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[Weekly News Roundup: August 28th - September 2nd](#)

The ceasefire implementation in Lebanon and the nuclear deadlock caused by Iran

This week's highlights center upon the issues that continue to appear in Lebanon, in the aftermath of the war, regarding the implementation of the ceasefire, the extremely important trip made by United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan in the Middle East, his meetings with the Lebanese and Israeli Prime Ministers, as well as with the Syrian President; the nuclear standoff with Iran, which defied the August 31st deadline and did not provide any answer to the package of nuclear incentives offered by the six-nation group; the slight failure of the UN resolution, sponsored by the United States and Great Britain in Sudan, regarding the Darfur issue, plus the current political feuds occurring within the Mexican political realm. At the beginning of the week, United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan assumed a very delicate 11-day mission in the **Middle East** to discuss with Lebanese authorities the release of the two Israeli soldiers, kidnapped by Hezbollah on July 12th. He hinted that a deal regarding the freedom of the two may be in the works, but failed to provide further details. "... renew my call for the abducted soldiers to be freed and as a first step to be transferred under the auspices of the ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross) either to the government of Lebanon or to a third party" he stated in a formal address to the Hezbollah leaders, during a press conference in Beirut on Sunday. Apart from the release plea, Annan focused on the Israeli side as well, urging the Israeli military chiefs to consider lifting the naval and air blockade on Lebanon that had been instituted at the beginning of the war, that is more than a month and a half ago. He also subtly warned Syria and Iran that they have to respect the terms of the ceasefire, as well as of the UN resolution that enforced it, while authorizing the enlargement of the UN peacekeeping force in southern Lebanon. **Turkish** authorities reported on Monday that a powerful explosion rocked a café in one of the most popular holiday resorts in their country, namely Antalya, the gateway to the "Turkish Riviera", killing three civilians and severely injuring dozens others, in what represented the fifth deadly blast in less than a day. The deadly attack, which had been claimed by the militant organization of the Kurdistan Liberation Hawks, was labeled by many as an organized campaign to totally destroy the Turkish tourist industry that had been flourishing in that area of the country. Police officials stated that the blast followed three other explosions in another very famous tourist resort, Mamaris, which occurred the day before, leaving at least 21 tourists injured, including 10 British citizens. Another explosion, which took place in Istanbul on Sunday night, severely wounded six people. As far as Monday's explosions were concerned, they ripped through the façade of a building, as well as through several shops in Antalya's center, starting a fire that practically burnt two people instantly. A third one died at the hospital. According to an official statement released by Antalya's governor office, the three dead people were Turks. **Sudanese** authorities continue to ignore US pressures to accept United Nations peacekeeping troops in the Darfur region, in order to appease the situation that is reportedly deteriorating. Officials from the Sudanese government chose to disregard US Assistant Secretary of State in Africa, Jendayi Frazer's official statement, delivered on Monday in Khartoum, meant to send a strong message to President Omar Hassan al-Bashir that he must accept the forces or else, the current situation in the western part of the country could spiral to chaos. She was given a very angry welcome upon her arrival in Khartoum on Saturday, by a furious crowd which told her to go back where she came from. Her meetings with Sudanese officials were described by one official from the Foreign Ministry as "just protocol meetings nothing else", while she struggled in vain to obtain an audience with the Sudanese chief of state. In spite of such negative reactions, the US representative continues to remain optimistic with regard to the

future outcome of her efforts in Sudan, as Sean McCormack, the spokesman for the State Department stated: "She is still hopeful and we are still hopeful that she will meet President Bashir". **Mexico's** Federal Electoral Tribunal issued an official statement on Monday, asserting that the results of the partial recount of the July 2nd presidential elections failed to prove leftist presidential candidate Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador's fraud allegations, triggering the latter's anger, who called on his supporters not to recognize a government which would most likely be ruled by his rival, Conservative Party candidate Felipe Calderon, CNN informs. However, the court added that the results of the recount did reduce Calderon's lead by over 4,000 votes, which were nevertheless insufficient to counter balance his initial 240,000-vote advantage. In addition to that, the court avoided to declare an official winner in the much disputed elections, asserting that it must first conduct a tally and decide whether or not to annul the initial round of elections, before the September 6th deadline. As far as Obrador was concerned, he furiously compared