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Foreign Military Studies Office

OE WATCH

FOREIGN NEWS & PERSPECTIVES OF THE OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

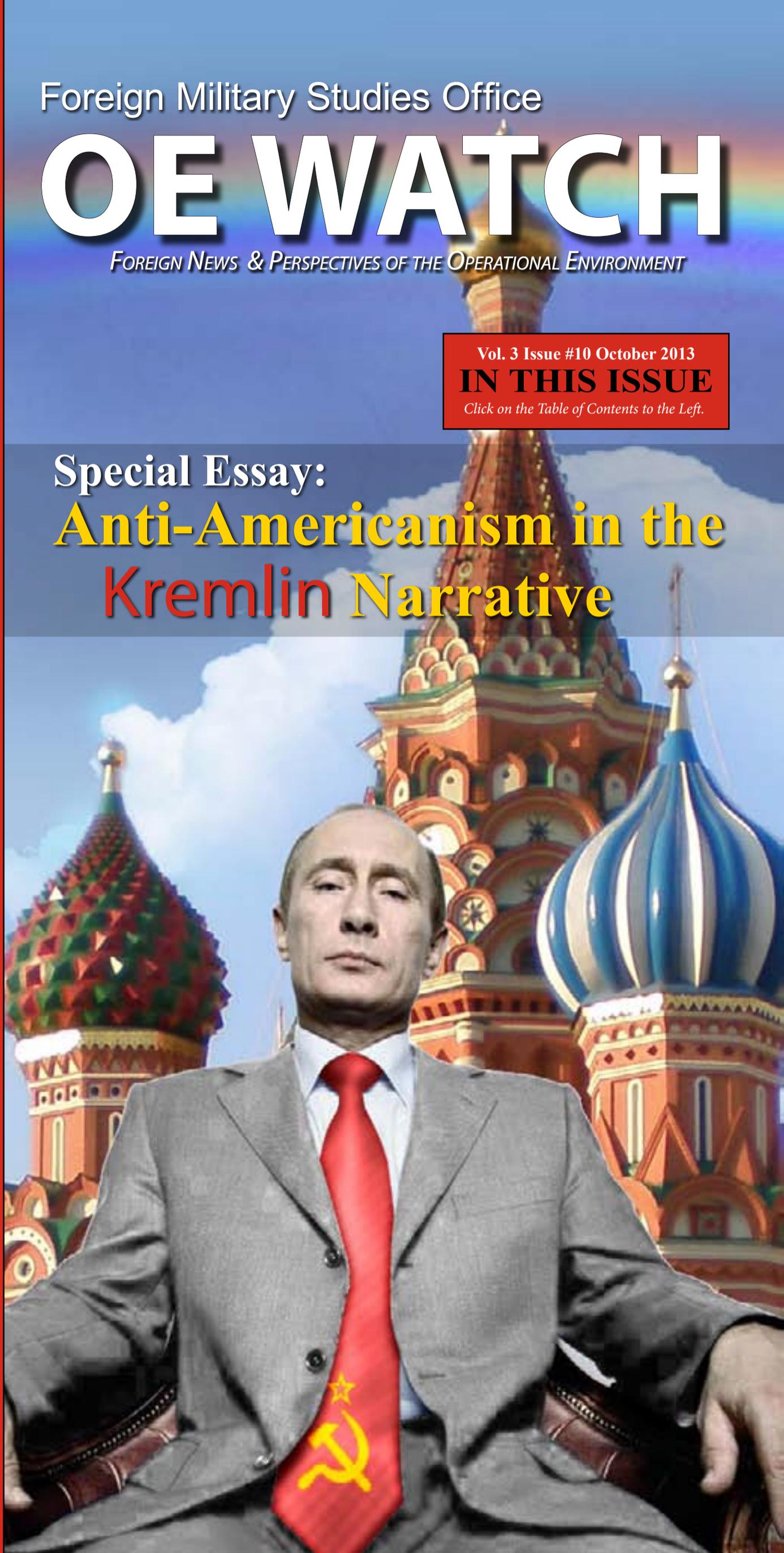
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Where Goes the IRGC's Economic Wing under Rouhani?

18 September 2013

“We do not know to what [future] projects President Rouhani was referring.”

OE Watch Commentary: While Western policymakers focus on the potential for renewed diplomacy with the Islamic Republic of Iran now that President Hassan Rouhani has changed the tone of Tehran's rhetoric, the new administration is focused on a different agenda inside Iran. Under both President Mohammad Khatami's second term (2001-2005) and Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's presidency (2005-2013), the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) gained significant power, as the Supreme Leader blessed their entry into the political sphere in order to contain reformist sentiment. Ahmadinejad himself personified this trend, as he was the first post-revolutionary Iranian president to base his legitimacy on his service to the IRGC during the Iran-Iraq War rather than as a cleric. The power of the IRGC reached its peak during Ahmadinejad's second term: more than half of Ahmadinejad's cabinet were IRGC veterans, but his cabinet included only one cleric.

Rouhani's cabinet is far different: he has reduced dramatically the number of IRGC veterans, balancing them instead with former employees of the Ministry of Intelligence. It is against this backdrop that Rouhani's speech to the IRGC is interesting. The true base of the IRGC's power and political influence rests in Khatam al-Anbia, the IRGC's economic wing. As president, Ahmadinejad awarded upwards of \$40 billion in no-bid contracts to Khatam al-Anbia-affiliated companies, a figure that represents a several-fold increase over the official IRGC budget. While Rouhani was willing to pay lip service to the IRGC's economic role, Khatam al-Anbia chief Ebadollah Abdullahi appears frustrated at the lack of firm commitment Rouhani has made with regard to new projects which his government might award Khatam al-Anbia.

Should Rouhani try to starve Khatam al-Anbia of new projects, it will signal a renewed effort by Iranian political leaders to bring the IRGC under control. Whether the IRGC—with tens of billions of dollars in reserve—will subordinate itself without a fight is another question entirely. **End OE Watch Commentary (Rubin)**



(From left to right) Current Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, former Iranian Presidents Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, and Mohammad Khatami.

Source: “Amadeh Komak be Dawlat Hastim” (“We Are Ready to Help the State”) Fars News Agency, 18 September 2013. <http://farsnews.com/newstext.php?nn=13920626000175>

We Are Ready to Help the State

According to a dispatch from the Fars News Agency, Hassan Rouhani, president of the republic, on Monday [September 16], at the 20th annual meeting of Corps commanders, emphasized the ability of this revolutionary institution in the great reconstruction and development activities in the country, and asked the IRGC to accept many large projects in the economic sphere.

IRGC Commander Mohammad Ali Jaafari said in response to the request of the president, that the IRGC is ready to assist the state in economic affairs and especially in the manufacturing sector.

In the same token, Ebadollah Abdullahi, the commander of Khatam al-Anbia, which plays a major role in this issue, in a conversation with the defense correspondent of the Fars News Agency, referring to the history of Khatam al-Anbia's activities in the construction sector, stated for two decades the Khatam al-Anbia base has been trusted with the responsibility to implement many of the country's large projects. In discussions on construction and the execution of large projects in the country, for example one can see the projects of Asaluyeh, railroad and road infrastructure like the highway from the shrine in Qom to the shrine in Mashhad, and other projects in a factories and mines...

Abdullahi continued, “For example, the shrine to shrine project is a highway whose construction will have many effects in the areas of road safety and security, and will also shorten the path. Likewise, the shortening of the road will lead to a decrease in fuel consumption... Completion of the first phase of this highway will be executed quickly, and the road between Qom and Semnan and Garmsar will be operational in the coming two to three months... Today, the Khatam al-Anbia is also present in large national projects, but we do not know to what [future] projects Mr. President was referring... These meetings have taken place in the past as well. For example we have gotten good results from negotiations with the Oil, Road and other ministries.”



Updating Iran's Naval Doctrine

17 September 2013

“The ability of the IRGC Navy is defined on five grounds: swift boats, missiles, naval air force, UAVs, and jihadi commandos.”

OE Watch Commentary: *If Iranian President Hassan Rouhani has sought to change the tone of Iranian rhetoric, his memo has not reached the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). In a semi-official, hardline Fars News Agency report summarizing two interviews granted by IRGC-Navy Commander Ali Fadavi to television news programs, Fadavi argued that the growth of the IRGC and regular Iranian navies had led the U.S. Navy to retreat from the Persian Gulf.*

That Fadavi claims that the IRGC's activities have forced unprecedented change in American strategy is meant to affirm Fadavi's leadership and the wisdom of the Supreme Leader's post-2011 emphasis on the IRGC Navy as the IRGC's marquis division. The five categories he lists for the IRGC-Navy illustrate how Iran has augmented its asymmetric strategy with new technologies, specifically with new ship-borne missiles and unmanned aerial vehicles. The concept of jihadi commandos might refer to suicide brigades, but also could presage new capabilities, such as underwater sabotage.

*Also interesting is Fadavi's interpretation of President Obama's decision to consult with Congress prior to any U.S. military strike on Syria. Fadavi calculates that if the IRGC-Navy can create enough deterrence, the U.S. Congress will hesitate to give any approval to future action against Iran. While that may or may not be an accurate reading of the U.S. political mood, such a belief among IRGC commanders will likely lead to continued military bluster, even as Iranian diplomats soften their tone. **End OE Watch Commentary (Rubin)***

Source: “Gosht-e Zani Shanavar-e Sepah dar Khalij-e Fars / Amrikaye-ha Hameh-e Ja Ma ra Mibinand” (“100 Guard Vessels in the Persian Gulf; Wherever the Americans Look, They See Us”) Fars News Agency, 17 September 2013. <http://farsnews.com/newstext.php?nn=13920625001479>

Americans See Our Vessels Everywhere

According to a report of the defense correspondent for Fars News, Admiral Ali Fadavi, commander of the IRGC-Navy, gave exclusive interviews with two television news shows to illustrate the capabilities of his force. Fadavi, with reference to dominance of all the marine forces in the Persian Gulf, said, “Today, we have more than 100 of our vessels patrolling the Persian Gulf so that the Americans see them everywhere. Stating that America has been passive in the Persian Gulf, he said that Americans have no understanding of the region... The Commander of the IRGC Navy said our power and ability is such that today we are seeing American vessels leaving from the southern shores of the Persian Gulf.

Fadavi, referring to direct confrontation between America and the Guards during the days of the Sacred Defense [Iran-Iraq War] continued to say that it is our ability that has forced the Americans to change their military strategy after nearly 200 years. He pointed out that the ability of the IRGC Navy is defined on five grounds: swift boats, missiles, naval air force, UAVs, and jihadi commandos...

This matter is also clear to the enemy. Before any assault, they must measure its costs, and this cost is great, so the enemy gives up. This is the ability of deterrence... America needs legislation to enter into any war, and we know that they will not be able to obtain this approval in the case of a war with Iran.”





The Huthis Prepare for Post-Transition Yemen

16 September 2013

“...events in Egypt have had an effect on Saudi relations with many branches of the Muslim Brotherhood, including the Yemeni one...”

OE Watch Commentary: During the months of August and September, as Yemen's National Dialogue continued unraveling, the Huthi Movement became involved in skirmishes throughout the country. Some were to consolidate their control over Saada Province, such as the flare-up of two-year-long, intermittent clashes with a Salafist school in the town of Dammaj or clashes with locals from Munabbih district, who refused to pay taxes to the Huthis. Others were conflicts of varying intensity in contested areas at the edge of the Huthi sphere of influence. Such clashes have become a regular occurrence and none falls too far outside what has become “normal politics” in and around Huthi-controlled areas. Three other developments, however, are far from normal.

The first is clashes that began in late July in the al-Radhma District of Ibb Province, an area not historically associated with a strong Huthi presence. As the first accompanying article implies, this is an important area, and a serious Huthi campaign to contest this district would meet strong resistance from national authorities. Military and security forces have already been called in to defuse the al-Radhma clashes, and the state has indicated a willingness to avoid escalation in this area.

The second development involves growing antagonism between the Huthis and the al-Ahmars, a group of brothers with vast political and economic influence throughout Yemen. One of them (Sadiq) is head of the important Hashid tribal confederation, while another (Hamid) is arguably Yemen's most powerful businessman. Most recently, it has led to clashes in Amran Province that claimed over fifty lives in only a few weeks. The conflict has even gotten personal: after Salih Hibra, a prominent Huthi leader, accused Hamid al-Ahmar of provoking



Source:

لماذا يحارب الحوثيين في الرضمة؟!؟

“Why are the Huthis Fighting in al-Radhma?!” al-Ahale, 19 August 2013. <http://alahale.net/article/12412>

Article #1

... In a conversation with al-Ahale, the district's security director Lt. Col. Sadiq al-Muqabli asked himself what was behind the Huthi's insistence in having a presence in the region and sending fighters and weapons there...

Many wars have begun in al-Radhma district, most prominently the Central Regions War ...

In this regard, Shaykh al-Shalal wonders: “What is the aim of the Huthi expansion of influence and attempt to take over the central region? Is there a joint plan between the Huthis and the Southern Movement to divide the country and support partition?”

(continued)



Continued: The Huthis Prepare for Post-Transition Yemen

a shootout that killed a family of Huthi supporters in the town of Huth (allegedly in revenge for the ransacking of the offices of Hamid's cellphone company Sabafon in Amran and Saada), Hamid al-Ahmar wrote to Yemen's attorney general asking that a case against Hibra be opened. According to the second accompanying article, this conflict is all the more volatile, given that the family of deposed President Ali Abdullah Saleh is using allies to fight alongside the Huthis to settle scores with the al-Ahmars.

The third development is less clear, though certainly no less important. On 7 September Salih Hibra met with Saudi Arabia's ambassador to Yemen. For years Huthi rhetoric has vilified Saudi Arabia, accusing it of funding and supporting its various opponents. The two even fought a brief war in late 2009-early 2010. The third accompanying article discusses a shifting Yemeni political landscape in which new alliances could be struck, including where least expected. Indeed, the apparent failure of the National Dialogue, the effects of recent events in Egypt, and Iran's new attempts to reach out to the Yemeni government all will affect the Saudi calculus vis-à-vis Yemen. The kingdom's response to these changes will play a major role in shaping Yemen's emergence from the slow-moving post-Saleh transitional period. **End OE Watch Commentary (Winter)**

Source:

أبعد من مجرد صراع مع آل الأحمر!

Mohammed abd al-Rahman. "More than just Clashes with the al-Ahmar Family!" al-Masdar Online, 16 September 2013. <http://almasdaronline.com/article/50031>

Article #2

... Considering what is taking place as simply a war between the Huthis and the al-Ahmar family or clashes between their supporters, as many see it, is biased. The Huthis want the clashes described in this way and are bothered when the truth is laid bare. The truth is that their war in this tribal region is expansionist and attempts to trick the members of these tribes in order to control and influence them. This is confirmed by the battles which they launched and are launching in al-Jawf and Hajjah, in addition to Saada...

In this context, one should not dismiss what some news websites have been saying in the past couple days regarding a plan for Ex-President Ali Abdullah Saleh and his family to carry out assassinations as part of a campaign of revenge and score-settling with those who stood against them, most prominently Hamid al-Ahmar, and tasking this to the Huthis...

Source:

السعودية والحوثيون

Nabil Abdullah. "Saudi Arabia and the Huthis," al-Khabar (Yemen), 15 September 2013. <http://www.alkhabarnow.net/news/75200/2013/09/15/>

Article #3

The meeting may come in the context of Saudi desires to maintain its position as the most important actor in Yemen with a privileged status in Saudi politics for geographic, historic, cultural and economic reasons...

While Iran attracts influential southern leaders and civil society groups and the Huthis gain influence over various tribal leaders, events in Egypt have had an effect on Saudi relations with many branches of the Muslim Brotherhood, including the Yemeni one. Consequently, Saudi Arabia has lost a strong Yemeni ally. Indeed, the relationship between Saudi Arabia and the Brothers has become a hostile one, which is a key reason for Saudi to return via the Huthi window...

A cooperative relationship between the two could be established, though, given Saudi Arabian attempts to lessen Iranian influence in Yemen and its interest in preventing collaboration between Huthis and the Shi'a living across the border in southern Saudi Arabia. Furthermore, they can support each other in dealing with Yemen's Muslim Brotherhood. Surely politics does not know eternal friendships or enmities. Just as there are points of disagreement there are always points of agreement.



Syria: Who Frames Whom?

11 September 2013

“...After two and a half years of revolution, shouldn't we wonder why opposition leaders find it so difficult to understand politics and how to prevent regime infiltrations?...”

