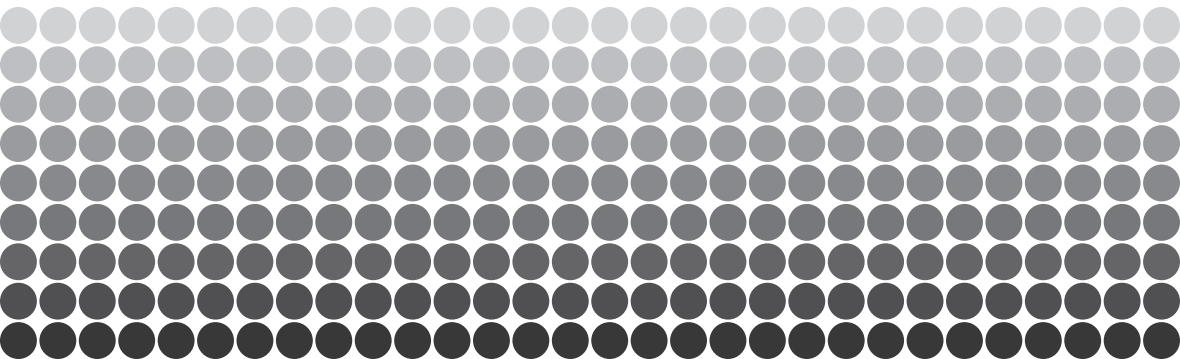


SIPRI YEARBOOK 2014

Armaments, Disarmament and International Security

Chronology 2013

NENNE BODELL



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Annex C. Chronology 2013

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This chronology lists the significant events in 2013 related to armaments, disarmament and international security. The dates are according to local time. Keywords are indicated in the right-hand column. Definitions of the abbreviations are given on pp. xviii–xxi.

- 4 Jan.* South Sudanese President Salva Kiir Mayardit and Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir, meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, agree to establish a buffer zone on the two countries' mutual border and resume oil exports, implementing a deal reached on 27 Sep. 2012. (See also *8 Mar.*) South Sudan; Sudan; Peace agreements
- 10 Jan.* Suicide bomb attacks in the city of Quetta, and in the Swat valley, Pakistan, kill more than 100 people and injure over 300. The escalation in violence comes during a period of heightened political and sectarian tension in the country. Pakistan; Terrorism
- 10–13 Jan.* Following the seizure by Islamist rebels of the town of Konna, in central Mali, the interim Malian President, Dioncounda Traoré, appeals for military assistance, and France's President, François Hollande, announces on 11 Jan. that France will deploy 400 troops. French troops launch Operation Serval, a military offensive that includes air strikes, to support Mali's armed forces. Neighbouring countries—Burkina Faso, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal—agree on 12 Jan. to send forces to support the French and Malian troops. Mali; France; Armed conflicts
- 11 Jan.* The Séléka rebel alliance, which seized control of parts of the Central African Republic (CAR) in Dec. 2012, signs a ceasefire agreement with the Government of the CAR in Libreville, Gabon. The two sides agree to form a unity government. (See also *24 Mar.*) Central African Republic; Peace agreements
- 14 Jan.* A group of 58 states write to the UN Security Council in support of moves to refer the conflict in Syria to the International Criminal Court (ICC). Since Syria is not a member of the ICC, a war crimes investigation can only be initiated by the Security Council. (See also *18 Feb.*) UN; ICC; Syria; War crimes

