

Chronologies

Chronology of Major Conflicts and Political Events

January 2012

In Spain, the government submits a budgetary stability bill. France announces aid to halt rising unemployment. In Italy, the Council of Ministers approves a reform plan to relaunch the economy. Greece continues negotiating a reform plan with the EU and the IMF in exchange for more aid, which is widely rejected by its citizens. In Malta, the government defeats a vote of no confidence. In Slovenia, Janez Jansa is appointed Prime Minister. Croatia approves EU accession in a referendum. In Cyprus, two former ministers are prosecuted for their responsibility in the explosion of an arsenal in 2011. In Syria, the uprising against Bashar al-Assad reaches its tenth month. In Egypt, the elections to the lower chamber of Parliament are won by the Islamist Freedom and Justice Party. In Algeria, the Movement of Society for Peace announces that it is leaving the government coalition the same month that 10 new parties are legalised. In Morocco, Mohammed VI appoints the members of the new government. Mauritania adopts a series of constitutional amendments as a result of the national dialogue process.

Portugal

- On 5 January the European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF) issues a 3 billion euro bond with three years maturity in support of the Portuguese and Irish economies.

Spain

- On 27 January the government passes a budgetary stability bill, which in-

cludes the structural deficit of 0% for autonomous communities from 2020.

France

- On 10 January the Minister of Finance François Baroin announces that France will be the first country to apply the Tobin Tax on financial transactions as an anti-crisis measure.
- On 18 January Nicolas Sarkozy announces aid of 1 billion euros to fight unemployment, branded as “insufficient” by unions, which also oppose the rise in VAT announced by the government.
- On 24 January the Senate passes the bill that outlaws denial of the “Armenian genocide” 1915-1917, which since December 2011 has caused a diplomatic crisis with Turkey. On 31 January 141 Members of Parliament appeal against the law to the Constitutional Court.

Italy

- On 10 January Carlo Malinconico, government Undersecretary for the Publishing Sector, resigns following his involvement in the corruption scandal linked to the organisation of the G8 Summit in La Magdalena.
- On 13 January the cruise ship Costa Concordia runs aground off the island of Giglio, Tuscany, causing the deaths of 17 of its 4,000 passengers and the disappearance of another 15. Italy declares a state of emergency in the area, an important natural maritime park, over fears of a spill of 2,380 tonnes of fuel.
- On 20 January the Government passes the economic reform plan that includes the deregulation of sectors

such as transport, energy and trade, and cuts in the privileges of certain professional sectors.

Malta

- On 26 January, thanks to the casting vote of the President of the Parliament, the government defeats a vote of no confidence moved by the leader of the Labour Party Joseph Muscat given the internal divisions in the government.

Slovenia

- On 17 January Slovenia and Croatia agree the composition of the arbitration court that will settle the border dispute between the two countries.
- On 25 January Janez Jansa, leader of the Democratic Party (SNS, conservative), obtains the backing of five parties to be elected new Prime Minister after Zoran Jankovic, leader of the social-democratic Positive Slovenia – winner of the elections of December 2011 – lost the inaugural debate on 11 January.

Croatia

- On 22 January Croatia approves EU accession in 2013 in a referendum with 66% of votes in favour and a participation of 44%.

Montenegro

- On 17 January Montenegro adopts the pre-accession economic programme 2012-2014.
- On 31 January, after 10 days of protests against the rise in the price of electricity announced by the govern-

ment, President Igor Luksic receives representatives of public institutions and NGOs to study an agreement.

Kosovo under UN Security Council Resolution 1244

- On 11 January Hashim Rexhepi is acquitted of the five corruption charges made against him in 2010 and which led to his resignation as Governor of the Central Bank.
- On 14 January there are confrontations at the Merdare border crossing with Serbia between Kosovo police and demonstrators of the pro-independence movement Vetevendosje! who are trying to stop the entry of Serbian products into Kosovo.
- On 19 January Kosovo and the European Commission start negotiations for Kosovo to form part of the Schengen zone.
- On 31 January Parliament votes, 83 to 13, in favour of requesting the full independence of Kosovo in late 2012.

Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM)

- On 17 January Athens and Skopje conclude two days of meetings with the United Nations mediator Matthew Niemetz over the name dispute without making progress.
- On 25 January the Constitutional Court paralyzes the implementation of 12 articles of the Lustration Law, which pursues collaborators with the former communist regime.

Albania

- On 16 January the former Prime Minister Ilir Meta is acquitted by the Supreme Court of corruption charges in relation to irregular public contract bidding for a hydroelectric plant.
- On 18 January Parliament approves with the votes of the governing Democratic Party (DPA, liberal-conservative) the formation of an investigative committee to demand the resignation of Kreshnik Spahiu, vice-Chairman of the High Council of Justice, whose post is deemed incompatible with the formation of the nationalist organisation Red and Black Alliance.

- On 23 January the Head of the Republican Guard is arrested, accused of the deaths of four demonstrators during the protests against the government in January 2011.

Greece

- On 17 January a strike by transport, health, education, press and justice personnel against the austerity measures paralyzes Attica, coinciding with the visit of the representatives of the troika (EC, ECB and IMF), which in December 2011 urged Athens to reduce the minimum wage.

Turkey

- On 13 January 32 Kurdish activists are arrested in 17 provinces for links with the terrorist organisation PKK.
- On 19 January thousands of people demonstrate in Istanbul commemorating the fifth anniversary of the murder of Turkish-Armenian journalist Hrant Dink and demanding justice, two days after the Istanbul Criminal Court rules that there is insufficient evidence to allege that Dink's murder was the result of the action of a Turkish ultranationalist group.

Cyprus

- On 11 January Cyprus and Israel sign two defence cooperation agreements during the official visit to Israel by the Minister of Defence Demetrio Eliades.
- On 24 January the former Minister of Defence Costas Papacostas and the former Minister of Foreign Affairs Marcos Kyprianou are prosecuted for manslaughter and gross negligence for the explosion of an arsenal that killed 13 people in 2011.
- On 25 January a new round of talks on the reunification of Cyprus, under the auspices of the UN, concludes in New York with limited progress.

Syria

- On 8 January the Arab League observers sent to Syria present a report in Cairo which reflects the climate of violence endured in the country, the difficulties found by the government and

opposition groups to carry out their mission, the large number of demonstrators arrested or disappeared, and the major military deployment. After assessing the report, the Arab League contact group for Syria decides to continue with the mission increasing the 165 experts to 200 and requesting aid from the UN to support their tasks. On 10 January the Secretary of the Arab League Nabil al-Arabi condemns the attacks suffered by the members of the observer mission, making the Damascus government responsible for their safety. On 11 January the Arab League announces that it has delayed sending new observers.

- On 15 January Bashar al-Assad announces a general amnesty for all those arrested since the start of the uprisings in March 2011, in addition to the release of 552 prisoners announced on 5 January.
- On 22 January the Arab League contact group for Syria and the Foreign Ministers of the Arab countries meet to assess the report on the observer mission deployed to Syria, agreeing to extend it for one month. The Gulf Cooperation Council countries decide to withdraw their observers.

Jordan

- On 10 January an employee of Amman City Council dies after having set himself on fire the previous day to protest his economic situation.

Egypt

- On 17 January the trial resumes against Hosni Mubarak, six of his advisors, his sons Gamal and Alaa and the former Minister of the Interior Habib al-Adli.
- On 21 January the definitive results of the elections to the People's Assembly, started on 28 November 2011 and completed on 11 January, confirm the victory of the Democratic Alliance led by the Freedom and Justice Party (FJP, Islamist, linked to the Muslim Brotherhood) with 235 of the 508 seats. It is followed by the Islamist Coalition, led by al-Nour (Salafi), with 124 seats. The Wafd Party (liberal) wins 38 seats, followed by the Egyptian Bloc (liberal-left) with 34.

- On 23 January the new Egyptian Parliament holds its first session, electing as President of the Assembly the current Secretary General of the FJP Mohamed Saad al-Katatni. The Military Junta transfers legislative power to Parliament.
- On 25 January the state of emergency in force since 1981 comes to an end.

Libya

- On 10 January in Tripoli the UN and the interim government sign the agreement establishing the presence in the transition process of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL).
- On 22 January Abdelhafiz Ghoga, Vice-President of the National Transitional Council (NTC), announces his resignation after the incidents in Benghazi in January following demonstrations against the continued presence in government institutions of members of the old regime.

Tunisia

- On 14 January, on the first anniversary of the Jasmine Revolution, the Ministry of Justice announces the commutation of 122 death sentences to life imprisonment and full amnesty for 3,868 prisoners as well as the granting of parole to another 4,975.
- On 28 January around 12,000 people called by the secular, liberal and centre-left parliamentary opposition demand that the governing Ennahda party and the other Islamist forces respect fundamental liberties and rights in Tunisia.

Algeria

- On 1 January the Movement of Society for Peace (MSP, Islamist) announces that it is leaving the government coalition after months of disagreement with the National Liberation Front (FLN, socialist) although it keeps its ministers in the government.
- On 16 January Mourad Dhina, former leader of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) and founder of the opposition movement Rachad, wanted by Algeria, is arrested in France.

- On 17 January Mohamed Laid Khelifi, Wali (Governor) of Illizi, is kidnapped in Timeroualine. On 19 January he is released in Libya by the country's security forces.
- On 24 January the Ministry of the Interior authorises the legalisation of 10 new political parties.

Morocco

- On 3 January Mohammed VI appoints the 30 members of the coalition government under President Abdelilah Benkirane, leader of the Justice and Development Party (PJD, Islamist) winner of the November 2011 elections, formed by Istiqlal (nationalist), the People's Movement (MP, liberal), the Progress and Socialism Party (PPS) and five independents.
- On 15 January Nabila Mounib, of the Unified Socialist Party (PSU), becomes the first woman to be Secretary General of a Moroccan party.
- On 18 January four youths who participated in a two-week rally in front of the Ministry of Education in Rabat set themselves on fire to protest against the large number of unemployed graduates in Morocco. On 23 January the Gendarmerie prevents a group of 120 workers from setting themselves on fire in Benguerir to demand their readmission into the state-owned phosphate company OCP.

Mauritania

- On 10 January the National Assembly (lower chamber) adopts several constitutional amendments agreed in December 2011 in the national dialogue process, in particular the criminalisation of coups d'état and slavery, recognition of the multicultural character of the country and the formation of an independent electoral commission. The Rally of Democratic Forces (RFD) and the Islamist party Tawasul boycott the vote as they consider the period for debate on reforms that leave all power in the hands of the President to be insufficient and that the National Assembly is illegal as its mandate expired in November 2011 without holding the elections scheduled for October and postponed until March 2012.

European Union

- On 1 January Denmark takes over the six-month EU Presidency with budgetary consolidation, economic dynamism, sustainable development, strengthening of information and communication technologies, and security of the external borders as priorities.
- On 17 January the German social-democrat Martin Schultz succeeds the Polish liberal Jerzy Buzek as President of the European Parliament (EP).
- On 30 January the European Council adopts, with the exceptions of the United Kingdom and the Czech Republic, the economic and monetary stability treaty that limits the deficit that can be incurred by Member States.

Arab League

- On 22 January the Arab League urges the Syrian President Bashar al-Assad to transfer his powers to the vice-President of the country and form a government of national unity within a period of two months.

February 2012

Spain approves labour market reform. In Italy, Silvio Berlusconi is acquitted in the Mills case. Janez Jansa forms a new government in Slovenia. The Serbian majority of North Kosovo rejects Kosovo institutions in a referendum by 99.74%. Greece's second bailout is approved by the eurozone in virtue of new austerity measures approved by Athens. Turkey prohibits Israeli cargo planes from flying over its airspace. In Syria, new sanctions, a UN resolution of condemnation, the meeting of the so-called "Friends of Syria" Group or the holding of a constitutional referendum are unable to put an end to the conflict. In Egypt, the elections for the Shura Council (upper chamber) end with a new Islamist victory the same month that bloody confrontations in the Port Said football stadium add fuel to demonstrations against the Military Junta. In Libya, the main threat is still domestic security.

Spain

- On 9 February the National Court judge Baltasar Garzón is sentenced to 11 years' disqualification by the Supreme Court for perverting the course of justice during his investigation of the Gürtel corruption case. On 27 February the Supreme Court acquits Garzón of the charges of perverting the course of justice in another case, the investigation of crimes by the Franco regime, although it considers that his action was erroneous.
- On 11 February the government passes a structural reform of the labour market which includes, among other measures, making it more flexible through a reduction of compensation for dismissal, clarification of economic causes for dismissals and a limit on linking temporary contracts.
- On 16 February Parliament approves reform of the banking sector, which calls on banks to capitalise 5.2 billion euros to balance their accounts.

France

- On 8 February the former Minister of Labour Eric Woerth is accused of passive influence peddling in the framework of the investigation into the funding of Nicolas Sarkozy's campaign in 2007, related with the L'Oréal case.
- On 17 February France and the United Kingdom agree the joint development of nuclear energy.
- On 22 February Dominique Strauss-Khan is released without charges after making a statement to the police in Lille on the Carlton case, the third sex scandal in which the former head of the IMF has been involved.
- On 28 February the Constitutional Council rules the law passed by Parliament in December 2011 outlawing denial of the Armenian genocide in the Ottoman Empire as unconstitutional.

Italy

- On 13 February the Turin Court sentences Stephan Schmidheiny, owner of the Swiss construction company Eternit, and his Belgian partner, Jean-Louis de Cartier de Marchienne, to 16 years' imprisonment for the death of around

3,000 people due to exposure to the asbestos processed by the company in Italy.

- On 14 February the vice-President of the Region of Umbria Orfeo Goracci is accused, among other crimes, of conspiracy and abuse of office.
- On 25 February the Milan Court dismisses the charge of bribery against Silvio Berlusconi made in the Mills case.

Slovenia

- On 10 February 50 of the 90 Members of Parliament give their vote of confidence to the new government of 12 ministers proposed by Prime Minister Janez Jansa.

Croatia

- On 15 February the government, trade unions and employers' organisation reach an agreement under which 5,000 public employees will be made redundant and salaries and benefits will be cut to save over 500 million euros in 2012.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

- On 3 February Bosnia adopts the law to conduct a census of the population in 2013.
- On 13 February Emir Suljagic, Minister of Education of the Sarajevo Canton, resigns following the death threats received after having proposed the removal of religion as a compulsory subject in school.
- On 13 February the federal government adopts a joint position to approve the 2011 budget, which will provide a basis for adopting that of 2012. Until then, the State had been operating with a temporary budget because of the political crisis in Bosnia.

Montenegro

- On 10 February protestors in Bijelo Polje and Podgorica denounce the increase in the price of electricity.
- On 26 February 10 people are arrested in Podgorica in relation to the burning of vehicles of the newspaper Vijesti that took place in summer 2011.

Serbia

- On 15 February Serbia announces that it will request the extradition of the three members of "Arkan's Tigers" arrested in Valencia, Spain, on 9 February and accused of assassinating the Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic in 2003.

Kosovo under UN Security Council Resolution 1244

- On 14 and 15 February three Serbian municipalities in North Kosovo reject the institutions of the Republic of Kosovo by 99.74% of the votes in a referendum.
- On 22 February negotiations between Belgrade and Pristina resume in Brussels, concluding in an agreement for Kosovo to attend regional forums under the denomination of "Kosovo under UN Security Council Resolution 1244." At the same time, KFOR reaches an agreement with the municipalities in North Kosovo to cross the Brnjak and Jarinje checkpoints.
- On 25 February Kosovo police arrest four Serbian police officers in Gnjilane charged with threatening Kosovo's legal order and obstructing police officers in the execution of their duty.

Albania

- On 2 February, following an order issued by the Supreme Court, Parliament lifts the immunity of three socialist Members of Parliament suspected of participating in the riots against the government in January 2011.

Greece

- On 7 February the first general strike of the year is held in protest against cuts in public spending requested by the EU and the IMF.
- On 13 February Parliament approves new austerity measures, which enables activation on 20 February of the 1.3 billion euros of the second bailout, while riots continue in the streets.
- On 17 February the Minister of Culture Pavlos Gerulanos resigns after the robbery of 70 pieces from the Museum of Olympia, which comes within the

worrying increase in the crime rate due to the crisis.

Turkey

- On 9 February 13 PKK terrorists and a soldier die in confrontations in Hakkari and Bingol. On 14 February another 10 terrorists die in confrontations in Sirnak.
- On 27 February Turkey announces restrictions for Israeli air traffic as a result of the attack on the ship Mavi Marmara in May 2010, in which several Turkish activists died. This is in addition to another similar measure against French flights announced in December 2011 after the French National Assembly passed legislation outlawing the denial of the Armenian genocide during the First World War.

Cyprus

- On 2 February Parliament unanimously passes a resolution against UN Envoy Alexander Downer due to the lack of objectivity in his mediation of the Cypriot conflict.
- On 15 February the European Parliament (EP) adopts a joint position to urge Turkey to return Varosha, a sector occupied since the Turkish invasion in 1974, to its legitimate owners.
- On 16 February the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu visits Cyprus to activate a strategic partnership between the two countries in energy, trade, tourism, agriculture and research.

Syria

- On 3 February an army bombing on Homs kills at least 260 people and injures 500 in one of the bloodiest attacks since the start of the uprisings.
- On 4 February Russia and China veto for the third time a draft resolution, prepared by Morocco and backed by the West and the Arab League, condemning the Syrian regime before the UN Security Council. On 10 February thousands of Syrians protest against Moscow.
- On 16 February the UN General Assembly passes by 137 votes in favour and 12 against – among them Russia, China and Iran – the non-binding reso-

lution drafted by Saudi Arabia and Qatar denouncing human rights violations in Syria and asking for the Arab League roadmap to be implemented and for the UN to send a special envoy to the country.