the results of the Federal Electoral Tribunal with a political coup the country is witnessing, stating that the judges in this court are actually fulfilling the interests of several elite parties involved. "We will never again allow an illegal and illegitimate government to be installed in our country", he declared in front of his supporters gathered in the large Zocalo square. Faced with an ultimatum issued by the United Nations, to respect the August 31st deadline in presenting the final conclusions on the six-nation package of nuclear incentives, **Iranian** officials announced that President Ahmadinejad would officially respond to such diplomatic challenges in a press conference due on Tuesday in Tehran, CNN reports. However, according to a CNN correspondent, Aneesh Raman, "We expect no change in the Iranian position". Iranian officials continue to state that the nuclear program their country is pursuing is solely for peaceful civilian purposes and not for the construction of weapons of mass destruction, like most Western nations have alleged. Iran has been warned on several occasions that if it did not accept the offer, then the UN Security Council would have to develop a resolution that would impose economic and even technological sanctions on the Islamic republic. Such a move has so far been supported by three of the Security Council's permanent members, namely Great Britain, France and the United States, while Russia and China adopted a softer approach on the nuclear issue. **Israeli** Prime Minister Ehud Olmert announced on Monday that he had ordered a government investigation into what he labeled as "failure" in the communication of the chain of the Israeli command during the 34-day conflict in Lebanon, that ended lamentably enough for their side. The announcement was made during a conference of Israeli mayors that the Prime Minister attended in the Israeli northern city of Haifa, which had been massively affected by Hezbollah rockets during the war in Lebanon. During the conference, Olmert admitted for the first time to the failure his country had to sustain in the war against Hezbollah: "We did not always achieve the aims we hoped for. There were problems and failures". "We have suffered severe losses.... We have not succeeded in stopping the Katyushas (Hezbollah rocket attacks)... and moreover we have not returned the captured soldiers. There is real, honest criticism from the heart of reserve soldiers, of citizens... I hear them and I respect them and what they have to say. There are some things that they are right in and some things that I disagree with", he added. On the other hand, Olmert insisted on rejecting claims for the organization of an independent state commission that would inquire upon the matter, given that "it would paralyze the leadership at a time when Israel needed to be prepared for a threat from Iran". On Wednesday, **Indonesian** officials announced that an undersea earthquake occurred near the country's **Moluccas Islands** on Tuesday, yet its strength was graded as moderate and thus, there were no risks of tsunamis ensuing. Therefore, the tsunami warning that had initially been sent throughout the country was canceled. "The tsunami warning has been canceled. The epicenter of the quake was 33 km (21 miles) in the sea with a magnitude of 5.4 on the Richter scale", was part of the official statement issued by Subagio, one of the representatives of the state meteorological agency. The agency had initially stated that the magnitude of the earthquake recorded 6.4 on the Richter scale and triggered concern

regarding the unfolding of potential tsunami waves. According to the official statement, the earthquake had been located in the southwestern part of Tual Island under the Banda Sea, which is situated in the eastern part of East Timor and the northern part of the city of Darwin, in northern Australia. Given that Indonesia had been the helpless witness of numerous massive earthquakes, out of which some have triggered powerful tsunamis, the overall psychological state of the local citizens was that of fear of unstoppable danger. On the eve of hurricane Katrina's somber anniversary, the **US East Coast** has been given fresh storm alerts, even though tropical storm Ernesto has made landfall in **Florida** on Tuesday only as a rainstorm and not as a hurricane, as it had initially started, Reuters informs. However, the danger of Ernesto becoming stronger, after it passes through the northeastern part of Florida and returns to land between Georgia and North Carolina states later this week, is high, an official statement issued by the US National Hurricane Center asserted. It also added that the center of the storm had been located over Plantation Key in the Florida Keys island chain, 105 km south-southwest of Miami, moving north-northwest at 13 kph. Although Ernesto, the fifth tropical storm to hit the Atlantic in the 2006 hurricane season, massively battered Cuba earlier on, it progressively weakened and failed to gain in strength as it moved to Miami through the Florida Keys, while local residents queued to many gas stations and emptied the shops and stores in anticipation of a really powerful hurricane, just like the Katrina one, which hit New Orleans, killing more than 1,500 people and producing 80 billion dollars worth of damages in 2005. According to American and European officials alike, inspectors with the International Atomic Energy Agency, who issued a joint formal statement, **Iran** had chosen to step up uranium enrichment efforts, a decision which has