- 16–19 Jan. Islamist militants take hostage about 40 Western contractors and 100 Algerian workers at a gas field close to the town of In Amenas, Algeria. Katibat Moulathamine ('masked brigade'), led by former al-Qaeda leader Mokhtar Belmokhtar, claims responsibility and states that the attack is a reprisal for French intervention against Islamist rebels in Mali. Algeria provided support by opening its airspace to French aircraft. On 18 Jan. the Algerian Army launches an attack on the compound where the hostages are held, killing 37 foreign workers and almost 30 kidnappers. Some hostages remain unaccounted for. Algeria; Terrorism
- 17 Jan. The Council of the European Union (EU) establishes the EU Training Mission Mali (EUTM Mali) to provide military training and advice to Malian armed forces under UN Security Council resolutions 2071 and 2085 of 2012, and in response to a request from Malian authorities. EUTM Mali is launched on 18 Feb. 2013. EU; Mali; Peace operations
- 22 Jan. The Philippines institutes proceedings against China in the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea over territorial claims in the South China Sea. China; Philippines
- 22 Jan. The UN Security Council unanimously adopts Resolution 2087, which condemns a 12 Dec. 2012 North Korean missile launch. The resolution demands that North Korea end its nuclear and ballistic missile tests, strengthens sanctions against officials of North Korea's missile launch facility and satellite control centre, and calls on member states to exercise 'enhanced vigilance' in preventing the transfer of funds related to North Korea's nuclear weapon and ballistic missile programmes. In response, North Korea vows to strengthen its nuclear deterrent and other military capabilities. UN; North Korea; WMD
- 24 Jan. North Korea's National Defence Commission announces that the country will carry out further rocket launches and a nuclear test that will target the USA. (See also *12 Feb.*) North Korea; USA
- 24 Jan. A Japanese Coastguard ship deters a boat carrying Taiwanese activists from landing on the disputed Senkaku/Diaoyu islands in the East China Sea, which are claimed by China, Japan and Taiwan. China; Japan; Taiwan
- 29 Jan. Speaking in Washington, DC, USA, the UN–Arab League Joint Special Representative for Syria, Lakhdar Brahimi, calls on the UN Security Council to take action to find a solution to the ongoing conflict in Syria and warns against further delay. UN; Syria
- 30 Jan. Meeting in Kuwait City, the International Humanitarian Pledging Conference for Syria raises pledges of more than \$1.2 billion to help civilians affected by the conflict in Syria. The UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, describes the situation in Syria as 'catastrophic'. Syria; Aid

- 30 Jan. Israeli jets carry out airstrikes against military targets on Israel; Lebanon; the Lebanon–Syria border and, reportedly, the Syrian Scientific Studies and Research Centre, at Jamraya, north of Damascus, which has been the target of international sanctions because of its suspected association with chemical and biological weapon programmes. The Syrian Army confirms that the attacks took place, but Israel does not comment. Syria; CBW
- 3 Feb. A suicide car bomber attacks provincial police headquarters in Kirkuk, Iraq, killing nearly 40 people and injuring more than 100. No group claims responsibility for the attack. Ethnic and religious tensions have escalated since Iraq’s prime minister placed the Iraqi military in charge of the city’s security. Iraq; Kurds; Terrorism
- 12 Feb. North Korea carries out its third underground nuclear weapon test, close to where it conducted tests in 2006 and 2009. An official statement declares that the test used ‘a miniaturized and lighter nuclear device with greater explosive force than previously’. The international community condemns the test and the UN Security Council convenes an emergency meeting. North Korea; Nuclear weapons; Nuclear testing
- 12 Feb. In his State of the Union address, US President Barack Obama announces that US forces in Afghanistan will ‘move into a support role’; 34 000 soldiers will leave Afghanistan by the end of 2013; and the USA will engage with Russia in order to seek further reductions in nuclear arsenals and to continue the global effort to prevent the spread of nuclear materials. Afghanistan; USA; Nuclear arms control
- 16 Feb. A suicide bomb attack in a market in Quetta, Pakistan, kills more than 80 people and injures around 300. A Sunni militant group, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (Army of Jhangvi), claims responsibility for the attack. Pakistan; Terrorism
- 18 Feb. The Council of the European Union extends, for a further three months, the sanctions on Syria on arms and equipment that could be used for internal repression, and the visa ban and assets freeze for officials and associates of the Syrian regime. The sanctions are amended to enable greater non-lethal support and technical assistance for the protection of civilians. (See also 27 May.) EU; Arms embargoes; Syria
- 18 Feb. The UN Human Rights Council’s Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Syria, investigating human rights violations in Syria, calls for urgent action to ensure justice for the victims of the crimes committed during the conflict. The Commission outlines detailed recommendations to ensure the accountability of all parties for the crimes committed, including referral to the International Criminal Court (ICC). Syria; Human rights