OE Watch Commentary: Although the empirical proof may be spotty, the claim that the rebels were involved in the 21 August chemical attacks in the eastern periphery of Damascus has a receptive audience both in and outside of Syria. The Syrian regime and its allies, Russia in particular, will continue pushing this narrative; regardless of its veracity, the claim should be understood. On 23 August the Lebanese newspaper al-Safir published an article – an excerpt of which is included here – laying out the narrative of rebel involvement to an educated, Arabic-speaking public. At the heart of the story lies an armed group called the “Liwa al-Islam” (The Islamic Brigade), allegedly the strongest among rebel units ensconced in residential neighborhoods on the outskirts of Damascus. As such, the group would play a major role, were the rebels to advance into the capital. According to the article, Russian sources presented evidence linking this rebel group to the attacks that took place in the Eastern Ghouta neighborhoods of Zamalka and Ein Tarma.

Liwa al-Islam is one of many groups that lie in the vast middle zone between the fundamentalist and secular fringes of the Syrian rebellion. As with most effective rebel battalions, they are closer to the former than the latter. They are a key component of the Syrian Islamic Liberation Front, which, despite being sectarian in its outlook and religious in its politics, is considered more palatable than other rebel coalitions. Unlike the secular or fundamentalist fringes of the rebellion, both of which opposed American strikes, though for very different reasons, Liwa al-Islam hedged. Its 1 September statement on the potential strikes – an excerpt of which accompanies this commentary – implied conditionality: so long as the right targets were struck and the strike was done



Logo of Liwa al-Islam, rebel faction in the Syrian Civil war.
Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Liwa_al-Islam_logo.png

Source:

جريمة الغوطة: ما قصة صاروخي «لواء الإسلام»؟
Mohammed Balut. “The al-Ghuta Crime: What is the Story of Liwa al-Islam’s Two Rockets?”
al-Safir, 23 August 2013. <http://www.assafir.com/Article.aspx?EditionID=2546&ChannelID=61465&ArticleID=1931#.UjdSFMash8E>

Article #1

According to the Russians, the two domestically manufactured rockets had chemical warheads and were launched from areas under the control of the “Liwa al-Islam.” This group, which is led by Zahran Alloush, is the strongest armed opposition group in the Ghouta. It has nearly 25,000 fighters distributed in Irbin, Zamalka, Sebqa, Kafr Batna, Ein Terma and al-Moadimiya. The two rockets aimed to counter operation “Capital Shield,” the Syrian Army’s largest operation on the edges of the capital since the conflict began. One of the rockets landed in Jobar near the old city, while the second landed between Irbin and Zamalka...

Source:

بيان حول الضربة الأمريكية المرتقبة
“Statement on the Anticipated American Strike,” Liwa al-Islam General Command, 1 September 2013. <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=519161051491446&set=a.438503639557188.99714.402176393189913&type=1>

Article #2

...What we care about in this matter is who America directs the strike against and why the particular time was chosen, given that the Asad regime has used chemical weapons tens of times without anyone moving a finger. Is it because America has been struck by a sudden case of awakened conscience? Or is it rather because it felt that the mujahideen were on the verge of achieving a final victory and seizing control of the country, forcing a last-minute American mobilization to deal this reeling regime its final blow, so as to portray itself as a key player and finally achieve its months-long goal of ruling Syria?...

(continued)



Continued: Syria: Who Frames Whom?

with the interests of the Syrian people in mind, no unconditional opposition would be articulated. Once the prospects of an American strike faded, they issued a new statement – an excerpt of which is included here – blusterously denouncing the potential deal to destroy Syria’s chemical weapons.

On the same day that the first statement was issued, Liwa al-Islam announced a major offensive in the Qalamoun Mountains north of Damascus. The Qalamoun offensive was dubbed the “Submission to Allah the Almighty” battle and was to target various sites commanded by the Syrian Army’s 3d Division, in coordination with other rebel groups. Much of the Qalamoun had been relatively quiet for several months thanks to local-brokered agreements between the rebels and the regime. The new rebel offensive broke this calm in several areas, most spectacularly the historical Christian town of Maaloula, which was overrun by rebels on 4 September. Part of Syria’s attention shifted accordingly, from chemicals in Zamalka and Ein Tarma to nuns and convents in Maaloula.

*The third accompanying article, an op-ed from the influential Saudi newspaper, al-Hayat, seeks to understand the political and military logic behind the flare-up in Maaloula. Unable to find a convincing reason from a rebel perspective, the author speculates that regime machinations are behind the affair. Although overused and usually impossible to verify, arguments of infiltrations and agents provocateurs have some utility. After all, the line of demarcation separating the regime from the rebels is neither fixed nor impermeable. Many new and difficult questions emerged in Syria during late-August/early-September, including “Who Framed Whom?” **End OE Watch Commentary (Winter)***

Source:

بيان حول الضربة الأمريكية المرتقبة (١١)
 “Statement on the Anticipated American Strike (II),” Liwa al-Islam General Command, 11 September 2013. <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=415676228538769&set=a.414187582020967.1073741828.413705812069144&type=1>

Article #3

...the suggestions of a military strike by the United States-led alliance are a blatant exploitation of the blood of those who died in the 21 August massacre and a means of negotiating with the Asad regime on its chemical weapons, which are considered a threat to western interests if they fall in rebel hands... For us, the political victory in this comes from the clarity with which the lies of what calls itself the resistance have become clear. In a contemptible and humiliating fashion, it expresses its willingness to give up its deterrent chemical weapons, which have been accumulated by the blood and sweat of the Syrian people, and which were meant to achieve strategic parity to counterbalance the Zionist nuclear arsenal.

Source:

لماذا معلولا؟
 Houssam Itani. “Why Maaloula?,” al-Hayat, 10 September 2013., 9 August 2013. <http://alhayat.com/OpinionsDetails/550076>

Article #4

What is the military justification for the attack? How will it reverberate at the tactical and political levels? Who set the timeframe for the attack and why was this particular political moment chosen to storm the town? What will the Free Syrian Army’s entry to Maaloula do to change the military map?...

The opposition’s inability to take a clear position on the overrunning of Maaloula leads one to ponder two possible reasons for the operation: One is that the FSA’s “political brain” is completely detached from the warnings of an American strike and fails to understand the importance of improving its bad image in the eyes of the media and western public opinion (which is ultimately responsible for the military strike), which view it as an opposition force that kills prisoners and murders children. The alternative (and this is more logical) is that the Syrian security apparatus has influence on some of the brigade leaders in the Free Syrian Army and leads them, whether or not they realize it, to carry out the agenda of the regime, which is looking for any card that may strengthen its international position...

It is clear from the laments for Maaloula voiced by the regime and its followers that the regime is sending a message to the Vatican and the international community, saying: “This is the nature of the opposition that you defend.” Meanwhile the regime completely ignores the catastrophe in al-Ghouta and similar crimes. After two and a half years of revolution, shouldn’t we wonder why opposition leaders find it so difficult to understand politics and how to prevent regime infiltrations?



Egyptian Russian Relations: More Than Meets the Eye

OE Watch Commentary: *Russia and Egypt today find themselves at a crossroads during a time of extreme tension and volatility in the Middle East. Current developments offer an opportunity for Russia and Egypt to deepen their relationship in lieu of what appears to be flagging Western support.*

Egypt has a long history in playing off Russia against the United States. Vladimir Putin appears ready to visit Cairo and the newly installed military regime is ready to receive him with open arms. As the referenced article mentions, in response to the Egyptian junta's escalating use of force against protestors, the US cancelled Operation Bright Star, a major military exercise with Egypt, which prompted Russia to immediately offer all Russian military facilities at the Egyptian military's disposal.

For Egypt, the attractiveness of Russia is the prospect of increased political independence from the strong influence of the US. Geo-politics also play a role. Both Russia and a significant part of Egypt's elite and society are strongly opposed to Islamic fundamentalism. On the other hand, Egypt and Russia view that the West has waxed and waned in support of fundamentalist groups such as the Taliban in Afghanistan and the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. A symptom of the complexity in relations throughout the Middle East, Egypt's current relations with Turkey are under severe stress while relations with Israel and Saudi Arabia are improving. This is a reversal of the situation from a few short weeks earlier when the Muslim Brotherhood were in power.

*Putin and the current military-led government, nevertheless, are ultimately guided by pragmatic economic and military considerations. **End OE Watch Commentary (Tombaugh)***

Source: Nkrumah, Gamal. (August 20, 2013). "Cairo Waits For Putin." Al-Ahram. Retrieved August 25, 2013, from: <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/News/3796/17/Cairo-waits-for-Putin.aspx>

...“America is today no longer the first among equals in the Arab world and Washington must contend with the fact. The Arab urge for security may not have been satiated, but the new relationship between Russia and key countries in the Arab world — such as Egypt — makes sense at this defining moment.”

“Russia is ridding itself of the last vestiges and imprints of negative publicity that only a decade ago peaked in the Arab world. Frankly speaking, Arabs distrusted Russia. Not so now.”

“The rising power and influence of Russia has chipped away at the monopoly of American hegemony over the Arab world.”...



Vladimir Putin in a 2005 visit to Egypt.



Russian Air Force Academy Welcomes First UAV Class

4 September 2013

“More than 60 people will take a five-year course in four specialties for the management and maintenance of various UAVs that are coming into service”

- Colonel Oleg Kochetkov

OE Watch Commentary: The Russian Federation has made several attempts over the last few years to utilize unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) technology in the Russian Armed Forces. The Russian Armed Forces appear to be interested in a variety of UAV technologies, ranging from smaller models, similar to the US “Raven,” to larger models similar in size and purpose to the US “Predator.” UAV development is being pursued by all of the main and lesser branches (including the airborne forces) within the Ministry of Defense.

The accompanying article discusses the Russian efforts to develop the human component of the UAV- the operator. The Russian Federation has apparently developed a curriculum for UAV pilots (presumably for the larger, more “Predator”-like models). Russian UAV pilots will be trained in 4-5 year academies, which would resemble the U.S. military model (a combination of a U.S. service academy and an initial officer basic course for job training). Upon completion of the academy graduates will be commissioned as lieutenants and be sent to their gaining units.

Although the program is located at the Russian “Air Force” Academy, it is unlikely that all graduates will be commissioned into the Air Force. The similarity among different military academies allows graduates to complete one service’s academy, yet be commissioned in another branch of service. Given the high interest in UAVs by the Ground Forces and airborne units, it is likely that many of these graduates will see service in these Ministry of Defense branches. It is also expected that graduates will be pumped into the Ministry of Interior and Border Troops, as these militarized security services are also fielding UAVs.



Forpost UAV Source: <http://vitalykuzmin.net/>

Source: “Preparation of UAV Specialists Starts in Russia,” ITAR-TASS (Russian government wire service), 4 September 2013, <http://www.itar-tass.com/>, accessed 20 September 2013)

Preparation of UAV Specialists Starts in Russia

Radio waves of new stations can seal Russia from the sky, sea, and land

The Air Force Academy has started training unmanned aviation specialists, ITAR-TASS was told today by Colonel Oleg Kochetkov, head of the Western Military District press service.

“The Air Force’s education and science center - the ‘Air Force Academy’ - for the first time has recruited unmanned aviation specialists,” he said. “At the end of this year the first samples of UAVs will arrive at the college for practical training of cadets. More than 60 people will take a five-year course in four specialties for the management and maintenance of various UAVs that are coming into service or are only undergoing tests.”

“The training of these specialists is being organized in Voronezh and at the Chelyabinsk branch of the Air Force Academy,” Kochetkov said.

According to him, “the academy will receive the Russian-made Orlan-10 UAV system which is used for monitoring objects in inaccessible terrain, as well as for search and rescue activities.” The Forpost UAV, used for aerial reconnaissance, is expected to arrive at the college at the beginning of 2014. The quantity of incoming aviation equipment will be increased in the future.

The command of the Russian Airborne Troops is planning after three-five years to have UAV subunits in all parachute landing (airborne assault) companies, Airborne Troops commander Vladimir Shamanov said.

(continued)



Continued: Russian Air Force Academy Welcomes First UAV Class

*The addition of a UAV career track for officers is another sign that Russia is serious about the integration of UAVs into its Armed Forces. As the excerpt from the article points out, airborne units are already planning on having organic UAV assets at even as low as the company level in some units. **End OE Watch Commentary (Bartles)***

According to him, UAV subunits already exist now in the structure of reconnaissance and special subunits and in artillery and air defense of the Airborne Troops. "Following world practice, we intend to further develop the UAV component in our troops," the colonel-general stated.



Forpost UAV <http://www.defencetalk.com/pictures/searcher-ii/p47137-forpost-uav.html>

Public Perception of the Sea Breeze Exercises and Ukraine's Prospects in the Black Sea Region

By Alisa Moldavanova

This paper focuses on the changing Ukrainian public perceptions of Sea Breeze. By closely examining six Ukrainian regional and national newspapers from 2001 until 2013, this study uncovers several underlying themes that explain varying public support and resistance to these exercises. The results suggest that Ukrainian public opinion is not uniform, and emphasize the importance in keeping these regional differences in mind when conducting a public information campaign regarding the Euro-Atlantic prospects of Ukraine.

<http://fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/Collaboration/international/Ukraine/Sea-Breeze-exercise.pdf>



Armenia's Surprising Decision to Join Russian-led Customs Union

3 September 2013

OE Watch Commentary: On 3 September Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan made an announcement that surprised many in the West: Armenia will be joining the Russian-led Customs Union, which also includes Belarus, and Kazakhstan. The announcement came in a joint statement upon conclusion of talks between Sargsyan and Russian President Vladimir Putin. The first accompanying Newsru.com excerpt reports on Armenia's decision and quotes portions of the statement.

Up until 3 September Sargsyan never made a commitment to join the Customs Union, as Armenia does not border any Customs Union countries. While stressing the need for cooperation with Moscow, Armenia's priority was, nonetheless, deep and comprehensive trade with European Union (DCFTA), according to Armenia's top officials. Armenia successfully concluded DCFTA negotiations with the E.U. less than two months ago, in July 2013, and Brussels expected Armenia to initial an association agreement with the E.U. at a summit in November in Vilnius, Lithuania. This is why Sargsyan's announcement came as such a surprise, to put mildly.

Yet Armenia has been in a difficult position. Russia's influence in Armenia is vast. Sargsyan cannot ignore Russia, but instead has to play a balancing act between Russia and Europe. Nonetheless, eventually he had to make a choice, as Putin has been pressuring Armenia to join the Customs Union.

Although officially Sargsyan announced that the decision to join the Customs Union was his, it is possible to conclude, as does Russia expert Anders Aslund, that Putin presented Sargsyan with an ultimatum—join the Customs Union or Russia will stop guaranteeing Armenia's security.¹

Less than two weeks after Sargsyan's announcement, nationalism-leaning Russian Agency REX, which boasts



Third President of Armenia, Serzh Sargsyan. Source: <http://armenpress.am/eng/news/691806/>

Source: Artem Potemin, "Армения заявила о желании вступить в Таможенный союз (Armenia Announced About Wish to Join Customs Union)," Newsru.com, 3 September 2013. <http://www.newsru.com/finance/03sep2013/armenia.html>

Armenia Announced Its Wish to Join Customs Union

Armenian President announced the republic's decision to join the Customs Union and to participate in the subsequent formation of the Eurasian Economic Union. This became known on Tuesday from a joint statement by the heads of the two countries, signed by Vladimir Putin and President Serzh Sargsyan upon the conclusion of talks in Moscow, reports Interfax."

"The President of the Republic of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan announced the decision of the Republic of Armenia to join the Customs Union and to take to this aim the necessary practical steps, and subsequently - to participate in the formation of the Eurasian Economic Union. President Vladimir Putin has supported the decision of the Republic of Armenia and the Russian side expressed readiness to fully assist in this process," says the document.

Moscow hopes that all members of the Customs Union will support Yerevan's decision to join the union, Armenia and Russia have already made the political decision, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov announced today.

"Procedures that exist in the Customs Union now take effect - an appeal to the leadership of the three founding members-states of the Customs Union, the Eurasian Economic Commission. This is already the subject of negotiations, rather technical. But the political decision was made in Armenia and the Russian Federation. We hope it will supported by all members of the Customs Union," quotes the Minister to RIA Novosti....

(continued)



Continued: Armenia's Surprising Decision to Join Russian-led Customs Union

the Russian imperial crown in its logo, came out with a poll among bloggers. The poll concluded that a slim majority (53%) of Russian bloggers believe it is good that Armenia is joining the Customs Union. Select comments from bloggers polled accompany this commentary. They reveal conflicting and at times irrelevant opinions—one, for example, said he likes Armenia's cognac and Armenians are "very nice people."