been labeled as an act of defiance, given that it occurs just a few days ahead of the August 31st deadline imposed by the six-nation group, which had initially offered the nuclear incentives' package to the Tehran administration. The inspectors stated on condition of anonymity that they intend to officially reveal Iran's new enrichment-related activities as well as the progress it made in such departments in a formal thorough report, which is due out on Thursday. Still, they provided a few details related to these aspects, highlighting the fact that Iranians have adopted quite a slow rhythm in working with uranium, which had been dosed in small quantities. In addition to that, the uranium material has been enriched at an extremely low level, which in turn may mean that no danger of nuclear weapons exists as of yet. In spite of this fact, the inspectors concluded that chances regarding Iran halting the uranium enrichment schedule before the August 31st deadline are very dim. Officials in Washington warn that they are going to adopt a UN Security Council resolution that would enforce strict sanctions on the Tehran administration, should it fail to cooperate in accepting the incentives and stop nuclear work. United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan conducted the much debated high-level meeting with **Israeli** Prime Minister on Wednesday morning at the latter's residence, in order to discuss the Israeli-imposed aerial and naval blockade in Lebanon and the Israeli's side rejection of ending it as long as the Israeli soldiers kidnapped by Hezbollah are not released. During the meeting, Olmert also initiated a discussion concerning Iran and its nuclear ambitions and the fact that it represents a serious threat to his country by doing so, stressing the "urgent necessity to deal with it". As far as the building of the UN peacekeeping force in southern Lebanon as well as the Israeli troop withdrawal issues were concerned, Annan stated that he hoped Israel would fully complete its 5,000-troop pullout operations once the UN forces arrive in the area, a matter which is allegedly going to be resolved in a few days or weeks. At the end of the meeting, Annan insisted on highlighting his belief that the kidnapped Israeli soldiers are still alive and he outlined the fact that he bases his assumption regarding this aspect on the talks he had had with Lebanese ministers, including some belonging to Hezbollah. The **US** National Hurricane Center issued an official statement, announcing that hurricane John, the sixth to occur in the **Pacific Ocean** during the 2006 hurricane season, is now graded as a category 3 tropical storm, while it passed near Mexico's coast on Tuesday. By afternoon, its winds recorded 115mph and it has been forecasted that it would grow even more powerful by

Wednesday. The center of the hurricane was located 175 miles south of Acapulco, while it was moving in the northwestern direction at 10 mph. Although the hurricane is not expected to make landfall too soon and thus, not affect the United States in any fashion, experts still fear that it might cause quite a great amount of floods and scare tourists currently on vacation in Mexico. According to long-term forecasts issued by the National Hurricane Center, John will move towards the northwestern part of the country, along the coastline, its outer sides still being able to batter popular summer resorts like Acapulco, Puerto Vallarta, Los Cabos and Ixtapa, where it might produce floods and landslides. One of the top members of the Hamas-made **Palestinian** government, Ghazi Hamad, the official spokesman of the government, made a very troubling statement with reference to the Palestinian citizens, which he labeled as being "attacked by the bacteria of stupidity", calling on them to stop blaming the Israelis for their failures. "The anarchy, chaos, pointless murders, the plundering of lands, family feuds ... what do all of these have to do with the occupation?", he rhetorically asked in one of the articles published by the Palestinian newspaper al-Ayyam. "We have always been accustomed to pinning our failures on others, and conspiratorial thinking is still widespread among us", he added. One of the main concerns of Hamad was the fashion in which the Palestinian managed to fail in their endeavors in making the Gaza Strip, the land that Israel gave up more than a year ago, a successful affair. Hamad's surprising opinion with regard to the attitude adopted by the Palestinians in what is supposed to be their homeland, highlights the division that starts to erode through the Hamas party, between those members who are still living in the Palestinian territories and those who live in exile in Damascus. While the former seem to have grown tired with fighting the Israelis, the latter still advocate for the idea of firing Qassam rockets into Israeli cities. On Thursday, the **United States** and three other **European** allies started elaborating on a list of economic and technological sanctions they would seek to impose within the UN Security Council next week. Most of these sanctions are believed to deal with restrictions on the import of nuclear-related materials. Diplomatic officials stated other sanctions might even enforce restrictions on traveling activities by Iranian leaders and the limitation of Iran's access to financial markets, depending on how the talks on sanctions will pursue. On the other hand, the same diplomats - speaking on condition of anonymity, given the delicate matter - added that the US is attempting