

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

March 18-24, (3), 2013

Editor: Sanjeev Kumar Shrivastav

Contributors

Anwesh Roy Chaudhury

Pranamita Baruah

Rajorshi Roy

Keerthi Kumar

Afghanistan, Pakistan

Japan, South Korea, North Korea

Central Asia And Russia

United Nations Review

Review Adviser: S. Kalyanaraman

Follow IDSA



Facebook



Twitter



INSTITUTE FOR DEFENCE
STUDIES & ANALYSES

1, Development Enclave, Rao Tula Ram Marg, New Delhi-110010
Telephone: 91-26717983; Fax: 91-11-26154191 Website: www.idsa.in; Email: twir@idsa.in

CONTENTS

In This Issue	Page
I. COUNTRY REVIEWS	
A. South Asia	2-3
B. East Asia	3-4
C. Central Asia and Russia	5-9
D. West Asia	9-10
II. UNITED NATIONS (UN) REVIEW	10-11

I. COUNTRY REVIEWS

A. South Asia

Afghanistan

- **Afghan government hits out at NATO; Five policemen killed in an insider attack**

According to reports, Afghanistan's presidential spokesman on March 19 described the NATO-led military operation in the war-torn nation as "aimless and unwise". Aimal Faizi, spokesman for President Hamid Karzai, hit out after NATO chief Anders Fogh Rasmussen rejected Karzai's recent allegations of US collusion with the Taliban. "The people of Afghanistan ask Nato to define the purpose and aim of the so-called war on terror.... (They) consider this war as aimless and unwise to continue," Faizi said in a statement.¹

In another development, according to reports, a member of Afghanistan's government-backed militia program shot and killed five of his colleagues. According to provincial spokesman Mirwais Mirzakwal, the shooting occurred on March 21, in a remote part of Qadis district of Badghis province. The attacker was a member of the Afghan Local Police, a program in which the Afghan government and its international allies train and pay villagers to defend against insurgents and other militants.²

Pakistan

- **Egypt President Dr Mohamed Morsi visits Pakistan; General election to the National Assembly to be held on May 11; Retired Justice Mir Hazar Khan Khoso appointed interim PM of Pakistan; Musharraf makes a comeback to Pakistan, aims at contesting in general elections**

Reports noted that Dr Morsi was on a daylong visit to Pakistan on March 18, the first by an Egyptian leader in over five decades. President Asif Ali Zardari and his Egyptian counterpart Dr Mohamed Morsi agreed to take bilateral relations "to a higher trajectory" by enhancing political contacts. The two countries will hold biennial summits to intensify political interaction. A joint statement issued at the end of Dr Morsi's visit said the two leaders had "agreed that high-level political interaction and exchanges are vital to take their relations to a higher trajectory" and fulfil their desire for a "new and glorious chapter of bilateral relations". The Foreign Office described Dr Morsi's visit as a "watershed and a landmark" in bilateral relations.³

¹ Afghan government says NATO war aimless, unwise, *Dawn*, March 20, 2013 at <http://dawn.com/2013/03/20/afghan-government-says-nato-war-aimless-unwise/>

² Afghan policeman kills five colleagues, *Dawn*, March 23, 2013 at <http://dawn.com/2013/03/23/afghan-policeman-kills-five-colleagues/>

³ Pakistan, Egypt to strengthen relations, *Dawn*, March 19, 2013 at <http://dawn.com/2013/03/19/pakistan-egypt-to-strengthen-relations/>

In a significant development, according to reports, President Asif Ali Zardari on March 20 announced that general elections for the National Assembly shall be held on May 11, the President's spokesman Farhatullah Babar said. Babar stated, "The president received a summary from the government asking him to announce a suitable date for the election, so the president announced today that a general election to the National Assembly will be held on May 11,". The National Assembly stood dissolved on completion of its constitutional term of five years on March 16. Elections will also be held for assemblies in Pakistan's four provinces, but it was not immediately clear whether those polls will also be held on May 11.⁴

Meanwhile, reports noted that Pakistan selected a caretaker prime minister, a retired judge, to head up an interim administration to guide the country through its historic election period on March 24. Mir Hazar Khan Khoso, 84, was selected by the election commission after a parliamentary committee and rival parties failed to agree on a candidate. He comes from the troubled southwestern province of Balochistan. "We have picked Mir Hazar Khan Khoso after frankly and openly discussing all the four names forwarded to us," chief election commissioner Fakhruddin Ibrahim told reporters in Islamabad. Khoso said that he will make sure that the elections are held on time and free and fair in nature.⁵

