

FAST Update

Angola

Semi-annual Risk Assessment
December 2004 to May 2005

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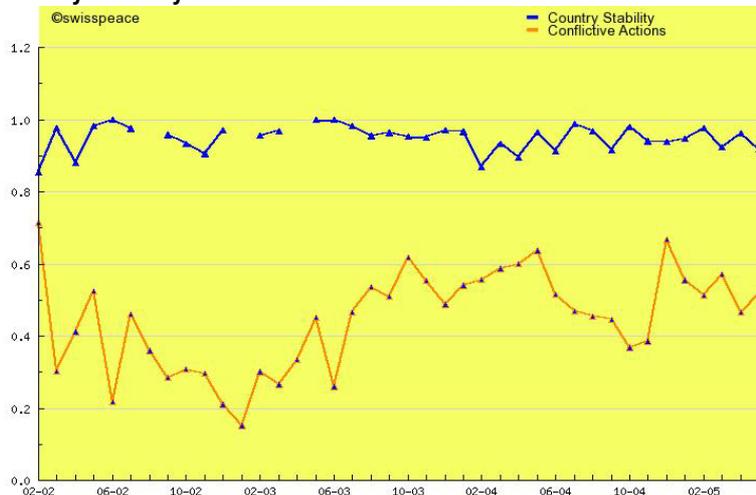
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Contact FAST International:
Phone: +41 31 330 12 07
Fax: +41 31 330 12 13
<mailto:FAST@swisspeace.ch>
www.swisspeace.org/fast

Country Expert:
Lisa Rimli
swisspeace

Country Stability and Relative Conflictive Actions



Average number of reported events per month: 121

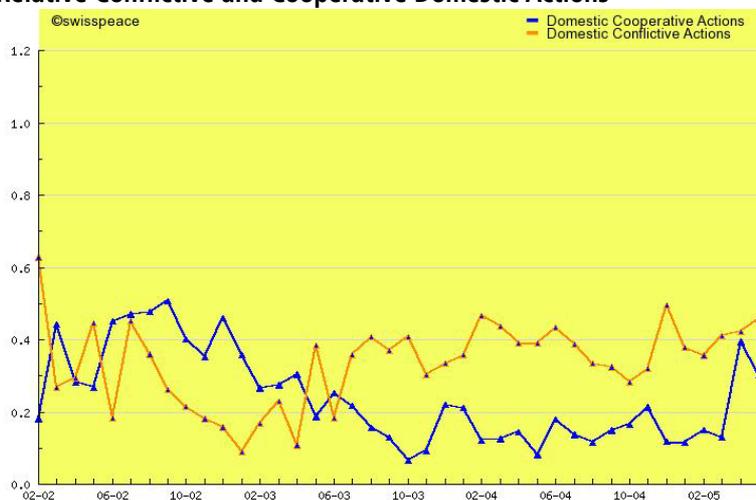
Indicator description: see appendix

Risk Assessment:

- The Country Stability index continued to fluctuate slightly at the same level as during the previous monitoring period, while the Conflictive Actions curve is marked by a sharp peak in December, followed by smaller peaks in March and May.
- Country Stability was not affected by the worst outbreak of a Marburg epidemic worldwide, which according to the World Health Organization has claimed 356 deaths out of 422 reported cases. Apart from a few cases, since, the epidemic remained largely contained in the northern border province of Uige. Although the outbreak has peaked, caution remains required.
- The monitoring period was marked by preparations of the electoral process. The legal framework and time schedule of the elections due in 2006 continue to await final definition, thus causing some concern. First, it remains open if parliamentary and presidential elections will eventually take place simultaneously or separately. President José Eduardo dos Santos had suggested in November 2004 that presidential elections take place 2007, one year after the parliamentary elections, and with the constitutional revision concluded by the newly elected Parliament. Second, as will be explained below, doubts are being raised whether elections will take place in 2006 at all.
- The reason for this doubt is the delay in the promulgation of a critical electoral law, namely the Electoral Law which creates the National Electoral Commission (CNE) as the overseeing body of the electoral process including voters' registration. The main opposition parties, UNITA and civil society organizations had strongly advocated the creation of an Independent National Electoral Commission (CNEI) to oversee all phases of the electoral process. Yet, the Government of Angola (GoA) decided that the Inter-Ministerial Commission of Elections, created in December 2004 and coordinated by the Ministry of Territorial Administration (MAT) would organize the voter's registration, while the composition of the National Electoral Commission was to be decided upon in Parliament. Given MPLA majority in Parliament, this position was harshly criticized as anti-democratic by opposition parties.
- The Electoral Law concerning the National Electoral Commission proved to be the most controversial in parliamentary debates from January to April. While agreement was reached on the other six laws (namely the laws on nationality, political parties, electoral observation, political parties funding, electoral registration and the code of electoral conduct), the seventh Electoral Law was passed on 26 April almost by the MPLA alone, against the majority of the opposition. According to the adopted law, the MPLA largely controls the 11-member National Electoral Commission (CNE), with two members to be indicated by the president, two by the Ministry of Territorial Administration and the Supreme Court, one by the National Media Council (yet to be created) and six by the Parliament (three from MPLA, two from UNITA and one from another opposition party).