- On 24 February the former UN General Secretary, Kofi Annan, is appointed as UN-Arab League Joint Special Envoy to Syria.
- On 24 February Tunisia hosts the meeting of the “Friends of Syria” Group with the participation of the EU and Arab League countries, some countries of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), USA, China and the Syrian National Council (SNC), which announces the sending of humanitarian aid and proposes the creation of a non-military intervention force.
- On 26 February the referendum called by Bashar al-Assad on the project of a new Constitution is approved by 89.4% of the votes, a result qualified as “not very credible” by the UN.
- On 27 February the EU approves new economic sanctions against Damascus.

Lebanon

- On 10 February at least two people die in confrontations in Tripoli between residents of the Sunni neighbourhood of Bab al-Tabbaneh and the Alawi neighbourhood of Jabal Mohsen, forcing a military intervention in the face of fears that the Syrian crisis could spread.

Jordan

- On 9 February Mohammed al-Dahabi, former Head of the Intelligence Services, is taken into police custody for 14 days at the request of the Anti-Corruption Office.

Egypt

- On 1 February a football match in Port Said between the al-Ahli and the al-Masri teams ends in a pitch battle leaving 74 dead and 300 injured. The Muslim Brotherhood accuses factions of the former regime of inciting the riots and the Military Junta of doing nothing to stop them. This event is

followed by several days of violence in demonstrations that demand the transfer of powers from the Military Junta.

- On 5 February the Ministry of Justice takes into police custody 43 workers from diverse NGOs accused of failing to observe Egyptian legislation. The EU supports American condemnation and threatens Egypt with suspension of its economic cooperation.
- On 22 February the elections to the Shura Council (lower chamber) end. The Freedom and Justice Party wins with 58.8% of the votes - 107 seats - while al-Nour comes second with 25.5% - 46 seats.

Libya

- On 5 February the first trial against 40 members and supporters of Muammar Gaddafi starts in Benghazi.
- On 13 February the spokesman of the National Transitional Council (NTC), Mohammed al-Harizi, announces the appointment of the members of the new Transitional Justice Committee.
- On 14 February around one hundred Libyan militias announce their grouping into a new federation led by Mokhtar Fernana to increase pressure on the NTC to speed up the reforms demanded by the revolution.
- On 20 February Misrata holds elections to choose its Municipal Council.
- On 22 February the number of dead as a result of the conflict started 10 days before in Kufra between the Arab Zuwaya and the African Tubu is 131.
- On 23 February the former Prime Minister Mahmoud Jibril announces the creation of a new coalition, the moderate Islamist National Forces Alliance, which brings together 44 parties, 236 civil organisations and representatives of the Amazigh, Tuareg and Tubu communities.
- On 24 February the NTC establishes a national council to watch over the state of security in Libya and manage the crises related to it.

Tunisia

- On 25 February a demonstration in Tunis condemns the attacks that took

place on 20 and 21 February against offices of the General Union of Tunisian Workers (UGTT) in several cities and coinciding with the start of a national strike by municipal workers to demand contract improvements.

Algeria

- On 6 February a court in Algiers sentences to up to 12 years' imprisonment the AQIM terrorists who survived the suicide attack in Bouira that killed 12 people in 2008.
- On 21 February 11 AQIM terrorists die in a large-scale security operation in Beni Khalifa which began on 19 February.
- On 25 February Algeria deploys an important humanitarian and security operation on the border with Mali to confront the possible consequences of the Tuareg conflict endured by Azawad for national security.
- On 25 February the three main Algerian Islamist parties – the Society and Peace Movement (MSP), Ennahda and Al-Islah – announce the creation of a coalition to run for the parliamentary elections on 10 May 2012.
- On 26 February the Ministry of the Interior authorises eight new political parties.

Morocco

- On 4 February, on the occasion of the celebration of Muhammad's birth, Mohammed VI pardons three Islamists imprisoned for the Casablanca attacks in 2003.
- On 4 February Morocco announces the dismantling of a terrorist cell linked to the Islamic Liberation Party that might have been planning attacks in the country.

Mauritania

- On 6 February Wane Abdoul Birane, coordinator of the "Don't Touch My Nationality" movement, who condemns the Mauritanian population census which he considers racist against the black population, is arrested in Nouakchott. On 8 February Birane is released, following a demonstration in Nouakchott.

European Union

- On 2 February the Treaty establishing the European Stability Mechanism, the successor to the European Financial Stability Facility, is signed.
- On 16 February the EP approves the liberalisation of trade between Morocco and the EU for agricultural and fishery products.

March 2012

Portugal and Spain hold general strikes in protest against the austerity plans of their governments. The Italian government implements an ambitious economic reform programme. Slovenia incorporates a limit on public debt into the Constitution. The Croatian Parliament ratifies EU accession. Serbia achieves candidate status for EU accession while in Kosovo tension over the holding of Serbian elections in May increases. In the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia there are episodes of ethnic violence. Greece agrees with its creditors to restructure its debt. Cyprus remodels its government. One year has passed since the start of the uprisings in Syria. In Lebanon, a fifth member of Hezbollah is charged with the assassination of Rafiq Hariri. In Libya, the aspirations of Cyrenaica open the debate on national unity.

Portugal

- On 22 March a general strike takes place in protest at the government's austerity measures, precarious work and unemployment.

Spain

- On 20 March the former President of the Balearic Islands, Jaume Matas, is sentenced to six years' imprisonment for the Palma Arena corruption case.
- On 25 March Andalusia holds elections in which the People's Party (PP, conservative) wins although without a big enough majority to govern, leaving the government in the hands of the coalition of socialists and communists. Asturias also holds early elections as

the government of Foro Asturias (regionalist) did not manage to approve the annual budget. The pact between the Socialist Party (PSOE), United Left (IU) and Union, Progress and Democracy (UPyD) forms a government.

- On 29 March a general strike called by the two main leftwing unions protests against the government's cuts to reduce the deficit and February's labour reform.

France

- On 11 March Nicolas Sarkozy threatens that France will leave Schengen if there is no reform to ensure that all countries apply identical border control criteria and he advocates introducing protectionist measures similar to those of the USA.
- On 23 March Mohamed Merah, suspected of links with al-Qaeda and responsible for the murders on 11 March in Toulouse of the soldier Imad Ibn Zaten, on 15 March in Montauban of Corporal Abel Chennouf and the soldier Legouad Mohamed and on 19 March of another four people in the Jewish school Ozar Hatorah in Toulouse, dies in a shootout with police.

Italy

- On 1 March the Senate approves the government's ambitious economic plan providing for the liberalisation of numerous sectors.
- On 12 March the Italian National Institute of Statistics (Istat) confirms that Italy entered recession in the fourth quarter of 2011.
- On 23 March the government approves a labour reform that increases flexibility of dismissals, simplifies contracts and provides for benefits for the unemployed.

Malta

- On 9 March the Malta Environment and Planning Authority (MEPA) sanctions Enemalta with 177,000 euros and an additional 428 euros for each day that the Marsa Plan, which has exceeded its operation and pollution limits, continues operating.

- On 10 March Malta holds elections in 35 of its local councils, in which the Labour Party wins with almost 56% of the votes.

Croatia

- On 9 March the Sabor (Parliament) ratifies the EU accession treaty.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

- On 12 March the mandate of the parliamentary commission for the constitutional reform requested in 2009 by the Strasbourg Court on the Sejdic-Finci case expires, without the six main parties having reached an agreement on ethnic minorities having access to high office.
- On 12 March the President of the Republic of Srpska Milorad Dodik threatens a referendum in the Serbian-Bosnian entity on belonging to NATO if it approves Bosnian membership.

Montenegro

- On 7 March Olivera Lakic, a Vijesti journalist, is brutally beaten in Podgorica in yet another attack against the media investigating corruption cases.
- On 18 March thousands of Montenegrins protest against corruption in Podgorica.

Serbia

- On 1 March Serbia becomes a candidate for EU accession.

Kosovo under UN Security Council Resolution 1244

- On 21 March the acquittal of the former Minister of Transport Fatmir Limaj and another nine former members of the Kosovo Liberation Army (UÇK) results in protests by Serbian victims of the Kosovo conflict.
- On 23 March the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) decides that it cannot be involved in the organisation of Serbian elections in Kosovo to avoid violating UN Security Council Resolution 1244, in response to a Serbian request follow-

ing threats by Pristina to obstruct elections in its territory.

FYROM

- On 1 March 10,000 Macedonian Albanians protest in Gostivar over the murder two days earlier of two youths by a Slav police officer.
- On 8 March 10 people are injured in three episodes of intercommunity violence in Skopje. Since the start of the year the number of people injured by interethnic tension is 38.
- On 14 March a court in Skopje sentences Velija Ramkovski, owner of the defunct television channel A1, to 13 years' imprisonment for corruption.
- On 23 March the government passes a new Lustration Law draft after the ruling of the Constitutional Court in January that declared the previous text illegal.

Albania

- On 9 March the Public Prosecutor's Office files corruption charges against the former Minister of Finance Dritan Prifti and the former Deputy Minister Leonard Beqiri.
- On 14 March eight poll commissioners of the Democratic Party of Albania (PDS, rightwing) are accused of fraud in Dajc during the local elections of May 2011.

Greece

- On 9 March the government achieves the support of creditors to undertake the largest debt restructuring in its history.
- On 10 March Yorgos Papandreu resigns as President of the Pahlhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK). On 18 March Evangelos Venizelos is elected President and candidate for the early elections in April. On 19 March Venizelos is replaced as Minister of Finance by his Deputy Minister Filippos Sachinidis.
- On 21 March Parliament ratifies the eurozone's and the IMF's second aid plan for an amount of 1.72 billion euros.

Turkey

- On 1 March an attack by the terrorist organisation PKK near the headquarters

of the governing AKP in Istanbul injures 16 police officers.

- On 21 March five Turkish police officers die in confrontations with the PKK in Sirnak, one day after the death of a police officer during demonstrations to mark the Kurdish New Year.

Cyprus

- On 5 March the Turkish Minister for EU Affairs Egemen Bagis states that if a solution on reunification is not achieved before the Cypriot EU Presidency, Ankara does not rule out a solution based on two independent states or the annexation of the north of the island.
- On 8 March Parliament passes a law that restricts air traffic controllers' right to strike, whose protests against the cuts paralysed the country the previous month.
- On 19 March Demetris Christofias remodels his government. The banker Vassos Shiarly replaces Kikis Kazamias, who resigned on 16 March for health reasons, as Minister of Finance. The Minister of the Interior Neoclis Sylikiotis replaces Praxoulla Antoniadou as Minister of Trade and Industry. Eleni Mavrou, former Mayor of Nicosia, becomes Minister of the Interior.

Syria

- On 1 March Russia and China accept a non-binding draft declaration by the UN Security Council asking Damascus to allow immediate entry of a UN delegation.
- On 7 March the Minister of Oil and Mineral Resources Abdo Hussameddin deserts and joins the revolution.
- 15 March marks one year since the uprisings with a total of 7,500 deaths and 10,000 displaced people. Thousands of Syrians go onto the streets of the main cities in a new "Day of Rage." There are also marches supporting Bashar al-Assad.
- On 21 March the UN Security Council ratifies a draft resolution based on Kofi Annan's Plan that ensures non-external interference and urges the parties to abandon violence, start mediation and not obstruct the supply of humanitarian aid.

Lebanon

- On 2 March the UN Special Tribunal for Lebanon announces that a fifth member of Hezbollah might have been accused of participation in the assassination of Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri in 2005.
- On 4 March the Lebanese government reinforces borders with Syria due to the increasing number of citizens entering the country fleeing the bombings. The army blocks access to Beirut where there are protests by supporters and detractors of Bashar al-Assad.
- On 14 March the Ethiopian Alem Dechasa commits suicide to avoid being returned to the man for whom she worked in another of the multiple cases revealing the conditions of slavery endured by domestic female workers.

Jordan

- On 9 March in Amman thousands of demonstrators support the Syrian revolution.

Egypt

- On 24 March there are new riots in Port Said after the decision by an Egyptian court to suspend the local football club, the al-Masri, for two years is made public.
- On 25 March the composition of the Parliamentary Assembly, which will prepare the new Constitution project, is announced. The Assembly is formed by 50 Members of Parliament, of whom 25 belong to the Freedom and Justice Party and 11 to al-Nour. Another 50 members represent the trade unions, the judiciary, religious orders and extra-parliamentary political movements.
- On 31 March the Muslim Brotherhood, despite their initial intention of not running in the presidential elections, announces the candidacy of their number two, Khairat al-Shater.

Libya

- On 5 March Mustafa Abdul Jalil is re-elected President of the National Transitional Council (NTC).

- On 6 March 3,000 tribal representatives of Cyrenaica support a declaration of autonomy and the recovery of the federal system prior to Gaddafi. On the same day, the creation of a Regional Transitional Council is announced, led by the former founding member of the NTC, Ahmed al-Senussi. On 9 March there are marches against federalism and division in several cities.
- On 13 March the National Reconciliation Conference, promoted by Prime Minister Abderrahim al-Kib, begins in Zliten.
- On 16 March Abdullah al-Senussi, Head of Muammar Gaddafi's Military Intelligence, is arrested at Nouakchott airport.
- On 25 March the death of a member of the Bussif tribe unleashes confrontations in Sebha between local groups and the Tubu community. On 31 March fighting ends with a total of 147 deaths.

Tunisia

- On 1 March Rachid Ghannouchi announces that he will not run for the presidency of Ennahda in the congress in July.
- On 20 March, on the commemoration of the 56th anniversary of Tunisian independence, 30,000 people in Tunis call for a secular state, while a meeting is held in El Menzah in which diverse Islamic forces call for the new Constitution to be based on the sharia. On 24 March in Tunis, 15,000 people call for a secular state. On 26 March, to avoid a social fracture, Ennahda announces it will maintain Article 1 of the 1959 Constitution establishing that "Tunisia is a free, sovereign and independent State. Its religion is Islam, its language Arabic and its type of government is the Republic."
- On 31 March President Moncef Marzouki announces that the state of emergency will remain in force until late April.

Algeria

- On 7 March three Islamist forces – the Movement for Society and Peace, Ennahda and Al-Islah – sign the Green Algeria Alliance to run for elections in May.

- On 10 March the congress of the Rally for Culture and Democracy (RCD, Berber nationalist) elects Mohcine Belabbas as its new leader, replacing Said Sadi.
- On 14 March an Algerian court sentences to death in absentia the AQIM leaders Abdelmadek Droukdel and Bouderbala Fatah and 14 other terrorists for the attacks on 11 April 2007 that resulted in 24 deaths and 222 injured.

Morocco

- On 12 March there are riots in Imzouren when the police disperse a demonstration marching to Beni Bouayach, where there had been different protests by unemployed Riffs and pro-independence campaigners.

Mauritania

- On 2 March Ely Ould Mokhtar, a Mauritanian gendarme kidnapped by AQIM in December 2011, and the Italian aid worker Rossella Urru, kidnapped in Tindouf in October 2011, are released in Mali after Nouakchott had freed the AQIM member Abderrahman Ould Amadou al-Azawadi.
- On 12 March the Coordinator of the Democratic Opposition (COD) heads a demonstration in Nouakchott to call for the end of the military government, the resignation of Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz, a definitive date for parliamentary elections and loyalty to Islamic tradition. The Mauritanian parliamentary elections, initially scheduled for 16 October 2011, were postponed in August 2011 until 31 March 2012, when the COD joined the National Dialogue process backed by the government.

European Union

- On 2 March the European Council adopts the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance that provides for tough sanctions against the countries that do not respect Community discipline.
- On 8 March the 27 Ministers of Justice and the Interior discuss measures to improve cooperation with the EFTA countries on border security and agree measures to increase coordination and

solidarity among the Schengen countries, the European Asylum Policy and the joint response to possible migration crises.

Arab League

- On 28 March the Arab League agrees in its annual summit, held in Baghdad, to back Kofi Annan's peace plan. On 29 March Bashar al-Assad announces that he accepts Kofi Annan's plan to find a solution to the Syrian conflict.

April 2012

Spain approves tough measures to cut public spending. Italy and Slovenia introduce the constitutional limitation on public debt. Interethnic tension increases in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia as well as between Serbia and Kosovo. Greece calls early elections for 6 May. In Turkey the trial against the survivors of the 1980 coup begins. In Syria, the acceptance of Kofi Annan's peace plan and the deployment of new international observers do not halt the violence in the country. The Jordanian government resigns. In Egypt, the cancellation of three candidacies for the presidential elections and the readmission of Ahmed Shafiq's candidacy for election intensify the tension between Parliament, demonstrators and the army. The episodes of tribal violence continue in Libya.

Portugal

- On 13 April Portugal becomes the first country to ratify in Parliament the Fiscal Compact approved by the European Council on 2 March.

Spain

- On 3 April the government submits to Parliament the 2012 general budget that provides for large cuts in public spending and tax increases to deal with the debt interest and maintain the pension and unemployment systems. They include a partial tax amnesty and the removal of fiscal deductions for large companies.

- On 13 April the government approves a new plan to fight tax fraud which includes the prohibition on paying invoices higher than 2,500 euros in cash and the obligation to declare accounts abroad.

- On 16 April the Argentinian government announces it has introduced into Parliament a bill by which 51% of the shares of YPF, subsidiary of the Spanish multinational Repsol, are expropriated, thereby causing a diplomatic crisis between Madrid and Buenos Aires.

- On 17 April the Bank of Spain announces that Spain has gone into recession.

- On 20 April the government approves new austerity measures concerning health and education to reduce 10 billion euros of deficit annually.

- On 24 April the Seville Court judging the corruption case concerning a layoff fund set up by the Andalusia government, remands the former councillor of Employment of the Andalusia Regional Government, Antonio Fernández, in custody.

France

- On 4 April the French police arrest 13 suspects for belonging to radical Islamist groups, in addition to the other 17 arrests made on 29 March for belonging to the illegal group Forsane Alizza (Knights of Pride).

