**THE
STATESMAN'S
YEARBOOK
2009**

‘Absolute government has no need to tell lies – it is silent. Representative government, obliged to speak, disguises the truth and lies with impunity.’

Napoleon I, 1769–1821

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THE STATESMAN'S YEARBOOK

THE POLITICS, CULTURES AND
ECONOMIES OF THE WORLD

2009

Edited by
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PREFACE

Are you getting the most out of your *Statesman's Yearbook*? This print edition is the first-stop reference work of choice for librarians, researchers, journalists, business people and general readers across the world, but it can never be more than a snapshot of the world—a detailed and comprehensive snapshot, certainly, but frozen in time while the real world is in constant change. That's why we update our online edition of the work on a regular basis throughout the year, making it available to all purchasers of the print edition. Just go to www.statesmansyearbook.com and register the unique code printed on the front of this book.

In addition to the frequent updates you'll find the online edition contains an enormous amount of material we simply couldn't cram into the printed book, including detailed

biographical profiles of post-war leaders for each country, a detailed week-by-week chronology of world events since the year 2000 and over 1,000 links to useful websites. What's more, institutions can choose to upgrade their complimentary single-user access to a site-wide licence: if you would like to offer unlimited access to multiple users please email sybinfo@palgrave.com for a quote.

If you have any comments or suggestions to help improve the *Statesman's Yearbook* in print or online we'd love to hear from you; please email us at sybcomments@palgrave.com or write to *The Statesman's Yearbook* team, Palgrave Macmillan, Houndmills, Basingstoke RG21 6XS, UK.

Alison Jones
Publisher, *The Statesman's Yearbook*

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KEY WORLD FACTS

• World population in 2008	6,750 (3,400 million males and 3,350 million females)
• World population under 30 in 2008	3,584 million
• World population over 60 in 2008	728 million
• World population over 100 in 2008	356,000
• Number of births worldwide every day	373,000
• Number of deaths worldwide every day	159,000
• World economic growth rate in 2007	4.9%
• Number of illiterate adults	771 million
• Number of unemployed people	185 million
• Average world life expectancy	65.0 years for females; 69.5 years for males
• Annual world population increase	78.33 million people
• Number of people living outside country of birth	185 million, or nearly 3% of the world's population
• Fertility rate	2.7 births per woman
• Urban population	49.9% of total population
• World defence expenditure	US\$1,208 billion
• Number of TV sets	1.36 billion
• Number of radio receivers	2.18 billion
• Number of cigarettes smoked	5,600 billion a year
• Number of Internet users	1.36 billion
• Number of mobile phone users	3.28 billion
• Number of motor vehicles on the road	647 million
• Number of people who cross international borders every day	2 million
• Number of people living in extreme poverty	986 million
• Number of people living in urban slums	924 million
• Number of malnourished people	852 million
• Number of overweight adults	1.6 billion
• Number of obese adults	400 million
• Number of people dying of starvation	24,000 every day
• Number of people lacking clean drinking water	1 billion
• Number of people lacking adequate sanitation	3 billion
• Number of recorded executions in 2007	1,252
• Number of people worldwide exposed to indoor air pollution that exceeds WHO guidelines	1 billion
• Annual carbon dioxide emissions	7.7 billion tonnes of carbon equivalent

ENVIRONMENT FACT SHEET

'We, the human species, are confronting a planetary emergency—a threat to the survival of our civilization that is gathering ominous and destructive potential even as we gather here. But there is hopeful news as well: we have the ability to solve this crisis and avoid the worst—though not all—of its consequences, if we act boldly, decisively and quickly.'
Al Gore, Nobel Lecture, 2007.

• Country with largest carbon dioxide emissions (2005)	USA (21.1% of world total)
• Country with largest carbon dioxide emissions per capita (2005)	Qatar
• Nations signed up to the Kyoto Accord on reducing greenhouse gases (Dec. 2007)	174
• % of Earth's land surface covered by rainforests	6%
• % of all land vegetation accounted for by rainforests	80%
• Estimated area of rainforest lost each year	13.7m. ha.
• Estimated area of the world threatened by desertification	4bn. ha.
• Number of natural and mixed (natural/cultural) sites on the UNESCO World Heritage List	191
• Number of natural and mixed sites on the UNESCO List of World Heritage Sites in Danger	14
• Highest rated country in the Environmental Performance Index (2008)	Switzerland
• Lowest rated country in the Environmental Performance Index (2008)	Niger
• World's most polluted city (2006)	Linfen, China
• Projected rise in global sea level by end of 21st century (against 1989–99 levels)	28–58 cm
• World's biggest oil spill	223,000 tonnes (from the Amoco Cadiz, off Brittany, France in 1978)
• People lacking access to a safe water supply	1.1bn.
• Number of plant species under threat (2006)	8,390
• Number of mammal species under threat (2006)	1,093
• Number of bird species under threat (2006)	1,206
• Number of fish species under threat (2006)	1,173
• Number of amphibian species under threat (2006)	1,811

Sources: BBC, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Rainforest Alliance, UNESCO, United Nations Environment Programme, World Bank, World Conservation Union, Yale & Columbia Universities

OIL FACT SHEET

'Formula for success: rise early, work hard, strike oil.'
Jean Paul Getty, US industrialist and oil magnate (1892–1976).

- Oil is the world's single largest energy source, although its share in global primary energy consumption is decreasing.
- Global demand for oil is forecast to increase by 48% between 2003 and 2030.
- World oil reserves totalled 1,208.2bn. bbls. in 2006.
- The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) accounts for about 75% of world oil reserves.
- Saudi Arabia has the largest reserves (264.2bn. bbls. in 2005).
- Global oil production in 2006 totalled 3,914.1m. tonnes or 81.7m. bbls. daily.
- Saudi Arabia is the largest oil producer (526.2m. tonnes in 2005 or 13.5% of world output).
- Other major producers are Russia (470.0m. tonnes in 2005), the USA (257.8m. tonnes) and Iran (200.4m. tonnes).
- Russia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan (non-OPEC producers bordering, or near, the Caspian Sea) control around 10% of world oil reserves.
- In South America, Venezuela has the largest reserves (79.7bn. bbls. in 2005) and is the biggest producer (154.7m. tonnes in 2005).
- Nigeria, Algeria, Libya and Angola are the main African producers (125.4m. tonnes, 86.5m. tonnes, 80.1m. tonnes and 61.2m. tonnes respectively in 2005).
- The USA is by far the world's largest oil consumer (951.4m. tonnes in 2005), accounting for 25% of global consumption.
- China is the second largest oil consumer (327.8m. tonnes in 2005), followed by Japan (244.0m. tonnes).
- Chinese oil consumption has doubled since 1996—that of the USA has increased by 12% and that of Japan has fallen.
- Middle Eastern countries accounted for 38.4% of all oil exports in 2006.
- The world's two leading oil exporting countries are Saudi Arabia and Russia.
- The main importers are the USA, Japan and China.
- The USA has the largest oil refinery capacity (17.45m. bbls. daily in 2006), followed by China (7.03m. bbls. daily).
- The price of a barrel of oil topped \$100 for the first time in Jan. 2008.
- ExxonMobil's net income in 2007 was \$40.6bn.—a record for any US company.
- Competing claims to rich oil discoveries may cause territorial disputes, not least over the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea which have been claimed by Brunei, China, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam.