- However, after the president received the electoral laws on May 16, the legally established time limit of 30 days passed without promulgation. According to a last minute presidential communiqué on June 15, the Electoral Law was submitted to the Supreme Court, in order to clear doubts about the constitutionality of some of its sections, however without specifying the points in question. The Supreme Court has 45 days to decide on the matter, after which the electoral law might be returned to Parliament. At that time, however, parliamentary holidays may have begun, with regular sessions only reopening in December.
- Resulting from this delay in the electoral laws' promulgation, the voters' registration, planned to take place during this year's dry season with an approved budget of 85 million USD, has yet to begin. Paulo Soma, official of the Ministry of Territorial Administration (MAT), declared at the end of May that the voters' registration might last into the rainy season. While Minister Fontes Pereira reassured that the process would be completed in 2005, and the president reaffirmed the 2006 date for elections, opposition parties are raising suspicions that the MPLA might be willfully holding up the elections.
- While a delay of the elections may give the MPLA more time to consolidate its membership basis, especially in the provinces, and to produce visible progress in national reconstruction efforts, it could lose the opportunity to take advantage of its 50th birthday celebrations in December 2006 - for the expected media coverage alone, a golden opportunity for electoral campaigning.
- Other outstanding laws concerning the elections include the law on access to public broadcasting, the law of reply, the law on the National Media Council and the press law. The media laws, in particular, might prove to be contentious, given hitherto existing blockages to the press law revision and the extension of Rádio Ecclésia's broadcasts to the provinces. UNITA and other opposition parties, as well as civil society organizations and churches, have strongly advocated an end to the *de facto* State monopoly on broadcasting in the provinces, as a necessary pre-condition for free and fair elections.
- The GoA's media strategy in view of elections is being revealed only gradually. The Council of Ministers on March 9 approved a new media development strategy for 2006-2007. In May, the new media Minister, Rabelais, former director of the state-owned radio RNA, unexpectedly announced a new press bill. Yet, both decisions were taken without prior consultation nor publication of the documents. Journalist unions said they were worried that the press bill might ignore recommendations considered beforehand in the Technical Commission drawn up by the president in 2002. Meanwhile, confidence of journalist unions in the press law revision was partly restored, following a series of bilateral meetings.
- While the revised press bill may allow new private media to emerge, the outcome of the Rádio Ecclésia blockage remains unclear. Concerns are also being raised on lack of transparency in license attributions for television and radio broadcasting. It may be recalled that the new private radio stations that emerged in the provinces shortly before Angola's first and only elections in 1992 were all linked to the MPLA. Reports from the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) indicate that censorship within state-owned media is again being tightened leading to the elections.
- One of the most basic pre-conditions for the elections, however, is providing an estimated 4 to 6 million potential Angolan voters with identity papers. While the Ministry of Justice started a nationwide free civil registration campaign in April, it has faced serious logistical constraints, however.
- Onofre dos Santos, former director-general of the 1992 elections, commented that the opportunity had been missed to build democracy from below with local elections, instead of "starting to build a house by the roof". According to him, the next elections will be much more difficult than the previous, given the traumatic experience of the 1992 post-electoral civil war for many Angolans.
- The credibility of the electoral process may at this early stage suffer from the imposition of the MPLA-dominated National Electoral Commission, adding up to the already intimate relationship between MPLA and the State - should the electoral law be promulgated by the president after its return from the Supreme Court. The credibility of the process now depends on the speedy setting of the legal framework and conclusion of the first phase of the civil and voters' registration processes. With significant delays in promulgating the electoral laws and creating the National Electoral Commission, confidence in the process and political stability might erode.