- On 22 April the first round of the presidential elections places the socialist François Hollande in the lead with 28.2% of the votes, followed by Nicolas Sarkozy, with 27%. Marine Le Pen's National Front (FN, extreme right) wins 18.6% of the votes.

Monaco

- On 3 April Jean-François Robillon, of the Union of Monégasques (UDM), is re-elected President of the National Council (Parliament) with 14 votes in favour and 6 abstentions.

Italy

- On 3 April the Italian police search the headquarters of the Northern League as part of the investigations by

the Naples Public Prosecutor's Office into alleged crimes of corruption and association with the 'Ndrangheta (Calabrese mafia) of the treasurer Francesco Belsito. On 5 April Umberto Bossi resigns as Secretary General of the party leaving control to the National Secretary of the party, Roberto Calderoli, former Minister of the Interior, Roberto Maroni, and the Member of Parliament Emanuela Dal Lago. On 9 April Bossi's son, Renzo, resigns as councillor of Lombardy.

- On 17 April the Senate adopts by absolute majority the inclusion in the Constitution of the "golden rule," which limits public debt.

Slovenia

- On 11 April the Slovenian Parliament approves the introduction into the Constitution of a limit on public debt.

Croatia

- On 12 April the government prohibits the holding in Zagreb of the annual march by European extreme right supporters.

- On 17 April the European Parliament welcomes the 12 new Croatian Members of Parliament as observers.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

- On 27 April the Bosnian government adopts the general budget for 2012 but without agreements on approving a reduction in public deficit through cuts in civil servants' salaries.

- On 30 April Rasema Handanovic becomes the first Muslim woman charged for war crimes in the Bosnian conflict after having been found guilty of the deaths of 26 Croatians in Trusina.

Montenegro

- On 29 April Montenegro becomes a member of the World Trade Organisation.

Serbia

- On 3 April Boris Tadic announces his resignation so that the early presidential elections can coincide with the

parliamentary and municipal elections of 6 May.

Kosovo under UN Security Council Resolution 1244

- On 7 April a Kosovo Albanian dies in Mitrovica after a bomb explodes. The incident, one month before the Serbian elections, increases tension in North Kosovo along with “tit-for-tat” arrests of police officers, trade unionists, former UÇK members and electoral officers carried out by Belgrade and Pristina since March. On 25 April a demonstration in Pristina by Kosovo Albanians from Mitrovica calls for the end of the “climate of terror” in the northern territories.
- On 30 April Belgrade and Pristina reach an agreement to enable the holding of the Serbian parliamentary elections, also in Kosovo territory.

FYROM

- On 12 April the discovery of the corpses of five Macedonian Slavic youths from Radisani, Skopje, supposedly executed, increases ethnic tension. On 16 April a demonstration condemning the murders ends in police riots.

Albania

- On 9 April Fatmir Kajolli, municipal councillor in Fier, is arrested at the request of Italy, accused of drug trafficking.

Greece

- On 9 April a bomb explodes at the Ministry of Administrative Reform, an attack attributed to anarchist organisations.
- On 11 April the former Minister Akis Tsohatzopoulos is arrested, accused of corruption and money laundering.

Turkey

- On 4 April at the Ankara Criminal Court the historic trial starts against Kenan Evren and Tahsin Sahinkaya, the last survivors of the Military Junta that prompted the 1980 coup.

Cyprus

- On 28 April the Cypriot President appoints the economist Panicos Demetriades as new Governor of the Central Bank.

Syria

- On 1 April Istanbul hosts the 2nd “Friends of Syria” Conference, in which 83 countries recognise the Syrian National Council (SNC) as representative of the Syrian people. Working groups on the sanctions against Damascus and to monitor the transition process are created and the Conference insists on the establishment of defined terms to apply the Annan Plan.
- On 10 April the deadline given to Damascus by the UN and the Arab League to implement Kofi Annan’s peace plan ends, although the army and the SLA continue their actions. On 12 April the ceasefire comes into force in Syria although attacks continue.
- On 13 April Syria accepts the presence of international observers. On 14 April the UN Security Council approves the version amended by Russia of the draft resolution submitted by the US, France and the United Kingdom authorising the deployment of international observers to Syria included in the Annan Plan. On 21 April UN Security Council Resolution 2042 establishes the United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria (UNSMIS).
- On 24 April the EU approves new sanctions against Damascus that include the prohibition on exporting luxury items to Syria as well as technology that may be used to continue the repression.
- On 26 April a missile attributed to the army by the Local Coordination Committees hits a building in Hama causing the deaths of dozens of people. This event, the persistence of violence in the region and a series of attacks in Damascus and Baniyas on 27 April question the effectiveness of the Annan Plan.

Jordan

- On 7 April Awn al-Khasawneh’s government approves the draft of the new Electoral Law. The text provides for a

mixed electoral system, which combines an open proportional list on the provincial level with an open proportional list on the national level, increasing the number of seats from 120 to 138, of which the female proportion moves from 12 to 15.

- On 26 April Prime Minister Awn al-Khasawneh and his government resign six months after having been appointed due to the difficulties in getting a programme of reforms that meets the social demands off the ground. On the same day, Abdullah II asks the former Prime Minister Fayez Tarauneh to form a new government.

Egypt

- On 10 April an administrative court in Cairo invalidates the Constituent Assembly that will prepare the draft of the new Constitution, ruling in favour of the liberal deputies that boycotted it as they consider that the Assembly does not represent all social sectors.
- On 13 April thousands of people demonstrate in Tahrir Square against Omar Suleiman running in the presidential elections.
- On 14 April the Electoral Commission disqualifies as possible candidate for the presidency Salafi Hazem Abu Ismail as he was unable to prove that his mother did not obtain American nationality in 2006 thereby contravening Egyptian electoral law that impedes non-Egyptians and Egyptians with parents of another nationality from being President. It also invalidates the candidacies of Mubarak’s former vice-President Omar Suleiman as he did not have the minimum number of signatures and the Freedom and Justice Party’s Khairat al-Shater as he had previously been sentenced by an Egyptian court. On 20 April a mass rally “Friday of the No to the Constitution Written Under Military Control” is held.
- On 23 April, after a weekend of protests, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces ratifies the law passed by Parliament on 12 April prohibiting high officials of Mubarak’s regime from running in the presidential elections.
- On 25 April the Electoral Commission revokes its decision to disqualify Ahmed Shafiq’s candidacy in the pres-

idential elections after he submitted an appeal against the Commission's report of 24 April, in which he alleges that his registration as a candidate was prior to the passing of the law that prohibits members of the National Democratic Party (NDP) from running for election.

Libya

- On 1 April confrontations erupt in Zuwara between former Arab combatants against Gaddafi from al-Jumail and Regdalin and members of the local Amazigh people. On 3 April the government announces 14 deaths and 80 injured in Zuwara and Regdalin and the deployment of 200 soldiers to pacify the area.
- On 8 April the Minister of Justice Ali Ashour affirms that Tripoli will not hand over Saif al-Islam Gaddafi to the International Criminal Court and that he will be judged by Libyan justice.
- On 20 April the death of a member of the Tubu community shot by members of the Zuwaya community unleashes a new spiral of violence in Kufra that causes 12 new deaths. On 21 April the Kufra military council achieves a truce between the parties.
- On 25 April the President of the NTC Mustafa Abdul Jalil removes from office the Director of the Electoral Commission Uthman Gajiji. Some hours before, Prime Minister Abderrahim al-Kib had accused the NTC of obstructing the reforms to be undertaken to meet the objectives of the revolution, especially the holding of elections in June.

Tunisia

- On 9 April a demonstration in commemoration of Martyrs' Day in Tunis condemning the ban decreed by the government on demonstrating after the riots that took place in a protest on 25 March calling for a secular state degenerates into violent confrontations. On 11 April the government lifts the ban.
- On 14 and 15 April there are confrontations between unemployed youths and police in Om Laarayes after the Gafsa Phosphate Company announced that it had contracted new employees.

- On 21 April a group of Salafi demonstrators attack Jawar Ben Mbarek, leader of the independent movement Doustourna (secular left), when he participated in a meeting with unemployed youths near Kebili. The incident takes place one day after a Salafi group impeded a similar meeting in Douz.

Algeria

- On 9 April the AQIM member Belhabous Adou Ben Yaya is sentenced by the Algiers Court to 20 years' imprisonment for being a member of Mokhtar "Laaouar" Belmokhtar's terrorist cell.
- On 11 April Ahmed Ben Bella, the first President of independent Algeria, dies in Algiers.
- On 14 April the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJWA) releases a video featuring seven Algerian diplomats kidnapped in early April in Gao, northern Mali, and urges Algiers to start negotiations. On 15 April the pro-independence National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA) offers to mediate.

Morocco

- On 9 April three people are arrested in Meknes accused of planning attacks on government offices.

Mauritania

- On 18 April the police arrest 40 youths who participated in a demonstration against the government of Mohamed Ould Abdelaziz called by the Mauritanian Youth Movement (MJM).
- On 22 April thousands of opponents of the government demonstrate in Nouakchott called by the Coordinator of the Democratic Opposition (COD) to demand the end of the military presence in the government structures and the implementation of a democratisation process.
- On 28 April the police arrest Biram Ould Dah Abeid, leader of the Initiative for the Resurgence of the Abolitionist Movement (IRA) after the burning the previous day in al-Riyadh, Nouakchott, of books of the Maliki tradition, which the IRA accuses of defending slavery.

European Union

- On 1 April the European Citizen's Initiative, provided for by the Treaty of Lisbon and which enables seven citizens from seven different Member States to submit legislative proposals backed by one million citizens, comes into force.

May 2012

In France, François Hollande is elected new President of the Republic. Italy suffers several earthquakes and in the elections held in several Italian towns the People of Freedom experiences a major defeat. In Malta, the Minister of the Interior resigns and the government manages to pass the Budget Law. In Bosnia the budget for 2012 is approved, the trial against Ratko Mladic begins and the Office of the High Representative in Brcko closes. In Serbia, the Progressive Party wins in the parliamentary and presidential elections. In Greece, Panagiotis Pikrammenos is appointed interim President. In Syria, there is fear over the drift towards civil war and a contagion effect in Lebanon, where there are new confrontations. Jordan passes the Political Party Law the same month in which the new government takes office. Egypt holds the first round of presidential elections. Algeria holds parliamentary elections, in which the governing National Liberation Front (FLN) wins. In Mauritania, protests calling for democratic reforms continue.

Portugal

- On 11 May Parliament approves a reform making the labour market more flexible.
- On 17 May Portugal adopts the reform of the energy sector to save between 170 and 190 million euros annually.

Spain

- On 3 May the High Court of Justice in Northern Ireland authorises the extradition to Spain of the ETA member José Ignacio de Juana Chaos, who had fled

two years earlier and whose whereabouts had been unknown.

- On 9 May the government announces the nationalisation of the Banco Financiero y de Ahorros (BFA), parent company of Bankia, the third largest Spanish financial group, which in 2011 had losses of 2.979 billion euros.
- 15 May marks one year since the March 15 Movement with rallies at the Puerta del Sol in Madrid and in other Spanish cities calling for a regeneration of political life and demonstrating against the cuts in public spending.

France

- On 6 May France holds the second round of the presidential elections, in which the Socialist Party candidate François Hollande wins with 51.9% of the votes over President Nicolas Sarkozy (UMP).
- On 16 May the new Prime Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault takes office and forms a government with Laurent Fabius as Minister of Foreign Affairs, Manuel Valls as Minister of the Interior and Pierre Moscovici as Minister of Finance.

Italy

- On 6 and 7 May Italy holds local elections in 941 towns with disastrous results for the People of Freedom (PDL, centre-right) and the Northern League (Padan nationalist, centre-right) and with notably good results in Genoa and Parma for Five Stars, the “anti-political” movement led by the comedian Beppe Grillo. On 20 and 21 May the second round of the municipal elections is held. The Democratic Party (PD, social-democrat) comes first in the main towns.
- On 20 May an earthquake of 5.9 on the Richter scale in Emilia-Romagna kills at least seven people. On 29 May new earthquakes in Emilia-Romagna result in the deaths of another 17 people. Around 8,000 people lose their homes.

Malta

- On 6 May 88 immigrants reach Riviéra Bay in the third arrival of boats to Malta in 10 days.

- On 9 May Parliament passes the budget for 2012 and the new Finance Law thanks to the favourable vote of Franco Debono, deputy of the governing Nationalist Party (conservative) but highly critical of it.
- On 30 May the Minister of the Interior Carmelo Mifsud Bonici resigns after losing a vote of no confidence moved by the Labour Party members and backed by Franco Debono.

Slovenia

- On 11 May the largest operation against organised crime carried out in Slovenia ends in 60 arrests for arms and drugs trafficking.
- On 11 May Parliament approves a cut in the budget for 2012 to reduce public deficit.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

- On 10 May Parliament approves the budget for 2012 amounting to 486 million euros with the support of 26 of its 42 deputies. The deputies of the Democratic Action Party (SDA, social-democrat, Bosnian nationalist) vote against as they regard it as inadequate, prompting a rupture of the government coalition.
- On 16 May in The Hague the trial against the Bosnian Serb General Ratko Mladic starts with 11 charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity. On 17 May the trial is postponed until 25 June due to irregularities in supplying documentation to the defence.
- On 23 May the Office of the High Representative of the International Community for Bosnia in the district of Brcko closes, a first step towards the end of international tutelage.

Montenegro

- On 5 and 15 May protests call for the resignation of Igor Luksic's government because of its policy of privatisation and tax increases and the high levels of corruption.

Serbia

- On 6 May Serbia holds parliamentary and municipal elections and the first

round of presidential elections. In the parliamentary elections, the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS, conservative) wins 24.7% of the votes followed by the Democratic Party (DS, social-democrat) with 23.2% and the Socialist Party with 16.6%. In the presidential elections, President Boris Tadic (DS) and Tomislav Nikolic (SNS) go forward to the second round. On 9 May the DS and the Socialist Party (SPS) agree on a parliamentary coalition to govern. On 20, in a surprising turn, May Nikolic defeats Tadic in the second round of the presidential elections by 50.21% to 46.77% of the votes.

Kosovo under UN Security Council Resolution 1244

- On 11 May The Hague Court provisionally releases Ramush Haradinaj, former commander of the Kosovo Liberation Army (UÇK), accused of war crimes despite Belgrade's protests.

FYROM

- On 2 May five Macedonian Albanian citizens are arrested for having murdered five Macedonian Slavs in April. On 4 and 11 May thousands of Macedonian Albanians protest against the arrests.
- On 20 May the NATO summit, held in Chicago, postpones the membership of the country until the name issue is resolved with Greece.

Albania

- On 10 May Parliament unanimously approves the investigation by a commission of the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) into an alleged organ-trafficking network of Serbian victims operated on in Albania during the Kosovo conflict.

Greece

- On 6 May Greece holds early legislative elections that break with four decades of the two-party system of the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) and New Democracy (ND, centre-right), which between them fail to win an absolute majority faced with

the remaining parties opposed to the austerity measures requested by Brussels. Antonis Samaras' ND is the most voted party with 18.8% and 108 deputies, followed by Alexis Tsipras' communist coalition Syriza, with 16.8% and 52 deputies, and Evangelos Venizelos' PASOK with 13.19% and 41 seats. The Greek Communist Party wins 26 seats while Independent Greeks (centre) with 33 seats, Golden Dawn (neo-Nazi) with 21 seats and Democratic Left with 19 seats all enter Parliament for the first time. After successive fruitless attempts to form a government, President Papoulias calls new elections for June and appoints as Interim President Panagiotis Pikrammenos President of the Council of State.

- On 9 May the eurozone countries freeze 1 billion euros of the Greek bailout until the political crisis is resolved.
- On 21 May New Democracy and Democratic Alliance (centre) announce their fusion to strengthen a pro-European centre-right front.
- On 28 May the European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF) releases 18 billion euros to recapitalise the four main Greek banks.

Turkey

- On 15 May the People's Democratic Congress (HDK), a bloc of pro-Kurdish and leftwing organisations established in October 2011 based on the movement Work, Freedom and Democracy, is constituted as a political party, whose majority partner is the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP).
- On 25 May a bomb attack by the PKK in a police station in Pinarbasi kills three people.

Cyprus

- On 14 May Demetris Christofias announces he will not run for re-election in 2013 due to the stagnation of the reunification negotiations.

Syria

- On 7 May Syria holds legislative elections which are boycotted by the opposition, while violence continues in the country on a daily basis.

- On 10 May two bomb attacks by the Jihadist Al-Nusra Front kill at least 70 people and injure another 375 in Damascus.
- On 14 May the Syrian National Council (SNC) announces that it will not take part in the talks under the auspices of the Arab League to overcome the fragmentation existing within the opposition, scheduled for 16 and 17 May in Cairo. The Arab League postpones the talks.
- On 23 May Bourhan Ghalioun resigns as President of the SNC.
- On 25 May at least 108 civilians die under artillery fire by the army over Hula. The SNC presses the UN Security Council to meet urgently.

Lebanon

- On 6 May around one thousand Lebanese citizens protest in Beirut calling for a secular state.
- On 13, 14 and 15 May there are confrontations in Tripoli between the Sunni and Alawi communities after the arrest of the Sunni cleric Shadi al-Moulawi, accused of providing aid to Syrian refugees considered terrorists.
- On 20 May the death at a military checkpoint in Halba of the Sunni Sheik Ahmed Abdul Wahid, opposed to the Syrian regime, intensifies the riots in Tripoli. On 21 May the riots extend to Beirut with shots exchanged by members of the Arab Movement Party of Shaker Berjawi, previously opposed to but now allied with Hezbollah, and Sunni opponents of the Syrian regime.
- On 22 May the kidnapping in the Syrian town of Azaz of Lebanese pilgrims on their way back from Iran unleashes riots in Beqaa and in the Shi'ite neighbourhoods of Beirut. On 25 May mediation by the former Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri achieves their release.

