

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

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I. COUNTRY REVIEWS

A. South Asia

Afghanistan

- **Former Afghan President and Head of High Peace Council Burhanuddin Rabbani assassinated in Kabul; Taliban claims responsibility for the killing; President Karzai: This is a sad day for us in Afghanistan but a day of unity and day of continuity for our efforts; President Barack Obama condemns the killing, calls it a "tragic loss; International community condemns the killing; Indian PM Dr. Manmohan Singh condemns the assassination of Afghan peace leader**

In a major setback to the Afghan peace process, former Afghan President and Head of High Peace Council Burhanuddin Rabbani has been assassinated in Kabul on September 20. Rabbani was killed at his home by a suicide attacker who officials believe had concealed a bomb in his turban. Rabbani was holding meetings with Taliban members at that time the attack. Mr Rabbani was a former President of Afghanistan and also led the main political opposition in the country. The international community has condemned the killing. Taliban has claimed responsibility for the killing.¹

Reports noted that on hearing the news, Afghan President Hamid Karzai decided to cut short his visit to the US but briefly met President Barack Obama, who condemned the killing as a "tragic loss". Both leaders reinforced their determination to continue the quest for peace. President Karzai stated, "This is a sad day for us in Afghanistan but a day of unity and day of continuity for our efforts." The leader of the opposition in the Afghan parliament, Dr. Abdullah Abdullah said Mr Rabbani's killing was "a big loss for all the people of Afghanistan", describing the former president as a man who "strove until his last breath to bring peace". NATO and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) condemned the attack, with ISAF commander Gen John R Allen saying that "the face of the peace initiative has been attacked".

India's Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has condemned Tuesday's assassination of former Afghanistan president and peace negotiator Burhanuddin Rabbani in a letter of condolence to present President Hamid Karzai. Condoling the death of Afghan peace leader Burhanuddin Rabbani Prime Minister Singh in a letter to Karzai on Wednesday said: "...the best tribute the people of Afghanistan can pay to the departed leader is to carry on with the task that he had begun - securing a peaceful and safe future for the people of Afghanistan."²

¹ "Afghan Peace Council head Rabbani killed in attack", *BBC*, September 20, 2011 at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-14985779>

² "PM condemns Rabbani killing by terrorists", *Sify News*, September 22, 2011 at <http://www.sify.com/news/pm-condemns-rabbani-killing-by-terrorists-news-terrorism-ljwbgajbghf.html>

Pakistan

- **US Ambassador to Pakistan: Pakistan has links to Haqqani group; Taliban attack kills eight in Karachi; ISI Chief meets CIA Chief Petraeus; Pakistan-US to liberalise trade regime**

The US Ambassador to Pakistan Cameron Munter has said that there is evidence that link Pakistan's support to Haqqani militants. He said this in a radio interview post Kabul attack. At least 25 died during a 20-hour-long attack blamed on the Haqqani group, who are believed to be based in Pakistan. However, Pakistan has strongly denied the accusations.³

In another development, in a Taliban suicide attack in Karachi, eight people were killed and the house of a senior police superintendent Aslam Khan was destroyed. Khan heads the counter insurgency unit in Karachi investigating militants. Khan said that he was threatened in the past by Taliban for arresting Taliban members. It would be worth noting that Karachi, Pakistan's economic hub, is currently undergoing its worst ethnic- and politically-linked unrest in 16 years, with more than 100 people having been killed in one week alone last month.⁴

According to reports, Pakistan's ISI Chief Gen Shuja Pasha met CIA Chief Gen David Petraeus in Washington and believed to have heard directly from the CIA Chief that the US wanted an immediate military operation against the network. The meeting comes in the wake of mounting US pressure on Pakistan to take military action against Haqqani network. Gen Pasha also met other officials in the administration, whose names are undisclosed. A senior Pakistani official aware of the proceedings of these meetings said that apart from Haqqani issue, Intelligence-sharing, militant activities across both borders and better border-control were other key points that were discussed.⁵

On economic front, Pakistan and the United States has decided to work towards liberalising trade regimes between both the countries. This decision comes after two days of talks held in Islamabad at the fifth Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) meeting. The meeting took up various issues ranging from investment to establishment of Reconstruction Opportunity Zones (ROZs). US Assistant Trade Representative Michael Delaney and Pakistan's Commerce Secretary Zafar Mehmood led their delegations at the meet.⁶

Bangladesh

- **Bangladesh PM addressed the UNGA; Bangladesh-US Naval Exercise begun; Sheikh Hasina receives Global Health and Children's award**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina delivered a speech at the 66th United Nations General Assembly in New York on September 24, 2011.⁷

³ "US envoy links Haqqani militants to Pakistan", *BBC*, September 17, 2011 at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-14960725>

⁴ "Taliban suicide blast in Karachi leaves eight dead", *Dawn*, September 19, 2011 at <http://www.dawn.com/2011/09/19/heavy-bomb-blast-in-karachi.html>

⁵ "ISI Chief meets Petraeus amid US pressure", *Dawn*, September 22, 2011 at <http://www.dawn.com/2011/09/22/isi-chief-meets-petraeus-amid-us-pressure.html>

⁶ "Pakistan -US to work for trade liberalisation", *Dawn*, September 22, 2011 <http://www.dawn.com/2011/09/22/pakistan-us-to-work-for-trade-liberalisation.html>

⁷ "PM addresses UN today: Seeks Qatar's support in UNSC membership bid", *The Daily Star*, September 24, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=203730>

In another development, the navies of Bangladesh and the United States began an eight-day of maritime safety and security exercises in Chittagong. This is the first-ever Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (Carat) Bangladesh 2011.⁸

In other developments, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has received the Global Health and Children's Award for her contribution to develop Bangladesh's health sector by using the Information Communication Technology (ICT), at the South-South Awards night held with a slogan "Digital Health for Digital Development". She dedicated the award to the people of Bangladesh.⁹

Sri Lanka

- **The largest India-Sri Lanka joint naval exercise "SLINEX II" held; Australian senate defeats motion aimed at suspending Sri Lanka from the Commonwealth; Sri Lankan parliament passes new bill to deal with LTTE Overseas fund raising activities and money laundering; President Rajapaksa hold talks with several leaders on the sideline of 66th Session of UNGA; IMF postpones the review of Sri Lanka's economic situation; Sri Lanka seeks help from Kyrgyzstan**

Reports noted that Sri Lanka Navy and the Indian Navy conducted their largest joint naval exercise off Trincomalee from September 18 to September 24. The exercise code-named "SLINEX II" aimed at enhancing the interoperability of the two Navies.¹⁰

In another development, the Australian Government and the Opposition voted together on September 22, to defeat a motion moved in the Australian Senate by Greens Senator Lee Rhiannon (Senator for New South Wales) to suspend Sri Lanka from the Commonwealth.¹¹

Sri Lankan Parliament has passed the Prevention of Money Laundering (Amendment) Bill and the Convention of the Suppression of Terrorist Financing (Amendment) Bill on September 21 to deal with LTTE overseas fund raising activities and money laundering.¹²

On the sidelines of the 66th sessions of the United Nations General Assembly at New York, President Mahinda Rajapaksa held talks with the Assistant State Secretary of America on South and Central Asia, Robert O Blake and with the Heads of States of Slovenia, Kyrgyzstan and Nigeria.¹³

⁸ "Bangladesh, US navies begin Carat exercise", *The Daily Star*, September 19, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=203106>.

⁹ "Digital Health for Digital Development: Global health award for PM", *The Daily Star*, September 21, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=203298>.

¹⁰ "Joint Naval exercise in Trinco", *The Daily Mirror*, September 24, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/news/57144.html>.

¹¹ "Aussie senate rejects motion to expel Lanka from C'wealth", *The Daily Mirror*, September 23, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/front-page-news/57056-aussie-senate-rejects-motion-to-expel-lanka-from-cwealth.html>.

¹² "New laws to curb LTTE fund-raising", *The Daily Mirror*, 22 September 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/front-page-news/56970.html>.

¹³ "President meets Blake", *The Daily Mirror*, September 22, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/front-page-news/56972.html>.