Relative Conflictive and Cooperative Domestic Actions



Average number of reported events per month: 121

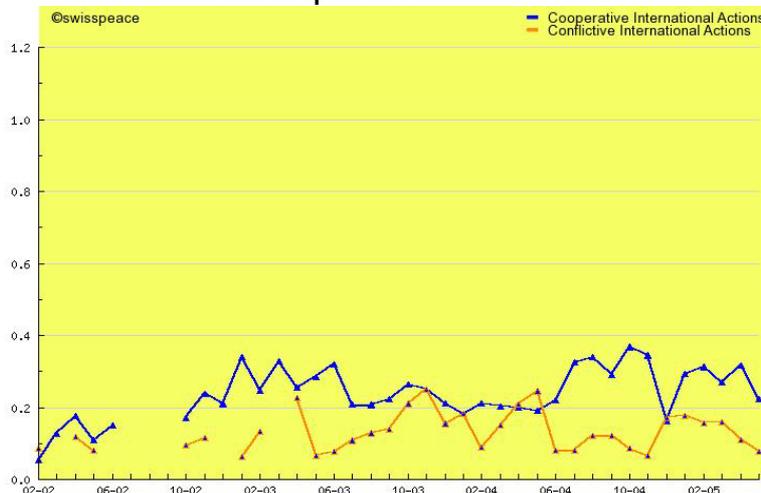
Indicator description: see appendix

Risk Assessment:

- In the domestic area, Conflictive Actions, peaking in December 2004, continued to override Cooperative Actions all through the monitoring period, however with a narrowing gap since April 2005.
- Throughout the monitoring period, local incidents of politically motivated violence were reported in several provinces, namely Bie, Moxico, Cuando Cubango, Huila and Benguela. One of the most serious incidents occurred on the 39th anniversary of UNITA on March 13 in Mavinga, Cuando Cubango, when clashes between the MPLA and UNITA followers caused 28 injuries. Also the opposition party PRS complained to be the target of politically motivated violence in Moxico. While opposition parties repeatedly accused the MPLA of instigating such violence in order to bar them from activities in the provinces, the MPLA continues to reject any responsibility. However, dialogue between the UNITA and MPLA leadership continued, and president José Eduardo dos Santos allegedly recognized the legitimacy of concerns raised by Angola's main opposition party. On May 13, UNITA and the MPLA held their 11th bilateral meeting in Luanda, reaffirming their will to maintain regular dialogue and to orientate their party members to respect mutual tolerance. However, the lack of a functioning and independent justice system continues to facilitate impunity.
- The disarming of the civilian population and former MPLA militias (Civil Defense Organization - ODC) are important outstanding issues in view of the upcoming elections. Opposition parties, civil society organizations and churches have been insistently demanding the abolition of the ODC, which has reportedly been involved in many politically motivated violent incidents, while having received substantial allocations from the State budget since its legalization under the Ministry of Defense in March 2002. Civil society groups have also strongly advocated the implementation of a national disarmament plan before the elections, which yet remains to be realized, especially in Luanda.
- In December 2004, the parliamentary opposition voted against the State budget (OGE) 2005 for its increase to nearly 18% of the budget for defense and public order, contrasting with declining allocations to social and health sectors.
- On April 5, the Angolan physician association in a special parliamentary session criticized the GoA's performance in the fight of the Marburg epidemic, while the hospital director of Uige, whose alerts of the epidemic in October 2004 had apparently been ignored, was dismissed under unclear circumstances.
- The controversial land law approved in August 2004 came into force on February 9, while its regulations continue to be in the making. In May, Fernando Pacheco, president of the Angolan NGO ADRA, unusually harshly criticized the approved land bill, calling for its urgent revision in order to prevent future land conflicts.