*The repercussions of Sargsyan's decision, however, are far more serious. Although Sargsyan said, upon the conclusion of his talks with Putin, that his decision to join the Customs Union is not a rejection of Armenia's dialogue with European institutions, a country cannot be both a member of Russia's Customs Union and European DCFTA. A customs union has one common external trade policy. Each individual member-state gives up sovereign control of this policy within its borders when joining the union. Therefore, once a country joins the customs union, the E.U. cannot conclude a DCFTA with only one country in that union. In this case, the other members of the Customs Union would have no interest in such an agreement. **End OE Watch Commentary (Borshchevskaya)***

1. Anders Aslund, "Push for Customs Union Turns Friends to Foes," The Moscow Times, September 9, 2013, available from: <http://www.iie.com/publications/opeds/oped.cfm?ResearchID=2473>

Source: Artem Potemin, "Хорошо, что Армения вступает в Таможенный Союз: мнения блогеров . Так думают 53% (It's Good that Armenia Joins Customs Union: Bloggers' Opinions. 53% Think so)," Information Agency REX, 15 September 2013. <http://www.iarex.ru/fd-non/41144.html>

It's Good that Armenia Joins Customs Union: Bloggers' Opinions

Here are the most interesting comments on the poll:

Demian Bogaty:

Glad about Armenia's accession to the Customs Union. I love Armenian cognac, naturally the real thing, bastourma , adjal - sandal and much more from the Armenian cuisine. I have Armenian friends, though they have barely been Armenia, they were not born in the 4- 5th generation in Moscow. Well, [they are] very nice people. And my favorite band "Crematorium" is headed by Armen Grigorian.

.....

Alexander Ativanov:

It is quite possible to test, based on practice , the benefit for the two communities for the two former Soviet republics [the blogger appears to be referring to Armenia and Ukraine]. According to my information, Armenia suffered the biggest population losses as a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union. And in GDP per capita, they are close. Armenia is about 15 per cent inferior to Ukraine. Its only advantage is its lower inertia as a result of its smaller size and population. So practice will show how correct was the choice for each country.

Alexander Bobylev:

The question, first of all is, are Armenian citizens happy about this event? From Russia's own sad experience we clearly know that in the post-Soviet space, much of which has maintained and exacerbated the Soviet traditions, beliefs and intentions of the leadership do not coincide with the desires, hopes, and aspirations of the people.

Nina Grushin:

A sense of self-preservation has allowed Armenia wise to make the right choice.



Ukraine Moves Closer to Europe—for Now

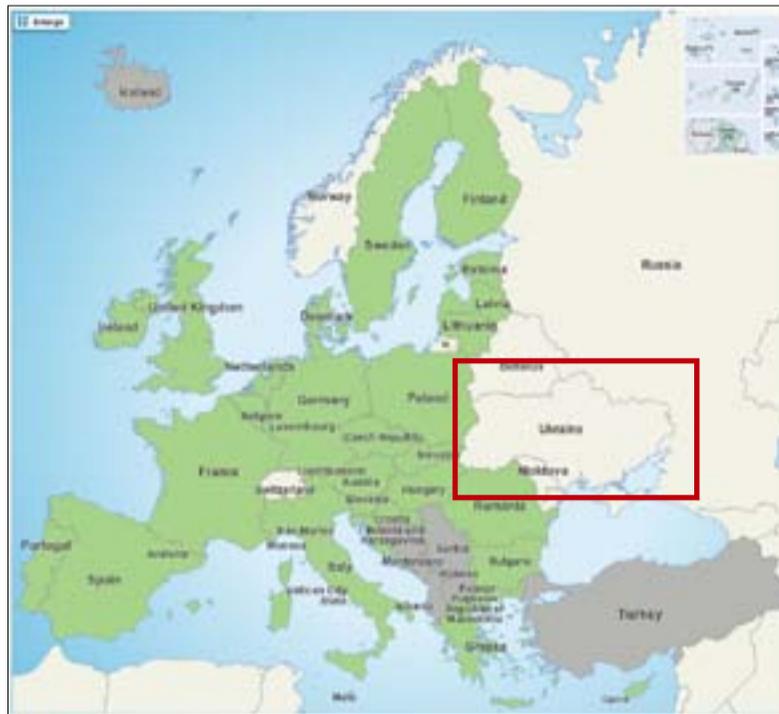
NO DATE 2013

OE Watch Commentary: On 18 September Ukraine's Cabinet of Ministers unanimously approved the draft Association Agreement with the European Union (EU). This is a very significant step towards greater cooperation between Ukraine and Europe. The agreement's core element is an introduction of a deep and comprehensive free trade area (DCFTA), as the document outlines a path to deepen political and economic relations between Ukraine and the EU. Ukrainian and European officials are expected to sign the Association Agreement at the upcoming Eastern Partnership Summit, in Vilnius, Lithuania, on 28-29 November 2013.

The Cabinet's approval of the draft agreement is especially significant because for Ukraine, as a step towards Europe is also a step away from Russia. Russian President Vladimir Putin has been putting significant pressure on Kiev to join the Russia-led Customs Union with Belarus and Kazakhstan. Ukraine is particularly important to Putin because historically the Russians draw the very creation of the Russian state from the Kievan Rus state with Kiev as its capital. From that perspective, losing Ukraine would be akin to losing Russia's limb.

Traditionally, the Kremlin dislikes the notion of Ukraine's sovereignty. Putin once famously declared that Ukraine is not a state. Putin has also threatened retaliation if Kiev signs the Association Agreement.

The two accompanying excerpts from the Russian press illustrate how Russian publications reported on the Ukrainian Cabinet's decision. The traditionally right-of-center *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* (*Independent Newspaper*) focuses on what this choice means about possible EU membership for Ukraine, while the more mainstream RIA Novosti (*RIA News*) looks at the economic effects of the agreement and focuses primarily on the perceived negative economic drawbacks for Ukraine. It also points out that this summer, when Russia effectively blocked Ukrainian goods, the EU intervened for the first time in a conflict situation, supporting Ukraine and reinforcing its sovereignty.



Map of current EU members.
Source: <http://europa.eu/about-eu/countries/>

To see a higher resolution version of this image, please click the image.

Source: Tatiana Ivzhenko, “Киев пошел на Запад. Украине не обещают полноправного членства в Евросоюзе (Kiev Went West. Ukraine is not promised a full-fledged membership in the European Union),” *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* (*Independent Newspaper*), 19 September 2013. http://www.ng.ru/cis/2013-09-19/1_kiev.html

Kiev Went West

Ukraine is not promised a full-fledged membership in the European Union

...In Kiev there is little doubt that the document [Association Agreement] will be signed, but the debate about the possible problems with subsequent ratification by the parliaments of all E.U. member-states. There is no consensus about whether or not the successful ratification will be the first step towards Ukraine's full E.U. membership....

Officials in Kiev believe that this document in no way limits cooperation with the Customs Union...A week earlier, he [Prime Minister Mykola Azarov] ordered that the Ukrainian ministries and agencies began to prepare a trilateral meeting between Ukraine, Russia, and the E.U. to harmonize all positions.

Off-the-record, officials say that the Russian side is unlikely to accept the invitation as previously Moscow has clearly indicated its plan of action after the signing of the agreement between Ukraine and the E.U. That means at least the introduction of trade barriers to protect the Customs Union market from the influx of goods from Europe through Ukrainian territory. Azarov confirmed yesterday, “The average rate of customs duties in Ukraine for goods from the E.U. will reduce in half - from 4.95 to 2.42 %. While the tariff rate on Ukrainian goods in the EU will decrease by 16 times - from 7.6 to 0.5 %.” This means that more of Ukrainian products will be shipped to the E.U., experts say. But they emphasize that a license to export to the European market will get only those companies that have completely switched over to European standards.

...”The main risk is that for modernization of the economy, enormous resources, and time, and needed, “Mykola Azarov said yesterday. He reminded that the forthcoming agreement with the E.U. assumes a decade of transition to modernize the economy, but select industries, in order to survive, will have to reach the European level in 3-5 years.

Earlier economist Kiev Center for Political and Conflict Studies Alexander Koshik stold, “NG” that text of the agreement between Ukraine and the EU contains unrealistic standards, which may result in bankruptcies of hundreds of companies and the destruction of Ukrainian industries...

(continued)



Continued: Ukraine Moves Closer to Europe—for Now

Russia's reaction in response to the Ukrainian Cabinet's decision and speculations about the Customs Union come out as a clear focus in these articles. The RIA Novosti article reveals that primarily pro-Russian forces in Ukraine, such as the Communist Party, are against the agreement.

While Ukrainian officials noted publically that the association agreement in no way limits cooperation with the Customs Union, as Nezavisimaya Gazeta notes, privately, they know this is not the case.

As both articles point out, the Cabinet's approval of the draft Association Agreement is not the final word on closer ties to Europe for Ukraine. The Armenian government, which Putin has also been pressuring to join the Customs Union, had successfully concluded DCFTA negotiations with the EU in July 2013, and analysts expected they would sign the Agreement in Vilnius too. However, Yerevan made a sharp U-turn this month by announcing it will join the Customs Union instead, a move that experts tend to view as a result of pressure from Putin.

*Putin has less leverage over Ukraine than over Armenia, the latter having no guarantor of security apart from Russia. Still, Putin's pressure matters to Ukraine. In addition, the Ukrainian government has yet to resolve rule of law issues, such as the imprisonment of former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko, an important precondition for closer relations with Europe. It is important to watch Ukraine in the months leading up to the Vilnius Summit in November. **End OE Watch Commentary (Borshchevskaya)***

The head of the Simulations Agency, Vitaliy Bala recalled that this summer, when Russia introduced a regime of enhanced customs control, effectively blocking Ukrainian goods at the borders, the E.U. intervened for the first time in a conflict situation. "I think it would be very nice if after the signing of the agreement [with Europe], Russia and the Customs Union fully implement the currently-voiced political threats. This will finally consolidate Ukraine as a nation and a state. And also, it will put on the agenda of the Ukrainian- European negotiations the issue of compensation mechanisms for a transitional period," he told NG. "He added that the association agreement is the only path today towards deep reforms in Ukraine

Communist Party leader Petr Symonenko said that big business and the government are committing a crime by accepting the terms of the EU without the approval of the choice of the Ukrainian people....

Source: "Украина и ЕС: в шаге от ассоциации (Ukraine and the EU: One Step Away from Association)," RIA Novosti (RIA News), 19 September 2013 <http://rian.com.ua/analytics/20130918/338571780.html>

Ukraine and the EU: One Step Away from Association

The Cabinet of Ministers approved the draft Association Agreement with the EU, but there is no unanimous approval in the country for European integration of the country, and experts warn that a difficult period of adjustment awaits the Ukrainian economy

According to Ukrainian Prime Minister Mykola Azarov, after signing the agreement, Ukrainian producers will have an advantage, as the average rate of customs duties on Ukrainian goods to the E.U. will decrease 15-fold— from 7.6 % to 0.5 %. And for 99 % of the goods, these changes will take effect in the first year after the signing of the agreement. Ukraine, for its part, will reduce the average rate of customs duties on goods from the E.U. just two-fold - from 4.95% to 2.42 % , and not immediately, but gradually, over a period of four years.....

However, the difficult economic situation in the euro zone could significantly complicate the creation of a free trade zoneThe liberalization of trade relations with the E.U. carries not only advantages, but also risks for Ukrainian business. For example, five years after the agreement Ukraine agrees to completely eliminate the import duty on second-hand clothing from E.U. countries - and that could be a threat to Ukrainian clothes producers.

To minimize the negative consequences of Ukraine's leadership intends to set up a special group....

While the Cabinet confirmed the text of the agreement, opponents of European integration held a rally next to the government building under the slogans of "European Integration - the path to poverty," "Enough Pressuring Ukraine!" and "Is there a future for the European Union?"

The participants stated that the signing of the association will jeopardize Ukraine's economic independence. Such rallies - albeit sparsely-attended- were also held in other cities. The Communist Party of Ukraine and the movement "Ukraine's choice," strongly opposed the association with the E.U., argued that the question of Ukraine's European integration should be put to a referendum...

The main argument of Euro integration opponents is that the association agreement will close the doors for Ukraine into the Customs Union and will also reflect negatively on trade with the Russian Federation....

Russia fears that after the signing of this agreement, European goods may flood Customs Union countries at lower prices, which would harm the Russian producers. Russian president's advisor Sergei Glazyev said earlier that Russia may raise the issue of repealing the free trade regime with Ukraine. Russian President Vladimir Putin said later that Russia will respect Ukraine's decision to complete the agreement about the free trade areas with the E.U., but will be forced in this case to take measures to protect its own economic interests....



Russia's Sovereign Foreign Policy

11 September 2013

“Russia – for the first time in contemporary history – is demonstrating that it is not subordinate to the United States....”

OE Watch Commentary: *Over the past few weeks the Russian media have been filled with reports describing the country's diplomatic success in preventing a US attack against Syria. By offering to help gain control of Syria's chemical weapons stockpiles, the Russian leadership has not only played the role of global peacekeeper, but has also demonstrated that it will pursue an independent foreign policy (the assumption being, that, until recently, Kremlin leaders would align their policies with those of the US).*

The notion that the Kremlin leadership has been subservient to the US since the end of the Cold War rivalry has considerable traction today in Russia (see this month's Special Essay). As the quoted expert (General Ivashov) claims in the referenced article, Russia gained nothing but humiliation in trying to align its foreign policy with the West. In condescending to

Source: Andrey Polunin, “С-300 достигнет Ирана,” [S-300s Will Reach Iran] Svobodnaya Pressa, 11 September 2013.

Russia Seen No Longer Subservient to US

Russia is making one further decisive move in the diplomatic game around Syria. Vladimir Putin has made the decision in principle to supply Iran – Syria's ally – with five battalions of the S-300VM Antey-2500 air-defense missile system (the modified export version of the S-300V system). This is what Kommersant has learned. Tehran is in exchange to withdraw its \$4 billion action against Rosoboroneksport for having nixed the previous contract.

We recall that in September 2010 President Dmitriy Medvedev signed an edict on action in compliance with the UN Security Council resolution, which imposed sanctions on Iran, specifically a ban on the transfer of modern arms. In the end the \$800 million contract for the delivery to Iran of five battalions of the S-300 (modification of the PMU-1) was canceled. In response, Tehran brought suit against Rosoboroneksport in the Geneva court of arbitration.

We would note that Russia “shafted” Iran over the S-300 deliveries to its own detriment. The decision was purely political. It was a good-will gesture to the United States. But the gesture did not work – relations with America did not improve. It may be assumed also that the SAM systems promised the Iranians became a throwaway card in the dialogue with the Americans on the START III Treaty. One way or another, now the Kremlin's decision to fortify Iran appreciably alters the state of affairs in the Americans' game against Syria – not in favor of the United States...

(continued)



Antey-2500 SAM at MAKS-2011. Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/S-300VM>



Continued: Russia's Sovereign Foreign Policy

Western interests, Russia's former allies (e.g., Serbia, Iraq, Libya) were unjustly punished and Russian interests were marginalized. Now, having remained firm in their support of the Syrian regime, the Kremlin has rediscovered the importance of pursuing an independent foreign policy.

*According to General Ivashov, selling advanced air defense systems to Iran ought to be one of the next steps in demonstrating Russia's sovereign foreign policy. He dismisses the idea that such a move would increase tensions in the region, and claims rather that such a step would help in "augmenting Iran's military potential, thereby contributing to stopping war in the Greater Middle East." **End OE Watch Commentary (Finch)***

...“Russia has in recent years, with Putin’s return to the presidency, begun to pursue a more-or-less independent policy,” Colonel-General Leonid Ivashov, president of the Academy of Geopolitical Problems, believes. “The national leadership has recognized that unless Russia shores up its status in the world, it will simply be obliterated. Finished off militarily included. This is why Russia is now seeking on the one hand bases of operations in the world, on the other, putting together a pool of its allies.

“All the years of democratization, beginning with Gorbachev, we chose as the main direction of cooperation the West. But in response our Western partners, primarily the United States, did nothing good for Russia. Moreover, our security has been impaired and our allies who reached out to Russia – Serbia, Iraq, Libya – have been pounded. Now it’s the turn of Syria, to be followed by Iran. As a result, Russia is on its own and is losing its geopolitical status of world power. It turns out that not only can our country not be relied on as a dependable ally, being friends and cooperating with it is altogether dangerous. Because all countries which reach out to Russia are crushed....

...“Following the support of Syria, Russia began to comport itself more independently toward Iran. Iran is our neighbor. On the majority of international security issues the positions of Moscow and Tehran coincide. Iran also, like ourselves, supports the idea of a multi-polar world and is opposed to the presence of the armed forces of third countries in the Caspian region. In addition, Iran is reaching out to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and will most likely submit a membership application to BRICS. It is this neighbor that should supplement Russia’s security potential.

