a group loosely associated with "Atonement", many of whose alleged members were arrested in 1982. This group was little heard of after 1983; many of its members apparently continued active in the same causes but under new names, including Islamic Jihad (see entry).

#### **Islamic Grouping (Al-Gama'a at Islamiyya)**

*Leadership. Sheikh Umar Abdurrahman (spiritual leader); Mustafa Hamza (political leader)*

Egypt's largest violent militant group, its name should probably be in the plural (*Gama'at*) as it refers generically to student groups at universities in Upper Egypt, in the provinces of Al-Minya, Asyut, Qina, and Sohaj. It also enjoys support in deprived suburbs of Alexandria and Cairo populated by new arrivals from the countryside. It is particularly popular in 'Ain Shams, once the site of a university, and the Cairo suburb of Imbaba, which once declared itself an independent Islamic state within Egypt. Radical students have opposed changes in the status of women and co-operation between Muslims and Christians.

The first *Gama'at* were constituted in 1971-72, with Sadat's encouragement, as a counterweight to secular Nasserites. Sadat's Minister of Religious Affairs (*Awqaf*) inaugurated summer camps for young Muslims, mostly students, which involved some military training. Its followers subscribed to the philosophy of Sayyid Qutb (see entry for Muslim Brotherhood).

Groups using the *Gama'a* name, allied to, or deriving from, the Muslim Brotherhood were particularly strong at the universities of Cairo and Asyut. They were said to receive funds from Saudi Arabia. The government blamed *Gama'a* for attacks on Coptic Christians in 1978 and for a mass protest at Asyut in March 1980 against the Shah of Iran's arrival in Egypt. It aimed to replace the existing secular regime in Egypt by one applying strict Islamic doctrine to public and private affairs.

In May 1987 purported *Gama'a* cadres claimed responsibility for an attack on Hasan Abu Basha, a former Minister of the Interior. *Al-Gama'a* claimed responsibility for the killing of the Speaker of Parliament, Rifaat Mahgoub, in 1990. They said this was in retaliation for the murder by state security forces of *Gama'a* spokesman Alaa Mohieddin earlier that year. In 1995 a *Gama'a* front man, Monasser Zayat, published a book entitled *Hiwaraat Mamnuua* ("Forbidden Discussions") in which he accused Mubarak of deliberately provoking a fight with radical groups in 1990 to ward off calls for democratization, and to prevent Islamists, both radical and moderate, from joining the political mainstream.

The group's activities increased after 1992, when their gunmen shot dead the popular secular and humorous writer, Farag Foda, outside his Cairo office. *Al-Gama'a* also claimed responsibility for an attempt on President Mubarak's life, in June 1995, when he was attending a conference in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. In November 1997 militants said to be associated with *Al-Gama'a* killed 58 foreign tourists at the ancient site of Luxor, causing enormous damage to Egypt's tourism industry.

By this stage, however, a concerted government counter-offensive, begun in 1993 and directed by the interior minister, Hassan al-Alfi, had ended *Gama'a* control over schools and clinics. Many *Gama'a* members were killed in gun battles, or arrested and tried by military courts. Al-Alfi resigned after the Luxor atrocity, and his successor, Habib al-Adli, started reining in heavy-handed police tactics. Though human rights groups and lawyers acting for Islamist parties protested the mass arrests of civilians and torture in prison, generally the brutal crackdown proved effective.

*Gama'a* officially issued a cease-fire in 1997, following a spate of attacks on Copts the year before. It has not conducted an attack inside Egypt since August 1998. The call emanated from the eight members of the 14-member *Gama'a* ruling consultative council, or *shura*, who were imprisoned in Egypt. The remaining six lived outside Egypt – two in Britain, one in Germany and three, it was thought, in Afghanistan. The three European exiles backed the truce, whereas the Afghan exiles rejected it. However, the *Gama'a* spiritual leader, Sheikh Umar Abdurrahman, rescinded his support for the cease-fire in June 2000. He had been sentenced in January 1996 on conspiracy charges connected to the 1993 World Trade Centre bombing, and imprisoned for life in the USA.

Some senior members signed Osama bin Laden's fatwa in February 1998 calling for attacks against the USA, and setting up a World Islamic Front (better known by the misnomer, *Al-Qaeda*). Soon, however, the bulk of the group's leadership tried to distance themselves from Bin Laden's global jihad philosophy.

Divisions also emerged over the domestic truce issue. Between 1993 and 1999, an estimated 1,200 had died in violence associated with the insurgency and resultant quashing. One faction, led by Mustafa Hamza, supported the truce. Another initially dominant faction, led by Rifa'i Taha Musa, began to demand a return to armed operations. Also known as Rifa'i Ahmed Taha, or Abu Yasser, he was a co-signatory of the April 1998 *Al-Qaeda* fatwa. Following retaliatory US raids after the East African embassy bombings later that year, Taha claimed that he had only signed the edict in his personal capacity.

Taha was long associated with Ayman al-Zawahri (see under Islamic Jihad). Together they were thought to have recruited sympathizers within the Egyptian military to assassinate President Sadat in 1981. Taha had been sentenced to death in absentia during the "returnees from Afghanistan" trial of 1992. *The Middle East Times* wrote that Mustafa Ahmed Hamza replaced him as overall leader in 1998. Also known as the *Gama'a* military commander, Hamza was sentenced three times to death in absentia. He is a prime suspect in the attempt on President Mubarak's life, and after a sojourn in Khartoum was last seen in Afghanistan. Also in Afghanistan, now possibly in Pakistan, are the two sons of Sheikh Abdurrahman, Ahmed and Mohamed (known locally as Assadallah and Seifallah respectively).

In early 2001 Taha published a book in which he tried to justify terrorist attacks that would cause mass casualties. In February that year he called on Muslims to "kill American Jews wherever they can be found". On Nov. 19, 2001, it was reported that Egypt had successfully ordered his extradition from Syria in late September, following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in the USA. Other reports suggested that Taha remained in Afghanistan, where he had lived since 1996. Still other reports placed Taha at various times in Sudan and Iran, where, Cairo has alleged, he acts as a conduit for shifting Iranian funds to Islamic Jihad. In early 2002 the US authorities named him and Zawahri as Specially Designated Terrorists (SDT).

Renewed security efforts following Sept. 11 further reduced the group's strength on the ground. That said, *Gama'a* continues to maintain a global presence through exiles in the UK, Afghanistan, Yemen and Austria. Egypt's government believes that Iran, *Al-Qaeda*, Afghan militant groups and private Islamic charities still support the organization. In October 2001 in London, the Egyptian-born radical, Yasser el-Sirri, was arrested and accused, amongst other charges, of belonging to *Gama'a*, officially a banned organisation in the UK (see entry on Islamic Jihad, below).

### **Islamic Jihad (IJ)**

*Leadership. Sheikh Umar Abdurrahman (alleged spiritual leader); Dr Ayman al-Zawahri (political leader of current leading IJ faction)*

This Muslim fundamentalist group was first mentioned in 1977 (though possibly originated as early as 1973) and

became the most persistent of the violent Muslim groups. Jihad means "struggle" in Arabic, though it is sometimes translated in the West as "holy war", a term many Muslims regard as misleading. IJ was loosely associated with "Atone-ment" (see entry) and, like all the other fundamentalist groups, descended from the Muslim Brotherhood.

In November 1981 its putative leader, Abbud al-Zumar, and 23 others were charged with the assassination of President Sadat and attempting to overthrow the government by force. Zumar is still serving his 40-year sentence. Many suspected members were detained for planning assassinations and committing other acts of violence, especially the uprising in Asyut in mid-October 1981, when 50 people were reported killed. Sheikh Umar Abdurrahman, a blind theologian from Asyut University and editor of the fundamentalist paper *At Da'wa*, the group's ideologue, had been named as a leader to replace Sadat. He was later arrested. Abdurrahman is also known as spiritual leader of the Islamic Grouping (see entry). The ambiguous relationship between IJ and *Gama'a* stimulates much speculation. Perhaps one clear difference is that whereas IJ specialises solely in assassinations and terrorism, *Gama'a* has a broader social and welfare network.

At the trial of 24 defendants allegedly involved in Sadat's assassination, the four charged with murder pleaded not guilty but their leader, Lt Khalid Hasan Islambuli, proudly admitted his responsibility. Defence counsel claimed that no accusation should be made against the defendants, as one of them (presumably Sheikh Abdurrahman) had called for a "holy war" against "a depraved and apostate society".

In spring 1982, 22 defendants were convicted. The IJ's then leader, Muhammad Abdussalam Faraj, Lt Islambuli and his three associates were executed, and the others received long prison terms. Also convicted on a lesser charge was Ayman al-Zawahri. After his release from prison in 1984 he began acquiring a greater leadership role, but after 1986 he managed affairs mainly from Afghanistan, where he joined the fight against the Soviets. Abdurrahman and another theologian from Asyut University, Ismail Salamuni, though acquitted, were quickly re-arrested and charged with membership of IJ. The government announced further arrests in mid-1982, adding that the security forces had recently broken up over 30 fundamentalist groups.

In December 1982 the trial opened of 300 people, most, reportedly, from this group, accused of attempting to overthrow the regime after Sadat's assassination and mounting the disorders in Upper Egypt. Many of the accused were acquitted in February 1984. Given the serious charges, the sentences appeared lenient; perhaps the government wished to avoid inflaming fundamentalist anger. A Supreme Court report said that it had been "established beyond doubt" that some of the accused had been tortured. They included Abdurrahman, who had been acquitted; his statements had reportedly been affected by torture.

In October 1984 the Supreme Court ordered the indefinite postponement of the trial of a further 176 people including 64 alleged "Holy Warriors". All were released. Sheikh Umar Abdurrahman was arrested and released in 1985; the same occurred again in 1986 when the Supreme Court ordered his release and that of 55 others.

Meanwhile other members of Jihad had been linked to

the February 1986 riots by central security force conscripts and, so it was believed, to a number of fundamentalist disturbances, including confrontations with Coptic Christians, who reportedly established their own "Christian Jihad". In June 1986 IJ claimed responsibility for a bomb explosion in a Cairo suburb. In December 1986, 33 people, including four army officers, were accused of belonging to this group, stealing army weapons and possessing subversive documents. Many others were arrested after the summer 1987 attacks on two former Interior Ministers and an anti-fundamentalist writer though responsibility for these acts was also claimed by two apparently different organizations, *Al-Gama'a* and a short lived group called "Saved from Hell".

In spring 1989 a sub-group calling itself "New Jihad" seized temporary control of a town in the Fayyum region. IJ members were evicted by the security forces who killed 15 of them. In spring 1990 many IJ supporters were killed in disturbances in Upper Egypt (Asyut and Gena) and the Fayyum.

Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait and the resulting tension in the Arab world naturally heightened security concerns inside Egypt, particularly after Rifa'at al Mahgoub, the Speaker of Parliament, was shot, with five of his escort, in Cairo on Oct. 12. He was a known opponent of the fundamentalists, although it later appeared that the real target had been the new Interior Minister, Muhammad Abdulhalim Musa. This incident the police at first ascribed to the Palestinian group of Abu Nidal and only later to IJ. Eight IJ members were arrested and two shot dead; 400 other fundamentalists were arrested.

The IJ claimed responsibility for the attempted assassinations of Interior Minister Hassan al-Alfi in August 1993 and Prime Minister Atef Sedki in November 1993. Increasingly, IJ members in exile began to attack targets on foreign soil. In 1993 members were implicated in the first attack on the World Trade Centre in New York City. Sheikh Umar Abdurrahman was charged and remains incarcerated to this day. In 1995 the IJ staged a suicide bombing attack on Egypt's embassy in Pakistan. Threats by the group to retaliate against the USA mounted after the arrest of IJ members in Albania, Azerbaijan and the UK. In April 2002 the US Justice Department charged that Abdurrahman had tried to direct further terrorist acts from his cell in Minnesota.

With Abdurrahman imprisoned in the USA and al-Zumar in Egypt, effective power passed to younger leaders. Soon a split developed. The leader of one faction, Dr Ayman al-Zawahri, became one of the chief signatories of Osama bin Laden's "international fatwa" against "Western Crusaders and Jews". The fatwa was signed in 1998 in Afghanistan, where they both lived. Since then Zawahri has been implicated in the bombings of US embassies in East Africa, in August 1998, and the Sept. 11 attacks in the USA. In October 2001 *The Times* reported that Mohammed Atta, alleged ringleader of the attacks on US targets on Sept. 11, had been a member of Islamic Jihad.

Some analysts suspect that Dr al-Zawahri has deliberately subsumed IJ's identity within Bin Laden's World Islamic Front (*Al-Qaeda*). After the events of Sept. 11, Heba Saleh in the *Financial Times* stated that "Islamic Jihad decided to take on the world only when it failed in Egypt" and suggested that Jihad's clandestine nature and limited membership hindered its ability to overthrow the Cairo government, but

made it ideal for pinpoint acts of global terror.

A former doctor to the bourgeoisie of Cairo, and scion of a famous old family, Zawahri is spoken of as Bin Laden's deputy, and his ideological and operational mastermind. The grandson of a former Grand Imam of the main seat of Sunni Muslim learning, Al Azhar College, Zawahri wrote a book, "The Bitter Harvest", which is regarded as the definitive radical critique of the Muslim Brotherhood. He was imprisoned on charges of possessing weapons in 1982, and released in 1984. Years later, in Afghanistan, Zawahri seconded two close Egyptian IJ allies, Muhammad Atef and Abu Ubaidah al-Banshiri, from Jihad to *Al-Qaeda*. They became the respective heads of terrorist training and financial affairs. In 1998 US authorities indicted Atef (also known as Sheikh Taseer Abdullah and Abu Hafis al-Misri) and Zawahri for the East Africa embassy bombings. That same year an attack by the IJ on the US embassy in Albania was apparently foiled.

It seems that a US bomb killed Atef in Afghanistan during a raid on the Taleban in November 2001. Dr Zawahri was sentenced to death in absentia during a major trial of IJ defendants that opened in Egypt in 1999. He appeared in video footage subsequent to Sept. 11, and apparently lost his wife and a child to another US bombing raid. His precise whereabouts are a mystery.

A rival faction grew out of a group called Vanguard of Conquest (*Talaa' al-Fateh*), led by Ahmad Husayn Agiza (though in 1997 the US State Department named Zawahri as its leader). Formerly amongst the most vicious of Egypt's fundamentalist splinter groups, the *Talaa'* branch of the IJ has apparently eschewed the use of violence, both within Egypt and internationally. Agiza is thought to be trying to revive the group following the colossal crackdown by President Mubarak's regime in the late 1990s. In 2001 the Egyptian government rejected two attempts by figures once associated with the IJ to set up political parties; and in October that year the government claimed to have foiled a second wave of suicide attacks on Western targets from an Egyptian-based *Al-Qaeda* cell, presumably linked to IJ. In a related development, President Bush singled out Egyptian Islamic Jihad in a Sept. 21, 2001, speech to Congress. A month later, the IJ, both as a group and its leaders as individuals, were put on a US blacklist of groups to whom sending funds is deemed a criminal offence.

Reports from Cairo in January 2002 suggested that Sarwat Salah Shehata was positioning himself as the new leader of Egyptian Jihad. He, too, had opposed Zawahri's move to *Al-Qaeda* in 1998, and enjoyed support amongst IJ exiles in London and Amsterdam. It was said that he exploited the rout of *Al-Qaeda* and Taleban in Afghanistan, in late 2001, to make his bid for power. Shehata himself lives in exile, possibly in remoter Baluchi areas of Pakistan. Egyptian courts have twice sentenced him to death in absentia. Assuming Zawahri is still alive, however, he remains IJ's overall leader in the eyes of many analysts. On May 21, 2003, the Al-Jazeera television channel, based in Qatar, broadcast an audio tape which it said had been recorded by Zawahri in which the speaker called for attacks on Western interests.

Meanwhile, the dragnet is tightening for many Egyptian exiles said to be connected to IJ. In December 2001 Jordan extradited to Egypt seven IJ members wanted in connection with the 1995 assassination bid on President Mubarak.

Another case involves Yasser el-Sirri, a Suez-born alleged member of IJ's military wing. He was sentenced to death in absentia in 1994 for the attempted murder of then Egyptian Prime Minister, Atef Sedki, in 1993. Sirri's route into exile is typical of many IJ members. He moved to Yemen in 1988 and Sudan in 1993, before seeking asylum in the UK in 1994. London refused repeated requests from Cairo to extradite him.

Sirri also appeared in Afghanistan during the 1990s, and admits having contacted Dr Zawahri there. He purported to be a peaceful propagator of Islamist notions, through his Islamic Observation Centre in London. He also said he lamented the deaths of Sept. 11, and claimed to oppose Zawahri's policy of political assassinations. However, in October 2001 the UK authorities arrested him on charges of masterminding the murder in northern Afghanistan, on Sept. 9, 2001, of the head of the anti-Taliban Northern Alliance, Ahmed Shah Massoud. He was released on bail in May 2002 after being acquitted for lack of evidence. Dismissed by some IJ figures as a self-promoter with little genuine support, Sirri nonetheless suggests a role that IJ members are increasingly playing: hired guns for other shadowy groups.

On Jan. 5, 2003, Egypt's semi-official *Al Ahram* newspaper reported that security police had arrested 43 suspected members of IJ. Those arrested included Ehab Ismail, who had allegedly formed three cells determined to "attack foreign interests, major personalities and vital installations".

### **Islamic Liberation Party, ILP (Hizb ut-Tahrir al Islami)**

Founded in Jordan in 1948 and originally connected with the Muslim Brotherhood (see entry), this party appeared in Egypt in 1955. Its ultimate aim is the re-establishment of the Islamic Caliphate, which ended in 1924. After 1970 the ILP acquired the support of President Kadhafi of Libya and broke with the Brotherhood. Serious riots in January 1975 were followed by arrests of ILP members.

In September 1980 Egyptian security claimed to have uncovered a branch of the organization, raided it and arrested some of its members. The ILP was also linked to the assassination of President Sadat in October 1981. Later the group operated from West Germany, with branches in the Arab world, one in Tunis being put on trial simultaneously with the arrest in Egypt of alleged ILP members in July 1983. More ILP supporters were detained later, but little was heard of it for years afterwards. The group appears to enjoy more general support in Britain, possibly among Egyptian students there, though it split in the early 1980s, the majority part hiving off to form a new group, *Al-Muhajiroun*. The latter group has no known Egyptian presence.

In June 2002 AFP reported that Egypt had arrested 118 suspected "Islamic militants" in March and April. The accused were charged with trying to reactivate the ILP, with distributing leaflets and internet messages denouncing Cairo's economic policy, and with forging links to *Al-Qaeda*.

### **Muslim Brotherhood (Ikhwan al Muslimin)**

*Leadership. Mamoun el-Hodeiby (Supreme Guide)*

*Websites: www.ummah.org.uk/ikhwan/;*

*www.elbehira.com*

Founded in Ismailia in 1928 as a society of religious resurgence, the Brotherhood claimed in the 1950s two million

members in the Arab world. Current estimates put its Egyptian membership at some 300,000, thus making it the largest dissident grouping by far in the country. So well established is the Brotherhood, and so comparatively moderate are its policies, to call it revolutionary would be a misrepresentation. To a large extent it operates within the framework of legitimate politics, even though it is technically banned from operating as party in its own right. The Brotherhood runs some 5,000 offices throughout Egypt, as well as an extensive network of charitable and financial institutions. Its General Guidance Bureau runs activities and formulates policies, which are discussed and ratified by a 100-member Shura Council.

Initially the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) advocated the overthrow of the monarchy, and its replacement by a political system based on shari'a, or traditional Muslim law. To this end it set up a terrorist branch in the 1930s, known as the Secret Organ. In 1948 the MB sent a division to fight for Egypt against Israel in what Israelis call their War of Independence. Some MB cadres attacked Jewish-owned businesses and British occupation forces as communal and political tensions rose in the Middle East.

On Dec. 18, 1948, Egyptian Prime Minister Nukrashy Pasha banned the *Ikhwan*. Brotherhood members subsequently assassinated the Prime Minister, after which the group's charismatic founding leader, Hasan el-Banna, a former schoolteacher, was himself murdered on Feb. 12, 1949, allegedly by government agents. Some 4,000 Brotherhood members were detained by July that year.

Re-legalized in October 1951, the Brotherhood initially found favour with the Free Officers who led the July 1952 Revolution and instituted a republic in Egypt. The colonels' secular socialist and nationalist principles, however, soon offended and disappointed *Ikhwan* radicals. Though not affected by the 1953 ban on political parties (the MB was not officially a party), the society was dissolved following one Brotherhood gunman's attempt to kill Gamal Abdul Nasser on Oct. 26, 1954. State officials arrested its then leader, Hasan el-Hodeiby, who was sentenced to death. Many other leading members were also jailed. (Hodeiby's sentence was later commuted to life imprisonment.) In November 1954, President Nagib was accused of involvement in a Brotherhood conspiracy, and deposed by Nasser. Thousands of Brotherhood supporters were interned without trial.

In 1964 MB adherents were released in a general amnesty; but many were re-arrested in 1965. There was a new wave of trials, wholesale arrests and allegations that some Brothers had been tortured in prison. Their leading intellectual, Sayyid Qutb, was charged with plotting against the regime, and hanged with two others in 1966. Qutb's book, "Milestones", advocated *Tawhid* (affirmation of God's unity), a violent interpretation of Jihad (holy struggle), and *Takfir* (denunciation of a supposedly Muslim ruler as an infidel). Qutb's writings inspired extremist groups to attempt the violent overthrow of the Egyptian government (see Atonement Society, above). While the mainstream MB moved towards non-violent, legal action, the security services remained hostile to all fundamentalist groups without distinction.

The MB and its various successors rallied considerable support, particularly in the universities. Their influence grew with social tensions caused by Westernization and urbaniza-



tion, and later the Islamic revolution in Iran. The Brotherhood also infiltrated the Egyptian army and professional syndicates. Official hostility towards the MB decreased after Egypt's defeat by Israel in 1967. President Anwar Sadat, on succeeding Nasser in 1970, came to regard it as a natural ally against Nasserite socialists and communists. Many jailed MB members were freed in a 1971 amnesty. After the 1973 war, however, Sadat's new economic policy, and his rapprochement with the USA and Israel in 1977, provoked renewed fundamentalist opposition. No MB candidates were allowed to stand in the People's Assembly elections of 1976 or 1979.

In 1977, and again in 1992, the MB sought to overturn the 1954 decree to disband the organization; on both occasions Egypt's administrative court rejected their call. Even so, in 1976 Sadat had allowed the MB to publish a monthly newsletter, *Al-Dawa* (The Call), until it was shut down amidst growing national unrest in late 1981.

After President Sadat's assassination in October 1981 and the arrest of many hundreds of Islamic fundamentalists, suspected MB sympathizers were purged from the armed forces. But the Brotherhood's then leader, Umar Tilimsani, condemned the assassination and supported Sadat's successor, Hosni Mubarak. Tilimsani also visited imprisoned fundamentalists, so as to persuade them to forswear violence and thus improve their chances when they came to trial. Thereafter security concentrated on smaller fundamentalist groups. Saudi Arabia, a long-time supporter of the Brotherhood, backed this new policy of Mubarak's.

Still banned from electioneering in its own right, the MB aligned itself with the New Wafd Party in the 1984 elections. (The original Wafd, or Delegation Party, emerged as a pivotal nationalist force after World War I. New Wafd was created in 1978). Successful MB-affiliated candidates continued to be officially tolerated, although supporters of the Brotherhood were periodically chastised for their policies on the implementation of Shar'ia, relations with the Coptic church, and social policy. Fundamentalist activists scored a temporary success in 1985 when the Constitutional Court invalidated amendments introducing inter alia limited divorce rights for women.

In the 1987 elections the MB was informally aligned with, and itself largely financed, a tripartite "Islamic Alliance" with Ibrahim Shukri's Labour Party and Mustafa Kamel Murad's Liberal Party. Of the 61 seats won by this group, 36 went to Brotherhood candidates. The MB had campaigned openly under the slogan "God is our aim; the Prophet is our leader; the Koran is our constitution". In its new quasi-legal manifestation, the Brotherhood's proclaimed object was to have all legislation based on the Shar'i'a which the government (with whose party MB members sometimes voted) showed little intention of conceding.

In the mid-1980s much internal trouble stemmed from inter-confessional conflicts. The MB opposed these outrages in 1987, ascribing them to foreign influences. The group denounced violence after an attack on a former Interior Minister. Even the application of Shari'a should be obtained by dialogue, said the Brotherhood. Ahmad Abu Nasr replaced Tilimsani as Supreme Guide in 1986.

The security authorities, unlike the political leadership, still regarded the Brotherhood with suspicion; in 1987 sever-

al hundred MB supporters were reportedly arrested before the polls and in 1989 the then Interior Minister accused it of complicity after 1,000 fundamentalists had been arrested following troubles during Ramadan. On some subjects the MB still openly opposed the government: in 1988 its leader described the hoped-for liberation of the territories occupied by Israel in 1967 as only the first step towards that of all Palestine. In August 1990, however, although its then leader, Ahmad Abu Nasr, initially criticized the despatch of Egyptian troops to Saudi Arabia, the Brotherhood officially demanded an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait. At the same time the MB condemned the stationing of Western forces on "the soil of Islamic countries", an issue which *Al-Qaeda* later propagated to its advantage.

The Egyptian authorities intensified their crackdown on Islamic fundamentalism in 1995. Many moderate MB members were caught in the dragnet, although – or perhaps because – the MB had fielded 160 MB-affiliated candidates in national elections in November that year. A group of 49 MB figures, including senior officials in national syndicates, were tried on charges of reviving a banned organization and having links to terrorism. Liberal commentators queried the sincerity of the MB's professed commitment to democracy, wondered whether they really sought absolute power instead, and voiced concern over the possibility of a clash between strict sharia law and women's rights.

Abu Nasr died in 1996, and Mustafa Mashhour was appointed Supreme Guide by proclamation at the cemetery where Abu Nasr was buried. Elements within the MB criticized this method of choosing the new leader as undemocratic. Younger members began resigning en masse, in protest at persistent domination by older *ulama* (Muslim clerics) and their "paternalistic" grip on power.

Abu Ella Madi and 16 other fellow professional Brothers left the MB to found a new movement called *Wasat* (Centre Party) on Jan. 10, 1996. *Wasat* scrupulously displayed moderation: it emphasized "democratic and modernist values", accepted the Egyptian constitution's circumscribed definition of the role of shari'a law, and had a Coptic Anglican, Dr Rafiq Habib, on its founding committee. Yet in May 1996 it was denied an official licence, and has since withered away as an independent entity.

Mashhour had joined the MB in 1938 and spent 19 years in Egyptian prisons. He penned 17 books, was a physics graduate, and wrote regularly for *Al-Shaab* (The People), mouthpiece of the (legal) Islamist-oriented Labour Party. Known as the "Iron Sheikh", he controversially mooted the re-imposition of the *jizya*, a tax on Christians and Jews not enforced since medieval times. Nonetheless, both Mashhour and his deputy, Mamoun el-Hodeiby, distanced themselves and the group from the terror attacks in the USA of Sept. 11, 2001, and reiterated denials of ties with either *Gama'a* or Islamic Jihad. Mashhour even praised "the wise and brave" stance taken by President Mubarak in response to the attacks, and for his caution over US retaliation against Afghanistan. He rejected charges that the MB infiltrated professional organizations, and called for renewed dialogue with the government.

The MB did surprisingly well in the parliamentary elections of October and November 2000, despite reports of harassment and the arrest of 20 of its candidates in Alexan-

dria. Five of its 22 candidates, running as independents, won in the first of three rounds. Ultimately 17 MB-affiliated candidates were elected to Egypt's 454-seat National Assembly, making the MB in effect the largest single opposition bloc in parliament. The Brotherhood fielded one female candidate, Jihan el-Halafawi.

In December 2002 the Assembly voted to expel one of the 17, Gamal Heshmat, after a constitutional committee claimed there had been a miscount in his original election. Heshmat had long campaigned against conditions in Egyptian prisons. In 1999 he created a website that strongly criticized the government. Presumably worried about a renewal of support for the MB, a trend hastened by anger at the new intifada in Israel and Palestine, the government arrested several MB affiliates in the run-up to the Shura Council elections of April 2001.

The Brotherhood's Supreme Guide, Mustafa Mashhour, died on Nov. 14, 2002, after a period of ailing health. More than 20,000 attended his funeral in Cairo, testifying to the Brotherhood's enduring appeal. As expected, the MB's 13-member executive chose Mamoun el-Hodeiby, 82, and Mashhour's deputy, as the new Guide – a role he had effectively played for years while Mashhour was incapacitated. Hodeiby is the son of the MB's historic second leader, Hassan el-Hodeiby, a moderate figure who said from prison that Brothers are "preachers not judges". However, Hodeiby the son is probably too old to engender the spirit of reform that disgruntled younger members of MB so urgently seek.

## OTHER DISSIDENT GROUPS

### **Egyptian Communist Party (ECP)**

*Leadership. Youssry Zaky, Rawy Abdel Gawwad*

The ECP (*Hizb al-Shuyu'i al-Misri*) was founded in 1921, being banned in 1925. Internal strife has typified the ECP's history, leading to the emergence of numerous splinters over the years. In 1965 the proscribed ECP officially merged with the Arab Socialist Union, the country's sole legal political organization. Shortly after assuming power in 1971, President Sadat purged Marxists and Communist sympathisers from top positions and in 1972 he expelled Soviet advisors. The ECP formally re-established itself in 1975. Both the ECP and its offshoot, the **Egyptian Communist Workers' Party** (ECWP), were involved in serious food riots, in early 1973 and again in 1977. The court also dissolved the ECWP, although further arrests and trials were periodically reported, in the late 1970s and early 1980s, of alleged activists of the ECWP, often in conjunction with members of the (legal) National Progressive Unionist Party, or *Tagammu*.

Hosni Mubarak continued Sadat's policy of curbing Marxist elements, with arrests of activists. However, for the most part, Islamist groups have been far more active of late than members of far-left or Communist-affiliated groups.

### **Egyptian Organization for Human Rights**

*Leadership. Hesham Kasem (president); Hafez Abu Se'da (secretary-general)*

*Website: [www.eohr.org](http://www.eohr.org)*

Established in 1985, and with a paid membership of 2,500, the EOHR campaigns for the suspension of the state of emergency in Egypt, against torture and indefinite detention,

and for the defence of free thought, expression and belief. Since the Sept. 11 attacks in the USA, EOHR has accused the Egyptian government of "exploiting the war on terror" by persecuting the Muslim Brotherhood and other groups. EOHR secretary-general Abu Se'da was arrested on Dec. 1, 1998, for "disseminating false information" and "accepting funds from a foreign country [UK] for the purpose of carrying out acts harmful to Egypt".

### **Egypt's Revolution (Thawrat Misr)**

First reported in June 1984, this Nasserite group admitted assassinating an attaché at the Israeli embassy in Cairo and hijacking an Egyptian airliner between Athens and Cairo in 1985. The hijacking ended in Malta with a bungled rescue by Egyptian commandos in November 1985, leaving over 60 dead. Some dispute that *Thawrat* was actually involved: the only surviving hijacker was a Lebanese-born Palestinian and the name "Egypt's Revolution" may well have been employed as a cover by the Palestinian Abu Nidal Group.

A group employing the same name claimed responsibility for killing an Israeli at the Israeli pavilion during the Cairo trade fair in March 1986 and for attacking two US diplomats in Cairo in May 1987, allegedly as a protest against Egypt's 1979 peace with Israel. Seven Egyptians were arrested, including Mahmoud Nour al-Din Sulayman, putative head of the group. Sulayman was jailed that year, and died in September 1998 in Tora Penitentiary Hospital. Another eight were charged in absentia, including Khalid Abdul Nasser, son of the late President. A nephew of Nasser's, Jamal Shawqi, was arrested on his return to Egypt in January 1989 but released on bail. The group favoured a return to Nasserite beliefs and received funding from Libya. However, little more has been heard of them in recent years.

Most Nasserites prefer to follow the legitimate path offered by the small Arab Democratic Party (ADP), led by Chairman Diaaeddin Dawoud.

### **Ibn Khaldun Research Centre**

*Leadership. Professor Saad Eddin Ibrahim (director)*

The Centre Director, Prof. Saad Eddin Ibrahim, has a long-standing reputation as a proponent of democracy and a critic of Mubarak's political apparatus. In 1999, following a long trial on charges of sedition, Ibrahim and 26 other Centre members were imprisoned for a period. In July 2002 Ibrahim was jailed again, this time for seven years, on charges of investigating the conduct of domestic elections and violence (allegedly sanctioned by arms of the government) against Egypt's Coptic Christian community. On Sept. 25, 2002, some 100 prominent Egyptian and other Arab intellectuals and politicians urged President Mubarak to free Ibrahim, and warned that his imprisonment was undermining Egypt's image abroad; the USA also linked any increase in its aid budget to the issue, leading to accusations in the Egyptian media that the USA was interfering in Egypt's internal affairs. Ibrahim was acquitted by an appeal court on March 18, 2003, and freed.

### **Popular Committee for Support of the Palestinian Intifada**

Formed in the wake of the start of the Al Aqsa Intifada by Palestinians in October 2000, the committee consists of var-

ious NGO activists and representatives of different opposition parties. On April 1, 2002, 10,000 students joined a committee-led demonstration in Cairo; many fought with police and vandalised “American symbols”. Police resorted to live fire outside Alexandria University on April 9; one student was killed and 250 wounded when police broke up the protest. Reports suggest that independent Trotskyites and “campus socialists” play a prominent role in street battles, as do radical secular Nasserites. Islamists, too, have held meetings, particularly near Al Azhar College, but these have been comparatively muted. Increasingly, protests turned to condemning President Mubarak directly. “The road to Jerusalem runs through Cairo”, was one slogan.

### LIBERAL DISSENT

Many of Egypt’s most prominent campaigners for civil and human rights are individuals, unaffiliated to official dissident groups. Some are iconic figures with international reputations, like the Nobel Prize winning novelist Naguib Mahfouz and the cinema director Youssef Chahine. Invariably fiercest reaction to liberal dissidents comes not from the establishment, but from fellow dissidents of an Islamist hue. The popular novelist, satirist and social critic, Farag Foda, was killed by radical Muslims in 1992.

### COPTS

Copts constitute some 14 per cent of the national population and with its 6,000,000 members, the Coptic Orthodox Church is the largest Christian denomination by far in Egypt. Many Copts claim to be the “original Egyptians”, descendants of those already in Egypt when Muslim Arabs invaded in the 7th century. Muslim hostility to Copts has caused many clashes and some casualties.

In 1980 Sadat unconvincingly accused Pope Shenouda III (elected in November 1971) and other Coptic priests of seeking to partition Egypt and set up a Christian state. Further serious clashes and a bomb attack on a church in Cairo were followed by many arrests. Shenouda himself was confined to a desert monastery in September 1981 and his temporal powers were transferred to a government-appointed committee (although he remained spiritual leader of the Copts).

In January 1985 Shenouda was allowed to resume his duties, and at a mass attended by President Mubarak called for reconciliation between Muslims and Christians. So did official Muslim leaders; however, Shenouda’s release was criticized by Sheikh Umar Abdurrahman, the prominent fundamentalist leader (see under Islamic Jihad), who said it illustrated government bias against “Islamists”.

Shenouda has also angered expatriate Copts, especially those living in the USA and Canada, who claim he hides the true story of Coptic persecution in Egypt. They allege that Cairo turned a blind eye to Muslim extremists who attacked and murdered Copts in Khosheh, Asyut and Abu Qurqas in the late 1990s. Some Coptic activists have sought to get Washington to impose sanctions on Egypt because of these events, though few of these activists are willing to operate openly in Egypt itself.

The Coptic Pope has assiduously nurtured relations with the leading Muslim cleric in Egypt, Sheikh Mohammed Tantawi, Imam of Al Azhar College; and speaks out strongly on pan-Arab causes, like the status of Jerusalem and treatment of Palestinians by Israel.

*Lawrence Joffe*

## El Salvador

**Capital:** San Salvador

**Population:** 6.6 m

The Republic of El Salvador, under the terms of its 1983 Constitution as modified in 1991 has an elected executive President, who serves a five-year term. There is an 84-member unicameral legislature (Legislative Assembly), elected for three-year terms. Members of the Supreme Court and the Supreme Electoral Tribunal are appointed by qualified majority of the legislature. An independent government-funded Human Rights Ombudsman is named by the Legislative Assembly.

In presidential elections held on March 7, 1999, Francisco Flores Pérez of the right-wing Nationalist Republic Alliance (ARENA) was elected with 51% of the vote, against 29% for Facundo Guardado, an ex-guerrilla leader, of the former left-wing rebel group,

Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (*Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional*, FMLN). In legislative elections held on March 12, 2000, ARENA lost its overall legislative majority (securing 29 seats), while the FMLN won 31 seats, the right-wing National Reconciliation Party (PCN) 14 seats, the centre-right Christian Democrat Party (PDC) five seats, three for a centre-left coalition of Democratic Convergence (CD), and two more for other parties. In legislative elections held on March 16, 2003, ARENA lost another three seats and the FMLN increased its legislative share to 31 seats. The PCN remained the third largest party with 14 seats, followed by PDC with five seats and the CD with three seats.

### FMLN insurgency of the 1980s

A densely populated country with one of the highest population growth rates in Central America, El Salvador was for a long time ruled by military governors following the suppression of a communist-led peasant rebellion in 1932. The uprising cost around 30,000 lives, including that of the rebel leader, Augusto Farabundo Martí. After elections held in 1972 and 1977 the opposition (and in particular the PDC) accused the PCN of massive electoral fraud in favour of the PCN's military candidates. Many opposition politicians began to seek asylum abroad.

Following the overthrow of President Carlos Humberto Romero in October 1979, the incoming reformist military-civilian junta was unable to maintain support among the various left-wing opposition groups. Repression against unions and opposition groups increased, and in 1980 opposition forces grouped together to launch a concerted attempt to overthrow the government. On Jan. 10, 1981, the newly-formed **Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front** (*Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional*, FMLN), an umbrella grouping of five separate guerrilla organizations, launched what it termed a "final offensive" against the government. Badly armed, and lacking in organization and popular support, the FMLN's first major uprising was easily suppressed by the Army. It also led the incoming US administration of President Ronald Reagan to resume military aid to El Salvador, which had been suspended by Jimmy Carter in the wake of the murder of three US nuns by Salvadorean National Guardsmen the previous year. Although this was several times questioned by Congress in view of the poor human rights record of the Salvadorean military, El Salvador remained one of the largest recipients of US military and economic aid for the entirety of the 12-year civil war.

After their failed offensive – but swelled in numbers by students and union members who fled the cities – the FMLN retreated to the country's northern and eastern mountains. During the following decade, the rebels used their bases in these regions to launch small-scale guerrilla attacks and larger military strikes against army units, and increasingly to make incursions into the major cities. Large areas of northern Chalatenango and eastern Morazán provinces fell under rebel control. During the early years of the war, central and local government fled those areas, and tens of thousands of peasant inhabitants sought refuge in camps over the border in Honduras. From 1996, the rebels encouraged a policy of repatriation of the refugees, many of whom were relatives of rebel fighters.

In October 1984 President José Napoleón Duarte (the elected candidate of the PDC in March 1982 elections) proposed peace talks with representatives of the FMLN and their political allies in the **Democratic Revolutionary Front**, FDR. Little progress was made, but a second round of talks was held later that same year. Further talks were held under the auspices of the Roman Catholic church in 1985 and 1986, but,

as on previous occasions, the discussion foundered on the government's insistence on a guerrilla cease-fire as a pre-condition, on the one hand, and the FMLN-FDR's refusal to recognize the legitimacy of the Duarte government on the other. Following the election of President Alfredo Cristiani Burkhard of ARENA as president in March 1989, contacts with the rebels were resumed. However, distrust was deep-seated on both sides. At the time the FMLN was secretly preparing for its largest-ever military offensive, which it launched on Nov. 11, 1989, simultaneously attacking the capital, San Salvador, as well as several large provincial cities. Militarily, the offensive failed to secure its objectives, and the rebel fighters were forced to withdraw from San Salvador and elsewhere after more than a week of fierce fighting. However, the ability of the rebels to strike so close to the government's seat of power and take the civil war from the isolated rural areas into the cities, proved to be a turning point in the conflict. Officials both in the Salvadorean government and in the US administration in Washington, many of whom had long believed the FMLN-FDR was militarily weak and lacking in support, came to realise that victory in the civil war was now unattainable. The murder of six unarmed Jesuit priests by members of an elite Army unit during the guerrilla offensive also brought diplomatic and political pressure on the government to seek a political settlement to the fighting. For its part, the FMLN-FDR woke up to its failure to spark off a popular insurrection in the cities – as many of its leaders had predicted would occur once the rebel offensive began. Moreover, the changing international posture of the Soviet Union, the collapse of Communist regimes throughout Eastern Europe through 1989, and the electoral defeat of the left-wing Sandinistas in Nicaragua in February 1990 meant that a major source of the FMLN-FDR's military and political support dried up. Diplomatic and political pressure, as well as the stalemate on the battlefield, brought both sides, somewhat reluctantly, back to the negotiating table, this time under the auspices of the United Nations.

### Transformation of FMLN to legitimate political party

The peace settlement that was eventually signed in Mexico City on Jan. 16, 1992, by President Cristiani and the five leaders of the FMLN paved the way for the disarmament of the 8,000 rebel fighters, and its conversion into a legal political party. The Army was severely cut in size and its officer corps purged in consequence of the work of an internationally-led Truth Commission and an ad hoc independent review committee. A new civilian police force, the National Civilian Police (*Policia Nacional Civil*) was created, with initial quotas for former guerrilla fighters and former members of the Army and existing National Police. Under the complex series of accords, the 1983 constitution was also reformed, redefining the constitutional role of the Armed Forces (limiting it to defence of the national sovereignty), restructuring the Supreme Court

and the Supreme Electoral Council, and increasing the number of elected members of the unicameral legislature.

On March 16, 1994, the first post-war elections were held, in which the FMLN participated as a legal political party. In a second-round run-off against the ARENA candidate, Armando Calderón Sol, the FMLN candidate, Rubén Zamora Rivas secured 26% of the vote. The FMLN also won 21 seats in the legislature. Tensions within the leadership of the former rebel group, which can be traced back to its foundation, resurfaced soon after its first electoral participation. In December 1994, a majority of the supporters of two of the five original founding groups left the FMLN to form the social-democrat orientated Democratic Party. Despite the spilt, the FMLN went on to increase its legislative and municipal share in 1997 elections. Amongst its gains was the city of San Salvador, where Dr Hector Silva became the first left-wing mayor in the capital's history. Further internal wrangling dented the image of the former rebels among voters ahead of the March 2000 presidential elections, in which their candidate, Facundo Guardado, failed to build upon the legislative success, winning just 29 per cent of the vote. Guardado and some of his backers have since left the party to form a break-away Renovation Movement Party, which was legally registered in September 2002.

Ahead of legislative and municipal elections in March 2003, there were further divisions, resulting in the resignation of Silva from the FMLN. He was generally considered to be the party's strongest candidate for the presidential race in March 2004. However, even without Silva, the FMLN still held onto the mayoralship of San Salvador, and defeated strong ARENA candidates in other large urban centres. In the legislature, the FMLN again emerged as the largest single party, increasing its share to 31 seats. The results were seen as having put the party in a strong position to make a challenge for the presidency in March 2004. In late July 2003 a party congress was set to choose the presidential candidate from two nominations: the veteran communist party leader, Shaffick Handal, or a former mid-level guerrilla leader (currently mayor of Santa Tecla) Oscar Ortiz. Both are considered traditionalists within the organization. Some members had called for a candidate to be selected from outside the historic ranks of the former rebels – which would have arguably given the FMLN a better chance of winning the presidential race.

Of the original five member organizations, only three remain within the FMLN (the Communist Party, the Farabundo Marti Popular Liberation Forces, FPL, and the Central American Workers' Party, PRTC). However, the separate structures and internal organi-

zation of these three founding parties have effectively been merged into one single unified group.

## EXTREME RIGHT-WING GROUPS

Right-wing deaths squads, linked to the Salvadorean military and responsible for numerous murders and acts of persecution during the civil war, no longer operate in post-war El Salvador. A 1993 report from a UN-organized Truth Commission detailed the activities and organization of these death squads. An ad hoc investigating committee, also formed after the peace accords, subsequently dismissed over 100 army officers – many of them for alleged involvement in extrajudicial killings. Nevertheless, in the first years after the peace agreement there were a number of politically-motivated killings and assassination attempts on high-profile members of the FMLN.

Unlike the death squad killings that took place in the war years, no known group claimed responsibility for many of these attacks. Many do appear to have been the work of a loose structure of former and active-duty police officers, in league with former members of the military. These assassinations included the 1993 murder of Francisco Velis, a top-ranking member of the PRTC and a future candidate for congress in the 1994 elections.

In June 1996, a group emerged calling itself the Major Roberto D'Aubuisson Nationalist Force, or FURODA, threatening public political and religious figures. It is not believed to have carried out any specific actions.

### Black Shadow (*Sombra Negra*)

This group emerged in December 1994 in the eastern province of San Miguel. In anonymously written statements to the press, it declared its task as "social cleansing" of members of juvenile street gangs, or maras. Between December 1994 and April 1995, the group claimed responsibility for the death of 17 alleged gang members, almost all of them in San Miguel. The *Sombra Negra* was effectively disbanded when the authorities arrested several police officers and local businessmen from San Miguel. A local ARENA party leader was also implicated in the organization. Those arrested were later released because of lack of evidence and no further investigations took place. Subsequently, in September 1999, a group calling itself *Chicos Buenos*, or Good Guys, issued public death threats against other alleged criminals. Five deaths in western Santa Ana province that same year were believed to have been the work of the group.

*Michael Lanchin*

# Equatorial Guinea

**Capital:** Malabo

**Population:** 474,000

The Republic of Equatorial Guinea won independence from Spain in 1968. The current President, Brig.-Gen. Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, seized power from the dictatorial regime of Francisco Macías Nguema (his uncle) in a coup in 1979. Ruling through a Supreme Military Council, the regime banned all political parties until 1987, when Obiang announced the formation of a single “party of government”, the Democratic Party of Equatorial Guinea (PDGE). Constitutional amendments, approved by referendum in 1982, extended the President’s term of office for a further seven years, and provided for the holding of presidential and legislative elections in a gradual transition from military to civilian rule. A new constitution, providing for the introduction of multiparty politics, was adopted by referendum in 1991. It provided for the separation of powers between the President and Prime Minister and also provided for a unicameral legislature (the House of People’s Representatives) of 80 members who are directly elected for a five-year term by universal adult suffrage.

Obiang was first elected (unopposed) as President in 1989 and subsequently secured re-election in February 1996 and December 2002. His most recent victory (with 99.5 per cent of the vote) was marred by irregularities, prompting opposition parties to withdraw their candidates some two hours after voting had started. Legislative elections held in March 1999 gave the PDGE an overwhelming majority, with opposition parties winning only five of the 80 seats. The opposition parties protested during the campaign against electoral irregularities and refused to take up their new seats in the legislature, calling for the results to be annulled.

Opposition to the Obiang regime has largely been directed by groups in exile, usually based in Spain. Legitimate opposition political parties, undermined by years of repression and internal dissension and defections, often engineered by the PDGE, have found it increasingly difficult to mobilize their supporters. An attempt to overthrow the regime was reported to have been made in 1997, resulting in mass arrests. Those arrested were eventually tried and in June 2002 close to 70 people, including a number of leading opposition figures, were sentenced to prison terms of between six and 20 years for conspiring to overthrow the President. Some of those imprisoned were members of banned organizations, but others included Plácido Miko Abogo, leader of the legitimate opposition Social Democratic Convergence (CPDS), who received a 14-year sentence. After the trial had ended, in July 2002 another legitimate opposition leader (Fabien Nseu Guema, leader of the Popular Union), was sentenced to one year in prison after being found guilty of insult-

ing the President. Nseu, a lawyer, had been arrested whilst preparing the defence of the alleged coup plotters.

The Bubi ethnic group, based on Bioko island, has also been a target of repression for the Obiang regime. In 1998 some 50 Bubi people were convicted of offences including “treason, terrorism and the illegal possession of explosives” after a military trial and were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment. Western analysts believed that many had been arrested solely on account of their ethnic origin.

The regime has faced strong criticism from the US State Department, citing denial of freedom of speech and the use of arbitrary detention and torture. However, US companies have recently been to the fore in developing Equatorial Guinea’s considerable oil reserves, and in early 2003 it was reported that the USA would re-open its embassy in the country, closed in 1995 (prior to the development of a large-scale offshore sector), US officials stating that diplomatic engagement would bring improvements in human rights.

## **National Resistance of Equatorial Guinea (Resistencia Nacional de Guinea Ecuatorial, RENAGE)**

*Address. Aptdo. de Correos, 40, 28930 Móstoles (Madrid), Spain*

*Website. [www.renake.org](http://www.renake.org)*

*Email. [info@renake.org](mailto:info@renake.org)*

*Leadership. Daniel M. Oyono (president); Aquilino Nguema Ona Nchama (vice-president); Weja Chicampo Puye (secretary-general)*

This exiled opposition umbrella organization was formed in the Spanish capital Madrid in 2001 and is led by Daniel Oyono, who also serves as president of the Independent Union of Democrats (*Unión de Demócratas Independientes*), one of RENAGE’s member organisations. Other members include the Movement for the Self-determination of the Island of Bioko (*Movimiento para la Autodeterminación de la Isla de Bioko*) and the Union for Democracy and Social Development (*Unión para la Democracia y el Desarrollo Social*). The Popular Union (*Unión Popular*), whose leader Fabien Nseu Guema had been sentenced to one year in prison in August 2002, was also a member of RENAGE, as was the Republican Democratic Forces (*Fuerza Demócrata Republicana*). In June 2002 the FDR chairman, Felipe Ondo Obiang, and Guillermo Nguema Ela, a senior party official and a former minister, were, along with other opposition figures, sentenced to long terms of imprisonment after being found guilty of plotting to overthrow President Obiang.

*D. J. Sagar*



# Eritrea

**Capital:** Asmara

**Population:** 4.2 m

A former Italian colony, Eritrea was a British protectorate from 1941 to 1952, when it became federated with Ethiopia by decision of the UN. It was eventually annexed by Ethiopia in 1962. Following the fall of the government of Mengistu Haile Mariam in Ethiopia in 1991, Eritrea functioned as an autonomous region with the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF, now the People's Front for Democracy and Justice, PFDJ), establishing a provisional government. The Republic of Eritrea was declared in May 1993 following a referendum, bringing to an end a 30-year struggle for independence. A transitional government was established to administer the country for a maximum of four years pending the drafting of a constitution and multiparty elections. Legislative power was vested in a unicameral National Assembly, comprising 75 members of the central committee of the PFDJ, plus (from March 1994) an equal number of members elected by PFDJ regional committees. The National Assembly elected the President, who was in turn its Chairman. Executive power was vested in a State Council appointed by the President, a post held, on an interim basis in the absence of elections since independence, by Isayas Afewerki.

In May 1997 a Constituent Assembly, comprising the 150 members of the current National Assembly and 377 representatives of regional assemblies and Eritreans living outside the country, adopted a draft constitution. Under this a President would be popularly elected for a maximum of two five-year terms, while a popularly elected legislature would have powers to revoke the President's mandate by a two-thirds majority vote. Political "pluralism" was authorized on a "conditional" basis with a view to holding elections (and thereby bringing the new constitution into force) in 1998. Pending the elections, legislative power was vested in a transitional National Assembly comprising 75 members of the PFDJ central committee, 60 regional members of the former Constituent Assembly and 15 representatives of Eritreans living outside the country. The presidency and the executive continued to function on the basis of existing transitional arrangements. The holding of elections in 1998 was precluded by the outbreak of a two-year border war with Ethiopia, and it was not until October 2000 that the transitional National Assembly set a new target date of December 2001 for the elections. However, the elections had not been held as of June 2003.

The authorities used repressive measures to deal with an upsurge in public dissent in the latter part of 2001. At least 80 people were detained including journalists and a number of senior PFDJ figures who had posted criticism of the government on the Internet.

The independent press was suspended in September and remained so as of June 2003. Student leaders who had organized anti-government demonstrations at Asmara University were arrested and thousands were kept in harsh conditions during their compulsory summer work programme at camps on the Red Sea. The European Parliament in February 2002 adopted a resolution that expressed concern at growing authoritarian tendencies in Eritrea.

## **Alliance of Eritrean National Forces (AENF)**

*Leadership: Abdullah Idriss (chairman); Hirui Tedla Bairu (secretary general)*

In March 1999 representatives of 10 Eritrean opposition groups formed the Alliance of Eritrean National Forces (AENF), under the leadership of Abdullah Idriss – leader of the Eritrean Liberation Front-Revolutionary Council – to overthrow the government of President Isayas Afewerki and create a three-year transitional government ahead of elections.

The members of the AENF are as follows: the Eritrean Liberation Front; the Eritrean Peoples' Conference; the Eritrean Islamic Salvation Movement; the Eritrean Liberation Front-Revolutionary Council; the Eritrean Liberation Front-National Council; the Eritrean Peoples' Democratic Liberation Front; the Eritrean Revolutionary Democratic Front; the Democratic Movement for the Liberation of Kunama/Eritrea; the Eritrean Democratic Resistance Movement Gash-Setit; and the Eritrean Initiative Group.

The AENF is based in Sudan, which has often accused Eritrea of supporting Sudanese opposition forces. In October 2002 the Sudanese government accused Eritrea of backing Sudanese rebels from the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) who had managed to cut the road in the east of Sudan linking the capital, Khartoum, to Port Sudan on the Red Sea. Eritrean reports in November 2002 claimed that Sudan, Ethiopia and Yemen had recently established a "trilateral axis of belligerence" aimed at overthrowing the government.

## **Islamic Salvation Movement**

*Leadership: Sheikh Mohamed Amer (secretary general)*

The government of Isayas Afewerki has faced limited armed opposition within the country from the Sudanese-based Eritrean Islamic Jihad Movement (*Harakat al Jihad al Islami*), a group which at a congress held in Khartoum in September 1998, changed its name to the Islamic Salvation Movement (*Harakat al Khalas al Islami*). The movement seeks the forceful overthrow of Eritrea's government and its replacement by an Islamic government. The Sudanese authorities indicated their official support of the movement when they allowed its secretary general, Sheikh Mohamed Amer, to hold a news conference in Khartoum.

*D. J. Sagar*

# Estonia

**Capital:** Tallinn

**Population:** 1.4 m

Estonia proclaimed its independence on Feb. 24, 1918. In June 1940, under the terms of the Hitler-Stalin pact, Soviet troops invaded the country and in August it was incorporated into the Soviet Union. Latvia again declared its independence on Aug. 20, 1991, in the midst of the unsuccessful August 1991 coup d'état in Moscow, this being recognized by the USSR State Council on Sept. 6.

A new constitution approved by referendum in June 1992 provides for a parliamentary system combined with a strong presidency. The President is the Head of State and is elected for a five-year term by secret ballot of the Estonian Parliament, the Riigikogu. In the absence of the required two-thirds majority after three voting rounds, a special assembly of parliamentary deputies and local council representatives elects the President. The President nominates the Prime Minister, who forms the Council of Ministers (government), subject to parliamentary approval. The 101-member unicameral Riigikogu is popularly elected by Estonian citizens for a four-year term by a system of proportional representation of parties which obtain at least 5% of the vote. Under constitutional amendments adopted in November 1998, parties may not contest elections in alliances, although joint lists of candidates are permissible.

Elections to the Riigikogu on March 2, 2003, gave the following results: *Eesti Keskerakond* (Estonian Centre Party) 28 seats (with 25.4% of the vote), *Uhendus Vabariigi Eest – Res Publica* (Union for the Republic – Res Publica) 28 (24.6%), *Eesti Reformierakond* (Estonian Reform Party) 19 (17.7%), *Eestimaa Rahvaliid* (Estonian People's Union) 13 (13.0%), *Erakond Isamaaliit* (Party Fatherland Union) 7 (7.3%), *Rahvaerakond Moodukad* (People's Party Moderates) 6 (7.0%).

## Citizenship issue

Estonians constitute 67.9% of the country's population. The main ethnic minorities consist of Russians (25.6%), Ukrainians (2.1%), Belarusians (1.2%) and Finns (0.9%), with others comprising 2.3%. An overwhelming majority of the non-Estonians, and the Slavic groups in particular, are recent settlers that were able to settle there only because Estonia had been involuntarily incorporated into the Soviet Union. The Russian minority in Estonia resides primarily in two areas of the country – the capital city Tallinn and the border cities of Narva and Sillamae. The first major influx of ethnic Russians into Estonia took place under the Soviet policy of population intermixing. While

travel outside of the Soviet Union was restricted, the people of the USSR were free to relocate within the country. Due to its relative economic prosperity, Estonia was a popular destination for people from the rest of the Soviet Union. The ethnic composition of Estonia's previously small and homogeneous population was drastically altered as a result. Russians were the group that immigrated in the greatest numbers to the region.

Under Soviet rule, the Russian minorities were not under any real or perceived threat. They were allowed to speak Russian to conduct official business and their children could attend Russian-speaking schools. In addition, the Soviet military was dominated by Russians, and due to the geographic position of Estonia, there was always a large military presence in the area. Despite their migration to Estonia, the Russian population did not assimilate into the local society. The situation for the Russian minority changed dramatically after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the subsequent declaration of Estonia's independence in 1991. With the adoption of the new Estonian constitution, many Russians who lived their entire lives in Estonia had overnight become outsiders.

In February 1992 the Estonian Parliament passed a "ius sanguinis" citizenship law that granted automatic citizenship only to citizens of Estonia's inter-war republic (1918-40) or their descendants. The law also provided for naturalization. This legislation effectively disenfranchised roughly 30 per cent of the population that came to Estonia after Soviet annexation in 1940 or were born there in later years. Consequently, elimination of the discriminatory citizenship and language requirements has been at the core of the Russian minority's demands since the early 1990s. These grievances have been articulated by a number of conventional political parties and pressure groups. There has been no evidence of rebellion.

The 1992 citizenship law was amended on Dec. 8, 1998, to allow stateless children born in Estonia after Feb. 26, 1992, to legally resident stateless parents to acquire Estonian citizenship at the request of their parents and without having to pass a language test. According to official data released in 2002, some 80% of the population are citizens of Estonia, 7% citizens of other countries and 13% stateless.

Although Estonia has encountered a number of problems in reconciling the needs of nation-building and the needs of minority rights the accommodation process has been relatively smooth. The Estonian nationalists appear to have accepted, somewhat grudgingly, that ethnic Russians must be offered citizenship



and a chance to integrate, while the overwhelming majority of Russians have come to accept integration into Estonian society so long as they feel there is a genuine prospect of integration for themselves and their children. This slow convergence of views and attitudes has weakened the basis for the growth of extremist politics and groups. However, in May 2000 a high ranking official of the Estonian Security Police reported that the neo-Nazi movement in Estonia continues to be fuelled by Russian neo-Nazi groups.

### Extremist groups

The (Russian) National Bolshevik Party (NBP) is the Estonian section of an extremist neo-fascist party established in May 1993 in the Russian Federation by Eduard Limonov (see Russia entry). The activities of the Estonian branch, which comprises several hundred members but can count on the tacit support of many more, have been restricted to organizing small demonstrations and publishing leaflets that oppose Estonia's membership of the EU and NATO and advocate armed resistance.

Russian National Unity (RNE), established in Russia in 1990 by Alexander Barkashov (see Russia

entry), is a neo-Nazi party that glorifies Russian chauvinism and Russian Orthodoxy. It established a regional centre in Estonia in 1996. It attempted to launch an electoral campaign in November 1999, but without any success. Since then its limited appeal has declined even further. The organization is reported to have about 100 members in Estonia. In April 2002 Tallinn City Court found three members of the RNE guilty of instigating ethnic hatred.

In addition to the extremist movements of Russian origin racist skinheads have made their presence felt in Estonia. Active skinheads groups function in Tallinn, Tartu, Pärnu, Saaremaa and Northern Estonia. The most active group of about 50 operates in Tartu, harassing foreigners and the local Russian-speaking population.

Eesti Paremaarmuslik Organisatsioon (EPO) is a far-right group that appeared on the internet in August 2001. Its website calls for campaign against Estonia's membership of the European Union, an end to marriages between members of different races and the expulsion of all refugees from Estonia.

*Bogdan Szajkowski*

## Ethiopia

**Capital:** Addis Ababa

**Population:** 64 m

What is now the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia was a monarchy under Emperor Haile Selassie until the 1974 revolution, after which there was military rule until the introduction of the 1987 constitution proclaiming the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. Rebel forces under the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) took control of Addis Ababa in May 1991, and Lt.-Col. Mengistu Haile Mariam, who had come to power after an internal struggle within the military leadership in 1977, fled the country. In July 1991 an 87-member Council of Representatives, elected at a multiparty conference, confirmed the leader of the EPRDF, Meles Zenawi, as transitional President. In December 1994 a new constitution was adopted, restructuring Ethiopia into nine ethnically-based states (each with a popularly elected legislature) and providing for a system of national government centred on a bicameral federal parliament. This comprises a directly elected House of People's Representatives with a maximum of 550 members and an upper House of the Federation whose members are elected by the state legislatures. The maximum interval between legislative elections is five years. The federal President (ceremonial head of state) is elected by a two-thirds majority of both houses of the federal parliament for a six-year term (renewable once); candidates are nominated by the House of

People's Representatives. A presidential candidate who is a member of parliament must resign from parliament if elected President. The federal Prime Minister (leader of the majority party in the House of People's Representatives) is head of the executive branch, chairman of the Council of Ministers and commander-in-chief of the armed forces.

In elections to the House of People's Representatives held in May 1995, but boycotted by many opposition parties, the EPRDF won a landslide victory, consolidating its hold on power. In August 1995 the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia was officially proclaimed. Elections for federal and state legislatures were held in May 2000, and resulted in an overwhelming victory for the EPRDF. The incumbent Prime Minister, Meles Zenawi, was formally confirmed in office in October 2000.

Shortly before the May 2000 elections were held, months of relatively low level hostilities along the border with Eritrea escalated when Ethiopia launched attacks on three fronts, throwing the Eritrean forces into disarray. The two sides eventually signed an internationally-brokered peace agreement in December 2000 and in April 2002 a boundary commission established by the Permanent Court of Arbitration at The Hague delivered its decision on the delimitation of the disputed border. The ruling, which was accept-

ed by both sides, gave Eritrea significant awards in the largely uninhabited western sector of the border but awarded Ethiopia some areas in the central region, including symbolically important towns, such as Zalambessa.

Ethiopian government troops operate in Somalia's Gedo, Bay and Bakol regions, supporting particular local Somali factions. The government faces long-running armed opposition in the Oromo region from the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), and in the Somali region from the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) and its ally *Al Itihaad al Islamiya* (Islamic Union), an Islamist group with ties to Islamist groups in Somalia (see entry on Somalia). In April 2002 five members of *Al Itihaad* were sentenced to death for committing "terrorist acts" in Ethiopia in 1995-96 in which 27 people were killed.

### **Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF)**

*Website. [www.onlf.org/](http://www.onlf.org/)*

Encouraged by the breakdown of authority in Addis Ababa after the 1974 overthrow of Haile Selassie, Somalia provided matériel and organizational support to insurgent movements in the Ogaden in south-eastern Ethiopia. The Western Somali Liberation Front (WSLF), which operated in the Ogaden, supported the creation of a "Greater Somalia". Its sphere of operations was in Bale, Sidamo, and Arsi, where it advocated union with Somalia or the creation of an independent state. After the 1977-78 Ogaden War, the WSLF was routed, and its forces flocked to camps in Somalia. The Somali government subsequently forbade the WSLF to use its territory to launch attacks into Ethiopia. By 1989 the WSLF had ceased to be an effective guerrilla organization within Ethiopia, and had effectively been replaced by a WSLF splinter group, the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF). Formed in August 1984, the ONLF initially had its headquarters in Kuwait.

Since its formation the ONLF has carried out guerrilla activities against the Ethiopian government; through its radio station, Radio Freedom, Voice of the Ogadeni People, the ONLF provides frequent reports of attacks on Ethiopian military targets. The ONLF maintains close links with other Ethiopian rebel groups, in particular the Oromo Liberation Front. In 1998 elements from within the ONLF merged with the Ethiopian Somali Democratic League (an 11-party alliance) to form the Somali People's Democratic Party, which in elections held in 2000 won seats in the federal legislature and in the Somali state of Ethiopia.

### **Oromo Liberation Front (OLF)**

*Leadership. Daoud Ibsa Gudina (chairman)*

*Website. [www.oromoliberationfront.org/](http://www.oromoliberationfront.org/)*

Established in 1973, the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) describes itself as "a political organization established ... by Oromo nationalists to lead the national liberation struggle of the Oromo people against the Abyssinian colonial rule". Following its formation, the OLF made a minor contribution to the military struggle against the Mengistu regime com-

pared with the contribution of Eritrean forces or the Tigre People's Liberation Front (TPLF, the main component of the ruling Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). Mutual antipathy between the OLF and the TPLF led to the creation, under the latter's auspices, of the rival Oromo People's Democratic Organization (OPDO) in 1990. Initially committed to an independent Oromo state, the OLF announced in mid-1991 that it would support substantial regional autonomy within a federal Ethiopia, and shortly afterwards it accepted four ministerial posts in the transitional government headed by Meles Zenawi of the EPRDF. However, clashes between members of the OLF and members of the OPDO (an EPRDF member-party) during the run-up to elections led to a final break with the EPRDF in 1992, after which the OLF went into armed opposition to the Meles regime, carrying out low-level guerrilla activities and advocating boycotts of all elections. The OLF also clashed with rival Oromo rebel groups, some of which had come into being through splits in the OLF. In September 2000 the OLF met with other Oromo rebel factions and agreed to form a new, unified group, the United Liberation Front of Orimiya (see entry below). The OLF is believed to receive support from Eritrea, Libya and Yemen.

### **Sidama Liberation Front (SLF)**

The Sidama Liberation Front, known as the Sidama Liberation Movement until July 1999, is a political front struggling, among other things, for self-determination for the Sidama people of southern Ethiopia. The SLF enjoys close links with the Oromo Liberation Front and the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF).

In May 2002 some 7,000 Sidama people from Awassa, capital of Ethiopia's Southern Region, and surrounding villages marched in a peaceful demonstration, to protest against the proposed changes to the administrative status of Awassa. Police used live ammunition without warning against the unarmed demonstrators, killing at least 25 and wounding many others. Following the killings hundreds of people, including SLF members and supporters, were detained in Awassa.

### **United Liberation Front of Orimiya (ULFO)**

*Leadership: Gen. Wako Guto (chairman); Jara Abaganda (vice chairman); Daud Ibsa (vice chairman); Galasa Dilbo (secretary-general); Jamal Haji Ibrahim (first deputy secretary-general); Abagidi Abamagal (second deputy secretary-general).*

This alliance of Oromo rebel forces was formed in mid-September 2000 and is composed of the following groups: the Oromo Islamic Liberation Front (IFLO); the Oromo Liberation Council (OLC); the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF); the Oromo Peoples' Liberation Organization (OPLO); and the United Oromo Peoples' Liberation Front (UOPLF). Gen. Wako Guto was elected as chairman of the new group.

*D. J. Sagar*

# Fiji

**Capital:** Suva

**Population:** 840,000

Fiji became an independent country within the Commonwealth in October 1970, after 96 years of British colonial rule. Tensions between the indigenous (Melanesian-Polynesian) Fijians, comprising about 51 per cent of the population, and those of Indian descent (about 42 per cent of the population) have since dominated its politics and formed the background to coups in 1987 and 2000. Following the latter coup, Fiji was suspended from the Commonwealth in June 2000 but was subsequently restored to full participation in December 2001 following fresh elections.

## Colonial antecedents of contemporary tensions

The first organized resistance to colonial rule came after the Deed of Cession in 1874 when chiefdoms from the western side of Fiji attempted to affirm their autonomy by refusing to be subject to British colonial rule. The colonial administration responded by sending in its soldiers (called the Native Constabulary) to pacify the rebels. Many rebels were killed, villages were burned down, and the resistance was eventually subdued.

Later anti-colonial resistance such as the *Luve ni wai* (children of the water) movement in the 1890s took semi-religious and non-violent political forms. But the state response was to arrest the leaders, burn villages and send away villagers to exile in other parts of Fiji. Later anti-colonial nationalists used economic means. For instance a well-known personality, Sairusi Nabogibogi, formed his Viti Kabani (Fijian Company) in the 1950s and urged Fijian farmers to sell their bananas and other products directly to it, rather than to white companies. This movement was seen as a threat to colonial economic interests and state security and Nabogibogi was arrested and exiled on an isolated island where he died. Also in 1959, Fijian and Indian workers took advantage of an industrial dispute with an oil company to focus their fury on European business and colonial government through riots, looting and burning in the capital, Suva.

One of the means by which the British colonial state maintained its control was to drive a wedge between Indians, who were brought in to work on the sugar plantations in the 1890s, and indigenous Fijians through the policy of “divide and rule”. This was institutionalized in the Native Policy whereby indigenous Fijians were locked into the subsistence sector and regulated by rigid rules under a separate Fijian administration (called the Native Administration). Separate political representation in the Legislative Council for Indians, Fijians and Europeans became the basis for formal political relations.

Political agitation by Indians for greater political

rights started early in the twentieth century and in 1929 they were granted full franchise, although Fijians were still represented by chiefs who were appointed by the Great Council of Chiefs and the Governor. By the 1950s and 1960s the Indians were increasingly agitating for independence, inspired by the Gandhian independence movement in India. In 1967 the Indian members of the Legislative Council staged a walk out to show their support for independence. The indigenous Fijians, on the other hand, feared that independence could mean their domination by Indians who by then were numerically superior, making up more than 50 per cent of the population. But political compromises were made between leaders of the two communities and independence took place in 1970.

## Instability in the post-independence period

Following independence the country was ruled by the multi-racial but indigenous Fijian-led Alliance Party. However, during the April 1987 general election the Alliance Party lost the election to the Labour-National Federation Party Coalition, which was led by an indigenous Fijian but which was Indian dominated. The defeat of the Alliance Party was not fully accepted by indigenous Fijians who feared domination by Indians. A nationalist group, which called itself the **Taukei Movement** (indigenous Fijian Movement), was formed and started mobilizing supporters through public marches, rallies and acts of destabilization. The military intervened on behalf of the indigenous Fijian nationalist movement through two coups in 1987, taking over the government, abrogating the constitution and declaring Fiji a republic. The President became Head of State, replacing the British Monarch. An emergency decree was declared and a number of people were arrested, some on the basis that they were part of underground movements to topple the military government. One such movement was alleged to have been the Kadavu Revolutionary Army, alleged by the army to have been secretly plotting to assassinate Rabuka, the coup leader.

A new constitution was promulgated in July 1990, which ensured the political dominance of indigenous Fijians and provided for various forms of affirmative action in their favour. The constitution stipulated that only Fijians were to be prime minister or president and ensured that 37 of the 70 seats in the House of Representatives (the lower chamber of the bicameral legislature) were reserved for the indigenous population, 27 for the Indian community, five for other races and one for the Polynesian inhabitants of Rotuma island. In the non-elected upper house of 34 members, 24 seats were

reserved for indigenous Fijians, nine for Indians and other races and one for the Rotuma islanders.

The 1990 Constitution was reviewed five years later after criticism that it was too racially biased and as a result a new constitution was promulgated in 1997. The 1997 Constitution provided for a much fairer political representation for the various ethnic groups, while making provisions for protection of certain indigenous Fijian interests such as land. During the first election under the 1997 Constitution, in 1999, the ruling indigenous Fijian government, under Major-General Rabuka, the 1987 coup leader, lost to the Indian-dominated Labour Party. The Labour Party formed a ruling coalition with a group of smaller parties with Mahendra Chaudhry, the Labour leader, becoming the first Indian Prime Minister. This led to Fijian nationalist mobilization to oppose and overthrow the Indian-led government.

Plots to overthrow the government were hatched by various nationalist groups both inside and outside parliament, including a unit within the army. There were public demonstrations and rallies in Suva by nationalists to express their displeasure with the Chaudhry government. The Taukei Movement was resurrected and secret meetings, mobilization and plotting took place. This culminated in a coup on May 19, 2000, when a group of soldiers entered parliament and arrested the entire government parliamentary group, including the Prime Minister and ministers. This coincided with a huge nationalist march in Suva on the same day. The government parliamentarians were held hostage for more than 30 days before they were released.

The hostages were kept in the parliamentary complex surrounded by hundreds of Fijian nationalist supporters who came in to show their support as well as providing a human shield against possible military retaliation. Although the coup was executed by a group of soldiers with the support of a number of senior officers in the army, it was largely the initiative of civilian nationalists within and outside parliament who were prepared to remove Chaudhry's government by any means, legal or extra-legal.

The coup leaders, led by George Speight, set about forming their own government with a new Council of Ministers and President. They abrogated the 1997 Constitution and declared Fiji a Fijian state. The military moved in to declare a state of emergency and martial law, abrogated the 1997 Constitution and took over the reins of power left vacant by the arrest of the government ministers and the forced departure of the President. Leaders of the coup were arrested and imprisoned and towns which had been taken by the rebels were retaken by the army. The military later appointed a civilian caretaker government under Laisenia Qarase as part of the transition back to normalcy.

For a number of weeks a group of soldiers and criminal elements armed with automatic weapons established themselves in the jungles of the main island terrorizing locals and even ambushed a police vehicle, killing a policeman and a soldier and wounding a few more. They were hunted down and arrested.

The members of the elite military unit involved in the coup attempted to stage a mutiny in the army on Nov. 2, 2000, although they had been arrested and pardoned earlier. The mutiny was an attempt to reverse the situation by arresting the Commander of the Army, dismiss the Qarase government, release Speight and put in place a nationalist government under Speight. The mutiny was crushed by the military and eight people died.

Fresh elections were held in August 2001 and Laisenia Qarase's party, in coalition with the Matanitu Vanua Party (consisting of Speight's coup supporters) formed the government. The high court also restored the 1997 Constitution in the same year. Speight and some close associates were tried for treason and Speight was handed a death penalty by the High Court in early 2002. This was later commuted to life imprisonment.

Some of the coup leaders and supporters are now part of the government. Qarase's broader political front was able to absorb both liberal and extremist nationalist Fijians. Speight and his supporters argued that their coup was successful because it ousted Chaudhry's government and helped to restore Fijian political rule. Some of the more extreme nationalists argued that Qarase hijacked their coup, and there was a plot to kidnap him and other senior government ministers. Some of those involved also belonged to a group called the Fiji Peacekeepers Association, formed by former Fijian soldiers who have served as United Nations peacekeepers in various parts of the world and who felt that they have not been receiving the full field allowances owed to them. Earlier the government refused to grant them a public march permit on security grounds. The plot was uncovered and those responsible were arrested.

The current major political issue is that of legitimacy. Chaudhry's opposition party has taken the Qarase government to court for not adhering to the constitutional provision for a multi-party cabinet. Civil society organizations such as the Citizens' Constitutional Forum and the Fiji Human Rights Coalition have been campaigning to highlight human rights and constitutional issues, which they alleged had been undermined by the government. The government responded by banning a planned demonstration by the Fiji Human Rights Coalition during the EU-ACP meeting in July 2002 in Fiji. At the same time the government is involved in a nation-wide reconciliation process to bring together different political, ethnic and religious groups and to bridge their differences and heal the wounds inflicted by the 2000 coup.

Perhaps the biggest threats to state security at the moment are followers of Speight who want Speight and others involved in the 2000 coup pardoned. They still have the potential to carry out destabilization plans if their wishes are not met. But the military and police have been adamant that any attempt at destabilization will be dealt with quickly and efficiently.

*Steven Ratuva*



# Finland

**Capital:** Helsinki

**Population:** 5.2 m

The Republic of Finland has a President elected for a six-year term by universal adult suffrage. The President appoints a Council of Ministers under a Prime Minister who must be able to command the support of Parliament. The President has traditionally enjoyed considerable executive powers although under the revised Constitution in effect from March 2000, these were reduced while those of the Council of Ministers were increased. The President leads foreign affairs in co-operation with the government and can dissolve the parliament. The 200-member unicameral parliament is elected for a four year-term. Elections held on March 16, 2003, in which the Centre Party (KESK), with 55 seats, and the Social Democratic Party (SSDP), with 53 seats, were the largest parties, resulted in the formation of a coalition government led by Prime Minister Anneli Jäätteenmäki of KESK.

During the 1990s a number of racist right-wing organizations (skinheads) were active in several cities. According to police statistics more than 450 racist hate-crimes were committed in the years 1999-2001. Skinhead organizations existed in Joensuu, Helsinki and Turku. Hate-crimes reported by police were also committed in Mikkeli, Imatra, Kajaani and Kouvolaa. The total membership of skinhead organizations was estimated to be 1,000 in the 1990s. By 2002 the number had decreased and barely exceeded a few hundred.

In addition to skinhead groups, some semi-underground neo-Nazi organizations have established Internet pages at which they advertise and sell Nazi and white power music, literature and regalia. Two former semi-legal organizations, United People in Great Finland and the Blue-White of Finnish People, were officially registered as parties at the end of 2002 (the registration of a party requires 5,000 signatures of support). The chairman of the Blue-White of Finnish People has been fined because of racist statements and the web pages of the organization contain ethnically harassing material. The chairman of the party has been elected as a member of the municipal council in Turku.

Extreme left-wing and anarchist groups and militant animal rights groups (Animal Liberation Front, Justice for Animals) have arranged demonstrations and attacks against enterprises, property, people and events e.g. fur auctions and National Independence Day celebrations. Several fur farms have been attacked and thousands of animals have been released over the last few years, while laboratories carrying out experiments on animals have been attacked by members of the underground Animal Liberation Front. Young Finnish anti-nuclear weapons militants have participated in peaceful "occupations" of British nuclear submarines.

*Vesa Puuronen*

# France

**Capital:** Paris

**Population:** 58.5 m

Under the 1982 constitution of the Fifth Republic as amended, France has an executive President, who appoints the Prime Minister, and is elected by universal suffrage for a term (as from 2002) of five years. There is a bicameral Parliament (Parlement) consisting of a 321-seat Senate (Sénat) and a 577-member National Assembly (Assemblée Nationale), the latter being directly elected for a five-year term. The conservative candidate Jacques Chirac, benefiting from the support of liberals and socialists hostile to his opponent, Jean-Marie Le Pen of the extreme right National Front (*Front National*, FN), was elected President by an overwhelming majority in June 2002. Elections to the National Assembly in June 2002 also resulted in a large majority for the pro-Chirac Union

for a Presidential Majority (UMP), which won 355 seats. The Prime Minister is Jean-Pierre Raffarin.

France has a revolutionary tradition and historically there has been a pattern of extra-constitutional challenges originating from both the left and the right. Since World War II the most significant sources of domestic instability have been the result of conflict over Algerian independence in the early 1960s, student protests in 1968 and, more recently, tensions arising from immigration from Islamic countries and the corresponding rise of xenophobic right-wing political groups on the borderline between constitutional and extra-constitutional politics. There is also separatist violence in Corsica and regionalist tensions in other parts of France although these have not reached the

level seen, for example, in Northern Ireland or the Basque Country of Spain and only the Corsican issue constitutes a major security issue.

France has traditionally provided a haven for exile groups from numerous countries, particularly its former colonies in Africa and also the Middle East. Some of these groups have used France as a base to work for the overthrow of their governments but have not normally sought to undermine the French state. However, extreme Islamic groups re-locating from Algeria in the mid-1990s were responsible for a series of terrorist attacks within France.

## EXTREME RIGHT-WING MOVEMENTS

### Union Defence Group (Groupe Union Défense, GUD)

The Union Defence Group was founded in 1969 by revolutionary-nationalist militants from the “Occident” movement (dissolved the previous year). Originally organized as a student union (the acronym then standing for *Groupe union droit*), the GUD established itself at numerous universities and engaged in frequent violent confrontations with extreme-left militants. Not a stable organization, the GUD was more a label used by several generations of young extreme-right militants. In the 1990s, the GUD published a review called *Jusqu'à nouvel ordre* (“Towards a New Order”) but other than having a strongly anti-Marxist and anti-Zionist orientation, it preferred direct action to ideological elaboration. In 1998, it was completely merged into Radical Unity (see separate entry) as its student branch.

### Radical Unity (Unité radicale)

Radical Unity was established in 1998 by the merger of the GUD (above) and *Nouvelle Résistance* (“New Resistance”, an organization led by Christian Bouchet, who had previously led *Jeune Résistance* after a split from the *Troisième Voie* movement that disappeared after 1991). Radical Unity expounds an anti-Zionist, anti-capitalist and anti-Marxist ideology and advances an ethnic conception of European identity inherited from the biological conceptions of GRECE (see separate entry). It initially tried to infiltrate the National Front (FN) but then followed the National Republican Movement (MNR) of Bruno Mégret after the schism with FN. Radical Unity was banned by the government after one of its members, Maxime Brunerie, attempted on July 14, 2002, to assassinate President Chirac. Shortly before its prohibition, it had split into two factions, one led by Guillaume Luyt and Fabrice Robert that favoured moving closer to the FN, and a second led by Christian Bouchet that favoured the MNR.

### Identity Bloc (Bloc identitaire)

*Bloc identitaire* was the name adopted by the former leaders of Radical Unity, Fabrice Robert and Guillaume Luyt, after the dissolution of their organization. The ideology remains identical to that of Radical Unity (above). About 80 militants attended the first national conference of the movement in April 2003.

Website: [www.les-identitaires.com](http://www.les-identitaires.com)

### Radical Network (Réseau Radical)

Radical Network is a new revolutionary-nationalist and *solidaire* organization led by Christian Bouchet since its departure from Radical Unity. Its ideology, similar to that of Radical Unity, attempts to define a “third way” between capitalism and communism, to which are added anti-Zionism, anti-Americanism and a defence of the political and ethnic European identity. It strongly supported Saddam Hussein during the 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq. Radical Network produces a monthly review called *Résistance*.

Website: [www.voxnr.com](http://www.voxnr.com)

### Earth and People (Terre et Peuple)

*Terre et Peuple* (which published a review under the same name) regards itself as a cultural association for the study of European civilisation. It was created by Pierre Vial, professor of history at the University of Lyon 3 and a former officer of the FN and, later, MNR. *Terre et Peuple* seeks to confer on political conflict a cultural dimension throughout celebration of European identity and history. An heir to the GRECE (see separate entry) and its ethnic and biological conception of identities, this association is in line with the neo-pagan trend of the extreme-right, and its militants organize feasts for the solstice on the model of old Celtic rites. It is close to the Identity Bloc (above).

Website: [www.terreetpeuple.com](http://www.terreetpeuple.com)

### Oeuvre française

*Oeuvre française* was founded in 1998 by its president-for-life, Pierre Sidos. It is a small group nostalgic for the Vichy regime and with an anti-communist, anti-Semitic, anti-democratic, revisionist and Catholic fundamentalist ideology. It releases a journal called *Jeune nation*. Very closed and hierarchical, *Oeuvre française* has only about fifty members in the whole country.

### French Nationalist Party (Parti nationaliste français, PNF)

Led by two former SS members, Jean Castrillo and Henri Simon, the PNF is a revolutionary-nationalist group created in 1983 after a split from the National Front. It expounds a racist ideology, rejecting interbreeding, and publishes a journal called *Militant*. Left with few activists, the PNF was weakened in 1992 by the departure of one of its main leaders, Pierre Pauty, for the FN and then by the rallying of several militants to Radical Unity in 1998.

### French Nationalist and European Party (Parti nationaliste français et européen, PNFE)

Created in 1987 and led by Claude Cornilleau, the PNFE was a neo-Nazi group with most of its members within the skinhead movement; it ceased all activity in 1999. Several PNFE militants were prosecuted by the police either for spreading Nazi propaganda or for violent actions (attacks on immigrants or hostels for foreign workers). Some of those responsible for the desecration of the Jewish cemetery of Carpentras in 1990 belonged to the PNFE.

### National Restoration (Restauration nationale)

National Restoration is the name adopted by former activists and leaders of the “French Action” organization (*Action*

*française*, founded in 1898) after its dissolution at the end of World War II. It is the main royalist French organization and continues to diffuse the monarchist, nationalist, Catholic fundamentalist, anti-democratic and anti-semitic ideology initiated at the beginning of the 20th century by Charles Maurras. Very focused on its ideological work, National Restoration has provided an educational framework for many extreme-right militants, both for those who have gone on to the National Front (FN) and also for the “classical” right.

It has experienced several splits since World War II. The most recent of these occurred at the end of the 1990s and separated a first group (led by Hilaire de Crémier), which kept title to the name of the organization (and releases a review called *Restauration nationale*), from a second under the name “Propaganda Centre for French Action” (*Centre de propagande d’Action française*), which retains control of the journal *AF 2000* (formerly *Aspects de la France*). Both groups continue to advance the ideas of Maurras.

Websites: [actionfrancaise.free.fr](http://actionfrancaise.free.fr)  
[www.restauration-nationale.asso.fr](http://www.restauration-nationale.asso.fr)

### **National European Community Party (Parti communautaire national-européen, PCN)**

The PCN was initially created in Belgium in 1984 and its French branch emerged in the early 1990s. This small group opposes “national-bolshevism” and seeks to defend the European identity by demanding the abolition of frontiers between nations and the creation of a unified European state. The PCN is anti-American, anti-Zionist and recently pro-Iraq. It publishes *Nation-Europe*.

Website: [www.pcn-ncp.com](http://www.pcn-ncp.com)

### **Christianity-Solidarity (Chrétienté-solidarité)**

The Christianity-Solidarity committees were created in 1982 by Bernard Antony (known as Romain Marie) who became one of the main leaders of the Catholic fundamentalist trend within the National Front (FN). The mission of Christianity-Solidarity is to implement Christian values in the political struggle and to fight against Communism, Islamism and “totalitarian cosmopolitanism”. The movement produces the monthly review *Reconquête*. Bernard Antony is also the founder and leader of the “Alliance against racism and for the respect of the French identity” (*Alliance contre le racisme et pour le respect de l’identité française*, AGRIF) which aims to fight against “French anti-racism” and to defend the Christian identity of France.

Website: [www.agrif.reconquete.com](http://www.agrif.reconquete.com)

### **Research and Study Group for European Civilization (Groupe de recherche et d’études sur la civilisation européenne, GRECE)**

GRECE was founded in 1967 and was, during the 1970s, one of the main think tanks not only for the extreme-right but also, to a certain extent, for the “classical” right. GRECE expounds a biological conception of identities and advocates a social Darwinist vision of the relations between peoples. Rejecting the Judaeo-Christian legacy, it intends to restore and celebrate pagan values. GRECE releases a review called *Eléments* and its main intellectual guide, Alain de Benoist, also publishes the review *Krisis*.

### **National Youth Front (Front national de la jeunesse, FNJ)**

FNJ is the youth organisation of the National Front. However, it has a certain ideological autonomy from the FN and its positions are very close to revolutionary-nationalist ideas; some of its former executives became leaders of Radical Unity and then Identity Bloc.

## **EXTREME-LEFT MOVEMENTS**

Until the end of the 1970s, the most visible extreme-left movements were of Maoist or Trotskyist inspiration. Nowadays, while Trotskyist groups still exist (including the constitutionally oriented Revolutionary Communist League (*Ligue Communiste révolutionnaire*, LCR), which won two seats in the European Parliament in the last election in 1999), anarchist and anti-fascist organizations are particularly active, acting in support of broader social movements such as anti-globalization and the defence of immigrants’ rights, and actions against the National Front (FN).

### **Anti-Fascist Movements**

Since 1983, in reaction to the increasing success of the FN, several anti-fascist ad hoc groups have been created among students and intellectuals. **Ras l’Front** (“enough of the Front”) was created in May 1990 after “the call of the 250” against racism written by Gilles Perraut, Michel Rajsfus and Anne Tristan in reaction to the desecration of the Jewish cemetery at Carpentras. Since then, about 100 associations have been established and they have all adopted the “charter of the network *Ras l’Front*”. This network engages in dissemination of documentation and demonstrations.

The first **Resolutely Anti-Le Pen Section** (*Section Carrément Anti-Le Pen*, SCALP) was established in Toulouse in 1984 by a group of students, libertarians and Maoist militants after an attack on the Congress Centre where Jean-Marie Le Pen was expected to hold a FN meeting. At the end of the 1980s, this movement spread in the shadow of squats and alternative rock bands. In the absence of a hierarchical framework, the various sections co-operated on several common actions, particularly the struggle for the defence of immigrants. Currently, about 30 sections are still active.

In 1986, another SCALP group was founded in Paris with the objective to fight against racism in universities and colleges. The first unit was created at the faculty of Nanterre by the **Student Libertarian Co-ordination** (*Coordination Libertaire Etudiante*) with the REFLEXes Review, which gave its name to the **Study, Education and Fight Networks against the Extreme-Right and Xenophobia** (*Le Réseau d’Etude, de Formation et de Lutte contre l’Extrême Droite et la Xénophobie*, REFLEXes). Between 1987 and 1990, the **National Anti-Fascist Co-ordination** (*Coordination Nationale Anti-Fasciste*) connected groups from Lyon, Paris and Toulouse. The SCALP groups have been very inventive in their modes of action: demonstrations

(sometimes violent) against extreme-right premises or militants, concerts, radio programmes, pamphlets, etc. These anti-fascist movements revived in April 2002 after the first round of the presidential elections resulted in Jean-Marie Le Pen coming in second place.

### Libertarian Movements

The **No Pasaran** network (Solidarity, Egalitarian, Libertarian) was set up in Paris in 1992, adopting the slogan of the Republicans in the Spanish civil war. The network connected itself with various organizations active in the following areas: homelessness, right of asylum, police violence, anti-capitalism, anti-globalization. *No Pasaran* advocates the practice of “civil disobedience” to create “experimental areas of self-management or temporary autonomous areas”. At the international level, *No Pasaran* participated in the Libertarian International Solidarity like OCL and AL (see below).

The **Anarchist Federation** (*Fédération Anarchiste*, FA) was created in 1944 at the congress of Agen. From 1951, FA entered a long period of crisis with the break away in 1967 of the **Anarchist Revolutionary Organization** (*Organisation Révolutionnaire Anarchiste*, ORA), precursor of the OCL.

FA is a federation of autonomous groups and individuals of various anarchist inspirations connected with each other by a loose framework: a congress elects the administrators of FA organs and a committee of co-ordination. FA has about 500 activists.

The **Libertarian Communist Organization** (*Organisation Communiste Libertaire*, OCL) was established in 1976 after the disappearance of the ORA. **Libertarian Alternative** (*Alternative Libertaire*, AL) originated in a dissenting ORA minority group which funded the **Union of Libertarian Communist Workers** (*Union des Travailleurs Communistes Libertaires*, UTCL). Unlike the OCL, the UTCL militants favoured the class struggle within enterprises through the unions and adopted a revolutionary programme. AL was formally established in Toulouse in 1991. From the beginning, the movement has called for revolution through the establishment of “counter-powers and the all-out strike” and has been present in every struggle (anti-militarism, anti-fascist, student movements, etc.). It has recently favoured a reconciliation with other organizations and has organized a meeting with the “Revolution! Trend” of the Revolutionary Communist League (*Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire*, LCR), an organization which has regularly participated in national elections. The **Collectives for a Libertarian Alternative** (*Collectifs pour une Alternative Libertaire*, CAL) with about 200 militants in 30 cities are connected via a national co-ordination which meets regularly to ratify its decisions.

### Direct Action (Action directe, AD)

This group first emerged in 1979 and was similar in ideology and tactics to the Red Army Faction in West Germany and the Red Brigades in Italy, with which it had connections (as

with ETA and various Palestinian groups). It was responsible for attacks on government buildings, police premises, international organizations such as the OECD and European Space Agency, and US and Jewish targets. On Sept. 13, 1980, the presumed leader of AD, Jean-Marc Rouillan, was arrested in Paris but in May 1981 he was one of 16 AD activists then in custody, who benefited from a general amnesty for political prisoners declared by the incoming President Mitterrand. On Aug. 18, 1982, the French government announced the formal banning of AD, adherence to which in itself thereby became a criminal offence. On Jan. 25, 1985, AD shot dead Gen. René Audran (who was responsible for French arms sales) in Paris and on Nov. 17, 1986, Georges Besse, managing director of the Renault group, was shot dead by two women AD members.

Direct Action was virtually destroyed following the arrest of leading activists, including Jean-Marie Rouillan, in 1987 which revealed much about their activity and established AD's responsibility for 60 armed attacks, four murders, 22 car thefts and other crimes.

### AUTONOMY & SEPARATIST MOVEMENTS

France is for the most part a well defined unitary state, with the borders of the state congruent with those of the French nation. Nonetheless, autonomist aspirations exist in Corsica, the Basque-populated area of France (in alliance with the Basques in Spain) and Brittany. Since the late 1960s these aspirations have at times found violent expression.

### CORSICA

Regionalist anger in Corsica originated in part from what was seen as the abandonment of the Corsican economy by the French state in the 1960s and measures favouring the *pièdes-noirs* (French settlers) displaced to Corsica from Algeria after that country achieved independence in 1962. Beyond this, however, were also tensions arising from the conflict between the state and the traditional Corsican clan-based political order, clan loyalties traditionally taking precedence over (or even conflicting with) any conceptions of citizenship. These loyalties dominated electoral allegiances and political decision making. This specifically Corsican way of exercising power came under pressure in the late 1960s and into the 1970s, not least because the sources of patronage, in terms of provision of jobs on the mainland or in the rapidly shrinking French colonial service (which had a substantial Corsican presence) were drying up. This put pressure on the clan leaders' ability to command allegiance. The regionalists of the **Corsican Regional Action** (*Action Régionaliste Corse*, ARC), then the nationalists of the **Corsican National Liberation Front** (*Front de Libération Nationale de la Corse*, FLNC), exploited the increasing fragility of the clan system and denounced the use of such electoral practices as recording votes by the deceased, interference with electoral lists, and buying of votes.

In the 1960s, the Union of Corsican Students



(*Union des étudiants corses*, UEC), based on students in Paris and Nice, mobilized around the issues of political autonomy and the defence of Corsican language and culture. The *Front régionaliste Corse* (FRC) was founded in 1966 in protest at French *colonisation intérieure*. Divisions in the FRC resulted in the formation on Sept. 3, 1967, of the ARC, this being far less oriented to the extreme left-wing than had been the founders of the FRC. More pragmatic in focus, the ARC worked to capitalize on the frustrations of Corsicans over their economic difficulties and lack of democracy. The publication of the FRC's Castellaré Appeal of January 1973 and the ARC's Autonomy Declaration (*Autonomia*) in February 1974, set an unambiguously regionalist tone and stimulated the creation by Corsican students in Nice of the CSC (*Consulta di i Studenti Corsi*), which included in its core group the majority of the future founders of the FLNC: Pantaléon Alessandri, Léo Battesti, and Pierrot Poggioli. Some CSC militants established the clandestine structures of the **Group of Corsican Nationalist Students** (*Groupe des Etudiants nationalistes corses*, GENC) that eventually encouraged the ARC to adopt "the gun". In the meantime, two clandestine movements were created and organized several attacks: in October 1973, the *Fronte Paisanu Corsu di Liberazione*, organised a series of attacks against the military bases of Solenzara and "economic" targets; in March 1974, it was *Ghjustizia Paolina* that perpetrated an attack against an airliner during the visit of the Prime Minister to the island.

These two movements merged in 1976, also with some support from within the ARC, within the **Corsican National Liberation Front** (*Front de Libération Nationale de la Corse*, FLNC). This marked the beginning of a long period of violence. In total, the FLNC has been responsible for more than 5,000 attacks with explosives and about 60 deaths.

Between 1978 and 1979, the organization was weakened by several arrests and trials and proclaimed itself a "victim of oppression". However, the Front modernized its structures and some activists received training in Lebanon. Despite a period of truce in 1980-81 and the election of a Socialist government in mid-1981, violence escalated from August 1981 and by the end of 1982 official statistics gave the number of bomb attacks and other violent incidents for that year at over 800, nearly double the level of 1981. The organization was officially banned by the government on Jan. 5, 1983. The death of several militants during operations and the murder of Guy Orsoni, the brother of Alain Orsoni, one of the leaders of the Front, escalated the conflict. The arrival of Charles Pasqua at the Ministry of Interior in 1986, led to stronger action against terrorism, which paradoxically reinforced the clandestine structures of the Front.

Two years later, with the re-election of President François Mitterrand (Socialist), a policy of dialogue was established and a truce came into effect, although splits developed over this within the FLNC. Competition developed between the various factions for the

control of military and financial resources and the political direction of the organization. In 1989, Pierrot Poggioli resigned from the Cuncolta and created his own dual structure (military and political), followed in November 1990 by Alain Orsoni, who established the *Mouvement pour l'autodétermination* (MPA) and the **FLNC canal habituel** (Normal Route) against the rivals of the hardline **FLNC canal historique** (Historical Route).

The killing on June 15, 1993, of Roberto Sozzi, a young militant of the Cuncolta, by the *canal historique* inaugurated a long series of intra-nationalist assassinations (which has to date claimed more than thirty lives). Meanwhile, attacks against the State also grew in number; the Prime Minister was himself the target of a devastating bomb attack on Bordeaux city hall on Oct. 5, 1996. On Feb. 6, 1998, the Prefect of Corsica, Claude Erignac, was assassinated by a radical nationalist faction opposed to the ongoing dialogue process. The firm reassertion of the authority of the state by the new Prefect led to a regrouping of the nationalists. In the territorial elections of March 1999, the Corsican Nation (*Corsica Nazione*) coalition of nationalist groupings won 16.77% of the votes (and the nationalists in total took 23.45%). Reconciliation between the nationalist factions was also assisted by the death or arrest of the principal former leaders, including the death of Pierre Albertini and the flight of Alain Orsoni in 1996, and the arrest of François Santoni and Charles Piéri in 1998.

At the Migliacciaru meeting of July 3, 1999, thirteen organizations agreed to "banish violence" between nationalist groups and nine of them on Nov. 4 merged to create a common base organization called **UNITA**. This electoral coalition has at its heart two political parties resulting from the association of the different movements present at Migliacciaru: **Independence** (*Indipendenza*), created in May 2001, and the **Corsican Emancipation Front** (*Front d'Emancipation Corse*), which emerged in November 2001. In parallel to this developing unity of legal nationalist groups, clandestine movements reunified under the aegis of the FLNC *union des combattants* (Combatants' Union). Only **Armata Corsa**, founded by François Santoni and Jean-Michel Rossi, refused to join this union and it was severely punished with the assassination of some of its members between August 2000 and December 2001.

On the political level, the "Maignon accords" put forward by the Prime Minister, Lionel Jospin, in January 2000 were irrevocably blocked after the withdrawal from negotiations of the nationalists of *Indipendenza*. Moreover, current events (the arrest and trial of those charged with the murder of Erignac) have revived tensions on the island. In this context, the recent consultative referendum of the Raffarin government on possible institutional reforms has not been decisive, Corsicans on July 6, 2003, voting 50.98% against and 49.02% in favour of proposed changes providing for a limited degree of autonomy, the proposals splitting nationalist opinion. The prolonged

absence of political dialogue and the recent attacks in the island and in Nice against public institutions do not augur well for the end of violence in Corsica.

## BRITTANY

The Breton movement, also called *emsav*, is currently very divided and marginal despite the vigorous character of the cultural renewal in Brittany. Originally a conservative and reactionary movement against the secular republic, the *emsav* was organized at the turn of the 20th century around the Breton Regional Union (*Union Régionale Bretonne*, URB) which demanded the preservation of the Breton language and administrative decentralization. After its split in 1911, most of its members from liberal professions founded the Breton Regionalist Federation (*Fédération Régionaliste Bretonne*), calling for decentralization and local economic development. Later, a more radical generation of militants created the Breton Autonomist Party (*Parti Autonomiste Breton*) which split in two in 1931: a majority of the members created the Federal League of Brittany (*Ligue Fédérale de Bretagne*) around Morvan Marchal and the others, more nationalist, such as Olivier Mordelle and Fransez (François) Debauvais, founded the Breton National Party (*Parti National Breton*, PNB) whose ideology, close to the Nazi party, acknowledged the use of violence. Other regionalists, such as Yann Fouéré, president of the URB, supported the Vichy Regime in the hope of seeing the implementation of a Breton regional administration and legislative power.

The resurgence of regional mobilization in Brittany in the 1950s was mostly attributable to local elites: in July 1950, the Study and Liaison Committee for Breton Interests (*Comité d'Etude et de Liaison des Intérêts Bretons*, CELIB) was established for the purpose of an association with the regional development policy of the state. In 1957, Yann Fouéré created the Movement for the Organization of Brittany (*Mouvement pour l'Organisation de la Bretagne*, MOB) for a moderate regionalism (a region with five departments and an elected assembly). However, with the failure of the projects of CELIB, the MOB suffered from a lack of popularity which led some of its members, nostalgic for the PNB, to create in 1966 the **Front for the Liberation of Brittany** (*Front de Libération de la Bretagne*, FLB) and the **Breton Republican Army** (*Armée Républicaine Bretonne*, ARB). These two movements were responsible for numerous attacks against public buildings (symbols of the State), against symbols of "Big Capital" (banks, companies) or instruments of cultural "oppression" (TV transmitters).

In the 1960s, the traditional *emsav* was reformulated into an economic discourse of Marxist inspiration. At the start of this revival, a group of students from the University of Rennes founded their own party, the Democratic Breton Union (*Union Démocratique Bretonne*, UDB). At its peak in 1980, with about 1000 militants, the UDB had connections with most of the

active social movements (strikes, anti-nuclear campaigns, ecologists, etc.). However, this moderate strategy kept it apart from radical movements such as the Revolutionary Breton Committee (*Comité Révolutionnaire Breton*), the "legal" FLB or the Breton Communist Party (*Parti Communiste Breton*). All these movements created in the early 1970s mobilized around a programme calling for the establishment of a socialist Breton state. In the same period, some nationalist militants formed the **Breton Revolutionary Army** (*Armée Révolutionnaire Bretonne*, ARB), which committed several violent attacks before being broken up at the end of the 1970s.

Other more serious nationalist movements emerged in the early 1980s such as the **Organization for a Free Brittany** (*Organisation d'une Bretagne Libre*, POBL), which positioned itself in the lineage of the traditional *emsav*. In 1983, the committees for the liberation of Breton prisoners created the independence movement **Emgann** ("fight") which took over the main "nationalist revolutionary" themes of the 1970s. Nevertheless, the whole movement suffered from a general climate of discouragement and the number of militants collapsed. The *emsav* was then confined to the cultural struggle with the creation of schools (*Diwan*) in 1977 and the mobilization within the *Stourm ar Brezhoneg* (fight for the Breton language) for bilingual signs from 1984. This investment in the cultural area was fruitful in the 1990s when there was a craze for Breton music and culture (e.g. inter-Celtic festivals) and to learn the language. The cultural movement became a very active pressure group associated with municipal cultural policies and capable of organizing important mobilizations for the promotion of the Breton language (e.g. the defence of the *Diwan* schools and the demand for Breton TV).

The traditional political movements took advantage of this revival of Breton identity and the nationalists remained marginal. This led, in the mid-1990s, to the emergence of new movements and parties from various ideological origins: *Ni-Hon Unan* ("Our-selves"), the Regionalist Movement of Brittany (*Mouvement Régionaliste de Bretagne*), *Adsav* ("Renaissance"), and platforms such as the Breton Identity Association (*Association Identité bretonne*) and the Breton Collective (*Collectif breton*) for democracy and human rights. However, the failure of the political *emsav* led several young militants to rejoin the ranks of *Emgann* and to opt for a strategy of confrontation with the state. Between 1998 and 2000, the ARB was reactivated and claimed responsibility for about thirty attacks including a fatal attack against a McDonald's restaurant in Quévert in April 2000. The resurgence of violence coincided with a polemic about the past of the *emsav* during the Occupation. The integration of the *Diwan* in the public education system finally occurred in 2001 after 25 years of campaigning.

## BASQUE COUNTRY

**Enbata**, the first Basque nationalist party in France, was created in 1963. Initially of Christian democrat orientation, this movement progressively evolved towards the left under the influence of ETA fugitives from the Spanish Basque country in the “French sanctuary”. At the beginning of the 1970s *Enbata* declared itself in support of the liberation struggle and focused its action around the defence of ETA fugitives. Several small groups formed around *Enbata* such as **Jazar** (which carried out anti-tourist actions) and, more importantly, **Hordago** and *Iparretarrak*, which planned to assist ETA in the French provinces. This led the French government to ban *Enbata* in January 1974. The same year, its most left-wing members founded *Herriko Alderdi Sozialista* (HAS) later called EHAS.

Created in Iparraldes in 1973, **Iparretarrak** (“The Ones from the North”, IK) advocated the use of violence in order to achieve its political goals. Less radical than ETA, the IK demanded Basque autonomy and the “re-basquization” of the region, as well as an amnesty for Basque political prisoners. But unlike ETA, IK remained a micro-organization without the resources to conduct a long term fight. IK committed more than 100 attacks in order to pressurize the French government but was constantly reminded by the leadership of ETA that their priority was the liberation of the south (“one front at a time”). It was officially dissolved by government decree in 1987 but continued with its bombing campaign, particularly against holiday developments and estate agents. With only one or two commandos left, the movement has been silent since October 2000. Its founder, Philippe Bidard, is serving a life sentence for the murder of two policemen in March 1982, while other former leaders have for the most part abandoned militant activism.

In the early 1980s, the *abertzal* (Basque nationalist) movement encountered several divisions. The political and most visible wing of the movement, **Laguntza**, was essentially composed of former members of *Hordago* and became very active (e.g. occupations of apartments on the Basque Coast) before its merger with other local *abertzales* within the **Ezkerreko Mugimendu Abertzalea** (EMA). EMA was considered the legal front of IK. Opposed to EMA, Jakes Aberri founded in June 1986 a new party, **Euskal Batasuna (EB)** as the real counterpart of the powerful Spanish Basque *Herri Batasuna*, the legal front of the military ETA.

At the end of the 1980s, while moderate Spanish Basque nationalist parties were progressively establishing themselves in France, unsuccessful attempts to create a coalition were made. It was finally in 1997 that the first main party of the Northern Basque country was created: **Abertzaleen Batasuna (AB)**. Although very attached to its *abertzalismo*, this nationalist coalition has been quite active in local politics through alliances with traditional parties in favour of creating a Basque department. In 2001, the majority of its members rejected a merger with the Spanish *Batasuna*. The majority within AB are opposed to ETA violence and favour a policy of enlarging the organization’s electoral base and engaging with con-

stitutional politics. The question of the use of violence has led to partial atomization of the *abertzale* movement. Among the young militants there is a sharp division between *Segi/Haika*, an independent youth organization close to ETA, and the *démos*, founded in January 2001 and linked to the AB, who emphasize non-violent symbolic protest.

France remains, despite increased police activity in recent years, to some degree a safe haven for ETA and the border is porous. All the infrastructure of the movement (arms caches, military workshops and training camps) is based in France, particularly in the Landes, Atlantic Pyrenees, the Grenoble region, Aquitaine and Paris. There is a trend to fusion of the *abertzale* movements of the south and the north.

## OVERSEAS DEPARTMENTS AND TERRITORIES

### NEW CALEDONIA

The first assertion of identity by the indigenous (Melanesian, or Kanak) population of New Caledonia timidly emerged after World War II at the instigation of the Communist Party (Association of the Friends of USSR) and the **Caledonian Union** (*Union Calédonienne*, UC) established by the churches in 1953. The arrival of a population of *pieds-noirs* settlers disrupted the fragile equilibrium between the indigenous population and whites and, against a background of the falling price of nickel, young Kanaks were forced to leave urban centres and to return to the bush. In the late 1970s New Caledonia’s population of about 135,000 comprised some 60,000 Melanesians, 50,000 Europeans and 25,000 Polynesians and others.

In 1977, Jean-Marie Tjibaou became the president of the UC and a new movement, the **Popular Caledonian Rally for the Republic (RPCR)**, led by the young deputy Jacques Lafleur, was created in the white southern province, appealing to Europeans and others opposed to independence. A year later, the UC adopted a radical agenda calling for independence and in 1979 an Independence Front led by the UC won 14 of the 36 seats in elections to the territorial assembly, the RPCR winning 15 seats. The situation then became extremely tense resulting in the assassination on Sept. 19, 1981, of the former UC leader, Pierre Declerc, by extremist *Caldoches* (whites), the establishment of blockades in the north and the arming of the south against Kanak incursions. At a roundtable organized in July 1983 at Nainville les Roches by the French government, a compromise could not be reached, Jacques Lafleur refusing to sign a final text recognizing the “innate and active right” to independence.

On July 31, 1984, the French National Assembly approved a new statute for the territory providing for transitional arrangements and a referendum to be held in 1989 on the options of independence or continued association with France. However, various independentist factions merged to create the **Kanak and Socialist National Liberation Front** (*Front de*



*Libération Nationale Kanak et Socialiste*, FLNKS), demanding immediate independence and the exclusion of settlers from any referendum. Territorial elections held in September 1984 were boycotted by many Kanaks, the RPCR consequently gaining the majority of seats. On Dec. 1, 1984, the FLNKS met outside Noumea to hold a ceremony to swear in a "provisional government of Kanaky", with Jean-Marie Tjibaou as "Prime Minister". The following day the FLNKS seized weapons and burnt down the house of Dick Ukeiwé, the president of the territorial government, while Tjibaou's house was bombed by anti-independence activists. On the night of Dec. 4-5, *Caldoche* extremists murdered ten independentists, including two brothers of Tjibaou, in Hienghène (Kanak territory). The fear of revenge led the RPCR to create its own self-defence army. On Jan. 13, 1985, Eloi Machoro, responsible for security operations within the "provisional government", was killed after a confrontation with the special police forces (GIGN) and more than 20 were killed in the first six months of 1985. In January 1985 the French government offered the "Pisani plan" and in April 1985 the "Fabius plan" but a political stalemate continued. During 1986-88 the new conservative Chirac government in France treated the New Caledonia issue as essentially one of law and order.

On April 22, 1988, a commando of twenty Kanaks attacked a police station in Fayaoué killed four officers and kidnapped twenty others, holding them hostage in a cave on the island of Ouvéa. The security forces finally attacked on May 5 and executed nineteen Kanaks, while two police officers were found dead. Following this, the new French socialist government brought New Caledonia under direct control and the factions together in negotiations, and this rapidly resulted in the Matignon accords. The agreement included increased aid from France, a tripartite administrative division of New Caledonia, and a referendum on independence to be held in 1998.

The agreement was approved by a French referendum in November 1988 and was broadly accepted by the FLNKS and approved in a local referendum. However, certain FLNKS elements gathered within the **United Kanak Liberation Front** (*Front Uni de Libération Kanak*, FULK) criticized the accords as between "the master and the slave". In May 1989, the FLNKS leader Tjibaou and his deputy, Yeiwéné-Yeiwéné, were assassinated by a FULK member. This event caused a shock wave within the north province and reinforced the desire for peace. The elections of June 1989 saw the victory of FLNKS in two of the three provinces (the north and the Loyalty Islands) while the RPCR dominated the south; political life was from then dictated by the Matignon agreements.

In May 1998 the RPCR and the FLNKS, led by Roch Wamytan, concluded the Noumea accords, re-launching the process towards independence. The text condemns colonization and violent acts against native populations and provides for a referendum on independence within fifteen to twenty years. From 1998, several competencies (employment, communications

and trade) were immediately transferred to the local power, while during 2004-09 other competencies were be transferred (education, security, civil and commercial law, etc.). Since 2000, New Caledonia is no longer a *territoire d'outre-mer* (TOM, overseas territory) but a sui generis community with a government of 5 to 11 members (currently 8 RPCR and 3 FLNKS) whose president represents the territory. Nevertheless, despite these new institutional arrangements, a "common future" between the three provinces seems difficult to construct. Recent inter-communal riots in Saint-Louis near Noumea attest the fragility of the "Caledonian peace". Moreover, the increasing divisions between traditionalist and modernist Kanaks particularly about the use of customary law, threaten the unity of the Kanak community around the issue of independence.

## MARTINIQUE

Violent riots took place in December 1959 against a background of the break-up of the traditional rural society and racism. These proved the starting point of an intense autonomist and anti-colonialist agitation involving the Martinique Communist Party (*Parti Communiste Martiniquais*, PCM), the Martinique Progressive Party (*Parti Progressiste Martiniquais*, PPM) of Aimé Césaire and the Martinique Youth Anti-Colonialist Organization (*Organisation de la Jeunesse Anticolonialiste de la Martinique*, OJAM).

In the 1970s, several independentist groups were created such as the "Word to the People" ("la Parole au Peuple") formed by the young mayor of Rivière-Pilote, Alfred Marie-Jeanne. In 1974, the Permanent Committee for the Martinique Left (*Comité permanent de la gauche martiniquaise*) was established, soon to be replaced by the National Front for Autonomy (Front National pour l'autonomie) which encompassed the PPM and PCM.

At the end of the 1980s, independentists re-appeared on the political scene and won 9 (out of 41) seats at 1990 regional elections; 7 of them being for the **Martinique Independentist Movement** (*Mouvement Indépendantiste Martiniquais*, MIM). In 1998, MIM won 13 seats and this re-launched the debate on the status of the island. On Dec. 1, the MIM leader Alfred Marie Jeanne signed with his counterparts from Guadeloupe and Guyana, the Declaration of Basse Terre which demanded the creation of a new status for the autonomous overseas region grouping the three French Departments.

## GADELOUPE

As in Martinique, a militant Guadeloupe movement developed from disappointment at the results of departmental status and the arrival of a new generation of students educated in France who had associated within the General Association of Guadeloupe Students. Small groups emerged such as the National Organization Group (*Groupe d'organisation nationale de la Guadeloupe*, GONG), an independentist move-

ment of Maoist inspiration created in January 1963. The growth of these movements underscored the necessity to create a larger political platform capable of participating in elections. This led in 1978 to the establishment of the **Popular Union for the Liberation of Guadeloupe** (*Union Populaire pour la Libération de la Guadeloupe*, UPLG).

In 1980, the **Armed Liberation Group** (*Groupe de Libération Armée*, GLA) which warned French residents to quit the island before Dec. 31, 1981, committed several attacks before it was dismantled. GLA and the **Revolutionary Caribbean Alliance** (*Alliance Révolutionnaire Caraïbe*, ARC) claimed responsibility for attacks between 1980-81 and 1983-89. The **Popular Union for the Liberation of Guadeloupe** (*Union populaire pour la libération de la Guadeloupe*, UPLG) lost four members when they were killed by their own explosives in July 1984. In this period, the

best organized group, ARC, favoured synchronized bomb attacks during “blue nights” such as on May 28, 1983, where it committed 17 bomb attacks in the Antilles, Guyana and Paris. ARC’s leader, Luc Reinette, was arrested in 1984 and the group was largely defunct thereafter; Reinette was released under a French amnesty in 1989.

*Lilian Mathieu; Isabelle Sommier; Xavier Crétiez; Juan José Torreiro*

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## Gabon

**Capital:** Libreville

**Population:** 1.2 m

The Gabonese Republic has an executive President who is elected for a seven-year term by universal adult suffrage and who is head of state and government, presiding over a Cabinet under a Prime Minister. There is a bicameral parliament which comprises a 120-member National Assembly (*Assemblée Nationale*), elected for a five-year term, and a 91-member Senate (*Sénat*), elected for a six-year term.

Gabon gained full independence from France in 1960. On the death of President Leon Mba in 1967, Vice-President Omar Bongo became head of state. The following year he declared Gabon a one-party state, under the Gabonese Democratic Party (*Parti Démocratique Gabonais*, PDG), which it remained until 1990. The country enjoyed stability and economic growth through the 1970s, due to the exploitation of its oil wealth, but political strains surfaced in the early 1980s. A moderate opposition group – the Movement for National Renewal (*Mouvement de redressement national*, Morena) – claiming that the regime was corrupt, formed a government-in-exile in Paris, France, and nominated a candidate to stand against Bongo in the 1986 presidential elections. However, Morena was prevented from organizing a campaign and Bongo won with 99.97% of the vote. A series of strikes, provoked by the deteriorating economy, and increasing opposition pressure for greater democracy, led the President to convene a National Conference in early 1990. The Conference approved the introduction of a pluralist political system and the legalization of oppo-

sition parties. Multi-party National Assembly elections took place in September-November 1990, returning the PDG with an overall majority, although opposition parties did well in the capital and some other provinces.

President Bongo’s disputed re-election for a fourth term in December 1993 provoked social and political unrest, leading to the Paris Accords signed in 1994 between the government and opposition. These provided for a transitional coalition government, reform of the electoral code, and fresh elections. Nevertheless, in the National Assembly and Senate elections held respectively in December 1996 and January-February 1997, the PDG maintained its absolute majority.

Facing a divided opposition, President Bongo was re-elected (for an extended seven-year term) on Dec. 6, 1998, with 66.6% of the vote. Although the main opposition parties claimed the elections had been manipulated and had included inaccurate electoral lists, the threatened violent backlash did not materialize. The PDG won some 85 seats in the December 2001 parliamentary elections, in which opposition parties were again split over participation or boycott. The elections were widely criticized for the low voter turnout and for irregularities in drawing up the electoral register.

*Richard German & Elizabeth Taylor*

# The Gambia

**Capital:** Banjul

**Population:** 1.4 m

The Gambia gained independence from the United Kingdom in 1965 and became a republic in 1970. The Progressive People's Party (PPP) was the dominant force from independence, with its leader, Dawda K. Jawara, serving first as Prime Minister and then (from 1970) as President.

In July 1981 the Marxist-Leninist leaning Socialist and Revolutionary Labour Party led by Kukli Samba Sanyang, in combination with the paramilitary Field Force, staged a coup, forming a Revolutionary National Council (RNC). However, Jawara loyalists and Senegalese forces rapidly crushed the "revolution". Sanyang and the RNC leadership fled into exile. In the trials that ensued, a total of 62 persons were sentenced to death for high treason, though sentences were subsequently commuted to life imprisonment. On Feb. 1, 1982, the Gambia went into a confederal union with Senegal known as the Senegambia Confederation. Each nation retained its sovereignty while the confederation exercised powers over defence, security and foreign policy. The union was short-lived, however, breaking up in 1989.

Jawara was unable to serve out his presidential term that began in 1992. On July 22, 1994, after 29 years of relative political stability, the democratic multiparty democracy fell to a military coup led by Captain Yahya J.J. Jammeh, who established an Armed Forces Provisional Revolutionary Council (AFPRC). Domestic and foreign pressure forced the military to concede elections but the regime banned the three parties that had held seats in Parliament prior to the 1994 coup from taking part. These were former President Jawara's People's Progressive Party (PPP), former Vice President Sheriff Dibba's National Convention Party (NCP), and the Gambia People's Party (GPP) of Hassan Musa Camara.

Having barred the principal opposition formations, Jammeh was elected President in September 1996 as

the candidate of his own newly formed Alliance for Patriotic Reorientation and Construction (APRC). The APRC likewise in January 1997 won 33 of the 49 seats in a newly created unicameral National Assembly. The opposition United Democratic Party (UDP) led by Ousainou Darboe won seven seats. The National Reconciliation Party led by Amath Bah won two seats, the small leftist People's Democratic Organization for Independence and Socialism (PDOIS) led by Sidi Jatta won one, two independents were elected, and four were nominated by the President.

A further presidential election held on Oct. 18, 2001, resulted in Jammeh being re-elected, with 53.0 per cent of the vote; his principal opponent was Ousainou Darboe of the UDP, who took 32.7 per cent. Legislative elections on Jan. 17, 2002, were boycotted by the UDP, with the result that the APRC won all but three of the 48 elective seats (the majority of its candidates standing unopposed), with the other three being taken by the PDOIS.

Decree 89, that prevented the PPP and other political parties from contesting elections in 1996, was repealed by the National Assembly in 2002, but the government can still impose "reasonable restrictions" on the political activity of parties. The PPP has returned as a political party in opposition. In May 2002, former President Jawara returned to the Gambia from exile in Great Britain, eight years after his overthrow. President Jammeh had earlier in December 2001 granted him an "unconditional amnesty" as part of a reconciliation move with opposition parties. In late 2002, Jawara resigned his position as the leader of the PPP, a position he continued to hold even while in exile. The party is currently led by Omar Jallow and Jawara now lives as a private citizen between Gambia and the UK.

*Obioma Iheduru*

# Georgia

**Capital:** Tbilisi

**Population:** 5.0 m

The Republic of Georgia started its existence as an independent state in the wake of the break up of the Soviet Union in December 1991. Eduard Shevardnadze (the former Soviet foreign minister) came to power in March 1992 with the backing of a Military

Council which had ousted Zviad Gamsakhurdia two months earlier. The Constitution adopted in October 1995 provides for an executive President to be directly elected for a five-year term. Shevardnadze was elected President in November 1995 with 76.8 per cent

of the popular vote and re-elected in April 2000 with a share of 79.8 per cent of the vote. His Citizens' Union of Georgia (SMK) party holds a majority in the legislature.

After independence, the country embarked upon a difficult process of nation – and state-building hindered by strong secessionist movements. The conflicts that broke out in South Ossetia and Abkhazia were triggered by the security concerns of the regional minorities. From the beginning of its independence, Georgia has been de facto if not de jure divided. Against this background, two distinct trends can be outlined as particularly relevant. Firstly, the constitutional order of the country is seriously challenged. The central government has no control over the secessionist regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia whilst its hold on two other southwestern regions – Ajara, bordering Turkey, and Javakheti, bordering Turkey and Armenia – is very weak. Two other regions pose additional potential security problems – Mingrelia (Samegrelo), which is home to a high proportion of internally displaced persons from Abkhazia as well as to many supporters of former President Gamsakhurdia, and Marneuli with a large Azeri population. Secondly, the political structure is prone to a potential confrontation between radical and moderate nationalistic forces depending on the capacity of the central government to restore its control over the secessionist regions and to find mutually acceptable solutions to the existing conflicts.

In the aftermath of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the USA, Georgia agreed to the deployment of US military advisers to train the Georgian army for anti-terrorist operations in the Pankisi Gorge. This region on the border with the Russian republic of Chechnya was beyond the control of the Georgian authorities and had become a stronghold for displaced Chechen rebels, Russia accusing Georgia of allowing the Chechens to take sanctuary. Russia was reported to have bombed targets in the gorge on a number of occasions. The gorge was regarded by the USA as an incubator for international terrorism and it was alleged that it became a hideout for *Al-Qaeda* and Afghan fighters after the fall of the Taleban in Afghanistan. In February 2002 the Russian foreign minister, Igor Ivanov, claimed that Osama bin Laden could be sheltering in the gorge.

### **Fragmentation at Independence**

Segmenting the territory into formations with different levels of autonomy and dividing the society into titular and non-titular nationalities, the Soviet Union had a strict hierarchical order of ethnic groups, each eligible to varying degrees of statehood, rights and privileges. Given this complex structure, the policies of glasnost and perestroika, pursued by Mikhail Gorbachev, unleashed first and foremost claims for independence and for exercise of the right to self-determination, coming from both titular and non-titular nations in the various state formations on the territory

of the Soviet Union. Confronted with the increased claims for independence and the imminent dissolution of the Soviet Union, Gorbachev tried to deal with the complex nationalities crisis by measures to broaden the rights of smaller state and territorial formations and to enhance the status of their nationalities in the decision-making process to a level that they had not previously enjoyed.

The case of Georgia provides ample evidence as to the complexity of ethnic divisions and the consequences of a policy conceived to exploit these divisions. As a Union republic, Georgia included two autonomous republics, Abkhazia and Ajara, and one autonomous province (*oblast*), South Ossetia. In 1989, the national aspirations of the constituent units broke on several levels. Georgian political activists organized a series of demonstrations in Tbilisi and across the country to demand greater political and economic autonomy and to protest against increasing Russification. A demonstration in Tbilisi on April 9, 1989, known as "Bloody Sunday", was suppressed by the tanks and troops of the Soviet Ministry of the Interior. Concurrently, Abkhazia launched its demands for removal from Georgia and its attachment to the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic (RSFSR). A few months later, the autonomous province of South Ossetia accelerated its campaign for upgrading its status to that of an Autonomous Republic. This campaign was viewed as a forerunner of the demand for unification with the North Ossetian Autonomous Republic within the RSFSR. The Azeri population of Georgia demanded the establishment of their own autonomous formation.

The spiralling upheaval of ethnic tensions further reinforced the latent hostilities between the different ethnic groups. Following the bloody suppression of the demonstrations in Tbilisi, Georgia strengthened its belief that its national survival depended on its secession, boycotted the all-Union referendum on preserving the Soviet Union, conducted its own referendum and declared Georgia's independence on April 9, 1991. Georgia's alienation from Moscow grew stronger following the declaration "On Sovereignty and Status of South Ossetia". The escalation of hostilities in South Ossetia and the presence of troops of the Soviet Interior Ministry prompted Georgia to take hard measures on its way to independence by canceling the envisaged transition period of three to four years.

The Georgian Constitution adopted in 1995 does not formally define the status of the country's autonomous regions.

### **Radical and moderate opposition movements**

Against the background of territorial claims and counter-claims, the emerging political movements were consolidated in the context of a double struggle – on the one hand, in opposition to the existing Communist regime and subordination to Moscow and, on the other, in response to movements among Georgia's



minorities for autonomy and independence. The events in Abkhazia and South Ossetia meant that the ex-dissidents of the Communist period were presented with a choice between radical nationalistic commitments and a more moderate attitude towards the secessionist claims. The internal dynamics of the radical nationalistic camp and the interaction between radicals and moderates is particularly relevant to the study of revolutionary and dissident movements in Georgia.

The “Bloody Sunday” events and the Abkhaz question contributed to the polarization of the Georgian opposition into radicals and moderates and to the ascendancy of the radicals. Their leaders – Zviad Gamsakhurdia, Merab Kostava, Giorgi Chanturia – were former political prisoners having close contacts with radicals from other Soviet republics. The moderates, on the other side, were not able to counter the ban on their activities by the communist authorities and thus were not able to garner much public support.

### **Split within the radical opposition**

An open split in the radical opposition occurred in May 1990 when Zviad Gamsakhurdia and his supporters gathered within the “Round Table” coalition. Others, notably the National Democratic Party headed by Giorgi Chanturia and the Georgian Independence Party headed by Irakli Tsereteli, formed the “National Congress”. Parliamentary elections were held in October 1990 and Gamsakhurdia’s Round Table coalition captured most votes. In May 1991, Georgia’s first presidential elections were held and Gamsakhurdia won over 86 percent of the vote.

### **Anti-Zviadists**

Gamsakhurdia’s policies of ethnic populism and repression gave rise to an opposition movement which united political forces whose co-operation had earlier been inconceivable. In opposing Gamsakhurdia’s radical policies, extreme radicals and pro-democracy moderates were both united around a radical agenda. The radicalization of the opposition to Gamsakhurdia came at a period when two developments, quite important for Georgia’s future, were taking shape. These were the fragmentation of military forces and the emergence of armed groups that acted as private armies for various political personalities.

### **Mkhedrioni**

Among the armed militias, the so-called *Mkhedrioni*, or Horsemen-Warriors, consisting of a 3,000 man-strong force, played the most prominent role. Founded in 1988, this militia was associated with the Georgian National Independence Party and was led by Jaba Ioseliani. It allegedly played a role in exacerbating ethnic conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia in 1989. It also attacked police stations and Soviet military installations in order to obtain weapons. Gamsakhurdia tried to disarm the militia and ordered the

imprisonment of Ioseliani in February 1991 but *Mkhedrioni* was instead instrumental in ousting Gamsakhurdia in January 1992.

In 1992, *Mkhedrioni* members attacked the population of several villages in Western Georgia loyal to Gamsakhurdia. It was outlawed in 1995, shortly after the arrest of Ioseliani and five other *Mkhedrioni* members on charges of involvement in a car bomb attack on Eduard Shevardnadze, the Speaker of Parliament at the time. In 1998, Ioseliani was sentenced to 11 years’ imprisonment on those and other related charges of banditry and illegal possession of arms, but was released under an amnesty proclaimed by Shevardnadze in April 2000.

In November 2000, at its founding congress, the political organization *Mkhedrioni* superseded the eponymous paramilitary organization. Four hundred delegates elected Jaba Ioseliani as chairman and adopted a political programme calling for the abolition of the presidency, the introduction of a parliamentary republic and Georgia’s neutrality and balanced relations with both Russia and the West. In fact, the *Mkhedrioni* leaders have always claimed that they constitute a powerful opposition to those forces who “do not want a strong and independent Georgian state”. The Ministry of Justice has rejected the application of *Mkhedrioni* for registration twice – shortly after its founding congress in November 2000 and in May 2001. Jaba Ioseliani died on March 4, 2003, at the age of 76.

### **National Guard**

Another locus of anti-Gamsakhurdia opposition was the so-called National Guard. As a newly independent state, Georgia moved to create its own defence forces. The first step was the decision to end the drafting of Georgians into the Soviet army and, instead, to draft them into special divisions under the control of the Georgian Ministry of Internal Affairs. These formations, which were to be called the National Guard, were under the leadership of Tengiz Kitovani, who at the time was Gamsakhurdia’s ally. Later, however, Kitovani turned into one of the strong opponents of Gamsakhurdia, which led to a split in the Georgian military forces and to battles between the pro- and anti-Gamsakhurdia factions in the National Guard.

Tengiz Kitovani was arrested in January 1995 in an alleged attempt to launch a military intervention with the aim of restoring Abkhazia to Georgian control. He was sentenced to eight years’ imprisonment on charges of creating an illegal military force. In June 1999, Kitovani was one of the 2,500 beneficiaries of an amnesty announced by President Shevardnadze.

### **Gamsakhurdia’s supporters – Mingrelia (Samegrelo)**

In January 1992, Gamsakhurdia was deposed in a coup d’état and fled the country. Tengiz Kitovani, Jaba Ioseliani and Tengiz Sigua established a Military



Council, soon afterwards transformed into the State Council of Georgia. It took over power and reinstated the Georgian Constitution of 1921. In March 1992, Eduard Shevardnadze returned to Georgia to head the State Council and parliamentary elections were fixed for October 1992, when Shevardnadze was elected parliamentary chairman.

Meanwhile, the supporters of Gamsakhurdia, especially in the north-western region of Mingrelia (Gamsakhurdia's ancestral home), began armed resistance and launched attacks and kidnappings of officials and Shevardnadze's aides. In October 1993, Georgian rebels led by Gamsakhurdia took one town after another. They occupied the important Black Sea port of Poti, cutting off much of Georgia from the outside world. In their turn, paramilitary groups supporting Shevardnadze, including Ioseliani's *Mkhedrioni*, subjected the population of Mingrelia to reprisals. At the same time, Georgia joined the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in return for Russian support to defeat pro-Gamsakhurdia forces.

In October 1998, Georgian army colonel Akaki Eliava, one of the most devoted of Gamsakhurdia's supporters, and a tank unit under his command launched an abortive rebellion in Mingrelia with the aim of forcing the resignation of Shevardnadze. Government army units intercepted the rebels and most of them surrendered. Eliava, however, escaped and engaged in talks with government representatives to negotiate the conditions under which he was prepared to surrender. One of these conditions was the release from pre-trial detention of his 39 associates. Despite the government's concessions, Eliava could not be apprehended and remained in hiding in Mingrelia until the time of his death in 2000 (below).

In 2000, the Georgian parliament created a temporary Commission for National Reconciliation to assess the events in Tbilisi in 1991 that culminated in Gamsakhurdia's ouster. In the wake of his re-election on April 9, 2000, in an attempt to defuse tension between the Georgian authorities and Gamsakhurdia's supporters, President Shevardnadze announced an amnesty for 279 prisoners, 236 of whom were Gamsakhurdia's supporters. In early July of the same year, criminal proceedings against 11 people who took part in the 1991 fighting were terminated and proceedings against a further 129 non-residents in Georgia were suspended. These attempts at reconciliation, however, were undermined by the July 9, 2000, shooting of Akaki Eliava by the Georgian security forces in the west Georgian town of Zestafoni.

In June 2001, representatives of 25 political parties and organizations aligned in the **Coordinating Council of Opposition Parties of Mingrelia** called for granting the region formal autonomy. They also demanded that the Mingrelian language (a dialect of Georgian) be taught in local schools. An estimated 100,000 displaced persons, out of 250,000 who fled Abkhazia in 1992-93, are mostly Mingrelians and are settled in Zugdidi, the capital of the region.

## SECESSIONIST MOVEMENTS

### ABKHAZIA

Armed conflict between Georgia and Abkhaz separatists took on serious proportions in 1992-93. A United Nations mission was established to monitor a ceasefire of July 27, 1993, this mission being repeatedly extended thereafter, notwithstanding breakdowns in the ceasefire. On Nov. 26, 1994, the Abkhaz regional government declared Abkhazia independent. This move precluded any further talks between the Georgian and Abkhazian governments. Since then, Abkhazia has maintained de facto independence. It has enjoyed a degree of Russian support, Russia having retained its own peacekeeping force (under the banner of the Commonwealth of Independent States, CIS) contrary to earlier suggestions this would be withdrawn.

On March 14, 1998, Abkhazia held elections, which were declared invalid by the UN and the Russian and Georgian governments. The polling was marred by bomb explosions and violent clashes between Abkhaz and ethnic Georgians that left several people killed and wounded. In the wake of the elections, tensions on the border between Abkhazia and the rest of Georgia started to rise again. On March 20, Abkhaz guerrillas launched a cross-border artillery attack on a village in Georgia's Zugdidi region, wounding four people. On May 18, Georgian guerrillas killed some 20 Abkhaz police officers in a surprise attack. Two days later, forces of the Abkhaz interior ministry armed with heavy weaponry launched a counter-offensive against several Gali villages. On May 27, the Abkhaz de facto President Vladislav Ardzinba imposed a three-month state of emergency on Gali and parts of Ochamchira and Tkvarcheli regions. This was condemned by both Georgia and Russia as a violation of an agreement signed in April 1994 by Georgian, Abkhaz, Russian and UN representatives on the repatriation to Gali of ethnic Georgian displaced people who fled during the 1992-93 war.

### White Legion and Forest Brothers

Georgian guerrillas, under the names of the White Legion and the Forest Brothers, are known to operate in Gali and on the Georgian side of the 12-kilometer-wide security zone on each side of the Georgia-Abkhazia border.

These guerrillas are reported to have been involved in the Gali clashes of May 1998. The Georgian leadership has denied any connection or jurisdiction over the White Legion and Forest Brothers, but one of their leaders has admitted that he receives funding from Tamaz Nadareishvili, chairman of the Abkhaz parliament in exile.

On July 12, 1998, an armoured personnel carrier was blown up by a landmine in Gali, killing five members of the Russian peacekeeping force along the border between Abkhazia and the rest of Georgia. On July

14, the Russian Foreign Ministry issued a statement accusing members of the White Legion of laying the mine and warning that the peacekeeping force would be withdrawn if such attacks continued. Between 1994 and 1998, some 67 Russian peacekeepers died in similar incidents as a result of mines laid down by the guerrillas.

On Dec. 21, 1998, the Abkhaz Prime Minister met with the Georgian minister of state and the Georgian security and interior ministers to agree measures to consolidate the cease-fire protocol, including the planned withdrawal of Georgian interior ministry troops from the exclave of Khurcha on the Abkhaz side of the border between Abkhazia and the rest of Georgia. A few days later, members of various informal Georgian paramilitary units met with the leader of the guerrilla formations to affirm their readiness to participate in a new military campaign to restore those territories to Tbilisi's jurisdiction.

Dato Shengelaia, one of the leaders of the Forest Brothers, was arrested in the town of Zugdidi in Western Georgia in September 2000 but was released in December 2000 on "health grounds".

#### **Abkhaz leadership-in-exile**

An Abkhaz government-in-exile and parliament-in-exile represent the 200,000 ethnic Georgians who fled the Abkhaz conflict in 1992-93. On July 8, 1998, Zurab Erkvania resigned as chairman of the Abkhaz government in exile and was succeeded by Londer Tsaava.

The Abkhaz parliament in exile comprises 26 ethnic Georgian deputies to the Abkhaz parliament elected in 1991. Its chairman, Tamaz Nadareishvili, has consistently espoused a tougher policy with regard to the Abkhaz conflict than is the policy of the Georgian central leadership. He advocates specifically the withdrawal of the CIS peacekeeping forces deployed along the border between Abkhazia and the rest of Georgia and a new war to bring the breakaway republic back under the control of the central Georgian government. In a 1999 interview for the Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) Tbilisi bureau, Nadareishvili put forward his interpretation of the conflict, which he does not view as a conflict between Georgia and Abkhazia but as a "conflict in Abkhazia" between "Ardz-inba's faction" and "Nadareishvili's faction", whereby the central Georgian government is not a party but a mediator.

In July 1999, 17 members of the Abkhaz government-in-exile were abducted when their helicopter landed in the Kodori valley (the only region in Abkhazia that is under the control of the central government in Tbilisi). The contradictory explanations of the kidnappers' identity and objectives put forward by the hostages and Georgian officials indicated tension between the Georgian leadership and the Abkhaz leadership-in-exile. David Tsanova, deputy chairman of the government-in-exile, and Nadareishvili claimed that the kidnappers were members of the Georgian law

enforcement bodies. Since then, relations between the Abkhaz leadership-in-exile and the Georgian government have been strained.

#### **SOUTH OSSETIA**

The Ossetian population of the South Ossetian Autonomous Oblast in Soviet Georgia launched a campaign for upgrading the region's status to an autonomous republic in 1989, which was seen as a forerunner of the demand for unification with the North Ossetian Autonomous Republic within the RSFSR. One year later, the newly elected Georgian parliament voted to abolish completely the region's autonomous status within Georgia. This move sparked fighting between informal military groups of Georgians and Ossetians and the exodus of many Ossetians to the North Ossetian ASSR.

In July 1992, Georgian State Council chairman Eduard Shevardnadze and Russian President Boris Yeltsin signed an agreement under which a CIS peacekeeping force, comprising Russian, Georgian and Ossetian troops, was deployed in South Ossetia. Hostilities have been prevented but there has been no progress towards a political settlement and the status of South Ossetia has remained undefined. Some villages with a majority Georgian population are under the jurisdiction of the central Georgian authorities. The region's capital, Tskhinvali, along with Ossetian villages comprise the breakaway republic. According to some press reports, the breakaway republic has a 5,000-strong defence force, with about 60 per cent of adult males bearing arms.

Since 1992, the central Georgian government has had only minimal contacts with the secessionist leadership of South Ossetia. The unrecognized republic has survived thanks to financing from the Russian federal budget. The central Georgian authorities have made economic aid contingent on the consent of the South Ossetian leadership that the region be an autonomous formation within a unitary Georgian state.

In May 1999, South Ossetia held parliamentary elections. Four out of 33 parliamentary seats were reserved for ethnic Georgian deputies. They remained vacant, however, as the local Georgian population boycotted the poll.

In a referendum held on April 8, 2001, voters in South Ossetia approved a new constitution that narrows eligibility for the post of the republic's President, designates Russian a state language together with Ossetian and provides for the official use of Georgian in districts where Georgians form the majority of the population. The Georgian community boycotted the referendum, in which 23,540 of an estimated 45,000 voters participated. The Georgian parliament issued a statement condemning the referendum as an attempt to sabotage the ongoing search for a peaceful settlement between South Ossetia and the central Georgian authorities.

On Nov. 18, 2001, South Ossetia held presidential elections which Georgia and the international commu-

nity declared illegal. Eduard Kokoyty, a businessman and a Russian citizen, was elected as President.

### AJARA

Besides Abkhazia, Ajara (an ethnically Georgian but historically Muslim region) was the other autonomous republic on the territory of Georgia in Soviet times that felt its continued autonomy threatened by the consolidation of Georgia's independence.

Unlike Abkhazia, however, Ajara is the only case of a South Caucasus autonomous region not involved in armed conflict with its central government. It has never represented a direct threat to Georgia's territorial integrity for two reasons. First, whilst radical political leaders sought to exploit the situation in Abkhazia, more moderate political forces were involved both in Batumi and Tbilisi when handling the Ajarian issue.

Second, the Ajarian authorities, and in particular Aslan Abashidze, the chairman of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Ajara, focused their attention on achieving de facto independence without insisting on legalizing this status. The Ajarian leadership has not challenged directly the principle of Georgian territorial integrity and the situation has largely settled into a stalemate in which neither side threatens the other and no real efforts have been made to negotiate the scope of relations between the central and local authorities.

In fact, Ajara is practically outside of the state jurisdiction, and the authority of the Georgian government over the affairs of Ajara is nominal rather than real. For example, the leadership of Ajara has rejected the deployment of Georgian border troops and has introduced its own new laws on Ajara's legislature, judiciary and security. Ajara's de facto independence is further strengthened by the economic benefits derived from its position on the Turkish border and the control over Ajara's capital of Batumi, which is one of Georgia's main ports. The presence of a Russian military base in Batumi plays a further important role to this effect.

### JAVAKHETI

The region of Javakheti in southern Georgia bordering Armenia is mainly populated by ethnic Armenians. It is geographically as well as economically remote and isolated from Tbilisi. In 1995, the Georgian authorities merged the region with that of Meshketi (with a Georgian majority) to create the province of Samtskhe-Javakheti. This move increased the resentment and suspicion of the Armenian population but did not lead to large-scale protests.

Calls for outright autonomy for Javakheti erupted on Feb. 15, 2002, amidst allegations that the Georgian authorities intended to order out a garrison of Russian troops and replace them with units of the Turkish army. Although Tbilisi denied these allegations, the protests demonstrated the increasing fears of the ethnic Armenians in the region regarding Georgia's regional anti-terrorist policy in cooperation with

Turkey and Azerbaijan and Georgia's expressed desire to join NATO.

No Georgian troops are currently in Javakheti. The last time Georgian troops tried to enter the region in 1998 to hold exercises, they were turned back by a crowd blocking the road. Georgia's defence minister, David Tevzadze, immediately ordered the troops to withdraw. A Russian military base is stationed in the region's capital, Akhalkalaki, which provides employment to 1,500 local residents, making it by far the largest employer in the region. There are fears that its closure would have a negative effect on the region's economy, leaving most of the population unemployed and thus more receptive to nationalistic sentiments advocated by the *Javakhk* and *Virk* political movements, both of which are not registered as the Georgian Constitution bans parties based on ethnic, religious or territorial principles.

### Javakhk

*Javakhk* is a nationalistic organization set up in the early 1990s with the purpose of spearheading a campaign for the Javakheti region to be granted formal autonomous status on a par with other autonomies in Georgia. *Javakhk* has not managed to sustain an active support and has been plagued by internal disputes and lack of a clear decision-making structure, as a result of which its members have dispersed their activities among legally constituted parties. On April 15, 1999, Genadii Muradian, administrative head of Javakheti, in an address to Georgian parliament deputies claimed that *Javakhk* "barely exists". The most radical members of *Javakhk* have had ties with the Armenian nationalist movement *Dashnaktsutiun*, which supports Javakheti's unification with Armenia.

### Virk

Whilst the influence of *Javakhk* is allegedly declining, *Virk* (the word for "Georgia" in ancient Armenian) is believed to be the driving force in the region. Established in the mid-1990s, the party has been denied registration with the Ministry of Justice and has accused the government of oppressing the rights of ethnic minorities. Regional experts believe that *Virk* and its claimed 15,000 members are promoting a nationalist agenda. *Virk* co-chairman David Rstakian has rejected such allegations by stating that the movement is fighting for better parliamentary representation of Javakheti's Armenians and greater rights for local governing bodies. Rstakian has also demanded that Armenian be raised to the status of a "regional state language" and that central authorities pay greater attention to the region's economic and social needs.

Following the calls for autonomy, *Virk* co-chairmen Mels Torosian and Rstakian denied claims that they intended to break away from Georgia and said that such claims are made to "prepare ground for external interference in the region's life". They have further stated that *Virk* is aimed only at achieving a degree of self-governance within Georgia.

*Nadia Milanova*



# Germany

**Capital:** Berlin

**Population:** 83.3 m

On Oct. 3, 1990, the constituent states (Länder) of the former German Democratic Republic (East Germany) acceded to the Federal Republic of Germany. The organs of state of the FRG are: (i) a bicameral parliament, made up of the Federal Diet or Bundestag (elected for a four-year term by universal adult suffrage) and Federal Council or Bundesrat (consisting of 68 representatives of the FRG's 16 Länder); (ii) the Federal President, elected for a five-year term by the Federal Assembly or Bundesversammlung (made up of members of the Bundestag and delegates nominated by the Länder parliaments); (iii) the Federal Government or Bundesregierung (made up of the Federal Chancellor elected by an absolute majority of Bundestag members as well as ministers appointed by the President upon the proposal of the Chancellor); and (iv) the Federal Constitutional Court or Bundesverfassungsgericht (tasked with protecting individual human and civil rights and arbitrating conflicts between Federal organs and the Länder).

The FRG has an Additional Member System (AMS) of proportional representation. Each voter has two votes of which the second vote (cast for a party list) is the most important because second votes determine the number of seats allocated to each party in the Bundestag. To qualify for representation a party must gain at least 5 per cent of the total national votes cast or secure the election of at least three of its candidates in the constituencies. With the exception of a brief period of majority government in the 1950s, over successive legislative periods the AMS system has produced a share of seats in the Bundestag that has made the formation of formal coalitions between the parties a necessity. AMS also produces "split-ticket" voting, whereby voters divide their allegiance between the first (constituency) and second (party list) votes. This practice tends to favour small parties, which pick up a disproportionate share of second votes. Germany is divided into 299 constituencies which means that 299 MPs (or MdBs as they are known in Germany) are elected by simple majority vote in single-member constituencies. A further 299 MPs are elected from party lists making a total of 598 MPs. If a party wins more seats in constituencies than it has claim to in view of the percentage of its second vote it is allowed to retain these extra seats. Thus the addition of these "overhang votes" means that the actual number of MPs in the present Bundestag is 603 and not 598.

Since 1998, the FRG has been governed by a so-called "Red-Green" coalition (made up of the Social Democratic SPD and the environmentalist Green Party), which was re-elected in 2002. Other parties in

the Bundestag are: (i) the CDU/CSU (a combined Christian Democratic party faction made up of the Christian Democratic Union and its Bavarian sister-party the Christian Social Union); (ii) the FDP (liberals); and (iii) PDS (post-Communist successors to the ruling Socialist Unity Party of the former GDR). There have never been parties to the right of the CDU or the left of the PDS represented in the Bundestag. As a result, political dissidence has generally taken an extra-parliamentary route. Following the elections of Sept. 22, 2002, the division of seats in the Bundestag is as follows: SPD 251; CDU/CSU 248; Greens 55; FDP 47; PDS 2.

## DISSIDENCE IN THE FRG

Germany's constitutional order is underpinned by the idea of "militant democracy" (*Wehrhaft Demokratie*). This means it has taken a more aggressive stance towards left- and right-wing extremism than some other Western European states. In January 1972, the federal government issued guidelines for checking political affiliations of job applicants, allowing for a so-called *Berufsverbot* which barred individuals from public service employment (including teaching and working in local government services) if they were deemed to be engaged in "activities against the Constitution" or were a member of an organization regarded as hostile to the Constitution. By 1985, over 6,500,000 job applicants had been checked and proceedings had been taken or bans on employment imposed in about 7,000 cases. Towards the end of the 1980s, the practice was relaxed but German unification saw a re-imposition of the *Berufsverbot* – both as a means of countering the growing threat of right-wing extremism and through the process of "lustration" by which individuals closely associated with the former GDR regime were exposed. Lustration was used particularly against former employees of the East German Ministry for State Security (Ministerium für Staatssicherheit, the MfS or Stasi for short), who were removed from the public service.

## Red Army Faction (Rote Armee Fraktion, RAF)

Established in 1968, the RAF (also known as the Baader-Meinhof Group or Gang) took its name and inspiration from the Japanese Red Army. The antecedents of the RAF are to be found in the Socialist German Students' Federation or *Sozialistischer Deutscher Studentenbund* (SDS). The SDS was founded in 1946 and was close to the SPD until 1961, when the SDS embarked on a revolutionary course. In the 1960s, the SDS had about 1,600 members

(out of a total student population of approximately 300,000) and formed the core of the extra-parliamentary opposition (*Außerparlamentarische Opposition*, or APO). The APO was hostile to what it regarded as an unreformed “establishment” and in particular to the “grand coalition” government formed in 1966 by the SPD and the CDU.

The SDS’ aim was one of radical reform and the setting-up of a communist society. However the SDS did not look to the Soviet Union or GDR for inspiration, but rather looked back to Marx, Engels and Lenin, as well as Rosa Luxemburg, Mao, Herbert Marcuse, Ho Chi Minh, Fidel Castro and Ché Guevara. At this time, the most influential person in the SDS was “Red” Rudi Dutschke. Dutschke described himself as “a professional revolutionary and a Marxist” and argued for the overthrow of western capitalism (and Soviet-style socialism) through protest demonstrations and “discussion” rather than through an explicit strategy of violence.

Nevertheless, violence soon followed. In June 1967 a 26-year-old student, Benno Ohnesorg, was shot dead by police during demonstrations by left-wing students against a visit to West Berlin by the Shah of Iran. In December 1967, the Federal Ministry of the Interior declared the SDS a “danger to the Constitution” and, in April 1968, Dutschke himself was severely injured by a right-wing attacker. This was followed by violent demonstrations by SDS followers in West Berlin and other West German cities, with a specific focus on the premises of the Springer media concern, which was regarded as having demonized Dutschke and therefore partly responsible for the attack on him. The demonstrations led to the deaths of a press photographer and a student.

In March 1971, the SDS dissolved itself because of disagreements over strategy. Broadly speaking, two alternative strategies presented themselves at this time. One strategy was to broaden the base of revolutionary politics into the working class. This brand of revolutionary cadre politics was dominated by the so-called K-Groups, such as the German Communist Party (*Deutsche Kommunistische Partei*, or DKP), Communist Party of Germany (*Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands*, or DKP), Communist Federation of West Germany (*Kommunistischer Bund Westdeutschlands*, or KBW), and the International Marxist Group (*Gruppe Internationale Marxisten*, or GIM). As elsewhere, these groups were bitterly divided into rival ideological factions of Leninists, Trotskyists, Maoists etc. The other strategy was the formation of secretive and essentially “vanguardist” armed groups. These were diverse in terms of background, organization, membership, and ideology and included groups such as the Second of June Movement (*Bewegung 2 Juni*), Revolutionary Cells (*Revolutionäre Zellen*, or RZ), and the Socialist Patients’ Collective (*Sozialistisches Patienten Kollektiv*, or SPK). However, the most active and persistent group was the RAF.

The RAF’s first “action” took place in April 1968, when the group was responsible for arson at a Frankfurt department store. Despite the arrest of many members the RAF’s campaign intensified during the 1970s. In May 1972, the group claimed responsibility for attacks on the US Army Fifth Corps in Frankfurt (killing an officer and injuring 13 other people), at the city police headquarters in Augsburg, the Bavarian criminal police office in Munich, on the car of a judge investigating the group in Karlsruhe, at the head-

quarters of the Springer publishing group in Hamburg, and at the US army’s European Command headquarters in Heidelberg on May 24 (three US servicemen were killed and five other persons injured in this incident). This led to a series of arrests of prominent members over the next month or so, including Andreas Baader, Holger Meins, Jan-Carl Raspe, Gudrun Ensslin, Ulrike Meinhof, and Siegfried Hausner. Among those convicted in 1973-74 were Ulrike Meinhof and Horst Mahler, sentenced in West Berlin on Nov. 29, 1974, to eight and two years’ imprisonment, respectively. (Mahler, a former right-wing radical, had by this time come to the conclusion that vanguardism was a flawed strategy and joined the newly established Maoist Communist Party of Germany. Following German unification he made another political volte-face and is now once more associated with right-wing extremism.)

The arrests and subsequent sentencing of RAF members not only hardened political lines of conflict between the state and the revolutionary left; they also fostered a culture of martyrdom. On Nov. 9, 1974, Holger Meins, awaiting trial for involvement in five murders and 54 cases of attempted murder, died in prison after taking part in a hunger strike. The following day, Günter von Drenkmann, president of the West Berlin Supreme Court, was shot dead at his home. The RAF claimed responsibility for his death as “an act of revenge” for the death of Meins. Subsequent deaths in prison, under circumstances that remain unclear, of Ulrike Meinhof, Andreas Baader, Gudrun Ensslin and Jan-Carl Raspe were to re-enforce the idea of martyrdom that underpinned the RAF’s activities.

During the period 1974-75, and despite the arrests discussed above, the RAF’s campaign continued, with a series of incidents involving bombings, arson and attempted assassination. In April 1977 the trials of Baader, Ensslin and Raspe ended. They had lasted for more than two years. The three defendants were charged with taking part in four murders, 34 attempted murders and the formation of and membership in a criminal organization. They all received life sentences. The trial allowed the defendants limited opportunities to articulate the group’s philosophy. In January 1976 Baader described the RAF as “an urban guerrilla group, a small motor to start up the great revolution by armed force”, whilst in May 1976 Ensslin provided a written statement confirming that the three defendants had been members of the RAF since 1970 and claiming responsibility for attacks on the CIA headquarters in Frankfurt, the US Army in Heidelberg, and an attack on the Springer building in Hamburg. The RAF’s actions had to be considered within the context of the Vietnam War which, she argued, had taken place not only in the Far East but also in West Germany (owing to the logistical role of US forces in Europe).

1977 was the high point of the RAF’s campaign, culminating in the so-called “German Autumn” of that year. First, on April 7, RAF members killed the Attorney General, Siegfried Buback, along with his driver and another passenger in the car. In a communiqué the RAF stated that it had “executed” Buback because he was an “agent of the system” and the “nodal point between the judiciary and the news organizations”. The RAF also accused him of being responsible for the deaths of Meinhoff (who had been found hanging in her cell on May 9, 1976, a verdict of suicide subse-

quently being returned) and Meins. Then in July 1977, the group killed the Chief Executive of the Dresdner Bank, Jürgen Ponto. Following this, in September 1977, the RAF's "Siegfried Hausner Commando" (named after a group member who was killed in a raid on the German Embassy in Stockholm in 1975) kidnapped Hans-Martin Schleyer, President of the German employers' organization, the BDA. During the kidnap three police escorts and a driver were killed. The group demanded the release of 11 imprisoned members of the RAF (including Baader, Ensslin and Raspe). This demand was reinforced the following month by a Palestinian armed group which hijacked a Lufthansa plane and flew it to Mogadishu in Somalia. The German government dispatched its special counter-terrorist unit (GSG-9), which freed the hostages and killed three of the Palestinian group. Hours later, Baader, Ensslin and Raspe were found dead in their cells. The following day Schleyer's body was found in an abandoned car near the border with France.

The events of the "German Autumn" ended in failure for the RAF and the death of the group's leadership. During this period many members left the organization, others went on the run, whilst still more were arrested. Numerous individuals were convicted for offences ranging from murder or attempted murder, through robbery and extortion, to running an information centre, allowing premises to be used for RAF activities, or simply being a member of an illegal organization. RAF members who had fled abroad were also brought to justice in several countries. In 1980 Astrid Proll, one of the founder members of the RAF, was sentenced to five years in prison and a fine of DM 4,500 (the prison sentence was suspended because she had already spent over four years in investigative custody) for armed bank robbery and issuing forged documents. Proll had been extradited from Britain, where she had fled in 1974.

Despite these setbacks, the RAF campaign continued. In 1979, the group began recruiting new members and robbed a bank in the city of Bochum, taking over DM 124,000. The same year, the RAF made an unsuccessful attempt on the life of the NATO Supreme Commander Alexander Haig, in Brussels. The following year they once again narrowly failed to kill US General Frederick Kroessen in a rocket attack on his car. Then in the mid-1980s, a new campaign resulted in the death of French General René Audran, the shooting of Motoren-Turbinen-Union Chief Executive Officer Ernst Zimmerman in Munich, and the killing of two US soldiers and wounding of 11 others in a bomb attack on the US Airforce base in Frankfurt (the latter attack in co-operation with the French group *Action Directe*). Overall, the RAF campaign against NATO and US military targets involved about 40 attacks.

The RAF was one of several organizations which claimed responsibility for the explosion of a bomb at the "La Belle" discotheque in West Berlin (much frequented by US servicemen) on April 5, 1986, which killed two persons and injured another 200, as well as for the murder of Olof Palme, the Swedish Prime Minister, on Feb. 28, 1986. Although neither of these claims is considered very credible, the RAF did shoot dead Gerold von Braunmühl, political director at the Foreign Affairs Ministry, in October 1986 and in December a West German development aid agency in Cologne was bombed by the "Rolando Olalia Fighting Unit", believed to

comprise dissident RAF militants.

At the same time, other armed groups such as the Revolutionary Cells and the violent women's group "Red Zora" (*Rote Zora*) became more active, both of which directed their attacks mainly against property. In August and September 1987 Red Zora launched a series of arson attacks against branches of the Adler clothing firm, which it accused of exploiting cheap female labour in South Korea and Sri Lanka. Eventually the firm agreed to carry out changes in its work policy and conditions abroad. Also in September 1987, Günter Korbmacher, a senior member of the Federal Court of Final Appeal for foreigners seeking asylum, was shot in the legs from close quarters by two gunmen on motorbikes in West Berlin. The shooting coincided with the fourth anniversary of the suicide of a young Turk who had been due for deportation, and was claimed by the Revolutionary Cells.

In September the following year, a state secretary at the Finance Ministry, Hans Tietmeyer, and his driver escaped unhurt when gunmen fired shots at their car in Bad Godesberg near Bonn. The "Khaled Aker Commando" of the RAF claimed responsibility for the attack, which they said failed when a machine-gun jammed. Tietmeyer was one of the organizers of the annual joint meeting of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which took place as scheduled in West Berlin the following week. Left extremists, including masked agitators known as Autonomous Groups (*Autonomen*) – allegedly working in concert with the RAF – had vowed to prevent the Berlin meeting taking place, threatening street blockades and "unusual measures" to "break the domination of the imperialist economic strategy". In a separate incident, the IMF's West German executive director, Günter Grosche, and an SPD member of the Bundestag both suffered head injuries when they were attacked by masked men at a Hamburg meeting held to discuss the forthcoming IMF/World Bank event.

Throughout the 1980s the German state continued to arrest and sentence RAF members. These included, among the more serious offences, Peter-Jürgen Boock (four concurrent life terms and one 15-year term for his involvement in the murders of Dr Ponto and Dr Schleyer, later amended to life imprisonment) and Rolf-Clemens Wagner (life imprisonment for participation in the murder of Schleyer). As the 1980s drew to a close, the RAF remained active albeit on a smaller scale than hitherto. In November 1989, a car bomb attack in Bad Homburg near Frankfurt killed Alfred Herrhausen, 59, chief executive of the country's largest bank, the Deutsche Bank. Herrhausen was also chairman of the supervisory board of Daimler-Benz, and a leading adviser to Chancellor Helmut Kohl on economic affairs. His driver was injured but six bodyguards escaped unhurt. A note left near the scene, bearing insignia associated with the RAF, claimed responsibility on behalf of the "Wolfgang Beer Commando". In April 1991, Detlev Rohwedder, executive head of the Treuhand agency entrusted with the privatization of former East German state enterprises, was shot dead at his home in Düsseldorf. The RAF claimed responsibility, and a note from the "Commando Ulrich Wessel" (named after an RAF member killed in 1975) was left at the scene.

The authorities discounted the possibility that the former East German state security police had been behind the attack on Rohwedder, despite confirmation in March 1991 by the



Federal Prosecutor that the Stasi had sheltered and trained RAF members since 1978. Nevertheless German unification spelt the beginning of the end of the RAF's campaign, not least because of the loss of their bolt-hole in the former GDR. During June 1990 East German police arrested nine people suspected of extremist attacks in West Germany on behalf of the RAF. On June 21 the West German police announced that they had started investigations into allegations that Erich Honecker (former Chairman of the ruling Socialist Unity Party) and Erich Mielke (former head of the Stasi) had actively colluded in offering RAF activists refuge in East Germany. During the summer of 1990 a number of RAF fugitives were arrested in East Germany. These included: Susanne Albrecht (wanted for the 1977 murder of the banker Jürgen Ponto), Inge Viett (wanted for the 1974 murder of the judge Günter von Drenkmann) and Silke Maier-Witt (wanted in connection with the murder of Schleyer. They were all handed over to the FRG authorities.

### DISSIDENCE IN THE GDR

The German Democratic Republic was established in October 1949, in response to the foundation of the Federal Republic in the western zones of occupation. It lasted 41 years until German Unification in October 1990. The GDR was a typical East European "people's republic", albeit with some institutional arrangements specific to itself. The GDR constitution enshrined the leading role of the ruling Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED). The party controlled all significant public bodies, with the exception of the Church. The SED itself was controlled by the Politburo, which had responsibility for strategic decision making and political direction. The Politburo was elected by the SED Central Committee, which was the crucial power broker within the GDR, exercising considerable technical control over all aspects of life, through organs such as the Academy for the Social Sciences of the Central Committee of the SED, and the Central Institute for Socialist Economic Leadership of the Central Committee of the SED, as well as the SED Party Secretariat.

Despite the primacy of the SED, in formal terms it kept up the pretence that it was just part of a wider democratic alliance called the "National Front". The National Front was made up of the SED, the mass organizations representing the trades unions, youth groups and women's groups, and a number of so-called "bloc parties" such as the Christian Democrats, Liberals, National Democrats and the Farmers' Party. The leaders of the bloc parties all co-operated with either the Stasi or the KGB (including Lothar de Maiziere who was the first non-communist leader of the GDR in 1990, and a place-man of Helmut Kohl). The bloc parties were heavily subsidized by the state, enabling them to maintain control of an extensive network of patronage through staffing, newspapers, recreation camps and hotels. In extremis, SED control of the bloc parties involved naked state power. For instance, in 1950, Communist shock troops stormed the offices of the Christian Democrats in Saxony and

forced its party chairman to resign.

Formal state institutions were as follows. First, the President of the Republic. Only one person occupied this position, that was Wilhelm Pieck from 1949 to 1960. When he died the office of President of the Republic was dissolved and replaced by a new Council of State. The Council of State consisted of 21- 24 members, the President of which was the General Secretary of the SED (first Walter Ulbricht and then – after a brief interlude – Erich Honecker), who acted as titular Head of State. Second, the Council of Ministers, which was the official government of the GDR and was accountable to the "Chamber of Deputies" (Volkskammer). The Volkskammer was composed of 500 delegates from the National Front. It was a rubber-stamp Parliament and met infrequently (as little as three times a year). There were no full-time Deputies, as they all held jobs in the National Front's constituent organizations. Finally, the main organ for the projection of state power (apart from the ever-present Red Army) was the Stasi. Modelled explicitly upon the KGB, the Stasi was considered to be the "sword and shield" of the party. It had over 90,000 full-time employees, as well as a vast network of unofficial co-workers or "officers with special duties" (civilian informers). The Stasi penetrated all aspects of everyday life in the GDR. The central office of the Stasi in Berlin had a staff of 33,000, whilst in the 15 district offices, staff numbers ranged from 1,700 to almost 4,000. On top of this, the Stasi had auxiliary units strategically placed across society: in factories, military bases, universities, and hospitals

### Dissident Groups

The pattern of opposition and dissidence in the GDR was determined by four external factors. First, and the most important, was the attitude of the Soviet Union towards the SED leadership. Key to this was the so-called Brezhnev Doctrine, by which the Soviet Union reserved the right to intervene in the internal affairs of Warsaw Pact countries if Soviet-style socialism was deemed to be threatened. The Brezhnev Doctrine was publicly abandoned by Mikhail Gorbachev in a speech to the UN in December 1988. Gorbachev's reformist course alarmed the SED leadership and from 1987 onwards the GDR leadership distanced itself from Gorbachev's policies. The official line taken talked of "Socialism in the colours of the GDR" and dismissed Gorbachev's reforms as "just a change of wallpaper that need not be copied".

The second factor was the existence of West Germany, with a common border with the GDR, and West Berlin, an enclave of capitalism in the GDR. For the GDR West Germany provided a constant challenge and a point of reference for the East German population. The international recognition of the GDR in the early 1970s strengthened the legitimacy of the East German regime in the short term but the subsequent influx of millions of West German visitors following this served to highlight the shortcomings of the

regime, particularly in the economic field. West German visitors brought with them Western ideas, products and lifestyles. This was compounded by the fact that most East Germans also watched West German television. The overall effect was a slow erosion of confidence in the GDR amongst the general population.

At the same time, however, the proximity of the FRG (which did not distinguish between East or West Germans in its nationality laws) provided the SED with a means of weakening the dissident movement in the GDR. Writers, artists and academics who were critical of the regime were put under intense pressure to emigrate, were given permission to leave, or were granted long-term visas to travel. Such tactics became evident in 1976, with the withdrawal of Wolf Biermann's citizenship, and writers such as Reiner Kunze, Ginter Kunert, Ernst Loest and many others followed, culminating with the forced emigration of Stephan Krawczyk and Freya Klier in 1988. Ordinary people who fell foul of the GDR penal code (by attempting to flee or insisting on their right to emigrate) were imprisoned but sooner or later most were quite literally "sold" to the Federal Republic. Between 1963 and 1989 the FRG paid for the release and emigration of 33,755 prisoners. In 1964 the price per person was DM 40,000; by 1977 it had risen to DM 95,000. While this weakened the dissident movement it also highlighted the presence of a freer and more prosperous German state next door.

The third factor was the GDR's signature of the Helsinki Agreement in 1975. Part of this agreement enshrined a charter of human rights, thus providing the basis for legal claims of individual citizens against the state. Most people had heard of Charter 77 in Czechoslovakia, and in the GDR the Initiative for Peace and Human Rights was formed in 1981. The GDR state also came under pressure from the evangelical churches, which pushed for greater human rights and peaceful co-operation between the two Germanys. The follow-up conferences associated with the Helsinki accords provided an external platform of support for dissident movements in the Eastern Bloc.

Finally, the development of dissident movements in other Eastern Bloc countries, especially in Poland and Hungary, put the GDR under even greater pressure. "Solidarity" became a mass-movement in Poland in the early 1980s, was then suppressed, but came to power in 1989. In Hungary, too, the reform movement gained ground before 1989 and on Sept. 11, 1989, the reformist government in Hungary allowed East German visitors to cross over to West Germany.

The three core themes of the dissident movement in the GDR were human rights, peace, and environmental protection. The churches, already engaged in a dialogue with the evangelical churches, provided meeting places and logistical assistance to East German dissidents. For their part, the Stasi systematically harassed dissidents and their families, imprisoning some of them, and forcing others to emigrate. Moreover the Stasi were reasonably successful in recruiting and

placing informers within dissident groups.

A confidential ministry paper of June 1989 listed 160 dissident groups operating in the GDR. The list highlights the supporting role of the evangelical churches: 150 out of 160 groups are listed as "church-based". Of these, 35 are categorized as peace groups, 39 as ecology groups, 23 as peace/ecology groups, seven as women's groups, three as doctors' groups, 10 as human rights groups, and 39 as "Third World groups" and conscientious objectors. In all, the Stasi estimated a total of 2,500 activists (disregarding sympathizers).

The new dissident movements that emerged in August and September 1989 must be seen in the context of the widespread dissatisfaction in the population. The immediate catalysts were anger about the falsification of local election results in May 1989, SED support for the Chinese government's suppression of the democracy movement, and the worsening economic situation. This was compounded by the regime's hubris in the run-up to the 40th Anniversary of the GDR in October 1989. Thus, while the wind of change blew through Poland, Hungary and the Soviet Union, the old formulas and phrases were used to prepare for the anniversary.

Five important movements emerged in the late summer and early autumn of 1989 that quickly attracted a mass following. First, the "New Forum" group, whose manifesto called for dialogue and for all citizens to join if they wished to change society. Second the "Democratic Rising" group sought a Western-style political system, but wished to retain a state-run economy. Third, "Democracy Now" also wanted political democracy but to retain a state-controlled economy. Fourth, the newly founded SPD, which demanded a social market economy. Finally, the "United Left", which wanted to retain the state-run economy but again demanded political reforms.

In the late summer of 1989, East German holiday-makers who wanted to emigrate to the West occupied the West German embassies in Prague, Budapest and Warsaw. On Sept. 11, 1989, the Hungarian government decided to open its border to the West and television screens showed thousands of East German youngsters overjoyed at being able to leave the GDR. Television coverage of this event was seen in the GDR and put heart into the dissident movement to press for change. The demonstrations were all peaceful (although there is evidence that some elements in the senior SED leadership did consider a Chinese-style crackdown on the early mass demonstrations).

On Oct. 18, 1989, Honecker fell from power, but the demonstrations continued; the largest taking place in East Berlin on Nov. 4, where more than one million people came together. On Nov. 7 the government of the GDR stepped down; one day later the entire Politburo resigned and New Forum gained official recognition. On the evening of Nov. 9, 1989, the GDR's borders were opened and its citizens were given the right to travel freely. During the night of Nov. 9-10, tens of thousands of East Berliners came to West Berlin in an



emotional unification of the divided city. The dissident groups took advantage of the new mood and pressed for greater democracy, including free elections in East Germany. On Nov. 13 the Volkskammer confirmed the government of Hans Modrow, an SED reformer. However many dissident groups regarded his government as no more than a transitional administration. In an attempt to align the dissident groups with the government, a Round Table was created and met for the first time on Dec. 7, 1989. Under the chairmanship of church leaders the SED, the old bloc parties, and the new groups sat together to debate the GDR's problems.

The Round Table talks were made possible by the SED's acquiescence in amending the GDR Constitution to remove the article that provided for the SED's "leading role" in state and society. However, the demonstrations continued and the mood of the demonstrators was changing. In early demonstrations, the popular chant was "we are the people". However, by the time West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl visited Dresden on Dec. 19 the demonstrators' chant had changed to "we are one people". The theme of German unification had come to the fore. This revealed an underlying rift between the aims of the dissident movement and the aspirations of the populace as a whole. Virtually all the leaders of the dissident groups were democratic socialists and wanted to retain a separate GDR, whereas the people at large were disenchanted with any type of socialism and opposed the idea of starting a new, albeit democratic, socialist experiment. Thus, the dissidents slowly lost the initiative as West German parties – particularly the ruling CDU – tapped into a popular mood for swift reunification of the two Germanys.

The Round Table representatives demanded the dissolution of the Stasi and "citizen committees", a move that was conceded in late January 1990. Dissident groups also exerted strong pressure for free elections, which were brought forward from May to March 1990. But free elections meant the end of the dissident movement. In the first free elections to the People's Chamber on March 18, 1990, the dissident movements (New Forum, Democracy Now, Initiative for Peace and Human Rights) gained a mere 2.9 per cent of the vote. The initiative had passed to western political elites and their East German allies.

## UNIFICATION, TERRORISM, AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE

### Left-wing extremism

The unification of Germany has led to a decrease in terrorist acts, not least because the dissolution of the Stasi eliminated one potential supporter of terrorism. The lustration of East German public servants took place within the framework of the civil service laws of the FRG, which require all public servants to be loyal to the political system. These formed the legal basis of the questionnaire that all former East German public

servants had to complete if they wished to continue to work in the public sector. By general consent former Stasi members were made redundant, but full-time party functionaries who also held a public service post were not automatically dismissed.

In late May 1990 a new government commission on the further dissolution of the Stasi was set up. Initial proposals were controversial, these including the idea that former Stasi members should be integrated into the police force and the Interior Ministry to avoid their becoming a potential terrorist threat. On May 3, 1990, General Peter Koch, who had been appointed in December 1989 to oversee the Stasi's dissolution, committed suicide amidst allegations that he had prevaricated in his duties and had illegally appropriated DM 40,000. These allegations had led to his dismissal in January.

On July 26, 1990, Erich Mielke, 82, the former Minister for State Security, was arrested and charged with preparing internment camps for dissidents and harbouring terrorists. Mielke had been arrested in December 1989 but then released on health grounds. His re-arrest was made on the recommendation of an independent doctors' commission.

In early January 1990 the West German magazine *Der Spiegel* claimed that for nearly twenty years the GDR government had trained members of the West German Communist Party (DKP) to carry out destabilizing terrorist attacks in West Germany. These DKP agents would have been activated in the event of heightened tension or conflict between NATO and Warsaw Pact forces. A more present threat was the RAF which, as noted, had received logistical support from the Stasi since the 1970s. The removal of this source of aid and succour, combined with a dwindling support base, led to a slow decline in RAF activity. The eclipse of the RAF was reinforced by the spectacle of former RAF members recanting their activities following their release from prison.

By the end of the 1990s, the RAF was no longer any significant challenge to the German state. Finally, in April 1998, the RAF released an eight-page letter, announcing the end of the strategy of the "urban guerrilla". This was effectively a formal end to the armed campaign, although the RAF reserved the right to use all effective means to bring about a "world beyond capitalism". At the same time, groups such as the Revolutionary Cells and Red Zora continued to operate. Moreover, street violence – organized by the autonomous groups and anti-Fascist groups – has increasingly become a medium of political dissent. This has often been complemented by a strategy of sabotage, including arson and bomb attacks on communications and data networks, high-tension pylons, railways, sites of urban "gentrification", and other politically– or logistically– sensitive locations.

### Right-wing extremism

The decline of left-wing extremist violence was mirrored by an upsurge of right-wing violence. In the first

three years of the 1990s, the German security services estimated that 49 people were killed in racist attacks that took place within a “political and organizational context”: in other words carried out by organized right wing groups. In 1991 membership of such organizations was estimated at 39,800 (a rise of 100 per cent over the figure ten years before). In 1992, 2,285 criminal offences of this nature took place, including murder, manslaughter, arson, use of explosives, damage to property, physical injury and threats of violence. Of these, the majority of crimes took place in the old West Germany (particularly the states of North Rhine-Westphalia, Lower Saxony, and Baden Württemberg) but a significant (and disproportionate) number of attacks took place in the states of the former GDR. Here, guestworkers from Mozambique and Vietnam were attacked and groups of skinheads fought battles with left-wingers. The rise of right-wing violence in Germany came to international attention with a series of violent and highly organized attacks on the hostels of asylum seekers in locations such as Rostock, Mölln, Hoyerswerda and Berlin. At the same time, the illegal movement of East Europeans across the Oder-Neisse border with Poland fanned the mood of xenophobia among some elements of the population, thus strengthening extremist right-wing groups.

Many extreme right-wing groups have been banned by the German state on constitutional grounds. Moreover, they are as prone to splits and schisms as their left-wing equivalents. Some of these splits were based on ideological differences, some on disagreements over tactics (such as whether to sanction attacks on foreigners), and others on the clash of personalities. Personality clashes are important because extreme right-wing groups tend to be organized along the lines of the *Führerprinzip*: the unquestioning acceptance of hierarchical authority flowing down organizational ranks from a charismatic leader. Thus the lack of a rational-bureaucratic organizational structure inhibits the resolution of such conflicts between individuals and encourages splits and schisms. This centripetal tendency is aggravated by the lack of a clear “front runner” among the individuals aspiring to lead the German far right, although the late Michael Kühnen – a former Bundeswehr lieutenant – came close to fulfilling this role.

Kühnen first came to the security services’ attention as “Führer” of the **Action Front of National Activists** (*Aktionsfront Nationaler Aktivisten/Nationale Aktivisten*, or ANS/AN), which was prohibited in 1983. Following the suppression of the ANS/AN, Kühnen and many of his followers launched an aggressive entryist operation against the rival **Free German Workers’ Party** (*Freiheitliche Deutsche Arbeiterpartei*, or FAP). However, Kühnen’s cabal clashed with the existing FAP leadership over whether to participate in elections (which Kühnen opposed) and whether to use physical violence against Jewish and German persons (which Kühnen supported). These disagreements eventually led to the split of the FAP, and Kühnen and his supporters left to form the **New Front Group**

(*Gruppe die Neue Front*, or GdNF).

In April 1991, Kühnen died of an Aids-related illness whilst in prison. However the GdNF continued to operate. By the mid-1990s, the GdNF had around 400 members, of which about a third were based in the states of the former GDR. The GdNF was also remarkably active in founding affiliated organizations such as “Anti-Communist Action” (*Antikommunistische Aktion*, or ANTIKO), “Anti-Zionist Action” (*Antizionistische Aktion*, or AZA) and the “German Women’s Front” (*Deutsche Frauenfront*, or DFF). Front organizations such as these allowed the GdNF to carry out organized attacks on foreigners and campaign for their ideological goals without drawing undue attention to the GdNF itself.

Ideologically, the GdNF, like other extreme right-wing organizations, is aggressively racist and hostile to everything deemed to be “non-German” or “un-German” (*undeutsches Wesen*). The two core elements of this ideology are the 1920 programme of the old Nazi Party (NSDAP) and the later Nuremberg Race Laws of 1935. The focus on the 1920 programme is especially interesting because it represents a period before Hitler’s consolidation of power within the party. In many instances, Hitler himself is criticized as selling out the original revolutionary goals of the NSDAP and delivering the party into the hands of Big Business. By contrast, right extremists look to the “left-wing” of the NSDAP, with their ideas of an anti-capitalist, classless society (*Volksgemeinschaft*), based on a co-operative economic order (*Genossenschaften*). Given this “socialist” strand within extreme right-wing thinking, it perhaps not surprising that it attracted elements who had previously supported the old GDR regime or even – in the case of Horst Mahler – former RAF activists.

Unlike the RAF and other extreme left groups, far-right groups’ activities do not specifically target the German state but rather focus on foreigners, leftists, and other “un-German” elements. Nevertheless, their ideology, internal organization, and modes of operation are in direct conflict with the constitutional principles of the FRG. As a result, in the 1990s the security services identified right-wing extremism as a key threat to German society. At the same time, however, these groups have become more sophisticated in their approach – making their suppression more difficult.

The German Interior Ministry has sought to obtain a ban on the **National Democratic Party** (*Nationale Demokratische Partei*, or NPD). The NPD is a long-established far-right party that achieved its electoral peak in 1969, when it took 4.3% of the national vote, but has never gained representation in the federal legislature. It has, since the 1960s, managed to steer a course that remained just within the envelope of what the Federal Constitutional Court would consider to be “democratic”. However, in recent years there is evidence that the NPD has engaged in activities that overstep this mark, including giving logistical and ideological support to more violent organizations and even Skinhead gangs. This led SPD Interior Minister Otto

Schily (himself a former Defence Council for the RAF) to seek a court-ordered ban on the NPD. In January 2002, however, the Federal Constitutional Court suspended proceedings against the party after it emerged that the government had used evidence from informers who might have acted as agents provocateurs. Against this background, on March 18, 2003, the same Court rejected the call to ban the party.

The salience of the theme of right-wing extremism reduced in the mid- to late-1990s. Nevertheless, organized groups continued to be active. In 1998, the German security services identified 120 organizations hostile to the constitutional order. These had 53,600 members, the majority of which (39,000) were members of a political party. In addition, there were another 8,200 right-wing extremists willing to commit acts of violence and 2,400 neo-Nazis who may or may not have committed such acts. Altogether, these groups were responsible for 708 reported acts of violence (including 16 attempted homicides).

#### Extremism amongst the non-German population

Germany has a large immigrant population of around 7.5 million. Of these, a small minority (estimated at around 59,000, or 0.8 per cent of all foreigners living in the FRG) are officially believed to be members and/or supporters of extremist organizations. Since 1990, the security services estimate that there have been around 1,700 reported incidents of politically-motivated violence by foreigners, resulting in over 20 deaths. Moreover, there was a 500 per cent increase in the annual reported number of such acts between 1991 and 1997. Some of these groups – such as the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK) and the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party/Front (DHKPC) (see entries under Turkey) – are based in Germany's large Turkish and Kurdish communities. The German security services estimate that the PKK has more than 11,000 supporters, and it has carried out attacks against embassies as well as shops, restaurants and clubs owned or frequented by Turks. Extreme left-wing Turkish groups have also been active, although they have been as prone to violent internal feuding.

#### Consequences of September 11

Following the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the United States, new security legislation was rapidly adopted which, inter alia, made it easier for the authorities to take action against religious and voluntary associations suspected of being used as a front for terrorist activity or recruitment. In December 2001, taking advantage of the new measures, the government banned the Turkish Islamic organization **Caliphate's State** (*Kalifstaat*), together with a foundation controlled by the group, the Servants of Islam, and 19 related associations. The group, which at that time was reported to have about 1,100 members, advocates the overthrow of the secular Turkish state and supporters of its leader, Metin Kaplan, are suspected of having planned attacks on the Atatürk mausoleum in Ankara and on the Fatih Mosque in Istanbul in 1998. Kaplan himself was arrested in March 1999 by the German authorities and subsequently sentenced to four years' imprisonment for incitement to murder. On Sept. 19, 2002, the Interior Ministry banned a further 16 organizations linked to the group.

Finally, the September 11 attacks in the USA focused attention on the activities of *Al-Qaeda* in Germany. Shortly after the attacks, it was estimated that there were around 100 individuals resident in Germany who had undergone training in *Al-Qaeda* camps in Afghanistan. However, the security services refused to confirm this number and it has been criticized as being unrealistically high by academics. Nevertheless, it emerged that much of the operational planning for the September 11 attacks was carried out in Germany and that key members of the group that took part in them stayed at a flat in Hamburg in the run-up to the attacks. None of the individuals identified had been among the estimated 31,000 members of the 17 Islamic extremist groups being monitored at that time by the Office for the Protection of the Constitution.

*Charles Lees*

## Ghana

**Capital:** Accra

**Population:** 19.5 m

The Republic of Ghana, a member of the Commonwealth, achieved its independence from the United Kingdom in 1957. Elections to the House of Parliament and the presidency, held in December 2000, resulted in victory for the first time for the New Patriotic Party (NPP). The 1992 Constitution is based on a quasi-executive presidential system of government.

The Constitution stipulates, however, that a majority of government ministers should be appointed from among members of Parliament.

Ghana is one of the few countries in Africa that has had significant experience of democratic political life. It operated as a democracy during the pre-independence internal self-rule period, 1951-57, during the

early post-independence period, 1957-60, before succumbing to one-party dictatorship, and during two briefs renewals of civilian, constitutional government, in October 1969–January 1972 and September 1979–December 1981. Ghana has also experienced prolonged periods of military dictatorship since independence, under the National Liberation Council (NLC) in February 1966–October 1969, the National Redemption Council/Supreme Military Council (NRC/SMC) in January 1972–June 1979, the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) in June 1979–September 1979 and the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC), December 1981–January 1993. Despite prolonged periods of military rule, there are nonetheless important social and political forces embedded in the fabric of Ghanaian society working in favour of democratic government.

In November 1992, the PNDC government led by Flt.-Lt. J.J. Rawlings (who had come to power in a coup in 1981) held multi-party presidential elections to return the country to constitutional rule. The election was won by Rawlings (taking 58% of the votes cast), standing as the candidate of his National Democratic Congress (NDC). Although international observers, like the Commonwealth Observer Group (COG), declared the elections as “free and fair”, the outcome of the democratic transition was highly disputed by four opposition parties, namely, the New Patriotic Party (NPP), the People’s National Convention (PNC), the National Independence Party (NIP) and the People’s Heritage Party (PHP). Consequently, these boycotted the parliamentary elections in December 1992. As a consequence, during Ghana’s first four years of its fourth attempt to establish constitutional government, the government party, the NDC, controlled virtually all (189 out of the 200) seats in Parliament.

On Dec. 7, 1996, the Ghanaian electorate went to the polls, with the election again won by the incumbent NDC. Although there were some irregularities in the elections, the opposition parties did not regard them as serious enough and so conceded defeat.

In December 2000, presidential and parliamentary elections were held. They were the third successful poll under the 1992 Constitution and Ghana’s Fourth Republic. The elections were won by the main opposition party, the New Patriotic Party (NPP), whose presidential candidate, John Kufuor, was sworn in as the second President of the Fourth Republic on Jan. 7, 2001. Jerry Rawlings, who had dominated the Ghanaian political scene for nearly 20 years, did not contest the elections, in line with the limit of two presidential terms as prescribed by the 1992 Constitution, and proved willing to accept an orderly transfer of power.

The Rawlings administration was characterized by personalism, with distribution of state-generated benefits to political followers and public officials selected on the basis of personal loyalty. The incoming NPP government declared a policy of zero tolerance for

corruption. In pursuance of this policy, it prosecuted its Minister of Youth and Sports who was implicated in the disappearance of \$400,000 meant for the country’s senior football team, the Black Stars. He was subsequently jailed for four years. In addition, it has started prosecuting ministers and other functionaries of the Rawlings regime who have been accused of malfeasance and causing financial loss to the state. This notwithstanding, the NPP government itself has been accused of lack of transparency and malfeasance in the handling of government contracts.

In addition to the policy of zero tolerance for corruption, the NPP government has also repealed the colonial Seditious Libel Law, which made it a criminal offence allowing journalists to be incarcerated if found guilty of publishing information considered inimical to the interest of the state. Repeal made the media environment much freer and bolder. Furthermore, a national reconciliation commission was established in May 2002 to deal with people who had been wronged by the excesses of the 1979 and 1981 coups. The minority NDC party walked out of Parliament over disagreements about the period to be covered by the reconciliation commission because it had the impression that the rationale was to witch-hunt Rawlings and other functionaries.

The NDC has also accused the government of witch-hunting and using state security apparatus such as the Bureau of National Investigation (BNI) and the Serious Fraud Office to harass its functionaries. For instance, in October 2001, E.T. Mensah, a former Minister of Youth and Sports under the Rawlings NDC government and currently a member of Parliament (MP), was arrested by the BNI and spent two days in cells for allegedly inciting a group of people in Nima, an Accra suburb, to demonstrate against the government in the wake of the September 2001 Accra Sport Stadium disaster in which 200 Ghanaians died. Similarly, the Accra Ridge residence of former President Rawlings was invaded by security officials, who were looking for an alleged arm cache and an illegal immigrant. Before these events in July 2001, Victor Gbeho, a former Minister of Foreign Affairs, was also called in by the security agencies for apparently no reason.

A few ethnic disputes have threatened the internal security of the country. The most important incident was the assassination of the overlord of the Dagbon traditional area, Yana Yakubu Andani, and twenty-eight others over a chieftaincy dispute in March 2002. This led to the burning down of houses and the clash of the two rival gates, Abudu and Andani gates. This led to the establishment of a government inquiry.

There is no evidence of extra-legal movements since the advent of constitutional rule in 1993.

*Joseph Ayee*



# Greece

**Capital:** Athens

**Population:** 10.7 m

Greece was ruled by a military junta from 1967-74 but since then has been a parliamentary democracy. It is a republic (the Third Hellenic Republic), the monarchy having been rejected by a referendum on Dec. 8, 1974. The 1975 Constitution was revised in 1986 and 2001. The President is head of state and is elected by Parliament for a five-year term (most recently on Feb. 8, 2000) but (following the 1986 constitutional amendments) now has a mainly ceremonial role. The head of government is the Prime Minister. The unicameral 300-member Parliament is elected for a four-year term by universal adult suffrage under a system of proportional representation. In the last general elections, held on April 8, 2000, the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) under the leadership of Costas Simitis, Prime Minister since 1996, prevailed over the conservative New Democracy (ND) by a narrow margin.

An anti-terrorism law passed by Parliament on April 17, 1978, provided, *inter alia*, for the mandatory death penalty for terrorist acts resulting in loss of life, life imprisonment for such acts perpetrated without loss of life and up to 10 years' imprisonment for membership of a terrorist organization. In an anti-terrorist law of April 6, 2001, the interrogation process was significantly strengthened, while the clemency measures reserved for members of terrorist organizations are to be applied only if they lead to the break-up of such organizations.

## Far-right Organizations

The radical right is represented by the Hellenic Front of Makis Voridis, the National Alliance of Grigoris Michalopoulos, the First Line of Costas Plevris and the Chryssi Avgi-Popular Nationalist Movement of Nikolaos Michaloliakos. These groups function legally and use democratic institutions in order to disseminate their xenophobic ideology. However, *Chryssi Avgi*, a pro-Nazi political group, has been associated with extra-legal activity in the form of violence against immigrants and parliamentary deputies of the left have called for it to be banned. While these small groups have not constituted a challenge to the mainstream political parties, LAOS (Popular Orthodox Rally), founded in 2000 by a former ND deputy, George Karatzaferis, secured 13.6 per cent of the total vote in the local authority elections of October 2002.

## Far-left Organizations

### November 17 Revolutionary Organization

This group constituted the major terrorist organization of the far left during the post-1974 era in Greek politics. Its activities were modelled on the Italian Red Brigades. Its impact

was not insignificant and it emerged in the context of the intense political ferment caused by the collapse of the military junta (1974), the Turkish invasion of Cyprus (1974) and the rise of anti-Americanism. In contrast to the first period (1974-83), during which its targets were symbols of US power or the authoritarianism of the military regime, in the last period (1984-2002) its activities were to a large extent considered as criminal.

The first terrorist act for which it claimed responsibility was the assassination of Richard S. Welch – officially a special assistant to the US ambassador in Athens, but in fact CIA station chief – outside his home in the Athens suburb of Psychico, on Dec. 23, 1975. The victim was judged “co-responsible for all the crimes” that were committed by the CIA at the expense of the Greek people. The proclamation of the organization was first published by the French daily *Libération* on Dec. 26, 1976, a year after it had been handed to the newspaper by the French existentialist philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre, a supporter of revolutionary movements of the extreme left.

The group also claimed responsibility for numerous other acts of violence including (i) the assassination of a former member of the military regime's secret police, Evangelos Mallios, on Dec. 14, 1976; (ii) the assassination of the deputy riot police chief, Pantelis Petrou, and his driver on Jan. 16, 1980; (iii), the killing of Captain George Tsantes, the chief of the naval section of the Joint US Military Aid Group to Greece, and his driver on Nov. 15, 1983; (iv) the murder of a US serviceman on April 3, 1984; (v) the killing of Nikos Momferatos, the publisher of the conservative daily *Apogevmatini*, and his driver on Feb. 21, 1986; (vi) the killing of three policemen and the injuring of 12 others in a police bus on Nov. 26, 1985; (vii) the killing of the chairman of the Khalyvourgiki Steel Company, Dimitris Angelopoulos on April 8, 1985; (viii) the killing of the director of a chemical and armaments company, Alexandros Athanassiadis on March 1, 1988; (ix) a car bomb attack in Athens that killed Captain William Nordeen, the US Defence and Naval attaché, on June 28, 1988; (x) the wounding of state prosecutor Constantinos Androulidakis on Jan. 1, 1989; (xi) the assassination of a New Democracy deputy, Pavlos Bakoyannis, son-in-law of the then leader of New Democracy Constantinos Mitsotakis on Sept. 26, 1989; (xii) the killing of an American sergeant Ronald Stuart on Sept. 3, 1991; (xiii) the killing of the ex-director of the National Bank of Greece, Michalis Vranopoulos on Jan. 24, 1994; (xiv) the killing of the councillor of the Turkish embassy, Halouk Sipachioglu on July 7, 1994; (xv) the assassination of the shipowner Costis Peratikos on May 28, 1997; and (xvi) on June 8, 2000, the killing of the British Military attaché, Steven Saunders. There were also several unsuccessful assassination attempts against right-wing parliamentarians, Yannis Palaiokrassas (1992), Eleftherios Papadimitriou (1992) and

Vassilios Michaloliakos (2001). In total the November 17 group, over 27 years, was held responsible for 110 attacks, and 23 murders.

In June 2002 Savas Xiros was killed by a bomb he was preparing to place in the offices of a marine company in Pireaus. The police and the anti-terrorist squad, which had modernized their methods thanks to their cooperation with the British police, have since then succeeded in breaking up the organization. The trial of nineteen suspects began in early March 2003 in Korydallos Prison. The defendants took the witness stand at the end of July with Dimitris Koufodinas, who claimed political responsibility, refusing to provide any information.

Under the anti-terrorist law, investigators have it at their discretion to promise those arrested “favourable treatment” if they provide particularly helpful evidence. Since 1975, however, not a single arrest had been made in connection with November 17 activities. Allegations about links between PASOK and November 17 that are now considered as unfounded by political parties were partly responsible for driving the investigations into the wrong direction. The rapid break up of the group in 2002 was widely viewed internationally as linked to the changed global environment post-Sept. 11 and concerns about security at the forthcoming (2004) Athens Olympic Games.

The group was a well structured terrorist organization with a leader – according to available evidence, Alexandros Yotopoulos, known under the pseudonym Lambros – and a network of activists. In the autumn of 1974, during a meeting of the representatives of several organizations which had opposed the junta, different points of view were expressed regarding the continuation or not of the struggle. Those who represented the hard line proceeded to form November 17. In the constitutional charter of the organization, found in one of its hideouts in 2002 and considered to have been written between 1983 and 1988, the necessity of armed violence by the people in order to bring about socialism and people’s power, was emphasized. The group’s supreme organ was the conference which met once a year, bringing together the representatives of all cells and electing the executive secretary. The conspiratorialism of the group was absolute. The last proclamation of the organization was that of July 27, 2002, and was published in the Greek daily *Eleftherotipia*.

The group designated itself as an urban guerrilla force which strikes several enemies of the people and not as a ter-

rorist group which acts violently terrifying larger sections of the population. Its targets were the CIA, NATO and American imperialism, the European Economic Community (later, the European Union), members of the former Greek junta, the Association of Greek Industrialists, the Inland Revenue authorities and the taxation system, the New World Order, Israel, and the Turkish politico-military establishment. The choice of a Turkish diplomat among its targets (1994) was justified by reference to “Turkish chauvinism and militarism” and the Turkish secret services, which were considered as responsible for the assassination of the Greek-Cypriot Theophilos Georgiou, a friend of the Kurds. Apart from nationalism, populism constituted another core element of the group’s ideology. The group designated itself the punisher of the entrepreneurs, the wealthy and the politicians in the name of the people. The bombs put in taxation and bank offices were meant to show the group’s distaste for the taxation system, which was characterized as a system of deceit at the expense of the salaried classes, the pensioners and the small handicraftsmen.

### Revolutionary Popular Struggle

This group has assumed responsibility for 103 bombings, 30 of them after fusion with the **May 1st Revolutionary Organization** in 1990. The May 1st group had claimed responsibility for the attack on a trade unionist, George Raftopoulos, who was shot and seriously wounded on June 29, 1987, and the fatal shooting of a Supreme Court prosecutor, Anastasios Venardos, in Athens on Jan. 23, 1989. Their first common appearance came with bomb attacks in Athens and Salonica.

Revolutionary Popular Struggle’s first attack was the arson of eight cars belonging to American military personnel on Apr. 4, 1975, and the last one was against a University School in Athens on Jan. 24, 1995, causing serious material damage. Most of its attacks were minor in nature, with many of them attacking the continued US military presence in the country. The group’s targets included banks, private businesses, insurance companies, public buildings, buses, supermarkets, cinemas, the Greek-American Union, the French Institute, embassies, European Union offices and the Greek Center of European Studies.

*Despina Papadimitriou*

## Grenada

**Capital:** St George’s

**Population:** 98,000

Grenada is an independent state within the Commonwealth with the British monarch as head of state, represented locally by a Governor-General. There is a bicameral parliament, consisting of a House of Representatives of 15 elected members and a Senate of 13 appointed members. The Prime Minister and Cabinet are responsible to Parliament. In the last elections,

held in January 1999, the incumbent New National Party (NNP) led by Keith Mitchell won all 15 seats in the House of Representatives.

Grenada experienced a period of great instability in the 1970s and early 1980s. In 1979 the elected Grenada United Labour Party (GULP) government, headed by Sir Eric Gairy, was overthrown in a coup staged by

the left-wing New Jewel Movement (NJM). This established a People's Revolutionary Government under the leadership of Maurice Bishop. In October 1983, however, Bishop was overthrown and killed, prompting military intervention by the USA and other Caribbean states. Fourteen members of the NJM and three soldiers were found guilty of being complicit in Bishop's murder, the majority of whom were sentenced to death. However, after international pressure those facing execution had their sentences commuted to life imprisonment. Despite accusations that the original trial process was flawed, all but one of the convicted remain incarcerated.

Following the invasion, new elections were held in December 1984 which were won by the conservative New National Party (NNP). The NNP has dominated the political scene ever since, winning all but the 1990 general election.

In October 2001 the government announced that it had suspended a programme for selling citizenship on the grounds that terrorists could abuse it. The action came in response to concerns expressed by the USA in the wake of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, although Prime Minister Mitchell stated that a review had shown that there had been no inadvertent sales of passports to known foreign terrorists. The USA, through the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), further pressurised the government to improve the transparency and accountability of its financial offshore sector. In February 2003, after a number of offshore banks were closed and a series of new legislative measures introduced, Grenada was removed from the FATF list of non-cooperative territories.

*Peter Clegg*

## Guatemala

**Capital:** Guatemala City

**Population:** 11 m

Under its 1985 Constitution, the Republic of Guatemala has a unicameral Congress, elected for a four-year term, and an executive President, who is likewise elected for a four-year term and may not be re-elected. In December 1999, Alfonso Portillo Cabrera of the right-wing Guatemalan Republican Front (FRG), was elected President with 68.3% of the vote in a run-off election against the candidate of the centre-right National Advancement Party (PAN). Elections to Congress in November 2000 were also won by the FRG, which took 63 of the 113 seats, with PAN taking second place with 37 seats.

In 1996 some thirty-six years of armed conflict were definitively brought to an end when a final peace settlement, negotiated under the auspices of the United Nations, was concluded between the government and the *Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca* (**Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity, URNG**). As part of the peace agreement the guerrilla force demobilized, laid down its arms and received an amnesty. After 1996 the URNG became a political party, its candidate coming third in the first round of voting in the 1999 presidential elections, while in alliance with the leftist Authentic Integral Development (DIA) party it won nine seats in the Congress elected in 2000.

### The period of insurgency

Guatemala's political transition comprised two separate processes: the transition from military to elected constitutional rule, which occurred in the mid-1980s, and the negotiated transition from war to peace, begun

in 1987 and completed in December 1996. During more than three decades of guerrilla and counter-guerrilla warfare, some 200,000 Guatemalans were killed or disappeared, most of them as a result of state military operations carried out against civilians.

Guerrilla activity first emerged in the early 1960s, in part encouraged by the example of the Cuban revolution, but it was not until February 1982 that three different guerrilla organizations and a faction of the (Communist) Guatemalan Labour Party (PGT) came together to form the united command of the URNG. However, the guerrilla forces proved no match for the superior firepower and ruthlessness of the Guatemalan army. Divisions within the military over the prosecution of the war led to two military coups during the early 1980s. The first took place in March 1982, led by General Efraín Ríos Montt, whose 15 months in office are widely regarded as the most violent in the country's modern history. During the first year of his regime more than 15,000 Guatemalans were killed, mainly among the Mayan rural population, 70,000 went into exile and some 500,000 were internally displaced. In the rural areas all men between the ages of 16 and 60 were forced to participate in paramilitary civil defence patrols, which at their height included over one million peasants and which were implicated in gross violations of human rights.

General Ríos Montt was overthrown by his Defence Minister, General Oscar Mejía Víctores, in August 1983. The new military regime restored the promotional hierarchy disrupted by the former government and promised a swift return to constitutional rule while continuing with the programme of counter-

insurgency and political repression. In July 1984 a Constituent Assembly was elected; the promulgation in 1985 of a new Constitution and general elections held in the same year ushered in a period of elected civilian rule and signalled a limited relaxation of the military's hold over national affairs. However, the central institutions of the counter-insurgency, such as the civil patrols, were legalized in the new Constitution. The November 1985 elections, boycotted by the URNG, were won by the centre-right Christian Democrat candidate Vinicio Cerezo. Ultimately Cerezo failed to challenge the dominance of the military or address the country's acute socio-economic problems. Gross violations of human rights continued.

Following the 1985 elections the URNG began to propose a negotiated settlement to the armed conflict and in October 1987 representatives of the government and the URNG met for the first time in Madrid to initiate talks. This was a direct result of the regional Esquipulas II Accord, signed two months before by all six Central American republics in search of a political resolution of the region's armed conflicts. In March 1990, the URNG and the government agreed a framework for negotiations, a mediating role for the United Nations and consultative status for the National Commission for Reconciliation (CNR), a coalition of national civic groups. However, peace talks stalled after the army insisted on a full demobilization of the URNG in advance of a final settlement and a full amnesty for all human rights violations. Presidential and congressional elections held in November 1990 were won in the second round by Jorge Serrano Elías, an evangelical leader and former minister during the 1982-83 Ríos Montt regime. The new government reinitiated the peace talks with the guerrillas and meetings were held in Cuernavaca, Mexico, in April 1991. Yet at the same time the domestic political situation continued to deteriorate, with human rights abuses increasing sharply. In May 1993, in the face of a worsening legitimacy crisis, President Serrano – supported by a faction of the military – attempted to suspend significant constitutional guarantees and dissolve Congress and the Supreme Court. However, in the face of domestic and international opposition the coup ultimately proved unsuccessful.

Serrano fled into exile and Congress designated the Human Rights Ombudsman, Ramiro de León Carpio, as interim President to serve until the end of Serrano's presidential term. In January 1994, the government and the URNG signed a framework agreement for the resumption of peace talks in Mexico and in March of the same year a comprehensive agreement for the protection of human rights was signed at talks held in Oslo. Unlike the other accords, which were to be implemented only after the entire peace process had been concluded, this was to enter into immediate effect with on site verification by the UN. A further agreement set out conditions for the return of refugees and resettlement of displaced populations.

Most controversial was the June 1994 accord that delineated the terms of a "Commission for Historical

Clarification", or truth commission, to investigate human rights violations committed during the armed conflict. It was agreed that the UN would carry out a comprehensive investigation into past abuses, but that it would not "name names"; that is, it would not ascribe individual responsibility for crimes. The Commission's mandate meant it could make wide-ranging recommendations to prevent future violations of human rights, but these were not to be legally binding. In March 1995, another wide-ranging agreement relating to the identity and rights of Guatemala's indigenous population (which constitutes some 50-60% of the total population) was signed. This set out provisions for such measures as the recognition of indigenous languages, development of bilingual education and the recognition of indigenous customary law, and included a range of measures to increase the political and socio-economic participation of indigenous people. This was the only accord where civic groups played a significant role in the elaboration of the agreement, through the consultative forum of the Civil Society Assembly (ASC), set up in 1994 to replace the CNR. However, by mid-1995 peace negotiations had stalled again, a consequence of weakness of the government and lack of political will on the part of military and civilian elites.

Presidential elections held in November 1995 led to a second round, won by Álvaro Arzú of the National Advancement Party (PAN), a party directly representing the private sector. The new administration prioritized the peace process and new accords, arguably some of the most controversial, were signed in 1996 before a final settlement was reached in December. These included an agreement on socio-economic issues and the agrarian situation, signed in May 1996, which committed the government to increase social spending, to fund a land-bank for landless peasants to acquire land, and to increase the country's tax base, combat tax evasion and fraud. Another agreement, concluded in September 1996, addressed the strengthening of civilian rule and function of the army in a democratic society, specifying the terms for a gradual reduction of the army's size and power, the reform of military intelligence and the establishment of a new public security force under civilian control. This agreement also agreed to the repeal of the civil patrol legislation, committing the government to the patrols' demobilization immediately following the conclusion of the final settlement, and to an end to forced conscription. A number of enabling accords were signed in December 1996, including those referring to constitutional reform and the electoral regime, a definitive ceasefire (which set out a 60-day timetable for URNG demobilization and disarmament under UN supervision) and the legalization of the URNG. The amnesty statute – the Law of National Reconciliation, passed in December 1996 – was not a blanket amnesty. It specified that crimes against humanity under international law (forced disappearance, torture and genocide) were exempt from its provisions. A final accord for a firm and lasting peace was signed in Guatemala City on



Dec. 29 in the presence of UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali. The rebels disarmed shortly afterwards under UN supervision and the URNG subsequently became a legal political party.

### **Implementation of the 1996 settlement**

The period immediately following the negotiated settlement was dominated by attempts to implement the reforms promised in the various accords and by efforts to investigate past violations of human rights. In April 1998 the Catholic Church's Human Rights Office published a report on gross violations of human rights that occurred during the armed conflict, based on over 6,000 testimonies. This attributed more than 85 per cent of war atrocities to the army and army-controlled paramilitary forces and 10 per cent to the URNG. The February 1999 UN Report of Historical Clarification, based on over 9,000 testimonies, went further, attributing 93 per cent of atrocities to the army and paramilitary forces and 3 per cent to the URNG. The UN report demonstrated that the army had committed acts of genocide as defined by international law as part of state policy during the 1981-83 period. The costs of such investigations were high – Monsignor Juan Gerardi, the bishop in charge of the 1998 Church report, was murdered just days after its publication. It took three years and immense international pressure for domestic courts to find three army officers guilty of his extra-judicial execution.

In March 1999 a referendum on a package of constitutional reforms agreed by Congress to implement the peace agreements was rejected on less than 25 per cent turnout, slowing down implementation of the settlement almost to a standstill. In addition, the Arzú administration resisted implementing tax and fiscal reforms to provide increased revenue for social spending. Alfonso Portillo, the candidate of the right-wing Guatemalan Republican Front (FRG), won the November 1999 presidential elections in the second round. Although the FRG was formally committed to implementation of the peace agreements, the party lacked the commitment of the former administration to the process, divided as it was between moderates and hardliners, the latter allied with party founder Ríos Montt, who maintained a powerful position as Head of Congress.

Institutional reform continues to be insufficient to meet the expectations raised by the peace settlement; the weakness of the public security and justice systems in particular has resulted in the inability of government to tackle the rising problem of common crime, which had reached unprecedented proportions by the end of the decade. The state-orchestrated violence of the 1980s was replaced by a wave of kidnappings, armed assaults and robberies, leading to escalating public alarm about law and order and calls for tough measures, such as the death penalty for kidnappers, approved in 1996. At the same time, implementation of the demilitarization agreed in the September 1996 accord met with numerous obstacles – although troop

size was reduced by one-third as stipulated (from 46,000 to 30,000), military intelligence institutions remained unreformed by the end of the decade, despite express provisions in the peace accords that they be dismantled. Political battles over the military budget also continued. The UN repeatedly raised concerns that the new civilian police force was becoming increasingly militarized. Continuing violence, crime and impunity since 1996 has led the population to resort to private justice; levels of gun ownership and homicide continue to increase, including mob lynchings of suspected criminals. Registering over 80 violent deaths for each 100,000 inhabitants per year, Guatemala is one of the most violent countries in the Western hemisphere. The rule of law remains extremely weak. Although a series of measures have been implemented since 1996 to improve access to justice, particularly in rural areas and for indigenous populations, the quality of state justice remains very poor for the majority of the population and impunity prevails. Levels of public disenchantment with the judiciary, and with state institutions in general, are comparatively high by regional standards.

Despite substantial weaknesses in its implementation, the peace settlement has held. The guerrilla forces had effectively been militarily defeated by the mid-1980s and had little demonstrable base of national support. The numbers of guerrillas demobilized in 1997 were relatively small – approximately 4,000. The URNG remains committed to the democratic process. Although the army has honoured the peace settlement, it has steadfastly resisted full implementation of the provisions regarding demilitarization and its *de facto* power and political influence remain considerable. Attempts to secure accountability for gross violations of human rights committed during the armed conflict continue to be a source of tension and human rights activists pursuing such cases remain subject to death threats, intimidation and extra-judicial execution. Human rights activists allege the existence of a clandestine network originating in military intelligence structures which operates throughout the justice system and public security forces to protect powerful individuals by preventing thorough criminal investigations and intimidating judges and witnesses. The press and even some government officials have also referred to “hidden forces” or “parallel powers” that are manipulating events and fostering instability.

Commitments contained in the peace accords to provide compensation to victims of state-orchestrated human rights violations have led to considerable displeasure amongst retired military officers and former civil patrollers. In June 2002 mass mobilizations of former civil patrols, demanding economic compensation from the government, took place throughout the country, involving the blocking of major highways and the occupation of local airports. The retired military officers' association, AMILVIGUA, played a key role in organizing the former patrollers, as did the regional structures of the ruling FRG, presumably for electoral advantage (presidential elections being due in Novem-

ber 2003). The government of Alfonso Portillo committed itself to providing some form of compensation for the former patrollers, in contravention of the spirit of the peace accords and in the face of protests from the UN verification mission in Guatemala. In the wake of the former patrollers' mobilization, peasant organizations staged mass mobilizations and road blocks throughout the country to protest at the government's lack of progress in providing land to landless peasants,

as promised in the peace accords. Thus, while prospects of a return to the armed conflict are extremely small, dissatisfaction with the post-settlement dispensation and government under-performance in general is likely to continue to generate political instability in the future.

*Rachel Sieder*

## Guinea

**Capital:** Conakry

**Population:** 7.6 m

The Republic of Guinea gained independence from France in 1958. The country's first President, Ahmed Sekou Touré, dominated the political stage for the next quarter of a century, pursuing a policy of socialist revolution and internal repression. After his death in March 1984, the armed forces staged a coup, forming a Military Committee for National Recovery (CMRN) under the leadership of Maj.-Gen. Lansana Conté. The 1982 constitution was suspended after the military takeover, as was the Democratic Party of Guinea, which had been the ruling and sole legal political party. A new constitution was approved by referendum in December 1990; in early 1991 the CMRN was dissolved and a mixed military and civilian Transitional Committee of National Recovery was set up as the country's legislative body.

President Conté was confirmed in office in December 1993 in the country's first multiparty elections, and five years later he won his second five-year mandate by a larger majority, winning some 56 per cent of the vote. Alpha Condé, leader of the opposition Guinean People's Rally (RPG), was arrested less than 24 hours after the Dec. 14, 2000, elections which returned Conté to power and was charged with plotting to overthrow the government. Condé was sentenced to five years' imprisonment in September 2000 after being found guilty of sedition, but was freed from prison in May 2001 after receiving a presidential pardon.

Another new constitution was approved by referendum in November 2001, although the opposition boycotted the vote. The new constitution removed the limitation of a presidential mandate to two terms in office, so as to allow President Conté to stand for re-election. It also extended the presidential term from five to seven years and lifted an age limit of 70 for presidential candidates, which would otherwise have barred Conté from standing for re-election upon the expiry of his term in 2003.

In legislative elections in June 1995, the Party of Unity and Progress (*Parti de l'Unité et le Progrès*, PUP), led by President Conté, won a majority of seats in the new 114-member National Assembly. The next elections were delayed until June 2002, partly because

of opposition requests for a postponement, but also due to unrest in Sierra Leone and Liberia which had spilled over into Guinea, threatening stability and creating a humanitarian emergency. Major border incursions from Revolutionary United Front (RUF) combatants from Sierra Leone, dissident Guinean forces, the Liberian army, and mercenaries between September 2000 and March 2001 killed over 1,500 Guinean civilians and military personnel (see also, entry on Liberia). When the National Assembly elections were eventually held in June 2002 the PUP increased its majority, winning 85 of the 114 seats, 14 more than in 1995. However, of the 12 parties competing in the election, only three were opposition groups.

### **Rally of Democratic Forces of Guinea (Rassemblement des Forces Démocratiques de Guinée, RFDG)**

In September 2000 shadowy rebel forces began launching attacks into Guinea from Liberia's Foya District in an apparent bid to overthrow the Conté regime. These militias managed to overrun Macenta and Gueckedou, two thriving provincial economic centres that harboured the bulk of Liberian and Sierra Leonean refugees. Guinean authorities earlier in the year had announced that more than 600 civilians had been killed in cross-border attacks launched from Sierra Leone and Liberia. The Guineans accused Liberia and Burkina Faso of backing the attackers, which they said included rebels from Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front (RUF).

Prior to the attacks there had been consistent reports that Guinean dissidents were being trained in Liberia under the command of Maj. Gbargo Zoumanigui, a Guinean army officer who had led a failed coup attempt against President Conté in 1996. A spokesman of a Guinean opposition group claiming to be in charge of the attacks confirmed the involvement of Zoumanigui, a member of the Lorma tribe from Macenta. Mohamed Lamine Fofana said that he was the leader of the previously unknown RFDG, and that Zoumanigui was the overall military commander. Fofana was reportedly arrested elsewhere in West Africa in early 2002. By the time of Fofana's arrest the insecurity across Guinea's borders with Liberia and Sierra Leone had virtual-

ly died down. The heads of state of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone held a summit in Rabat, Morocco, in February 2002 to discuss ways and means of resolving tensions and laying solid foundations for joint co-operation at the level of the Mano River Union (comprising those three countries).

President Conté had previously refused to meet with his Liberian counterpart, Charles Taylor, accusing him of being “unreliable and dishonest”.

*D. J. Sagar*

## Guinea-Bissau

**Capital:** Bissau

**Population:** 1.4 m

The Republic of Guinea-Bissau unilaterally declared independence from Portugal in September 1973. This status was formally confirmed one year later. The intervening period had seen a military coup and change of regime in Lisbon that had been provoked in part by the long, draining war against Guinea-Bissau's nationalist guerrillas. The post-independence regime was formed by the dominant revolutionary movement, the **African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde** (*Partido Africano para a Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde* – PAIGC).

There had been some rival nationalist opposition to the PAIGC during the last phase of Portuguese rule from the **Front for the Liberation and National Independence of Guinea** (*Frente para a Libertação e Independência Nacional da Guiné*, FLING). Like the PAIGC, the Front had been formed in the mid-1950s under the leadership of Benjamin Pinto Bull. It maintained a presence up until independence in 1974 and more spectrally afterwards from its base in neighbouring Senegal. It did not present any serious opposition to the PAIGC either before or after independence, though from time to time the Portuguese attempted to set it up as a possible alternative interlocutor during the years of the liberation war. FLING's frequent claims of success in its supposed parallel war against the Portuguese were received with widespread scepticism. The Front found favour neither in Africa with the Organization of African Unity nor beyond it with the body of international opinion hostile to Portuguese colonialism; both favoured the more ideologically coherent and militarily effective PAIGC. (Converted into a political party, FLING won a single seat in the 102 seat national legislature in the country's first democratic elections in 1994.)

With independence, in common with the other regimes of Portuguese-speaking Africa (Angola, Mozambique, Cape Verde and São Tomé & Príncipe), Guinea-Bissau declared itself a single-party state committed to a Marxist route to development. The ideological component of the PAIGC's politics was, in fact, more concrete than that in some of the other new regimes as befitted a party founded by the revolutionary thinker Amílcar Cabral, who led it until his assassination at the beginning of 1973. (The first president of the new state being his half brother, Luís.)

Regional and ethnic tensions had afflicted the

PAIGC throughout its existence. The principal cleavage was between the mixed race (*mestiço*) membership, mainly of Cape Verde origin like the Cabrals, which had tended to dominate the leadership, and indigenous Guinean Africans who formed the main ranks of the guerrilla army during the war. In 1980 the issue came to a head when the Chief State Commissioner (effectively “prime minister”), the legendary guerrilla leader João Bernardo ‘Nino’ Vieira, carried out a coup. The ousted President Cabral was imprisoned (and later exiled) while other *mestiços* were removed from power. The coup ended the nominal bilateral commitment to the unification of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde.

The following decade was characterised by considerable insecurity in the regime, with repeated attempted coups and rumours of coups. These power struggles, however, took place largely within the PAIGC itself and did not involve the creation of distinct, separate dissident groups or parties. The one exception to this was the **Guinea-Bissau Resistance/Bafatá Movement** (*Resistência da Guiné-Bissau/Movimento Bafatá*: RGB/MB) established in the mid-1980s in exile (in Portugal) by Domingos Gomes. The RGB/MB pre-figured Guinea-Bissau's move to multi-party democracy and after the 1994 parliamentary elections became the largest opposition party.

By 1990 Guinea-Bissau had joined the general trend in Lusophone Africa when President Vieira proposed constitutional changes which would open the way for a multi-party system. These included the ending of the PAIGC's status as sole national party, a breaking of the constitutional link between the PAIGC and the armed forces and trade unions, the encouragement of a market economy and the removal of restraints on the media. Over the following months several new political parties were formed.

The PAIGC retained power in the legislative elections held in 1994, in part because of the failure of the new opposition parties to organise themselves into a viable coalition. Vieira himself held on to the presidency for the PAIGC as well.

1998 saw the beginning of Guinea-Bissau's greatest post-independence crisis when Vieira was confronted by a widely supported military coup led by a former chief of staff of the armed forces, Ansumane Mané. The crisis – which was in effect a localised but

immensely destructive civil war – lasted from June 1998 until May 1999, when Vieira was finally forced into exile. A major component in the conflict was the government's ambivalent attitude to the separatist movement in the Casamance region of neighbouring Senegal which had begun a sporadic guerrilla war against the Dakar government in the early 1980s (see Senegal entry). Mané's coup followed his dismissal by Vieira for alleged involvement in gun-running to the rebel Movement of Democratic Forces of Casamance (*Mouvement des Forces Démocratiques de la Casamance*, MFDC).

Following the crisis, presidential and parliamentary elections were held in November 1999 in both of which the PAIGC fared poorly. The largest single party in the parliament was now the Social Renewal Party (*Partido para a Renovação Social*, PRS).

Kumba Yala of the PRS also defeated the PAIGC presidential candidate. Mané himself did not seek public office, but maintained a looming presence on the edge of national politics until, in an apparent attempt to launch a rebellion against the new government at the end of 2000, he was killed by troops loyal to President Yala.

After the expulsion of Nino Vieira in 1999 politics in Guinea-Bissau remained highly unstable, although there was no reversion to widespread violence. In September 2003, after repeatedly postponing scheduled elections, Kumba Yala was deposed in a bloodless coup carried out by the chief of staff of the armed forces, General Veríssimo Correia Seabra.

*Norrie MacQueen*

## Guyana

**Capital:** Georgetown

**Population:** 863,000

Guyana (formerly British Guiana) achieved independence in 1966 and the Co-operative Republic of Guyana, a member of the Commonwealth, was proclaimed in 1970. Under its Constitution, which came into effect on Oct. 6, 1980, there is a popularly elected President and a First Vice President, appointed by the President, who is also Prime Minister. There is a unicameral National Assembly of 65 members, 25 of whom are elected on the basis of geographical regions and 40 based on a proportional allocation according to the vote for party lists. In an election held on March 19, 2001, the incumbent People's Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C) headed the poll with 52.9 per cent of the vote with the result that President Bharrat Jagdeo was re-elected and the party took 34 of the Assembly seats. The opposition People's National Congress/Reform (PNC/R) won 27 seats, while the remaining four seats were shared amongst smaller parties.

Guyanese politics is highly polarized. The PPP has traditionally garnered support from those of Asian origin (about 49 per cent of the population), while the PNC has counted on those of African descent (about 32 per cent of the population). The Afro-Guyanese community maintain that they are treated as second-class citizens because the Indo-Guyanese population controls the government, the public bureaucracy and much of the economy. Furthermore, the PNC/R claim that an elite anti-crime unit known as the Target Special Squad (TSS) unfairly and aggressively targets the Afro-Guyanese community. The Guyana Human Rights Association supports this view, accusing the TSS of undertaking a series of extra-judicial killings. In response, the government has denied the claims

arguing that the TSS is merely defending society against the increasing problem of heavily armed criminal gangs.

The PNC led the country to independence under Forbes Burnham and thereafter remained in power until 1992, assisted by widespread ballot rigging. In the 1970s the party, having hitherto had a moderate socialist programme based on co-operative principles, took a sharply left-wing course. After the elections of 1985, won under the leadership of Desmond Hoyte, the party came under heavy domestic and international pressure to work towards free and fair elections and a market economy. When the next election was held in October 1992, all independent international observers stated they were satisfied that the process had been open and fair. With the support of the Indo-Guyanese population and in alliance with Civic, a small grouping of businessmen and professionals, Cheddi Jagan and the PPP won the election.

Jagan died in the last year of his term of office, so when the next election was held in December 1997 his widow, Janet Jagan, led the PPP/C. The poll was won by the PPP/C and was endorsed by international observers. However, the opposition PNC refused to accept the result, claiming that the election had been compromised by serious electoral fraud. A month of civil disturbance followed, with numerous attacks on Indian-owned businesses, which was only halted when the Herdmanston Accord, brokered by the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), was signed in January 1998. Under its provisions Jagan agreed to introduce a range of constitutional reform measures and to hold a general election by January 2001, almost two years ahead of schedule. In addition, an external audit of the



election results and procedures was undertaken, which found no evidence to support the PNC's claims of electoral fraud. Jagan, having secured a settlement to the dispute, resigned from the presidency on grounds of ill health in August 1999 and Bharrat Jagdeo, her former Prime Minister, succeeded her.

However, the validity of the 1997 election was put into question once more in January 2001 when a judge ruled that it was null and void. The ruling claimed that a substantial number of potential voters had been unfairly excluded from participating in the election, because legislation requiring voters to hold a special identification card was unconstitutional. However, the judge did not pass comment as to whether the governing PPP/C had been unlawfully elected. Rather, she directed that the government should stay in office until the forthcoming general election, but that no legislation should be enacted before that time. However, the judge ruled that all legislation passed between Dec. 15, 1997, and Jan. 15, 2001, should remain on the statute book. The dissolution of the National Assembly, which was delayed as a consequence of the ruling, came on Feb. 15. Election day itself remained fairly calm, although there was some violence during the campaign.

In the immediate aftermath of the election, judged fair by international observers, both President Jagdeo and opposition leader Desmond Hoyte agreed to begin a process of dialogue in an attempt to overcome the deep-seated mistrust between the country's main political-ethnic groupings. There was a hope that if regular political consultations could be undertaken, the defeated side in the election would remain engaged and retain confidence in the governing process. However, the contacts between the two men ended in acrimony in March 2002, with Hoyte expressing dissatisfaction over the government's alleged failure to implement decisions reached in the dialogue process. The breakdown in discussions was doubly serious because the National Assembly had not met since October 2001.

The clearest manifestation of the serious nature of the crisis came on July 3, 2002, when anti-government protesters attacked the presidential complex in Georgetown. Two people were shot dead by the police, while shops and cars were set on fire by rioters. The

violence followed a protest march, led by the leader of the People's Solidarity Movement, Philip Bynoe. The recently formed movement, comprising workers from the bauxite industry and other groups, was protesting against alleged racial discrimination against members of the Afro-Guyanese population. PNC/R leaders condemned the violence, while insisting the grievances of the protesters were genuine. However, the governing PPP/C accused the PNC/R of being centrally involved in the violence, and accused the party of launching an unprecedented attempt "to assassinate the President and remove the elected government from office". The alleged ringleaders of the protest, Bynoe and TV presenter Mark Benschop, were charged with treason.

Attempts were then made to re-start the dialogue process between the two main party leaders, but the deep animosity between them prevented any immediate resumption of talks. The lack of a properly functioning democratic system was made worse by the increasing number of violent crimes and kidnappings. In August 2002 gunmen shot and killed the deputy head of Guyana's anti-drug agency, while in September, four people were killed and 10 others wounded, including the Director of Public Prosecutions, after shots were fired in a Georgetown bar. In protest against the increasing lawlessness and the political deadlock, the Association of Regional Chambers of Commerce, supported by other sectors of civil society, organized a shut-down of businesses in early October. However, the killings continued with the number of murders exceeding 150 in 2002, a fourfold increase compared with the year before.

A way out of the political crisis presented itself after the sudden death of Desmond Hoyte in December 2002. Hoyte's replacement as PNC/R leader, Robert Corbin, made clear that he was prepared to engage with the government in constructive talks. As a consequence in February 2003 the PNC ended its long-standing boycott of parliament, while in May an agreement was signed between Jagdeo and Corbin creating a number of bipartisan committees to deal with a variety of political, economic and social issues.

*Peter Clegg*

## Haiti

**Capital:** Port-au-Prince

**Population:** 8 m

Under the terms of its 1987 Constitution, a President, elected by universal suffrage for a five-year term, exercises executive power in the Republic of Haiti. The President appoints a Prime Minister who chooses a Cabinet and is accountable to the National Assembly, comprising an 83-member Chamber of Deputies and a

27-member Senate.

The Lavalas Family (FL) movement dominated parliamentary elections held in three stages in 2000, winning large majorities in both the Chamber of Deputies and Senate. However, the opposition Democratic Convergence (CD) disputed the results of the

elections, a position supported by international observers. The presidential election, held in November 2000, was boycotted by the CD in protest at the results of the legislative elections. The FL's Jean-Bertrand Aristide won the presidential election with over 90 per cent of the vote. However, there has since then been a serious political impasse with the CD refusing to recognise the legitimacy of either the President or the parliament. This situation has exacerbated an already tense political and social climate in the country.

Between 1957 and 1986 Haiti was ruled successively by President-for-Life François "Papa Doc" Duvalier and, from 1971, his son Jean Claude, "Baby Doc". The regime was one of great brutality and the country became the poorest in the Western Hemisphere, notorious for the prevalence of voodoo cults and endemic violence. Following prolonged popular unrest, "Baby Doc" fled the country in February 1986. Although a new democratic constitution was adopted, the country remained highly unstable.

Almost as soon as Jean-Bertrand Aristide first won the presidency in 1990, his position came under threat as a consequence of his reform agenda. In 1991, his government was overthrown by a military coup, during which time around 300 people were killed. Aristide was sent into exile. After concerted international pressure, culminating in US military intervention in September 1994, Aristide was restored to the presidency. In a related measure the armed forces were abolished. Aristide was unable to compete in the December 1995 presidential elections owing to a constitutional provision preventing any individual from holding office for two consecutive terms. In the event René Préval, representing the National Lavalas Political Organization and Aristide's anointed heir, won the presidency. However, his government's neo-liberal reform programme was obstructed by a fractious parliament, led by a disenchanted Aristide and his newly created FL movement. Allegations of electoral fraud and the freezing of substantial funds from foreign donors further undermined Préval. As a consequence, fresh elections were held during the course of 2000, in an attempt to break the political stalemate, which returned Aristide to power. However, mistakes were made in calculating the results, and there were calls to undertake a recount in a number of disputed seats. The victorious FL refused to sanction a review, thus precipitating the political crisis.

At the beginning of 2001, the CD demanded that the legislative and presidential elections should be re-run, while threatening to establish a provisional government of national unity if fresh elections were not held. In response the FL government warned that it would not tolerate challenges to its authority.

Associated with the political impasse was an increase in civil disruption and disunity, leading on occasion to outbreaks of violence. The most serious

incident came on Dec. 17, 2001, when armed men wearing the uniform of the disbanded Haitian army stormed and briefly held the National Palace in Port-au-Prince before it was retaken by police in a battle that left four dead. The FL government accused the opposition of conspiring with the disbanded army to overthrow the government and there was a wave of revenge attacks by Aristide's supporters, who burned down the homes of opposition figures. A subsequent Organization of American States (OAS) inquiry concluded in July 2002 that there was no substance to the government's claim that the incident had been an attempted coup or the counter-claim by the opposition parties that it had been a provocation organized by the government itself to incite violence.

In a further related incident on Aug. 5, 2002, thousands of protesters in the city of Gonaïves hurled stones and attacked riot police. The violence was initiated by a group of prisoners who had escaped from the city gaol three days earlier. The leader of the protest, Amiot Metayer, a former pro-Aristide militant, had been sentenced for his part in the attacks against the opposition after the storming of the presidential palace. Metayer himself alleged that he had been made a scapegoat to divert attention from the involvement of senior members of the FL movement in the alleged coup attempt and subsequent violence. The situation worsened during the latter part of the year, with a series of protest marches held by opposition and student groups on the one hand, and pro-Aristide elements on the other, resulting in violence.

Attempts by the OAS to end the political stalemate have come to little. The OAS put forward Resolution 822 in September 2002 for the establishment of a Provisional Electoral Council – representing all elements of the political spectrum – to arrange elections to replace members of parliament who were elected in the disputed elections of May 2000. However, the lack of trust between Aristide and the opposition parties, particularly the CD, prevented the formation of the Council.

In October 2002, 19 people with alleged links to the Haitian government and police force were indicted on cocaine trafficking charges in New York. This followed a claim by the US permanent representative to the OAS that 15 per cent of all cocaine entering the US passes through Haiti, and that Haitian authorities are complicitly involved in the trans-shipment chain. In February 2003, meanwhile, the director of the Anti-Drug Trafficking Brigade of the Haitian National Police was arrested after ordering his men to block off part of Port-au-Prince's Route Nine highway to allow a Colombian plane to land, which was carrying approximately one tonne of cocaine.

*Peter Clegg*

# Honduras

**Capital:** Tegucigalpa

**Population:** 6.9 m

The Republic of Honduras has an executive President who is elected for a four-year term by universal adult suffrage and who presides over a Cabinet. There is a unicameral National Congress similarly elected for a four-year term. At elections held on Nov. 25, 2001, the presidential contest was won by Ricardo Maduro of the National Party (PN), defeating the candidate of the former ruling Liberal party, Rafael Pineda Ponce. The PN secured 61 of the 128 seats in congress, the PL won 55 seats, followed by the left-wing Democratic Unification party, PUD (5), the Party for Unification and Social Democracy, PINU (4) and the Christian Democrats, PDC (3).

After decades of military rule, Honduras took its first steps back to democracy with an elected civilian leader as President in 1981. However the army commander-in-chief, Gen. Gustavo Alvarez retained considerable power and effectively dictated policy. It was not until the mid-1980s that one elected civilian government was directly succeeded by another for the first time since 1929, with José Azcona del Hoyo of the Liberal Party (PLH) as President. Azcona had won only 27 per cent of the vote in the Nov. 24, 1985, presidential elections, but was declared the winner as the leading candidate of the party with the highest total aggregate vote (from three candidates), although the highest single vote was for Rafael Leonardo Callejas of the PN. Former President Roberto Suazo Córdova had precipitated a constitutional crisis in March 1985 in an unsuccessful attempt to ensure the election of his own PLH candidate. In 1989 Callejas won the presidency for the PN, and set about a process of privatization and reform of the economy. Four years later on Nov. 28, 1993, campaigning on an anti-corruption platform and proposing reforms to the military, Carlos Roberto Reina beat the incumbent PN candidate and the presidency returned to the Liberals. However, in a separate vote on mayors, the PL took control of 270 of the 293 local authorities, including both major cities of San Pedro Sula and, for the first time in 12 years, the capital, Tegucigalpa. In 1997, the PN was returned to power with the business leader Carlos Roberto Flores Facussé becoming President. It was also in that year that the left-wing Democratic Unification Party (PUD) won a seat in the legislature in its first foray into electoral politics. The PUD was formed in 1993 by four small left-wing groups, including the part of the Honduran Communist Party, PCH, which renounced the armed struggle. The PUD increased its share to five seats in the last legislative vote in November 2001.

Honduras was largely spared the internal conflicts

that affected its Central American neighbours in the 1980s. However, the conflict within Nicaragua had an impact, with “contra” guerrillas setting up bases in the south of the country and reportedly receiving assistance from the Honduran military. A few small armed groups emerged within Honduras itself in the 1970s from radical student groups and off-shoots of the then outlawed Communist Party (PCH). In 1983 Gen. Gustavo Alvarez, the commander-in-chief of the armed forces, claimed that 3,000 Hondurans were being trained in guerrilla warfare and there was a period of vigorous repression by the army in 1982-84. On Jan. 25, 1989, Gen. Alvarez was shot dead in Tegucigalpa and responsibility was claimed by the Cinchonero People’s Liberation Movement (*Movimiento Popular de Liberación Cinchonero*, MPLC), which had carried out a number of bombings, kidnappings and other actions since the early 1980s. On May 10, 1991, however, four leaders of the MPLC signed a formal agreement to abandon the armed struggle at a meeting attended by President Callejas. In recent years, there have been no reported armed political acts from the various left-wing groups that operated in the country in the 1980s.

Honduras has suffered from a violent crime wave since the mid-1990s, largely as a result of continuing poverty levels in the country (the third poorest in Latin America) and easy access for civilians to weapons. After the peace accords in El Salvador and Nicaragua, many demobilized combatants from both countries fled over the borders into Honduras and formed armed criminal gangs. Kidnapping for ransom, rather than for political motives, has become commonplace in many areas of Honduras, and despite his promises to clamp down on the violence, President Maduro (whose son was killed in a kidnapping attempt in 1997) has had little success in combating spiralling crime. Early on in his presidency, the army was deployed onto the streets of the major cities to help the police force. Under reforms put in place by then President Reina, a civilian defence minister is in charge of the army. In 1999, Congress approved a series of measures ending the autonomy of the Honduran Armed Forces. Also forming part of the military’s transformation was a decision by the Congress to authorize the armed forces to work in non-military tasks such as literacy campaigns, environmental and health programmes, and in narcotics control.

Politically-motivated human rights abuses, common in the mid-1980s, are no longer widespread in Honduras, although the police force is frequently criticized for its heavy-handed treatment of detainees.

There have also been repeated attacks reported on leaders of militant indigenous groups, which have long been in conflict with the Honduran state over land rights. These groups have not carried out any reported armed actions in recent years, and maintain a more civic form of protest. According to Amnesty International, in March 2001 three leaders of the indigenous Coordinating Body of Popular Organizations of Aguán (COPA) received death threats, allegedly from armed groups with links to the author-

ities. One of them had been shot at three times in April and September 1999 and his house was set on fire. In January 2001, the Honduran Committee for the Defence of Human Rights reported that more than one thousand street children had been murdered the previous year by loosely formed vigilante groups, allegedly backed by the police.

*Michael Lanchin*

## Hungary

**Capital:** Budapest

**Population:** 10.3 m

After four decades of communist rule in the People's Republic of Hungary, in January 1989 the National Assembly legalized freedom of assembly and association. A month later the then ruling Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (MSMP) approved the formation of independent parties, some of which had begun organizing on an informal basis the previous year. In September formal sanction was given to multi-party participation in national elections, the People's Republic giving way the following month to the revived Hungarian Republic.

The President as head of state is indirectly elected for a five-year term by the unicameral National Assembly, which is elected for a four-year term by universal adult suffrage in two rounds of voting, its 386 members including eight providing ethnic minority representation. The complex electoral system involves the election of 176 deputies from single-member constituencies, 152 from 20 multi-member constituencies by a form of proportional representation of parties which obtain at least 5 per cent of the vote, and 58 from national party lists to ensure overall proportional representation. The head of government is the Prime Minister.

A general election held in April 2002 resulted in the formation of a government by the Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP, the democratic socialist successor to the former ruling party of the Communist era), which won 178 seats, with the support of the centrist Alliance of Free Democrats (SzDSz), which won 20 seats. The opposition is formed by the conservative FIDESz and MDF parties, which had a joint electoral list in the 2002 elections, winning 164 and 24 seats respectively. Following the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, in the USA the Hungarian government adopted new internal security legislation aimed at fighting international terrorism. In 2002 it completed ratification of the various international conventions and protocols relating to ter-

rorism and in December 2001 it adopted legislation on money laundering and terrorist financing.

### Skinhead and neo-Nazi groups

Skinheads, as in other East European countries, are the "shock troops" of right-wing extremism, aiming in Hungary in particular at the gypsies and foreign community. The most notorious Hungarian neo-Nazi group is the Hungarian Welfare Association, which has appeared under various names and in different forms and adheres openly to the legacy of the Hungarian fascist Arrow Cross movement, led during World War II by Ferenc Szalasi.

On Oct. 23, 1992, the 36th anniversary of Hungary's 1956 anti-Soviet revolt, hundreds of skinheads, marching into Budapest and openly carrying Nazi symbols, shouted down President Arpad Goncz. In April 1993, in response to the growing concern about neo-Nazi and skinhead activity in Hungary, the Hungarian parliament issued several decrees to combat this phenomenon and outlawed both the arrow-cross, symbol of the Hungarian fascists during World War II, and the swastika.

Skinhead numbers do not appear to have increased in recent years and their activities may even have diminished. Nevertheless, skinheads continue to disturb the public order. In February 1999, Hungarian police battled hundreds of local and foreign neo-Nazis who were commemorating the 54th anniversary of the attempt by Hungarian and Nazi troops to break out of Soviet-besieged Budapest. Following this unprecedented display of neo-Nazi power, the authorities promised a clampdown on such manifestations. The yearly march seems to have become an annual display of neo-Nazism and Holocaust revisionism.

*Luca Blasi*



# Iceland

**Capital:** Reykjavik

**Population:** 280,000

The Republic of Iceland was established in 1944 (having previously been a Danish possession). The head of state is the President, who is elected for a four-year term by universal adult suffrage. The head of government is the Prime Minister, who leads the Cabinet, while legislative power is held by a 63-member Parliament (Althing) similarly elected for a four-year term and which divides itself after election into Upper and Lower Houses. Following elections held on May 10, 2003, a government was formed by the liberal-conser-

vative Independence Party and the liberal Progressive Party, which between them had won 34 seats in the legislature.

Iceland has a wide range of fringe political parties that have failed to achieve representation in parliament. None, however, have engaged in extra-constitutional activities in recent years.

*Florence Terranova*

# India

**Capital:** New Delhi

**Population:** 1.05 bn

The Union of India is, under its Constitution with amendments which came into force on Jan. 3, 1977, “a sovereign socialist secular democratic republic” with a Parliament consisting of the President, the Council of State (Rajya Sabha) and the House of the People (Lok Sabha), the latter House having 545 members elected by universal adult suffrage for a five-year term (and up to 20 members representing Union territories and up to two additional members nominated by the President). The Rajya Sabha is elected for a five-year term by the elected members of Parliament and of the Legislative Assemblies of the states, and in turn appoints a Prime Minister and, on the latter’s advice, other ministers, all of whom are responsible to Parliament.

India’s unbroken tradition of functioning multi-party national democracy since independence in 1947 has meant that most revolutionary and dissident groups have been regionally based, the result of perceived local ethnic, religious or caste injustices or of antagonism between a local population and the centre. The major threat both to national security and to India’s relations with Pakistan since 1989 has been the escalating separatist movement in the northern state of Jammu and Kashmir (see below). The internal security situation was previously dominated by events in Punjab, where Sikh separatists demanded an independent Sikh state of Khalistan. There is also intermittent inter-communal violence on a large scale in several parts of the Indian Union and numerous separatist movements, notably in the north-eastern states.

The last time an armed dissident movement inflicted a catastrophic blow in the national political arena

was on May 21, 1991, when Rajiv Gandhi, a former Prime Minister and the leader of the Congress (I) party, was assassinated by a suicide bomber at an election meeting at Sriperumpudur in the southern state of Tamil Nadu. This, however, was generally regarded as an “extra-territorial” act of terrorism, believed carried out by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE, see under Sri Lanka) and a consequence of the involvement of Indian forces under Gandhi’s government in the Tamil separatist civil war in Sri Lanka.

## Prevention of Terrorism Act

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led government on Oct. 25, 2001, promulgated the Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance (POTO), replacing the controversial and now unused 1987 Terrorism and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act (TADA). Justifying the ordinance the government cited not only an upsurge of terrorist and insurgent activities in India but also the threat of international terrorism, as exemplified by the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the USA. Indeed, the government presented the ordinance as necessary compliance with UN Security Council resolution 1373, adopted on Sept. 28, requiring member states to suppress terrorism through legislation and other means. Nevertheless, critics thought that the measure’s broadened definition of terrorism, its wide scope of those deemed to have participated in terrorism, the sweeping powers of detention and interception of communications that it gave the police, and the stringent bail conditions it imposed, amounted to an ero-

sion of civil liberties. The government introduced some modifications to make POTO appear less draconian but the main opposition Congress (I) party continued to lead resistance to it in Parliament.

Eventually the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government pushed the bill enacting POTO through Parliament on March 26, 2002, by the rare device of a joint session of both Houses of Parliament (only the third since Independence). This was because the bill had been defeated on March 21 by 113 votes to 98 in the Rajya Sabha (the upper house) where Congress (I) had a majority. The bill – which now became the Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA) – had already been passed on March 18 in the Lok Sabha (the lower house) by 261 votes to 137. Congress (I) president Sonia Gandhi maintained that the Act would be used unfairly against minorities, pointing out that many Muslims, but no Hindus, had been held under POTO during the violence in Gujarat (see below).

The organizations prohibited under POTA include the following: *Al-Umar Mujahideen*, All Tripura Tiger Force, Babbar Khalsa International, *Deendar Anjuman*, *Harakat-ul Mujahideen*, *Hizbul Mujahideen*, International Sikh Youth Federation, Jammu and Kashmir Islamic Front, Kangleipak Communist Party, Khalistan Commando Force, Khalistan Zindabad Force, *Lashkar-e-Toiba*, Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, Manipur People's Liberation Front, National Democratic Front of Bodoland, National Democratic Front of Tripura, People's Liberation Army, People's Revolutionary Army of Kangleipak, Students' Islamic Movement of India, United Liberation Front of Assam and the United National Liberation Front.

### HINDU NATIONALIST (HINDUTVA) MOVEMENT

Apart from the conflict in Kashmir, in which Muslim separatists fight for the secession of the state, either for full independence or for union with Pakistan, perhaps the greatest present constitutional threat to India comes from the loosely structured but highly organized Hindu nationalist or fundamentalist movement. Yet this is not the cause of a separatist group or of an ethnic, religious or ideological minority, but that of the religion of the vast majority of the Indian population, the Hindus. Its overall goal is vague and all-embracing: *Hindutva*, "Hindu-ness", the establishment of the Hindu religion and social structure as the dominant characteristic of Indian society.

Since the general election of 1998 *Hindutva* has been the ideology of the leading political party in the Union government, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), although Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee has generally striven to present the moderate face of the movement, not least because the BJP depends on the support of several avowedly secular parties in the ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA) coalition. The movement champions the Hindu religion as the essence of the Indian nation, and characterizes foreign influences as tending to undermine, colonize and per-

vert the nation. Although this has some economic implications, in that many Hindu nationalists are strongly resistant to privatization programmes and the transnational effects of global capitalism, the main thrust of the movement is religious, political, cultural and social. In the *Hindutva* view of Indian history the chief culprit is Islam, which to Hindu nationalists dealt India its worst blow through the rule of the Mughal emperors from the 16th to 18th centuries, thus derailing temporarily the destiny of the nation. The Hindu nationalist view is that both Islam and Christianity act perniciously as unassimilated foreign bodies, unwilling to be integrated fully into Indian society. Perhaps most importantly, neither religion subscribes to the Hindu caste hierarchy.

Muslims are perceived as the greater threat, as they comprise over 11 per cent of India's population of over 1 billion (compared with Christians at about 2.3 per cent) and because of the memory of the communal strife during Partition in 1947 and the subsequent antagonism between India and the officially Islamic state of Pakistan. Yet India's Constitution is secular, with no place for a state religion. Indeed, this is one measure of the political importance of Jammu and Kashmir, as supposed proof that a Muslim-majority state can exist and thrive within the secular Union. *Hindutva* ideologists maintain that Hindu supremacy is itself a kind of "higher" secularism, in that Hinduism creates a social order that embraces diversity, as long as non-Hindus accept the conditions of a Hindu society and the primacy of Hindu "values and traditions".

### Ayodhya

The principal strategy of the *Hindutva* organizations has been the recovery of Hindu heritage from the supposed historical depredations of Muslim invaders. The centre-piece of the strategy has been the campaign begun by the **Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP)**, World Council of Hindus in 1984 to "reclaim" a site occupied by the Babri Masjid mosque in the town of Ayodhya in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh, which some Hindus consider the birthplace of the god Rama (or Ram) – Ramjanmabhoomi. It was claimed that the 16th century mosque was built on the site of an earlier Hindu temple to Rama destroyed by Muslims.

The campaign intensified in September 1989 with preparations to rebuild the temple to Ram triggering communal violence in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. In late September 1990 L.K. Advani, then president of the BJP and now Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Home Affairs, led a nationwide *rath yatra* (pilgrimage) to Ayodhya. The *rath yatra* caused renewed communal violence and Advani was arrested to prevent him from entering Uttar Pradesh. This effectively brought down the *Janata Dal* government led by V.P. Singh when the BJP withdrew its support. Despite the arrests of Advani and many others, in October thousands of VHP militants battled security forces on the site in

Ayodhya, leading to five deaths and damage to the mosque. This was followed by rioting in several northern states in which about 900 people died. In October 1991 the VHP announced plans to commence building a temple at Ayodhya, with the result that the BJP government of Uttar Pradesh acquired land around the mosque and legal deliberations over the ownership of the site intensified.

In July 1992 the Uttar Pradesh government defied two court orders by allowing temple construction work to commence on the disputed site. This was suspended within weeks after the matter was referred to the Supreme Court after talks between the VHP and Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao. Finally on Dec. 6, 1992, against a background of widespread communal tension, a mob of VHP militants broke through the security cordon at Ayodhya (reportedly meeting with little resistance) and demolished the Babri mosque. India was at once convulsed by communal violence worse than anything seen since Partition, and reaching as far south as Kerala. About 3,000 people were killed, the majority of them Muslims.

In 1993 the Supreme Court made the Union government “statutory receiver” of the site and in 1994 the court ruled that the status quo must be maintained, barring religious activity, until lower courts had ruled on legal disputes over ownership of the site, some dating from 1950. In early 2003 these disputes had still not been resolved, but the VHP periodically applied pressure on the government by setting deadlines for the commencement of construction of the temple. In a ruling on March 13, 2002, the Supreme Court rejected a request by the Union government to allow a religious ceremony to be performed at the site. The court emphasized the importance of maintaining the status quo in the current tense atmosphere. This Supreme Court ruling was effectively repeated on March 31, 2003. On March 5 the Uttar Pradesh High Court sitting in Lucknow ordered the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) to excavate the site at Ayodhya to determine whether a Hindu temple occupied it before the Babri mosque was built.

L.K. Advani and other senior BJP leaders (though not Vajpayee) were charged in 1997 with conspiracy in the destruction of the mosque. The trial of 21 defendants, including Advani, was suspended in May 2001 on technical grounds. The VHP and other Hindu fundamentalist groups had identified some 3,000 mosques across India that they claimed had been built on the site of Hindu temples destroyed by Muslims, including celebrated mosques in Varanasi and Mathura in Uttar Pradesh.

### Massacres in Gujarat, 2002

On Feb. 27, 2002, a Muslim mob at the railway station in the town of Godhra, in the western state of Gujarat, set fire to a train carrying Hindu pilgrims returning from a visit to Ayodhya, killing 58 people, many of them women and children. There was evidence in

some reports that some of the pilgrims had taunted and even attacked Muslims during the train’s prolonged stop at the station. The incident triggered a wave of sectarian violence that spread throughout Gujarat and lasted until May. Muslim businesses and homes were burned down and over 100,000 people driven from their homes. According to official figures about 1,000 people died but reports commissioned by EU governments and international human rights organizations maintained that up to 2,500 people died, almost all of them Muslims. Moreover, these independent reports said that despite the initial appearance of spontaneous revenge attacks, the riots, massacres and the mass rape of Muslim women amounted to a well-organized pogrom and had evidently been long-prepared. The reports cited the participation of the VHP and the Hindu extremist *Bajrang Dal* and accused local police of not only doing little to prevent the bloodshed but also of often organizing it. (VHP leader Ashok Singhal in June 2002 referred to the massacres as a “positive response” to “Muslim fundamentalism”.) The state administration led by Narendra Modi (the last remaining BJP government in a major state) was also accused by Congress and other opposition parties of having connived in the rioting. Under some pressure from Prime Minister Vajpayee, Modi resigned in July, but was appointed by the state Governor as head of a caretaker administration. Some 56 people were later charged and held without bail under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA) for participation in the Godhra train massacre. There were very few prosecutions in Gujarat for the attacks on Muslims and no one was charged under POTA for these crimes.

Two heavily armed gunmen, apparently belonging to a previously unknown Muslim group, on Sept. 24, 2002 attacked a Hindu temple in Gandhinagar, the Gujarat administrative capital. Some 32 people died, including the gunmen, in what seemed to be a revenge attack for the earlier massacres. India blamed Pakistan, which denied any connection with the incident. Modi’s BJP won a landslide victory in December 2002 in elections to the state assembly.

### Sangh Parivar

The *Sangh Parivar* (Family of Associations) is the collective name for the various loosely associated Hindu nationalist organizations, all embracing the ideal of Hindu supremacy or *Hindutva*. The major organizations are distinct in formal identity, yet at the same time often fluid in membership. The links between them are close but largely informal. To some analysts the confusing character of the interrelation between the parts of the *Sangh Parivar* appears deliberate, masking the way the *Sangh* operates and the process of decision making and transmission. This gives the movement collective strength without collective responsibility. The following are the principal elements of the *Sangh Parivar*.

### **Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS, Association of National Volunteers)**

*Leadership: Kupahalli Sitaramaiah Sudarshan (sarsangchalak – president)*

The RSS is a shadowy but influential Hindu supremacist umbrella organization founded in 1925 by Keshav Baliram Hedgewar. The fundamental ideology of the RSS is laid down in *A Bunch of Thoughts*, a book by its second leader (from 1940) M.S. Golwalkar, in which he denounces Muslims, Christians and communists as “internal threats” that can only become Indian if they subordinate their beliefs to the supremacy of Hindu traditions.

The organization was banned after Nathuram Godse, a former member, assassinated Mahatma Gandhi in 1948, but the ban was lifted the following year. The RSS was banned again from December 1992 to May 1993 for its role in the destruction of Babri mosque at Ayodhya (see above). It maintains the high profile of the movement by staging massive, militaristic rallies at “national defence camps” and organizing with the *Vishwa Hindu Parishad* (VHP, see below) long *yatras* (marches) as a medium of religious and political agitation. Since 1998 the RSS has mounted a campaign to reform the Indian educational system to make it “Indianized, nationalized, spiritualized”.

The **Bharatiya Janata Party** (BJP, Indian Nationalist Party) was formed in 1980 from the *Bharatiya Jana Sangh*, itself founded in 1951 as the political wing of the RSS. Prime Minister Vajpayee, most BJP ministers and most leading members of the party are RSS members. It is regarded by many commentators as performing the same function for the RSS today. However, although it came to power – briefly in 1996 and more securely in 1998 – largely on a wave of Hindu nationalist sentiment following the December 1992 destruction of the Babri mosque, as leader of a 24-party ruling coalition it has been constrained from openly fulfilling some of the more controversial elements of the *Hindutva* agenda. Vajpayee has been fiercely criticized by both the RSS and the VHP for failing to deliver on promises on Ayodhya.

### **Vishwa Hindu Parishad (World Council of Hindus)**

*Leadership: Ashok Singhal (president); Pravin Togadia (general secretary); Acharya Giriraj Kishore (vice-president)*

Founded in 1964, the right-wing VHP is avowedly concerned solely with religious matters. It was banned from December 1992 to June 1995 for its part in the destruction of the Babri mosque, and also from January-June 1995 for its threats to other mosques. The VHP is a wealthy organization, being heavily funded not only by domestic subscription but also by donations from expatriate Hindu communities, especially in the USA. It is regarded as highly influential in mobilizing voters for the BJP.

On April 14, 2003, the VHP leader, Pravin Togadia, was arrested by police in Rajasthan for carrying a trishul, a three-pronged dagger symbolically associated with the Hindu god Shiva. This followed the decision the previous week by officials in Rajasthan (where the Congress party was in power) to classify the trishul as a dangerous weapon in response to wholesale distribution of the daggers at VHP rallies; such daggers had reportedly been widely used in the Gujarat massacres (above). Togadia's arrest was followed by the declaration of a statewide strike by both the VHP and the BJP and the detention by the state authorities of more than 600 militants linked to the VHP.

ration of a statewide strike by both the VHP and the BJP and the detention by the state authorities of more than 600 militants linked to the VHP.

### **Shiv Sena (Shiva's Army)**

*Shiv Sena* is a political party, a member of the NDA governing coalition and generally regarded as more extremist than the BJP. Its political base is in Bombay (Mumbai) in western Maharashtra state, and its activities were originally directed against southern immigrants into Maharashtra and the Communist party, but from 1970 it began agitating against Muslims. *Shiv Sena* leader, Bal Thackeray, was prosecuted for inciting the inter-communal violence that followed the destruction of the Babri mosque in December 1992. The case was dropped, however, in July 2000 on technical grounds.

### **Bajrang Dal**

*Bajrang Dal* is the youth wing of the VHP. It was banned between December 1992 and June 1993 in connection with the Ayodhya disturbances. The organization was originally formed in the 1980s to counter “Sikh terrorism”, but later broadened the scope of its militant activities to include amongst its targets the Muslim and Christian minorities.

It was alleged that the leader of the mob that in January 1999 murdered Australian Christian missionary Graham Staines and his two sons in eastern Orissa state was a *Bajrang Dal* activist. This was an incident in a campaign from 1998-2000 against Christians that was particularly directed against the Christian conversion of low-caste Dalits and Adivasis (tribal people). The campaign included assaulting and sometimes murdering priests, monks and nuns and lay Christians, burning and bombing churches and forcing converted congregations to abjure their new faith. The *Bajrang Dal* also targets authors and films that are seen as promoting “Western” and anti-Hindu values and social practices, and shops that sell merchandise regarded as undermining Hindu values. A loosely organized group, the “Brown-shirts” of the movement, it is not directly controlled by the VHP or the RSS.

### **Ranbir Sena**

*Leadership: Brahmeshwar Singh (founder and commander)*

*Ranbir Sena* (or *Ranvir Sena*) is a banned militia employed by high-caste Hindu rural landowners (Bhoomihars) against Maoist Naxalite guerrillas and low-caste Dalits (formerly Untouchables). It is particularly active in the eastern state of Bihar, where it has been held responsible for number of massacres of low-caste villagers (see also entries for Left-wing Movements).

Founded in September 1994 and operating at first in the Bhojpur district of central Bihar, *Ranbir Sena* has expanded its area of operations. Better organized and more generously funded than predecessor landlords' private armies, *Ranbir Sena* is said to have a core of some 400 underground cadres. It has been banned by the state of Bihar since July 1995. Brahmeshwar Singh was arrested on Aug. 29, 2002, in Patna, the state capital, and subsequent reports named either Shamsher Bahadur Singh or Bhuar Thakur as taking over the leadership of the group. Although effectively an arm of the *Hindutva* enterprise, fulfilling its agenda in enforcing the social and economic disparities of Hinduism's caste system,



*Ranbir Sena* is only loosely connected with the *Sangh Parishad*. *Ranbir Sena* has a political front organization, the *Ranbir Kisan Maha Sangh*.

## LEFT-WING MOVEMENTS

### Dalit Panthers

This movement, founded by Raja Dhale, took its name from the word *dalit* (meaning “oppressed”) and the (US) Black Panther movement, which it regarded as its model. It was set up in 1972 to defend the interests of the Harijans (“untouchables”) who formed 9 per cent of the population of the state of Maharashtra. Its members were involved in clashes with higher caste Hindus. Later the movement spread from Maharashtra to Gujarat, where upper-caste militants objected to the reservation of government jobs and university places for Harijans, and launched early in 1981 an agitation which led to riots in which over 40 people were killed. The Dalit Panthers were also active in encouraging conversions of Harijans to Islam (as a means of escaping from the caste system), and in this connection at least 23 Dalit Panthers were arrested under the National Security Act in Kanpur (Uttar Pradesh) in August 1981. The government, however, took the line that a ban on conversions would be unconstitutional.

Militant protesters led by Dalit Panthers burnt down a police station on June 13, 1983, after an order to remove a statue erected illegally to commemorate the “untouchable” leader, Dr B. R. Ambedkar, who helped frame India’s Constitution. Several people died when police opened fire on the protesters.

### The Naxalite Movement

Originating from an armed revolutionary campaign launched in 1965, the Naxalite movement took its name from Naxalbari, a town in the Darjeeling district of West Bengal, where a peasant revolt broke out in March 1967 under the local leadership of the (pro-Chinese) **Communist Party of India (Marxist)** or **CPI-M**. The movement was started in Siliguri (a town south of Darjeeling), where the local CPI-M committee called for the arming of peasants and the setting-up of rural bases in preparation for armed struggle. The committee was opposed to the policy of the CPI-M of entering into coalition governments in West Bengal and Kerala, and was itself supported by the Communist Party of China (where the Naxalites were hailed as a “spring thunder over India”). The CPI-M, however, expelled the leaders of the revolt, which was suppressed by the Indian army by August 1967.

On July 2, 1968, supporters of the expelled leaders of the revolt founded a new Revolutionary Communist Party, which was opposed to any participation in parliamentary activities. Kanu Sanyal, the leader of the Naxalbari revolt, continued to call for the formation of village guerrilla units (even if armed with only bows and spears) to create “free zones”, but he was arrested on Oct. 31, 1968. Following his release on April 9, 1969, he announced on May 1 that a new “truly revolutionary party”, the **Communist Party of India**

**(Marxist-Leninist)** or **CPI-ML** had been formed on April 22, its programme being “to liberate the rural areas through revolutionary armed agrarian revolution, to encircle the cities and finally to liberate the cities and thus to complete the overthrow throughout the country”. Early in 1970 Charu Mazumdar, the party’s chief theoretician, called on peasants to murder local landowners and thus to become “the sole authority in settling all their local affairs”.

The CPI-ML was officially supported by the Chinese Communist Party, but not by all Indian Maoists. The new party in turn supported tribal rebellion such as that of the Girijan tribesmen in the Srikakulam district (on the border between Andhra Pradesh and Orissa), which had first broken out at the end of 1967 and had continued since then.

During 1970 Naxalite activities spread in many Indian states. In West Bengal between 10,000 and 20,000 Naxalites, about half of them in the Greater Calcutta area, were reported to have launched a “cultural revolution” on the Chinese model. At its first congress held secretly in Calcutta on May 15-16, 1970, the CPI-ML decided to build up a strong “People’s Liberation Army” and to create “innumerable points of guerrilla struggle throughout the countryside”. However, many of the party’s leaders were subsequently killed or arrested.

Charu Mazumdar, then general secretary of the CPI-ML, was expelled from the party on Nov. 7, 1971, for pursuing “a Trotskyite adventurist line”, after he had been attacked by Ashim Chatterjee (a Naxalite campaign leader in a West Bengal district). The latter had inter alia demanded that, in accordance with the Chinese Communist Party’s policy, the CPI-ML should actively support the Pakistan regime of President Yahya Khan and should act against the *Mukti Bahini* movement fighting for the independence of East Pakistan (Bangladesh). The expulsion of Charu Mazumdar and his replacement as general secretary of the CPI-ML by Satya Narain Singh led to division of the movement into factions attacking each other and to a general decline in Naxalite activities.

Charu Mazumdar was arrested in Calcutta on July 16, 1972, and died on July 28 of that year. The faction which had followed him was later divided into two groups: (i) one which supported criticism of his policies by the Chinese Communist Party and in particular of his endorsement of individual terrorism and his opposition to participation in other organizations, and (ii) another which continued his policies, supported Marshal Lin Biao’s theory that guerrilla warfare was “the only way to utilize and apply the whole strength of the people”, and rejected as “revisionism” the Chinese party’s criticism of Mazumdar’s views. The second group was, however, according to the police in Bihar almost “wiped out” by mid-1975.

The group led by S. N. Singh, which rejected terrorism, advocated a combination of legal and illegal activities and also participation in mass movements launched by other left-wing parties; it worked for the unification of the extreme left and claimed in August

1974 to have enrolled 90 per cent of the members of the Revolutionary Communist Party in Andhra Pradesh.

At Cochin (Kerala) on Dec. 14-15, 1974, however, dissident members of the CPI-ML formed the Centre of Indian Communists (as the fourth Communist Party in India). It rejected the “right-wing opportunism” of the Communist Party of India, the “left-wing opportunism” of the Communist Party (Marxist) and the “adventurism” of the CPI-ML; it declared that it would follow the Chinese party’s line in ideological struggles while taking local conditions into account in applying it; and it defined its aims as the establishment of a people’s government by organizing an armed revolution of the working class and the peasants.

The CPI-ML was banned on July 4, 1975, under emergency powers, but this ban was revoked on March 22, 1977. Following a series of meetings in April 1977 between S. N. Singh (the party’s general secretary) and Charan Singh (the newly appointed Indian Home Affairs Minister) the former gave an assurance that the party had renounced violence and terrorism and wished to participate in democratic processes. Charan Singh thereupon agreed to release all Naxalite detainees irrespective of the nature of their offences or group affiliations.

However, in West Bengal the CPI-ML faction formerly led by Charu Mazumdar had the greatest following of all the Naxalite groups and rejected all talk of reverting to parliamentary politics. The third CPI-ML group, led by Ashim Chatterjee and Kanu Sanyal, had before the general elections of March 1977 (won by the Janata Party) issued a statement calling on the people to vote against the Congress (which was defeated in these elections).

In February 1979 Naxalite guerrilla activities were reported to have intensified in West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Punjab and Kerala and to have spread to Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Assam, with the total strength of the movement being estimated at 15,000.

A secret conference of leaders of 13 Naxalite groups held on Jan. 30 – Feb. 2, 1981, agreed to abandon terrorist methods and to concentrate on public political agitation. Nevertheless guerrilla activities continued in several states and increased in particular in Kerala and West Bengal.

In Tamil Nadu the leader of an “annihilationist” group named as Kannamani was killed on Dec. 28, 1980, this group being held responsible for several murders and armed robberies. In Andhra Pradesh a Naxalite faction known as the **People’s War Group (PWG)**, see entry below) was involved in fighting in a village on April 20, 1981, when 13 tribesmen and one policeman were killed. In West Bengal, the pro-Lin Biao faction of the CPI-ML led by Nisith Bhattacharya and Azizul Haque continued to murder policemen, landowners, small businessmen and shopkeepers and to steal arms, while in Bihar the Naxalites were principally involved in an armed struggle between landowners and landless labourers agitating for higher

wages.

Home Ministry sources stated on April 13, 1982, that 92 people had been killed in 1981 in 324 violent incidents inspired by Naxalites (compared with 84 killed in 305 incidents in 1980), the states most affected being Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal and Bihar. During the campaign for the May 19 state elections in West Bengal Naxalites carried out attacks on offices of the CPI-M, which nevertheless won the elections at the head of a Left Front. Following these and other attacks on police targets in the state, Nisith Bhattacharya was captured with six of his followers in Bihar on May 27.

A 164-page document issued in Trivandrum (Kerala) in December 1982 by the “central re-organization committee” of the CPI-ML gave an analysis of the experiences of the Naxalites over the previous 15 years as a contribution to the process of rebuilding the movement for a “new phase” of activities. Entitled “Towards a New Phase of the Spring Thunder”, the document said that despite the “serious mistakes” committed under Charu Mazumdar’s leadership the revolutionary programme evolved by him should still form the basis of the movement’s political and organizational line. Analysing the causes of the recent setbacks and fragmentation suffered by the Naxalites, it said that the movement’s line had deviated to the left in dealing with specific issues, notably in respect of the relationship between armed struggle and other forms of struggle. This had resulted in a neglect of mass movements, with the result that the Naxalites became “isolated” from the people, making it all the more easy for the state to launch “a massive encirclement and suppression campaign”. The document continued that the movement had failed to produce a concrete political, economic and agrarian programme to back up its armed struggle and had placed one-sided emphasis on “annihilation of class enemies”, with the result that the concept of “political power at the local level” had degenerated into an “abstract, hollow slogan” and the annihilation campaign into “isolated killings”.

