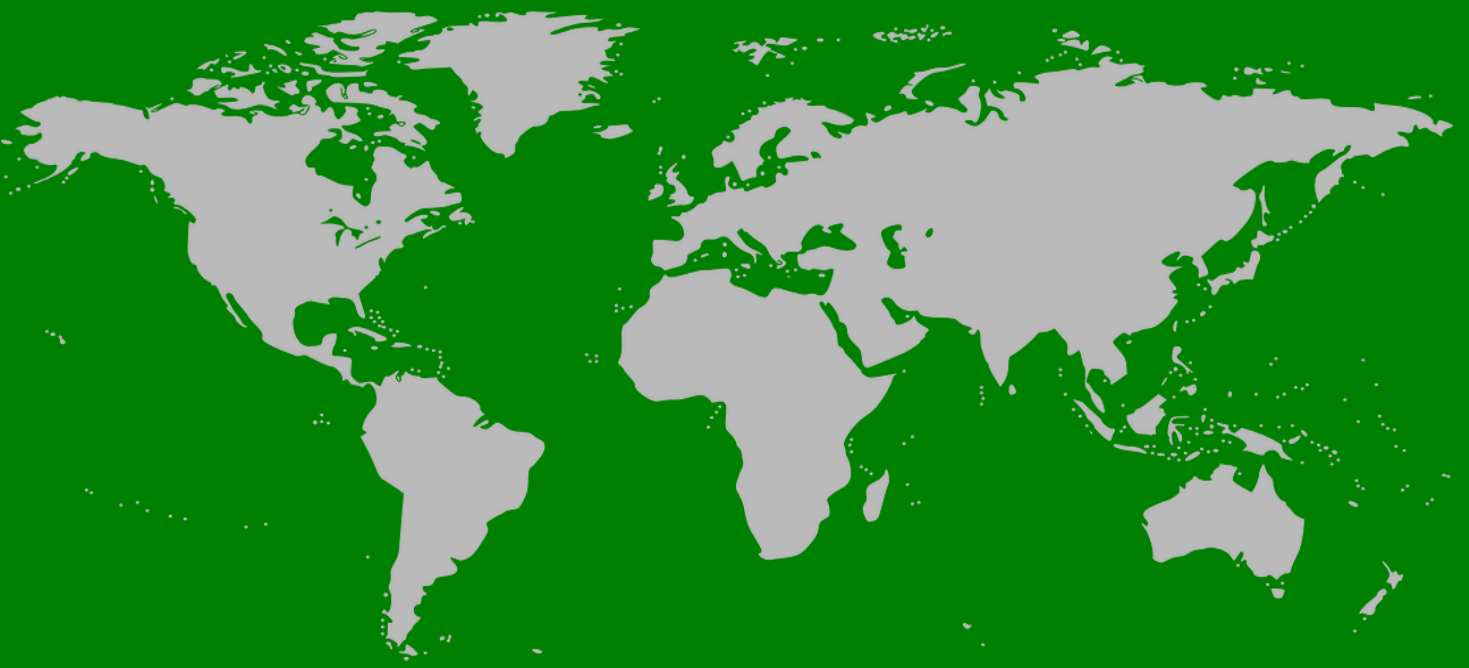


*“Discovering international relations
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Concerns over the Brexit process: when will it start?

Aldoreza Prandana ■

■ The Brexit referendum taken this summer in Britain resulted into Britain leaving the European Union. After the Brexit referendum happened, David Cameron resigned from his position as the Prime Minister of Britain and Theresa May took his position and the responsibility to start the exiting process of Britain from the European Union. Despite the majority decision taken to leave the union, no clear actions have been taken by the government to start triggering the Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty.

The discussion on Brexit revolved around the issues of trade and immigration, as those two issues were the main concerns during the campaign of Remain and Leave groups. Boris Johnson, the main Leave campaigners and the current minister assigned to process the secession of Britain from the European Union, gave a little detail about what is going to happen with Brexit. He wrote in an op-ed that there will still be access to the union's single market and assured that the European Union's citizens will still be able to live in Britain. However, he did not elaborate further on the plan which many have been waiting to know.

Two years after the Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty is triggered, Britain must have left the union. Despite the push from France for Britain to have the Brexit talks this year, the British government indicated that Brexit talks will only start in the beginning of 2016. Yet it is still unclear whether the article will be triggered by then or not. Visegrad 4 countries, consist of Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia, argued that they will veto any Brexit deal which will limit their citizens' rights to work in Britain. The Brexit vote and the refugee crisis have become the union's crisis due to the effect it had towards the solidarity of the union. Blocs are formed within the union as a response towards the crisis they are facing.



EU accepts Bosnia's membership application

Abdulhamid Gunda ■

■ A long process ahead awaits Bosnia as its membership application to the European Union (EU) has been accepted. Sarajevo hopes the country will eventually be added as 29th member of the union though it is going to be certainly a long process.

The EU accepted the membership application of Bosnia which was filed in February partially because of the noteworthy progress on necessary reforms. Furthermore, the 28 member states of the union has asked the European Commission to assess the suitability of the country to be part of the union and to gauge whether Bosnia has achieved “candidate status”, a process that can take up to one year.