Reportedly, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has postponed the review of Sri Lanka's economic situation till December before releasing the ninth tranche of the US\$ 2.9 billion stand-by facility which was scheduled to have been released in August.¹⁴

In other developments, Sri Lanka had sought the help of Kyrgyzstan, who holds the deputy chairmanship of the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC), to thwart the attempt by the United States to have an interactive session on the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commissions (LLRC) report at the next session scheduled for March, next year.¹⁵

Maldives

- **Maldivian Vice President met with PM of Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan and Sri Lanka; Dr. Waheed met with the Associate Administrator at UNDP; Maldives supports international shark conservation efforts**

Reports noted that Vice President of the Maldives Dr Mohamed Waheed met with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina of Bangladesh, Prime Minister Baburam Bhattarai of Nepal, Prime Minister Jigme Y. Thinley of Bhutan and Prime Minister Disanayaka Mudiyansele Jayaratne of Sri Lanka on the sideline of United Nations General assembly in New York.¹⁶ Dr Mohamed Waheed also met with the Associate Administrator at UNDP, Rebecah Grynspan and exchanged ideas on climate change and its undesirable effects to the environment. The Vice President also shared information on the Maldives' works against climate change.¹⁷

In other developments, Vice President Dr Waheed joined leaders from the Bahamas, Colombia, Honduras, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Micronesia, and Palau to support the creation of shark sanctuaries around the world.¹⁸

B. East Asia

South East Asia

- **Bomb blast in Indonesia injures dozens; Thai Defence Minister visits Cambodia; Clashes**

¹⁴ "IMF delays loan instalments", *The Daily Mirror*, September 20, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/front-page-news/56765.html>.

¹⁵ "Lanka seeks help from Kyrgyzstan", *The Daily Mirror*, September 19, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/front-page-news/56634.html>.

¹⁶ "Vice President meets Prime Ministers of Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan and Sri Lanka", *The President's Office, Republic of Maldives*, September 24, 2011 at <http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=5990>.

¹⁷ "Vice President meets UNDP Associate Administrator", *The President's Office, Republic of Maldives*, September 24, 2011 at <http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=5989>.

¹⁸ "Vice President Pledges Maldives' Support to International Shark Conservation Effort", *The President's Office, Republic of Maldives*, September 23, 2011 at <http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=5982>.

in Southern Philippines kill 13; Vietnamese President to visit Singapore; Pakistan Muslim League leader honoured with General Order of Cambodia;

According to reports, on September 25, a suicide bomber blew himself inside a church during the Sunday service in Solo, Central Java, Indonesia, injuring at least 22 people. The police is investigating the case and is yet to finish the inquiry.¹⁹

In another development, the newly appointed Thai defence minister Yuthasak Sasiprapha commenced his two-day visit to Cambodia on September 23. The visit is seen as a follow-up to the visit paid by the Thai Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra. The aim of the visit is to reduce tensions along the border and convene meetings of Thai-Cambodia General Border Commission.²⁰

In a deadly clash between the Moro rebels and the Philippine troops, 13 people are reported dead. According to media reports, at least five soldiers are also injured in the fighting. The southern province of Sulu is inflicted by separatist for long. However, the military could not say whether the gunmen involved were members of Moro National Liberation Front.²¹

Reports noted that Truong Tan sang, the President of Vietnam is to pay a visit to Singapore starting September 26. He will be accompanied by his wife, Deputy Prime Minister Dr Nguyen Thien Nhan, Chairman of President's Office Dao Viet Trung, Minister of Labour War Invalids and Social Affairs Pham Thi Hai Chuyen, as well as senior officials and a business delegation. The visit aims to strengthen Vietnam-Singapore bilateral relations.²²

In other developments in the region, General Mushahid Hussain, Secretary of Pakistan Muslim League has been decorated with General Order of Cambodia for promoting Asian causes and bringing Asian people closer, at an award ceremony held at Phnom Penh, capital of Cambodia. The award is considered one of the highest in Cambodia.²³

China

(September 12-25)

- **China expects improving ties on Korean peninsula; China to assist Libya in post-war reconstruction; China supports nuke-free Middle East; China opposes US report on its religious situation; China, India to host strategic economic talk in Beijing; SCO vows to fight terrorism, separatism and extremism; China backs Palestine's UN bid; China to build satellite for Belarus; China, Russia pledge to further military cooperation**

¹⁹ Suicide bombing at Indonesian church injures 22, *News Day*, September 25, 2011, <http://www.newsday.com/news/suicide-bombing-at-indonesian-church-injures-22-1.3199059?qr=1>

²⁰ Thai defense minister starts 2-day visit in Cambodia, *Global Times*, September 23, 2011, <http://www.globaltimes.cn/NEWS/tabid/99/ID/676689/Thai-defense-minister-starts-2-day-visit-in-Cambodia.aspx>

²¹ 13 dead in fresh fighting in the Philippines, *The Mindanao examiner*, September 25, 2011, http://www.mindanaoexaminer.com/news.php?news_id=20110924225536

²² Vietnam president to make state visit to Singapore, *Channel New Asia*, September 25, 2011, <http://www.channelnewsasia.com/stories/singaporelocalnews/view/1155455/1/.html>

²³ Mushahid honoured with Cambodian Award, *Associated press of Pakistan*, September 25, 2011, http://ftpapp.app.com.pk/en_/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=155623&Itemid=2

In a significant development, China supported the Republic of Korea (ROK) and the Democratic people's republic of Korea (DPRK) in their efforts to improve the bilateral relations.²⁴ Meanwhile Beijing pledged to play an active role in the reconstruction of Libya.²⁵

China reaffirmed its support for a nuclear weapons free zone in the Middle East and also stated that Israel should join the NPT as soon as possible.²⁶

In a recent development, Beijing condemned the US report based on China's religious situation and stated that it firmly opposes the United States intervention in its domestic issues.²⁷

On the bilateral front China and India will be holding their first round of bilateral strategic economic dialogue.²⁸

Meanwhile the Regional Anti-Terror Agency Council of the SCO held its 19th conference in Beijing. They pledged to give top priority to preventing terrorism, separatism and extremism.²⁹

In other developments, China has pledged its support for the Palestinian bid to United Nations recognition.³⁰ Meanwhile China has agreed to build and launch a satellite for Belarus.³¹ Reports noted that China has also agreed to step up bilateral military cooperation between Beijing and Moscow.³²

Japan

- **Japanese PM Noda vows to push Futenma base move; Japan reiterates the necessity of UN Security Council reform**

During Japanese PM Yoshihiko Noda's first meeting with US President Barack Obama on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly session recently held in New York, the former vowed to do his utmost to relocate the US Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station in Okinawa Prefecture in line

²⁴ "China expects improving ties on Korean peninsula" *China Daily*, September 16, 2011 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2011-09/16/content_13723814.htm

²⁵ "China to assist Libya in post-war reconstruction" *China Daily*, September 16, 2011 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2011libya/2011-09/16/content_13724000.htm

²⁶ "China supports nuke-free Middle East" *China Daily*, September 16, 2011 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2011-09/16/content_13711584.htm

²⁷ "China opposes US report on its religious situation" *China Daily*, September 14, 2011 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2011-09/14/content_13688814.htm

²⁸ "China, India to host strategic economic talk in Beijing" *China Daily*, September 23, 2011 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2011-09/23/content_13783358.htm

²⁹ "SCO vows to fight terrorism, separatism and extremism" *China Daily*, September 21, 2011 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2011-09/21/content_13762645.htm

³⁰ "China backs Palestine's UN bid" *China Daily*, September 20, 2011 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2011-09/20/content_13744472.htm

³¹ "China to build satellite for Belarus" *China Daily*, September 20, 2011 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2011-09/20/content_13737510.htm

³² "China, Russia pledge to further military co-op" *China Daily*, September 24, 2011 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2011-09/24/content_13784875.htm

with the 2010 bilateral accord between Tokyo and Washington.³³ At the same time, Noda also informed that he would make every possible effort to persuade the Okinawa prefectural government to accept the relocation within the prefecture.³⁴

In another development, Japan, along with three other countries-Germany, India and Brazil, have reiterated their claim to expand both permanent and non-permanent membership of the UN Security Council. In a joint statement issued by the foreign ministers of the four countries, the so called G-4 expressed its solidarity in working together to bring about “urgently needed reform of the Security Council”.³⁵

In other developments, Japan and Taiwan has recently signed an accord which is to lower bilateral investment barriers between the two countries. This accord covers three areas i.e. trade liberalization, trade promotion and protection of investment and it could eventually lead to free-trade deal between the two countries. It is worth noting that Japan is Taiwan’s second -largest trading partner and its biggest investor, while Taiwan is Japan fourth-largest trading partner and has so far invested around \$1.6 billion in its Asian neighbour.³⁶

South Korea

- **South Korean air force to conduct aerial refueling drill with the US for the first time over South Korean skies**

According to reports, South Korean Air Force is to conduct its first aerial refueling drill over its skies with the US Air Force through September 30, 2011. Although several South Korean Air Force pilots have been to the US to participate in such drills, this is the first time for aerial refueling to take place over South Korean skies. Many have opined that South Korea should use the drill as a watershed for its air force to secure related capacities in preparation for emergencies.³⁷

North Korea

- **South Korean President Lee Myung-bak urges the North Korea to break its self-imposed isolation and join the international community by abandoning its pursuit for nuclear arms; President Obama urges North Korea to take concrete measures towards denuclearization**