In another development, according to reports, former President and army Chief Pervez Musharraf made a comeback to Pakistan on Sunday. He ends his exile of almost five years after he stepped down as the President in 2008. He is returning to run for elections in May.⁶

B. East Asia

Japan

- **Japan to urge EU to maintain its ban on arms exports to China; Japan to contribute 550 million dollars for the peace and stability of Africa**

According to reports, Japan is to urge the European Union to maintain its ban on arms export to China during the upcoming discussion of a political accord that Japan and the EU is to sign. Due to China's provocative actions over the Senkaku islands, Japan wishes to impede the former's military modernization to some extent.⁷

In another development, Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida has announced Tokyo's decision to contribute 550 million dollars for the peace and stability of Africa. Out of that, 6 million dollars

⁴ NA elections to take place on 11th May, says presidential spokesperson, *Dawn*, March 20, 2013 at <http://dawn.com/2013/03/20/na-election-to-take-place-on-may-11-says-presidential-spokesman/>

⁵ Justice (r) Mir Hazar Khan Khoso named interim PM of Pakistan, *The Express Tribune*, March 24, 2013 at <http://tribune.com.pk/story/525608/justice-r-mir-hazar-khan-khoso-named-interim-pm-of-pakistan/>

⁶ Musharraf lands in Karachi, *Dawn*, March 24, 2013 at <http://dawn.com/2013/03/24/musharraf-to-reach-pakistan-today/>

⁷ "Japan to ask EU to maintain ban on arms exports to China", *The Yomiuri Daily*, March 22, 2013, at <http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/national/T130321004264.htm>

will be given to the African-led International Support Mission to Mali (AFISMA). Tokyo will also extend its humanitarian assistance to refugees in Sudan, South Sudan as well as Somalia.⁸

South Korea

- **South Korea and the US sign a contingency plan to counter North Korean provocation more effectively**

Reports noted that South Korea and the United States have recently signed a contingency plan to deal with North Korean provocation “immediately and decisively”. According to the plan, Seoul will primarily lead the counter-provocation operation and the US will provide the necessary support in it.⁹

North Korea

- **North Korea fiercely criticizes the ongoing South- Korea-US joint military exercise as a threat to its national security; Pyongyang criticizes Tokyo for inciting confrontation between the two Koreas, threatens to strike against US military bases in Japan**

According to reports, North Korea has criticized the ongoing South- Korea-US joint military exercise joint military ‘Foal Eagle’ as a flagrant provocation and a threat to its own national security. In the meantime, while negating the possibility of holding a bilateral dialogue with Washington, the Minju Josun, the North Korean Cabinet’s official newspaper, has reportedly stated that Pyongyang-Washington bilateral relations has recently deteriorated to the point that there is no longer any need to hold such talk.¹⁰

In another development, according to reports, North Korea has expressed strong resentment against Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s recent statement that North Korea is fated for collapse. Pyongyang has accused Abe of inciting confrontation and leading anti-Pyongyang activities.¹¹

In fact, in retaliation to the recent report of use of nuclear armed US B-52 bombers in the ongoing US-South Korea joint military drill, the North Korean army has threatened to strike against US military bases in Japan.¹²

⁸ “Govt pledges 550 million dollars to Africa”, *The Yomiuri Daily*, March 18, 2013, at <http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/national/T130317003488.htm>

⁹ “Korea, US set up plan to counter N.K. provocation”, *The Korea Herald*, March 24, 2013, at <http://nwww.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20130324000289>

¹⁰ “N. Korean blasts Foal Eagle exercises as flagrant provocation”, *The Korea Herald*, March 23, 2013, at <http://nwww.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20130323000066>

¹¹ “N. Korea accuses Japanese prime minister of inciting confrontation”, *The Korea Herald*, March 23, 2013, at <http://nwww.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20130323000056>

¹² “N.K threatens US bases in Japan, Guam”, *The Korea Herald*, March 21, 2013, at <http://nwww.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20130321000714>