Along the process, the central government of Bosnia will be asked to answer thousands of questions to prove suitability to join the bloc. As such, the assessment will give emphases on Bosnia's economy, state of democracy, adherence to the rule of law and human rights, and the country's ability to respect membership obligations. Brussels' task for now is to lay out what conditions remain to be met before membership as granted to Sarajevo. And the good thing is that there is no processing time limit.

The Prime Minister of Bosnia, Denis Zvizdic, described this huge development as a “historic moment” for the country and very good news for the youth in particular. Report says that Bosnia's leaders have been working hard on reforms that focus on creating jobs and the

improvement of the standard of living in the country to stop many of its youth leaving for a better life in the EU countries. To this, the EU envoy to Bosnia, Lars-Gunnar Wigemark, affirmed saying that “It is clear that these reforms are starting to show results... We have seen the reduction of the level of unemployment and an increased growth”.

However, amongst all the odds, the country's complex political system stands as the greatest challenge for membership acceptance. A country of at least 3.5 million, Bosnia is split along ethnic lines with three governments. This is what the peace deal – Dayton Peace Agreement – had accorded in 1995 to end the war that killed some 100,000 people when Yugoslavia broke up apart the country. The three governments consist of two autonomous entities, representing Bosniaks and Croats as one entity and the second entity representing the Bosnian Serbs; the third is the central government with a three-member presidency consisting of one Serb, one Bosniak and one Croat. This set the limit on who can run for office.

On this matter, the EU states called on Bosnia to continue “socio-economic reforms and reforms in the area of rule of law and public administration.” Moreover, Bosnia will continue to be monitored on its implementation of a 2009 European Court of Human Rights ruling that “ordered Bosnia to allow ethnic minorities, such as Jews and Roma, to run for high office.”



Azerbaijan holds referendum to extend president's term

Abdulhamid Gunda ■

■ A referendum to extend the presidential term from five to seven years was held in Azerbaijan. The step, according to a European democracy, would hand President Ilham Aliyev “unprecedented power.”

The 54 year old president, who succeeded his father in 2003, was all out in his campaign to convince the 5.3 million eligible voter of the former Soviet republic as he himself can bid for re-elections after limits were scrapped in the referendum held seven year back.

The officials from the administration claimed that a longer presidential term is a move that will extend “continuity” in decision making and is “vital” for Azerbaijan’s economic growth. The president’s assistant on political issues, Ali Hasnov, said: “One of the main tasks of the referendum is implementation of economic reforms in the post-oil boom period in Azerbaijan, the elimination of bureaucratic mechanisms and creation of an effective governing system.”

However, the Venice Commission which is an advisory unit of the Council of Europe, said that many of the proposed amendments would

severely upset the balance of power by giving “unprecedented” powers to the president. Furthermore, critics of the proposed amendments feared that it would give the president “power to declare early presidential election at his convenience” and may as well dissolve the parliament.

“The referendum has been accompanied by arrests and intimidation from the beginning. Those who have attempted to criticise and campaign against these proposals have faced assaults and harassment by the authorities”, said Denis Krivosheev, Deputy Director for Europe and Central Asia at Amnesty International.



*Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev.
Photo: Senibus [Wikimedia Commons]*



Trump pledges to recognise Jerusalem as Israeli capital

Deniz Horuz ■

■ Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and USA Republican Presidential Candidate Donald Trump held a meeting on 26th September in the Trump Tower. The main subject on this meeting was the announcement of Donald Trump that if he is elected as president he would recognise Jerusalem as the capital of the state of Israel. This announcement can be considered as a political manoeuvre to keep the votes of the Jewish population in America. Furthermore, and in line with the before mentioned, Trump stated that if he is to be elected president, the USA embassy in Israel will change its place from the capital Tell Aviv into Jerusalem.

Previous presidents did not move the consulate of USA from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem because of security reasons. But now Trump would like to change it, and the reason is mostly about the votes of Jewish people residing in the US. Also Trump spoke about the problems between Palestine and Israel. He said, that the solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict may be possible to be achieved if there is refraining from resorting to violence, and hate speech of Palestine.



Regarding the issue a statement was made by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Palestinian state. Namely, the ministry announced that the Jewish population in the USA will not accept that price for such an acquisition, regardless of the attempts of Trump to play with the Jewish votes in the US presidential elections. Despite election campaigns, “we are not in the scope of the idea that we see this as an extremely dangerous statement”, the officials of the Palestinian MFA said.



World leaders join Israelis in paying respects to Peres

Abdulhamid Gunda ■

■ A funeral, believed to be the greatest in Israel after that of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin who was assassinated in 1995, was held for the Late President Shimon Peres. The thousands of Israelis who flocked to view the remains of Peres were joined by several world leaders and foreign dignitaries.



Funeral of Simon Peres.

Photo: Presidencia de la República Mexicana [Wikimedia Commons]

Expected presence of United States President Barack Obama, French President Francois Hollande, German President Joachim Gauck, Prince Charles of Britain and King Felipe VI of Spain did not surprise those who came and those who monitored the event. On the contrary, eyes were on the Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas along with representatives from Egypt and Jordan. Abbas was previously

hesitant to attend the funeral due to the collapse of peace efforts.