At the UN Assembly, while giving the keynote address, South Korean President Lee Myung-bak urged the North Korea to break its self-imposed isolation and join the international community by abandoning its pursuit for nuclear arms. He also announced that Seoul is ready

³³ “Noda, Obama hold 1st talks/PM vows to push Futenma base move; TPP also on agenda”, *Yomiuri Shimbun*, September 23, 2011, at <http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/national/T110922006466.htm>

³⁴ “Noda to urge acceptance of Futenma plan/ Pledges effort to persuade Okinawans”, *Yomiuri Shimbun*, September 25, 2011, at <http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/national/T110924003035.htm>

³⁵ “Japan and three other nations reaffirm solidarity on Security Council reform”, *The Japan Times*, September 25, 2011, at <http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20110925a5.html>

³⁶ “Taiwan, Japan sign investment pact”, *The Japan Times*, September 23, 2011, at <http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nb20110923a3.html>

³⁷ “Air Force to conduct 1st aerial refueling dill with the US”, *Dong-A-Ilbo*, September 20, 2011, at <http://english.donga.com/srv/service.php3?biid=2011092074888>

to help its impoverished neighbor if it makes the strategic decision. Meanwhile, US President Barack Obama, during his recent address to UN General Assembly in New York, urged North Korea to take concrete measures towards denuclearization. While stating that the North Korea is yet to make concrete efforts in abandoning its pursuit for nuclear arms and continues to take belligerent action actions against the South, Obama warned that if Pyongyang continued to adopt such measures, it would face “greater pressure and isolation”.³⁸

C. Central Asia & Russia

Central Asia

- **Turkmenistan rejects the proposal of TAPI members linking gas price to cost of production; SCO members adopt the ‘Xian Initiative’; Central Asian states participate in 66th UN General Assembly; ‘New Silk Road’ trade route plan unveiled at the UN meet; Kyrgyzstan presidential candidates begin campaign; Russian and Kazakh air defense network to be integrated**

Reports noted that a proposal by TAPI members Afghanistan, Pakistan and India, to link the price of gas to the cost of production has been rejected by the would-be supplier Turkmenistan. The standard international practice is to link gas prices to the global price of crude, while the proposed formula would tie the Ashgabat government to a fixed profit margin. However, the TAPI group is aiming to complete all negotiations by October 15 when they will ink a gas sales purchase deal.³⁹

In another development, the heads of energy agencies of China, Russia and Central Asian republics Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan adopted the “Xian Initiative” at the meeting of the Eurasian Economic Forum last week in Xi’an, China. The initiative lays out the framework for accelerated work on an open and consultative multi-stakeholder SCO Energy Club⁴⁰ which is aimed at expanding the energy strategy of the SCO member states, the exchange policy and security issues, the development of energy technology cooperation, training of energy professionals.⁴¹

Turkmen President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov on 23rd September chose to focus on Caspian security and environmental issues and vowed to uphold human rights in his address to the UN’s General Assembly (UNGA) during the general debate of the 66th session in New York.⁴² Jose Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission, held talks with Turkmen President Gurbanguly Berdimuhammedov on sidelines of UNGA meet. Barroso has invited

³⁸ “Obama warns N.K. for more pressure”, *Korea Herald*, September 22, 2011, at <http://www.koreaherald.com/national/Detail.jsp?newsMLId=20110922000725>

³⁹ “Turkmenistan rejects TAPI buyers’ gas pricing formula”, *Universal Newswires*, September 26, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=10259>

⁴⁰ “Shanghai Pact quickens steps toward energy club”, *Universal Newswires*, September 26, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=10263>

⁴¹ “E Jita published in four countries “Xi’an Initiative”, *China News*, September 24, 2011 at <http://www.cnkeyword.info/e-jita-published-in-four-countries-xian-initiative/>

⁴² “Caspian issues dominate Turkmen leader’s UN speech”, *Universal Newswires*, September 23, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=10254>

Berdimammedov to EU headquarters in Brussels keeping in mind energy security partnership plans. In related news, a top EU official announced that Europe will hold talks with Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan on laying a gas pipeline along the bed of the Caspian Sea.⁴³

In the meanwhile, Kyrgyz President Roza Otunbayeva drew attention of UNGA to her country's democratic progress while urging the UN to push for stricter punishment for autocrats who empty government coffers.⁴⁴ Also she urged members of NATO's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) to ensure that Afghan troops and police are adequately prepared to ensure security in their state before the coalition leaves the country. She mentioned that Kyrgyzstan has applied to be a nonpermanent member of the UN Security Council for the 2012-2013 session, while publicly giving support to Palestine's bid to be a member of the organization.⁴⁵

Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev called for the creation of an international agency to oversee internet security as he addressed the UNGA, hoping that it will create "an international legal framework of the global and information space" to better protect businesses, banks and government ministries from being hacked.⁴⁶

Also at the UN meet, senior officials of Central Asian states in New York on 22nd September joined with diplomats from Afghanistan to unveil an extensive trade route plan dubbed the "New Silk Road." The new Silk Road would be a modern version that consists of energy pipelines, highways, and rail links, with Afghanistan at the center of the network.⁴⁷

The US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, while linking the stabilization of Afghanistan with a prosperous wider region, addressed the New Silk Road ministerial meeting and stated, "An Afghanistan firmly embedded in the economic life of a thriving South and Central Asia would be better able to attract new sources of foreign investment, connect to markets abroad and provide people with credible alternatives to insurgency".⁴⁸ The other participants of this ministerial meet included top ministers of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, also China, Iran, Pakistan, India, Norway, Canada and the United Arab Emirates, among others.

According to reports, Kyrgyz Prime Minister Almazbek Atambayev is one of the contenders for the October 30 presidential elections. He vacated his premier post to campaign for the elections where it is believed that he might win. Meanwhile his deputy Omurbek Babanov will take over all duties.⁴⁹ Only 20 Kyrgyz presidential hopefuls remained in the running as the registration

⁴³ "Turkmen leader invited to Brussels for energy talks", *Universal Newswires*, September 23, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=10249>

⁴⁴ "Keep dictators from looting national wealth, Otunbayeva tells UN", *Universal Newswires*, September 22, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=10245>

⁴⁵ "Keep dictators from looting national wealth, Otunbayeva tells UN", *Universal Newswires*, September 22, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=10245>

⁴⁶ "Kazakh web sites sustain attacks by hackers", *Universal Newswires*, September 23, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=10255>

⁴⁷ "New Silk Road plan promoted at UN meet", *Universal Newswires*, September 23, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=10252>

⁴⁸ "New Silk Road plan promoted at UN meet", *Universal Newswires*, September 23, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=10252>

⁴⁹ "Kyrgyz premier vacates post, hits campaign trail", *Universal Newswires*, September 26, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=10261>

deadline passed for the October 30 elections, leaving another 63 out of the race. The candidates contesting for the chief executive post need to meet criteria like: collect 30,000 signatures supporting their candidature; paying of registration fee of \$2,200; passing a Kyrgyz language exam; and create an election fund of not more than \$1.1 million.⁵⁰

In other developments in the region, Russia's Armed Forces Deputy Chief of the General Staff Col. Gen. Valery Gerasimov announced plans to integrate Kazakhstan's air defenses into a Russian-led network in the very near future. He said, "We already have such bilateral regional air-defense systems with Belarus and Armenia and in future we are planning to build a similar air-defense system with Kazakhstan." Kazakh Deputy Defense Minister Saken Zhasuzakov said the Astana government is currently acquiring modern Russian weapons with a view to jointly defend their airspace.⁵¹

Russia

- **Russia-China military ties touch nearly one billion US\$ in 2011; Russia to back Palestinian bid for statehood at the UN; Russia to build sea based missile shield; Iceland proposes joint geo-thermal energy projects with Russia; Russia's new attack submarine launched for sea trials; Syria may buy more Russian air defence systems; Russia may launch its first Earth remote sensing satellite in 2012; Russia to refit nuclear missile cruisers; Russia to build Polar regions first oil processing plant in Murmansk; US-Russia coast guards sign cooperation agreement; Russia has estimated that volume of transportation along the Arctic may reach 7 lakh tons by 2012; An international Arctic Forum was inaugurated in Arkhangelsk region of Russia; Russia facing a very high unemployment rate; Russia's Space Forces launch a new spacecraft; Russia's growth rate expected to be around 4% for the next few years; Russia may build new nuclear power plant in Iran; Russia and Germany discuss the Middle East peace process.**

According to Russia's principal arms exporter, Rosoboronexport, Russia's military and technical cooperation with China was assessed at US\$ 1 billion in 2011. Meanwhile, China's share in Rosoboronexport's order portfolio has exceeded 4% including the sale of Al-31F and Al-31FN engines.⁵²