Jordan

- On 2 May Fayez Tarauneh's government takes office. Twelve ministers from the previous cabinet keep their posts. On 4 May mass demonstrations call for the resignation of the government.

- On 9 May Parliament passes the new Political Party Law that prohibits parties of a religious nature, prevents their funding by foreign sources and maintains the supervision of their activities by the Ministry of the Interior.

Egypt

- On 2 May the security forces manage to contain the spiral of violence that since 29 April has ravaged the Cairo district of Abbasiya against the military authorities and with a total of 22 deaths and over 270 injured. On 4 May a Friday of protest brings together thousands of Egyptians in Tahrir Square and Abbasiya.
- On 23 and 24 May in the first round of the presidential elections Mohamed Morsi (Freedom and Justice Party) wins 24.78% of the votes and Mubarak's former Prime Minister Ahmed Shafiq wins 23.66%, going on to the second round.
- On 31 May, when the Emergency Laws in force since 1981 expire, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces announces that they will not be renewed.

Libya

- On 2 May the National Transitional Council (NTC) passes Law 36 appointing a state representative for all Muammar Gaddafi's assets; Law 37 providing for Criminalisation of the Glorification of the Dictator; Law 38 guaranteeing impunity for all actions carried out by insurgents with the end of the triumph of the revolution; and Law 29 prohibiting the parties that contradict what is provided for by the transitional constitutional law, incite violence and hatred or are of a military nature.
- On 19 May Benghazi holds elections for its local council, the first since 1964.
- On 21 May Mahmoudi al-Baghdadi, Gaddafi's former Prime Minister, begins a hunger strike in Tunis to avoid being extradited to Libya.
- On 28 May the President of the NTC Mustafa Abdul Jalil announces the possible delay of the constituent elections scheduled for 19 June.

Tunisia

- On 1 May the Sfax Court of Justice passes the first sentence against two police officers for the death of a demonstrator during the revolution, sentencing them to 20 years' imprisonment and to pay compensation of 40,000 euros.

Algeria

- On 10 May Algeria holds legislative elections with low participation (42.9%). The governing National Liberation Front (FLN) wins with 220 seats, followed by the Democratic National Assembly (RND, liberal) with 68 seats and the Green Alliance (Islamist), with 48 seats. On 21 May, after the meeting of the recently created Political Front for the Protection of Democracy, 14 Algerian parties announce that they will boycott the Parliament emerging from a "mass electoral fraud."

Morocco

- On 8 May Mohammed VI appoints the 40 magistrates of the "High Authority for National Dialogue on Justice Reform" responsible for the reform of the civil and penal codes and for designing measures to ensure the independence of the Judicial Power one day after 1,800 magistrates sign a petition calling for urgent judicial reforms.

Mauritania

- On 9 May thousands of people demonstrate in Nouakchott called by the Coordination of Democratic Opposition (COD), in the first protest by this opposition movement authorised by the government.
- On 12 May members and sympathisers of the Initiative for the Resurgence of Abolitionism (IRA) and the movement "Don't Touch My Nationality" demonstrate in Nouakchott to demand the release of the anti-slavery leader Biram Ould Dah Abeid.
- On 16 May the leader of the COD Fadel Ould El Moctar is arrested along with other demonstrators in a new anti-government protest in front of the Parliament.

European Union

- On 14 May the eurozone Ministers of Economy express their commitment to guaranteeing that Greece, which is in its fifth year of recession, will stay in the euro. On 15 May the EU Ministers of Economy and Finance adopt an agreement for the recapitalisation of banks and investment companies.

June 2012

The Portuguese and Maltese governments defeat votes of no confidence. Spain and Cyprus announce their request for aid from the European Rescue Fund. In France, the Socialist Party wins the legislative elections. Italy approves the labour market reform and, like Slovenia, adopts new adjustment measures. Bosnia and Serbia experience major changes in the government. Montenegro starts negotiations for EU accession. Albania appoints a new President. In Greece, Antonis Samaras becomes Prime Minister after winning the elections. Kofi Annan's peace plan in Syria fails, where violence continues and the government is remodelled. Mohamed Morsi is elected new President of Egypt. Libya continues to endure growing sectarian and militia violence. Tunisia experiences episodes of violence by Salafi demonstrators.

Portugal

- On 4 June the government announces that it will receive the 4 billion euros of the following phase of its bailout after having passed the fourth EU and IMF quarterly examination.
- On 25 June Pedro Passos Coelho's government defeats a vote of no confidence moved by the Communist Party thanks to the votes of the conservative parliamentary parties.

Spain

- On 9 June Spain announces its request to the eurozone for a loan to recapitalise its banking system of 6.2 billion euros from the European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF) through the is-

suance of public debt backed by the eurozone.

- On 28 June Parliament approves the austere budget for 2012 that endeavours to reduce the deficit from 8.9% to 5.3% of GDP through a reduction of government spending and an increase in income, corporation and tobacco taxes.

France

- On 10 June France holds the first round of the legislative elections, in which the Socialist Party (PS) wins. With an abstention of 44.3%, on 17 June the second round gives an absolute majority to the PS, with a total of 280 seats out of the 577. With the seats of the Greens – 17 –, the left independent candidates – 22 – and the Left Radical Party – 12 –, the presidential majority is absolute with 331 seats. The parliamentary right goes into opposition with a total of 229 deputies comprising 194 seats of the Union for a People's Movement (UMP), the 15 of the rightwing independent candidates, the 12 of the New Centre, the 6 of the Radical Party and the 2 of the Centrist Alliance. The National Front (extreme-right) wins two seats.

Monaco

- On 12 June Albert II announces the relaunch of Monaco's Territorial Enlargement Plan, paralysed since 2008, regaining five hectares from the sea.

Italy

- On 15 June the government announces the privatisation of 3 public companies to obtain around 10 billion euros and to reduce the public debt that exceeds 120% of GDP, implement a public buildings fund, reduce high officials by 20% and the number of civil servants by 10%, and reactivate the infrastructures with tax exemptions.
- On 27 June Parliament approves the reform of the labour market tending to greater flexibility, reduction of precarious work and helping youth employment.

Malta

- On 4 June the government of the Nationalist Party defeats a vote of no confidence moved by the Labour Party thanks to the vote of its unruly deputy Franco Debono.
- On 18 June Malta's Permanent Representative to the EU Richard Cachia Caruana resigns as he loses a vote of no confidence in Parliament following a Wikileaks cable that revealed negotiations in 2008 by Cachia Caruana to reactivate Maltese membership of NATO's Partnership for Peace, bypassing parliamentary procedure.

Slovenia

- On 27 June the government adopts a second package of economic reactivation measures that include regional development, simplification of procedures for domestic investment and attraction of direct foreign investment.

Croatia

- On 20 June UEFA announces disciplinary proceedings against the Croatian Federation of Football for racist behaviour of several Croatian supporters during EURO 2012.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

- On 15 June a new government coalition in the Bosnia and Herzegovina Federation between the governing Social-Democrat Party (SDP), the Union for a Better Future (SBB, centre-right) and the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ, centre-right), leaves the Democratic Action Party (SDA, centre-right, Bosnian nationalist) outside the government.
- On 26 May Prime Minister Vjekoslav Bevanda removes from office the Minister of Security Sadik Ahmetovic, the Minister of Defence Muhamed Ibrahimovic, and the Deputy Minister of Finance Fuad Kasumovic, all members of the SDA, at the request of the SDP.
- On 30 June the EU Police Mission in Bosnia, operative since 2003, ends as the country is considered to have achieved sufficient stability.

Montenegro

- On 28 June the European Council approves the opening of negotiations for the accession of Montenegro.

Serbia

- On 11 June the new Serbian President Tomislav Nikolic's inauguration is boycotted by the Heads of State of the bordering countries following Nikolic's declarations that the massacre of Srebrenica cannot be called genocide.
- On 20 June three high officials of the security services are sentenced to a total of 22 years' imprisonment for the assassination attempt on Vuk Draskovic, leader of the opposition against Slobodan Milosevic, in Budva in 2000.
- On 28 June the socialist Ivica Dacic, leader of the Socialist Party (SPS), is appointed Prime Minister.

Kosovo under UN Security Council Resolution 1244

- On 1 June the prohibition of Serbian number plates for Kosovo vehicles comes into force.
- On 5 June the EU extends until 14 June 2014 the mandate of the EU Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX).
- On 28 June in Pristina Kosovo Albanian citizens attack Kosovo Serbians who were about to peacefully participate in the commemoration of the Kosovo Polje Battle in 1389, injuring 16 children. The UN Secretary General criticises the passivity of the Kosovo police.

FYROM

- On 13 June the authorities close the television channel A2 as it does not meet the necessary requisites for its licence, in a controversial decision adopted one year after the closure of its sister channel A1, also critical of the government.

Albania

- On 11 June in a fourth attempt and despite the socialist opposition, Parliament manages to appoint the current Minister of the Interior Bujar Nishani as the new President.

Greece

- On 17 June Greece holds legislative elections again, which are won by New Democracy (ND) with 29.66% of the votes – 129 seats – followed by Syriza (leftwing) with 26.89% – 71 seats – and PASOK with 12.29% – 33 seats. On 20 June the leader of ND Antonis Samaras forms a government and becomes the new Prime Minister.
- On 25 June, before being sworn in, the new Minister of Finance Vassilis Rapanos resigns for health reasons and is replaced by Manis Stournaras.

Turkey

- On 12 June Recep Tayyip Erdogan announces that Turkey will allow teaching in Kurdish from the following school year.
- On 16 June 13 inmates from a prison in Sanliurfa, where many members of the terrorist organisation PKK are serving their sentence, die in a fire following a riot.
- On 19 June an attack by the PKK in Yuksekova kills at least eight soldiers.

Cyprus

- On 25 June Cyprus requests a loan from the European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF) for its banking system, seriously damaged by exposure to the Greek crisis and in need of 1.8 billion euros before the end of the month.

Syria

- On 4 June Sami al-Kurdi, spokesman of the Free Syrian Army (FSA), announces the return to armed activity after the ultimatum given to the Syrian government to stop violence runs out. Al-Kurdi also requests the imposition of an air exclusion zone and the deployment of an international peacekeeping force.
- On 5 June Syria declares *persona non gratae* the ambassadors of the US, the United Kingdom, France, Spain, Italy, Turkey and Switzerland and several diplomats from Germany, Belgium, Canada and Bulgaria in response to the expulsion of Syrian diplomats by these countries in late May after the massacre of Hula.

- On 5 June there are serious confrontations in Latakia between the army and the FSA which result in at least 25 deaths.
- On 6 June the UN-Arab League Joint Special Envoy to Syria, Kofi Annan, admits at the UN Security Council the failure of the Peace Plan for Syria and proposes the creation of an international contact group.
- On 9 June the Syrian National Council (SNC) elects the Kurdish Abdel Baset Seida, head of its Human Rights Department, as new President.
- On 16 June the UN suspends the deployment of international observers to Syria due to the impossibility of them carrying out their tasks under minimum safety conditions. The SNC again calls for the Security Council to adopt an urgent resolution to intervene in Syria.
- On 23 June Bashar al-Assad approves the appointment of the new government led by Riyad Hiyab, former Minister of Agriculture, and which has ministers from the reformist wing of the regime, among them the new Minister for National Reconciliation Ali Haidar.

Lebanon

- On 3 June at least 12 people die in Tripoli in fighting between Sunnis and Alawis.
- On 19 June two Palestinians from the Nahr al-Bared refugee camp in Lebanon are shot and killed by the Lebanese army as a response to an attack by a group of Palestinians attending the funeral of a refugee who had died the day before when Lebanese soldiers tried to stop a fight between two residents in the camp.

Egypt

- On 2 June the Cairo Criminal Court sentences Hosni Mubarak and his former Minister of the Interior Habib al-Adly to life imprisonment for their responsibility in the deaths of 850 demonstrators during the Egyptian revolution. However, both are acquitted of the charges of corruption and misappropriation of public funds, as are Mubarak's sons, Gamal and Alaa. These acquittals provoke riots and a large

rally in Tahrir Square on 5 June, which also protests against the candidacy of Ahmed Shafiq.

- On 14 June the Constitutional Court declares illegal the Political Isolation Law passed by Parliament in April, which would permit the annulment of the presidential candidacy of Ahmed Shafiq. In another legal ruling, it annuls the composition of the two chambers of Parliament as it considers that the allocation of seats violated the Law. This second ruling means that legislative power returns to the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) until new elections are held.
- On 17 June, after the closing of the polling stations, the SCAF announces the passing of new amendments to the constitutional project limiting presidential powers.
- On 24 June the results of the presidential elections of 16 and 17 June are announced, with the Islamist Mohamed Morsi winning 51.73% of the votes and the former Prime Minister Ahmed Shafiq winning 48.27%.
- On 26 June an Egyptian court suspends the government decree that enabled the military intelligence and police to arrest civilians without a court order, passed by the interim government three days before the presidential elections.

Libya

- On 4 June an armed group breaks into Tripoli airport to force the government to provide information on the whereabouts of a member of the group who went missing on 1 June. Some hours later, government troops regain control of the airport.
- On 6 June a bomb claimed by the Brigade of Sheik Omar Abdul Rahman, linked to AQIM, explodes in the American consulate in Benghazi. Government sources believe that the attack is a reprisal for the death two days earlier in Pakistan of the Libyan Abu Yahya al-Libi, number two of al-Qaeda in this country.
- On 7 June a delegation of the International Criminal Court is arrested by the Libyan authorities when they were about to visit Saif al-Islam Gaddafi in Zintan.

- On 10 June new tribal confrontations in Kufra result in at least 11 deaths and 50 injured.
- On 24 June Tunisia hands over Gaddafi's former Prime Minister Mahmoud al-Baghdadi to Libya.

Tunisia

- On 10 June two AQIM terrorists are sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment for the murder in May 2011 of two Tunisian soldiers.
- On 11 and 12 June riots take place in Tunis and other cities when Salafi groups attempt to set on fire a police station and private businesses for activities "contrary to Islamic law." The security forces arrest at least 86 people.
- On 13 June Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali is sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment in absentia for responsibility in the deaths in January 2011 of four demonstrators in Ouardanine.
- On 16 June the former Prime Minister Beji Caid Essebsi announces the creation of the Call for Tunisia movement.

Algeria

- On 15 June two police officers die when around fifty AQIM terrorists attack a police station in Ouarzifs, Tizi Ouzou.
- On 28 June an Algiers court sentences the leader of AQIM Abdelmalek Droukdel and six other terrorists to death in absentia for multiple murders between 1993 and 1996.

Mauritania

- On 10 June the former Mauritanian Commissioner for Human Rights Mohamed Lemine Ould Dadde is sentenced to three years' imprisonment and payment of a fine of 200,000 euros for misappropriation of funds.

European Union

- On 1 June Ireland, the only country that holds a referendum on the EU Treaty of Stability, Coordination and Governance signed in March, approves the agreement by 60%, which must be ratified by 12 of the 17 eurozone countries.
- On 7 and 8 June the European Justice and Home Affairs Council agrees

the application in the Schengen zone of joint regulations in relation to the temporary reintroduction of controls, in a controversial decision that excludes the Commission and Parliament from the decision-making process.

- On 28 and 29 June the European Council of Heads of State and Government commits to an agreement on growth and employment.

Arab League

- On 2 June the ministers of the Arab League who met in Doha request the mediator of their organisation and UN Kofi Annan to establish a deadline for the fulfilment of his peace plan in Syria.

July 2012

Portugal, Spain and France adopt new austerity measures. In Italy, a historic trial ends with the closing of the Ilva steel plant. In Bosnia, changes in the government coalition cause a dispute over the formation of the Council of Ministers. The Montenegrin Minister of Foreign Affairs resigns. The Serbian Constitutional Court declares part of a law granting autonomy to Vojvodina illegal. In Kosovo, several cases of corruption provoke resignations in the government. Albania passes the new Electoral Law. Cyprus takes over the EU Presidency. In Syria, crucial battles are unleashed over the control of Damascus and Aleppo, Trenches is the setting of the worst massacre since the start of the conflict, the first desertions by ambassadors take place and the Minister of Defence dies in an attack while the divisions within the International Community impede any progress in solving the conflict. Tension increases in the neighbouring Jordan, Turkey and Lebanon due to the growing number of Syrian refugees and the fear that the crisis may spread. In Egypt, the Constitutional Court orders the dissolution of Parliament and President Morsi asks the Islamist Hisham Qandil to form the new government. Libya holds its first democratic elections. In Tunisia, the former President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali is once

again sentenced in absentia and the Minister of Finance resigns.

Portugal

- On 5 July the Constitutional Court declares the suppression of salary bonuses for civil servants and pensioners decreed by the government in October 2011 illegal.
- On 11 and 12 July Portuguese doctors strike over cuts in health and the new hourly contract that the government is planning to introduce.

Spain

- On 11 July the government announces new measures to reduce the deficit by 6.5 billion euros in two years by eliminating the Christmas bonus for public employees, increasing VAT by 2%, reducing unemployment benefits, reducing the number of councillors by 30% and eliminating tax deductions for house purchases.
- On 19 and 20 July four members of the terrorist group First of October Antifascist Resistance Groups (GRAPO) are arrested in Seville, Cadiz and Caceres in relation to the kidnapping and murder of the businessman Publico Cordon in 1995.
- On 24 July Catalonia joins the autonomous liquidity fund, as did Valencia and Murcia which in the same month also requested the state bailout due to the instability of their debt.

France

- On 3 July the government announces numerous measures to reduce the deficit in five years, including a fiscal reform that suppresses exemptions for the Solidarity Tax on Wealth (ISF), large inheritances and national insurance contributions for overtime in companies with over 20 workers and eliminates the VAT rise planned for October. It is also announces an increase of contracts in the education sector and security forces.