“Russia was required to pursue military-technical cooperation with Iran, but pressure from Washington prevented the delivery to Tehran of purely defensive systems – such as the S-300. God grant that this mistake now be rectified. Russia is augmenting Iran’s military potential and hereby contributing to stopping war in the Greater Middle East.”...

...SP: Do the deliveries to Tehran of the S-300 change the lineup of forces?

[Ivashov] Russia is already sending warships to the Mediterranean, to Syria’s shores, a relatively strong Russian naval force is being created there. The deliveries to Iran of modern SAM systems reinforce Russia’s positions extremely and are shaping an alliance of the states that is close to a military alliance.

Russia – for the first time in contemporary history – is demonstrating that it is not subordinate to the United States....

Russia's Strategic Mobility

Supporting 'Hard Power' to 2020?

By Roger N. McDermott

http://www.foi.se/ReportFiles/foir_3587.pdf

Roger N. McDermott’s Russia’s Strategic Mobility: Supporting ‘Hard Power’ to 2020? examines the rapidly changing Russian military’s strategic capabilities for logistics, combat service support, and force projection. McDermott’s work for The Russia Studies Programme of the Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI) sheds light on the unglamorous, but vitally important logistic backbone upon which the Russian military relies. Roger N. McDermott is a Senior International Fellow for the Foreign Military Studies Office.





Bio-Weapon Accusations

7 September 2013

OE Watch Commentary: One of the pretexts for the strain in Russian-Georgian relations stems from the pro-Western/US aspirations of certain Georgian leaders. Some within the Kremlin maintain that Georgia belongs in their sphere of interest and resent what they perceive as US meddling in the region. Over the past decade the Russian leadership has used a variety of tactics to limit American influence. One favorite strategy deals with disinformation.

The excerpt from the accompany article is a good example of this tactic. For the past couple of years rumors have been circling around a US-funded biological lab constructed near Georgia's capital, Tbilisi. Even though American and Georgian officials have invited their Russian counterparts to tour the health facility, the harmful allegations continue. In this instance a senior Russian health official ascribes a recent outbreak of swine flu to this lab.

This excerpt also illustrates how conspiracy theories are built. To "prove" the nefarious nature of this lab the article attributes the US decision not to sign a protocol related to the Biological Weapons Convention in July 2001 to the subsequent anthrax attacks which occurred later that year. These specious cause-effect arguments serve as a basis for much of the anti-American sentiment in Russia today (see this month's Special Essay).

Over the past couple of weeks there has been much discussion regarding how the US and Russia can work together to secure Syria's chemical weapons and associated facilities. There are numerous obstacles to implementing such a plan, and one of the key problems revolves around the question of trust. To carry out this mission and effectively defend against common threats, Russian officials will have to modify their disinformation campaign against the US.
End OE Watch Commentary (Finch)

"We are now concerned as to why US military laboratories are located in our former medical institutions in Georgia."

Source: "Русской Федерации Министерством иностранных дел обеспокоена 'Американские военные Биоактивность' у наших границ," [Russian Federation Ministry of Foreign Affairs Concerned by 'US Military Bioactivity' at Our Borders] *Ruskiy Vestnik*, 7 September 2013.

'US Military Bioactivity' at Russia's Borders

The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has expressed concern over the active US military biological activity at our borders. As the [ministry's] information and press department told RIA Novosti, the United States is not providing any documentary evidence confirming that "all facilities under US jurisdiction or control that had previously taken part in military biological programs have been destroyed or converted to peaceful purposes in accordance with Article II of the Convention on the Prohibition of Biological and Toxin Weapons."

In addition to this, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated that doubts that Russia is fulfilling its obligations with regard to the Convention on the Prohibition of Biological and Toxin Weapons are completely groundless. It is being emphasized that creation of a verification mechanism within the framework of the Convention on the Prohibition of Biological and Toxin Weapons would make it possible to dismiss many questions regarding the United States itself in connection with the involvement of a number of US organizations in large-scale dual-use biological activity.

In this regard, I would like to recall the comments of Russia's chief health inspector Gennadiy Onishchenko regarding the African swine fever epidemic that engulfed the southern part of the country not long ago:

"African swine fever came to us from Georgia -- first to Ossetia and then to Krasnodar and Stavropol Krays. There are signs that this is an artificially induced situation. It is economic sabotage, and Krasnodar Kray has been unable to get out from under it for three years. We are now concerned as to why US military laboratories are located in our former medical institutions in Georgia..."

...Reserve Colonel Mikhail Supotnitskiy, a specialist in biological security problems and candidate of biological sciences, shared his opinion with Odnako. He suggests that US biological activity has never slowed down, it continues to this day, and the Americans are not taking orders from any conventions. In June 2001, for example, they completely blocked the document that specialists called the Protocol. It was an addendum to the Convention on Prohibition of the Development, Production, and



The Central Public Health Reference Laboratory is the product of collaboration between the U.S. Department of Defense, the U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command, and the Georgian Ministry of Defense.
Source: http://www.army.mil/article/82553/The_Birth_of_a_Laboratory/

(continued)



Continued: Bio-Weapon Accusations

Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, which was signed by the leading states in 1972. The 1972 Convention is a single page of text, and it does not contain clear mechanisms for monitoring compliance with it...

...What happened next is something that still demands an official explanation. Many still remember the events of autumn 2001, when letters containing what was called “white powder” were sent in the United States. An investigation revealed that this terrorist act was organized by individuals associated with military biological centers in the United States. A very curious fact was discovered when this “powder” was tested in specialized laboratories. It turned out to be a mixture of freeze-dried anthrax spores and a special excipient that experts coyly called some sort of silicon dioxide. The largest particle, which included spores as part of this “white powder,” did not exceed 3 microns in size, and the “silicon dioxide” particles that played the role of an excipient were of submicron size. The strain of anthrax pathogen turned out to also be known to them because it was their strain Ames, which is capable of overcoming the protective effect of commercial vaccines and is resistant to treatment with the antibiotics that are used to treat anthrax in Russia. The white powder turned out to be a special formulation that is designed for filling dispenser munitions and that, when used, is capable of infiltrating the deep areas of the lungs and causing illness in a person. But according to the 1972 Convention, the United States should not have such formulations and munitions. Why they were put off by the Protocol thus became clear.

Fergana as FATA?

Central Asia after 2014 – Outcomes and Strategic Options

By Ted Donnelly

The analysis presented in this essay describes the most likely effects of the 2014 U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan on the Central Asian States, focusing on the Fergana Valley – the strategic center of gravity of the region.



<http://FMSO.leavenworth.army.mil/products.html#Europe>



Popularity of Military Cadet Education

6 September 2013

OE Watch Commentary: While the Russian military is still struggling to attract sufficient numbers of conscripts and contract soldiers to fill active duty ranks, the situation with enticing young men and women to serve as military cadets is far better. After a pause of nearly four years to reorganize the country's military education system, during which time there were very few cadet applications, military schools and universities now have to turn applicants away.

This increase among those who want to enter the cadet ranks stems from a variety of factors, to include a greater emphasis on patriotism over the past decade and rising education costs. Not only is there renewed prestige with wearing a military uniform, but economics also plays an important role. Where in the past higher education was provided by the government, today many universities now require students to pay for their education; however, education is largely free for those students serving as military cadets. Moreover, there are enhanced career opportunities for those who have completed military service.

As the excerpt from the article points out, the long delay in reorganizing the system has resulted in some loss of institutional capacity. In downsizing and consolidating the military's education system, many instructors were released. Problems with outdated curriculum and equipment aggravate the shortage of trained personnel. Still, as a barometer to measure how the military is perceived today within Russian society, the increased desire among youth to attend a military academy is a positive sign. **End OE Watch Commentary (Finch)**



Russian Airborne Cadets. Source: ITAR-TASS

Source: "1 сентября 15,000 кадетов и студентов началась дорога в связи с углубленным военных знаний," [On 1 September 15,000 Cadets and Students Began the Road to In-Depth Military Knowledge] Nezavisimoye Voyennoye Obozreniye Online, 6 September 2013. <http://nvo.ng.ru/>

Academies Up at Start of New Academic Year

Defense Ministry vuzes [higher educational establishments] and schools began the current academic year according to a new tradition. A military leader visited each of them with a speech to send them on their way.... Considering that 15,000 cadets and students, of whom 200 are girls, have sat down at their desks this year, the scope of the celebration is impressive. Particularly in the context of the fact that many military vuzes have not been replenished with new cadets at all in the past few years. And the intake last year totaled only just over 2,000.

This year, for instance, a full intake has resumed at the General Staff Military Academy. Instead of 16 students, as was the case only recently, of whom the Internal Troops and the Border Troops accounted for the lion's share, this year 91 top and senior officers have been admitted. They will study there for two years. Foreign students have also enrolled at the General Staff Military Academy. In total there will be 240 officers studying at the Academy....

...These are not the only examples of military education returning to common sense. It is important that the leadership of the military department is trying to do everything possible to ensure that the new combat equipment and simulators that are entering the troops are also sent to the vuzes in parallel. Future commanding officers and specialists must be trained not on hardware that, when they graduate, people will no longer find in the Army, but on the machines with which, if necessary, they will have to fight and which they will need to train their subordinates to use. Another peculiarity of this year is the dramatic increase in practical studies for the future officers. Thus, for instance, flight training is envisaged for students at the Air Force Academy. Students at the General Staff Military Academy will be taught information technology and information security -- a general or colonel who has not mastered the computer will never be able to insist that his subordinates learn to work with automated command and control systems at both the tactical and the operational-tactical level. And if the future commanding officer has not had a training course in working with drones and robotized systems and complexes, you will never make a modern commanding officer of him.

True, it is one thing to announce education under new programs and academic disciplines, and another to introduce them into the day-to-day practice of vuz training. If the students are to be filled with a sense of the importance of mastering advanced means and methods of conducting combat operations and mastering future combat equipment and modern methods of military engagement, then their teachers must become advocates for this approach to combat

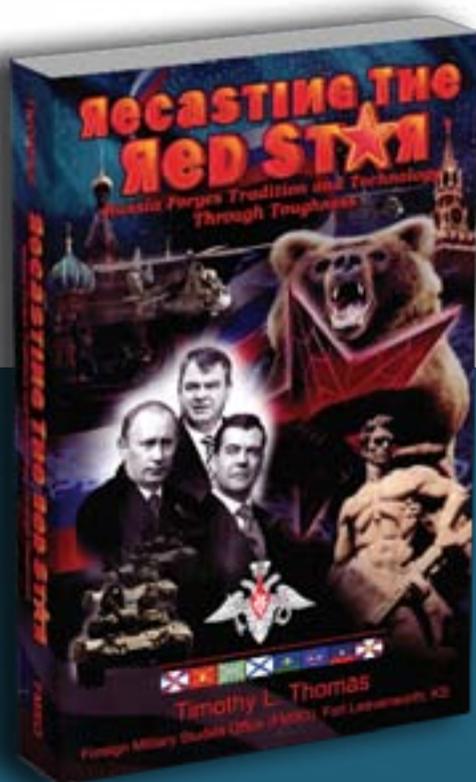
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Continued: Popularity of Military Cadet Education

work. But where do you find mentors like that, if the new approaches to the training and education of future officers are only just beginning to be established. And gaps of three or four years in the training of cadets were bound to affect the level of the professorial and teaching staff of the vuzes. Although the chiefs responsible for organizing military education assert that in those vuzes where there was no intake of first-grade students, the education process never stopped. There was the retraining of officers sent from the troops to study, the training of students under additional professional education programs was organized, sergeants were trained under the “two years plus 10 months” program, there was retraining in specialties in demand in the market for officers due to be discharged in the coming months...

...Let us hope that the education that began on 1 September at the military department’s higher and secondary educational establishments will be directed, along with everything else, specifically at educating and training the elite officer of Russia.



Tim Thomas’s *Recasting the Red Star* describes Russia’s culture of military thought through its modernization effort. Adding to his robust library of work on the subject, Tim Thomas illuminates Russia’s Defense Ministry reform efforts, the Russian national security strategy take on the operational environment, and a relevant review of the Russian military doctrine.



Russia "Restoring" Military Presence in Arctic

19 September 2013

OE Watch Commentary: Man's quest for seasonally ice-free Northeast and Northwest Passages is slowly becoming a reality. For the past six years ice-free summer passage across the north of America has been possible in September, and may remain so for some period of time. Use of the Northwest Passage cuts 3000 to 4000 miles off the trip from Europe to Asia. This results in a marked savings in fuel and time. Use of the Northeast Passage will create similar benefits, since the reduced ice pack here has permitted more transit without icebreakers during the past years.

These easier passages are creating legal battles over international versus internal waters, rights of navigation, local navigation protocols, fishing rights, transit fees, garbage disposal and requirements for local pilots. An open passage requires a significant investment in infrastructure: communications, ports with repair and maintenance facilities, disaster response centers, law enforcement facilities, fueling stations, and more. Of the six largest cities, five are in the Russian Federation. This will surely expand. Therefore, the needs for military

Source: "Russia is restoring its military presence in Arctic, not expanding it - Foreign Ministry," Interfax, Murmansk, 19 September 2013

The strengthening of any country's military forces in the Arctic is in most cases not targeted against any of the neighbors, Russian Foreign Ministry charge d'affaires Anton Vasilyev said.

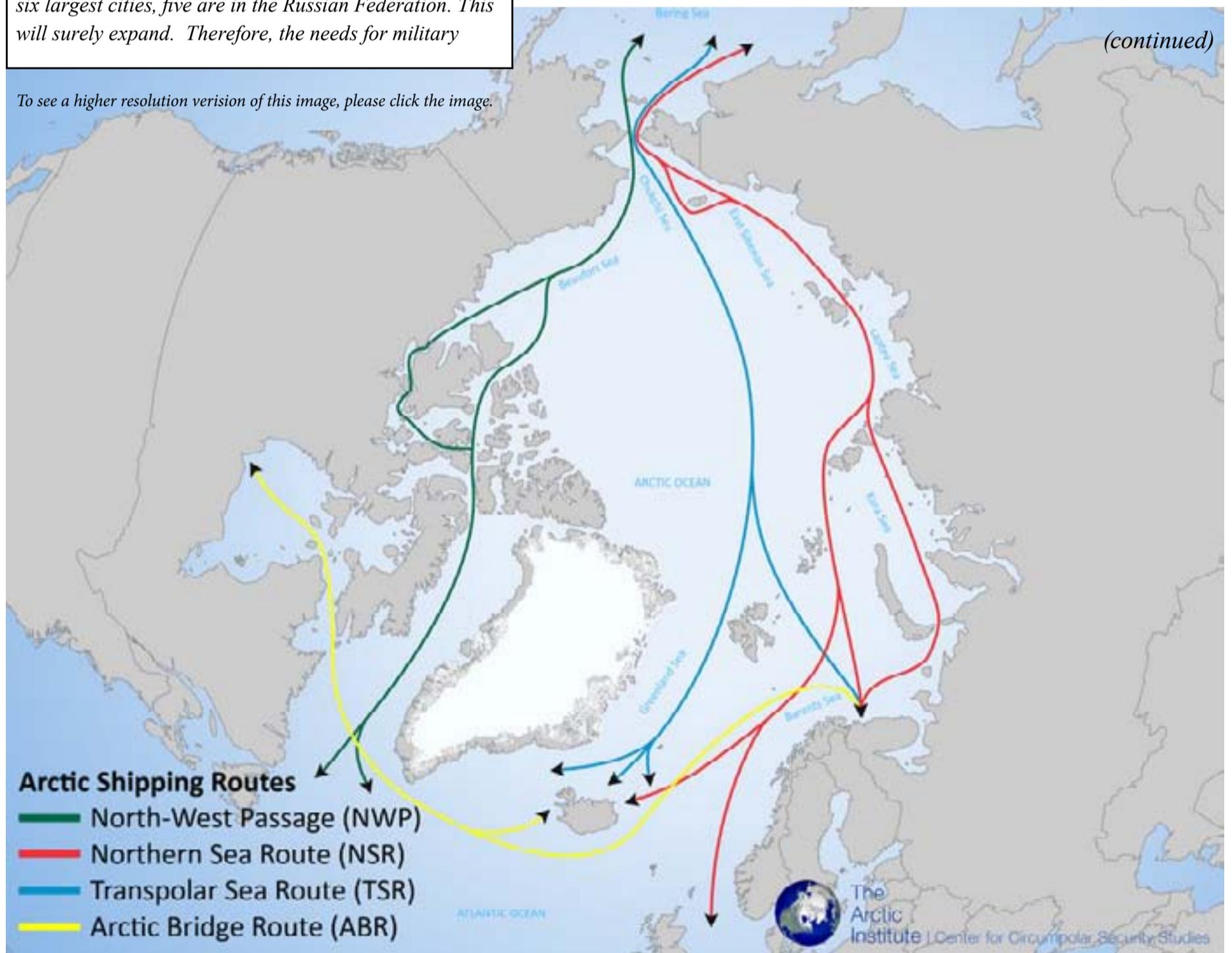
"If we don't take into account strategic nuclear weapons, which are an element of a different, global strategic dimension, it's difficult to speak about any militarization of the Arctic," he said at a meeting of the permanent committee of parliamentarians of the Arctic region held in Murmansk on Thursday.

