



CHRONOLOGY OF ARMAMENTS, DISARMAMENT AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY 2011

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This chronology lists the significant events in 2011 related to armaments, disarmament and international security. In addition to the headline-grabbing events, it also records the less publicized, but no less important, advances and setbacks in arms controls and international security.

Dates are according to local time. Keywords are given in the margins. Abbreviations are explained below.

9 January

Polling stations open for a referendum on southern Sudan's independence from Sudan. The referendum is a result of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement, which granted the south the right to self-determination.

10 January

The Basque separatist group Euzkadi ta Azkatasuna (ETA, Basque Land and Liberty) declares 'a permanent and general ceasefire which will be verifiable by the international community'. More than 800 people have been killed in ETA-related violence since the group's founding in 1968.

11 January

Chinese President Hu Jintao confirms that a first test flight of a stealth jet fighter (the J-20) has been carried out after accounts of the test and pictures of a prototype of the aircraft appear on Chinese websites.

14 January

Following weeks of violent anti-government protests throughout Tunisia, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali is forced to leave the country. The Prime Minister, Mohamed Ghannouchi, declares that he will remain in power until elections are held. Ben Ali's overthrow marks the first time an Arab leader has left his post after public demonstrations.

KEYWORDS

Sudan; Southern Sudan

Spain

China; Aircraft

Tunisia

**18 January**

Iraq; Terrorism

A suicide bomber kills 50 people and wounds 150 in an attack on police recruits in Tikrit, Iraq, in the first major attack since the formation of the new government in December 2010. No group claims responsibility, but it is similar to previous bombings by the Islamic State of Iraq, an organization affiliated with al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia.

24 January

Russia; Terrorism

An explosion in the international terminal at Domodedovo airport, Moscow, Russia, kills at least 35 people and injures more than 130. No group claims responsibility, but Russian officials accuse Islamist militants from the North Caucasus.

25 January

Egypt

Following violent anti-government protests in Tunisia, tens of thousands of people take to the streets in Cairo and other large cities throughout Egypt, demanding the resignation of President Hosni Mubarak. Violence escalates in subsequent weeks, and protesters loyal to Mubarak clash with anti-government groups.

26 January

Russia; USA; Nuclear arms control; New START

The Federation Council, the upper house of the Russian Parliament, approves the Treaty on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (New START). The State Duma had ratified the treaty on 25 January and the US Senate on 22 December 2010. The treaty will enter into force on the date of exchange of instruments of ratification.

4 February

ASEAN; Cambodia; Thailand

Military clashes at the disputed border between Cambodia and Thailand resume and continue sporadically throughout the spring of 2011. On 4 May a ceasefire is agreed. Indonesia, acting as chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), attempts to mediate, and on 6 May both parties agree terms of reference for an Indonesian observer team.

5 February

Russia; USA; Nuclear arms control; New START

The Treaty on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (New START) enters into force after Russia and the USA exchange instruments of ratification.

7 February

Sudan; Southern Sudan

Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir announces the Sudanese Government's acceptance of the results of the 9 January referendum on independence for southern Sudan in which nearly 99 per cent of the registered voters participated. Southern Sudan will become independent in July 2011.



9–10 February

The Sudan People's Liberation Army clashes in the state of Jonglei with rebel forces loyal to General George Athor, leaving almost 200 dead. The fighting breaks a one-month armistice signed days before the 9 January referendum on independence for southern Sudan.

Southern Sudan

11 February

After weeks of protests, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak is forced to leave power.

Egypt

16–22 February

The violent anti-government protests that have taken place throughout the Middle East and North Africa reach Libya; demonstrations against the regime of Muammer Gaddafi occur in several cities. Hundreds are killed and injured when government forces responds in Tripoli and Benghazi on 21 February. The UN Security Council condemns the 'violence and use of force against civilians', deplores the 'repression against peaceful demonstrators' and expresses 'deep regret at the deaths of hundreds of civilians'. On 22 February Gaddafi states that anyone using 'force against the authority of the state will be sentenced to death'.

Libya

26 February

The UN Security Council unanimously adopts Resolution 1970, which demands an end to violence against civilian demonstrators in Libya, refers the situation to the International Criminal Court (ICC), imposes an arms embargo and a travel ban on the country, and freezes the assets of Muammer Gaddafi's family and those of government officials.