Italy

- On 11 July Vittorio Grilli becomes Minister of Economy, until then a re-

sponsibility assumed by the Prime Minister himself Mario Monti.

- On 27 July a Taranto court orders the closing of Ilva, the largest European steel manufacturer, sentencing to prison 8 of its managers for not having controlled the alarming levels of pollution that might have caused 11,000 deaths over the last 7 years. The ruling is contested by successive workers' demonstrations while the government announces that it will appeal against the sentence.

Slovenia

- On 2 July the government agrees with the Belgian bank KBC on the recapitalisation of Nova Ljubljanska Banka, the largest bank in the country, with 381 million euros.

Croatia

- On 10 July the Minister of Transport announces that the national railway will cut 2,700 jobs before the end of the year to prepare the entry of the sector into the community market.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

- On 19 July the Democratic Action Party (SDA, social-democrat) prevents the government from dismissing its three ministers after the breakup of the government coalition in May alleging that it undermines the national interests of the Bosnian community, which would be underrepresented in the Council of Ministers.

Montenegro

- On 2 July the Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration Milan Rocen resigns as he considers that he has fulfilled his mission of putting Montenegro on the path to EU accession. On 18 July Parliament appoints Nebojsa Kaludjerovic as his replacement.

Serbia

- On 10 July the Constitutional Court declares several provisions of the law granting autonomy to Vojvodina unconstitutional, including those permitting

the region to open diplomatic representations abroad and others that name Novi Sad as its capital.

- On 10 July the Socialist Party (SPS), the Progressive Party (SNS) and United Regions of Serbia (URS) sign an agreement to form a government.

Kosovo under UN Security Council Resolution 1244

- On 7 July Milovan Jevtic, Kosovo Serbian councillor in Talinovac, and his wife are shot and killed two days after a Kosovo Albanian citizen is sentenced to 16 years' imprisonment for the murder of another Serbian citizen.
- On 9 July the Deputy Prime Minister Bujar Bukoshi and the Deputy Minister of Finance Astrit Haraqija, both investigated for corruption, resign. Moreover, Hajredin Kuci, former Minister of Justice, resumes his post 18 days after he resigned once Parliament had rejected a reform of two articles of the penal code that obliged journalists to reveal their sources to the authorities.
- On 31 July 8 Kosovo judges are accused by the Public Prosecutor's Office of misappropriation of funds.

FYROM

- On 19 July the Democratic Party of Albania (PDS) announces that it is joining the bloc of opposition to Prime Minister Nikola Grevski led by the Social-Democrat Party.

Albania

- On 19 July Parliament adopts by 127 votes of the 140 deputies present the new Electoral Law that should put an end to the climate of constant dispute between the two majority parties and which is one of the requisites for advancing in the EU accession process.

Greece

- On 9 July Parliament approves the government plan to increase privatisation and attract investments to avoid further cuts in public spending.

Turkey

- On 22 July a soldier dies and 8 others are injured in an assault by the PKK against a military checkpoint in Hakkari.

Cyprus

- On 19 July the UN Security Council extends the UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) until 31 January 2013.

Syria

- On 1 July the Syrian National Council (SNC) rejects the proposal by the Action Group for Syria, which met the previous day in Geneva, to form a transitional governing body with the participation of opposition and government. On 2 and 3 July, under the auspices of the Arab League, around 200 representatives of different opposition groups meet in Cairo with major differences over the future of the Baath Party, the Kurdish question or the role of the SNC.
- On 2 July Bashar al-Assad enacts the Law passed by the People's Assembly on 28 June which allows for harsher sentences for terrorism.
- On 11 July Nawaf al-Fares, Syrian ambassador to Iraq, becomes the first high level diplomat to desert.
- On 13 July at least 200 civilians die in Trench, province of Hama, in the largest massacre of civilians by the regime since the start of the uprising.
- On 18 July a bomb attack on the headquarters of National Security in Damascus, claimed by the Free Syrian Army (FSA), causes the death of the Minister of Defence, Daoud Abdullah Rayiha, General Asaf Shaukat, brother-in-law of Bashar al-Assad, and General Hasan Turkmani. The Minister of the Interior, Mohamed Ibrahim al-Shaar, and the Head of National Security, Hisham Bekhtyar, are injured. Some hours later, General Fahd Jassim Frij is appointed new Minister of Defence.
- On 19 July Russia and China veto the draft resolution put forward on 12 July by Western members of the Security Council providing for sanctions

against Damascus if within 10 days it does not observe the Annan Plan, invoking Article 41 of the United Nations Charter.

- On 28 July the army launches an offensive to regain control over Aleppo. Thus begins a battle considered crucial to end the conflict which in only 24 hours leaves an estimated death toll of 168.

Lebanon

- On 25 July the Minister of Foreign Affairs Adnan Mansour asks the Syrian ambassador to Lebanon for Damascus to stop all violations of Lebanese sovereignty once and for all. On 26 July at least four missiles launched from Syria hit Kawacha, Rabadia, Arida and Sayeidat Monye.
- On 31 July Electricité du Liban (EDL) announces that the country will be blacked out due to the strike by temporary workers who after weeks of protests decide to take over the headquarters of EDL to request permanent contracts and improvements in working conditions.

Jordan

- On 1 July riots begin in the city of Salt when youths protesting against political arrests, the level of unemployment and the lack of democracy attack members of the security forces with stones.
- On 10 July the government announces the construction in the north of the country of refugee camps for the more than 130,000 people who have fled from Syria.

Egypt

- On 8 July the Supreme Administrative Court submits to the Constitutional Court a petition for the Shura Council to be dissolved for irregularities in its composition.
- On 9 July President Mohamed Morsi issues a decree ordering the National Assembly to resume its sessions despite having been dissolved on 15 June by the Constitutional Court. Moreover, he establishes the holding of new legislative elections

within 60 days following the approval of the new Constitution to be prepared by the Assembly.

- On 10 July Parliament holds its first session – boycotted by the Wafd Party (liberal) and the Egyptian Bloc (left, secularist) – since its dissolution in June, challenging the ruling of the Constitutional Court. The session decides to refer the dispute with the Constitutional Court to the Court of Cassation and not to hold any more sessions until it makes its ruling.
- On 19 July Omar Suleiman dies suddenly during a medical check-up in Cleveland, the victim of the cancer he was suffering.
- On 24 July Mohamed Morsi asks the current Minister of Irrigation, the Islamist Hisham Qandil, to form a new government.

Libya

- On 2 July the Ministry of Foreign Affairs announces the release of the four delegates of the International Criminal Court (ICC) imprisoned in June in Zintan accused of filtering documentation to Saif al-Islam Gaddafi.
- On 7 July with a participation of 62%, Libya holds its first parliamentary elections to elect the 200 deputies that will form the Constituent Assembly of Egypt – 100 from Tripolitania, 60 from Cyrenaica and 40 from Fezzan. The National Forces Alliance of the former Prime Minister Mahmoud Jibril wins 39 of the 80 seats reserved for political parties, followed by the Islamist Justice and Construction Party, with 17 seats, and the National Front, with 3 seats.

Tunisia

- On 12 July the governing party, Ennahda, holds its first national congress in 24 years with the aim of consolidating as a moderate Islamist option capable of providing an effective response to the socioeconomic needs of the country.
- On 13 July the government rejects for the second time the petition to legalise the party of Salafi ideology Hizb ut-Tahrir.

- On 16 July the former President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali announces through his lawyer, the Lebanese Akram Azoury, his intention to immediately renounce all the goods he still possesses in Switzerland and surrender them to the Tunisian State.
- On 18 July, with 110 votes out of 217, the National Assembly approves the proposal submitted on 26 June by President Moncef Marzouki to remove from office the Governor of the Central Bank Mustafa Kamel Nabli due to the serious disagreements between him and the government on the independence of the Central Bank.
- On 18 July a Tunisian court increases the list of sentences passed against Zine al-Abidine Ben-Ali as it condemns him to life imprisonment in absentia for the death of demonstrators during the Tunisian revolution. The same court hands down sentences of 20 years' imprisonment for the former Head of Security Ali Seriati and 15 years' imprisonment for the former Minister of the Interior Rafik Belhaj Kacem. Forty other former high officials receive sentences ranging from five to 20 years' imprisonment.
- On 19 July Beji Caid Essebsi, leader of Call for Tunisia, and Ahmed Nejib Chebbi, President of the Republican Party, agree a joint strategy on the 2013 legislative elections. The leader of the Democratic and Social Party Ahmed Ibrahim also attends the meeting.

Algeria

- On 9 July around 5,000 communal guards march from Blida to Algiers to demand the payment of their overdue salaries and the possibility of joining the police and gendarmerie following the government's plans announced in March 2011 to dissolve the paramilitary body.

Morocco

- On 2 July the government launches a process of national dialogue on the state of prisons with the participation of Parliament, government institutions and NGOs given the reports by Amnesty International of

“torture and physical abuse” in Moroccan prisons.

- On 11 July a police officer dies under the weight of around 100 Sub-Saharan immigrants who were trying to get to Spain through the Ferjana pass. After the incident, the police carry out searches and make arrests in Nador and Oujda.

Mauritania

- On 15 and 22 July there are serious riots during the protests carried out since 12 June in Guelb Moghrein, Akjoujt, by the workers of Copper Mines of Mauritania to demand salary increases.

European Union

- On 1 July Cyprus takes over the sixth-month EU Presidency with the priorities of fostering growth policies based on social cohesion and solidarity, the Multiannual Financial Framework for the period 2014-2020, balancing opposed interests in the Common Agricultural Policy and creating a joint asylum system.
- On 1 July the European Stability Mechanism comes into force replacing the European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF), with more capital and greater stability in the long term.
- On 11 July the European Council decides that, from 1 January 2014, the French overseas department of Mayotte will become an ultra-peripheral region of the EU.

August 2012

Portugal approves a rescue fund for the Azores. Spain approves the reform of the banking sector. The Italian Parliament approves new economic cuts. Greece seeks to negotiate a deferment of the deadlines to satisfy the payment of the debt and stagger the cuts demanded by the troika. Turkey increases its military deployment on the Syrian border due to the lack of control by Damascus of the zones controlled by Kurdish nationalists and the endless influx of refugees from the Syrian conflict. In Syria Prime Minister Riad Farid Hijab resigns. Kofi Annan also resigns

as UN-Arab League Joint Special Envoy and is replaced by the Algerian Lakhdar Brahimi due to the lack of consensus within the International Community and the exhaustion of the diplomatic channels to stop a conflict that threatens to spread to neighbouring Lebanon, where confrontations between communities hit Tripoli again. In Egypt the new government of Hisham Qandil takes office, President Mohamed Morsi pushes Marshall Tantawi and the Chief of Staff Sami Annan into retirement, and troops are sent to the Sinai to regain control of the region. In Libya, the National Transitional Council hands over power to Parliament. The rise of Salafism and the prevailing values of the revolution are an issue of concern in Tunisia.

Portugal

- On 20 August the government grants a bailout of 135 million euros to the Azores to refinance the autonomous region's debt.

Spain

- On 31 August the government approves the reform of the banking system that provides for the public supervision of the banking entities with funds below 9% of capital and the creation of a bad bank to which toxic real-estate assets will be transferred for later sale.

France

- On 8 August the police dismantle two Gypsy camps in Lille, in a controversial action considered by diverse NGOs as continuing the policy of the previous government.
- On 13 August there are violent riots between the police and around 100 youths in the north of Amiens, following police control during a burial.
- On 27 August the ETA member and person responsible for international relations of Segi Arturo Villanueva Artea who fled in 2003, is arrested in Urrugne. His arrest follows that of Iñaki Imaz Manduate, on the run since the break up in 2007 of the Urederra Commando on 5 August in Hendaye.

Italy

- On 7 August Parliament passes the bill approved by the government on 6 July and endorsed by the Senate on 31 July revising public spending with cuts of 2.6 billion euros from 2012 to 2014.
- On 19 August an unemployed man from Turin commits suicide by setting himself on fire due to his desperate situation. A case that, along with another that took place on 11 August in front of the Italian Parliament, completes the around thirty suicides recorded in 2012 in Italy as a result of the economic crisis.

Slovenia

- On 31 August the government announces the fall of the Slovenian GDP during the second quarter of 3.2% in comparison to the same period in 2011, a much greater fall than expected and that, along with a rise in the debt over the course of 10 years to 6.9%, makes it likely that Slovenia will request a bailout.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

- On 7 August the President of the Srpska Republic Milorad Dodik rejects participation in the federal government until the Minister of Foreign Affairs Zlatko Lagumdžija resigns as he had supported a resolution against Syria in the UN Security Council without consulting all the members of the government, violating the Constitution.

Serbia

- On 4 August Parliament approves measures that delimit the independence of the Central Bank. On 6 August Jorgovanka Tabakovic, close to President Nikolic, is appointed new Governor of the Central Bank.

Kosovo under UN Security Council Resolution 1244

- On 21 August the Head of the United Nations Interim Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) Farid Zarif calls on the Security Council to approve measures that help resume dialogue between Serbia

and Kosovo, at a standstill since the start of agreement in early March.

- On 23 August Kosovo Serbian demonstrators impede the passage of convoys of the EU Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) with barricades in Zupce.

FYROM

- On 22 August the Democratic Union for Integration (DUI) threatens to leave the government coalition if Parliament adopts the bill granting compensations for the 2001 conflict to the army members but not to the Albanian National Liberation Army (UÇK).
- On 16 August President Ivanov orders an investigation of the Minister of Defence Fatmir Besimi and other members of the government who attended a tribute to the UÇK.

Greece

- On 3 August the Ministry of the Interior launches the operation Zeus Xenios against irregular immigration, which during the weekend results in the arrest of 6,000 people without identity papers.
- On 22 August Prime Minister Antonis Samaras begins negotiations for the deferral of cuts (from 2014 to 2016) in exchange for a renewed guarantee of support. This follows a 14 August debt sale of 4.063 billion euros in treasury notes at 4.43%, the largest debt placement since the approval of the second bailout. The sale funds the 3.2 billion euros of debt maturing on 20 August, which is owed to the European Central Bank.

Turkey

- On 1 and 2 August in Semdinli and Diyarbakir there are confrontations between the army and the terrorist organisation PKK after weeks of confrontations which coincide with the crisis of power in Syrian Kurdistan, resulting in dozens of deaths.
- On 20 August a car bomb attributed to the PKK causes eight deaths in Gaziantep.
- On 27 August Turkey closes its border to the 7,000 Syrian refugees wait-

ing to cross until two new camps are created in Hatay and Gaziantep with a capacity for 10,000 people.

Cyprus

- On 2 August the rating agency Standard & Poors calculates the cost of refloating the Cypriot economy at 11 billion euros, approximately 60% of the GDP.

Syria

- On 2 August the army bombs al-Yarmuk, the largest Palestinian refugee camp in Syria, killing 21 people.
- On 3 August the UN General Assembly adopts a draft resolution submitted by the Arab group condemning the violations of human rights by the government and the opposition and denounces the ineffectiveness of the Security Council.
- On 6 August the desertion of Prime Minister Riad Farid Hijab is revealed. On 8 August the former Minister of Health Wael Nader al-Halqi, a Sunni and born in Dara, is appointed new Prime Minister.
- On 7 August the army launches an offensive with 20,000 soldiers in Aleppo against rebels, mostly in Salaheddine.
- On 9 August Teheran hosts a conference on Syria which is attended by representatives from 29 countries and constitutes an alternative to the Conference of Friends of Syria promoted by the West and the Gulf Cooperation Council.
- From 13 to 16 August Mecca hosts the conference of the Organisation for Islamic Cooperation that agrees to expel Syria but with the opposition of Iran. Egypt launches a proposal to create a contact group for Syria made up of Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Iran.
- On 16 August the UN Security Council decides to conclude the observation mission in Syria.
- On 20 August Barack Obama warns Damascus against the use of chemical weapons, which could lead to a possible American intervention.
- On 28 August a car bomb explodes in the mostly Druze and Chris-

tian neighbourhood of Yarmana, southern Damascus, causing at least 12 deaths.

Lebanon

- On 9 August the former Minister of Information Michel Samaha is arrested and accused of planning attacks in Akkar, northern Lebanon, to incite sectarian fighting following Syrian instructions.
- On 20 August the Public Prosecutor of Damascus Marwan al-Luji announces that he intends to summon around thirty Lebanese politicians to give evidence under the charge of providing refuge, weapons and funding to the Syrian opposition in Lebanon. The possible summons includes the former Prime Minister Saad Hariri, the leader of the Christian Lebanese Forces Samir Geagea and the Head of the Socialist Progressive Party, the Druze Walid Jumblatt.
- On 21 August in Tripoli five people die in fresh fighting between Sunnis and Alawis. On 23 August the death toll reaches 17. On 24 August the death of the Sunni Sheik Khaled al-Baradei fuels the fighting.

Jordan

- On 28 August Jordan announces plans to open a new reception centre for refugees funded by the United Arab Emirates due to overcrowding of the Zaatar camp.

Egypt

- On 1 August the composition of the new markedly technocrat government of Hisham Qandil is announced. The new cabinet includes seven members of the previous interim government in decisive posts such as Foreign Affairs – Mohamed Kamel Ali Amr, Finance – Momtaz Saed Abu al-Nour and Defence – Marshall Mohamed Hussein Tantawi. The reformist judge Mahmoud Mekki is appointed Head of the vice-Presidency.
- On 5 August 16 Egyptian police officers die on the border with the Gaza Strip and Israel in an attack by a Jihadist commando that sought to

infiltrate Israel. Egypt closes its border with Gaza and launches the Eagle Operation, the largest military campaign in the Sinai since the signing of peace with Israel in 1979. The seriousness of the situation means that on 8 August Mohamed Morsi removes the Head of the Secret Services Murad Muwafi from office. Other important changes made by the President after the incidents are the appointment of Mohamed Ahmed Zaki as Head of the Republican Guard, the dismissal of the Governor of the province of Northern Sinai, the appointment of the former Ambassador to Libya Mohamed Fathi Rifa'a al-Tahtawi as Head of the Presidential Cabinet and the appointment of Maged Mostafa Kamel at the head of Central Security.