Vasilyev reiterated that Russia, in turn, is not expanding, but restoring its military presence in the Arctic.

"It is significant that the expansion, and in the case of Russia, the restoration of its military presence in the Arctic is going on in a transparent and predictable way and is not aimed against any neighbors, is not destabilizing, and does not cross any 'red lines,'" he said.

The diplomat said the strengthening of the military forces is due to the

To see a higher resolution version of this image, please click the image.



(continued)



Continued: Russia “Restoring” Military Presence in Arctic

*security of this area will also grow, and as the title of this article suggests, Russia is moving in that direction. Russian naval and air patrols can be expected to increase and the Russian Ground Forces have announced the formation of two Arctic brigades, one of them presumably stationed near Murmansk on the Kola Peninsula. **End OE Watch Commentary (Grau)***

expansion of economic activities in the Arctic and is needed for the protection of the northern borders, ensuring navigation safety, protection of important infrastructure elements, and search and rescue operations.

“There is no reason for the appearance of military political blocs in the Arctic, while gradual expansion of military cooperation between the Arctic countries appears very logical,” Vasilyev said.





OE Watch Commentary: In late 2012, in an attempt to limit foreign influence (particularly in the political realm), the Russian government enacted legislation which requires nongovernmental organizations (NGO) to register as “foreign agents” if they receive foreign funding. Since enacted, Russian news sources report that only 22 of nearly 1000 NGOs inspected last spring were deemed foreign agents, while the Ministry of Justice’s official website confirms only one.

The lack of up-to-date information from official channels and the ambiguity of the law’s wording illustrate the contentiousness of this piece of legislation. Opponents of the law question the meaning of the terms “foreign agents” and “political activities.” They argue that these ill-defined and ambiguous phrases allow for government authorities’ selective application and enforcement of the law. NGO leaders have also argued that the label “foreign agent” has a negative connotation related to “spy,” which leads Russians to believe that such organizations are collaborating with outsiders to undermine the goals of the Russian government.

The foreign agent law appears to be only one part of a larger campaign to reduce the connections between Russian NGOs and their international counterparts. In late August the government tried to bring these entities under closer government control by awarding presidential grants to nearly 1,100 organizations. Recipients included several NGOs suspected of being foreign agents. In total, the government awarded 2.3 billion rubles to NGOs, and there are plans to increase financing for next year’s awardees. Leaders of Golos, an election-monitoring NGO which did not receive a presidential grant, argue that the grants will not support NGOs that challenge the legitimacy of government power.

The selective application of the foreign agent law, coupled with the selective distribution of presidential grants, illustrates that the Russian government is possibly embarking on a campaign not only to strengthen those NGOs which serve its interests, but also to weaken the legal and



Russian election watchdog GOLOS is denied Kremlin funding.
Source: <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20130829/183047883.html>

Source: “Russia’s Ombudsman Files NGO ‘Foreign Agent’ Law Appeal,” RIA Novosti, 3 September 2013.

Article 1:

Russia’s Human Rights Commissioner has lodged an appeal against some provisions of a controversial law which brands NGOs funded from abroad and engaged in political activities as foreign agents, Kommersant daily reported Tuesday. “The document’s provisions containing such definitions as ‘foreign agents’ and ‘political activities’ are politically and legally ambiguous,” Vladimir Lukin said, according to Kommersant.

Source: “Russian Election Watchdog Golos Is Denied Kremlin Funding,” RIA Novosti, 29 August 2013.

Article 2:

Golos was sidelined because the Russian government is ready to admit problems with corruption and rights abuse, but not elections, Grigory Melkonyants, deputy executive director of Golos, told RIA Novosti on Thursday. “The authorities think vote-monitoring is very dangerous ... because it undermines their legitimacy,” he said.

(continued)



Continued: Recent Developments in Russia's Foreign Agent Law

financial constructs of NGOs that resist registering themselves as foreign agents. Weakening the channels for Russian NGOs to cooperate with international NGOs, including American ones, creates a climate which prohibits open communication.

*Russian proponents of the law have also claimed that the U.S. Department of State has actively tried to undermine the law's success through the establishment of alternative grant programs. Local Russian press coverage and government rhetoric allege that U.S. involvement in the application of the foreign agent law weakens the working relationship between Russia and the U.S. Most importantly, this Russian media coverage surrounding the law's application spreads negative and often incorrect information about U.S. motives and actions. This information undermines the legitimacy of well established cultural and academic cooperative programs in the country, and creates hostility toward U.S.-led initiatives, thereby fueling anti-American sentiment among the population, which further weakens the possibility of future cooperation. **End OE Watch Commentary (Hodish)***

Also see this month's Special Essay: "Anti-Americanism in the Kremlin Narrative".

Source: "Russian Prosecutor Says 2,200 Russian NGOs Funded from Abroad, Moscow Interfax in Russian, 22 August 2013.

Article 3:

More than 2,200 NGOs in Russia receive funding from abroad, and of the 1,000 or so checked so far, 22 have been given the status of "foreign agents" under the recently passed law, privately-owned Russian news agency Interfax quoted a senior official from the Prosecutor-General's Office (PGO) saying on 22 August. Aleksey Zhafyarov, identified as deputy head of a PGO directorate, gave the figures at a meeting of the Human Rights Council under the Russian president.

Interfax recalled that mass checks of Russian NGOs by the PGO, Justice Ministry and tax officials began earlier this year after the law was passed by the State Duma. Several leading NGOs, including Memorial, Moscow Helsinki Group and Golos, said they would not register as "foreign agents."...

... The law that requires nongovernmental organizations that receive funding from abroad and "engage in political activity" to register with the Justice Ministry as "foreign agents" was signed by President Vladimir Putin on 21 July 2012 and came into force on 21 November 2012. Advocates of the law say it is necessary to prevent foreign-funded meddling in Russia's domestic affairs. Its critics, however, see it as an instrument to stigmatize NGOs and crack down on civil society.



3D Will Help Troops to Conduct Warfare

September 2013

OE Watch Commentary: Russian military experts believe the country is behind in the production of combat simulation systems, which they believe began in the US in 2000. To correct this deficiency the military has ordered simulating air and space combat conditions on the basis of 3D graphics on regular and special monitors. A network-centric system of tactical-level management is being created for commanders as well. These simulation systems are vital to correctly assess battlefield situations, whose speed and thus complexity are exceeding a human's ability to comprehend and calculate. Several companies are now vying to take over specific aspects of that competition. Kompas Machine Building Design Bureau Special Development Center is working to ensure accuracy and realism are input into the mathematical model. The Almaz-Antey Air Defense Concern noted that the 3D Unigine Engine will be used in the workup. Fotogrammetria is working to digitize military equipment and terrain. The goal is to supply the Defense Ministry with 27 simulator systems in 2015. **End OE Watch Commentary (Thomas)**

Source: Izvestiya Online, 9 September 2013

“The speed of targets, especially intercontinental ballistic missiles and supersonic and, in the future, hypersonic aircraft and missiles, does not allow adequate human calculation of flight trajectories or to independently estimate where a missile will fall. Meanwhile, automated decision-making increases the response time by a factor of 10. Therefore, the army needs such a system today,” Korotchenko explained.

Mathematical Model Will Predict Combat Actions in Virtual Reality

The military has ordered a program simulating the development of combat conditions in space and on the air on the basis of a three-dimensional digital model of reality that will be displayed in 3D graphics on regular and special monitors. The program will simulate the behavior of military equipment and projectiles on the basis of physical laws, weather conditions, and anticipated external effects on objects.

The result of the work will be a graphic display of the immediate future - for example, the zone of a missile strike on a three-dimensional map, as well as options for actions needed to fend off or eliminate a threat - to raise interceptors, evacuate people from the attack area, etc. in addition, the system will show from where a missile was launched, based on its trajectory, and what is necessary for a counterattack. The program takes into account all physical laws and environmental conditions like the wind and precipitation, which must be realistic in the model,” Dmitry Kustov, acting director of the Kompas Special Developments Center, stated...

...“The speed of targets, especially intercontinental ballistic missiles and supersonic and, in the future, hypersonic aircraft and missiles, does not allow adequate human calculation of flight trajectories or to independently estimate where a missile will fall. Meanwhile, automated decision-making increases the response time by a factor of 10. Therefore, the army needs such a system today,” Korotchenko explained.



These 3D images were produced by ALMAZ-ANTEY using Unigine Engine Technology.
Source: <http://unigine.com/press-releases/121120-almaz-antey/>





Turkey's Position on Syria Leaves it Isolated

18 September 2013

OE Watch Commentary: The accompanying passages from the Turkish press discuss the Turkish government's position on Syria. They warn that unless it takes a more realistic approach to the crisis, Turkey will end up even more isolated in the Middle East.

The Turkish government's position on Syria differs from that of most of the international community: since the beginning of the crisis it declared that the Syrian civil war would not end unless the Assad regime was gone. The government is not pleased with the recent diplomatic developments and is disappointed in an outcome which, it believes, does not punish Assad.

When a military intervention was being discussed in the U.S., Prime Minister Erdoğan and Foreign Minister Davutoğlu both said that it should not be a limited one, but rather a comprehensive one directed at the regime. According to Erdoğan and Davutoğlu, Assad is just trying to gain time and cannot be trusted, while the Russian plan is not genuine. They both claim that the main goal should be to stop the civil war.

The government's position does not reflect the views of the majority of Turks, who oppose a military intervention in Syria. The public is weary of the costs to Turkey of such an intervention. As one of the passages points out, these include increased refugees (which already number over 500,000), worsening border security, increasing terrorism, a worsening economy and deteriorating relations with Russia and Iran. Many criticize the government's foreign policy, which they claim was a sectarian one, resulting in Turkey becoming a party to the civil war. As the final passage points out, Turkey's foreign policy choices have left it isolated in the region, including in Syria, Egypt, and Iraq, and in the Middle East peace process. **End OE Watch Commentary (Kaya)**

"...we are not in Iraq. We are not in Syria or Egypt. And, we are not in the Middle East peace process because of the point we are at with Israel. So, what else is left?"



Syrian refugees in Turkey. Source: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/gallery/2013/jul/25/syria-refugees-in-pictures#/?picture=411543692&index=2>

Source: Soli Özel, "Kimyasal krizinden sonra bölge Türkiye ve İran (Turkey, Iran and the region after the chemical crisis)," Haberturk.com.tr, 18 September 2013, <http://www.haberturk.com/yazarlar/soli-ozel/878606-kimyasal-krizinden-sonra-bolge-turkiye-ve-iran-1>

"It looks like Turkey's requests, preferences and desires... will not be taken into account. Turkey is ending up excluded from the game because it deviated from a non-sectarian approach in its policy towards Syria; because it became a direct party to the civil war and because it wasn't able to convince anyone that it wasn't supporting jihadist groups, or at least that it wasn't looking out for them."

Source: Sami Kohen, "Ankara farklı düşünüyor (Ankara thinks differently)," Milliyet.com, 14 September 2013, <http://dunya.milliyet.com.tr/ankara-farkli-dusunuyor/dunya/ydetay/1763292/default.htm>

"...The new phase that the Syrian issue has entered requires a more rational and pragmatic approach and a more flexible rhetoric. Otherwise, Turkey will be in the position of an outside actor which just constantly complains about developments, criticizes others and is eventually left out of the process."

(continued)



Continued: Turkey's Position on Syria Leaves it Isolated



Official numbers of Syrian refugees registered or awaiting registration; the real numbers are thought to be slightly higher. Source: UNHCR - The UN Refugee Agency

Source: Sami Kohen, "Türkiye'nin rolü ne olacak? (What role will Turkey play?)," Milliyet.com.tr, 31 August 2013, <http://dunya.milliyet.com.tr/turkiye-nin-rolu-ne-olacak-/dunya/ydetay/1757016/default.htm>

"The cost to Turkey of a comprehensive military operation which will include Turkey will be very heavy (refugees, border security, terror, the economy and relations with Russia and Iran). The government's policy on the Syrian crisis, which entailed taking a side, has already created enough problems... If Ankara can now 'fine tune' its strategy and become more flexible, it would be more successful in the 'regional role' that it wants to play."

Source: Aslı Aydıntaşbaş, "Cenevre'ye 'çakmamak' lazım (We should not 'lash out' at Geneva)," Milliyet.com.tr, 16 September 2013, <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/cenevre-ye-cakmamak-lazim/siyaset/ydetay/1764055/default.htm>

"Prime Minister Erdoğan's opposition to the [Geneva] agreement using harsh language will only push Turkey outside of the Syrian equation. Be careful please!... We need to be realistic. In the short term, there will not be a U.S. intervention in Syria. Thus, the government's rhetoric should be consistent with world realities."

Source: Semih Idiz, "Türkiye'nin Ortadoğu'daki stratejik açmazı (Turkey's strategic predicament in the Middle East)," Taraf.com.tr, 16 September 2013, <http://www.taraf.com.tr/semih-idiz/makale-turkiye-nin-ortadogu-daki-stratejik-acmazi.htm>

"Ankara, who is cold towards diplomatic options, still wants Assad to be overthrown. But it does not have a convincing answer to the question "what comes if Assad goes?". Turkey placed its Syria policy on abstract wishes instead of concrete assessments. But regional and global balances did not allow for this. Now, Ankara is paying the price for not being able to foresee this.

If we put Northern Iraq aside, we are not in Iraq. We are not in Syria or Egypt. And, we are not in the Middle East peace process because of the point we are at with Israel. So, what else is left?"



Why Did Turkey Down the Syrian Helicopter?

19 September 2013

“The Syrian helicopter has been downed because those who rule Turkey are furious and upset with the entire world and the Middle East, and because they feel extremely isolated as a result of their own foreign policy.”

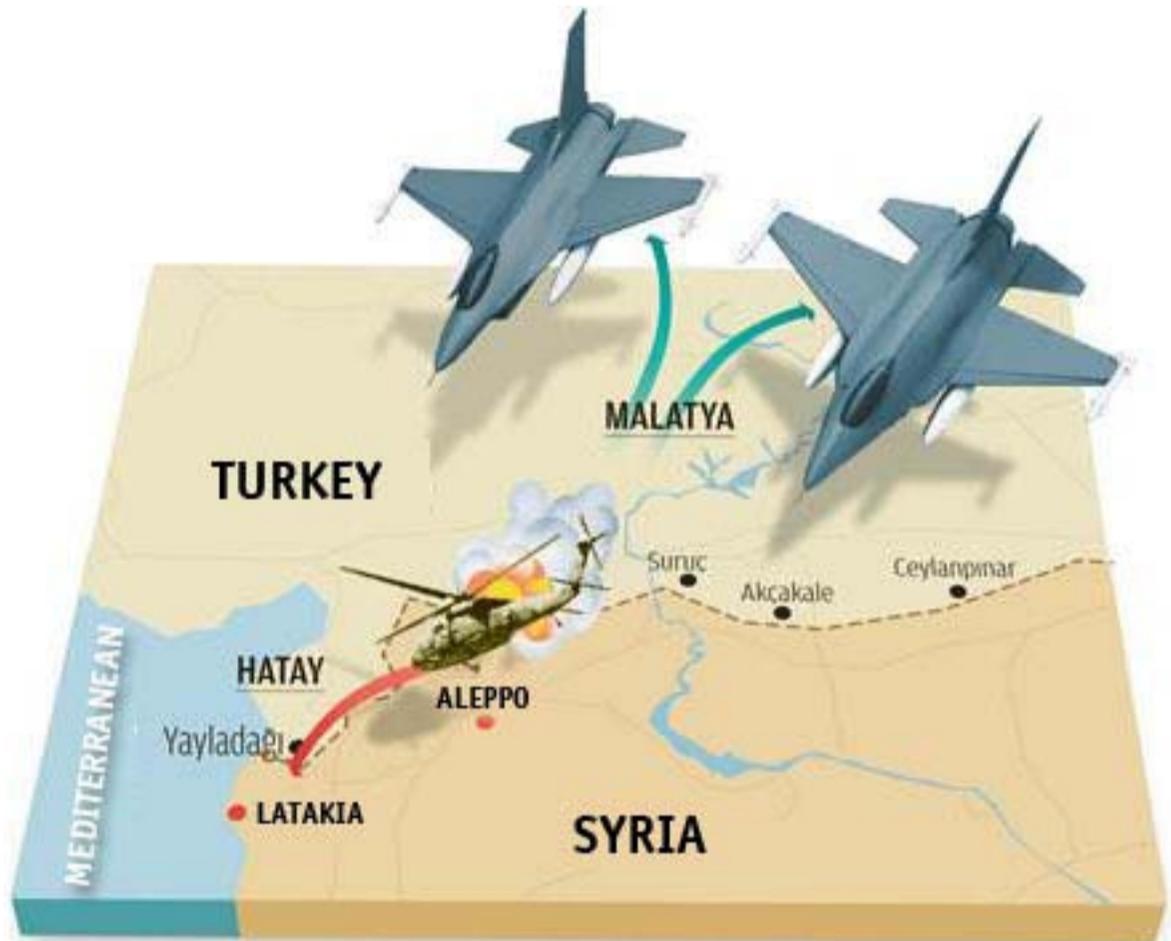
OE Watch Commentary: On 16 September the Turkish Armed Forces (TAF) shot down an M-17 Syrian helicopter. A statement on the TAF website claimed the helicopter violated Turkish airspace and refused to leave, despite warnings.