On April 19, 1986, police opened fire on crowds demonstrating in the Gaya district, killing 23 landless labourers and accusing protesters of being Naxalites associated with the leftist organization *Mazdoor Kisan Sangram Samiti* (which was reported on Aug. 17, 1986, to have been banned by the state government).

In a move to combat lawlessness in the state, a ban was imposed on Aug. 20, 1986, on all private caste-based armies in Bihar, including those maintained by landlords (Bhoomihars) and by ultra-leftist organizations (mainly lower caste and Harijan or Dalit), the banned armies including *Lal Sena*, *Lorik Sena*, *Bhoomi Sena* and *Kunwas Singh Sena* (see also entry for *Ranbir Sena* under Hindu nationalist movement).

On Oct. 7, 1986, a group called the Marxist Co-ordination Committee (of left-wing guerrillas) killed 11 high-caste villagers in the Aurangabad district of Bihar. It was later reported that 49 people were arrested in connection with the killings. Members of the

**Maoist Communist Centre (MCC**, see also separate entry below) were reported to have attacked a village on May 29, 1987, beheading 28 Rajput (warrior caste) villagers and burning 13 others to death in a revenge attack for the killing of seven guerrillas the previous month.

Between June and September 1989 the biggest Naxalite group, the People's War Group (PWG), kidnapped six members of the ruling Telugu Desam Party in Andhra Pradesh and killed one of them. Despite a truce offered in June by Chief Minister N. T. Rama Rao, violence continued and on Dec. 23 a Telugu Desam member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) was kidnapped by Naxalites demanding the release of seven companions. The new Congress (I) Chief Minister, Marri Chenna Reddi (appointed following the November 1989 elections) rejected these demands and on Dec. 26 a Congress (I) MLA was also kidnapped. The two MLAs were released by the end of the week and six Naxalites facing charges under the Terrorists and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act were released on bail.

In Andhra Pradesh Naxalites killed 180 people in 1990, up from 62 in 1988. In one of the worst incidents 47 people were burned to death on Oct. 10 in a train after an attack by PWG guerrillas, who said that they were enforcing a *bandh* (political strike) urging the government to implement the recommendations of the Mandal Commission. A commission headed by B.P. Mandal had been established in 1978 to investigate the conditions of the "socially and educationally backward classes" (SEBCs). The commission's report, presented in 1982, calling for 27 per cent of public-sector jobs to be reserved for the SEBCs, had been shelved by successive governments. Prime Minister V.P. Singh's announcement in August 1990 that his government was going to implement the provisions of the report caused an immediate political furore and widespread rioting in northern Indian states where upper castes formed a higher proportion of the population. Students who felt that their job prospects were threatened were at the forefront of the protests. By the end of September 70 people had died in the unrest. The Supreme Court on Oct. 1 ordered the government to delay the implementation of the Mandal Commission recommendations until it had completed the list of the castes to which the measures applied. Despite the Supreme Court's intervention to cool the situation down seven people were killed in New Delhi on the following day during a violent demonstration against the commission's recommendations. The social and political tensions exposed by the issue prepared the way for the fall of Singh's government, which was brought down in November by a vote of no-confidence over the government's handling of the dispute of the Babri Mosque at Ayodhya (see entry under Hindu nationalist movement).

The failure of state governments to implement land and labour laws increased Naxalite popularity amongst the landless poor. Kondapalli Sitaramayya, leader of the PWG, claimed that although the Nax-

alites would easily win district elections in some areas, they refuse to stand on the basis that electoral politics was, according to Sitaramayya, "a cesspool of intrigue and hypocrisy".

On May 1, 1991, PWG guerrillas kidnapped P. Sudhir Kumar, Andhra Pradesh youth Congress president. Kumar was released the following day when the state government freed four imprisoned PWG members. Kidnapping to secure the release of detained cadres has been a frequently used PWG tactic. On Feb. 21, 1993, the PWG released the last two of 10 Andhra Pradesh state officials and legislators held by them during a 23-day crisis. In Bihar on April 6, 1992, police killed six MCC members during an outbreak of inter-caste violence. A landmine planted by the PWG exploded on Nov. 14, 1993, in Mahboobnagar district, Andhra Pradesh, killing 10 people. On Nov. 24, 1994, guerrillas said to belong to a PWG break-away faction – the *Praja Pratighatna* – kidnapped a relative of Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao, but he was later released. The PWG on Nov. 16 killed 16 policemen with a landmine planted in the Karimnagar district of Andhra Pradesh, as part of a campaign to disrupt state elections due in December. On Nov. 14, 1996 a PWG attack on a police station at Sirpur Utnor in the northern Adilabad district of the state killed 14 people, including 13 policemen. In October the state government had re-imposed a ban on the group that had been lifted some months earlier. It was reported that an estimated 84 policemen, upper caste landowners and liquor sellers had been killed by the PWG in Andhra Pradesh in the first six months of 1996. The PWG attacked a police station at Karakagudem on Jan. 10, 1997, killing 16 policemen and two civilians. Of the 27 people who died in Bihar state in violence related to the February 1998 general election many were killed in landmines attributed to the Naxalites. On Oct. 8 Naxalite guerrillas detonated a landmine in the Bastar region of Madhya Pradesh state killing 16 policemen and wounding 15.

1999 saw an escalation of Naxalite violence, partly in response to attacks on low-caste villagers by the Bhoomihars' private armies. At least 34 people were massacred on March 18 in a village in the Jehanabad district of Bihar. Their attackers were said to be members of the MCC. On March 2 PWG guerrillas gunned down four Bhoomihars, allegedly members of the *Ranbir Sena*, who were accused of the massacre on Feb. 10 of 12 Dalits in another village in Jehanabad. After the February massacre President K.R. Narayanan imposed President's rule on Bihar, and the police were reported to have arrested some 40 *Ranbir Sena* activists. *Ranbir Sena* was again blamed when on April 21, 11 Dalit villagers were shot dead in the Gaya district of Bihar. The US Human Rights Watch (HRW) organization published a report on April 14 saying that the terrorization and oppression of India's 160 million Dalits had increased dramatically in the 1990s, and claiming that the authorities had failed to enforce legislation intended to protect their rights. It was reported on April 1 that in Andhra Pradesh a total of 14 PWG



guerrillas had been killed in two separate gun-battles with police. A further eight Naxalites were shot dead by police on April 15 following the assassination of state senior Congress (I) leader D. Sripada Rao and a Telugu Desam Party activist. During the September 1999 general elections a total of 51 people were killed in Bihar, many of them by landmines planted by the Naxalites. Both in Bihar and Andhra Pradesh there was a heavy presence of police and troops to prevent Naxalite groups from disrupting the polling. On Dec. 15 the Madhya Pradesh state minister of transport, Likhiram Kavre, was murdered in his home; a letter was sent to the local media claiming responsibility on behalf of Maoist Naxalites.

On Feb. 20, 2000, a landmine laid by Naxalites near the town of Narayanpur in Madhya Pradesh killed 22 policemen aboard a truck. Two days earlier a Naxalite attack on a police post in the state's Visakhapatnam district had left seven policemen and one guerrilla dead. In Andhra Pradesh on Feb. 1 seven Naxalites were reported killed in clashes with the police. A landmine blast on March 7 blamed on the PWG killed the Andhra Pradesh state minister for rural bodies, Alimineti Madhava Reddy, and three other people on a road 25 km from Hyderabad, the state capital. The *Ranbir Sena* was blamed for the massacre on June 16 of 34 lower caste and Dalit villagers in Aurangabad district, 150 km south-west of Patna, the capital of Bihar. The victims included 13 women and nine children and the massacre was thought to be an act of revenge for a massacre on June 12 of 12 Bhoomihars south-east of Patna. This in turn was thought to be Naxalite retaliation for the murder on June 4 of five lower-caste people in a nearby village. According to a report in *The Hindu* newspaper on July 1 the federal Home Affairs ministry had several times in May and June passed on warnings to the Bihar state government of imminent *Ranbir Sena* and Naxalite violence.

Jharkhand, created from part of southern Bihar in November 2000, remained one of the states worst affected by Naxalite violence. On April 14, 2001, MCC guerrillas killed some 14 people in a village in Hazaribagh district, most of the dead being members of a village protection force. In October 13 police personnel were killed in a Naxalite attack on a police station in Dhandad district and four policemen were killed by a landmine in Garhwa district. In November 2001 the Jharkhand government launched Operation Eagle to suppress Naxalites in Dhanbad, Hazaribagh, Giridih and Garhwa districts, at the same time promoting a policy of rehabilitation and financial assistance to surrendering militants. A landmine set by the PWG killed 13 people on Jan. 27, 2002, when it exploded outside Chainpur police station in Gumla district. Another landmine detonated by the PWG on May 7 in Mithadih village in Kodarma district killed 15 police personnel and injured 10 others. The PWG was also thought to be responsible for another landmine explosion on Nov. 20 which killed eight policemen in Jharkhand, some 110 km north of Ranchi, the capital. Also in Jharkhand the MCC on Dec. 20 attacked a police

van in the Sanda forests, killing 18 people. Two days earlier an MCC leader, Ishwari Mahato, had been killed in an ambush in the state.

There have been signs of a recent decline in support for the PWG in Andhra Pradesh, particularly in its heartland of Telangana. On Jan. 10, 2002, tribal leaders in Andhra Pradesh accused the PWG of having killed 194 tribal people (Adivasis) whom they had accused of being police informers. There were reports of a number of village leaders swearing oaths to exclude the Naxalites from their villages. On May 7 the PWG declared a month-long ceasefire in the state, which was followed by three rounds of preliminary talks between the rebels and the state government. However, these made little progress, with the state refusing to lift its ban on the PWG and to declare a reciprocal ceasefire. Additionally, seven Naxalites were killed in June and July in what the PWG termed "fake encounters"; in protest against these the PWG on July 19 withdrew from its first-ever negotiations with the state government.

A landmine exploding under a civilian bus in the Warangal district of Andhra Pradesh on Nov. 18, 2002, killed 14 people and injured 17 others. A statement by the PWG claiming responsibility also apologized for "one more serious mistake in the history of the revolutionary movement" – the bus having been mistaken for a police vehicle. The attack was thought to be in revenge for the deaths of five PWG guerrillas on Nov. 17 in an "encounter" with the police. Over 220 people died in Naxalite-related violence in 2002, including at least 89 Naxalite militants, 76 security force personnel and 55 civilians. This represented a decline from 2001, when some 412 people were killed, including 156 Naxalites, 109 security personnel and 144 civilians. The Naxalite insurgency is estimated to have cost some 6,000 lives since 1981.

### People's War Group (PWG)

*Leadership: Muppala Lakshman Rao (alias Ganapathi) (general secretary)*

This organization has as its official name the **Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) (People's War) (CPI-ML (PW))**. The PWG was founded in the southern state of Andhra Pradesh on April 22, 1980, by Kondapalli Sittaramayya, at the time a member of the central organizing committee of the Communist Party of India – Marxist-Leninist (CPI-ML), from which he was subsequently expelled. Sittaramayya died on April 12, 2002.

From the beginning the PWG adopted an ideology based on the Chinese leader Mao Zedong's theory of organized peasant insurrection based on guerrilla warfare, establishing bases in rural areas and building them up into "liberated zones" encircling cities. The PWG's aim is to create a revolutionary workers' state. Its original base was the Karimnagar district of the north Telangana region of Andhra Pradesh, from which it expanded over the years to other parts of the state and other states, including Bihar, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh.

The highest policy making body of the PWG is the 21-

member central committee, which stands at the apex of a multi-level organization of political bureaus and committees, with responsibilities ranging from the district to the state. The PWG maintains its bases in remote rural locations and in about 125 villages, particularly in tribal districts of the Telangana region, runs a parallel government. In Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh it has established a number of front organizations, including political groups and associations for peasants, industrial workers and students. According to police estimates the PWG has around 5,000 overground activists.

The PWG has long had links with the Maoist Communist Centre (MCC, see below) – although these have often been fratricidal – and on July 1, 2001, nine Maoist groups from India, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka formed the Co-ordinating Committee of Maoist Parties and Organizations in South Asia (CCOMPOSA). Apart from the PWG and the MCC these included the Bangladeshi Purba Bangla Sabhara Party, the Communist Party of Nepal – Maoist (CPN-M) and the Sri Lankan Communist Party of Ceylon – Maoist (CPC-M). Analysts consider that the links between the Indian and Nepalese groups are probably the most significant, reflecting a long-term strategy of creating a continuous “revolutionary zone” extending from Andhra Pradesh to Nepal. It is believed that the PWG was taught the techniques of manufacturing and planting landmines by the Sri Lankan separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

The PWG reorganized its guerrilla forces as a separate entity, the **People's Guerrilla Army (PGA)**, in December 2000 – January 2001, apparently in response to a co-ordinated drive by police forces of different states against the PWG. Military command is exercised by a central military commission, to which report commissions on state and zonal levels. The PGA's guerrilla forces are broadly divided according to two functions: military platoons that undertake offensive actions, and protection platoons or local militias based in villages. It is estimated that the PGA has over 1,000 fighters.

See also, The Naxalite Movement, above.

### **Maoist Communist Centre (MCC)**

*Leadership: Pramod Mishra (general secretary); Sanjay Dusadh.*

The earlier incarnation of the MCC was the *Dakshin Desh*, a Maoist group that chose to remain independent in 1969 when several other factions merged as the CPI-ML (see above under history of Naxalite Movement). In 1975 the *Dakshin Desh*, which was active chiefly in West Bengal, was renamed the Maoist Communist Centre and now operates largely in Bihar and Jharkhand states, although it has reportedly been trying to expand its activities in West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh. The MCC, whose aims and ideology are similar to that of the People's War Group (PWG, see entry) is directed by a central committee and there are also committees at the regional, zonal, sub-zonal and village levels. It is estimated that the group has some 50 military squads of about 20 guerrillas each. Like the PWG, the MCC is believed to have close contacts with the Nepalese CPN-M. The MCC and the PWG, despite the similarity of their aims, have often been in conflict, frequently encroaching on each other's areas of domination. The two groups on Aug. 30, 2001, issued a joint statement resolving to end their conflict.

Over the previous five years clashes between the two Maoist groups were estimated to have cost some 300 lives.

## **SEPARATIST MOVEMENTS**

See also Sikh Movements below.

### **JAMMU & KASHMIR**

The tensions that have created and driven the separatist conflict in the northern state of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) derive from the history of its incorporation into the Indian Union and the fact that it is India's only Muslim-majority state. Jammu and Kashmir had never been formally assimilated into British India but held the status of an independent princely state. After the British annexed the Punjab in the war of 1845 following the death of Ranjit Singh they sold his possession of Kashmir to their then ally Ghulab Singh, who later added Buddhist Ladakh to his fiefdom. Singh thus became the first of the Dogra Maharajahs, who ruled Jammu and Kashmir until 1949. The rule of the Dogra dynasty's Sikh and Hindu ruling class over the largely Muslim population was accounted oppressive by most observers, although the last Maharajah did introduce some reforms after a Muslim revolt in 1934. In the partition and independence of India and Pakistan in 1947 the rulers of the princely states were given the choice of which country to join. The last Maharajah of Kashmir, Sir Hari Singh, procrastinated under pressure from both sides and his own population until it became clear that forces of the new Pakistani state were infiltrating into Kashmir. On Oct. 26, 1947, Sir Hari Singh signed an instrument of accession committing Jammu and Kashmir to India. A war over Kashmir then ensued between the two new states in 1947-48, ending in a ceasefire on Jan. 1, 1949, along the first Line of Control (LoC). This left India with about two-thirds of Kashmir, although both India and Pakistan have continued to claim sovereignty over the whole state. Sir Hari abdicated in 1949 (although retaining the title of Maharajah) in favour of his son Yuvraj Karan Singh, who became Regent in Jammu and Kashmir until 1952, when he was elected head of state (*Sadr-i-Riyasat* – a title later replaced by Governor).

In his acceptance on Oct. 27, 1947, of Sir Hari Singh's signature of the instrument of accession Lord Mountbatten of Burma, the last British Governor-General of India, specified that the allegiance of Jammu and Kashmir should later be put to a plebiscite. This principle was accepted by both India and Pakistan and was incorporated in several resolutions on the dispute adopted by the UN Security Council between 1948 and 1957, notably resolutions 38 (1948), 47 (1948), 51 (1948) and 91 (1950). The early resolutions even established a commission to undertake preparations for the referendum. By 1957, however, the process had petered out because of India's progressive detachment from the principle of consultation. India introduced constitutional amendments in 1953 and 1957-59 to more fully integrate Kashmir (which had originally

enjoyed a high degree of autonomy under Article 370 of the 1949 Indian Constitution) into the Federal Union, although the state still retained a “special status”.

India subsequently rejected Pakistan’s attempts to reopen the question of the status of Kashmir through the UN, arguing that the conditions for a plebiscite no longer existed, that the population of Kashmir had already exercised its will through elections and that Jammu and Kashmir was now irrevocably part of the Union of India. India has consistently rejected all outside mediation or “interference” in Kashmir, seeing the dispute as a bilateral question between itself and Pakistan. In 1965 India and Pakistan fought a war over Kashmir, producing minor modifications to the LoC, and the 1971 war fought between the two countries over East Pakistan’s secession as Bangladesh included a second front in Kashmir.

The dominant figure in Kashmiri politics after 1947 was Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah, founder of the secular Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (JKNC) and several times Chief Minister, until his death in 1982 when he was succeeded as Chief Minister by his son Farooq Abdullah. The secular stand of the JKNC was important because, despite its predominantly Muslim population, the state also includes a Buddhist minority in eastern Ladakh and a Hindu minority, mostly in southern Jammu.

Although since the 1947-48 war there had been numerous armed infiltrations and bombing campaigns in the state directed from Pakistani “Azad” (Free) Kashmir, a serious indigenous militant separatist movement took shape only in 1989 after Farooq Abdullah’s JKNC was returned to power in what were widely regarded as rigged elections in March 1987. There had long been resentment of the Union government’s erosion of the autonomy of Kashmir and its manipulation of Kashmiri politics, with the result that the JKNC came to seem merely the tool of the New Delhi establishment. The goal of some of these indigenous separatist groups was an independent state of Kashmir, but increasingly through the 1990s the influence was felt of Pakistan-based militant Islamist groups fighting for the union of Kashmir with Pakistan.

The escalation of the conflict in the 1990s has been widely seen as due in part to the rise of such Islamist groups in Pakistan and their involvement in the 1980s with Afghan mujahideen resistance forces against the Soviet occupation and with the later Taliban fundamentalist government of Afghanistan. The Taliban consolidated control over most of Afghanistan in the mid-1990s with backing from the Pakistani government and army, particularly the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agency, which has for many years been seen by the Indian government as a funder of separatist and subversive activity in India. Gen. Pervez Musharraf, the commander of the Pakistani army, was widely thought to be the instigator of the May 1999 mass incursion of guerrillas (said to include many Afghans), backed by Pakistani regular forces, into the Kargil sector of Kashmir, almost precipitating a fourth

war between the two countries. India poured troops into the mountainous area and employed its air force in combat for the first time since 1971. The intense fighting lasted until July, when Pakistan, under diplomatic pressure from the USA, recalled the guerrillas and withdrew the regular troops it never admitted having committed. India stated that 398 Indian soldiers were killed in the Kargil conflict and claimed to have killed 698 Pakistani troops and 150 guerrillas. Western analysts estimated Indian losses as at least 1,000.

Musharraf seized power in Pakistan in a bloodless coup in October 1999. However, following the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks in the USA and the initiation of the US-led effort to depose the Taliban, Pakistan was forced to withdraw its support for the Taliban. The Dec. 13, 2001, attack on the federal Parliament in New Delhi (see below under *Jaish-e-Mohammed* entry) precipitated a crisis between India and Pakistan in which both countries withdrew their high commissioners and cut transport links. A massive military build-up produced a state of high tension lasting for several months in which a million armed men faced each other across the international border and the LoC. To the outside world it seemed as though the two countries, which in 1998 had both tested nuclear bombs, were on the brink of war and the problem of Kashmir received more international diplomatic attention than it had for many years. As a gesture to de-escalate the stand off, Musharraf banned a number of Islamic militant groups and pledged to clamp down on Islamic extremism within Pakistan. He repeatedly countered charges that the ISI continues to help infiltrate militants into Kashmir with the claim that Pakistan gives only moral, not material, support to the cause of Kashmiri “self-determination” (see also Pakistan entry).

Tensions began to ease in June 2002 despite continuing separatist violence within Kashmir itself, partly through diplomatic pressure, partly because there seemed to be some evidence that Musharraf was applying genuine constraints on Kashmiri separatist groups based in Pakistan, but also partly perhaps because India’s practical military options against Pakistan were limited. Even an offensive confined to militant training camps in Azad Kashmir had the potential to escalate to a general war in which both sides might be tempted to use nuclear weapons. The state assembly elections held in Jammu and Kashmir in October 2002 (the first since 1996) seemed to offer a window of hope when the discredited JKNC government was unexpectedly ousted from power. Its candidate for Chief Minister had been Farooq Abdullah’s son Omar, a junior minister in the Union government. Despite the circumstances of the conflict – some 730 people had been killed since the elections were announced in early August – unofficial foreign election monitors endorsed the polls as broadly “free and fair”, probably the first elections in the state to merit this description for many years. A new coalition government of the Congress Party and the largely Muslim People’s Democratic Party (PDP) was headed by the PDP’s Mufti Mohammed Sayeed, himself a former federal



minister. Sayeed announced that his government would attempt to apply a “healing touch” to the problems of the state, saying that he was prepared to hold talks with separatist groups and to release some separatist prisoners. The new policy was reportedly the creation of Sayeed’s daughter Mehbooba Mufti, the founder of the PDP and formerly a leading politician in the J&K Congress party. The immediate response of hardline militant groups was, however, an intensification of violence.

Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee on April 18, 2003, told a public meeting in Srinagar that “open dialogue” was the only way to bring peace to Kashmir and that “guns can never solve problems”. It appeared that Vajpayee had virtually abandoned the hope that a settlement could be reached with the separatist groups themselves and believed that peace could be secured only by dealing directly with Pakistan, because of its sponsorship of the major militant groups.

According to the Indian government, by the end of 2002 around 40,000 people had been killed in Kashmir since the beginning of the conflict in 1989. Kashmiri separatists and international human rights groups produced higher estimates, some being as high as 80,000 dead. According to Indian figures, the insurgency cost 4,507 lives in 2001. Of these 2,850 were militants, 590 were security force personnel and 1,067 were civilians. The number of fatal casualties fell in 2002 to 3,024, including 1,714 militants, 469 security force personnel and 841 civilians.

### Separatist Groups

The following are the major past and present separatist groups in Jammu and Kashmir.

#### Kashmir Liberation Army (KLA)

This group kidnapped and shot dead the Indian assistant high commissioner to the United Kingdom, Ravindra Mhatre, in Birmingham on Feb. 3, 1984. The group demanded £1,000,000 ransom and the release of prisoners in India, including the group’s president Magbool Boot, sentenced to death for the murder of a policeman in Kashmir in 1976. Two men convicted of the 1984 kidnapping received life sentences in the UK on Feb. 6, 1985. The court was told that three other Kashmiris, including the person alleged to have shot R. Mhatre, Mohammad Musserat Iqbal, had fled Britain and were thought to be in Pakistan. Boot was executed in India on Feb. 11, 1984.

#### Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF)

*Leadership:* Yasin Malik

On April 23, 1989, the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) (originally the Kashmir Liberation Front) mounted a three-day protest at police actions during unrest that had developed in the Kashmir valley the previous year as a result of popular opposition to the ruling alliance of the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (JKNC-Farooq) with Congress (I) and of increased activity by pro-Pakistan and Kashmir separatist organizations. The JKLF formed a united front in 1989 with the People’s League (led by Shabir Shah)

and the Islamic Students’ League. The Indian government alleged Pakistani involvement in arming and training militants. In an interview with *India Today* Shabir Shah conceded that Pakistan military intelligence – the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agency – had given such assistance in the past, but insisted that Benazir Bhutto’s government had suspended these operations.

By the end of the year JKLF-organized strikes had paralyzed Srinagar, the state’s summer capital, and much of the Kashmir Valley. Strikes and kidnappings were characteristic of the group’s early tactics. In December 1989 Rubina Sayeed, daughter of Mufti Mohammed Sayeed (the Union Minister for Home Affairs) was kidnapped in Srinagar by the JKLF, being set free after five days when the government complied with the demand to release five JKLF prisoners. Other kidnappings ended with the deaths of the hostages, including an incident in early April 1990 in which three hostages died. The JKLF was among eight groups banned in April 1990 as a curfew was imposed in Kashmir and tension grew between India and Pakistan. In the same month bombs planted in New Delhi and Bombay by a group calling itself the Mujahedin Kashmir killed two people and injured 43.

In June 1990 Amanullah Khan, chairman of the JKLF, announced in Muzaffarabad, capital of Pakistan-controlled Azad Kashmir, the formation of a provisional government of the Indian state. In August, amid rising violence, security forces captured Yasin Malik, one of the senior commanders of the JKLF.

In May 1994 Malik was released from prison on the grounds of ill health, and by September 1995 there were reports that Malik was leading a faction of the JKLF that had abandoned the armed struggle and broken away from the Pakistan-based faction led by Khan. The Shabir Siddiqi group of the JKLF continued a militant campaign at least until 1996. Malik’s JKLF, which has aimed for independence for Kashmir rather than unification with Pakistan, was transformed into a political party, although it refused to participate in elections. It has also been secular rather than Islamist. The police in Srinagar arrested Malik under the Prevention of Terrorism Act on March 25, 2002, accusing him of receiving US\$100,000 from Azad Kashmir to fund militant activity, which Malik denied. Chief Minister Sayeed’s government released Malik on Nov. 11, and three other JKLF members were released in November after being imprisoned for 12 years.

#### Lashkar-e-Toiba (“Army of the Pure”, LeT)

*Leadership:* Hafiz Mohammed Saeed; Abdul Wahid Kashmiri (leader of general council); Zaki ur Rehman Lakhwi (supreme commander in Jammu and Kashmir); Saifullah (operations chief)

Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) was reportedly formed in 1990 in the Kunar province of Afghanistan as the military wing of a Pakistani fundamentalist Islamic group, *Markaz al-Dawat wal-Irshad* (MDI). Initially LeT was involved in the mujahideen resistance to the Soviet-backed Najibullah government in Afghanistan, but it is believed to have first infiltrated Pakistani and Afghan fighters across the Line of Control into Indian-controlled Kashmir in 1993. Both LeT and MDI established their headquarters at Muridke, near Lahore in Pakistan’s Punjab province. According to the Indian govern-

ment, LeT has been actively supported since 1996 by Pakistan's ISI intelligence service. LeT's objective is the unification of Indian Jammu and Kashmir with Pakistan, but according to some sources its long-term aim is the imposition or restoration of Muslim rule on the whole of India.

LeT, together with *Jaish-e-Mohammed* (JeM, see below), was accused by India of conducting a joint operation in the Dec. 13, 2001, terrorist attack on the Indian federal parliament in which 14 people died, including all five attackers. India also accused the ISI of involvement in planning the attack, and it was widely thought that pressure from the USA caused Pakistan to act against LeT. On Dec. 22 the central bank froze all LeT's assets and on the same day Hafiz Mohammed Saeed formally resigned his leadership of LeT, handing over to Abdul Wahid Kashmiri (a native Kashmiri). Saeed also announced on Dec. 25 that LeT had already moved its headquarters to Pakistani Azad Kashmir and that MDI was being replaced by *Jama'at-e-Dawat*, a "civil defence group". The USA on Dec. 26 designated LeT a terrorist organization (as had the UK in February 2001). Saeed was arrested by the police on Dec. 30, but released within a few months.

President Musharraf, in a speech on Jan. 12, 2002, said that no Kashmiri terrorist organizations would be allowed to operate from Pakistan and named LeT and JeM among five banned sectarian groups. It was reported in March 2002 by the *Far Eastern Economic Review* that LeT, JeM and *Harakat-ul-Mujahideen* had all moved their headquarters to the remote town of Skardu in Azad Kashmir. There were other reports in March to the effect that the major militant groups had been asked by the United Jihad Council (UJC) to merge in order to escape the attention of the authorities. It was later reported that LeT had begun to use the name **Al-Mansour**. From this point onwards there appears to have been a certain fluidity of identity amongst both Islamic fundamentalist *jihadi* (holy war) active groups in Pakistan and those operating in Kashmir.

LeT has a reputation of being one of the best organized, best funded, most ruthless and feared of the militant separatist groups in Kashmir. This is because more massacres of civilians have been laid at the door of LeT than any other group, and because after the serious reverse for the Pakistan-backed separatists of the 1999 Kargil "mini-war", LeT is credited with pioneering the launch of well-executed suicide squad (*fedayeen*) attacks against the Indian security forces. It was reported on Dec. 17, 2001, that LeT was responsible for 35 out of 42 suicide attacks since 1999.

LeT was blamed for the massacre on June 16, 1998, of 25 members of a Hindu wedding party in Doda district in Jammu. India's National Security Adviser, Brajesh Mishra blamed both LeT and *Hizbul Mujahideen* (HM, see below) for the massacre on March 20, 2000, of 35 Sikh men in the village of Chattisinghpura, near Anantag, about 80 km south-east of Srinagar. Sikhs had never before been victims of the state's sectarian violence. The atrocity occurred during a visit to India by US President Bill Clinton (the first visit to India by a US President since 1978), and both militant groups denied responsibility and claimed that the slaughter had been staged by Indian forces as anti-separatist propaganda for Clinton's benefit. The assailants had reportedly been wearing Indian army uniforms. It was reported by

the Indian media on Aug. 31, however, that two captured LeT militants had admitted taking part in the Sikh massacre.

The security forces also claimed days after the massacre that they had killed five of the militants responsible in an "encounter". Such was the outcry against this claim by local people that Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah announced in April that he would order an investigation under the authority of a Supreme Court judge. Abdullah announced on July 16, 2002, that DNA tests had shown that the five men killed by the security forces in March 2000 had been innocent local Muslim civilians, not foreign militants as had been claimed at the time.

Such an incident goes to the heart of the Indian problem in Kashmir: the human rights abuses committed by the security forces ensure that they are as feared by the population – even those who are unsympathetic to the separatists – as are the militants. Over the years there has been a litany of complaints of the killing of innocent civilians, the killing of captured militants in "fake encounters" and the torture and killing of militants and their sympathizers in custody. Many of these accusations have been supported by regularly produced reports by international human rights groups such as Amnesty International (AI) and Human Rights Watch (HRW). The pattern is repeated in the separatist conflicts in India's north-eastern states and in the campaign to suppress the Maoist Naxalite guerrillas in Andhra Pradesh and Bihar.

*Lashkar-e-Toiba* was also blamed for a series of massacres on Aug. 1-2, 2000, in which 102 people were killed, in an apparent attempt to derail peace talks between *Hizbul Mujahideen* and the Indian government (see below). On Aug. 1, 35 people were killed at Pahalgam, 90km south-east of Srinagar, when gunmen attacked a party of Hindu pilgrims escorted by paramilitaries. A subsequent inquiry by the J&K government found, however, that most of the dead had been killed by gunfire from the paramilitary escort. On the same day uniformed gunmen shot dead 26 migrant workers at a factory in Mirzabar, near Anantag. Further killings of Hindus and migrant workers took place the next day in remote villages.

Prime Minister Vajpayee announced on Nov. 19, 2000, a unilateral limited ceasefire by Indian forces in J&K, refraining from offensive action during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, which began on Nov. 28. The gesture was rejected by all major militant groups, and on the first day of the ceasefire 24 people died, including 15 soldiers killed by landmines (although subsequently there was a reduction in violent incidents). Nevertheless, Pakistan responded positively, announcing that its forces would observe "maximum restraint" along the LoC, and after Vajpayee on Dec. 20 extended the ceasefire until Jan. 26, 2001, Pakistan announced a partial withdrawal of troops from the LoC. However, LeT was blamed for an attack on Dec. 22 on the historic 17th century Red Fort in Delhi, its first in India outside J&K, killing one soldier and two civilian workers. Indian police claimed on Dec. 26 to have killed one gunman and captured another in a raid in Delhi.

Vajpayee again in January 2001 extended the ceasefire by another month, despite continuing violence, including an attack by LeT on Srinagar airport in which six militants, three Indian paramilitaries and two civilians died. Vajpayee eventually announced an end to the ceasefire on May 24; the

experiment was felt to have demoralized the security forces without having produced any real lessening of violence. However, on the same day he extended an invitation to Musharraf to visit India to engage in “productive dialogue”, an invitation which Musharraf accepted on May 29.

The government of Pakistan’s Sind province issued a ban in August 2001 on organizations collecting funds for jihad in Kashmir, arresting 200 people in a raid on LeT’s offices in Karachi after LeT defied the ban. In J&K itself a massacre on Aug. 3 of 15 Hindus in the Doda district of Jammu was blamed on LeT. Federal Home Affairs Minister, L.K. Advani, on Aug. 9 extended the “disturbed areas” designation to four districts of Jammu. This meant that all six districts of Jammu and all six districts of Kashmir were now classified as “disturbed areas” under the 1990 Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act. Mainly Buddhist Ladakh, which was still largely free of violence, alone escaped the act’s designation. The change in the security status for the Jammu districts was seen by analysts as a reflection of increased militant violence since the failure of the Musharraf-Vajpayee summit and an admission that the situation was slipping out of control.

The situation in Kashmir continued to deteriorate after the Dec. 13, 2001, attack on the Indian parliament, with tension rising between India and Pakistan as both countries amassed huge numbers of troops on the international border and the LoC.

A massacre occurred on May 14, 2002 at Kulachak army camp in Jammu. Three gunmen on a bus that stopped outside the camp killed the driver and six passengers before attacking the camp, where they killed a further 27 people, including eight women and eleven children from army families, before being shot dead themselves by Indian troops. India identified the gunmen as Pakistani nationals, and said that the unknown group *Al-Mansour* that claimed responsibility was probably LeT or *Jaish-e-Mohammed* (JeM). Vajpayee told parliament that “we must retaliate” and spoke of India “fighting a decisive battle”, but although shelling along the LoC became heavier through May the belligerence was not translated into real action. Tension eased slightly in June under diplomatic pressure and India offered no retaliation to a massacre on July 13 in the Qasim Nagar Hindu slum area on the outskirts of Jammu, the winter capital. Unidentified gunmen attacked people listening to a radio broadcast of a cricket match, killing 27 (including 13 women and one child) and wounding another 30. No group claimed responsibility but Indian officials again suspected LeT or JeM. On Aug. 6 militants killed nine Hindu pilgrims on a visit to the Amarnath shrine in Kashmir. One of the attackers was killed by guards and L.K. Advani, now Deputy Prime Minister, blamed LeT.

The first two rounds of phased elections to the J&K state assembly were held in September 2002. Separatist militants did their best to wreck the electoral process and by Sept. 21, 460 people had been killed. LeT claimed responsibility for the death of state law minister Mushtaq Ahmed Lone, who was among eight people killed in a machine-gun attack on an electoral rally in Tikkipora village. Militants on Nov. 24 attacked the Hindu Raghunath temple, a pilgrimage site in Jammu. By the time the security forces regained control of the temple 12 people were dead, including two militants, and 54 wounded. Advani again blamed LeT. LeT did claim

responsibility for an attack on Nov. 22 on a police barracks in Srinagar by two gunmen dressed as policemen. The gunmen killed six officers before dying themselves. Police in New Delhi claimed to have killed two Pakistani LeT gunmen in a shoot-out, foiling an attempt to attack a shopping mall. However, India’s human rights commission launched an inquiry into the incident, based on witness testimony that the men were unarmed.

### **Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM)**

*Leadership: Maulana Masood Azhar (Amir)*

*Jaish-e-Mohammed* was founded in January 2000 by Maulana Masood Azhar, formerly the chief of *Harakat-ul-Mujahideen* (HuM), after his release from prison in December 1999 (see HuM entry below). JeM is based in Pakistan, where it has been linked with the Islamic fundamentalist group *Lashkar-e-Jhangvi* as responsible for attacks on US and other Western targets and on Christian churches. JeM is also thought to have been involved in the abduction and murder in Karachi of the US journalist Daniel Pearl in January-February 2002.

In Kashmir JeM has largely operated through *fedayeen* (suicide squad) attacks, often targeting the bases of the security forces. It has become one of the most effective militant groups in Kashmir and its operations are often linked with *Lashkar-e-Toiba* (see above). The Indian government held JeM responsible for an attack on Oct. 1, 2001, on the state assembly building in Srinagar in which 38 people died. A squad of four guerrillas were involved, one detonating a car bomb and the other three attacking the building with guns and grenades. One of the militants escaped.

JeM’s only reputed operation in India outside J&K is the Dec. 13, 2001, attack by gunmen and a suicide bomber on the Indian parliament in New Delhi that left 14 people dead. A Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA) court in New Delhi on Dec. 16, 2002, convicted three Kashmiri Muslims of planning the attack and on Dec. 18 sentenced them to death. The prosecution claimed that Shaukat Hussein and Mohammed Afzal were members of JeM and that S.A.R. Geelani was a member of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF, see entry). Critics of the convictions claimed that the evidence against the men was flimsy and circumstantial. Maulana Masood Azhar was arrested on Dec. 29, 2001, in Musharraf’s crackdown on militant groups, but released from detention on Dec. 14, 2002, by order of the Lahore High Court.

### **Harakat-ul-Mujahideen (HuM)**

The Pakistan-based Islamic militant group *Harakat-ul-Mujahideen* (HuM) was originally formed in 1985 to support the jihad (holy war) against Soviet forces sustaining the Communist government in Afghanistan. After 1989 it turned its attention to the separatist cause in Jammu and Kashmir.

In 1993 HuM merged with another militant group, the **Harakat-ul-Jihad al-Islami (HuJI)** to form the **Harakat-ul-Ansar (HuA)**. However, by February 1994 three of HuA’s top leadership had been arrested in Kashmir, including the general secretary Maulana Masood Azhar. HuA quickly turned its energies to carrying out abductions to obtain hostages to secure the release of its leaders. In the first attempt in January 1994 two Indian security personnel were



abducted and subsequently killed when India refused to release the HuA leaders. Next two HuA gunmen on June 6 seized two British tourists 50 km south of Srinagar, but they were released unhurt on June 23, apparently because of popular local opposition to the kidnapping. In September and October four more hostages were seized – one being from the USA and three from the UK – and held at locations in northern Uttar Pradesh state while demands were made for the release of Azhar and the other detained leaders. The security forces rescued the hostages on Oct. 31, and two men were charged with planning the kidnapping, including UK-born Ahmad Omar Sayeed Sheikh.

In July 1995 a previously unknown group called **Al-Faran**, believed to be a cover for HuA, seized six foreign tourists in Kashmir and issued demands for the release of 21 militants, including Azhar. Pakistan condemned the abductions and the US and UK governments attempted to secure their release through contacts in Kashmir. Even the All-Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC, see below) said that it would try to rescue them. The Indian government refused to release the militants. Of the two UK nationals, two US nationals, one German and one Norwegian, one American succeeded in escaping. The decapitated and severely tortured body of the Norwegian hostage, Hans Christian Ostro, was found on Aug. 13 in a forest south of Srinagar. *Al-Faran* issued a statement threatening to kill the other hostages unless their demands were met. Efforts were made to secure the release of the hostages at least until early 1996, but the Indian government refused to make a deal with the kidnappers, and nothing further was heard of the four missing tourists. A body exhumed in Kashmir in July 1997 was at first thought to be Paul Wells, one of the British hostages, but a DNA test conducted in the UK seemed to disprove this. However, the Kashmir police announced in January 2000 that a new set of DNA tests proved that the remains were of Paul Wells.

International revulsion at this episode and in particular a ban imposed on HuA in 1997 by the USA led the organization to revert to its original identity of *Harakat-ul-Mujahideen*. HuM now hatched an ambitious plan to spring its leadership (who had still not yet been tried) from prison. It was executed on Dec. 24, 1999, when five armed terrorists hijacked Indian Airlines flight IC 814 with 187 passengers and crew on their way from Kathmandu, the Nepalese capital, to New Delhi. The pilot was forced to divert the plane first to Amritsar, where one Indian passenger was stabbed to death, then to Lahore in Pakistan, where it was refuelled but obliged to fly on, Dubai, where 27 passengers were released, and finally on Dec. 25 to Kandahar in Afghanistan. There the hijackers demanded the release of Azhar and 35 other militants. It was reported that Azhar's brother led the hijackers.

Eventually on Dec. 31 a deal was reached with Indian negotiators by which all the remaining hostages were released in exchange for Azhar, Ahmad Omar Sayeed Sheikh and the Kashmiri Mushtaq Ahmed Zargar, founder of the separatist *ul-Ummar Mujahideen*. A retired Pakistani intelligence source was quoted as saying that the true value of Azhar to the militants was that as a free man he had access to "enormous funds". In early 2000, soon after his release, Azhar is said to have abandoned HuM and founded *Jaish-e-Mohammed* (JeM, see entry), transferring HuM's resources

and many of its personnel.

HuM's interventions in Kashmir since then have been sporadic. On Nov. 22, 2000, it claimed to have killed 30 Indian soldiers in night attacks on army posts. It was banned by India, the UK and the USA in 2001 and by Pakistan in January 2002. According to some reports, HuM is still active in Pakistan. No information is available on its leadership or structure. Sheikh was among four men convicted on July 15, 2002, in an anti-terrorist court in Pakistan of the murder of US journalist Daniel Pearl. Sheikh was the only defendant sentenced to death.

The HuJI also appears to have regained its independent existence since the disbandment of the HuA and there have been some reports of attacks by HuJI militants on Indian security forces in Kashmir. There is also said to be a branch of this group in Bangladesh, which it uses as a base for activities in the North-East. On Jan. 22, 2002, four gunmen on motorcycles opened fire on people outside the US Information Service Building in Calcutta (Kolkata), the capital of West Bengal, killing five off-duty policemen and injuring about 20 people, none of them a US citizen. The gunmen all made their escape. The police said that two groups had claimed responsibility, one of them the Asid Raza Commandos, a local criminal organization led by Aftab Ansari (alias Fahan Malik), the other the Bangladesh branch of the HuJI. The police also implicated Pakistan's ISI in the attack, claiming that there were links between the ISI, Islamic militants and the West Bengal criminal underworld. In an "encounter" on Jan. 28 police fatally shot two Pakistani suspects in Jharkhand, 400 km north-west of Calcutta. Before dying the men were said to have confessed to involvement in the Calcutta attack and to membership of the Kashmiri separatist group *Lashkar-e-Toiba* (LeT, see entry above). By the end of January the police had arrested 61 people in connection with the Calcutta attack. In February Aftab Ansari was extradited to India from Dubai in the United Arab Emirates, where he was based.

### **Hizbul Mujahideen (HM)**

*Leadership: Sayed Salahuddin.*

*Hizbul Mujahideen* (HM) is probably the largest of the militant separatist groups in Kashmir, deploying between 800 and 3,500 guerrillas, a mixture of indigenous, Pakistani and other foreign militants. It was established in 1989, originally under the name *Al-Badr*, as the military wing of the **Jamaat-e-Islami**, an Islamic religious and socio-political organization. According to some commentators the HM was established at the prompting of Pakistan's ISI as a pro-Pakistan, Islamist counterpart to the pro-independence, secular JKLF. Its aim has always been the integration of J&K into Pakistan.

In its early days it received arms train from Afghani mujahideen groups. HM has collaborated closely with other major groups such as LeT and HuM. The HM was amongst eight organizations banned on April 15, 1990, after a kidnapping by the JKLF ended with the death of three hostages. On June 18 security forces killed Mohammed Abdullah Bangroo, described as HM's field commander. A rocket attack on waterfront hotels in Srinagar being used as barracks for the security forces, in which four policemen died, was thought to be in retaliation for the death of Bangroo. HM



suffered a setback in December 1993 when its then supreme commander, Ahsan Dar, was arrested; he has remained in custody since then.

In 1994 the abduction and murder of a senior Muslim cleric, Qazi Nissar Ahmed, whose body was found on June 20 at Anantag, 60 km south of Srinagar, was blamed on HM. Ahmed, an advocate of Kashmiri independence, had accused HM of “holding Kashmir to ransom, to hand it over on a plate to Pakistan”. However, Sayed Salahuddin, the supreme commander of HM, denied any involvement in Ahmed’s death. HM claimed responsibility for a car bomb explosion on Sept. 4, 1995, in Srinagar that killed 15 people. On March 19, 1997, government troops wrongly claimed to have killed Abdul Majid Dar, HM’s operations commander in Kashmir, in a clash at Wodhpura, 75 km north of Srinagar.

On Nov. 14, 1998, Ghulam Mohammed Butt, the then leader of *Jamaat-e-Islami*, HM’s parent organization, gave a press conference in which he repudiated HM’s violence and emphasized his commitment to democratic and constitutional means of change. Butt also said that *Jamaat-e-Islami* members who also participated in HM were expelled from *Jamaat*. There were, however, dissenters from Butt’s stand, notably the hardline Syed Ali Shah Geelani, who later became leader of *Jamaat-e-Islami* (see also entry for All-Parties Hurriyet Conference).

In 1999 Indian police blamed HM for a massacre on July 20 of 15 civilians at Lihota village in Doda district. HM, along with LeT, was accused of the massacre of 35 Sikhs at Chattisinghpura on March 20, 2000 (see entry for LeT). HM claimed responsibility for a landmine explosion on May 15 near Anantag that killed J&K state minister for power Ghulam Hassan Bhat and four other people. Bhat was the first state minister to be killed since the beginning of separatist violence.

On July 24, 2000, Abdul Majid Dar gave a press conference in Srinagar in which he offered India a three-month ceasefire on condition that Indian forces stopped human rights violations and ceased operations against militants. Vajpayee welcomed the offer – which had been endorsed by Salahuddin on July 25 in a press conference in Islamabad – saying that he was willing to talk to anyone within the framework of the Indian constitution. The commander of Indian forces in Kashmir, Lt-Gen. J.R. Mukherjee, said on July 29 that he had ordered his forces to suspend all operations against HM. Other militant groups, such as LeT, denounced the ceasefire offer as “treasonous”, and Salahuddin was on July 26 ousted as chairman of the Pakistan-based 15-member United Jihad Council (UJC).

Talks began in Srinagar on Aug. 3 between an HM delegation led by Fazal Haq Qureshi and Indian negotiators led Home Secretary Kamal Pande. Negotiations foundered by Aug. 8 on the irreconcilability of HM’s demands of “no pre-conditions” and the inclusion of Pakistan in the talks, and India’s insistence on negotiating “within the framework of the Indian constitution” – implying both the acceptance of the current status of J&K and the exclusion of Pakistan. Salahuddin declared on Aug. 8 that the ceasefire was over. Although each side blamed the other for the breakdown of the talks, Qureshi on Aug. 17 did not rule out an early resumption if Pakistan could be included “at an appropriate time”. Dar, who was thought to be the chief advocate of the

talks, said on Aug. 24 that he was trying to arrange a collective ceasefire with other militant groups. Soon after this HM split, with Dar being ousted as operations commander by Saiful Islam and leaving to form his own faction. HM, like the other militant organizations, was unresponsive to Vajpayee’s unilateral declaration of a ceasefire in November.

March 2003 saw a major upsurge in violence, with some 138 people being killed in the state. On March 23, 2003, gunmen assassinated Abdul Majid Dar. An unknown group called *Al-Nasireen* that claimed responsibility, claiming that Dar was a spy for the Indian forces, was thought to be a front for the HM. On the following day gunmen dressed in Indian army uniforms overpowered police guards in the village of Nadi-marg, 48 km south of Srinagar, and massacred 24 Pandits (Kashmiri Hindus), including 11 men, 11 women and two children. No group claimed responsibility, but on April 10 police arrested Zia Mustafa, a local LeT commander, in connection with the incident. The outrage was thought to be aimed at Chief Minister Sayeed’s policy of encouraging the remaining Pandits to stay in Kashmir and to work for the return of the many thousands who had fled the state since 1990. India’s Border Security Force (BSF) claimed to have killed Saiful Islam on April 2 in a gun battle. They said that Islam, who had been captured earlier, had led them into an ambush during a search for an arms dump. HM sources, however, claimed that he had been “eliminated in a fake encounter”.

The **Students’ Islamic Movement of India (SIMI)**, listed as a banned organization under the Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance in October 2001, is said by the Indian government to have links with HM. On Sept. 27, 2001, police shot dead three SIMI leaders when confronting a violent mob in Lucknow, the capital of northern Uttar Pradesh state. The government claimed that SIMI had been responsible for bombings in Uttar Pradesh in 2000-01.

### **Lashkar-e-Jabbar**

Little is known about this group, which targets Kashmiri women who do not observe strict Islamic codes of dress and behaviour. In August 2001 it claimed credit for an acid attack injuring two Muslim women teachers in Srinagar who were not wearing the all-enveloping burqa and set a deadline of Sept. 1 for all Muslim women in Kashmir to adopt the fundamentalist Islamic dress code. It appears that after the attack the incidence of Muslim women wearing the burqa increased. On Dec. 20, 2002, suspected militants murdered three young women in a village of the Rajouri district of Jammu, two by shooting and the third by beheading. The killings came days after *Lashkar-e-Jabbar* put up posters in the district ordering all Muslim women to wear the burqa in public. *Lashkar-e-Jabbar*’s actions have had little support among militant groups such as LeT.

### **All Parties Hurriyet Conference (APHC)**

*Leadership: Abdul Ghani Bhat (Muslim Conference) (chairman); Bilal Ghani Lone (People’s Conference); Syed Ali Shah Geelani (Jamaat-e-Islami); Yasin Malik (Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front) – senior members of executive council.*

The All-Parties Hurriyet Conference (APHC), a 26-member umbrella organization of indigenous Kashmiri separatist groups based in Kashmir, was formed on March 9, 1993, at

a time when indigenous pro-independence Kashmiri militancy was being overtaken by Pakistan-based Islamist groups such as LeT. The APHC, whose membership includes political parties and religious and civic associations, has provided an overground forum for political activism, organizing strikes, protests and campaigns, in parallel with the secret warfare of underground militancy. Some membership groups support Kashmiri independence, some unification with Pakistan.

The APHC has scorned the state's formal political processes, and the "official" participating political parties such as the JKNC and Congress, as mere puppetry serving the purposes of the Union government. Correspondingly, the APHC has characterised itself (and has been so endorsed by Pakistan) as the legitimate expression of the will of the Kashmiri people. The organization has refused to participate in either federal or state assembly elections. The Indian federal government for its part long scorned contact with the APHC and in September 1999 it announced the arrest of 15 of its senior leaders, further announcing in December that their detention without trial in Jodhpur prison, Rajasthan, would be extended until September 2001.

On his visit to India in March 2000 US President Bill Clinton persuaded Vajpayee to seek a political solution to the Kashmir conflict that involved both Pakistan and the indigenous separatists. This led on the one hand eventually to the (failed) summit meeting with Musharraf in July 2001 and also to the first releases of the APHC leaders in April 2000 and the statement on April 4 by Home Affairs Minister L.K. Advani that the government might be willing to talk to the APHC leadership. Initially this came to nothing despite the release of the remainder of the detained APHC leaders in May. APHC declined to support the short-lived ceasefire called by *Hizbul Mujahideen* (HM) in July and the abortive talks held with the Indian government in August (see above). However, when Vajpayee announced in November a unilateral ceasefire for Ramadan the APHC was the only separatist grouping to offer encouragement, describing it as a "positive change" and declaring itself ready to participate in a "comprehensive peace process". The word "comprehensive" was regarded as a code for the involvement of Pakistan.

The former chairman and moderate APHC leader Abdul Ghani Lone flew to Dubai to discuss with Azad Kashmir separatist leaders and Gen. Musharraf the ceasefire and the possibility of talks. Musharraf was encouraging, but said that he was waiting for an "improved offer" (i.e. an invitation for him to join talks). India reasserted its long-standing position that it would not talk to Pakistan until it stopped "cross-border terrorism", but on Dec. 24 Musharraf urged the Indian government to begin by talking to the APHC. In early 2001 there were hopes that the Indian government would begin negotiations with the APHC, but these fizzled out in protracted delays in providing visas for a delegation to go to Pakistan to first consult colleagues in Azad Kashmir. It was reported that India was reluctant to allow the inclusion in the delegation of the hard-liner Syed Ali Shah Geelani. According to analysts there were policy differences between Lone, who saw Kashmir's predicament as a political problem, and Geelani, who saw it as religious. By April the Indian government appeared to have abandoned the initiative, instead appointing a chief negotiator, K.C. Pant, with a mandate to

talk to "all interested groups" in Kashmir. The APHC rejected on April 26 the terms of the government offer, insisting that it should be regarded as the sole representative of Kashmiri opinion. In November 2001, as Pakistan began to apply pressure on the armed separatist groups based in Pakistan, the APHC called for a ceasefire on both sides and for tripartite talks between India, the APHC and Pakistan. However, as tensions rose and violence increased following the attack on the Indian federal parliament in December, the opportunity for the APHC to play a significant role seemed to have passed.

On May 21, 2002, two gunmen wearing police uniforms shot dead Abdul Ghani Lone and one of his bodyguards at a ceremony in Srinagar to commemorate the assassination in 1990 of moderate Muslim cleric Maulvi Mohammed Farooq, like Lone a peaceful advocate of independence. Lone, founder of the People's Conference Party and a founder of the APHC, had urged Pakistani and other foreign militants to leave Kashmir. No group claimed responsibility for his assassination. Lone's son Sajad immediately blamed Pakistan's ISI and Geelani for his death, although he was later to accuse Indian security forces of the murder. There was speculation that hard-line separatists had killed Lone because they feared that he would run in state elections due in September.

On the day of Lone's death Vajpayee began a five-day visit to Kashmir. In a speech to the army on March 22 (eight days after the attack on Kaluchak army camp) he urged the armed forces to prepare for a "decisive battle". The police arrested Geelani in Srinagar on June 9, accusing him of channeling funds from Pakistan to *Hizbul Mujahideen*. On June 20 Defence Minister George Fernandes said that the government would consider the APHC's request to send a delegation to Pakistan to negotiate a ceasefire with militant leaders, but nothing came of this. The APHC spurned the federal government's urgings that it participate in the September – October state elections, instead joining the armed groups in calling for a boycott of the polls. In the event, the election was regarded as the most "free and fair" for many years in J&K. In the short term the APHC appeared to have missed an opportunity, and its space between the armed militants and the political superstructure seemed to have narrowed.

## NORTH-EAST STATES

### ASSAM

#### Bodo Groups

The Bodos first raised the demand for a separate homeland when India was under British rule. In 1967 the All Bodo Students' Union (ABSU) was formed to press the separatist claim and repeated representations were made to central government. In March 1988 the ABSU, under the leadership of Upendra Nath Bramha, formally launched a campaign of violence to press their demands and in its first 12 months it claimed some 300 lives. As a result of talks in August 1989 between the ABSU, Chief Minister P. K. Mahanta, and a central government observer, the Assam government

lifted restrictions imposed under the Disturbed Areas Act on Sept. 1 in return for a cessation of violence. Further talks were held in New Delhi on Oct. 5, at which all parties expressed approval of the lessening of violence and the ABSU promised to stop the violence in order to create an atmosphere for a political solution to the problem. However, both state and central government resisted ABSU demands for a separate Bodo homeland.

As a result of a peace initiative by Rajesh Pilot, the State Minister for Internal Security, an agreement was signed on Feb. 20, 1993, by the federal and Assam state governments and representatives of ABSU and the Bodo People's Action Committee (BPAC) to establish a 40-member Bodoland Autonomous Council (BAC).

This agreement did not go far enough for groups such as the **Bodo Security Force (BSF)**, which had been banned in 1992, and the newly formed **Bodo Liberation Tigers Front (BLTF)**. The chief aim of the BLTF, which was banned on Oct. 3, 1997, is the establishment of a separate state of Bodoland on the north bank of the Brahmaputra river. Its chairman and commander-in-chief is Hagrama Basumatary.

As in many of the separatist conflicts in the north-east Indian states much of the Bodo violence in Assam has been directed at competing ethnic groups (see also entry for United Liberation Front of Assam, below). In October 1993, 23 people were killed in clashes between BSF militants and non-Bodo tribespeople in the Kokhrajhar and Bongaigaon districts. Bodo militants attacked Muslim Bengali immigrants in Kokhrajhar district on May 28-29, 1994, killing 22 people. BSF militants were blamed for a massacre on July 24 of some 40 Muslim refugees at a camp at Barpeta, western Assam, which resulted in more than 50,000 Muslims fleeing their homes. Earlier in July the BSF had set fire to homes in 250 villages in the Barpeta region, killing some 30 people. The BSF was later to re-launch itself as the **National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB)**. The current leader of the NDFB is chairman Ranjan Daimary.

In October 1995 Bodo militants carried out a series of attacks in the Nalbari district in which they killed 21 non-Bodo settlers. No group claimed responsibility when up to 300 people were killed on Dec. 2, 1996, by two bombs exploding on a passenger train in Guwahati, the state capital, but the Assam government blamed Bodo militants. Some 50 people died in separatist violence in Assam in August 1997, the worst incident being the killing by NDFB guerrillas on Aug. 10 of 10 people in a village in Kamrup district that supported the rival BLTF. In December 1997 and January 1998 at least 36 people were killed by suspected Bodo militants in attacks on non-Bodo villages in the Darrang and Kekerichuchi districts. In May 1998 at least 22 Santal tribesmen were killed in attacks by Bodo militants in Kokrajhar district. Some 10,000 people from both the Santal and Bodo communities were said to have fled their villages. In the same month the state and Union governments held their first

joint talks with Bodo militant groups to end the insurgency. Little progress was made but all parties pledged themselves to further talks. In July and August Bodo militants killed some 50 soldiers and civilians in a series of bombing and shooting attacks, and in September 43 people were killed and some 700 homes burned down in a renewed outbreak of fighting between Bodos and Santals in Kokrajhar district.

The NDFB and the Assamese separatist United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) were blamed for a series of powerful bombs on Aug. 8-10, 1999, that briefly cut road and rail links to the rest of India and damaged power lines. This appeared to be the first major collaboration between the two groups. The NDFB, like the ULFA, has maintained armed camps in the forested southern districts of Bhutan bordering Assam since the early 1990s. The Indian separatist groups came under some pressure from the Bhutan government in 2001-02 to dismantle these camps. The NDFB has remained active despite the ceasefire observed since March 2000 by the BLTF (see below). Indeed, BLTF cadres have often been the targets of NDFB attacks. On Sept. 25, 2001, a bomb set by the NDFB derailed an express train in Bongaigaon district, injuring at least 100 people, 40 of them seriously. Police blamed the NDFB for an attack on Oct. 27 on a "non-tribals" village in Kokrajhar district that left 23 people dead and over 30 wounded.

The Union government and the BLTF (now also known as the Bodo Liberation Tigers, BLT) agreed on a ceasefire in March 2000 to pave the way for peace negotiations and in September 2000 it was announced that the ceasefire had been almost entirely effective and would be extended. Negotiations concluded with the signing on Feb. 10, 2003, by the BLTF and federal and Assam state governments of a peace accord providing for the creation of an autonomous Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) to replace the 1993 BAC. The 46-member BTC would include 30 seats reserved for tribals, five for non-tribals and six seats open to all. The BTC's territory would comprise 3,082 villages, with 95 further villages for possible inclusion within three months. The signing ceremony was witnessed by Union Deputy Prime Minister and Home Affairs Minister L.K. Advani, Assam Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi and representatives of all major Bodo civil organizations.

### **United People's Democratic Solidarity (UPDS)**

*Leadership: Horensing Bey (general secretary); Lt Leen Timung (mass relations secretary)*

The UPDS was formed in March 1999 from the merger of two militant groups, the **Karbi National Volunteers (KNV)** and the **Karbi People's Front (KPF)**. The objective of the UPDS is to champion the cause of the tribal Karbi people and to drive non-Karbhis, especially Biharis, out of the district of Karbi Anglong. On May 23, 2002, UPDS leader Horensing Bey signed a one-year "cease hostilities" agreement with the Assam state government, which currently still holds.

Other tribal militant groups in Assam include the **Adivasi**



**Cobra Force (ACF)**, also known as the Adivasi Cobra Militant Force (ACMF), formed in the latter part of the 1990s with the object of protecting Adivasi (tribal) people of Lower Assam. Originating in the Kokrajhar district, it has expanded its activities to the Bongaigaon and Dhubri districts. Through reported links with the Kamatapur Liberation Organization (KLO) of West Bengal (see entry), the ACF is said to have established training facilities in camps in southern Bhutan. The ACF leader is Durga Minz.

The **Dima Halom Daoga (DHD)** is active in the North Cachar Hills district and the Karbi Anglong district, its aim being the self-determination of the Dimasa people. The DHD commander-in-chief is Pranab Nunisa. Although in 2001 at least six people were killed in DHD attacks, and the DHD was thought to have carried out an ambush on July 18, 2002, near the town of Umrangshu in the North Cachar district, in which seven policemen were killed, the group is currently maintaining a ceasefire.

In September 1987 the Indian press reported the formation of a multi-ethnic grouping, the **Hill Tribal Liberation Organization**, comprising 12 tribes from the state of Mizoram, the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh and the Arakan Hills of Burma, with the objective of liberating and unifying these areas to form an independent country (see also under Bangladesh and Myanmar).

It was reported on April 5, 2003, that the Assam state government had called out the army to restore order after up to 29 people had been killed and thousands displaced in ethnic clashes between Dimasa, Kuki and Hmar tribespeople. The violence began with a massacre on March 31 of 21 Dimasa by Hmar militants. Assam Chief Minister, Tarun Gogoi, said that he had secured the agreement of the DHD not to break the current ceasefire by retaliating.

### **United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA)**

*Leadership: Arabinda Rajkowa (chairman); Paresh Barua (military commander-in-chief).*

The United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) claims to have been founded in April 1979 as a result of the Indian government's repression of a popular movement against an influx of immigrants and the alleged Indian economic exploitation of the state, in which President's rule was imposed on Dec. 12, 1979. The ULFA did not, however, come into prominence until 1990.

The ULFA, a movement that rejects historic Indian claims over the sovereignty of Assam, is a Marxist group fighting for "a socialist sovereign state" for the Assamese people, who are in a minority in several parts of the state of Assam, where they are outnumbered by various tribes and by immigrants from Bangladesh. A common factor in many of the separatist movements in the seven north-eastern states of the Indian Union is resentment of the impact – economic, cultural and political – of the large influx of Bengali immigration into the area, the first wave coming after Partition in 1947, the second beginning in 1971 with the independence war that transformed East Pakistan into Bangladesh. There has been intermittent communal warfare between the ULFA and militant tribesmen, especially Bodo groups (see above).

In the first six months of 1980 agitation by the **All-Assam Students' Union (AASU)** and the **All-Assam Gana Sangram Parishad (AAGSP)** for the expulsion of immi-

grants from Bangladesh resulted in a campaign of demonstrations, strikes and riots that caused the deaths of at least 54 people, blockaded exports and in early July cut off air and rail links with the rest of India. The agitation was suspended in July, apart from a blockade on exports from Assam of crude oil, and talks followed in August and September between the federal government and AASU and AAGSP on citizenship qualifications in Assam. President's rule was suspended in December 1980 with the formation of a new state government. Some 224 people had died in the agitation and 240 were missing. However, the negotiations, which continued at intervals through 1981, foundered on an inability to reach agreement on the status of immigrants. The Union government proposed, broadly, in August 1981 that all immigrants from the former East Pakistan who had arrived before 1961 should be granted Indian citizenship; that all who had entered Assam between 1961 and 1971 should be denied citizenship but allowed to stay in India, and if possible dispersed to other states; and that all who had entered since March 25, 1971 – the outbreak of the war that led to the creation of independent Bangladesh from East Pakistan – would be deported. However, the federal government also later claimed that it was bound by a 1965 agreement to give Indian citizenship to all refugees from East Pakistan, and an accord on the details of the plan remained elusive when talks broke up in January 1982. Negotiations were later resumed but the Assamese were angered when the federal government further relaxed citizenship criteria for immigrants who entered Assam in 1961-71. Elections to the state assembly in February 1983 were disrupted by widespread violence between Assamese, Bengalis and tribal minorities, including massacres. The official total of deaths between January and March was 1,482; another estimate was 1,700, of whom over 1,300 were Bengalis. The AASU estimated that 3,000 people were killed during this period.

The AASU and the AAGSP signed an agreement on Aug. 15, 1985, with the Union government that became a citizenship amendment bill; passed by both houses of parliament it entered into law on Dec. 7. Immigrants to Assam before 1966 automatically qualified for Indian citizenship. Those who arrived between January 1955 and March 24, 1971, were disenfranchised for 10 years but enjoyed all the other rights of citizenship. Those who arrived after March 24, 1971, were classed as foreigners to be expelled. The **Asom Gana Parishad (AGP)**, Assam People's Council, which was formed in October 1985 from the AASU and the AAGSP, although not representing a merger of the two organizations, positioned itself as a political party committed to both the unity of India and ethnic diversity in Assam and won state assembly elections in December, forming an administration.

The ULFA had close links with the AGP, which ruled the state until President's rule was imposed in Assam in November 1990. The ULFA had by now begun a serious campaign of bombings, assassinations and kidnappings, exploiting frustration at delays by the federal government in implementing the 1985 accord. Moreover the AGP, once in power, found it legally difficult to identify and expel illegal immigrants.

In late January 1991 the ULFA announced its willingness to negotiate with the central government on terms that included an immediate withdrawal of President's rule and the implementation of an immediate ceasefire. Records indi-

cated 97 ULFA killings since Nov. 27, 1990, directed mainly at Congress (I) politicians, and in February 1991 the ULFA stepped up its attacks and proved itself able to resist the Army's "Operation Bajrang" offensive in the state. Manavendra Sharma, the Assam Congress (I) general secretary, was assassinated by suspected ULFA guerrillas on Feb. 22, 1991. The Front declared a unilateral ceasefire on March 4, but demanded that all political groupings make clear by the end of the month their standpoint on Assam independence and "New Delhi's colonialism". Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar suspended army operations after ULFA pledged not to disrupt state elections in June, which saw Congress (I) return to power.

The ULFA declared a ceasefire in December 1991 and abortive peace talks were held in March 1992. The organization was divided on negotiating with the government, and an explosion that killed 10 security forces personnel in April was thought to be the work of the more militant faction. Nevertheless, the ULFA was eclipsed during much of the 1990s by the activities of the Bodo separatist groups, although there was some evidence of collaboration between these and the ULFA. In September 1997 the Assam state government accused the Tata Tea company, India's largest tea producer, of funding the ULFA, saying that Tata was among 50 companies funding militant groups.

On Dec. 21, 1997, police in Bangladesh arrested Anup Jetia, the ULFA general secretary, on charges of living illegally in the country, and he was convicted on Oct. 25, 1998, and sentenced to six years' imprisonment. India had in vain sought Jetia's extradition for his alleged involvement in the murder of a prominent Indian tea planter in Assam. Indian intelligence services also claimed that the ULFA had set up training camps in Bangladesh. Vice Chairman Pradip Gogoi was arrested on April 8, 1998, and has been in custody in Guwahati, the state capital, ever since.

The ULFA was by now well established in the forested northern districts of the state along the border with Bhutan (see also entry for Bhutan). On Feb. 27, 2000, a landmine in Nalbari district killed five people, including the state minister for forests, Nagen Sharma. This was followed in March by an escalation of counter-insurgency operations against the ULFA. In July, 12 people including 10 soldiers, were killed when a bomb exploded under a train 55 km west of Dispur, the state capital. In a series of attacks in the remote Tinsukia district between Oct. 21 and Dec. 7 the ULFA killed some 86 Bengali immigrants. The state government announced on Dec. 9 that it would step up its operations against the ULFA.

The ULFA chairman Arabinda Rajkowa in November 2001 called for a "political solution" to the conflict, but attached conditions to negotiations – such as the participation of the UN and the negotiability of Indian sovereignty – that were certain to be rejected by the federal government. Overtures by the Congress (I) state administration elected in May had earlier been rebuffed. Despite a number of mass surrenders of its guerrillas in 2000-01 the ULFA was able to persist with a low level of insurgency, including occasional spectacular bombings and attacks, because the security forces were unable to root out its bases in remote areas. At the same time police and army human rights abuses alienated the Assamese population. Increasingly in 2001 the ULFA

began to portray itself as a revolutionary force for the states (the so-called "Seven Sisters") of the north-east, either active in or having links to other secessionist groups in neighbouring states such as Nagaland, West Bengal, Tripura, Manipur, Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh. According to a UN-sponsored survey published in July 2002 separatist violence in Assam over the past 10 years had cost the lives of 2,206 civilians, 1,579 security personnel and 1,173 separatist militants. According to the South Asia Terrorism Portal web site the number of fatalities in Assam resulting from ULFA-related violence fell from 758 in 2000, to 606 in 2001, and to about 340 in 2002.

The ULFA renewed its campaign on March 7, 2003, with several simultaneous attacks. A bomb caused a massive fire that took two days to extinguish at an oil installation of the Indian Oil Corporation near Digboi in Tinsukia district in Upper Assam. Another bomb at nearby Duliagan damaged an oil pipeline serving a generating station. ULFA guerrillas made an ineffective rocket attack on a police post at Bongaigong and laid siege to Rangjuli police station in Goalpara district, retreating after a prolonged exchange of fire. The only casualties in this attack were two bystanders killed and six injured, allegedly by wild firing from the militants. ULFA commander Paresh Barua claimed responsibility for the March 7 attacks in a call to a local newspaper. ULFA was blamed for a landmine that exploded under a civilian bus on March 16 near the village of Bamungopha, killing seven people and injuring 54. Security sources said that a police convoy had been the intended target. According to a report by Indian Doordarshan television on March 14 the recent attacks had been carried out at the instigation of the Islamic militant *Al-Qaeda* network, which had allegedly supplied equipment to the ULFA.

On April 10, 2003, security forces in Meghalaya state seized a "huge cache of arms" after a gun-battle with ULFA guerrillas at Rongdupara in the West Garo Hills. Officials claimed that the weaponry had been procured from the remnants of the Afghan Taleban movement, adding that ULFA guerrillas had recently undergone training in Afghanistan. It has been frequently suggested by Indian intelligence sources that Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agency has funded and supplied weapons to the ULFA and to other separatist groups in the north-eastern states, with the purpose of raising insurgency to a level that would turn the north-east into a heavily militarized zone of instability, on the model of Jammu and Kashmir.

### **Muslim United Liberation Tigers of Assam (MULTA)**

MULTA is the largest of some 14 militant Islamic groups operating in Assam. Both MULTA and the **Muslim United Liberation Front of Assam (MULFA)** are thought to be part of a co-ordinating group called the **All Muslim United Liberation Forum of Assam (AMULFA)**. Prafulla Kumar Mahanta, the then Chief Minister of Assam, said on April 6, 2000, that both MULTA and MULFA were directed by the Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agency. The objective of these groups is thought to be the creation of an Islamic state in Assam. MULTA is said to mostly be active in the Dhubri district, and is thought to be responsible for murders, kidnappings and extortion. It reportedly has train-

ing camps in Bangladesh.

## NAGALAND

### Naga Separatist Movement

The state of Nagaland was created from the Naga Hills and Tuengsang Tribal Area of the eastern portion of Assam in 1962 in an effort to satisfy Naga nationalist aspirations. The Nagas, a people ethnically related to the Tibetans and the Burmese, but Christian in religion, have based their fight for a fully independent state on an agreement reached with the British in 1880, which they claim shows that Nagaland never conceded sovereignty to British India. Furthermore the separatists claim that a declaration of independence in 1947 from newly independent India was confirmed by a referendum of 1951. Naga nationalists claimed in 2003 that some 200,000 Nagas have died in India's longest-lasting internal conflict.

A **Naga National Council (NNC)**, formed in 1946, agreed upon the achievement of independence by India in 1947 to accept Indian suzerainty for a period of 10 years, but in 1949 it adopted a policy of non-co-operation with the Indian government. Certain Naga extremists began a campaign of violence in 1952, but Angami Zapu Phizo, president of the NNC, disclaimed any connection with the disturbances caused by these extremists. However, following the murder of the leader of a faction opposed to A. Z. Phizo in January 1956, the Naga movement was split. A. Z. Phizo dissolved the NNC in May 1956, and formed a **"Federal Government of Nagaland"** with its own parliament. His supporters embarked on an armed rebellion that led to widespread destruction of villages. After the rebels' main forces had been subdued by troops, rebel attacks on loyal villages and other acts of violence continued for many years. A. Z. Phizo left the country, living first in Pakistan and, from June 12, 1960, in London.

In 1968 a **"Revolutionary Government of Nagaland"** was formed by rebels against the extremist policies of Phizo's supporters. The "Revolutionary Government", led by Leshimo Nyushu, surrendered its arms on Aug. 16, 1973, and swore allegiance to the Indian Constitution. However, attempts to achieve a negotiated settlement between the Union and the "Federal Government of Nagaland" met with little success for many years. On Nov. 10-11, 1975, however, agreement was reached in Shillong between the Governor of Nagaland and a delegation of six representatives of the underground Naga movement led by Kevi Yalay Phizo (a minister in the "Federal Government" and a brother of A. Z. Phizo), whereby (i) the Naga delegation unconditionally accepted the Constitution of India (and thus the status of Nagaland as part of India); (ii) the underground Nagas would deposit their arms at places agreed upon; and (iii) the Naga representatives would have reasonable time to formulate other terms for discussion on a final settlement. A. Z. Phizo, however, repudiated this agreement on Dec. 1, 1975 (while he was in self-imposed exile in Lon-

don). On May 8, 1976, it was announced that all political prisoners who had accepted the Shillong agreement had been released, among them "General" Mowu Angami and 137 of his followers.

On Sept. 9, 1976, it was officially stated that Nagaland was now free from all traces of insurgency and that since March 1975 a total of 1,356 underground Nagas had "come overground" voluntarily.

In June 1977 Morarji Desai, then Indian Prime Minister, had talks with A. Z. Phizo in London, during which he assured the Naga leader that if he accepted the present state of affairs and the agreements made with the Nagas (including the 1975 Shillong agreement), he and the other exiles were welcome to return to Nagaland and he could become Chief Minister of Nagaland if the people wished it. A. Z. Phizo, however, had refused to accept Indian citizenship, and in a statement issued in his name later it was said that the activities of the separatist movement would be intensified.

By the early 1980s the main rebel forces were divided into two mutually hostile groups: those supporting the exiled leader A. Z. Phizo on the one hand and the adherents of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN, see entry below) on the other. A third faction, hostile to both main groups, had also emerged under the leadership of "General" Mowu Angami. In a night attack on a Burmese village near the Nagaland border on Sept. 27, 1980, pro-Phizo forces killed 75 National Socialists and the following year were reported (in August 1981) to have recently co-operated with the Burmese security forces in an attack on a National Socialist camp. In recent years the NNC has been eclipsed by the NSCN but a version of it was still in existence in 2002 and had entered no formal ceasefire with the Union government.

### National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN-IM)

*Leadership. Thuingaleng Muivah (general secretary, India branch); Isak Swu*

The NSCN was originally formed in 1978 by a Maoist breakaway faction of the Naga separatist movement led by A. Z. Phizo (see above). In July 1980 NSCN followers were said to have killed 200 pro-Phizo rebels and to have burnt down 150 villages, to which pro-Phizo forces responded by killing 75 NSCN followers on Sept. 27 and subsequently co-operating with the Burmese security forces in operations directed against the NSCN.

In February 1982 the NSCN began carrying out combined operations with the People's Liberation Army active in Manipur but by September 1982 it was reported to be in disarray following the surrender of several of its leading members, notably "Major" Ithoku Sema. However, further NSCN attacks on security forces and political figures occurred in 1984 and 1985. On Aug. 11, 1985, "Colonel" Moba Konyak, reportedly second in command, was captured attempting to cross into Burma, and in June 1986 it was reported that amongst high-ranking members arrested were "Captain" Pubi Mao, a regional chairman, and "Corporal" Yarmila, head of the women's wing and secretary to the NSCN leader Thuingaleng Muivah.

A split between Burmese and Indian Naga factions came



to a head in 1988 when the Burmese NSCN-East faction (NCSN-K) led by S. S. Khaplang and Khole Konyak, drove the Indian Naga (NCSN-IM), led by Thuingaleng Muivah and Isak Chishi Swu, across the border into Manipur. By 1990 the NSCN-IM was reported to be conducting joint operations in upper Assam with ULFA (see above). In the 1990s NSCN-IM operations increasingly took place in the neighbouring north-eastern state of Manipur, where the Naga separatists were pursuing their aim of creating a “greater Nagaland”(Nagalim) to include areas inhabited by Nagas beyond the boundaries of the state created in 1962.

In September 1993 it was reported that over 250 people had been killed in Manipur in fighting between the NSCN-IM and the tribal **Kuki National Army (KNA)** after the Naga militants issued an ultimatum to Kuki residents to leave a predominantly Naga area of the state. Some 1,500 troops were sent to Manipur to suppress the violence. In January 1994 the authorities reported that in 1993, 316 people had died in clashes between NSCN guerrillas and Kuki militants. In late May 1994 the NSCN was blamed for the deaths of 16 Kukis in the Tamenglong district of Manipur. In further ethnic violence between Kukis and Nagas in November it was reported that at least 30 people were killed. The NSCN was blamed for the deaths of 27 people on Feb. 25, 1995, in two bomb explosions on a train near Diphu town in Assam.

On Aug. 1, 1997, a three-month ceasefire began between the NSCN-IM and government forces, which was periodically renewed. The NSCN-K also announced a ceasefire on April 9, 2000, and this too was largely sustained. The latter group was said to have a strength of some 2,000 cadres and to have training camps in north-west Myanmar, which it shared with separatists from Manipur and Tripura states (see separate entries). In mid-2003, however, Myanmar government forces, in cooperation with India, launched an offensive against NCSN-K bases.

A political crisis was caused in Manipur in June 2001 after the Union government agreed on June 14 to an extension “without territorial limit” of its ceasefire with the NSCN-IM. This caused alarm in Manipur because the NSCN-IM maintained bases in the state (and in Assam and Arunachal Pradesh) in furtherance of its ambition to create a “greater Nagaland”. A three-day strike followed, culminating in the burning down of government buildings in Imphal, the state capital. Police shot dead at least 13 rioters and the federal government rushed paramilitaries to the state. A strike began in Assam on June 20 in solidarity with the Manipur protesters. President’s rule had already been imposed in May following the collapse of the state’s Samata Party-led administration. However, the Union government on July 27 reversed its policy and restricted the ceasefire to Nagaland itself.

On Nov. 26, 2002, the Union government lifted its ban on the NSCN, saying that it was willing to hold unconditional talks on the political status of Nagaland. On Jan. 12, 2003, Isak Swu and Thuingaleng Muivah emerged from three days of talks with Union Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Defence Minister George Fernandes saying that they were confident that their guerrilla war for independence was over. A joint statement issued on Jan. 23 committed both sides to further talks and to maintaining peace until a lasting settlement was reached.

See also entry under Myanmar.

## ARUNACHAL PRADESH

Separatist violence in Arunachal Pradesh is entirely the result of the spillover of conflicts in the neighbouring states of Nagaland and Manipur, involving the NSNC-IM and the NSNC-K (see Nagaland entry above). In 2002 a total of 63 people were killed in separatist-related violence, including 40 civilians, 12 security force personnel and 11 militants. Both the Naga organizations maintain bases in the Tirang and Changlang districts to facilitate arms smuggling from Burma (Myanmar) and it is reported that the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA, see entry) also imports arms through this route.

## MANIPUR

### Kuki Organizations

The **Kuki National Front (KNF)** was established in May 1988 under the leadership of Ranco Thangboi Kuki, with the aim of unifying the Kuki tribespeople in an independent homeland. Some 300 KNF guerrillas underwent training in Kachin Independence Army (KIA, see entry under Myanmar) camps in north-west Myanmar. From 1992 the KNF, together with the Kuki National Army (KNA), itself founded in June 1991 by Suvitulon Haokip, has fought an intermittent conflict with the Naga separatist NSCN-IM (see Nagaland entry) pursuing the aim of a “greater Nagaland” including areas of Manipur. In September 1993 the NSCN-IM gave Kukis an ultimatum to leave predominantly Naga areas, with hundreds being killed in clashes between the two groups. An added dimension has been a contest for the control of the smuggling route from Myanmar through the border town of Moreh.

There was also violent ethnic conflict in Churachandpur district between the Kukis and the Paites tribe – represented by the **Zomi Revolutionary Army (ZRA)** – in the late 1990s, peaking in 1997-98 and costing over 1,000 lives. The KNF and the ZRA signed a ceasefire agreement in August 1997, but intermittent violence persisted until a full agreement was signed in October 1998.

### Manipur People’s Liberation Front (MPLF)

The MPLF is an umbrella organization that includes the **United National Liberation Front (UNLF)**, the **People’s Liberation Army (PLA)** and the **People’s Revolutionary Army of Kangleipak (PREPAK)**. Manipur is an ethnically diverse state inhabited by some 30 tribes, but around 50 per cent of the population are Meiteis who, unlike many of the other ethnic groups, do not enjoy the legal protection and privileges that accompany Scheduled Tribe status. This has led to resentment among the Meiteis, who largely inhabit the Imphal valley, and the growth of a secessionist movement.

The UNLF was founded in November 1964 by Samarendra Singh, whose aim was an independent and socialist Manipur. (Like Meghalaya and Tripura, Manipur was not granted full statehood within the Indian Union until January



1972. Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram became Union Territories at this time and achieved statehood in February 1987.) The secessionist movement was damped down when most of its leaders were detained during the Bangladesh independence war of 1971. However, N. Bisheswar Singh was influenced in prison by Maoist Naxalite thought, and on release in 1975 he led a group to Chinese Tibet, where they received guerrilla training. Bisheswar Singh formed the PLA on Sept. 25, 1978, to fight an armed struggle for independence. In 1977 R.K. Tulachandra established the PREPAK and the Kangleipak Communist Party (KCP) was founded in 1980.

An insurgency that began in 1979 reached its peak in 1981, when 51 people were killed. However, the security forces clamped down on the rebellion, destroying rebel camps and killing or capturing much of the leadership. Bisheswar Singh himself was arrested in July 1981. By June 1981 PREPAK appeared a spent force, but the PLA fought on. At this time the PLA first made links with the Naga separatist National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN, see entry) and on Feb. 19, 1982, the PLA and the NSCN were believed to be jointly responsible for an ambush of an army convoy on the Kohima-Imphal highway that left 20 soldiers dead. The PLA was particularly prominent in the next resurgence of rebellion in the late 1980s, reorganizing itself militarily and establishing camps in Myanmar and Bangladesh. It also in 1989 formed a political wing, the **Revolutionary People's Front (RPF)**.

The Meitei groups in the early 1990s also began a campaign against both Bengali immigrants and native Manipuri Muslims (Pangals). In May 1993 some 90 people were killed in clashes in the Thoubal and Imphal districts between Meiteis and Pangals. This trend led to the formation of Islamic militant groups such as the **People's United Liberation Front (PULF)**.

It was reported by *The Times of India* on Nov. 22, 2001, that the Myanmar army had captured some 200 insurgents of the UNLF and the Revolutionary People's Front (RPF) in camps near the border with Manipur, seizing quantities of weapons, cash and gold.

Suspected guerrillas of the **Manipur People's Army (MPA)**, as the armed wing of the UNLF was now known, killed seven paramilitary policemen on Nov. 20, 2002, when they ambushed a patrol in Bishepur district. This was the first serious incident in the state since elections to the state assembly in February, which had resulted in a government of the Congress-led Secular Progressive Front (SPF). Turnout was high at 80 per cent despite widespread intimidation and violence by separatists during the election campaign, in which some 20 security personnel and election officials were killed. The previous assembly had been dissolved in September 2001 following political and civil disorder over the Union government's plan to extend its ceasefire with the NSCN-IM to areas where it operated in Manipur (see Nagaland entry).

## MEGHALAYA

The level of separatist violence in Meghalaya is comparatively low, and between Jan. 1 and Aug. 4, 2002, a total of 36 people were killed in separatist incidents, compared with 40 people in the whole of 2001 and 36

people in 2000. However, on Aug. 13, 2002, unidentified militants ambushed a bus in Raksamgiri, in the north-east of the state, killing 15 people. None of the separatist groups has responded to overtures from the state government for negotiations.

### Hynniewtrep National Liberation Council (HNLC)

*Leadership: Julius K. Dorphang (chairman); Cheristerfield Thangkhiw (general secretary); Bobby Marwein (commander-in-chief).*

The HNLC is a product of a split in 1992 of Meghalaya's first militant separatist group, the Hynniewtrep Achik Liberation Council (HALC), with the HNLC representing the cause of the Hynniewtreps or Khasis and the Jaintias. The principal aim of the HNLC is to promote the Khasis as the dominant ethnic group in Meghalaya against the Achiks (Garos) and immigrant populations. It operates mostly in the Khasi hills.

### Achik National Volunteer Council (ANVC)

*Leadership: Dilash R. Marak (chairman); Jerome Momin (commander-in-chief)*

After the split in the HALC (see above) Achiks (Garos) formed the **Achik Liberation Matgrik Army (ALMA)**, dedicated to a separate Garoland state for the Garos in the Garo Hills in the west of Meghalaya. Although most of the ALMA guerrillas surrendered to the security forces in 1994 a minority established the ANVC in 1995. The ANVC is active in the Garo Hills and areas of the West Khasi Hills. Its objective is the creation of an Achik homeland in the Garo Hills and areas of Kamrup and Goalpara district of Assam in which it claims there is a Garo majority. The ANVC reportedly had early support from Naga and Bodo separatist organizations such as the NSCN-IM and the NDFB (see separate entries) but has now cut those links. There is evidence that the ANVC now has links with the Assam separatist ULFA group (see entry) and there are claims that it distributes counterfeit currency on behalf of the Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agency.

### People's Liberation Front of Meghalaya (PLF-M)

*Leadership: Vincent Sangma (chairman); Nimush Marak (commander-in-chief)*

The PLF-M was begun by former surrendered ALMA guerrillas (see above) and aims for a separate state for the Garos in the Garo hills. Some reports suggest that it has been renamed the **Achik National Council (ANC)**. Like the other Meghalaya separatist groups it raises funds through extortion and kidnapping.

## MIZORAM

### Bru National Liberation Front (BNLF)

*Leadership: Brang Masha (president)*

The BNLF's object has been the establishment of an Autonomous District Council for the Bru (or Reang) tribespeople in the north-west of the state. However, on Aug. 23, 2002, during a sixth round of talks with the state government, the BNLF accepted instead the proposal of an Area

Development Council. Its demands also include five seats in the state legislature reserved for Brus and 10 per cent of government jobs reserved for educated Brus. Another sticking point has been the demand for the repatriation of Bru refugees from the Kanchanpur district of northern Tripura. The Mizoram state government is unwilling to allow this unless the BNLF definitively abandons violence and operates openly "overground".

However, alone of the north-eastern states Mizoram saw no separatist violence in 2002. Additionally, Mizoram Chief Minister Zoramthanga mediated successfully in peace negotiations between the Naga militants NSCN-IM and the Union government (see Nagaland entry).

## TRIPURA

Tripura was a princely state that acceded to the Indian Union in 1949, became a Union territory in 1956 and a state within the Union in 1972. Militant insurgency in Tripura derives fundamentally from the grievances of the 19 native tribes following the massive influx of Bengali refugees from the then East Pakistan following Partition in 1947. The grievances concern land disputes, resentment of Bengali economic dominance and complaints of over-representation of Bengalis in government employment. Bengali-speaking immigrants and their descendants now constitute about three-quarters of Tripura's population of approximately three million. Tripura shares a 840 km border with Bangladesh.

From 1985-88 activities by separatists in Tripura were largely attributed to the **Tripura National Volunteers (TNV)**, which was formed in 1978 and declared illegal on Jan. 22, 1987, under the 1967 Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. At the same time, areas in the north-west and south of Tripura were declared "disturbed" following continued attacks on Bengali settlers.

On Jan. 6, 1985, a three-month long amnesty had been offered to activists. However, on April 9, five people were killed after having been kidnapped from the house of a local tribal leader of the Communist Party of India (Marxist).

On March 10, 1986, four supporters of the ruling Left Front Coalition were killed in southern Tripura, and following an attack which killed five people on April 4, 1986, the Union government was asked for an increased paramilitary presence in the occupied areas. Over 100 people were estimated to have been killed in the TNV campaign in 1986.

The TNV killed 22 non-tribal people in three separate incidents on Oct. 13-14, 1987, in an offensive preceding the anniversary of Tripura's accession to India in 1949, as part of an attempt to generate fresh ethnic tension before forthcoming elections to the state assembly. Tripura Chief Minister, Nripen Chakraborty (CPI-M), blamed the central government for withdrawing the Army from the disturbed areas along the border with Mizoram without the state authorities' consent. On Jan. 4, 1988, the central and Tripura governments signed an agreement to undertake joint oper-

ations against the outlawed TNV; on Jan. 29 the Disturbed Area Army Special Powers (Prevention of Unlawful Activities) Act was applied to the whole of Tripura, giving the security forces greater powers of arrest, search and seizure as part of a comprehensive package of security measures to deal with TNV violence. The total number of deaths in January reached 105 when the TNV killed 70 people within 72 hours on Jan. 29-31. On Aug. 12 an agreement was signed in Delhi between TNV leader Bijoy Kumar Hrangkhawl, the central government, and the Tripura state government. In exchange for ending the insurgency, the TNV secured an increase in the number of state assembly seats reserved for tribal representatives from 17 to 20, a commitment to the restoration of tribal lands, and a promise of rehabilitation for surrendering guerrillas. On Sept. 10, 425 TNV guerrillas laid down their arms in response to the accord.

Since the early 1990s the tribal insurgency against Bengali immigrants has been revived by the **All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF)** and the **National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT)**. The latter is the larger and better-armed force. Both operate from bases inside neighbouring Bangladesh, operating through hit-and-run tactics, and both aim for effective independence for the tribal areas. However, in addition to its purpose of ethnic cleansing of the tribal areas, the NLFT also has a Christian evangelist agenda. Roughly half of the state's 200,000 tribal community are Christians and it is alleged that the NLFT has coerced the support of the non-Christians. The current leader of the NLFT is Biswamohan Debbarma, based in Bangladesh, and it is thought that recent internal divisions have led to several other senior leaders being killed or expelled from the movement.

After a peace settlement signed with the state government in August 1993 more than 1,000 ATTF guerrillas surrendered on Sept. 6. The ATTF suffered a further setback in 1994 when some 1,600 fighters – the majority of its cadres – surrendered to the state government under an amnesty. Its leader is Ranjit Debbarma, who is based in Bangladesh.

However, the ATTF regrouped, and in July 1996 warned all Bengali immigrants that they should leave Tripura. The state government in February granted the army and paramilitary forces sweeping shoot-on-sight, search and detention powers after ATTF guerrillas killed 22 Bengali settlers in three villages in the Khowai district. Another 40 people died in separatist violence by the end of the month.

In May 2000 it was reported that the NLFT had massacred some 30 Bengalis in the village of Baghber some 85 km north of the state capital, Agartala, in revenge for the killing of seven tribals whose vehicle was blown up by a landmine laid by the **United Bengali Liberation Front (UBLF)**, a force formed in October 1999 with the avowed purpose of protecting Bengalis in Tripura. Its leaders include Biplab Das and Bijon Basu and its tactics reportedly consist largely of attacks on isolated tribal people.

According to official figures, in the period Jan. 1 to

Aug 4, 2002, 103 people were killed in separatist violence, including 28 militants, 10 security force personnel and 65 civilians. This represented a reduction in violence from 2001, when a total of 312 people were killed, including 42 militants, 31 security force personnel and 239 civilians. In 2000, 514 were killed, including 45 militants, 16 security personnel and 453 civilians.

The NLFT backs the **Indigenous People's Front of Tripura (IPFT)** party successfully in elections to the state's tribal council, but the IPFT makes less headway in state assembly elections. The ruling Left Front led by the Communist Party of India – Marxist (CPI-M) was returned to power in 1998 and on Feb. 26, 2003. In the latter election the IPFT, in alliance with Congress, failed to make significant gains and won only six of the 20 reserved tribal seats. On election day five paramilitaries of the Border Security Force (BSF) were killed by suspected militants. The ATTF opposes the IPFT and attacks its candidates. Its own political wing is the **Tripura People's Democratic Front (TPDF)** and it maintains a parallel government in some remote tribal areas.

It was reported by the BBC on April 8, 2003, that NLFT guerrillas had on April 7 killed five supporters of the Left Front attending a wedding party in the village of Jagabhandupara and that a week earlier the rebels had killed seven members of the Railway Protection Force in the same area.

Tripura Chief Minister Manik Sarkar said at a press conference on April 28, 2003, that the ATTF had links with the Assamese ULFA and the NDFB whilst the NLFT was in touch with the Naga NSCN-IM. Sarkar recommended that all the north-eastern states should make a combined effort to defeat separatist insurgency in the region, and also said that the Union government should see north-eastern separatism as a national problem. He noted that many of the militant groups maintained camps in Bangladesh, but said that it was the responsibility of the Union government to formulate a policy to deal with this if the Bangladesh government was unable to suppress the separatist bases.

## WEST BENGAL

The **Gurkha National Liberation Front (GNLF)** was formed in the early 1980s to campaign for a separate Nepali-speaking state in West Bengal within the Indian Union. The areas claimed are the Nepali-speaking hill districts of Darjeeling, Kurseong, Kalimpong, and parts of the Jalpaiguri and Cooch Behar districts where some 60 per cent of India's 1,500,000 Nepali-speaking citizens live.

Agitation increased in 1986 after the eviction in March of 10,000 ethnic Nepalese from the north-eastern state of Meghalaya, where natives feared that they were being outnumbered.

A meeting convened by the Chief Minister of West Bengal – where the Communist Party of India (Marxist), CPI-M, was the dominant element in the ruling Left Front coalition – unanimously adopted, on Aug. 18, a resolution condemning the GNLF as “anti-state, anti-

national, anti-people and divisive”. Rajiv Gandhi, the Indian Prime Minister, however, stated during a visit to West Bengal in September that he had found nothing in the statements of the GNLF to imply that it was in any way anti-national or secessionist.

A serious situation arose in October 1986 when GNLF supporters began to burn down the homes of CPI-M supporters, and the police were given orders to shoot arsonists on sight. On Dec. 17 Subhash Ghising, the leader of the GNLF, presented the Union Home Secretary with a memorandum of the GNLF's demands, which included the establishment of a separate state. At a subsequent meeting held on Jan. 25-28, 1987, between a GNLF delegation and the Union Minister of Home Affairs, the GNLF demanded Indian citizenship for all ethnic Nepalese who had arrived in India after the signing of the India – Nepal treaty of peace and friendship in July 1950. After the GNLF had, on Feb. 7, presented a further memorandum with its demands, R. Gandhi stated that he and the Chief Minister of West Bengal were agreed that there would be no separate Gurkha state in West Bengal.

On April 22, 1987, it was reported that the GNLF had threatened the Union government with the launching of a full-scale armed struggle against the state government of West Bengal. It remained a legal organization, however. At conciliation talks with the federal government in June 1987, the GNLF agreed to suspend its campaign when Prime Minister Gandhi offered to meet a GNLF delegation. At this meeting, on July 22, Gandhi rejected the Front's demand for a separate state but arrangements were made for discussions to continue both in New Delhi and Darjeeling in the hope of reaching a compromise on some form of autonomy. The proposal of the West Bengal government in September to form the Darjeeling Hill Development Council (HDC) was rejected by Ghising as a “lollipop” to “allure the hill people who had been struggling for their own land”. Continuing violence and arson attacks on government buildings in the hill districts prompted the state government to invoke anti-terrorist laws in the affected areas on Dec. 17.

In January 1988 Ghising accepted the proposed HDC and tripartite talks were held in Delhi on Jan. 25, but the refusal of the West Bengal government to accept GNLF demands and attend the final round of talks was interpreted by the GNLF leadership as deliberate sabotage. With the expiry of the GNLF deadline for final agreement on Feb. 20, agitation resumed with a call for a 40-day general strike starting the following day.

On July 1, 1988, the GNLF suspended its agitation in order to facilitate the search for a peaceful solution, and the West Bengal government in turn released detained GNLF leaders. On July 25, Ghising met senior ministers to finalize terms for a settlement based on regional autonomy. The settlement provided for the establishment of a Darjeeling Gurkha Hill Council (DGHC) covering the three hill subdivisions of Darjeeling and part of the Siliguri subdivision. The council was to comprise 28 elected members, with 14 appointed by the West Bengal government, and to have



substantial powers in respect of land allocation, agriculture, water resources, tourism, health, education, public works, local government and small-scale industry.

The surrender of arms by GNLf militants went according to schedule, as did the release of GNLf detainees by the government. At the elections for the DGHC on Dec. 15, the GNLf won 26 seats and the CPI-M two. However, some political tensions persisted: Ghising objected to the nomination of CPI-M supporters to the council by the state government; and some sections of the Gurkha movement continued to press for a separate state.

These tensions increased in the late 1990s and in December 2000 West Bengal Chief Minister Buddhadev Bhattacharya requested increased police vigilance against rising militant activities in north Bengal, especially the Siliguri district, where the Kamatapur Liberation Organization (KLO, see below) and the **Gurkha Liberation Organization (GLO)** were operating. The GLO, led by Chhattre Subbha, was a hard-line breakaway faction of the GNLf, dissatisfied with the measure of autonomy gained by the DGHC. Bhattacharya warned that the GLO and the KLO both received support from the Assamese ULFA and the Naga NSCN-IM. Intelligence reports indicated that both the ULFA and the NSCN-IM had supplied training to the Bengali separatists and that the ULFA maintained refuges in north Bengal and used the area, especially the Siliguri corridor, as a transit to its bases in southern Bhutan.

On Nov. 14, 2000, Subbha declared that the GLO would achieve a separate Gurkha state through armed struggle, following an incident in Tinkatari village in which two GLO supporters and a policeman were killed in a gunfight. Subbha rejected police claims that the rebels were Nagas.

On Feb. 10, 2001, GNLf leader Ghising was seriously injured in a gun and grenade attack on his car near Kurseong on his way back to Darjeeling after a meeting in New Delhi with Home Affairs Minister L.K. Advani. Three people died in the incident, including one of the attackers. However, it was not established who was behind the attack, and although suspicion fell on the GLO and Subbha was arrested, there were also those who blamed a conspiracy by Kalimpong GNLf leader C.K. Pradhan, who called a press conference to protest his innocence. Nevertheless, Pradhan now began to distance himself from Ghising and to renew the call for a separate Gurkha state. Unidentified gunmen on Oct. 3, 2002, shot dead Pradhan himself in Kalimpong, which caused an open split in the GNLf. Pradhan's supporters, led by his widow Sheela Pradhan, his brother D.K. Pradhan and Maximus Kalikotey, launched a breakaway faction, the **GNLF (C)**. In January 2003 the new group set up a roadblock as part of a campaign to pressurize the state authorities to find and arrest those responsible for C.K. Pradhan's death, which the dissidents believed had been ordered by Ghising.

#### Kamatapur Liberation Organization (KLO)

The KLO was founded on Dec. 29, 1995, to champion the cause of the Kamta or Cooch people in the north of West Bengal, initially to address economic and land grievances and perceived cultural neglect, especially discrimination against the Kamta language. Increasingly, however, the KLO turned to militant activities and began to demand a separate state of Kamatapur. It is said to be the underground armed wing of the **Kamatapur People's Party (KPP)**.

The chairman of the KLO until his arrest in October 1999 was Tushar Das (alias Jibon Singha) but little is known of the leadership of the group since then. There have been reports since 2001 that the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA, see entry) has given training to KLO guerrillas in ULFA camps in the southern districts of Bhutan and that the KLO has contacts with the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB, above), the Naga separatist NSCN-IM (above) and the underground Communist Party of Nepal – Maoist (CPN-M) (see entry for Nepal).

The areas in which the KLO is active – and which it claims as a Kamta state – are the Cooch Behar, Darjeeling, South Dinajpur, North Dinajpur, Jalpaiguri and Malda districts of northern West Bengal, and Bongaigaon, Bhubri, Goalpara and Kokrajhar districts of neighbouring Assam. Its strength is said to be roughly 300 cadres. Like the ULFA and other separatist groups in the north-eastern states, the KLO is said to finance itself partly through extortion from tea planters. In 2002 KLO activities resulted in 15 deaths, including eight KLO guerrillas, six civilians and one member of the security forces. In the most serious incident five activists of the Communist Party of India – Marxist (CPI-M) were killed and 14 wounded in a KLO attack on a CPI-M office in Jalpaiguri district.

#### BIHAR – JHARKHAND

The demand of the Jharkhand tribes for a separate homeland, covering the tribal regions of the states of Bihar, Orissa, West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh, was reflected in the creation of the *Jharkhand Mukti Morcha* (JMM) political party in 1980. This won seats in Bihar and also Orissa. In the 1999 general election all major parties promised to consider breaking up some of the larger states into more manageable units to make politicians more responsive to local concerns. In November 2000 the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government brought into being three new states. Jharkhand was created on Nov. 15 from the southern portion of Bihar and part of Orissa. Its capital was at Ranchi (formerly in Bihar), its area 79,714 sq. km, and its population 21.8 million. Sceptics saw the new entity as primarily benefiting the local political elite and the leading party in the NDA, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which had a majority of legislators in Jharkhand. The first Chief Minister of the new state was in fact a central BJP appointee rather than one of the local candidates from the tribal people or Adivasi. Illegal militancy in Jharkhand is now represented (as in Bihar itself) not by separatists but by Maoist Naxalite guerrillas.

#### PUNJAB – SIKH MOVEMENTS

Sikh militancy reached extreme levels in the mid-1980s and resulted in the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in October 1984. There has been no serious re-emergence of Sikh militancy since the military defeat of the movement in 1993 (see below) but the Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance introduced by the Union government in October 2001 (passed into law on March 25, 2002, as the Prevention of Terrorism Act – POTA) named four Sikh groups as proscribed organizations: **Babbar Khalsa International (BKI)**, the **International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF)**, the **Khalistan Commando Force (KCF)** and the **Kahlistan Zindabad Force (KZF)**. Five of the 20 men wanted for alleged crimes in India that the Indian government in January 2002 demanded that Pakistan extradite for trial in India were Sikh separatist militants. These were Wadhawa Singh Babbar, the leader of the BKI; Lakhbir Singh Rode, head of the ISYF; Paramjit Singh Panjwar, head of the KCF; Ranjit Singh Neeta, head of the KZF; and Gajinder Singh, head of the Dal Khalsa International (DKI).

### The Conflict over “Khalistan”

The demand for an independent Sikh state (“Khalistan”) was put forward by Dr Jagjit Singh, the general secretary of the *Akali Dal* (the Sikh political party), who stated that President Yahya Khan of Pakistan had promised his support for the secession of Punjab from India and the establishment of an independent Sikh state. He was expelled from the party for his “anti-national” activities and his followers in 1972 formed the **National Council of Khalistan**, which from its headquarters in the Golden Temple at Amritsar (Punjab) issued “Khalistan” passports, postage stamps and currency notes.

A youth organization, the **Dal Khalsa**, was founded in 1979 under the leadership of Gajendra Singh, who with four other members of the organization hijacked an Indian airliner on Sept. 29, 1981, forcing the pilot to land at Lahore (Pakistan). The hijackers were overpowered whereupon nearly 100 extremist Sikhs, mainly *Dal Khalsa* members, were arrested in India.

On April 27, 1982, fighting broke out between Hindus and Sikhs in Amritsar after severed cows’ heads had been discovered outside two Hindu temples. Responsibility for the desecration was claimed by the *Dal Khalsa*, which had demanded a ban on smoking in Amritsar (the use of tobacco being forbidden to Sikhs). In all about 600 people were arrested in the disturbances, which spread to other towns and which resulted in both the National Council of Khalistan and the *Dal Khalsa* being banned on May 1, 1982, under the 1967 Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

Further airliner hijackings or attempted hijackings by Sikh extremists in August – September 1982 were accompanied by mounting tension in the Punjab as *Akali Dal* leaders launched a new campaign for an autonomous state of Punjab (similar in status to Kashmir), enlarged to include adjacent Sikh-populated areas, and also in support of various religious

demands. Although these demands stopped short of the full independence demanded by the Khalistan movement, secessionists participated in the widespread agitation and demonstrations which developed, to which the authorities responded by arresting thousands of Sikh activists. Talks between the government and Sikh leaders towards the end of 1982 failed to produce any agreement on the Sikhs’ political demands, although the Prime Minister on Nov. 25 made concessions to their religious demands by announcing that Amritsar would be declared a holy city and that the sale of tobacco and liquor would be banned within its walls.

On April 8, 1983, the *Akali Dal* leader Sant Harchand Singh Longowal said that a “sacrifice force” of 100,000 volunteers would be ready to be martyred in a peaceful way for the Akali cause. On April 28, 1983, the “beginning of the Sikh War of Independence” was declared by Balbir Singh Sandu, the leader of the National Council of Khalistan, after the killing of a police officer outside the Golden Temple, following which 40 activists believed to be hiding inside were ordered to surrender within a week.

On Oct. 6, 1983, President’s rule was introduced in Punjab, with 2,000 arrested between Oct. 6 and Dec. 16. Hundreds died in apparently indiscriminate violence in which moderate Sikhs also came under attack from more radical factions. Leadership of the Sikh agitation gradually passed from the moderate Sant Longowal to the Sikh militant leader Sant Bhindranwale, who had taken refuge in the Golden Temple along with his followers.

Tripartite talks began in Delhi on Feb. 14, 1984, to discuss Sikh demands which included a greater degree of religious and political autonomy; the recognition of Chandigarh as the capital of Punjab alone (and not of Punjab and Haryana); a greater share of river water; and the abolition of a sub-clause of Article 25 of the Constitution which was taken to mean that Sikhism was a sect of Hinduism. However, talks broke down the next day due to a further outbreak of violence, in which 80 people died between Feb. 14 and early March.

On March 4, 1984, police and paramilitary forces were given power to arrest suspects and search for arms without a warrant, this being the first time since Indian independence that such powers had been given to security forces. On March 19, President’s rule was extended for another six months. On the same day, the militant youth group of the *Akali Dal*, the **All India Sikh Student Federation (AISSF)**, was banned by government decree.

In early April there was another outbreak of intense violence, despite an announcement by the government in New Delhi that it would consider amending Article 25, and on April 3 Punjab was declared a “dangerously disturbed area”. On April 5 the National Security Act was amended to allow detention for up to six months without trial in Punjab and Chandigarh.

At a mass demonstration at the Golden Temple on April 13 called by Sant Longowal to protest against the “siege” tactics of the security forces, Sant Bhin-

dranwale called on Sikhs to arm themselves with “grenades, bombs, rifles and even submachine-guns”. At the Golden Temple 11 Sikhs died on June 1, 1984, in clashes with security forces outside. Following this incident, and in anticipation of a new wave of agitation announced by Sant Longowal on May 27, in particular a threatened grain embargo, the army was sent into Punjab on the night of June 2. On the same day, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi appealed to Sikhs to return to negotiations, saying that she was ready to concede most of their demands. On June 3, a state-wide 36-hour curfew was imposed, all road and rail travel was banned, news coverage was barred, and the border between Pakistan and the Punjab was sealed.

On June 2-3, an estimated 30-40 people died in confrontations throughout Punjab. Sikhs opened fire as the army laid siege to the Golden Temple, starting a fierce gun battle which continued through June 4. Unofficial sources reported that 36 militants died in this fighting, and 200 pilgrims escaped from the temple complex.

During the night of June 5-6, the army began an attack on the Golden Temple (and at the same time on 37 other Sikh shrines throughout Punjab), culminating in the capture of the Akal Takht (one of the most sacred parts of the temple which had become the stronghold of those inside, and which the army had been instructed not to damage).

Official figures published in a White Paper stated that 493 “terrorists” and civilians and 92 soldiers were killed in the army assault. Unofficial army figures put the figures at 1,000 and 250 respectively. Amongst those killed was Sant Bhindranwale. Thousands of Sikhs were arrested, including Sant Longowal who had been living in the Golden Temple, but had managed to leave before the assault. On July 27, the Minister of State for Defence reported that 1,421 Sikh soldiers had deserted in protest against the assault, and 35 were subsequently killed, but other government sources were reported as putting the figure of deserters at 5,000, with at least 102 killed.

Scattered resistance from groups of militants continued after the assault and there were further violent incidents throughout Punjab. Sikh leaders refused to allow the temple to be repaired until the military left, but on July 17, a group of *Nihang* (temple guardians) began repair work. On July 21, Punjab was declared “terrorist-affected” and special courts were created to sit in camera in the affected area.

On June 27, 1984, the Golden Temple was reopened to controlled groups of pilgrims. The army completed its withdrawal from the Golden Temple on Sept. 29 and President’s rule was extended for a further six months on Oct. 4.

The assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi by two Sikh members of her bodyguard on Oct. 31, 1984, was followed by an outbreak of violence (described as the worst since Partition in 1947) which left an estimated 2,987 dead (2,416 in Delhi alone) and forced 35,000 Sikhs to take refuge in temples or camps. Three thousand people were arrested for riot-

ing as mobs of Hindu youths attacked male Sikhs. The army was deployed in parts of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Tripura, Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir. Most violent incidents occurred in the so-called “Hindi heartland” of the north, where the largest Sikh populations also lived. At the same time, many Sikhs praised Hindu neighbours in Delhi for protecting them.

There followed numerous demonstrations for peace and by Nov. 13, curfews which had been imposed in Delhi and 20 other places had been largely lifted.

The assassins of I. Gandhi were subsequently named as Satwant Singh and Beant Singh. Satwant Singh was critically injured and Beant Singh killed in shooting which broke out in a guard room where the two men were taken after the attack. (It was alleged they tried to escape.) Kehar Singh, an assistant in the Directorate General of Supply and Distribution and a relative of Beant Singh, was implicated by Satwant Singh and arrested on Nov. 30, 1984. Balbir Singh, a Delhi police sub-inspector, described as having “guided the assassins”, was arrested on Dec. 3, after also being implicated by Satwant Singh. On Nov. 30, a former policeman, Simranjit Singh, described as the “co-ordinating mastermind behind the plot”, was arrested as he tried to cross into Nepal. Also implicated was Harinder Singh, who had resigned on June 19, 1984, as first secretary at the Indian embassy in Oslo (Norway), and who was alleged to have paid Beant Singh US\$100,000 to finance the assassination.

On June 23, 1985, an Air India passenger jet was blown up in mid-air, with Sikh groups claiming responsibility (see Babbar Khalsa International entry, below). On Aug. 20, 1985, the moderate Sikh leader Sant Longowal was killed by rival Sikhs after an announcement on July 24 that he had signed an agreement with Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi for a settlement of the Punjab problem. On Sept. 30, 1985, President’s rule was raised in Punjab.

On Jan. 22, 1986, death sentences were passed on three Sikhs who took part in I. Gandhi’s assassination; Satwant Singh was found guilty of shooting Gandhi (as was Beant Singh, who had been killed immediately afterwards), whilst Kehar Singh and Balbir Singh were found guilty of conspiring to murder.

Despite its interest in opening up lines of contact with the militants, in March 1988 the Indian government strengthened the powers at its disposal to deal with the Punjab crisis and President Ramaswamy Venkataraman dissolved the Punjab Assembly, which had been suspended since President’s rule was reimposed in May 1987. The passing of the Constitution (59th Amendment) Bill by the Lok Sabha on March 23 allowed the government to extend the state of emergency for a maximum of three years in the case of the Punjab.

The period from 1986 saw a continuing power struggle between Sikh groups over the control of the Golden Temple. Militant groups held the Temple for a



period in 1986. Jasbir Singh Rode (the founder of the International Sikh Youth Federation and a nephew of the militant Sikh leader Sant Bhindranwale killed in the army assault on the Temple) was installed as *Jethedar* (head priest) of the Akal Takht in March 1988 with the approval inter alia of the militant faction Unified Akali Dal, the Panthic Committee (co-ordinating the armed militant groups), the National Council of Khalistan, the Khalistan Commando Force, and the executive of the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC, the elected management committee of the Sikh temples). Rode attacked leaders of the *Akali Dal* and insisted that future negotiations with the government must involve the militants, though he avoided any reference to the concept of Khalistan or the rejection of separatism outright.

In November 1988 AISSF militants invaded the Golden Temple and dismantled police barricades there. On Jan. 24, 1990, Harminder Singh Sandhu, AISSF general secretary and a leading advocate of the establishment of Khalistan, who had been released from prison the previous month, was assassinated in Amritsar by, it was widely speculated, factions struggling for supremacy within the Sikh militant movement.

In the elections to the Lok Sabha in November 1989, a prominent Unified Akali Dal leader, Simranjit Singh Mann, was elected by a large majority while still in prison and his Akali Dal (Mann) faction won six out of the 13 Punjabi seats. One of the last actions of the outgoing Congress (I) government was to release Singh Mann on Dec. 2 and drop all conspiracy charges against him. The new government of V. P. Singh stated its intentions to find a peaceful solution to the Sikh militants' demand for an independent homeland of "Khalistan". At the end of December, the Lok Sabha repealed the March 1988 amendment allowing the declaration of a state of emergency in the Punjab.

On Jan. 11, 1990, V. P. Singh announced the rehabilitation of Sikh deserters after the 1984 army assault on the Golden Temple. However, Singh's conciliatory initiative had the effect of stimulating not only the growth of overground pro-Khalistan parties but also the recruitment of underground separatist militants. Sikh separatists, scenting victory, effectively pursued a dual-track strategy, leading to an escalation of violence despite the withdrawal of the army from the state. V.P. Singh's *Janata Dal* Union government fell in November 1990, to be replaced by one headed by Chandra Shekhar, leader of a dissident *Janata Dal* faction. The army resumed operations against separatists in the Punjab. In 1990 the number of deaths in the Punjab attributed to terrorism amounted to 4,263.

Despite the lack of improvement in the security situation, Chandra Shekhar decided that Punjab should participate in the general elections scheduled for May – June 1991, holding federal Lok Sabha and state assembly elections simultaneously on June 22. During the election campaign in May (during which former

Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated by Tamil terrorists in southern Tamil Nadu state) there was widespread violence in Punjab, with at least 100 people being killed. Violence continued in June, with the state being declared a disturbed area on June 14. On June 15 separatist militants attacked passenger trains, killing at least 74 people. The Chief Election Commissioner decided on June 21 that free and fair polls were not possible and postponed the elections until Sept. 25. He cited the intimidation of voters and the murders of at least 27 candidates. Nationally, the elections returned Congress (I) to power under Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao.

Separatist violence continued to mount in Punjab, with the September elections again postponed, until in November 1991 Narasimha Rao deployed the army in the state with a mandate to restore order. In a comprehensive strategy involving close co-ordination between the army and the police and the deployment of troops in smaller units throughout the state (instead of in large concentrations in sensitive locations) the security forces turned the tide against the militants and significantly reduced the number of civilian casualties. Separatist-related violence reached its peak in 1991, accounting for 5,265 deaths.

The militant groups were unanimous in ordering a boycott of the Lok Sabha and state assembly elections held on Feb. 19, 1992, and death threats by separatists resulted in only one faction of the *Akali Dal* fielding candidates. Congress (I) won in a landslide with 12 out of the 13 Lok Sabha seats and 87 out of 117 assembly seats. Some 36 people were killed during the election, but no candidates were assassinated. Although the turnout was a record low of 28 per cent Punjab now had an elected government for the first time since the imposition of President's rule in 1987.

It was considered by many analysts that this election was a turning point in that the militants' refusal to participate consigned them thenceforward to an underground role, in a battle with the army and the police. Violence continued in 1992, accounting for 3,883 deaths in the whole year, but the trend was downwards, and village *panchayat* elections in January 1993 saw a voter turnout of 82 per cent. In the next state elections in February 1997 two factions of *Akali Dal* contested, with former Chief Minister Prakash Singh Badal's Sikh Akali Dal winning 75 seats and Akali Dal (Mann) winning only one. Congress was reduced to 14 seats.

1997 saw the last major terrorist incident in the Punjab, when a bomb exploding on a passenger train on July 8 killed 36 people and injured 70. No group claimed responsibility.

According to official statistics at least 14,469 people died as a result of the Sikh separatist campaign from 1985-91, including 4,786 people in 1991 alone. Official figures for the whole period of 1981-2002 record a total of 21,618 people killed: 11,776 civilians, 8,094 terrorists and 1,748 security personnel.

**Babbar Khalsa International (BKI)**



*Leadership: Wadhawa Singh Babbar (leader)*

As its name suggests, BKI is sustained to a significant degree by the Sikh expatriate community, chiefly in Canada, Germany, the UK, and Pakistan. As with other Sikh militant groups, BKI's objective is an independent Sikh state of Khalistan. BKI is said to have been formed by Sukhdev Singh Babbar and Talwinder Singh Parmar, associates of the militants who assassinated Baba Gurbachan Singh, leader of the reformist Sikh Nirankari sect, on April 24, 1980. Singh Parmar is thought to have established the first operational cell of BKI in Canada in 1981.

By the late 1980s BKI was one of the chief militant Sikh separatist groups, alongside the Khalistan Commando Force (KCF) and the Khalistan Liberation Force (KLF). Like the other militant groups, however, BKI suffered heavy losses in the military crackdown of 1992-93, effectively losing its operational base in the Punjab. Sukhdev Singh Babbar was killed by the police on Aug. 9, 1992.

Talwinder Singh Parmar formed a breakaway faction of BKI – Babbar Khalsa (Parmar) – in 1992, but was shot dead by police on Oct. 9, 1992, near Jullunder, Punjab. He had been accused of planning the planting of a bomb aboard Air India flight 182 Boeing 747 airliner, which exploded off the west coast of Ireland on June 23, 1985, killing all 329 passengers and crew. From an early stage in the investigation Sikh terrorists resident in Canada were suspected of having committed the atrocity, but responsibility has never been tied with certainty to a single organization. On the same day a bomb exploded prematurely at Narita international airport in Japan, killing two baggage handlers, and Inderjit Singh Reyat was eventually convicted and sentenced to 10 years in prison for his role in this. Singh Reyat, who also admitted helping to acquire the explosives used in the flight 182 bomb, was also convicted of manslaughter on Feb. 10, 2003, in Vancouver, Canada, for his participation in this sabotage and sentenced to a further five years' imprisonment.

BKI's current leader, Wadhawa Singh Babbar, is said to have been based in Pakistan since the late 1980s. According to Indian intelligence sources, the BKI is sponsored by Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agency, operating through the Kashmiri militant separatist group *Lashkar-e-Toiba* (LeT, see entry), which provides training to the Sikh separatist factions in camps in Pakistan's Punjab and North-West Frontier (NWFP) provinces. According to the Indian press, citing official sources, the LeT training programme began in March 2001 and operated in at least eight camps. It was even claimed that Pakistan's President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, had met some of the "Khalistani" leaders.

On May 22, 2001, police seized in the Punjab four BKI militants and a quantity of explosives, reportedly thwarting a plan to attack a Hindu religious ceremony. The men were said to have admitted having obtained arms from Pakistan. On Aug. 31 the police arrested another BKI militant who was allegedly planning a bombing campaign to revive Sikh separatism. On April 29, 2002, police arrested five BKI militants, capturing a large arms cache and allegedly foiling a planned campaign of attacks on the Hindu fundamentalist RSS (see section on *Hindutva* groups).

**International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF)***Leadership: Lakhbir Singh Rode (leader)*

The ISYF was founded in the UK in 1984 after the storming by Indian forces of the Golden Temple (see above). One of the co-founders, Jasbir Singh Rode and his brother (the current leader) are nephews of a major Sikh separatist figure, Sant Jarnail Singh Bindranwale, who was killed in the assault on the Golden Temple.

The group, which has subsequently split into a number of factions, appears to have had little success in recent years in carrying out terrorist attacks but has been a major international fundraiser for the cause of Sikh independence. On Dec. 19, 1986, Birmingham Crown Court in the UK found two ISYF members, Jarnail Singh Ranuana and Sukhvinder Singh Gill, guilty of conspiring to murder the then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi during his visit to the UK in October 1985. They were sentenced to 16 years' and 14 years' imprisonment respectively. Parmatna Singh Marwaha, British treasurer of the ISYF, was acquitted. In July 2002 two Indian businessmen, Avtal Hundal and Kesal Dhaliwal, were convicted in the UK of being members of the ISYF (by this time a proscribed organization in the UK) and sentenced to two-and-a-half years in prison. They were believed to have come to the UK from Germany to raise funds for the ISYF. The ISYF branch in Canada was disbanded in February 2002 after being designated a terrorist organization.

**Khalistan Commando Force (KCF)***Leadership: Paramjit Singh Panjwar (leader)*

Four KCF militants on Aug. 10, 1986, assassinated Gen. Arun Vaidya in the city of Pune, Maharashtra state. Vaidya, who had retired as army chief of staff in January 1986, had been the commander of Operation Blue-Star, the storming of the Golden Temple in Amritsar in 1984. Sukhdev Singh and Harjinder Singh were convicted in 1989 of the murder of Gen. Vaidya, and hanged on Oct. 9, 1992, in Pune. The KCF also identified itself as responsible for the deaths of at least 72 bus passengers in two attacks in early July 1987.

On March 4, 1988, KCF guerrillas massacred 34 Hindus in north-east Punjab and shot dead 17 people throughout Punjab on March 29. Work on the Sutlej-Yamuna canal was brought to a halt after several thousand migrant workers from Bihar fled following an attack on May 17, in which 30 people were killed. In May Malkiat Singh, a KCF leader, was captured after the Army had sealed off the holiest parts of the Golden Temple and forced the surrender of militants who had retreated there. Since only a small proportion of the militants' forces had been involved in the siege (unlike 1984 when a large number of extremist forces had been killed or captured in the Army assault on the temple), they retained their capacity to mount armed operations. However, their organization was weakened when Sukhdev Singh, Balbir Singh and Labh Singh were killed in separate encounters with the police in July 1988.

Since the early 1990s the KCF's chief exploit has been the assassination on Aug. 31, 1995, of the Chief Minister of the Punjab, Beant Singh, who was killed along with 12 other people by a car bomb outside government offices in Chandigarh.

A court in Amritsar on March 7, 2003, acquitted Wassan

Singh Zaffarwal, the leader of a KCF faction, on sedition charges. He had already been acquitted in November 2002 of a murder charge, but other cases were still pending against him. The sedition case dated from Zaffarwal's participation in the Panthic committee (of which he was the only surviving member) that seized the Golden Temple in 1986. Zaffarwal was reported to have renounced terrorism and to have said that many exiled separatists were willing to return to India if they could participate in mainstream politics.

### **Khalistan Zindabad Force (KZF)**

#### *Leadership: Ranjit Singh Neeta (leader)*

On Aug. 25, 1997, police arrested Sukhinder Singh Johal, said to be a major operative of the KZF, near Pathankot town in Punjab. Johal reportedly told police that Neeta himself had planted a bomb on a bus at Pathankot on April 6. He also claimed that in a joint operation the BKI had planted another bomb on a bus in Pathankot on June 6. Johal also reportedly said that after carrying out a train bombing in Ambala in December 1996 another KZF militant had gone to Nepal to meet an officer of Pakistan's ISI agency.

*Tim Curtis*

## **Indonesia**

**Capital:** Jakarta

**Population:** 203.5 m

On May 21, 1998, Suharto resigned as Indonesian President following three months of widespread student protest and, on May 13-14, rioting in the streets of the capital Jakarta during which over one thousand people were killed. The resignation of the President brought an end to the 32-year rule of his repressive and military-based "New Order" regime, and initiated an uncertain transition to democracy.

The Republic of Indonesia is a unitary state with an executive President who governs with the assistance of a cabinet and who is elected (and is eligible for re-election once, after five years) by a People's Consultative Assembly, the highest authority of state. Following reforms which took place after the resignation of President Suharto, the Assembly has 695 members. 500 of these are from the People's Representative Council, the country's parliament, to which 462 are elected for a five-year term by direct universal adult suffrage, the remaining 38 being appointed representatives of the police and armed forces. The Assembly's other 195 members comprise delegates of provincial assemblies (130), and "group" representatives appointed by the General Elections Commission (65).

As a result of a general election held on June 7, 1999 (the first to take place under democratic conditions since 1955), the Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P), headed by Megawati Sukarnoputri, won 34 per cent of the vote, followed by the party of the former New Order governing elite, Golkar, with 22 per cent (a third of the figure it had secured in Suharto-era elections). The traditionalist-Islamic National Awakening Party (PKB) came next with 13 per cent, followed by the Muslim-based United Development Party (PPP) at 11 per cent and the National Mandate Party (PAN) with 8 per cent. The remainder of the vote was divided between 43 smaller parties, 13 of which secured at least one seat in parliament.

President Suharto's New Order regime came into being following a coup attempt ("the 30th September

Movement", see below) in 1965, for which the Indonesian military blamed the Communist Party. Maj.-Gen. Suharto put down this coup attempt within a day. In the following months effective power passed to him from President Sukarno and the army spearheaded a campaign of repression to eliminate the Communist Party and its supporters. After Suharto attained the full presidency in 1967 he set about securing military dominance, consolidating the military's hold over the bureaucracy, reorganizing the political parties and constraining labour unions, student councils and other political organizations.

The Suharto regime identified its chief threat as the communist "extreme left", from which it had "saved" the nation in 1965. From the mid- to late 1970s it also claimed to face a substantial threat from the Islamic "extreme right", by which it meant Muslim fundamentalist movements which aimed to transform the existing secular republic into an Islamic state. The regime also confronted secessionist movements in outlying regions, especially in East Timor following Indonesia's annexation of that former Portuguese colony in 1975. From the early 1990s, the regime was also challenged by a diverse array of dissident groups, non-governmental organizations, student groups and labour organizations demanding political democratization.

When he resigned in May 1998, President Suharto was succeeded by his Vice-President, B. J. Habibie, who set about dismantling many of the regime's repressive laws. During his tenure in office (May 1998-October 1999) he liberalized the press, the party system and trade unions, passed decentralization laws, and established a framework for democratic elections. During this period, many organizations (such as student groups) continued to press for the President's resignation. President Habibie also offered the population of East Timor a choice between expanded autonomy or complete independence, leading to a UN-supervised referendum on Aug. 30, 1999, in which 78.5 per-

cent of voters chose independence.

Following the general elections of June 1999, in October of that year the new People's Consultative Assembly elected Abdurrahman Wahid, an Islamic scholar and former leader of the 30-million strong *Nahdlatul Ulama* organization, as the new President. He appointed a cabinet including representatives from all the major parties and the armed forces. However, relations between the President and the legislature soon broke down into acrimony, especially after the President dismissed from cabinet several of his ministers who were members of the parties that were best represented in the parliament. These tensions culminated in July 2001 when the parliament convened an "extraordinary session" of the People's Consultative Assembly, which dismissed Abdurrahman Wahid as President and replaced him with the Vice-President and head of the PDI-P, Megawati Sukarnoputri.

In the years following the end of the Suharto regime, many previously illegal or harassed organizations attained legal status and began to operate openly. However, an array of organizations remained illegal (notably, secessionist movements) or engaged in extra-legal activity.

## SECESSIONIST MOVEMENTS

### (I) PAPUA (IRIAN JAYA)

#### **Free Papua Movement (Organisasi Papua Merdeka, OPM)**

This movement grew out of numerous organizations established by Papuans to oppose Indonesian rule during the years following the assumption of Indonesian control of Papua (formerly Dutch New Guinea and known as West Irian until 1973, and then Irian Jaya until 2001) in October 1962. Indonesia's move into the territory was sanctioned under the terms of a 1962 agreement negotiated in New York between the governments of Indonesia and the Netherlands under the auspices of the UN Secretary-General. Papua's incorporation into Indonesia was eventually legitimated by an "Act of Free Choice" formally monitored and approved by the UN in 1969. The Indonesian authorities regarded most of the original leaders of the movement as pro-Dutch. Most of them had some Dutch education and a number had been members of the colonial police and Papuan Volunteers Corps and had some military training and experience.

In 1971, an OPM group based in Biak formed a "Provisional Revolutionary Government of West Papua New Guinea" and proclaimed the independence of the territory. The provisional government had as its president "Brigadier-General" Seth Rumkorem (a former major in the Indonesian army). The movement also established a "National Liberation Army" (*Tentara Pembebasan Nasional*, TPN) with a small number of combatants.

Other OPM groups endorsed Rumkorem's declaration of independence and the "Provisional Government" established headquarters in the Netherlands and information offices in Dakar (Senegal) and Stockholm. By the mid-1970s the movement claimed to control a number of "liberated zones" in Papua and to possess an armed force of 10,000, although

most observers believed the number to be far smaller. Among the areas of greatest OPM strength was the jungle border between Papua and Papua New Guinea (PNG), with the territory of that country providing some degree of sanctuary for OPM combatants.

In 1976 there was a split in the leadership of the OPM between Rumkorem and Jacob H. Prai, a former law student. In 1977 Rumkorem was succeeded by Jacob Prai as president of the "Provisional Government", which included 10 persons formerly resident in Papua but currently holding either PNG citizenship or residence permits.

A series of rebellions took place against Indonesian rule in April-May 1977 in the Baliem Valley and the Carstenz Mountain Range in the Central Highlands. These were crushed by Indonesian troops after six weeks of fighting. In April 1978 it was reported from PNG that over 5,000 guerrillas and civilians, as well as 3,500 Indonesians, had been killed in fighting in Papua since the beginning of 1976, although all such figures are widely contested. The Indonesian government, however, described this fighting as tribal war and consistently referred to OPM guerrillas as "wild gangs".

In June-July 1978 Indonesian military activity increased greatly along Papua's border with Papua New Guinea, following an ambush by OPM units of an Indonesian helicopter carrying senior military and civilian personnel, seven of whom the OPM seized as hostages. The Indonesian counter-action was informally supported by the Papua New Guinea Defence Forces. As a result of the 1977-78 violence, about 3,000 Papuans crossed the border into PNG. The government of that country had agreed in January 1977 that it would not allow its territory to be used as a base for incursions into Papua by subversive elements or "dissidents."

In September 1978 J. Prai and his "defence minister" (Otto Ondawame) were arrested as illegal immigrants in PNG and subsequently sentenced to imprisonment; they later obtained sanctuary in Sweden. Rumkorem, describing himself as "President" of the "Republic of West Papua", reappeared in Rabaul (PNG) in September 1982, and was arrested for illegal entry.

Following another attempted uprising in early 1984, which included flag-raising in the Papuan capital, Jayapura, another flood of refugees crossed the border into PNG. In July 1984 the PNG government dispatched troops into the border area in an attempt to quell OPM activity. In a new border agreement signed on Oct. 29, 1984, the Indonesian government gave a written assurance that reprisals would not be taken against some 10,000 refugees returning to Indonesia. The PNG government had insisted that any Indonesian refugees would be repatriated provided that the Indonesian government gave an assurance of their future well-being. It also asserted that it "would not drive out" OPM rebels.

During the 1980s and 1990s, the OPM continued to attempt to generate international support. An OPM delegation attended a "world conference of liberation movements" in Libya in March 1986, and an OPM official said on May 11, 1987, that the movement had turned to Libya for support after failing to win regional backing. Libya was reported to be offering financial assistance and training.

An International OPM Office was established on Feb. 1,

1992, in Malmö, Sweden by Jacob Prai, aiming to restructure the organization. The Office continued international lobbying efforts on behalf of the movement, with some limited success. For example, the Irish Parliament on Jan. 31, 1996, condemned human rights abuses in Papua and called for the issue of Papua to be reconsidered by the UN Committee on Decolonization. In March 1996 the European Parliament called for an international fact-finding team to be sent to Papua.

During the 1980s and 1990s, sporadic attacks by Papuan armed groups on Indonesian military outposts, mining facilities and other targets were attributed to the OPM. The best-publicized such operation occurred in July 1996 when an OPM group under Kelly Kwalik abducted for four months 12 members of a joint European-Indonesian scientific expedition. When Indonesian special forces (*Kopassus*) attempted to release the hostages, two Indonesian members of the expedition were killed.

By the late 1990s, however, it remained very difficult to assess OPM strength. Most observers agreed that the OPM was very weak as a military force, comprising a number of small armed groups, each based in discrete geographical areas and on different ethno-linguistic groups, with minimal coordination between them. Nevertheless, the OPM retained an exiled leadership and appeared to have considerable support in the Papuan population, especially in remote rural areas. It came to embody the ideal of independence for many Papuans who were never associated with it as an organization.

In the years that followed the resignation of President Suharto, OPM groups still mounted occasional armed operations. For example, in January 2001 a group under William Onde abducted 13 employees of a South Korean timber company based in Asiki area in Merauke. In late September and early October of the same year, a group of OPM combatants occupied the airfield at Ilaga for several days before being driven away by security forces. At this time, the Indonesian military commander for Papua, Mahidin Simbolon, claimed that the organization had about 100 members and 12 firearms. OPM commanders still claimed that the movement had tens of thousands of followers.

### **Papuan Council Presidium (Presidium Dewan Papua, PDP)**

The resignation of President Suharto on May 21, 1998, was followed in July 1998 by a series of flag-raising and other public demonstrations in favour of independence in Jayapura, Sorong, Wamena and Biak. These events marked the beginning of a shift in focus of secessionist energies away from the OPM and the guerrilla struggle, toward a new urban-based pro-independence movement. On Feb. 26, 1999, a team of one hundred Papuan leaders met with Indonesia's President Habibie and shocked him by declaring their support for independence. The "team 100" subsequently organized a series of events including a raising of the Papuan nationalist "Morning Star" flag in Jayapura on Dec. 1, 1999, and a Papuan "Mass Consultation" (*Mubes*) on Feb. 23-26, 2000. The *Mubes* established a 26-member Papuan Council Presidium (PDP). The PDP subsequently emerged as the chief public voice of Papuan nationalism in the terri-

tory.

The PDP organized a second Papuan Congress (*Kongres Papua*) on May 29-June 4, 2000, which was attended by approximately three thousand representatives from different social sectors and districts, and including delegates from the exiled leadership of the OPM (although there was tension between the OPM and PDP over which group embodied Papuan aspirations and over the question of armed struggle versus non-violence). The congress produced a resolution which avoided a direct "declaration of independence", asserting instead that "Papua" had been independent and sovereign since Dec. 1, 1961 (a date viewed by Papuan nationalists as marking an earlier "declaration of independence" from the Dutch). The congress also rejected the New York Agreement and "Act of Free Choice" by which Papua was integrated into Indonesia. At this congress, Theys Eluay, a traditional leader from Sentani and former member of the provincial legislature, effectively appointed himself as "supreme leader" of the Papuan nation.

In the aftermath of the congress, Indonesian security forces resumed a harder line against flag-raising and other expressions of support for Papuan independence. On Oct. 6, 2000, about 30 people were killed in clashes after the police attempted to lower the Morning Star flags flying in Wamena (Central Highlands). In November 2000 Theys Eluay along with Thaha Al Hamid, the general secretary of the PDP, was detained and charged with treason. Along with three other PDP members he was put on trial in Jayapura in mid-2001. On Nov. 10, before the court had reached its decision, Theys Eluay was abducted and murdered on his way home after attending a function at the *Kopassus* (Indonesian Special Forces) base at Skow Sae, southeast of Jayapura. About 10,000 people attended Theys Eluay's funeral on Nov. 17, while about 1,000 attended the by now annual commemorations of Papua's so-called 1961 "proclamation of independence" at Eluay's home on Dec. 1, 2001.

On April 21, 2003, an Indonesian military tribunal sentenced seven members of the *Kopassus* to jail sentences of between two and three-and-a-half years for the murder of Eluay.

## **(II) ACEH**

### **Free Aceh Movement (Gerakan Aceh Merdeka, GAM)**

Officially called the **Acheh-Sumatra National Liberation Front (ASNLF)**, this organization is more commonly known in Indonesia and internationally by its Indonesian language acronym GAM. GAM's aim is the independence of Aceh, a territory with a population of some 4 million at the northern tip of the island of Sumatra.

GAM was founded in 1976 by Dr Hasan Muhammad di Tiro, who issued a "re-declaration of Acehnese sovereignty" on Dec. 4 of that year. This declaration declared Aceh "free and independent from all political control of the foreign regime of Jakarta and the alien people of the island of Java". It also claimed that Acehnese independence was a legal continuation of the sovereign power of the sultanate of Aceh, which had been invaded by the Dutch in 1873. In the GAM view, Aceh was never legally incorporated into the Netherlands East Indies, so that the Indonesian claim to



sovereignty over Aceh (as the successor state to the old colonial entity) was also invalid. Hasan di Tiro is a descendant of a famous Muslim scholar who played a leading role in the 19th century struggle against the Dutch. On the basis of this ancestry, he claims to be the forty-first head of state of Aceh.

When it was established GAM drew on a core group of young intellectuals and supporters from villages, especially in the Pidie and North Aceh districts. The Indonesian army launched a campaign to eradicate the movement, successfully restricting it to Aceh's mountainous interior. By 1982 GAM had been destroyed as an effective military force and several of its core leaders had been killed or captured. In 1980 there were reports that Hasan di Tiro had been killed in October of that year but it subsequently emerged that he had left Aceh for exile, eventually establishing himself in Sweden. Several other founding members of GAM including "Health Minister" Dr Zaini Abdullah and "Education Minister" Dr Husaini Hassan followed him there.

In its early years, GAM leaders emphasized the Islamic character of the movement, declaring that they aimed to establish an Islamic state in Aceh. Between 1986 and 1990 approximately 2,000 GAM members traveled to Libya where they received military training. For some time in the late 1980s Hasan di Tiro acted as the chairman of the political committee of the Libyan-based "Mathaba Against Imperialism, Racism, Zionism and Fascism".

### **Military Resurgence of GAM**

A series of armed attacks on policemen and some police and military posts in the first half of 1989 marked the re-emergence of GAM, this time as a more serious military force. The unrest was centered along the East coast, especially in the Pidie, North Aceh (Lhokseumawe) and East Aceh (Langsa) districts. The Indonesian military responded by declaring a "Red Net" counter-insurgency operation, in which a large number of civilians were killed (most estimates put the number at approximately 3,000), mostly in 1990-92.

While military operations circumscribed GAM activities inside Aceh, the organization's leaders continued to be active in exile. For example, Hasan Tiro appeared before the UN Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities in August 1991. GAM also developed a significant presence among Acehnese refugees in Malaysia, many of whom were forcibly repatriated to Indonesia in 1997.

In 1997 Hasan Tiro suffered a stroke (he later made a partial recovery) and a split became apparent in the leadership of the organization in Sweden, with a breakaway group based around Dr Husaini Hassan challenging another led by Zaini Abdullah and "State Minister" Malik Mahmud, who remained closer to Hasan Tiro. In June 2000, Don Zulfahri, a leader associated with the breakaway group, was shot dead in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The Husaini Hassan group accused Malik Mahmud of responsibility.

After the resignation of President Suharto, the central government apologized for human rights abuses in Aceh and promised to remove special troops assigned there. From the

third quarter of 1998, GAM rapidly asserted a visible presence, holding public meetings in rural areas and small towns, and recruiting openly. The geographical spread of GAM activities was much greater than in previous periods of unrest, involving a considerable presence in the districts of Greater, Central, West and South Aceh. A series of armed clashes occurred in November-December 1998 and accelerated in pace and intensity thereafter. In June 1999 GAM called for a boycott of the Indonesian national elections, resulting in a very low voter turnout in Aceh of approximately 30 per cent of eligible voters.

From mid-1999, it became apparent that GAM controlled a large part of Aceh's rural hinterland, and a GAM administration began to emerge. In some areas, the organization issued identity cards and certificates for land sales, and its officials presided over marriage ceremonies. In 1999, GAM called for mass strikes in Aceh timed to coincide with Indonesia's independence day (Aug. 17) and the commemoration of the its own "re-declaration" of independence (Dec. 4). These resulted in a cessation of most transportation, commercial and other public activities in the province. Similar strike calls in 2000 and 2001 were also largely effective. In December 2000 there were reports that GAM held ceremonies commemorating its independence re-declaration in over thirty locations through the province.

### **Peace Talks with Government**

In early 2000, the Indonesian government under President Abdurrahman Wahid initiated negotiations with the exiled leadership of GAM. These talks were viewed as a diplomatic victory by GAM leaders, who had for some years been endeavouring to attain the support of major Western powers, including by de-emphasising the Islamic element in GAM's program. The talks were facilitated by the Geneva-based Henry Dunant Centre and produced a "humanitarian pause" designed to halt armed conflict in the territory. This came into effect on June 2, 2000. Although negotiations continued and the "pause" was extended several times, it failed to prevent a resumption of armed conflict, which escalated especially rapidly in early 2001. The Indonesian military and police were responsible for most offensive actions, although GAM combatants also launched numerous assaults on Indonesian security forces. In April 2001 President Abdurrahman Wahid issued a presidential instruction endorsing "limited military operations" in the province. In July 2001 Indonesian police arrested and temporarily detained six members of GAM's negotiating team for the peace process in Banda Aceh. In 2001 an estimated 1700 persons were killed in the territory.

On Jan. 22, 2002, the Indonesian military achieved a significant military and propaganda victory when it killed the Commander of the GAM Armed Forces, Tengku Abdullah Syafi'ie. He was replaced by his Deputy, Muza-kkir Manaf, a recipient of military training in Libya in the 1980s.

Most estimates of GAM's strength in 1999-2002 put the number of combatants at approximately 3,000, although not all of these were believed to be equipped with modern weapons. In April 2001, the Commander of the Indonesian

Armed Forces estimated GAM's armed strength at approximately 1,000. In February 2002, the local Indonesian military commander estimated that GAM had between seven and 10 members in most villages in Aceh, an estimate which would put total GAM membership at many thousands. In July 2002, the Indonesian military claimed that 950 GAM combatants had been killed over the preceding 15 months. GAM spokespersons disputed this figure.

In the sixth and seventh rounds of negotiations in Geneva in February and May 2002, GAM accepted that Indonesia's "special autonomy" laws for Aceh would be a "starting point" in the search for a peaceful resolution to the conflict, although leaders of the organization continued to insist that they would not compromise on their ultimate goal of Acehnese independence. On Dec. 6, 2002, the two sides signed a peace agreement in Geneva providing for a complete cessation of hostilities and allowing for a limited number of international monitors. The agreement also provided for free elections in the territory, in which it was implied GAM would be allowed to participate, but was seen as facing opposition from within the Indonesian military. In the following months the offices of the international monitors were subject to a series of attacks or threats which were generally linked to elements of the security forces.

#### **Renewed Military Offensive**

On May 18, 2003, following the collapse of further talks in Tokyo, co-chaired by the USA, Japan and EU, President Megawati declared a state of martial law throughout Aceh. Military sources stated that 50,000 troops would be used to mop up GAM's membership and that civilian casualties would be kept to a minimum. Military sources claimed in July 2003 that 500 members of GAM had been killed in the first two months of the operation.

#### **Aceh Referendum Information Centre (Sentral Informasi Referendum Aceh, SIRA)**

*Leader: Muhammad Nazar*

This organization was established at the beginning of 1999 following a congress of Acehnese youth and students from the province, other parts of Indonesia, and overseas, held in Banda Aceh. SIRA denies that it is secessionist or that its goal is independence. However, it campaigns for a UN-supervised referendum for the Acehnese population to decide whether Aceh should remain part of Indonesia or become independent, and as such has been labeled separatist by Indonesian authorities. SIRA describes the referendum option as a means to resolve the conflict in Aceh in a peaceful and democratic manner. In November 1999, shortly after the independence referendum in East Timor, SIRA was the main organizer of a series of pro-referendum rallies throughout Aceh. These culminated with a massive rally in Banda Aceh on Nov. 8, which its organizers claim was attended by upwards of 500,000 people. In November 2000, SIRA organized another large pro-referendum rally in Banda Aceh. Indonesian security forces fired on vehicles and boats carrying people trying to reach the rally, reportedly killing several dozen. In the same month, the leader of SIRA, Muhammad Nazar, was arrested and charged under "hatred spread-

ing" provisions of Indonesia's criminal code. Although he rejected the authority of the Indonesian court to try him, he was convicted and sentenced to ten months imprisonment. In January 2002, the head of SIRA's Jakarta "embassy" was sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment under the same provisions.

### **(III) MALUKU (MOLUCCAS)**

#### **Maluku Sovereignty Front (Front Kedaulatan Maluku FKM)**

*Leader: Dr Alexander Manuputty*

In January 1999, communal conflict between Muslims and Christians broke out in the capital of Indonesia's eastern Maluku (Moluccas) province, Ambon. In the following months and years, conditions in the province at times resembled all-out war, resulting in approximately 8,000-9,000 deaths in 1999-2000, with 700,000 displaced. In the midst of this conflict, the FKM was formed on June 15, 2000, although its existence was not publicized until later in that year. The organization aspired to assert the "sovereignty" of Maluku, which, in its view, had been illegally annexed by the Indonesian republic. Although claiming to be non-sectarian, almost all supporters of FKM were from the Christian community. The organization also claimed an association with the **RMS (Republic of South Maluku)**, a predominantly Christian movement which had organized a short-lived secessionist revolt against the Indonesian republic in 1950. (South Moluccans brought to the Netherlands in 1951 had also established a movement to support the demand for independence, carrying out a series of actions in the Netherlands in the 1970s – see Netherlands entry).

On April 25, 2001, coinciding with the anniversary of the proclamation of the RMS in 1950, the FKM held a ceremony at the home of its founder and leader, Dr Alexander Hermanus Manuputty, at which the RMS flag was raised. A week previously the Governor of Maluku, Saleh Latuconsina, had issued a decree banning the activities of the organization. Dr Manuputty was subsequently arrested and convicted on charges of inciting hatred of the government, although he was later released following an appeal to the Administrative Court. In April 2002, before another planned flag-raising ceremony, he was arrested again and charged with sedition.

### **ISLAMIST MOVEMENTS**

The Suharto government proscribed organizations which aimed to establish an Islamic state in Indonesia. Tensions between the government and Islamic organizations became especially acute after the government insisted in the early 1980s that all societal organizations adopt Pancasila (the essentially secular state ideology) as their sole "ideological foundation". A series of violent clashes (such as a massacre of Muslim civilians in the Tanjung Priok port-district of Jakarta in September 1984) and bombings resulted. The Indonesian government claimed that members of a group called the Command Warriors of Allah were responsible for clashes with the security forces in Lampung province in Sumatra in early February 1989, although



subsequent reports indicated that the disturbances were linked to land disputes and other local issues. Up to 100 people were estimated to have been killed after the army attacked the group's base. During 1989 and 1990 trials of alleged Muslim extremists were held in Sumatra, Jakarta and West Nusa Tenggara on charges of conspiracy to replace Pancasila.

In the more liberal political conditions that followed the resignation of President Suharto in 1998, groups which openly expressed Islamist goals were no longer proscribed. Several political parties which aimed to amend the constitution so as to make Islamic shariah law binding for all Muslims contested the 1999 general elections. These included the United Development Party (*Partai Persatuan Pembangunan*, PPP), a Suharto-era party which began to assert a more openly Islamist political agenda, the newly-formed Star and Crescent Party (*Partai Bulan Bintang*) and the Justice Party (*Partai Keadilan*). These parties respectively attained 10.7, 1.9 and 1.4 per cent of the popular vote.

After 1998, several groups also emerged which espoused radical Islamic agendas and were associated with violent incidents. There was also a series of bombings and attacks on churches, most of which were poorly explained, but some of which were perpetrated by Islamic groups.

### **Laskar Jihad**

One Islamist group is the *Laskar Jihad*, or Jihad Force. This organization is linked to the FKAJ (Sunni Communication Forum), a body which was established in 1999 with the aim of securing the implementation of Islamic law in Indonesia. The group's founder was Ja'far Umar Thalib, a fiery Islamic preacher of part-Arabic descent who in the 1980s spent several years fighting as part of the anti-Soviet mujahadin in Afghanistan. Thalib claimed on the group's website that he met with Osama bin Laden in Afghanistan in 1987, but that he viewed the *Al-Qaeda* leader's views as heretical, partly because of the latter's support for rebellion against a legitimate Islamic state in Saudi Arabia. He has publicly denied accusations that his organization has received funding from *Al-Qaeda*.

*Laskar Jihad* was established on Jan. 30, 2000, in response to the violence between Christians and Muslims in Maluku province (see above). The group established a paramilitary training camp in West Java and in May 2000 sent 2,000-3,000 volunteer fighters to Maluku, where they obtained modern weapons and actively participated in the violent conflict. Subsequent estimates put the group's numbers at between 3,000 and 10,000, and its presence was widely viewed as tipping the balance of conflict in favour of the Muslim side. There were many reports in the Indonesian and international press that the group received covert support from elements in the Indonesian military.

Ja'far Umar Thalib stated that the organization aimed to remove President Abdurrahman Wahid, who was viewed as having an anti-Islamic agenda, from office. In late 2001 it was also reported that *Laskar Jihad* had sent several hundred fighters to Poso, another site of Christian-Muslim violence in the central part of the island of Sulawesi.

In March 2001 Ja'far Umar Thalib officiated at the stoning to death in Maluku of a *Laskar Jihad* member who had admitted to committing adultery. He was arrested and detained temporarily. Thalib was arrested again on May 4, 2002, on charges linked to an April 28 attack on a Christian village, where at least 12 persons were killed. In October 2002, immediately after the Bali bombing (see below) and with signs of a government crackdown on extremist groups, Ja'far announced the disbanding of *Laskar Jihad* (he claimed that the decision was taken some days before the bombing). He explained that the decision had been taken because some members of the group had deviated from their original ideological principles and were being influenced by political considerations. It was also made, he added, in consultation with clerics in Medinah and Mecca. Some commentators suggested that there was evidence that the organization had been experiencing internal conflict, and it may have lost support from its military or other sponsors.

### **Defenders of Islam Front (Front Pembela Islam, FPI)**

Another Islamist group which aims to secure implementation of Islamic law and which has been associated with violence is the Defenders of Islam Front (*Front Pembela Islam*, FPI), which was established in August 1998 and by late 2001 claimed branches in 22 provinces. FPI is headed by Habib Muhammad Rizieq Syihab. From the final months of 1998, FPI organized a series of well-publicized and frequently violent raids on bars, casinos, brothels and other "places of vice" in Jakarta and other cities which it accused of being contrary to Islamic values. Some press commentators suggested, however, that the organization partly functioned as a protection racket and was used to extort money from the businesses targeted. In October 2001 police in Jakarta violently dispersed a demonstration organized by the group in protest at the US bombing campaign in Afghanistan and Syihab was detained temporarily. In October 2002 he was arrested and charged with incitement in connection with attacks the group had made on entertainment venues in Jakarta earlier in the month. One month later the FPI Central Leadership Council announced that the group was "freezing" and demobilizing its militia throughout the country.

### **Darul Islam and Jemaah Islamiah**

More shadowy groups include *Darul Islam* (Abode of Islam), an underground movement which claims affinity with a large insurgent movement of the 1950s which aimed to establish an Islamic state in Indonesia (the group is sometimes also known as **NII**, *Negara Islam Indonesia*, Islamic State of Indonesia). In November 2001, an Acehnese Islamic activist called Al Chaidar, who described himself as a spokesperson for the movement, stated publicly that the *Darul Islam* was split into 14 factions, some of which engaged in bombings and other violent acts with support from elements of the Indonesian military. In April 2002, police arrested 17 individuals whom they accused of attending a secret NII meeting in Bandung, West Java.

Following a series of arrests in Singapore in late 2001, the Singapore authorities announced the uncovering of *Jemaah Islamiah*, a trans-national terrorist group which they

claimed aimed to establish an Islamic state uniting Malaysia, Indonesia and the Islamic parts of the southern Philippines. The Singapore authorities also claimed that the organization was linked to *Al-Qaeda* and had planned, or been responsible for, bombings and other terrorist acts in Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines and Indonesia. They also said that the leader of the organization was Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, an Islamic preacher based in Central Java and head of the Indonesian Mujahidin Council (MMI). Ba'asyir denied the claims and the Indonesian police refused to arrest him, citing lack of evidence of any wrongdoing.

Subsequent investigations, however, indicated that the term "Jemaah Islamiyah", or "Islamic community", had been used by Ba'asyir and another Javanese cleric, Abdullah Sungkar (who died in 1999), from as early as the 1970s. At this time, both men were advocates of an Islamic state in Indonesia and had links with *Darul Islam* and a loose network of extremist Islamic activists, some of whose members engaged in violent acts. The two were tried and sentenced for subversion in 1982, although while their cases were being appealed they fled to Malaysia. During exile in Malaysia, these men established an Islamic school and continued to cultivate a secretive network of activists who aimed to establish an Islamic state. Some reports suggest that Sungkar, or perhaps both men, established *Jemaah Islamiyah* as a formal, but secret and cell-based, organization dedicated to jihad in the mid-1980s (or the early 1990s). Other analysts suggest that *Jemaah Islamiyah* remained only a loose network. It is clear, however, that some associated with the network participated in the jihad in Afghanistan in the 1990s, and while there developed links with *Al-Qaeda* and learned bomb-making and other skills.

On Oct. 12, 2002, bombs exploded in two bars in the entertainment district of Kuta, Bali. 188 persons were killed, most of them Australians and other foreign tourists. Police investigations rapidly uncovered a network responsible for the attacks, leading to the arrest of 15 men by January 2003. All of those arrested were Indonesians and had a history of links to Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, either in Indonesia or Malaysia. Police claimed also to find a document in a house used as a hiding place by some of the suspects detailing the organizational structure of the *Jemaah Islamiyah* network in the country. Eventually, the police officially declared that *Jemmah Islamiyah* had been responsible for the attack. Abu Bakar Ba'asyir was detained by the police in connection with an earlier series of bombings against churches and priests at Christmas 2000 and on April 14, 2003, was indicted on charges of treason in connection with the Christmas 2000 bombings and another incident, although he was not charged in connection with Bali. On April 23, the Indonesian police arrested Abu Rusdan, who was described in the press as being a hardliner who had emerged as the new spiritual leader of *Jemaah Islamiyah* following Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's arrest. In August 2003, Riduan Isamuddin, better known as Hambali, a *Jemaah Islamiyah* figure accused of being behind the Bali bombing and other attacks, was arrested in Thailand.

On Sept. 2, 2003, Ba'asyir was sentenced by an Indonesian court for immigration offences and association with acts of treason but the court found it unproven that he was the leader of *Jemaah Islamiyah* or was connected to the Bali

bombing. On Sept. 4, Hamzah Haz, the Indonesian Vice-President and leader of the Islamic United Development Party, defended his previous ties to Ba'asyir, calling the USA the "king of terrorists".

## OTHER MOVEMENTS

### Communist Party of Indonesia (Partai Komunis Indonesia, PKI)

Founded in May 1920, the PKI was involved in an unsuccessful revolt against Dutch rule (in the Netherlands East Indies) in 1926-27, whereafter it went underground. In the 1930s it took part in the establishment of an anti-fascist front which during World War II opposed the invading Japanese forces. After the proclamation of Indonesia's national independence on Aug. 17, 1945, the PKI took part in the government but in September 1948 the movement was involved in armed clashes with opposing Republican forces in and around the East Javanese town of Madiun, and was effectively suppressed. After the 1949 transfer of sovereignty the PKI was re-constituted, and in elections in 1955 it became one of the country's four major parties. In local elections held in 1956 it polled the greatest number of votes.

In subsequent years there was discussion on strategy within the party, whose seventh congress held in 1962 advanced the thesis that "the national interest is above class interest" (to some extent reflecting the strongly nationalist Marxism espoused by President Sukarno). By the early 1960s, the PKI claimed some three million members, making it the third-largest communist party in the world (after the Soviet Union and China). In 1965 party leaders endorsed the "30th September Movement" by a group of young army officers who staged a coup to prevent what they claimed was a planned right-wing coup. The young officers' attempt was defeated, however, and right-wing generals led by then Maj.-Gen. Suharto accused the PKI of masterminding the 30th September Movement. In the subsequent military-led campaign to eliminate the PKI and its support base at least 500,000 persons were killed and 700,000 arrested, according to Amnesty International.

Sporadic armed resistance by PKI groups was largely eliminated by the early 1970s. However, some statements were released which claimed that the PKI had reconstituted itself. A pro-Moscow wing defined its position in three documents released in 1966, 1969 and 1975, which outlined a strategy of creating a front of national unity and eventually an "anti-imperialist, democratic government as the prelude to advancing to socialism". For its part, a pro-Chinese wing issued a statement on the 60th anniversary of the party in May 1980 declaring its support for an Indonesian application of "Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong thought". Between the 1970s and 1990s, however, there was little evidence that the PKI was successfully re-organizing itself on an underground basis.

In no small measure this was due to the continued high level of repression visited upon former adherents of the party. In October 1977 Amnesty International estimated that there were at least 55,000 and probably about 100,000 political prisoners (known as tapols), many of them having been held without trial since 1965. By December 1979 the gov-

ernment claimed to have released all political detainees except 61 “category A” prisoners described as hard-core communists and those directly involved in the 30th September Movement. Over the following decade, some of the remaining category A detainees were executed. Released PKI detainees, meanwhile, continued to be monitored by security agencies and were prevented from voting in national elections. They and their relatives were banned from government employment.

After the resignation of President Suharto in May 1998, President Habibie began to issue amnesties for political prisoners. The final ten prisoners detained in connection with PKI membership and/or alleged involvement in the 30th September movement, by now all elderly men, were released in 1999. In early 2000 President Abdurrahman Wahid proposed repealing Provisional People’s Consultative Assembly Decree No. 25 of 1966 which confirmed an earlier ban on the PKI and outlawed the propagation of Marxism-Leninism. The proposal was greeted with outrage from Islamic organizations, the army and other groups, and it was shelved.

In the more democratic political conditions since 1998 some associations and informal networks of former PKI members and detainees have been established. Most of these, however, have attempted to document and publicise the killings of 1965 and to campaign for the rights of former detainees. There have been no reports of open attempts to re-establish the PKI.

### **People’s Democratic Party (Partai Rakyat Demokratik, PRD)**

In the late 1980s and early 1990s several student groups emerged on campuses in Java and elsewhere which were opposed to the government of President Suharto. These groups organized protests on a diverse range of issues, including land disputes, freedom of organization and anti-militarism. Some of the most leftist of these students eventually formed, in May 1994, the PRD (*Persatuan Rakyat Demokratik*, People’s Democratic Union) which attempted to organize students, workers, peasants and other social groups in a struggle for democratic change. In July 1996, in the midst of widespread social unrest caused by the government’s attempts to remove Megawati Sukarnoputri from the leadership of the officially-recognized PDI, the PRD turned itself into a party (*Partai Rakyat Demokratik*). It also released a manifesto which called for the overthrow of the Suharto government and its replacement by a “multi-party popular democracy” led by a “popular democratic coalition”. Government officials accused the organization of masterminding a riot in Jakarta on July 27, which was sparked by a violent military-led takeover of the PDI national headquarters. PRD members went into hiding, though several dozen were eventually arrested. Ultimately 14 of them were tried in late 1996 and early 1997 under anti-subversion provisions, eventually receiving prison terms of between 18

months and 13 years. Although the organization remained small (having at most several hundred members), it reorganized itself underground and exercised some influence in labour and student unrest in subsequent years. In the 1999 general elections which followed the resignation of President Suharto, the PRD registered as a legal party but attained only some 79,000 votes (approx. 0.07 per cent of the total). Six leaders of the organization who remained in detention, including its general chairperson, Budiman Sudjatmiko, were released under a special amnesty granted by President Abdurrahman Wahid in December 1999. The organization’s members subsequently were active in various anti-establishment movements, and several were detained for short periods. In July 2002 the PRD called for the replacement of the Megawati Sukarnoputri government with a “government of the poor”.

### **Student activist groups**

Between February and May 1998 a wave of very large student protests against the Suharto government swept across Indonesian campuses. This movement gave birth to many dozens of new student protest organizations, including some which were militantly anti-government. Many of these groups dissolved within months of the resignation of President Suharto, while others such as the Jakarta-based groups Forkot (Forum Kota, City Forum), and Famred (Forum Aksi Mahasiswa untuk Reformasi dan Demokrasi, Student Action Forum for Reform and Democracy) continued to organize demonstrations, the largest such occurring during the November 1998 special session of the People’s Consultative Assembly, when many tens of thousands of people took to the streets of Jakarta. At this time, Forkot, Famred and similar groups called for the replacement of the Habibie government by a “presidium”, “transitional government” or a “people’s council”. By 2002 these groups, too, had dwindled in size and demonstrations they organized generally attracted at most several hundred participants, who sometimes still engaged in violent clashes with security forces.

The most significant Islamic student organization formed during the 1998 anti-Suharto movement is the Indonesian Muslim Students’ Action Front (*Kesatuan Aksi Mahasiswa Muslim Indonesia*, KAMMI). This was established in late March 1998 at a meeting in Malang, East Java, and by 2002 it continued to organize large demonstrations against corruption, political involvement by the military and similar issues.

*Edward Aspinall*

# Iran

**Capital:** Tehran

**Population:** 66.1 m

Iran was a monarchy until 1979, when Muhammad Reza Shah Pahlavi was overthrown by an alliance of liberal, leftist and Shiite Islamic fundamentalist opposition activists, the last group being led by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and the dominant force. Iran became an Islamic Republic and *Velayat e faqih* (Rule of Jurist) was imposed, with Khomeini as the Supreme Leader (Wali Faqih) and guiding force of the Islamic revolution.

Ayatollah Khomeini died on June 3, 1989. The last two years of his life were marked by a fierce factional struggle between “radicals” and “moderates” within the ruling clergy. The radical Hojatoleslam Mehdi Hashemi, head of the World Organization of Islamic Liberation Movements, was executed on Sept. 28, 1987, after being convicted of murder, plotting to establish a more radical Islamic regime, and planning explosions in Mecca during the hajj. Hashemi was an associate of Khomeini’s nominated successor, Ayatollah Hossein Ali Montazeri. Many hundreds of Montazeri supporters were executed; in January 1989, Amnesty International claimed that there had been 5,000 executions over the previous three years, including 2,500 in the latter half of 1988.

Following Khomeini’s death (before which he had dismissed Montazeri as his successor) the Assembly of Experts (a body of clerics, elected by universal suffrage) chose Ayatollah Sayed Ali Khamenei to succeed him as Faqih, a position he continues to hold (the position being held for life). Khamenei is regarded as a bulwark of Islamic fundamentalist conservatism. The head of government is the President, who is elected by universal suffrage every four years. The first President, Abol Hassan Bani-Sadr, a French-trained intellectual, was elected in 1980 and forced into exile in 1981. Constitutional amendments in July 1989, following the death of Ayatollah Khomeini, abolished the post of Prime Minister, and strengthened the role of the President vis-à-vis the Faqih. After Khomeini’s death, Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani was elected President, being succeeded by Mohammad Khatami, who was first elected with 69% of the vote in 1997 and was re-elected with 77% of the vote in June 2001.

There is a 290-member unicameral Islamic Consultative Assembly (Majlis-e-Shoura-e-Islami), elected every four years (most recently in 2000) by direct universal suffrage on a non-party basis. The Majlis approves the appointment of members of the Council of Ministers. The members of the Majlis are elected by majority vote in two rounds. A candidate must win at least one-third of the votes cast to be elected in the first round and a simple majority in the second round. The Majlis elects six members to the Council of Constitu-

tional Guardians and an additional six are appointed by the President. The Council of Constitutional Guardians is responsible for assuring that legislation passed is compatible with Islam and is controlled by conservative supporters of Khamenei. It also supervises elections for the Assembly of Experts, the President and the Majlis.

Legislation adopted in 1981 provides for the licensing of political parties and societies. However, the Islamic Republican Party, with which most deputies were associated, was abolished by Ayatollah Khomeini in June 1987. Numerous licenses have been granted but the development of formal parties is rudimentary with only relatively loose societies and associations.

The 1980s were dominated by the conflict between different interpretations of Islam and also by the war with Iraq (1980-88) in which Iran suffered immense losses caused by the use of “human wave” assaults of poorly trained massed infantry, designed to capitalize on Iran’s numerical advantage. On July 18 1988 Iran unconditionally accepted UN Resolution 598 calling for a ceasefire and peace talks, which a year earlier it had rejected.

Since 1997, though agreeing on *Velayat e faqih*, the Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei and the President, Mohammad Khatami, have shown different opinions on the question of relations with the West, Khatami being seen as favouring a more amicable relationship. Notwithstanding his heavy victories in successive presidential elections, Khatami has faced powerfully entrenched fundamentalist forces. The October 1998 elections to the Assembly of Experts demonstrated the victory of religious hardliners although Khatami’s position was seen as strengthened by the 2000 elections to the Majlis. The Islamic Iran Participation Front (*Djeb e Mosharekat e Eslami*), headed by Mohammad Reza Khatami, brother of the President, is the biggest reformist bloc in the Majlis, wanting to establish democracy in the framework of Islam on *Velayat e faqih*. The Front has 130 representatives in the Majlis and five ministries in the government.

Khatami’s position as President has been consistently undermined by his opponents, with Ayatollah Khamenei and former President Rafsanjani constituting rival centres of power. On March 2, 1997, “moderate” students in favour of Khatami protested in front of Tehran University and were violently crushed. Many of them were arrested. During the first term of Khatami’s presidency, many of his supporters were arrested, including Gholam-Hossein Karbastchi, the mayor of Tehran. Many newspapers were also shut like “Society” (*Djamee*) and “Daily Information” (*Gozarash e*



*Rouz*). Many journalists were also arrested and put in jail. Some liberalization was apparent by 2002, with numerous new publications having been licensed, these openly discussing issues such as relations with the West and the division of Church and State. However, constant attacks continued to be made by the courts, including on those close to Khatami, several of whose supporters were imprisoned. Further closures of liberal-inclined newspapers and arrests of journalists took place in May 2002 following critical remarks by Ayatollah Khamenei.

In spite of the President's statements stressing the need of an "Islamic civil society", freedom of speech has not been achieved. Public executions, stoning and torture are continuing. Discrimination and persecution of religious minorities, like the Bahais, has not stopped since 1979.

Ayatollah Montazeri was arrested in November 1997 after questioning Ayatollah Khamenei's religious authority and his assumption of wide-ranging powers. Montazeri was released from house arrest in January 2003, after five years' detention. He immediately condemned the use of the revolutionary court and special clerical court to carry out political trials. About one dozen grand ayatollahs, senior religious leaders, have refused to endorse the authority of Khamenei as supreme leader.

The issue of dissent in Iran achieved renewed prominence in 2003, following the overthrow of Saddam Hussein in Iraq. US President George W. Bush had on Jan. 29, 2002, in his State of the Union address, referred to Iran, along with Iraq and North Korea, as one of three countries constituting an "axis of evil". Iran's inclusion in this list was particularly criticized by European governments, the EU being engaged in a diplomatic dialogue and having extensive trading contacts. In May 2003 US press reports suggested that the US Defence Department (which had dominated US policy-making in the run-up to the war in Iraq) favoured an active programme to destabilize the Iranian regime. According to Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, *Al-Qaeda* was active in Iran, whereas the Iranian ambassador to the USA stated that Iran had "probably captured more *Al-Qaeda* people in the past 14 months than any other country". Statements by President Bush in June 2003 welcoming large-scale student protests in Tehran were condemned by Iran as interference in its internal affairs and on July 2 US Secretary of State Colin Powell referred to the protests as a "family fight" in which the USA should not intervene. The student protests petered out as the police took a generally non-confrontational approach and arrested some leaders of hardline Islamic vigilantes, who had attacked the students, apparently with clerical backing.

### **Organization of the Iranian People's Holy Warriors (Sazman e Mojahedin e Khalq e Iran)/People's Mujahideen Organization (MKO)**

*Leadership. Massoud Rajavi; Maryam Abrishamhtchian Rajavi (co-presidents)*

This organization originated as a left-wing Islamic move-

ment, which attracted support from the educated middle classes and the young and had been active in opposing the Shah's regime for many years. In the initial stages of the Islamic regime it set up, in February 1979, with the left-wing Fedayeen e Khalq, a joint committee to coordinate and supervise the use of arms confiscated from the Shah's supporters. It took part in the election of a Constituent Council of Experts on Aug. 3, 1979, when its leader, Massoud Rajavi, was elected to that Council. He was, however, not allowed to stand as a candidate in the presidential elections of Jan. 25, 1980, on the grounds that he had not endorsed the country's new Constitution.

During the parliamentary elections held in March-May 1979, the *Mojahedin e Khalq* lodged complaints against alleged irregularities, and its leader called for the elections to be annulled. In subsequent months members of the organization were involved in clashes with pro-Khomeini groups, in particular the extremist fundamentalist *Hezbollah* (Children of the Party of God). In June 1981 the *Mojahedin e Khalq* began to support President Abol Hassan Bani-Sadr in his opposition to the rule of the doctrinaire fundamentalist clergy (Maktabi), who made use of the *Hezbollah* to disrupt anti-government demonstrations.

After the dismissal of President Bani-Sadr on June 21, 1981, the *Mojahedin e Khalq* were exposed to a rigorous government campaign against all opposition. Following a bomb explosion in Tehran on June 28, 1981 (killing 72 leading politicians), for which Ayatollah Khomeini held the *Mojahedin e Khalq* responsible, the latter were also accused of having drawn up death lists including the names of the governor of the Evin prison in Tehran and Tehran's revolutionary prosecutor. Numerous *Mojahedin e Khalq* members were subsequently executed, and on July 29, 1981, Rajavi arrived in Paris with ex-President Bani-Sadr, and on Oct. 1, he announced that he had formed a provisional government-in-exile. In Iran itself, *Mojahedin e Khalq* forces were said to have majority support in the traditionally left-wing strongholds in the northern provinces bordering the Caspian Sea. Moussa Khiabani, described as the most senior *Mojahedin e Khalq* leader inside Iran, was killed by Revolutionary Guards in Tehran on Feb. 8, 1982, together with his wife and that of Rajavi (then in Paris), and he was succeeded by Ali Zarkesh.

The *Mojahedin e Khalq* continued to be the most active opposition group within Iran during 1982. Despite a fierce campaign waged against them by the Revolutionary Guards and despite extensive arrests and executions of their members, they carried out repeated attacks and assassinations of government leaders, including Hojatoleslam Mohammed Ali Amininejad, the head of the navy's political office, who was killed on June 11, 1982; Ayatollah Mohammed Sadduqi, a member of the Majlis and a close associate of Ayatollah Khomeini, who was killed in Tehran on July 2; and Ali Mahlojes, a high-ranking member of the ruling IRP, whose assassination was claimed by the *Mojahedin* on Sept. 2. On Sept. 5, 1982, the *Mojahedin e Khalq* claimed to have killed over 100 Revolutionary Guards in Tehran in the past week alone.

*Mojahedin e Khalq* power and influence began to decline from late 1982 onwards as a result of a sustained campaign against the movement by the Revolutionary Guards and armed forces. One of its last major successes was the assas-

sination in October 1982 of Ayatollah Ashrafi Isfahani, one of Khomeini's closest aides, whom the *Mojahedin* claimed to be responsible for ordering hundreds of executions in western Iranian cities. Sporadic actions continued to be reported during 1983-84, and a number of attacks were staged to coincide with the celebrations to mark the sixth anniversary of the revolution in February 1985.

The movement frequently alleged that the regime was engaging in summary executions of suspected sympathizers. In a letter to the United Nations Secretary-General in September 1985, it claimed that over 12,000 such executions had been carried out since June 1981.

In June 1986, following increased official harassment, Rajavi and 1,000 followers left France for Iraq, where they re-established their headquarters and relaunched attacks against Iran. Following a major battle in Iranian Kurdistan in May 1987, on June 19 Rajavi formed the National Liberation Army (NLA). In its first major offensive, the NLA entered the province of Khuzestan on March 28, 1988; in June 1988, the NLA occupied the border town of Mehran, which it held for several days. Following the Iranian acceptance of UN Resolution 598, on July 25, 1988, the NLA launched a new offensive and advanced deep into Iran, towards Kermanshah, before being forced to withdraw on July 27. It was believed that the NLA was being used as a proxy by Iraq, which did not want to be seen to breach the ceasefire, but wanted to prevent a possible Iranian regrouping.

Following the end of the Iran-Iraq war and Khomeini's death, on June 4, 1989, *Mojahedin e Khalq* activities declined. However, it assisted Saddam Hussein to suppress the Shia rebellion at the end of the 1991 Gulf War. The organization has no evident continuing base of support in Iran but still maintains a presence in the Iranian exile community, especially in Europe (with a headquarters in Paris). The *Mojahedin e Khalq* has been designated a terrorist organization by the US State Department. Following the US invasion of Iraq and overthrow of Saddam Hussein, its bases in Iraq, close to the Iranian border, were captured and destroyed by US forces and its combatants (who were said to number 500-700) dispersed. Some combatants were said to have left Iraq before the conflict started.

On June 17, 2003, French counter-terrorist forces raided *Mojahedin e Khalq* premises in Paris and detained 159 people, including Maryam Rajavi (Massoud Rajavi's wife, and co-president of the organization). The French investigating magistrate who ordered the raids, Jean-Louis Brugière, stated that the group was a "criminal association aimed at preparing terrorist acts". On June 18, two Iranian women died in Paris after setting themselves on fire in protest at the arrests. Iran called on France to extradite those arrested but French officials said this would not happen. Maryam Rajavi was subsequently described as being under continuing investigation by the French authorities.

The **National Council of Resistance for Liberty and Independence (NCR)**, or **National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI)**, is an umbrella exile group that acts as the political front of the *Mojahedin e Khalq*. It was set up in 1981 by ex-President Abol Hassan Bani-Sadr and Massoud Rajavi, the leader of the *Mojahedin e Khalq*, both of whom had reached Paris on July 29, 1981. Bani-Sadr, who had been a close associate of Ayatollah Khomeini, had been elected as

first President of the Islamic Republic of Iran on Jan. 25, 1980, but he was later in disagreement with the Ayatollah over the question of the President's powers. After he had refused to sign bills passed by Parliament and had also been criticized for his conduct of the war against Iraq, he was on June 10 1981 ordered by Ayatollah Khomeini to be dismissed from the post of Commander in Chief of the armed forces. On June 12 1981 he attacked the rule of the Islamic Republican party as having "worsened the condition of the country day by day", and Parliament thereupon, on June 21, declared him incompetent (by 177 votes to one with one abstention) and on the following day Ayatollah Khomeini formally dismissed him as President, whereupon he disappeared from public life until his arrival in Paris. Bani-Sadr was later named by the NCR as its preferred future President of a "provisional government". Bani-Sadr left the NCR in March 1984, however, reportedly as a result of differences with Rajavi over relations with Iraq, with Rajavi favouring close ties with the Baghdad regime. Bani-Sadr remains in exile in Paris but is not connected with the NCR.

The NCR in 1993 nominated Maryam Rajavi to become president of Iran in a transitional period following the overthrow of the current regime and says it favours a democratic, pluralist, market-based society freed of religious fundamentalism and respecting women's rights. The NCR condemned the arrest of Maryam Rajavi in France in June 2003 (see above) as "part of a dirty deal done between Paris and Tehran". Commentators suggested that the crackdown related to efforts by European governments to foster positive relations with Iran in the context of the Israel-Palestine peace process and other regional problems.

## LEFT-WING ORGANIZATION

### Tudeh Party of Iran

*Leadership. Ali Khavari (first secretary)*

The Tudeh party originated in 1920 as the Communist Party of Iran; it was banned in 1931 and forced to continue its work illegally. In 1941 it was reorganized as the Tudeh Party of Iran, which was itself repressed and officially declared illegal in 1949. It later split into pro-Castro, Maoist and pro-Soviet factions, but the last group remained the official Tudeh party, with a base in East Germany. It was allowed to resume activities in Iran after the fall of the Shah but its support for the new regime waned as the latter became more committed to clerical fundamentalism; the party also opposed the Iran-Iraq war, which broke out in September 1980.

In early 1983, the government moved decisively to crush the Tudeh party. Over 1,000 of its leading activists were arrested, including its first secretary, Nourreddin Kianouri and the party's leading theoretician, Eshan Tabari. All party members were ordered to report to Revolutionary Guards' offices. In the first of a series of televised "confessions", Kianouri admitted that he had engaged in acts of "treason and espionage"; other party members "confessed" that they were employed by the Soviet state security service, the KGB. The party was formally proscribed on May 4, 1983, when the government declared that "any activity in favour of it will be regarded as illegal and counter-revolutionary".

Thereafter the party continued to operate from exile in



the Soviet Union and East Germany. In February 1984, 10 members of the party's military section, including Capt. Bahram Afzali, the former Iranian navy commander, were executed after being convicted of treason. The trial of other leaders, including Kianouri and Tabari, was postponed indefinitely shortly before it was due to commence in November 1984. Tudeh claimed that this was due to concern that the proceedings would expose crimes committed by the state, while other reports suggested that the decision was taken as a result of Soviet pressure.

Tudeh's founder, Iraj Eskendari, died in East Germany in April 1985 at the age of 77. He had originally gone into exile when the party was declared illegal in 1949, but returned after the revolution in 1979, only to leave again later the same year after disagreements over the extent to which the party should support the Islamic regime. In September 1987, provisional leader in exile Ali Khavari was elected first secretary of the party, a position he retains. The party remains in exile in Germany, publishes "People" (*Mardom*) and associates itself with the French Communist Party (PCF) and similar groups. It has not been significantly active within Iran in recent years.

## MODERATE OPPOSITION

### Freedom Movement (FM, Nehzat-Azadi)

*Leadership. Dr Ebrahim Yazdi*

The FM originated as a group of moderate politicians associated with Dr Mehdi Bazargan, Prime Minister from February to November 1979, who had been eclipsed as the fundamentalists gained undivided control of the Iranian revolution. The Movement boycotted the 1984 elections. A letter, signed by Bazargan and several former Cabinet ministers, was released to coincide with the celebrations marking the sixth anniversary of the revolution in February 1985 and attacked the "lack of basic freedoms"; it called for freedom of press, speech and assembly and for an end to the war with Iraq. The Movement's offices were later raided by the (pro-regime) *Hezbollah* party. Dr Bazargan registered as a presidential candidate prior to the August 1985 elections, but his candidacy was among 27 out of 30 which were rejected by the Council of Guardians.

After the death of Bazargan, Ebrahim Yazdi took the leadership. The FM had appeared to be growing in influence as an opposition movement within Iran. In March 2001, however, mass arrests of FM members were staged. On July 28, 2002, the Revolutionary Court in Tehran, dominated by hardliners, banned the FM, seized its assets, and sentenced 33 prominent members to up to 10 years' imprisonment on charges of seeking to overthrow the Islamic system. The trial was condemned by the Participation Front (the largest bloc supporting the President in the Majlis). Yazdi remains in Iran and is at liberty.

## SEPARATIST MOVEMENT

### Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan (PDKI)

The PDKI (or **Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran, KDPI**) was originally formed as an illegal organization in 1945 out of an Association for the Resurrection of Kurdistan. It proclaimed the "Republic of Kurdistan", based at Mahabad, in

January 1946 but this was crushed by Iranian troops in December 1946 and the leaders executed. The organization was practically liquidated when a further Kurdish rebellion in Iran in 1966-67 was crushed. Dr Abd ar Rahman Qasemlu (Abdul Rahman Ghassemlou) – who had been a member of the (communist) Tudeh party – was, at a secret PDKI conference held in Baghdad after 1973, elected the party's secretary-general, and he returned from exile to Iran shortly after the February 1979 Islamic revolution.

On Feb. 19, 1979, Kurdish leaders placed their autonomy demands before a government delegation but the new regime took no steps towards accepting these demands. The PDKI thereupon boycotted the March 1979 referendum on the establishment of an Islamic Republic in Iran, largely because the form of the question put to voters, in the PDKI's view, compelled them to vote in favour. Subsequent Kurdish uprisings were crushed by the Iranian authorities and in August 1979 the PDKI was banned on the ground that it had "instigated bloody incidents" in various Kurdish areas. Ayatollah Khomeini denounced the rebel Kurds as "communist-backed enemies of the revolution" but offered a "pardon" to all Kurds (but not to Dr Qasemlu) who "returned to the road of Islam" and surrendered their weapons. Dr Qasemlu, however, declared from his hideout (in an interview published in Paris on Sept. 10, 1979) that the rebellion was not ended and that guerrilla war would be pursued.

Early in 1980 the PDKI continued its guerrilla operations, and its followers clashed with Revolutionary Guards, with the result that these guards were in February 1980 withdrawn from Mahabad, Sanandaj and Kamyaran (western Iran) and a measure of regional autonomy was introduced in the Kurdish areas. As Kurdish rebels continued to be active, a new government offensive was launched in April 1980, when more than 1,000 Kurds and 500 government troops were said to have lost their lives. Following the withdrawal of the Kurds a ceasefire was negotiated between President Bani-Sadr of Iran and the PDKI in July 1980 but was overruled by Ayatollah Khomeini. In August 1980 government forces were said to have retaken Mahabad (the principal Kurdish city and headquarters of most Kurdish organizations).

After the outbreak of war between Iran and Iraq in September 1980 the PDKI leaders initially declared that they would not hinder the Iranian war effort against Iraq; in fact they intensified their struggle and were reported to be in receipt of substantial aid from the Iraqi government (while the Iranian government supported pro-Iranian Kurds in Iraq). By October 1980 a unified Kurdish council had been formed with other organizations and large-scale Kurdish attacks began against Iranian army units. Government forces responded by launching periodic offensives against Kurdish positions, using helicopter gunships and heavy artillery; extensive casualties were reported to have been sustained by both sides in the frequent engagements. By mid-August 1982 it was estimated that over one-third of the Iranian Army (including several thousand Revolutionary Guards) was fighting in Kurdistan, while the strength of *Peshmerga* forces was given by Dr Qasemlu (in March 1982) as 12,000 backed by up to 60,000 armed peasants. During this period Kurdish forces increasingly mounted joint operations with guerrillas of the *Mojahedin e Khalq*.

The PDKI claimed in August 1982 that the government had started to imprison or resettle hundreds of Kurdish families and that a recent Iranian offensive against Iraq was in fact a manoeuvre to encircle the Kurds; it was also claimed by Kurdish and *Mojahedin* sources that the army had used incendiary and chemical bombs on Kurdish villages. A further government offensive in October 1982 was reported to have provoked the four main Kurdish tribes (Harkis, Shakkak, Bagzadeh and Simko) into united resistance. A particular cause of tension was said to be the arrival of large numbers of Shiite mullahs in the Kurdish region, whose action in offering cash rewards to converts had angered Kurdish Sunni ayatollahs.

In November 1981 it had been announced that the PDKI had joined the National Council of Resistance for Liberty and Independence, which had been set up in France earlier in the year by ex-President Bani-Sadr and other exiled opponents of the Khomeini regime (see separate entry).

In the face of a major government offensive in October 1982, the PDKI agreed with the Marxist *Komaleh* faction “under pressure of events” to co-ordinate their forces. The government claimed further successes in 1983-84, in June of which year the PDKI stated that jet fighters and helicopter gunships had been employed against Kurdish villages near Oroumieh. More heavy fighting followed a government offensive in October 1984. Details of the outcome of the battles were difficult to ascertain, but journalists travelling in the region noted that Kurdish guerrillas remained in control of some rural areas.

In April 1985, the PDKI was expelled from the National Council of Resistance, ostensibly after the *Mojahedin e Khalq* had denounced it for demonstrating a willingness to negotiate with the government.

Dr Qasemlu, his deputy Abdullah Qaderi, and another aide, Fathel Rassoul, were assassinated in Vienna on July 13, 1989, while conducting secret peace talks with the govern-

ment, which had been organized by Jalal Talabani, leader of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan. It was not clear who was responsible for the murders; the Iranian and Iraqi governments accused each other. During September-October 1989, in renewed guerrilla fighting, the PDKI briefly occupied the town of Mahabad.

Qasemlu's successor as party secretary-general, Dr Sadegh Sharafkandi, was assassinated by Iranian agents in Berlin on Sept. 17, 1992, while attending a meeting of the Socialist International. The party gained observer status with the Socialist International in 1996 and officially espouses a democratic socialist platform, rejecting terrorist activity, which it distinguishes from its own “armed resistance”. The party reports persistent detention, assassinations and torture of its activists within Iran and some 13,000 Iranian Kurds were in refugee camps in Iraq at the time of the war to depose Saddam.

### MONARCHIST GROUPS

Since the 1979 revolution the Iranian authorities have announced on several occasions that plots against the government had been uncovered, those involved being army officers and other members of the armed forces intent upon restoring the monarchy. The same aim has also motivated the activities of a number of organized groups.

Since 1979, many opposition groups have been set up, claiming to be monarchist but having no real weight. Reza Pahlavi, son of the late Shah, who is in exile in the United States, has said that he is in favour of non-violent civil disobedience to end the Iranian regime and a referendum for the people to decide on their preferred form of government.

*Firouzeh Nahavandi*

## Iraq

**Capital:** Baghdad

**Population:** 24 m

The modern state of Iraq was founded in 1920 after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. The monarchy, set up under British tutelage, was overthrown in a military coup in 1958, and a republic was declared. A pan-Arab element in turn staged a successful coup in 1963. In 1968, this regime was overthrown by members of the Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party, who ruled continuously until the US-led invasion of March-April 2003 defeated them in battle, and removed them from power.

According to its 1968 Constitution, Iraq was to be a popular, democratic state, with Islam as the state religion and socialism as the basis of the economy. The “supreme organ of the state” was the Ba'ath Party's Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), appointed and chaired by the party's secretary-general, Saddam

Hussein. Ba'ath was also the main component of a National Progressive Patriotic Front (NPPF), which was formed in 1973. The Ba'ath parties of Syria and Iraq remained theoretically “regional” wings of a “national” pan-Arab Ba'ath movement. In practice, the two parties, and countries, severed links with each other decades ago. Moreover, it has been argued that under the personal tyranny of Saddam Hussein, the party as such had atrophied into a merely formal institution that enacted the President's will.

In 1979 Saddam formally replaced his mentor, Ahmad Hasan al-Bakr, as State President. Saddam also acted as Prime Minister from 1979 until March 23, 1991, when he handed over the post to Sa'adoun Hammadi. President Saddam Hussein was most

recently re-elected (unopposed) in a national “referendum” in October 2002. The President used to appoint a Council of Ministers, and maintained influence outside major cities via a Ba’ath Party Regional Command, and via his role as commander-in-chief of the national army.

Iraq’s parliament was a 250-member National Assembly, elected every four years under a system of proportional representation. In practice its powers were very limited, as all its decisions were subordinated to the RCC. All candidates had to express support for the principles of the 1968 revolution. A 57-member “Legislative Assembly” purportedly represented the Kurdish Autonomous Region, although arrangements changed after 1991.

At the time of going to press, the old constitution has been rescinded and the Ba’ath Party banned. The effective ruler of Iraq is an American civil administrator who heads a Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA). Initial plans for a US military governor were dropped after much opposition, although the administrator (currently L. Paul Bremer) enjoys a measure of martial power. Bremer’s appointment is meant to last only until Iraqis finalize a constitution and hold free elections. Both of these developments are scheduled to occur some time in 2004.

For the present, the US governor is assisted by a 25-member interim Governing Council. Members are drawn from all sectors of Iraqi society (see details below). However, they are not themselves elected, but were formally appointed on July 13 by the US government and the CPA in consultation with a range of Iraqi political trends.

In consideration of this new dispensation, many of the groups which were described as “dissident”, as below, now have a share, albeit limited, in the running of the country. By contrast, the former regime, its supporters and its party are now considered as the new dissidents, although they prefer to regard themselves as constituting “resistance” to an unwarranted occupation.

Iraq consists of three regions, named after the biggest city in each: Mosul in the north, Baghdad in the centre and Basra in the south. Each is home to one of Iraq’s three main ethnic groupings: Kurds in Mosul, Sunni Muslim Arabs in Baghdad and Shiite Muslim Arabs in Basra. Although Shiites constitute more than 60 per cent of the population, power has always resided with the less numerous Sunnis (32-35 per cent); after 1979 it came to be held particularly by supporters and relatives of Saddam Hussein from his home town of Tikrit. Kurds form about 15 per cent of the population. Smaller minorities include Turkic-speaking Turkomans and Assyrians, who are Christian.

The recently deposed Ba’ath rulers of Iraq were at one stage dissidents themselves, only securing full power in 1968 (after joining the 1963 coup against President Qassim they were outflanked by pan-Arabists). The party began in Syria, but its Iraqi branch was bitterly opposed to Damascus. Its philosophy combines nationalism with socialism; though secular,

it often employs Islamic themes. Above all, it is authoritarian and centralized along the old Soviet model. Dissidence was not tolerated under Saddam, who achieved power by eliminating opponents. Party membership grew to two million while its independent political influence decreased. Many of these “members” were only loosely attached to the party; genuine party operatives were thought to number little more than 35,000 people.

Dissident Ba’athists in exile tended to migrate to one or another of the dissident factions, though naturally Baghdad tolerated no opposition within the movement. The Ba’ath Party had its own internal security agency known as Amn al-Hizb (Party Security), monitoring party members and ensuring their loyalty. Similarly, it is said that members of Baghdad’s intelligence services (generally referred to as the Mukhabarat) regularly infiltrated opposition groups and on occasion assassinated leading figures in exile.

### **Iran-Iraq War, 1980-88 and Gulf War, 1990-91**

In 1980 Iraq invaded the new Islamic regime of Iran under Ayatollah Khomeini. After initial successes, Iraqi forces were pushed back across the border and by early 1987 were on the defensive. The war lasted until July 1988 and left at least 500,000 dead. It also cost Iraq US\$112 billion. During the war both countries exploited ethnic and religious fissures, such as Iraq’s support for ethnic Arabs in southern Iran, and Iran’s support for Shiite dissidents in southern Iraq. They also backed each other’s Kurdish dissidents. International sympathy for Kurds in Iraq grew after Iraq used poison gas on the town of Halabja in 1988. With the notable exception of Syria, Iraq’s traditional rival, most Arab states backed Saddam’s side, but did little to end the war.

Iran and Iraq signed a peace treaty in August 1988, after which Saddam promised constitutional reforms. Iraq announced three amnesties that year; but many saw them as a trap, especially after reports that dozens of those who had given themselves up were executed. In January 1989 there was a failed coup attempt and senior army officers were executed. Internal deportation of Kurds resumed in June 1989, part of a policy to “Arabize” the north.

In January 1990 the London-based Organization of Human Rights in Iraq said Iraqi armed forces had attacked 30 towns near Basra and Nasariyah, killing and injuring up to 10,000 Shiites in an attempt to create a “safe border zone”. Middle East Watch and Amnesty International accused Iraq of using summary executions, relocations, and torture of adults and children alike. On July 30, 1990, a new draft Constitution was published which provided for the direct election of a President for an eight-year term, and a half-elected Consultative Council to replace the RCC. New political parties would be tolerated.

In 1990 Iraq accused its erstwhile ally, Kuwait, of deliberately orchestrating an oil price slump to ruin the Iraqi economy. Iraq invaded Kuwait on Aug. 2, 1990,

and declared the country to be the 19th province of Iraq.

Protracted United Nations pressure and the imposition of sanctions (according to UN Resolutions 660-665) failed to budge Saddam. In November 1990 Resolution 678 authorized the use of force to ensure Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait. Opposition to Saddam grew in Iraq in November, despite repression from the active security branch, the mukhabarat. In December the Syrian-based Joint Action Committee of Iraqi Opposition (JACIO), consisting of 17 groups including Kurds, communists, Islamic fundamentalists, socialists and nationalists, issued an anti-Saddam programme, thus ending long-standing differences between them.

On Jan. 17, 1991, a US-led UN force from 29 nations, including Saudi Arabia, Syria, Britain, France and Egypt, declared war on Iraq. At first the campaign relied on heavy bombing of Iraqi towns and military facilities, and Saddam's attempts to win a face-saving cease-fire, and his promise to withdraw from Kuwait, were spurned as a "hoax" by the USA. On Feb. 23 the coalition launched a full-scale land offensive, leading to a crushing defeat of Iraq in three days and liberation for Kuwait.

In the aftermath of defeat, Iraqi dissidents and exile groups planned to topple Saddam and set up a new government, encouraged by promises of support from US President Bush. Kurds in the north and Shiites in the south achieved initial military gains, capitalizing on disarray within the Iraqi army, especially the elite Republican Guard. There were widespread reports of desertions, and 30,000 opposition fighters rose up in Basra, arming themselves with Kalashnikovs and RPGs abandoned by fleeing soldiers. At one stage rebels claimed to control 14 of Iraq's 18 provinces.

But predictions of Saddam's imminent removal proved premature. Baghdad-based Islamic and liberal groupings, like the Baghdadi National Committee for the Salvation of Iraq, fared worst. Within a month, the Iraqi army and Republican Guard regained control of major towns after bloody fighting and effective use of attacks by helicopter gunships. A million or so refugees streamed into Turkey and Iran. Some 450,000 Marsh Arabs were trapped in central Iraq, suffering from malnutrition. International aid eventually arrived to help Kurdish civilians, and allied forces set up an "exclusion zone" around Zakho in the north to protect them from the army, but stopped short of open confrontation with the latter. This policy was known as "Safe Havens", and was bolstered by a northern "no-fly zone", barring Iraqi military aircraft from moving north of latitude 36. The zone was enforced by the USA, UK and France, but not officially authorized by the UN.

Many dissident groups felt betrayed by the USA, especially the Shiites, who received less Western sympathy than the Kurds because of the taint of militancy and ties with Iran. US troops based near Basra after the Gulf War allegedly blew up Shiite arms depots and gave Saddam's Republican Guards a free hand to

destroy opponents. Coalition forces seized the military airport near Nasiriyah, but did not assist rebels, and disarmed them when they retreated.

### Developments 1991-2001

Saddam Hussein exploited opposition disunity with his March 15, 1991, proclamation that Iraq would soon become a multi-party democracy. In April and May the RCC officially abolished the Popular Army and Revolutionary Court. Most dissidents viewed these gestures with scepticism, but Masoud Barzani of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP, see entry) opened negotiations with Saddam for limited Kurdish autonomy. His chief rival, Jalal Talabani of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK, see entry), preferred to await the overthrow of Saddam. By mid-1991 anti-opposition forces were divided: the KDP flirted with the idea of partial autonomy, while Shiite dissidents favoured total democracy in a unitary state.

On April 3, 1991, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 687, outlining provisions for a cease-fire and setting up inspections of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and Resolution 688, ordering an end to Iraq's repression of its citizens. In 1992 a second no-fly zone was established south of latitude 32°; US and UK military aircraft set up Operation Southern Watch to patrol the zone. In response to allegations of Iraqi transgressions of the cease-fire agreement, and Iraqi attempts to assassinate former US President Bush when he visited Kuwait, US and British aircraft attacked Iraq with missiles in 1993. In 1994 an increasingly beleaguered Saddam Hussein sought to recapture his authority by threatening Kuwait again, by amassing troops on the border. When the USA responded by mobilizing its own troops, the Iraqis withdrew.

Saddam Hussein founded the Special Republican Guard (SRG) in March 1995 as an elite paramilitary unit to protect his person and repel any attempt at a rebellion or coup. Many analysts concluded that he could no longer trust the mainstream Republican Guard, and feared that it might spawn a military coup against him. In time the SRG acquired a complement of 26,000 supposedly crack troops; Qusay Hussein, second son of Saddam Hussein and his putative heir, became head of the SRG in 2001. He was also elected to the leadership of the ruling Ba'ath Party in May 2001, and was later empowered to act as president in his father's absence.

Meanwhile, the strict UN sanctions regime was leading to increased ill health and economic distress. It appeared that Saddam was winning a propaganda war, blaming the USA and UK especially for causing unnecessary deaths. Under pressure from many nations, not least from France and Russia, on April 14, 1995, the UN proposed an oil-for-food regime, under UNSC Resolution 986, so as to revive the Iraqi economy, and prevent innocent citizens from suffering unduly. Belatedly, Saddam accepted the plan in May 1996, and only began implementing it in December.



Nonetheless, Resolution 986 proved a lifeline for his struggling administration. It allowed Ba'ath to resurrect its shattered organization and it was also abused by Saddam in that suspected dissidents were denied aid coupons. That said, the rival PUK and KDP administrations in the autonomous area also came to rely on the oil-for-food regime as a way of resurrecting their infrastructures.

On Aug. 31, 1996, Iraq backed KDP fighters in their battle with rival Kurds in the PUK. In September US President Clinton ordered cruise missile raids on Iraq in retaliation for the regime's actions in the north. The USA also extended the southern no-fly zone northwards by one degree. Saddam was forced to withdraw his forces from Kurdish Irbil, but he dislodged Iraqi National Congress (INC, see entry) opposition forces from the area, and left behind a network of spies and informers to monitor dissidents in Kurdish-run areas.

Saddam Hussein furthermore exploited the crisis to gain diplomatic support from France, Russia, China and former enemies in the Arab region. In that way he opened up a rift between them and the increasingly unified Anglo-American anti-Saddam front – a rift that was to culminate in the full-scale UK-US attack on Iraq in March 2003. The schism Saddam helped to engineer also wrought havoc within Iraqi dissident movements and their international supporters.

Repeatedly in 1997 and 1998, the USA accused Iraq of obstructing weapons inspectors. Iraq in turn accused the inspectors of being US spies, and particularly objected to proposed investigations of Saddam's presidential palaces. Diplomatic clashes frequently resulted in limited aerial raids on Iraq to enforce compliance, and in some cases to actually destroy sites where WMD were thought to be stored. Eventually in December 1998 Iraq barred UNSCOM inspectors from visiting virtually all sites, so the contingent was forced to leave. The USA and Britain referred to the "expulsion" of inspectors, though Iraq insisted that this was not the case. By way of punishment, US and British forces launched Operation Desert Fox against Iraqi sites.

Meanwhile, in an apparently significant change of policy, on Sept. 29, 1998, the US Congress had passed the Iraq Liberation Act (ILA) "to remove the regime headed by Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq and to promote the emergence of a democratic government". The President was to designate one or more Iraqi democratic opposition organizations and provide assistance to them up to \$97 million.

In 1999 Iraq rejected a UN resolution to ease sanctions in return for allowing the weapons inspectors to return. Russia vetoed a carefully negotiated UN proposal to adopt "smart sanctions" against Iraq, in 2001 (the idea had been to ensure that most goods could be traded, but to exclude those that were clearly imported for military applications). Saddam's careful policy of wooing Arab neighbours began paying off, especially after October 2000, when Iraqi officials attended an Arab League summit for the first time in ten years.

Such rapprochement hampered support by Arab states for Iraqi opposition groups.

### Path to war in 2003

On Jan. 20, 2001, newly elected US President George W. Bush vowed to "re-invigorate" sanctions against Iraq, signalling a tougher approach than the outgoing Clinton administration. The terrorist attacks on the USA of Sept. 11, 2001, prompted a dramatic reappraisal of US foreign policy. In various statements, *Al-Qaeda* leader Osama bin Laden gained Muslim support by damning "the immense destruction inflicted on the Iraqi people" by the USA, through sanctions and military strikes.

In his January 2002 State of the Union address, President Bush spoke about an "axis of evil" consisting of Iraq, Iran and North Korea. Bush drew attention to their alleged possession of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and also their alleged sponsorship of international terrorist organizations. His speech demanded that UN weapons inspectors (now regrouped as UNMOVIC) be re-admitted to Iraq. He also hinted at military confrontation, like that exercised, ultimately successfully, in the recently completed war against the Taleban and *Al-Qaeda* in Afghanistan.

Certain leading figures within the Bush administration, notably Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, Vice President Richard Cheney, and to some extent, National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice, revived discussion of former President Clinton's notion of "regime change" in Iraq. On Sept. 25 Condoleezza Rice specifically accused Iraq of training *Al-Qaeda* in the development of chemical weapons. Kenneth Pollack, one of the authors of the influential September 2002 "Beyond Containment" report from the Pentagon's National Defence University, urged a long-term US military occupation of Iraq.

To mark his 100 per cent approval in an October 2002 referendum, Saddam Hussein granted amnesty to all political prisoners (or so it was claimed).

In late 2002 the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1441, the 18th Iraq-related resolution, which mandated the return of weapons inspectors under Hans Blix and Mohammed El-Baradei. Faced with a semblance of international consensus, Iraq was now forced to readmit inspectors, though the initial UNMOVIC report in early 2003 proved inconclusive. There was mounting UK-US impetus to force an invasion. France, China and Russia led opposition to the "military option" in the UN Security Council, and threatened to veto any new resolution (i.e. additional to 1441) that might mandate such action.

US State Department officials reportedly despaired of continuing divisions amongst Iraqi dissidents in exile, doubted that such groups commanded real popular support within Iraq, and questioned their military capabilities. In addition they were wary of the possibility of Iraq splitting apart in a multi-sided civil war after Saddam was gone. In light of all these factors,

US officials mooted that it might be better to encourage Iraqi military officers and Ba'ath Party personnel to turn against Saddam "at the last moment".

Washington sought to tie in its concern with Iraq with the battle against terrorism. In particular, it accused the Iraqi government of having ties with Osama bin Laden's *Al-Qaeda* network. However, public evidence of Iraqi involvement in the Sept. 11 attacks was lacking. The only hard evidence of *Al-Qaeda*'s Iraqi connections was the presence of a few hundred cadres in northern Iraq, operating under the ambit of the fundamentalist Kurdish splinter group, *Ansar al-Islam* (see entry). Direct ties between *Al-Ansar* and Saddam's Baghdad seemed spurious.

The International Crisis Group (ICG) estimated in October 2002 that there existed some 100 Iraqi opposition groups and more than 40 regular dissident publications. The last conference of dissidents held on Western soil took place in London on Dec. 14-17, 2002. It had UK, US and apparently also Iranian co-operation. Exiled Iraqi dissidents sought to mend differences and plan for a post-Saddam future. After some tempestuous debate, delegates agreed to create a 65-member steering committee for the opposition. This body included monarchists and leftists, Sunnis, Shiites and Kurds, and was called the Follow-up and Arrangement Committee (FUAC, see entry).

### Course of the 2003 Invasion

In mid-March 2003 President Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair decided at a conference in the Azores not to propose a second Security Council resolution, mandating armed action, as originally planned. This followed France's threat to veto any such resolution, whatever its content, and a presumed antipathy towards military action from two other Security Council members, China and Russia.

President Bush gave Saddam Hussein and his sons, Uday and Qusay, a 48-hour deadline to flee Iraq. After Saddam refused to do so, and the deadline lapsed, hostilities commenced on March 19, 2003. There was an initial aerial raid on Baghdad, apparently aimed at "decapitating" Saddam Hussein and his top aides. When that particular initiative failed US and UK troops crossed the border from Kuwait and invaded Iraq.

Initial expectations of a quick and easy coalition victory based on "Shock and Awe" tactics were soon dashed. Spontaneous anti-Saddam uprisings did not materialize; it later became clear that Baghdad had pre-empted such an eventuality by posting thousands of informers, "enforcers" and armed militiamen in major cities, especially in the south. Additionally, US and British authorities underestimated the extent to which they would be seen as foreign interlopers, rather than "liberators". Although there were reports of a minor revolt in Basra, and hundreds of regular Iraqi soldiers surrendering, there was also stiff resistance from other Iraqi units, especially in and around the towns of Najaf, Karbala, Basra and Nassiriya.

With the commencement of the second week of hostilities, the UK captured Umm al-Qasr port on March 25, and the USA parachuted a smaller contingent of forces into Kurdish-controlled areas in the north. Had Turkey allowed US forces to use its territory as a launchpad, there would most likely have been a much stronger northern offensive, to facilitate a pincer attack on Baghdad. To the USA's chagrin, this option did not materialise. Nonetheless, there was overt co-operation between US troops and local KDP peshmerga in the north, by contrast with the situation in Arab Iraq.

Evidently Iraqi troops retreated to stiffen the protection of Kirkuk. Major bombing of key installations in Basra continued. With respect to indigenous armed anti-Saddam militias and the prosecution of the war, there was a surprising development on March 28, 2003, when US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld explicitly warned the Shiite Badr Brigade (see entry), and their sponsors, Iran, not to intervene in the conflict. Rumsfeld said that US forces would regard them as "enemy combatants". This appeared to contradict understandings reached earlier, between the USA and a coalition of opposition forces. The latter included the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq (SCIRI, see entry), the political overseer of the Badr Brigades.

As the conflict progressed, it became clear that the Saddam regime was unwilling to confront the well-organized and pro-US Kurdish forces of the north. Nor did the two main Kurdish groups, the PUK and KDP, fall out with each other, as was feared. There was greater fear of inter-ethnic battles, between Kurds on the one hand, and Turkoman and Arab minorities on the other. Another threat came in the shape of an *Al-Qaeda*-affiliated Kurdish force, called *Ansar*, though initially they appeared to be repulsed by joint assaults by US helicopter gunships in the air and Kurdish peshmerga ground forces. The greatest dread, though, was that Turkey would intervene to scotch any likelihood of the birth of an independent Kurdistan. At the time of going to press, this eventuality has not materialized; but it remains a worry for American occupying forces, and many Kurds.

Curiously, compared with the Shiite south, there was less effective resistance to the invaders in Baghdad and its environs, even in Saddam's birthplace of Tikrit, the Sunni Arab heartland from which Ba'ath drew most support. US troops had entered Najaf by April 1 and Karbala fell on April 2; both southern cities are extremely holy to Shiites, so their capture marked a breakthrough in the campaign. On April 7 UK troops claimed control of the centre of Basra, Iraq's strategically pivotal port, despite some ongoing resistance. After weeks of targetted bombing, Baghdad itself fell to US soldiers and tanks on April 9. The toppling of a giant statue of Saddam that same day was regarded as the symbolic end of his regime. Kirkuk fell to Kurdish fighters on April 10, and the Iraqi Army's 5th Corps surrendered as US and Kurdish forces entered Mosul on April 11. Tikrit, cited as a likely "last stand" by Saddam's allies, fell relatively easily to the



coalition on April 14. President Bush announced the conclusion of major hostilities on May 1.

### **Iraq after Saddam**

Washington produced a pack of 55 playing cards, detailing the most wanted fugitives from the former regime. There were several notable captures, and on July 22 American units besieged and killed Saddam's sons and most trusted lieutenants, Uday and Qusay, in a villa in southern Mosul.

However, to date Saddam remains elusive, and sporadic hostilities have persisted, even after the slaying of Uday and Qusay. By August more US soldiers had died since the supposed cessation of hostilities on May 1 than during the official war. The official tally of US troops killed by hostile fire since then stood at 88 by Oct. 4, 2003; British soldiers had been killed, too, though in smaller numbers.

On April 29, the US admitted that it had killed up to 13 protesting civilians in Falluja, outside Baghdad, the worst of several such incidents indicating tension between occupying forces and disgruntled citizens. Most worrying were devastating terrorist attacks, such as one on the Jordanian Embassy on Aug. 7, and another on UN headquarters on Aug. 19, the latter killing the head of the UN mission in Iraq, Sergio Vieira de Mello, along with about 19 others.

Schisms have emerged within the Shiite community, too, exacerbated by the murders of two major leaders who had recently returned from exile. Both were slain at or near the Imam Ali Mosque in Najaf: Abdul Majid al-Khoei on April 10, and SCIRI leader, Ayatollah Mohammed Bakr al-Hakim, together with some 85 fellow worshippers, on Aug. 29.

Meanwhile, in the USA and UK, there was anger that there were still no signs of weapons of mass destruction, whose capture and elimination was the supposed pretext for the war. What was discovered, however, were mass graves of Saddam's murdered opponents (a figure estimated at 300,000). This provided a more compelling albeit ex post facto argument for military intervention.

By September 2003 complaints mounted in the USA about the high costs needed to effect a transition to a stable democracy and restore basic amenities and security in Iraq. President Bush's call for an additional \$87 billion in funding faced substantial opposition in Congress.

Likewise earlier talk of a short stay by US forces proved woefully optimistic. Certain US isolationist circles, both liberal and conservative in inclination, fear that the USA may have been dragged into a second Vietnam. In Britain and America, alarm also grew at the lack of planning for a peaceful transition after Saddam and over apparently misleading, or at least misinterpreted, intelligence that was used to justify the decision to launch war. In addition, a schism had apparently opened between circles of power in Washington. Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld wished to implant an exile-based interim government alongside

a US military governate, initially under retired US Brig.-Gen. Jay Garner; whereas US Secretary of State Colin Powell favoured nurturing a more indigenous administration with international support.

One recurring problem was whether to totally dismantle the Ba'ath infrastructure; or whether to differentiate between "good" Ba'ath apparatchiks (who were needed to maintain continuity of services) and those "bad" Ba'ath members with "blood on their hands". In late September it appeared that the USA was now prepared to re-employ Ba'ath officials with essential expertise. Having outlawed the Ba'ath era Iraqi army, the US administration is currently committed to training 55,000 Iraqis to form a future indigenous security force. In certain sectors, soldiers from nations other than the USA (notably Poles) are taking over duties.

The USA rejects charges of colonization, and insists that ultimately Iraqis must reclaim their political autonomy. To this end, the first major postwar meeting of various anti-Ba'ath political groups took place on April 15 at an airbase near Nassiriya, although major Shiite parties conspicuously boycotted the assembly. Administrator Jay Garner also faced a problem of dealing with self-proclaimed leaders. One such was Mohammed Mohsen al-Zubaidi, who on April 18 declared himself "chief of the executive council" in Baghdad. US security arrested him on April 27. Another was Abbas Abu Ragef, a Shiite leader in Kut, near the Iranian border.

Increasingly Garner was criticized for not fulfilling his brief adequately. Many blamed him for the lawlessness, looting, violence and collapse of basic services that followed military victory. On May 7 President Bush named L. Paul Bremer, a former ambassador and head of the US counter-terrorism office, as Iraq's new civil administrator to replace Garner.

### **Iraq's new interim Governing Council**

On July 13, after two months of arduous negotiations, Bremer announced the creation in Baghdad of a 25-member interim Governing Council. Membership was carefully divided by sectarian and ethnic affiliation. Shiites received a slim majority of 13 out of 25 seats on the Council. The USA was relieved that 'Abd al-Aziz al-Hakim, then deputy leader of the powerful Shiite group, SCIRI, agreed to accept a seat. However, most Shiites on the Council were secular figures – like INC chief, Ahmed Chalabi, and former career diplomat, Aqila al-Hashimi – or moderate or apolitical clerics, like Bahr al-Ulloum. Sunni Arabs and Kurds received five seats each and Assyrian Christians and Turkomans, one each.

The effective demotion of Sunni Arabs – by comparison with their overwhelming preponderance under Saddam – drew criticism from some outside Arab observers. Two-thirds of Council members came from recognized opposition groups; the remaining third were appointed for their technical expertise. Three of the 25 members were women, a high ratio for Arab countries. Unable to choose a president of the Council,

the body agreed on July 19 to adopt the principle of a rotating chairman. Initial plans called for a three-member rotating triumvirate. Since then Council members have accepted a body of nine members, each of whom would act as chairman for one month. Succession was determined by where a given member's name appeared in Arabic alphabetical order.

Probably the most significant single appointment was that of Council member Hoshiyar Zebari as Iraq's new foreign minister (a non-rotating post). By virtue of his position Zebari, a senior official of the Kurdistan Democratic Party, became a symbol of Kurdish determination to represent a predominantly Arab country. On Sept. 9 Zebari took his country's seat at the 22-member Arab League. For two months previously the League had debated whether or not to accept the Council as successor to Saddam's regime. Detractors felt that the Council was a "puppet" organization, a front for US interests. Arab League Secretary-General Amr Moussa was cautiously welcoming, but stressed that true Iraqi sovereignty would only arrive with the election of an indigenous government, and the ultimate departure of foreign military forces. However, the Council's acceptance by the League did much to restore its legitimacy, albeit on an interim basis and pending Iraqi elections in 2004. Bremer has laid out a seven-step plan for a new Iraqi constitution by the end of 2004 or beginning of 2005.

By contrast with these advances, the Council suffered a major setback when gunmen – allegedly "Saddam loyalists" – shot a Council member, Aqila al-Hashimi, on Sept. 20. She died from her wounds on Sept. 25. A career diplomat, and the only Council member who had served under Saddam (she implemented the UN oil-for-food programme, and served as aide to Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz), Hashimi had been touted as Iraq's first post-Saddam ambassador to the UN.

Nonetheless, the Governing Council did take Iraq's seat at the UN General Assembly ministerial session of Sept. 23. That same week a Council delegation attended OPEC talks in Vienna. At the time of going to press the US government was trying to encourage the UN Security Council to grant more explicit powers to the Governing Council.

## UMBRELLA GROUPS

### Coalition of Iraqi National Forces (CINF)

Launched on June 23, 2002, the CINF has an extraordinarily diverse range of ethnic and political constituent groups. Its National Action Charter committed members to overthrow Saddam Hussein without "foreign interference", to lift sanctions, preserve Iraq's unity and institute democracy and pluralism. Senior members include the Iraqi Communist Party, *Al-Daw'a* (see separate entries) and the Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party-Iraq Command, a pro-Syrian faction.

Other constituent parties include the Group of Mujahedin Ulema in Iraq, the Islamic Action Party, the Iraqi Democratic Grouping, the Kurdistan Communist Party, the Socialist Party in Iraq, the Turkomen Democratic Party, the Arab Socialist Movement, the Islamic Union for Iraq's Turkomen,

and the Assyrian Ethnic Organisation, plus unnamed independent political and military figures. Quite how these disparate groups could cohere was unclear, given inherent schisms. For instance, the religious Shiites of *Al-Daw'a* and the Mujahedin are sworn foes of communism.

### Follow-up and Arrangement Committee (FUAC)

The FUAC arose out of the London conference of Iraqi dissidents of December 2002. It was designed as the ultimate umbrella group, the "address" to which foreign powers could address concerns, or indeed, if all worked to plan, the embryo for an interim government of post-Saddam Iraq.

Originally the council was to consist of 65 members drawn from across the ideological, religious and ethnic spectrum. The first meeting of the FUAC itself was held in Salahuddin, autonomous Iraqi Kurdistan, in late February 2003, where a six-member leadership council was chosen, in effect as the FUAC's executive authority. These six were Ahmed Chalabi (INC), Masoud Barzani (KDP), Jalal Talabani (PUK), Adnan Pachachi (DCT), Iyad Alawi (INA) and 'Abd al-Aziz al-Hakim (SCIRI). Pachachi was elected in absentia and later declined his position on the council.

### Free Iraq Council (FIC)

*Leadership. Sa'ad Saleh Jaber*

Sa'ad Jaber, son of Iraq's first Shiite Prime Minister, Salah Jaber (1947-48), founded this pro-Western alliance of anti-Saddam forces in London on Feb. 9, 1991. Described as an offshoot of the Iraqi National Accord (see entry), it included democrats, socialists and dissident Ba'athists. Later that month the FIC met in Riyadh with JACIO members (see Iraq National Congress entry) to discuss forming a government-in-exile. The FIC, JACIO and the Nationalist Iraqi Constitution (led by Salah Omar Ali) met again in Beirut during the Kurdish and Shiite rebellions. The FIC aborted attempts to launch a coup when their plot was uncovered in April 1992; some 300 officers and civilians were arrested, with many executed. Jaber claimed the USA had leaked FIC plans to the Iraqi regime. He has US citizenship but lives in London.

### Free Iraqi Forces (FIF)

This name was adopted for militiamen from various Iraqi opposition groups who from late 2002 were undergoing training under US Army auspices at Camp Freedom, in Taszar, south-west Hungary. Of the constituent groups, Ahmed Chalabi's Iraqi National Congress (INC, see entry) predominated. The camp was established under the mandate of the USA's 1998 Iraq Liberation Act.

### Group of Six

This loose confederation of opposition groups began to meet outside the framework of the Iraqi National Congress (see entry) in 2001 and involved the two main Kurdish movements, the PUK and the KDP, the Iraqi National Accord, and the Shiite SCIRI (see separate entries). Initially dubbed the Group of Four, it became the Group of Six when the Constitutional Monarchy Movement and the INC itself joined in 2002.

### Higher Council for National Salvation

*Leadership. Maj.-Gen. Wafiq al-Samarra'i*

Al-Samarra'i launched the HCNS on Aug. 1, 2002, apparently as a counterweight to the Iraqi National Council (see entry) which had held a much publicized meeting in London the month before. Samarra'i was a senior intelligence officer in Saddam's army until he defected in December 1994. He then supported covert operations to assassinate Saddam Hussein, and planned the abortive March 1995 coup attempt in cahoots with the INC.

Supported by Saudi Arabia, Samarra'i is said to be close to General Nizar al-Khazraji, the highest-ranking defector from Saddam's army. Khazraji was Chief of Staff of the Iraqi armed forces from 1980 until 1991 (in other words, for the duration of the Iran-Iraq war and the invasion of Kuwait). Samarra'i lives in London and Khazraji is based in Denmark, where the HCNS has its headquarters. Khazraji once said that he considered it his "sacred duty" to succeed Saddam as leader of Iraq.

### **Iraqi Democratic Union**

Website. [www.idu.net](http://www.idu.net)

The IDU was founded in the USA in 1980 to campaign for democracy in Iraq. Though predominantly aimed at the extensive US Iraqi community, it also acts as a forum for Iraqi dissidents of all backgrounds.

### **Iraqi Forum for Democracy**

Website. [www.iraqifd.org](http://www.iraqifd.org)

Founded in the USA in 1998, the IFD seeks to "promote pluralistic democracy for Iraq by non-violent means". Emad Dhia is the IFD president. On Aug. 25, 2002, the IDF wrote an open letter criticizing the Group of Six (see entry) for dominating ties with Washington.

### **Iraqi National Congress (INC)**

Leadership. *Dr Ahmed Chalabi (head of ruling triumvirate); Sharif Ali bin Al-Hussein; Sheikh Mohammed Mohammed Ali*

Website. [www.inc.org.uk](http://www.inc.org.uk)

The INC began in 1992, but its origins probably lie in a group called the Joint Action Committee of the Iraqi Opposition (JACIO). On Dec. 27, 1990, a group of 17 parties opposed to the Ba'athist regime in Iraq met in Damascus, where they adopted a Kurdish proposal to end differences between nationalist and Islamic groups. JACIO also demanded the immediate withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait. In February 1991 they gathered in Riyadh, with the pro-Western Free Iraq Council (see separate entry), to plan a government-in-exile. Saudi Arabia subsequently had qualms about backing a group that included the pro-Iranian SCIRI (see entry).

In March 1991 JACIO and 13 other groups met in Beirut while the Shiite and Kurdish rebellions were in full swing. They approved the following: world support for the uprisings, a structured framework for uniting Iraqi opposition, the overthrowing of Saddam Hussein, a "just solution" to the Kurdish question, guaranteed rights for Turkomen and Assyrian minorities, and direct and free elections to a constituent council which would draft a new Constitution. JACIO lost much authority after the rebellions collapsed. In June its members rejected any deal with Saddam and criticized Kurdish members who had negotiated with him. Shiite

delegates feared that a separate Kurdish deal would free Iraqi forces to repress the south again.

The INC (in Arabic *al-Mu'tamar al-Watani al-Iraqi*) was created in June 1992 out of elements of the JACIO, in another bid to provide an umbrella for disputing factions. According to Robert Rabil, writing in MERIA journal, December 2002, the INC conspicuously differed from JACIO in loosening ties with regional nations (especially Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Syria) and tightening links with Western powers (notably the UK and USA). From the outset the INC received CIA support

Nineteen groups represented by about 300 delegates affiliated themselves to the INC at its founding conference in Vienna. Significantly, these included (and still nominally include) the Kurdish KDP and PUK. Secularists, democrats, liberals and Islamists were also represented. A further meeting of 234 representatives of opposition groups was held in Salahuddin, Iraqi Kurdistan, in October 1992, when the theocratic Shiite SCIRI joined for the first time. Striving to maintain the ethno-religious balance, delegates elected a three-man presidential council consisting of Mohammed Bahr al-Uloum, a senior Shiite scholar from Najaf; Masoud Barzani, head of the KDP; and Hasan Mustafa al-Naqib, a retired Sunni general. The INC decided to set up its headquarters in Irbil, in northern Iraq (or southern Kurdistan). A 26-member executive council became in effect the INC's cabinet, and Dr Ahmed Chalabi was selected as its president.

Chalabi remains the INC's leading light. An ambitious and talented American-educated Shiite mathematician and banker, he left Iraq in 1956. For many years he was based in Lebanon, but civil war there persuaded him to leave the country for Amman, where he established the influential Petra Bank. Chalabi is a controversial figure, and is currently wanted in Jordan on charges of fraud and of causing the kingdom's currency collapse of 1989. He was convicted in absentia and sentenced to 22 years in jail but has rejected the charges as politically motivated. Suspected by Saudi Arabia because he is Shiite, he is also mistrusted by Turkey. By contrast, he is allegedly much admired by Washington neo-conservatives, including Deputy Secretary of Defence Paul Wolfowitz and Richard Perle, the strategist who headed the Pentagon's Defence Policy Board.

It became clear that Irbil was a problematic site for INC offices, after clashes started in 1993 between the KDP and PUK. Kurdish problems soon infected other sectors: in September 1993 the Shiite *Daw'a* party withdrew from the INC; after May 1995 both Bahr al-Uloum and Gen. Naqib suspended their membership, rendering the tripartite presidency void. Communists, nationalists and dissident Ba'athists in Europe objected to the INC platform, and its mode of selecting representatives.

Chalabi enjoys the support of the US Defence Department and White House. But elements in the CIA and State Department reportedly mistrust him and accuse him of financial irregularities. They favour instead Alawi's Iraqi National Accord (INA, see entry). Likewise Kurdish groups (albeit technically part of the INC) felt that Chalabi made the USA favour the INC with funds, and deny them access to sums released by the Iraq Liberation Act (see below). Chalabi also faces a foe in Dr Laith Kubba, who co-founded the INC with him in 1992, but who subsequently left to form the



Iraqi National Group (see entry below).

In 1995 the INC launched an insurrection to oust Saddam Hussein. After it failed, the INC blamed the USA for withdrawing support at the last minute. In August 1996 Iraqi troops and the KDP (see entry) attacked the PUK, and also INC bases in northern Iraq, killing 200 supporters and forcing thousands to flee. Iraqi forces ransacked INC offices in Irbil and Salahuddin and captured and interrogated many INC personnel. This eroded INC unity and made Irbil an unsafe location for its headquarters, which moved to London. Chalabi himself settled in the UK and became a British citizen. A chastened INC had to reconsider its relations with the KDP, as well as its rival and the INC's more faithful friend, the PUK.

Chalabi redirected his attention to lobbying in Washington. In 1997 he promoted the establishment of Indict, an organization dedicated to bringing to international justice the top 12 Iraqi officials. He helped draft and realize the 1998 Iraq Liberation Act passed by the US Congress on Sept. 29, 1998. This Act institutionalized the INC as the main US conduit for supporting political change in Iraq, and authorised the passage of nearly \$100 million to facilitate activities. In March 1999 the INC sought to rebuild itself by electing a provisional seven-member leadership, in Windsor, UK. However, Kurdish groups soon left, followed by Communists, SCIRI, INA and others.

To some extent, the vacuum was filled in 1999 by the London-based Constitutional Monarchy Movement (CMM – see entry), which joined the INC after years of opposition. Its leader, Sharif Ali ibn al-Hussein, became one of INC's ruling triumvirate and a prominent INC spokesman and negotiator with Washington. Sheikh Mohammed Mohammed Ali, a religious scholar living in London, joined Sharif Ali and Dr Chalabi as the third member of the ruling INC triumvirate. In 2002 Chalabi's name was cited as the potential head of a post-Saddam government.

The Group of Four was formed by the KDP, PUK, SCIRI and INA as an alternative to the INC, which it saw as dominating contacts with Washington. However, the INC (and its new partner, the CMM) joined the Four in 2002 to create a new Group of Six, which negotiated in August 2002 with US officials.

At an Iraqi Opposition Open Conference, with up to 526 delegates, held in London in December 2002, the INC advocated the creation of a "nucleus transitional authority" for a future post-Saddam government in Iraq. The INC joined the resultant 65-member steering committee for Iraqi opposition groups (see entry on the Follow-up and Arrangement Committee) and Chalabi won one of the six seats on its leadership council.

Ahmed Chalabi returned to Iraq after the US-led invasion, and on April 6 he addressed a crowd of supporters in the southern city of Nassiriya, urging them to join him in removing the "the final remnants" of Saddam's regime. Later that month Jordanian Foreign Minister Marwan Muasher stated: "Ahmed Chalabi does not have credibility, either inside Iraq or in the region". On April 18 Mohammed Mohsen al-Zubaidi, a putative ally of Chalabi's, declared himself "chief of the executive council" in Baghdad. Some regarded him as a "stalking horse" for Chalabi himself. US security arrested him on April 27 and the INC leader dis-

owned him. In May Chalabi claimed that Saddam was still in Iraq, under "special protection".

By late September there were reports of renewed tension between the US administration and Chalabi. At the time Chalabi was presiding as acting chairman of the provisional Governing Council, of which he was a key member. Washington refused to pass over further powers to the Council that it had nominated while Chalabi wanted more autonomy for the Council, in particular over finance and security ministries; he also wished to expedite a swifter US departure from the country. According to press reports, the Pentagon wanted Chalabi to gain more powers whereas the State Department favoured more caution, and preferred a greater role for other countries in securing Iraq's future.

### **Iraqi National Council**

*Website.* [www.eatlaf.com](http://www.eatlaf.com)

*Leadership.* Maj.-Gen. Tawfiq al-Yasiri; Brigadier Saad al-Ubeidi

Also known as the Iraqi National Coalition (not to be confused with the Coalition of Iraqi National Forces, above) the Council is known in Arabic as *Al-I'tilaf al-Watani al-Iraqi*. It was officially founded as an umbrella group of former officers in March 2000. Its military wing, the Iraqi Military Alliance, was apparently created a year earlier. The London-based al-Yasiri, a Shiite naval officer and former head of Iraq's military academy, heads both the Council and the Military Alliance. The Council seems to enjoy most of its support from Sunni Iraqis, notwithstanding Yasiri's Shiite provenance. Yasiri had led mutinous units in the mainly Shiite southern Iraqi uprising in 1991. He was wounded and escaped to the West through Saudi Arabia.

In July 2002 the Council hosted a three-day conference of 70 former officers in Kensington Town Hall, London. The meeting formally set up a 15-man military council in exile. Prominent figures present included former Iraqi Brigadier Generals Naguib al-Saleh, Fadel al-Assaf and Saad al-Ubeidi, and former Jordanian Crown Prince, Hassan bin Talal, uncle of King Abdullah II of Jordan, apparently in a personal capacity. The most prominent person not involved was General Nizar al-Khazraji, the highest-ranking defector from Saddam's army. The resultant 10-point "Covenant of Honour" committed the group to returning power to civilian rule after overthrowing the Saddam regime, respect for human rights and the rule of law, and the restitution of exiles' confiscated property. On Aug. 23, 2002, the Council opened "volunteer centres" around the world to recruit and train Iraqi exiles to fight Iraqi forces, alongside American troops.

### **Iraqi National Forces**

This alliance of opposition groups was first announced on June 25, 2002. Its declared aim was to overthrow Saddam Hussein without foreign intervention. The *al-Zaman* newspaper reported that it included the Iraqi Communist Party, the Islamic Daw'a party, the Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party (Iraq Command), the Group of Mujahedin Ulema in Iraq, the Islamic Action Party, the Iraqi Democratic Grouping, the Kurdistan Communist Party, the Socialist Party in Iraq, the Turkomen Democratic Party, the Arab Socialist Movement, the Islamic Union for Iraq's Turkomen, and the Assyrian

Ethnic Organization, plus unnamed independent political and military figures.

### **Iraqi National Group (ING)**

The founder of this Washington-based group is Dr Laith Kubba. Kubba co-founded the Iraqi National Congress (INC) with Chalabi in 1992, but after a bitter dispute, left the organization. Pre-war, Kubba (a Shiite) called for a post-Saddam interim government that would end “strongman” politics and be inclusive of minorities. In early 2003 the ING decided to join forces with Adnan Pachachi’s Independent Iraqis for Democracy (see entry under Sunni Groups, below).

## **COMMUNIST PARTIES**

### **Iraqi Communist Party (ICP)**

*Leadership.* Aziz Mohammed (first secretary)

*Website.* [www.iraqcp.org](http://www.iraqcp.org)

Founded in 1934, the pro-Soviet ICP – known as *al-Hizb al-Shuyu'i al-Iraqi* in Arabic – enjoyed a substantial popular following, thanks in part to its excellent organization. After Abdul Karim Qasim’s 1958 coup it gained influence in his non-party administration, although individual members were imprisoned. In 1963 the new regime executed or assassinated up to 5,000 ICP members and outlawed the party. Repression decreased after Ba’ath elements were ousted from government in 1964. The ICP was particularly popular among educated Kurds.

When the Ba’ath took sole power in 1968, under the leadership of President al-Bakr and his protégé, Saddam Hussein, they initially reconciled with the ICP. Two ICP members joined the government in 1972, and in July 1973 the party was admitted to the National Progressive Patriotic Front (NPPF) and formally legalized for the first time. According to some analysts, the Ba’ath exploited the NPPF arrangement as a means to wrest control of national organizations hitherto dominated by the ICP.

The ICP had long nurtured relations with Kurdish autonomists; when the Kurdish uprising collapsed in 1975, the ICP was repressed once more, with army purges and executions in 1978-79. These mounted when Saddam became President. The party’s press criticized the government over its attitude to Soviet foreign policy, Kurdish autonomy, lack of democracy and relations with Syria. In early 1979 party secretary Aziz Mohammed was forced to flee Iraq, and in March the ICP left the NPPF. The two ICP cabinet ministers were dismissed, while Saddam accused the party of having links with “imperialists and Zionists”.

The ICP transferred its centre of operations to Kurdistan, and increasingly fought alongside the PUK and KDP peshmerga (see under Kurdish Groups). On Nov. 12, 1980, the ICP joined six other parties in a National Democratic and Pan-Arab Front dedicated to overthrowing Saddam Hussein. It supported Iran in the war and looked to Syria as an ally. On Feb. 14, 1982, Aziz Mohammed and Syrian President Assad jointly condemned the Iran-Iraq war for “diverting Arab states from their battles against the Zionist enemy”. However, Iran subsequently distanced itself from the ICP, while Saddam improved ties with the Soviet Union. Following the 1987-88 Anfal Campaign against the Kurds, the ICP was forced to move to Syria. The collapse of the USSR in 1991

led the ICP to dilute its Marxist-Leninist ideology.

After 1991 the ICP joined the JACIO anti-Saddam umbrella coalition (see entry for Iraqi National Congress). The collapse of the Soviet Union dented its power, but the ICP maintained its tight structure. On June 23, 2002, the ICP joined the Coalition of Iraqi National Forces as a senior partner and took up a position opposed to US military intervention in Iraq while accepting that pragmatically this might be necessary to unseat Saddam.

Aziz Mohammed remains first secretary; Hamid Majid Mousa is secretary of its central committee. Hamid Majid Mousa now represents the ICP on the Governing Council; another Communist, Mufid Mohammad Jawad al-Jazairi, serves as culture minister.

According to the Iraqi National Alliance, two “patriotic” branches broke away from the ICP after 1991, of which one, led by Khalid Salam and Ahmad Karim, joined the Alliance. The other bloc is called the Advanced Cadre, and was led by a member of the ICP politburo, Baqir Ibrahim al-Mousawi. Alliance leader, Abdul Jabbar al-Kubeisi, claimed that the official ICP in Kurdistan was under the sway of the “Kurdish National Movement”, had accepted US money (funding anti-Saddam groups) and was awash with Kuwaiti funds.

### **Worker Communist Party of Iraq (WCPI)**

*Website.* [www.wpiraq.org](http://www.wpiraq.org)

A more doctrinaire Marxist grouping than the Iraqi Communist Party, the WCPI was founded by Mansoor Hekmat and held its first congress in July 1994. The WCPI opposes pseudo-leftist groups, as they see it, like the Kurdish PUK. It considers Kurdish autonomy as regression into non-progressive nationalism, but demands a referendum so that “the people of Kurdistan control their own destiny”. It equally regards political Islam as atavistic, and fights for women’s rights, and against the practice of honour killings. The WCPI has some eccentric platforms in its vast programme: it seeks to dissolve the national army, which it accuses of being a tool of the bourgeoisie, and replace it with a people’s militia. It also urges Iranians to abandon the Farsi alphabet and replace it with the Latin one instead, so as to benefit from science. Currently led by Rebwar Ahmed, who succeeded the revered Hekmat after his death in 2001, the WCPI held its second congress in December 2002. In 2003 it launched ferocious verbal assaults on and arranged large demonstrations against the US “annihilation war” against Iraq. The WCPI has an active website, in English, German, Arabic and Kurdish; and publishes a newsletter, *Forward*.

## **SHIITE GROUPS**

The Shiite trend within Islam originated after the Prophet’s son-in-law, Ali ibn Abu Talib, became the fourth Caliph in the mid-7th century. His partisans – Shi’at Ali, hence Shiite or Shi’a – regarded the previous three Caliphs as impostors. Soon these partisans fought adversaries from the majority Sunni trend for supremacy in the broader Muslim *umma* (community of believers). What began as a theological schism developed into a cultural and political one. Most early battles took place around the southern Iraqi cities of Najaf, Karbala and Kufa. Hussein, son of Ali and

grandson of Mohammed, was killed in Karbala in 680 along with 72 companions; a pivotal historical moment commemorated annually in the Shiite Ashura Muharram festival.

Traditionally, the Shiite imam fuses spiritual with communal leadership – a factor of significance to Shiite dissident groups. Other features of Shi'ism include veneration of martyrdom, a strong and autonomous clergy (*ulema*), and a general self-perception of being a righteous, “authentically Muslim”, yet often persecuted minority. This is as true of Iraq as it is of Shiites in Lebanon, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia.

Only in Iran are mainstream “Twelver” Shiites an overwhelming majority, and part of the establishment. Iran's comparatively late adoption of Shi'ism as the state religion in the 16th century lent the Sunni-Shiite schism an ethnic hue (Persian versus Arab). Iraqi Shiites were and still are influenced by their more numerous and powerful Persian co-religionists. Yet they are overwhelmingly Arab by ethnicity, like their Sunni fellow countrymen, and are proud of the fact that the holiest sites in Shiite Islam – Najaf and Karbala – are located within Iraq's borders.

Globally, Shiites make up 10% of all Muslims; in Iraq they constitute some 55-65% of the population, and more than 75% of the Arab population. Their numerical preponderance, however, is rarely reflected in government, which has traditionally remained the province of the Sunni Arab minority of central Iraq, around Baghdad and the western regions. Likewise Sunnis dominated the Iraqi military, both in Ottoman times, under the Sharif and later King of Iraq. Since the 1958 republican revolution, the Sunni leaders of each successive coup have offered Shiites positions of power, but each has broken these promises. (The first leader, Abdul Karim Qasim, was of mixed Shiite-Sunni parentage, but was compelled to favour Sunni interests).

Paradoxically, the first leader of Iraq's Ba'ath movement was a Shiite, Fuad al-Rikabi (he was ousted in 1959 and murdered in prison in 1971). And in the early 1960s, Ba'ath secretary-general Ali Salih al-Saadi was said to be a Shiite of Lur descent (Lurs being a people related to Kurds). After the mid-1960s, however, the Ba'ath purged itself of left-wing Shiites and became overwhelmingly a Sunni Arab group. Sunnis felt stronger natural affinities to pan-Arabism. Two exceptions to this general rule were Amer al-Saadi, Saddam's science minister and presidential advisor, and Saadoun Hammadi, a Ba'ath official who favoured liberalization. Hammadi briefly became Prime Minister after the 1991 war, and then parliamentary speaker in 1995.

Individual Shiites (notably Ahmed Chalabi of the INC) have led nationalist groups that defy ethnic or confessional barriers. However, specifically Shiite groups stress devotion to the Shiite faith, rather than socialism, pan-Arabism or Iraqi patriotism. There is no major wholly secular Shiite sectarian group. The longest established group, *Daw'a*, was known for its hatred of communism. Shiites from the port of Basra,

former capital of the Ottoman province of that name, tend to be more secular in orientation. Distinction is made between them and Shiites from the hinterland, and especially from the holy cities of Karbala and Najaf. Karbala in particular, site of the martyrdom in battle of Ali's son, Hussein, became a centre of Shiite autonomy in the mid-18th century.

It is also worth noting that about half the population of the capital Baghdad is believed to be Shiite, mostly economic migrants from the south who settled there years ago. Over the Saddam decades they developed a distinctive identity, as seen in the phenomenon of the radical *Sadriyyun* movement.

**Marsh Arabs**, who number some 250,000, constitute a peculiar subsection of the broader Shiite community. Though they had lived in the wetlands region bordering Iran for some 5,000 years, over the past decade 100,000 have been displaced within Iraq, and another 40,000 expelled to Iran. Baghdad deliberately drained the marshes and thereby ruined 90% of the local ecology. One reason given was that they could thereby destroy cover used by Shiite rebels.

### Shiites under Saddam

In the years 1972-80, Iraq employed a policy some have called variously “ethnic cleansing” or “Arabization”, and deported 200,000 Shiites, Turkomen and Kurds to Iran. It banned religious trusts, *awqaf*, in 1978, thereby partly disabling the Shiite clerical authority, the *hawza*.

The coming to power of Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran in 1979 provided a new impetus to Iraq's Shiites. Indeed, the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war may have been partly prompted by Iraqi fears that a Shiite Islamic revolution would take root in the south. There were strong connections between Ayatollah Khomeini and Iraq's Shiite clerical establishment: the imam had lived in exile in southern Iraq for decades, until (then Vice President) Saddam Hussein expelled him to Paris in 1978. Some 70 per cent of the 3 million inhabitants of Iran's Khuzestan Province, which abuts Iraq, are Arab Shiites like their neighbours across the border.

In the event many Iraqi Shiite soldiers were forced to fight against their confessional cousins in Iran, despite the objections of the world's leading Shiite cleric, Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Abu al-Qasim al-Khoei. During and after the war approximately 250,000 Iraqi Shiites moved to Iran. One Shiite underground group attempted to kill Iraq's Foreign Minister, Tariq Aziz, in 1980. For the most part, and unlike the Kurds of the north, there was no significant Shiite rebellion during the 1980-88 war.

However, there was a major rebellion in March 1991 in the aftermath of the Gulf War. Rebels, many from the newly empowered Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq (SCIRI, see entry), hanged up to 30 Ba'ath officials near the golden shrine of Abbas in Karbala. The revolt proved short-lived and was brutally crushed within a month. Some 105 senior clerics and religious scholars disappeared immediately after the uprising; at least 30,000 people died in the



uprising; 92-year-old Ayatollah al-Khoei was detained; in June 1991 an historic Shiite shrine was demolished in Samara.

Repression and persecution persisted, albeit less dramatically, in the years after 1991. Grand Ayatollah Mohammed Sadiq al-Sadr was shot dead in Najaf on Feb. 19 1999. Though five people were arrested for the attack, which also claimed the lives of al-Sadr's two sons, similar incidents persisted. In June 2001, a UN report deemed that there had been "a systematic attack on the independent leadership of Shiite Muslims in Iraq". There were numerous accounts of arrests without charge and prison torture, and many disappeared. Many Shiite leaders remained across the border in Iran. Repression of Shiites was most noticeable in the Iraqi south. For instance, in November 1998 SCIRI reported that 150 people, including imams and army defectors, had been executed in Amara, and another 50 in Radhwaniya. There were also various reports of assassinations of Shiite exiles in other countries by Saddam's agents.

Matters improved when in late 1996 the USA extended the southern no-fly zone from the 32nd to the 33rd parallel, just south of Baghdad. The Saddam regime was compelled to use clerics under the *hawza* to distribute funds for medicine; it attempted to appease Shiites by restoring some banned religious ceremonies in 1998, and permitting religious education in summer schools. But its national faith campaign, *hamla imaniya*, backfired by fuelling Shiite consciousness.

### Shiites and 2003 War

There was little organized Shiite dissident action against Saddam's forces in the 2003 US-led war on Iraq. This contrasted with the situation in the Kurdish north, where the PUK and KDP co-operated openly and successfully with invading US troops. There were reports of a belated uprising in Basra, though this appeared later to be limited in scale, and was soon quelled by Iraqi army and paramilitary units. Pro-Saddam forces defended fiercely from several Shiite-populated cities, like Nasiriyah, Najaf, Basra and Karbala. Some Shiites said that the Ba'ath's iron grip, and threats of instant execution, prevented a successful insurrection. Others claimed that they did not want to repeat the error of 1991, in trusting in Western support (British Prime Minister Tony Blair admitted in March 2003 that the West "had let them down" in 1991). In addition, the USA was wary about SCIRI, its theocratic philosophy, and its connections with Iran (defined as one of the three "axis of evil" powers by George W. Bush in January 2002). Such wariness was reflected in Donald Rumsfeld's warning, made on March 29, 2003, in the second week of the military campaign, to Iran, SCIRI and SCIRI's Iranian-backed militia, the Badr Brigades, not to intervene in the conflict.

Since the end of the war, Shiites have enjoyed restored religious rites, including the annual pilgrimage to Najaf, banned for decades, which in 2003 attracted some four million marchers. Shiites enjoy a slight over-

all majority of 13 on the 25-member Governing Council. One member, an independent, Wael Abdul Latif, was also appointed governor of Basra. Politicians are now generally careful to consult with the established clerical headquarters in Najaf, the *hawza*.

Yet there were worrying developments, too, not least the assassinations of two leading clerics, both in Najaf, Abdul Majid al-Khoei in April and SCIRI leader, Mohammed Bakr al-Hakim in August; and the assassination of the secular Shiite female politician and Governing Council member, Aqila al-Hashimi, in September. Some blamed this violence, and the intimidation of other leading clerics, like *hawza* chief, Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, on renegade supporters of the young Muqtada al-Sadr of Baghdad. Evidently a schism had opened between younger Baghdadi Shiites and the more established southerners; and between exiles, like al-Hakim, and those who remained throughout Saddam's reign, like al-Sadr.

Three central themes emerge regarding the Shiite groups: firstly, levels of dependence on or independence from Tehran; secondly, the extent to which groups have played down their commitment to government based on Shari'a law; and thirdly, the question of Shiite separatism versus national unity and democratic institutions.

### Al-Daw'a al-Islamiya (The Call of Islam)

*Leadership. Dr Ibrahim al-Ja'afari (spokesperson for collective leadership)*

The Daw'a Party has the longest pedigree of all Shiite political factions. It was formally established in 1968, but was based on the Association of Najaf Ulama (clergy), which began in 1958. *Daw'a/Ulama* fiercely opposed atheism, secularism and communism. It was supported by senior Shiite ayatollahs from the holy southern cities of Najaf and Karbala, notably Muhsin al-Hakim (al-Tabataba'i) and his son, and subsequently leader of SCIRI (see below), Mohammed Bakr al-Hakim. Its longtime spiritual leader was the venerated Ayatollah Sayyid Muhammad Bakr al-Sadr and its "operational leader" was Sheikh Arif al-Basri.

From the outset *Al-Daw'a* was a clandestine group based on tight knit secret cells (*halaqat*) and a strict hierarchy, modelled on the traditional *ulama* structure. Its more militant "activist" members evidently drew inspiration from a small Shiite group of extremists in Iran, who carried out assassinations there in the 1950s and 1960s, called *Fadayeen-e-Eslam*.

The Ba'ath regime stepped up persecution of *Al-Daw'a* in the early 1970s, executing five of its leaders in December 1974. The Iraqi authorities put to death 500 Shiite activists between 1974 and 1980, most of them *Al-Daw'a* supporters. Unsurprisingly, *Al-Daw'a* welcomed the Islamic revolution in neighbouring Iran. Ayatollah al-Sadr broadly supported Ayatollah Khomeini's philosophy of *Velayat e faqih* (loosely, the right of clerics to rule politically over a sharia-based state). In July 1979 he requested the right to lead a procession to Iran to congratulate Khomeini. When this was refused, riots erupted in Najaf and Karbala. Analysts say the Iranian example inspired the group's change from secrecy and conservatism, to populism and mass action.

In March 1980 Baghdad made affiliation with the party liable to death; Ayatollah Muhammad Bakr al-Sadr and his sister, Bint al-Huda, were murdered by the Saddam regime on April 9, 1980. *Daw'a* renamed its military wing *Shahid al-Sadr* (The Martyr al-Sadr). That year some 40,000 Shiites were deported to Iran and another 96 were executed. In response to this calamity, many *Daw'a* operatives fled to Iran, and there established the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq (SCIRI, see entry below). In time SCIRI became a separate rival organization. Other *Daw'a* followers took exile in Europe.

Mohammed Sadiq al-Sadr, a pupil of Bakr al-Sadr, succeeded his mentor as *Daw'a* spiritual leader. (Unlike many other Shiite clerics, including the Hakim brothers of SCIRI, he remained in Iraq until he, too, was killed by Saddam agents, in 1999.) Meanwhile, Al-Daw'a's Iranian-trained Mujaheddin fighting units, led by Said Mohammad al-Haidari, attempted to kill Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz on April 1 and Saddam Hussein on June 4. In the early 1980s *Al-Daw'a* encouraged unrest in the Shiite south, operating as a fifth column during the Iran-Iraq war.

On June 27, 1982, five Shiites joined the Cabinet, presumably an attempt to co-opt Shiites into the establishment. Nevertheless *Al-Daw'a* shunned any reconciliation; it tried but failed to kill Saddam in July, near Dujail, after which 150 died in a battle between *Daw'a* fighters and Ba'ath security personnel. On Aug. 1 *Daw'a* claimed a car bombing of a government building in Baghdad that killed 20 people. The party also rejected an amnesty in February 1985, calling it "a propaganda ploy", and took credit for an Iraqi airliner hijacking and crash in December 1986.

By this stage, however, Iran's Ayatollah Montazeri began calling for Al-Daw'a's dissolution. Tehran objected to its collective leadership and communist-style cell structure, and switched its patronage to the SCIRI. *Al-Daw'a* became one of six member parties in this umbrella group. On April 9, 1987, an *Al-Daw'a* unit ambushed Saddam's motorcade near Mosul, killing 10 bodyguards and just missing the President. Another 20 people died in a Baghdad car bombing on Aug. 12. In early 1988 the organization was hit by an Iraqi campaign to eliminate opponents. In January Iraqi intelligence agents assassinated Mahdi al-Hakim, son of the late Grand Ayatollah Muhsin al-Hakim, in Khartoum, Sudan.

Based in Tehran, *Al-Daw'a* continued to support an Islamic state in Iraq, although it tended to be shunned by most Arab states, apart from Syria and Lebanon. It joined the Damascus-based National Democratic Front soon after it was formed on Nov. 28, 1980. It also belongs to the Coalition of Iraqi National Forces. Its spokespersons include Dr Ibrahim al-Ja'afari and Abu-Bilal al-Adib, member of the Political Bureau. A small breakaway faction apparently controls Al-Daw'a's website.

*Daw'a* also joined the Iraqi National Congress (see entry above) umbrella group in its own capacity, in 1992. It participated in the INC-organized October 1992 assembly in Salaheddin, in autonomous Kurdish northern Iraq. The assembly appointed one prominent *Daw'a* sympathizer, Sayed Mohamed Bahr-al-Ulloum, to the INC's three-man presidential council. However, *Daw'a* left the INC partially in 1993, and fully in May 1995, citing its opposition to the INC's plans for a federal Iraq.

*Al-Daw'a* technically has belonged to the Shiite umbrella group, SCIRI. However, in practice its ideology and strategy have diverged considerably from the latter. *Al-Daw'a* currently operates separately from SCIRI, which usurped its formerly pre-eminent role in Iraqi Shiite politics. In January 2000 Al-Daw'a's then secretary-general Muhammad Mahdi Asefi was forced to resign because he tried to subordinate the group more fully to the wishes of the Iranian leadership.

It has been reported that *Al-Daw'a* has split into five factions. A number of these joined a new grouping, originally founded by a splinter from SCIRI, and called the Union of Iraqi Islamic Forces (UIIF). The UIIF rejects SCIRI's perceived over-reliance on Iran, which it has blamed for the defeat of the 1991 uprising. *Daw'a* currently asserts that it places the interests of Iraq above those of a putative Islamic *umma* (community of believers). It accepts the need for democratic government in Iraq, and values "the popular will", rather than, as before, edicts passed by clerics from above.

*Daw'a* joined the Coalition of Iraqi National Forces upon its launch in July 2002 (see entry). Like other CINF members, *Daw'a* opposed US plans to invade Iraq, and favoured overthrow of the Ba'ath regime without "outside interference". Nonetheless, a *Daw'a*-affiliated leader of the Shiite Ahlul Bayt World Assembly (ABWA) was appointed to the 65-member US-backed Follow-up and Arrangement Committee (see entry). (*Ahlul Bayt* means "People of the House of the Prophet".) On Jan. 10, 2003, *Daw'a* leader Dr Ja'afari met Zalmay Khalilzad, President Bush's special envoy for "free Iraqis", in Washington. It appears that Ahmed Chalabi, head of the INC and a fellow Shiite, helped arrange the meeting. The event appeared significant, as *Al-Daw'a* had hitherto resisted being drawn into the broad US-backed anti-Saddam coalition, and rejected plans for a US-led attack on Iraq.

*Daw'a* leaders, Dr Ja'afari and the influential Tehran-based ideologue, Muhammad Bakr al-Nasiri, returned to Iraq after the fall of Saddam Hussein in April 2003. In late June one *Daw'a* political bureau member was quoted as saying that there was "no interest in a US withdrawal at this moment". Radical anti-American forces accused *Daw'a* of "informing the occupation forces about resistance forces". *Daw'a* boycotted the first round of post-war opposition conferences, but participated in the second. Dr Ja'afari accepted a seat on the eventual Governing Council of Iraq, and in fact served as its first president, or chairman, in August.

Meanwhile, and by contrast, radical supporters of the young Baghdad-based cleric, Muqtada al-Sadr, son of the murdered Ayatollah Mohammed Sadiq al-Sadr, claimed to speak on behalf of a radical anti-US splinter, sometimes called the "party" of Al-Daw'a, or *Hizb al-Daw'a al-Islamiya*. There is some confusion of nomenclature, as this title is sometimes used as the full name of *Daw'a* itself. More accurately the group should be called *Sadriyyun* (see separate entry). They soon established a reputation as the most violent foe of Western forces, former Ba'ath officials, secular Shiites, and religio-political Shiite rivals.

Abdul Karim al-Anizi, a member of the *Daw'a* leadership council, claimed that people followed Muqtada al-Sadr only because of his father's reputation. In the search for a charismatic figure to rival Muqtada, some *Daw'a* officials

have even considered asking Grand Ayatollah Mohammed Hassan Fadlallah to return to Iraq and lead them. Fadlallah was born to Lebanese Shiite parents in Najaf in 1934. He studied under Ayatollah al-Khoei and co-founded the Iraqi Daw'a in the 1960s. In Lebanon he inspired the creation of *Hezbollah*. By mid-2003 he had apparently softened his earlier harsh opposition to temporary foreign occupation in Iraq, and certainly enjoys the religious and political credentials to rival al-Sadr.

The two Daw'a representatives on the Governing Council are Dr Jaf'ari and Ezzedine Salam. Another two Daw'a supporters are ministers: Haidar al-Abbadi and Khoddayir Abbas.

### Al-Khoei Foundation

An influential body, with headquarters in London and centres in the USA, the Foundation was created in honour of the teachings of Grand Ayatollah Abdul Qasim al-Khoei, regarded as the most senior Shiite cleric in the world during his lifetime. But the murder in Iraq of his son and Foundation leader, Sayyid Abdul Majid al-Khoei, in April 2003, shocked the group and naturally eroded its potency in the short term.

Grand Ayatollah Abdul Qasim made enemies with the regime when he called on Shiite Iraqis not to fight their co-religionists in Iran, during the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war. In March 1991, following the Shiite uprising in the south, the Ayatollah's son, Abdul Majid, set up a body in Najaf to ensure that his father's wishes about not pursuing vendettas was observed. The uprising collapsed when Saddam's Republican Guard retaliated, and Abdul Majid fled to London where he set up the Foundation as a charitable institute. The Grand Ayatollah himself remained in Iraq, but died in August 1992.

In July 1994 Abdul Majid's brother, Taghi, was assassinated, after which Abdul Majid became secretary general of the Foundation. An influential figure in the exiled Iraqi community, he eschewed overt politics, yet consulted widely with UK politicians, including Prime Minister Blair, and Iraqi opposition figures opposed to the Saddam regime. The Foundation enjoyed close ties with the late King Hussein of Jordan, as well as Prince Hassan and current Crown Prince, Hamza bin al-Hussein. The body also became known for interfaith activity with Christians, Jews and other Muslims. Meanwhile, supporters of Al-Khoei were harassed by Iran, as well as by the Iraqi government, as Tehran favoured their rivals in the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq (SCIRI, see entry).

After the successful US-UK military campaign, Abdul Majid returned to Iraq on April 3, 2003. Accompanied by the US military, he returned to his native Najaf, where he soon set up a 25-member group to maintain order, provide food and re-open closed mosques in the liberated zone. His remit soon extended north to Karbala and east to Diwaniya. He aroused opposition amongst some fellow clerics by insisting on a clear division between state and religious authority. On April 10, Abdul Majid and his assistant, Haidar al-Kaldar, were murdered in the Shrine of Imam Ali Abu Talib, in Najaf, one of the holiest sites in the Shiite faith. The exact circumstances were unclear but it is thought that Abdul Majid was negotiating a possible truce with rival Shiite groups when fighting erupted. Followers of the young cleric

Muqtada al-Sadr (see entry on *Sadriyyun*) were suspected of the assassination.

Abdul Majid's younger brothers, including Yusuf al-Khoei, continue to run the Foundation in London but its future role in Iraqi politics remains unclear. Meanwhile, one Shiite cleric affiliated to the Foundation, Mohammed Bahr al-Ulloum, joined the Governing Council, but resigned his seat in protest at the lack of security that he said led to the assassination of Ayatollah al-Hakim in late August. The imam's son, Ibrahim Mohammad Bahr al-Ulloum, acts as Iraq's new oil minister.

### Badr Brigade

Regarded as the military wing of the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq (SCIRI, see entry below) the Badr Brigade has an estimated 8,000-10,000 men under arms. It was set up in 1983 with the express purpose of combating Iraqi troops in the south of the country. Badr refers to a pivotal battle fought near Medina, in early Muslim history. Many of the combatants are Iraqi Shiites who were expelled to Iran during the early days of the Iran-Iraq war. Others are deserters from the Iraqi army, or politicized clerical students. In the 1991 Gulf War the Badr Brigade briefly captured Najaf, on the Euphrates, but in March 1991 Baghdad crushed the Shiite rebellion; escapees rejoined the Brigade in Iran. The corps consists of infantry, armoured, artillery, anti-aircraft and commando units, and is strongly backed by the Islamic Republic of Iran.

On March 4, 2003, ABC News reported that the Badr Brigade had set up camp at the foot of Mount Zimnako, 11 miles into PUK-controlled Iraqi territory. Evidently some Kurdish militias welcomed their presence, while others feared intervention by "Iranian proxies". Likewise, Turkish military sources expressed disquiet, as the brigade's presence could hamper their own plans to impose a "security belt" in northern Iraq.

US officials were particularly concerned at reports that the Brigade's commanders were drawn from Iran's elite Islamic Revolutionary Guard. State Department spokesman Richard Boucher warned that the USA would "oppose any Iranian-supported presence" in Iraq, and considered Badr's potential involvement in fighting "a very serious and destabilizing development". US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld reiterated similar views in the second week of the US-led attack on Iraq, in late March 2003. He added that Iranian or Badr troops would be regarded as "hostile combatants" if they intervened in the conflict.

### Hawza

*Leadership. Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani*

Technically a non-political body, the Najaf-headquartered hawza 'ilmiya, is the supreme religious council for Iraqi Shiites, and indeed for Shiites from India. Though literally meaning "territory of learning", the hawza also provides social and religious services for its community. After the Khomeini revolution, some of its students felt compelled to leave Najaf for the seminary in Qom, Iran.

Under Saddam, the hawza had to play a cautious game, preserving its congregants' rights and helping distribute UN food-for-oil. Since April 2003 the hawza has carried out post-war welfare and economic assistance, and can operate



without constant surveillance by the Ba'ath mukhabarat (security police). By the same token, it has been drawn willy-nilly into the political turmoil typifying post-Saddam Iraq. Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani heads the council and is generally regarded as the leading Shiite spiritual authority in the country. It is thought that reformist clerics from Qom, like Ayatollah Khomeini's grandson, Hossein, wish to ally with the Najaf hawza in a bid to reform Islam and challenge Tehran hardliners.

Sistani is assisted by three other clerics, or marjas, Mohammed Ishaq Fayadh, Bashir Husein al-Najafi and Mohammed Said al-Tabata'ei al-Hakim, a relative of the late SCIRI leader, Mohammed Bakr al-Hakim. Sistani is of Iranian origin; of his three aides, only Hakim is Iraqi by origin. All four were students of Grand Ayatollah Abdul Qasim al-Khoei (see Al Khoei Foundation) and represent traditional Shiism, or *salafia ja'afaria*. A bomber tried but failed to kill Said al-Hakim in the week before the attack in Najaf that killed SCIRI leader, Mohammed Bakr al-Hakim.

At the end of the war the hawza issued a fatwa telling Shiites not to loot. Still much respected by ordinary Iraqis, the body, and especially Sistani himself, has been very cautious about intervening directly in politics. Perhaps because of his contact with US forces, he was besieged in his home by a rabble, presumably *Sadriyyun*, and a bomber tried to kill Sistani's deputy in Baghdad, Sayyid Ali al-Wa'iz. However, the son of Ayatollah Najafi told the *Financial Times*: "There can be no division between religion and politics. The hawza is the ultimate spiritual authority in Iraq." And the so-called quietist image of Najaf, by contrast with Qom's activism, may be somewhat erroneous, as its students included the elder Khomeini, and Lebanese *Hezbollah* patriarchs.

### Islamic Action Organization (IAO)

*Leadership. Ayatollah Muhammad Hadi al-Mudarrasi*

Founded in 1965 in Karbala by the late Ayatollah Muhammad al-Shirazi, the IAO developed under Shirazi's nephew and current leader, Ayatollah Muhammad Hadi al-Mudarrasi, into a clandestine group during the 1970s. The IAO was inspired by the Iranian example, and members received military training in Lebanon. From its Tehran base, the IAO attempted an armed revolt in Iraq. Incidents included a lorry bomb in Baghdad in 1983, an attack on the Iraqi Airways office in Cyprus in 1984, and a grenade attack on an officers' club in Baghdad in 1985. It was affiliated to Islamic Amal and was also a member of SCIRI and later the INC (see separate entries).

Mudarrasi broke with Iran when Ayatollah Khomeini died in 1989 and the Iranian authorities forcibly closed his seminary in Tehran. He subsequently led a branch of the IAO in Damascus, Syria. Sheikh Qasim al-Husseini leads a smaller rival pro-Iranian branch. Mudarrasi returned to Karbala soon after Saddam's fall in April 2003. He immediately set up two religious seminaries in the town, and cast himself as a moderate Iraqi nationalist who sought gradual, democratic enactment of Islamic mores. He also desires amicable relations with the West, wishes to build a new hawza university, and assiduously nurtures ecumenical ties with Sunni groups both in Iraq and outside.

### Mujahidin-e Khalq

This organization of dissident Iranians was based in southern Iraq and backed by Saddam. In March 2003 there were reports that the *Mujahidin* were joining forces with pro-Saddam Iraqis in opposing US troops fighting in southern Iraq. (The group is not to be confused with the militia also named the *Mujahidin*, run by the anti-Saddam *Al-Daw'a* movement, see entry above.)

### Sadriyyun

*Leadership. Muqtada al-Sadr (leader); Ayatollah Sayyid Qadhim al-Ha'iri (spiritual leader)*

The *Sadriyyun* ("Partisans of al-Sadr") have enjoyed a meteoric rise since the end of the 2003 war. Their leader, Muqtada al-Sadr, is the 27-year-old son of the revered Ayatollah Mohammed Sadiq al-Sadr (see *Daw'a*), killed by Saddam's forces in 1999. In April 2003 the group organized the first major anti-US demonstration after the US victory. It also employs a variety of other titles: *Hizb al-Daw'a al-Islamiya* (Party of the Call of Islam); *Harakat al-Sadr al-Thani* (Movement of the Second Sadr); and *Al-Hawza al-Natiqa* (The Active Centre of Authority). The group has increasingly distanced itself from the parent organisation, *Daw'a*; hence the *Hizb* title now seems misleading.

On Feb. 23, 2003, *Sadriyyun* representatives met with those of SCIRI and Islamic Amal in a separate session in Tehran, away from other Iraqi opposition movements who were meeting at the same time. On May 28, 2003, Muqtada attended a meeting of major religious clerics in Amman, Jordan, under the aegis of Prince Hassan of Jordan. *Sadriyyun* was said to have its main offices in Iran, with a smaller one in Syria. However, by the war's end it appeared that *Sadriyyun* was actively distancing itself from its Shiite rivals in SCIRI, both in terms of ideology and indigenous authenticity. "The ones who were abroad living in luxury cannot be real representatives", said Sheikh Adnan al-Shahmani, a spokesman for Muqtada. The group also distanced itself from Iran, possibly to cement its Iraqi nationalist credentials, although its young leader has consulted with Iran's conservative Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei.

*Sadriyyun's* stronghold lies in Sadr City – formerly Saddam City – a poor neighbourhood in Baghdad that houses approximately two million Shiites, where it has recruited among disaffected young men. Thus *Sadriyyun* arguably reflects a sociological phenomenon – the mass migration of Shiites from the south to the capital over past decades. Since the 2003 war its supporters have destroyed numerous Christian-controlled liquor shops in Baghdad and established vigilante "protection" forces in the city.

On July 31, 2003, Muqtada al-Sadr claimed that around 10,000 young men had come forward to join an "Islamic army" in the holy city of Najaf, suggesting an attempt to recapture the traditional Shiite heartland.

The ultra-conservative Karbala-born Ayatollah Qadhim al-Ha'iri is regarded as the group's spiritual leader. He removed himself to Qom, a famous clerical city in Iran, left *Da'wa* in the 1980s and has criticised SCIRI. In May 2003 he issued a fatwa legitimizing the killing of former Ba'ath officials who returned to work. He has also stoked fears that US administrators would allow Iraq to be parcelled out to foreigners and especially Jews.

The *Sadriyyun* are virulently opposed to US forces and to

all groups it deems as too pro-Western. In mid-July 2003 Muqtada al-Sadr damned the interim governing council as being full of “non-believers”, and threatened to set up his own alternative body. Some members of SCIRI blamed Muqtada’s followers for the murder of the SCIRI leader, Ayatollah Mohammed Bakr al-Hakim, on Aug. 29, outside the Imam Ali Mosque in Najaf. *Sadriyyun* rejected the accusations and Saddam loyalists or Saudi Wahhabists were also seen as possible culprits. His supporters have also been accused of killing Abdul Majid al-Khoei on April 10 (see above).

### Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq (SCIRI)

*Leadership. Nominally a collective leadership; Ayatollah ‘Abd al-Aziz al-Hakim is deputy leader; military chief and presumed acting leader*

*Website. [www.sciri.org](http://www.sciri.org)*

Also known as the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq (SAIRI), or simply the Majlis, this conglomerate organization of Shiite Islamic parties was founded on Nov. 17, 1982. Still the largest single Shiite opposition front, it originally opposed the prosecution of the Iran-Iraq war. The Ba’ath accused it of acting as agents for Iran. At the time of going to press, SCIRI’s future path is uncertain after the assassination of its prominent founder and leader, Hojatolislam Seyyed Mohammed Bakr al-Hakim, on Aug. 29, 2003.

SCIRI technically consists of several groups, including the Movement of the Iraqi Mujaheddin, the Islamic Movement in Iraq, *Jund al-Imam*, the Islamic Movement for the Kurds, *Al-Daw’a al-Islamiya*, the Islamic Action Organization and the Islamic Scholars’ Organization. Some of these groups have distanced themselves from SCIRI, generally on grounds of its close ties to Tehran, notably *Daw’a*.

The former SCIRI leader, Hojatolislam Seyyed Mohammed Bakr al-Hakim was also joint leader of the Iraqi Mujaheddin. Banished to Iran, he called for the replacement of the Iraqi “Zionist regime” by an Islamic republic on the Iranian model. A collective leadership formally replaced Bakr al-Hakim in 1985, but he remained SCIRI’s *primus inter pares*. Its 70-member assembly consists of members of the six constituent groups, and several influential individual Shiite clerics.

In early 1988 Saddam began to eliminate Shiite opponents, including a leading clergyman, Sayed Mahdi al-Hakim, who was killed in Khartoum. SCIRI demonstrated that it would not be cowed when in 1989 it attacked a state intelligence building in Baghdad. The group maintained bases in Beirut and Tehran. It fomented anti-Saddam riots in the poorer Shiite districts of Baghdad in November 1990 after the Kuwaiti invasion. Some 4,500 followers were reportedly arrested. On Dec. 27 1990, SCIRI was instrumental in founding the JACIO umbrella opposition group in Damascus, and after 1992, the Iraqi National Congress (INC).

SCIRI was the main rallying point for Shiite opposition in the rebellion that began in Basra on March 1, 1991. It soon spread to Nasiriyah and the holy cities of Najaf and Karbala. Within a week 30,000 had died in heavy fighting between rebels and Republican Guards. (Shiite army regulars were not trusted to attack their own, and many had

already deserted in the Gulf War.) Locals took their revenge on Ba’ath officials. US troops stationed nearby did not aid the rebels as they were forbidden to interfere in Iraq’s internal affairs.

The then Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq, Sa’adoun Ham-madi (himself a Shiite) on March 5 asked Tehran to pressurize SCIRI into some form of power sharing. Both SCIRI and Iran rejected this. Iraq subsequently blamed Iran for the rebellion, which the latter denied. Peace hopes receded as Iraqi troops “desecrated” the holy cities, massacred civilians and kidnapped Grand Ayatollah Qassim al-Khoei, mullah of Najaf and arguably the world’s most revered Shiite cleric. The uprising collapsed by April, defeated by superior arms and in al-Samawah by the desertion of tribal bedouin clans allegedly bribed by the Iraqis. Local Shiite leaders also bitterly denounced the USA and Britain, for promising to aid their revolt, but then abandoning them to their fate. Many Shiite refugees fled to Kuwait and Iran, where they are divided between urbanites and the largely despised Marsh Arabs.

Although SCIRI’s Iranian connections initially precluded support from Saudi Arabia and the USA, in 1998 the US administration surprisingly offered SCIRI funding (albeit through the auspices of the INC), after Congress passed the Iraq Liberation Act. SCIRI initially refused that offer, though in December 2001 it supported the principle of outside intervention and a one-year transitional government, followed by general elections. In 2002, however, SCIRI reverted to its former policy of criticizing US intervention, citing the likely civilian casualties. US sources claim that SCIRI is directed by Iran’s Nasr Command, which is the Republican Guard wing responsible for exporting the Iranian Revolution.

Prominent leaders of SCIRI include Hamid al-Bayati in London, Bayan Jabr in Damascus, Muhammad al-Haydari, head of SCIRI political bureau, and Ibrahim Hammudi, political advisor to former SCIRI leader Bakr al-Hakim. ‘Abd al-Aziz al-Hakim is described as SCIRI’s military leader; he presides over the Badr Brigade (see entry) and was also SCIRI’s representative on the six-member leadership council of the 65-member Follow-up and Arrangement Committee (FUAC, see entry).

A breakaway faction called the Iraqi Islamic Forces Union, led by Abu-Haydar al-Asadi and others, was formed in 2002 when it seemed that SCIRI was about to ally itself with the USA. Indeed, on Dec. 9 2002, President Bush approved funding for six Iraqi opposition groups, including, for the first time in its own right, SCIRI. Much of this money was earmarked for military training.

A month earlier US Deputy Defence Secretary Paul Wolfowitz had written to Bakr al-Hakim, inviting him to attend the London conference. For his part, Bakr al-Hakim had toned down his earlier calls for a sharia state, in favour of a pluralist democracy that reflects Shiites’ numerical preponderance. SCIRI received 15 or 16 of the 65 seats in the US-backed cross-party opposition FUAC established at the December 2002 London conference, making it the largest single constituent group.

SCIRI probably has up to 12,000 guerrillas, consisting mainly of Iraqi Shiites captured by Iran during the 1980-88 war. It claimed that 8,000 of its troops operate inside

south/central Iraq and that another 70,000 fighters are based in two training camps near Sulaymaniyya, a semi-autonomous Iraqi Kurdish zone under PUK authority (see entry on Patriotic Union of Kurdistan). The latter figure was most probably an exaggeration.

Despite his earlier warnings against the USA and anger at restrictions placed on the activities of the Badr Brigade (see entry), Bakr al-Hakim allowed his brother, and effective deputy, 'Abd al-Aziz, to sit on the US-backed interim governing council. Bakr al-Hakim himself returned to Iraq in early May 2003, being greeted by crowds of up to 100,000. He also presided over the restoration of pilgrimage marches to Shiite holy cities, and the Ashura festival; and pointedly avoided challenging the authority of Ayatollah al-Sistani, head of the Shiite hawza (see entry).

However, there appeared to be strong opposition to Bakr al-Hakim from followers of the young Baghdad-based cleric, Muqtada al-Sadr, and his *Sadriyyun*. Some still resented SCIRI's support for Iran against Iraq in the 1980-88 war. On Aug. 29 Bakr al-Hakim was assassinated, together with 85 fellow worshippers, while emerging from the Imam Ali Mosque in Najaf. Rebels had attempted to kill his close relative, and hawza sage, Grand Ayatollah Seyed Mohammed Said al-Hakim, at SCIRI offices in Najaf, on Aug. 24. Suspicion naturally fell on *Saddriyyun* agents, though later reports suggested that Saddam loyalists or even *Al-Qaeda* affiliates may have been to blame. Whoever was responsible, the murder inflamed Shiite emotions; vast crowds gathered alongside the funeral procession of Bakr al-Hakim from Baghdad to his burial in Najaf; and there were fears of revenge attacks on rival groups.

'Abd al-Aziz al-Hakim succeeded his brother as SCIRI leader. Mohammad Jassem Khodayyir, who divides his allegiance between *Daw'a* and SCIRI, is Iraq's new immigration minister. Another SCIRI affiliate, Ali Faek al-Ghadban, is minister for youth and sports. Bayan Baqer Sulagh, a Shiite Turkoman and SCIRI member, is minister for the crucial postwar portfolio of reconstruction and housing.

### Tribal Council for Diwan

This is the collective name for 11 Shiite tribes of south and central Iraq, comprising the areas of Diania, Middle Ferat, Samawa, Nassiriyah and Basra. The name *Diwan* means variously court, table, register, or discussion chamber in Arabic. The council's London representative, Sheikh Hussein al-Shaalan, negotiated closely with the US State Department's official in charge of northern Gulf Affairs, David Pearce, in December 2002, and discussed co-operation between US forces and Shiite tribes. Generally, the USA feels more comfortable dealing with the Council than with SCIRI, as the Council is free of the strong Iranian ties of the latter, better known group. "Arab Shiites in Iraq want to represent themselves", said Shalaan. He has subtly indicated his opposition to Iranian desires to dominate their community in a post-Saddam Iraq.

After Saddam's fall, British forces in Basra entrusted power to a local council in Basra headed by a tribal leader, Sheikh Mozahem al-Tamimi, a respected scholar, sometime theologian and former army general. Ten of the council's 24 members were also tribal sheikhs. However, this experiment in transition to local rule prompted fierce protests on April

14. Demonstrators accused tribes of being paid stooges of the Ba'ath regime. They also called the sheikhs "backward" (Tamimi himself being a notable exception) and demanded that they submit to the authority of Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani's hawza (see entry).

## SUNNI GROUPS

### Identity and History

Sunni Muslim Arabs have traditionally controlled the government and army of Iraq, though they remain a minority within the country. They are mainly concentrated in western and central regions, in cities like Baghdad, Tikrit and Kut; smaller minorities of Sunnis have existed for centuries in larger cities, like Mosul in the north and Basra in the south-east. Under the old Ottoman Empire, Baghdad was the capital of a largely Sunni province (*vilayet*).

At the time of the Muslim conquest of what is now Iraq, the region was ruled by the Sassanid Persians, though many local inhabitants may have been Christianized Arabs. The Muslim conquest took place over three years, starting in 634, two years after the Prophet Mohammed's death, and finished in 636. It began under the reign of Caliph Abu Bakr and ended during the reign of Caliph Umar, who named Kufah as Iraq's capital. Arabs maintained the Sassanid state structures, while many local Iraqis converted to Islam, married Arabs and began seeing themselves as Arab.

The Sunni-Shiite schism originated in eastern Iraq, with clashes involving the governor of Syria, Muawiya, on the one hand, and Ali, Hussein and Hassan, on the other, near Najaf and Karbala. Thereafter Iraq came under the sway of the Sunni Umayyad Caliphate, with its headquarters in Damascus. Local Iraqi Shiites initially supported the Hashemite leader, Abu Muslim, who in 747 attacked the Umayyads and occupied Iraq. This allowed Abd al-Abbas to create the Abbasid Caliphate, centred on Iraq, rather than Syria.

The second Abbasid Caliph, Abu Jafar Al-Mansur (754-75 AD), founded Baghdad as his capital. He rebuilt Baghdad, originally founded by the Persians and sited near the ancient capital of Babylon, as a mighty city. To Shiite disappointment, the Abbasids, too, adopted Sunni Islam as the dominant creed. By the 10th century, Abbasid Iraq was clearly the centre of the Muslim world, renowned for its artistic creativity and advanced scholarship. Seljuks and finally in 1258 Mongols conquered Baghdad, but by now Sunni Muslims were well established as the local majority. Ottoman Turks (fellow Sunnis) ruled with a few interruptions from 1533 until the British invasion of southern Iraq, in 1914, and occupation of Baghdad in 1917. With British support, King Faisal of the Hashemite royal family (also Sunni) took over as head of the new state of Iraq in 1921; the kingdom achieved independence in 1932. Sunnis formed the elite, though from time to time Turkoman, Kurdish and Shiite politicians gained leadership roles.



General Abdul Karim Qasim, who assumed power soon after the 1958 republican coup, was of mixed Sunni-Shiite descent, and faced considerable opposition from a clique of Sunni “Free Officers”. Ba’ath won partial rule in 1963, and full power in July 1968. Technically Ba’ath ideologues favoured pan-Arab equality, and downplayed confessional and class differences, though in power Ba’ath favoured Sunni dominance. Moreover, under first President al-Bakr from 1968, and then his protégé, Saddam Hussein, from 1979, the Ba’ath regime drew its strongest support from, and dispensed most privileges to, residents of Tikrit.

### Dissidents from the Army and the Ba’ath

Many of the most dangerous challenges to Saddam’s authority came not from organized dissident anti-Ba’ath groups, or from “excluded” ethnic and religious groups, but from individuals, and sometimes factions, from within the Sunni-dominated Army and Ba’ath Party. Some reasons for this have been alluded to above; for example, antagonism towards the Tikriti clique. Then there were social grievances, of expectations raised and then dashed; like the middle class that benefited greatly from increased oil revenues and better services in the mid-1970s, who lost their wealth and security after the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq War, the 1991 Gulf War, and the sanctions regime thereafter. An estimated four million educated Iraqis fled into exile during Saddam Hussein’s reign.

After 1968 numerous plots (or alleged plots) from within Ba’ath were nipped in the bud. Nasir al-Hani, a former foreign minister and co-plotter in the coup, was abducted and murdered in November 1968. In October 1969 Abd al-Rahman al-Bazzaz, a former prime minister, was jailed on grounds of being a “Zionist spy”. Minister of Defence Hardan al-Tikriti was dismissed in October 1970 and murdered in Kuwait on March 30, 1971. In possibly the most serious case, Chief of Internal Security Nadim Khezzar and 35 others were executed after reports of conspiracy, on July 8, 1973.

Increasingly after 1975 Saddam Hussein garnered more power, apparently at the expense of his mentor, President al-Bakr. Shortly after becoming President himself, on July 16, 1979, Saddam executed 22 senior figures from the party and military, including five members of the ruling RCC, on charges of plotting a pro-Syrian coup. Former President al-Bakr died in 1982 in “mysterious” circumstances. In January 1989 there was a failed coup attempt; senior army officers were executed in its wake. That May Saddam’s cousin, the popular Defence Minister Adnan Khairallah, died in a helicopter crash that many felt was engineered by Saddam. After Iraq’s Gulf War defeat in 1991, more than 1,500 army officers (mostly Sunni) fled to the West. Many Ba’ath officials also sought asylum abroad. Loyal army units crushed an alleged CIA-backed military coup in March 1995. The abortive coup involved former Ba’athists and military leaders, like Brigadier-General Najib al-Salihi and the former head of Iraqi Military Intelligence, Wafiq Jassim al-

Samarra’i, who had defected in December 1994. Both subsequently formed their own dissident groups, the Free Officers’ Council and the Higher Council for National Salvation respectively (see entries).

In 1996 Saddam’s trusted lieutenant and son-in-law, Hussein Kamel, defected to Jordan. He returned to Iraq after a few months, on a promise of amnesty, only to be murdered by his clansmen acting on Saddam’s instructions. On Dec. 12, 1996, suspected disgruntled Ba’athists attempted to assassinate Saddam Hussein’s elder son Uday, who at the time was seen as the dictator’s putative successor. Ten senior military officers in Mosul were executed on Saddam’s orders in December 2000, after being accused of plotting a coup. Saddam’s other son, Qusay, moved military units to the north in order to staunch any further threats. In October 2001 Saddam instigated a new round of purges of party members.

Sunni tribal sheikhs have often wielded considerable influence. Though Ba’ath ideology supposedly eschews such atavistic associations, in reality the regime actually encouraged them as a source of support. By the same token, tribes have also provided sustenance for challenges to Saddam Hussein’s reign. In 1990 a plot was uncovered among the Jubburi tribesmen of the elite Republican Guard. Military officers of the ‘Ubayd tribe fell under suspicion in 1993–94, and in 1994, the al-Bu Nimr clan of the Dulaym tribe revolted against Saddam’s rule.

Curiously, militant Sunni Islam has never really served as a hub for anti-regime activity in Iraq, unlike in neighbouring Syria. Faleh a-Jabar wrote in *Le Monde Diplomatique*, October 2002, that Iraqi security forces had deliberately allowed Wahhabi beliefs to cross the border from Saudi Arabia in the south. Jabar contends that this encouragement of militant Sunni trends was intended as “a desirable alternative to Shiite militancy”. Possibly it was also a means of assuaging the formerly hostile Saudi Royal Family.

It is also worth noting that official pronouncements by Iraq’s supposedly secular Ba’ath leaders have since the mid-1980s, and increasingly since 1991, incorporated much use of Islamic rhetoric. Saddam put on shows of piety and changed the national flag to include the slogan “Allahu Akbar” (God is the Greatest). Such displays of new-found religiosity may have been intended, in part, to offset potential Sunni Islamist threats. Actual state assistance to Sunni religious factions seemed restricted to help for Kurdish (thus non-Arab) militants, like *Ansar al-Islam* (see below), probably to frustrate the longer established secular PUK and KDP.

### Al-Qaeda

One of President Bush’s chief pretexts for invading Iraq was to smash a supposed link between the Saddam regime and those who planned the devastating attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. While such charges were hard to prove, it subsequently appeared that *Al-Qaeda* affiliates have emerged as significant renegade elements in post-Saddam Iraq. In particular, they co-operate closely with the formally Kurdish *Ansar*

movement (see entry under Kurds, below).

US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld accused Iran of harbouring senior *Al-Qaeda* and *Ansar* operatives, and doubted that Tehran would surrender them to the USA. Some reported Wahhabi fanatics, possibly associated with Bin Laden's group, crossing the Saudi border into Iraq.

The *Al-Qaeda* "point man" for operations in Iraq has been reported as being Abu Musab Zarqawi, nom de guerre for a Jordanian national, Ahmed al-Khalayeh. He once fought for the Taliban in Afghanistan, was allegedly a poisons expert, had a leg amputated in Baghdad, and after October 2001 resided in Iran. He was convicted in absentia for plotting to bomb tourist sites in Jordan. That said, CIA director George Tenet stated that Zarqawi was only tangentially associated with *Al-Qaeda*, and instead ran an independent outfit called *Al-Tawhid* (Unity). Some said Zarqawi was working in cahoots with Saif al-Adil, a senior *Al-Qaeda* operative, under protection of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards.

### Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party – Iraqi Command (ABSP-IC)

Founded in 1963 as a breakaway from the parent Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party, the ABSP-IC is based in Syria and led by Fawzi al-Rawi. During the 1960s this offshoot benefited from the split between the official Iraqi and Syrian "regional commands" of the Ba'ath (i.e. governing parties in Baghdad and Damascus), with each branch claiming that it represented the authentic ideology. Michel Aflaq, who founded the Ba'ath in Syria in the 1940s, as an authoritarian, pan-Arab and quasi-fascist group, moved to Iraq after an internal putsch in Syria.

The ABSP-IC lacked a military capability and hoped for a revolt within Iraq's existing power structure, rather than popular uprising or foreign intervention, to achieve change. While condemning the personality cult that developed under Saddam, and declaring itself in favour of political pluralism, it acquiesced in the totalitarian expressions of Assad dynasty Ba'athism in Syria. It has an ageing leadership and more recent dissident Ba'athists and military leaders have associated with groups like the Iraqi National Accord (INA) and Free Officers' Movement (FOM).

### Constitutional Monarchy Movement

*Leadership.* Sharif Ali al-Hussein

*Website.* [www.iraqcomm.org](http://www.iraqcomm.org)

The CMM is committed to restoring constitutional monarchy to Iraq. Sharif Ali, born in Iraq in 1956 and raised in Beirut and London, is a scion of the Hashemite family (second cousin of the late King Faisal II) that was ousted from power in 1958. Hashemites claim descent from the Prophet Mohammed, and for many centuries governed over Mecca and Medina, until ousted by the House of Al Saud in the 1920s. In 1999 Sharif Ali joined Ahmed Chalabi's Iraqi National Congress, and joined the INC's ruling triumvirate. Though pro-Western, he has criticized American inability to understand the centrality of tribal bonds in Iraqi politics.

While himself a Sunni, Sharif Ali is married to a member of a prominent Shiite family from Karbala. The CMM claims popular support within Iraq, and a former Iraqi intelligence chief is reputedly numbered amongst Sharif Ali's

entourage. He favours the adoption of a monarchy, possibly along British lines, following a free national referendum that would restore the constitution of 1925. The CMM stresses the importance of Kurdish-Arab unity as the basis for a democratic Iraqi state.

Sharif Ali sees himself as a potential symbol of national stability, and envisages a role more like an arbitrator than ruler, according to traditional Islamic models. It has been suggested, however, that too few Iraqis remember the monarchy; or, if they do, they recall only its shortcomings, and its abuse by corrupt politicians.

In mid-2002 former Jordanian Crown Prince Hassan was suddenly touted as a potential future King of Iraq. This temporarily dented Sharif Ali's prestige but Jordan's ruling family sought to quash the rumours.

### Free Officers' Movement (FOM)

*Leadership.* Brig.-Gen. Najib Salihi

The FOM, created in 1996, was reported before the 2003 war as being in favour of a three-pronged infantry assault on Baghdad from Kurdish Iraq, Kuwait and Jordan, without the use of US ground troops. The name adopted by the group reflects a possible homage to the Free Officers who led Egypt's "republican revolution" in 1952. The FOM is connected to the Iraqi Independent Alliance.

FOM leader Najib Salihi comes from the large Beni Salih tribe. He commanded a Republican Guard armoured division during Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, and the subsequent 1991 Gulf War. He appeared to boast about his crushing of the short-lived 1991 rebellions, and the resultant displacement of an estimated 1.5 million civilians, in a book entitled *Al-Zilzal* ("The Earthquake"). Salihi also fought against Iraqi National Congress (INC) insurrectionists in 1995 but defected that year and now lives in the USA. The FOM enjoyed CIA support and claimed it could raise 30,000 fighters.

Salihi became a member of the 15-man military council of the Coalition of Iraqi National Forces (see separate entry). The FOM signed a confederation agreement with the Assyrian National Congress on June 15, 2002, presumably in a bid to broaden its support base. That same month, Salihi and fellow former generals, Tawfiq al-Yassir and Saad al-Obaidi, agreed on a "Covenant of Honour", which called for a demilitarized Iraq and pluralist civilian rule, following a US-backed bid to topple Saddam Hussein.

### Higher Muslim Council

The Council is one of the few known Sunni organizations that espouses an Islamic government, while disavowing any desire to "swap one form of tyranny [i.e. Saddam] for another, like in Iran".

### Independent Iraqis for Democracy

*Leadership.* Adnan Pachachi (*secretary-general*)

Adnan Pachachi, a former Iraqi foreign minister and ambassador to the UN who left Iraq after the 1968 coup, founded the Democratic Centrist Tendency (DCT) in 2000. To some extent, it followed the principles of the old National Democratic Party, founded in the 1940s, but which disbanded after the Ba'ath coup of 1968. On March 29, 2003, Pachachi effectively relaunched the DCT as the Independent Iraqis for Democracy (IID) at a meeting of more than 300 Iraqi exiles

in London when he said that a US military post-war administration was “in no way acceptable” and called for a “provisional administration of the UN and Iraqi technocrats”. He describes his group as “liberal independents”.

Pachachi's group was somewhat dwarfed by the INC, INA and other more established coalitions. Pachachi declined Dr Chalabi's invitation to join the INC in February 2003. He also was offered a place on the leadership council of the inclusive Follow-up and Arrangement Committee (FUAC) but declined to take up this post.

While Pachachi himself seems beyond reproach, having never been a Ba'ath member, Shiites were wary about allies of his who were. They feared that the DCT/IID still favoured Sunni hegemony. Laith Kubba's Iraqi National Group (see entry), which enjoys Shiite support, cautiously agreed to join the new movement prior to the London launch. Two important religious Shiite figures also attended the meeting: Hussein al Sadr and Mohamed Bahr al Ulloum (a founder of the INC, see entry).

The Union of Independent Iraqis also affiliated itself to the IID at the March 2003 meeting. Its leader is Abbas Mehdi, a sociology professor at St. Cloud State University, USA. Mehdi accepted Pachachi as “the most acceptable person to be the next president of Iraq”. Resembling the IID ideologically is the Union of Iraqi Democrats, based in London, founded in 1989, and led by Faruq Ridha'a.

Though the IID claims high level support in the Gulf, neither it nor the other groups named above enjoy mass followings in Iraq itself. This may reflect the absence of some four million middle class and educated Iraqis who fled since 1968. Conceivably, the anticipated return of this important sub-community, under a new democratic dispensation, may boost the fortunes of such liberal parties.

Pachachi led Iraq's first post-Saddam delegation to the UN General Assembly in September 2003.

### **Iraqi Democratic Liberation Movement**

A mainly tribal Arab party led by the wealthy Jebouri (or Jaburi) family, the IDLM it is said to enjoy good links with the PUK and KDP, but engages in little activity in northern Iraq.

### **Iraqi Islamic Party**

*Website. [www.iraqi.com](http://www.iraqi.com)*

This party is one of very few Sunni religious opposition groups. It is led by Iyad al-Samara'i who after some arguments joined as one of the 65 members of the Follow-up and Arrangement Committee (FUAC, see entry) at the December 2002 London meeting of opposition groups. Samara'i had objected strongly to what he saw as dominance by the Shiite SCIRI (see entry) and negation of Sunni views. Mohsen Abdel Hamid, a prolific author on the Koran, represents the IIP on the Governing Council. The IIP is the Iraqi branch of the region-wide Muslim Brotherhood, and it may be associated too with the Higher Muslim Council.

### **Iraqi National Accord (INA)**

*Leadership. Iyad Alawi*

*Website. [www.wifaq.com](http://www.wifaq.com)*

Consisting mainly of Sunni defectors from the Iraqi armed forces, Ba'ath and intelligence network, the INA (*Harakat*

*Wifaq al-Watani*) was created in 1990 at the instigation of the Saudi secret services, and reputedly also Kuwait. A major sponsor at the time was Saudi Prince Turki ibn Faisal, who had promoted Osama bin Laden ten years earlier in Afghanistan. The INA is a successor to a loose grouping known as the Dissident Ba'athists which originated in the late 1970s. Led by Fadil al-Ansari, these dissidents enjoyed links with Syria and rejected persecution of southern Shiites.

Backed by the CIA and British intelligence, the Saudis encouraged the INA to set up Radio Free Iraq. Potential foreign backers warmed to the INA after the collapse of the 1991 Shiite and Kurdish rebellions, and their “peripheral approach”. It gained in status with the defection to Jordan of Saddam's son-in-law, Hussein Kamel, in 1995 (though he was not happy in the INA, returned to Iraq and was soon killed there). Perhaps more significant was Gen. Nizar al-Khazraji, former Iraqi chief-of-staff, who joined the INA in March 1996.

The INA launched a campaign of bombings inside Iraq in 1994, allegedly directed by one Abu Amneh al-Khadami. Targets included both Ba'ath facilities and offices of the rival Iraqi National Congress (INC). The INA also advised the USA against supporting the INC/Samarra'i coup attempt of March 1995, in favour of its own planned insurrection, scheduled to take place on June 26, 1996. The INA coup leader was to be Muhammad Abdullah al-Shahwani, a retired Iraqi general of Turkoman ethnicity. However, Iraqi authorities got wind of the plan, aborted the coup before it began, and smashed INA networks within Iraq. In 1998 the British intelligence agency, MI6, admitted being involved in the CIA plot. It was suggested that the CIA and MI6 conducted operations without gaining the authorization of their respective governments. Rival Iraqi opposition movements chided the agencies for dealing with the INA, which they called “notorious” for being riddled with Iraqi double agents – hence the coup's failure.

The INA also suffered from being caught up in the fighting between the rival Kurdish movements, the PUK and KDP. Its offices in Kurdish-controlled Dohuk, Sulaymaniyah and Zakho were diminished, possibly closed altogether. Nonetheless, it maintains its main office in Amman, Jordan, which it set up in February 1996, having moved there from Damascus, Syria. In late 1996 the CIA began reorganizing the weakened INA as a counterweight to the INC, which they suspected of disunity and lack of military preparedness.

INA leader Alawi is a successful Shiite businessman and British-trained neurologist who formerly headed the Iraqi Student Union in Europe. He became a leading intelligence officer in Iraq but left in 1971. After shuttling between Kurdish areas, Syria and Jordan, Alawi settled in London. In 1978 he suffered a near fatal axe attack carried out by Iraqi agents. Several other attempts on his life have also failed. Alawi has good ties with the CIA and US State Department and with several Arab states. He argued that the USA need only target the top 40 or so acolytes of Saddam Hussein, and should leave the rest of the state apparatus intact.

Other leaders include Dr Tahseen Mu'ala, Salal al-Shaykhly and Adnan Nuri, a former Republican Guard general who secured funding from the CIA in 1992. Significantly, almost all INA top brass have Ba'ath roots. This has made

them appear attractive to US State Department analysts, who feel Iraq needs a transition administration that understands the existing Iraqi power structure.

The INA in the late Saddam period had offices in Dahuk, Sulaymaniyya, Zakhu, Salahuddin and Irbil, all within Iraq's Kurdish autonomous region.

The INA is the only "national movement" within the Group of Six (see entry, above). When constituted as the Group of Four, it formed a powerful counterweight to the INC; the INA brought a crucial Sunni component to the Kurdish one (represented by the PUK and KDP) and the Shiite (represented by SCIRI).

Alawi took a seat on the 25-member Governing Council after June 2003, making him one of the most prominent Sunni politicians in post-Saddam Iraq. Another INA member, Nuri Badran, was appointed interior minister.

### **Iraqi National Alliance**

This exiled opposition group was established in 1990, and advocated "democracy and pluralism" in Iraq, though not the ouster of Saddam Hussein. Its first major congress was held in Sweden in June 1992. Constituent groups have included the Arab Baath Socialist Party (pro-Syrian wing), Socialist Unity Party (Nasserite), Arab Labour Party, Arab Socialist Movement (offshoot of the Arab Nationalists' Movement), Kurdish Islamic Army, Kurdistan Peace Party, various independents, and what was called the "patriotic current" in the Iraqi Communist Party.

In September 2000 the Alliance held its second congress in London. Five of the Alliance's leaders, including its chief, Abdul Jabbar al-Kubeisi, travelled to Iraq in November. Izzat Ibrahim al-Douri, then deputy chairman of Saddam's Revolutionary Command Council, promised Kubeisi that he would head a committee to reform the Iraqi constitution to permit the freedoms they desired.

Kubeisi had been a Ba'athist since 1958 yet was arrested by the al-Bakr/Saddam regime repeatedly during 1968-71. Thereafter he worked for the clandestine pro-Syrian wing of Ba'ath in Iraq. When its leader, Ahmed al-Azzawi, was assassinated in Damascus in August 1976, Kubeisi left Iraq for Syria, where he took over Azzawi's role. In 1980 he helped form the Democratic National Patriotic Front, consisting of various opposition groups. However, in the course of the Iran-Iraq war he began to distance himself from the pro-Iranian stance of Assad's Damascus regime.

In an interview in Baghdad in late 2002, Kubeisi said that most of Iraq's 173 opposition groups were "mercenary creatures of the CIA [with] no authentic roots either in Iraq or abroad". Some critics suggested that the Alliance was a front or a pseudo-opposition at best.

### **Iraqi National Movement (INM)**

*Leadership. Maj-Gen Hasan al-Naqib (secretary-general)*

The INM, also known as the Iraqi National Liberal Movement, is a Sunni-dominated group that split off from the Iraqi National Congress (INC) in late 2000. Between 40 and 100 former military officers and politicians are affiliated to the INM. Naqib's deputy is Hatim Mukhlis. The INM's Washington representative, Thair Nakib, has held numerous meetings with US officials.

The US State Department agreed that the INM should

establish offices in Damascus, from which it could build ties with Arab states and other opposition groups. The INM expressed the view that a small US invading force might encourage mass desertions from the Iraqi Army.

### **National Democratic Party (NDP)**

*Leadership. Naseer al-Chaderchi*

Once active in the 1940s, the NDP experienced an unexpected revival after Saddam's fall as a Sunni alternative to the Ba'ath. Its leader, Naseer al-Chaderchi, holds a seat on the Governing Council as one of only five Sunni representatives. He is the son of Kamel al-Chaderchi, a leading democracy advocate of the 1950s who opposed the British-backed monarchy. The younger Chaderchi stayed in Baghdad under the Ba'athists. A Shiite NDP member, Abdel Amir Abbud Rahima, now serves as agriculture minister; while a Sunni NDP member, Hisham Abderrahman Shibli, serves as justice minister.

### **"Saddam Loyalists"**

Since the declared end of the war of 2003 the term "Saddam loyalists" has been used to describe residues of the old regime. In tape-recorded messages purportedly from Saddam himself, currently presumed to be in hiding, he claims that loyalists were behind attacks on occupying forces. "Loyalists" have also been blamed for attacking political opponents whom they accuse of collaborating with the occupiers, and of murdering the SCIRI leader, Ayatollah Bakr al-Hakim in August. By way of a caveat, however, numerous Arab observers claim that the phenomenon of the loyalists is illusory; they ascribe attacks on Western forces to local Iraqis who never supported Saddam, but resent foreign occupation.

Assuming that loyalists do exist, it is suspected that they inherited arms and personnel from the disbanded official Republican Guard battalions, and the paramilitary *Fedayeen Saddam* ("Fighters for Saddam"). During the 2003 war, *fedayeen* were credited with fiercely resisting American and British soldiers, especially in the south. Nominally led by Saddam's psychotic elder son, Uday, they were notorious for brutal reprisals against Shiites in 1998 and 1999, in the latter case, after the assassination of Grand Ayatollah Mohammed Sadiq al-Sadr, a leading Iraqi Shiite cleric, and his two sons in Najaf.

Presumably certain Ba'ath cadres are also involved, motivated possibly less by genuine loyalty to Saddam, and more out of fear for their fate if they were caught by angry Iraqis. However, since the deaths of Saddam's sons, Uday and Qusay, it is far from clear which figures, if any, actually lead this nebulous group. Taped radio broadcasts purportedly from Saddam Hussein give loyalists succour, and possibly even coded commands.

There have also been rumours that foreign Arab fighters, especially from Syria, and even Al-Qaeda elements, have joined forces with the loyalists. If true, this would indicate that anti-American feelings have served to forge a new "unholy alliance" between pan-Arabists, Islamic fundamentalists and Sunni Iraqi nationalists, one that papers over their natural divisions. It is notable that none of the former regime leaders who have been captured (figures like Information Minister Mohammed Sahaf and Deputy President Tariq



Aziz) openly support the “loyalists”.

## KURDISH GROUPS

### Identity

The Kurdish people number some 25 million, and are said to be the only community in the world of that size without a form of national statehood. “Kurdistan”, the area they inhabit, straddles four nations: Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. Of these, only Iraq, where they constitute 15-20 per cent of the population, acknowledges them as a separate ethnic entity.

In terms of religion, most Iraqi Kurds (perhaps over 75 per cent) are Sunni Muslim though there are smaller minorities of Shiite Muslims, Christians, Yezidis (a blend including indigenous pre-monotheist faiths) and Judaism. (Most Kurdish Jews emigrated to Israel around 1950, where they now number up to 150,000.) The history of Iraqi Kurds has run parallel with that of fellow Muslims. However, Kurds differ from their neighbours in tradition, language and sense of national identity.

In Iraq, Kurds predominate in a northern region the size of Austria, covering 83,000 square kilometres. Assyrian-Chaldean, Turkoman, Arab and Armenian minorities live among them. Some 3.7 million Kurds live in the Kurdish northern safe haven, established after the Gulf War, around the Zagros Mountains (traditionally regarded as their original homeland). Another one to two million Iraqi Kurds live elsewhere in Iraq as minorities, including in those parts of Iraqi “Kurdistan” that remained under Saddam’s control.

Special mention should be made of the Faili, Kurds who came to Iraq from Iran in the early 19th century. Many of these people live today in Baghdad and the Iraqi south; many if not most follow the Shiite rite. While they speak Arabic as their first language, most proudly identify themselves as being of Kurdish origin. Unsurprisingly, Iraqi nationalist politicians have from time to time tried to portray Failis as aliens, due to their Persian origins.

### History to 1970s

After the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in World War I and Britain’s occupation of Mosul, capital of Iraq’s northern province, the Kurds were promised their own state, Kurdistan, by the Treaty of Sèvres in 1920. The offer was rescinded under the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne. Many reasons are offered to explain this about-turn. Persian and Turkish nationalists opposed the creation of such a state, which they felt threatened their national interests. Furthermore, the discovery of oil in Mosul and Kirkuk made Britain loath to lose control of this precious resource. Britain initially supported a Kurdish autonomous region around Sulaymaniyah. But when Kurds refused Iraqi suzerainty in 1922 the British bombed the area. Using the pretext of internecine Kurdish tribal rivalries, Britain reversed its previous policy to absorb the territory within mandat-

ed Iraq.

In 1926 the Iraqi Prime Minister recognized Kurdish identity, but did not honour promises to allow limited self-rule. Mullah Mustafa Barzani responded by launching a series of revolts from his tribal strongholds, Baradost and Barzan. Barzani remained the principal figure in Iraqi Kurdish politics until his death in 1979 (see entry on Kurdistan Democratic Party, KDP). Barzani formed links with *Hewa*, a Kurdish cultural movement, and the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP, see entry). Under Soviet tutelage, Kurds formed the Kurdish republic of Mahabad in Iran in 1946, the only such state ever formed, but it did not last out the year (see also Iran entry). Barzani’s tribal irregulars formed part of the Mahabad army, but were forced back into Iraq by victorious Iranians. In that year the KDP was formed, with rival branches in Iraq and Iran. From then on Barzanis have ruled the party in uneasy alliance with more progressive “politicals” like Ibrahim Ahmad and Jalal Talabani (now head of the rival Patriotic Union of Kurdistan – PUK, see entry). These politicals co-operated with revolutionary regimes in Iraq from time to time.

Kurdish areas benefited from the commerce generated by booming oil revenues in Iraq and Iran during the 1960s, but felt they were being cheated of their full due by Baghdad’s Sunni elite. Kurds initially formed close ties with Iraqi communists and other opposition forces, but distanced themselves after President Qasim came to power in 1958 and legalized the KDP in 1960. The honeymoon was short-lived: Mullah Barzani led an insurrection in 1961, and the overthrow of Qasim in 1963 saw new armed outbreaks of Kurdish insurgency until 1975.

The Ba’ath took power in 1968 with the tacit support of the Talabani faction of the KDP and put five Kurds in the Cabinet. Barzani held talks with the new rulers, which resulted in the Ba’athist Manifesto of March 11, 1970. It recognized “Kurdish nationality”, allowed Kurds linguistic rights, participation in government, administration in their own area, and provided for a new province based on Dohuk. According to Prof. Yitzhak Nakash the 1970 agreement remained for years “the basis for addressing the Kurdish problem in Iraq”, both for Arabs and Kurds, and even now, for outside powers like the USA and Turkey.

In practice, though, the Baghdad government abrogated the agreement from the start, by expulsions, assassination attempts on the Mullah and his sons, and nationalization of the oil fields around Kirkuk. The KDP thus refused to join the Ba’ath-Communist National Front in 1973. In March 1974 the Ba’ath Party passed the Autonomy Law, which while recognizing Kurds as a distinct group, also placed severe limits on their promised autonomy, deliberately excluding the oil-rich areas of Kirkuk, Khaneqin and Jabal Sinjar. The governate of Kirkuk was renamed Al-Ta’imim and its borders redrawn to give it an Arab majority. Kurdish ministers left the government in protest to rejoin the KDP, their place being taken by members of a pro-Ba’athist Kurdish Revolutionary

Party. Iraqi Air Force bombing caused 275,000 Kurdish refugees to flee to Iran by the spring of 1975.

That year Kurds were shocked by Iraq's Algiers accord with their ally, the Shah of Iran. It meant that the KDP lost bases and places of refuge across the border. Talabani left the KDP to form the rival PUK. Barzani was particularly bitter at Iran's benefactor, the USA, for deserting Iraqi Kurds. Though Iraqi President Ahmed Hasan al-Bakr granted limited autonomy to Kurds in 1977, they remained wary. The border areas were cleared, thousands of villagers displaced, and Arabs "imported" to take their place, especially around Sulaymaniyah. Kurds found new allies in Ayatollah Khomeini, who took power in Iran in 1979 (although Iran's own Kurds soon suffered under his rule) and, to a lesser extent, Syria. The renewed alignment towards Tehran also coincided with the accession to power of Saddam Hussein in Baghdad.

Saddam retained the services of Taha Muhie-Eldin Marouf, who was appointed one of Iraq's two vice-presidents in 1975, and remained in this position throughout the Saddam era, the only Kurd in the Ba'ath top hierarchy.

### **Iran-Iraq War (1980-88) and Gulf War (1990-91)**

When the Iran-Iraq War broke out in 1980, both the KDP and the PUK joined forces on Tehran's side, receiving weapons from them and occasionally fighting alongside Iranian regular troops. By the mid-1980s they expanded their area of control and pinned down Iraqi garrisons in the north, especially around Dohuk and Sulaymaniyah. The Iraqi army started losing control of the Kurdistan countryside. Kurdish groups also found common cause with Shiite and other dissidents. In response, the Iraqi regime began in 1985 "Operation Termination of Traitors", the destruction of villages and deportation of their former inhabitants to concentration camps.

Iraq then resorted to chemical and poison gas warfare, starting in 1986 and culminating in the bombing of Halabja and neighbouring areas on March 16, 1988. Among the poisons used were cyanide, mustard gas, and the nerve agents sarin and tabun. At least 5,000 were killed in Halabja, sparking international protests and Iraqi denials. The 1988 offensive was known as *al-Anfal* – "The Spoils" – and according to the author Sheri Lazier, it killed 182,000 Kurds. By August 1989 an estimated 100,000 Kurdish refugees had fled to Turkey.

On Sept. 6, 1988, Iraq announced a month's amnesty for Iraqi Kurds (except for Jalal Talabani of the PUK). Both the PUK and KDP rejected this offer. Meanwhile Iraq rearmed the *jash* "loyalist" Kurdish militia and went ahead with elections in the "Autonomous Area" for its 50-member legislative council. In June as many as 250,000 Kurds were deported from the area north of Sulaymaniyah, as a way of clearing the border area and releasing land for Arab internal immigrants.

In late 1990 Kurdish leaders were prominent in

arranging opposition coalitions against Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, but played no active role in the Gulf War (as neither Turkey nor Iran had opened a northern front). After the war Kurdish groups formed an ad hoc Kurdistan Iraqi Front (see entry) to exploit the disarray in Iraq, and launched an uprising in the first week of March 1991, concurrent with a Shiite uprising in southern Iraq. The Front's *peshmerga* captured major cities from the army, including Dohuk and Sulaymaniyah, and threatened Kirkuk and Mosul. By the end of March 1991, however, Iraqi Republican Guards and mukhabarat recaptured these towns at the cost of about 50,000 lives, forcing more than 700,000 Kurds to seek refuge in Turkey and Iran (Barzani put the total at 3,000,000).

### **Post-1991 autonomy – War of 2003**

Turkey was initially reluctant to accept refugees whose presence might inflame its own "Kurdish problem". But the Kurds knew that by staying in Iraq they would risk Iraqi attack and lose their refugee status. An international outcry followed reports of refugees dying of disease and starvation (Iran estimated the number was 1,000 per day on its borders alone); Kurdish groups accused Saddam of "genocide" and the UN Security Council passed a resolution condemning, and aiming to prevent, the repression of Kurds (No.688). On April 8 British Prime Minister John Major called for "safe havens" to be created for returning refugees within Iraqi borders, with an "exclusion zone" from which all Iraqi troops would have to withdraw. It would be policed initially by a UN force and later by a combination of *peshmerga* and Iraqi military.

The plan was soon carried out, with the USA and Germany authorising sums of \$555 million and \$262 million respectively to cover costs. In May, 12,000 UN coalition troops (American, British, French and Dutch) set up the zone in Iraq north of the 36th parallel, around Zakho, Dohuk and Amadiyah. Aircraft dropped food for those starving in the mountains, as UNHCR facilities took over the job of caring for the wounded within the zone. Even though refugees streamed back, some 13,000 reportedly died before reaching "safe havens".

But the West and other Iraqi oppositionists were surprised and alarmed at Kurdish readiness to reach an independent settlement with Baghdad. On April 24 PUK leader Talabani said Saddam agreed "in principle" to Kurdish autonomy, and on April 29 the RCC announced the first "general amnesty" since the war. The first round of talks involved the RCC and four Kurdish groups: the KDP, PUK, Kurdistan People's Democratic Party (led by M.M. (Sami) Abdulrahman) and Socialist Party of Kurdistan (led by Rasoul Marmand). By May Masoud Barzani claimed that the RCC had accepted his demands for Kurdish democracy, but Talabani chose to pull out of talks until democracy was assured for all Iraqis. The KDP seemed willing to accept half a loaf – a reduced autonomous Kurdistan



with control over some oil revenue, but probably not Kirkuk. The PUK planned to wait until Saddam's ouster and then gain more.

UN resolutions meanwhile compelled the allied troops to respect the territorial integrity of Iraq; with this in mind, they withdrew from the zone as planned on July 15, 1991. Some 200,000 *peshmerga* (including deserters from the pro-Saddam *jash*) took over in Zakho and Amadiyah; they also ran Dohuk and Kifri with 60,000 Iraqi police and troops. This uneasy truce was apparently crumbling in June-July, with Kurds driving Iraqi troops out of Arbil (in Iraqi Kurdistan) and Sulaymaniyah (nominally Kurdish controlled) in fighting that cost 300 lives.

The KDP saw the allied deterrent force based in Turkey as a guarantee against a reincursion by Iraqi forces. It welcomed Saddam's promise to free all Kurdish political prisoners; but it drew away from signing a final agreement when Iraq insisted that it sever all ties to foreign powers and in effect join Ba'ath against other parties. Talabani wanted any agreement counter-signed by Western powers, but Barzani's uncertain alliance with Saddam made the West wary of trusting Kurds.

Helped by the Safe Havens regimen and northern no-fly zone, an autonomous Iraqi Kurdistan was eventually set up (minus the cities and environs of Mosul and Kirkuk, which remained under Iraqi suzerainty). From 1991 to 1996 the USA contributed an estimated \$1 billion to Iraqi Kurdistan. After 1996 the region also benefited from money disbursed by the UN oil-for-food programme (13 per cent of whose money was earmarked for autonomous Iraqi Kurdistan). The region also gained much revenue from cross-border trade, and in some cases, smuggling. Despite the low-level five-year war between the PUK and KDP fought during the 1990s (see below) the autonomous region began enjoying higher living standards and more individual freedom than the rest of Iraq.

Free elections were held on May 19, 1992, though no stable authority followed. A dead heat at the polls for a 105-seat national assembly led the KDP to control the north of the region up to the Turkish border, and the PUK the south up to the Iranian border. By 1994 fighting began between two separate zones: a PUK-led government with its "capital" in Sulaymaniyah and a KDP-led government with its "capital" in Irbil. The PUK wrested control of Irbil from the KDP, but on Aug. 31, 1996, in response to a call for aid from the KDP, Iraqi forces launched an offensive into the northern no-fly zone and captured the city. As this contravened UN resolutions, President Clinton ordered the bombing of Iraqi sites in September. Saddam ordered his forces to withdraw, though the KDP retained Irbil.

In September 1999 the KDP and PUK reached an agreement for an interim joint government and parliament in Iraqi Kurdistan. Called the Washington Accord, as US efforts helped achieve the breakthrough, it declared the stated goal of a Kurdish area joining a fully democratic Iraq. Officially, the two

groups had shelved their earlier demand for an independent Kurdistan, presumably incorporating Kurdish-inhabited areas of neighbouring Turkey, Iran and Syria.

A new phenomenon after 1998 was the appearance of militant jihadi Kurdish groups, some allegedly connected to the global terrorist *Al-Qaeda* network (see *Ansar* entry, below). The jihadis oppose the PUK and KDP in equal measure. There have also been armed clashes between the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK, see under Turkey) which operates mainly in Turkey but has bases in northern Iraq, and the KDP. While the PKK has historically called for a united independent Kurdistan, the KDP has appeared satisfied with Kurdish autonomy within an Iraqi republic.

Renewed unity between the mainstream KDP and PUK movements was demonstrated on Sept. 8, 2002, when the leaders of the two parties signed a new peace pact and pledged to reactivate plans for a joint parliament. Indeed, on Oct. 3 they did hold the first joint meeting of the Kurdistan National Assembly in eight years, and committed themselves to a future federal Iraq. All 105 of the assembly's elected delegates were present and both party leaders apologized to the Kurdish people for their internecine fighting in the 1990s. Nonetheless, many Kurds remained skeptical that Talabani and Barzani would truly merge their administrations and share revenues, as they had agreed.

In early 2003, with signs growing of the impending US invasion, Kurdish groups expressed fears that Turkey, a key US ally, would use the pretext of war to annex areas of what is now de facto Kurdish territory. Turkey said it "reserved the right to enter northern Iraq if its national interests were threatened". In particular, Kurds feared the Turks might seek control of the oil-rich lands around Kirkuk and Mosul and use Iraq's Turkoman minority as a fifth column to achieve their aims.

With the commencement of hostilities on March 19, 2003, Kurdish troops agreed to come under coalition (i.e. US-led) command. First joint actions were directed against the *Ansar* and their Islamist allies. Kirkuk and Mosul fell to Kurdish and US forces soon after the collapse of the regime in Baghdad. The Turks made no attempt to launch their own invasion of northern Iraq.

### **Action Party for the Independence of Kurdistan (PKSK)**

The PKSK (*Parti Kari Sarbakhoy Kurdistan*), a splinter from the Iraqi Communist Party (see entry), initially allied itself to both the PKK and the PUK. However, relations with the PUK deteriorated after the murder of the PKSK leader, Muhammad Halleq, on Nov. 2, 1995. Since then the PKSK has aligned itself more closely to the KDP. Its leader, Yusif Hanna Yusif, known as Abu Hikmat, serves as a minister in the cabinet of the KDP in Irbil but it remains a small faction.

### **Ansar al-Islam**

*Leadership. Najmuddin (Najim al-Din) Faraj, better known*

### *as Mullah Kerekaar*

Formerly known as *Jund al-Islam* (Army of Islam), a title it still employs from time to time, the *Ansar al-Islam* (Supporters of Islam) began as an offshoot of the Islamic Movement of Iraqi Kurdistan (IMIK, see entry) in 1998. It also used the name *Hamas*, in tribute to the Palestinian fundamentalist organization.

Ansar's leader, Mullah Kerekaar, is a Kurdish Islamic scholar who lived in Pakistan in the 1980s, where he came under the sway of Abdullah Azzam, mentor to Osama bin Laden. He subsequently gained a Norwegian residence permit. Saddam Hussein's son, Uday, has claimed that strong Iranian influence led to Shiite proselytising amongst the *Jund* faction, though this has not been independently verified. If true, it would also cast doubt on relations between *Jund/Ansar* and the strongly anti-Shiite *Al-Qaeda* movement (see below).

Ansar's chief foes are the PUK, as they contest the same turf (north-eastern Kurdistan, near the Iranian border). The movement was blamed for several bomb attacks and murders in the PUK-controlled region of Sulaymaniyah and Irbil from 1998 onwards. Its attacks intensified in 2002-03, reputedly at the behest of the Saddam government. In April 2002 it tried to assassinate PUK Kurdistan's Prime Minister, Barham Salih, but only managed to kill five of his bodyguards; on Feb. 8, 2003, *Ansar* gunmen killed Shawkat Haji Mushir, a PUK parliament member and friend of Talabani, along with two other government officials. The movement also shot and killed Franso Hariri, longtime leader in the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP), near his home in Irbil in early 2001.

*Ansar* merged with a group called *Tawhid* (Unity), led by Mullah Abdul Ghani Bazazi, and then with another Islamist militia in September 2001 to form the *Jund al-Islam*, marking its new strength with the killing of captured PUK fighters in the village of Khela that month. In November the Iranian government arranged a ceasefire according to which the *Jund* was dissolved. By the end of the year, however, Kerekaar had assumed overall control of a new militant coalition, apparently flushed with funds and arms from *Al-Qaeda*. There were also rumours that Baghdad provided intelligence support. In July 2002 *Ansar* was accused of destroying ancient Naqshbandi Sufi shrines in the south of Iraqi Kurdistan.

Mullah Kerekaar was denied entry to Iran, deported to Sweden, and then further deported to Holland, where he was arrested on Sept. 12, 2002. There he was jailed while fighting extradition to Jordan on drugs smuggling charges. After his attempts to apply for diplomatic asylum in the Netherlands failed in February 2003, Kerekaar was returned to Norway, where he had residence status. In March he was charged with kidnapping nine men in northern Iraq in December 2001.

The group controlled villages between Halabja and the Iranian border. Given its maximalist Islamist ideology, it presumably seeks to create an Islamic Caliphate for Arabs and other Muslims as well as Kurds, throughout Iraq and beyond its borders.

In August 2002 US officials announced that *Ansar* had tested the use of ricin and other biological and chemical weapons in northern Iraq. The US administration placed

*Ansar* on its list of proscribed terrorist organizations and Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld expressed his conviction that Saddam Hussein knew of *Ansar*'s activities. US officials cited the name of Abu Musaab al-Zarqawi, an *Al-Qaeda* operative who had fled from Afghanistan after the Taliban's defeat by US forces in late 2001: he allegedly set up a ricin factory in Kurdistan for *Ansar*, and was said to have received treatment for a leg injury in Baghdad, information that US Secretary of State Colin Powell used as proof of Saddam's complicity with Bin Laden.

Prior to the 2003 war it was suggested that *Ansar* controlled 100 square miles between Halabja and the Iranian border. It reportedly had about 600 ethnically Kurdish fighters and another 70 or so Arabs under arms, men who were under the *Al-Qaeda* aegis in Afghanistan until they escaped in early 2002. In July 2002 the PUK accused *Ansar* of ransacking the sacred tombs of Sufi sheikhs in PUK-held territory, which it regarded as extreme provocation. After such "outrageous crimes", said PUK chief Jalal Talabani, "PUK policy is to eradicate this terrorist group once and for all". Some Kurds were reported as having defected to the PUK because of the influence of the Arabs in *Ansar*.

During the 2003 war, *Ansar* bore the brunt of concerted attacks by US forces and Kurdish fighters, who moved into the group's former stronghold. After the war it appeared that *Ansar* had regrouped near the eastern border with Iran, sometimes taking refuge over the border. In late March three senior *Ansar* figures, Ayoub Afghani, Abdullah Shafeye and Abu Wahel, fled to Iran. On May 30 1,000 US troops and 10,000 PUK *peshmerga* entered *Ansar*-held villages near Sulaymaniyah and Halabja, and claimed to have destroyed a "massive terrorist camp", killing up to 300 militants. Several *Ansar* detainees proved to be "Afghan Arabs".

*Ansar* subsequently was blamed for various terrorist attacks, possibly aided by *Al-Qaeda* or even elements of the old Ba'ath Mukhabarat intelligence services. In particular, *Ansar* were blamed for a massive blast at the Jordanian embassy in Baghdad, on Aug. 8, that killed 17 and wounded scores more. Jordan has claimed that *Ansar* units have operated within its borders; other reports said they were operating from Syria as well.

### **Conservative Party of Kurdistan (CPK)**

Known as *Parti Parezgarani Kurdistan* in Kurdish, and *Hizb al-Muhafidhin al-Kurdistani* in Arabic, the CPK established itself in early 1992 as a clan-based entity strongly affiliated to the Surchi tribe. After 1996 its relations with the KDP deteriorated, since when it has operated mainly in PUK-controlled territory. Non-ideological in orientation, it probably enjoys support in rural areas.

### **Democratic Alliance of Kurdistan (DAK)**

Set up on Oct. 13, 1996, as a protest against KDP co-operation with the Iraqi authorities, the DAK comprised the PUK, Iraqi Toilers' Party, Democratic Movement, Socialist Democratic Kurdistan and the Conservative Party of Kurdistan. The DAK is known as *Hawpaymani Demoqrati Kurdistan* in Kurdish. It publishes a newspaper called *Haw Pemani* in Kurdish, and *Al-Tahalluf* in Arabic.

### **Islamic Movement of Iraqi Kurdistan (IMIK)**

*Leadership. Sheikh Ali Abd al-Aziz*

IMIK was formed in 1986 during the Iran-Iraq war, with Iranian sponsorship and under the leadership of Sheikh Uthman Abd al-Aziz. In Kurdish it is known as *Bizutnewey Islami le Kurdistan Iraq*; in Arabic, *Al-Haraka al-Islamiyya fi Kurdistan al-Iraq*. IMIK fighters clashed with the PUK in December 1993 and with the KDP in May 1994. The Sheikh declared in a January 1994 interview with Kanal-6 television that IMIK sought to establish an Islamic state “like Iran” in northern Iraq. That same year Kurdish officials reported that IMIK had set up a joint military base with Iran’s Revolutionary Guard in IMIK-controlled areas. Despite these strong Iranian links, there seems to be no proof that IMIK actually adheres to Shiite Islam.

Throughout the 1990s IMIK fought a turf war against the PUK and Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran (KDP-I). IMIK killed, abducted or forcibly returned Iranian Kurds (Faili) who sought sanctuary in northern Iraq. In 1996 the KDP-I arrested Anwar Anabi, an IMIK military commander, and sent him to Iran, where he may have been executed. Since then it seems IMIK has improved relations with Iran, and with the PUK, in whose administration it has representatives.

IMIK has adopted numerous names over time. Many Kurdish religious factions began life as IMIK breakaways, such as the Kurdistan Islamic Group (KIG, see entry). The current IMIK leader, Sheikh Ali Abd al-Aziz is the brother of the movement’s late founder, Sheikh Uthman. In 1999 IMIK merged with another armed group, the Islamic Al-Nahdah (Renaissance) Movement, to form the Islamic Unity Movement in Kurdistan. However, it resumed its original name after a split in 2001. By 2002 IMIK was calling itself the Islamic League. In recent years IMIK, which has several hundred militiamen, has been eclipsed in its Halabja stronghold by another, more radical Kurdish Islamist group, *Ansar al-Islam* (see entry). The movement publishes a twice-weekly newspaper, *Bizutnewey Islami*.

### **Kurdish Workers’ Party (PKK)**

The PKK is a Turkish-based movement (see main entry under Turkey) but has also had bases in northern Iraq, where it has variously allied or come into conflict with indigenous Kurdish groupings. Following the Gulf War of 1991 and the establishment of de facto Kurdish autonomy in northern Iraq, Iraqi Kurds proved more concerned with preserving that autonomy than furthering the PKK’s maximalist goal of a Kurdistan uniting Kurds throughout the region. In the 1990s the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), in cahoots with Turkey, attacked PKK forces based in KDP-controlled autonomous areas. In March 1996 the PKK apparently spawned a local group called the Kurdistan National Democratic Union (YNDK). This offshoot soon split into pro-PKK/PUK and pro-KDP factions.

In 1997 the PKK stepped up attacks on civilians in Kurdish-controlled areas, especially members of the Assyrian community who backed the KDP. In October 2000 the PKK also clashed with the PUK in the Qandil Range. Following the 2003 war, Turkey was seeking the disbandment of PKK bases in northern Iraq in exchange for support for the US-led occupation, although the PKK has largely desisted from attacks in Turkey since the capture of its leader, Abdullah Ocalan, in 1999.

### **Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) (Al-Hizb ad-Dimuqraati al-Kurid)**

*Leadership. Masoud Barzani*

*Website. [www.kdp.pp.se](http://www.kdp.pp.se)*

Founded in 1946, the KDP remains the strongest Iraqi Kurdish party. It was founded by Mullah Mustafa Barzani, who epitomized the struggle for Kurdish autonomy in Iraq for over 30 years. After the collapse of the 1946 Republic of Mahabad, located in Iran, Mullah Mustafa took exile in the Soviet Union, while his family returned to their ancestral village, Barzan.

The KDP rejected Baghdad’s Autonomy Law of 1974, and clashes broke out between Iraqi troops and KDP *Peshmerga* (“Forward to Death”) guerrilla units in April that year. The KDP insurgency was temporarily suspended after the Shah of Iran ended support for the Kurds and signed the Algiers Agreement with Iraq on March 6, 1975. It resumed in 1977, however, and on Jan. 10 of that year KDP forces seized six technicians, including five Poles, as hostages. The party demanded the return of all Kurds deported from the mountainous northern regions, and the release of all political prisoners in Iraq. In March the hostages were released after United Nations intercession, and in May there were reports that 40,000 Kurdish internees had been allowed to return to their northern homes.

Jalal Talabani’s Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK, see entry) was created in 1975 as a breakaway from the KDP. The rump KDP was briefly known as the KDP – Provisional Command, and led by Idris and Masoud Barzani, sons of Mullah Mustafa, and M. M. Abdulrahman, a former communist who had joined the KDP in 1960. The new PUK accused the KDP’s provisional leadership of having links with the CIA, receiving funds from Israel and having bases among Kurds in Turkey. Clashes between the two groups in mid-1977 cost about 400 lives.

In August 1977 a KDP spokesman said that several Kurdish villages had been destroyed after the Iraqi government decided to clear a 25-mile strip along the Turkish border. On April 20, 1979, the governments of Turkey and Iraq signed an agreement to crush guerrilla activity. To this end Turkish troops made sure that no Iraqi Kurds received supplies from their brethren across the border, and Iraq continued to deport Kurds from the mountainous border area.

The death of Mullah Barzani in exile in the United States on March 1, 1979, prompted a power struggle within the KDP, with his son Masoud, born in 1946, emerging as the dominant figure. With the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq War in 1980 Masoud Barzani proclaimed his support for the Tehran government. In April of that year Iraq began expelling Kurds to Iran at the rate of 2,000 a day. By 1981 the KDP had its own radio station, the “Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan”, which denounced armed co-operation between Iraq and Turkey against Iran.

The second KDP central committee congress, held on July 21-Aug. 1, 1981, committed the KDP to joining an Iraqi National and Patriotic Front of “democratic and Islamic forces opposed to Saddam Hussein’s fascist regime”. It also furthered links with Iran and Syria. In February 1983 the KDP attended a conference of 18 Iraqi opposition groups in Tripoli, Libya, which called for a “democratic and unionist” regime to overthrow Saddam and “genuine autonomy for



Iraqi Kurdistan”.

Bolstered by victories against Iraqi forces in the Irbil and Bahdinan areas in 1984-85, the KDP began mending fences with the PUK. On Nov. 8, 1986, the old rivals agreed to joint action at a meeting in Tehran.

By early 1986 the KDP had tripled the area under its control in the previous five years (from Zakho in the north to the Iranian border, and southwards 75 km into Iraq). It occasionally staged joint actions with regular Iranian troops. Arms, such as Soviet-made Sam 7 missiles, came from Syria and Libya via Iran. The death of military commander Idris Barzani in February 1987 marked a setback for the DPK, but they continued to score military successes around Sulaymaniyah, even threatening the oil pipeline to Turkey.

In March 1988 Iraqi forces killed at least 5,000 Kurds who lived in Halabja and surrounding areas, using mustard gas, cyanide and chemical bombs. Despite international condemnation, the KDP's call for help produced little tangible aid. In 1989, the Turkish government signed an agreement with the KDP, whereby the two parties would fight jointly against Turkish Kurdish militants, the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK, see under Turkey) stationed in northern Iraq. So began a long period of clashes between the KDP and the PKK, which accused the former of being lackeys to Ankara and traitors to the broader Kurdish cause.

The KDP joined other opposition forces in JACIO (see under Iraqi National Congress, INC) in late 1990, after the invasion of Kuwait. In March 1991, with the war over and Iraq defeated, the KDP's *peshmerga* scored major successes against disunited Iraqi forces. However, by the end of the month Iraq recaptured major towns. Kurdish guerrillas fled to the hills, while up to 500,000 Kurds took refuge in Turkey and Iran. KDP officials co-operated with UN coalition forces as they set up a temporary exclusion zone in the north (see above).

Barzani entered discussions with Saddam in April 1991, and said the latter agreed to limited Kurdish autonomy in a region that would exclude the oil-rich town of Kirkuk. The KDP rejected calls to merge with the Ba'ath in an alliance against all other dissidents, but even so its negotiations caused a rift in the Kurdistan Iraqi Front (see separate entry). In Kurdish elections, held in May 1992, the KDP and PUK emerged as the two dominant groups opposing the Iraqi government. After the hung result of the election, they agreed to split the assembly's 105-member assembly with 50 for each party, the remainder being reserved for Christian Assyrians. In time the KDP controlled an administration centred on Irbil, containing a population of 1.8 million. Renewed fighting broke out between the two groups in 1994.

In March 1995 the KDP backed out of an INC plan to attack Iraqi frontlines. Then in 1996 the KDP accepted support from Baghdad in a virtual civil war with their chief rivals, the PUK. They regained Irbil from the PUK, which had taken it earlier. Between October 1996 to October 1997 the KDP estimated that 58,000 KDP supporters were expelled from Sulaymaniyah and other PUK-controlled areas. In 1996 Nechervan Idris Barzani, nephew of the KDP leader, Masoud Barzani, became deputy Prime Minister of the Kurdistan Regional Government in Irbil. He became full Prime Minister in 1999. Born in 1966, and later exiled to Iran, he had participated in the 1991 negotiations with Sad-

dam Hussein. Meanwhile, the KDP successfully established trading routes with neighbouring Turkey, deriving considerable revenue. This success, however, exacerbated tension with the PUK.

Eventually the KDP and PUK mended their differences with a peace deal in September 1998. Their agreement stipulated the limited goal of Kurdish autonomy within a democratic post-Saddam Iraqi republic. Their rapprochement appeared cemented by the first joint session in eight years of the Kurdistan National Assembly, in October 2002. The KDP also unveiled a draft constitution for a new federal Iraq with autonomy enshrined for Kurds. But their approach offended and threatened the PKK, the chief Kurdish militant group within Turkey, which maintained bases in northern Iraq and was committed to the creation of a wholly independent Kurdistan over all Kurdish inhabited areas in the Middle East. Continuing a policy established in the 1990s, the KDP keeps a watch on PKK activities on Turkey's behalf.

That said, by late 2002 the KDP's insistence on control over Kirkuk (in that part of Kurdistan still under Baghdad's control) was worrying the Turkish government. Ankara feared that in a post-Saddam Iraq, Kurds would have access to Iraqi oil. Worse, they anticipated that the KDP might use Kirkuk as the basis for a future Kurdish state and this would revive ethnic nationalism, only recently subdued, amongst the Kurds of eastern Turkey. Additionally, Ankara feared for the Turkomen of Kirkuk, their ethnic kinsfolk; and seemed to be staking a claim to Mosul, formerly capital of northern Iraq in Ottoman times, and another city coveted by the KDP.

Tensions with Turkey increased amidst fears that Turkey might invade across Iraq's northern border. Washington had plans to use Turkish troops as part of its strategy to attack Iraq if it failed to comply with UN weapons inspections. On Feb. 24, 2003, the veteran KDP ideologue and Deputy Prime Minister, Sami Abdulrahman, stated: "We feel less threat from the regime of Baghdad than from this threat of Turkish occupation [that] is aimed at strangling the hopes and aspirations of our people". In mid-March Kurdish *peshmerga* units agreed to come under US military control. Estimates of the *peshmerga*'s strength at that time varied from 40,000 (a joint KDP-PUK force) to 100,000 (presumably including other factions as well).

Nechervan Barzani proved a pivotal KDP figure in planning last-minute arrangements with the USA, and especially with Zalmay Khalilzad, the US envoy to the Iraqi opposition. Another was KDP leader Hoshiyar Zebari, formerly the movement's representative in London and Washington. He liaised with US forces who arrived in Kurdistan on March 26, 2003, and opened a northern front to the campaign to free Iraq from Saddam's rule. While Masoud Barzani represents the KDP on the 25-member interim Governing Council, which was instituted on July 13, Zebari is now Iraq's new foreign minister. In September Zebari represented Iraq for the first time since Saddam's demise in the UN General Assembly.

By virtue of these positions, Zebari has come to symbolise Kurdish determination to be considered as full Iraqis. His appointments appeared to stymie suspicions, especially from Turkey, that Kurds' real interests lie in forging a separate state of Kurdistan.

### Kurdistan Iraqi Front (KIF)

This ad hoc alliance of seven Kurdish groups apparently coordinated *peshmerga* activity against Iraqi forces in 1991. Its members were the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP, see separate entry), Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK, see separate entry), Kurdish Hizbollah (led by Sheikh Muhammad Kaled), Kurdistan People's Democratic Party (see entry), Kurdistan Socialist Party (led by Rasoul Marmand), Assyrian Democratic Party and the Revolutionary Proletariat Kurdistan Party. After the failure of the 1991 uprising and the KIF's suspension of talks with Baghdad in January 1992, the KIF has largely fallen into abeyance as an independent group. However, its structure may serve as the template for a revived umbrella grouping since the apparent KDP-PUK rapprochement of 2002.

### Kurdistan Islamic Group (KIG)

*Leader. Mala Ali Bapir*

Affiliated to IMIK (see entry), the Kurdistan Islamic Group is a comparatively moderate Islamist grouping, led by Mala Ali Bapir, its "Emir". The KIG was founded in 2001 as a breakaway from the Islamic Unity Movement in Kurdistan (see under IMIK entry). The PUK apparently approved of the KIG running its welfare and social services in PUK-controlled territory.

In October 2002 Bapir reversed his earlier policy, and announced the creation of an armed militia. However, joint *peshmerga*/US forces raided the KIG compound in late March 2003, killing 43 KIG militiamen, apparently in the belief they were attacking *Ansar al-Islam* (see entry), a more radical and militant group. While senior PUK officials described the KIG as "friends" the "prime minister" of the PUK enclave, Barham Salih, felt the KIG had been playing a dangerous game by occasionally providing cover, he alleged, to *Ansar* forces. The BBC reported that the KIG probably has ties with *Al-Tawhid* (Unity), which had attacked KDP forces in the Soran region. After the US attack, the KIG chose to relocate 10,000 group members from its base in Khormal, in the mountains, to valleys nearer the Iranian border.

### Kurdistan People's Democratic Party (KPDP)

*Leadership. M.M. (Sami) Abdulrahman*

Abdulrahman, a former communist, joined the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP, see entry) in 1960 and subsequently led its "intellectual wing". Years of acrimony with the Barzanis took their toll, and he left to form the new party. Nonetheless, he joined the loose Kurdistan Iraqi Front (see separate entry) and played a key role in negotiations alongside KDP delegates with Baghdad from April 1991. In subsequent years it appeared that the KPDP had rejoined the KDP; as of early 2003, Abdulrahman was spoken of as the KDP deputy prime minister.

### Movement for Democratic Change in Iraq

*Leadership. Hussain Sinjari*

The Iraqi Kurdish politician Hussain Sinjari launched this movement in March 2002. Earlier he had founded the Iraq Institute for Democracy, funded by the US National Endowment for Democracy. His movement, though still small, draws support from across Iraq's ethnic and ideological

maze. He was deported in March 1974 after the Baghdad authorities demolished his family home. Since 1991 he has been Minister of Municipalities in Iraq's autonomous Kurdish region.

### Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK)

*Leadership. Jalal Talabani*

*Website. www.puk.org*

Much of the current schism between the PUK and the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) reflects older rivalries between the Barzani and Talabani tribal clans. The PUK was set up in July 1975 by a merger of the Kurdistan National Party, the Socialist Movement of Kurdistan and the Association of Marxist-Leninists of Kurdistan. Jalal Talabani, born in Kelkan, northern Iraq, in 1933, was formerly a member of the KDP. After the 1958 revolution he commanded an Iraqi army tank unit, but joined the Kurdish rebellion which began 1961. The PUK was formed after the collapse of the 1974-75 Kurdish revolt.

Like the KDP, the PUK officially supports autonomy for Kurds within a "unified democratic Iraq". However, its stance has been more overtly leftist and less traditionalist than that of the KDP. The Talabani wing of the KDP had given tacit support to the Ba'ath coup of 1968, as the nationalists under then President al-Bakr regarded Talabani as a fellow "progressive". That fact notwithstanding, the shrewd Talabani has maintained close ties with conservative and Islamist regimes, especially Iran and Saudi Arabia.

During the late 1970s the PUK clashed with Iraqi troops, and at times with the KDP. It accused both of executing its members. In 1977 the KDP captured 400 PUK guerrillas, including supreme military commander Ali Askeri. The PUK also accused the KDP of links with the CIA, Israel and Turkey. Iraq, it said, was trying to Arabize the north by deporting a million Kurds to southern parts of the country.

Following the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq War in 1980, in January 1984 the PUK signed a cease-fire with Iraq, and agreed to run a "Kurdish autonomous region" in the north. The party set up a 40,000-strong "Kurdish army" to defend it against "foreign enemies" (i.e. Iran and its KDP allies). The region included the governorates of Irbil, Sulaymaniyah and Dohuk, plus areas to the south around oil-rich Kirkuk and Khanuqah.

The agreement collapsed a year later when the army attempted to enforce conscription in the area and Iraq then co-operated with Turkey in fighting "subversive groups". In November 1986 the PUK signed an agreement in Tehran with the KDP to join forces against the Iraqi regime. Iran supplied arms and Talabani claimed to have 20,000 fighters around Sulaymaniyah, where they claimed several victories. Baghdad now called the PUK *zumrat umala' Iran* ("band of Iranian agents"). The PUK joined an Iraqi Kurdish Front with the KDP in July 1987.

Iraq announced a general amnesty for Kurdish dissidents at the end of the Iran-Iraq War, but specifically excluded Talabani. The PUK reported chemical attacks in Kirkuk in October 1988. On Nov. 18, 1989, Talabani announced a new strategy of taking the "urban guerrilla war to the Arab cities", but attacks would be directed at military targets, not civilians. After Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, Talabani played a key role in co-ordinating anti-Saddam

opposition and in leading the March 1991 uprising.

The rebellion was brutally crushed. Nonetheless, under the cover of the US-UK-enforced no-fly-zone, since 1991 the PUK has run its own Kurdistan Regional Government in Sulaymaniyah. The rival KDP-run zone has its headquarters in Irbil, and clashes between the two groups led to a virtual civil war between the two groups from 1994-98. In March 1995 the PUK, acting in concert with forces from the INC, inflicted severe losses on two regular Iraqi Army brigades. In 1996, the KDP accepted support from Baghdad in its battle with the PUK. The PUK in turn turned to Iran for assistance. However, the two sides agreed to a power-sharing arrangement and peace deal in September 1998. New fighting erupted in December 2000 between the PUK and Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK), partly attributed to "turf wars", partly to rivalry over cross-border trade receipts.

On Jan. 21, 2001, Barham Salih, formerly PUK and Kurdistan Regional Government representative to North America for ten years, became Prime Minister of the PUK-run authority and assembly. On April 2, 2002, two gunmen attacked his residence, killing a bodyguard, but not managing to assassinate Salih himself. Salih's talent at diplomacy partly explains the convening in October 2002 of the first joint session of the Kurdistan national assembly in eight years. PUK and KDP leaders shared a platform before television cameras. Salih used the occasion to openly call for "regime change" in Baghdad. US Secretary of State Colin Powell sent the meeting a strong message of support. Some analysts interpreted the PUK-KDP rapprochement as the precursor to a military strike against the Saddam regime. Others, however, regarded the much-publicized event as purely cosmetic. Meanwhile, from 2000 the *Ansar al-Islam* group (see entry) launched repeated attacks on prominent PUK figures. This sparked speculation that Baghdad was sponsoring *Ansar* and seeking the PUK's destruction.

Interviewed in the *Middle East Quarterly* in Winter 2002, Jalal Talabani called for a genuinely pluralist post-Saddam Iraq, that did not "replace Sunni rule with Shiite rule". He further spoke against giving a leading role to the Islamists of the SCIRI and similar groups. Talabani stressed the common interest of the PUK and KDP in ensuring the maintenance of the "oil-for-food" regime, provided for by UN Resolution 986. "Our prosperity here, our reconstruction, indeed our very life, depend on 986", he explained.

The PUK joined the KDP and other Kurdish factions in June 1992, to establish the Iraqi National Congress (INC, see entry), yet Jalal Talabani likes to distinguish between the "opposition of the trenches and the opposition of the hotels". He generally enjoys good relations with a range of disparate nations: Iran, Saudi Arabia, the USA and Turkey. Qubad Talabani, his son, is deputy head of the PUK mission to Washington. He often appears in the media and may be a possible successor to his father. Together with the KDP, the PUK is thought to command a force of 40,000 *peshmerga* fighters in northern Iraq.

During the 2003 war a message released in Saddam Hussein's name warned the PUK not to "flirt" with US invading forces, and called on Talabani to assist the regular Iraqi army instead, as a true Iraqi "patriot". Clearly the PUK rejected this appeal. It found itself in the frontline in battles with the Islamist *Ansar* group (see entry) around Halabja. On Feb. 9,

in Sulaymaniyah, *Ansar* gunmen had killed Gen. Shawkat Haji Mushir. A senior and founding member of the PUK, Mushir was also the chief architect of the PUK's economic relief programme in their region.

Since the fall of Saddam, Jalal Talabani now represents the PUK on Iraq's interim Governing Council. PUK members Mohammad Tufik Rahim and Latif Rashid also serve as Ministers for Industry and Mines, and Water Resources, respectively.

## OTHER MINORITIES

### Assyrians

Assyrians live in northern Iraq, worship according to one of four Christian rites (including Chaldean and Nestorian), speak a language related to ancient Aramaic, and claim descent from the original pre-Arab Mesopotamians. Their historic heartland is centred on Nineveh, Ashur and Kalhu in central Iraq. Today they are spread over several nations and claim to number three million, though this may be overstated. Their number in Iraq is put at 650,000.

The Assyrians supported the Western powers and Arabs against Turkey in World War I. After losing an estimated third of their population during that war, they were drafted into garrison units called levies by Iraq's post-war colonial administrators. Assyrians claim that they were offered the area of Mosul, but were betrayed, as were the Kurds who received a similar promise. Perhaps as many as 250,000 Assyrians were expelled after the collapse of the Kurdish revolt in 1991. Many fled to Iran, or further afield, to Europe and North America. Baghdad "relocated" Assyrians from oil-rich areas, and replaced them with Arabs. Some Christians took part in national politics, most notably Saddam's deputy, Tariq Aziz, a Nestorian-Assyrian.

Exile groups based in the USA include the **Assyrian National Congress** ([www.anca.us](http://www.anca.us)), itself an umbrella group including the Bet-Nahrain Democratic Party (BNDP), the Assyrian American Leadership Council and others; its president is Sargon Dadesho.

### Assyrian Democratic Movement (ZOWAA)

*Leadership. Loya Yonadam Kanna (secretary-general)*

*Website. [www.zowaa.org](http://www.zowaa.org)*

The Assyrian Democratic Movement (ZOWAA) was founded on April 12, 1979, in Iraq as "a democratic, national and patriotic organization to defend our people and their legitimate rights". Under Saddam ZOWAA was the pre-eminent Assyrian opposition group. Though committed to "self-determination", for Chaldeans, Assyrians and Syriacs alike, ZOWAA has co-operated with other Kurdish and Arab opposition groups since the mid-1980s. The ZOWAA leader, Yonadam Kanna, spent several terms in Iraqi jails for his activities, and then two decades in political exile within Iraq.

ZOWAA participated in the Iraqi opposition conference in London in December 2002 and accounts for most of the five seats in the Kurdistan National Assembly reserved for Christians.



After Saddam's demise Kanna proclaimed: "An empire of terrorists has collapsed". On July 13 he was appointed as the sole Assyrian Christian member of the 25-member post-Saddam Governing Council. His movement now occupies a sprawling compound in Baghdad that once belonged to Uday Hussein's feared Ba'athist paramilitary group, the *Fedayeen Saddam*.

### Jews

By the mid-20th century Jews made up one-fifth of Baghdad's population. However, the *farhum* (pogrom) of 1941, mass migration to Israel following 1948, general antipathy towards Zionism, and Ba'athist persecution in the late 1960s, greatly diminished the number living in Iraq. An estimated 300,000 Jews of Iraqi descent are said to live in Israel today. Very few Jews still remain in Baghdad though pockets of Aramaic-speaking Kurdish Jews still live amongst their Muslim Kurdish kinsmen. Most observers agree that there is no Iraqi Jewish opposition party per se. Nonetheless, in August 1999 the Iraqi daily, *Babel*, claimed that Jalal Talabani's Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) had founded a Jewish party *Yahud Kurdistan* (Jews of Kurdistan), with Israeli financial support, based in the Sulaymaniyah district of the autonomous Kurdish zone of northern Iraq.

### Turkoman

Ethnically related to the Turks of Turkey and Turkic peoples of Central Asia, including Turkmenistan, this group settled in Iraq in the 12th century AD. After the fall of the Ottoman province of Mosul, in 1919, they joined the Kut, Baqubah and Kirkuk Levies, essentially military units under British colonial control. Turkomans were expelled from their traditional centre in oil-rich Kirkuk after 1991, and replaced by Arabs; Kurds were also expelled from the city. Iraqi Turkomans claim to number 3.5 million, though this seems like a wild exaggeration. Their true figure may be just 2 per cent of the Iraqi population; other sources suggest they number 800,000 in total. However, close ties with Turkey potentially give them added political weight in a post-Saddam Iraq. Enemies call them Turkey's fifth column, and certainly Turkish administrations in 2002, both under Prime Ministers Ecevit and Erdogan, loudly championed their cause. Some see the community as a bulwark against Kurdish aspirations in the region; or even as an advance guard for Turkish conquest of Kirkuk and Mosul.

Two distinct trends typify Turkoman dissident groups. The Iraqi Turkoman Front distrusts Kurds and follows Ankara's line. Their opponents, since 2002 grouped together within the Turkoman National Asso-

ciation, have favoured co-operation with their Kurdish neighbours against the Baghdad regime.

### Iraqi Turkoman Front (ITF)

*Leader.* San'an Ahmad Agha

*Website.* [www.turkmencephesi.org](http://www.turkmencephesi.org)

A coalition of six major Turkoman groups, and possibly up to 20 minor ones, the ITF was established in April 1995 and is backed by the Turkish government.

The ITF desires a major role in the future governance of Kirkuk and Irbil, oil-rich centres of northern Iraq, which it identifies as Turkoman territory. This stance has led to conflict with the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), which also covets these areas. In late 1996 and 1997 the ITF was involved in the Ankara Process negotiations, overseen by Turkey and the UK, which brokered a cease-fire between the KDP and its rival, the PUK. Renewed fighting broke out between the ITF and the KDP in August 1998 and in August 2002 the ITF claimed that "arbitrary imprisonment and torture" by the KDP had become a daily occurrence. For its part, the KDP considers the ITF as a proxy for Turkish regional interests.

Opposed to the Saddam regime, the Front nonetheless had qualms over the turmoil that might result from a possible US invasion. In July 2002 the ITF attended the Iraqi National Council's meeting which set up a military council in exile but the chief ITF delegate refused to sign the resultant 10-point "Covenant of Honour". The ITF opposes the creation of a Kurdish state in northern Iraq, especially one that may adopt Kirkuk as its capital.

The Front maintains headquarters in Irbil. It opened offices in Ankara in 1996 and London in 1999, and publishes a weekly newspaper, *Turkomaneli*, in Arabic and Turkoman.

### Turkoman National Association (TNA)

Founded in November 2002, the TNA is an umbrella organization encompassing the Turkoman Cultural Association, Turkoman Brotherhood Party, Turkoman National Liberation Party, Iraqi Turkoman Union Party and Kurdistan Turkoman Democratic Party. By contrast with the Iraqi Turkoman Front (see above), the TNA appears to enjoy better relations with Masoud Barzani's KDP. A TNA member and head of the Turkoman Cultural Association, Jawdat Najjar, is a minister in the KDP-led regional government.

*Lawrence Joffe*

# Ireland

**Capital:** Dublin

**Population:** 3.9 m

The Republic of Ireland is, under its 1937 Constitution, “a sovereign, independent democratic state” with a President, elected for a seven-year term by universal adult suffrage, holding specific constitutional powers and advised by a Council of State. Legislative power is vested in the National Parliament consisting of the President and two Houses – (i) a House of Representatives (Dáil Eireann) of 166 members elected for a five-year term by adult suffrage (under a complex system of proportional representation) and (ii) a Senate of 60 members (11 nominated by the Prime Minister, six elected by the universities and 43 chosen by representatives of vocational and administrative bodies). Executive power is held by a government headed by a Prime Minister and responsible to the Dáil.

Elections held on May 17, 2002, resulted in the following distribution of seats in the Dáil: Fianna Fáil 81, Fine Gael 31, Labour Party 20, Progressive Democrats 8, Green Party 6, *Sinn Féin* 5, Socialist Party 1 and independents 14.

## NORTHERN IRELAND QUESTION

The Republic of Ireland has to some degree been affected by and involved with the conflict in Northern Ireland (for a full account of which see under United Kingdom) since 1969. There have been three basic reasons for this.

The first is that under its 1937 Constitution the Republic of Ireland asserted a constitutional claim to sovereignty over the whole of the island of Ireland. From the point of view of militant Republicans in the Irish Republican Army (IRA), which was organized on a pan-Irish basis, their struggle in Northern Ireland was an active expression of this claim; though their methods might be condemned by the Irish State, their goals were notionally the same. From the point of view of Northern Ireland Loyalists, the constitutional claim demonstrated the fundamentally antagonistic attitude of the Republic to the wishes of the majority population of the North.

This Loyalist interpretation was reinforced by numerous examples of the refusal of the Irish courts to extradite individuals wanted in the North for serious terrorist offences. The laws of the Republic prohibited extradition for “political” offences and it was not until 1982 that the Irish Supreme Court for the first time ordered the extradition to Northern Ireland of a person claiming membership of the IRA (Dominic McGlinchey, wanted for murder in Northern Ireland), ruling that he was not wanted for a political offence. Subsequently Ireland in 1987 ratified the European

Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism, which was intended to facilitate the extradition and prosecution of the perpetrators of terrorist acts even though such acts might have been politically motivated. However, even after this time further cases arose in which the refusal of the Irish courts to grant extradition on various grounds (including a presumed lack of access to an unprejudiced trial or the risk of assault by prison officers) caused considerable friction.

Throughout the conflict the Loyalist community proved implacably hostile to all efforts by the British government to deepen the involvement of Ireland in consultative and other structures intended to ameliorate the position in the North by engaging the Republic as a partner in finding a solution. The constitutional issue became one of the many stumbling blocks in the peace process and was dealt with in the negotiations leading to the Good Friday agreement of 1998. Following the establishment of a power-sharing executive in the North in December 1999, the Irish government promulgated constitutional amendments (previously approved by a popular referendum on the Good Friday agreement on May 22, 1998) formally enshrining the principle of popular consent to any change in the status of the North. The Good Friday agreement also established a North-South ministerial Council and, notwithstanding differences of emphasis between the two governments and continuing Loyalist objections, the Republic has effectively become a central partner in the peace process.

## Cross-border activity

A second source of involvement of the South in the “Troubles” that started in 1969 arose from the porous nature of the border between the North and the South. At the height of the Troubles members of the IRA were able to cross this border relatively easily (assisted by the fact that some areas of the North adjacent to the border were Republican strongholds with mainly Catholic populations) and there were frequent reports and allegations of the existence of training camps and arms dumps in the South.

While support for *Sinn Féin*/IRA was at the height of the Troubles only limited within the Republic as a whole, it was considerable in pockets close to the border. Credible reports in the early stages of the Troubles suggested a degree of direct assistance by elements within the Irish government to the IRA: two former Irish government ministers were tried and acquitted in 1970 on arms smuggling charges, one of them (Charles Haughey) subsequently becoming Prime

Minister in 1979 to the alarm of Northern Loyalists. The willingness of the Irish government to improve cross-border co-operation increased through the period of the Troubles in apparent recognition of the need to position the Republic as a partner with the British government in resolving the conflict.

### **Terrorist attacks in the South**

A third dimension to Irish involvement in the Northern Ireland problem was that the Republic was itself on occasion either the target or the location of direct attacks from groups operating in the North.

Although rhetorically some Republican factions, notably the Irish National Liberation Army (INLA), emphasized the Northern Ireland struggle as merely the first step in a broader struggle to create a unified socialist Ireland, in practice Republican groups for the most part did not attack Irish targets in the South, notwithstanding various robberies, kidnappings, murders and other crimes. However, one of the major IRA operations, the assassination of Earl Mountbatten in 1979, took place in Ireland, and in 1972 the IRA was involved in the burning down of the British Embassy in Dublin. While Loyalists in Northern Ireland tended to see the Republic as the sponsor of Republican groups, the Irish government itself clamped down firmly on any activities by Republican groups that appeared to directly threaten the Irish state: the Provisional IRA was a proscribed organization in the South and long sentences were passed for activities within the Republic itself.

Although sporadic Loyalist bombings in the South never amounted to a concerted campaign, various attacks were carried out in particular at times of heightened tension over the involvement of the South in the affairs of the North. This was particularly the case in the early years of the conflict when there were widespread Loyalist apprehensions of a “sell-out” to the South by a British government anxious to rid itself of the problem of IRA terrorism on the British mainland.

### **Current status of Republican groups**

Public sentiment in the South has been overwhelmingly in favour of the peace process in the North – far more so, indeed, than opinion in the North, where there has been considerable Loyalist unease. A refer-

endum on the Good Friday agreement held in the Republic on May 22, 1998, resulted in 94.4% of those voting approving the agreement.

*Sinn Féin*, the political wing of the IRA, lacked any mass political base in the Republic while the Troubles were at its height and most IRA recruits were from the North with most of its external political support coming from the Irish diaspora in the USA rather than the South. As part of its emergent policy of the “ballot box and the Armalite” *Sinn Féin* ended its historic policy of non-participation in the Dáil in 1986. It won no seats in the elections of 1987, 1989 or 1992. A broadcasting ban on *Sinn Féin* was lifted in 1994 and as the peace process gained momentum it won one seat in 1997 and in 2002 increased to five seats. Although still a minor force in the South compared with the North, where it now rivals the nationalist SDLP as the main Catholic party, *Sinn Féin* seeks to position itself as the only pan-Irish political party in preparation for what it considers the inevitable ultimate achievement of a united Ireland.

The Good Friday agreement of 1998 provided for the release of prisoners belonging to political groups maintaining a ceasefire, and resulted in the release of IRA prisoners held in the South. However, the agreement also embodied increased measures against those groups that did not adhere to a ceasefire and these were included in the Offences Against the State (Amendment) Bill, enacted in September 1998. This was enacted in the immediate aftermath of the Omagh bombing of Aug. 15, when 29 people were killed by the Real IRA, a group of dissident Republicans opposed to the peace process (see under UK entry). On Aug. 7, 2003, Michael McKevitt, the alleged leader of the Real IRA and a former leading figure in the IRA, was convicted by the special criminal court in Dublin of the membership of an illegal organization and of directing terrorism, the latter charge having been introduced by the new legislation. Also in August 2003 Irish police arrested ten alleged members of the Continuity IRA, another group of IRA dissidents, at an apparent training camp in County Waterford. These rump Republican groups have no political base within the South but appear to have support among small groups of connected activists.

*F. J. Harper*

## **Israel**

**(Internationally recognized) Capital:** Tel Aviv

**Population:** 6.2 m

The State of Israel declared its independence in 1948, following the end of the British mandate in Palestine. The government is headed by a Prime Minister and

cabinet drawn from the largest party, or coalition of parties, as represented in the 120-seat unicameral Knesset. The head of state (a largely ceremonial role)

is the President, who is elected for five years by simple majority of the Knesset. Elections to the Knesset are held every four years, unless called early, by universal adult suffrage under a system of proportional representation. There are numerous legal political parties and a few political organizations which are not recognized by the government. Arab and Druze citizens of Israel enjoy the vote, but this right is not extended to Palestinian Arabs living in the West Bank and Gaza, as these territories, gained by Israel after the 1967 war, were not formally annexed to the State of Israel.

Elections to the Knesset in 1988 resulted in a hung parliament and another Labour-Likud coalition government. In 1992 Yitzhak Rabin's Labour Party won an election outright. Following Rabin's assassination on Nov. 4, 1995, his deputy, Shimon Peres, took over as Prime Minister, but narrowly lost a prime ministerial poll to Benjamin Netanyahu of the Likud on May 29, 1996. (This was the first occasion on which separate but concurrent prime ministerial and legislative elections were held, according to a law passed in 1992. Israel changed the amendment in 2001, and the elections of early 2002 were contested under the earlier single ballot system).

Following several governmental crises, Netanyahu went to the polls on May 17, 1999, and lost power to the Labour Party, under Ehud Barak. Internal political problems, exacerbated by the failure of the Oslo peace process and outbreak of a second Palestinian intifada, prompted new prime ministerial elections on Feb. 6, 2001. In these Ariel Sharon, leader of the Likud Party, convincingly defeated Barak and formed a Likud-Labour coalition government. On Jan. 28, 2003, Sharon and Likud scored a major legislative election victory over Labour, now led by Amram Mitzna.

On July 31, 1985, the Knesset approved (by 66 votes to none) a measure to provide an electoral ban on any party which incited people to racism or which endangered state security. The law was also used to outlaw contacts between Israelis and members of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO); this aspect of the law was, however, overturned in 1992 thereby facilitating the contacts that led to the Oslo peace accords of 1993 (below).

Before the 1988 elections (on Oct. 5) the Central Elections Committee banned the right-wing Kach Movement (below) from contesting the poll on the grounds that it was anti-democratic and racist. The Supreme Court upheld this decision on Nov. 18. At the same time it granted the Arab-Jewish Progressive List for Peace (now defunct) permission to contest the election. (Both parties had been prohibited from contesting the July 23, 1984, election; though on appeal the Supreme Court rescinded the decisions on May 27.)

Israel's overriding security problem has arisen out of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the occupation by Israeli forces and settlers of large areas inhabited by Arabs (see section on Palestinian Movements). After taking these territories in the 1967 war, two were for-

mally annexed (East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights) and one (the Sinai Peninsula) subsequently returned to Egypt. The Gaza Strip and West Bank of the River Jordan remained as administered occupied territories. Successive Israeli governments encouraged Jews to settle there, particularly after Likud took power for the first time in 1977. At the latest estimate there are up to 200,000 Jewish settlers living in the occupied territories (or more, if the Jewish inhabitants of East Jerusalem are counted). Settlements have become breeding grounds for extreme nationalist groups.

In December 1987, Palestinian inhabitants of the occupied territories started an uprising (or intifada) which continues to the present day (see section on Palestinian Movements). In 1991 Israel suffered direct hits from Iraqi Scud missiles as a consequence of the Gulf War. Israel did not retaliate as expected, while some Palestinians in the territories welcomed the attacks. Both these developments exacerbated attitudes and polarized left and right within Israel, with reports of increased anti-Arab sentiment.

In the aftermath of the Gulf War, and under strong US pressure, Israel, Jordan, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon and a Palestinian delegation met at an historic peace conference in Madrid, in October 1991. A twin-track peace process began with the USA and USSR (soon to become the CIS) as guarantors: bilateral talks between Israel and each of the other parties, and multilateral talks conducted on a region-wide basis, dealing with issues of mutual concern.

Smaller right-wing parties in coalition with Likud, which was led by Yitzhak Shamir, proved hostile to what they saw as excessive concessions in the peace process, and the Shamir government crumbled. On winning the resultant early elections in 1992, Yitzhak Rabin committed Israel to pursuing a full peace with the Palestinians. Early in 1993 his Labour-led government rescinded laws forbidding contact with the PLO and in September that year, following secret negotiations in Oslo, Israel and the PLO signed an historic Declaration of Principles in Washington.

A sceptical Likud, now led by Benjamin Netanyahu, railed against the peace process as appeasement of Arab demands. In many respects the Likud was responding to grassroots pressure from settlers and right-wing extremists, who feared that the Oslo peace process would inevitably lead to the creation of a Palestinian state, on soil that they called *Eretz Yisrael* (Biblical Land of Israel). Separate groups arose specifically to protest against the anticipated withdrawal of Israel from the Golan Heights. Occupied in 1967, this region was touted to return to Syria in an anticipated final settlement with Damascus.

Leftist and peace groups, by contrast, welcomed the new government line. However, the more militant among them disliked what they saw as Rabin's unwillingness to confront difficult issues, like Jerusalem, refugees and settlers.

Right-wing protests mounted in 1995 as the second stage of the Oslo peace process (dubbed Oslo II) reached fruition. Oslo II entailed further distribution



of land to Palestinian Authority control, and thus threatened settlers' dreams of reconstituting *Eretz Yisrael* in the occupied territories. Mainstream parties, including Likud, tacitly backed demonstrations where incendiary anti-Rabin slogans and posters appeared. Certain rabbis issued edicts condemning Labour's plans as illegal and blasphemous. Radical settlers adopted acts of civil disobedience, like road blockages.

Belatedly, peace groups began countering with demonstrations of their own. At one of the largest, held in Tel Aviv on Nov. 4, 1995, Prime Minister Rabin addressed a large crowd. He was assassinated immediately afterwards by Yigal Amir, a member of an extremist group (Eyal – see below). A shocked Knesset passed legislation outlawing incitement to violence. Shimon Peres took over as Prime Minister, and pressed ahead with plans for implementing Oslo II. After his victory in May 1996, Likud's Benjamin Netanyahu proceeded to slow down the peace process. New left-wing dissident groups emerged in response to this setback for their cause. Meanwhile Netanyahu disappointed many of his former right-wing and religious allies by agreeing to the Hebron Protocol and the Wye Valley Agreements. Hence right-wing dissidence began to revive by 1999.

In 1999 Ehud Barak, Israel's new leader, pledged to revive the peace process with both the Palestinians and Syria. In early 2000 he honoured his pledge to withdraw Israeli forces from the "southern security zone" in Lebanon. This was regarded as a particular triumph for civic organisations like Four Mothers (see listing below) who had campaigned for such an action.

Following the failure of Barak's attempt to forge a peace deal with Syria, he turned his attention to the "Palestinian track". The result was the US-backed Camp David II peace talks. These attempted to address the long delayed "final status" issues, pursuant to the Oslo peace process, but ended in acrimony. Both sides blamed each other: Barak claimed that he had offered the Palestinians a golden deal, with the prospect of a possible state on more than 95 per cent of the West Bank; PLO leader Yasser Arafat denied this, and was angry that Israel would not apparently concede more regarding Jerusalem and Jewish settlements.

Subsequent attempts to revive talks failed when in late September 2000 a visit by Israeli opposition leader, Ariel Sharon, sparked off (or was used as a pretext for) the so-called Al Aqsa intifada by Palestinians. Sharon won a prime ministerial poll in early 2001, and created a Labour-Likud "government of national unity". His Likud Party triumphed over Labour at a general election held in early 2003. At the time of going to print, the uprising is still continuing, though a new peace plan, dubbed the "road map", and backed by a quartet of the USA, UN, EU and Russia, is currently under discussion.

The effect of the more recent violence has been profound on dissident movements in Israel. Right-wingers have veered towards vigilante action. Leftist

peace groups were initially shocked, angry at perceived Palestinian "betrayal", and lost support. But they subsequently revived in protest at violent Israeli retaliations after terrorist incidents, and reoccupation of territories vacated by Israel under Oslo II. A new feature of this period has been the radicalisation of many Israeli Arabs, who identify closely with their Palestinian brethren in the territories. The Israeli Islamic Movement has split between those who see their future within a Jewish state, and those who seek overt separation and on occasion countenance the use of violence to achieve this end.

Finally, it should be mentioned that the 2003 elections saw a crisis averted, after the electoral commission threatened to ban candidates from the Jewish right and Arab left. These bans were rescinded before polling day. Had this not been the case, observed some analysts, dissidents might have been forced underground, with potentially grave consequences for violent incidents within Israel, and destabilization of Israel's democratic structure.

*Note:* See also section on Palestinian Entity.

## EXTREME JEWISH NATIONALISTS

### Committee for Safety on the Roads

Despite its innocuous title, the Committee was actually one of the most active pressure groups opposed to the peace process. Its ostensible *raison d'être* was to keep West Bank tributary roads safe for passage by Jewish settlers. In 1995 the Committee stepped up its programme of civil disobedience. Individual members were accused of acts of violence against Palestinians. Other associated groups include Struggle Command Against Autonomy (led by former Tehiya Party chief, Elyakim Ha'etzni), Women in Green (see entry), Eyal (see entry), and *Zo Artzeinu* (see entry). The Committee was founded in 1982, with Baruch Marzel (see *Kach* entry) as its first commander, and Tiran Polack as his successor.

### Dor Hemshekh ("Next Generation")

*Leadership.* Shimon Richlin

Meaning "Next Generation", this group of younger settlers was founded in 1999. Many of its members are children of prominent earlier "pioneers". Its origin lay in opposition to an agreement signed in October 1999 between the new government of Ehud Barak, and Yesha (see entry), the official body representing settlements. Yesha and Barak had agreed to dismantle outlying illegal settlements, a decision that *Dor* regarded as betraying Jewish rights to *Eretz Yisrael*.

More generally, the group seeks to revive the original radical ideology of *Gush Emunim*, and opposes any land compromise in the occupied territories. In the words of its apparent leader, Shimon Richlin, it aims to counter "negative aspects of Western culture" with "Torah-based values", and "create a peaceful Jewish revolution". Richlin, from the settlement of Ma'ale Michmash, says he eschews the radical image of *Gush Emunim* (see entry), and stated: "our goal is to build and be creative, not to destroy". He wants to spread his message to secular Jews within pre-1967 Israel, and not only to fellow settlers.

Belying Richlin's argument, in late 2001 *Dor* led violent resistance to Israeli Defence Force (IDF) troops who were sent to dismantle outpost settlements at Gilad Farm. (This followed earlier peaceful protests in late 1999 at Nokdim and Maon Farm.) *Dor* also uses Gush Emunim's Daniella Weiss as an unofficial senior advisor. Evidently *Dor Hemshekh* is split between moderates, like Richlin, and radicals who query the legitimacy of Israeli government decisions, and possibly even the state as it currently exists. Notable figures in *Dor* include Yehoshaphat Tor (founder of Maon), Oded Porat (an activist for Golan Heights settlers), Malachi Levinger (son of Rabbi Moshe Levinger, and chief recruiter), and Tzippi Schlissel (niece of the late Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook, and a founder of Charasha, a caravan settlement overlooking Ramallah).

### Eyal ("Jewish Fighting Organization")

The highly clandestine Eyal cell became infamous when an alleged member, Yigal Amir, assassinated Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in Tel Aviv on Nov. 4, 1995. Although Amir claimed to have "acted alone", Eyal's putative leader, Avishai Raviv, was arrested on Nov. 8 on suspicion of conspiracy to murder. Later reports suggested that Shin Bet (Israeli intelligence) had hired Raviv, a philosophy student at Bar-Ilan University where Amir studied law, as an agent provocateur. It was said that Raviv had founded Eyal on Bar Ilan campus so that the government could keep track of radical right-wingers. Raviv denied all such charges.

Raviv is currently being prosecuted for not stopping Amir when he apparently knew of the latter's plans to kill Rabin. Reportedly, secret documents from the official Shamgar commission of inquiry into the assassination suggest that a Shin Bet agent encouraged Amir to fire shots, believing them to be blanks. Conspiracy theorists, predominantly right-wingers, say Shin Bet planned a bogus assassination attempt on Rabin, but that the plan went badly wrong when rogue agents substituted live bullets for blanks. They hope to thereby divert blame from right-wing groups.

Eyal may have arisen as an offshoot of *Kach* (see below) after the Hebron massacre of February 1994. The name is an acronym for "Jewish Fighting Organization" in Hebrew. Video footage shows Eyal acolytes being inducted at a ceremony over the graves of fighters of the Lehi (or Stern Gang, right-wing Jewish terrorists active prior to the creation of the Jewish state). New members were heard vowing to kill anyone who "sold out the Land of Israel". Later reports suggested that the "ceremony" was staged. Raviv was said to have designed posters depicting Rabin as an SS officer, which were displayed at anti-government right-wing rallies in 1995, prior to the Rabin assassination.

Like *Kach*, Eyal was a racist group that fuses ultra-Zionist nationalism with religious orthodoxy. It regarded settlers as the spearhead of a movement to recreate Greater Israel (*Eretz Yisrael*) and opposed all moves to promote Palestinian rights. Eyal saw the peace process as an existential threat to Jewish life in Israel. Certain rabbis, in Israel and the Diaspora, justified the use of violence to sabotage peace talks. In June 1995 Rabbi Abraham Hecht of New York had stated that *halakha* (Jewish religious law) permitted the killing of the Prime Minister because his policies constituted a danger to Jews. Eyal claimed responsibility for the killing of a 25-

year-old Palestinian, Salman Zamiri, in the village of Hal-houl, near Hebron, on Sept. 8, 1995. It may be linked to another shadowy group, the Sword of David.

### Gal Einai ("Open My Eyes")

*Leadership. Rabbi Yitzchak Ginsburgh*

The US-born Rabbi Ginsburgh came to Israel in 1965. His Gal Einai ("Open my Eyes") Institute sees the "recovery of Eretz Yisrael" as a divine gift. Israel's refusal to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem is blamed for all Israel's current problems. Affiliated to the Lubavitch Hassidic movement, and promoters of *kabbalah* (the Jewish mystical tradition), Gal Einai's acolytes have clashed with Palestinians at Joseph's tomb in Nablus, where they set up a yeshiva (religious academy). Ginsburgh often lectures to the militant Jews based in Hebron.

### Gush Emunim ("Bloc of the Faithful")

*Leadership. Rabbi Moshe Levinger; Daniella Weiss*

The late Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook, son of a revered moderate former Chief Rabbi of Palestine, was the spiritual mentor of this messianic movement, founded in 1974 after the October (or Yom Kippur) War of 1973. Activist leaders include Rabbi Moshe Levinger, Rabbi Haim Druckman and Daniella Weiss, public relations chief of *Gush*, and its director from 1984 to 1988. Levinger remains a prominent veteran figure in the small and radical Jewish community of Hebron. He once killed a Palestinian and was jailed for four months. Weiss was elected Mayor of Kedumim in 1996. She helped found this, the first settlement in "Samaria" (northern West Bank), in 1975, near the town of Sebastia, against government wishes. Yitzhak Armoni succeeded Weiss as director in 1988.

Governed by a 13-member secretariat, *Gush Emunim* also ran an agency for practical settlement, called *Amana*, initially led by Uri Elitzur. *Amana* still operates, whereas it appears that the parent organization, *Gush*, is effectively defunct. Many former *Gush* members gravitated to Yesha (see entry) or more radical entities.

Meaning "Bloc of the Faithful", the *Gush* inherited the mantle of the Land of Israel movement, set up after Israel conquered the territories in 1967. The latter was established immediately after the 1973 war, and pressurised successive Israeli governments to settle Jews in these areas, as did *Gush*. Amongst their parliamentary advocates were Hanan Porat and others within the National Religious Party (NRP), the Herut faction of Likud, the far-right Tehiya Party, and even certain sections of Labour. *Gush* also worked closely with Ariel Sharon, Likud Agriculture Minister between 1977 and 1981, who increased the number of settlers by up to 30,000 during this period. Affiliations with *Gush Emunim* prompted a significant internal party revolt against militant influence within the NRP in the mid-1980s.

While some settled for economic reasons (cheaper rents and rates), others, especially those affiliated with *Gush Emunim*, were motivated by religious factors. They called the territories by their Biblical name, Judea and Samaria. Religious *Gush* acolytes tended to be graduates of Yeshiva Merkaz Ha-Rav, a Talmudic academy dedicated to the philosophy of former Chief Rabbi Yitzhak Kook. *Gush* members feel that the very act of settlement would render obsolete any plan for



Palestinian autonomy, and quoted Jewish scriptures to say it would be sin to give up this land.

Rabbi Levinger founded the Kiryat Arba settlement outside Hebron, an Arab West Bank town revered by Jews as the City of the Patriarchs, in the early 1970s. Israel's first Likud government gave active support to *Gush Emunim* from 1977 to 1984, though the presence of Labour in a national unity government thereafter slowed this trend. In 1979 settlers provocatively took over a building in central Hebron.

Relations between settlers and Palestinians deteriorated after the first intifada broke out in December 1987. Some accused the Israeli army of not protecting them from the intifada and took the law into their own hands. Rabbi Levinger, who demanded vengeance when an Israeli woman was killed in 1983, shot dead an Arab shopkeeper in Hebron after his car was stoned in September 1988. A manslaughter charge was dropped after plea-bargaining, and he received a five-month sentence. *Gush* members were also prominent in the Jewish Underground (see entry).

Rabbi Benny Elon was reported to be the new leader of *Gush Emunim* in 1992, though he was also said to be a leader of the more militant *Kach* (see entry). Former *Gush* radicals now support protest groups like *Zo Artzeinu* and Eyal. In the late 1990s there was talk of a new movement to replace *Gush* with another, representing the "next generation" of settlers, and entitled simply *Emunim*.

Many rabbis formerly associated with *Gush Emunim* were accused of fomenting the atmosphere that led to Prime Minister Rabin's assassination on Nov. 4, 1995. In 1995 a body called The Rabbinical Authority, consisting of 1,500 mainly *Gush*-affiliated rabbis issued a halachic ruling for religious military conscripts to defy any orders to withdraw from the occupied territories. It also forbade the "evacuation of bases and the handing over of land to non-Jews". Rabbi Nahum Rabinovich, spiritual head of the large Ma'ale Adu-mim settlement outside Jerusalem, allegedly told his students to place land-mines in the path of defence forces if they tried to make settlers evacuate their homes. The original edict came from the Authority's leader, former Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi Avraham Shapira. In 2002 Rabbi Zalman Melamed, the controversial rabbi of Beit El, called on settlers to aggressively resist dismantling of settlements. So did other rabbis, including Yitzhak Ginsburgh (see Gal Einai), Dov Lior and Eliezer Waldman, both of Kiryat Arba, and Haim Druckman (who once led an NRP breakaway faction called Matzad).

Since the 1990s the mainly administrative Yesha Council, founded in 1979, has largely superseded the marginalized *Gush* as the voice of settlers (see separate entry). Meanwhile, several former *Gush* acolytes have reached senior positions in Israeli politics: notably, former Brig.-Gen. Efraim Eitam, the highest-ranking officer in the IDF, a "returnee to faith", and since April 2002 leader of the National Religious Party (*Mafdal*). Eitam rejects a Palestinian state west of the Jordan (suggesting that Egypt's Sinai Desert would make a better locality), and has called for PLO leader Arafat to be killed. Re-elected in January 2003, he entered Ariel Sharon's new coalition government. As Minister for Housing he is expected to promote the expansion of settlements. If so, this would contravene Israel's stated

acceptance of the internationally supported "road map for peace".

### Jewish Underground

On July 22, 1984, the alleged leader of the so-called "Jewish Underground" (or *Machteret* in Hebrew), Menachem Livni, was sentenced with two others to life imprisonment for murder following attacks on Palestinians. On May 23 Livni and 24 others had been charged with being members of a terrorist organization, with desecrating mosques, and with attacking in March 1980 the former Palestinian mayors of the West Bank towns of Ramallah, Nablus and El-Bira. The Underground was formed in 1978 and is regarded as an activist offshoot of *Kach* (see entry). Livni was also the chairman of the Committee for the Renewal of Jewish Settlements in the City of Patriarchs (i.e. Hebron on the West Bank — see under *Gush Emunim*).

After months of demonstrations, Israeli President Herzog on March 26, 1987, commuted the three life sentences imposed in 1984, but refused calls for a full presidential pardon after his re-election in 1988. On Dec. 27, 1990, the three were released after serving less than seven years of their sentences. The next day a previously unknown group, the Zionist Avengers, attacked a Palestinian family in the West Bank, badly wounding three. This incident followed a spate of knife attacks on Jews in the wake of the Temple Mount massacre (see under Temple Mount Faithful).

### Kach ("Thus")

*Leadership. Baruch Marzel (reputedly)*

*Websites: www.kahane.org*

*www.jdl.org*

*www.newkach.org*

*www.geocities.com/Athens/Delphi/3141/[Yeshiva of the Jewish Idea]*

For most of the 1970s and 1980s, *Kach* defined the outer boundary of the far-right in Israel. Today some of its policies (such as "transfer" of Palestinians from the territories) have been adopted by small parties whose leaders sit in the Likud-led cabinet. For a few years *Kach* operated as a legal party, but was best known as a dissident platform for its charismatic leader, Rabbi Meyer Kahane, who was assassinated in 1990.

Born in New York in 1932, Kahane founded the Jewish Defence League (JDL) in 1968. The American branch organized defence patrols, clashed frequently with Black nationalists and bombed Soviet targets in the USA, in revenge for restrictions on Jewish emigration. An Israeli branch was set up soon after Kahane came to Israel in 1971. It advocated removing all Arabs from the whole of "Greater Israel" (i.e. including the territories), except for those willing to accept a grossly inferior status within a Kahane-led Jewish theocracy.

Kahane also opposed socialist and democratic views as inimical to his view of Judaism. While many right-wingers shunned Kahane's brashness, he declared in 1985: "I am saying what you are thinking". In time the group became known as *Kach*. Other names used were *Dikuy Bogdim* (Repression of Traitors), *Dov*, the State of Judea, Committee for the Safety of the Roads, the Sword of David, Judea Police, Forefront of the Idea, and the Qomemiyut Movement. *Kach* attracted a following among orthodox Jews (many were "returnees to faith" — *hozrei b'yeshuva* — espe-

cially from the USA) and disgruntled youth from the poorer sections of Israel's Oriental Jewish community.

Kahane unsuccessfully contested the 1977 elections. He was elected as *Kach*'s sole member in 1984 after an attempt to ban his party failed. In August 1979 he was sentenced to a year in prison for visiting Hebron illegally. On May 13, 1977, Kahane and Baruch Green (later called Baruch Ben-Yosef) were detained following reports that *Kach* was setting up an underground army to attack West Bank Arabs. Prime Minister Begin (whom *Kach* called a traitor for his Camp David deal with Egypt) lifted Kahane's detention order, but he still had to serve a prison sentence for provoking disturbances earlier in the year.

*Kach* and *Gush Emunim* supporters fought Israeli troops who removed Jewish settlers from Yamit, northern Sinai, in April 1982. The area was returned to Egypt on schedule, but *Kach* argued that it was Israel's by right of conquest and settlement. Yehuda Richter, a *Kach* leader, was sentenced in 1984 for leading an attack on an Arab bus near Ramallah in March that year. After Kahane planned to set up an emigration office for Palestinians at Umm el Fahm, within pre-1967 borders Israel, thousands of Jews and Arabs protested his intended visit there on Aug. 29, 1984.

In mid-1987 the Knesset restricted Kahane's rights as a member of the Knesset. It also forced him to surrender his dual Israeli-American nationality, which had allowed him to raise funds in the USA, and swear an oath of loyalty to Israel. Kahane further embarrassed the two nations in November when a leaked FBI memo suggested that Israeli intelligence was blocking US investigations into the JDL. Evidently JDL members had attacked Arabs in the USA, then taken refuge with *Kach* supporters in Kiryat Arba, near Hebron. The intifada that broke out in December gave *Kach* additional pretexts for violence. In March 1988 both the JDL and *Kach* International claimed they had bombed the PLO ship docked in Cyprus, which was returning 100 Palestinian deportees to Israel.

On Oct. 5, 1988, Israel's Supreme Court backed a decision to ban *Kach* from contesting the forthcoming election on the grounds that it was a "Nazi-like, undemocratic and racist" organization. Kahane continued his struggle regardless, calling for settlers to take the law into their own hands and fight Israeli forces if need be. He was addressing a fledgling support group in New York on Nov. 5, 1990, when he was shot dead by an Egyptian, El Sayed Noseir. Two elderly Palestinians were killed in an apparent revenge attack in Nablus the next day, and 15,000 people, including three cabinet ministers, attended Kahane's funeral. (Noseir was acquitted of Kahane's murder on a technicality, but was later indicted and imprisoned for his role in the first bombing of the New York World Trade Center, in 1993.)

Rabbi Avraham Toledano was elected *Kach* leader on March 24, 1991, with the blessing of Kahane's widow. Her son Binyamin challenged the election, and formed a splinter group, Kahane Chai ("Kahane Lives", see entry). The US State Department lists both movements as "foreign terrorist organizations". Soon a younger Hebron-based radical and former parliamentary aide to Kahane, Baruch Marzel, took over as *Kach* leader. Others spoke of Rabbi Moshe Levinger of *Gush Emunim* (see entry) as Kahane's spiritual heir.

In February 1994 Baruch Goldstein, a Brooklyn-born

doctor and *Kach* member, entered the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron and began firing a machine gun, killing 29 people. Soon thereafter both *Kach* and Kahane Chai were declared banned organizations. Their leaders were placed under Shin Bet (Israeli internal security) surveillance. Marzel served three years under administrative detention. Nonetheless, a string of *Kach*-affiliated groups remain quietly active. Marzel and some other activists threatened Israeli President Ezer Weizman when he visited Hebron in 1998. In September 1999 an Israeli court convicted Uri Amir, the leader of *Noar Meir*, a Kahanist youth group, of sedition. Amir had distributed fliers endorsing the murder of Arabs, praising Rabin's assassination, and encouraging people to contribute to the "Baruch Goldstein Fund".

The outbreak of the Al Aqsa intifada in late 2000 revived Kahane sympathizers, as evidenced by the proliferation of posters and graffiti proclaiming "Kahane was right". Militants have attacked Palestinians, sometimes shooting at vehicles from the roadside; disrupted olive harvests by Palestinian farmers; and fought Israeli forces sent to oversee the dismantling of illegal outpost settlements.

In the USA the *Kach*-affiliated JDL renewed activities following the September 11 terrorist attacks. On Dec. 11, 2001, JDL leaders Irv Rubin and Earl Krugel were charged with plotting to bomb the King Fahd Mosque in Culver City, and an office belonging to a congressman of Lebanese descent, Darrell Issa. Rubin died from wounds received when he allegedly tried to commit suicide in jail in October 2002.

In April 2002 Noam Federman, a former *Kach* spokesman and foe of the more established Yesha Council for West Bank and Gazan settlers, was arrested in connection with an incident that took place in July 2001. It was alleged that he planned to bomb a Palestinian school and hospital in Jerusalem. Another *Kach* associate, Dov Shurin, praised past murderers of Palestinians, like Ami Popper and Yoram Skolnik, on his regular programme on the pirate radio station, Arutz 7.

In October 2002 Baruch Marzel participated in an assault on soldiers who had been sent to enforce the dismantling of the illegal outpost settlement of Gilad Farm. He was arrested in November and confined to the Jerusalem area under a court order. In December 2002 Michael Kleiner, MK, appointed Marzel to the number two slot on his far right Herut Party's list of prospective candidates for the Jan. 28, 2003, elections. Kahane sympathisers supported Herut by spray painting slogans like "Expel the Arab enemy" and "No Arabs, No Terrorism".

By 21 to 18 votes, Israel's Central Elections Committee accepted the legitimacy of Marzel's candidacy. Attorney General Elyakim Rubinstein, though, vetoed this decision. An investigator working under Rubinstein, Talia Sasson, found documents at *Kach* offices that "proved beyond doubt" that Marzel still led an outlawed terror movement, and therefore should be ruled out as a parliamentarian. In early January Marzel's candidature was reinstated on appeal, along with two Arab politicians who were also barred, Ahmad Tibi and Azmi Bishara. However, in the Jan. 28 elections Herut just failed to achieve the minimum votes cast for representation in the Knesset, and neither Kleiner nor Marzel were elected.

Rabbi Benny Elon, another former *Kach* leader, born in Jerusalem in 1954, was named as head of *Gush Emunim* in 1992. He has been a Knesset member for Rehavam Zeevi's far-right *Moledet* party since 1996. The legal *Moledet* is often compared with the illegal *Kach*. Until its defeat in the 1999 election, so was *Yemin Yisrael*, a right-wing breakaway from *Moledet* led by Knesset member and settler from Kiryat Arba, near Hebron, Shaul Gutman.

However, *Moledet* insists that it favours voluntary transfer of Arabs, as opposed to the enforced expulsions advocated by *Kach*. *Moledet* also includes non-religious nationalists, whereas *Kach* technically sought rule according to halakha (Jewish traditional law) and despised democracy. Some Kahane-like views have also been detected in Avigdor Lieberman's largely Russian *Yisrael Beiteinu* party, which allied itself to the National Union bloc.

Rabbi Elon taught at the Jerusalem Centre of the extremist *Ateret Ha-Cohanim* (see entry on Temple Mount Faithful) and in 1999 led another extreme group, *Mityashvei Tzion* (Settlers of Zion), in their bid to displace Arab homesteaders from the suburb of Sheikh Jarrah, East Jerusalem. In October 2001 Zeevi was assassinated by a Palestinian group (Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, PFLP) and Elon succeeded him as leader of both *Moledet* and the parent *Ichud Leumi* (National Union) coalition. From then until his resignation in March 2002, Elon was Israel's Tourism Minister. Re-elected to the Knesset in January 2003, he returned to his former post as Tourism Minister. Like her husband, Emunah Elon currently affects a more moderate stance. She is a major media spokesperson for Israel's far-right.

Other *Kach* or former *Kach* militants include Tiran Polack, Baruch Ben-Yosef, and Rabbi Yehuda Kroizer, since 1987 head of the *Kach*-affiliated Yeshiva (seminary) of the Jewish Idea, in Jerusalem. Kroizer also officiates at Mitzpe Yericho, a yeshiva in largely Palestinian Jericho. As of late 2000, opinion polls revealed that between 10% and 20% more voters would be prepared to support a *Kach* party, if it were legal, than was the case when *Kach* was banned in 1988. The polls revealed that support now extended beyond religious fanatics and downtrodden Oriental Jewish youth. It now includes secular citizens angered by Palestinian terrorism, *Haredi* (ultra-orthodox Jews) who were previously non-Zionist, and irreligious immigrants to Israel from the former Soviet Union.

Though officially banned, "New Kach" runs a newsletter, *Voice of Jewish Resistance* (VJR). For the first time leading settler rabbis attended an annual public ceremony to commemorate the death of Rabbi Meyer Kahane in Jerusalem, in October 2002. In the six months to March 2003, pro-Kach and anti-Arab slogans proliferated in the Jewish enclave of Hebron (where 800 Jews live among 200,000 Arabs).

It appears that the Al Aqsa intifada that began in late September 2000, and the Israeli reoccupation of parts of the West Bank, since 2001, has been accompanied by more violent activity by settlers. It is thought that a reactivated *Kach* network may be guiding such attacks. The *Jerusalem Post* wrote that a hitherto dormant Jewish underground cell, possibly affiliated to *Kach*, had killed ten Palestinians — apparently in revenge for killings of settlers by *Hamas* and others during the intifada. In June 2001, to quote one instance,

armed settlers were reported by *B'Tselem* (see entry below) to have entered the Palestinian villages of Luban a-Sharqiya and A-Sawiya, in the Nablus district. They were said to have destroyed property, shot at villagers, and prevented ambulances from entering, all with the collusion or acquiescence of IDF forces present. Likewise there were numerous accounts of settlers forcibly preventing Palestinian farmers from harvesting their olive crops.

On April 9, 2003, it was reported that a radical right-wing Jewish group calling itself "Revenge of the Babies" claimed responsibility for an explosion at a school in the village of Al-Jarba, 10 kilometres south of Jenin, in the northern West Bank. The blast injured 29 Palestinian children, four seriously. The group said they were "avenging the Jewish children killed by the Palestinians". In May 2002 four settlers from sites near Hebron and Bethlehem were arrested in connection with an attack on another Palestinian school, this time in Sur Baher, East Jerusalem, in March 2002. A group calling itself "Revenge of the Children" claimed responsibility; it is not clear whether this is the same outfit as the one mentioned above. Four were wounded in the March 2002 attack.

### Kahane Chai ("Kahane Lives")

*Leadership.* David Axelrod

The group Kahane Chai ("Kahane Lives") was formed as a platform for Binyamin Kahane, son of the assassinated *Kach* leader, Rabbi Meyer Kahane, in 1991. It also employs other titles: the Kfar Tapuah Fund, the Judean Voice, the Judean Legion, The Way of the Torah, and *Koach* (Strength). The younger Kahane failed to be named as successor to his late father as *Kach* leader after the latter was killed, in 1990 (see *Kach* entry, above). There is little to distinguish the ideologies of the two groups. Both claim the mantle of the late Meir Kahane, espouse racist views and seek to recreate a theocratic Israel to its full biblical dimensions. Rabbi Binyamin taught at Jerusalem's Yeshiva (seminary) of the Jewish Idea. He refused to condemn Rabin's murder, and commented: "A person could understand Amir [the assassin]".

Though lacking the charisma of his father, the quieter son nonetheless commanded a small but devoted following, bolstered by his use of the internet to disseminate his religious and political arguments. He used to operate out of the West Bank settlement of Tapuah. The Israeli cabinet declared Kahane Chai as an illegal terrorist organization in March 1994, under Israel's 1948 Terrorism Law. Binyamin Kahane was gunned down and killed by Palestinian militants, together with his wife and four children, in a drive-by shooting in late December 2000. His followers vowed to wreak vengeance for his murder. Like *Kach*, Kahane Chai still receives substantial donations from American supporters. The US-born David Axelrod is considered to be its current leader.

### Temple Mount Faithful

*Leadership:* Gershon Salomon (chairman)

*Websites.* [www.templemountfaithful.org](http://www.templemountfaithful.org)

[www.ateret.org.il/](http://www.ateret.org.il/)

This fanatical group of Jewish nationalists, believed to be an affiliate of *Kach*, is determined to rebuild the ancient Jewish temple, destroyed by the Romans in 73 AD, on its original site in Jerusalem. It described US President Bush's "vision

of a Palestinian state”, as reported in 2002, as a “sinful mistake”. It believes we are living in an “end-times generation”, the age of the imminent coming of the Messiah, and claims a membership of 9,000.

However, the Temple Mount area (known to Muslims as the Haram al-Sharif, or Noble Sanctuary) also houses the Dome of the Rock and al-Aqsa Mosques and is administered by an Islamic council. Muslims regard the site as their third holiest after Mecca and Medina, hence their opposition to such plans by the TMF. (A visit to the Mount by then opposition leader, now Israeli Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon, in September 2000, sparked off the Al-Aqsa intifada.) Official Israeli policy since 1967 disallows Jews from praying on the Mount, according to a normative Orthodox precept that doing so may involve unintentional desecration of the Holy of Holies).

The TMF seek “the liberation of the Temple Mount from Arab (Islamic) occupation so that it may be consecrated to the Name of God”. Forty-five TMF members were arrested when they tried to settle on the Mount on March 10, 1983. Two were arrested after 268lbs of explosive charges were found near the mosques on Jan. 29, 1984. The TMF tried to blow up the mosques on five occasions prior to 1991. They call the Muslim houses of prayer “symbols of Arab colonialism” and openly seek their destruction. On Oct. 7, 1998, the TMF tried to plant a foundation stone for a new temple during the Jewish festival of Succoth (Tabernacles).

On Oct. 7, 1990, Israeli security forces won a Supreme Court order forbidding the TMF from entering the Haram to again lay a “foundation stone”. But the court ruling was poorly publicized and the next day 3,000 Muslims demonstrated against an anticipated incursion. A massacre ensued, costing 17 Palestinian lives and wounding another 100 (for more details, see section on Palestinian Movements).

In 2000 the TMF condemned a “covenant” allegedly signed between the Pope and PLO leader Yasser Arafat as being “against the God and People of Israel”. In October 2000 the TMF were banned from entering the Mount compound after Sharon’s controversial visit led to rioting. A year later, police again blocked a bid to plant two cornerstones during the festival of Tisha B’Av.

A Temple Institute, led by Rabbi Israel Ariel and director, Zev Golan, is located in the Jewish Quarter of Jerusalem’s Old City. Sometimes linked to the TMF, it claims to eschew violence. Its museum displays recreations of temple implements. TMF officials sometimes don ancient priestly dress during their activities. Most bizarrely, the TMF acquired a red heifer born in Galilee, which they intend to sacrifice when they build their Third Temple, thus fulfilling biblical edicts to the letter.

The TMF arranges tours of Israel and the territories for American Christian Zionists who wish to be “Partners in Redemption”. (Many US Christian evangelical groups, including Pat Robertson’s Christian Broadcasting Network, raise funds for the TMF.)

Another group backing these tours is Project Shofar. Led by Gary Cooperberg, former public relations officer for Jewish zealots in Hebron and for the late Rabbi Meyer Kahane (see Kach entry), the Project seeks to encourage Jewish immigration from the USA. “The American Jew is the most endangered species in our exile”, states its website,

which also seeks support from non-Jewish Americans.

The TMF are also associated with a group called **Ateret Ha-Cohanim** (“Crown of the High Priests”). Ateret’s yeshiva (seminary), administered by Yossi Kaufman and headed by Rabbi Shlomo Aviner, won approval to take over properties in an Arab neighbourhood of Jerusalem, Ras al-Amud, in August 1998. This followed violent rioting between Ateret supporters and Palestinian residents. Ateret’s leading patron is a Miami-based casino boss and right-wing philanthropist, Irving Moskowitz. Also financing Ateret is the Organization for the Restoration of Jerusalem, founded in 1977. It has raised tens of millions of dollars from wealthy Jews who wish to expand the Jewish presence in East Jerusalem. In 1989 the foundation, or “Project”, helped Ateret Ha-Cohanim acquire St. John’s Hospice in the Christian Quarter. It reputedly funded campaigns by former Likud leader and Prime Minister, Binyamin Netanyahu.

### Terror against Terror (TNT)

This group (*Terror Neged Terror* in Hebrew) was a shadowy offshoot of Kach. It claimed responsibility for grenade attacks on two mosques in Hebron on Dec. 30, 1983, and an attack on a bus near Ramallah on March 4, 1984. TNT has been connected to the Sicarites, named after knife-wielding Jewish resistance groups in Roman-ruled Palestine of the first century AD, who launched revenge attacks on Arabs during the late 1980s.

### Women in Green

*Leadership: Ruth and Nadia Matar*

*Website: [www.womeningreen.org](http://www.womeningreen.org)*

Founded in 1993 by the mother and daughter duo, Ruth and Nadia Matar, Women for Israel’s Tomorrow (better known as Women in Green) arose out of opposition to the Oslo peace process. It is devoted to Greater Israel, opposes any land concessions in the Golan Heights, West Bank, Jerusalem or Gaza, has accused Israeli Arab citizens of treachery, and enjoys widespread support from settlers. Ruth Matar has her own regular programme on the popular far-right radio station, Arutz 7, and has attacked Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, elected in February 2001, for co-operating with the Labour Party. It has called the Israeli left a greater threat than Iran, Iraq and the Palestine Authority. Paradoxically, yet deliberately, Women in Green mimics the name and use of dress code of the left-wing Women in Black movement (see below).

### Yesha

*Leadership: Benjamin Kashriel (secretary general); Ben-Tzion Lieberman*

*Website: [www.yeshanews.org](http://www.yeshanews.org)*

Yesha is an acronym for Yehuda, Shomron and Aza (Judea, Samaria and Gaza), i.e. the occupied territories. Officially, it seeks to “concentrate broader representative power in [settlers’] dealings with government ministries and other government authorities”. It thus acts as a cross between a democratically elected administrative body and a lobby for the 144 settlements of the territories. However Yesha occasionally espouses radical and dissident demands. As *Gush Emunim* (see entry) declined, Yesha absorbed some of its former personnel.



For many years Yisrael Harel, a founder of *Gush Emunim*, chaired Yesha. In November 1985 the Council warned that its members would not pay taxes or serve in the army if the government ever negotiated away settlers' land. In 1995 Yesha organized demonstrations against the Labour government and its Oslo peace process. One of its clearly incendiary slogans was "in blood and fire we will expel Rabin". The subsequent assassination of Rabin prompted some soul-searching amongst Yesha leaders, regarding their role in his murder. Nonetheless, the victory of Benjamin Netanyahu in 1996 restored their status, and on June 1, 1997, a large funding effort for settlements was launched in the USA, entitled the Israel Fund/YESHA Heartland Campaign.

Yesha revived campaigning against the Oslo peace process after the election of Prime Minister Ehud Barak in 1999. In May 2000 the group led a rally in Zion Square, Jerusalem, that attracted possibly more than 70,000 demonstrators. Nonetheless, Yesha Director General, Shlomo Filber, and Yesha Secretary General, Aharon Domb, maintained contact with Barak.

The Council denied spearheading a campaign, launched in September 2001, to populate new sites in the territories, but said it was "being kept informed". Campaigners claimed to have co-ordinated moves with the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF), but threatened to resist deportation if removed. On Dec. 13, 2001, Yesha demanded that parties from the "national camp" leave the Likud-led coalition government of Ariel Sharon, if he failed to order IDF troops to "recapture Palestinian territories". And, on July 25, 2002, the Council called on the government to deport 80,000 Palestinians from the West Bank after news broke of another terror incident. Specifically, Yesha demanded the expulsion of residents from Yatah, which they sought to make "a symbol of the price to pay, for Palestinians who commit terrorist acts or support them." They also stated, "Tonight, the village of Harth Al-Maya should be destroyed because of terrorist attacks coming from there."

Benjamin Kashriel, mayor of the settlement of Ma'ale Adumim, is the Secretary General of Yesha. The Director General of the Council's Foreign Desk is Yehudit Tayyar. Shlomo Filber was Director General of Yesha, until appointed bureau chief for former Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, in April 2001.

In mid-2000 Filber publicly admitted that it was impossible for Israel to rule over the Palestinian people indefinitely. However, following the outbreak of the Al Aqsa intifada, Filber called for the assassination of PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat in 2001. When the Sharon government belatedly agreed to dismantle illegal "outpost" settlements, Yesha condemned the move as "encouragement for terrorism".

Yesha has long suffered from schisms between "moderates", like Ben-Tzion "Benzi" Lieberman and Aharon Domb, and "radicals", like Daniella Weiss, the Mayor of Kedumim (see *Gush Emunim*). In late 2002 there was an attempt to remove Weiss from Yesha's ruling council. In 1999 a movement of younger settlers set up *Dor Hemshekh* (see entry). Though not opposed to Yesha, it has embarrassed some of the older Yesha leadership by seeking to return the settler movement to its original radical ideals.

By mid-2002 the lawyer Ben-Tzion Lieberman was deemed to be Chairman of Yesha. He is also head of the

Shomron (Samaria) Regional Council, within Yesha, and previously led a right-wing legal organization, *B'Tzedek*. Former Yesha Chairman Yisrael Harel criticized Lieberman and other "moderate" Yesha leaders, for agreeing with the Sharon government that a security wall should be built between Israel and the territories. Harel called the wall, or fence, a "victory for terrorists", a precursor to Palestinian statehood, and an implied threat to settlers east of the line. By June 14, 2002, Lieberman appeared to have bowed to pressure, and vowed to fight a "bitter struggle" against the government if the fence went up. Yesha is associated with the Arutz-7 pirate radio station, which is popular with settlers.

### Zo Artzeinu ("This is Our Land")

*Leadership: Moshe Feiglin and Shmuel Sackett*

*Website: www.zoartzeinu.org*

Meaning "This is Our Land" in Hebrew, the movement was founded in summer 1995 by the Israeli-born Feiglin and US-born Sackett, the only two Israelis (other than the late Binyamin Kahane – see Kahane Chai) convicted of sedition in the nation's history. Its first mass action was a sit-down protest by what it claims were 100,000 supporters, at 80 traffic intersections. In his book, "Where There Are No Men", Feiglin accuses Israel of succumbing to post-Zionist drift. He saw in the Oslo peace process a threat to Jewish life in the occupied territories of the West Bank (Judea and Samaria, in his parlance) and ultimately the destruction of Israel itself.

Feiglin claims that *Zo Artzeinu* is both a protest group and an intellectual movement advocating a new ideology of authentic Jewish leadership for Israel. "The objective of the Jewish people and Israel is to uplift the entire world to [recognize] the Divine Good and [execute] the Divine Will," he wrote. Militantly anti-Arab, the group was blamed for inciting the atmosphere that led to the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on Nov. 4, 1995. Posters at mass meetings depicting Rabin as a Nazi were regarded as particularly incendiary. Probably most of its supporters come from the settlements.

Before the Rabin murder it enjoyed the support of supposedly moderate settler leaders, like US-born Rabbi Shlomo Rifkin of Efrat, and still claims to favour non-violent action. *Zo Artzeinu* criticized the right-wing 1996-99 Netanyahu government for betraying the ideals of *Eretz Yisrael*, especially in the Hebron Accord, whereby Israeli troops withdrew from parts of the overwhelmingly Arab West Bank city. In September 1997 he was sentenced to 18 months for seditious activity – becoming one of only three Israelis ever so convicted. Feiglin supported the protests against IDF forces sent to dismantle the rogue settlement of Gilad Farm, in October 2002.

Currently *Zo Artzeinu* works via the Jewish Leadership (*Manhigut Yehudit*) movement with Likud supporters, infiltrating it and gaining 125 seats on its 2,700-seat Central Committee. On Nov. 28, 2002, the movement fielded its leader, Moshe Feiglin, as a candidate in internal leadership elections. Feiglin called for replacing the "Zionist dream that consumes both Likud and Labor" with a purely Jewish dream. He came a distant third in the elections, with about 3% of votes polled. (Prime Minister Ariel Sharon was duly re-elected, defeating Benjamin Netanyahu, whom he had recently appointed as his foreign minister.)

Many Likud members felt that Feiglin's presence within Likud legitimized extremist positions. Communications Minister and Likud member, Reuven Rivlin, threatened to leave the party if Feiglin forced it to adopt "the rejected anti-democratic ideas of the past". Feiglin was chosen as number 41 on the Likud party's list of candidates for the January 2003 election. However, on Dec. 24, 2002, Israel's Election Committee disqualified him from standing because of his past conviction for sedition. In his ruling, Judge Michael Cheshin said of Feiglin: "[His] words and deeds [are] against the elected authority and democratic rule that we are proud of. He and his friends decided to do all that they could to thwart decisions accepted as law. Feiglin hurt the state's democratic foundations and proper social order...his actions undermine society's existence and eventually turn a state of law and order to one ruled by militias that fight one another".

## OTHER GROUPS

Generally, left-wing and pro-Palestinian groupings in Israel have not resorted to violence, and cannot be called revolutionary movements. However, because a number have flouted Israeli laws, by meeting representatives of the PLO in the past, when it was illegal, or by refusing to serve in the defence forces, they are often defined as dissident, and are thus included here. Included in this number are certain legal political parties – especially Arab non-Zionist parties – whose right to contest elections has been challenged recently.

### Ale Yarok (Green Leaf Party)

Website. [ale-yarok.org.il](http://ale-yarok.org.il)

Led by Dan Goldenblatt, amongst others, this party, which favours the legalization of marijuana, was predicted to win seats in the 2003 elections as part of a general "protest against politics". In the event it failed to win seats.

### Balad (National Democratic Assembly)

The National Democratic Assembly (in Arabic, *Al Tahammu al-Watani al-Dimuqrati*) was founded just prior to the 1996 Israeli elections. Its leader, Azmi Bishara, is a Christian Palestinian citizen of Israel and a former professor of philosophy. He was elected as its sole member. That same year Balad set up an affiliated newspaper in Nazareth, *Fasl Al-Maqal* (The Decisive Opinion) edited by Nabil al-Saleh.

In 1999 Bishara became the first Israeli Arab to decide to stand for election as Prime Minister of Israel. He said he wished to test Israel's claim to be a democratic secular state for all its citizens, and not primarily a state for Jews only. In the event, Bishara stood down in favour of the ultimately successful Labour candidate, Ehud Barak, when the latter promised to commit more resources to ensuring Arab equality in Israel. Bishara has been a Knesset member since 1996.

In February 2001 Azmi Bishara led a campaign for Israeli Arabs to boycott the prime ministerial poll of that month. He wished to protest against the killing of 13 of their number in October 2000, during the early days of the Al Aqsa intifada, and what he said were the "broken promises" towards Arabs of the incumbent Prime Minister Barak. An estimated 85 per cent of Israeli Arabs did indeed obey the boycott; Ariel Sharon was elected Prime Minister.

The Knesset voted on Nov. 7, 2001, to lift Bishara's parliamentary immunity, after he had delivered a speech in the Syrian capital Damascus (capital of an "enemy state") and called on Arab countries "to adopt a unified position to support the Palestinian resistance against the Israeli occupation". A trial of Bishara began on Dec. 10, 2001. The politician welcomed the opportunity to "explain the difference between resistance and terrorism". (Certain Arab political exiles were upset that Bishara had failed to criticize human rights abuses in Syria, and shunned contacts with anti-Baathist dissidents.)

In December 2002 the Legal Advisor to the Israeli government, Elyakim Rubenstein, asked the Central Elections Committee to bar the Balad list and Azmi Bishara from standing in the elections scheduled for Jan. 28, 2003. Rubenstein explained that Bishara had denied Israel's right to exist as a "democratic Jewish state". Liberal Israeli academics protested that barring Balad damaged rather than enhanced or protected Israeli democracy. They alleged, furthermore, politically motivated double standards at work, as former *Kach* leaders, like Baruch Marzel, were permitted to stand as Knesset deputies, whereas Bishara, with no record of violence, was not. Israel's Supreme Court overruled the decision in early January 2003, and Bishara's candidacy was restored, along with those of Marzel and another Arab member of the Knesset, Ahmad Tibi (see entry for *Hadash-Ta'al*).

The Hebrew acronym for Bishara's party is Balad, which means Country in Arabic. As such, Balad may have connections with an earlier group, *Ibna al-Balad* (Sons of the Village), set up in the Arab Israeli town of Umm al-Fahm prior to local elections in December 1973. The *Ibna* were disenchanted with what they saw as excessive moderation by Rakah (incarnation of the Communist Party). It favoured a secular binational state over all of historic Palestine, including Israel, and initially shunned elections to the Knesset. *Ibna* did, however, contest municipal elections.

The group split in 1983, with some members joining the *al-Ansar* list, which in turn supported the Progressive List for Peace (PLP), a joint Jewish-Arab party that stood for elections. The PLP received the blessing of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in 1984, and held meetings with PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat. Another possibly affiliated group, Telem (from the Hebrew acronym for Progressive National Movement) was an Arab students' movement founded at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, in 1977. It favoured national self-determination for all Palestinians, including those who constituted the 18% Israeli Arab minority. A rump group of Sons of the Village remained active in its own right, and is currently led by Muhammed Kana'ana. In 1990 it collected signatures protesting the influx of Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union.

### B'Tselem

Leadership: Jessica Montell (executive director)

Website. [www.btselem.org](http://www.btselem.org)

Founded in 1989 by prominent Israeli academics, lawyers, journalists and Knesset members, *B'Tselem* adopted its name in reference to the biblical phrase for "in the image of God", a phrase echoed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Its subtitle is the "Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories".



*B'Tselem* combines the roles of monitoring group, field-work and research body, and lobby against Israeli policy in the occupied territories. It also wishes to foster a "human rights culture" in Israel, while believing that violations of rights in the territories deserve top priority. Respected even by ideological foes for the veracity of its annual and ad hoc reports, *B'Tselem* is staffed by Israeli Jews and Arabs, and co-operates closely with Palestinian personnel from the territories.

Its supporters participate in protests, though they eschew violence themselves. Supporters also accompany journalists on fact-finding missions. *B'Tselem* claims to be even-handed and on occasion has highlighted alleged abuses of the rights of Israelis in the territories. Since the 1993 Oslo Peace Process began, it has also drawn attention to violations by the Palestinian National Authority. Its workload has unsurprisingly intensified since the onset of the Al Aqsa intifada, where it has highlighted continued land expropriation, questionable activities by the IDF, and increased settler violence against Palestinians. It received the Carter-Menil Award for Human Rights in December 1989.

### Coalition of Women for Peace

*Leadership.* Gila Svirsky (co-founder)

*Websites:* [www.coalitionofwomen4peace.org](http://www.coalitionofwomen4peace.org)  
[www.batshalom.org](http://www.batshalom.org)  
[www.newprofile.org](http://www.newprofile.org)

An umbrella group that encompasses Women in Black, *Bat Shalom* (Daughter of Peace), The Fifth Mother Movement, The Woman's Voice - The Other Voice, Women Engendering Peace, New Profile (active since 1998), TANDI - Movement of Democratic Women for Israel (est. 1951), *Noga* (a feminist magazine), NELED - Women for Coexistence, Machsom-Watch (roadblock watch) and the Israeli chapter of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. Co-founder Gila Svirsky was formerly the director of the New Israel Fund-Israel and of Bat Shalom-Jerusalem Link.

### Four Mothers

*Leadership:* Rachel David (chair), Zohara Antebi, Miri Sela and Ronit Nachmias

*Website.* [www.4mothers.org.il/mothers](http://www.4mothers.org.il/mothers)

Established on March 4, 1997, by four mothers of soldiers serving in Lebanon, the group succeeded in forcing successive administrations to question the wisdom of maintaining troops north of the border. The lobby arose spontaneously after two IDF helicopters flying to Lebanon collided, killing 73 soldiers. All four of the founding mothers were members of kibbutzim or moshavim (types of agricultural collective) in northern Israel, near the border with Lebanon.

The group's name in Hebrew – *Arba Ima'ot* – evoked the notion of the four matriarchs in the Bible, Sarah, Rebecca, Leah and Rachel. They received much media coverage, in Israel and Arab countries, and increasing public sympathy. Their first tangible success came when Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced on April 1, 1998, that public pressure had led his government to change policy and agree to accept UN Resolution 425 (mandating the departure of foreign troops from Lebanese soil). The group faded away after it achieved its purpose in March 2000, with the departure of the last Israeli soldiers from the so-

called "southern security zone" in Lebanon.

### Guardians of the City Gates (Neturei Karta)

*Leadership.* Rabbi Moshe Hirsch (leader in Israel); Rabbi Yisroel Weiss (New York spokesman)

*Website.* [www.nkusa.org](http://www.nkusa.org)

Members of this group are extremely religious Jews of Lithuanian origin, whose roots go back to people who settled in Jerusalem during the 19th century. Their name is derived from an Aramaic phrase in the Talmud (codified Jewish Oral Law). Quoting what they say is the authentic interpretation of the Torah and Talmud, they oppose the existence of "the poison" of a secular Israel, or indeed any sovereign Jewish entity. They condemn the UN for agreeing to create the State of Israel, and believe that only the Messiah can unite the Jewish people in the Holy Land.

They also oppose Orthodox Jews who are pro-Zionist, like the Lubavitch Hassidic movement, the National Religious Party (Mafdal) and *Gush Emunim* settlers (see entry). Taking matters further, they explicitly support the PLO, but sometimes chide the latter for accepting a two-state solution. *Neturei Karta* even blames Zionism for the Nazi Holocaust, a deeply offensive view to most Jews. Of late they have stressed that "Jews are not allowed to dominate, kill, harm or demean another people", and call for a reversal of the "heretical Zionists' dispossession" of the Arabs of Palestine.

Before the foundation of the Israeli state in 1948, *Neturei's* anti-Zionism was not so exceptional in religious circles. The mainstream Orthodox *Agudat Yisrael* organization was at least non-Zionist, if not overtly anti-Zionist. *Neturei Karta* nonetheless broke away from *Agudat Yisrael* in 1938, accusing the latter of being lured by money and "selling out to the golden calf". The Satmar Hassidic sect remains antipathetic to political Zionism, whether secular or "national religious", as to some extent does the Sephardi (Oriental Jewish) Shas party since 1984. However, although Satmar has more followers than *Neturei*, the latter remains far more radical.

Led for many years by Rabbi Amram Blau (now deceased), the sect claimed 5,000 followers in Jerusalem and many more throughout the world. In October 1980 they issued leaflets urging Orthodox Jews to resist paying taxes and even to murder tax collectors. In 1981 they staged pitched street battles with police in Jerusalem, and appealed to the United Nations to protect Jewish holy places in Jerusalem subjected to "Zionist oppression". With other Orthodox sects they have stoned vehicles found driving on the Jewish Sabbath, and have disrupted archaeological digs, as the Torah forbids desecration of tombs.

Unlike other Orthodox groups and yeshivot (religious seminaries), *Neturei Karta* members refuse any monetary benefit – social or religious – from the Zionist secular state. They speak Yiddish instead of the "secularized Hebrew language of Zionism – a tool of nationalism"; and wear distinctive black 18th century garb. Their splendid isolation, however, eroded somewhat when they lent their support to Rabbi Schach's Degel Hatorah Party in the 1988 elections. In 1994 Rabbi Hirsch accepted a post on the Palestinian National Authority as "minister for Jewish

affairs". Since the start of the 2000 intifada, *Neturei* members have spoken at pro-Palestinian demonstrations in London, New York and Paris, but have been less prominent in peace protests in Israel itself.

### **Gush Shalom ("Bloc of Peace")**

*Leadership: Uri Avnery*

*Website: www.gush-shalom.org*

Meaning "Bloc of Peace" (a paradoxical reference to *Gush Emunim*, the pro-settler "Bloc of the Faithful"), *Gush Shalom* was founded in 1993 by the veteran peace activist, Uri Avnery. Its initial raison d'être was as a platform for Israeli left-wingers to protest against the deportation of 415 Palestinians accused of belonging to *Hamas*. The group positions itself to the left of the longer established Peace Now. Whereas the latter is clearly still a Zionist movement, most *Gush Shalom* supporters favour a one-nation solution to the Israeli-Palestinian problem – i.e. one secular nation encompassing both peoples, rather than separate states of Israel and Palestine.

Avnery himself was born in Germany, migrated to Mandatory Palestine in 1933, and joined the extreme right-wing Irgun underground in 1938. Around 1946 he began adopting a radical left-wing philosophy. He envisaged a "Semitic alliance" of working class Jews and Arabs against reactionary governments, and set up Israel's first satirical protest journal, *Ha'Olam Haze* (This World) which was repeatedly shut down by the Labour government of the 1950s and 1960s. A prolific writer, both in books and newspapers, Avnery was a member of the Knesset from 1965 to 1981, ultimately for the left-wing Sheli party. Although in 1970 he was attacked by the PLO for advocating a two-state solution, in 1974 became the first Israeli to establish contact with the PLO leadership, and in 1982, the first to meet Yasser Arafat, after crossing the lines in besieged Beirut. He also became chairman of the Progressive List for Peace, which won two Knesset seats in 1984. Avnery dropped out of politics in 1988, before setting up *Gush Shalom* in 1993.

Since then the group has campaigned for a state of Palestine in all of pre-1967 West Bank and Gaza; a shared Jerusalem; and an end to all settlements. Avnery also vocally backed Kurdish militants in Turkey. Though initially he supported the election of Yitzhak Rabin in 1992 and Ehud Barak in 1999, in both instances he later opposed them for not pursuing peace sincerely, as he saw it. *Gush Shalom* eschews violence in favour of active civil disobedience. The group, which has both Jewish and Arab supporters, appeared to intensify its efforts with the outbreak of the new intifada, in 2000, unlike (initially) the more moderate or cautious Peace Now. Its reports highlight alleged abuses by Israeli soldiers, anti-Palestinian arson and violence by vigilante settlers. Since 2001 its members have helped Palestinian farmers gather their threatened olive crops, and on occasion obstructed tractors sent to construct new settlements, settler roads and roadblocks.

In 2002 *Gush Shalom* caused renewed controversy when it announced that it was keeping dossiers on Israeli military commanders who, it claimed, were committing "war crimes" against Palestinians. Uri Avnery is a charismatic leader, and his small group of followers are very devoted. He is now over 80, and no clear successor has been chosen in the event of his

death. Other leading members are Debbie Lerman, Oren Medicks, Beate Zilversmidt and Yehoshua Rozin.

### **Hadash-Ta'al**

*Leadership: Mohammed Barakeh*

This is an alliance between Hadash (Hebrew acronym for Democratic Front for Peace and Equality) and Ta'al. Hadash formed out of the merger of the Communist Party (formerly called Rakah) and Black Panthers (radical Sephardis) in 1977. Hadash (which means "new") represents both Israeli Arabs and Jews. It seeks help for the disadvantaged, a democratic and secular constitution, full rights for Israeli Arabs and women, and was one of the first parties to approve contact with the PLO, call for complete Israeli withdrawal from the territories, and support the establishment of a Palestinian state. Hadash leader, Mohammed Barakeh, also serves as head of Hadash-Ta'al's three-member bloc in the Knesset.

Ta'al itself is an offshoot of Balad (see entry) and is represented in the Knesset by its leader and sole member, Dr Ahmad Tibi. Ta'al, an acronym for the Arab Movement for Renewal, was formed in 1996 and contested the elections of that year and 1999. Though accepted as a legitimate political party, there were calls from right-wing Israelis to ban it as a revolutionary and pro-PLO organ, with primary loyalties to the Palestinian Authority (PA), rather than the State of Israel.

Tibi is an Israeli Arab citizen, yet has also been a principal adviser to PA President Yasser Arafat — a status that led Israeli right-wingers to charge him with dual loyalties. He held secret and technically illegal talks with the PLO before the Oslo Accords were signed. In the past Ta'al aligned itself with both Hadash and Balad (see entry). In a controversial ruling, Israel's Central Election Commission barred Tibi from standing for re-election in the pending Jan. 28, 2003, elections, though his party was allowed to contest the polls. Israel's Supreme Court overruled the decision in early January 2003, and Tibi's candidacy was restored.

### **Islamic Jihad**

This group has a long history amongst Palestinians of the occupied territories, but is not thought to be strong amongst Arabs who are citizens of Israel (see Palestinian Entity). That said, the radicalisation of politics amongst Israeli Arabs since the advent of the Al Aqsa intifada has probably increased the popularity of its ideology. In March 2003 Israeli authorities said they had discovered an explosives factory in Juljilya, within pre-1967 borders Israel, run for the group; three Israeli Arabs were arrested. Evidently they intended to bomb the Tzifrin military camp. Cell members were previously accused of throwing Molotov cocktails. Two other Israeli Arabs were arrested for participation in a bomb attack that same month on a bus in Haifa that claimed 17 lives.

### **Islamic Movement**

*Leadership: Sheikh Abdallah Nimr Darwish; Sheikh Ra'id Salah; Sheikh Kamal Khatib*

Arab citizens of Israel constitute about 18% of the population. The Islamic Movement (IM) was founded as a conservative front for those who favoured an Islamic approach to bettering their conditions in the country. Sheikh Abdallah Nimr Darwish, spiritual leader of the IM, initially formed the

underground *Usrat al-Jihad* (Families of Jihad) in 1979, the same year as Iran became an Islamic republic. *Usrat* sought “an Islamic Arab state in Palestine”, presumably subsuming the Jewish state of Israel. It stockpiled weapons, burnt fields, and killed one “collaborator”, until in March 1981 its leaders were arrested, including Darwish.

Released in 1985, Darwish adopted a new approach of lawful activity and publicly eschewed violence. He speaks Hebrew, has often agreed to be interviewed on Israeli television, and frequently co-operates with Jewish officials. IM established educational and health centres for Israeli Arabs, built mosques and concentrated on peaceful *da'awa* (proselytizing amongst fellow Muslims). In 1983 IM ran for office in local municipal elections, winning control of two councils. In 1989 it won six municipalities, including Umm al-Fahm, a success repeated in 1993 and 1998, along with victories in Nazareth and other localities.

Over the years, the IM has spawned two contending factions. Darwish now leads a moderate southern faction, which is particularly strong in the Sheikh's home base of Kafr Qasm. Mayor Kamal Ghayan of neighbouring Kafr Bara helped him instigate local Islamic rule in Israel. His trend also includes Kafr Qasm's mayor and IM spokesman, Ibrahim Sarsur, as well as two Knesset members, elected in 1996 and again in 1999, Abd al-Malik Dahamshe of Kafr Kanna and Tawfiq Khatib of Juljilya. Both men ran on a joint ticket with the Arab Democratic Party. The Darwish faction enjoys additional support amongst Bedouin in the Negev, many outlying Arab villages, and mixed Arab/Jewish cities, Lod, Ramle, Jaffa, Nazareth and Acre.

Sheikh Ra'id Salah, Mayor of Umm al-Fahm, the largest Muslim town in Israel, and Sheikh Kamal Khatib of Kafr Kanna, head a more radical and overtly anti-Zionist northern faction. This group has effectively wrested control of the IM's weekly, *Sawt al-Haqq wal-Hurriya* (The Voice of Truth and Freedom), plus the Islamic Association, Islamic College and welfare committees in Umm al-Fahm. Darwish responded by founding a rival journal, *Al-Mithaq* (The Covenant).

Sheikh Ra'id supports the rehabilitation and restoration to Muslim control of old waqf (Islamic trust) sites, mosques and cemeteries damaged or abandoned during the 1948 war. He won much political capital from his campaign to “defend the Al Aqsa Mosque” in Jerusalem. This project gained impetus after, and may have inspired, the Al Aqsa intifada. Ra'id often visits Turkey and Egypt, and reportedly receives funds from Muslim Brotherhood factions throughout the region. He led a delegation to Jordan to welcome *Hamas* overall leader, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, after his release from jail. Though Ra'id rejects the Oslo Accords, he nonetheless seeks inter-faith harmony, and tried, unsuccessfully, to arrange a meeting between Sheikh Yassin and Israel's Chief Rabbi. *Hamas* now tends to back him over Darwish. Darwish enjoys better relations with Arafat's Palestinian Authority.

At the organisational level, both wings of the IM still employ cell (*usra*) structures. Some *usrat* are “open”, some “closed”; though the IM denies that it operates in clandestine fashion. In 1998 local elections the Ra'id faction consolidated its hold over Umm al-Fahm, while Darwish's men retained a plurality on Nazareth city council.

Allegations of IM involvement in terrorist incidents within Israel prompted renewed calls, especially in 2002, to

ban this hitherto legal organization. It appeared that Israeli Arabs in the northern IM, inducted into the movement by *Hamas* in the West Bank, planted car bombs that injured many people in Haifa and Tiberias in September 1999. IM radicals have also clashed with Christians in Nazareth. Some forcibly occupied the plaza of the Basilica of the Annunciation on Dec. 21, 1997, and demanded the right to build a mosque at this much venerated Christian site. In November 1998 elections the IM came to dominate the city council. Nazareth's Christian Arab mayor, Remaz Jeraysi, was attacked in October 1999, it was presumed by IM zealots.

Though the IM is an extra-parliamentary grouping, it eventually agreed, after a fierce internal debate, that IM supporters could stand for election to the Israeli Knesset. Sheikh Darwish was a Communist until the 1967 war changed his outlook. In 1968 he enrolled in the Islamic College in Nablus. As mentioned above, in prison he adopted a philosophy of non-violence “to suit Israel's democratic conditions”. Since then Darwish has co-operated with Israeli authorities in order to improve conditions in Arab municipalities. He formed particularly close links with Rabbi Aryeh Deri, former Interior Minister and leader of the Oriental Jewish orthodox Shas Party.

Under Darwish's guidance the Movement has grown over the last five years. Although in 1995 Darwish narrowly failed to persuade a caucus of the IM that it should stand as a political party in forthcoming Israeli general elections, he did persuade the IM in 1999 to ally with the Arab Democratic Party. As stated above, the IM boasts two IM-affiliated members in the Knesset. The IM also controls a number of Arab town councils. Darwish often participates in meetings of the National Union for Arab Local Councils and Mayors, in which forum he advocated shows of sympathy for the first intifada.

Darwish has also acted as a go-between whenever Israeli officials wish to talk to *Hamas*, the main Palestinian Islamist grouping in the territories. In November 1994, Darwish and Dr Ahmad Tibi, a fellow Israeli Arab and close advisor to Yasser Arafat, helped broker a truce between the PLO and *Hamas* after clashes in Gaza. Since then, Tibi formed the Ta'al party, which joined Hadash to form a single bloc in the Knesset (see Hadash-Ta'al). The Islamic Party, representing Darwish supporters within the IM, joined two already existing parties, the United Arab List and Mada – the Democratic Arab Party, to create a new coalition, Raam. Abd al-Malik Dahamshe, the Islamic Party leader, currently heads the united Raam bloc, which since elections in 1999 counts five Knesset members. Attempts to bar the Islamic Party from participating in the January 2003 elections were quashed in December 2002.

### Israeli-Palestinian Peace Coalition

The Palestinian Authority Information Minister, Yasser Abed Rabbo, and Israeli Oslo architect and former minister under Rabin, Yossi Beilin, are joint chairmen of the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Coalition. The IPPC was set up as a coalition of autonomous groups from both sides of the Green Line. In May 2002 the IPPC won the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Human Rights Award. In March 2003 former left-wing Member of the Knesset, Mossi Raz, was appointed Israeli Director of the IPPC. His Palestinian counterpart is Samir Rantisi. One

of the IPPC's slogans is Two States – One Peace. Other Palestinian members include Ghazi Hanania and Ghassan al-Khatib, director of the Jerusalem Media and Communications Centre, and since late 2002, Labour Minister in the PA cabinet.

### Jerusalem Link

This ad hoc alliance was formed between the mainly Jewish Israeli *Bat Shalom* (see under entry for Coalition of Women for Peace, above) and the Palestinian Jerusalem Centre for Women, led by Rada Zughaier as of 1996. *Bat Shalom* itself was founded in 1993. At one stage Gila Svirsky was its director. Its current director is Terry Greenblatt, while Dafna Golan has been active in the past. In May 2002 Greenblatt and a Palestinian colleague, Maha Abu-Dayeh Shamas, director of the Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling, addressed several women's peace events in the USA.

### Netivot Hashalom ("Paths to Peace")

Meaning "Paths to Peace" in Hebrew, this is a group of religious Jews opposed to settlement in the West Bank. It is sometimes linked to another similar group, *Oz ve-Shalom*, "Strength and Peace". Both groups have ties with Meimad, a more mainstream, moderate grouping, which broke away from the National Religious Party (Mafdal) when the latter was perceived to have veered too far to the right, in its support for religious settlers. Meimad failed to win parliamentary representation, although it joined the Labour Party and Gesher in forming the *Yisrael Ehad* (One Israel) bloc, under Ehud Barak, prior to the 1991 elections. Rabbi Michael Melchior served as a minister during the Barak and Sharon coalition administrations. (See also Rabbis for Human Rights.)

### Peace Now (Shalom Achshav)

*Leadership: Mossi Raz (sec.); Moria Shlomot (director); Janet Aviad*

*Website: [www.peacenow.org.il](http://www.peacenow.org.il)*

This is the main peace umbrella grouping. Founded in March 1978 by 348 reserve officers and soldiers of the Israel Defence Forces, it initially protested at what they saw as timidity and insincerity by the government of Menachem Begin in his peace talks with Egypt's President Anwar Sadat. Its impetus grew in 1982 when, in opposition to the Lebanon War, it brought out up to 350,000 Israelis in protest. One demonstrator, Emil Grunzweig, was killed by a grenade reportedly thrown by a *Kach* supporter. Another person wounded in that attack was Avraham Burg, who subsequently became a prominent Labour Knesset member, head of the international Jewish Agency, and who was narrowly defeated in a bid to become Labour leader, in late 2001.

After 1982 Peace Now (PN) came to advocate withdrawal from the territories and maintained contacts with PLO members, despite some disenchantment with the PLO's support for Iraq in 1990-1. Author Amos Oz, former army officer Mordechai Bar'on, Labour Knesset member and former PN leader, Tzali Reshef, Prof. Galia Golan, and successive leaders of the left-wing Meretz Party, Knesset members Shulamit Aloni and Yossi Sarid, are prominent supporters. Another former MK and PN activist, the Indian-born Abie Nathan, ran the famous Voice of Peace clandestine radio station from a ship off the Israeli coast. He was imprisoned for

six months in 1989 for meeting PLO leaders. In 1991 he went on hunger strike in protest against Israeli policy towards the Palestinians.

The law rescinding Israeli contacts with PLO personnel – under which Nathan was imprisoned in 1989 – was rescinded in early 1993. Though this was regarded as a triumph for PN, it also, ironically, somewhat took the wind out of the movement's sails. Likewise, the election in 1992 of a Labour government, and its commitment to the 1993 Oslo Accords, persuaded many in PN that their mission was accomplished.

The assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on Nov. 4, 1995, by a right-wing Israeli fanatic led to a revival of support for the peace project, especially amongst younger Israelis. PN had organized the rally at which Rabin had been killed; now the group helped organize memorial events. Rabin's son, Yuval, then founded a group that was expected to rival PN. Called *Dor Shalem Dor Shalom* (loosely, An Entire Generation Demands Peace) it appealed to young professionals who felt uncomfortable with PN's leftist image. However, it soon fell into abeyance, leaving the field to PN.

The election of Labour in 1999 saw PN grow quieter, although they did lend their support to the Four Mothers Movement (see entry). The outbreak of the second intifada, in October 2000, shocked and disillusioned many PN members. Some already felt that Yasser Arafat had let them down by not accepting Prime Minister Ehud Barak's apparently generous offers at the Camp David II talks, in mid-2000. Nonetheless, as the violence escalated, and the new Sharon administration imposed a reoccupation of the territories, PN began galvanizing formerly disenchanted supporters in 2001, leading to a demonstration of 50,000 in central Tel Aviv.

PN holds regular dialogue sessions with Palestinian leaders. A youth group was established in 1991, and PN has support groups abroad, especially strong in the USA. More recently it set up an influential body called Settlement Watch. By and large the membership of PN is middle class and Ashkenazi (European Jewish) in origin. Hence the creation in the mid-1980s of a rival Sephardi (Middle Eastern Jewish) group, *Ha-Mizrach le-Shalom* (Orient for Peace).

Nonetheless PN's current secretary is Mossi Raz, assisted by his brother, Chen, who come from a Kurdish Jewish family. The brothers said they hoped PN would contribute to a situation in which the killing of their cousin, Arie Raz, by suicide bombing, will never reoccur. Mossi Raz is currently a Knesset member for Meretz. Other key PN members are Moria Shlomot, its director, and Gavri Bar-Gil, secretary of the Kibbutz Movement.

Responding to a plea for peace from several dozen Palestinian moderates and intellectuals, in 2001 PN joined an umbrella bloc known as the Israel-Palestine Peace Coalition. In 2002 PN campaigned widely for the demolition of illegal outpost settlements, and claimed that their pressure had forced Defence Minister Ben Eliezer to destroy such sites. In October 2002 residents in Kibbutz Metser, which traditionally backs a PN stance, offered Palestinian neighbours from the village of Kafin some of their land. In a joint meeting they explained that this would compensate Palestinian farmers for property confiscated by the erection nearby of the controversial concrete wall, along the seam of the old 1967 green line.

That said, more direct action was often taken by Peace



Now's rival to the left, *Gush Shalom* (see entry) and other more radical groups, which, unlike Peace Now, were not wedded to the Zionist philosophy. Tellingly, PN tells its members in the armed forces to exercise their own choice about serving in the territories, but does not itself oppose service as a point of principle.

### People Against the Ultra-Orthodox

After Orthodox fanatics burned bus shelters carrying "immoral" advertisements in 1986, members of this militantly secular group desecrated synagogues in Kiryat Shalom and Tel Aviv. Less radical secularists have since found a home in the legitimate Shinui (Change) Party.

### Rabbis for Human Rights

*Leadership: Rabbi Arik Ascherman (executive director)*

*Website. [www.rhr.israel.net](http://www.rhr.israel.net)*

Rabbis for Human Rights (RHR) is a group of Israeli rabbis and rabbinical students, currently 90 in number, established in 1988. In their words, they seek to counteract the indifference of Israel's religious establishment to the state's abuse of Palestinians. They oppose the occupation on the basis of Jewish ethics.

The US-born Harvard educated Rabbi Arik Ascherman has been RHR's executive director since 1998. He calls himself "a Zionist who works in the deepest, darkest secrets of Israeli society that most would rather not think about". For much of the 1990s RHR campaigned strongly on behalf of West Bank Palestinians whose homes had been demolished, on grounds of lacking permits. He also supported the right of Israeli Arabs to protest peacefully against discrimination. Ascherman and his cohorts have been arrested on numerous occasions; more so after six months of the 2000 intifada, when they took to performing "acts of resistance", including defying bulldozers and refilling ditches blockading Palestinian villages.

RHR often works in tandem with like-minded groups, like *B'Tselem* (see entry) and the Israeli Committee on Home Demolitions. It makes representations on behalf of Palestinians to the Israeli court system. RHR achieved international media coverage in 2002 for its acts of solidarity with Palestinians whose olive harvesting has been disrupted by settlers and IDF troops. Rabbis involved in RHR include Orthodox and other trends, but come mostly from Conservative and Reform congregations, who constitute a small minority within Israel. Ascherman accepts that "Palestinians are not all angels", but feels that "Israel is the dominant power [and] holds all the cards". He accuses the Israeli media of conducting a black-out on news about RHR, and has received death threats from right-wing militants.

### Seventh Day

[see Four Mothers, above]

*Website. [www.7th-day.co.il](http://www.7th-day.co.il)*

### Ta'ayush ("Co-existence")

*Websites. [www.taayush.org](http://www.taayush.org)*

*[minerva.tau.ac.il/~alon/taayush](http://minerva.tau.ac.il/~alon/taayush)*

Meaning "coexistence" in Arabic, *Ta'ayush* was set up after the outbreak of the second intifada in late 2000 as an Israeli

group for Jewish-Arab Friendship. Together with like-minded groups, like the Coalition of Women for Peace, *Ta'ayush* members paid solidarity visits to Yasser Arafat in early 2002, when he was restricted by Israeli forces to his headquarters in Ramallah. *Ta'ayush* also participated in a major Tel Aviv rally against the pending war in Iraq, on Feb. 15, 2003. For the most part the group favours peaceful demonstrations, though they are not averse to acts of civil disobedience. Leaders include Leena Dallasheh and Azmi Bdeir (Arab members) and Gadi Algazi and Noa Native (Jewish members).

### Women in Black

This non-denominational (i.e. Jewish and Arab) grouping of women opposes the occupation and Iron Fist policy in the territories. To this end they joined Peace Now (see separate entry) and Palestinians to build a human chain around Jerusalem in December 1989. Many were arrested for civil disobedience. The hard core membership numbers 2,000, and the well known feminist, Gila Svirskey, is one of their most prominent leaders. Increasingly, the group operates within the framework of the Coalition of Women for Peace (see entry).

### Yesh Gvul ("There is a Limit")

*Website. <http://seruv.org.il>*

Founded during Israel's Lebanon campaign in 1982, *Yesh Gvul* ("There is a Limit") encourages conscripts not to serve in Lebanon or, since 1988, to help put down the intifada in the territories. Col. Eli Geva was a prominent leader in early *Yesh*, when he refused to lead a tank assault on west Beirut. *Yesh Gvul* claimed solid precedents to justify their action: for instance, the military court "black flag" ruling, issued after a border police massacre of 50 Arabs during a curfew, which empowered soldiers to disobey "manifestly illegal orders".

Several *Yesh Gvul* members have served prison sentences. Having fallen somewhat into abeyance, the movement could nonetheless claim some credit for the IDF's full withdrawal from Lebanon (one of their demands) in 2000. That same year it gained new impetus with the outbreak of the second intifada. The current movement of conscientious objectors is sometimes known as **Courage to Refuse**, **Seruv** or **Shministim**. To date over 500 soldiers have refused to serve, and 43 are serving prison sentences for so doing.

This well-organized group has active websites, and sends representatives on speaking tours to Europe and North America, where they often appear on joint platforms with Palestinian activists. Many members stress that they consider themselves Zionists, and are prepared to defend Israel from external attack within its pre-1967 borders, and are thus not pacifists. However, they condemn as immoral and "fascist" the occupation (or, since 2001, the effective re-occupation) of Palestinian inhabited territories. Affiliated groups include New Profile, which opposes what they see as the militarization of Israeli society.

In February 2002, 52 reserve officers published an open letter to the press, defending their decision not to serve in the territories. "We know that the territories are not Israel", it stated, "and that all settlements are bound to be evacuated in the end". Israeli Chief of Staff, Lt.-Gen. Shaul Mofaz warned that they could be dismissed, and called it "a severe



rebellion that the country's leaders must address". Prime Minister Sharon said that if soldiers refused to carry out orders of the government, "that will be the beginning of the end of democracy". The dissidents did nonetheless win some support from Ami Ayalon, former head of the Shin Bet internal security agency.

### **Yisrael Acheret ("A Different Israel")**

*Leadership. Itai Ben-Horin and Boaz Rol*

Meaning "A Different Israel", *Yisrael Acheret* was in late 2002 the latest incarnation of a thrice-repeated attempt to create a centrist alternative to Labour and Likud, according to *The Review*, a Jewish publication in Australia. The party's platform resembled aspects of its predecessors, the Centre Party and *Derech Ha-Shlishit* (Third Way), including support for both fighting terror and making a compromise with

Palestinians when conditions were appropriate. However, the group also had an anarchistic dissident hue, in that it called for "politics without politicians". Leaders Ben-Horin and Rol distinguished themselves as heads of the Awakening Movement, university students opposed to the 2000 Tal Bill, which formalised the exemption of ultra-Orthodox yeshiva (seminary) students from military service. As such *Yisrael Acheret* expressed secular and libertarian concerns. Predicted at one stage to win three seats in the January 2003 elections, it failed to pass the threshold; it is likely many voters deserted to Shinui (Change), a mainstream centrist party, that now ranks third behind Likud and Labour, with 17 seats.

*Lawrence Joffe*

## **Italy**

**Capital:** Rome

**Population:** 57.7 m

The Italian Republic is, under its 1948 Constitution, "a democratic republic founded on work". It has a bicameral Parliament consisting of a 315-member Senate and a 630-member Chamber of Deputies, the latter being elected for a five-year term by universal adult suffrage. The Prime Minister is the head of government. The head of state is the President, who is elected for seven years at a joint session of both Houses of Parliament and of delegates from regional councils.

Elections to the Chamber of Deputies in May 2001 resulted in the following distribution of seats: the House of Liberty alliance of right-of-centre parties took 367 (*Forza Italia* 189, National Alliance 96, Christian Democratic Centre–United Christian Democrats, CCD-CDU 40, Northern League 30, others 12), the left-of-centre alliance Olive Tree took 248 (Democrats of the Left 138, Daisy Alliance 76, Sunflower Alliance 18, Italian Communist Party 9, independents 7), and those unaffiliated to either coalition numbered 15. Following the election, Silvio Berlusconi, the leader of *Forza Italia*, became Prime Minister for the second time.

Any attempt to reconstitute the Fascist Party (which was in power in 1922–43) is prohibited under the Constitution and under a special law passed in 1952.

### **Anti-terrorist legislation**

Italy faced a serious threat from internally-based terrorist activities in the 1970s and into the early 1980s. According to an Italian police report in June 1982, it was stated that between 1969 and March 1982 acts of terrorism had led to the deaths of 364 persons, while 1,414 members of armed left-wing groups and 432 of extreme right-wing groups had been imprisoned. In

view of the rising number of acts of terrorism in the 1970s, the government repeatedly increased the penalties for such acts. Under a decree which came into force on Dec. 15, 1979, mandatory life sentences were introduced for the murder of policemen, members of the judiciary, lawyers and trade union leaders. President Alessandro Pertini (Socialist) declared in a 1981 New Year message that the terrorist threat meant that Italy was "at war"; that in his view the terrorism was being organized from abroad; that the bridge constituted by Italy (between Europe on the one hand and Africa and the Middle East on the other) could be destroyed if Italy's democracy was destabilized; and that this constituted a danger to the whole of Europe.

Under a law (the Legge Cossiga) enacted in May 1982 the courts were empowered to give lighter sentences to convicted terrorists who confessed or gave information to the authorities. The law expired on Jan. 29, 1983, and according to a spokesman for the Ministry of Justice 389 guerrillas from the Red Brigades and the Front Line group had made use of it – 78 of them having actively and continuously co-operated with the police, 134 having confessed their crimes and given some information about them, and 177 having formally renounced their group's actions.

Terrorist activity declined thereafter. Figures for 1986 showed that there had been only 30 "incidents of a terrorist nature", the lowest incidence since 1969. By 1987 Italy had introduced a lenient prison regime for "penitent" convicted terrorists, who were permitted to take social leaves of absence from prison, the government terming this "social rehabilitation". By 1990 the level of political violence from terrorist groups had fallen significantly in comparison with a decade previously, with most of the leaders of the Red Brigades and other extremist left-wing groups detained in

prison. The focus of the security authorities had also switched from countering terrorism to combatting the criminal violence of the Mafia and related organizations in southern Italy and Sicily. The last few years have, however, seen a limited revival of the Red Brigades and similar groups.

Following the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, in the USA, the Italian government adopted new internal security legislation aimed at fighting international terrorism. A decree, issued on Oct. 18, 2001, provided a new legal framework to combat international terrorism, with a definition of international terrorist groups and modification to the previous legislation on the regulations covering activities of the Italian police against these groups. In a report to Parliament the Minister responsible for the coordination of the secret services stated on March 8, 2002, that the main internal security threat to Italy was currently represented by Islamic terrorist groups and the Red Brigades.

## RIGHT-WING MOVEMENTS

### Armed Revolutionary Nuclei (Nuclei Armati Rivoluzionari, NAR)

The NAR was a neo-fascist organization which has been held responsible for major bomb explosions and for the killing of a number of its political opponents. Its actions included an explosion at the Bologna railway station on Aug. 2, 1980, when 85 persons were killed and 194 injured. The Bologna attack was reportedly carried out "in honour of Mario Tutti", a right-wing extremist serving a life sentence for murdering a policeman and also charged with involvement in an explosion on a Rome-Munich express on Aug. 5, 1974. The NAR, however, later denied any involvement in the Bologna station explosion.

On Feb. 22, 1980, NAR members killed a member of the (left-wing) Workers' Autonomy Group. Four suspected NAR members were arrested on Feb. 28 on charges of illegal possession of arms. On March 12 NAR members bombed a Communist Party office in Naples. The group also accepted responsibility for the killing of a policeman on May 28, of a deputy public prosecutor (investigating right-wing attacks) in Rome on June 23, 1980, and of a policeman in Rome on Dec. 6, 1981, one day after police had killed Alessandro Alibrandi, an NAR suspect, in a gun battle north of Rome. The NAR also admitted shooting another policeman in Rome on June 24, 1982. For the killing of the deputy public prosecutor four persons were sentenced to life imprisonment on April 5, 1984.

In connection with the Bologna station bombing, warrants of arrest were issued on Sept. 11, 1982, against five alleged perpetrators of this attack – Stefano delle Chiaie, a former leader of the neo-Nazi National Vanguard (see separate entry), who had fled to South America in 1976; Maurizio Giorgi; Pier-Luigi Pagliai (who was extradited by Bolivia on Oct. 11, arrived in Rome on Oct. 12 but died on Nov. 5, 1982, from wounds received in a gunfight in Bolivia); Joachim Fiebelkorn (a West German who surrendered to the police in Frankfurt on Sept. 13); and Olivier Danet (a Frenchman detained in France for illicit arms trading with Belgium and linked to various extreme right-

wing groups). A sixth suspect, Carmine Palladino, had been murdered in prison on Aug. 4, 1982, by Pier Luigi Concutelli, who had claimed that Palladino was responsible for the death of Giorgio Vale (a long-sought NAR member shot in a gun battle with police in Rome on May 5, 1982) and who had in April 1981 strangled another prisoner, Ermanno Brezza, a neo-fascist who had turned police informer.

Early in October 1982 police in Milan arrested Roberto Frigato, described as the "killer" of a gang led by Gilberto Cavallini and Pasquale Belsito (both of whom had gone underground), who were accused of being involved in the killing of two Carabinieri, various robberies and the Bologna station bomb explosion. Frigato's arrest was made possible through the co-operation with the police of another neo-fascist, and he was also accused of trading in arms and involvement in assassinations and kidnappings in Lombardy and Venetia.

On Feb. 22, 1983, a court in Rome sentenced two NAR members to life imprisonment and two others to terms of 21 years and 15 years and eight months respectively in prison on charges of killing a neo-fascist whom they had mistaken for a police informer. On April 26, 1983, police in Rome arrested Fabrizio Zani, said to be one of the most dangerous right-wing terrorists, with two other persons, all alleged to be members of the NAR, and also uncovered a quantity of weapons, explosives and forged identity documents.

On March 24, 1985, two NAR members were shot dead and four others arrested when they opened fire on police in Piedmont.

On May 2, 1985, a Rome court sentenced 53 NAR adherents to imprisonment for terms ranging from one-and-a-half years to 23 years for murders and other crimes committed in 1977-81. On July 30, 1986, five leading NAR members were sentenced to life imprisonment for murders committed in 1981-82, and 21 others were given prison sentences ranging from six months to 25 years. On Nov. 7, 1986, a group of 27 NAR adherents were sentenced in Milan (some of them in absentia) to terms of six months to life in prison for murder, conspiracy and membership of an armed gang.

The trial of 20 people implicated in the 1980 Bologna bombing began on Jan. 19, 1987. The defendants included Gen. Pietro Musumeci, the former deputy chief of the military intelligence service SISMI and Gen. Giuseppe Belmonte, his former assistant; Licio Gelli, the fugitive Grand Master of the banned *Propaganda Due* (P-2) Masonic Lodge (see separate entry); and Stefano delle Chiaie (see above). P. Musumeci and G. Belmonte were accused of diverting inquiries into the incident to bring suspicion onto the extreme left.

The trial ended on July 11, 1988. Four defendants were sentenced to life imprisonment while eight, including Musumeci, Belmonte and Gelli, were acquitted of subversive association. The convictions were later overturned at appeal on July 18, 1990.

### Black Order (Ordine Nero)

This group was established in 1974 as a successor to the New Order organization, which was banned in November 1973 (see separate entry). The Black Order claimed responsibility for a bomb explosion at an anti-fascist demonstration

in Brescia on May 28, 1974, when eight persons were killed and 95 injured, and also for an explosion on the Rome-Munich express on Aug. 5 of that year, when 12 persons were killed and 48 injured. On this occasion the group accused the Italian government of leading the country towards Marxism and asserted that Nazism would “return to save Italy”. On Aug. 12, 1974, it warned the Prime Minister that it had condemned him for “exploitation of the Italian people”. Having planted bombs at several other places, the Black Order claimed responsibility for an explosion at Savona (on the coast west of Genoa) on Nov. 21, 1974 (when one person was killed and eight were wounded) and on Dec. 23 of that year it threatened to place bombs inside churches unless “the Church and the Pope give their immense wealth to the people” and to carry out a “massacre” if “charity institutes refused to accept the sums which the Church will have to give”.

The group appears to have been generally dormant since the mid-1970s. Eight persons (apparently Black Order members) convicted in 1979 of having planted the bomb in Brescia were, on appeal, acquitted on March 2, 1982. Mario Affatigato, a former leader of the group, was extradited from France to Italy on Sept. 7, 1980, being suspected of involvement in the Bologna station explosion of Aug. 2, 1980, attributed to the Armed Revolutionary Nuclei (see separate entry). In a trial which ended on July 20, 1983, the three main defendants (among them Mario Tutti) were acquitted for lack of evidence in the 1974 bombing of the Rome-Munich express. However, on appeal a Bologna court on Dec. 18, 1986, passed life sentences on M. Tutti and Luciano Franci for their involvement in that bombing. The Black Order had earlier claimed responsibility for planting a bomb on a railway track near Florence on Aug. 9, 1983, which slightly injured two men.

### **National Vanguard (Avanguardia Nazionale)**

This neo-fascist group was one of several accused by the Minister of the Interior on Aug. 13, 1974, of trying to create chaos. It had repeatedly accepted responsibility for bomb attacks on offices of left-wing groups before 1974. One of the group's leading members, Pier Luigi Concutelli, was imprisoned after confessing to having murdered, in Rome on July 10, 1976, Judge Vittorio Occorsi, who had been investigating the activities of the New Order (see separate entry); Concutelli was also said to have been associated with extreme right-wing groups in Spain and to have links with the *Propaganda Due* lodge (see separate entry). For the murder of the judge five right-wing extremists were sentenced to life imprisonment on March 22, 1985.

### **New Order (Ordine Nuovo)**

This organization was founded by Pino Rauti, a journalist and former member of the Italian Social Movement (MSI), who was its leader until 1969, when he rejoined the MSI. The organization was banned and disbanded on Nov. 23, 1973, after 30 of its members (out of an estimated total of 600) had on Nov. 21 been sentenced to prison terms ranging from six months to five years for violating the 1952 Legge Scelba (which provided for sentences of three to 10 years for promoting or organizing under any form the reconstitution of the dissolved Fascist Party). At the same time, all proper-

ty of the New Order was ordered to be confiscated. The movement had earlier claimed responsibility for attacks on the offices of left-wing organizations.

There followed several trials for alleged New Order activities. On Dec. 3, 1975, Sandro Saccucci (an MSI deputy) was sentenced to four years in prison and barred from public office for five years for forming and organizing the New Order; this sentence was, however, suspended pending an appeal, and during the May 1976 election campaign he left the country while he was being sought in connection with the shooting of a Communist after an MSI rally near Rome.

### **Political Movement (Movimento Politico, MP)**

*Leadership: Maurizio Boccacci*

This organization was founded near Rome in December 1984 by some former members of neo-fascist organizations, such as National Vanguard and Third Position. MP was initially only a minor group, but by the early 1990s it had registered a big growth in the number of its activists, in connection with the growth of the skinhead movement. It operates especially in Rome and it had a strong presence in the suburbs and in small towns near the city. MP had at one time some 150 activists, a thousand supporters, and three main offices in Rome.

Members of the group took part in various attacks in the early 1990s on black and African people and left-wingers. On Oct. 28, 1992, the MP organized a demonstration in Rome to commemorate the anniversary of the “march on Rome” by Mussolini's black shirts, one thousand skinheads taking part. On Nov. 2, 1992, in Rome some MP activists put yellow stars, like those used by Nazis to identify Jews, on some shops owned by people of the Jewish religion. The rising number of ethnic and religious attacks brought about enactment in 1992 of legislation, known as the Legge Mancino, against “racial discrimination, hate and violence”. On May 4, 1993, the Italian police, in an operation called “Runa”, disbanded the MP as a public organization following an investigation into violations of the Legge Mancino, reconstitution of the Fascist Party, and Nazi apologist activities.

### **Propaganda Due (P-2)**

The existence of this secret Masonic lodge became known in March 1981 when the police recovered a list of 931 alleged members and other documents showing that the lodge had been involved not only in large-scale crimes but also in right-wing terrorist activities in the late 1960s and early 1970s, including a bomb explosion in Milan in 1969. In a report to the government by a Milan magistrate in May 1981 it was stated: “The P-2 lodge is a secret sect which has combined business and politics with the intention of destroying the constitutional order of the country and transforming the parliamentary system into a presidential system”.

A special commission appointed in May 1981 reported on June 15, 1981, that the P-2 presented the characteristics of a “secret society” and could therefore be in breach of the Constitution. On June 20 a total of 22 members of the P-2, including a former head of the secret service, were charged with political conspiracy and activities against the state. The list of alleged P-2 members discovered by the police also contained the names of a number of senior officials and of

the editor-in-chief of the Milan newspaper *Corriere della Sera*, who were subsequently replaced. Disclosures made during this affair also led to a government crisis and the formation of a largely new administration under the premiership of the leader of the Republican Party (PRI) on June 28, 1981, and to the approval by the government, on July 29, 1981 of a bill outlawing and dissolving all secret societies.

At the request of the Italian authorities Licio Gelli (the Grand Master of the lodge), who had fled to Switzerland, was arrested in Geneva on Sept. 13, 1982, and continued to be held pending his possible extradition to Italy. In March 1983 the High Council of Magistratures declared *inter alia* that the P-2 had directed its efforts towards political changes and interference in the most sensitive affairs of the state. However, it was also decided officially that mere membership of the P-2 did not constitute an offence.

On Aug. 19, 1983, the Swiss Supreme Court approved Gelli's extradition, but he had already (on Aug. 10) disappeared from a high-security prison in Geneva, apparently with the help of a warder, and had fled into France. An international warrant for his arrest was issued on Aug. 20 by an Argentine federal judge who also ordered the seizure of all his assets in Argentina.

Following further disclosures of alleged involvement in the P-2, Pietro Longo (of the Social Democratic Party, PSDI) resigned on March 24, 1984, from his post as Minister of the Budget.

In a parliamentary report on the P-2 approved by a 40-member commission on July 10, 1984, it was concluded that a list found at Gelli's Tuscan villa and containing the names of supposed P-2 members, was authentic except in a few cases.

Gelli was re-arrested in Switzerland in September 1987, extradited to Italy in February 1988 and committed in April 1989 to stand trial on charges of political conspiracy, criminal association, extortion and fraud. Gelli was then confined to his house at Arezzo, in Tuscany, until on April 22, 1998, the Italian higher court (Corte di Cassazione) confirmed the sentence of 8 years and 6 months in prison for fraud linked to the collapse of Banco Ambrosiano. (The Banco Ambrosiano, the largest privately owned financial institution in Italy in the early 1980s, collapsed a few days after the discovery of the body in London of Roberto Calvi, the Bank's president and member of the P-2 lodge.) Gelli disappeared on May 4, 1998, and was then at large until arrested in Cannes (France) by the Italian and French police on Sept. 10, 1998. He is now under house arrest on the grounds that his health is too poor for him to be in prison.

## LEFT-WING AND ANARCHIST MOVEMENTS

### Antagonist Movement (Movimento antagonista)

The Italian Antagonist Movement is an umbrella for groups and movements, including leftists, Catholics and ecologists, opposed to the social and economic policy of the Italian government and to globalization. It is linked to similar movements all around the world. An important part of the Italian Movement is the autonomous "social centres" (*Centri Sociali Autogestiti*, CSA). In Italy in 2002 there were some 173 centres (90 in illegally occupied buildings) with 5,800 adher-

ent of different political persuasions, but mainly anarchists or former members of Workers' Autonomy (see entry).

The so-called **White Overalls** (*Tute Bianche*) group, was created in 1998 from the leftist groups of the northeastern part of Italy seeking to channel their energies toward a "controlled kind" of street violence. During demonstrations at the G-8 Summit held in Genoa in July 2001, when one demonstrator was killed by the police, the White Overalls changed their name to the "**Disobedients**" (*Disobbedienti*).

### Anti-Imperialist Territorial Nuclei (Nuclei Territoriali Antimperialisti, NTA)

The NTA is a left-wing organization operating in the northeastern part of Italy that emerged in 1995. It has been responsible for relatively small-scale terrorist attacks, such as the destruction of US soldiers' cars and the bombing of offices of the (democratic socialist) Democrats of the Left (DS) party in Rome and in Venice. The NTA acknowledges the heritage of the Red Brigades and stated its intention to continue the fight of the Red Brigades and the Communist Fighting Nuclei (see entries). The NTA were responsible, on Sept. 16, 2000, for bombing the offices of the international organization Central European Initiative and of the Italian Foreign Commission in Trieste. The NTA supported the assassination of Massimo D'Antona (1999) and Prof. Marco Biagi (2002) (see under Red Brigades) and in almost 20 statements released from 1995 to 2002, the NTA expressed its willingness to renew attacks against the Italian Republic.

### Armed Proletarian Nuclei (Nuclei Armati Proletari, NAP)

The NAP was responsible for committing numerous acts of violence from its inception in 1974, including a series of kidnappings. By January 1977 the NAP was officially held responsible for 30 political crimes, which included the kidnapping of Guido De Martino (a Socialist leader in Naples) who was released upon payment of the equivalent of about \$1,100,000. For this kidnapping 15 people were, in Naples on Jan. 9, 1978, given prison sentences of from eight to 14 years. By October 1977 the NAP was believed to have formed a central command with the Red Brigades (see separate entry).

### Communist Fighting Nuclei (Nuclei Comunisti Combattenti, NCC)

The Communist Fighting Nuclei were created as a result of the fragmentation of the Red Brigades - PCC. This organization was responsible for a series of bombings in Rome. On Jan. 10, 1994, they bombed the NATO Defense College in Rome, causing damage but without any person injured. On Feb. 13, 1995, the police arrested Luigi Faccini and Fabio Matteini. They declared themselves political prisoners and members of the Communist Fighting Nuclei. They were released after a few months and then disappeared. The NCC seems to have been absorbed by the Anti-Imperialist Territorial Nuclei (see entry) in 1995.

### Front Line (Prima Linea, PL)

This organization was established in 1976 and was responsi-



ble for a number of attacks on industrialists and others. It also co-operated with the Red Brigades (see separate entry).

On Oct. 11, 1978, members of the PL killed Alfredo Paoletta, a university professor and forensic expert, whom they considered a "state collaborator"; on Nov. 8 of that year a senior magistrate, his driver and his bodyguard were killed by PL members at Patricia (south of Rome). PL members were also responsible for killing a deputy public prosecutor in Milan on Jan. 29, 1979, a Christian Democrat provincial secretary in Palermo on March 9, two policemen in Genoa on Jan. 25, 1980, a Seveso factory executive on Feb. 5, a suspected informer in Milan on Feb. 7, and a magistrate in Milan on March 19. On Dec. 11, 1979, PL members attacked a business school in Turin (where lecturers were employed by Fiat) in retaliation for the dismissal of "troublemakers" and the temporary halting of recruitment at Fiat's plant in Turin.

During the early 1980s the structure of the PL was broken up in a series of trials resulting in the conviction of dozens of members. Those convicted included Sergio Segio, regarded as the founder of the PL. Testimony given in trials concluded in 1982 indicated that since 1978 there had been links between the PL and the Basque ETA in Spain and that there had been a joint training camp of the two organizations in southern France.

### **Red Brigades (Brigate Rosse, BR)**

Established in 1969, this organization of Marxist-Leninist urban guerrillas, modelled on the Tupamaros of Uruguay (see Uruguay entry), was during the first three years of its existence active mainly in Milan, not only in disseminating Marxist-Leninist propaganda but also in attacks on the property of industrialists and other "enemies of the working class". By 1974 its activities had spread to Genoa and Turin and kidnapping operations had begun. After 1976 the BR operated in most parts of the country, intimidating, wounding or murdering their victims and seeking the greatest possible publicity for their actions. Their techniques included the publication of lists of potential victims among factory directors and managers as well as company security guards, and their numerous kidnappings led to the payment of considerable sums in ransom.

The original declared aim of the Red Brigades was to create a situation in which a fascist coup could be provoked; this would lead to a return of the Communist Party of Italy (CPI) to its "revolutionary" role (which, the BR asserted, the CPI had abandoned by collaboration with the government) and to the consequent outbreak of civil war which would bring the left to power. In a statement issued on March 25, 1979, the BR compared its struggle to those of the (Provisional) Irish Republican Army, the (West German) Red Army Faction (Baader-Meinhof Group) and the Palestine Liberation Organization.

In their Journal No.4 of December 1981 the BR declared that they intended to progress from being a clandestine organization to the stage of a more centralized party which would proclaim "total class war". In another BR communiqué it was stated that their primary target would from then on be "the multinational centre of American imperialism". In a further statement issued on Dec. 19, 1981, the BR called for the creation of a "terrorist international" in which the

central position would be held by the BR and the West German Red Army Faction, and which the "European revolutionary forces" of ETA in Spain and the Irish Republican Army could join once they had abandoned "the stifling perspective of nationalism".

The first Red Brigades' terrorist act was the bombing of a Milan electronics firm's premises in 1970. On April 18, 1974, BR members abducted Mario Sossi, a senior magistrate in Genoa (who had played an important part in bringing to justice a BR group known as "October 22" responsible for kidnappings in 1972); the BR demanded the release of eight "October 22" members, failing which their victim would be killed; and after a Genoa court had set these men free Sossi was released on May 23. The government, however, did not give in to other demands made by the BR (for passports and safe conducts to Algeria, Cuba, or North Korea for the released eight men).

On Sept. 9, 1974, police arrested Renato Curcio and Alberto Franceschini, who had led the BR since 1972; however, Curcio was liberated from an Alessandria prison on Feb. 18, 1975, by a BR commando including his wife (Margharita Cagol, who was killed in a police raid on June 5, 1975). Curcio was subsequently recaptured in January 1976 and was, on June 23, 1977, sentenced to seven years in prison for wounding a policeman, possessing a firearm and resisting arrest, while four other BR members were given lesser sentences. During this trial the BR continued their campaign of intimidation by attacking journalists and threatening to take action against jurors and lawyers' families if the trial were proceeded with.

An earlier trial of Curcio and 52 other BR members for belonging to a subversive organization had opened in May 1976 but was postponed after the assassination of Francesco Cocco (a state prosecutor) by the BR in Genoa, and again after the assassination by BR members on April 28, 1977, of Dr Fulvio Croce, head of the Turin lawyers' association.

On March 16, 1978, members of the BR seized Aldo Moro, the president of the Christian Democratic Party (DC), who had been Prime Minister between 1963 and 1976. The BR stated that he would be tried by a "people's court" for being "the most loyal executor of directives laid down by imperialist centres"; they also demanded the release of certain detainees as the price of freeing their hostage. The Italian government, however, refused to make any concessions to the BR, and this attitude was widely supported, notably by the three major trade union federations, including the (communist-led) General Confederation of Italian Labour (CGIL).

On April 15, 1978, the BR declared that Aldo Moro had been found guilty and sentenced to death, as his trial by a "people's court" had (they said) exposed "the real and hidden responsibilities in the bloodiest pages of the history of recent years", "the intrigues of those who held power, the conspiracy that covered up murder committed by the state, and the intricate web of personal interests and corruption". On April 20 the BR declared that Aldo Moro would be executed within 48 hours unless an unspecified number of "communist" prisoners was released, and on May 9 Aldo Moro was shot dead by at least two of his kidnappers and his body was found in a car parked in the centre of Rome. It has since been vigorously denied by Giulio Andreotti, who



became Prime Minister on the day of Moro's abduction, that he and other Christian Democrat leaders allowed Moro to be killed for fear of the revelations contained in his forced "confessions". Andreotti was in November 2002 convicted by an appeals court of complicity in the 1979 murder of a scandal sheet publisher, Mino Pecorelli, who was said to have had access to the so-called confessions, which allegedly referred to links between politicians and right-wing terrorist groups and the Mafia.

When the trial of Renato Curcio and others reopened in Turin on March 9, 1978, one of the defendants, Paolo Ferrari, read out a statement on behalf of the accused, declaring a state of war and threatening further violence against anyone who collaborated with the court. Following the assassination, in Turin on March 10, of a policeman who had taken part in the arrest of Ferrari, the trial was again adjourned until May 20. Nevertheless, on June 23 Curcio was sentenced (in Turin) to 15 years in prison for forming an armed group to subvert the state and for carrying out political kidnappings; Alberto Franceschini was sentenced to 14 and a half years and 28 others (some of them in absentia) to varying terms, among them Prospero Gallinari, who was sought in connexion with the murder of Aldo Moro and was given a 10-year sentence in absentia. He was later arrested on Sept. 24, 1979.

Corrado Alunni, the BR leader who was suspected of having masterminded the kidnapping of Aldo Moro, was arrested on Sept. 13, 1978; he was a week later sentenced to 12 years and four months in prison for illegal possession of arms and was on Oct. 28 given an additional seven-year sentence for attempted murder and possession of arms.

Renato Curcio was on Feb. 6, 1979, given a further 12-year prison sentence for attempted murder and possession of arms and a six-year sentence on Nov. 1 for his escape from prison in 1975. On Oct. 14, 1979, Curcio received a further 10-year sentence.

Further acts of violence were committed by BR members from October 1978 onwards. Girolamo Tartaglione, a senior official at the Ministry of Justice, was shot dead at his home in Rome by BR members on Oct. 10, 1978. A series of killings of police officers took place in 1979-80. Numerous arrests of BR members were made in March and April 1980. Nonetheless, BR members were in the following months responsible for the killing of the head of the anti-terrorist police in Mestre on May 12, 1980; of a Christian Democratic regional councillor in Naples on May 19 (for which four BR members were on July 8, 1980, sentenced to life imprisonment); and of Walter Tobagi, a journalist on the *Corriere della Sera* of Milan, killed on May 28 by a "March 28" column of the BR. Tobagi was co-author of a book on the psychology of terrorism and had, after police had killed four BR suspects on March 28, 1980, written a newspaper article on the "disintegrating myth of the [Genoa] column of the BR".

On Dec. 12, 1980, BR members kidnapped Judge Giovanni D'Urso, who was, however, released by them on Jan. 15, 1981, after the government had, on Dec. 26, acceded to a BR demand to close a maximum security prison on the island of Asinara (off Sardinia) and three newspapers had published BR documents (as also demanded by the BR). A revolt at the Trani prison (in Apulia), where several BR

members were detained, was put down by a carabinieri unit on Dec. 29.

In 1981 a series of attacks was made on military targets. Brig.-Gen. James L. Dozier (a US army staff officer and deputy commander of NATO land forces Southern Europe) was abducted in Verona on Dec. 17, 1981, and the BR immediately accepted responsibility for this action. The BR subsequently issued several communiqués, and on Dec. 22 they announced that Gen. Dozier had been found guilty by a "people's court" and would be killed. However, on Jan. 28, 1982, police acting on information received from a suspect freed the general unhurt and arrested the five BR members who were holding him in an apartment in Padua. This police action constituted the first occasion on which Italian police had succeeded in freeing a hostage seized by the BR.

A court in Verona tried altogether 17 BR members (eight of whom were still at large and were tried in absentia) for involvement in Gen. Dozier's abduction, and on March 25, 1982, the court passed prison sentences totaling over 300 years on the defendants. Antonio Savasta, who had confessed to having committed 17 murders, received a reduced sentence having co-operated with the authorities and given information which had led to the arrest of hundreds of BR suspects.

An under-secretary at the Ministry of Information stated on March 16, 1982, that since the abduction of Gen. Dozier 385 persons had been arrested on terrorism charges — 340 from the BR and affiliated organizations and 45 from the extreme right; that 35 arms caches and "safe houses" had been found in the past three months; and that of those captured only 10 per cent had refused to co-operate with the authorities, most of the "terrorists" having realized that they had failed to attain their political aims.

Four of the five abductors of Gen. Dozier were on March 7, 1982, reported to have issued an appeal to their fellow members of the BR to give up the armed struggle which, they claimed, had proved "utterly negative" during the past 10 years. Moreover, Prof. Enrico Fenzi, one of the ideologues of the BR, who had been sentenced to a prison term in Genoa in 1981, declared early in March 1982 that the BR and the idea of armed struggle had failed and that "ten years of bloodstained struggle" had definitively proved that it could "produce no political programme".

The trial of 63 defendants (nine of whom were still at large) for involvement in the abduction and killing of Aldo Moro in 1978 (see above) and in other crimes was held in Rome between April 14, 1982, and Jan. 24, 1983. The court imposed life sentences on 32 of the defendants for 17 murders (including that of Moro), 11 attempted murders and four kidnappings during the years 1977-80. Among those imprisoned for life were Mario Moretti, said to have directed the kidnapping of Moro, and Prospero Gallinari, convicted of killing Moro. Two of the accused were given 30-year sentences, and A. Savasta and Emilia Libera each received 16 years, this being the highest sentence given to those who had "repented" of their BR activities, but rather higher sentences were given to those who, while dissociating themselves from the crimes committed by the BR, did not co-operate with the authorities.

Further mass trials of BR members continued throughout 1983-4. In a trial of 152 BR adherents which ended in Milan

on Nov. 29, 1983, 132 of the accused were sentenced; two of them, convicted of the 1980 murder of Walter Tobagi (see above) were given reduced and suspended sentences for co-operating with the police and were released.

Prof. Enzo Tarantelli, an adviser to the Christian Democratic trade union confederation (CISL), was shot dead by BR members on March 27, 1985. On Feb. 10, 1986, Lando Conti, a former mayor of Florence, was shot dead by BR members, with the BR giving as grounds for its act Conti's friendship with Zionists and his links with the armaments industry and "Western imperialism".

In 1977 the BR were said to consist of cells of between three to five members each, of which only one member was in contact with another cell; several cells constituted a "column" in a city or region. There was also, it was reported, a "strategic directorate". The Red Brigades had an estimated membership in 1980 of about 500 activists, with a further 10,000 supporters. Thereafter, the active membership of the BR was widely believed to have gone into a significant decline, principally because of the success of the security authorities in penetrating and neutralizing the organization's cells in different parts of the country.

Two apparent offshoots or aliases of the BR were the Fighting Communist Party and the Union of Communist Fighters. The former claimed responsibility for an armed raid on a postal van on Feb. 13, 1987, in which two policemen died, while the latter on March 20, 1987, assassinated Air Force General Licio Giorgeri in Rome. Gen. Giorgeri was Director General of the Department for Aerospace and Missile Procurement within the Ministry of Defence, and comparisons were widely drawn with the assassination of Gen. René Audran by the French group Direct Action in January 1986, while the Italian Minister of the Interior stated his belief that the murder of Gen. Giorgeri "was decided outside Italy and carried out by professional killers".

On April 16, 1988, Prof. Roberto Ruffilli, a leading member of the Christian Democratic Party, was shot dead outside his home in Forlì. The Fighting Communist Party claimed responsibility for the attack. Mass trials of BR members ended in October and December 1989 leading to the acquittal of 253 and 168 BR members, respectively, on charges of calling for armed insurrection and civil war (although many of them were also serving sentences for other crimes).

On June 1, 1990, nine people were sentenced by a court at Forlì to life imprisonment for Ruffilli's murder, including the alleged leader of the group, Fabio Ravelli.

The Red Brigades were not responsible for a single death for 11 years after the killing of Ruffilli. The cumulative destruction of its structures by arrest and imprisonment, changes in Italian society and the new international situation with the end of the Cold War, contributed to this situation. The Italian secret service stated that the number of surviving BR activists, other than those actually in prison, could be thought of as a few dozen, divided between Italy, France and some African countries. On May 20, 1999, however, the Red Brigades, or a group adopting the mantle of the former organization, assassinated in Rome Massimo D'Antona, who was the head of the juridical council of the CGIL trade union confederation and an adviser to the labour minister. The BR issued a statement describing D'Antona as the "political-operational pivot between the government and the

confederal unions". Three years after the killing of D'Antona, the BR on March 19, 2002, assassinated Prof. Marco Biagi, in Bologna, also an adviser to the government on industrial relations and labour market reform. No one had been convicted by June 2003 in connection with the D'Antona and Biagi assassinations but on March 2, 2003, a random police check on a train resulted in the death of one suspect. In addition to these assassinations, which roused widespread concern at the possibility of a resurgence of the BR, the group was linked with a number of small sabotage or propaganda actions.

### Walter Alasia Column

This group was a break away from the Red Brigades. The police officially claimed on March 1, 1982, that it had broken up the Column after the seizure of four vehicles which the Column had intended to use for an attack on the San Vittore prison (in Milan), where Aurore Betti (the Column's "historic leader") was held. On Dec. 6, 1984, a court in Milan sentenced 19 members of the group to life imprisonment and 89 others to prison terms of up to 30 years for eight murders and 17 attacks in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

### Workers' Autonomy (Autonomia Operaia)

This organization was established as a successor to Workers' Power (*Potere Operaio*). Prof. Antonio Negri (a teacher of political science at Padua University) was, upon his arrest in April 1979, charged with membership of this illegal organization, which was said to have links with the Red Brigades. Franco Piperno (a physics teacher at Cosenza and a founder-member of Workers' Autonomy), was arrested in France in August 1979 and extradited to Italy in October of that year on charges of involvement in the Aldo Moro murder and other killings; however, he was released for lack of evidence on June 30, 1980.

The charges against Prof. Negri concerning the Moro case were subsequently dropped on April 24, but he was kept in custody on the other charges until July 7, 1983, by which time he had been elected to the Chamber of Deputies as a candidate of the Radical Party. The Chamber, however, decided on Sept. 23, 1983 (by 287 votes to 75, with 227 abstentions) to deprive him of his parliamentary immunity, so that he could be re-arrested on charges brought against him and 70 other Workers' Autonomy members in respect of inter alia, armed insurrection against the State and the formation of an armed band, but meanwhile he had disappeared. On June 12, 1984, he was sentenced in absentia (having fled to France) to 30 years' imprisonment for complicity in the murder of a policeman and in kidnapping and attempted murder of another person as well as for possession of explosives and theft.

On Jan. 31, 1986, Prof. Negri and seven other members of the teaching staff of Padua University were acquitted of being the "moral leaders" of the Red Brigades and other left-wing groups. On June 8, 1987, an appeals court acquitted Prof. Negri of armed insurrection and kidnapping, but upheld his conviction for organizing armed robbery. Prof. Negri returned to Italy from exile in France in 1997, with the aim of securing amnesty legislation that would also enable other leftist former terrorists to return to Italy. He is currently in prison.

Piperno was sentenced in absentia to 10 years' imprisonment by a court in Rome on May 16, 1987, on charges of founding an organization which promoted armed rebellion. Piperno, who had been living in Canada, returned to Italy on Jan. 17, 1988, and gave himself up to the authorities.

### South Tirol

Conflict in South Tirol (Alto Adige) has in the past occurred between extremists from the German-speaking majority population, who have sought either independence or unification with Austria, and Italian-speakers who wish to maintain Italian rule. The Italian Foreign Minister said that he believed he was the target of a bomb attack on a hotel in Merano on Dec. 31, 1986, and a number of violent incidents occurred in the early months of 1987, although with no fatalities. In May 1988 there were a number of bomb attacks in the South Tirol by a group calling itself "One Tirol". On May 17 four bombs exploded in Bolzano and two on the railway line with Brenner. The bombs caused damage but no injuries. The small (legal) Union for South Tirol party continues to advocate a South Tirol free state able to opt for union with Austria.

### External Groups

The main current external terrorist threat to Italy consists of Islamic fundamentalist groups. According to Italian secret service periodic reports to Parliament, the majority of such groups in Italy originate from

North Africa and have links with *Al-Qaeda* and similar groups. Italy is said, in the context of the global strategy of such groups, to have primarily a logistical role, hosting "sleeper" cells ready to act elsewhere. Western intelligence services have noted the opportunity for Islamic terrorists to join the uncontrolled flow of clandestine immigrants who enter Italy through the coasts of Calabria and Apulia and then can pass easily elsewhere in the European Union.

Since 1995, the Italian security services have initiated investigations and arrests in the Islamic communities of northern Italy (including the mosque of Milan), arresting about 10 representatives of organizations including the Algerian Armed Islamic Group (GIA) and the Salafist Group for the Call and Combat (see Algeria entry). Carabinieri investigations also suggest connections between *Al-Qaeda* and the Red Brigades (BR, see entry). Nadia Lioce, a BR member arrested during a random police check on a train in March 2003, made a public statement during her trial pointing out the convergence between Red Brigade and Islamist groups in the fight against the "Western capitalistic powers". Other indicators of terrorist groups' activity in Italy are increasing propaganda and proselytism through the internet and increasing anti-Israeli propaganda. The Italian secret service has stated that the main channel for financing Islamic terrorist groups operating in Italy is sales of weapons and false documentation linked to the smuggling of refugees.

*Luca Blasi*

## Jamaica

**Capital:** Kingston

**Population:** 3 m

Jamaica, a former British dependency, achieved independence in 1962. It is a member of the Commonwealth with the British monarch as head of state being represented by a Governor-General. It has a bi-cameral parliament consisting of (i) a 60-member House of Representatives elected for five years by universal adult suffrage and (ii) a 21-member Senate to which 13 Senators are appointed by the Governor-General on the advice of the Prime Minister and the remaining eight on the advice of the Leader of the Opposition. The Prime Minister (the head of the government) and Cabinet are responsible to Parliament. In elections held in October 2002, the ruling People's National Party (PNP) made history by winning a fourth consecutive term of office. The PNP, led by P. J. Paterson, won 53 percent of the vote and 35 seats, while the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) under the leadership of Edward Seaga won 47 percent of the vote and 25 seats.

The issue of politically inspired or linked violence has been a recurrent one in Jamaica. In many cases armed gangs receiving patronage from the two major

parties carry out the violence. Such violence attained crisis levels during the period of bitter ideological division between the two main parties in the 1970s (when the PNP government elected in 1972 adopted a left-wing agenda) and reached a climax in the run-up to the 1980 election when several hundred people were killed. The PNP lost power in the 1980 election but when restored to office in 1989 the party followed a more moderate programme, and as a consequence ideologically driven violence greatly declined. Nonetheless, during May, June and July 2001 there were serious clashes in west Kingston between rival gangs associated with the PNP and JLP. The worst of these came in a three-day period in July, when 27 people were killed after police conducted a weapons raid in a neighbourhood dominated by JLP supporters. Furthermore, during the 2002 election campaign some 80 murders were committed, although this number was down on previous campaigns. The decline was partly attributable to a code of conduct signed in June 2002 between the two party leaders. The code called on

political parties not to encourage violence in political activities, to avoid procuring and distributing weapons or ammunition, and to avoid forcing people to declare their political affiliations.

Much of the violence in recent years, however, has been connected to criminal activities, drugs and territorial disputes between groups, rather than being specifically political in nature. During 2001 there was a record 1,139 murders in Jamaica, a figure matched in 2002, giving Jamaica a murder rate exceeded only by

South Africa and Brazil. The continuing high murder rate, together with an upsurge in criminal activity more generally, precipitated a call from some sections of Jamaican society for the government to declare a state of emergency. Prime Minister Paterson refused to countenance such a move, but in December 2002 he announced a joint army and police offensive on crime.

*Peter Clegg*

## Japan

**Capital:** Tokyo

**Population:** 127.3 m

The Empire of Japan is a constitutional monarchy in which the Emperor is not head of state but is described in the 1946 Constitution as “symbol of the State and of the unity of the people, deriving his position from the will of the people with whom resides sovereign power”. The Emperor has no governing power. Executive power is vested in a Cabinet and legislative power in a bicameral Diet consisting of (i) a 247-member House of Councillors, the Upper House, and (ii) a 480-member House of Representatives, both Houses being elected by universal adult suffrage of citizens above the age of 20 years. Members are elected to the House of Councillors from a combination of single-member constituencies and a national constituency of the whole electorate. The members of the House of Representatives are now elected for a four-year term, 300 for single-member seats and 180 by proportional representation based on candidates from party lists in eleven electoral districts. This replaced a system of multi-member constituencies of greatly varying sizes. All organizations wishing to nominate candidates for public office have to be registered as political parties; there are over 10,000 such parties but the vast majority of them are of significance only at local or regional level.

The Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) ruled Japan from 1955 until party realignments in the early 1990s saw it turned out of office in July 1993 elections, returning in 1994 as a coalition partner. The LDP has stayed in power since then as the lead party in ruling coalitions. In elections to the House of Representatives on June 25, 2000, the LDP took 233 seats, the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) 127, New Komeito 31, the Liberal Party 22, the Japan Communist Party 20, the Social Democratic Party of Japan (SDPJ) 19, and minor parties and independents 28.

The country’s pacifist Constitution was modified in 1992 to allow service personnel to serve in UN peace-keeping operations in a non-combatant role and in October 2002 to allow Japan’s Self-Defence Forces to send naval vessels to support in an auxiliary role the US-led military campaign against the Taleban regime

in Afghanistan.

Numerous acts of politically motivated violence were carried out both by extreme right-wing and by extreme left-wing groups in the 1970s and 1980s. In March 1977 the police estimated that there were perhaps 40 extreme right-wing formations with a total membership of fewer than 3,000 and advocating an authoritarian government as the best solution to overcome corruption, exploitation and “unequal treaties” with foreign powers. Some of the extreme left-wing groups extended their operations to targets outside Japan, and under a law enacted on May 12, 1978, and entering into force on June 5 of that year the death penalty was extended to hijackers and anyone seizing diplomatic establishments, while the penalty for taking hostages was raised from five years to life imprisonment.

Whereas until 1977 the Japanese government had repeatedly acceded to demands made by hijackers of aircraft (with the then Prime Minister, Takeo Fukuda, stating on Sept. 29, 1975, that human life was “more precious than the earth”), it was reported in June 1978 that the government had mapped out a new policy whereby no further demands by terrorists would be complied with, even if lives had to be sacrificed.

Up to 1980 some 80 members of left-wing organizations had been killed and 4,500 wounded in internecine ideological feuding. The mid-1980s saw an upsurge in left-wing activity and in the year up to April 1986 police arrested over 900 “radicals”. Tokyo’s international airport at Narita continued to arouse political opposition and police believed a bomb explosion there on July 4, 1988, which damaged 27 vehicles, was the work of left-wing opponents of a major expansion of the airport’s facilities (see below for Fourth Trotskyist International).

### EXTREME RIGHT-WING GROUPS

Among the groups active in the 1970s and 1980s were: (i) the **Japan Volunteer Army for National Independence** (*Nihon Minzoku Dokuritsu Giyungun*), which in



particular carried out attacks on the premises and staff of *Asahi Shimbun*, a leading liberal daily newspaper. These incidents included the shooting of two reporters (one fatally) at an *Asahi* office on May 3, 1987. (ii) **Spiritual Justice School** (*Seiki Juku*), a leader of which, Kazumi Tajiri, admitted to shooting and seriously wounding Hitoshi Motoshima, the mayor of Nagasaki, on Jan. 18, 1990, Motoshima having become a target for right-wing groups after he had said in December 1988 that Emperor Hirohito bore some responsibility, “as do all of us who lived in that period”, for Japan’s role in the Pacific War of 1941-45. His remarks broke an established Japanese taboo prohibiting even oblique criticism of the monarch. (iii) **Youth League for the Overthrow of the Yalta and Potsdam Structure**. On March 3, 1977, two members of the League and two from the **Shield Society** (*Tatenokai* – an extreme right-wing group disbanded after the suicide of its leader, the well-known writer Yukio Mishima, in 1970) took about 12 members of Keidanren (the Japanese Federation of Economic Organizations) hostage. They denounced big business for corruption and “poisoning Japan’s post-war society and its landscape”.

### EXTREME LEFT-WING GROUPS

Previously active groups include:

(i) The **Battle Flag of the Communist League** (*Senki Kyosando*). This group fired crude incendiary rockets at the US Embassy in Tokyo, Imperial Palace and other targets in 1986.

(ii) **Fourth (Trotskyist) International – Japanese Section**. This group played a leading role among the radical groups which from 1971 onwards actively opposed the construction and opening of a new international airport at Narita (about 40 miles north-west of Tokyo). Demonstrations by local farmers, left-wing student groups and environmentalists led to several years’ delay in the completion of the airport. During disturbances in February-May 1978 four policemen and one civilian died and several hundred persons were injured. Although the airport was officially opened on May 20, 1978, attacks on its communications and other installations continued upon a sporadic basis, with several bombs exploding in its vicinity in 1984 and 1985.

(iii) **Middle-Core Faction** (*Chukaku-Ha*). This Marxist breakaway group from the National Federation of Students’ Organizations was created in 1960 to oppose the security treaty concluded between the United States and Japan. Members of the Faction were repeatedly involved in violent clashes with members of the rival *Kakumaru-Ha* movement (Revolutionary Marxist Faction); in such clashes eight persons were killed in March-June 1975; and on Oct. 30, 1980, *Chukaku-Ha* members were reported to have beaten to death five *Kakumaru-Ha* members as an act of revenge for the murder of a leftist leader four years earlier.

The group made extensive use of simple missiles,

carrying out attacks on government buildings, on Narita airport and (on May 4, 1986) on buildings used in connection with the Tokyo economic summit of the leading industrial countries.

In opposition to government plans (which took effect in April 1987) to break up and privatize the Japan National Railways (JNR) public corporation, *Chukaku-Ha* sabotaged JNR installations, causing widespread disruption on two occasions in November 1985 and September 1986. On Sept. 1, 1986, it carried out a series of attacks on officials of a small break-away union, Shinkokuro, which had approved the privatization policy, one official being beaten to death.

*Chukaku-Ha* was estimated in 1986 to have some 3,000 members, with 250-300 constituting its inner operational “Revolutionary Army”. Although considered responsible for some 47 deaths the group maintained a publicly known fortress-like headquarters in a Tokyo suburb.

### United Red Army (URA) (Rengo Sekigun )

The URA was formed in 1969 by a merger of the Red Army Faction (*Sekigunha*), which was an offshoot of the (Trotskyist) Communist League, and the Keihin Joint Struggle Committee against the US-Japan Security Treaty (*Keihin Anpo Kyoto*) to launch an armed campaign for revolution. In February 1972 some of its militants “executed” 14 alleged “deviationists” and for six days resisted police action against them.

In a document issued in May 1977 the URA declared that it would continue to fight for the materialization of a people’s republic of Japan by uniting and joining forces with the “oppressed people, comrades and friends in confrontation with Japanese imperialism”. During its early operations the URA had stressed the “need to fight against Zionism” and for “the just cause of the Palestinians”. During the hijacking of an airliner to Dacca (Dhaka) in 1977 (see below) the URA affirmed the need of a revolution in Japan, its solidarity with the Japanese people in their struggle against the monarchy and the growing “imperialism”, the economic exploitation of South Korea by Japan, the construction of Narita airport and corruption in general. In December 1977 the URA called for the formation of a revolutionary council in Japan in order to prepare for a revolutionary government-in-exile.

The URA was involved in numerous acts of international terrorism from 1970 to 1977. They hijacked a Japan Air Lines (JAL) airliner on March 30, 1970, and diverted it to North Korea. Three URA gunmen killed 26 people and injured 78 others at Lod airport (Tel Aviv) on May 27, 1972: one gunman was killed by Israeli police, another committed suicide, and a third, Kozo Okamoto, was captured. The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) claimed responsibility for this massacre, stating that the three Japanese had come “to take part with the Palestinian people in the struggle against the power of Zionism and imperialism”. Okamoto was sentenced to life imprisonment on July 17, 1972.

On July 20, 1973, hijackers diverted a JAL airliner (flying from Paris to Amsterdam) to Benghazi (Libya), where they blew it up after releasing the passengers and crew. They



described their action as retaliation against the Japanese government for having paid compensation to Israel for the Lod massacre. Four men claiming to be PFLP and URA members attacked a Shell oil refinery in Singapore on Jan. 31, 1974, and took a ferry crew hostage, demanding safe passage out of Singapore. While negotiations proceeded between them and the Singapore authorities, five armed men occupied the Japanese embassy in Kuwait on Feb. 6, holding the entire staff hostage and demanding that the Japanese government send a plane to take the URA members from Singapore to Kuwait. This demand was met: all the hostages in Singapore and Kuwait were released; and all the guerrillas were flown to Aden (South Yemen) on Feb. 8.

Three URA members took 10 people hostage at the French embassy in The Hague on Sept. 13, 1974, and demanded the release of Yutaka Furuya, a URA member detained at Orly airport (Paris) that July. The hostages were released in exchange for Furuya and an aircraft took him and the guerrillas to Damascus on Sept. 18. Five URA members seized 52 people at the US consulate and the Swedish embassy in Kuala Lumpur on Aug. 4, 1975, and demanded the release of seven URA prisoners in Japan. The Japanese government acceded to this the next day, but only five prisoners agreed to be released and they were flown to Kuala Lumpur. Their plane then flew on to Tripoli with the five attackers and four new hostages (two Malaysian and two Japanese officials replacing the original hostages, most of whom had been released earlier). The officials returned to their countries on Aug. 10 after the URA members had surrendered to the Libyan authorities.

On Sept. 28, 1977, five URA "Hidaka commandos" forced a JAL airliner en route from Paris to Tokyo to land in Dhaka, Bangladesh, and demanded a ransom of US\$6,000,000 and the release of seven URA prisoners and two convicted murderers in Japan. The Japanese government accepted these demands, but only six of the named prisoners agreed to be released. After most of the hostages had been released, the airliner left Dhaka on Oct. 2 with 29 passengers, seven crew members, five hijackers, six ex-prisoners, and the ransom. Seven passengers were released in Kuwait and 10 in Damascus before the airliner reached Algiers on Oct. 3, where the remaining hostages were released and the URA members and ex-prisoners were taken to an unknown destination. On Oct. 5 Algeria rejected a Japanese plea for the hijackers' extradition and the surrender of the ex-prisoners and the ransom.

Two URA members seized a bus with at least 15 passengers in Nagasaki on Oct. 15, 1977, and threatened to explode 37 bombs throughout Japan unless their demands for ransom and for talks with the Minister of Justice were met. But the authorities made no concessions and the police stormed the bus the next day, killing one terrorist and seizing the other.

In May 1979 the URA announced its decision to "solidify internationalism and work out our own salvation with our own efforts" and "to properly eliminate inconsistencies in the establishment of socialism". Fusako Shigenobu, the movement's leader, stated in May 1982 that the URA had abandoned terrorism because of its failure to win international support, but that it was important to unify all anti-imperialist forces and consolidate the movement to build a bigger base. She admitted that the URA continued to receive

military training in the Lebanon; according to the Japanese police, the remnants of the URA had their headquarters in a Palestinian refugee camp on the outskirts of Beirut. The URA also had ties with revolutionary groups in other countries, notably West Germany and Spain.

On May 20, 1985, Kozo Okamoto was released by Israel in an exchange deal whereby Israel freed 1,150 detainees in return for three Israeli soldiers captured in the Lebanon by the PFLP in 1982. The Japanese government, which had asked for Okamoto's exclusion from this deal or his transfer into Japanese custody, officially notified the Israeli government of its displeasure. About 40 URA members were thought to be operating abroad at the time, mainly in Libya or the Lebanon.

On Sept. 26, 1986, the Tokyo High Court rejected an appeal by Hiroko Nagata, Hiroshi Sakaguchi and Yasuhiro Uegaki, against their conviction in 1982 for the murder of 14 fellow URA members and two policemen in 1971-72. Nagata and Sakaguchi were sentenced to death.

The attempted return to Japan of Osamu Maruoka, reputed to be the URA's second-in-command, who was arrested on Nov. 24, 1987, led to renewed fears that the organization was preparing to resume operations within the country. Maruoka was wanted in connection with the massacre at Lod airport in 1972, and the hijacking of JAL airliners in 1973. Evidence emerged following his arrest that the URA had been planning attacks in South Korea, and on May 6, 1988, Yasuhiro Shibata was arrested in Tokyo on passport charges during a security sweep organized by the Japan-South Korea Games Security Committee in preparation for the 1988 Olympic Games in Seoul. Shibata and eight other alleged Red Army members had fled to North Korea after hijacking a Japanese aeroplane in 1970.

Italian police were reported to be seeking members of the URA after two car bombs exploded outside a US servicemen's club in Naples on April 14, 1988, killing five people. The URA was also suspected of involvement in attacks on the US and UK embassies in Rome in June 1987.

The Japanese Supreme Court on Feb. 19, 1993, upheld death sentences imposed on Hiroko Nagata and Hiroshi Sakaguchi and a 20-year prison sentence for Yasuhiro Uegaki for 17 murders committed between 1971-72. Of the 16 URA members originally indicted 11 had already completed prison sentences.

It was announced on March 6, 1997, by Adnan Adoum, Lebanon's Prosecutor General, that five Japanese nationals who had been arrested in the Bekaa valley in Lebanon in February had been charged with forging passports and entering Lebanon illegally. Although the named five were all reported to be members of the URA, including Kozo Okamoto, who participated in the Lod airport massacre of 1972, Adoum stressed that the charges had nothing to do with the defendants' "political capacity". Three other Japanese nationals arrested in February, one believed to be a Japanese intelligence officer who had infiltrated the URA, were expelled from Lebanon. The Japanese government appealed in vain to Lebanon (with which Japan had no extradition treaty) to extradite the five to Japan. On completion of three-year prison sentences four of the Japanese were expelled from Lebanon in March 2000 and subsequently returned to Japan to face charges relating to the Lod airport

massacre. Okamoto, however, was granted political asylum in Lebanon.

On Nov. 6, 2000, Japanese police arrested URA founder member Fusako Shigenobu at a hotel near Osaka on suspicion of planning the seizure of the French embassy in the Netherlands in September 1974.

At the trial in March 2002 in Tokyo of Megumi Yao, another URA member, she revealed that she had been involved in 1983 in the abduction of a Japanese student in Denmark to North Korea. The issue of some 11 Japanese nationals allegedly abducted during the 1970s and 1980s to North Korea, apparently for use as spies or language teachers, had long been an obstacle to any improvement in relations between the two countries. On Sept. 17 during a visit to North Korea by Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, North Korean leader Kim Jong Il made the dramatic admission – and apology – that North Korea had abducted 12 Japanese citizens. Kim initially said that only four had survived, but in October North Korea allowed five Japanese to return to Japan for a 10-day visit to their families. The Japanese authorities were reluctant to allow them to return to North Korea and in December all five abductees announced that they intended to stay in Japan, despite the fact that they had not been allowed to bring their children with them. It had earlier been reported in July that four surviving Red Army hijackers of the aircraft forced to fly to North Korea in 1970 were preparing to return to Japan, which was taken to indicate that North Korea wished to dissociate itself from terrorism. Nothing more was heard of this by the end of the year.

The USA, in its biennial review of terrorism, on Oct. 5, 2001, dropped the URA from its list of designated terrorist groups, presumably because it had been inactive for so long.

## RELIGIOUS CULT

### **Aum Shinrikyo**

Since the early 1990s, with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the subsequent fading of left-wing groups such as the United Red Army (URA), the chief threat to internal security in Japan has come from a quasi-religious sect named *Aum Shinrikyo* (Aum Supreme Truth). The sect's apocalyptic world view resulted in the deliberate release into the Tokyo subway system on March 20, 1995, of the nerve gas sarin – first developed by the Nazis during World War II – causing the deaths of 12 people and injuries to about 5,000. It subsequently emerged that the cult had also been responsible for previous attacks.

*Aum Shinrikyo* was founded in 1987 by its partially blind leader, Shoko Asahara (born Chizuo Matsumoto), as an eclectic amalgam of aspects of Hindu yoga, Buddhism and Christianity. Asahara, who claimed to have attained enlightenment in the Himalayas, preached salvation through spiritual enlightenment to avert a coming world catastrophe that would take the form of nuclear war in 1999, although he also taught that only a small elite would survive Armageddon. Asahara's indoctrination included elements of anti-Semitic and anti-USA conspiracy theories. He subjected his followers to strict ascetic discipline in group environments at headquarters in Tokyo and Kamakuishiki near Mount Fuji and required them to donate their personal wealth to the sect.

Asahara recruited widely in the professional and scientific community, and according to some accounts *Aum Shinrikyo* even penetrated the military research establishment. At its peak the millennial cult boasted 10,000 members in Japan and spread to some 20 other countries. Following a tour of Russia by Asahara in the early 1990s the Russian membership soared to a reported 30,000. *Aum* produced proselytizing radio and television programmes that were widely broadcast in Japan and Russia. There were also reports that *Aum Shinrikyo* established contact with rogue elements in the Russian military. In 1989, the year in which *Aum Shinrikyo* was officially recognized in Japan as a religious organization, the cult formed its own political party, the Shinri Party, but none of its 25 candidates succeeded in winning a seat in the 1990 general election.

Following the Tokyo subway attack the police from March 22 began a series of raids on *Aum Shinrikyo* properties at Kamakuishiki and 25 other locations, uncovering chemical factories and thousands of tonnes of chemical constituents for sarin and other nerve gases. It transpired that whatever apocalyptic purpose the Tokyo attack was intended to serve it was also a pre-emptive strike to avert impending government action against the cult. On March 30 the chief of the National Police Agency, Takaji Kunitatsu, was shot in an attempted assassination by a police officer who was also a member of *Aum Shinrikyo*. A number of cult members, including several members of its "alternative government" and of its chemical weapons team, were arrested in March and April but Asahara himself remained elusive. *Aum Shinrikyo* had meanwhile been banned in Russia in March and in April a court fined it 20 million roubles and forbade the broadcasting of its radio and television programmes.

There were gas attacks at the railway station in Yokohama on April 19 and 21, in which nearly 400 people were hurt. Although these were attributed to *Aum* at the time, a criminal with no known links to the sect later admitted responsibility. The Diet passed legislation in April banning sarin and a number of other substances. At the end of the month Hideo Murai, head of Aum's science and technology agency, was stabbed to death in Tokyo by a member of a right-wing group. The police finally discovered and arrested Asahara on May 16, discovering him in an underground chamber during a renewed search of the cult's complex at Kamakuishiki. At this point the police had arrested 31 of the 41 *Aum Shinrikyo* members for whom murder warrants had been issued, and 150 cult members had been detained on lesser charges. Railway guards on May 5 foiled another attack using cyanide gas at Tokyo's Shinjuku station.

Asahara was indicted on murder and attempted murder charges on June 6, relating to the March attack, and in July Asahara and seven others were indicted for the murder of seven people who had died in a sarin attack in the city of Matsumoto in June 1994. Security precautions thwarted further cyanide gas attacks at Tokyo railway and subway stations on July 5. It also emerged that in 1990 *Aum Shinrikyo* had attempted to attack the Diet with botulinum toxin and that in June 1990 it had sprayed anthrax spores over four days from a tall building in Tokyo, but without causing any serious injuries. This attack had failed apparently because

the anthrax had been derived from a vaccine. On Sept. 6, 1995, the remains were unearthed of a lawyer, Tsutsumi Sakamoto, his wife and small child, who had disappeared in 1989. Sakamoto had acted for parents who were seeking to extricate their children from *Aum Shinrikyo*. A later confession by an *Aum* member revealed that the tape of a never-broadcast interview about the cult that Sakamoto had given to the Tokyo Broadcasting System (TBS) had been shown to the *Aum* leadership after pressure had been brought to bear. Following this Sakamoto and his family were murdered. The cult was also believed to have murdered other opponents and fugitive cult members. The Tokyo district court on Oct. 30 stripped *Aum* of its legal status and protection, with the subsequent appointment of a liquidator in December to seize the group's assets. The trials of a number of cult members began in October, but that of Asahara was suspended when he dismissed his lawyer. When Asahara's trial finally got under way on April 24, 1996, he refused to enter a plea in response to the 17 charges of murder and other charges against him, and employed a wide range of delaying tactics.

Despite widespread anger at the way that the authorities had allowed *Aum Shinrikyo* to flourish for years despite mounting evidence of dangerous and criminal activities, the Justice Ministry's Public Security Commission on Jan. 31, 1997, refused to ban *Aum Shinrikyo* under the anti-subversive activities law. By this time the first legal compensation claims on behalf of the victims of the Tokyo subway attack had been filed, and the cult declared bankrupt.

In May 1998 Ikyuo Hayashi was sentenced to life imprisonment on being convicted of being one of the five people who had carried out the sarin attack in March 1995, escaping the death sentence because his confession had enabled the prosecution of other *Aum* members, including Asahara. Hayashi was the first of the principal defendants to be convicted. In October 1998 a Tokyo court found Kazuaki Okazaki guilty of taking part in the Sakamoto murders and sentenced him to death, the first death sentence imposed on a member of the cult. In December Asahara's chief defence lawyer was arrested on suspicion of obstructing the compulsory seizure of *Aum Shinrikyo*'s rental income. This imposed another major delay in the progress of the trial. Meanwhile the cult, although shrunken in membership, continued to thrive financially, operating at least thirteen businesses. In 1997 its computer sales alone earned *Aum* the equivalent of US\$57.5 million. It also derived a steady income from training seminars and initiation rituals. It was

also reported that *Aum* appeared to continue to maintain chemical plants and warehouses on some of its properties. The Tokyo district court on Sept. 30, 1999, sentenced Masato Yokoyama to death for murder and attempted murder, the first death sentence on a member of the cult for the 1995 Tokyo sarin attack. On the previous day the remaining leadership announced that it was suspending activities from Oct. 1 and halting the use of the name *Aum Shinrikyo*. In December the Diet passed legislation empowering the police to conduct raids and financial searches on *Aum* (and similar religious cults) without obtaining a warrant.

On Jan. 1 the cult held a press conference at which it admitted for the first time that *Aum Shinrikyo*, under Asahara's leadership, was responsible for the gas attacks and other crimes. It further announced that it had reconstituted itself as *Aleph* and disassociated itself from Asahara and its past. *Aleph* was believed to retain around 1,200 members. Within months its new leader was Fumihiro Joyu, a senior member of the sect who had been released from prison at the end of December 1999. Joyu had acted as chief spokesman in the months after the Tokyo sarin attack, denying all allegations against the cult, until he was arrested in October 1995 and later convicted of forgery. The USA on Oct. 5, 2001, announced that it had added *Aum Shinrikyo* to its list of designated terrorist groups and on Nov. 2 froze all *Aum*'s financial assets in the USA. On Oct. 10, 2002, the Tokyo district court sentenced Seiichi Endo to death for helping to produce the sarin gas used both in the March 1995 Tokyo subway attack and the June 1994 Matsumoto attack. Endo, a graduate student of virology who joined the cult in 1987, was its tenth member to receive the death sentence. Meanwhile the trial of Asahara limped on, with the defendant appearing largely oblivious to the proceedings. The prosecution concluded the presentation of the case against him in January 2002, having reduced the original 17 indictments to 13. Asahara's lawyers, whose main defence appeared to be that other cult members were outside the leader's control, said in December 2002 that they intended to call him to the witness stand in 2003. The Public Security Examination Commission in January 2003 decided to extend the close surveillance on *Aleph/Aum Shinrikyo* for a further three years. Joyu attacked the decision, scorning the idea that the cult could still be considered a public danger.

*Tim Curtis*

## Jordan

**Capital:** Amman

**Population:** 4.3 m

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is a constitutional hereditary monarchy which, under its 1952 Constitution, had a bicameral National Assembly consisting of a 60-member lower house elected in equal numbers from the West and East Banks, and a 30-member Senate appointed by the King. An Anti-Communist

Law of 1953 banned Marxist-oriented parties. All other political parties were outlawed in 1957, though non-party elections were still held. Jordan's mukhabarat (secret police) often detained political dissidents for long periods without charge. King Hussein would justify such actions by alluding to the Commu-

nist threat or to pan-Arab fervour inspired by Egypt.

Israel's capture of the West Bank in 1967 ended elections to the lower house and heralded a long period of martial law. The greatest threat to the monarchy came in 1970, when radicalized Palestinians affiliated to various branches of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) threatened to launch a coup. After initial attempts to organize a *modus vivendi* failed, Hussein ordered his army to crush the incipient revolt, in September 1970. The final PLO units were expelled from Ajlun in the north, in mid-1971.

In 1974 King Hussein ostensibly transferred responsibility for the West Bank to the PLO and dissolved the Assembly — having reluctantly accepted that the PLO was the “legitimate representative of the Palestinian people” at that year's Rabat summit. The assembly was reconvened in 1976 and again in 1984, when it authorized the filling of empty seats by holding by-elections (with women voting for the first time) for the East Bank and appointing seven members from the West Bank.

In summer 1988 the King broke Jordan's links with the West Bank, dissolved the lower house and postponed elections pending new electoral lists. In 1989 drastic economic reforms, mandated by the IMF, provoked rioting which reduced traditional bedouin support for the government and emboldened its enemies. From April that year, however, the government changed the Elections Law to allow parties to apply for registration, and lifted press restrictions. Elections followed in November 1989 under a new electoral law that raised the membership of the lower House of Representatives to 80, redrew constituency boundaries and abolished the seats formerly reserved for Palestinians.

In these general elections, the first since 1967, 635 candidates stood for the 80 seats, nominally as individuals, but with clear party allegiances. Observers noted that there was virtually no voter intimidation and the mukhabarat kept a low profile. The new lower house had, for the first time, no permanent or reliable government majority. Only 31 of the 80 successful candidates were declared supporters of the government. Twenty were from the Muslim Brotherhood and a further 11 were Islamic fundamentalists (despite the King's previously expressed hope that people would not use religion for political ends). The remaining 18 were left-wingers and nationalists, including former members of the Jordanian Communist Party (JCP) and followers of Nayef Hawatmeh's Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP). The new government released political prisoners and promised to investigate corruption. King Hussein established a committee to draft a new National Charter in April 1990.

In April 1992 King Hussein formally abolished all martial law provisions introduced after the 1967 Arab-Israeli War and in July 1992 legislation was passed lifting the ban on political parties. Between 1992 and early 1999, 32 parties obtained licences, although strict laws stipulate that they receive no funding from abroad and abide by the constitution.

Multi-party elections to the House of Representatives were held on Nov. 8, 1993. With the exception of the Islamic Action Front, most political parties had a low profile and a majority of candidates were returned as independents.

Jordan has been one of the more stable Arab countries. Nonetheless, tensions have arisen over the running sore of the Palestine question, and anxiety stemming from the post-1967 Israeli occupation of its territory. Other factors exacerbating tensions over recent decades have included: differences between the partly urbanized Jordanians of the West Bank and the original East Bankers with their bedouin conservatism, the Lebanese civil war, and the Arab world's division in attitudes towards the West. Jordan was additionally penalized by the USA and Gulf States for its refusal to join the anti-Saddam coalition in 1991. Vital aid from both sources ceased; some 350,000 Jordanians, mostly of Palestinian origin, were effectively expelled from the Gulf and returned to Jordan, placing a burden on an already suffering economy. Outbursts nonetheless lessened after 1989 as legitimate channels for opposition offered less violent outlets for protest. As elsewhere, the strongest anti-regime force has come from Islamic fundamentalism.

To a large extent, King Hussein sought to diffuse potential Islamic dissidence while clamping down on socialists, pan-Arabists and Nasserite nationalists. In a country where the majority of the population has a Palestinian provenance, he was said to tolerate *Hamas* at the PLO's expense. This feature of his rule was all the more remarkable, given his perception in Israel as a moderate leader. King Hussein signed an historic peace treaty with Israel on Oct. 14, 1994, but the popular reception in Jordan was considerably less enthusiastic than in Israel. Increasingly, Islamists and nationalists found common cause in opposing normalization with Israel.

Tensions with Syria remained, tensions that had existed at least since 1957, when Syria (albeit under a different administration) harboured Jordanian military officers who had tried to topple the young King Hussein from power. In 1996 King Hussein confronted President Hafez al-Assad with “proof” that Syria was encouraging anti-Jordanian “terrorists”, including anti-Hashemite Palestinian radicals. Assad denied all such charges, though Damascus had only recently hosted 27 Jordanian opposition figures, who bitterly opposed Jordan's 1994 peace treaty with Israel.

The last five years of Hussein's life saw a “recession of the democratic process, converting it into a mere showcase”, according to the New Jordan Centre think-tank. Protests erupted in Maan, Karak, Amman and elsewhere after government subsidies were lifted in August 1996. As a consequence, perhaps, in May 1997 the printed matters law was tightened, and despite judicial appeals after 13 weeklies were suppressed, it was reintroduced in different guise in June 1998. Half of the 20 recognized parties boycotted the 1997 elections, allowing Royal Court loyalists to establish a majority in the lower house. Hussein's



decision to modestly sponsor certain Iraqi opposition factions, in 1997, aroused fury from pro-Iraqi sectors of the Jordanian people.

After Hussein's death his son Abdullah assumed the throne, on Feb. 7, 1999. Initial fears of a dissident revolt proved unfounded. Within six months the new monarch began curbing *Hamas*, which had previously enjoyed a somewhat tolerated role in Jordan. Then the outbreak of the Al Aqsa intifada in late 2000 in Israel's occupied territories renewed anger amongst Jordan's majority Palestinian population and their sympathisers. Jordan recalled its ambassador to Israel in protest. Eager to contain the potential spread of the revolt across Jordan's western border, the government also tightened border controls and intelligence surveillance on potential dissidents. On Oct. 6, 2000, it banned public protests following clashes between demonstrators and police during anti-Israeli demonstrations. In all, the government has issued more than 100 "temporary laws" that limit free expression and broaden the penal code. The State Security Court has gained new powers, and rights of appeal have been largely rescinded.

Criticism of alleged corruption in high places also potentially threatens the monarchy. Anger at the removal of food price subsidies, and other financial adjustment measures mandated by the IMF to relieve Jordan's ailing economy, have inspired protests that the government often ascribes to Islamic militancy. The events of Sept. 11, 2001, in the USA led Jordan to further tighten press restrictions, and impose jail terms for slandering the monarchy and for writing anything that might "undermine national security" or criticized "friendly nations". It also considerably firmed up anti-terrorist regulations. Critics accused the government of using the excuse of national security to further "roll back" Jordan's experiment in democracy.

In a speech delivered on Oct. 11, 2002, King Abdullah reiterated his government's opposition to "the presence in Jordan of parties with non-Jordanian references or that receive orders or financing from abroad". He specifically cited the Jordan Communist Party, Ba'ath parties, whether affiliated to Iraq or Syria, and the Islamic Action Front, linked through the Muslim Brotherhood with other Islamist parties around the world. The speech was hailed as the launch of the King's new "Jordan First" policy, and enjoyed support in many quarters. He warned against threats to force refugees across the Kingdom's borders, from either the conflict in the West Bank, or the pending war in Iraq. A major siege of the dissident stronghold of Maan in November 2002 (following earlier disturbances there in January) was seen as an attempt to "nip in the bud" any revolt before the onset of the expected war in neighbouring Iraq.

Elections scheduled for 2001 were postponed until June 2003. They resulted in a majority of seats being won by supporters of the King but Islamist formations took 20 per cent of the vote.

## Muslim Brotherhood

*Leadership. Abdel-Meguid Zuneibat (head of the movement's Jordanian chapter)*

Hassan al-Banna, Egyptian founder of the Muslim Brotherhood (*Ikhwan al-Muslimin*) began setting up cells of the organization throughout what was then called Transjordan in 1942. A Jordanian chapter was officially founded on Nov. 19, 1945, under the chairmanship of Abdullatif Abu Qura. In 1948, and again in 1954, members of the Brotherhood (MB) found asylum in Jordan when their movement was suppressed in Egypt.

As in Egypt, the Jordanian MB has usually been more important than other opposition groups. It has entered the framework of legitimate politics and often holds a powerful place in government. Muslim Brothers supported the young King Hussein when nationalists threatened to overthrow him in 1956, and were exempted from the ban on political parties in 1957 (they were named a society instead). The MB appreciated the fact that the King was descended from the Prophet Mohammed, and that his ancestors had traditionally guarded the holy places in Mecca and Medina.

In the 1970s Hussein permitted Jordanian Brothers to provide their MB allies in Syria with military training. Self-interest might explain this policy, as Hussein disliked the secular Ba'ath administration in Damascus, and feared that Syria might one day absorb Jordan within a "Greater Syria".

However, relations between the monarchy and the MB deteriorated during the Iran-Iraq war (1980-88). Hussein favoured Iraq, whereas the MB sympathized with Ayatollah Khomeini's Iran. Improving Jordanian-Syrian relations led to the extradition of some Brothers to the Ba'ath regime in Damascus. In 1985, many fundamentalists, including MB members, were arrested in Jordan.

There was also a growing split within the MB, between the old guard, conservative pro-monarchists; and younger MB members, who ascribed to the more radical jihadi ideas of the late Egyptian Islamist, Sayyid Qutb. The latter rejected democracy and accused all contemporary Muslim leaders (including King Hussein) of being apostates and Western lackeys. They preferred to separate from society and felt true believers should uproot *jahilliya* (religious ignorance) – with violence, if necessary – in order to restore the ancient Caliphate.

The radical wing appeared in the ascendant for much of the 1970s and 1980s. The MB generally was blamed (unfairly, as it turned out) for stoking the riots that swept Jordan in April 1989, first in Maan, in the south, and later in towns and cities to the north. The pro-Syrian Prime Minister Zaid Rifa'i restricted MB activity and dismissed the US-educated MB-affiliated moderate, Dr Abdullatif Arabiyat, as Under Secretary of Education, along with many Islamist university professors. MB supporters needed a certificate of good conduct if they sought employment, or wished to travel abroad.

The sacking of Rifa'i in mid-1989 and the elections that November reversed both these trends. In its campaign the MB demanded the implementation of shari'a law, purely Islamic education and a total ban on alcohol. They also called on Muslims to "liberate the whole of Palestine" ("from global Jewry and international crusaders", according to their 1954 manifesto). The MB regarded Sunni/Shi'ite differences as outdated, and accused the Arab world of failing to resolve the Palestinian question, resist western



encroachment on Islam, and purge itself of corruption.

MB candidates won 20 out of 80 seats (later amended to 23 by some accounts). This was an astonishing success, given that the Brotherhood had only fielded 26 candidates; and its political wing, the **Islamic Action Front** (IAF), had not yet been formally registered. Another nine elected “independent Islamists” co-operated with the MB-affiliated deputies, bringing overall Islamist representation in the house to 42%. Electoral victory strengthened the hand of MB democrats over the radicals. They claimed that parliamentary representation, far from diluting their Islamic message, offered a chance for *da'wa* (propagation of Muslim beliefs). Much credit went to the MB's *al-Akhawat* (women's section) which mobilized the female vote. Some say the trend began in 1980, when MB candidates had wrested municipal control of Madaba from the Christians who had dominated the town for decades.

Despite the MB's new parliamentary strength, it refused to enter Mudar Badran's new government unless it received the education portfolio. This was conceded to it in 1991, with four other ministries, and Arabiyat as Parliamentary Speaker – but only after Badran accepted 14 conditions, including reaffirmation of the constitutional principle that Islam was the religion of Jordan. So began a period of co-optation with the establishment. Yet when MB ministers demanded segregated schools for boys and girls, they were outvoted and dismissed. Meanwhile the IAF prepared for campaigning in its own right.

The IAF backed the creation of an Islamic state, yet supported the institution of the monarchy and equality between the genders. Other Muslim trends – Sufi, Salafi and Islamic Liberation Party (see entry) – rejected offers to join the IAF. Thus the party remained dominated by the MB. Legally registered in late 1992 under the leadership of Ishaq Farhan, the IAF became the largest single electoral bloc after the November 1993 national elections. It won 16 out of 80 seats in the lower house (eight of these were Palestinians). Yet this represented a decline in MB representation on 1993. IAF officials blamed a new election law designed to curb the Brotherhood's strength.

The IAF and the MB led national opposition to the Israel-Jordan peace treaty of 1994, and provided a political home for alienated Palestinians. As early as 1990 the MB had called on the government to arm the people against Israel and organized demonstrations to support the intifada in the occupied territories. Even so, Dr Arabiyat, the Speaker, sided with the government and backed the treaty.

The IAF suffered further reverses in the municipal elections of July 11, 1995, losing to traditional tribal leaders, even in their stronghold of Zarqa. They blamed governmental vote-rigging and intimidation. But there were other factors: candidates were all male, and most were middle aged. Further, a purge of hardliners in 1993 resulted in mass resignations from the IAF. Conversely, Abdullah al-'Akayla, a veteran MB leader, considered forming a new party to co-operate with government.

Under pressure from MB *usrat* (religious cells) at a pivotal conference in July 1996, the IAF chose to boycott national elections in November 1997. The IAF were protesting a harsh new press law, and another that it said demarcated constituencies to its disadvantage by over-representing

tribal regions. Other opposition parties joined the boycott. However, the IAF's credibility suffered badly. Moderates were furious that the boycott lobby had “hijacked” the Brotherhood organ, *Assabeel*.

Abdel-Meguid Zuneibat, head of the MB's Jordan chapter, was the only opposition figure to visit King Hussein when he was in hospital in the USA in early 1999. Interviewed in Egypt's *Al Ahram*, Zuneibat said that the MB was “mature and rational, deeply rooted in Jordan and well respected”. The MB, he claimed, backed political stability and “prevented the emergence of more radical groups”. That said, he opposed the “harmful” effect of peace with Israel and protested a press law that gave the King the power to shut down newspapers.

Initially, little changed in relations between the MB and the Royal Court, when Abdullah became King in February 1999. IAF secretary-general Arabiyat praised the impartiality of the new government in running municipal elections. Having learnt from their mistake, the MB allowed – even encouraged – the IAF to contest these polls in July 1999. Some 79 out of 100 IAF candidates won seats, and the party swept to victory in Irbid, Zarqa and Russeifa. Both the results and Arabiyat's comments affirmed the MB's enduring popular strength in cities, and their determination to give the new King a “honeymoon period”. It also signified a retort to conservative Brothers, who had presumed to override their professional political representatives, and feared democracy, or co-operation with a political system that patently veered from the ideal shari'a model. Lack of political representation had proven self-defeating for the Islamist cause.

The MB's apparent return to dissident status was confirmed in September 1999, when Prime Minister Rawabdeh told deputies that the Brotherhood was training *Hamas* supporters, and helping it hoard weapons caches. In May 2001 Dr Arabiyat was injured when he joined a demonstration in favour of the new Palestinian intifada, and was set upon by police. On Oct. 9, 2002, King Abdullah II delivered his “Jordan First” speech, in which he condemned the IAF links “through the Brotherhood with other Islamist parties around the world”.

## Other Organizations

### Association for the Struggle against Zionism

The ASZ is a platform for a former parliamentarian, Leith Shbeilat, who has often been accused of fomenting insurrection. Shbeilat was born in 1942 and educated in Lebanon and the USA. He became president of Jordan's Engineers' Association in 1980, and served as an independent Islamist parliamentary representative from 1983 to 1993. He is affiliated with neither the Muslim Brotherhood (see entry) nor the legalized Islamic Action Front. Shbeilat has consistently condemned Jordan's peace treaty with Israel and decried all normalization between the two countries. He also publicizes cases of official corruption. Shbeilat was arrested and imprisoned in 1992 on charges of “conspiracy against the government”, and again in 1995, though in both instances he was freed by royal pardons. Leith Shbeilat is also involved with the Support Committee for Iraq, and was said to be close to the Saddam regime.

### Ba'ath

Pro-Iraqi and pro-Syrian factions of the party exist in Jordan. Some Ba'athists gravitated towards the Jordanian Arab Democratic Party, the pro-Syrian Arab Ba'ath Party for Progress and the Jordanian Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party. All were legalized in 1993, though only after considerable bargaining. The government blamed pro-Iraqi Ba'athists for triggering "bread uprisings" in Jarak, south Jordan, in August 1996. King Abdullah again drew attention to Ba'ath's alien origins in October 2002.

### Black September

The name recalls September 1970 when, provoked by the spectacular hijacks to Jordan organized by Palestinians associated with the Popular Front (see entry), King Hussein expelled thousands of them. On Nov. 28, 1971, Black September cadres murdered Jordan's Prime Minister Wasfi al-Tal in Cairo. In December they launched an unsuccessful attempt on the life of Jordan's Ambassador to London, Zaid al-Rifa'i.

The Septembrists' most notorious act was the attack on Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympic Games, on Sept. 5, 1972, which led to the death of 11 athletes, five of the gunmen, and a German policeman. Israeli intelligence agencies pledged to eliminate all Black September personnel involved, and largely achieved their goal over the next decade.

In March 1973, 17 Septembrists were charged with plotting to kidnap Jordan's Prime Minister and other ministers. Evidently they had planned to release the ministers if several hundred detained group members were freed. All were sentenced to death. However, facing pressure from other Arab states, King Hussein released those charged, including their leader, Muhammad Daud Auda (Abu Daoud).

Most Septembrists fled to Beirut, from where they organized attacks on Jordanian property abroad in the mid-1980s, together with other groups, such as the Abu Nidal Organization (ANO) and the "Arab Revolutionary Brigades". In March 1988 a group calling itself Black September took credit for bombings and demonstrations in Amman. The ANO assassinated a Jordanian diplomat in Lebanon in January 1994.

### Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP)

*Leadership. Naif Hawatmeh*

This Palestinian group, a left-wing militant splinter from the PLO, reportedly instigated action by some trade unionists who were detained in Amman in 1985-6. DFLP members were arrested during the economic riots of April 1989. However, after the regime's reverses in that autumn's elections, there was an apparent rapprochement between the King and his former opponents on the left. He held meetings with their leaders, including Hawatmeh, in the spring of 1990. There was another such meeting in September 1990 during an "anti-imperialist" congress held in Amman to support Iraq against the USA and its Arab allies.

The DFLP was founded in 1969 by Hawatmeh, himself not a Palestinian but a Christian Arab born in Salt, Jordan, in 1935. DFLP ideology is paradoxical: it launched dramatic terror attacks in the 1970s, yet simultaneously advocated a

two-state solution to the Palestinian problem before supposedly moderate factions, like Fatah.

Within Jordan, the DFLP is strongly linked to the Jordanian Democratic People's Party (*Hizb al-Sha'b al-Dimuqrati al-Urdani*, or Hashd). Founded in 1989, Hashd won no seats at the latest 1997 parliamentary elections, though has previously enjoyed parliamentary representation. The party merged with others and went through a number of name changes, before becoming the Democratic Party of the Left in 1998. Younger intellectuals joined its new executive, and pledged to fight privatization and political domination by tribal elders. Other DFLP members joined the Jordanian Progressive Democratic Party, which won a seat in 1993 elections.

### Al Fatah

Yasser Arafat and others founded this Palestinian movement, probably in Kuwait, in 1961. Though Fatah initially rejected the PLO (founded in 1964) it effectively usurped the running of that organization in February 1969, when Arafat became its chairman. Jordanian state armed forces had helped Fatah *fedayeen* ("strugglers") repel an Israeli raid on the Jordanian East Bank town of Karameh in March 1968. This success – a contrast with Arab failures during the June 1967 war – bolstered Fatah's reputation. Support for Fatah grew in Palestinian refugee camps within Jordan.

However, its policy of Palestinian self-liberation and its rejection of the Jordanian monarchy's legitimacy, and right to speak on behalf of Palestinians, offended King Hussein. When Fatah's attempts to spark off a revolt in the now Israeli-occupied West Bank failed, it sought more authority in Jordan proper. Fatah distanced itself from more militant acts by the PFLP (see entry) but was increasingly associated with threats to the Amman regime. Clashes between Jordan's bedouin troops and armed *fedayeen* increased after 1968. Egyptian President Nasser brokered a truce, though agreements were repeatedly broken. Guerrilla sympathizers entered a "reconciliation cabinet" under Prime Minister Abdel Monim Rifa'i in June 1970. But Fatah continued to flout Jordanian law, criticize a UN peace initiative, and demand civil disobedience and a general strike by all Jordanians. Arafat even asked Col. Muragha, a Jordanian Army officer, to launch a coup (see Fatah Uprising).

Matters came to a head in September 1970 ("Black September") and over 3,500 (perhaps up to 15,000) died in bloody street-by-street fighting. Fatah was eventually forced out of Amman in April 1971. In May Fatah demanded the overthrow of the Jordanian "puppet separatist authority" and its replacement by "national rule" (presumably by the Kingdom's Palestinian majority). A final push by General Habes al-Majali in July 1971 drove Fatah fighters from their northern enclave in Ajlun and Jarash, into Syria and ultimately Lebanon. Some say Fatah was the real force behind the "Black September" revenge group (see entry) though this remains debatable.

King Hussein refused a request from PLO leaders (possibly including Fatah members) to re-establish bases in Jordan, in 1978. After Israel's invasion of Lebanon, starting in June 1982, Arafat again requested a base in Jordan from the King when he visited Amman, but was again rebuffed. Jordan subsequently sponsored a splinter group, Fatah Uprising

(see entry), in bid to defeat Arafat's forces. In July 1986 King Hussein accused Fatah of fomenting the disturbances at Yarmouk University in the northern city of Irbid in May (see Jordan Communist Party) and interfering in a by-election. He closed all Fatah offices in Jordan, and terminated a year-old agreement of joint action with Yasser Arafat. The King stated that the PLO, as distinct from Fatah, was the only legitimate representative of the Palestinians.

Affiliated somewhat with Fatah is the Jordanian chapter of the Committee for the Defence of the Right of Return [of Palestinian Refugees]. Its leadership includes Ahmad Yousef and Abdel Aziz Jabr, and it was formed from the Higher Co-ordination Committee of Jordanian opposition parties. However, unlike the DFLP and PFLP (see entries), Fatah has no direct links with any Jordanian political party.

### Fatah Uprising

This is one of the names adopted by a pro-Syrian splinter from the PLO, created in 1983. These "Fatah Rebels" were led by a Palestinian-born Sandhurst-trained former colonel in the Jordanian Army, Said Musa Muragha (known as Abu Musa). In 1970 he left the Jordanian Army to join the PLO, and participated in the attempted coup against Hussein of that year.

The rebels enjoyed support from elements of Jordan's Royal Court who intensely disliked Yasser Arafat, and wanted him replaced as head of Fatah and the PLO. The rebels hoped to capitalize on disarray in Arafat's ranks, as his forces were compelled to leave Lebanon after the Israeli invasion of 1982. In 1983-84 the rebels fought Arafat loyalists in what was known as Lebanon's "war of the camps". Abu Musa's forces – known variously as Palestine National Liberation Movement-Fatah, or the Fatah Revolutionary Council – received support from Syria (which had, however, tried to kill him in 1978), the Lebanese Shi'ite militia, *Amal*, and Ahmed Jibril's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine – General Command.

There were few reports of violence spilling over into Jordan itself, until in May 1990 Abu Musa supporters were said to have attacked a Jordanian police post and a secret police detachment on the Syrian border. Abu Musa's faction is currently based in Damascus. It claims 3,000 men under arms, though is largely a spent force.

### Hamas

*Leadership. Khaled Misha'al (Jordan bureau chief)*

Founded in the Israeli-occupied Palestinian territories in 1988, shortly after the outbreak of the first intifada, this Islamist group soon began winning support away from the PLO and Fatah in Jordan, too. At various points it has pronounced its intention to replace Israel with a theocratic Muslim entity, according to an ever-binding sacred trust (or *waqf*) that covered all of "historic Palestine". Whether this demarcation includes present-day Jordan remains unclear – probably deliberately so.

*Hamas* grew out of the conservative Muslim Brotherhood (see entry), and shared the latter's accommodating view of the Hashemites and their Kingdom. King Hussein reciprocated in mid-1988 by funding Palestinian Muslim institutes, and allowing *Hamas* leaders to write in local newspapers and visit Jordanian ministries. Hussein clearly

seemed to favour *Hamas* over Yasser Arafat's cash-starved PLO. Similarly, Jordan's Muslim Brotherhood shunned Arafat's emissaries in 1988. Before long *Hamas* commanded a sizeable following in Palestinian areas of Jordan.

After the Oslo Accords of 1993, Jordan drew closer to the PLO and its newly established Palestinian Authority (PA), though it still used *Hamas* as a means of leveraging Arafat into uncomfortable positions. The triple effect of the PA's requests for recognition, the Israel-Jordan peace treaty of 1994, and *Hamas* bombings in Israel, especially in 1995, led to cooler relations between the Royal Court and *Hamas*. In September 1997 Jordan detained *Hamas* spokesman, Ibrahim Ghosheh, for two weeks, after he boasted that *Hamas* was behind recent suicide attacks in Israel.

Even so, that same month King Hussein secured the release from Israeli prison of the founding leader of *Hamas*, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin. Days earlier Israeli Mossad agents had tried but failed to kill the effective leader of *Hamas*'s Jordanian chapter, Khaled Misha'al. Yassin's release was thus interpreted as Israel's apology to Jordan for its ill-considered assassination bid on Jordanian soil. In November 1998 *Hamas* and the Royal Court concurred that *Hamas* did not actually operate from Jordan.

Policy shifted dramatically after Abdullah succeeded to the throne in February 1999. On Aug. 31, 1999, Prime Minister 'Abd ar-Rauf al-Rawabdeh ordered the closing of *Hamas* offices in Jordan, and issued arrest warrants for Misha'al, Ghosheh, and politburo members, Musa Abu Marzuq, Sami Khater and Izzat Rasheq. *Hamas* representative Mohammed Nazal and Rasheq went into hiding in Jordan; Ghosheh, Abu Marzuq and Misha'al initially stayed in Iran, where they were visiting. Misha'al, who is head of the overall *Hamas* executive, later moved to Damascus, where he is currently based. Abu Marzuq is wanted in the USA.

King Abdullah supported his premier and won the support of parliament. He described these actions as a response to criminal activities, and not politically motivated. All further *Hamas* activity was banned in November. The government denied *Hamas* claims that the two parties had agreed a pact protecting the group's "information and media activity" in 1991 or 1993. Neither open protests nor private entreaties dissuaded Abdullah from his course of action.