C. Central Asia and Russia

Central Asia

- **Kyrgyzstan approves NATO cargo transit deal; Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Afghanistan sign a 400 kms railroad agreement; China's exports to Kyrgyzstan increased by 31 per cent in 2012; Gas production in Turkmenistan's massive field of Galkynysh will commence from July 2013; Kazakhstan will limit Russian oil imports in 2013; Uzbekistan becomes the first Central Asian republic to launch a shale extraction project; Turkmenistan and Pakistan agreed to expand bilateral cooperation; Tajikistan calls for greater Russian investment in exchange for military base agreement; Uzbekistan and European Union discuss bilateral ties; Austria imposes conditions for increasing economic cooperation with Kyrgyzstan**

According to reports, the Kyrgyz government has approved a deal which will allow NATO's forces to transport cargo by rail and road to and from Afghanistan.¹³

In another development, reports noted that the Presidents of Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan have signed a memorandum of understanding for the construction of a railway line aimed at linking the three countries. The 400-kilometer railroad is to connect the Afghan town of Akina-Andkhoy to Atamurat-Ymamnazar in Turkmenistan and Pyandzh in Tajikistan. Construction is planned to begin in July 2013 in Turkmenistan. Turkmen workers will also build the Afghan section of the railway. A 75-kilometer line from Afghanistan to Uzbekistan is already operational from 2011.¹⁴

China's exports to Kyrgyzstan have increased by 31 per cent in 2012. Total trade between the two countries stood at US\$ 5 billion in 2012.¹⁵

Gas production at Turkmenistan's field of Galkynysh is expected to begin in July 2013. Gas reserves are estimated to be between 13.1 trillion and 21.2 trillion cubic meters (tcm).¹⁶

Reports noted that the Kazakh government will limit the amount of Russian oil imports into the country in 2013. Russian oil products currently account for 40 percent of the Kazakh domestic market.¹⁷

¹³ "Kyrgyzstan approves NATO cargo transit deal", Central Asia Newswire, March, 19, 2013, <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/kyrgyzstan/viewstory.aspx?id=13827>

¹⁴ "Turkmen, Tajik, Afghan Presidents Sign Railroad Agreement", Radio Free Europe, March 20, 2013, <http://www.rferl.org/content/afghan-tajik-turkmen-railroad/24934483.html>

¹⁵ "Chinese exports to Kyrgyzstan increase 31% in 2012", Central Asia Newswire, March, 22, 2013, <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=13847>

¹⁶ "Turkmen production at Galkynysh gas field to begin in July", Central Asia Newswire, March, 20, 2013, <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=13831>

¹⁷ "Astana will limit Russian oil imports this year, oil ministry official says", Central Asia Newswire, March, 19, 2013, <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/kazakhstan/viewstory.aspx?id=13822>

According to reports, Uzbekistan has launched a shale extraction project on its Sangranta deposit located in the central Navoi province and thereby became the first Central Asian Republic to begin the process of shale extraction. The country is estimated to have 47 billion tons of oil shale reserves.¹⁸

Uzbekistan has declared that a joint Chinese-Uzbek venture, to explore and develop uranium deposits in the country's central Kyzyl Kum deposit, will expand in 2013. The venture's authorized capital will be nearly doubled to \$8.6 million from its original \$4.6 million level and mining may begin by the second half of 2014.¹⁹

Turkmenistan and Pakistan have agreed to expand their areas of strategic bilateral cooperation in sectors like trade, fuel, energy, construction and agriculture. Both sides reached at this agreement during the meeting between President Gurbanguly Berdymuhamedov and President Asif Ali Zardari in Ashgabat.²⁰

In other developments, Tajikistan has called for greater Russian investment in sectors like hydropower and modernisation of Tajik military in exchange for the military base agreement.²¹

Uzbekistan's Foreign Ministry's officials and the EU's Special Representative for Central Asia Patricia Flor have discussed the prospects of cooperation between the two entities in the political, trade, economic, investment, cultural and humanitarian sectors.²²

Austria has insisted that its industrial and energy companies will work in Kyrgyzstan only under 'condition of guarantees from the Government' and in cooperation with international financial institutions.²³

Russia

- **Chinese President Xi Jinping is on an official visit to Russia; Chinese President Xi Jinping vowed to strengthen military ties with Russia; Russia and China sign an agreement on expanding trade in crude oil; President Putin sets a target of achieving trade turnover of**

¹⁸ "Uzbekistan launches shale extraction project", Central Asia Newswire, March, 22, 2013, <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/uzbekistan/viewstory.aspx?id=13851>

¹⁹ "China to expand Uzbek uranium exploration", Central Asia Newswire, March, 18, 2013, <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/uzbekistan/viewstory.aspx?id=13813>

