

**Elections to watch**  
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**NIGERIA**

The vote, expected in spring, will be a referendum on President Olusegun Obasanjo's rule. He's begun to revive the economy, but unemployment is above 50% and ethnic and religious violence are rife. Obasanjo will win re-election, but governing Africa's great black hope won't get any easier.

**ISRAEL**

Voters will have a choice between peacemakers and hardliners in January — and they'll choose the hard-line. New Labor leader Amram Mitzna will be conciliatory to the Palestinians, but Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's Likud will win big on the right and center.

**MALAYSIA**

Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad will stand aside for his deputy, Ahmad Abdullah Badawi, in October. But Abdullah's perceived lack of a political killer-instinct will precipitate a succession struggle in his party, which could upset the nation's delicate multiracial balance.

**SOUTH KOREA**

North Korea's nuclear arms program raises the stakes for the December race between Lee Hoi-chang and Roh Moo Hyun. Roh would press Pyongyang to dismantle its nuke program but won't stop aid; Lee would suspend aid until the North swears off nukes for good.

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