Analysts gave different interpretations of the reasons behind the crackdown. Some mentioned Abdullah's rapprochement with Arafat, his unwillingness to upset Israel and discoveries of illegal *Hamas* arms caches. Others cited co-operation between PA and Jordanian intelligence agencies, and the imminent onset of Israeli-Palestinian discussion of delicate "final status issues". Jordan's Speaker Abdul-Hadi Majali claimed that *Hamas* had set up a "clandestine intelligence apparatus" within Jordan that ferried money and orders to suicide squads in Israel and the territories.

One *Hamas* official in Tehran spoke of Amman's "September complex" – namely, its fear that a violent Palestinian faction might overthrow the monarchy, as it almost did in 1970. On Sept. 23, 1999, an unnamed Jordanian official interviewed by Agence France Presse admitted that parliamentary deputies feared "a repeat of Black September". He added that *Hamas* had infiltrated domestic Islamist and opposition groups and thereby "threatened severe destabilization". For its part, *Hamas* claimed that its "arsenals"

were discovered in 1991, but were ignored then as *Hamas* sought to defend Jordan against an expected Israeli attack, in the wake of the Gulf War.

Opposition figures warned that Jordan was setting a precedent for the expulsion of any or all “unwanted” Palestinians. In summer 2001 Ibrahim Ghosheh was compelled to “freeze” his membership of the group in order to facilitate his re-entry into the Kingdom from Qatar. There are no known incidents of *Hamas* attacking Jordanian officials or premises.

### Islamic Jihad

This Lebanese Shi'ite group has apparently operated occasionally from Jordan territory. In April 1990 five of its members were arrested after Jordan had foiled their attempts to fire rockets into Israel from Jordanian territory. A Palestinian group of the same name, although Sunni in orientation, is also said to operate cells from Jordan. Since 2000 it has threatened to hit American targets in Jordan.

### Islamic Liberation Party (Hizb ut-Tahrir al-Islami)

*Website. www.hizb-ut-tahrir.org*

This, one of the oldest Arab dissident groups, is or was banned in all Arab countries. It is believed to date from the 1930s and advocates a return to the Caliphate and to government based on the Koran. Its three-staged manifesto was published in 1953 by Taqiuddin al-Nabhani, an Islamic judge, from then Jordanian-ruled East Jerusalem. In 1969 the ILP tried to assassinate the King.

It surfaced again in January 1991, when its spokesman, Atta Abu Rishta, called for attacks on Western embassies in reprisal for allied attacks on Iraq. He was briefly arrested. In April 1993 Jordan arrested and sentenced to death several military students who were ILP members. They were charged with plotting to assassinate King Hussein, but later exonerated and released by order of the appeal courts. The party conspicuously refused to join the legalized Islamic Action Front, which reflects the views of the more amenable Muslim Brotherhood (see entry).

Shortly after Prime Minister 'Abd ar-Rauf al-Rawabdeh assumed office, in late 1999, he arrested ILP members in Irbid, Amman and Husn. According to the movement, this belied his claim to European human rights activists that Jordan is “continually tolerant [and] does not punish anyone for his views or convictions, whatever degree his opposition might be”. The ILP rejected all charges that it uses violence, and swears that it seeks to remove false Jordanian rulers, “subservient to the English and the Jews”, by means of “thought, opinion and persuasion”. In early 2001 it launched a campaign to reject a new sales tax as an “unjust, man-made law”.

### Jordan Communist Party (JCP)

*Website. www.broadleft.org/jo*

Originally established in 1943, this pro-Soviet party adopted its present name in 1951. Like all other parties, it was banned in 1957. After Israel's seizure of the West Bank in 1967, its main platform was the defence of the Palestinian cause. The JCP has sometimes published illegal newspapers. Though it adheres to orthodox Marxism-Leninism, the JCP also takes an Arab nationalist stance.

In 1986, JCP members were among those arrested at Yarmouk University, where demonstrations against expulsions of politically active students and in favour of academic reforms led to fatal clashes with security forces. King Hussein spoke of the “unholy alliance” between Fatah, Jordanian communists and Islamic fundamentalists. JCP members were arrested during the economic riots of 1989 and the party participated with others in the 1990 rapprochement with the government (for details see under DFLP).

The party applied for legal status in October 1992, though this was only accepted in 1993, as its manifesto was deemed to be at odds with the Jordanian constitution. It subsequently won one seat in the 80-seat lower house of parliament in 1997.

Other former Communists founded the Jordanian Socialist Democratic Party, achieving legal status in January 1993, despite refusing to expunge the word “socialism” from its manifesto. Another Jordanian Communist splinter group, the Palestinian Communist Labour Party Organization, joined the Jordanian Progressive Democratic Party (JPDP). The JPDP attained legal status in January 1993 and won one seat in the national elections, held in November 1993. In his speech of November 2002, King Abdullah II specifically cited the JCP for transgressing the constitution because of its links with foreign Marxist parties.

### Jordanian Writers' Society

In June 1987 this body (established in 1984), was disbanded by the government which, not liking its critical attitude, had never officially recognized it. The government that followed the November 1989 elections reversed the decision. (See also Liberals, under the next section, Independent Dissident Trends). The current president of the Jordanian Press Association is Sayf al-Sharif.

### Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)

*Leadership. Azmi al-Khawaja (head of Jordanian wing)*

This left-wing splinter from the PLO combines extreme Marxist and Maoist views with Arab nationalism, and has a legacy of international terrorism. From its inception in December 1967 it was led by the Palestinian Christian ideologue, Dr George Habash. Operatives of the Arab National Movement, progenitor of the PFLP, had tried to overthrow the Jordanian monarchy since the early 1950s. The loss of the West Bank to Israel in the 1967 war exacerbated anger at the Hashemite monarchy.

Exploiting such feelings, Habash, who relocated to Amman in 1969, encouraged support for armed *fedayeen* (“strugglers”) within Jordan's teeming Palestinian refugee camps. On Sept. 6, 1970, PFLP cadres hijacked and destroyed four international airliners at Dawson's Field, an airstrip in Jordan. They called it “liberated territory”. The PFLP was also accused of two attempts on the life of King Hussein that month. As a result of these and other challenges to Amman's authority, the King authorized a major military onslaught on the PFLP and Fatah (see entry). This 11-day effective civil war claimed at least 3,500 lives and was henceforth known as “Black September” (see entry on group of the same name). Most *fedayeen* were forced to leave Amman in April 1971. In time the PFLP set up new head-



quarters in Damascus, Syria.

In October 1989, 12 PFLP members were arrested in Amman for arms smuggling and for planning attacks from Jordan against Israel. However, they were released by royal pardon in December, along with all others then in detention for political offences. In spring and autumn 1990 the PFLP was included in the rapprochement with the government (for details see under DFLP).

Jordanian leftist supporters of the PFLP created the Jordanian Democratic Popular Unity Party (*Hizb al-Wihda al-Shabiyya al-Dimaqrati al-Urduni*). It attained legal status in February 1993, was led by Azmi al-Khawaja, and opposed both the Israel-PLO agreements of 1993, and the Jordan-Israel peace treaty of 1994. Another group that also claimed support from pro-PFLP Palestinians in Jordan, the Popular Movement Party, entered an otherwise conservative coalition of 13 parties, formed in 1999 and called the National Constitutional Party.

### Al-Qaeda

Jordanian security authorities claimed to have thwarted plans to attack tourists in 1999-2000 by Jordanian members of this extremist international federation led by Osama bin Laden. In December 1999 13 suspected *Al-Qaeda* members were arrested. Another Jordanian apparently associated with the 13 was extradited from Pakistan that month. In all 28 were eventually charged, with six receiving death sentences from a military tribunal on Sept. 18 2000, six being acquitted, and the other 16 receiving prison sentences.

Raed Hijazi, a Jordanian-American, was sentenced to death in February 2002 in Jordan, in connection with the 1999 events. Shortly thereafter a leading Jordanian terrorism investigator survived a car bomb attack in Amman. Turkish police arrested a Jordanian and two Palestinians on Feb. 15, 2002, who were said to be in transit via Iran to conduct bombings in Israel. The three men belonged to *Beyyat el-Iman*, a group linked to *Al-Qaeda*. In April 2002, the Russian military said it had killed a Jordanian-born terrorist named Khattab, who led Islamist rebels in Chechnya and allegedly had ties to *Al-Qaeda*.

On Dec. 14, 2002, Jordanian authorities arrested two men suspected of killing Lawrence Foley, the first American diplomat to be killed on Jordanian soil, on Oct. 28 that year. Those arrested were a Libyan, travelling on a forged Tunisian passport, Salem Saad bin Suweid (also known as Abu Suheib Habib), and his Jordanian accomplice, Yasser Fatih Ibrahim. Both were accused of belonging to *Al-Qaeda*. Police said that Foley's slaying bore similarities to three attacks on Israeli personnel in Jordan over the previous two years (see also *Shurafaa' al-Urdun*).

Amman also announced that it was still searching for Fadel Nazzal Khalayleh, also known as Abu Musaab Zarqawi. It named him as an *Al-Qaeda* agent who had planned Foley's death and armed the arrested pair. In 1999 Zarqawi had been sentenced in absentia by a Jordanian court in connection with the plot to bomb the Radisson Hotel in Amman during millennium celebrations. Allegedly chemical weapons were to be used. Zarqawi has been on the run since 1999, and was reported to have been in Iran, Syria, and Afghanistan, from which he fled in October 2001 during the US attacks on *Al-Qaeda* bases. He has been linked both to

Lebanon's *Hezbollah*, and to an eight-man cell arrested in Germany on charges of planning attacks on Israeli and US interests there.

Omar Uthman Abu Omar, known as Abu Qatada, is also wanted by Jordanian authorities in connection with the millennium plot. A Muslim cleric born in Bethlehem, he lived in Jordan until 1989, when he fled to Pakistan claiming religious persecution. In 1993 he entered the UK and sought diplomatic asylum. He was sentenced to life imprisonment in absentia in Jordan, in 1999. Abu Qatada is sometimes called *Al-Qaeda's* spiritual leader and chief "fixer" in Europe. His videotaped teachings have attracted a mass following among radical Muslims in Europe. Following the Sept. 11 attacks, his assets were frozen, and on Oct. 24, 2002, he was detained in the UK.

### Revolutionary Arab Communist Party

A group using this name claimed to be behind the attack on a British bank in Amman in October 1990, doubtless as part of extremist Arab reactions to allied action against Iraq. The group is thought to have disbanded some time between 1990 and 1997.

### Shurafaa' al-Urdun

Meaning "The Honourable Ones of Jordan" in Arabic, *Shurafaa' al-Urdun* first announced itself when it claimed responsibility for the killing of an Israeli diamond merchant in Amman, on Aug. 20, 2001. Two other groups, the Islamic Jordanian Resistance, and the Ahmad Daqamisah Group (so named after a Jordanian soldier who shot dead six Israeli girls at the border in 1997) also sought to take credit. *Shurafaa'* made its announcement over *Al-Manar* Television, in Lebanon, a station associated with the militant Shi'ite movement, *Hezbollah*. The group claimed that the slain merchant, Yitzhak Snir, was a Mossad agent. On Oct. 28, 2002, the *Shurafaa'* told a London-based Arab newspaper that they were responsible for that day's fatal shooting of an administrator with the US Agency for International Development (USAID) in Amman, Lawrence Foley. This murder, the first of a Western diplomat in Jordanian history, had come in protest against US support for Israel, and the "bloodshed in Iraq and Afghanistan" said the *Shurafaa'*. Jordanian officials doubted the group's existence. Others suggested an *Al-Qaeda* role (see entry).

### Takfir wal-Hijra

Meaning "Denunciation of Infidels, and Pilgrimage", a Koranic phrase, this small radical Islamist group with origins in Egypt appears to be strongest in the southern Jordanian city of Maan. Its leader is said to be Mohammad al-Shalabi, also known as Abu Sayyaf (Father of the Sword). In February 1998 rioting followed a Friday sermon in Maan, the birthplace of the late King Hussein. One died as security forces attempted to quell demonstrations that blamed the King's government for siding with the USA against Iraq. Fifteen Islamists were arrested in Maan in February 2000, after attacks on the local university's female residences. Militants had opposed co-educational classes. Those arrested were said to belong to the *al-Salifiyah* group (meaning Muslims following the edicts of Islam's forefathers); though it may be supposed that they are allies of *Takfir wal-Hijra*.



Fierce riots erupted over several days in Maan, in January 2002, leading to the arrest of 33 alleged radicals. On March 6 it was announced that nine would be released for lack of sufficient evidence. Jordanian security forces besieged Maan for several days, starting on Nov. 10, 2002, following renewed rioting by a “gang of criminals” (the phrase Amman uses to describe *Takfir wal-Hijra*). Three gunmen and a policeman were killed in the incidents, and some 50 were arrested. Many more were presumed killed and wounded. One likely spark for the violence was the official demand for Maan to surrender 30 men wanted by authorities, a request that Maan citizens had rejected.

A correspondent for Arabicnews.com noted that the huge police and army presence, involving armoured vehicles, marked the implementation of a new “Jordan First” policy, as recently announced by King Abdullah II. Evidently state forces had severed telephone and electricity lines so as to isolate the city. Although police located large stockpiles of weapons in Maan’s Al-Tour quarter, they could not locate Shalabi, nor his closest cohorts, Majdi Azzami and Omar Ghazi al-Baza Ye’a. Shalabi was originally sought for an attack on a police station in 2001. State sources claim that he uses his ties with neighbouring allied Saudi tribes to evade detection.

The Maan unrest received national prominence when the opposition Islamic Labour Front called for the ending of the “siege”. Soon after the riots, former parliamentarian Leith Shbeilat (see Association for the Struggle against Zionism) was summoned for questioning after he had allegedly praised the group’s actions and incited Maan residents to violence.

### Independent Dissident Trends

The following two categories represent dissidents, or potential dissidents, who lack formal organizations, yet may prove decisive in a future change of power in Jordan.

#### Liberals

Many professionals, including doctors, lawyers and journalists, have campaigned against what they regard as arcane and anachronistic statutes not befitting a modern democracy. Protection and advancement of rights for women feature highly in their agendas. In September 1999, liberals pressurized the Jordanian government to abrogate item 340 of the sanctions law, which exempts those who commit “honour killings” from suffering the harshest penalties for murder, including the death penalty. (On average, 28 women die annually in “honour killings”).

Passage of the amendment proved more difficult than anticipated. Jordan’s nominated upper House of Nobles approved the change, but the elected lower house blocked it. In February 2000 a conservative group, the Islamic Work Front, issued a fatwa whereby any abrogation of 340 was deemed a violation of shari’a law which “might encourage adultery”. This prompted a sizeable counter-demonstration by liberals in favour of legislation that bolstered women’s rights.

Many liberal issues are aired by the legally tolerated academic think-tank, the New Jordan Centre. One particularly prominent independent liberal is Toujan Faisal. For a long time Jordan’s only female parliamentary representative, Faisal left the lower house to campaign against widespread government corruption. Her chief target is Prime Minister Ali Abu Ragheb. After writing a letter to this effect, to King Abdullah, she was arrested and jailed in May 2002, on charges of “harming the reputation of the government”, though freed in July. Hers became a cause célèbre in Jordan, on a par with the arrest of a fellow liberal in Egypt, Dr Saad Eddin Ibrahim.

Feelings aroused by the election boycott of 1997 persisted into 1998, with 80 social and political figures joining in a “Civil Society Cry”, adding their voices to those of political parties who had shunned the polls. Ahmad al-Qadiri is chairman of the Council of Professional Association Presidents. The collapse of the Soviet Union adversely affected leftist parties, which began to split and re-form. A Labour Law of 1996 partially met unionist aspirations, but the General Federation of Trades Unions lost some credibility, being seen as an appendage of the government. Strikes were fairly frequent in the 1990s, though open political dissent was rare.

Students have long formed a sizeable reservoir of potential dissent. A Jordanian Students’ Conference was founded in 1953, but frozen by the crackdown of 1957. A Student Force Alliance gained prominence in the late 1990s, as a means of promoting aims both educational and political (against the 1996 electoral law). Police suppressed many SFA demonstrations in 2000. A split between leftists and Islamists, and the reimposition of restrictions on civil bodies, has thwarted students’ attempts to establish a General Union of Students. A project to achieve this was launched in 1990, but has thus far failed to materialize.

#### Court and Army

Hassan ibn Talal, younger brother of King Hussein, was Crown Prince – and therefore putative heir to the King – from 1965. Only weeks before Hussein’s death, however, the dying King dismissed Hassan as Crown Prince, and named his eldest son, Abdullah, as his successor. The cause of the rift remains uncertain, though some suggest that Hussein disliked Hassan’s conduct during the food riots of 1989, when Hussein was touring the USA.

There were rumours that Hassan’s supporters might try to unseat the younger scion soon after he assumed the throne, in February 1999. Abdullah was nonetheless supported by the powerful armed forces. He was a protégé of Zayed bin Shaker, a former chief of staff, Prime Minister and éminence grise, who died in 2002. The articulate Oxford-educated Hassan is nonetheless thought to command a loyal, if small, following in the Royal Court. In July 2002 he made a surprise appearance at a meeting of Iraqi dissidents in London. This gave rise to rumours that he intended to become King

of a post-Saddam Iraq, thereby restoring the Hashemite Monarchy that was driven from Baghdad in 1958. Whatever his intentions, observers noted that Prince Hassan had embarrassed Amman by mingling with Saddam's opponents, as official policy in Jordan remained one of constructive engagement with the Baghdad regime. Politically, Hassan was an architect of the Israel-Jordan peace treaty, and is well regarded internationally as a proponent of interfaith dialogue.

For the most part, the Jordanian military, primarily

officered by bedouin or indigenous Jordanian tribal figures, has been steadfastly loyal to the monarchy, notably in the effective civil war against PLO forces, in 1970-71. Nonetheless, there was a failed coup attempt in 1972, and an earlier one in 1957 (by Nasserite officers).

*Lawrence Joffe*

## Kazakhstan

**Capital:** Astana

**Population:** 15 m

The Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic declared its independence on Dec. 16, 1991, on the eve of the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Later that month Kazakhstan joined the newly formed Commonwealth of Independent States. Nationwide, but uncontested, presidential elections were held in the immediate aftermath of independence. Nursultan Nazarbayev, formerly First Party Secretary of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan, won a landslide victory and was confirmed in office for a five-year term. This was later extended by referendum to 2000. The first post-Soviet Constitution was adopted in January 1993, but superseded by a new Constitution in 1995. It provided for a strong executive presidency. Subsequent amendments included the abolition of the maximum age limit for presidential candidates (formerly set at 65 years of age); extension of the term of office of the elected President to seven years; and removal of the need to have a minimum of 50 per cent of the electorate participating in the poll. Presidential elections, this time contested, were held in 1999 (a year earlier than required by law). Nursultan Nazarbayev was re-elected, gaining 80 per cent of the vote; his nearest rival, Serikbolsyn Abdilin, leader of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan, won 12 per cent. There was strong international criticism of the election proceedings, which were felt to have been overly biased in favour of the incumbent president. In June 2000, a bill was passed granting President Nazarbayev extraordinary powers and privileges after the expiry of his term of office; opposition leaders claimed that this amounted to life presidency.

The supreme legislative body is the bicameral Kenges. It consists of the Senate (Senat), comprising 47 members, 32 of whom are elected by official organizations and the remainder appointed by the President; and the Assembly (Majlis), comprising 77 elected members. The first legislative elections, in accordance with the new Constitution, took place in December 1995. In autumn 2000, as scheduled, a new round of elections was held. Ten parties took part. The results

were confused and in several cases contradictory outcomes were announced. The conduct of the elections was severely criticised, not only by international organizations, but even by the Kazakh Prosecutor General. The majority of those elected were allies of the President.

In the early 1990s, the Kazakh leadership appeared to be committed to democratic reforms. However, by the middle of the decade the trend was towards increasingly repressive, autocratic rule. A clear indication of this was the debarring of the former Prime Minister, Akezhan Kazhegeldin, from the presidential elections in January 1999. The only serious rival to Nazarbayev, he was disqualified in November 1998 by means of a minor legal technicality. The following month he founded the Republican People's Party of Kazakhstan (RPPK). From the outset, this party adopted an overtly oppositional stance. Kazhegeldin left Kazakhstan shortly after, to live in self-imposed exile in Europe. In April 1999 he was charged with tax evasion; further charges were later brought against him. In September 2001 he was tried in absentia; the Supreme Court found him guilty of abuse of power, tax evasion and the illegal possession of weapons. He was sentenced to 10 years in prison; in addition, a substantial fine was imposed and his property was confiscated. However, he continued his political activities from abroad. In October 1999 he was one of the founders of the Forum of Democratic Forces of Kazakhstan, an alliance of opposition groups. This, however, failed to coalesce and soon ceased to be active.

In autumn 2001 President Nazarbayev's son-in-law, Rakhat Aliyev, deputy chief of the Kazakh National Security Committee (NSC), was publicly accused of abuse of office, corruption and manipulation of the mass media. In November 2001 a new opposition party was launched, called the Democratic Choice of Kazakhstan (DCK). Its leaders were mostly in the 35-45 year old age group. Several held senior positions in the administration; these included Oraz Dzhandosov (Deputy Prime Minister), Mukhtar Ablyazov (Minster

of Energy, Trade and Industry 1998-99) and Galymzhan Zhaqiyarov (Governor of Pavlodar Province). They, too, spoke out against corruption in high places. However, the then Prime Minister, Qasymzhomart Toqayev, made a counter-attack against these “disloyal” opposition members. The President appeared to distance himself from the affair. Rakhat Aliyev resigned from the NSC, but was almost immediately appointed deputy chief of the Presidential Guard, and subsequently given an ambassadorial post abroad. The Prime Minister tendered his resignation on Jan. 28 and, as required by the constitution, the entire government followed suit. The following day he was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs and Secretary of State.

A few weeks later, there was a crackdown on those who had originally started the crisis by criticizing President Nazarbayev’s son-in-law. In early 2002, two of the DCK leaders, Ablyazov and Zhakiyanov were arrested, accused of abuse of power, embezzlement and numerous other offences. Supporters of both men claimed that the charges were politically motivated. Subsequently they were tried and received prison sentences of six and eight years respectively; in addition, a fine of \$3.6 million was imposed on Ablyazov, whose property was also confiscated.

The DCK was refused registration. Meanwhile, internal splits began to open up, fatally weakening the party. In January 2002 Dzhandosov created a separate party, *Aq-Zhol* (literally, “White Road”, i.e. Right Way). This was regarded by some as constituting yet another pro-presidential party. By mid-2002 it claimed to have 54,000 members. Another split within the opposition was the formation of the United Democratic Party (UDP) in December 2001. This was founded by Kazhegeldin and leaders of some of the other officially sanctioned opposition parties. There was some tactical cooperation between the DCK and the UDP, but it was not sufficient to make a significant impact on the political scene.

Restrictive pressures on the independent media were also intensified after the 1999 elections. The major media networks, print and electronic, were almost wholly controlled by the President’s family. Journalists who expressed criticism of the government were subjected to official and unofficial harassment, including street muggings and beatings, and arrest for alleged tax violations and other financial irregularities. Legal action was used to intimidate opposition newspapers. In some cases their offices were raided and trashed by unknown assailants. In October 2002, Sergei Duvanov, editor of a human rights bulletin, was arrested and charged with the rape of a minor. A few months earlier, he had been charged with impugning the dignity and honour of the President after publishing an article accusing President Nazarbayev and his associates of massive corruption; however, on that occasion the case had stalled. Many commentators believed that the new charge was merely a ploy to restart legal proceedings against him.

In June 2002, a new law on the regulation of polit-

ical parties was passed. It included the requirement that parties seeking registration (a precondition for political activity) should have branches in each of the country’s regions and a minimum of 7,000 members in each branch, i.e. a total of 50,000 members instead of 3,000, as previously. This was a serious handicap for opposition parties, most of which were small with a narrow regional base. Only the two largest pro-presidential parties had the necessary geographic spread and size of membership to qualify for registration.

Human rights activists monitor violations of constitutional freedoms and provide an informal source of opposition to the government. One of the most long-standing campaigners is Yevgenii Zhovtis, of the Kazakh Bureau on Human Rights. There are some “national centres” that raise issues that relate to their own ethnic communities. There are also a number of semi-political Russian organizations that from time to time align themselves with opposition parties. The Islamist opposition is very weak, and mostly located in the south, bordering Uzbekistan.

### Opposition Parties and Movements

#### Republican People’s Party of Kazakhstan (RPPK)

Founded in December 1998 by former Prime Minister Akezhan Kazhegeldin, this party was registered in April 1999. It espoused a platform that included such aims as the building of a law-based society, a socially oriented market economy and the observance of civic freedom and human rights. The RPPK has suffered severe harassment from government officials. It was allowed to participate in the October 1999 Majlis elections, but withdrew its candidates from the party list on the eve of the election, on the grounds that its leader had been denied registration. It did contest eight constituency seats, but failed to win any seats.

#### Association of Russian and Slavic Organizations

This is a movement representing the interests of the Slav population. It sometimes forms a tactical alliance with the Republican People’s Party of Kazakhstan to form a loose tactical alliance known as the “Republican bloc”.

#### Society for Assistance to the Cossacks of Semirechye (Obshchestvo Sodeistviia Semerechenskikh Kazakam)

Founded by Nikolay Gunkin, an ethnic Russian; it was registered in July 1994 but suspended four months later, allegedly for seeking links with Cossacks in Russia.

#### Orleu Movement

An opposition movement, founded by Seydahmet Kuttykadam in Almaty in February 1999, that sometimes joins the Republican People’s Party of Kazakhstan to form a loose tactical alliance known as the “Republican bloc”. It failed to qualify for participation in the October 1999 Majlis elections.

### Islamist Opposition

In Kazakhstan, as elsewhere in Central Asia, radical Muslims are often referred to as “Wahhabis”, whether

or not they are adherents of this sect. The only Islamist organisation that is currently represented in Kazakhstan is *Hizb ut-Tahrir* (HT). This is not a Wahhabi sect in the strict sense of the term.

### **Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT)**

Hizb ut-Tahrir (transliterated in various forms and usually translated as the Liberation Party) is a transnational Islamist organization. Initially, Uzbekistan was the primary focus of HT activities in Central Asia (see Uzbekistan entry). HT

operates clandestinely, since it is banned in all the Central Asian states. Since the late 1990s it has been spreading beyond the borders of Uzbekistan and now has some adherents in Kazakhstan. Some commentators suggest that it attracts followers mainly from the Uzbek minority. Since 2001, at least two dozen HT members have been arrested in Kazakhstan; some have been given prison sentences of up to four years.

*Shirin Akiner*

## Kenya

**Capital:** Nairobi

**Population:** 32 m

Kenya achieved independence from the United Kingdom in 1963, and was proclaimed a republic the following year. In the 1960s the ruling **Kenya African National Union (KANU)** effectively became the sole legal party, with its status as the only legal political organization embedded in the Constitution from 1982. Daniel arap Moi succeeded Jomo Kenyatta as President and KANU party leader in 1978.

By the start of the 1990s (and in line with contemporary democratic developments in much of Africa) there was mounting pressure within Kenya for KANU's monopoly on power to be ended. On May 3, 1990, former cabinet ministers Charles Rubia and Kenneth Matiba called a press conference to demand the introduction of multi-partyism. *Saba Saba* (seven seven), i.e. July 7, 1990, was the starting point of one week of urban riots that became the symbol of this challenge. After 18 months of mass mobilization in combination with pressure from the international community (including the suspension of multilateral aid after several revelations of high level corruption and possible involvement of State House officials in the killing of former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Robert Ouko, found murdered in February 1990, and other prominent opponents of the Moi regime), section 2(A) of the Constitution was repealed on Dec. 3, 1991, enabling the return to multi-partyism by January 1992. The multi-party system allowed discontent with the Kenyan authorities to surface in legal channels to the detriment of underground movements such as *Mwak-enya* (a mainly university-based group active in the 1980s), which faded out. Among the last actions by *Mwak-enya* was the issuing of a statement "Kenya Democracy Plank" after the *Saba Saba* struggles.

Initially, by August 1991, the opposition came together in an alliance known as the **Forum for the Restoration of Democracy (FORD)**. In December 1991 Mwai Kibaki resigned as Minister of Health and founded the Democratic Party (DP). Several other new political parties registered successfully. However, in spite of this new political freedom, at least six parties were denied registration, most notably the **Islamic**

**Party of Kenya (IPK)**, led by Sheikh Khalid Salim Balala (see below). Other parties banned included the Green Party and the DEMO (Democratic Movement) of Ngonywa wa Gakonya's religious group "Tent of the Living God". Following a split in FORD over its future direction and leadership, the opposing factions registered as separate parties in October 1992; FORD-Asili, led by Kenneth Matiba, and FORD-Kenya, led by Oginga Odinga.

On Dec. 29, 1992, Kenya held its first multi-party election since 1966 and the first direct election of its President. Eight presidential candidates and 10 political parties contested the presidency and a total of 188 parliamentary seats. President Moi was declared the winner of the presidential contest with 37 per cent of the vote. KANU took just under 30 per cent of the vote in the legislative contest but, as a result of the first-past-the-post electoral system, won 100 parliamentary seats, leaving 88 for the combined opposition. There were widespread reports of electoral malpractice in favour of KANU candidates.

Following the 1992 defeat, the political opposition lost much of its momentum. KANU grew even stronger by luring opposition MPs back to the ruling party. Among the most notable defectors was Ngonywa wa Gakonya, the political and the spiritual leader of DEMO. His followers felt so betrayed that they sought to kill him. (Wa Gakonya was later to work his way back into FORD-Asili and ultimately *Saba-Saba Asili*). FORD-Kenya leader Oginga Odinga died in January 1994 and the party's leadership was taken over by Kijana Wamalwa. More wrangles over its leadership led Gitobu Imanyara and Paul Muite to leave the party. By December 1996 also Raila Odinga (Oginga Odinga's son) left the party for the National Development Party (NDP). FORD-Asili split prior to the 1997 elections into (the unregistered) *Saba-Saba Asili* (Matiba) and FORD-People led by Kimani wa Nyoike.

Besides continuing restrictions on political parties (by 1994 almost 30 parties had been denied registration), the Kenyan authorities continued to harass indi-



vidual politicians, journalists and activists. Many opposition politicians such as Raila Odinga, Paul Muite, Martin Shikuku, and Sheikh Khalid Balala, among others, were arrested during 1993 and subsequent years and kept in jail for periods ranging from a few days to several weeks. Most notorious, however, was the treatment of Koigi wa Wamwere, a former member of parliament. While in exile in Norway from 1986 he founded the Kenya Patriotic Front (KPF, which ceased to exist after the partial legalization of parties in 1991). In September 1990, Wamwere was abducted by Kenyan security agents in Uganda, and brought to Kenya. Kenyan officials, however, announced that he had been captured in a Nairobi suburb with a cache of arms. He spent two and a half years in custody only for the state to drop treason charges facing him and two others. He was released shortly after the 1992 elections only to be re-arrested (with family members) in November 1993 and after an 18-month trial was sentenced to four years' imprisonment for attempted robbery. International observers at his trial concluded that the prosecution had fabricated the evidence against him. The defence team lodged appeals in December 1995, and he was granted bail in December 1996 on medical grounds, as were his two associates. In December 1997 the Chief Justice quashed Wamwere's four-year jail sentence and dropped all charges against him and his two co-defendants. In 2002, he was elected to parliament on a NaRC ticket.

The politically motivated violence that had affected particularly the so-called opposition zones within the Rift Valley province since the end of 1991 returned by early 1993, and erupted with renewed force towards the end of that year. It was estimated that at least 1,500 Kenyans, mostly Kikuyu, were killed and 300,000 internally displaced. Allegations that the Kenyan government had promoted this violence were confirmed by the report of a parliamentary committee in 1992. Similar politically motivated clashes erupted before and after the 1997 elections.

Alongside the creation of new parties, a range of new civic organizations was established, mostly by lawyers, sometimes assisted with international donor funding, in the early 1990s. These included the Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC), the Institute for Education in Democracy (IED), Release Political Prisoners (RPP), and the Centre for Law and Research International (CLARION). Muite's Mwangaza Trust was deregistered but resurfaced in 1995 as Safina, "the ark" in Kiswahili, a would-be political party, led by the internationally known archaeologist Richard Leakey and Paul Muite. Safina only obtained official registration on Nov. 26, 1997, one month before the 1997 general election.

For those who could not be bought or compromised in any scandal KANU had kept the heavy stick of its Provincial Administration, General Service Unit (GSU) and other branches of its political police. Leakey, Muite and others were beaten by KANU youths, when they made an attempt to visit Koigi wa

Wamwere in September 1995 in Nakuru. In other incidents government opponents paid with their lives (e.g., Karimi Nduthu of Release Political Prisoners).

In the period following the 1992 elections, the civil society organizations, especially those that had warned the opposition parties to press for legal and constitutional changes first before going to the polls, took over the debate. On Nov. 2, 1994, the Law Society of Kenya, the International Commission of Jurists (Kenyan Chapter) and the Kenya Human Rights Commission publicly presented the draft of a model Constitution ("The Kenya We Want"), in which they proposed a more complete framework for a democratic multi-party system. With the (moral) support of the Catholic Church and of the NCCCK, the umbrella organization of the Protestant Churches, the debate became the central public issue. The steering committee of the conference transformed itself into the Citizens' Coalition for Constitutional Change (4Cs) and Moi promised a constitutional review in his (1995) New Year's message to the people. The 4Cs, though, did not yet have a strategy on how to sustain the debate as a result of heavy wrangling with the opposition parties over supremacy over the campaign and the 4Cs time-consuming approach needed for a nation-wide debate on constitutional reform. With the pressure for reform easing, Moi, on June 1, 1995, ruled out any major changes to the Constitution. Moreover, by the beginning of that year fear and confusion had returned prominently after Moi's announcement that a revolutionary group, the **February Eighteenth Movement (FEM)**, wanted to forcefully overthrow his government through their military arm, the **February Eighteenth Revolutionary Army (FERA)** led by "Brigadier" John Odongo (see below).

From June 1995 to April 1997 the issue of constitutional reform did not feature prominently in the news. Quietly, however, progress was made with regard to civic education, in which the need for constitutional reform was one of the central issues. By the end of 1996 civil society actors, under the umbrella of the National Convention Executive Committee (NCEC) had been able to outmaneuver the opposition parties in the leadership of the reform initiative. Through regular street demonstrations they demanded substantive reforms before the elections. The confrontation culminated at the end of August when Moi accused the NCEC of preparing a "civilian coup".

The political elite – including many of those who had been at the forefront of the crusade for political reform – acquiesced in KANU's political maneuvers. Minimal reforms were agreed upon by September 1997, ending a period of turmoil. Ten new political parties were registered and three rejected. Some minimal improvements were also realized in the composition of the Electoral Commission, access to public media and in the ability of opposition parties to hold rallies. Yet the institutional bias in combination with election violence and fraud enabled KANU to win the December 1997 elections, taking 107 of the 210 elective seats in the legislative elections while President Moi won with



40.2 per cent of the vote in a 15-way presidential contest.

After the elections, Moi and KANU insisted that the constitutional reform process should be exclusively in the hands of elected parliamentarians. Only after continued protests and protracted negotiations did KANU agree, in principle, to the inclusion of civil society groups in the reform process. The Constitutional Review Commission, headed by Yash Pal Ghai, handed in a first draft by September 2002, too late to be implemented before the 2002 elections.

After the 1997 elections, KANU's tiny majority in Parliament was quickly reinforced by roughly three dozen MPs from Raila Odinga's NDP. By June 2000 Raila Odinga and his NDP colleagues accepted places in the Kenyan government, hitherto reserved for KANU ministers only. This collaboration finally resulted in a merger of KANU and NDP in March 2002 and the rise of "New KANU". Yet this move was the beginning of the end of KANU's uninterrupted rule since independence. The main battleground became the issue of succession to President Moi. Finance Minister Simeon Nyachae left the party after angering President Moi for rightly predicting publicly that the government would go bankrupt. Nyachae left to become FORD-People's presidential candidate. His example was followed in October 2002 after the official appointment of Uhuru Kenyatta (son of Jomo Kenyatta) as KANU's flag bearer. This move angered Odinga and a number of other leading party members, who moved to the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). They again formed a coalition with Kibaki (DP), Michael Wamalwa (FORD-K) and Charity Ngilu (NPK) in the **National Rainbow Coalition (NaRC)**. NaRC carried the day in the December 2002 elections by taking 125 seats, against 64 for KANU. NaRC's single presidential candidate, Mwai Kibaki, trounced Uhuru Kenyatta by garnering 62.3 per cent of the vote against 31.2 per cent for Kenyatta.

The new cabinet included a number of former exiled or jailed opponents of the Moi government. Torture chambers used by the Moi government were opened after the elections for the Kenyan public to witness. Also, violence erupted when members of the *Mungiki* sect (see below) who had supported Uhuru Kenyatta's candidature, harassed local residents in the Molo region. The new government cracked down upon the *Mungiki* group instantly. The coming years will tell if this dissident movement will return to its original religious roots or stick to its more recent political and banditry operations.

The incoming Kibaki government faced huge economic problems, with the coffee, tea, rice, dairy and sugar industries in total disarray, marred by mismanagement, corruption and the violent actions of desperately impoverished farmers. The tourism sector has also been hard hit, especially after the Aug. 7, 1998, bomb blast, thought to have been carried out by Muslim/*Al-Qaeda* extremists from outside the country, that destroyed the US embassy and neighboring buildings, killing 213 people (see below). The chances of recov-

ery for the tourism industry were further reduced when on Nov. 28, 2002, the Hotel Paradise, located some 20 km north of Mombasa and at the time crowded with Israeli tourists, was car bombed. Ten Kenyans, three Israelis and three suicide bombers were killed in the blast at the hotel. *Al-Qaeda* claimed responsibility for this suicide bombing as well for the simultaneous failed attempt to bring down an Israeli jetliner, carrying 261 tourists, as it took off from Mombasa airport.

### Islamic Party of Kenya (IPK)

Sheikh Balala (born 1958), the unofficial leader of the Islamic Party of Kenya and a lecturer on Islamic religion, became popular among the (Muslim) youth and poor people due to his sermons and demonstrations against the government. He stressed the "marginalization" of the Muslim community in Kenyan society. The IPK aligned itself politically with the FORD-Kenya party in the 1992 general election and helped it to win two parliamentary seats in Mombasa. In 1993 the IPK was involved in anti-government demonstrations and clashes with the police, with numerous arrests of its supporters, and fought street battles with its rival, the **United Muslims of Africa (UMA)**. The IPK claimed that hired UMA thugs had gone on the rampage in IPK strongholds, backed by the police, to intimidate its supporters. This claim was confirmed by the Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims (Supkem), which in the past had spoken strongly against the IPK's programme, saying the party sought the formation of a theocratic state in Kenya. The UMA had been started by well-connected KANU politicians and had heavy government backing. The UMA was virtually dissolved by February 1994, however.

Sheikh Balala was stripped of his citizenship in November 1994 while on a visit to Germany. He returned to Kenya on July 12, 1997. On arrival, his identity card and his expired passport were confiscated. Sheikh Balala was arrested just prior to the December 1997 elections, for claiming that President Moi had rigged the election process and inciting people not to vote, and again in June 1998 on further charges of incitement, at which time he was remanded in custody for 10 weeks before being released on Aug. 21, 1998. In October 1998 the IPK caused uproar in Zambia where it planned to register a party. Balala had said that southern African countries had "adopted western styles of living and governing", making them a fertile ground to propagate Islam. Balala's comments enraged Zambia's Christian leaders.

Balala was only given back his identity card and allowed to register as a voter in 2002, after which he declared his candidature for the Green Party of Kenya in the December 2002 elections. In the end, however, he stood on a *Shirikisho* ticket and garnered only 3 per cent of the votes in Mvita constituency, just ahead of Sheikh Juma Ngao who represented what remained of the unregistered Islamic Party of Kenya and stood on a FORD-People ticket.

The IPK's declining support reflected the continuing denial of registration to the IPK and the impact of events such as the bombing of the US embassy.

### February Eighteenth Movement (FEM)/February Eighteenth Resistance Army (FERA)

A group of Kenyan rebels named themselves the “February Eighteenth Movement” (FEM) and its military arm the “February Eighteenth Resistance Army” (FERA) on Feb. 18, 1991, the 34th anniversary of the hanging by the British colonial government of Mau Mau freedom fighter Dedan Kimathi. From the late 1980s to early 1990s onwards young, jobless Kenyans were recruited for FEM/FERA under the pretext that they could find employment in Uganda. Instead they were trained in a camp in Sono in Mbale district, northern Uganda, preparing to overthrow the Kenyan government. Some of them went for further training in Libya and North Korea. FERA was composed of cells named after prominent dead Kenyans (e.g., Muliuro, Ouko, Muge).

Patrick Kimingich Wangamati, former chairman of Webyue Town Council, was identified as the political leader of FEM. He had reportedly fled to Uganda in the wake of the murder of former Bungoma mayor, Henry Wakwabubi, in 1993. At the time of his disappearance Wangamati, in his late 50s, was a staunch FORD-Kenya supporter who, in 1992 sought the party nomination to run in Sirisia constituency.

FERA was led by a “Brigadier” John Odongo (also known by a variety of aliases), who had been living in self-imposed exile abroad since the 1960s. The Kenya Broadcasting Corporation and the government-owned newspaper *Kenya Times* claimed that FERA was founded with the support of Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni’s National Resistance Movement (NRM). Odongo had strong links with the NRM and moved up in the ranks of the National Resistance Army in 1986 in recognition of his contribution to the NRM. These sources also claimed that a high-ranking NRM official had drafted a blue print entitled “Ten ways towards the removal of Moi”, on behalf of FERA. The *Kenya Times* newspaper claimed that FERA operatives had taken an oath in April 1994, shortly after the assassinations of Presidents Habyarimana of Rwanda and Ntaryamira of Burundi, to bind their forces and those of an organization called *Mouvement Nationale Congolaise-Lumumba* to overthrow the governments of Presidents Moi of Kenya and Mobutu of Zaire.

In reply, President Museveni said that he had known Odongo since 1972 but denied that his government was supporting FERA. Revelations from FERA fighters later showed that the assurance that the Ugandan NRM would fight alongside FERA to remove the regime in Kenya was dropped after Moi agreed by mid-1991 to multi-party elections. Morale among many FERA fighters was low by mid-1992 and a number of them made use of the general amnesty announced by Moi that same year for all who had fled abroad for political reasons. They were asked to return. The Kenyan Special Branch interrogated some of them and collected information from the returnees, initially by false promises and later by torture. Thus the Kenyan government was well aware of FERA/FEM’s existence and its strength, or rather weakness, by that time.

On Oct. 30, 1994, a shoot out occurred between some 30 FERA members and the police in the Mt Elgon region. The group’s mission was to attack and seize more arms from the Kenyan police. According to the Kenyan government five rebels and two policemen died. The Kenyans sought and found refugee status in Uganda.

A number of people were arrested and severely tortured

between October 1994 and November 1995. Estimates are that in total some 50 Kenyans were taken to court and some 20 persons were convicted and sentenced to up to six years imprisonment. In addition, a number of Kenyans alleged to be linked to the movement never appeared before a court but were moved from one police station to another for periods ranging from a week up to several months. Almost all the people who appeared in court originated from Bungoma District in Western Province. Most of them were FORD-Kenya supporters in their early twenties. A number of student leaders and lawyers were also tortured in an attempt to make them sign confessions that they belonged to FEM/FERA. They were also questioned extensively about their alleged relations with political leaders as Paul Muite and Raila Odinga. In the end none of them was convicted. One detainee was awarded Ksh. 500,000 in compensation in May 2003 after he sued the government over his illegal detention in 1995.

President Moi officially revealed the existence of FEM/FERA in February 1995, one reason for the public disclosure being Uganda’s refusal to extradite Odongo. President Moi also claimed that the guerrilla group had the backing and financial support of the Kenyan opposition, reinforcing an announcement he had made on Jan. 8 that the opposition was planning to start what he termed “urban guerrilla warfare”. KANU politicians and supporters marched the streets demonstrating against Odongo and Wangamati and calling for the arrest and prosecution of opposition politicians.

The Kenyan government even implicated the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR). UNHCR border points were alleged to be used as bases by conspirators plotting against the Kenyan government. The refusal by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees to assist in repatriating Odongo resulted in a threat by President Moi to expel the estimated 230,000 refugees (most from Somalia and Sudan) in camps on Kenyan territory.

John Odongo and Patrick Wangamati were arrested by the Ugandan authorities and sent in March 1995 into exile in Ghana. From Ghana, Odongo continued to claim he would overthrow the Kenyan government and accused the Kenyan authorities of killing and secretly burying his men. The last heard about Odongo was in September 1999 when a Kenyan refugee in Uganda, Raphael Osumba, claiming to have started a new rebel group and to be a lieutenant and nephew of John Odongo, requested to be moved to Ghana to rejoin his uncle. However, the UNHCR rejected Osumba’s request for relocation.

Patrick Wangamati returned to Kenya on Oct. 6, 1997. He was interrogated and detained for almost nine weeks, and pardoned in December 1997. He announced publicly that FERA had been officially dissolved. In 2002 he unsuccessfully sought the KANU nomination as a parliamentary candidate.

### Al-Qaeda and Kenya

The Arab dominated Islamic Party of Kenya (IPK, see entry) has been identified as the most radical among the Muslim community of Kenya. However, it has worked primarily through speeches and demonstrations, reflecting the view that Kenya’s potential for

violent religious extremism is low, since most Kenyan Muslims are moderate and tolerant. Until the late 1990s, Kenya mainly had to deal with local Muslim Somali-Kenyan bandits, known as Shiftas, operating in the North-Eastern Province and preying primarily on the local population and tourists. Kenya has, however, since then been the victim of well-organized externally directed attacks on its soil, aimed at American or Israeli targets, but killing hundreds and wounding thousands of Kenyans.

The attackers in the bombing of the US embassy (August 1998) and the Paradise hotel (November 2002) were predominantly outside terrorists, from Saudi Arabia and Egypt, who had entered the country a few months or even only days before the assault. Yet they did get support from a few Kenyans. For the embassy bombings in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, four people were sentenced to life imprisonment by May 2001. Another 12 persons, including Osama bin Laden were indicted for these attacks in December 1998. Fazul Abdullah Mohamed, alias Abdul Karim, the alleged leader of the Kenya embassy bombing, has so far eluded capture. This alias was the one he used to marry a local teenage girl on Dec. 30, 2001, when he was teaching at an Islamic school in Lamu. On May 14, 2003, in the wake of a car bomb attack in Saudi Arabia, the Kenyan National Security Minister Chris Murungaru warned of a possible attack by *Al-Qaeda* in Kenya and released a picture of Fazul Abdullah Mohammed claiming he plies between Nairobi and Mogadishu in Somalia and might be in Kenya. Subsequently Britain and the USA issued travel bans to Kenya and the UK even banned flights to Nairobi by its airlines, fearing they might be brought down by terrorists. The US ambassador, accusing the Kenyan government of not doing enough to fight terrorism, decided to close down his embassy on June 20, 2003, over what was termed "new information concerning possible terrorist activity in Kenya".

Sheikh Ahmed Salim Swedan and Fahid Mohammed Ally Msalam have been indicted in the 1998 bombings. Both were born in Mombasa. Sheikh Swedan was most likely captured on July 11, 2002, in Karachi and handed over to the FBI. An unnamed US intelligence official, though, could not confirm detailed reporting by the *Guardian* newspaper over this case. Fahid Msalam was mentioned by an Israeli source as one of the three suicide bombers who attacked the Hotel Paradise. In March 2003, Abikar Mohamed Ali, a trader in electrical goods carrying Yemeni and South African passports, was arrested in Mogadishu where he had been staying for about a year. He was said to be a mid-level *Al-Qaeda* operative suspected of having played a role in both the 1998 bombings and more recent attacks in East Africa. From June to September 2003 six people, all Kenyans of Arab origin, were arrested and charged by the Kenyan authorities in connection with the Paradise hotel bombing.

*Al-Qaeda* activities were also recorded in September 2002 when another *Al-Qaeda* suspect from Yemen, Hassan Omar Hussein, was arrested trying to get into

Kenya. He was said to be planning to use a false Kenyan identity. A Kenyan, Mubarak Salim Mubarak, was accused of helping him and was released on bail. It is feared that with *Al-Qaeda* hunted out of Afghanistan attention will be redirected towards other regions, such as the East African coastal zone.

In early 2003 Kenya joined a group of six countries identified by the USA to work in a coalition in the battle against terrorism in the Horn of Africa. The new government will have to work hard to convince the world that that it is no longer possible to bribe the immigration department. It was alleged in August 1999 that this corruption had eased tremendously the work of the terrorists, some of them having left the country with Kenyan passports. The lure for financial gain had also been shown in February 1999, when Kenyan intelligence services sold off Kurdish rebel leader Abdullah Ocalan to the Turkish government, after being tipped off by Israeli intelligence of his presence in the country. Rumors circulated that the Turkish government had paid a "delivery fee" of Ksh. 270 million to State House and security individuals.

### Mungiki ("United People")

The origin of this religious-political movement is debated, reflecting its dual character. Some see it as essentially a revival of orthodox traditional cultural values and practices, like female circumcision, in rejection of Western culture. Others stress its political dimension and link *Mungiki* to the Mau Mau rebellion against British colonial rule in the 1950s. One of the *Mungiki* founders, Ndura Waruinge, is a grandson of General Waruinge, a Mau Mau fighter. In particular, *Mungiki*, like the Mau Mau, in the majority draws its supporters from the Kikuyu, Kenya's largest tribal group, accounting for 20 per cent of the population. Moi, in contrast, was from the Kalenjin group, and had built much of his political strategy on a policy of combining the other tribal groups against the Kikuyu, who had dominated under (Kikuyu) Jomo Kenyatta. Those Kikuyu who had become victims of state-sponsored violence under Moi, which made them lose their land and property during the clashes in the 1991-2001 period (killing some 4,000 people and displacing 600,000 others) became a huge following. Later, elements of the urban poor and non-Kikuyu are said to have joined *Mungiki*. It is estimated that by 2002 *Mungiki* had between 1.5 and 2 million dues-paying members, mostly youth between the age of 18 and 35 and some 20 per cent being women.

*Mungiki* took part in revenge attacks aimed at the Moi government, as well as resettling victims. In the mid-1990s members were regularly arrested and tortured by the authorities but it was only by November 1998 that *Mungiki*'s activities surfaced prominently. That month Molo MP Kihika Kimani held a rally in Nakuru where 61 alleged members of the *Mungiki* sect apologized to President Moi over their taking an illegal oath. It was Kimani who until then had been seen as the main mobilizer of Kikuyu activities in conflict areas. Also, *Mungiki* made headlines after they commenced a campaign in urban areas against drunkenness, drug addiction, criminal activities, prostitution, etc.

In September 2000, 13 *Mungiki* leaders converted to the



radical Shiite order of Kenyan Muslims, politically united in the Islamic Party of Kenya (IPK). (Most Kenyan Muslims adhere to the Sunni branch of Islam.) In November 2001 Ndura (now Ibrahim) Waruinge was detained for a short period after declaring that the *Mungiki* would paralyze the transport system within Nairobi should police interfere with their bid to take over the management of all private taxi routes around the city to ensure that prices would remain affordable for the poor. While such efforts have been immensely successful in some cases, similar efforts in other parts of the city ended in blood baths as *Mungiki* youths clashed with entrenched cartels. It has been claimed that these takeovers were foremost instigated because they formed an important source of income for the movement as it has been for others.

The Kenyan government outlawed the sect briefly on March 3, 2002, after a gang of some 300 *Mungiki* vigilantes slaughtered 23 opponents in Kariobangi, Nairobi. Another seventeen groups, mostly linked to prominent politicians, were banned. However, *Mungiki* continued to operate widely, despite the ban. After the merger of KANU and NDP on March 8, 2002, *Mungiki* came out in support of the party and its leading group of “Young Turks” (Sunkuli, Kenyatta, Jirongo).

Scholars like Peter Kagwanja have noted the phenomenon of the *Ituika* (“break”) system, an old Kikuyu ceremony last held in 1902 and banned by the British in 1935, where political power was handed over from the old to the young generation. The *Mungiki* accused the old generation of overstaying their time in power, at the expense of the next generation. The 2002 election, *Mungiki* leader Maina Njenga stated, should result in the older (Moi and Kibaki generation) handing over power to the younger (Uhuru Kenyatta) generation. Uhuru Kenyatta (a Kikuyu), 41, named *kamwana* (the youth) by *Mungiki*, was seen as the fulfillment of a Kikuyu prophecy that a young man would rise and support the peo-

ple in their hour of need. On Aug. 20, 2002, the day of Uhuru’s nomination as a presidential candidate, *Mungiki* youth came in their thousands to celebrate his candidature for the presidency. However, after Uhuru Kenyatta was accused of being the leader of *Mungiki*, Kenyatta denounced the group stating they were tarnishing his name.

Maina Njenga himself stood on a KANU ticket in Laikipia and trounced his opponent during the KANU primaries. Yet the party did not except his candidature and replaced him, possibly because of growing calls on the ruling party from both in and outside parliament to stop protecting the *Mungiki*’s unlawful activities. After the elections it was revealed that the sect had been given at least one Land Rover, out of 10 irregularly acquired army vehicles, by KANU for its 2002 campaign.

This could not prevent Uhuru’s and KANU’s election defeat in December 2002. Many *Mungiki* youth considered Kibaki’s win a political loss and a generational loss as well (Kibaki being in his 70s). It triggered post-election violence between *Mungiki* followers and the Kibaki government. In early January 2003, *Mungiki* followers killed some thirty, mainly Kikuyu, people in Nakuru, Nairobi, and Maragua. The Kenya government issued a “shoot-to-kill” order to stop *Mungiki* followers. Hundreds of *Mungiki* followers were arrested, which forced many followers to go underground and to threaten war. After protests from human rights organizations over the “shoot-to-kill” order, the government abandoned this policy. Instead, it adopted a two-pronged strategy of punishing criminality on the one hand and rehabilitating *Mungiki* members on the other. This approach halted the orgy of bloodshed by March 2003.

*Marcel Rutten*

## Kiribati

**Capital:** Tarawa

**Population:** 94,000

Kiribati (previously the Gilbert Islands) was granted self-rule by the UK in 1971 and complete independence as a republic within the Commonwealth on July 12, 1979. It has an executive President heading a Cabinet, and a House of Assembly of 41 members, of whom 39 are elected by universal adult suffrage for a four-year term, with one ex-officio member and one nominated to represent the now Fiji-based Banaban population.

A dispute over the island of Banaba, whose inhabitants had in 1980 campaigned for the separation of Banaba from Kiribati or for self-government for the Banabans on Banaba, was settled in April 1982 by an agreement providing for compensation to be paid to the Banabans, with the island remaining part of Kiribati. The original settlers of Banaba were relocated to

Rabi Island in Fiji in the 1940s when their island was used for phosphate mining by the British Phosphate Commission.

The first political party, the Christian Democratic Party, was formed in September 1985 by opponents of the government’s decision to extend fishing rights to the Soviet Union (this agreement being terminated in October 1986). Over the years, at least two other political parties came into existence.

Within the last two years, Kiribati has gone through dramatic political changes, which have caused a certain degree of destabilization. The election in November 2002 saw the demise of President Teburoro Tito’s parliamentary dominance. His party, the *Manaeban Te Mauri* (“Protect the Manaeba”) won 16 seats, the main opposition *Boutokanto Koaava* (“Pillar of Truth”) won

17 and the independents won 7. A number of Tito's ministers lost their seats and he himself had to go through the second round of voting before he finally secured his seat. Tito's decreasing popularity was due to his increased authoritarianism, suppression of the media and opposition campaigns and accumulated debt from a newly acquired Air Kiribati plane. Perhaps the most significant opposition to Tito's government was the privately run newspaper *Kiribati Newstar* run by former President Ieremia Tabai. However, Tito's government has been trying unsuccessfully to push through legislation to regulate the media. Tabai's application for a license to run his radio station has not been successful. The government also banned a New Zealand journalist, Michael Field, from entering the country after he highlighted the environmental and economic problems of Kiribati in the magazine *Pacific Island Business* in 1999.

Following the 2002 election, with the support of some independents, Tito managed to retain the presidency (the position being elected by members of the House of Assembly). In March 2002, however, his presidency was toppled in a vote of confidence. Tito's motion for a supplementary budget was defeated by 21 to 19 and this forced the dissolution of parliament. This paved the way for another general election in May. The May election saw Tito's political adversaries controlling parliament by a comfortable 25 seats out of 42. The presidential election held on July 4, 2003, was contested by three candidates, Harry Tong (who worked under Tito as Minister of Health), his brother Anote Tong supported by the opposition, and Banueera Berina, an independent. Anote Tong was the victor.

Steven Ratuva

## North Korea

**Capital:** Pyongyang

**Population:** 22.6 m

The Korean peninsula was liberated from Japanese rule in 1945, the northern portion being occupied by Soviet troops and subsequently (in 1948) becoming the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK, or North Korea). The DPRK is, under its Constitution adopted on Dec. 27, 1972, "an independent socialist state" in which the working people exercise power through the Supreme People's Assembly, elected by universal adult suffrage, and also through people's assemblies at lower level. The Supreme People's Assembly elects the country's President, who convenes and presides over an Administrative Council (Cabinet). For elections to the Assembly a single official list of candidates is submitted by the Democratic Front for the Reunification of the Fatherland (i.e. of both North and South Korea), which consists of the country's leading party, the Korean Workers' Party (KWP) and also two small parties —the (religious) Chondoist Chongu Party (officially stated to comprise former Buddhist believers) and the Korean Social Democratic Party (known until January 1981 as the Korean Democratic Party), both formed in 1945. The general secretary of the KWP's Central Committee is also head of state and supreme commander of the armed forces.

In all recent general elections to the Supreme People's Assembly it was officially claimed that 100 per cent of votes had been cast for the candidates on the sole official list.

North Korea was one of three states (the others being Iran and Iraq) named by US President George W. Bush in his State of the Union address of Jan. 29, 2002, as constituting an "axis of evil". This designation caused some alarm in South Korea, which was in

pursuit of a policy of constructive engagement with the North. The North has continued to maintain large conventional forces on its border with the South since the Korean War came to an end in 1953 while the USA maintains significant military capability in the South and in close proximity.

Although no dissident organizations officially exist, reports suggest that North Korean society has never been entirely "monolithic" and that dissatisfaction with the regime led by Kim Jong Il, son of the late founder of the DPRK Kim Il Sung is widespread. Periodically, there are reports of purges of opponents or critics of the party centre. The economic crisis in North Korea intensified after changes in Soviet (later Russian) and Chinese policy from early 1991, since when North Korea has been required to pay world market prices for energy and other imports. Years of severe drought combined with the inefficiencies of the rigidly state-directed system of agricultural production plunged North Korea into severe famine from 1995-98 during which even official DPRK figures in May 1999 admitted that at least 200,000 people died. According to some external estimates some 2 million people starved to death or died from famine-related illnesses, and a private South Korean aid group estimated in August 1999 that as many as 3.5 million people had starved to death. That the crisis was at least held in check was almost wholly due to the efforts of the UN World Food Programme (WFP) in distributing food aid, and foreign bilateral donors, especially South Korea, China, Japan and the USA. By the summer of 1999 the WFP and other aid groups assessed that there was a genuine improvement in the situation, largely because of aid distribution but also through efforts to



boost food production.

US President Bill Clinton announced in April 1999 that for the first time the USA would ship food aid directly to North Korea. The Clinton administration had in 1994 concluded an “Agreed Framework” for North Korea to shut down the power reactors at the heart of its suspected nuclear weapons programme, under which alternative energy sources were guaranteed for the DPRK, including regular deliveries of US fuel oil. Both fuel and food deliveries were suspended by President George W. Bush in November 2002 because the DPRK appeared not to have kept its side of the agreement. However, US Secretary of State Colin Powell announced on Feb. 25, 2003, that the USA would resume food aid. Japan announced in March 2000 that it would resume the food aid suspended since September 1998 because of North Korea’s testing of ballistic missiles. Japanese food aid was again suspended in 2002 because of North Korea’s refusal to renounce its nuclear weapons programme.

Despite the famine, the parlous state of the economy, the fluctuating states of tension with its neighbours South Korea and Japan and the long-gathering crisis with the USA over the DPRK’s development of nuclear weapons – which escalated to a new level of danger in October–December 2002 with the DPRK’s apparent admission of the nuclear weapons programme and its expulsion of inspectors from the UN International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) – this period saw no public evidence of splits in the KWP or the emergence of even the nucleus of a dissident organization. However, the desperate conditions in the country and the deepening atmosphere of political siege resulted in a sharp increase in the number of defections to South Korea and a flood of refugees across the northern Tumen river on the border with China. Whether attempting to escape from hunger alone or from political oppression, North Koreans began crossing the Tumen to China in large numbers at the height of the famine. By 2003 it was estimated that between 140,000 and 300,000 North Koreans were living in hiding in north-eastern China. The Chinese authorities largely ignored their existence until 2000 onwards, when their potential role in a North Korean crisis that China saw as threatening to destabilize the region became more apparent. International media attention focused on China as a conduit for defections to the South. To the frustration of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) China refused to classify the North Koreans as refugees, insisting that they were economic migrants, and periodically sent police squads to round them up and return them to the DPRK, many to prison camps and some to their deaths. Between December 2002 and January 2003 China deported some 3,200 North Korean refugees to the DPRK.

According to South Korean government figures released in January 2001, of the 1,342 people who had succeeded in defecting to the South since the end of the Korean War in 1953 nearly half had arrived over

the past five years. Between January 2001 and August 2002 a further 1,176 defected to South Korea. Because the border between North and South was so heavily militarized almost all of these defectors reached South Korea through third countries, most through China, but some through Russia, Mongolia, Burma or Laos.

These defections provided the first information about an underground Christian movement in North Korea. As in China and Vietnam, all religious adherence and practice in the DPRK is permitted only through state-sanctioned bodies; its official Korean Christian Federation claims to have some 12,000 members. However, according to South Korean and international Christian groups such as Durihana and Open Doors the number of clandestine Christians in North Korea is much larger, up to 500,000, and missionaries had established some 540 underground cells. These were reportedly persecuted if they were found out by the authorities. According to one account 11 Christian men discovered at a prayer meeting in Chongjin on the north-eastern coast were publicly beheaded. In 2002 Chinese police caught and jailed two South Korean priests, the Rev. Chun Ki Won and the Rev. Cho Bong Il, and a US citizen, the Rev. Joseph Choi, while they were trying to help refugees to escape to South Korea. On March 14, 2002, Norbert Vollertson, a German Christian, helped 25 North Koreans to take sanctuary in the Spanish embassy in Beijing, the Chinese capital. China resolved its diplomatic embarrassment by deporting them to the Philippines, whence they made their way to South Korea. This was the first of several heavily-publicized stunts organized by Vollertson, not all of them successful but serving to highlight the plight of the refugees, involving the embassies and consulates in China of South Korea, Canada, Ecuador and the USA. At least 75 defections were accomplished in this way. On Aug. 19, 2002, 21 North Koreans landed from a fishing boat at the South Korean port of Inchon, the first maritime defections from the North for five years. In January 2003 Chinese police thwarted an attempt by Vollertson’s group to smuggle 60 North Koreans by boat from the Chinese province of Shandong.

As tensions rose in December 2002 over the DPRK’s nuclear weapons programme the magazine *Far Eastern Economic Review* published photographs obtained from a commercial satellite of a slave labour camp at Haengyong in north-eastern North Korea. A former camp guard who had defected related how prisoners, sent there for dissent, were subjected to forced labour, torture and executions. A report published on Dec. 10 by the UK-based Christian Solidarity Network described the treatment of prisoners in North Korean labour camps as “one of the worst abuses of human rights we have ever documented”. South Korean Christian groups claimed that up to 100,000 North Korean Christians were held in the camps.

*Tim Curtis*

# South Korea

**Capital:** Seoul

**Population:** 48 m

The southern portion of the Korean peninsula was occupied by US forces at the end of World War II, this becoming the Republic of Korea (South Korea) in 1948. The country's history in the following decades was characterized by mainly authoritarian governments led or dominated by military figures, with episodes of civil unrest, against a background of rapid economic development. In the mid-1980s a powerful pro-democracy movement gathered pace, this culminating in the adoption of a new (sixth) Constitution in 1987. Under this Constitution, there is a President elected by direct universal suffrage to a single five-year term and a National Assembly (also elected by universal adult suffrage, but for a four-year term). The sixth Constitution reduced the power of the President to take emergency measures or to dissolve the National Assembly. It granted the National Assembly the right to investigate the administration and to call for the removal of a Prime Minister on a vote of no confidence. It also strengthened the previous constitutional provisions on civil and human rights.

As a result of changes in the international environment South Korea gained admittance into the United Nations as a full member in the autumn of 1991. North Korea responded to the change in attitude by the USSR and China toward South Korean membership in the UN by announcing in June 1991 that it too would seek membership of the UN, which it also gained the same year.

In December 1992 former dissident Kim Young Sam (now leader of the Democratic Liberal Party, DLP) won the presidential election, taking office in February 1993 as South Korea's first elected President since 1960 without a military background, and presiding over a wholly civilian Cabinet. An early priority of Kim's administration was the reform of the military to impose civilian control and ensure that the armed forces would no longer intervene in or influence government. In this Kim was almost wholly successful, despite some early tensions. In August 1996 former Presidents Chun Doo Hwan and Roh Tae Woo were convicted on charges relating to a 1979 military coup that followed the assassination of President Park Chung Hee, for the bloody suppression of the 1980 Kwangju pro-democracy uprising and for corruption. Chun was sentenced to death and Roh to 22 and a half years' imprisonment, although Chun's sentence was later commuted to life imprisonment and Roh's to 17 years. Kim Young Sam pardoned both in December 1997.

Kim Young Sam was succeeded as President after the December 1997 election by former dissident col-

league Kim Dae Jung, leader of the National Congress for New Politics (NCNP), the first time in Korean history that power had been transferred by election from a ruling to an opposition party. Kim Dae Jung came to power in the wake of the 1997 financial crisis, which saw the drastic devaluation of the won (the currency) and an eventual IMF economic rescue package. Kim pledged fundamental economic and political reforms, and certainly succeeded in strengthening South Korea's economy. However, like his predecessor he was less successful in tackling two major deforming influences on South Korean politics: regional factionalism and corruption. The administrations of both Kim Young Sam and Kim Dae Jung were affected by corruption scandals and the personal standings of both Kims were undermined by the conviction of their sons on corruption charges.

Kim Young Sam's presidency saw a crisis over North Korea's alleged programme to develop nuclear weapons, resolved by the 1994 Agreed Framework in which the North pledged to abandon the programme and shut down its existing nuclear reactors in exchange for alternative power sources supplied by an international consortium led by the USA and South Korea. Kim Dae Jung deepened his predecessor's conciliatory initiatives towards the North by embarking on a "sunshine policy" of economic investment in the North combined with developing political contacts. The high water mark of this policy was the summit meeting with North Korea's "Dear Leader", Kim Jong Il, in June 2000 in Pyongyang, the North Korean capital, in which the two leaders pledged themselves to economic co-operation and measures to build mutual trust, and to work towards eventual peaceful reunification of the two countries. For his promotion of reconciliation with the North Kim Dae Jung was awarded the 2000 Nobel Peace Prize.

However, in January 2001 the new administration of US President George W. Bush quickly disengaged itself from Kim Dae Jung's "sunshine policy", which had been consistently supported by Bush's predecessor Bill Clinton. From this point onwards progress in reducing tension with the North was patchy and there was mounting domestic criticism that Kim made too many concessions to the North for little return. For the first time since 1945 South Korea's government's policy towards the North diverged from that of the USA. At the same time the presence of the 37,000 US military personnel, in South Korea since the 1950-53 war as a guarantor of the country's security against another invasion from the North, became increasingly

unpopular. The apparent revelation in October 2002 that North Korea had reneged on its promise to abandon its nuclear weapons programme, which provoked a crisis in relations between the North and the USA, conjured a potentially combustible atmosphere for the December presidential election. However, Roh Moo Hyun, candidate of the Millennium Democratic Party (MDP) – as Kim Dae Jung’s NCNP had been re-launched in January 2000 – who was committed to the continuation of Kim’s “sunshine policy”, narrowly won the election.

Numerous dissident organizations that were banned in the 1980s now operate legally. The Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU) originated from independent unions that emerged in the late 1980s as breakaways from the dominant Federation of Korean Trade Unions (FKTU). It was officially launched on Jan. 20, 1990 (as the Korea Trade Union Congress, KTUC or *Chonnohyup*), and was immediately banned by the government. Over 500 leaders of *Chonnohyup* were subsequently arrested, including its President, Dan Byung Ho but the organization consolidated its representation in workplaces. After mergers and name changes, it became the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions in 1995 but it was not until Nov. 22, 1999, that it finally achieved legal recognition. It now represents perhaps 550,000 workers and remains more militant

than the larger, mainstream FKTU.

It was not until July 1999 that teachers’ unions (which had frequently participated in militant action) affiliated to the FKTU and KCTU, were accorded legal recognition.

Citizens’ Solidarity is an alliance of some 470 civic groups including trade unions, professional organizations, environmental and women’s activists. In January 2000 it published a list of 114 members of the National Assembly whom it considered unfit to hold office, mostly for reasons of political corruption. The publication of the list was said to be prompted by disappointment that vested interests had blunted President Kim Dae Jung’s drive to push through reforming legislation to tackle corruption and revise the repressive National Security Law. Citizen’s Solidarity’s street demonstrations and the publication of the list were thought to have contributed to the National Assembly’s long-delayed approval in February of amendments to the election law, which included permission for campaigning by civic groups against candidates whom they considered unfit for office.

*Tim Curtis*

## Kosovo

**Capital:** Prishtina

**Population:** 2.1 m

Kosovo is considered by Serbian nationalists to be the ancient Serbian heartland; its majority population is, however, ethnic Albanian. Significant unrest, which was brutally suppressed, developed among the Kosovo Albanians in the early 1980s and at the end of the decade Slobodan Milosevic came to power in Serbia on a platform that emphasized the indivisibility of Kosovo and Serbia. In 1989 he abolished its former (largely nominal) autonomous status within the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

Amid the civil wars that accompanied the dissolution of Yugoslavia from 1991 onwards, Kosovo remained comparatively peaceful, with no uprising against Serbian dominance. The principal Albanian political force, the **Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK)**, founded in 1990 and led by Ibrahim Rugova, sought dialogue and officially opposed an armed struggle. In 1992 provincial elections, organized by the Kosovo Albanians but declared illegal by the Serbian authorities, were won by the LDK and Rugova was declared “President of Kosovo”. In reality, Serbian hegemony over the province was consolidated as the rump of former Yugoslavia, Serbia and its traditional ally Montenegro, transformed into a new Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY).

In the late 1990s, however, insurgents of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) became increasingly active and in 1998 the FRY authorities launched a violent crackdown. In October 1998, in the face of threatened intervention by NATO, Milosevic (by now President of Yugoslavia) agreed to halt the offensive and accept an international observer mission to Kosovo. In February 1999 he agreed to proximity talks with the Kosovo Albanians at Rambouillet (France); amid mounting reports of “ethnic cleansing” by Serb paramilitaries and a growing refugee crisis, the talks collapsed in mid-March. On March 24, 1999, NATO initiated an air offensive which concluded when on June 9 Yugoslavia agreed to the withdrawal of its military, paramilitary and police forces from the province.

On June 10 the UN adopted Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999), providing for the deployment of an international civil and security presence in Kosovo under UN auspices. The resolution provided a framework for the removal of FRY and Serbian police, military and paramilitary formations from Kosovo and the demilitarization of the KLA. The resolution authorized the UN Secretary-General to create an interim administration, which would in turn establish and oversee the development of provisional institutions for democratic

and autonomous self-government pending a political settlement. Pursuant to this resolution, the first elements of the NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR) entered Kosovo on June 10 and the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) was established.

UNMIK remains in place. Kosovo is in effect an international protectorate: it has not been formally detached from the FRY (now the Union of Serbia and Montenegro) but Serbia has no role in its administration and the question of its ultimate status has in effect been deferred to an indefinite future date.

The post-conflict emergency humanitarian operation was entrusted to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and was phased out in June 2000. The task of democratization and institution building has been entrusted to the Organization for Cooperation and Security in Europe (OSCE) while reconstruction and economic development is being managed on behalf of the UN by the European Union.

Elections were held in November 2001 to an Assembly for Kosovo, which exists under UNMIK control. The elections were held peacefully and resulted in victory for the moderate LDK of Ibrahim Rugova, who became President. Municipal elections were also held in 2000 and 2002. The KLA has been officially disbanded and succeeded politically by the **Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK)**, with its fighters integrated into the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC), a form of national guard. KLA remnants have, however, been seen as active in ethnic Albanian insurgent groups that have operated in south Serbia, Macedonia and Kosovo itself at various times since 2000.

### **Albanian National Army (ANA)/ Albanian National Union Front (ANUF)**

*Leader: Valdet Vardari (nom de guerre; commander)*

The Albanian National Army (ANA) and its political wing, the Albanian National Union Front (ANUF), were established on Dec. 4, 1999, with the aim of uniting ethnic Albanian lands in the Balkans. The ANA claimed responsibility for attacks in the Preševo Valley in Serbia and in Macedonia. It claimed responsibility for an explosion on a railway bridge in Zvečan in Kosovo itself on April 12, 2003, in which two bombers died. Following this, it was declared a terrorist organization by UNMIK, with the consequence that members could be jailed for up to 40 years under UNMIK regulations.

Idajet Beciri, the political secretary of ANUF, known under the pseudonym of Alban Vjosa, has said that the ANA operates only in those territories inhabited by Albanians where the local population has been “occupied” and “colonized” by Serb, Montenegrin and Macedonian forces, and not in areas controlled by KFOR. The ANA claims that its members are recruits from the former KLA, the Liberation Army of Preševo, Medvedja and Bujanovac (UCPMB, see entry), and the National Liberation Army that fought in Macedonia in 2001 (see under KLA).

ANA commander Valdet Vardari (real name Gafur Adili) was arrested in Albania on July 1, 2003.

### **Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA)**

During the period of the disintegration of Yugoslavia, Kosovo Albanians maintained an external political identity with a government-in-exile but activity within Kosovo was muted. Reflecting the absence of unrest in Kosovo, the international community ignored the Kosovo issue in framing the 1995 Dayton Agreement that concluded the Bosnian war: the lack of reference to Kosovo, combined with the apparently pivotal role played by Milošević in securing the Dayton agreement (when he was widely feted by Western leaders), seemed to confirm acquiescence by the international community in continuing Serbian control of the province.

Against this background, increasing sentiment developed among Kosovo Albanians to mount direct resistance to Serbian rule. The government-in-exile established the Armed Forces of the Republic of Kosovo (FARK) to mount attacks in Kosovo, though few materialized. Frustrated by the FARK's lack of action, activists from the Popular Movement of Kosovo (LPK) began mobilizing fighters within Kosovo and carrying out operations, the LPK becoming the KLA. The KLA increased in status in the diaspora community and progressively marginalized the FARK. It did not accept the authority of the government-in-exile, whose “President” was Ibrahim Rugova, and an apparent effort by the Albanian government to broker unity between the factions proved unsuccessful.

KLA activities in Kosovo were on a sufficient scale by 1998 to provoke a violent Serb counter-offensive but they lacked the resources to mount a serious challenge to the forces of the Yugoslav state. Yugoslav leaders were subsequently to portray NATO as having acted as proxies for the KLA. During the 1999 NATO air offensive, in Tirana KLA supreme commander Hashim Thaci set about establishing a provisional government for Kosovo. By the end of the NATO air offensive, the KLA had an estimated 15,000 guerrillas, and when NATO ground troops entered Kosovo on June 12, the KLA accompanied them. Ibrahim Rugova and the LDK, in contrast, were slow to return to the province, leaving a vacuum for the KLA and its provisional government to take over the running of the province on the ground. Hashim Thaci assumed a civilian political role, leaving Agim Ceku to take his place as supreme commander. The rest of the province was divided between KLA regional commanders. On its return, the LDK also established a provisional government in the province, which operated in opposition to the KLA administration.

Against this background it took several months for KFOR and UNMIK to consolidate control over the province, and the KLA remained a military force although its demilitarization had been mandated by the Security Council. The KLA effectively controlled a range of aspects of civilian life. Official demilitarization occurred on Sept. 20, 1999, with the establishment by the UN of the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC). The KPC was based on the units of the KLA and when created in early 2000 consisted almost entirely of former KLA fighters. Meanwhile KLA leaders were reported to have established positions in control of smuggling and other illegal business activities, including levying “taxes” on movements of oil tanker lorries and other forms of extortion, as well as the re-distribution of houses and apartments abandoned by fleeing Serbs. Politically, the KLA formed the



basis of a newly formed Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK), led by Thaci.

In December 1999, Ibrahim Rugova and Hashim Thaci agreed to disband their rival provisional governments, in exchange for agreement by UNMIK to give positions to LDK and PDK officials within an interim administrative council overseen by UNMIK. This was established in February 2000. KLA fighters who were not from Kosovo (including ethnic Albanians from south Serbia, Macedonia and the diaspora) largely left Kosovo, but some remained, including Gezim Ostreni, from Macedonia, who became chief of staff of the newly formed Kosovo Protection Corps.

In February 2001 a rebellion broke out among sections of Macedonia's ethnic Albanian minority, who are concentrated in the northern and western parts of Macedonia, close to Kosovo (see Macedonia entry). The National Liberation Army, led by Ali Ahmeti and including former KLA fighters in its ranks, staged a seven-month insurrection that ended in August with the signing of an agreement that provided a range of reforms demanded by the Albanians. The Kosovo Protection Corps chief of staff, Gezim Ostreni, emerged as chief of staff of the National Liberation Army and was dismissed by the KPC General Commander. There were reports that numerous ex-KLA fighters now in the KPC had crossed the border to fight in Macedonia, though the KPC retained the support in particular of the USA and the UK as a factor for stability in Kosovo.

The PDK in its early phase adopted militant rhetoric hostile to Rugova and the LDK and claiming credit for the "liberation" of Kosovo and demanding immediate independence. However, this proved politically ineffective. In October 2000 the LDK emerged as the strongest force in municipal elections, obtaining 58 per cent of the vote compared with only 27 per cent for the PDK. Shortly after the elections, the LDK's campaign chief and Rugova's closest asso-

ciate, Xhemail Mustafa, was assassinated. Other assassinations of LDK leaders took place in 2000 and 2001 and were widely seen as part of an effort to intimidate the party by former KLA adherents. Following the October 2002 municipal elections, another local LDK leader, Uke Bytyqi, was killed together with his two bodyguards after an LDK convoy was ambushed by a group of PDK supporters.

In November 2002, an international panel of judges in Prishtina convicted General Daut Haradinaj and four other former KLA members known as the Dukagjin group, of torturing and killing four FARK members in June 1999. The trial triggered protests by KLA supporters and a key prosecution witness was subsequently shot dead in an ambush.

On March 24, 2003, Sali Veseli, a former KLA commander and later a member of the Kosovo Protection Corps, was convicted in Prizren for the murder of former KLA local commander Ekrem Rexha, aka Commander Drini, in May 2000. Rexha had enjoyed close relations with UNMIK and the prosecution maintained that it was this that had led to his assassination.

### **Liberation Army of Preševo, Medvedja, and Bujanovac (UCPMB)**

This group emerged in January 2000, carrying out operations in the demilitarized "Ground Safety Zone" between Kosovo and Serbia. Between March and May 2001, NATO allowed Serbian forces to reoccupy the Ground Safety Zone. In May 2001, the Serbian government envoy, Nebojsa Covic, put forward confidence-building plans to end discrimination against 70,000 ethnic Albanians. In return, the UCPMB handed over significant quantities of weapons, disbanded and withdrew from the Preševo area.

*Jeta Xharra*

## **Kuwait**

**Capital:** Kuwait City

**Population:** 2.2 m (includes 1.2 m non-nationals)

Kuwait is a constitutional hereditary monarchy, ruled by the al-Sabah dynasty since 1756. Succession as Emir is restricted by the 1962 Constitution to descendants of the late Mubarak Al-Sabah (known as Mubarak the Great). Kuwait's current head of state is His Highness Sheikh (Emir) Jaber Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. He exercises executive power through his appointed Prime Minister (traditionally the Crown Prince) and the Council of Ministers.

Kuwait is the first Arab Gulf State to have an elected parliament. This experience began with two primitive assemblies, one in 1920 and the other in 1938. Neither of these early experiments lasted very long but they have become a part of Kuwait's democratic tradition. In particular, they influenced the 1962 Constitution, one of the most democratic in spirit to be found in the Arab world. This Constitution combines popular

and royal authority; it provides for a National Assembly (Majlis al-Umma) with broad legislative powers, elected on the basis of male suffrage, while giving the Emir some legislative authority. This unicameral body has fifty members (two each from 25 constituencies), each of whom serves a four-year term, as well as all of the appointed members of the Council of Ministers (their number varies from one government to the next).

When Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah came to power in 1977, the Assembly had been dissolved since 1976 and he did not call elections until 1981. His predecessor, Sheikh Sabah Al-Salim Al-Sabah, had dissolved the Assembly following a constitutional dispute. This dispute was due to the known fact that the Assembly was more liberal than the cabinet. The Emir dissolved the Assembly and suspended several consti-



tutional amendments so as to prevent the Assembly from reconvening. After 1981, the Assembly ran relatively smoothly until 1986 when a constitutional crisis involving the Assembly's right of interpolation prompted Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah to dissolve the Assembly for the second time in its history.

The right of interpolation, or the right to question ministers "with regard to matters falling within their competence", has been a persistent source of tension between the Assembly and government. The Constitution also empowers the National Assembly to overturn any Emiri decrees made during the dissolution, and the Assembly has exercised this right on occasion. The parliament can also veto a law proposed by the government or impose a law rejected by the government. No bill becomes law without parliamentary approval.

The Emir has, however, the power to adjourn the Assembly for a period not exceeding one month and may also dissolve the Assembly and call for new elections within two months. The Assembly was dissolved in May 1999 and elections held in July 1999 resulted in 20 seats being won by Islamists, 16 by liberals and 13 by government supporters.

The dissolution of parliament has been a cause for growing tensions between the Assembly and the government. The dissolution of parliament demonstrates the power the Kuwaiti executive can wield in dealing with the legislative branch. But this power is checked by the constitution, and the parliament can be dissolved for no more than 60 days before new elections are held. If no elections are held, the dissolved parliament or legislators must be brought back into session. Additionally, parliament can never be dissolved twice for the same reason.

### Political groups

While political parties are banned, the government has for many years permitted the formation of informal political groups that act much like parties. These include groups of bedouins, merchants, moderate Sunni and Shi'a activists, secular liberals, as well as public interest associations, trade unions, and many other informal groups. More formal professional groups, bar associations and scientific bodies operate and maintain international contacts under license from the government, but only one organization may exist for a given issue or interest.

Political groups compete against each other openly in elections and in the Assembly. Among the most popular campaigning methods is the use of *diwaniya*. The *diwaniya* (gathering house) is deeply rooted in Kuwait's history and dates back to the time of Kuwait's first Emir, H.H. Sabah I (1756-1762). It acted as a "little parliament" where the Emir as well as the population listen to grievances and suggestions, and how problems or issues could be solved or resolved. Today, the *diwaniya*, which is explicitly protected by the constitution, is used to discuss virtually any topic (e.g., politics, business, society). Women are not precluded from holding diwanis; however, such

diwanis are uncommon and by tradition women are barred from the men's diwanis.

Among the more significant groups are: the Democratic Forum, a liberal Arab nationalist group; the Islamic Constitutional Movement (ICM), a Sunni Muslim group drawing its inspiration from the Muslim Brotherhood; the Salafi movement and the "scientific" Salafis, Islamic groups that advocate social reforms similar to Wahabbism; the Popular Action Bloc of tribal traditionalists; the Kuwait Democratic Forum (KDF), which is a loose association of secular groups with Nasserist and pan-Arabist foundations; and the National Democratic Group, composed of generally secular progressives with liberal tendencies. Tribal confederations organize, have held primaries, and agree to vote for certain candidates. These candidates are usually closely aligned with either the government or the Islamists, but their main goal is the protection of tribal interests. The Islamic National Alliance is the main faction for Shia Muslims (who constitute about 25 per cent of the Kuwaiti population), although many run as independents. These groups can also be added to by Independents who are generally aligned loosely with the ruling family or with the other political groupings.

The most notable of these groups and semi-groups are the Islamic Constitutional Movement, the Shi'ite Islamic Movement, Al-Salafiya Movement, and National Liberal Movement.

### Dissident groups up to the Gulf War

As in Bahrain, Kuwait's large Shi'ite community supported the Iranian revolution, while the Sunni majority opposed it, leading to trouble between the two groups. In Kuwait a number of attacks were attributed to **Al-Dawa** (the call), a Shi'ite group, some of whose supporters were local Kuwaiti-Shi'ite fundamentalists. The first attack was carried out in December 1983 as one in a series of attacks on American, French and Kuwaiti interests. Other incidents included the hijacking of a Kuwait Airways airliner in 1984 and an unsuccessful attempt to assassinate the Emir of Kuwait on May 25, 1985. The direct involvement of **Hezbollah** (God's Party) was proven when the Kuwaiti authorities arrested and tried seventeen people, among them, Mustafa Bader-el-Din, a prominent terrorist in Hezbollah's external terror apparatus. Hezbollah's continuous and extensive efforts to release him and his partners came to be known as the "Dawa Seventeen" affair.

According to a report by a top security official in November 1986 a total of 26,898 people had been deported from Kuwait in the year following the assassination attempt. On Jan. 7, 1987, two persons were sentenced to death for their part in a cafe bombing in Kuwait City that took place on July 11, 1985. Alleged members of the *Al-Dawa* group, together with another Palestinian militant formation, the Abu Nidal group, were amongst those arrested on July 1, 1986, in connection with the bomb attacks. In June 1987 six Kuwaiti Shi'ites were sentenced to death for their part

in the bombing of three of the country's oil installations which took place on Jan. 19, 1987. In 1988, another Kuwait Airways airliner was hijacked.

When Saddam Hussein invaded and occupied Kuwait in 1990 he aimed to convince the Islamic world that the Kuwaitis did not deserve to exist as a nation and that their rulers had betrayed Islam by hosting infidel soldiers. He also aimed to convince the people of the world, specifically Arab nationalists, that he was acting in accordance with the Kuwaiti people's request to overthrow the Al-Sabah family. Indigenous Kuwaiti support for Saddam proved lacking, however, and the "Free Provisional Kuwaiti Government" established by Saddam lacked substantial Kuwaiti figures. Nonetheless, many Palestinians working in Kuwait supported the invasion (as did the Palestine Liberation Organization) and hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were driven from Kuwait, or left of their own accord, after the Iraqi defeat.

In the aftermath of the 1990-91 Gulf War, Kuwait became more united, yet the country still had social, cultural, economic, and political cleavages. Among the elite, and the different Islamic and liberal forces in society, a debate emerged over what constituted the appropriate tempo and scale of Kuwait's democratization as well as Islam's role in state and society. In 1992, under considerable domestic and international pressure, the Emir fulfilled his promise, which he made in exile, by holding elections in October. While this move was welcomed by many, others expressed their concern at the possible consequences for Kuwaiti society, in terms of the encouragement of tribal and sectarian divisions.

### Islamist political forces

Compared with the tightly controlled society of neighboring Saudi Arabia, Kuwait is a more democratic country, with an elected Parliament and a largely uncensored press. But Islamist political groups are gaining strength in Kuwait. They have used their relative freedom of expression to build support across a broad range of society, from university students to government employees to disaffected expatriate Arab workers. While the Kuwaiti Islamist groups eschew violence, they make no secret about wanting to transform the country into a puritanical society more like Saudi Arabia.

Islamist groups do not see Islam as a mere religion, but as a political ideology which should be integrated into all aspects of society (politics, law, economy, social justice, foreign policy, etc.) The ultimate goal of these groups is the application of conservative principles of Islamic law. These movements, in fact, have shifted from the struggle for a supranational Muslim community into the need to be fully recognized as legitimate actors in the political arena. Kuwaiti Islamist movements are very organized and powerful as they incorporate groups such as tribes and Shiites, and, thus, involve important sectors of society in political participation.

During the Iraqi occupation, the Muslim Brothers' organization and other nationalist groups took a stand in accordance with the perceived national interest. To some groups, it was the United States that had encouraged Kuwait to provoke Iraq prior to the Iraqi invasion. Some dissident figures saw the Gulf War not as an effort to restore sovereignty but as a modern crusade in Islam's holy lands. The continuing Iraqi threat, however, pushed Kuwait's rulers closer to the USA and its allies.

In March 1998, the then Minister of Information, Sheikh Saud Nasser Al-Sabah, was put under pressure for allowing previously banned books to be displayed and sold at an Arab book fair. Sheikh Saud was forced out of office but was then appointed by the Emir as Minister of Oil. In May 1998, the parliament's solid Islamist bloc majority found out about the Cabinet's decision to purchase the United States' Paladin artillery system. Press-generated pressure and public rumours of irregularities in the procurement process meant that by the end of 1998, conservatives had blocked the deal. A further situation arose in April 1999, when the parliament's Islamist majority began to put pressure on the Minister of Justice and Islamic Affairs Ahmed Al-Kulaib (an elected MP who had been appointed Minister) for allowing the circulation of copies of the Quran, which contained errors and accidental omissions.

Some Kuwaitis have been linked to **Al-Qaeda**. *Al-Qaeda* spokesman Sulaiman Bu-Ghaith was a well-known figure in Kuwait, especially during the period 1990-91, but was later banned from preaching in mosques for his dissident sermons and was stripped of his Kuwaiti nationality for featuring in an *Al-Qaeda* video at the time of the US-led invasion of Afghanistan. Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, a Kuwaiti, featured on US "most wanted" lists for his alleged role in a January 1995 plot to blow up 12 jets flying Asia-Pacific routes and in the Sept. 11 attacks.

The government has sought to adopt a middle ground position in responding to the Islamists, to some degree accommodating their concerns. After a court decision that canceled a six-month prison sentence imposed on former *Al-Qabas* editor Muhammad Jasim Al-Saqr in 1998, for example, for publishing a joke about Adam and Eve in his paper, the judicial authority pursued another high-profile prosecution. Dr. Ahmad Al-Baghdadi, head of the political science department at Kuwait University and a regular contributor to the daily newspaper *Al-Siyassah*, was sentenced to one month in prison for allegedly defaming Islam and the prophet Muhammad in a 1996 article, which he wrote for the Kuwait University student magazine *Al-Shoula*. However, Al-Baghdadi was freed after the Emir pardoned him a few weeks later.

### Women's suffrage

One of the most pressing issues in Kuwait is that of women's suffrage. Currently, voting in Kuwait is restricted to men, who must be 21 years of age.

Kuwaiti women have on several occasions protested against their denial of the franchise; they have routinely marched on the National Assembly holding signs and banners demanding political rights; on other occasions, they have marched into voter registration centres in police stations demanding to receive their political rights. On May 16, 1999, the Emir unexpectedly issued a decree granting women the right to vote. The decree, was, however, struck down by the National Assembly in November 1999. A similar proposal presented by Assembly members was defeated by two

votes.

Some Islamists support giving women the right to vote but not to hold political office. Others, such as Ismail Al-Shatti and Tareq Suweidan, two leading members of Kuwait's Muslim brotherhood (*Al-Harakah Al-Dusturiya*), support political rights for women, based on an interpretation of Islamic law.

*Ibrahim J. Al-Sharifi*

## Kyrgyzstan

**Capital:** Bishkek

**Population:** 5 m

The Kyrgyz Soviet Socialist Republic was established as a constituent member of the Soviet Union in December 1936. In August 1991, some months before the collapse of the Soviet Union, Kyrgyzstan proclaimed its independence. It joined the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in December 1991. The post-Soviet constitution was adopted in May 1993 and amended significantly over the next decade. Askar Akayev was elected president by the Kyrgyz Supreme Soviet (parliament) in 1990, a mandate reconfirmed by popular election in 1991. Having tried, unsuccessfully, to extend his term of office by referendum, he stood for re-election in December 1995 and won a substantial majority, gaining 72 per cent of the vote. The Constitutional Court ruled that he was eligible to run yet again in October 2000; however, many regarded this third term as illegal, since article 43 (2) of the constitution specifically limits presidential tenure to two terms of office. Akayev won the election with a slightly increased majority (74 per cent), but there were widespread allegations of ballot rigging and official misconduct. Kyrgyz commentators as well as international observers were highly critical of the conduct of the election.

The Soviet-era unicameral legislature was replaced in 1995 by a bicameral Supreme Council (Zhorgorku Kenesh). This consists of (i) a non-standing Assembly of People's Representatives (Myizam Chygaruu Jyiyny) of 45 seats, directly elected from single-member constituencies, and (ii) a standing Legislative Assembly (El Okuldor Jyiyny) of 60 seats, of which 45 are directly elected from constituencies and 15 from national party lists on a proportional basis, subject to a 5 per cent threshold. Members of both chambers are elected for five-year terms. Elections to the Supreme Council, held on schedule in February-March 2000, were contested by 11 of the 27 registered parties. Several opposition formations (including some of the more prominent ones) were barred on procedural technicalities and the majority of candidates stood as independents. There were numerous allegations of vote rigging

and official interference and the results of the elections were highly confused, with the majority of constituency seats going to independents (including both supporters and opponents of the President). By this time, increasing restrictions were being placed on the media. Printing presses were brought under government control and several independent newspapers were closed down. Formal and informal harassment of dissidents became more prevalent.

In the context of US-led action to overthrow the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan agreed to the stationing of US troops on its territory, the first deployment taking place on Dec. 16, 2001.

At the end of the first decade of independence, Kyrgyzstan was still the most open society in Central Asia, but non-democratic trends were clearly in the ascendancy. In 2001 there were over 30 parties, encompassing a wide spectrum of political views. Many were too small and poorly organized to play a significant role. Moreover, the electorate was divided by such factors as regional affiliations, reflected in the split between the north (which dominated the government) and the south, and socio-economic rifts (with the south being generally poorer). Yet there were a few larger parties that succeeded in bridging these divisions and, singly and in coalition, did attempt to hold the President and the government to account. There were also several non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that formed an unofficial, but active, opposition. A third strand of opposition consisted of radical Islamist groups, operating clandestinely, mainly in the south. Their aims were very different from those of the secular formations and they remained outside the political process. However, government officials sometimes accused them (without providing any evidence) of coordinating their activities with those of mainstream opposition groups. Finally, ethnically-based organizations have from time to time been held responsible for fomenting unrest. In particular, members of the Uighur minority have been accused of supporting acts of terrorism, on account of their alleged links with Uighur



separatist movements across the border in Xinjiang. In 2000-01, following the assassination of a Chinese diplomat in Bishkek, several Uighurs in Kyrgyzstan were arrested.

In 2002 Kyrgyzstan experienced confrontations of unprecedented violence and hostility between the public and government agents. In mid-March there were demonstrations in southern Kyrgyzstan, calling for the release of a popular parliamentary deputy, Azimbek Beknazarov, who had been arrested in January on charges of alleged abuse of office; many suspected that the real reason for his arrest was his outspoken criticism of the 1999 Sino-Kyrgyz border treaty (finally ratified by the Kyrgyz parliament in May 2002). On March 17-18, the police opened fire, without warning, on a large, unarmed crowd. Six people were killed and 62 injured. Beknazarov was released, though the charges against him were not dropped. He was given a suspended 12-month sentence and stripped of his parliamentary mandate (restored on appeal in June). In May, there were further disturbances, including hunger strikes, picketing of government buildings and a blockade of the main highway between the capital Bishkek and the south. The Prime Minister, along with the rest of the government, resigned. However, tension remained high. In August, opposition parties, non-governmental organizations and other public bodies combined forces to create the **Movement for the Resignation of President Akayev**. The new grouping found strong support in the south of the country, from where, in early September, hundreds of protesters set off on a march to the capital. They were stopped before reaching Bishkek. Government officials and opposition spokesmen held talks and signed a memorandum setting out terms and conditions for a peaceful end to the protest. The government acceded to some of the demands of the opposition, giving assurances that those who were responsible for the tragedy in March would be punished. Yet little action was taken and there were further disturbances in October.

## MAIN SECULAR OPPOSITION PARTIES

### Agrarian Labour Party

Registered in October 1994 (with 629 members), the party aimed to represent the interests of agro-industrial workers. In the February 2000 parliamentary elections it gained 2.5 per cent of the vote. At that time it was regarded as largely pro-government, but in April 2001 it joined the opposition coalition the People's Patriotic Movement (see entry). The current chairman is Usun Sydykov, a prominent businessman.

### Ar-Namys (Dignity Party)

Registered in August 1999 (with 621 members), it was formed by Feliks Kulov, previously Vice President, then Minister of National Security. Once a close ally of President Akayev, Kulov fell out of favour and in 1998 was demoted from national to local government; he subsequently resigned, in order to pursue an independent political career. His party *Ar-Namys* was not allowed to contest parliamentary elections in February of that year, on the grounds that it

had not been in existence for long enough. It merged temporarily with the Democratic Movement of Kyrgyzstan (see entry), but that party, too, was excluded from the elections. Kulov, who by this time had a considerable following, particularly among the young, stood as an independent candidate in a constituency contest. He topped the poll in the first round, but was defeated in dubious circumstances in the run-off. Shortly thereafter he was arrested on charges of fraud and abuse of power. He was acquitted in August 2000. He tried to stand against Akayev in the presidential elections of October 2000, but was denied registration on the grounds that he did not fulfill basic requirements (e.g. adequate knowledge of the Kyrgyz language). At a re-trial in January 2001, he was found guilty of the previous charges and sentenced to seven years in prison (raised to ten years in May 2002, but on appeal in October, reduced again). In April 2001 *Ar-Namys* initiated the creation of the People's Patriotic Movement (see entry), a coalition of nine opposition parties. In November 2001, it was one of four parties that banded together to form the People's Congress (see entry).

### Democratic Movement of Kyrgyzstan (DMK)

Established in 1990 as an umbrella for the first wave of independent organizations such as *Ashar* (Mutual Help Movement), *Aqi* (Truth) and *Osh Aymaghi* (Osh Region Union). In 1991 the movement fractured as splinter groups broke away. The DMK originally supported President Akayev, but later became critical of his policies. It was formally registered as a political party in July 1993. It continued to enjoy widespread support, but was excluded from the elections in February 2000 on account of alleged procedural irregularities. The current chairman is Zh. Zheksheev.

### El/Bei Becharali (People's Party)

El was registered in 1995 (with 500 members). Initially it drew its support from the academic and cultural community. However, it soon attracted a broader following and by 2000 was one of the largest opposition parties in Kyrgyzstan. It did not qualify for registration for the proportional representation section of the February 2000 parliamentary elections and several of its nominees for constituency seats, including the then chairman Daniyar Usenov, were excluded from participation on administrative technicalities. (Usenov was also barred from standing in the presidential elections in October 2000 on account of previous charges against him for alleged criminal activities.) In April 2001 El joined the opposition coalition the People's Patriotic Movement and in November 2001, the People's Congress (see entries). The current chairman is the journalist Melis Eshimanov, formerly one of the leaders of the smaller *Asaba* (Banner National Revival) Party.

### Erkindik (Freedom)

A splinter group of the Progressive Democratic Party of Free Kyrgyzstan (ErK), *Erkindik* was formed in April 2000 by Adylbek Kasymov, of the Kyrgyz Institute of Education. One of its leading members was Topchubek Turgunaliyev, the original founder of ErK (and before that a member of the Democratic Movement of Kyrgyzstan). He spent 1996-98 in prison, charged with insulting the President. In September 2000, he was again arrested and sentenced to 16 years in prison (later commuted to 10 years), for allegedly master-

minding a plot to assassinate the President. He was amnestied in 2001.

### **Party of Communists of Kyrgyzstan (PCK)**

Created in June 1992 and registered in September, the PCK was the successor to the Soviet-era Communist Party of Kyrgyzstan (disbanded in August 1991). Under the leadership of Absamat Masaliev, the former First Secretary of the old Communist Party, it attracted a wide following and won parliamentary representation in the elections of February 1995. According to official estimates, it had 25,000 members in 1998. In 1999, however, it was split by internal disputes and a small splinter group formed the Communist Party of Kyrgyzstan. Nevertheless, the PCK contested the February 2000 elections and won a larger share of the vote than any other party (27.2%). In April 2001, the PCK joined the People's Patriotic Movement (see entry), a new, multi-party opposition coalition. The current chairman is Absamat Masaliev.

### **Progressive-Democratic Party of Free Kyrgyzstan (ErK)**

Founded in 1991, under the acronym ErK ("Will"), this splinter group of the Democratic Movement of Kyrgyzstan espoused a moderately nationalist platform and advocated economic reform. In 1992 it was seriously weakened by the secession of the Socialist Party Ata-Meken (see entry). The founder of ErK was Topchubek Turgunaliyev, former rector of the Bishkek Humanities University. He was arrested in 1996 and convicted on charges of libel and fraud; he was given a four-year prison sentence. Amnesty International adopted him as a prisoner of conscience and he was released on parole in 1998. ErK was re-registered in February 1997 and began to attract new support. In 1999, it had a membership of 12,000. ErK contested the February elections and won 4.2 per cent or the proportional vote. In May 2000, however, it suffered another setback when some of the founder members broke away to form a new party, *Erkindik* (see entry). The current chairman is Tursunbai Bakir uuly, a parliamentary deputy.

### **Socialist Party Ata-Meken (Fatherland)**

Founded in 1992 by a breakaway nationalist faction of the Progressive-Democratic Party of Free Kyrgyzstan (ErK), it was registered in December 1992, and re-registered in April 1998. Similar in orientation to the Party of Communists of Kyrgyzstan (PCK, see entry), it assumed a largely oppositional stance. It made a creditable showing in the February 2000 parliamentary elections, winning 6.5 per cent of the vote. In April 2001, it became one of the core members of the new opposition coalition People's Patriotic Movement. In November 2001 it also joined the People's Congress. The current chairman is Omurbek Tekebayev, a parliamentary deputy.

## **COALITIONS**

### **Movement for the Resignation of President Akayev**

Formed in August 2002 by a 22-member coalition of opposition parties, NGOs, regional movements and human rights activists. It found strong support in southern Kyrgyzstan and was the organizing body for the protest march on Bishkek in September 2002 (see above). The demonstrators' demands

included a revision of the Sino-Kyrgyz border agreement, the punishment of senior officials implicated in the March tragedy, and the release of Feliks Kulov.

### **People's Congress**

A coalition bloc formed in November 2001 by four opposition parties – *Ar-Namys*, *Ata-Meken*, *Erkindik* and *El* – under the nominal leadership of the imprisoned Feliks Kulov. The authorities continually harassed this group, but they nevertheless succeeded in holding several meetings in 2002-03. They put forward a number of demands to the government, including a call for the creation of a broad-based working group to draw up a strategy to stabilize the country and to implement constitutional reforms. They also called for the release of Feliks Kulov.

### **People's Patriotic Movement**

A coalition with the declared aims of defending democracy and the human and constitutional rights of the population of Kyrgyzstan, it was formed in April 2001. The constituent members of the alliance were the Agrarian-Labour Party, *Ar-Namys*, *Ata-Meken*, Communist Party of Kyrgyzstan, Party of Communists of Kyrgyzstan, *Erkindik*, Kairan-El, El/Bei Becharali and the Republican Party. The authorities repeatedly impeded the activities of this united opposition front.

## **NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS**

The constitution guarantees freedom of association for its citizens. The activities of non-governmental organizations are regulated by the 1991 Law on Public Organizations and the 1999 Law on Non-Commercial Organizations. In 2001, there were an estimated 1,000 registered NGOs in Kyrgyzstan. They were active in such sectors as women's issues; services for children and young people; education; support for families and pensioners; healthcare; and the environment. Approximately 150 groups were concerned with human rights and civil society. Most had some degree of support from international donors. The largest and most active civil rights NGO is the **Kyrgyz Committee for Human Rights (KCHR)**. It was founded in 1996 as a successor to the Kyrgyz Movement for Protecting Rights, which was dissolved when registration was withdrawn in 1995. The KCHR acts as an umbrella organization for various groups concerned with the protection of human rights. It has had a difficult relationship with the government; its registration was repealed in 1998, though restored in 1999. It has frequently drawn attention to instances of harassment of the media and to the unjust treatment of individual human rights activists. It has also played a prominent part in opposition actions, notably in the public demonstrations of 2002. It has an estimated membership of some 1,000. The current chairman is Ramazan Dyryldayev; he has experienced frequent harassment and for while was forced to take refuge abroad. Other NGOs that have taken part in opposition actions are the **Public Association for the Social Protection of the Population** and the **Human Rights Movement of Kyrgyzstan** (headed by Tursunbek Akunov).



## ISLAMIST MOVEMENTS

In Kyrgyzstan, as elsewhere in Central Asia, Muslims who do not conform to mainstream norms of behaviour are referred to indiscriminately as “Wahhabis”, whether or not they are adherents of this sect (founded in the eighteenth century by Muhammad ibn Abdul-Wahhab, and subsequently the dominant form of Islam in Saudi Arabia). The overwhelming majority of radical Muslims in the region are not, in any literal sense, Wahhabis.

There are currently two main Islamist movements in Central Asia, the **Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan** and **Hizb ut-Tahrir**. Both are based in Uzbekistan, in the Ferghana Valley, but are acquiring growing influence in southern Kyrgyzstan (and likewise adjacent parts of Tajikistan and Kazakhstan). Both reject the legitimacy of the present governments and call for the establishment of an Islamic state, modeled on the early Caliphate. Consequently, they are regarded as enemies of the state. They have been accused of acts of terrorism and of plotting to overthrow the constitution by force. It is difficult to judge the validity of such allegations, since statements from official sources, likewise reports in the mass media, are heavily biased. Human rights organizations (local and international) insist that many of those who have been arrested are not guilty of any crime. They point out that although *Hizb ut-Tahrir* advocates an Islamic system of government, this is to be achieved by non-violent means; theoretically, this could be said to fall within the constitutionally permitted limits of freedom of expression in each of the Central Asian states. However, this argument cannot be advanced in defence of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, since the available evidence indicates that it is a militant organization, prepared to use force to achieve its goals. In Uzbekistan, there have been mass arrests of suspected members of these groups. In Kyrgyzstan, too, increasingly repressive measures are being adopted towards these groups.

### **Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT)**

Hizb ut-Tahrir is a transnational Islamist organization. Founded in 1953 in Jerusalem it spread to other countries in the Middle East, North Africa and eventually South East Asia, and was being reported in Uzbekistan by the early 1990s. Its stated aim is to bring the worldwide Muslim community back to an Islamic way of life, under the umbrella of the Khilafah State (i.e. Caliphate). Uzbekistan has, to date, been the primary focus of HT activities in Central Asia. However, since the late 1990s it has been gaining ground in Kyrgyzstan. Its activities appear to be confined to the south, and some commentators suggest that it attracts adherents mainly from the Uzbek minority. Since 2001, well over 100 alleged HT adherents have been arrested; most have been charged with inciting racial, ethnic or religious hatred and sentenced to several years in prison. In 2002, the head of the National Security Service accused HT of involvement in the anti-government demonstrations.

### **Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) – see also under Uzbekistan**

This was founded around 1996 in Uzbekistan, in the Ferghana Valley. Government counter-terrorist operations caused many of its members to flee the country. They thereupon established camps in Afghanistan and, allegedly, in Tajikistan. In August 1999 some 500 armed IMU fighters crossed into Kyrgyzstan, reportedly with the aim of invading Uzbekistan and creating an Islamic state there. When the guerrillas reached the border they found Uzbek troops blocking their route; they thereupon retreated into the Kyrgyz mountains. The Kyrgyz army was unable to dislodge them for over two months. In mid-2002 Kyrgyz officials announced that the IMU was regrouping along the Afghan-Tajik border, in preparation for a renewed assault on Kyrgyzstan and the Ferghana Valley.

*Shirin Akiner*

## Laos

**Capital:** Viang Chan (Vientiane)

**Population:** 5.5 m

The Lao People’s Democratic Republic (LPDR) was proclaimed on Dec. 2, 1975, putting an end to the six-century-old Lao monarchy. Proclamation of the LPDR signalled the victory of the Lao revolutionary movement known as the Pathet Lao (literally Land of the Lao) in its “thirty-year struggle” (1945 to 1975) against the former Royal Lao regime. This long civil war was punctuated by three short-lived coalition governments. On the revolutionary side it was nominally led by the Lao Patriotic Front, but in fact was directed throughout by the (communist) Lao People’s Revolu-

tionary Party (LPRP).

The LPDR was established as a Marxist-Leninist state, with a President, a Supreme People’s Assembly (later renamed the National Assembly), and a Council of Ministers presided over by a Prime Minister. Until 1990, when a Constitution was eventually promulgated, the Secretary-General of the LPRP was concurrently Prime Minister. Thereafter, following the lead of the Soviet Union, the Secretary-General (renamed the President) of the Party has concurrently been State President, responsible for appointing the Prime Minis-

ter from among his Politburo colleagues. In 1977 the LPDR concluded a 25-year Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with Vietnam. Close relations were established with the Soviet Union and slightly less cordial relations with China.

At first the LPDR adopted orthodox socialist economic policies, including nationalization of the means of production and the collectivization of agriculture. These had a devastating effect on an already weak economy, resulting in plummeting living standards and popular discontent. Meanwhile, despite government promises of release, thousands of former officials and military officers remained incarcerated in remote re-education camps. Over the next decade, as most were eventually released, they followed their families abroad. Altogether an estimated 300,000 Lao citizens, or ten per cent of the entire population, fled Laos to Thailand, from where most were eventually resettled in the United States, France, Australia or Canada. As many as 40 per cent of Lao refugees belonged to tribal minorities, mainly Hmong recruited by the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in its "secret war" against the Pathet Lao.

This hemorrhage of population not only deprived Laos of as much as 90 per cent of its educated elite (thus retarding development by a generation), but also created a substantial recruitment base for opposition to the new regime. In the context of the Cold War, Lao anti-government rebels were supported by the Thai authorities. After Laos sided with Vietnam over its 1979 invasion and occupation of Cambodia, relations with China deteriorated, and China too began to harbour and train Lao anti-government insurgents. By the mid-1980s, however, relations between the LPDR and China had begun to warm. With the change in Laos to a more open economic policy encouraging foreign investment, and after two brief border wars in 1984 and 1987-88, relations with Thailand too began to improve and Thai support for the Lao resistance was progressively reduced.

With the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, the first internal dissent against the regime surfaced in November 1990 in the form of a Social Democratic Group of intellectuals and officials who urged the government to adopt more democratic processes. Repression was swift, and three ring-leaders were given lengthy jail terms. The LPDR was nevertheless forced to improve relations with the West in order to ensure continued aid and investment (to replace that which had previously been provided by the Soviet Union). At the same time, the withdrawal of Vietnamese forces from Cambodia created conditions for improved relations between Vietnam, China and Thailand. The LPDR was thus able to gain political support from both Vietnam and China, while remaining on good terms with the capitalist world. In 1997, Laos followed Vietnam into the Association of South-east Asian Nations (ASEAN). The turn of the century saw the LPRP still firmly in power. Internal political dissent was minimal, while armed opposition had declined to little more than banditry, although there

was a brief upsurge in insurgent activity to greet the new millennium. Meanwhile political representation to foreign governments and the United Nations by various Lao expatriate resistance groups met with minimal response.

## RESISTANCE MOVEMENTS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Compared with the military victories of revolutionary forces in Cambodia and South Vietnam, the slower seizure of power by the LPRP in Laos through 1975 was relatively peaceful. Most Lao were tired of war and ready to cooperate with the new regime. Scattered spontaneous resistance came from two groups in particular, however: from those Hmong recruited by the CIA, who feared reprisals; and from right-wing military officers and government officials who crossed to Thailand before the Pathet Lao seizure of power.

### The Hmong

Several thousand Hmong, along with their leader, General Vang Pao, were evacuated by American aircraft to Thailand, but thousands more remained in northern Laos, concentrated in the vicinity of the Phu Bia massif, southwest of the Plain of Jars. An estimated 15,000 former Vang Pao soldiers and their families refused all contact with the new regime, attacked Lao People's Army (LPA) patrols and ambushed government vehicles. In 1977 Lao and Vietnamese forces attacked the Hmong stronghold. While many Hmong died in the assault, others trekked west through the mountains and across the Mekong, through Xainyaburi province, to refuge in Thailand (suffering many more casualties on the way). Some retreated deeper into the mountains, however, to carry on their resistance. Independent investigators have been unable to confirm Hmong claims that retreating columns were subjected to aerial chemical attack (the so-called "yellow rain"). Those Hmong who reached Thailand were herded into refugee camps, the largest of which was Ban Vinai, near the Lao-Thai border. From there, agents maintained contact with the Hmong resistance deep inside Laos and with Vang Pao's **Hmong Liberation Front** in the United States. The Thai authorities closed down these Hmong camps in 1992, repatriating under pressure all but a recalcitrant minority back to Laos.

Those Hmong who remained in Laos mostly belonged to a messianic movement known as the **Chao Fa** (meaning Lord of the Sky or Heaven), who, so its adherents believed, would descend to establish an independent Hmong homeland. Their leader in Laos was Yong Youa Her, who remained a key figure in the continuing Hmong resistance to the LPDR authorities over the next two decades. This resistance took the form of occasional attacks on LPA positions and ambushes of vehicles on roads in Viang Chan, Xiang Khuang and Borikhamxai provinces. In response the government created the Xaisombun Spe-

cial Region containing most of the Phu Bia massif, and placed it under military administration. Hmong resistance has continued, however, fueled by resentment over resettlement policies, ethnic prejudice and oppression, and official corruption. In 1985, Yong Youa Her reorganized his Chao Fa forces as the **Ethnic Liberation Organization of Laos**, claiming 3,000 men under arms and double that number trained to take their place. Yet by 2000, out of a population of around 350,000, it was estimated that fewer than 5,000 Hmong still actively opposed the LPDR government.

### **Ethnic Lao Resistance Groups**

The first Royal Lao government officials and military officers who fled to Thailand in 1975 immediately called for resistance against the Pathet Lao. They called their movement the **Lao People's Revolutionary Front 21/18**, in reference to the date of the agreement setting up the Third Coalition government and its broadly accepted eighteen-point political programme. Its appeal was thus not simply to the discredited right-wing of Lao politics, but also to neutralists and disgruntled Pathet Lao unhappy over the degree of influence wielded by Vietnam. The Front was responsible for a number of isolated incidents, the most spectacular of which were two grenade attacks on the Soviet embassy and the Lao National Radio. An attempt was also made to assassinate LPRP Secretary-General, Kaison Phomvihane. However, the Front lacked both leadership and effective organization and as the new regime tightened its grip on the country, it declined into obscurity.

In its place new resistance groups became active, recruited from the rising tide of refugees disillusioned by the government's heavy-handed policies and failure to keep its promises. These groups were known collectively as the *ku xat*, or resistance. All were based in Thailand and operated from the far north to southern Laos, under a variety of names. Most incursions into Laos were on a small scale, to conduct hit-and-run attacks or armed propaganda. The appeal of the *ku xat* was bolstered by the Lao-Vietnamese treaty and the unpopularity of agricultural cooperatives. But their activities were never enough to threaten the survival of the regime.

What worried the Lao authorities most in the early years of the LPDR was the enmity of China after 1979. China gave asylum and training to both the Hmong and Lao resistance movements. There was even a shadowy Lao Socialist Party purporting to be a genuine Marxist-Leninist replacement for the LPRP. Political bickering among resistance factions, however, convinced the Chinese that they were backing a lost cause. By the mid-1980s, China's relations with the LPDR were beginning to warm and Beijing dropped its support for the Lao resistance.

In 1980, at Thai urging and under the leadership of General Vang Pao, the various Lao resistance groups formed an umbrella organization, the **United Lao National Liberation Front (UNLNF)**, also known as the United Front for the National Liberation of the Lao

People. This was supported by exiled Lao politicians and generals in the United States, France and Thailand. Guerrilla operations increased, with the Front claiming in 1985 to be directing a force of between 7,000 and 8,000 men. In April 1985, Hmong rebels shot down a helicopter, killing several senior Lao and Vietnamese army officers. Spurred on by events in Eastern Europe, in December 1989 members of the Front in France and the USA announced formation of a "provisional revolutionary" government-in-exile. This was quietly dissolved in the face of French and US pressure, though the Front continued to gain membership and solicit donations among Lao émigré communities.

The internationally brokered solution to the "Cambodian problem" that saw Sihanouk return to his throne as head of state gave great encouragement to overseas Lao opponents of the LPDR regime. Appeals for international pressure to bring about a similar result in Laos were directed to the United Nations and the US Congress. At the same time, the Lao resistance stepped up its operations, mounting two large-scale attacks involving up to 300 resistance fighters in 1992. As relations between Laos and Thailand warmed, however, the Thai authorities clamped down on Lao resistance groups in Thailand, and Lao opposition increasingly shifted from armed raids and propaganda to political persuasion. Hmong insurgents inside Laos kept up their military opposition, however. In May 1998 an aircraft carrying 26 senior Lao and Vietnamese military officers was shot down over Xaisombun.

International acceptance of the Lao regime and the inclusion of Laos in ASEAN convinced most émigré Lao that resort to force was useless. Instead, expatriate Lao political activists stepped up their lobbying of foreign governments and the UN. Among those most active were the **Movement for Democracy in Laos** (later the Laos Democratic Party), based in France but with branches in the USA, and the **Lao United League for Democracy**. Those urging non-violent means of promoting political change in Laos pinned their hopes on the pretender to the Lao throne, Prince Soulivong Savang, the oldest grandson of the last king of Laos. In September 1997, Prince Soulivong presided at a "Royal Lao Conference" in Seattle, which brought together some 300 royalist delegates to form the **Assembly of Lao Representatives Abroad**. But as ever, the Lao expatriate community was divided. Earlier in the year an organization calling itself **Lao Houn Mai** (the New Lao Generation) was formed as another alliance of non-violent resistance groups struggling to bring about political change in the LPDR. The eleven conference resolutions made no mention of Prince Soulivong, but focused instead on Vietnamese influence in Laos. Yet another grouping, the **Federation for Free Elections in Laos**, listed representatives from no fewer than 26 Lao expatriate organizations on its board of directors.

In early 2000, a spate of small bombings shook the Lao capital of Vientiane, with some loss of life. No

one claimed responsibility. The Lao government blamed Hmong insurgents, but the bombings may well have been the work of ethnic Lao dissidents. Then in July came a more serious attack by some three dozen armed Lao resistance fighters on a customs post on the Lao-Thai border in southern Laos. The attack was soon beaten off. Several attackers were killed, while the rest fled back into Thailand. The Thai authorities were much embarrassed by this incident and arrested those responsible, but refused to hand them over to Lao authorities. Thailand and Laos have subsequently concluded an extradition treaty.

The attack may have inspired creation of a new **Lao Liberation Alliance**, whose existence was revealed two months after the attack. The Alliance reportedly brings together Lao resistance groups (*ku xat*) operating in northern Laos, the Hmong Liberation Front of General Vang Pao, the Chao Fa inspired Ethnic Liberation Organization of Laos, the Ethnic Issara (Free-

dom) organization grouping ethnic opponents to the regime other than the Hmong, and the Lao People's Liberation Front, which supposedly combines three ethnic Lao resistance groups operating in southern Laos. Member organizations believe that only force will bring about political change in Laos. Whether this new alliance (if indeed it exists in any form other than on paper) will be any more effective than previous resistance groups, seems doubtful, given that none of Laos's neighbours is now prepared to permit Lao resistance groups to operate on its territory.

Neither armed Lao nor Hmong resistance groups, nor expatriate Lao political organizations, have posed any significant threat to the security of the LPDR or the political influence of the LPRP since it seized power in 1975, and nor are they likely to do so in the foreseeable future.

*Martin Stuart-Fox*

## Latvia

**Capital:** Riga

**Population:** 2.4 m

Latvia proclaimed its independence in 1920. In June 1940, under the Hitler-Stalin pact, Soviet troops invaded the country and in August it was incorporated into the Soviet Union. During the Soviet occupation the population base of the country changed quite substantially as a result of deportations of the native population and a large scale influx of Russians, Ukrainians, Belarusians and other non-Baltic ethnic groups.

Latvia declared its independence on Aug. 21, 1991, in the midst of the unsuccessful August 1991 coup in Moscow and subsequently (July 6, 1993) restored its 1922 Constitution. This confirms the Republic as a parliamentary democracy in which the sovereign power of the people is exercised through a unicameral Parliament (Saeima). The 100 members of the Saeima are elected for a four-year term by universal, equal, direct, secret and non-compulsory suffrage of those aged 18 and over, on the basis of proportional representation but subject to at least 5% of the vote being obtained by a party. The President, elected by the Saeima by absolute majority for four years, is the Head of State and appoints, subject to parliamentary approval, the Prime Minister, whose task it is to form the Cabinet of Ministers (government), again subject to Saeima consent.

Elections to the Saeima on Oct. 5, 2002, resulted as follows: New Era (JL) 26 seats (with 23.9% of the vote); For Human Rights in a United Latvia (PCTVL) 25 seats (18.9%); People's Party (TP) 20 seats (16.7%); Latvia's First Party (LPP) 10 seats (9.6%); Green and Farmers Union (ZZS) 12 seats (9.5%); Alliance Fatherland and Freedom – LNNK (TB–LNNK) 7

seats (5.4%). A government coalition was formed by the JL, LPP, ZZS and TB/LNNK.

### Citizenship issue

According to data from the 2000 national census Latvians account for only 57.6% of the country's population. The biggest non-Latvian group is Russians (29.6%), followed by Belarusians (4.1%), Ukrainians (2.7%), Poles (2.5%), Lithuanians (1.4%), and smaller groups of Jews, Germans, Estonians, Tatars and Roma (together 2%). The substantial minority population is dispersed throughout Latvia, particularly in urban areas, forming majorities in the principal cities, including the capital Riga (c. 60%) and the second largest town, Daugavpils (c. 84%). However, the demographic contours are essentially linguistic rather than ethnic: the population breaks down to approximately 60 per cent Latvian-speakers, with the remainder mainly Russian-speakers. A lingering consequence of Soviet language policy is asymmetric bilingualism, whereby almost all Latvians are bilingual speakers of Latvian and Russian, while many Russian-speakers remain monolingual speakers of Russian. Even in 2000 the overall share of the population with a command of Latvian (81.7%) was lower than that with a command of Russian (84.4%).

Since independence in 1991, Latvia has struggled with the challenge of promoting a new national identity in a manner which fully acknowledges the aspirations of its substantial Russian-speaking minorities. In no other field has this been as difficult or fundamental



as that of citizenship. A 1991 resolution restoring citizenship only to persons who had been citizens of Latvia between the First and Second World Wars and their descendants, denied automatic citizenship to all others. Although the resolution was not explicitly ethnicity-based, it disproportionately impacted ethnic non-Latvians, many of whom arrived in Latvia after 1945. More than 60 per cent of the large ethnic Russian minority was affected compared with only 1.6 per cent of ethnic Latvians. Only just over 50,000 individuals have been naturalized as Latvian citizens since the restoration of independence, leaving hundreds of thousands in the country as either Russian citizens or “stateless” individuals with no citizenship at all. As of Jan. 1, 2001, the number of stateless “non-citizens” in Latvia was 551,064, or 23.3 per cent of the total registered population. Surveys among the Russian community show that it feels humiliated and alienated from Latvian society by its citizenship policies. Many of them also feel insecure about their status.

### Extremist groups and organizations

Many of the activities of Latvia’s extremist groups of the left and right since the restoration of independence relate to the problems arising from the ethnic composition of the country and some of the policies pursued by the successive governments, particularly in respect of granting full citizenship to Russian and other minorities. Corollary to this are issues relating to Latvia’s membership of NATO and the European Union.

On May 27, 1998, Lainis Kamaldis, the director of the Bureau for the Protection of the Constitution, stated that there were twelve “potentially anti-state and extremist” organizations in Latvia: seven were left-wing, five right-wing. According to him the largest organization had about 150 active members, while the smallest were composed of no more than four or five activists. Since 1998 the Latvian government has embarked on a crackdown on extremist groups and consequently the efficacy of such groups has diminished quite markedly.

However, some observers consider the **Alliance Fatherland and Freedom – LNNK** party, now represented in the parliament, as an extremist grouping. Many diplomats and analysts feel that the party’s stubborn brand of Latvian nationalism has exacerbated relations with the non-citizen community and Russia itself.

**Perkonkrusts** (“Thundercross”, or “Cross of Perun”, a pagan god), is a fascist organization that emerged during 1934 after a fascist coup d’état under its initial name of *Ukunkrusts* (“Fire cross”). In pre-World War II Latvia, *Perkonkrusts* was an openly anti-Communist and antisemitic organization, and its activities were banned. *Perkonkrusts* re-surfaced after 1991 as a shadowy organization re-claiming its fascist roots. Its leader, Juris Recs, had been hiding in forests for two years before being captured in May 2000. Its members set off an explosion at the Victory Monument in Riga that killed two people including one of

the terrorists. Another nine who managed to escape were subsequently captured and in May 2000 tried and sentenced to varying periods in jail. They were found guilty of attempting to blow up the Victory Monument on three occasions, blowing up a hot water main, assault and other crimes including vandalising Jewish sites. Throughout the investigation and trial, the right-wing weekly *Latvietis Latvija* (see below) published appeals to donate money to help *Perkonkrusts* members, whom the paper called “patriots of the Latvian people” and “political dissidents.” *Perkonkrusts* has now suspended its activities.

**Russian National Unity (RNE)**, which has branches in seven Latvian cities, and its offshoot **Kolvrats** (“Swastika”), are active among the Slavic population, distributing Nazi books, papers and magazines smuggled in from Russia and publishing original propaganda.

Perhaps the largest number of right-wing extremists and sympathizers centres on the notorious and overtly National Socialist weekly newspaper *Latvietis Latvija* (“A Latvian in Latvia”) published by the Latvian Fund and edited by Leonards Inkis. With a circulation of between 2,500-3,000, it regularly features racist and anti-Semitic articles calling, for example, for rejection of the “Zhids” (a pejorative term for Jews), cosmopolitanism, and the demands of Russians for integration. The Office for the Protection of the Constitution in March 1999 launched a criminal investigation into the paper for inciting racial and ethnic hatred, but found no violation and the case was closed in summer 2000.

Hostile views are not confined to Latvian language publications. In January 2000, the **Latvian Regional Organization of Russian National Unity**, a neo-Nazi group led by Evgeny Osipov and modelled on a group based in Russia, published an underground newsletter entitled *Za Russky Poryadok* (“For a Russian Order”). One article derided perceived Latvian sympathy for the Chechen cause, noting “if someone wants to fight with Russians, there is no need to go so far. WE ARE ALREADY HERE!” Another article asserted that in 1940 “our fathers once again returned here and only took back what has always belonged to Russia by right”.

Some public officials – and particularly members of the Fatherland and Freedom party – have made statements cultivating intolerance and prejudice towards Russian speakers and questioning their loyalty. Though Fatherland and Freedom has since 1997 been a member of the ruling coalition, no steps have been taken by other coalition partners to counter anti-Russian remarks by members of this party. The recurring theme of these statements is that non-citizens in Latvia are “occupiers and colonists” who should leave rather than integrate.

The extreme left **National Bolshevik Movement “Pobeda”**, led by Vladimir Linderman, which rejects Latvia’s membership of NATO, advocates the granting of citizenship to everyone, demands that Russian be declared the second official language, and calls for the creation of state Russian television in Latvia.



The (Russian) **National Bolshevik Party (NBP)** is the Latvian section of an extremist party that has operated in the Russian Federation since May 1993 (see entry under Russia). The Latvian branch publishes a paper *Generalnaja Linija* ("General Line"). In April 2000 it established a front organization – the **Victory Society** (*Obshchestvo pobedy*) – that publishes a regular newsletter *Tribunal* which has consistently glorified violence. In its first issue *Tribunal* invited to its ranks "all who want to make a revolution with their own hands. National-bolsheviks, anarchists, Che Guevarists, skinheads, punks. We guarantee an interesting life and a beautiful death". In November 2000 three members of the group threatened to detonate a grenade on the spire of the historic St. Peter's Church in the heart of Riga's old town in protest at the prosecution of Soviet officials for genocide and against Latvia's application for membership of NATO.

Other extremist groups include Russians of the West and Young Bolsheviks.

### Latvian SS veterans

During World War II the Nazis formed military divisions from the citizens of occupied countries. In Latvia the 15th Waffen-Grenadier Division and the 19th SS Latvian Division were created in 1943. Latvian veterans of these divisions held parades through Riga every year between 1998 and 2002. On March 16 they marched in memory of the battles between these divisions and the Red Army in 1944. On June 15, 1998, the Latvian parliament declared March 16 "Latvian Fighters' Day". This official assignation was rescinded under heavy international pressure on Jan. 13, 2000. The Municipal Council of Riga finally banned the parades in 2003. A sizable proportion of the population regard the SS soldiers as national heroes who fought to free Latvia from the threat of Soviet conquest. The veterans' parades have created an uneasy feeling among many observers about extremist tendencies in the country.

*Sebastian Kaniewski*

## Lebanon

**Capital:** Beirut

**Population:** 3.8 m

Under an unwritten "National Covenant" of 1943, institutional power was allocated between religious groups on the basis of their relative numerical strength. Under the Covenant, the President has been by convention a Maronite Christian, the Prime Minister a Sunni Muslim, and the Speaker of the National Assembly a Shia Muslim. The Covenant likewise decreed that there should be six Christians to every five Muslims in the National Assembly.

This arrangement proved flawed because it could not accommodate changing demographic and political realities. The National Covenant had accorded Christians the dominant political role in Lebanon based on a 1932 census, according to which they constituted 56 per cent of the population. By the mid-1970s, however, it was clear that Muslims were the majority. By the late 1980s it was estimated that Muslims made up 57 per cent of the population (with Sunnis the largest community, followed by Shi'ites and Druse). Christians made up 43 per cent, more than half of whom were Maronite Catholics, followed by Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholic, Armenian (Orthodox and Catholic), Protestants, Syrian Catholics, Latin Catholics, Syrian Orthodox and Chaldean. There was also a very small Jewish community.

Open civil war, principally between Christians and Muslims but with kaleidoscopic re-alignments of factions, broke out in 1975, and continued with varying intensity until 1991, when most militias were forced to disarm. In 1976 a (mainly Syrian) "Arab Deterrent

Force" intervened, but soon became embroiled in the fighting itself. Two main causes of the war were: (i) resentment felt by the Muslim community, and especially Shi'ites, at the concentration of political and economic power in Christian hands; (ii) the presence of large numbers of Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) guerrillas (see entry under Palestinian Entity), who clashed at various times with both Christian and Shi'ite militias.

Israeli forces invaded Lebanon in 1978 and again in much larger numbers in June 1982, with the stated aim of expelling the PLO. After laying siege to Beirut, they staged a phased withdrawal over three years. Israeli forces continued to stage anti-guerrilla operations in the south, where their ally, the South Lebanon Army (SLA), battled for control with the Shi'ite *Hezbollah*. The Syrian army occupied much of eastern and northern Lebanon with the tacit acceptance of Israel and the international community after 1987. After the signing of the Taif Accord by Lebanese parliamentarians in 1989 and subsequent important constitutional reforms, and particularly after the end of the Gulf War in February 1991, Syria extended its influence in Lebanon. It effectively ended the civil war, despite opposition from the renegade Christian General Michel Aoun. His campaign against Syria and the militias began in 1988 and ended in defeat in October 1990. Syria backed the official National Army of Lebanon under General Lahoud, which established control of all the country up to the Israeli controlled buffer zone in the

extreme south.

In 1991 Lebanon signed a "Brotherhood" treaty with Syria, coordinating functions between Lebanese and Syrian ministries. In May the Lebanese government regained control of all ports from militias, a necessary prerequisite for reviving the shattered economy. The first test of the new government was to disarm the militias, starting in Beirut. As an inducement, each of the nine militia heads were offered posts as ministers without portfolios, effectively leaving the confessional system intact.

Former militia fighters were encouraged to join the regular army, though there were problems of sectarian allegiance. At first *Hezbollah* and the PLO in the south refused to surrender arms on the grounds that they were not militias, but "liberation movements" resisting "Israeli aggression".

On Nov. 19, 1991, Terry Waite was freed in Beirut, 1,763 days after being taken captive while trying to negotiate the release of other Western hostages in Lebanon. Waite and an American professor, Thomas Sutherland, who had been held for 2,353 days, were then taken to Damascus and handed over to ambassadors at a press conference at the Syrian foreign ministry. By the end of the month, all the hostages had been freed, opening a new chapter for Lebanese diplomatic relationships.

Constitutional changes were agreed in 1990, within the framework of the 1989 Taif Accord. These amendments increased the executive powers of the (Sunni) Prime Minister and the Cabinet, gave greater powers to the (Shia) Speaker, and reduced the powers of the (Christian) President. The size of the National Assembly was increased from 99 to 108 seats (raised to 128 for the 1992 elections), to ensure equal representation of the Christian and Muslim communities.

No elections to the National Assembly were held from 1972 until 1992, after the end of the civil war. Further elections were held in 1996 and 2000. Powerful individual figures tend to hold the allegiance of loose blocs of MPs. Successive elections were boycotted by many Christians, who accused Syria, as the dominant external power, of rigging elections.

The Prime Minister is Rafiq Hariri, a Sunni Muslim, who held this office from 1992-98, and was re-elected in 2000. He projected himself as "Mr. Lebanon", had dominated political and business life since the civil war and was widely credited with getting the country back on its feet after the devastating 15-year conflict. The President, Emile Lahoud, elected in 1998, is a former head of the army and a close ally of Syria.

Fighting erupted again in June 1999 between Israel and *Hezbollah* guerrillas, following an announcement by Israel's new Prime Minister, Ehud Barak, that he would withdraw Israeli troops stationed in south Lebanon within a year. In May 2000 the Israeli army began a gradual withdrawal, turning over its positions to its Lebanese Christian ally, the SLA, but the SLA collapsed, leading Israel to accelerate its withdrawal, which was completed by late May. After the withdraw-

al of the Israeli Army, the security buffer zone was taken over by *Hezbollah*, backed by Syria, which continues to cause friction along the Israeli border, to the present day, occasionally shelling Israeli army outposts. Syria retains a substantial military presence in the country.

### The Militias

The strongest militias in the period of conflict included the Shi'ite *Amal*, the Christian Phalangist "Lebanese Forces", the Druse Progressive Socialist Party, the Israeli-backed mainly Christian South Lebanon Army, the Iranian-backed Shi'ite *Hezbollah*, and the Sunni Mourabitoun. The regular army was divided along confessional lines. Despite its expulsion by Israel in 1982, the PLO rebuilt its strength in refugee camps in Beirut, Tyre and Sidon, until being somewhat surprisingly forced to disarm in March 1991. In many cases a nominally legal political party had an "illegal" militia.

A number of smaller shadowy armed groups also operated in Lebanon, the most notorious being Islamic Jihad, which was responsible for kidnapping Westerners during the 1980s. In the 1990s the new strength of central government meant the factions had to surrender much of their control in their respective heartlands.

After the Taif Accord of 1989, the only militia not disarmed and still operating is *Hezbollah*. It also functions as a political party within the post-1991 constitutional framework, as do others of the former militias.

### CHRISTIAN GROUPS

#### Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA)

ASALA was founded in Beirut on Oct. 22, 1975, but most of its activities involved attacks on Turkish interests. The 250,000 Armenians in Lebanon stayed neutral in the 1975-76 civil war.

ASALA is no longer an active organization at this time. Its members were expelled by the Israelis from Beirut with the PLO to Syria. There the PLO was said to have begun working against ASALA, and the Al Fatah leader Abu Iyad reportedly gave the French security services details of the activists.

#### Cedar Guardians

This right-wing member of the Lebanese Front was first active during the 1975-76 civil war, and in 1979 clashed with the Tiger Militia of the National Liberal Party. In 1984 it was rumoured that Israeli forces transported units of the Cedar Guardians from central to southern Lebanon. The group opposed the Taif accord, and the Syrian involvement in and occupation of Lebanon. Some members were also in the South Lebanon Army (SLA, see entry).

The group remains politically rather than militarily active as the Lebanese Resistance Movement. It seeks to raise international awareness of conditions in southern Lebanon and to secure the return of refugees and the release of pris-

oners. The group demands freedom from Syrian control in Lebanon and supported the “Syria Accountability Act of 2002”, introduced by US Congressmen Armev and Engel in April 2002.

### Marada Militia

Also known as the Zghorta Liberation Army, the Marada Militia was always pro-Syrian, hence bitter enemies of their Christian rivals, the Phalangists (see separate entry) and particularly the Gemayel family. It was led by Soleiman Franjie, President of Lebanon in 1970-76, and was best known in the early 1980s when it besieged Phalangist strongholds north of Beirut. In early 1986 Marada militiamen provided artillery support to pro-Syrian Phalangist units during fighting with Geagea’s hardline forces. It was dismantled after the Taif Accord.

### National Army of Lebanon

The National Army was constituted after 1990 under General Lahoud as the most powerful single force in Lebanon other than the Syrian army, integrating the disbanding militias into its ranks. Under the leadership of Gen. Michel Aoun, however, the National Army for a time operated as a renegade force. From 1988-90 Aoun ran a maverick campaign against all militias and Syria. In 1987 Syria started establishing its hegemony in the north, with thousands of troops and many tanks taking positions in west Beirut under Brig.-Gen. Ghazy Kenaan. They took advantage of infighting between Samir Geagea, the Phalangist militia commander (see separate entry), and the pro-Syrian Elie Hobeika, in Beirut.

In September 1988 Amin Gemayel’s six-year rule as President ended, with no successor decided on. His final act was to appoint the Maronite Christian Army Commander Gen. Michel Aoun as head of a transitional government. In effect Lebanon now had two rival governments: Aoun’s Christian administration, based in East Beirut, and Selim al-Hoss’s Muslim administration, in West Beirut. Each man called himself “Prime Minister”.

In February 1989 the fragile alliance between Gen. Aoun’s Lebanese Army and Samir Geagea’s Lebanese Forces (LF) broke down. Geagea condemned Aoun for co-operating with Syria; Aoun in turn criticized the LF for illegally taxing anyone who crossed their territory. Aoun’s forces attacked the Phalangist enclave of Jounieh, north of Beirut, and forced the LF to relinquish control of ports.

When intra-Christian fighting abated, Aoun attacked Syrian-backed Muslim and Druse forces in March, blockading their ports and subjecting them to vicious artillery barrages. Iraq, always eager to trump their Syrian rivals, supplied Aoun with arms and openly recognized his regime. In April Aoun called for a “war of liberation” to drive out Syria and stop its “annexation” of Lebanon. This sparked off some of the bloodiest fighting of the 14-year civil war, resulting in 300 dead and 1,200 wounded in a month. Some said that Aoun knew he could not win, but wanted the Arab League, EC and UN to intervene and ensure Syria’s withdrawal. In the event, French, Arab League and Vatican attempts to bring peace only inflamed the situation. The killing on May 16 of Grand Mufti Hassan Khaled, head of the 700,000-strong Sunni community, further set back peace hopes.

In August Aoun repulsed a Syrian assault on Suq-al-Garb, near his Baabda Palace headquarters. Palestinian and Druse militias, plus the rival Shi’ite groupings, *Amal* and *Hezbollah*, formed a joint anti-Aoun Front. Meanwhile, France urged Israeli and Syrian withdrawal and new political reforms to bring peace – though the anti-Aounists were sure France meant only to protect the Christian enclave, as it had historically done.

On Sept. 16, 1989, the Arab League fashioned a peace plan in the Saudi Arabian city of Taif. A fortnight later 31 Christian and 31 Muslim MPs of the Lebanese National Assembly, who had last met in 1972, accepted it. The plan, drafted by an Arab League “troika” of Saudi King Fahd, Moroccan King Hassan and Algerian President Chadli Benjedid, demanded: (i) an immediate ceasefire, to be supervised by a five-member security committee consisting of the leading warring militias; (ii) political reforms, including giving more power to the Sunni Prime Minister, ending sectarianism in the Lebanese Army and civil service, and increasing the number of MPs to better reflect Lebanon’s demographic balance.

Syria and the militias accepted the plan and the two superpowers declared their support; but Aoun only half accepted it as it made no mention of Syrian withdrawal. The ceasefire formally came into effect on Sept. 23, 1989, and on Oct. 22 the National Assembly endorsed the Taif Accord.

The “troika” added an annex designed to assuage Christian fears: Syrian forces would “end their security mission within a period of not more than two years” (in fact they are still there 14 years later). Aoun denounced the accord as a betrayal of Lebanese sovereignty, reserving special venom for the “treacherous” Christian MPs. Geagea accepted the Syrian-backed accord. He was joined by other members of the Maronite elite, including Phalangist Party president Georges Sa’adah, National Liberal Party president Dany Cham’oun and the Maronite Patriarch, Nasrallah Sfeir. Sunni leaders were also satisfied, but *Amal*, *Hezbollah* and the Druse had reservations.

A Maronite President, René Mouawad, was elected on Nov. 4, 1989, but was killed 18 days later by a huge bomb in West Beirut. Syria blamed Aoun, but he denied such charges. On Nov. 28 he was dismissed as C.-in-C. of the Lebanese Army and replaced by Gen. Emile Lahud, but he retained the loyalty of many troops, both Muslim and Christian. Gen. Aoun also received unexpected support from French MPs and the LF, although the Defence Ministry suspended the salaries of Aoun loyalists in December.

When Syria did not attack Baabda, Aoun tried to consolidate his power by getting the LF to disband. When they refused to do so he attacked them in February 1990, but was surprised at their dogged resistance. He rejected Maronite Patriarch Sfeir’s attempts to make peace between the Christian rivals, and on March 29 actually shelled the Patriarch’s Palace. By June the sides had fought themselves to a stalemate, leaving over 1,000 dead. On Sept. 28 National Army troops loyal to President Hrawi replaced LF militiamen at the crossing points to Aoun’s Baabda enclave and southern Beirut, and imposed a crippling blockade.

The end came quickly for Aoun. On Oct. 1 masked gunmen killed civilian supporters of Aoun near Death River; on Oct. 13 Syrian artillery bombarded Baabda as Gen. Lahud’s

soldiers overran the enclave, accompanied by Hobeika's pro-Syrian Phalangists. Some 800 died in a brutal takeover, full of atrocities. France granted Aoun and his family asylum in their embassy. On Oct. 15 Syria dismantled the Green Line separating Muslim and Christian Beirut, and the three main militias agreed to withdraw.

Initially, Aoun had held out against the odds; for two years he defied the might of Syria. The crowning irony is that it was his very resistance that gave Damascus the pretext to intervene. It also hastened the Taif Accord which effectively abolished the Christian pre-eminence Aoun strove to preserve, and united the warring militias. The Kuwaiti crisis provided the opportunity; for with Syria in the anti-Iraqi coalition, France withdrew its support for Aoun, allowing Syrian President Assad a free hand to destroy the renegade General.

Aoun has been in exile in France since that time. He has been a vocal critic of Syria's presence in Lebanon, a cause supported by many Lebanese in the Diaspora. He has recently been mentioned as a possible presidential candidate to replace the incumbent, General Lahoud. Syria remains opposed to Aoun's return to Lebanon and that of others who support his call for a total withdrawal of all Syrian troops from Lebanon. Syria has, however, been weakened by the toppling of the Ba'thist regime in neighboring Iraq. Mounting US pressure for reform at home and Lebanese unease about the continuing presence of Syrian troops are generating pressures for an eventual Syrian withdrawal.

### **Phalangist Militia (Lebanese Forces, LF)**

With an estimated 10,000 active soldiers in 1990, the Lebanese Forces, or armed wing of the Phalangist Party, emerged at the end of the civil war as the largest military force apart from the Syrians and the National Army itself. The Party was formed in 1936 as a right-wing Maronite grouping under the leadership of Pierre Gemayel. In later times they were the key partner in a Lebanese Front of conservative Christian groupings.

After fierce fighting between the (Christian officered) Lebanese army and PLO in April-May 1973, the Phalangists spearheaded the creation of unofficial armed units, known as the *Kataeb*. At the time Pierre Gemayel demanded a referendum to forbid PLO guerrillas to operate from Lebanon. (Under the Cairo Agreement of 1969, the Lebanese Government had authorized Palestinians to establish camps in Lebanon and launch attacks on Israel.)

There was sporadic fighting, but it was a bus storming incident near the Tal Zaatar Palestinian camp outside Beirut in April 1975 which propelled the country into full civil war. Soon *Kataeb* and its allies faced a coalition of PLO and leftist Lebanese Muslims. Under the leadership of Bashir Gemayel (youngest son of Pierre) *Kataeb* gained the support of the mainly Syrian Arab Deterrent Force in 1975-76. Even so, Phalangists remained opposed to Syrian hegemony and saw the alliance as a short-term expedient.

By the late 1970s, the Phalangists also fought with the neutral Armenian community, and especially with their former allies, the Tiger Militia (armed wing of Camille Chamoun's National Liberal Party, NLP). Following very heavy clashes between the NLP and *Kataeb* in Christian east Beirut in May 1979, the two formed a joint military com-

mand, but it lasted barely a year.

In October 1980 the Phalangists claimed to have purged the suburb of Ain Rumaneh of NLP groups, thus establishing control over east Beirut where they levied taxes (a common militia practice). In 1981 they began buying large amounts of weapons from Britain, France, West Germany and Israel. The Phalangists also co-operated with the Israelis besieging Beirut in mid-1982, in a common effort to rid the city of PLO military units.

Bashir Gemayel was about to be sworn in as President when he was assassinated on Sept. 14, 1982. Two days later Phalangist militia entered the Sabra and Chatila Palestinian refugee camps (which were nominally under the control of the Israeli army). This revenge operation was meant to "purge" the area of enemy units, but it soon turned into a full-scale massacre in which possibly more than 700 died. An Israeli independent judicial inquiry found that the Phalangists carried out the massacre but Israeli commanders bore responsibility for not preventing it. A Lebanese government report of June 1983, however, absolved the Phalangist Party and militia of any guilt in ordering the atrocities. Relations with Israel began to deteriorate soon afterwards; a Phalangist radio station began to refer to Israelis as "foreign occupiers".

The period 1983-84 saw *Kataeb* lose ground to Druse fighters of the Progressive Socialist Party (PSP, see separate entry) in the Chouf Valley, despite help from Christian sectors in the Lebanese Army. In early 1985 a Druse, *Amal* and PLO coalition drove them out of Sidon. Syria brokered a peace agreement between rival factions in August 1984, and in October Fouad Abou Nader, a grandson of Pierre Gemayel (who died the same month) replaced Fady Frem as Lebanese Forces commander.

Later that year Samir Geagea replaced Nader, and in March 1985 he launched a rebellion against the Phalangist political command, accusing it of being subservient to Syria. He also attacked Muslim positions around Sidon, but was repulsed by Druse, *Amal* and Sunni Mourabitoun fighters. In May Geagea was dismissed and replaced by Elie Hobeika, the 27-year-old reputed instigator of the Sabra and Chatila massacre. Hobeika was close to Syria and with its help forged a truce between Phalangist and Muslim militias late in 1985. Immediately Geagea led a faction against Hobeika and his new allies in the Syrian National Socialist Party and Marada, decisively defeating them and reclaiming leadership of the militia. In August 1986 Hobeika returned from exile in Syria, but failed to budge Geagea. Fighting in east Beirut continued into 1987, with Syria taking advantage of the violent split in the *Kataeb* to cement her own hegemony in Northern Lebanon.

In September 1988 outgoing President Gemayel appointed the Christian Commander of the National Army, Gen. Michel Aoun, as his provisional successor in east Beirut. At first Geagea accused Aoun of kow-towing to Syria, but soon it was Aoun who became Syria's *bête noir*. In February 1989 the fragile alliance between Gen. Aoun and Samir Geagea broke down, with the former criticizing the militia for illegally taxing anyone who crossed their territory. The National Army attacked the LF enclave of Jounieh in northern Beirut, and forced it to relinquish control of ports.

In early 1989 Iraq wooed Geagea with weapons, but



Geagea nonetheless accepted the Syrian backed Arab League Taif Accord on Oct. 22, 1989. He was joined by other members of the Maronite elite, including Phalangist Party President Georges Sa'adah, National Liberal Party president Dany Chamoun and the Maronite Patriarch, Nasrallah Sfeir. By rejecting the accord, Aoun antagonized these leaders. The Maronite lawyer Rene Mouawad was elected President (after Georges Sa'adah withdrew from the contest) on Nov. 5, 1989, but died in a massive bomb blast during a motorcade in Beirut, on Nov. 22. The pro-Syrian Maronite from the Bekaa, Elias Hrawi, replaced him. At once Prime Minister Selim al-Hoss sacked Gen. Aoun as Army Commander-in-Chief, and a Syrian military build-up threatened to overthrow him. Geagea said his 6,000 militiamen would back Aoun if attacked.

When Syria did not attack, Aoun turned again on Geagea in February 1990. About 600 died in heavy fighting, with the LF expelling Army forces from Adma, their only enclave in the northern LF territories, despite being outnumbered and outgunned by Aoun. Patriarch Sfeir organized a ceasefire, but it collapsed in March, with Aoun regaining some ground. On April 3 Geagea belatedly recognized the Hrawi government and invited the (official) Army to send troops to LF areas. Georges Sa'adah had resigned from the government, but returned on June 5.

Aoun was more isolated than before after rejecting Hrawi's peace overtures in July. Meanwhile, the LF had managed to hold on to their bases in Jounieh and Jubail north of Beirut, and Ashrafieh and Karantina in east Beirut. In late September a blockade against Aoun's enclave sapped Aoun's strength. On Oct. 1 the LF was blamed for massacring pro-Aoun demonstrators near Death River, Beirut. Aoun was defeated on Oct. 15, mainly by Syrian forces and pro-Syrian Phalangists led by Elie Hobeika.

On Oct. 24, 1990, the LF agreed to disband its forces but did not withdraw from Metn, east Beirut, citing the presence there of Hobeika's rival forces, "Executive Committee of LF – The Promise". Under Syrian pressure Hobeika gave up his positions to the LF. According to the Greater Beirut Security Plan, Prime Minister al-Hoss handed over to Umar Karami (brother of a previous Prime Minister) on Dec. 19. Neither Geagea nor Sa'adah joined the Cabinet, in protest at the presence of pro-Syrian ministers, Elie Hobeika, Minister Michel al-Murr (defence) and Minister Maj.-Gen. Sami al-Khatib (interior).

Perhaps the once proudly independent Geagea felt he had lost respect in the Maronite community; or perhaps he feared for his security. Whatever the case, he declined the seat that was offered to him, and after officially resigning on March 20, 1991, it went to Roger Dib, a close aide and Phalangist leader. The Karami government promised to incorporate "unemployed" militiamen into a non-confessional army. The LF was wary of Palestinian units in south Beirut, but did start disarming on April 30, 1991. Dib acceded to the Lebanese-Syrian Friendship Treaty of May 22, thus ending a chapter of Phalangist-Syrian enmity.

Elie Hobeika was twice elected to parliament in the 1990s and served as a minister until 2000. He was killed by a car bomb in Beirut on Jan. 24, 2002. No group claimed responsibility but Lebanese President Emile Lahoud immediately alleged that Hobeika had been killed to prevent him

testifying in a possible court case in Belgium concerning Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's role in the 1982 Sabra and Chatila massacre (Sharon having been Israeli Defence Minister at that time).

The Phalangists have for all intents and purposes lost their military and political clout. However, their ability to organize and mobilize must not be underestimated. They have the resources, the cadres and the support with the potential to re-assert themselves in the event of a Syrian withdrawal. Nonetheless the days when they could manipulate Lebanese politics with limited opposition are long gone.

### South Lebanon Army (SLA)

This largely Christian Israeli-backed militia was set up by Maj. Saad Haddad, a former Lebanese army officer, ostensibly to defend Christian inhabited areas of southern Lebanon against Syrian and Palestinian attack.

In February 1978 Maj. Haddad announced a "government-in-exile" in the south, and declared the Syrians to be invaders. Israeli forces invaded the area in March 1978, and when they left in June entrusted it to Haddad's control. By April 1979 Haddad felt confident enough to declare an "independent free Lebanese state", and called on the then Lebanese President Elias Sarkis to resign. The Lebanese government accused him of treason and discharged him from the army. No state accepted his declaration of independence, and the UN Security Council repeatedly condemned the illegality of his "de facto force". Over the next few years the Haddad militia clashed sporadically with units of the UN's peace-keeping Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).

Haddad expanded his territorial claims after Israel's June 1982 invasion. In its December negotiations with Lebanon, Israel insisted that the militia be accorded a security role in the demilitarized zone they sought (and got) in southern Lebanon. The Haddad Militia was implicated in the Sabra and Chatila massacre (see entry under Phalangist Militia), but nothing was conclusively proven.

Maj. Haddad died on Jan. 14, 1984. Ten days earlier the Lebanese government had reinstated him with full rights as an army officer. His successor as commander of the South Lebanon Army (as it was now known) was Col. (now Maj.-Gen) Antoine Lahad. A former National Liberal Party member and army commander of the northern region until 1983, Lahad initially enjoyed the patronage of the Lebanese government. To justify this new-found legitimacy, the SLA recruited members of the local Shi'ite community, though many of them subsequently deserted to join *Amal* or *Hezbollah* (see separate entries). Meanwhile the withdrawing Israeli army transferred control of its bases to the SLA, and supplied them with arms and medical supplies. The SLA in turn patrolled a six-mile-wide "security zone" strip of land north of the Israeli border, thus preventing PLO cross-border raids into Israel.

Beirut soon became disenchanted with Lahad too, and sanctioned attacks on the SLA by Muslim fighters of the "Lebanese National Resistance" (a collective name loosely applied to groups fighting Israeli occupation). The SLA also repeatedly clashed with *Amal*, UNIFIL, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), Lebanese Communists and *Hezbollah* (the latter proving the most dan-



gerous foe, for their use of suicide car-bombs). Eighty-four SLA men were killed in 1986, and Israel had to provide artillery and air support for the militia. The SLA responded with atrocities, like that against the Shi'ite village of At-Tiri in February 1987, and by detaining hundreds of captured *Hezbollah* fighters in bad conditions at Khiam jail. Israel also helped pay SLA salaries, which they increased in 1987 to prevent defections (*Hezbollah* troops had received three times as much), and provided the SLA with captured Soviet-built tanks.

The following years were somewhat quieter, as Shi'ite, Palestinian and Christian militias fought amongst themselves in Beirut and Sidon. However, by 1990 the SLA won international notoriety by killing two UNIFIL soldiers in February. The SLA played no part in the Taif agreements, but felt new pressure as Shi'ite and Palestinian militias started returning south after being forced out of Beirut (according to the new Syrian-backed security plan).

Following the final Israeli withdrawal from south Lebanon in 2000, the SLA collapsed and its members and their families fled to Israel. Since then a few of its members who chose to return and re-settle in Lebanon have been permitted to return under strict amnesty conditions negotiated between the main political forces.

### **Tiger Militia**

Once the second strongest force in the (Christian) Lebanese Front, the Tigers (or military wing of the National Liberal Party, NLP) was largely a spent force by the end of the civil war. This was especially so after the assassination on Oct. 26, 1990, of NLP President Dany Chamoun, a supporter of the militantly anti-Syrian Gen. Aoun. Following the Taif Accord, this militia was disbanded.

## **MUSLIM GROUPS**

### **Amal (Hope)**

*Amal* was set up in 1979 as the military wing of the Shi'ite community's political movement. Until then the traditionally underprivileged Shi'ites had adopted a quietist position and stayed out of the civil war. However, after their spiritual leader, Imam Moussa Sadr, disappeared in mysterious circumstances during a visit to Libya in August 1978, *Amal* began to attack Palestinians and leftists.

In time their list of enemies included pro-Iraqis (like the Lebanese Communist Party and Ba'ath Party), separatist Christians (especially in the south – see entry on South Lebanon Army) and by mid-1982, Israeli forces. By this stage the group, which received ever-increasing backing from Iran, numbered 30,000 fighters, making it the biggest non-Palestinian militia in Lebanon after the Phalangists. During 1982-85 *Amal* spearheaded the "Lebanese National Resistance", which also included PLO units and the newer Shi'ite *Hezbollah* movement. What united them was opposition to Israeli forces in the south. Their hallmark was the use of suicide car bombs.

*Amal* and Druse fighters drove the Lebanese army out of west Beirut in February 1984; it probably reached the zenith of its power in March 1985 when they did the same to the Phalangists east of Sidon. Nabi Berri held a cabinet post, and set up a National Unity Front with the Druse Progres-

sive Socialist Party (PSP, see entry) to end the civil strife. At this stage Iran began shifting support to *Hezbollah*, as *Amal* moved closer to Syria. At the latter's request, *Amal* besieged the Palestinian camps of Bourj al-Barajneh, Sabra and Chatila, from May to July 1985, and again in 1986 and 1987, to nip in the bud a resurgence of PLO military strength. The resultant bloody fighting only lost *Amal* the support of former allies, the Sunni Mourabitoun, Communists, Syrian National Socialist Party and especially the Druse PSP. In February 1987 this coalition drove *Amal* from its west Beirut bases, and only Syria's direct intervention saved it.

In the south it was a similar story: in 1985 many Shi'ite SLA troops deserted to join *Amal*, yet by 1986 *Amal* was losing influence to the better-paid and more daring *Hezbollah* fighters. Some speculated that *Amal* had a secret agreement with Israel based on their mutual dislike of the PLO. Certainly, *Amal* sought respectability, as instanced by Berri's cabinet diplomacy and *Amal*'s support for UNIFIL troops in the south.

In late 1987 the two Shi'ite forces clashed at Nabatiyeh, south of Beirut. In December 1988 *Amal* signed a peace deal with the PLO; this sparked off new clashes with *Hezbollah* in south Beirut and Iqlim al-Tuffah, south Lebanon, in early 1989. Under a Damascus peace accord, *Hezbollah* recognized *Amal*'s primacy in the south; but fighting between the rivals continued during 1990 in west Beirut and spread to the Bekaa Valley by July. *Hezbollah* used car bombs to kill *Amal* military commander Ayyad Ayyad and politbureau member Haj Hassan Malak in April and May. *Amal* found a new ally in the PLO's Fatah group (something that changed after the Oslo Accords between Israel and the PLO, *Amal* toeing the Syrian line).

By November 1990 both *Amal* and *Hezbollah* were forced to leave Beirut for the south, where they made way for regular Lebanese Army units – the result of a rapprochement between their respective backers, Syria and Iran. By December 1990 Israeli pressure from the south presented them with a common threat. On April 30, 1991, *Amal* disarmed by the agreed deadline.

*Amal* has, however, been re-invented into an effective political party with many members in parliament (standing for election in 2000 as part of a bloc with *Hezbollah*) and its leader, Nabi Berri, being one of Lebanon's three key political figures, as the Speaker of Parliament.

### **Arab Commando Cells**

A note in the name of this group was found near the bodies of three kidnap victims, two British and one American, in April, 1986. The secretive group was thought to be run from Libya. Today it is non-existent.

### **Arab Red Knights (ARK)**

This was the militia of the Arab Democratic Party, based in Tripoli and representing the interests of the Alawite Muslim Lebanese population. As the Alawite sect dominates the Syrian government, the ARK had close ties with Damascus. Its chief enemy was *Tawheed* (see separate entry), the fundamentalist Sunni militia, whom it finally defeated in December 1986 after allying with the Syrian National Socialist Party, Ba'ath Party, and Lebanese Communist Party. This

party is today of no significance.

### Armed Struggle Cells

This is the name of the group claiming to have abducted the former RAF fighter pilot and UK resident of Beirut, Jackie Mann, on May 12, 1989. They no longer exist.

### Ba'ath Party

A Lebanese wing of the ruling "Arab socialist" party in Syria, this group maintained a small militia in areas of Lebanon under Syrian influence. It took part in fighting against the Islamic Unification Movement's *Tawheed* militia (see separate entry) in Tripoli in December 1986. The party has members in the current National Assembly, and is regarded as a beneficiary of the Taif Accord. The party is increasingly losing members and losing credibility, especially as more Lebanese, especially on the Christian side, today seem to hold hostile views towards what they regard as the occupation of Lebanon by Ba'athist Syria.

### Hezbollah ("Party of God")

*Leadership. Sheikh Fadlallah (spiritual leader); Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah (secretary-general)*

*Hezbollah* emerged in the early 1980s to become the chief fundamentalist Shi'ite movement in Lebanon, and as such the arch-rival of the more "moderate" *Amal* (see separate entry). Its stance was militantly anti-Western and pro-Iranian, and it took responsibility for numerous kidnappings, car bombs and other violence. A curious ambiguity typified the organization: its spiritual leader, Sheikh Fadlallah, often condemning acts of kidnapping or assassination perpetrated by Hezbollah's operative affiliates, Islamic Jihad and Islamic Amal (see separate entries). Such Islamic theological dualism is called *taqqiyah*, meaning "to approve of something contradictory to your faith if the need arises".

Hezbollah's own militia was well paid and well organized, thanks largely to Iranian sponsorship. The group is thought to have had 5,000 men under arms in 1990—the same as *Amal*. The two groups were allies in the so-called Lebanese National Resistance against Israel and its ally, the SLA, in southern Lebanon in 1984. By 1985, however, their paths diverged. *Hezbollah* gained support in the south at *Amal*'s expense, and this led to open clashes between the two, both there and in Muslim west Beirut.

In March 1985 unidentified car-bombers tried but failed to kill Sheikh Fadlallah in Beirut. *Hezbollah* supporters demonstrated against the government in Sidon, and formed an alliance with the PLO, to the exclusion of *Amal*. (When the latter, acting in league with Syria, attacked Palestinian camps in Beirut, *Hezbollah* stepped up its attacks on the moderates). During 1986 *Hezbollah* also clashed with UNIFIL peacekeeping forces in the south, and set up links with fellow fundamentalists, the Sunni *Tawheed* militia (see separate entry) in the north. From early 1984 *Hezbollah* was associated with a series of kidnappings of Westerners, and in June 1985 with the hijacking of a TWA airliner to Beirut.

The movement rejected a Syrian-mediated peace deal reached between Phalangists, *Amal* and the Progressive Socialist Party in 1985, and clashed with Syrian troops in the Bekaa Valley in June 1986. In an apparent change of heart,

*Hezbollah* fighters then agreed to withdraw from the streets of west Beirut, opening a door to a Syrian peacekeeping force in August.

*Hezbollah* leaders met Terry Waite, the Archbishop of Canterbury's special envoy, in January 1987, who was subsequently kidnapped. Although the movement denied holding him, it claimed it had warned him not to get involved in an American "arms-for-hostages" deal. Waite remained in captivity until November 1991.

Ever since Islamic Jihad's claimed car-bombing of Israeli military headquarters in Tyre in 1983, *Hezbollah* bases were singled out for punishment by Israeli forces, who soon regarded the group as a more dangerous foe than even the PLO. In July 1989 Israel abducted the Shi'ite cleric, Sheikh Abdul Karim Obeid, and 200 other *Hezbollah* supporters.

Fighting flared between *Hezbollah* and *Amal* in 1990, both in west Beirut and in the Bekaa Valley. The former was accused of the car bomb killings of *Amal* military commander Ayyad Ayyad and politbureau member Haj Hassan Malak.

On Feb. 16, 1992, Abbas Mousawi, the *Hezbollah* secretary-general, was killed in a lightning air attack in South Lebanon by the Israeli Defence Forces. Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah won a power struggle for the succession, his defeated rival, Hassan Tufayli setting up a breakaway political group in the late 1990s.

In 1996 *Hezbollah* survived a major Israeli assault known as Operation Grapes of Wrath. It continued to engage in sporadic clashes with Israeli forces until the latter evacuated their security zone in south Lebanon in 2000.

Today *Hezbollah*, backed by Syria, remains strong in south Lebanon and despite the withdrawal by Israeli troops, there is ongoing tension on the border. *Hezbollah* were the only militia not required to disarm by the Taif accord, which it did not explicitly support but accepted as a "bridge to internal peace" in Lebanon. *Hezbollah* has built itself as a political and social force in Lebanon, running schools and health services (with the aid of Iranian funding), and developing links to the Christian community and to a considerable degree allaying earlier fears that it wanted an Iranian style theocracy. It contested the 1996 and 2000 parliamentary elections in combination with *Amal*, the Bloc taking 23 seats in 2000, of which nine belonged to *Hezbollah*. It nonetheless retains its military dimension, maintaining forces and large stockpiles of missiles on the Israeli border.

After the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the USA, the US government on Nov. 2 called on Lebanon to freeze Hezbollah's assets, but Lebanon refused to comply, reflecting the group's domestic political significance. *Hezbollah* leader, Nasrallah, claimed that he had rejected a "secret offer" from the USA to "forgive the past" if *Hezbollah* ended its hostile activities against Israel. In May 2003 the US ambassador in Beirut demanded that Lebanon should end Hezbollah's presence on the Israeli border.

### Iranian Revolutionary Guards

Iranian Revolutionary Guards were active in Lebanon in the latter stages of the civil war. They supported the operations of *Hezbollah* and its affiliates. The group has decreased its direct presence in Lebanon. Iran continues to provide support to *Hezbollah* but has found more indirect means of

channeling support, including military, to *Hezbollah*.

### **Islamic Amal**

Hussain Mussavi founded this group in 1982 after being expelled from the command council of *Amal* (see separate entry), where he repeatedly clashed over policy with more moderate leaders like Nabi Berri. The movement based itself in Baalbek in the eastern Bekaa Valley, coming under the general *Hezbollah* umbrella. The group had often strained relations with Syria, and in May 1986 there were armed clashes as Syrian troops tried to impose control.

The group still survives with a much diminished influence but many of its members have left the group or joined other political groups and parties.

### **Islamic Jihad (Al Jihad al-Islami – Islamic Holy War)**

Islamic Jihad functioned during the civil war as a tight-knit and secretive fundamentalist organization whose name is invoked whenever Shi'ites attack Western interests in Lebanon. Its leadership came from the Mughniyah clan, members of whom were among 17 Shi'ites imprisoned in Kuwait following bomb attacks there in December 1983.

The group had ties with *Hezbollah* and Islamic Amal, regarding Sheikh Muhammad Husain Fadlallah as a spiritual mentor. Islamic Jihad also had strong ideological links with Iran, which nurtured through a network of mullahs—Sheikhs Mohammed Haidar and Ibrahim Aakid in Beirut, and Sheikh Abbas Mussavi (see Islamic Amal entry) in Baalbek. Abdul Hadi Hamadi and Hassan Essedine at times led factions within the Jihad, which may explain inconsistencies in policy on hijacking and kidnapping.

The name was first used by a caller to a Beirut news agency claiming responsibility for the bombing of the US embassy in west Beirut in April 1983, which claimed 50 American and Lebanese lives. On Oct. 24 Islamic Jihad was one of three groups which claimed to have launched the suicide car bombings of the US and French headquarters of their respective contingents in the multinational peacekeeping forces, west Beirut. The incidents occurred virtually simultaneously, and killed 246 US servicemen and 56 French paratroopers. In a similar event, Islamic Jihad attacked Israeli military headquarters in Tyre, south Lebanon, killing 50 soldiers.

Seldom have terrorist actions had such a devastating political effect, all the more significant in view of the newness of the group. Within months US, French, and Israeli forces began to leave Lebanon. In early 1984 Islamic Jihad duly adopted a new policy of kidnapping. When Imad Mughniyah's brother-in-law, Youssif Badreddine, was arrested with 16 companions in Kuwait for bombing, the Jihad captured several Americans in Beirut and offered to swap them for the 17.

One victim, the former CIA Beirut station head William Buckley, died in captivity in 1985, reportedly after torture; in 1986 the group executed a French hostage, Michel Seurat. Terry Waite, the Archbishop of Canterbury's special envoy, was believed to have been negotiating for the release of hostages when he himself was taken captive, on Jan. 20, 1987.

On April 30, 1990, Frank Reed, the US director of the Lebanese International College, captured by the Jihad in

September 1986, was released by an affiliate, the Islamic Dawn Organization. The same group released the British-Irish teacher, Brian Keenan, kidnapped in April 1986, on Aug. 24, 1990.

### **Islamic Jihad for the Liberation of Palestine (IJLP)**

This group carried out kidnappings of Westerners in Lebanon in the late 1980s. From the early to the late 1990s it operated from offices in Khartoum and received funding from a few Arab regimes. It appears on the US list of terrorist groups issued after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in the USA. Most of their operations are targeted against Israelis, including civilians, in the Occupied Territories. Israel has since 2001 been carrying out a campaign of so-called "targeted assassinations" against its main operatives (military) and leaders (political).

### **Mourabitoun Militia**

Active in the early days of the civil war as the chief representative of the Sunni community, their enemies numbered the Christian Tiger militia and Lebanese Forces, as well as Kurds. They received arms from Libya but declined in power during 1984-87, first being driven out of their Beirut strongholds by Jumblatt's Druse Progressive Socialist Party (PSP), then losing the initiative to Shi'ite groups like *Amal* and *Hezbollah*. It no longer exists.

### **Moussa Sadr Brigades**

This group kidnapped Libyan diplomats in June and July of 1984, and hijacked a Jordanian aircraft to demand that Palestinians leave their camps in Beirut. The force was dedicated to the memory of *Amal* spiritual leader, Moussa Sadr, who disappeared in Libya in 1978. The group has not existed for a long time.

### **Nasserite Popular Organization**

In January 1987 this mainly Sunni group, named after former Egyptian President and Pan-Arab nationalist Gamel Nasser, absorbed the Arab Socialist Union. The latter was a member of the National Democratic Front organized by Druse leader Walid Jumblatt. The NPO had ties with the Syrian-based Palestinian National Salvation Front, and in July 1987 joined a new pro-Syrian alliance, the "Unification and Liberation Front". The group is today nearly extinct without any influence and with a very negligible membership.

### **Organization of the Oppressed of the Earth**

This small group attacked members of Beirut's dwindling Jewish community in 1985-86. In late 1985 it said it had killed a victim to protest the South Lebanon Army's (SLA – see separate entry) detention of Shi'ites in Khiam. In December 1986 it killed three Jews whom it described as "spies" for Israel.

On Feb. 17, 1988, a US Marines officer, Lt.-Col. William Higgins, was kidnapped south of Tyre by the Organization; two days later it claimed he was a CIA agent. On July 28, 1989, Israeli forces abducted Sheikh Abdel-Karim Obeid, a Shi'ite cleric and *Hezbollah* sympathizer, who, they said, had masterminded Higgins' capture. Two days later the Organization threatened to kill Higgins unless the sheikh

was freed. After a 24-hour deadline expired Israel offered to free 150 Lebanese Shi'ites in exchange for 20 foreign hostages and three Israeli soldiers detained in Lebanon. The Organization rejected this and issued a macabre videotape, purportedly of Higgins being hanged. This act sparked off condemnation around the world, including in Iran.

This organization has ceased to exist.

### Popular Liberation Army

This pro-Syrian Sunni militia based in Sidon took over PLO positions after that organization worked out a ceasefire with *Amal* in October 1986. After a period of neutrality, they opposed the *Tawheed* militia and clashed with the PLO's Fatah in late 1989. They have been disarmed and dismantled since the early 1990s.

### Progressive Socialist Party (PSP)

*Leadership. Walid Jumblatt (president)*

Walid Jumblatt is Lebanon's archetypal survivor. He epitomizes the resilience of Lebanon's Druse ethno-religious community in defending their heartland, the Chouf mountain area east of Beirut. In 1990 he had up to 10,000 active troops under his command, as well as an influential role within the revived National Assembly; though, pragmatic as ever, he agreed to disarm his militia by the deadline of April 30, 1991.

Walid's father, the clan leader Kamal Jumblatt, had founded the PSP in 1949, and Walid took over after Kamal's assassination in 1977. He maintained close ties with Syria. In the 1975-76 civil war the PSP fought against the (Christian) Phalangists in alliance with other Muslim groups, and played a key role in founding the Lebanese National Movement. When Israel withdrew from the Chouf mountains, the PSP fought for control with regular army units in September 1983. They held their positions, despite heavy bombardments from offshore US battleships and French warplanes. In October Jumblatt set up a local Druse administration there, but it was denounced by the Beirut government as Syria's "fifth column" in Lebanon.

Jumblatt turned his attention to mainstream politics, winning a Cabinet post as Public Works Minister in 1984. From this vantage point he forged a number of alliances, including the National Democratic Front with *Amal* and other parties opposed to President Gemayel. At the same time he used military force to clear south Beirut of Phalangists and west Beirut of the Sunni Mourabitoun. In early 1985 PSP and PLO units defeated Samir Geagea's Lebanese Forces east of Sidon. When *Amal* began besieging Palestinian camps in May, however, Jumblatt backed Arafat's PLO. Despite his obvious Palestinian sympathies, it is notable that Jumblatt never took on Israel directly, possibly because he did not want his troops to have to fight fellow Druse in the Israeli army.

During 1986 the PSP became increasingly allied with the PLO and former enemies, the Mourabitoun, against Nabi Berri's *Amal*. Only the entry of Syrian troops into Beirut ended the PSP – *Amal* fighting. Thereafter, all three formed an alliance against a new mutual enemy, the renegade Gen. Aoun (see under National Army of Lebanon). In March 1989 Christian and Druse militias shelled each other's ports, north and south of Beirut. Jumblatt saw in the September Taif Accord a welcome guarantee against Aoun's ambitions, but soon grew disenchanted at the superficiality of its reforms.

The PSP kept out of the fighting between the Shi'ite rivals, *Amal* and *Hezbollah* in 1990. Similarly, the PSP objected to the blockade imposed against Aoun's enclave and intra-Christian fighting between Aoun and the LF. The PSP played no role in Aoun's defeat in October 1990.

The PSP remains influential politically, with Jumblatt serving as a minister in successive administrations. In 2002 its leadership sparked off a debate on the status of the Syrian forces in Lebanon, drawing severe criticism from Damascus.

### Syrian Social National Party (SSNP)

The SSNP (also referred to as the **Syrian National Socialist Party, SNSP**) is a small Lebanese organization which believes that the country should be considered as part of "Greater Syria" (as was the case during the Ottoman Empire). Its own militia was not strong in the civil war, but in alliance with other parties, and especially the Syrian Army, it achieved some success.

In 1984 it joined Jumblatt's National Democratic Front, and in 1986 it provided armed cover for Hobeika's rebel pro-Syrian Lebanese Forces (LF) against Geagea's mainstream. As part of a Syrian-backed alliance, it helped destroy the *Tawheed* in Tripoli in December 1986. In 1987 Juban Jaysh deposed Isam Mahayri, but was in turn defeated by Dawoud Baz, the current leader. The party played a key role in defeating General Aoun in October 1990. The party owes its survival to Syrian patronage. Its future remains clouded by its close alliance with Syria at a time when many Lebanese groups have started to question Syria's presence in Lebanon.

### Tawheed

Tawheed was the armed wing of the fundamentalist Sunni group, the Islamic Unification Movement led by Sheikh Sa'ad Shaban. It enjoyed considerable power in Tripoli until it was crushed in bloody fighting by a Syrian-backed alliance of the Arab Red Knights (ARK), the SSNP, the Lebanese Communist Party and the Ba'ath Party in 1986. The group originated in a specific context of civil war and alliances and counter alliances. It has not survived politically.

## LEFT-WING MOVEMENTS

### Lebanese Armed Revolutionary Factions (Brigades) (Factions armées révolutionnaires libanaises, FARL or LARF)

This Maronite Marxist group tried to kill the American chargé d'affaires in Paris in 1981 and the next year killed the US deputy military attaché, Lt.Col. Ray, there. In 1984 it claimed it was the group which murdered the head of the Sinai Multinational Force in Rome.

The alleged leader of LARF, Georges Ibrahim Abdallah, was sentenced to life imprisonment in February 1987 for complicity in the murder of Ray, an Israeli diplomat in Paris, and the attempted murder of the US consul-general in Strasbourg in 1984. Abdallah earlier received four years for arms possession. LARF was thought to be behind the Committee of Solidarity with Arab and Middle Eastern Prisoners, which launched a bombing campaign in Paris in September 1986 to try to obtain Abdallah's release.

LARF no longer exists.



### **Lebanese Communist Party (Parti communiste libanais, LCP)**

The LCP began life in 1924 as a liberation group committed to ending the French occupation of Lebanon. It was only recognized by law in 1972, and three years later joined the civil war on the side of pro-Palestinian Muslim leftists. In 1981 and 1986, it clashed with *Amal* in the south, and with *Tawheed* (see separate entries) in Tripoli, in 1983.

In October 1984 the LCP joined the new National Democratic Front, launched by Walid Jumblatt. The party claimed responsibility for the suicide bombing of the "Voice of

Hope" radio station, 2 km north of the Israeli border. It was also partly responsible for the demolition of the Sunni *Tawheed* near Tripoli in 1986. In December 1989 Israeli aircraft destroyed the LCP's southern headquarters at Rmaile.

The party now functions within the Lebanese political framework and is weak. Its secretary-general, Faruq Dahruj, narrowly failed to win a parliamentary seat in the 2000 elections.

*Larbi Sadiki*

## **Lesotho**

**Capital:** Maseru

**Population:** 2.2 m

Lesotho, a small kingdom entirely surrounded by South Africa, has had a highly turbulent history. The anti-colonial nationalist movement was spearheaded by the **Basutoland Congress Party (BCP)** of Ntsu Mokhehle, which won the first (indirect) general election in 1960. However, the BCP lost power in 1965, when it narrowly lost the first universal suffrage election to the conservative **Basotho National Party (BNP)**, led by Leabua Jonathan, which received the overt support of the powerful Catholic Church, and was quietly favoured by the apartheid government of South Africa. In contrast to the BCP, which adopted a strident anti-apartheid rhetoric, the BNP adopted a policy of open cooperation with Pretoria, and condemned African nationalists who were calling for the apartheid regime to be isolated.

The BCP secured revenge over the BNP by narrowly defeating it at the general election of 1970. However, rather than accept defeat, Prime Minister Leabua Jonathan suspended the constitution. Over the next few years, Mokhehle rebutted efforts by Jonathan to draw him into a government of national unity, and in 1974 backed an attempted coup by his supporters. When this was put down, he and his loyalists fled into exile, most of them ending up in Botswana.

Jonathan's actions had left him even more isolated. From 1975 on he sought to remedy this by replacing his political cooperation with South Africa by an internationalist strategy which endorsed anti-apartheid sentiment, increased trade and diplomatic linkages with communist countries, and struck up friendship with the principal South African liberation movement, the African National Congress (ANC). From 1976, Lesotho became home to a steady flow of South African political refugees, who provided a pool of recruits for the ANC. Increasingly, too, the ANC came to use Lesotho as a base for intelligence and various other operations.

Following its relocation to Botswana, the exiled BCP opted to form the **Lesotho Liberation Army (LLA)**. From 1979, it launched a series of armed

attacks upon the BNP government. However, because these necessitated the LLA operating from South African territory, the BCP was drawn into an ideologically awkward relationship of convenience with the South African security services. South Africa backed the LLA to persuade Jonathan into reining in the ANC. When he did not do this to Pretoria's satisfaction, the South African Defence Force made a raid on Maseru in which some 43 persons were killed. Following talks, Lesotho subsequently airlifted ANC personnel out of the country, but relations with South Africa continued to be difficult. A South African economic blockade, imposed in late 1985, precipitated a military coup in January 1986. The new military government, led by Major-General Justin Lekhanya, swiftly opted for cooperation with South Africa, and signed an agreement that neither country would serve as a base for "terrorist" operations against the other. In March 1990 King Moshoeshoe II was stripped of his powers and went into exile, to be replaced by his son, Letsie III.

Changing domestic and regional conditions compelled the military regime to make way for a return to civilian rule. The 1993 general election, conducted under a plurality electoral system, provided a clean sweep 65 seats to nil victory for Mokhehle and the BCP. The result was rejected by the BNP, which subsequently backed military disturbances and a related suspension of the BCP government by King Letsie III in August 1994. Mokhehle was returned to office in late September after the King had given way to pressure by South Africa, Botswana and Zimbabwe. However, he was subsequently to lose control of his own party machinery. In response, in 1997, he outmanoeuvred his rivals by taking the majority of MPs into a new party, the **Lesotho Congress of Democracy (LCD)**. Under his chosen successor, Pakalitha Mosisili, this won a further resounding victory (endorsed as free and fair by international electoral monitors) of 80 seats to nil in an election in 1998. This time the BNP was joined in its rejection of the result by the rump BCP and other minor parties that formed



an opposition alliance. Critically, too, the BNP was confident of the support of the military, which was broadly sympathetic to its interests. Together the parties mobilized a demonstration of their supporters which, centred outside the King's palace, gradually took over the capital, prevented civil servants getting to work, and deprived the government of its capacity to govern. Faced by a "creeping coup", Mosisili called for help from the Southern African Development Community (SADC). The result was an armed intervention by the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) and the Botswana Defence Force. However, rather than securing an immediate restoration of political order, the intervention precipitated widespread rioting by opposition supporters and resistance by the Lesotho Defence Force before the SANDF was able to gain control.

The LCD resumed office, but was compelled by SADC to enter negotiations with the opposition parties about the adoption of a more appropriate electoral system which would provide for minority representation in parliament. This resulted in agreement around a Multi-Member Proportional Representation electoral system which was used in the election of May 2002. In this contest, the LCD won all but one of the 80 constituency seats, but the opposition parties were now compensated by 40 seats elected by proportional representation. Heavy pressure was brought by SADC and other external actors upon the opposition to accept the result, which appears to provide a basis for the political stability which Lesotho has otherwise lacked since the time of independence.

### **Lesotho Liberation Army (LLA)**

The LLA was established by the exiled Basotho Congress Party (BCP) in 1974. Early assistance was provided by the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC) of South Africa, the rival of the ANC, into whose orbit Mokhehle had taken the BCP since the late 1950s. Training was provided for LLA guerrillas in Libya, Syria and later Tanzania. However, collaboration with the PAC ceased in 1978 following differences concerning the BCP's autonomy. The LLA was moved south and, although it was hopelessly ill-equipped, a decision was taken to launch the attacks upon the Jonathan government in Lesotho.

Mokhehle's plan was to use QwaQwa, the South African "homeland" for the Basotho, and Transkei, an equivalent for the Xhosa, as bases for the LLA's attacks. Both shared borders with Lesotho. However, to reach them, the LLA had to cross South African territory. The first incursion, made in mid-1978, ended disastrously when the first group of a dozen LLA guerrillas was captured by the South African police. Subsequently, the LLA's armed campaign began in earnest in August 1979. As detailed revelations to the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission were to indicate nearly three decades later, this was facilitated by Mokhehle having held various meetings with South African security personnel and thereby being drawn into de facto collaboration. Mokhehle, as Prime Minister in the 1990s, resolutely denied these links. However, the evidence is convincing that the LLA operated almost entirely under the

South African umbrella, and indeed, LLA units which operated from Transkei worked under the Transkei Defence Force, which at that time was commanded by senior officers recruited from the Rhodesian military. For its part, South Africa incorporated the LLA into its "Total Strategy", which systematically backed rebel forces against hostile regional governments.

A flurry of attacks, mostly upon border posts, police stations and other government installations involved the LLA in several engagements with Lesotho's Police Mobile Unit. These resulted in a meeting between Jonathan and P.W. Botha, the South African Prime Minister, in August 1980 which provided for an initial agreement that both sides would respect each other's security. But an uneasy peace did not last for long, and LLA attacks mounted again from early 1981. Between then and the end of 1982, the LLA made some 30-odd strikes designed to destabilize the Jonathan government, most of them bomb attacks upon prominent buildings, and some entailing assassination of leading government personnel. These culminated in the SADF's raid upon Maseru in December 1982, following which Jonathan was cajoled into an agreement in June 1983 whereby both sides agreed to clamp down on each other's insurgents. Once Jonathan had expelled ANC activists, the number of LLA attacks declined markedly.

Deprived by the South Africans of its freedom to operate, the LLA became demoralized and fractious. Although it declined to accept a general amnesty offered by the military government after February 1986, some members drifted back home. Meanwhile, its official position was that, alongside the BCP, it demanded the restoration of the 1966 constitution, the integration of the LLA into (what was now called) the Lesotho Paramilitary Force, and the holding of early elections.

When the BCP returned home from exile in the early 1990s, it did so as a faction-ridden organization. One of the issues that divided it was the LLA. Mokhehle and those around him insisted that it had been dissolved. On the other hand, a so called "Pressure Group" (*Majelathoko*) insisted on its continued existence, and argued that the BCP government should provide for the welfare of LLA members and their integration into what by now was the LDF. But Mokhehle, even as Prime Minister, had no control over the armed forces, which regarded both him and the LLA as their enemy. By now, some members of the LLA had been recruited into private security companies, but the majority of them were unemployed and dispersed throughout the country.

Persons claiming to be the LLA held a conference in February 1996 at which they listed a series of demands to be debated by the BCP. They wanted recognition that the LLA had not been disbanded, rehabilitation expenses, information to be provided to families of deceased members of the LLA about the circumstances of their death, and assurance that the LLA would be integrated into the LDF. Little came of these demands as by this time BCP conferences had become battlegrounds between Mokhehle and the Pressure Group.

With Mokhehle's formation of the Lesotho Congress of Democracy (LCD) and the effective collapse of the BCP, little more has been heard of the LLA, whose former members must now have reached middle and old age.

### BNP Youth League

By 1998, former military strongman Justin Lekhanya had assumed the leadership of the Basotho National Party (BNP), both Jonathan and his own successor as party leader, E.R.Sekhonyana, having died. Lekhanya, along with the leader of the rump BCP, was to drive the opposition alliance in protest against the outcome of the election. His strategy was to mobilize opposition supporters in front of the Royal Palace in a bid to persuade the King to suspend the elected government and call new elections.

The opposition alliance was centred on the BNP. However, this party was itself divided, with many of its “old guard” Jonathan loyalists resenting its leadership having been captured by the man under who had displaced the BNP from power in 1986. For his part, Lekhanya viewed the party in

largely military terms. Hence it was that he utilized the BNP Youth League as his shock troops. Youth Leaguers, mainly unemployed young men from the peri-urban and rural areas, many of whom had arms acquired from the military, not only took over the capital but set up road blocks on all major roads throughout the country. Numerous cars were hijacked, and after the SANDF’s intervention, numerous commercial premises (notably those with South African connections) were fired, along with the private homes of various government ministers. However, once the SANDF had gained control of the capital and the LDF had surrendered, the BNP Youth Leaguers melted away. Significantly, they were to make no further appearance after the 2002 election.

*Roger Southall*

## Liberia

**Capital:** Monrovia

**Population:** 3.2 m

The Republic of Liberia, an independent state from 1847, was founded by freed black slaves from the USA. In September 1990 Gen. Samuel K. Doe, who had seized power in a military coup in 1980 and been elected President in 1985, was deposed and killed as rival rebel groups struggled with government forces for control. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), which had sent a peace-keeping force to Liberia in August 1990, backed the nomination of Amos Sawyer as Interim President, and in January 1991 an Interim Government of National Unity (IGNU) was appointed. Civil war continued nonetheless.

In July 1993 a UN-sponsored peace agreement was signed by the IGNU, the **National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL)** and the **United Liberation Movement of Liberia (ULIMO)**. It provided for a ceasefire, the confinement of troops to camp, and the formation of a transitional civilian administration. A five-member Council of State and 35-member Transitional Legislative Assembly were installed in March 1994, while the National Transitional Government met for the first time two months later. As a result of further peace talks involving all the main factions, it was agreed in December 1994 that a new Council of State should be appointed which would hand over to an elected government on Jan. 1, 1996, following multiparty elections in November 1995. However, negotiations on the composition of the Council were stalled until August 1995 when a new peace accord was brokered. In September the Council was inaugurated, a new 16-member transitional government was formed and elections were rescheduled for August 1996. However, further fighting erupted in Monrovia in April 1996 and it was not until February 1997 that ECOWAS was able to announce a new target election date of May 1997. The main faction leaders, having formally disbanded

their military organizations (some of which were reconstituted as political parties), resigned from the Council of State in order to stand for the presidency.

After further delay, elections were finally held in July 1997. The former NPFL leader, Charles Taylor, standing as the candidate of the **National Patriotic Party (NPP)**, won over 75 per cent of the votes cast in a 13-way contest for the presidency. Under Liberia’s 1986 Constitution, the President is elected for a six-year term of office (renewable once) as head of state, head of executive government and commander-in-chief of the armed forces. Legislative elections were held in July 1997, for a 64-member House of Representatives (term of office six years) and a 26-member Senate (term of office nine years). The NPP won a large majority in both chambers.

By 2003, however, rebel forces of the **Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD)** had closed in on Monrovia (see below). On June 4, it was announced that UN prosecutors in Sierra Leone had indicted Taylor on charges of “bearing the greatest responsibility” for war crimes and crimes against humanity in that country. By July, with heavy fighting taking place in the capital, Taylor came under intense international pressure to agree to resign. He stood down as President on Aug. 11 in favour of Moses Blah, the Vice-President, and took up an offer of refuge in Nigeria while declaring at his resignation ceremony that “God willing, I will be back”. Nigerian peacekeepers were deployed in Monrovia. On Aug. 21 the government and LURD leaders agreed on the appointment of Gyude Bryant, a little known businessman, as chairman of a transitional government of national unity to govern from October (when Blah would stand down) until elections in 2005.

**Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democra-**

## cy (LURD)

Since the first sketchy news reports emerged in mid-2000 of guerrilla activity in Liberia's north-western Lofa County, little information of substance has been forthcoming about the group which titles itself Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD). The group appears to be a loose coalition of forces opposing the government of President Charles Taylor, drawing upon a variety of militia factions and refugee groups, increasingly backed by Guinea, with more indirect support from Sierra Leone and, according to some reports, the USA and the UK.

As Liberian dissidents convened in regional capitals and refugee camps during 2000, and groups such as the **Justice Coalition of Liberia** and the **Organization of Displaced Liberians (ODL)** began to mount attacks within Liberia, a sustained effort was undertaken to combine the various anti-Taylor groups into a single force. Against the backdrop of an unravelling peace process in Sierra Leone, meetings were held in Freetown (the capital of Sierra Leone) in early 2000 among the Justice Coalition of Liberia, the Organization of Displaced Liberians and the **Union of Democratic Forces of Liberia (UDL)**. The last of these was an umbrella group comprising the various factions of Liberian dissidents present in Sierra Leone, and brought together by Laveli Supuwood, a former Liberian Minister of Justice and senior figure within Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia, who had fallen out with Taylor in 1994. The meetings reportedly produced the declaration of a union of these anti-Taylor forces into the LURD, which shortly established liaison with British military officers stationed in Sierra Leone as part of that country's fragile peace process.

Whilst Sierra Leone appeared to be a natural base of operations for the LURD, President Ahmed Tejen Kabbah opposed proposals to allow the LURD to use his country as a staging ground for attacks against President Taylor. Consequently, the LURD began gradually to shift its attention to Guinea, where it had a foothold in border regions and was tolerated, if not yet actively supported, by the regime of President Lansana Conté. In July 2000, LURD forces began carrying out attacks into Liberia from Guinea. The guerrillas made some inroads into Lofa County in north-western Liberia but in September, Liberian forces counterattacked, and widened the conflict considerably by sending the bulk of the (Sierra Leonean) **Revolutionary United Front (RUF)** fighters that remained loyal to Taylor into Guinea. The RUF was accompanied by Liberian regular forces, as well as Guinean dissidents sponsored by Taylor, who had been grouped into the Rally of Democratic Forces of Guinea (RFDG) (see entry under Guinea) under the command of Maj Gbargo Zoumanigui, a Guinean army officer who had led a failed coup attempt against President Conté in 1996. At the height of the invasion, the RUF and Guinean dissidents took the cities of Macenta and Guéckédou near the Liberian border, reached the outskirts of Kissidougou, slightly farther north, and got one-third of the way to the capital, Conakry. President Conté, fearing elements of his army might join Zoumanigui, relied on mobilizing LURD forces, and even Sierra Leonean "Donso" hunter militiamen in Guinean refugee camps. Using these as ground troops, and backing them with helicopter gunships and artillery, he managed to force the RUF back into Liberia and Sierra Leone by January

2001.

At this time, the offensive turned east, driving for the centre of President Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia movement, Gbarnga. Its success – killing hundreds of RUF fighters, bringing the Donsos to within a short distance of the Kono diamond fields and taking the LURD deep into Lofa County – effectively forced President Taylor to restart the peace process in Sierra Leone, requesting RUF disarmament and UN deployment in Kambia. Taylor's renewed interest in regional peace was driven by the fact that he was fighting on three fronts – in Liberia, on the Kambian border with Guinea, and in Kono in Sierra Leone. At the same time a US and British diplomatic offensive in the UN Security Council resumed. Armed with the report of a UN expert panel demonstrating President Taylor's links with the RUF and the trade in conflict diamonds, the USA began pressing for sanctions. Frustrated primarily by Taylor's francophone West African allies, including Burkina Faso and Mali, who were supported by France, sanctions were delayed until May 2001. When finally introduced, the sanctions package was considerably less punitive than had been anticipated, after France had apparently ensured the removal of the most damaging proposals, covering timber and maritime registry.

Whilst the first serious LURD invasion failed in its military objective of taking Gbarnga, it did galvanise increasing support for the group and many prominent Liberian opposition figures, who had previously dismissed its chances, began approaching the movement's shadowy leadership. The ongoing disarmament process in Sierra Leone also stimulated interest as many parties saw the RUF "disarmament" as less an admission of defeat than a tactical retreat from Sierra Leone into Liberia. Analysts were agreed that between 600 and 2,000 RUF fighters had crossed into Liberia by the end of 2001, with some RUF combatants as far away as Freetown saying they had been offered large sums of money to fight for President Taylor.

In response, it was reported that as many as 500 Kamajor fighters, many from tribes whose traditional lands spanned the Sierra Leone-Liberia border, passed through Freetown and Conakry to the Guinea border to join the LURD. These forces were also sent mainly on a contract basis, with some paid as much as US\$300 each. In October 2001, a number of Liberian dissidents who had formerly served in the "special forces" of the Sierra Leone army left Zimmi in the south-east of Sierra Leone to join the LURD in Guinea. Facing opposition from President Kabbah, they had abandoned plans to invade from Sierra Leone. LURD forces in Guinea also received reinforcements from Liberians exiled in Côte d'Ivoire. These new fighters shifted the military balance within the LURD away from the Mandingos, and provided a fresh force of highly motivated and experienced guerrillas, who would be the driving force behind the new incursion.

The LURD began its new offensive in November 2001, driving south along the Sierra Leone border, with the aim of establishing contact with dissident fighters still waiting there. This strategy appeared to work: Voinjama fell in December, as well as Valhun, Foya and, later, Bopulu. Groups of combatants began crossing into Liberia from Sierra Leone in a steady, though small, stream from November onwards. However, by late December the Liberian army at

Kolahun had joined with RUF forces operating out of Sierra Leone and attacked the LURD rear, ambushing convoys and retaking Foya. Initially, the LURD was forced to return north to fight a mix of Liberian, RUF and Guinean rebel troops at Kolahun, but in January 2002, after an angry message from President Conté of Guinea, President Kabbah of Sierra Leone deployed his troops to Kailahun to block RUF activities, and the LURD won a resounding victory at Kolahun.

By early February 2002, it was widely agreed that the Liberian army was in disarray, with a large LURD contingent stationed along the Sierra Leone border, guarding against another RUF invasion from Sierra Leone, and combining the Lofa bush for government forces. The conclusion of the disarmament process in Sierra Leone has also pushed active elements of the RUF into Liberia. The elusive senior RUF figure Sam “Mosquito” Bockarie was reported in February 2002 to be operating in Lofa County just across the border, rallying RUF combatants. Most importantly, the shift in the character of the LURD away from a Mandingo force, and the lobbying of LURD Vice Chairman Laveli Supuwood, a prominent Lorma, had succeeded in shifting the loyalty of the Lorma tribe away from President Taylor. The remnants of the Lofa Defence Force shifted from Farsu to

the LURD, and so opened the way for an advance on Zorzor and south to Gbarnga. Zorzor fell in late February 2002, and LURD troops subsequently managed to reach Salay. In central-southern Lofa, the LURD captured the diamond mines at Fassama. As of early 2003, LURD forces reportedly controlled most of Lofa County and an arc of territory that put them within striking distance of Monrovia, Gbarnga and the Mano River Bridge on the Sierra Leone border.

In mid-June 2003 LURD forces reached the outskirts of Monrovia itself, with fierce fighting reported. Western governments arranged the evacuation of their nationals. As fighting continued around the capital in the following weeks international engagement resulted in Aug. 2 on Taylor agreeing to resign as President (which he did on Aug. 11) and the arrival of Nigerian ECOWAS peacekeepers in Monrovia on Aug. 4. The LURD was subsequently given seats in the transitional government of national unity.

*D. J. Sagar*

## Libya

**Capital:** Tripoli

**Population:** 5.4 m

Formerly an Italian colony, Libya was administered by the United Kingdom and France until the attainment of independence in 1951. In 1969 King Idris was overthrown in a coup by a group of military officers led by Col. Moamer al Kadhafi. As expounded in his *Green Book*, published in the mid-1970s, his regime was committed to achieving equality and the elimination of class differences. His political philosophy drew on Islam, socialism and Bedouin tradition, and was intended as an alternative to communism and capitalism.

The Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyyah is a revolutionary “state of the masses”, conceived as a system of direct government through popular organs at all levels of society, with Kadhafi exercising overall leadership. He has held no official post since 1979 and is known only by the title “Leader of the Revolution”. Legislative power is exercised by the General People's Congress (Parliament), which appoints its own 12-member General Secretariat and the General People's Committee (broadly equivalent to a Council of Ministers). A form of direct democracy is exercised at local level by “basic people's congresses”.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s Col. Kadhafi adopted a high international profile based on pan-Arabism, support for liberation movements around the world, and condemnation of Western imperialism. As a proponent of Arab unity, he attempted on various occasions to arrange Libyan mergers with Algeria,

Chad, Egypt, Malta, Mauritania, Morocco, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia and Yemen. None of these attempts met with any lasting success, while relations with immediate neighbours, notably Egypt and Chad, were at times stormy. Libyan troops were actively involved in the Chadian civil war through the 1980s, and in 1994 the International Court of Justice ruled against Libya's longstanding territorial claim to the Aozou strip in northern Chad.

Meanwhile, Libya also provided military and financial support and training facilities for a number of radical Arab and other revolutionary groups, particularly factions of the Palestine Liberation Organization and Polisario in Western Sahara. Left-wing groups in Nicaragua, El Salvador and Colombia, as well as Basque separatists in Spain, the Irish Republican Army, Red Brigades in Italy and other anti-government groups in Japan, Turkey and elsewhere are all believed to have received material help from Kadhafi's regime.

Involvement in international terrorism earned Libya the status of pariah. Particularly notorious incidents included the killing in 1984 of a British policewoman by shots fired from the Libyan embassy in London during an anti-Kadhafi demonstration, and the bombing of a discotheque in Berlin, West Germany, in March 1986, in which one US serviceman was killed and dozens injured. In response to apparent evidence



of Libyan complicity in the latter incident, the United States carried out punitive air strikes on Tripoli and Benghazi the following month.

Libya was also deemed responsible for the December 1988 terrorist bombing of a PanAm civil airliner in flight over Lockerbie in Scotland, which killed 270 people, and for the destruction of a French airliner over the Sahara in September 1989 in which 170 died. Kadhafi refused to surrender for trial two Libyan nationals accused by the USA and United Kingdom of planting the Lockerbie bomb, and in 1992 the United Nations imposed wide-ranging sanctions against Libya. There followed an impasse until 1998 when the UK and US governments announced their willingness to allow the trial of the two accused to be held before a Scottish court of three judges and no jury sitting in the Netherlands. The Libyan Government eventually complied, and in April 1999 the two accused were flown from Tripoli to the Netherlands. This resulted in the UN sanctions being suspended.

The Lockerbie trial began in May 2000 and in January 2001 Abdelbaset Ali Mohamed Al-Megrahi was found guilty; his co-defendant was acquitted. The USA and UK continued to demand that the Libyan authorities renounce terrorism, take responsibility for the attack, and pay compensation to the victims' families. Kadhafi gave a public denunciation of the verdict and initially claimed he had evidence to exonerate Megrahi, although this never materialised. Megrahi's subsequent appeal against his conviction was refused in March 2002.

Kadhafi maintained his anti-US posturing in 2001 and the US government extended unilateral sanctions against Libya in August for a further five years. However, he was also one of the first Arab leaders to condemn the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks against the United States, subsequently offering to help capture the Saudi-born *Al-Qaeda* leader Osama bin Laden through law enforcement co-operation and intelligence sharing. Libya nonetheless remained as one of seven countries accused of sponsoring terrorism in a US State Department report issued in April 2003.

In August 2003 Libya, the USA and UK finalized an agreement with Libya whereby Libya accepted "responsibility for the actions of its officials" for the Lockerbie bombing and agreed to phased compensation for the families of the victims cumulatively worth up to \$2.7bn in exchange for a lifting of sanctions. The compensation equated to \$10m per victim, \$4m to be paid when UN sanctions were lifted, \$4m when US commercial sanctions were lifted and \$2m when Libya was removed from the State Department's terrorism watchlist. After a delay while France concluded a separate "complementary" compensation package with Libya for families of the victims of the 1989 bombing of a French airliner, the UN Security Council on Sept. 12, 2003, finally voted to lift the sanctions imposed in 1992 and suspended since 1999. The USA abstained in the Security Council vote, saying its own sanctions would remain in force pending the outcome of further discussions with Libya on the issues of state sponsor-

ship of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction.

In recent years Kadhafi has turned his diplomatic attentions to the promotion of African unity, although this policy has led to an influx of African immigrants at a time of deteriorating domestic economic conditions. Despite his past support for rebel insurgencies and alleged attempts to destabilize a number of African countries, he has increasingly stepped into the role of regional power broker. In 2001, for example, he worked with Egypt on a peace plan for war-torn Sudan, mediated the restoration of diplomatic relations between Uganda and Sudan, and sent Libyan troops to the Central African Republic to support the President against two coup attempts. Also in 2001, Libya hosted a summit of the Organization of African Unity, which backed the OAU's dissolution and replacement by a stronger African Union.

There are no political parties in Libya, and only civic associations affiliated to the regime are tolerated. Dissidents have made little impact. Nevertheless, during Kadhafi's long period in power there are believed to have been frequent coup attempts and incidents of military dissent against his rule, notably in October 1993 when forces loyal to Kadhafi were reported to have suppressed a serious uprising in the armed forces (denied by the Libyan authorities), which was possibly fuelled by tribal differences. Significant internal opposition groups are not currently apparent, although in the mid-1990s there was widespread, but fragmented, Islamist resistance to the regime, mainly in eastern Libya. In September 1995 around 30 people died in clashes between the security forces and militants in Benghazi. The regime blamed extremist infiltrators from Egypt and Sudan for the violence and thousands of Sudanese and Egyptian workers were expelled. In February 1996 it was rumoured that members of the Militant Islamic Group (see below) had attempted to assassinate Kadhafi in Sirte. In 1998 Libyan security forces launched a major offensive against Islamist strongholds in the northeast of the country.

There are several opposition organizations in exile, but these reportedly remain weak and divided. Opposition activists in exile have been attacked by agents of the regime in Western European countries as well as Egypt.

### Islamist Opposition

Active anti-Kadhafi Islamist groups include the Islamic Martyrs Movement (IMM); the Militant Islamic Group (MIG), which aims to establish an Islamic regime, has reportedly been active since 1996, and appears on the United States' list of alleged international terrorist organizations; and the Libyan Islamic Group (84 of whose alleged sympathizers were imprisoned, and two sentenced to death, by a People's Court in February 2002, having been in detention since 1998 – an appeal trial opened in December 2002). There seems little evidence of co-operation between the different organizations or between the Islamists and the secular opposition.



**Libyan Liberation Organization**

This organization was founded in Egypt in 1982 by Abdel Hamid Bakoush, who had served as Prime Minister under the monarchy in 1967-8.

**Libyan National Alliance (LNA)**

The LNA was formed in Cairo in 1980 to encompass the anti-Kadhafi Libyan community living in Egypt. In 1993 its leader, Mansour Kikhia, disappeared in Cairo, it being widely assumed that he had been abducted and murdered by Libyan state security agents.

**National Front for the Salvation of Libya (NFSL)**

*Leadership. Mohammed Megarief*

*Website. www.nfsl-libya.com (in Arabic)*

The creation of the NFSL was announced in Khartoum (Sudan) in October 1981, its avowed aim being to “liberate Libya and save it from Kadhafi’s rule”, replacing the regime with a constitutional and democratically elected govern-

ment. The Front has published details of alleged human rights violations committed within Libya and of political detainees being held there. It has also organized demonstrations and other protests against the Libyan regime in a number of European cities. The NFSL rejects any rapprochement with the Kadhafi regime. In 1994 dissident members of the Front broke away to form the Libyan Change and Reform Movement.

**Other Groups**

Reference has also been made to the existence of the following opposition organizations: the Co-operation Bureau for Democratic and National Forces, Libyan Patriots Movement (which emerged in 1997), Libyan National Liberation Army (based in Chad), and the Libyan National Democratic Rally.

*Richard German & Elizabeth Taylor*

## Liechtenstein

**Capital:** Vaduz

**Population:** 32,000

The Principality of Liechtenstein is an hereditary constitutional monarchy. It became a sovereign state in 1806. Under its constitution of 1921, the Prince (currently Prince Hans-Adam II von und zu Liechtenstein) exercises legislative power jointly with a unicameral Diet (Landtag) of 25 members, who are elected every four years by universal adult suffrage under a proportional representation system. The Chief of Government is appointed by the sovereign from the majority party or group in the Diet. The most recent general election, held in February 2001, resulted in the Progressive Citizen’s Party in Liechtenstein (FBPL) winning 13 seats and forming the government.

In March 2003 a popular referendum overwhelmingly approved a constitutional amendment to allow the Prince to expand his executive powers, including the right to dismiss governments, nominate judges, veto legislation, and rule by emergency decree. Prince Hans-Adam II had threatened to go into exile to his palace in Vienna if his demands for more authority were

not met. Before the vote, he had already possessed more power than any other European monarch. The Council of Europe, of which Liechtenstein is a member, decided to investigate “whether one can speak of a pluralistic democracy following the constitutional changes that occurred in March 2003”. In August 2003 Prince Hans-Adam announced he would give up the throne in 2004, passing it on to his son, Prince Alois.

Since World War II (in which Liechtenstein remained neutral) the country’s low taxes have spurred outstanding economic growth. However, shortcomings in banking regulatory oversight have resulted in concerns about the use of the financial institutions for money laundering. Blacklisted in 2000 as a centre for money laundering, Liechtenstein toughened its laws and made major efforts to clean up its financial practices. In 2002, the country was removed from the OECD’s money-laundering blacklist.

*Bogdan Szajkowski*

## Lithuania

**Capital:** Vilnius

**Population:** 3.5 m

Lithuania repudiated its 1940 annexation by the Soviet Union on March 11, 1990, and its independence was recognized by the USSR State Council in September 1991. Its 1992 Constitution provides for an executive

President who is directly elected for a five-year term (most recently in January 2003), who appoints the Prime Minister and other ministers, subject to parliamentary approval. The legislature is the 141-member

Seimas, elected for a four-year term.

Extremist (or, as they are generally termed in Lithuania, radical) movements of both the right and left exist. However, the distinction between left-wing and right-wing Lithuanian extremists is not always clear, due to the fact that they often work together: one example of their joint actions was the rallies held in January 2001 at the President's office which gathered together National Socialists, Young Lithuanians, the Lithuanian Freedom Union and the pro-communist *Už Teisingą Lietuvą* (For the Fair Lithuania).

In Lithuania, a few major parties and a constellation of small parties compose the political landscape: in total, it is possible to count 36 official political parties although only few of them have seats in the Seimas. As far as the extremist movements are concerned, they all figure in the second category and have not, except occasionally, achieved representation at a national level.

### Left-wing extremism

Extremist groups of the left have found little support. Moreover, Communist organizations are illegal according to the Lithuanian Constitution. Most individuals closely associated with the former Soviet regime fled to Russia in 1991. Only two institutional parties may be considered as pro-Communist: the Socialist Party, lead by Mindaugas Stakvilevicius, and the People's Union "For a Just Lithuania", led by Member of Parliament Julius Veselka.

### Right-wing extremism

Among the marginal political parties in Lithuania three of them can be considered as being inclined to right-wing extremist positions: the Lithuanian National Democratic Party (LNDP), the Young Lithuanians and the Lithuanian Freedom Union.

#### Lithuanian National Democratic Party (LNDP)

This is the most radical of the right-wing parties. Born as an underground **Union of Lithuanian National Independence** in 1993 in Siauliai, it was founded by some members of SKAT (the Battalion of the Voluntary Defence Service). Openly neo-nazi, the Union of Lithuanian National Independence created combat units, the aim being "to prepare some 30 people who could be efficient fighters and were not afraid to die". The group also produced a torture manual and used as their symbol a red swastika on a blue background. In 1995 its leader was imprisoned.

On Nov. 24, 1996, a successor organization was founded in Siauliai, the **Lithuanian National Social Unity Union**. Its principal idea was that only Lithuanians should rule Lithuania and in 1996-97 its leaflet *Naijos Balsas* ("Voice of the Nation") was widely disseminated. Adopting blatant slogans and an aggressive style, their main target is minorities: Russians, Poles and especially Jews. Anti-semitic ideology is

seen as the basis for safeguarding the unity and morality of the nation and the organization opposes Lithuania's planned accession to the European Union and all other international organizations it claims were established by Jewish Bolsheviks.

Efforts by the National Socialists to be registered as a political party were rejected on the basis of article 29 of the Lithuanian Constitution. In December 2000, part of the organization joined the Lithuanian Party of Life and Logic, founded in 1996 and hitherto rather inactive, but were forced to leave. In 2001 the neo-nazis found a home in the Lithuanian National Democratic Party (LNDP). The merger into the LNDP gave the neo-Nazis legal status while the LNDP gained visibility. The LNDP has between 200 and 1,400 members according to different estimates.

#### Young Lithuanians

The Young Lithuanians emerged in 1988, recalling the *Jaunoji Lietuva* (Lithuanian National Youth Union) of the pre-World War II period and publishing the periodical *Tautos Valia* ("Will of the Nation"). Their main idea has been to "de-colonize" Lithuania, in particular by Russian "colonists". The leader of the movement, Stanislovas Buskevicius, who was defeated in the elections of 1992, became the Prime Minister's advisor on Youth affairs in 1993. Although the party split into two organisations – *Jaunoji Lietuva* (Young Lithuania) and *Jaunalietuviai* (the Young Lithuanians) – he remained the only leader. Campaigning against "crime, the mafia and corruption" he was elected as a member of Kaunas City Council in 1995 and in 1996 as a member of the Seimas. In 2000 six Young Lithuanians won seats on municipal councils of the region of Kaunas; moreover they organized a vigilante squad with the Kaunas City Municipality to enforce the law against drug dealers and hooligans. In Vilnius Young Lithuanians from 2000 started to be noticed because of their protest actions against minorities, prostitution and pornography as well as against the EU and the selling of land to foreigners.

#### Lithuanian Freedom Union (LFU)

This organization was created in 1994 by Vytautas Sustauskas as a breakaway from the Lithuanian Freedom League in Kaunas. He was elected in 1995 to Kaunas City Council and the party's popularity was increased by the "March of the Poor" from Kaunas to Vilnius in 1997 and campaigns against privatization in 1998-99. These campaigns also included xenophobia and anti-Semitism. In 2000 the LFU won level 11 seats in Kaunas and Sustauskas was elected to the Seimas from the constituency of Silainai with 38.38 % of votes cast. Once in the Seimas, the leader adopted a much more moderate attitude.

#### Luisa Montrosset

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# Luxembourg

**Capital:** Luxembourg-Ville

**Population:** 454,000

Fully independent since 1867, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg is, under its 1868 constitution (with occasional revisions) a constitutional hereditary monarchy in which the head of state, the Grand Duke (since October 2000 Grand Duke Henri of the House of Nassau-Weilburg), exercises executive power through a government headed by a Prime Minister and accountable to the legislature. The latter is the Chamber of Deputies (*Chambre des Députés*), whose 60 members are elected for a five-year term by citizens aged 18 and over (voting being compulsory). There is also an advisory Council of State, whose 21 members are appointed for life, seven directly by the Grand Duke and the other 14 by him on the recommendation of the Council itself or of the Chamber of Deputies.

Elections to the Chamber on June 13, 1999, resulted as follows: Christian Social People's Party 19 seats (with 30.1% of the vote), Democratic Party 15 (22.4%), Luxembourg Socialist Workers' Party 13 (22.3%), Action Committee for Democracy and Justice 7 (11.3%), The Greens 5 (9.1%), The Left 1 (3.3%).

During the past decade Luxembourg has on the whole been free from extra-parliamentary opposition

activities. The exceptions have been racist skinheads and other far-right extremists. Though few in numbers, skinheads have been responsible for several attacks in recent years. The skinheads' views are shared in Luxembourg's political arena by an extremist party known as the *National Bewegung* (National Movement). The *Bewegung* has campaigned on an anti-foreigner platform directed against Portuguese and other foreign workers. It has performed poorly in recent elections.

Since the terrorist attacks in the USA of Sept. 11, 2001, an area of considerable concern has been the extensive banking facilities available in the Grand Duchy. Some reports suggested that Luxembourg's secretive banking provisions could facilitate money laundering and financing of terrorist groups abroad. On June 25, 2003, the Luxembourg government published a draft law (*Chambre des Députés* - N° 5165) intended to ensure consistency throughout the entire Luxembourg economy in the fight against money laundering and financing of terrorism.

*Bogdan Szajkowski*

# Macedonia

**Capital:** Skopje

**Population:** 2 m

A former constituent republic of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY), Macedonia declared its independence on Nov. 21, 1991. In contrast to other former Yugoslav republics it enjoyed a peaceful and broadly uncontested transition to independence. Full international recognition, in contrast, was delayed by Greek objections to the new state being called Macedonia (this being the name of a Greek province and its use, in the Greek view, implying pan-Macedonian ambitions) and admission to the United Nations was blocked until April 1993, when it took place under the interim designation "Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia".

Macedonia has a President elected for a term of five years by popular vote and a unicameral Assembly (*Sobranie*) of 120 members, who are elected for a four-year term by those aged 18 and over, 85 in single-member constituencies and 35 by proportional representation subject to a 5 per cent threshold.

Under Tito the SFRY sought to steer a political

mid-course between the West and the Soviet bloc and the society was relatively open, particularly in the latter years. However, any evidence of Macedonian nationalism within the ruling party was purged, notably in 1971-2 when a number of leading figures were demoted. After Tito's death in 1980 the policy of suppressing nationalist sentiments was gradually abandoned. Macedonia witnessed the rise of a plethora of groups, movements, and associations that gradually emphasized elements of Macedonian ethnics and culture that were largely ignored during the previous period. The first signs of emergence of new pluralist tendencies were to be found in the Macedonian cultural scene. In the mid-1980's a multimedia project "Makedonska Streljba" was launched by a number of young intellectuals and artists underlying the importance of the Macedonian language and culture in the Yugoslav context and seeking for new forms of political arrangements in Macedonia and SFRY. Although soon to be banned by the internal security apparatus,

“Makedonska Streljba” was not only a precursor of the acclaimed Slovenian movement “Neue Slowenische Kunst” but in conjunction with activists from the human rights associations concerned over the fate of the Macedonians in Greece and Bulgaria, and the youth group “Komiti” it was active in provoking debate on historical issues and questions concerning the status of Macedonia within the Yugoslav federation. These groupings were a factor in the emergence of the most influential political party in the 1990s in Macedonia, VMRO-DPMNE.

### Issue of the Albanian minority

The ethnic Albanian minority comprises about one-quarter of the population of Macedonia. It is based largely in the northern and western parts of Macedonia, close to Kosovo. Led by Ali Ahmeti the National Liberation Army (the acronym of which is ONA in Macedonian and UCK in Albanian) – a motley group of former Kosovo Liberation Army (also UCK in Albanian) members from both Kosovo and Macedonia, ethnic Albanian radicals and nationalists from Macedonia and foreign mercenaries – organized a seven-month armed insurrection against the Macedonian government (February-August 2001).

At first it was not clear what aims the organization had as in its communiqués it proclaimed to be fighting against the “Slavo-Macedonian” oppressors and in favor of “Greater Albania.” Its rhetoric later became one of “fighting for the human rights of the Albanians in Macedonia.” Using techniques of ethnic cleansing and terrorist acts against governmental troops Ahmeti’s group exacerbated ethnic divisions in the country, creating the threat of widespread civil strife. The Macedonian government alleged that the fighting was part of an effort by ethnic Albanians in Macedonia, Kosovo, southern Serbia and Montenegro to create a Greater Albania.

The emergence of this new Balkan conflict less than two years after NATO intervention in Kosovo, provoked considerable international alarm. There was a determination to avoid the prevarication, particularly by the European Union, that had allowed the development of previous Balkan crises. International mediation took place and fighting between government troops and the ONA ended in mid-August following

the signing of an agreement which provided for the implementation of a range of reforms to protect the interests and identity of ethnic Albanians. This was followed by a brief operation (Aug. 27-Sept. 25) in which NATO troops supervised a handover of weapons by the insurgents.

In mid-November 2001, to the dismay of hardline Macedonian nationalists and under considerable international pressure, the Sobranie approved a package of constitutional reforms to protect and expand Albanian access and rights in areas such as education, politics and policing. Shortly thereafter, President Boris Trajkovski declared an amnesty for former ONA insurgents, including about 120 detainees and convicts. Having secured constitutional reform and an amnesty for his fighters Ahmeti made a leap into legitimate political activities. Although in the spring of 2002 he toyed with the idea of becoming a “coordinator” of the existing Macedonian Albanian political parties, Ahmeti concentrated on founding a new political party in the summer of 2002. Together with his former fighting associates, and co-opting various members of the Macedonian Albanian intelligentsia, Ahmeti founded the Democratic Union for Integration (DUI in Macedonian and BDI in Albanian) on June 5, 2002, in Tetovo (the principal Albanian town in Macedonia). In his inaugural speech delivered beneath a large Albanian flag in Tetovo’s “Palace of Culture”, Ahmeti emphasized that the DUI was founded on the principle of equality, promised to work for peace, and repudiated the use of violent methods. In parliamentary elections on Sept. 15 the DUI won most of the votes of the Macedonian Albanian community and secured 16 seats in the Sobranie. Following lengthy and tense negotiations DUI entered the coalition government of Branko Crvenkovski, the leader of the Social Democratic Alliance of Macedonia, the third partner being the small but influential Liberal Democratic Party of Macedonia. In March 2003 the EU took over responsibility from NATO for the small international peace-keeping force that remains in Macedonia to provide security for monitors overseeing implementation of the peace accords. This was the first EU-led military operation (but with continuing access to NATO support).

*Zhidas Daskalovski*

## Madagascar

**Capital:** Antananarivo

**Population:** 16 m

The Republic of Madagascar achieved full independence from France in 1960. In 1975 Didier Ratsiraka assumed the presidency and in 1976 he launched his Vanguard of the Malagasy Revolution (later known as the Association for the Rebirth of Madagascar – *Asso-*

*ciation pour la Renaissance de Madagascar*, *Andry sy Riana Enti-Manavotra an'i Madagasikara*, AREMA) as the dominant element in a coalition front, the National Front for the Defence of the Revolution (FNDR), within which all political organizations were



required to function until 1990.

Ratsiraka was re-elected as President in 1989 for a third term, taking more than 60 per cent of the votes in the first round. Independent observers estimated that fraudulent votes had delivered the margin to allow Ratsiraka to avoid a second round, in which the opposition would have likely consolidated around Manandafy Rakotonirina, president of the Movement for the Progress of Madagascar (*Mouvement pour le Progrès de Madagascar, Mpitolona ho'amin'ny Fanjakan'ny Madinika*, MFM), who had obtained about 25 per cent of the votes in the first round. The 1989 legislative elections resulted in AREMA taking 120 of the 137 seats in the National Assembly.

### Adoption of multi-party system

By the early 1990s there was mounting pressure - as in much of Africa at that time - to allow greater political pluralism. Four of the most important Christian churches (accounting for 60 per cent of believers in Madagascar) offered to act as intermediaries through the Council of Malagasy Christian Churches (*Fikambanan'ny Fiangonana Kristanina Malagasy, Conseil des Eglises Chrétiennes Malgaches*, FFKM) gathering Protestants, Lutherans, Anglicans and Catholics. National debates on this question were supposed to be held within forums combining the nation's "Forces Vives". AREMA and the authorities refused to send representatives and regarded the "Forces Vives", including the Christian churches, as opponents.

This rejection led the opposition, being weakly represented in Parliament, to organize street demonstrations in 1991 that were backed up by a six-month general strike. The opposition built a parallel government with General Rakotoarison, a former chief of staff, as "president". The movement called for civil disobedience and, under the banner of non-violence, installed parallel ministers. Adherents of the martial art of kung fu, whose leader and some followers were killed in clashes with the army in 1985 after being accused of trying to establish a "state within a state", became the bodyguards of the leaders of the "Forces Vives" movement. In reaction, Ratsiraka opted for repression, arresting several leaders of the opposition movement, among them the wife of Pastor Richard Andriamanjato, president of the Congress Party for Madagascar Independence Renewal (*l'Antokon'ny Kongresin'ny Fahaleovantenan'i Madagascarikara, Parti du Congrès pour l'Indépendance de Madagascar*, AKFM). The conflict resulted in the death by gunfire of several demonstrators outside the presidential palace and Ratsiraka agreed to the creation of a transition government.

On Aug. 19, 1992, a new multi-party constitution, creating the Republic of Madagascar in succession to the Democratic Republic of Madagascar, was adopted by popular referendum. The second round of presidential elections in February 1993 resulted in the defeat of Ratsiraka (who took 33.26 per cent of the vote) by Albert Zafy (66.74 per cent), representing an alliance of opposition forces.

The 1992 Constitution established a parliamentary system, with the Prime Minister chosen from among the majority group in Parliament. The legislative elections (June 16, 1993) resulted in a majority in the National Assembly theoretically in favour of Albert Zafy, political groupings supporting him winning over 70 of the 138 seats contested. The legislature was no longer characterized by the phenomenon of one-party domination and AREMA, due to its limited number of deputies in the assembly, attempted to provoke street movements.

The coalition majority behind the President proposed the candidature of Francisque Ravony as Prime Minister. However, discords within the coalition caused its break-up. Albert Zafy organised a referendum (Sept. 17, 1995) to modify the Constitution. This reform allowed him to eject Prime Minister Ravony and to appoint Emmanuel Rakotovahiny, the leader of the National Union for Democracy and Development (*Union Nationale pour la Démocratie et le Développement*, UNDD). The ministerial and institutional instability provoked an economic crisis and on May 15, 1996, a majority of deputies voted for Zafy's impeachment and the government resigned.

### Return of Ratsiraka

Presidential elections were held on Nov. 3 and Dec. 29, 1996. In the second round, Ratsiraka beat Zafy by a very narrow majority, taking 50.7 per cent of the vote, with many abstentions and under unclear circumstances.

Ratsiraka then organized a further constitutional referendum in March 1998. The constitutional amendments were adopted by a tiny majority (50.96 per cent) while 30 per cent of the voters had disappeared from the electoral lists and there were many abstentions.

The Constitution as amended strengthened the presidency, with the President, directly elected for a five-year term, having the power to appoint the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers; it also established autonomous provinces inspired by federalist partisans who had supported Ratsiraka in 1991. The Constitution provided for a bicameral legislature comprising (i) the Senate (*Sénat*) as the upper house, two-thirds of whose 90 members are indirectly elected by an electoral college representing the autonomous provinces and a third nominated by the President; and (ii) the National Assembly (*Assemblée Nationale*), whose 150 members are directly elected for a four-year term from 82 single-member and 34 dual-member constituencies.

The subsequent elections (May 17, 1998) for the newly enlarged National Assembly involved about 3,500 candidates, including many independents. Over 151 parties were legally declared, although only two presented candidates in all constituencies: AREMA and the pro-Ratsiraka "Leader-Fanilo". Some opposition parties boycotted the ballot. The elections resulted in a majority of pro-Ratsiraka deputies: Ratsiraka named Tantely Andrianarivo as Prime Minister of a majority composed of AREMA (63 deputies), Leader-Fanilo (17) and Rally for Social Democracy (*Rassemblement pour la Sociale Démocratie*, RPSD) (11).



With Ratsiraka's return the opposition once again resorted to the opposition of the streets. The imprisonment of one of the leaders of the RPSD and vice-president of the National Assembly, Jean Eugène Voninahitsy, after being convicted of fraud and undermining the honour of the Head of State, triggered the creation of the "Cellule de Crise" (Emergency Committee) composed of the most important opposition parties: Judged by One's Work (*Asa Vita No Ifampitsarana, on est jugé sur le résultat*, AVI), RPSD and MFM.

### 2001 Presidential Election and fall of Ratsiraka

During 2000, the *Cellule de crise* sought unsuccessfully to reactivate the movement of 1991 in the large towns. However, unrest ignited following the disputed presidential elections in December 2001 which resulted in the opposition candidate, Marc Ravalomanana, a businessman and mayor of Antananarivo, coming in first place but short of an outright win. Ravalomanana claimed that ballot rigging had prevented his outright victory and rejected the order of the High Constitutional Court for a further round to be held on Feb. 24. With the backing of his electoral committee *Tiako Madagasikara* ("I love Madagascar"), his companies and the KMMR (Committee to Support Marc Ravalomanana, composed of the majority of the opposition parties), and the support of a series of massive demonstrations, he had himself proclaimed President of the Republic on Feb. 22 and formed a government. With Ravalomanana in control of the capital, Ratsiraka re-located his own government to his stronghold of Toamasina on the east coast and called for support from provincial governors to blockade and choke off the two central provinces controlled by his opponent. He sought to exploit ethnic rivalries between Malagasy, the coastal population presented as of African descent and those from the central highlands of Asian descent (of whom Ravalomanana was one). Sections of the army allied with militias established by pro-Ratsiraka governors (governors of four of the country's six provinces threatening secession if Ratsiraka was deposed) and some senior officers attempted to create

a guerrilla force with funds looted from provincial branches of the Public Treasury and banks. Between March and July 2002 a low intensity war took place between supporters of Ravalomanana and Ratsiraka, particularly in the north of Madagascar, with Ratsiraka also attempting to bring in foreign mercenaries. Prices escalated in the capital and tens of thousands were put out of work as a consequence of the economic blockade.

After mediation by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) a recount of the December ballot was held under the direction of the High Constitutional Court in April 2002. This confirmed Ravalomanana as victor, with 51.5 per cent of the vote compared with 35.9 per cent for Ratsiraka, but Ratsiraka refused to accept the result and demanded a referendum. Ravalomanana was officially sworn in as President in May.

After six months of conflict, in early July 2002, by which time forces loyal to Ravalomanana controlled most of the island, Ratsiraka fled from Toamasina to the Seychelles and then France.

The Organization of African Unity – renamed the African Union (AU) in July 2002 – refused to accept the legitimacy of Ravalomanana's government in view of the circumstances in which it came to power, leading a spokesman for Ravalomanana to dismiss it as "a club of old heads of state, some of them friends of Didier Ratsiraka, who keep themselves in power the same way he did". The decision not to recognize the new government was apparently led by the South African President, Thabo Mbeki, and the AU proposed a new round of elections, which Ravalomanana rejected. The Ravalomanana government gained increasing international acceptance, however, including by the USA and a number of African countries, against a background of growing stability within Madagascar. In February 2003 the AU conflict resolution body recommended readmission to the AU.

Legislative elections held in December 2002 resulted in victory for a coalition of parties supporting Ravalomanana, the National Solidarity Alliance.

*S. Randrianja*

## Malawi

**Capital:** Lilongwe

**Population:** 12 m

Malawi, the former British protectorate of Nyasaland, achieved independence in 1964. One of the poorest African countries, with an average life expectancy of only 36 years, Malawi is struggling to establish democracy in the face of daunting problems, chief among them starvation caused by a lengthy drought and pervasive AIDS. These conditions preclude widespread political expectations.

### End of the Banda regime

Under the leadership of the late Dr Hastings Kamuzu Banda, the traditionalist and conservative Malawi Congress Party (MCP) was the sole legal party from 1966. During the Banda era, political opposition was not only not tolerated, opponents frequently met an unfortunate end. Some were dropped down "Ching-

we's Hole", a geological formation atop the Zomba Plateau, not far from the meeting place of Parliament. Inexplicable auto accidents dispatched other critics of the regime. In addition to totalitarian politics, rampant corruption was reported. However, like other one-party regimes in much of sub-Saharan Africa, that in Malawi faced intensifying demands for democratization in the early 1990s. Widespread opposition to the Banda regime included academics and politicians as well as religious organizations; a pastoral letter from the Catholic bishops was instrumental in precipitating a "velvet revolution" in 1992.

Sixty-three percent of voters opted for change in a referendum in 1993. The 1994 constitution established a semi-presidential system in which the directly elected executive President, like the Parliament (National Assembly), serves a five-year term. Cabinet ministers need not be members of Parliament. The new constitution provided protection for human rights and created the position of ombudsman.

The MCP lost power in the resultant multi-party elections in May 1994. A former member of Banda's party, Bakili Muluzi, was elected President under the new United Democratic Front (UDF) banner, the UDF also coming first in the parliamentary elections, while the MCP came second in both contests. Many UDF leaders were former Malawi Congress Party officials, suggesting that the "revolution" was less muscular

than it might have been; Muluzi himself was a former MCP Secretary General. Muluzi refused to replace the Banda regime's ambassador to South Africa, even though requested by President Mandela (Banda having been criticized for his links with the previous apartheid regime in South Africa).

AFORD, the Forum for the Restoration of Democracy, taking the name of a comparable opposition group in Kenya, took third place in the 1994 elections. Muluzi found himself six votes short of a majority in the parliament, so he appointed six AFORD members to his Cabinet, achieving an 89-88 majority.

The 1999 elections resulted in a second victory for Muluzi (with 52 per cent of the vote in the presidential election) and a plurality of 93 seats for the UDF in the 192-seat parliament. The MCP again came second and AFORD, third. The three main parties are regionally-based organizations reflecting the ethnic-regional perspective that dominates Malawian politics.

In late 2002 Dango Mughogho, leader of the Malawi Forum for Unity and Development, was arrested for publicly opposing a third (unconstitutional) term for Muluzi.

There appears to be no current extra-legal political opposition, either inside or outside the country.

*Richard A. Fredland*

## Malaysia

**Capital:** Kuala Lumpur

**Population:** 23 m

The Federation of Malaysia, consisting of Peninsular Malaysia, Sabah and Sarawak, is an independent member of the Commonwealth and parliamentary democracy. The Supreme Head of State, known as Yang Di Pertuan Agong, a largely ceremonial post, is elected for five years by the nine rulers of the Malay states from among their own number. The head of government is the Prime Minister.

Malaysia's Parliament consists of (i) the Supreme Head of State, (ii) a 70 member Senate or Dewan Negara (26 of its members being elected by the 13 state Legislative Assemblies and 44 appointed by the head of state for maximum two terms), and (iii) a 193-member House of Representatives or Dewan Rakyat elected for up to five years by universal adult suffrage.

In the federal general election held on Nov. 29, 1999, political parties that obtained seats in the House of Representatives were as follows: National Front (Barisan Nasional) 148, Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party (PAS) 27, Democratic Action Party 10, National Justice Party (KeAdilan) 5, and United Sabah Party (Parti Bersatu Sabah) 3. The National Front is made up of 14 political organizations (the leading party being the United Malays National Organization, UMNO) repre-

senting all the main ethnic communities. The National Front has held power since its foundation in 1973, when it superseded the earlier and similar Alliance Party, which had held power continuously since independence in 1957.

The government's policy of promoting ethnic Malay economic interests was embedded in the New Economic Policy (introduced in 1970 after racial riots on May 13, 1969), which featured reverse discrimination in favour of the more economically backward but numerically larger *bumiputera* community (indigenous peoples), especially Malays. The New Economic Policy ended in 1990 and was replaced by a more moderate National Development Policy that afforded the non-Malays more freedom and opportunities.

### Internal Security Issues

Under Essential (Security Cases) Regulations promulgated by the government on Oct. 4, 1975, and still in effect as of 2003, all acts affecting security are to be tried by a single judge (sitting without a jury) with appeals limited to cases involving severe penalties. The judge is bound to impose the maximum penalty

and suspects may be arrested without warrant and kept in preventive custody for 75 days. The regulation abolished the principles of the onus of proof of culpability lying with the prosecution and that guilt was presumed until innocence was proven.

According to a report by Amnesty International (Aug. 29, 1979), over 1,000 persons were being held without trial, 53 of them for over eight years. On July 30, 1981, the government announced the release of 21 of such detainees, among them four politicians arrested on Nov. 4, 1976, in connection with alleged communist subversion. After their release, a former deputy minister and member of the UMNO, the chairman of the (opposition) Malaysian People's Socialist Party, and four members of the (opposition) Democratic Action Party were re-elected to the federal House of Representatives in 1978. On Feb. 4, 1982, it was officially announced that the total number of political detainees released had reached 168, leaving 444 persons who were still held without trial, although further arrests were made under internal security provisions later that month.

Under a Societies' (Amendment) Bill passed by the federal House of Representatives on April 9, 1981, all clubs, societies and associations were required to register as either political or non-political bodies. The Registrar of Societies was empowered to take action against any society that was registered as non-political but was later deemed to have involved itself in political affairs. In such cases there is no possible appeal except to the Minister of Home Affairs.

In October and November of 1987, 106 opposition leaders were detained under the Internal Security Act for allegedly "inflaming communal sentiments". They included the parliamentary opposition leader, Lim Kit Siang of the Democratic Action Party, and members of the Malaysian Chinese Association and Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party. About half were later released unconditionally while the rest were released with restrictions to their movement and freedom of association. The last of the detainees were released on April 19, 1990.

The Internal Security Act remains in force, allowing for indefinite detention without trial, and has in recent years been used in particular against extreme Islamists. In 2001 the government banned large political gatherings.

The East Asian economic crisis of 1997-98 led to a period of political upheaval, with conflict between Prime Minister Mahathir bin Mohamad and his Deputy Prime Minister, Anwar Ibrahim, resulting in the latter's dismissal in September 1998. Opposition formed into the Reformasi (Reformation) Movement, though this did not reach the levels of the parallel movement in Indonesia that led to the downfall of Suharto. Anwar Ibrahim was arrested under the Internal Security Act (later being convicted on various criminal charges) and various Reformasi leaders followed suit. Political detainees are often arrested under the ISA, released for a period, and then re-arrested.

## LEFT-WING MOVEMENTS

### Communist Party of Malaya (CPM)

Established in 1930, the CPM was banned on July 23, 1948, after being engaged in an armed insurrection in the Federation of Malaya, which became an independent state within the Commonwealth on Aug. 31, 1957. The insurrection was not finally suppressed until July 31, 1960 (with the help of British, Australian and New Zealand forces) when a 12-year state of emergency ended. According to official statements the insurrection had resulted in the death of 11,048 persons (6,710 communist guerrillas, 1,865 soldiers and police and 2,473 civilians) in addition to which 510 civilians were listed as missing. Chin Peng, the then General Secretary of CPM later settled in Beijing (China) in 1961.

The CPM, which initially had some 15,000 fighters in the field, was largely composed of ethnic Chinese (who form about 35 per cent of Malaysia's population), and embraced the policy of the Communist Party of China. From 1966 onwards a Malayan National Liberation Army (MNLA), organized by the CPM, carried out guerrilla activities near Malaysia's border with Thailand, and it had its own radio station, the "Voice of the Malayan Revolution".

Agreement on Thai-Malaysian co-operation against the MNLA was first reached in July 1968 and was confirmed in a military co-operation agreement signed on March 7, 1970. Protracted fighting between guerrillas and Malaysian troops (supported by Thai forces) continued until June 1971. The Malaysian government announced the formation of a National Action Committee in June 1971 to cope with "the serious and growing communist threat" and to induce people in the rural areas to side with the government and not to allow themselves to be recruited by the MNLA.

In 1971, however, China began to improve its relations with Malaysia and progressively gave less publicity to MNLA operations. When the two governments decided, on May 31, 1974, to establish diplomatic relations with each other, China undertook to "respect Malaysia's independence and sovereignty" and to enjoin those Chinese in Malaysia who retained their Chinese nationality out of their own will "to abide by the laws of the government of Malaysia".

MNLA guerrilla activities persisted throughout the early part of the 1970s. However, by the mid-1970s the communist guerrillas in Malaysia were said to have been reduced to about 3,000 who were divided into three factions (CPM, CPMM-L and CPM-RF), with 12 army brigades being deployed in the border area. In November 1980 Musa bin Ahmad (described as chairman of the CPM), who had resided in Beijing for 25 years, defected to the Malaysian authorities, and on Jan. 6, 1981, he alleged in a broadcast that China still intended to turn Malaysia into one of its satellites.

The "Voice of the Malayan Revolution" radio station ceased its broadcasts on July 1, 1981, but was replaced on July 4 the same year by the "Voice of the Malayan Democracy". It announced on June 20, 1982, that the MNLA had been renamed the Malayan People's Army (*Tentera Rakyat Malaya*).

In a new party constitution adopted on April 29, 1980, the CPM was described as "a proletarian party guided by Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong thought", whose revolution could "never attain victory by taking the road of parliamen-



tary democracy, armed uprising in the cities or urban guerrilla war” but only by “using the countryside to encircle the cities and seize political power by armed force”.

The Chinese Foreign Minister said on Feb. 28, 1984, during an official visit to Malaysia, that China would not end its “moral support” for the CPM. *The Bangkok World* reported on Feb. 12, 1985, that Malaysia and Thailand had launched their “biggest-ever military drive” against CPM guerrillas. Malaysian authorities estimated that at that time there were about 260 active “communist terrorists” in Peninsular Malaysia, 100 in Sarawak and 2,000 in southern Thailand.

During 1989 secret talks were held between the CPM and Thai and Malaysian authorities with the view of ending the CPM’s insurgency and finally on Dec. 2, 1989 a peace agreement was signed in Haadyai, Southern Thailand, by Chin Peng and representatives of the Thai and Malaysian government. Under the terms of the treaty, 1,188 CPM members were to disarm and return to civilian life, although the Malaysian government stated that there were no plans to legalize the CPM. The movement itself no longer exists.

### Communist Party of Malaysia (MCP)

The MCP was formed in 1983 by the merger of the Communist Party of Malaya–Revolutionary Faction and the Communist Party of Malaya Marxist-Leninist (CPMM-L), which broke away from the Communist Party of Malaya (CPM) in 1970 and 1974 respectively. Both groups rejected the Maoist theory of using the countryside to encircle the cities as unworkable in Malaysia (where the rural population is predominantly Malay, whereas the CPM membership was mainly Chinese), and advocated rallying support among the Chinese population in the towns and the use of urban guerrilla warfare. Fighting occurred between CPM and CPMM-L forces in southern Thailand in 1982. In 1987 about 700 guerrillas of the MCP surrendered to the Thai authorities at Sentong and were later settled as farmers. The MCP no longer exists.

## MUSLIM FUNDAMENTALIST GROUPS

Muslims constitute about 60% of the Malaysian population; most Muslims are Malays although there are small numbers of Muslims from other groups. Since 1980 there have been five major crackdowns on Muslim fundamentalist groups. By April 2002 the Malaysian authorities had identified 24 religious groups seen as deviant. Some 7,210 people had been arrested for posing a threat to national security and affecting the dignity of Islam in one way or another. They were said to encourage violence or be causing harm to other people, splitting the Muslims and breaking up family ties. To curb their influence, the authorities had charged several religious leaders in court or detained them under the Internal Security Act (ISA). In respect of students with militant Islamist views and/or pursuing religious studies in Pakistan and Yemen on their own, the government is considering the need for guidelines and regulations to monitor self-financing students overseas. In addition, cooperation with the host countries on the matter would be sought.

The **Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party (PAS)** emerged

as the strongest opposition party in the 1999 federal elections (although the government retained a commanding majority). It also retained control of Kelantan at the state level and won control of Terengganu. Prime Minister Mahathir warned in June 2001 that if the ruling coalition fragmented and allowed the PAS to come to power in elections due by 2004, it would seek to establish an Islamic government and cause instability that would lead to the “re-colonization” of Malaysia. The seemingly ambivalent PAS reaction to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in the United States led to a rift with its opposition partner, the (mainly Chinese) Democratic Action Party (DAP).

### Dakwah (Missionary) Muslim Movement

This movement, said to have grown significantly in 1978-80, was involved in violent clashes with police in South Johore in August 1980. In that incident, eight persons were killed and others injured. This led to a curfew being imposed in the town of Batu Pahat, Johore, where the massacre occurred. The *Dakwah* advocated inter alia the rejection of symbols of modern or Western life, such as television sets, and the exclusion of women from higher education (such education of women being regarded as contrary to the Koranic teaching). A small group of Muslims were also responsible for the destruction of several temples of the 700,000 strong Hindu community in the state of Selangor in 1984. The Malaysian authorities labeled the group as “religious fanatics” and punished them accordingly. There have been no such further incidents since 1984.

### Al-Arqam

*Al-Arqam*, being a reference from the Quran (Koran), was established by Ashaari Muhammad in 1968, and began as an ordinary missionary group besides being involved in the production of foodstuffs and publications. Radical change occurred in 1979 when its leader admitted to being a follower of the dead religious teacher Shaikh Muhammad As-Suhaimi and adopted his doctrine of *Aurad Muhammadiyah* as the philosophy of *Al-Arqam*. Ashaari then published a book, *Aurad Muhammadiyah*, which contained the philosophy of *Al-Arqam*, and distributed this among his followers.

The Minister of Home Affairs, on the advice of the National Fatwa Council (a council that decides on guiding Islamic principles), banned the book on Aug. 5, 1994. The National Fatwa Council had ruled that its teachings were “wrong and a deviation”, these misleading teachings including the belief that Shaikh Muhammad As-Suhaimi would be resurrected as Imam Mahdi and that Ashaari had had a conscious meeting with Prophet Muhammad in the Ka’abah and received the *Aurad Muhammadiyah*. The claim by Ashaari that he had a conscious meeting with the Prophet Muhammad and his followers and had conducted a dialogue with the prophet challenged the foundation of Islamic teaching as this would mean that the Quran and Hadith were yet to be completed.

During this period Ashaari was living in self-imposed exile in Thailand but the Thai authorities later turned him over to Malaysia, where he was detained under the Internal Security Act on Sept. 6, 1994.

There were mixed reactions in Malaysia to the ban on this society. The leader of the opposition Democratic Action

Party (DAP) called the detentions under the Internal Security Act completely unjustified. Although the authorities banned the society in 1994, its revival was reported in 1996 when one of the local publishing companies was alleged to be spreading the teaching of *Al-Arqam*. In addition to this, the State Religious Affairs Department (JAIS) was informed that its activities were being continued by former members of the group around Sungai Pencala and Sungai Serai in Hulu Langat, Selangor. By the year 1999, the group was reported to have revived its movement during the economic downturn. One of its ex-members told a local journalist that it was hard for members to leave behind the teaching of *Al-Arqam* totally, even though they have attended the rehabilitation course conducted by Malaysian Islamic Advancement Department (JAKIM), as the teachings of *Al-Arqam* are deep-rooted within them.

### **Al-Ma'unah**

*Al-Ma'unah* ("Brotherhood of Inner Power") claims to have registered as a society in 1998. Its website reports that it teaches "martial arts", particularly the development of one's inner power and the practice of Islamic traditional medicine. Mohamed Amin Mohamed Razali led this group by the year 2000. (Razali, when 13 years old, was reported to have been a member of a group involved in clashes with police at a religious commune in Memali, in the northern state of Kedah, in 1985 when four policemen and 14 villagers were killed.)

An arms heist organized by the group took place in Sauk, in the state of Perak on July 2, 2000. Members of the group, including active and former military men, disguised themselves as army officers and stole more than 100 assault rifles, grenade launchers and light machine guns from the armories at two army camps. Two hostages were tortured and killed by the group. All 27 members subsequently surrendered on July 6, 2000. Malaysian servicemen who were involved in the incident were urged to repent and a hunt for the group's followers continued until July 10. Police were working closely with the State Religious Affairs Department to trace members of the group and determine the extent of their activities.

Following the incident, the leader of the opposition DAP party urged the Prime Minister to introduce a White Paper and allow a full parliamentary debate on the dual problems of the serious lapse in military discipline and security of weaponry armories and violent Islamic deviationist groups. The DAP also proposed the establishment of a committee to deal with the aftermath of the *Al-Ma'unah* arms heists and work out a bipartisan national counter-strategy to prevent a recurrence and to stamp out deviationist religious groups.

Consequently, the government set up two boards of inquiry to investigate the incident and make recommendations. The Home Affairs Ministry and the Islamic Advancement Department were made responsible for an "early-warning system" to monitor religious groups. The White Paper was tabled in parliament for debate. Prime Minister Mahathir denounced the group's action in deliberately killing the non-Muslim hostages as being against the true teaching of Islam. The White Paper, inter alia, reported that the group espoused the formation of an Islamic State.

By Aug. 9, 2000, a total of 29 members of the *Al-Ma'unah* group were detained in Bukit Jenalik. They were charged in the Session Court with waging war against the

Yang di Pertuan Agong (the King). Ten members were sentenced to death by hanging and 16 others to life imprisonment on Dec. 27, 2000, for waging an armed revolt to overthrow Malaysia's government and replace it with an Islamic state.

Analysts noted that at the core of *Al-Ma'unah* philosophy is a form of mysticism whereby it provides a spiritual path that enables one to attain mystical powers such as invincibility and the ability to see beyond the material world.

### **Malaysian Mujahideen Organization/Malaysian Militant Organization (Kumpulan Mujahideen Malaysia, KMM)**

It has been reported that two religious fanatical groups, which appeared in the 1980s, influenced the formation of the KMM. This group was formed by students who took part in the Afghan struggle against the Soviet Union. Two leaders of the KMM were arrested under the Internal Security Act and the group was reportedly by 1999 under the leadership of Nik Adli Nik Abdul Aziz, son of the opposition Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party (PAS) spiritual leader, Nik Aziz. Some reports suggested that the KMM was formed as a militia to protect PAS members after the Memali incident in 1985 (above) but PAS has denied any connection with the KMM.

Official sources reported that the KMM had established branches in all nine states of Peninsular Malaysia. The group was alleged to conduct militia-style training to protect the opposition party in the event of a government crackdown. Its leaders were believed to be actively planning a violent overthrow of the government in favour of the establishment of a new Islamic state, encompassing Malaysia, Indonesia, the southern Philippines, Singapore and Brunei.

Some KMM members are believed to have been wooed by Indonesian *ulema*, or Islamic teachers, Abubakar Ba'asyir and Riduan Isamuddin, better known as Hambali. Both preached a radical new vision of Islam, heavily influenced by the world view of Osama bin Laden, believing in the glory of a martyr's death and the overriding goal of setting up a Muslim government. These members are believed to have formed a new organization called *Jemaah Islamiah* (JI) in the late 1990s and the authorities have labeled this as KMM-2.

However, according to Abubakar Ba'asyir in an interview with *Time*, he was not advocating the overthrow of any government but was looking for a government that is committed to Islam. He accused the Malaysian Prime Minister of inventing JI for the purpose of instilling fear in the Muslim community.

The KMM came to prominence after a robbery at Southern Bank in Jalan Gasing, Petaling Jaya on May 18, 2001. In this incident the bank's security guard shot three armed robbers, two of whom died. Malaysian police made their first arrests of 12 KMM members in early August 2001. A second round of arrests was carried out between Dec. 9, 2001, and Jan. 21, 2002, involving 23 KMM members in Selangor, Kuala Lumpur and Johor, and a further 13 men and one woman were detained on April 18, 2002. Only three of those arrested were released. The detainees were accused by the government of staging bank robberies, murdering a politician, dispatching volunteers to fight Christians in Indonesia, acquiring arms to overthrow the Malaysian government and conspiring to set up an Islamic state. The police claimed that KMM members were also members of the Pan-Malaysian



Islamic Party (PAS).

### SEPARATIST MOVEMENT

#### **Sabah People's Liberation Organization**

This group was alleged to be behind a separatist plot to seize the state of Sabah with the assistance of foreign mercenaries

in order to withdraw Sabah from the Malaysian Federation. The plot was revealed by the government on July 9, 1990, when three police officers and an associate of Chief Minister Kitingan were arrested under the terms of Malaysia's Internal Security Act.

*Nidzam Sulaiman*

## Maldives

**Capital:** Male

**Population:** 310,000

The Republic of Maldives, called the Maldives Islands until April 1969, was a British protectorate from 1887, briefly becoming a republic in January 1953 until its former status as a sultanate was restored in February 1954. The Maldives achieved full independence outside the Commonwealth on July 26, 1965, and became a republic again in November 1968, following a referendum. The Maldives became a full member of the Commonwealth in June 1985.

The Constitution vests considerable powers in an executive President, elected for a five-year term by universal adult suffrage. On Oct. 16, 1998, President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom (in power since November 1978) was re-elected for a fifth term by 90.9 per cent of the votes in a national referendum. There is a Cabinet presided over by the President and a 50-member (expanded from 48 under the revised 1998 Constitution) People's Council (Majlis – since Jan. 1, 1998, the People's Majlis). Eight members of the Majlis are appointed, whilst 42 non-partisan members are elected every five years, the last general election being held on Nov. 19, 1999. There are no political parties.

The government of President Gayoom found it necessary to take action against certain members of the former regime of President Ibrahim Nasir, who was in exile in Singapore. Ahmed Naseem, a former deputy fisheries minister, was sentenced in April 1981 for attempting to overthrow Gayoom the previous year on behalf of Nasir. A similar plot was reported in 1983. Gayoom finally issued a pardon to Nasir in 1990.

On Nov. 3, 1988, the presidential palace and other government buildings in the capital, Male, were attacked in an attempted coup in which 20 people were killed. The attempt was carried out by a force of 150 insurgents who had come from Sri Lanka by boat. The government called upon India for assistance and India despatched 300 paratroopers to Maldives. The rebels were led by Maldives dissidents Abdullah Luthufi and Sagar Ahmed Nasir while the remainder were Tamil separatists recruited as mercenaries. On Nov. 4, Indian troops arrived to take control and the insurgents attempted to escape by sea taking a number of hostages with them. Immediately 67 of the insurgents, including Luthufi and Nasir, were captured; they had killed four of the 28 hostages taken and another four

were unaccounted for, but the rest were released. On Nov. 7 the government said that the Indian troops would remain until those involved in the coup attempt had all been captured. On Nov. 8 it was announced that 160 insurgents had been arrested in Male.

On Aug. 17, 1989, 73 insurgents were brought to trial for the attempted coup and of these 17 were sentenced to death including the coup leader, Abdullah Luthufi, and various Sri Lankans. The remainder, all Sri Lankan mercenaries, received sentences varying between 17 and 38 years in prison. On Nov. 3, 1989, it was announced that the Indian troops would return home.

President Gayoom in early 1990 announced a programme of democratic reform involving redistribution of power and liberalization of the press. The emergence, however, of several politically outspoken magazines led to a reversal of the liberalization policy, with the banning of unapproved publications and the arrest of a number of journalists. In late 1993 Minister of Atolls Administration Ilyas Ibrahim, Gayoom's brother-in-law, was charged with unconstitutional behaviour in trying to obtain the nomination of the Majlis for the presidency. Ibrahim left the country, was tried in absentia and sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment. Ibrahim returned to the Maldives in 1996 and was held under house arrest until 1997.

At the end of a four-year process Gayoom ratified a revised 156-article Constitution that came into effect on Jan. 1, 1998, and introduced broader formal democracy and accountability into political life, although it did not allow political parties.

During the campaign for the general election held on Nov. 19, 1999, Ibrahim Ahmed Maniku and two other candidates for the Majlis were detained and reportedly ill-treated and tortured in custody. According to Amnesty International (AI) they were not charged with any criminal offence but detained solely because they stood against candidates closely associated with the government. AI received reports that up to 100 people had been detained before the election, either for campaigning on behalf of independent candidates or for criticizing government-backed candidates.

On Feb. 14, 2003, the Paris-based media watchdog

Reporters without Borders (RSF – *Reporters sans Frontières*) appealed to the government of the Maldives to release four journalists detained since January 2002 for publishing articles critical of the government in their electronic newsletter *Sandhaanu*. In July 2002 Mohamed Zaki, Ibrahim Luthfee and Ahmed Didi (the editors of *Sandhaanu*) were sentenced to life imprisonment for “defamation of the President” and “committing acts hostile to the government”. Their assistant Fathimath Nisreen was sentenced to 10 years’ imprisonment for “expressing dissatisfaction with the gov-

ernment”. The defendants were denied legal representation. According to AI the articles had not advocated violent political opposition to the government and RSF cited in its appeal article 25 of the constitution, which guaranteed freedom of speech. The four prisoners were reportedly being held in poor conditions.

*Tim Curtis*

## Mali

**Capital:** Bamako

**Population:** 11.4 m

Mali was established as an independent republic on Sept. 22, 1960, under the rule of the Sudanese Union – African Democratic Convention (*Union Soudanaise – Rassemblement Démocratique Africain* USRDA), headed by Modibo Keita. From 1968 to 1979, the country was ruled by a Military Committee of National Liberation (*Comité Militaire de Libération Nationale*, CMLN) with Brigadier-General Moussa Traoré as executive President. In 1979 Traoré constituted a one party state under the Democratic Union of the Malian People (*Union Démocratique du Peuple Malien*, UDPM) and had himself elected as President, while remaining the head of the army. Traoré repeatedly promised a return to civilian government, but this remained confined to the appointment of civilians to the Cabinet.

A number of outlawed parties had continued in existence in Mali since the days of the USRDA one-party state, including the Malian Workers’ Party (*Parti Malien des Travailleurs*, PMT). The USRDA itself was outlawed in 1968, but remained in existence in exile. From its ranks, the Malian Party for Revolution and Democracy (*Parti Malien pour la Révolution et la Démocratie*, PMRD) came into existence in 1979. The Malian Popular Democratic Front (*Front Démocratique et Populaire Malien*, FDP) was largely composed of exiled Malians. Most of these parties would join either the National Committee for Democratic Initiative (CNID) or Alliance for Democracy in Mali (ADEMA) in 1990. Attempted coups were foiled by the regime in October 1978 and December 1980.

On March 26, 1991, Traoré was toppled by a popular uprising instigated by the Student Union (*Association des Etudiants et Elèves Maliennes*, AEEM) and the dissident democratic movements, the National Committee for Democratic Initiative (*Comité National d’Initiative Démocratique*, CNID) and the Alliance for Democracy in Mali (*Alliance Démocratique du Mali*, ADEMA), while the army was held down in the North of the country by a Tuareg

rebellion. Between March 1991 and June 1992, the country was ruled by a Transition Committee for the Salvation of the People (*Comité Transitoire pour le Salut du Peuple*, CTSP) under Lieutenant-Colonel Amadou Toumani Touré, which represented all dissident movements in Mali, including the Tuareg rebels and the students. The CTSP organized a National Conference in July 1991 and prepared a new constitution, put in effect in January 1992, and parliamentary and presidential elections, which were won by the ADEMA candidate, Alpha Oumar Konaré in June 1992. Konaré was re-elected in the presidential elections of May 1997, which were judged democratic and valid by international observers, despite organizational problems and heavy opposition to the elections and their outcome from an alliance of small opposition parties known as the Collective for Political Opposition (*Collective d’Opposition Politique*, COPPO). The 1992 Constitution was revised in 2000. Among other changes was the inscription of decentralized government, and a stronger insistence on the limit of two presidential terms of office of five years each, strengthening Mali’s democratic institutions.

Konaré did not present himself at the 2002 presidential elections. He was succeeded by former CTSP leader Touré, who defeated Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, acting Prime Minister between 1994 and 2000 for the ruling ADEMA party, which he left in 2002 as he was not made the party’s presidential candidate (Keita forming his own party, the Assembly for Mali, *Rassemblement pour le Mali*, RPM).

### Rebellion of Tuareg and Moors

From June 1990 to March 1996, Mali faced a rebellion of the nomadic Tuareg and Moors in the North of the country. The original separatist intentions of the Tuareg rebels changed to demands for more autonomy within the Malian state, finally deteriorating into Tuareg inter-tribal conflicts. However, rebel demands for more autonomy eventually led to decentralization

and the democratization of local administration in 1999.

Having been promised independence within a Common Organization of Saharan Regions (*Organisation Commune des Régions Sahariennes*, OCRS) in the 1950s, Tuareg leaders had never fully accepted inclusion in Mali and Niger. A first rebellion in Mali took place between 1963-64. After defeat, its leaders went into exile in Algeria and Libya. Their ranks swelled with refugees from the droughts of the early 1970s and 1980s. In 1980 they founded the Popular Front for the Liberation of the Arab Central Sahara (PFLACS) under Libyan tutelage. Its members gained military training and skills as volunteers with the PLO in Lebanon and in Libyan campaigns in Chad in the 1980s. At a summit attended by Mali, Niger, Libya and Algeria (at Djanet in Algeria) on Sept. 8-9, 1989, it was agreed to establish a joint committee to resettle and re-integrate the Tuareg. Mali had accused Libya of arming and training them and Libya had recruited Tuareg to serve in its Islamic Legion. The accusation that Libya had armed them has always been denied by the rebels.

Peace talks, starting in December 1990, resulted in the signing under Algerian mediation of a treaty in Tamanrasset, Algeria, on Jan. 6, 1991, between Mali and the Popular Movement of the Azawad (*Mouvement Populaire de l'Azawad*, MPA) and the Islamic Arab Front of the Azawad (*Front Islamique Arabe de l'Azawad*, FIAA) (Azawad being the name of the Tuareg home country). Despite the name of the latter movement, Islam or Muslim radicalism has never played any role in this conflict.

The treaty was never applied as the signatory Traoré government was toppled two months later. New negotiations between the rebels and the CTSP led to the signing of the National Pact on April 11, 1992. By then, the rebels had split into four different movements: the already mentioned MPA and FIAA, the Popular Front for the Liberation of the Azawad (*Front*

*Populaire pour la Libération de l'Azawad*, FPLA) and the Revolutionary Army for the Liberation of the Azawad (*Armée Révolutionnaire pour la Libération de l'Azawad*, ARLA). The divisions between the rebels were based on internal tribal organization and tribal conflicts of power.

The National Pact was never applied by either government or rebels, and internal fighting between Tuareg movements led to the creation in 1994 of a new vigilante movement, the Patriotic Movement Ganda Koy (*Mouvement Patriotique Ganda Koy*, MPGK), consisting of army deserters of Songhay origins, who had the tacit support of the Malian army. Fighting between the MPGK and army on the one hand and the various Tuareg movements on the other throughout 1994, led to strong ethnic and racial tensions and violence on an unprecedented scale. From October 1994 onwards, Tuareg and Songhay civil leaders tried to solve the conflict on a local level. A first step in this reconciliation process was made with the Bourem Pact between Tuareg and Songhay inhabitants of that town. Similar agreements between civic leaders of local communities and also between Tuareg rebel movements and the MPGK followed, with the support of the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the Norwegian NGO, AEN.

These local peace initiatives led to the formal ending of the conflict on March 26, 1996, with the Flame of Peace ceremony in Timbuktu, where approximately 3,000 weapons, collected from voluntarily disarmed rebel fighters, were publicly burned. During this ceremony, all rebel movements and the MPGK were formally dissolved. As the Malian constitution does not allow for the creation of political parties on an ethnic or religious basis, none of the rebel movements sought to transform themselves into a political party. At the time of writing, no dissident movements were active.

*Baz Lecocq*

## Malta

**Capital:** Valletta

**Population:** 385,000

Malta achieved its independence from the United Kingdom in 1964 and declared itself a republic in 1974. It adheres to neutrality as defined in its Constitution. The Head of State is a President appointed by resolution of the House of Representatives which normally has 65 members, elected usually for a period of five years by universal adult suffrage through a proportional electoral system and the single transferable vote. The President appoints the Prime Minister (the head of government) and, on the latter's advice, the Cabinet ministers from among the elected

members of the House of Representatives.

Maltese politics are highly contested and since 1966, turnout at general elections has not been lower than 89 per cent (reaching over 96 per cent in the most recent election, in April 2003). Also since 1966, domestic politics have been dominated by two parties, the Nationalist Party (NP) and Malta Labour Party, which have alternated in government.

Malta experienced a period of considerable tension in the 1980s. In the 1981 elections the ruling Malta Labour Party took a lower share of the popular vote

than the NP but obtained a three-seat parliamentary majority and formed the government. The Nationalist Party refused to take up its seats in Parliament on the grounds that some of the 13 electoral districts had been “gerrymandered” to yield the anomalous result. Political tensions increased following the government’s approval of the Foreign Interference Act (1982), designed to isolate the opposition, and reached crisis point in 1983 when the government adopted legislation to confiscate some Church property and raided the Nationalist Party headquarters. The government also attempted to take over the Church schools and political violence reached unprecedented levels with the slaying of a Nationalist Party supporter and the serious injury of several others during political rallies. A temporary agreement with the Vatican over the future of Church schools was reached in 1985. During this tumultuous period there were several bombing incidents in which no one was killed or injured. It is not known who was behind this strategy of creating tension.

The crisis of the 1980s led to a political compromise involving changes in the electoral law providing for the party with an absolute majority of votes in the election to be awarded additional Parliamentary seats to enable it to secure a majority and form a government, while the definition of Malta’s neutrality was enshrined in the Constitution.

The Nationalist Party was elected to government in 1987 and the European Convention on Human Rights was immediately made part of Maltese law. In July 1990, Malta applied to join the European Union. The EU membership question subsequently became the main divisive issue in Maltese politics with the Nationalist Party favouring membership and the Malta Labour Party preferring a partnership agreement. The election of the Malta Labour Party to government in 1996 following a strong campaign against membership led to the suspension of the membership application. However, following another change in government resulting from an unprecedented early election called in 1998 after internal Labour Party divisions, and which saw the return of the Nationalist Party to

power with a five-seat parliamentary majority, the application was reactivated and negotiations with the EU started in 2000 and were successfully completed in December 2002. A referendum held in March 2003 resulted in 53.6 per cent of those who voted supporting the country’s accession to the EU, and Malta is expected to become a member of the EU on May 1, 2004. The Nationalist Party was re-elected to office in April 2003.