Sources: BP Statistical Review of World Energy; SIPRI Yearbook;
Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries; US Energy Information Administration;
The Economist.

WORLD POPULATION DEVELOPMENTS

1950			2005		
1.	China	554,760,000	1.	China	1,312,979,000
2.	India	371,857,000	2.	India	1,134,403,000
3.	USSR	180,980,000	3.	USA	299,846,000
4.	USA	157,813,000	4.	Indonesia	226,063,000
5.	Japan	83,625,000	5.	Brazil	186,831,000
6.	Indonesia	79,538,000	6.	Pakistan	158,081,000
7.	Brazil	53,975,000	7.	Bangladesh	153,281,000
8.	UK	50,616,000	8.	Russia	143,953,000
9.	West Germany	49,986,000	9.	Nigeria	141,356,000
10.	Italy	47,104,000	10.	Japan	127,897,000

2050		
1.	India	1,658,270,000
2.	China	1,408,846,000
3.	USA	402,415,000
4.	Indonesia	296,885,000
5.	Pakistan	292,205,000
6.	Nigeria	288,696,000
7.	Brazil	254,085,000
8.	Bangladesh	254,084,000
9.	Congo (Democratic Republic of)	186,837,000
10.	Ethiopia	183,404,000

Source: United Nations World Population Prospects (2006 Revision)

LARGEST URBAN AGGLOMERATIONS

1950			2005		
1.	New York-Newark, USA	12,338,000	1.	Tokyo, Japan	35,327,000
2.	Tokyo, Japan	11,275,000	2.	Mexico City, Mexico	19,013,000
3.	London, United Kingdom	8,361,000	3.	New York-Newark, USA	18,498,000
4.	Paris, France	5,424,000	4.	Mumbai (Bombay), India	18,336,000
5.	Moscow, USSR	5,356,000	5.	São Paulo, Brazil	18,333,000
6.	Shanghai, China	5,333,000	6.	Delhi, India	15,334,000
7.	Rhein-Ruhr North, West Germany	5,295,000	7.	Calcutta, India	14,299,000
8.	Buenos Aires, Argentina	5,041,000	8.	Buenos Aires, Argentina	13,349,000
9.	Chicago, USA	4,999,000	9.	Jakarta, Indonesia	13,194,000
10.	Calcutta, India	4,446,000	10.	Shanghai, China	12,665,000

2015		
1.	Tokyo, Japan	35,494,000
2.	Mumbai (Bombay), India	21,869,000
3.	Mexico City, Mexico	21,568,000
4.	São Paulo, Brazil	20,535,000
5.	New York-Newark, USA	19,876,000
6.	Delhi, India	18,604,000
7.	Shanghai, China	17,225,000
8.	Calcutta, India	16,980,000
9.	Dhaka, Bangladesh	16,842,000
10.	Jakarta, Indonesia	16,822,000

Source: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs/Population Division, World Urbanization Prospects (2005 Revision)

CHRONOLOGY

CHRONOLOGY

April 2007–March 2008

Week beginning 1 April 2007

In Nepal, a new coalition government included representatives of the rebel Maoist party. Sahana Pradhan was named foreign minister.

Han Duck-soo was sworn in as prime minister of South Korea.

In a cabinet reshuffle in Romania, Adrian Cioroianu was named foreign minister, Varujan Vosganian finance minister and Teodor Meleşcanu defence minister.

In Qatar, foreign minister Sheikh Hamad bin Jasim bin Jabir Al Thani was named prime minister.

Defence minister Serzh Sargsyan was appointed prime minister of Armenia. His former role was filled by Mikael Arutyunyan.

In Côte d'Ivoire, Guillaume Soro was sworn in as prime minister. His cabinet included Charles Diby Koffi as finance minister and Michel Amani N'Guessan as defence minister.

Estonian prime minister Andrus Ansip announced a new cabinet with Jaak Aaviksoo as defence minister, Urmas Paet foreign minister and Ivari Padar finance minister.

In Yemen, president Ali Abdullah Saleh appointed a new government headed by Ali Mohammed Mujawar, with Noman Taha Al-Souhaybi as finance minister and Abubakr Al-Qirbi foreign minister.

Week beginning 8 April 2007

In the first round of presidential elections in East Timor, Francisco Guterres of the ruling FRETILIN party won 27.9% of the vote, followed by José Ramos-Horta with 21.8% and Fernando de Araújo with 19.2%. In the subsequent run-off Ramos-Horta was elected with 69.3% of votes cast against Guterres with 30.7%.

Martinho Ndafo Kabi was appointed prime minister of Guinea-Bissau. His new government included Maria da Conceição Nobre Cabral as foreign minister, Marciano Silva Barbeiro as defence minister and Issuf Sanhá as finance minister.

In North Korea, prime minister Pak Pong-chu was dismissed. He was replaced by Kim Yong-il.

Week beginning 15 April 2007

In Finland, parliament re-elected Matti Vanhanen as prime minister. Appointing a new cabinet he named Ilkka Kanerva foreign minister, Jyrki Katainen finance minister and Anne Holmlund interior minister.

In Eritrea, Osman Saleh became foreign minister.

Husayn Elabe Fahiye was appointed foreign minister of Somalia.

The Romanian parliament voted by 322 to 108 to suspend president Traian Băsescu. The president of the senate, Nicolae Văcăroiu, became interim president.

Sidi Mohamed Ould Cheikh Abdellahi was sworn in as president of Mauritania. Zein Ould Zeidane was appointed prime minister, heading a cabinet including Mohamed Saleck Ould Mohamed Lemine as foreign minister, Abderrahmane Ould Hamma Vezaz as economy and finance minister, and Yall Zekaria as interior minister.

In presidential elections in Nigeria, Umaru Yar'Adua won 70.0% of votes cast ahead of Muhammadu Buhari with 18.7% and Atiku Abubakar with 7.2%.

Week beginning 22 April 2007

In the first round of presidential elections in France, Nicolas Sarkozy gained 31.2% of the vote. His nearest rivals were Ségolène Royal with 25.9%, François Bayrou with 18.6% and Jean-Marie Le Pen with 10.4%. In the second round Sarkozy won 53.1% against Royal with 46.9%.

Israeli finance minister Avraham Hirschson stood down for three months while police investigated allegations of corruption. Prime minister Ehud Olmert became acting finance minister.

In parliamentary elections in Syria, the ruling National Progressive Front, led by the Ba'ath Party, won 172 of the 250 available seats. Independents won the remaining 78 seats.

Zalmay Khalilzad became the US ambassador to the United Nations.