- 24 Feb. Meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 11 African countries—UN; DRC; Peace
Angola, Burundi, the Central African Republic (CAR), the agreements
Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the Republic of
the Congo, Rwanda, South Africa, South Sudan, Tanzania,
Uganda and Zambia—sign the Peace, Security and Cooper-
ation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo
and the Region. Under the agreement, brokered by the UN,
the countries promise neither to interfere in the internal
affairs of the DRC, nor to tolerate or support armed groups.
- 28 Feb. In Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, the National Revolutionary Thailand; Peace
Front (Barisan Revolusi Nasional, BRN), a faction of the agreement
Patani separatist movement, and the head of Thailand's
National Security Council sign the General Consensus
Document to Launch a Dialogue Process for Peace in the
Border Provinces of Southern Thailand in the presence of
the Malaysian and Thai prime ministers, Najib Razak and
Yingluck Shinawatra. However, the BRN is just one of the
rebel groups in the south, and it is unclear if the process
will be able to reach or sustain a comprehensive peace.
- 4–5 Mar. Norway hosts an international conference on the humani- Nuclear weapons
tarian impact of nuclear weapons with the participation of
127 governments, UN agencies, international organizations
and civil society representatives. Mexico announces that it
will host a follow-up meeting in 2014.
- 6 Mar. The Arab League invites the National Coalition for Syrian Arab League; Syria
Revolutionary and Opposition Forces (Syrian National
Coalition, SNC) to take Syria's seat in the organization,
subject to the formation of representative institutions. Syria
had been suspended from its membership in Nov. 2011.
- 7 Mar. The UN Security Council unanimously adopts Resolution UN; North Korea;
2094, condemning North Korea's 12 Feb. nuclear test. The WMD; Sanctions
resolution strengthens sanctions on North Korea's trade
and banking, extending them to officials involved in the
trade of arms-related material and to the Second Academy
of Natural Sciences in Pyongyang; demands that the
country retract its announcement of withdrawal from the
1968 Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT); and reaffirms the
Security Council's decision that North Korea 'shall abandon
all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes, in a
complete, verifiable and irreversible manner'. North Korea
issues a statement threatening to launch a nuclear strike on
the USA.
- 7 Mar. Twenty-one Philippine observers serving with the UN UN; Israel; Syria;
Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) in the Golan Peace operations
Heights are kidnapped by a Syrian rebel group. They are
released on 10 Mar. On 10 May, following the release of
another four Philippine observers who had been kidnapped
on 7 May, the Philippine Foreign Minister, Albert del Ros-
ario, threatens to withdraw his country's contribution to
the operation, which amounts to about one-third of the
total. (See also 6 June.)

- 8 Mar. Following the strengthening of UN Security Council sanctions, North Korea's Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of Korea (CPRK) issues a statement declaring that the country, as of 11 Mar., 'abrogates all agreements on non-aggression reached between the North and the South', including the 1953 Armistice Agreement ending the Korean War, and will disconnect the North-South hotline installed in 1971. North Korea; South Korea; Peace agreements
- 8 Mar. South Sudan and Sudan sign an agreement to establish a demilitarized border zone between the two countries as part of the implementation of the 2012 framework security agreement. Withdrawal of troops will be completed on 5 Apr. On 12 Mar. the two countries also agree to resume oil production, which South Sudan stopped in Jan. 2012 in a dispute with Sudan over transport fees. South Sudan; Sudan; Peace agreements
- 15 Mar. North Korea accuses the USA of cyberattacks on its networks. (See also 20 Mar.) North Korea; USA; Cybersecurity
- 16 Mar. The US Defense Secretary, Chuck Hagel, announces that the USA will not deploy upgraded interceptor missiles in Poland that had been intended to counter medium- and intermediate-range missiles from the Middle East. Russia had strongly opposed the plans. Simultaneously, he announces that more ground-based interceptor missiles will be deployed on the USA's west coast in response to the increased threats from North Korea. USA; Missile defence
- 18 Mar. Bosco Ntaganda, one of the leaders of the Mouvement du 23 mars (M23, 23 March Movement) rebel group, surrenders himself to the US embassy in Kigali, Rwanda, for transfer to the International Criminal Court (ICC). The ICC had issued an arrest warrant for Ntaganda in 2006 related to his conduct as leader of a militia group in north-eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) in 2002-2003. He appears before the ICC in The Hague, Netherlands, on 26 Mar. ICC; DRC; War crimes
- 18-28 Mar. The UN Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) is held at UN headquarters in New York, USA. On the final day of the conference the adoption by consensus of the treaty text is vetoed by Iran, North Korea and Syria. The text is referred to the UN General Assembly for a vote. (See also 2 Apr.) UN; Arms Trade Treaty
- 19 Mar. Allegations are made that chemical weapons have been used in the conflict in Syria. The Syrian Government and Russia accuse opposition forces of an attack in Aleppo province that kills at least 16 people. The National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces (Syria National Coalition, SNC) blames government forces for that attack as well as a second attack in suburban Damascus. (See also 21 Mar.) Syria; CW