- In April, former justice minister Paulo Tchিপilica was elected by the Parliament as the first Justice Ombudsman – the sole candidate in a process marked by the absence of civil society consultations.
- On a positive note, the monitoring period was also characterized by a high incidence of cooperative events involving civil society, the churches, political parties, government officials and the donor community in a series of public seminars and workshops on elections issues, human rights, access to justice, HIV/AIDS and small arms proliferation, including the extension of the civil society Electoral Network to Huila province. In March, the Catholic Church held its second Pro Pace congress on elections.
- Most significantly, in May provincial governors of Kwanza Norte, Huambo and Cuando Cubango in May initiated and participated for the first time in broadly attended meetings of cadres, including members of the Diaspora, to discuss provincial development perspectives.
- While the Angolan Armed Forces (FAA) have apparently begun to tackle petty corruption among its ranks, the more serious issue of impunity of security forces concerning human rights abuses continues to be a problem. On March 29, the civil society and opposition platform Coalition for Reconciliation, Transparency and Citizenship (RTC) launched a nationwide sensitization campaign against corruption on grass-roots level in Luanda, attended neither by UNITA nor the MPLA.
- In Cabinda, there are unconfirmed reports that fighting has resumed in the interior and might lead to a new FAA offensive during the dry season. In May, FLEC claimed to have killed 20 FAA soldiers and shot down an army helicopter, after the state-owned RNA announced the disappearance of a police helicopter due to bad weather in Mayombe forest. However, the Angolan journalist union (SJA) complained that access to local official information on the case was being denied. The GoA might possibly step up efforts to wipe out remaining FLEC guerilla resistance in view of the upcoming elections. The continuing presence of over 30'000 FAA soldiers in Cabinda, along with perceptions of large-scale embezzlement of provincial oil revenues, has fuelled social unrest and catalyzed a civil society movement for peace and independence, with the local clergy and Mpalabanda civic association as its backbone. Neutralizing this movement politically has thus become a government policy. The GoA's relationship with the Vatican has been warming up, while relations between the Angolan Bishop's Conference (CEAST) and the local church, already tarnished by the CEAST's reluctance in condemning the FAA offensive in 2002, have reached a critically low point, since the Pope nominated a non-Cabindan bishop to succeed the retired D. Paulino Madeka in February. Groups of believers subsequently threw stones at CEAST president D. Damião Franklin and the apostolic nuncio on their visits in the enclave, resulting in an investigation launched by CEAST. Meanwhile, albeit being sued by the provincial government for having organized an allegedly unauthorized public event in Buco Zau on Dec. 5, Mpalabanda has been able to attract the attention of Angolan civil society to Cabinda's problems by organizing a conference with NIZA on oil exploration and social responsibility in April.
- Another phase of the police operation "Brilhante" (which as explained in previous updates targets illegal diamond prospecting and trafficking), was concluded in February. While officially about 300'000 illegal foreigners (mainly from the DRC) were expelled, sustainability of the operation has come to be challenged by provincial officials of the Geology and Mines Ministry and the National Police itself, who blame lack of economic alternatives to the "garimpo" and neglect of concession areas by the respective companies for on-going illegal diamond prospecting and trafficking.

Relative Confictive and Cooperative International Actions



Average number of reported events per month: 121

Indicator description: see appendix

Risk Assessment:

- International Cooperation surmounts International Conflict throughout the monitoring period, however with an overlap in December 2004.
- After successive postponements, the long-awaited IMF delegation visit took place in April. However, no agreement was reached with the GoA on a pilot program leading into another monitoring agreement, eventually making way for concessional loans. Finance Minister José Pedro de Morais and the president José Eduardo dos Santos downplayed the importance of an agreement with the IMF, referring to bilateral cooperation and foreign private investment as alternative sources for reconstruction.
- In view of forthcoming elections, the GoA might have decided to postpone an IMF agreement, in order to allow unconditional public spending to boost the ruling party's image internally, thus accepting that a donor conference might not materialize before elections, rather than submitting to the IMF's scrutiny over transparency and structural reform demands. Lack of information forwarded to the IMF about an estimated 600 million USD windfall from high oil prices in 2004 reportedly was one of the contentious issues with the IMF, which expects Angolan oil revenues to increase substantially in the years to come to an estimated 10 billion USD in 2008.
- The World Bank's decision that the GoA has met pre-established conditions for direct financing agreements for reconstruction in February, making way for substantial lending accords signed in May, was harshly criticized by transparency campaigners from Global Witness in an open letter to the donor community signed by several Angolan civil society organizations. Other significant donor accords were signed with the UNDP and the European Commission.
- However, oil-backed commercial loans, particularly the 2 billion USD oil-backed credit line granted by China's EximBank in March 2004, following last year's 2.35 billion credit brokered by UK's Standard Chartered bank, have become the major source for public investments in Angola. In May, the president of the Chinese EximBank signed in Luanda a series of accords that will allow the first half of the credit to be released shortly.
- The GoA expects to produce visible reconstruction results before the elections. However, the Chinese deal has been criticized for several reasons: First, doubts are being raised that benefits will trickle down to the population in a sustainable way, beyond quick reconstruction of the physical infrastructure. Angolan companies have a designated share of 30% of the contracts under the Chinese agreement, while 70% will be assigned to Chinese companies who bring in their own workforce. Secondly, the procurement process defined in these agreements has been criticized for lack of transparency. This view is enforced by the fact that influential figures closely linked to the president hold key positions in the process, such as Helder Manuel Vieira "Kopelipa" from the presidential Casa Militar, the

appointed head of the National Reconstruction Bureau established in 2004. Third, China's entry as a strong competitor for Angola's resources, obviously facilitated by the Chinese loan, may in the long-term also erode the will of Western companies to submit to transparency standards. All in all, commercial loans to Angola have long been criticized by the Bretton Woods institutions and international NGOs for opening back doors to corruption.

- Angola has ascended to China's second most important trade partner in Africa, with an overall business volume increasing substantially in 2004 to reach 4.9 billion US dollars. Bilateral cooperation has since extended to the diamond and oil sector - most significantly with joint ventures with state-owned companies such as Endiama China International Holding and China Sonangol International Holding (CSIH) -, and Sinopec's entry into oil block 3. Military cooperation with China has been strengthened with credits for telecommunications, equipment, and the construction of a FAA elite troop instruction center north of Luanda.
- Regional relations have continued to be highly cooperative, with sectoral cooperation agreements signed with South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe, and intensive diplomatic activities within the African continent. At a time when Africa expects to appoint two permanent members in what it anticipates will be a reformed UN Security Council, and Angola's timid ambitions in this regard notwithstanding, regional relations may reveal that the country is carefully hedging its bets and has not decided between the three front runners: Nigeria, and South Africa and Egypt.
- Apart from the failing IMF agreement, International Conflictive Actions mainly consisted in criticism from international organizations focusing on human rights, corruption and transparency issues.
- A very critical report of the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Human Rights Defenders, Hina Jilani on ongoing constraints for human rights defenders activities in Angola was published on the internet during the 61st session of the UN Commission for Human Rights in February. However, Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister George Chicoti dismissed Jilani's criticism as "interference into domestic affairs".
- The decision of the Attorney-general of Geneva in December 2004 to close the corruption case against Pierre Falcone, French billionaire and Angolan ambassador to UNESCO (concerning the rescheduling of the Angolan debt to Russia), was strongly criticized by Global Witness and a number of Swiss and Angolan NGOs and MPs. However, the French court investigation into the so-called Angolagate corruption case continues to condition final de-freezing of remaining Angolan funds in Switzerland.
- In March, a report based on extensive field research by NIZA and Open Society highlighted systematic violations of human and socio-economic rights in the diamond-rich Lunda Norte and Sul provinces, and called for the resumption of international campaigning against so-called conflict diamonds from Angola.
- In a report published in December, Human Rights Watch elaborated on the human rights situation in Cabinda, and in March called attention to the situation of returning refugees, who have been suffering from discrimination by local populations and lack of economic opportunities, access to identity papers and basic social and health facilities.
- Voluntary repatriation operations carried out by the UNHCR have resumed, targeting 53'000 refugees from neighboring countries this year, yet have been constrained by the Marburg epidemic in Uige, some reluctance of refugees to return before elections, and ongoing funding shortfalls with regard to the World Food Programme's relief and recovery operations.
- International election observers were attributed only a minor role in the electoral observation law adopted by Parliament in March. This results from widespread perceptions in Angola that the international community failed in preventing the post-electoral civil war in 1992. However, Human Rights Watch and Hina Jilani, expressing concern at the declining field presence of the OCHA's Transitional Coordinating Unit and the lacking protection mandate of the UN Office for Human Rights, have stressed the urgent need to step up international protection monitoring presence during the post-war and pre-elections transition period.