In another development, Russia's Foreign Minister Mr. S Lavrov has said that his country will back Palestine's bid for statehood at the UN. This was in continuation of the Soviet Policy of having backed the Palestinian demand for statehood way back in 1989.⁵³

Reports noted that Russia is planning to develop its own sea-based missile defence system. The move can be interpreted as Russia's critical response to NATO's European missile shield, which

⁵⁰ "20 Kyrgyz candidates to contest presidential election", *Universal Newswires*, September 26, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=10262>

⁵¹ "Russian-led air defense network to integrate Kazakh air defense", *Universal Newswires*, September 23, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=10250>

⁵² "Russia-China aviation ties worth nearly \$1bn-Rosoboronexport", *RIA Novosti*, September 23, 2011, <http://en.rian.ru/business/20110923/167055418.html>

⁵³ "Russia to back Palestinian bid", *Ria Novosti*, September 22, 2011, <http://en.rian.ru/world/20110922/167050093.html>

it says it needs to counter potential missile attacks from “rogue states,” such as Iran and North Korea.⁵⁴

Iceland has said that developing geothermal energy projects and the Northern Sea Route with Russia are a top priority for Iceland. It has also suggested developing Russian-Iceland commercial navigation, transport terminals (sea-ports and airports), and corridors like the Northern Sea Route, which could transform Russia’s ability to ship natural resources to the markets of Asia.⁵⁵

According to reports, Russia’s first Graney class nuclear-powered attack submarine has been launched for scheduled sea trials and is expected to join active duty by the end of the year. Graney class nuclear submarines are designed to launch a variety of long-range cruise missiles (up to 3,100 miles or 5,000 km), with conventional or nuclear warheads, and effectively engage submarines, surface warships and land-based targets. The Russian Navy plans to receive up to 10 Graney class subs by 2020.⁵⁶

Syria has shown an interest in buying a whole range of advanced Russian air defence systems. These include long-range S-300 Favorit systems, medium-range Buk and short-range Tor.⁵⁷

Russia may launch its first remote Earth sensing satellite in 2012. The Kondor is an 800 kg Earth remote-sensing spacecraft designed to provide high-resolution radar imagery and terrain mapping in real-time. It will be launched as part of the so-called Arktika Earth observation satellite grouping.⁵⁸

According to reports, the Russian Defense Ministry is planning to refit three mothballed nuclear-powered Kirov-class missile cruisers as part of Russia augmenting its naval strength. The 3 nuclear missile cruisers were built in the Soviet era but have been decommissioned and laid up in dock for over a decade. The only active Kirov class cruiser is the Pyotr Veliky, the flagship of Russia’s Northern Fleet. The ships will be fitted with advanced multi-module missile systems capable of firing a wide range of missiles and torpedoes, including P-800 Yakhont (SS-N-26) anti-ship cruise missiles.⁵⁹

Reports noted that Russia will build the Polar region’s first oil processing plant in Murmansk. Tentative capital investments are estimated at 250,000 million roubles.⁶⁰

In another development, the North-eastern border department of the Russian Federal Security Service’s Coastal Guard and 17th District of the United States Coastal Guard have signed a

⁵⁴ “Russia to build sea-based ‘missile shield’-diplomat”, RIA Novosti, September 22, 2011, http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20110922/167048033.html

⁵⁵ “Russia, Iceland consider joint geothermal energy projects”, RIA Novosti, September 22, 2011, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20110922/167046977.html>

⁵⁶ “Russia’s new attack submarine goes for sea trials”, RIA Novosti, September 12, 2011, http://www.en.rian.ru/military_news/20110912/166792371.html

⁵⁷ “Syria may buy more Russian air defense systems”, RIA Novosti, September 12, 2011, http://www.en.rian.ru/military_news/20110912/166787203.html

⁵⁸ “Russia may launch its first Earth remote sensing satellite in 2012”, RIA Novosti, September 22, 2011, <http://en.rian.ru/science/20110922/167049123.html>

⁵⁹ “Russia to refit nuclear missile cruisers –media”, RIA Novosti, September 21, 2011, http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20110921/167012600.html

⁶⁰ “Polar region’s first oil processing plant to be built in Murmansk”, ITAR-TASS, September 22, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/230890.html>

cooperation agreement. The agreement provides for cooperation in ensuring security and legality in the Convention Areas of the Bering Sea, northern sections of the Pacific and along sea delimitation lines between Russia and the United States in 2011-2012.⁶¹

The Second International Forum “The Arctic - Territory of Dialogue,” organised by the Russian Geographical Society (RGS), was inaugurated in Arkhangelsk. The main issue on the agenda is the formation of the transport system in the Arctic and complex environmentally friendly developments of the region while taking into account its unique nature and interests of indigenous peoples.⁶² Speaking at the forum, Prime Minister Putin has said that the volume of transportation along the Arctic Route may reach 700,000 tons in 2012. Sounding very optimistic he said that trial runs to deliver large consignments of hydrocarbon were carried out successfully this year, and transit passage of vessels was in progress. Russia is actively developing the infrastructure of the region.⁶³

Reports noted that as per the statistics revealed by the Russian Federal Statistics Service (Rosstat), unemployment in Russia rose to 4.7 million people in August– i.e. 6.1 percent of the economically active population in Russia. The number of the economically active population in August amounted to 76.7 million people, or more than 54 percent of the total population of the country.⁶⁴ Meanwhile, Russia’s Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Alexei Kudrin has said that Russia’s economic growth is expected to hover around 4% for the next few years and he doesn’t expect any kind of a recession in the Russian economy.⁶⁵

Reports noted that Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov has said that Russia may build another nuclear power plant in Iran following the start-up of the Bushehr facility. As for concerns regarding Iranian nuclear bomb plans, Ryabkov admitted there has been no breakthrough in the issue but dialogue continues and Iran displays interest in it.⁶⁶

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev and German Chancellor Angela Merkel have discussed the Middle East peace process in light of the Palestinian bid for statehood at the UN General Assembly session in New York. They also discussed the schedule of contacts at the highest level and raised a number of issues of bilateral cooperation.⁶⁷

In other developments, reports noted that Russia’s defence ministry has launched a Proton-M carrier rocket from the Baikonur cosmodrome.⁶⁸

⁶¹ “US, Russian coastal guards sign cooperation agreement”, ITAR-TASS, September 21, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/230071.html>

⁶² “Intl Arctic forum opens in Arkhangelsk”, ITAR-TASS, September 22, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/231163.html>

⁶³ “Carriages along Arctic route may reach 700,000 tons in 2012”, ITAR TASS, September 22, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/231470.html>

⁶⁴ “Russia’s unemployment in August amounts to about 5 mln”, ITAR TASS, September 22, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/231055.html>

⁶⁵ “Russia’s growth rates to be 4% in next few years-Russian deputy PM”, ITAR-TASS, September 25, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/233255.html>

⁶⁶ “Russia may build new nuclear power plant in Iran”, ITAR-TASS, September 23, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/231749.html>

⁶⁷ “Medvedev, Merkel discuss MidEast settlement on the phone”, ITAR-TASS, September 24, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/232465.html>

⁶⁸ “Russia’s Space Forces launch spacecraft from Baikonur”, ITAR TASS, September 21, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/229877.html>

D. West Asia

Iran

- **Ahmadinejad's UN speech sparked walkout by the US and European delegations; Indian Prime Minister accepted Ahmadinejad's invitation to visit Tehran**

Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad went on the warpath against the West at the UN again sparking a mass walkout by outraged US and European delegations. The Iranian leader repeated comments casting doubt on the origins of the Holocaust and the September 11, 2001 attacks and criticized the United States for killing Osama bin Laden rather than bringing him to trial. He told that European countries use the Holocaust as an excuse to pay "ransom to the Zionists." Ahmadinejad caused a UN walkout last year when he alleged the US government could have been behind the September 11 attacks. He has also used speeches in the past to call for the destruction of Israel and cast doubt on the existence of the Holocaust. Western diplomats said they had expected a tough speech by Ahmadinejad and had prepared walkout plans in advance. White House spokesman Jay Carney dismissed Ahmadinejad's remarks. "Our views on Iran's behavior and its vile mistreatment of its own citizens are well known. I find it rich that the Iranian president has such criticisms."⁶⁹

Reports noted that Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh has accepted, in principle, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's renewed invitation to visit Iran. Indian foreign secretary Ranjan Mathai said the dates for the visit will be decided by the two sides after diplomatic consultations. But as part of the bilateral agenda of visits, Lok Sabha Speaker Meira Kumar will be visiting Iran shortly. If Manmohan Singh visits Iran, it will be the first prime ministerial visit after 10 years, when Atal Bihari Vajpayee made a trip to Tehran in 2001. But there have been visits at other levels over the years between the two countries. He also added that "the previously planned meeting basically focused on our bilateral relationship." The two leaders discussed a whole series of projects between the two countries, including potential cooperation in the area of hydrocarbons. They also decided to hold a meeting of the India-Iran Joint Economic Commission co-chaired by the foreign ministers of the two countries. They also agreed to review the Non Aligned Movement, which will be chaired next by Tehran.⁷⁰