UN; ICC; Libya; Arms embargoes

28 February

The Council of the European Union adopts restrictive measures on trade with Libya, including an arms embargo, imposes a travel ban and freezes the assets of Muammer Gaddafi's family and those of government officials.

EU; Libya; ; Arms embargoes

1 March

The UN General Assembly suspends Libya from the UN Human Rights Council for 'gross and systematic' human rights violations.

UN; Libya

8 March

Violent fighting between protesters and forces loyal to Muammer Gaddafi in the town of Zawiyah leaves dozens of people dead and many wounded. Fighting, which began on 16 February, persists throughout Libya as Gaddafi tries to regain control of cities held by rebel forces, using air strikes, armour and artillery.

Libya

**12 March**

Japan; Nuclear energy

Following a devastating earthquake and tsunami that kill over 18 400 people in northern Japan on 11 March, the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear reactors are partly destroyed and an explosion occurs. Radioactive steam is released and people are evacuated from the area. Following the disaster, many countries re-evaluate their nuclear energy programmes, and there are anti-nuclear demonstrations globally.

Libya; Arab League

The Arab League asks the UN Security Council to impose a no-fly zone over Libya to protect civilians. It suspends Libya from the organization and opens contact with rebel forces via the Libyan National Transitional Council (NTC).

14 March

GCC; Bahrain

Following weeks of anti-government protest in Manama, Bahrain, the government requests assistance from the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) to quell the unrest. Troops are provided by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Several protesters are killed or wounded.

17 March

UN; Libya

The UN Security Council adopts Resolution 1973 by a vote of 10–0, with Brazil, China, Germany, India and Russia abstaining. The resolution approves a no-fly zone over Libya and authorizes UN member states to act individually or through regional organizations and to use all necessary measures to protect civilians under threat of attack in Libya, including in Benghazi. It excludes the sending of any foreign occupation force to any part of Libya.

18 March

Libya

Following the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1793 on 17 March, the Libyan Foreign Minister, Moussa Koussa, announces an ‘immediate ceasefire and the stoppage of all military operations’. In eastern Libya, government armed forces reportedly continue to attack cities held by rebel forces.

Yemen

Security forces and government supporters open fire on demonstrators in Sana’a, Yemen, killing at least 40 people and injuring more than 100. The anti-government demonstration is the largest to occur in Yemen and follows weeks of escalating protests and violence.

19 March

UN; Libya

A coalition including Canada, France, Italy, the UK and the USA launch an operation to enforce the no-fly zone in Libya that was authorized by UN Security Council Resolution 1973. French fighter aircraft attack Libyan tanks south of Benghazi, in eastern Libya, and British and US cruise missiles are fired at Libyan military installations along the coastline.



23 March

As part of Operation Unified Protector, NATO warships and aircraft patrol Libyan territorial waters to reduce the flow of arms, related material and mercenaries to Libya, in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 1970.

NATO; Libya

29 March

The Republican Forces of presidential claimant Alassane Ouattara take control of a number of towns in Côte d'Ivoire and proceed towards the capital, Abidjan, which is held by troops loyal to the incumbent president, Laurent Gbagbo. Ouattara had been declared the winner of presidential elections on 28 November 2010, but Gbagbo had refused to accept defeat. Fighting between their supporters had escalated. On 7 December 2010 the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) had recognized Ouattara as the winner, but attempts by the African Union and ECOWAS to solve the crisis by peaceful means failed.

Côte d'Ivoire

30 March

Following presidential elections on 4 February, the new civilian president of Myanmar, U Thein Sein, together with two vice-presidents, takes power after almost 50 years of military rule. The former ruling body, the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC), is 'officially dissolved'.

Myanmar

The UN Security Council unanimously adopts Resolution 1975, imposing targeted sanctions against Ivorian President Laurent Gbagbo and his associates. Heavy fighting erupts in Abidjan on 31 March. The UN estimates that about 500 people have been killed and more than 1 million displaced in the fighting since November 2010.

UN; Côte d'Ivoire

31 March

NATO and its allies take the lead in Operation Unified Protector, a military operation in Libya conducted under UN Security Council Resolution 1793, with the goal of protecting civilians and civilian-populated areas that are under threat of attack by the regime of Muammer Gaddafi.