to persuade several European banks to halt lending money to Iran, and it seems such attempts have proved to be successful, given that some Swiss banks have subtly agreed to such measures. In addition to this, the Iranian nuclear issue might be complicated by the report the International Atomic Energy Agency will present today, which will speak about the slow progress the Iranians are making in resuming the production of small quantities of enriched uranium after temporarily stopping in the spring. Another main concern of the report would also deal with the reasons why Iran failed to provide explanations regarding the nuclear activities it pursues, like the fact that Iranian officials have declined to expand on President Ahmadinejad's claim that his country does possess a research project concerning some advanced technology of uranium enrichment based on a centrifuge it obtained from Pakistani expert Abdul Qadeer Khan. **Israeli** officials have proved they are more determined in continuing their military operations in southern Lebanon; to some degree, anyone would have expected that, since they have recently presented their rejection of United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan's demand to lift the aerial and naval blockade on the war-torn country. In addition to that, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert told Annan that he would not order the full troop withdrawal from Lebanon until all provisions of the ceasefire, requested by the UN Security Council resolution, would be enforced. He based his decision on arguments regarding the fact that, should Israel ease the pressure on Lebanon's airports and harbors, the full implementation of UN resolution 1701 would actually fail. International peace monitors in **Sri Lanka** have released an official statement on Thursday, declaring their absolute certainty with regard to the fact that the Sri Lankan troops are to blame for the slaying of 17 relief workers on August 4th. All of them were working for a French

humanitarian organization called Action Against Hunger, and they had elaborated a plan to improve infrastructures in the northeastern part of Sri Lanka, which had been heavily battered by tsunami waves. 15 of them had been found face to the ground and displaying gunshot injuries, in the nearby compound of the office of the organization. The rest were found dead in a car. The Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission had conducted an independent inquiry into the death of the 17 people and concluded that "there cannot be other armed groups than the security forces who could actually have been behind", a finding which triggered anger on the part of Sri Lankan government officials and fury on the part of the international community. The conclusion was partly based on the fact that 16 of the relief workers were ethnic Tamils, which made officials at the Monitoring Mission suspect the Sri Lankan Army, which is heavily dominated by Sinhalese which have been accused of murderous acts in the past too. In addition to that, some representatives of the Nordic countries-dominated Mission stated that they have read certain confidential conversations provided by what they called "highly reliable sources" and which clearly pointed out that the Sri Lankan army had been involved in the killings. Moreover, the simple fact that the Sri Lankan government refused to allow access to the crime scene for the monitors also cast a heavy suspicion cloud over that the group described as "eagerness to conceal the matter". During the news conference that he conducted in **Ramallah** on Wednesday, United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan stated that Israel must end the occupation of the Palestinian territories so that the Palestinians would be able to establish a state in the Gaza Strip alongside Israel. In his opinion, these are the two main preconditions for the resolution of all main issues in the Middle East region. At the press conference, which followed a meeting with Palestinian Authority President, Mahmoud Abbas in Ramallah, the West Bank, Annan also highlighted the fact that he had been informed by the latter on the current political and economic situation the Palestinian territories are in and made an appeal on reducing the Gaza Strips citizens' ordeal. In his turn, Abbas mentioned that all potential Palestinian coalition governments must take into consideration all existing Palestinian factions. "This government must have political agendas fitting national, regional and international standards", he declared outlining the policies that he would adopt in the near future. Officials at the United Nations announced that the **United States** and **Britain** sponsored a resolution regarding the current situation in the **Darfur** region, in **Sudan**, which clearly stipulates that the United Nations is given full authority over the peacekeeping forces deployed in the area, as soon as the Sudanese government approves such a decision as well. However, the resolution does not stipulate any solution concerning the persuasion of the Sudanese officials to come to an agreement over the UN troops in Darfur. The resolution in itself, which awaits a vote due on Thursday, highlights that the control transfer over the troops would also have to be approved by the African Union which is currently in charge of the contingents deployed there. According to many diplomats, including US Ambassador John Bolton, the approval of the Sudanese government on the transfer may not be needed in the beginning, given