- 20 Mar. A Chinese patrol ship confronts a Vietnamese fishing boat in disputed waters near the Paracel Islands in the South China Sea. Viet Nam accuses the Chinese ship of firing on the fishing boat, setting it alight. China; Viet Nam
- 20 Mar. A suspected cyberattack affects banks and television stations in South Korea. On 10 Apr. the South Korean Government blames North Korea for the attack. North Korea; South Korea; Cybersecurity
- 21 Mar. Following a formal request from the Syrian Government, the UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, announces a UN fact-finding mission to investigate allegations of the use of chemical weapons in Syria. On 8 Apr. the Syrian Foreign Ministry states that the UN investigation team will not be admitted to the country. UN; Syria; CW
- 24 Mar. Fighters from the Séléka rebel coalition seize Bangui, the capital of the Central African Republic (CAR), and overthrow the president, François Bozizé. The international community condemns the coup. Central African Republic
- 28 Mar. The UN Security Council unanimously adopts Resolution 2098, approving the creation of its first-ever 'offensive' combat force, an Intervention Brigade within the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). The brigade is intended to carry out targeted operations to 'neutralize and disarm' the Mouvement du 23 mars (M23, 23 March Movement) and other Congolese rebel and foreign-armed groups in the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). UN; DRC; Peace operations
- 2 Apr. North Korea announces its intention to reactivate all facilities at its nuclear complex at Yongbyon, North Pyongan, in order to ease its electricity shortage and strengthen its nuclear capability. The Yongbyon reactor was shut down in 2007 as part of the Six-Party Talks. North Korea; Nuclear programme
- 2 Apr. The UN General Assembly adopts, by a vote of 155-3 (Iran, North Korea and Syria voting against) with 22 abstentions, the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), which regulates the international trade in conventional arms and links arms sales to the human rights records of the importing countries. The treaty is opened for signature on 3 June and will enter into force 90 days after ratification by the 50th signatory. Arms Trade Treaty
- 10 Apr. Japan and Taiwan sign an agreement granting Taiwan fishing rights near the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands in the East China Sea. China and Taiwan both claim the islands, which are controlled by Japan. China opposes the agreement. China; Japan; Taiwan
- 23 Apr. As eight Chinese government ships sail towards the disputed Senkaku/Diaoyu islands in the East China Sea, Japan warns that it will respond with force if the ships attempt to land on the islands. China; Japan