NATO; Libya

1 April

Following the burning of the Koran by US Christian extremists at the Dove World Outreach Center, Florida, on 20 March, thousands of protesters storm the compound of the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) in Mazar-i-Sharif, Afghanistan. At least 20 people are killed. Massive protests occur throughout Afghanistan for several days.

UN; Afghanistan



UN; Israel; Palestinians; War crimes

1 April

Richard Goldstone, head of the 2009 UN Human Rights Council Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict, retracts some of the conclusions made in its report on Israel's intentional targeting of civilians during the conflict. On 14 April the three other members of the mission criticize Goldstone and state that they stand by the report's conclusions.

2 April

Côte d'Ivoire

International humanitarian organizations report that a massacre, killing at least 800, was committed in Duekoué, Côte d'Ivoire, by the Republican Forces loyal to Alassane Ouattara. The killings are alleged to have taken place between 27 and 29 March during inter-ethnic fighting.

4 April

UN; DRC

An aircraft in use by the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) crashes while landing in poor weather conditions in Kinshasa, killing 32 people, in one of the worst accidents involving a UN aircraft.

UN; Côte d'Ivoire

Forces from the UN Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), supported by French forces, carry out a military operation and attack weapon stores at President Laurent Gbagbo's military camp in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. The UN forces have been instructed by the UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, to take 'all necessary measures' to prevent the use of heavy weapons against civilians.

10 April

AU; Libya

The African Union (AU) sends representatives from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali, Mauritania, South Africa and Uganda to Libya to negotiate a 'roadmap to peace', including an immediate ceasefire, suspension of NATO air strikes and talks to reach a political solution to the conflict in Libya. Muammer Gaddafi accepts the road map, but the rebel forces' National Transitional Council (NTC) rejects it because it does not require the regime to leave power immediately.

11 April

Côte d'Ivoire

Following attacks by UN helicopters on Ivorian President Laurent Gbagbo's residence on 10 April, the Republican Forces loyal to Alassane Ouattara, and supported by French and UN forces, capture and arrest Gbagbo.

13–15 April

MTCR

At a plenary meeting in Buenos Aires, Argentina, the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) partners agree to strengthen cooperation with non-partners in missile non-proliferation and underline the importance of transit and trans-shipment controls.

**19 April**

After a month of violent anti-government protests, with nearly 200 people killed, the Syrian Government announces that the 48-year-old emergency powers law will be lifted, but demonstrations continue.

Syria

20 April

The UN Security Council unanimously adopts Resolution 1977, which extends the mandate of the 1540 Committee for 10 years. The committee is urged to intensify its efforts to promote full implementation by all states of Resolution 1540 (2004) on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and is requested to carry out a comprehensive review of implementation.

UN; WMD

The UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) condemns the alleged repeated use of cluster munitions and heavy weapons in Misrata by Libyan Government forces, claiming that their use could be considered a war crime and serious violation of international humanitarian law.

Libya; War crimes

24 April

Two NATO missiles hit Muammar Gaddafi's compound, Bab al-Azizia, in Tripoli, Libya. The Libyan Government accuses NATO of trying to assassinate Gaddafi. On 30 April, in the second air strike in a week, NATO again attacks one of Gaddafi's residences, killing members of his family.

NATO; Libya

25 April

Violence escalates throughout Syria and at least 3000 troops, backed by tanks and heavy weapons, open fire in the town of Deraa, the centre of the anti-government protests. The UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) condemns the violence and the US Government considers imposing sanctions on Syria.

Syria

28 April

UN Security Council unanimously adopts Resolution 1980 extending the arms embargo and the diamond trade ban on Côte d'Ivoire until 30 April 2012, stating that it can be lifted or modified earlier depending on progress in the peace process.

UN; Côte d'Ivoire; Arms embargoes

30 April

At the second meeting of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI), which was formed in September 2010, its 10 members—Australia, Canada, Chile, Germany, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, Poland, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates—adopt the Berlin Statement on Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation, containing four proposals for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Disarmament; Nuclear weapons

**1 May**

USA; al-Qaeda

US President Barack Obama announces that US special forces have located and killed al-Qaeda's leader, Osama bin Laden, in Abbottabad, Pakistan, in a 'targeted operation'.

4 MayPalestinian territories;
Egypt

In Cairo, in a deal brokered by the Egyptian Government, the leaders of the main Palestinian factions, President Mahmoud Abbas (Fatah) and Khaled Meshaal (Hamas), sign a reconciliation agreement committing them to form an interim unity government and hold elections in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank within a year.