Outpouring of grief from those in the funeral was evident. For most of them, the late president encompassed all of Israel in himself. 67 years old Yossi Namari, who drove for two hours from a suburb area in northern Israel, described Peres as peace advocate and an inspiring leader. While the foreign minister of Bahrain tweeted “Rest in peace President Shimon Peres, a man of war and a man of the still elusive peace in the Middle East.”

Opposite sentiments were expressed by some Arab leaders form led by the spokesman for Hamas who even urged Abbas to cancel participation. Caricatures depicting the late president as the “angel of death” were featured of many Arab social media sites. “We have strong objections and criticism to Peres of the occupation, of building the settlements and the crimes in Qana (in Lebanon),” said Ayman Odeh, head of the Arab Joint List in parliament.

Two weeks after suffering a stroke, Peres passed away at the age of 93. The detailed plans for the funeral which was left behind by the late president were revealed by Dr. Rafi Walden, his son-in-law and personal physician.



Airstrikes hit Syrian aid convoy near Aleppo

Abdulhamid Gunda ■

■ An aid convoy to deliver assistance for 78,000 Syrian people in a rebel-held and a hard-to-reach area, Urm al-Kubra, was hit by airstrikes near the Syrian city of Aleppo as per the report of the Syrian Red Crescent. A report says that at least 18 of the 31 trucks were hit and 12 people were killed in the incident. Most of the victims were drivers and included some Syrian Arab Red Crescent volunteers.

The delivery of assistance to the besieged areas was a significant component of the “cessation of hostilities deal” brokered by the governments of the USA and Russia. Staffan de Mistura, a UN special envoy for Syria, described the incident as an “outrage”. He said in his statement that the convoy was the outcome of a long process of permission and preparations to assist isolated civilians.

Both the rebels and the Syrian forces accused each other of violating the truce. Furthermore, the Syrian Observatory of Human Rights had claimed the direct involvement of either the Syrian or the Russian warplanes over the attack on the convoy. The UN had confirmed the incidence but refused to give details on who carried out the attack and the exact number of the people killed.

The UN aid Chief Stephen O’Brien called for immediate independent investigation and gave impression that it can be considered as a war crime. He reiterated that all parties were notified and the convoy was clearly marked as a humanitarian.

The attack seemed to have signalled the “imminent collapse” of the effort of the USA and Russia to end the civil war. Furthermore, the incident made the UN to suspend all aid convoys to Syria.

UN Security Council: Russia accused of war crime in Syria

Russia was accused with “barbarism” on a specially-convened meeting of the UN Security Council. According to the statement, Russia was committed war-crimes with the use of bunker-busting and incendiary bombs on civilians in the rebel-held Aleppo. Approximately, there were 398 injured and 180 dead people, including 61 children. Meanwhile, the Russian spokesman of Kremlin, Dmitri Peskov, told, if the United States and the United Kingdom will follow the use of that unacceptable tone, further harms and damages can put their relations into jeopardy. One of the outcomes of the meeting was a new phase, which threw out any halting hopes that the United States and Russia are would be able to reach a peace deal for Syria.



UN report said 5 million of people in Somalia do not get enough food

Badra Aliou Doumbia ■

■ According to the new UN report on 20 September, 5 million Somalis, more than 40 per cent of the country's population do not have sufficient food. According to the new assessment report release in Mogadishu, over 300,000 children under five are acutely malnourished included more than 50,000 children who are severely malnourished and more vulnerable than any other group.

Since the last review in February 2016, an increase of 300,000 people who are food insecure have been noticed. Peter de Clercq, the Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia reported "Humanitarian partners are ready to scale up response to help families struggling to find food to make it through the day," In addition, "The Somalia Humanitarian Response Plan for 2016 is 32 per cent funded and additional resources are urgently required to boost response and on-going efforts to sustainably address malnutrition and access to food, including support to comprehensive durable solutions."

During the past two decades, the food and nutrition situation particularly affects the estimated 1.1 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) who are highly vulnerable to natural hazards, disease outbreaks, exploitation and abuse. An estimated 58 per cent of people

who are acutely food insecure are living in horrible conditions in settlements spread throughout the country sometimes facing the continuous risk of forced evictions, discrimination, violation of children's rights and pervasive gender-based violence.



Malnourished children, weakened by hunger.
Photo: UK DFID [Flickr](#)

Efforts to reduce levels of vulnerabilities continue. However, irregular weather patterns influenced the food and nutrition situation such as drought conditions continue in pastoral areas of Somaliland and Puntland; Poor rainfall in southern and central Somalia, the breadbasket of the country, has led to a reduction in cereal production by nearly half, compared to the long-term average.



Anti-Kabila riots turned into deadly protest in Congo

Veronika Tóth ■

■ According to opposition leaders around 100 people died in the violent demonstrations, while the police put the death toll at 37. The protesters went to the street in order to indicate that the President Joseph Kabila should step down. World powers and the United Nations urged the government to exercise restraint and find a solution.