Iraq

- **Seventeen people killed and dozen injured in four consecutive blasts in Iraqi city of Kerbala**

According to reports, Iraqi police said four successive blasts hit the Iraqi city of Kerbala, killing more than 17 people and wounding dozens more outside a local government building in an attack. The first bomb ripped through a crowd of guards and civilians gathered in front of an office issuing ID cards and passports, and three other explosions went off shortly after as emergency services arrived to help the wounded, police said. Violence in Iraq has eased since the height of sectarian strife in 2006-2007, but insurgents tied to Al Qaeda and Shia militias still

⁶⁹ "UN walkout at Ahmadinejad speech," *Khaleej Times*, September 23, 2011, at http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle09.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2011/September/middleeast_September434.xml§ion=middleeast

⁷⁰ "Indian PM to visit Iran," *Tehran Times*, September 25, 2011 at <http://www.tehrantimes.com/index.php/politics/2861-indian-p-to-visit-iran>

carry out daily attacks as US troops prepare to withdraw at the end of this year. Mohammed Al Moussawi, chairman of the Kerbala Provincial Council, blamed Al Qaeda affiliates for attack. Kerbala, a major Shia holy city 80 km (50 miles) southwest of Baghdad, has often been attacked in the past by Sunni Islamist insurgents targeting Shia pilgrims who flock to the city's religious sites.⁷¹

Syria

- **Security forces kill five people in Homs; Syria and Lebanon discuss cross-border smuggling, farmers' disputes; Syrian-Iraqi Business Council stresses importance of investment projects**

According to reports, Syrian security forces have killed five people including a woman during a raid in the central province of Homs as the opposition prepares to organize a protest against the regime. Security forces also fired on the demonstrators in two other towns in Homs, and made arrests in the second city Aleppo, eastern Deir Ezzor and the coastal cities of Latakia and Banias.⁷²

Following the incident, the EU announced plans to slap new sanctions on the regime of President Bashar Assad. Further, the UN human rights office in Geneva warned that the regime's bloody crackdown on protesters was intensifying. The latest violence also came as the US President Barack Obama called on the UN Security Council to impose sanctions on Syria in his speech at the General Assembly in New York.⁷³

In another development, the Syrian-Lebanese Subsidiary Committee for Damascus Countryside and Biqaa governorates discussed issues related to cross-border smuggling and farmers' disputes. During their talks, the two sides stressed the importance of permanent communication among the committee members, especially with regard to security and military, and cooperation to stop cross-border smuggling.⁷⁴

In other developments, during the Syrian-Iraqi Business Council meeting in Aleppo city aimed at enhancing economic cooperation between the two countries, the Syrian Minister of Economy and Trade, Mohammad Nedal al-Shaar, stressed the importance of economic partnership based on infrastructure and facilities offered to exchange goods and set up economic and industrial projects. For his part, Minister of Industry, Adnan Salakho, pointed the importance of achieving economic cooperation and making use of the two sides' experiences to boost relations. While the Syrian Chairman of the Syrian-Iraqi Business Center, Ahmad al-Shihabi, stressed the importance of enhancing commercial relations and setting up more investment projects while the Iraqi Chairman of the Center, Jafar al-Hamdani, stressed upon the council's readiness to set up an integrated map of the investment projects and opportunities in Iraqi cities.⁷⁵

⁷¹ "Four blasts kill 17 in Iraq's Kerbala," *Khaleej Times*, September 25, 2011, at http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2011/September/middleeast_September501.xml§ion=middleeast

⁷² "More Syria bloodshed as opposition vies to organize", *The Jordan Times*, September 20, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=41492>

⁷³ "EU to slap new sanctions on Syria as death toll rises", *The Jordan Times*, September 22, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=41569>

⁷⁴ "Syrian-Lebanese Talks on Cross-border Smuggling, Farmers Disputes", *Syrian Arab News Agency*, September 22, 2011, at <http://www.sana.sy/eng/22/2011/09/22/371031.htm>

⁷⁵ "Syrian-Iraqi Business Council Stresses Importance of Investment Projects", *Syrian Arab News Agency*, September 26, 2011, at <http://www.sana.sy/eng/24/2011/09/26/371534.htm>

Libya

- **The Prime Minister of the Libyan interim government Mahmoud Jibril seeks world's help in rebuilding Libya; Libyan forces captured parts of Sabha; US pledge to help Libya in rebuilding; NATO further extends Libyan mandate; Tunisia arrests Libya's ex-premier; Mass grave of people killed by Gaddafi security forces discovered in Tripoli**

Addressing the 66th session of the General Assembly of the United Nations in New York, Mahmoud Jibril, the prime minister of the Libyan interim government and chairman of the executive committee of the National Transitional Council, called on the United Nations to unfreeze all frozen Libyan assets. He also urged the world community to stand beside Libya in its difficult road to reconstruction and national reconciliation.⁷⁶

In another development, Ahmed Bani, a military spokesperson for Libya's interim government, announced that its forces had seized parts of Sabha, one of the last strongholds of forces loyal to Muammar Gaddafi. Sabha also controls the main route south of Libya to neighbouring Niger, an escape route used by members of Gaddafi's associates. Any advance on the town, which is still used as a military base, would be an important boost for government forces who are struggling to oust Gaddafi loyalists from the towns of Bani Walid and Sirte as well as to contain disunity in their ranks.⁷⁷

In a related development, according to NTC's military spokesperson Fathi Bashaagha, Libya's interim forces had captured the outpost of Jufra about 700km south-east of Tripoli, one of Muammar Gaddafi's last strongholds deep in the Sahara desert, and unearthed a secret depot of chemical weapons in the area.⁷⁸

Separately, US President Barack Obama called on the remaining forces of Muammar Gaddafi to lay down their arms as he announced the return of the US ambassador to Tripoli and pledged to help Libya rebuild itself. Meanwhile, the African Union also recognised the National Transitional Council (NTC) as Libya's de facto government, removing another prop of diplomatic support for the ousted Gaddafi. On the other hand, Gaddafi spokesperson Moussa Ibrahim hoped that the war would take many years and that loyalist forces have enough arms and were willing to fight.⁷⁹

In another development, sending a clear message to the Libyan people that as long as the country's civilian population is under threat they will continue their operation as mandated by the United Nations Security Council, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) has decided to extend the current mandate of Operation Unified Protector for 90 more days. At the same time, NATO general secretary Anders Fogh Rasmussen said that in doing so they will also keep the situation

⁷⁶ "Jibril Urges World Help Rebuild New Libya after Four Decades of Al Qathafi", *The Tripoli Post*, September 25, 2011, at <http://www.tripolipost.com/articledetail.asp?c=1&i=6987>

⁷⁷ "Libyan forces say they captured part of Sabha", *The Jordan Times*, September 20, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=41480>

⁷⁸ "Libya rulers unearth chemical weapons stockpile", *Mail and Guardian*, September 22, 2011, at <http://mg.co.za/article/2011-09-22-libya-rulers-unearth-chemical-weapons-stockpile/>

⁷⁹ "Obama urges Qadhafi forces to give up", *The Jordan Times*, September 21, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=41505>

under regular review and with the will of the Libyan authorities. It is the second 90-day extension of the NATO campaign in Libya.⁸⁰

According to reports, in a high profile detention of a Qadhafi associate, a Tunisian court sentenced ex-prime minister of Libya Al Baghdadi Ali Al Mahmoudi to six months in jail on charges of illegally entering the country. After the sentence, the justice minister in Libya's new government Mohammed Al Alagi said Tripoli would request that the former prime minister be extradited to stand trial in Libya. At the same time, Libya's new rulers said they were tightening their grip on the desert towns where Qadhafi himself might be hiding.⁸¹

In other developments, in a three-day meeting convened in Benghazi to discuss the formation of an interim government, the National Transitional Council announced that it found a mass grave in Tripoli, containing bodies of more than 1,270 people killed by Al Qadhafi's security forces in a 1996 massacre at Tripoli's Abu Salim prison. Human rights groups have estimated that about 2,000 Abu Salim inmates were killed in the 1996 massacre. Khaled al-Sharif, spokesman for the Tripoli Military Council, told that investigators had found the site, relying on information from people detained on suspicion of involvement in the massacre.⁸²

Egypt

● Popular Consensus initiative demand transfer of power in Egypt; Military Council head testifies in Mubarak's trial

Calling on the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) to hand over power to a civilian government by April 30, 2012, various political groups, civil society organisations, unions and syndicates launched "The Popular Consensus" initiative in Egypt. The aim of the initiative was to reach a state of popular and political consensus and unity that would pressure SCAF execute the popular demands. The initiative also said that it would peacefully resort to escalation in case SCAF ignores its demands. The statement issued by the initiative cited their three main demands as "security, bread and freedom".⁸³ Notably, the initiative brought together prominent political powers and youth groups in Egypt.