Besnik Mustafaj resigned as foreign minister of Albania. He was replaced by Lulzim Basha.

In China, Yang Jiechi was appointed foreign minister.

Week beginning 29 April 2007

In presidential elections in Mali, Amadou Toumani Touré was re-elected president with 71.2% of votes cast against Ibrahim Boubacar Keita with 19.2%. There were five other candidates.

Meritxell Mateu Pi was named foreign minister and Antoni Riberaygua Sasplugas interior and justice minister in a cabinet reshuffle in Andorra.

In parliamentary elections in The Bahamas, the Free National Movement won 23 out of the 41 available seats with 49.9% of the vote against the ruling Progressive Liberal Party with 18 seats and 47.0%. Hubert Ingraham was sworn in as prime minister and finance minister, with Brent Symonette as deputy prime minister and foreign affairs minister.

Nikos Symeonides, the defence minister of Cyprus, died in office. He was succeeded by Christodoulos Pashiardis.

In elections to the Scottish Parliament, the Scottish National Party won 47 seats, against Labour with 46, the Conservatives 17 and the Liberal Democrats 16. Alex Salmond, the leader of the SNP, was elected first minister.

In Welsh Assembly elections the Labour Party won 26 seats, followed by Plaid Cymru with 15, the Conservatives 12 and the Liberal Democrats 6. Labour subsequently formed a coalition government with Plaid Cymru, with Rhodri Morgan re-elected as first minister.

Week beginning 6 May 2007

In parliamentary elections in Burkina Faso, the Congress for Democracy and Progress won 73 of the 111 available seats, followed by the Alliance for Democracy and the Federation-African Democratic Rally with 14 and the Union for the Republic with 5.

In Nicaragua, Ruth Tapia Roa became defence minister.

Abdülkadir Aksu, the Turkish interior minister, resigned. He was replaced by Osman Günes.

The Northern Ireland assembly was restored after an agreement was reached between the Democratic Unionist Party and Sinn Féin. Ian Paisley was sworn in as first minister, with Martin McGuinness as deputy first minister.

Immanuel 'Manny' Mori was elected president of Micronesia. Alik L. Alik became vice president.

The Samoan head of state, Malietoa Tanumafili II, died in office.

In parliamentary elections in Armenia, the Republican Party of Armenia won 64 seats followed by Prosperous Armenia with 24, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation 16, Rule of Law 9 and the Heritage Party 6.

Gen. Baïlo Diallo was named defence minister of Guinea.

In Icelandic parliamentary elections the Independence Party won 25 of the 63 seats with 36.6% of the vote. The Social Democratic Alliance won 18 with 26.8%, the Left-Green Alliance 9 with 14.3%, the Progressive Party 7 with 11.7% and the Liberal Party 4 with 7.3%.

Parliamentary elections in the Seychelles resulted in the Seychelles People's Progressive Front winning 23 of the available 34 seats (56.2% of votes cast), against 11 for the Seychelles National Party-Democratic Party (43.8%).

Week beginning 13 May 2007

In Serbia, prime minister Vojislav Koštunica announced his new cabinet, including Vuk Jeremić as foreign minister, Dragan Jočić as interior minister and Mirko Cvetković as finance minister.

Rimantas Šadžius was appointed finance minister in Lithuania.

In parliamentary elections in Algeria the ruling coalition won 249 of 389 seats (consisting of the National Liberation Front with 136, the National Rally for Democracy 61 and the Movement of the Society for Peace 52). The remaining seats went to minor parties and independents.

In a referendum held in Romania, 74.5% of voters supported the reinstatement of Traian Băsescu as president. He subsequently returned to office.

Week beginning 20 May 2007

Parliamentary elections in Vietnam resulted in Communist Party members winning 450 of the 493 seats, with non-party independents taking the remaining 43.

In Belize, defence minister Cordel Hyde was dismissed by prime minister Said Musa.

In parliamentary elections in Ireland, Fianna Fáil won 78 seats with 42.0% of votes cast, followed by Fine Gael with 51 and 27.4%, the Labour Party 20 and 10.3%, the Green Party 6 and 4.5%, and Sinn Féin 4 and 7.1%.

Week beginning 27 May 2007

Syrian president Bashar al-Assad won 97.6% of the vote in a referendum that confirmed him in office for another seven-year term.

In Monaco, Jean Pastorelli was named foreign minister.

Umaru Yar'Adua was sworn in as president of Nigeria.

Basile Ikouébé was appointed foreign minister in the Republic of the Congo.

In Latvia, Valdis Zatlers was elected president by parliament, defeating Aivars Endziņš by 58 votes to 39.

Algerian prime minister Abdelaziz Belkhadem and his government resigned. President Abdelaziz Bouteflika appointed a new government, with Belkhadem remaining prime minister, Mourad Medelci as foreign minister and Karim Djoudi as finance minister.

Week beginning 3 June 2007

In Burkina Faso, prime minister Paramanga Ernest Yonli resigned. He was replaced by Tertius Zongo, who appointed Col. Djibril Yipene Bassolet foreign minister.

Seyni Oumarou was appointed prime minister of Niger. His cabinet included Djida Hamadou as defence minister.

In parliamentary elections in Senegal, Coalition 'Sopi' (led by the ruling Senegalese Democratic Party) won 131 of the 150 available seats, gaining 69.2% of the vote. Prime minister Macky Sall subsequently resigned, and was succeeded by Cheikh Hadjibou Soumaré.

The acting prime minister of St Lucia, Stephenson King, who was appointed after Sir John Compton suffered a stroke, took over the foreign affairs, home affairs and finance portfolios.

Week beginning 10 June 2007

In parliamentary elections in Belgium the Christian Democratic and Flemish-New Flemish Alliance won 30 of the 150 seats, followed by the Reformist Movement with 23, the Socialist Party 20, the Open Flemish Liberals and Democrats 18 and Flemish Interest 17. Prime minister Guy Verhofstadt, the leader of the Open Flemish Liberals and Democrats, subsequently resigned.

Two rounds of parliamentary elections in France resulted in president Nicolas Sarkozy's Union for a Popular Movement winning 314 of 577 available seats with 46.4% of votes cast, ahead of the Socialist Party with 185 and 42.3%. The failure to gain election of Alain Juppé, a former prime minister and the mayor of Bordeaux who had been earmarked for a senior post, led François Fillon to reshuffle his cabinet, with Christine Lagarde replacing Jean-Louis Borloo as finance minister.

Moldovan president Vladimir Voronin dismissed defence minister Valeriu Pleșca. He was temporarily succeeded by Ion Corobceanu.

In Israel, Shimon Peres was elected by the Knesset to succeed Moshe Katsav as president, defeating Reuven Rivlin and Colette Avital.

After fighting between the Fatah and Hamas parties in the Palestinian-Administered Territories, president Mahmoud Abbas dismissed the government of prime minister Ismail Haniya and declared his intention to rule by presidential decree. Salam Fayyad was appointed prime minister but Haniya's Hamas government unofficially retained power in the Gaza Strip.