No extra-parliamentary opposition groups have been reported to exist in Malta in recent years although foreign terrorist organizations may have used Malta as a staging post without the knowledge of the authorities and to carry out some of their activities. Terrorist activity carried out by foreigners in Malta includes the slaying of a Lebanese national (mistaken for a Palestinian official) by the Abu Nidal group in 1981, an attack on the Israeli Chargé d’Affaires in 1983, and the assassination of Fathi Shiqaqi, secretary general of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad organization, who was shot dead on Oct. 26, 1995, in Malta while in transit to Syria. In 1985, an Egypt Air airliner with 91 passengers and six crew members on board was hijacked to Malta by members of the Abu Nidal group helped by Libya. Following an assault on the airliner by Egyptian commandos, only 20 passengers survived, one of whom was a hijacker who was later arrested by US authorities in Ghana following his eventual release after serving his sentence in Malta. In the aftermath of the events in the USA of Sept. 11, 2001, the Maltese authorities have increased vigilance against the movement of persons connected to terrorist organizations such as *Al-Qaeda*.

Hamadi Bouyahia, a Tunisian national with suspected *Al-Qaeda* connections was arrested in Malta in October 2002, a day before a football match between the Maltese and Israeli national teams was due to be played. He was allowed to leave Malta for Italy on the morrow of his arrest. Italy was seeking his arrest in connection with suspected terrorist activity and he is due to stand trial in October 2003.

*Roderick Pace*

## Marshall Islands

**Capital:** Dalap-Uliga-Darrit (Majuro)

**Population:** 57,000

The Marshall Islands, located in the northern Pacific, came under US administration from 1947 as part of the UN Trust Territory of the Pacific. The Marshall Islands were separated from other US-administered Trust Territories and became a separate state in 1978. In 1983 a referendum endorsed a 1982 Compact of Free Association with the USA, whereby the USA took charge of external and defence matters.

Growing anti-US resentment resulted from nuclear tests in the Marshall Islands. The hydrogen bomb was first tested on Bikini Atoll in 1947 and today the USA still uses the Kwajalein Atoll as a testing ground for its carrier rockets. During the nuclear tests, a number of people exposed to radiation were killed and many were removed from their atolls for relocation due to the tests.



Resistance to US nuclear testing and rule in the Marshalls came in the form of anti-nuclear groups mobilizing to end “nuclear colonialism”. The demand for compensation for damage caused was also a major issue. At the forefront of the campaign was the Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific movement.

However, no political unrest developed. The Marshall Islands remains heavily dependent economically on the USA.

*Steven Ratuva*

## Mauritania

**Capital:** Nouakchot

**Population:** 2.8 m

The Islamic Republic of Mauritania gained independence from France in 1960, becoming a civilian one-party state under the Mauritanian People's Party led by President Mokhtar Ould Daddah. Following a coup in 1978, the country was ruled until 1992 by a Military Committee of National Salvation (CMSN), which from 1984 came under the leadership of Moaouia Ould Sidi Ahmed Taya.

Political tensions were aggravated by an unsuccessful coup attempt in 1987 and by serious Mauritanian-Senegalese ethnic unrest in 1989 as Mauritania was drawn into the movement to greater political pluralism apparent across much of Africa in the early 1990s. A referendum in July 1991 overwhelmingly approved a new constitution instituting multi-party politics. It provided for the election of a President by universal suffrage for a renewable six-year term and for the appointment of a Prime Minister. Legislative power was vested in a National Assembly (*Assemblée Nationale*), elected for a five-year term in single seat constituencies, and an indirectly elected Senate (*Sénat*). At the same time, legislation allowing for the formation of political parties was approved by the CMSN.

Taya has since retained the presidency in elections in January 1992 and again in December 1997 (latterly with 90.2 per cent of the vote, defeating four other candidates). In the 1992 legislative elections the Democratic and Social Republican Party (*Parti Républicain Démocratique et Social*, PRDS) – formed as a political vehicle for President Taya following the legalization of multi-partyism in 1991 – won an overwhelming victory. It repeated its electoral success in October 1996. However, the 1992 and 1996 polls were undermined by an opposition boycott prompted by allegations of electoral fraud. Further parliamentary elections (considered generally fair and transparent by European Union monitors) were held on Oct. 19 and 26, 2001, the PRDS securing 64 of the 81 National Assembly seats.

President Taya has maintained ties with Israel and

in 2003 ordered a wave of arrests of suspected Islamists following the US-led invasion of Iraq. In June 2003 army units loyal to President Taya put down an attempted coup by elements of the armed forces after the presidential palace was briefly seized.

### **African Liberation Forces of Mauritania (Forces de libération africaine de Mauritanie, FLAM)**

*Leadership.* Samba Thiam

*Website.* [www.flamnet.fr/fm](http://www.flamnet.fr/fm) (in French)

Formed in 1983, the FLAM has opposed alleged increasing Arabization of Mauritanian society and discrimination exercised against the black population, mainly in the south of the country.

### **Union of Democratic Forces–New Era (Union des forces démocratiques–Ere Nouvelle, UFD–EN)**

*Leadership.* Ahmed Ould Daddah (secretary-general)

The UFD–EN was legalized as a coalition front of opposition parties in 1991. In 1996 it boycotted the National Assembly elections, accusing the Taya government of tampering with the voting register. In April 2000 secretary-general Daddah, a former presidential candidate, was arrested briefly after he called for a protest against the government's failure to investigate alleged political killings, disappearances and torture during the late 1980s and early 1990s. The UFD–EN was then dissolved and its property confiscated by government decree in October 2002 for “inciting intolerance and violence, and inciting demonstrations in order to disturb public order, peace and security”. Daddah described the decree as void and illegitimate.

### **Other Groups**

Other banned organizations include the black militant United Front for Armed Resistance in Mauritania (*Front uni pour la résistance armée en Mauritanie*), which emerged in 1990, and the Free Man (*El Hor*) Movement.

*Richard German & Elizabeth Taylor*



# Mauritius

**Capital:** Port Louis

**Population:** 1.2 m

A former British colony, Mauritius gained independence in 1968 and became a republic within the Commonwealth in March 1992. The head of state is the President, a largely symbolic office, who is elected by the unicameral National Assembly. The head of government is the Prime Minister. The Assembly comprises 62 elected members, serving a five-year term, and up to eight additional seats allocated to correct any inequality in community representation.

Parliamentary elections in December 1995 ended 13 years of coalition government headed by Sir Aneerood Jugnauth of the Militant Socialist Movement (*Mouvement Socialiste Militant*, MSM). In subsequent elections on Sept. 11, 2000, an opposition

alliance between the MSM and the Mauritian Militant Movement (*Mouvement militant mauricien*, MMM) regained power decisively. Jugnauth resumed the premiership while MMM leader, Paul Bérénger, became deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance.

Mauritius remains a stable, multicultural democracy, with regular elections, a free press and an independent judiciary. It has a good human rights record, although there have been underlying ethnic tensions, most recently evident during disturbances in 1999. There appears to be no organized extra-parliamentary opposition.

*Richard German & Elizabeth Taylor*

# Mexico

**Capital:** Mexico City

**Population:** 103 m

Mexico has an executive President, elected for a six-year term, and a bicameral Congress, comprising a 128-member Senate and a 500-member federal Chamber of Deputies (the latter elected every three years). After seven decades of unbroken rule, the Institutional Revolutionary Party (*Partido Revolucionario Institucional*, PRI) lost control of the presidency with the election in July 2000 of Vicente Fox Quesada, the candidate of a coalition of parties led by his own National Action Party (*Partido Acción Nacional*, PAN). The July 2000 legislative elections left no party in overall control, with the PAN winning 218 seats in the Chamber of Deputies and the PRI 209, while the July 2003 elections to the Chamber again left no party in overall control, but with the PRI re-emerging as the largest party.

Mexico almost entirely avoided the wide-scale left-wing insurgency and counter-revolutionary repression that affected the neighbouring Central American states of El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala and Nicaragua in the 1980s. In the 1990s, however, a significant if localized peasant insurgency developed, notably in the state of Chiapas, an area of the country adjoining Central America. This insurgency was based mainly in the 10 per cent of the population of indigenous descent.

## The revolutionary tradition in Mexico

The Mexican Revolution (1910-20) was a combination of small-scale guerrilla warfare and set-piece artillery battles and sieges of towns. The authoritarian

*ancien régime* of Porfirio Díaz (President from 1876-1911, other than 1880-84) was eventually defeated by an unstable alliance of bourgeois reformers and generals and peasant combatants like Emiliano Zapata and Francisco “Pancho” Villa. These latter two self-promoted generals were eventually assassinated on the orders of the central authorities but their reputations lived on. They have been iconic figures for generations of Mexican peasants and left-wing activists.

By the mid-1930s the revolutionary regime had achieved firm control of the state and a national political party (the PRI, known as the National Revolutionary Party from 1929-38 and the Party of the Mexican Revolution from 1938-46) had been established to unify the various interests thrown up during the revolution. Regional conflicts, remnants of revolutionary feuds and religious resistance, were disappearing and a reformed, professional army was able to manage challenges to the central authorities. Under Lázaro Cárdenas (President from 1934-40), the government also embarked on a programme of radical social change. Land reforms gave land in the form of communal *ejido* plots to thousands of landless peasants and the government proved sympathetic to trade unions in negotiating wages and conditions for their members. This style of distributist policies, allied to a nationalistic expropriation of foreign public utilities and oil companies, was the basis of the mass-based, corporatist PRI and central to its decades of dominance.

The Latin American revolutionary left was galva-

nized by the Cuban Revolution in 1959, with national liberation fronts, disavowing the gradualist policies of the traditional communist parties and advocating armed struggle, appearing throughout much of the region. Mexico's own national liberation front, however, was headed by former President Cárdenas and was largely concerned with staging demonstrations in defence of the Cuban revolution (Mexico, uniquely among the states of Latin America, never breaking off diplomatic relations with Castro's Cuba) and in protest against the persistence of poverty in Mexico. It was not involved in violence. Other smaller, confrontational groups appeared, particularly in the poor, mountainous state of Guerrero. The most important of these were led by two rural school teachers: the **Partido de los Pobres** (PdLP, the Party of the Poor) led by Lucio Cabañas and the **Asociación Revolucionaria Nacional Cívica** led by Genaro Vázquez. They were each estimated to have about 200 armed militants. Other smaller groups were reported to be operating in the states of Chihuahua, Oaxaca, Jalisco, Campeche and Veracruz. There were also occasional robberies and kidnappings in several Mexican cities. The number of insurgents, however, was small and there was no effective coordination of their efforts.

During the 1968 Olympic Games, which were hosted by Mexico, a massive demonstration by thousands of students and workers in Mexico City was fired on by the army. The number of people killed is still disputed and the events of Tlatelolco, the name of the area where the massacre occurred, are currently under investigation by a commission established by President Fox. This investigation has yet to uncover the plot claimed by the Díaz Ordaz government in 1968. Quite the reverse, it is uncovering evidence of the presence of governmental *agents provocateurs* in the crowd.

In 1969 the **Revolutionary Action Movement** (*Movimiento de Acción Revolucionario*, MAR) announced its existence. It operated mainly in Mexico City and in the state of Veracruz. The government claimed that this group was financed and supported by the Soviet Union and North Korea, but it also used bank robberies and kidnappings to finance its activities. Its organization included an urban guerrilla wing, the *2 de Octubre del MAR* and a rural guerrilla wing known as the *Ejército Popular del MAR*. These groups were thought to have fewer than 1,000 adherents, most of whom seem to have been students. The MAR was the focus of fierce counter-insurgency action by the Mexican armed forces and appears to have virtually disappeared by the 1980s. Similar efforts to destroy the rural threats offered by Genaro Vázquez and Lucio Cabañas eventually succeeded and their movements became inoperative. The activists were eliminated, sought new careers or adopted less dramatic and more patient revolutionary strategies. Sebastian Guillén (see below) appears to have taken the latter route.

The revolutionary insurgent flame was kept alight by the formation of the **Partido Revolucionario Obrero Clandestino Unión del Pueblo (PROCUP)** in 1971. This alliance of several small groups declared a "pro-

longed people's war" against "imperialism" and in favour of a proletarian dictatorship in Mexico. Its actions were sporadic but it survived several ideological divisions and claimed to have established cells throughout the republic. It planted bombs, robbed banks and assassinated public figures. The government often described its actions as criminal rather than political and condemned its operations in the southern states of Guerrero and Morelos as related to the production and trade in narcotics. Despite governmental attacks and defections PROCUP survived in limited form into the 1990s.

For a brief period at the end of the 1970s the Mexican economy boomed, buoyed by the high price of oil and by foreign credits. The boom, however, was short-lived and by 1982 the government announced that it was unable to meet its current debt servicing repayments, obliging it to accept structural adjustment policies mandated by the World Bank and the IMF. The political and social costs of this shift in economic priorities were considerable. The governing PRI experienced damaging internal divisions over the abandonment of its traditional corporatist policies based on state spending. The nationalist wing also objected to the supposed subservience of the government to its powerful US neighbour, which they saw as the driving power behind the IMF and World Bank. Reductions in public expenditure resulted in cuts in subsidies to a host of basic commodities, like tortillas and fuel, as well as rising unemployment. In the 1988 presidential elections a new electoral force emerged to challenge the PRI. The National Democratic Front (*Frente Democrático Nacional*, FDN), which backed the candidacy of Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas (the son of former President Cárdenas), came close to defeating the governing party's candidate, Carlos Salinas de Gortari.

Over the next few years President Salinas worked hard to neutralize this electoral threat from the left. A new super-ministry, the Programa Nacional de Solidaridad (PRONASOL) was established to coordinate and target social development funding. The targets were often the areas where Cárdenas had polled heavily in 1988. Alongside these tactics local level politicians also employed less sophisticated ways of intimidating or removing opposition. In the slums of the cities and in the poorest parts of the countryside, the source of most of the electoral support for Cárdenas in 1988, the level of political violence increased.

These harsh measures, however, could not disguise the fact that conditions in the cities and countryside were deteriorating badly. Real wages declined and the cost of living increased. The government also decided to repeal Article 27 of the Constitution – a move which meant that landless peasants could no longer hope to receive land through government-sponsored land redistribution schemes. The PRI political machine found it ever more difficult to mobilize its vote. Its local agents faced growing discontent with a severely depleted set of resources.

### The Zapatista rebellion in Chiapas

These circumstances provided the context for a rebel-

lion that achieved international notice when in the early morning of Jan. 1, 1994, small groups of ski-masked, lightly armed people occupied five towns in the highlands of the poor, southern state of Chiapas. The press was advised of the rebellion by fax and email and journalists arrived in the largest of the occupied towns, San Cristóbal de las Casas, almost as soon as the Mexican army.

The rebels called themselves the **Zapatista National Liberation Army** (*Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional*, EZLN), adopting the name of Emiliano Zapata, one of the Mexican Revolution's most revered peasant leaders. They released indigenous prisoners from the local jail, ransacked the offices of the land courts and took several local political figures hostage. Journalists and tourists caught up in the events reported as many as 2,000 rebels. The great majority of the insurgents, although masked, were thought to be drawn from the many indigenous groups in the state. The most articulate of the leaders, however, Comandante Marcos, was not. He was later unveiled as Sebastian Guillén, a former university student activist at the University of Puebla, who had moved to Chiapas to live with the indigenous people in the 1980s.

The Mexican army's response was initially harsh. About 15,000 troops were despatched to Chiapas and in the first 12 days it is estimated that over 150 lives were lost as the rebels withdrew from the towns they held and retreated towards the wet jungle area along the border with Guatemala. By Jan. 12 a ceasefire was arranged and both sides began to prepare for talks. There were large pro-EZLN demonstrations in Mexico City and sympathetic foreign groups added their weight to the *zapatista* cause. Despite the commitment to a dialogue the numbers of soldiers in the state increased steadily. New barracks were constructed and surveillance operations expanded.

By February the demands of the EZLN were becoming clearer. Their battle cry had been *Ya basta!* ("enough is enough") and the early statements had been dramatic but unstructured. Later declarations were more concerned to explain why the rebellion had taken place and to spell out in some detail what demands they intended to make on the Mexican government. It was quickly evident that the EZLN was eager to appeal beyond the Mexican nation for support. It was also careful to avoid use of Marxist/Maoist rhetoric and made frequent references to Mexican history and the frustrated promises of the Constitution. It did not urge an overthrow of the state, but rather demanded that the rights of the indigenous poor be recognized. The appalling social conditions of rural life in Chiapas were condemned and corruption and political intimidation, local and national, were exposed.

The *zapatista* insurgency contained within it elements of the older generation of *guerrilleros*, notably Marcos himself and elements from the **Fuerzas Nacionales de Liberación (FNL)**, the **Comité de Lucha Revolucionaria (CLR)** and the **Ejército Insurgente de México (EIM)**, but the rebellion also reflected the impact of the deterioration of rural con-

ditions in the late 1980s. Chiapas was one of Mexico's poorest states. It ranked at the bottom of almost all indicators of socio-economic development. This deep-set poverty worsened dramatically in the wake of the debt crisis. Cuts in subsidies to maize and coffee producers hit household incomes badly. Large scale cattle ranching expanded, with the connivance of the local political elite, and dislodged large numbers of peasants from their lands. The dispossessed peasants moved to the already densely populated highlands or to the underpopulated marginal lands of Las Cañadas and the Lacondon jungle. In the highlands traditional inter-communal conflicts increased and in the marginal lands the incomers struggled with unfamiliar soils and climates to raise their crops. It was in these areas and from these dispossessed people that the EZLN found its earliest recruits.

The politicized nature of the indigenous peasants could also be related to the work of the Catholic Church in the state. The Bishop of San Cristóbal, Samuel Ruiz, was part of the pan-Latin American liberation theology movement. He was committed to improving the lives of indigenous peoples and to helping them to assert their identity. He had organized an Indian Congress in 1974 in San Cristóbal which attracted indigenous delegates from all over the Americas. A network of priests and *catechistas* encouraged local people to demand their rights as citizens and were critical of the landowners and the local PRI elites. Ruiz's reputation as a defender of the indigenous people eventually made him a trusted negotiator and mediator for the EZLN.

In the face of surging levels of dissent the traditional political machine, based on various peasant associations affiliated to the PRI and a network of local political *caciques* (bosses), was severely stressed. PRONASOL funding was pumped into the state but little of it reached the disaffected peasants. A stream of new, strident and "unofficial" peasant associations appeared. The land courts were inundated with claims against illegal actions by landlords. Land occupations were common.

Not all of the indigenous peasantry of Chiapas was sympathetic to the *zapatista* cause. In the highlands, traditional tribal rivalries persisted, with some villages identifying with the EZLN while their neighbours sided with the PRI. The large landowners also worked hard before and after the rebellion to suppress anti-establishment activity, often through the use of their own private paramilitary formations.

#### Peace process – Establishment of "autonomous" communities in Chiapas

The peace process began in February 1994 with a meeting in the cathedral in San Cristóbal between Manuel Camacho, as the representative of the national government, and elements of the EZLN leadership. Within a year two bodies had been created to move the negotiations forward, the *Comisión Nacional de Intermediación* (CONAI) and the *Comisión de Concordia y Pacificación* (COCOPA) and in February 1996 the

Agreement of San Andrés was made public. The document recognized the special nature of indigenous laws and culture within the context of modern Mexico and was seen as the basis for future federal legislation.

The administration of President Ernesto Zedillo (elected in August 1994), however, had difficulty accepting some of the proposals and the negotiations broke down. The army presence in Chiapas expanded and there were regular reports of army complicity in the anti-*zapatista* activities of several paramilitary groups operating in the state. The most notorious of these was the massacre of 45 indigenous people, mainly women and children, in the village of Acteal in December 1997. Throughout the state the atmosphere was tense. Illegal roadblocks, kidnappings and murders by paramilitaries were common. The EZLN continued to condemn the government and the local political elites for their lack of commitment to reform and their use of repression. The peace process had come to a halt. The state was paralyzed by a low intensity war of attrition. Despite efforts to kick-start the negotiations by the government and its new head negotiator, Emilio Rabasa, there was little progress, and with the 2000 presidential elections approaching the EZLN leadership was prepared to wait and see what a new President had to offer.

On the campaign trail, the victorious presidential candidate, Vicente Fox, had claimed that he could solve the Chiapas problem in 15 minutes. This proved optimistic. His overtures towards Marcos have been rebuffed and the EZLN has condemned the PAN government in terms very similar to those used when earlier describing the PRI. This has embarrassed Fox since he has met most of the *zapatista* demands of the last five years. He has reduced the number of troops in Chiapas, closed military bases, released EZLN prisoners and offered to accept the San Andrés Accord. The problem appears to be the EZLN's suspicions about the government's interpretation of the latter, notably the issue of "autonomy" for the indigenous communities. Fox has been unable to command a predictable majority in Congress and his opponents – in his own party as well as the PRI – are opposed to allowing certain communities to govern themselves in ways which are unavailable to other communities within the republic.

In March 2001 the EZLN decided to march to the capital in order to address the Congress. The progress of the "caravan" attracted tremendous press attention as it meandered through southern Mexico, visiting a variety of indigenous communities en route. Hundreds of thousands lined the route and gave support. In Mexico City, however, the *Comandantes* were refused permission to address the Congress and were offered instead the option of an address to one of its committees.

Since the events of 1994 the EZLN have retreated to a number of "autonomous" communities in the Highlands, the Northern Zone and the Lacondon. They wear uniforms and carry weapons in these communities but are subject to regular surveillance by the armed forces. They have their own forms of local government and administer local justice. They refuse to accept any

funding from the Mexican government. In addition to these 10, openly "autonomous", communities there are at least another 20 that are openly pro-*zapatista*.

It is difficult to assess the numerical strength of the EZLN. In 1994 estimates ranged from 400 to 8,000. It is unlikely that there are many more than 8,000 carrying modern arms, although there are many others who appear at demonstrations carrying machetes or old rifles. In January 2003 about 23,000 people, their faces covered by ski-masks, demonstrated in the main plaza of San Cristóbal. A major source of support for their cause, however, comes from outside Chiapas. From its inception the *zapatista* rebellion has attracted sympathy and support from groups throughout Mexico and beyond. The rebels' use of electronic media and Marcos' talents as a communicator have created networks of solidarity which extend well beyond the jungles and mountains of southern Mexico. "Zapatistas in Cyberspace" is only one of many websites devoted to the rebels' cause. Marcos himself is a regular contributor to national newspapers and the best-selling author of fictional short stories.

### Insurgency outside Chiapas

Although the Mexican government was concerned, and the EZLN claimed, that the 1994 rebellion would spark revolutionary actions elsewhere in the republic, there was little evidence of any organized support beyond Chiapas. Marcos is also reported to have turned down offers of assistance from elements of the PROCUP.

The government was most concerned about the state of Guerrero, the traditional source of insurgency groups since the 1960s, but it also stepped up its security operations in Oaxaca, Morelos and Michoacán, three other poor states with large indigenous populations. The first signs of guerrilla action outside Chiapas occurred in Guerrero when the **Fuerzas Armadas Clandestino (FAC)** and the **Ejército de la Liberación de la Sierra del Sur (ELSS)** announced their existence in 1995. Other small groups appeared in Oaxaca, such as the **Ejército Clandestino Indigenista de Liberación Nacional (ECILN)**. Their actions were small scale and limited to attacks on army and police posts.

In 1996 a more significant force appeared on the scene. In June a "Capitan Emiliano" announced the formation of the unified military command of the **Ejército Revolucionario Popular (ERP)**. This was a descendant of PROCUP and was described as incorporating 14 smaller groups mainly operating in the state of Guerrero. It proclaimed its connections with the earlier revolutionaries, Lucio Cabanas and Genaro Vázquez, and demanded the removal of the "illegitimate" government and the creation of a new socialist republic. It engaged the army and police in several fire-fights and was declared by the army to be better equipped than the EZLN. The ERP claimed to have 23,000 armed combatants in the state of Guerrero and to have killed more than 100 soldiers in the summer of 1996. Both claims are likely to be exaggerations but it does appear to have carried out actions beyond

Guerrero in the states of Oaxaca, Puebla, Guanajuato, San Luis Potosí, Zacatecas and Mexico City. The government's estimate of 200 militants is probably an understatement and undermined by the army's deployment of large numbers of troops in Guerrero.

The ERP's unity, however, was short lived and divisions within the leadership over tactics and ideology brought defections and new organizations. The most important of these were the **Ejército Popular Revolucionario Insurgente (EPRI)** and the **Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias del Pueblo (FARP)**. These groups have continued to attack army and police posts and have extended the range of their actions beyond Guerrero. An arrested leader of the EPRI claimed that his organization had at least six active cells operating within the republic. Its threat to disrupt the 2000 elections was not carried out but it frequently claims to be involved in bank robberies and attacks on the security forces. FARP favours the "prolonged popular war" strategy and has been involved in isolated "armed propagan-

da actions", including its leaders addressing a public meeting in Xochimilco in Mexico City in April 2000. The numbers involved in these groups are small with one estimate as low as 400 in total.

Even smaller and seemingly more ephemeral guerrilla groups include the *Comité Clandestino Revolucionario de los Pobres – Comando Justiciero 28 Junio* (CCRPCJ), the *Ejército Villista Revolucionario del Pueblo* (EVRP), the *Frente Armado para la Liberación del Pueblo Marginado de Guerrero* (FALPMG) and the *Ejército Justiciero del Pueblo Indefenso* (EJPI). The scale of their operations is small and memberships probably not much larger than the number of letters in their acronyms. The EZLN has been careful to avoid linking up with any of these groups. The leftist political party, the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD), has also distanced itself from these groups.

David Stansfield

## Federated States of Micronesia

**Capital:** Palikr

**Population:** 118,000

The Federated States of Micronesia consists of four major island groups or states, namely Pohnpei, Chuuk (formerly Truk), Kosrae and Yap. It was established by the United Nations as a Pacific Islands Trust Territory under US administration in 1947 after the defeat in World War II of the Japanese, who had ruled the islands under a League of Nations mandate since 1920. Prior to that it was under German rule after Germany acquired the territories from the Spanish.

Open rebellion against Spanish rule took place in 1887, when a number of people including the Spanish governor died. In 1899 the Germans purchased Micronesia from the Spanish and Micronesians were forced to work as labourers on coconut plantations. Many were forcibly transported from their islands to the plantations. From October 1910 to February 1911 there was an open rebellion against the Germans led by Chief Somatau. The Germans suppressed the rebellion and moved all the inhabitants of Sokehs, where the rebellion was largely based, to Yap island where they lived until returning after World War I.

Moves for self-government started in the 1960s and in July 1978 a referendum for the Trust Territory states of Pohnpei, Kosrae, Truk and Yap overwhelmingly favoured a common constitution providing for internal self-government but with US responsibility for defence matters. US administration ended as a result of the 1982 Compact of Free Association (implemented in 1986) under which the USA continues to provide economic assistance.

The US administration in Micronesia was widely resented by citizen and peace groups opposed to nuclear testing and military bases in the Pacific. In 1975 a Pacific-wide movement called the Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific (NFIP) was set up in Suva, Fiji, with local Pacific branches and in 1977 the NFIP had its second conference in Pohnpei. Amongst other things, the conference called for the independence of all US territories in the Pacific and cessation of all nuclear testing (now discontinued).

Steven Ratuva

## Moldova

**Capital:** Chisinau

**Population:** 4.5 m

Under its 1994 constitution, the Republic of Moldova is governed through what is essentially a presidential

system. However, a constitutional amendment in July 2000 has seen the roles of the legislature and executive



become fundamentally intertwined. The President is now elected by the unicameral Parliament for a four-year term, following national parliamentary elections, which are also held on a four-yearly basis. The current President, Vladimir Voronin, has held the position since April 15, 2001, after his Moldovan Communist Party (PCM) had become the first communist party to be democratically elected to government from the post-Soviet bloc of states.

Underneath the President is a Prime Minister, who is selected by the President in consultation with the Parliament. After the nomination, the Prime Minister - designate then presents a Cabinet and policy programme before the Parliament, which must then endorse the proposed platform for the appointments to be ratified. Vasile Tarlev of the PCM has been Prime Minister since April 2001.

### Historical Background

The land currently constituting the Republic of Moldova has only been an independent state since 1991. Various parts of the territory had previously fallen under the jurisdiction of the Russian and Ottoman Empires, before the Bessarabian territory was incorporated into a "Greater Romania" following the First World War. The current territory was brought together in 1940, when the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact resulted in the Soviet annexation of Bessarabia, giving rise to the formation of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Moldova. Fifty years on, as the central control of Moscow over the peripheral republics of the Soviet Union weakened, Moldova followed the lead of the Baltic republics by declaring independence from the Soviet Union in May 1991.

With little past history of democracy, parties that formed during the first years of independence tended to be based around the charisma of party leaders rather than definite party ideologies. In such a volatile political environment, the multi-ethnic make-up of the state meant that questions of identity and ethnicity were important early determinants of party policy. Of particular note were the early aspirations of the Moldovan Popular Front to seek a reunification with Romania. The poor electoral showing of the Popular Front and its successor parties was indicative, however, of a reluctance by the majority of the population to form a union with Romania, despite the common language shared by Romanians and the majority of Moldovans.

Although the Moldovan Communist Party was initially barred from participation in the newly formed democracy, PCM members were granted permission to participate in the 1998 parliamentary elections and went on to win 40 of the 101 parliamentary seats. Despite this strong showing, the party was kept out of government at that time by a centre-right coalition calling itself the Alliance for Democracy and Reform, consisting of the Democratic Convention of Moldova (CDM), Bloc for a Prosperous and Democratic Moldova (PpMDP) and the Party of Democratic Forces (PFD).

While further elections were not scheduled until 2002, the failure of Parliament to elect a President when

required in December 2000 saw the national elections brought forward one year to February 2001. In this election the PCM won 71 of the 101 parliamentary seats, although they only took 50.1% of the popular vote. The Braghis Alliance took 13.4% of the vote, the Christian democratic *Uniunea Crestin-Democrata din Moldova* (PPCD) took 8.2% and other parties 28.3%.

The official language of Moldova is Moldovan (which is, in essence, identical to Romanian) although there are a number of significantly sized minority language groups. The two primary dissident movements discussed below stem from ethnic separatist movements. The ethnic breakdown is Moldovan/Romanian 64.5%, Ukrainian 13.8%, Russian 13%, Gagauz (Christian-Turkic) 3.5%, Bulgarian 2%, other 3.2%.

### SEPARATIST MOVEMENTS

#### Dniester Moldovan Republic (Transnistria)

*Leader: Igor Smirnov ("President")*

Transnistria, also known as Trans-Dniester and Pridnestrov'ia, comprises the thin strip of land lying between the Dniester (Nistru) River in Moldova's east, and Ukraine. Since 1990, residents of this territory have claimed independence from Moldova and, despite a lack of international recognition, the "Dniester Moldovan Republic" (DMR) continues to function as a de facto autonomous entity. A brief civil war in 1992, in which Russian forces intervened on the side of the secessionists, served to cement this status.

Although the political and economic elite operating in the self-declared capital of Tiraspol is primarily of Slavic origin, 39.9% of the region's total population is ethnic Moldovan / Romanian. Ukrainians form the largest minority with 28.3%, and 25.5% of the population claim Russian heritage.

Despite the plurality of Romanian speakers, the region has not, historically, fallen under the jurisdiction of either Bessarabia/Moldova or Romania. The region formed part of Kievan Rus and, later, the Galicia-Volhynian kingdom between the ninth and fourteenth centuries. It was then drawn into the Ottoman Empire, before being annexed by the Russian Empire in 1812. Following the Bolshevik Revolution and ensuing civil war, Transnistria was incorporated into Soviet Ukraine.

Following the annexation of Bessarabia by the USSR in 1940, Transnistria and Bessarabia were brought together, forming the Moldovan Soviet Socialist Republic. Despite this union, social, political and economic differences between Bessarabia and Transnistria remained evident throughout the period of Soviet rule. Having been significantly "sovietized" between the First and Second World Wars, the Transnistrian political elite was considered by Moscow to be more reliable than its Bessarabian counterpart. As a result, Communist Party members from east of the Dniestr were comparatively over-represented in the Moldovan Soviet state structure. Furthermore, Transnistria was the focus of Soviet industrial expansion in the region, with a particular emphasis on steel refining and energy generation. Ukrainian and Russian immigration to the region also shifted the demographic balance during this period.

Tensions between Chisinau and Tiraspol began to mount from the late 1980s, following the introduction of a number

of restrictive language laws, which gave predominance to the Moldovan language over its Slavic counterparts. These laws, proposed by the Moldovan Popular Front and adopted by the Moldovan Supreme Soviet in August 1989, were viewed as indicative of a shift towards Bessarabian hegemony. As a result, fears developed within the Transnistrian elite that their political and economic dominance would be usurped by Chisinau.

Transnistrian resistance was initially led by the United Council of Work Collectives, under the leadership of Igor Smirnov. Although the first strikes and demonstrations were largely peaceful, protests swiftly became violent as managers of Transnistria's industrial plants set their workers against Moldovan police forces. Nationalist symbols were then invoked following the declaration of an independent Dniester Moldovan Soviet Republic on Sept. 2, 1990. This was followed by a declaration of full independence on Aug. 27, 1991. Smirnov was declared President.

With the refusal of Chisinau to recognize the DMR's independence violence escalated, peaking in the summer of 1992, with the active intervention of Russia's 14th Army. Although the 14th Army was officially a neutral force, it clearly provided assistance to the DMR forces.

Moldova's disorganized defence, led by poorly-armed police forces, meant that their troops were unable to retain control of their positions in Transnistria, and Moldova suffered considerably more casualties than either Transnistria or Russia. Overall casualties have been estimated at between 700 and 1,000. A pact signed on July 21, 1992, between the Russian President, Boris Yeltsin, and the Moldovan President, Mircea Snegur, put an end to armed hostilities. Russian forces began to withdraw from 1994, although a residual Russian military presence remains, a total withdrawal having been opposed by the DMR.

The status of the DMR remains unresolved, despite ongoing talks between Chisinau and Tiraspol, sponsored at various times by both Russia and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the latter having been involved in monitoring the ceasefire. Consensus was ostensibly reached in May 1997 over "Common Negotiating Principles", in which all parties agreed that Moldova should remain a "common state" and the current internationally recognized borders would remain intact. Further negotiations led to the signing of the Kiev Joint Statement in 1999, in which both parties agreed to build their relations on the principles of common borders and common economic, legal, defensive and social space. However, rather than resolving the situation, the signing of these treaties has merely shifted disagreement to interpretation of the treaties, with the DMR leader Smirnov arguing that the documents endorse confederalism between two sovereign states.

Representatives from the US State Department held talks with the DMR administration in the summer of 2002, amid increasing concern that Transnistria is becoming a haven for illegal economic activity. In particular drug and arms trafficking are thought to be rife. It is also widely believed that the leaders of the separatist republic are heavily involved personally in this criminal activity. The situation in Transnistria has also caused concerns in the European Union (EU) in view of the potential accession of Romania to the EU as early as 2007, at which time Moldova would border

the Union. In July 2003, the OSCE asked the EU to consider sending a "peace consolidation force" force to Transnistria by the end of 2003. Russian troops are scheduled to wholly withdraw at this time.

### **Gagauzia (Gagauz Yeri)**

*Leader: Stefan Topal*

The Gagauz are a small community of Christian, Turkic-speaking people concentrated in the south of the Republic of Moldova. It is estimated that there are around 150,000 Gagauz in this region and about 50,000 more situated around the Black Sea zone. The Gagauz capital is Comrat.

Just as the creation of the Moldovan Popular Front and talk of Romanian/Moldovan unification sparked separatist movements in Transnistria (see above), so too did the Gagauz respond to the demands of the Popular Front by calling for autonomy. Thus, in September 1989, the Gagauz declared an Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, under the leadership of Stefan Topal. This step was followed in August 1990 by the self-proclamation of the Gagauz Soviet Socialist Republic, wholly independent of Moldovan influence. Despite these proclamations, however, it is unclear whether the Gagauz did genuinely want full separation from Moldova, as they continued to receive funding from the central government.

As the Moldovan government initially refused to acknowledge any moves towards independence taken by the Gagauz, a political body called *Gagauz Halky* formed in August 1991, in order to articulate the goals of their community in a structured fashion. *Gagauz Halky* initially relied heavily on support from Moscow, which was fostered by the connections of *Halky* member, S. Curoglu, with the former USSR Supreme Soviet President, Alexandre Yakovlev. However, when support from Russia waned, the Gagauz turned to Turkey for support in their movement towards autonomy.

With Turkish backing, a resolution was reached between Gagauzia and Moldova proper in December 1994. Under the agreement reached between Moldovan President Mircea Snegur and then Gagauz leader Andrei Sangheli, Gagauzia would be granted full autonomy in those *raions* which voted to join the community. Six of the ten localities in which the vote was held agreed to such an arrangement. A 1995 amendment reserves the right for the *Gagauz Yeri* to determine its own fate, should Moldova's constitutional position shift in the future.

Whereas the Transnistrian dispute can be seen as a conflict between elites over the control of resources, the Gagauzian conflict was purely an ethnic conflict. As such, willingness by the Moldovan government to grant the community significant cultural autonomy over its land has meant that there has been little conflict since this arrangement was realized. That said, certain Gagauz leaders, including hardliners Constantin Taushanji (Mayor of Comrat) and Mikhail Kendiglian (Speaker of the Gagauz Assembly) have recently begun to support Igor Smirnov, the "President" of the Dniester Moldovan Republic (DMR), in his push for the creation of a confederal Moldovan state – one in which Gagauzia has a stronger representation in the Moldovan National Assembly. However, in view of the state of relations between the DMR and Chisinau, the likelihood of such an arrangement emerging soon appears unlikely.

*John Gledhill*

# Monaco

**Capital:** Monaco-Ville

**Population:** 33,000

The Principality of Monaco is an hereditary monarchy dating from the 13th century in which constitutional limitations on the monarch's powers have been in force since 1911. The 1962 constitution vests executive authority in the Prince (currently Prince Rainier III), who governs through a Minister of State selected from a list of three French civil servants submitted by the French government, assisted by government councillors and palace personnel. Legislative authority is vested in the Prince and the National Council (Conseil National) of 24 members (16 elected by a list majority system, 8 by proportional representation), who are elected by citizens aged 21 and over for a five-year term. There are no formal political parties in Monaco, although informal groupings have been formed to contest recent elections. In National Council elections on Feb. 9, 2003, the *Union pour Monaco* (Union for Monaco) won 58.5 % of the vote and 21 seats, while the *Union Nationale et*

*Démocratique* (National and Democratic Union) secured 41.5 of the vote and 3 seats.

Monaco was declared an "uncooperative tax haven" by the OECD's Committee on Fiscal Affairs in 2000 and 2002. Its legally guaranteed banking secrecy and the easy registration of anonymous companies have made it an attractive centre for money laundering. Aware of these deficiencies and under international pressure, the authorities have strengthened legislation on money laundering and concluded co-operation agreements on exchange of information and transparency with several European countries. In May 2002, the Principality adhered to the Convention of the Council of Europe on money laundering and confiscation of criminal gains. Recently, closer co-operation with the French authorities has also been initiated.

*Florence Terranova*

# Mongolia

**Capital:** Ulan Bator

**Population:** 2.4 m

The Mongolian People's Republic was proclaimed in 1924 as the world's second communist state, after the Soviet Union, and was then run as a one-party state by the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP). The collapse of communist power in Eastern Europe and discontent at home led to the holding of multi-party elections in 1990 and entry into force of a new Constitution in 1991. Under this Constitution Mongolia is a "sovereign, independent, law-governed democratic state".

Supreme authority is vested in the State Great Hural (Assembly). In the most recent elections to the Great Hural, held in July 2000, the MPRP (now calling itself a democratic socialist party) returned to power after a four-year absence, winning 72 of the 76 seats. The former MPRP chairman, Natsagiyn Bagabandi, was re-elected as President in May 2001, and the Prime Minister is also from the MPRP.

## Assassination of Zorig

Sanjaasurengiyn Zorig, regarded as the leading figure in the 1990 democracy movement, was stabbed to death at his home on Oct. 2, 1998, by intruders. It was widely rumoured in Mongolia that Zorig had been assassinated on the orders of politicians fearful of

being exposed by his investigations into government corruption (no one ever having been prosecuted for his murder). In July 1999, following his resignation as Prime Minister after losing a vote of no confidence in the Great Hural, Janlaviyn Narantsatsralt indicated in a newspaper interview that he had been ousted by a group in his own Cabinet to stop his attempts to investigate corruption and the murder of Zorig.

A movement to promote Zorig's legacy culminated in the formation in March 2000 of the Civic Will Party (CWP), which elected Sanjaasurengiyn Oyun, Zorig's sister, as its chairperson. In the general election of July 2000 that restored the former communist MPRP to power with a landslide victory, Oyun survived as one of only four opposition legislators in the Great Hural. In February 2002 the CWP merged with the Mongolian Republican Party (MRP) to form the Civil Courage Republican Party (CCRP), with Oyun as leader. Although she is head of a legitimate political party rather than an underground dissident group, the opposition parties are now so marginalized by the MPRP's huge majority that Oyun also acts as the focus of a wider civil movement of dissatisfaction with the current political dispensation.

*Tim Curtis*

# Morocco

**Capital:** Rabat

**Population:** 33.4 m

The Kingdom of Morocco was established in 1957 (the former French and Spanish protectorates having joined together as an independent sultanate the previous year). King Mohammed VI ascended the throne in July 1999, following the death of his father, King Hassan II.

The 1962 Constitution proclaimed a constitutional monarchy, with a Prime Minister and Cabinet appointed by the King. The King has retained considerable personal powers. A 1996 referendum approved the replacement of the previous unicameral legislature by a 325-member Assembly of Representatives (Majlis al-Nuwab), the lower house, elected for a five-year term, and a 270-member upper house, the Assembly of Councillors, representative of various interest groups. The new Assembly includes 30 seats reserved for women and contested on women-only lists.

Elections held in September 2002 resulted in the Socialist Union of Popular Forces (USFP) remaining the largest single party although its leader, Abderrahmane Youssoufi, lost the position of Prime Minister that he had held since 1998; King Mohammed VI, in a move widely criticized as a regressive step in Morocco's democratic transition, instead appointed a former Interior Minister, Driss Jettou, to form a government. The new assembly has a wide-ranging representation from more than 20 political parties. This is remarkable by Arab standards. The two secular parties associated with the trade unions, the USFP and the *Istiqlal* (Independence) party, won 50 and 48 seats, respectively, while the officially sanctioned moderate Islamists (Justice and Development Party, PJD) emerged as the country's newest formidable political force, coming third with 42 seats.

There was significant conflict in Morocco in the 1980s. Violence during a general strike in Casablanca in June 1981 claimed at least 66 lives; the government subsequently arrested many activists of the *Confédération Démocratique du Travail* (CDT), associated with the USFP, and closed its offices. Food riots took place in many cities in January 1984, following the removal of government subsidies on basic foodstuffs. As many as 110 were reported to have been killed, and 1,800 arrested. Many were tried over subsequent months, two receiving life sentences. The King blamed the disturbances on Marxist-Leninists, supporters of the Ayatollah Khomeini, and the Israeli secret service (Mossad).

A general strike on Dec. 14, 1990, called by the CDT and the *Union Générale des Travailleurs Marocains* (UGTM), associated with the *Istiqlal* party, attracted wide support, and led to riots in several major cities. Troops were mobilized, and at least 100 civilians were killed. Hundreds were arrested and sen-

tenced to prison terms of up to seven years.

Elections due in 1990 were postponed until 1993. However, the end of the 1980s and early 1990s saw the release of thousands of political prisoners. On Feb. 27, 1991, the government announced the release of the family of General Oufkir, detained since Oufkir's death in a failed coup in 1972, and on March 1, 2,268 prisoners were amnestied. Amnesty International on March 27, 1991, reported that there were still 650 political prisoners in the country. On Aug. 27, 1991, Amnesty International said that it feared that hundreds of Western Sahara civilians who had disappeared as long ago as 1976 were being held in secret detention in Morocco.

During the 1990s Morocco avoided the bitter conflict between government and Islamists that affected neighbouring Algeria and won a reputation as a comparatively stable society. In February 2003, however, a statement attributed to *Al-Qaeda* warned that Morocco was one of five "apostate" Arab regimes that were "eligible" to be overthrown in view of their ties with the USA. In March there were large-scale demonstrations against the US invasion of Iraq, with protesters calling for suicide attacks. On May 16, 2003, a series of suicide bomb attacks on Jewish and other targets in Casablanca resulted in the deaths of 41 people, 13 of them bombers (see below).

## LEFT-WING MOVEMENTS

### Forward Movement (*Ilal Amam*)

This movement emerged in 1974, when a large number of persons were arrested for distributing "seditious literature" and forming three extreme left-wing groups – *Ilal Amam*, the 23rd March Group and *Al Moutakalinine* ("Rally") – which were to be merged in a Marxist-Leninist front with a "Red Army". Their declared objective was to set up a "people's democratic republic" to be headed by Abraham Serfaty, an anti-Zionist Jewish engineer who had been a member of the Moroccan Communist Party (banned in 1952) and of the Party of Liberation and Socialism (which existed in 1968-69) and who was said to have Maoist views. On Feb. 15, 1977, a total of 176 of the arrested persons were sentenced to terms of imprisonment, 44 of them for life, among them A. Serfaty.

On Feb. 13, 1986, *Ilal Amam* members were among a group of 26 people sentenced to between three and 20 years' imprisonment for posing a threat to Morocco's internal security and giving intelligence information to Polisario guerrillas fighting Morocco for control of the Western Sahara (see separate entry).

Dozens of members were among the more than 4,000 prisoners released in a series of pardons between August 1988 and April 1990. Abraham Serfaty was subsequently

sent into exile. After the death of King Hassan II in 1999, King Mohammed VI allowed Abraham Serfaty to return home after eight years of exile in France. In September 2000, the King appointed the 74-year old engineer as advisor to the director general of the Moroccan oil company (ONAREP).

## ISLAMISTS

### **Al-Adl Wal-Ihsan (Justice and Charity)**

*Leadership. Abd as-Salam Yassin*

This Islamist movement was refused registration as a political party in 1982. In November 1989, 24 members of the group were arrested and charged with membership of an unauthorized organization, holding unauthorized meetings, and possession of documents endangering state security. Seventeen were convicted, and its leader, Abd as-Salam Yassin, was placed under house arrest. The trial led to demonstrations and more arrests, and in January 1990, the government ordered the dissolution of *Al-Adl Wal-Ihsan* and arrested five alleged members of its central committee, who were sentenced to prison terms ranging from nine months to two years. On appeal, four were released, and one had his sentence commuted. Meanwhile, a further 2,000 supporters were arrested outside the Rabat court in May during what was believed to be Morocco's largest ever demonstration.

The group is permitted to function only as a charity. It challenges the King's claim to be sole interpreter of Islam in Morocco. It denounced the May 2003 suicide bombings in Casablanca.

### **Jeunesse Islamique (Islamic Youth)**

This organization was founded mainly as a student movement in 1977. It was active during the January 1984 riots and dozens of members were convicted on charges of subversion. Although this group has been inactive, a number of other but smaller groups, espousing similar ideas have flourished in university campuses. Their small size and lack of influence has meant there has been little state interest in their activities, at least prior to the May 2003 Casablanca bombings.

### **Salafiya Jihadiya**

This group, one of a number of Salafist groups present in Morocco, was blamed by the Moroccan government for the May 2003 suicide bombings in Casablanca, with numerous arrests taking place after the bombings. All the bombers were said to have come from the impoverished Casablanca suburb of Sidi Moumen, considered a stronghold of the group. Leaders of the group had reputedly trained with Osama bin Laden in Afghanistan.

## WESTERN SAHARA

### **Polisario Front (Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el Hamra and Rio de Oro)**

*Leadership. Mohammed Abdelazziz (secretary-general)*

The Polisario Front was established in May 1973 as a national liberation movement in the (then Spanish) Western Sahara. After the governments of Morocco and Mauritania had, under an agreement concluded in Madrid with Spain in November 1975, divided the Western Sahara between them-

selves, the Front decided to take up its armed struggle against both these governments as from November 1975, with the support of the government of Algeria. In February 1976 the Front proclaimed a **Saharan (Sahrawi) Arab Democratic Republic (SADR)**.

Following the overthrow of the Mauritanian government of President Mokhtar Ould Daddah in July 1978, the Front declared a ceasefire in its military operations against Mauritania, and this decision was followed by a peace agreement between the Front and the new government in Mauritania on Aug. 5, 1979, and the withdrawal of Mauritanian forces from the Western Sahara. The territory vacated by Mauritania was, however, formally annexed by Morocco on Aug. 11-12, 1979.

Heavy fighting between the Polisario Front and Moroccan forces took place in the second half of 1979 and in 1980, with both sides making conflicting claims of successes. While the Front repeatedly asserted that it controlled large areas of the Western Sahara, Morocco retained full control over what it called the "useful triangle" near Bou Craa, the centre of the phosphate mines (although these were closed between 1977 and July 1982). By 1981 Morocco had built a wall of fortifications across the desert to protect the most important localities, but its defence expenditure had risen to about one quarter of its annual budget. It was increasingly supplied with sophisticated arms by the United States and was also reported to receive financial support from Saudi Arabia. It was claimed in Morocco that the Polisario Front received support not only from Algeria and Libya but also from the Soviet Union, which was said to have supplied the Front with tanks, heavy artillery and ground-to-ground missiles in 1982. Libyan support was, however, withdrawn after a treaty of federation with Morocco in September 1984.

The Polisario Front was based in three large camps near Tindouf, in southern Algeria, where some 120,000 Saharan refugees were housed. With some international assistance, the Front provided them with basic education and health care. Many of the young male refugees were active as Polisario Front guerrillas; in early 1986, Mohammed Abdelazziz, the organization's leader, claimed that the Front fielded a total of 20,000 fighters.

Efforts to find a peaceful solution to the conflict, made by the Organization of African Unity (OAU), proved unsuccessful. The SADR was admitted to the OAU in February 1982, at the instigation of the OAU's secretary-general and on the ground that 26 of the 50 OAU member states had recognized the SADR. However, under the OAU's Charter, a quorum of two-thirds of its members was required for any decision on whether the SADR was an independent sovereign state entitled to OAU membership (which was denied by Morocco and other member states supporting the latter); during 1982 it emerged that no such quorum was obtainable and that the OAU was divided into a majority "radical" section (which favoured admission of the SADR) and a minority "moderate" section (which opposed it).

A Polisario Front congress held in October 1982 elected the Front's secretary-general, M. Abdelazziz, as President of the SADR, which also had a "Cabinet" headed by a "Prime Minister".

In an effort to facilitate a diplomatic solution, the Polisario Front decided not to take up its seats at the 19th OAU



Assembly of Heads of State and Government, held in June 1983, at which a resolution was passed calling on both sides to negotiate a ceasefire prior to the holding of a referendum. The following month, King Hassan of Morocco warned that, regardless of the result of any such plebiscite, he would not feel obliged “to hand over the Sahara on a silver platter to a rabble of mercenaries”. At the 20th OAU summit in November 1984, Morocco announced its withdrawal from the organization after SADR delegates had taken up their seats. (As of 2003, Morocco had not re-joined the OAU or its successor organization the African Union, being the only African country not in membership.)

At a further congress, held in “liberated territories” in December 1985, Abdelaziz was again named as secretary-general of the Front and also President of the SADR. Over 50 countries which had by then recognized the SADR as “a sovereign and independent state” included not only the majority of the OAU member states, but also Cuba and Iran, and those member states of the Arab League which were opposed to the Egyptian–Israeli reconciliation.

Subsequent diplomatic activity focused on the United Nations, whose Decolonization Committee passed a resolution calling for direct negotiations in November 1985. Proximity talks arranged by the UN Secretary-General, Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, were held in April 1986, involving Moroccan and Polisario Front representatives, UN officials and observers from Algeria and Mauritania. The talks foundered, however, on Morocco’s refusal to agree to direct negotiations. In October the same year, the UN General Assembly agreed by 98 votes to nil (with 44 abstentions and 16 countries absent, including Morocco) that the Western Sahara issue was “a question of decolonization which remains to be completed on the basis of the exercise by the people of the Western Sahara of their inalienable right to self-determination and independence”.

From 1983 onwards, the military situation became increasingly stalemated, largely due to the maintenance and extension of Morocco’s defensive wall, which by 1986 enclosed 200,000 sq km of the territory’s total 260,000 sq km area. Polisario Front attacks were largely restricted to harassing operations against the wall, although it occasionally demonstrated its ability to stage larger scale offensives. From 1985 onwards, the Front also attacked foreign vessels (mainly fishing boats) and light aircraft, which it deemed were infringing its territorial waters or airspace.

Fighting intensified in 1987. However, in July 1987, Morocco and Polisario held indirect talks in Geneva. In November 1987, Polisario announced a truce while a joint UN-OAU delegation visited the area to assess the terms under which a referendum, which both Morocco and Polisario accepted, should be held. Polisario demanded a Moroccan withdrawal from the area, which should be placed under UN administration before a referendum, while Morocco refused direct negotiations with Polisario.

There were reports in 1989 of splits within Polisario, with native Saharawis alleging that the movement was being taken over by Algerian and Mauritanian radicals. In August 1989, Omar Hadhrami, one of the founders of Polisario, defected to Morocco, together with other leaders. Others followed, and there were reports of disturbances and mass arrests in the refugee camps.

In August 1988, Pérez de Cuéllar announced a UN peace plan, which called for a reduction of Moroccan forces and the withdrawal of both sides to barracks, under UN supervision, before the holding of a referendum. Following secret talks in Saudi Arabia, both Morocco and Polisario accepted the UN proposal. However, disagreements continued, and fighting resumed in September 1988.

In January 1989, King Hassan met the Polisario and SADR leaders in Marrakech, but the subsequent ceasefire broke down in March 1989. Fighting continued sporadically until January 1990, when the Polisario called a truce pending implementation of the UN plan. A further ceasefire was agreed in 1991.

The UN Security Council established the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) in 1991, with responsibility for referendum preparations and for supervising the repatriation of Western Saharans identified as eligible to vote. However, preparations for a referendum have been repeatedly stalled since that date over the issue of voter eligibility, with each side accusing the other of falsifying voter registration lists. By 2001 the referendum had been delayed 12 times causing tension to mount. A proposal put forward by UN officials in 2001 that offered the territory autonomy under Moroccan sovereignty for a period of five years, after which a referendum would be held on its final status, was rejected by Polisario. The Polisario Front insists that it can not accept any plan that does not offer the Sahrawi people self-determination. The situation remains a stalemate, with Morocco in de facto control of most of the territory. The Front, in the different climate facing “liberation movements” since the end of the Cold War, has lacked the financial and military backing by external sponsors to mount offensives and there has been negligible military activity since the early 1990s. Thousands of Sahrawis remain in refugee camps in Algeria, Algeria having remained Polisario’s principal supporter, while Morocco has imported tens of thousands of new inhabitants to the territory in advance of any referendum.

On Sept. 2, 2003, 243 Moroccan soldiers were released from captivity by Polisario, having been held captive at desert locations near Tindouf across the Algerian border since the 1970s; the International Committee of the Red Cross stated that 914 others were still being held.

*Larbi Sadiki*

# Mozambique

**Capital:** Maputo

**Population:** 19.3 m

Mozambique gained independence from Portugal in June 1975. The **Front for the Liberation of Mozambique** (*Frente de Libertação de Moçambique*, FRELIMO) thereafter established a one-party state. However, a sustained rebellion was waged against the regime by the **Mozambique National Resistance** (*Resistência Nacional de Moçambique*, RENAMO). In the context of the Cold War RENAMO enjoyed a degree of support from the West and also from the apartheid regime in South Africa while FRELIMO was close to the Soviet bloc.

By the late 1980s, however, a series of factors combined to pave the way to peace. With the end of the Cold War, the superpowers wished to disengage from support for proxy movements in Africa. In Africa itself, there was widespread pressure for greater pluralism and away from one-party regimes. At the regional level, the gathering pace of change in South Africa made it seem inevitable that South African backing for the RENAMO rebels would end once the apartheid regime was dismantled. Finally, there was within Mozambique itself a prevalent war weariness and desire for peace, reconciliation and reconstruction.

After FRELIMO had in 1989 abandoned Marxist–Leninist ideology in favour of democratic socialism, in 1990 a new constitution came into effect heralding a multi-party system, direct elections and a free market economy. Under it the People's Republic of Mozambique became the Republic of Mozambique. Negotiations between the FRELIMO government and RENAMO to end the protracted civil war culminated in the signing of a peace accord in Rome in October 1992. Because of delays in the implementation of the peace plan, presidential and legislative elections did not take place until October 1994. These resulted in victory for incumbent President Joaquim Chissano and for FRELIMO, which won 129 of the 250 seats in the Assembly, against 112 for RENAMO and nine for the Democratic Union.

A further presidential election held on Dec. 3–5, 1999, was won by the FRELIMO incumbent, Joaquim Chissano, who received 52.3% of the votes, as against 47.7% for the RENAMO leader, Afonso Dhlakama, whose candidacy was supported by an alliance of RENAMO with a group of opposition parties styled RENAMO–Electoral Union (RENAMO–UE). The RENAMO–UE alliance also presented a joint list of candidates in the December 1999 legislative election, in which FRELIMO won 133 Assembly seats with 48.5% of the vote, while RENAMO–UE won the remaining 117 seats with 38.8% of the vote.

The validity of the 1999 election results was upheld by the Mozambique Supreme Court and by international

monitors after being strongly disputed by RENAMO. Opposition members took up their seats in the new Assembly but boycotted its proceedings for a time to protest against the election results. The RENAMO–UE coalition continued to function as a single opposition bloc, within which RENAMO itself reportedly had 99 seats and its junior partners 18 seats.

Notwithstanding disputes over election results, there has been no return to violence in Mozambique: politics have elements of a conventional two-party system, with FRELIMO affiliated to the democratic socialist Socialist International and RENAMO to the Christian Democrat International, although the main divisions are regional. The country has made substantial economic progress since the early 1990s, having one of the world's fastest growing economies in the decade after the war ended, although it remains one of the world's poorest countries. Its reconstruction of good relations with its neighbours was symbolized by its joining in 1995 of the Commonwealth, with the unique status of being the only member country that had never been a British possession (all six countries with which Mozambique shares a border being themselves members of the Commonwealth).

## The Civil War

FRELIMO was founded in June 1962 by merger of three exiled groups, the Mozambique African National Union (MANU), the National Democratic Union of Mozambique (UDENAMO) and the National African Union of Independent Mozambique (UNAMIL), with Dr Eduardo Mondlane as its first president. In September 1964 FRELIMO guerrillas, based in Tanzania, launched their first attack into Angola. In the following years FRELIMO was active particularly in the two northern provinces of Cabo Delgado and Niassa, where it controlled considerable territory. Mondlane was assassinated in 1969 and succeeded as leader of FRELIMO by Samora Machel.

After the overthrow of the right-wing dictatorship of Marcello Caetano in Portugal in the coup of April 25, 1974, the new left-wing Portuguese government transferred power to FRELIMO. Nearly all the 250,000 white colonists left, either to Portugal or South Africa. The People's Republic of Mozambique was established on June 25, 1975, with Samora Machel as President and FRELIMO subsequently consolidated power as a one-party state, initially with a Marxist–Leninist programme and with the active support of the Soviet bloc.

In the late 1970s FRELIMO provided bases for Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) rebels in white-ruled Rhodesia. Rhodesia responded by sponsoring

RENAMO, which was set up mainly by Mozambicans who had fled after FRELIMO took power, and was active particularly in areas bordering Rhodesia. After the end of white minority rule in Rhodesia in 1979, South Africa became RENAMO's main external sponsor and thereafter the war spread to most parts of Mozambique. Meanwhile, the new ZANU government in Zimbabwe came to the assistance of FRELIMO with troops.

In March 1984 Machel signed a security pact (the Nkomati Accord) with South Africa in an effort to end the conflict: it provided that neither country would serve as a base for acts of aggression against the other. Tripartite discussions were also held between South Africa, RENAMO and FRELIMO on resolution of the conflict and South Africa claimed officially that it was not supporting the rebels. However, fighting continued (with up to 10,000 Zimbabwean troops being deployed in support of the government in 1985), and with Mozambique also accusing Malawi of backing the rebels. On Oct. 19, 1986, Machel was killed in an unexplained plane crash over South African territory. His successor was Joaquim Chissano. In December 1986 Mozambique and Malawi signed an agreement on security co-operation.

Notwithstanding a joint statement by Presidents Mugabe of Zimbabwe and Chissano in January 1987 that they would continue joint military operations until RENAMO was wiped out, a military victory for the government proved unobtainable. In July 1989, FRELIMO officially abandoned Marxism-Leninism; preliminary peace negotiations shortly followed, with the first direct peace talks in Rome in July 1990; and a multiparty constitution was adopted in November 1990. During 1992 agreement on peace terms was reached with RENAMO and the United Nations' Operation in Mozambique (UNOMOZ) began in 1993. The conflict had between 1976-92 caused the direct loss of tens of thousands of lives, as well as several hundred thousand more as a result of food shortages arising from disruption of agricultural production and transportation and the destruction and collapse of health facilities. It had resulted in the internal displacement of three million people and a large exodus of refugees to neighbouring countries, particularly Malawi.

#### Post-war security issues

Since the end of the civil war and the introduction of free elections, FRELIMO has retained a narrow

majority at the national level, although RENAMO is generally dominant in the northern and western provinces. Although the two main political formations are still those that contested the bitter civil war, and rhetorical exchanges, particularly around election times, can be heated, there has been no return to violence.

Ideologically, FRELIMO and RENAMO now have much common ground but they have a regional pattern of support, with FRELIMO having its stronghold in the south, which has also tended to be the main beneficiary of economic development and political patronage. In the 1999 elections, when FRELIMO took 133 seats to RENAMO's 117, FRELIMO scored some successes in the north, winning in Cabo Delgado, Maputo City, Maputo, Gaza and Inhambane provinces. However, RENAMO took the majority of seats in the other northern provinces of Sofala, Manica, Zambezia, Tete, Niasa and Nampula.

RENAMO condemned the December 1999 elections as fraudulent. Riots and demonstrations in November connected to the election campaign led to 40 deaths, while another 80 detainees died in an overcrowded police cell, apparently of suffocation. For a time after the election RENAMO threatened to boycott Parliament but ultimately took up its seats and resumed participation.

The government has refused to contemplate any form of power-sharing (although there is an effective system of cross-party committees in the legislature) and some extreme RENAMO elements have even called for a division of the country along the line of the River Save, with RENAMO to rule the central and northern regions. Most refugees have returned to their homes and demobilization has been achieved, although there is a problem of joblessness among those demobilized and a group of disaffected former RENAMO guerrillas, self-styled *Chimwenje* rebels, has taken to banditry. The new integrated defence force, the *Forças Armadas por Defesa de Mocambique* (FADM), is poorly equipped and not itself a political factor. Crime and corruption, the two often interlocked, constitute the major security issues and there is widespread availability of weapons left over from the conflict. Although many landmines have been cleared, there are still an estimated 250,000 left from the civil war.

*F. J. Harper & João Porto*

## Myanmar (Burma)

**Capital:** Yangon (Rangoon)

**Population:** 52 m

Burma formed part of British India until 1937 and then became a separate dependency. It achieved independ-

ence, as the Union of Burma, in 1948. From 1948, the Communist Party of Burma (CPB), the Karen National

Defence Organization (KNDO), and the 3rd and 5th Kuomintang Chinese Armies battled the Burmese military, the *Tatmadaw*, across the country. This civil war was soon joined by a host of ethnic insurgencies leading to one of the longest standing civil conflicts in the world. The Burmans constitute about 65 per cent of the population. The principal minorities are the Karen (the most numerous of the non-Buddhist indigenous peoples) in the south and east; the Shans (Theravada Buddhists like the Burmans and the ethnic kinfolk of the Thai and Lao people) on the eastern plateau; and the Chins, Kachins, Mons and Arakanese in the north and north-east.

In 1962, the *Tatmadaw* under General Ne Win staged a coup d'état, thereafter ruling by Revolutionary Council (RC) until 1974. A new constitution was instituted, and power transferred to the Burmese Socialist Programme Party (BSPP), a thinly veiled front for military rule. Instituting the "Burmese Way to Socialism", an attempt at Socialist-Buddhist syncretism, Burma also became one of the most isolationist states in the world. The economy declined dramatically, being propped up only by the flourishing black market from Thailand, Malaysia, China, India and Bangladesh which was reported to have met 80 per cent of the country's consumer goods needs. This sizable smuggling operation also financed the ethnic insurgents on the border who taxed the trade, or engaged in resources extraction such as mining, cattle smuggling, illegal immigration, and involvement in the drug trade. From the late 1960s the *Tatmadaw* began utilizing what it called the Four Cuts (*Pya Ley Pya*) counter-insurgency program. This was a strategy to deprive insurgents of food, funds, intelligence and recruits. Its origins lay in the counter-insurgency operations developed by the British in Malaysia and US forces in Vietnam, where sustained infantry operations would contain civilians in "strategic villages" to deny insurgents civilian support. These methods were brutally prosecuted by the *Tatmadaw* against ethnic communities, leading to systematic human rights abuses that have continued to the present day.

In 1988, months of demonstrations convulsed the entire country with the population calling for political and economic reform. A government crackdown cost the lives of some 3,000 to 10,000 until the *Tatmadaw* staged a coup, effectively ending the BSPPs ineffective attempts at a reform programme. On Sept. 18 the military stepped back in to assume formal political control as the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC). They announced an end to socialism and promised a move toward an open market system and multi-party democratic elections. As campaigning for the elections began the following year, the SLORC changed the name of the country from the Union of Burma to the Union of Myanmar, a direct transliteration of the name in the Burmese language.

The elections took place in April 1990. The main opposition group, the National League for Democracy (NLD), won the election with 80 per cent of the seats and 60 per cent of the vote. The result was never hon-

oured, and many opposition figures were jailed or went into exile. The general secretary of the NLD, 1991 Nobel Peace Prize winner Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, was placed under house arrest between 1989 and 1995. The SLORC promised to transfer power after a new constitution was written by a National Convention. It took until June 23, 1992, for the regime to convene a steering committee under the chairmanship of Maj. Gen. (later Lt. Gen.) Myo Nyunt to prepare the ground for the convention. Parties represented in the co-ordination meeting were the NLD (15 seats), Shan National League for Democracy (SNLD) 6 seats, National Unity Party (NUP) three seats, and one each for the Union Pa-O National Organization (UPNO), Mro or Khami National Solidarity Organization, Shan State Kokang Democratic Party (SSKDP) and the Lahu National Development Party (LNDP).

The SLORC made it clear that the convention process must ensure and enshrine the leading role of the armed forces in the future political leadership of the country. The National Convention eventually convened on Jan. 9, 1993, comprising a total of 702 delegates. 156 were elected in the 1990 election, while the rest comprised hand-picked SLORC delegates representing the *Tatmadaw*, ethnic minorities, peasants, workers, intellectuals, and civil servants. From the start the Convention appeared to have the joint aims of enshrining military rule and denying ethnic groups a form of semi-autonomy in a federal structure that many desired.

Whereas before the state defined ethnic groups as "big races", it now proposed a "little race" balance. Instead of acknowledging seven major races in the country, most with ethno-linguistic sub-groups, the Myanmar Government now talked of "135 national races". The existing administrative structure would be retained, that is Village Tract/Ward, Township, District, Region/State. In addition, there were to be Self Administered Zones (SAZ), essentially Townships with a majority of one ethnic group, and Self Administered Divisions (SAD), in which one ethnic group forms a majority. This means that in principle, smaller ethnic groups such as the Pa-O, Kokang, Palaung and Naga could achieve greater representation even though the central government would maintain control over their affairs. It is a form of symbolic autonomy. The six SAZs agreed to by 1996 merged three townships in Sagaing Division into one Naga SAZ, and in the Shan State there are Danu, Pa-O, Palaung, Kokang, and Wa SAZs within the State administrative structure.

While the political strategy to seek an end to the civil war has floundered (with no new constitution having emerged from the stalled National Convention process), the SLORC achieved great successes in their post-1989 cease-fire strategy. In early 1989 the SLORC enjoyed its first success when the CPB insurgency imploded from a mutiny by its rank and file soldiers. The majority of the 10,000-12,000 strong Communist army were ethnic recruits from the hills who endured great hardships under the hard-line Burman



leadership. Their struggle was further troubled by the removal of Chinese support in the early 1980s. Between March 14-16, ethnic Kokang Chinese cadres captured the CPB headquarters at Pangshang, driving the Burman leadership into exile in China.

The SLORC acted quickly to stop the large army from reforming. The head of the Directorate of Defence Services Intelligence (DDSI, *Tatmadaw* military intelligence), Lt. Gen. Khin Nyunt, flew to the north and negotiated with the mutineers. He enlisted the help of former Kokang opium warlord Lo Hsing-han (now reputed to be one of the biggest illicit businessmen in Myanmar), as well as retired Kokang warlord Olive Yang, and former Revolutionary Council technocrat Brig. Aung Gyi. The CPB had broken down into four new organizations: the Kachin-dominated New Democratic Army (NDA), the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA) in Kokang and Mong Ko, and the Kokang Chinese constituted National Democratic Alliance Army (NDAA). The biggest deal was done with the United Wa State Army (UWSA), led by Chao Nyi Lai.

The accord reached with these groups set the pattern for the string of agreements which followed. All groups would be permitted to retain their weapons and organization; they were permitted to engage in any form of business activity, although with an evident preference for SLORC or *Tatmadaw* controlled companies or contacts; they would be eligible for increased infrastructure funding and social services provisions in their area; and they would eventually be given a measure of legitimacy by participation in the National Convention. The other conditions were that groups were no longer to target government forces; they were to remain in their agreed cantonment areas; they were to withdraw from multilateral resistance organizations; and they were forbidden to join other armed groups still fighting the government. The SLORC propaganda for these agreements heralded the cease-fire groups as "returning to the legal fold". The state newspaper *The New Light of Myanmar* gave daily attention during the 1990s to insurgents of any group or number abandoning the "path of armed struggle" and pursuing development. The SLORC conducted lavish ceremonies for this propaganda campaign.

The political strategy also spelt the effective end of multilateral insurgent organizations. The National Democratic Front (NDF), an alliance of non-communist ethnic insurgent groups, set up in May 1976, attempted to take advantage of the turmoil in the cities to develop a broad front against the Yangon government. It helped raise the Democratic Alliance of Burma (DAB) in November 1988 at Klerday, a union of insurgent groups and Burman political parties such as the All Burma Students Democratic Front (ABSDF), and the Committee for Restoration of Democracy in Burma (CRDB). On Dec. 18, 1990, in Manerplaw, many of the same groups developed the Democratic Front of Burma (DFB). It also raised a government in exile, the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma (NCGUB) led by U Sien

Win, a cousin of NLD leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. The DFB was subsequently renamed the Anti-Military Dictatorship National Solidarity Committee (ANSC). The DAB and NDF were seriously weakened by the string of cease-fire agreements which followed 1990, particularly the 1994 cease-fire agreement reached by the Kachin Independence Organization.

While these multilateral groups attempted to maintain relevance during the 1990s, they became essentially the forum of Burman opposition figures, the Karen, and minor groups with little choice but to attach themselves to large organizations. This is essentially what transpired with the Ethnic Nationalities Seminar conducted at Mae Tha Raw Hta in January 1997. While it committed 17 ethnic groups, many of them with cease-fire agreements, to a renewed struggle against Burman military rule, many of the signatories came from splinter groups of these parties, and had little influence within the main organizations. The subsequent meetings at Thu Mwe Kloh in 1998 and Law Khii Lah in August 2001, continued these developments. A recent development has been the five-power Military Alliance signed on June 16, 1999, comprising the Karen National Union (KNU), Shan State Army-South (SSA-S), Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP), Chin National Front (CN), and Arakan Liberation Party (ALP). Given the geographical spread of these organizations, joint operations are impossible, except between the SSA-S and KNPP. Nevertheless, the alliance continues to issue joint statements and refuses unilateral peace talks with the government, establishing an avenue for eventual multilateral peace negotiations.

The SLORC also provided the *Tatmadaw* with a major re-equipment and expansion programme to renew the offensive against ethnic insurgents. (By 2002 the strength of the *Tatmadaw* was estimated at 400,000, compared with the 1988 level of 180,000.) The SLORC aim was to attack trading posts and resource-rich territory controlled by insurgents to deprive them of their main source of funds. In addition, the government legalized much cross-border trade, making it more lucrative for Thai and Chinese traders to deal with the government instead of the myriad of border groups. Much of the hard currency for the SLORC's weapons purchases came from the legalization of border trade and the signature fees for Thai logging and fishing rights. This also led the Thai allies of many insurgent groups to pressure them into seeking cease-fire terms with the regime.

As an inducement to insurgent and ethnic community leaders, the SLORC created the Central Committee for the Development of Border Areas in May 1989, raising it to ministerial status in September 1992 as the Border Areas Development Programme (BADP). This initiative was designed to improve infrastructure such as bridges and roads, education and health in areas that had experienced decades of conflict. The catch of the programme was that only communities which had signed cease-fire deals with the government were eligible for programs. According to government figures,



the 13-year “Master Plan” would cover 67 townships in 18 border regions.

In November 1997, the SLORC dissolved and was renamed the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC). The ostensible reasons for the transition were to dispense with ostentatiously corrupt members of the government, reorder the power balance within the regime between competing factions, and present a more benign image to the world community to facilitate foreign investment. However, the continued mismanagement of the economy and continuation of tight central control has seen development in Myanmar stagnate.

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi (released from detention in 1995) and the NLD attempted to break the reform stalemate. On June 23, 1998, they gave the SPDC until Aug. 21 to convene the 1990 elected parliament. A month later they convened the Committee Representing the People’s Parliament (CRPP), made up of nine NLD members and one ethnic representative each of four parties. These included the Arakan League for Democracy, the Mon National Democracy Front, the Shan Nationalities League for Democracy, and the Zomi National Congress. This was set up to pressure the regime into acknowledging the results of the 1990 election and to convene the elected parliament. The regime cracked down again and the NLD leader was effectively put under house arrest again until her release in May 2002.

The appointment of veteran Malaysian diplomat Razali Ismail in 2000 as the United Nations Special Envoy attempted to break the deadlock. Razali started a round of secret negotiations between the SPDC and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. This initiative not only had the authority of the UN, but also the support and influence of a range of supporters of the regime, including Japan, China, Malaysia and Singapore, who were anxious for a political resolution to open the doors for increased aid and trade. International financial institutions like the World Bank and IMF have also been waiting for an opportunity to resume aid projects in the country. A 2002 International Crisis Group (ICG) report argued for a resumption of international aid to fight poverty, arguing that health, HIV, and education programmes should be exempt from the bargaining process. In early May 2002, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was released from 18 months of house arrest. Colonel Hla Min, a spokesman for the regime, stated: “Today marks a new page for the people of Myanmar and the international community. We shall recommit ourselves to allowing all of our citizens to participate freely in the life of our political process”. This occurred in the wake of a bizarre attempted coup staged in March 2002 by the son in law and grandchildren of the 92-year old former Socialist era dictator, U Ne Win, aligned with rogue military and police officers (those involved were swiftly arrested and stood trial on charges of treason). On May 30, 2003, however, Suu Kyi was again detained on a “temporary” basis when the regime acted to close NLD offices around the country and held other party leaders incommunicado.

The government claimed that she was being held for her own protection after an attack on her motorcade by supporters of the junta left a large number of dead (see below).

While fighting along the border continues with the Shan, Karenni and Karen, and a small-scale insurgency still continues along the Western frontier, the SPDC has been largely successful in controlling the spread of insurgency. Its cease-fire deals, while tenuous, have been bolstered by the creation of *Pyithu Sit* (People’s Militias) around many villages, as well as forced sentry duty for villages and roads, and many of the splinter groups act as *Tatmadaw* proxies. A more brutal phase of the counter-insurgency campaign has seen hundreds of thousands of civilians forcibly relocated to easily monitored cantonment camps to deprive insurgents of civilian support, in cease-fire and non-cessate-fire zones. This in turn has created massive numbers of refugees into Thailand, approximately 100,000, and many more internally displaced persons (IDPs), estimated at 350,000.

Many of the ethnic communities represented by the insurgents are yet to see promised infrastructure funding, and the possibility that Myanmar could experience renewed insurgency, either through a resurgence of politically motivated groups, or criminal offshoots, is very real. The government’s failure to stem the flow of illegal drugs onto world markets has also attracted criticism from the West. Tellingly, Colonel Hla Min pledged a renewed government effort for the “total eradication of drugs” in Myanmar. To this end, the regime has instituted “The New Destiny Project”, a forced crop replacement program in the north, which according to initial reports has been successful, albeit detrimental to uncompensated farmers.

## BURMAN GROUPS

### All Burma Students Democratic Front (ABSDF)

*Leadership: Ko Than Khe (chair); Myo Win (vice-chair); Kyaw Ko (general secretary)*

Following the 1988 uprising, thousands of Burmese dissidents fled to the border regions to escape the SLORC crackdown. 10,000 students, from university and high school level, made up the majority of dissidents along the Thai-Myanmar border, with thousands more in Kachin State. They were initially assisted by Karen, Mon, and Karenni insurgents to form the Burma Revolutionary Force (BRF), an umbrella organization of 55 student, labour and *sangha* (Buddhist monks) groups. In early November 1988 the groups were absorbed into the All Burma Students Democratic Front (ABSDF). Compelled to take up arms against the regime, the difficulty of their training was compounded by inadequate supplies, disease, and lack of funds. The ABSDF was said to field 18 battalions of armed troops, but despite the absorption within experienced ethnic insurgent groups, military action against the *Tatmadaw* was always circumscribed by poor financing and lack of experience.

The factional nature of Burmese politics also spread to the ABSDF. By 1989, the election of newly arrived Moe Thee Zun over the initial leader Htun Aung Gyaw produced a split

in the organization. At the October 1991 ABSDF Conference, the Moe Thee Zun faction split from the main organization, but confusingly retained the title ABSDF (Leading Committee). By 1992 internecine tensions resulted in violent infighting. In the ABSDF (North) in Kachin State, a purge resulted in the execution of 17 suspected *Tatmadaw* intelligence agents, and the torture of 60 suspects. For the next few years the number of cadres dwindled as many of the students left for Thailand, North America, Australia, and Europe.

The destruction of the ABSDF *Dawn Gwin* base at Manerplaw in 1995 was a severe setback to an already faltering struggle. They moved north, across from Mae Hong Song, before reestablishing a replacement *Dawn Gwin* inside Myanmar. A year later in September 1996, the two factions of the ABSDF reunited. The Front had an estimated 10 camps along the Thai-Burmese border, with the main base at Weigyi north of Mae Saam Laep, and an estimated 1,500 armed fighters in 2001, although this figure is more likely to be between 250-500. There are also distant factions based on the Indian border, in Kachin State and south in Mon State, although their activities are not known. The Front has essentially downgraded armed resistance in place of activism, stating at the Sixth General Conference in March/April 2001, a “continuing strategy of armed resistance in combination with other political activities; education initiatives, health care programmes, research and documentation and public information.” This also saw the election of a new Chairman, Ko Than Khe, over the perennially feuding leaders Moe Thee Zun and Dr. Naing Aung.

The major victories of the student movement were in maintaining resistance to SLORC/SPDC rule through activism in Thailand and raising awareness in the West. The movement engaged in cyberactivism, sparking consumer boycotts on North American university campuses of companies which invested in Myanmar, and helped to push for European and US trade bans. These transformed student fighters were arguably instrumental in several US cities passing “selective purchasing” laws which hampered foreign investment in Myanmar, and keeping public attention on human rights abuses inside the country. The numbers of the political ABSDF are much larger when taking into account its non-armed chapters around the world.

### **National League for Democracy (NLD)**

*Leadership: Daw Aung San Suu Kyi (general secretary); U Aung Shwe (chairman); U Tin Oo (vice-chairman)*

The National League for Democracy (NLD) is Myanmar’s largest non-state political party. Formed on Sept. 30, 1988, it contested the 1990 general election and won 81 per cent of the seats and 60 per cent of the popular vote. This was despite the fact that most of its leadership had been either jailed or placed under house arrest. The leadership of the NLD renounces violence as a means of political mobilization and has no armed wing, nor does it cooperate with armed organizations at a military level. It expressly renounces violence as a policy.

The party has branches throughout the country, although they are often closed by the SPDC, and in so called “liberated areas” along the border and in neighbouring countries. The NLD’s aim is to achieve a peaceful transition to a more democratic political system through a dialogue process with

a range of civil society groups. Following her release in May 2002 from another spell of house arrest, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and other members of the party leadership undertook several trips through the country to drum up support for the organization and reopen party offices. On the seventh trip in late May 2003, approximately 3,000 members of the pro-government Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA), soldiers, and prison labourers attacked their motorcade. Eleven NLD members and civilians were confirmed dead and 64 listed as missing, presumed killed. Hundreds were arrested and sent to prison, including the leadership, in what was a concerted government crackdown on the activities of the party.

### **Vigorous Burmese Student Warriors (VBSW)**

*Leadership: Ye Ti Ha*

The shift toward non-violent political lobbying by the All Burma Students Democratic Front (ABSDF, see entry) took a dramatic turn in late 1999. Five Burmese activists hiding weapons in guitar cases stormed the Myanmar Embassy in Bangkok taking 38 hostages. After a 25 hour siege, the students, who called themselves “Vigorous Burmese Student Warriors”, were flown to the border accompanied by the Thai Deputy Foreign Minister Sukhumbhand Paribatra, where they were permitted to escape. None of the hostages, who included Myanmar embassy staff and foreigners, were harmed. Official Thai policy was that the activists were students fighting for democracy, not terrorists. It demonstrated the frustration of activists dismayed at the lack of real progress. It further strained Myanmar-Thai relations, causing the SPDC to close the border once again to punish Thai business.

Following the sheltering of the VBSW by the Karen millenarian group God’s Army in late 1999 (see below), the Thai military exacted retribution by shelling the jungle camp in January 2000, as *Tatmadaw* troops attacked from the Myanmar side. Driven to desperation, ten members of the group led by its deputy Myint Tein (aka Preeda) crossed the border and held nearly 100 hostages at a hospital in Ratchaburi for two days. Thai commandos stormed the building and killed all ten of the activists. Their former leader, Kyaw Ni (aka Johnny), escaped with the remainder of the group, and little has been heard of them since Kyaw Ni’s mysterious disappearance in 2001. Their new leader Ye Ti Ha claimed in March 2003 that the group was still operating but their activities are unknown.

## **KACHIN STATE**

### **Kachin Defence Army (KDA)**

*Leadership: Mahtu Naw*

The KDA, with an estimated strength of 800 to 2,000, is the former 4th Brigade of the Kachin Independence Army (KIA), the military wing of the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO, see entry). Situated in Shan State, north of Lashio, it broke away before the mainstream KIO entered peace negotiations, signing its treaty on Jan. 11, 1991. The KDA territory has been designated Special Region No.5, and while still operative, it is largely under the control of the far stronger Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDA) in the lucrative opium growing region of northern Shan State. Some human rights reports implicate the

involvement of the KDA in narcotics smuggling through Kachin State to Manipur in India.

### **Kachin Independence Organization (KIO)**

*Leadership: "Brigadier-General" Lamung Tu Jai*

The Kachin are a predominantly Christian ethnic group inhabiting the northern mountains of Myanmar. They began their struggle for autonomy against the Burmese in the early days of independence, when World War II hero Naw Seng set up the Pawngyawng National Defense Force. The Kachin Independence Organization is the political wing of the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) established on Feb. 5, 1961, by Zau Seng. One of Burma's largest and most effective insurgent groups, the KIO established control over large parts of Kachin State, reducing the reach of the *Tatmadaw* to the key towns of Myitkyina and Bhamo. There was fierce fighting between government forces and the KIA in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The KIO signed a cease-fire deal with the SLORC on Feb. 24, 1994. This deal was merely another "standfast" agreement, and had no political settlement provisions. The KIA were permitted to retain their weapons and forces, and had control over some territory, and were promised infrastructure and human development funding.

Since then the power of the organization has dwindled. The KIO's long serving leader, Maran Brang Seng, died in mid-1994 and was replaced by his deputy, Major-General Zau Mai. He was in turn succeeded in early 2001 by his deputy, Brigadier-General Lamung Tu Jai, in what some observers have termed a "quiet coup" by a leader more interested in business deals with the SPDC.

The Myanmar government and China have circumvented the Kachin as a trading group, legalizing much of the previously lucrative illicit border trade, and taking control of the Hpa-kant jade mine, which provided much of the KIO's finances. The cease-fire was reportedly pressed upon the KIO by their former cross-border allies, the Chinese and Indian governments. The Chinese government had long wished to establish a strategic trade route through Burma to the Indian Ocean, and the legalization of border trade, the implosion of the Communist Party of Burma (CPB), and better relations with the Myanmar government has facilitated this. Unconfirmed reports have suggested that part of this pressure came in the form of the failure of the Chinese government to re-supply the KIA with US\$7 million of weapons in the early 1990s, after taking the payment. This essentially bankrupted the KIO.

Chinese business is now dominant in Kachin State, particularly in the lucrative logging and mining sectors. Much of the promised infrastructure funding has been in roads and bridges, permitting the Myanmar military and their trading allies better access to the resources of Kachin State. A major project to log forests from Putao in the north of the state to Katha in the south has been granted to the Kachin Jadeland company of Yup Zau Hkawng. To facilitate this project the company has put on the payroll Colonel N'Ban La, the KIA vice-chief of staff, Lt. Colonel N'Sang La Awng, chief of the Kachin "national council", and Lt. Colonel Lahpai Zau Tang, commander of the KIA 2nd Brigade. Some reports claim that the "official" approval for this venture was obtained by the *Tatmadaw* chief of the Northern Command, Maj. General Kyaw Win.

While the SPDC permitted the KIO to open a political representation office in the Kachin state capital of Myitkyina in 1998, this has produced no tangible results. Some reports from the state claim that the KIA has been reorganizing and rearming, with numbers put at 40,000 cadres. This is certainly exaggerated. Given the diminished finances of the organization, even a more likely 6,000 fighters, reduced from an early 1990s peak of 10,000, would be hard pressed to form a sustainable threat to the *Tatmadaw*. While many in Kachin State feel that at least the cease-fire has halted the fighting and facilitated some measure of development and ease of travel, there is a great deal of resentment over the failure of the KIO and SPDC to come to a political settlement over the future of the state.

### **New Democratic Army (Kachin) (NDA-K)**

*Leadership: Sakhone Ting Ying and Zalun*

Originally a part of the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO, see entry) the NDA was created in 1968 after it split with the main Kachin group, joining the Communist Party of Burma in the CPB 101 War Zone. It operates along the border between Yunnan and Kachin State, near Kamaiti, Pangwa and Hpimaw. The NDA was the first of the former CPB groups to seek and be granted cease-fire terms with the SLORC on Dec. 15, 1989. While suspected of being involved in the narcotics trade, the NDA now ostensibly works as a government militia. It has a strength of about one thousand.

### **Palaung State Liberation Party (PSLP)**

*Leadership: U Aik Mong*

As an ethnic group situated in northern Shan State, the Palaung were always junior rebel partners to the larger Shan and Kachin groups. Originally formed as an ethnic unit of the Shan State Independence Army by Shan-Palaung leader Sao Hso Lane in January 1963, it later served as the 5th and 6th Battalions of the Shan State Army (see entry). Reformed on Feb. 12, 1976, by Kwan Tong as the Palaung State Liberation Organization/Army (PSLO/PSLA), as an ally of the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO, see entry), it was renamed the PSLP/PSLA in October 1986.

The first signs of a cease-fire parley resulted from the pressure of 51 Buddhist monks on the PSLA leadership in early 1991. A peace deal with the SLORC was agreed on April 23, 1991, and they were designated Shan State Special Region 7. According to official SLORC pronouncements, the terms of the cease-fire were as follows: "to relinquish the path of armed insurrection; to stay within the area assigned for their resettlement; to pledge allegiance to the State; to refrain from extortion activities; to refrain from increasing their present military strength; to have no contacts of any kind with outlawed political organizations". The PSLP, while reportedly unsatisfied with the progress of the cease-fire and promised infrastructure investment, is now essentially a government militia, some 700-800 strong. Some reports indicate a small splinter group has formed called the Palaung State Liberation Front (PSLF), but reports are scant and their operations small.

## **KAREN (KAYIN) STATE**

### **Karen National Union (KNU)/ Karen National**



## Liberation Army (KNLA)

*Leadership: Saw Ba Thin Sein (chairman), Padoh Mahn Sha (general secretary)*

The Karen, who number 3-4 million, inhabit the central eastern part of the borderlands of Myanmar. The oldest of the country's ethnic resistance groups, the Karen National Union, and its armed wing the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA), have waged one of the world's longest insurgencies.

The KNU was created from a range of Karen groups before independence in 1948, when it was clear that the Burmese would not permit the Karen to form a free *Kawthoolei* (literally "flowerland", the name for an envisaged free Karen State). The first manifestation of the KNLA, the Karen National Defence Organization (KNDO), under Mahn Ba Zan, came close to toppling the fledgling government of U Nu in the battles of 1948-50. The first President of the KNU, Saw Ba U Gyi, before his assassination in 1950, laid down four main principles of the Karen resistance as being: (1) For us surrender is out of the question; (2) The recognition of the Karen State must be completed; (3) We shall retain our arms; (4) We shall decide our own political destiny.

From the early days of the insurgency, the Karen have constituted one of the most effective and battle hardened of the rebel groups. A split occurred in the 1960s, with the leftist Karen People's Liberation Front (KPLF), under Saw Hunter Thamwe, signing a cease-fire deal with the central government. The Karen National United Front was created as the direct precursor to the KNLA in June 1968, led by Mahn Ba Zan and its military leader, the legendary Karen commander Bo Mya. In 1975, the KNU established the organization that it largely retains to this day, with Bo Mya becoming chairman of the KNU in 1976.

Fighting with the government during the 1970s and 1980s largely pushed the KNLA into the hinterland. Occasional offensives and deep penetration attacks, in the Delta and plains regions, were daring but unsustainable. Low level sabotage against roads and trains was also conducted, but the war became essentially a stalemate apart from annual dry season offensives by the *Tatmadaw*. The KNLA tightly controlled the border with Thailand. They levied a 5-10 per cent tax on all goods smuggled via their key taxation posts such as Wangkha and Palu, permitting them to purchase weapons and equipment on the Thai arms black market. According to Myanmar expert Bertil Lintner, "at Wangkha alone, the sum of one hundred thousand Thai baht was being collected by the Karen rebels per day in taxes".

The KNLA did not take any military advantage of the 1988 uprising, but their large base at Manerplaw (Victory Field) became the centre of Burmese and student resistance. This gave the military more urgency in destroying the KNU before it could forge the Burmese and other ethnic groups into a force that could seriously threaten the central government. Major *Tatmadaw* offensives between 1988 and 1990 captured the key border trading posts at Klerday, Maw Pokay, Teger Nee, Wawlay, Thayaaya, Thay Baw Bo and Palu. The main loss was the lucrative border levy post at Maethawa.

In January 1992, the *Tatmadaw* launched one of the largest offensives of the 50-year civil war against the strategic base of Manerplaw, which housed the headquarters of the KNU, All Burma Students Democratic Front (ABSDF),

Democratic Alliance of Burma (DAB), and National Democratic Front (NDF). After fierce fighting, which claimed 1,000 killed and 2,000 wounded, the *Tatmadaw* wrested control of the crucial Tipawicho (Sleeping Dog) Mountain. The KNU appeared to be finished, yet the *Tatmadaw* called a cessation of its attacks on the Karen, with the regime thenceforth adopting a more political strategy for a time as the cease-fires grew apace.

Mass defections of Buddhist Karen from the Christian-led KNU in late 1994 seriously weakened the organization. The rise of the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA, see entry) splinter group gave the SLORC the opportunity to use them against the redoubt at Manerplaw. A major operation in January 1995, assisted by DKBA defectors who guided the *Tatmadaw* through the secret passes to the town, besieged the headquarters of the main resistance groups. On the night of the 26th, the KNU set fire to Manerplaw and retreated south to Kawmoora as thousands of refugees crossed into Thailand. Gen. Bo Mya remained defiant, declaring: "the revolution will not die because of the fall of Manerplaw. We will begin an extensive and effective guerrilla warfare". Emboldened by the KNU's loss of Manerplaw and the growing effectiveness of the DKBA, the *Tatmadaw* kept up the pressure on the KNU. The organization's leadership, reeling from the loss of their bases, began peace talks with the SLORC. Six meetings were held between 1995 and November 1996, before they broke down on the vexed issue of the KNU retaining its weapons.

In January 1997 joint *Tatmadaw*/DKBA attacks caused the KNLA to lose two more key border bases. These internal raids and cross border attacks on refugee camps kept the KNLA on the back foot, as well as seriously interdicting their revenue raising interests. The KNU were dealt a further serious blow with the defection of their Forestry Minister, Padoh Aung San, and 300 followers in March 1998, reportedly with millions of Thai *baht* from the KNU's coffers. KNLA figures refuse to talk about what funding infrastructure they use now, but they are known to be heavily dependent on captured weapons and material. Continued dependence on forestry probably accounts for much of the finance, although as Myanmar expert Raymond Bryant argues "the KNU had long based part of its local and international appeal on sustainable forest management", a position which may have been damaged by desperation for funds.

After the fall of Manerplaw the KNLA retained their ostensible structure, but rather than sorties from fixed bases they became more mobile, including the GHQ. The KNLA 1st Brigade is based in Tha-ton District, the 2nd Brigade in Toungoo District, the 3rd Brigade in Nyaung-lay-bin District, the 4th Brigade in Mergui/Tavoy, the 5th Brigade in Pa-pun, the 6th Brigade in Doo-pla-ya District, and the 7th Brigade in Hpa-an District. In early July 2002, the KNLA lost their base at Law Thee Hta, across from Thailand's Tak province, to an assault from the *Tatmadaw*'s 201 and 202 light infantry battalions and the DKBA's 999 Brigade.

The change in military strategy was eventually followed by changes to the political structure. Realizing that a central reason for the DKBA split was rank and file dissatisfaction with KNU leaders, the central committee eventually managed to marginalize the role of intransigent hard-liner Bo Mya in early 2000. He was made vice-chairman of the

organization, with moderate Saw Ba Thin Sein elevated to chairman, and Mahn Ba Sha becoming general secretary. Another move was the promotion of Saw Satila, a former Buddhist monk, as religious affairs spokesman to heal the divisions with Buddhist Karen and the DKBA. While the post-1992 fortunes of the KNU have not been good, they are still operating and scoring sustained resistance against the *Tatmadaw*. According to a recent report by Australian academic Desmond Ball, the KNLA's recent successes have achieved "morale (that) is now better than at any time since 1995". The current strength is about 10,000.

### **Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA)**

*Leadership: Padoh Tha Htoo Kyaw (Chairman) and Sayadaw U Banddan Thuzana*

Dissension within the mainstream Karen National Union (see entry), between regional commanders, and between the Christian leadership and Buddhist Karen, caused the most dramatic split of the Karen resistance. The DKBA was formed on Dec. 21, 1994, under the leadership of a Karen Buddhist monk, Sayadaw U Banddan Thuzana, the leader of the Kawthoolei Sangha Organization (KSO) at Myaing Gyi Ngu. While many of the organization's political and religious grievances against the KNU leadership had foundation, it is also clear that the SLORC and its military intelligence arm, the Directorate of Defence Services Intelligence (DDSI), had a guiding role in the formation of the DKBA. All of the leadership and the majority of the cadres are former KNLA fighters. An initial force of 400 DKBA cadres sided with the SLORC forces in late 1994 assisting the *Tatmadaw* assault on the KNU stronghold of Manerplaw.

Since 1995 the DKBA have been fashioned into a government militia, conducting cross border raids on Karen refugee camps in Thailand. The *Tatmadaw* accelerated these attacks in early 1997 to pressure the KNU to capitulate to a political cease-fire. The ferocity of the attacks was designed to compel Karen refugees back into Myanmar, and interdict KNLA operations conducted within the camps. The DKBA are organized into four brigades, 333, 555, 777, and the largest, the 999 Brigade, and are dependent on the *Tatmadaw* for arms, equipment and uniforms and operate almost wholly as support for government offensives and operations. Their recruitment is largely through volunteers or forced recruitment from villages on a quota system.

The attacks on refugee camps, situated in Thai territory, have made it necessary for the SPDC to distance itself from DKBA activities. Initially the government refused to acknowledge operational links between its forces and a group that it termed as "out of control". An attack by DKBA soldiers at Ban Rai Don Chai in Thailand's Mae Sot area in August 1999 wounded a Thai civilian. According to the Thai newspaper *The Nation*, Secretary No.1 of the SPDC, Lt. Gen. Khun Nyunt stated to the Thai Foreign Minister, "the incursion was contrary to the spirit of good neighbors and was against Burma's aspirations and commitment to making the Thai-Burma border harmonious and friendly." Despite this, the DKBA attacks on Karen civilians and cross border raids continued until their almost complete reduction in 2002. The *Tatmadaw* began using *Sa Thon Lon* guerrilla retaliation units in occasional conjunction with the DKBA. These small hit squads have wreaked terror through Karen

State as they steal through villages assassinating suspected KNLA sympathizers.

The relationship between the DKBA and the *Tatmadaw* is complex and different between operational regions. According to a report by the Karen Human Rights Group (KHRG), some DKBA soldiers and commanders are "more interested in personal power and loot than anything else, but there are also those who want to protect Karen people from the SPDC's abuses as much as they can." The government has permitted the DKBA to become involved in logging, the cattle smuggling trade (until it was banned by the leadership in late 2002) and according to some accounts, low level smuggling in opium and methamphetamines. Despite reports of regular defections from the DKBA back to the KNLA, and Buddhist Karen dissent over the close relationship between the DKBA and the *Tatmadaw*, this alliance and its chaotic results within Karen State should continue. The DKBA's current strength is some 1,500 to 2,000.

### **Karen Peace Army (KPA)**

*Leadership: Gen. Saw Tha Mu Heh*

Formed on Feb. 24, 1997, the KPA (also known as *Nyein Chan Yay A'Pway*, Karen Peace Force) is the former KNLA 16th Battalion from the Doop-aya District of Eastern Karen State. The leader of the group, former KNLA Lt. Col. Tha Mu Heh, has been implicated in routine abuse and extortion of civilians when he was still with the main Karen group. Initially used by the *Tatmadaw* as a local militia force, the KPA began recruiting in the area under their nominal control from Dooplaya to Three Pagoda Pass. They were reported to have accompanied government forces on several operations against non-cease-fire groups. A lack of recruitment in their area has seen their role in the district gradually replaced by larger DKBA forces, according to the Karen Human Rights Group. The KPA is about 300 strong.

### **God's Army**

*Leadership: Johnny Htoo and Luther Htoo*

A side effect of the splintering of the Karen resistance was the increased turn to already strong millenarian beliefs. This was nowhere better displayed than in the rise of the *Kersay Doh* (Soldiers of God's Holy Mountain) led by twin boys Johnny and Luther "Rocky" Htoo since the age of nine in 1997. The brothers were reputed to possess special powers of invisibility and imperviousness to bullets, which played into the traditions of mountain Karen who believed in the appearance of pseudo-Christian and animist divine messengers possessing black tongues. The twins led a force of approximately 200 armed KNLA defectors, child soldiers and ABSDF splinter groups. Following the sheltering of the Vigorous Burmese Student Warriors (VBSW) in late 1999, the Thai military exacted retribution by shelling the *Kersay Doh* camp in January 2000, as *Tatmadaw* troops attacked from the Burmese side. After the Ratchanaburi hospital siege (see VBSW entry) the group was squeezed between a major *Tatmadaw* offensive which overran their base at Karmaplaw and much reduced Thai tolerance of their activities.

Johnny and Luther Htoo were captured in 2001 along with 18 followers in Thailand. They were eventually reunited with their parents in a refugee camp. While the group no longer exists without their young charismatic leaders, rem-



nants remain in pockets around the area or have been absorbed into other Karen forces.

## KARENNI (KAYAH) STATE

### Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP)

*Leadership: Khu Hte Bupeh ("Prime Minister"), Abel Tweed ("Foreign Minister")*

The smallest state in Myanmar, Karenni (Kayah) State is home to 250,000 inhabitants, comprising the majority Karenni as well as sizable numbers of Burmans, Shan, Karen, Palaung and Pa-O. The traditional dissension within Karenni State, Shan and Pa-O migration, and the campaigns by the *Tatmadaw* to pacify the area, have resulted in a plethora of insurgent groups.

The KNPP, with the Karenni Army (KA) as its military wing, maintains a parallel government, and is seeking complete secession from the Union of Myanmar. The government is led by Prime Minister Khu Hte Bupeh, Abel Tweed as Foreign Minister, and Chief of Staff of the KA General Bee Htoo.

The Karenni National Organization (KNO), a political movement formed in November 1947 by Saw Maw Reh, was raised to represent the declaration of independence of the United Karenni Independent States (UKIS), proclaimed on Sept. 11, 1946, by Karenni leader Bee Tu Re. This was intended to preserve an historical independence from Burma of the Karenni states of Bawlake, Kyebogyi and Kantarawaddy. In 1948, Saw Maw Reh raised the United Karenni States Independence Army (UKSIA). This first armed wing of the Karenni resistance operated largely with neighboring Karen forces of the KNDO. Formed on July 29, 1957, by Taw Plo, the KNPP traces its roots back to these organizations. In 1974, the UKSIA became the Karenni Army (KA), under the leadership of Aung Than Lay.

The KNPP began talks with the SLORC in 1992, which were further pursued in January 1994. The government used the influential Catholic Bishop Soetero of Loikaw to broker much of the negotiations. A cease-fire was agreed on March 7, 1995, and according to state propaganda, 7,790 KNPP fighters "returned to the legal fold" and surrendered 9,000 weapons, which is clearly an exaggeration. The deal included a 60-point set of principles including that the *Tatmadaw* would not coerce Karenni into porter duties or levy porter taxes from villages. The deal also permitted the *Tatmadaw* to reach into previously dangerous "brown" areas, or contested territory.

The government attempted to blame a renewal of hostilities on misunderstandings created by rogue *Tatmadaw* commanders. In a major battle in March 1996, however, the KA lost its last two strategic hill bases near the border, also known as Rambo Hills 1 and 2. By June 1996, the cease-fire had completely broken down. The regime exacted its revenge on the KNPP by pursuing a programme of forced relocation starting in 1996. In that year alone more than 25,000 people were forcibly relocated to more easily monitored cantonments close to *Tatmadaw* bases, depriving armed groups of support and intelligence from civilians. These cantonments were at Shadaw, Ywathit, Mawchi, Pah Saung, and Baw La Keh. The *Tatmadaw* order for the relocations stated that "to establish peacefulness and restore law and order within Shadaw Township, all the area between the

Pon River and Salween River, all villages south of Shadaw and north of Shadaw, must gather at Shadaw. If you do not gather by the deadline the troops will enter the village and if we see anyone we will consider them as enemy".

KA offensives since 1996 have become hit and run attacks against *Tatmadaw* outposts and columns. In early 1999, the KNPP and Shan State Army (SSA) allied to form a joint battalion of 1,500 SSA and 300 KA troops. Engagements with government forces in June scored major victories for their joint attacks near Homong. As the government forces continued their drive to the border, Thai military officials began pressuring the KNPP to cease offensive operations against the *Tatmadaw*. Thai authorities also made it extremely difficult for the leaders such as Bee Htoo and Gen. Aung Myint to travel within Thailand. Often the KNPP leadership must leave their headquarters in Mae Hong Son and cross the border to stay in KA mobile bases.

### Karenni National Defence Army (KNDA)

The KNDA is the armed wing of the Karenni National Defence Party (KNDP), a splinter group from the Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP, above) formed in the wake of the 1995 cease-fire. It has two factions. The first is led by former Mawchi mining businessman Zaw Hla, from the Paku ethnic group. The second group, led by Lee Rey, are Karenni. The KNDA acts as a government militia which operates alongside *Tatmadaw* operations in targeting the KNPP and border refugee camps.

### Karenni National People's Liberation Front (KNPLF)

*Leadership: U Sandar (chairman) & Htun Kyaw (vice-chairman)*

A splinter group of the Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP, see entry), the KNPLF was formed in 1978 by Than Nyunt from defectors who aligned themselves with the Communist Party of Burma (CPB). It has directly targeted the main Karenni group since 1982, when Than Nyunt was killed in a battle with the KA. The group signed a cease-fire with the SLORC in February 1994. There are serious divisions within the group based around slight ethnic differences, between the Shan ethnic group, led by San Tha, and the Padaung faction led by the KNPLF Chief of Staff of the Army, Htun Kyaw. The main force of the KNPLF operates around Loikaw and Labakho, while San Tha's faction is situated along the Thai border. The KNPLF are also known as the Red Star Army, or *Daw Daeng* in Thai.

The KNPLF engages in commercial activity, predominantly illegal logging and cattle smuggling, although most of this trade is conducted with or through the *Tatmadaw* and not cross border traders. In 1999, the KNPLF were implicated in an attack on a Thai police station at Nam Piang Din. An illegal logging deal they had formed with members of the *Tatmadaw*'s 513st infantry battalion had soured with their Thai partners, both police and a local merchant, who refused to pay. Other activities reportedly include looting from Thai villages and the laying of landmines along routes the KNPLF claim. It is about 300 strong.

### Kayan National Guard (KNG)

*Leadership: U Gabriel Byan and Htay Ko*

A small splinter group from the Kayan New Land Party (KNLP, see entry) the KNG is the armed wing of the small, leftist Kayan National Organization (KNO). Following a rift within the main party, dissident U Gabriel Byan broke away with about 80 followers and signed a peace deal with the SLORC on Feb. 27, 1992. According to an official Myanmar government pronouncement, the KNG was “equipped with arms again for regional security”, a euphemism for their development as a government militia. They operate around their base at Phae Khon near the Shan-Karenni border as Special Region-1, Kayah State.

### **Kayan New Land Party (KNLP)**

*Leadership: U Shwe Aye (president) & U Than Soe Naing (vice-president)*

The KNLP are from the Padaung tribe, living in southern Shan State near Pekon and Mong Pai. Padaung tribes are situated along the eastern border, within Karen, Karenni and Shan States. Created in 1964 to represent the Padaung against the policies of the military socialist government, the KNLP has often attached itself to larger groups to compensate for its size and lack of finance. In 1977 the group joined the Communist Party of Burma (CPB) to gain greater access to weapons and training. It returned to the non-communist National Democratic Front in June 1991, from where it operated mostly in Karenni (Kayah) State. On July 26, 1994, the KNLP surrendered, being designated as Kayah State Special Region No.3 Group.

### **Pa-O National Organization (PNO)**

*Leadership: U Aung Kham Hti*

The Pa-O are a tribe mostly situated in Shan and Karenni (Kayah) States. The first Pa-O resistance organization was the United Pa-O National Organization (UPNO) and its armed wing the Pa-O National Liberation Army (PNLA), created in 1958 by U Hla Pe. Pa-O resistance then went through a number of incarnations, occasionally signing cease-fire deals with the central government, splintering into different factions, and operating alongside Shan nationalist and Burman communist groups. The current PNO and its armed wing the Pa-O National Army (PNA) were created in 1976, combining several splinter groups under the leadership of U Kyaw Sein. It joined the National Democratic Front until signing its cease-fire with the government on March 27, 1991. The PNO/PNA are situated in southern Shan State at Kyauk Talong, and have been designated the Southern Shan State Special Region (6) group. In June 1991, a small splinter group under the leadership of PNA Col. Hkun Okker was formed as the Pa-O People's Liberation Organization (PPLO), which operates around Na Awn in Karenni State.

### **Lahu National Organization (LNO)**

*Leadership: Payah Ja Oo*

The LNO and its armed wing the Lahu National Army (LNA) is the new incarnation of Lahu resistance, having taken over from the Lahu National United Party (LNUP) which surrendered to the government in 1984. Whereas before the LNUP operated in the Doi Lang area, before being driven out by Khun Sa's Mong Tai Army (MTA) in 1982, the LNO operates in Karenni State alongside the KNPP. It is about 200 strong. There are numerous other

small Lahu groups which operate in Shan State and are also reportedly involved in drug smuggling.

### **Shan State Nationalities Liberation Organization (SSNLO)**

*Leadership: Tha Kalei*

The SSNLO is a multi-ethnic group of Karenni, Shan, and Pa-O and was formed in 1966 as a splinter group from the Pa-O National Organization (PNO, see entry). Leftist in orientation, they were key allies of the Communist Party of Burma (CPB) during the 1970s and 1980s. This caused a major rift with the PNO, often causing battles between the two factions. Operations with their allies the KNPLF and KNLP saw them take a prominent role in northern Karenni from their base at Naung Htaw. They signed a cease-fire with the SLORC on Oct. 9, 1994 in Loikaw. Government announcements on the arms for peace process claim “the group is taking part in the projects relating to the development of the region and eradication of narcotic drugs”. Its current strength is about 500.

## **MON STATE**

### **New Mon State Party (NMSP)**

*Leadership: Nai Shwe Kyin (president)*

The New Mon State Party was formed by Nai Shwe Kyin on July 20, 1958, as the successor to the two previous incarnations of Mon resistance, the Mon National Defence Organization (MNDO) and the Mon People's Front (MPF). The NMSP suffered a serious split in 1981, only reconciling in late 1987. The NMSP armed wing is the Mon National Liberation Army (MNLA). The NMSP lost its headquarters and key border trading post at Three Pagodas Pass to a *Tatmadaw* offensive in February 1990. The group's leaders then engaged in cease-fire negotiations with the SLORC in 1993-94, and signed their cease-fire on June 29, 1995.

Under the agreement the party was not permitted to enter into dialogue with other parties or dissident groups. All trade had to be conducted through a SLORC registered company called Rehmonnya International, and the government explicitly asked that Mon trade be directed toward Singapore and Malaysia and away from Thailand where the NMSP had previously conducted its business deals. The extension of health and education infrastructure was conditional. If the SLORC provided the funds, education had to be in Burmese and with a central government curriculum, not the Mon-designed one. Refugee issues were not adequately addressed, the vexed issue of taxation on logging and fishing concessions, as well as border levy posts was never adequately settled, and the MNLA was confined to twelve contiguous cantonment areas. In return, the SLORC promised to construct a 65-mile road linking Thanbyuzayat, Ye, and Three Pagoda Pass.

The effect of the cease-fire has been a greater *Tatmadaw* presence in Mon State, the splintering of former NMSP forces, including the MAMD (below), the Hansawatoi Restoration Party (HRP) and its armed wing the Monland Restoration Army (MRA) formed in September 1998, and the non-violent umbrella organization of Mon groups, the Mon Unity League (MUL). The MRA, under the leadership of former MNLA Colonel Pan Nyunt, has been reportedly coercing taxation out of Mon civilians and not forwarding

the funds to the NMSP. In June 2002, the MRA was reported to have kidnapped NMSP General Secretary Nai Rot Sa and his personal assistant Mon Saw Ng, holding them for several weeks before their release on July 6. Fighting also increased around the border refugee camp of Halockhani, which houses nearly 6,000 displaced Mon civilians. By mid-2003 the HRP had scattered to southern Mon State and did not represent a serious threat to the NMSP or *Tatmadaw*.

The increased factionalism and continued misery of civilians in Mon State is arguably due to the poor terms of the cease-fire, and the lucrative business opportunities pursued by its president, Nai Shwe Kyin. The biggest project undertaken by the SPDC in the area, the Yadana gas pipeline project, and its support project, the Ye-Tavoy railway extension, has created numerous human rights abuses in Mon State, including forced relocations, forced labor on the railway project and road building. The ability of the NMSP to resume armed struggle against the SPDC would be hampered by the dramatic drop in the numbers of their soldiers, from a peak of 6,000 in 1995 to an estimated 1,500 in 2003. Nevertheless, NMSP forces continue to push the provisions of the cease-fire leading to increasingly difficult relations with the SPDC.

### **Mon Army, Mergui District (MAMD)**

*Leadership: Ong Suik Heang*

This splinter group from the New Mon State Party (NMSP, above) was formed on Nov. 6, 1996, as a result of the cease-fire agreement between Mon leaders and the SLORC. Situated in an NMSP cantonment area waiting to be handed over to *Tatmadaw* control, the group split away and resumed hostilities against government forces. This sparked a major *Tatmadaw* offensive in the MAMD's main operational area of Chaung Kyi which effectively ended the splinter group's short lived resistance. It surrendered on May 25, 1997, but small pockets of the force still operate along the border.

## **SHAN STATE**

### **Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA)**

*Leadership: Yang Mao-ling, Lui Go-shi, and Peng Jia-sheng*

Following the 1989 mutiny within the Communist Party of Burma (CPB), SLORC intelligence chief Lt. Gen. Khin Nyunt flew to the Kokang region to sign deals with the leaders of the emerging formations. He took with him Lo-Hsing Han, former KKY commander in Kokang and semi-retired opium king of the Golden Triangle, who was well connected to the ethnic Chinese warlords who rule the fiefdom of Kokang and roam the Wa Hills. The Peng brothers, Jiafu and Jia-sheng, were granted leadership of the MNDAA, and in uneasy partnership with the warlord family the Yang clan, control of the region's opium trade. They are headquartered at Laukkai in Northern Shan State and are designated the Northern Shan State Special Region (1). According to *Jane's Intelligence Review* in 1998, 23 new heroin refineries were opened in the region soon after, and heroin exports from Myanmar to Thailand, Laos and China, and from there to world markets, doubled in the first year after the cease-fire.

In 1992 a major war for control of the MNDAA erupted between the Peng and Yang factions. This soon drew in other

players to the dispute, with the United Wa State Army (UWSA, see entry) supporting the Yangs and Khun Sa's Mong Tai Army (MTA, see entry) attempting to shore up the Pengs. While Peng Jia-sheng lost out in the 1992 round of the heroin wars, he has eventually clawed back the reins of leadership. Despite an ostensible role as "a leader of one of the national races" and "assisting the government in opium eradication efforts" according to Myanmar government pronouncements, Peng Jia-sheng and the MNDAA has little revolutionary or political motivation apart from a partnership of convenience to maintain its narcotics empire. Maintaining a force of 2,000 militia, well equipped and connected to government figures, the MNDAA only poses a threat to the central government should they attempt a concerted curtailment of their business.

The Peace Myanmar Group, headed by Yang Mao-liang, is but one of the businesses used by the MNDAA to launder profits or reinvest them in the legal economy. Their interests include electronics, distilleries, refineries and mills. Despite close links to Chinese authorities in Yunnan, this does not grant the MNDAA complete immunity. Enraged by continued drug shipments into Southern China and the concomitant rise in intravenous drug use, in 1994 the Chinese arrested and executed Yang Mao-xian, one of the Kokang Yangs and joint partner with Peng Jia-sheng of the militia. The MNDAA merely changed their routes, despite pledging a complete opium eradication by 2000.

### **National Democratic Alliance Army (NDAA)**

*(also known as Military and Local Administration Committee, Eastern Shan State, or the Eastern Shan State Army – ESSA)*

*Leadership: Lin Mingxian (Sai Lin), Zhang Zhiming (Kyi Myint)*

The second of the former Communist Party of Burma (CPB) forces to reach a cease-fire, the NDAA is led by ethnic Chinese and former Red Guards Lin Mingxian (aka Sia Lin) and Zhang Zhiming (aka Kyi Myint). They signed their deal in June 1989 and maintain a base at Mong La, in the old CPB 815 War Zone in Eastern Kengtung by the Chinese border. As brother in law of Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA, see entry) commander Peng Jia-sheng, Lin Mingxian has led the NDAA into a prominent role in the regional narcotics network.

With this increase the Myanmar government has had to step up its anti-narcotics efforts. It appears to have chosen to do this in conjunction with the NDAA rather than against them. Lin Mingxian is feted as a "leader of one of the national races", despite his Chinese ethnicity and lack of Myanmar citizenship. He is a titular participant in the National Convention, and portrayed by the government as a partner in the struggle for narcotics eradication. He was appointed the Chairman of the Mong La Action Committee on Narcotics. His headquarters in Mong La "boasts gambling dens, karaoke bars, brothels, strip joints and clubs featuring transvestite shows" according to Myanmar expert Bertil Lintner. Many of the Myanmar government, United Nations, and US Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) show-burnings of seized narcotics have taken place there. Lin also maintains a "Museum of Drug Suppression" in the town. Attracting an estimated 500,000 Chinese tourists a year, Mong La is an

example of the semi-autonomous enclaves that have been created by the post-1989 ceasefires.

Close ties to the *Tatmadaw* and SPDC leadership have permitted the former CPB forces to consolidate their position in the drug trade. This has both an economic and security dimension given the danger in attempting to curb a well armed 4,000-man force, and the lucrative benefits of failing to. As Lintner points out, “Lin Mingxian especially is reported to have given generous contributions to high-ranking officers in Burma’s military intelligence. In exchange, he enjoys protection from the government, which has enabled him to invest in legitimate business”.

### **Mong Tai Army (MTA)**

*Leadership: Gen. Khun Sa (aka Zhang Qifu)*

The Mong Tai Army were the armed wing of the Shan State Restoration Council (SSRC), initially formed in March 1985 as the Tai-land Revolutionary Council (TRC). This organization was the fusion of the Shan United Revolutionary Council (SURA), the 2nd Brigade of the Shan State Army (SSA) and the Shan United Army (SUA) of Chinese-Shan opium warlord Khun Sa. The MTA, while assiduously represented as a Shan nationalist organization, was a front for Khun Sa’s opium smuggling syndicate. The leader of a government militia unit, the *Ka Kwe Ye* (KKY) in the 1960s, Khun Sa had been a prominent player in the narcotics trade since then. Following the 1989 Communist Party of Burma (CPB) mutiny and the arrival of Wa and Kokang organizations to the trade, the MTA battled both the *Tatmadaw* and the United Wa State Army (UWSA, see entry) during the early 1990s for control of opium fields and smuggling routes.

In 1994, the *Tatmadaw* stepped up attacks on the MTA headquarters at Homong, on the Thai border just north of Karenni State, where fighting raged for months. This was followed by a sustained UWSA assault on the MTA in 1995 as the Wa group attempted to muscle in on Khun Sa’s markets. The group was dealt a serious blow when MTA Major Karn Yord and 5,000 soldiers split from the MTA to form the Shan State National Army (SSNA, see entry) aligned with government forces. In the last months of 1995, Khun Sa opened negotiations with the SLORC for surrender. In late December, the MTA withdrew from the strategic Doilang Hill and permitted the *Tatmadaw* to take over Homong. The ceremony, on Jan. 18, 1996, rehabilitated the warlord. Gone were references to Khun Sa as a “devil” or “drug bandit”. He was now U Khun Sa, leader of one of the “national races” who had “rejoined the legal fold”. Another splinter group of several thousand MTA soldiers, under the leadership of Major Yord Serk, reformed as the Shan United Revolutionary Army (SURA), later changing to the Shan State Army-South (see entry).

A month after Khun Sa’s return to the legal fold in January 1996, ten companies were registered in Yangon at an apartment owned by the “Good Shan Brothers International Ltd”, a front for Khun Sa’s drug profits. According to some sources, the drug smuggler transferred US\$24 million from Thai banks to Yangon following the surrender. Within a few months he had installed himself in the capital, reputedly in a heavily defended compound at Mingaladon airfield. He quickly announced two lucrative bus line concessions and other interests which included a US\$20 million development

resort along the Thai border, and a casino project at Kawthaung. His knowledge of the Byzantine world of Shan State opium politics is too great for the regime to have extradited him to the United States, where several warrants for his arrest are outstanding. He is reported to have suffered a stroke in the late 1990s which has restricted his movements.

### **Shan State Army (SSA) (also known as SSA-South)**

*Leadership: Major Yord Serk*

Formed from the remnants of Khun Sa’s Mong Tai Army, the SSA initially regrouped under the banner of the Shan United Revolutionary Army (SURA) before reforming the SSA (a large Shan army from the 1960s) in 1998 in consultation with two other Shan cease-fire groups. The SSA is essentially one faction of a tripartite arrangement with the SSNA and SSA-N, although these two groups do not conduct military operations against the *Tatmadaw*.

At the 2001 Shan National Day, Yord Serk declared that “our campaign against drugs, a means to total independence from the Burmese junta, hasn’t received any support.” The SPDC, in contrast, describes Yord Serk as an “opium-trafficking insurgent”. The SSA vigorously deny involvement in narcotics smuggling, and while little is known of their fund raising activities they do admit to taxing cross border and intrastate trade.

The SSA have been utilized as a proxy force by the Thai military since the late 1990s to attack United Wa State Army (UWSA, see entry) drug shipments. With their bases strung along the northeast border, they straddle Wa shipment routes and are capable of attacking both smuggling convoys and *Tatmadaw* troop columns. As SSA attacks against their opponents became more effective, the military staged an extensive Four Cuts operation between 1996-98 that forcibly displaced 300,000 civilians into strategic hamlets close to military cantonments. Large areas of central and eastern Shan state have become free fire zones where any villagers caught are suspected of being SSA sympathizers and shot. Land in southern Shan State has also been appropriated from Shan, Lahu and Akha villagers without compensation and sold to Wa and Chinese settlers from the north. According to a July 2002 report by Amnesty International, there is a sustained campaign of intimidation against Shan civilians to reduce support for the SSA.

Recent reports indicate that the SSA, which has a strength of about 2,000, has been seeking peace talks with the regime. Yord Serk confirmed that an approach had been made by Thai Defense Minister Chavalit Yongchaiyudh to act as intermediary. Further proposals were made to the SPDC that the UN could mediate. As a reported 106 battalions of *Tatmadaw* massed around eastern Shan State, and amid fighting between government forces and their UWSA allies against the SSA, Yangon rejected any peace initiative. The SSA-S maintains a series of bases along the Thai-Myanmar border interspersed between *Tatmadaw* and UWSA outposts, and appears to be becoming larger and better equipped. The SSA-S, with the KNLA, poses the most direct military challenge to the central Myanmar government.

### **Shan State Army (SSA) (also known as SSA – North)**

*Leadership: Col. Loi Mao (chairman)*



The Shan State Army-North was one of the first cease-fire groups, signing a deal with the SLORC in September 1989 after a split from the main Shan State Army. They have been designated the Shan State Special Region 3 based at Sien Kyawt. Not much is known about their activities, and according to the Thai based publication *The Irrawaddy*, their forces retain their arms, engage in some government approved business such as mining, logging, and taxation, "but if they want to cross government roads they are obliged to inform authorities". Despite their maintained strength (about 4,000 men), the SSA-N do not attempt to stop the continued human rights abuses which are still prevalent in Shan State, such as forced labour and portage.

### **Shan State National Army (SSNA) (also known as SSA – Central)**

*Leadership: Karn Yord*

The SSNA is the former 16th Brigade of the Mong Tai Army (MTA, see entry), commanded by Maj. Karn Yord, which broke away in August 1995 after a split with Khun Sa. The political leaders of the breakaway faction, Kan Ywet and Dae Wain, left the MTA due to the favoritism shown to Chinese in the organisation by Khun Sa and the greater emphasis on his opium business than Shan nationalism. They are based at Khai Sin, Hsipaw, and are about 3,000-strong. Ostensibly a cease-fire group, the SSNA does not appear on official Myanmar government documents as one. According to Myanmar expert Martin Smith it is a "gentlemen's agreement" not a formal truce. The SSNA, SSA-N and SSA-S signed a non-aggression agreement in September 1997 to co-operate in political representation at the National Convention, although stopping short of combined military operations. Little is heard of the activities of the SSNA.

### **United Wa State Army (UWSA)**

*Leadership: Pao Yuchang, Chao Nyi Lai (North UWSA), Wei Hsueh-Kang (South UWSA)*

The Wa are a hill tribe in the northern Shan States of Myanmar. For decades they were the foot soldiers of the Communist Party of Burma (CPB) before their mutiny in 1989. The United Wa State Party (UWSP) and the armed wing (UWSA) were created from a union of northern Wa at Panghsang near the Chinese border, and southern Wa troops originally called the Wa National Army (WNA) at the town of Mong Yawn on the Myanmar/Thai border. The UWSA, some 20,000-strong, is commanded by Pao Yuchang (aka Ta Pang) and his deputy Li Zi-ru is a former Chinese Red Guard. The leader of the UWSP Chao Nyi Lai (aka Ta Lai) suffered a stroke in 1995. The leader of the southern Wa, ethnic Chinese Wei Hsueh-Kang (aka Prasit Chivinnitipanya) was indicted by a US court in June 1998 on charges of drug smuggling, and a US\$2 million bounty put on his arrest. Thailand has repeatedly called for Yangon to arrest Wei, but to no avail.

The factions of the UWSA have an uneasy alliance, partly from political differences over the autonomy of the Wa area, mostly from competition over the opium smuggling trade which both immediately were drawn into. As a proviso of their cease-fire deal, the UWSA were permitted to engage in all business activity. To this end, the group has maintained close links with Myanmar military intelligence officials and *Tatmadaw* regional commanders in their areas, and there is

significant proof that military officials have routinely permitted drug convoys free navigation through the country, reportedly for a 10 per cent taxation levy. Despite pledging complete opium eradication by 2005 (extended to 2006), the UWSA established the largest drug empire in the region and do not appear genuine in their desire for an opium free Wa area.

In 1994, the northern Wa forces starting sending troops south to shore up the southern faction's forces under the military leadership of Ta Tahng (aka Wei Sai-tang). This was the beginning of the push against Khun Sa's Mong Tai Army (MTA, see entry). By early 1996, joint UWSA and *Tatmadaw* offensives had compelled Khun Sa to surrender to the SLORC. The UWSA southern faction virtually stepped into the old warlord's business and took it over, although crucially the *Tatmadaw* maintained control of the MTA stronghold at Homong. This gave the UWSA uncontested supremacy in the opium trade in that region. To expand, the Wa syndicate also began flooding Thailand and Yunnan province with cheaply produced synthetic drugs, amphetamine type stimulants (ATS), known in Thailand as *yaa ba* (mad medicine). The US government's *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report* of 2003 places annual *yaa ba* production at 800 million tablets, most of which are destined for Thailand. In order to facilitate the transfer of narcotics across the border, the northern faction began resettling thousands of Wa and ethnic Chinese around Wei Hsueh-Kang's stronghold of Mong Yawn. The aim was to resettle 120,000 civilians to facilitate the emerging empire. The UWSA were also reinvesting their profits into infrastructure such as roads, hydroelectric plants, schools, clinics and crop replacement programs. The group also operates ATS labs in Western Laos and down the border in Karen State. This has led to what one foreign diplomat told *Asiaweek* was "the appearance of an emerging state".

The UWSA consortium also began to inject its profits into the legal economy. Its company, the Myanmar Kyone Yeom Group, has headquarters in Yangon and interests in construction, mining, real estate, and forestry. Its chairman, UWSA Col. Kyaw Myint (aka Michael Hu Hwa) is said to attend business meetings armed, and was reputedly furious that his attempts to wrest control of the Prime Commercial Bank were thwarted by the Myanmar government. Some reports indicate that the SPDC have curtailed the activities of this front company, but Wa business is still booming. The group still controls the National Races Cooperative Society which offers 84% interest per annum, a clear money laundering business. Another UWSA company, the Hong Pang Group, was marked for liquidation after *Tatmadaw* chief Lt. Gen. Maung Aye promised the Thai government he would curtail their drug business during an official visit in April 2002. There has been no evidence that steps have been taken in this direction.

The SPDC have permitted the UWSA to create a narcotics empire that threatens regional security. As a result of the necessity of arranging cease-fire deals in the post-1988 crisis, the Myanmar government is now faced with a large, extremely well armed and battle hardened force that would take a major effort to curtail. This is despite the UWSA pledging to achieve complete opium eradication by 2005, and the continued crop replacement programmes. Counter-narcotics experts believe that crop replacement programmes in the area



around Mong Yawn are unsustainable for the envisaged settlers. The expanding power of the Wa has come to a head on the Thai-Myanmar border. Faced with a growing epidemic of *yaa ba* abuse, the Thai authorities have begun to vigorously interdict Wa drug shipments, with the assistance of a small US Special Forces team known as Task Force 399. The two countries exchanged a week long artillery duel in February 2001 over incursions by *Tatmadaw* troops in hot pursuit of SSA rebels, concealing Wa drug convoys, with Yangon countering with accusations of Thailand harbouring the Shan. Several civilians in the towns of Mae Sai and Tachilek were killed in the exchange. In May 2002, the Thai armed forces began an exercise called Surasi 143, which was ostensibly designed to control the northwest border. This was mirrored by a *Tatmadaw* buildup across the border, ostensibly to assault the Shan State Army. As tensions ran high and Thai forces began to shell UWSA positions, Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra called a halt to the Thai exercise. Yangon accused Thailand of sheltering Shan rebels, with counter-accusations from Bangkok that the SPDC had done little to stem the flow of narcotics from the UWSA.

## WESTERN MYANMAR

### Arakan Liberation Party (ALP)

*Leadership: Khaing Ray Khaing*

Formed amidst the highly political and volatile cauldron of Arakan State politics, the ALP and their armed wing the Arakan Liberation Army (ALA) are not the biggest armed faction to have emerged but arguably the most enduring. Initially formed in 1972 they have gone through an estimated three incarnations under their present name. The ALP operates in both Arakan State and Karen State where it receives some support from the KNU. Its numbers approximately 200, but even this figure is probably exaggerated. It is a member of the 5 power Military Alliance (see above) and while its stated aim is to have an independent Arakan, its statements with the Military Alliance see the downfall of the SPDC as its main objective. Little is reported of their military operations, but they are not reported to be on a major scale.

### Arakan Rohingya National Organization (ARNO)

*Leadership: Nurul Islam and Mohammed Yunus*

The descendants of Moorish migratory traders from the 9th century, the Rohingya speak a Burmese dialect peppered with Bengali and Persian, and are virtually indistinguishable from the ethnic population of Arakan. Arakan (Rakhine) State has seen a plethora of small insurgent groups and bandits since independence in 1948. The White Flag Communist Party of Burma (CPB) and Red Flag CPB of Thakin Soe conducted substantial operations in the region from the 1950s. The complexity of rebellion in Arakan has been the competition of groups that are ideological, Arakanese Buddhists seeking autonomy from the central state competing with various types of Muslim rebels, either left leaning or *mujahideen*. Always small in size and rarely effective against the *Tatmadaw*, they often engage in intramural fighting.

Having endured regular rounds of harassment by the Burmese government since independence, some 200,000 Rohingya were expelled under the brutal Operation Naga Min (Dragon King) in 1978. This sought to register all citi-

zens who could not prove that their families had had continuous residence since the time of the First Anglo-Burmese War in 1826. Naga Min also had the ancillary aim of registering all residents to quell illegal migration from Bangladesh which was threatening to destabilize the western region.

In mid-1990, the SLORC began to reorder the population of the state, forcibly relocating people to monitored camps astride military cantonments where they were forced to construct military bases and airfield runways. A year later, the *Tatmadaw* launched Operation Peezaya (Prosperous Country), a combination of joint military exercises and relocation campaigns which drove an estimated 90,000 Rohingya into Bangladesh by early 1992. The *Tatmadaw* and *Lon Htien* units in the area utilized forced labour, rape and torture to coerce Rohingya into fleeing across the border. By mid-1992, there were an estimated 250,000 Rohingyas in overcrowded and poorly maintained refugee camps in Teknaff and Cox's Bazaar, and a further estimated 50,000 people not in supervised camp environments. In 1993, the United Nations was permitted to start a repatriation scheme that saw a gradual return of many of the Rohingya to Myanmar. Some 20,000 still remain in Bangladesh. The SLORC attempted to portray the operation in a security guise, but the small and largely ineffectual assortment of Rohingya resistance groups were not a pronounced military threat to the enhanced *Tatmadaw* presence.

The two main Rohingya parties were the relatively moderate Arakan Rohingya Islamic Front (ARIF) and the more extremist Rohingya Solidarity Organization (RSO). The RSO was formed in 1982 by Nurul Islam and Mohammed Yunus with about 100 followers. The ARIF was formed in August 1987 by Nurul Islam (the former RSO leader) and Shabir Hussain. On July 10, 1995, the ARIF joined with the RSO under the name Rohingya National Alliance (RNA). Smaller groups include the Arakan Liberation Party (ALP), led by Khaing Ray Khaing, the National United Party of Arakan (NUPA), led by Dr Khin Maung, Khing Ling Ning, and their armed wing the Arakan Army (AA), with a reputed strength of 90-150. On April 29, 2002, 85 soldiers of a breakaway faction of the AA were reported by Indian sources to have surrendered.

In October 2000, the ARIF merged again with the RSO, and confusingly, a political formation also called the Rohingya National Organization (RSO) led by Professor Mohammed Zakaria. The new group is called the Arakan Rohingya National Organization (ARNO). Its main stated aims, propagated at the 2nd Rohingya National Council (RNC) in 2000, are "the inalienable right of the people of Arakan to self-determination and independence" and the commitment to "the preservation and growth of Islamic culture among the Muslim community in Arakan without prejudice to the preservation and growth of other religious and indigenous culture in Arakan".

The last reported action by the Rohingya National Army (RNA) and Arakan Army (AA) forces was in April 2001, when a Myanmar government border post was attacked at Amtula near the Bangladesh border. According to an ARNO statement, five government soldiers were killed and 12 wounded under what the new alliance called Operation Yoma.

In 1991, the *Far Eastern Economic Review* reported that RSO cadres had close links with the *Jamaat-I-Islami* in

Bangladesh and Pakistan, Kashmiri mujaheddin *Hezb e Islami* rebels of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar in Afghanistan, *Rabitat al Alam* in Saudi Arabia, and *Angkatan Belia Islam sa-Malaysia*. This article claimed that Afghan instructors had been spotted on the border, and that 100 cadres had been sent to Afghanistan for training. While some analysts have claimed that the small Rohingya and Muslim groups receive funding from the Middle East, a claim difficult to verify, much of the finance for weapons and refugee support comes from the sizable diaspora community. In 1993 it was estimated that there were 20,000 Rohingya in the United Arab Emirates, 200,000 in Saudi Arabia, 2,000 in Qatar, 5,000 in Jordan, and more than 200,000 in Pakistan. Workers' remittances and donations would probably be directed toward some of the Muslim groups.

Reports that Myanmar Muslim militants have been discovered fighting for the Taliban or *Al-Qaeda* in Afghanistan are possibly exaggerated. A cache of *Al-Qaeda* training videos obtained by CNN in mid-2002 purportedly showed Burmese Muslims being trained in Afghan camps. Individuals may well have gone there, but any links the small Arakanese groups maintain have not demonstrated a rise in numbers or proficiency. A spokesperson for the Muslim Information Committee of Burma (MICB), Thet Lwin Oo, stated: "If the news that members of ARNO had been trained at bin Laden's camps in Afghanistan were really true, you would have seen major operations by Rohingya militants along the border".

### **Chin National Front (CNF)**

*Leadership: Col. Thomas Thangnou*

The Chin number four million on the western border of Myanmar, with more Chin people living in the Chin semi-autonomous state of Mizoram in India. Chin State resistance in Myanmar started in the early 1960s under the Chin Independence Army (CIA). Several groups followed until the CNF was formed in 1985. Its armed wing the Chin National Army (CNA) was formed in March 1988 to represent the rights of "Zoram" or "Zomi-land" as the Chin refer to it. According to Zing Cun, vice chairman of the Front, "the CNF is a revolutionary organization, working to achieve the Chin nationals' interests which are: to regain the right of self-determination for the Chin people and to establish a genuine democratic federal union in Burma". Their main aim is the overthrow of the current regime and a transition to a democracy.

Partly trained by the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) in the late 1980s, the CNA is based at Victoria Camp, across the border in India at Chapul, near Zawngling, a township in southern Mizoram. Since 1994 the CNA has conducted small level guerrilla operations against *Tatmadaw* units. In February 1996, an attempted assassination of a military intelligence officer in Haka, the capital of Chin State, nearly succeeded. Further bombings and small lightning raids have been partially successful, but given the strength of government forces in the region, the CNA have had limited success. The Chin are also squeezed by greater cooperation between India and Myanmar to stage joint operations against insurgents from both countries using the dense jungle border as sanctuary. A CNA mobile training camp on the border was raided by the Indian 1st Assam Rifles in June 1999, captur-

ing two CNA cadres and killing one. Some reports indicate that the CNA Chief, J. Kaiuluaia, was recently captured by the Indian police, and is being detained in Lawngtlai.

The so called "tri-junction", where Myanmar, Bangladesh and India meet, is close to Cox's Bazaar, a major arms market for the plethora of small insurgent organizations battling for ethnic, political or religious rights in all three countries. The CNA is a major purchaser of weapons, but their general fund raising activities are mostly unknown. It now raises "revolutionary taxation" from the civilian population. Currently each household is asked to give 1,000 kyats (US\$1.20) or provide goods such as food. Recent reports indicate the CNF has split into several factions, battling its main rival the Zomi Revolutionary Organization (ZRO). Reports from Chin State claim that there are numerous cases of human rights abuses, including "free fire zones", forced relocations, and in some reports, forced intermarriage of Christian Chins to Buddhist Burman soldiers. Given the difficulty of access, it is not easy to verify these reports, but given the activity of the CNA, the *Tatmadaw* would have responded with similar "Four-Cuts" counter-insurgency operations.

### **National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN)**

*Leadership: Kitovi Zhimomi (leader Khaplang-NSCN-East)*

The Naga are a hill tribe in northwest Myanmar who straddle the Myanmar-Indian border. The National Socialist Council of Nagaland was formed in 1979 and is descended from the Naga National Council (NNC) set up in 1946 (see India entry). Former headhunters, the Naga are predominately devout Christians, hence their motto "Nagaland for Christ". Their insurgency against the central government was always hampered by the rivalry between Indian and Burmese Naga, a tension derived from the pursuit of a free Nagaland whose claimed territory crosses two states. The formal split between the two factions came to a bloody head in 1988 when the NSCN-East faction (NCSN-K) led by S. S. Khaplang staged a purge of the Indian Naga, led by Thuingaleng Muivah and Isaac Chishi Swu, and drove them across the border into Manipur. In 1997, the NSCN-Muivah Isaac faction signed a cease-fire with the Indian government, which was further extended in 2001. Reports in 2001 indicated that the Khaplang faction, which announced a cease-fire in 2000, is also seeking peace talks with the Indian government. This is probably due to enhanced Myanmar-Indian cooperation in cross border trade and security issues. In May 2001, the NSCN-East faction claimed to have killed 50 *Tatmadaw* soldiers for the loss of three of their own, a clearly exaggerated account. In mid-2003, the *Tatmadaw* launched a major offensive against the NSCN, in cooperation with Indian security forces, which drove the organization from many of their border camps.

See also entry under India.

### **Rakhine State All National Races Solidarity Party (RSANRSP)**

*Leadership: U Saw Tun Oo*

Formerly the Rakhine State (Arakan) arm of the Communist Party of Burma, the RSANRSP started negotiations with the SLORC in late 1996, signing a peace deal on April 6 1997. That year the organization renounced its revolutionary aspirations and it has since been inactive.

## Namibia

**Capital:** Windhoek

**Population:** 1.8 m

Having been under South African control from 1915, the Republic of Namibia achieved independence in March 1990. South Africa's mandate to rule the territory was terminated by the UN in 1966, but it continued its occupation until final agreement was reached at the end of 1988 on the implementation of a UN-sponsored independence plan.

Under the 1990 multi-party Constitution, executive power is vested in the President and the Cabinet. The President, as head of state and government, is directly elected by universal adult suffrage and must receive more than 50 per cent of the votes cast. One person may not hold the office of President for more than two five-year terms. The legislature consists of the National Assembly and the National Council. The National Assembly, with a five-year mandate, has 72 directly-elected members and up to six non-voting members nominated by the President. The indirectly-elected and mainly advisory National Council, consisting of two members from each region, has a six-year term of office.

The South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) led the struggle for independence from 1960, being recognized in 1973 by the UN General Assembly as the "sole authentic representative of the Namibian people". In pre-independence elections held under UN supervision in December 1989, SWAPO emerged as the largest party in the Constituent Assembly, with 41 of the 72 seats and a 57.32 per cent share of the popular vote. The first post-independence presidential and legislative elections were held in December 1994, resulting in incumbent President Sam Nujoma of SWAPO being returned for a second term and SWAPO winning a substantial majority in the National Assembly. Despite strong opposition protests, in 1998 the constitution was amended to permit Nujoma (as an exceptional case) to stand for a third five-year presidential term. Voting for the presidency and the National Assembly took place in November and December 1999, resulting in further victories for Nujoma and SWAPO, with Nujoma taking 76.8 per cent of the vote in the presidential contest while SWAPO took 55 of the elective Assembly seats with 76.1 per cent of the vote.

### Caprivi Liberation Front (CLF)

*Leadership.* Mishak Muyongo (*leader*)

Secessionist activity attributed to the Caprivi Liberation Front (CLF) and its armed wing, the Caprivi Liberation Army (CLA), emerged in 1998 under the leadership of Mishak Muyongo, a traditional leader of the Mafwe ethnic

group. He claimed that the 100,000 Caprivians had been starved of development aid and politically marginalized by President Nujoma and his SWAPO government.

Caprivi is a fertile strip of land running across north-eastern Namibia, sharing borders with Angola, Botswana, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Historically the region was under the control of the Lozi Barotseland kingdom in Zambia, and the cultural ties remain. During the South African colonial administration, Caprivi was governed directly from Pretoria rather than Windhoek, reinforcing for many the sense of its separate identity. The territory was used as a rear base by the South African army at the height of the apartheid era in its war against SWAPO and as a support base for the Angolan rebel National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), then backed by the Western powers in the proxy war against Angola's Soviet- and Cuban-backed government (see Angola entry).

Muyongo, a member of the Mafwe royal family that trace their lineage to pre-colonial Barotseland, was a vice president of SWAPO until he was expelled over the issue of Caprivi self-determination. He then became a leading figure in the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA), a multi-racial formation favoured by South Africa that formed the majority in the transitional government prior to independence. He was then president of the DTA in opposition until he was removed in 1998 following reports of his sponsorship of the CLF. He wielded significant political power in eastern Caprivi, in part through an alliance with a former Mafwe chief, Boniface Mamili. Both men fled to Botswana in 1998 after the discovery of a CLA training camp in their Linyanti home region. Muyongo was granted asylum by Denmark in 1998, and three other CLA leaders were settled in Finland.

In August 1999 the situation in Caprivi worsened with a dawn attack on government installations in Katima Mulilo by the CLA which left 13 people dead and led to a fresh influx of refugees into Botswana. President Nujoma responded to the attack by declaring a state of emergency in the Caprivi region. In the attack, the CLA targeted a military base, a police station and the offices of the Namibian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC). Afterwards, the Namibian authorities detained over 100 people, including 14 Angolans. A number of reports at the time alleged that UNITA had supplied arms to the CLA in order to punish the Namibian government for its role in the war in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). It was also reported that the Zambian-based separatist Barotse Patriotic Front (BPF) had assisted the CLA.

*D. J. Sagar*

# Nauru

**Capital:** Domaneab

**Population:** 12,000

Political instability in Nauru has historically been largely externally induced. In 1888 it was taken over by Germany and incorporated into the German Marshall Islands until Germany lost her territories as a consequence of World War I. It then became a British mandated territory administered by Australia. In December 1940, during World War II, German raiders shelled and sunk a number of Australian and British ships sheltering on the island from cyclone, to avenge the loss of the territory. In 1942 the Japanese invaded the island and deported 1,200 inhabitants (about 50 per cent of the total population) to the Carolines Islands for forced labour. Only 737 survived and returned to rejoin the less than 1,000 left on Nauru.

After World War II Nauru became a UN Trust Territory under Australian administration. The British Phosphate Commission responsible for exploitation of the rich phosphate deposits on the island offered to resettle the islanders in the chilly Bass Strait in Southern Australia but the Nauruans refused.

The Republic of Nauru gained independence in 1968. It has a unicameral Parliament of 18 members from 14 constituencies elected for up to three years by universal adult suffrage and a President elected by

Parliament for its duration from among its members.

Nauru's economy has been almost totally dependent on exploitation of its phosphate deposits but this resource is now virtually exhausted, with its exploitation having reduced most of the country to a wasteland. With impending economic collapse, the government of Nauru has been plagued by political instability with a succession of leaders blamed for mismanagement and corruption. Since 1995 there have been repeated changes in the presidency as a result of votes of no confidence. The main opposition to the government is the Naoero Amo Party, Nauru's first political party, formed on March 18, 2001. By early 2002 Nauru had virtually gone bankrupt and was forced to accept Australia's offer to use Nauru as a processing centre for refugees in return for \$20 million as part of Australia's "Pacific Solution". Opponents of the refugee deal, in particular the Naoero Amo Party, have been trying to change the government's economic and governance policies through a nation-wide and international media campaign.

*Steven Ratuva*

# Nepal

**Capital:** Kathmandu

**Population:** 24 m

King Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Deva formally proclaimed a new Constitution for Nepal on Nov. 9, 1990, which ended the absolute rule of the Shah dynasty. It replaced the 1962 Constitution, which was based on village and provincial councils (*panchayats*) and a 140-member National Assembly (*Rashtriya Panchayat*), 112 of whom were directly elected by adult suffrage and 28 nominated by the King. The new Constitution recognized fundamental human rights, parliamentary government, a multi-party system, a constitutional monarchy and an independent judiciary. Executive power was jointly vested in the King and the Council of Ministers, and legislative power in a bicameral parliament consisting of a 205-member elected House of Representatives and a 60-member National Council, to include 10 members appointed by the King. Freedom of expression, of the press, of peaceful assembly, and of association and movement were all guaranteed.

From 1961 to 1990 all political parties were banned and there were frequent demonstrations against the government, whose critics were often detained; at times opposition groups resorted to bomb attacks within the country. A campaign of mass agitation for political reform (known popularly as the "stir") was launched on Feb. 18, 1990, by the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy (MRD), a coalition of the banned Nepali Congress Party (NCP, see below) and the United Left Front of seven communist factions, which sought the ending of the *panchayat* system and the reintroduction of party politics.

Continuing demonstrations and strikes in the first week of April caused the King to dismiss Prime Minister Marich Man Singh Shrestha on April 6 and appoint Lokendra Bahadur Chand, a former Prime Minister, with a specific brief to open negotiations with the MRD. The King also announced the setting up of a commission of inquiry, to look into allegations



of police violence, and a commission on constitutional reform. Later that day the opposition rejected these concessions and insisted on the legalization of political parties as a precondition to negotiation. When a crowd estimated at between 100,000 and 200,000 gathered near the royal palace, the police opened fire, killing between 35 and 150 people (including three foreign tourists) and wounding more than 200. On April 8 the King lifted the ban on political parties and the MRD responded by calling off its campaign. At a meeting with the King the following day the opposition demanded the dissolution of the Rashtriya Panchayat, the release of all political detainees, and the representation of the opposition on the commission dealing with constitutional change. However, disagreement hinged on the new Prime Minister's insistence that the opposition should join the existing administration. NCP leaders suggested as a compromise that the King should head the interim government, but he declined.

On April 13 at a meeting with NCP leader, Ganesh Man Singh, the King accepted the principle of opposition-led government. Negotiations were opened with Prime Minister Chand two days later, but opposition discontent with their progress led to Chand's offer of resignation, which the King accepted on April 16, the day on which the dissolution of the Rashtriya Panchayat was announced.

A coalition caretaker government (led by the Nepali Congress Party under K. P. Bhattarai and including the Communist parties) held office from April 19, 1990, to May 12, 1991, when the first general election for 32 years took place. The election for the 205 seats in the lower house of parliament, the House of Representatives, was contested by 1,345 candidates from 21 parties. Congress won 110 seats, the communists 69, and the minor parties the remainder. On May 26 the King appointed Girija Prasad Koirala as Prime Minister.

### Communist Party pre-and post-legalization

The **Communist Party of Nepal (CPN)**, founded in Calcutta (India) in 1948, operated openly in Nepal from 1950 to 1952, when it was banned for alleged complicity in an attempted left-wing coup. In 1953 it nevertheless obtained more than half the votes in Kathmandu municipal elections, gaining five out of 18 seats. Legalized in 1956, it gained only 7.5 per cent of the votes in 1959 parliamentary elections.

After the banning of all political parties in 1961, the CPN was divided, and by 1962 there were (i) a pro-Soviet section led by Keshar Jung Raimajhi, and (ii) a pro-Chinese section led by Pushpa Lal (who had been the leader of the original CPN). The Raimajhi section continued to agitate, with the Nepali Congress and other opposition parties, for the legalization of political parties. Later this section was divided into three factions, all of which were prepared to take part in *panchayat* elections and to co-operate with the Nepali Congress. In November 1978 K.J. Raimajhi signed a

declaration issued by four banned parties and calling for the establishment of a constitutional monarchy.

The Pushpa Lal section of the CPN was later divided into four factions, two of which abandoned their former pro-Chinese line, adopted an independent attitude and were prepared to co-operate with the Nepali Congress. In 1984 these two factions joined with two of the pro-Soviet groups in forming a Leftist Unity Front.

Two further sections were (i) the Fourth Congress Group, which broke with the Chinese Communist Party and claimed that no communist state existed anywhere, and (ii) the *Mashal* (Torch) Group, which broke away from the Fourth Congress Group and retained a pro-Chinese attitude. Both rejected all co-operation with the Nepali Congress.

Man Mohan Adhikari, the CPN leader, was briefly arrested on Dec. 15, 1989, after demanding the immediate abolition of the existing political system in Nepal and the formation of a national government. In January 1990 six factions of the CPN together with a labour group formed the United Left Front (ULF) and co-operated with the Nepali Congress Party (NCP) to set up a co-ordinating committee for the *Jana Andolan* (People's Movement) campaigning for the return of democracy. In January 1991 two major factions of the CPN (Marxist and Marxist-Leninist) joined forces to form the **Communist Party of Nepal—Unified Marxist-Leninist (CPN-UML)**, which came second in the general election of May 12, 1991 with 69 seats.

In the May 1991 general election the CPN-UML won three out of the five parliamentary seats for Kathmandu. In one of the constituencies, its general secretary, Madan Kumar Bhandari, defeated the caretaker prime minister, K. P. Bhattarai, by 750 votes. Political observers believed that the communists secured their victories by portraying the NCP as "anti-national" because of its close ties with the Indian Congress Party.

Following a general election in November 1994 in which it became the largest single party, with 88 seats, the CPN-UML formed a minority government under its chairman Man Mohan Adhikari. Following a successful constitutional challenge in 1995 to Adhikari's dissolution of the House of Representatives in preparation for elections in November, the government lost a vote of no confidence in September 1995, giving way to a coalition headed by the NCP. When this administration lost a vote of no confidence in March 1997 the CPN-UML returned to government, but as the largest element in a coalition headed by Prime Minister Lokendra Bahadur Chand of the Rashtriya Prajatantra Party (RPP – National Democratic Party). This government, too, quickly proved unstable because of infighting between coalition members and factionalism within the CPN-UML itself. Local elections in May and June were marred by violent clashes between supporters of different political parties in which at least 30 people were killed. In its turn the coalition was brought down by a no confidence vote in October 1997, to be replaced by a coalition of the RPP



and the Nepal Sadbhavana Party (NSP) under Suraya Bahadur Thapa, president of the RPP. Thapa in December expanded the coalition to include the NCP but not the CPN-UML, which later participated in complex and ultimately unsuccessful manoeuvres to unseat the Thapa government.

Meanwhile, in March 1998 the CPN-UML was split by disagreement over the Mahakali water-sharing treaty with India, resulting in 46 of the party's deputies defecting to form the **Communist Party of Nepal-Marxist-Leninist (CPN-ML)** led by Bam Dev Gautam. Thapa resigned as Prime Minister in April, handing over to Girija Prasad Koirala, president of the NCP. One of Koirala's stated priorities was tackling the Maoist insurgency, which was escalating in western Nepal. Koirala invited the CPN-ML to join the coalition in August, principally to deepen divisions on the left, but the alliance lasted only until December, when the CPN-ML pulled out of the coalition, alleging that the NCP had failed to honour a number of agreements, especially on Nepal's relations with India. Koirala offered his resignation but was asked to head an interim coalition that included the NCP, the CPN-UML and the NSP.

This was to be the CPN-UML's last taste of power before the Maoist uprising escalated in 2001-02 into a national crisis that put the whole political system in jeopardy. King Birendra dissolved the legislature in January 1999 to prepare for elections in May in which the NCP won an overall majority with 110 seats, the CPN-UML becoming the leading opposition party with 68 seats. The breakaway CPN-ML won no seats in the new legislature. The two communist parties formally reunited as the CPN-UML in February 2002.

### Nepali Congress Party pre-1990

The **Nepali Congress Party (NCP)** was founded in Calcutta (India) in 1946 under the leadership of Bisheshwar Prasad Koirala (who had been active in the Indian Congress Party and its struggle for Indian independence). In 1947 the left wing of the NCP broke away to form a Nepali National Congress. In March 1950 the NCP absorbed the Nepali Democratic Congress founded by Mahendra Bikram Shan (a member of the Nepali royal family). On Sept. 29, 1950, it was announced in Kathmandu that NCP supporters had plotted to assassinate the Prime Minister, and in November-December 1950 NCP followers were involved in a revolt against the government which induced the latter to introduce constitutional reforms. The NCP thereupon took part in the formation of an interim government on Feb. 12, 1951. Following a Cabinet crisis a new government was formed on Nov. 16, 1951, with Matrika Prasad Koirala (then president of the NCP and a brother of B. P. Koirala) as Prime Minister.

In July-August 1952 M. P. Koirala and his supporters left or were expelled from the NCP and formed a National Democratic Party. In January 1955 the NCP launched a civil disobedience campaign, inter alia

with the aim of enforcing the holding of a general election.

In the country's first elections, held in February-April 1959, the NCP gained 74 of the 109 seats in the lower house of parliament, and B. P. Koirala thereupon formed a government which was sworn in on May 27, 1959. However, on Dec. 15, 1960, King Mahendra abolished parliamentary government, dissolved all political parties and arrested most of their leaders, including B. P. Koirala. The state of emergency imposed by the King ended in April 1963 with the introduction of the *panchayat* system of indirect representation, under which political parties remained banned. B.P. Koirala remained imprisoned until Oct. 30, 1968, when he was released after the NCP had on May 15, 1968, offered the King its "loyal co-operation". On the following day NCP leaders living in exile in India were pardoned.

B. P. Koirala, from exile in India, offered King Birendra (who succeeded to the throne on the death of his father, King Mahendra, on Jan. 31, 1972) co-operation in building "a progressive democratic and prosperous Nepal". B. P. Koirala returned to Kathmandu from India on Dec. 30, 1976, but was arrested, with several other NCP followers accompanying him, for "anti-national activities". On Feb. 23, 1978, a special tribunal cleared B. P. Koirala of three charges of treason and sedition, and on March 3 he was acquitted of other charges. He was received by the King on Oct. 30 and said afterwards that in his view a policy of national conciliation would lead to unity and was desirable.

Following the outbreak of student unrest in April 1979 B. P. Koirala was placed under house arrest and three other NCP leaders—Ganesh Man Singh (deputy leader of the NCP), Krishna Prasad Bhattarai (acting president of the NCP and former Speaker of parliament) and Gokal Prasad (former editor of a government-controlled newspaper)—were taken into custody on April 27, 1979. However, after the Indian government had reportedly advised the King to come to an understanding with the NCP leaders, the above three and 61 other political leaders were released on May 9, 1979. B. P. Koirala said after his release that the King should not delude himself that he could keep the throne by sheer armed force, and he later welcomed the King's decision to hold a constitutional referendum. However, in this referendum held in May 1980, the policies of the NCP for a restoration of party pluralism were rejected (by 2,443,452 votes to 2,007,452, with about 372,000 spoilt or invalid ballot papers). The first direct parliamentary elections held on May 9, 1981, were boycotted by B. P. Koirala, who died in Kathmandu on July 21, 1982. In December 1982 the NCP held its first open conference since 1959 in the capital.

At an NCP national convention attended by 1,200 party workers and delegates held on March 13-15, 1985, the government was criticized for inflation, alleged food shortages and an incorrect land-ownership policy. However, in his opening speech, K. P. Bhattarai stressed his support for the monarchy,

describing it as an essential political institution.

Up to 350 supporters of the NCP were reported to have been detained on the first day of a campaign of civil disobedience launched on May 23, 1986, including K. P. Bhattarai, and the NCP general secretary, Girija Prasad Koirala.

The NCP stated in 1986 that members would perhaps take part in elections to the National Assembly held on May 12, on condition that political prisoners were released and candidates were not obliged to be members of one of the six *panchayat* class organizations. However, these demands were not met, and no members took part. Later the party announced that it would take part in local *panchayat* elections held on March 21 and 24, 1987, after having been officially declared winner of the mayoral elections in Kathmandu. However, its results were disappointing and it claimed that there had been ballot-rigging and booth-capturing.

In an attempt to prevent NCP activists celebrating the 76th anniversary of the birth of B. P. Koirala, the government arrested as many as 900 opposition supporters between Sept. 9 and 12, 1989. Ganesh Man Singh and G. P. Koirala were briefly arrested on Dec. 15, 1989, after demanding the immediate abolition of the existing political system in Nepal and the formation of a national government. After the launching of the campaign for political reform on Feb. 18, 1990, K. P. Bhattarai, Ganesh Man Singh and G. P. Koirala were placed under house arrest.

### Maoist insurgency

The **Communist Party of Nepal–Maoist (CPN-M)**, an independent Maoist formation now led by Pushpa Kamal Dahal, alias Comrade Prachanda, originated as an offshoot of the Naxalite movement in India (see entry), launching a campaign against landowners in eastern Nepal in the early 1970s, when its two leaders were sentenced to death.

An insurgency aimed at overthrowing the monarchy was launched in February 1996 by the CPN-M and members of the radical United People's Front (UPF). The CPN-M's principal ideologist was Dr. Babu Ram Bhattarai. The UPF had hitherto participated in parliamentary elections (gaining nine seats in May 1991) but had also resorted to campaigns of demonstrations and general strikes against the perceived corruption of successive governments and the domination of political life by the NCP, which under G. P. Koirala was seen to have shifted to the right, supportive to the monarchy and deferential to India. The trigger for the "People's War" was the conclusion in February 1996 by an NCP-led coalition government under Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba of a treaty with India on the shared use of the waters of the Mahakali River basin for irrigation, domestic consumption and hydro-electric power. Most leftist parties regarded the terms of the treaty as highly disadvantageous to Nepal, organizing protest demonstrations and general strikes. The treaty was eventually

ratified by Nepal and India in June 1997.

The Maoist insurgents operated initially out of the remote western Dang, Rolpa and Rukum districts, attacking police posts, taking over villages and imposing their own party structure on the inhabitants, building up their own parallel administration and even conducting local elections. By the end of 1996 the insurgency had claimed at least 100 lives. According to government figures released in September 1999 a total of 942 people had been killed, including 703 guerrillas and 81 policemen. However, even at this time some human rights groups were claiming that 3,000 lives had been lost, most of the dead being civilians. On Nov. 28, 1999, Prime Minister Krishna Prasad Bhattarai established a commission to negotiate with the Maoists, having offered peace talks and an amnesty to the rebels if they would cease violence. The CPN-M refused the offer until its activists were released from prison and arrest warrants against the party leadership were withdrawn. Little came of the new initiative because Bhattarai's grip on power was weakening in the face of internal opposition within the NCP led by G. P. Koirala. To pre-empt a no-confidence vote called by the pro-Koirala faction of the NCP Bhattarai resigned on March 16, 2000, paving the way for the election of Koirala as parliamentary leader of the NCP and his appointment two days later, for the fourth time, as Prime Minister. (Bhattarai, who had previously served as Prime Minister in 1990-91, had begun his second term after the NCP won a majority in the House of Representatives in the May 1999 general election, taking over from Koirala's caretaker premiership.)

On Oct. 27, 2000, a government team led by Deputy Prime Minister Ram Chandra Paudyal began the first unofficial direct talks with a CPN-M delegation led by central committee member Rabindra Shrestha, but the talks were broken off on Nov. 3 after two Maoists released from detention announced that they had defected to more moderate Marxist groups. They subsequently maintained that the statement had been made under duress. The Communist Party of Nepal–Unified Marxist-Leninist (CPN-UML), was also reported to be in unofficial talks with the Maoists at this time, but CPN-UML leader Madhav Kumar Nepal on Nov. 13 ruled out any alliance with the CPN-M unless they abandoned violence.

After nearly losing a vote of no confidence among NCP legislators at the end of December, Koirala's last six months in office were preoccupied largely with hanging on to power by manipulating the factions within the party. His government was ineffective in countering Maoist activity and unable to tempt the CPN-M into peace talks. In raids in April 2001 in western Rukum district and eastern Dolakha district the Maoists killed at least 58 policemen and 20 villagers, capturing large quantities of weaponry. Koirala in vain on April 16 offered an amnesty to Maoists who surrendered their weapons. By this time fighting had spread to 50 of Nepal's 75 districts. Soldiers of the Royal Nepalese Army (RNA) were deployed in May in western Gorkha district, the first time in the Maoist

insurgency that the army had been deployed outside its district headquarters.

### **Murder of Birendra and escalation of civil war**

The death of King Birendra in a massacre of 10 members of the royal family in the royal palace at Kathmandu on June 1, 2001, led to an escalation of the conflict with the Maoists and to a deepening political crisis. An official inquiry led by the chief justice of the Supreme Court reported on June 14 that Crown Prince Dipendra, 29, after consumption of alcohol and drugs, had shot dead the King, Queen Aishwarya and seven other family members before turning a gun on himself. Fatally wounded, he died in hospital on June 4, having in the meantime, bizarrely, been proclaimed King himself on June 2. The inquiry found that no other persons were involved in the massacre. It was widely reported that Dipendra had killed his parents because they had refused to countenance his marriage to a minor aristocrat of partly Indian descent whom they considered to be of inferior social status. The Queen was said to have told Dipendra that he would be barred from the succession if he went ahead with the marriage.

Birendra's surviving brother Gyanendra Bikram Shah Dev, 54, was proclaimed King on June 4. Birendra was widely revered and his murder was a national trauma for Nepal. He was the King who had consented to the transition from absolute monarchy to constitutional, multi-party democracy and during the 1990s he had played a major part in the survival of the new democratic system, working closely with prime ministers of fractious, unstable coalitions and averting crises by ensuring a smooth transition of power. Gyanendra, by contrast, was a remote, authoritarian figure who inspired little popular affection. There was widespread popular feeling against his dissolute son, Prince Paras Shah, whose reckless driving was said to have killed several pedestrians in Kathmandu. Among the rumours that swept Kathmandu after the massacre was the allegation that the killings had been part of a plot led by Gyanendra. Three journalists were charged with sedition on June 6 after the newspaper *Kantipur* published an article by a Maoist leader supporting this conspiracy theory.

Comrade Prachanda was reported as calling on all "leftists, nationalists and republicans" to unite to form an interim government. When Gyanendra was crowned on June 4, angry crowds rioted on the streets and at least two people were killed by police fire. Birendra had feared the results of an escalation of the conflict with the Maoists and had only recently, with reluctance, authorized a limited role for the Royal Nepalese Army (RNA) in assisting the poorly armed and ill-trained police. It was expected that Gyanendra would take a hard line towards the Maoists and would have few scruples about mounting an aggressive military campaign.

Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala resigned on July 19, admitting in a broadcast to the nation that he had failed to quell the Maoist rebellion, which had

stepped up its attacks since the massacre of the royal family.

### **Peace talks with insurgents**

On July 22 the NCP parliamentary party elected Koirala's veteran rival Sher Bahadur Deuba (Prime Minister 1995-97) as its president by 72 votes against 40 for Koirala's nephew Sushil Koirala. King Gyanendra appointed Deuba Prime Minister the same day. Deuba's first act on July 23 was to offer peace negotiations and a ceasefire to the Maoists. Prachanda, who reportedly regarded Deuba as more trustworthy than his predecessor, immediately reciprocated.

The first round of peace talks was held on Aug. 30, the government team being led by Physical Planning and Works Minister Chiranjibi Wagle and the CPN-M negotiators by Krishna Bahadur Mahara. Earlier in the month the rebels had released 31 policemen captured earlier in the year and the government released 33 Maoist leaders and published the names of 273 Maoists still in detention. Deuba also attempted in August to address the social grievances that provided fertile ground for the Maoist cause, announcing in the National Assembly a programme of reforms including land redistribution, the outlawing of discrimination against low-caste Hindu Dalits ("untouchables") and the establishment of a National Women's Commission to ensure women's rights and equality. Additionally he promised to pass into law an amended form of an anti-corruption bill first presented by Koirala's administration.

The government and the CPN-M held a second round of peace talks in the resort of Bardia in western Nepal on Sept. 13-16, 2001, but these reportedly ended in deadlock because the Maoists would not modify their demands for the abolition of the monarchy and the establishment of an interim government of all parties and a constituent assembly. However, it was agreed to hold further talks. Although the ceasefire appeared generally to be holding Deuba accused the Maoists on Sept. 22 of breaching it by continuing "extortion, abduction and terrorizing the people". A statement of concern by the EU on Sept. 18 supported these allegations. The CPN-M issued a statement on Oct. 19 saying that it was unwilling to enter into further negotiations until the government released all remaining Maoist political prisoners. Nevertheless, a further round was held in November that broke up on Nov. 13 despite the fact that Prachanda had in a statement on Nov. 10 dropped his demand for the abolition of the monarchy as a condition for peace. His negotiators had, however, stuck to the other conditions: dissolving the constitution, forming an interim government and electing a constituent assembly.

### **Imposition of State of Emergency**

Although at the time a further round of talks was expected, this effectively marked the end of Deuba's government's attempt to find a peaceful solution to the



conflict. Maoist guerrillas launched a major offensive from Nov. 23, initially in the western Dang district, where at least 45 people were killed, including 34 soldiers and policemen. On Nov. 25 hundreds of guerrillas attacked banks, a barracks and an airport in the town of Sallery, north-east of Kathmandu, leaving some 80 dead and looting an arsenal of modern weapons. The CPN-M also established a 37-member Joint Revolutionary People's Council as a parallel government. King Gyanendra on Nov. 26 declared a state of emergency in a decree that described the Maoist rebels as "terrorists". Gyanendra authorized for the first time the full deployment of the RNA against the Maoists and promulgated the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention and Control) Ordinance 2001, defining terrorism and outlining anti-terrorist measures, which included the suspension of civil liberties and press freedom.

*The Times* reported on Nov. 27 that 280 people had been killed since the beginning of the renewed Maoist offensive, and by the end of the month the RNA had launched counter-offensives in the western Dang and Rolpa districts and the eastern Sallery district. From the collapse of the ceasefire the conflict descended into a deepening spiral of violence, with the RNA's search and destroy operations seeming at first to be militarily effective. The government claimed on Dec. 2 that on its sweep through the Sallery district alone the army had killed some 200 Maoists. The rebels were forced to abandon their tactic of massive attacks on isolated police outposts. Deuba was confident enough to adopt a new, harder line on Dec. 14, saying that he would not resume negotiations until the Maoists laid down their arms. The conflict was beginning to attract more international attention, with both India and China in November offering the government their moral support and India's Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee holding out the hope of material assistance. (Chinese statements rejected the rebels' right to claim the legacy of Mao.) US Secretary of State Colin Powell visited Kathmandu on Jan. 18-19, 2002, holding talks with King Gyanendra, Deuba and senior military personnel. It was reported that although Powell made no concrete commitments of support to the Nepalese government he did hint that the USA might supply some military hardware. He also stressed the importance of eliminating corruption to "dry up the swamp that produces terrorism".

This theme was emphasized at a meeting of international donors at the Nepal Development Forum on Feb. 4-7, 2002, in Kathmandu, which made actual levels of future aid conditional on the effective implementation of the government's poverty reduction programmes. World Bank vice president for South Asia Mieko Mishimizu said that Nepal faced a "crisis of governance", highlighting the problems of corruption and the remoteness of central government from the rural poor. It was also widely acknowledged that the deepening crisis of the Maoist rebellion was exacerbating the country's economic problems, especially in causing a sharp fall in numbers of Western tourists vis-

iting Nepal. In response to the early successes of the RNA against the guerrillas the Maoists from the beginning of 2002 widened the conflict by adopting a new tactic of attacking the rural infrastructure with explosives, targeting hydroelectric power plants, telecommunications towers, irrigation schemes, water pipelines, bridges, health clinics, schools and local government offices. By April 2002 the rebels had destroyed 1,000 of Nepal's village council buildings. A conference in London organized by the UK Foreign Office in June 2002, attended by 13 countries including the USA, China and India, supported the Nepalese government against the Maoists while at the same time stressing the need to end human rights abuses by the security forces and to make inroads into poverty and corruption. British Foreign Office minister Mike O'Brien described the fight against the Maoists as "part of the overall battle against terrorism". The UK pledged £33.7 million of development and security aid to Nepal for the current financial year.

Meanwhile Deuba had announced on Jan. 22, 2002, that the government intended to extend the state of emergency for a further three months when it expired in February. The extension of the state of emergency required at least a two-thirds majority vote in the House of Representatives, but the main opposition party, the CPN-UML, criticized the government for relying wholly on a military solution and advocated re-opening negotiations with the rebels. In a dramatic escalation of the conflict on the night of Feb. 15-17, hundreds of Maoist guerrillas mounted an attack on police and army posts and the airport at Mangalsem, a town in the remote district of Accham, some 500 km west of Kathmandu. Using modern weapons looted from barracks in November 2001 the rebels inflicted the highest casualties in a single day – at least 129 killed, including 48 soldiers, 76 policemen and five civilians. Maoist casualties were unknown, because of their frequent practice of carrying away their dead and wounded from the scene of battle. The RNA rushed hundreds of troops to the area for counter-offensive operations, and by Feb. 27 claimed to have killed 189 Maoists. By then 194 members of the 205-member House of Representatives had on Feb. 21 approved an extension of the state of emergency. In return for the support of the CPN-UML, Deuba promise to establish an anti-corruption commission and to consider reforms of electoral law.

Heavy fighting continued throughout March, with the army claiming to have killed some 230 guerrillas during the month. The government said that a joint army-police attack on March 17 on a Maoist training camp in north-western Rolpa district killed 62 rebels. On April 11 a reported 3,000 guerrillas overwhelmed two police posts in the jungle district of Dang, 450 km south-west of Kathmandu. The RNA made a successful counter-attack the next day. Estimates of casualties varied widely, but an official statement released on April 16 said that 48 policemen had been killed and the bodies of 92 rebels recovered. The government having continued to reject further negotiations

until the rebels laid down their arms, a widely criticized announcement on April 23 set a price of 5 million Nepalese rupees on the heads of the senior Maoist leaders. To placate the opposition parties and human rights groups Deuba on April 4 relaxed some emergency restrictions on the media and political activities, and by the time the legislature was prorogued on April 17 bills had been passed on terrorism, corruption, women's and minorities' rights. Nevertheless, on Deuba's recommendation King Gyanendra on May 22 dissolved the legislature, setting Nov. 13 as the date for new elections, because the NCP itself was now divided and unlikely to give unified support for a new extension of the state of emergency. This precipitated a crisis in the NCP, with three ministers resigning from the government and the party's disciplinary committee, dominated by a faction led by the now resurgent G.P. Koirala, voted to expel Deuba from the party. On the following day the state of emergency was extended by royal decree by a further three months.

Meanwhile, fighting continued to intensify. The RNA launched an offensive on May 3 on Maoist camps in Rolpa district, using newly acquired attack helicopters for the first time and claiming to have killed 548 rebels for the loss of only three soldiers and one policeman. However, the government also admitted that a Maoist counter attack on the village of Gam had wiped out a garrison of 140 soldiers and police. A Maoist attack on an army base in the Khara area of western Rukum district on May 28 reportedly cost the rebels 169 dead for only five soldiers killed. Throughout the conflict journalists rarely had access to the fighting, partly because of the sheer inaccessibility of the locations and partly because of government censorship, so there was no independent assessment of the official casualty figures, which were sometimes subject to inconsistent fluctuations.

The crisis in the NCP accelerated in June, with Koirala's supporters on June 5 petitioning the Supreme Court to declare Deuba's dissolution of the legislature unconstitutional. Deuba's faction held a convention on June 15-19 that expelled Koirala from the party and elected Deuba as NCP president. The Supreme Court on Aug. 5 rejected Koirala's petition, clearing the way for the Nov. 13 elections, for which Deuba planned to lift the state of emergency. The crisis in the ruling party came to a head on Sept. 17 when the Election Commission of the NCP ruled that Koirala's faction of the NCP held the legitimate title to the party, whereupon Deuba's minority faction registered on Sept. 23 as a new party, the Nepali Congress Party-Democratic (NCP-D). It was reported that security officials had asked the Election Commission to stagger the forthcoming elections in eight phases at 20-day intervals to enable the army to protect the electoral process against Maoist disruption.

Renewing their offensive after a relative lull in fighting the Maoists in September mounted their heaviest attacks since May, striking in both the west and the east of the country. On Sept. 8 about 1,500 guerrillas

attacked a police post in Bhiman village in Sindhuli district, about 145 km east of Kathmandu, killing 49 policemen for the reported loss of six rebels. On the following day in an assault on the town of Sanhikharka in Argakhachi district, 290 km west of the capital, the Maoists killed 58 police and soldiers. The RNA launched an immediate counter-offensive in Argakhachi, claiming on Sept. 10 to have killed 267 guerrillas. The army also claimed to have killed a further 115 guerrillas in other offensive operations during the month.

Whether because the Maoists had demonstrated their continuing military capacity or because they had suffered heavy casualties, Comrade Prachanda on Sept. 11 offered a ceasefire and peace talks. Deuba's response was cautious, expressing doubts over the CPN-M's commitment to negotiations. He appeared to share the view of the military high command that the Maoists had used the peace talks of 2001 as a breathing space in which to regroup, recruit and rearm. The government was reported to be considering renewing the state of emergency, which had expired on Aug. 28. The political crisis deepened on Oct. 4 when King Gyanendra unexpectedly dismissed Prime Minister Deuba and the entire Cabinet, accusing the government of "incompetence" after Deuba had asked for a one-year postponement of the November general election. Gyanendra announced that he was assuming executive powers and that the elections were postponed indefinitely. It was the first time a king had dismissed an elected government since the restoration of multi-party democracy in 1990; Gyanendra justified this step by citing article 127 of the 1990 constitution, which allowed the King to intervene to "resolve difficulties". Gyanendra invited the political parties to nominate candidates with "clean images" to sit in a new Cabinet and over the next few days held meetings with party leaders. However, six major parties, including the NCP and the CPN-UML but not the monarchist *Rashtriya Prajantanta* Party (RPP-National Democratic Party), quickly took an agreed position of demanding joint negotiations with the King. These were not forthcoming, with the result that Gyanendra appointed on Oct. 11 a core Cabinet (expanded in November) headed by Prime Minister Lokendra Bahadur Chand of the RPP, who had been Prime Minister in 1983-86, 1990, and 1997. Apart from Chand the only other Cabinet member from the parliament dissolved in May was Deputy Prime Minister Badri Prasad Mandal of the Nepal Sadbhavana Party (NSP), the remainder being businessmen, civil servants and professionals. The other parties condemned Gyanendra's installation of a new government as unconstitutional and suspected the King of wishing to revert to an autocratic executive monarchy. According to the *Far Eastern Economic Review* of Oct. 17, article 127 of the constitution entitled the King to "issue necessary orders" only once they had been "laid before parliament" – which in the circumstances was impossible.

Many analysts considered that the King's actions played into the hands of the Maoists and would



increase their support. Comrade Prachanda himself described Gyanendra's intervention as a return to "feudal absolutism" that had set up a "puppet government". Chand said that he was willing to negotiate with the CPN-M, but only if the other political parties were willing to participate in government. The prospect of building a consensus to find a way to end the civil war seemed remote. In addition to calling a general strike in Kathmandu on Oct. 28 the Maoists were thought to be responsible for a number of explosions in the capital during October, injuring at least 30 people. One bomb killed one person and demolished a statue of the late King Mahendra. The RNA claimed to have killed at least 117 guerrillas during the month.

The Maoists called another general strike on Nov. 11-13, following it up on Nov. 15 with large-scale attacks in the western districts of Jumla and Gorkha. Some 4,000 guerrillas laid siege to a police base and administrative offices in Khalanga, 600 km west of Kathmandu. According to official figures 37 police and soldiers and four civilian officials were killed in the attack, whilst 77 rebels died. In an attack on a police post in Gorkha district, 150 km west of Kathmandu, 23 policemen were killed. Besides the set pieces there were many smaller-scale incidents during the month, as in every month in 2002: assassination of local officials, ambushes of police patrols, and sabotage of infrastructure.

#### Scale of the conflict

According to figures released by the Home Affairs Ministry on Oct. 31, 2002, some 7,073 people had been killed in the Maoist insurgency since it began in February 1996. Of these 4,366 had died since the imposition of a state of emergency on Nov. 26, 2001. The total comprised 6,011 Maoist rebels, 873 civilian policemen, 773 civilians, 97 armed policemen and 219 soldiers. The number killed since November 2001 included 4,050 Maoists.

However, a report released by the London-based human rights group Amnesty International on Dec. 19, 2002, alleged that nearly half of the dead in the conflict were civilians. Amnesty affirmed the claims made consistently by other human rights groups and the few journalists able to enter the conflict areas that the army frequently killed civilians whom they perceived as Maoist sympathizers, including pharmacists who had given them medicine, or villagers who had given them food or shelter, even if the aid had been given through fear. Over 200 people had "disappeared" during the insurgency after being taken into custody, 66 of them during the past year. Many genuine Maoist fighters had been killed after capture. Amnesty said that torture and rape, especially by the RNA and the Armed Police Force (APF) were reported almost daily, and concluded that human rights abuses had reached unprecedented levels, while the authorities lacked the will to remedy the situation. The report also accused the Maoists of killing an estimated 800 civilians as "enemies of the revolution", including local NCP officials, teachers who declined to

disseminate CPN-M propaganda and other civilians who refused to co-operate. Like the security forces, the Maoists indulged in torture and killing the enemy after capture. The rebels also routinely practiced the coerced recruitment of children as guerrillas. In an earlier report published in April 2002 Amnesty said that the Maoists had killed at least 29 teachers.

Both sides were criticized for their treatment of journalists that they considered collaborators with the enemy, including abduction, torture and murder. The Paris-based Reporters Without Borders (RSF – *Reporters Sans Frontières*) took up the case of Krishna Sen, editor of a pro-Maoist newspaper who had been arrested on May 20, 2002, and whose body was released to his family in June, having apparently died under torture. Sen had been released in March after two years' detention for publishing an interview with Maoist leader Babu Ram Bhattarai. In a report published on March 26, 2002, RSF claimed that over 100 journalists had been arrested and that at least 30 were still in detention. RSF also reported the hostility of the Maoists towards independent journalists, including the abduction, mutilation and murder of the editor Nawaraj Sharma, whose body was discovered in western Karnali district on Aug. 13, 2002.

By the end of 2002 most analysts considered that something like a stalemate had been reached in the conflict. The Maoist rebels, with an estimated 10,000 cadres, had a strong presence in at least 32 of Nepal's 75 districts, and were by now too well established to defeat, especially given the remoteness and difficulty of the mountainous or jungle terrain in their strongholds. Through a combination of the government's failure to eradicate the corruption endemic in the Hindu ruling castes and its neglect of rural poverty, and the army's savage and indiscriminate reprisals, the political establishment had forfeited the allegiance of a high proportion of the mass of rural peasantry. On the other hand, the harshness and brutality of the Maoists had also alienated many in their natural constituency. Meanwhile, Nepal was slipping towards an economic crisis as expenditure on security absorbed an ever-increasing share of government revenues – leaving less both for reconstruction and poverty-eradication measures – and income from tourism, one of the country's major sources of foreign exchange, shrank as the insurgency took on the character of a civil war. Tourist numbers fell by 21 per cent in 2001 from the previous year, and by 28 per cent in 2002.

#### Resumption of peace talks

On Jan. 26, 2003, Krishna Mohan Shrestha, Inspector General of the Armed Police Force (APF), his wife and bodyguard, were assassinated on the streets of Kathmandu. (The APF had been established by a decree of King Birendra in February 2001 to combat the increasingly aggressive rebel tactics – a step short of the full commitment of the RNA to the war, to which his successor would resort later that year.) The killings were widely believed to be the work of the

Maoists, although they did not claim responsibility. The CPN-M had long pursued the tactic of paralyzing life in Kathmandu through calling general strikes lasting one or two days, which were generally observed through fear of retribution if nothing else. For the past year, too, bombings in the capital had demonstrated the reach of the insurgents, causing damage and injuries though few fatalities, but no senior figure had previously been assassinated.

The shock caused by the murder of Shrestha sharpened the element of surprise in the announcement three days later on Jan. 29 of a ceasefire and an impending new round of peace talks. The news was first announced by CPN-M leader Comrade Prachanda, who said that the development had been made possible by the government dropping the designation of the Maoists as “terrorists”, withdrawing the bounties set on the heads of the three most senior CPN-M leaders, and canceling the Interpol arrest warrants issued for the leadership. Government sources confirmed these details hours later. It appeared that secret negotiations had been conducted with the rebels by Minister of Physical Planning and Works Narayan Singh Pun, who was named as the government’s chief negotiator in the formal peace talks.

Although a military victory over the Maoists in their mountain and jungle strongholds was beyond the RNA, the army was also too strong to be defeated by the rebels, especially with the help that had begun to reach it in the past year from friendly foreign governments including India, Belgium and the UK, such as modern equipment and attack helicopters. Earlier in January the USA had announced a forthcoming package of military aid. The announcement of a ceasefire served to further marginalize the political parties, which were now almost as angrily anti-monarchical in their pronouncements as the CPN-M in the aftermath of the King’s dismissal of the government in October 2002. The NCP and the CPN-UML formed on Jan. 22 a common front in opposition to Gyanendra’s “puppet government”, saying that they were determined to force it to hold elections. In March 2003 a code of conduct was agreed for the resumption of formal talks between government and the insurgents. On May 30, Prime Minister Chand resigned as caretaker Prime Minister following popular demonstrations, but the Maoists said they would continue their commitment to the peace talks.

*Tim Curtis*

## Netherlands

**Capital:** Amsterdam

**Population:** 15.8 m

The Kingdom of the Netherlands (comprising the Netherlands in Europe, the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba) is a constitutional and hereditary monarchy. The Netherlands in Europe has a bicameral Parliament (the States-General) consisting of (i) a 75-member First Chamber (upper house) elected by the country’s 12 provincial councils and (ii) a 150-member Second Chamber (lower house) elected for a four-year term by direct universal suffrage by proportional representation. Executive power is exercised on behalf of the Crown by the Prime Minister and a Council of Ministers, accountable to Parliament.

### **Assassination of Fortuyn – 2002 and 2003 Elections**

In March 1999 Liveable Netherlands was established as a nation-wide party, bringing local “Liveable” parties, such as Liveable Utrecht and Liveable Rotterdam, under one national umbrella organization. Under the charismatic leadership of Pim Fortuyn, the new party’s popularity grew at an unprecedented rate, with opinion poll results indicating the party could become the second largest national party. However, after making controversial statements, amongst others with regards to the desirability of repealing the first article of the Dutch

Constitution that forbids discrimination, Pim Fortuyn was dismissed as party leader and on Feb. 15, 2002, three months before the elections for the Second Chamber, Pim Fortuyn established his own party, “List Pim Fortuyn” (LPF). The party’s programme was an eclectic mix that defied ready classification but included hostility to further immigration and the dilution of Dutch culture as a key plank. New opinion polls showed that a vast majority of those who previously indicated the intention to vote for Liveable Netherlands now intended to cast a vote for the new LPF party.

However, on May 6, 2002, nine days before the elections, a Dutch animal rights activist, Volkert van der Graaf, who acted as an individual and not on behalf of a known political movement, assassinated Pim Fortuyn. (He was on April 15, 2003, sentenced to 18 years’ imprisonment for the crime.) Prime Minister Wim Kok discussed the possibility of postponing the elections with his Cabinet, but after consulting other List Pim Fortuyn party officials it was decided to go ahead with the elections on the planned date despite what was termed the first political murder in modern-day Netherlands. The elections on May 15 did indeed make the LPF the second largest national party, with seats in the Second Chamber distributed as follows: Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA) 43, List Pim For-

tuyn (LPF) 26, Party of Freedom and Democracy (VVD) 24, Labour Party (PvdA) 23, Green Left (GL) 10, Socialist Party (SP) 9, Democrats '66 (D'66) 7, Christian Union (CU) four, Political Reformed Party (SGP) two, Liveable Netherlands (LN) two.

While the May 2002 election brought to an end the centre-left Kok coalition government, formation of a stable government has since proved difficult. The LPF joined a governing coalition with the CDA and VVD but this ultimately collapsed, in part because of intense feuding within the LPF. Further elections were held on Jan. 22, 2003, resulting in a sharp decline for the LPF, with seats distributed as follows: CDA 44, PvdA 42, VVD 28, SP 9, LPF 8, GL 8, D'66 6, CU 3, SGP 2. As of July 2003 the government was a minority coalition of the CDA, VVD and D'66, with Jan Peter Balkenende (CDA) as Prime Minister.

### **Free South Moluccan Organization**

This organization came to prominence with a series of violent actions in the Netherlands in the 1970s. The short-lived Republic of South Maluku (Republik Maluku Selatan, RMS) was proclaimed in April 1950 by secessionists from the Indonesian federation but was quickly suppressed as Indonesia was consolidated as a unitary state. In 1951, some 15,000 Moluccans (mostly military personnel who had joined the ranks of the Dutch army in their struggle against the Japanese invaders of the then Dutch East Indies in World War II), were temporarily evacuated to the Netherlands, on the basis that they could stay until the Republik Maluku Selatan had regained independence. The question of whether or not the Dutch government had committed itself to the struggle for Moluccan independence remained at the heart of the political debate. The leader of the "RMS government in exile" in the Netherlands, Jan Manusama, denounced violence as a means to achieve Moluccan independence. However, when in 1966 the Indonesian army executed the imprisoned leader of the Moluccan resistance in Indonesia, Chris Soumokil, more radical RMS activists resorted to violence in an attempt to make the Dutch government "keep its promise" of securing Moluccan independence from Indonesia.

In Wassenaar, an attempt was made to assassinate the Indonesian ambassador to the Netherlands in which a police officer was killed. In 1975 and 1977 radical RMS activists seized trains, killing some passengers in the process. In a declaration to Parliament on Jan. 26, 1978, however, the Netherlands government stated that for "juridical, historical and political reasons" it could not "recognize or support an autonomous South Moluccan republic". In recent years, RMS activists have acknowledged that these violent protests proved partly counterproductive. Nevertheless, these violent actions increased awareness of the Moluccan cause in the Netherlands, and government policies have been devised to promote the preservation of the Moluccan culture in the Netherlands.

Since 1999 conflict has resumed in Maluku with heavy loss of life (see Indonesia entry). However, there has been no re-emergence of terrorist actions among the Moluccan community in the Netherlands.

### **Anti-apartheid movement**

In September 1985 arsonists destroyed the Amsterdam branch of Makro supermarkets. An underground movement operating under the name of "RaRa" claimed responsibility for the arson, denouncing Makro's business interest in South Africa's apartheid regime. In December 1986 RaRa activists destroyed two more Makro branches, one in Duiven and one in Nuth. Other corporations, such as for example the multinational Shell oil company, were also criticized for supporting South Africa's apartheid regime. Isolated acts of violence against Shell service stations did occur, such as for example the cutting of petrol hoses, but none were attributed to the RaRa organization.

### **Militant Environmentalists**

In 1991 Shell again became the target of public criticism, this time over the proposed dumping of the Brent Sparr, an oil platform, in the North Sea. Extreme left groups organized boycott actions and demonstrations near Shell service stations. More violent acts also occurred, such as the cutting of petrol hoses on Shell service stations and bomb threats against premises, but no major acts of violence occurred.

### **Republican and anti-monarchy movements**

Republican movements that press for the abolition of the Dutch constitutional monarchy are limited in numbers in the Netherlands and should be seen as marginal. However, in 2000, a new republican party was established, called the Republican Modern Party (RMP). This party not only pursues the abolition of the Dutch constitutional monarchy, but proposes the restoration of the "third Dutch Republic" (after the "United Provinces" and "Batavian Republic"), to include the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg. The RMP aims to achieve its goals through peaceful and democratic means.

Other anti-monarchy groups, such as for example the anarchistic "Committee March on the House of Orange" (COMODO), question not only the legitimacy of the Dutch constitutional monarchy but of the current world order of states and state-capitalism.

### **Extreme right-wing political movements**

Since the early 1970s a number of Dutch extreme right political parties have been active, such as the Centre-Democrats (CD), Centre Party '86 (CP'86), Netherlands People's Union (NVU), the Netherlands Bloc and the New National Party (NNP). None of these parties has been known to use illegal means in order to achieve its goals. However, CP '86 was banned by an Amsterdam court ruling in November 1998 that found that it had been "consistently promoting and encouraging discrimination against foreigners living in the Netherlands". After its ban, a number of former CP'86 members continued political activity in a new party, called the New National Party (NNP). The CP'86 is not known to have continued activities underground.

Neo-Nazi groups, albeit small in number of members, are active in organizations such as the Action Front National Socialists (ANS) and Fundamentalist Labour Party (FAP). Other extreme right groups such as “Storm Front Netherlands”, “Viking Youth Netherlands” and Nationalist Student Association (NLSV) call for the cultural protection of the Dutch linguistic and cultural area and have in some cases close links with similar organizations in other countries. Some have established links with the Belgian organization “Lookout” (*Voorpost*) which openly calls for the abolition of the Belgian state and the formation of a “greater Netherlands” reuniting all Dutch and Flemish language communities. Some have established links with similar organizations in South Africa, such as for example the “People’s committee for the commemoration of the second Freedom War”. These extreme right and neo-Nazi organizations do not only have links between them, but also to the youth sections of official extreme right parties, such as NVU-youth and CD-youth.

This overview is by no means exhaustive and other extreme right groups can be found in the Netherlands. However, in most cases the actual membership of these groups is limited to no more than two hundred individuals.

#### **Anarchistic and “law defiant” movements**

Dissident and revolutionary movements can also be found at the extreme left of the political spectrum in the Netherlands. With origins dating back to 1964, the “squatters’ movement” is one of the older “law defi-

ant” movements. While in the past the expulsion of squatters by special police forces often triggered riots in major Dutch cities, nowadays such riots occur much less frequently. Increasingly the squatters’ movement seems to have become intertwined with new extreme left anti-globalization and anti-EU organizations.

#### **Anti-globalization and anti-EU movements**

In more recent years, a number of anti-globalization and anti-EU organizations have emerged in the Netherlands. Anti-globalization movements such as for example “Confrontation” and “Autonomous Centre” have roots in the anarchist movement and continue to question the legitimacy of the state on asylum seeking and identification document issues. However, increasingly their attention has turned to denouncing the liberal free-market model and the European Union, which is seen as an exponent of a liberal free market. A similar position is taken by *Eurodusnie* (“Euronoway”). In the same grouping of extreme left movements we also find activist groups that resort to “soft” violence. One such soft violence group is *Taart* (Dutch for Pie). This group has claimed responsibility for publicly throwing pies in the faces of politicians who issued political statements that the group deemed unacceptable.

*Frank Mols*

## **Netherlands Dependencies**

### **Aruba**

**Capital:** Oranjestad

**Population:** 78,000

Aruba is part of the constitutional and hereditary monarchy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (comprising the Netherlands in Europe, the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba). In 1986, a new Constitution was adopted that gave Aruba full autonomy from the Netherlands in internal affairs, while the areas of defence and foreign affairs remained under the competence of the Dutch government. This constitutional “Status Aparte” also had the effect of separating Aruba from the Netherlands Antilles of which it had been a part, and which had already obtained full autonomy from the Netherlands in internal affairs in 1954.

Aruba has a parliamentary democracy with a uni-

cameral legislature (Staten) consisting of 21 members who are elected by direct popular vote and serve for a four-year term. The Monarch of the Netherlands, represented by the Governor General, the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers (Cabinet), hold executive power. The Governor General is appointed by the monarch for a six-year term, while the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister and Council of Ministers are elected by the Staten for a four-year term.

As a result of elections held on the Sept. 28, 2001, seats in the Staten were distributed as follows: People’s Electoral Movement (MEP) 12, Aruban People’s



Party (AVP) 6, Aruban Patriotic Party (PPA) two, Aruban Liberal Party (OLA) one.

The desire for the establishment of a direct link between the Netherlands and Aruba, separate from the other Dutch Antilles, and more specifically Curaçao (the dominant island), was expressed by local elites as early as the 1930s. Although Aruba's degree of independence was increased in 1951, following the advice of a special committee of inquiry, this did not stop the local Aruban Council from submitting a proposal for the establishment of Aruba as a separate part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. This resulted in the emergence of a wider separatist movement called *separashon* and the establishment in 1971 of a new "pro-separation" political party, the People's Electoral Movement (MEP), by Gilberto François Croes. Under the leadership of Croes (better known as "Betico Croes") support for the separatist cause rose to the extent that it could no longer be ignored by the The Hague.

In 1985 the Dutch government responded by granting Aruba autonomy in internal affairs, effective Jan 1, 1986. This *Status Aparte* was intended to lead to full independence as of Jan.1, 1996, and soon many Arubans referred to Croes as the modern "liberator" of Aruba.

However, in May 1991 the MEP government, in the face of domestic financial and administrative problems, decided to postpone the pursuit of full independence from the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

The separatist cause from the 1970s onwards was not associated with any major acts of violence, the MEP pursuing a constitutional path and periodically forming the government (again since the 2001 elections). Increasingly, however, Aruba has come under international scrutiny for its role as a transit point for illicit drugs bound for the USA and Europe and for drug-money laundering. In 1996, Aruba was added to the US list of major drug producing or drug transit countries. This status was reclassified to "region of concern" in 1999. In 2000 Aruba was one of 35 jurisdictions defined as "un-cooperative" by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) but it has since come into compliance. Some observers fear that this large-scale illegal activity could eventually lead to illegal and extra-parliamentary political activity. There is, however, no evidence to suggest that such "contamination" has already occurred.

*Frank Mols*

## Netherlands Antilles

**Capital:** Willemstad (Curaçao)

**Population:** 202,000

The Netherlands Antilles consists of five Caribbean islands, Curaçao, Bonaire, St Maarten, Saba and St Eustatius, and is part of the constitutional and hereditary monarchy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, (comprising the Netherlands in Europe, the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba). In 1954, a new Constitution was adopted that gave the Netherlands Antilles full autonomy from the Netherlands in internal affairs, while the areas of defence and foreign affairs remained under the competence of the Dutch government. In 1986 Aruba, which had until then been the sixth island of the Netherlands Antilles, separated from the Netherlands Antilles after being granted "Status Aparte" by the Dutch government.

The Netherlands Antilles has a parliamentary democracy with a unicameral legislature (Staten) consisting of 22 members (including 14 from the most populous island, Curaçao) who are elected by direct popular vote and serve for a four-year term. The Monarch of the Netherlands, represented by the Governor General, the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers (Cabinet), hold executive power. The Governor General is appointed by the monarch for a six-year term, while the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister and Council of Ministers are elected by the Staten for a four-year term.

As a result of elections held on Jan. 18, 2002, seats in the Staten were distributed as follows: Workers' Liberation Front (FOL) 5, Antillean Restructuring Party (PAR) 4, National People's Party (PNP) 3, Labour Party People's Crusade (PLKP) two, Democratic Party of Sint Maarten (DP-St.M.) two, National Progressive Party (NA) one, Patriotic Union of Bonaire (UPB) two, Democratic Party of Bonaire (PDB) one, Democratic Party of Sint Eustatius (DP-St.E.) one, and Windward Islands People's Movement (WIPM) one.

### The independence issue

As in many other colonies, the struggle for independence in the Netherlands Antilles gained momentum in the period following World War II. The situation in the Netherlands Antilles was distinctive, however, in that the fight for self-determination was not exclusively aimed at reducing oppression by the colonial "motherland", but also in the case of the smaller islands against domination by their "sister" island of Curaçao. Initially the territory of the Netherlands Antilles comprised six islands (Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, St Maarten, Saba and St Eustatius) while the seat of Government was located in the capital Willemstad on the island of Curaçao. In 1954 a Constitution was



adopted that granted the six islands full autonomy from the Netherlands in internal affairs.

Although by 1978 all six islands had accepted the principle of “insular self-determination” this did not pacify all resentment against “internal” domination by Curaçao. Aruba’s demand for more independence from neighbouring Curaçao was rewarded in 1986, when it obtained *Status Aparte*, which also gave Aruba full autonomy from the Netherlands in internal affairs. Resentment was notably apparent also on St Maarten, Saba and St Eustatius, the three islands that are geographically located remotely from Aruba and Curaçao and also have large English-speaking communities. Secessionist sentiments have seemingly declined in more recent years and during the mid-1990s all five islands voted to remain within the Netherlands Antilles.

Such sentiment remains strong in St Maarten, however, where at a referendum in June 2000 the local government secured 69 per cent backing for proposals for St Maarten to follow the example of Aruba in becoming an autonomous territory within the Kingdom of the Netherlands, separate from the Netherlands Antilles. Since the referendum, a Constitutional Steering Group (SG), a Working Group on Constitutional Affairs (WGCA) and a Permanent Committee for Constitutional Affairs (PCCA) have been set up to facilitate this process of constitutional change.

While the call for more independence from Curaçao persisted, that for full independence from the Netherlands seemed to vanish. The reason for the weakening of secessionist feelings towards the Netherlands seems twofold: firstly, the perception of

domination by the Netherlands weakened as result of the Dutch government’s policy in the 1970s in regard to its overseas territories. In those years the Dutch government repeatedly expressed its support for independence for the Antilles, on condition that all islands remained in a federal structure. Secondly, the economic recession of those years increased awareness of the economic vulnerability of the islands in the event they could no longer rely on economic support from the Netherlands. While sentiment in favour of secession from the Netherlands has not disappeared altogether, there is a broad acceptance that the status quo represents a balance between self-determination and dependency.

The recent political history of the Netherlands Antilles has been relatively peaceful. In Curaçao this peace was briefly disrupted in 1969 when labour disputes led to riots. There are no reports in recent years of revolutionary or dissident movements that have had resort to extra-parliamentary means. Increasingly, however, the Netherlands Antilles (like Aruba) has come under international scrutiny for its role as a transit point for illicit drugs bound for the USA and Europe and for drug-money laundering. In 1999, the US State Department added the Netherlands Antilles to the US list of “regions of concern” in the fight against major drug production and traffic. There is no evidence that the growth of drug smuggling and money laundering has had a significant political impact.

*Frank Mols*

## New Zealand

**Capital:** Wellington

**Population:** 3.9 m

New Zealand is a member of the Commonwealth with the British monarch as head of state, represented locally by a Governor-General. The head of government is the Prime Minister. The unicameral parliament has 120 members, seven of whom represent Maori territorial units, and is elected for three years by a system of proportional representation. At a general election held on July 27, 2002, the social democratic Labour Party retained power as part of a minority coalition government, Helen Clark continuing as Prime Minister.

New Zealand’s status as a South Pacific nation is reflected in the distribution of the population, 14 per cent of whom are aboriginal Maori and over 6 per cent of Pacific Island origin. While those of European (especially British) descent are in a clear majority, in recent years there have been large increases in the numbers of immigrants from the Middle East, Africa and Asia. Over 6 per cent of the population is now of Asian ethnicity. As part of its commitment to accept-

ing refugees and asylum-seekers, in 2001 the government accepted 150 asylum-seekers from the Norwegian vessel, the *Tampa*, which had entered Australian territorial waters.

Maori protest has focused on a number of issues, particularly land claims. Although a permanent government-appointed commission, the Waitangi Tribunal, hears and makes recommendations to the government on Maori claims, from time to time affected Maori groups take protest action, including the occupation of disputed land. There is mounting political pressure to settle most of these historic grievances within the next decade. In recent years a number of Maori activists and institutions have engaged in legitimate political debate over the issue of Maori self-determination, including the creation of a Maori nation-state.

In response to the threat of international terrorism and following the New Zealand government’s decision

to lend support to the US-led intervention in Afghanistan, the New Zealand Parliament passed the 2002 Terrorism Suppression Act. This legislation makes it an offence to associate with, shelter or provide financial assistance to terrorists or terrorist groups. In 2003 the government introduced a new counter-terrorism bill making it a crime punishable by a fine or term of imprisonment to import radioactive material, deliberately pollute the food and water supply, and infect animals with a view to damaging the economy. It also gave police and customs greater pow-

ers of investigation and arrest. In addition, the government began to issue lists of known international terrorists and terrorist groups. Although there was no evidence of any connection between the named terrorists and New Zealand, the Prime Minister in April 2003 defended the decision on the grounds that it would "deter New Zealanders from becoming inadvertently involved in their activities".

*Raymond Miller*

## Nicaragua

**Capital:** Managua

**Population:** 4.9 m

The Republic of Nicaragua, under the terms of its 1987 Constitution, has an executive President elected for a six-year term. There is a unicameral legislature, elected by proportional representation, whose members also serve a six-year term. In elections held on Nov. 4, 2001, Enrique Bolaños Geyer of the Constitutional Liberal Party (PLC), won a comfortable victory over the left-wing Sandinista party (FSLN) candidate, Daniel Ortega Saavedra, by 56.3% to 42.3%. The Conservative Party of Nicaragua (PCN) won 1.4 per cent of the presidential vote. In the simultaneous legislative elections, the ruling PLC took 47 seats in the legislature, the FSLN 43 and the PCN two.

The lengthy dictatorship of the Somoza family (since the 1930s) was overthrown in 1979 in a popular revolution, led mainly by the left-wing **Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN)**. Elections in November 1984 had resulted in the election of Daniel Ortega, the FSLN leader and the Co-ordinator of the Junta of National Reconstruction, as President. This was subsequently confirmed by the drafting and promulgation of a new Constitution.

From 1981 onwards, several groups opposed to the Sandinista regime conducted a campaign of guerrilla warfare. They included former supporters of the Sandinista revolution, former officials and guardsmen of the Somoza regime and members of the Miskito Indian community of Nicaragua's Caribbean coast. These groups became known as counter-revolutionaries, or "contras", and operated from bases on the borders of Nicaragua with neighbouring Honduras and Costa Rica. Some of the groups received substantial backing from the USA, which opposed the Sandinistas' Marxist-based regime.

Movement towards peace was encouraged by the military stalemate on the ground, the debilitation of the Nicaraguan economy, the broader Central American peace process, and a weakening of support for the Sandinista regime by the Soviet Union and its allies in the context of the approaching end of the Cold War. Leaders of the main contra umbrella organization, the

**Nicaraguan Resistance (RN)**, returned to the country during 1989 in order to participate in elections held on Feb. 25, 1990. Before entry they were required to sign a statement renouncing violence. The 1990 elections were won by an anti-Sandinista coalition, the National Opposition Union, or UNO. Violeta Barrios de Chamorro, widow of a newspaper editor murdered by Somoza, became President. (The FSLN, now a predominantly democratic socialist party, has been defeated at successive elections since 1990, while remaining the principal opposition.)

During the first part of the Barrios presidency, the Sandinista army commander, Humberto Ortega Saavedra (Daniel Ortega's brother) remained in his post, and a plan was reached for the demobilization of the contra forces under UN supervision in five special security zones on the country's borders. Fighters were to be helped to resettle and return to civilian life in these areas. The Sandinista Army (EPS) was also severely reduced and many officers and soldiers were demobilized. From 86,810-strong in January 1990 the EPS was slashed to 16,200.

The benefits of demobilization did not reach all those concerned. While military leaders on both sides of the conflict made sure their own interests were served, many ordinary combatants – in the RN and the EPS – were largely left to fend for themselves. The lack of land, credit and pensions, which had been offered in exchange for demobilization, provoked widespread dissatisfaction among the ex-combatants. Consequently, both former contras and former EPS soldiers formed armed bands, known as *recontras* and *revueltos*. Largely criminal in nature, these groups did also make political demands on the government – such as a fairer share of land for former fighters. On March 5, 1992, a group of *Revueltos* occupied the town of Ocotol, near the Honduran border. That same year, the **Andres Castro United Front** (*Frente Unido Andres Castro*, FUAC) was formed by a former Sandinista army officer, Edmundo Olivas. The group became one

of the most successful armed bands, and pursued an agenda of demands for social and economic changes in the remote mining region along Nicaragua's Atlantic coast, where it enjoyed substantial public support. There were several abortive attempts at securing a peace deal with the FUAC leadership. In December 1997 the group took hostage the members of a peace commission that had arrived to broker a deal. By 2001, after three of its leaders, including Olivas, had been

killed in separate ambushes, the FUAC was reduced to a remnant of a handful of members, led by another former Army captain, José Luis Marenco. In June 2001, FUAC reportedly ambushed a police patrol in northern Siuna, killing eleven officers. In subsequent army operations, Marenco was reportedly killed and the remaining FUAC members scattered.

*Michael Lanchin*

## Niger

**Capital:** Niamey

**Population:** 10.6 m

After achieving independence from France on Aug. 3, 1960, the Republic of Niger was ruled until 1974 as a single party state by the Niger Progressive Party (*Parti Progressiste Nigérien*, PPN) under President Hamani Diori. The exiled Marxist former Prime Minister Djibo Bakary's *Sawaba* party, which staged an unsuccessful coup attempt in 1964, formed the main dissident movement.

In April 1974, a successful coup d'état led to the installation of a Supreme Military Council which suspended the Constitution and dissolved the National Assembly and the Niger Progressive Party. The President of the Supreme Military Council, Lieutenant-Colonel Seyni Kountché, headed a (largely civilian) Council of Ministers.

On March 15, 1976, an unsuccessful coup attempt, headed by Commander Bayere Moussa and Captain Sidi Mohamed as well as a number of non-commissioned officers of Tuareg origins, led to a purge of civil and military administrators of Tuareg origins. Many fled to Libya, where they joined their kinsmen who had fled the drought of 1973. From 1980 onwards, a number of these refugees, in liaison with their Malian brethren and with Libyan support, organized a nationalist separatist movement known as the Popular Front for the Liberation of the Arab Central Sahara (PFLACS). This movement would eventually break up along national lines, leaving the Nigérien Tuareg in the Revolutionary Movement for the Liberation of Niger (*Mouvement Révolutionnaire pour la Libération du Niger*, MRLN), which staged a first attack on the uranium mines at Arlit in 1982, leading to further tensions between Libya and Niger.

In May 1983, a massive student strike was severely suppressed, and in October a number of close collaborators of Kountché staged another unsuccessful coup. On June 14, 1987, a referendum approved by 99.5 per cent a National Charter to be the basis of a new Constitution to replace the original Constitution suspended in 1974 on the fall of President Diori.

On Nov. 10, 1987, President Kountché died. He was replaced as President by Colonel Ali Saïbou. The new President approved a general political amnesty on

Dec. 17, 1987, extending to the Tuareg exiles in Libya, and then on Jan. 18, 1988, there was a second amnesty which covered students who had gone into exile after their 1983 strike. A number of the Tuareg dissidents in Libya, as well as many drought refugees from Libya and Algeria (from which an estimated 6,000 had been forcibly expelled in 1986) returned to Niger. They were received in a number of camps, where the government and international agencies provided them with the necessities of life. The most important of these camps could be found around Tchén Tabaraden.

On Aug. 2, 1988, President Saïbou announced the formation of a political party, the National Movement for the Developing Society (*Mouvement national de la société de développement*, MNSD) as a sole political party. A new Constitution was adopted by referendum in September 1989; 93 candidates (all belonging to the MNSD) stood for election. On Dec. 10, 1989, elections confirmed President Saïbou as head of state with 99.6 per cent of the votes cast and with a 4 per cent abstention.

In February 1990, new student protests broke out, which were suppressed. On May 6, a quarrel between government representatives and spokesmen of the Tuareg returnees at Tchén Tabaraden led to the death of three gendarmes. The Tuareg, members of the MRLN, seized a number of weapons and fled. In the weeks after these events, army retaliation left hundreds of Tuareg in the area dead (estimates of the number of casualties vary). On June 11, 1990, the National Trade Union proclaimed a general strike. On Nov. 15, 1990, President Saïbou told the National Assembly that a multi-party system would be introduced and a national consultation conference would be held once political parties had been formed. This National Conference took place between July 29 and Nov. 3, 1991, under the presidency of André Salifou. The National Conference suspended the 1989 Constitution and affirmed Ali Saïbou as President.

### Tuareg Rebellion

In January 1992, the simmering conflict between the

government and Tuareg dissidents became a full Tuareg rebellion. The originally united movement, the Liberation Front for the Aïr and Azawagh (*Front de Libération de l'Aïr et de l'Azawagh*, FLAA), soon split up along tribal lines. In Niger, the number of Tuareg dissident movements would eventually reach eleven, with the FLAA remaining the most important in the field, while the leader of the Temust Liberation Front (*Front de Libération Temust*, FLT), the well connected Tuareg tour operator and Paris-Dakar Rally organizer Mano Dayak, managed to make the rebellion an internationally known affair.

A first peace agreement between the government and the various rebel movements, united in the Armed Resistance Coordination (*Coordination de la Résistance Armée*, CRA), was reached in October 1994, but never fully implemented, while it created new dissident movements. The most important of these was the Democratic Renewal Front (*Front Démocratique de Renouveau*, FDR), which was mostly active in the Kavar region, bordering both Libya and Chad, and which mainly consisted of Tubu tribesmen, some of whom were said to come from Chad. The Kavar area contains the Djado Block, Niger's largest oil field, which extends for its largest part into Libya.

A second peace agreement was signed on April 24, 1995, leading to a larger measure of peace and security. Under the provisions of the peace agreement, a number of Tuareg rebels were integrated in the administration and army, including FLAA leader Rhissa Boula as minister of tourism in a number of cabinets. But again, this treaty generated new refractory movements; the Armed Revolutionary Forces of the Sahara (*Forces Armées Révolutionnaires du Sahara*, FARS) and the Union of the Armed Resistance Forces (*Union des Forces de Résistance Armée*, UFRA). Both movements contained Tubu and Tuareg elements, were mostly active in the Kavar region, and were supported by Libya. They united in the Armed Resistance Organization (*Organisation de la Résistance Armée*, ORA). In November 1997, the FARS joined the 1995 peace agreement through the mediation of Chadian President Idriss Déby. In March 1998 a general amnesty was proclaimed for all former rebels in order to rally the last refractory groups of fighters. On June 5, 1998, the fighters of the UFRA movement adhered to the 1995 peace agreement, leading to a final return of peace and security in all of Northern Niger, despite recurrent acts of banditry attributed to former rebels.

### Troubled Democracy

During the whole period of the rebellion, Niger's politics remained troubled. On Dec. 29, 1992, a new constitution was adopted. Parliamentary elections on Feb. 14, 1993, led to a victory of the Alliance of Forces for

Change (*Alliance des Forces du Changement*, AFC) headed by Mahamadou Issoufou, who was installed as Prime Minister on April 17. On March 27, 1993, AFC candidate Mahamane Ousmane was elected as President, defeating MNSD candidate Colonel Mamadou Tanja. President and Prime Minister engaged in a power struggle which left the country without actual government, until new elections in February 1995 replaced Prime Minister Issoufou by Amadou Cissé. Unrelenting power struggles within the government finally led to protests by the military outside the presidential palace, culminating in a coup d'état on Jan. 27, 1996. Power was taken by Colonel Ibrahim Mainassare Barré who, after the adoption of a new constitution and the lifting of a ban on political parties, was himself elected as President on July 7, 1996, with 52.22 per cent of the votes.

These elections were condemned by all observers as the most fraudulent in Niger since the days of Kountché. Barré remained in place, despite protests from the opposition parties, united in two party coalitions: the Front for the Restoration and Defence of Democracy (*Front pour la Restauration et la Défense de la Démocratie*, FRDD), and the Alliance of Democratic and Social Forces (*Alliance des Forces Démocratiques et Sociales*, AFDS). On April 9, 1999, Mainassare Barré was murdered by members of the Presidential Guard during a tour through the country. Prime Minister Ibrahim Hassane Mayaki immediately suspended political activities by dissolving the National Assembly. On April 11, the head of the Presidential Guard, Major Daouda Mallam Wanké assumed power as head of the National Reconciliation Council (*Conseil de Réconciliation Nationale*, CRN), with Mayaki remaining Prime Minister of a cabinet including delegates of the two main political movements, the FRDD and AFDS.

The CRN set out to write a new constitution, and to organize democratic elections for parliament and president. The new constitution was adopted by popular referendum on July 18, 1999, and the presidential elections were won after a second round by the candidate of the MNSD-Nassara (the former single party under Ali Saïbou), retired Colonel Mamadou Tanja, on Nov. 24, 1999. In July and August 2002, Tanja was confronted by an army mutiny over arrears in pay and living conditions in the garrisons of Diffa, N'Gourti and N'Guigmi, which he declared a rebellion against the state and which was subsequently suppressed by loyal units. The next presidential elections are to be held in 2004. At the time of writing, no dissident activity or opposition movements are known.

*Baz Lecocq*



# Nigeria

**Capital:** Abuja

**Population:** 129 m

Nigeria attained independence from the United Kingdom in 1960, becoming a federal republic within the Commonwealth in 1963. A series of coups have punctuated the post-independence politics of the country, resulting in long periods of military rule.

A lengthy and often delayed process of transition from military to civilian rule was interrupted when the military regime of Gen. Ibrahim Babangida annulled the July 1993 presidential elections, which were widely believed to have been won by centre-left candidate Moshood Abiola. In November 1993 Defence Minister Gen. Sani Abacha seized power, signed a decree establishing a new military junta, the Provisional Ruling Council, and declared the restoration of the 1979 constitution, although most of its provisions remained in abeyance during a transitional period. Abacha, who intended to stand himself as the sole candidate in presidential elections, died suddenly in June 1998 and he was succeeded as head of state by Gen. Abdulsalam Abubakar. Abubakar's pledge to continue with Abacha's programme prompted protests by the United Action for Democracy (UAD), an alliance of 22 pro-democracy and human rights organizations formed in 1997 to put pressure on Abacha to step down and allow a transitional government of national unity to oversee the restoration of elected institutions. The protests prompted Abubakar to release the detained 1993 election candidate Moshood Abiola, whose subsequent death prompted violent anti-government demonstrations. Gen. Abubakar then abandoned the Abacha programme and adopted a new timetable for a return to civilian rule by May 1999.

Municipal council elections were held in late 1998 in which three parties received sufficiently large shares of the vote (and a sufficiently wide geographical spread of their vote) to qualify for registration to contest the forthcoming state and federal elections. Elections to the country's 36 state legislatures were held in January 1999, after which two of the three registered parties, the All People's Party (APP) and the Alliance for Democracy (AD), agreed to mount a joint campaign in the federal elections. The presidential election, held in February 1999, was won by the People's Democratic Party (PDP) candidate, Gen. (ret'd) Olusegun Obasanjo, who easily defeated Olu Falae, the joint candidate of the AD and the APP. President Obasanjo was inaugurated in May 1999, bringing into effect a federal constitution broadly based on the 1979 constitution (drawn up when Obasanjo had presided over a previous transition to civilian rule). The President is head of state, chief executive of the federation and commander-in-chief of the federal armed forces.

The presidential term is four years, and the successful candidate is required to win at least 25 per cent of the popular vote in at least two-thirds of the states of the federation. The President and both houses of the bicameral legislature, the National Assembly, are directly elected by universal adult suffrage, with a voting age of 18. In National Assembly elections held in February 1999, the party shares of the 360 seats in the lower chamber, the House of Representatives, were PDP 221, APP 70 and AD 69, while the 109 seats in the upper house, the Senate, were distributed PDP 67, APP 23 and AD 19. The term of both houses of the federal legislature is four years. A total of 24 new political parties were officially registered in December 2002, bringing the total number of political parties in the country to 30.

A further presidential election was held in April 2003, with Obasanjo again running as the candidate of the PDP, with his principal opponent being another former military ruler (1983-85), Gen. Muhammadu Buhari, who stood as the candidate of the main opposition All-Nigeria People's Party (ANPP). The contest mirrored Nigeria's North-South, religious divide, Obasanjo being a Christian from the south-east and Buhari a Muslim from the north. Obasanjo was declared the winner of the contest, winning almost twice as many votes as Buhari, in a result that was described as a "scam" by the ANPP and as "marred by serious irregularities and fraud" by EU observers. There were reports of violent intimidation of voters and ballot stuffing from many areas, especially the Niger Delta, where the vote in favour of Obasanjo was recorded as above 90 per cent in a number of states. The PDP was also the victor in the parallel parliamentary elections.

## **Movement for the Actualisation of the Sovereign State Of Biafra (MASSOB)**

*Leadership: Chief Ralph Uwazurike*

The Movement for the Actualisation of the Sovereign State Of Biafra (MASSOB) is a pro-Biafran group campaigning for an independent state of Biafra for the Igbo-speaking people of eastern Nigeria. The leader of MASSOB, Chief Ralph Uwazurike, was arrested while meeting other members of the group in March 2003. Uwazurike's arrest followed a month-long security crackdown on MASSOB, which the government claimed constituted a serious threat to Nigeria's sovereignty. The government had earlier banned MASSOB.

As many as two million people had died in the 30-month civil war to halt Biafra's attempt to secede from Nigeria in 1967. The war ended in 1970 with the defeat of the Biafran forces, led by Lt.-Col. Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu.



The Biafrans were subsequently treated with surprising leniency as the military ruler, Gen. Yakubu Gowon, adopted a policy of national reconciliation. Ojukwu stood in the April 2003 presidential election as the candidate of the All-Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA), finishing third but winning only some 3 per cent of the vote.

### **Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP)**

*Leadership: Ledum Mitee.*

*E-mail: mosop@gn.apc.org*

The Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), formerly led by Ken Saro-Wiwa, promotes the rights of the minority Ogoni ethnic group from Ogoniland, Rivers State, in the oil producing Niger delta region of south-east Nigeria. MOSOP has campaigned against environmental damage and for greater benefits for the local population from exploitation of the Niger delta by major oil corporations, principally the Anglo-Dutch group, Royal Dutch/Shell.

The goals and activities of MOSOP gained international prominence following the execution of Saro-Wiwa, the group's leader, and eight companions, in Port Harcourt in November 1995. The executions provoked an international outcry and calls for intensified sanctions against the military regime of Gen. Sani Abacha. Saro-Wiwa insisted that the charges against him (of the murder of four pro-government leaders of the Ogoni people) were false. Nineteen MOSOP activists detained alongside Saro-Wiwa were released from prison in Port Harcourt in September 1998. According to MOSOP, the released men had been held in solitary confinement and tortured; a fellow detainee had apparently died whilst in prison. Renewed violence broke out in Ogoniland in April 2000. One policeman and four civilians were killed after MOSOP activists attempted to prevent Royal Dutch/Shell from building a road as part of its reconciliation programme with local communities. MOSOP claimed that there had been too little consultation over the road and that it was not a development priority.

Since the mid-1990s various **Ijaw youth groups** have also been involved in the struggle for the right to share the oil wealth of the Niger delta. Following the discovery of oil in commercial quantity in Oloibiri (Ijawland, covering parts of Ondo, Edo, Delta, Bayelsa, Rivers and Akwa Ibom states) in the late 1950s, Ijaw groups, like MOSOP, claim that international oil companies have colluded with the military and successive governments in a war of economic exploitation and environmental degradation. Ijaw youths have organised into groups, including the Egbesu Boys of Bayelsa, the Chicoco Movement, the Ijaw Youth Council, Federated Niger Delta Ijaw communities and the Niger Delta Volunteer Force. However, several splinter groups are reported to have turned to extortion, hijacking, sabotage and kidnapping for private gain.

### **O'odua People's Congress (OPC)**

*Leadership: Frederick Fasehun (leader)*

The O'odua People's Congress (OPC) is a group active in the south-west of Nigeria which campaigns to protect the interests of the Yoruba ethnic group and seeks autonomy for

the Yoruba people. Established in 1994 with the aim of overcoming what it alleged was the political marginalization of the Yoruba, the OPC's activities have ranged from political agitation for Yoruba autonomy and promotion of Yoruba culture to violent confrontation with members of other ethnic groups, and, more recently, vigilantism and crime-fighting. The OPC has been implicated in numerous killings, usually in the context of clashes between Yoruba and other ethnic groups. Such clashes reached a peak during 2000, but continued in 2001 and 2002. By early 2003, incidents of killings by the OPC had decreased, but clashes between different ethnic groups, including the Yoruba, were still commonplace in Nigeria, and ethnic tensions had not abated.

The OPC's activities have led them into direct confrontation with the police and there have been repeated, violent clashes between the two sides. In 1999, the federal government announced a ban on the OPC and reportedly gave the police orders to deal with the organization ruthlessly. Despite the subsequent crackdown, the OPC continued to function, although sometimes underground. However, in some of the states where it operates in the south-west, the OPC enjoys close relations with state government authorities and even the explicit support of governors, a support which, to some extent, may have provided it with a level of protection.

### **O'odua Republic Front (ORF)**

*Leadership: Kayode Ogundamisi*

Shortly before legislative and presidential elections were held in April 2003, the newly-created O'odua Republic Front (ORF) issued a call for a sovereign state for the Yoruba, the country's second biggest ethnic group. The ORF is led by Kayode Ogundamisi, a leading member of the Coalition of O'odua Self-determination Groups (COSEG) and the former secretary of the O'odua People's Congress (OPC).

In an editorial-style advertisement in the independent newspaper *Punch*, the ORF said that independence had become imperative for the south-west region because the Yoruba were being held back by the country's conservative north. "Events since independence . . . have shown beyond doubt that development and fulfilment are impossible for the Yoruba within the Nigerian neo-colonial enclave", the ORF said.

### **Radical Islamic groups**

During his first full year in office in 2000 President Obasanjo faced a major problem with growing sectarian violence between Muslims and Christians. Serious and bloody rioting erupted as a result of moves to establish sharia (Islamic) law in the northern states. The process of the northern states adopting sharia in defiance of the constitution, the accompanying violence and rising Christian fears, as well as the weak response of the President and government, raised fresh doubts about the integrity of the federation.

Rioting between Muslims and Christian continued in 2001, with serious clashes erupting on Sept. 12 in the city of Kano, apparently fuelled by Muslims celebrating the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in New York and Washington. Up to 500 people were killed.

Another 200 people were killed in Kano in October, this time in reaction to Muslim protests at the US bombing of Afghanistan. Tension was further heightened in January 2002 when the first execution under sharia law was carried out in the northern city of Kaduna. The subsequent imposition of death sentences by stoning on women found guilty of adultery prompted widespread international outrage and, even though the sentences were condemned by the federal authorities and had not been carried out as of early 2003, they exacerbated divisions within the country. Serious rioting broke out in Kaduna in November 2002 in response to an article in a national newspaper which suggested that the Prophet Mohammed would not have objected to the "Miss World" beauty pageant which was scheduled to hold its finale in Nigeria in December (the event subsequently being moved to the UK in view of the situation in Nigeria).

Of Nigeria's roughly 60 million Muslims, at least 80 per cent are located in northern Nigeria, with the majority being in the 12 states that currently form the "Sharia Law belt" (Sokoto, Zamfara, Kebbi, Kano, Yobe, Jigawa, Bauchi, Katsina, Niger, Bauchi, Adamawa and Gombe). Although Nigerian Muslims are largely of the Sunni persuasion, a radical set of fundamentalist movements has developed over the years to confront the more conservative Society for the Victory of Islam (*Jama'at Nasril Islam*—JNI) and the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (SCIA), both

viewed by most commentators as vehicles of state Islam. Chief amongst the fundamentalist movements is the **Movement Against Negative Innovations and for Orthodoxy** (*Jama'at Izalatil Bidiawa Iqamatus Sunnah* or *Bida Yan Izala*), a Sufi brotherhood started by Sheikh Ismaila Idris in Jos and later enjoying the support of important figures such as the late Sheikh Mahmoud Gumi. Together with influential Muslim groups such as the Council of Ulema, a group of Islamic scholars based in the north, the *Bida Yan Izala* sect have long championed the campaign to fully Islamize the northern region of Nigeria. Another key fundamentalist group is the **Maitatsine**, founded in Kano in the 1960s by Alhaji Marwa Maitatsine of Cameroon. Maitatsine himself was killed in Kano during disturbances in 1980 in which over 4,000 people died during a month of rioting and unrest. This group was also reported (but never proved) to be responsible for riots in Maiduguri in October 1982 and Yola in February 1984. The **Muslim Brotherhood** movement under Sheikh Ibrahim El Zak-Zaky is a radical Sunni group, which has nonetheless received training in largely Shi'ite Iran. It has a large number of recruits from university students in northern Nigeria and has often been wrongly referred to as being "Shi'ite" due to its Iranian links.

*D.J. Sagar*

## Norway

**Capital:** Oslo

**Population:** 4.5 m

Norway is a constitutional hereditary monarchy in which the monarch exercises authority through a Council of State (cabinet) headed by a Prime Minister and responsible to a Parliament (the Storting) of 165 members elected for a four-year term by universal adult suffrage.

Elections held on Sept. 10, 2001, resulted as follows: Norwegian Labour Party 43 seats (with 24.4% of the vote), Conservatives 38 (21.2%), Progress Party 26 (14.7%), Socialist Left Party 23 (12.5%), Christian People's Party 22 (12.4%), Centre Party 10 (5.6%), Liberal Party 2 (3.9%), and Coastal Party 1 (1.7%). Following the election a minority centre-right coalition government was formed headed by Prime Minister Kjell Magne Bondevik of the Christian People's Party.

### RIGHT-WING AND ULTRA-NATIONALIST GROUPS

In spite of the large number of militant right-wing extremist groups, the number of active participants is

small, ranging between 100 and 500 at different periods (with a recent peak around 1995). Many of those involved participate in several groups simultaneously, as membership and group boundaries are fluid. A number of small right-wing extremist parties (the National Democrats, the Fatherland Party, the Stop Immigration Party, White Electoral Alliance, National Alliance) have failed, mainly because the right-wing populist Progress Party has filled most of the political space to the right of the mainstream conservatives. The Progress Party has, however, moderated its earlier xenophobic positions and adopted a more mainstream agenda.

The **Anti-AFA** (AFA being Anti-Fascist Action, see entry) clandestine cells were part of a transnational neo-Nazi network of groups. Their aims were to collect intelligence and commit terrorist acts against anti-fascists and other political opponents. Anti-AFA was suspected of several minor bombings in Norway during the 1990s. The related **Einsatz Group** was broken up in 1997 when the Security Police detected plans for

the assassination of several “prominent citizens”.

**Boot Boys**, the first racist skinhead group in Norway, started in 1987, later becoming a network of neo-Nazi skinhead gangs in several Norwegian cities and towns. Three Boot Boys members were convicted in connection with the fatal stabbing of a 15 year old boy in Oslo in January 2001. The victim was selected randomly on the basis of his dark skin.

During the 1990s, a loose network called the **Nationalist Milieu** gathered individuals and groups ranging from outright neo-Nazis to skinheads and various “patriotic” groups. This mostly youthful scene included such groups as Boot Boys, White Aryan Resistance (HAM), Anti-Antifa, Aryan Brothers, Viking, Varg, Blood & Honour, and the all-female Valkyria group. Individuals often carried multiple memberships. Attempts to unite these groups under a common umbrella organization failed repeatedly due to differences over ideology, strategy and leadership. A general trend within the scene during the 1990s was a gradual ideological shift from nationalism towards neo-Nazism and anti-semitism. This was heavily influenced by propaganda on the subject of the “Zionist Occupation Government” (ZOG), imported from the USA via Swedish neo-Nazi groups.

### **National Unity (NS)**

This fascist party was established in 1933, headed by Vidkun Quisling. It was the only legal party in Norway during the World War II Nazi occupation. In connection with the post-war treason trials, it was established that membership in National Unity was a crime because the party had aided and collaborated with the occupying forces (there is still no ban in Norwegian law against membership in Nazi, fascist or racist organizations as such). A circle of former National Unity members continued to work for their rehabilitation during the decades after the war through the newspaper *Folk og Land* and the Institute for Social Rehabilitation. Some also tried to nurture political heirs among the younger generations.

### **Norwegian Front/National People's Party**

This fascist group was established in 1975, headed by Erik Blücher. A series of violent confrontations with left-wing anti-fascists and communists culminated in two small bombs being thrown by an NF activist at May 1st demonstrators in 1979, causing severe injuries. In the aftermath, NF was disbanded. In 1985, core activists of the successor group, the National People's Party, were behind a series of bombings, mainly against immigrant targets. Most of the party leadership was convicted of various forms of involvement. The party was dissolved in 1991.

### **Norway's National Socialist Movement**

The most long-lasting Nazi organisation in Norway started in 1988 as Zorn 88, and later took the name Norway's National Socialist Movement. Ideologically, it represents a classical form of German-style National Socialism, and focuses on ideological and organizational activities rather than violence. It belongs to the international Nazi network NSDAP/AO and runs a website, [www.nnsb.net](http://www.nnsb.net).

### **People's Movement Against Immigration**

Established in 1987, this was a nationalist organization with a relatively broad xenophobic appeal. In 1989, the chairman Arne Myrdal, was convicted of plotting to bomb an asylum centre. Dismissed, Myrdal formed his own organization, **Norway Against Immigration**, which fell apart when he was convicted again for incitement to violence. His main contribution was to link xenophobic youths and elderly with nationalist organizations and neo-Nazi skinhead groups.

### **Vigrid**

This Nazi-oriented organization was founded by Tore W. Tvedt in 1998. It describes itself as “an ethnic/religious community that wants to develop a Nordic society based on Norse religion and Nordic values and cultural norms”. The political ideology is mainly adopted from the racial revolutionary American discourse on the Zionist Occupation Government (ZOG) and the coming racial war – strongly influenced by the writings of the late William L. Pierce, the author of the *Turner Diaries* (see *USA entry*). It has a website: [www.vigrid.net](http://www.vigrid.net)

### **White Electoral Alliance**

The party leader, Jack Erik Kjuus, was convicted of racism by the Supreme Court in 1997 for statements in the parliamentary election programme that called for sterilization or deportation of non-Norwegian partners in mixed marriages, as well as for their children. This alliance was an attempt to gather several small right-wing extremist parties under one umbrella, including Kjuus' own Stop Immigration Party.

## **LEFT-WING AND ANARCHIST GROUPS**

### **Anti-Fascist Action, AFA**

AFA is a militant anti-racist group inspired by Antifa in Germany and other countries, and closely associated with Blitz in Oslo. AFA collects intelligence about groups and individuals within the neo-Nazi scene and fights them through “physical confrontation”. AFA was mainly active in Norway during the mid- and late 1990s.

### **Blitz**

This is an autonomous group located at the Blitz house in Oslo, established in 1982. It grew out of the punk and squatter movements in the late 1970s, gradually adopting an autonomous anarchist ideology and establishing ties with similar movements abroad. During the 1990s, Blitz engaged in a number of violent confrontations with neo-Nazi groups and was also hit by several bombings, probably committed by neo-Nazis. It has a website: [www.blitz.no](http://www.blitz.no)

### **Workers' Communist Party (AKP m-l)**

The AKP started out in the late 1960 as a splinter group of the youth section of the Socialist People's Party. Adopting a Maoist and Marxist-Leninist line, AKP emerged as a formal organization in 1973. It took part in elections as Red Electoral Alliance. It had a representative elected to Parliament only once (1993-97), but had more success in local elections. AKP built a strong and highly clandestine party organization, dominated student politics, and got control over a number of other organizations during the 1970s. Although its

main support was among radical students and youths, many of the more dedicated "self-proletarianized" to become workers. The AKP admired China, Kampuchea and Albania as models, advocated armed revolution, and encouraged members to do military service in order to get training in the use of arms and guerrilla warfare (allegedly to fight an expected Soviet invasion). Although supporting a number of national liberation movements, however, the AKP was against terrorism because it undermined the mobilization of the masses. Website: [www.akp.no](http://www.akp.no)

## OTHER GROUPS

### Animal Liberation Front

This transnational network has had an active group in Norway since 1995. Local activists have focused their activities on the fur and meat industries. They have "liberated" thousands of minks, foxes, pigs and dogs, vandalised fur shops, and in one case, put on fire a slaughterhouse and several factories producing fodder for fur farms. There is no formal membership and actions are carried out by local cells with-

out any central organization. Its website is: [www.animalliberation.net/norway](http://www.animalliberation.net/norway)

### Sami militants

The Sami people (numbering about 30,000) are the main aboriginal minority in Norway. The notion of Sami separatism has had very limited support. The main Sami demand has rather been a call for special rights over natural resources in Sami areas. The conflict reached its peak in connection with the building of controversial hydroelectric dams in core Sami areas during the late 1970s. Several sabotage actions were carried out between 1975 and 1984, and Sami activists were behind at least some of them. However, the dominant line within the Sami movement was strictly non-violent, using civil disobedience, hunger strikes and alliances with environmentalists to stop the building of the Alta dam. This struggle was lost, but a Sami Parliament was established in 1989 as a direct outcome. The issue of rights to land and water is still not settled, however.

*Tore Bjørge*

# Oman

**Capital:** Muscat

**Population:** 2.7 m

Oman is a hereditary state, ruled by the Al Bu-Said dynasty since 1741. In 1970, Qaboos bin Said Al Bu-Said ousted his father and has ruled as Sultan ever since. The Sultan is both the chief of state and head of government. On Nov. 6, 1996, he issued a royal decree which, among other things, clarified the royal succession and established a bicameral legislature.

The bicameral Majlis consists of a 48-seat upper chamber (Majlis al-Dawla) and an 83-seat lower chamber (Majlis Al-Shura). The upper chamber is appointed by the monarch and the lower is elected by limited suffrage for a three-year term. Both chambers have only advisory powers, however, with the members of the lower house having some limited powers to propose legislation. Nonetheless, in both chambers, the Sultan has the final decision.

There are no political parties and no political pressure groups in Oman and suffrage in the elections of 2000 was limited to approximately 175,000 Omanis, chosen by the government to vote for the Majlis Al-Shura. Two women were elected for the first time to the Majlis Al-Shura and about 100,000 people voted.

### Nationalist movement in Oman

The rise of nationalist movements in southern Arabia began in Oman with the Jabal Al-Akhdhar (Green Mountain) revolt of 1955-59. Amongst other factors, two significant issues appear to have led to such movements. The first was the desire to halt British

influence in the Arabian Gulf and the second was a revolt against Said bin Taimur Al Bu-Said, who ruled Oman with an iron fist from 1932 to 1970.

British influence was seen in the dispute over the border between Oman and Yemen. In fact, the separation of Yemen from Oman was never complete as the borders had never been politically and formally drawn. Between 1874 and 1881 the then ruler of Mukalla, the Kasadi *Naqib*, sought to obtain the mediation of the Sultan of Muscat in his conflict with the Qu'ayti lords of Shilir and Shibam. As this coincided with the Omani expansion into Dhofar there was concern that Omani influence could spread westwards. The UK government at the time appears to have helped in complicating the matter. While the Foreign Office, which was responsible for Muscat, was backing the Sultan of Oman's claim to Habrut, the Colonial Office, which was responsible for the Protectorates, was backing the claims of the Sultan of Malira and Socotra. Ultimately, the question of territorial title was left unresolved, which led to the rise of other dissident movements in Oman.

The rule of Said bin Taimur Al Bu-Said was another issue. Under his rule the Omanis were isolated from the world, restricted from access to education and health care, and prevented from leaving the country. This isolation was increased by the fact that the Sultan surrounded himself by mercenaries. The discovery of oil and the wealth that it entailed helped lay the seeds for the emergence of organized groups that resulted in a



full-scale war in the western Omani province of Dhofar.

### **Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman (PFLO)**

The PFLO had its origins in a Popular Front for the Liberation of the Occupied Arabian Gulf formed with the object of overthrowing the Sultan of Oman. Their central issues were the defeat of British imperialism and to counter the repression of the people of Dhofar by the Sultan.

In 1962 a form of organization emerged among the insurgents, leading to the establishment of the Dhofar Charitable Association (DCA) as a cover for the **Dhofar Liberation Front (DLF)**. The DLF was associated with the Arab Nationalist Movement (ANM), known for their successful aid for the revolutions in the Yemens. Two other groups, the Dhofar Benevolent Society (DBS) and the Dhofari Soldiers Organization (DSO), also formed. Both operated underground in Salalah until early 1965, when an arms shipment from Kuwait and Iraq was intercepted by the Iranians. Consequently, some insurgents were captured in Oman and others fled to the mountains. Those who fled met at Wadi Al-Kabir (the Great Valley) on June 1, 1965, to solidify the leadership of the DLF and prepare plans for their campaign. This meeting was declared as the "First Congress", calling for the liberation of Dhofar and stressing the need to rebel against imperialism.

The 1967 Arab-Israeli war had a significant impact on the DLF, resulting in the Second Congress on Sept. 1, 1968. At this congress, which was held in Aden, the organization's leadership was taken over by Marxist-Leninists. Almost the entire leadership of the DLF changed hands, and the pro-Marxist Mohammed Ahmad al-Ghassani became secretary. At this time, the DLF changed its name to the **Popular Front for the Liberation of the Occupied Arabian Gulf (PFLOAG)**. It also passed a resolution that extended the scope of the revolution from Dhofar to Oman and the Gulf region as a whole.

Until 1970, the insurgents had a promising campaign. Nonetheless, the National Democratic Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arabian Gulf (NDFLOAG), which was formed in June 1970, suffered military defeats at Nizwa and Izki shortly after its formation. On July 23, 1970, Sultan Qaboos ousted his father, and he initiated reforms that eventually weakened the appeal of the insurgents; he, for example, opened up the country to the outside world, built schools, hospitals and so on in all parts of the country. The new policy ultimately changed the picture for the Omani

people, specifically those in Dhofar. As a reaction to such changes, the PFLOAG called for a Third Congress in June 1971 and the "People's Councils" were appointed. The stress on a Marxist-Leninist strategy was also reduced.

In January 1972, and to counter the changing environment of politics, the PFLOAG joined forces with the NDFLOAG. US estimates suggested that the number of insurgents at the time amounted to 800 hard-core fighters and about 1,000 part-time militia organized into local groups. These insurgents had the support of the then People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY or South Yemen), from whose territory they conducted most of their operations, and also of China (until 1973) and later of the Soviet Union. Not only that but the PFLOAG had established an intensive education program, which taught Arabic, and conducted political classes.

To counter the insurgents, the Sultan sought the help of Iranian forces. This move increased the sense of panic among the PFLOAG, which led to a Fourth Congress in January 1974. The immediate objective behind the meeting was to mass forces and concentrate only on Oman. The new aim divided the organization. Those who supported the objective, who were Omani nationals, split from the party. The new Omani organization called themselves the **Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman (PFLO)**, indicating that it was to be a national liberation movement fighting against the British and Iranians in Oman, and not a revolutionary organization trying to overthrow governments in the Gulf area. Efforts to achieve a cease-fire between Oman and the PFLO made by an Arab League conciliation commission, set up in March 1974, remained ineffective.

An agreement on the normalization of relations between Oman and South Yemen came into effect on Nov. 15, 1982, and appeared to bring a formal end to 15 years of hostility between the two states. In a gesture towards former rebels who had taken refuge in South Yemen, the Omani government on Jan. 3, 1983, proclaimed a further amnesty for "all Omani citizens who are still in South Yemen", offering them a four-month "period of grace" to return to Oman, where "all measures" would be taken to receive and settle them. Many former rebel leaders were given government posts. The threat of PFLO dissident activity supported by the PDRY or border operations against Oman declined after reconciliation with the PDRY, marked by the exchange of ambassadors in 1987.

*Ibrahim J. Al-Sharifi*

## **Pakistan**

**Capital:** Islamabad

**Population:** 160 m

The Islamic Republic of Pakistan was proclaimed in March 1956, Pakistan having earlier been granted independence as a Commonwealth dominion following the partition of the British Indian Empire in August 1947. In 1971, East Pakistan seceded and became

Bangladesh.

Pakistan's post-independence political history has largely been one of unstable and bitterly fractious parliamentary governments along with periods of military rule. Gen. Zia ul-Haq came to power in a coup in 1977



in which he overthrew the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) government of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who was subsequently executed by the regime. Zia remained in power until he was killed in an unexplained air crash in August 1988, shortly after announcing fresh elections to the National Assembly. The subsequent elections resulted in victory for the PPP with Bhutto's daughter, Benazir Bhutto, becoming Prime Minister. Her government was dismissed by President Ghulam Ishaq Khan in August 1990 and further elections resulted in victory for the right-wing Islamic Democratic Alliance (IDA) headed by Mian Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, who formed a coalition administration. Further political crises led to the resignations of both President Khan and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in July 1993 and in the resulting elections, the PPP returned to power as the largest single party.

The new Bhutto government survived until November 1996, when it was dismissed by President Farooq Leghari, and in February 1997 Nawaz Sharif was re-elected as head of the Pakistan Muslim League–Nawaz (PML(N)). Nawaz Sharif's efforts to concentrate power in his own hands led to conflicts within the PML and a series of constitutional crises involving the Supreme Court, the office of the President and, finally, the army. In October 1999, after being forced by international pressure to withdraw support for an army-backed guerrilla incursion into Indian-held Kashmir, Nawaz Sharif attempted to remove the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, General Pervez Musharraf, but was instead overthrown himself in a bloodless military coup. Musharraf then suspended the constitution in order to impose direct military rule. The overthrow of the government seemed to command a measure of popular support after years of political paralysis, factionalism and corruption. In June 2001 Musharraf declared himself President for three years and dissolved the National Assembly, the Senate and the provincial assemblies (all of which had been in recess since October 1999).

In September 2001, following the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, President Musharraf committed Pakistan in support of US military action in Afghanistan, successfully facing down threats from domestic Islamists, who succeeded in staging only modest demonstrations in the main cities. On April 30, 2002, Musharraf won a controversial referendum to give him a five-year term as President.

In October 2002 the first general elections since Musharraf took power were held, to the National and Provincial Assemblies. The elections were contested by 83 parties and three political alliances but neither Benazir Bhutto nor Nawaz Sharif, accused by Musharraf of looting the country during more a decade of civilian rule, returned from exile. In the election to the National Assembly (the lower house of the bicameral legislature) the leading parties were the Pakistan People's Party Parliamentarians (PPPP, i.e. supporters of Bhutto) with 71 seats; the Pakistan Muslim League (PML-QA, supporting Musharraf) with 69; the Islamist coalition MMA with 53 (compared with only two seats

won by the Islamist Assembly of Islamic Clergy (JUI) in the last elections in 1997); and the Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N) of Nawaz Sharif, 14. The balance of seats in the 342-member Assembly was made up by minor parties, non-partisans and 60 seats reserved for women and ten reserved for national minorities.

On Nov. 21, 2002, Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali of the PML-QA, was elected Prime Minister by the Assembly, by 172 votes out of 342. Under constitutional amendments introduced before the election, the President has sweeping powers to dismiss the Prime Minister, veto Cabinet decisions and dissolve the National Assembly.

## MAIN OPPOSITION PARTIES AND COALITIONS

### Pakistan People's Party (PPP)

Founded in 1967 by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto the PPP initially presented itself as a socialist party with slogans such as "Islam is our faith, democracy is our polity, socialism is our economic creed: all power to the people". Bhutto's government was overthrown in 1977 and he was executed by the military regime in 1979, but the party remained a leading force in Pakistani politics. Under Bhutto's daughter, Benazir, the party returned to power in 1988-90 and 1993-96, but did poorly in the 1997 elections. After being indicted on corruption charges in late 1997, Benazir Bhutto went into self-imposed exile, where she remains. The party competed (under the electoral name of the Pakistan People's Party Parliamentarians, PPPP) in the 2002 elections. In Bhutto's absence, Makhdoom Amin Fahim, a large landowner in the province of Sindh, leads the group. The party has been a vocal opponent of military rule under President Musharraf but has not engaged in destabilizing activities. Its particular strength is in the southern province of Sindh and parts of Punjab.

### Pakistan Muslim league (PML)

The party has two wings. The **PML(N)** is the faction loyal to former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif who was overthrown in 1999. It won 14 seats in the 2002 elections. The group is led by Raja Zafar ul Haq, who served as leader of the Senate, leader of the opposition and minister of religious affairs at various times from 1988 to 1999. Nawaz Sharif was arrested after the 1999 coup and sentenced to life imprisonment but allowed to leave for Saudi Arabia in 2001, where he remains.

The **PML(QA)** (*Quaid e Azam*) is a breakaway faction of the PML and has the nickname of "King's party" because it has been backed by Musharraf's government. The group is headed by Mian Mohammad Azhar, former governor of Punjab province from 1990 to 1993. The PML(QA) supports Musharraf's economic reforms and a major role for the military in civilian led Pakistan. It is mainly based in Punjab province.

### Mutahidda Qaumi Movement (MQM)

The movement represents the Urdu-speaking people who migrated to Pakistan from India at the time of the partition of the sub-continent. Its main base is in Karachi. Created in 1984, it has presented demands for Muhajirs to be considered as the fifth nation of Pakistan. It has also defended the idea of

the creation of a Muhajiristan and of Karachi being separated from Sindh province. It won 13 seats in the 2002 elections.

### **Mutahida Majlis e Amal (MMA)**

This is an alliance of six hard line Islamic groups that vow to make Pakistan a "true Islamic" state. Strongly opposed to the President's support for the US-led intervention in Afghanistan at the end of 2001, the movement has had close links with the Taleban. It campaigned in the 2002 elections on a strongly anti-American platform and won 53 seats on an 11.3 per cent share of the vote, historically the best performance by the Islamists in Pakistan.

The secretary general of the MMA is Fazal ur Rahman who also heads a faction of the militant *Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e-Islam* (JUI, Assembly of Islamic Clergy). He is a vocal supporter of the former Taleban regime in Afghanistan and was imprisoned in 2002 for leading protests against government policy. The MMA has its power base in Baluchistan and the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP), two provinces bordering Afghanistan, and gained control of the NWFP in the 2002 elections. It has continued to campaign against Musharraf's assumption of powers to dissolve Parliament and dismiss the Prime Minister and the alliance with the USA.

## **ISLAMISTS**

Although the majority of the population has historically not been attracted to extreme forms of fundamentalism, Islamist influence is significant in Pakistani law and culture. This has been reinforced by the proliferation of an estimated 40,000 to 50,000 madrasas (Islamic schools) over the last two decades, these schools teaching dogmatic interpretations of Islam. The schools are especially strong in the areas adjacent to Afghanistan (more than 80 per cent being in the North-West Frontier and Baluchistan provinces) and were the source of many of the Taleban. In 2001 Musharraf referred to such schools as a "state within a state" and announced plans to reform their syllabus but has proved unable to take action to reform them. Efforts in 2002 to force madrasas to register proved a failure as few complied.

Blasphemy is punishable by death and although in practice this punishment has not been carried out, as of July 2003 scores of people condemned to death by lower courts were in prison awaiting appeals before higher courts. Individuals accused of blasphemy are customarily arrested prior to any investigation and Musharraf has backed down on promises to change the way the law is enforced, in the face of pressure from Islamists. Musharraf has to some extent sought to offset Islamist hostility to his support for the USA (which has won him substantial economic aid as well as lessening international pressures for a restoration of democracy) by indulging their domestic agenda.

The North-West Frontier Province is the stronghold of the Islamists and also has close connections with the Taleban in Afghanistan, thousands of whom are believed to have taken refuge there. It is governed by a coalition of Islamist parties, the MMA (see entry). In the

immediate aftermath of the Sept. 11 attacks in the USA there was intense criticism of the role of Pakistan in bolstering the Taleban, with allegations particularly focused on the Pakistan intelligence services. Musharraf strategically withdrew his backing for the Taleban (although Pakistan was the last country to end diplomatic recognition for the Taleban) and US and Pakistani forces have since carried out joint operations in the Afghanistan-Pakistan border regions to root out *Al-Qaeda* and Taleban remnants. It was reported in June 2003, that Pakistan had in the past 12 months arrested and handed over to the USA some 500 *Al-Qaeda* members. The border regions nonetheless are considered to some degree to remain a sanctuary for such remnants, who enjoy support among the local population. In the early months of 2003 Afghan government officials were reported as believing that the regrouping of Taleban forces and adherents of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar (see Afghanistan entry) was being assisted with logistical and financial support by former or current members of the Pakistani InterServices Intelligence (ISI).

The issue of Islamic extremism has also complicated relations with India. Following an attack on the Indian Parliament in December 2001 blamed by India on Pakistani-based Islamic militants (see India entry), tensions between the two countries escalated and in January 2002 Musharraf responded by ordering the arrest of 2,000 militants and banning five organizations. However, Pakistan's position on what India views as "terrorism" in Kashmir has been ambivalent.

Most Pakistani Muslims are Sunnis but Shias represent about 20 per cent of the population. Thousands of deaths have been attributed to conflict between Shias and Sunnis since the 1980s.

### **Harakat-ul-Mujahideen**

This group was originally founded in the 1980s to engage in the Afghan conflict. It has been among the irregular forces fighting Indian troops in Kashmir but has also carried out actions in Pakistan. Three members of a faction of the group were on June 30, 2003, sentenced to death (one in absentia) by a court in Karachi after being convicted of organizing a suicide attack in Karachi on May 8, 2002, that killed 14, including 11 French technicians working with the Pakistan Navy.

For further details, see entry under India.

### **Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM)**

This group was banned in January 2002 and is regarded as having close links with *Al-Qaeda*. It was blamed by India (with *Lashkar-e-Toiba*, below) for the December 2001 attack on the Indian Parliament. Its leader, Masood Azhar, was arrested by Pakistan in December 2001 but released in December 2002.

For further details, see entry under India.

### **Lashkar-e-Jhangvi**

This group was banned in June 2001, members fleeing to join the Taleban in Afghanistan. It was accused of murdering Pakistani Shias, its alleged victims including Shaukat Mirza, the managing director of Pakistan State Oil, in July 2001, as

well as a number of Iranian officials in Pakistan. The group's leader, Riaz Basra, was killed by Pakistani security forces in May 2002.

### **Lashkar-e-Toiba**

This group ("the Army of the Pure"), founded in 1987, was originally active in Afghanistan but in the 1990s opened operations in Indian-controlled Kashmir. It suspended its operations in December 2001 under government pressure, after being blamed by India for the attack on the Indian Parliament.

It was the most prominent externally-based group active in Kashmir and was tolerated by the Pakistani government. In Pakistan the group ran schools and social services, with its headquarters spreading over a 190-acre site outside Lahore and including a mosque and factories. In Kashmir it staged numerous attacks including suicide bombings and was one of the most feared groups. Indian sources claimed that the group was established with funding from Osama bin Laden and that it was supported by the ISI. Hafiz Mohammed Saeed, its leader, was detained on Dec. 30 but released during 2002.

The group has a transnational identity, with an apparent objective of achieving Islamic rule in the whole Indian sub-continent, and has not acted against the Pakistani state. Saeed stated in 1997 that the primary purpose of the organization was to train individuals to wage jihad in un-Islamic countries. By 2003 the group had seemingly merged or blurred its identity with other similar groups in Pakistan but was still active in Kashmir.

See India entry for further details of *Lashkar-e-Toiba*.

### **National Movement for the Restoration of Pakistani Sovereignty**

This group claimed responsibility for the kidnapping in Karachi on Jan. 23, 2002, of Daniel Pearl, a reporter for the *Wall Street Journal*. One month later the kidnappers released

a video of the moment at which they killed Pearl. The group's leader, Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh, known as Sheikh Omar and who had been brought up in the United Kingdom and had links with other Islamist groups (including *Harakat-ul-Mujahideen*), was arrested on Feb. 5 and admitted his involvement in the kidnapping. In 1999 he had been released from custody in India in exchange for passengers on an Indian airliner hijacked to Afghanistan by his supporters (see also under India). Sheikh was among four men convicted on July 15, 2002, in an anti-terrorist court in Pakistan of the murder of Pearl. Sheikh was the only defendant sentenced to death.

### **Sipah-e-Sahaba**

This militant Sunni Muslim group, the "Soldiers of the Friends of Prophet Mohammed", has called for Shias to be designated as "infidels" by the government and has been blamed by Shias for scores of killings. It was banned in January 2002 although the group's leaders were reported to be operating freely thereafter and its leader, Azam Tariq, won election to the National Assembly in the October 2002 elections. It reputedly had close links with the former Taleban regime in Afghanistan and with *Al-Qaeda*. Police were reported to suspect the group of responsibility for a suicide attack with machine guns and grenades on a Shia mosque in Quetta on July 4, 2003, in which at least 44 were killed. The attack led to riots by the minority Shia Hazara community in Quetta; the Shia Hazara had also been the target of violent repression by the (Sunni) Taleban in Afghanistan. Azam Tariq was assassinated near Islamabad on Oct. 6, 2003, triggering widespread rioting and numerous attacks on Shia targets.

*F. J. Harper*

## **Palau**

**Capital:** Koror

**Population:** 17,500

The Republic of Palau comprises a chain of islands and islets in the Pacific. From 1947, Palau was administered by the United States as part of the UN Trust Territory of the Pacific, the Japanese having previously administered the islands under a League of Nations mandate. In 1978 Palau opted not to join the Federated States of Micronesia (comprising other elements of the Trust Territory). A Compact of Free Association with the United States (giving Palau full internal sovereignty but with the USA retaining responsibility for defence) was signed in 1982 but was not ratified until 1993. It came into force the following year when Palau became independent.

As in other north Pacific US-administered territories, opposition to US rule became well established in the mid-1970s as a result of the formation of the

Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific (NFIP) network. An NFIP Palau committee was set up to campaign for independence and against US nuclear and militarization policies. The NFIP movement, together with other civil groups, campaigned hard for a nuclear-free Palau. In 1979, 92 per cent of the population voted for a constitution that prohibited the stationing of nuclear weapons and storage of nuclear waste.

Under the Compact of Free Association signed in 1982, however, the USA still had control over Palau's security matters. From 1983 onwards a series of referendums was staged under US pressure, to override the nuclear ban and enable the Compact to come into effect, but these failed to secure the necessary 75 per cent majority. In 1992 the approval requirement was lowered to a simple majority and in a referendum the

following year the Compact was accepted. During the years of controversy a number of anti-nuclear activists were assassinated by pro-US elements. Two Presidents died, one through assassination and another through

suicide, in circumstances linked to the Compact of Free Association issue.

*Steven Ratuva*

## Palestinian Entity – Palestinian Movements

**Government Centre:** Ramallah and Gaza City

**Population:** 2.8 m

### Palestine under Mandate

After World War I Palestine – which had been part of the Ottoman Empire (one of the central powers defeated in the war) – became a British mandate under League of Nations auspices. However, in the Balfour Declaration published in November 1917, the British government had stated that it viewed “with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people ...it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities”. In the Middle East this declaration was strongly opposed by the Arabs, in particular those in Palestine.

In September 1921 the British government promulgated a Constitution providing for the setting-up of a Palestinian state, but this instrument was never implemented because the Arabs were unwilling to accept the concessions made in it to Zionism. In 1929 there occurred the first large-scale clashes between Jews and Arabs in Jerusalem. Following increased Jewish immigration from Europe (after the advent to power of Hitler in Germany in 1933) an Arab High Committee was formed in 1936 to unite Palestinian Arabs in opposition to the Jews, and there followed a three-year civil war between them. A British report (of the Peel Commission) published in July 1937 recommended the partition of Palestine, but Arabs rejected it. In the same year the British government outlawed the Arab High Committee and arrested or exiled its leading members. A new British proposal, reducing the size of the proposed Jewish state from that envisaged by the Peel Commission, was rejected by both Zionists and Arabs in 1938.

In a White Paper published in May 1939 the British government declared that there would be no partition; that it was not British policy that Palestine should become either a Jewish or an Arab state; that an independent Palestinian state should be set up within 10 years; that meanwhile Jews and Arabs should be asked to take an increasing share in the country’s administration; and that Jewish immigration into Palestine should be limited to 75,000 persons during the next five years, after which there was to be no further immigration without Arab consent. By 1939 the Jewish population in Palestine had risen to 445,457 or 30 per cent of the country’s total.

The subsequent progress of the war in Eastern Europe and mass extermination of Jews by the Nazis brought about massive illegal immigration into Palestine by Jews from many parts of Europe. By the end of World War II the Jewish Agency was ready to ensure the provisional government of a Jewish state through the Jewish National Council representing local Jews; on the other hand, the League of Arab States formed in March 1945 proclaimed its intention of defending the Arab cause in Palestine. Amid a serious deterioration of the security situation, various new partition proposals failed to move the Arab side from its demand for a unitary Palestinian state based on majority rule. Accordingly, the British government decided in February 1947 to refer the Palestine question to the United Nations (as the successor to the League of Nations for the purposes of the mandate). On the basis of recommendations by a UN special committee, the UN General Assembly on Nov. 29, 1947, took its historic decision in favour of partition (and thus in favour of the creation of a Jewish state) by 33 votes to 13 with 10 countries abstaining and one being absent.

### Establishment of State of Israel

The UN decision was opposed by the Arabs, who declared their determination to resist it by force. Nevertheless, the military forces of the Jews moved to establish full control over the area of the proposed Jewish state, which was officially proclaimed as Israel on May 14, 1948, a few hours before the termination of the British mandate at midnight. Simultaneously, the uncoordinated armies of Egypt, Transjordan, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq (backed by Saudi Arabian units) invaded the new state with the declared objective of “establishing the independence of Palestine for its lawful inhabitants on the basis of majority rule”. However, initial Arab advances were quickly stemmed by Israeli forces who, in a successful counter-attack, not only secured virtually all of the territory allotted to the Jews under the UN partition plan but also took control of substantial additional areas.

Under separate armistices signed in early 1949 between Israel on the one hand and Egypt, Transjordan, Syria and Lebanon on the other (but not Iraq), the Jewish state was left in control of three-quarters of the territory of Palestine. Of what remained in Arab hands,



the southern coastal strip around the town of Gaza came under Egyptian administration, while the central area of Palestine west of the Jordan river (including the Old City of Jerusalem) was incorporated into the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan (as Transjordan was renamed in June 1949).

During the 1948-49 hostilities, between 700,000 and 900,000 Arabs either fled or were expelled from Jewish-held territory, leaving the State of Israel with a substantial Jewish majority. Most of the refugees were housed in refugee camps in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which thus became the centres of a burgeoning Palestinian Arab nationalism having as its fundamental aim the recovery of the homeland which the Jews were seen as having expropriated. Palestinian *fedayeen* (literally “martyrs”) groups were responsible for many guerrilla movements, which in 1964 came together in the loose framework of the newly formed **Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)**. During this period the broader tensions arising from unremitting Arab hostility to the Jewish state had erupted into a second full-scale conflict, fought between Israel and Egypt in late 1956.

### Consequences of 1967 and 1973 Wars

In the third Arab-Israeli war (of June 1967) Israel extended its control of territory to the whole of the area of Palestine by capturing the Gaza Strip from Egypt and the West Bank (including east Jerusalem) from Jordan, while at the same time also taking the Golan Heights from Syria and overrunning the Egyptian Sinai peninsula. The hostilities resulted in a further exodus of Arab refugees, principally to Jordan and Lebanon, but the bulk of the Palestinian inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza stayed put under Israeli military administration. The Palestinian guerrilla movements, operating at this stage mainly from Jordan and Syria, were thus deprived of their natural bases within the confines of pre-1948 Palestine and found it even more difficult to penetrate to targets in Israel proper, especially after King Hussein expelled the guerrillas from Jordan in 1970-71. Thereafter, Lebanon became the main centre of Palestinian military activities against Israel, while militant PLO factions increasingly resorted to terrorist attacks on Israeli and other, often civilian, targets outside the Middle East theatre of conflict.

The outcome of the 1967 war set a new tone for the Arab-Israeli conflict, which for some years thereafter revolved less around the fundamental Palestinian Arab challenge to the legitimacy of Israel and more around the quest of Egypt, Syria and Jordan for the recovery of their lost territories.

The crucial outcome of the fourth Arab-Israeli war (of October 1973) was that Egypt re-established control of the eastern side of the Suez Canal (this being the first territory wrested from Israel by military force since its creation in 1948) and was thus psychologically enabled to move towards a rapprochement with the Jewish state. This process got under way with Presi-

dent Sadat’s historic visit to Jerusalem in November 1977, which was followed by the conclusion of the Camp David framework agreements in September 1978 and ultimately by the signature of a full peace treaty between Egypt and Israel in March 1979. For the Egyptians the importance of the peace treaty was that Israeli-controlled Sinai would be restored to Egyptian control by April 1982. For the Palestinians, on the other hand, the whole Camp David peace process represented a betrayal of the Arab cause (a view widely shared in the Arab world), particularly because it did not provide for the genuine self-determination of the Palestinian people in their own land.

The PLO and all Arab states except Egypt therefore refused to participate in the US-sponsored negotiations with Israel on the granting of some form of “autonomy” to the Palestinian inhabitants of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, as envisaged under one of the Camp David agreements. For this and other reasons these negotiations had made virtually no progress by early 1983 (nearly four years after their commencement), during which period Palestinian opposition to the process was strengthened by the oft-repeated claim of the Begin government that Israel possessed an historic right to sovereignty over the whole of the biblical “Land of Israel” (*Eretz Israel*), i.e. including the West Bank, Gaza and the Golan Heights. In pursuance of this aspiration, the Israelis not only greatly expanded Jewish settlement of the occupied territories (especially the West Bank) but also passed new legislation in July 1981 strengthening the status of Jerusalem as the “indivisible” capital of Israel (as first proclaimed immediately after the June 1967 war); moreover, in late December 1981 Israel effectively annexed the Golan Heights.

### Use of Lebanon as Palestinian base

Meanwhile, the Palestinian guerrilla organizations had become increasingly embroiled in the internal hostilities that broke out in Lebanon in 1975, and thereafter their virtually autonomous activities in Lebanon were viewed with increasing concern by Israel. During the late 1970s numerous military interventions were carried out by the Israelis to counter the threat to Israel’s northern border area posed by the PLO presence in southern Lebanon. At the same time Israel gave active support to the Lebanese Christians in their continuing struggle with the Palestinian-backed Lebanese Muslim factions. Eventually, some six weeks after completing their withdrawal from Sinai, the Israelis launched a full-scale invasion of Lebanon in June 1982 with the declared objective of eliminating the military presence of the PLO from that country. After a two-month Israeli siege of Palestinian positions in west Beirut, an agreement was eventually reached under which PLO units withdrew from the Lebanese capital by early September, together with Syrian troops of the Arab Deterrent Force stationed in Lebanon since late 1976. But although the PLO had suffered heavy losses during the Israeli campaign, it subsequently became clear



that the various Palestinian guerrilla movements remained operational notwithstanding the dispersal of many activists to a number of Arab countries. Moreover, on the political and diplomatic front the PLO continued to play a prominent role in Arab opposition to any Middle East peace settlement that did not provide for the establishment of a sovereign Palestinian state.

### Intifada

A series of negotiations between Yasser Arafat, the PLO leader, and King Hussein of Jordan during 1983-85 laid the basis for a possible peace settlement along the lines of a federation between Jordan and an independent Palestinian state on the West Bank. The initiative was strongly opposed by Israel and by radical PLO factions, and effectively collapsed in early 1986. The 18th Palestine National Council session of April 1987 saw a new display of unity around Yasser Arafat and a marginalization of the PLO "rejectionist" front sponsored by Syria.