- 25 Apr. The US administration informs the Congress that US Syria; CW intelligence agencies have found evidence of the use of sarin nerve gas on a small scale in Syria. The evidence does not prove beyond a doubt that the Syrian Government is responsible, but it is 'very likely' that is the case. (See also 13 June.) The investigators of the UN fact-finding mission are due to visit survivors of alleged chemical weapon attacks and to analyse soil samples taken by Western intelligence agencies.
- 25 Apr. The UN Security Council unanimously adopts Resolution 2100, establishing the UN Multidimensional Integrated UN; Mali; Peace operations Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), to be deployed on 1 July 2013, and transferring authority from the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA) to the new mission. MINUSMA will comprise 12 600 military and police personnel. Its mandate will include stabilizing key population centres, supporting the re-establishment of state authority throughout Mali, protecting civilians and UN personnel, and promoting and protecting human rights.
- 26 Apr. Meeting in Almaty, Kazakhstan, the Shanghai Cooperation SCO; Turkey Organisation (SCO) and officials from the Turkish Government sign a memorandum granting Turkey the status of SCO Dialogue Partner Country. Turkey is the first NATO member country to establish such a relationship with the SCO.
- 2 May The UN Security Council unanimously adopts Resolution 2102, establishing the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia UN; Somalia (UNSOM) by 3 June 2013, for an initial period of 12 months. Its mandate is to provide UN 'good offices' functions to support peace and reconciliation, to assist the Government of Somalia and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) with advice on peacebuilding, to assist with coordination of international support, to help build capacity in human rights and the rule of law, and to monitor and prevent human rights violations.
- 4-5 May Syria accuses Israel of carrying out a rocket attack on the Israel; Syria Syrian Scientific Studies and Research Centre, at Jamraya, north of Damascus, and of attacking a missile shipment to Hezbollah close to the Lebanese border. Israel does not confirm or deny the bombings.
- 9 May The Philippine Coastguard fires on a Taiwanese fishing Philippines; Taiwan boat in disputed waters in the South China Sea, reportedly killing one person.

- 14–24 May The UN open-ended working group (OEWG) on ‘taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons’, established by UN General Assembly Resolution 67/56 in Dec. 2012, convenes its first session in Geneva, Switzerland. The OEWG will take stock of existing commitments and proposals, look at how to take forward nuclear disarmament negotiations, and develop proposals for the next session of the UN General Assembly. UN; Nuclear disarmament
- 15 May The Plan for the Sustainable Recovery of Mali (PRED) 2013–2014 is presented at the international donors conference ‘Together for a New Mali’ in Brussels, Belgium, co-organized by the EU, France and Mali. The international community pledges a total of €3.25 billion (\$4.3 billion) aid. Mali; Development aid
- 20 May A series of car bombings and shootings across Iraq kill at least 90 people and injure many more. Sectarian violence between Sunni and Shia Muslims escalates throughout the country; since 15 May over 200 people have been killed in different attacks. Iraq; Terrorism
- 27 May The Council of the European Union fails to reach agreement on extension of the arms embargo against Syria, which will expire on 1 June. France and the UK argue for lifting the embargo and the two countries are permitted to deliver weapons to the Syrian opposition after 1 Aug. All other sanctions are reinstated. EU; Syria; Arms embargoes
- 28 May Representatives of 72 governments gather in Warsaw, Poland, for a high-level political meeting to mark the 10th anniversary of the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI). Non-proliferation
- 6 June The British newspaper *The Guardian* reports that the US National Security Agency (NSA) is collecting communications data under Prism, a previously secret surveillance programme, including from such large Internet companies as Facebook and Google. On 9 June Edward Snowden, a former computer analyst working for the NSA, is named as the source of the leaks. The USA requests that Snowden be extradited from Hong Kong, China. USA; Intelligence
- 6 June Austria announces that it will withdraw its personnel from the UN Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) in the Golan Heights, citing unacceptable levels of danger for the soldiers. The 380 observers account for more than one-third of the operation. The withdrawal starts on 12 June. Croatia and Japan have also withdrawn their personnel in recent months. UN; Israel; Syria; Peace operations