However, the debate in Turkey suggests that there are other reasons that the helicopter was downed. Given that the shooting took place only two minutes after the helicopter entered Turkish airspace, some are claiming that it was a political move. The accompanying articles summarize the potential political motivations behind the incident.

As one of the passages points out, Turkey was reacting to its increasing isolationism on the Syria issue and acting out of its disappointment over the international community’s response to the crisis. In contrast to the efforts to get Syria to eliminate its chemical weapons, the Turkish prime minister prefers an immediate, all-out military operation to end the Assad regime.

In addition, as pointed out, Turkey was retaliating against Syria’s downing of a Turkish jet in June 2012. After this incident Turkey changed its rules of engagement with Syria, declaring that any Syrian military instrument on the Turkish border would be treated as a “military threat.” Some also claim that Turkey was trying to show the world that it has the power and will to take action against Syria and to punish Syria in its own way for the massacres taking place.

The move was also met with suspicion by the political opposition. As the final passage points out, one of the leaders of the main opposition party pointed out the irony of shooting down a Syrian helicopter because it violated Turkish



Map Source: <http://medya.todayszaman.com/todayszaman/upload/image/2013/jets4.jpg>

Source: “Genelkurmay’ dan beklenen açıklama geldi (The awaited statement from the Chief of Staff has come),” Milliyet.com, 16 September 2013, <http://gundem.milliyet.com.tr/genelkurmay-dan-beklenen-aciklama/gundem/detay/1764401/default.htm>

“A statement has been made regarding the Syrian helicopter downed by the Turkish Armed Forces: “The Unified Control Alert Center (BIKIM) in Diyarbakır identified an M-17 Syrian helicopter at 26 NM [nautical miles] to the Turkish border at 13:41 hours. ... [It] was warned that it was coming close to Turkish airspace ... [even] as close as 5 NM, but it continued to come closer and violated the Turkish airspace by 2 kilometers [flying] at 14,200 feet at 14:25 hours around the Guvecci border station in Hatay/Yayladagi....

Accordingly, it was shot by one of the two F-16 aircraft on patrol duty at 14:27 hours in the Turkish airspace, and it fell down approximately 1 kilometer on the Syrian side.”

Source: Kadri Gürsel, “Suriye helikopterini ne düşürdü? (What brought down the Syrian helicopter?)” Milliyet.com, 19 September 2013, <http://dunya.milliyet.com.tr/suriye-helikopterini-ne-dusurdu-/dunya/ydetay/1765418/default.htm>

“The Syrian helicopter has been downed because those who rule Turkey are furious and upset with the entire world and the Middle East, and because they feel extremely isolated as a result of their own foreign policy.

(continued)



Continued: Why Did Turkey Down the Syrian Helicopter?

airspace, while all kinds of land border violations are being allowed to take place, referring to the radical jihadist groups which use the border areas as a base to launch attacks. Many are calling on the government to stop turning a blind eye to the use of the borders by such jihadi groups. End OE Watch Commentary (Kaya)

(Please see the July 2012 issue of OE Watch, "Turkish Jet Downed by Syria Brings the Syrian Crisis into NATO.")

...Look at how the disappointment and fury was reflected in government spokesperson and Deputy Prime Minister Bülent Arınç's words in the day before the incident: 'Won't anyone be held responsible for the massacres? Will nobody keep anyone accountable and will nobody be accountable?... The events that have transpired bring us to the point of rebelling. The answers to these questions are not in the U.S.-Russia agreement.'

...The AKP [Justice and Development Party] government has shown domestic and foreign audiences that it has the means and the will to continue its own independent agenda on Syria. And of course, it has also retaliated for the Turkish RF-4 plane that was shot down by Syria 15 months ago."

Source: Tülin Daloğlu, "Turkey Should Shut Down Jihadists on Border," Al Monitor.com, 18 September 2013, <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2013/09/nato-syria-jihadists-turkey-border.html>

"On September 17, Muharrem Ince, the deputy chairman of the Republican People's Party (CHP) said.. 'What does it serve to shoot down a Syrian helicopter while all these other violations are taking place.... Look at the land borders. Armed groups easily come and go through these borders... You may act on one issue, but what do you do about the others?'

Turkey should also abide by its responsibilities as a NATO member country and stop allowing its borders be used by armed groups — including radical jihadist groups like al-Qaeda affiliate Jabhat al-Nusra. There are so many eyewitness accounts of the group's presence along the border, as well as the ease with which the border can be crossed, that it's impossible to deny."



Changing Trends in Israel – Turkey Security and Military Relations: Their Perspectives

This article analyzes the changing trends in the military and security relations between Turkey and Israel. It identifies factors of the operational environment that influence bilateral relations and includes a thorough discussion of each of the factors from a Turkish and Israeli perspective. It argues that relations are a product of the structural changes in the two countries' operational environments.

<http://fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/documents/Changing-Trends-in-Israel-Turkey-Security-Relations.pdf>





Is the PKK Peace Process Stalling?

19 September 2013

“[The Prime Minister] said that [the reform package to be unveiled] would not include any changes on the issue of education in the Kurdish language,.... local autonomy or the Anti-Terror laws. ...these were the Kurdish public’s biggest expectations.”

OE Watch Commentary: *The ceasefire and peace process between Turkey and the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK) is one of the most important agenda items in Turkey. While the process brought great hope when it started, there is now fear that it may be stalling, carrying the risk that if it collapses, violence will be even more intense than before.*

The process was initiated in early 2013, with a view to end 30 years of violence. At first, it moved forward more quickly than anyone expected. In March the PKK declared a ceasefire and in May PKK militants started withdrawing from Turkey (into the Kurdistan Regional Government in Iraq) per their agreement. However, as the first accompanying passage notes, on 9 September the group’s umbrella organization announced that the PKK was halting its withdrawal (though keeping the ceasefire), claiming that by delaying promised reforms the Turkish government was not fulfilling its end of the bargain. The government claims that it is waiting for the withdrawal to be complete before moving forward, while the PKK wants to see a gesture before completing the withdrawal. Thus, the process appears deadlocked.

As the accompanying passages point out, the PKK is referring to reforms such as Kurdish-language education in state-run schools, the release of approximately 2000 Kurdish political prisoners, increased freedom of expression, and amendments to vague antiterrorism laws. The group was expecting these reforms to be announced in July, but when that did not happen, the PKK warned the government that these reforms should be ready by 1 September. On 19 September the prime minister announced further



PKK militants.. Source: <http://www.voanews.com/content/pkk-militants-attack-turkish-military-despite-ceasefire/1695299.html>

Source: “Terrorist PKK halts withdrawal from Turkey, maintains cease-fire,” Today’s Zaman, 9 September 2013, <http://www.todayzaman.com/news-325823-terrorist-pkk-halts-withdrawal-from-turkey-maintains-cease-fire.html>

“Following oft-cited criticism in the past couple of months toward the government for failing to take the necessary steps as part of the settlement process launched to settle the Kurdish issue, the Kurdistan Communities’ Union (KCK) -- an umbrella organization encompassing the terrorist Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK) -- has announced that PKK terrorists have stopped withdrawing from Turkey.

“While the withdrawal of guerillas has been halted, cease-fire will be kept,” said the KCK in a statement published on Monday by a news agency affiliated with the terrorist PKK. “The reason why the cease-fire is being respected is to offer the AKP [ruling Justice and Development Party or AK Party] the opportunity to take steps in line with the project of Apo [Abdullah Öcalan],” the statement read.”

Source: Murat Yetkin, “Kürt paketinin açıklanması neden gecikiyor? (Why the delay in announcing the Kurdish package?)” Radikal.com, 19 September 2013, http://www.radikal.com.tr/yazarlar/murat_yetkin/kurt_paketinin_aciklanmasi_neden_gecikiyor-1151499

“Why the delay? There was an expectation that the ‘democratization package’ would be revealed before the parliament went into recess in July, but that was delayed into August when Ramadan and the holidays came. In fact, this had led to warnings by the PKK and the BDP [pro-Kurdish Peace and Democracy Party] that these steps had to be taken by 1 September. Several statements saying that the package was ‘coming next week’, were followed by the

(continued)



Continued: Is the PKK Peace Process Stalling?

delays in the widely anticipated reform package and said that it would not include some of the most important reforms that the Kurds wanted to see, leading many to question the reasons for the delay. End OE Watch Commentary (Kaya)

(Also see, “New Hopes for Peace with the PKK” in the February 2013 issue; “The PKK Peace Process Moves Forward: ‘Silence the Guns’” in the April 2013 issue, and “Regional Implications of the PKK Withdrawal from Turkey” in the June 2013 issue.)

Prime Minister’s announcement yesterday that the package would be announced at the end of this month.”

Source: Hilmi Hacaloğlu, “Türkiye’de Demokratikleşme Paketi Ertelendi (The Democratization [Reform] Package in Turkey has been Postponed),” Voice of America, 19 September 2013, <http://www.amerikaninsesi.com/content/turkiyede-demokratiklesme-paketi-ertelendi/1752984.html>

“Member of Parliament from the [pro-Kurdish] Peace and Democracy Party Ertugrul Kürkçü said, ‘The Prime Minister told us upon his return from Turkmenistan, what would not be in the package. He said that there would be no changes on the issue of education in the Kurdish language,... local autonomy and the Anti-Terror laws. As you know, these were the Kurdish public’s biggest expectations.’”



Turkey’s Role in Afghanistan and Afghan Stabilization

By Karen Kaya

Turkey views its presence in Afghanistan not only as part of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission, but also as a “brotherhood duty” to help the Afghan people restore peace. Turkey’s views towards Afghanistan are also based on its own strategic interests: as long as Afghanistan is unstable, the whole region will be unstable, posing a security threat to Turkey. When Afghanistan becomes a secure and stable country, this will introduce wider stability in the region, bringing new economic benefits for the region in general and for Turkey in particular.

http://usacac.army.mil/CAC2/MilitaryReview/Archives/English/MilitaryReview_20130831_art007.pdf





Somalisation of the Central African Republic

September 2013

“Displacement, sexual violence, extrajudicial killings, a proliferation of arms, high levels of malaria and the collapse of the public health system have marred efforts to stabilize the country.”

OE Watch Commentary: *The Central African Republic (CAR) is at risk of once again devolving into chaos. French President Francois Hollande probably best described the situation when, according to the accompanying article, he called upon the UN Security Council and the African Union (AU) last month to stop the “Somalisation” of CAR, a reference to the chaos that engulfed the governmentless Somalia for so many years. His concern for the former French colony seems quite justified.*

Perhaps most troublesome in this nation beset by numerous troubles is the continued presence of Seleka (or at least remnants of Seleka), the rebel group responsible for overthrowing President Francois Bozizé and helping install Michel Djotodia as the country’s new leader. Although Djotodia may owe his presidency to the group, he issued a formal decree disbanding it, declaring that those who act in the name of Seleka “will expose themselves to the full sanctions available under law.” However, while Djotodia may technically have dissolved the group, the reality on the ground is somewhat different. The group has splintered, though some rebels continue to fight in its name, including against factions still loyal to deposed President Bozizé. Additionally, the rebels have been accused of a spate of crimes, including looting and killing civilians. There are also fears that the rebels’ actions are part of a nascent inter-religious conflict. While the majority of the country is Christian, Seleka is mainly Muslim. Though President Djotodia, who is Muslim, has appealed to the nation to stop the sectarian violence, going so far as to declare the “Central African Republic is a secular state,” many Christians still worry that Djotodia and



Fighters from Seleka before CAR President Djotodia ordered the rebel group disbanded. Despite that decree, there are still those who fight under its name. Source: http://www.la-croix.com/Actualite/Monde/En-Centrafrigue-les-rebelles-du-Seleka-sont-aux-portes-de-la-capitale-_NG_-2013-03-22-923908

Source: Khadija Patel, “CAR: Teetering on the brink of further conflict,” Daily Maverick (South Africa), 16 Sept 2013, <http://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2013-09-16-car-teetering-on-the-brink-of-further-conflict/>

...Six months after the coup d’état that forced Francois Bozizé out of power and that exposed the cost of South Africa’s ambitious foreign policy, the Central African Republic (CAR) is still embroiled in conflict..

...And while South African troops are (thankfully) no longer on the frontlines in Bangui, the conflict the South African National Defence Force (SADF) was ensnared in continues to threaten the stability of the entire region...

...Last week, more than 100 people were killed in clashes in Bossangoa in the north east of the country between remnants of forces loyal to Bozizé, and factions of the Seleka rebel coalition...

...While Djotodia has tried to distance himself from the rebels as he sets up an interim government in preparation for elections next year, the United Nations has slammed Seleka for its crimes...

...In a report released last Thursday the UN said, “Seleka also engaged in sexual violence and grave violations against children.” The report also lists violations committed by forces loyal to Bozizé and recommends that the new transitional government take urgent measures to restore security and screen both rebel fighters and soldiers of the national army. Djotodia has already dismissed the head of the armed forces following the clashes with Bozizé supporters in the

(continued)



Continued: Somalisation of the Central African Republic

his Muslim counterparts from the north seek to impose an Islamist agenda in CAR.

An international peacekeeping force is slowly assembling, with plans to reach its full strength of 3,600 troops some time in 2014. It is unclear if this will be strong enough to stop the ongoing violence and allow elections, scheduled for next year, to proceed. Meanwhile, the situation appears to be deteriorating, with outside observers warning of possibly significantly more violence to come.

*As is so often the case in Africa, ironically the people are poor although the country has significant mineral wealth. Diamonds, uranium, gold and other valuable minerals are all present in CAR. However, full development of these resources is hindered by corruption, the country's poor infrastructure, and what could be yet even more instability in an already unstable country. **End OE Watch Commentary (Feldman)***

north east of the country...

...Last month, UN secretary general Ban Ki-moon recommended the UN Security Council impose sanctions on CAR in response to the abuses taking place in the country, while the ICC prosecutor also warned that she was studying the situation in the country closely...

...But while the international community bides its time, security in the country continues to deteriorate...

...While the international peacekeeping force has remained in Bossangoa "to prevent a bloodbath", they too are enforcing peace with just two military trucks...

...This weekend, the Republic of Congo announced that it has sent 200 more soldiers to the Multinational Force of Central Africa (Fomac) as the force transforms itself into a 3,600-strong international peacekeeping mission...

...Fomac itself, however, has not endeared itself to some in CAR. One Facebook user in Bangui last month noted that Fomac used tear gas to disperse protesters at M'poki airport in Bangui. Reports were that thousands of civilians fled to CAR's main international airport in order to escape Seleka rebels, occupying the tarmac for 18 hours as a sign of protest. What began as an evacuation became a protest against the state of lawlessness in the country...

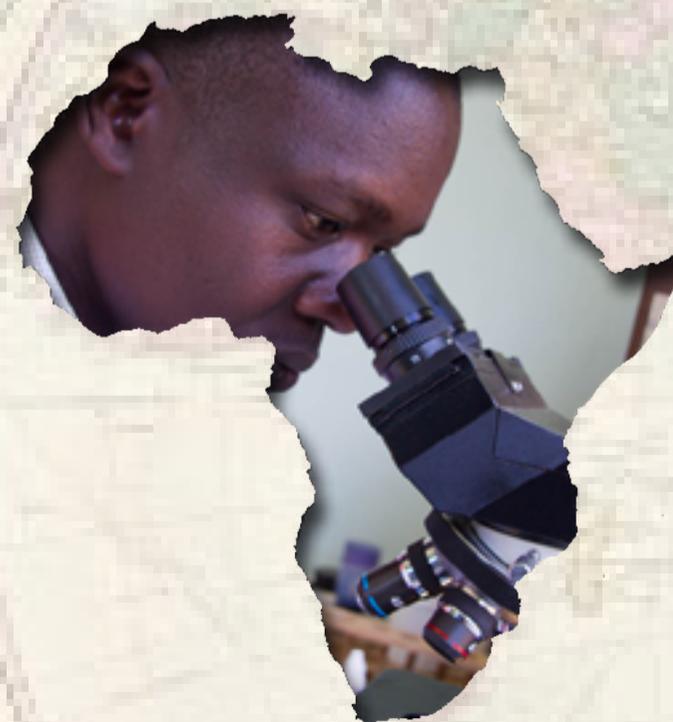
...According to Human Rights Watch the administrative state of CAR has been gutted and many official documents have been destroyed. "It is impossible to imagine credible elections taking place in just over a year," the rights group says...