From the end of 1987 to the start of the 1990s developments took place against the background of the intifada. What distinguished the intifada (uprising, or literally "shaking off") from earlier protests was the fact that it involved entire communities and was co-ordinated across wide areas. It began on Dec. 9, 1987, when residents of the Jabalya refugee camp in the Gaza Strip attacked Israeli patrols with stones and petrol bombs. They were protesting against an incident the previous day when an Israeli taxi ploughed into Palestinian labourers at a roadside and killed four of them.

The intifada rapidly spread throughout Gaza and the West Bank. Within a fortnight the PLO called for a supportive strike, and on Jan. 11, 1988, the first of a series of handbills appeared in the name of the secretive Unified National Command (see separate entry). These attempted to co-ordinate protests and encouraged civil disobedience, such as refusing to pay taxes. In the early months of 1988 the intifada spread to Jerusalem and other towns within Israel itself and to Palestinian refugee camps in Jordan. Israel continued with beatings, administrative detentions, house demolitions and occasional deportations, citing the danger that stone-throwers posed to troops.

On March 20 the first Israeli to die in the intifada was a soldier shot dead in Bethlehem. However, the use of firearms was avoided: PLO orders from Tunis advised against their use. In June the Arab League promised the PLO \$100 million to fund the intifada; yet it was questionable how much direct influence the men in Tunis had. Indeed, despite the momentous decisions taken at the 19th Palestine National Council conference (below), the real battle for control of the intifada seemed by August 1988 to be between the Unified National Command and the Islamic *Hamas* group (see separate entries), which was particularly strong in Gaza.

Nearly 400 Palestinians died in the first year of the

intifada. By the second anniversary in December 1989, this figure had risen to 795, including 150 "collaborators" killed by Palestinians, and 45,000 wounded. Some 44 Israeli soldiers and civilians had also died. In addition, 48,000 people had been arrested for three days or more, 7,900 placed under administrative detention, and 61 persons deported.

By May 1989 there were reports of clashes between Palestinians and Jewish settlers, and fatal stabbing attacks on Jews by Islamic fundamentalists. Masked gangs of *shabib* (youth) set up kangaroo courts in West Bank and Gazan towns to convict and execute "collaborators". By "taking the law into their own hands", Jewish settlers hoped to sting demonstrators into using firearms, thus giving the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) a pretext for a fiercer crackdown. By contrast, a growing minority of IDF conscripts joined the *Yesh G'vul* ("There Is A Limit") movement and refused to serve in the territories.

On Oct. 8, 1990, a clash between police units and Muslim worshippers on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem led to the killing of 17 Palestinians and a spate of fatal stabbing attacks on Israelis. The murder of *Kach* leader Meyer Kahane in November led to more violence between settlers and Palestinians. Intifada leaders and the external PLO united around a pro-Iraq stance in the Gulf Crisis, and welcomed Saddam's linkage of the Kuwaiti and Palestinian issues. International sympathy for the uprising diminished, however, when Iraq launched unprovoked Scud missile attacks on Israel to the applause of West Bank activists.

### Oslo Accords – Creation of Palestinian Authority

After Jordan renounced its claim to the West Bank in July 1988 the PLO recovered the initiative at the 19th PNC session by declaring a State of Palestine with Jerusalem as its capital. Inter alia, it recognized Israel and renounced the use of terror.

The pronouncement heralded a flurry of peace plans from all sides and saw the US administration talk to the PLO for the first time, a process which ended in 1990 when Arafat refused to condemn a new spate of terrorist incidents. Israel's right-wing Likud government considered peace but refused to talk to the PLO; Islamic fundamentalism began to dominate the continuing intifada. Both factors eroded the PLO's support base. After Iraq invaded Kuwait in August 1990, Arafat adopted Saddam Hussein as protector of the Palestinian cause. This proved to be a major miscalculation, losing him Western sympathy. Saddam's defeat in February 1991 at the hands of a Western and Arab coalition proved another setback for the PLO, and indeed Palestinians generally. Many had welcomed the Scud missiles which fell on Israel; now oil-rich Gulf states and Saudi Arabia cut off funds to the PLO; Kuwait's Palestinian population (once 380,000) was more than halved by forced emigration; PLO units in Lebanon were pounded by Israeli aircraft and humiliated by the Syrian-backed Lebanese Army.

After the 1991 Gulf War Yasser Arafat came under

immense international pressure to engage with a Middle East peace process. The USA, USSR and UN were determined to test the PLO's sincerity over its 1988 claim to recognize the state of Israel, condemn terrorism, and endorse a "two-state solution" based on the concept of "land for peace", as itemized in UN Security Council Resolutions 245 (1967) and 338 (1973).

This process resulted in the announcement on Aug. 30, 1993, of a draft pre-peace agreement whose final stages had been negotiated in Oslo. The Declaration of Principles of August 1993 was signed between the State of Israel and the PLO. Over time, however, the Palestine Authority (PA), erected in stages as a consequence of the Oslo Accords, gained an identity of its own. In effect, the centre of gravity of Palestinian politics shifted from the Diaspora to the West Bank and Gaza – i.e. areas of "historic Palestine" – and this reality manifested itself in the PA's growing status in respect of the parent PLO. Some predicted that if the Oslo Accords were to create an independent State of Palestine, the PLO would naturally wither away; and its constituent groups (Fatah, Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, etc.) plus possibly others outside the PLO ambit, like *Hamas*, would transform themselves into locally based democratic parties. However, when it became clear that the peace process was faltering, and that immediate statehood was chimerical, the PLO in exile found a new role as a centre for opposition to the Oslo formula. In particular, PLO exile politicians became advocates for the rights of refugees, whose interests they alleged PA bureaucrats were ignoring.

The **Palestine National Authority (PNA, or PA)** was officially inaugurated on May 4, 1994. The Jericho area was handed over to PA authority on May 13 that year, and the Gaza Strip on May 18. Under Oslo II, signed in October 1995, other Palestinian cities on the West Bank passed to PA control: Jenin on Nov. 13; Tulkarem on Dec. 10; Nablus on Dec. 11; Qalqiliya on Dec. 16; Bethlehem on Dec. 21; and Ramallah on Dec. 27. Following the signing of the Hebron Protocol, some 80 per cent of Hebron officially passed to PA control on Jan. 17, 1997.

On Jan. 20, 1996, the first elections were held for the Palestine Legislative Council, a parliament within areas controlled by the Palestine Authority, as mandated for in Oslo I and Oslo II. Formally, *Hamas*, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) and the PFLP boycotted the poll, in protest against the peace process. This left Fatah with the majority of seats gained. However, many seats were won by independents, some Fatah-affiliated, some connected to rival parties, including *Hamas*. Independent foreign observers deemed the election to be largely free and fair. In a separate presidential poll, Yasser Arafat defeated his opponent, a DFLP-affiliated veteran woman activist known as Umm Khalil, by winning about 89 per cent of the votes cast.

The defeat of Shimon Peres's Labour Party in Israeli elections, in May 1996, albeit narrow, presaged a new antipathy to Oslo by Israel's incoming Prime

Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. He refused to meet Arafat for many months, but admitted later that he was surprised at the extent of useful security co-operation that there was between Israeli and Palestinian agencies. A crisis developed in late 1996 with riots over Israeli building around an ancient tunnel in the centre of the Old City. For the first time, there were major clashes between Israeli and official Palestinian armed forces. In time the crisis blew over and following strong pressure from the Clinton administration in the USA, Netanyahu and Arafat agreed to the Hebron Accord (above). In 1998-99 the two sides signed the Wye River Accords, which awarded the PA a further 11 per cent of territory, as stipulated by the now much-delayed Oslo II agreement.

In elections held in early 1999 the Labour Party (temporarily renamed "One Israel") under Ehud Barak soundly defeated the Likud government. Barak won on a platform of reviving the peace process. However, his attempts to re-negotiate elements of the Wye agreements irritated the PA as did his initial concentration on the Syrian track negotiations, apparently at the expense of the Palestinian track.

In May 2000 Israel withdrew from its self-declared "security zone" in southern Lebanon, nearly 18 years after the invasion of June 1982 (dubbed Operation Peace for Galilee in Israel). President Clinton then prevailed upon Barak and Arafat to attend intensive talks at Camp David in the USA in July 2000. He seemed to want to repeat the successful formula there of his predecessor, Jimmy Carter, over the Egyptian-Israeli peace talks. Negotiations proved more difficult than expected. Arafat came under enormous pressure from Fatah and others not to compromise on the refugees' "right to return", or over their claims on Jerusalem. Despite lengthening the time allotted to reach a solution on all outstanding "final status issues", President Clinton announced that the venture had failed. He praised Barak for making what were said to be offers of unprecedented generosity (including sharing Jerusalem, and giving up approximately 90 per cent of the West Bank). Clinton also described Arafat as the chief obstacle to a solution.

Scholars have since pored over these largely secretive talks, and many came to different conclusions, including questioning the sincerity and "generosity" of Barak's plans. In sum, it seemed with hindsight that Clinton, Arafat and Barak had been unduly optimistic about hoping to achieve the much heralded "end of conflict" in under a fortnight.

### **Al Aqsa Intifada**

Talks continued fitfully over succeeding months, at a lower level, and with reports of some progress. However, the outbreak of the Al Aqsa Intifada (caused in part by the radicalization of Palestinian opinion after the Camp David failure) in September 2000 disrupted the process. In retrospect, some Israeli commentators deduced that Israel's departure from Lebanon had been ill-timed and poorly executed, such that it

encouraged Palestinians to use violence (as *Hezbollah* had done) to achieve its aims.

Many Palestinians objected to the workings of the Oslo peace process. They cited lack of progress, and the ineffectiveness of Palestinian negotiators, over the issues of the settlements, release of prisoners, Jerusalem, and freedom of movement. Increasingly, the rights of refugees and other Diaspora Palestinians came to the fore. The Israelis were seen as establishing “facts on the ground” that contravened the spirit if not the letter of the peace accords.

Amidst atrophying support for Barak, Likud leader Ariel Sharon visited the sensitive Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif compound in Jerusalem, on Sept. 28. Protests erupted, and the hundreds of police accompanying Sharon responded with some force. Certain shooting incidents followed, after which a widespread rebellion began. Israeli troops stationed in Area B (according to the Oslo Accords) fired at stone-throwing protesters in Nablus, Ramallah and other Palestinian cities. Some Israelis claimed that Sharon’s visit had been pre-agreed with Waqf or Muslim religious authorities, and that the intifada was pre-planned. Palestinians largely blamed Sharon for deliberately inciting the incident and blamed Barak for allowing him to do so.

As violence spread throughout Gaza and the West Bank, PA security forces increasingly clashed with IDF units. On Dec. 10, 2000, Barak resigned in preparation for new elections. Sharon defeated Barak convincingly on Feb. 6, 2001, in prime ministerial (i.e. non-Knesset) elections. A unity government between Sharon’s Likud and a defeated Labour resulted. It was committed to stemming the unrest, and intensifying the policy of “pinpoint targetting” (called assassinations by opponents) of Palestinian figures suspected of planning acts of terror.

International intervention failed to stem the cycle of violence. US Senator George Mitchell, who had proven successful in the Northern Irish conflict, led an inquiry into the uprising, and formulated means to stem it and return to talks. Thereafter CIA director George Tenet negotiated a ceasefire in 2001, but it did not hold. Sharon demanded ten days of peace before signing. Invariably, *Hamas* or others launched attacks, thus preventing this grace period from being realised. Israel accused Arafat of playing a double game, condemning violence one moment, and demanding “martyrdom” the next. As the months passed, a new phenomenon of suicide bombings arose. Initially these remained the province of *Hamas*; soon, though, Fatah-affiliated factions joined in this activity. Analysts deduced that the PLO/Fatah wished not to be eclipsed by *Hamas*. The latter group seemed able to draw on an inexhaustible supply of candidates for suicide bombing operations. In a widely held Israeli view, however, the PLO/Fatah had returned to type, resorting to the violence that it had officially abjured at Oslo. In addition, attacks within pre-1967 Israel persuaded even former peace activists that the PLO was still dreaming of destroying all of Israel, and not just (as stated) end-

ing the occupation in the territories.

Other than Fatah and *Hamas*, other groups attempted to make their impact felt. The PFLP, for instance, launched a series of car-bombings in East Jerusalem in 2001. In apparent retaliation, an Israeli helicopter fired rockets that killed the PFLP leader, Abu Ali Mustapha on Aug. 27. On Oct. 17 one of the PFLP hit squads assassinated in turn the far right Israeli minister, Rehavam Zeevi, in a Jerusalem hotel. By the end of 2001, more than a thousand people had died, mostly Palestinians. US attitudes towards the PA regime cooled after the terrorist attacks in the USA of Sept. 11, 2001, despite Arafat’s protestations that he condemned the bombers of the World Trade Centre and rejection of any connection between the attacks and the Palestinian cause.

On Jan. 4, 2002, Israeli naval patrols apprehended the *Karine-A* ship, apparently carrying arms from Iran via *Hezbollah* to PA areas. The seizure lent weight to the Israeli claim that the PA was at best turning a blind eye to armed attacks on Israelis, thereby abrogating the terms of Oslo. On April 15 Israel arrested Marwan Barghouti, the most high profile grassroots leader of the intifada, and putative head of the *Tanzim* (see entry below), an offshoot of Fatah.

### Israeli Re-occupation

In April 2002 Israel launched what it called Operation Defensive Shield, or the effective re-occupation of Palestinian cities (hitherto demarcated as Area A under the Oslo II Accords – that is, under direct Palestinian security control). Most notable was the capture of the refugee camp in the northern West Bank city of Jenin, in which the IDF met heavy resistance and claimed to have killed 52 Palestinians. Palestinian sources spoke of a massacre, although a subsequent UN inquiry rejected this. Nonetheless, the UN did criticize the Israeli army for “war crimes” during incursions into Nablus and Jenin.

IDF tanks and troops took over Arafat’s Ramallah compound on March 29, forcing the Palestinian leader into two rooms. The troops were eventually withdrawn, on May 1, following pressure from the United States. Arafat was briefly corralled in Ramallah again on June 5-6, 2002, and Sept. 20-29, 2002, actions that boosted his hitherto flagging popularity amongst Palestinians, as opinion polls revealed. In May a five-week standoff at Bethlehem’s Church of the Nativity ended when 13 Palestinians were sent into exile. Suicide attacks continued, although at a reduced rate, leading Sharon to claim that his tough approach (including curfews and surrounding of cities) was paying dividends.

On June 18, 2002, the European Union added five Palestinian groups to an expanded blacklist of terrorist organizations. These were the Al Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigade (reputedly affiliated to Fatah), the Palestine Liberation Front (PLF), the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), the Abu Nidal Organization and the Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Devel-



opment, a US-based charity accused of channelling funds to *Hamas*.

### Launch of the “Road Map for Peace”

Talks were initiated in Cairo under the aegis of Egyptian security chief, Ali Suleiman, aimed at convincing Fatah, *Hamas* and other groups to consider a ceasefire with Israel. These fitful and initially unpromising discussions were designed to dovetail with a “Road Map for Peace”, sponsored by the so-called quartet of the USA, EU, UN and Russia. President George W. Bush made a speech in June 2002 that accepted the need for the creation of a Palestinian state. At the same time, he laid the lion’s share of blame for the violence at the PA’s door, and called on Palestinians to replace their leader with one “not compromised by terror”.

PA officials complained that they could not curb terrorist groups, as IDF raids on ministerial and security structures had deliberately degraded their effectiveness. Israel, by contrast, alleged that the PA was unwilling – not unable – to quell the violence. Paradoxically or otherwise, the intentional degrading of PA institutions played into the hands of *Hamas*, which filled the vacuum in providing medical and social services to destitute and war-weary Palestinians, especially in Gaza.

Renewed attempts at finding a peaceful solution began in March 2002. A US envoy, Gen. Anthony Zinni, visited Israel and Palestine and began compiling recommendations. Meanwhile, at the Arab League summit in Beirut, a seemingly far-reaching regional plan from Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia promised full regional recognition of Israel in return for full withdrawal of Israeli forces from the territories. Sharon’s government was lukewarm about the plan and suffered international criticism for preventing Yasser Arafat from attending the summit.

By the end of 2002 there were concerted attacks on southern Israeli towns by *Hamas*, using crude home-made Qassem missiles. Though the weapons in question proved less than devastating, Israel was determined to nip in the bud what it saw as an escalation of the armed nature of the conflict. In similar vein, Israel accused the PA of allowing lethal weapons to be smuggled across the Egyptian border, and into southern Gaza, at Rafah. Israel intensified military action here, and at Beit Hanoun in the north. Yet the resultant destruction of civilian homes, and harrassing of “international brigade” peace activists, once more raised levels of opprobrium against Israel. By late 2002, even the USA began raising objections to the creation of a concrete wall in the West Bank, designed to screen out potential terrorist attacks.

Meanwhile, Israel held early parliamentary elections on Jan. 28, 2003, at which Ariel Sharon’s Likud scored a substantial victory over Labour. While Arabs saw the result as a lurch to the right, the end of the election period allowed the much-delayed Road Map to be unveiled in April. The map is based on mutually reciprocal steps, and pledges to create a Palestinian

state within two years, with outstanding issues to be decided thereafter. Despite criticisms of the document, both the PA and the new Israeli government accepted it in principle.

### Appointment and resignation of Abu Mazen

By this stage, too, there was international pressure for “democratization” of the PA and to reduce the perceived authoritarian power of Arafat. Within the Palestinian territories, critics of the PA complained about arbitrary arrests, corruption, embezzlement of international donor funds, nepotism, failure to pass a Basic Law or constitution, restrictions on freedom of expression, the lack of a truly independent judiciary, and underfunding of health and social institutions. Some disliked the multitude of armed security forces, their internecine rivalries, and apparently untrammelled powers.

It had been hoped that the 1996 Legislative Councils elections would create an independent opposition that could hold Yasser Arafat and his administration to account. PLC Speaker Abu Ala to some extent tried to carry out this role. However, legislators soon began complaining that they were being ignored, and that their council was no more than a talking shop. Arafat continued choosing ministers at will, often from outside the PLC, and a Basic Law was still delayed. Arafat did move his main offices from Gaza to Ramallah – the seat of the PLC – yet cynics saw this as less a sign of the PLC’s authority at the centre of Palestinian political power than a case of the President stamping his authority on the supine body.

On Jan. 14, 2003, Palestinian officials used the occasion of a one-day conference in London to consider a plan to establish a post of an empowered Prime Minister. PA Minister for International Co-operation, Nabil Shaath, began drafting a new draft constitution for PA areas, in consort with Saudi officials. Then Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen), a founding member of Fatah, and effective number two to Arafat, was appointed as Prime Minister. Yasser Arafat only narrowly approved Abu Mazen’s cabinet. On April 29, 2003, the 88-member Palestinian Legislative Council also approved the new cabinet after a heated debate. Ariel Sharon thereafter opened direct talks with Abu Mazen, though he still refused to speak to a weakened Arafat.

In May 2003 Syria indicated it no longer opposed the Road Map. By July 2003, *Hamas*, Islamic Jihad and the Al Aqsa Brigades agreed to a *hudna* – a temporary three-month ceasefire. Optimists noted that in the process of agreeing to these terms, *Hamas* had for the first time acknowledged Israel’s right to exist. However, Jewish settlers threatened forceful resistance to the IDF if it came to dismantle their settlements. Though Israeli troops withdrew from Bethlehem and other urban areas, they redeployed to outlying areas and were accused of maintaining an armed blockade. Incidents continued, with further attacks and suicide bombings by Al Aqsa and *Hamas* and the assassination by Israeli forces on Aug. 14 of

Mohammed Sidr, an Islamic Jihad leader, and on Aug. 21 of Ismail Abu Shanab, one of the *Hamas* leaders. Both *Hamas* and Islamic Jihad officially called off their ceasefires in response.

Overall, the Al Aqsa intifada differs from the earlier 1987-1990 intifada in several respects. This time there are legitimate Palestinian security forces, although the boundaries between them and renegade groups are often blurred. In the first intifada, stone-throwing youth typified the struggle; in the second, bombs and guns are more prevalent. There is more competition between groups over attacking Israelis; and some analysts detected in the violence a tacit protest against PA misrule. Despite large crowds at funerals of “martyrs”, there is apparently less civil disobedience and concerted mass action.

Against this background, Yasser Arafat sought to retain effective control of the security apparatus and the position of Abu Mazen became increasingly untenable. He resigned as Prime Minister in early August and was replaced on Sept. 10 by Ahmed Qurei (Abu Ala), who was described by the Israeli Defence Minister as an “Arafat lackey”.

## PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION (PLO)

*Leadership. Mohammed Abed Arouf (Yasser) Arafat (chairman of executive committee)*

### I HISTORY TO START OF PEACE PROCESS

#### Origins and Palestine National Charter

An Arab League summit meeting held in Cairo on Jan. 13-16, 1964, agreed to set up the PLO (*Munazamat Tahrir Falastin*) under Egyptian President Nasser's initiative. Its first leader was Ahmed Shukairy, a lawyer born in Acre and former Palestinian spokesman at the United Nations. The inaugural session of the **Palestine National Council (PNC)** – a “parliament-in-exile”) was held in the Jordanian part of Jerusalem, where on May 28 it formed the PLO as “the only legitimate spokesman for all matters concerning the Palestinian people”. The Arab League would finance both it and an armed wing called the **Palestine Liberation Army (PLA)**.

On June 2 the PNC adopted the 33-article Palestine National Charter. This document still officially applies, although the PNC's Declaration of a State of Palestine in 1988 undermines key elements of it. (The Declaration applies just to the West Bank and Gaza Strip, whereas the Charter regards the whole of British mandated Palestine as one “indivisible unit”, i.e. including what is now the State of Israel.) As long as the Charter is still on the statute books, it is seen by Israel as proof that the PLO's prime aim is to destroy the Jewish state.

As amended in 1968, the Charter states that “Palestine is the homeland of the Palestinian Arab people [and] is an indivisible part of the Arab homeland” (Art.

1). It exhorts Palestinian Arabs to “determine their destiny after [liberating] their country...entirely of their own accord and will” (Art. 3). Included among this number are Arabs resident in Palestine before 1947 and all their descendants and Jews resident “before the Zionist invasion”.

The Charter also declares that “armed struggle is the only way to liberate Palestine” (Art. 9). There would be freedom of worship (Art. 16) in the new state. The Charter declares the State of Israel and 1947 partition as illegal and “inconsistent with the principles of the UN Charter” (Art. 19). Article 20 rejects the Jews' historical or religious ties with Palestine, and Article 21 rejects “internationalization of the Palestinian problem”. Zionism is condemned as “racist and fanatic” and the PLO is the sole instrument of liberation.

Reputedly the world's wealthiest liberation organization, thanks to Arab state donations, the PLO has provided an umbrella to groups ranging from radical Marxist to democratic liberal. The PNC elects a Central Council and administrative Executive Committee which includes political and military groups as well as “independents”. All major decisions must be ratified by the PNC. Through its various social organizations, the PLO influences the lives of some four million Palestinians in the occupied territories, refugee camps and cities in the Middle East and West (the so-called Diaspora). During its history the PLO developed several fissures: (i) maximalists versus minimalists (those wishing to liberate all of Palestine and those satisfied with an initial partial settlement); (ii) Pan-Arabists who accepted the patronage of major states (whether Egypt, Syria or Iraq) versus regional nationalists; (iii) those favouring negotiations with Israel versus those committed to the armed struggle, including acts of terror; (iv) an exiled leadership in Tunis versus regional cells in the territories.

From the outset King Hussein of Jordan (half of whose population is Palestinian in origin) refused to allow the PLA to train or levy taxes from refugees in his country, and in 1970-71 the PLO was expelled from the country (see Al-Fatah entry). By 1968 the PLA had bases in Syria. Shukairy and Yasser Arafat agreed on co-operation between their respective groups, the PLA and Al-Fatah, the main Palestinian guerrilla unit. When the Six Day War broke out in June 1967 the PLA came under the “national command of Egypt and Syria”, but did not actually fight. Israel conquered territories formerly controlled by Egypt and Jordan so guerrillas lost their bases and fled to Jordan and Lebanon. Yehia Hammouda replaced the discredited Shukairy in late 1967.

In February 1969 the PNC condemned attempts to impose “peaceful settlements” against Palestinian wishes. It rejected UN Security Council Resolution 242 (passed on Nov. 22, 1967), which demanded Israeli withdrawal from the territories, because it did not mention Palestinian national rights other than speaking of a refugee problem.

Arafat became de facto leader of the PLO in Febru-



ary 1969. Soon the Syrian-backed *Al-Saiqa* and others joined his Armed Struggle Committee, but Arafat's *Fatah* group was now clearly the dominant party. Palestinian guerrillas expelled from Jordan regrouped in the Arqoub region of southeast Lebanon near the Golan Heights. Their cross-border raids into Israel prompted fierce retaliation which alarmed the Lebanese government. In November 1969 the PLO and Lebanon signed the "Cairo Agreement" which aimed to regulate the guerrillas, but in effect legitimized their presence in Lebanon.

Israeli commando raids increased Lebanese resentment, as did the PLO's militancy (it acted as if it ran parts of the country). This helped cause the civil war in 1975 (see also Lebanon). The PLO condemned guerrilla actions outside historic Palestine, such as hijackings by the PFLP (Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine) and the Munich Olympics massacre in 1972, but condoned attacks on Israel and Arab "reactionaries".

### **Recognition of PLO as representative of Palestinian people**

Arab heads of government met after the 1973 war with Israel in Algiers on Nov. 26-28, 1973, and recognized the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of all Palestinians (only Jordan dissented).

Yasser Arafat addressed a United Nations debate on the Palestinian question on Nov. 13, 1974. He said he came "bearing an olive branch and a freedom fighter's gun", and offered to live in peace with Jewish Israelis who "turned away from the illusory promises of [colonialist] Zionism". Israel's permanent representative at the UN rejected this overture, saying the PLO had no right to impose itself on the Palestinian people, who already had a state, namely Jordan. "[Israel] will pursue the murderers of the PLO and destroy their bases", he declared. The debate concluded by passing resolutions (opposed by Israel, the USA and some others): (i) recognizing the PLO as a principal party in proposed Middle East peace talks; and (ii) granting it permanent observer status at the UN General Assembly.

The PLO was thereafter recognized as the Palestinian people's representative by many organizations, including the movement of non-aligned countries in August 1975, the Arab League, the Organization of the Islamic Conference in August 1976, and the Organization of African Unity. It set up offices throughout the world, in many cases gaining full diplomatic status.

### **PLO and Lebanese Civil War – Rejection of Camp David**

In the civil war in Lebanon in 1975-76, militant PLO guerrillas sided with left-wing Muslim groups in a Lebanese National Movement against right-wing Maronite Christian militias. In May 1976 the Movement at first managed to block a Syrian-dominated Arab Deterrent Force from entering Beirut. Soon they found that some PLO units, notably *Al-Saiqa*, backed

Syria; thus the seeds were sown for future PLO splits. Arafat moved the PLA headquarters from Damascus to Beirut on July 7, 1976.

Arafat reconciled his differences with King Hussein at a summit meeting in Cairo in March 1977; but that same month a split developed between PLO "moderates" and "rejectionists" at a meeting of the PNC. The former (consisting of *Al-Fatah*, *Al-Saiqa* and the Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, later known as the DFLP) favoured peace talks and a Palestinian state in those parts of Palestine which could be "liberated". The latter (consisting of the PFLP, PFLP – General Command, Arab Liberation Front and Popular Struggle Front) opposed talks and backed an armed struggle to win all of the land. Nonetheless, the PNC session voted to unify all combat forces under PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat's executive committee, to be financed by a Palestine National Fund (PNF).

In September 1977 the US State Department declared for the first time that the Palestinians should be involved in talks towards a lasting peace. The mainstream PLO welcomed this as a "positive step", but the Knesset (Israeli Parliament) voted "not to negotiate with the PLO" or to countenance a Palestinian entity.

The PLO and Syria condemned the visit to Jerusalem by President Sadat of Egypt on Nov. 19-21, 1977, and on Dec. 2-5 they joined with Algeria, Libya, Iraq and South Yemen in Tripoli, Libya, to establish an "Arab resistance and confrontation front". They rejected UN Resolutions 242 and 338 (adopted in 1973) and any "negotiation with the enemy".

The Camp David agreement between Israel and Egypt was signed in September 1978, under which Israel surrendered control of the Sinai in exchange for mutual recognition. Arafat condemned it as "a dirty deal...which does not decide our destiny". In November an Arab summit in Baghdad also rejected the agreement and promised support for the PLO and Egypt was subsequently excluded from Arab forums. The PLO rejected US-sponsored talks aimed at establishing Palestinian autonomy in the territories (a stipulation of Camp David).

### **Expulsion of PLO from Lebanon**

In March 1978 Israel invaded southern Lebanon after a major Palestinian raid on its border towns. It aimed to eliminate PLO bases and block the Syrian army; and so it supported Maj. Saad Haddad's mainly Christian forces, later known as the South Lebanon Army (see under Lebanon). A UN peacekeeping force (UNIFIL) failed to prevent further clashes which continued after Israel withdrew in June. In July 1979 Israel made pre-emptive strikes against PLO bases a formal policy. In response, the PLO ceased guerrilla activity against Israel in October; by June 1980 it closed all its offices in Sidon and withdrew its fighters to refugee camps. Israeli planes backed Phalangists in April 1981, and in June struck PLO positions in the capital, Beirut.

US mediation brought a ceasefire in July 1981 after PLO guerrillas, now back in southern Lebanon, fired rockets on northern Israeli settlements. But PLO militants rejected the deal, and increasingly clashed with Israel and the Haddad forces. After the attempted assassination of Israel's ambassador in London on June 3, 1982, Israel launched a full-scale invasion of Lebanon, codenamed "Peace for Galilee" on June 6. The aim was to destroy the PLO's military capability and restore effective central government in Beirut.

Israeli forces soon overran PLO bases in Tyre, Sidon, Saadiyat and Damour on the western coast; the PLO's mountain fortress of Fort Beaufort and Nabatiyeh; and the Arqoub in the east. Israeli forces also encircled Beirut, trapping PLO fighters in the west of the city. After two months of intensive US-mediated negotiations Palestinian units were evacuated by sea and land to friendly Arab countries. The official Lebanese count of evacuees, including some civilians, was 14,656. Arafat himself left for Greece, but vowed to continue the struggle and denied defeat. Damascus now became the main PLO headquarters.

Some 6,000 Palestinian guerrillas were captured by the Israelis and placed in special internment camps; about 1,000 had died in the war. Nevertheless, many PLO units remained in northern and eastern Lebanon, and some evacuees began returning. In all there were 7,000 PLO guerrillas in Lebanon at the end of 1982.

Suspecting that 2,000 of them were hiding in the Beirut refugee camps of Sabra and Chatila, Israel sponsored Phalangist militiamen to expel them. However, after the assassination of President Gemayel, the operation became a civilian massacre on Sept. 16-18. Up to 800 camp-dwellers were killed, sparking international condemnation of Israel's complicity. An official Israeli inquiry blamed its leaders for indirect responsibility.

### **Splits in PLO ranks**

On the diplomatic front, US President Reagan proposed a new peace plan on Sept. 1, 1982, based on self-government for Palestinians in the territories in a federation with Jordan. This split the PLO, with rejectionists condemning the plan's implicit negation of full statehood. On Sept. 9 Arab League leaders meeting in Fez countered with a plan for a Palestinian state with "peace guarantees" by the UN Security Council to "all countries in the region" (i.e. including Israel). Again, militants rejected this. A PNC meeting in Algiers on Feb. 14-23, 1983, ruled out Reagan's plan, but Arafat nonetheless held talks with King Hussein in April to discuss the federation idea.

Further developments were disrupted by an internal rebellion within Al-Fatah, which erupted in open fighting by mid-1983. Rebels received crucial military support from Syria, and Fatah loyalists were forced to withdraw from northern Lebanon. Unity was only re-established at the 18th PNC session in 1987. The

rebellion started in May 1983 when Arafat promoted two officers accused of cowardice during the Israeli invasion. Three Al-Fatah commanders, Col. Saed (Abu) Musa, Col. Khaled Al (Abu) Amlah and Nimr (Abu) Saleh, condemned Arafat's action and soon spoke out against more general corruption. Syria tried to mediate, but the officers formed a Fatah Revolutionary Council (FRC) which attacked Arafat loyalists in the Bekaa Valley.

As the PFLP-GC joined the rebels and Syria and Libya offered support, Arafat and his chief ally, Khalil al Wazir, were expelled from Damascus. Many camp-dwellers stayed loyal and Arafat found a new ally in King Hussein. Even so, loyalists were forced to withdraw to refugee camps outside Tripoli in north Lebanon by September, where they were bombarded by Syrian artillery. Meanwhile, Ahmed Jabril of the PFLP-GC appeared to have taken over as chief rebel leader. In December loyalists were evacuated from Lebanon. Al-Fatah expelled Abu Musa and Abu Amlah in January 1984 and held them guilty of treason.

Outside Al-Fatah, the PLO had divided into two broad groupings: the strongly anti-Arafat National Alliance, which included the FRC, *Al-Saiqa*, PFLP-GC and Palestine Popular Struggle Front (PPSF); and the more moderate Democratic Alliance, which included the PFLP, DFLP, Palestine Communist Party (PCP) and Palestine Liberation Front (PLF). In June 1984 Al-Fatah representatives met Democratic Alliance leaders in South Yemen, who in turn met National Alliance leaders in Damascus. Full reconciliation was thwarted by disagreements over treatment of Egypt, with Al-Fatah taking a more conciliatory line. The 17th PNC session was held in Amman in November 1984, when King Hussein took the occasion to propose an initiative based on "territory for peace" and UN Resolution 242. In February 1985 he and Arafat agreed to work towards a peace settlement based on confederation. While this was well received in some Israeli quarters (including by Foreign Minister Shimon Peres), it was rejected by the Palestine National Salvation Front (PNSF, the National Alliance plus PFLP), as well as Syria, Libya and Iran.

In Lebanon the *Amal* militia and Syria in May 1985 launched an offensive against PLO guerrillas (mainly Arafat loyalists) in the refugee camps of Sabra, Chatila and Bourj el-Brajneh. It was meant to flush out the PLO military presence in Beirut, but had the opposite effect of uniting pro- and anti-Arafat forces against a common enemy. PNSF artillery shelled *Amal* positions, while PFLP leader Dr George Habash left Damascus in protest at Syria's stance. During 1985-86 the PLO was backed by the Druse Progressive Socialist Party and *Amal*'s Shi'ite rival, *Hezbollah*. From 1986 to April 1987 *Amal* again besieged the camps, where conditions worsened and many died of disease.

All PLO factions based in Lebanon were attacked by the Israeli Air Force during 1983-87 in retaliation for raids on Israel. In October 1985 Israeli aircraft bombed PLO headquarters in Tunis, killing 80 people, after terrorists had killed three Israelis on a yacht in

Cyprus. Any sympathy the PLO may have won then was lost after the hijacking of the *Achille Lauro* cruise liner (see Palestine Liberation Front entry) and terror attacks on Rome and Vienna airports (see Abu Nidal Group).

### Reunification of PLO

Although Arafat condemned such actions, King Hussein increasingly saw him as duplicitous and unreliable. The King called off his accord with the PLO in February 1986, criticizing Arafat's failure to endorse UN 242 (a US precondition for PLO participation in peace talks). All 25 Fatah offices were shut, and Jordan sponsored a rival Fatah grouping under Col. Atallah Atallah (Abu Zaim).

During 1985-86 PLO officials transferred from Tunisia to Baghdad (Iraq) and North Yemen. Clearly Tunis felt after the Israeli raid that the PLO was as much a risk there as it had been in Beirut. At first Al-Fatah refused to accept that the Jordan accord was over; but gradually, as it restored links with hardliners, it realized it was not worth holding on to if the price to pay was PLO unity.

The 18th PNC session held in Algiers in April 1987 saw the reunification of the PLO under Arafat. Unlike the previous session, most groups were present, apart from the PFLP-GC, FRC, *Al-Saiqa* and the Abu Nidal Group. The PNC still rejected Resolution 242, the Reagan and Camp David plans and the idea of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian negotiating team. It did, however, demand an international conference with UN Security Council members and the PLO present.

The PLO had set up a Palestine National Front in the territories in 1973, overseen by Khalil al-Wazir (Abu Jihad); now the PNC session set up a co-ordinating committee for the territories. Not all were happy with the compromises with the reformed PLO. Egypt closed all their offices after being criticized at the session while *Hezbollah*, shocked at the PLO's willingness to hold peace talks, severed its alliance.

### Intifada and initiation of peace talks

Throughout 1987 tentative feelers were put out for peace: Shimon Peres backed an international conference (to the chagrin of Likud Prime Minister Shamir) and held talks with Jordanian officials. Officially neither wing of Israel's government would talk with the PLO but there were unofficial contacts.

Few in the PLO expected the intifada that started in 1987 to last, but by March 1988 both they and the Israelis realized there was a new force in the field. While Israel was increasingly attacked for its harsh (and less than effective) crackdown, the PLO sought to wield influence in the new clandestine Unified National Command. The PLO's secular nationalist approach found a new radical opponent amongst militant Muslims (such as *Hamas*).

On April 16, 1988, Mossad assassinated in Tunis Arafat's second-in-command, Abu Jihad (Khalil al-

Wazir), the PLO military commander. Between 1983 and his expulsion from Jordan in 1985, Wazir wielded huge influence in local West Bank politics, and Israeli sources credited him with organizing the intifada.

In July 1988 Jordan relinquished its authority in the West Bank. This gave the PLO the chance for a breakthrough. Bassam Abu Sharif, a senior Arafat adviser, had proposed a "two-state solution" (breaking with the PLO Charter) at a meeting of the Arab League in Algiers, on June 7-9. Arafat spoke to the socialist group at the European Parliament on Sept. 13 and said the PLO would attend an international peace conference with Israel based on UN Resolutions 242 and 338.

### Proclamation of State of Palestine

An extraordinary 19th session of the PNC was held on Nov. 12-15, 1988, in Algiers. All major PLO groups except the PFLP-GC, FRC (Revolutionary Council of Fatah) and *Al-Saiqa* attended. With George Habash registering the sole dissenting voice, the session proclaimed a **State of Palestine** with Jerusalem as its capital. It cited UN General Assembly Resolution 181 (1947) which partitioned Palestine into two states, one Jewish and one Arab, as providing the legal basis for the Palestinians' right to national sovereignty. (The irony did not escape observers: in 1947 the Zionists accepted this plan, while the PLO's antecedents had rejected it outright.)

The PNC issued a statement at the end of the session calling for an international conference on the Middle East, under UN supervision, to be convened on the basis of UN Security Council Resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). This was the first overt PLO acceptance of the resolutions, which the USA and Egypt insisted was a prerequisite for peace talks. The new state received immediate recognition from all Arab countries (except Syria) and from many non-aligned states. The Soviet Union recognized the declaration, but not the state. By mid-1990 over 90 countries recognized either the state or the declaration.

The next stage was to form a provisional government-in-exile. Disagreement broke out about its composition, but the PLO Executive Committee assumed responsibility and nominated Arafat as President and Farouk Qaddumi (also Fatah) as Foreign Minister. The Central Committee endorsed this in April 1989, although rejectionists (including PFLP-GC and Fatah Rebels) were reportedly plotting "an alternative to the PLO" in Libya.

With the diminution of Soviet global power and hence its influence over the PLO, the organization sought links with the USA. On Dec. 13-14, 1988, Arafat addressed the UN General Assembly in Geneva, explicitly recognizing the State of Israel and renouncing terrorism. This satisfied conditions set by US Secretary of State George Shultz, and on Dec. 16 US-PLO negotiations began between the US ambassador in Tunis, Robert Pellereau, and Yasser Abed Rabbo, a PLO Executive Committee member.

When a terrorist bomb destroyed a Pan Am flight



over Lockerbie, UK in late December 1988 (see also Libya entry), suspicion fell on Palestinian groups, and doubt was cast on Arafat's claim to have halted terrorism. Nonetheless, the diplomatic process continued apace as the intifada entered its second year, with a variety of plans being floated. PLO relations with Egypt improved and in November 1988 the PLO Executive Committee met in Cairo for the first time in 15 years.

On Jan. 1, 1990, an Israeli minister was dismissed for talking with the PLO, and in March 1990 Labour withdrew from the government. By June Likud formed what was seen as Israel's most right-wing government ever. By not outrightly condemning the May 30 beach attack (see entry under Palestine Liberation Front) Arafat antagonized the USA, and on June 20 President Bush suspended the USA-PLO dialogue. Radical groups, including the PFLP and DFLP, said the PLO should drop the "peace strategy" adopted in 1988. But the mainstream PLO won new support from the Arab League and EC, whose "troika" of ministers put pressure on Israel at their July summit, and doubled financial aid to Palestinians.

### **PLO and Gulf Crisis**

A growing number of PLO leaders, including the DFLP's Hawatmeh and PFLP's Habash, saw a resurgent Iraq as a more useful ally. On Aug. 2, 1990, Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait, thus beginning the Gulf Crisis which was to culminate in a US-led coalition liberating Kuwait in February 1991. In September 1990 Saddam began to "link" his invasion with Israel's "occupation of Palestine". He claimed it was hypocritical for the West to pay mere lip-service to UN Resolutions 242 and 338 (for Israeli withdrawal from occupied territories), while demanding Iraq's total climb-down over Kuwait. The USA and Israel regarded such "linkage" as spurious and cynical; yet Saddam's case, and that of his followers in the PLO, including Arafat, received a boost on Oct. 8 with the Temple Mount incident.

A rumour spread on the Haram al-Sharif (plain of the grand Mosque in Jerusalem) that Jewish militants were going to lay the foundation stone to the old temple. Muslim worshippers demonstrated; some dropped stones on Jews praying at the nearby Western Wall. Police units apparently lost control and fired at the crowd, killing 17 and wounding many more. This was the most violent incident in the three-year intifada, and led to a spate of fatal stabbings of Israelis. On Oct. 12, at the PLO's instigation, the UN Security Council (including the USA) unanimously adopted Resolution 672 that condemned the massacre and planned to send a UN mission to the area to "recommend ways of ensuring the safety and protection of Palestinian civilians under Israeli occupation".

Meanwhile Palestinians were expelled from Saudi Arabia (starting in September 1990) and the Gulf states as punishment for the PLO's pro-Iraqi stance. Arafat was forced into a loose alliance with King Hus-

sein of Jordan, whose largely Palestinian population demonstrated in favour of Iraq and against the West.

On the eve of the Gulf War, Salah Khalaf (Abu Iyad) was assassinated on Jan. 14, 1991, in Tunis. He was Arafat's second-in-command and closest advisor, a role he had inherited from the late Abu Jihad. Khalaf had abandoned an early career of terrorism (playing a key role in the Black September massacre at the Munich Olympics). PLO officials blamed Abu Nidal for his death, thought to be in revenge for his reservations about Saddam Hussein. It was revealed on April 5 that Hamzah Abu Zayd, a Palestinian, had been sentenced to death for the murder at a Palestinian military tribunal in Yemen.

Saddam Hussein's defeat by the UN coalition in February 1991 rebounded on Arafat, whom President Bush said had "lost credibility". Israel by contrast won praise for its restraint in the face of unprovoked Iraqi Scud missile attacks. As fighting increased between the PLO and Israel's South Lebanon Army allies in Lebanon, Yasser Arafat released a new peace plan on March 25. It was the most conciliatory so far, which probably reflected his diminished bargaining power. On March 12, Syria released 302 PLO members from prison, mostly Arafat loyalists; and on April 5 the pro-Syrian Palestine National Salvation Front (PNSF) called for unity under PLO leadership. Syria's status with the West improved after joining the anti-Iraq coalition. By mid-1991 it effectively dominated Lebanon (see under Lebanon). It backed the Lebanese Army in forcing PLO units in Sidon to retreat and disarm.

## **II AL-FATAH**

*Leadership. Mohammed Abed Arouf (Yasser) Arafat (leader)*

### **Origins of Al-Fatah**

Al-Fatah (the reversed acronym of the organization's Arabic title, *Tahir al-Hatani al Falastani*), the Movement for the National Liberation of Palestine, was formed by Palestinian students, including Yasser Arafat, at foreign universities in 1958. It had ties with the Muslim Brotherhood and sought independence from Arab governments.

Its first base was in the Gaza Strip, then under Egyptian administration. Al-Fatah set up training camps in Algeria in 1962 and Syria in 1964. In 1965 it began raids into Israel – 31 in all, mostly from Jordan. The group came under Syrian control when left-wingers came to power there. As its raids increased, Syria suffered Israeli reprisals, which contributed to the June 1967 Arab-Israeli war. Al-Fatah played no part in the 1967 war; by November most of its forces on the West Bank were eliminated.

Al-Fatah moved its headquarters from Damascus to Amman, Jordan, in 1968. Arafat's commitment to armed struggle won him support from PLO members disillusioned by their leaders' weakness in the 1967 war. On Feb. 1-5, 1969, Al-Fatah gained virtual con-

trol of the PLO's executive committee at a PNC session in Cairo and Arafat was elected chairman with President Nasser's blessing.

Almost half of Al-Fatah's *fedayeen* (guerrilla) force of 25,000 was based in Jordan. King Hussein worried about their growing arrogance, despite an agreement in 1968 limiting their action. The PLO failed to rouse the Arab population under occupation to revolt so resorted to ever more audacious acts, leading to ever fiercer Israeli reprisals against Jordan. In all, Fatah launched 2,432 attacks on Israeli targets in 1969. It also set up a strong base in southern Lebanon that year, where its men clashed with Lebanese Christians as well as Israeli troops.

### **"Black September"**

On Nov. 2, 1969, Al-Fatah signed the "Cairo agreement" with Beirut, but in Jordan conflict arose in 1970 between it and the government. On Feb. 10 Jordan forbade the carrying of weapons in towns and the activities of political parties. Sporadic fighting broke out between Al-Fatah and King Hussein's bedouin army. When on Sept. 16 the king placed Jordan under military rule, the guerrillas appointed Arafat as "general commander of all the armed forces of the revolution" and declared a general strike. What followed has since become known as "Black September" – a fierce 10-day operation which drove PLO forces out of Amman. On Dec. 10 the new Jordanian Prime Minister, Wasfi Tell, forced Arafat to rescind an earlier agreement to site *fedayeen* camps along the Israeli border. In April 1971 Al-Fatah called for the overthrow of King Hussein, and declared war on Jordan. By July 20 Jordan expelled all guerrillas.

Ironically, some fled to Israel and gave themselves up; but most, estimated at 9,000, left for Syria. Finding conditions too restrictive under Assad's regime, some 4,000 moved on to the southeastern Arqoub region of Lebanon, which became known as "Fatahland". From here they conducted raids into Israel which usually drew retaliation.

### **Recognition of PLO – Splits in Fatah**

Al-Fatah played a minimal role in the 1973 war, but Arafat's star rose when Arab leaders met in Rabat, Morocco, and declared the PLO to be the "sole legitimate representative" of the Palestinian people in October 1974. Al-Fatah issued mixed messages during these years. Arafat advisers Issam Sartawi and Said Hammami wanted talks with Israel, while PLO "Foreign Minister" Farouk Qaddumi demanded no let-up in the armed struggle. The group compromised on terrorism in September 1974: henceforward actions would be directed mainly at targets in Israel and the territories.

Eight Al-Fatah guerrillas launched the first seaborne raid on Tel Aviv in March 1975; altogether 18 people were killed. Another sea raid in 1978 led to the deaths of 34 Israelis and nine raiders. As head of

Al-Fatah's military wing, Abu Jihad organized the attack (and was also blamed for the Black September massacre at the 1972 Olympics in Munich). In March 1978 Israel castigated Soviet bloc states for training PLO "terrorists", and then invaded Lebanon to flush them out.

After the PLO's enforced evacuation from Beirut in August 1982 (see above), support for Al-Fatah's policies within the PLO weakened. *Al-Saiqa* and the DFLP left the "moderate" camp to join "rejectionists" led by the PFLP, while from mid-1983 Al-Fatah was split between rebels and loyalists (see under Palestine Liberation Organization). In 1983, 4,500 guerrillas were released from Israeli detention in exchange for six Israeli soldiers held by Al-Fatah in Lebanon.

In 1986 King Hussein encouraged Col. Atallah Atallah (Abu Zaim) to head a breakaway Al-Fatah, and Arafat supporters were expelled. On July 7, all 25 Al-Fatah offices in Jordan were closed, although 12 other PLO offices stayed open. In 1987 Al-Fatah started co-operating with Islamic fundamentalists in Gaza, often via their commando unit, Force 17 (see separate entry). With the outbreak of the intifada, Al-Fatah called for a general strike throughout the territories. The organization played a key role in the underground Unified National Command (see separate entry). On April 16, 1988, Abu Jihad was assassinated at the time when he was said to be planning to step up the intifada.

On Sept. 7, 1990, Al-Fatah beat off an RCF attack at refugee camps near Sidon in conflict costing 78 lives; but in 1991 the Syrian-backed Lebanese Army easily defeated Al-Fatah units which refused to disarm. Al-Fatah suffered a major blow with the murder on Jan. 14, 1991, of Salah Khalaf (Abu Iyad), Arafat's number two and the group's joint founder.

### **Fatah and the peace process**

The Oslo accords sparked off the transfer of Fatah personnel from Tunisia to Gaza and Jericho, the two areas cited for initial Palestinian self-rule under Oslo I. Yasser Arafat himself returned to Gaza on July 1, 1994.

Prominent Fatah personnel during the initial interim period (i.e. until the passage of Oslo II) were Sa'eb Erekat, with his fiefdom in Jericho; West Bank Fatah party head, Marwan Barghouti (see under *Tanzim*); head of Preventive Security in the West Bank, Jibril Rajoub, and his intellectual ally, Dr Sari Nusseibeh. In Jerusalem the prominent figure was Faisal Husseini, effectively PA minister for Jerusalem affairs; and in Gaza, Mohammed Dahlan, Preventive Security chief. All these figures were locally based Palestinians, who had "cut their teeth" during the first intifada.

Other Fatah personalities came from Tunis, and enjoyed better ties with the Palestinian Diaspora, though were somewhat mistrusted in the territories. These included Arafat deputy Abu Mazen (Mahmoud Abbas); negotiator and financial expert, Nabil Shaath; and Ahmed Qurei (Abu Ala), who led the PLO team at the original talks held in secret at Oslo. Intissar al-



Wazir (widow of former PLO deputy chief and Fatah founder, Abu Jihad) joined those mentioned above in returning to the territories with the advent of autonomy. Farouk Qaddumi, another old guard Fatah figure, head of the PLO Political Department, sometimes called its “foreign minister”, and a rival to Arafat, remained sceptical of the peace process and thus chose to remain in exile.

In the first elections held in the PNA, on Jan. 20, 1996, official Fatah candidates won 52 of the 88 seats; in a separate poll, Yasser Arafat gained 88.1 per cent of the vote to defeat a leftist candidate, Umm Khalil, and be elected Al-Ra’is (President). There were reports before the election that some Fatah candidates chosen in local primaries were removed and replaced by Arafat loyalists.

President Arafat enjoyed sweeping powers, including the right to choose whom he wanted as minister, and the PLC’s status with respect to the PLO’s National Council (PNC) remained undefined and ambiguous. Given that background, the figure of PLC Speaker Abu Ala, albeit a Fatah appointee and long-term comrade of Yasser Arafat’s, emerged as a de facto block to perceived excesses by the all-powerful executive.

Officially, Fatah backed the terms of Oslo, although many of the rank and file felt that Israeli policy, especially under Netanyahu after his victory in 1996, was eroding the process. Fatah loyally backed Arafat’s declared commitment in early 1996 to rescind articles in the PLO Charter that denied the existence of Israel. Fatah greeted with cautious optimism the election in 1999 of Ehud Barak and the Labour Party as the new government of Israel. However, when there was little indication of Barak honouring his pledge to propel negotiations with the PLO (he initially preferred concentrating on “the Syrian track”), tensions grew. In particular, there were reports that Barak was actually expanding settlements, rather than freezing them. Under US pressure, Barak and Arafat met at Camp David in June 2000 to sort out some of the outstanding issues in the Oslo programme. But Fatah activists put immense pressure on Arafat not to “compromise on Jerusalem”, and to insist on refugees’ “right to return”. Ultimately, the collapse of the Camp David meetings led to the Al Aqsa Intifada.

### **Fatah and the Al Aqsa Intifada**

A major blow for Fatah was the premature death of Faisal Hussein, Minister for Jerusalem Affairs, on May 30, 2001. Hussein was considered as a possible successor to Arafat as head of Fatah, a moderate figure with gravitas, who would negotiate Jerusalem’s future in eventual final status talks with Israel. Increasingly there were rumours that younger Fatah leaders wanted to make their voices heard and even oust the ageing Yasser Arafat. According to the Palestinian analyst, Dr Yezid Sayigh, one understated motive behind the intifada was a challenge, not only to Israel, but also as a “dysfunctional revolt” against the Fatah old guard. *Tanzim*, originally Fatah’s grassroots organization in

the territories, become the locus for much of this trend (see entry under *Tanzim*).

From April 2001, Fatah was determined not to be upstaged by *Hamas*. Officially it eschewed suicide attacks within Israel, but apparently approved of attacks on settlers and soldiers across the green line. After a brief cease-fire that began on Dec. 16, 2001, Fatah units did arrest Islamic Jihad forces that were responsible for planning suicide attacks in Afula. Yet Israel accused units of Fatah of themselves participating in terrorist attacks, sometimes alone, sometimes in tandem with Islamic Jihad or *Hamas*. In particular, they spoke of units of the Fatah-affiliated Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades (see entry, below), and especially attacks in Jerusalem from Brigades cells in Jenin, in March 2002.

The Sharon government used these incidents to legitimize massive IDF raids on Jenin refugee camp, in April 2002. Palestinians contended that the IDF perpetrated a massacre in Jenin; Israel said that this was a fallacy, and that no more than 50 Palestinians, mainly armed militants, died in the confrontations.

The events of mid-2002 – the corralling of Arafat within his headquarters in Ramallah, the battle for Jenin, reoccupation of area A cities, and IDF targeting of PNA security forces, ostensibly for not fulfilling their obligations under Oslo I and II – led to turmoil in Fatah ranks. Jibril Rajoub, once considered as a future successor to Arafat, was summarily demoted for allegedly showing cowardice in the face of the IDF offensive. His arch-rival, Marwan Barghouti, correspondingly rose in status, though his effective power diminished when Israel arrested him in April 2002.

At the same time, Fatah moderates like Abu Mazen and Sari Nusseibeh began questioning the wisdom of an armed insurrection. Such views led to a growing schism within Fatah. These were exacerbated by internal challenges within Fatah to Arafat’s autocratic tendencies, notably from Nabil Amr, a PNA cabinet minister who resigned in May 2002. He demanded the unification of the PNA’s diverse security forces, new parliamentary and municipal elections, a technocratic cabinet, and a truly independent judiciary. Another 15 ministers proffered their resignations shortly thereafter, a move Arafat rejected. Israeli reoccupation of Palestinian cities, following terror attacks within Israel, served to put on hold calls for internal reform, until the issue was revived by President Bush’s call for major changes in the PNA administration.

On Sept. 10, 2002, Fatah responded to international and internal calls, and ordered a cessation of attacks on Israeli civilians. For the first time Fatah argued that such attacks were against Islam, and not only unwise from a pragmatic point of view. It stated: “In accordance with the higher interests of the Palestinian people, and with our moral values, tolerant religions and belief; we, the Fatah movement, reject and we will prevent any attacks against Israeli civilians”. The statement was regarded as significant, as the Fatah offshoot, the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, had claimed responsibility for most of the recent attacks. However,

some officials doubted the veracity of the statement, claiming that it was no more than a preparatory draft.

In 2002 Fatah's secretary in Gaza was Ahmad Hils, who also served as local head of *Tanzim* (see separate entry). However, it is thought that Mohammed Dahlan, Gaza's chief of Preventive Security, wielded more real power within the Gaza faction of Fatah. By the first week of January 2003, there were signs of a chasm opening between Fatah and the Palestine Authority. Yasser Arafat condemned a recent double-suicide attack in Tel Aviv, soon before Israeli elections, while senior Fatah activist, Hussein al-Sheikh, acknowledged and justified the action, and "endorsed the goal of getting rid of the occupation [for which] industriousness is a natural matter".

### Rifts and the issue of Arafat's successor

Hani al-Hassan, a Fatah "old hand" from the 1960s, criticized Fatah for "mistakenly believing it was above the other [Palestinian] factions". Hassan was appointed PA Interior Minister in October 2002. Long a critic of suicide bombings, in February 2003 Hassan met Dov Weisglass, bureau chief for newly re-elected Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, to discuss a possible cease-fire between the PA and Israel. A leaflet from the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade earlier threatened to assassinate Hassan if he stepped foot in Nablus. Hassan promptly visited Nablus to show that he was not intimidated, and the Brigades claimed that the earlier leaflet was a forgery. Nonetheless, the incident demonstrated an apparently enormous schism opening within the broad Fatah camp.

Another Fatah old guard who returned to prominence in late 2002 was Abu Mazen (Mahmoud Abbas), secretary-general of the PLO's executive committee, and regarded as number two in status to Yasser Arafat. In October 2002 aides for Abu Mazen denied that he was planning to set up a new and more moderate rival organization to Fatah in Jordan. Jibril Rajoub was said to back Abu Mazen's putative group. On Nov. 28, 2002, the London-based Arabic newspaper, *Al Hayat*, quoted Abu Mazen as saying that Palestinian use of arms had only made the Israeli Prime Minister more popular, and that Palestinians had missed several opportunities to reach a truce.

From late 1995 Abu Mazen had negotiated with former Israeli Labour Minister Yossi Beilin, a former co-worker in the Oslo peace process. Advocates of the resultant secret Abu Mazen-Beilin deal felt that it would serve as a template for a final status solution between Israel and the PLO. Several of its tenets were apparently incorporated in the Taba talks agreement, also unofficial, negotiated in late December 2000 (i.e. after the Al Aqsa Intifada had begun).

While enjoying the support of many Arab national leaders, Abu Mazen lacked grassroots popularity in the territories. Even so, Abu Mazen did accept Arafat's offer (made under international pressure) that he should take on the role of a more empowered Prime Minister, in March 2003. For his part, Arafat insisted

that the choice to remould the Prime Minister's portfolio was wholly his own, and not one undertaken at the behest of either Israel or the negotiating Quartet (consisting of the USA, UN, EU and Russia). Another clash between the two men in July resulted in reports that Abu Mazen had resigned from the Fatah Central Committee, possibly from the organization altogether. This was later denied, and the two leaders patched up a rapprochement. However, a continuing struggle over control of the security forces resulted in the resignation of Abu Mazen as Prime Minister and his replacement in early September 2003 by Ahmed Qurei (Abu Ala).

Farouk Qaddumi is still the head of Fatah's political council, and used to be spoken of as a possible successor to Arafat. However, his age and resistance to talks with Israel may stand against him as may the fact that he has not returned to PA-controlled territory. Conceivably his authority amongst the Palestinian diaspora may benefit him if the road map fails altogether, and the PA is dissolved.

Amongst possible successors from the new generation of internal politicians, three names are cited. Mohammed Dahlan, the son of refugees, currently security minister and former head of general security for Gaza, is favoured by the US and apparently Israel, though disliked by *Hamas* and Fatah radicals. Marwan Barghouti was once considered head of Fatah in the West Bank. He seemed to have quelled his main regional rival, Jibril Rajoub who was fired as West Bank security chief in 2002 (although Rajoub was appointed Arafat's national security adviser in August 2003). Barghouti is currently awaiting trial in an Israeli jail, charged with involvement with violence and terror. He was credited with preparing the way for Fatah's acceptance of the road map. Finally, Sa'eb Erekat, a much experienced negotiator since the 1991 Madrid conference, and a PA minister, with his stronghold in Jericho, enjoys a comparatively high international profile. He resigned from the administration when Abu Mazen accepted the road map, though this was said to be on personal matters. Since then he has spoken widely on the need for serious peace negotiations with Israel.

### III OTHER PLO-RELATED GROUPS

The history of the PLO is a complex one with numerous factions having appeared, in addition to the dominant Al-Fatah, and with frequent re-alignments and splits. The relationship between groups has not always been transparent. This section includes mainstream PLO groups, rejectionist groups, miscellaneous groups in the PLO orbit and groups with significant linkages in terms of personnel or organization.

#### Al-Saiqa (The Storm)

*Leadership. Issam al-Qadi*

Formed in 1968 by the Syrian Ba'athist government as a counter-balance to Al-Fatah, *Al-Saiqa* was led by regular Syrian army officers. In 1973 members of its "Eagles of the

Palestinian Revolution” branch held hostage two Soviet Jews and an official in Austria, whom they freed when Chancellor Bruno Kreisky gave in to demands to close a transit camp for Jews en route to Israel.

In 1978 *Al-Saiqa* set up resistance cells on the West Bank. From its Lebanese bases it became a major arm of Syrian intervention in the 1975-76 civil war, and fought other PLO groups, notably *Al-Fatah*. In 1981 four members were sentenced to death in Turkey for an attack on the Egyptian embassy there in 1979.

After Israel invaded Lebanon in 1982, *Al-Saiqa* joined the “rejectionist” factions led by the PFLP. The group tried to mediate in the Fatah rebellion in 1983, but then joined the PNSF hardline alliance. Under Syrian influence it stayed hostile to Arafat even after most hardliners re-established contacts with the mainstream.

### **Abu Ali Martyrs Brigade**

Essentially the armed wing of the West Bank-based PFLP, and so renamed after Israel’s assassination of PFLP secretary, Mustafa Abu Ali (Ali Zibari). Israel had accused the brigade (under its previous title) of masterminding a series of bombings in Jerusalem.

### **Al Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigade (Kataeb al-Shaheed al-Aqsa)**

Unknown before the launch of the Al Aqsa Intifada, this militia started gaining prominence in early 2001. It was linked to Yasser Arafat’s mainstream Fatah (see entry), and some referred to it as an armed wing of the *Tanzim* (see entry). By January 2003, however, senior Palestinian figures, including the legislator Ziad Abu Amr, said that various autonomous elements within Fatah were acting in the name of Al Aqsa, thus casting doubt on the notion that the Brigades had one central command.

(Another group called the Al-Aqsa Brigade made its first appearance after September 1990, when Ibrahim Sarbal defected from Sheikh Tamimi’s *Beit al-Muqades* faction of Palestinian Islamic Jihad. This particular brigade was really a rival faction, which indulged in various acts of sabotage around Bethlehem. It is unclear whether there is any connection with the current group.)

The Fatah-affiliated group initially promised to target only Israeli soldiers and settlers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This was interpreted by some to signify their opposition to Israeli occupation, not the existence of Israel itself, in line with official Fatah policy. In early 2002, however, the Brigade launched a series of terrorist attacks against civilians in Israeli cities. In January the group claimed responsibility for the first suicide bombing carried out by a female. Its adoption of suicide techniques mimicked *Hamas* and Islamic Jihad. Al Aqsa also notably adopted a title with religious connotations (Al Aqsa refers to the main mosque on Jerusalem’s Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif complex). Despite these two features, however, its goals are predominantly nationalist as opposed to fundamentalist. Many of its recruits grew up as children under the first intifada. Lacking education, some found a new role in the various PNA security apparatuses, before they joined the Brigade.

In January 2001, the IDF assassinated Ra’ad Karmi, the Brigades leader in Tulkarm. His death sparked a new

upsurge of violence throughout the West Bank. In March 2002, after a deadly Al Aqsa Brigade suicide bombing in Jerusalem, the State Department added the group to the US list of foreign terrorist organizations. On April 23 an Israeli helicopter fired a rocket that killed the Brigade’s leader in Hebron, Marwan Zallun. This action coincided with Israel’s Operation Defensive Shield. On June 18, 2002, the European Union followed the US lead and added the Brigade to a list of five Palestinian groups regarded as “terrorist organizations”.

Brigade spokesmen claimed responsibility for an armed attack on a polling station in Beit She’an, in northern Israel, on Nov. 11, 2002. The gunmen managed to kill six Israelis on the day Likud Party members were choosing their leader. (Ariel Sharon won that poll, and went on to win the national election the following January.) The PA condemned “attacks against Israeli citizens in general”, actions that “do not serve the just cause of the Palestinian people but cause us great damage on every level”. Questions were raised about a rumoured rift between the PA and Fatah on the one hand, and the unruly Brigades (putatively their footsoldiers) on the other.

An offshoot of the Martyrs’ Brigade in Nablus claimed responsibility for a double suicide bombing near Tel Aviv’s old central bus station, on Jan. 5, 2003, in which 25 died, including the bombers. Israeli intelligence said that the same cell was responsible for an earlier spate of terror murders in Beit Shean, Kfar Saba and Kibbutz Metzer. The head of research in Military Intelligence, Brig.-Gen. Yossi Kuperwasser, told the Knesset Foreign and Defense Committee that a *Tanzim* cell from Nablus was responsible (see *Tanzim*). This view seemed of a piece with the prevailing Israeli view, that there was no significant difference between the Brigade, *Tanzim*, Fatah and the Palestine Authority. Indeed, Israeli Defence Minister Shaul Mofaz claimed that there was a “direct correlation” between the attack’s timing, and the lifting of a curfew on Nablus a week earlier.

Immediately after hearing news of the Tel Aviv attack, the PA and Arafat’s dominant wing of Fatah condemned the action. Evidently even some within the Brigade issued a denial, in effect retracting the earlier boast emanating from their offices. Mohammed Dahlan, former head of security for the PA, damned the attack as only serving the interests of the Sharon government. However, Fatah has yet to formally disown the Brigade from operating in its name.

Since Barghouti’s arrest, PLC member and refugees’ advocate, Husam Khader, was regarded as having much influence over the Brigade, though he has never been directly accused of involvement in terror. Since 1998 he has run a Committee for Defending the Rights of Palestinian Refugees (see entry). Israeli forces arrested him from his home in the Balata camp, near Nablus, on March 16, 2003. An *Independent* article of July 2003 named Munir Maqdash of the Ein al-Hilweh refugee camp in southern Lebanon as major leader (in absentia) of the Brigade. The current operational commander of the northern West Bank branch of the Brigades is Zakariya Zubeidi, 29. A veteran of the first intifada, he served several years in Israeli prisons in his teens. He succeeded Ziad Amr, who was killed by IDF forces, and is himself currently on the run.

In June and early July 2003, the Brigade initially held out

against accepting a *hudna* (temporary ceasefire) with Israel, even after *Hamas* and Islamic Jihad had done so. This surprised many who felt that as an adjunct of Fatah, the Brigade would be more “moderate”. Others deduced that their reticence bespoke a desire to show that they were as, if not more, radical than their Islamist rivals. Brigade spokesmen also backed Arafat over Abu Mazen and Palestinian security minister Mohammed Dahlan, whom they refused to obey.

Ultimately the Brigade did accept a *hudna*. Pointedly, according to one official, they opted for a six-month one, rather than the others’ three-month truce. On July 19, 2003, Brigade commander Zubeidi admitted that some of his militants had that day abducted Haider Irsheid, acting PA governor of the Jenin district, for “crimes against our people”. The incident followed the PA’s recent arrest of a Brigade gunman in the adjoining Jenin refugee camp. Arafat sent mediators to secure Irsheid’s release but the incident proved once more the extent of a rift between the Brigade and the PA establishment. Al Aqsa operations continued notwithstanding the ceasefire.

The Brigade remains a shadowy organisation: it is doubtful that there is one central command; numerous local cliques and renegades operate in its name. It remains to be seen whether the Brigade can operate as a unified and credible entity, especially if the road map succeeds, and thus restores the prestige of mainstream, non-violent Fatah.

### Arab Liberation Front (ALF)

The ALF was set up by the Ba’ath government of Iraq in April 1962 as the sole Palestinian group permitted in that country and served as a counterweight to the Syrian-backed *Al-Saiqa*. Militant offshoots took part in various terrorist acts, notably the attack on Orly airport (Paris) in 1975. The ALF’s leader, Dr Abdel Wahab Kayyale, was assassinated in December 1981. The ALF was a member of the “rejection front” within the PLO but in the late 1980s rejoined the mainstream. With the PLO’s pro-Iraqi stance in the Gulf War the ALF had no reason to rejoin Syrian-based “rejectionists”.

### Black Panthers

This group of putatively Fatah-affiliated *Shabib* operated in disguise and killed “collaborators” in Nablus. On Dec. 1, 1990, an Israeli Army unit gunned down four of its leaders. The unit had infiltrated the group in disguise. A former leader of the Panthers, Iyad Sawalha, was killed in Jenin in November 2002 by IDF forces. Imprisoned for killing 40 in the first intifada, Sawalha had joined the Islamic Jihad on his release in 1999, a possibly familiar tale amongst former Panthers.

### Black September

Perhaps the most notorious terror group of the 1970s, Black September was responsible for the killing of the Jordanian Prime Minister in 1971, the Munich Olympics massacre in 1972, and the Athens airport attack in 1973. It was named after the month in 1970 when Jordan defeated the PLO. In 1973 Jordan released its leader, Abu Daoud, who claimed he took orders from Fatah’s Salah Khalaf. In 1979 an Israeli bomb killed another leading Black September suspect, Ali Hassan Salameh, in Beirut (see Force 17). Under Aharon Yariv, Israeli intelligence devoted much time and energy to

eliminating Black September leaders one by one. After its heyday in the 1970s, the group was less active, occasionally resurfacing to interfere in Fatah politics such as during the 1983 rebellion in Lebanon.

### Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP)

*Leadership. Nayef Hawatmeh (Abdul Nouf) (secretary-general)*

Nayef Hawatmeh, a Christian and Marxist intellectual from Jordan, broke from the PFLP in February 1969, alleging it had developed “bourgeois tendencies”. His **Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, PDLFP** (since the early 1980s called the DFLP) soon built a reputation for mixing pragmatism (such as dialogue with Israeli left-wingers since 1974) with hardline activism (terror attacks throughout the 1970s). As early as 1973 it proclaimed that liberation of all of pre-1948 Palestine was impossible, to cries of heresy from many in Al-Fatah. Instead, it said the PLO should concentrate on “the art of the possible”, achieving Israeli withdrawal from the territories and setting up a PLO “national authority” there.

Hawatmeh remained close to the PLO leader, Yasser Arafat, which may explain why the DFLP joined Al-Fatah and *Al-Saiqa* in the “moderate” wing of the PLO during the 1970s. However, the PLO’s Lebanon debacle in 1982 and Arafat’s rapprochement with Jordan contributed to the DFLP’s drift into the “rejectionist” camp led by the PFLP. In 1984 DFLP attacks in Jerusalem killed many civilians.

Hawatmeh reconciled with the PLO leader in 1985, and in 1987 helped reunify the PLO on the eve of the 18th PNC session. After the intifada broke out, DFLP members played a significant role in the Unified National Command and popular committees.

The DFLP’s rising star appeared to be Yasser Abed Rabbo, head of information on the PLO Executive Committee and deputy secretary-general to Hawatmeh. It was he who started official negotiations with the USA on Dec. 16, 1988. Rabbo lost favour amongst radicals as the peace strategy failed to pay dividends and on April 5, 1991, the DFLP politburo dismissed Abed Rabbo, who subsequently founded the more liberal FIDA party (see entry, below).

Officially the DFLP sided with Fatah and the mainstream PLO in welcoming the Oslo Peace Process in 1993. Umm Khalil, a veteran female DFLP activist, was the only candidate to oppose Yasser Arafat in the first Palestinian presidential elections, on Jan. 20, 1996. Although she polled barely 11 percent of the vote, this tally represented more than the general level of support for the DFLP in the Palestinian populace. Her very presence in a two-horse race convinced outside observers that the elections were genuinely democratic. A handful of DFLP candidates were returned in the simultaneous Legislative Council elections, thus making the DFLP the largest identifiable non-Fatah opposition bloc in the assembly. Shortly afterwards, the DFLP leader Nayef Hawatmeh returned after years in exile to participate in the PLC conference on amending the PLO charter, in Gaza.

### Democratic Party of Palestine (DPP)

*Leadership. Saleh el-Khalili*

Formed in July 1991, this West Bank-based organization



aimed to offer Israel a Palestinian negotiating partner untainted by association with PLO militancy. Despite a semblance of independence from the PLO, Khalili claimed support among senior PLO officials. It may have been subsumed within the FIDA movement (see entry below).

### **Fatah Hawks**

Key figures in the 1987 intifada, the Fatah Hawks were disbanded when Israel and the PLO finalized security agreements, according to the Oslo framework, in 1995-96. In the current intifada (September 2000 and onward) elements of the Hawks are said to have migrated to the *Tanzim* and Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade (see entries).

### **Fatah Revolutionary Council (FRC, “Fatah Rebels”)**

*Leadership.* Col. Saed (Abu) Musa; Col. Khaled al (Abu) Amlah

The Council led the rebellion against the authority of Yasser Arafat, and was launched by Musa and Amlah (former Jordanian army officers) and Nimr al (Abu) Saleh in May 1983. Members were drawn from Fatah guerrillas in parts of eastern and northern Lebanon under Syrian control. The FRC boycotted the 18th and 19th PNC sessions. Al-Fatah expelled Musa and Amlah in January 1985, but later when *Amal* attacked loyalist camps, FRC supported the latter with artillery cover. In March 1989 Abu Musa met PFLP-GC leaders in Libya to discuss “an alternative to the PLO”. In June 1991 the FRC’s *raison d’être* was undermined as Syria sought to patch up relations with the mainstream PLO. The FRC became one of the ten groups to join the Alliance of Palestinian Forces (see entry), set up in Damascus in 1993 to oppose the Oslo Accords. The group once enjoyed support from certain anti-Arafat sections of the Jordanian Royal Court, though this is probably no longer true. The FRC is also known as Fatah-Uprising or Fatah Intifada, and is not to be confused with the Revolutionary Council of Fatah (see entry), one of the names adopted by the Abu Nidal Group.

### **FIDA**

*Leadership.* Yasser Abed Rabbo; Saleh Ra’fat (secretary-general)

In late 1990 a “young democrat” faction within the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP, see entry) tried unsuccessfully to elect deputy leader Yasser Abed Rabbo as a successor to DFLP leader, Nayef Hawatmeh. On April 5, 1991, the DFLP politburo expelled Abed Rabbo from the group, after which he founded the Palestinian Democratic Union (PDU) – *Al-Ittihad ad-Dimuqrati al-Filastini*. FIDA, its more familiar reverse acronym, spells “sacrifice” in Arabic. The chief FIDA representative in the occupied territories was Jamal Zakut, a labourer who was educated in Bulgaria and later founded a branch of the Unified Leadership in Gaza. Zakut’s brother-in-law, Mohammed Labadi, was a major organizer of the intifada. Zakut was interrogated and deported. He is one of the few members of the intifada generation to keep power in the PA era.

As early as 1973 Abed Rabbo, then a Maoist-Marxist, had advocated a limited Palestinian State in the West Bank, as opposed to total conquest of all of historic Palestine. He remained a key advisor to Yasser Arafat, and encouraged the

PLO chief to declare “independence”, recognize Israel and seek negotiations in the Algiers Declaration of 1988. In late 1989 he represented the PLO in their historic first negotiations with the US State Department’s Robert Pelletreau in Tunis. He also represented FIDA on the PLO Executive Committee. Once regarded as a possible successor to Arafat, Abed Rabbo and FIDA persuaded Arafat to allow a Palestinian delegation to attend the 1991 Madrid talks. FIDA later supported the Oslo Accords. Abed Rabbo returned to the occupied territories and joined the PA cabinet, initially as culture minister, later as information minister.

FIDA was one of the few PLO factions apart from Fatah to contest the first elections to the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) on Jan. 20, 1996. Abed Rabbo won its sole seat, for the constituency of Tulkarm. FIDA’s poor showing seemed to prove that its appeal was still restricted mainly to an intellectual leftist minority.

In 2000 Abed Rabbo and Israel’s former Labour minister, Yossi Beilin, set up an umbrella organization called the Israeli-Palestinian Coalition for Peace (see entry). Both FIDA and Abed Rabbo have condemned acts of terror during the Al Aqsa Intifada. On Jan. 14, 2003, Abed Rabbo told a one-day London conference in Whitehall that Israel was hampering PA attempts at reform, and renewed calls for international monitors to visit the territories. He had to address the delegates by video link-up, as Israel had banned him and other moderate Palestinians from attending in person.

### **Force 17**

*Leadership.* Col. Mahmoud al-Natour (Abu Tayeb)

After the expulsion of the PLO from Jordan in the early 1970s, Force 17 arose as a praetorian guard or personal security service for Yasser Arafat and other PLO leaders. An early commander was Ali Hassan Salameh, who was linked with the Black September group. He was killed by an Israeli bomb in Beirut on Jan. 22, 1979.

Lebanon remained Force 17’s headquarters until 1982, after which it dispersed to Tunis and other locations. Israeli officials blamed it for the Cyprus yacht harbour killings of three Israeli tourists in October 1985. The group transferred its headquarters from Tunis to Amman in January 1986, and subsequently made contact with *Hamas* and other Islamic groups in Gaza. Lacking a popular support base, Force 17’s expertise in acts of terror gave it a new lease of life after the start of the intifada. Al-Fatah renounced terror as a tool, but many believed that groups like Force 17 and the Palestine Liberation Front act for them by proxy.

Force 17 became one of 12 paramilitary organizations, under the umbrella of the Palestine Authority’s General Security Services (GSS), allowed by the Oslo peace accords to operate in Gaza and parts of the West Bank. In 1994 many cadres returned to these areas, and soon found themselves, somewhat bizarrely, co-operating on a daily basis with Israeli military and intelligence forces.

The outbreak of the Al Aqsa Intifada cast Force 17 into an ambiguous position. Officially, they were meant to fulfil their obligations under Oslo, and prevent acts of terror by other Palestinian dissident movements. In practice, Force 17 has been blamed by Israel and the USA for turning a blind eye to such acts of terror and in some cases for aiding and abetting them. However, when Force 17 has tried to arrest



militants, other Palestinians have damned them as traitors and as Israeli lackeys. Force 17 has about 3,000 personnel under arms, and access to light armoured vehicles.

### **Palestine Liberation Front (PLF)**

*Leadership. Mahmoud Zaidan Abbas (Abul Abbas)*

Formed by Talat Yacoub in April 1977 as a breakaway faction from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine – General Command (see separate entry), the PLF received backing from both Syria and Iraq. In 1984 it split into three factions. Yacoub joined the rejectionist Democratic Alliance in Tripoli, Libya. Abul Abbas, a former member of the PFLP, and spokesman for the PFLP-GC since 1973, led a second faction. He joined the PLO executive committee in November 1984, and was named deputy leader of a “reunited” PLF on June 30, 1987. A smaller third group led by Abdel Fatah Ghanem was based in Libya. In subsequent years Abul Abbas eclipsed Yacoub as overall leader.

The PLF gained a reputation for attacking Israeli positions from Lebanon. In August 1978 its Beirut headquarters were destroyed in a bomb explosion which killed 180 people. Fighters belonging to the Abul Abbas wing hijacked the Italian cruise liner *Achille Lauro* in October 1985, during which an American passenger was killed. The PLO condemned the action and promised to try the hijackers, who had surrendered in Egypt. However, an American fighter plane intercepted their flight from Egypt to Tunis, and the 12 hijackers were taken to Italy where they were arrested in July 1986. Abbas was released before trial on the grounds that there was insufficient evidence to convict him. Italy subsequently issued a new arrest warrant, and convicted him in absentia of masterminding the operation.

In retaliation for the Rishon Le Zion massacre, PLF units in motorboats launched an abortive attack from Libya on Israelis holidaying at the beach, on May 30, 1990. One boat reached the coast and four guerrillas were killed. Arafat antagonized the USA by not condemning the attack outright, and Washington suspended its 18-month dialogue with the PLO on June 20. There is dispute over whether Arafat approved the attack to pressurize Israel, or whether the PLF wished to embarrass the PLO leadership.

Abul Abbas held the international relations chair on the PLO executive committee as a Fatah member, until US pressure forced him off the committee in October 1991. In April 1996 he entered areas controlled by the Palestine Authority, with Israeli approval, and took part in an historic meeting in Gaza of the PNC. (At that meeting delegates agreed to reform aspects of the PLO Charter that opposed the existence of Israel.) He also apologized for the murder of an elderly US citizen, Leon Klinghoffer, who was killed during the *Achille Lauro* affair.

Abul Abbas seems to have lived in Baghdad from at least the late 1990s. On April 14, 2003, following the effective surrender of Iraq to an American-led coalition, US special operations forces captured him in his Baghdad compound. They also arrested many of his associates, and impounded documents and weapons at various sites around the city. It appeared that the USA and Italy were more concerned than Israel with bringing him to justice. On April 16 the USA rejected PA demands for his release. The PA had claimed that Abul Abbas was immune from possible prosecution accord-

ing to the Oslo Accords and cited a 1999 Israeli Supreme Court ruling to this effect. He remains in US custody.

### **Palestine National Salvation Front (PNSF)**

*Leadership. Khaled al-Fahoum*

Established in March 1985 as a loose coalition of various groups, the PNSF essentially consisted of the previous National Front plus the PFLP. It rejected Yasser Arafat’s November 1994 rapprochement with Jordan’s King Hussein. From its outset the PNSF has been led by Khaled al-Fahoum, a founder member of the PLO, and speaker of the PNC from July 1971 to 1984. The PNSF later metamorphosed into the Alliance of Palestinian Forces (see entry) which formed in Damascus, in 1993, in opposition to the Oslo Accords. On July 30, 1999, Fahoum helped engineer a visit to Syria by 13 Arab and Druze members of the Israeli Knesset (parliament). As of early 2003 the PNSF appeared to have maintained a modicum of its separate identity, though it remains more of a co-ordinating political mechanism, rather than a militia or ideological entity in its own right.

### **Palestine People’s Party**

Communists established their first cells in Mandatory Palestine in 1919, recruiting both Arab and Jewish members. In 1947, the Arab wing of the party, constituted as the National Liberation League in Palestine, was the only major Palestinian Arab group to accept UN 181 and the partition plan.

The Palestine People’s Party (*Hizb a-Sha’ab al-Filastini*) was launched in 1991 as a reincarnation of the older **Palestine Communist Party (PCP)**. Bashir Barghouti and others founded the PCP in Beirut in February 1982 to include Palestinian Communists from the territories, Lebanon and Jordanians in exile. Before then, the PCP had been subsumed within the Jordanian Communist Party, a proscribed group since 1957. Palestinian Communists were the only Palestinian faction to openly back UN 242, and its programme for Israeli withdrawal from the territories seized in 1967. The party backed Soviet initiatives on the Middle East and an international peace conference.

Barghouti was allowed to return to his native Ramallah in 1973, and was a driving force behind the creation of a Palestinian National Front on the Israeli-occupied West Bank. In 1977 it is said that Fatah and their usual enemies, the Hashemites of Jordan, joined forces to attempt to stifle Communist influence in the West Bank. Israel also placed Barghouti under a restriction order, banning him from leaving Ramallah for ten years, in 1980. In 1984 the PCP joined the Democratic Alliance and attended the PNC session in 1987 after helping patch up PLO schisms between Fatah and the Popular Front (PFLP). For the first time the PCP was officially designated as a full member of the PLO. It was also the first party, as opposed to paramilitary group, to be thus accepted.

Ironically, the intifada that began in December 1987 inspired PCP resurgence, just as fellow Communists were on the way out in Europe. The PCP took full advantage of their well-established network on the West Bank, and their links with Israeli Arabs via the Rakah Communist Party. The PCP played a key role in setting up the intifada’s Unified National Command (see separate entry), where they often moderat-

ed less temperate views. Barghouti and his lieutenant, Taysir Aruri, helped set up “popular committees”, distributed ideological handbills and organized grassroots resistance to the occupation.

Unlike other purportedly Marxist groups – the PFLP, PFLP-GC, DFLP, PLF, Abu Nidal Group, *et al* – the PCP never used terrorism as a tool of policy. A veteran communist, Suleiman Najjab (Abu Firas), became the party’s representative on the PLO executive committee in 1987, and headed the PLO Social Affairs Department. He played a key role in unifying the fractured PLO that year, and backed the PLO’s historic 1988 Algiers Declaration, mandating a two-state solution. He also participated in PLO – Syria talks in June 1991, and that same year helped found the new PPP. Though the PCP never enjoyed a mass following, outside certain areas like Salfit, it remained influential in academic circles, such as the Arab Thought Forum, and through prominent and respected local personalities, like Dr Haidar Abd al-Shafi in Gaza.

The PCP backed the Oslo Accords in September 1993, though warned against Israeli interpretations of the agreement that, in its view, allowed settlements to subvert the goal of Palestinian statehood. For these reasons, it objected to the terms of Oslo II, in late 1995, though encouraged continued negotiations by the PNA.

In January 1996 Barghouti narrowly beat his doctor cousin and fellow PPP candidate, Mustafa, for a seat in the first Palestinian Legislative Council (the legislative arm of the Palestine National Authority). He also became a PNA minister, and surprised many former supporters by backing distinctly non-Marxist policies like privatization, incentives for investors, and industrial parks straddling the borders between Israel and PNA-controlled zones.

The PPP continued drawing attention to corruption in the PNA, and advocated greater democracy in Palestinian civil society. It nonetheless justified its co-operation with the PNA on grounds of national unity, especially in the face of a new and more right-wing Israeli administration under Netanyahu, after June 1996. The party held its third conference on Nov. 2-4, 1998, having launched a major initiative in May that year to oppose settlements and prepare the groundwork for full Palestinian statehood. A stroke in 1997 rendered Barghouti less active, though he remained the party’s leader until his death on Sept. 9, 2000. Najjab, his putative successor, died in August 2001.

### **Palestine Popular Struggle Front (PPSF)**

*Leadership. Samir Ghosheh*

This Iraqi-backed group was formed in Jordan in 1968 by the commando wing of the Palestine Liberation Army. Closely identified with Al-Fatah in the early 1970s, the small PPSF later joined the PLO’s “rejectionist front”. It joined the hardline National Alliance in 1984 after the rebellion within Al-Fatah but by mid-1987 had returned to the mainstream, playing a key role in the reconciliation before the 18th PNC session, and voting for the 1988 Algiers Declaration.

From 1993 the PPSF surprised many by becoming involved in the Oslo negotiations with Israel. It even acted as a mediator between Arafat’s Fatah and the more radical PFLP (see entry). In 1994 the PPSF leader, Jerusalem-born Samir Ghosheh, was rewarded with the post of Minister of

Labour and Social Affairs in the newly formed Palestinian National Authority. His appointment convinced observers that the PNA was broad-based and not confined to just Fatah and supporters of Arafat.

### **Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) (Al-Jabha Al-Shabiyya li Tahrir Falastin)**

*Leadership. Ahmed Sa’adat (in detention)*

The PFLP’s founder and leader from its creation until 2000 was Dr George Habash. He left mandated Palestine in 1948 and studied in Lebanon, where he created the radical leftist Arab National Movement (ANM). He and another future leader of the PFLP, Wadi Haddad, came under the influence of the Arab nationalist philosopher, Dr Constantine Zurayq, whose books, including *Al-Wa’i al-Qawmi* (“National Consciousness”, 1939) and *Nahnu wa al-tariq* (“We and the Future”, 1954) defined the ANM’s pan-Arab and anti-imperialist ideology. In 1967 Habash moved to Jordan where in December, following the Arab defeat in the June Six Day War, he founded the PFLP as the ANM’s military wing.

The PFLP soon absorbed other smaller groups, and succeeded the ANM as a Marxist-Leninist organization conducting “class struggle against Zionism and imperialism” and regarding the Palestinian cause as only part of a general struggle to rid the Middle East of its supposedly reactionary and pro-Western leaders. Increasingly, Habash dropped his earlier reticence about leading a separate Palestinian struggle outside the ambit of pan-Arab liberation. Nonetheless, ideological differences led to one PFLP co-founder, Nayef Hawatmeh, breaking away from the parent group in 1969 to form the Democratic Front, or DFLP (see entry). The PFLP charged the DFLP with “infantile leftism”. Another group, called the PFLP-GC (Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine - General Command) and led by Ahmed Jibril, had broken away from the PFLP in 1968, after which it, too, maintained a separate identity.

Between 1967 and 1970, the PFLP increased its organization and activity in Jordan. Towards the end of this period, it began militating for the overthrow of the Hashemite Monarchy. In 1970 its destruction of three airliners at Dawson’s Field in Jordan was seen as a direct threat to Jordan’s military forces. Analysts suggest that the PFLP forced Fatah’s hand, leading inexorably to the events of Black September and a virtual civil war in Jordan that ultimately saw both the PFLP and PLO expelled from the Kingdom in 1971.

The mainstream PLO condemned these actions as embarrassing to their cause, but the PFLP continued building ties and planning joint acts with other revolutionaries, such as the Japanese Red Army (at the Lod airport attack in 1972), the West German Red Army Faction and the Venezuelan Carlos Ramirez. PFLP guerrilla Leila Khaled achieved iconic status at this time. The most infamous example was the hijacking of an Air France airbus to Entebbe, Uganda, in 1976, whose passengers were rescued by Israeli commandos.

In 1974 the PFLP left the PLO executive committee to lead the “rejection front” opposed to any compromise. However, Habash began to distance himself from operations chief, Wadi Haddad, who persevered with terror acts. Habash and Arafat staged a reconciliation in 1979, and two

years later the PFLP joined the PLO Executive Committee. The PFLP later turned on its Syrian benefactors following their proxy siege of Palestinian camps in Beirut in 1985. It rejoined the mainstream PLO at the 18th PNC session in 1987, after the PLO renounced its pact with Jordan.

In the late 1980s the PFLP became the main focus of opposition to the Jordanian government. PFLP members in the territories and Jordan enthusiastically supported the intifada in 1987; 50 were expelled from Jordan after demonstrations in December. The organization played a key role in the intifada's Unified National Command (see separate entry). As the uprising progressed, however, the Front's West Bank organ, *Al-Hadaf* (The Aim) warned against stretching economic resources too far in the struggle against Israel; and against expecting an immediate end to Israeli occupation. The PFLP's military wing was then known as the Red Eagles (see entry). Increasingly, they turned to violent armed actions including attacks on Israeli civilians in pre-1967 Israel, and even on suspected Palestinian "collaborators".

PFLP guerrillas raided Israel from Lebanon in early 1989. Bassam Abu Sharif, chief spokesman for the PFLP and active in terror attacks, was expelled from its Central Committee in 1987 and has since been a great influence on Arafat. It was his anonymous article in 1988 which started the process leading to Arafat's recognition of Israel that year at the 19th PNC session.

Habash voted against the "two-state solution", but abided by the majority vote, thus giving Arafat credibility with radical sceptics. But after USA-PLO talks broke down, he asked the PNC to evaluate the "experiment" with moderation on June 9, 1990. Habash played a key role in September's meeting in Amman, Jordan, of 120 "anti-imperialist" Arab parties, promising to help Iraq in the event of a US attack. Throughout the first half of 1991 Israeli forces pounded PFLP bases in Lebanon.

The PFLP became a key player in the Alliance of Palestinian Forces (see entry) that gathered in Damascus to oppose the Oslo Accords between the PLO and Israel, in August and September 1993. The PFLP officially boycotted the Palestinian Authority's elections of Jan. 20, 1996, although local West Bank-based PFLP leaders, notably Riyadh al-Malki, argued against the decision as an opportunity lost to make their voices heard.

Abu Ali Mustafa (born Mustafa Zibri) officially replaced George Habash as leader of the PFLP in July 2000. The ailing Habash had resigned on April 28 that year. Mustafa, appointed deputy secretary general, had caused some controversy in radical circles when he agreed to return to PNA-controlled areas in October 1999. Israel accused him of being behind a series of car-bombings in early 2001, and an Israeli helicopter fired rockets that killed him in Ramallah on Aug. 26, 2001.

Ahmed Sa'adat, considered to be a more radical figure than his predecessor, immediately replaced Mustafa as PFLP leader. On Oct. 16 a PFLP team operating in Jerusalem assassinated a right-wing Israeli cabinet minister, Rehavam Ze'evi, in apparent retaliation for Mustafa's slaying less than two months earlier. Sa'adat was arrested by the Palestinian Authority in January 2002, under pressure from Israel and the USA. He is currently incarcerated in Jericho, according to an arrangement that has him guarded by US and British

personnel. Ahed Ghoumi, leader of the Abu Ali Mustafa Brigades, was one of four others handed over to US-UK custody at the same time. In April a makeshift PNA court convicted Ghoumi and three others of Ze'evi's murder. Israel arrested Abdel Rahim Maluh, Sa'adat's deputy, in July 2002, and imprisoned him in Megiddo. Yasser Arafat subsequently offered Maluh a post within his reshuffled cabinet, in a bid to create a broader based government, but Maluh refused.

### **Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine — General Command (PFLP-GC)**

*Leadership. Ahmed Jabril (secretary-general); Talal Naji (deputy secretary-general)*

After it broke away from the PFLP in 1968 the nominally Marxist General Command gained notoriety for repeated acts of terror. The PFLP-GC claimed that it was more interested in military activity than political dialogue (unlike the PFLP). The Damascus-based group was one of the most resolutely pro-Syrian, a factor of some significance once Syria began talking to Israel. Its leader, Ahmed Jabril, was formerly a captain in the Syrian army. Syria still provides the group with logistic support, and at various stages Libya has sponsored its activities.

The PFLP-GC made its name with acts such as the blowing up of a Swiss airliner in 1970 (killing 47), attacking the Kiryat Shemona settlement in northern Israel in 1974 (killing 18, including 12 children), kidnapping a US colonel in Beirut in 1975, and killing a former Iraqi Prime Minister in London in 1979. A pro-Iraqi faction led by Abul Abbas broke away to form the Palestine Liberation Front (see separate entry).

It sided with the Fatah rebels in their battle with Arafat, but some members objected to this. In May 1985 the PFLP-GC exchanged three captured Israeli soldiers for the return of 1,155 guerrillas held by Israel.

On Nov. 26, 1987, a PFLP-GC operative launched a hang-glider raid, near Kiryat Shemona, killing six and wounding seven, before being killed himself. The incident provided a role model for young activists in the intifada that broke out on Dec. 8, 1987.

Jabril was widely accused of being behind the bombing of a Pan Am flight which exploded over Lockerbie, Scotland, on Dec. 21, 1988, killing 270 people. Indeed, defence lawyers for the two Libyans put on trial for the bombing specifically named the PFLP-GC and the Palestine Popular Struggle Front as the real culprits. Jabril and his deputy, Talal Naji, have always denied the charge. Since the intifada Jabril has improved ties with Muslim radicals who also oppose the PLO and they have co-operated in acts of terror.

In late 1993 the PFLP-GC joined the Alliance of Palestinian Forces (APF, see entry), a Damascus-based umbrella group for ten radical leftist and Islamist groups that rejected the Oslo Accords. On May 20, 2002, Jihad Jabril, son of PFLP-GC leader Ahmed Jabril and head of the group's military operations, was killed in a Beirut car bombing. The movement immediately blamed Israeli Mossad agents, though Lebanese police arrested a senior PFLP-GC commander on suspicion of being involved in the assassination.

### **Red Eagles**

Name adopted by the armed wing of the Popular Front for

the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP, see entry). They soon established a pattern of attacking suspected Palestinian collaborators, and suffered – like the other militias here mentioned – from infiltration by Israeli undercover agents. Their fighters at one stage wore red-embroidered keffiyehs (Arabic scarves) to distinguish them from rivals. The name seems no longer in usage; in the current (post-2000) intifada, PFLP gunmen are called the Abu Ali Mustapha Brigades.

### **Revolutionary Council of Fatah (RCF, Abu Nidal Group)**

Abu Nidal was at one time one of the most feared and elusive terrorists in the world. His Revolutionary Council of Fatah (*Fatah al-Qiyadah al-Thawriyyah*) has operated under a variety of *nommes de guerre*, and enjoyed contacts with revolutionaries around the world. The Group was founded in 1973 as a breakaway faction from Al-Fatah. That year five RCF members operating under the name *Al-Iqab* (Punishment) seized the Saudi embassy in Paris to force the release of Abu Daoud, the Black September leader.

The Group was based in Iraq where it enjoyed government patronage, but by the late 1970s Syrian influence grew. In 1975 the RCF killed the secretary-general of the Afro-Asian People's Organization in Cyprus. The Group regarded Arafat and other "moderate" PLO representatives as traitors and hence legitimate targets for assassination. It killed the PLO representative in Paris on Aug. 3, 1978, as well as several Iraqi diplomats abroad. In 1974 the PLO condemned Abu Nidal to death.

On June 3, 1982, the Group made an attempt on the life of the Israeli ambassador in London. Although unsuccessful, this act led to Israel's invasion of Lebanon three days later. (Two groups claimed responsibility – *Al-Asifa* and the Lebanese-based Revolutionary Organization of Socialist Muslims – but both were regarded as fronts for the Abu Nidal Group). Another name used by the group is Arab Revolutionary Brigades.

In April 1983 it claimed the life of Dr Issam Sartawi, a close Arafat adviser and vocal advocate of mutual recognition by the PLO and Israel. Abu Nidal was expelled from Baghdad to Damascus in November 1983, but he returned the next year for cardiac treatment. In November 1984 he was erroneously reported to have died of a heart attack, but in December 1985 took credit for two particularly brutal attacks, at Rome and Vienna airports. A Rome court sentenced him to life imprisonment in absentia on Feb. 12, 1988. Between 1973 and early 1987, the RCF committed 98 terrorist actions, including 56 against Palestinians, according to the PLO.

In March 1986 Abu Nidal's "Che Guevara Brigade" entered the Israeli occupied West Bank and killed Nablus Mayor Zafer al-Masri. Some thought Abu Nidal wished to re-enter the PLO mainstream; a belief borne out by RCF discussions with PLO groups prior to the 18th PNC session. In May 1987 Abu Nidal supporters co-operated with Al-Fatah units in southern Lebanon. Somewhat shunning its earlier clandestine cell structure, it formed a militia, welcomed new militant recruits, and even initiated social and political activity in refugee camps.

Abu Nidal guerrillas seized a yacht off the Israeli coast on Nov. 8, 1987, believing the passengers to be Israelis.

They were in fact French and Belgian tourists, whom the Group released in 1988-90.

Both Iran and Libya had links with Abu Nidal. His Syrian offices were closed on June 1, 1987, his supporters expelled and his ally, Gen. al-Khouli, head of Syrian Air Force intelligence, dismissed. Libya endured US sanctions because he had offices in Tripoli; in December 1989 they were shut down and Abu Nidal was placed under "house arrest". The group was among those accused of carrying out the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, in December 1988.

A renegade RCF faction killed PLO security chief, Salah Khalaf (Abu Iyad) and Abu Hul, commander of Fatah's Western Sector forces, in Tunis on Jan. 14, 1991, apparently as punishment for Abu Iyad's lukewarm support for Iraq on the eve of the Gulf War. At the time Abu Iyad was regarded as deputy chief of the PLO, and second only to Yasser Arafat in seniority. The group assassinated a Jordanian diplomat in Lebanon in January 1994.

Abu Nidal's group has not attacked Western targets since the late 1980s. In his 1999 biography of Abu Nidal, the British author Patrick Seale advanced the argument that he had acted as a hired gun for various Middle East governments, including the Israelis. Unsurprisingly, Jerusalem denied the allegation, citing the number of Israeli and Jewish targets he had hit. In March 1999 the *Jerusalem Post* reported that eight RCF defectors were living on the West Bank, under Palestine Authority control, including Ali Farra, reputed planner of the 1982 attack on Israel's ambassador to London. On Jan. 14, 2000, Austrian Police arrested a female activist of the RCF, Halima Nimer, when she tried to withdraw a sum equivalent to US\$ 7.5 million from a Viennese bank. Nimer was claimed to be chief financier of the RCF.

Abu Nidal was apparently forced to relocate from Libya to Iraq in December 1998. In 1999 Libya and Egypt closed down RCF offices in their countries. Abu Nidal died on Aug. 22, 2002, in Baghdad – the result of suicide, according to the Iraqi authorities. Former allies, though, claimed he had been summarily executed on Saddam Hussein's orders. It is doubtful that the group will survive intact for long without its charismatic leader. The RCF's operational strength is estimated at no more than 400 at most, mostly distributed in Lebanon's Beka'a Valley, and amongst Palestinian refugee camps in that country. Some agents still reputedly operate in Sudan and Syria, though Egypt and Libya effectively shut down its operations in their countries in 1999, and it lacks support in the occupied territories. Overall, the RCF has lost ground to Islamist groupings and longer established nationalist forces loyal to the PLO. It has played little discernible role in the Al Aqsa Intifada, though individual members may conceivably lend their logistical prowess to other groups.

### **Shabiba (Youth)**

The official PLO youth wing is called by the same name, but the phrase has been extended to cover young people who set up secretive kangaroo courts to try alleged collaborators (see Black Panthers for one example). Evidence suggests that a number of "executed" and otherwise punished people were indeed paid-up Shin Bet informers; but many others were victims of older, non-political feuds. After the Gulf War moderate and older Palestinian leaders, including Faisal



Husseini, jettisoned their earlier reticence and condemned the *Shabib* for corrupting the spirit and original purpose of the intifada.

### **Tanzim**

*Leadership. Marwan Barghouti*

The Fatah Hawks, key figures in the 1987 Intifada, were disbanded when Israel and the PLO finalized security agreements, according to the Oslo framework, in 1995-96. But many of its personnel migrated to Fatah's new unofficial militia, established in 1995 and known as the *Tanzim* (Organization).

*Tanzim* has been variously seen as an unofficial pro-Arafat force and an indigenous political trend within Fatah, which sought greater grassroots participation and democracy for a new young guard. Many *Tanzim* cadres are graduates of the first intifada. Analysts regard the *Tanzim* as a secular nationalist counterweight to the equally indigenous Islamist groupings, *Hamas* and Islamic Jihad. By the same token, the Israeli Institute for Counter-Terrorism sees *Tanzim* also as a counterweight to formal PA security bodies. It is ready to do Arafat's bidding, says the institute, yet also acts as a "safety-valve" through which ordinary Palestinians can protest corruption by the PA elite.

*Tanzim* subscribes to the Fatah ideology, of political self-sufficiency borne of mistrust of foreign Arab governments. It runs summer camps for indoctrination and weapons training. Reportedly the *Tanzim* receives from PA coffers an annual budget of \$2.4 million. At various stages, *Tanzim* has favoured a unilateral declaration of Palestinian statehood, at variance with official PA policy. The group claims to have tens of thousands of members, and divides the territories into sectors and cells. Its strongest branches operate in the universities of Bir Zeit, Bethlehem and An-Najar in Nablus. Some *Tanzim* personnel serve in the PA security forces, which represents not only a potential clash of interests, but also the option of deniability when it comes to ascribing blame for various actions.

Before the outbreak of renewed intifada in September 2000, Israeli intelligence analysts had predicted the possible return of terror and violence as a means for Arafat to attain political ends. But while they correctly predicted acts from *Hamas* and Islamic Jihad, they underestimated the role that would be played by Fatah, via the *Tanzim*. In another play at deniability, *Tanzim* spawned a military strike force, known as the Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade (see separate entry). The relationship between *Tanzim*, the Brigade and Fatah itself remains ambiguous and confusing, probably deliberately so. The *Tanzim* is believed to offer sums of money to compensate families of Palestinians killed or wounded in the intifada. It reputedly has an array of weapons, from pistols to anti-tank missiles and German MP-5 submachine guns, some allocated to it by the PA, some purchased from Israel's criminal underground, and some acquired by smuggling from Egypt and Jordan.

The best-known *Tanzim* leader is Marwan Barghouti. Born in Ramallah in 1959, he led the Bir Zeit University Council for four years, was arrested for his role in the first intifada, and was imprisoned in Israel for two years. Expelled from the West Bank, he went to Tunis and in 1989 was elected as the youngest member of the Fatah Revolu-

tionary Council, returning to the territories after the Oslo Agreement in 1994. Barghouti was elected to the PLC in 1996, and represents Ramallah. In June 1998 he criticized Arafat's re-appointment of six ministers whom a PLC report called corrupt. He also accused PA security forces of abusing their power. Fluent in Hebrew, Barghouti often appeared on Israeli television, and at some stages fostered close contacts with peace campaigners in Israel. One of his chief rivals is Hussein al-Sheikh, who defeated him in an election for the post of General Secretary of Fatah in the West Bank. Arafat subsequently annulled the election.

*Tanzim*'s leader in Gaza is Ahmad Hils, who also serves as Fatah's Gazan secretary. By contrast with Barghouti, who dislikes the head of Preventive Security in the West Bank, Jibril Rajoub, Hils has co-operated closely with Rajoub's counterpart in Gaza, Mohammed Dahlan. In June 1998 Hils proclaimed that "the path of jihad, struggle, and heroism continues to be the only way to liberate Palestine". In September 2002, however, he described initiatives to end attacks on Israeli civilians as "not just to please Sharon, but to ensure our struggle is just and fair". A key negotiator between Fatah and *Hamas*, he is thought to enjoy more support in the north of Gaza than in the south.

*Tanzim*'s first direct clash with Israel came in September 1996, with the widespread Palestinian protest against Prime Minister Netanyahu's decision to open an ancient tunnel in the Old City of Jerusalem. This was repeated with the brief Nakba riots of May 2000. In both instances, *Tanzim* members used live fire. Israel accuses the *Tanzim* of initiating mass demonstrations, and then shooting from behind civilian protesters, effectively turning the latter into a "human shield". Since 2001 *Tanzim* stands accused of specific acts of terrorism, including bombings and road ambushes, and sometimes in concert with *Hamas* and Islamic Jihad cells.

Israel managed to capture and arrest Marwan Barghouti in April 2002, and subsequently charged him with ordering attacks that led to the deaths of 24 Israelis. Barghouti questioned Israel's right to arrest him in nominal PNA territory, denied all charges, and contested Israel's right to try him, as he was a member of the Palestinian Legislative Council. On Dec. 2, 2002, Barghouti called for a change in PA leadership, after they had "failed in their roles and responsibilities in this decisive battle". (His proclamation was made from his Israeli prison.) While Barghouti did not specify Arafat by name, many felt that was his intention. Unlike other leaders, he still backs a militarized intifada. He also favours elections as the means to effect a change in leadership. Meanwhile, Israeli paratroopers arrested the *Tanzim* head in Nablus, Ibrahim Hashish, in late December 2002, having arrested his predecessor a month earlier.

What remains unclear is the actual relationship between Fatah, the *Tanzim*, the nominally Fatah-affiliated Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade (see entry), and apparently leaderless and localized "freelance" Fatah militias. Israel consistently blames Arafat for masterminding, or at least approving of, all terrorist acts committed in the name of Fatah. Many analysts query this assumption, and feel that Arafat had lost control, having been isolated from the "battlefield" while effectively incarcerated in his Ramallah headquarters.

### **Unified National Command (UNC)**



The Unified National Command was the grassroots Palestinian group which organized the first intifada and resisted Israeli attempts to crush it. Its main components were outposts of PLO factions in the territories: Al-Fatah, the Popular and Democratic Fronts (PFLP and DFLP) and the Palestine Communist Party (PCP) (see separate entries). Yet it resented the external PLO for claiming to have started the intifada and often differed with them on tactics. It issued a succession of imperative handbills, usually countersigned by the PLO. The Command was from the start cloaked in secrecy. Many of its leaders came from the ranks of the 20,000 young Palestinians who had served time in Israeli prisons. The Labadi brothers, Mohammed and Majid, both DFLP activists, coordinated UNC handbills in the early days.

Divisions soon emerged between pragmatists, like the PCP, and the more fiery Al-Fatah and Front representatives. By February 1988, the UNC began adopting the ideas of Al-Fatah supporter and editor Hanna Siniora, and veteran peace campaigner Mubarak Awad. They wished to raise the intifada to a "higher plain", eschewing violence in favour of civic non-cooperation with Israel and economic self-sufficiency in the territories—in short, preparing for autonomy. Jordan's abdication of its claim to the West Bank in July suddenly made this appear feasible.

On July 31, 1988, Faisal Hussein outlined plans for regional independence and talks with Israeli officials; in November the Palestine National Council declared a State of Palestine. But by this stage many UNC leaders had been arrested. Some were deported, to the protests of international bodies and liberal opinion in Israel.

UNC members attended meetings of the external PLO, but resented having to obey PLO orders, maintain an economy during the uprising, and at the same time prevent Islamic radicals and *Shabib* from winning the initiative. In its heyday it challenged both the Civil Administration and the PLO in exile. Israeli security experts say that UNC members continued to run sophisticated networks from within prisons.

By 1990 a group of older venerated personalities (known in Arabic as the *shakhsyat*) began speaking on behalf of the UNC. Certain members of the Israeli security establishment began clandestine talks with a number of them. The *shakhsyat* included figures like Hanan Ashrawi and Riad al-Malki (the latter from the PFLP; both on the staff of Bir Zeit University). Others included the Jericho-based Sa'eb Erekat, Gazan Dr Haidar Abd al-Shafi, Jad Isaak, Dr Mamdouh Aker, Dr Sari Nusseibeh and Hassan Asfour. US authorities consulted most of these people, who ultimately formed the bulk of the official (and nominally non-PLO) Palestinian delegation to the Madrid peace talks of October 1991.

### Unified Resistance of the Intifada

Yasser Arafat and Marwan Barghouti (see also under *Tanzim* and Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade) reputedly formed this umbrella structure in the fall of 2001 to co-ordinate terrorist attacks among Fatah, *Hamas*, Islamic Jihad, and PLO member organizations like the DFLP and the PFLP.

## ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALIST GROUPS

### Al-Qaeda

Reports of *Al-Qaeda* cells operating amongst Palestinian militants were particularly rife after the atrocities in the USA of Sept. 11, 2001. Nonetheless, there is little conclusive proof to show that such cells really exist. Both *Hamas* and PLO leaders distanced their organizations from the Sept. 11 attacks. Yasser Arafat pointedly condemned *Al-Qaeda* chief, Osama bin Laden, for exploiting the Palestinian issue for his own ends, with little genuine concern about the fate of the Palestinian people.

That said, an Israeli military court at the Erez checkpoint on the border with Gaza charged Nabil Okal with conspiring to bomb targets on the orders of *Al-Qaeda*, and sentenced him to 27 years in prison. A resident of the Gaza Strip, Okal allegedly trained in camps run by Bin Laden in Afghanistan, and arrived in the occupied territories in 2000 to set up *Al-Qaeda* cells. There were also reports that a militant *Al-Qaeda* cell operated in the Ein al-Hilweh Palestinian refugee camp in southern Lebanon, where on occasion they had gun-fights with rival groups.

### Hamas (Islamic Resistance Movement)

*Leadership. Sheikh Ahmed Ismail Yassin*

Progenitors to *Hamas* included a Gazan branch of the Egyptian *Ikhwan al-Muslimin* (Muslim Brotherhood) and local organizations. One such was Suffiyan, an Islamic reformist society that was founded in the 19th century and enjoyed support in Gaza before the outbreak of the intifada. Another conservative Muslim association with influence in Gaza was *Mujamaa*, or Islamic Congress, led by Sheikh Yassin, and instituted in 1973.

The mutation from local groups to *Hamas* bespoke the politicization of Islam, and the geographic extension of its doctrine from Gaza to the West Bank. It also represented a shift from a conservative stance that stressed individual betterment according to Koranic principles, to one which emphasized the nationalist agenda. *Hamas* increasingly began to compete overtly with the largely secular Fatah and PLO, even posing as a radical, more "authentic", alternative to the longer established nationalist movements.

### Role during the first intifada

Formally founded in February 1988, *Hamas* soon led the two-month old intifada in its spiritual heartland, the Gaza Strip. Soon it made its mark on the West Bank too. Its founder is Sheikh Ahmed Ismail Yassin, of Zaitoun, Gaza. Before 1988 he chaired the Islamic Congress. After his premature release in 1985 from a 13-year Israeli prison sentence for arms possession, he led the Muslim Brotherhood, a cultural movement loosely connected with the mother organization in Egypt. Both the Congress and Brotherhood were soon subsumed within *Hamas*.

The launch of the underground *Hamas* ("zeal" in Arabic and also an acronym for "Islamic Resistance Movement") marked a change from the previous Muslim stance of quietism vis-à-vis nationalist activism. Indeed, the Civil Administration had encouraged fundamentalism in the hope of thwarting secular nationalists in the PLO. They registered the Islamic Congress and turned a blind eye to its takeover of the Muslim *waqf* (religious trust) and the al-Azhar Islamic University in Gaza. (The Congress had encouraged grow-

ing numbers of young Gazans to attend their mosques.)

In the event, Israeli policy backfired during the 1987-1991 intifada as *Hamas* consistently outflanked the PLO and its front groups in resorting to violence and refusing to negotiate with Israel. It shunned the Unified National Command (UNC) as it would not take orders from secularists. *Hamas* sees the "liberation of Palestine" as just a step towards the ultimate creation of an Islamic theocracy throughout the Middle East. To this end they use blatantly anti-Jewish rallying cries. *Hamas* leaders were rounded up in July-September 1988 but soon regrouped.

The organization rejected the PLO's belated acceptance at the Algiers PNC meeting of UN 181 whereby it accepted the principle established in November 1947 of partition between a Jewish Israel and Arab Palestine. On Aug. 18, 1988, *Hamas* published its own "covenant," a document of thirty-six articles calling for a synthesis of Islamism and Palestinian nationalism. It declared that the whole of historic Palestine (i.e. including all of present-day Israel) was granted to Muslims as a holy endowment (*waqf*), and thus could not be ceded by mortal politicians to others. In January 1989 *Hamas* called for an alternative to the PLO's leadership of the UNC.

Their role increased in 1989-90 as the PLO failed to get Israel to compromise. On Jan. 3, 1990, Sheikh Yassin went on trial in Gaza for 15 offences, including alleged complicity in the murder of two soldiers in May 1989. He was subsequently found guilty by Israel and imprisoned.

*Hamas* played the Gulf War of early 1991 to its advantage. While Yasser Arafat indicated support for Saddam Hussein, *Hamas* evinced more sympathy for occupied Kuwait. Hence conservative parties in the Middle East, notably Gulf States, and to some extent Jordan, began transferring financial support away from the PLO and towards *Hamas*. Rejecting the concept of talks with Israel over "selling the land", *Hamas* opposed the Madrid conference of late 1991, and the subsequent peace process.

### Organization and factions

A broad network of *Hamas*-run charity associations (*Jamayat Hiriya*) and committees (*Lejan Zekat*) operates in the territories. These survived the devastation of a major Israeli crackdown in 1989, which required massive re-staffing. In 1991 *Hamas* officially launched the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigade (named after a famous Islamist killed by the British in Palestine, in 1935). This added to the less formalized military wing, *Mujahedin A-Falestinin*, which had operated as an adjunct to the Muslim Brotherhood since 1982. An internal security section, *Al-Majd* (Glory), was founded in 1987.

An information section publishes handbills, newsletters, and various periodicals in Arab countries and Europe. As of April 1998, the chief ideological Steering Committee included Sheikh Mohammed Abu Zid, Sheikh Bassam Jarar and Sheikh Jamal Hamami. By September 1999, Mahmoud Al-Zahar was regarded as the highest-ranking *Hamas* political figure not in jail. A Central Committee co-ordinates *Hamas* operations in the West Bank and Gaza. It may also foster ties with elements in Israel's Islamic Movement (see Israel section). Finally, mention must be made of a group called *Halas*, established in various Palestinian towns since 1994.

Some regard it as the embryo of a more moderate political party affiliated to *Hamas*; others see it as a disguised Islamist wing of Fatah, so designed to erode support from *Hamas*.

James Schanzer, writing in the *Middle East Quarterly* of Spring 2003, stated that *Hamas* had created a "social infrastructure which functions as a quasi-government. This includes hospitals, clinics, libraries, seminaries, orphanages and schools. Indeed, it now has an advantage over Fatah and the PA, which have squandered millions of dollars in aid since 1993, and have come up short in providing crucial social services. Should the PA collapse, *Hamas* may seize the opportunity to co-opt some of the PA infrastructure and combine it with its Islamist social services network already in place".

*Hamas* also has maintained offices outside Gaza and the West Bank, particularly in Jordan and Syria. At times there have been reports of rifts between radical "external" leaders and more pragmatic "internal" ones. The head of the movement's politburo, Khalid Mash'al (born in 1956), was based in Amman. Mash'al's deputy was Musa Abu Marzouk, who had earlier lived in the USA, and was sought by US authorities on terrorist-related charges. The *Hamas* spokesman in Jordan was Ibrahim Ghosheh. In 1998 he alleged that PA forces had betrayed *Hamas* personnel and localities to Israel.

A botched attempt in 1997 to assassinate Mash'al with a shot of poison in the ear by Israel's Mossad, under the orders of then Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu, led to a major diplomatic crisis. It resulted in Israel agreeing to free the imprisoned spiritual leader of *Hamas*, Sheikh Yassin. The sheikh returned to Gaza, but only after a region-wide tour where he garnered much moral and financial support.

Meanwhile, following the death of King Hussein, Jordan's new King Abdullah II took a tougher line against *Hamas*. In August 1999 he shut down *Hamas* offices and three months later deported Mash'al and four other *Hamas* leaders to Qatar. More Palestinians live in Jordan than in any other Arab country. Evidently, Abdullah feared reports that Yassin hoped to change *Hamas* into a mass political movement in Jordan, in tandem with the powerful local Muslim Brotherhood. This was despite the sheikh's calls to suspend all *Hamas* military operations from Jordanian soil. Qatari authorities barred the five expelled leaders from activity in the Emirate; the quintet also rejected an invitation from Yasser Arafat to resettle in the West Bank.

Abu Marzouk and Mash'al were later located in Syria, which has a Palestinian population of some 400,000. Damascus agreed formally to shut *Hamas* and Islamic Jihad offices in June 2003, following the US victory in Iraq, and massive US and Egyptian pressure on President Bashar Assad. Earlier, Assad had defended *Hamas*'s right to operate, saying it was a legitimate resistance movement, not a terror gang, and that its bureaux in Damascus were merely "press offices". However, in late July the *New York Times* reported that *Hamas* was still secretly active in Damascus.

Financially, *Hamas* enjoys support from certain expatriate Palestinians. Through supposed charity outfits like the Holy Land Foundation and Al Aqsa Fund, money also comes from some other Muslims in North and South America, and Europe. Indeed, *Hamas* held its Third Congress in late 1990 in Kansas City, testifying to the support it enjoys even in the

USA. Allegations are rife of money-laundering and smuggling that filters funds into *Hamas* coffers. It was also thought that *Hamas* received gifts from pious sheikhs and wealthy business people in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf, especially after reports emerged of PA and PLO corruption and embezzlement.

### Stance regarding Peace Process

Yitzhak Rabin came to power in early 1992 on a platform of reviving negotiations with “moderate” Palestinians. Clearly he wished to isolate *Hamas*, for later that year he ordered the deportation of 415 Palestinians, mainly from Gaza, whom he suspected of belonging to *Hamas* or Islamic Jihad. Stranded in southern Lebanon, their fate became an international *cause célèbre*, and won *Hamas* renewed popularity in the territories.

*Hamas* opposed the Oslo Accords of September 1993 and initially refused to co-operate with the soon to be established Palestine National Authority. In late 1993 *Hamas* officially joined a Damascus-based coalition of ten “rejectionist” Palestinian groups, both nationalist and Islamist, called the Alliance of Palestinian Forces (APF, see entry).

From July 1994 PLO and Fatah personnel began pouring in to Gaza, one of the first two sections of the territories to start reverting to Palestinian control, according to Oslo I (the other section being Jericho). Gazan *Hamas* cadres resented the construction of a Palestinian Authority (PA) on what they considered was “their turf”. A showdown between PA security forces and *Hamas* in November 1994 resulted in the deaths of 13 civilians and three fighters, and 200 wounded. Meanwhile, sporadic car bombings by *Hamas* in pre-1967 Israel eroded support for the Oslo peace process. Some Israeli commentators accused the PA of arresting and then releasing *Hamas* suspects in what was called a “revolving door imprisonment policy”. Many Palestinians, by contrast, objected to the way PA security forces were acting as “Israeli proxies”, and protested alleged gross abuses of the rights, and occasional deaths in detention, of *Hamas* members.

On Jan. 24, 1995, US President Clinton signed an executive order prohibiting transactions with the group due to their potential for disrupting the Middle East peace process. *Hamas* faced a major dilemma after Oslo II, signed in late 1995, paved the way for the long awaited Palestinian legislative council elections, on Jan. 20, 1996. After much internal discussion, *Hamas* chose not to contest the elections overtly, so as not to give credence to the PA, and, by extension, to the peace agreements with Israel. Yet *Hamas* did allow individual members to contest the polls as “independent Islamists”. One *Hamas* figure elected was Emad Falluji, who became the first Islamist member of Arafat’s PA cabinet. He was subsequently proscribed by *Hamas* leaders for giving credence to what they considered the “fiction of Palestinian autonomy”.

In April 1998 the *Hamas* bomb-maker, Muhi ed-Din el-Sharif, was assassinated, apparently by fellow *Hamas* figures. Palestine Authority secretary-general Tayeb Abdul Rahim, quoting one of the accused, Ghassan Adassi, of the Izz al-Din al-Qassem wing, said as much. Abdul Rahim claimed that the killing was symptomatic of growing rifts within the group. Some centred on financial disputes; others

bespoke enduring ideological differences over whether or not to co-operate with the PA.

### Role during Al Aqsa Intifada

The Al Aqsa Intifada broke out in late September 2000. One of Arafat’s first responses was to release hundreds of *Hamas* members held in PA jails. Israel claimed that the PA was giving a “green light” to *Hamas* terror. Certainly, the organization took credit for a number of suicide bombings. These included the following incidents and locations in 2001: the Dolphinarium discotheque, Tel Aviv, on June 1 (21 dead, 120 wounded); Sbarro pizza restaurant, Jerusalem, on Aug. 9 (15 dead, 130 wounded); bus attack in Hadar, a suburb of Haifa, on Dec. 2 (15 dead, 40 wounded); bus attack near Emmanuel, a settlement in the northern West Bank, on Dec. 12 (10 dead, 30 wounded). A further 29 people were killed and 140 injured in a suicide bombing of a Passover dinner at a hotel in the coastal city of Netanya, on March 27, 2002.

By August 2001 one opinion poll showed that *Hamas* enjoyed marginally more support than Fatah (27 percent to 26 percent). Relations between the two groups soured in October when a *Hamas* operative killed Col. Rajah Abu Lihyah of PA security. A senior leader of the *Hamas* military wing in the West Bank, Husam Ataf Ali Badran, was caught and arrested by IDF and Israeli intelligence forces on April 18, 2002, outside Nablus. He was named as being involved in all the above atrocities. Arrests tended to be exceptional; mostly, the IDF preferred “targeted” assassinations.

An Israeli navy commando unit killed Muhamad Taher, *Hamas* military commander in Samaria (northern West Bank), known as Engineer 4, in a raid on his home in Nablus on June 30, 2002. Israeli officials said that Taher and his men were responsible for the deaths of 121 Israelis, including a suicide bombing attack on a Jerusalem bus, on June 18, that had killed 19 people. Increasingly, from May 2002 onwards, Arafat and his aide, Tayeb Abdul Rahim, accused *Hamas* of carrying out its own agenda, and of providing Israeli right-wingers with an excuse to attack Palestinian facilities.

On July 23, 2002, Israeli forces bombed and killed Salah Shehadah, head of the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, and the most senior figure within *Hamas* targeted thus far. The attack, which hit crowded tenement dwellings in Gaza City, caused a total of 15 deaths, including nine children, according to PA sources. Many Israelis joined international protests against what was seen as an unacceptable level of civilian casualties.

In August 2002 a leading *Hamas* figure, Abdel Aziz al-Rantisi, openly ordered the military wing to proceed with suicide attacks. This statement, and earlier comments by Sheikh Yassin in the Saudi-owned newspaper, *As-Sharq al-Awsat*, reaffirmed an explicit link between *Hamas*, the political organization, and the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades. Nonetheless, by December 2002 *Hamas* was participating in talks with Fatah and other PLO factions, in a bid to maintain Palestinian unity, and also to consider the possibility of declaring a cease-fire in the intifada. The group came under considerable pressure to compromise, especially by Egypt’s chief of security, Ali Suleiman. *Hamas* would only countenance a *hudna* (temporary truce) and remained formally committed to eliminating Israel. Israel’s *Ha’aretz* daily noted that such talks raised the status of *Hamas* to the equal



of the PA itself; they were a major player in determining policy. In December, Sheikh Yassin attracted a crowd of 30,000 at a Gaza soccer stadium, where he pledged that the "jihad" would continue. Yet clashes between *Hamas* and Fatah forces in Gaza intensified at the same time, raising the spectre of Palestinian civil war.

Israeli retaliations against *Hamas* operatives increased dramatically in early 2003, especially following the re-election of Ariel Sharon as Israeli Prime Minister. Even so, there was talk of a draft pact in Cairo between PLO factions and *Hamas*, whereby the Islamist grouping would for the first time acknowledge the reality of the State of Israel.

Since February 2002 *Hamas* operatives have fired Qasam-2 missiles (an upgrade of an earlier home-made rocket, with a range of up to 12km) at the Israeli city of Sderot and other targets across the Gaza border. *Hamas* claimed that this was needed to correct the armed imbalance between Israelis and Palestinians. On Sept. 24, 2002, the *Hamas* military wing, Izz al-Din al-Qassam, claimed to have destroyed two Israeli *Merkava* tanks. Israel fears that use of missiles will transform the intifada into a full-blown conventional war. There was talk of establishing a "security buffer zone" between Israel and Gaza, like the Israeli-run zone in southern Lebanon. In some respects this policy had already begun by early 2003.

On March 8, 2003, Israeli forces assassinated Ibrahim al-Maqadma, a founder and military leader of *Hamas*. Three others died in the attack in Gaza, which followed the slaying of two Israelis on a settlement for which the military wing of *Hamas* claimed responsibility. The previous week, Israeli forces captured another co-founder of *Hamas*, Mohammed Taha, during a raid on Gaza, in which several civilians were killed. Also in March, reports emerged of a leafleting campaign, purportedly written by the "Nobles of *Hamas*", directed at the organization, accusing it of disruption, and specifically accusing *Hamas* leader in Gaza, Abdel Aziz al-Rantisi, of being an Israeli spy. Rantisi rebuffed the accusations, which he said emanated from the PA's bureau of investigations.

Frequently arrested and then released by the PA in the past, Rantisi was emerging as a paramount figure in Gazan politics, and a threat to the PA's credibility in the region. It was said that he faced a rival in the sometimes more amelioratory Ismail Abu Shanab. On June 10 IDF forces attempted but failed to assassinate Rantisi, an event which drew criticism from President Bush and threatened to plunge the region back into violence, just as the US-backed "road map" was being accepted by Israeli and PA authorities. On June 20 US Secretary of State Colin Powell singled out *Hamas* as the "enemy of the peace". In any event, *Hamas* leaders, including the wounded Rantisi, did agree on June 29 to a three-month cessation of violence. *Hamas*, it seemed, did not want to be dragged into a Palestinian civil war, which could only benefit Israel; nor did it want to be blamed for ruining hopes for peace. *Hamas* demanded the release of all its prisoners as part of a planned broader release of Palestinians held by Israel, and on July 27 the Israeli Cabinet voted by 14 to nine to include members of *Hamas* and Islamic Jihad among those to be freed, though this would not include individuals with "blood on their hands".

On Aug. 19, however, a suicide bombing by *Hamas* of a bus killed 20 people and on Aug. 20 Israel warned the PA

that it must use an "iron fist" to suppress groups such as *Hamas* and Islamic Jihad. On Aug. 21, Ismail Abu Shanab was killed in a targeted assassination by Israeli helicopter-launched missiles. *Hamas* announced the end of its ceasefire. The assassination drew comment as Abu Shanab, who lived openly in Gaza City without security, teaching at the Islamic University, was understood to be a key supporter of the ceasefire, although an Israeli statement claimed he had been responsible for directing military operations.

### **Islamic Jihad (Holy Struggle) of Palestine**

*Leadership. Sheikh Abdel Aziz 'Awda (spiritual leader); Ramadan Abdullah Shallah (political leader)*

The **Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ)** (*Al-Jihad al-Islami fi Filastin*) was founded in 1981 in Gaza by Dr Fathi Abdel Aziz Shiqaqi, a physician and former leftist from Rafah, and Sheikh Abdel Aziz 'Awda, a preacher from the Jabaliyya refugee camp. Both had studied at Zaqaziq University in Egypt, where they imbibed extremist ideas and rejected the gradualist approach of the Muslim Brotherhood (see entry under Egypt). They were expelled from Egypt after the assassination of President Sadat, and returned to Gaza. The group officially predates *Hamas*, and differs from the latter in that it operates in small cells, not on a mass scale.

The PIJ owes a strong allegiance to its namesake in Lebanon, and to Iran's Islamic revolution, particularly to Ayatollah Khomeini's teachings. Because Iran is non-Arab and Shi'ite, not Sunni, it is still viewed with suspicion by many religious Palestinians. Iran has provided PIJ with logistical support, training and finance. Meir Litvak wrote in November 2002: "Whereas *Hamas* was always an independent Palestinian movement, Islamic Jihad became an instrument of Iranian policy in the Arab-Israeli conflict."

The PIJ's reading of the Koran concludes that Palestine is the eternal nexus of a battle between the forces of truth – *haq* – meaning Muslims, and the forces of evil – *batil* – meaning Jews and Christians. It regards the liberation of Palestine as a necessary, though only initial, phase in the triumph of pan-Islam.

Despite its Gazan origins, PIJ was and probably still is stronger in the West Bank. Armed actions by the PIJ's *Saraya al-Quds* (Jerusalem Brigades) began in 1984. Shiqaqi and 'Awda were both arrested by Israel in March 1986, and deported to Lebanon. In June 1988, Israeli authorities launched a major bid to crush the movement. Sheikh 'Awda was expelled for "inciting violence" and Shiqaqi, who had returned from Lebanese exile to spend two years in an Israeli prison for arms smuggling, was deported once more to Lebanon. In 1989 he set up offices in Damascus, marking the start of greater dependency on Syria. PIJ units have trained with *Hezbollah* in Lebanon, and carried out some joint operations with that group against Israelis in the early 1990s, as well as with Ahmed Jabril's PFLP-GG, notwithstanding their ideological differences.

The PIJ's *Bayt al-Maqdis* branch was very active in 1990. On Feb. 4 a unit from its Martyrdom Lovers' Battalion launched a machinegun and grenade attack on Israeli tourists near Ismailiya in Egypt, killing 11 people and wounding 20. The PIJ claimed responsibility for a spate of fatal stabbing attacks on Israelis after the Temple Mount massacre in October 1990.

The PIJ strongly opposed the Oslo Peace Process, and in late 1993 it entered the Alliance of Palestinian Forces (APF, see entry) which rejected the accords signed between the PLO and Israel. Thereafter the PIJ and *Hamas* (another co-signatory of the APF) began to set aside their differences. Less active than *Hamas* in fighting the newly established Palestine Authority on the ground, the PIJ boycotted the 1996 PLC elections, but unlike *Hamas* did not openly challenge the PA politically. Even so, the PA closed its newspaper in Gaza, *al-Istiqlal* ("Independence") and arrested low-level activists.

In 1995 the PIJ was responsible for the the bombing of a bus terminal in Beit Lid in January (21 killed), the car-bombing of a bus carrying Israelis in Kfar Darom, Gaza, in April (eight killed), and a Jerusalem suicide bombing in August (five killed). President Hafez al-Assad rebuffed American demands to expel Shirqi from Syria after the bombing in August. On Oct. 26, 1995, Shirqi was assassinated in Malta, and Israeli intelligence agencies did not deny responsibility. The PIJ swore to make "every Zionist on the face of the earth a target for our amazing blows and our bodies exploding in anger". Ramadan Abdullah Shallah was chosen as Shirqi's successor. A former teacher at the University of South Florida, he currently resides in Damascus. The USA has listed PIJ as an illegal terrorist organization, and has tried, as yet unsuccessfully, to persuade Syria to cease its support for the group.

The death of PIJ's charismatic founding leader dealt the movement a blow, especially as his method of rule was so centralized. By 1997 the *Jerusalem Report* claimed that the group was "barely functioning". However, the outbreak of the Al Aqsa Intifada in late September 2000 revived the PIJ, which has played a prominent role, out of proportion to its size. By mid-2002 there were reports of the PIJ co-operating with units from *Hamas* and even Fatah, and receiving logistical support from the PA. Jenin is a major centre of PIJ activity. The PIJ's most dramatic "success" in the intifada was its slaying of 12 Israeli soldiers in an ambush in Hebron, on Nov. 15, 2002. However, the PIJ lacks the institutional network of *Hamas*, with its schools and welfare bodies.

On Feb. 19, 2003, US federal authorities indicted eight people connected with the PIJ on 50 counts of terrorism and related offences, such as perjury, conspiracy to kill and maim, and extortion. Four men were arrested in the USA, the most prominent of whom was Sami al-Arian, professor of engineering at the University of South Florida, the putative head of the PIJ in the USA and secretary of the PIJ's international council. The remaining four, charged in absentia, include the PIJ overall leader, Ramadan Shallah, and Abdel Aziz 'Awda, imam of the Al Qassam Mosque in Gaza and the group's "spiritual leader". The other two were Bashir Musa Mohammed Nafi, who lives in Oxfordshire, England, claimed to be the UK head of PIJ, and Mohammed Tasir Hassan Al-Khatib, currently in Beirut, said to be the treasurer of the organization. Nafi was subsequently detained in the UK.

The connection between the University of South Florida and PIJ goes back at least to March 11, 1992, the day the university and the World & Islam Studies Enterprise (WISE) entered into a formal agreement to co-operate "in the fields of research and graduate student enrichment". WISE, itself founded in 1990, was far from being a neutral think-tank, as purported, but rather has served as a seedbed for nurturing

the new leadership of PIJ. Shallah was its administrative director and Nafi its director of research. Nafi wrote under the pseudonym of Ahmed Sadiq for numerous PIJ publications, and was associate editor of the *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*. He was deported from the USA in 1996 because of visa violations.

In early April 2003 PIJ leader Ramadan Shallah addressed a much-publicized rally at the Al-Yarmouk Palestinian refugee camp, outside Damascus, pledging "jihad" against UK and US forces operating in Iraq. The PIJ military wing, the Al-Quds [Jerusalem] Brigades claimed in a communiqué of March 30 that it had dispatched a corps of Palestinian suicide bombers to Baghdad; according to Iraqi sources, some 4,000 such Arab volunteers were arriving to assist the Saddam regime in defending Iraq. Nonetheless in late June 2003 the PIJ representative in Syria, Mohammed al-Hindi, confirmed that his group had agreed to a three-month cease-fire (or *hudna*) with Israel. The PIJ, and other militants like *Hamas*, claimed that by so doing they were allowing a breathing space for the Road Map for Peace to progress, and were avoiding the risk of a potential internal Palestinian civil war. Violence continued, however, and in late August 2003 the PIJ, like *Hamas*, called off its ceasefire.

### Islamic Movement (or Islamic Trend)

*Leadership. Subhi Anabtawi*

This loosely-knit body came to prominence in 1990-91 as an umbrella group for Islamic fundamentalists in the territories, including *Hamas*. It refused to join the PLO's National Council (PNC) as it favours an Islamic state over "all of Palestine". The Islamic Movement may have links with a group of the same name within Israel. Some suspected that it may serve as the political wing of moderate elements within *Hamas*, willing to negotiate with the PNA (after the Oslo Accords of 1993) and maybe even with Israel, in time. So far, this has not materialized.

### 'Usbat al-Ansar

Based in the Ein al-Hilwe Palestinian refugee camp near Sidon in southern Lebanon, this group's name means "Partisans' League" in Arabic. It is said to be closely associated with Osama bin Laden's *Al-Qaeda* network, and has links to the militant Sunni community in Lebanon, although most of its members are Palestinian in origin. Although 'Usbat consists of not many more than 300 active fighters, it has been blamed for numerous acts of terror. In a reply to questions posed by the CIA Tenet inquiry in 2001, Lebanese security officials admitted that they were loath to enter the camp for fear of inflaming sentiment.

## OTHER GROUPS

### Alliance of Palestinian Forces

*Leadership. Khaled al-Fahoum*

This loose alliance consists of ten established Palestinian groups who wished to protest against the PLO's signing of the Oslo peace accords in August and September 1993. It is also referred to as the **Damascus Front**, after the Syrian capital where they gathered to voice their objections, or the **Democratic and Islamic National Front**. As the latter name implies, the APF includes both nationalist forces



(PFLP, PLFP-GC, DFLP, Fatah Revolutionary Council, *Saiqa*) and Islamist forces (*Hamas* and Palestinian Islamic Jihad). According to some sources, the APF is a direct successor to the previous Palestinian National Salvation Front (PNSF, see entry).

The APF mandated its members to boycott the Palestinian Legislative Council elections of Jan. 20, 1996. In December 1998 the group reinforced its identity by opposing the Wye River Accords signed between Israel and the PLO. After the victory of Ehud Barak in the Israeli elections of 1999, however, there were signs of division in its ranks, as the PFLP began negotiating with Fatah, and indirectly with the PA, presumably in expectation of not being left out of a final deal to create a Palestinian state.

The APF chief co-ordinator is Khaled al-Fahoum, a former Speaker of the Palestinian National Council, and not himself a member of any of the APF's constituent factions. In 1999 he even appeared on Israeli radio to call for "Palestinian national unity". He also demanded immediate direct talks with Yasser Arafat, and eventual talks with Israel, in contradistinction to a communique issued earlier by a majority of APF factions. Fahoum is sometimes referred to as chairman of the Higher Follow-up Committee of the Palestinian National Conference, believed to be alternative names for the APF. He is still regarded as head of the (possibly separate) Palestine National Salvation Front. Understandable tensions existed between leftists and Islamists concerning ultimate goals for the APF. In the wake of the widening split in the organization, Fahoum offered his resignation, but later withdrew it.

In July 1999 Fahoum denied rumours that President Hafez al-Assad's regime in Syria was preparing to expel the APF from Damascus, following strong US pressure. Similar rumours resurfaced in early 2000 when it was suggested that expelling Palestinian radicals was a price Damascus was willing to pay as part of a final peace settlement with Israel. As it turned out, peace talks between Israel and Syria failed, and when Bashar al-Assad replaced his late father, in mid-2000, he reassured the APF constituent groups that they were safe in Damascus. Visiting the UK in late 2002, Bashar denied that the APF and similar groups were "terrorist organizations".

The onset of the Al Aqsa Intifada in October 2000 seems to have lessened divisions between the PA on the one hand and APF on the other. In September 2001 Fahoum helped broker an historic rapprochement between Yasser Arafat and Syria. In September 2002 Fahoum hailed Arafat as "a leader and symbol of the Palestinian people more than any other Palestinian commander."

### Army of Palestine

On April 26, 2002, gunmen operating under this name killed at least four Israelis near the Israeli settlement of Adora, on the West Bank near Hebron. It was the first time Palestinians had managed to breach a settlement perimeter since Israel launched Operation Defensive Shield in March. Terrorists who killed four Israeli holiday-makers and numerous Kenyans in Mombasa, on Nov. 28 2002, also used the name "Army of Palestine", but may be a different group.

### Cry of the Homeland Committee

Based on a November 1999 petition launched by 'Abd al-Jawad Saleh, briefly a PA minister of agriculture, and others, the committee decried abuses of human rights in PA-controlled areas. Supporters were harassed by PA security forces. In early September 2002, Saleh and another Fatah dissident, Jamal al-Shobaki, led a no-confidence motion in the PLC against Arafat's rule. Though expected to win, they were forced to shelve the vote when the entire 21-member PA cabinet resigned. The crisis was averted when Arafat was compelled to nominate a fresh cabinet two weeks later.

Though not necessarily affiliated to the committee, numerous Palestinian commentators began espousing calls for greater democracy in Palestine, and throughout the Arab world, after the fall of Saddam in Iraq in 2003. Amongst these were Fuad Abu Hijleh, a respected Palestinian columnist; Hafez al-Barghouti, editor of the daily *al-Hayat al-Jadeeda*; PLC legislator, Muawiyah al-Masri; and *Fatah* activist, Taisir Nasrallah. Similar calls had emanated since 1993 from the veteran Gazan physician and diplomat, Haidar Abd al-Shafi; spokesperson, former PA higher education minister and human rights activist, Hanan Ashrawi; lawyer Raja Sourani; human rights campaigner, Bassam 'Eid; and child psychiatrist and peace activist, Eyad al-Sarraj.

### Committee for Defending the Rights of Palestinian Refugees

*Leadership. Husam Khader*

Founded in 1998, the CDRPR tries to keep alive the issue of refugees which it feels was neglected by the Oslo peace process. Its founding leader is Husam Khader, a former leader of the first intifada in the Nablus area and a resident in the Balata refugee camp within Nablus. Khader comes out of the Fatah stable. Israel deported him to Lebanon in January 1988, though he returned to the West Bank in 1994 under the terms of Oslo. Elected to the Palestinian Legislative Council in January 1996, he became the leading critic of the Palestinian Authority, which he dubbed a corruption-filled mafia, and especially PA cabinet ministers, whom he called a "bunch of thieves". After the second intifada broke out in 2000, Khader was said to have much influence over the gunmen of the Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade (see entry). Israeli forces arrested him on March 16, 2003, to some Palestinian surprise, making him the second PLC member so arrested in the current intifada.

### Israeli-Palestinian Peace Coalition

*Leadership. Yasser Abed Rabbo and Yossi Beilin (founding members)*

Abed Rabbo (see under DFLP and FIDA, above) and Yossi Beilin, former Israeli minister under Rabin, are joint chairmen of the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Coalition. The IPPC was set up in 2001, in the wake of the new intifada. In May 2002 the IPPC won the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Human Rights Award. In March 2003 former left-wing Member of the Knesset Mossi Raz was appointed as the new Israeli Director of the IPPC. His Palestinian counterpart is Samir Rantisi.

### Kataeb al-Awdah

Meaning Battalions of the Return [of Refugees] in Arabic, this hitherto unknown group began distributing in Nablus and Jenin a "hit-list" of Israeli politicians marked for assass-

sination, in August 2002. It appeared the group had connections with Munir Maqdah, a powerful though controversial Fatah dissident leader in Lebanon, particularly within the largest refugee camp in that country, Ein al-Hilweh.

### People's Choice

*Leadership. Dr Sari Nusseibeh and Ami Ayalon*

This is the provisional name of an Israeli-Palestinian peace initiative, launched by the Fatah-affiliated President of Al Quds University, and doyen of a famous family, Dr Sari Nusseibeh, and Ami Ayalon, former head of the Shin Bet (Israeli internal security agency). The group was officially launched, following months of consultations, on July 27, 2002, since when their Statement of Principles has attracted 20,000 Israeli and more than 2,000 Palestinian signatures. According to a report in *Ha'aretz*, in July 2003, the group was beginning to pick up support from Fatah groups in Hebron, and to a lesser extent Ramallah and Jenin. Nusseibeh was temporarily regarded as a PA minister with responsibility for Jerusalem, in 2002, but his controversial stance about sharing holy sites, ending the intifada, and

abjuring the "right to return" of refugees, lost him the backing of more militant Palestinians. A descendant of refugees himself, he sees the People's Choice as recognition of the need for a historical compromise on both sides, towards a two-state solution. In this regard, the movement — if it develops as such — eschews violence, and serves to complement rather than compete with the US-led Road Map, as adopted by Prime Ministers Sharon and Abbas.

*Lawrence Joffe*

## Panama

**Capital:** Panama City

**Population:** 2.9 m

The Republic of Panama has an executive President elected for a five-year term by a simple majority of the popular vote, failing which the unicameral Legislative Assembly appoints the President by a simple majority. The President appoints a Cabinet and is assisted by two Vice-Presidents elected by popular vote. The Assembly is elected for a five-year term by universal and compulsory adult suffrage.

In the twentieth century elected governments were overthrown by military intervention on various occasions. In the late 1980s the de facto leader of the country, Gen. Manuel Noriega Moreno, the commander of the Panamanian Defence Forces, came into increasing conflict with the United States. In 1989, Noriega annulled the results of presidential elections and declared himself head of state, precipitating his rapid overthrow by a US military intervention. He was sub-

sequently taken to the USA to stand trial on drug trafficking and money laundering charges. Since then Panama has had constitutional government. In elections held on May 2, 1999, Mireya Elisa Moscoso Rodríguez of the Arnulfista Party (PA), supported by three other parties, was elected President with 44.9 per cent of the vote. Concurrent congressional elections, however, gave her Union for Panama (UPP) coalition only 24 of the 72 seats in the Legislative Assembly; the rival New Nation (NN) coalition winning a total of 42 seats and Opposition Action (AO), 6 seats.

As of mid-2003 there were no significant revolutionary or dissident movements in Panama, though some incursions into Panamanian territory by Colombian groups had been reported.

*Peter Calvert*

## Papua New Guinea

**Capital:** Port Moresby

**Population:** 5.1 m

Papua New Guinea (PNG), an independent state since 1975, is a member of the Commonwealth, with the British monarch as the head of state, represented by a locally appointed Governor. The head of government

is the Prime Minister and there is a unicameral Parliament of 109 members. Papua New Guinea's boundaries are a product of colonial competition in the late 19th century and it is a country of immense linguistic,

cultural and social diversity, with over 800 distinct languages. Small-scale pre-colonial social structures persist, though much changed by the impacts of colonial and post-colonial rule. The capacity of the state is limited and in decline, and its impact on most local communities is small, and hence in practice communities have a high degree of autonomy.

The two main extra-legal groups in Papua New Guinea – the Bougainville Revolutionary Army and the Government of the Republic of Me'ekamui and its associated Me'ekamui Defence Force – both operate in Bougainville, population about 200,000, and the most remote from the national capital of the country's 19 provinces. The Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA), fought a secessionist war from 1988 to 1997, supporting a Unilateral Declaration of Independence made by its leader, Francis Ona, in May 1990. The BRA joined a peace process in 1997 that in 2001 resulted in a political settlement of the conflict. The original leader of the BRA, Francis Ona, opposed the peace process, and in 1998 established the Government of the Republic of Me'ekamui which continues to support Bougainville's secession. An unknown number of people died as a result of the conflict, several hundred in combat, many others as a result of extrajudicial executions, and some as a result of (or partly because of) an air and sea blockade imposed on Bougainville from April 1990. However, reports of 15,000 to 20,000 deaths are most unlikely to be accurate.

### **Bougainville Revolutionary Army**

*Leadership: Francis Ona (1989 to 1998), Sam Kauona (1989 to 1999), and Ishmael Toroama (1999 to present)*

Movements for secession or autonomy developed in many parts of Papua New Guinea in the late colonial era as groups sought to re-assert autonomy undermined by colonialism, or took the opportunities that the end of colonialism offered to define new relationships with the centre. All save that in Bougainville petered out quite quickly just before or soon after independence. In Bougainville, close cultural links to neighbouring Solomon Islands, resentment about post-World War II neglect by the Australian colonial administration, and imposition in the late 1960s of the giant Panguna copper and gold mine, fuelled a movement in part directed to secession, in part to improved revenue shares, and in part to autonomy of communities. This culminated in a Unilateral Declaration of Independence in September 1975, just prior to Papua New Guinea's independence day. Bougainville reluctantly accepted integration in 1976, the price being constitutionally entrenched autonomy in a system of provincial government, but support for secession never died. Late in 1988 disputes among landowner groups over rents and compensation from the mine led to destruction of mine property. Indiscriminate violent responses by police riot squads and later the PNG Defence Force sparked a wider ethno-nationalist secessionist uprising.

Initially called "militants", the always loosely organized secessionist fighters began calling themselves the Bougainville Revolutionary Army from the first half of 1989. Their successful guerrilla tactics led to closure of the

mine in May 1989 and forced the PNG government to accept a cease-fire and the withdrawal of its forces from March 1990. Francis Ona declared independence in May 1990 and established a civilian government – the Bougainville Interim Government (BIG). This received no international recognition, however. The PNG government imposed a sea and air blockade. The BIG and BRA were unable to assert effective control over Bougainville. Local opposition to undisciplined BRA elements contributed to internal conflict, and the emergence of armed groups opposing the BRA – by 1993 called the Bougainville Resistance Forces (BRF). PNG forces began returning to Bougainville from late 1990, usually with the support of communities threatened by local conflict. A series of peace talks between Bougainville and PNG from mid-1990 failed to resolve the conflict. But efforts within Bougainville from the early 1990s to resolve the internal conflict bore fruit in mid-1997, and a series of New Zealand government sponsored peace talks resulted in a truce in October 1997 and a cease-fire in April 1998. The total number of BRA personnel was approximately 2,500, more than half being 'home guards' rather than active fighters. Numbers and proportions in the BRF were similar.

While most Bougainville leaders supported the peace process, Francis Ona and some other BRA and BIG leaders did not. Political negotiations over the two years to 2001 resulted in agreement on a constitutionally guaranteed settlement, the main elements of which were: (i) a high degree of autonomy for Bougainville, (ii) a referendum for Bougainville on independence to be held within 10 to 15 years of the autonomy arrangements beginning to operate, and (iii) demilitarization of Bougainville through a multi-staged process of disposal of weapons by BRA and BRF and withdrawal of PNG forces. The Peace Agreement also provided for the disbanding of the BRA and the BRF once their roles in weapons disposal were complete.

By mid-2003 implementation of the Agreement was continuing, with the constitutional amendments implementing the Agreement having been enacted by the national Parliament, the PNG forces having withdrawn from Bougainville, and two of the three main stages of the weapons disposal process completed. Progress made towards establishing an autonomous government for Bougainville has been made, but has been much slower than expected, and with the Papua New Guinea national government in fiscal crisis and with declining capacity, there is a little uncertainty in Bougainville about future implementation. Almost 2,000 weapons have been contained by BRA and BRF elements. But with the Me'ekamui Defence Force refusing to take part in the weapons disposal process (below) it is likely that some BRA and BRF weapons have not been disposed of.

### **Government of the Republic of Me'ekamui and the Me'ekamui Defence Force**

*Leadership: Francis Ona and Moses Pipiro*

Early in 1998 Ona indicated that as a result of his opposition to what he saw as the compromises on secession being made in the peace process, he was forming a new government for what he regarded as the continuing independent state of Bougainville resulting from the declaration of independence made in May 1990. He used the name *Me'ekamui*, being a local language term roughly translatable as "sacred land".

Some units of most of the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) companies then broke away from the BRA to become part of the Me'ekamui Defence Force (MDF) under a former BRA member, Moses Pipiro.

The MDF is a loose organization of 50 to 60 active members, with several hundred sympathizers, who hold a few hundred weapons taken by the elements of the BRA companies when they switched to the MDF. The MDF has so far refused to participate in the weapons disposal process. Support for Ona and Pipiro is concentrated in a small mountainous area near the derelict Panguna mine site, and in a scattering of non-contiguous villages in a number of other parts of Bougainville. It is difficult to estimate the proportion of geographical area or of total population under the control or influence of Ona and Pipiro, but it is quite small.

While indicating opposition to the peace process, Ona and Pipiro have consistently stated they have no intention of trying to undermine it by violence. Rather, Ona indicates that he believes that the Bougainvilleans supporting the peace process will eventually realise that they have been tricked by a national government that will permit neither real

autonomy nor a referendum for Bougainville, and that they will then switch support back to Ona. There have been no significant clashes between the BRA and the MDF, although suspected MDF involvement in break-ins to containers in which BRA weapons were being stored as part of the weapons disposal process led to a clash in March 2003 in which one MDF member was killed and one injured. Resulting tensions were resolved through consultation. The Papua New Guinea national authorities have accepted the advice of the Bougainville leaders supporting the peace process that they will eventually be able to reconcile with Ona and Pipiro. As of August 2003, while support for Ona and Pipiro appeared to be shrinking, they continued to have the potential to destabilize the ongoing Bougainville Peace Process, and their support levels could grow quickly if implementation of the Peace Agreement does not proceed as expected in Bougainville.

*Anthony Regan*

## Paraguay

**Capital:** Asunción

**Population:** 5.5 m

The Republic of Paraguay has an executive President elected for a five-year term by universal adult suffrage. Legislative power is held by a bicameral Congress, consisting of a Senate of 45 members and a Chamber of Deputies of 60 members, both elected for five-year terms by direct adult suffrage. In elections held on April 27, 2003, the candidate of the Colorado Party (*Asociación Nacional Republicana—Partido Colorado*, ANR-PC), Óscar Duarte Frutos, won the presidential contest, while the ANR-PC also emerged as the strongest party in both chambers of the legislature. The Authentic Radical Liberal Party (*Partido Liberal Radical Auténtico*, PLRA) came second in both contests. The Colorado and Liberal parties have dominated Paraguayan politics since the 1870s.

Paraguay has had a turbulent political history punctuated by frequent coups. The rule of President (Gen.) Alfredo Stroessner, who had led the country since a coup in 1954, was ended on Feb. 3, 1989, by a military coup. The army second-in-command, Gen. Andrés Rodríguez (Stroessner's son-in-law), was sworn in as President and elected to that post in presidential elections held on May 1, 1989, initiating a period of transition to democratic government. A new Constitution was adopted in 1992 which reduced the previously sweeping executive powers of the President. Since that time Paraguay has had constitutionally elected government. On March 28, 1999, President Luís González Macchi, formerly president of the Senate, constitutionally succeeded President Raúl Cubas Grau, who had been elected on May 10, 1998. Cubas

had resigned (and fled the country) after being impeached following the assassination of Vice President Luís María Argaña, an event in which he was widely considered to have been implicated.

### **Free Fatherland Movement (Movimiento Patria Libre, MPL).**

On Feb. 12, 2002, the Interior Minister, Julio César Fanego was forced to resign, following allegations that he had known of the abduction and torture of two alleged members of this leftist insurgent movement.

### **Oviedistas**

Military opposition to the democratic government has been led by Gen (retd) Lino César Oviedo Silva, who was appointed Commander in Chief of the Army by President Juan Carlos Wasmosy in 1993 in return for his political support. On April 22, 1996, however, the President requested his resignation on account of his open campaign for the leadership of the ruling Colorado Party (ANR-PC). The General, who had hopes of becoming President in 1998, refused and, with the support of some 5,000 troops, in turn demanded the resignation of the President, who sought asylum in the US Embassy. Strengthened by popular demonstrations in his favour and the support of other regional powers, Wasmosy agreed to a compromise on April 24 by which the General would resign his commission to be appointed Defence Minister. This having been done, however, Congress refused to ratify the appointment, which was withdrawn. The new Army Commander, Gen. Oscar Díaz Delmas did not intervene and three days later the President's former rival, Luís



María Argaña, was elected leader of the ANR-PC. A vigorous purge of senior military commanders followed. On June 13 Gen. Oviedo was arrested and imprisoned on the orders of the Attorney General, Anibal Babrera. The order aroused unrest in the Army and Oviedo was subsequently cleared of charges of insurrection by the appeals court on Aug. 7 and freed.

It was Oviedo who won the presidential nomination of the ANR-PC in a primary election in September 1997 in which he obtained 36.75% of the vote to 34.97% for Argaña. Gen. Oviedo lost no time in attacking President Wasmosy for alleged corruption, and having eluded capture when the President ordered him put under "disciplinary arrest", continued to do so from hiding. On March 9, 1998, the Special Military Court found Gen. Oviedo guilty of rebellion and sentenced him to ten years imprisonment and dishonourable discharge. The Supreme Court confirmed the decision on April 17. The following day Oviedo's candidature was voided by the Supreme Electoral Tribunal and he was replaced by Raúl Cubas Grau as candidate for the presidency for the ANR-PC with Argaña as vice presidential candidate. Despite protests the elections went ahead as planned, and on May 10 Cubas was victorious, taking 54 per cent of the votes cast.

Having taken office on Aug. 15, President Cubas, a wealthy engineer who was said to have made his money from contracts for the Itaipú Dam, appointed two Oviedista generals to his Cabinet and commuted Gen. Oviedo's sentence to time already served. The new Congress immediately voted to condemn the pardon, and to institute impeachment proceedings against President Cubas, and on Dec. 2 the Supreme Court ruled it unconstitutional.

On March 23, 1999, Vice President Luís María Argaña Ferraro was assassinated in the streets of the capital, Asunción, when three men in military uniform opened fire on the car in which he was travelling. Tensions had been running high and the 66-year old Argaña and his supporters had just succeeded in regaining control of the headquarters of the Colorado Party, from which they had been expelled on March 14 by supporters of Gen Oviedo and Cubas. The latter were immediately accused by Argañistas of being at least

the "moral instigators" of the crime and large crowds filled the streets demanding the President's resignation. The President responded by detaining Oviedo, having earlier refused to obey an order of the Supreme Court to do so. On March 26 four died and 60 were injured when snipers fired on crowds holding a vigil outside Congress. But Congress had by then already initiated impeachment proceedings, and on March 28, hours before it was due to vote on the critical resolution, President Cubas resigned and fled to Brazil, where he was granted political asylum, while Gen. Oviedo simultaneously sought and was granted asylum in Argentina. The General was subsequently dishonourably discharged from the Army.

On May 18, 2000, three people were wounded in an attempted coup by Oviedo's supporters within the First Cavalry Division. It failed, as under pressure from Brazil and the United States, the armed forces command resumed control. Oviedo himself was arrested in Brazil on June 11 but was not extradited.

In March 2002 a faction of the ANC-PC seceded to form a new organization to support Oviedo's candidature for the 2003 presidential elections and his supporters were behind the second of several attempts to impeach the President the following month, which, however, failed to gain the necessary two-thirds majority in the Chamber of Deputies. Meanwhile pressure from supporters of both Vice President Franco and Gen. Oviedo continued, and forced the President to proclaim a state of emergency in July 2002 after two people had been killed in clashes with police in Ciudad del Este. A final Oviedista-backed attempt to impeach the President failed on Feb. 11, 2003. The resolution to approve the charges was carried by 25 votes to 18 in the Senate, with one abstention and one absence, thus falling short of the two-thirds majority constitutionally required. After that, elections took place without incident on April 27, 2003, in which the ruling National Republican Party/Partido Colorado (ANR-PC) retained power.

*Peter Calvert*

## Peru

**Capital:** Lima

**Population:** 27.5 m

Under its 1993 Constitution the Republic of Peru has an executive President, elected for a five-year term by universal adult suffrage, who governs with the assistance of an appointed Council of Ministers. There is a unicameral National Congress of 120 members elected for a five-year term from national party lists.

Alberto Keinya Fujimori was elected President in June 1990. Fujimori staged a presidential coup (*autogolpe*), with the support of the military, in April 1992, when he dissolved the legislature and suspended the constitution, with a new constitution being approved by referendum the following year. Fujimori was re-

elected in 1995 and again in May 2000, his principal opponent in 2000, Alejandro Toledo, having decided to boycott a run-off poll because of the widespread view that it would not be conducted fairly. However, in the face of mounting domestic opposition and charges of corruption, in September 2000 Fujimori announced that he intended to step down and call an election in which he would not be a candidate. Two months later, Fujimori (the son of Japanese immigrants) fled to Japan and announced his resignation as President.

In the resultant presidential elections held in April



and June 2001, Toledo, backed by his centrist Peru Possible (PP) party, took 53.1% of the vote in a run-off victory over Alan García of the populist left-of-centre Peruvian Aprista Party (APRA). In legislative elections held in April 2001, Toledo's PP emerged as the largest single party, with 45 seats (from 26.3% of the vote), while APRA took 26 seats and nine other parties shared the remaining seats.

### Scale of Violence since 1980

The activities of left-wing terrorists, notably the Maoist *Sendero Luminoso* (Shining Path, see entry), dominated the Peruvian political scene after 1980, although such activity has now almost entirely abated. A report delivered to President Toledo on Aug. 28, 2003, by the official Truth and Reconciliation Commission, identified some 32,000 people who had been killed in the civil war between 1980 and 2000, and a further 6,000 who had disappeared without trace. However, the Commission concluded that the most likely number of victims was 69,000, killed either by the insurgents or the security forces. The majority of victims were indigenous villagers and peasants not directly involved in the conflict but killed for their real or suspected allegiances.

A 2003 report by Amnesty International stated that the Peruvian security forces were responsible for acts of torture and ill treatment towards prisoners, with those responsible not being brought to justice or being judged by military courts. The report noted also that the special anti-terrorism legislation introduced in 1992 remained in force despite national and international protests.

Since the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the USA, Peru has been a regional leader in supporting anti-terrorism initiatives including the passage of legislation against money laundering and the establishment of a financial intelligence unit. However, high officials of the former Fujimori administration have themselves been accused of connections with drug trafficking and organized crime.

### Shining Path (Sendero Luminoso, SL)

*Leader. Abimael Guzmán (historic leader; in prison)*

*Sendero Luminoso* derives from a small left-wing group founded and led by a former university professor, Manuel Abimael Guzmán Renose, during the 1970s. It had broken off relations with China in 1979 and called the Chinese Communist leaders "traitors". It subsequently developed its own Maoist-Marxist ideology, and took its name from one of its first pamphlets, *The Shining Path of Juan Carlos Mariátegui*. Juan, or José, Carlos Mariátegui, 1894-1930, had been the founder of the Peruvian Socialist Party, which was formed on Oct. 7, 1928, and which later became the Peruvian Communist Party; he had advocated a return to the peasant communities of the Inca empire. The main stated goal of the *Sendero Luminoso* was to destroy existing Peruvian political institutions and replace them with a communist peasant revolutionary regime. It opposed any influence by foreign governments, as well as by other terrorist groups,

especially the Tupac Amarú Revolutionary Movement (MRTA, see separate entry).

The *Sendero Luminoso* commenced its armed campaign in May 1980. Terrorist incidents in the central Andean provinces increased gradually, and on Dec. 26, 1982, President Belaúnde Terry denounced the SL as a "gang of murderers" and not a political party. He appealed to SL members to surrender unconditionally. On the expiry of a time limit on Dec. 29, a state of emergency was imposed and orders were given for attacks on the terrorists.

Further heavy clashes in the Ayacucho area occurred during April 1983. Thereafter the government took further steps to quell a virtual SL insurrection, but appeared to be making little progress against guerrillas operating in favourable terrain. By late 1984 the SL had spread into the main cocaine-producing area of the Upper Huallaga valley, providing the movement with a source of income for arms and supplies from payments from illegal cocaine traders in return for protection. From 1986 the group's activities spread into urban areas, carrying out bombings, murders and causing regular electricity blackouts by the destruction of power pylons.

Early in 1986 the SL was held responsible for bomb attacks on foreign embassies, the assassination of government party members and the killing of Rear Adml Carlos Ponce de León Canossa, on May 4. A nationwide state of emergency was imposed on Feb. 7, 1986.

Following a mutiny of prisoners at three Lima prisons, El Frontón, Lurigancho and Santa Barbara, on June 18-20, 1986, some 270 prisoners were reported to have died in the resulting military assault, including virtually all the SL prisoners held at Lurigancho. At two of the prisons, the military used rocket-firing helicopters, anti-tank missiles and sub-machine guns to break down the defences of the prisons. After criticism of military excesses, President Alan García stated on June 27, 1986, that over 100 SL prisoners had been executed only after they had surrendered, and that of 124 prisoners killed at Lurigancho, 20 at most had died in the fighting. The President promised that those responsible would be brought to trial, and it was later announced that 15 officers and 80 soldiers had been detained. However, in a report published in February 1987 by Amnesty International, the Peruvian government was accused of a massive cover-up; the report alleged in addition that 30-60 survivors of the El Frontón mutiny and army assault had been taken to a naval base where they had been tortured and had subsequently "disappeared".

At the end of June 1986 the SL threatened to kill 10 members of the ruling APRA party for every guerrilla killed in the mutinies. In October 1986 it was reported that 28 police officers had been killed since the mutiny.

Towards the end of 1986, SL activities again appeared to intensify, with targets now including Peruvian and foreign businessmen and representatives. Mortar attacks were reported on the presidential palace, and in January 1987 an attack on the Indian embassy was carried out whilst President García was on a tour of India. Among prominent SL leaders Emilio Antonia Díaz Martínez died in the 1986 prison mutinies; Claudio Bellido (third in command) was killed in October 1986; and Walter Palacio Gutierrez (SL military chief) was captured in July 1987.

Government efforts to stem the activities of the SL had

little effect, apart from regions such as Puno, where government land reforms had resulted in a loss of following for the movement. A favourite method of the SL was to call "armed strikes" in the regions under its control to paralyze local services and intimidate the population into obeying the strike call. An armed strike on Nov. 22, 1988, in the Upper Huallaga valley coincided with a major clash with the security forces in which a reported 100 guerrillas and 20 soldiers were killed. On the same day 68 members of a peasant "self-defence" group were shot dead near Ayacucho.

In March 1989 SL attacked the state copper mines near La Oroya, destroying installations. On May 10, 1989, SL launched a three-day "armed strike" in the central Andean provinces. Electricity pylons and bridges were blown up. On May 17, the anniversary of the start of SL's armed campaign, 73 people were killed, including 50 peasants from a communal self-defence group on the border of Cuzco and Ayacucho provinces. In clashes in Huánuco province in July it was reported that 97 SL and MRTA guerrillas had been killed, while a major offensive in the Upper Huallaga valley in late July led to the deaths of 110 guerrillas and seven soldiers.

An upsurge in guerrilla activity occurred in September 1989. On Sept. 18, security forces claimed to have killed 70 guerrillas as they staged an attack on a military garrison in the eastern Amazon department in an attempt to free prisoners, and on Sept. 27, 40 guerrillas were said to have been killed in an attack on a police post in Nuevo Progreso. Orestes Rodríguez Campos, a minister in the previous administration, was killed in Lima on Sept. 23.

The early 1990s saw the shift of the SL's operations from the countryside to the cities, especially the capital Lima. The SL organized a series of bomb attacks on national and foreign properties, including the US, Soviet, Chinese, German and Japanese embassies. Attempts by the SL to disrupt the 1990 elections failed, partly due to heavy security. Electricity supplies were disrupted and there were some bombings, but no major incidents. However, at the end of the year 11 of Peru's 24 departments were under state-of-emergency status.

President Fujimori was elected in July 1990 promising reforms of the judiciary to achieve speedier trials of terrorist suspects; however the military and police suffered from a lack of adequate equipment and training and there was an absence of the coordination necessary to conduct effective anti-terrorist operations.

The period 1991-92 marked the peak of the terrorist offensive against the Peruvian government, mainly by the SL, with a concentration of attacks in Lima (600 attacks caused 350 deaths). The SL attacked teachers, clergy, engineers, development and human right workers, political candidates, and Indian peasants, as well as government, police and political party officials, with the intention of creating a climate of terror.

In view of the ineffectiveness of the Peruvian justice system in fighting terrorism, the Peruvian government issued several decrees to strengthen the anti-terrorism capability of the security forces, by reducing sentences in exchange for information, increasing the power of military commanders in areas outside emergency zones, and reorganizing the police and intelligence services.

In 1992 the attacks reached a climax. The SL organized and executed well-planned urban campaigns in February,

May, and July to sap public morale and give weight to its claim of having reached a position of strategic equality with the government. In response to the escalation, Fujimori suspended constitutional law in Peru on April 5, proceeding with stiff anti-terrorism measures, including new juridical procedures.

On Sept. 12, 1992, anti-terrorist forces captured the founder and leader of the SL, Abimael Guzmán, with many members of SL's high command, jailing him in isolation in the Callao navy base. This major success boosted the morale of the government forces. During the last quarter of 1992 Peruvian police forces continued with arrests of SL's leaders and hundreds of rank-and-file cadres.

The capture of Guzmán and most of the SL's leaders destroyed Sendero Luminoso's prospects of defeating the government. Attacks in 1993 were numerous but much less lethal than in previous years and appeared to require fewer skilled operatives and less coordination, with attacks concentrated on vulnerable targets, including business and tourist objectives. SL units nonetheless continued to operate freely in many areas in the countryside, especially in the coca-growing region of the Huallaga River valley, exploiting the drug trade in various ways to finance group operations. In late December 1993 *Sendero* also attacked several foreign embassies, hitting the Chinese embassy twice.

During the fall of 1993 the Peruvian government publicized three letters written by imprisoned SL leader Abimael Guzmán calling for an end to the armed struggle and requesting peace talks, thus increasing the confusion among the SL's militants and supporters. In November 1994 the Peruvian government introduced an amnesty programme for terrorists that, in conjunction with arrests, casualties, and defections, increasingly weakened the organization. The deaths attributed to the SL in 1994 were 150, down from a total of 516 recorded in 1993.

With Guzmán in prison, a fraction of militant SL members, led by Oscar Ramírez Durand ("Feliciano") and styling themselves the **Sendero Rojo (Red Path)**, continued guerrilla activities in the remote jungle areas of the country. This faction was headquartered in the Viscatán region of Ayacucho Department and operated mainly in remote jungle regions, staging only sporadic incursions to urban centres.

Most of the incidents in 1995 were in the countryside, especially the coca-growing areas, and in a major operation police arrested almost 20 SL members, among them the SL central committee member and number two leader still at large, Margi Clavo Peralta.

SL remnants conducted a particularly brutal attack at the end of 1996 in Sapasoa, killing the mayor and three of his supporters at a rally.

Peru's tough anti-terrorist legislation and improved military intelligence diminished the capabilities of the terrorist groups in Peru, reducing their activity to low-level attacks and propaganda in the rural areas. In July 1999 the Peruvian authorities captured Commander Feliciano, who had led SL operations since the capture in 1992 of Abimael Guzmán. Leadership of the remaining guerrillas then passed on to "Artemio" (Filomeno Cerrón Cardoso, among other aliases) and his lieutenant "Alipio."

On March 20, 2002, immediately prior to a visit by US President George W. Bush, a car bomb attack on a commer-

cial centre near the US embassy in Lima killed ten people. Suggestions were made that the attack was the work of the SL, possibly Alipio's group, although the SL had been inactive in the capital for several years.

*Sendero Luminoso/Sendero Rojo* is believed reduced to a rump of a few hundred activists. However, SL's involvement in the illegal narcotic business in Peru is noticeably growing, providing the terrorists with a greater source of funding with which to conduct operations. Its centre of operations, the High Huallaga valley, is the largest coca producing region in the world, producing between 45 and 50% of the entire world production. The rebels have adopted a new policy that spares local people from punishment and indiscriminate attacks, in order to rebuild the base of support in Ayacucho enjoyed at the beginning of the insurrection in 1980. They provide armed protection to traffickers and peasants who seek to grow coca in defiance of government eradication efforts and have consolidated their position in remote areas as the government has scaled down its security operations.

### **Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (*Movimiento Revolucionario Tupac Amará, MRTA*)**

This pro-Cuban and "anti-imperialist" group, which had no obvious links with the *Sendero Luminoso* (see separate entry), was formed in 1984 by organizations from the radical left. It built up its forces in 1984 and 1985 in San Martin province and became known through a series of bomb attacks. Its name derives from an eighteenth century indigenous Peruvian who rebelled against Spanish rule. Its main objective was to overthrow the Peruvian government and to establish a Marxist government.

In September 1985 the MRTA reportedly made it known that it was prepared to suspend its activities to allow the government to introduce measures to assist the Peruvian people. However, on Aug. 7, 1986, the MRTA announced an end to the truce, stating that promises made by the government had turned into measures that did not represent the people's interests. In September 1986, a total of 288 people were arrested following the planting of bombs in Lima which killed two people; guerrillas left MRTA leaflets calling for the overthrow of the government. In December 1986 the group was blamed for eight bomb attacks in Lima only hours after President García had called for a united effort to develop society. The MRTA was also blamed for attacks on offices of the ruling APRA party in Lima in February 1987.

On Feb. 3, 1989, a leader of the MRTA, Víctor Polay Campos, was captured by security forces during a raid on a tourist hotel in Huancayo. The government claimed another major success against the MRTA on April 28, 1989, when security forces ambushed a column of guerrillas near Jaiya in Junin province and killed 62 guerrillas.

On Jan. 9, 1990, Gen. Enrique López Albújar, a former Chief of Staff and Minister of Defence, was shot dead in Lima. The MRTA claimed responsibility for the killing, but it was ascribed by police to *Sendero Luminoso*. The incident

was followed by numerous arrests and a security clamp-down.

During November 1990, to commemorate the group's anniversary, the MRTA bombed US businesses, the US consulate, and a US-Peruvian centre. In 1991 the MRTA was connected to some 34 attacks on American interests. In July MRTA leader Víctor Polay escaped from Canto Grande prison with 46 other inmates via a 315 meter-long tunnel.

In 1992 the terrorist offensive against American and Western interests in Peru continued, even if it was greatly reduced compared with the past, with two attacks on US properties. The renewed anti-terrorist effort of the Peruvian government was a major blow for the MRTA and it was also weakened by internal splits and the declining appeal of Cuban-style Marxism. In June 1992 the security forces recaptured MRTA leader Polay and he was held in detention in total isolation in the Callao navy base.

1993 was a black year for the MRTA, which came under heavy pressure from the ongoing operations by government security forces. The group was crippled by arrests, defections, and in-fighting. The MRTA was believed to have been almost dismantled by the end of 1993.

On Nov. 30, 1995, 30 of Tupac Amaru's members were arrested after a plot to occupy the Peruvian Congress, holding its members hostage in exchange for jailed MRTA militants, was foiled. Further arrests of MRTA members occurred in December 1995.

In 1996 the MRTA staged its final and most spectacular major operation. On Dec. 17, the 14 members of MRTA's "Commando Edgar Sanchez", headed by the group's top operational leader Nestor Cerpa Cartolini (a.k.a. Evaristo), seized the Japanese Ambassador's residence in Lima. They took more than 500 hostages, including numerous foreign ambassadors, prominent Peruvians and foreigners, and high ranking members of the police and military. Most hostages were freed in the first few days after the attack but by the end of the year 72 hostages were still being held, including the brother of President Fujimori. The MRTA's main demand was for the release by the Peruvian government of imprisoned MRTA members in Peru, a demand that stalled attempts to resolve the hostage situation peacefully. On April 22, after weeks of stalled talks, Peruvian military forces stormed the residence and successfully rescued all but one of the 72 remaining hostages. Two Peruvian soldiers and all 14 of the MRTA terrorists died in the assault. The MRTA's activity dropped off dramatically after the rescue operation, a sign of its almost complete organizational and military commitment in the attack.

The Tupac Amaru Movement, although politically active, is not known to have committed any terrorist acts in the last few years. The actual number of MRTA members is estimated as being no more than 100.

*Luca Blasi & Siro Mazza*

# Philippines

**Capital:** Manila

**Population:** 83 m

Following the overthrow of President Ferdinand Marcos in the “People Power Revolution” of 1986, a new Constitution was drawn up and approved by plebiscite in February 1987. This essentially restored the US-style presidential system under which the Philippines had been governed from 1935 until the imposition of martial law in 1972, with “people power” modifications. Executive authority rests with the President, directly elected for a single six-year term, and a Vice President elected separately. In January 2001, President Joseph Estrada (elected in 1998) resigned the presidency in the face of popular revolt and impeachment proceedings and was succeeded for the remainder of his term by his Vice President, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. The bicameral Congress comprises a House of Representatives (20 per cent of whom are elected from a party-list of organizations representing under-represented sectors) and a directly elected Senate. There is substantial decentralization of policy making to elected provincial and local-level bodies. Within the Philippines, however, the political system is commonly described as one of “elite democracy”, and poverty levels, relative to other countries in the region, are high.

The Marcos regime (1965-86) was marked by high levels of political repression, corruption and nepotism, and by the early 1970s it was facing a widespread leftist insurgency, led by the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and its armed wing the New People’s Army (NPA), and an armed separatist movement in the Muslim south. It also faced growing opposition from tribal minority people, especially in the Cordilleras of the northern island of Luzon, who became mobilized in opposition to land grabbing, illegal logging, and large-scale development projects which threatened their ancestral lands. Tribal people, or cultural communities, were frequently supported by the CPP/NPA.

A range of NGOs and church organizations (notably the Roman Catholic Church’s Basic Christian Communities) were also in opposition to the regime, with some church workers joining the NPA. Among these was Catholic priest Conrado Balweg, who left the church in the early 1980s to support the work of the NPA amongst cultural communities in the Cordilleras. Balweg later split with the NPA and announced the formation, in April 1986, of the Cordillera People’s Liberation Army (CPLA) to press for Cordillera autonomy. The CPLA subsequently negotiated a ceasefire and autonomy agreement with the government of Corazon Aquino (who succeeded Marcos), and the 1987 Constitution made provision for a Cordillera Autonomous Region (CAR). A Cordillera Organic Act was passed in 1989, but two

subsequent referenda failed to secure the necessary support for the CAR. The CPLA was eventually integrated into the government’s paramilitary forces.

## Dissidence in the Armed Forces

Under Marcos, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine Constabulary (PC), and their locally-based auxiliary Civil Home Defense Force (CHDF) units, acquired a formidable reputation for human rights abuses. A number of fanatical right-wing cultist vigilante groups (such as Alsa Masa and Tadtad), military “lost commands”, and private armies of local warlords were also enlisted to carry out counter-insurgency actions against the left-wing groups and the Muslim separatists. As social and economic conditions deteriorated under Marcos and opposition grew on a wider front, and as Marcos’s failing health generated competition among potential successors, factions also began to appear within the AFP. Prominent among these was the Reform the Armed Forces Movement (RAM), a group of younger officers, graduates of the Philippine Military Academy led by Colonel Gregorio Honasan, who had been alienated by Marcos’s appointment of “intégré” officers to politicize the military in order to consolidate control over it. In 1986 RAM officers, together with Defence Secretary Juan Ponce Enrile and former PC commander General Fidel Ramos, played a prominent role in bringing about the demise of the Marcos regime. (Ramos later succeeded Corazon Aquino as President and Honasan became a senator.)

Having assumed a political role in 1986, army officers subsequently challenged the government of President Corazon Aquino (1986-92), Aquino surviving seven coup attempts, involving RAM (renamed, following a failed coup attempt in December 1989, *Rebolusyonaryong Alyansang Makabayan* [People’s Revolutionary Alliance]), Marcos loyalists within the AFP, and a group known as the Young Officers’ Union (YOU). In 1994 the RAM signed a peace agreement with President Ramos. Rumours of an imminent coup attempt surfaced again in 2001-02, following the deposing of President Joseph Estrada in a military-backed popular revolt in January 2001 and his replacement by then Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. No such attempt eventuated then, but in July 2003 a group of around 300 soldiers, identified as the Magdalo group, wired explosives to a building complex in Manila’s up-market business and residential district, Makati, and demanded the resignation of the President and senior defence officials, whom they



accused of corruption, and the granting of pay increases for the AFP. The soldiers reportedly had links to both Senator Gregorio Honasan and former President Estrada. Although the Magdalo mutiny was quickly and peacefully diffused it provided evidence of continuing unrest within the AFP.

## LEFT-WING ORGANIZATIONS

### **Communist Party of the Philippines – Marxist-Leninist – Mao Zedong Thought (CPP); New People's Army (NPA); National Democratic Front (NDF)**

*Leadership. José Maria Sison (chair); Benito Tiamzon (secretary-general)*

The CPP was established in January 1969 on the “firm ideological foundation of Marxism Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought” after breaking from the (pro-Soviet) Communist Party of the Philippines (*Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas*, PKP) founded in 1930. The CPP marks its foundation on Dec. 26, 1968, however, to honour Mao’s birthday, and continues to engage in underground activities through its armed wing, the **New People’s Army (NPA)**, established on March 29, 1969. It also set up a **National Democratic Front (NDF)** in 1973 as an alliance of various left-wing movements, led by Antonio Zumel until his death in 2001.

When the NPA initiated its armed struggle in 1969, it numbered no more than 60 guerrillas with 35 weapons, and was limited to the central Luzon provinces of Tarlac and Pampanga, the heartland of the PKP-led Huk rebellion of the 1940s and 1950s. On Sept. 6, 1971, a Senate committee put NPA armed strength at 350, saying this posed “no real military threat”. When President Marcos declared martial law on Sept. 22, 1972, however, he invoked both the NPA and Muslim rebellion in the southern islands as major threats to national security, asserting on Sept. 24 that the NPA had 10,000 “active guerrillas” and 100,000 sympathizers. By the time his dictatorship was overthrown in 1986, in no small part as a result of US and elite fears of a communist takeover, these once grossly exaggerated figures would pale beside the reality.

There were early successes against the communists. On Aug. 27, 1976, Marcos presented 25 captured rebel leaders to the press, among them Bernabé Buscayno (“Ka [Comrade] Dante”), founder of the NPA, and Victor Corpus, a military defector and the NPA’s guerrilla training chief, both of whom were sentenced to death (the sentences were never carried out, and Corpus subsequently became a senior security adviser to post-Marcos governments). José Maria Sison, the founder of the CPP, was captured on Nov. 8, 1977, in La Union province (125 miles north of Manila). Rodolfo Salas replaced Sison as CPP chairman. Although Marcos claimed that the capture of Sison and Buscayno had “broken the back” of the communist insurgency, by the late 1970s the NPA had extended its operations from initial expansion areas in northern and southern Luzon to establish a substantial presence in the central Visayan islands (especially Samar), and in Mindanao.

The NPA had also, in 1979, infiltrated the area of the Kalinga people, whom it supported in opposing a hydro-electric project on the Chico River in northern Luzon. Trib-

al followers of rebel priest Conrado Balweg would later follow him out of the NPA to form a Cordillera People’s Liberation Army (CPLA, see above). Balweg was assassinated by the NPA in January 2000.

During 1981 NPA expansion accelerated, particularly in Mindanao. The movement was not known to receive any external assistance (attempts to smuggle Chinese weapons to the CPP in 1972 and 1974 failed), but captured or bought arms from the police and army. In the same year government forces resorted to the “strategic hamlets” concept, used by the British in Malaya in the 1950s and later by the United States in Vietnam, which involved uprooting families from their homes and relocating about 250,000 people, mainly in the three Davao provinces in Mindanao. Although the Defence Minister ordered the reversal of this policy in March 1982, there was no evidence that the hamlets had been dismantled. While the strategic hamlets exposed some guerrilla forces by depriving them of their mass base, they also increased anti-government sentiments among the people.

The scale of NPA operations increased markedly during 1983 and 1984, as the movement exploited the government’s unpopularity in the aftermath of the assassination (widely thought to have been carried out on the orders of Marcos) in August 1983 of opposition leader Benigno Aquino. Estimated NPA strength grew from 10,660 to 14,360, operating on many new fronts, particularly in Mindanao where a loose tactical alliance formed between the NPA and Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF, see separate entry). The NPA’s urban activities also increased, with “Sparrow Units” (small groups of urban guerrillas) reportedly gunning down more than 70 police in Davao City (Mindanao) in 1984-85.

On Jan. 9, 1985, Defence Minister Enrile stated that the NPA constituted “the most formidable threat to our national security today and will continue to do so”. Since 1981, he suggested, the movement had grown by 23 per cent per annum, and during 1984 was active in over 80 per cent of the country’s 73 provinces, resulting in the deaths of over 900 soldiers and 1,000 civilians. Although some 1,000 guerrillas had been killed in the course of the year, he estimated that the front-line strength of the movement remained above 20,000 fighters. At its 9th central committee plenum held between July and October 1985, the CPP indeed assessed NPA strength at 6,800 full-time fighters armed with high-powered rifles, and 16,000 local militia.

The CPP boycotted the “snap” presidential election campaign called by Marcos in early 1986 in an attempt to defuse the mounting support in the country for Corazon Aquino (the widow of Benigno). The CPP rejected Aquino’s candidature as the voice of the opposition on the grounds that she was a representative of “the landowners and the capitalists”. Although declared the winner, Marcos stood down from the presidency in the face of mounting popular anger and the defection of Enrile and Chief of Staff Fidel Ramos, and Aquino was sworn in as President on Feb. 25, 1986. The NPA’s distrust of Aquino (based upon her class background and her retention of key figures from the previous regime such as Enrile and Ramos) was somewhat diminished by her genuine effort to dissociate her government from that of Marcos. In addition to dismantling much of the coercive apparatus of the former regime, the President initiated the wholesale release of political prisoners, including Sison and



Buscayno.

Ceasefire talks between the government and NPA began in late June 1986 but were impeded by procedural disagreements and by actions attributed to elements of the army, including the arrest of Salas, the overall commander of the NPA, on Sept. 29, and the murder of a prominent trade unionist on Nov. 12. Tension between liberals in the Aquino regime who favoured negotiation, and hardline elements around Enrile, underlay several coup attempts in 1986-87, leading to the removal of the latter from his post as Minister of Defence in November. A 60-day truce between the government and the NPA was agreed on Nov. 27, and under an agreement that came into force on Dec. 10, a National Ceasefire Committee was established.

Talks held in January 1987 failed to resolve outstanding issues, with a massacre by government troops of peasant demonstrators outside the presidential palace on Jan. 22 poisoning the negotiating climate. The ceasefire was no longer observed after Feb. 8, and fighting resumed, with over 50 people reported killed in the first three days. President Aquino declared "Total War" on the NPA on Feb. 11, and with US advice began implementing an "integrated" counter-insurgency strategy including vigilante intimidation of above-ground left-wing activists and escalated military operations, combined with a surrender and amnesty scheme.

Despite government claims that the amnesty programme was succeeding, guerrilla operations intensified throughout much of the country. Sparrow units carried out assassinations in Manila and other major cities, and on Oct. 28 three US service personnel were killed near Clark Field. A few days later the NPA confirmed that US personnel, both service and civilian, were henceforth to be considered legitimate targets. Colonel James Rowe, an American counter-insurgency advisor, was assassinated in Manila in April 1989.

The authorities scored a spectacular victory on March 29, 1988, when the NPA commander, Romulo Kintanar, CPP secretary-general, Rafael Baylosis, and four other leading communists were arrested in Manila. (Following the arrests it was reported that Baylosis had been replaced as secretary-general by Saturnino Ocampo.) While Kintanar escaped from custody on Nov. 12, Ocampo and his wife were captured in July 1989. Buscayno defected from the NPA to organize an agricultural co-operative on the Aquino family hacienda.

In 1988, Philippine military intelligence reported the first decline in NPA ranks for twelve years, to 23,060 at year-end, from a high point of 25,200 in 1987. This decline continued throughout the first half of the 1990s to a low of 6,020 in 1995. Fidel Ramos succeeded Aquino to the presidency in July 1992, and achieved significant gains in the field and at the negotiating table, where the framework for a comprehensive peace agreement was signed with NDF representatives at The Hague in September. The CPP was legalized on Sept. 1, 1992, although "rebellion" remained illegal. In November, US forces withdrew from Subic Bay and Clark Field, in accordance with the Philippine Senate's rejection of a new draft treaty the previous year, and meeting a longstanding CPP demand.

In December 1992, J. M. Sison, in exile in the Netherlands since 1986, when he reportedly resumed the CPP chairmanship, publicly denounced Kintanar, together with

other senior CPP leaders Ricardo Reyes and Benjamin de Vera, as "renegades" and agents of the Ramos regime. This broadside marked the intensification of an internal CPP "rectification" campaign aimed at "reaffirming" the fundamental Maoist tenets of rural "protracted people's war". Sison blamed the movement's declining fortunes on the "renegades'" misguided policies of urban insurrection and NPA "regularization" (the formation of larger, mobile company- and battalion-sized units, at the expense of smaller units more closely integrated with the peasant mass base). These policies, initially pursued in Mindanao, led directly to internal CPP purges on the island in 1985-86 that took about 1,000 lives, according to Sison; the errors were then replicated at national level as the "renegades" were promoted.

Beginning in July 1993, the CPP fragmented into contending "Reaffirmist" (RA) and "Rejectionist" (RJ) factions, the former endorsing Sison's diagnosis, the latter rejecting it. Manila-based units led by Filemon "Popoy" Lagman were the first to break away, eventually crystallizing around a new Filipino Workers' Party (*Partido ng Manggagawang Pilipino*, PMP) in August 2002 (Lagman was assassinated in February 2001). Units in the western Visayas and central Mindanao gravitated towards another new party, the Revolutionary Workers' Party – Philippines (RPM-P), formally established in May 1998, and led by Arturo Tabara and Ike de los Reyes, and its Revolutionary Proletarian Army (RPA). In central Luzon, meanwhile, a Marxist-Leninist Party of the Philippines (MLPP) and Revolutionary People's Army (RHB) broke away from the CPP in 1997, advocating a bigger role for legal mass mobilizations. NPA units have clashed with the RHB and RPA on a number of occasions in Luzon and Negros island. On Negros, the RPA signed a ceasefire agreement with the government of President Estrada, and now serves as a security force for former Marcos crony Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco.

The Hague negotiating framework bore fruit in August 1998, when a comprehensive agreement on human rights and international humanitarian law was signed between the NDF and Philippine government. The remaining Hague agenda covers social and economic reform, political and constitutional reform, and ceasefire and disposition of forces. When the Philippine Senate ratified a new Visiting Forces Agreement with the US in May 1999, however, talks broke down. They were resumed in Oslo after the accession of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in 2001, only to be suspended again when the NPA assassinated two Congressmen and a provincial mayor. President Macapagal-Arroyo has committed herself to an early and final resolution of the conflict, which has now taken more than 40,000 lives since 1969. The addition of the NPA to the US State Department's list of Foreign Terrorist Organizations on Aug. 9, 2002, however, does not bode well for the negotiations. The USA has called on European allies to freeze CPP accounts and deport Sison, while conducting "anti-terrorist exercises" on Philippine soil, where the NPA has undergone a resurgence since 1996. From an estimated 6,300 guerrillas, active in just 1 per cent of the country's villages, the number of insurgents reportedly grew to 11,094 in July 2002, affecting more than 5 per cent of villages. Of this number, according to Philippine military intelligence, 85 per cent belong to the NPA, the remainder being aligned with various anti-Sison factions.

## MUSLIM SEPARATISM

Muslims comprise about 4.5 per cent of the Philippines population. They are concentrated in the islands of the Sulu Archipelago, western and central Mindanao, and southern Palawan, and comprise some thirteen ethno-linguistic groups, though four of these – the Maguindanao, Maranao-Ilanun, Tausug and Samal – account for over 90 per cent of the Muslim population.

When the Spaniards arrived in the Philippines in 1565 they immediately came into conflict with the “Moros” (so named after the Muslim Moors in Spain), beginning a bitter struggle for religious and commercial control in the Philippine islands which continued over some 350 years. But although they reversed the expansion of Islam, the Spaniards never gained effective sovereignty over Mindanao and Sulu. When the United States took over control of the Philippines in 1898 the Moros continued to resist the foreign intrusion until a major military defeat in 1913. Subsequently, the US administration attempted to integrate the Moro into mainstream Filipino society, though there were intermittent outbreaks of armed resistance.

By the 1950s, increasing migration to Mindanao, and consequent competition for land and political influence, combined with an Islamic resurgence, had brought new tensions in relations between Muslim and Christian communities. These tensions escalated during the 1960s and in 1969 a Muslim Independence Movement was established. By the early 1970s Muslim Mindanao and Sulu were in a state of armed insurgency, spearheaded by the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF, see below). A number of concessions were made to Moro demands by the Marcos government in the 1970s, including codification of *shari’a* law.

In 1976 a ceasefire and agreement between the MNLF and the Philippine government were signed in Libya. Under this Tripoli Agreement the Philippines government accepted thirteen provinces in Mindanao-Sulu-Palawan as a prospective area of Muslim autonomy. Attempts to implement the agreement broke down, however, when the Philippine government insisted on a plebiscite on the autonomy arrangements in the thirteen provinces (only five of which had a Muslim majority by the 1970s), and each side accused the other of ceasefire violations.

Following the “People Power Revolution” of 1986, talks were resumed between the Philippine government and MNLF leader Nur Misuari, which culminated in provisions in the 1987 Constitution for an Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). Disputes again arose, however, over the issue of a referendum to determine which provinces and cities would join the ARMM, and in the event the MNLF boycotted the poll and Misuari returned overseas. In the subsequent referendum, only four provinces agreed to join the ARMM, which consequently had little credibility amongst those who supported Muslim separatism.

Six years later negotiations were revived under President Fidel Ramos, and in 1996, with the mediation of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), a Peace Agreement was signed between the MNLF and the Philippine government. It provided for the creation of a Special Zone of Peace and Development (SZOPAD) in the (now) fourteen provinces and nine cities specified in the Tripoli Agreement, and for a Southern Philippines Council for Peace and Development (SPCPD), with limited autonomous powers, headed by Misuari. (In 1996 Misuari was also elected governor of the ARMM.) Provision was made for the integration of former Moro fighters into the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police. The inevitable referendum, seeking to expand the ARMM to cover the wider area of the SZOPAD, was postponed, but when it was eventually held, in 2001, only five provinces and one city voted to join. Making good an earlier threat, Misuari subsequently went back to the hills.

### Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF)

The Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) was created as a unified movement around 1971 amongst a group of young Philippine Muslims who had undergone guerrilla training in Malaysia. It became the leading political organization in the Muslim insurgency against the Philippine government. The MNLF, under the leadership of Nur Misuari, demanded a separate *Bangsa Moro* (Moro nation) in the traditional Muslim heartland of Mindanao-Sulu-Palawan, and also opposed traditional feudal structures within Philippine Muslim society. It had a military wing, the Bangsa Moro Army (BMA). The MNLF gained the support of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), the principal global organization of Muslim countries, and financial backing from Libya and other Islamic countries.

Following the signing of the Tripoli Agreement (above), splits occurred within the MNLF in 1977 over issues of strategy, personality and ideological orientation; the split also followed major ethno-linguistic divisions in Philippine Muslim society. While the Suluano Misuari remained as the recognized leader of the MNLF, a faction led by Hashim Salamat, a religious leader from Maguindanao, broke away to form the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF, see below), and a second, predominantly Maranao, faction led by Dimas Pundato, formed the MNLF – Reformist Group (MNLF-RG). Another group, the Bangsa Moro Liberation Organization (BMLO), a socially conservative, mostly Maranao group headed by Macapanton Abbas, also emerged in this period, but both it and the MNLF-RG appear to have faded away by the late 1980s. Abbas died in 2003.

By the late 1970s fighting was on a diminished scale, with a number of MNLF fighters surrendering to the government under amnesty programs. In 1986 Misuari returned to the Philippines for talks with President Aquino, but despite the President’s initiative in creating the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), Misuari went back overseas to campaign for a separate Bangsa Moro. Ten years later Misuari became a signatory to the Peace Agreement initiated by former adversary President Ramos, returning to become chair of the Southern Philippines Council for Peace and Development.

(SPCPD) and governor of the ARMM (see above).

In the latter part of the 1990s, however, there was growing factionalism within the MNLF, and Misuari's leadership came under attack. In 1999, he survived a challenge to his leadership of the ARMM from within the MNLF and his term as governor was extended. But in August 2001 his position was again challenged by a faction identifying itself as the Executive Council of the Fifteen, and in the ARMM elections that year, following the vote against expansion of the ARMM, Misuari was deposed and returned to the armed struggle, launching an armed attack on government troops before fleeing to Malaysia. He was arrested in November 2001 and returned to the Philippines to face trial. In 2003 he remained in detention pending the completion of his trial.

### **Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF)**

*Leadership. Al Haj Murad Ebrahim (chairman)*

The Moro Islamic Liberation Front was formed in 1977 as a breakaway from the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF, see entry). Its leader at the time, Hashim Salamat, accused MNLF chairman Nur Misuari of autocratic leadership, communist sympathies, and corruption. A bid by Salamat to gain OIC recognition for the MILF as the leading Moro organization failed. When in 1986-87 the Philippine government negotiated with the MNLF over the creation of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), the MILF was not a party to the talks, and again in the 1990s it did not participate in the negotiations that culminated in the 1996 Peace Agreement. The MILF thus became the leader of the armed struggle for a separate Moro nation and appears to have gained in strength and militancy.

Under the Ramos and Estrada presidencies several attempts were made to negotiate with the MILF, and there appears to have been a tacit acceptance of the MILF's spheres of influence around its headquarters, Camp Abubakr, and other bases in western Mindanao. In 2000, however, a series of clashes between the MILF and government forces resulted in President Estrada declaring "all-out war" on the MILF. The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) subsequently overran the MILF bases and a number of MILF fighters reportedly surrendered. In 2001, under the administration of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, new attempts were made to negotiate a peace settlement, resulting in a ceasefire in August 2001.

A joint government – MILF Coordinating Committee on the Cessation of Hostilities (CCCH) thereafter met regularly to monitor the ceasefire and pave the way for the resumption of formal peace talks. In May 2003, however, government forces launched a renewed offensive against MILF strongholds in central Mindanao. President Macapagal-Arroyo stated that the offensive did not signify an all-out war against the rebels and that the targets were specific MILF units that had carried out recent attacks. Peace talks were scheduled to resume in October 2003.

Hashim Salamat died in July 2003 and was replaced by his vice chair for military affairs, Al Haj Murad Ebrahim.

### **Abu Sayyaf**

The *Abu Sayyaf* ("The Swordsman" in Arabic) emerged in the western Mindanao-Sulu area in the early 1990s. It was founded by a former Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF, see entry) supporter, Abdurajak Janjalani, who had received religious training in Libya before returning to the Philippines where he became a charismatic preacher and advocate of a separate Islamic state in the south. He recruited a small but committed following, some of whom had fought with the *mujahideen* in Afghanistan, and appears to have had links with radical Muslim groups overseas including *Al-Qaeda*. *Abu Sayyaf* was reported to have been financed in the early 1990s through Mindanao-based charities run by Mohammad Jamal Khalifa (born in Saudi Arabia), the brother-in-law of Osama bin Laden.

Janjalani was killed in a confrontation with police in December 1998 but his group survived, primarily carrying on what Filipinos describe as "commercial insurgency" – kidnapping and extortion, which enabled it to fund a substantial armory. In 2000 *Abu Sayyaf* groups attracted international publicity with a series of kidnappings, which included several Europeans and Americans. Their ransom demands included recognition of an independent Islamic state, the release of international terrorists held overseas, the banning of foreign fishing vessels from the Sulu Sea, and protection for Filipinos in Sabah, as well as payments of up to \$US1 million per hostage. Some hostages were executed; others were released following intervention by President Kadhafi of Libya. Other Muslim groups, including the MNLF and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF, see entry) have condemned *Abu Sayyaf* and dissociated themselves from it.

US concern about *Abu Sayyaf* intensified after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the United States, with the Philippines government also seeking to revitalize the traditional strategic relationship with the USA, which had decayed after the closure of US bases in 1992 (with all US military aid subsequently being stopped). In January 2002 US forces began exercises and training with the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) near the *Abu Sayyaf* stronghold of Basilan island, although it was stated that there would be no US participation in military operations (this being barred by the Philippines Constitution). US military equipment was also delivered to assist the AFP's counter-insurgency operations. The group appeared to enjoy some local support and has been able to find shelter in remote areas and the numerous islands. In September 2002, Khadaffy Janjalani, who had succeeded his brother, Abdurajak Janjalani, as leader of *Abu Sayyaf* called for renewed attacks on US and Philippine targets, and analysts suggested he wish to bring the group back to its Islamist and separatist roots rather than operating as an armed gang of kidnappers.

*R. J. May & Kit Collier*

# Poland

**Capital:** Warsaw

**Population:** 38.7 m

Communist rule effectively collapsed in Poland after the June 4, 1989, semi-democratic elections that brought to power the first non-communist government in Eastern Europe since the 1940s, led by Tadeusz Mazowiecki. Subsequently Poland embarked on a process of political, economic and social transformation aiming at first at the introduction, and later the consolidation of democracy, a market economy, and re-direction of the country's foreign policy with the specific aim of joining NATO and the European Union. In 1997 a new constitution was approved in a nation-wide referendum. Under the constitution the President (head of state) is popularly elected for a five-year term. He appoints the Prime Minister subject to parliamentary approval. Legislative authority is vested in a bicameral National Assembly (Zgromadzenie Narodowe) elected by universal adult suffrage for a four-year term. The upper chamber, the Senate (Senat), comprises 100 members, of whom 94 are returned from 47 two-member provinces and three each from the provinces based on Warsaw and Katowice. The lower house, the Sejm, is composed of 460 deputies elected by a system of proportional representation that requires party lists (except those representing ethnic minority communities) to obtain at least 5 per cent (8 per cent for coalitions of parties) of the vote.

The first round of presidential elections on Oct. 8, 2000, resulted in outright victory for the incumbent candidate of Democratic Left Alliance (*Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej* – SLD), Aleksander Kwasniewski, with 53.9% of the vote. Elections to the Sejm on Sept. 23, 2001, resulted in a coalition of the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) and the Union of Labour (*Unia Pracy* – UP) winning 219 seats (with 41.3% of the vote), the Citizens' Platform (*Platforma Obywatelska* – PO) 63 (12.7%), Self-Defence (*Samoobrona*) 53 (10.0%), Law and Justice (*Prawo i Sprawiedliwość* – PiS) 47 (9.8%), the Polish Peasant Party (*Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe* – PSL) 42 (8.8%) and League of Polish Families (*Liga Polskich Rodzin* – LPR) 34 (7.7%), with one seat being taken by the German minority. In simultaneous Senate elections the SLD-UP coalition won 68 of the 100 seats.

Although, like the rest of Eastern Europe, Poland has during the past decade witnessed the proliferation of groups and organizations of both the extreme right and left, these groups remain on the margins of society and have had very little impact on political, social and economic discourse. Since 1999 their number has dramatically declined and those groups and organizations that remain are insignificant in terms of membership. Many of their members participate in several

groups simultaneously as membership and group boundaries are fluid. Their *raison d'être* has been their total opposition to Poland's forthcoming membership of the European Union, the country's membership (since 1998) of NATO, and during 2003 Polish participation in the war against Iraq. However, accession to the EU was endorsed by 77.45% to 22.55% in a national referendum (turnout 58.85%) in June 2003; the question of continuing membership of NATO is not at issue; and there is overwhelming support for Poland's participation in the US-led intervention in Iraq. In September 2003 Polish forces were given responsibility for military control in central Iraq.

## RIGHT-WING GROUPS

### All Poland Youth (*Młodzież Wszechpolska*)

*Leader:* Roman Giertych

*Website:* [www.wszechpolacy.pl](http://www.wszechpolacy.pl)

Describing itself as an anti-left organization, it claims continuity with an organization of the same name that existed between 1922 and 1945. It aims to shape among its members national, Catholic, and patriotic values beneficial to the Polish homeland. Although it claims membership and local organizational structures in 14 regions its following is quite insignificant and amounts to several dozen people.

### National Revival of Poland (*Narodowe Odrodzenie Polski*)

*Website:* [www.nop.org.pl](http://www.nop.org.pl)

Created on Nov. 11, 1981, as a discussion group, it claims to be the oldest national-radical organization in post-war Poland. Since 1983 it has published the periodical "I am a Pole" (*Jestem Polakiem*). Its programme contains strong nationalist elements. It emphasises an anti-European Union, anti-liberal, anti-NATO platform. Although it claims the support of several thousand members and sympathisers, its membership amounts to no more than 200-300.

### Polish Defence League (*Polska Liga Obrony*)

*Website:* [www.maloca.com.pdl](http://www.maloca.com.pdl)

A small but very vocal extreme nationalist, anti-Semitic and anti-left organization which claims that it "stands on guard of the Polish interests to create fair advantage for the Poles in their country. Those who work with the post-communists we consider to be collaborators and traitors of our Nation".

### Radical Anti-communist Action (*Radykalna Akcja Antykomunistyczna*)

*Website:* [www.raak.prv.pl](http://www.raak.prv.pl)

Established in 1995 in order to galvanize public opinion against the election of Aleksander Kwasniewski as the pres-



ident of the Polish Republic. Vehemently anti-left, with a membership of 100-200, it has been responsible for organizing demonstrations that often turned into violence.

Other right-wing organizations of limited significance include: **Organization of Polish Monarchists** (*Organizacja Monarchistów Polskich*) (<http://republika.pl/adnikiel/>), and **Our Heritage** (*Naszosc*) ([www.naszosc.prv.pl](http://www.naszosc.prv.pl))

### LEFT-WING GROUPS

#### Anti-capitalist Offensive (Ofensywa Antykapitalistyczna)

Website. [republika.pl/ofensywa\\_antykapitalistyczna](http://republika.pl/ofensywa_antykapitalistyczna)

Created on Feb. 9, 2002, it aims at the destruction of capitalism, the creation of a classless society and the international working class order. It claims to have its ideological foundations in Marxism-Leninism. The group's membership is very small, probably not exceeding one hundred. It has staged violent clashes with the police. Some of its members have been involved in acts of vandalism.

#### Left Alternative (Lewicowa Alternatywa)

Website. [www.lewicowa.org](http://www.lewicowa.org)

Established in 1997 it aims to link the radical left in Poland

including anarcho-syndicalists, Marxists and socialists. It is against Poland's membership of NATO and the European Union. It demands the abolition of the post of President of Poland and of the upper chamber of parliament, the halting of privatization, the removal of the presence of the Roman Catholic Church in education and the media, and the re-confiscation of property returned to the Church after 1989. It has been responsible for organizing demonstrations in Warsaw and Katowice which led to violent clashes with the police.

#### Revolutionary Left (Nurt Lewicy Rewolucyjnej)

Website. [www.republika.pl/socjalizm/](http://www.republika.pl/socjalizm/)

A Trotskyist organization that publishes an occasional periodical *Dalej* (Forward).

Other left-wing groups and organizations include: **Anarchist Federation** (*Federacja Anarchistyczna*); **Anti-bourgeois** (*Antyburzuj*); **Communist Youth of Poland** (*Komunistyczna Młodzież Polski*); **Radical Wing of the Polish Socialist Party** (*Nurt Radykalny Polskiej Partii Socjalistycznej*) and **Working Democracy** (*Pracownicza Demokracja*).

Bogdan Szajkowski

## Portugal

**Capital:** Lisbon

**Population:** 10.3 m

The Republic of Portugal is, under its 1976 Constitution, reflecting the aims of the 1974 revolution, "a democratic state based...on pluralism...with the objective of ensuring the transition to socialism". It has as head of state a President elected by universal adult suffrage for a five-year term. The head of government is the Prime Minister and there is a unicameral national legislature, the Assembly of the Republic, which has 230 members elected by universal adult suffrage for a four-year term.

On Jan. 14, 2001, the candidate of the Socialist Party (*Partido Socialista*, PS), Jorge Sampaio, was re-elected for a second term as President with 55.8% of the vote. Assembly elections held on March 17, 2002, resulted in the moderate conservative Social Democratic Party (*Partido Social Democrata*, PSD) winning 105 seats, with 40.1% of the votes, and the PS 96 seats (37.9%). Other parties winning seats were the conservative Popular Party (*Partido Popular*, PP), with 14 seats, the Unitarian Democratic Coalition (CDU, comprising the Communist and Ecologist parties), 12 seats, and the Bloc of the Left of communist and extreme left candidates, with 3 seats. The government is led by the PSD in coalition with the PP.

Democracy now seems well established. Alternation of governments takes place regularly, the PSD having

won the 1991 and 2002 elections and the PS those in 1995 and 1999. Anarchist and extreme left activity in Portugal, as elsewhere in Europe, has largely refocused itself into the anti-globalization movement.

#### People's Forces of 25 April (Forças Populares de 25 Abril, FP-25)

Established on April 30, 1980, this extreme left-wing group took its name from the date of the 1974 revolution which overthrew the right-wing Caetano regime. Members of the group were subsequently involved in bank raids, bombings, extortion and murder.

In operations against the FP-25 on June 18-20, 1984, police arrested 42 persons, among them Lt.-Col. Otelo Saraiwa de Carvalho (who had played a leading part in the 1974 revolution). Meanwhile FP-25 members still at large carried out more bomb attacks, their targets including British, French and West German business premises and an industrialist who was murdered on March 23, 1985.

The trial of 74 suspected FP-25 members, due to begin on July 22, 1985, was postponed after one of the prosecution's key witnesses had been shot by an FP-25 member on July 19 (he died of his wounds in August). The FP-25 also claimed responsibility for killing the director-general of the prison service in Lisbon on Feb. 15, 1986, and for a car bomb explosion at the US embassy on Feb. 18.



On May 20, 1987, Otelio Carvalho was found guilty of organizing a terrorist group and sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment; in total 47 of the co-defendants were convicted, and 16 acquitted.

In February 1990 it was reported that Carvalho had

renounced the armed struggle. In 1996 an amnesty was granted by President Mario Soares and Carvalho and his accomplices were released.

*William Tupman*

## Qatar

**Capital:** Doha

**Population:** 793,000

The State of Qatar is a traditional monarchy that has been ruled by the Al Thani family since the nineteenth century. Previously a British protectorate, it became an independent state on Sept. 3, 1971. The current Amir is Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani who, when the crown prince, ousted his father, Amir Khalifa bin Hamad Al Thani, in a bloodless coup on June 27, 1995. A provisional constitution was enacted on April 19, 1972, but there is no parliament and no elections have been held since. There is, however, a 35-member Advisory Council (*Shoura*). Political parties or pressure groups remain banned and no open opposition is tolerated.

The Iranian Revolution of 1979 and the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq War in 1980 threatened the stability of the Gulf states and in 1981 Qatar joined Kuwait, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Oman and the UAE to form the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) to provide for regional defence and to coordinate policy on trade and economic issues. In foreign affairs Qatar has customarily followed the lead of Saudi Arabia. During the 1991 Gulf War, Qatar's troops and air force were part of the UN coalition, and were especially noted for their contribution in the retaking of Khafji (a Saudi city on the southern border of Kuwait). In 2001, Qatar resolved longstanding border disputes with both Bahrain and Saudi Arabia.

In March 1999, Qatar held nationwide elections for representatives to its Central Municipal Council, which has consultative powers aimed at improving the provision of municipal services.

In July 1999 Amir Hamad issued a decree forming a committee to draft a permanent constitution. Under draft constitutional proposals legislative elections in Qatar could come by 2004. The draft constitution establishes four-year terms for the 30 elected members of the *Shoura*; women will be eligible to run for office. The *Shoura* would have the right to draw up legislation, question Cabinet ministers, review and vote on the government's budget proposals and debate decisions taken by Cabinet ministers – all of whom will still be appointed by the Amir, however. The Amir would retain the right to veto legislation, but would be required to reconsider any vetoed bills that are resubmitted by the legislature within three months. The Amir could also dissolve the council but would be required to call new elections within six months.

In addition to the provisions for an elected council,

the draft constitution explicitly guarantees the rights of freedom of expression and freedom to form societies (but not political parties), and stresses the right of women to vote and hold elected office. Qatari officials have stressed that the constitution does not preclude the formation of political parties at a later date. While the document calls for an independent judiciary to be based on Islamic law it also states that authority to administer the nation's legal code will flow from the judiciary, apparently leaving room for something other than literal interpretation in applying Islamic law. The draft constitution allows all religions to practice their faith.

Islamists and nationalists believe that the US military presence in Qatar and other regional states is a new form of crusade against Islam and the unification of the region. This view is widely held but what makes it more significant is that Qatari foreign policy appears to provoke additional opposition. The government's decision to invite Israel to participate in a World Trade Organization (WTO) meeting in Qatar in November 2000 provoked strong condemnation.

On Oct. 13, 2002, the Qatari regime faced an attempted coup led by several members of the royal family, Islamist organizations and several army officers of Yemeni and Pakistani origins. Intervention by US forces from the al-Udaid base, it was reported, was able to foil the coup in which some 140 military personnel and civilians were arrested.

Al-Jazeera TV station, based in Qatar, is seen as a major competitor to CNN and BBC in the Arab World but is also viewed by governments in the region as an opposition or dissident tool. The Qatari daily newspaper *Al-Raya* accused Saudi Arabia in 2002 of running a "hidden war" against Al-Jazeera. Information ministers of the GCC, with the exception of Qatar, issued a statement at the conclusion of their 13th meeting which was held in Muscat accusing Al-Jazeera TV of defaming certain leaders of the GCC. During the conflict in Afghanistan the US government notified the Qatar authorities of their displeasure with Al-Jazeera. US Secretary of State Colin Powell acknowledged that he personally pressed Qatar to censor Al-Jazeera, but Washington's pressure had not produced the desired effect.

*Ibrahim J. Al-Sharifi*

# Romania

**Capital:** Bucharest

**Population:** 23 m

Under its post-communist constitution, adopted on Dec. 8, 1991, Romania has a semi-presidential system of government, akin to the arrangement operating in the French 5th Republic. The President, as Head of State, and the Prime Minister, as the Head of Government, share executive functions. In practice however, the presidency has been the locus of power until recently, when President Ion Iliescu has shifted control to his hand picked Prime Minister, Adrian Nastase. As Iliescu draws towards the end of his second full term as President (the maximum allowed under the constitution), the transferral of responsibility to Nastase is seen as preparation for Nastase's own predicted candidacy for the presidency in 2004.

The President is elected by popular vote for a four-year term. The Prime Minister is appointed by the President, but should retain the confidence of the bicameral parliament. The parliament consists of a 140-seat Senate and a 345-seat Chamber of Deputies. Both are elected every four years by proportional representation.

## Historical Background

Following the declaration of a communist People's Republic in 1947, Nicolae Ceausescu came to power in 1965 and then led the regime until its collapse in 1989. As a result of Ceausescu's willingness to resist the influence of Moscow, he initially won wide respect among Western states, to the extent that Romania was granted "most favoured nation" trading status by the United States in 1975. However, Ceausescu's increasingly draconian leadership during the 1980s caused unrest on his home soil, culminating in the revolution of December 1989. After revolt spread east from the Transylvanian city of Timisoara, the leader and his wife were tracked down, arrested and summarily executed on Christmas Day 1989.

In response to the power vacuum that stemmed from the overthrow of Ceausescu's regime, a rapidly formed collection of reform-minded Communists proclaimed the right to lead an interim government, until elections could be held in the spring of 1990. This group, known as the National Salvation Front (FSN), formed a provisional government under President Ion Iliescu and Prime Minister Petre Roman. Although the group had initially indicated that it would not run as a party in the elections set for May 20, 1990, this decision was reversed as the elections drew near. With substantial control over resources and a broadly divided opposition (82 parties competed in the elections), both Iliescu and the FSN were able to win comfortable

majorities in the 1990 elections. A revised constitution cut short Iliescu's first term and led to a fresh set of elections in 1992. He was again elected President at that time.

A substantial shift in the balance of power accompanied the 1996 elections as a centre-right coalition, the Democratic Convention, took the majority of seats in parliament and a reform-focused academic, Emil Constantinescu, was elected to the presidency. However, the failure of Constantinescu to realize many of his election promises combined with a worsening economic situation to force him out of contention for the 2000 elections and Iliescu was again elected as President. In the legislative elections in November 2000, the Romanian Social Democratic Party (PDSR) of Iliescu and Nastase, derived from the FSN, emerged as the strongest party.

Romania has a number of significantly sized ethnic minorities, including Hungarian (7.1%), Roma (1.8%), German (0.5%), Ukrainian (0.3%), and others (0.8%). At present, there is no indication that any of these groups have separatist inclinations. This may be due to the broad dispersion of the minority groups across the breadth of the Transylvanian region.

## Workers' and Union Movements

Despite the strict crackdown on any form of dissent under Ceausescu, miners remained comparatively vocal in their protests during the era of Communist rule. Leadership in the protests was taken by workers from the Jiu Valley, a mining area located in central Romania. The first large-scale protest to emerge from the Valley came in 1977, as the miners led strikes which called for an improvement in wage levels, pensions and safety conditions. The Jiu Valley miners also played a leadership role in the public protests that broke out in the city of Brasov in 1987 – protests that have come to be seen as a forerunner to the revolution of 1989.

While the union movement had been wholly centralized under Ceausescu, the fall of his regime in 1989 was accompanied by a dismantling of the state-sponsored system, and the formation of independent, sector-specific unions. During the early 1990s, many of these groups then banded together into one of a number of confederations, the largest of which was the National Confederation of Free Trade Unions in Romania (CNSLR). Despite this trend, the union representing the Jiu Valley miners did not align itself closely with any of these broad-reaching groups and continued to represent its own interests.

From 1990, members increasingly employed violent tactics to publicize their concerns. The willingness of the Jiu Valley miners to rely on violent protest became starkly evident shortly after the first post-communist elections, held in May 1990. Although the elections had given Iliescu and the FSN a strong popular mandate, sections of the population – led by students and intellectuals – were not satisfied that the retention of power by former Communist leaders constituted a realization of the revolution's objectives. The protesters' opinions were articulated in a document entitled the Timisoara Proclamation. This paper argued that any person who had worked as an activist in the Communist Party under Ceausescu should be barred from candidacy in the elections of May that year.

When the Timisoara Proclamation was dismissed by leaders of the interim government and the primarily ex-Communist FSN cruised to an easy victory, supporters of the Proclamation took to the streets of Bucharest in protest. As it became clear that the protesters would not dissolve of their own accord, President Iliescu ordered police to disperse the crowd and arrest the leaders of the movement. The police quickly turned to violent measures and the hitherto peaceful protesters were attacked. In turn, the protesters responded violently, attacking the police headquarters, public television station and Foreign Ministry building – where the government was housed at that time.

The failure of state police to control the crowds led Iliescu to call upon the Jiu Valley miners to descend upon Bucharest in order to “defend the revolution”. The estimated 7,000 miners, “commanded” by Jiu Valley Union leader Miron Cozma, arrived in Bucharest on June 14, armed with iron bars. The miners were given free rein for two days, during which time they attacked the demonstrators, offices of government opposition parties, small businesses and Roma. Events drew to a close as Iliescu summoned the miners together for a victory rally on the eve of June 15.

The miners' next incursion came in September 1991, by way of protest over the hardships associated with economic restructuring. The workers attacked the national parliament building and national television studios, although they were not able to take control of either of these facilities.

The 1996 elections saw Romania's first democratic change of government since 1989, as Emil Constantinescu replaced Iliescu as President. Coming in on a programme of neo-liberal economic reform, Constantinescu and his coalition (DC) introduced a number of steps designed to accelerate the privatization of state-owned industries. A significant aspect of Constantinescu's attempted reforms included the closure of inefficient or loss-making state-owned firms. The announcement of this policy was met with resistance by certain labour movements, to the extent that workers at two petrol refineries scheduled for liquidation turned to violent protest. In June 1997, workers from the Ploiesti and Vega plants set themselves upon the headquarters of their refineries.

During this time, economic reforms hit the mining

industry particularly hard, and demand for coal fell from 44 million tons in 1996, to 33.5 million in 1997. In response this fall, and partly in order to satisfy directives that were required in order to collect an IMF loan, Prime Minister Radu Vasile announced the closure of all non-profitable mines – effective from December 1998. This would have involved the loss of more jobs in the Jiu Valley region, in addition to the 20,000 that had already been cut in 1997.

Jiu Valley leader, Miron Cozma (then free after having served a one and half year sentence for his involvement in the protest of 1991), responded immediately to the government proposal by threatening to bring 15,000 miners to Bucharest, unless the decision was reversed. Cozma's threat was openly endorsed by the leader of the *România Mare* party (see below), Corneliu Vadim Tudor. Conflict was eventually avoided when Prime Minister Vasile agreed, on Jan. 22, 1999, to re-open the Jiu Valley mines and provide the workers with a pay rise.

Immediately following this decision, Constantinescu's government sought to undermine Cozma's influence by reactivating charges that had been made against him in the early 1990s, but never enforced. This move prompted further violence from the miners on Feb. 16, 1999, as they sought to protect their leader from the authorities. A showdown between the miners and government anti-terrorist forces resulted at Petrosani. Cozma was eventually taken by government forces and has remained imprisoned since that time. There have been no further acts of collective violence since Cozma's arrest.

### Extreme Nationalist Party

#### Greater Romania Party (Partidul România Mare, PRM)

*Leader: Corneliu Vadim Tudor*

Although the *România Mare* (PRM) party – currently the second largest in the Romanian parliament (having won 84 seats in the 2000 elections) – insists on its commitment to democracy and liberal social values, the party's association with extreme nationalist movements and its primary objective of reunification with the Republic of Moldova warrant its inclusion in this volume.

The party identifies itself as being of the centre-left from a socio-economic perspective and centre-right, from a socio-political perspective. Thus, by combining socialist economic platforms with populist nationalist rhetoric, *România Mare* attempts to appeal to a broad cross-section of the population. This, indeed, proved to be the case in the 2000 elections when the party's leader, Corneliu Vadim Tudor, was able to take 28.3 per cent of the vote in the first round of presidential elections. His party took around 19.5 per cent of the legislative vote that same year. Much of the party's success has been built on the populist charisma of Tudor who, before founding the party in 1991, had been closely tied to the Ceausescu regime and had served as court poet to the dictator.

However, despite claims from the PRM that it sits either side of the centre, the party's strong nationalist line has seen

it most commonly tied to the extreme right of the political spectrum. Claims to this effect have been so resonant that the party's internet home page ([www.romare.ro](http://www.romare.ro)) features pointed rebuttals regarding accusations of extremism, anti-Semitism and xenophobia. The party's primary platform, or the "Basis of the Nationalist Doctrine of the PRM", aims at the reconstruction of a "Greater Romania". This would see all Romanian speaking peoples come together under the one state – which would essentially involve Romania uniting with the Republic of Moldova. Although the idea of unification gained some currency in both states shortly after the collapse of communism in Romania, the poor showing of pro-unification parties in Moldova through the 1990s has been evidence of the reluctance of the Moldovan people to form part of a Romanian "super-state". Furthermore, despite the success of the PRM, polls in Romania have shown that there is little support for drawing their troubled neighbour into a common state.

In addition to holding irredentist aspirations, Tudor con-

firmed suspicions regarding his weak commitment to democracy and the rule of law in January 1999, when he published a letter in which he openly supported the Jiu Valley miners' threats to storm Bucharest in protest over proposed mine closures. In supporting the miners' actions, Tudor called for all workers to stage a "nation-wide strike to overthrow the anti-popular and anti-national regime" of President Constantinescu.

Other notable past and present members of the PRM have included the leader of the Jiu Valley Union, Miron Cozma, and Gheorghe Funar, the mayor of Transylvania's largest city, Cluj. Throughout his tenure as mayor, Funar has pushed Romanian nationalism at the expense of the significant Hungarian minority in Cluj. Controversially, Funar also attempted to build a memorial to the anti-Semitic wartime leader and Nazi-collaborator, Ion Antonescu.

*John Gledhill*

## Russia

**Capital:** Moscow

**Population:** 145.3 m

The post-Soviet Russian political system based on the Constitution of 1993 and various earlier and subsequent laws and presidential decrees has faced serious legitimacy problems since its inception, only partly mitigated in recent years by the high level of popularity enjoyed by President Vladimir Putin. Levels of social and political discontent remain high.

Nevertheless, for at least three different reasons, it is difficult to single out unequivocally "revolutionary and dissident movements" in contemporary Russia, with the exception of Chechnya.

Firstly, the level of political mobilization and organized political activity is among the lowest in Europe, having dropped significantly since the early 1990s. The Communist Party of the Russian Federation (KPRF) is the only mass party, having around 500,000 members, most of whom are inactive. Political apathy is widespread.

Secondly, because of ambiguities in legal stipulations and practice as well as in the statements of political leaders, it is often difficult to establish a clear distinction between opposition groups working within the system and groups that challenge the political system as a whole and/or call for revolution. This is especially salient in the case of the KPRF. The party system still being weak and relatively unstable, there is also a degree of fluidity and overlap between groups seeking to work within and those operating from outside the constitutional political system, most notably in the Russian nationalist/Soviet restorationist camp.

Thirdly, unconstitutional and otherwise extra-legal practices, especially by regional officials and the police force, as well as the armed forces in Chechnya,

are often tolerated and probably sometimes encouraged by the federal government and presidential administration as long as they do not conflict with the centre's policies and are not linked to separatism or demands for greater autonomy. The federal administration itself adheres to legal norms very selectively. Comparatively little use is made of existing legal instruments against most extremist groups.

The only significant cases of unequivocally revolutionary activity are those of certain Russian nationalist organizations across the country, and that of separatism in the North Caucasus (Chechnya and, much less, Dagestan), sometimes but not always linked to radical Islamism. Chechnya (or Ichkeria as it is called by most separatists) enjoyed a limited measure of de facto independence between 1991-92 and December 1994 (the beginning of the first Chechen war), and a much greater degree of independence from the withdrawal of federal troops in 1996-97 until the beginning, in September 1999, of the second war (labelled "anti-terrorist campaign" by the federal government), which continues to this day.

There have been numerous terrorist bombings in Russia over recent years, most notably a series in Moscow and other cities in 1999 which caused hundreds of deaths, and a number of suicide attacks in 2002 and 2003. While most of these seem to be linked to Chechnya, there has also been much speculation about a possible role of the Federal Security Service (FSB, the former KGB) in the explosions of 1999.

The term "dissident" is rarely used in any but a historical sense in contemporary Russia, but the tradition of Soviet-era dissidence is continued by a range of



human rights NGOs such as Memorial, which systematically document and denounce violations of existing legal norms by state authorities. Democratic NGOs and pressure groups which may be qualified as “dissident” because they believe the state does not respect legality fall outside the scope of this survey.

### Legislation

Article 13 of the Russian constitution outlaws “public associations, whose aims and actions are directed at forcible alteration of the fundamentals of constitutional governance and violation of the integrity of the Russian Federation and undermining of the security of the state, the forming of armed units, the incitement of social, racial, national and religious strife”. Article 29 states that “propaganda or campaigning inciting social, racial, national or religious hatred and strife is impermissible. The propaganda of social, racial, national, religious or language superiority is forbidden”. Articles 4 and 5 mention territorial integrity among the basics of the constitutional order.

The Penal Code of the Russian Federation outlaws, *inter alia*, terrorism, banditry, taking or retaining power by forcible means, armed rebellion, public calls for forcible alteration of the fundamentals of constitutional governance of the Russian Federation, and publicly urging aggressive warfare; as well as the organization of, or participation in, illegal armed organizations, criminal organizations, mass disorders, or associations aiming to harm citizens or infringe upon their rights.

The Law on Combating Terrorism of July 25, 1998, defines terrorism as “violence or threat thereof against natural persons or organizations, as well as the destruction (damaging), or threat thereof, of property and other material objects, endangering the life of human beings or risking to cause significant damage to property or other public hazards, committed with the aim of disturbing public security, intimidating the population, or pressuring authorities into taking decisions advantageous to the terrorists or satisfying their illegitimate material and/or other interests; murderous assault against a state official or public figure aimed at terminating their political activity or as revenge for such activity; attack against representatives of foreign states or staff of international organizations who enjoy international protection, or attack against business premises or vehicles of persons enjoying international protection, if this act is committed with the aim of provoking war or complicating international relations”.

The Law on Countering Extremist Activity of June 27, 2002, includes a highly general definition of extremism which encompasses “the propaganda of exclusiveness, superiority or inferiority of citizens according to their attitude towards religion or their social, racial, national, religious or linguistic affiliation” and “the debasement of national dignity”. It sets penalties for “extremist action which has led to the violation of the rights and liberties of persons and citizens, has harmed persons, their health, the environ-

ment, public order, public security, property, the legitimate interests of natural and/or legal persons, society and the state or has created a real risk of causing such harm”, and gives authorities at all levels wide-ranging powers, e.g. to suspend the activity of organizations, including media, suspected of extremist activity without court order.

Amendments to the Law on Combating Terrorism as well as a restrictive new “Law on Battling Propaganda of Terrorism in Mass Media” passed by the State Duma (lower chamber of parliament) in October 2002, shortly after a large-scale hostage crisis in Moscow, were vetoed by the President after media representatives promised to draw up and follow a strict code of conduct.

Russia adheres to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Internationally Protected Persons, including Diplomatic Agents, the International Convention against the Taking of Hostages, the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination, and the International pact on Civil and Political Rights. As a member of the European Council, Russia has signed and ratified the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism (Russia has signed the May 15, 2003, amendment). Russia has not, at the time of writing, signed the Convention on Cybercrime.

In practice, these legal instruments are used highly selectively. Russian nationalist groups, in particular, are only ever faced with legal action when their actions conflict with those of high-ranking officials. Independent legal cases against extremist groups have mostly failed. The only sanction regularly applied to certain extremist parties is denial of registration, which makes it impossible for them to stand in elections but does not entail dissolution. Chechen separatist fighters are often jailed on charges of terrorism and/or banditry when they are not killed directly on the ground.

### Ethnic separatism

The first nationalist organizations among the non-Russian nationalities of the Russian Federation appeared in 1988, somewhat later than in the other republics of the then Soviet Union, and most saw themselves as part of the democratic movement across the USSR. At first they spoke out for greater cultural or political autonomy, but starting from late 1990, demands for sovereignty or separatist slogans could be heard, becoming stronger after the failed putsch of August 1991 and the break-up of the Soviet Union on Dec. 31, 1991. Separatist movements soon came to dominate national assemblies in several of the “ethnic” autonomous regions. However, most of these movements were soon marginalized or co-opted

by regional elites ready to remain within the newly emerging legal system of the Russian Federation. Individual treaties with Moscow, defining the status of the “subjects of the federation” were signed by the mid-1990s by most “ethnic” regional entities, many of which were recognized as “republics” forming part of the Russian Federation. President Vladimir Putin has significantly, though perhaps not permanently, curbed the power of the presidents or other leaders of these regions, by steps including the creation of seven federal districts. Chechnya and Dagestan as well as (to a much lesser extent) Tatarstan, Bashkortostan and Tyva are the only republics within the Russian Federation where separatist movements retain any salience today.

Most of the movements listed in this section have not formally been banned though few sit in regional parliaments; outside Chechnya and Dagestan, violence is used only very occasionally and never as part of general party strategy. Most movements have made cultural activities the central part of their work.

### BASHKORTOSTAN

Bashkirs are less numerous in Bashkortostan than Russians and Tatars and their proportion is decreasing; most of them are rural dwellers.

#### **People’s Party of Bashkortostan (Narodnaya partiya Bashkortostana, NPB)**

The NPB, led by Galim Khisamov, and the radical wing of the **Union of Bashkir Youth** (*Soyuz bashkirkoy molodezhi*, SBM) led by Rinat Baimov, both founded in 1990, advocate Bashkir independence, and the latter organization actively supported Chechen independence during the first Chechen war. Other Bashkir nationalist organizations advocate quotas for Bashkirs and the use of Bashkir as the main state language without secession from Russia.

#### **Idel-Ural Tatar Democratic Party (Tatarskaya demokraticeskaya partiya “Idel’-Ural”, TDP-IU)**

This small party, founded in 1991, is the only one of the several Tatar movements in Bashkortostan to advocate the independence of Bashkortostan without secession of Tatar areas to Tatarstan.

### BURYATIA

#### **Buryat-Mongol People’s Party (Buryat-Mongol’skaya Narodnaya Partiya, BMNP)**

Founded in 1990, this party advocates Buryatia’s secession from Russia and unification with Mongolia. It is led by Igor’ Pron’kinov. The **Negeden National Unity Movement** (*Dvizhenie natsional’nogo edinstva “Negeden”*) split off from the BMNP in 1992 but continues to be closely linked with it. It also has a separatist and pan-Mongol programme. Its leader is Vladimir Khamutayev. Neither of these two movements has attracted any widespread support or had any electoral success whatsoever.

### CHECHNYA

The Chechen and Ingush lands were conquered by the Russian Empire during the so-called Caucasian wars of 1817-64. Contemporary Chechen separatists and observers often see this long period of resistance to the Tsarist army and the deportation of virtually the entire Chechen population, along with over a dozen other nationalities, to Central Asia and Siberia by Stalin and Beria in early 1944 as part of a continuous struggle for liberation from Russian domination. Without any doubt, Stalin’s deportation of the Chechens, whom he accused of treason and co-operation with the German invaders, aside from causing the death of apparently over half of those deported, was a traumatic experience for several generations of surviving Chechens, and has been a powerful motivating factor for separatists in the two post-Soviet Chechen wars.

Most of those who survived returned to Chechnya from the 1950s onwards, especially after the decree obliging them to live in special settlements was cancelled by Nikita Khrushchev in 1956, and in spite of semi-official hostility to resettlement in Chechnya. Many are reported actually to have walked most of the way from Kazakhstan to Chechnya or ridden on top of train wagons. Moreover, it is also true that rebellions took place in Chechnya throughout the period of Russian/Soviet rule, e.g. in 1929-32 in response to forced collectivization, and during World War II in 1940-42. Nevertheless, it must be noted that many Chechens were well integrated into the Soviet social and political system from the 1960s onwards, and many of those on both sides in the post-Soviet conflicts made successful careers in the USSR. While the separatist option was not an improbable outcome of the process of dissolution of the USSR, it was anything but predetermined by history, and there was a degree of opposition to it within Chechnya from the outset.

Chechen traditions are heavily influenced by a kind of Sufi Islam. However, several generations of Chechens were socialized by the Soviet schooling system with its high levels of political mobilization and propagandizing of atheism. The “Islamic factor” did not play a significant role at the beginning of the post-Soviet conflict. “Ethnic” motives and their instrumentalization by political elites were much more important. However, the first Chechen war drove many Chechens to a new kind of radical Islamism, which proved one of the decisive factors in the build-up to the second and continuing Chechen war. Radical Islamist fighters have been the most determined and uncompromising among the Chechen separatists, and they now form the core of the resistance to the Russian military. Nevertheless, there have also been attempts to employ Islam against separatism, most notably by Akhmad Kadyrov, mufti of Chechnya since 1996, head of the pro-Russian Chechen administration and Kremlin-designated president of the Chechen Republic.

Until 1991, Chechnya was part of the Chechen-Ingush Republic; Chechens were in a majority but

large numbers of Ingush and Russians also lived in the Republic. In 1990-91, Chechen separatists, coming together in several sessions of the **Chechen National Congress** (*Chechensky natsional'ny s'ezd*), later renamed **Nationwide Congress of the Chechen People** (*Obschenatsional'nyj kongress chechenskogo naroda*, OKChN) repeatedly proclaimed the sovereignty of Chechnya. The Supreme Soviet of the Chechen-Ingush Republic on Nov. 27, 1990, declared the republic sovereign. After the failed Moscow putsch of August 1991, the OKChN forcibly disbanded the Supreme Soviet, took power, declared the separation of Chechnya and Ingushetia, and held presidential and parliamentary elections on Oct. 27, 1991, in the face of an opposition movement within the Republic which contested the elections' legitimacy.

A Soviet army officer, Dzhokhar Dudayev, the president of the OKChN, won the elections, declared the independence of Chechnya and resisted a very hesitant attempt by Boris Yeltsin, the President of the Russian Federation, to regain control of the situation through military pressure. This inaugurated a period during which Chechnya was de facto independent in several respects. Talks about the Republic's status took place between Moscow and Chechen leaders until 1993, when Dudayev temporarily disbanded the Chechen parliament and gave himself wide-ranging powers. In 1994, opposition forces, unofficially supported by Moscow, launched an armed rebellion against Dudayev's government. After a failed attempt to storm Grozny (the Chechen capital) in November 1994, Russian defence minister Pavel Grachev ordered the invasion of Chechnya. Grozny was taken in January 1995 and by mid-1995 the Russian troops controlled virtually all of Chechnya.

A period of guerrilla war ensued, barely interrupted by two short-lived armistices in 1995 and 1996. Chechen fighters twice carried out raids into neighbouring Russian territories, taking numerous hostages. Dudayev was killed by a Russian missile on April 22, 1996, and replaced at the head of the Chechen rebels by his deputy Zelimkhan Yandarbiev. Finally, the guerrillas managed to re-conquer Grozny, and an agreement on principles of political co-operation was signed between Chechen chief of staff Aslan Maskhadov and Russian general Alexander Lebed' on Aug. 31, 1996, followed by a peace accord on May 12, 1997, although Russia never formally recognized Chechnya's independence.

All Russian troops left Chechnya by January 1997, and on Jan. 27, 1997, Maskhadov was elected president. Radical Islamist field commander Shamil Basayev came second and in 1998 Maskhadov asked him to form a Chechen government. In 1999, Maskhadov was pressured into introducing shariah law; in August, fighters led by Basayev and the Arab *mujahid* Kharbo Khattab (alias Emir Ibn Al Khattab) carried out a raid into neighbouring Dagestan, supported by local "Wahhabites". This, along with continued kidnappings and killings by Chechen paramilitary groups and a series of terrorist bombings in Russia in

September attributed to Chechens, triggered bombardments and a new invasion of Chechnya by Russian troops on Oct. 1, 1999. Labelled an "anti-terrorist campaign" although it involves massive use of force as well as widespread arrests and wanton killings of civilians, this war continues with guerrilla attacks taking place especially in the Vedeno, Argun and Shatoy districts in the South, but also in areas close to Grozny such as the town of Khankala.

Officially, federal forces control most of Chechnya's territory (apart from patches of wooded areas and especially the mountains in the southern part of the Republic, where most separatist fighters are based). However, in reality this control is frail since it is carried out by units which are often poorly equipped and reportedly mostly corrupt to the point that separatists (and journalists) can sometimes buy their way through checkpoints or even obtain weapons from Russian soldiers. Separatist fighters enjoy (or extort) support from parts of the population, meaning that they are in an intermediate state between an underground movement and a guerrilla force with clear territorial bases.

A pro-Moscow government headed by mufti Akhmad Kadyrov was put in place in June 2000, and control over the operation was formally transferred first to the Federal Security Service or FSB (in 2001), then the Ministry of the Interior (in 2003). A referendum on a new constitution for Chechnya, whose result was widely disputed in Russia and abroad, was held on March 23, 2003 and paved the way for Kremlin-sponsored republican elections to be held on Oct. 5, 2003. (Officially, 90.9% of those who cast their vote approved of the new constitution, while support for the laws on the election of a parliament and a President of the Chechen Republic were 89.9% and 86.4% respectively. Participation in the referendum is stated as 89.5%.) The presidential elections resulted in victory for Akhmad Kadyrov but all of his competitors who had any significant popular support either withdrew their candidacy themselves (Aslanbek Aslakhonov, Said-Selim Tsuev, Khuseyn Dzhabrailov), or their registration as candidate was cancelled (Malik Saydulayev).

The most recent of several amnesties for certain categories of Chechen fighters was declared on June 7, 2003, on the occasion of the adoption of the new constitution, and ended on Sept. 1, 2003. However, it had very little success, inter alia because after surrender, amnesty was contingent upon a court decision, and because the amnesty also encompassed federal soldiers, including some of those who perpetrated crimes against the local population. Few if any of the 150 or so people who did surrender seem to have had any recent connection to actual fighter units.

Meanwhile, suicide attacks in Chechnya and Russia have continued, most notably the seizure of the *Nord-Ost* musical theatre in Moscow in October 2002; an explosion which destroyed the House of Government in Grozny on Dec. 27, 2003; an attack by a truck carrying explosives on administrative buildings in the small



Chechen town of Znamenskoye on May 12, 2003; and a major suicide bombing at a concert at Moscow's Tushino airfield on July 5, 2003. About half of the terrorists who captured the theatre, and the two or more perpetrators of the Tushino bombings, as well as those involved in several other attempted or successful attacks, were women. Cars loaded with explosives have been much used in terrorist attacks since 2000.

A number of recognizable separatist political parties, armed movements and other organizations emerged in Chechnya from 1993 onwards and especially during the period of de facto independence between 1996 and 1998, though most were highly amorphous even then.

Such groups included: the political movement **Chechen Islamic State** (*Nokhchiyn Islaman Padchalghk*), the **Party of National Independence**, the **Free Fatherland** party (*Marsha Daymohkh*), and the **Democratic Progressive Party**, all of which favoured normalizing relations with Russia.

Shamil Basayev's **Congress of the Peoples of Ichkeria and Dagestan** (renamed **Majlis ul-Shura of the Muslims of Ichkeria and Dagestan** in 1999) and **Freedom Movement** (*Marshanan Toba*) as well as Movladi Udugov's **Islamic Nation** and **Islamic Order** (*Islam Nizam*), were formally loyal to Maskhadov but advocated action in other republics of the North Caucasus.

Salman Raduyev's **Dzhokhar Dudayev Army** and **Dzhokhar's Path**, the **Organization of Caucasian Islamic Unity**, the **Caucasian Confederation** and "Wahhabites" such as Khattab's **Caucasus Military Training Centre**, the **Urus-Martani Jama'at** and others, openly opposed Maskhadov and promoted military intervention in other parts of the Caucasus and the establishment of an Islamic state. (The so-called "Wahhabites" in the North Caucasus do not accept this designation, preferring to call themselves the "Community of Muslims". They are different in several respects from classical Saudi Wahhabism though also opposed to "impure", especially Sufi forms of Islam.)

Since the beginning of the second Chechen war in 1999, all of these movements have had either to disband or to go underground, apparently losing what formal structure they had. Some of the designations keep re-appearing in interviews and press releases by separatist politicians and warlords, especially Basayev. However it is probably more accurate to speak of individual leaders commanding small groups of people bound to them by ties of personal loyalty, often based on common geographical origin, although there are also functioning training centres linked to some of them. Some of the movements which existed in 1996-99 grew out of armed rebel detachments, and mostly reverted to that form after the outbreak of the second war.

The armed groups around Shamil Basayev, Ruslan Gelayev, Salman Raduyev (who died in a Russian prison under mysterious circumstances in December 2002), Arbi Baraev (killed in June 2001) and Kharbo Khattab (killed in April 2002) have been among those receiving

the most publicity in Russia and abroad. On several occasions, there have been joint actions by several of these groups, e.g. the raids into Dagestan in August 1999 by Khattab and Basayev. There is much speculation, but no reliable data, about the extent to which they have been acting in a concerted fashion since the beginning of the second war. Nor is it known to what extent the Maskhadov government controls any of these groups, though Maskhadov representatives state that all warlords except Basayev are loyal to Maskhadov, and Gelayev was appointed commander-in-chief of the armed forces of Ichkeria in May 2002. Basayev's *Majlis ul-Shura* is reported to function as an alternative Islamist government, although there have been periods of rapprochement. Khattab has reportedly been replaced as co-ordinator of foreign Islamist mujahideen by the Saudi Abu al-Walid, reports of whose own death have appeared on at least seven occasions, most recently in early September 2002.

While there has undoubtedly been financial and personal involvement of foreign radical Islamists in the Chechen wars, this has been exaggerated out of proportion since Sept. 11, 2001, by a Russian government eager to present its military operation as part of a global struggle against "international terrorism".

On June 30, 2003, the general in charge of the Russian operation stated that there were 1,200 separatist "fighters" in Chechnya left, including 300 foreign mercenaries. The real figure seems to be much higher, and the proportion of foreign fighters, and generally of Islamists, is probably vastly overstated. Moreover, separatist fighters are continuously reinforced by new recruits, among whom there have recently been many women.

The other main recognizable organization representing independent Ichkeria is Aslan Maskhadov's government, no longer recognized as legitimate by the pro-Russian administration of Chechnya since Jan. 27, 2001, when his formal presidential term expired according to the Dudayev-era constitution. Of the ministers still alive, some are based in Chechnya and some abroad. Maskhadov continues to regard himself as president of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria for the duration of the hostilities. Maskhadov and his government have a network of representatives in many world capitals, including Moscow.

The main public presence of Chechen separatist groups has been the network of Islamist web sites around [www.kavkazcenter.com](http://www.kavkazcenter.com), [www.kavkaz.org](http://www.kavkaz.org), and [www.qoqaz.org](http://www.qoqaz.org), directed by Movladi Udugov (most of which are shut down at the time of writing but are likely to reappear as they have in the past). Other pro-separatist web sites include [www.chechenpress.info](http://www.chechenpress.info) (official information agency of the Maskhadov government), [www.chechnya-mfa.info](http://www.chechnya-mfa.info) (Maskhadov's foreign minister, Ilyas Akhmadov, [ministry@chechnya-mfa.info](mailto:ministry@chechnya-mfa.info)), [www.chechen.org](http://www.chechen.org), [www.kafkas.org.tr](http://www.kafkas.org.tr), [www.kvestnik.org](http://www.kvestnik.org) and [www.daymohk.info](http://www.daymohk.info).

While there is a growing yet powerless anti-war movement in Russia, apart from other separatist movements only one small group unconditionally supports



Chechen independence (<http://separatist.narod.ru>, separatist@inbox.ru).

### Confederation of the Peoples of the Caucasus

The Confederation of the Mountain Peoples of the Caucasus (*Konfederatsiya gorskikh narodov Kavkaza*, KGNK) was founded in Sukhumi (Abkhazia) in 1991 by representatives of a number of North Caucasian nationalities and chaired by the Balkar, Musa (Yury) Shanibov. Parts of the Confederation (especially Chechen members) sought to establish an independent North Caucasian republic, others merely wished to foster inter-regional co-operation across the new state borders set up in 1992. The Confederation had sections in the Russian regions of Dagestan, Chechnya, North Ossetia, Kabardino-Balkaria, and Karachaevo-Cherkessia, and was supported by a number of nationalist movements in each of these regions though it failed to attract support from a number of nationalities. Most notably, the Confederation was actively involved in the Abkhaz-Georgian conflict in 1992-93 on the Abkhaz side. Thereafter the Confederation became more moderate although it continued to entertain an "army". In 1992 it was renamed Confederation of the Peoples of the Caucasus (*Konfederatsiya narodov Kavkaza*, KNK) in order to embrace Cossacks and other Slavic groups. While at first parts of the Confederation supported the bid for Chechen independence, thereafter it became estranged from the Chechen leadership. In 1996 the presidency was assumed by the Chechen, Yusup Soslanbekov, who proved conciliatory towards the Russian Federation though he formally continued to advocate an independent North Caucasian republic up until his assassination in Moscow in July 2000. Since then the Confederation has shown little activity.

## DAGESTAN

Dagestan lies between Chechnya and the Caspian Sea. With over twenty recognized nationalities among its approximately 2 million people, Dagestan is Russia's ethnically most diverse republic, the Avars being the biggest group (about 25 per cent of the population). Since October 1994, its government has been based on a "consociational system" providing for quasi-proportional representation of most ethnic groups, which has given it a degree of stability. Nevertheless, since 1989 there have been dozens of assaults against officials and party politicians at all levels, many of whom were killed. However, it is usually the case that no group declares itself responsible for these acts, and they are rarely if ever followed by political demands.

While most national movements focus on demands linked to internal territorial reorganization, conflicts between mountain and plain dwellers, tensions between different ethnic groups etc, there are also some who advocate the secession of Dagestan from Russia, and/or the creation of an Islamic republic, possibly uniting the entire (North) Caucasus. Fears of a large-scale "Wahhabite" separatist movement were especially strong in 1996-99, when Islamists based in Chechnya gained a foothold in Dagestan. However, their incursion into the republic in 1999, supported by local "Wahhabites", has given rise to widespread anti-

Chechen sentiment and an upsurge in loyalty to Russia.

In the early 1990s, organized political movements advocating independence were active in the republic. Now most of these are dissolved or inactive, and popular support for them has shrunk, especially since May 21, 1998, when supporters of Magomed Khachilaev's Lak nationalist movement **Gazi Kumukh** temporarily occupied the building of the government of Dagestan in Makhachkala. Now the most serious separatist threat is generally regarded as stemming from more loosely organized and/or clandestine "Wahhabite" groups. Dagestan's "Wahhabites" are organized in various Jama'ats. The most radical ones were based in the Western, mountainous regions. Of these, at least until 1999, some paid obeisance directly to Khattab (see Chechnya section, above), but most were led by Bagauddin-Mukhamed Kebedov, who left for Chechnya in 1998 to head the Al-Kaf centre which published two Islamist periodicals. In September 1999, the Republic of Dagestan adopted a Law Prohibiting Wahhabite and Other Extremist Activity on the Territory of the Republic of Dagestan.

### Imam Shamil Popular Front (Narodny front imeni Imama Shamilya, NFSH)

The most radical Avar nationalist organization, which disposes of several fighting squads. While the NFSH is generally hostile to Chechens, some of its members have advocated secession from Russia, been active in the Confederation of the Peoples of the Caucasus (see above), and co-operated with Chechen separatists. The NFSH is led by State Duma deputy Gadzhi Makhachev.

### Islamic Party of the Rebirth of Dagestan (Islam-skaya partiya vozrozhdeniya Dagestana)

Grew out of the radical wing of a democratic separatist party, the **Islamic Democratic Party of Dagestan**, founded by Abdurashid Saidov.

### Jamaat

An Avar movement founded in 1990. One of its leaders, Den'ga Khalidov, was actively involved in **Islamic Nation** and the **Congress of the Peoples of Ichkeria and Dagestan** (see Chechnya section) in 1996-99. It is not to be confused with the various "Wahhabite" jamaats and is led by Adallo Ali Mukhamed.

### Party of the Independence and Rebirth of Dagestan (Partiya nezavisimosti I vozrozhdeniya Dagestana, PNVD)

Led by Arkady Ganiev, this party promoted secession from Russia and the creation of a liberal-democratic Dagestan and supported the Confederation of the Peoples of the Caucasus. It hardly exhibited any activity, and Ganiev is now a member of the Union of Right Forces.

Lezgi separatists have repeatedly demanded for the Lezgi areas of Azerbaijan to become part of Russia, but there have not recently been any demands for secession from Russia.

## KARELIA

The Karelian Association ([www.karjalanliitto.fi](http://www.karjalanliitto.fi)), the Extraordinary Congress of Karelians, Vepsians and Finns, the Movement for the Tartu Peace, and the Civic Committee for the return of former Finnish territories to Finland, all based in Finland, want (Western) Karelia to be returned to Finland. In Karelia, the Karelian Congress (*Karel'sky kongress*, KK) advocates a step-by-step movement towards independence. However, such ideas garner little support even among the less than 15 per cent of Finnic (Karelian, Finnish and Vepsian) inhabitants of Karelia.

## TATARSTAN

Of all Russia's "ethnic" regions, Tatarstan (its population being almost 50% Tatar and over 40% Russian, plus Chuvash and other minorities) has been the one most actively asserting its autonomy without proclaiming independence. President Mintimer Shaimiev, who has led Tatarstan since 1989, has successfully pursued the double strategy of securing special rights for the republic from Moscow and marginalizing Tatar nationalists by creating a supra-ethnic "Tatarstanist" ideology. Separatists see Shaimiev as one of their main enemies. The nationalist movement is divided into a majority that seeks to strengthen ties with Tatars across Russia and abroad (including even Crimean Tatars), and a small minority that wants the Tatars in and around Tatarstan to be renamed Bulgars, after the medieval Volga Bulgar state.

### All-Tatar Public Centre (Vsetatarsky obshchestvenny tsentr, VTOTs)

*Leadership.* Rashit Yagafarov

*Website.* [www.tatar-centre.ru](http://www.tatar-centre.ru)

Founded in 1988-89 as the Tatar Public Centre and renamed in 1991-92, the VTOTs has long been the most authoritative of Tatar nationalist/separatist organizations and has acted as an umbrella for a range of such movements. Its first programme, adopted in February 1989, demanded a Declaration of Sovereignty of the Tatar Republic, state language status for Tatar, increased economic autonomy, etc. At first it supported Shaimiev and, in 1990, declared its initial demands fulfilled and adopted a more strongly-worded programme. After the Moscow putsch in 1991, it asked for full independence. The VTOTs was actively involved in the organisation of the First *Koryltay* (Congress) of the Tatar People in 1991-92, and some of its leaders were elected into the *Milli Medzhlis* (see entry below). In 1993 the radical wing of the VTOTs split off to form the Tatar Public Centre, which has gone through varying degrees of independence from the VTOTs since then. The VTOTs itself became more radically ethno-nationalist around 1994, which led to a drop in popular support since President Shaimiev successfully integrated the movement's earlier, more egalitarian demands into his platform. Its base has been further sapped by the general political apathy of the late 1990s and early 2000s.

### Concord Tatar National Independence Party

### (Tatarskaya partiya natsional'noy nezavisimosti "Ittifak")

*Leadership:* Fauziya Bayramova

The most ambitious separatist party: it advocates full independence for Tatarstan, the adoption of Tatar as sole state language and the creation of a Greater Turkic State between the Volga and Ural rivers. The party is based in the town of Naberezhnye Chelny but has divisions across Tatarstan, especially in Tatar rural areas. *Ittifak* has a strong Islamist streak.

### Fatherland Popular Democratic Party (Narodno-Demokraticeskaya Partiya "Vatan")

*Leadership:* Mokhammad Minachev

Mainly engages in cultural activities as well as small demonstrations across the country.

### Freedom (Azatlyk)

*Leadership:* Talgat Akhmadishin

*Website.* [www.azatlyk.com](http://www.azatlyk.com)

This Tatar nationalist youth movement is linked to the VTOTs and *Ittifak*.

### National Council (Milli Medzhlis)

The *Milli Medzhlis* was instituted as an alternative ethno-national parliament, and its members elected, at the First *Koryltay* of the Tatar People in 1991-92. It included representatives from all Tatar nationalist groups, moderates and radicals alike. It adopted a "law of the Tatar people" on Tatarstan's independence. The *Milli Medzhlis* still exists and acts as a nationalist pressure group closely linked to *Ittifak* and the TOTs, but its decisions and proclamations are ignored by the leadership of Tatarstan.

### Tatar Public Centre (Tatarsky obshchestvenny tsentr, TOTs)

*Leadership:* Il'dus Amirkhanov

Semi-independent radical wing of the VTOTs, advocates secession from Russia and the creation of a Tatar national state based on Islamic law.

## TYVA (TUVA)

A republic bordering on Mongolia. About two-thirds of the total population of over 300,000 belong to the Tyva group. Most of them are Buddhists. From 1921-44, it was formally independent though in fact controlled by Moscow. A small part of historical Tyva was ceded to Mongolia in 1958, and Tyvan nationalists want it back. However, neither of the two organizations advocates extra-legal means, and both have toned down their demands under Putin's presidency.

### Free Tyva (Khostug Tyva)

*Leadership:* Vladimir Orus-ool (Chairman of the Republican Committee)

This is an umbrella organization for various unions supporting Tyvan independence. In the mid-1990s, some of its leaders were included into the regional government.

### People's Party of a Sovereign Tuva (Narodnaya

**partiya suverennoy Tuvy)**

*Leadership: Bair Sanchy (Chairman)*

Demands the revocation of Tuva's accession to the USSR in 1944, and full independence.

**OTHER REGIONS**

At the time of writing, there are no serious separatist movements in any other regions of the Russian Federation.

In North Ossetia there are several movements demanding the reunification of the Republic with South Ossetia, which is now part of independent Georgia (see Georgia entry). In November 1992 there was a military operation by North Ossetian nationalists supported by federal Russian troops to expel the Ingush population of the Prigorodny area to neighbouring Ingushetia. However, despite individual pronouncements about the need to expel Russians from the Caucasus and threats of secession, subsequent nationalist demands have mainly been directed at the reunification of Ossetia as a part of Russia and are therefore not separatist with regard to the Russian Federation.

Adygh nationalists from Adygeya were particularly active in supporting Abkhazia's campaign for independence from Georgia.

In the Chuvash Republic, the Chuvash Party of National Rebirth advocates a form of Pan-Turkism, and some of its activists have occasionally speculated about independence.

In the early 1990s there were tiny separatist parties in Mari El and the Komi Republic, but in both cases they disappeared by the mid-1990s.

In Yakutia (Sakha), Russia's biggest region and an area rich in mineral resources, there has been a tendency towards "economic separatism" which has never been linked to plans for secession.

**ISLAMIST ORGANIZATIONS**

Islamist activity is practically limited to the organizations active in Chechnya and Dagestan listed in the corresponding sections, and the radical wing of Tatar and Bashkir separatism. Many Central Asian members of the international **Hizb ut-Tahrir al-Islami** are based in Russia, but their political activity is almost exclusively aimed at Uzbekistan and other Central Asian states (see entries). Nevertheless, the party is on a CIS list of terrorist organizations, and on June 6, 2003, the Federal Security Service announced the arrest of 55 members and supporters of the *Hizb ut-Tahrir*, two of whom were armed. The other 53 were asked to leave Russia.

All other groups put on a list of 15 terrorist organizations by the Russian Supreme Court on Feb. 14, 2003, are also Islamist; apart from the Chechen ones mentioned above, all of them are based in Central Asia or the Middle East, and there has not been any public evidence of any activity in Russia.

**OTHER POLITICAL EXTREMISM**

Organizations listed here can be called dissident and/or revolutionary in that either they are systemically opposed to democracy (and the current semi-democratic political system), or they advocate some form of revolution, be it conservative, restorationist, anti-capitalist or ethnic. Groups are not classified along a left/right-wing continuum. Though moderate "Western" left-wing ideas attract an increasing popularity among youth NGOs, ecologists etc, organized (internationalist) Marxist organizations hardly exist, and most, but not all, of the tiny radical "left-wing" groups are closely linked to the Russian "national-patriotic" scene. A structured internationalist and revolutionary left not contaminated by Stalinism and great power rhetoric is practically unheard of, the numerous anarchist groups that sprung up in the late 1980s and early 1990s having virtually disappeared. Stalinism, hostility to democracy, radical anti-liberalism and militant anti-Westernism are common to most groups on the "left" and "right" though a small radical fraction of Russian nationalists remains anti-Communist, and nationalist rhetoric is often combined with the language of anti-globalization. Inside the "national-patriotic" spectrum, there is a differentiation between Soviet restorationists, Eurasian imperialists and Stalinists; Russian ethnic nationalists; White supremacists; and monarchists, though hybrid forms are the most successful. The shelling of the Supreme Soviet by President Boris Yeltsin in October 1993 remains the main historical reference uniting the "national-patriotic opposition". Most of the "national-patriotic" organizations are genetically linked to the anti-Semitic **Pamyat'** movement of the early 1990s. Though anti-Semitism is still an important issue, "Southerners" (people from Central Asia and the Caucasus) as well as Blacks and Asian-looking people have been the preferred target for racist rhetoric and violence in post-Soviet times.

Extremist organizations, just like other political movements, have seen a significant drop in membership and support since the early 1990s, though many had never been organized as political parties. However, under Putin's presidency, there has been a significant increase in nationalist sympathies in the media and literary circles; some of the most successful writers and TV commentators are linked to extremist organizations or even head them, which in part is the result of a conscious Gramscian strategy of achieving cultural hegemony (see NBP below). Revolutionary, nationalist and racist literature can be bought freely in bookshops across the country, legal restrictions notwithstanding. The influence of both left and right-wing radicals now exerts itself through the cultural sphere.

The following choice concerns mainly comparatively large and/or active groups based in Moscow and Saint Petersburg. None of the organizations listed here have engaged in systematic terrorist activity, although racist beatings and killings (mainly by skinheads) are

reported weekly, and there have been several organized pogroms against Caucasian-looking people over recent years. Apart from this, their extremism mainly shows itself in demonstrations, proclamations and several dozen periodicals.

**All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks  
(Vsesoyuznaya kommunisticheskaya partiya bol'shevikov, VKPB)**

*Leadership.* Nina Andreeva

*Website.* [www.vpkb.ru](http://www.vpkb.ru)

This is a small orthodox Stalinist party. Its leader, a former school teacher, rose to prominence in 1988 when the famous "Nina Andreeva letter" published in the *Sovetskaya Rossiya* newspaper inaugurated a brief period of anti-reform reaction by the conservative part of the then Politburo.

**All-Union Communist Party (of Bolsheviks)  
(Vsesoyuznaya kommunisticheskaya partiya bol'shevikov (VKP(b)),**

*Leadership:* Alexander Lapin

*Website.* [bolshevick.narod.ru](http://bolshevick.narod.ru)

This is a small orthodox Stalinist party,

**Anti-globalization movement**

The nascent anti-globalization movement suffers from the fact that the left-wing scene is dominated by the KPRF with its closeness to Russian nationalist organizations. Many radical activists now posing as anti-globalization protesters come from the extreme-right scene and remain linked to it, and even anti-nationalists often take part in joint actions with the KPRF and outright xenophobic groups. **ATTAC Russia** (*ATTAK Rossiya*, [www.attac.ru](http://www.attac.ru)), the most moderate organization, seeks to adhere to democratic norms and distances itself from the KPRF. **ATTAC Moscow** ([www.resist.ru](http://www.resist.ru), [socresist@rambler.ru](mailto:socresist@rambler.ru)) and **ATTAC South** (*ATTAK Yug*, same address) do not, though they are formally radical democratic movements. They co-operate with the KPRF and organizations close to it in the framework of a platform called *The World is Not a Commodity*.

**Avant-Garde of Red Youth (Avangard Krasnoy Molodezhi, AKM)**

*Website.* [www.akm1917.com](http://www.akm1917.com)

This is the semi-independent youth organisation of Working Russia.

**Communist Party of the Russian Federation  
(Kommunisticheskaya partiya Rossiyskoy federatsii, KPRF)**

While in the *Duma* Russia's biggest party plays by the rules of Russia's imperfect democracy, it also subscribes to anti-democratic, anti-liberal, radical nationalist and revolutionary ideas, and uses revolutionary rhetoric in campaigns aimed at left-wing student youth, though revolution is mainly presented as the resistance of traditional national communities to liberalism and globalization.

The KPRF's ideology is highly eclectic; however, one of its main elements is "state patriotism" and nationalism linked to hatred for what its leader, Gennady Zyuganov, calls "the New World Order", seen mainly as a global political

and economic system imposed by the capitalist West and especially the USA. Russian nationalist and anti-Semitic views are prominent among party members, including functionaries and Duma deputies, many of whom openly or covertly support nationalist or even fascist groups. The KPRF is generally seen as forming part of the "national-patriotic camp" and serves as the main umbrella for ultra-nationalist and imperialist parties and organizations. Stalinism and the glorification of the Soviet Union are widespread in the KPRF and part of its official ideology. While Marxist-Leninist rhetoric is still used in party documents, the Russian nationalist and statist elements of Soviet-era ideology and even references to Russian Orthodoxy are much more prominent, although Marxist egalitarianism retains a measure of popularity with the party base. Zyuganov has also been heavily influenced by the West European and Russian New Right. The KPRF's unofficial party newspaper, *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, has one of the biggest circulations of Russian dailies and espouses a stance that is distinctly "state patriotic" and glorifies the Soviet era.

Nevertheless, the KPRF has not been successful in creating a large-scale extra-parliamentary opposition movement. Even after its split in 2002, when a pro-presidential faction led by Duma speaker Gennady Seleznev was ousted by the hard-line oppositionists, the KPRF, which is in part financed by big business, is prepared to co-operate with the presidential administration in many respects.

**Eurasia Political Party (Politicheskaya Partiya "Evraziya")**

*Leadership:* Alexander Dugin

*Website.* [www.eurasia.com.ru](http://www.eurasia.com.ru)

This party was created in 2001 by Alexander Dugin, one of the co-founders of the National-Bolshevik Party and a prolific Russian nationalist and New Right intellectual. Outwardly it is a moderate "Eurasianist" and systematically pro-Putinist political movement with no electoral ambitions. Its "Eurasianism" is in fact a form of neo-National Bolshevism based on fundamentalist anti-Americanism and a desire to restore and expand a Russian ("Eurasian") empire.