Israeli defence minister Amir Peretz resigned. He was replaced by Ehud Barak.

Week beginning 17 June 2007

In a cabinet reshuffle in Benin, Moussa Okanla was named foreign minister, Gen. Félix Hesso interior minister and Soulé Mana Lawani finance minister.

Tuiatua Tupua Tamasese Efi was sworn in as head of state in Samoa after being elected by the legislative assembly.

Week beginning 24 June 2007

In the first round of parliamentary elections in the Republic of the Congo the Congolese Labour Party won 23 seats, the Congolese Movement for Democracy and Integral Development 4 and the Action Movement for Renewal 3.

Tony Blair resigned as prime minister of the United Kingdom and was succeeded by Gordon Brown. His new cabinet included Alistair Darling as chancellor of the exchequer, David Miliband as foreign secretary and Jacqui Smith as home secretary.

Parliamentary elections in East Timor resulted in the Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor (FRETILIN) winning 21 of the 65 available seats, the National Congress for Timorese Reconstruction 18, the Timorese Social Democratic Association–Social Democratic Party 11 and the Democratic Party 8.

Week beginning 1 July 2007

Israeli finance minister Avraham Hirschson resigned. In a cabinet reshuffle, Roni Bar-On became finance minister and Meir Sheerit interior minister.

Robert Zoellick took office as president of the World Bank.

Miroslav Lajčák was appointed UN high representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina, replacing Christian Schwarz-Schilling. Željko Komšić became president for an eight-month term as part of a four-year rotating presidency representing the three major ethnic groups.

In Japan, defence minister Fumio Kyuma resigned; he was succeeded by Yuri Koike.

In a cabinet reshuffle in Laos, Somdy Duangdy replaced Chansy Phosikham as finance minister.

Gen. Gustavo Rangel Briceño was appointed defence minister of Venezuela.

Week beginning 8 July 2007

Valdis Zatlers took office as president of Latvia.

Jarosław Kaczyński, the prime minister of Poland, dismissed deputy prime minister Andrzej Lepper.

In Cyprus, the Communist Progressive Party of the Working People withdrew from the coalition government, with foreign minister Yiorgos Lillikas and interior minister Neoklis Sylikiotis resigning from the cabinet. They were replaced by Erato Kozakou-Marcoullis and Christos Patsalidis respectively.

In Ghana, Akwasi Osei-Adjei was named foreign minister.

Clotilde Nizigama was appointed finance minister of Burundi as part of a cabinet reshuffle.

In Micronesia, Lorin S. Robert became foreign minister and Finley S. Perman finance minister.

Parliamentary elections were held in Papua New Guinea, with the National Alliance Party taking 27 of the 109 available seats, the Papua New Guinea Party 8 and the People's Action Party 6.

Week beginning 15 July 2007

Shimon Peres took office as president of Israel.

In Moldova, Vitalie Vrabie was appointed defence minister by president Vladimir Voronin.

Jim Nicholson announced his resignation as US secretary of veterans' affairs.

Raymond Paul Ndougou was named interior minister of the Central African Republic.

After three unsuccessful attempts at securing the required majority, Bamir Topi was elected president by the Albanian parliament.

In presidential elections in India, Pratibha Patil won the support of 65.8% of the federal and state legislators eligible to vote, defeating Bhairon Singh Shekhawat who won 34.2%.

Week beginning 22 July 2007

In two rounds of parliamentary elections held in Mali a coalition led by the Alliance for Democracy in Mali and the Union for the Republic and Democracy won 113 of 147 available seats.

In parliamentary elections in Cameroon the ruling Cameroon People's Democratic Movement won 153 of the 180 available seats.

Parliamentary elections were held in Turkey, with the ruling Justice and Development Party winning 341 of 550 seats with 46.7% of votes cast, followed by the Republican People's Party with 112 and 20.8% and the Nationalist Movement Party with 71 and 14.3%.

In Brazil, Nelson Jobim replaced Waldir Pires as defence minister.

Lyonpo Khandu Wangchuck resigned as prime minister of Bhutan. He was succeeded by Lyonpo Kinzang Dorji. Finance minister Wangdi Norbu and interior minister Jigme Thinley also announced their resignations.

Nigerian president Umaru Yar'Adua's new cabinet included Ojo Maduekwe as foreign minister, Mahmud Yayale Ahmed as defence minister and Shamasudeen Usman as finance minister.

Week beginning 29 July 2007

In a cabinet reshuffle in Vanuatu, George Wells was appointed foreign minister.

Oil prices reached a record high of US\$78.77 per barrel.

Week beginning 5 August 2007

As a result of the second round of elections in the Republic of the Congo the ruling Congolese Labour Party and its allies held 124 of the 137 contested seats.

In East Timor, president José Ramos-Horta appointed Xanana Gusmão prime minister. Gusmão also took the defence portfolio, with Zacarias da Costa as foreign minister and Emília Pires as finance minister.

The Polish interior minister Janusz Kaczmarek was dismissed. He was replaced by Władisław Stasiak.

Hamid Ansari was elected vice president of India.

Parliamentary elections were held in Sierra Leone, resulting in the All People's Congress winning 59 seats, followed by the Sierra Leone People's Party with 43 and the People's Movement for Democratic Change with 10.

Week beginning 12 August 2007

In Papua New Guinea, prime minister Sir Michael Somare was re-elected by parliament, winning 86 votes against Sir Julius Chan with 21. His new cabinet included Bob Dadae as defence minister, Patrick Pruaich as finance minister and Sam Abel as foreign minister.

In a cabinet reshuffle in Canada, Peter MacKay was named defence minister and Maxime Bernier foreign minister.

Parliamentary elections in Kazakhstan resulted in the ruling Light of the Fatherland Party winning all 98 elected seats with 88.1% of votes cast.

Week beginning 19 August 2007

In Jordan, finance minister Ziad Fariz resigned.

Ahmed Shaheed, foreign minister of the Maldives, resigned. He was replaced by Abdullah Shahid.

In a cabinet reshuffle in Liberia, Olubanke King Akerele was named foreign minister.

Zambian president Levy Patrick Mwanawasa dismissed foreign minister Mundia Sikatana who was succeeded by Kabinga Mpande.

In parliamentary elections held in Nauru, supporters of president Ludwig Scotty won 15 of the available 18 seats. Scotty was subsequently re-elected president, defeating Marcus Stephen by 14 votes to 3.

Week beginning 26 August 2007

In a cabinet reshuffle in Japan, Nobutaka Machimura was named foreign minister, Masahiko Koumura defence minister and Fukushima Nukaga finance minister.

US attorney-general Alberto Gonzales announced his resignation, to take effect in mid-September.

In the third round of presidential elections in Turkey, Abdullah Gül of the ruling Justice and Development Party was elected by parliament, winning 339 of the 550 available votes. In a subsequent cabinet reshuffle, Ali Babacan was appointed foreign minister and Beşir Atalay interior minister.