*President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo Joseph Kabila.
Photo: US Department of State [Wikimedia Commons]*

Protests were held in Kinshasa, in the capital of the Democratic Republic of the Congo on 19-20 September, to call for President Joseph Kabila to step down. Thousands of people occupied the streets, and barricades were built by the protesters to oppose an election delay, and the protests turned into violence between demonstrators and police. According to Human Rights Watch at least 37 protesters, including six policemen died. However, Congo's one of the most important opposition leaders reported to a Belgian television that the death toll was around 100. Human rights groups claimed that many protesters and journalists were arrested in the capital and in other cities such as Goma and Kisangani. After two days of deadly riots the normal life went on in Kinshasa, but the army was sent to different parts of the city where the tensions did not calm down, for example 50 troops were sent to the university campus to avoid further demonstrations.

The mineral-rich central African state gained its independence in 1960 from Belgium, and it has never seen a peaceful transition of power. During the regional wars between 1996 and 2003, millions of people died in Congo, therefore Western observers and donors are concerned about the current political instability as it could





turn into an armed conflict. Kabila came into power as a young soldier in 2001; one day after his father was assassinated. In 2011, the victory of Kabila's second term was disputed. According to the country's constitution two terms are allowed, and Kabila's second term will expire on 20 December. The electoral commission should have set up the date for presidential elections, due in November on a Monday, however, it has claimed that it is not possible to hold it then. The tension is present in the country for more than a year, as the Constitutional Court declared that Kabila could remain in office until an election is held.

Word powers have quickly reacted to the violence. Tensions are growing between Washington and Kinshasa, as the United States threatened to establish sanctions on those

responsible for the repression. French President François Hollande urged the government to respect the constitution. French Foreign Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault said that the current situation in Congo is "extremely worrying and very dangerous", adding that sanctions might be imposed by European nations. Also, the African Union called parties in Congo to find a solution to the current tensions. The United Nations Security Council and the Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon urged the Congolese leaders and the national security forces to exercise restraint. However, opposition leader Etienne Tshisekedi called for further protest, referring that Kabila should officially step down in December.



“thousands of people occupied the streets, and barricades were built by the protesters to oppose an election delay, and the protests turned into violence between demonstrators and police”



Protests of South African students

Aldoreza Prandana ■

■ Many students from universities across South Africa were protesting for the right to free education and against deeper inequities in a year-long movement, known as #FeesMustFall. The movement started in October 2015 where students protested against the proposal to increase tuition fee for university students. They believed that the education system is unfair not only towards the poor, but also discriminating towards black people. Despite winning the protest last year, the Minister of Higher Education and Training Blade Nzimande said in September 2016 that universities will have to determine their own fee increases for 2017, but any increase must not exceed 8%. The statement then led to the latest protest held by students. The problems with the education system in South Africa is not only about the expensive education fee, but also the disproportionate access to higher education for black students and the colonisation of education system which lacks of black thoughts and intellectuals in the curriculum. Other than that, another problem they protested was, also, about the lack of facilities in many universities. Some universities faced electricity and water shortage which forced them to cancel classes.

William Gumede, a professor at Wits University in South Africa, argued that the students should have protested the government for the problems with the education system, not the universities. He said that the protest will not be efficient if they do not aim their voice towards the government, and their protest against the universities will, instead, become a nuisance for the education process needed for the students themselves. Some university staff members have supported the cause protested by the students. They argued that the problem is too important to ignore and demanded the government to do something about it.



Second day of the FeesMustFall protests in 2015.
Photo: Discott [Wikimedia Commons]



The Philippines to look for support from China, not the United States anymore

Aldoreza Prandana ■

■ President Rodrigo Duterte of the Philippines declared that he wants to establish new alliances with China for trade and commerce in the future. As an impact of that, he intended to end the joint military exercise between the Philippines and the United States due to the fact that Beijing is not in favour of the war games with the United States. However, he assured that the military alliance between the Philippines and the United States will be maintained.

The relationship between the Philippines and the United States dated back to 1951 when both countries signed a mutual defence treaty that calls on them to come to each other's aid in times of trouble or invasion. The treaty is the main reason why President Duterte would still maintain relationship with the United States in terms of military. However, he has been showing his attitude towards the United States that he would create a foreign policy free from the United States' influence. He also requested the troops of the United States to leave out of the Southern Philippines, blaming their presence as intensifying the power of a Muslim insurgency there.

The newly-planned cooperation with China in trade and commerce is related to the fact that

President Duterte is expecting to cooperate with China in other matter too: fight against illegal drugs trafficking. President Duterte's strong stance against the drugs trafficking is seen from his speeches. He believes that China's cooperation will be beneficial for his program since he has always said that the drug lords running the syndicates in the Philippines are based in China. Despite the conflict with China over the South China Sea, President Duterte would approach the cooperation with China only focusing in the area of trade and commerce, while he appointed former president Fidel Ramos as an ambassador for the conflict.



*President Duterte meets Chinese ambassador Zhao Jianhua in June 2016.
Photo: Presidential Communications Operations Office [Wikimedia Commons]*



Prime Minister acclaims Australia's asylum policy as a model

Roberta Maddalena ■

■ At the UN Summit held last September the Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull acclaimed Australia's asylum policy as model to follow by other countries.

The Prime Minister said that the strategy put into force by Australian government to tackle the emergency of refugees is one of the best working in the world. The key point of the strategy is showing to Australian citizens that the borders of the nation are protected in order to get their consensus regarding asylum policy. "Public opinion will not accept a generous

humanitarian program, a substantial migration program, unless the government is seen to be command of its borders", claimed Turnbull.