In another incident, Egypt's ruling military council head Field Marshal Mohamed Hussein Tantawi testified in the trial of Hosni Mubarak in a hearing that could decide the fate of the ex-president accused of responsibility for the deaths of hundreds of demonstrators. However, lawyers representing the people killed in the uprising complained that Tantawi gave evidence earlier than usual and left the courthouse without allowing them to cross examine him. One lawyer even submitted a request to the court to have the tribunal panel replaced, which would delay the trial until October 30 to allow a review of the request.⁸⁴

⁸⁰ "NATO Extends Mandate for Protecting Libya by Further 90 Days", *The Tripoli Post*, September 22, 2011, at <http://www.tripolipost.com/articledetail.asp?c=1&i=6965>

⁸¹ "Qadhafi's ex-premier jailed after fleeing Libya", *The Jordan Times*, September 23, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=41613>

⁸² "Mass Grave with over 1,270 Bodies Killed by Al Qadhafi Security Discovered in Tripoli", *The Tripoli Post*, September 25, 2011, at <http://www.tripolipost.com/articledetail.asp?c=1&i=6993>

⁸³ Fahmy, Heba (2011), "Political powers, civil society call on SCAF to transfer power by April 30", *The Daily News Egypt*, September 22, 2011, at <http://www.thedailynewsegypt.com/egypt/political-powers-civil-society-call-on-scaf-to-transfer-power-by-april-30.html>

⁸⁴ "Egypt military ruler testifies in Mubarak trial", *The Jordan Times*, September 25, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=41637>

Palestine

- **Palestine formally submits request for statehood to the UN; Palestine rules out talks without halt to Israeli settlement**

In a significant development, Palestine President Mahmoud Abbas submitted his formal request to the United Nations for Palestine to be the 194th full member of the world body. After submitting the request, Abbas criticised Israel's policy of what he called "ethnic cleansing", which had pushed Palestinians away from their ancestral home. He told the UN that the Jewish settlements in the West bank were blocking the movement to peace. He opined that settlements were the key obstacle to peacemaking. However, he pointed out that Palestinian people would continue their "peaceful, popular resistance" as they aim to gain recognition of their rights.⁸⁵

Later, in an apparent rejection of a proposal from the peacemaking Quartet, the Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas ruled out new talks without international legitimacy and a "complete halt" to Israeli settlement building. The Quartet, comprising the United States, United Nations, Europe and Russia, called for talks to begin within a month, and for a final deal to be reached before the end of 2012. However, they made no explicit reference to a halt of Israeli settlement construction, or clear parameters for the talks, both of which the Palestinians have said are key preconditions for their return to the negotiating table.⁸⁶

Meanwhile, US President Barack Obama said there was no short cut to Middle East peace. In order to avert a diplomatic disaster, French President Nicolas Sarkozy urged the UN to grant the Palestinians the status of observer state, like the Vatican, while outlining a one-year roadmap to peace.⁸⁷

Yemen

- **Yemeni President returns to capital Saana; Saleh's return sparked a wave of deadly clashes**

Yemen's President Ali Abdullah Saleh returned to capital Saana on September 23, after more than three months in Saudi Arabia for treatment from injuries he suffered in a failed assassination attempt on June 3, 2011 in the mosque of his Palace.⁸⁸ In his speech, Saleh has called on all parties to come for peaceful transition of power to end the country's crisis. He reiterated that he has had authorized the Vice-President Abdrabu Mansour Hadi to engage in dialogue with the opposition and sign a transition deal and to conduct early elections. He also stated that dialogue that is the only way to help Yemen in this current crisis and said that presidential, parliamentary and local council elections would be held after an agreement is signed. Saleh stated that he is still committed to the initiative by the Gulf cooperation Council (GCC).⁸⁹

⁸⁵ "Update: Palestine President Abbas' Pleads for Statehood At UN", *The Tripoli Post*, September 23, 2011, at <http://www.tripolipost.com/articledetail.asp?c=1&i=6978>

⁸⁶ "Abbas rules out talks without settlement halt", *The Jordan Times*, September 26, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/?news=41670>

⁸⁷ "Obama tries to derail Palestinian UN statehood bid", *Yahoo News*, September 22, 2011 at <http://in.news.yahoo.com/obama-tries-derail-palestinian-un-statehood-bid-231835088.html>

⁸⁸ "Yemen President returns home despite detractors' war", *Yemen Observer*, September 23, 2011 at <http://www.yobserver.com/front-page/10021439.html>

⁸⁹ "Yemen President calls for peaceful transfer of power", *Yemen Observer*, September 26, 2011, at <http://www.yobserver.com/front-page/10021451.html>

Meanwhile, Saleh's return has sparked a wave of deadly clashes between his troops and the forces loyal to Ali Mohsin Al Ahmar despite a call for ceasefire. More than 40 people were killed in different places in the country since his return.⁹⁰

E. Africa

Somalia

- **Aid agencies clamour for increased international involvement in Somalia; Al Shabaab moves famine victims back to their homes**

According to reports, aid agencies have issued an open letter urging the international community to prioritize people's lives over politics if they are to stand any chance of aiding people suffering from the famine in Somalia. The agencies said that while aid was getting through in many areas, it was not at the scale needed to address the enormity of the crisis as thousands were suffering in the famine. They warned that with the coming rains expected to bring the threat of deadly disease, restrictions were still preventing the rapid boost in aid that was so desperately needed to save lives. The letter urged the international community to change its approach to Somalia and enhance diplomatic engagement with the parties to the conflict, to ensure unhindered delivery of humanitarian aid.⁹¹

Separately, it was reported that al Shabaab, the radical Islamist group that opposes the policies of the Somali Government, has started moving people affected by famine back to their homes. Most of those being returned had left the rural areas in search of humanitarian assistance, especially after their livestock and farms perished as a result of drought. An al Shabaab official, however, was quoted saying that cards had been distributed to those being returned to allow them to receive aid at their places of origin. Nevertheless, the reaction to the return is said to be a mixed one.⁹²

South Africa

- **South Africa extends support for Palestinian UN bid**

President Jacob Zuma clarified that South Africa "fully supports" the Palestinian bid for full membership of the United Nations. Expressing that the Palestinian membership would be "a decisive step towards achieving lasting peace", he called for the bid to be "viewed favourably" by UN members.⁹³

⁹⁰ "Saleh's return sparks violence in Yemen", *Gulf News*, September 25, 2011, at <http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/yemen/saleh-s-return-sparks-violence-in-yemen-1.875968>

⁹¹ "Somalia: 'Lives Before Politics'", *AllAfrica.com*, September 21, 2011, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201109220492.html>

⁹² Khalif, Abdulkadir (2011), "Al Shabaab Moves Famine Victims Back to Their Homes", *AllAfrica.com*, September 25, 2011, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201109260207.html>

⁹³ "Zuma throws weight behind Palestinian UN bid", *Mail and Guardian*, September 22, 2011, at <http://mg.co.za/article/2011-09-22-zuma-throws-weight-behind-palestinian-un-bid>

Sudan

- **Liberation and Equality Movement (LJM) leader appointed as head of Darfur Regional Authority; Sudan claims control of Dandro area in Blue Nile; SPLM-N reports air attacks in Blue Nile state; JEM dismisses the head of its delegation to Darfur peace process**

Sudanese President Omer Hassan al-Bashir appointed the leader of the Liberation and Equality Movement (LJM) Tijani el-Sissi as the head of Darfur Regional Authority (DRA). According to the Doha Darfur Peace Document (DDPD), the regional executive body is tasked with the implementation of the seven-chapter pact signed in Doha on July 14, 2011 by the two sides. Besides reconciliation, and the consolidation of security and social peace, the DRA is also tasked with post conflict reconstruction and development and can borrow money from both national and external institutions in this regard.⁹⁴

In another development, Sudan's army claimed that it gained control of a strategic area in the country's unrest-hit southern state of Blue Nile as its newly appointed governor Lieutenant General Al-Hadi Bushra vowed to restore stability. Blue Nile State has been the scene of violent confrontations between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and fighters of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement North (SPLM-N). SAF and SPLM-N each accused the other of instigating the clashes which, according to the United Nations, saw 20,000 people taking refuge in neighbouring Ethiopia. According to Al-Sawarmi Khalid Sa'ad, SAF's official spokesman, army troops were now fully in control of the Dandro area, which is located 100 km away to the south of the state's capital Al-Damazin.⁹⁵