Africa's Brain Drain: Its Impacts on Security and Stability

By Lieutenant Colonel Robert Feldman, U.S. Army Reserve.

Africa is bleeding. Much of its lifeblood, composed of well-educated individuals who could help tackle its toughest problems, is flowing away. This hemorrhaging of engineers, doctors, teachers, nurses, businesspersons, scientists, and others with extensive training constitutes Africa's brain drain. This brief study examines the impact of this loss in the social, economic, political and security spheres.

<http://fms0.leavenworth.army.mil/documents/Africa's-Brain-Drain.pdf>





Tall Problems for a Short People: Conflict in the DRC Displaces the Bambuti

10 July 2013

“We Bambuti are only in the town because of the war,” said a representative of the group now living in the school. “But we have nothing to do with the war. Our home is in the forest.””

OE Watch Commentary: They are hunter-gatherers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), often called pygmies in a pejorative manner by others, but proudly referring to themselves as “Bambuti.” The history of discrimination against them is long, which is why, in part, they prefer to live in the jungle, away from other ethnic groups. However, as their forests are cut down by loggers or their land confiscated by miners, they have been forced to relocate elsewhere, often close to the very people who despise and mock them. In more recent times, as the accompanying article relates, another factor is driving them from their lands - rebel-based conflict.

The Bambuti are often unwelcome in the towns they flee to, but they have little choice, as returning to their native lands could mean death at the hands of the rebels. There are numerous rebel forces fighting in the eastern region of the DRC, many for control of the lucrative minerals there, still others with political agendas, though they, too, frequently take advantage of opportunities to enrich themselves. The accompanying article relates how it is mainly the Allied Democratic Forces-National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (ADF-NALU) that has caused the Bambuti to flee. Originally the ADF was a Ugandan opposition group composed of Muslim rebels and funded by Sudan. The NALU is an ADF affiliate. While not presently a serious threat to Uganda’s government, the ADF-NALU has remained a painful thorn in Uganda’s side since launching its first attack in 1996, with subsequent attacks involving bomb blasts, kidnappings, and mutilation of civilians. Uganda has responded by attacking the group’s bases in the DRC, which have diminished but not incapacitated the ability



Conflict in the eastern part of the DRC has forced many forest dwellers, such as these, to move to towns where they sometimes find they are unwelcome. Source: <http://www.dw.de/conflict-forces-drc-jungle-dwellers-to-leave-their-traditional-homes/a-17085446>

Source: John Kunyumu and Philipp Sander, “Conflict forces DRC jungle dwellers to leave their traditional homes,” Deutsche Welle, 12 Sept 2013, <http://www.dw.de/conflict-forces-drc-jungle-dwellers-to-leave-their-traditional-homes/a-17085446>

... tempers are running high in the town of Oicha in eastern DRC, some 70 kilometers (44 miles) from the border with Uganda. Around 60 refugees have found shelter in a primary school - much to the anger of the pupils. They are furious that classes cannot be held because of the newcomers who have fled from rebels of the Allied Democratic Forces-National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (ADF-NALU)...

...One girl tells journalists from a local radio station that she and her fellow pupils will do all they can to make sure the newcomers leave again as quickly as they came. “We’ll make sure these pygmies leave our classrooms,” she declares. “Either we’ll make a lot of noise or we’ll throw stones.”...

...The word ‘pygmy’ is commonly used to describe an ethnic group in eastern Congo who call themselves ‘Bambuti.’ They live in small settlements in the jungle of central Africa, living mostly from the animals and plants to be found there. Because of their simple style of living and their small stature, they are frequently the target of mockery and discrimination by other groups..

This has been the case for generations, says Ulrich Delius of the Society for Threatened Peoples. And so an atmosphere of hostility is pretty much pre-programmed should they find themselves having to live in close proximity to other Congolese, as is the case in Oicha.

... many Congolese have no respect for the Bambuti, even though “they are an ethnic community who possess a high level of knowledge in their familiar habitat.”...

(continued)



Continued: Tall Problems for a Short People: Conflict in the DRC Displaces the Bambuti

of the ADF-NALU to continue its activities. Meanwhile, Uganda has claimed the group has ties to al Qaeda and al- Shabaab.

*Entangled in this mess are the Bambuti, though, to be sure, there are also other ethnic groups besides the Bambuti in the eastern region of the DRC. There are also other rebel groups in that area, including the M23, whose takeover of Goma, the provincial capital, made international news in 2012. Not to be left out of the mix is the army, whose record on human rights is spotty at best. However, as the accompanying article points out, the Bambuti's short stature frequently makes them "the target of mockery and discrimination," causing the already difficult experience of living as a displaced people to be even greater. With the eastern DRC embroiled in multiple conflicts, many of which have been recalcitrant to solutions, the Bambuti are likely to find their anguish will continue for some time to come. **End***
OE Watch Commentary (Feldman)

... Forests are cut down, appropriated by mining companies or invaded by rebels. The indigenous population are never consulted...

... it's a situation that pits two groups of victims against one another...many groups within the population are suffering; they are either treated badly by the authorities or they are the victims of violence perpetrated by either the authorities or by the army or rebel militias. "The stronger group then hits out at the weaker members of society,"...The Bambuti are the weakest link in the chain...

...Experts estimate there are more than 20 different rebel groups active in DRC. Prominent in the headlines has been the M23 group which has occupied territory in North Kivu for more than a year. With their spectacular capture of the provincial capital Goma in November 2012, they forced the DRC government to enter into negotiations. International mediators were also involved but without so far finding a solution. Other militia groups are often forgotten, much to the dismay of Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni who would like to be rid of the problem on his border...

...When African heads of state met in the Ugandan capital Kampala in early September to seek a solution to the M23 problem, Museveni drew their attention to the rebel group ADF-NALU. For years they have terrorized people on the Congolese side of the border. Many people also sought refuge in Ugandan schools. "These refugees are suffering," Museveni said and called on the international community for support...





Kenya's Turkana County Oil Rush: Niger Delta Déjà Vu?

10 July 2013

“But behind the optimistic rhetoric, the prevailing political and security environment in Turkana County is looking conspicuously similar to that which sparked insurgency in the Niger Delta. If left unaddressed, we could potentially see the region become a theatre for oil conflict.”

OE Watch Commentary: *Though the discovery and extraction of oil in Nigeria's Niger Delta was supposed to fuel development in that impoverished region, the legacy so far has been corruption, environmental degradation, and an armed rebellion by a populace angry at not receiving any benefits while living amid an ecological disaster. Now oil has been discovered in Kenya's Turkana County, and while the Kenyan government and Tullow Oil have offered reassurances of transparency and development monies, there are concerns that another Niger Delta, complete with an armed insurgency, is in the making.*

As the accompanying article states, there are numerous reasons for the concern that Turkana County's path will parallel that of the Niger Delta. To begin with, there is corruption, which resulted in the Kenyan government ranking 139th out of 176 countries on the Transparency International 2012 Corruption Perceptions Index. The drilling has not even started, but already community leaders have accused local officials of illegally acquiring title deeds, misappropriating community-owned land and using intimidation and violence to displace communities within the region's oil-rich localities. Tullow Oil has also not escaped charges, including bribery of local councilors and leaders as a means of securing control of resource-rich land. With such early accusations, the project is not off to an auspicious start.

Besides the risk of corruption surrounding the project, there is also the prospect of significant environmental degradation. The area has suffered from prolonged drought in the past and indeed is in one now. The loss of some of the remaining fertile land to oil exploration, drilling, mining, and associated activities might further exacerbate an already dire food shortage. Then there are the leaks and spills. Anyone who follows the



Kenya's Turkana County: Will the oil it holds fuel another African insurgency?
Source: <http://thinkafricapress.com/kenya/predicting-next-oil-insurgency-precarious-case-turkana-county>

Source: Ryan Cummings, “Predicting Africa’s Next Oil Insurgency: The Precarious Case of Kenya’s Turkana County, Think Africa Press, 13 Sept 2013, <http://thinkafricapress.com/kenya/predicting-next-oil-insurgency-precarious-case-turkana-county>

... all agree on one thing: there is a positive relationship between the availability of lootable resources and armed insurrection, and this is particularly the case where populations have been marginalized...

...Nigeria's oil-rich Niger Delta follows this pattern - the Delta experienced a protracted insurgency against the region's hydrocarbon industry due to the negative impacts of oil exploration and the question of profit distribution. The conflict occurred in a context of ethnically-motivated violence and a burgeoning small arms trade, leading to the rapid militarization of the region...

. Most vested stakeholders have focused on the potential geopolitical benefits of the [East African] boom, but fail to address the potential impact these resource discoveries could bring to areas already experiencing acute socio-political and economic marginalization...

...Located at the meeting of Kenya's blurred borders with Ethiopia, Uganda and South Sudan, Turkana County is an arid region, long neglected by successive Kenyan administrations. However, in recent months, Turkana County has become a key area of interest for the Kenyan government and investors alike following reports that British-owned oil exploration company, Tullow Oil PLC, discovered an estimated 250 million barrels of crude oil there...

...If history in the Niger Delta is anything to go by, it is far from guaranteed that the population of Turkana County will benefit from the potential oil revenue...

...Both the Kenyan government and Tullow Oil have rejected these allegations and committed to greater transparency to ensure local populations can see concrete benefits.

(continued)



Continued: Kenya's Turkana County Oil Rush: Niger Delta Déjà Vu?

Niger Delta in the news has seen pictures of the devastating leaks in the pipelines, many created by poor people trying to acquire some oil to sell, which can destroy the land as some of the oil finds its way into the environment. Perhaps even worse is when a spark is accidentally created as a gas pipeline is tapped: the results are immediate, brutal, and overwhelming.

Environmental degradation and corruption, including the lack of sharing of the oil wealth with the people of the Niger Delta, were two factors that helped drive an armed rebellion in that part of Nigeria. Another factor was the availability of small arms, and, as it turns out, small arms are also readily available in Turkana County, Kenya, with an estimated 50,000 in circulation there. Some of these weapons are being used. Growing land and resource scarcity has significantly increased tensions, leading to frequent and protracted outbreaks of violence.

*In a country with marked corruption, where ethnic divisions periodically result in violence, whose northern region relatively recently struggled with cross border raids by al-Shabaab terrorists and is presently awash in small arms, the discovery of oil in Kenya's Turkana County could be less of a call for celebration than an alarm of the risk of yet another destabilizing force. It will be a challenge for the Kenyan government to ensure that development of the oil industry in Turkana County does not follow the path it did in the Niger Delta, for if it does, as the article title states, it could lead to Africa's next oil insurgency. **End OE Watch Commentary (Feldman)***

However, until commitments have been realized, mistrust and skepticism will remain...

...An estimated 60% of the region's inhabitants are pastoralists who have long struggled with seasonal droughts, which led to the deaths of thousands of livestock...

...The situation has deteriorated significantly over the last decade and it is estimated that 75% of the population is reliant on food aid. While the hydrocarbon industry will undoubtedly produce marked improvements in infrastructure, this is likely to be counterbalanced by the unavoidable ecological impact of oil exploration. Dwindling reserves of fertile land will be appropriated for mining activities, and risks of air, soil and water pollution are significant...

...Although based in deep-rooted grievances, the role small arms proliferation plays in fuelling internal armed insurrection cannot be overstated. Again, the Niger Delta serves as a timely reminder. In the early-2000s, a thriving small arms trade developed as light weaponry flowed readily over the porous borders of Cameroon, Gabon and Guinea-Bissau. The subsequent militarisation of ethnic groups within the Niger Delta would later serve as important vehicles of the violence directed against the region's oil industry...

...It is not just oil that lies beneath Turkana County. Recently, massive water reserves have been discovered in the region. Many believe this water wealth could provide the solution to water insecurity not just in the drought-blighted regions in the north, but for the entire country...

...With both water and oil drawing all eyes to Turkana County, government and commercial stakeholders must act now to ensure the recent discoveries are to the benefit of local populations and to prevent the region becoming a focal point for a resource-driven conflict...

...Socio-economic development must come first. Forthcoming oil sector legislation needs to promote development and put the needs of the local population - and particularly the new hopes for the elimination of drought - above those of the oil industry...

...Ultimately, any future industry within Turkana County has to be beneficial to the overall well-being of the region's inhabitants. If not, communities may very well resort to violence...



Post Independence, Blood Continues to Be Shed: Human Rights Abuses by South Sudan's Army

4 August 2013

“But in particular the attacks on civilians by soldiers have made the Murle feel increasingly persecuted by their own government. We are not the ones going to raid, we are not the ones rebelling against the government but we are the ones being killed,’ one woman told (the article’s author)”

OE Watch Commentary: Independence for South Sudan has not brought peace, either externally and or internally. Much of the world’s media coverage has focused on South Sudan’s difficulties with Sudan over border and oil issues, but less attention has been paid to the country’s internal struggles. It was reported that at one point South Sudan’s army, the SPLA (Sudan’s People Liberation Army), was fighting at least seven armed groups - many of whom accuse the government of ignoring rural development and not fairly supporting the country’s myriad ethnic groups - in nine of its ten states.

To be sure, it is not just the SPLA versus various ethnic groups. Ethnic groups are also fighting among themselves. Interethnic warfare predated South Sudan’s independence, continued after independence was declared, and, based on the difficulties in trying to end it, appears likely to extend at least into the nation’s immediate future. Unfortunately, not only does the SPLA, which traces its origins to the guerilla movement that fought for South Sudan’s

Source: Skye Wheeler, “South Sudan: Army Must Be Held Accountable,” Inter Press Service. Source: <http://www.ipsnews.net/2013/09/op-ed-south-sudans-army-must-be-held-accountable/>

...On the last day of July, South Sudanese soldiers shot dead two unarmed women, Anyibi Baba and Ateil Rio...

...Panic has spread among the Murle. Thousands have fled their homes, too scared of the soldiers to return...

...Attacks and counter attacks between armed members of the Dinka Bor, Lou Nuer and Murle ethnic groups over the past three years have been especially bloody and have increasingly targeted women and children. Because authorities almost always fail to investigate or punish criminals, these groups mete out their own justice in a cruel cycle of brutal revenge attacks...

...The re-emergence of a Murle rebel group in 2012 and the government’s counter-insurgency has greatly complicated the situation and chances for peace in Jonglei and has plunged all of Pibor county, the center of the anti-insurgency effort, into humanitarian crisis, displacing tens of thousands of Murle...

...In one case, soldiers returning from a firefight with rebels in the bush in May executed 12 men, three of them chiefs, in the village of Manyabol. As a result, the whole village fled. Soldiers also burned and looted homes, looted aid agencies and hospitals and destroyed and occupied schools. “They don’t want anything good for the Murle people,” one man said...

