



UNITED STATES INSTITUTE OF PEACE

# PREVENTION

## PREVENTION NEWSLETTER

MAY 2012

### MISSION

The USIP's Center for Conflict Management (CCM) designs and manages the Institute's efforts to *prevent* the initial outbreak of violent conflict, *resolve* ongoing conflicts, and *stabilize* areas emerging from conflict. The Center also conducts research, identifies best practices, and develops new tools for conflict prevention, management, and resolution.

### CALENDAR

**May 10:** USIP Annual Conference on Security Sector Transformation in North Africa and the Middle East.

**18-19 May:** G-8 Summit, Camp David.

**20-21 May:** NATO Summit, Chicago.

**23 May/16 June:** Presidential Elections in Egypt.

**May 25:** 3rd Anniversary of North Korea's 2nd nuclear test. Analysts expect a 3rd nuclear test later this spring.

**7-8 June:** EU-LAC Summit in Santiago, Chile.

### PUBLICATIONS

- "Obama Announces Formation of the Atrocities Prevention Board" *USIP On the Issues* by Jonas Claes, April 2012.
- "Despite Big Unresolved Issues, Progress in Iran Nuclear Negotiations" *USIP On the Issues* by Daniel Brumberg, April 2012.
- "What Does North Korea's Ballistic Missile Test Tell Us about the Reclusive Country?" *USIP On the Issues* by John Park, April 2012.
- "Examining the Prospects for Iran Nuclear Talks" *USIP On the Issues* by Daniel Brumberg, April 2012.
- "Myths and Misconceptions in the Afghan Transition" *USIP Peace Brief* by Shahmahnood Miakhel and Noah Coburn, April 2012.
- "North Korea's Planned Missile Test Steals the Spotlight at the Seoul Nuclear Security Summit" *On the Issues* by John Park, March 2012.

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## Dear Colleagues,

The violence in Syria is a tragic reminder of the difficulty of mobilizing timely and effective international action when governments attack their own people. The principle of the responsibility to protect—or R2P—is a key development in the global effort to eradicate mass atrocities. The responsibility to protect seeks to reframe the debate around "humanitarian intervention" in a way that emphasizes the complementary responsibilities of national governments and the international community.

On April 5, the U.S. Institute of Peace hosted the fifth session of the Working Group on the Responsibility to Protect, co-chaired by former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and Ambassador Richard Williamson. Jointly organized by USIP, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, and the Brookings Institution, this Working Group seeks to increase understanding of R2P and identify concrete steps to bolster the political will of U.S. decision-makers to respond in a timely manner to threats of genocide and other mass atrocities crimes. The April session focused on global perspectives on the responsibility to protect and explored the differing international views on the principle. The session featured presentations from Ambassador Hardeep Puri, India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Carlos Portales, Chile's former Permanent Representative to the United Nations, and Mr. William Awinador, deputy permanent representative of Ghana to the United Nations. A number of countries remain skeptical of the Responsibility to Protect, as they see the principle as a potential stalking-horse for Western interventionism. A majority of U.N. member states, however, remains supportive of this principle, including within the developing world. The common ground is not whether, but how to prevent atrocities.

Previous Working Group sessions discussed the role of the U.S. Executive Branch and Congress in implementing R2P and atrocity prevention policies. The Working Group also continues to organize outreach activities, including public events, private roundtables, and sub-group meetings. The Report of the co-chairs is expected to be released in December 2012.

Abiodun Williams

Senior Vice President

Center for Conflict Management

U.S. Institute of Peace



## SPOTLIGHT

# North Korean Missile Launch

Following four rounds of “exploratory talks” in New York (July 2011), Geneva (October 2011) and Beijing (December 2011 and February 2012), the U.S. and North Korea concluded the “Leap Day Agreement” on February 29. In return for 240,000 metric tons of nutritional assistance provided by the U.S., North Korea agreed to a moratorium on nuclear and missile activities. For the U.S., the deal initially appeared to signal that there was a degree of continuity in North Korean decision-making after the death of Kim Jong-il in December 2011. Since the overall arrangement had been put in place prior to Kim’s death, the Obama administration was hopeful that the deal could be the early basis for working with North Korea to prevent future provocations on the Korean Peninsula and facilitate an eventual resumption of the Six-Party Talks.