Chinese finance minister Jin Renqing resigned; he was replaced by Xie Xuren.

In Ecuador, defence minister Lorena Escudero Durán resigned and was succeeded by Wellington Sandoval.

Week beginning 2 September 2007

In parliamentary elections in Jamaica, the Jamaica Labour Party won 33 of the available 60 seats and 50.1% of the vote, against the ruling People's National Party with 27 and 49.8%. Bruce Golding was sworn in as prime minister. His cabinet included Kenneth Baugh as foreign minister and Audley Shaw as finance minister.

Mikael Odenberg resigned as Swedish defence minister. He was succeeded by Sten Tolgfors.

In a cabinet reshuffle in Cameroon, Henri Ayissi Eyebe was named foreign minister and Lazare Essimi Menye finance minister.

Parliamentary elections were held in Morocco, resulting in the Independence Party winning 52 seats, followed by the Party of Justice and Development with 46, the Popular Movement 41 and the National Rally of Independents 39. Abbas El Fassi was appointed prime minister.

In St Lucia, prime minister Sir John Compton died in office. He was succeeded by Stephenson King who also took the foreign, home affairs and finance portfolios.

In a presidential run-off in Sierra Leone, Ernest Bai Koroma gained 54.6% of votes cast, defeating Solomon Berewa with 45.4%. Koroma appointed Samuel Sam-Sumana as vice president.

Week beginning 9 September 2007

In parliamentary elections in Guatemala, the National Union of Hope won 48 of 158 seats, followed by the Grand National Alliance with 37 and the Patriotic Party with 30.

Japanese prime minister Shinzo Abe resigned. Parliament elected Yasuo Fukuda as his successor.

Vladimir Putin, the Russian president, replaced prime minister Mikhail Fradkov, appointing Viktor Zubkov in his place.

Crispin Grey-Johnson was appointed foreign minister of The Gambia.

Oil prices rose above US\$80 for the first time, reaching US\$80.20 per barrel.

Week beginning 16 September 2007

Parliamentary elections in Greece resulted in New Democracy winning 152 of 300 contested seats. The Panhellenic Socialist Movement won 102, the Communist Party 22 and the Coalition of the Radical Left 14.

Oil prices reached a high of US\$82.51 per barrel.

In the USA, agriculture secretary Michael Johanns resigned.

Week beginning 23 September 2007

In parliamentary elections in Madagascar, the I Love Madagascar party won 105 of the 127 available seats.

In Thailand the interior minister Aree Wong-araya resigned.

The prime minister of Mali, Ousmane Issoufi Maïga, resigned. He was succeeded by Modibo Sidibé.

Dominique Strauss-Kahn was selected as managing director of the International Monetary Fund.

Week beginning 30 September 2007

Parliamentary elections held in Ukraine resulted in the Party of Regions winning 175 of 450 seats with 34.4% of the vote, followed by the Yuliya Tymoshenko Bloc with 156 and 30.7% and Our Ukraine–People's Self Defence with 72 and 14.2%.

In San Marino, Mirko Tomassoni and Alberto Selva were appointed captains regent.

Thai prime minister Surayud Chulanont took over the interior affairs portfolio.

Week beginning 7 October 2007

In Sierra Leone, president Ernest Bai Koroma appointed Zainab Bangura foreign minister, David Carew finance minister and Dauda Kamara internal affairs minister.

Girma Wolde-Giyorgis was re-elected president of Ethiopia by parliament.

Soe Win, the prime minister of Myanmar, died in office. He was succeeded by Thein Sein.

Week beginning 14 October 2007

In parliamentary elections held in Togo, the Togolese People's Assembly won 50 of the 81 available seats, gaining 32.7% of votes cast, followed by the Union of Forces for Change with 27 and 30.8%.

Recently appointed Moroccan prime minister, Abbas El Fassi, announced his cabinet, naming Taieb Fassi Fihri foreign minister and Salaheddine Mezouar finance minister.

Roosevelt Skerrit, the prime minister of Dominica, took over the post of foreign minister. Rayburn Blackmore became national security minister.

Deng Alor Kuol was named foreign minister of Sudan.

In presidential elections in Kiribati, incumbent Anote Tong was re-elected with 64.3% of the vote, defeating Nabuti Mwemwenikarawa. In a cabinet reshuffle Naatan Teewe was appointed finance minister.

Artis Pabriks resigned as foreign minister of Latvia.

Week beginning 21 October 2007

In Polish parliamentary elections Civic Platform won 209 of 460 seats with 41.5% of the vote, followed by the ruling Law and Justice Party with 166 and 32.1% and the Left and Democrats with 53 and 13.2%.

Parliamentary elections were held in Switzerland, resulting in the Swiss People's Party winning 62 of the 200 available seats with 29.0% of votes cast. The Social Democratic Party of Switzerland won 43 and 19.5%, the Free Democrat Party 31 and 15.6% and the Christian Democratic People's Party 31 and 14.6%.

Ecuador rejoined OPEC after a 15-year absence.

In Kyrgyzstan, prime minister Almazbek Atambayev and his cabinet resigned.

In a cabinet reshuffle in Madagascar, Cécile Manoroahanta became defence minister and Haja Nirina Razafinjatovo finance minister.

Week beginning 28 October 2007

In Somalia, prime minister Ali Muhammad Ghedi resigned. Salim Eliyow Ebrov became acting prime minister.

Oil prices reached US\$93.53 per barrel.

In the USA, Edward T. Schafer was nominated as agriculture secretary.

Nikola Špirić resigned as prime minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Week beginning 4 November 2007

In Guatemala's presidential election runoff Álvaro Colom Caballeros won 52.8% of the vote and Otto Pérez Molina 47.2%.

In parliamentary elections in Trinidad and Tobago the ruling People's National Movement won 26 of 41 seats with 45.9% of the vote. The United National Congress won the remaining 15 seats with 29.7% of the vote. The new cabinet included Paula Gopee-Scoon as foreign minister and Karen Nunez-Tesheira as finance minister.

The first vice president of Burundi, Martin Nduwimana, resigned. Parliament selected Yves Sahinguvu as his successor.

Latvian Prime Minister Aigars Kalvitis announced the imminent resignation of his government. In spite of this, parliament approved three new ministers, including Māris Riekstiņš as foreign minister.

Mongolian prime minister Miyegombo Enkhbold resigned. Two weeks later parliament elected Sanj Bayar to succeed him.

The United States Senate confirmed Michael Mukasey as attorney general.

Week beginning 11 November 2007

In Slovenia's presidential election runoff, Danilo Türk gained 68.0% of the vote against Lozje Peterle with 32.0%.

Lithuanian interior minister Raimondas Sukys announced his resignation, to take effect in early December.

In parliamentary elections in Denmark the Liberals won 26.3% of the vote (46 of 175 seats) followed by the Social Democrats with 25.5% (45) and the Danish People's Party with 13.8% (25). Prime minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen's new cabinet included Lars Løkke Rasmussen as finance minister.