- 13 June* The US administration states that, on the basis of information gathered by the US intelligence community, it has credible evidence that the Syrian Government has used chemical weapons, including the nerve agent sarin, on a small scale against the opposition multiple times during the past year. US President Barack Obama therefore authorizes an increase of the ‘scale and scope’ of assistance to the opposition, supplying them with small arms and ammunition for the first time. USA; Syria; CW; Military assistance
- 14 June* Russia and the USA sign a new bilateral framework on threat reduction to replace the 1992 Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) programme (also known as the Nunn-Lugar programme) umbrella agreement, which expires on 17 June. While reducing the scope of US CTR activities in Russia, the new agreement provides for continued joint nuclear security activities and authorizes the two parties ‘to work in several areas of nonproliferation collaboration, including protecting, controlling and accounting for nuclear materials’. Russia; USA; Non-proliferation
- 14 June* The Iranian presidential election is won decisively by Hassan Rouhani, a former chairman of Iran’s Supreme National Security Council and chief nuclear negotiator. The new president pledges to take a more pragmatic approach to addressing international concerns about Iran’s nuclear programme while protecting the rights of the Iranian people. Rouhani takes office on 3 Aug. (See also *24 Nov.*) Iran; Nuclear programme
- 18 June* At a ceremony in Kabul, Afghanistan, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) officially transfers security responsibility for all of Afghanistan to Afghan Government forces. Foreign forces will continue combat duties until the end of 2013. Afghanistan
- 18 June* Meeting in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, the transitional Government of National Unity of Mali and two Tuareg rebel groups—the Mouvement national de libération de l’Azawad (MNLA, National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad) and the Haut conseil pour l’unité de l’Azawad (HCUA, High Council for the Unity of Azawad)—sign the Preliminary Agreement for the Presidential Election and Inclusive Peace Talks in Mali. Under the agreement, the Malian Army would be redeployed throughout northern Mali and presidential elections are scheduled for 28 July throughout Mali, including Kidal. Mali

- 19 June In a speech in Berlin, Germany, US President Barack Obama announces that the USA will propose a reduction of deployed strategic nuclear weapons by up to one-third in negotiations with Russia, taking stockpiles below the 1550 warheads permitted in the 2010 New START treaty. The USA will also work together with its NATO allies to reduce Russian and US tactical nuclear weapons in Europe. The USA will work to build support for US ratification of the 1996 Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and calls on all states to begin negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty. USA; Nuclear weapons; Nuclear disarmament
- 1 July Croatia becomes the 28th member state of the European Union. EU; Enlargement; Croatia
- 3 July Following two weeks of violent protests against Egyptian President Mohamed Morsy and the Muslim Brotherhood throughout Egypt, the Defence Minister, General Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, announces that the military has ousted Morsy. Civilian, political and religious opposition leaders agree on a road map for a post-Morsy government under which the constitution is suspended and an interim government is installed, with the chief justice of the Supreme Constitutional Court as acting president. Plans will be made for new parliamentary and presidential elections. Morsy's supporters call the move a military coup d'état. Egypt
- 3 July The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) declares Viet Nam free of weapon-grade uranium after 10 years of work by an international team at the Dalat Nuclear Research Institute. Sixteen kilograms of highly enriched uranium are removed from the country and transferred to Russia. IAEA; Viet Nam; Uranium
- 8 July Security forces and police open fire on supporters of the ousted president, Mohamed Morsy, during a demonstration in Cairo, Egypt, killing at least 51 civilians and injuring more than 400 people. The military claims that a group of 'terrorists' tried to storm the Republican Guard compound, but the cause of the violence cannot be determined. This is the deadliest day of violence in Egypt since the overthrow of President Hosni Mubarak in 2011. Egypt
- 10 July The US Navy successfully lands the unmanned X-47B experimental jet aircraft aboard an aircraft carrier. This marks the first time an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV, or drone) has completed such a landing, which is considered the most challenging operation in naval aviation. USA; UAVs
- 15 July Panamanian authorities announce that they have seized a North Korean ship, the *Chong Chon Gang*, carrying 'undeclared weapons of war' hidden in containers of brown sugar en route from Cuba to North Korea. The ship was seized after a tip to authorities that it might be carrying drugs. North Korea; Arms smuggling

