

## November 2009

## INTERNATIONAL

## Climate change

Nov. 15—On the sidelines of an Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit in Singapore, it is announced that world leaders have abandoned hopes of reaching a binding international agreement at a UN climate change conference scheduled for December in Copenhagen. A new climate deal is needed to succeed the Kyoto Protocol, which expires at the end of 2012.

Nov. 25—The administration of US President Barack Obama announces that the US will by 2020 strive to reduce its carbon emissions by about 17% from 2005 levels, and to reduce emissions 83% by 2050. Formalizing the announced reductions will depend on action by the US Congress.

Nov. 26—China vows by 2020 to reduce its carbon intensity, or the amount of carbon produced per unit of energy consumed, by 40 to 45% compared to 2005 levels. China's total emissions would increase even if the goal is reached.

## European Union

Nov. 3—The Czech Republic approves the Treaty of Lisbon, becoming the last of the EU's 27 member states to do so. The treaty establishes a full-time EU presidency and further empowers the grouping's foreign minister. The treaty, which EU officials hope will strengthen Europe's role in global affairs, goes into force Dec. 1.

## Israeli-Palestinian conflict

Nov. 5—Mahmoud Abbas, president of the Palestinian Authority, says he will not seek reelection in scheduled January voting. The announcement comes amid sputtering US efforts to broker Israeli-Palestinian peace talks, with Israel spurning US demands to halt construction of settlements in the West Bank and Palestinians disappointed that the US has not exerted greater pressure on the Israelis.

## AFGHANISTAN

Nov. 1—Abdullah Abdullah, who was to have competed against incumbent Hamid Karzai in a Nov. 7 run-off election for the country's presidency, drops out of the race because, he says, a fair vote is impossible.

Nov. 2—President Karzai is officially declared the election's winner.

Nov. 30—Obama orders that 30,000 additional US troops be deployed to Afghanistan. NATO allies will be asked to provide 10,000 new forces as well. The deployment is part of a new US plan under which forces are to begin withdrawing in 2011, by which time it is hoped Afghanistan can start assuming responsibility for its own security.

## HONDURAS

Nov. 29—A controversial presidential election is won by the conservative Porfirio Lobo, who gains about 52% of the vote. The voting follows a June military coup in which President Manuel Zelaya was ousted and replaced with congressional leader Roberto Micheletti. Months of regional efforts to defuse the crisis resulted in an October agreement whereby Zelaya was to have been returned to power until the election and the results of the voting were to be recognized by all sides. However, the country's congress never approved the agreement and Zelaya urged his supporters to boycott the vote.

## IRAN

Nov. 27—The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) demands that Iran halt operations at a once secret uranium enrichment facility near Qum. The IAEA action comes amid Iranian foot-dragging regarding an October agreement, according to which Iran was to have sent enriched uranium to Russia for further enrichment, thereby slowing Tehran's alleged progress toward building nuclear weapons. Russian and Chinese support for the IAEA's stance is seen as a victory for the US, which lobbied hard for the 2 countries' assistance.

Nov. 29—Iran announces it plans to build 10 more uranium enrichment facilities.

## IRAQ

Nov. 8—The Iraqi parliament passes a law necessary for administering a January national election. The last national election, held in 2005, was marred by a Sunni boycott; the election law is designed to prevent a recurrence of such legitimacy problems.

Nov. 18—Tariq al-Hashemi, one of the country's 3 vice presidents, vetoes the law, leaving the status of the election in limbo.

## KOREA, NORTH

Nov. 2—A spokesman for North Korea's foreign ministry calls for direct talks between Pyongyang and Washington on the North's nuclear weapons program, and also indicates a willingness to participate in 6-party talks that include South Korea, Japan, China, and Russia. The US favors the 6-party format.

## UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, DUBAI

Nov. 25—The government of Dubai asks banks to allow Dubai World, its primary investment vehicle, to suspend debt repayments for 6 months. The request sparks fears that Dubai will default on its heavy debt load, amassed during the emirate's stalled effort to transform itself into a finance and tourism center.

Nov. 30—The central bank of the United Arab Emirates helps calm markets by pledging loans to Dubai banks.

## UNITED STATES

Nov. 19—Returning to Washington from South Korea, Obama completes his 1st trip to Asia as president. The trip—which also took him to China, Japan, and, for the APEC summit, Singapore—produced few public announcements of tangible achievements. For example, China made no public concessions on human rights or currency exchange rates.

## URUGUAY

Nov. 29—Leftist former guerrilla José Mujica wins a run-off presidential election, gaining 53% of the vote compared to 43% for the former right-wing president Luis Alberto Lacalle. Mujica is expected largely to continue the policies of the outgoing president, Tabaré Vázquez.

## YEMEN

Nov. 4—Saudi Arabia launches a fighter jet attack against Houthi rebels, who for years have been battling the Yemeni government, after Houthis kill a Saudi border guard in the vicinity of the 2 countries' poorly defined border. The conflict raises fears of a Yemeni proxy war involving Saudi Arabia and Iran. ■