The U.S.’s tempered optimism quickly evaporated when North Korea announced on the eve of the Seoul Nuclear Security Summit—a gathering of over fifty heads of state intended to promote the prevention of nuclear terrorism—that it would launch a satellite in mid-April. During the prior episode leading up to North Korea’s April 2009 test, China and Russia supported Pyongyang’s position that it was preparing to conduct a peaceful satellite launch. This time round both countries sought to convince North Korea not to proceed with what was essentially another long-range ballistic missile test. New voices expressed direct concern—namely, the Philippines and Vietnam because the flight path of the missile test was directed southward.

Heralded as a gift from the North Korean people to Kim Il-sung to celebrate the centenary of his birth on April 15, North Korean officials took the unprecedented step of inviting foreign journalists to the new launch pad in Tongchang-ri. While these officials may have thought such access would convince the journalists of the peaceful nature of the satellite launch, the international community continued to view it as a thinly veiled long-range ballistic missile test that clearly violated prior UN Security Council resolutions prohibiting North Korea from carrying out “all ballistic missile-related activities.” Despite the clear wording of these resolutions, North Korea unsuccessfully tried to shift the focus onto the innocuous scientific satellite payload to justify its launch. However, irrespective of what was in the payload, the rocket itself was a long-range missile.

On April 13, North Korea defied the international community and conducted what turned out to be a failed enterprise. The missile disintegrated about 90 seconds after launch with debris falling into waters west of South Korea. On the surface, the failure did not appear to dampen the mass celebrations in Pyongyang surrounding the centenary of Kim Il-sung’s birth. Prior to the launch, Kim Jong-eun, grandson of the Eternal President (Kim Il-sung’s formal title), received the important ranks of First Secretary of the Party and Chairman of the Central Military Commission at a special Workers’ Party of Korea conference. Following the disastrous missile test, North Korea watchers are asking a new question: is the now formally anointed leader of North Korea competent? The consensus view among these watchers is that Kim Jong-eun will seek to compensate for this high profile failure with a nuclear test. We may be entering into a new cycle of escalation of tensions in Northeast Asia.

USIP's Korea Working Group (KWG) has been engaging current and former policymakers in Washington, Seoul, Beijing and Tokyo in Track 1.5 dialogues that seek to develop collaborative ways to prevent future North Korean provocations.

## OVER THE HORIZON— HIGHLIGHTS

### U.S.-Pakistan Relations

That U.S.-Pakistan relations are at their lowest ebb has become clichéd after months of crises and finger pointing between both sides. The tension in the relationship remains even as critics continue to point out that precious time is being lost in the partnership. The Pakistani parliamentary review of the bilateral relationship has dragged on, and ruling and opposition parties are at loggerheads on the recommendations tabled by the Parliament's National Security Committee. There are signs that the Pakistani government is frustrated with the parliamentary process. The civilian government and military top brass have begun to open up communication channels with the United States. President Obama and Pakistan Prime Minister Gilani met in Seoul in late-March and other high ranking Pentagon and State Department officials have traveled to Pakistan. However, the all-important NATO supply route through Pakistan remains closed, and the parliamentary recommendations provide little maneuvering space to the government on the drone strikes. There is a demand for an unconditional U.S. apology for the NATO airstrike which killed 24 Pakistani soldiers, and the review urges the Pakistani government to pursue energy ties with Iran notwithstanding U.S. pressure. The coming weeks are likely to see Islamabad reengage the U.S. as both sides try to put the relationship back on track. However, expectations must be kept modest as an already-weak Pakistani government is unlikely to put its political fortunes at home on the line. Broader engagement will have to follow at its own pace, presuming there are no fresh crises that derail the process again.