However, Australian asylum policy has been criticised by politicians and human rights activists because it is built on three pillars: offshore processing, regional resettlement, and boat turnbacks. The most controversial cases are those regarding the refugees' camps on the islands of Nauru and Manus. A Kurdish Iranian journalist refugee, on The Guardian newspaper, has denounced miserable conditions in these camps, where sexual and physical violence, cruel treatments and inadequate medical care are systemic, so that they look like detention centre. In its claiming at UN Summit, Turnbull perhaps closed its eyes on many critics towards Australian's policies made by many governments around the world, UN agencies and civil society. In this emergency situation there should be more unity, especially among international community representatives, instead of declaring which countries work better than others.



Accommodation in the Nauru offshore processing facility.
Photo: DIAC Images [Wikimedia Commons]



Australia wants to negotiate a free trade deal with Britain

Deniz Horuz ■



Australia - UK Ministerial (AUKMIN) meeting in London, 9 September 2016.
Photo: Foreign and Commonwealth Office [Flickr]

■ Australian Trade, Tourism and Investment Minister, Steven Ciobo, made an official visit to the United Kingdom in London where he met with International Trade Minister of UK, Liam Fox. The main topic for this meeting was the UK decision to leave the EU and the future implications of this move for the free trade deals between Australia and the United Kingdom. After decision upon the termination of its membership within the EU, the United Kingdom clearly stated that they would go to for a definitive agreement. The two ministers also said

they want the FTA to create new trade and investment opportunities.

Furthermore, the ministers decided that the next first meeting will be held at the beginning of 2017 in Australia. This initiative, liberalisation of global trade and to support the reforms and the UK as well as Australia, are considered to reflect the strong political commitment to taking a leadership role in this respect. Ciobo said that the EU should formally negotiate or sign any agreement before the exit of the United Kingdom. Certainly in preliminary discussions for how they can conduct the pre-negotiations, Australia is concerned about its trade agreements with United Kingdom as to be able to express their thoughts in this matter.

Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull announced that, as part of a partnership to ensure the common interests of the United Kingdom he wish to benefit from the decision of separation of the UK with EU. United Kingdom and Australia, depending on the speed of the free trade negotiations, are not expecting to sign the new agreement between the two countries before 2019.



First presidential debate in the United States

Aldoreza Prandana ■

■ The first US Presidential debate was held at Hofstra University, outside of New York City. Donald Trump, representing the Republican Party, and Hillary Clinton, representing the Democratic Party, approached the debate in different ways. The presidential debate is seen as a pivotal moment for presidential candidates, especially this close to the election time. Trump's approach was more freewheeling and he became defensive when responding to the arguments stated by Clinton on his temperament, refusal to release his taxes and his past comments about race and women.

Hillary Clinton was seen as dominant during the debate and delivered a strong performance in which she demonstrated a command of policy and, at the same time, a sense of humour in response to the opponent's attacks. Trump aggressively went after her record on trade by pointing to her husband Bill Clinton's signing of NAFTA in the 1990s. He also pointed out the fact that Hillary Clinton's past support on the Trans-Pacific Partnership, the landmark 12-nation trade pact brokered under the current President Barack Obama administration.

Despite the fact that Trump started strong in the debate, by making some effective points on the economy and jobs, he continued the debate by making false claims as he made inaccurate statements on everything from laws regarding policing, his support for the Iraq War and his contention that Clinton was behind the so-called "birther" conspiracy. Even the Taliban group gave their opinion on Donald Trump by saying that he seems like a "non-serious" candidate.

The first presidential debate had many highlights. From Trump's attack to Clinton's email case, to Clinton countering with highlighting that Trump has not shown his tax returns and argued that he may not have paid taxes in several years. The poll after the debate suggested that many people who watched leaned towards Hillary Clinton with 62% than towards Donald Trump with 27%. As the election time coming closer, the fate of the United States is still unclear whether they will vote Hillary Clinton or Donald Trump. Many argue that the next debates will be able to show more of the capabilities of both presidential and vice presidential candidates' potential to run the country.



Peace deal in Colombia

Veronika Tóth ■

■ A historic peace accord between the Colombian government and left-wing FARC rebels was signed after 52 years of conflict. However, the peace deal will be only implemented if it is approved by the majority of Colombian voters in the referendum on 2 October.



*Members of the FARC Greet the Crowd.
Photo: U.S. Department of State [Flickr]*

A final peace deal between the Colombian government and the FARC guerrilla group was announced on 24 August in the Cuban capital, Havana, where the negotiations have taken place since November 2012. After signing the deal in Havana, Humberto de la Calle, chief government negotiator announced that “the

war is over.” Five days later the bilateral ceasefire came into force, ending the 52-year armed conflict. Later, Colombia’s president Juan Manuel Santos submitted the peace agreement with the FARC to the Security Council’s president in the presence of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on the 21st of September. Ban Ki-moon praised the Colombia’s president’s courage and leadership and thanked Cuba, Norway and also Chile and Venezuela, which contributed to the process. The Secretary-General also added that the United Nations had key responsibilities regarding the monitoring and verification of the bilateral cease-fire. The United Nations aim is to help the peace process advance, and in January 2015, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2261, to establish a political mission of unarmed international observers in order to monitor and verify the laying down of arms, following the signing of a peace agreement. The preparations for the United Nations Mission in Colombia are progressing at UN Headquarters and in Colombia as well.