- 29 July Meeting in Washington, DC, USA, under the auspices of the US Secretary of State, John Kerry, Israel and Palestine agree to restart peace negotiations. The process aims to reach 'a deal to end the historic conflict' by May 2014. Before the negotiations, Israel agrees to release over 100 Palestinian prisoners in four stages, while Palestine agrees to refrain from seeking acceptance or redress at UN bodies and other international institutions. The first talks are held on 14 Aug. Israel; Palestine
- 1 Aug. After spending one and a half months at Moscow Airport, Edward Snowden receives temporary asylum in Russia. Following the decision US President Barack Obama cancels a meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin. Russia; USA; Intelligence
- 14 Aug. Egyptian security forces storm and clear protest camps in Cairo that are occupied by supporters of the deposed president, Mohamed Morsy, killing hundreds of people and injuring thousands. Violence spreads throughout Egypt, and Vice-President Mohamed ElBaradei resigns in protest at the unnecessary use of force. Egypt
- 14 Aug. The Syrian Government agrees to allow the UN fact-finding mission established on 21 Mar. into Syria to investigate allegations of the use of chemical weapons. The UN inspection team arrives in the country on 18 Aug. UN; Syria; CW
- 21 Aug. Following the military coup d'état on 3 July, the EU's Foreign Affairs Council announces that EU member states had agreed to suspend licences for export to Egypt of any equipment that might be used for internal repression and to reassess export licences for military equipment and review their security assistance to Egypt. EU; Egypt
- 21 Aug. Reports emerge of a chemical weapon attack on Ghouta, a rebel-held suburb of Damascus, Syria, that results in an estimated 500–1300 deaths. If confirmed, this would be the most deadly chemical weapon attack since the 1988 attack in Halabja, Iraq. The UN Security Council immediately calls an emergency meeting but does not explicitly demand an investigation of the incident. Syria; CW
- 27 Aug. The Council of the Arab League blames the Syrian Government for the chemical weapon attack on Ghouta on 21 Aug. and calls on the UN Security Council to agree on action. It falls short of recommending military action. Arab League; Syria; CW
- 29 Aug. The British House of Commons votes against a government motion supporting British military action in Syria after the UN Security Council has debated the report of the UN mission on the use of chemical weapons in Ghouta on 21 Aug. The French Government remains committed to a military response. In the USA, after the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations endorses on 4 Sep. the administration's request to use force in Syria, domestic debate reveals significant levels of opposition to the use of force. Syria; UK; France; USA; CW

- 9 Sep. Forces aligned with Nur Misuari, leader of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), attack Zamboanga City on Mindanao island, Philippines. The deployment of the Philippine armed forces results in intense urban fighting. Over 200 people die. Philippines; Armed conflicts
- 12 Sep. Following a Russian proposal, Syria agrees to join the 1993 Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). The convention enters into force for Syria on 14 Oct. Syria; Disarmament; CW
- 13 Sep. President Michel Djotodia of the Central African Republic dissolves the Séléka coalition that brought him to power following the coup d'état on 24 Mar. Many of the former rebels refuse to disarm. Central African Republic
- 21–24 Sep. On 21 Sep. gunmen attack the Westgate shopping centre in Nairobi, Kenya. Security forces struggle to regain control of the building over 4 days, as more than 60 people are killed. The Somali Islamist group al-Shabab says that it carried out the attack in retaliation for Kenya's military intervention in Somalia. Kenya; Somalia; Terrorism
- 26 Sep. The UN Security Council adopts Resolution 2117, by a vote of 14–0 (with Russia abstaining), its first resolution dedicated exclusively to the issue of small arms and light weapons. UN; SALW
- 27 Sep. The Executive Council of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) agrees special procedures for the expeditious and verifiable destruction of Syria's chemical weapons. The UN Security Council unanimously adopts Resolution 2118 endorsing the OPCW decision. UN; OPCW; Syria; CW
- 3 Oct. Gambia announces that it is to withdraw from the Commonwealth of Nations. Commonwealth of Nations; Gambia
- 9 Oct. Following the military coup d'état on 3 July, the USA suspends military aid and deliveries of weapons to Egypt. Egypt; USA
- 11 Oct. The Norwegian Nobel Committee announces that the Nobel Peace Prize for 2013 will be awarded to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) for its extensive efforts to eliminate chemical weapons. OPCW
- 16 Oct. Following a decision by the OPCW Executive Council and the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 2118 on 27 Sep., the OPCW–UN Joint Mission in Syria is established to achieve timely elimination of the Syrian chemical weapon programme in the safest and most secure manner possible. UN; OPCW; Syria; CW
- 18 Oct. Having been elected for the first time to a two-year term on the UN Security Council on 17 Oct., Saudi Arabia turns down the seat, citing the UN's failure to act on the conflict in Syria among other reasons. UN; Saudi Arabia

