



Constitutional crisis was much in the news a week or two back, when the House and Senate were voting to impose restrictions on the [Bush administrations Iraq plans](#), or [supoena presidential advisors](#).

While these claims of crisis are more hyperbole than real (not that the issues aren't real, they're just not a crisis) there are a number of real constitutional crises going on in the world right now. Here is a quick review:

Pakistan: President Parvez Musharraf fired the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. Since then, lawyers have taken to protesting the government on a regular basis. Here is some coverage: [Khaleej Times Online - Pakistan's framework contest](#)

[The Peninsula On-line: Qatar's leading English Daily](#)

Ukraine: President Viktor Yushchenko, himself only in power for a couple of years (following the "Orange Revolution"), and precariously at that, has disbanded the Verhovna Rada, the parliament, and called new elections. Parliament, for their part, responded by declaring the dissolution decree to be null and void. The Rada asked the Constitutional Court to rule on the matter, but that body is itself dysfunctional. Protesters are in the streets from both sides.

Coverage here:

[B92 - News - Globe - Ukraine PM challenges dissolution of parliament](#)

[BBC NEWS | Europe | Q&A: Ukraine political crisis](#)

[UNIAN - Ukraine leaders start crisis talks](#)

[Ukraine Lawmakers Reject Dissolution, Crisis Intensifies - RADIO FREE EUROPE / RADIO LIBERTY](#)

UPDATE - 4/4/2007: Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich called on President Victor Yushchenko to rescind his decree dissolving parliament, and asked the Constitutional Court to overturn the decree. The Chief Justice of the Constitutional Court has reportedly stepped down from his post, citing pressure:

[Ukraine premier rejects early elections](#)

[Fears of constitutional crisis in Ukraine](#)

[Ukraine PM increases pressure on president](#)

Ecuador: President Rafael Correa has attempted to expel 57 members of congress through his control of the electoral court and with the backing of the military. This led to a court ruling from a provincial judge suspending their firing. Then the judge was himself fired. A referendum is planned for April 15 to decide whether a constitutional assembly shall be

convened to rewrite that document. Coverage here:

[Another Ecuador Crisis Deepens as a Judge Is Fired Ahead of Voting - New York Times](#)

[Ecuador's crisis merits OAS response - 03/29/2007 - MiamiHerald.com](#)

[Ecuador political crisis grows as judge fired - CNN.com](#)

Zimbabwe: President Mugabe, dictator since independence, has once again allowed the brutal suppression of opposition politicians and their supporters. Not much more need be said here.

[Zimbabwejournalists.com: Let us Drive the Tyrant out of Town - Mutambara](#)

[Zimbabwe's Downward Spiral - Catholic Online](#)

Lebanon: Prime Minister Fouad Siniora is under pressure to dissolve parliament and call new elections following a power struggle with Hezbollah, whose MPs have abandoned their posts and lead their supporters into the streets in protests which have raged for weeks. The fear is that if new elections were called, Hezbollah may be able to ride a wave of popular support based upon their month long war with Israel last summer. Politics in Lebanon are famously fluid, however, so many surprises are in store. The best coverage of this may be found at *The Independent*, whose Robert Fisk has lived in and written from Beirut for the last 30 years:

[Independent Online Edition > Robert Fisk](#)

With all of this going on in the world today, you would imagine our diplomatic corps would be racking up the frequent flier miles. Doesn't look like it, though. The myopia of our current government has kept it focused almost exclusively on Iraq and Iran.