9 May

EU; Arms embargoes; Syria

In response to the violent repression by Syrian Government forces of peaceful protests, the Council of the European Union adopts an embargo against Syria on arms and equipment that could be used for internal repression and a visa ban and freezes the assets of officials and individuals with ties to the Syrian regime.

13 May

Pakistan; Terrorism

Two suicide bomb attacks at a paramilitary training centre in the Charsadda district, north-western Pakistan, kill at least 70 people and injure 100. Pakistani Taliban groups claim responsibility and state that the attacks are revenge for the death of Osama bin Laden on 1 May.

15 May

Israel; Palestinian territories

Thousands of Palestinians in East Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank demonstrate to commemorate Nakba Day, marking the Palestinian displacement and the creation of Israel in 1948. The protesters clash with the Israeli Army and police on Israeli's borders with Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. At least 13 people are killed. Israel accuses Syria of provoking the confrontations.

16 May

ICC; Libya

The prosecutor at the International Criminal Court (ICC), The Hague, Netherlands, formally requests arrest warrants for Libyan leader Muammer Gaddafi, his son Saif al-Islam Gaddafi and the head of the Libyan intelligence service, Abdullah Senussi, on charges of war crimes. The ICC prosecutor states that the three are operating as an 'inner circle', orchestrating the killing of peaceful protesters.

**17 May**

The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) in Arusha, Tanzania, finds the former head of the Rwandan Army, Augustin Bizimungu, guilty of genocide and crimes against humanity that were committed in the 1994 civil war and sentences him to 30 years in prison. Bizimungu has been on trial since his arrest in 2002.

ICTR; Rwanda

26 May

The Bosnian Serb military leader Ratko Mladić is arrested by Serbian police and indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), The Hague, Netherlands, for war crimes and genocide during the 1990s Bosnian war.

ICTY; Bosnia and Herzegovina

27 May

The Leaders of the Group of Eight industrialized states (G8), meeting in Deauville, France, agree to extend its 2002 Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction for an unspecified period beyond its 2012 expiration.

G8; WMD

31 May

At the All Darfur Stakeholders Conference in Doha, Qatar, the Doha Peace Document is adopted as the basis for a comprehensive and final peace agreement to end the conflict in Darfur, Sudan.

Sudan

2-3 June

Meeting in Vienna, Austria, the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCOC) participants welcome the accession of Iraq and the Central African Republic to the regime, bringing the number of subscribing states to 132.

HCOC; Ballistic missiles

3 June

In an attack on the presidential compound in Sana'a, Yemen, President Ali Abdullah Saleh is seriously wounded, and some senior officials are killed or wounded. Saleh is taken to Saudi Arabia for treatment. Violence has escalated in Yemen since the end of May.

Yemen

10 June

Meeting in Paris, France, the Australia Group approves a new manual containing guidance on how to manage intangible technology transfers.

Australia Group

14 June

The Arab League publicly criticizes the ongoing violence in Syria, stating that it is 'angry and actively monitoring' the crisis.

Arab League; Syria

**20 June**

- Syria
Protests erupt throughout Syria following the first public speech in two months by President Bashar al-Assad, who promises national dialogue and reforms. The opposition forces claim that at least 1400 people have been killed and 10 000 arrested since violent protests against the regime started in March. The European Union strengthens its financial sanctions against the Syrian regime.
- AU; UN; Sudan; Southern Sudan
Meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) and the Sudanese Government sign a demilitarization agreement for the contested region of Abyei on the border of southern Sudan. The deal, negotiated under the auspices of the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP), permits Ethiopian peacekeeping troops to be deployed in the area. On 27 June the UN Security Council adopts Resolution 1990, establishing the UN Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA).
- NATO; Libya
NATO officials confirm that an air strike on 19 June in Tripoli, Libya, that was intended to hit a military missile site instead struck a residential area, killing and injuring several civilians.
- EU; Belarus; Arms embargoes
The Council of the European Union adopts Council Decision 2011/357/CFSP, imposing an arms embargo on Belarus to strengthen its existing sanctions on the leadership of the country in response to the deteriorating human rights, democracy and rule-of-law situation in Belarus.