- 31 Oct. A proposed government amnesty bill sparks large demonstrations against the government in Bangkok, Thailand, which escalate into violent street clashes between protesters and the police. Protests continue and grow throughout the year and several people are killed. Thailand
- 1 Nov. The UN's Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, Adama Dieng, calls for urgent action to stop the widespread violations of human rights and increasing sectarian violence in the Central African Republic. He blames former members of the (largely Muslim) rebel group Séléka and the (largely Christian or animist) 'Anti-balaka' militias for most of the atrocities against the civilian population. (See also 5 Dec.) UN; Central African Republic
- 7 Nov. After a successful offensive by the armed forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), backed by the UN, the Mouvement du 23 mars (M23, 23 March Movement) rebel group announces that it has ended its rebellion and that it will disarm and pursue negotiations. UN; DRC
- 11 Nov. Yukiya Amano, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and Ali Akbar Salehi, head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), sign an agreement in Tehran setting out a framework to strengthen 'cooperation and dialogue aimed at ensuring the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme'. The agreement includes six initial actions for Iran to take by mid-Feb. 2014 that will provide the IAEA with access to two nuclear sites and information on Iran's planned nuclear power plants and research reactors. IAEA; Iran; Nuclear programme
- 11 Nov. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) rules that a 1962 judgement had awarded the area around the Preah Vihear Temple to Cambodia and orders Thailand to withdraw its forces from that area. Cambodia had asked the ICJ to interpret its 1962 judgement in Apr. 2011 following clashes in the disputed area that began in 2008. ICJ; Cambodia; Thailand
- 20 Nov. The USA and Afghanistan agree the draft text of a Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA). The agreement would provide for a number of US troops to remain in Afghanistan after 2014 in training and support, but not combat, roles. Afghan President Hamid Karzai declines to sign the agreement, saying that it should be the task of his successor, to be elected in 2014. Afghanistan; USA
- 21 Nov. Following the Ukrainian Government's suspension of accession and trade talks with the European Union, thousands of people take to the streets in Kyiv, demanding that the government resign. Protests escalate and people are killed or injured in violent clashes with the police. Ukraine

- 23 Nov. China establishes an 'air-defence identification zone' in an area of the East China Sea that includes the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands, which are claimed by China and Taiwan but controlled by Japan. Japan protests. US, South Korean and Japanese military aircraft continue to fly through the zone without giving China advance notice. China; Japan
- 24 Nov. Meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, Iran and the P5+1 states (China, France, Russia, the UK and the USA plus Germany) sign a Joint Plan of Action under which Iran agrees to restrict its nuclear activities during a 6-month period. In return, Iran's oil sale revenues from frozen accounts are released and some trade restrictions are suspended. During the 6-month period, the parties will continue negotiations to reach a comprehensive agreement that allows Iran to pursue a peaceful nuclear programme. The agreement will take effect on 20 Jan. 2014. Iran; Nuclear programme
- 3 Dec. The UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) launches the UN's first ever unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV, or drone) in support of MONUSCO's aerial monitoring of troop movements and the arms embargo against non-governmental forces. UN; DRC; UAVs
- 5 Dec. Following several days of escalating sectarian violence between Christian and Muslim groups in Bangui, capital of the Central African Republic (CAR), the UN Security Council unanimously adopts Resolution 2127. It authorizes the African-led International Support Mission in the CAR (MISCA) and French troops in the country to protect civilians using all necessary means and to restore state authority. UN; Central African Republic; France
- 8 Dec. International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors visit the heavy-water production plant near Arak, Iran, for the first time since 2011 and take samples of the heavy water produced at the facility. IAEA; Iran; Nuclear programme
- 15 Dec. Heavy fighting erupts in Juba, South Sudan, between rebels supporting the former vice-president, Riek Machar Teny, and forces loyal to the president, Salva Kiir Mayardit. The fighting rapidly escalates and spreads into Unity and Jonglei states. Thousands of civilians are killed and by 27 Dec. around 65 000 are seeking refuge with the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). South Sudan
- 17 Dec. Japan announces plans to increase its military spending and make major equipment acquisitions, with an emphasis on naval capabilities. Japan; Military expenditure