Prime minister Yawove Agboyobo of Togo resigned.

A new government was named in Burundi, with Venant Kamana as interior minister.

Donald Tusk was sworn in as Polish prime minister. The new cabinet included Radosław Sikorski as foreign minister, Bogdan Klich as defence minister and Jan Vincent-Rostowski as finance minister.

Georgian prime minister Zurab Nogaideli resigned. Parliament approved the nomination of Vladimer 'Lado' Gurgenedze as his successor, with a largely unchanged cabinet.

In Pakistan, Mohammadmian Soomro was sworn in as prime minister of an interim government. Inam ul-Haq became foreign minister, Salim Abbas Jilani defence minister and Salman Shah finance minister.

Week beginning 18 November 2007

Parliamentary elections were held in Jordan, resulting in independent candidates winning 104 of the 110 available seats and the Islamic Action Front taking the remaining six. Nader Dahabi became prime minister and defence minister, while Salah Bashir was appointed foreign minister.

In a cabinet reshuffle in São Tomé e Príncipe, Ovídio Pequeno became foreign minister and Arlindo Carvalho finance minister.

Nur Hassan Hussein was named prime minister of Somalia. He appointed Muhammad Ali Hamoud foreign minister, Ismail Ahmed Nur defence minister and Muhammad Yusuf Weyrah finance minister.

In Australian parliamentary elections the Australian Labor Party took 83 of 150 seats with 43.4% of votes cast. The Liberal Party won 55 seats with 36.3% and the National Party 10 with 5.5%. Kevin Rudd was sworn in as prime minister with Stephen Smith as foreign minister, Joel Fitzgibbon as defence minister and Lindsay Tanner as finance minister.

Week beginning 25 November 2007

Croatian parliamentary elections resulted in the Croatian Democratic Union winning 66 of 153 available seats, followed by the Social Democratic Party of Croatia with 56.

Mikheil Saakashvili resigned as president of Georgia to concentrate on his re-election campaign. Parliamentary speaker Nino Burjanadze became acting president.

In Kyrgyzstan, Almazbek Atambayev was dismissed as prime minister. He was replaced on a temporary basis by Iskenderbek Aidaraliev.

Rafael Correa, president of Ecuador, dismissed interior minister Gustavo Larrea. Fernando Bustamante became acting interior minister.

Tharman Shanmugaratnam was named finance minister of Singapore.

In Chad, Mahamat Nour Abdelkerim was dismissed from the post of defence minister.

Week beginning 2 December 2007

In Russia's parliamentary elections United Russia won 64.2% of the vote and 315 of 450 seats, the Communist Party 11.6% (57), the Liberal-Democratic Party 8.2% (40) and Fair Russia 7.8% (38).

Komlan Mally was appointed prime minister of Togo. His cabinet included Léopold Gnininvi as foreign minister.

In the Czech Republic, prime minister Mirek Topolánek's government narrowly survived a no-confidence vote.

The Mongolian parliament ratified prime minister Sanj Bayar's new cabinet, which included Sanjaasuren Oyun as foreign minister, Jamiyandorj Batkhuyag as defence minister and Chultem Ulaan as finance minister.

Week beginning 9 December 2007

Cristina Fernández de Kirchner took office as president of Argentina. Julio Cobos was appointed vice president, Florencio Randazzo minister of the interior and Martín Lousteau economy minister.

The Swiss parliament elected Pascal Couchepin as president for 2008, with 197 of 210 votes, and Hans-Rudolf Merz as vice president (193 of 211).

In the Solomon Islands, prime minister Manasseh Sogavare's government was defeated in a no-confidence vote in parliament by 25 votes to 22.

Following the resignation of Latvian prime minister Aigars Kalvitis, parliament approved a government led by Ivars Godmanis. Vinets Veldre became defence minister, Mareks Segliņš interior minister and Atis Slakteris finance minister.

Week beginning 16 December 2007

The prime ministerial candidacy of Yuliya Tymoshenko was approved by the Ukrainian parliament. Her cabinet, which included Volodymyr Ohryzko as foreign minister, Yuriy Yekhanurov as defence minister and Viktor Pynzenyk as finance minister, was confirmed later the same day.

Derek Sikua was elected prime minister of the Solomon Islands having defeated Patteson Oti in parliament by 32 votes to 15.

In parliamentary elections in Kyrgyzstan the Ak Zhol (Bright Path) party won 71 of 90 seats, the Social Democratic Party of Kyrgyzstan 11 and the Party of Communists of Kyrgyzstan 8.

In South Korea, Lee Myung-bak of the Grand National Party won the presidential elections with 48.7% of the vote, followed by Chung Dong-young of the United New Democratic Party (26.1%) and the independent Lee Hoi-chang (15.1%).

Danilo Türk was sworn in as president of Slovenia.

Week beginning 23 December 2007

Igor Chudinov was elected prime minister of Kyrgyzstan. His cabinet included Tajikan Kalimbetova as finance minister, but other key positions were unchanged.

Former prime minister of Pakistan Benazir Bhutto was killed in a suicide attack after an election rally in Rawalpindi.

Incumbent Mwai Kibaki won Kenya's presidential elections with 46.4% of the vote, followed by Raila Odinga with 44.1%. The legitimacy of the result was disputed, and nationwide protests led to the death of some 1,000 people.

In Croatia, interior minister Iвица Kirin resigned. Iвица Buconjić became acting interior minister.

Week beginning 30 December 2007

Cyprus and Malta adopted the euro.

Ramón Carrizález Rengifo was appointed new vice president of Venezuela. Rafael Isea was named finance minister and Ramón Rodríguez Chacín interior minister.

Chilean minister of the interior Belisario Velasco resigned. Felipe Harboe Bascuñán succeeded him on an interim basis.

Somalian prime minister Nur Hassan Hussein named Ali Ahmed Jama as foreign minister, Mohiyadin Muhammad Haji as defence minister and Muhammad Ali Hamoud as finance minister. The new cabinet was sworn in and won a confidence vote in parliament by 223 votes to five.

In presidential elections in Georgia, Mikheil Saakashvili won 53.5% of the vote, Levan Gachechiladze 25.7% and Badri Patarkatsishvili 7.1%.

The spot price of crude oil briefly hit \$100 per barrel before declining steadily to settle at just above \$90 at the end of January.

Week beginning 6 January 2008

Sheikh Khalifa bin Ahmed Al-Khalifa, the defence minister of Bahrain, was dismissed.

In the Marshall Islands, Litokwa Tomeing succeeded Kessai Note as president after defeating him in parliament by 18 votes to 15. His cabinet included Tony deBrum as foreign minister, Jack Ading as finance minister and Norman Matthew as minister for internal affairs.

Kenyan president Mwai Kibaki announced an incomplete cabinet, which included Kalonzo Musyoka as vice president and George Saitoti as interior minister.