USIP staff briefed relevant U.S. Government and Congressional staff on Pakistan related issues. The program's analytical work remains focused on examining Pakistan's conflict dynamics, with recent work analyzing violence and extremism in the port city of Karachi.

### USIP Academy Courses on Nuclear Issues and Conflict Prevention

USIP's Academy for International Conflict Management and Peacebuilding offered two courses in March on the role of nuclear arms control and nonproliferation in conflict prevention. Part of a series on nuclear issues, these were the first to focus on specific countries. One examined the separate proliferation challenges posed by Iran and Pakistan, while the other focused on the challenge of North Korea and on China as a rising regional and global power. USIP experts Bruce MacDonald, Mike Lekson, John Park, and Moeed Yusuf and guest lecturer David Albright provided balanced, in-depth analyses of regional nuclear issues and their impact on the global nonproliferation regime. Conducted as interactive seminars with elements of group discussion and simulation exercise, these courses drew a diverse set of participants. For other Academy courses related to conflict prevention and other aspects of peacebuilding, please visit <http://www.usip.org/courses>.

“An already-weak Pakistani government is unlikely to put its political forces at home on the line.”



USIP Academy Course. Source: USIP staff.



## Stalled Israel–Palestine Peace Process

Official talks between Israel and the Palestinian Authority have not been held since 2010 and a round of preliminary talks failed to produce results earlier this year. Mid-late April saw an exchange of letters between the two sides, addressing the stalled peace process and putting forth their own positions on a resumption of negotiations. The Palestinian side reiterated its long-held position that the Netanyahu government must stop the construction of settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem and accept the 1967 borders formula as the basis for a two-state solution. The Israeli government responded by expressing its willingness to resume talks to discuss all core issues of the conflict, but without the imposition of preconditions by either side. Meanwhile, March 2012 saw the worst violence between Israel and Gaza since 2009. The flare up followed the Israeli Defense Forces' targeted assassination of a leader of the Popular Resistance Committees in Gaza, whom Israel accused of actively planning a terrorist attack aimed at their southern border. Palestinian militants launched over 200 rockets into Israel over a four day period, and Israel retaliated with targeted air strikes on Gaza. Islamic Jihad, who suffered most of the casualties, took responsibility for the rocket fire. Hamas disavowed any role, indicating that it had no appetite for this latest round of violence. Hamas's reluctance to engage in open hostilities with Israel comes on the heels of clear signals the group has sent that it is distancing itself from its Syrian and Iranian backers. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Netanyahu, fresh from a trip to the United States during which he pushed the U.S. to play a strong role in thwarting Iran's nuclear ambitions, retained his focus on the threat from Iran. Reacting to the hostilities with Gaza, the Prime Minister pointed to Iranian material support for the missile attacks and for Islamic Jihad, arguing that this latest round of violence underscored the danger Iran poses to Israel.

## Iran and P5+1 Nuclear Talks to Resume

Talks between Iran and the P5+1 (UN Security Council permanent members plus Germany) on Iran's nuclear programs took place on April 14 in Istanbul, Turkey. These talks occurred in a context of escalating crisis and tension, arising out of Iran's continued defiance of international demands to suspend nuclear fuel activities, intensified energy and financial sanctions on Iran and market-rattling talk of military strikes against Iran's nuclear facilities. No side could afford these talks to collapse, given the implications. EU foreign policy Chief Catherine Ashton's statement is important to note here indicating that "we have agreed that the nonproliferation treaty (NPT) forms a key basis for what must be serious engagement to ensure that all the obligations under the treaty are met by Iran while fully respecting Iran's right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy." Moreover, Iran's representative, Saeed Jalili, who was there in his capacity as representative of Supreme Leader Khamanei, praised this "positive approach," and the talks themselves, which he said, advanced a "process of cooperation." Thus, real compromise was seen on both sides, including a resumption of talks in Baghdad on May 23. It is not yet clear what issues the next round of talks will address but it is important to note Ashton and colleagues' insistence on subsequent talks leading to "concrete steps towards a comprehensive negotiated solution." Moreover, the agreement to meet in Baghdad was a critical confidence building measure, but we are still early in the game.