- On 12 August Mohamed Morsi revokes the constitutional declaration with which on 17 June 2012 the SCAF sought to limit presidential powers. He also announces the retirement of the Chief of Staff Sami Annan and of Marshall Mohamed Hussein Tantawi.

Libya

- On 8 August the President of the National Transitional Council (NTC) Mustafa Abdul Jalil officially returns power to the People's Congress (Constituent Assembly), elected in July. On 9 August Mohamed Magarief, leader of the National Front, is elected President of the National Assembly.
- On 10 August General Mohamed Hadia al-Feitouri is assassinated, within the series of attacks against members of Muammar Gaddafi's regime that have taken place in Benghazi since early summer.
- On 16 August the National Congress passes its first law, prohibiting citizens with dual nationality and those married to someone without Libyan nationality from occupying high offices.
- On 19 August in Tripoli two people die after the explosion of three car bombs. On 19 August 32 people are arrested for their presumed involvement in the first car bomb attack after the fall of Gaddafi.

Tunisia

- On 5 August the police disperse a demonstration against the government announcement to institute economic compensations for over 12,000 political prisoners during the mandate of Ben Ali, a measure considered excessive given the serious economic and social problems.
- On 9 August five people are injured and two others are arrested in riots that took place during a demonstration in Sidi Bouzid organised by the December 17 Front and with the participation of the Republic Party, the Party of Tunisian Workers and al-Watan against the Ennahda government.
- On 13 August, on the anniversary of the enactment of the 1956 Personal Status Code that abolished polygamy and repudiation, thousands of people demand that equal rights for women be included in the new Constitution after it is revealed that in Article 28 the term “equality” is replaced by “complementarity within the family.”
- On 14 August around 2,000 people participate in the general strike called in Sidi Bouzid by the General Union of Tunisian Workers (UGTT) to demand greater social and economic reforms.
- On 16 August in Bizerta a meeting of the Tunisian League for Tolerance during the Al-Aqsa Festival is attacked by a group of 200 Salafists in an incident that takes place within the context of the growing aggressions by fundamentalists against public, cultural and festive events.
- On 17 August the military trial scheduled for that day for charges of slander against President Moncef Marzouki’s former Communication Advisor Ayoub Massoudi, who the previous day the Tunisian court had prohibited from leaving the country, is postponed until 22 August. Massoudi, outside the government since June and critical of the government’s management of the protests in Sidi Bouzid, denounces it as a political trial. On 30 August the court lifts the prohibition against Massoudi leaving the country, and his defence attempts to have it referred to a civil court.

Morocco

- On 22 August in Rabat riot police disperse a demonstration called by the February 20 Movement to call for the abolition of the ceremony of loyalty to the King, held the previous day.

Mauritania

- On 1 August the new two-year fishing agreement between Mauritania and the EU, signed in Nouakchott on 26 July, comes into force.
- On 3 August a group of demonstrators called “No to the Loss of Morality” marches through Nouakchott to call for the imposition of the sharia in Mauritania.
- On 6 August President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz responds to the demonstrations led by the Coordination of the Democratic Opposition (COD) and that have called for his resignation every week since May by pointing out that his election was democratic and that he is determined to serve out his mandate, which expires in 2014.

European Union

- On 29 August François Hollande and Angela Merkel agree the constitution of a “working group” to lead the necessary reforms in the Economic and Monetary Union to confront the debt crisis.

Arab League

- On 2 August Kofi Annan resigns as UN-Arab League Joint Special Envoy to Syria. On 14 August the former Algerian Minister of Foreign Affairs Lakhdar Brahimi is elected new Special Envoy.

September 2012

Portugal, Spain, France, Italy, Greece and Monaco are the setting for demonstrations against cuts. In Italy, the resignation of Lazio’s governor worsens the crisis of the People of Freedom Party. Kosovo gains full sovereignty. In Syria, confrontations continue over the control of Damascus and Aleppo. The

state of tension experienced by Lebanon worsens with the people’s protests against the video “Innocence of Muslims” produced and directed by the US resident Copt Bakoula Nassely Bakoula and considered offensive by Islamist sectors of the Arab world. The protests to diplomatic delegations of the USA and other Western countries in different Islamic countries reach dramatic levels with the assault on the US consulate in Benghazi in which Ambassador Christopher Stevens dies. In Egypt, the military intervention continues in Sinai and there are new judicial actions against important members of the Mubarak regime. In Libya, Mustafa Abu Shagour is the newly-elected Prime Minister. In Algeria, the composition of the new government is announced.

Portugal

- On 15 September thousands of Portuguese demonstrate against the new austerity measures after Prime Minister Pedro Passos Coelho announced, on 7 September, a cut in all public and private salaries through increased national insurance contributions from 11% to 18%. The measure aims to reduce the public deficit without eliminating the bonus for civil servants and pensioners who receive more than 1,000 euros per month, declared illegal by the Constitutional Court in June.

Spain

- On 20 September the socialist Mayor of Orense and the PP Mayor of Boqueixon, Galicia, are arrested along with another 11 people in Galicia, Asturias and Madrid within the Pokemon anti-corruption operation.
- On 24 September Catalonia calls early elections for 25 November and threatens a referendum on independence after the autonomous government’s failure in its bid to collect and manage all taxes through its own Inland Revenue, a request that Madrid considers unacceptable in the current crisis situation.
- On 25 September the peaceful rally “Surround the Congress” against

the spending cut measures of the government, whose resignation they demand, and the political class who they accuse of “Hijacking democracy” and of whom they demand the development of a new Constitution, ends in riots, 35 arrests and dozens of injuries, after which a group of demonstrators attempts to storm the Parliament.

France

- On 10 September seven bombs attributed to the Corsica Liberation National Front explode in different supermarkets on the French island.
- On 12 September Harlem Désir is elected new Secretary General of the Socialist Party, replacing Martine Aubry, who resigned from the position in August.
- On 30 September thousands of French people demonstrate in Paris against the Hollande government's spending cuts policy.

Monaco

- On 19 September a one day strike called by the Monegasque Workers' Union protests against the reform proposed by the government to reduce pensions and increase the retirement age. On 26 September the National Council unanimously passes the 1947 Retirement Law reform.

Italy

- On 10 September in Rome a demonstration by employees of the plant in Portovesme, Sardinia, owned by the American steel works Aldecoa results in 14 casualties in riots near the Ministry of Economic Development, where a meeting is being held between the company, the unions and the government to find alternatives to the closure of the plant.
- On 22 September the Governor of Lazio Renata Polverini resigns in the midst of the misappropriation of public funds scandal, which shakes the People of Freedom Party in the region and endangers Silvio Berlusconi's options to return to the presidency of the government.
- On 22 September at the end of a meeting with Mario Monti, the manag-

ers of Fiat announce a commitment to maintain its industrial presence in Italy.

Malta

- On 12 September Malta and Italy sign a series of cooperation agreements in sensitive areas such as delimitation of the continental shelf, exploration of oil resources and immigration.

Slovenia

- On 20 September Slovenia warns that it will veto Croatian EU accession if first there is no resolution of the dispute over the 160 million euros deposited before the disappearance of Yugoslavia and reclaimed by 130,000 Croats from the defunct Slovenian Ljubljanska Banka.

Serbia

- On 21 September the Belgrade High Court sentences 11 ex-guerrillas of the Kosovo Liberation Army (UÇK) to a total of 116 years' imprisonment for war crimes committed in 1999 in Kosovo.

Kosovo under UN Security Council Resolution 1244

- On 10 September Kosovo achieves full sovereignty when the International Steering Group for Kosovo decides to end the supervised independence of the country.

Albania

- On 20 September Parliament passes a constitutional amendment that limits the immunity of politicians, Members of Parliament and judges.

Greece

- On 8 September thousands of Greeks protest in Thessaloniki against the government's austerity measures.
- On 24 September the President of the Parliament Vangelis Meimarakis temporarily resigns after it is revealed that he is being investigated along with two other former ministers for the al-

leged laundering of 10.2 billion euros.

- On 26 September in Athens a mass demonstration on the occasion of the general strike against Antonis Samaras' government ends in riots and around 50 arrests.
- On 27 September the government coalition – ND, PASOK and Dimar – reaches an agreement to save the 11.5 billion euros demanded by the troika through public spending cuts and another 2 billion through new fundraising.

Turkey

- On 6 September at least sixty immigrants die in a shipwreck off the Aegean-Turkish coast.
- On 11 September one person dies in a suicide attack on a police station in Sultangazi, Istanbul, for which the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party claims responsibility.
- On 16 September at least eight police officers die in the explosion of a mine on the road in Karliova, province of Bingöl.
- On 25 September seven people die in an attack by the PKK against an army armoured vehicle in Tunceli.

Syria

- On 3 September a bomb attack in the mostly Druze and Christian neighbourhood of Yarmana, following another on 28 August, kills at least five people.
- On 16 September Iran officially confirms that there are troops of the Revolutionary Guard in Syrian territory offering non-military aid but that it “could become militarily involved if the country is attacked.”
- On 18 September Bushra al-Assad, sister of the Syrian President, leaves the country with her children for Dubai amidst growing disagreements within the power faced with the fear that the repression exercised by Bashar al-Assad would end up involving the whole Alawi sect.
- On 19 and 20 September at least 28 Palestinian refugees from the Yarmuk camp, Damascus, die during an attack by the army against opponents of the Free Syrian Army (FSA).

- On 20 September the USA condemns the possible use by Iran of civilian planes to carry armaments to the Syrian regime through Iraqi airspace and urges Iraq to take measures.
- On 26 September the Islamist group Ansar al-Islam, part of the FSA, claims responsibility for a suicide attack with two car bombs perpetrated hours earlier against the headquarters of the General Staff in Abu Rumaneh, Damascus.
- On 26 September over 300 people die in Syria in the bloodiest day since the start of the uprisings.
- On 27 September the fighting over control of Aleppo becomes more intense, reaching "unprecedented" levels according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

Lebanon

- On 13 September the USA imposes sanctions on the leader of Hezbollah Hassan Nasrallah, accusing him together with another two members of the organisation of helping the Syrian government in the repression of the protests.
- On 17 September Hassan Nasrallah takes part in a mass march in Beirut against the video "Innocence of Muslims", a low-budget production that ridicules the figure of Mohammad unleashing a wave of protests in the Muslim world. On 19 September thousands of Hezbollah followers demonstrate again in Beirut against the USA, against this film and against France for the caricatures of Allah and Mohammad published by the satirical weekly Charlie Hebdo.

Jordan

- On 1 September Jordan asks the International Community for 700 million dollars in urgent aid to help the more than 177,000 Syrian refugees in Jordan.
- On 12 September Abdullah II accuses Israel of impeding the development of a civil nuclear programme even though Jordan's energy dependency is one of the main stumbling blocks to its economic progress. The declarations come in the context of

continuous protests led by the Muslim Brotherhood against the rise in the price of fuel.

Egypt

- On 9 September the Public Prosecutor's Office refers to the Military Prosecutor's Office two complaints made by the April 6 Movement against the former Minister of Defence Marshall Hussein Tantawi and the former Chief of Staff Sami Annan for his involvement in the death of demonstrators since the outbreak of the Egyptian revolution. A third complaint had been made by the Prosecutor's Office against Anan for illicit gains.
- On 11 September an Egyptian court rules preventive detention for the last Mubarak Prime Minister and candidate defeated in the Egyptian presidential elections Ahmed Shafiq, currently in the United Arab Emirates. The Egyptian justice ministry accuses Shafiq of illicit gains and falsification of official documents when in 1993 he sold 40,000 square metres of land in Ismailiya to Hosni Mubarak's sons for less than market price.
- On 11 September a group of demonstrators bursts into the US embassy in Cairo and burns the American flag replacing it with a black standard with the verse "Allah is the only God and Mohammad is his prophet" in protest at the broadcast of the video "Innocence of Muslims," condemned by the Coptic Orthodox Church and considered offensive by Islamic fundamentalists. On 18 September the Public Prosecutor Abdelmeguid Mahmoud asks for seven Coptic Christians living in the USA, among them Nakoula Basseley Nakoula, producer of "Innocence of Muslims," and the American pastor Terry Jones to be taken into custody for his involvement in the production and distribution of the film.

Libya

- On 2 and 10 September the colonels of the Gaddafi regime Juma al-Kadiki and Badr Khamis al-Obeidi die in two attacks.
- On 4 September Mauritania extradites to Libya Abdullah al-Senussi,

Head of the Secret Services of the Gaddafi regime.

- On 11 September the US ambassador to Libya Christopher Stevens and another three embassy employees die during the attack on the US consulate in Benghazi by a group of demonstrators in protest at the broadcast of the video "Innocence of Muslims" on the occasion of the commemoration of the 11 September terrorist attacks.
- On 12 September Mustafa Abu Shagour is elected new Prime Minister of Libya beating Mahmud Jibril in a second parliamentary round by 96 votes to 94.
- On 17 September, following the assault on the US consulate in Benghazi, the Minister of the Interior Fauzi Abdel Aal removes from office the Head of the Local High Security Commission Wanis al-Qaddafi, the Deputy Minister of the Interior for Cyrenaica Wanis al-Shaf, and the Head of National Security for Benghazi Hussein Bou Hmida.
- On 24 September Libya takes control of the two largest militias still operating in Benghazi.

Tunisia

- On 8 September in Kasserine a demonstration demands compensation for the victims of the Tunisian uprising.
- On 10 September the Qatari authorities decide to expel Sakher El Materi, son-in-law of the deposed President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali.
- On 14 September hundreds of Islamist protesters congregate in front of the American Embassy to protest against the video "Innocence of Muslims." Three demonstrators die in police riots. On 23 September Hassen Brik, an important member of Ansar al-Sharia, is arrested in connection with the incidents.

Algeria

- On 3 September the Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika appoints as Prime Minister Abdelmalek Sellal, Minister of Hydraulic Resources, replacing Ahmed Ouyahia, who resigned. On 4 September the names of the members of the new government are announced. Continuing in their posts are the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Mourad Me-

delci, the Interior, Dahou Ould Kablia, Defence, Abdelmalek Guenaizia and Energy, Youcef Yousfi.

Morocco

- On 23 September the Mayor of Fes Hamid Chabat is elected new Secretary General of Istiqlal, beating Abdelouahed El Fassi. Chabat, who belongs to the current critical of the policy of the coalition government of which Istiqlal forms part, anticipates possible changes in the government.

Mauritania

- On 3 September a Mauritanian court grants parole to seven anti-slavery activists who had been arrested in May for burning sacred books, among them the leader of the Initiative for the Resurgence of the Abolitionist Movement (IRA) Biram Ould Dah Ould Abeid.

European Union

- On 8 September the President of the European Council Herman Van Rompuy and the Italian Prime Minister Mario Monti propose the holding of an extraordinary European Summit in Rome to counteract the rise in anti-European feeling and the populism resulting from the economic crisis.
- On 12 September the EC proposes to entrust the European Central Bank with supervision of all banks in the eurozone from 2013, with powers of sanction.
- On 12 September in his speech on the State of the Union to Parliament, José Manuel Barroso asks for the EU to evolve towards a federation of Nation-States.
- On 13 September the German President Joachim Gauck ratifies the European Fiscal Compact and the permanent bailout fund one day after it is unlocked by the Constitutional Court. Germany was the last remaining country to ratify both measures.

October 2012

The Azores holds regional elections and the Portuguese government defeats two

votes of no confidence. In Spain, Galicia and the Basque Country hold elections. Italy passes new laws to clean up national politics the same month that Silvio Berlusconi is convicted for the Mediaset case and Sicily holds elections. The European Health Commissioner, the Maltese John Dalli, resigns. Slovenia and Croatia approve new cuts for 2013. The Democratic Party of Socialists wins the early Montenegrin elections. Belgrade and Pristina resume negotiations on the future of Kosovo. Greece and the troika reach an agreement on the application of new cuts. Turkey responds with artillery to shots against its territory from Syria, where the truce during the Festival of Sacrifice proposed by the UN-Arab League Joint Envoy does not stop the violence that has already resulted in 30,000 deaths. There is increased inter-community tension in Lebanon with a terrorist attack in Achrafieh. In Egypt, the government attempts to secure its power following new rallies in Tahrir Square condemning a swing towards conservatism. A similar situation faces the government coalition in Tunisia, where actions by radical Islamists increase. In Libya Parliament approves a new government and there are confrontations in Bani Walid.

Portugal

- On 8 October the eurozone Ministers of Finance grant Portugal another year to reduce its deficit given the impossibility of lowering it to 4.5% in 2012 and to 3% in 2013.
- On 4 October the government defeats two votes of no confidence moved by the Communist Party and the Left Bloc against the latest austerity measures submitted.
- On 14 October the Azores holds regional elections which the Socialist Party wins for the fifth consecutive time and with an absolute majority.
- On 31 October Parliament passes the budget for 2013, the most austere in Portuguese history and which includes major tax increases.

Spain

- On 7 October there are demonstrations in several Spanish cities against the government's budget cuts.

- On 16 October around 50 Sub-Saharanans attempt to break through the border fence of Melilla hours after another 300 did the same. It is the third attempt in one week. Spain and Morocco strengthen security.
- On 16 October the police arrest 82 people in the Emperor Operation against a network led by several Chinese criminal gangs and responsible for laundering around 300 million euros per year.
- On 19 October the Balearic Islands ask the government to join the Regional Liquidity Fund.
- On 21 October Galicia and the Basque Country hold autonomous elections which are won, respectively, by the People's Party and the Basque Nationalist Party.