Founding members include the renegade Muslim cleric Talgat Tadzhuiddin, influential TV commentator Mikhail Leont'yev, and representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church. Since the creation of the party Dugin has become one of the most-quoted political commentators in the Russian media, which tend to conceal his nationalist, imperialist and anti-democratic views based partly on the idea of Conservative Revolution. Dugin also directs a publishing house (Arctogaia) and one of the Russian Internet's most active network of web sites. His ideas have a certain influence with the West and Central European New Right.

**Freedom Party (Partiya Svobody)**

Based in Saint Petersburg, Pskov and generally the North-West. Led by Yuri Belyaev since 1994, it used to be called the National-Republican Party of Russia, and had grown out of a now defunct movement by the same name led by Duma deputy Nikolai Lysenko. A militant Russian nationalist and White supremacist, but not Soviet restorationist/imperialist group. Anti-Caucasian and anti-Semitic. It is close to the skinhead movement.



**Keepers of the Rainbow (Khraniteli radugi)**

Radical ecologist group with left-wing sympathies. No fixed structure or membership, anyone who has taken part in major protest actions (about 5,000 people) can call him/herself a member.

*Website. rk2000.chat.ru*

**Liberal-Democratic Party of Russia (Liberal'no-demokraticheskaya partiya Rossii, LDPR)**

*Leader. Vladimir Zhirinovskiy*

While the LDPR has consistently supported virtually all legislation initiated by the Yeltsin and Putin administrations, its leader also adheres to an ultra-nationalist rhetoric which wavers between ethnic and statist Russian nationalism but has consistent elements of anti-Semitism and especially hatred for Caucasians and Turks. Expansionism, imperialism and anti-Westernism are important parts of its programme. Its structure and ideology bear distinct fascist elements, and it has supported fascist (including paramilitary) groups in several Russian regions. However, given its support of the Putin regime it can hardly be classified as dissident.

**National-Bolshevik Party (Nacional-bol'shevistskaya partiya, NBP)**

*Leadership: Eduard Limonov*

*Websites. www.nbp.gok.ru, www.nbp.nad.ru*

The NBP was founded in 1993 by writer Eduard Limonov (Savenko), New Right theoretician Alexander Dugin, and several musicians. The NBP blends a distinctly fascist core ideology with left-wing, Bolshevik and "revolutionary" ideas and symbols, and tries to tap most unofficial youth subcultures, especially the punk rock scene. The NBP's programme, created by Dugin, revolves around militarism, a cult of its leader, Russian nationalism, violent opposition to liberalism, democracy and capitalism, a desire to restore the Soviet Union or some other form of Russian empire, and a fascist worldview blending a return to mythical historical roots, and the creation of a New Man.

It has been called a "party of general extremism". Limonov's popularity, the participation of well-known cultural figures, and an aggressive strategy aimed at provocation and gaining cultural hegemony have turned it into one of Russia's biggest independent youth movements, with little electoral success but a strong presence (and good friends) in many mainstream mass media. Its membership is unknown but may be anything up to 5,000. Its political actions have mainly been of the kind of throwing tomatoes at George Soros, though there have also been numerous beatings of foreigners by NBP members.

Dugin left the NBP in 1998 and is now chairman of the Eurasia Movement; Limonov was arrested on April 7, 2001, on charges of challenging the constitutional order by trying to invade Northern Kazakhstan and create a Russian ethnic state there but in the end only received a four-and-a-half year sentence for illegal possession of weapons. He was released ahead of time in June 2003. His popularity rose considerably during his prison term, and in 2002 he received the prestigious Andrei Bely literary prize.

The NBP actively co-operates with a range of left- and right-wing extremist groups.

**National-Great Power Party of Russia (Natsional'no-derzhavnaya partiya Rossii)**

*Leadership. Alexander Sevast'yanov, Stanislav Terekhov, Boris Mironov*

*Website. www.ndpr.ru*

A radical Russian nationalist, anti-Semitic party formed as a union of several earlier parties. Taken off the party register by the Ministry of Justice on May 19, 2003.

**People's Will (Partiya natsional'nogo vozrozhdeniya "Narodnaya volya")**

*Leader: Sergey Baburin*

This Russian nationalist party was created on Dec. 22, 2001, as a union of several previous organizations, including the Spas movement which was the main electoral platform for Russian nationalists in the 1999 Duma elections and was in its turn based on regional units of the Russian National Unity. It spans from Orthodox Christian fundamentalism and monarchism to fascist sympathies. Its leader was a Duma deputy until 1999. Viktor Alksnis, a Soviet army officer prominent in the consolidation of the "red-brown" movement in 1991-93, is vice-chairman.

**People's Patriotic Union of Russia (Narodno-patriotichesky soyuz Rossii, NPSR)**

*Website. www.npsr.ru*

An umbrella organization created by Gennady Zyuganov and the KPRF as a common platform with various "patriotic" organizations, though recently most Russian nationalist parties have left the union.

**Regional Party of Communists (Regional'naya partiya kommunistov, RPK, RegPK)**

Based in Saint Petersburg. Split from the RKRP-RPK in 2002. Anti-Stalinist, internationalist, open to West European post-war left-wing ideas.

**Revolutionary Workers' Party (Revolucionnaya rabochaya partiya, RRP)**

A small splinter Trotskyist party.

*Website. www.1917.com*

**Russian Communist Youth Union (Rossiysky kommunistichesky soyuz molodezhi, RKSM)**

Originally the KPRF's youth organization. It is led by Igor' Malyarov.

**Russian Communist Workers' Party – Russian Communist Party (Rossiyskaya Kommunisticheskaya Rabochaya Partiya – Rossiyskaya Kommunisticheskaya Partiya, RKRP – RPK)**

*Leadership: Viktor Tyul'kin, Anatoly Kryuchkov (Central Committee Secretaries)*

Born out of a merger of two parties (RKRP and RPK) in 2002. Estimated to have around 10,000 members. This is an orthodox Soviet-style Marxist-Leninist party with strong Stalinist sympathies though it also criticises Stalin for having practically abolished the Soviets. Wants to restore Soviet power through parliamentary means. Has a strong regional base, especially in parts of Siberia.

### **Russian National Unity (Russkoe natsional'noe edinstvo)**

An unequivocally fascist organization, violently nationalistic, anti-Caucasian and anti-Semitic, modelled on Mussolini's Black Shirts and the SS, it glorifies Hitler, Nazism and the pre-revolutionary Black Hundred anti-Semitic pogrom movement. Founded in 1990 by Alexander Barkashov, it had a strong material base and several thousand fighters and supporters at its peak in the late 1990s, and engaged in beatings and killings of people considered non-Russian, large-scale propaganda, paramilitary and "policing" operations (sometimes in accord with nationalist regional governors), and criminal activity. There are indications that it prepared for a military coup. In 2000 it split into at least three smaller groups, led, respectively, by Oleg Kassin (Russian Rebirth, [www.rne.fathweb.com](http://www.rne.fathweb.com)), Mikhail and Yevgeny Lalochkin ([www.rne.org](http://www.rne.org)), and Barkashov ([www.rnebarkashov.ru](http://www.rnebarkashov.ru)). Groups of men wearing RNU symbols remain very prominent at nationalist demonstrations and have been among the most vociferous supporters of Colonel Yury Budanov, who was sentenced to ten years in jail for killing an 18-year old Chechen girl in 2000, and has become a nationalist hero.

### **Socialist Resistance (Committee for a Socialist International) (Sotsialisticheskoe soprotivlenie (Komitet za rabochy internatsional, KRI))**

*Website. [www.socialism.ru](http://www.socialism.ru)*

An internationalist, Trotskyist organization with sympathisers across the former Soviet Union which also collaborates with Stalinists and other Marxist and Communist movements and is active in the nascent anti-globalization movement.

### **Spiritual Heritage (Dukhovnoe nasledie)**

*Leadership: Alexei Podberezkin (Secretary-General)*

*Website. [www.nasled.ru](http://www.nasled.ru)*

A small Russian nationalist/anti-Western movement based on nationalist circles within the former KGB. Its main function is that of a think tank for "patriotic" groups including the KPRF, though it is also registered as a political party.

### **Tomorrow (Zavtra)**

While not linked to any particular organisation, this newspaper (called *Den* /The Day in 1990-93) has been the flagship of the united "national-patriotic" or "red-brown" opposition since its inception. Its editor-in-chief, Alexander Prokhanov, received Russia's most prestigious literary distinction in 2002, for a novel which sings the praise of Russian imperialism and accuses Vladimir Putin of having organized the terrorist bombings in Moscow in 1999. Prokhanov is a statist nationalist opposed to "Jewish" conspiracies and the power of the "oligarchs", but since 2002 he has been co-operating with exiled "Jewish" multi-millionaire Boris Berezovsky in a campaign against the Putin regime.

### **Union of Communist Youth (Soyuz kommunisticheskoy molodezhi, Sokomol)**

The KPRF's current youth organization. Formally has 50,000 members, including 30,000 in Krasnodar region where students are often forced to join at the order of the regional governor. Most members are reported to be "dead souls".

### **Working Russia (Trudovaya Rossiya)**

*Leadership: Viktor Anpilov*

*Website. [www.anpilov.com](http://www.anpilov.com)*

An orthodox Stalinist movement close to the Russian nationalist camp although it has members across ethnic groups and uses internationalist rhetoric. Led by Viktor Anpilov, it may have had over 200,000 members and supporters in 1992-93 when it was instrumental in the Supreme Soviet's opposition to president Boris Yeltsin, but is now a rump organization made up essentially of a few hundred old-age pensioners. It was taken off the party register in July 2003.

*Mischa Gabowitsch*

## **Rwanda**

**Capital:** Kigali

**Population:** 7.4 m

The Republic of Rwanda achieved independence from Belgium in 1962. Following a military coup led by Gen. Juvénal Habyarimana in 1973, the Hutu-dominated regime created the National Revolutionary Movement for Democracy (MRND), with Habyarimana as President. This remained the sole legal political party until the adoption of a multiparty constitution in 1991, when it was renamed the National Republican Movement for Democracy and Development (*Mouvement Républicain National pour la*

*Démocratie et le Développement*, MRNDD). By then a rebellion had been launched by the (predominantly Tutsi) Rwandan Patriotic Front (*Front Patriotique Rwandais*, FPR), with which the government signed the Arusha Accord of August 1993 providing for the establishment of interim institutions in a transition period leading to multiparty elections. However, delays in the deployment of a UN observer force and internal divisions led to the repeated postponement of the start of the transition period.

The fragile peace process ended abruptly in April 1994 when President Habyarimana and his Burundian counterpart Cyprien Ntaryamira were killed when their plane was shot down on the approach to the airport at Kigali. The government and security forces blamed the FPR, which in turn accused Hutu extremist elements of seeking to derail the peace process. Hutu militias, known as the *Interahamwe*, other militias and troops and civilians then launched a campaign of violence of genocidal proportions. The ferocity and the rapidity of the killing has seen few equals in modern history, with the decimation taking place in about 100 days between April and July 1994, the majority of those killed being hacked or clubbed to death with machetes or farm implements. A government report issued in February 2002 maintained that one-seventh of the population of Rwanda were killed in ethnic violence between 1990-94, more than 93 per cent of those killed being members of the Tutsi minority.

Although in general terms an ethnic conflict between the majority Hutu and minority Tutsi, the violence was also politically-motivated, in that supporters of the regime sought to eliminate all opposition, Tutsi and Hutu alike. The violence prompted the resumption of the rebellion by the FPR which, by July 1994, claimed military victory. In the same month Pasteur Bizimungu, a senior FPR figure, was inaugurated as President for a five-year term and the composition of a new government of national unity was announced. Posts in the Council of Ministers were assigned to the FPR, the Republican Democratic Movement, the Liberal Party, the Social Democratic Party and the Christian Democratic Party. The new administration declared its intention to honour the terms of the 1993 Arusha Accord within the context of an extended period of transition. However, the MRNDD and the Coalition for the Defence of the Republic (CDR) were excluded from participation in the government.

A 70-member Transitional National Assembly was inaugurated in December 1994 (without benefit of election). In June 1999 the Assembly was extended for a further four years. President Bizimungu resigned in March 2000; he was succeeded in April by Maj.-Gen. Paul Kagame who was elected in a special vote of the Assembly. Kagame, the FPR military chief, had formally been Vice President. He was overwhelmingly confirmed as President in national elections in August 2003.

A new draft constitution adopted by the Transitional National Assembly in April 2003 was approved overwhelmingly in a referendum held in late May. The new constitution provided for a President and a bicameral legislature and also included provisions for a commission to combat genocide. Furthermore, it limited the ability of any single political party to gain power through the manipulation of differences between Hutu and Tutsi.

### UN War Crimes Tribunal

Acting under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, the UN Security Council in November 1994 created the Inter-

national Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR, the war crimes tribunal), located in Arusha, in north-eastern Tanzania. The ICTR was established for the prosecution of persons responsible for genocide and other serious violations of international humanitarian law committed in Rwanda between Jan. 1, 1994 and Dec. 31, 1994. The Tribunal issued its first indictment against eight accused persons in November 1995. As of mid-2003 over 70 suspects have been indicted, of whom more than 60 have been arrested and transferred to the Tribunal's custody. Of those so far apprehended the trials of ten have been completed, resulting in nine convictions and one acquittal. Those convicted include Jean Kambanda, the interim Prime Minister of Rwanda during the genocide, who pleaded guilty in May 1998 and was subsequently sentenced to life imprisonment, being transferred to Mali to serve his sentence.

### Army for the Liberation of Rwanda (*Armée pour la libération du Rwanda, ALIR*)

Following the 1994 genocide the extremist Hutu forces (members of the Rwandan armed forces (ex-FAR) and the *Interahamwe* militia) were routed and pushed into the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC, then Zaire) by the forces of the predominantly Tutsi Rwandan Patriotic Front (FPR), led by Maj.-Gen. Kagame. Once in the DRC, the disparate forces merged, recruited additional fighters and became known as the Army for the Liberation of Rwanda (ALIR), eventually forming a political wing, the Party for the Liberation of Rwanda (PALIR).

During the war in the DRC the ALIR forces have been allied with the government of President Joseph Kabila, which has reportedly provided training, arms and supplies. Rwandan government forces and rebels under their control (the Congolese Rally for Democracy – RCD) operated in the DRC during the civil war, weakening the ALIR forces and preventing them moving back into Rwanda, but also securing control of the DRC's abundant and lucrative resources. Despite the presence of some 20,000 Rwandan troops in the eastern DRC, ALIR regular forces continued to operate alongside the DRC army throughout the civil war. A similar number of ALIR guerrillas also operated behind Rwandan forces' lines in eastern DRC and managed to cross into Rwanda, where they carried out limited attacks on civilian and military targets.

In 1999, ALIR was responsible for the kidnapping and murder of nine persons, including two US tourists in Bwindi Park. (In March 2003, the Rwandan government transferred custody of three of the suspected perpetrators of these murders to the USA.) In July 2001 the Rwandan government announced that it had captured the ALIR chief of staff, Pierre Habimana (also known as Colonel Bemera) in Ruhengeri region in north-west Rwanda. Reports indicated that ALIR and other Hutu groups were trying to return to Rwanda to avoid being eventually disarmed under the DRC peace process.

In July 2002 the DRC and Rwandan governments signed a peace agreement providing for the withdrawal of all Rwandan troops from the eastern DRC and the dismantling of ALIR, ex-FAR and *Interahamwe* forces opposed to the Kagame government. Under the terms of the agreement, the

DRC agreed to begin rounding up ALIR fighters 30 days after the deal was signed. Rwanda's troop withdrawal would begin 15 days later and would be completed in 45 days. The Rwandan forces began their withdrawal in mid-September and it was completed by the end of October. The continued presence of Ugandan troops in eastern DRC, and especially around Bunia, in the first quarter of 2003 prompted stern warnings from Rwanda that it might be forced to send its forces back into the DRC. (Rwanda and Uganda were initially allies in the DRC, but their troops had subsequently clashed several times.)

### **Army of the King (Ingabo Z'umwami)**

This is a pro-monarchist group regarded since mid-1999 as a security threat by the authorities, particularly in north-western Rwanda. *Interahamwe* forces are reported to have told the local population that they were *Ingabo Z'umwami* in an attempt to gain local support in the north-west.

The King (*Umwami*) of Rwanda, Kigeri V, was overthrown by a 1959 Hutu-led revolution and was eventually driven into exile in 1961. Resident for a long time in Kenya, the King went on to lead a quiet life in a suburb of the US capital, Washington DC. He has publicly disavowed any link to armed resistance groups and has insisted that he would return to rule Rwanda only if a majority of the population wanted the monarchy restored. Whilst welcoming the return of the King as a private citizen, President Kagame has also threatened to ruthlessly quash any attempt to restore the monarchy by force of arms.

*Ingabo Z'umwami* first came to prominence in November 1999 when the local authorities in Nyamirambo, a suburb of Kigali, detained more than 200 young people accused of being members of the group. Unlike previous opposition groups identified solely with the Hutu, the monarchists include both Hutu and Tutsi. (Kigeri V is Tutsi, but by custom the King represented all Rwandans, not just those of one ethnic group.) The multi-ethnic composition of the *Ingabo Z'umwami* appeared to pose a serious challenge to the government, which previously had managed to discredit opposition groups as being composed only of Hutu and for including persons implicated in the 1994 genocide.

### **Coalition for the Defence of the Republic (Coalition pour la défense de la république, CDR)**

Formed in 1992 and illegal since 2001, the CDR is a radical Hutu party that operated an unofficial militia known as *Impuza Mugambi* ("single-minded ones") during the 1994 genocide. The militia was reported to have taken a leading role in the slaughter of Tutsi and moderate Hutu.

### **Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda, FDLR)**

Led by Ignace Murwamashyaka and based in Kinshasa (the capital of the Democratic Republic of Congo – DRC), the FDLR is largely made up of members of the ex-Rwandan Armed Forces (ex-FAR) and Hutu refugees based in the DRC. An organization representing Rwandan Hutu rebels in the DRC, the FDLR has both political and armed wings.

### **Democratic Party for Renewal (Parti démocratique pour le renouveau, PDR)**

### **Formed in 2001 by former President Pasteur Bizimungu, the party was banned shortly afterwards and Bizimungu and party secretary-general Charles Ntakirutinka placed under house arrest. The government acted against Bizimungu after alleging that that PDR was a pro-Hutu party that advocated ethnic division.**

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### **Ex-Rwandan Armed Forces (Ex-Forces armées rwandaises, ex-FAR)**

The Ex-Far are remnants of the Hutu militias (*Interahamwe*) and former Rwandan armed forces responsible for the 1994 genocide. Although some have laid down their arms and returned to Rwanda for "re-education", many thousands remain in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), where they have fought alongside the government forces of President Kabila, Mayi-Mayi militiamen and Congolese Hutu fighters.

### **Interahamwe**

The Hutu *Interahamwe* ("those who stand together") were the civilian militia force that carried out much of the killing during the 1994 genocide. Closely linked to the ruling National Republican Movement for Democracy and Development (MRNDD, see entry), members of the militia were forced out of Rwanda into the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in 1994 where they regrouped with Ex-Rwandan Armed Forces (ex-FAR) members to form the Army for the Liberation of Rwanda (ALIR, see entry). From their bases in the eastern DRC, the *Interahamwe* have sought to topple Rwanda's Tutsi-dominated government and reinstitute Hutu control of the country.

### **National Republican Movement for Democracy and Development (Mouvement républicain national pour la démocratie et le développement, MRNDD)**

Formed in 1975 as the *Mouvement révolutionnaire national pour le développement* (MRND), the MRNDD was the sole legal party from its formation until 1991 and the ruling party until 1994. A Hutu party of Catholic orientation, the MRNDD's large unofficial militia, the *Interahamwe*, was extensively involved in the atrocities of the 1994 genocide. Consequently the party was not allowed to participate in the Transitional National Assembly and government and was formally banned in July 2001.

### **Party for the Liberation of Rwanda (Peuple en armes pour la libération du Rwanda, PALIR)**

This organization is the political wing of the Army for the Liberation of Rwanda (ALIR), formed in 1996 by members of the *Interahamwe* in an attempt to enhance their political legitimacy. PALIR is banned in Rwanda and is not represented in the government or the legislature.

### **Rwandan Democratic Alliance (Alliance démocratique Rwandaise, ADR)**

In January 2002, Rwandan political groups exiled in Belgium formed a coalition known as the *Alliance démocratique Rwandaise* (ADR), (also referred to in English as the Rwandan Democratic Alliance (RDA) and in the Kinyarwanda language as ADR Isangano). The coalition



brought together the *Congrès démocratique Africain* (CDA) and the *Mouvement pour la paix, la démocratie et le développement* (MPDD). The ADR said it had been formed in response to the political vacuum in Rwanda and the government's opposition to "any form of independent political association and freedom of expression". The ADR also

called for the withdrawal of Rwandan forces from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) without delay.

*D. J. Sagar*

## St Christopher and Nevis

**Capital:** Basseterre (St Kitts)

**Population:** 41,000

St Christopher and Nevis (most commonly known as St Kitts and Nevis), consisting of the Caribbean islands of St Kitts and Nevis, became an independent state with a federal constitution within the Commonwealth on Sept. 19, 1983. The British monarch is head of state, being represented by a Governor-General, while the Prime Minister is head of government. It has a unicameral National Assembly consisting of 11 members elected for five years by universal suffrage (eight representing St Kitts and three Nevis) and three appointed members and one ex-officio member. The Prime Minister and the Cabinet are responsible to the Assembly.

In elections to the National Assembly held in March 2000 the incumbent St Kitts-Nevis Labour Party (SKNLP), under the leadership of Prime Minister Denzil Douglas, was returned to office. The SKNLP won eight seats (all on the main island), with the Nevis seats being taken by the Concerned Citizens' Movement (two seats) and the Nevis Reformation Party (one seat). The political system had by this time regained some of its stability after a difficult period during the mid-1990s. In the 1993 general election, although the SKNLP won a majority of votes it was kept out of power by a two-party coalition. The election was followed by riots, a 10-day state of emergency and a parliamentary boycott by the SKNLP. The pressure was such that another election was called in 1995, with the SKNLP winning seven of the eight seats on St Kitts.

On Nevis there is a Nevis Island Assembly and a Nevis Island Administration. The Assembly has the power to provide for the separation of Nevis from the Federation. Nevis has its own Deputy Governor-General appointed by the Governor-General. In 1997, the Assembly voted to hold a referendum to allow voters to choose full political independence for the island. When the referendum was held in August 1998, almost 62 per cent of the electorate voted for independence, although the figure was just short of the two-thirds

majority needed to change the island's status. Since then little progress has been made regarding constitutional reform, and as a consequence the option of independence is once again on the agenda. An indication of this came in February 2003, when Nevis' two political parties announced that they would no longer participate in future federal elections. The independence movement on Nevis believes that its important offshore business sector would provide the island with sufficient economic means to survive as a separate state. However, opponents of independence fear that the island's democratic system of government could be undermined by the growth in money laundering and drug trafficking, primarily because Nevis would have to depend for its survival on the controversial offshore sector.

St Kitts and Nevis was removed, in June 2002, from the Financial Action Task Force's list of non-cooperative countries in the fight against money laundering, after the government introduced measures to improve the transparency and oversight of the country's offshore financial sector. St Kitts has come under heavy international pressure in recent years over its alleged contact with, and harbouring of, drug traffickers. In December 2000, for example, a US court convicted a national of St Kitts, Charles Miller, on two counts of drug trafficking. The USA first indicted Miller in 1996, but a court in St Kitts blocked his extradition on two occasions before the government finally decided to hand him over on the eve of the March 2000 elections. Miller, who had significant business interests on the island and reportedly close ties with the SKNLP, was widely seen to be above the law. In January 2002, the US Treasury froze the assets of the local franchises of the air courier company, DHL Worldwide Express, and of Freight Movers International. A Caribbean drug lord reportedly controlled both franchises.

*Peter Clegg*

## St Lucia

**Capital:** Castries

**Population:** 156,000

St Lucia achieved independence from the United Kingdom in 1979. The British monarch is head of state, being represented locally by a Governor-General, while the head of government is the Prime Minister. St Lucia has a bicameral parliament consisting of (i) a 17-member House of Assembly elected for five years by universal adult suffrage and (ii) an 11-member Senate appointed by the Governor-General (six senators on the advice of the Prime Minister, three on the advice of the Leader of the Opposition and two by consultation with religious, economic and social

bodies). The Prime Minister and the Cabinet are responsible to Parliament. In elections held in December 2001 the St Lucia Labour Party, led by Prime Minister Kenny Anthony, retained power by winning fourteen of the seventeen seats in the House of Assembly. The United Workers' Party won the remaining three seats.

There have been no reports of recent dissident activities in St Lucia.

*Peter Clegg*

## St Vincent and the Grenadines

**Capital:** Kingstown

**Population:** 115,000

St Vincent and the Grenadines achieved its independence from the United Kingdom in 1979. It has the British monarch as head of state, represented locally by a Governor-General, and the head of government is the Prime Minister. There is a unicameral House of Assembly consisting of 15 members elected by universal adult suffrage and six appointed senators.

A general election was held on March 28, 2001, more than two years ahead of schedule. The election had been brought forward following a period of widespread anti-government protests after parliament approved new pensions and other benefits for MPs. The opposition Unity Labour Party (ULP), headed by Ralph Gonsalves, emerged victorious at the polls as the incumbent New Democratic Party, led by Arnhim Eustace, lost power for the first time since 1984.

Although Prime Minister Gonsalves retained his popularity, his ULP government was tarnished by a

number of scandals during the first half of 2003. A series of corruption charges were leveled against the government, while the ULP also came under pressure for its alleged links with the marijuana trade. The latter claim was particularly serious, as it undermined the government's stated commitment to address the issue of drug cultivation and the growing problem of violent crime associated with the trafficking of cocaine. More positive news for the government came in June when St Vincent and the Grenadines was finally removed from the Financial Action Task Force's list of non-cooperative countries. The government instituted a series of legislative acts after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the USA to address the related issues of money laundering and terrorist financing.

*Peter Clegg*

## Samoa

**Capital:** Apia (Upolu)

**Population:** 182,000

Samoa (which changed its name from Western Samoa in 1997) was a former German protectorate occupied by New Zealand at the outbreak of World War I. At the time of the German occupation, a Samoan political

group called the *Mau* movement was formed to negotiate with the Germans. Under New Zealand rule, violence broke out on Dec. 29, 1929, and New Zealand soldiers fired on Samoan protesters killing 11, includ-

ing Tupua Tamasese Lealofi III, the leader of the *Mau* and a well respected Samoan leader. In June 2002 the New Zealand Prime Minister, Helen Clark, apologized publicly to the Samoans for the killing and injustices by New Zealand.

New Zealand continued to administer Samoa as a trust territory until 1962 when it became an independent member of the Commonwealth. The head of state is elected for a five-year term by the Legislative Assembly or Fono. Executive power is vested in a Prime Minister who must be supported by a majority in the 49-member Legislative Assembly (which is elected for a five-year term) and who appoints other ministers. Only chiefs (*matai*) may stand for election to the Fono.

In elections to the Legislative Assembly held on March 4, 2001, the Human Rights Protection Party led by Sailele Malielegaoi Tuila'epa won 23 seats, the Samoa National Development Party led by Tapua Tamasese Efi won 13 seats, and there were 13 victorious independent candidates. Prime Minister Tuila'epa has been in office since Nov. 24, 1998, after taking over from Tofilau Eti Alesana who resigned due to poor health.

Although politics in Samoa has been relatively stable, on July 16, 1999, the country was rocked by the assassination of the Public Works Minister, Luagalau Leavaulu Kamu, a reformist politician, while presiding over a social function to mark the 20th anniversary of the ruling Human Rights Protection Party. Two former ministers were charged with murder and are now serving prison sentences. During the trial there was evidence presented that the two accused also attempted to murder Savea Malifa, editor and publisher of the *Samoan Observer*, because of his forthright criticism of corruption and abuse of power in government. The *Samoan Observer* was, for a number of years, put under relentless pressure by the former government of Tofilau Eti Alesana, through criminal libel and defamation lawsuits, for highlighting official corruption and mismanagement. Radio Polynesia, a privately owned FM commercial station, resumed its local news service in 2000 after having had its license suspended in 1999 due to political pressure. The media in Samoa has provided the most powerful voice of dissent in recent years.

*Steven Ratuva*

## San Marino

**Capital:** San Marino

**Population:** 28,000

The Most Serene Republic of San Marino, which traces its independent history back to 301 AD and its constitution to 1600, is a parliamentary democracy in which legislative power is held by the directly elected 60-member Grand and General Council (Consiglio Grande e Generale) and a 10-member Congress of State (Congresso di Stato) is elected by the Council to form the government.

After the terrorist attacks in the USA of Sept. 11, 2001, San Marino took several measures to monitor and fight the financing of international terrorism, such as the freezing of the assets of terrorist groups and individuals. It is no longer considered an uncooperative tax haven by the OECD.

*Luca Blasi*

## São Tomé & Príncipe

**Capital:** São Tomé

**Population:** 170,000

The island group of São Tomé & Príncipe (República Democrática de São Tomé e Príncipe) became independent from Portugal in July 1975. Under the Movement for the Liberation of São Tomé & Príncipe (*Movimento de Libertação de São Tomé e Príncipe*, MLSTP) it remained a one-party, professedly Marxist, state until it joined the wave of democratization running through Portuguese-speaking Africa with the end of the Cold War. The new constitution of 1990 introduced a system of multi-party parliamentary democra-

cy with direct universal suffrage for both the legislature and the presidency.

The years following independence were ones of considerable instability in part caused by a cleavage between pro-Angolan and pro-Gabonese factions, with the increasingly authoritarian regime of President Manuel Pinto da Costa identified with the former. In the 1980s an opposition group within the MLSTP led by former minister Carlos Graça formed the **National Resistance Front of São Tomé & Príncipe** (*Frente de*

*Resistência Nacional de São Tomé e Príncipe*, FRNSTP) which conspired clandestinely against the government, contributing to an extended period of tension. The details of the MLSTP-FRNSTP conflict during the 1980s remain opaque. The Angola-Gabon dichotomy was inter-woven into the broader politics of the southern African region of the time. The conflict between Angola and South Africa – with its Cuban and Namibian ramifications – seeped into São Tomense affairs, and repeated claims and rumours emerged of attempted coups and mercenary incursions with shadowy South African and/or French involvement. In this climate the FRNSTP itself split in 1986 with some of its senior leaders, including Graça himself, returning to the MLSTP fold. In 1988 a large group of its members were given lengthy prison sentences after being captured allegedly in the act of mounting a coup.

While the FRNSTP was perceived as the greatest challenge to the MLSTP regime in São Tomé, two other small dissident movements were formed in exile in Portugal. These were the Democratic and Independent Union of São Tomé & Príncipe (*União Democrática e Independente de São Tomé e Príncipe*, UDISTP) and the National Democratic Action of São Tomé & Príncipe (*Acção Democrática Nacional de São Tomé e Príncipe*, ADNSTP). While neither of

these splinters posed any major threat to the regime their activities did cause some discomfort in relations with Portugal.

With democratization in 1990 the three dissident movements (FRNSTP, UDISTP and ADNSTP) combined to form the Democratic Opposition College (*Coligação Democrática da Oposição*, CODO). At the same time, the MLSTP adopted the suffix “social democrat”, re-naming itself the *Movimento de Libertação de São Tomé e Príncipe – Partido Social Democrata* (MLSTP-PSD). A number of other constitutional opposition parties also sprang up at that time and subsequent parliamentary elections have seen the MLSTP-PSD move in and out of power.

Despite the general process of democratization party government remained fragile. In July 2003 President Fradrique de Menezes was overthrown by a group of military officers while he was on a visit to Nigeria. Evidently without any clear idea of what to do next, and under pressure from other regional and lusophone states, the plotters quickly agreed to the President’s reinstatement, demanding only an amnesty for themselves in return.

Norrie MacQueen

## Saudi Arabia

**Capital:** Riyadh

**Population:** 23.5 m (includes 5.4 m non-nationals)

Saudi Arabia is an hereditary monarchy, ruled by the Al-Saud dynasty. The current royal family are the descendants of King Abdul-Aziz ibn Saud, who in 1902 captured Riyadh and embarked on a 30-year campaign to unify the Arabian Peninsula. The current King and Prime Minister (since June 1982) is Fahd bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud. The Crown Prince and First Deputy Prime Minister is Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud (brother to the monarch and heir to the throne).

In 1992 a written constitution and a bill of rights were adopted. Since 1993 the Saudi Kingdom has been divided into 13 administrative districts that are administered by appointed governors and assemblies of local notables. In larger cities, municipal governments are appointed by local leaders, and towns and villages are governed by councils of elders. The constitution is based on Shari’a (Islamic law) and it is a principle that new legislation must be in accordance with Shari’a law.

The relationship between the dynasty and the religious community is the principal pillar upon which the stability of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia rests. This relationship dates back to the 1744 alliance between Mohammed ibn Abdul-Wahhab and Mohammed ibn Saud. The descendants of al-Wahhab still dominate the

official religious institutions of the state. The official clergy regularly issue fatwas (religious judicial opinions) that justify the policies issued by the government.

Political parties in the Kingdom are illegal. There is no parliament and the Council of Ministers is appointed by the monarch and includes many royal family members. Public demonstrations are prohibited and public gatherings are segregated by sex. There are no publicly active human rights groups, and the government appears to prohibit visits by international human rights groups and independent monitors.

### Dissident movements up to the Gulf War

In the 1970s and 1980s there was sporadic opposition within Saudi Arabia, in particular from fundamentalists and the Shi’ite minority (see also below).

Established in 1974, the **Muslim Revolutionary Movement in the Arabian Peninsula** aimed at obtaining universal Muslim recognition of Mohammed al-Qatani as the expected “Mahdi” (as prophesized by certain Mahdist sects). This group condemned all current rulers of Islamic states as not upholding the religion of Islam. On Nov. 20, 1979, some 200 armed members of the Movement took over



the Grand Mosque in Mecca with the object of forcing the congregation to recognize their "Mahdi". The government announced on Nov. 25, that the Ulema (the supreme body of Islamic jurisdiction) had decided to lift the Koranic ban on the use of weapons in the mosque. About 2,200 troops thereupon entered the mosque, taking until Dec. 3 to overcome all resistance by the intruders. The Movement had, on Nov. 27, declared that it was responsible for the action at the mosque and that it was directed against the Saudi royal family, whom it denounced as "corrupt".

A total of 63 of the intruders were executed by being beheaded on instructions of Saudi religious courts; 19 other death sentences were commuted to terms of imprisonment and 22 women and children were sent to corrective institutions. Of the insurgents, 102 were said to have died during or after the occupation of the mosque, while troop casualties were officially given as 127 dead and 451 injured, and civilian casualties as 26 dead and 109 injured. Those beheaded included not only Saudi citizens but also Egyptians, Yemenis and Kuwaitis. The "Mahdi" was reported to have been killed in the fighting.

In clashes surrounding the haj in 1987, Saudi Arabian security forces killed at least 400, including 275 Iranians, protesting against the USA and Israel.

On July 10, 1989, the "Generation of Arab Anger" claimed responsibility for a bomb attack on the *haj* in Mecca, in which one person was killed and 16 injured. The organization issued threats against the Saudi royal family. On Sept. 21, 1989, 16 people, all Kuwaiti Shi'ites, were condemned to death and executed.

On Nov. 6, 1990, there was an unprecedented demonstration of Saudi women against the imposition of Islamic laws, and particularly the ban on women driving cars. Many people were arrested in January 1991 during demonstrations against the Gulf War. On Feb. 1, 1991, the *International Herald Tribune* stated that six "terrorists" had been executed.

### Post-Gulf War Islamist opposition

Though there were rare instances of opposition prior to 1991, Islamist criticism of the monarchy grew dramatically following the Gulf War. The presence of thousands of Western, non-Muslim troops in close proximity to the holy cities of Mecca and Medina was seen as heretical. Moreover, reliance on foreign troops for defence highlighted the vulnerability of the monarchy and seemed to imply that the defence of the Holy Land had been mismanaged in view of the billions spent on defence. Thus, in the eyes of the religious opposition, the Islamic credentials of the monarchy had been called into question.

The divide between official Islamic authorities and popular Islamic leaders is great. The alternative clergy wrote fatwas during the Gulf War that contested the fatwa of the official clergy and provided reasons to prohibit the stationing of US troops on Saudi Arabian soil. The alternative fatwas drew wider public support than did the official fatwa.

Several Saudi dissident groups have been suspected of attempting to overthrow the government. These groups justify the use of terror in order to rid Saudi Arabia of all Western influence. Some Saudi individuals have been accused of financing Islamic extremists within countries such as Egypt, Tunisia and Jordan. The great anger these groups exhibit toward the US presence in the Gulf region has led to violence which has been exported, notably by means of Osama bin Laden's *Al-Qaeda*. In 1994 the Saudi government revoked Osama bin Laden's citizenship.

Other factors encouraging religious opposition include declining living standards, uneven distribution of wealth and growing urbanization. Sheikh al-Shuaibi and others have disseminated new fatwas that extend the idea of jihad from fighting foreign infidels to fighting domestic regimes that are perceived to be unjust. Al-Shuaibi's serious elaboration of the idea could be interpreted to target the Al-Saud regime. In 1991-92, angry demonstrations took place, including within Najd, the heartland of conservative "Wahhabi" power and traditional bedrock of Al-Saud support.

In 1992, King Fahd appointed a non-legislative consultative council and gave more power to provincial governments, where other family members ruled. These "reforms" disappointed some and angered others. They had the effect of consolidating the ruling family's centrality to political life, rather than broadening meaningful participation.

In 1993, a group of clerics led a march through the streets of the city of Buraydah protesting against official government corruption and loose morals that they felt were destroying Arabian society. The central authorities cracked down, arresting a number of the clerics. Among those arrested was Sheikh Salman bin Fahd Al-Auda, a man whose followers had grown numerous and threatening to the royal family and who was resisting a government injunction banning him from expressing his views. Salman bin Fahd Al-Auda is from the Bani Khalid tribe; this is an important tribe, whose domain extends from Qaseem in the middle of Najd all the way to Dammam, Dhahran, Khafji and Kuwait. He was imprisoned for five years. Since his release from jail in 1998, he has been forbidden from giving sermons at the mosque.

Various Saudi extremist groups claimed responsibility for the car bombing of the US-run Saudi National Guard training centre in Riyadh on Nov. 13, 1995, when five Americans and two Indians were killed. Four Saudi citizens, three of whom had fought against the communist regime in Afghanistan, confessed on television that they had carried out the bombing, and in May 1996 were publicly executed for the crime. There was widespread speculation that they were not, in fact, responsible for the attack, but had been convicted so that the government could show it was in control of the security environment.

On June 25, 1996, an enormous truck bomb explosion occurred just outside the US Air Force base in Khobar, near Dhahran in Eastern Province, in which 19 US servicemen were killed and 64 seriously

injured. The bomb, like that of November 1995, was clearly aimed at the US military presence in the kingdom. Sunni militants linked to those who fought Soviet forces in Afghanistan and to followers of Osama bin Laden were seen as the prime suspects. In June 2001, however, a US Department of Justice indictment associated Iran with the attack.

### **Sept. 11 and its consequences**

Following the September 11 attacks in the USA Osama bin Laden denounced the Saudi government as “godless” for allowing American troops in Saudi Arabia, the birthplace of the prophet Mohammed and home of Mecca, Islam’s holiest site. He also warned that the United States would not enjoy security until “all the infidel armies leave the land of Mohammed”. Bin Laden’s message resonates with Saudis, who privately donate to Islamic charities used as fronts to support Bin Laden’s network. It also erodes the government’s claim to religious legitimacy as the defender of Islamic faith and law.

It is difficult to measure the level of support Bin Laden enjoys within Saudi Arabia. However, he represents the conflict, albeit in its most extreme dimension, that has altered political dynamics in Saudi Arabia, perhaps permanently. Fifteen of the 19 terrorists who hijacked aircraft on Sept. 11 were from the Asir, the mountainous southwest province of Saudi Arabia. The Sept. 11 attacks, involving so many Saudi nationals, strained relations between the United States and Saudi Arabia. US commentators subsequently emphasized aspects of Saudi society that appeared to provide a fertile soil for Bin Laden and his adherents and there were repeated suggestions of close links between the Sept. 11 hijackers and elements within the Saudi extended ruling family and intelligence services. At the same time, the issue was complicated by the close entanglement of US military, diplomatic and commercial interests with the Saudi regime. A US congressional inquiry into the Sept. 11 attacks, released in July 2003, was notable for the decision not to de-classify a lengthy section that was widely reported to document linkages between the Sept. 11 hijackers and Saudi figures and institutions. On July 29, 2003, more than 100 US Congressmen sent a letter to President Bush seeking “detailed assurances” that Saudi Arabia was acting to prevent the financing of terrorist groups.

Saudi attitudes toward Osama bin Laden are complex. While many Saudis despise his actions, others admire his anti-American stance. The Palestinian intifada, which has inflamed opinion in Saudi Arabia as well as many other Arab and Islamic states, has added to sympathy for him. But Bin Laden poses a threat to the Saudi regime because he challenges the royal family on religious grounds. Bin Laden says he, not the royal family, protects Islamic holy places from infidel Americans.

Critics argue that the Saudi regime was slow to realize that extremism had become a serious problem in the region, especially as a result of the Afghanistan

conflict, where many young Saudis went to fight the Soviets. Some senior Saudi princes admit they had ignored problems in their own education system, which “advocated extremist views of the world and contained significant anti-Christian and anti-Semitic content”. Critics of the Saudi government maintain it was lax in monitoring Islamic charities and it only belatedly realized that one of its own citizens, Osama bin Laden, had evolved from an Islamic freedom fighter in Afghanistan into a serious threat. With the growing strength of Islamist sentiment, sections of the Saudi masses are longing for a leader who could fight back and have found one in Bin Laden. Bin Laden’s status in Saudi Arabia was only increased in the late 1990s by public denunciation of him by President Clinton and other US officials and media.

### **The war on Iraq**

While Bin Laden is sweeping in his condemnation of the present regime and the most radical in calling for a return to the utopian days of Mohammed bin Abdul-Wahhab, most other opposition figures recognize that even a state based firmly on Islamic principles is going to have to make some concessions to modernity. However, military action in Iraq appears to have aggravated frustrations, spawning more suicide terror. Anti-Western domestic Islamist opposition is likely to be behind the spate of small-scale bomb attacks that started in 2000, killing and injuring Westerners working in the kingdom. The Saudi authorities blamed most of the attacks on disputes among expatriates over the illegal trade in alcohol, and convicted five Westerners for the bombings. The Saudi government was in general reluctant to concede the existence of organized opposition within the country. However, further attacks in 2003 saw the authorities shift their focus and acknowledge that home-grown terrorism was an issue. Most scholars, journalists, and other writers have repeated the long-established argument that Islamic anger at the West is a product of Western policies in the Islamic world. Critics point out that although the United States has been active in the region since the late 1950s, it has never before chosen to foster democracy or protect human rights in the area, least of all in Saudi Arabia. Such critics believe the sole interest of the United States and other western states in the region is oil, and launching a war on Iraq has no other objective.

Some Islamists, in contrast, see in US policy a war on Islam as a whole. The Saudi Arabian Mufti Sheikh Abdul-Aziz bin Abdullah al-Sheikh, has stressed the need of inter-Islamic solidarity to withstand challenges facing the Islamic nation. He has warned that the “enemies of the Islamic nation have targeted it in its curricula, when they claim that these educational curricula call for terrorism and targeted it in its economy when they tried to link its economy to theirs”.

In the run-up to the war on Iraq, it was claimed by dissidents that the USA had deployed 9,000 troops in a base in northern Saudi Arabia near the Iraqi border

and had made use of Saudi air bases. Saudi Foreign Minister Saud al-Faisal denied the dissidents' reports, saying Saudi Arabia would not participate in any military actions against Iraq: "The kingdom (of Saudi Arabia) does not and will not approve the use of its land for aggression against any Arab and Islamic country, including Iraq". In response, three prominent Saudi clerics issued statements warning that Saudis who assisted US troops would be considered "Kafir," or infidels.

There was no general unrest in Saudi Arabia during the main phase of the Iraq war. However, three linked suicide car bombings on May 12, 2003, directed against compounds in Riyadh occupied mainly by foreign workers, resulted in 35 deaths and were attributed by US and Saudi officials to *Al-Qaeda*. After the May bombings, the Saudi authorities visibly stepped up anti-terrorist operations and by the end of July 2003 more than 200 *Al-Qaeda* suspects had been detained, some in connection with the May 12 bombings, and at least a dozen suspects had been killed in police raids.

### Shia Dissent

The Shia minority, totalling some 1.2 million people, is concentrated in the Eastern Province and has complained of officially sanctioned political, economic and religious discrimination by the dominant Sunnis, including restrictions on the building of Shia mosques. The Eastern Province witnessed a Shia uprising in November-December 1979 linked to the Iranian revolution. The pro-Iranian demonstrations were put down by troops, and there was further loss of life when troops intervened to disperse a Shia demonstration in Qatif in February 1980 to celebrate the first anniversary of the Iranian revolution. Following this insurgency, the Saudi government took steps to reduce the Shia workforce in the critical petrochemical sector.

In January 1990, Amnesty International stated that there were 700 political prisoners, mainly Shias, in Saudi Arabia.

In October 1993 the ruling family reached an agreement with exiled leaders of the Shia community, whereby the latter promised to stop resistance activities abroad in exchange for greater civil liberties at home and a serious attempt to address long-standing complaints about discrimination. However, this agreement appeared to break down following the June 1996 bombing (above), when a Shia newsletter published in Washington complained that none of the provisions of the 1993 agreement had been adequately implemented. The authorities subsequently resumed their constraints on the Shia religious authorities and have arrested Shia religious leaders.

There were indications in 2003 of a resurgence of Shia demands for equality in the wake of the US-led invasion of Iraq, which had led to a Shia religious and political resurgence in Iraq after the overthrow of the Sunni-dominated Saddam regime. A Shia delegation presented a petition to Crown Prince Abdullah in April 2003 stating that Saudi Arabia suffered from "a fanatical sectarian current which promotes hatred against other Islamic sects and their followers, in particular the Shia" and which was embedded in the educational system and the media.

### Other Dissident Groups

The **Free Princes Movement** was established by Prince Talal bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud and Turki bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud. This movement emerged from within the royal house and aims to ease the political situation by bringing new ideas and adopting a more democratically oriented system of government.

The **American Islamic Group** was created by Fahd al-Qahtani and Mohammed al-Khilewi. It started when al-Khilewi defected as a Saudi diplomat. He created a media sensation when he announced having in his possession thousands of documents showing Saudi spying against Jewish organizations in the USA and Saudi funding of a nuclear arsenal.

The **Committee for the Defence of Legitimate Rights (CDLR)** is based in London and headed by Mohammed al-Masaari; the **Movement for Islamic Reform in Arabia (MIRA)**, is also based in London, and headed by Sa'ad al-Faqih. These two exiled groups have publicly criticized the Saudi government and the lack of freedoms and rights in the country. The founders of MIRA have all been key figures in the reform movement in Arabia since the Gulf War of 1991. They were the main authors of the famous 1991 Letter of Demands and the Advice Memorandum presented to the Saudi regime, demanding an independent consultative council, sweeping reforms, respect for the nation's sovereignty and an end to corruption. They were also the main founders of CDLR. After a crack-down on CDLR by the regime they organized the transfer of the movement's activities outside the country.

While there is condemnation of the Sept. 11 atrocities inside Saudi Arabia, the grievances articulated by the external Islamist movement do resonate powerfully among most parts of society. More important than any external organization are the loose underground networks of study groups in Saudi Arabia that can be activated at the appropriate moment.

*Ibrahim J. Al-Sharifi*

# Senegal

**Capital:** Dakar

**Population:** 10.6 m

The Republic of Senegal has an executive President elected by universal suffrage for a five-year term on a two-round majority basis. The President may be re-elected only once. The 2001 constitution grants the Prime Minister a greater scope of action than ever before. It also gives the President the means of dissolving the National Assembly. The right of political parties to oppose the policy of the government is guaranteed by this new constitution. However, political parties may not identify with a particular race, religion, sect, ethnic group, sex, language or region.

Senegal has been in evolution towards an open and pluralist society with regular occurrence of partially or totally free elections. About sixty political parties are officially registered and fifteen of them regularly take part in elections. A vibrant and independent media is constantly growing. Most significantly, a democratic transfer of power took place in 2000 when after nearly forty years of rule by one party, President Abdou Diouf of the Socialist Party (*Parti Socialiste Sénégalais*, PSS) was voted out of office in favour of his long time opponent Abdoulaye Wade, leader of the Democratic Party (*Parti Démocratique Sénégalais*, PDS). By African standards, the Senegalese state is not a weak state. Its stability to some degree builds on a collaborative arrangement with the religious brotherhoods of Senegal which ensure viable linkages with the communities (local, religious or ethnic).

After independence from France in 1960 until 1978, the country was in effect a one-party state. President Léopold Senghor managed to achieve increasingly concentrated power in the presidency while at the same time allowing for a progressive opening to other political groups beyond the Socialist Party. A three-party system was mandated in 1978 and a fourth party was legalized in 1979. Nevertheless, dissenting voices persisted and unofficial political organizations grew steadily. In 1981, Senghor yielded power to his designated heir Abdou Diouf.

Under Diouf (1981-2000), changes were made to the constitution to permit an unlimited multiparty system. In 1983, Senegal had fifteen legal parties. But democratization proved an uncertain process and steps towards political liberalization were wobbly. Opposition parties faced many setbacks in their attempts to come to power through the ballot box. The PSS remained largely in control of the country's key political institutions, using the media as a mouthpiece. From time to time, opposition leaders were arrested and later released. Charges of fraud and irregularities in the conduct of elections were frequent. In 1988, the

presidential election was especially disruptive with the contested victory of Diouf. Abdoulaye Wade, who officially won 25 per cent of the votes, led a wide movement of protest, claiming that the election had been stolen. His supporters rioted in Dakar. Wade was arrested and a state of emergency was declared.

In the 1990s, the Senegalese government moved towards a more open electoral system by adopting a series of initiatives and compromises. It could be said that the 1993 presidential elections reflected voters' sentiment more accurately than previously. Wade won 32 per cent of votes while President Diouf was re-elected with 53 per cent, the lowest score of an incumbent President since independence. Despite these efforts, the opposition continued to cry fraud. Notwithstanding this, Wade, as well as leaders of smaller opposition parties such as the Independence and Labour Party (PIT) or the Democratic League Labour Party (LD-MPT), joined the government coalition on more than one occasion.

In 1996 decentralization reforms created new interest for political party competition in local elections. At this time, the PSS won regional, municipal and rural elections easily. But in the 1998 legislative elections, the ruling party barely obtained more than 50 per cent of the total vote. A process of splitting into factions that began around 1997 was further eroding the PSS hegemony. The opposition parties boycotted elections for the newly created Senate in 1999. The stage was being set for the PDS to win the presidential elections of March 2000. During the second round of voting, other opposition parties rallied behind Wade's candidacy. He won largely because of the desire of people for change after 40 years of PSS rule.

Since then, migration and alliances among political parties have made for an ever more complex political game. The PDS regime is not likely to be of the hegemonic type since neither the legislative elections of 2001 nor the local elections of 2002 were easily won. In 2001, Mame Madior Boye was the first ever woman elected as Prime Minister.

Under Wade, political pressure groups and leaders remain essentially the same as under previous leaders: labour; Muslim brotherhoods; students; and teachers. Civic associations such as women's organizations and human rights groups are also very active. Extra-parliamentary dissidence is mainly confined to the *Mouvement des forces démocratiques de la Casamance* (MFDC) and other rebel factions that are pursuing separatist objectives in the Southern region of the country.



### **Movement of the Democratic Forces of the Casamance (Mouvement des forces démocratiques de la Casamance, MFDC)**

*Leadership. Father Augustin Diamacoune (secretary-general)*

*Website: [www.ifrance.com/Casamance/](http://www.ifrance.com/Casamance/)*

The MFDC is a pro-independence group active in Casamance, the Senegalese Southern region. Casamance is almost entirely cut off from the rest of Senegal by the Gambia. The MFDC calls for the independence of the region on the grounds of the cultural hegemony of the Northern Senegalese, economic underdevelopment and political underrepresentation in the central government. The MFDC also cites historical administrative treaties to justify their claim that Casamance was never part of Senegal.

The first popular protests took place in Casamance in 1982. In 1990, the MFDC officially declared that armed struggle would be the only way to achieve independence. For 20 years, about 700,000 ethnic Casamançais have been living in a general climate of insecurity, in fear of armed robbery by rebels or bandits and of gross human rights violations by government forces. Normal economic activities are close to impossible. Local infrastructure is in a state of collapse and the growth of a promising tourist industry has been interrupted. Over the years, the parties have committed to numerous cease-fires which have usually ended in failure and led to renewed fighting. In 2001, President Wade and Father Augustin Diamacoune Senghor, the leader of the MFDC, signed a peace deal. But some extremist rebel factions are sabotaging the peace process through continued attacks on civilians, government police and security forces.

The MFDC is mainly active in Lower-Casamance, a sub-region of Casamance of approximately 21,000 square kilometres. Even though the movement's ideology says that all Casamançais should unite behind the battle for a separate Casamance, followers of the MFDC are mostly recruited among one ethnic group, the Diolas. In general, the other minorities of the sub-region do not adhere to the separatist cause. Nor do, generally speaking, Casamançais or Diolas living in Dakar. Quite the contrary, in Dakar, an association of civil servants and businessmen from Casamance (*Collectif des cadres casamançais*) is promoting a dialogue between the government and rebel factions and opposes any fragmentation of Senegal.

Following the popular demonstrations of 1982 and 1983 in Ziguinchor, the regional capital of Casamance, police arrested hundreds of Casamançais. The State Court subsequently passed prison sentences ranging from two to fifteen years on about 60 defendants. During the course of the 1980s, many more people (300-500) were arrested but later released, as was the case just before the 1988 general elections. During those years, allegations of torture and illegal detention were widespread. It was also during this time that recruitment for the guerrilla forces took place.

In the 1990s, the MFDC launched much more systematic attacks on government infrastructure and personnel, such as customs posts, police stations, and military posts. Tourist resorts were also targeted. In 1995, four French tourists disappeared mysteriously and were never found. In 1997, the widespread seeding of landmines, presumably by the MFDC (although maybe not only by them) provoked a rise in inse-

curity. During these years, the MFDC and other extremist rebel groups turned against the civilian population. They ransomed and threatened villagers they thought were collaborating with the Senegalese government. They ambushed passenger vehicles and kidnapped civilians. Since 1982, the conflict has caused about 1,200 civilian and military battle-related deaths while thousands of people have been internally displaced or have become refugees in neighbouring countries.

The leadership of the MFDC is clearly a key issue in this conflict. Since the beginning of the uprising, Father Diamacoune, a priest now in his 70s, has held the title of secretary-general of the movement. He was arrested in 1982 and imprisoned until 1987. In 1992, Diamacoune was forced into exile in Guinea-Bissau by his own troops. After seven months, the Senegalese army organized his return to Ziguinchor. From 1995 on, Diamacoune remained under house arrest in Ziguinchor on the grounds that his own safety was in jeopardy. There are also many other players to consider. Since the end of 1991, the *maquis* (the guerrilla fighters and their territory) has been divided into the *Front Sud*, operating south of the Casamance River, and the *Front Nord* to the north. It is the leader of the *Front Nord*, Sidy Badji who signed the first cease-fire in May 1992. Shortly after, the *Front Nord* declared that the region under its control was pacified and entered into negotiations with the government. In reality, it has not laid down its arms and maintains de facto control of large areas around the village of Bignona. However, it was the *Front Sud* which was reputed to be the one with hardliners.

Internal dissent has always existed within the MFDC. In December 2000 and the months following, some very intense internal fighting took place, opposing one leader of the *Front Nord*, Leopold Sagna and one of the *Front Sud*, Salif Sadio. In 2001, Diamacoune's leadership as secretary-general of the movement was brought into question with the nomination of a younger contender, Jean-Marie Biagui. But Biagui's leadership was short; he resigned after a few months. In summer 2003, Badji died of old age. The death of this leader, who was always a rival to Diamacoune, may help the peace process. It must be noted that, to some extent, these numerous and serious internal divisions mirror the ethnic divisions of Diola sub-groups that exist in Lower-Casamance.

During these 20 years of struggle, there may have been 500 to 700 MFDC guerrilla fighters. The current figures are much lower. There may be many young men amongst them, but the leadership is clearly held by the older generation. As for so-called bandits, it is not clear exactly who they are and whether they are even Casamançais. As in the case of other African conflicts, the Casamançais conflict is closely tied to the political economy of the West African sub-region. A war economy has established itself in Lower-Casamance, with combatants exploiting natural resources in areas under their control. These can include exotic wood, timber and marijuana. Arms and drug trafficking networks also exist with some connection to Gambia.

The ties of the Casamançais conflict to neighbouring countries (Gambia and Guinea-Bissau) are important as both countries have more or less served as a safe harbour for the rebels. Both countries have also hosted and engaged in various meetings aimed at peace in Casamance. The rebels enjoyed particular support from the former chief of staff of

the Guinea-Bissau armed forces, Ansumane Mané, and his death in an apparent attempted rebellion against President Yala in 2000 was a serious loss to the hardline rebels (see Guinea-Bissau entry).

The Senegalese government response to the MFDC campaign has been to alternate between negotiating and rather unsuccessful military operations. Government forces have been suspected of responsibility for many civilian deaths, including in 1997, the death of Sarani Badiane, an MFDC leader close to Father Diamacoune. For a long time, the official view was that this conflict was an issue of law and order and any form of autonomy or granting of independence was flatly rejected. But in 1999, President Diouf met for the first time with Father Diamacoune. This meeting gave a new legitimacy to the movement and hope for the establishment of a peace process.

Abdoulaye Wade came to power in March 2000 on the promise that he would resolve the Casamance conflict. In reality, political instability and illegal activity have remained much the same since then. In March 2001, President Wade and Father Diamacoune signed a peace deal agreeing on a cease-fire, the release of prisoners, the return of refugees, the reconstruction of roads and so on, but the cease-fire did not hold. Diamacoune is unable to unite his movement behind the peace deal. Seizures of passenger cars and attacks on villagers continue to occur sporadically. The government response is to launch "clean-up operations" to identify and neutralize rebels. In early 2003, clashes between the army

and rebels caused the death of thirty rebels and four government soldiers. The Casamance tourist industry is compromised once more.

Nonetheless, recent events suggest that numerous parties, such as an association of media and journalists, a human rights organization and the Casamançais association in Dakar, are trying to mediate for peace. The army detachments operating in Casamance are reported to be more constructive than before. They protect the population in their daily activities and help repair schools or roads. According to Amnesty International, there is a notable reduction in the level of human rights violations by the security forces.

In autumn 2002, the wreck of the *Joola*, the ship that was the primary means of transportation between Ziguinchor and Dakar, created a new element of disruption. Nearly 1,900 people drowned when the ferry capsized in heavy seas. These included about 900 Casamançais, most of them students returning to school in Dakar or St-Louis. While the tragedy at first appeared to be caused by bad weather, the investigation revealed severe negligence in the maintenance of the ship. Some MFDC activists are accusing the government of having staged the tragedy on purpose to deplete Casamance of its educated elite and future leadership of the region. The government has recognized that the state-run ship was overloaded and accepted the responsibility for the tragedy, but denies any malicious intent.

*Geneviève Gasser*

## Serbia & Montenegro

**Capital:** Belgrade

**Population:** Serbia (without Kosovo): 7.5 m;  
Montenegro: 615,000

Following the dissolution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia with the independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia and Slovenia, the remaining republics of Serbia and Montenegro in April 1992 declared themselves the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY). Serbia was under the authoritarian rule of Slobodan Milosevic between 1988 and 2000. Following the break of the Montenegrin ruling party with the Milosevic regime in 1998, the federal state effectively ceased to function. In the aftermath of the Kosovo war in 1999 Kosovo, a province of Serbia, came under international administration (see separate entry). After the fall of Milosevic in October 2000, following presidential and parliamentary elections, economic and political reforms were initiated by the federal and Serbian governments. As a result of Montenegro's policy of seeking independence from Serbia, a new Union of Serbia and Montenegro was negotiated under EU auspices in 2002, with the new entity being established in February 2003. The powers of the new union are strictly limited to foreign policy, defence and external economic relations. As a result, the two republics are

largely autonomous with divergent political and economic strategies.

The Socialist Party of Serbia of Slobodan Milosevic, the successor to the League of Communists in Serbia, ruled Serbia between 1990 and 2000 by semi-authoritarian means. While elections were held regularly, the opposition had limited access to the media. Furthermore, opposition to the government was intimidated and at times criminalized. Especially in the last years of the Milosevic regime, some opposition figures were assassinated and independent media shut down. While opposition parties were not banned during the Milosevic era, all major parties boycotted some of the elections during the 1990s.

Instrumentalizing extreme nationalism, the Milosevic regime was largely responsible for instigating wars in Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo, through direct and covert support for Serb paramilitaries, extremist parties and direct intervention of Yugoslav and Serb security forces. In Serbia itself, minorities were marginalized and often subject to attacks. Since 2000 a broad coalition of democratic parties has been governing at the federal level and in Serbia, often at

odds with each other.

The Democratic Party of Socialists in Montenegro remained loyal to Milosevic throughout most of the 1990s, only splitting with him after an internal power struggle which led to the election of Milo Djukanovic as President of the republic.

Currently, Serbia has a 250-member parliament, Montenegro has a 78-member parliament, and the Union has a 126-member parliament. The Serbian and Montenegrin parliaments are elected for four years by proportional vote, while the joint parliament is indirectly elected for the first two years by the republican parliaments. The most recent Serbian parliamentary elections, in December 2000, were contested by all major parties. However, the parties of the Albanian minority along the border with Kosovo boycotted the elections. Successive attempts to elect a Serbian President in 2002 failed because voter turnout fell below the legally required 50 per cent, with the parliamentary speaker becoming the interim President. The former President, Milan Milutinovic, on Jan. 20, 2003, surrendered himself to the Hague tribunal (the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia). Milosevic was deported to the Hague in June 2001.

While the main opposition parties in Montenegro boycotted presidential elections in 2003, they are represented in parliament and do not pursue extra-parliamentary political strategies.

The main challenge to the new post-Milosevic authorities in Serbia arose from nationalist parties and organizations, often linked to security structures, which resented the political reforms in the country, especially the extradition of alleged war criminals to the Hague. The political parties in opposition to reform have been the (disintegrating) Socialist Party of Serbia, the Serbian Radical Party and the Party of Serbian Unity, founded by the paramilitary leader Zeljko "Arkan" Raznjatovic (assassinated Jan. 15, 2000). All three parties are represented in the Serbian parliament. While losing most of the media influence they had during the Milosevic era, they have received positive reporting by some TV stations, weeklies and dailies.

### **Assassination of Serbian Prime Minister**

The assassination in Belgrade of the Serbian Prime Minister, Zoran Djindjic, on March 12, 2003, revealed the substantial degree of organized opposition to the democratic authorities. While it was not proven that the assassination was part of an out-right coup d'état attempt, there has been no doubt that the assassins had contacts with organized crime, parts of the Milosevic-era security apparatus and the political opposition. The subsequent state of emergency (which lasted until April 22) led to the arrest of more than 11,000 persons, including individuals implicated in the assassination and a series of other unresolved crimes, including the murder of the former Serbian president and mentor and later critic of Milosevic,

Ivan Stambolic (who disappeared in August 2000, his body not being found until March 2003) and two assassination attempts against the leading opposition politician Vuk Draskovic in 1999 and 2000.

During the state of emergency freedoms were seriously curtailed, and in particular the media were forced to report only the government statements on the investigation of the assassination. Some media, including a daily, were banned both for contravening this ban and for alleged ties with the organized crime group (known as the Zemun Clan) reportedly behind the assassination. The key suspect in the assassination, Milorad Lukovic a.k.a. Legija (who remained at large), had been head of a special police unit (JSO) – disbanded after the assassination of Djindjic – notorious for crimes committed during the wars in Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo. This police unit had staged a rebellion against the government in 2001, blocking a major thoroughfare in Belgrade to protest the extradition of some of their members to the Hague Tribunal. While the end to this protest was negotiated with the government, it demonstrated the strength of the unit for special operations.

### **Position in Montenegro**

Unlike in Serbia, Montenegro has not been confronted with strong extra-legal opposition to the authorities. Despite the high degree of polarization in Montenegro over relations with Serbia, no significant extra-institutional movements emerged. The main pro-independence advocate, the Liberal Alliance of Montenegro, which had been the main opponent of the Milosevic regime in the early 1990s, has since 2001 even cooperated with the pro-Yugoslav opposition against the government. The pro-Milosevic parties quickly changed their political platform after the fall of Milosevic and have since supported the constitutional framework. However, the former Montenegrin president, Momir Bulatovic, heads a marginal political party, the People's Socialist Party, which together with the Radical Party and the Yugoslav Left advocates a return to the political system under Milosevic.

### **Obraz**

*Website. [www.srpskiobraz.net](http://www.srpskiobraz.net)*

The "Patriotic movement Obraz" is an extreme nationalist organization, founded in 1999, which has become increasingly active since the fall of Milosevic. It seeks to rehabilitate some fascist collaborators of World War II and identifies with ultra-nationalist, Serbian Orthodox ideology. The movement opposes Western-type democracy and engages in open attacks against minorities and proponents of closer ties with the West and reconciliation with neighboring countries. In particular, the movement has defended the activities of indicted Serbian war criminals, including Radovan Karadzic, the wartime "president" of the Serb Republic in Bosnia. It was furthermore seen as being responsible for attacking participants in the country's first gay-pride parade in 2001. Its activities, however, have been largely limited to public discussions and poster campaigns. The strongest base

of the organization is among students of Belgrade University. It is linked to a network of other organizations and publications, which propagate similar extreme nationalist views.

### **Serbian Radical Party (Srpska Radikalna Stranka, SRS)**

*Website: www.srs.org.yu*

The Serbian Radical Party has emerged after the fall of the Milosevic regime as the most popular group challenging the existing constitutional order. While it has been operating legally and is represented in parliament, its policies have openly sought to reverse the democratization process and economic reforms of recent years. The party was founded in 1991 by Vojislav Seselj and initially received significant support from the ruling party. Despite occasional conflict with Milosevic, the party maintained close ties with the Belgrade regime and joined the government in 1998.

The party calls for the creation of a "Greater Serbia", including parts of Croatia and Bosnia. It has frequently called for the expulsion of minorities in Serbia, especially Albanians. The party furthermore ran its own paramilitary formation during the wars in Croatia and Bosnia, closely linked to official security structures. After the fall of Milosevic, the party overtook the disintegrating Socialist Party in popularity and became the main focal point of opposition to the post-2000 developments. It won 23 seats on an 8.5 per cent share of the vote in the December 2000 elections to the Serbian Assembly. In the (invalidated) Serbian presidential elections held in December 2002, Seselj, who had the support from prison of Milosevic, managed to secure 36 per cent of the vote. His support is in part based on dissatisfaction with the results of economic reforms, mirroring similar radical candidates elsewhere in Eastern Europe. As such, the electoral support does not equal support for return to the authoritarian politics of the 1990s, but is at least in part also a protest vote.

Shortly before the assassination of Djindjic in March 2003, Seselj voluntarily surrendered to the Hague Tribunal,

where he has been indicted for war crimes. While a direct link between him or his party and the assassins remains to be established, there has been a clear programmatic overlap.

### **Liberation Army of Presevo, Medvedja and Bujanovac (UCPMB)**

In 2000, before the fall of Milosevic, an offspring of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA, see entry under Kosovo), the Liberation Army of Presevo, Medvedja and Bujanovac (UCPMB) emerged, attacking police in the Presevo valley along the border with Kosovo. In addition to ending the oppression of Albanians in Serbia, it sought to integrate the region into an independent Kosovo. Fighting with Serbian police forces escalated in the late 2000, after the fall of Milosevic. In a peace agreement in 2001 with the new Serbian authorities, the UCPMB agreed to disarm in return for increase participation of Albanians at the local level. While some new Albanian political parties emerged with links to the disbanded UCPMB, they operated within the constitutional framework of Serbia. After the disbanding of the UCPMB, the situation largely stabilized in Southern Serbia, with Albanians participating in local elections in 2002.

### **Albanian National Army (ANA)**

*Website: www.aksh.org*

In 2003 a small group calling itself the Albanian National Army emerged in southern Serbia, Kosovo and Macedonia, seeking the violent creation of a greater Albania. While the group's support has been small among the Albanian population, it has carried out a number of attacks against Serbian policemen in southern Serbia, in northern Kosovo and Macedonia. Originally the group was deemed to be mostly a "virtual" or Internet based organization (or person), but with some attacks being claimed by the group, it has been declared a terrorist organization by UNMIK in Kosovo.

See under Kosovo for further details.

*Florian Bieber*

## **Seychelles**

**Capital:** Victoria (on Mahé)

**Population:** 80,000

The Seychelles gained independence from the United Kingdom as a republic within the Commonwealth in June 1976. The first President, James Mancham, was deposed in a coup in June 1977 by France-Albert René, who established a single-party regime headed by his left-wing Seychelles People's Progressive Front (SPPF). René ran the country as a one-party state for 14 years, surviving three unsuccessful coup attempts (in April 1978, November 1979 and November 1981) by exiled opponents involving foreign (mainly South African) mercenaries.

In response to growing pressure for political reform, René announced in December 1991 a transi-

tion to multiparty democracy, and a new constitution was approved in a referendum in June 1993. It provided for the direct election for five-year terms of the President and unicameral National Assembly. Presidential and parliamentary elections, described by Commonwealth observers as free and fair, were staged in July 1993. René retained the presidency (having been previously re-elected as the sole candidate in polling in 1979, 1984 and 1989), while the SPPF secured an overwhelming majority of the National Assembly seats. The next simultaneous elections in March 1998 produced comparable results.

René called further presidential elections two years



ahead of time for Aug. 31–Sept. 2, 2001 (following a constitutional amendment in May 2000 relating to consecutive executive mandates). He was re-elected, but with a significantly reduced share of the vote (54 per cent) than in 1998, and there were widespread opposition claims of government cheating. Parliamentary elections on Dec. 6, 2002, again returned the SPPF to power with 23 of the National

Assembly's 34 seats (nine of which are proportionally allocated). The opposition centrist Seychelles National Party won the remaining seats in an 87 per cent voter turnout.

There have been no reports of recent extra-parliamentary dissident activity in the Seychelles.

*Richard German & Elizabeth Taylor*

## Sierra Leone

**Capital:** Freetown

**Population:** 5.2 m

The Republic of Sierra Leone achieved independence from the United Kingdom in 1961, originally as a constitutional monarchy. In 1971 a republican constitution was adopted and Siaka Stevens, leader of the All People's Congress (APC), became President. The APC was declared the sole legal party in 1978, and the country remained a one-party state until a referendum in 1991 endorsed the introduction of multiparty politics. General elections were arranged for the following year, but the process was curtailed in April 1992 by a military coup led by Capt. Valentine Strasser. In 1993 the Strasser regime announced the adoption of a transitional programme envisaging a return to civilian government in early 1996 following multiparty elections. Towards this end, in April 1995 Strasser lifted the ban on political activity. However, this development took place against a background of intensifying rebel activity by the Revolutionary United front (RUF).

In January 1996 Strasser was deposed by Brig. Julius Maada Bio. Nevertheless, legislative and presidential elections went ahead as planned in February 1996 under the provisions of the 1991 constitution (which had been suspended since the Strasser coup). This provided for a unicameral legislature with 12 indirectly elected members and 68 members directly elected for a five-year term. Executive power was vested in a directly elected President, who could serve for no more than two five-year terms. In voting for the presidency, no candidate won an absolute majority, but in a run-off ballot held in March 1996, Ahmed Tejan Kabbah of the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) – which had won the greatest number of seats in the legislative elections – was elected with almost 60 per cent of the vote.

In May 1997 President Kabbah was deposed in a military coup led by Maj. Johnny Paul Koroma, who formed a junta (the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council – AFRC), suspended the 1991 constitution and banned political activity. Although the coup leaders were disaffected members of the armed forces, some leaders of the RUF were appointed to the AFRC. Other elements of the armed forces remained loyal to deposed President Kabbah, whose restoration was also an objective of the Economic Community of West

African States (ECOWAS) Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), the regional peacekeeping force operating in Sierra Leone. Key concentrations of AFRC forces were defeated in February 1998 by ECOMOG troops, who also engaged with RUF rebels.

In March 1998 President Kabbah was restored to office and the civilian government institutions were formally reinstated. A further round of armed conflict, in which the RUF forces were backed by former AFRC elements, led to a ceasefire agreement between the RUF and the Kabbah government in May 1999. A peace accord was signed in July 1999 under which the RUF pledged to disarm and reconstitute itself as a political organization, with an entitlement to representation in a proposed government of national unity. The RUF was duly registered as a political party in November 1999, but it failed to fulfil its disarmament pledges and in early 2000 objected to the replacement of ECOMOG by a larger UN peacekeeping force (UNAMSIL). The peace process collapsed and there was a fresh cycle of brutal armed conflict before the RUF signed another ceasefire agreement with the Kabbah government in November 2000. The disarmament process ended in January 2002 and in May presidential and legislative elections were held, resulting in an overwhelming victory for incumbent President Kabbah and his SLPP.

### Revolutionary United Front (RUF)

In the 1980s a group of Sierra Leoneans trained in Libya in the art of revolutionary warfare. Among them was Foday Sankoh, a former army colonel who had been imprisoned for seven years for his alleged involvement in a 1971 coup plot against President Siaka Stevens. Upon his return to Sierra Leone, Sankoh created the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) with the support of Burkina Faso and Liberian rebels under the command of (future President) Charles Taylor. By 1991 the six-year-old regime of President Joseph Saidu Momoh was facing serious difficulties. Beset by economic problems, growing popular agitation and factional turmoil within the government, President Momoh announced a return to multiparty politics, and general elections were planned for 1992. Before the poll could be held, however,

RUF guerrillas launched their first attacks into Sierra Leonean territory. Backed by Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), Sankoh and a small group of fighters crossed from Liberia into Sierra Leone's Eastern Province in March 1991, and carried out raids on several border towns; within a month, most of Kailahun district was under rebel control.

A humanitarian crisis quickly resulted from the RUF's tactics, which involved brutal attacks on unarmed civilians and children. Attempting to copy the ethnic incitement that had served Taylor and the NPFL well in Liberia, the RUF at first targeted Fula and Mandingo traders, killing more than 100 in its first two months of operations. The atrocities created alarm among the civilian population and caused rapid and widespread displacement. Further confusion was created by the formation in Sierra Leone of the United Liberation Movement of Liberia (ULIMO), a coalition of anti-Taylor Liberians who, with the overt backing of the Momoh regime, initially fought both the RUF and the NPFL.

During 1992 and 1993 the fortunes of the RUF fluctuated. On occasion, they overran the country's lucrative diamond-producing areas, but they failed to take full control of the territory. During this time it was often unclear who was responsible for a particular ambush. In some cases attacks were carried out by soldiers and blamed on the RUF. (Soldiers by day and rebels by night, they became known as "sobels".) The situation was further confused because the RUF would often carry out raids using stolen army uniforms. The impact of the fighting on the civilian population was, however, clear for all to see; hundreds, and eventually thousands, of children and adults with their hands, feet, ears or genitals crudely amputated.

By 1995 the military situation in the country had become desperate. RUF fighters were able to carry out raids throughout the country at will and had managed to overrun the country's last remaining economic assets, the SIEROMCO bauxite mine and the Sierra Rutile titanium mines, allegedly with the assistance of soldiers commanded by Maj. Johnny Paul Koroma. With RUF forces closing in on the capital, Freetown, in May 1995 the government bought in a team of South African-led mercenaries who quickly beat the RUF back from Freetown, and within a month had cleared the diamond areas. By early 1996, the RUF had been seriously damaged, and had been pushed out of the diamond-producing areas that had helped to pay for their efforts.

Hard-pressed by continuing attacks by mercenaries, in early 1996 the RUF announced a ceasefire and sought unconditional peace talks with the government. These began in Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire) only a few days before legislative and presidential elections were held in Sierra Leone, the elections resulting in victory for Ahmed Tejan Kabbah and his Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP). The peace talks in Abidjan lasted for almost nine months, during which RUF attacks resumed, only to be fended off with ease by the mercenaries and Kamajor forces (for which, see entry below).

When Sankoh and the Kabbah government signed a peace agreement in November 1996, it appeared to many commentators that the RUF was a spent force. Despite its apparent weakness, however, the RUF gained a great deal from the Abidjan agreement. The RUF was given an on-going political role and legitimacy, and was absolved of responsibility

for its past atrocities. Moreover, it gained militarily in the sense that the government, which had agreed to expel most of the mercenaries, was left exposed with little reliable security beyond the Kamajors and a new contingent of Nigerian troops sent to bolster the existing ECOMOG force. RUF attacks continued, in part because of disagreement in the leadership over the peace agreement, while in Freetown, a number of army officers were arrested in a suspected coup plot. Eventually, in May 1997, a group of soldiers attacked the central prison in Freetown, releasing the coup plotters. President Kabbah fled to Guinea and Maj. Koroma, freed in the prison break-out, became head of a new ruling junta, the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC). The AFRC invited the RUF to join it, declaring the war to be over. However, the resulting period of joint AFRC-RUF rule was characterised by a complete breakdown of law and order, and by an almost total collapse of the formal economy.

In February 1998 Nigerian ECOMOG forces entered Freetown and managed to push AFRC/RUF fighters and officials out of the city in a fierce battle that saw widespread looting and reprisal killings. Restored to office, President Kabbah took steps to begin demobilizing the entire army. Almost 50 individuals associated with the AFRC/RUF administration were convicted on treason and other charges and sentenced to death. Foday Sankoh, who had been arrested in Nigeria and returned to Sierra Leone, was also tried, found guilty and sentenced to death. However, during this period, the AFRC/RUF forces conducted a violent rampage throughout the country, chased from one place to another without great success by ECOMOG forces. Several thousand civilians were brutally killed or mutilated, whilst many others were abducted from their villages and forced to join their attackers during a period referred to by the RUF as "Operation No Living Thing".

With Sankoh and other AFRC/RUF defendants appealing their convictions, the RUF again attacked Freetown in January 1999, apparently catching both the government and ECOMOG off guard. Using women and children as human shields, some RUF fighters and their Liberian supporters managed to bypass ECOMOG troops and join rebels who had already infiltrated the city. In the savage fighting that ensued, an estimated 5,000 people died, including ministers, journalists and lawyers, who were specifically targeted. Before the RUF were again driven out of the city, large sections of Freetown were burned and as many as 3,000 children were abducted as they retreated. While many of the convicted AFRC/RUF collaborators were freed, Sankoh remained in government custody.

The signing of an ECOWAS-brokered ceasefire agreement by the RUF and the government in Abuja in November 2000 heralded the beginning of a peace process that resulted in the RUF's eventual disarmament (in January 2002) and its transformation into a political party, the Revolutionary United Front Party (RUFPP). In presidential elections held in May 2002 (and won by Kabbah) the RUFPP candidate, former academic Alimamy Pallo Bangura, won less than 2 per cent of the vote. The party failed to win a single seat in legislative elections held at the same time. Despite the group's transformation into a political party, RUF fighters continued to be accused of launching attacks in Guinea at the behest of their chief backer, President Taylor of Liberia. The UN has

identified Liberia, Libya, Gambia, and Burkina Faso as conduits for weapons and other materiel for RUF fighters based in Liberia and operating in Guinea and parts of Sierra Leone.

Foday Sankoh died in Sierra Leone on July 29, 2003, while awaiting trial before a special court, set up by the Sierra Leone government with the support of the UN, on charges of crimes against humanity.

### Civil Defence Forces (Kamajors)

In 1992, a new force emerged in the Sierra Leonean civil war, the Kamajors, which eventually became known as the Civil Defence Forces (CDF). The Kamajors are traditional hunters from the Mende ethnic group in the southern and eastern regions of Sierra Leone. The Mende are Sierra Leone's largest tribe, forming some 30 per cent of the population, and Kamajor is a Mende word meaning "hunter". In traditional Mende society, the hunter was a guardian of soci-

ety and part of a mystical, "invincible" warrior cult. Joined by a number of educated individuals and retired military personnel, the Kamajors soon became a force to contend with, fighting back not only against the Revolutionary United Front (RUF, see entry above), but against the excesses of the ruling military regime.

Eventually, the Kamajors emerged as one of the main military backers of President Kabbah's government, fighting alongside Nigerian ECOMOG forces against the RUF. As part of the wider peace process, in May 2001 the Kamajors and the RUF signed a ceasefire agreement, countersigned by Nigeria. The Kamajor leader Samuel Hinga Norman was appointed as Interior Minister in the new government of Sierra Leone formed in May 2002.

*D. J. Sagar*

## Singapore

**Capital:** Singapore City

**Population:** 4 m

Singapore has been an independent state since leaving the Federation of Malaysia in 1965. It is a republic with a unicameral parliament elected by universal adult suffrage for five years. There is a directly elected President (head of state), who has limited powers of veto and oversight of government activities. Presidential elections are held only when the incumbent vacates the office. The leader of the party with the most seats in Parliament is invited by the President to assume the office of Prime Minister (the head of government). The Prime Minister then selects a team of Ministers from elected members of Parliament to form a Cabinet, which is collectively responsible to Parliament.

In the last general election held on Nov. 3, 2001, the ruling People's Action Party (which has held a majority continuously since Singapore achieved self-rule from the United Kingdom in 1959) won 82 of the 84 elective seats in Parliament, with the opposition Singapore Democratic Alliance and Workers' Party retaining one each. In addition, one "non-constituency" seat was awarded to the Singapore Democratic Alliance, and three "nominated members" were appointed on the recommendation of a Parliamentary Select Committee.

Singapore possesses a formidable internal security apparatus. A wide range of legislation is in place with a bearing on internal security (covering matters such as political activity, racial and religious harmony, labour organization, and the media). Any of these laws may be invoked to deal with perceived threats when required. A more specific piece of legislation – the Internal Security Act – also exists. Inherited from the British colonial authorities, this allows for the indefinite detention of suspects, without trial.

Complementing this legislative framework, there is an extensive and well-endowed intelligence network (Special Branch and military intelligence) with close working relationships with regional and international counterparts.

Partly as a result of this apparatus, revolutionary or dissident movements are a rare occurrence in Singapore. The government therefore surprised many when it announced in January 2002 the arrest of 15 men for alleged terrorist activities in Singapore. Thirteen of those arrested were supposedly cell members of a clandestine organization, **Jemaah Islamiah**, based in Indonesia (see entry) but with links in Malaysia, the Philippines and Singapore. A further 20 suspects had escaped and fled. The government claimed the group had been raising funds and procuring materials to make several truck bombs, while simultaneously conducting surveillance on potential targets, including train stations regularly used by US servicemen, the US and Israeli embassies, the British and Australian high commissions, and other American targets.

Of those arrested, a number had allegedly received training in *Al-Qaeda* camps in Afghanistan, while others were trained in Malaysia and had participated in terrorist activities in Indonesia. According to the government, the cell demonstrated the close relationships that had developed between *Al-Qaeda* and regional groups such as the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, *Abu Sayyaf*, *Kumpulan Mujahideen Malaysia*, *Laskar Jihad*, and *Jemaah Islamiah*. Under the influence of *Al-Qaeda*, it was claimed, these groups had been co-opted into a larger common *jihad* with ambitions of creating an Islamic archipelago, *Dauliah Islam Nusantara*, which would include Malaysia, the southern Philippines, Singapore and Indonesia.

Following the discovery of the *Jemaah Islamiah* cell, the government made no dramatic changes to internal security arrangements or legislation. Instead, greater emphasis was placed on vigilance within the existing framework, while a new national security secretariat was established to coordinate the activities of all security agencies. Further, given the official perception that the group largely consisted of disaffected and misguided Malay Muslims, greater efforts were made to foster racial and religious harmony in Singapore. In the context of a multiracial society where Malay Muslims were a minority, it was believed such efforts would improve inter-racial relationships and thus prevent the emergence of extremist views and movements. Singapore had not experienced significant inter-communal conflict since the 1960s and in January 2002 the Prime Minister, Goh Chok Tong,

stated that he was more concerned over the potential impact of Islamic terrorism on relations between the majority ethnic Chinese and the Malay Muslims than the security threat per se.

On Feb. 2, 2003, the Indonesian police arrested Mas Selamat bin Kastari, whom Singapore alleged was the leader of the Singapore cell of *Jemaah Islamiah*. The Indonesian authorities stated, however, that as they had no extradition treaty with Singapore, Mas Selamat would not be handed over. Of those previously arrested in Singapore, none had been brought to trial and most remained in detention under the Internal Security Act. In July 2003 Mas Selamat was sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment in Indonesia on immigration charges.

*Alfred Oehlers*

## Slovakia

**Capital:** Bratislava

**Population:** 5.4 m

The Slovak Republic came into being on Jan. 1, 1993, upon the dissolution of the Czech and Slovak Federative Republic, itself established in 1990 in succession to the (communist) Czechoslovak Socialist Republic. The dissolution of the Czech and Slovak federation was notable for having been achieved without conflict. Slovakia has a unicameral National Council (parliament) of 150 members, elected for a four-year term. The head of state is the President, directly elected for a five-year term, who appoints the Prime Minister (the head of government).

The most recent general election, in September 2002, resulted in the re-election of a centre-right coalition government led by Prime Minister Mikulas Dzurinda. The result was interpreted as easing the way to Slovakian accession to the European Union (EU), the EU having warned that the return to power of former Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar, who had attracted criticism internationally for his perceived authoritarian tendencies, would jeopardize entry.

Prior to the collapse of one-party rule in Czechoslovakia in 1989 there were several illegal dissident groups in Slovakia. They concentrated on the defence of human rights and non-violent opposition to the communist regime. Many of their members subsequently joined new legal political formations and became active in Slovakian politics. There are now no active dissident movements challenging the state, but the activities of the skinhead movement pose a problem for the society and the country's assimilation into the EU.

### Skinhead Movement

During the first half of the 1990s a right-wing extremist skinhead movement developed, linked to the emer-

gence (as in the Czech Republic) of a post-punk music style – so called *Oi!* Groups.

The skinhead ideology emphasizes the fight to preserve a nationally and racially “pure” society. Slovakia has few immigrants from outside Europe and the binding agent of this movement is racism towards the Gypsy minority, which comprises some 10 per cent of the population. This minority constitutes a marginal group in Slovak society and is characterised by a high level of unemployment and criminality. Hostility to the Hungarian minority in Slovakia and anti-communism are other factors in the common identity of skinheads. Beyond these basic common elements, the Slovak skinheads are a relatively heterogeneous movement.

There are three main streams. The first stream is influenced by Nazi ideology and demonstrates admiration for Adolf Hitler or Rudolf Hess, radical anti-Semitism and holocaust denial.

The second stream subscribes to the ideology of the Slovak state of World War II which was built rather on the Italian version of fascism and with a connection to the Catholic Church. Its emphasis is on nationalism, Catholicism and rejection of Nazism as well as anti-Semitism. In this stream there exist quite strong contacts with some legal organizations and even with political parties such as the Slovak National Party (SNS), the Slovak People's Party (SLS), and Slovak National Unity (SNJ). The third stream declares its affiliation with the “racial holy war”, and is distinguished by hostility towards homosexuals, anarchists, and drug users; it also denies the holocaust.

There has been considerable organizational fluctuation within the skinhead movement. Groups tend to be organized around strong individual leaders. As of

2002 the number of active members of the movement was estimated to be between 400 and 500 and the number of active groups as 12 to 15. Particularly active groups have included Slovak branches of supra-national organizations, such as the Slovakia Hammer Skins and Blood and Honour, as well as groups of domestic origin such as White Slovak Unity (*Biela slovenska jednota*), Knights of Sunny Clan (*Rytieri Slnecneho klanu*), Fighters of Celtic Cross (*Bojovnici keltskeho kriza*).

The principal political question for this movement is the position of the Gypsies. Skinhead ideas include the segregation and isolation of Gypsies, prohibition of mixed marriages and even possibly their physical liquidation. In practice, skinhead activity focuses on physical attacks on Gypsies, which have shown a rising trend, with over 100 racially motivated attacks in 2002.

*Lubomir Kopecek*

## Slovenia

**Capital:** Ljubljana

**Population:** 2 m

Slovenia declared its independence from the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in June 1991, adopting a new republican Constitution in December 1991. Unlike neighbouring Croatia, its independence was secured after only brief conflict with the Serb-dominated Yugoslav National Army (there being no significant territorially based Serbian population in Slovenia). It thereafter consolidated its position as the most stable and prosperous of the former Yugoslav republics. Slovenia has a bicameral legislature, with 90 deputies in the lower house (National Assembly), including one seat each reserved for the Hungarian and Italian national minorities. There is a directly elected President (a largely ceremonial role) and the head of government is the Prime Minister. Following the elections of Oct. 15, 2000, the government was formed by a coalition led by the centre-left Liberal Democracy of Slovenia (LDS). In March 2003 popular referendums gave approval by large majorities to

proposals for Slovenia to join both NATO and the EU.

There are some 38 registered political parties, eight of which have seats in the National Assembly. Under the 1994 Law on Political Parties, political parties may not operate as military or defence associations, and no political party may be registered or operate if it promotes violence or the destruction of the constitutional order, if it seeks the secession of any part of Slovenia, or if it operates, or aims to operate, unconstitutionally. The law makes provision for the de-registering of political parties for unconstitutional activities, subject to approval by the Constitutional Court. However, as of April 2003 no party has been de-registered as the result of a ruling by the Constitutional Court.

There has been no notable extra-legal activity since independence.

*Petra Roter*

## Solomon Islands

**Capital:** Honiara (Guadalcanal)

**Population:** 418,000

The Solomon Islands achieved internal self-government in 1976 and became independent in July 1978. The head of state is the British sovereign represented by a Governor-General. Legislative authority is vested in a unicameral National Parliament, the 50 members of which are popularly elected from single-member constituencies for up to four years. The Prime Minister (who is elected by members of Parliament from among their number) and an appointed Cabinet exercise executive power and are responsible to Parliament.

Government composition since independence has

been determined by an extremely fluid party structure and constantly shifting coalitions. Parliamentary elections on Aug. 6, 1997, resulted in victory for the multi-party Solomon Islands Alliance for Change (SIAC), which mustered 26 seats and installed Bartholomew Ulufa'alu as Prime Minister.

The Solomon Islands includes some 70 language groups and clan or tribal loyalties are strong, taking precedence over any form of national identity. Animosities between different groups pre-date colonial times. From late 1998 there were increasing attacks by the indigenous population of Guadalcanal



(Isatabu), these coming to be organized under the banner of the **Isatabu Freedom Movement (IFM)**, on settlers from the densely populated neighbouring island of Malaita (which was generally poorer). The underlying causes were longstanding ethnic tensions, disputes over customary land rights, and the perception that incomers from Malaita had taken most of the jobs in the small formal economy and in the capital, Honiara (where most Malaitan immigrants to Guadalcanal had congregated, comprising close to half the population).

Some 20,000 Malaitans (many of whom had been settled for long periods, in some cases for several generations) were driven out of their homes in Guadalcanal by June 1999, either returning to Malaita or taking refuge in Honiara, and widespread damage was done to the economy; Malaitans responded by forming the **Malaita Eagle Force (MEF)**. Commonwealth and regional peace initiatives proved unavailing and altogether between 50 and several hundred people, according to varying estimates, were killed in clashes by mid-2000. Some of the weapons used were reported as having come from arms dumps left over from military operations in Guadalcanal in World War II, while another source of arms was via the secessionist Papua New Guinea province of Bougainville.

Though himself a Malaitan (but regarded by Malaitan militants as having done little to protect their interests), Prime Minister Ulufa'alu was in June 2000 put under house arrest by the MEF and elements of the small paramilitary Police Field Force (the Solomon Islands having no army) for five days, in what proved to be tantamount to an armed coup. The MEF explained this as an attempt to accelerate the peace process. Emerging from captivity, Ulufa'alu tendered his resignation as demanded by the MEF and on June 30 Parliament replaced him as Prime Minister with Manasseh Sogavare of the People's Progressive Party (PPP), previously the Finance Minister, with some SIAC figures also joining the new caretaker government of "national unity, reconciliation and peace".

Sogavare's appointment was followed by renewed peace efforts and a ceasefire was agreed in early August. A peace agreement between the two militias, the Townsville Peace Agreement, was reached under Australian auspices on Oct. 15, 2000. It provided for an amnesty for members of the MEF and IFM in exchange for a handover of weapons, with members of the militias to be recruited into a reorganized and expanded police force as "special constables", and with reinstatement of police officers who took part in the June 2000 coup. It also provided for the establishment of an unarmed Australian-led International Peace Monitoring Team (IPMT). However, although limited disarmament took place, the militias breached the provisions of the agreement on the surrender of weapons and their members who had been recruited into the police force turned to criminal activity such as extortion. Leaders of the armed groups established personal fiefdoms.

Further elections were staged on Dec. 5, 2001.

These were held with a strong presence of international monitors and were generally adjudged to have been free and fair. The elections resulted in 20 of the 50 seats being won by the People's Action Party (PAP), while the Association of Independent Members (AIM) took 13 seats, SIAC 12, the PPP 3 and the Labour Party 1. Sir Allan Kemakeza of PAP (who had been knighted for his work in securing the Townsville Peace Agreement) was elected Prime Minister, with 29 of the votes in Parliament.

The IPMT ceased its work in June 2002 but lawlessness and intimidation by armed gangs and militias continued: in February 2003, Sir Fred Soaki, a former Police Commissioner and prominent figure in the peace process, was assassinated. On July 24, 2003, at the request of the Kemakeza government, Australia despatched a force of 1,200 troops and police to the Solomon Islands to assist in the restoration of order. The operation, known as "Helpem Fren" (pidgin for Help A Friend) also had smaller contributions from New Zealand and South Pacific nations such as Fiji and Tonga and was designated as the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI). It seemed to enjoy wide support in the Solomon Islands.

### **Isatabu Freedom Movement (IFM)**

This group, with its strongest support in West Guadalcanal (the western "Weather Coast"), was involved in the wholesale expulsion of Malaitan settlers from late 1998 onwards as well as kidnappings and killings. The group was initially known as the Guadalcanal Liberation Front (GLF) and then the Guadalcanal Revolutionary Army (GRA) before adopting the name Isatabu Freedom Movement. By the middle of 1999 it held the rural areas surrounding Honiara, threatening the capital and triggering the creation of the MEF. In 2000 it broke into factions led by Andrew Tee and Harold Keke, Tee being a signatory of the October 2000 Townsville Agreement, which Keke rejected. The factions thereafter retained their weapons, feuded, and engaged in criminal activity, with the Keke faction achieving notoriety for its brutality, being blamed for dozens of deaths in 2002-03 and terrorizing areas round its base on the Weather Coast. The Tee faction agreed to surrender its weapons after the arrival of the Australian-led intervention force in July 2003. Harold Keke threatened to continue resistance and was described by the New Zealand Foreign Minister as the "most wanted" person in the Solomon Islands; he was vigorously pursued and surrendered to the intervention force on Aug. 13, together with his main lieutenants. One week earlier he had revealed that six Anglican missionaries he had taken hostage were no longer alive. After his detention he was charged with offences including the murder of a former Member of Parliament and Cabinet minister, Father Augustine Geve.

### **Malaita Eagle Force (MEF)**

The MEF was formed during 1999 to defend the interests of Malaitans in Guadalcanal against the indigenous forces of the Isatabu Freedom Movement (IFM). Its co-founders were Jimmy Lusibea (Jimmy Rasta), Simon Mani and Moses Su'u and most of those involved at first were reportedly relatives

of Malaitans kidnapped or killed by the IFM. The MEF operated as a paramilitary force and also had political demands for compensation by the government of those Malaitans who had been forced from their properties. It had some support within the Malaitan-dominated police force and was strong enough to force the Prime Minister from office in June 2000, in cooperation with some police units, in an action that seemed to mimic the seizure of the Prime Minister in Fiji the previous month (see Fiji entry). By this time Andrew Nori, a lawyer, former Finance Minister and long-standing opponent of the Prime Minister, had emerged as the leading public spokesman on behalf of the MEF.

The MEF signed the October 2000 Townsville Peace Agreement but in practice retained its arms and remained entrenched in Honiara. However, following the arrival in July 2003 of the Australian-led intervention force, the MEF accepted disbandment, although it handed over only 99 weapons in a gun amnesty. In October 2003 Moses Su'u, was arrested and charged with robbery and the abduction of a former local commander of the Isatabu Freedom Movement, Selwyn Saki, in September 2001, and Jimmy Rasta was also arrested on murder charges.

*F. J. Harper*

## Somalia

**Capital:** Mogadishu

**Population:** 9.4 m

The Republic of Somalia was created by the unification of the British Somaliland Protectorate and the UN Trust Territory of Somalia at independence in 1960. In 1969 Mohammed Siyad Barre seized power, and under his regime the Somali Revolutionary Socialist Party (SRSP) became the sole legal party. Siyad Barre was overthrown in a rebellion led by United Somali Congress (USC) guerrillas in early 1991. Ali Mahdi Mohamed was installed as interim President and free elections were promised. In mid-1991 the USC and five other groups agreed on the re-adoption of the constitution that had been in force from 1961 until Siyad Barre's coup. A Cabinet appointed in October 1991 represented an attempt to unite various groups behind the USC, but after fighting between opposing USC factions – one led by Ali Mahdi Mohamed and the other by Gen. Mohamed Farah Aidid – had broken out in Mogadishu in November 1991, the attempt to establish a national government was suspended. Other leading political groups subsequently split into pro-Aidid and pro-Mahdi factions.

A UN peacekeeping presence in Somalia between 1992 and March 1995, aiming to disarm warring factions and protect relief operations, was unable to restore order, and essentially anarchic conditions persisted in the country. In June 1995 factions allied with Gen. Aidid elected him President of the country, and the appointment of a Cabinet was subsequently announced. On Gen. Aidid's death shortly thereafter, his supporters elected his son, Hussein Aidid, to succeed him as "interim President".

In January 1997 representatives of 26 anti-Aidid factions established a 41-member National Salvation Council, pending the holding of a national reconciliation conference. In May 2000 a reconciliation conference, attended by 400 delegates (but rejected by three of the five main faction leaders, including Hussein Aidid), opened in Djibouti. In July the conference (now attended by an estimated 900 delegates) drew up proposals for Somalia to make a three-year transition

to a federal government structure with 18 regional administrations. In mid-August a 245-member transitional national assembly, in which seats were apportioned after detailed negotiations between representatives of different Somali clans, was inaugurated and went on to elect Abdulkasim Salat Hassan (a former minister under Siyad Barre) as President of Somalia. His transitional national government established a presence in Mogadishu from mid-October 2000 but remained highly vulnerable to continued outbreaks of faction fighting. Representatives of 17 factions opposed to the transitional national government agreed in March 2001 to set up their own Somali Reconciliation and Reconstruction Council (SRRC) in the town of Baidoa to organize a new reconciliation conference in Somalia.

In the immediate aftermath of the terrorist attacks in the USA on Sept. 11, 2001, there was speculation that Osama bin Laden, the leader of *Al-Qaeda* and the prime suspect for the attack, was planning to shift his operations from Afghanistan to Somalia. Reports in the Western press in October 2001 claimed that bin Laden had started shifting money and weapons to Somalia. Accordingly, in November, Somalia's largest remittance company, Barakat International, was effectively closed down after the USA had accused the company of having links with *Al-Qaeda*. The move was a serious financial blow to Somalia, remittances constituting the country's largest source of foreign exchange, dwarfing even foreign aid flows.

The transitional national government responded to the Sept. 11 attacks by announcing shortly thereafter the creation of a National Anti-Terrorism Task Force with the aim of determining "the role which the Somali Republic could play in worldwide efforts to combat international terrorism". Despite this, speculation mounted in late 2001 that the USA was planning to carry out military action against Somalia, and in particular against the *al-Itihaad al-Islamiya* group, which was believed to have links

with *Al-Qaeda*. A number of US officials visited Somalia in December 2001, the first such visits since the USA's disastrous military intervention in the country as leader of the multinational UNOSOM II task force which had made an ignominious withdrawal in 1995 after failing to disarm the country's warring factions. Also in December, the National Anti-Terrorism Task Force arrested 11 foreigners accused of having links with *Al-Qaeda*. The suspects, eight Iraqis, two Eritreans and a Palestinian, were all released in February 2002.

### Regional administrations

In May 1991 the area that had formerly constituted the British Somaliland Protectorate, in the north-west, was proclaimed independent by the Somali National Movement (SNM), as the **Republic of Somaliland**, with its capital at Hargeisa. This entity received no international recognition but proved relatively stable. In February 1997 representatives of the self-proclaimed republic announced the promulgation of an interim constitution, with a clause confirming independence, which was subsequently approved by referendum in May 2001. Mohamed Ibrahim Egal, President of the Republic of Somaliland, died in May 2002 and was succeeded by Dahir Riyale Kahin. Somaliland held presidential elections in April 2003, in which according to the electoral commission, Kahin, standing as the candidate of the Democratic United National Party, won 205,595 votes compared with 205,515 obtained by Ahmed Mohamed Mohamud Silanyo of the Kulmiye party. Silanyo stated that he would not accept the result.

The promulgation of the Somaliland constitution in May 2001 was condemned both by the current transitional national government in Mogadishu and by the government of neighbouring "**Puntland**" (the name assumed by an area of north-eastern Somalia when an autonomous regional administration was established in 1998 under the presidency of Col. Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed, a former leader of the Somali Salvation Democratic Front). The Puntland government, currently organized on a non-party basis, has supported a federal solution to Somalia's political problems. Col. Abdullahi Yusuf was removed as President in July 2001 and replaced by Yusuf Haj Nur, who was himself replaced four months later by Jama Ali Jama. Col. Abdullahi Yusuf did not accept Jama's appointment and fighting for control of Puntland ensued, with rival militias carrying out frequent attacks against each other. Intense fighting between the two sides was reported in Dhuubo in late December 2002.

It was announced in April 2002 that the Rahawein Resistance Army (RRA, see entry), which controlled the Bay and Bakool regions in south-western Somalia, had set up a new regional administration. The new autonomous region was known as **South-western Somalia** and had its capital in Baidoa. The chairman of the RRA, Col. Hassan Mohamed Nur Shatigudad

was elected as President of the new entity by some 70 elders from the Digil and Mirifle clans.

### **Al-Itihaad al-Islamiya (Islamic Union)**

This fundamentalist Islamic group was founded in the late 1980s and is based in the southern Gedo region, although there have been unconfirmed reports of recent activity in Puntland. It is rumoured to have links to *Al-Qaeda*, the Islamist network believed to be behind the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the USA, and the US State Department has since listed it as a terrorist organization.

Despite the allegations of *Al-Qaeda* links, some commentators have said that *al-Itihaad* has effectively been a spent force since 1996 and has not been active for some years. However, there are suggestions that individual Somalis or even groups of Somalis might have, or have had, links with the *Al-Qaeda* leader, Osama bin Laden. There are reports that such people could be hiding in camps in Ras Kamboni, near the Kenyan border, and at El-Wak, near Somalia's border with Kenya and Ethiopia. In the past, Ethiopia has blamed *al-Itihaad* for bomb attacks in Addis Ababa (the Ethiopian capital) and elsewhere, apparently carried out in support of Ethiopian opposition groups. This has led to low-profile Ethiopian military incursions into Somalia in recent years. The USA has claimed that *al-Itihaad* also had links with Barakat International, the main remittance bank and telecommunications system in Somalia, which was effectively closed down in late 2001 as a result of US pressure. Barakat strongly denied these allegations, and the UN said that there was little evidence to link Barakat with *Al-Qaeda*.

### **Rahawein Resistance Army (RRA)**

*Leadership: Col. Hassan Mohamed Nur Shatigudad*

The Ethiopian-backed Rahawein Resistance Army (RRA) is led by Col. Hassan Mohamed Nur Shatigudad, a professional soldier based in Baidoa, and controls the regions of Bay and Bakool. Once a supporter of the transitional national government, Shatigudad became a strong opponent of the interim administration in October 2001, a move which caused a split in the RRA. In late 2001 it was reported that US military personnel had visited Baidoa to examine the possibility of forging links with Shatigudad ahead of any military action in Somalia in the aftermath of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on the USA. It was announced in April 2002 that the RRA had set up a new regional administration, South-western Somalia (see above), with its capital in Baidoa and Shatigudad as President.

### **Somali National Front (SNF)**

*Leadership: Omar Haj Mohammed Masaleh*

This group is split into pro- and anti-Ethiopian factions. The dominant faction, led by Omar Haj Mohammed Masaleh, is based in the southern Gedo region.

### **Somali National Movement (SNM)**

*Leadership: Dahir Riyale Kahin*

In May 1991 the area that had formerly constituted the British Somaliland Protectorate, in the north-west, was proclaimed independent by the Somali National Movement (SNM), as the Republic of Somaliland (see above).

**Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM)***Leadership: Gen. Aden Abdullahi Nur Gabyow*

A Minister of Defence in the Siyad Barre era, Gen. Gabyow now leads the southern-based Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM). The SPM is allied with the Ethiopian-backed militiamen of Gen. Mohammed Said Hirsi Morgan, based in Baidoa. A former army commander and son-in-law of Siyad Barre, Gen. Morgan became known as the “Butcher of Hargeisa” in the late 1980s when he conducted military operations against Somali National Movement (SNM) rebels in northern Somalia.

**Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF)***Leadership: Col. Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed*

This group led by Col. Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed controls “Puntland”, an area of north-eastern Somalia declared an autonomous regional administration in 1998 under the presidency of Abdullahi Yusuf. Since mid-2001 Abdullahi Yusuf has battled for control of Puntland against rival militiamen led by Jama Ali Jama.

**Somali Reconciliation and Reconstruction Council (SRRC)***Leadership: Col. Hassan Mohamed Nur Shatigudad (president); Hussein Aidid (president)*

The main challenge to the transitional national government formed in mid-2000 comes from the Somali Reconciliation and Reconstruction Council (SRRC), a loose coalition of opposition warlords from southern Somalia, many of whom have backing from Ethiopia. Formed in March 2001, the SRRC has its headquarters in the town of Baidoa.

The coalition began to fracture when some of its members signed a peace pact with the transitional national government in Nakuru, Kenya, in December 2001. The Nakuru accords were, however, drawn up without the direct involvement of the most prominent SRRC members, including Col. Shatigudad of the Rahawein Resistance Army (RRA), Hussein Aidid of the United Somali Congress/Somali

National Alliance (USC/SNA), Muse Sadi Yalahow of the United Somali Congress (USC)/Somali Salvation Alliance (SSA) and Gen. Mohammed Said Hirsi Morgan. The anti-Nakuru faction of the SRRC has continued to contend that the transitional national government was not representative of Somali society and had little control over the country, and called on the international community to intervene in Somalia and set up a transitional government just as they had done in Afghanistan.

**United Somali Congress/Somali National Alliance (USC/SNA)***Leadership: Hussein Aidid*

Based in Mogadishu, Hussein Aidid leads the United Somali Congress/Somali National Alliance (USC/SNA). Aidid is a former US marine and son of the late Gen. Mohamed Farah Aidid, the warlord who helped to remove President Siyad Barre from power, and then fought US forces in Mogadishu in 1993. Hussein Aidid arrived in Somalia with the US forces, but then left the US military and became a local militia leader. He controls southern areas of Mogadishu. A dissident faction of the USC/SNA is led by Osman Hassan Ali Atto, who, unlike Aidid, signed the Nakuru peace deal on a national unity government in December 2001. Ali Atto is also based in southern Mogadishu.

**United Somali Congress (USC) /Somali Salvation Alliance (SSA)***Leadership: Muse Sadi Yalahow*

The United Somali Congress/Somali Salvation Alliance (USC/SSA), led by Muse Sadi Yalahow, is based in Mogadishu, but enjoys support from Ethiopia. Muse Sadi was once a close ally of Ali Mahdi Mohamed, Somalia's interim president after Siyad Barre's overthrow. His forces were involved in heavy fighting in south Mogadishu from December 2001 to May 2002.

*D. J. Sagar*

## South Africa

**Capital:** Pretoria (administrative), Cape Town (legislative), Bloemfontein (judicial)

**Population:** 43.2 m

The Republic of South Africa was established in 1961, evolving from the Union of South Africa which had been formed in 1910 and achieved independence from the UK in 1931. The National Party (NP), supported particularly by the (Dutch-descended) Afrikaner population and which was the ruling party from 1948 until 1994, pioneered the system of apartheid. Under this the population was divided into four different racial categories (Whites, Coloureds, Indians and Africans), each entitled to varying degrees of political, social and economic rights. In practice, the system maintained the supremacy of the minority white (particularly Afrikaner) population.

In the face of domestic and international pressure,

the NP government in 1989 indicated a preparedness to negotiate an end to apartheid, the following year lifting restrictive measures against the African National Congress (ANC) and other proscribed organizations. Multiparty negotiations began in late 1991 and resulted in the adoption two years later of an interim constitution, under which the country's first non-racial, multiparty legislative elections took place in April 1994. These resulted in a decisive victory for the ANC, which had been in the forefront of the struggle against the apartheid regime. In contrast to the ANC, exiled groups such as the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC), and its armed wing, the Azanian People's Liberation Army—APLA) from the outset

rejected multi-racial co-operation on the grounds that it safeguarded “white interests”. The PAC refused to participate in the multiparty constitutional negotiations which preceded the April elections. However, it did contest the elections after claiming to be the authentic voice of the black population, and won five seats. APLA fighters were subsequently integrated into the new South African National Defence Force (SANDF). In May 1994 the ANC leader, Nelson Mandela, was elected President of the Republic by the National Assembly and a transitional government of national unity assumed office. The two houses of the legislature sat jointly as a Constituent Assembly to draft a permanent constitution, which entered into force in February 1997.

The 1997 constitution provides for a bicameral legislature comprising a 400-member National Assembly, the lower house, elected by universal adult suffrage (200 from national party lists and 200 from regional party lists) under a system of proportional representation, and a 90-seat National Council of Provinces, appointed by the members of the elected legislatures of the country’s nine provinces. The President, who is head of state and head of the executive, is elected by the National Assembly from among its members. No person may serve more than two presidential terms. A general election held in June 1999 produced an increased ANC majority in the National Assembly. Thabo Mbeki (who had succeeded Mandela as ANC party president at the end of 1997) was elected President of South Africa by the new Assembly and was formally inaugurated in office in June 1999.

### **The Truth and Reconciliation process**

In July 1995 the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act was enacted in an attempt to assist the transition from the apartheid system. Under the terms of the Act, in December 1995 the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), chaired by Archbishop Desmond Tutu (a Nobel Peace Prize winner and head of the Anglican Church in South Africa), started a programme to explore, seek, and document information about human rights violations under the apartheid regime. In particular, the TRC aimed to: (i) establish as complete a picture as possible of the nature, causes and extent of gross violations of human rights committed during the apartheid period (October 1960 to May 1994) and the fate or whereabouts of the victims of such violations; (ii) provide for the granting of amnesty to persons who made full disclosure of all the relevant facts relating to acts associated with a political objective committed during the apartheid period; (iii) take measures aimed at the granting of reparation to, and the rehabilitation and the restoration of the human and civil dignity of, victims of violations of human rights; and (iv) recommend measures to prevent human rights violations in the future. Accordingly, the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa Report* was published in October 1998. This five-volume report disclosed acts

of atrocities, provided rehabilitation for victims, and became the basis of amnesty for perpetrators.

The events and issues investigated by the Commission included: the Sharpeville Massacre (1960), when a peaceful demonstration ended in the deaths of 69 black protestors, including 40 women and eight children, at the hands of the security forces; the Soweto Uprising (1976), when two black students were killed by police during a student demonstration, civil unrest then spreading throughout the township of Soweto, eventually resulting in 176 dead and more than 1,000 injured; the killing of anti-apartheid activist Steve Biko (1977), who died from brain injuries in Pretoria while in police custody; the Church Street, Pretoria Bombing (1983) intended for an airforce building, in which 19 people were killed and a further 219 injured – two members of the ANC’s armed wing *Umkhonto we Sizwe* (MK – Spear of the Nation) were among the dead, and were found to be responsible for the explosion; the Natal Conflict (1987), which was the start of intense confrontations between the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), led by Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, and the United Democratic Front (UDF) in townships adjacent to Pietermaritzburg and in Mpumalanga – UDF defence committees were created in response to attacks from Inkatha vigilantes and the resulting violence led to the deaths of 367 people, often involving innocent non-combatants; the Bisho Massacre (1992) in which Ciskei Defence Force (CDF) soldiers opened fire on 70,000 protesters at an ANC-sponsored demonstration, resulting in the deaths of 29 demonstrators; the attack on St. James Church, near Cape Town (1993) by members of the APLA which resulted in the deaths of 11 white people; and the Election Bombings (1994) in which extreme right-wing groups, including the Afrikaner Resistance Movement (AWB), attempted to sabotage free elections in the Transvaal and Orange Free State resulting in 21 deaths.

### **ISLAMIST GROUPS**

#### **People Against Gangsterism and Drugs (PAGAD)**

*Leadership: Abdus Salaam Ebrahim*

People Against Gangsterism and Drugs (PAGAD) was formed in 1996 as a community anti-crime group fighting drugs and drug-related violence in the Cape Flats area of Cape Town. However, by early 1998 the group was in open opposition to the ANC-led government and statements emanating from its leadership were increasingly anti-Western in sentiment. Alongside its Islamic ally *Qibla* (see entry), PAGAD appears to regard the government as a threat to Islamic values and consequently promotes a greater political voice for the country’s Muslim population. PAGAD uses several front names, including Muslims Against Global Oppression (MAGO) and Muslims Against Illegitimate Leaders (MAIL), when launching anti-Western protests and campaigns.

The group’s G-Force (Gun Force), with an estimated membership of around 50, operates in small cells and is believed to have been responsible for various acts of urban



terrorism in the Cape Town area since 1998, including nine bombings in 2000. Targets for bomb attacks have included government buildings and institutions, moderate Muslims, synagogues, gay nightclubs, tourist attractions, and Western-associated restaurants. PAGAD was believed to have masterminded the bombing in August 1998 of the Cape Town "Planet Hollywood" restaurant.

### **Qibla**

*Leadership: Achmad Cassiem*

*Qibla* (the direction in which the believer orients himself for *salat*, the prayer of Islam) is a small radical Islamist group led by Achmad Cassiem, who was apparently inspired by Iran's late spiritual leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. After a spell in prison on Robben Island in the 1960s for sabotage, Cassiem – a former president of the South African Students' Association (SASA) – and a group of students attempted to formulate an Islamic version of black consciousness, the main form of resistance politics during the 1970s in South Africa. In 1980 *Qibla* was formed to "give direction" to South African Muslims, and Cassiem, a charismatic speaker, drew large audiences under the *Qibla* slogan: "One solution, Islamic revolution." Cassiem was again imprisoned in the 1980s for "terrorism" and when he emerged in the early 1990s, he condemned the notion of power-sharing and increasingly opposed the new order established after the demise of the apartheid regime.

*Qibla* is believed to be distinct from the group People Against Gangsterism and Drugs (PAGAD, see entry), although the media often treat the two groups as one. It is estimated that *Qibla* has around 250 members and, like PAGAD, it operates mainly in the Cape Town area. Reports have suggested that the group has links with Islamic extremists in the Middle East. In the immediate aftermath of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the USA, Cassiem spoke on Radio 786 – a radical Muslim community station – for 20 minutes, glorifying the concept of martyrdom which, he said, was an "obligation". Its "objective", he said, "was to do maximum damage to the oppressor". He had earlier been quoted as saying that the "USA is Satan" and that Muslims must respond to the call for a jihad.

## **WHITE EXTREMIST GROUPS**

There are a large number of extremist far-right groups in South Africa, whose members are hostile to the ending of the apartheid system. They include the Boer nationalist Afrikaner Resistance Movement (AWB), groups of trade unionists, farmers and academics who believe that they have been oppressed by the ANC government, and Israel Vision and Daughter of Zion. The last named groups call for a state run by the Afrikaners, the descendants of Boer (Dutch) settlers who arrived in the region three centuries ago. Since the end of apartheid such shadowy right-wing groups have attempted to whip up white militancy, citing the growth of brutal "black-on-white" crime (although most crime in South Africa, which has one of the highest murder rates in the world, is black-on-black) and also the 1920s prophecies of the Boer seer Siener van Rensburg, who predicted a white rebellion against a

black government. However, despite a relative upsurge in white extremist violence in late 2002, analysts were agreed that such groups were operating on the fringe of South African politics and that the threat posed by them was only marginal.

### **Afrikaner Resistance Movement (Afrikaanse Weerstandsbeweging, AWB)**

*Leadership: Eugene Terreblanche*

*Website: [www.awb.co.za](http://www.awb.co.za)*

*E-mail: [awb@awb.co.za](mailto:awb@awb.co.za)*

The AWB was established with the avowed intention of maintaining white supremacy in South Africa by all possible means. It has called, among other things, for the abolition of all political parties, for the right to vote to be restricted to white Christians (thus excluding Jews) and for a government controlled by an AWB Higher Council (*Opperraad*). The AWB has also sought the restoration of the independent Boer republics of the Transvaal, the Orange Free State and Northern Natal. Organized along paramilitary lines, this neo-Nazi group has a swastika-like emblem and a blackshirt youth movement.

The AWB reacted violently to the onset of multiparty negotiations in 1991 aimed at negotiating an end to apartheid. In August 1991 shooting broke out between the police and AWB supporters in Ventersdorp, the AWB's headquarters situated 120 km west of Johannesburg, as AWB members tried to prevent President F. W. de Klerk from addressing a meeting. Three AWB members were killed in the fighting, which marked only the second occasion in 70 years on which police had opened fire on a white crowd. The first incident, in May 1991, also took place in Ventersdorp.

In April 1993 an AWB member, Polish-born emigré Janus Walus, assassinated Chris Hani, general secretary of the South African Communist Party (SACP) and a member of the ANC's national executive committee. Initially, Hani's killing posed a serious threat to the fragile process of negotiations on constitutional reform after some anti-apartheid activists called for revenge and the ANC struggled to control the anger of its supporters. Walus was arrested within an hour of the assassination and along with another right-wing extremist, Clive Derby-Lewis, was subsequently sentenced to death for Hani's murder, although this was later commuted to a life sentence. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in 1997 rejected the amnesty applications of Walus and Derby-Lewis, stating that the two men had not fully disclosed all of the facts nor shown a political motive for the killing.

AWB leader Eugene Terreblanche admitted in June 1998 in an affidavit to the TRC the "political and moral responsibility" for a bombing campaign in which 21 people were killed and hundreds injured prior to the country's first multi-racial elections in 1994. The white right-wing campaign to disrupt the elections had been spearheaded by the AWB and had included a massive car bomb attack on the ANC offices in central Johannesburg in April 1994 in which nine people were killed and almost 100 others injured. Shortly afterwards another car bomb had exploded in a minibus taxi rank used by blacks in Germiston, in the then Pretoria, Witwatersrand, Vereeniging (PWV) province, killing 10 and

injuring 36 others. In late April police arrested 31 members of the AWB including the alleged brains behind the bombing campaign; the arrests effectively ended the attacks. Five members of the AWB were in April 1996 sentenced to 26 years' imprisonment each for their part in the bombing campaign. Terreblanche described the sentences as a "recipe for revolution and war". Although the government said that it would take the threats seriously, it was widely acknowledged at this time that the risk of serious extreme white right-wing violence had evaporated.

In June 1997 Terreblanche was sentenced to six years' imprisonment for attempted murder, relating to an earlier assault on a black labourer on Terreblanche's farm. He was also sentenced to one year's imprisonment for assault with intent to cause grievous bodily harm for setting his dog on a black petrol station attendant. He served the one-year sentence in 2000-2001 and, upon his release, he lost his appeal against the earlier, six-year sentence, which he began in March 2001.

### **Boere Vryheids Aksie (BVA)**

In late November 2002 the South African intelligence service, the National Intelligence Agency (NIA), revealed that it had foiled a plot by a group calling itself the *Boere Vryheids Aksie* (BVA) to poison the water supplied to a number of large black townships, thereby threatening the lives of millions of people. In the plan to contaminate water supplies, tetranium, an agricultural poison, would have been poured into reservoirs serving Soweto, Atteridgeville, Soshanguve and Laudium, townships inhabited by at least 10 million people. The BVA also planned to destroy electricity and

transport networks serving the same areas, and plotted to detonate bombs in the national parliament building in Cape Town.

### **Warriors of the Boer Nation**

This right-wing extremist group claimed responsibility for a series of bomb explosions in Soweto in October 2002 in which one person was killed, a mosque and an Islamic school destroyed and a railway line badly damaged. The bomb attacks came at a time of heightened concern over a possible resurgence of white right-wing extremist activity. During the weeks prior to the bomb attacks, the police had made a number of arrests and discovered arms and ammunition which they believed were destined to have been used in attempts to re-establish white minority rule.

South African police sources said that the new group had splintered off from the **Boer Force** (*Boeremag*), which had already threatened to bring down the ANC government, while others claimed that the Warriors and *Boeremag* were one and the same thing. After admitting carrying out the bomb attacks, the Warriors had also issued a call for the release of 35 Boer Force activists (including alleged leader Tom Vorster) and had threatened further violence. In March 2003, 23 members of the *Boeremag* were indicted for high treason over a plot to destabilize the country by assassinating Nelson Mandela and setting off bombs in black areas and strategic targets such as Johannesburg international airport.

*D. J. Sagar*

## **Spain**

**Capital:** Madrid

**Population:** 40 m

The Kingdom of Spain is, under its 1978 Constitution, a "democratic state" and a "parliamentary monarchy" which guarantees the right to autonomy of all "nationalities and regions". The country has a Cabinet headed by a Prime Minister and responsible to a bicameral Parliament (Cortes Generales) consisting of a Congress of Deputies of 350 members elected from party lists by province-based proportional representation and a 259-member Senate, of whom 208 are directly elected and 51 designated by 17 autonomous regional legislatures. Both houses are elected for four-year terms.

Elections held on March 12, 2000, resulted in the re-election of the Popular Party (*Partido Popular*, PP)-led government of Prime Minister José María Aznar. Seats were won in the Congress of Deputies by national level parties as follows: PP 183, Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) 125, United Left (IU) 8. Other seats were won by regional parties as follows: Convergence and Union (CIU, Catalonia) 15, Basque Nationalist Party (EAJ-PNV) 7, Canarian Coalition

(CC) 4, Galician Nationalist Bloc (BNG) 3, Andalusian Party (PA) 1, Republican Left of Catalonia (ERC) 1, Initiative for Catalonia/Greens (IC-V) 1, Basque Solidarity (EA) 1, Aragonese Union (CHA) 1.

The promulgation of the Spanish Constitution of 1978, in which the right to autonomy of the nationalities and regions that make up the Spanish nation is enshrined, represented a profound shift from the centralist, dictatorial rule of Gen. Francisco Franco, who held power from the 1930s until his death in 1975. Article 2 of the Constitution states that the right to autonomy of the nationalities and regions of which it is composed is recognized and guaranteed. This provision is based on the premise of the indissoluble unity of the Spanish nation, the common fatherland of all Spaniards. The text of the Constitution sets out the powers which the autonomous communities may assume and those which are vested solely in the Spanish state.

Following ratification of the Constitution 17 autonomous communities were established within

three years, each with its own government and legislature, as follows: Andalusia, Aragon, Asturias, Balearic Islands, Basque Country (Euskadi), Canary Islands, Cantabria, Castilla y Leon, Castilla-La Mancha, Catalonia, Extremadura, Galicia, Madrid, Murcia, Navarra, La Rioja, and Valencia. Under legislation adopted in 1994, the North African enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla also acquired autonomous status as regions of Spain. In many of the regions the national-level parties are the principal political formations, but there is also a large number of regional parties, some of them strongly supported and with representation in the national legislature (see above).

The granting of autonomy to the various regions of Spain has met the aspirations of most autonomist regional parties except in the Basque region (consisting of the provinces of Alava, Guipúzcoa and Vizcaya, but not including Navarra, claimed as “Basque” by many Basque nationalists) where a minority continues to demand the total independence of the Basque region. Attacks by the terrorist group ETA (*Euzkadi ta Azkatasuna*), have killed more than 870 since its creation in 1959, including 22 in the period 2000-02 after a suspension of activity in 1999. In response to continuing ETA violence, in August 2002 Parliament called on the courts to ban the *Herri Batasuna* party, seen as the political wing of ETA, and this was done by the Supreme Court in March 2003.

Spain's proximity to countries such as Algeria affected by Islamist agitation, and the large number of foreign (particularly Algerian and Moroccan) guest workers from Islamic countries, has led to reports that Islamist groups have set up operations in the country. By April 2002 Spanish police had arrested more than 20 individuals said to have connections with *Al-Qaeda*. There have been no major incidents of such groups acting against Spain itself, however.

## BASQUE COUNTRY

### Basque Nation and Liberty (Euzkadi ta Azkatasuna, ETA)

Basques in Spain have since the late 19th century campaigned for either autonomy within the Spanish state or complete independence for the Basque areas, defined by them as the provinces of Vizcaya, Guipúzcoa, Alava and Navarra. Some of them have also campaigned for the inclusion of certain areas of France partly inhabited by Basques, namely Labourd, Basse-Navarre and Soule (all bordering on the Spanish province of Navarra and forming part of the French department of Basses-Pyrénées). Until 1936 the Basques enjoyed a measure of autonomy under the Spanish Republican government, and during the 1936-39 Civil War the Basque provinces held out for a long time as a Republican enclave within Nationalist-controlled territory. After the Civil War militant Basque nationalism was quiescent, until ETA was formed in 1959 as a breakaway group from the Basque Nationalist Party (*Partido Nacionalista Vasco*, PNV), which remained a legal autonomist party opposed to the use of violence.

In 1960 the Spanish government issued a decree author-

izing military courts to try cases of “military rebellion”, an offence which included the dissemination of false or tendentious news intended to cause internal disorders, international conflict or loss of prestige to the Spanish state and its institutions, and also the holding of illegal meetings and the fomenting of strikes. Penalties included death or life imprisonment for sabotage, causing explosions, arson, kidnapping, armed assault and armed robbery. The decree was later suspended but was reimposed on Aug. 15, 1968, after the head of the political police in Guipúzcoa province had been assassinated on Aug. 2 and a partial state of emergency declared in the province on Aug. 5. In the ensuing years numerous alleged ETA activists were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment, among them several priests.

In January 1972 ETA described its objective as being “the reunification of the Basque country north and south of the Pyrenees and the defence of the interests of the working class until it effectively assumes the political, cultural and economic control of Euzkadi” (the Basque country).

Thereafter ETA intensified its activities, carrying out further abductions, using machine guns and planting bombs. One of its bombs killed Adml. Luis Carrero Blanco, the Spanish Prime Minister, on Dec. 23, 1973.

After the death of Generalissimo Franco on Nov. 20, 1975, ETA continued its campaign of violence. In 1977 the government offered sweeping amnesties for those convicted in the Franco era. On March 20, 1977, it offered a choice of voluntary exile to Basque political prisoners, and on May 22 five of them, who had been sentenced to death in 1970, were flown to Norway, with the sixth following on June 6, together with another ETA member sentenced to death in Burgos on Aug. 29, 1975. Further ETA members awaiting trial – some of them in connection with the assassination of Adml. Carrero Blanco in December 1973 – were flown to Denmark, Austria or Norway on June 9, and some others were released. The government on Oct. 17, 1977, announced an amnesty for most political offences committed before June 15, 1977, including all suspects held in connection with the assassination of Adml. Carrero Blanco, who were formally amnestied on Jan. 20, 1978.

Following an appeal by all major political parties to ETA to renounce violence as a political instrument, ETA stated on Jan. 13, 1978, that it would abandon its terrorist activities provided the government fulfilled conditions involving the granting of a total amnesty, the unconditional legalization of all political parties and the removal of all state security forces from the Basque provinces.

As the government made no further concessions, ETA continued attacks in 1978-79 and inter alia killed the army chief of manpower with two colonels and a chauffeur in Madrid on May 25, 1979, two army officers in Bilbao on Sept. 19 and the military governor of Guipúzcoa in San Sebastian on Sept. 23.

Following the adoption of the 1978 Constitution (above), a referendum was held on Oct. 25, 1979, and resulted in approval of a regional autonomy statute for Alava, Guipúzcoa and Vizcaya (by 90.3 per cent of the votes cast in a 58.9 per cent turnout). ETA staged no major acts of violence during the referendum campaign from Oct. 4 onwards: nevertheless, it opposed the proposed statute as a barrier to full self-determination for the Basque nation, while the

*Herri Batasuna* party called for abstention from voting.

After the election of the first regional parliament of the Basque region on March 9, 1980, when the *Herri Batasuna* party gained 11 seats (out of the total of 60) and 16.3 per cent of the votes cast, the party declared that it would not take its seats until some 200 imprisoned ETA members had been amnestied. However, the party nominated as its spokesman in parliament Inaki Pikabea Burunza, an ETA-m member then on trial for terrorism. Violence from the various factions of ETA continued at a high level: in 1980 alone, 126 people were killed by political violence; 85 were, according to the police, killed by ETA-m (the ETA military wing) and 33 by other extremists, while eight ETA suspects were killed by the police.

ETA's particular targets included policemen, civil guards and retired military officers. ETA-m on Jan. 29, 1981, kidnapped the chief nuclear engineer at the Lemóniz power station construction site (near Bilbao), demanding in return for his release the commencement within a week of the demolition of the power station. He was found murdered on Feb. 6, 1981. ETA-m continued its policy of carrying out attacks on civilian and military targets with the aim of provoking a right-wing coup or backlash that would lead to a general uprising in the Basque country. However, the Anti-terrorist Liberation Group (GAL) promised to kill one Basque activist for every ETA victim. In the first seven months of 1984 ETA was responsible for 19 killings and the GAL for nine.

During the same year some ETA members sought "social integration" as offered by the Spanish government to ETA members not wanted by the police or the judicial authorities. On Aug. 23, 1984, the government announced that it was willing to enter into direct negotiations with ETA when and where it wished and without intermediaries but that it would not make any political concessions and would grant no amnesty to those guilty of crimes. ETA, however, dismissed the offer.

Among the violent actions taken by ETA-m late in 1984 and early in 1985 was the killing, on March 7, 1985, of the commander of the autonomous Basque police force. On March 13, 1985, the Basque regional government issued a declaration calling on all Basques to "overcome the fear of fear" and to stand up to violence, and on the following day the Basque parliament unanimously adopted a motion urging all Basques to oppose violence resolutely and formally calling on ETA to surrender its arms and to accept the democratic system.

In June 1985 the Spanish government offered new peace terms to ETA-m's military chief, Domingo Iturbe Abásolo. ETA attacks, however, continued during the following months, when the director-general of defence policy was killed on July 29, 1985, and another high-ranking officer (Vice-Adml. Cristóbal Colón de Carvajal) on Feb. 6, 1986. On Oct. 25, 1986, ETA-m also assassinated the military governor of Guipúzcoa.

Secret talks between members of ETA and the Spanish government started in January 1987 in Algeria and continued in August when their existence was made public. The informal discussions were broken off, however, after a car bomb attack at a civil guard barracks at Zaragossa on Dec. 11 which killed 11 people, including five children.

During the 1980s, Spain gradually began to receive increased cooperation in the fight against ETA from France, whose position had hitherto been ambiguous and which had constituted the main base (in the Basque areas across the

border) for launching attacks on Spain and sheltering ETA members. ETA was banned in France on Oct. 8, 1972, and the French Minister of the Interior stated in November 1972 that his government would not allow Spanish refugees to use France as a base for activities across the border. The French government did not, however, then comply with Spanish demands for the extradition of Basque (or other) "terrorists". This ambivalence persisted after the end of the Franco regime and the French Prime Minister declared on June 8, 1981, that France was "a country of asylum". However, on July 29, 1981, the French government agreed to intensify border controls and to "give full support to the Spanish authorities in their fight against terrorism".

On March 28, 1984, it was announced that ETA refugees would no longer obtain residence permits for living in the French Basque region. (Of some 600-700 Spanish Basques then living in France about 200-300 were estimated to be active ETA members.)

On June 14, 1984, the French government undertook to deport ETA suspects (but not to extradite them to Spain). Those deported from France in 1984 included Eugenio Etxebeste Arizguren, regarded as ETA's political chief (expelled on Aug. 3); he was succeeded as ETA leader by José Antonio Urrutikotxea Bengoetxea.

The formation of the Chirac government in France in March 1986 resulted in increased French co-operation in the fight against ETA-m violence. Domingo Iturbe Abásolo (Txomin), ETA-m's military chief, was arrested near Biarritz on April 27 and was deported to Gabon on July 13; in October it emerged that he and other ETA-m members were living in Algeria, where he was killed in a car accident on Feb. 27, 1987. Between July and November 1986 the French government extradited a number of ETA suspects to Spain, especially after the French police had, in a raid on a factory in Hendaye, found weapons and plans for ETA attacks on targets in Madrid and Barcelona. The Spanish police alleged that the factory had been used as a front for laundering money obtained by ETA through robberies, kidnapping and extortions; captured documents showed that some 90 Basque companies were paying "revolutionary taxes" demanded by ETA, contributing to ETA's annual budget of some 250,000,000 pesetas.

By the end of the 1980s intensified cross-border co-operation with the French authorities had a major impact on reducing ETA's potential effectiveness and resources. The French authorities were involved in a number of significant arrests of leading ETA members. On Jan. 12, 1989, the ETA leader, Urrutikotxea Bengoetxea, was arrested in Bayonne. By the early 1990s the Spanish authorities claimed that the number of active ETA commandos had been reduced to 50 or 100 people.

ETA has lost its previous bases inside France and in October 2001 France and Spain agreed that suspects should stand trial in that country filing the most serious charges, ending a loophole whereby ETA suspects had avoided extradition by standing trial on lesser firearms charges in France. In addition, international cooperation has also increased with other countries. For the first time, in December 1999, the United States extradited an alleged member of ETA, Ramón Aldasoro Magunacelaya, who had been arrested in Miami on Dec. 2, 1997. The USA designated ETA as a terrorist organization in 1997.

During the 1990s evidence emerged of the activities of the Anti-Terrorist Liberation Group (GAL) which in the 1980s had conducted a “dirty war” against ETA. Senior officials of the ruling PSOE and security apparatus were implicated in having provided funds for the GAL.

The leader of the PP, José María Aznar, escaped with only minor injuries in a car bomb attack in Madrid attributed to ETA on April 19, 1995. He was the highest profile ETA target since the 1973 assassination of Carrero Blanco.

Throughout 1999 ETA carried out no attacks. However, in December 1999 it announced the end of a 14-month truce, which it appeared to have used to reorganize and strengthen its weakened structure. ETA struck again on Jan. 21, 2000, when a car bomb killed a lieutenant colonel in the army. This provoked massive demonstrations against ETA in Madrid. On Feb. 22, 2000, ETA used a car bomb to assassinate in Vitoria (the regional capital) the spokesman of the Basque Socialist Party (PSE) in the Basque Parliament, Fernando Buesa Blanco, and his bodyguard. A demonstration against the assassination the following day in Vitoria drew a crowd of 60,000.

During 2001, ETA carried out car bomb attacks apparently aimed at the tourist industry. On Nov. 6, 2001, a car bomb in Madrid, apparently intended to kill Juan Junquera, Secretary General of Science Policy, injured more than 90 people. On Nov. 23, 2001, ETA killed two members of the Basque police force, the *Ertzaintza*, on traffic duty south of San Sebastián; 13 members of the *Ertzaintza* had been killed by ETA since the force was created in 1982, five of them since the end of the ceasefire in December 1999.

By this time, however, Spanish police had detained some 150 suspected ETA members since the end of the ceasefire and the group’s operational structures, including in the Basque country, were considered to have been badly damaged. Intelligence officials were reported as believing that ETA had only some 50 active guerrillas and the organization faced coordinated international action in the new security climate following the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks in the USA. This resulted in the EU designating ETA a terrorist organization. The group’s support within the Basque country also appeared to be declining (see below). Some reports suggested that ETA was divided between those who wished to continue the armed struggle and those seeking to embrace constitutional politics, others that a shrunken organization was now controlled entirely by diehard extremists.

### Herri Batasuna

The *Herri Batasuna* (“United People”) party, always seen as the closest formation to ETA and in effect its overground political wing, was founded in 1978 and participated in Basque and Spanish elections from 1979. In October 1979 *Batasuna* called for abstention in the referendum on the creation of an autonomous Basque region excluding Navarra (see above). It refused to take up its seats in assemblies above the level of *ayuntamientos* (local councils). In 1984 it won a High Court ruling obliging the Interior Ministry to recognize it as a party despite its alleged links with ETA.

In the 1989 national elections *Batasuna* announced that it would take up its four seats in the Congress of Deputies, ending a decade-long boycott of representation at that level. However, on the eve of the opening of parliament, *Batasuna*

deputy-elect Josh Muguruza was killed and *Batasuna* leader Iñaki Esnaola wounded in an attack apparently carried out by right-wing terrorists. Later, the remaining *Batasuna* deputies were expelled for refusing to pledge allegiance to the constitution.

In the 1996 elections *Batasuna* gave over its free air time to hooded ETA separatists. In December 1997 the entire 23-member *Batasuna* leadership received seven-year prison terms for “collaborating with an armed band” (i.e. ETA). A new leadership was elected in February 1998, which opted to change the party name to *Euskal Herriarrok*, (“We Basques”, EH) and to take its seats in the regional parliament. In the October 1998 Basque elections EH improved to 14 seats, whereupon the party took the historic step of joining a minority regional government headed by the Basque Nationalist Party (PNV). In July 1999, however, the old *Batasuna* leadership was released from prison following a decision by the Constitutional Court, Spain’s highest court.

ETA’s decision in December 1999 to resume terrorist activities damaged the EH in terms of electoral support. Having failed to win any seats in the March 2000 national elections, it slumped to only seven seats (with 10% of the vote) in the Basque regional elections in May 2001, following which it went into opposition to a PNV-led coalition.

In 2002 the Aznar government sought to ban *Batasuna* in response to an ETA strategy of attempting to assassinate local councillors of the two main national parties, the PP and PSOE. This strategy, which had resulted in several assassinations over a four-year period, had led to a spate of resignations of local councillors fearing for their lives. *Batasuna* (while claiming not to be linked to ETA) had failed to condemn any of the killings. The PSOE supported the government’s wish to see *Batasuna* banned, but the moderate Basque Nationalist Party (PNV), which controlled the regional government, opposed banning *Batasuna* on the ground that this could exacerbate the situation and encourage sympathy for extremism. The government’s view was that, with ETA now weakened militarily, it was time to dismantle the support structures, in terms of political and cultural organizations, local political patronage (*Batasuna* controlling 43 local councils in the Basque country and 20 in Navarra, notwithstanding its comparative weakness at regional level), fund raising, and money laundering of “revolutionary taxes” through Caribbean tax havens that had supported it.

In June 2002 Parliament approved legislation banning organizations that “provide open or tacit support for terrorism or which seek to legitimize or exculpate acts of terrorism”. On July 3, 2002, Judge Baltazar Garzón, the leading investigative magistrate of terrorist activities (who had earlier exposed the activities of the GAL against ETA), froze all the party’s bank accounts. On Aug. 26 Parliament voted by 295 to 10, with 29 abstentions, in favour of a motion to petition the Supreme Court to proscribe *Batasuna* and Garzón ordered the immediate closure of all *Batasuna* political activities, including the closure of its offices, businesses and cultural centres. On March 17, 2003, two months before local elections, the Spanish Supreme Court proscribed *Batasuna* for “promoting hatred, violence and civil confrontation”.

On May 3, 2003, the Supreme Court barred 241 candidates for local elections in the Basque country and Navarra on May



25 on the ground that they were members of a coalition of newly formed groups, the *Autodeterminaziorako Bilgunea* (AuB), that succeeded the parties banned by the Court in March. This decision was upheld by the Constitutional Court (the highest Spanish court) on May 9, this being the first time that a political group had been barred from presenting candidates for election since the adoption of the 1978 Constitution. Spain's strong support for US action against Iraq was also seen as having a benefit in its relationship with the USA. On May 7, US President George W. Bush announced at a press conference with Aznar in Washington that *Batasuna* would be designated a terrorist organization by the USA.

## CANARY ISLANDS

### **Movement for the Self-Determination and Independence of the Canary Archipelago (Movimiento para la Autodeterminación y Independencia del Archipiélago Canario, MPAIAC).**

This autonomist movement was established in 1961 with its headquarters in Algiers. In 1976, after the death of Franco, its leader, Antonio Cubillo, appealed to the Spanish government to "avoid recourse to violence" and to recognize the MPAIAC as the legitimate representative of the people of the islands and to commence negotiations on a timetable for the decolonization of the Canaries under the auspices of the Organization of African Unity (OAU). In the absence of any response to his appeal, Cubillo ordered the Movement on Nov. 1, 1976, to begin a campaign of "armed propaganda".

After the Spanish authorities had announced on Feb. 26, 1977, that about 20 MPAIAC militants had been arrested and that the Movement was virtually dismantled, Cubillo ordered an armed struggle to begin. On March 25 a teenage militant

was shot dead by a soldier while he was allegedly trying to steal arms from a military depot. In revenge the MPAIAC caused a bomb explosion at Las Palmas airport; this led to the diversion of two Jumbo jets to Tenerife where they collided on the runway, causing the death of 582 people.

Cubillo thereupon suspended his Movement's armed activities until April 11, 1977, when his campaign designed to disrupt tourism was resumed, involving some 80 bomb attacks during 1977.

The liberation committee of the OAU had recognized the MPAIAC as a liberation movement in July 1968, and in February 1978 the OAU Council of Ministers supported the committee's recommendation for material and financial aid to be given to the Movement (with only Morocco and Mauritania voting against this decision). The Spanish government thereupon made great efforts to dissuade African governments from giving such aid.

The MPAIAC's aims were implicitly rejected at a Council of Europe conference of members of local authorities and regional bodies which declared on Oct. 18, 1979, that the Canary Islands (as also the Azores and Madeira) were "peripheral regions of Europe" in the economic development of which European countries should participate.

In 1986 Cubillo established the National Congress of the Canaries (*Congreso Nacional de Canarias*, CNC) as a constitutional party within what had become the Canary Islands autonomous region, with a policy of leaving the EU (which Spain joined, when it was known as the EC, on Jan. 1, 1986) and joining the OAU. It is a minor force and won no seats in the 1999 regional assembly elections.

*F. J. Harper*

## Sri Lanka

**Capital:** Colombo

**Population:** 18.5 m

Ceylon gained its independence from the United Kingdom in 1948 and in 1972 became the Republic of Sri Lanka. Under the present constitution, promulgated in 1978, its name was changed to the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and a semi-presidential form of government was adopted. The executive President, who is directly elected by universal suffrage for a six-year term and shares powers with the Prime Minister, has the power to appoint or dismiss members of the Cabinet, including the Prime Minister, and to dissolve Parliament. The unicameral Parliament has 225 members, directly elected for a period of six years under a system of proportional representation first introduced in 1989.

The conservative United National Party (UNP) formed the government from independence until 1956, from 1965-70, and then again continuously from 1977-94. In a general election held on Aug. 16, 1994, however, the UNP was defeated by a left-of-centre

coalition, the People's Alliance, in which the dominant component was the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP).

The SLFP, with the UNP one of the country's two historic major parties, has been led by one family throughout its history. S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike (originally a leading figure in the UNP) was the party's founder and first Prime Minister from 1956 until his assassination in September 1959. His widow, Sirimavo Bandaranaike, in 1960 became the world's first woman Prime Minister, holding this post until 1965 and again from 1970-77. The party suffered a crushing defeat in the 1977 elections, when it won only eight seats, and during the 1980s it faced periodic harassment from the ruling UNP including Sirimavo Bandaranaike's expulsion from Parliament and detention. Following the party's return to power in 1994 she was again Prime Minister from November 1994 until her death in October 2000.

Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga, the daughter

of S.W.R.D. and Sirimavo, was Prime Minister from August–November 1994, becoming the elected President in November 1994. Kumaratunga's first term in office was dominated by the civil war against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and, after her peace strategy based on constitutional reform was blocked in Parliament, she called an early presidential election in December 1999. This confirmed her in office but with a reduced share of the vote and she decided not to call early parliamentary elections. When Parliament completed its six-year term, a general election was held on Oct. 11, 2000. Kumaratunga's People's Alliance was returned again as the largest grouping with 107 seats and formed another coalition government.

Bitter factional fighting soon broke out within the new government and in October 2001, following defections from the People's Alliance coalition, Kumaratunga called new elections for Dec. 7, 2001. These resulted in the UNP returning as the largest party, with 109 seats, compared with 77 won by the People's Alliance. Kumaratunga was obliged to appoint the UNP leader, Ranil Wickremesinghe, as Prime Minister, thus beginning a period of uncomfortable "co-habitation" between the President and the UNP-led government. Other parties winning seats in the 2001 elections were the People's Liberation Front (JVP), with 16, the Tamil United Liberation Front 15, the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress 5, the Eelam People's Democratic Party 2 and the Democratic People's Liberation Front 1.

The principal Tamil party in Parliament, the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) is a moderate grouping aiming a Tamil homeland (Tamil Eelam) in north-eastern Sri Lanka with the right to self-determination. The Democratic People's Liberation Front (DPLF) was established as the political wing of the Tamil separatist People's Liberation Organization of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE, see below). It has taken a moderate path and has operated as a political party since 1988. The People's Liberation Front (JVP) has combined extreme left-wing politics with Sinhalese ultra-nationalism.

### TAMIL SEPARATISM

By far the greatest security issue for Sri Lanka over the last two decades has arisen from conflict between the (mainly Hindu) Tamil population (forming a majority in the north) and its counterpart, extreme nationalism among the national-level majority (70 per cent), mainly Buddhist, Sinhalese population. In the colonial period, the English-speaking Jaffna Tamils had often been regarded as enjoying better access to positions in the colonial administration but after independence the majority Sinhalese asserted their dominance with conflict resulting over such issues as language (the government in 1956 making Sinhalese alone the official language) and religion. There was also Sinhalese immigration into Tamil areas and the Sinhalese dominated the armed forces. Tensions increased with the adoption in 1972 of a new republican constitution which was viewed by Tamils as con-

solidating Sinhalese ascendancy. In 1977 the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF, formed in 1976 and which remains the principal parliamentary voice of the Tamils) won 18 seats in Parliament on a platform that called for self-determination for the Tamil people.

The first anti-Tamil pogrom after independence occurred in 1956 but it was not until 1983 that violence became widespread. The consequent Tamil insurrection, spearheaded by the **Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE)**, had by 2003 resulted in an estimated 64,000 deaths. However a ceasefire, brokered by Norwegian diplomats in February 2002, had by July 2003 proved the longest lasting break in the violence since the conflict started on a large scale in 1983. Low-level inter-Tamil conflict continued with numerous assassinations of Tamil moderates by the LTTE.

The extreme left-wing and Sinhalese ultra-nationalist **People's Liberation Front** (*Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna*, JVP –see entry), although currently functioning as a constitutional party, sought to overthrow the elected government by force in 1971 and the late 1980s.

A state of emergency declared in May 1983 was thereafter routinely extended in an attempt to contend with the threat posed by Tamil guerrillas. Parliament approved in August 1983 an amendment to the Constitution (the 6th amendment) making the advocacy of separatism illegal, though this had the effect of undermining the position of elements such as TULF who had a separatist programme but sought to work through constitutional channels. The close links between Tamil separatists in Sri Lanka and Tamils in southern India (where Sri Lankan separatist groups based themselves in Madras in the state of Tamil Nadu) also resulted in Indian involvement in the conflict. An Indian-Sri Lankan agreement on proposals for "peace and normality" was concluded on July 29, 1987, between President J. R. Jayawardene and Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. Under the terms of the agreement an Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) was stationed in Sri Lanka, in the majority Tamil region of the Jaffna peninsula, but this move (while welcomed by more moderate Tamil groups) met with the hostility of both the LTTE and the extremist Sinhalese JVP. The deployment of Indian troops increased steadily to 50,000 by mid-1988 as they found themselves involved in conflict with the LTTE. In August 1989 the IPKF acknowledged the loss of 961 of its soldiers killed since its arrival under the 1987 Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement and in September 1989 India and Sri Lanka signed an accord providing for the withdrawal of all Indian troops. The IPKF withdrawal was completed in March 1990 and since that time there has been no foreign peacekeeping force in Sri Lanka.

### Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE)

*Leadership. Velupillai Prabhakaran (leader, also transliterated as Velupillai Pirapaharan); Tamil Chehvan (leader, political wing, also transliterated as S. P. Tamilselvan); Anton Balasingham (chief theoretician and negotiator)*

The LTTE (also known as the "Tamil Tigers" or the "Liberation Tigers") has been by far the strongest and most

effective of the Tamil separatist organizations operating in Sri Lanka. Its historic primary objective has been the establishment of a separate Tamil state – Eelam – in the Northern and Eastern provinces (Tamils being the majority in the former province and, due to a policy of settlement by Sinhalese farmers, a minority in the latter).

The LTTE was founded on May 22, 1972 (as the Tamil New Tigers, adopting the present name in 1976), the date of the proclamation of the Republic of Sri Lanka. It has been led throughout its history by Velupillai Prabhakaran (Pirapaharan). Prabhakaran was born on Nov. 26, 1954, his father being of Malaysian Tamil origin and a district land officer. As a small child, in 1958, he witnessed his uncle being burned alive in riots over language issues. Prabhakaran has imposed an extreme level of discipline over the organization and engaged in bitter internecine conflict with rival Tamil groups to build and retain its dominance. He was also a pioneer of suicide bombing techniques from the late 1980s as part of his strategy, the LTTE having carried out well over two hundred such attacks.

During the 1970s the LTTE carried out a number of operations which included the killing of police officers, bank robberies and the destruction of a Sri Lankan airliner. Its first major act was the assassination of the Mayor of Jaffna on July 27, 1975. In April 1978 the organization first came into the open and accepted responsibility for an assassination, and Parliament on May 19, 1978, passed a bill banning the organization and empowering the President to proscribe any group advocating the use of violence and directly or indirectly connected with any unlawful activity. The LTTE continued to carry out sporadic assassinations and other actions but its activities were at a generally low level and it was apparently not until November 1982 that it lost its first fighter in action.

On July 23, 1983, LTTE guerrillas killed 13 soldiers in Jaffna district in a landmine attack and this incident led to large-scale communal violence in the last days of the month. Much of the violence, in which almost 400 people were killed, took the form of attacks by the majority Sinhalese community on the Tamil minority. In addition dozens of Tamil political detainees in Welikada prison were killed on July 27-28 by Sinhalese inmates, allegedly with the connivance of prison guards. This spate of violence was the start of the major escalation of the conflict.

During inconclusive “amity talks” held on an Indian initiative between January and December 1984 and involving the (legal) Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF), the LTTE launched, in August of that year, a full-scale “armed revolutionary struggle” against the government on the ground that the democratic process had been “fully exhausted”.

On April 11, 1985, the LTTE joined with three other Tamil separatist groups to form an Eelam National Liberation Front (ENLF, see below). This fell apart in 1986. Thereafter the LTTE progressively established its supremacy over other Tamil separatist groups.

By May 1985 the LTTE was in control of Jaffna town and much of the Jaffna peninsula. Following continued armed actions by the LTTE, security forces carried out large-scale military operations on May 17-23, 1986, and on May 25 the government claimed that it had regained control of the whole Jaffna peninsula. However, the LTTE guerrillas continued to be active in the ensuing months, and on Oct. 27 the LTTE

announced that from Jan. 1, 1987, the Jaffna peninsula would be administered by a “Tamil Eelam secretariat”, as opposed to the current controlling government agent. It was also reported that the LTTE controlled much of the peninsula’s infrastructure.

On Jan. 2, 1987, a Tamil radio station stated that the LTTE had recently formed a new political party named Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam People’s Front which, led by Velupillai Prabhakaran, would function under the LTTE.

On April 7, 1987, the government of the (Indian) state of Tamil Nadu announced that it had granted the LTTE aid worth US\$2,400,000.

The LTTE launched attacks on Sept. 12-13, 1987, around Batticaloa and Trincomalee, killing over 100 members of the “Three Stars” (sections of the rival Tamil groups the People’s Liberation Organization of Tamil Eelam, PLOTE, the Eelam People’s Revolutionary Liberation Front, EPRLF, and the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization, TELO, for which see below). This fighting was thought to be related to disagreements amongst the various militias over the composition of a proposed “interim administration” to control the Northern and Eastern provinces as envisaged by the recently concluded Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement. On Sept. 29, President Jayawardene announced his own plans for the formation of a 12-member interim administration, in which the LTTE would be given a majority of seats, but the continuing violence soon forced him to abandon the idea.

On Sept. 14, 1987, the LTTE issued a series of demands to the newly arrived Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF), which included the confiscation by the IPKF of all weapons held by rival Tamil organizations and the closure of all Sri Lankan Army and police stations in the Northern and Eastern provinces. On the same day, in support of these demands, Amirthalingam Thileepan, head of the LTTE propaganda wing in Jaffna, started a hunger strike; his death two weeks later provoked great emotion in Jaffna. On Oct. 5 a group of 15 LTTE guerrillas committed suicide on the tarmac of a military airfield by swallowing cyanide capsules; they were part of a group of 17 rebels arrested at sea when a Sri Lankan Navy patrol intercepted an arms-laden trawler heading towards Trincomalee. The LTTE claimed that the guerrillas had been driven to suicide while in custody and repudiated the Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement. The LTTE executed eight Sri Lankan soldiers held in Jaffna and attacked Sinhalese settlements in the Eastern province, killing up to 200 people.

On Oct. 10, 1987, the IPKF launched a major operation against LTTE positions in Jaffna peninsula. In taking Jaffna city in late October the IPKF lost nearly 200 troops killed in the offensive and the LTTE over 600. The LTTE were forced to regroup around Batticaloa and during January 1988 effectively brought the civil administration to a halt by threatening to kill anyone who collaborated with the IPKF. The Sri Lankan government announced on Feb. 6, 1988, that India had agreed to a major increase in troop strength in Sri Lanka to about 70,000, which would allow the IPKF to “finish the job against terrorists as soon as possible”.

President Jayawardene announced a fresh amnesty to the LTTE in February 1988, but its attacks on Sinhalese villages resulting in over 60 deaths in March prompted him to announce that Sri Lankan forces would co-operate with the IPKF in the Eastern province to provide security to

Sinhalese and Muslim villages. Despite discussions between the Indian government and the LTTE on a ceasefire and the laying down of arms, the LTTE issued a statement in Madras on July 9 describing the Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement as a “charter of servility for Tamils”. Some LTTE leaders inclined towards a negotiated settlement, while others opposed any political accommodation.

Jayawardene’s proclamation of the merger of the Northern and Eastern provinces on Sept. 8, 1988, led the LTTE to threaten reprisals against government officials involved in elections for new provincial council on Nov. 19. In response to LTTE threats, TULF did not field any candidates, though the EPRLF and the PLOTE did.

In retaliation for the killing of six Indian soldiers by the LTTE, the IPKF reportedly went on the rampage on Aug. 2, 1989, on the north coast, which resulted in the deaths of 50-70 civilians. In a major incident between IPKF and LTTE forces on Aug. 5-6 some 70 people were killed. The IPKF unilaterally suspended its military operations on Sept. 19 and the LTTE agreed to respect the ceasefire, while retaining the right of self-defence if attacked. Ten days later, in a major breach of the ceasefire, seven members from both sides were killed in clashes.

On Dec. 20, 1989, the LTTE announced the formation of a new “democratic socialist” political party, the People’s Front of Liberation Tigers (PFLT), which was approved by the Commissioner of Elections. K. Mahendrarajah and Yogaratnam Yogi were named as president and party secretary respectively and the party’s aims included the right of self-determination for Sri Lanka’s Tamils and Muslims. The LTTE theoretician, Anton Balasingham, stated that the formation of the new party did not indicate a cessation of the LTTE war against the Tamil National Army (TNA, a coalition of three pro-IPKF Tamil militias, see below) as they sought to replace their rivals, principally the EPRLF, the TELO and the Eelam National Democratic Liberation Front (ENDLF, comprising PLOTE and breakaway factions of the EPRLF), in the areas vacated by the IPKF. The Tigers gained control of Batticaloa from the TNA on Dec. 15, killing as many as 100 TNA fighters in the battle.

In August 1990 a major offensive was launched against the LTTE, who were besieging some 250 government troops trapped in Jaffna fort, and the heavy fighting and aerial bombardment caused many civilian casualties.

The government accused the LTTE of the assassination on March 2, 1991, of Ranjan Wijeratne, the hardline security chief and Minister of State for Defence, in a bomb attack which also killed over 30 other people in the street where his motorcade was passing. In a statement on March 4 denying their involvement, the LTTE said Tamils would welcome Wijeratne’s death as he had promised to “wipe the Tigers off the face of the earth”. His death was followed by intensified government bombing of LTTE strongholds. An LTTE attack on two army camps on the Mannar peninsula on March 19-23 ended in a major defeat for the guerrillas, according to official reports, with 23 soldiers killed as against some 300-500 guerrillas dead.

Former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated by a Sri Lankan Tamil suicide bomber on May 21, 1991, in apparent revenge for the previous Indian intervention in the conflict. Although the LTTE denied responsibili-

ty, the Indian government stated that it believed the LTTE was behind the attack and banned the LTTE from operating in India (a ban that remains in force). In May 1993 the LTTE was implicated in the assassination of President Ranasinghe Premadasa by a suicide bomber. In October 1993 the government launched a major offensive against LTTE positions but this resulted in heavy army casualties and the resignation of the army commander-in-chief.

In the August 1994 legislative elections, the United National Party lost power after 17 years and the People’s Alliance coalition, led by Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga, came into office promising to engage in peace talks. This offer was accepted by the LTTE, the government eased the economic blockade on LTTE-controlled areas, and on Sept. 5 the government announced the end of the nationwide state of emergency imposed in 1983. Sporadic fighting continued, however, and in the run-up to the November 1994 presidential election (won by Kumaratunga) the UNP presidential candidate and leader of the parliamentary opposition, Gamini Dissanayake, was on Oct. 23 killed (with 52 others) by suicide bombers at an election rally in Colombo. Dissanayake was known as a hardline opponent of the Tamil cause and this and the suicide bombing technique led to speculation of LTTE involvement, UNP leaders claiming that the government had conspired with the LTTE to stop the UNP winning the election. The LTTE denied involvement, however.

The peace process quickly faltered. In April 1995 a fragile truce broke down in the face of renewed LTTE attacks. A major government offensive resulted in the fall on Dec. 6, 1995, of the LTTE stronghold of Jaffna, which had been held by the LTTE since 1990. This led to a mass exodus of thousands of civilians from Jaffna on the orders of the LTTE. In apparent retaliation for the loss of Jaffna, LTTE suicide bombers on Jan. 31, 1996, caused an explosion in Colombo that killed 80. The government offensive broke down in the Jaffna peninsula, however, with the LTTE maintaining resistance. In heavy fighting through 1999 the LTTE recovered considerable ground in the Jaffna peninsula (though not Jaffna city).

In December 1999 Chandrika Kumaratunga narrowly escaped assassination by an LTTE suicide bomber. In December 2001, the UNP returned to government, incoming Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe having pledged to pursue a renewed peace initiative. This reinforced ongoing efforts by the Norwegian government to kick start peace negotiations. It also coincided with changing international attitudes towards “liberation movements” employing terrorist methods in the wake of the Sept. 11 attacks in the USA. On Dec. 24, both sides separately declared ceasefires and in February 2002 Norwegian diplomats, with broad international backing, succeeded in negotiating an indefinite ceasefire agreement. An estimated 2,000 people had been killed in clashes in the previous 12 months.

On Sept. 4, 2002, the government formally lifted a ban on the LTTE (in the face of criticism from President Chandrika Kumaratunga) prior to the commencement of peace talks. The first round of official negotiations began in Thailand on Sept. 16, 2002, with Anton Balasingham as chief negotiator for the LTTE and G. L. Peiris for the government. Balasingham on Sept. 18 stated that the LTTE was no longer seeking full independence but “substantial regional autonomy”. On Dec. 5, 2002, Balasingham announced in

Oslo, where peace talks were being conducted, that the government and LTTE had made an “unprecedented historic decision” under which they would work towards regional autonomy within a federal structure. However, the talks in the following months moved slowly and did not cover critical issues such as the disarmament of the LTTE’s estimated 10,000 fighters. Although the LTTE pulled out of the peace talks in April 2003, citing its exclusion from an aid donor planning meeting and lack of progress in improving Tamil living conditions, it stated it remained committed to a negotiated peace. On the ground there was a process of reconstruction of transport and commercial links between government and LTTE-controlled areas. In June 2003 international donors meeting in Tokyo pledged \$4.5bn to Sri Lanka subject to successful continuation of the peace process. Reports suggested that the government would offer the LTTE an interim administration in Tamil areas and participation in the disbursement of some foreign aid.

As of July 2003 the ceasefire was holding, representing by far the longest cessation of hostilities in the two decades of conflict. However, according to Dharmalingham Siddharthan, the leader of the moderate Tamil Democratic People’s Liberation Front, the ceasefire was simply a ploy by the LTTE to enable it to regroup and rearm. He stated that Velupillai Prabhakaran (who remained in heavily defended jungle hideouts in the Vanni region) was exploiting the ceasefire to eliminate any remaining Tamil opposition to the LTTE in government-controlled areas, such opponents having already been destroyed in LTTE-controlled areas. A similar view was expressed by President Kumaratunga. The LTTE is regarded as responsible for the assassination of dozens of moderate Tamil politicians, Tamil soldiers, alleged informers, and police officers during the period of the ceasefire.

The LTTE is believed to have funded its activities in good measure by a network of criminal and “charity” operations, sometimes involving intimidation, among the large Tamil diaspora. In the USA it is designated as a foreign terrorist organization but it operates legally in Canada, where there are some 200,000 Tamils. In June 2003 the opposition Canadian Alliance party called for the LTTE to be banned in Canada, to hamper its fund raising activities through front organizations, but the government was reluctant to unsettle the peace process. The organization has focused on its own struggle within Sri Lanka but in June 2002 the Nepal government accused the LTTE of training Maoist insurgents active in Nepal.

### Other Tamil Groups

The 1980s upsurge of violence gave rise to a number of Tamil groups. The formation of the **Eelam National Liberation Front (ENLF)** was announced on April 11, 1985, comprising the **Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE)**, above), the **Eelam People’s Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF)**, below), the **Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization (TELO)**, below) and the **Eelam Revolutionary Organization of Students (EROS)**, below). In a joint press release the members announced that the alliance had been formed to “co-ordinate their efforts in the armed struggle for national independence” in the face of “the escalation of state violence

and genocide”. The **People’s Liberation Organization of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE)**, below) was the only significant Tamil separatist group not in the coalition.

The ENLF participated in unsuccessful talks in Bhutan with the Sri Lankan government in July-August 1985, along with representatives of the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF, a moderate political party).

Internal dissension within the ENLF broke out in late April 1986 with fighting between the LTTE and TELO forces. On Aug. 30, 1986, it was reported that the LTTE had withdrawn from the ENLF, having stopped attending meetings earlier that year, and on Dec. 13 the LTTE launched a full-scale offensive throughout the Tamil-dominated areas against EPRLF members.

On March 28, 1987, it was reported that the ENLF had been “virtually wound up” and that its Madras office had been closed down. In an operation launched by the LTTE against TELO, EPRLF and PLOTE forces the government estimated that 98 people had been killed by April 4.

After the arrival of the Indian Peacekeeping Force (IPKF) following the Indo-Sri Lankan agreement of July 1987 (above), the Indians sought to mobilize a **Tamil National Army (TNA)**, comprising three pro-IPKF militias, the EPRLF, the ENDLF (itself comprising breakaway elements from the EPRLF as well as PLOTE) and TELO, in order to provide support against the LTTE. However, many of the members proved to be forcibly conscripted teenagers and of little use against the LTTE guerrillas, leading in December 1989 and January 1990 to the TNA’s rapid defeat and withdrawal from areas vacated by the IPKF. The LTTE has been the undisputed leading Tamil guerrilla force since that time.

### Eelam People’s Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF)

Formed as a breakaway from EROS (see below), it created a military wing in 1982, and had a distinctively leftist orientation under its original leader, K. Pathmanabha, who had trained in the 1970s with the PLO in Lebanon. In 1985 it joined the abortive Eelam National Liberation Front (ENLF). The group had a strongly pro-Indian orientation and after the arrival of Indian forces it supported the IPKF and participated in elections, earning it the enmity of the LTTE. One of its leaders, Annamalai Varatharaja Perumal, in 1988 became the Chief Minister of the merged Northern and Eastern Province. After the withdrawal of Indian forces the EPRLF rapidly declined and fell victim to assassinations by LTTE supporters. K. Pathmanabha was assassinated in Madras on June 19, 1990.

It is now a minor factor and no longer engaged in armed conflict with the Sri Lankan authorities. It is split into two factions, one headed by former Chief Minister A.V. Perumal (the Varathar wing), who is in India, and another by its secretary general, Suresh Premachandran (the Suresh wing), who is semi-retired. The Varathar wing has remained a target for LTTE attacks since the 2002 ceasefire.

### Eelam Revolutionary Organization of Students (EROS)

Founded in 1975 and its cadres received training by the PLO



in Lebanon in the late 1970s. From the outset it was closely associated with the LTTE and remained the only militant Tamil group not to come into conflict with the LTTE. The group also received some assistance in the 1980s from the government of the (Indian) state of Tamil Nadu.

### **People's Liberation Organization of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE)**

Formed in 1979 by Uma Maheswara, a former senior member of the LTTE, who had fallen out with Prabhakaran. Maheswara, like other Tamil leaders, had received training by the PLO in Lebanon. In common with other Tamil secessionist groups the PLOTE sought a separate, socialist Tamil homeland. On Sept. 20, 1984, the organization's public relations officer was quoted as stating that the PLOTE advocated mass insurrection as opposed to guerrilla tactics, and that it sought alliances with any communist country, except China. The PLOTE was the most significant separatist organization that did not join the short-lived Eelam National Liberation Front (ENLF, see above) alliance of four Tamil groups formed in April 1985. In 1986, PLOTE came under sustained attack by LTTE forces.

Breakaway factions of the PLOTE and of the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF, see above) formed in Madras on May 17, 1987, the Eelam National Democratic Liberation Front (ENDLF) which went on to participate in the political process in co-operation with Indian forces.

Uma Maheswara was sentenced in absentia on Aug. 5, 1987, to life imprisonment for robbery. He was killed in Colombo in July 1989, apparently as a result of internal conflict within the group.

PLOTE and its political wing the Democratic People's Liberation Front (DPLF) have now adopted a constitutional course. The organization is led by Dharmalingham Siddharthan, a Member of Parliament. It won three parliamentary seats in 1994 but lost them in the 2000 elections, regaining one seat in 2001. Its officials have remained targets for assassination by the LTTE since the 2002 ceasefire.

### **Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization (TELO)**

Founded in 1979. Three of its original leaders were killed in prison in 1983. In 1985 it joined the short-lived Eelam National Liberation Front but fighting between TELO and LTTE guerrillas between April 29 and May 6, 1986, resulted in the destruction of 22 TELO camps and the death of over 100 members, including its founder Sri Sabaratnam. This effectively destroyed its influence as a guerrilla organization.

TELO stood in the 2000 general election in Northern province and won three seats.

## **EXTREMIST SINHALESE MOVEMENT**

### **People's Liberation Front (Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna, JVP)**

*Website.* [www.jvpsrilanka.com](http://www.jvpsrilanka.com)

*Leadership.* Somawansa Amarasinghe (leader); Tilvin Silva (general secretary)

This Sinhalese Maoist movement was founded in 1965 in opposition to the participation of other left-wing parties in the Bandaranaike government. It is now a legal political

party but it attempted to overthrow the government in 1971 and the late 1980s.

Although it supported the Bandaranaike-led United Front coalition in the 1970 elections, Rohana Wijeweere, its leader, and over 4,000 of the JVP's members were arrested by the United Front government in March 1971. In consequence it launched a revolt in April, which was quickly crushed; a state of emergency was imposed, the JVP was banned and Wijeweere was eventually sentenced to life imprisonment in 1974. The JVP was legalized in 1977, however, and on his release later in the same year Wijeweere repudiated the use of violent methods. In the 1983 presidential elections Wijeweere took third place and 4.19 per cent of the vote. The JVP was again banned after communal riots (mainly in Jaffna and Colombo) in 1983.

Following its proscription and in the light of the escalating violence between Tamil guerrillas and the armed forces in the Northern and Eastern provinces, the JVP is thought to have concentrated on propaganda work in the southern Sinhalese heartlands and universities and on building up supplies of arms. JVP supporters were amongst 3,000 Sinhalese detained in early February 1987 in order to prevent reprisals against Tamils following the recent killings of 43 Sinhalese villagers by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE, see separate entry). On April 15 a JVP unit raided an army camp near Kandy, seizing a number of automatic weapons. Late in May police arrested some 140 JVP members; at the same time six of the country's universities situated in predominantly Sinhalese areas were closed following allegations that student leaders were forming links with the JVP; and 18 trade unions with alleged JVP affiliations were proscribed. The government claimed that JVP guerrillas had, on June 7, launched simultaneous raids on military targets. The JVP's avowed aim was "to protect the nation against an impending Indian invasion".

The JVP gained considerably in strength in the months following the July 1987 Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement, which it claimed conceded too much power to the Tamil minority. In the second half of 1987 the JVP was blamed for numerous political assassinations, generally of officials and MPs of the ruling UNP. Secret negotiations with the government led to the lifting of the ban on the JVP on May 10, 1988, which had been in force since the outbreak of the inter-ethnic Sinhalese and Tamil rioting in July 1983. In return, the JVP agreed to end political violence and surrender its weapons to Buddhist monks by May 29. However, it continued its assassination campaign in the run-up to the June provincial elections and supported along with the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) a general strike at the end of July in the southern provinces to mark the first anniversary of the Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement.

In August 1989 the JVP began to target the families of members of the Sri Lankan armed forces for attack, a move which aroused violent retaliation from pro-government vigilante groups. The death in police custody of Wijedasa Liyanarachchi, a lawyer and defender of JVP activists, prompted a JVP-led strike on Sept. 12, which effectively paralyzed Colombo and many provincial towns. In late 1989 the JVP stepped up its violent campaign and throughout November mounted a series of disruptive strikes enforced by death threats against both workers and employers.

However, in a ferocious counter-offensive the government effectively destroyed the JVP. Rohana Wijeweere, the JVP leader since its formation, and his deputy, Upatissa Gamanayake, were shot dead on Nov. 13 while in the custody of security forces and their bodies were cremated by the Army within hours, making a post mortem impossible. President Premadasa ordered an immediate inquiry into the circumstances of Wijeweere's death. JVP sources quoted in *The Guardian* of Nov. 15 claimed that Wijeweere had been interrogated then executed, and alleged that the Army was wary of delivering captured JVP members to the government in case they were given amnesties, as had happened in the past with large numbers of insurgents.

Colombo radio reported on Nov. 25, 1989, that the entire JVP politburo and 25 district and area leaders of the organization's military wing had been apprehended by the security forces during the previous two weeks. It was estimated that in the month up to Nov. 15 there were 429 deaths. On Dec. 13 the JVP freed 220 prisoners, including many JVP detainees, after an attack on a prison in Colombo. In February 1990 the government stated that 6,700 suspected

JVP members were being detained in prisons and security-force camps. Tens of thousands of young men suspected of JVP sympathies were abducted by government forces during the period of conflict from 1987-90, and mass graves were later unearthed.

The party re-entered constitutional politics in 1994 when the UNP government was replaced by the People's Alliance. The party has a continuing Marxist and pro-Chinese orientation. Its candidate in the December 1999 presidential elections, Nandana Gunathilake, came a distant third, with 4.1 per cent of the vote, and in the October 2000 general elections it won 10 seats in Parliament. In September 2001, it briefly offered back-bench support to the coalition government led by the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, keeping it in office for an additional month, citing efforts to destabilize the country by the "murderous" United National Party (which it blamed for past massacres of JVP supporters), imperialists, and Tamil separatist forces. It won 16 seats in the December 2001 elections.

*F. J. Harper*

## Sudan

**Capital:** Khartoum

**Population:** 31.7 m

Since its establishment in 1956, the Republic of Sudan has experienced political instability, north-south division and a debilitating civil war. The country has suffered perennial refugee crises and economic stagnation (exacerbated by drought), with hundreds of thousands killed in conflict.

A period of transitional military rule followed the coup of April 1985 in which the armed forces seized power from President Jaafar al-Nemery, who had himself come to power in a coup in 1969 and established a one-party state. Power was transferred to a civilian regime in May 1986, and for three years a series of coalition governments held office, with Sadiq al-Mahdi as the most prominent political figure (as he had been in civilian administrations prior to the Nemery coup). Al-Mahdi's failure to deal with the country's problems led to an army takeover in June 1989, in a coup led by Lt.-Gen. Omar Hassan Ahmad al-Bashir at the head of a Revolutionary Command Council (RCC). In October 1993 the RCC dissolved itself and named Bashir as President of a new civilian government that included most ministers from the outgoing administration. Elections were held on a non-party basis in March 1996 for 265 of the 275 elective seats in a 400-seat National Assembly (the unicameral legislature). Hassan al-Turabi, secretary-general of the National Islamic Front (NIF, a fundamentalist Islamic party with close links to successive Bashir governments) was elected president (Speaker) of the new National Assembly. Bashir was elected to a five-year term as President in March 1996, easily defeating

40 other candidates.

A new constitution, endorsed by referendum, came into force in July 1998. Organized political activity, banned since Bashir's 1989 coup, resumed in November 1998, the first approvals of party registration applications being announced in early 1999 (although the most important opposition parties remained in exile). The NIF evolved into the National Congress (NC) party, with President Bashir as its president and Turabi as its secretary-general. However, relations between Bashir and Turabi deteriorated progressively during the second half of 1999, which also brought a reopening of contacts between Bashir and Sadiq al-Mahdi, the exiled leader of the Umma Party (one of the two major parties which, together with the NIF, had dominated Sudanese politics before Bashir's coup).

In December 1999 President Bashir suspended the National Assembly before it could vote on a bill (supported by Turabi) to reduce presidential powers. The Assembly was dissolved in February 2000 and four months later Turabi (who had been suspended as secretary-general of the NC) established a new party, the Popular National Congress (PNC), in opposition to Bashir. Presidential and legislative elections held in December 2000 were boycotted by the PNC and other main opposition parties (including the Umma Party, whose leadership had returned from exile prior to polling). Bashir was re-elected as President with over 86 per cent of the vote; his main challenger (with less than 10 per cent of the vote) was former President Nemery, who had returned to Khartoum under an

amnesty granted in May 2000. In the legislative elections, and in the face of limited opposition, the NC swept the poll, winning 355 of the 360 available seats in the National Assembly.

### Beja Congress

*Leadership: Amin Shingrai*

The Beja Congress, a member of the opposition umbrella organization the National Democratic Alliance (NDA, see entry), effectively controls a swathe of eastern Sudan centred around Garoura and Hamshkoraib and populated by some 3 million Beja tribespeople. This group is not regarded as well-organized as a fighting force.

### Equatoria Defence Force

*Leadership: Theophilus Ochang Lotti*

This is a pro-government militia that had broken away from the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) in the early 1990s and had joined the South Sudan Independence Movement (SSIM, see entry) upon its formation in 1995.

### National Democratic Alliance (NDA)

*Leadership: Moulana al-Sayed Mohammed Osman al-Mirghani (president of Leadership Council); Gen. Abd-al-Rahman Saeed (vice-president of Leadership Council); Fagan Amom (secretary-general of executive bureau)*

The NDA was formed in the immediate aftermath of the June 1989 military coup that brought Bashir to power as a coalition linking, somewhat awkwardly, a disparate group of his opponents. These included the **Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM)** and a number of Muslim-based parties, many of which not only supported the imposition of Islamic Sharia law on the south, but had also opposed southern autonomy or secession prior to the coup. Members also included Sudan's two main centrist parties, the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) and the Umma Party (UP); several smaller, more radical parties (the Communist Party of Sudan and the Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party); the General Council of the Trade Unions Federations (trade union activity having been banned in the post-coup ban on political activities); and political representatives of various small armed rebel groups operating in southern Sudan, including the Beja Congress and the Sudan Alliance Forces (SAF).

Over 95 per cent of the NDA combatants are provided by the SPLM's military wing, the **Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA)**, and the SPLM/A's leader, John Garang, sits on the NDA's Leadership Council as representative of the Unified Military Command of the NDA. The NDA has its headquarters in Asmara, the capital city of Eritrea, together with branch offices at Cairo, Nairobi, Washington and London.

Since 1995 the NDA has been led by Osman al-Mirghani, the exiled leader of the DUP. Mubarak al-Mirghani, a senior member of the Umma Party, was suspended as NDA secretary-general in late 1999 after the Umma Party leader, Sadiq al-Mahdi, held secret peace talks with President Bashir without first consulting other NDA members. The talks resulted in the signing of the so-called "Call of the Homeland" accord by the Umma Party and the government, following mediation by the government of Djibouti. Mubarak al-Murghani resigned as secretary-general in

March 2000 when the Umma Party withdrew from the NDA and shortly thereafter he returned from exile to Khartoum, as did Umma Party leader Mahdi in November 2000.

Osman al-Mirghani held a round of "exploratory" talks with President Bashir in Eritrea in September 2000. A few months later the government arrested the NDA's then secretary-general, Joseph Okelo, and other members of the NDA's Khartoum secretariat on charges including espionage and plotting armed opposition to the government.

### South Sudan Independence Movement (SSIM)

The South Sudan Independence Movement (SSIM) was formed in 1995 from a faction of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) led by Riek Machar Teny-Durgon, who (alongside another SPLM faction leader, Col. Kerbino Kuanyin Bol) had openly opposed John Garang's leadership of the SPLM since 1991.

In April 1996 the SSIM and Bol's Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) – United (also known as the SPLA (Bahr el-Gazal Group)) signed a preliminary peace treaty with the Bashir regime, through which the two groups effectively relinquished their demands for independence for the south. The SPLM and many independent analysts regarded the agreement as a tactical government effort to enlist southerners on its side. In particular, Machar, a Nuer, had been of crucial importance to the government because his tribal area included the country's main oil field in the Upper Nile province. The agreement was concluded in Khartoum in April 1997 and provided for a referendum on self-determination in the south after four years, the suspension of legislation imposing Islamic *sharia* law on the largely non-Muslim south; and an amnesty for members of the SSIM, the SPLA-United and the four other groups which signed the accord – another SPLA splinter group, led by Arok Thon Arok, the SPLA (Bor Group); the Union of Sudan African Parties (USAP); the Equatoria Defence Force (EDF); and the South Sudan Independents Group (SSIG). These former insurgent elements subsequently formed the United Democratic Salvation Front (UDSF).

In August 1997 President Bashir appointed Machar as chairman of the newly established Southern States' Co-ordination Council (SSCC) and as a presidential assistant. However, in early 2000 Machar resigned as chairman of the SSCC and as presidential assistant. He also tendered his resignation as chairman of the United Democratic Salvation Front, his party that had been registered in early 1999. In his resignation letter to Bashir, Machar stated that the government had "violated" the 1997 Khartoum agreement. Prior to his official resignation Machar had left Sudan and had entered into talks, in Kenya, with SPLM/A leader Garang. Machar went on to form and lead a new group, the Sudan People's Democratic Front, which signed a "declaration of unity" with the SPLM in January 2002.

### South Sudan Liberation Movement (SSLM)

*Leadership: Wal Duany (chairman); Commander Timothy Taban Juc (chief of staff)*

The South Sudan Liberation Movement (SSLM) and its armed wing, the **South Sudan Liberation Army (SSLA)**, was formed in January 2000, in the Upper Nile Region to defend southern Sudan against "Arab/Islamic domination

and aggression". The group's formation had been preceded by the establishment in November 1999 in Waat, central Upper Nile, of the Upper Nile Provisional Military Command Council (UMCC), which had aimed to unify all the military forces in central, eastern and western Upper Nile.

In its founding charter, the SSLM said that it had been formed "as a political necessity to meet the exigencies of the political and military situation in Upper Nile Region without prejudice to the [Sudan People's Liberation Movement – SPLM, see entry] and its role in the liberation process, but to enhance the unity of the people for purpose of the liberation, freedom and independence, until such a time that organic unity of the fighting people can be achieved". However, in January 2003 there was evidence that the SSLA had recently been involved in fighting with the SPLM's military wing, the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA). A statement issued by the SSLM said that the SSLA had "ended the SPLA occupation of Akobo" in late January and that SSLA forces were carrying out a "clean up" operation in the area. Furthermore, the statement said that the approach of the SPLA to the southern Sudanese "who are supposed to be liberated has been crude and absolute". "Most southern Sudanese" it went on "believed the SPLA is not any longer a liberation movement".

### **South Sudan Unity Movement (SSUM)**

*Leadership: Paulino Matip*

This pro-government militia was formed in March 1998 by Paulino Matip, a former commander in Riek Machar's South Sudan Independence Movement (SSIM, see entry). The government denies allegations that it has recruited private military and security companies to train the SSUM to protect oilfields. Nonetheless, in January 2003 it was reported that SSUM fighters had launched a series of attacks on areas of the oil-rich Upper West Nile under the control of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A, see entry).

### **Sudan Alliance Forces (SAF)**

*Leadership: Abdelaziz Khalid*

The Sudan Alliance Forces (SAF) of ex-paratrooper Abdelaziz Khalid, a northerner, have grown in strength on Sudan's eastern border since the early 1990s. The SAF has played a major role in the opening of a new war front in the east since 1997, when together with the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and smaller groups its forces began to pressure the strategically vital hydro-electric dam on the Blue Nile. The SAF is a member of the opposition National Democratic Alliance and is regarded as having a secular orientation.

### **Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A)**

*Leadership: Mani Arkoi Minawi (secretary general)*

Rebels in Sudan's western Darfur region announced in mid-March 2003 that they had changed their group's name from the **Darfur Liberation Front (DLF)** to the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A). In a political statement issued at the same time, the SLM/A stated that its objective was to "create a united democratic Sudan" on the basis of equality and devolution of power. The group called for a separation of state and religion and committed itself to an armed struggle as "one of our means to achieve our legit-

imate objectives". In addition, it called upon all citizens of Darfur "from Arab background" to join the struggle against the Khartoum government.

Analysts suggested that the SLM/A wanted to end the marginalization of Darfur, and was not interested in secession, unlike southern rebels. Darfur, one of the most arid and isolated regions in Sudan, had witnessed tribal clashes and bandit raids for many years, but no armed political faction was reported active there until February 2003, when the DLF claimed to have seized control of Gulu, the chief town of the Jebel Marra district. The rebels claimed to have killed 195 government troops, out of a force of approximately 450 in Gulu. Government forces were reported to have re-taken Gulu in early March and a ceasefire was agreed after the government pledged to implement development projects in the region. However, the ceasefire proved to be short-lived and in mid-March rebel forces were reported to have launched fresh attacks on government troops.

### **Sudan People's Democratic Front (SPDF)**

*Leadership: Riek Machar*

After departing from the government side, which he had joined in 1997, Riek Machar (former leader of a faction of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM)) formed a new group in 2000 called the Sudan People's Democratic Front (SPDF), with its military wing, the Sudan People's Defence Forces. In January 2002 Machar and his former adversary and rival John Garang (leader of the SPLM) met in Nairobi, Kenya, and issued a "declaration of unity" under which the SPDF would be merged into the SPLM.

### **Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A)**

*Leadership: Col. John Garang (chairman and commander-in-chief); James Wani Igga (secretary-general)*

The Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), and its armed wing, the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), is the principal armed rebel force in southern Sudan. The SPLM/A emerged from the Anya-Nya II southern secessionist movement in 1983, and has since fought against the governments of Jaafar al-Nemery and Sadiq al-Mahdi and the current Bashir regime. The group is largely but not exclusively southern and Christian, and its declared aims are the establishment of a secular, democratic Sudan. Although many southerners have called for full independence for the south, the SPLM/A has talked primarily of unity with the Islamic north within a confederal system and has denied accusations that it has a hidden, secessionist agenda. The SPLM/A's leader, John Garang, holds a doctorate and had military training in the USA. He is from the Dinka, Sudan's largest ethnic group.

The SPLM/A was one of the founder members of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA, see entry) set up after the military coup of 1989 to provide a joint forum for a wide range of opponents of the Bashir regime. Northern, Islamic Sudanese recognition of Garang took an important step forward in October 1996 when he was appointed chairman of the NDA's Unified Military Command. The military wings of the various opposition groups had hitherto operated separately in the conflict.

However, in the early 1990s the SPLM/A suffered from

serious internal divisions when a number of commanders broke with Garang, eventually signing a separate peace agreement with the Bashir regime in April 1997. These commanders included Riek Machar, leader of the breakaway South Sudan Independence Movement (SSIM), and Col. Kerbino Kuanyin Bol, leader of the breakaway Sudan People Liberation Army (SPLA) – United (also known as the SPLA (Bahr el-Gazal Group)).

In 1983 Bol had led the mutiny in the southern town of Bor which sparked the current insurgency. For several years he had served as second-in-command of the SPLA, but he fell out with Garang in 1987. (Garang and Bol belonged to different branches of the Dinka group.) Garang imprisoned Bol, who managed to escape to Uganda and then on to Kenya, where he formed the SPLA (United) faction. Bol's base was in Gogrial, northern Bahr el-Ghazal, where his military acumen was crucial to the government's success in countering the SPLA. Bol's vital role in countering Garang was rewarded in January 1998 when President Bashir appointed him as Deputy President and Minister for Local Government and Public Security in southern Sudan. Machar, meanwhile, had been appointed as president of the government's Southern Co-ordinating Council.

Shortly after his appointment to the government, Bol won further praise from the Bashir regime when he apparently orchestrated mass defections of SPLA forces in the Bahr el-Ghazal region. However, Bol's action turned out to be a carefully organized "Trojan Horse" operation as once inside the regional capital, Wau, the rebel returnees began capturing the town for the SPLA. A spokesman for the SPLA stated that Bol's original defection to the government had been a carefully orchestrated trap. Nonetheless, Bol's relations with Garang remained poor and in November 1998 gunmen loyal to Bol narrowly failed to assassinate Garang in his Kenyan home. Bol died in September 1999 from wounds which he had received following an internal power struggle within a small pro-government militia led by Paulino Matip.

After the December 2000 presidential and legislative elections there was an intensification of national and international efforts to negotiate a peaceful solution to the conflict. In addition to maintaining close links to its partners in the NDA, in February 2001 the SPLM/A concluded a controversial "memorandum of understanding" with the Popular National Congress (PNC) led by Hassan Abdullah al-Turabi, formerly the regime's chief Islamic ideologue and who had emerged as President Bashir's chief rival. The memorandum reportedly called for an "escalation of popular and peaceful resistance against the government". A few months later Garang held talks with Sadiq al-Mahdi, the leader of the Umma Party (which had withdrawn from the NDA in 2000), who urged him to declare a ceasefire to prepare the way for talks between the government and all the opposition groups in Sudan.

In late July 2002 President Bashir held his first face-to-

face meeting with Garang in the Ugandan capital, Kampala, one week after government officials and SPLM/A leaders had agreed on a framework for talks to end the civil war. This came after the USA had intensified pressure on both sides to make peace. The meeting between Bashir and Garang followed five weeks of intensive talks in the Kenyan town of Machakos – under the auspices of the regional Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD)—in which both sides agreed to enter into negotiations to end the war. The framework Machakos protocol called for Sudan's constitution to be rewritten so that Islamic *sharia* law would not be applied to non-Muslims in the south. It also called for a referendum to be held in six years' time to determine whether the south should remain a part of Sudan or gain its independence. It was agreed that the talks would focus on issues that included the integration of rebel leaders into the government, organizing a ceasefire, human rights and the sharing of Sudan's oil wealth.

The government delegation walked out of the Machakos talks in early September 2002 after the SPLA had captured the strategically and symbolically important town of Torit, the capital of Eastern Equatoria state. Torit had served as the SPLA's base until it had fallen to the government in 1992. Government forces recaptured Torit in early October and peace talks resumed shortly thereafter when the two sides signed a memorandum of understanding providing for a temporary ceasefire, which did little to halt fighting on the ground. The peace talks continued into 2003, although little concrete progress was reported. In early February 2003 the two sides signed an appendix to the October 2002 ceasefire agreement, which included additional steps to enforce the ceasefire. Nonetheless, it was reported that government troops were continuing to carry out military operations in the oil-rich West Upper Nile.

### **Upper Nile Provisional Military Command Council (UMCC)**

*Leadership: Peter Bol Kong (chairman); James Yiech Biet (deputy chairman); Kuong Donhier Gatluak (secretary)*

Senior commanders of the South Sudan Defence Force (SSDF), Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and the South Sudan Unity Army (SSUA), all from the Greater Upper Nile Region, met in Central Upper Nile in November 1999 to "review and evaluate the political and military situation in the Sudan with special focus on the fighting in Western Upper Nile". The commanders agreed to form a unified military leadership to be known as the Upper Nile Provisional Military Command Council (UMCC) that would act as the "supreme military authority over all their military forces in Upper Nile". The creation of the UMCC was a precursor to the formation in January 2000 of the South Sudan Liberation Movement (see entry).

*D. J. Sagar*



# Suriname

**Capital:** Paramaribo

**Population:** 436,000

With the establishment of the Republic of Suriname on Nov. 25, 1975, Suriname gained full independence from the Netherlands, after having enjoyed a certain degree of autonomy since 1954. The 1975 Constitution established a parliamentary democracy in which the President had only limited powers. This was to change in 1987, when with the adoption of a new Constitution the role of the President was strengthened to become both head of state and head of government. However, constitutional reforms adopted in 1992 curbed the President's powers to some extent by stipulating that the President can be forced to resign by a simple majority in the National Assembly rather than by a majority of two-thirds of the Assembly.

The unicameral National Assembly consists of 51 members who are elected by direct popular vote to serve for a five-year term. Executive power is exercised by the President, who is elected by the National Assembly and is assisted by a Vice President, also elected by the Assembly, and a Cabinet appointed by the President from among the Assembly members. Members of the executive are elected for a five-year term by the National Assembly, or by the People's Assembly, consisting of 869 representatives from local and regional councils, if no President or Vice President obtains a constitutional majority.

## Post-colonial political developments

The post-colonial political history of Suriname has been marked by ethnic conflict, military coups, and allegations of corruption and involvement of government officials in the trafficking of illicit drugs. In 1980, five years after gaining independence, Suriname saw its first military coup, successfully staged by Désiré Bouterse. Two years later, on Dec. 18, 1982, fifteen opposition leaders were killed in Fort Zeelandia, which led to widespread international condemnation of the Bouterse régime and to strained diplomatic relations with the Netherlands, which had until then continued to support the young republic financially.

Under increased international pressure, not least from the USA, which saw in Bouterse a potential communist threat because of his overt sympathy for Fidel Castro, Bouterse eventually conceded free elections for the first time in 1987. However, in 1990 Bouterse staged another military coup in order to dismiss the government of President Ramsewak Shankar and to install a new government under the leadership of J. Kraag. This was followed in 1991 by new elections, in which Ronald Venetiaan came to power. Despite

resistance from the military, President Venetiaan nominated Arthy Gorré to succeed Désiré Bouterse as chief of the armed forces in 1993.

Venetiaan's successor as President, Jules Wijdenbosch, who was elected in 1996, nominated Désiré Bouterse as advisor of State. Although Bouterse no longer takes centre stage in Suriname's political arena, he continues to be the leader of the National Democratic Party (NDP), which is currently part of the main opposition coalition, the Millennium Combination (MC). Meanwhile, the number of allegations concerning Bouterse's involvement in the trafficking of arms and illicit drugs has increased steadily over the last years, and led to the issuing in 1997 of an international arrest warrant for Bouterse by the Dutch public prosecutor, Docters van Leeuwen.

President Wijdenbosch called early elections, after the plummeting of the value of the Surinamese Guilder from 700 to approximately 2,100 to the US dollar led to sometimes violent mass protests in the streets of Paramaribo. As a result of these elections, held on May 25, 2000, the 51 seats in the Assembly were distributed as follows: National Front, consisting of the National Party of Suriname (NPS), Progressive Reform Party (VHP), *Pertjajah Luhur* (PL) and the Suriname Labour Party (SPA), 32; Millennium Combination (MC), consisting of Bouterse's National Democratic Party (NDP), the Party for National Unity and Solidarity (KTPI) and Democratic Alternative (DA), 10; Democratic National Platform 2000 (DNP2000), 3; Democratic Alternative '91 (DA'91), 2; Political Wing FAL (PVF), 2.

Parties that did not achieve representation in the Assembly were: Basic Party for Renewal and Democracy (BVD), Renewed Progressive Party (HPP), Democracy and Development through Unity (DOE), *Naya Kadan* (NK), General Liberation and Development Party (ABOP), 21<sup>st</sup> Century Democrats (D21), National Party for Leadership and Development (NPLO) and Progressive Workers' and Farmers' Union (PL).

Following the elections, Venetiaan (the leader of the National Party of Suriname) was elected by the National Assembly for a second term as President and J. R. Ajodhia was elected Vice President.

## Dissident and revolutionary movements

Suriname has a history of political factionalism, inter-ethnic tension and military intervention. Against this background, two main categories of anti-constitutional and revolutionary movements may be distinguished.

Firstly, factions from within the established military order that managed to overturn the democratically elected governments by means of a coup. Secondly, various pressure groups, such as for example the Mandela Bushnegro Liberation Movement, the *Tucayana Amazonica* and the Union for Liberation and Democracy, which claimed a bigger political voice for certain ethnic populations of Suriname's interior and some of which resorted to armed force.

However, the demarcation line between these two groups was often unclear. For example, Ronnie Brunswijk, a military man and former bodyguard of Bouterse, led the Maroon or Bush Negroes (*boschneger*, descendants of escaped slaves who had established an independent existence in the interior of the country) in an armed insurrection against Bouterse's regime in 1986. Brunswijk's Surinamese Liberation Army (or "Jungle Commando"), estimated as numbering between 200 and 400, staged attacks on economic targets and military posts and claimed to control parts of the interior in the late 1980s, although it then broke up into ineffective factions. The attempt in more recent years by both Bouterse and Brunswijk to shed their radical military pasts and to become part of more mainstream political movements complicates this picture even further. At present both Bouterse and Brunswijk are active in what seem mainstream political parties. Bouterse continues to lead the National Democratic Party (NDP), which in 1996 formed the Wijdenbosch-Radhakissun government with the help of some smaller political parties, and which is now part

of the Millennium Combination (MC). Ronnie Brunswijk leads the General Liberation and Development Party (ABOP), which has no seats in the legislature.

The situation in the Surinamese interior is still not entirely free of armed conflicts between the various ethnic groups, but there has been a sharp decline in ethnic violence and insurrection since the early 1990s. Many of these ethnic groups have established formal political parties, such as for example the Suriname Amazon Party (APS), the Brotherhood and Union in Politics Party (BEP) and the General Liberation and Development Party (ABOP, see above), which now voice the individual concerns of these ethnic groups of Suriname's interior.

Meanwhile ethnic sections of the urban population are represented in other political parties, such as the Hindu in the Basic Party for Renewal and Democracy (BVD), the Renewed Progressive Party (HPP) and *Naya Kadam* (NK) and the Javanese in the *Pendawa Lima* (PL). This might suggest that the political climate of Suriname has changed over the last decade and that those who aspire to political change are no longer confined to resorting to violence and insurrection, but instead now have access to channels where political influence can be exercised. However, it seems premature to make such a general statement, given that Suriname's track record of dealing peacefully with pressures for social and political change is relatively short.

*Frank Mols*

## Swaziland

**Capital:** Mbabane (administrative); Lobamba (legislative)

**Population:** 1.1 m

The Kingdom of Swaziland achieved full independence from the United Kingdom in 1968. The country is ruled by a King (*Ngwenyama* or Paramount Chief) whose succession is governed by Swazi law and custom. The present King, Mswati III, acceded to the throne in 1986. Under the 1978 constitution considerable executive power is vested in the King and is exercised by a Cabinet appointed by him. The bicameral Parliament consists of a Senate and a House of Assembly, with limited powers. The House of Assembly has 65 members, 55 directly elected (on a non-party basis), with voters electing one representative from each of the *Tinkhundla* (tribal assemblies), and a further 10 members appointed by the King. There are 30 members of the Senate, 20 of whom are nominated by the King and 10 elected by the House of Assembly. Party political activity, banned in 1973, was formally prohibited under the 1978 constitution.

The issues of democratization and liberalization have dominated the political scene in Swaziland since

the mid-1990s. The Constitutional Review Commission, established in 1996, submitted a private report to the King in mid-2001. Some of the key recommendations of the report were that the absolute monarchy should continue in its current form and that political parties should remain banned, although provision should be made for a bill of rights. In late 2001 the King announced the appointment of a team to draft a new constitution, to be completed by mid-2003. The main (illegal) opposition movement, the People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), denounced the move as a "sham", and called for a national convention to conduct negotiations that would culminate in democratic elections for an interim government to oversee the transition to democracy.

### **People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO)**

*Leadership:* Mario Masuku (president); Bong'nkhosi Dlamini (secretary-general)

This group first came to public attention in 1990, when 10

alleged members were tried on charges of high treason and sedition in a trial which the state had sought to use as a means of deterring mounting dissent. The court dismissed the treason charges, but found six of the accused guilty of participating in a political meeting (an illegal activity since 1973). The 10 accused had been among 20 people arrested in a crackdown on dissenters earlier in the year, when it came to light that the PUDEMO group was closely linked with the Swaziland branch of the Nelson Mandela International Reception Committee, formed soon after Mandela's release from prison in South Africa in February 1990. Leaflets circulated by the movement indicated that it aimed among other things to limit the power of the monarch to the figurehead role prescribed in the independence constitution (abolished in 1973).

The movement's entire executive committee was changed at its annual congress held secretly in Mbabane in March 1996. PUDEMO president Kislon Shongwe was replaced by one of the movement's founder members, Mario Masuku. Masuku had been a leading member of PUDEMO since its formation as an underground political movement in the mid-1980s following the death of King Sobuza II in 1983. PUDEMO secretary-general Domenic Mngomezulu was replaced by Bong'nkhosi Dlamini while veteran PUDEMO women's activist Zodwa Mkhonta was elected vice president. PUDEMO officials said that Shongwe had resigned to avoid deepening a split in the movement resulting from dissatisfaction among younger, more militant,

members who had accused the executive committee of ineffective leadership and taking too long in forcing political change.

PUDEMO president Masuku was arrested on charges of sedition in November 2000 and released under restrictive bail conditions. In October 2001 Masuku refused to continue to observe his bail conditions, which required him to report daily to the police regional headquarters in Mbabane, to obtain the permission of the Commissioner of Police to address any public gathering and to obtain the permission of the High Court to travel abroad. He was remanded in custody pending trial on the original sedition charges. In August 2002 Masuku was acquitted of the sedition charges. The High Court in Mbabane ruled that the state had failed to prove its case and ordered Masuku's immediate release.

In January 2003 PUDEMO published its manifesto in the *Swazi Observer*, a daily newspaper owned by the palace-controlled royal conglomerate, Tibiyo TakaNgwane. The publication was regarded as a milestone in the movement's political development and was an indication of the growing domestic and international pressure to legalize political debate. The manifesto, in the form of a New Year's message, called for the repeal of the 1973 royal decree that banned parties and activity in opposition to royal rule. PUDEMO, it said, would "lead all the oppressed and democracy-seeking forces" in the country.

*D. J. Sagar*

## Sweden

**Capital:** Stockholm

**Population:** 8.9 m

The Kingdom of Sweden is a parliamentary democracy in which the monarch has a purely ceremonial role as head of state. There is a Cabinet headed by a Prime Minister (the head of government) which is responsible to a unicameral Parliament (Riksdag) of 349 members elected for a four-year term by universal adult suffrage.

As a result of elections held in September 2002, seats in the Riksdag were distributed as follows: Social Democratic Labour Party 144, Conservative Party (the "Moderates") 55, Liberal Party 48, Christian Democrats 33, Leftist Party 30, Centre Party 22 and Greens 17. The government is led by the Social Democratic Labour Party of Prime Minister Göran Persson. The Social Democrats have been in power for all but nine years since the 1930s.

The most notable act of political violence in recent Swedish history was the assassination of the Prime Minister, Olof Palme, on Feb. 28, 1986, a crime that has never been solved. The Foreign Minister, Anna Lindh, was assassinated in Stockholm on Sept 10, 2003. Although both left- and right-wing extremist groups exist, it is the extreme right that has been of more consequence in recent years due to its sometimes

violent activities, although neither extreme represents a serious threat to the political system.

### Extreme Right-wing Groups

In the 1991 elections, the short-lived New Democracy, campaigning in the middle of a deep recession on a populist platform that included tax cuts and curbs on immigrants, won 6.7 per cent of the vote and 25 seats in parliament. This party failed to reach the 4 per cent barrier to parliamentary representation in the next election (1994), however, and declined rapidly thereafter. While New Democracy blamed immigrants for the country's major problems and wanted to limit immigration, it did not espouse openly racist views and neither did it claim to oppose parliamentary democracy.

The most important extreme right-wing party today is the Swedish Democrats. This party opposes immigration and multiculturalism. Although the party has never come close to passing the 4 per cent barrier to enter the national parliament, municipal elections do not have any barriers and the Swedish Democrats have succeeded in gaining seats in several municipal assemblies.

In the southern town of Sjöbo an anti-immigrant party was founded by a former Centre Party politician, Sven-Olle Olsson, who was expelled from the party for leading a local referendum to prevent his town from providing housing for asylum seekers. Olsson founded the Sjöbo Party which in 1994 became the largest party in the town. In the most recent local elections in 2002 it won over 18 per cent of the vote.

None of these parties are openly anti-democratic, but more extreme parties exist. The National Democrats, who have openly cooperated with Nazi groups, have two seats in the town of Haninge, south of Stockholm. The National Socialist Front is openly Nazi but has not achieved any electoral success.

During the 1990s various neo-Nazi groups often attacked refugee camps and even killed several immigrants or second-generation immigrants. At first the legal system did not take these groups seriously, as the judges tended to claim that these were simply cases of "drunken youths". However, it became increasingly difficult to deny that these groups were well organized. Many of the participants were over 30 and thus hardly youths; moreover, they were ideologically motivated and active in neo-Nazi groups.

As a consequence of the country's relatively liberal and tolerant free press laws, Sweden has become a centre for White Power music. Record companies that would be forbidden in Germany have been able to produce and sell records with racist texts in Sweden and then distribute them via the Internet.

### Extreme Left-wing Groups

Several leftist political parties in Sweden claim to be revolutionary, although in practice they have been quite peaceful and oriented toward organizing and

publishing. Perhaps the most famous communist party is KPML(r) or the Communist Party of Marxist-Leninists (Revolutionary). In the 2002 elections it elected representatives to the local municipal assemblies in Lysekil (2), Karlshamn (6) and Gislaved (3). This party has a Stalinist orientation.

Two Trotskyist parties also exist. In 1997 the Socialist Justice Party was founded and is a member of the Committee for a Workers' International. In the 2002 elections it won three seats in the municipal assembly in Umeå and two in Luleå. In the national elections, however, it received a mere 1,519 votes. The older and better known Socialist Party owns several popular bookstores, named after the famous Strindberg play "Red Room". It received 3,213 votes in the most recent elections.

Among extra-parliamentary groups, the syndicalist union SAC (Swedish Workers' Central Organization) still has around 15,000 members. Although it pays lip-service to syndicalism's anarchistic and revolutionary tradition, in practice the organization is rather tame and devotes its efforts to typical union-type activities such as wage negotiations and running its unemployment fund. It also runs the syndicalist magazine *Arbetaren* ("The Worker").

Some small, loosely knit anarchist youth groups exist that sometimes engage in violence. For example, several members of these groups threw stones at the police during the EU summit in Göteborg (Gothenburg) in the summer of 2000. Small-scale rioting has also taken place during some anarchist demonstrations. However, in contrast to the neo-Nazi movements, these groups are not well organized and have not killed anybody.

*Steve Saxonberg*

## Switzerland

**Capital:** Bern

**Population:** 7.2 m

The Swiss Confederation dates its independence from 1291. It has a bicameral legislature comprising (i) the National Council (Conseil National), representing the people directly, which has 200 deputies elected for a four-year term in proportion to the population of the cantons, and (ii) the Council of States (Conseil des Etats), representing the cantons, consisting of two members for each of the 20 full cantons and one member for each of the six half-cantons. The Federal Council (Government) is elected by the two houses, and parliament elects from among the Council's members the President of the Confederation, the presidency rotating on an annual basis.

The Swiss tradition is one of high levels of political consensus and while political parties of different per-

suasions exist, the four main parties (from left to right: the Social Democratic Party, the Christian Democratic People's Party, the Radical Democratic Party and the Swiss People's Party) have formed a coalition government continuously since 1959. This pattern is replicated at cantonal and communal level. Contentious issues are customarily decided through direct democracy by popular referendums (held almost every three months), notable recent referendum results including the decision in March 2001 not to seek membership of the EU and that in March 2002 in favour of joining the United Nations.

Direct democracy and the Swiss preference for consensus have limited any development of extra-constitutional dissident movements. The canton of Jura

was established in 1979 in the north-west part of the canton of Bern as a canton inhabited overwhelmingly by French speakers; subsequent demands in Jura for the incorporation into Jura of other mainly French-speaking areas of Bern subsequently declined. While anti-globalization activists and a few skinheads may be found, and there is some hostility to immigrants, there are no significant movements currently operating outside the constitutional framework.

The Swiss People's Party emerged as the largest

single party in the National Council (with 55 seats) in elections held on Oct. 19, 2003. It had campaigned on a platform making use of xenophobic rhetoric, raising fears of an increase in tensions with foreigners and refugees. Switzerland had adopted on Sept. 25, 1994, by popular referendum, an amendment to the Criminal Code to prohibit racism, anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial.

*Nicolas Schmitt*

## Syria

**Capital:** Damascus

**Population:** 18.8 m

The Syrian Arab Republic is, under its 1973 Constitution, a "socialist popular democracy" with an executive President, who is secretary-general of the Ba'ath Party and also president of the National Progressive Front (NPF), embracing the Ba'ath and five other small, legal and left-wing parties including the Syrian Communist Party. There is a legislative People's Assembly, in which the above parties and also independents are represented and which is elected by universal adult suffrage for a four-year term. The President is elected every seven years in a nationwide referendum after nomination as the sole candidate by the People's Assembly on the recommendation of the Ba'ath Party. The government, the Ba'ath and the armed forces are decisively influenced by members of a minority Shi'ite sect, the Alawites of the north-west, who constitute only about 12 per cent of Syria's population, 70 per cent being Sunni Muslims.

Syria's "Third Republic" began in June 2000 with the death of Hafez al-Assad, who had been President since 1971. His son, Bashar al-Assad, then 34 years old, was declared President after a two-day constitutional "fix" that amended the constitution, lowering the previous age requirement from 40 to 34. His presidency was confirmed in a popular referendum on July 10. The period since Bashar al-Assad became President has seen a continued monopoly of power by the Alawite minority sect and the Ba'athist party. However, since the toppling of the Saddam regime in Iraq in April 2003, Syria is the only remaining Ba'athist-ruled state. Syria, previously bitterly hostile to Iraq, had improved its relations in recent years and vehemently opposed the 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq, being accused by US officials of providing a safe haven for members of the Iraqi regime.

Following the death of Hafez al-Assad a degree of liberalization occurred, with 600 political prisoners released, numerous new publications permitted, and informal political discussion groups allowed to form. However, outspoken critics of the government in parliament were detained in late 2001. Elections to the

250-seat People's Assembly were held in March 2003. The Ba'ath dominated National Progressive Front won 167 seats. The Front rallied all potential centrifugal forces under a nationalist umbrella, incorporating the professional and commercial classes without reducing the ruling party's authority as the prime locus of power in Syria. Thus the party rejuvenated its membership and gained new allies as can be gleaned from the new deputies that have entered the Assembly under the Front list: 40 lawyers, 19 GPs, 36 engineers, 14 businessmen and 4 industrialists. Only 72 candidates retained their old seats. The new membership has been interpreted as providing a foundation for Bashar al-Assad to take Syria into new directions: membership of the World Trade Organization; increased privatization and liberalization; possible peace negotiations with Israel; and re-invention of the country's political elite.

The 2003 elections did not resemble past elections. Although the activities of the opposition were closely scrutinized, the opposition was given some say, venting the occasional criticism publicly. Nonetheless, the main opposition group, the National Democratic Rally (NDR), boycotted the elections saying these were not free and fair. The armed forces proved the main losers in the new parliament. However, Bashad has yet to find ways of boosting his legitimacy without reliance on the patronage of the party's stalwarts, all of whom owe their status to the late Hafez al-Assad, and the bureaucracies, especially the army and the intelligence services.

Minority Alawite control, combined with the Ba'ath's persistently secular and leftish character since taking power in 1963, in a country traditionally conservative and Sunni, has in the past stimulated anti-regime activity by the Muslim Brotherhood and its offshoots. Bloody conflicts were recorded in 1964, 1976-80, 1982 and 1986, the focus of Sunni opposition to President Assad being the Muslim Brotherhood. Many Sunnis strongly opposed the promulgation of the 1973 Constitution, demanding



that it should recognize Islam as the state religion, but an amendment to the Constitution then adopted stated merely that the President must be a Muslim. In a referendum held in March 1973 to approve the Constitution many Sunni Muslims abstained or voted against its adoption.

International factors – Syrian-Iraqi rivalry inside the Ba'ath movement, the consequent tactical alliance with Khomeinist Iran, Syria's occupation of Lebanon, its partisanship on Palestinian issues and former encouragement of Palestinian terrorism – also proved destabilizing. So, too, was the resistance to Hafez al-Assad's consolidation of power offered by older Ba'athist politicians and army officers, especially, until 1984, the determined ambitions of his exiled brother Rifa'at. During his exile Rifa'at moved to Geneva and began conspiring against the regime, reportedly meeting with Yasser Arafat, his brother's archenemy at the time. Rifa'at spent most of his time in France, Switzerland and Spain, though he retained a nominal position of Vice-President until February 1998. Having returned to Syria following the death of his mother in 1992, he stayed there off and on until 1998, when he again went into exile. He actively challenged the succession of Bashar to the Syrian presidency, even after the death of his father in July 2000.

## MUSLIM FUNDAMENTALISTS

### Muslim Brotherhood

This movement, originating in Egypt (see entry under Egypt) reached Syria via Syrian students returning from Cairo. However, Syrian fundamentalism reflects, more than Egypt's, the tensions of a society divided by religion and geography, tensions especially strong between the urban Sunnis of Aleppo and Hama and the once underprivileged, but now dominant, Alawi minority of the north west. The Brotherhood's Syrian branch (which almost took the lead while Nasser ruled in Egypt) engaged, from the 1960s onwards, in a bloody struggle with the now Alawi-dominated Ba'ath regime. It shared some objectives with the Shi'ite theocracy of post-1979 Iran, but advocated, besides Islamic fundamentalism, free elections, a less government-controlled economy and an end to Alawite dominance. According to the Brotherhood, its proposed Islamic state would not deny the religious rights of Christians and other non-Muslims (tending however to see the Alawis as heretics) but would accord full status only to those whose ideologies do not contradict that of Islam.

Fundamentalist opposition to the new Ba'ath regime started in 1963, when militants in Aleppo and Hama (always the Brotherhood's strongholds) organized resistance and a religious leader founded a Movement of Islamic Liberation, doubtless inspired by similarly-named movements elsewhere; there have been many such in Syria, stemming from, but not identical with, the Brotherhood itself. In 1964 the Brotherhood's then leader, Isam al-Attar, excluded from Syria, settled in, and began operating from, West Germany. Many Brothers were killed that year in serious riots in Hama, encouraged by the Imam of the Sultan mosque, and his Cairo-educated son, Marwan Hadid. In 1965 Marwan

founded a new organization, the *Kataib Muhammad* (Muhammad's Battalions). He was re-arrested in 1976 and died on hunger strike.

There followed, in the late 1970s and early 1980s, an intense terrorist campaign against Ba'athists and Alawis, many of whom, and some Soviet military advisers, were assassinated. In 1979 there was a massacre of Alawi army cadets in Aleppo. The government executed those they held responsible and accused the United States and Israel of encouraging the Brotherhood (which Damascus, usually followed by the outside world, blamed indiscriminately for every fundamentalist outrage). Popular anger followed the arrest of the Imam of Aleppo's Great Mosque; his son-in-law, Husni Abo, leader of a fundamentalist underground group, the Fighting Vanguard (*Tali'at al Muqatila*), was also arrested and executed. Husni's successor, Adnan Uqla, had helped massacre the Alawi cadets. The anti-Ba'ath, anti-Alawi terrorist campaign soon extended beyond Aleppo and Hama to Lattakia, their urban centre.

A climax to this terror and counter-terror came in 1980 when an attempt on Assad himself in Damascus was followed next day by a massacre, by troops commanded by Assad's brother Rifa'at, of 500 Muslim Brothers in jail at Palmyra. Membership of the Brotherhood became a capital offence. Many Brothers were killed or executed during 1980, including Captain Ibrahim Yusuf, alleged leader of the 1979 Brotherhood outrages in Aleppo, and Hisham Jumbaz, head of the Brotherhood's military wing. Abroad, the exiled Brotherhood leadership shifted from relative moderates to out-and-out militants. At a 1980 congress in Aachen (West Germany), Isam al-Attar was replaced by a triumvirate of Sadr al-Din al-Bayanuni from Aleppo, Adnan Sa'ad ul Din from Homs and Sa'id Hawwa from Hama, who announced the formation of an "Islamic Front" to be the centre of a national anti-Assad alliance. In combating opposition, the Ba'ath were also active abroad; a Syrian commando raided a Brotherhood training camp in Jordan and suspected Syrian agents killed Attar's wife, a former anti-Assad prime minister, and Lebanese journalists critical of Syria.

In 1981, killing and counter-killing went on in the Sunni towns of Homs, Hama and Aleppo but the new Islamic Alliance also succeeded in moving the battle to Damascus itself. There were explosions at the Prime Minister's office, Air Force headquarters, the Soviet adviser's offices, and on Nov. 29 a huge explosion in central Damascus that killed and wounded hundreds of passers-by.

In February 1982 came the tragedy of Hama, with the partial destruction of this historic city and the violent deaths of thousands. An armed Brotherhood insurrection broke out after an army patrol was ambushed; the newly appointed governor refused a call to surrender, 70 Ba'athists were murdered, the guerrillas declared Hama "liberated" and a battle with 12,000 troops lasted three weeks. The insurgents were well-prepared, with a fortune in foreign currency, sophisticated communications (allegedly supplied from the USA) and large arms dumps – 15,000 machine guns were captured by the ultimately victorious government forces after they had surrounded the city with tanks and heavy artillery. In their bombardment much of Hama was destroyed. Casualties, mostly civilian, were heavy – possibly between 5,000 and 10,000.

President Assad publicly attributed the insurgency to the Muslim Brotherhood, claiming that it had used mosques as arsenals and fortresses from which to open fire and that it had had the backing of Israel, the United States, Iraq, and Jordan (which later acknowledged that “some of its officials” had helped the Brotherhood).

Following the Hama massacres, the government’s vigilance (and its censorship of news) increased, and the Brotherhood’s activities consequently gave every appearance of declining. The Ba’ath party’s eighth congress, in 1985, boasted of the liquidation of the Brotherhood, resolving to show it no leniency, but the Interior Ministry simultaneously announced that members of the Brotherhood’s “Vanguard Organization” could return from exile under a presidential pardon; this followed alleged reassuring statements by Brotherhood members to Syrian officials in Europe. However, also in 1985, two Brothers, while being deported from West Germany, hijacked their aircraft to Austria and were imprisoned there for air piracy. In April 1986 there were various explosions, which were publicly confessed to by three Syrians and two Turks; one man said he belonged to the Brotherhood and implicated the Iraqi government.

Although there were further terrorist outrages in Syria in the middle and late 1980s, these could not often be squarely attributed to the Muslim Brotherhood, and there were more manifestations of opposition abroad than in Syria itself. Such manifestations were generally announcements of the formation in Europe of an anti-Assad front under some new high-sounding name, but giving the impression of having been organized by the same figures as before.

The Muslim Brotherhood remains proscribed in Syria but it has not been an organized force within the country since Hama in 1982. Most of its leadership dispersed thereafter to different countries, including in Europe and North America. Its spiritual leader, Sadr al-Din al-Bayanuni, a lawyer, took refuge in Jordan. The thaw in Jordanian-Syrian relations following the passage of power to Bashar al-Assad in Syria (2000) and King Abdullah II in Jordan (1999) translated into greater restrictions on Al-Bayanuni and other Muslim Brotherhood leaders. Sensing danger in the warming relations between Amman and Damascus, especially after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks in the USA, leading figures followed Al-Bayanuni into refuge in the UK.

The Brotherhood has a number of demands, one of which is the release of all its cadres still in prison and a legal inquiry into the Hama massacres. Generally, however, the movement is acquiescent as it does not wish to jeopardize its existence, especially in Arab countries that might be influenced by Damascus to either deport its members and families or hand them over to the notorious Syrian *mukhabarat* intelligence service.

Syria, keen to erase its image as a sponsor of international terrorism, given its direct or indirect support to groups such as *Hamas* and *Hezbollah*, has co-operated with the USA in sharing information on extremists from the Brotherhood. This sharing of intelligence led to the arrest of a Hamburg-based Brotherhood member and businessman, Ma’mun Darkazani, by German intelligence on the trail of *Al-Qaeda* suspects. This arrest led to the deportation, via Morocco with US help, of another Brotherhood member,

Muhammad Haydar Zammar, whose links with *Al-Qaeda* were revealed in German intelligence interviews with Darkazani.

## COMMUNIST DISSIDENTS

The Syrian Communist Party was generally regarded as the largest communist party in the Arab world; it has been firmly integrated with Ba’athist rule. Various splinter groups and factions opposed to Ba’athist rule appeared, but these have little current significance.

### Syrian Communist Party, Politburo

The titular leader of this group is Riyadh al-Turk. Some of its low-ranking members have been given amnesty in return for abandoning politics. Al-Turk, however, remains one of the most famous dissidents in the country, known by his admirers as “the Mandela of Syria”. He was released from prison in 1998, after 17 years in detention, but his continuing defiance saw him jailed for several months, less than two years after being released.

## BA’ATHIST DISSIDENTS

Syria became the main power base of the Ba’ath Arab Socialist movement in 1963, when the Ba’ath party of Iraq lost power until 1968. The Ba’ath party of Syria was thereafter separated from the “historic” Ba’ath party of Iraq.

In 1975, about 200 Syrian Ba’athists, understood to support the Iraqi party, were arrested on charges of plotting against the government. In the same year a congress of the Syrian party denounced the Iraqi Ba’athists as a “rightist clique” in alleged collusion with Iran and traitors to the Arab cause. The assassination of an Iraqi-born member of the Ba’ath party’s pan-Arab command in Syria was officially attributed to Iraqi Ba’athists.

A prominent dissident figure was the Druze and doctrinaire Marxist, Hammud al-Shufi. He resigned his position as Syria’s ambassador to the United Nations in 1979, announcing the formation of a new opposition in exile “to defend the democratic aspirations of the Syrian people”. He attacked the oppressive methods of Assad’s government and its monopolizing of power and wealth for the benefit of the Alawis, to whom as a Druze he had been opposed since 1964.

A group called the Vanguard of the Arab Revolution claimed in 1981 to have fought the Syrian army in Aleppo while storming a prison to release Salah Jadid, formerly leader of the Ba’ath party; the group also claimed to have “executed” a Syrian secret agent in Kuwait to avenge Assad’s exiled opponent, Salah ul Din Bitar, co-founder of the Ba’ath, Prime Minister in 1963-66 and finally assassinated in Paris in July 1980 during a campaign against external opposition.

Another Ba’athist dissident group, the National Salvation Command, claimed responsibility for bomb explosions in Damascus in August and September 1981, one of which killed three members of a Martyr

Kamal Jumblatt group who set it off, as well as about 43 people at Ba'ath headquarters (Jumblatt, Druze leader of the Progressive Socialist Party of Lebanon, had been assassinated in March 1977 after Syria's massive intervention there in 1976.)

### OTHER GROUPS

#### National Alliance for the Liberation of Syria

This alliance-in-exile of about 20 political and religious groups opposed to the Assad regime was proclaimed in 1982 in New York by Hammud al-Shufi (see entry for Ba'athist dissidents). Al-Shufi said that it included the Muslim Brotherhood and the closely related Islamic Front in Syria, as well as dissident members of the ruling Ba'ath party such as himself.

The aims of the Alliance as set out in its charter included the forcible overthrow of the Assad government and its replacement by a constitutional elective system in which freedom of faith, expression and association would be guar-

anteed. Islam would be the country's religion and the Sharia (Islamic law) would be the basis of legislation, but the rights of non-Muslims would be respected. In October 1986 an organization in Cairo using the same name announced that many of Syria's intelligentsia had been arrested, allegedly to curb support for a group called the Nasserite Popular Organization, members of which had been reportedly arrested the previous month.

#### Patriotic Front for National Salvation

The formation of this group was announced in Paris in February 1990. It was stated that it would embrace political and religious organizations based in Iraq and Jordan, including the Muslim Brotherhood, and had agreed to co-operate unconditionally in overthrowing the Assad regime. It was apparently financed by Iraq. The group has not been heard from for some time. Its survival was complicated by the thaw in Iraqi-Syrian relations in the late 1990s.

*Larbi Sadiki*

## Taiwan

**Capital:** Taipei

**Population:** 22.3 m

In 1949 the Chinese Nationalist government of President Chiang Kai-shek, defeated in mainland China by communist forces, established the Republic of China on the island of Taiwan (Formosa), which had been ruled by Japan from 1895-1945. Thereafter, the Taipei government continued to assert its claim of sovereignty over mainland China (and Mongolia), as did the Beijing government its counter-claim over Taiwan. Until 1971 the Republic of China held China's seat at the UN, both in the General Assembly and as a permanent member of the Security Council, before being replaced by the People's Republic of China (PRC). Taiwan's state of war with the PRC formally persisted until May 1991. Notwithstanding Taiwan's emergence as one of the major economies of Asia, and the high level of commercial and other informal contact now in place between Taiwan and the PRC, Taiwan remains in a form of diplomatic limbo, denied membership of most international organizations, including the UN.

Taiwan was dominated for more than half a century by the *Kuomintang* (KMT—Nationalist Party), the party of the nationalist Chinese who had fled the mainland. During the 1990s, however, the KMT faced an increasing challenge from the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), itself composed mainly of "Taiwanese", i.e. natives of the island of Taiwan. In March 2000, the KMT lost the presidency for the first time, to Chen Shui-bian of the DPP, while in December 2001 it also lost control of the Legislative Yuan, with the DPP becoming the strongest party. The emergence of the

DPP, which included powerful currents favouring a declaration of Taiwanese independence, caused renewed tensions in relations with Beijing, whose main concern has been to prevent any momentum for the international recognition of Taiwan as an independent entity, the so-called "two Chinas" scenario.

The Legislative Yuan is now the country's only permanent legislative body, its 225 members serving three-year terms. The majority, 168 members, are directly elected in multi-member constituencies, while 41 are elected by proportional representation, eight are elected by aboriginal constituencies and eight are appointed by party officials for overseas Chinese communities. The country's highest administrative organ is the Executive Yuan, whose Council (the Cabinet) is responsible to the Legislative Yuan.

#### Process of democratization

The Kuomintang's approach to internal security questions was for decades largely conditioned by Taiwan's position vis-à-vis the People's Republic of China and the party held power closely to itself. The National Assembly and the Legislative Yuan, both controlled by the KMT, originally included over 1,400 life members elected in mainland China in 1947. The first elections, for 53 seats in the National Assembly, were not held until 1972. Mainly to guard against the threat of internal communist subversion, fundamental constitutional liberties remained suspended under a state of siege until July 1987; thus public meetings, strikes, demon-

strations, petitions and the “spreading of rumours” were forbidden. Although executions on political charges, which had been numerous in the 1950s and 1960s, became less frequent in the 1970s, several hundred people were still detained for political reasons in the early 1980s, including alleged “communist agents” as well as “rebels” of the Formosan Independence Movement.

In the late 1970s the government adopted a somewhat more liberal internal policy, notably by holding elections to regional assemblies in which large numbers of independent candidates were returned. Nevertheless, the growth of opposition activities gave the authorities cause for considerable concern, and elections to the National Assembly and the Legislative Yuan scheduled for December 1978 were postponed until December 1980. During this period resentment of the political domination of Taiwan by immigrants from the mainland (who formed only 13 per cent of the population) led to demands both for the democratization of the regime and for acceptance that Taiwan was now a state independent of and separate from mainland China.

The Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) was formed on Sept. 28, 1986, by some 130 members of the *Tangwai* (a loose coalition of opponents of the *Kuomintang* regime), who called for an immediate end to martial law. The new party’s foundation was a clear breach of the country’s martial law regulations, which prohibited the existence of political parties other than the KMT and its two small allied parties. The *Tangwai* had been unofficially tolerated because its members had campaigned as independents rather than as participants within an overtly organized grouping. Despite this, however, the authorities failed to initiate any punitive action against the founders of the DPP, and on Oct. 7 President Chiang Ching-kuo announced his intention to lift martial law in the near future.

DPP members participated in the elections of December 1986, winning 12 and 11 seats respectively in the Legislative Yuan and the National Assembly. After the elections in 1989, when the DPP won 35 per cent of the vote, its official status was much enhanced. With 21 seats in the Legislative Yuan it could now propose legislation. Yet it remained divided between various factions, some emphasizing independence for Taiwan, others domestic political reform, yet others workers’ opposition to the ruling elites.

The long presidency of Lee Teng-hui, which began in January 1988 on the death of Gen. Chiang (the son of Chiang Kai-shek, the founder of the state), proved a journey of political reform into authentic democracy and saw the gradual erosion of the dominance of the exiled Nationalist elite in favour of indigenous Taiwanese (Lee himself was the first President from this community).

Lee Teng-hui’s first phase of constitutional reforms, in 1991, included the formal ending of the state of civil war with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and thus the de facto (but not legal) recognition of the existence of the PRC government on the main-

land. Correspondingly Lee also terminated the 1948 “Temporary Provisions”, effectively a state of emergency that concentrated power in the hands of the President, suspended the Constitution and froze the structure and composition of the legislature. The 1991 reforms also provided for the retirement by the end of the year of all surviving “senior parliamentarians” elected in the 1940s to represent mainland seats in the National Assembly (469) and the Legislative Yuan (81) and further elections to these bodies.

Lee’s second package of constitutional reforms, in 1994, included provisions for the direct election for four-year terms of the President and Vice President, paving the way for Lee’s first election in 1996. Further reforms in 1997 froze elections to the Taiwan provincial governorship and assembly. This was widely seen as in effect a step towards dismantling the fiction that the government of the Republic of China was the legal authority of the whole of China, of which Taiwan was only a province.

One consequence of the constitutional reforms of 1991 and 1994 was that the National Assembly’s role had been greatly reduced compared with that of the Legislative Yuan and its existence as a permanent body had been criticized as redundant. In 2000, following agreement between the DPP and the KMT, its powers were further reduced, leaving it with the functions of ratifying constitutional amendments and conducting impeachment proceedings, for which purposes it would become an ad hoc body composed of 300 delegates appointed by the political parties on the principle of proportional representation. Its sessions would in future last no more than one month.

During the 1990s the DPP gradually strengthened its position in opposition, increasing its seats in the Legislative Yuan from 21 in 1989 to 70 in 1998. In the presidential election on March 18, 2000, the DPP was able to capitalize on a split in the KMT vote, with Chen Shui-bian narrowly beating independent James Soong (a former KMT secretary-general), and with Lien Chan, the official candidate of the KMT, trailing in third place. Chen thus became Taiwan’s first President not to come from the KMT. Chen Shui-bian had been politically active since acting as a defence lawyer for dissident journalists in 1979 and had become a vigorous advocate of Taiwanese independence. During an unsuccessful election campaign by Chen in 1985 his wife Wu Shu-jen was run over three times by a truck driven by Nationalist thugs, an incident that left her paralyzed from the waist down. She nevertheless won a seat in the Legislative Yuan in 1986, the same year that Chen was imprisoned for eight months for his role in defending a newspaper. Chen joined the DPP in 1987.

In power Chen tempered his earlier pro-independence beliefs in the face of unremitting hostility from the PRC and pledged that he would not declare Taiwan’s independence unless the island was invaded by mainland China. In the election of Dec. 1, 2001, the DPP won the largest number of seats in the Legislative Yuan, 87, but without an overall majority. For the first

time since 1949 the KMT, with 68 seats, had lost its dominance in the legislature.

### **Taiwan Independence Movement**

(also known as **World United Formosans for Independence – WUFI**)

This Movement, mainly based abroad and regarded as subversive by the Taiwan government, emerged to demand an independent Taiwan ruled by Taiwanese (and not by the *Kuomintang* regime dominated by Chinese who came from the mainland in 1948).

It was responsible for bomb explosions at a US Information Service office in Taiwan in 1970 and at the Bank of America in 1971, and also for an incident in October 1976 in which Hsieh Tung-min (then Governor of Taiwan and after 1978 Vice-President) had his left hand blown off by a letter bomb. Although the Movement was effectively suppressed in Taiwan, it was reported in 1978 to be supported by many Taiwanese in Japan (where it had some 10,000 members) and in the United States.

The American section of the Movement – World United Formosans for Independence (WUFI) – was believed to be responsible for bomb explosions in 1979 at offices of China Airlines and the Washington office of the Co-ordination Council for North American Affairs (the Taiwan government's semi-official representative in the United States). Although it then appeared to be inactive for some time, on Oct. 20-21, 1991 the Taiwanese authorities arrested 14 pro-independence activists, including 12 WUFI members, and

some were charged with sedition. They included WUFI general secretary Wang Kang-lu and central standing committee member Kuo Cheng-kuang, the latter being expelled from Taiwan. In January 1992 four WUFI members were convicted of plotting to overthrow the government. In June 1992 a court convicted WUFI chairman George Chang Tsang-hung of sedition and attempted murder, sentencing him to 10 years' imprisonment (commuted to five). Chang, who had returned to Taiwan from the USA in December 1991, was allegedly responsible for the letter bomb attack in 1976 that injured Governor Hsieh Tung-min. Chang was released for medical treatment in October 1992 and in a retrial on March 20, 1993, his conviction was overturned on the grounds of insufficient evidence.

### **Organization for Taiwan Nation-Building (OTNB)**

This was established by radical dissident Stella Chen Wan-chen on returning to Taiwan from the USA in 1991. Chen was arrested in February 1992 and was found guilty on March 16 of "preparing to commit sedition" and sentenced to 46 months' imprisonment. Four other OTNB members had been convicted of sedition in January and sentenced to prison terms of between two and three-and-a-half years. However, in May the harsh sedition law was amended to decriminalize non-violent acts, which led to the release from prison of several dissidents and the return from exile of others.

*Tim Curtis*

## **Tajikistan**

**Capital:** Dushanbe

**Population:** 6.5 m

The Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic declared independence from the Soviet Union in September 1991; in December 1991 it became a member of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). The Soviet era communist establishment nonetheless retained power. In mid-1992 civil war erupted between forces including the former communists and a coalition of Islamists and self-styled democrats, with the former communists and allies briefly losing and then re-gaining control of the government. In January 1993, there was a mass exodus of opposition forces to Afghanistan, where the **United Tajik Opposition (UTO)** was formally created; a government in exile, the **Islamic Rebirth Movement of Tajikistan**, was also set up at this time, under the chairmanship of Said Abdullo Nuri. Several new legal parties were launched in 1993-94, the most significant of which proved to be the pro-presidential People's Democratic Party of Tajikistan (HDKT, initially known as the People's Party of Tajikistan, PPT). The conflict continued sporadically for five years. It was formally brought to a close in June 1997, when a peace treaty was signed in Moscow between the government and the UTO. Uniquely

among the Central Asian republics, Tajikistan has a continuing Russian military presence, arising from Russian involvement in settling the civil war.

Despite the shortcomings of the 1997 peace agreement, and the imperfect manner in which it was implemented, up to the present it has remained in force. This has permitted a certain amount of political and economic restructuring to take place; several of the political parties that were banned in 1993 have regained registration. There are now some 15 political formations. However, many of these have not succeeded in qualifying for registration. Most of these are very small, both in terms of numbers and geographical spread. The majority are, to a greater or lesser extent, critical of the government. However, they have not been successful in forming lasting alliances, hence they are easily marginalized. There is strong government control of the media and opposition activists are frequently harassed. A separate strand of opposition, outside the mainstream political process, is represented by the two proscribed Islamist organisations, the **Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan** and **Hizb ut-Tahrir**.



The post-Soviet constitution was adopted in November 1994, while the country was still torn by civil strife. Important changes to the constitution were adopted by referendum in September 1999. These included the extension of the presidential term of office to seven years and the creation of a bicameral legislature in place of the unicameral Soviet-era body. The 63-member Chamber of Representatives (*Majlisi Namoyandagon*) sits on a regular basis, with deputies elected on the basis of a mixed voting system of constituency seats and proportional representation of parties. The 33-member National Chamber (*Majlisi Milli*) functions on a convening basis; some members are presidential appointees, the remainder are elected by members of the provincial governments. Parliamentary elections are scheduled to be held every five years.

In presidential elections held in November 1994, the interim incumbent Imomali Rahmonov was returned with 58 per cent of the vote. He was re-elected in November 1999, as the candidate of the HDKT, gaining 97 per cent of the vote. Parliamentary elections to the newly established bicameral legislature were first held in February 2000. Six parties satisfied the requirements for registration and were allowed to nominate candidates. However, only three of these passed the threshold 5 per cent of the vote required to win proportional representation. The pro-presidential HDKT also won a substantial majority in both houses. Of the opposition parties, only the Communist Party of Tajikistan and the Islamic Rebirth Party gained seats.

## PRINCIPAL SECULAR OPPOSITION PARTIES

### Communist Party of Tajikistan (CPT)

The CPT was the ruling and only legal party in the Soviet era. On Sept. 21, 1991, immediately following Tajikistan's declaration of independence, a party congress voted to convert the party into the Tajik Socialist Party and adopt a democratic socialist orientation; the following day, however, the party was banned and its assets were nationalized. The ban was lifted in January 1992 after the election of (the communist) Rahmon Nabiyeu to the presidency in November 1991; thereafter the party resumed activities under the CPT title, while maintaining its new commitment to democratic socialist principles. The CPT sided with the government against the opposition alliance of Islamists and "democrats" in the civil war.

When the Tajik Supreme Court banned the Islamic Rebirth Party (IRP) and the three leading secular opposition parties in June 1993, the CPT was left for a short time as the sole political formation with official sanction. It has since been eclipsed by the pro-presidential HDKT and moved into opposition. In the February-March 2000 parliamentary elections, the CPT gained 21 per cent of the seats in the Lower House and 12 per cent of the seats in the Upper House.

### Democratic Party of Tajikistan (DPT)

Launched by Shodmon Yusuf in 1990, the DPT advocated Tajik sovereignty, the introduction of a market economy and a revival of Iranian culture. It entered into a tactical alliance with the Islamic Rebirth Party (IRP) and backed the candi-

dacy of Davlat Khudonazarov, in the November 1991 presidential election. In the prelude to the civil war, the DPT played a prominent role in the Government of National Reconciliation of May–November 1992 but came into conflict with the newly resurgent former communists. Supporters of the DPT fled to Afghanistan in January 1993, where they formed part of the United Tajik Opposition. The DPT was banned by the Tajik Supreme Court in June 1993.

Internal divisions between the moderate and hard-line wings of the DPT led to an open split in June 1995. Shodmon Yusuf was deposed from the leadership but refused to recognize the election of Jumaboy Niyazov as his successor. Yusuf came to an agreement with the Dushanbe government whereby his faction of the party was re-legalized in July, while the Niyazov faction entered into a formal opposition alliance with the IRP. Yusuf later fell out with the government and sought political asylum in Austria. Niyazov's faction of the DPT was re-registered in August 1999 and contested the February 2000 elections but failed to win any seats.

## OTHER SECULAR OPPOSITION PARTIES

Other parties that have been de-registered at various times include the following:

### Badakhshan Ruby Movement (Lali Badakhshan)

Founded in the late 1980s by Atobek Amirbek, it aimed to represent the Pamiri people of Gorno-Badakhshan. It originally demanded full autonomy. When civil war broke out, it sided with the United Tajik Opposition against the Dushanbe government and was banned in June 1993. The ban was lifted in August 1999; however, in the February 2000 parliamentary elections it failed to win any seats.

### Party of Popular Unity and Accord (PPUA)

Founded in November 1994 by Abdumalik Abdullajanov, a former Prime Minister, following his defeat in the presidential elections. His power base was mainly in northern Tajikistan. The PPUA was credited with winning two seats in the 1995 Supreme Council elections. It was banned in November 1998 after allegedly being implicated in an armed uprising in northern Tajikistan.

### Rebirth Movement (Rastokhez)

Founded in 1990 as a nationalist/religious movement advocating the revival of Tajik culture and traditions. It played an active role in organizing anti-government demonstrations in the last stages of the Soviet era. It took part in the Government of National Reconciliation of May – November 1992, prior to the outbreak of civil war. It sided with the United Tajik Opposition in January 1993 and was banned in June that year. The ban was lifted in August 1999 but it did not contest the February 2000 elections.

### Tajikistan Party of Political and Economic Renewal (TPPER)

Founded in 1993 as a pro-market formation aspiring to convert Tajikistan into a capitalist economy, albeit with a social dimension. The new party was credited with winning one seat in the 1995 Assembly elections. In March 1996, the

TPPER leader, Mukhtor Boboyev, was murdered in northern Tajikistan by unknown gunmen. The TPPER was suspended for six months in 1999 owing to administrative irregularities. It did not contest the February 2000 elections.

### ISLAMIST OPPOSITION

The main Islamist movements in Central Asia are the **Islamic Rebirth Party (IRP)**, the **Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU)** and **Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT)**. In Tajikistan, as elsewhere in Central Asia, radical Muslims are often referred to as Wahhabis, whether or not they are adherents this sect, but none of the Islamist organisations in Tajikistan are “Wahhabi” in the strict sense of the term.

The IRP was the key component of the **United Tajik Opposition** in the civil war. Its constituency is still overwhelmingly Tajik. It is the only Islamist party in Central Asia to be officially sanctioned. The IMU and HT are both banned. Based in Uzbekistan, in the Ferghana Valley, they are acquiring growing influence in northern Tajikistan (and adjacent parts of Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan).

#### Islamic Rebirth Party (IRP) of Tajikistan

The IRP of Tajikistan was originally an offshoot of the all-Union Islamic Rebirth Party, founded in Astrakhan (on the Volga) in June 1990. However, it soon diverged from the main party. It was banned in Tajikistan, but played an active part in organizing the demonstrations that followed the Dushanbe government's support for the anti-Gorbachev coup in Moscow in August 1991. When the coup failed, the then Tajik president, Kahhar Makhkamov, was forced to resign. The IRP was legalized in October 1991; in the presidential elections held in November that year, it formed a tactical alliance with the Democratic Party of Tajikistan to support the unsuccessful candidacy of Davlat Khudonazarov.

In May 1992, the IRP was an influential component of the newly-formed Government of National Reconciliation. The situation rapidly deteriorated, however, and within a few months the country was engulfed by civil war. The Dushanbe government regained some semblance of control over part of the country in December. In January 1993 there was a mass exodus of supporters of the IRP and other opposition parties to Afghanistan, where they formed a coalition, the United Tajik Opposition. The **Islamic Rebirth Movement of Tajikistan**, which functioned as a government in exile, was also set up at this time, under the chairmanship of Said Abdullo Nuri.

“Inter-Tajik” peace talks to resolve the conflict were initiated in 1994 under the auspices of Iran, Russia and the UN, with support from the OSCE, the USA and neighbouring states such as Uzbekistan and Pakistan. Lack of a political agreement resulted in an IRP boycott of the presidential and

legislative elections of late 1994 and early 1995. However, the peace process continued, and on June 27, 1997, after eight rounds of negotiations, the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord was signed by President Rahmonov and Said Abdullo Nuri in Moscow, in the presence of President Yeltsin and senior representatives of the UN and other supporters of the peace process.

The IRP was officially re-registered in August 1999 and put forward a candidate, Davlat Usman, in the presidential elections later that year; he was beaten by the incumbent, President Rahmonov. The IRP also contested the parliamentary elections in early 2000, winning two seats in the Lower House. Despite its unique position as the only registered Islamist party in Central Asia, the IRP does not campaign for a more prominent role for Islam in public life. It supports the government in condemning clandestine Islamist movements. Nevertheless, in 2002 the IRP was itself strongly criticised by the government for failing to control the activities of its members. Several IRP imams (religious leaders) were banned from preaching and a number of mosques were closed. The President and other government officials insinuated that there were possibly links between the IRP and the banned IMU and HT. Fears of the rise of Islamic militancy were fanned by the news that three Tajiks from the Soghd province (northern Tajikistan) were being held by the USA in Guantanamo Bay for allegedly serving in the ranks of the Taliban and *Al-Qaeda*.

#### Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT)

Hizb ut-Tahrir (transliterated in various forms and usually translated as the Liberation Party) is a transnational Islamist organisation (see also under Uzbekistan). Its stated aim is to bring the worldwide Muslim community back to an Islamic way of life, under the umbrella of the Khilafah State (i.e. Caliphate). HT operates clandestinely, since it is banned in all the Central Asian states. Since the late 1990s it has been gaining ground in Tajikistan. According to official sources, since 1999 more than 100 HT adherents have been arrested in Tajikistan, mostly in the Soghd province. Several have received long prison sentences.

#### Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU)

Founded around 1996 in Uzbekistan, in the Ferghana Valley, the IMU is banned throughout Central Asia (see also Uzbekistan entry). Uzbek government counter-terrorist operations caused many of its members to flee the country. They thereupon established camps in Afghanistan and, allegedly, in Tajikistan. The support base of the IMU was mainly Uzbek. In 2002, following the US occupation of Afghanistan, the IMU were said to be re-establishing bases in the Garm region of Tajikistan.

*Shirin Akiner*

# Tanzania

**Capital:** Dodoma

**Population:** 35.3 m

The United Republic of Tanzania was established in 1964, when the newly independent states of Tanganyika and Zanzibar merged. Under the constitution, executive power is vested in the President, who is elected by direct popular vote for a five-year term, renewable once only. Legislative power is exercised by the National Assembly, which serves a five-year term. It comprises 232 members directly elected from single seat constituencies, 37 women nominated by the President, and five seats reserved for members of the Zanzibar House of Representatives. Zanzibar's internal administration provides for a popularly elected President and House of Representatives. In December 1994 a constitutional amendment was introduced ending the convention that the President of Zanzibar would automatically serve as a Vice-President of the United Republic.

The ruling Revolutionary Party of Tanzania (*Chama Cha Mapinduzi*, CCM) was the sole legal political party until 1992. Multi-party presidential and legislative elections were held throughout the country in October-November 1995 resulting in victory in the presidential election to the CCM candidate, Benjamin Mkapa, while the CCM also gained an overwhelming majority in the legislature. Zanzibar also held elections for its own president and legislature in October 1995.

In 2000 Zanzibar held its internal elections at the same time as the Tanzanian national presidential and legislative elections. Polling took place throughout Tanzania in late October, with re-runs in 16 of the 50 Zanzibar constituencies in early November. The conduct of the October elections throughout Zanzibar was strongly criticised by international observers, and the 16 re-runs were boycotted by opposition parties, which called for fresh elections in all 50 Zanzibar constituencies. Mpaka was re-elected President of Tanzania while the candidate of the main opposition party, the Zanzibar-based Civic United Front (CUF), Amani Abeid Karume, was elected as President of Zanzibar. The elections to the Tanzanian legislature resulted in an overwhelming victory for the CCM.

## Unrest in 2001

In late January 2001 demonstrations organized by the CUF were held in Zanzibar town, three towns on Pemba island and in Dar es Salaam and other mainland towns. They had been organized to protest against the election results of 2000 and the govern-

ment's refusal to hold new elections in Zanzibar. Killings and large-scale arrests of CUF officials and supporters occurred before, during and after the demonstrations, which were declared illegal by the government. Hundreds fled to neighbouring Kenya following the violence. In Pemba security forces shot dead at least 22 demonstrators. A political impasse surrounding the disputed election results and the brutal suppression of the January 2001 demonstrations continued until October 2001 when a political accord was signed between the ruling CCM and the main CUF. The accord restated an unimplemented 1999 agreement on reconciliation and democratic reform. It also identified measures to address human rights concerns stemming from the events of January 2001, including the establishment of an independent commission of inquiry to investigate the unrest and measures to assist the victims and their families.

## Other security issues

Islamic militants associated with Osama bin Laden's *Al-Qaeda* organization were believed responsible for a large truck bomb outside the US embassy in Dar es Salaam on Aug. 7, 1998, just as a similar bomb exploded outside the US embassy in the Kenyan capital, Nairobi (see Kenya entry). The explosion in Dar es Salaam killed 10 Tanzanians, including seven local embassy employees, and injured 77 persons, including one US citizen. The Tanzanian authorities have reportedly co-operated closely with the USA in the criminal investigation of the bombing.

Tanzania has hosted hundreds of thousands of refugees following a decade of conflict in the Great Lakes region. Some 500,000 Congolese and Burundians currently reside in refugee camps in Kagera and Kigoma regions, and the Tanzanian government estimates that there are another 300,000 Burundians who have fled the war but are living in Tanzanian villages, rather than registering as refugees. Burundi's former President Maj Pierre Buyoya, a Tutsi, has charged that the Burundian refugee camps in Tanzania are highly militarized and harbour the main Hutu rebel movements (the National Council for the Defence of Democracy/Forces for the Defence of Democracy (CNDD-FDD), the National Liberation Front (Frolina) and the Palipehutu-Forces for National Liberation (Palipehutu-FNL)).

*D. J. Sagar*

# Thailand

**Capital:** Bangkok

**Population:** 63.4 m

The Kingdom of Thailand is a constitutional monarchy and the only South-East Asian country not to have been colonized by a European power. From 1938-79, generally military or military-civilian government prevailed, with democratic interludes. However, since 1979 parliamentary government has been in place, other than for a coup in February 1991 that introduced a period of military rule that ended the following year following popular demonstrations. A new constitution was adopted in 1997 providing for a parliamentary system in which the Prime Minister (the head of government) and Cabinet must govern with the support of parliament. Elections held for the House of Representatives, the lower house of the bicameral legislature, in January 2001 resulted in the recently formed Thais Love Thais (*Thai Rak Thai*) party holding 248 of the 500 seats, with its leader Thaksin Shinawatra, a telecoms tycoon, becoming Prime Minister in a coalition government. Despite the scrutiny of the Election Commission (requiring repeat polls in 62 seats) other election-monitoring bodies described it as probably the most corrupt election in Thai history.

During the Cold War years from the 1950s to the 1980s Thailand was a piece in an ideological jigsaw in South-East Asia. A capitalist and notionally democratic friend of the West, it was surrounded by states which professed socialism (Burma) or which were threatened by powerful communist rebellions, such as Malaya. In 1975 three governments fell to their communist opponents, in South Vietnam (merging with North Vietnam), Cambodia and Laos. Thailand had provided essential forward bases for the USA's intervention against communist movements in Indo-China. US aircraft flew thousands of bombing missions from Thai airfields against targets in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. By March 1976 all US forces had officially pulled out of Thailand; inevitably, however, subversion and a threat to state security was still for many years principally associated with communism. A 1952 act banning communist activities under pain of imprisonment for from 10 years to life was reinforced on Oct. 17, 1976, by an order defining "communist activities" as "any activities aimed at undermining national security, religion, the monarchy, and the democratic form of government with the King as head of state", nationalizing private property without fair compensation or setting up a social system under which all property was held to be common property. The order also empowered the Prime Minister *inter alia* to declare any area communist-infested and to prohibit people from entering or living in such an area; meas-

ures could also be taken to prevent food and other commodities from reaching communist organizations.

The situation was complicated by Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia in 1979, ousting the genocidal *Khmer Rouge* government. Thailand provided discreet help to its powerful ally the USA, which gave covert backing in the 1980s to the continuing guerrilla activity of the Maoist *Khmer Rouge* against the occupying power, Vietnam.

## LEFT-WING MOVEMENTS

### Communist Party of Malaya (CPM)

Activists of this Maoist party, mainly Chinese from Malaya who had entered southern Thailand, established guerrilla operations in the 1970s in Thailand's southern provinces (notably Pattani, Yala and Narathiwat) and on the border with Malaysia. In these areas they were able to win the support of the Muslim community (constituting about 40 per cent of the population in four provinces). From 1977 Thai and Malaysian forces carried out regular joint operations against the guerrillas. However according to official Thai estimates in late December 1983, some 1,200 CPM guerrillas were still active in the border area. By the mid-1980s, however, numbers of insurgents were surrendering or laying down their arms. After a year of secret talks, the CPM agreed to abandon its campaign. On Dec. 2, 1989, a peace agreement was signed in the southern Thai border town of Haadyai between the CPM secretary-general, Chin Peng, and representatives of the Malaysian and Thai governments. The CPM agreed to disarm and return to civilian life and hoped to be settled on land on the Thai-Malaysian border.

### Communist Party of Thailand (CPT)

Originating as the Thai section of the Chinese Communist Party in 1942, the CPT became fully constituted in 1952, when it was banned. This pro-Chinese organization pledged itself to fighting a people's war in the rural areas of Thailand, and began guerrilla activities in 1965 in the north-east of the country (bordering Laos), spreading to the northern provinces and being supported by Hmong tribesmen. In 1969 the CPT established a military wing, the **Thai People's Liberation Armed Forces**, and the following year it was estimated that between 1,000 and 1,600 CPT guerrillas were operating in the north and some 1,500 in the north-east. Assisted by arms supplies from China and North Vietnam, in 1971 they began to use mortars and their strength in the north-eastern provinces alone was said to have risen to between 4,000 and 5,000 men. On Sept. 17, 1974, the CPT claimed for the first time to have established "liberated zones" or "bases" but did not give details of their whereabouts.

On June 14, 1976, the Thai Defence Minister estimated

the total of communist guerrillas at between 8,000 and 9,000. By 1978 it was believed that some 1,500 Thai guerrillas were operating at least 15 bases inside Kampuchea with the active support of the Kampuchean army (of the Pol Pot regime). However, as a result of the growing conflict between Vietnam on the one hand and China and Kampuchea on the other, aid to the CPT guerrillas in Thailand from all these outside sources was greatly reduced during the latter part of 1978. The CPT at first attempted to maintain a neutral position between China and Vietnam, with the party's leadership (many of whose members were ethnic Chinese) taking a pro-Chinese line, whereas many of the Socialists who had joined the guerrillas in 1976-77 adopted a pro-Vietnamese attitude. Some 1,000 pro-Chinese Thai Communists were on June 21, 1979, reported to have been expelled from Laos since March, while several hundred pro-Vietnamese CPT members sought refuge in Laos where they subsequently set up the *Phak Mai* (New Party). These developments weakened the Thai guerrillas, of whom 500 were on July 10, 1979, reported to have surrendered in the past three months. Altogether about one-half of the students and intellectuals who had joined the guerrillas since 1976 returned to Bangkok in 1979-81 as a result of disillusionment with the Chinese-dominated CPT.

Despite these divisions and setbacks, guerrilla activities continued in various areas of Thailand. By September 1980 CPT guerrillas were said to be operating in 50 of the country's 71 provinces and to number between 8,000 and 15,000. The fourth congress of the CPT was held between March and May 1982, when an interim general secretary, Udom Sisuwan, was appointed; in September he surrendered to the authorities, reportedly revealing that the CPT leadership was in a state of disunity. Internal dissension within the CPT was caused partly by a reduction in Chinese support, itself a result of a growing Sino-Thai common approach to the Kampuchea issue.

The Thai army commander, Gen. Arthit Kamlangek, claimed on Jan. 23, 1983, that the communist insurgency in north-eastern Thailand had been virtually brought to an end, following a mass defection of guerrillas. Thai military officials claimed that the latest surrenders had reduced the number of CPT insurgents in the north-east to about 250 and represented a major success for the government's new approach of using political persuasion rather than military force.

Martial law was lifted in 29 provinces on May 23, 1984, and in 13 southern provinces on Oct. 11, because of the reduced threat from communist insurgents (the lifting of the regulations did not, however, apply to all the districts in the provinces). The then Deputy Army Chief of Staff Lt.-Gen. Chaovalit Yongchaiyut (later the Prime Minister) in a speech made in October 1984, claimed that the CPT "will never again be able to pose an armed threat to the country". He went on to claim that in northern Thailand there were only 50-80 communist insurgents left, with a similar number in the north-east, whereas in the south there were between 1,200 and 1,500 armed insurgents with a command centre in Chumphon province. In an assessment in April 1985 Lt.-Gen. Chaovalit estimated that the armed strength of the CPT had been further reduced to about 500, "most of whom were operating more like criminals rather than revolutionaries". Further surrenders occurred in the late 1980s with the com-

munist threat ceasing to be of any significance.

## ISLAMIC SEPARATISTS

### Pattani United Liberation Organization (PULO)

The Pattani United Liberation Organization (PULO) was founded in 1960 as a breakaway faction of the **Barisan Revolusi Nasional (BRN – National Revolutionary Front)**, the PULO subsequently becoming a more high-profile organization than the BRN and having as its aim to achieve independence for four southern provinces of Thailand with large Muslim populations. (In Thailand as a whole, Muslims constitute only some 5 per cent of the population, which is otherwise almost entirely Buddhist.) Previously independent, the provinces in the isthmus of Kra and the northern part of the Malay peninsula had been annexed by Thailand (then known as Siam) by conquest in the nineteenth century.

The PULO first gained notoriety on Sept. 22, 1977, when it made an apparent assassination attempt on King Bhumibol Adulyadej and Queen Sirikit in southern Yala province. Some 47 people were injured by bombs but neither the King nor the Queen was hurt. Four Muslims arrested on Oct. 9-10 allegedly confessed to the bombings and to being members of PULO. They were eventually sentenced in September 1982 to prison sentences of up to 60 years for their part in the attempted assassination. According to the Thai military, insurgent activity – mostly bombing, arson and kidnapping – in the southern provinces of Pattani, Narathiwat and Yala increased sharply in the first half of 1980, and was largely ascribed to the PULO. On June 30 bombs exploded in Bangkok, in two railway stations, a bus station and on a bus, injuring 47 people. The *Bangkok Post* newspaper published a letter from the PULO on July 19 that accused the Thai armed forces of committing "genocide and massacre" against Muslims in Pattani.

The *Nation* newspaper reported on Dec. 15, 1985, that the PULO had in November formed a Revolutionary Council with the aim of stepping up its separatist activities. According to army commander Lt-Gen. Wanchai Chitchamnong the announcement was made in a "Middle East country known as a major supporter of separatist movements in southern Thailand", the first suggestion that PULO had connections with an international Islamist movement. It was reported on May 19, 1986, by the Thai newspaper *Siam Rath* that PULO, the Pattani National Liberation Front (PNLF – which had been founded in April) and another Muslim secessionist group had merged on Sept. 16, 1985, to form the **Mujaheddin Pattani Movement**. However, PULO itself seemingly continued to retain its separate identity.

PULO claimed responsibility for a bombing on Aug. 13, 1992, at a railway station in the southern city of Hat Yai that killed three people and injured 73. In August and September 1993 PULO launched a series of attacks in the southern provinces, co-ordinating for the first time since the early 1980s with the *Barisan Revolusi Nasional* (BRN—National Revolutionary Front). In early August arson attacks were made by PULO guerrillas on some 30 schools in Pattani, Yala and Narathiwat provinces. Reportedly a monk died in a grenade attack on Aug. 16 on a temple in Narathiwat province. On Aug. 17 two soldiers were killed in an ambush



of an army unit in Yala province. Guerrillas ambushed a train in Narathiwat province on Aug. 22, killing one civilian and injuring nine. There was a skirmish between the Thai army and guerrillas on Sept. 5 in the Sisakon district of Narathiwat province. There was suspicion in Thai government circles that the separatists were based across the border in Malaysia's northern Kelantan state. Malaysia's Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad denied during a visit to Thailand on Aug. 19-21 that PULO or the BRN received any help from Malaysia.

In a clash with paramilitary rangers on April 2, 1997, four BRN personnel were killed, including a senior commander, Ariya Tohbala. It was reported on April 26 that, apparently in reprisal, four rubber tappers were murdered in Betong province. A new flare-up of bombings in the southern provinces in December resulted in four provinces being placed under temporary military control. Malaysia gave earnest of its co-operation against separatists when on Jan. 13, 1998, a police raid in the Malaysian capital, Kuala Lumpur, resulted in the capture of three alleged leaders of a new faction of PULO, who were extradited to Thailand on Jan. 22. On Feb. 10 Thai police arrested Sama-ae Thanam, military leader of the PULO, in southern Songkhla province, which has a large Muslim minority.

After a three-year hiatus in rebel activity a bomb attack on the railway station at Hat Yai, on April 7, 2001, killed a seven-year-old boy and injured 40 people, while another explosion on the same day in a hotel car park in the town of Betong injured several people. Thai intelligence sources said that the PULO and the BRN had amalgamated to form a new organization named **Bersatu** ("United" in the Malay language), which they believed was responsible for the attacks. An intelligence report stated that the new group commanded between 60 and 80 guerrillas, who were thought to have been trained in the Middle East.

Over the years successive governments tended to adopt a minimalist strategy towards the Muslim secessionist groups, mounting security operations only in response to specific attacks and playing down the significance of the separatist movements. This approach changed after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the USA in a new global climate of anxiety over terrorism and particularly with regard to Islamic militancy. This was given added focus after the bombing in the Indonesian tourist island of Bali on Oct. 12, 2002 (see Indonesia entry), drew international attention to a regional Islamist group *Jemaah Islamiyah* (JI), which was said to be working towards the goal of an Islamic caliphate covering Malaysia, Indonesia, Brunei, the southern Philippine island of Mindanao and southern Thailand.

A court in Bangkok on Oct. 15, 2002, sentenced three members of PULO to life imprisonment for a series of bombings in the late 1990s. On Oct. 29, however, three bombs exploded in Pattani province, outside a hotel, a Buddhist temple and a Chinese temple, and in neighbouring Songkhla province there were five arson attacks on schools. No casualties were reported. Thailand's Interior Minister Wan Mohamad Noor Matha called for increased security at tourist sites and oil installations, whilst at the same time Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra downplayed the risk. Although most analysts considered that the resources of

PULO and other Thai separatist groups were too meagre to mount a major terrorist operation, Thailand was under pressure from Malaysia and Singapore to ensure that the country was not being used as a base by JI.

## BURMESE ETHNIC GUERRILLA FORCES

Throughout the 1990s there were growing problems around Thailand's western and northern borders with Myanmar caused by insurgency within the latter country (see also Myanmar entry). Guerrilla warfare and campaigns of retribution by the Burmese army resulted in hundreds of thousands of refugees fleeing into the Thai border provinces. On the western border the conflict involved ethnic Karen groups, principally the **Karen National Union** (KNU, see entry), and on the northern border it involved ethnic Shan groups, principally the **Shan State Army** (SSA, see entry). Although the activities of the guerrillas were not directed against the Thai state or Thai society the proximity of these conflicts and the presence of the refugees inevitably created security problems and the Thai army was sometimes drawn into the hostilities when clashes overran the border.

The situation was complicated by the presence in Myanmar's Shan state of the heavily armed ethnic Wa militia the **United Wa State Army** (UWSA, see entry). The UWSA was a former separatist group that had concluded a peace agreement with the Myanmar government in 1989 under which it had been permitted to keep its weaponry. It subsequently supported itself by smuggling enormous quantities of Burmese-produced heroin and methamphetamines across the border into Thailand, creating a major social problem of drug addiction and criminality. The combination of guerrilla warfare and drug running frequently created border tensions, particularly in February-May 2001 and March-June 2002, when Thai army infantry and artillery were heavily involved in clashes with the Burmese army and the UWSA.

Similar problems arose with the **Democratic Karen Buddhist Army** (DKBA, see entry), which made its peace with the Myanmar government in 1995 and in effect became a government militia. The DKBA, which was also said to be involved in drug running, frequently launched attacks on Karen refugee camps in Thailand that sometimes resulted in cross-border retaliations by the Thai army.

The most serious incident away from the border areas occurred on Oct. 1, 1999, when five armed members of a previously unknown Burmese dissident group called the Vigorous Burmese Student Warriors (see entry) seized Myanmar's embassy in Bangkok, taking 89 people hostage and making a series of political demands of the Myanmar government. The Thai government negotiated a peaceful end to the siege on Oct. 2 and flew the dissidents to a refugee camp where they were allowed to go free.

*Tim Curtis*

# Togo

**Capital:** Lomé

**Population:** 5.3 m

The Republic of Togo gained independence from French-administered United Nations trusteeship in 1960. The first President, Sylvanus Olympio, was assassinated in 1963. In 1967 his successor, Nicolas Grunitsky, was ousted in a bloodless coup led by Gen. Gnassingbé Eyadéma, whose Rally of the Togolese People (*Rassemblement du Peuple Togolais*, RPT) was established as the sole and ruling party in 1969. Existing political parties were banned. Eyadéma survived several attempted coups during the 1980s, the most notable being in 1986 when French troops intervened against armed Togolese dissidents, many of whom fled to neighbouring countries to escape brutal reprisals. Gilchrist Olympio, the exiled opposition leader of the Togolese Movement for Democracy (*Mouvement Togolais pour la Démocratie*, MTD) based in Paris (and son of the first President), was sentenced to death in absentia for complicity in the coup.

Pro-democracy riots in 1990, often violently suppressed, forced the Government to open negotiations with the newly-formed opposition *Front des associations pour le renouveau* (FAR) and to recognize political parties. It conceded an amnesty to political dissidents and agreed to a national conference in 1991 to prepare for free elections. The conference established a High Council of the Republic (HCR) as a transitional legislature which subsequently engaged in a power struggle with Eyadéma. Amid continuing political tension, a new multi-party constitution was approved by referendum in September 1992. This vested executive power in the President and legislative power in an 81-member National Assembly (*Assemblée Nationale*), both directly elected for five-year terms of office.

Multi-party presidential elections were held for the first time in August 1993. However, the elections were boycotted by opposition candidates following the exclusion from the poll of Gilchrist Olympio, President Eyadéma's main rival, who had earlier returned from exile and launched the Union of Forces for Change (*Union des Forces du Changement*, UFC). Voter turnout was very low and Eyadéma was returned virtually unchallenged. In parliamentary elections the following year, marred by violence and intimidation, two opposition parties – the Action Committee for Renewal (*Comité d'Action pour la Renouveau*, CAR) and the Togolese Union for Democracy (*Union Togolaise pour la Démocratie*, UDT) – initially won a narrow majority in the Assembly. However, a subsequent CAR-UDT split, and the loss of three seats in election re-runs ordered by the Supreme Court, allowed Eyadéma's RPT to regain control of the legislature.