## Security Sector Reform in Libya

USIP continues to engage Libyans in support of a stable and peaceful transition, including in areas related to rule of law, justice sector reform, and conflict management. In Libya, the



USIP's Manal Omar on the ground in Benghazi, Libya, in June 2011.

Source: USIP staff.

- “Learning from Sudan’s 2011 Referendum” *USIP Special Report* by Jon Temin and Lawrence Woocher, March 2012.
- “Gen. John Allen’s Testimony and the Way Ahead in Afghanistan” *On the Issues* by Andrew Wilder, March 2012.
- “Lessons from Women’s Programs in Afghanistan and Iraq” *USIP Special Report* by Kathleen Kuehnast, Manal Omar, Steven E. Steiner and Hodei Sultan, March 2012.

USIP Security Sector Governance Center will meet with the representatives from the defense and interior ministries, militia groups, political parties, the UN and foreign observers to discuss the challenges when creating national military and police forces, integrating militia units, and strengthening ministerial oversight. The SSG Center will provide briefings and prepare a report for U.S. government agencies on security sector reform in Libya. In cooperation with the Libyan Ministry of Justice, USIP’s Rule of Law Center plans to conduct workshops in Libya that bring together civil society and justice sector officials to discuss justice and security challenges. In addition, USIP and the Libyan Ministry of Justice will conduct an operational analysis of justice and security issues in Libya to identify public and professional perceptions of the justice system, its challenges, and what Libyans expect from the justice system in the future.

## Atrocity Prevention through Persuasion and Deterrence

Both in theory and practice, political missions and preventive deployments have primarily been identified as potentially useful instruments for preventive diplomacy or conflict management. However, little analytical effort has been made to assess the utility of both tools for the prevention of mass atrocities or R2P crimes, even though both mission types have operated within atrocity situations, and arguably mitigated the risk or impact of atrocities in the past. On April 4, USIP organized an input session with policy-makers and academics to address this question. Our discussion addressed the role, constraints and advantages of political missions and preventive deployments as a crisis prevention instrument, when atrocity crimes are considered imminent or ongoing. This initiative will result in an online USIP publication serving as input for the UN Secretary-General’s Report in advance of this summer’s interactive dialogue at the UN General Assembly on R2P Pillar III. R2P’s third pillar includes both pacific and coercive tools for collective action in case the international community is facing imminent or ongoing atrocities after local efforts or international capacity-building failed to prevent a crisis situation.

## WORKING GROUPS

- On April 12, the **Korea Working Group (KWG)** participated in a closed briefing for Admiral Jonathan Greenert, Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), on key findings from recent Northeast Asia Track 1.5 work. On March 20, the KWG briefed the Treasury Department’s North Korea sanctions team on latest developments in Sino-DPRK commercial interactions and implications for U.S. sanctions efforts. On March 18, the KWG convened the 5th USIP-KINU Washington Workshop titled “The Outlook for the North Korean Situation and Prospects for U.S.-ROK Cooperation after the Death of Kim Jong-il.”
- In March, the **Lebanon Working Group (LWG)** met with current U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon, Maura Connelly. Ambassador Connelly briefed the group on current political and security challenges facing Lebanon and the impact of the deepening crisis in Syria.
- USIP hosted the fifth session of the **Working Group on the Responsibility to Protect** on April 5. This meeting explored the differing international views on the R2P principle. The Report of the Working Group co-chairs will be released in December 2012.
- In February, members of the **Yemen Working Group** participated in a video conference with U.S. Ambassador to Yemen Gerry Feierstein to discuss the state of the ongoing transition in the country.



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