According to reports, urging international relief organisations to provide urgent assistance to the victims, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement North (SPLM-N) claimed that aerial bombardment carried out by the Sudanese army in Blue Nile State has displaced half of the population there. According to the humanitarian relief secretary of the SPLM-N, Hashim Orta, the air forces of the "ruling National Congress Party [NCP]" were conducting more than six air strikes on daily basis in the Blue Nile and displaced large number of people.⁹⁶

In other developments, the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) dismissed the head of its delegation to the Doha peace process, two months after the signing of a peace agreement between the government and another rebel group, Liberation and Equality Movement (LJM). Mohamed Bahr was the of head JEM delegation to Doha in December 2010 as the group decided to resume its participation in the peace process after freezing it in May 2010.⁹⁷

Nigeria

- **Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan urges the international community to support the efforts of African nations in conflict preventive strategies; Nigeria formally accedes to UN**

⁹⁴ "Sudan's President appoints LJM leader as head of Darfur regional authority", *The Sudan Tribune*, September 21, 2011, at <http://www.sudantribune.com/Sudan-s-President-appoints-LJM,40217>

⁹⁵ "Sudan army claims control of key area in Blue Nile", *The Sudan Tribune*, September 21, 2011, at <http://www.sudantribune.com/Sudan-army-claims-control-of-key,40216>

⁹⁶ "Sudan's rebels report air attacks in border states", *The Sudan Tribune*, September 25, 2011, at <http://www.sudantribune.com/Sudan-s-rebels-report-air-attacks,40247>

⁹⁷ "JEM sacks head of its delegation to Doha process for peace in Darfur", *The Sudan Tribune*, September 25, 2011, at <http://www.sudantribune.com/JEM-sacks-head-of-its-delegation,40249>

Convention on Statelessness; Nigeria in talks with UK over faulty air transport pact; Doubts raised over targeted power supply by 2020

Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan urged the international community and the United Nations to support, both financially and technically, the efforts of African nations in conflict preventive strategies. Along with South African President Jacob Zuma, he expressed that the African Union must help the National Transitional Council (NTC) in Libya to end the conflict and establish good governance in the country. The two leaders also discussed steps needed to further strengthen the Nigeria-South Africa Bi-National Commission. While addressing the UN Security Council, Jonathan said that Nigeria viewed conflict prevention as a subject of critical importance to humanity.⁹⁸

In another development, Nigeria has formally acceded to the 1954 convention on the status of stateless persons and the 1961 convention on reduction of statelessness, as President Goodluck Jonathan handed over the country's instruments to the United Nations. The Federal Executive Council had earlier approved the ratification of the Convention and Jonathan said it was a demonstration of the nation's commitment to global issues and for the promotion of democratic values and protection of human rights.⁹⁹

Separately, the federal government of Nigeria has begun discussion with the British authorities to regularise the inconsistent Bilateral Air Services Agreement (BASA) between the two nations. Consequently, Nigerian designated carrier, Arik Air, has discontinued its Abuja-London operations over the air services agreement and alleged discrepancy over access to the allocated frequencies. It has cited many other determining factors such as the very high operating and infrastructure costs at London Heathrow Airport as other reasons for the suspension. Under the BASA agreement of 2008, UK carriers were granted a total of 21 frequencies into Nigeria, adding that Nigerian carriers were afforded a reciprocal 21 frequencies into London, Heathrow.¹⁰⁰

In other developments, reports noted that the federal government of Nigeria expressed doubts over the ability of the proposed 40,000 MW, which the country planned to achieve by year 2020, to supply enough power for industries and over 150 million Nigerians. At the same time, Minister of Power, Prof. Barth Nnaji, stated that government was ready to confront any stumbling block to the realisation of government's target by year 2020.¹⁰¹

⁹⁸ "Jonathan meets world leaders, advocates preventive diplomacy", *The Nigerian Guardian*, September 23, 2011, at http://www.ngrguardiannews.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=62045:jonathan-meets-world-leaders-advocates-preventive-diplomacy-&catid=1:national&Itemid=559

⁹⁹ "Nigeria: Govt Accedes to UN Convention On Statelessness", *AllAfrica.com*, September 22, 2011, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201109220613.html>

¹⁰⁰ "Govt in talks with UK over faulty air transport pact", *The Nigerian Guardian*, September 26, 2011, at http://www.ngrguardiannews.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=62320:-govt-in-talks-with-uk-over-faulty-air-transport-pact&catid=1:national&Itemid=559

¹⁰¹ "40,000mw can't guarantee uninterrupted power supply, says minister", *The Nigerian Guardian*, September 23, 2011, at http://www.ngrguardiannews.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=62046:40000mw-cant-guarantee-uninterrupted-power-supply-says-minister&catid=1:national&Itemid=559

II. DEFENCE REVIEW

National

- **Rosoboronexport's CEO: Military-technical cooperation between India and Russia to grow further; India strengthening her navy to meet emerging challenging**

The Chief Executive Officer of Rosoboronexport Anatoly Isaikin said recently that India remains the biggest strategic partner of Russia in terms of military-technical cooperation. He noted that currently, the Russian industry is participating in 20 races launched by India, and "Winning at least half of these offers is an enormous fortune for any State". In the ongoing joint development of Sukhoi T-50 fighter aircraft designed to rival with the American F-33 Raptor, India has pledged to cover 35% of the approximately 6 billion dollars needed for its development. It should be built in 1000 models over the next forty years: of these 200 each will go to India and Russia, with the remaining 600 aircraft to other Countries.¹⁰²

In another development, reports noted that to increase its presence in the Indian Ocean and beyond, the oil exploration stand-off in South China Sea being just the latest indicator of the intent, India is building a Navy for the future. Calculations show ongoing warship, submarine and maritime aircraft acquisition programmes as well as some concrete projects in the pipeline will together cost more than Rs 300,000 crore. There are 46 ships "on order" for Navy at different domestic shipyards, along with aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya (refitted Admiral Gorshkov) and three Talwar-class stealth frigates being built in Russia, according to the defence ministry. The biggest warships currently under construction are the 44,570-tonne Vikramaditya and the 40,000-tonne indigenous aircraft carrier (IAC) being built at Cochin Shipyard. With Vikramaditya to be inducted by early-2013 and IAC by 2015, India hopes to deploy two potent carrier battle-groups by the middle of this decade. Another lethal punch will come when India's own nuclear submarine, the over 6,000-tonne INS Arihant being built at Vizag, becomes operational next year.¹⁰³

International

- **China focusing on naval power; Russia receives a new-generation mine countermeasures ship**

Reports noted that China's Navy is playing an important role in the country's drive to become a world military power, with the recent trials of its first aircraft carrier underlining the scale of China's naval ambitions. The People's Liberation Army (PLA) - the largest armed force in the world — is primarily a land force. But the navy is playing an increasingly important role as Beijing grows more assertive about its territorial claims, notably in the East China Sea and South China Sea of late. "As a permanent member of the UN Security Council, China must take greater responsibility in world affairs," Captain Wei Hua, Chief of Staff of the Shanghai naval base, told the journalists. He added, "We have some 18,000 kilometres of coastline and over three million

¹⁰² "India the biggest strategic Moscow partner for military-technical cooperation", *Bharat Rakshak*, September 23, 2011 at <http://www.bharat-rakshak.com/NEWS/newsrf.php?newsid=15485>

¹⁰³ "Rs 3L cr plan to boost India's naval might", *Bharat Rakshak*, September 26, 2011 at <http://www.bharat-rakshak.com/NEWS/newsrf.php?newsid=15524>

square kilometres of maritime area. It is therefore very important to build a powerful navy to protect the country and its interests.” Beijing lays claim to swathes of the South China Sea which are also claimed by its smaller neighbours. Since 2007, at the request of President Hu Jintao, the navy has held a permanent seat on the Central Military Commission, China’s powerful supreme military authority.¹⁰⁴

In another development, Russian Navy on Wednesday received a new-generation mine countermeasures ship, Project 12700 Alexandrite, at the Sredne-Nevesky Shipyard. Project 12700 harbour minesweeper was developed by the Almaz Central Design Bureau (St. Petersburg). The ship is designed for mine searching and sweeping at safe distances. It opens a new generation in mine countermeasures ships, according to a news report by JSC Sredne-Nevesky Shipyard. The new minesweeper has an anti-mine complex with high-efficiency sonars placed both onboard the ship and on remotely-controlled and autonomous submersibles, integrated bridge system, and main battle station. With a displacement of 800-tonne, the ship’s hull is made of monolithic fiberglass and shaped by vacuum infusion and also has perfect manoeuvrability because of effective system of steering propellers. The new minesweeper is expected to take the sea in 2012.¹⁰⁵

III. INTERNAL SECURITY REVIEW

Jammu & Kashmir

- **Two killed in blast near Kupwara town; BSF soldier killed in Samba as Pakistan violates ceasefire; Interlocutors final report on Jammu & Kashmir ready; Police post attacked in Sopore**