22 June

- USA; Afghanistan
US President Barack Obama announces that the USA has largely achieved its goals in Afghanistan and plans to withdraw 10 000 troops from the country by the end of 2011, and an additional 20 000 troops by the summer of 2012. The drawdown will then continue 'at a steady pace' until 2014. The troop reductions are larger and the pace more rapid than suggested by military commanders.

23–24 June

- Nuclear Suppliers Group
Meeting in Noordwijk, the Netherlands, the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) agrees to strengthen the NSG guidelines on the transfer of sensitive enrichment and reprocessing technologies.

27 June

- ICC; Libya; War crimes
Pre-Trial Chamber I of the International Criminal Court (ICC), The Hague, Netherlands, issues warrants for the arrest of Muammer Gaddafi, Saif al-Islam Gaddafi and Abdullah Senussi on charges of crimes against humanity (murder and persecution) in Libya. The crimes were allegedly committed throughout Libya during February 2011 using the state apparatus and security forces.



29 June

Meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N) sign a framework agreement for the states of South Kordufan and Blue Nile, under which a Joint Security Committee and a Joint Political Committee are formed to address remaining issues regarding border security.

Sudan

30 June

The Western European Union (WEU) ceases to exist as a treaty-based international organization. Residual administrative tasks are transferred to the European Union Satellite Centre.

WEU

30 June–1 July

The five permanent members of the UN Security Council—China, France, Russia, the UK and the USA—meet in Paris, France, for a Conference on Confidence Building Measures Towards Nuclear Disarmament, establishing a regular multilateral dialogue among themselves on nuclear transparency, verification and confidence-building measures.

P5; Nuclear arms control

8 July

The UN Security Council unanimously adopts Resolution 1996, establishing the UN Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS) as of 9 July to consolidate peace and security. The mandate of the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) ends on the same date.

UN; South Sudan;
Peacekeeping operations

9 July

The Republic of South Sudan is officially declared an independent state in Juba. On 14 July the UN General Assembly admits it as its 193rd member.

South Sudan

18 July

The International Court of Justice (ICJ), The Hague, Netherlands, decides that the disputed temple area Preah Vihear belongs to Cambodia, under a 1962 ICJ decision, and that both Cambodia and Thailand should immediately withdraw military personnel from the demilitarized zone around the temple. The two countries should also continue their cooperation initiated within the framework of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The conflict has been ongoing since 2008.

ICJ; Thailand; Cambodia

The Council of the European Union adopts Council Decision 2011/423/CFSP, amending its 2005 decision imposing an arms embargo on Sudan so that it covers arms supplies to both Sudan and the newly independent state of South Sudan.

EU; South Sudan; Arms embargoes

**22 July**

Norway; Terrorism

Government buildings in Oslo, Norway, are damaged by a massive bomb, and a few hours later a shooting attack occurs at a Labour Party youth camp on an island outside Oslo, killing 76 people and injuring many. A Norwegian right-wing extremist is arrested and charged with carrying out both attacks.

31 July

Syria

At least 140 civilians are killed in clashes between Syrian Government forces and anti-government protesters. The largest number of deaths occurs in the city of Hama when government security forces attack using tanks. On 3 August the UN Security Council issues a statement condemning the Syrian authorities 'widespread violations of human rights and use of force against civilians'.

6 August

AU; Somalia

Following an offensive by government troops and forces of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), the Islamist rebel group al-Shabab announces a 'tactical' withdrawal from Mogadishu, Somalia. The group still controls several towns in southern Somalia.

15 August

Iraq; Terrorism

In a series of suicide attacks and car bombings targeted at civilians and security forces throughout Iraq, at least 90 people are killed and 300 are injured. No group claims responsibility.

17 August

Syria

Following an appeal by the UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, to halt the violence, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad states that all military and police operations against anti-government protesters have ceased. Syria is criticized for its violence against civilians by several states in the Middle East. On 18 August the European Union and the USA demand al-Assad's resignation.

17-22 August

Turkey; Iraq; Kurds

Following an attack by rebel forces of the Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan (PKK, Kurdistan Workers' Party), the Turkish Army conducts a series of air strikes over six days, targeting 132 PKK strongholds in northern Iraq. Up to 100 rebels are killed and more than 80 wounded.

**18 August**

In coordinated attacks on civilian and military vehicles by gunmen in southern Israel, several people are killed or injured. Hamas denies responsibility for the attacks. Israel immediately retaliates, launching air attacks on Rafah in the Gaza Strip.