that the situation in Darfur is so critical that it allows the UN to do some planning and logistics to speed up efforts. He also added that he believes that once the resolution is voted upon, it may persuade the government to accept it as well. The reason for the authority transfer is that the poor, ill-equipped and outnumbered African Union soldiers would receive more funding, should they be under the supervision of the United Nations and thus, be more capable of stopping what has been labeled as a humanitarian disaster in Darfur, on many occasions. On Friday, it was reported that **US** President Bush had issued an official statement on Thursday, demanding that strong "consequences" be bestowed upon **Iran**, given that the Islamic republic chose to ignore the deadline that expired yesterday regarding the suspension of its nuclear enrichment schedule and the acceptance of the package of incentives offered by the six-nation group in exchange. Bush outlined the fact that his administration desires powerful sanctions be directed against Iran and in a timely fashion, yet the United Nations Security Council continues to maintain its division with regard to this aspect. Bush also added that the Tehran administration's current position

exudes defiance, while intentionally delaying a formal answer to the deadline: "It is time for Iran to make a choice. We've made our choice. We will continue to work closely with our allies to find a diplomatic solution, but there must be consequences for Iran's defiance and we must not allow Iran to develop a nuclear weapon", he stated. Many tourists still spending their holidays in the popular **Mexican** summer resort **Cabo San Lucas** were forced to pack up their things and flee as soon as possible as moderately weakened hurricane John approached the location. In addition to that, at least 15,000 local residents from surrounding areas of Cabo San Lucas were warned that they must move to higher grounds if they wish not to be affected by the storm. According to State Governor Narciso Agundez, those residents who defy the warnings to move to other locations would be removed from their homes by force: "Where there are areas that are highly vulnerable, we will have to do things forcibly". Mexican authorities issued an official statement, announcing that they are ready to displace as many as 10,000 people from Cabo San Lucas and San Jose del Cabo, as well as 5,000 more from the city of La Paz, the capital of the Baja California del Sur state. According to officials, these people would be provided with shelters that have already been set up in 131 schools. **Syrian** officials welcomed United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan, currently during an official tour in the Middle East region in order to gather support for the Security Council resolution, in Damascus on Thursday, telling him that Israel must completely withdraw from southern Lebanon at all costs, as well as put a stop to the aerial and naval blockade it had established over the country, both conditions being stipulated in the ceasefire resolution. "Talks underlined the necessity of preserving the cease-fire and the Israeli withdrawal from south Lebanon as well as lifting the maritime and air blockade imposed on Lebanon as it constitutes a violation of resolution 1701", was part of the statement released by the Sana news agency in the aftermath of Syrian Foreign Minister Walid al-Moallem's meeting with UN Secretary General Kofi Annan in the capital city. However, both Moallem and Annan, who is scheduled to meet Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, highlighted the urgent need for the United Nations to play a very active role in Lebanon in "working to achieve a just settlement in the region based on the return of land for peace formula", Sanna reported. Chinese News Agency Xinhua announced that the international conference aimed at raising donations for reconstruction efforts in Lebanon, which took place on Thursday in **Stockholm**, exceeded its monetary goal by raising approximately 940 million dollars, more than double the expected sum. The organizers of the conference, led by the Swedish Foreign Minister Jan Eliasson, had initially expected to come up with around 500 million dollars, but given the surprising outcome of the aid conference, they declared they are more than pleased with the results: "The conference has thus met its objective with a wide margin", Jan Eliasson stated. Thus, the total amount of money that has been raised up to this point reaches the 1.2 billion dollars threshold. The donors conference which took place in the Swedish capital, was the first of its kind since the war in Lebanon broke out at the beginning of July and most of its aims are centered around the possibility of building houses or shelters for all of the civilians who were left homeless in the aftermath of Israeli bombings, especially in the southern part of Lebanon. The money will also be used in providing medical treatments, fixing the severely damaged infrastructures like the water and electricity networks, as well as removing all of the still active exploding devices, like cluster bombs and the like, which were planted during or at the end of the war. The overall general opinion of the **Israeli** officials regarding the chances the Palestinian Authority possess at the moment in constructing a national unity government, are extremely low, given that anarchy and terror in the Gaza Strip are now more and more difficult to stop, A Jerusalem Post newspaper reports shows. Israeli Defense Department officials asserted that even if Israeli tank gunner Cpl. Gilad Shalit, who was kidnapped by three armed Palestinian factions at the end of June, sparking the Israeli armed offensive in the Palestinian Territories, is released, Hamas would continue its policies of rejecting three of the most important preconditions established by Quartet powers in order for the organization to be granted international credibility. These