France

- On 6 October an antiterrorist operation begins in Strasbourg which results during the weekend in the arrest of 11 Salafists for an attack against a Jewish establishment in Sarcelles on 19 September.
- On 18 October the former Minister of Education Nadine Morano announces the creation of her own party, the Rassemblement pour le Peuple de France (RPPF, conservative).
- On 16 October the lawyer linked to the National Liberation Front of Corsica Antoine Sollacaro is murdered near Ajaccio. A few hours later, the former nationalist militant Jean-Dominique Allegrini-Simonetti is found dead in the north of the island. With their deaths there have been 16 victims in 2012 as a result of the actions of the Corsican mafia against pro-independence militants.
- On 28 October the ETA leaders Izaskun Lesaka and Joseba Iturbe are arrested in Mâcon.

Monaco

- On 9 October 130 workers at the company Mecaplast demonstrate against staff reductions.
- On 10 October the Head of the Police André Muhlberger resigns.
- On 23 October the Minister of Finance Marco Piccinini announces his resignation.

Italy

- On 11 October the arrest of the capo of the 'Ndrangheta Domenico Condello, a fugitive since 1992, is announced.
- On 15 October Pietro Ribisi, capo of the Mafia, commits suicide in the Carinola prison, Sicily, where he was serving life imprisonment for the murders of the judge Antonio Saetta and his son in 1988.
- On 22 October a controversial sentence by the Ministry of Justice sentences seven scientists to six years' imprisonment for minimising the danger of a big earthquake six days before the major earthquake in L'Aquila which in April 2009 caused 309 deaths.
- On 26 October the Ministry of Justice sentences Silvio Berlusconi to four years' imprisonment, subject to appeal, for tax fraud in the Mediaset case.
- On 28 October Sicily holds regional elections which involve a historic victory for the Democratic Party with 30.5% of the votes.
- On 31 October Parliament passes the bill prohibiting legally condemned people from taking part in the electoral process and the bill to reduce the costs of Italian politicians by prohibiting accumulation of expenses and pay and limiting regional councils and high offices.
- On 31 October the government adopts a decree that suppresses dozens of provinces to make savings in political and administrative costs.

Malta

- On 16 October the European Commissioner for Health and Consumer Policy, the Maltese John Dalli, resigns after becoming involved in accusations of trading in influence by favouring Maltese tobacco producers. On 21 October Tonio Borg replaces Dalli.

Slovenia

- On 4 October the government passes the budget bill 2013-2014 which provides for spending cuts and an increase in VAT to reduce the deficit to below 3% of GDP.

Croatia

- On 11 October in Zagreb mass protests reject the cuts in salaries by the government in the education and health sectors.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

- On 7 October Bosnia holds local elections, in which the Democratic Action Party triumphs in 34 municipalities followed by the Serbian Democratic Party, which wins in 27.

Montenegro

- On 14 October Montenegro holds early parliamentary elections, which are won by the governing coalition European Montenegro led by the Democratic Party of Socialists although losing its absolute majority.

Serbia

- On 4 October the European Commission condemns the government decision to move the gay pride march of 6 October in Belgrade from the streets to a sports centre for security reasons.
- On 4 October the Ministry of Finance and the Vojvodina authorities reach a preliminary agreement on financing the autonomous province.
- On 9 October Parliament revokes the immunity of Oliver Dulic (Democratic Party), accused by the Public Prosecutor's Office of corruption during his time as Minister of the Environment.

Kosovo under UN Security Council Resolution 1244

- On 17 October there are confrontations between police and demonstrators protesting against the privatisation of the Kosovo electricity grid for an amount of 26.3 million euros.
- On 19 October the Serbian Prime Minister Ivica Dacic and Kosovo Prime Minister Hashim Thaçi have talks for the first time to reactivate negotiations backed by the EU after three months of paralysis.

FYROM

- On 4 October Athens sends to Skopje a draft bilateral memorandum seeking to stimulate the stagnated negotiations on the name issue.
- On 6 October the government defeats a vote of no confidence moved by the social-democrat opposition.

Albania

- On 15 October eight former prisoners from the communist era warn that they will continue their hunger strike of 23 days until they die if the State does not compensate them for their imprisonment.

Greece

- On 4 October the PASOK confirms the suicide of the former Secretary of State Leonidas Tzannis, who had appeared on a list of Greek politicians investigated for corruption.
- On 17 October EU and IMF experts leave Greece without having reached an agreement with Athens about new cuts on the same day that two days of strike begin in the country. On 24 October Athens and the troika reach an agreement that includes measures to make the labour market more flexible.

Turkey

- On 18 October in Istanbul the trial for offences against Islam begins against the pianist Fazil Say, which on the same day is postponed until 18 February 2013.
- On 29 October, Republic Day, a march in Ankara by thousands of secularist demonstrators backed by the Kemalist opposition is dispersed by the police to avoid the demonstrators entering the Ataturk Mausoleum.

Cyprus

- On 10 October the government approves a fund of 300 million euros for the creation of employment and stimulation of the energy and construction sectors.
- On 28 October three people are arrested accused of planning to assassinate the President.

sinate the Attorney-General Petros Clerides.

Syria

- On 3 October 48 people die in a chain of attacks in Aleppo.
- On 3 October Turkey bombards Syrian territory in retaliation for the launch of missiles against the Turkish town of Akçakale, causing the deaths of five civilians. On the same day, NATO meets at the request of Turkey to analyse the posture of the Atlantic Alliance in the Syrian conflict.
- On 10 October the Turkish Air Force compels a Syrian plane flying from Moscow to Damascus to land in Ankara, alleging that it was carrying "non-civilian" cargo.
- On 14 October Turkey closes its airspace to Syrian civil flights in retaliation for a similar measure adopted by Damascus the previous day.
- On 16 October Turkey announces an agreement with Iran to promote the ceasefire in Syria and announces the intention to create three tripartite initiatives with Egypt, Russia and Saudi Arabia to resolve the Syrian crisis.
- On 23 October Bashar al-Assad issues a general amnesty for all prisoners not charged with "terrorism."
- On 24 October Bashar al-Assad and the Free Syrian Army agree to recognise the ceasefire proposed by the UN-Arab League Special Envoy Lakhdar Brahimi on the occasion of the Aid el-Kebir Festival. The truce does not manage to stop the violence.

Lebanon

- On 19 October the Head of the Police Intelligence Services Wissam al-Hassam and another eight people die in an attack in Achrafieh, a mostly Christian Beirut neighbourhood. The attack unleashes a new wave of confrontations throughout October.

Jordan

- On 23 October Abdullah II orders the release of 20 activists arrested in September for demonstrating against the monarchy and the government.

- On 21 October the breaking up of a commando unit linked to al-Qaeda that was planning attacks on 9 November in Amman is announced.

Egypt

- On 8 October Mohamed Morsi announces the pardon of political prisoners held since the start of the revolution.
- On 10 October important figures of the Mubarak regime are acquitted of the charges against them for the attack on demonstrators in Tahrir Square in February 2011, known as the Battle of the Camel.
- On 12 and 20 October thousands of demonstrators in Tahrir Square protest against the swing to conservatism by the Freedom and Justice Party government.
- On 20 October the former President of the People's Assembly (lower chamber) Mohamed Saad al-Katatni is elected new President of the Freedom and Justice Party.

Libya

- On 7 October the National Congress passes a no confidence motion against Prime Minister Mustafa Abu Shagur, after rejecting his government's proposal. On 13 October Members of Parliament elect the diplomat Ali Zeidan as the new Prime Minister.
- On 16 October Captain Adel Baqramawi becomes the 15th high ranking official to be assassinated in Benghazi in 2012.
- On 20 October fighting in Bani Walid, submerged in violence since the start of the month, claims at least 26 lives. The deaths include Khamis Gaddafi, son of Muammar Gaddafi.
- On 31 October the National Congress approves Ali Zeidan's government.

Tunisia

- On 6 October Ennahda sympathisers march through Sidi Bouzid one day after the police broke up an anti-government demonstration that demanded the resignation of Governor Mohamed Najib Mansouri, who on 7 October is

replaced by the then Governor of Kebili Amara Tlijani.

- On 14 October the government calls presidential and legislative elections for 23 June 2013.
- On 18 October Lufti Nagued, Regional Secretary of Nida Tunis, a party created by the former Prime Minister Beji Caid Essebsi, dies beaten by members of a Revolution Protection Committee.
- On 23 October the government submits to Parliament the draft Constitution establishing a semi-presidential republic inspired by the French and Portuguese models in which the President would be elected by universal suffrage and Parliament would be responsible for forming the government.
- On 24 October the number two of the Salafi Ansar al-Sharia movement Abu Ayub is sentenced to one year in prison for his involvement in the attack on the American embassy in Tunis.

Algeria

- On 1 October Heddad Fodhil, Emir of the El Forkane Brigade linked to AQIM, gives himself up after over 20 years of terrorist activity.

Morocco

- On 1 October the Moroccan Ministry of Justice reduces from 15 to 12 years' imprisonment the sentence of the Belgian-Moroccan Ali Aarrass, arrested in the Spanish city of Melilla in April 2008 for supplying arms to AQIM.
- On 6 October 8,000 magistrates demonstrate in Rabat demanding reforms to guarantee the independence of judicial power.
- On 16 October Bashir Benshaib, activist of the February 20 Movement, is sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment for participating in an unauthorised demonstration in March, among other charges.

Mauritania

- On 14 October President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz is injured in an accidental shooting by a soldier.

European Union

- On 8 October the European Stability Mechanism officially comes into force.
- On 10 October the European Commission publishes the annual reports on the progress of the accession candidate countries. It recommends the status of candidate for the FYROM as soon as the question of the name is resolved and for Albania as soon as the country approves the judicial and administrative reform. It warns Turkey of the deficient state of fundamental rights and notes the lack of progress in the Cypriot question. Montenegro must carry out justice reforms and the fight against corruption and organised crime, human rights and security. For Serbia and Kosovo it recommends the normalisation of relations to advance in the accession process.
- On 18 and 19 October the European Council agrees to establish a single supervisory mechanism for banks from 2013.

November 2012

In Spain and Portugal, there is a general strike. Portugal approves its budget for 2013. In Spain, Catalonia holds decisive autonomous elections. In France, the UMP holds primary elections. Italy approves the budget for 2013. In Croatia, the Deputy Prime Minister resigns and the former Prime Minister Ivo Sanader is sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment. In Bosnia, the government is remodelled after the change of the government coalition. The Hague Court acquits former Kosovo Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj. Greece and the troika agree on unlocking a new bailout package and an additional deadline for the reduction of the public deficit. Turkey strengthens the military deployment on its southern border and asks NATO for a preventive deployment of missiles given the escalation of tension with Syria, where the civil war has reached its eighteenth month and the opposition agrees on a restructuring to overcome its internal divisions. Lebanon experiences new periods of tension

between Sunnis and Shiites. There are further protests in Jordan. Egypt suffers a new institutional crisis. Tunisia achieves an advanced status in its relations with the EU. Algeria holds local elections.

Portugal

- On 27 November Parliament approves the budget for 2013 which involves, among other measures, tax increases of 30%, an additional tax of 3.5% on all incomes, and cuts in pensions, unemployment benefit and sickness leave.

Spain

- On 14 November there is a general strike in Spain and Portugal against the cuts in public spending by their respective governments.
- On 17 November Cadiz hosts the 22nd Ibero-American Summit, which adopts a commitment to solidarity between the two shores of the Atlantic over the economic crisis sweeping Spain and Portugal.
- On 25 November Catalonia holds early elections with a participation of 70%, called by the governing Convergència i Unió (CiU, pro-independence conservative) with the debate on independence from Spain as the background. CiU wins with 50 of the 135 seats, 12 fewer than in the previous elections.

France

- On 7 November the Council of Ministers passes the gay marriage bill.
- On 18 November the Union for a Popular Movement (UMP) holds primary elections to choose its new leader, in which Jean-François Copé, outgoing Secretary General, wins over the former Prime Minister François Fillon, who denounces irregularities in the count and on 27 November announces the creation of Rassemblement-UMP (Rally-UMP), a parliamentary group split from the UMP, until new primary elections are held.
- On 28 November the Senate rejects the budget for 2013, which includes 2.4 billion euros in tax rises.

Monaco

- On 15 November workers at SBM, the main shareholder of the Casino of Monte Carlo, announce the creation of Renaissance, a new party to protect the interests of workers.

Italy

- On 22 November the lower chamber of the Italian Parliament adopts the budget bill 2013 in a revised version of the original bill submitted by the government on 10 October.

Malta

- On 28 November Francis Zammit Dimech is appointed successor to Tonio Borg as Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Croatia

- On 14 November Deputy Prime Minister Radimir Cacic resigns after a Hungarian court sentences him to 22 months' imprisonment for the death of two people in a car accident in January 2010.
- On 16 November the International Criminal Court for the Former Yugoslavia acquits the former Croatian Generals Ante Gotovina and Mladen Markac, accused of war crimes against Serbians in Croatia in 1995.
- On 20 November the former Prime Minister Ivo Sanader is sentenced by the Zagreb Court to 10 years' imprisonment for the Hypo Alpe Adria Bank and MOL corruption cases.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

- On 14 November the UN Security Council extends for one year the mandate of the EUFOR-ALTHEA mission, which supervises the implementation of the Dayton Agreements.
- On 22 November the Federal Parliament appoints Fahrudin Radoncic of the Union for a Better Future (SBB) as Minister of Security; Zekerijah Osmic, of the Social Democrat Party (SDP), as Minister of Defence; and Edita Djapo (SBB) as Deputy Minister of Finance, to replace the three outgoing ministers of the Democratic Action

Party (SDA), which in May left the government coalition over profound disagreements on the general budget for 2013. This forced a new coalition in October between the SDP, the SBB, the Serbian nationalists of the Alliance of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD) and the Croatian conservative nationalists of the Croatian National Union of Bosnia (HDZ-BiH) and the HDZ1990.

Montenegro

- On 9 November President Filip Vujanovic announces the election of the leader of the Socialist Democratic Party (DPS) Milo Djukanovic as Prime Minister.
- On 22 November the Bosnian Party condemns the acquittal by the Podgorica Court of nine police officers accused of arresting and deporting Bosnian citizens to the Srpska Republic during the Bosnian War.

Serbia

- On 24 November the former Minister of Agriculture Sasa Dragin is arrested for abuse of power in the case of illegal sales of fertilisers.

Kosovo under UN Security Council Resolution 1244

- On 7 November the Serbian and Kosovo Prime Ministers meet in Brussels to advance in the normalisation of bilateral relations.
- On 15 November the EULEX arrests three members of the security forces, former members of the UÇK, accused of committing crimes against humanity during the Kosovo conflict.
- On 24 October the EU Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) sentences the vice-President of the governing Kosovo Democratic Party (PDK) Fatmir Limaj and three other former combatants of the Kosovo Liberation Army (UÇK) accused of war crimes in Klecka to one month's preventive detention following appeal. The accused had been acquitted on 2 May by the Pristina Court for insufficient evidence.
- On 29 November the former Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj is acquitted

by the Hague Court of Appeal of the charges of crimes against humanity during the Kosovo conflict.

Albania

- On 23 November a Tirana court sentences to 15 years' imprisonment Ilir Kimbaro, former agent of the Intelligence Services, for the kidnapping, torture and murder of the Macedonian Albanian businessman Remzi Hoxha in 1995, in a conspiracy to assassinate the former Macedonian President Kiro Gligorov.
- On 28 November Albania celebrates the centenary of its independence from the Ottoman Empire.

Greece

- On 1 November the journalist Kostas Vaxevanis is acquitted of the charges for having published a list of 2,059 supposed tax evaders.
- On 6 November a 48-hour general strike begins against new cuts agreed by Athens and the troika to reduce 1.8 billion euros in public spending in three years in exchange for receiving 3.15 billion to avoid bankruptcy. On 7 November Parliament passes structural reforms that mean cuts of 1.8 billion euros until 2016. On 11 November Parliament passes the budget for 2013, with reductions of around 9.5 billion euros.
- On 16 November Greece manages to pay back 5 billion euros of debt to its creditors saving itself from bankruptcy.
- On 26 November the eurogroup and the IMF finally reach an agreement to unlock the 4.37 billion euros pending the second bailout and to reduce the Greek debt to 124% of GDP until 2020 – 4 billion euros.

Turkey

- On 12 November five Kurdish nationalist Members of Parliament and the Mayor of Diyarbakir join the hunger strike held since September by around 700 Kurdish prisoners to demand the release of the leader of the PKK terrorist organisation Abdullah Ocalan and the possibility of using the Kurdish lan-

guage in schools and in judicial proceedings. On 18 November the prisoners end the hunger strike at the request of Ocalan.

- On 26 November the result is published of the autopsy carried out on the body of former President Turgut Ozal, who supposedly died of a heart attack in 1993, revealing proof of poisoning.
- On 27 November the decision by the army to include homosexuality as a serious offense in the new military code is announced. On 29 November Parliament approves the education reform submitted by the government that allows students in religious schools to wear the hijab.

Syria

- On 8 November confrontations in the Palestinian refugee camp in Yarmouk, Damascus, between militia soldiers of the Free Syrian Army (FSA) and members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, a group loyal to the regime, end with the deaths of 10 Palestinians.
- On 8 November the opposition to the regime, meeting in Doha, elects the Christian and leftwing George Sabra as new President of the Syrian National Council (SNS). On 9 November there is an agreement on forming the National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces (NCSROF), a joint opposition bloc that must form an interim government of national unity after the fall of the regime. On 10 November Ahmed Moaz al-Khatib is elected President of the NCSROF.
- On 20 November at least 36 militia soldiers die in Ras al-Ain in fighting between rebels of the Al-Nusra Islamist movement and members of the Justice and Development Party (Kurdish nationalist), which according to the opposition might be cooperating with the Syrian regime in exchange for securing a Kurdish autonomy in Syria.
- On 21 November Turkey formally requests from NATO the deployment of Patriot missiles on its border with Syria given the repeated attacks against Turkish territory.
- On 25 November the FSA affirms it has gained control of the Marj al-Sultan base, near Damascus airport.