The FARC’s 10th and final conference as an armed group was organised in September in Yari



plains region and it lasted for seven days. The delegates to the FARC agreed to hand in their weapons and become an unarmed political party. Colombia's largest rebel group has given its approval to a peace deal. "The war is over," said the group's chief negotiator, Ivan Marquez. Colombian President and FARC leader Timoleon Jimenez, known as Timochenko, signed the agreement, but it will only be implemented if it is approved by the majority of Colombian voters in a referendum on 2 October. FARC is Latin America's oldest guerrilla group and the Marxist group has been fighting the Colombian armed forces since 1964 under a banner of social justice. According to estimation at least 220,000 people have died in the conflict and over six million people were obliged to leave their homes. Alex Fattal, an American anthropologist has been studying the FARC's media strategy, and he described "the FARC are beginning their transformation from a clandestine guerrilla insurgency into a media savvy, culturally hip movement, primed for politics".

According to the agreement, on one hand, the government will carry out development programmes and it will work on the inequalities. The government will also provide political participation opportunities for smaller political movements. On the other hand the FARC agrees to contribute to the dismantling and discouraging drug businesses, which financed the war for the past few decades. In addition, the deal consists of reparations to victims and a transitional justice system will be set up. However, FARC delegates who will confess their crimes will do "community service", instead of

going to jail, which is the main controversy regarding the peace deal.

Critics believe that the peace deal should be renegotiated in order to include jail time from crimes against humanity. Alvaro Uribe, served as president of Colombia from 2002 to 2010, and currently leading a campaign to reject the peace deal. He argues that the negotiators are willing to hand the country to the rebels. Many Colombians are concerned about the FARC as for many decades; they attacked villages and towns, and kidnapped many children. Also, many people do not believe that the government is able to keep the promises regarding the social projects and infrastructure development, which is included in the accords. Peter Schechter, from the Latin America Centre at US-based think tank the Atlantic Council said argued that "everybody wants peace, but not everyone is sure that this peace deal is the right peace deal."

Kristian Herbolzheimer, the mediator, said that "the main challenge in any peace process is moving from words to action." The mediator believes that Colombia had become a sign of hope, as he said "it shows that no matter how complex a conflict is, if there is the political will there is a political solution." The peace process is an historic opportunity to end a conflict that has caused a lot suffering to the citizens for many decades, and currently there is a hope for a more secure and prosperous future for the Colombians. The president urged the Colombian people to embrace peace, as the deal will be only implemented if it is approved by the majority of Colombian voters.



Dilma Rousseff's impeachment ends 13 years of Workers' Party rule in Brazil

Annalisa Baldassarri ■

■ Brazilian Senate secured the compulsory qualified majority which determined the removal of President Dilma Rousseff from office. The allegations were that she has manipulated the state budgets of 2014-2015 in order to guarantee her reappointment. The arduous impeachment trial has, so, ended 13 years of Workers' Party rule in Brazil and has resulted in the replacement of the removed president with her former vice president Michel Temer. Centre-right patrician Temer is expected to stay in charge during the remaining two years and four months of Rousseff's term.

As reported by Al Jazeera, Dilma Rousseff has made a clear statement, following the Senate vote, firmly criticising the happening: "They decided to interrupt the mandate of a president who had committed no crime. They have convicted an innocent person and carried out a parliamentary coup." Ex-president accuses the opposition of having planned a state coup with the purpose of overthrowing her government and take power without elections. Rousseff's lawyer Jose Eduardo Cardozo has made clear the intentions of appealing the impeachment to the

Supreme Court, by reporting defects in the procedure. In a separate vote the senate excluded to ban Dilma Rousseff from public office for eight years, therefore Rousseff shall be eligible for re-election.



President Dilma Rousseff in March 2016. Photo: Agência Brasil [Wikimedia Commons]

Michel Temer is a 75-year-old politician and representative of the centrist Democratic Movement party (PMDB); he has been defined by magazine *The Economist* as a "multitalented politician, a conciliatory man who believes in a blend of economic and social liberalism that is unusual in Brazil" and, in addition, he has been labelled as "nearly the opposite" of Rousseff. Temer, who has been running the country since



Rousseff's suspension in May, in an address to the nation has highlighted that his government will, first, pursue the establishment of peace in the country, vowing that this will be a "new era" of government for Brazil. Temer's administration's main objective is to strengthen Brazil's presence on the global stage, which has been considered as less prominent under Rousseff's presidency. For instance, Temer has spoken about the aim of advancing projects which would tighten commercial and diplomatic relations with African countries.

But Michel Temer has to deal, also, with his unpopularity in Brazil. Thousands of demonstrators have raised a huge and peaceful march, in Sao Paulo, protesting the removal of leftist president Dilma Rousseff. The marchers showed their aversion to the appointment of Temer until 2018 and called for new elections. But this is not the only tricky aspect of the situation, since current president Michel Temer

himself is not exempt from the risk being charged of corruption. His unpopularity among Brazilians is in fact partly due to his implication in the so-called Operation Car Wash. A key informant in the investigations linked Temer to the Petrobras scandal. Temer denied accusations which refer to illegal campaign funds for his party through bribes deriving from state oil company Petrobras and which would imply his involvement in a massive corruption scandal.