Appendix : Description of indicators used | Page 9

Variable Name	Description / Definition
All Events	IDEA categories: a count of all coded events with WEIS cue categories ranging from 1 to 22 (all WEIS cue categories) plus an additional 11 IDEA event cue categories (Event type: 'other').
All Actions	WEIS categories: a count of all coded events with cue categories ranging from 1 to 22 (all WEIS cue categories).
Relative Actions	Proportion of All Actions to All Events.
Conflict Carrying Capacity	The Conflict Carrying Capacity (or CCC) is a composed index that depicts the overall stability of the country or region of interest. The CCC is operationalized in terms of the multiplicative interaction among three Proportional measures: (1) civil contentiousness or the Proportion of civil actions that are reported as contentious or "direct" and thus challenge (at least implicitly) the state's monopoly on conflict regulation; (2) state repression or the Proportion of state actions that are reported as extra-institutional or "direct" both in response to direct challenges from the civil sector and those initiated by the state to repress and control opposition; and (3) violent contention or the Proportion of actions entailing physical damage to persons or property. The index is scaled between 0 and 1, where 1 means high and 0 low stability.
Country Stability	The Country Stability index is another version of the CCC measure with minor changes in order to improve the responsiveness of the index to events that influence the stability of a country.
Relative Cooperative Actions	Proportion of all actions belonging to all cooperative categories yield, comment consult, approve, promise, grant, reward, agree, request, and propose to All Events.
Relative Conflictive Actions	Proportion of all actions belonging to all conflictive categories reject, accuse, protest, deny, demand, warn, threaten, demonstrate, reduce relationships, expel, seize, and force to All Events.
Relative Domestic Actions	Proportion of all actions whose recipients and/or initiators belong to the same country (domestic actions)
Relative International Actions	Proportion of all actions whose recipients and/or initiators do not belong to the same country (international actions)

Who are we?

FAST International is the early warning program of swisspeace, based in Berne, Switzerland. The program is funded and utilized by an international consortium of development agencies consisting of the Austrian Development Agency (ADA), Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

What do we want to achieve?

FAST International aims at enhancing political decision makers' and their offices' ability to identify critical developments in a timely manner so that coherent political strategies can be formulated to either prevent or limit destructive effects of violent conflict or identify windows of opportunity for peacebuilding.

How do we work?

FAST International uses both qualitative and quantitative methods, with the combination of methods being determined in each case by customer needs. The centerpiece of FAST International is the collection of single cooperative and conflictive events by means of a web-based software, applied by local staff using a coding scheme called IDEA (Integrated Data for Event Analysis), which is based on the WEIS (World Interaction Survey) coding scheme. The monitoring by FAST International is done independently from Western media coverage, thus providing for a constant influx of information. This information is collected by FAST International's own Local Information Networks (LINs). The quantitative empirical analysis is based on composed indicators developed within the IDEA framework. Since even the most profound quantitative analysis requires interpretation, FAST International cooperates with renowned country/area experts.

What are our products?

FAST International offers different early warning products tailored to customer needs. The only standard product available to the general public is the FAST Update, which provides the reader with an overview of developments on a semi-annual basis. It consists of three to five tension barometers (graphs), displaying cooperative and conflictive developments, which are analyzed by FAST's country/area experts on the basis of specific indicators. Whenever major changes occur in one of the countries or regions under scrutiny, FAST releases Special Updates, which follow the structure of the regular FAST Updates. FAST Updates are available in either hard copy, in electronic form on the respective country page or by subscription.

Which countries do we currently monitor?

Africa: Angola, Burundi, DRC/Kivu region, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Mozambique, Rwanda, Somalia
Asia: Afghanistan, India/Kashmir, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan
Europe: Georgia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Russian Federation/North Caucasus region