Israel; Palestinian territories

23 August

Rebel forces, backed by NATO air strikes, capture Muammer Gaddafi's compound, Bab al-Azizia, in Tripoli, Libya, but are unable to gain control of the whole capital and fighting continues. Government forces still control the cities of Sirte and Sabha. Gaddafi himself is not located.

NATO; Libya

26 August

An explosion at UN headquarters in Abuja, Nigeria, kills at least 18 people and injures many. An Islamist group linked to al-Qaeda, Boko Haram ('Western education is sinful'), claims responsibility for the attack, the first on UN representatives in Nigeria.

UN; Nigeria; Terrorism

Violent ethnic clashes in Jonglei state, South Sudan, that began on 18 August and leave at least 600 people dead and 1000 injured, prompt the deployment of peacekeepers from the UN Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS) together with members of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) in an attempt restore peace and stability.

UN; South Sudan

1 September

At a conference in Paris, France, hosted by French President Nicolas Sarkozy and the British Prime Minister, David Cameron, leaders of the Libyan National Transitional Council (NTC) and over 60 states and international organizations discuss a road map for Libya's humanitarian, political and economic future. The participants agree to continue NATO operations, to bring those guilty of war crimes to justice and to help the NTC achieve political transition.

Libya

2 September

The organization WikiLeaks releases the complete, unredacted archive of 250 000 confidential US diplomatic cables (Cablegate) on the Internet.

USA; Foreign policy

6 September

Meeting in Mogadishu, Somalia, under the auspices of the UN Special Representative for Somalia, at the Consultative Meeting on Ending the Transition, delegates from the Transitional Federal Institutions (TFIs) and regional representatives agree on a road map of measures and principles for their implementation leading to the end of transition on 20 August 2012.

UN; Somalia

**13–14 September**

Afghanistan; Terrorism

Taliban militants launch an attack on government buildings, the US Embassy and the headquarters of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Kabul, Afghanistan, killing several people. NATO blames the attack on the Haqqani Network, an al-Qaeda ally, based in Pakistan.

16 September

UN; Libya

The UN General Assembly recognizes the National Transitional Council (NTC) as Libya's representative in the UN, and the Security Council unanimously adopts Resolution 2009, establishing the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) to support the NTC. The resolution lifts parts of the arms embargo, the assets freeze and the no-fly zone imposed earlier in 2011.

22 September

IAEA; Nuclear safety

Meeting in Vienna, Austria, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) General Conference unanimously endorses an action plan on nuclear safety to enhance transparency in the ongoing efforts to set effective global safety standards.

23 September

UN; Palestine

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas submits an application for full UN membership for Palestine to the UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon. The application is transmitted to the UN Security Council.

29 September

China; Space programmes

China launches an experimental space laboratory module, Tiangong-1, from Jiuquan Space Centre, to lay the groundwork for a future space station. This is China's most ambitious space project since its first manned space flight in 2003.

CFE Treaty

The fourth Review Conference of the 1990 Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE Treaty) is held in Vienna, Austria.

30 September

USA; Yemen; CIA; al-Qaeda

In northern Yemen, Anwar al-Awlaki, a US citizen and leading figure in al-Qaeda on the Arabian Peninsula, is killed by a missile fired from an unmanned aircraft by the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). This is the first CIA strike in Yemen since 2002.



30 September

The UN Security Council unanimously adopts Resolution 2010, requesting the African Union (AU) to ‘urgently increase’ the strength of the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) to the mandated level of 12 000 uniformed personnel and to extend the mission’s authorization until 31 October 2012. The resolution calls on member states and international and regional organizations to provide additional equipment, technical aid and funding to the enlarged force.

AU; UN; Somalia

4 October

A truck loaded with bombs explodes in a government district in Mogadishu, Somalia, killing more than 80 people and injuring many. The Islamist group al-Shabab claims responsibility for the attack, the largest since the group withdrew from Mogadishu on 6 August and one of the most devastating attacks to date.

Somalia; Terrorism

11 October

Israel and Hamas announce that they have reached an agreement to exchange more than 1000 Palestinian prisoners for an Israeli soldier, Gilad Shalit, who has been held prisoner in the Gaza Strip since June 2006. The deal is negotiated under the auspices of Egypt. The exchange of prisoners starts on 18 October.