*Demonstration against corruption and Dilma Rousseff in São Paulo in March 2016.
Photo: Agência Brasil [Flickr]*

“the arduous impeachment trial
has ended 13 years of Workers’
Party rule in Brazil ”



■ News in Brief

Domestic affairs affecting international relations

Remembering 9/11 tragedy 15 years ago

■ 15 years after the 9/11 tragedy, the people of the United States of America commemorated the loss by having a ceremony, tolling church bells, and having a tribute of lights at the site where the tragedy happened in New York City. President Barack Obama was speaking from Pentagon, another site where the tragedy happened, told the people of the United States of America in his speech to stay true to the country's values to commemorate the 3,000 people who lost their lives during the tragedy. Two presidential candidates, Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton, were also present during the ceremony in New York City to pay their respects to the victims. The 9/11 tragedy was orchestrated by Osama bin Laden and the terrorist group al Qaeda which directly led to the United States of America war in Afghanistan and indirectly to the invasion of Iraq.

USA: protests between police and black erupted again – state of emergency in North Carolina

■ A state of emergency was declared by Pat McCrory the North Carolina Gov. in Charleston after violent protest over a police shooting of a Black man. The demonstrations started after police shot and killed 43-year-old Keith Scott, who was mistaken for a wanted man. However, after announced the man was dead, the City

officials later corrected that to say he was in critical condition, on life support. Protesters held signs that read “release the tape”, referring to police video of the shooting. In addition, to the man who was seriously hurt, five law enforcement officers and eight other people were injured during the night's events. According to police their injuries were not life-threatening. In order to pacify anger, Mayor Jennifer Roberts appealed for protesters to go home and pledged that the city would conduct a thorough and transparent investigation. Throughout an announced on CNN she asserted: “We are working very hard to bring peace and calm back to our city; We know that this is not who Charlotte is; This is not who we are and Violence is not the answer.”

Sarkozy's election campaign promises new EU treaty aiming to reverse Brexit course

■ During his campaign in the run-up to the next French elections, in May 2017, Nicolas Sarkozy has highlighted as one of the main objectives a draft proposal for a new EU treaty which might overturn Britain's decision of leaving Europe. The proposal has to deal, on one hand, with British Prime Minister May's statement through which she has repeatedly confirmed that “Brexit means Brexit” and, on the other hand, with the position expressed by other EU partners, Germany on the front line, which has made clear that they do not



foresee any changings to the enforce EU treaty and that no one is expecting to reverse Britain's course.

Hungarian PM suggested Libya to be buffer country on refugee crisis

■ Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban suggested Libya to be Europe's refugee buffer. He argued, taking an example from Australia's decision to process refugees offshore, that Libya could facilitate the refugees seeking for asylum in Europe by becoming a refugee-processing country for Europe. Since Libya is one of the two the tracks through traffickers smuggle asylum seekers to Europe, building a giant refugee camp in Libya is a better option than having refugees crossing borders illegally. However, the detail of his plan seems vague, like who would provide security for the giant refugee camp. Despite the fact that Europe needs a third country to help on handling the influx of refugees, many argues that Libya does not seem fit to be a buffer country due to the fact that Libya is a country rife with violence.

Bosnia and Herzegovina's referendum: 9 January should or should not be celebrated?

■ On 25 September 2016, Bosnian Serbs voted overwhelmingly in a referendum to celebrate 9th January as "Statehood day" national holiday. 99.8% of voters in the Republika Srpska had supported the decision made by President Milorad Dodik, even though the Constitutional

Court of Sarajevo banned it. As a matter of fact, the Court defined the date discriminated against Muslim Bosniaks and Catholic Croats, because 9th January coincides with a Serbian Orthodox Christian festival and marks the secession of Serb's territory from Bosnia in 1992. International community stood for cancelling the vote, as the fear is that the Dayton Peace Agreement has been threatening and the vote may provoke tensions among the ethnic communities.

Turkey's President Erdogan demands global action against exiled rival Fethullah Gülen

■ Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the Turkish President has called the global community for immediate action against the exiled preacher and his political rival, Fethullah Gulen. Mr Erdogan, in his statement to the UN General Assembly declared "necessary measures" need to be taken against US-based Mr Gulen who he holds accountable for the aborted coup d'etat against him in July 2016. However, Mr Gulen, who fled Turkey for Pennsylvania, has strongly denied the charges he orchestrated or was even involved in the recent military coup. He told the UN Gulen's movement is active in 170 countries posing a "national security threat" to them all and "it is evident from our experience that if you do not fight against Fethullah Terrorist Organisations (FETO) now, tomorrow may be too late." Because, "this terrorist organisation is in a deep mental heresy of subduing the whole world, far beyond Turkey."