According to reports, two civilians were killed and eight injured when an explosive device went off during collection of scrap at Maidanpora Lolab, around 22 kilometers from Kupwara town in North Kashmir. According to locals a scrap collector while collecting junk from inhabitants was beating it to accommodate it in his handcart. Police believe the scrap collector unwittingly collected some unexploded device.¹⁰⁶

In another development, a Sub Inspector of paramilitary BSF was killed, while a laborer received bullet injuries, when Pakistan Rangers allegedly opened fire on an Indian forward post along the border, in violation of the ceasefire agreement, in Samba district. The BSF has taken the matter seriously and has intensified its vigil along the border. The BSF has also called for a flag meeting with its counterpart in Pakistan to take up the matter.¹⁰⁷

Reports noted that New Delhi-appointed three-member panel of interlocutors on Kashmir stated that their final report will carry political, social, economic and cultural aspirations of the people

¹⁰⁴ “China’s Navy driving country’s military expansion”, *Brahmand*, September 25, 2011 at <http://www.brahmand.com/news/Chinas-Navy-driving-countrys-military-expansion/8108/1/13.html>

¹⁰⁵ “Russian Navy receives new minesweeper”, *Brahmand*, September 23, 2011 at <http://www.brahmand.com/news/Russian-Navy-receives-new-minesweeper/8090/1/13.html>

¹⁰⁶ “Student among 2 killed in blast”, *Greater Kashmir*, September 20, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Sep/21/student-among-2-killed-in-blast-46.asp>

¹⁰⁷ “Pak violates ceasefire, BSF soldier killed”, *Greater Kashmir*, September 20, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Sep/21/pak-violates-ceasefire-bsf-officer-killed-64.asp>

of J&K within the ambit of Indian Union. The interlocutors set aside the controversies among them saying reports of bickering are of past. Their report will be unanimous and all of them have endorsed it. The group will be submitting its report to Central Government by October 12.¹⁰⁸

In other developments, suspected militants attacked a police post in Sopore town in north Kashmir's Baramulla district. According to a police spokesman, unidentified militants fired upon Police Post Warpora. Police retaliated the fire but militants managed to escape from the spot. There was no loss of life or injury reported on either side.¹⁰⁹

North East India

- **Two migrant workers killed in Manipur; Manipur blockade enters 54th day; Report: ULFA Chief Paresh Baruah invested millions of dollars**

Reports noted that security has been beefed up in and around the state capital of Imphal following the killing of two non-local workers by unidentified gunmen in Manipur. Armed police personnel have been deployed at strategic locations in and around Imphal to prevent further escalation in violence. The killed persons, who hailed from Bihar, were staying in rented houses. Police is yet to arrest any suspect. Following the development, the non-locals mostly workers residing in and around Lamphelpat, Singjamei, Kwakeithel, Mantri-pukhuri and Porompat areas under Imphal West and East districts have been provided shelter at Dharamsala and Kalimandir complex in the heart of Imphal.¹¹⁰

In another development, the on-going economic blockade on the National Highways 39, 53 and 150 over the demand of a separate district entered 54th day and evoked reactions from various fronts including the newly-formed coordination committee of seven major armed groups in Manipur. Sadar Hills District Demand Committee has imposed the indefinite economic blockade on National Highways 39 and 53 demanding a separate district while UNC imposed a counter-blockade to register its opposition against "bifurcation" of Naga areas.¹¹¹

In other developments, reports noted that ULFA military chief Paresh Baruah, who is opposed to peace talks with the government, invested millions of US dollars in several Bangladeshi companies having interests in real estate, shipping, textile, power and medical care. In a classified report, security agencies also said he receives USD 1.5 million every quarter as remittances from these businesses and an additional USD 5,00,000 every quarter through Western Money changer from other sources. Sources said the National Security Intelligence (NSI) of Bangladesh and the National Board of Revenue, Bangladesh have reportedly kept these companies under their radar and are contemplating action against them.¹¹²

¹⁰⁸ "Solution within constitution: Interlocutors", *Greater Kashmir*, September 21, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Sep/22/solution-within-constitution-interlocutors-64.asp>

¹⁰⁹ "Sopore police post attacked", *Greater Kashmir*, September 24, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Sep/25/sopore-police-post-attacked-21.asp>

¹¹⁰ "2 migrants killed, security beefed up in Manipur", *The Assam Tribune*, September 19, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=sep2011/oth06>

¹¹¹ "Manipur blockade enters 54th day", *The Assam Tribune*, September 23, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=sep2411/oth06>

¹¹² "Paresh invested millions of dollars", *The Assam Tribune*, September 25, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=sep2611/at07>

IV. UNITED NATIONS (UN) REVIEW

- **Indian PM calls for early UNSC reforms in General Assembly; UN Counter Terrorism Committee negotiates vision document; UN Security Council condemns assassination of former Afghanistan President; Security Council stresses on preventive diplomacy; Security Council urges all parties in Yemen to refrain from violence; India sets December 2012 as deadline for permanent membership of UNSC; UK expressed its support to India's permanent membership in the Council**

Addressing the UN General Assembly, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh called for an early reform and expansion of the Security Council that will 'reflect the contemporary reality' and also cautioned against protectionism by calling for effective ways to promote coordination of microeconomic policies in the world's biggest economies. The PM also touched upon other issues like terrorism, interventions in the Middle East, piracy in the Indian Ocean, sustainable development and food security.¹¹³ He also reinforced the country's strong support to Palestine people's demand for UN membership.¹¹⁴

In another development, India that currently heads the UNSC's Counter Terrorism Committee successfully negotiated a "vision document" with the committee that will emphasize 'zero tolerance' towards any perpetrators or sponsors of terror. The statement talks of how to handle the problem of terrorism over the next decade.¹¹⁵

Meanwhile, the Security Council condemned terrorist attack in Afghanistan that claimed the life of former president Buhranuddin Rabbani and wounded several others. The Council members expressed their deep sympathy and condolences to the victims and their families as well as to the people and the government of Afghanistan.¹¹⁶

The 15-member UN Security Council expressed its resolve to enhance the effectiveness of the UN in defusing potential and ongoing conflicts and also encouraged the UN to use all the preventive diplomacy tools at its disposal. The members also stressed on the "overriding political, humanitarian and moral imperatives as well as economic advantages" of preventing an outbreak and escalation or relapse into conflicts.¹¹⁷

¹¹³ "PM calls for early reform and expansion of UN Security Council", *The Asian Age*, September 24, 2011 at <http://www.asianage.com/cricket/pm-calls-early-reform-and-expansion-un-security-council-038>

¹¹⁴ "India supports Palestine's call for UN's full membership", *The Times of India*, September 25, 2011 at http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2011-09-25/india/30200313_1_general-assembly-india-territorial-integrity-full-membership

¹¹⁵ "India-led UN panel readies paper for 'zero tolerance' to terrorism, *The Indian Express*, September 21, 2011 at <http://www.indianexpress.com/news/India-led-UN-panel-readies-paper-for-zero-tolerance-to-terrorism/849435/>

¹¹⁶ "Security Council strongly condemns murder of former Afghan president", *UN News Centre*, September 21, 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=39665&Cr=afghan&Cr1=>

¹¹⁷ "Security Council resolves to enhance UN's preventive diplomacy efforts", *UN News Centre*, September 22, 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=39700&Cr=preventive+diplomacy&Cr1=>

In the interim, the Security Council urged all sides in Yemen to refrain from violence and to abide by their obligations under international law. The Council also called upon all parties to move forward in an inclusive, orderly and Yemen-led process of political transition on the basis of the Gulf Cooperation Council's initiative that meets the Yemeni aspirations for change. While expressing concern over the deteriorating situation, the Council also urged the parties to ensure access for the provision of humanitarian assistance.¹¹⁸

According to some reports, India has set itself a deadline of December 2012 to become a permanent member of the Security Council. India's representative to the UN, Hardeep Singh Puri said that there was no intermediary solution but only two categories of membership; permanent or non-permanent.¹¹⁹

In other developments, meeting on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly's 66th session, UK's Foreign Minister expressed his country's support for India's permanent membership in the UN Security Council.¹²⁰

¹¹⁸ "Yemen: Security Council urges end to violence and attacks against civilians", *UN News Centre*, September 25, 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=39778&Cr=Yemen&Cr1=>

¹¹⁹ "India may enter UNSC by 2012 end, says envoy to UN Hardeep Puri", *India Today Online*, September 23, 2011 at <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/india-may-enter-uns-c-by-2012-end-hardeep-puri/1/152474.html>

¹²⁰ "UK supports India's bid for permanent membership of UNSC", *The Economic Times*, September 25, 2011 at http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2011-09-25/news/30200745_1_permanent-membership-uns-c-bilateral-relations