Kosovo's parliament re-elected incumbent Fatmir Sejdiu president. On the same day, Hashim Thaçi was elected prime minister.

Croatian prime minister Ivo Sanader's new government was approved by parliament. It included Gordan Jandroković as foreign minister, Branko Vukelić as defence minister and Berislav Rončević as interior minister.

Week beginning 13 January 2008

Álvaro Colom Caballeros was sworn in as president of Guatemala. Rafael Espada took the post of vice president, Roger Haraldo Rodas Melgar became minister of external relations and Vinicio Gómez interior minister.

Parliamentary elections in Barbados saw the opposition Democratic Labour Party claim 20 of the 30 seats, with the remaining ten seats won by the Barbados Labour Party. David Thompson was sworn in as prime minister. His cabinet included Christopher Sinckler as foreign minister and Freundel Stuart as home affairs minister.

Following the resignation of Francisco Laínez, Marisol Argueta de Barillas was appointed foreign minister of El Salvador.

Juan Camilo Mouriño Terrazo succeeded Francisco Ramírez Acuña as Mexican minister of the interior.

Moldumusa Kongantiev became Kyrgyzstan's interior minister.

Week beginning 20 January 2008

Faustin-Archange Touadéra was appointed prime minister of the Central African Republic following the resignation of Élie Doté. His cabinet included Dieudonné Kombe Yaya as foreign minister.

Parliamentary elections took place in Cuba with candidates standing unopposed in all 614 available seats. Turnout was 95%.

Romano Prodi's government lost a confidence vote in the Italian Senate, prompting the prime minister's resignation. Franco Marini was asked to form an interim administration by President Napolitano.

Week beginning 27 January 2008

Thailand's parliament elected Samak Sundaravej as prime minister. The following day his nomination was approved by the king.

Jaroslav Baška was appointed Slovakian defence minister following the resignation of František Kašický.

Prime minister Željko Šturanović of Montenegro resigned, citing health reasons.

Week beginning 3 February 2008

In Monaco's parliamentary elections the Union for Monaco won 21 of the 24 seats. The remainder were claimed by the Rally and Issues for Monaco.

In Serbia's presidential election run-off, incumbent Boris Tadić gained 51.2% of the vote to narrowly defeat Tomislav Nikolić (48.8%).

In the USA the contest for the presidential nominations continued after 'Super Tuesday', the day on which the largest number of state primaries and caucuses were held, failed to produce a conclusive result. In the Democratic contest Barack Obama won 13 states (838 delegates) and Hillary Clinton nine (826). Republican John McCain won nine states (602 delegates) to all but secure his nomination.

The king of Thailand endorsed prime minister Samak Sundaravej's new cabinet, which named Surapong Suebwonglee finance minister, Noppadon Pattama foreign minister and Chalerm Yubumroong interior minister.

The United Democratic Party won 56.6% of the vote (25 of 31 seats) in Belize's parliamentary elections, ahead of the People's United Party with 40.7% (six seats). Prime minister Dean Barrow's cabinet included Wilfred Elrington as foreign minister and Carlos Perdomo as minister of national security.

Tomé Vera Cruz announced his resignation as prime minister of São Tomé e Príncipe. He was succeeded by Patrice Trovoada.

The Union for the Presidential Majority won 94.1% of the vote and all 65 seats in Djibouti's parliamentary elections after they were boycotted by the opposition.

Week beginning 10 February 2008

The Electoral College of Trinidad and Tobago confirmed the re-election of President George Maxwell Richards, who was the only candidate for the position.

A cabinet reshuffle in Uruguay saw Gonzalo Fernández appointed foreign minister and José Bayardi defence minister.

Mizengo Pinda was sworn in as prime minister of Tanzania following the resignation of Edward Lowassa. The new cabinet included Mustafa Mkuro as finance minister, Lawrence Masha as home affairs minister and Hussein Mwinyi as defence minister.

In the Czech Republic, incumbent Václav Klaus was re-elected president. After several inconclusive rounds he defeated Jan Švejnar in an all-parliamentary vote by 141 to 111.

Week beginning 17 February 2008

Incumbent Tassos Papadopoulos was eliminated from Cyprus' presidential contest in the first round. In a runoff between the two remaining candidates, Dimitris Christofias gained 53.4% of the vote to defeat Ioannis Kasoulidis with 46.4%. After being sworn in, Christofias named a cabinet including Kostas Papakostas as defence minister and Neoklis Silikiotis as interior minister.

In Pakistan's parliamentary elections the Pakistan's People's Party won 121 of 336 seats, followed by the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz with 91 and the Pakistan Muslim League with 54.

Presidential elections in Armenia saw incumbent prime minister Serzh Sargsyan gain 52.8% of the vote to defeat former president Levon Ter-Petrosyan (21.5%).

Week beginning 24 February 2008

In Cuba, Fidel Castro stood down as president. The National Assembly elected his brother, Raúl, as his successor.

Milo Đukanović was elected prime minister of Montenegro.

Lee Myung-bak was sworn in as president of South Korea. Han Seung-soo was elected prime minister. The new president's cabinet included Yu Myung-hwan as foreign minister, Lee Sang-hee as defence minister and Kang Man-soo as finance minister.

Week beginning 2 March 2008

In Russia's presidential elections Dmitry Medvedev, the candidate endorsed by outgoing president Vladimir Putin, won 70.3% of the votes cast. Gennady Zyuganov of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation won 17.7% followed by the Liberal Democratic Party's Vladimir Zhirinovskiy with 9.3%.

Muftah Mohammed Kaiba was appointed secretary of the General People's Congress of Libya.

John McCain was confirmed as the Republican candidate for November's US presidential election following the withdrawal of his only remaining rival for the nomination, Mike Huckabee.

Haris Silajđić took over Bosnia and Herzegovina's rotating presidency.

Parliamentary elections in Malaysia saw the reigning National Front coalition gain 140 seats with 50.3% of the vote. Opposition parties won the remaining 82 seats with 46.5% of the vote, and took control of five of the 13 state assemblies (the National Front had previously held every state but one). Prime minister Badawi's cabinet included Datuk Seri Dr Rais Yatim as foreign minister and Datuk Hamid bin Syed Jaafar Albar as minister of internal security and home affairs.

Malta's National Party narrowly retained power after winning 49.3% of the vote (35 seats) in parliamentary elections ahead of the Labour Party with 48.8% (34 seats). Prime minister Lawrence Gonzi's new cabinet included Tonio Borg as foreign minister and Carmelo Mifsud Bonnici as minister of home affairs.

Prime minister of Serbia Vojislav Koštunica resigned after his government was divided on the issue of the European Union's support for Kosovo's secession.

Week beginning 9 March 2008

The Spanish Socialist Workers' Party retained power after winning 43.6% of the vote (169 seats) in Spain's parliamentary elections, followed by the Popular Party with 40.1% (153). The remaining 28 seats were divided between fringe parties.

Oldemiro Balói replaced Alcinda Abreu as foreign minister of Mozambique.