preconditions regard the halting of attacks, the acceptance of previous agreements that have been concluded between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, as well as recognizing the former's right to existence. Moreover, the difference of mentality in pursuing courses of action that exists between Hamas and Fatah will also play a major role in their disagreement: "There will not be a unity government," a senior defense official who monitors the PA said this week. "Hamas is pulling the PA in a radical direction, and Fatah wants to pull things in a moderate direction. The two will not be able to get along together. It won't happen. Instead, there will be a deterioration in the situation, including more terror attacks against Israeli targets", is part of the statement of a top defense official who has been involved with the monitoring of the current situation in Gaza. On Saturday it was reported that **Russian** officials caused the Bush administration new concerns on Friday, refusing to press for economic and technological sanctions against Iran, which missed the August 31st deadline in providing an official answer to the package of nuclear incentives. By doing so, Russia joined European leaders, who also expressed caution in rushing to adopt restrictions against the Islamic republic. In a joint statement Russian officials began by expressing their regret over the fact that the deadline passed without Iran highlighting the position it adopts in relation to the incentives offered, bringing nuclear negotiations to a new international political deadlock. "We express our regret that Iran did not abide by (the U.N. Security Council) Resolution 1696 and has not ended its work on enriching uranium by the deadline set out in that document", was part of the statement issued by the spokesman for the Foreign Ministry Mikhail Kamynin, quoted by Interfax news agency. However, officials did highlight the fact that they do not agree with the idea of sanctions or other means of repressive actions against Iran, in order to alienate it, sharing what seems to be a common political trend in Europe as well. In what has been labeled as a premiere in the history of **Mexico**, opposition leftist deputies took control over the congressional Mexican chamber on Friday, shouting slogans and waving anti current President Vicente Fox-related placards, creating a state of chaos that prevented Fox from delivering his last annual address. Dressed in all the three colors of Mexico's flag - green, red and white - Vicente Fox had to stand and watch as deputies took center stage, waiting awkwardly for at least ten minutes before admitting that he needed to give up entering and delivering his speech. He was handed a microphone through which he announced that he was leaving and then left a copy of his speech to an official, as the law requires, thus becoming the first Mexican chief of state who does not receive the chance of making his last State of the Nation address. The national state television broadcast bizarre images as Fox left the congressional complex with his wife, Martha Sahagun, yet smiling and nodding at the people who had gathered around the building. The leftist deputies, who took the Mexican congressional building by storm, are supporters of the Democratic Revolutionary Party, as well as of its candidate Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, the main political rival of Conservative Party member Felipe Calderon, who lost the July 2nd presidential elections by a few thousands votes and has been demanding ever since, that a full recount of the votes be made sustaining that first hand results were subject of alleged fraud. Current **British** Prime Minister Tony Blair continues to refuse to nominate an official date for his departure from his office, basing his decision, regarding this aspect, on the fact that otherwise he would cause pointless, yet endless speculations and damages to his image and authority. In an official address that he issued on Friday, during an interview with The Times daily, he asked his fellow colleagues from the ruling Labour Party - some of whom had been pressuring him to establish an official date when he would quit the Prime Minister's position - telling them that they should stop getting "obsessed" over this aspect and concentrate on the proper activities of the Government: "If they kept on talking about the leadership, people will think the Government is paralyzed or has run out of steam", he commented. He also added that the Labour Members of the Parliament, who "carried on and on" about the issue of his leadership as Prime Minister, are actually the ones who desire some kind of change in the direction and the policies adopted by the Party. He highlighted the fact that he would not act as former

Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher did, and he would not prolong this problem indefinitely, but on the contrary, he would make the official announcement of his departure in due time, so as to give what he labeled as "ample time" for his successor to grow accustomed to the responsibilities of the Prime Minister.