Israel; Palestinian territories

The US Attorney General accuses Iranian officials of conspiring to assassinate the Saudi Arabian ambassador to the USA and of planning to bomb the Israeli Embassy in the USA and the Israeli and Saudi embassies in Argentina. Iran ‘strongly and categorically rejects’ the accusations.

USA; Iran; Saudi Arabia; Israel

20 October

The Libyan National Transitional Council (NTC) announces the capture and subsequent killing of the former Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi, when NTC forces, supported by NATO air strikes, liberate the city of Sirte, the last stronghold of the forces loyal to Gaddafi.

Libya

The Basque separatist group Euzkadi ta Azkatasuna (ETA, Basque Land and Liberty) announces ‘the definite cessation of its military activities’ and declares its desire for ‘direct dialogue’ with the governments of France and Spain. ETA has sought Basque independence since 1968.

Spain

23 October

In Benghazi, Libya, leaders of the Libyan National Transitional Council (NTC) declare an end to the uprising in the country. The NTC is to select a new interim government within three months, elections to a national council are to be held within eight months and a full government is to be elected a year after that.

Libya

**31 October**

- UNESCO; Palestine By 107 votes in favour, 14 against and 52 abstentions, the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) General Conference admits Palestine as its 195th member.
- NATO; Libya NATO ends its Operation Unified Protector in Libya.

5 November

- Nigeria; Terrorism At least 63 people are killed in a series of coordinated gun and bomb attacks in Yobe, a north-eastern state in Nigeria. Boko Haram ('Western education is sinful'), an Islamist group linked to al-Qaeda, claims responsibility for the attacks. The violence is among the worst seen since the group launched its insurgency against the government, demanding wider application of sharia law in Nigeria in 2009.

8 November

- UN; IAEA; Iran The Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Yukiya Amano, releases his report on implementation by Iran of its 1968 Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) safeguards agreement and relevant provisions of UN Security Council resolutions, covering developments since 2 September 2011. The report states that 'Iran has carried out activities relevant to the development of a nuclear device' that might still be ongoing. Iran rejects the report, claiming it is 'unbalanced, unprofessional and politically motivated'.

12 November

- Arab League; EU; Syria Meeting in Cairo, Egypt, the Arab League decides to suspend Syria, as of 16 November, from its activities because of the violent repression of anti-government protesters. On 13 November the European Union decides to strengthen its sanctions against Syria.

14–25 November

- CCW Convention The Fourth Review Conference of the 1981 Certain Conventional Weapons Convention (CCW Convention) is held in Geneva, Switzerland.

16 November

- Syria The Free Syrian Army, composed of defectors from the Syrian Army, claims to have launched several attacks on government military bases near Damascus, including on an air force intelligence compound. The attacks are not independently confirmed. Violence in Syria has escalated and several attacks on foreign diplomatic missions have occurred in recent weeks. The UN estimates that more than 3500 people have been killed since March 2011.



16 November

Meeting in Rabat, Morocco, the foreign ministers of the Arab League offers Syria a new deadline to accept the League's peace plan, calling on the Syrian Government to stop its violent repression of anti-government protesters. The Arab League also offers to send civilian and military monitors to Syria.

Arab League; Syria

21 November

Following the 8 November release of an International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) report on the Iranian nuclear programme, Canada, the UK and the USA impose new sanctions on Iran's banks and oil industry. In protest against the sanctions, students storm the British Embassy in Tehran on 28 November.

Canada; UK; USA; Iran;
Sanctions

22 November

The USA announces, in Vienna, Austria, that it will cease carrying out certain obligations under the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE Treaty) with regard to Russia. The USA will continue to implement the treaty and carry out all obligations with all other states parties, and will resume full treaty implementation if Russia resumes implementation of its treaty obligations. Russia suspended its participation in the CFE Treaty in 2007.

USA; Russia; CFE Treaty

23 November

Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh signs an agreement brokered by the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, under which power is transferred to the vice-president in an attempt to restore calm to Yemen after 10 months of political instability and violence.

GCC; Yemen

26 November

NATO helicopters from the US-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan cross the Pakistani border and launch an air attack on a military checkpoint in Mohmand region, killing 24 Pakistani soldiers. Pakistan calls the attack 'unprovoked' and 'deliberate' and closes ISAF's supply routes at Torkham and Chaman on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. US officials claim that the ISAF troops came under fire and acted in self-defence. NATO will initiate an investigation.