After victory in the Mississippi primary, Barack Obama stretched his lead in the race to become the Democratic candidate for the US presidency. Requiring 2,025 delegates to secure the nomination, Obama led Hillary Clinton by 1,596 delegates to 1,484 with ten state contests remaining.

Eliot Spitzer announced his resignation as governor of New York following revelations about his personal life. His post was taken by lieutenant-governor David Paterson.

The price of gold reached \$1,000 an ounce.

The National People's Congress of China re-elected president Hu Jintao for a second five-year term.

Week beginning 16 March 2008

The price of oil reached a new record high of \$111.80 per barrel.

The cabinet of Kuwaiti prime minister Sheikh Nasser Muhammad Al Ahmad Al-Sabah resigned.

After dismissing foreign minister Madan Dooloo, the prime minister of Mauritius, Navin Ramgoolam, took on the portfolio in an acting capacity.

A cabinet reshuffle in The Gambia saw Omar Touray appointed foreign minister.

Yves Leterme was sworn in as prime minister of Belgium.

'Otenifi Afu'alo Matoto was made Tongan finance minister.

Week beginning 23 March 2008

In the first democratic elections to be held in the country, the Bhutan Peace and Prosperity party won 67.0% of the vote, followed by the People's Democratic Party with 33.0%.

Yousaf Raza Gilani was elected prime minister of Pakistan by 264 votes to 42 in the National Assembly. His cabinet installed Shah Mehmood Qureshi as foreign minister, Chaudhry Ahmed Mukhtar as defence minister and Muhammad Ishaq Dar as finance minister.

The parliament of Moldova approved the cabinet of new prime minister Zinaida Greceanii. Mariana Durlusteanu became finance minister and Valentin Meşinchi interior minister.

Elections were held in Zimbabwe. The results of the presidential election between Robert Mugabe and Morgan Tsvangirai were disputed. The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission withheld results pending a recount in 23 constituencies, a decision upheld by the High Court. In elections to the House of Assembly the Movement for Democratic Change won 99 seats. Robert Mugabe's ZANU-PF party, with 97 seats, lost its parliamentary majority for the first time in the country's history. However, these results too were subject to a recount.

Week beginning 30 March 2008

Kamlesh Sharma took office as secretary-general of the Commonwealth.

Seretse Khama Ian Khama was sworn in as president of Botswana following the retirement of Festus Mogae. He named Ramadelluka Seretse defence minister, Phandu Skelemani foreign minister and was succeeded as vice-president by Mompoti Merafhe.

Prime minister of Ireland Bertie Ahern announced his resignation, to take effect in May.

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ADDENDA

ADDENDA

All dates are 2008

ARGENTINA. Carlos Fernández was appointed *Foreign Minister* on 25 April.

AUSTRALIA. The new *Governor* of Tasmania, Peter Underwood, was sworn in on 2 April.

BULGARIA. A cabinet reshuffle was approved by parliament on 24 April. The position of *Interior Minister*, left vacant by the resignation of Romen Petkov on 13 April, was filled by Mikhail Mikov. Nikolai Tsonev became *Defence Minister* and Evgeni Zhelev *Health Minister*.

CHAD. Following President Idriss Déby's dismissal of Nourradine Delwa Kassiré Koumakoye, Youssouf Saleh Abbas was appointed *Prime Minister* on 16 April. His first cabinet included Abakar Mallah Mourcha as *Finance Minister* and Kamougue Wadal Abdelkader as *Defence Minister*.

FRENCH POLYNESIA. Gaston Flosse was replaced as *President* by Gaston Tong Sang after losing a vote of no confidence in parliament on 15 April.

GEORGIA. Eka Tkeshelashvili was appointed *Foreign Minister* on 5 May.

GUERNSEY. Parliamentary elections on 23 April saw all but two of the standing deputies re-elected.

On 1 May Lyndon Trott was appointed *Chief Minister* following a secret ballot of the elected deputies.

GUYANA. Carolyn Rodrigues was sworn in as *Foreign Minister* on 10 April.

HAITI. The Senate voted unanimously for the dismissal of *Prime Minister* Jacques-Edouard Alexis on 12 April. On April 27 Ericq Pierre was nominated to succeed him by *President* René Préval, pending parliamentary approval.

IRAN. In the second round of parliamentary elections held on 25 April the Conservatives won 38 seats (bringing their total to 170 of 290 available seats), the Reformists gained 15 (total 46) and independents 29 (total 69). The remaining 5 seats had been shared amongst fringe religious parties in the first round.

Hossein Semsam became acting *Minister of Economy and Finance* on 22 April.

KOREA. In elections held on 9 April the Grand National Party won 153 of 299 parliamentary seats, the United Democratic Party

81, non-partisans 25, the Liberty Forward Party 18, the Park Geun-hye Coalition 14, the Democratic Labour Party 5 and the Renewal of Korea Party 3. Turnout was 46.0%.

KUWAIT. *Amir* Sabah al-Ahmed al-Jaber al-Sabah dissolved parliament on 19 March following the resignation of the cabinet. A general election was scheduled to take place on 17 May.

LEBANON. The election of a new *President* by parliament, scheduled for 13 May, was postponed for a 19th time as a result of fighting between Hizbollah and government forces. A new date was set for 10 June.

MAURITANIA. On 6 May Yahya Ould Ahmed El Waghef became *Prime Minister* after the resignation of Zein Ould Zeidane.

NAURU. Supporters of *President* Marcus Stephen won 12 of 18 available seats at parliamentary elections held on 26 April.

ROMANIA. Lazăr Comănescu was appointed *Foreign Minister* on 14 April following the resignation of Adrian Cioroianu.

RUSSIA. *Prime Minister* Vladimir Putin announced his new cabinet on 12 May. Alexei Kudrin retained his position as *Finance Minister*, as did *Foreign Minister* Sergei Lavrov. Alexander Kononov replaced Vladimir Ustinov as *Justice Minister*. Igor Shuvalov and outgoing premier Viktor Zubkov were named *First Deputy Prime Ministers*.

The local parliament endorsed the nomination of Rail Sarbayev as *Prime Minister* of Bashkortostan on 10 April.

SERBIA. Parliamentary elections were held on 11 May. Provisional results suggested that *President* Boris Tadić's For a European Serbia alliance had won 39% of the vote, equating to 102 of the 250 seats. The Serb Radical Party won 77 seats (29% of the vote), the coalition led by incumbent *Prime Minister* Vojislav Koštunica 30 seats (11%), the Serb Socialist Party 20 seats (8%) and the Liberal Democrats 14 seats (5%). The remaining seven seats were shared among parties representing ethnic minorities.

TAIWAN. *Foreign Minister* James Huang resigned on 6 May.

TANZANIA. On 21 April *Infrastructure Minister* Andrew Chenge resigned amid allegations of corruption.

TONGA. Pro-democracy candidates won six of the nine available seats in parliamentary elections on 24 April.

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