²⁰ "Turkmenistan, Pakistan vow to expand cooperation", Central Asian News Service, March 22, 2013, <http://en.ca-news.org/news:522080/>

²¹ "Tajikistan demands Russian investment in exchange for military base agreement", The Times of Central Asia, March 20, 2013, <http://www.timesca.com/index.php/m-news-by-category/politics-analyses-and-opinions/10290-tajikistan-demands-russian-investment-in-exchange-for-military-base-agreement>

²² "Uzbekistan, EU discuss bilateral ties", The Times of Central Asia, March 19, 2013, <http://www.timesca.com/index.php/m-news-by-category/politics-analyses-and-opinions/10274-uzbekistan-eu-discuss-bilateral-ties>

²³ "Austria imposes conditions for cooperation with Kyrgyzstan", The Times of Central Asia, March 22, 2013, <http://www.timesca.com/index.php/m-news-by-category/economy-finance-and-investment-news/10296-austria-imposes-conditions-for-cooperation-with-kyrgyzstan>

US\$ 100 billion with China by the year 2015; Gazprom and China National Petroleum Corporation have signed a tentative agreement on the annual supply of 30 billion cubic meters of natural gas deal to China; Russia and China sign nine economic agreements as part of President Xi Jinping's visit to Moscow; Russia and EU sign an energy cooperation roadmap; Russia extends its space cooperation with the US; Prime Minister Medvedev calls upon the European Union to revise certain provisions of Third Energy Package; First underwater supersonic BrahMos missile has been successfully tested in India; PM Medvedev: Ukraine cannot become a member of the Customs Union under the 3+1 formula; Russia refuses to alter its stand on missile defence in the backdrop of the new US position of abandoning the final phase of its European missile defence system; Medvedev terms Cyprus plan as 'absurd'

In a significant development, Chinese President Xi Jinping is on an official visit to Russia from 22-24 March, 2014.²⁴ Meanwhile, Chinese President Xi Jinping has vowed to strengthen military ties with Russia. As part of his official visit to Moscow, President Jinping met the Russian military leadership in the Russian Armed Forces' Operational Command Center, thereby becoming the first foreign leader ever to be allowed inside the "heart" of Russian military establishment.²⁵

Russia and China have signed an intergovernmental agreement on expanding cooperation in the field of crude oil. Although the deal is yet to be finalized, it is envisaged that Rosneft will receive a US\$ 2 billion loan from the China Development Bank in return for 25 years of oil deliveries. They have also signed an agreement on construction of an oil refining and petrochemical plant in the Tianjin metropolitan area.²⁶

In another development, President Putin has set a target of achieving trade turnover of US\$ 100 billion with China by the year 2015. Trade in 2012 was close to US\$ 90 billion and mutual direct investments stood at US\$ 5.5 billion. He has also declared 2014-2015 to be a year of youth exchanges between Russia and China.²⁷

According to reports, Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin and his Chinese counterpart Wang Yang have signed nine economic agreements in Moscow which include sectors like banking, coal, financial cooperation, investment, insurance, energy and rabbit husbandry.²⁸

Reports noted that Gazprom and China National Petroleum Corporation have signed a tentative agreement on the annual supply of 30 billion cubic meters of natural gas deal to China. The deal is

²⁴ "China's New Leader Praises Deals, Cooperation With Russia", Rianovosti, March 23, 2013, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20130323/180203935/Chinas-New-Leader-Praises-Deals-Cooperation-With-Russia.html>

²⁵ "Chinese Leader Vows Stronger Military Ties With Russia", Rianovosti, march 24, 2013, http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20130324/180213648/Chinese-Leader-Vows-Stronger-Military-Ties-With-Russia.html

²⁶ "Russia, China sign agrmnt on expanding trade in crude oil", ITAR-TASS, March 22, 2013, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/684598.html>

²⁷ "Putin sets the task of bringing Sino-Russian trade volumes to 100 bln dollars by 2015", ITAR-TASS, March 23, 2013, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/684824.html>

²⁸ "Russia, China Sign 9 Deals, Including on Rabbits", Rianovosti, March 22, 2013, <http://en.rian.ru/world/20130322/180179738.html>

expected to be finalized by the end of this year with supplies starting from 2018 and export volumes expected to eventually rise to 60 billion cubic meters per year. The two sides have agreed that the priority direction of gas supplies from Russia to China is the 'eastern' route of the Power of Siberia gas pipeline. The first section of the Power of Siberia pipeline is due to come on-stream in late 2017.²⁹