NATO; ISAF; Pakistan;
Afghanistan

27 November

Meeting in Cairo, Egypt, the Arab League agrees to impose immediate broad economic sanctions on Syria. The Syrian Foreign Minister, Walid Muallem, states that the Arab League has declared 'economic war' on Syria by imposing sanctions and that Syria will use 'its strategic location to retaliate'. On 3 December the sanctions are expanded to include an arms embargo. This is the first time that the Arab League has imposed an arms embargo.

Arab League; Syria; Arms
embargoes

**30 November**

UK; Iran Following the storming of its embassy in Tehran, Iran, the British Foreign Minister, William Hague, announces that the UK is closing the embassy and ordering the expulsion of Iranian diplomats from the UK.

5–22 December

BTWC The Seventh Review Conference of the States Parties to the 1972 Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) is held in Geneva.

5 December

UN; Eritrea; Sanctions The UN Security Council adopts, by a vote of 13–0, with China and Russia abstaining, Resolution 2023, which expands the sanctions imposed by Resolution 1907 (2009) and demands that Eritrea cease providing support to all direct or indirect efforts to destabilize Somalia and other parts of the Horn of Africa.

ICC; Côte d'Ivoire Former Ivorian President Laurent Gbagbo appears before the International Criminal Court (ICC), having been detained by the ICC on 30 November. Gbagbo is brought to account for his individual responsibility in the violence during the civil war in Côte d'Ivoire following the elections in 2010. He is the first former head of state to appear before the court.

6 December

Afghanistan; Terrorism A series of coordinated suicide bomb attacks at Shia shrines in Kabul, Kandahar and Mazar-i-Sharif, Afghanistan, kill at least 63 people and injure many more. Lashkar-e-Jhangvi al-Alami, a Pakistani militant group with close ties to al-Qaeda, claims responsibility for the attacks.

12 December

EU; Horn of Africa; Indian Ocean The Council of the European Union approves the establishment of Regional Maritime Capacity Building (RMCB) mission under the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) in order to strengthen the maritime capacities of eight countries in the Horn of Africa and the western Indian Ocean—Djibouti, Kenya, Mauritius, Mozambique, the Seychelles, Somalia (the regions of Puntland, Somaliland and Galmudug), Tanzania and Yemen. The RMCB will be a civilian mission and complement the EU Naval Force (EUNAVFOR, Operation Atalanta) and the EU Training Mission (EUTM) in Somalia. The mission's launch date is to be decided by the Council.

15 December

USA; Iraq A ceremony at Baghdad airport marks the end of the nine-year US military presence in Iraq, which started with the US- and British-led invasion in March 2003. The last US soldiers leave Iraq on 18 December and the 2008 Iraqi–US status of forces agreement expires on 31 December.

**17 December**

North Korean leader Kim Jong Il dies and his youngest son, Kim Jong Un, becomes the country's leader. Following the news of Kim's death, South Korea puts its military on alert along the border with North Korea.

North Korea

19 December

Meeting in Cairo, Egypt, the Arab League and Syria sign a deal allowing Arab League observers into Syria. Under the agreement Syria is also to withdraw its troops from insurgent towns, release thousands of political prisoners and open dialogue with the opposition. The observer mission, comprising 150 observers, will be fully deployed by 25 December.

Arab League; Syria

22 December

A series of coordinated bomb attacks across Baghdad, Iraq, kills at least 72 people and injures more than 200. The sectarian violence has been provoked by the issuing of an arrest warrant for Vice-President Tariq al-Hashemi (a Sunni) by the Prime Minister, Nouri al-Maliki (a Shia).

Iraq; Terrorism

29 December

Turkish military carries out air strikes in Iraq, killing 35 civilian smugglers mistaken for rebels of the Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan (PKK, Kurdistan Workers' Party).

Turkey; Iraq; Kurds

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ABBREVIATIONS

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AU	African Union
BTWC	Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention
CCW	Certain Conventional Weapons Convention
CFE Treaty	Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
EU	European Union
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
G8	Group of Eight industrialized states
HCOC	Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICJ	International Court of Justice
ICTR	International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda
ICTY	International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
MTCR	Missile Technology Control Regime
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
P5	Five permanent members of the UN Security Council
START	Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty
UN	United Nations
WEU	Western European Union
WMD	Weapon(s) of mass destruction

Other abbreviations are defined in the text.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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