Lebanon

- On 11 November the confrontations between Sunni followers of the Salafi leader Ahmad al-Assir and members of Hezbollah near the Palestinian refugee camp of Ein el-Helweh, Sidon, result in at least four deaths and seven injured. The incidents are caused by some Hezbollah promotional banners placed by the Shiites for the Ashura Festival.

Jordan

- On 13 November the radical Palestinian Jordanian cleric Abu Qatada, serving a sentence in the Long Lartin prison since 2006, is released on bail by British authorities after having won an appeal to avoid his deportation requested by Amman for terrorism, alleging that in Jordan he would not receive a fair trial.
- On 14 November around 20 people are arrested by the security forces in protests with the participation of the Muslim Brotherhood over the increase in the price of fuel and the withdrawal of subsidies on oil derivatives to reduce the public deficit.

Egypt

- On 22 November Mohamed Morsi issues a constitutional declaration that stipulates that no authority can revoke any presidential decision until the election of a new Parliament or dissolve the parliamentary organs. The announcement unleashes new protests from the sectors that accuse Morsi of wanting to monopolise power and there are attacks on government offices and Muslim Brotherhood offices. On 24 November the Supreme Council of Justice urges Morsi to annul the constitutional declaration and Egypt's Judges' Club agrees the suspension of all judicial activity until the declaration is withdrawn.
- On 29 November the Constituent Assembly, dominated by the Islamists, approves the draft of a new Constitution submitting it to the President for ratification, after which within a period of one month a people's referendum must be called on the new constitutional text. Thousands of Egyptians

protest against Morsi, the Muslim Brotherhood, the presidential declaration and the accelerated approval of the constitutional draft.

Libya

- On 2 November a demonstration in Benghazi calls for more economic autonomy for Cyrenaica, declares its support for the recently appointed government of Prime Minister Ali Zeidan and demands a return to the spirit of the 1951 Constitution.
- On 4 November Hamid al-Hassi, Commander of the self-proclaimed Cyrenaica Transitional Council, escapes an attempted assassination in Sidi Khalifa.
- On 21 November the Head of the Benghazi Police Faraj al-Deirsi is murdered.
- On 26 November the Commission of Integrity and Patriotism of Libya definitively approves 24 of the 31 ministers of the new government, 21 of whom were sworn into office on the 14 November.

Tunisia

- On 6 November in Tunis hundreds of Salafis demand the release of around 900 detainees held since January 2011. The same day, Bilel Chaouachi, Ansar al-Sharia's spokesman, is arrested, accused of inciting violence.
- On 19 November Tunisia and the EU sign the Advanced Status agreement in Brussels.
- On 25 November a demonstration in Tunis organised by the Civil Alliance against Violence and for Freedoms condemns the rise in Salafi violence and demands gender equality and completion of the new Constitution draft.
- On 27, 28 and 29 November protests in Siliana demand the removal of the governor, social and economic improvements, and the release of 14 prisoners arrested during the uprising.

Algeria

- On 29 November Algeria holds municipal elections. The governing National Liberation Front (FNL) achieves

a predictable victory, followed by its partner in the government coalition, the National Rally for Democracy (RND). The Islamist coalition Green Algeria Alliance obtains poor results.

Morocco

- On 18 November the security forces prevent a demonstration in front of the Parliament called by the February 20 Movement and the extra-parliamentary left against the Royal Household's allowances.
- On 27 November there are riots in Tangier after members of the Salafia Jihadia movement demonstrate outside the police headquarters to demand the release of Salafi prisoners.

Mauritania

- On 20 November Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz announces his return to Mauritania on 24 November from France, where he is convalescing from the accidental shooting in October. On 21 November in Nouakchott thousands of demonstrators demand his resignation, condemn the power vacuum created during his absence and demand the start of a real transition period.
- On 29 November the Council of Ministers passes a bill which penalises attempted coups.

Arab League

- On 13 November the Arab League recognises the National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces (NCSROF) as legitimate representative of the Syrian people, a decision shared by France, Turkey and the United Kingdom.

December 2012

Portugal privatises its airport infrastructures. Spain approves the budget for 2013. In France, the Constitutional Council strikes down the tax rate of 75% on large fortunes set out in the budget for 2013. The Italian and Maltese Prime Ministers tender their resignations over the difficulties in passing their budgets for 2013. In Slovenia,

Borut Pahor is elected new President and there are citizen protests against corruption and the economic crisis. The Bosnian Serbian former General Zdravko Tolimir is sentenced to life imprisonment for the Srebrenica massacre. In Montenegro the government takes office. Serbia and Kosovo agree on the joint management of their borders. Greece alleviates fears of bankruptcy and its exit from the euro after the definitive approval by the eurozone of an additional 4.37 billion euros. The civil war goes on in Syria with the growing concern over the control of Damascus' great chemical arsenal, the suspension of the tasks of the United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria (UNSMIS), the authorisation of the deployment of Patriot missiles on the Turkish-Syrian border, important new desertions in the ranks of the regime and the recognition by 114 states of the National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces (NCSROF). The instability in Lebanon continues due to the spread of the Syrian conflict. In Egypt, the passing of the new Constitution draft by more than 60% in a referendum increases social tension. The Libyan Military Prosecutor's Office accuses former President of the National Transitional Council Mustafa Abdul Jalil of abuse of power and of undermining national unity.

Portugal

- On 27 December Portugal sells the management of the national airport company, ANA, and that of the main air terminals for 50 years to the French group Vinci, for 3.08 billion euros, the greatest privatisation carried out within the bailout of 7.8 billion euros granted by the EU and the IMF.
- On 31 December President Anival Cavaco Silva announces the state budget for 2013, which involves a major increase in taxes as well as the dismissal of thousands of civil servants and a reform of pensions.

Spain

- On 9 December thousands of employees and patients of the Madrid

health service demonstrate in the capital for the second time after the 29 November march against the decision by the Autonomous Community to privatise part of its public health service.

- On 12 December the judicial sector protests against the budget efficiency measures bill in the Justice Administration that includes the introduction of fees for appeals and major budget and staffing cuts.
- On 20 December Parliament approves its budget for 2013, which includes cuts amounting to 3.9 billion euros.

France

- On 11 December the ETA member Alex Acarregui is sentenced by the Paris Correctional Court to eight years' imprisonment for belonging to ETA.
- On 20 December the Belgian authorities reject the nationality application of the magnate Bernard Arnault, owner of the business emporium LVMH, to avoid the enormous tax increases on large fortunes passed by the Élysée in September; a decision emulated by the actor Gérard Depardieu, in the process of acquiring Russian citizenship. On 29 December, the Constitutional Council declares unconstitutional the 75% tax on incomes above one million euros included in the 2013 budget.

Italy

- On 2 December Pierluigi Bersani is re-elected candidate of the Democratic Party (PD, centre-left) for the 2013 elections, defeating the Mayor of Florence Matteo Renzi in the second round of the party primaries, whose first round was held on 25 November.
- On 8 December Prime Minister Mario Monti informs President Giorgio Napolitano of his intention to resign as soon as the Budget Law is passed due to the decision by the People of Freedom Party (PDL, rightwing) not to second the budget bill. Monti's decision, official on 21 December, is also motivated by Silvio Berlusconi's announcement to stand as PDL candidate in the 2013 elections. On 23 December

Monti announces that he will not stand as candidate given his position as senator for life but does express his willingness to head the next government if so asked by the Parliament that emerges from the elections.

Malta

- On 10 December Parliament rejects the budget for 2013 presented by the government of Lawrence Gonzi, who the next day tenders his resignation and proposes the dissolution of Parliament in order to hold general elections on 9 March 2013.

Slovenia

- On 2 December the former Prime Minister Borut Pahor is elected President with 67.44% of the votes, beating Danilo Turk in the second round of the presidential elections, whose first round was held on 11 November.
- On 4 December Parliament unanimously adopts the increase in retirement age from 63 to 65 years.
- On 6 December the Mayor of Maribor Franc Kangler announces his resignation following demonstrations and riots over the mass privatisation policy undertaken since 1997 and denounces corrupt practices in the town council in a context of severe economic crisis, which spreads the protests against clientelism and corruption to other cities such as Ljubljana, Kranj, Celje and Trbovlje.
- On 6 December Parliament adopts the austere budgets for 2013 and 2014 with the objective of reducing the deficit to below 3% of GDP.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

- On 12 December the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) sentences to life imprisonment the former Bosnian Serbian General Zdravko Tolimir for the genocide of Muslims in Srebrenica in 1995.

Montenegro

- On 4 December Parliament swears in the new government led by Milo Djukanovic.

- On 19 December Montenegro opens and closes its first chapter on Science and Research in the accession negotiations.

Serbia

- On 4 December the Serbian Ambassador to NATO Branimir Stokich commits suicide in Brussels airport when awaiting an official delegation from his country.
- On 12 December the magnate Miroslav Miskovic, owner of the Delta Holding group, is arrested under suspicion of illegal gains in the road network privatisation processes, a case in which around twenty Serbian politicians could be involved according to the government.

Kosovo under UN Security Council Resolution 1244

- On 6 December Serbia reaches an agreement with the municipalities of Mitrovica, with a Serbian majority, on the management of the four border crossings between Serbia and Kosovo which will have the status of neutrality, a demand by the Kosovo Serbians following the agreement between Belgrade and Pristina on 4 December to jointly manage their common border.

FYROM

- On 14 December President Gjorge Ivanov regrets in his annual speech to Parliament the decision of the European Council in October to again postpone the accession negotiations due to a new veto by Greece over the name issue supported by Bulgaria, which accuses Skopje of appropriating part of Bulgarian history.
- On 24 December Members of Parliament in the governing coalition approve the budget for 2013 that includes a debt of 230 million euros through a loan from the World Bank minutes after expelling the opposition Members of Parliament led by the social-democrats, opposed to this budget. Thus begins a week of riots in the streets of Skopje between supporters and detractors of the Internal Macedo-

nian Revolutionary Organization – Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity (VMRO-DPMNE).

Greece

- On 13 December the eurozone Ministers of Finance authorise the unlocking of 4.37 billion euros agreed in November to prevent Greece from going bankrupt and leaving the euro.

Turkey

- On 31 December Turkey confirms for the first time that for months it has been in talks with the PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan for the terrorist organisation to definitively stop violence.

Cyprus

- On 11 December a demonstration breaks into the Parliament to protest against new austerity measures being considered by the government and the legislative in the framework of the negotiations with the troika of the loan to avoid Cypriot bankruptcy and which could amount to 14 billion euros, 80% of national GDP.

Syria

- On 3 December the UN announces the withdrawal of its non-essential personnel and suspension of the Observer Mission in Syria (UNSMIS) given the increase in violence.
- On 4 December NATO authorises the deployment requested by Turkey of Patriot missiles on the Turkish-Syrian border.
- On 12 December Marrakesh hosts the 4th Conference of Friends of the Syrian People, in which 114 states recognise the National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces (NCSROF) as legitimate representative of the Syrian people. In relation to the possibility of using chemical weapons against civilians, the Conference warns Damascus with a "firm response."
- On 25 December the Israeli newspaper Yediot Aharonot reports that given the possibility of international intervention, the Syrian regime might

have acquired arms and munitions valued at over 2 billion euros, an amount comparable to the total Syrian investments in armament since the Yom Kippur War in 1973.

- On 26 and 27 December General Abdelaziz Jassim al-Shalal, Head of the Military Police, and the Public Prosecutor of Aleppo, Ahmed al-Nuaimi, desert the regime.

Lebanon

- On 4 and 5 December there is new fighting between Sunnis and Alawis in Tripoli, in which at least four people die after the disappearance on 30 November of 20 Lebanese who were fighting the Syrian regime in Tel Kalaj.

Jordan

- On 12 December Jordan and Kuwait sign an agreement for the Emirate to allocate 695 million dollars to development projects in Jordan, which forms part of the aid for the Hashemite Kingdom approved by the Gulf Cooperation Council - 5 billion dollars in five years.

Egypt

- On 2 December the Constitutional Court postpones the ruling expected on the legality of the Constituent Assembly and the Shura Council after thousands of supporters of President Morsi surround the headquarters of the high court.
- On 8 December, pressured by the mass opposition in the streets led by the April 6 Movement and the National Salvation Front, which brings together most of the secular, liberal and leftwing political opposition, Mohamed Morsi withdraws the presidential declaration that would have awarded him near absolute power. In contrast, he decides to continue with the referendum on the new Constitution.
- On 15 and 22 December the referendum on the new Constitution is held with 62.69% voting in favour, after which on 26 December President Morsi calls on the different po-

litical powers of the country to participate in a national dialogue process.

Libya

- On 9 December the Ministry of the Interior announces the disbandment on 31 December of the Supreme Security Council, created in September 2011 by the National Transitional Council (NTC) to protect Tripoli. Moreover, the government announces that within one month it will stop paying all combatants that have not signed security contracts with the Ministry of the Interior.
- On 11 December the Military Prosecutor's Office accuses the former President of the NTC Mustafa Abdul Jalil of abuse of power and of undermining national unity during his mandate and in relation with the death, in July 2011, of General Abdel Fatah Younes in circumstances that are still unclear. After being interrogated, Abdel Jalil is released on bail and forbidden to leave the country until the trial is held on 20 February 2013.
- On 17 December Libya announces the temporary closure of its borders with Algeria, Niger, Chad and Sudan given the increased instability within the country.
- On 28 December around 2,000 people demonstrate in Benghazi demanding that the militias that still operate outside the security forces surrender their weapons or join them.

Tunisia

- On 1 December the General Union of Tunisian Workers (UGTT) reaches an agreement with the government to end the protests that in the last five days have resulted in over 300 injured in Siliana. According to the agreement, the Governor Ahmed Ezzine Mahjoubi will be dismissed.
- On 17 December stones the Tunisian President Moncef Marzouki and the President of the Constituent National Assembly Mustafa Ben Jaafar during an event commemorating the second anniversary of the Tunisian revolution in Sidi Bouzid, where protests persist over the lack of solutions to serious economic difficulties.

Algeria

- On 16 December the Algerian security forces capture in Cheurfa, Bouira, the AQIM number two Salah Gasmi, alias Salah Abu Mohamed.

Morocco

- On 28 December a court in Rabat sentences to one years' imprisonment Driss Bouterrada, member of the February 20 Movement, arrested on 10 December accused of possession and trafficking of narcotics.
- On 29 December around 30 people taking part in an unauthorised demonstration in Marrakesh over the increased price of water and electricity are arrested in riots originating from the demonstration.

European Union

- On 6 December the European Council and Parliament conclude an agreement passing the community budget for 2013 that includes the EP's request to add 6 billion euros to the budget for 2012 to avoid non-payments in several of its programmes.
- On 10 December in Oslo the Presidents of the European Council, Commission and Parliament receive the Nobel Peace Prize 2012, awarded to the EU.
- On 10 and 11 December the 27 ministers in charge of competitiveness issues agree the Single European patent.
- On 13 December the 27 Ministers of Economy and Finance lay the foundations to establish a Single Supervisory Mechanism for the banking sector.
- On 13 and 14 December the European Council of Heads of State and Government agrees the creation of a common strategy to conclude the Economic and Monetary Union and greater development of the Common Security and Defence Policy.

Gibraltar

- On 24 January the Spanish Foreign Minister José Manuel García-

Margallo announces a change in the Spanish policy on Gibraltar linking cooperation with the colony to advances in talks on sovereignty and demanding symmetry of the Tripartite Forum with the inclusion of Andalusia.

- On 16 May Queen Sofia of Spain cancels her participation in the 60th anniversary of the crowning of Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom as a reaction to the announcement that the Earl and Countess of Wessex will visit Gibraltar in June and the Gibraltar government's decision, adopted in March, to prohibit Spanish fishermen from working in waters that Gibraltar claims as its own, contravening the 1999 Fishing Agreement.
- On 8 May, after three months of tension and meetings in the waters of Algeciras Bay and fruitless meetings, talks are resumed between Gibraltar representatives and the fishing associations. The lack of progress in negotiations means that the fishermen mark 30 July as the deadline to reach an agreement. Once this deadline is passed, the fishermen return to work protected by the Guardia Civil and the harassment resumes.
- On 3 August an agreement is reached allowing Cadiz fishermen to fish Spanish territorial waters surrounding Gibraltar. On 17 August Madrid sends a formal complaint to London over the unilateral breaking by Gibraltar of this agreement alleging environmental reasons. On 9 September Spain announces, in the interest of the environmental protection pursued by Gibraltar, the establishment of a Special Conservation Area of 26,641.82 hectares around Gibraltar, encompassing the waters under dispute and prohibiting practices harmful to the environment such as bunkering, filling of open coastal waters and emptying tanks, all practised regularly by the colony. Moreover, on 18 September Spain announces that the Guardia Civil will continue to accompany the Spanish fleet in Algeciras Bay and that the government will study other measures if the hostilities against Spanish fishermen do not cease.

Western Sahara

- On 11 March in Manhasset, New York, the ninth round of extra-official negotiations begins between Morocco and the Polisario Front, without notable agreements.
- On 9 April the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon urges Morocco and the Polisario Front to prepare a census of Tindouf refugees and recommends that the UN Security Council should extend the mandate of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) until 30 April 2013.
- On 17 May Morocco withdraws its trust in UN Special Envoy for Western Sahara Christopher Ross considering that his work has not achieved any real progress and that the Western Sahara Autonomy Plan is being sidelined by the UN.
- On 15 June Wolfgang Weisbrod-Weber is appointed new Head of MINURSO.
- On 13 December the European Parliament passes a resolution demanding from Morocco the release of Saharawi political prisoners.

- On 19 December the United Nations General Assembly adopts a resolution to resume talks with Rabat and the Polisario Front.

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