Russia and the European Union (as part of a meeting between Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev and European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso) have agreed on a roadmap for energy cooperation till 2050. The parties also agreed on the coordination of emergency situations response and consumers rights.³⁰

According to reports, Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev has signed a decree to extend the U.S.-Russia agreement on cooperation in the use and exploration of outer space till 2020. It will help promote effective implementation of Russia's space programmes as well as joint U.S.-Russian space projects, including exploration of the Moon and Mars. The agreement between NASA and the Russian Space Agency was originally signed in 1992 and later extended in 1997, 2002 and 2007.³¹

Prime Minister Medvedev has called upon the European Union to revise certain provisions of Third Energy Package and observed that Russia is not the exclusive energy provider to the EU since it supplies only about 30 per cent of Europe's energy requirement.³²

The first underwater supersonic BrahMos missile has been successfully tested in India. Russia and India will jointly develop this BrahMos-2 hypersonic missile and have decided to create a working group in charge of the development and production of the missiles.³³

In other developments, Prime Minister Medvedev has said that Ukraine cannot become a member of the Customs Union under the 3+1 formula. Only those states which have passed and ratified all documents of the Customs Union and the Economic Union can become a member it and the future Eurasian Economic Union.³⁴

Russia has refused to alter its stand on missile defence in the backdrop of US announcement that it was ready to abandon the final phase of its European missile defence system. Russia has

²⁹ "Russia, China inch closer to natural gas deal", Rianovosti, March 22, 2013, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20130322/180193267/Russia-China-Inch-Closer-to-Natural-Gas-Deal.html>

³⁰ "Russia, EU Sign Energy Cooperation Roadmap", Rianovosti, March 22, 2013, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20130322/180194423/Russia-EU-Sign-Energy-Cooperation-Roadmap.html>

³¹ "Russia extends space cooperation with US", Rianovosti, March 23, 2013, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20130323/180201521/Russia-Extends-Space-Cooperation-With-US.html>

³² "Dmitry Medvedev invites EU to revise certain provisions of Third Energy Package", ITAR-TASS, March 21, 2013, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/682352.html>

³³ "First underwater supersonic BrahMos missile successfully tested in India", ITAR-TASS, March 20, 2013, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/681846.html>

³⁴ "Ukraine's entry in Customs Union as 3+1 impossible – Medvedev", ITAR-TASS, March 18, 2013, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/679027.html>

announced that there have been no visible concessions and its concerns still remain.³⁵

Prime Minister Medvedev has criticised the EU financial plan of rescuing the Cyprus economy and termed it 'completely absurd, unpredictable and inconsistent'.³⁶

D. West Asia

Iran

- **Iran's Supreme Leader: Iran capable to destroy Israel in ground war; Iran dismissed Saudi Arabia's claims about the presence of an Iranian national in an alleged spy network**

According to reports, Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has said that Iran will raze Tel Aviv to the ground if Israel launches a military strike against the Islamic Republic. Khamenei pointed out that the enemy seeks to create hurdles through sanctions and threats and downplay Iran's achievements through propaganda, as its two major strategies against the Iranian nation. He noted, "the center of conspiracy and the basis of hostility with the Iranian nation is the US government."³⁷

In another development, according to reports, Iran's Foreign Ministry Spokesman Ramin Mehmanparast has dismissed Saudi Arabia's claims about the presence of an Iranian national in an alleged spy network in the country. Saudi Interior Ministry said in a statement on March 19 that the country's authorities have arrested 18 people, including an Iranian and a Lebanese, on charges of espionage for a foreign country. Mehmanparast dismissed the allegation as a "baseless and repetitive scenario." He also added that "raising such baseless issues at the media levels is merely for domestic consumption."³⁸

Iraq

- **IBC: More than 112,000 civilians killed in 10 years in Iraq**

According to a new report noted that at least 112,000 civilians were killed in the 10 years since the US-led 2003 invasion of Iraq that ousted Saddam Hussein. According to the Britain-based Iraq Body Count (IBC) group, the figure could rise as high as 174,000 including combatants on all sides of the decade-long conflict, as well as yet undocumented civilian fatalities. Noting that "this conflict is not yet history," report puts the number of civilian deaths since March 20, 2003 at between

³⁵ "RF sees no grounds to change stance on missile defense", ITAR-TASS, March 18, 2013, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/678631.html>