The presidential elections in June 1998 were fraudulent. The government intervened to disrupt the count when results indicated that Olympio, as the main opposition candidate, was going to win, subsequently claiming that Eyadéma had won 52 per cent of the vote. European Union observers condemned the conduct of the electoral process and the EU reaffirmed its 1994 suspension of aid. The March 1999 legislative elections, which returned the RPT with 79 seats, were boycotted by the opposition amid further allegations of polling irregularities. In response, Eyadéma offered to negotiate with opposition leaders. In July the EU mediated the Lomé Framework Agreement, under which the government promised to dissolve the RPT-dominated National Assembly and hold fresh elections, and Eyadéma pledged not to stand for another term as President. However, there were delays in setting an electoral timetable. Arrangements to stage the elections in October 2001 were postponed due to lack of preparation. A new date of March 2002 was set, but the imposition of electoral conditions by the government in contravention of the Lomé Framework Agreement provoked a breakdown in dialogue with the opposition parties, and the elections were again postponed. Attempts at political reconciliation had earlier been hampered by the imprisonment in 2001 (until March 2002) of Yawovi Agboyibo, leader of the opposition CAR, for criticizing the Prime Minister. This provoked street demonstrations, which met with a severe response from the security forces. Meanwhile, a United Nations-sponsored report concluded that there were indications that security forces were responsible for human rights violations and extrajudicial killings perpetrated against members of opposition parties at the time of the 1998 presidential elections.

The elections finally took place in Oct. 27, 2002. The RPT won 72 seats and four smaller opposition parties won the remaining nine seats. The main opposition parties, grouped within a Coalition of Democratic Forces (CDF), staged a boycott in protest at the way the polls were organized. In December 2002 the new parliament amended the constitution, removing a clause which would have barred Eyadéma from seeking re-election after the expiry of his second-term mandate in 2003. The CDF described the revision as "an unacceptable constitutional coup d'état against the Togolese people".

Eyadéma is Africa's longest-serving leader, completing 36 years in power in January 2003. No other heads of state attended the celebratory military parade in the capital. He was again declared the winner, with

57.2 per cent of the vote, in the face of opposition claims of widespread electoral fraud, in presidential elections held on June 1, 2003.

*Richard German & Elizabeth Taylor*

## Tonga

**Capital:** Nukualofa (Tongapatu)

**Population:** 100,000

Tonga is the only monarchy in the Pacific. It was a British protected state for 70 years prior to achieving full independence in 1970. The monarch, King Tausahau Tupou, has wide executive powers and his son, Prince Lavaka ata Ulukalala, is the Prime Minister. The unicameral legislative assembly comprises nine members elected by the country's 33 nobles and nine members elected by the population at large together with the Privy Council (Cabinet), whose members are chosen by the monarch, and the King.

Tonga's monarchy has been in existence for more than two centuries and has hardly evolved in terms of structure and distribution of political power. The most significant change, especially after the current King came to power, has been the drive towards economic modernization and educational achievement. Over the years, resistance to the absolute power of the monarch has been muted largely because of the way in which monarchy is presented as "cultural" and "divine" and therefore beyond question.

The first real critical response to the monarch came from Tongan intellectuals, educated overseas and who did not agree with the concentration of power in one family and denial of power to the majority of the population. One such person was Futa Helu, who set up a critical think tank in the form of a "university" which he called *Atenisi*, after ancient Athens. *Atenisi* produced critical scholars who formed the only visible critical vanguard against authoritarianism. But little of the *Atenisi* critical thinking reached the streets to spur the masses.

Nonetheless, by the 1970s demands for reform were being openly articulated and in the 1980s, the pro-

democracy movement was taking shape, led by Akilisi Pohiva. It first started as a critical voice against the conduct of politicians through a controversial current affairs programme. Pohiva, a school teacher, was sacked from his public service position and later won a historic court case for unfair dismissal and denial of free speech.

Pohiva's group later launched a newspaper called the *Kele'a*, which raised political issues of concern to the public, in particular the issues of corruption and incompetence in the government. His popularity was such that he was elected into the parliament in 1987. He has since been re-elected a number of times. Pohiva has faced a number of defamation charges by the government and was imprisoned once in 1999, but won a case for wrongful imprisonment in 2002.

In the 1990s the Tongan pro-democracy movement consolidated its strength, especially after a pro-democracy convention, which attracted a lot of overseas Tongans, in Nukualofa, the capital. In 1996 a full-time director of the movement, Lopeti Senituli, was appointed to organize and mobilize the movement nationally. A new constitutional review proposal was drawn up and presented to the government.

The pro-democracy movement's aim is to bring about democratic change through peaceful means to avoid unnecessary violence and bloodshed. They want the monarch retained but with reduced executive powers, like the UK constitutional model. But resistance by the conservative members of the government continues, although the Prime Minister, the King's son, has recently shown signs of accommodation.

*Steven Ratuva*

## Trinidad and Tobago

**Capital:** Port of Spain

**Population:** 1.3 m

Trinidad and Tobago achieved independence from the United Kingdom in 1962, becoming a republic in 1976. The head of state is the President, who is elected for a five-year term by an electoral college constituted by the members of the country's bicameral parliament, which itself consists of (i) a 36-member House of Representatives elected for five years by uni-

versal adult suffrage and (ii) a 31-member Senate appointed by the President (16 senators on the advice of the Prime Minister, six on the advice of the Leader of the Opposition, and nine at his own discretion). The Prime Minister (who is the head of government) and his Cabinet are collectively responsible to Parliament.

In a general election to the House of Representatives

held in October 2002, the People's National Movement (PNM), led by Patrick Manning, broke a political deadlock in effect since the December 2001 tied elections, winning 20 of the 36 seats. The opposition United National Congress (UNC) won the remaining 16 seats. The PNM is supported in the main by that portion of the population of African descent and the UNC by those of East Indian ancestry. Inter-racial tension tends to rise at election time and was exacerbated for a period following the contentious December 2001 elections, when the UNC refused to accept the President's decision to appoint Manning as Prime Minister, both parties having won 18 seats.

The Attorney General stated in July 2002, that an investigation was being undertaken into allegations that members of the PNM and UNC have links with the drugs trade. The inquiry followed claims that several local politicians were associated with a British millionaire, now wanted by British police on drug trafficking charges. In other developments, the UNC leader and former Prime Minister Basdeo Panday was charged on three counts for failing to fully disclose the holdings of a London bank account, reportedly containing a sum of one million pounds. The new PNM government, meanwhile, was forced to address the issue of rising crime. The number of murders in 2002 reached a record 172, while the incidence of kidnappings also rose dramatically.

Trinidad and Tobago has only a small Muslim community, representing 5.8 per cent of the population, but the activities of militant Islamists have caused concern in recent years. In January 2003 Panday claimed that local groups were connected to *Al-Qaeda* and that "the government was in association with those elements", a claim rejected by Manning as one of "irresponsibility and irrationality". Nevertheless, the UK government placed a travel advisory on Trinidad and Tobago, stating that it had been identified as "one of a number of countries where there may be an increased terrorist threat".

#### **Jamaat al Muslimeen**

*Leadership: Yasin Abu Bakr*

This Black Muslim group was founded in 1984 under the leadership of Yasin Abu Bakr (formerly Lennox Philip, a police officer). It maintained a commune in the suburbs of Port of Spain and was alleged to have received financial support from Libya. On July 27, 1990, *Jamaat* attempted a coup, seizing the country's parliament building and holding over 40 hostages, including the Prime Minister A. N. R.

Robinson. On Aug. 1 the rebels surrendered unconditionally, but 23 people had been killed in the intervening period. Abu Bakr and his followers were charged with offences including treason and murder, but escaped prosecution thanks to a legally suspect amnesty.

Since 1990, *Jamaat* has acquired a following in some sections of Trinidad's underclass. As a consequence, it has been able to influence the political scene, by offering to deliver the votes of this group at election time to either main party, depending on the deals being offered. Both the PNM and UNC have used *Jamaat* to attract the underclass vote, while normally ignoring the movement's demands once the votes are counted. During the 2002 election campaign, for example, Prime Minister Manning made a deal with *Jamaat* in order to secure victory, by promising to give the movement a piece of land they had been squatting on for a number of years. However, when victory was secured Manning backtracked on his promise, partially as a consequence of public anger at what had been a secret agreement between the PNM and *Jamaat*.

The role of *Jamaat al Muslimeen* came under further scrutiny when an alleged link between it and Islamic terrorism was made during 2002. According to a dossier compiled by US intelligence, *Jamaat* had received funds from an Islamic cell society; members had attended a post-Sept. 11 World Islamic People's Leadership Conference in Libya; and the movement's former website had hyperlinks to the *Hamas* organization. In response, Bakr denied that *Jamaat* had any links with terrorist organizations.

#### **Waaajahatul Islaamiyyah (Islamic Front)**

*Leadership: Umar Abdullah*

The leader of the *Waaajahatul*, Umar Abdullah, is a radical Muslim who has pledged to establish Islamic rule in Trinidad and Tobago by following the Koran and Sunnah (the teachings of the Holy Prophet Mohammed). Abdullah first came to the attention of the Trinidadian authorities in 1995 when he began publicizing his fundamentalist Islamic views and openly aligning himself with a Rio Claro-based mosque. The organization publishes a newsletter critical of US and British involvement in the Muslim world. In addition, the publication has been openly supportive of Osama bin Laden, *Al-Qaeda*, the Taliban and a Jihad (Holy War) against the USA and Britain. Further, *Waaajahatul* has been linked to a number of foreign-based radical Islamic groups. More particularly the group is accused of being behind plans to attack local American and British interests in Trinidad.

*Peter Clegg*

## **Tunisia**

**Capital:** Tunis

**Population:** 9.6 m

The Republic of Tunisia was declared in 1957, following independence from France the previous year. The country has only ever had two Presidents. In Novem-

ber 1987 "President-for-Life" Habib Bourguiba, who had held the presidency since independence, was declared senile and unfit to govern, and was deposed



by his Prime Minister, Gen. Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. Ben Ali was most recently re-elected as President in October 1999, when he was declared to have received 99.4 per cent of the vote in a three-way contest (the first time an incumbent President had faced an opponent). The Democratic Constitutional Rally (*Rassemblement Constitutionnel Démocratique*, RCD), known as the Destourian Socialist Party (PSD) under Bourguiba, has held power since independence: in the October 1999 elections it won 148 seats in the unicameral National Assembly, the remaining 34 seats being reserved for the opposition.

Since 1987 and the so-called "constitutional coup" that terminated the Bourguiba presidency, Tunisia has demonstrated appreciable social and economic progress. It signed its first Association Agreement with the European Union in 1995, and is often cited as a model of stability and sustainable development, with a successful record in areas such as trade expansion, family planning, debt servicing, and tourism development (tourism being the main hard currency earner, with Tunisia receiving more than 5 million visitors a year). Internally, the country's personal status code of 1956 has made its women the most empowered anywhere in the Arab World. However, while elections have been held periodically since 1989, competition to the ruling party is confined to six small political parties that still depend on the state for funding and political survival. In the 1999 elections the six parties increased their seats in the National Assembly under a quota system. Political rhetoric often suggests liberalization is in the offing but practice seems to contradict this. After the overthrow of Bourguiba, a three-term limit was put on future Presidents, but this was abolished in a referendum on April 30, 2002, thus allowing Ben Ali to stay in office beyond the expiry of his third term in 2004; the age limit was also raised to 75 to accommodate Ben Ali.

The government has at times in the past found itself in conflict with the trade union movement. For many years the Tunisian General Labour Union (*Union Générale Tunisienne du Travail*, UGTT) was the only organized force in society other than the ruling party and the armed forces, having played a prominent role in the independence movement. Periods of attempted repression, with detention of UGTT leaders and attempts to install compliant leaders in their place, alternated with periods in which the UGTT and government came into alliance. A strike called by the UGTT in 1978 led to riots, dozens of deaths and the arrest of union leaders, with the UGTT secretary-general, Habib Achour, being sentenced to imprisonment with forced labour. However, in the first multi-party elections since independence in 1956, held in 1981, the UGTT (without Achour) and the ruling PSD combined in a National Front, and won all the seats, Bourguiba then granting Achour a pardon and allowing him to return to the union leadership. Following strike threats in July 1985, however, Achour was again detained and the government installed its own officers at the UGTT. Following the fall of Bourguiba in 1987,

Achour was released, those leaders deposed by Bourguiba were allowed to resume positions in the UGTT, and since then generally stable relations have existed between the UGTT and the state. The UGTT is reported to receive considerable government subsidies for its work.

## ISLAMIST MOVEMENTS

The government exercises continued vigilance against any form of Islamist expression. The government operates an extensive network of informers; those suspected of Islamist tendencies face harassment or arrest; women may not wear the *hijab* (scarf) at work and men are not allowed to grow a beard without permission. Mosques are constantly monitored and policed. In the aftermath of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks in the USA, Western criticism of Ben Ali's heavy-handed repression has become muted.

The government has tended to downplay the risk of terrorist attack in recent years for fear of damaging the tourist industry. A tanker explosion at a synagogue in April 2002 resulted in 16 deaths. A group calling itself the Islamic Army for the Liberation of the Holy Sites, and saying it was linked to *Al-Qaeda*, claimed responsibility for the incident.

### Hizb al-Nahda (Renaissance Party)

*Leadership. Rachid al-Ghanouchi (exiled in London)*

The *Hizb al-Nahda* was established as the **Islamic Tendency Movement** (*Mouvement de la Tendance Islamique*, MTI) in 1981. Its founding president, Rachid al-Ghanouchi, was a philosophy professor, while Abdel Fatah Mourou, its secretary-general, had been a leader of the mainstream Muslim Brotherhood. It faced repression from the start, being accused in February 1981 of fomenting violence at colleges and schools. On July 11-18, 1981, many members, including Ghanouchi and Mourou, were arrested and charged with "contact with foreign quarters". On Sept. 4, 1981, 99 fundamentalists received heavy prison sentences; Ghanouchi was sentenced to 11 years (reduced on appeal to 10 years), and Mourou to 10 years. A further 140 fundamentalists, including other MTI leaders, were arrested at a demonstration on Sept. 14, 1981.

The MTI boycotted the general elections held on Nov. 1, 1981 (Tunisia's first multi-party elections since independence), in protest at the decision that only parties polling more than 5 per cent of the vote would be legalized. Thirty-six members were imprisoned on July 27, 1983, for attempting to reconstruct the MTI; 17 members, including Ghanouchi and Mourou, were pardoned on Aug. 1, 1984. In common with all opposition parties, the MTI boycotted the November 1986 general elections.

In March 1987, following violent clashes between fundamentalist and left-wing students at Tunis University, the government alleged an Iranian plot to overthrow President Bourguiba and establish a fundamentalist regime in Tunisia. Thousands of MTI members, including Ghanouchi, were arrested. Khemais Chemari, secretary-general of the Tunisian Human Rights League (LTDH), was also arrested, with the government alleging that the LTDH was a front for



the MTI. Official newspapers published photographs of alleged MTI arms caches. The MTI denied these allegations, and accused the government of torturing detainees.

In August 1987, 13 tourists were injured in bomb explosions at the resort towns of Sousse and Monastir (Bourguiba's home town). Although responsibility was claimed by the Islamic Jihad, the government blamed the MTI, and 90 members were tried (40 in absentia) for threatening state security and plotting against the government. The prosecution demanded death sentences for all 90, but only seven were condemned to death (five in absentia); 14 were acquitted, and 69, including Ghanouchi, received prison sentences. Two men were executed on Oct. 10, 1987, and Bourguiba demanded a retrial for the other defendants in order that they, too, be condemned to death. Amidst rumours of disagreements between President Bourguiba and Prime Minister Ben Ali over the fate of the defendants, and fears of an MTI coup, Bourguiba was on Nov. 7, 1987, replaced by Ben Ali.

As a result of President Ben Ali's policy of national reconciliation, 608 MTI members were among the first wave of political prisoners amnestied in December 1987. Ghanouchi was released from prison in May 1988. In August 1988, Ghanouchi announced that the MTI respected the Tunisian Constitution, including its guarantees for women's rights. The MTI, together with other recognized and non-recognized political parties, took part in consultations on a National Pact in September 1988. With the publishing of the Pact in November, the MTI formally declared itself as a political party, the *Hizb al-Nahda* (Renaissance Party).

Despite the liberalization, the MTI was forbidden from taking part in the April 1989 parliamentary elections. Nevertheless, independent Islamists stood in 19 of the 25 constituencies, receiving 13 per cent of the total national vote; in major cities, they polled over 25 per cent, and in Tunis 30 per cent. In June 1989, and again in December 1989, *al-Nahda* was refused official recognition, but it was permitted to publish a weekly newspaper, *Al-Fajr* (The Dawn).

Following clashes between left-wing and fundamentalist students during 1989, and riots in support of the Palestinian Intifada (Uprising), the government attempted in December 1989 to close the theology faculty at Zeitounia University, a centre of fundamentalist thought. This led to further clashes at Kairouan and Sfax universities, and a hunger strike of 96 students. Serious riots followed the floods of January 1990; 583 members of the Tunisian General Students' Union (UGTE) were arrested, and 283 drafted into the army. The government accused *al-Nahda* of inciting the disturbances. Together with the six legal opposition parties, *al-Nahda* boycotted the June 1990 parliamentary elections. In June 1990, *Al-Fajr* was banned.

The August 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, and the subsequent Gulf War of January-February 1991, posed further problems for *al-Nahda*. Rashid Ghanouchi supported Iraq's action, as did much public opinion. Abdel Fatah Mourou and

other party leaders, however, felt obliged to support their Saudi financiers. This also reflected tensions between more radical and more traditional approaches to Islam and Islamic nationalism. With the outbreak of war, there were demonstrations in Tunisia, notably on Jan. 24, 1991. On Jan. 31, 1991, Hamadi Jebali, editor of *Al-Fajr*, was sentenced to one year's imprisonment for criticism of the government, and on Feb. 1, 1991, many leaders of *al-Nahda* were arrested. Several demonstrators were shot on Feb. 6, 1991, and on Feb. 17, a self-styled "commando group" of about 30 people occupied and destroyed the Tunis offices of the ruling RCD. These were apparently members of *al-Nahda*, though operating without the knowledge or authorization of the party leadership. Following government criticism of the party, secretary-general Mourou announced on March 7, 1991, that it was suspending all activity. Amidst allegations of a coup being planned by Ghanouchi, the government arrested hundreds of *al-Nahda* members; Ghanouchi claimed that as many as 1,500 had been rounded up.

*Al-Nahda* has become inactive in Tunisia since the government crackdown of the early 1990s and lacks any significant following within the country. Mourou remains in Tunisia, refusing exile, having officially resigned from the movement, most likely under pressure from the authorities. Ghanouchi, who continues in exile in London, remains a widely respected and influential seminal thinker within Islamist circles globally. He continues to grip the imagination of Islamists all over the Arab World for his re-reading of the Quran, which does not oppose democracy, inclusion of women and minorities and, above all else, peaceful activism. His main treatise published in the early 1990s on "Public Freedoms" is taken to be a clear manifesto of his commitment to non-violence, a moderate Islam, and continuous use of independent reasoning in order to integrate Islam into the modern world.

### Islamic Jihad

The Tunisian branch of a movement active in many Arab and Muslim countries, Islamic Jihad was formed in the early 1980s by fundamentalists who had broken with the Islamic Tendency Movement (MTI) over the latter's rejection of violence. In July 1986, its leaders, Rabid Dhaoui and Lt. Ouchahi Kilani, were executed after being convicted of conspiracy to steal arms and explosives. Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility for the bomb attacks on hotels in August 1987, in which 13 tourists were injured. The government blamed the MTI for these attacks, though the seven subsequently sentenced to death were alleged to be members of Islamic Jihad. This group was eradicated in the 1990s.

*Larbi Sadiki*

# Turkey

**Capital:** Ankara

**Population:** 67.7 m

A period of mounting instability and widespread political violence culminated in a military coup and the imposition of martial law on Sept. 12, 1980. The military regime (acting through the National Security Council, NSC), headed by Gen. Kenan Evren, endeavoured to dismantle the existing militant organizations of the extreme left and also brought to trial many right-wingers who had been involved in violent attacks on the left carried out before the military take over in 1980.

By early 1981 some 30,000 persons were in detention for suspected terrorist activities, the majority of them being members of some 40 different left-wing groups. On Aug. 14, 1981, the Prime Minister declared that since the military take over there had been 459 victims of political violence as against 3,710 in the preceding 21 months. By the end of December 1981 it was officially stated that most terrorist groups in Turkey had been dismantled; that about 45,000 persons had been arrested since 1980, with about 30,000 of them having been charged with offences, for which 85 death sentences had been passed of which 11 had been carried out. It was also claimed that no less than 662 organizations were operating against Turkey from abroad; 286 of them were described as extreme left-wing, 17 as separatist and 280 as religious extremist.

Under a new constitution, introduced by the NSC and overwhelmingly approved in a referendum held on Nov. 7, 1982, Turkey was defined as a democratic, secular and social state in which legislative power belongs to the Grand National Assembly (parliament) and in which the President and the Council of Ministers led by the Prime Minister exercise executive power. The constitution prohibits the formation of political parties on an ethnic, class or trade union basis, as well as those professing communism, fascism or religious fundamentalism.

On Jan. 13, 1983, it was reported that 27,818 persons had been sentenced by martial law courts, of whom 98 had received death sentences, 24 of which had been carried out. Under a presidential decree of April 23, 1983, the ban on political activity was partly lifted, with certain restrictions remaining in force; in particular some 100 former party leaders were barred from political activity for 10 years. Elections to the Grand National Assembly were held in November 1983 under close supervision by the NSC, only three parties being permitted to stand. Military rule was formally ended in December 1983, with Turgut Ozal becoming Prime Minister, but Gen. Evren remained as a civilian President of the Republic under transitional provisions of the 1982 constitution until 1989, when Ozal was elected for a seven-year term by the

National Assembly.

On May 7, 1985, the National Assembly adopted a bill providing for leniency for members of illegal organizations who turned state's evidence; a presidential veto of the bill was overruled by the Assembly on June 5. On March 11, 1986, the Assembly passed legislation restricting the use of the death penalty and reducing prison terms by more than half. (No death sentences had been carried out since 1984.)

By March 19, 1987, martial law had been lifted everywhere except four provinces with majority Kurdish populations in the eastern part of Turkey, where a state of emergency (martial law under civil authority) was retained. Prior to the elections in November 1987, a referendum in September 1987 resulted in a narrow majority in favour of lifting the 10-year ban (until 1992) imposed on over 100 political figures who had been prominent before the 1980 military coup.

In the elections of November 1993, when voting was compulsory, those who had failed to vote in the 1982 constitutional referendum were excluded. Moreover, 12 parties were effectively barred from taking part in the elections because the NSC exercised its constitutional powers to veto the choice of their candidates.

In June 2002 martial law was lifted in two of the provinces in the East and the date of martial law was extended in two other provinces in the Eastern part of country for the last time for four months. In September, it was lifted entirely.

On Aug. 2, 2002, the Turkish Parliament ended the death penalty although capital punishment remains to be used in times of war or the "imminent threat of war". Other reforms have been made or are planned to raise human rights standards to the level required for possible accession to the European Union, but the military remains a powerful factor in Turkish political life.

There has been persistent conflict between the secular establishment and armed forces (which have seen themselves as the defenders of the secular constitution bequeathed by Ataturk) and Islamist political tendencies. Since the 1970s a succession of Islamist-influenced parties have been dissolved, in the case of the Welfare Party after briefly forming a government in 1996-97 (see below). In 2001, Recep Tayyip Erdogan formed the Justice and Development Party (AKP) as another in the line of such parties, on a platform that incorporated a diluted blend of Islamic and Western values. Elections on Nov. 3, 2002, resulted in 363 of the 550 seats in the National Assembly being won by the Justice and Development Party. In 1998 Erdogan had been convicted on charges of inciting religious hatred and barred from political office for life. Follow-

ing the 2002 election, parliament voted through a constitutional change that would lift the ban on Erdogan. In March 2003 Erdogan was elected to parliament in a by-election and became Prime Minister.

## LEFT-WING MOVEMENTS

### Communist Party of Turkey (CPT)

*Leadership. Haydar Kutlu (general secretary)*

Communists took part in the Turkish national movement in 1918-22, during which the CPT was founded on Sept. 10, 1920. The party was banned in 1923, and under Articles 141 and 142 of the Turkish penal code of 1926 communist propaganda and activities were prohibited; moreover, any initiatives designed to overthrow the constitution by force or to set up an association with the object of establishing the domination of one social class by another were made liable to long terms of imprisonment or even the death penalty. The CPT, however, continued its underground activities and, after World War II, had its headquarters in East Berlin.

Following the military take over in September 1980, hundreds of alleged party members were arrested, and in September 1981 it was stated in the Turkish press that the party had divided Turkey into six sections and had called for the establishment of a Kurdish state in Eastern Anatolia and of an independent socialist state without military bases in Cyprus. It was also said to have called for the repeal of Articles 141 and 142 of the penal code to enable it to assume power legally, failing which it would set up a national democratic front as an umbrella organization of all "antifascist" elements.

On Aug. 15, 1982, three party leaders were given long prison sentences for their activities, and on May 25, 1983, nine party members were, in Istanbul, sentenced to death and eight others to life imprisonment for attempting the armed overthrow of the state; another 40 were given prison terms of up to 24 years.

On March 29, 1985, a military court in Ankara sentenced 234 CPT members to imprisonment for from 32 months to 17 years and five months. A sentence of six years and five months in prison was imposed in Izmir on Nov. 13, 1986, on Servet Ziya Corakli, a writer, for his membership of the CPT.

After Sept. 12, 1982, the CPT unified unofficially with the **Workers' Party of Turkey (WPT)** under the name of the **Unified Communist Party of Turkey (UCPT)**. The leaders of the CPT, Nihat Sargin and Haydar Kutlu, returned to Turkey in 1987 but were arrested at the airport by the police. In 1988 the UCPT was formally set up and Nihat Sargin and Haydar Kutlu were released from prison on May 4, 1990. In its new line, the UCPT supported peaceful revolution and sought legalization but arrests of UCPT members continued. On July 22, 1991, the Constitutional Court took a decision to ban and expropriate the assets of properties of the party.

### Revolutionary Left (Dev-Sol)/Revolutionary People's Liberation Party–Revolutionary People's Liberation Front (DHKPC)

Dev-Sol was active in the 1970s as the main left-wing terrorist organization not linked to Kurdish separatism. Members of Dev-Sol sentenced to imprisonment in 1971-73 had been amnestied in 1974.

During 1980, in the run-up to the establishment of the military regime on Sept. 12, Dev-Sol members were responsible for the assassination of Gun Sazak (deputy chairman of the National Action Party) on May 22; of Dr Nihat Erim (Prime Minister in 1971-72) on July 19; of an intelligence agent in Istanbul on July 30; and of two policemen in Ankara on Sept. 1. Dev-Sol was the first extreme left-wing group to pledge itself to public opposition to the military regime.

On Nov. 16, 1981, six Dev-Sol members were condemned to death for the assassination of Dr Erim in July 1980 and of the Istanbul police chief early in 1981. On March 15, 1982, five Dev-Sol members were sentenced to death in Izmir for four political murders and "conspiracy to establish proletarian dictatorship", while three other defendants were given life sentences and 43 prison sentences of from two to 15 years.

On Feb. 17, 1984, in Istanbul, seven alleged Dev-Sol members were sentenced to death and 46 to imprisonment for from 3 to 20 years.

According to government sources Dev-Sol had, before the military take over of Sept. 12, 1980, agreed on co-operation with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) led by Dr George Habash, whereby the PFLP would supply Dev-Sol with weapons and training and enable it to open an office in Beirut.

Security forces launched nationwide operations to arrest Dev-Sol members in 1992. These operations to a great extent diminished the force of Dev-Sol. This paved the way for the organization splitting into two fractions, the Bedri Yagan and Dursun Karatas groups. These two groups struggled with each other for the leadership of Dev-Sol. Bedri Yagan and four associates were shot dead in a police operation on March 6, 1993. The Dursun Karatas fraction ensured its dominance within the Dev-Sol and engaged in drug trafficking and further attacks, including on members of the rival fraction. These attacks included the murder of a policeman in Istanbul on Aug. 27, 1995, an attack on Aug. 16, 1995, on the branch of the *Hurriyet* newspaper in London, and torturing to death Hakan Acar, a member of the Yagan fraction.

In 1994 Dev-Sol changed its name to the **Revolutionary People's Liberation Party–Revolutionary People's Liberation Front (DHKP-C/DHK-C)**. On Sept. 9, 1994, Dursun Karatas was arrested in France. Karatas was conditionally released by the French authorities later in the year and escaped from France.

In 1995, 149 Dev-Sol members and their weapons were captured in a police operation against it. On Jan. 9, 1996, the organization assassinated Ozdemir Sabanci, who was one of the major shareholders in one of the leading monopolies of Turkey, the Sabanci monopoly. One of the murderers of Sabanci, Mustafa Duyar, surrendered to the Turkish Embassy in Syria. The other murderer, Fehriye Erdal, was arrested with other DHKP-C members in Belgium.

According to the Defence Minister of Turkey, this organization is trying to recruit sympathizers from university students.

### Revolutionary Way (Dev-Yol)

*Leadership. Gulen Cayan (based in Paris)*

Before the military take over of September 1980 this organization had held a dominant position in several small towns

and had engaged in numerous acts of violence, in particular against political opponents. Under the military regime large numbers of the organization's members were arrested and tried.

By the end of 1981 Dev-Yol's headquarters were believed to have been set up in Paris, the organization's six member committee being headed by Gulten Cayan, whose husband, Mahir Cayan, had been the most influential leader of the **Association of Revolutionary Youth (Dev-Genc)** and a founder member of the **Turkish People's Liberation Army (TPLA)**. In 1971 he had been put on trial on charges of conspiring to overthrow the state and for involvement in other crimes, including the murder of the Israeli consul-general in Istanbul in May 1971; during the trial he had escaped from prison in November 1971 but had himself been killed, with other TPLA members, on March 30, 1972.

An attempt to revive the Dev-Yol group in Turkey in 1982 appears to have failed, as hundreds of alleged Dev-Yol supporters were arrested and tried on various charges, including an attempt to create a left-wing "liberated zone" at Fatsa on the Black Sea coast. Numerous trials of Dev-Yol members took place in the following few years and the police foiled a number of alleged plots.

In 1989-1990 divisions appeared within the Dev-Yol between groups seeking a constitutional path to power as a political party and those that wished to continue with a campaign of violence. However, while further arrests of militants continued in the early 1990s, by 1993 the majority of Dev-Sol members had abandoned the armed struggle and sought to enter politics. Some Dev-Yol members participated in the Freedom and Solidarity Party (ODP) which is a small legal leftist party.

#### **Turkish Communist Party—Marxist-Leninist (TKP-ML)/Turkish Workers and Peasants Army (TIKKO)**

This party was formed in 1972 by Ibrahim Kaypakkaya, the party adopting the style "Marxist-Leninist" to distinguish itself from communist parties allied with the Soviet Union. The Marxist-Leninist Turkish Workers and Peasants Army (TIKKO) was formed as the military wing of the TKP-ML. On Jan. 30, 1980, a total of 98 members of the party were arrested and charged with murder, and by September 1981 there were 178 alleged party members being tried for armed insurrection. The TKP-ML's principal founder, Ibrahim Kaypakkaya, died in custody following the military take over of September 1980. In 1984 over 80 of its members were sentenced to death and 168 to terms of imprisonment.

This organization was subsequently responsible for various bank robberies, drug trafficking and the murder of members of the security forces. Among other incidents, they killed six soldiers in Ovacik Topuzlu on May 20, 1994, and nine civilians on June 3, 1998, in Pertek (Tunceli). Security forces arrested many members of the organization.

The TKP-ML/TIKKO suspended its actions in 1998 because of the struggles of factions within the organization. However, it made a dramatic return on March 5, 1999, when it attempted to assassinate the governor of the province of Cankiri, the governor being injured and four others killed. The members of the organization who carried out the attack were arrested by Ankara police. According to the Defence

Minister of Turkey, TKP-ML/TIKKO seeks to recruit sympathizers from among university students and Turkish citizens who live in abroad.

### **RIGHT-WING MOVEMENTS**

Various movements of the extreme right engaged in violent actions against the left in the period before the September 1980 military take over. Thereafter such movements generally backed the Evren regime in its offensive against the extreme left but were themselves frequently the subject of trials brought by the authorities for illegal activities mainly carried out in the period before September 1980. However, these movements became legal in late 1980s.

#### **Grey Wolves ("idealists")**

*Leadership. Col. Alpaslan Turkes*

This organization was the militant youth wing of the extreme right-wing National Action Party, which was banned in 1980.

Assassinations attributed to Grey Wolves' members included that of Abdi Ipekci (editor of the influential daily *Milliyet* and friend of Bulent Ecevit, Prime Minister of Turkey and president of the National Democratic Left Party), who was murdered on Feb. 1, 1979. The person who was convicted of this crime was Mehmet Ali Agca, who was condemned to death in absentia in April 1980 after escaping from prison in November 1979 and fleeing the country. The sentence was confirmed by the Turkish Consultative Assembly on March 4, 1982, but meanwhile Agca had shot and wounded the Pope in Rome on May 13, 1981, and had been sentenced to life imprisonment by an Italian court on July 22, 1981. A Turkish request for his extradition was refused by Italy. On March 29, 1986, a Rome court sentenced Agca to one year in prison and two months' solitary confinement for illegally importing the weapon used in the attack on the Pope; during his trial Agca alleged that the Grey Wolves had been involved in preparations for the attack.

In the late 1980s, the Grey Wolves were legalized but some of its former members set up organized crime groups.

### **MUSLIM FUNDAMENTALISTS**

Since the late 1980s, in parallel with the rising trend of Islamic fundamentalism in the Muslim world, fundamentalist organizations have been active in Turkey.

#### **Islamic Great Eastern Raiders Front (IBDA-C)**

*Leadership. Salih Izzet Erdis*

This organization was formed by the members of the "Raiders" youth organization which was the supporter of the National Salvation Party (NSP) in the 1970s. Salih Izzet Erdis criticized the NSP for being passive and set up the IBDA-C with former members of the Raiders after the September 1980 coup. They sought to overthrow the regime and set up a theocratic state. The organization found a base among Islamist students in universities.

In the 1990s the organization was responsible for attacks on cafés and pubs, Atatürk monuments, synagogues, churches and political party buildings. IBDA-C became weaker



after prominent figures in the organization, including Salih Izzet Erdis, were arrested in 1999-2000.

### **The Way of Allah (Hizbullah)**

The organization was set up after the 1980 coup. It later divided into two fractions, **Ilim** (led by Huseyin Velioglu) and **Menzil** (led by Fidan Gungor). Ilim can be likened to groups such as the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) in Algeria and the Islamic Grouping in Egypt (see entries). The name of Hizbullah/Ilim was first heard in the context of assassinations of members of the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK). According to the authorities, the struggle between these organizations resulted in 700 dead between 1991-95. Out of these 700, 200 were Hizbullah/Ilim and 500 PKK members and sympathizers. Then, Ilim started to kill its opponents in the other Islamic groups. The leader of the Menzil fraction, Fidan Gungor, and numerous Menzil members were killed by the Ilim group. It murdered the leader of the Zehra Association, Izzettin Yildirim, who was known as one of the leaders of the "light sect", Islamist feminist intellectual Gonca Kuris, and those of its own members who were suspected of being informers. The organization generally murdered its victims by torture.

According to the Anadolu Agency, the organization was involved in 5 criminal offences in 1991; 149 in 1992; 345 in 1993; 366 in 1994; 59 in 1995; 10 in 1996; 22 in 1997; 18 in 1998; and 28 in 1999. According to the Agency, the security forces arrested 1,527 members of the organization in the period 1992-99.

On Jan. 17, 2000, the leader of the organization, Huseyin Velioglu, was shot dead by police in Beykoz (Istanbul). The power of Hizbullah greatly diminished after this date. On Jan. 24, 2001, however, the organization assassinated the chief executive of the Diyarbakir police force, Gaffar Okan.

### **Muslim Youth (Musluman Genclik)**

The organization is a continuation of the "Raiders" which was the Islamic youth organization supporting the National Salvation Party. It has a strong base in Istanbul and Yildiz universities in Istanbul. The organization supports the ideas of *Hamas* and Khomeini. As a result of police operations, 18 members of the organization have been arrested since Aug. 20, 1997, in Istanbul.

### **Nationalist View Organization (NVO)/Caliphate's State (Kalifstaat)**

*Leadership. Metin Kaplan*

This organization is based in Germany under the leadership of Metin Kaplan, who is the son of the founder of the organization, Cemallettin Kaplan, a former Mufdi who had considered himself to be the Khomeini of Turkey. According to official Turkish sources reported on Feb. 5, 1987, its militants were trained in Iran and supplied with funds and weapons by the Khomeini regime. Their object was said to be to destroy secular rule in Turkey and to replace it with a regime based on the religion of Islam, under which a Union of Islamic Societies and Congregations would establish itself in the country. The militants were said to be infiltrating Turkey's eastern provinces.

After Cemallettin Kaplan's death on May 14, 1995, Metin Kaplan became the leader of the organization. On Oct.

26, 1998, 24 NVO members were arrested in possession of explosives. Their interrogation reportedly revealed that the NVO planned to blow up Fatih and Ayasofya mosque and bomb Anitkabir (the Ataturk mausoleum) by means of a hired aeroplane on the national holiday on Oct. 29, 1998. Kaplan was arrested in Germany in March 1999 and subsequently sentenced to four years' imprisonment for incitement to murder: the German authorities have taken steps to dissolve the group (see Germany entry).

### **Banned Islamist political parties**

Founded in October 1972 as the continuation of the National Order Party (proscribed after a military coup in 1971), the **National Salvation Party (NSP)** became the principal political expression of Islamic fundamentalism in Turkey. Having become, with 48 seats, the third strongest parliamentary party in 1973, it entered a coalition government (led by the Republican People's Party) in January 1974—the first Islamic party to share power since the secularization of the state in 1928. After further governmental participation from March 1975 (this time in coalition with the Justice Party), it gained votes in the June 1977 general elections but saw its representation in the 450-member Assembly halved to 24 seats. It went into opposition in December 1977.

Following the military take over of September 1980, the NSP came into conflict with the Evren regime and was, together with all other registered parties, officially dissolved in October 1981. The party leader, Prof. Necmettin Erbakan, had earlier been brought to trial in April 1981 (together with 33 other NSP members) on charges of attempting to create an Islamic state in Turkey. He was eventually sentenced to four years' imprisonment on Feb. 24, 1983.

In 1983 Prof. Erbakan set up a new party under the name of the **Welfare Party**. This party made a major advance in the mid-1990s: in local elections in 1994 it won the mayoralities of Ankara and Istanbul (where its candidate was Recep Tayyip Erdogan) and in the December 1995 Assembly elections it gained 21 per cent of the vote, coming in first place with 158 of the 550 seats. In May 1996 the party formed a coalition government with Erbakan becoming Turkey's first Islamist government leader since the end of the Ottoman Empire. In June 1997, however, Erbakan was forced to resign under pressure from the military and the party went into opposition. In January 1998 the Constitutional Court ordered the dissolution of the Welfare Party on the grounds of its "hidden" Islamic fundamentalist agenda and its "conspiracies" against the secular order. Erbakan and six other party leaders were banned from holding political office for five years.

In February 1998 some 100 former Welfare Party deputies declared their support for the newly formed **Virtue Party** under the presidency of Recai Kutan. In elections on April 18, 1999, the Virtue Party took third place, winning 111 seats and 15.5 per cent of the vote. Erbakan was sentenced to a year's imprisonment in



March 2000 for a speech made in 1994 (though he was not detained) and in June 2001 the Constitutional Court banned the Virtue Party, though without accepting the prosecution demand that all the party's deputies should lose their seats. Kutun in July 2001 launched the **Felicity Party** in succession while in August 2001 Erdogan launched the **Justice and Development Party** on a moderate and diluted Islamist platform. In the November 2002 elections the Felicity Party won no seats but the Justice and Development Party headed the polls, Erdogan ultimately becoming Prime Minister (see above).

## KURDISH MOVEMENTS

The number of Kurds in Turkey has been variously estimated: in 1991, President Turgut Ozal stated there were 12 million and it is commonly said that Kurds (however defined) constitute around 20 per cent of the population. Kurds are in a majority in the south-east of the country but are also to be found dispersed throughout the country with concentrations of internal migrants in the larger cities.

In the Treaty of Sèvres concluded in 1920 between the Western Allies and the Sultan of Turkey, provision was made for an autonomous Kurdistan, but this treaty was superseded by the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne, which effectively determined Turkey's present boundaries. Except for a brief attempt in Iran in 1945-46 (see Iran entry) there has never been an independent Kurdistan, and the Turkish government has never recognized the existence of Kurds as a minority.

A Kurdish nationalist movement first arose before World War I, and anti-Turkish revolts by Kurds were suppressed in 1908, 1925, and 1930-33. A further period of conflict began in 1984 in which the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK) has been the leading organization. Numerous Kurdish organizations or front names for the PKK have emerged including the ARGK (People's Liberation Army), Komal, Rizgari, the KUK (Kurdistan National Liberation), DDKD (Revolutionary Democratic Culture Association), TKSP (Turkey Kurdistan Socialist Party), TKDP (Democratic Party of Turkish Kurdistan), Tekosin (Struggle-War), Denge, Kawa (The Unification of Kurdistan Proletarians), etc. However, all these organizations have been secondary to, or absorbed into, the PKK since 1983. The PKK campaign has resulted in an estimated 30,000 deaths since 1984 but the conflict has subsided over recent years, in particular after the capture of PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan in 1999.

### Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK)

*Leadership. Abdullah Ocalan (in detention)*

The PKK was established by Abdullah Ocalan on Nov. 27, 1978, in the Lice district of Diyarbakir province. Espousing Marxist-Leninist rhetoric and attracting detribalized educated Kurds from poor backgrounds, it soon became notorious for the violence of its terrorist tactics, which were often directed at other Kurdish groups (considered by the PKK as tribalist, feudal, bourgeois etc.).

After the 1980 military coup, the PKK moved its headquarters to the Syrian-controlled Bekaa valley in eastern Lebanon. Abdullah Ocalan himself spent most of the 1980s in Damascus. After an initial ambush in May 1983 (in which three Turkish soldiers were killed), the PKK came to prominence on Aug. 15, 1984, with a raid on Eruh and Semdinli which resulted in 35 dead.

The terrorists variously styled themselves the Kurdistan Freedom Brigades (HRK), the Kurdistan National Liberation Front (ERNK) and then again the People's Liberation Army of Kurdistan (ARGK). The commander of ERNK, Masun (Mazlum) Korkmaz, was killed by Turkish troops in March 1986, and his name was given to the PKK training camp ("military academy") in the Bekaa valley.

In order to protect the civil population against terrorist intimidation, the Turkish authorities introduced in 1985 a system of village guards. They and their families immediately became the object of PKK attacks. In 1987, the Turkish government lifted martial law in the remaining provinces of the south-east, but replaced it with a state of emergency (martial law under civil authority). The PKK operated almost exclusively in the countryside. In some cases where serving and retired officers of the security forces were gunned down in cities (including Istanbul and Ankara), Dev-Sol (see separate entry) was accused of working on behalf of the PKK.

The PKK campaign led to the migration of Kurds from exposed villages to district and provincial centres, or out of the south-east altogether. A few villages were evacuated by the authorities. Politically, it was a factor in the government's decision in 1991 to legalize the use of Kurdish (although the use of Kurdish in education was not permitted), and to invest and encourage investment in the relatively impoverished south-east, including the vast Southeast Anatolia Project to harness the waters of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers for both electricity generation and irrigation.

The PKK stepped up its campaign when the West sought to alleviate the plight of Iraqi Kurds in the spring of 1991. Western troops and observers in south-eastern Turkey formed an audience which the PKK clearly wanted to impress.

The PKK's emphasis in the 1980s was on a "socialist" Kurdistan to include all the Kurdish-speaking areas in Turkey, Iraq, Iran etc. With the worldwide collapse of communism at the start of the 1990s, however, the left-wing ideological component was played down. The PKK also indicated it was prepared to abandon its armed struggle in favour of political activity in Turkey, if it were given legal status as a political party, and if its prisoners were released. While implementing a policy of encouraging desertions from the PKK by offering immunity to "repenting terrorists", the Turkish authorities steadfastly refused, however, to extend legal immunity to the PKK as a whole and recognize it as a legitimate political force.

The PKK targeted security forces, public employees such as teachers, and civilians in an effort to make south-eastern Turkey ungovernable. Its tactics included the destruction of schools, railways and bridges, construction machinery and other facilities. The number of actions attributed to the PKK rose from 184 in 1984 to 5,717 in 1993 and 6,357 in 1994. Thereafter, however, the number of actions decreased, to

3,974 in 1995 and 2,977 in 1997 as the PKK lost ground to the security forces. One result was that the PKK resorted to suicide bombings to attack the security forces. The first suicide bombing was carried out on June 30, 1996, in Tunceli, which resulted in 7 dead and 34 injuries, and in all there were 16 suicide bombing incidents between 1996 and 1999.

The loss of ground to the security forces paved the way for conflicts within the organization. One of the prominent leaders of the organization, Semdin Sakik, was put on trial by Abdullah Ocalan in 1998 for his failures against the security forces but Sakik escaped from the PKK and was captured by Turkish security forces. The PKK was identified as one of the 30 main terrorist organizations in the world by the US Secretary of State in October 1997.

On Feb. 2, 1999, Abdullah Ocalan was arrested in Kenya by the Turkish and US secret services. He was returned to Turkey and sentenced to death but not executed. PKK leaders withdrew to northern Iraq, where Iraqi Kurds enjoyed de facto autonomy, with an estimated 5,000 PKK fighters in camps. Since Ocalan's capture violence has largely subsided and the PKK have formally observed a unilateral ceasefire. Ocalan, in detention, is reported to have called on his supporters to abandon violence and pursue a political path.

In 2002, the PKK officially adopted the name **Congress for Freedom and Democracy (KADEK)** although the PKK acronym has universally remained in use.

In April 2003 it was reported that the nine-member leadership council of the PKK had shelved its ambitions for a unified state for all Kurds and instead was seeking equal rights for all citizens in Turkey. In June 2003 the Turkish parliament adopted legislation to allow education and broadcasting in the Kurdish language. On Sept. 2, 2003, the PKK announced that its unilateral ceasefire was at an end, in view of Turkish government violations, and that henceforth a ceasefire would only be applied bilaterally. By this time the position of the PKK had become entangled with the future

status of the Kurdish region of Iraq and the issue of the proposed introduction of Turkish troops into Iraq. At the request of the USA, Turkey had abandoned cross-border incursions against the PKK in Iraq after the US invasion, and also offered a partial amnesty for PKK fighters (this not including several hundred PKK leaders), but in return sought the closure of PKK camps and the handing over of PKK leaders as a condition for providing troops.

### Kurdish Political Parties

The **People's Labour Party (HEP)** was set up after 1980. In 1986, it entered parliament on a joint list with the Social Democratic People's Party, some of the deputies of the party attempting to take the oath in the National Assembly in Kurdish. It was alleged by the Turkish authorities that the party had an organic relationship with the PKK. In July 1993, the party was banned.

After the HEP was banned, the former deputies of the party established the **Democratic People's Party (DEP)**. The leader of the party, Yasar Kaya, was arrested on Sept. 16, 1993, because of a speech given in (Kurdish) northern Iraq. On June 16, 1994, the DEP was banned and some deputies of the party were sentenced to prison terms of up to 15 years on Dec. 8, 1994.

DEP was succeeded by the **People's Democratic Party (HADEP)**. In February 2000 the HADEP leader and 17 others received prison sentences for aiding and abetting the PKK.

*Rasim Donmez*

## Turkmenistan

**Capital:** Ashgabat

**Population:** 5.1 m

The Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic declared its independence in October 1991; after the collapse of the Soviet Union it became a member of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in December 1991. A new Constitution was adopted in May 1992. This provided for an executive President as head of state and government. The following month, a presidential election was held. The sole contender was Saparmurad Niyazov, former First Party Secretary of the Communist Party of Turkmenistan. In January 1994 his term of office was extended until the end of the decade. In January 2000 the Turkmen National Forum (an annual meeting of some 2,700 leading politicians and administrators) confirmed the President in office for life. Niyazov has become the object of a personality cult within the country which to a considerable degree

has been isolated from the rest of the world.

Legislative authority is vested in the 50-member Assembly (Majlis), elected by popular vote to serve five-year terms. There are also two advisory bodies. One is the People's Council (Khalk Maslakhaty), comprising 50 directly elected members as well as the 50 deputies of the Assembly, members of the Council of Ministers and other officials. The other is the Council of Elders (Yashulylar Maslakhaty), formed of respected members of society, personally selected by the President to provide "wise guidance" in affairs of state. This body has among its powers the exclusive right to nominate presidential candidates.

The Communist Party of Turkmenistan was transformed into the Democratic Party of Turkmenistan on the eve of the demise of the Soviet Union. This

remains the only active registered political party in Turkmenistan. In early 1992 a Peasants' Party was organized, with the aim of representing the interests of the rural population. It appears to have been registered, but since its inception it has not shown any signs of life. Unregistered groups are banned. As discussed below, some secular opposition organizations are based outside the country. There are no reports of Islamic opposition parties in Turkmenistan.

### Opposition and Dissident Movements

Turkmenistan is widely regarded as one of the most repressive states in Central Asia. Two laws — the law that prohibits impugning the “dignity and honour of the President” and the law that prohibits hunger strikes and public demonstrations in the capital — are frequently invoked to quell any form of dissident activity. Other tactics to curb incipient opposition include imprisoning suspected dissidents on fabricated charges of such offences as drug trafficking and corruption; intimidation and harassment (beatings, theft of personal property etc.) by official and non-official agents is also common.

Efforts to establish independent organizations date back to the end of the Soviet era. In September 1989 **Agzybirlik** (“Unity”), a society aimed primarily at the promotion of Turkmen language and culture, was officially registered. However, registration was soon withdrawn. It evolved into a “popular” socio-political movement and attracted a certain amount of support, particularly in intellectual circles. Post-independence the Turkmen government refused to recognize it. It is impossible to assess the current strength of this movement, though some of the leaders, notably Nurberdy Nurmamedov, have remained active. The independent **Democratic Party of Turkmenistan** (not to be confused with the official, government-backed Democratic Party of Turkmenistan) was founded in December 1990. It was refused registration, but collaborated with *Agzybirlik* to produce an independent cultural-political journal *Dayanch* (“Support”), under the editorship of Murad Salamatov. The **Movement for Democratic Reform**, also founded at this time, was based in Moscow. In August 1991 an umbrella body, **Genesh** (Council), was established with the aim of coordinating the activities of these three movements. However, it does not appear to have progressed far beyond the planning stage; there has been no news of its activities for several years.

By 1992 opposition within the country had effectively been silenced. The first notable defector was the Foreign Minister, Avdi Kuliev. He fled to Moscow, where he founded the **Turkmenistan Foundation (TF)**. This organization was originally apolitical in stance, but soon became the centre of opposition to Niyazov's regime. By 1994, most of the leading dissidents were in voluntary exile. The majority went to Moscow, though some were granted asylum in Scandinavian countries. Khoshali Garayev and Mukhamedkuli Aitmuratov, prominent members of TF, were

arrested in Uzbekistan in 1994 and extradited to Turkmenistan, where they were given long prison sentences; Garayev subsequently died in custody. In 1997 TF was transformed into the **United Democratic Opposition of Turkmenistan (UDOT)**, a broad coalition of exiles comprising the **Russian Community of Turkmenistan**, the **Communist Party of Turkmenistan** and other small groups. In Turkmenistan, meanwhile, any type of non-conformist activity attracted severe penalties. In 2000, Nurmamedov, one of the few independent figures to remain in the country, was arrested.

Members of “non-traditional” faiths such as Jehovah's Witnesses, Seventh-Day Adventists, Baptists and Hare Krishna adherents were continually harassed; there were several instances of the deportation of the leaders of these communities and the demolition of premises used for religious services.

In 2001 Boris Shikhmuradov, one of Niyazov's closest associates (and a former Foreign Minister) sought refuge abroad, first in Moscow, later in various Western capitals. However, he did not align himself with Kuliev, but instead started his own party, the **People's Democratic Movement of Turkmenistan**. This polarised the opposition into “old” and “new” camps. The former regarded Shikhmuradov and other recent defectors as self-seeking opportunists.

Within Turkmenistan, there were signs of nascent opposition in 2002. Sporadic outbreaks of civil unrest and anti-government demonstrations were reported. The authorities responded by yet greater repression. An anti-corruption campaign was launched in March, resulting in the purging of several senior officials. In May, criminal charges (including murder, torture, embezzlement and drug trafficking) were brought against the former head of the National Security Committee, Muhammad Nazarov, and members of his staff. They were sentenced to between 15 and 20 years' imprisonment. Nazarov had previously been regarded as the most powerful figure in Turkmenistan after the President. The former Minister of Defence, the Chairman of the National Bank and the head of the main television channel were likewise removed from office and charged with serious offences. It was rumoured that at least some of these individuals had links with the Turkmen opposition abroad. The Turkmen government demanded, unsuccessfully, the extradition from the United States of Shikhmuradov.

On Nov. 25, 2002, there was an assassination attempt on the life of President Niyazov. This prompted a new wave of dismissals and arrests. Turkmen Special Forces raided the Uzbek embassy in Ashgabat, claiming that Turkmen nationals who had taken part in the attack were hiding there. They did not find anyone on this occasion, but a week later, at a separate location in Turkmenistan, they captured Shikhmuradov. It was alleged by some that Uzbekistan had indeed been implicated, at least indirectly, in the assassination plot. Shikhmuradov, along with several alleged accomplices, was put on trial in January 2003. He was found guilty of treason and sentenced to life imprisonment.

In November 2002, Khudaiberdy Orazov, former Director of the National Bank of Turkmenistan, and Alexander Dodonov, former deputy Prime Minister of Turkmenistan, together with other Turkmen exiles in Moscow, created a new opposition movement called **Watan** (Fatherland). The group operates a website ([www.watan.ru](http://www.watan.ru)) and posts regular updates on the situation in Turkmenistan. In May 2003, leading Turkmen

exiles in the West (including Nurmukammed Khanamov, former Ambassador to Turkey) set up the Republican Party of Turkmenistan. To date there is little information on this formation.

*Shirin Akiner*

## Tuvalu

**Capital:** Fongafale (Funafuti atoll)

**Population:** 11,000

Tuvalu, formerly the Ellice Islands, achieved independence from the UK in 1978. It comprises a series of Pacific atolls with a total population of little more than 11,000.

One of the early impacts of European contact was the forced recruitment of Tuvaluan men, through “blackbirding” men, to work in plantations in Peru, Fiji, Samoa and Hawaii. There was some resistance but this was largely ineffective against the well-armed blackbirders.

Tuvalu came under British jurisdiction in 1877 and was made part of the British Protectorate of Gilbert and Ellice Islands in 1892. The Japanese invaded the territory during World War II and were later uprooted by the Americans. Opposition to Japanese rule was minimal due to fear of Japanese brutality. After the war, tension between the Gilbertese and Ellice Islanders increased, partly over employment opportunities. Many Ellice Islanders had moved into Tarawa, the capital, located in the Gilbert Islands, in search of work.

In 1974 Britain granted self-government to the Gilbert and Ellice Islands. But the Ellice Islanders were not happy with the idea of changing their ruling masters from British to Gilbertese and began seeking ways for secession. A formal inquiry into Tuvaluan attitudes to independence took place, followed by a referendum. Tuvaluans were warned that if they seceded, they would lose the royalties from the Ocean Island phosphate mining. Nevertheless, 92 per cent of Tuvaluans voted for secession. On Oct. 1, 1975, Ellice Islands was legally separated from Gilbert Islands (now Kiribati) and the name Ellice Islands later changed to Tuvalu. Tuvalu became fully independent in 1978.

There are no political parties in Tuvalu, where alliances in the 13-member parliament tend to be formed around personalities. The Prime Minister, Faimalaga Luka, was ousted from power in a vote of no confidence in parliament in December 2001.

*Steven Ratuva*

## Uganda

**Capital:** Kampala

**Population:** 24.7 m

The Republic of Uganda achieved independence from the United Kingdom in 1962. President Milton Obote and his Uganda People's Congress (UPC) government were deposed in 1971 by Idi Amin Dada, whose brutal military regime was in turn overthrown in 1979 following internal rebellion and military intervention by Tanzania. General elections were held the following year in which Obote and the UPC were returned to power. The current President, Yoweri Museveni, assumed power in January 1986 as leader of the National Resistance Movement (NRM). The NRM had waged a guerrilla war from 1981, firstly against the Obote government, and subsequently against the

military regime which deposed Obote in 1985. Political activity was banned, although political parties were permitted to continue in existence. Obote is now in exile in Zambia and Amin died in exile in Saudi Arabia in August 2003.

In 1995 Uganda adopted a new constitution, agreed by a Constituent Assembly elected the previous year which consisted mostly of NRM supporters. The constitution provided for new presidential and legislative elections, to be held under the existing restrictions on party political activity. The elections took place in May and June 1996. Museveni won the presidency with 74.2 per cent of the vote, while NRM sympathiz-



ers secured a majority in the unicameral Parliament. A national referendum on a return to multi-party democracy was held in June 2000. Although 91 per cent of voters supported the retention of Museveni's non-party political system (known officially as the Movement system), the turnout was low in view of an opposition call for a boycott. In the next presidential and legislative polls, held respectively on March 12 and June 26, 2001, Museveni was re-elected President for another five-year term with 69 per cent of the vote and the NRM maintained its dominance of the 292-member national Parliament.

Uganda has shown considerable social and economic recovery since the Obote and Amin eras, when much of its formerly comparatively prosperous economy was destroyed. Since 1987 Museveni and the NRM have exercised unchallenged control in southern Uganda and much of the country is peaceful. However, parts of the northern and western regions are subject to continuing sporadic guerrilla activities by insurgent groups, exacerbated in part by political instability and violence in neighbouring Sudan and Democratic Republic of the Congo.

#### **Allied Democratic Forces (ADF)**

*Leadership. Jamil Makulu*

The ADF was formed in 1995 as a diverse opposition coalition of former members of the moribund National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (NALU), Islamists from the Salaf Tabliq sect, Hutu militiamen, and fighters from neighbouring Democratic Republic of the Congo. Aiming to oust the Museveni regime and install a government based on sharia law, it has operated from the Ruwenzori mountain range in western Uganda. The government claims to have defeated the ADF, which was most active at the end of the 1990s.

#### **Lord's Resistance Army (LRA)**

*Leadership. Joseph Kony*

The LRA is a Christian fundamentalist organization, formed as an offshoot of the rebel Holy Spirit Movement of Alice Lakwena which was decisively beaten by government forces in 1987. It has an estimated 6,000 fighters and is the largest insurgent group in Uganda, with most of its fighters from the Acholi group. The LRA leader has announced that he wants to create his own nation, to be called the Nile Republic, in northern Uganda. The group is believed to practice a combi-

nation of spiritualism and black magic, and has regularly carried out atrocities against the civilian population, including the abduction of children and young adults for training as guerrillas or for slave labour. LRA forces have also targeted local government officials and non-governmental organization workers, and ambushed international humanitarian aid convoys.

Uganda has accused Sudan of supporting the LRA in the past, but in March 2002 the two countries signed a protocol allowing Ugandan government forces to take military action against LRA bases in southern Sudan, known as "Operation Iron Fist". The LRA responded by rounding up villagers in the north of Uganda into camps, increasing the region's displaced population to some 800,000, and carrying out thousands of abductions of boys to become fighters or girls for sex slaves. Despite previous initiatives that have failed to bring an end to LRA activity, Joseph Kony reportedly expressed his willingness in December 2002 to enter into peace talks with the Museveni government. In June 2003, however, LRA forces were reported to have launched attacks in parts of eastern Uganda where they had never previously been active.

#### **Uganda National Rescue Front II (UNRF II)**

*Leadership. Ali Bamuze*

Based in Sudan, the UNRF was formed in 1996, consisting of former soldiers of the deposed President Idi Amin Dada. It has operated in the Arua and Kitgum regions of northern Uganda, and has been responsible for a number of killings and abductions. In December 2002 it was announced that the Museveni government had signed an amnesty deal with the UNRF II leader, under which rebels who surrendered were promised integration into the Ugandan army or economic support.

#### **Uganda Salvation Front (USF)**

This group, which first appeared in 1998, has claimed responsibility for several attacks and abductions in eastern Uganda.

#### **West Nile Bank Front (WNBF)**

*Leadership. Juma Oris*

Launched in 1996, the WNBF is dominated by Muslims from the West Nile province and operates largely in north-western Uganda. It has reportedly linked up with anti-government rebels in the neighbouring Democratic Republic of the Congo.

*Richard German & Elizabeth Taylor*

## **Ukraine**

**Capital:** Kyiv (Kiev)

**Population:** 48.5 m

Ukraine declared its independence from the disintegrating Soviet Union in August 1991. It is a unitary republic with an executive President elected for a five-year term, and a 450-member unicameral Parliament (Verkhovna Rada) elected for a four-year term, both

on the basis of universal, equal and direct suffrage by secret ballot. The President of Ukraine is a head of state with extensive powers, including that to nominate the Prime Minister with the consent of the Verkhovna Rada. Half the members of the Parliament are



elected directly from constituencies and half through party lists.

In November 1999, in a second round of balloting, President Leonid Kuchma, standing without party affiliation, was re-elected for a second term, taking 56.3 per cent of the vote, compared with 37.8 per cent for the candidate of the Communist Party. As a result of legislative elections held in March 2002, the principal party formations in Parliament were as follows: the pro-presidential centrist block "For United Ukraine", 102 seats; the national-democratic centre-right block "Our Ukraine", 111; the Communist Party of Ukraine, 66; the Socialist Party of Ukraine, 24; the centrist block of Yuliya Tymoshenko, 21; and the Social Democrats (SDPU-O), 22. The pro-presidential forces of "For United Ukraine" and SDPU-O, together with independent MPs, formed an unstable majority.

Ukraine inherited from the former Soviet Socialist Republic of Ukraine not only extensive communist legislation, but also ex-communist ruling elites and such institutions as parliament, central and local government, army, police and courts. National-democratic forces enjoyed overwhelming support in the Western and to some extent the Central regions of Ukraine but failed to penetrate the highly russified East and the South, including Kharkiv (Kharkov) and the Donbass industrial region, where ex-nomenklatura functionaries remained in power. National revolution, therefore, was not completed in 1991 when the Soviet Union collapsed. National democrats, notably members of the mass movement *Rukh*, achieved some degree of influence in the Ukrainian government, although never formally forming the government. Tension between the pro-Western, EU-orientated national-democrats and pro-Russian "oligarchs", as well as Communists, remains high. Ukraine became a de facto presidential republic with limited or managed democracy and some form of state capitalism, a buffer state between Russia and the West.

### **Soviet legacy and post-Soviet reality**

Anti-Soviet armed struggle in Ukraine was not totally suppressed by the Soviet security forces until 1956 when the last units of the UPA (Ukrainian Resurgence Army) were finally defeated in Western Ukraine. Some individuals managed to stay in underground bunkers, mostly in rural areas, up until formal independence in 1991. After the establishment of the independent Ukrainian state, former UPA combatants who had fought against the Soviet Union during World War II and after that for independence, were neither prosecuted nor recognized as war veterans. The UPA Brotherhood is actively campaigning for the recognition of UPA fighters as World War II combatants, but is not likely to succeed in the near future.

During the 1960s to 1980s, the dissident movement in Ukraine consisted mostly of members of the Ukrainian intelligentsia trying to protect the status of the Ukrainian language and culture by establishing human rights groups such as the Helsinki Union, led

by Viacheslav Chornovil. However, no armed struggle was possible or attempted between 1956 and 1991 when formal independence was achieved. Gorbachev's programme of perestroika, however, provided the opportunity to create paramilitary organizations while general liberalization combined with economic decline led to a sharp increase in organized crime.

When Ukrainian law enforcement bodies refer to terrorist activities, they usually mean the activities of organized criminal groups using firearms or explosives against businessmen, officials or policemen. The vast majority of such instances are not of a political or religious nature and, therefore, would not be considered necessarily as "terrorist" in the Western sense of the word. Politically motivated "terrorist" activities in Ukraine, therefore, by any standards are rather low. When the Ukrainian government approved a new law on the "Fight against Terrorism" at the end of 2002, the opposition accused the President of seeking to provide even wider powers to the security services to subjugate the opposition movement. The only terrorist act reported by the Ukrainian Security Service (SBU) in 2002 was an explosion at Odessa international airport. The "terrorist" involved was sentenced for an attempt to extort money from Austrian Airlines.

The major divisive issue in political life in Ukraine since 2000 was the "cassette scandal" when Maj. Mykola Melnychenko, a bodyguard of President Kuchma, published secret tape-recordings implicating the President and his inner circle in corruption and involvement in the murder of an opposition journalist. The mass protest movement "Ukraine without Kuchma", that briefly united the Ukrainian political spectrum from the right to the left, culminated on March 9, 2001, when a demonstration by up to 150,000 protesters clashed with special police units and was violently dispersed. Two of the most radical para-military organizations, the Ukrainian National Self-Defence (UNSO, see entry) and *Tryzub* (see entry), were held responsible for provoking violence; however, only UNSO members were tried in the courts and given various sentences of imprisonment.

Until then, the most high-profile terrorist act in Ukraine was attributed to a member of the left-wing Socialist Party of Ukraine (SPU). During the 1999 presidential campaign grenades were thrown into a crowd of supporters of the leader of the Progressive Socialists (PSP), Natalia Vitrenko, with a number of people, including Vitrenko, injured. The PSP had been launched by Vitrenko in 1996 as a breakaway from the SPU. The Ukrainian Security Service arrested Sergiy Ivanchenko and two other individuals who confessed to having organized the terrorist act in order to prevent Vitrenko from running for the presidency. The leader of the SPU, Oleksandr Moroz (the former chairman of the Ukrainian legislature in the Soviet period), claimed that confessions were extracted by torture to discredit him as a presidential candidate, and later provided tape-recordings from Major Melnychenko suggesting that the presidential administration was behind the plot.

## Right-wing and ultra-nationalist groups

### Ukrainian National Self-Defence (UNSO)

Website. [www.una-unso.org](http://www.una-unso.org)

The UNSO was organized by the ultra-nationalist **Ukrainian National Assembly (UNA)** and has been considered by the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) as one of the major terrorist threats. However, there has been no evidence of UNSO terrorist activities on the territory of Ukraine although 17 UNA-UNSO members received substantial prison sentences after the violent demonstrations of March 9, 2001.

The Russian government complained about UNSO members serving as mercenaries in Chechnya during the first and second Russian military campaigns in the republic. One of the UNA/UNSO leaders, Dmytro Korchynsky, supported such claims in his book "War in the Crowd", freely available in bookshops. UNA, under the leadership of Andriy Skil, officially denied any involvement in the second Chechen war, but it openly admitted its involvement in earlier conflicts in Moldova, Georgia and Chechnya. The fact that UNSO members continue to serve as foreign mercenaries, which is explicitly forbidden by Ukrainian law, supports the claim that the Ukrainian Security Services either ignore them or have some sort of control over the organization. The former head of the Ukrainian military intelligence, Gen. Oleksandr Skypalsky, has said that UNSO was created by the Soviet KGB with support of the local cadres in Ukraine that now constitute the core of the SBU.

### Tryzub ("Trident")

Leadership. "Colonel" Yevgen Fil

Website. [www.tryzub.com.ua](http://www.tryzub.com.ua)

The S. Bandera Patriotic-Sports Association *Tryzub* was originally created as a branch of the Congress of Ukrainian Nationalists (KUN), itself organized in 1993 by the émigré Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (Stepan Bandera faction) or OUN (b). The KUN was hostile to the Ukrainian National Assembly (UNA) and created *Tryzub* in opposition to the UNA-backed Ukrainian National Self-Defence (UNSO, see entry).

By the late 1990s, however, OUN(b) lost its influence on KUN and reverted to being an émigré organization in 2000. *Tryzub*, effectively, also drifted away from KUN, being led by "Colonel" Yevgen Fil. *Tryzub* collaboration with "Rukh for Unity" and "OUN in Ukraine" suggests that the organization was influenced by the pro-presidential forces and, possibly, controlled by the SBU. *Tryzub* members were involved in the clashes with police in the anti-presidential demonstration of March 2001 (see above), though none were subsequently put on trial.

## Cossack organizations

### The Ukrainian Cossacks (*Ukrainske Kozatstvo*)

It is the largest organization of the Ukrainian Cossacks and has local branches in every *oblast* of Ukraine. It was established in 1990 by the activists of *Rukh*, who elected Viacheslav Chornovil as its first *Hetman* (Commander). Unlike UNSO and *Tryzub* with their unmistakably right-wing ideology, the *Ukrainske Kozatstvo* follow the more state-centred

ideology of the Ukrainian centre right. It is registered as a sports-patriotic public organization of Ukrainian patriots in support of the military traditions of Ukraine and pre-conscript military education.

The *Ukrainske Kozatstvo* alone claims 300,000 members, while there are a number of other All-Ukrainian Cossack associations also claiming a substantial membership, which is difficult to prove. The Cossack movement enjoys support in all regions of Ukraine and not only in the Western, traditionally more nationalist, parts. Cossacks claimed to have participated in various armed conflicts, including Transdnistria, Bosnia and Chechnya and are active in Crimea. Being ideologically varied, the Cossack movement in Ukraine includes some pro-Russian organizations or even units of the Russian Cossacks in Ukraine. Some of these pro-Russian Cossack organizations were banned by the SBU for alleged anti-Ukrainian orientation. The latest Hetman of *Ukrainske Kozatstvo*, Gen. Ivan Bilas, represents a pro-presidential, state-centred policy orientation, while some other smaller Cossack associations, such as *Zvychayeve Kozatstvo* tend to support the centre-right opposition.

The website of the *Ukrainske Kozatstvo* is [www.kozatstvo.kiev.ua](http://www.kozatstvo.kiev.ua)

## Left-wing revolutionary organizations

The Ukrainian Security Service (SBU) claimed in 2000 to have uncovered a plot to overthrow the Ukrainian government by military force by the previously unknown **Union of Soviet Officers in Ukraine**, based in Chernihiv and Sumy. A group of such officers was arrested by the SBU in September 2000, for conspiracy to form military units, and planning to carry out terrorist explosions (e.g. at the Chernobyl nuclear plant) to destabilize the state and overthrow the government. The union's council, "Revvoyensovet", included 18 officers, but only their leader Yuriy Perlovskiy was sentenced to six years' imprisonment.

The SBU also announced that a bomb was planted in Kharkiv by another group of former KGB officers, protesting against corruption in the Ukrainian government and the security forces. The fate of those self-proclaimed "ex-KGB terrorists" remains unknown. An explosion near SBU headquarters in October 2002 was attributed to the previously unknown radical **Komso-mol** organization (Communist Youth League), whose members were based in Odessa and Mykolayiv. The arrested group of Komsomol members confessed to planning terrorist activities; however, the Komsomol and the Communist party claimed that such confessions resulted from torture. National-democrats accused the SBU of "inventing" fictional terrorist organizations in order to distract the attention of the Ukrainian public from the "cassette scandal" involving the President.

## The Muslim Factor

Ukraine has a growing Muslim population, due largely to resettlement of the Crimean Tatars returning from Central Asia to which they were deported by Stalin

after World War II. Mostly secular, the 250,000 Crimean Tatars formed a representative council (*Majlis*) that allied politically with the Ukrainian national democrats as opposed to the Russian majority of the Crimean Autonomous Republic. However, high rates of unemployment and poverty, missionary activities by foreign Islamic organizations, together with a profound sense of historical injustice have radicalized some parts of the Tatar movement. The Crimean SBU accused "local Muslim extremist groups" of providing support to the Chechen fighters, whose presence was established through the Chechen cultural centres in Ukraine. There are increasing reports of violent confrontations between Tatars in Crimea and the local Russian-speaking population. Active involvement of the Russian Cossacks in such confrontations might prove a source of increasing Crimean Tatar militancy in future. Members of the

(Russian) Crimean Cossack Union have repeatedly described the Crimean Tatar *Majlis* as a "pro-fascist" organization and urged Crimean Cossacks to "fight the *Majlis*". The Crimean Cossack Union has also demanded suspension of the Ukrainian Cossacks' organization in Crimea saying their activities are "provocative" and accusing the Ukrainian Cossacks of contracting an alliance with the Crimean Tatar *Majlis*.

In March 2003, the Ukrainian Security Service also reported concern over some refugees arriving in Crimea from Arab countries who were allegedly involved in illegal arms sales, drug-trafficking and fraud. According to the SBU's directorate in Crimea, some foreigners seeking refugee status in Ukraine are suspected of being members of "terrorist Islamic bases and criminal clans".

*Olexander Hyrb*

## United Arab Emirates

**Capital:** Abu Dhabi

**Population:** 2.4 m

On July 18, 1971, rulers of six emirates (Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Al Fujairah, Sharjah, Ajman, and Umm al Qaiwain), known as the Trucial Coast states, ratified the provisional constitution of the United Arab Emirates (UAE). This union went into effect on Dec. 2, 1971. Ras Al-Khaimah, the seventh emirate, joined the union in February 1972.

The executive branch consists of the Supreme Council of Rulers (SCU), the Council of Ministers (the cabinet), and the presidency. The SCU consists of the rulers of the seven hereditary emirates; it elects from among its members a chairman and a vice chairman, who serve for a term of five years. Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al-Nahyan (ruler of Abu Dhabi since August 1966), has been the President of the federation since Dec. 2, 1971, and Sheikh Maktoum bin Rashid Al-Maktoum (ruler of Dubai since October 1990) is the Vice President. Decisions of the SCU require the approval of at least five members, including the rulers of Abu Dhabi and Dubai. The UAE has enjoyed considerable political stability and economic success during the long period of rule of Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al-Nahyan.

Under the provisional constitution, the Federal National Council (FNC) is the highest constitutional authority, but its actual role in the governmental process is limited to consultation. This unicameral FNC or *Majlis al-Ittihad al-Watani* consists of forty members appointed for two-year terms by the respective emirate rulers. The rulers of Abu Dhabi and Dubai have effective veto power, a fact reflecting the comparative wealth of the various emirates. Abu Dhabi and Dubai each appoint eight members to the FNC; Ras Al-Khaimah and Sharjah each appoint six mem-

bers; and Ajman, Al Fujairah, and Umm al Qaiwain each appoint four members. These members must be citizens of the emirates they represent, twenty-one years of age or older, and literate.

Like its neighbours in the Gulf region, the UAE faces two kinds of problems or threats. The UAE was threatened by the Iranian Revolution of 1979, the first Gulf War in 1980, and the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait in August 1990 and the possibility of Iraqi forces continuing down the Gulf coast to seize other oil-rich Arab states. In addition, a dispute with Iran over various occupied UAE islands flared up in April 1992, when Iran refused to allow several hundred former residents to return to the islands. These threats pushed the UAE to ally very closely with the West. In 1991 the UAE participated in the coalition that expelled Iraq from Kuwait. In 1993 the UAE supported the Oslo accords between the Israelis and Palestinians. Following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks against the United States, President Sheikh Zayed condemned "all acts of terrorism everywhere". In 2002 the UAE played a key role in the unsuccessful attempt to persuade Saddam Hussein to step down to spare Iraq and its population from war.

The other problem is that of the demographic composition of the federation. Almost all of the seven emirates' 2.4 million people are Muslim. South Asians, mainly Indians and Pakistanis, make up 45 per cent of the population. The next three largest groups are Iranians (17%), Arabs from other parts of the Middle East (13%) and Westerners (5%). Virtually all of the federation's Iranians and Shias (16%) live in Dubai. Nationals are therefore in the minority and this is considered a potential threat to the UAE's security. This dilemma

illustrates one of the UAE's greatest challenges: weaning itself from its dependence on foreign labour. Expatriates create expensive long-term structural problems but nationals have not wished to fill the jobs currently held by expatriates. In 1995, there were only 736 nationals in local industries, which was 1.5% of the labour force. The expulsion of 300,000 expatriates in 1996 caused inflation, labour shortages, and reduced economic growth. Moreover, most of the expatriates expelled at that time had returned to the UAE by the middle of 1997. The informal *hawala* remittance system is used by many expatriate workers to transfer money to their home countries outside of formal bank-

ing channels, using middlemen. It has been criticized by Western law enforcement agencies as a component in the financing of global terrorism and in November 2002 the UAE Central Bank announced it would tighten regulation to meet such criticisms.

There are no apparent political parties and leaders or political pressure groups in the UAE. There have been no indications of political instability and there appears to be general support for the government's strategy of attempting to adapt and preserve traditions while pursuing a policy of vigorous economic development.

*Ibrahim J. Al-Sharifi*

## United Kingdom

**Capital:** London

**Population:** 59.5 m

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is a hereditary constitutional monarchy in which the monarch is head of state. The legislature (Parliament) consists of (i) a House of Commons of 659 members elected for not more than five years by universal adult suffrage in single-member constituencies and (ii) a House of Lords currently with 500 life peers, 92 hereditary peers and 26 clergy. The government is headed by a Prime Minister who is leader of the party which commands a majority in the House of Commons. There is no written Constitution but the UK has now incorporated the European Convention on Human Rights into domestic law.

Following a general election held on June 7, 2001, seats in the House of Commons were distributed as follows: Labour 413, Conservatives 166, Liberal Democrats 52, Ulster Unionist Party (Northern Ireland) six, Democratic Unionist Party (Northern Ireland) five, Scottish National Party five, *Plaid Cymru* (Welsh Nationalists) four, *Sinn Féin* (Northern Ireland) four, Social Democratic and Labour Party (Northern Ireland) three, Independent one. The Labour Party, led by Prime Minister Tony Blair, has held office since 1997, prior to which the Conservatives had been in office continuously since 1979 under Margaret Thatcher (1979-90) and John Major (1990-1997).

Parties which unsuccessfully contested the 2001 elections included the Green Party, the Workers' Party (NI), the Socialist Alliance, the Socialist Labour Party, the Alliance Party of Northern Ireland, *Mebyon Kernew* (Cornwall), the British National Party, and the UK Independence Party.

A new Terrorism Act came into force in February 2001. This was aimed as much at terrorism originating from outside the United Kingdom as at terrorism originating from Northern Ireland, which had been the main concern of previous legislation. Further legisla-

tion has been and is being introduced to fit in with European Union and US legislation subsequent to the Sept. 11 attacks in the USA and as part of the "war on terror". On Nov. 12, 2001, Parliament passed legislation (the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001) including an opt-out from article 5 of the European Convention on Human Rights. The new legislation effectively permitted the indefinite detention without trial of foreign nationals considered by the government to be a threat to national security, with limited rights of appeal or review. In July 2002, the Special Immigration Appeals Commission ruled that the law was discriminatory and in breach of human rights law because it allowed the internment of non-British citizens only, but this opinion was overruled by the Court of Appeal on Oct. 25, 2002.

### EXTREME RIGHT-WING MOVEMENTS

#### British Movement (BM)

Once one of the largest extreme right-wing groups, the BM was wound up in 1983-84. It was founded in 1968 by Colin Jordan (who left in 1976) and, with Michael McLaughlin as its chairman, it was by 1980 organized in some 25 branches, claiming a membership of 4,000. An anti-semitic and anti-immigration movement, it encouraged military training and had its own uniformed Leader Guard.

#### British National Party (BNP)

*Leader: Nick Griffin*

This party was originally founded in 1960 as an alliance of the League of Empire Loyalists, the White Defence League and the National Labour Party but suffered splits, with the rump of the BNP being one of the founder members of the National Front (see entry) in 1967. The BNP was re-formed by John Tyndall in April 1982. It contested 53 constituencies in the general election of the following year and retains its policy of fighting elections.



Tyndall was sentenced to 12 months' imprisonment in 1986 for incitement to racial hatred. Under its current leader, Nick Griffin, the party has sought to re-brand itself as a party that concentrates on local issues and has attempted to present a more moderate face. It has several front organizations that campaign on specific issues such as farming or saving the pound. The issue of asylum seekers has become its biggest theme.

The party has never elected an MP. In the 2001 general election its 33 candidates won an aggregate of 47,129 votes, or 0.2% of the total. The BNP has since made gains at local council level in the depressed Lancashire cotton towns and by June 2003 they held 16 council seats.

### Combat 18

Formed in 1992 to provide stewarding for the National Front (see entry) it became a separate organization the following year. It has only 30-50 members, involved in football hooliganism and other violent activities. It remains close to the National Front and publishes *The Stormer*.

### National Front (NF)

The National Front was founded in 1967 by merger of other right-wing groups, its principal plank being the desire to defend the racial purity of Britain through the repatriation of non-white immigrants. It has also opposed the UN, EU, international financial institutions and "big business capitalism". It has nominated candidates in every general election since its foundation (with a peak of 303 in 1979) but has never won a parliamentary seat or come close to doing so, its best ever result being at a by-election in 1973 when it took 16 per cent of the vote.

During the 1970s NF meetings and marches often resulted in clashes with demonstrators from groups such as the Anti-Nazi League and the organization sought to demonstrate a highly visible street presence, including marches through areas with large numbers of black and Asian people. Since the 1980s, however, and in contrast to its French namesake, the NF has shrunk to political insignificance and it has been eclipsed on the far-right by the British National Party (see entry). In the 2001 general elections it put up only five candidates, who won a total of 2,484 votes.

In January 2001 Simon Northfield, the NF youth organizer, and seven others were jailed after pleading guilty to conspiracy to commit racially aggravated assault.

### EXTREME LEFT-WING GROUPS

Since the general collapse of Communism, extreme-left groups and parties, never of great significance in the UK, have subsided into practical non-existence or become groupuscules within environmental protest movements or the anti-globalization movement. Reclaim the Streets is an anarchist umbrella organization which is active in the annual May Day "Stop the City" protest, when various groups march on and through the City of London financial district. Extra-legal activities have been seen mainly in single-issue protest campaigns against individual road schemes, genetically modified crops and protests against summits of world political leaders.

### ANIMAL RIGHTS GROUPS

Since the mid-1980s there has been increasing militant activity from animal rights groups who object to the use of animals in scientific experiments and intensive agriculture. Their protests have taken the form of vandalism at scientific establishments involved in animal experimentation and, latterly, in terrorist attacks on scientists.

A major focus has been Huntingdon Life Sciences (HLS), a company that uses animals to test pharmaceutical products. Its bankers, firstly the Royal Bank of Scotland, then Stephens Inc of the USA, have been targeted by protesters and withdrawn their support. The focus on this company has encouraged the development of links between British and US animal rights groups and led to an exchange of tactics. In August 2003, five Japanese pharmaceutical companies, all customers of HLS, were granted interim "exclusion zones" by the High Court around their UK premises and homes of senior employees after a wave of harassing attacks. The orders applied to named individuals as well as the Animal Liberation Front, Animal Rights Militia and Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty (SHAC). Similar exclusion zones had previously been granted to HLS employees. Three co-ordinators of SHAC were jailed in 2001 for inciting a public nuisance and causing criminal damage.

The **Animal Liberation Front (ALF)** has claimed responsibility for a series of raids on laboratories and scientific establishments from 1985 onwards, in which animals being used for experiments have been set free and buildings and equipment damaged. The ALF has also been blamed for many bombings and violent attacks: in 1999 alone, there were 1,200 attacks estimated to have resulted in £2.6 million of damage. The **Justice Department** and the **Animal Rights Militia** are two groups organized on a cellular basis that have been involved in sending letter bombs and in direct acts of violence. Their tactics have included fire-bombing cars and homes.

### ISLAMIST GROUPS

In the aftermath of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks in the USA attention has turned to Islamic groups that have been alleged to be linked to *Al-Qaeda*. London has long been a centre of refuge for exile groups and there is little public evidence at present that such groups are seeking to influence domestic politics or target the United Kingdom itself. No terrorist attacks have occurred in the UK linked to such groups and the UK government has permitted many individuals to remain in the country who are wanted on allegations of terrorism in other countries, primarily those whose judicial standards give concern or which apply the death penalty. Recruitment for training by *Al-Qaeda* has taken place, however, and the USA has a number of British citizens in detention at Guantanamo Bay. In addition, a number of individuals suspected of links with *Al-Qaeda* or other groups have been detained



under the provisions of the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001.

On Jan. 20, 2003, a raid on the Finsbury Park Mosque (London) resulted in the arrest of seven persons under the 2000 Terrorism Act. Sheikh Abu Hamza (who was not arrested) had attracted much media attention because of the alleged inflammatory nature of his preaching at the mosque. He runs an organization known as the **Supporters of Sharia**. Another prominent Islamist group is **al-Muhajiroun**, headed by Omar Bakri Mohammed. This group has sought to justify the Sept. 11 attacks.

### EXTRA-PARLIAMENTARY CAMPAIGNS

A number of protest campaigns have taken place in recent years in the UK over issues such as road-building, genetically modified crops, petrol prices, legislation against hunting etc, outside parliamentary channels and in some cases on or crossing the border of legality. These campaigns have tended to be highly decentralized.

#### Rural issues

Rural campaigns have been encouraged by the depressed state of much of agriculture at a time of general economic buoyancy and a perception that the Labour government is indifferent to rural concerns and in some respects hostile to rural ways.

The Countryside Alliance (CA) was formed in 1997 to campaign against a ban on hunting with dogs, to which the incoming Labour Government had a manifesto commitment. In September 2000 a loose organization of farmers and owner lorry drivers blockaded oil refineries around the United Kingdom (the "fuel crisis"). They also operated rolling blockades on some of the motorways. The success of this campaign, which effectively closed off supplies to petrol stations, has inspired the radical fringe of the CA to threaten similar tactics if hunting is banned.

On Sept. 22, 2002, the CA organized a major march through London, the Liberty and Livelihood march. The Countryside Alliance has sought to adopt a position in mainstream politics but is increasingly developing a radical fringe, including the "Real Countryside Alliance" and the Countryside Action Network. Another group calling itself the Rural Action Group has threatened to disrupt motorway traffic as was done during the "fuel crisis".

### NATIONALIST GROUPS

#### SCOTLAND

Since 1999 Scotland has had its own Parliament with a range of powers devolved from central government. The granting of a Scottish Parliament was a deliberate attempt to conciliate Nationalist sentiment. The Labour Party is the strongest party in the Parliament, with the Scottish National Party (SNP) in second

place. The SNP favours Scottish independence but operates within the framework of constitutional politics.

#### Gaelic Language Defence League (Ceartas or Justice)

This group in 1981 threatened to destroy English road signs and radio and TV transmitters in its campaign for official recognition of the Gaelic language.

Demands for legal status for Gaelic have been opposed on the grounds that very few Scots now speak the language. However, a petition was handed into the Scottish Parliament in September 2002 seeking a Gaelic Language Act and a dedicated Gaelic television station.

#### Scottish National Liberation Army (SNLA)

The SNLA, which was believed to have only a few active members, claimed responsibility for a number of incendiary bombs in the 1980s. Bombs were also planted in Aberdeen and Stonehaven in 1994. Although there have been no notable acts of violence in recent years, the SNLA still exists and there is a legal organization, the Scottish Separatist Group, which gives it political support.

### WALES

There has been a Welsh assembly since 1999 with devolved powers. Following 2003 elections the Labour Party held 30 seats, with the nationalist *Plaid Cymru* in second place with 12 seats. Pro-independence sentiment has been markedly less in Wales than in Scotland and *Plaid Cymru* has adopted an equivocal position on the issue.

#### Cymru 1400

A group with links in the USA that campaigns for an independent Wales, taking part in demonstrations to commemorate historical events. It celebrates prominent figures from violent movements of the recent past such as the Free Welsh Army, which does not seem to have been operative since the 1970s.

#### Sons of Glyndwr (Meibion Glyndwr); Movement to Defend Wales (Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru); The Keepers of Wales (Cadwyr Cymru)

These groups were thought to be responsible for many of the 200 or so arson attacks on English-owned holiday homes and businesses in Wales between 1979 and 1991. In June 1990, there was a spate of incendiary devices sent through the post. Most of these devices were defused but at least two people were injured when incendiaries went off after being delivered to homes and businesses.

Members of the Sons of Glyndwr appeared in black berets and dark glasses in a procession at Abergele, Clwyd on July 7, 1990, to mark the 21st anniversary of the deaths of two Welsh nationalists blown up by their own bomb on the eve of the investiture of the Prince of Wales in 1969.

#### Welsh Language Society (Cymdeithas yr Iaith Cymraeg)

Established in 1962, this Society was originally concerned almost exclusively with the defence and expansion of the use

of the Welsh language. From its beginnings it campaigned for a separate Welsh television channel and for increased use of the Welsh language in radio broadcasts. The society later adopted the tactics of civil disobedience to press its case.

On June 25, 1981, the chairman of the Society was sentenced to nine months in prison for his part in a conspiracy to damage television relay stations in Avon, Somerset and Sussex during 1980 (as part of the campaign for a Welsh television channel) after he had admitted the Society's liability for causing damage worth £43,000.

The campaign must be considered a success: a Welsh language TV channel (S4C) has been in existence since 1982 and extensive use of Welsh in official documents is now required, even in those areas of Wales (comprising the main population centres) with few Welsh speakers. The campaign has died down significantly, having achieved most of its aims.

### CORNWALL

A campaign has begun for some form of devolution for Cornwall, a peripheral English county with a Celtic heritage. The "peaceful campaigners" who stand for election go under the name of *Mebyon Kernow* (Sons of Cornwall). The more militant groups call themselves "An Gof" after Michael Joseph, a smith who led the 1497 Cornish uprising. Activities have been confined to minor vandalism such as removing and defacing English language signs.

### NORTHERN IRELAND

Northern Ireland, with a population of 1,500,000 and whose capital is Belfast, is a province of the United Kingdom: the full name of the United Kingdom (the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) testifies to the province's separate and distinctive history from the rest of the UK.

Its population is traditionally deeply divided between (i) a (now declining) Protestant majority (constituting some 53.13% per cent of the total population according to the 2001 census), politically represented mainly by various Unionist parties standing for the maintenance of Northern Ireland's status as part of the United Kingdom; and (ii) a Roman Catholic minority (43.76%, compared with only 37% when the "Troubles" began in the late 1960s) for the most part desiring the union of Northern Ireland with the Republic of Ireland and politically represented mainly by the moderate nationalist Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) and, increasingly in recent years, by *Sinn Féin* (the political wing of the Republican movement whose military wing is the Irish Republican Army, IRA). An attempt to bridge the sectarian divide in the province was made by the constitution of the Alliance Party, which has, however, received only limited support. The two main parties in British politics, the Conservative and Labour parties, have virtually no presence in Northern Ireland.

The west and south of the province are increasingly Catholic in population, the Protestants concentrat-

ing increasingly in the east. Belfast itself is 49% Protestant and 46% Catholic.

Northern Ireland now has 18 seats in the British House of Commons. In the 2001 general election, the Ulster Unionist party (UUP) took 6 seats, the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) 5, *Sinn Féin* (SF) 4 and the SDLP 3. *Sinn Féin* has never taken up its seats in the House of Commons. The continuing peace process in Northern Ireland has led to particular tensions within the Ulster Unionist Party: in June 2003 three members of the UUP resigned the party whip at Westminster and were expelled from the party.

### Creation of Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive

The so-called Good Friday agreement of April 10, 1998, created a power-sharing Assembly, from which ministers for the new Northern Ireland executive were drawn. Elections to the new 108-seat Assembly, held on June 25, 1998, resulted in the following shares of the vote and distribution of seats: SDLP 21.99% (24 seats); UUP 21.28% (28); DUP 18.03% (20); *Sinn Féin* 17.65% (18); Alliance Party 6.50% (6); United Kingdom Unionist Party (UKUP) 4.52% (5); Independent Unionists 3.00% (3); Progressive Unionist Party (PUP) 2.55% (2); Northern Ireland Women's Coalition (NIWC) 1.61% (2).

Other parties that contested the Assembly elections but did not win seats included the Ulster Democratic Party (UDP), founded as a political front for the loyalist paramilitary Ulster Defence Association (UDA), which took 1.07% of the vote.

In December 1999, the new Northern Ireland executive came into being: David Trimble, the leader of the UUP, was elected First Minister and Seamus Mallon, Deputy Leader of the SDLP, was elected Deputy First Minister. John Hume of the SDLP, who had played a major role in the negotiations, did not stand and resigned his seat in 2000.

The devolved institutions were subsequently suspended once for three months in 2000, twice for a single day in 2001, and then again in October 2002, since when they have remained suspended (see below).

### The course of the "Troubles"

For a quarter of a century from 1969 there was almost continuous sectarian violence in Northern Ireland, known as the "Troubles", leading to the loss of some three thousand lives. In the last decade there has been a marked and progressive abatement of conflict, allowing the creation of new power-sharing institutions. A definitive settlement to the conflict has not been achieved, however, with an irreconcilable difference remaining between the demands of Republicans for a united Ireland and of Loyalists to remain part of the United Kingdom.

The Irish Free State (later the Republic of Ireland) was established in 1922, with an overwhelming Catholic majority, in the greater part of the island of

Ireland. Six northern counties, however, with a Protestant majority, remained under British rule as part of the United Kingdom. The South never formally relinquished its claim to sovereignty over the whole of Ireland, a fact that encouraged the apprehensions of the Northern Loyalists.

The sources of the Troubles were complex but several important factors may be mentioned. Firstly, although the North had a Protestant majority, it also incorporated a substantial Catholic minority: indeed, its borders had been drawn in such a way that two of the six counties had a Catholic majority. Thus there remained a substantial proportion of its population that was fundamentally unreconciled to the existence of Northern Ireland. Secondly, the Catholic minority suffered discriminatory treatment in many areas, such as employment, this forming the background to the civil rights marches of 1968 and early 1969 that heralded the Troubles. Thirdly, the Northern Ireland policing apparatus was exclusively Loyalist in composition and militarized to an extent unknown in Britain: it included in its ranks one element, the B-Specials, that was little more than a Protestant paramilitary force, whose activities led to its disbandment in 1970. Fourthly, Northern Ireland's provincial government, which enjoyed very substantial devolved powers, with its own Parliament at Stormont, commonly acted on the principle of majoritarian rule, exclusively in favour of the Protestant population. Fifthly, the Catholic and Protestant populations were educated separately and effectively formed separate and antagonistic populations.

Finally, and of great significance to the rapid escalation of the conflict, Northern Ireland was not integrated into the rest of the United Kingdom. In domestic matters, its own Parliament and government held sway to the remarkable extent that by convention Northern Irish matters were not even discussed in the Westminster Parliament. At the outset of the Troubles, Northern Ireland was as if a foreign country, profoundly different and unfamiliar, not just to most of the British people but to most British politicians. As matters escalated after 1968, the British government at first sought to leave the problem largely in the hands of the government of Northern Ireland; although this was reluctantly abandoned in the early 1970s with the imposition of direct rule, Northern Ireland continued to be regarded as a separate entity. Terrorist outrages on the mainland always evoked more concern than those in the province, to the degree that in 1974 legislation was adopted that provided for the exclusion from Britain of individuals suspected of terrorist associations who remained at liberty in the province; furthermore, the post of Northern Ireland Secretary was consistently put in the hands of individuals of only second-rank status in British politics.

Civil rights marches by Catholics in 1968 and the hostile reaction of Loyalists gradually slipped into full-scale violence in 1969. The first fatalities were recorded in July 1969. Over the next two years wholesale population movements took place as Catholics

fled into Catholic areas and Protestants into Protestant districts: it is estimated that between 1969 and 1971, 60% of those who were forced or fled from their homes were Catholic and 40% Protestant. The British government deployed troops on the streets for the first time in August 1969 and although these were at first welcomed by most Catholics as providing protection from Loyalist attacks, conflict between the troops and militant Republicans soon developed. Sections of Belfast and Londonderry, both Catholic and Loyalist, eventually became "no-go" areas for troops. These areas were protected by fortifications and within them the paramilitaries consolidated their strength.

Amid continuing violence in August 1971 the government introduced internment without trial of terrorist suspects: this remained in force (being used mainly against Republicans) until December 1975 but succeeded in little other than turning prisons into training camps. Devolved government to Northern Ireland was ended and direct rule from London imposed in March 1972. This failed to have any impact on the security situation and violence continued, mainly in Northern Ireland, but with increasing attacks by Republican groups in Britain. British government policy oscillated between efforts to impose an essentially military solution and secret and ineffectual attempts to treat directly with the terrorist factions.

Various efforts were made following the introduction of direct rule to set up a workable democratic government in Northern Ireland based on the principle of power-sharing between the two communities. These failed, largely because of Unionist opposition to any power-sharing with Republican parties: in 1974 a tentative form of power-sharing and co-operation between North and South introduced by the Anglo-Irish Sunningdale agreement was wrecked by highly effective industrial action co-ordinated by the Ulster Workers' Council, a Loyalist umbrella group. This experience scuppered the prospects of any form of power-sharing for years: a new devolved Assembly was established in November 1982 but this never enjoyed significant support in either of the communities, suffered from regular boycotts and suspensions, and was finally dissolved in June 1986 having achieved nothing. The Unionists were also strongly opposed to the conclusion of the Hillsborough Agreement in 1985, under which the British and Irish Governments agreed to improve cross-border co-operation in security and other matters. After the Agreement had been approved by the Irish and British parliaments on Nov. 21 and Nov. 27, 1985, respectively, ministers from the two countries met at regular intervals under the aegis of the Anglo-Irish Intergovernmental Conference to discuss matters of mutual concern.

The level of violence in the 1980s was markedly less than in the 1970s peak, when in 1971-76 an average of 275 people per year were killed. Nonetheless, bombings and assassinations continued, with an average of 84 deaths per year in 1987-91.

In 1988 secret inter-party talks took place between



the OUP, the DUP, the SDLP and the Alliance, while parallel talks also began between John Hume of the SDLP and Gerry Adams of *Sinn Féin*. Although the IRA and other groups continued their campaigns of violence, these two sets of talks laid some of the groundwork for what became the peace process.

In January 1990, the new Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Peter Brooke, launched an initiative involving contacts with the parties in the province and the Irish government aimed at promoting negotiations over future constitutional arrangements. This culminated in an announcement, on March 26, 1991, that the negotiation process would begin at the end of the following month. On April 29, 1991, the Combined Loyalist Military Command announced a ceasefire but this was cancelled on July 4. Little then happened until 1993, when in September, Gerry Adams and John Hume issued a joint statement which became known as the Hume-Adams initiative.

Bomb attacks by the IRA on the City of London financial district in April 1992 and April 1993 caused damage totalling well over one billion pounds and provided the context for the intensification of peace efforts including the opening of secret British discussions with *Sinn Féin* in February 1993 (these becoming public knowledge in November 1993). In December 1993, British Prime Minister John Major and Irish Prime Minister Albert Reynolds issued the Downing Street Declaration. This stressed that reunification of Ireland could only take place by democratic consent and invited all political parties dedicated to peaceful democratic means to take part in talks aimed at creating new institutions to bring about reconciliation between the communities in the North.

In August 1994, after a meeting between the British government and *Sinn Féin* leaders Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness, the IRA announced a complete cessation of military activities. Broadcasting restrictions imposed by the British government on *Sinn Féin*, Republican *Sinn Féin* and the Ulster Defence Association in the 1980s (preventing the broadcasting of images or the voices of their spokesmen), were lifted in September. In December President Clinton appointed former US Senator George Mitchell as his special representative to assist the peace process. Talks sputtered on through 1995, with the British side insisting that some decommissioning of weapons by the IRA was a precondition of any *Sinn Féin* participation in talks with the other parties. On Feb. 9, 1996, however, the IRA ended its ceasefire by setting off a large bomb at South Quay in the London Docklands area. Notwithstanding this return of IRA activities to the British mainland, on Feb. 28 the British Government announced that all-party talks would start on June 10. In April, the British government reiterated that the IRA must restore its ceasefire and *Sinn Féin* must accept the six "Mitchell principles" (as laid down by Senator George Mitchell in January 1996, and involving the concept of decommissioning in parallel with talks, rather than before or after) before it could join the talks.

In June 1996 the talks began with *Sinn Féin* excluded: in response the IRA caused massive devastation with a bomb attack on a shopping centre in Manchester on June 15. *Sinn Féin* also strengthened its position outside the talks by taking 15.6% of the vote on May 31, 1996, to establish a consultative Northern Ireland Forum, whose proceedings it boycotted. On Oct. 7, two IRA bombs went off outside British army headquarters at Lisburn (Northern Ireland). This was the first IRA attack on the British military since the announcement of the ceasefire in 1994.

In May 1997 a general election resulted in the return of a Labour government to office in London, after 18 years of Conservative administration. Mo Mowlam became Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. The IRA ceasefire was finally restored in July after several meetings with the SDLP as intermediaries with *Sinn Féin*. On Aug. 29, Mowlam announced that the ceasefire had been sufficiently well observed for *Sinn Féin* to enter the multiparty talks and this they did on Sept. 9, having signed up to the Mitchell principles. The UUP entered the talks, but the DUP refused to take part because of the presence of *Sinn Féin*.

On Dec. 27, Billy Wright, leader of the Loyalist Volunteer Force (LVF) was shot dead in the Maze prison by Irish National Liberation Army (INLA) members. A number of Catholics were shot in retaliation and in January the loyalist prisoners announced their withdrawal from the peace process. Mo Mowlam entered the Maze to meet them and successfully persuaded them to give support again. Talks moved to Lancaster House in London in January 1998 and various parties took it in turn to be expelled because of action by paramilitaries of both sides. After George Mitchell, the independent chair of the negotiating process, set a deadline of April 9 for agreement, the Good Friday agreement was finally signed on April 10. It was subsequently approved in separate referenda held in the Irish Republic and Northern Ireland on May 22, 1998, in which it was endorsed by 71.12% of those who voted in Northern Ireland and 94.39% of those in the Republic. The Northern Ireland Forum was wound up on April 24, 1998.

As one consequence of the agreement, the British Parliament in July 1998 enacted legislation that provided for the early release on license of terrorist prisoners whose organizations were observing a ceasefire. This resulted in the phased release of 428 prisoners by the end of July 2000. Those who had escaped from prison or absconded while awaiting trial are still notionally fugitives.

The Assembly first met in shadow form on July 1, 1998. On Aug. 15, 1998, 29 people were killed as a result of a bomb planted in Omagh, County Tyrone by the "Real IRA", an apparent IRA splinter group opposed to the Good Friday agreement. This attack caused widespread revulsion in the Catholic as well as Protestant community and prompted the announcement of ceasefires by the INLA and the Real IRA itself. On Oct. 17, 1998, the award of the Nobel Peace Prize jointly to David Trimble and John Hume was

announced.

Loyalists and Republicans continued to disagree as to the detailed meaning of the Good Friday agreement, however. The issues of arms decommissioning and the composition of the Northern Ireland Police Service (as the Protestant-dominated Royal Ulster Constabulary, RUC, has now been renamed) were to the fore. Wrangling over decommissioning continued until on Nov. 27, 1999, the UUP finally agreed to enter the power-sharing executive before actual decommissioning had taken place, allowing the executive to be set up at the beginning of December, with David Trimble as First Minister. In 2000 and 2001, however, the power-sharing institutions were suspended on three occasions in crises surrounding the issue of decommissioning, each suspension being ended after the IRA agreed to limited decommissioning gestures.

In October 2002 the discovery of an alleged IRA spying operation in the province's administration led to Unionist demands for the expulsion of *Sinn Féin* from the power-sharing institutions as a condition of their own continued participation. The British government responded by suspending the Assembly and power-sharing executive on Oct. 14 and restoring direct rule. The Unionist parties have since refused to re-enter a devolved government with *Sinn Féin* until the IRA explicitly announces the end of its armed struggle. Underlying this position has been continued often bitter divisions within the Unionist community over the whole issue of power-sharing and the credibility of IRA decommissioning. The British government postponed Assembly elections, due to be held on May 1, 2003, after the IRA refused to accede to a joint British and Irish demand for "acts of completion", including an end to paramilitary activity. Statements by Tony Blair reflected the concern that elections held in the absence of such a commitment would lead to a large movement of Unionist voters away from the UUP to the hardline Democratic Unionist Party. As of September 2003, the power-sharing institutions remained suspended and no date had been set for Assembly elections.

An Independent International Commission on Decommissioning was established in August 1997 to oversee paramilitary disarmament, chaired by General John de Chastelain of Canada.

While major violence has been at an end since the IRA ceasefire began, and no British soldier has been killed in the province since February 1997, the period has nonetheless been characterized by troubles at the Catholic-Protestant residential interface. Such trouble flares up in the July "marching season" when Protestants stage parades ("Orange marches") to celebrate the province's Loyalist heritage, with violence breaking out between Protestants and Catholics or Protestants and the police. A Parades Commission has been established in an effort to regulate the conduct of such marches. The Catholic and Protestant populations are highly segregated (particularly in working class districts of Belfast) but sporadic conflicts occur around isolated enclaves. In addition, the activities of paramil-

itary organizations have spilled over into organized crime and some violence has its origins in what are essentially criminal turf wars, including between groups nominally on the same side of the political and religious divide. The IRA and Loyalist paramilitaries still carry out punishment beatings and other illegal activities to enforce discipline. All but one of the Loyalist paramilitaries had officially ended their ceasefires by 2003 and although this had had little practical consequence, it reflected the Loyalist view that the British government placed appeasement of the IRA at the centre of its policy making.

In August 2003 details were announced of the creation of a new body, with the support of the British and Irish governments, to monitor implementation of the Good Friday agreement including the paramilitary ceasefires.

Under the Good Friday agreement the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland has powers to call a referendum on a united Ireland "if at any time it appears likely to him that a majority of those voting" would be in support.

The British government has established a judicial inquiry into one of the events of the Troubles, the "Bloody Sunday" killings by British troops of Catholic demonstrators in 1972 and has also staged judicial inquiries into police conduct (the Stevens' inquiries). However, no move has been made to set up any form of Truth and Reconciliation Commission to examine the responsibilities of all parties.

On Nov. 4, 2001, the Police Service of Northern Ireland came into existence in succession to the Royal Ulster Constabulary. Its goal was to increase recruitment of Catholic officers but the IRA remained hostile to the police service.

## LOYALIST ORGANIZATIONS

### Loyalist Volunteer Force (LVF)

The LVF was formed in 1996 as a split from the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF, see entry), which had declared a ceasefire in October 1994. They are hardliners opposed to the Loyalist ceasefire. Their goal is to undermine the peace process by shooting Catholic politicians and civilians as well as attacking Protestant politicians in favour of the ceasefire.

In 1997 Irish National Liberation Army (INLA) members shot dead Billy "King Rat" Wright, the leader and founder of the LVF, in the Maze prison. Mark "Swinger" Fulton took over. The group has been associated with violence against the police at Drumcree and other places where Orange Order and similar marches have been banned by the independent Parades Commission.

In May 1998 the LVF called a ceasefire and unilaterally decommissioned some weapons. It continued to operate, however, under the alias of the Red Hand Defenders (see entry), a name also believed to be used by the UDA. In January 2000 the LVF clashed with the UVF after Richard Jameson, the leader of the UVF, was killed in Portadown.

On Oct. 12, 2001, the Northern Ireland Secretary, John Reid, stated that the British government no longer recognized the LVF cease-fire, having received "clear informa-



tion” that it was involved in the murder of Martin O’Hagan, a Catholic journalist, two weeks earlier.

### **Orange Volunteers**

An organization of this name was active in the 1970s but ceased to exist thereafter. In 1998 the name re-appeared in connection with various attacks on Catholics and the group was proscribed on March 3, 1999. It is thought likely to consist of dissidents from other paramilitary groups.

### **Red Hand Defenders**

This group first appeared in 1998 and has claimed responsibility for a number of assassinations and bombings. It is thought likely to be a front name, used by both the LVF and UDA, possibly in an attempt by those organizations to continue operations without forfeiting the privileges on prisoner release allowed under the Good Friday agreement to groups observing a ceasefire. It was proscribed by the British government on March 3, 1999.

In December 2001, the Red Hand Defenders claimed responsibility for the murder of William Stobie, a police informer who had made allegations of collusion between police and paramilitaries in the 1989 killing of Patrick Finucane (see under IRA).

### **Ulster Defence Association (UDA)**

The UDA has been consistently regarded as the strongest of the various Loyalist paramilitary organizations. In 2003 it was estimated to have up to one thousand members. However, most recent terrorist operations have been linked to a faction or wing of the UDA known as the Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF), with a much smaller membership.

The UDA was formed in September 1971 by merger of various local paramilitary “defence associations” established in Loyalist areas. Thomas Herron, then secretary of the UDA, claimed on Oct. 16, 1972, that it had some 50,000 members trained in all aspects of guerrilla warfare. After the Provisional IRA had established “no-go” areas (where the writ of the Northern Ireland government did not run) in parts of Londonderry, the UDA established its own “no-go” areas in different parts of Northern Ireland in May-June 1972 in protest against the continued existence of the IRA “no-go” areas. This led to clashes between UDA members and the Army.

Although the Army had cleared the Provisional IRA’s Londonderry areas in a swift operation on July 31, 1972, UDA members continued their activities in Belfast, where clashes between the Army and UDA units on Sept. 7-8, 1972, resulted in the death of two UDA members. Herron himself was assassinated in September 1973 (it was thought by a member of a rival Loyalist group) The UDA itself was held responsible for numerous assassinations, mainly (but not exclusively) of Roman Catholics. It played a leading role in ensuring the success of the Ulster Workers’ Council strike in May 1974 that defeated the first attempts at power-sharing.

Trials of a number of UDA supporters or members took place in England and Scotland, where the UDA was in 1974 thought to have some 1,000 members. These involved charges of gun running.

Whilst remaining a paramilitary organization, the UDA

established in the late 1970s the Ulster Loyalist Democratic Party (renamed the **Ulster Democratic Party, UDP**, in 1989) as a political front, to look at other constitutional options, including that of establishing an independent state of Northern Ireland. In January 1987, the UDA published a plan which involved power-sharing in a devolved system of government. However, one of the UDA leaders closely associated with this philosophy, the second-in-command, John McMichael, was killed on Dec. 22, 1987, by a car bomb planted by the IRA.

The UDA was finally proscribed in August 1992, a front organization, the Ulster Freedom Fighters having been responsible for more murders in 1992 to that point than the IRA. It called a ceasefire on Oct. 13, 1994, along with other loyalist paramilitaries in response to the IRA ceasefire.

The UDP took only 2.2% of the vote in elections in 1996 to the Northern Ireland Forum: it won no constituency seats but was given two at-large seats under the formula designed to bring it into the negotiations in view of its links with the UDA. It endorsed the Good Friday agreement and called for a “yes” vote in the May 22 referendum. In the subsequent 1998 Assembly elections it took 1.07% of the vote and won no seats. On Nov. 28, 2001, it was announced that the UDP had been dissolved, reportedly on the ground that most UDA members no longer supported the Good Friday agreement.

On Oct. 12, 2001, the British government officially declared that it regarded the UDA ceasefire as having ended. This followed a campaign of intimidation of Catholic parents and school children on their way to a Belfast school, the use of a number of “pipe bombs” in attacks on Catholics in their homes and attacks by loyalist mobs on RUC officers. Intense feuding was reported within UDA/UFF ranks, with internecine killings (see UFF entry). On Feb. 22, 2003, the UDA announced a 12-month cessation of military activity.

### **Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF)**

This organization has been said to operate under the aegis of the Ulster Defence Association (UDA, see separate entry), although the latter has on occasion disowned it. Following a number of murders, the UFF was officially banned in Northern Ireland on Nov. 12, 1973, but nevertheless continued to be involved in assassinations both in the Republic and in Northern Ireland.

The UFF claimed responsibility for an attack on March 14, 1984, on Gerry Adams and three other *Sinn Féin* members, all of whom were injured. For this attack three men were on March 22, 1985, sentenced to imprisonment for between 12 and 18 years.

On Feb. 12, 1989, a leading Catholic solicitor, Patrick Finucane, was shot dead at his home by the UFF, who claimed he had been a member of the IRA (this was denied by his family). After the murder of another Catholic, Loughlin Maginn, in August 1989, the UFF claimed responsibility and said that it had been passed intelligence documents and photographs by members of the Ulster Defence Regiment (UDR) to enable it to target and kill members of the minority community involved in Republican terrorism. Following further allegations of the leaking of security information to loyalist paramilitaries, the Deputy Chief Constable of Cambridgeshire Police, John Stevens, was appointed to head an inquiry into the affair. His report, published on May 17,

1990, concluded that passing of information to paramilitaries did take place, but on a very limited scale, and it recommended procedural and technical improvements. (A further Stevens report, re-examining the Finucane affair and similar matters, was released in April 2003, and demonstrated limited collusion between paramilitaries and individuals in the security forces but no institutionalized collusion.)

The UFF and the Ulster Volunteer Force (see separate entry) announced a ceasefire on April 17, 1991, in the run-up to the opening of talks on the future of Northern Ireland, while reserving the right to retaliate for attacks by the IRA. However, further sectarian murders followed and UFF attacks led to the proscribing of the UDA in 1992.

On April 24, 1998, the UFF issued a statement supporting the Good Friday agreement and stating that it would not lead to a united Ireland.

Johnny Adair, one-time leader of the Shankill (Belfast) group of the UFF, has become its most controversial member in recent years. A number of feuds within the Loyalist paramilitaries have had him at their centre. He was released from prison in September 1999, but re-imprisoned in August 2000 after a Loyalist feud that claimed several lives. He was released again in August 2002 but then expelled, together with John White, from the UDA/UFF over the death of one of its leaders as he was seen by the UDA to be involved with both UFF and UVF. In January 2003 he was re-arrested after intelligence allegations that he was involved in terrorism, drug-dealing, extortion and the distribution of weapons. The shooting of several of his associates in February 2003 caused his family to leave for Scotland.

### **Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF)**

The UVF was originally formed in 1912 as a paramilitary organization to resist the planned establishment by the British Liberal government of a Home Rule government in Ireland. It was recruited from among Protestants and was armed with rifles and ammunition smuggled in from the continent of Europe; and it was at the time supported by the Conservatives in Britain opposed to the granting of home rule to Ireland. In the 1960s it was revived to take part in the Loyalist struggle against the Irish Republican Army (IRA).

Following the killing of a young Catholic by a UVF member (who considered his victim to be a member of the IRA), the UVF was banned in 1966 as the Northern Ireland government wished to prevent the revival of sectarian warfare. It was re-legalized on May 15, 1974, but was again proscribed in November 1975, after it had been involved in various acts of violence. It was alleged to have been responsible for bomb attacks in the Irish Republic that killed 33 people on May 17, 1974.

Lennie Murphy, reported to be the leader of the UVF, was shot in Belfast on Nov. 16, 1982, and died later, with the IRA claiming that he had been "executed for the murder of 20 innocent Nationalists" and for planning to set up a new loyalist "terror team" in Belfast.

In a trial which ended on April 11, 1983, 14 loyalists, including 13 UVF members, were sentenced to life imprisonment after being convicted of over 60 terrorist offences, mainly on the evidence of a self-confessed UVF commander who had been granted immunity from prosecution after turning crown witness. Other cases in the 1970s and 1980s

involved gun running by Loyalist sympathizers in Scotland.

The UVF announced a ceasefire in October 1994. On Oct. 12, 2001, the British government declared it considered the UVF ceasefire to be at an end, although the UVF maintained it was continuing the ceasefire.

The **Progressive Unionist Party (PUP)**, which was founded in 1977 in succession to the Volunteer Political Party, is aligned with the UVF and the vehicle through which the British government has negotiated with the UVF. It received 3.47% of the vote in the Forum elections in May 1996, receiving two seats, and subsequently proved supportive of the process culminating in the 1998 Good Friday agreement. In the subsequent 1998 Assembly elections it took 2.55% of the vote and won two seats.

On Jan. 17, 2003, the UVF announced that it was ending contacts with the agency established to oversee arms decommissioning, by which point it was the only Loyalist paramilitary group officially observing a ceasefire. The PUP leader, David Ervine, stated that this was because of frustration that Loyalists had been excluded from secret negotiations between the government and *Sinn Féin*.

## **REPUBLICAN ORGANIZATIONS**

### **Continuity IRA**

This group is composed of Republican dissidents opposed to the peace process. It has carried out bomb attacks in Northern Ireland since 1996, mainly causing damage to property. Its political wing is reputedly Republican Sinn Féin, founded in 1986 by former *Sinn Féin* president Ruairi O'Bradaigh. After the Real IRA announced a "complete cessation" of violence in September 1998, the Continuity IRA was left as the only Republican group not officially observing a ceasefire. In 2000 it exploded devices in London and on Sept. 20 fired an anti-tank rocket at the headquarters of the intelligence service MI5. Its membership is small, probably in the dozens.

### **Irish National Liberation Army (INLA)**

The INLA was set up in 1974 as the military wing of the Irish Republican Socialist Party (IRSP), and was largely based on members of the disbanded Official IRA who wished to continue the military struggle. The IRSP has been a legal political party in the Republic of Ireland with the aim of "ending British rule in Ireland" and establishing "a united democratic socialist republic". It is of no contemporary political influence.

In 1975 the INLA began to conduct armed warfare in order to bring about a British military withdrawal from Northern Ireland which was to be united with the Republic on the basis of "socialist principles". The INLA claimed responsibility inter alia for the murder of Airey Neave, former Conservative spokesman for Northern Ireland affairs in the British House of Commons, in London in March 1979.

On July 2, 1979, the British government decided to proscribe the INLA, both in Northern Ireland under the Northern Ireland (Emergency Provisions) Act and in the United Kingdom under the Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act. The INLA, however, continued its bombing campaign and in particular made two bomb attacks on a school of infantry on Salisbury Plain on March 7, 1980. Of

INLA members convicted of various offences and held in the Maze prison (Belfast), three (among them one described as the "officer commanding" INLA prisoners), died there between May and August as a result of a hunger strike in support of a demand for "special status" for these prisoners; the INLA, however, ended its use of hunger strikes on Sept. 6, 1980.

The INLA claimed responsibility for the killing on June 4, 1982, in Dublin of a former director of operations of the Official IRA, who was said to have killed the founder of the IRSP (Seamus Costello) in Dublin in 1977.

In the most serious attack against the British forces by the INLA, 11 soldiers and six civilians were killed by a bomb at a public house at Ballykelly (Co. Londonderry) on Dec. 6, 1982. For involvement in this attack four INLA members were, on June 12, 1986, sentenced to life imprisonment, while a fifth defendant was given a 10-year sentence.

On Jan. 5, 1983, the government of the Republic of Ireland declared the INLA to be a proscribed organization.

A member of the INLA's army council, in an interview with a US radio station in mid-January 1983, declared that the INLA differed from the Irish Republican Army (IRA) in that it was a revolutionary socialist organization and that, while the IRA was quite likely to lay down its arms when the British withdrew from Ireland, the INLA believed that the resolution of the national question was "just the first stage in the process for establishing a 32-county socialist state".

In a feud between different INLA factions 11 persons were killed in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland between December 1986 and March 1987. It was believed that three of the factions wanted the INLA to be disbanded, whereas the fourth faction, led by Gerard Steenson, refused to disband. Those killed included, on Feb. 1, Mary McGlinchey (the wife of Dominic McGlinchey, serving a 10-year prison sentence in the Republic of Ireland) and Steenson himself, shot dead on March 15.

In 1992 a breakaway Irish People's Liberation Organization (IPLO) was formed, but quickly broke into factions which themselves disbanded the same year after coming under attacks by the IRA in which one person died. On Feb. 10, 1994, Dominic McGlinchey, the former leader of the INLA, was shot dead in Ireland by unknown assailants.

Following the declaration of the IRA ceasefire in 1994, the INLA adopted a "no first strike" policy before itself calling a ceasefire on Aug. 22, 1998. This followed a statement by the IRSP two days after the Omagh bombing (perpetrated by the Real IRA, see entry) that the "armed struggle" could no longer be justified. The INLA is now thought to have a minimal membership.

### **Irish Republican Army (IRA)**

For more than a quarter of a century the IRA operated as the most significant movement engaged in terrorist activities in Western Europe. From 1969-93 it was responsible for an estimated 1,755 deaths while itself losing 243 members. As part of the developing peace process it declared a ceasefire in August 1994, but ended this in February 1996. Since July 1997 it has continuously observed a ceasefire and the emphasis of its struggle has shifted to the political arena, where its position is communicated via its political wing, *Sinn Féin*. *Sinn Féin* has simultaneously developed to

become the most important representative of Catholic opinion to the British government. While *Sinn Féin* formally emphasizes its independence from the IRA, and the IRA's independence from it, and has sought to portray itself as an interlocutor with the IRA rather than its mouthpiece or as being able to dictate its actions, it is generally believed that the leadership of the two organizations overlap. The two leading figures in contemporary *Sinn Féin*, Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness, are generally reported as being current or former members of the IRA Army Council. Statements by the IRA have historically always been released anonymously under the authority of "P. O'Neill".

The Irish Republican Army originated in the context of the (southern) Irish civil war of the 1920s over acceptance of the terms by which the Irish Free State was established in 1922. The IRA remained unreconciled to the partition of Ireland but with settlement of the conflict in the south, it remained largely dormant over the following decades: after World War II its only notable activity was a small-scale bombing campaign in 1956-62 in the border areas. The escalating violence of 1969 provided a vehicle for the re-emergence of the IRA, in good measure initially as a self-elected protection force for Catholic areas.

The Provisional IRA (PIRA) broke away from the Irish Republican Army (IRA) in December 1969 as a direct-action organization intent upon launching a guerrilla campaign and making Northern Ireland ungovernable by forcing the British government to withdraw its armed forces and to relinquish all responsibility for the province. Another wing of the IRA became the Official IRA. However, the Official IRA suspended its military activities in May 1972 and was disbanded thereafter. By 1977 it was superseded politically by the small *Sinn Féin* – The Workers' Party, which in 1982 dropped the prefix *Sinn Féin*. The shortened form Irish Republican Army (IRA) has since the dissolution of the Official IRA been applied to the Provisional IRA which also uses this name in its statements.

Provisional *Sinn Féin*, which became simply *Sinn Féin* with the dissolution of the Official wing, has remained a legal party both in the Republic and in Northern Ireland, whereas the PIRA was declared a proscribed organization under the Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Bill enacted in the United Kingdom on Nov. 29, 1974.

### **IRA at the height of the Troubles**

The Provisional IRA began its campaign in Northern Ireland in 1969 by sniping at British soldiers and bombing property; by September 1971 it was using rocket launchers, and in April 1973 letter bombs appeared, to be followed by parcel bombs sent to senior civil servants. In its early phase it reputedly received assistance in weapons and training from some Irish government officials and security officers, although a trial of two former government ministers on related charges in Dublin in 1970 resulted in acquittals. In August 1971 the government introduced internment without trial of suspects, which remained in force for four years despite a civil disobedience campaign called by the Roman Catholic opposition parties in Northern Ireland. Action by British troops against demonstrators led to the death of 13 persons in Londonderry from army gunfire on Jan. 30, 1972, and in a reprisal

action for this so-called “Bloody Sunday” the British embassy in Dublin was attacked by Provisional IRA members. “Bloody Sunday” proved a pivotal event in intensifying support for the IRA: the detailed events of that day remain disputed and in 2003 were the subject of a continuing judicial inquiry established by the British government. On “Bloody Friday”, July 21, 1972, nine people were killed when the PIRA detonated 27 bombs in Belfast.

By that time a state of continuous confrontation had been reached between the Provisionals on the one hand and, on the other, the British Army, the Ulster Defence Regiment (UDR) and the Royal Ulster Constabulary (the Northern Ireland police), while members of paramilitary Protestant organizations (of which the Ulster Defence Association was the strongest) were responsible for numerous killings (mainly, but not exclusively, of Catholics). The IRA consolidated its support in the province in part by acting as a defence force for Catholic ghettos against Loyalist terrorist groups, reflecting the generalized breakdown of British authority in parts of the province. Within its communities it further strengthened its position by carrying out punishment beatings, “knee-cappings”, and at times killings, of those it accused of being informers or of engaging in criminal activities the IRA had not sanctioned.

In 1972 secret talks were held between representatives of the British government and the IRA (including Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness, the two leaders of *Sinn Féin* as of 2003) but these produced only short-lived ceasefires. The Provisionals carried their operations to the mainland with a bombing campaign in England between March 8, 1973, and May 1976. IRA actions carried out in England in the latter part of 1974 included a bomb attack on a public house in Guildford (Surrey) on Oct. 5, in which five people were killed; another such attack in Woolwich (London) on Nov. 7, when two persons were killed and 34 injured; and a third one on a public house in Birmingham on Nov. 21, in which 21 persons lost their lives and 120 were injured. This wave of attacks produced such alarm that the government rushed through the Prevention of Terrorism Act, enacted on Nov. 29, 1974, including provisions designed to prevent suspected terrorists from entering the rest of the UK from Northern Ireland.

Prominent persons killed by the IRA included Ross McWhirter, a publisher who had called for the establishment of a reward fund for information leading to the arrest of bombers and who was shot dead on Nov. 27, 1975.

In connection with the Guildford and Woolwich attacks, life sentences were imposed on Oct. 22, 1975, on four men and a young woman. One of the men died in prison and the remaining persons, known as the “Guildford Four”, were released when their convictions were overturned in October 1989. A judicial inquiry into the case was set up. In connection with the Birmingham attack, six Irishmen (Patrick Hill, Richard McIlkenny, Johnny Walker, William Power, Gerard Hunter and Hugh Callaghan) were convicted of murder and sentenced to life imprisonment in August 1975. The case of the “Birmingham Six” subsequently became a *cause célèbre*, with many notable figures joining a campaign for their release. An appeal in January 1988 was rejected, but after a second hearing in the Court of Appeal, the six were freed on March 14, 1991, after scientific and police evidence was discredited.

Following a meeting between Protestant churchmen and leaders of the IRA and *Sinn Féin* at Feakle, Co. Clare (in the Republic of Ireland), on Dec. 10, 1974, the IRA observed a temporary ceasefire from Dec. 22, 1974, to Jan. 16, 1975. Although renewed from Feb. 10, 1975, the ceasefire gradually broke down in the course of 1976. Bombings and other attacks continued through 1977-78. In connection with Provisional activities in the Republic of Ireland, Seamus Twomey, then chief of staff of the IRA, was in October 1973 sentenced to three years in prison for membership of a proscribed organization and for receiving money taken in an armed robbery; he escaped from prison in Dublin shortly afterwards, spent several years in Northern Ireland and was re-arrested in Dublin on Dec. 3, 1977. On June 12, 1978, he was given a five-year prison sentence for his escape and a concurrent three-year sentence for IRA membership.

During the 1970s the Provisional IRA in some respects adopted the national liberation movement and Marxist-influenced rhetoric prevalent at that time. Its ideological grounding remained firmly nationalistic, however, and its principal external support came from sympathizers of Irish descent in the USA, who via organizations such as NORAID openly fund-raised for the IRA and also exercised sufficient domestic political influence to ensure that the USA was to some extent a “safe haven” for IRA fugitives. Various IRA members wanted by the UK authorities successfully avoided extradition from the USA.

The IRA campaign against the British state achieved its most spectacular success on Aug. 27, 1979, when 18 British soldiers were killed by two bombs at Warrenpoint (Co. Down) and the same day Earl Mountbatten of Burma (a cousin of Queen Elizabeth II and uncle of the Duke of Edinburgh) was killed in the Republic of Ireland by a bomb placed on his fishing boat. The two convicted perpetrators of this latter crime were sentenced to life imprisonment in Dublin on Nov. 23, 1979.

#### IRA operations in the 1980s and early 1990s

IRA violence continued unabated into the early 1980s. Further victims of IRA assassinations in this period included (i) on Jan. 21, 1981, a former Speaker of the Northern Ireland House of Commons, and his son, also a former member of that House; and (ii) on Nov. 14, 1981, the Rev. Robert Bradford, an Official Unionist member of the British House of Commons.

After two major bomb attacks carried out in London on July 20, 1982, resulting in the death of 11 soldiers, the IRA declared that it had carried them out “in accordance with the right of self-defence under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter”.

By the early 1980s it was evident that public support for the IRA among the Roman Catholic section of Northern Ireland’s population was increasing notably, mainly at the expense of the traditionally dominant Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP). At funerals of IRA casualties the organization was able to rally thousands of sympathizers. This fostered a growing momentum to elevate the political status of the IRA, whose activities had been condemned by the British government (notwithstanding reports of covert contact) as merely criminal in nature.



A number of convicted prisoners from among the many hundreds of IRA members and other Republicans held mainly in the "H Blocks" of the Maze prison near Belfast, conducted a hunger strike between Oct. 27, 1980, and Oct. 3, 1981, with the object of obtaining special treatment and ultimately the status of political prisoners – a demand which the British government steadfastly refused to grant. This hunger strike, resulting in the death of many involved in it, appeared to further the cause of the IRA, as evidenced by several election results.

In a by-election held on April 9, 1981, in Fermanagh and South Tyrone, to a seat in the British House of Commons, Robert (Bobby) Sands, an IRA hunger striker (serving a 14-year term for arms offences and standing as an Anti-H Block/Armagh, Political Prisoner), won the seat against an Official Unionist (Harry West) by gaining 30,492 votes (a majority of 1,446). However, Sands died in prison on May 5. In a further by-election held on Aug. 20, 1981, the seat was taken by Owen Carron, a member of the Provisional *Sinn Féin*, as the candidate of the same committee which had nominated Sands (the majority being increased to 2,230).

For the general elections held in the Republic on June 11, 1981, the National H Block/Armagh Committee nominated nine prisoners (four of them on hunger strike) and two of these candidates, both being IRA members, were elected – Paddy Agnew and Kieran Doherty, the latter dying on Aug. 2, the 73rd day of his hunger strike.

Notwithstanding the 1979 assassination of Mountbatten, the IRA generally avoided operations in the Irish Republic, preferring not to compromise a situation in which its operatives could cross the porous border between the North and South with relative ease. It also benefited from historic sympathies in the South for the Republican cause. On Dec. 7, 1982, the Irish Supreme Court ordered the extradition of Dominic McGlinchey to Northern Ireland, where he was wanted for murder, this being the first case in which the Republic had ordered the return to the North of a person wanted for terrorist offences. McGlinchey had claimed immunity from extradition on the ground that his action had been carried out under instructions from the IRA, but the Chief Justice decided that his offence could not be considered political.

A bomb planted by the IRA at the Grand Hotel in Brighton exploded on Oct. 12, 1984, killing five persons (but not the intended victim, the Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, nor other members of the government staying at the hotel for a Conservative Party conference) and injuring over 30 other persons. Of the IRA members involved in this attack, Patrick Magee was, on June 23, 1986, sentenced to a minimum of 35 years in prison on seven charges including the murder of five persons (and on a charge of conspiracy to plant bombs at English seaside resorts in 1985); four other IRA members were sentenced to life imprisonment and a sixth to eight years in prison.

On Feb. 28, 1985, IRA members killed nine RUC officers in an attack on a police station at Newry (Co. Down). On Aug. 5, 1986, the IRA announced that anyone involved in administration, maintenance or building work at army and police installations in Northern Ireland would be considered a legitimate target for assassination. IRA attacks were also made in 1987-88 on British military targets in West Ger-

many and the Netherlands. On May 8, 1987, the IRA suffered its greatest loss for many years when eight of its members were shot dead by police and troops while attacking a police station at Loughgall in Co. Armagh.

A Panamanian-registered ship, the *Eksund*, was seized by French customs off Brittany in October 1987, and found to be carrying 150 tonnes of weapons including surface-to-air missiles, mortar shells, rocket launchers and semtex high explosive, apparently destined for the IRA. The crew of five were sentenced in Paris on March 6, 1991, to between five and seven years for arms trafficking. The prosecution had said during the trial that the ship had been travelling from Libya to the Irish Republic with the last of five arms shipments for the IRA, the previous four having got through undetected. This appeared to confirm reports that much of the IRA's weaponry had been provided by Libya, whose leader, Col. Kadhafi, had previously expressed support for the Republican struggle in Northern Ireland.

Eleven people were killed and 61 others injured in a bomb attack in Enniskillen, Co. Fermanagh, on Nov. 8, 1987, as crowds were assembling for a ceremony to commemorate Remembrance Day. The IRA acknowledged carrying out the attack, but said the bomb had been meant to kill troops, not civilians. The president of *Sinn Féin*, Gerry Adams, expressed his "regret" and said that he "did not try to justify" the bombing.

Three members of the IRA were shot dead by British soldiers in Gibraltar on March 6, 1988, during what the British authorities believed to be the final preparations for a bomb attack against a changing of the guard ceremony outside the Governor's residence in the colony. An inquest in Gibraltar reached a verdict on Sept. 30, 1988, that the three had been lawfully killed.

On Oct. 19, 1988, Douglas Hurd, the UK Home Secretary, announced the imposition of an immediate ban on television or radio broadcasts of interviews with representatives or supporters of 11 named groups in Northern Ireland: the IRA, the IRA's youth and women's groups, the INLA, Free Ireland (*Saor Eire*), the Protestant Red Hand Commando, the UVF, the UFF, *Sinn Féin*, Republican *Sinn Féin*, and the UDA.

IRA members ambushed and shot dead a superintendent and chief superintendent of the RUC on March 20, 1989, at Jonesborough, Co. Armagh. The two men were the most senior police officers to have been killed by the IRA.

There was a spate of IRA bomb attacks on the British mainland in late 1989, the most serious of which occurred at Deal Barracks in Kent on Sept. 22, when 10 bandsmen of the Royal Marines School were killed and 22 others injured.

Ian Gow, Conservative MP for Eastbourne and formerly a close associate of the Prime Minister, was killed on July 30, 1990, when an IRA bomb exploded under his car. The IRA issued a statement on July 31, saying that he had been killed because he had been central to formulation of British government policy decisions on Northern Ireland.

The IRA carried out a mortar attack on the Prime Minister's residence at 10 Downing Street, London, on Feb. 7, 1991, while the Cabinet was in session. Some damage was done but there were no serious injuries.

### The IRA and the Peace Process



In May 1985 *Sinn Féin* stood in local elections for the first time and received 11.8% of the vote and 59 seats. In 1988 talks began between John Hume of the SDLP and Gerry Adams of *Sinn Féin*. IRA activities continued, however. In 1992-93 the IRA staged two attacks of particular significance on the City of London (the financial district), the first on the Baltic Exchange on April 10, 1992, and the second in Bishopsgate on April 24, 1993. Although these two attacks killed only five people, in combination they caused damage well in excess of one billion pounds, far more than the damage to property in Northern Ireland in the whole period since 1969. These attacks, which led to the creation of a permanent "ring of steel" security cordon around the City, proved highly effective in pushing the British business and political establishment in favour of achieving a negotiated settlement with the IRA. In November 1993 it was revealed that the British government had been in secret talks with *Sinn Féin* since February.

Against the background of growing momentum towards a peace process, on Aug. 31, 1994, the IRA announced a complete cessation of military activities. Its active service strength, reflecting changes in the political environment, was by this time much reduced from its peak in the 1970s. On Sept. 16, 1994, the British government lifted the ban on broadcasting of the image and voices of IRA/*Sinn Féin* spokesmen imposed in 1988.

Thereafter talks faltered over the demand for the IRA to undertake decommissioning activities (which had not been mentioned in the 1994 ceasefire statement) prior to becoming a full partner, via *Sinn Féin*, in negotiations. In an indication of its continued willingness to strike on the British mainland, the IRA abandoned its ceasefire on Feb. 9, 1996, when it detonated a large bomb in London, killing two people and causing massive damage to commercial premises. All-party talks, not involving *Sinn Féin*, began on June 10, 1996, and on June 15 the IRA responded with a further bomb attack on the mainland, on the Arndale shopping centre in Manchester, which caused immense damage to the city centre. On Oct. 7, two IRA bombs went off outside British army headquarters at Lisburn (Northern Ireland). This was the first IRA attack on the British military since the announcement of the ceasefire in 1994.

In May 1997 renewed momentum to the peace process was given by the election of a new Labour government. The IRA ceasefire was restored on July 20, 1997, again after the government had used the good offices of the SDLP, and in September 1997 *Sinn Féin* was permitted to join the negotiations that culminated in the Good Friday agreement of April 1998. The agreement was followed by the creation of a small splinter group, the Real IRA, by dissidents opposed to the peace process (see entry). The *Sinn Féin* leadership called for a vote in support of the Good Friday agreement in the referendum held in the Republic and Northern Ireland on May 22, 1998. A meeting between Gerry Adams and Ulster Unionist Party leader David Trimble on Sept. 10, 1998, was the first ever between a *Sinn Féin* leader and a Unionist leader. However, *Sinn Féin* continued to maintain that it could not secure IRA decommissioning prior to the formation of the power-sharing executive, an issue which resulted in a year and a half of delays until the Ulster Unionists finally acceded to the *Sinn Féin* position. Meanwhile there was continuing controversy over allegations that the IRA was

still procuring weapons and had covertly carried out murders and other crimes.

The IRA's engagement with the protracted peace process, via *Sinn Féin*, at first tentatively through intermediary discussions with the SDLP and later as a full partner, had a number of major consequences. By re-positioning itself as a partner in dialogue, *Sinn Féin*/IRA began to increase its electoral support base, a phenomenon confirmed when it took 18 of the 108 seats in the Assembly elections of 1998, compared with 24 for the SDLP. This was the first time *Sinn Féin* had ever participated in the political institutions of Northern Ireland. It effectively gained the leadership role on the Catholic side of the sectarian divide, becoming the critical negotiating partner from the point of view of the British government. It also played a role for the first time in the province's institutions, in December 1999 *Sinn Féin* taking the health and education portfolios in the new Northern Ireland executive. At the same time, that re-positioning undermined the IRA's freedom to engage in indiscriminate violence and extreme rejectionist positions. The tensions resulting from that have been reflected in the fact that the IRA has simultaneously observed the ceasefire continuously since 1997 while refusing to declare a final end to its armed campaign or going beyond symbolic gestures of decommissioning.

Following a lack of progress on IRA arms decommissioning, which had led to bitter divisions in Unionist ranks and a series of political crises, David Trimble resigned as Northern Ireland's First Minister in July 2001 and withdrew the Ulster Unionist ministers on Oct. 17, 2001. On Oct. 22, however, the IRA, following a call by *Sinn Féin*, announced it had begun decommissioning some weapons "to save the peace process", which was confirmed by the International Commission on Decommissioning. Tony Blair praised the "courage" of Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness for securing the breakthrough. The British government also said it would reduce its military observation facilities in the province. This move allowed the power-sharing executive to be re-formed and was widely seen against the background of growing international co-operation against terrorist organizations in the wake of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks in the USA, which had called into question the historically somewhat relaxed view taken of the IRA in the USA. In this context the arrest in Colombia in August 2001 of three reputed IRA men allegedly involved in training FARC guerrillas lent ammunition to those who claimed that the IRA had not abandoned its position in a network of loosely linked terrorist organizations worldwide.

In July 2002 the Northern Ireland Secretary, John Reid, warned that the IRA's ceasefire was not sufficient and that the IRA had to end targeting, training and weapons procurement. On July 16, 2002, the IRA issued a statement expressing "sincere apologies and condolences" to the families of "non-combatants" who had died as a result of its actions.

On Oct. 5, 2002, police carried out raids on *Sinn Féin* offices in the Assembly and elsewhere, as part of an investigation into alleged espionage within the Northern Ireland administration, resulting in a number of arrests. Martin McGuinness stated that the raids demonstrated that "the RUC and militarists in the British establishment are still there, still working their anti-peace process agenda". The Northern Ireland First Minister, David Trimble, however,

stated that: “The time when the Republicans can ride two horses is at an end. They have to choose irrevocably to follow only the peaceful political path and no longer maintain the existence of an armed wing”. The resultant crisis led to Unionist politicians refusing to participate further in the power-sharing executive participate alongside *Sinn Féin* until there was a definitive renunciation of the armed campaign by the IRA, and to the restoration on Oct. 14 of direct rule from London. By September 2003 the IRA had not made the required gesture and the power-sharing institutions remained in suspension.

The IRA appears to regard the ambiguity of its position in this regard as giving it continued leverage in obtaining concessions from the British government. A leaked Irish government document in December 2002 implied that, although the IRA was still “actively engaged in training, targeting, recruiting, and acquiring small quantities of weapons”, the British and Irish governments were concerned that the IRA’s dissolution would merely result in hardline members defecting to dissident groups opposed to the peace process.

The IRA’s refusal to agree to “acts of completion”, involving a commitment to end its paramilitary activity, was cited by the British government in postponing Assembly elections planned for May 1, 2003. It was generally believed that elections held without such a commitment would result in the loss of unionist support from the UUP to the hardline Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), which has opposed the Good Friday agreement, a result which the British government feared. The British government has likewise put on hold a scaling down of its security operations in the province. Nonetheless negotiations between *Sinn Féin* /IRA and the British government were ongoing in 2003 and reported to include the concept of making large cuts in British troop numbers (currently 13, 500), changes in police legislation, and an end to the pursuit of IRA fugitives, in exchange for concrete steps on decommissioning.

#### **Real IRA**

The group emerged in May 1998 as a splinter from the IRA by elements opposed to the 1997 ceasefire and the April 1998 Good Friday agreement and was believed to include some former senior figures in the IRA. It was responsible for an explosion on Aug. 15, 1998, in which 29 people were

killed in Omagh, County Tyrone. This was the heaviest loss of life in a single incident since the Troubles began; it caused widespread revulsion and helped consolidate Catholic support for the peace process. In view of popular reaction to the Omagh attack, the Real IRA announced a ceasefire on Aug. 18 and in early September 1998 the IRA was reported to have ordered the Real IRA to disband “sooner rather than later”. On Sept. 7 the Real IRA announced a “complete cessation” of its armed campaign. It has not entirely abandoned operations, however, and it carried out various explosions (none resulting in fatalities) in England in 2001 for which three men were convicted on April 8, 2003.

It was reported in July 2003 that Northern Ireland police had warned up to 300 people that they had been earmarked as potential Real IRA targets. On Aug. 7, 2003, Michael McKevitt, the alleged leader of the group, was jailed for 20 years in Dublin on charges of directing terrorism. McKevitt was not convicted on charges directly relating to the 1998 Omagh bombing, only one person having been convicted in that connection (Colm Murphy, who was sentenced on Jan. 25, 2002, to 14 years’ imprisonment by the special criminal court in Dublin). Families of the victims had, however, initiated a civil action against five named individuals, including McKevitt.

#### **UNITED KINGDOM DEPENDENCIES**

There are 13 overseas British territories: 10 of these have permanent populations (Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Falkland Islands, Gibraltar, Montserrat, Pitcairn Islands, St Helena, and Turks and Caicos Islands), although their aggregate population is only 181,000. There are no extra-legal movements in these territories but concern has been expressed about the potential for money laundering through those territories with lax regulatory regimes, notably Bermuda, the Cayman Islands and Gibraltar.

*F. J. Harper & William Tupman*

## **United States of America**

**Capital:** Washington DC

**Population:** 287 m

The United States of America has under the “separation of powers” laid down in its founding Constitution three branches of national government, the executive, the legislative and the judicial. The President is the head of the executive branch and is elected for a four-year term (for a maximum of two terms) by an Electoral College of delegates mandated by the 50 states on the basis of the popular vote in each state. The President nominates Cabinet officers, the heads of govern-

ment agencies, and federal judges, subject to confirmation by the Senate. The legislative branch is Congress, comprising a House of Representatives of 435 members elected for two-year terms and a Senate of 100 members, each of the 50 states having two Senators, elected for six-year terms (with one-third of the Senate standing for re-election every two years). The judicial branch has at its apex the US Supreme Court. The nine Supreme Court justices are nominated

by the President, and their appointments ratified by the Senate, but once appointed enjoy lifetime tenure with considerable powers to strike down and interpret legislation on the basis of a judicial reading of the Constitution. Parallel systems (with small variations) prevail in the 50 states of the Union, in which elected Governors head the executive branch.

Congress is elected on a first-past-the-post basis and the electoral system has been one factor underpinning the remarkable dominance of two parties, the Democrats and the Republicans, which have exclusively held the presidency and dominated Congress since their formation in the mid-nineteenth century. Neither party has achieved a sustained national-level dominance over the other and this parity has become more pronounced over recent years: the November 2000 presidential election resulted in victory to the Republican candidate George W. Bush, who won a majority in the Electoral College while taking only 47.9% of the popular vote, compared with the 48.4% won by the Democratic candidate, Al Gore. Following the November 2002 congressional elections, the Republicans held 229 of the seats in the House (the Democrats 205, with one independent) and 51 of those in the Senate (the Democrats 48, with one independent).

Both major parties have historically been coalitions: ideologically they overlap in many respects, but left-wing currents that in Europe have created socialist parties have largely been absorbed by the Democrats, while the Republicans have captured much of the ground on the right.

### **Patterns of Dissent**

The United States was founded in the late eighteenth century on the basis of a revolutionary insurrection against the British colonial power. In the mid-nineteenth century it faced an attempted secession by the 13 southern states, this being suppressed in a bloody civil war (1861-65). Since that time, however, there has been no significant internal threat to the integrity of the federal system. While US historiography since the 1960s has often emphasized patterns of dissent and revolt, in any international perspective the USA has been exceptionally stable for a period of more than a century and a half. In that respect it may be distinguished from virtually all of the world's more populous countries.

In the period since World War II the most significant extra-legal politically motivated activity has been associated with the Black Power movement that developed in the 1960s on the fringe of the constitutionally-oriented civil rights movement and the more extreme forms of opposition to the war in Vietnam, from the mid-1960s to the early 1970s. Although these two movements were contemporaneous, and to some degree intermeshed ideologically, they were essentially separate but parallel phenomena, opposition to the Vietnam War particularly galvanizing sections of the white student population. For a time opposition to the

war resulted in quite widespread terrorist type violence, directed particularly against military and corporate targets by the Weathermen and other militant groups: in 1969 alone there were 93 explosions in New York City and 62 in San Francisco. This atmosphere of conflict created the background to the assassinations of Robert F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King in 1968 and the attempted assassination of George Wallace in 1972.

Both the Black Power movement and the anti-war opposition faded during the 1970s, having achieved many successes in terms of changes in legislation and society. The Vietnam War finally concluded in 1975 after a period of progressive US disengagement. The resurgence of the Cold War under President Reagan (1981-89) led to a widespread anti-nuclear movement in Western Europe in the early 1980s but this was only palely mirrored in the USA. With the end of the Cold War and the general collapse of communism, left-wing political activity has further declined and the numerous self-styled revolutionary leftist parties are tiny in membership and in practice inactive and inconsequential.

Of far more significance has been the persistence of various ultra-right survivalist and other groups. These tap into a broader political tendency of libertarianism, little known in Europe, that rejects the authority of the federal government and instead emphasizes the unfettered rights of "rugged individualism".

### **External Threats**

Of greater import than domestic sources of dissent are externally-based threats. As the world's pre-eminent power, with a global presence, US government and business premises and US officials and private individuals have faced attack by extremist groups in numerous countries. In the 1970s and 1980s most of this activity was directed by left-wing groups; since the 1980s, most of it has an Islamist source. This global challenge is extensively reflected in the various country entries of the present volume.

However, since the 1990s, this externally-based threat has also manifested itself inside the USA itself, which had previously been largely unaffected by international terrorism. Since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks in New York and Washington, the US government has simultaneously sought to confront its externally-based enemies by attacking them in other countries (to date resulting in the overthrow of the governments of both Afghanistan and Iraq) and by choking off their ability to operate within the USA by intensified "homeland security".

### **Consequences of Sept. 11**

The Sept. 11 attacks, involving the hijacking of four commercial airliners by individuals identified with *Al-Qaeda*, resulted in an unparalleled catastrophe: the collapse of the World Trade Center in New York which, together with a smaller loss of life at the Pen-

tagon in Washington, and the deaths of passengers and crews of the hijacked airliners, in total produced a death toll of over 3,000 (the exact number in the World Trade Center is unlikely ever to be established). One immediate consequence was that the US government determined to unseat the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, which provided protection to and was in turn supported by *Al-Qaeda* (see Afghanistan entry).

The USA in turn established at Guantanamo Bay, a US military base in Cuba, a detention camp for Taliban and *Al-Qaeda* combatants and suspects, this also coming to house individuals arrested elsewhere in the world in addition to those captured in Afghanistan. The status of those held at Guantanamo has been a source of controversy, the USA having defined them as “unlawful combatants”. The use of Guantanamo Bay is held by the US government to have removed the prisoners from the jurisdiction of the US courts: under a treaty of 1934 with Cuba the USA leases the base from Cuba and has jurisdiction there but it is not “sovereign territory”. Whereas the general principle in regard to prisoners of war is that they are to be released once the conflict is over, this was not the case in respect of those detained in Afghanistan (where the Taliban was routed by early 2002) and those detained are apparently in custody for the duration of a “war against terror” of indefinite duration. They are denied due process under US law but are also deemed to be outside the jurisdiction of the International Committee of the Red Cross, which has duties in regard to the repatriation of prisoners under the Geneva conventions (to which the USA is a party) and which has officially stated that it regards those captured in Afghanistan as prisoners of war. In March 2003 a US appeals court held that the US courts had no jurisdiction as the detainees were foreign nationals held outside US territory, but the issue has yet to reach the US Supreme Court. Although President Bush announced in November 2001 that detainees would be subject to trial before specially constituted military commissions, no such trials have yet taken place; however on July 3, 2003, it was announced that President Bush had designated six unnamed individuals as eligible for trial. As of September 2003 more than 600 persons were detained at Guantanamo.

Domestically, the Sept. 11 attacks led to a wave of arrests, with 550 people reported in custody by late November 2001, mostly on immigration related charges. For a short period widespread panic was created by a spate of mail contaminated by anthrax and addressed to Congressmen and others, resulting in the death of two postal workers: the source of these attacks has never been identified. The following months saw a series of warnings by US officials of possible attacks, usually couched in general if alarmist terms and in no cases coming true, giving them diminishing public credence.

The Patriot Act, signed into law by President Bush on Oct. 26, 2001, broadened the government’s right to carry out surveillance of and detain individuals suspected of terrorist connections. In November 2001,

the Justice Department announced the “Responsible Co-operators Programme” whereby illegal immigrants could be granted permanent suspension of deportation proceedings where they provided information leading to the apprehension of terrorist suspects. On Dec. 6, 2001, John Ashcroft, the Attorney General, told Congress that: “We have waged a deliberate campaign of arrest and detention to remove suspected terrorists who violate the law from our streets”. In June 2003 a Justice Department internal watchdog found that 762 illegal immigrants were detained following Sept. 11 in the search for potential terrorists and held for months without criminal charges. None had subsequently been charged with a terrorism-related offence.

A blue-ribbon National Commission on Terrorism reported to Congress in 2000 that the USA was poorly equipped in the area of “homeland” security and called for the creation of a cabinet-level National Homeland Security Agency. Following Sept. 11, President Bush announced the creation of a White House Office of Homeland Security, headed by Tom Ridge, a former Governor of Pennsylvania, and set up in early October, to co-ordinate the activities of agencies responsible for countering terrorism. Bush initially opposed the creation of a cabinet-level Department of Homeland Security (as urged by Senate Democrats) but in early June 2002 announced his support for the idea in the wake of critical investigations of FBI and CIA intelligence failures pre-Sept. 11. On Nov. 19, 2002, the Senate voted approval of the creation of a Homeland Security Department, amalgamating elements of 22 government agencies with 170,000 employees with responsibilities for preventing terrorist attacks and including the customs service, immigration, border patrol and emergency management services. The Department did not have authority, however, over the FBI and CIA, the lead agencies involved in combating terrorism at home and abroad, respectively. In response to criticism of its failure to anticipate the Sept. 11 attacks, restrictions on FBI surveillance operations were eased (the Bureau having previously been restricted to placing people under surveillance only where it had evidence of criminal activity) and it was reported in May 2002 that one-quarter of the FBI’s agents had been allocated to counter-terrorism duties.

While criticized by civil liberties groups and some right-wing libertarians, most of this activity was widely accepted. On Sept. 10, 2003, however, President Bush stated that the government still faced “unreasonable obstacles to investigating and prosecuting terrorism”, indicating support for further measures under consideration by the Attorney General.

Since Sept. 11 there have been no further attacks within the USA directly linked to international terrorist groups. This may reflect the effectiveness of the new internal security measures; equally, it may reflect the fact that, notwithstanding the spectacular enormity of Sept. 11, this was a one-off action by a group with no real base of support within the USA.



## BLACK MILITANTS

Unrest was widespread in black communities in the 1960s: this expressed itself in the form of urban riots (particularly after calamitous events such as the 1968 assassination of Martin Luther King) and politically in the creation of a powerful civil rights movement working for change through constitutional means. On the fringe of the black political mainstream, the Black Panther Party was founded by Huey Newton and Bobby Seale in Oakland in 1966. This was a left-wing black nationalist group which had violent confrontations with the police and whose destruction became a key aim of the FBI: its leading figures included Eldridge Cleaver and George Jackson. By the 1980s, however, black nationalism was predominantly influenced by varying shades of Islamist doctrine, re-interpreted by charismatic leaders and often with a virulently anti-semitic theme.

### Nation of Islam

*Leader: Rev. Louis Farrakhan*

*Website: [www.noi.org](http://www.noi.org)*

The NOI, a cult with only a tangential relationship to general Islamic beliefs, originated among black migrants to Detroit in the 1930s and was from 1934 led by Elijah Muhammad (born Elijah Poole). In the early 1960s its most prominent spokesman was Malcolm X (born Malcolm Little), whose relationship with NOI was severed in 1964 and who was assassinated in February 1965, three NOI supporters being convicted of his killing. After Elijah Muhammad's death in 1975, his son sought to lead his father's followers into the worldwide Muslim mainstream: in response Louis Farrakhan (born Louis Eugene Walcott) led a faction away to establish his own Nation of Islam organization in 1978. In the 1980s Farrakhan came to national prominence with a series of rallies where he expounded his view that the black people of America and of the Western hemisphere were the "chosen people", called for a separate black homeland for US blacks, and made anti-semitic statements.

He also courted controversy with contacts with the Libyan leader Col. Kadhafi at a time when US relations with Libya were tense. In May 1985 he stated that he had turned down an offer of arms from Kadhafi, but that he had accepted a \$5,000,000 interest-free loan to assist a company he had set up to market products aimed at the black market. (Kadhafi had on March 2 urged US blacks to struggle to establish an independent black state.) In 1996 Kadhafi reportedly offered Farrakhan \$1bn to establish a Muslim organization in the USA, but the State Department blocked the payment.

In the 1990s Farrakhan generally toned down his rhetoric and focused on the issues of self-reliance and self-respect in the black community, where he found common ground with mainstream black leaders. This was exemplified by his "Million Man March" on Washington of Oct. 16, 1995, which was followed by a "Million Family March" in 2000. In July 2001, the British courts lifted a 15-year old ban on Farrakhan entering the United Kingdom. He has continued to explain US foreign policy as shaped to further the interests of Israel and claimed the Sept. 11 attacks were a "cover" to allow the USA to get its hands on oil from the Middle East

and Central Asia.

### New Black Panther Party for Self Defense

*Leader: Malik Zulu Shabazz*

Claiming descent from the original Black Panther Party (which had started as the Black Panther Party for Self Defense), the New Black Panther Party for Self Defense was established in 1990 and is now considered the largest group combining black nationalism and anti-semitism. Its hierarchy has many linkages with the Nation of Islam and it has been repudiated as a racist group by Bobby Seale and David Hilliard, surviving early leaders of the 1960s Panthers. The group's leader, Khallid Abdul Muhammad (born Harold Moore Vann), a former national spokesman for Farrakhan, died in February 2001 and was succeeded by Malik Zulu Shabazz (born Paris Lewis), a Washington attorney who had been the New Panthers' "National Minister of Justice". Shabazz has voiced support for the widely spread claim that Jews had foreknowledge of the attacks on the World Trade Center and in consequence several thousand of them had stayed away from work on Sept. 11. While adopting extreme rhetoric the party has mainly engaged in demonstrations and marches within the law. In 2002 Shabazz stated that membership was in the "low thousands".

## EXTREME-RIGHT & SURVIVALIST GROUPS

In the two decades prior to Sept. 11 the most important source of extra-legal political dissent was the far-right. The most significant extreme-right movement through to the 1980s was the Ku Klux Klan, which existed mainly in the South and parts of the Midwest. The 1980s, however, witnessed the growth of a number of racist and anti-semitic organizations, often espousing a millenarian and survivalist agenda and establishing paramilitary compounds, and emphasizing extreme hostility to the federal government. These groups included the Order, Aryan Order, the Christian Patriots, Posse Comitatus, and the Farmers' Liberation Army. Most of these groups were located in the South, the Pacific Northwest, the Mountain States of the West, and rural areas of the Midwest. While not a systematic threat, survivalist groups continue and the ideology was behind the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995.

A range of religious millenarian cults exists, in particular in the South and West. While essentially apolitical, and focused on the Second Coming, such cults to some degree share a common language with the right-wing survivalist groups. The Christian Identity movement blurs theology and racist politics with its belief that Aryans are the descendants of the Lost Tribes of Israel and Jews the descendants of Satan. Its beliefs provide a common thread through numerous extreme right movements of the last two decades. Although the broader Christian evangelical movement in the USA has in the last two decades tended to move away from historic nativist anti-semitism, to the extent that it has become associated with support for the State of Israel, for the entangled neo-Nazi and skinhead, Christian Identity, survivalist and millenarian cults on the ultra-



right (groups with considerable overlapping of membership), anti-semitism remains a driving force. In this respect such groups find common ground with the extremist Black Muslim tendencies. Indeed, some prominent spokesmen for the white Christian ultra-right appeared to justify the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center on the ground that New York was a centre of the international Jewish conspiracy as well as the melting pot where races merged and homosexuals flourished.

Some groups, such as the skinhead groups that emerged from the late 1980s and are united as the "Hammerskin Nation", adopting neo-Nazi rhetoric and organizing White Power rock concerts, are primarily cults of violence appealing to disaffected white youths (the victims of their attacks being indiscriminately selected from among the despised minorities). They are akin to street gangs and their quasi-political veneer is thin. Many groups have come and gone on the far-right which also seem to be primarily engaged in racketeering, money-making and self-promotion by individual leaders without deep political roots. Another strand of hostility to the federal government is the tax protest movement. In the 1960s and 1970s, "war tax resisters" opposed paying for the Vietnam War and other "imperialist" ventures, from a left-wing perspective; the contemporary tax protest movement in contrast forms part of the broad right-wing "patriot" tendency and claims that the federal income tax is an illegal imposition per se. There have been numerous cases involving bombings, arson and even murder directed against Internal Revenue Service (IRS) facilities and officers over the last decade. The tax protest movement is closely associated with the so-called "sovereign citizen" movement and there are many points of connection with Christian Identity and other right-wing movements. Elements of the movement are simply a pretext for fraud and racketeering. Some on the extreme-right are also advocates of a form of "leaderless resistance" that emphasizes individuals united by a common ideology rather than organizational structures that can be penetrated and broken up.

The siege of the Branch Davidian compound in Texas in 1993, although involving a millenarian cult rather than a political movement, has become a point of reference for all groups opposed to the federal government. This cult, descended from a breakaway in the 1930s from the Church of the Seventh-Day Adventists, was by the 1990s led by David Koresh (real name Vernon Howell) and had assembled an arsenal at its compound near Waco, Texas, to await the Day of Armageddon. On Feb. 28, 1993, federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) agents attempted to enter the compound and arrest Koresh for firearms violations, resulting in a confrontation in which four ATF agents and six Davidians were killed. After a 51-day siege, the FBI stormed the compound and some 75-80 Davidians died in a fire which the government said cult members had started themselves in an attempted mass suicide; many of those hostile to the government claimed that the FBI had caused the

slaughter and unfounded rumours circulated that the federal agents had attacked with flame throwers and helicopter gunships.

The Waco siege has since become a pivotal event in cementing extreme right-wing hostility to the federal government. The desire for "revenge" for Waco was apparently a motivation for Timothy McVeigh, convicted of the bombing on April 19, 1995 (the second anniversary of the ending of the Waco siege) of the Oklahoma City federal building in which 168 died. McVeigh was executed for this crime on June 11, 2001.

### **Aryan Nations**

*Leader: Richard G. Butler*

The Rev. Richard Girnt Butler established the paramilitary anti-semitic Aryan Nations at Hayden Lake in Idaho in the mid-1970s as an offshoot of his Church of Jesus Christ Christian, part of the Christian Identity movement. The group espouses the view that "Aryans" are the chosen people of the Bible, calls for a national state for the white race and has hosted annual summer events at Hayden Lake known as the World Congresses of Aryan Nations, at their peak in the 1980s. Its "Declaration of Independence" asserts that "the Aryan people in America are... a free and independent nation; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the United States of America, and that all political connection between them and the federal government thereof, is and ought to be totally dissolved".

Elements of the group in the 1980s joined with supporters of the National Alliance and Ku Klux Klan to form The Order (see entries). The Aryan Brotherhood, a network of prisoners, was established as an offshoot. Since the 1980s the group has suffered from dwindling membership; in 2001 Butler was forced into bankruptcy by a lawsuit brought with the backing of the Southern Poverty Law Center and lost his Idaho compound and by 2003 the Aryan Nations was split into three factions.

### **Aryan Republican Army**

This paramilitary neo-Nazi group, inspired by the example of 1980s terror group The Order (see entry), sought the overthrow of the US government and the establishment of an "Aryan Republic", its name being apparently modelled on that of the Irish Republican Army. The group carried out 22 bank robberies in the Midwest in the period 1992-96 and stockpiled weapons, before being broken up by a series of arrests and convictions in 1996-97. In 2001 the FBI reported that Timothy McVeigh, convicted for the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing, had also been a member of the Aryan Republican Army.

### **The Covenant, the Sword and the Arm of the Lord**

The Covenant, founded by James Ellison, a fundamentalist minister, in the early 1970s, was described as the political and paramilitary arm of the Church of Zarepath-Horeb and as part of the anti-semitic Christian Identity Movement. It had a paramilitary training camp in the Ozark Mountains in Arkansas, which was taken control of by state and federal law officers on April 22, 1985. In September 1985 Ellison and six other members of the group were sentenced to prison

terms on various charges, including arson attacks on a church for homosexuals and on a Jewish centre in Indiana. This effectively ended the group's activities. In 1987 Ellison gave evidence as a government witness in an unsuccessful trial for sedition of 10 right-wing extremists, including the leader of the Aryan Nations, Richard Butler, and former Klan leader Louis Beam, and was released under the federal witness relocation programme.

### **Creativity Movement**

*Leader: Matt Hale*

This white supremacist group was originally founded as the "Church of the Creator" in 1973 by Ben Klassen with a doctrine of "RaHoWa" (Racial Holy War). Klassen committed suicide in August 1993 and in 1996 the group was re-organized under the leadership of Matt Hale as the World Church of the Creator. In January 2003 Hale was arrested on charges of soliciting the murder of the judge who had sat in a case his organization had lost involving trademark infringement in the use of the name "Church of the Creator".

### **Ku Klux Klan**

The first Ku Klux Klan was founded in Tennessee in 1865 and rapidly developed into a political organization with the aim of restoring white supremacy in the post-Civil War South by terrorizing newly emancipated and enfranchized Negroes; it was banned by special legislation under President Grant in 1871.

A second Ku Klux Klan emerged in Georgia in 1915 as an anti-Negro, anti-Jewish, anti-Catholic, anti-foreign and anti-organized labour organization, whose members attacked not only the organization's political opponents but also bootleggers, gamblers and "wife beaters". In 1920-24 it grew into a nationwide movement with between 4,000,000 and 5,000,000 members and had considerable political influence in the Southern states and also Indiana, Colorado and Oregon. After 1926, its influence sharply declined, and in 1939 it was discredited by the discovery of its links with the pro-Nazi German-American Bund. In 1944 it was disbanded when the government attempted to collect unpaid taxes of US\$685,000 owed by the Ku Klux Klan for their business enterprises. Thereafter the Klan was revived in Atlanta (Georgia) by Dr Samuel Green, though Green, who died in 1949, proved to be the last of the Imperial Wizards to enjoy authority over a relatively unified organization, the Klan fragmenting in the 1950s and 1960s. During the 1964-66 civil rights campaign numerous Klan members were involved in acts of violence (including murder and arson) against both black and white civil rights workers. The first time an all white Mississippi jury convicted Klan members of murdering civil rights workers was on Oct. 20, 1967, but the prison sentences imposed on the four defendants ranged only from three to seven years.

Although numerically declining, the Klan remained active to some degree in the 1970s and 1980s, mainly in the Southern states. In 1979 a confrontation between the Klan and leftists in Goldsboro, North Carolina, left five dead. Members of the Klan were involved in an attempted invasion of Dominica in 1981 resulting in the sentencing of national "Grand Wizard" Stephen D. Black and one of his lieutenants to three years in prison in New Orleans, on July

23, 1981.

According to Klan Watch, a civil rights organization based in Montgomery, Alabama, the Ku Klux Klan was by 1986 "much a spent force" as most of its dangerous members had joined neo-Nazi groups. The Klan also faced unprecedented civil and criminal restrictions on its activities during the late 1980s and early 1990s, contributing to its image of a "spent force". In February 1987 a federal jury in Mobile, Alabama awarded \$7,000,000 damages against the United Klans of America following the 1981 slaying of Michael Donald. The civil suit, brought by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the victim's family, resulted in the deeds of the national headquarters of the United Klans of America being handed over to the victim's family. The decision represented the first time that the Klan had been held liable for the actions of its members under the doctrine of "corporate conspiracy". On Oct. 25, 1988, the Klan and 12 individuals were similarly ordered to pay \$1,000,000 to 53 civil rights marchers injured in clashes at Forsyth (Georgia) in 1987. The Invisible Empire Knights and Southern White Knights were ordered to pay \$400,000 each with the rest coming from individuals.

In the 1990s the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, led by Thom Robb of Harrison, Arkansas, a minister in the anti-semitic Christian Identity movement, was the largest faction. Following the lead of David Duke, who founded the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan and led the group until 1980, it generally sought to present a more moderate public face, members emphasizing "love of the white race" rather than hatred of others and involving themselves in civic responsibility campaigns on issues such as drug dealing.

The Klan today is in no respect a cohesive organization. According to the Anti-Defamation League, by 2003 the Klan was fragmented into about 100 units, mostly independent of each other, and with a total membership of a few thousand. The Klan stages demonstrations and marches and sells paraphernalia but is not engaged in systematic violence or subversion and has largely been superseded on the extreme militant right, where it is often regarded as outmoded (though some Klansmen also associate with the other ultra-right groups).

There are now three umbrella groups (i) the Imperial Klans of America (based in Kentucky), which originated as a splinter from the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan and is led by Imperial Wizard Ron Edwards; (ii) the American Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, based in Indiana and led by National Imperial Wizard Jeff Berry (who was sentenced in December 2001 to seven years' imprisonment for conspiracy to commit criminal confinement, following which the organization began to fragment); and (iii) the Knights of the White Kamelia (Texas), whose Imperial Wizard is James Roesch.

### **Militia Movement**

The Militia Movement spread rapidly in the wake of the 1993 Waco siege (see above) as a network of locally organized paramilitary groups, espousing anti-federal government views and often recruiting at gun fairs. These groups are in a long if erratic tradition of right-wing paramilitary formations, and emphasize the menace of a supposed conspiracy involving the federal government to impose a socialist world

government on the USA. Numerous members of these militias have been convicted, most commonly on weapons, explosives and conspiracy charges involving inter alia plans to bomb federal facilities. The Movement has declined somewhat since the mid-1990s but still has a presence, especially in the Midwest.

### **National Alliance**

*Leader: Erich Gliebe*

This neo-Nazi group was founded in 1974 by William L. Pierce, who had formerly been involved with the American Nazi Party of George Lincoln Rockwell (assassinated in 1967) and its successor, the National Socialist White People's Party.

Pierce achieved great influence on the far-right through his authorship of *The Turner Diaries*, originally published under the pseudonym Andrew Macdonald in the late 1970s, which imagines a future right-wing overthrow of the government and the subsequent cleansing of the USA of non-Aryans and nuclear attack on Israel. This work, which sold more than half a million copies, became the "bible" of the extreme right in the 1980s. Federal prosecutors stated it had provided the "blueprint" for Timothy McVeigh, convicted of the bombing of the Oklahoma City federal building in 1995 in which 168 people died, who replicated passages from the book in the bombing. McVeigh was not a member of the National Alliance but Pierce described him as a "man of principle". The book was also an influence on The Order (see entry)

Pierce ran the National Alliance after 1985 from a compound in the Appalachian Mountains in West Virginia and the Alliance by 2001 reportedly had 1,500 supporters in 35 cells nationwide and an income of \$1 million from National Vanguard Books and the White Power music label Resistance Records (the latter purchased in 1999). Pierce died on July 23, 2002. He was succeeded as leader by Erich Gliebe, a former boxer styled the "Aryan barbarian" and the manager of Resistance Records (and whose father had fought in the German army in World War II), but the group has since suffered from defections. In 2003 members of the National Alliance participated in rallies against the war in Iraq.

### **The Order (Briider Schweigen or Silent Brotherhood)**

This group, founded in September 1983, had, according to investigations by law enforcement agencies, intended to wage war against the US government which it described as a "Zionist Occupation Government" or "ZOG". The group, which incited racial violence and attacks on public officials, engaged in counterfeiting and robbery to finance its activity and recruited its members from the Aryan Nations, National Alliance and factions of the Ku Klux Klan; it was heavily influenced by *The Turner Diaries* of William L. Pierce.

The group was destroyed by the death of its founder, Robert Jay Mathews, during a police siege near Seattle on Dec. 8, 1984, and the sentencing of 10 of its members to terms of imprisonment, ranging from 40-100 years' for racketeering and other offences, by a Seattle federal judge on Feb. 6, 1985. It was believed that of an estimated \$4,000,000 stolen by The Order, significant sums had been channeled to leaders of the Ku Klux Klan and to neo-Nazi groups.

In 1987 four of its members were charged with offences relating to the murder of Alan Berg, a Jewish radio talk show presenter, in June 1984. Two of the four defendants were eventually sentenced to 150 years in December 1987, the remaining two being acquitted. All four defendants were already in prison for racketeering convictions brought in Seattle in December 1985. While these convictions ended the Order, later groups claiming descent included the Order II and Arizona Patriots.

### **Phineas Priesthood**

An offshoot of the Christian Identity movement this is a loose alliance of advocates of violent actions against Jews, blacks, homosexuals and abortion clinics. One group carried out a series of bombings and robberies in Washington State in 1995-96 before four of its members were arrested and sentenced to long prison terms.

### **Sovereign Citizen Movement**

With origins in groups such as the Posse Comitatus, active in the West in the 1970s and 1980s, this is a semi-organized network of groups and individuals who reject the authority of the federal government and espouse an extreme form of individualism. The Movement mainly engages in propaganda and filing of lawsuits and other tactics intended to harass federal officials, as well as issuing spurious documents and forms of money. However, in 1996 one group, the Freemen of Montana, held out against a siege by FBI agents for 81 days; a further siege, in 1997, of members of the "Republic of Texas" group resulted in one group member's death.

## **OTHER GROUPS**

### **Animal Rights Groups**

There has been limited extra-legal activity in this area, much of it apparently linked to the more extensive activity in the UK (see UK entry). The president of the US Foundation for Biomedical Research stated in June 2002 that there had been a "marked escalation" in violence since 2000 and that the FBI had warned all institutions involved in using animals for research that they were potential targets. Attacks in the USA have been identified with the Animal Liberation Front, the Justice Department and the Animal Rights Militia.

### **Earth Liberation Front (ELF)**

Cells of this "eco-terrorist" group have claimed responsibility for a number of arson attacks against housing developments and other "urban sprawl" targets in recent years.

### **Jewish Defence League (JDL)**

The Jewish Defence League was founded by Rabbi Meyer Kahane in 1968 in response to anti-semitic attacks in New York. It clashed with Black Muslims, the Ku Klux Klan and neo-Nazis. Kahane established the JDL in Israel in the 1970s (this becoming known as *Kach*, see entry under Israel)) with Kahane then becoming a leading figure on the Israeli ultra-right and winning election to the Knesset in 1984. Irv Rubin succeeded him as chairman of the JDL in the USA in 1985. Kahane was assassinated in New York on Nov. 5, 1990, by an Egyptian, El Sayed Noseir. Noseir was subsequently acquitted of Kahane's murder on a technicality, but was later



convicted for his role in the first bombing of the New York World Trade Center, in 1993.

Rubin favoured direct action (having in 1978 offered \$500 to anyone who “kills, maims or seriously injures a member of the American Nazi Party”). In December 2001 he was charged, with another JDL member, Earl Krugel, with plotting to bomb a mosque and the offices of an Arab-American congressman; he died on Nov. 13, 2002, of apparently self-inflicted injuries while in custody awaiting trial. Membership of the JDL is now thought to be only a few dozen.

## EXTERNAL GROUPS

US interests abroad have faced terrorist attacks for decades; however the groups responsible have normally lacked the desire, organization or resources to mount such attacks in the USA itself. This changed in the 1990s with attacks or attempted attacks linked to apparently well-funded Middle Eastern Islamist groups, culminating in September 11.

On Oct. 10, 2001, President Bush released a list of the USA’s 22 “most wanted” terrorists, with a reward of \$5m for information leading to the arrest of any of them. All those named were foreign Muslims and included 13 figures linked to *Al-Qaeda*, including, in first place, Osama bin Laden, the leader and global figurehead of *Al-Qaeda* and, in second place, Ayman al-Zawahri, involved in both the Egyptian Islamic Jihad and *Al-Qaeda*. Others on the list included individuals wanted in connection with the 1993 World Trade Center bombing and the bombings in 1998 of the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania and in 1996 at a US air force base in Khobar, Saudi Arabia (see country entries). Some of the suspects were believed to be in Iran and Iraq, though in most cases their whereabouts were speculative.

In the aftermath of the Sept. 11 attacks, many hundreds of individuals of Arab or Middle Eastern origin were detained, on an apparently indiscriminate basis: there were reports of individuals being held in solitary confinement, shackled, and refused access to lawyers without being charged. Critics made comparisons with the blanket round-ups of Japanese Americans in the aftermath of Pearl Harbour.

### Islamic Jihad/Islamic Grouping (Al-Gama’a at Islamiyya)

These are Egypt’s largest militant Islamist groups and are inter-related: Sheikh Umar Abdurrahman (Omar Abdel-Rahman), a blind theologian, has been regarded as the spiritual leader of both groups (see full entries under Egypt).

Members of Islamic Jihad were implicated in the first attack on the World Trade Center in New York City on Feb. 26, 1993, when six people were killed. Sheikh Umar Abdurrahman was sentenced in January 1996 on conspiracy charges connected to the 1993 World Trade Center bombing and imprisoned for life in the USA. In April 2002 the US Justice Department charged that Abdurrahman had tried to direct further terrorist acts from his cell in Minnesota.

The leader of one faction of Islamic Jihad, Dr Ayman al-Zawahri, became one of the chief signatories of Osama bin

Laden’s 1998 “international fatwa” against “Western Crusaders and Jews” and has been implicated in the bombings of the US embassies in East Africa in August 1998, and the Sept. 11 attacks in the USA. He is spoken of as Bin Laden’s deputy and appears to have subsumed the identity of the Egyptian groups in that of *Al-Qaeda*. His whereabouts are unknown.

### Al-Qaeda

*Al-Qaeda* (“the Base” or the “World Islamic Front for Jihad Against the Jews and Crusaders”) is a loose global network of extreme Islamists, drawing particular strength from Saudi roots and resources and which established a secure base in Afghanistan prior to the overthrow of the Taleban at the end of 2001. Its network is fragmented and cell-based and many acts are attributed to *Al-Qaeda* which may be only tenuously linked, if at all, to any form of organizational structure.

Prior to Sept. 11, *Al-Qaeda* or proxies had been linked to a range of attacks on US military and diplomatic targets outside the USA, including in Saudi Arabia, Kenya, Tanzania and Yemen (see country entries). It had links with individuals involved in attacks in New York (see Islamic Jihad, above). Ahmed Rezzam, an Algerian *Al-Qaeda* operative, was arrested entering the USA from Canada in December 1999 in possession of bomb making materials planned for use against Los Angeles international airport.

Following the attacks of Sept. 11, US officials rapidly identified *Al-Qaeda* and Osama bin Laden as responsible. On Sept. 14 the US Congress granted President Bush authority to “use all necessary and appropriate force” against any country, organization and individual involved in the Sept. 11 attacks and on Sept. 20 President Bush warned the Taleban regime in Afghanistan to hand over the leaders of *Al-Qaeda* or “share their fate”. The USA subsequently shared evidence with other governments that *Al-Qaeda* had been responsible for the Sept. 11 attacks. Responsibility for these had not been explicitly claimed by *Al-Qaeda*, but on Dec. 13 the Pentagon released a videotape of Osama bin Laden, apparently made in Afghanistan on Nov. 9, in which Bin Laden boasted of detailed foreknowledge of the attacks and those who carried them out, declaring the results had been “all we had hoped for”.

On Oct. 7, i.e. less than one month after Sept. 11, the USA, with British participation and the support of Afghanistan factions in the Northern Alliance, launched a military campaign in Afghanistan that resulted in the expulsion of the Taleban from Kabul by Nov. 13. In parallel with this drive against *Al-Qaeda*’s military base in Afghanistan, the USA also launched a vast worldwide effort, in concert with many other governments, to choke off *Al-Qaeda* funding, seize *Al-Qaeda* assets, arrest its leaders and destroy its structures. Among those eliminated who were said to have been directly involved in the operational planning of Sept. 11 have been (i) Ramzi Binalshibh, said to have been a coordinator of the attacks, arrested in Pakistan in September 2002; (ii) Khaled Sheikh Mohammed, described as the *Al-Qaeda* military chief and planner of the Sept. 11 attacks, who was arrested in Pakistan in March 2003; and (iii) Muhammad Atef (alias Abu Hafz al-Misri), described as responsible for the military training of recruits, apparently killed by US bombing in Afghanistan in November 2001.

Other leaders, including Osama bin Laden himself, have disappeared.

The campaign against *Al-Qaeda* and organizations with which it is seen as allied or associated, such as *Jemaah Islamiah* in Southeast Asia, continues as a major component of US foreign policy and is generally referred to by officials as a war of indefinite duration. Domestically, however, notwithstanding the vast effort put into investigations, little evidence has emerged of a continuing *Al-Qaeda* presence in the USA itself and there have been no further *Al-Qaeda* attacks.

All 19 Sept. 11 hijackers were killed when the airliners crashed. Only one individual, Zacarias Moussaoui (a French citizen of Moroccan descent), has been charged in the US courts in connection with Sept. 11, prosecutors stating that he was the intended 20th hijacker (he had previously been detained on Aug. 16, 2001, in Minnesota on immigration charges). Moussaoui was indicted before a criminal court (not a military tribunal) in December 2001 on charges of conspiracy to commit the Sept. 11 attacks. However, government prosecutors subsequently complained that they faced a choice between disclosing sensitive intelligence information or having the case dismissed. In July 2003 the US government rejected an order from a district court that it should make an informant available for interrogation and said that it would if necessary end the trial and declare Moussaoui an enemy combatant (i.e. subject to indefinite detention without trial). Both France and Germany (where Moussaoui had been resident) had previously declined to make available evidence to the FBI, citing restrictions on providing evidence in cases that might result in the application of the death penalty.

On May 8, 2002, a former Chicago street gang member, José Padilla, who had converted to Islam in jail and called himself Abdullah al-Muhajir, was detained (and in June on government orders incarcerated as an “enemy combatant”) after allegedly plotting with *Al-Qaeda* operatives outside the country to explode a “dirty bomb” in the USA. In March 2003 a lower court ruled that Padilla must be allowed access to lawyers. In June 2003 the USA declared a further suspected *Al-Qaeda* operative, Ali Saleh Kahlal al-Marri, a Qatari in custody since December 2001, an “enemy combatant” subject to indefinite detention, having abandoned plans to prosecute him in the civilian courts. Only one other person was at that time detained in the USA as an enemy combatant, Yaser Esam Hamdi, like Padilla a US citizen.

On Jan. 30, 2003, a British citizen, Richard Reid, was sentenced to a prison term of life plus 110 years by a federal court in Boston after pleading guilty to charges of attempting to detonate explosives in his shoe while on board a flight from Paris to Miami on Dec 22, 2001. Reid was a self-proclaimed member of *Al-Qaeda*.

Whereas the Sept. 11 attacks had involved the hijacking of aircraft using as weapons nothing more sophisticated than knives, repeated statements from US officials subsequently sought to assert that *Al-Qaeda* posed a threat with weapons of mass destruction. On Feb. 6, 2002, George Tenet, the director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), told Congress that *Al-Qaeda* was seeking to acquire chemical and biological weapons and “will continue to plan to attack this country and its interests abroad”. On June 10, 2002, Vice

President Richard Cheney warned that *Al-Qaeda* was “still at work” on weapons of mass destruction. This issue became blurred with that of the supposed continuation of programmes to acquire such weapons by other states, notably Iraq.

Fifteen of the 19 who took part in the Sept. 11 attacks were Saudis, as is the leader of *Al-Qaeda*, Osama bin Laden, as well as various others of its principal figures, and this has contributed to considerable speculation as to the possibility of involvement of Saudi backers in the intelligence community or the extended Saudi royal family. This has in turn extended to allegations that the extensive commercial involvement with Saudi Arabia of some senior US officials, including President Bush, had contributed to a reluctance to identify Saudi Arabia as a potential source of terrorism. These concerns were reinforced when the administration in July 2003 refused to de-classify a lengthy section of a congressional report on the events of Sept. 11 that was widely believed to document linkages between the hijackers and Saudi figures and institutions. On July 24, Senator Bob Graham, the former Democratic chairman of the intelligence committee, who had led the investigation, stated that the hijackers had “received...significant assistance from a foreign government” while in the USA, without identifying the government. On July 29, more than 100 US Congressmen sent a letter to President Bush seeking “detailed assurances” that Saudi Arabia was acting to prevent the financing of terrorist groups. Specific concerns aired in the USA concerned the alleged role of Omar al-Bayoumi, reputedly a Saudi intelligence officer, in assisting two of the attackers. In August 2003 FBI agents were given access to Bayoumi in Saudi Arabia.

Since Sept. 11 the US authorities have sought to staunch the flow of funding thought to reach *Al-Qaeda* via various front organizations established by charities in the USA (the benefactors of such charities not necessarily knowing the destination of their donations). In October 2002 a grand jury indicted Enaam Arnaout (a Saudi), the US director of the charity Benevolence International Foundation (BIF), on charges of using the charity as a conduit for funds for *Al-Qaeda* and other terrorist groups. In February 2003, however, Arnaout pleaded guilty to lesser fraud charges in a plea bargain arrangement with the Justice Department. In August 2003 the USA made public an affidavit stating that the Muslim World League and an affiliate, the International Islamic Relief Organization, charities operating out of Virginia and with financial backing from Saudi sources, had been used in channelling funds to *Al-Qaeda*, *Hamas* and other groups.

In July 2003 it was announced that six unnamed individuals held by the USA at Guantanamo Bay had been designated by President Bush as eligible to stand trial before military commissions. The Pentagon stated that the six may have attended *Al-Qaeda* training camps in Afghanistan and been involved in financing the group, recruiting new members and protecting Osama bin Laden.

## US DEPENDENT TERRITORIES

The USA has a number of dependencies in the Pacific and Caribbean, mainly with very small populations, notably American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana



Islands, Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands. Of these, Puerto Rico is by far the most populous and it is also the only possession to have a history of activity by extra-legal revolutionary and dissident groups.

### PUERTO RICO

The Caribbean island of Puerto Rico has a population of about 4 million. It was ceded by Spain to the United States as a result of the Spanish–American War of 1898 and has had Commonwealth status since 1952. While this status has been often described as one of “free association” with the USA, the US House of Representatives in 1998 concluded that Puerto Rico was in effect an unincorporated territory that did not meet the US or international definition of free association.

Although Puerto Ricans have been US citizens since 1917 they do not have a vote in US congressional or presidential elections and are instead represented in the US Congress by a Resident Commissioner, elected for a four-year term, who may vote on committees but not from the floor. The US President is head of state. The head of government is the Governor, who is elected for a four-year term and assisted by an appointed Cabinet. There is a bicameral Legislative Assembly comprising a Senate and a House of Representatives; both chambers are directly elected for a four-year term, with the majority of seats decided by direct election from single-seat districts.

Two parties, the Popular Democratic Party (*Partido Popular Democrático*, PPD) and the New Progressive Party (*Partido Nuevo Progresista*, PNP) have dominated Puerto Rican politics since the late 1960s, alternating in power. The PNP, formed in 1967, has won the governorship for five four-year terms (in 1968, 1976, 1980, 1992 and 1996), while the PPD has in the same period won the governorship for four terms (in 1972, 1984, 1988 and 2000).

In elections held on Nov. 7, 2000, the PPD won back control of both houses of the legislature and also elected the governor, Sila María Calderón, and the Resident Commissioner, Aníbel Acevedo Vlá.

### Independence issue

For decades the issue of Puerto Rico’s constitutional status has been at the forefront of politics. Of the two parties that have dominated politics since the 1960s, the PNP has since its formation in 1967 consistently advocated statehood for Puerto Rico within the USA. However, the US Congress, while acknowledging the right of self-determination for Puerto Rico, has never indicated that it is prepared to accept Puerto Rico’s admission as the 51st state and it is generally considered that there is no majority support for such an option in Congress.

The PPD, founded in 1938 and the dominant political formation from 1940 until a split in the party in 1968 resulted in the PNP gaining power, has traditionally been a coalition of diverse views. In the early

years the PPD, while emphasizing social and economic reform, favoured independence, but with the onset of the Cold War in the 1940s repudiated this position and then became a framer and consistent defender of the Commonwealth status granted in 1952. Perceived benefits of Commonwealth status include automatic US citizenship, federal tax breaks for investors, welfare benefits paid for by the US taxpayer but exemption of Puerto Ricans from federal taxes, a common market with the USA, and US military defence, while also providing sufficient autonomy to enable Puerto Rico to retain its distinctive Hispanic culture and identity.

The only other party of any consequence is the Puerto Rican Independence Party (*Partido Independentista Puertorriqueño*, PIP). The party was formed in 1946 by defectors opposed to the movement of the PPD away from advocacy of independence. The PIP regards the status of Puerto Rico as being that of a colony, and campaigns to achieve “national freedom”. The PIP believes that Puerto Rico’s status has fostered a culture of dependence on federal welfare payments and tax reliefs for US investors; it argues that statehood for Puerto Rico (as favoured by the PNP) would inevitably be on a second-class basis as its per capita income is only one-third of the US average and it is overwhelmingly Hispanic, with only a minority adequately speaking English; likewise it regards the existing Commonwealth status, as supported by the PPD, as an “outmoded remnant of the Cold War” when the USA was concerned that it should ensure control. The party also rejects “free association” on the model of the Marshall Islands, Micronesia and Palau as a diluted form of independence. However, the party won only one seat in each of the House and Senate in the last three elections (1992, 1996 and 2000), while its 2000 candidates for Governor and Resident Commissioner took just over and just under 5% of the vote, respectively.

The independence issue was at its most potent in the late 1930s through to the early 1950s, with terrorist attacks in both Puerto Rico and the USA and widespread detentions in Puerto Rico. Sporadic terrorist activity, both in Puerto Rico and the mainland, continued in the following decades but independence is now favoured by only a small minority. In a plebiscite held in November 1993, 48.6% of voters opted for continued Commonwealth status, 46.3% for statehood and 4.4% for independence. A further locally organized plebiscite was held on Dec. 13, 1998. However, while the PNP and PIP supported the statehood and independence options on the ballot, respectively, the PPD rejected the terminology for the continuation of Commonwealth status. The result was that votes were cast as follows for the main options: 787,900 (50.3%) for “none of the above” (i.e. the PPD’s position); 728,157 (46.5%) for statehood; and 39,838 (2.5%) for independence.

Much of the pro-independence energy has been channelled into opposition to the “militarization” of Puerto Rico and the PIP has waged a campaign of non-

violent resistance against the Navy's use of the island of Vieques as a bombing range. Following a mass trespass, party leader Rubén Berríos (a law professor) was tried in May 2001 and sentenced to four months' imprisonment; however, in June 2001, US President George W. Bush said the Navy would halt the bombing on Vieques in "a reasonable period of time", an announcement seen as a gesture to the Hispanic vote.

Terrorist incidents linked to the independence cause largely died out after the mid-1980s with the break-up of the two main groups active in the previous decade (see below). There have since been only occasional and relatively minor bombings, mostly in Puerto Rico itself, with no fatalities in recent years. However, the decision of President Clinton in August 1999 to extend clemency to 16 individuals convicted on charges arising from their membership of the FALN and EPB terrorist groups, provoked considerably controversy. The House Committee on Government Reform subsequently concluded that the amnesties were made for political reasons and that "it undermines our international war on terrorism if we set a standard for US terrorists that appears to be different than that set for foreign born terrorists. If sympathetic lobbyists can win the early release of terrorists in this country, our position is undercut when we ask other countries to take a hard line on terrorists of their own nationalities".

#### **Armed Forces of National Liberation (Fuerzas Armadas de Liberación Nacional Puertorriqueña, FALN or FALNP)**

This organization carried out more than 100 bombings and other attacks, resulting in five deaths, from the mid-1970s to mid-1980s, in pursuit of its campaign to expel "Yankee colonialism" from Puerto Rico. In the worst incident, four people died in the FALN bombing of the Fraunces Tavern in New York City on Jan. 24, 1975. It operated mainly in the continental USA, in New York and Chicago. Eleven members, including the leader, Carlos Alberto Torres, were arrested in Evanston, Illinois, in April 1980, subsequently proclaiming themselves to be "prisoners of war"; ten were tried in Chicago and convicted of conspiracy to overthrow the government of the United States and other crimes; the 11th (the wife of Carlos Alberto Torres) was convicted in New York in connection with an attack at the Mobil Oil

Building in New York City on Aug. 3, 1977, in which one person died. Further arrests and convictions resulted in the FALN being broken up by the mid-1980s. Carlos Alberto Torres, the group's leader, was not among the 12 FALN members who benefited from an amnesty by President Clinton in 1999.

#### **Puerto Rican Popular Army (Ejército Popular Boricua, EPB, or Los Macheteros)**

This clandestine group, formed in 1976, announced itself when it claimed responsibility for the killing of a police officer in Puerto Rico in 1978. Its leaders were Filiberto Ojeda Rios and Juan Segarra Palmer. Unlike the FALN (above), it operated mainly against military and police targets in Puerto Rico (in January 1981 bombing 11 planes at a National Guard base on the island), its attacks resulting in five deaths. In addition it claimed responsibility (a year later, when the money had been removed from the country) for an armed robbery of \$7,000,000 from a Wells Fargo depot in West Hartford (Connecticut) on Sept. 12, 1983. In this connection 14 persons were arrested in Puerto Rico and the United States on Aug. 30, 1985, but one principal figure in the robbery (Victor Manuel Gerena, a Wells Fargo guard) was believed to have been granted asylum in Cuba.

The group claimed responsibility for a number of small bomb explosions in Puerto Rico in June 1989 which it said were in protest at the sentencing of one of its members, Juan Segarra Palmer (seen as the chief operational planner), to 65 years' imprisonment for involvement in the West Hartford robbery.

Although largely broken up by arrests and convictions in the late 1980s, occasional explosions were claimed in the name of the EPB during the 1990s. In 1999 President Clinton commuted Segarra's sentence so that he would be eligible for release on parole after serving 19 years in prison. Ojeda Rios remained a fugitive.

*F. J. Harper*

## Uruguay

**Capital:** Montevideo

**Population:** 3.4 m

The "Eastern Republic of the Uruguay" has been an independent state since 1830. It has an executive President and a National Congress consisting of a 99-member Chamber of Deputies and a 31-member Senate, all elected by universal adult suffrage for five-year terms. The President appoints, and presides over,

a Cabinet.

In a run-off presidential election held on Nov. 26, 1999, Jorge Batlle Ibáñez, the candidate of the (historically dominant) Colorado Party (*Partido Colorado*, PC) defeated Tabaré Vázquez, representing the Progressive Encounter–Broad Front (*Encuentro Progre-*

sista – *Frente Amplio*, EP-FA) coalition, Batlle taking 54.1 per cent of the vote. In legislative elections held in October 1999, the Progressive Encounter – Broad Front coalition won 40 seats in the Chamber of Deputies, the Colorado Party 32, the National (*Blanco*) Party 23 and New Space four. President Batlle formed a government with the support of the Blancos.

### Tupamaros insurgency

During the early 1970s there was brutal internal conflict as the government sought to suppress the **Tupamaros** guerrilla movement, of which the **National Liberation Movement** (*Movimiento de Liberación Nacional*, MLN) was the political wing. The movement developed first in rural areas in the early 1960s, where its founder Raúl Sendic organized strikes among sugar cane cutters, but after 1966 switched its efforts to the cities and took up the armed struggle, becoming one of the most potent left-wing guerrilla forces in Latin America. Drastic restrictions on civil liberties were introduced in 1971 and the army took power in 1973, with the Tupamaros being virtually

annihilated.

Military rule was ended by elections in 1984 and Tupamaros guerrillas were released under an amnesty in 1985. After much controversy a “full stop” (*punto final*) law, adopted in 1986 and providing an amnesty for military and police accused of human rights violations, was approved by referendum in April 1989. The MLN held its first legal convention in Montevideo on Dec. 20-22, 1985, when it ratified an announcement of Sept. 4 to the effect that it would abandon the armed struggle and become a legal political party, and that it would merge with the (socialist) March 26 Movement (*Movimiento 26 de Marzo*); the convention also decided that the MLN should join the Broad Front (*Frente Amplio*). The MLN was legally recognized as a political party in May 1989. The MLN now exists as a leftist minority faction within the Progressive Encounter–Broad Front alliance. Although now committed to democratic politics it has never renounced its past.

Peter Calvert

## Uzbekistan

**Capital:** Tashkent

**Population:** 25.7 m

The Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic declared independence from the Soviet Union at the end of August 1991. In December 1991, Uzbekistan became a member of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Prior to independence, Islam Karimov, the then First Secretary of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan, had been elected to the newly established post of President of the republic by the Supreme Soviet in March 1990. Contested nation-wide presidential elections were held in December 1991, as a result of which Islam Karimov was re-confirmed in office, winning 86 per cent of the vote. His chief rival, Muhammad Solih (leader of *Erk*), won just over 12 per cent. In March 1995 Karimov's term of office was extended by referendum to the year 2000. In the presidential election held in January 2000, Karimov was declared to have won 92 per cent of the vote and was returned to office for a further term. In January 2002, his mandate was extended by referendum from five to seven years.

The post-Soviet constitution was adopted in December 1992. It established a single-chamber legislature, the Supreme Assembly (*Oliy Majlis*). Elections to this 250-member body are scheduled to be held every five years. The first elections were held in December 1994-January 1995. In December 1999 a new round of parliamentary elections took place. The five registered parties contested 123 seats; candidates for the remaining seats were nominees of administrative and local initiative bodies. All the parties that have

received official sanction are supportive of government and presidential policies. There are no legalized opposition parties within Uzbekistan. There are, however, other sources of dissent. These include opposition leaders who are based abroad but who have a following within the country and radical Islamist groups. Independent human rights organizations also challenge the government's record on civil liberties and thus provide some outlet for alternative opinions.

### SECULAR OPPOSITION PARTIES

In 1989-91, a number of small, independent socio-political groups emerged in Uzbekistan. Most failed to secure registration and were therefore unable to operate legally. They included the Party of Free Peasants (closely linked to *Birlik*), the Green Party (an offshoot of the Committee to Save the Aral Sea), the Samarqand Movement (aimed at promoting the rights of the Tajik minority in Uzbekistan), and the People's Movement of Turkistan (which called for the unification of the Central Asian states). They are now moribund. However, the two largest parties, *Birlik* and *Erk*, have survived. Within Uzbekistan they are banned, but they have quite strong organizations in exile. Both have an active Internet presence. The leaders also take part in discussion programmes on foreign media networks. These channels of communication are blocked in Uzbekistan, yet some information does percolate

through. Skeleton networks of activists distribute opposition publications and keep alive some degree of independent debate. Personal rivalries between the leaders of *Birlik* and *Erk* have hindered collaboration between the two parties. At grassroots level, however, relations are better and there is a certain amount of mutual support.

### **Birlik ("Unity")**

*Leadership. Abdurahim Polat*

*Birlik* was formed in November 1988 by an informal group of intellectuals, under the leadership of Abdurahim Polat. In March 1989, *Birlik* began to conduct mass public meetings. It raised, amongst other issues, the question of the Uzbek language, calling for it to be given official status. *Birlik* leaders played a prominent role in defusing the ethnic violence that erupted in 1989 between Uzbeks and Meskhetian Turks. The party attracted a large popular following, but was constantly harassed by the authorities. It was never granted registration. After independence, the Uzbek government, concerned that the civil war in Tajikistan might spread across the border, cracked down ruthlessly on any form of opposition. Independent political action became impossible. In the summer of 1992 Abdurahim Polat went into self-imposed exile, first in Turkey, then in the USA. Most of the other leading members of *Birlik* also left the country.

In the late 1990s there were signs that President Karimov might be softening his stance towards *Birlik*. On April 4, 2002, Karimov announced that he was prepared to meet exiled opposition activists, provided that they were prepared to work with the government in a constructive manner and to refrain from the use of violence. *Birlik* was able to hold a number of regional conferences in Uzbekistan without interference from the authorities. In August 2002, a senior *Birlik* official, Polat Ahun, returned to Uzbekistan after seven years in exile in Sweden; other *Birlik* leaders expressed a desire to follow suit. The prospects for registration appeared promising, but given the history of political repression in Uzbekistan, some remained skeptical of the government's motives and doubted whether this would actually be achieved in the near future.

### **Erk (Freedom) Democratic Party**

*Leadership. Muhammad Solih*

*Erk*, an offshoot of *Birlik* (see above), was founded in April 1990, under the leadership of a celebrated poet, Muhammad Solih. Taking its name from a nationalist party of the 1920s, *Erk* called for "independence first, then democracy". The party was registered for a brief period in 1991, but official sanction was withdrawn on Dec. 9, shortly before the presidential elections later that month. Muhammad Solih stood as the *Erk* candidate in these elections and according to official reports, won just over 12 per cent of the vote; his supporters insisted that he had in fact won 52 per cent. The *Erk* leadership claimed that the party had a registered membership of 54,000 at this time, spread throughout the country.

In the early days of independence, the *Erk* leadership tried to cooperate with the Uzbek government and supported its attempts at reform. However, the relationship soon soured. The party's bank account was closed down and its property was confiscated. Members were arrested and ill-

treated. In April 1993, Muhammad Solih went into voluntary exile, moving first to Turkey and later to Western Europe; he was granted political asylum in Norway in 1998. Many other *Erk* leaders also sought refuge abroad during the 1990s.

Uzbek officials claimed that while in Turkey, Solih had links with terrorist organizations. He was accused, along with the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (see entry), of masterminding an assassination attempt on President Karimov in Tashkent in February 1999. Solih denied any involvement in this crime. However, he was tried in absentia in November 2000 and given a prison sentence of fifteen and a half years. On a visit to Prague in November 2001, he was arrested by the Czech authorities, in response to an Interpol extradition warrant requested by the Uzbek government. Solih was eventually released, but only after human rights organizations had energetically campaigned for his freedom. It was clear that whatever conciliatory gestures the Uzbek government was prepared to make towards *Birlik* did not extend to *Erk*. In 2002 the party was still being prevented from undertaking any public activities in the country.

## **INDEPENDENT HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS**

The first independent human rights organization in Uzbekistan was the **Society for Human Rights (SHR)**, founded in Tashkent in February 1992 by Abdumannob Polat (brother of Abdurahim Polat, leader of *Birlik*). It was refused registration. However, the organization remained active and despite frequent harassment of its members, established branches in many parts of the country. It has a long record of monitoring civil liberties and raising cases of injustice and abuse. Abdumannob Polat subsequently moved to the USA, and as Director of the **Union of Councils of Central Asian Human Rights Information Network** (Washington DC), he collaborated with SHR, notably by recording and publishing the names and biographical details of political prisoners in Uzbekistan.

In 2002, SHR (now headed by Vasila Inoyat) merged with the **Civic Assistance Human Rights Society of Uzbekistan** (chairman Ruslan Sharipov) and, under the name **Ezgulik ("Good Deed") Human Rights Society of Uzbekistan**, applied for registration. This was denied. However, the **Independent Human Rights Society of Uzbekistan**, founded in 1996 by Mikhail Ardzinov and previously refused official sanction, was granted registration in March 2002. This was the first independent human rights organization to be recognized by the Uzbek authorities.

## **ISLAMIST MOVEMENTS**

In Uzbekistan, as elsewhere in Central Asia, Muslims who do not conform to the prevailing norms of behaviour are referred to as "Wahhabis" (the dominant form of Islam in Saudi Arabia), whether or not they are adherents of this sect. The Islamist movements currently active in Uzbekistan are revivalist in orientation, but do not appear to espouse Wahhabi teachings in a literal sense.



Independent radical Islamist movements appeared in Uzbekistan the early 1990s; these included *Adolat* ("Justice"), the *Akromiya* (named after their founder, Akrom Yuldashev), also known as the *Imonchilar* ("Believers") or *Khalifatchilar* ("Caliphate Supporters"), *Tawba* ("Repentance"), and *Islom lashkarlari* ("Soldiers of Islam"). They appear to have been very small, and by the mid-1990s, some re-alignment had taken place.

Currently, the main Islamist movements in Uzbekistan, as elsewhere in Central Asia, are the **Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU)** and **Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT)** (see entries). It is impossible to estimate the numerical strength of these two groups or whether or not they are linked. Both reject the legitimacy of the present governments of the region and are seeking to establish an Islamic state. In Uzbekistan this is regarded as a call for the overthrow of the constitution and consequently, is seen as high treason. Thousands of pious Muslims have been arrested on suspicion of association with these groups; many have been given long prison sentences, often on the basis of highly dubious evidence. Popular Muslim clerics, among them the imams (religious leaders) of some of the major mosques in Tashkent and other cities have disappeared without explanation. There are widespread reports of assault and torture of those in custody.

It is difficult to judge the validity of the allegations of terrorist plots to overthrow the government, since statements from official sources are heavily biased against any expression of dissident opinion. Representatives of human rights organizations (local and international) insist that many of those who have been arrested are not guilty of any crime. They point out that although *Hizb ut-Tahrir* publications advocate an Islamic system of government, this is to be achieved by non-violent means; theoretically, this could be said to fall within the constitutionally permitted limits of freedom of expression in each of the Central Asian states. However, this argument cannot be advanced in defence of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, since the available evidence indicates that this is a militant organization that is prepared to use force to seize power.

In October 2001 Uzbekistan and the USA signed an agreement providing for urgent consultations in the event of a threat to Uzbekistan's security. Uzbekistan subsequently allowed the USA access to airbase facilities to conduct search and rescue missions in the Afghanistan conflict.

### **Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT)**

*Hizb ut-Tahrir* (transliterated in various forms and usually translated as the Liberation Party) is a transnational Islamist organization originally founded in 1953 in Jerusalem by a prominent Palestinian, Sheikh Taqiuddin al-Nabhani (1909-78). Its stated aim is to bring the worldwide Muslim community back to an Islamic way of life, under the umbrella of the Khilafah State (i.e. Caliphate). It calls for an intellectual as well as a political struggle against unbelievers, under which rubric it includes both colonialist states and unjust rulers in Muslim countries, and is banned in many states, including

all those in Central Asia.

Initially, Uzbekistan was the primary focus of HT activities in Central Asia. This is evidenced not only by their energetic missionary work and concomitant success in attracting adherents (by some estimates, now numbering around 80,000), but also by the attention paid to Uzbekistan on the official *Hizb ut-Tahrir* website. Several of the documents posted there contain excoriating attacks on the Uzbek government and in particular, on President Karimov, who is depicted as an arch enemy of Islam. Since 2001 the *Hizb ut-Tahrir* website has referred to Uzbekistan as a *Wilaya* (province), presumably of an imagined worldwide Islamic state.

The first HT leaflets reportedly appeared in Tashkent in 1992-93, but the movement does not seem to have established a definite presence in the city until 1995. Thereafter, it used its established strategy to build up a strong clandestine infrastructure, based on cell formations. The HT message is spread by word of mouth and by publications. Large consignments of the party's journal *Al-Wa'i* ("Consciousness"), as well as leaflets and books, have been circulated in recent years. Such material is usually scattered covertly at night, or handed out by casual hired labour. These texts are sometimes in Arabic, sometimes in competent Uzbek translations. Anyone who is found in possession of such material runs the risk of arrest and persecution, thus, it is very difficult to judge how much of it is actually read by the population at large. In 2002, according to HT sources, some 4,000 of its members were in Uzbek prisons, where they were subjected to brutal and degrading treatment.

### **Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU)**

Founded c. 1996 in Uzbekistan, in the Ferghana Valley (where Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan meet), the IMU is banned throughout Central Asia. Uzbek government counter-terrorist operations in 1997-98 caused many of its members to flee the country. They thereupon established camps in Afghanistan and, allegedly, in Tajikistan. Uzbek officials blamed the IMU for the attempted assassination of President Karimov in February 1999. In August 1999 some 500 armed IMU fighters crossed into Kyrgyzstan, reportedly with the aim of invading Uzbekistan and creating an Islamic state there. When the guerrillas reached the border their route was blocked by Uzbek troops; they thereupon retreated into the Kyrgyz mountains, taking with them a number of hostages (including four Japanese geologists). The hostages were eventually released in October, reputedly after the Japanese government had paid a large ransom. There were similar armed clashes in the same area in mid-2000, though on a smaller scale. In September 2000 the US State Department placed the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan on the list of international terrorist organizations to which US citizens are forbidden to give assistance, and whose members are denied entry to the USA.

The support base of the IMU is mainly Uzbek. There have been attempts to widen the ethnic base and in 2001 there was a move to re-name the party the Islamic Movement of Turkistan. However, as yet this does not appear to have been implemented. One of the founders of the IMU was Juma Namangani. Born in 1969, in the Namangan province of Uzbekistan, he served with the Soviet army in



Afghanistan in 1988-89. In the early 1990s he fought in the Tajik civil war, undergoing military training in Afghanistan, then in Pakistan; he also visited Saudi Arabia. In 1997 he became the "commander in chief" of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan. The Uzbek government accused the IMU of the attempted assassination of President Karimov in Tashkent in February 1999 in a series of bomb attacks in Taskent that killed 16 and destroyed a number of government buildings; in November 2000, Namangani and a fellow leader of the IMU, Tohir Yoldashev, were tried in absentia and sentenced to death. Both were believed to be in hiding

in Afghanistan. In November 2001, there were reports that Namangani had been killed in the US-led campaign against *Al-Qaeda* and Taleban forces in Afghanistan. Yoldashev was thought to have sought refuge abroad (possibly in Pakistan). However, in mid-2002 there was speculation that Namangani was alive, as the IMU began to regroup along the Afghan-Tajik border.

*Shirin Akiner*

## Vanuatu

**Capital:** Port Vila

**Population:** 193,000

Vanuatu, formerly the British and French condominium of the New Hebrides, became an independent republic in 1980. Its President is elected for a five-year term by an electoral college consisting of parliament and the presidents of the country's regional councils. The unicameral parliament is elected by universal adult suffrage for a four-year term. Executive power is vested in the Prime Minister (elected by parliament from among its members) and a Council of Ministers appointed by him.

An independence movement spread throughout the New Hebrides in the 1960s and 1970s under the leadership of Father Walter Lini, who established the National Party of New Hebrides in 1971. A number of other parties were also formed in the 1970s leading to the formation of a Government of National Unity in 1978. The elections in 1979 were won by the *Vanuaaku Pati* (VP, formerly the National Party of New Hebrides) and Father Lini became Chief Minister. In May 1980, however, Jimmy Stevens, with the support of an American businessman, staged an armed rebellion to create his own secessionist state; this "Santo Rebellion", as it came to be known, was crushed in September with the assistance of troops from Papua New Guinea. Vanuatu became independent on July 30, 1980.

The *Vanuaaku Pati* won the parliamentary elections of 1983 and 1987. A leadership struggle developed between Lini and his VP colleague Barak Sope, which led to the latter's dismissal from the Cabinet in May 1988 and his expulsion from parliament in July. In December 1988 President George Sokomanu (Sope's uncle) attempted to effect a constitutional coup by dismissing Lini and appointing Sope as Prime Minister. The country's troops and police remained loyal to Lini, however, and Sokomanu, Sope and their support-

ers were arrested and imprisoned. Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea had offered military support to Lini and Sope threatened to seek support from the Fiji military. Sope was accused of planning an uprising and was jailed for four months before being released. In January 1989 Sokomanu was formally dismissed from office. In 1991, Donald Kalkapos was elected leader of the VP to replace Lini, who in response formed the National United Party. Jimmy Stevens was also released the same year after serving 11 of his 15 years' sentence.

In late 1999 Sope returned to power as Prime Minister. In April 2001, after defections by members of his governing coalition, Sope lost a vote of no confidence in parliament. Sope tried to declare a state of emergency but failed to get the backing of the police chief. The members of the 300-strong paramilitary Vanuatu Mobile Police were called in to disperse hundreds of Sope supporters who had gathered outside parliament during the vote of no confidence. Sope was later charged and jailed for corruption. He was succeeded as Prime Minister by Edward Natapei.

A further incident in early August 2002 caused renewed tension. The police commissioner, Mael Apisai, and the Attorney General, as well as another 13 officials, were arrested and charged with seditious conspiracy in the controversial appointment of Apisai as police commissioner. The charges and also Apisai's appointment were later dismissed by the court. On Aug. 27 armed members of the Vanuatu paramilitary police arrested policemen who had been involved in the initial arrests. Twenty-seven Vanuatu police officers, including the acting police commissioner, Holi Simon, now face charges of mutiny.

*Steven Ratuva*

## Vatican City (Holy See)

**Capital:** Vatican City

**Population:** 870 (citizens)

The Roman Catholic Church is unique among the world's major religions in having its central authority constituted as a state. The terms Holy See and the Vatican City State are deployed synonymously in modern usage. In the narrow sense the Holy See means the office of the Pope (the head of the Catholic Church). In the wider sense the Holy See signifies the whole complex of congregations, tribunals, offices, commissions, etc., through which the Pope oversees the government of the Catholic Church. The term Vatican City State specifically refers to the entity created on Feb. 11, 1929, by bilateral treaty between the Holy See and the Kingdom of Italy (the Lateran Treaty). Vatican City (an enclave within Rome) is the residence of the spiritual leadership of the Catholic Church, which numbers one billion faithful world-wide.

The Roman Pontiff – the Pope – exercises supreme legislative, executive, and judicial power over the Holy See and the Vatican City State. The Pope rules the Holy See through the Roman Curia and the Papal Civil Service. The Curia consists of the Secretariat of State, nine congregations, three Tribunals, eleven Pontifical Councils, and a complex of offices that administer church affairs. The Secretariat of State, under the Cardinal Secretary of State, directs and coordinates the Curia. The Secretary of State, currently Cardinal Angelo Sodano, is the Holy See's equivalent of prime minister. Archbishop Jean-Louis Tauran, Secretary for Relations with States of the Secretariat of State is the Holy See's foreign minister.

John Paul II (Karol Wojtyła), born in Poland and elected to the papacy on Oct. 16, 1978 (at the age of 58) is the first non-Italian Pope for 455 years and was the youngest Pope for well over a century. He survived an assassination attempt in May 1981 (see page 487), but has subsequently been subjected to numerous terrorist threats.

The Holy See exercises considerable influence within the international system, having permanent observer status at the UN and participating in the work of a number of international organizations, particularly those concerned with human rights, social welfare and disarmament.

The position taken by the Holy See has had a significant impact on the course of a number of civil conflicts. In the 1960s through to the 1980s the Church in Latin America, in particular, showed sharp divisions between conservatives and advocates of "liberation theology" (priests in a number of countries becoming leading figures in guerrilla movements), with the Vatican working to mediate those divisions. The election of a Polish Pope in 1978 likewise proved a significant catalyst in the creation of the Solidarity movement, which brought about the first significant weakening of communist hegemony in Eastern Europe. The Holy See remains active as a facilitator of peace processes in a number of countries.

The Holy See has a legal personality that allows it to enter into treaties as the juridical equal of a state and to send and receive diplomatic representatives. The current Pope has overseen a major expansion in this aspect of the Holy See's work, the number of countries with which diplomatic relations are maintained having increased from 84 in 1978 to 174 by 2003, together with the European Union and the Sovereign Military Cross of Malta. It also has relations of a special diplomatic nature with the Russian Federation and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

The Holy See does not have diplomatic relations with a number of conservative Islamic states, such as Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, but does have relations with such important Islamic countries as Iran, Iraq, Libya and Syria. Historically the most sensitive relationship has been that with the State of Israel. Diplomatic relations were established following the signing of a Fundamental Agreement between the Holy See and Israel in December 1993. The Fundamental Agreement was signed four months after the announcement of the Oslo draft peace agreement between the Israelis and Palestinians. Notwithstanding diplomatic recognition the Holy See has continued to voice criticism of Israeli policy in the occupied territories.

*Bogdan Szajkowski*

## Venezuela

**Capital:** Caracas

**Population:** 24.5 m

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela consists of 22 states, a federal district, two federal territories and 72

federal dependencies. The executive President is elected by universal adult suffrage for a six-year term and

can be re-elected for one consecutive term. The President has the power to select Cabinet members and is commander-in-chief of the armed forces. There is a unicameral National Assembly comprising 165 members with seats distributed by state on the basis of direct universal suffrage and proportional representation. A number of seats are reserved for representatives of indigenous communities.

Venezuela achieved full independence from Spain in 1830 and for much of its subsequent history was ruled by a succession of *caudillos* ("strong men") and military regimes until democratic civilian rule was established after a popular uprising in 1958. Thereafter the political system was dominated for four decades by the Democratic Action (AD) and Christian Democratic (COPEI) parties.

Legislative and presidential elections in November–December 1998 dramatically redefined the political landscape. Hugo Chávez, the founder of the Fifth Republican Movement (MVR, formed in 1997 as a vehicle for his presidential ambitions) won the presidential election with 56 per cent of the vote on a "Bolivarian" populist platform of radical social and political reform. Chávez, who had founded the Bolivarian Revolutionary Movement 200 (MBR 200) while a military officer, had first come to prominence as the leader of an attempted military coup against the government of Carlos Andrés Pérez in 1992. The MVR, in alliance with the Movement Towards Socialism (MAS) and the Homeland for All (PPT) faction of The Radical Cause (LCR) parties won 68 of the 208 seats in the Congress and 18 seats in the 57 seat Senate (as the legislature was then constituted).

Chávez decreed a popular referendum in February 1999 on the convocation of a constituent assembly to rewrite the constitution. Elections to the constituent assembly in July 1999 resulted in an assembly that was dominated by supporters of Chávez. The resulting new constitution, which received the approval of 71 per cent of voters in a second referendum in December 1999, revised the institutional framework of the Venezuelan state. Fresh national elections were convened in July 2000. Chávez won the presidential contest with 60 per cent of the vote. In elections to the newly created single-chamber National Assembly, the MVR, MAS, PPT "patriotic" alliance won 62% of the seats, AD won 17%, COPEI won 3% and others won 18%.

### Opposition to Chávez – Attempted coup

After assuming power, Chávez faced intense opposition to his programme of radical change from a range of interests. Senior figures in the armed forces were hostile to Chávez owing to his insubordination in 1992 and changes introduced to the structure and role of the military after 1998. The appointment of active and retired military officials to government positions led to criticism that the new administration was militarizing the country. Government initiatives intended to improve the distribution of wealth and resources,

including new legislation relating to land holdings, the state oil company (PDVSA) and taxation led to a backlash from the private sector and upper and middle income groups. These policies, in addition to attempts to reorganize the union movement and private education system, catalyzed the formation of a broad opposition front, the **Democratic Co-ordinator (CD)**, at the end of 2000. The eclectic front grouped a diverse range of organizations, from the radical right to the far left, including the Marxist-Leninist *Bandera Roja* (Red Flag).

Led by the presidents of the main trade union confederation (*Confederación de Trabajadores de Venezuela*, CTV) and the private sector organization (FEDECAMARAS), and with extensive support from the private sector media, the CD organized mass anti-government demonstrations and pressured the military to remove Chávez. In April 2002, Chávez was briefly deposed by a civil-military alliance following violent confrontations between pro- and anti-government groups that left 17 dead. Support for the new administration of Pedro Carmona, the president of FEDECAMARAS, quickly collapsed following his decision to dissolve the National Assembly and suspend regional governments. Chávez was returned to power after two days with the assistance of troops loyal to the government. The political crisis did not attenuate with the return of Chávez and the CD continued to mobilize protests.

A vast range of pro- and anti-government paramilitary and dissident groups flourished in the context of the extreme level of polarization and escalating social violence in 2002. At the end of that year, a group of military officers and civilian supporters declared themselves in open rebellion against the government, claiming a basis of legitimacy in the constitution, which permits dissidence against an authoritarian regime. An indefinite general strike organized by the CD in December 2002 and supported by white-collar workers at PDVSA, led to financial losses of over \$4bn by the beginning of 2003. International diplomatic efforts to resolve the political conflict were stepped up during the strike but there proved to be no ground for consensus between the administration and its opponents.

### United Self-Defence Units of Venezuela (Autodefensas Unidas por Venezuela, AUV)

In June 2002, a video was released by this previously unheard of organization. In the video, the spokesman of the group, "Major Antonio", claimed that the organization had 2,200 members distributed throughout the five Venezuelan states that border Colombia. The AUV was committed to halting alleged incursions into Venezuela by left-wing Colombian groups, the FARC and ELN (see Colombia).

According to Carlos Castaño Gil, leader of the Colombian right-wing paramilitary group, the *Autodefensas Unidas por Colombia* (AUC, see Colombia), the AUV was formed in solidarity with his own movement. According to Castaño, AUC members were providing training for the AUV, which he claimed was in an embryonic stage of development.

Aside from the distribution of propaganda, no action was recorded in the name of the AUV and security forces had no evidence that the group existed. Government officials remained sceptical, claiming the formation of the AUV was a fabrication by wealthy Venezuelan cattle ranchers opposed to the government's land reform programme and intended to destabilize the political climate in the country.

### **Institutional Military Front (Frente Institucional Militar, FIM)**

Launched in March 2000, the FIM was created by serving and retired senior military officials and led by Vice-Admiral Rafael Huizi Clavier. Initially formed in protest at the politicization of the armed forces by Hugo Chávez, the FIM became a leading element on the radical right of the anti-Chávez opposition front and refused to recognize the legitimacy of the Chávez government. Elements in the movement were linked to the failed attempt to remove Chávez in April 2002 and the FIM participated in a civil-military occupation of a major square in Caracas in open rebellion against the government. The FIM was linked to the emergence of another group of rebellious military officers, identified as the *Comacates*, who released a series of videos calling on fellow officers to overthrow the Chávez government.

### **Tupamaro Revolutionary Movement (Movimiento Revolucionario Tupamaro, MRT)**

Based in the populous 23 de Enero slum in Caracas, the Tupamaros first emerged and gained notoriety in the 1980s, when they carried out a number of armed raids on banks in the capital. In 1983, the state security police arrested key figures in the group, which was led at this time by Alejandro Carrizales. Remaining activists dispersed, re-emerging in the

early 1990s under the leadership of Noel Avila Jérez. The Tupamaros were infiltrated and dismantled for a second time in 1995 after a series of bank robberies. By 1998, the group had regained their footing in 23 de Enero, and gained support for their campaign to eliminate drug use in the area.

The organization played a leading role in demonstrations against the Caracas Metropolitan Police, identified as a key anti-Chávez sector, during the heightened political tensions of 2002. The MRT gained widespread publicity after agreeing to press conferences during that year, organized by the group's spokesperson, José Pinto. While emphasizing their autonomy from Chávez's Bolivarian organization, the group declared its support for the President's "revolution".

### **The Carapaicas (Movimiento Revolucionario Carapaica)**

Alleged to be an offshoot of the Tupamaro Revolutionary Movement (MRT, see entry) the Carapaicas initiated "self-defence" training campaigns for residents of the 23 de Enero slum areas from 2001 onwards. The Metropolitan Police were identified by the group as a legitimate target of engagement, on account of the anti-Chávez position of the Police and their suppression of pacific pro-Chávez demonstrations in 2002.

The leading spokesperson for the group, Comandante Murachí, claimed that the organization identified itself with the ideas of Marxism and the Cuban revolutionary leader, Ché Guevara, and that the group's members, estimated to number 150 armed militants, were committed to the defence of the Bolivarian revolution. However, as with the MRT, the Carapaicas were not directly affiliated to Chávez's MVR party.

*Julia Buxton*

## **Vietnam**

**Capital:** Hanoi

**Population:** 80.7 m

The Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRV) was proclaimed in July 1976, after North Vietnam-backed communist insurgents had effectively reunified the country in April 1975 by overthrowing the United States-supported government of South Vietnam. The country had been partitioned in 1954 following protracted communist-led opposition to the French colonial power.

Legislative power is vested in a 498-member National Assembly, to which elections were most recently held in May 2002. All but 51 deputies elected were members of the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV) and all candidates had been vetted by the party. Only two deputies had stood as independents, described as "self-nominated candidates". The Assembly elects a Council of State (the collective presidency) and a Council of Ministers headed by a Chairman. Major political power in the SRV is concentrated in the politburo of the CPV, which is described in the 1980 Constitution as "the only force leading the state and society".

In September 1987 the government released almost 7,000 prisoners who had been held in re-education camps since 1975. A subsequent report on Hanoi radio stated that although "millions of puppet army and administration personnel of the old regime had committed crimes against the people" only 90,000 had served time in a re-education camp and that "only 1 per cent of those detained are still in camps because they stubbornly refuse to mend their ways".

Following the communist takeover of the South in 1975 a large number of Vietnamese fled the country as refugees. By September 1990 there were over 112,000 so-called "Vietnamese boat people" living in foreign refugee camps. Almost 50 per cent of the "boat people" were in Hong Kong, the remainder having made their way to Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines. In mid-1988 the Hong Kong authorities announced that newly arriving "boat people" would no longer be eligible for automatic refugee status, that a



screening process would be introduced to separate genuine “political refugees” from “economic migrants” and that only members of the former group would be eligible for automatic resettlement in third countries. Other Asian countries followed Hong Kong’s lead and introduced a screening process in March 1989. During 1989 and 1990 various attempts were made to persuade “economic migrants”, who comprised about 80 per cent of the total intake of “boat people”, to return to Vietnam, but with little success. A UN-sponsored voluntary repatriation scheme had only a limited impact and in December 1989 the first, and to date only, involuntary or forced repatriation of “economic migrants” was carried out in Hong Kong.

## EXILE GROUPS

Various groups opposed to the government were active in exile in the period after 1975, but have had little impact in recent years.

### National United Front for the Liberation of Vietnam (NUFL VN)

The NUFL VN was until 1990 the largest and best organized Vietnamese resistance group. Based in San Jose, California, it reportedly enjoyed strong support among Vietnamese expatriates on the US west coast and in Japan and was believed to have received arms from the *Khmer Rouge* (in the 1980s the main force operating in Cambodia against the Vietnamese-backed government).

Attempted small scale NUFL VN incursions into Vietnam via Laos in the mid- to late 1980s ended disastrously when they were defeated by Lao and Vietnamese forces, with participants being killed or imprisoned in Vietnam.

### Free Vietnam Movement

Police in Bangkok, the capital of Thailand, arrested three ethnic Vietnamese US citizens after a failed attempt on June 19, 2001, to bomb the Vietnamese embassy. Another suspect was arrested on June 24. All were said to be members of the Free Vietnam Movement (FVM). It had been reported on Feb. 15 by the magazine *Far Eastern Economic Review* that the Vietnamese authorities were holding 38 alleged FVN members on charges of terrorism and anti-government propaganda. It was claimed that over the past year they had infiltrated from bases in Thailand and Cambodia to carry out a campaign of sabotage in Vietnam. The group was later brought to trial in Ho Chi Minh City and on May 29 a court convicted 37 defendants on terrorism charges. The alleged FVM leader Le Kim Hung and three others were sentenced to 20 years’ imprisonment. Others received prison terms of between 30 months and 18 years.

## THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS

### United Front for the Struggle of the Oppressed Races (Front unifié de lutte des races opprimées, FULRO)

FULRO was the most enduring political and martial expression of the aspirations of the tribal people of the Central Highlands of Vietnam (whom the French collectively termed

Montagnards, and who term themselves the Degar) for autonomy for the four northern provinces of southern Vietnam: Dac Lac, Gia Lai, Lam Dong and Kontum.

The Montagnards’ first political organization was the underground *Front pour la Libération des Montagnards* (the Montagnard Liberation Front), set up in 1955, which sent a number of demands to the then President Ngo Dinh Diem of South Vietnam. This was replaced in 1958 by **Bajaraka**, an acronym based on the names of the four main Montagnard tribal groups: Bahnar, Jarai, Rhade (or Ede) and Koho. Under its leader Y Bham Enuol, Bajaraka attempted to gain international support for its grievances and its claim for autonomy. The government arrested Enuol and other leaders, sent the army into the Central Highlands and conducted a purge of Highlander officials. Enuol was to remain in prison until February 1964, when he was released after the fall of Diem’s government in a military coup.

Bajaraka linked with two ethnic Cambodian movements among the Cham and the Khmer Krom in 1964 to form FULRO. As the second Vietnam or Indochina war intensified in the 1960s, both the US allies of the South Vietnam government and the communist National Liberation Front (NLF), backed by North Vietnam, tried to recruit the Montagnards, strategically situated as they were on the NLF’s supply route from the North. As early as 1961 some former Bajaraka leaders joined elements of the NLF to form a Montagnard Autonomy Movement. US special forces recruited some 3,000 Montagnard fighters, but in September 1964 FULRO organized a rebellion amongst these against “Vietnamese expansionism”. US negotiators quickly procured a surrender of the rebels, but Y Bham Enuol fled with some 2,000 supporters to Cambodia, where he was to remain for almost the rest of his life, despite remaining the revered leader of FULRO. The government of South Vietnam promised a number of concessions to the Montagnards, such as reinstating customary highland law and the use of minority languages in schools, but reneged on these. A second FULRO rebellion followed in December 1965, and 35 Vietnamese soldiers and civilians were killed. The revolt was quickly extinguished, however, with four FULRO leaders being publicly executed. Relations between FULRO and the South Vietnamese authorities improved under the government of Nguyen Cao Ky, who began to address some Montagnard grievances. Some 250 FULRO guerrillas returned to Vietnam from Cambodia in October 1966 and Enuol returned for negotiations in 1968 that resulted in an agreement that the Montagnards could form their own political party and fly their own flag. Following this some 1,300 FULRO fighters returned to the Central Highlands in January 1969 and this faction of FULRO fought alongside US special forces until the end of the war in 1975. Enuol was prevented from returning when the Cambodian army took him from his headquarters in Mondilkiri to Phnom Penh, where he was kept under virtual house arrest. One FULRO faction in Vietnam, led by Y D’he, announced that the organization was to be replaced by a political party, the Ethnic Minorities Solidarity Movement. However, another FULRO faction continued its fight against the South Vietnam government, having been promised local autonomy by the NLF and the North Vietnamese. By the end of the Vietnamese War in April 1975 most new officials appointed in the Central High-



lands were said to have been drawn from FULRO. When the Cambodian *Khmer Rouge* captured Phnom Penh in April 1975 they seized Y Bham Enuol and other FULRO leaders from the French embassy and executed them.

However, early in 1976 FULRO groups, disenchanted with the failure of the new regime to grant local autonomy, renewed armed resistance. Unrest in the Central Highlands continued sporadically, and in 1981 the Vietnamese government claimed that China was using FULRO to destabilize the country. However, in 1982 an official government broadcast claimed that FULRO was in a state of disintegration, many of its leading members (including its first vice-president) having defected or surrendered. In the 1980s FULRO had close links with *Khmer Rouge* forces – the *Khmer Rouge* having been ousted from power by a Vietnamese invasion in 1979 – and the leadership was based in the Cambodian province of Mondolkiri. This relationship came to an end in 1992, with the establishment of a UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) and increasing pressure on the *Khmer Rouge* to fully implement the 1989 peace accord. FULRO eventually ended its struggle for autonomy in October 1992, when the remnants of its 1,500 guerrillas surrendered to officials of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and were flown to Phnom Penh under UN protection before being resettled in the USA.

### Montagnard Foundation

The Montagnard Foundation, Inc. (MFI) was established in 1990 by Kok Ksor and is based in Spartanburg, South Carolina, USA. Kok Ksor was a senior FULRO officer who fled to the USA in 1975 and was nominated as FULRO's representative to the UN and the USA by Y Bham Enuol just before his death. MFI remains the chief channel for Montagnard aspirations and grievances outside Vietnam, its web site carrying detailed reports of Vietnamese repression. It declares that its "overriding mission is to preserve the lives and culture of the indigenous, Montagnard (Degar) people of Vietnam's Central Highlands..." and "pledges to accomplish its mission through peaceful, humanitarian and non-military means in the spirit of international co-operation".

In recent years the Montagnard aspiration for autonomy and the expression of ethnic identity has become closer to a struggle for ethnic survival, dominated by the twin themes of land rights and freedom of religion. As long ago as 1956 Diem began to resettle ethnic Vietnamese in the Central Highlands, fuelling the alienation of the Montagnards from central Vietnamese authority, and this process was accelerated after 1975 by the communist government of unified Vietnam. It was estimated in April 2002 that since 1975 one million ethnic Vietnamese had been resettled in the four Central Highlands provinces, where the Montagnards numbered now about 1,036,000 out of a total population of roughly four million.

The traditional rotational farming practices of the Montagnards, underpinned by a system of customary land rights (either family or village-based), have come under increasing pressure from the influx of immigrants and government-directed economic development schemes. The government's rapid expansion of coffee farming in the Central Highlands has also caused severe environmental degradation through deforestation. The growth of evangelical Protestant Chris-

tianity in the Central Highlands provinces dates back to the 1950s, initially being spread by US missionaries, and the cultural ethnic term Degar has become associated with this. To the Vietnamese government this strain of Protestantism has become synonymous with political separatism. The Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV) tolerates religion only as practiced under six officially recognized and controlled organizations. The leadership of the approved churches, seen by many as puppet organizations, is dominated by CPV members or party-approved figures and the CPV vets the appointment of priests.

Protests on Feb. 2-6, 2001, by some 2,000 Montagnards in Gia Lai and Dac Lac provinces briefly captured the attention of the world's media, and the demonstrations were described as the most serious civil unrest in Vietnam for several years. Local government offices were destroyed and both soldiers and civilians were injured. The government suppressed the disturbances with troops and riot police and sealed off the Central Highlands from the attention of journalists. The Foreign Ministry admitted that 20 people had been arrested, saying that incidents had resulted from "misunderstandings" exploited by "extremists". Local officials alleged that some of those arrested were former members of FULRO. MFI claimed that the protests had been sparked by the detention and torture of two local Protestants.

Since this time, according to MFI, the Central Highlands provinces have effectively been under martial law. The region has certainly been closed off to foreign journalists, diplomats and UN workers apart from those on government-controlled tours. According to the London-based human rights organization Amnesty International (AI) 14 Montagnards were sentenced on Sept. 26, 2001, in courts in Gia Lai and Dac Lac provinces to terms of between six and 12 years' imprisonment on charges relating to the February disturbances. A court in Dac Lac on Oct. 18 sentenced another six Montagnards to between two and six years in prison for disseminating propaganda and inciting social unrest. Both AI and the Washington-based Human Rights Watch (HRW) expressed concern over probable human rights violations in the conduct of the trials, from which foreign reporters and diplomats were barred. Further evidence emerged of a crackdown on the Montagnards. HRW claimed in a Jan. 13, 2002, article in the *Washington Post* that the Vietnamese authorities had rounded up and detained many Montagnard Christians in late December 2001 to prevent them from holding Christmas services, a claim the official Vietnamese News Agency (VNA) rejected as a "rude, slanderous accusation". It was supported by a January 2002 press release from MFI that listed nearly 200 Montagnards it said had been subjected to beatings, torture and detention. An agreement reached on Jan. 21 between Vietnam and Cambodia to repatriate over 1,500 Montagnards who had recently fled to Cambodia was criticized by both AI and HRW because of its potential for forcible repatriation, despite the involvement of the office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). A court in the Central Highlands on Jan. 28 sentenced four men – accused of having links with the "reactionary Montagnard Foundation" – for smuggling 83 people across the border into Cambodia.

The first 15 Montagnards were repatriated to Gia Lai province on Feb. 19, 2002, under the UNHCR programme. However, the Vietnamese Ministry of Foreign Affairs on

Feb. 25 criticized the UNHCR for delays in implementing the repatriation agreement, describing the refugees as illegal migrants who had been “tricked or coerced”. In late March the UNHCR withdrew from the repatriation programme, days after an incident on March 21 when some 400 Vietnamese bussed in by the Vietnamese authorities invaded one of the refugee camps, intimidating and threatening both asylum seekers and UNHCR staff. It was also reported that at the beginning of the month Cambodian police had forcibly deported 63 Montagnards who had just crossed the border. According to HRW in all some 500 Montagnards were forcibly returned to Vietnam. The USA on March 26 offered asylum to the remaining approximately 900 refugees. This offer was accepted on March 25 by Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen. HRW published on April 23 a 200-page report recounting the history of Vietnamese repression of the Montagnard minorities and criticizing the government’s current policy. It said that thousands of people had been rounded up since the February 2001 demonstrations and that torture had been used to extract political confessions. The report included detailed case studies to support its claim that in an attempt to stamp out evangelical Christianity the authorities had razed or burned churches and forced many people to take part in “goat’s blood” ceremonies in which they had to drink rice wine mixed with animal blood and renounce their religion. It was also reported in April that the authorities planned a new wave of migration to the Central Highlands, intending to resettle 10,000 people a year up to 2005 from Thai Binh province on the northern Red River delta in Dac Lac and Kontum provinces. The migrants would establish new economic zones or work for state farms or “defence agencies”.

MFI issued a report on Nov. 13, 2002, alleging that Vietnamese security forces had on Oct. 29 executed three Montagnard Christians by lethal injection for their part in the February 2001 demonstrations. HRW published a briefing paper on Jan. 21, 2003, that described an intensified assault on human rights in the Central Highlands. The report detailed a campaign of propaganda, denunciation, interrogation, arbitrary arrest, beatings, bans on public meetings and worship, and restrictions on movement. Both AI and HRW reported that about 70 people had received prison sentences of up to 12 years for involvement in the February 2001 demonstrations or for trying to flee to Cambodia (but without confirming the report of executions). The Evangelical Church of Vietnam, South (ECVNS), which received official recognition in February 2001, has made several protests to the government against the persecution of the Montagnard Christians. HRW’s report quotes an internal CPV directive of Oct. 22, 2002 stating the party’s determination to eliminate “Degar Protestantism”, which it describes as a “reactionary political organization posing as a religion”. According to a public letter dated Oct. 23 sent by Rev, Thai Phuoc Truong, general secretary of the ECVNS, in Dak Lak province alone the government had closed 354 out of 412 churches between January and September 2002.

Another source of information on the Montagnards, the Roman Catholic Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), reported on Feb. 6, 2003, that on two occasions in January large groups of Montagnard families were intercepted by Cambodian police in Mondolkiri province before being forcibly returned

to the border and being handed over to Vietnamese guards. On the second occasion the men in the group were severely beaten by the Cambodian police. JRS cited credible reports that the Cambodian authorities allowed Vietnamese secret police to operate freely on Cambodian territory and that Vietnam maintained detention camps for Montagnards who had been returned from Cambodia.

## ROMAN CATHOLIC DISSENT

Numerous Roman Catholic priests have been imprisoned and detained since the communist victory in Vietnam in 1975. However, during the late 1980s the government adopted a more relaxed policy towards the Roman Catholic Church.

In October 1987, 23 members of the “Dong Cong Church” (a Roman Catholic community) in Lam Dong province were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment, having been found guilty of “propaganda against the socialist system, sabotage against the policy of solidarity, disturbance of public security and terrorism”. The leader of the group, Fr Tran Dinh Thu (who was sentenced to life imprisonment) had previously served a prison sentence between 1975 and 1977 for similar propaganda offences. The mainstream Catholic Church in Vietnam had generally distanced itself from Fr Tran and his group.

Relations between the government and the Vietnamese Catholic Church were strained in June 1988 when the Vatican canonized 96 Vietnamese of the 18th and the 19th centuries. The government contended that a number of the Vietnamese allegedly martyred had in fact been executed for collaboration with the French rather than for their religious beliefs.

Despite such setbacks, relations generally between the government and the Catholic church improved markedly under Nguyen Van Linh’s general secretaryship of the CPV (Linh had been elected to the post in late 1986). As secretary of the CPV committee in Ho Chi Minh City in the early 1980s Linh had built up a working relationship with local Catholics and had helped reduce the suspicion between party and Church which had developed as a result of the staunch anti-communist stance of many Catholics under the Diem and Thieu regimes of the 1960s and 1970s.

Relations continued to improve during 1990, culminating in a visit to Vietnam in early November by a Vatican delegation, the first official contact between the Vatican and the Vietnamese government. The delegation, led by Cardinal Roger Etchegaray, held talks with the government on the appointment of five new Vietnamese bishops, whose nomination without consultation had previously angered Hanoi.

Also responsible for easing relations was the diplomacy of the Pope’s adviser on Vietnam, the exiled Cardinal François Xavier Nguyen Van Thuan, who died in September 2002. A nephew of the former President Diem, Thuan had been appointed by the Vatican coadjutor bishop (with the right of succession) just before the fall of Saigon to the communists in 1975. The new government imprisoned Thuan for “re-education” for

13 years, nine of them in solitary confinement. On his release in 1988 Thuan refused to work with the state-controlled Catholic Church and when he was allowed to visit the Vatican in 1991 he learned that he would not be allowed to return. Despite the Vietnamese government's later willingness to allow him a visa, Thuan never accompanied Vatican delegations to his homeland, believing that he would not be allowed contact with ordinary parish priests and lay Catholics.

In December 2000 Father Nguyen Van Ly, who had previously served 10 years in prison from 1982 for "undermining national unity" by his criticism of the government's policy towards religion, attempted to revive the parish of Nguyet Bieu in Thua Thien-Hue province in central Vietnam by reclaiming the land on which the church stood, which had been confiscated by the government. Fr Ly, who was reportedly under house arrest in the central city of Hue by March 2001, sent an (unsuccessful) appeal to Congress not to ratify a USA-Vietnam bilateral trade agreement because of continuing religious oppression in Vietnam. The Vietnamese media and the government-controlled Roman Catholic Church condemned him for this act of spreading "anti-revolutionary propaganda". A court in Thua Thien-Hue province convicted Fr Ly on Oct. 19 for defying a house arrest order and for "compiling and disseminating reactionary materials". He was sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment. It was reported in February 2003 that two nephews and a niece of Fr Ly faced charges of "espionage".

### BUDDHIST RESISTANCE

When the government declared a mass amnesty for 5,219 prisoners to mark Vietnam's National Day on Sept. 2, 1998, their number included four prominent dissidents, among them the high-ranking Buddhist monks Thich Quang Do and Thich Tue Sy, both members of the banned **Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam (UBCV)**.

Sy had been arrested in 1984 and sentenced to death for "attempting to overthrow the people's power", a sentence commuted later to 20 years' imprisonment with hard labour. Do had been convicted in 1995 of "sabotaging religious solidarity", along with five other UBCV members, and sentenced to five years in prison. They had organized independent relief for flood victims in the Mekong delta in 1994, instead of acting under the umbrella of the CPV. After a 10-day visit to Vietnam in October 1998 Abdelgottah Amor, the UN Human Rights Commission's rapporteur on religious freedom, said that he had been prevented from meeting Do and other religious figures. Four UBCV monks had been amongst eight people sentenced in November 1993 to up to four years' imprisonment for instigating social unrest in the city of Hue.

It was reported on April 3, 2003, that Prime Minister Phan Van Kai had held talks with Thich Huyen Quang, the leader of UBCV, who had been confined to house arrest for 20 years. No details were released by state media. The government ensures that very few details of

the actions, ideas, aims and even the existence of dissidents reaches the public. Although it was possible that the government was attempting a genuine dialogue with Quang, analysts said that it was likely that the meeting was a gesture intended to deflect international criticism of its human rights record.

The **Hoa Hao Buddhist** sect, which was founded in 1939, is based chiefly in the provinces of the southern Mekong delta. During the Vietnam War it organized its own independent militia, responsible chiefly for village defence, until the South Vietnamese government ordered its dissolution and disarmament in January 1975. However, the Hoa Hao continued to offer armed resistance to the new communist government, centred on An Giang province, in 1975-77, supplemented by former soldiers of the South Vietnamese army. The sect now claims some one million adherents and was given official recognition in 1999. The government-controlled Hoa Hao's 11-member administrative committee includes nine CPV members. However, the unofficial **Hoa Hao Buddhist Church** continues to exist and to resist government control. It was reported on March 19, 2001, that police had detained and severely beaten Le Quang Liem, chairman of the central council of the Hoa Hao Buddhist Church, who had been one of the signatories to Fr Ly's plea for religious freedom (see above). It was reported on Nov. 21, 2002, that police had overcome resistance by monks and nuns to break into two temples of the unofficial Hoa Hao in An Giang province and administer beatings to a number of Hoa Hao followers.

During its seventh plenum on Jan. 13-21, 2003, the Central Committee of the CPV passed a resolution tightening the party's control over religious affairs with the aim of "promoting the religious people's patriotic spirit...in the struggle to foil all attempts of the hostile forces, who abuse religious and ethnic minority issues for sabotaging the national unity bloc".

### SECULAR DISSIDENTS

One of Vietnam's most famous dissidents, Lt-Gen. Tran Do, died aged 78 on Aug. 9, 2002. A veteran of the wars against colonial France and the USA, Tran Do was appointed Deputy Minister of Culture after the reunification of the country in 1975. Tran Do published a manifesto in 1998 calling for radical reforms, including free elections and freedom of expression, and in January 1999 he was expelled from the CPV. His funeral in Hanoi on Aug. 14, although unpublicized, was attended by thousands.

The amnesty of Sept. 2, 1998, that saw the release from prison of two leading Buddhist monks (see above) also included two prominent secular dissidents, the writer and journalist Doan Viet Hoat, who was sentenced in 1993 to 15 years' imprisonment after being accused of attempting to overthrow the government, and the doctor Nguyen Dan Que, who was convicted in November 1991 of the same offence and sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment with hard labour followed by five years of house arrest. Following their release,



Hoat went into exile but Que elected to stay in Vietnam. In 1976, disillusioned by the lack of human rights under the new communist order, Que and a number of friends founded the **National Movement for Progress (NMP)**, which published two underground newspapers, *The Revolution* and *The People's Revolution*. The government arrested Que and 47 other NMP activists in 1978. Que was held in prison without trial for 10 years, enduring beatings, torture and periods of solitary confinement until a campaign on his behalf by AI procured his release in 1988. In 1990 Que was among the founders of the **Non-Violent Movement for Human Rights in Vietnam** (or *Cao Trao Nhan Ban* – rendered by AI as the **High Tide of Humanism Movement**) and on May 11, 1990, he published an appeal for a non-violent struggle for a free and democratic Vietnam, calling on the government to respect basic human rights and to hold free and fair elections under a multi-party system. It was for this that Que was arrested on June 14 and convicted on Nov. 29 of trying to overthrow the government. May 11 has since been designated by the US Congress and the Australian Senate as Vietnam Human Rights

Day. Since his release in 1998, Que has remained under virtual house arrest. The Foreign Ministry announced on March 20, 2003, that the authorities had arrested him on March 17 after he had been “caught red-handed” committing an unspecified offence.

In December 2002 security officials arrested military historian Pham Que Duong and literature professor Tran Khue. They were co-founders in September 2001 of the **Citizens' Association Against Corruption (CAAC)**. According to the Free Vietnam Alliance (FVA) the authorities were monitoring pro-democracy activists so closely that it was almost impossible for them to communicate with each other. All the evidence gathered by human rights organizations monitoring Vietnam suggested that at this time the operations of the state security apparatus made it virtually impossible to form and sustain dissident movements, apart from those with a religious or ethnic basis (such as that of the Montagnards or Degar). Otherwise opposition to the government was almost entirely confined to individuals and small groups of associates.

*Tim Curtis*

## Yemen

**Capital:** Sana'a

**Population:** 20.3 m

The Republic of Yemen was established in May 1990 through the unification of the **Yemen Arab Republic (YAR, North Yemen, capital Sana'a)** and the **People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY, South Yemen, capital Aden)**. Unification followed two decades of tension between the two states. The country has been led by President Ali Abdullah Saleh (the former ruler of North Yemen) since unification.

Both states had a history of internal turmoil. The **YAR** had been declared in 1962 following the overthrow of the monarchy. Its 1974 Constitution declared it an “Arab, Islamic and independent state”. Two of the YAR's previous Presidents were assassinated—the pro-Saudi Lt.-Col. Ibrahim al-Hamadi in October 1977, and his successor, Lt.-Col. Hussein al-Ghashmi. Following this Lt. Gen. Ali Abdullah Saleh consolidated power.

The **PDRY** gained independence from the UK in 1967 having revolted against British rule and subsequently became the only avowedly Marxist state in the Middle East, a status consolidated by a 1979 treaty with the Soviet Union. Tensions between factions in the PDRY government culminated in open civil war in January 1986. President Ali Nasser Mohammed attempted to have his opponents killed in a pre-emptive strike, but several survived. Mohammed lost the resulting war that cost some 4,200 lives and fled to the YAR with 12,000 supporters. The new government, under President al-Attas and the secretary-general of

the ruling Yemen Socialist Party (YSP), Ali Salim al-Bid, initially offered amnesties to persuade exiles to return, but few took up the offer. Mohammed himself, and 34 of his ministers, were sentenced to death on Dec. 12, 1987, in absentia. Attacks on the PDRY by pockets of Mohammed loyalists based in the North were reported but Mohammed announced his withdrawal from politics at the end of 1989. Following unification President Saleh sought reconciliation between Mohammed and his opponents within the PDRY.

Talks towards unification had begun in 1979, and in December 1981 the Presidents of the two republics met in a joint “Yemen Council”. The 1986 civil war in the South upset this process, with the PDRY suspicious of YAR protection of Mohammed, but it became irreversible after the publication in December 1989 of the draft joint Constitution of a unified Yemen. In the event unification was achieved comparatively smoothly, six months ahead of schedule, largely through pressure from North Yemen's leader, Saleh. YSP leaders were less willing to be forced into a new dispensation. They feared the North's numerical preponderance and conservatism.

In the 1980s South Yemen had only one legal party, the Yemen Socialist Party; there were no parties as such in the North but the General People's Congress (GPC), presided over by President Saleh, constituted a broad political forum and included a spectrum of views. In December 1989, however, both states

backed the call to implement a multi-party system, and issued a general pardon to all political prisoners. In the 13 months following the publication of the draft joint Constitution of a unified Yemen, fully 60 parties were legalized or newly created. Many of the “new” parties had origins in older dissident movements.

In elections to the House of Representatives of unified Yemen held on April 17, 1993, the GPC emerged as the strongest party, with 123 seats, while the YSP won 56 and the conservative Islamist Yemeni *Islah* Party (YIP, the Reform Party), having most of its support in the northern tribal areas, took 62. These three parties agreed to form a coalition government. In October 1993 the House elected a five-member Presidential Council, which in turn elected the former leader of North Yemen, Saleh, as the country’s President. Ali Salim al-Bid, the former leader of South Yemen, became Vice-President.

Mounting tensions between the North and South erupted into full-scale civil war in May 1994. Ali Salim al-Bid proclaimed the formation of the independent **Democratic Republic of Yemen (DRY)** in the South, the North continuing to designate itself the Republic of Yemen. The DRY forces were defeated by the North in early July 1994, however, and its leadership fled abroad. In October 1994 the Presidential Council was abolished, President Saleh was confirmed in office and a new GPC/YIP coalition, excluding the YSP, was formed.

Further elections held on April 27, 1997, returned the GPC with the majority (187) of seats. The YIP took 54 seats and independent candidates 55. The YSP boycotted the elections. Saleh was re-elected on Sept. 23, 1999, in the country’s first direct presidential election. He claimed 96.3% of the vote, although overall turnout was about 66% (and was believed to be less than 10% in the South).

Seven months before the next parliamentary elections were scheduled to be held, parliament voted for a series of significant constitutional amendments, which were put to a referendum on Feb. 20, 2001. About 77 per cent of the electorate voted for the changes which extended the presidential term from five to seven years and the parliamentary mandate from four to six years (rescheduling the next election from 2001 to 2003). Further legislative elections in April 2003 resulted in a clear majority for the GPC.

Al-Bid still enjoys political asylum in an undisclosed Gulf Co-operation Council State, most likely Saudi Arabia. Saleh has sought to woo him back with a pardon, something he has announced more than once. Al-Bid, however, has proved reluctant to take at face value Arab diplomats’ assurances of his personal safety. His role in the 60-day war, which he orchestrated with Saudi instigation, has not been forgotten or forgiven by many in the North of the country.

Although Yemen has been reunified, the 1994 civil war has made the divisions within the society even more pronounced than they had been previously. The former leadership of the South is still outside the country in exile and their constituents remain largely

underrepresented. Yemen is predominantly a tribal society where the state does not always command unconditional loyalty. Tribalism permeates all aspects of society, economy, politics and culture. In elections, many vote according to tribal loyalty. Parties draw up their lists and select and field their candidates according to tribal considerations.

In addition, ruling party hegemony is driving a wedge in the alliance between the two major political parties from the North: President Saleh’s General People’s Congress and Shaikh Abdullah al-Ahmar’s *Islah* Party. The February 2001 referendum, extending presidential terms from five to seven years and the life of a single parliament from four to six years, reinforced criticisms in the *Islah* Party of Saleh’s tendency to monopolize power, something he has done since 1978 – well before the 1990 unification. In the most recent elections of April 2003, Saleh’s ruling party came under fire from national and international sources with allegations of vote-fixing that helped the GPC win more than 72 per cent of the vote.

The YSP has been reconstituted. Its fourth general congress, held in 2000, without government restrictions, voted to elect members exiled since 1994 onto its central committee. The party continues to oppose the 2001 constitutional amendments. The YSP deputy secretary-general, Jarallah Omar, was assassinated in December 2002. His reported assassin, Ali Jarallah, was a member of *Islah*.

### Islamist groups

The country is religiously very conservative. This, along with a combination of illiteracy and widespread poverty, has made some Yemenis open to recruitment by extremist organizations, such as *Al-Qaeda*.

Prior to unification, the desire of the regime in the North to merge with the South faced opposition from some Islamist quarters. In July 1977 Shaikh Abdullah bin Hussain al-Ahmar, head of the northern Hashid tribal confederation, led an unsuccessful insurrection aimed at setting up a strictly Muslim regime in North Yemen. In May 1990 there were reports of heavy fighting around Sana’a involving tribes opposed to unity and backed by Saudi Arabia (although the latter had formally welcomed unification). Western press reports suggested at the time that the YAR and PDRY governments were forced to bring forward unification, to nip in the bud further violent opposition.

In September 1990 Shaikh al-Ahmar formed the **Yemeni Islah Party** (YIP, Reform Party) as a successor to the earlier Islamic Front in the old YAR. The party joined other Islamic groups led by the League of the Sons of Yemen in boycotting the May 15, 1991, referendum approving the 1990 unification Constitution. Despite a rally in Sana’a attended by up to 30,000 fundamentalists, the new government recorded a majority of 98.3 per cent approval. The party allied itself firmly with President Saleh in the 1994 civil war, later supporting the President, but is now allied with opposition parties and highly critical of the regime’s warming



relations with the USA.

International attention on Yemen as a potential source for international terrorism was increased when in October 2000, a US Navy ship, the USS *Cole*, was severely damaged in a terrorist attack in the port of Aden, killing 17 US servicemen. At the time of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 and the resultant Gulf War, Yemen took the most consistently pro-Iraq stance of any of the Arab states, a stance highlighted in that it was the only Arab member of the UN Security Council during the crisis. It paid a severe penalty when Saudi Arabia cancelled guest worker arrangements and 800,000 Yemenis were forced to return home. Following the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the USA, President Saleh told domestic political leaders that the country should not repeat the errors of 1990-91 and quickly declared Yemen's support for the US war against terrorism, countering suggestions in some US circles that the country had become a haven for terrorists. The regime from 2002 also moved against pro-Saddam Ba'thists, banning all their activities, in a move widely interpreted as being to show support for the US plans to remove the Ba'thist regime in Baghdad. Pro-Syrian Ba'thists are also closely monitored

by the authorities.

However, US concerns have persisted over the government's lack of control of tribal areas where some suspected *Al-Qaeda* members have allegedly found refuge. The government had itself made use of *mujaheddin* fighters trained in Afghanistan in the 1994 civil war and there were concerns that such elements were in practice embedded in the Yemeni security apparatus. In 2002-03 the CIA and US special forces were given permission to operate against *Al-Qaeda* within Yemen. In November 2002 US forces killed a leading *Al-Qaeda* suspect, Ali Qaed Sunian al-Harithi, and five associates in a remote-controlled missile attack 175 km east of Sana'a. Al-Harithi was believed to have had a role in the attack on the USS *Cole*. By October 2002 the Yemeni authorities had detained 89 people alleged to be involved with *Al-Qaeda*. In December 2002, a group called Islamic Jihad, said not to be connected with the Palestinian group of the same name, was blamed for the fatal shooting in December 2002 of three US medical missionaries at a Baptist hospital in Yemen.

*Larbi Sadiki*

## Zambia

**Capital:** Lusaka

**Population:** 10 m

On achieving independence from the United Kingdom in 1964, Zambia became a republic under the leadership of Kenneth Kaunda. As national President and head of the ruling United National Independence Party (UNIP) – the sole legal political organization from 1972–91 – Kaunda created a highly centralized one-party state.

The regime grew increasingly repressive through the 1980s as its security and economic problems were exacerbated by attacks from the South African apartheid regime on African National Congress (ANC) targets in Zambia and by destabilizing activities within the country by right-wing Mozambican Renamo rebels. In October 1988 an alleged plot to overthrow the government led to the arrest of several senior military and civilian figures. By 1990 popular demands for political reform had intensified, food price rises provoking violent disorder and a short-lived coup attempt by a small group of dissident army officers in June. In September 1990, in line with developments in much of Africa at that time, Kaunda and the UNIP National Council agreed to the establishment of a multi-party system and the holding of free elections by October 1991. Accordingly, a new democratic constitution was approved in August 1991, under which executive authority is vested in the President, who is elected by universal adult suffrage for a five-year term

(once renewable) at the same time as polling for 150 directly elected seats in the National Assembly (which also has eight appointed members and a Speaker).

Presidential and parliamentary elections on Oct. 31, 1991, were won convincingly by the Movement for Multi-party Democracy (MMD), formed as an informal alliance of anti-UNIP groups, which was granted legal recognition in December 1990. The MMD leader and head of the Zambian Congress of Trade Unions, Frederick Chiluba, became President. In the run-up to the next national elections in November 1996, the Chiluba government became increasingly intolerant of political opposition and critical journalism. In May 1996 the National Assembly approved a constitutional amendment requiring presidential candidates to be nationals of Zambian parentage – a move seemingly designed to sideline former President Kaunda (of Malawian descent), who had retired briefly after the 1991 elections but returned to active politics to regain the UNIP leadership in 1994. While Kaunda urged his supporters to mount a campaign of civil disobedience, UNIP and a number of smaller opposition parties boycotted the 1996 elections, which resulted in a landslide MMD victory.

In October 1997 an uprising by a group of middle-ranking military officers was put down swiftly by the Zambian army. President Chiluba declared a state of

emergency, giving the police extended powers, and Kaunda was detained and charged with having prior knowledge of the coup. A court discharged him the following year, although nearly 60 other suspects were found guilty at the conclusion of the trial in September 1999.

In 2001 Chiluba's ambitions to stand for a third presidential term (requiring a constitutional amendment) met with dissension within the MMD (as well as the opposition), as did the party's alternative nomination of Levy Mwanawasa, widely considered to be Chiluba's chosen candidate. Presidential and parliamentary elections were held on Dec. 27, 2001. Mwanawasa was declared the winner in early January 2002 with only 29 per cent of the presidential vote

(provoking opposition charges of electoral fraud and a legal challenge in the Supreme Court), narrowly defeating Anderson Mazoka of the United Party for National Development (UPND, formed in 1998). In the National Assembly the MMD won 69 of the 150 elected seats, but the opposition parties together won most seats overall (particularly the UPND with 49, the UNIP with 13, and the Forum for Democracy and Development with 12). The new President reacted to criticism of the controversial elections by announcing a crackdown on political dissent and warning that protest would be viewed as treason.

*Richard German & Elizabeth Taylor*

## Zimbabwe

**Capital:** Harare

**Population:** 12.2 m

The white minority regime in Rhodesia, which had declared unilateral independence from the UK in 1965, ended in 1979 with the adoption of the Lancaster House Agreement. The following year the country gained full independence as the Republic of Zimbabwe. It has since been ruled by the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF).

Under 1987 amendments to the 1980 pre-independence constitution, executive power is vested in the President, who is both head of state and head of government, with a six-year mandate. Previously executive authority had been held by the Prime Minister. When the Lancaster House Agreement on the constitution expired in April 1990, the former bicameral legislature set up at independence was replaced by a single-chamber House of Assembly, with a six-year term of office and 150 members (120 elective, 10 traditional chiefs, eight provincial governors appointed by the President and 12 other presidential appointees).

Robert Mugabe, the leader of ZANU-PF, who had been Prime Minister since independence, was elected President by the House of Assembly in December 1987. In March 1990 he was directly elected to the presidency for the first time, being re-elected for a second six-year term in March 1996 as the sole candidate. In the late 1990s, however, a coalition of opposition forces, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), was formed and showed increasing popular support. The legislative elections held in June 2000 were closely contested, and despite evidence of intimidation of voters and ballot rigging in favour of the governing party, ZANU-PF was declared to have won only 62 of the elective seats with some 48.6 per cent of the vote, while the MDC won 57 seats with 47 per cent of the vote. Even the official returns showed some areas of the country, notably Matabeleland, as favouring the MDC. The High Court in April 2001 upheld the chal-

lenge of the MDC to results in two seats won by ZANU-PF; the MDC's challenge to the result in a further seat was struck out.

Presidential elections in March 2002 were contested by Mugabe, now 78, and Morgan Tsvangirai, the leader of the MDC, with Mugabe being declared the winner. Tsvangirai claimed that the government had rigged the poll and had effectively disenfranchised thousands of MDC supporters. International reaction to Mugabe's victory varied widely. African observers generally endorsed his victory, whilst Western governments – already hostile to Mugabe because of his highly controversial "land reform" policies which had taken land from white farmers and distributed it to poor blacks allied to ZANU-PF – denounced it. Commonwealth election observers reported that the poll had been marred by a "high level" of politically motivated violence and, accordingly, a week after the elections, Zimbabwe was suspended from the organization for a year. Mugabe himself declared that the election result was a "stunning blow to imperialism" and sought to present the discontent against his regime as manipulated by Western powers.

Unrest and dissent during the 1980s was rooted in conflict between the two major nationalist groups, Mugabe's ZANU-PF and its rival, the Patriotic Front-Zimbabwe African People's Union (PF-ZAPU) led by Joshua Nkomo. ZANU-PF was supported mainly by the majority Shona population group and PF-ZAPU by the minority Ndebele people of Matabeleland in south-western Zimbabwe. This was exacerbated by South African hostility towards the newly-independent Zimbabwe, which took the form of attacks, exploitation of dissident elements and propaganda. Clashes between ZANU-PF and PF-ZAPU, government repression, and random disorder and banditry associated with the heavily armed demobilized militias of the various fac-

tions in the civil war, led to the deaths of several thousand in Matabeleland in the early 1980s. By 1990 the security situation had nonetheless improved sufficiently to permit the government to lift the state of emergency, which had first been imposed in 1965 under the Ian Smith regime and had been renewed every six months since independence.

In February 2000 the electorate rejected a proposed new constitution that would have increased the power of the President, weakened civil liberties and redistributed white-owned land. The government nevertheless introduced legislation (passed in April 2000) to legalize the compulsory transfer of white-owned land to landless blacks; having done this, the authorities made little effort to prevent or punish acts of violence and intimidation by pro-government “war veterans” who carried out forcible seizures of land. Between 2000 and early 2003 about 4,000 white-owned farms were reported to have been taken by force, leaving only 500 white-owned farms in the country. Known supporters of the MDC were among the white farmers attacked (and in some cases killed) by war veterans and suspected ZANU-PF activists in the weeks preceding the June 2000 legislative elections, which also brought an upturn in attacks on black MDC organisers and supporters. Furthermore, the government’s redistributive land policy caused turmoil in the agricultural sector and exacerbated serious food shortages.

The human rights situation in the country steadily deteriorated in 2001 as violence escalated in the run-up to the 2002 presidential elections. There were numerous and consistent reports of forced evictions, arbitrary arrests, beatings, torture and political killings, amounting to what most observers regarded as a pattern of deliberate, state-sponsored repression

of opposition to the government or its policies. Abuses were reported to be widespread throughout the country, but intensified in the run-up to by-elections and during farm occupations. Most were carried out by “war veterans”, who appeared able to act with impunity. There were numerous reports that the police not only stood by and failed to intervene in assaults by “war veterans”, but also actively took part in a number of attacks alongside ZANU-PF supporters.

Freedom of expression also came under increasing restrictions and journalists and lawyers were arbitrarily detained, beaten, tortured and threatened for reporting on political issues. New media legislation signed into law in March 2002 required local journalists to meet a set of requirements in order to win mandatory accreditation from a government appointed panel. Working without accreditation would be punishable with fines or imprisonment. The law also restricted the right to report on the activities of some government structures and effectively banned foreign correspondents from working full-time in the country.

In March 2003 the MDC called a general strike, described by the authorities as an “act of terrorism”, resulting in the arrest of several hundred of its supporters. Mugabe stated: “let the MDC and its leaders be warned that those who play with fire will not only be burnt but will be consumed by that fire”. Further widespread strikes and demonstrations took place in early June; these were described by the MDC as representing the “final push”, but failed to dislodge the government. Since the emergence of the MDC, Tsvangirai has been intermittently arrested, charged with treason and released.

*D. J. Sagar*

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