Russia's parliamentary election

■ The parliamentary elections were held on 18th of September, in Russia, but the turnout was very low, as in Moscow 35 percent, and in St. Petersburg 33 percent, and in the whole country 48 percent voted. There were no surprises, as predicted, only the ruling United Russia party with 54 percent, and the three "Kremlin-controlled opposition" achieved the five-percent threshold, which is required to enter the Duma, consisting 450 seats. The two main liberal parties, Yabloko received less than 2 percent, while PARNAS received less than 1 percent, which means that the new Duma will be opposition-free. Dmitri Gudkov was considered to be the only independent deputy in the Duma, but he was not elected, causing a big disappointment among the opposition supporters. As it can be seen, the majority of Russians does not believe in change and in the ballot box. It is important to mention, that Putin did not confirm yet if he would run for the re-election in 2018, however, the recent parliamentary elections ensured his power.

President Islam Karimov:

Asia's one of the most authoritarian leaders dies

■ The Uzbek state television announced on the 2nd of September, that the President Islam Karimov, who ruled Uzbekistan for 27 years, has died aged 78 after suffering a stroke. Before, during one week there was speculation about

his death, and also, Turkey's Prime Minister, Binali Yildirim, offered his condolences prior to the Uzbek announcement. In 1989, Kremlin appointed Karimov as the head of local Communist Party, and after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991; he became the president of the newly independent state. The parliament has approved Prime Minister Shavkat Mirziyoyev as interim president, even though under the constitution, Senate leader Nigmatilla Yuldashev should have taken the role. Due to the Parliament confirmation, the presidential election will be held within three months. As the Central Asian country is rich in gas, therefore the challenge for the future successor will be to keep the balance between the West, Russia and China.

Anti-Maduro protest registers massive participation and asks for new elections by the end of this year

■ Massive anti-Maduro march organised in Caracas has seen an immense national participation. The opposition guided the march by supporting the referendum which asks for President Nicolas Maduro's resignation as well as the holding of early elections. Venezuela's socialist government has intervened with all possible operations in order to cover up the hundreds of thousands of people who joined the protest. Opposition leaders call for the necessity of new elections and the consequent interruption of Maduro's term as effective solution to the crisis.



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Bilateral and international relations

Dalai Lama's visit to Strasbourg provokes China anger

■ On 15th of September, Dalai Lama spoke at European Parliament in Strasbourg and met its President, Martin Schulz. The Nobel peace prize-winning monk told European Parliament he hoped to reach a fast and good solution regarding the Tibet issue with China, but Tibet also needs the support of EU. Beijing's reaction came right after, with Foreign Ministry spokesperson claiming that "China is resolutely opposed to mistaken actions of the European Parliament" in inviting Dalai Lama. Indeed, China deleted the visit of the EU delegation of Commission of Economic Affairs and of Industry, which had to go to meet Chinese delegations the week after the controversial event. China accuses Dalai Lama to support the use of violence to pursuing the independence of Tibet, and for this reason it is warning States and international organisations to not allow any Dalai Lama's visit.

Kashmir attack: India launches strikes against militants

■ On 29, September, 2016, an operation had taken place along the de-facto border between India and Pakistan, in Kashmir. According to a senior army official, the action was intended to

forestalling actions being planned by Pakistan-based militants. On the other hand, Pakistan traverses India executed any strikes, moreover declares that two of its soldiers were killed. The argument over the Muslim-majority Kashmir between the two nations has been going on for decades, but the voltage was kindled after 18 soldier of the Indian army were killed, in a militant attack earlier in September. However, the crime remained unclear, due to both sides were claiming each other.

EU appoints new commissioner for security

■ Briton Julian King was appointed as commissioner for security by the European Union governments, in spite of the United Kingdom is going to leave the European Union. His main task will be to fight against terrorism and cybercrimes, moreover he will be participating in the coinage of the new Security Union of EU member states as well. Sir Julian will also report to Frans Timmermans, one of the vice presidents and assist the work of Dimitris Avramopolous, the commissioner who is responsible for migration. Nevertheless, the UK is preparing to leave the EU, Downing Street spokesman declared, that until it will be eventuated, they are going to continue be an active player, comply our rights and also their engagements as a member state.



UN urges states to ratify nuclear test ban

■ In the interest of a safer world, the United Nations Security Council pressed several states to ratify a treaty, which would be banning nuclear explosions and only use for peaceful purposes. Until then, more than 160 countries have already ratified the 1996 Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty. Now the following nations were urged to validate the agreement: China, the United States, North Korea, Egypt, India, Iran, Israel and Pakistan. The UN urges that Israel should consent it within 5 years, moreover, Iran should also follow Israel, but with the difference, that the timing is uncertain. On the other hand, Barack Obama's administration has said that several US lawmakers, chiefly Republicans, were standing against the treaty as they fear it would limit US security options.

Obama demands one-world government at UN

■ President Barack Obama, asserted during an address at the United Nations General Assembly, that every nation in the world can successfully fight radical Islamic terrorism only by giving in to a one-world government. He believes global security can only be achieved with the help of international institutions like the UN. Being criticised by his own citizens for professing a belief in international norms and multilateral institutions, Obama remains convinced he is right by stated "powerful nations" like us, the United States will have to accept some limits on our freedom, but we should not give up autonomous rights like the freedom to defend ourselves or pursue our core interests but binding ourselves to international rules, over the long-term, enhances our security.





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