³⁶ "Medvedev Calls Cyprus Plan 'Absurd'", The Moscow Times, March 22, 2013, <http://www.themoscowtimes.com/news/article/medvedev-calls-cyprus-plan-absurd/477305.html>

³⁷ "Iran will raze Israel to ground in war: Ayatollah Khamenei," *Mehr News Agency*, March 21, 2013, at <http://old.mehrnews.com/en/newsdetail.aspx?NewsID=1819043>

³⁸ "Iran rejects Saudi espionage claims," *Mehr News Agency*, March 24, 2013, at <http://old.mehrnews.com/en/newsdetail.aspx?NewsID=1819106>

112,017 and 122,438. Reports noted that violence remains high, with annual civilian deaths of between four and five thousand roughly equivalent to the total number of coalition forces who died from 2003 up to the US military withdrawal in December 2011, at 4,804.³⁹

II. UNITED NATIONS (UN) REVIEW

- **India votes against Sri Lanka at UNHRC; UNSC extends mandate of UN mission in Afghanistan, India expresses concern over NATO 2014-withdrawal from Afghanistan; UNSC concerned about security situation in CAR; UN condemns terrorist attacks in Damascus**

According to reports, at the UN Human Rights Council, India was among the 25 countries that voted in favour of a resolution against Sri Lanka on human rights. The US-sponsored resolution was opposed by 13 countries while 8 abstained from voting. Though India expressed concern, it failed to make any amendments to the resolution. India had earlier encouraged Sri Lanka to expedite the process of broad-based, inclusive and meaningful reconciliation.⁴⁰

According to reports, the UN Security Council extended the mandate of the UN mission in Afghanistan for another year until 19 March 2014 in order to back the government's National Priority Programmes as it goes through the process of taking full control of security, governance and development by 2014.⁴¹ Meanwhile, India at the UNSC stated that despite concerted efforts of the international community for over a decade in Afghanistan, the country continues to face an existential threat from "syndicate of terrorism" from across the border. India also cautioned the US and its allies against arriving at a conclusion in Afghanistan that as the countries prepare to withdraw, there is no similar draw down on the part of the terrorist outfits from across the border.⁴²

In another development, according to reports, the Security Council expressed strong concern over the deteriorating security situation in the Central African Republic where renewed fighting by the Seleka rebel coalition is threatening civilians and the fragile peace reached earlier this year in January. The Council also condemned the threats by militias and related movements against civilians and called upon all actors to refrain from inciting violence.⁴³ Meanwhile, the UN Secretary-

³⁹ "112,000 civilians dead in a decade in Iraq," *Khaleej Times*, **March 17, 2013**, at http://www.khaleejtimes.com/kt-article-display-1.asp?xfile=/data/middleeast/2013/March/middleeast_March201.xml§ion=middleeast

⁴⁰ "Anti-Lanka UN resolution adopted, India makes no amendments", *The Times of India*, March 21, 2013 at http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2013-03-21/india/37902100_1_sri-lanka-anti-lanka-resolution

⁴¹ "Afghanistan: Security Council extends mission amid calls for continued UN support", *UN News Centre*, March 19, 2013 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=44426&Cr=afghan&Cr1=#.UVAG3Rfe4y4>

⁴² "Mission not accomplished in Afghanistan: India to UNSC", *The Statesman*, March 20, 2013 at http://www.thestatesman.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=448462&catid=36

⁴³ "Security Council voices concern over deteriorating security in Central African Republic", *UN News Centre*, March 20, 2013 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=44443&Cr=central+african+republic&Cr1=#.UVAGrhfe4y4>

General and the Council members called on all parties to immediately cease hostilities, to allow safe and unhindered humanitarian access and condemned all attempts to undermine the stability of the country.⁴⁴

In other developments, reports noted that the UN Secretary-General and the UNSC strongly condemned the terrorist attack in Damascus which left more than 40 people dead. Ban Ki-moon called for prompt and thorough investigation and to bring the perpetrators to justice.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ "Central African Republic: Ban, Security Council urge parties to immediately halt fighting", *UN News Centre*, March 22, 2013 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=44472&Cr=central+african+republic&Cr1=#.UVAGKBfe4y4>

⁴⁵ "UN chief and Security Council strongly condemn terrorist attack on Damascus mosque", *UN News Centre*, March 22, 2013 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=44462&Cr=syria&Cr1=#.UVAf9Bfe4y4>