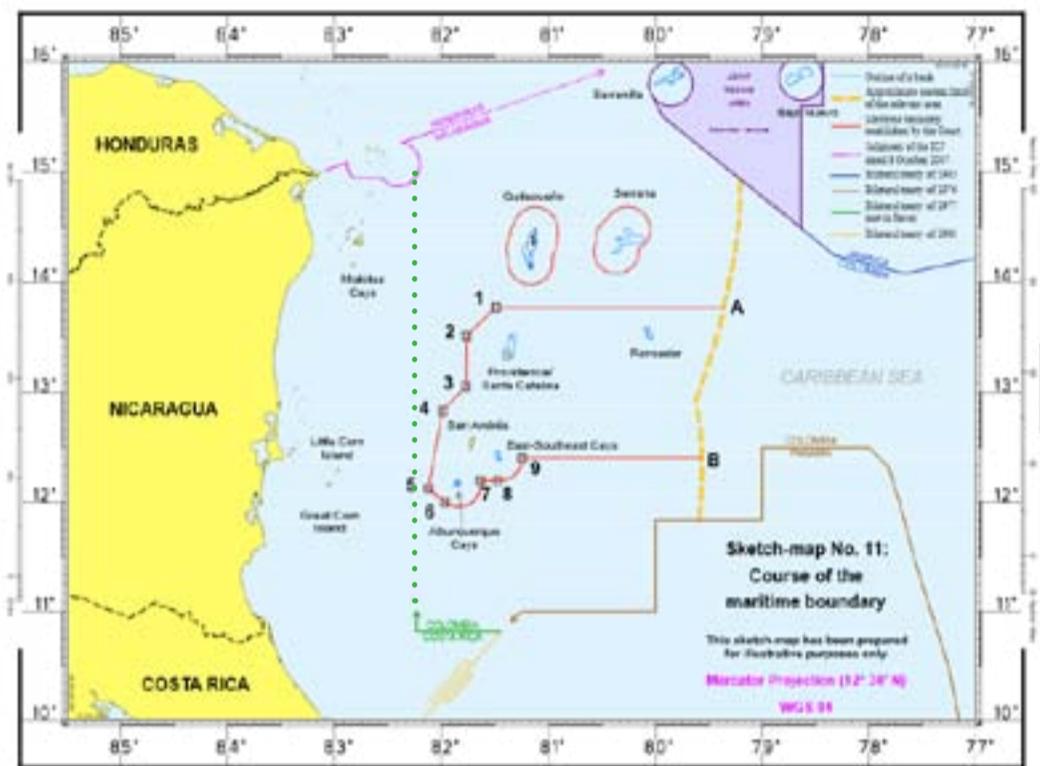
...Even-handedness in approaching the ethnic violence in Jonglei will be crucial in counteracting the perception of persecution among the Murle. Authorities have not protected either side in the ethnic conflict from attacks, but they have encouraged young Lou Nuer men to arm themselves and did nothing to stop the mobilisation of thousands of Lou Nuer who attacked Murle areas in July...





OE Watch Commentary: In a recent territorial and maritime decision (*Nicaragua v. Colombia*, case number 2012/33, 19 November 2012), the International Court of Justice (ICJ) held that Colombia has sovereignty over the maritime features in dispute, including all the islands of the San Andrés Archipelago. One might think that would settle things, but not so. A good deal of second-guessing is going on in Colombia as to why the Colombian government even bothered to entertain Nicaragua's complaint at the ICJ.

As the Court asserted, Colombia had exercised governance and dominion over the area for decades without complaint. A 1928 treaty, according to which Nicaraguans received valuable territorial compensations, had been observed without debate. It appears the Colombians were so confident of their position they felt they might as well put the matter to rest by obtaining a new court deed. The result is complicated. The rest of the Court's sentence reads "and draws a single maritime boundary." During the long procedures the Nicaraguans had



To see a higher resolution version of this image, please click the image.

(Above map) The green vertical dotted line indicates Colombia's former territorial boundary, while the red lines indicate Nicaragua's new territorial boundaries. Source: [http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/f/f8/International_Court_of_Justice_Territorial_and_Maritime_Dispute_\(Nicaragua_v._Colombia\)_Course_of_the_maritime_boundary.svg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/f/f8/International_Court_of_Justice_Territorial_and_Maritime_Dispute_(Nicaragua_v._Colombia)_Course_of_the_maritime_boundary.svg)

Source: The International Court of Justice. "Territorial and Maritime Dispute (Nicaragua v. Colombia) The Court finds that Colombia has sovereignty over the maritime features in dispute and draws a single maritime boundary." The International Court of Justice, November 19, 2012. <http://www.icj-cij.org/docket/files/124/17162.pdf> (accessed September 2013).

"Colombia should reject the decision because it overthrows national sovereignty. The international courts aren't constituted to undermine peoples' sovereignty but to do justice." Former President Álvaro Uribe

Source: El Tiempo. "Uribe pidió 'rechazar' y 'no cumplir' fallo de la Corte de La Haya." El Tiempo.com September 20, 2013. <http://m.eltiempo.com/politica/uribe-pidi-rechazar-y-no-cumplir-fallo-de-la-corte-de-la-haya/12391657> (accessed September 2013).

"The decision of the International Court of Justice is not applicable until a treaty is reached that protects the rights of Colombians, a treaty that must be approved in conformity with the requirements of our Constitution." Current President Juan Manuel Santos



(continued)



Continued: Something that Doesn't Smell Right in the Caribbean

astutely added a claim for a change in the maritime boundaries which would give Nicaragua about 75,000 square miles of sea it had before not even claimed. The court admitted it was a wholly new claim, allowed it anyway, and found in favor of Nicaragua.

*The Colombians now smell a rat and are seriously considering not accepting the court's finding, that is, not accepting a finding that in the main is in Colombia's favor. As many Colombian's read it, the decision to give something to the Nicaraguans is a little too Solomonesque, a decision perhaps motivated not by legal considerations, but rather by a suite of personal, geopolitical and ideological coincidences unfavorable to Colombia. Some Colombians see the concession as a first step in a process of territorial arrogation by the Bolivarian left, Nicaragua's government being very close to Cuba's and Venezuela's. Nicaragua has been quick to announce its intention to proceed with hydrocarbon exploration within its newly awarded space, and is actively considering an alliance with the Chinese to build a new cross-isthmian canal. Now the question may become an issue of national pride floating in the next couple of Colombian election cycles. **End OE Watch Commentary (Demarest)***

Source: CNN. "Santos dice que el fallo de La Haya sobre disputa con Nicaragua es 'inaplicable'" (Santos says that the decision of the Hague over the dispute with Nicaragua is 'inapplicable') CNN, September 9, 2013. <http://cnnespanol.cnn.com/2013/09/09/santos-dice-que-el-fallo-de-la-haya-sobre-disputa-con-nicaragua-es-inaplicable/> (accessed September 2013).

"In spite of the sharp differences with President Juan Manuel Santos, the ex-president gave a strong boost to the head of state in his determination in the litigation with Nicaragua. "I celebrate the decision of the Administration because to have done the opposite would have been first to lose the sea and later to lose San Andrés." Former President Álvaro Uribe

Source: El Espectador. "Uribe respaldó decisión de Santos sobre La Haya," ElEspectador.com September 16–20, 2013. <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/politica/uribe-respaldo-decision-de-santos-sobre-haya-articulo-445421> (accessed September 2013).

"The judges in the Hague received dozens of letters from various governments asking that the court support Nicaragua's pretensions."

Source: Ricardo Puentes Melo. "San Andrés: el gran asalto a la soberanía colombiana." (San Andres: the great assault on Colombian sovereignty). Periodismo sin Fronteras, July 28, 2013. <http://www.periodismosinfronteras.org/san-andres-asalto-a-soberania-nacional.html> (accessed September 2013).

"To experts in international law it was a Solomonesque decision."

Source: César Paredes "Sentencia del Tribunal de La Haya: "Las islas San Andrés, Providencia y Santa Catalina son de Colombia." Semana, December 13, 2007. <http://www.semana.com/on-line/articulo/sentencia-del-tribunal-la-haya-las-islas-san-andres-providencia-santa-catalina-colombia/90040-3> (accessed September 2013).



El Chapo: Eventual Ally of the Peña Nieto Administration?

OE Watch Commentary: *At the close of the Calderon administration in December 2012 the Sinaloa Cartel was left intact, despite the fact that other key cartels in Mexico were hit hard during his six-year presidential term. For example, Calderon brought down the Beltran Leyva organization by arresting key leaders, including Hector Beltran and Edgar Valdez Villarreal, aka El Barbie. He also orchestrated the operation that resulted in the death of Arturo Beltran, the leader of that organization. Furthermore, he significantly weakened the Gulf Cartel by killing Antonio Cardenas Guillen, aka Tony Tormenta, and arresting Eduardo Costilla, aka El Coss. He also weakened the ranks of Los Zetas by arresting and/or killing nearly all of its key leaders during his administration. The end result of these actions was the emergence of the Sinaloa Cartel as the strongest in Mexico. It is not yet clear how the Peña Nieto administration will handle the Sinaloa Cartel, but the April 2013 arrest of El Chapo's father-in-law, Coronel Barreras, 45, is an indicator that he may not allow this group to operate as freely as many analysts have hypothesized.*

The Sinaloa Cartel Today

The Sinaloa Cartel emerged at the end of the 1980s following the arrest of Miguel Angel Felix Gallardo. It is headed by Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman, an individual

Source: "El Chapo: eventual aliado de Peña Nieto?" Proceso. Accessed on 16 September 2013 from <http://www.proceso.com.mx/?p=327663>

El Chapo Guzman: Eventual Ally of the Peña Nieto Administration?

President Enrique Peña Nieto has publicly stated that one of his key goals is to reduce levels of organized crime violence in Mexico over the next six years. Some analysts have hypothesized that this could be done by eradicating the blood-thirsty Los Zetas and allowing the Sinaloa Cartel to continue its daily operations.

Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman, the leader of the Sinaloa Cartel, has been described as a rational thinker who adheres to the code of conduct that was followed by Mexican drug lords in the 80s and 90s which was to keep levels of violence low as not to draw attention to themselves. Some of these former drug lords include:

- o Miguel Angel Felix Gallardo, drug lord during the 1980s
- o Benjamin Arellano Feliz, leader of the Tijuana Cartel
- o Fernando Sanchez Arellano, aka El Ingeniero

Today, the Sinaloa Cartel is the most powerful in Mexico while Los Zetas rank second on a national scale. The key difference between these groups is that Los Zetas seek out violence and use it to intimidate and control. In fact, Los Zetas are known as the most violent cartel in Mexico. Furthermore, Los Zetas are involved in criminal activities including extortions, kidnappings, and, human trafficking. They are also known to target innocent people as evidenced by the August 2010 murder of 72 undocumented persons in San Fernando, Tamaulipas.

For this reason, it has been said that arresting El Chapo would be counterproductive to the Peña Nieto strategy of reducing violence levels in the country because it could be Los Zetas who would take the helm as the most powerful cartel in Mexico.

Allowing the Sinaloa Cartel to continue its operations and using El Chapo as an ally does not necessarily mean that President Peña Nieto will sit down and negotiate with him, instead, it is likely he would focus on debilitating El Chapo's number one enemy; Los Zetas.

(continued)



Pictured above Joaquin Archivaldo Guzman Loera 'El Chapo Guzman'.



Continued: El Chapo: Eventual Ally of the Peña Nieto Administration?

who is ranked on the Forbes 500 Billionaires list. In the last eight years El Chapo is said to have earned billions from his drug shipments. Regarding areas of operation, the Sinaloa Cartel is active in Mexico, the United States, Central and South America, Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia, and Afghanistan. To maintain control over territories the Sinaloa Cartel is known to work with the following armed groups:

- *Gente Nueva*: This group operates in Sinaloa, Chihuahua, Jalisco, and Veracruz. It is currently vying for control of key drug-trafficking hubs against Los Zetas in Veracruz. Following the 29 July 2010 death of Nacho Coronel in Zapopan, the Gente Nueva initiated a fight for the Zapopan Plaza against the New Generation Cartel of Jalisco and Los Zetas.
- *Los Artistas Asesinos (AA) and Los Mexicles*: These gangs operate predominantly in Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua, and received guidance from Noel Salgueiro, aka El Flaco, until his 04 October 2011.
- *Los Gueros*: This group is believed to have become operational around 2000 and is headed by Luis and Esteban Rodriguez Olivera, two brothers from Jalisco. Los Gueros are responsible for money-laundering operations from Cancun to Texas. Multiple members of this group are currently wanted by the US Treasury Department.

El Chapo and his Presence along the Southwest Border

El Chapo is said to be responsible for building 90% of the drug tunnels along the US-Mexican border. To complete this work he recruits architects, engineers, and construction experts. Individuals hired must also be able to cross the border with ease (meaning they have a visa or are US citizens). Day laborers hired to work on the tunnels may be killed upon their completion to ensure that there are no potential leaks of tunnel locations.

The Sinaloa Cartel has also steadily increased its power and presence in the United States, and, according to the DEA, dominates the marijuana market in Chicago. This group's marijuana production primarily occurs within Mexico, but there is evidence that at least ten remote/wooded areas in Wisconsin are being utilized by the Sinaloa Cartel to grow marijuana.

*With earnings obtained from the marijuana market in the United States, the Sinaloa Cartel has been able to increase the amount of heroin, cocaine, and methamphetamines it traffics. As for markets within United States, Chicago and Atlanta represent principal centers of distribution for marijuana. **End OE Watch Commentary (Fiegel and Gonzalez)***



India's First Dedicated Military Satellite Launched

30 August 2013

OE Watch Commentary: *The deployment of GSAT-7, the first Indian satellite, is being viewed as a qualified achievement for India. This satellite, exclusively dedicated to Navy missions, is a sign of the modernization of the Indian Armed Forces. The deployment also will offer increased coverage capability within the Indian Ocean and Indian subcontinent. However, the launch by the European Space Agency rather than the Indian Space Research Organization is a reminder to India that it still has a ways to go as a space-capable nation. More importantly, though, the satellite will decrease India's reliance on other nations by providing organic space capabilities for the Indian Navy. In this sense, it is a major advancement. End OE Watch Commentary (Freese)*

“...the Indian space agency cannot orbit heavy satellites like GSAT-7 as its home-grown GSLV rocket, with indigenous cryogenic stage, is still at works....”

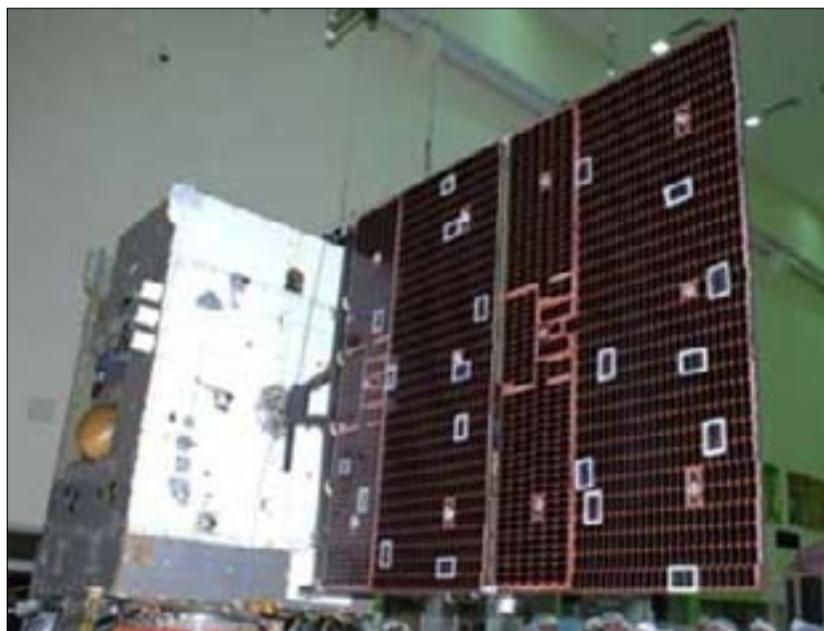


Photo: GSAT-7. Source: http://www.firstpost.com/india/gsat-7-indias-first-military-satellite-launched-successfully-1071675.html?utm_source=hp-footer

Source: PTI, “India’s first defence satellite GSAT-7 launched successfully,” The Economic Times, 30 August 2013, <http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/indias-first-defence-satellite-gsat-7-launched-successfully/articleshow/22153328.cms>

Article 1:

India’s maiden dedicated defence satellite was launched by an European rocket early today... Ariane 5 precisely placed the Rs 185-crore home-built communication spacecraft into the intended Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit (GTO) ... Expected to be operational by September-end, the country’s first exclusive satellite for military applications, would give a major push to the maritime security.

The 2625-kg satellite ... carries payloads operating in UHF, S, C and Ku bands, helping marine communications with coverage over India landmass as well as surrounding areas.... With GSAT-7 ... the Navy would be able to overcome the limitation from line of sight and ionospheric effects...

Earlier, satellite communication in ships was through Inmarsat

ISRO said the present orbit of the satellite will be raised to Geostationary Orbit ... through three orbit raising manoeuvres by firing of GSAT-7’s Liquid Apogee Motor (LAM).

... the Indian space agency cannot orbit heavy satellites like GSAT-7 as its home-grown GSLV rocket ... is still at works....

Source: Department of Space, “GSAT-7 Satellite Placed in Geosynchronous Orbit,” Government of India Press Information Bureau Release 99108, 4 September 2013, <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=99108>

Article 2:

India’s advanced multi-band communication satellite GSAT-7... has been successfully placed in the Geosynchronous Orbit ... the communication antennae of GSAT-7, including the UHF Helix antenna, were deployed successfully.

The GSAT-7 Satellite would reach its assigned orbital slot of 74 degree East longitude in the Geostationary Orbit within the next 10 days. On September 14, 2013, the communication transponders in UHF, S, C and Ku bands are planned to be switched on.



Taiwan Donates Maritime Patrol Boats to The Gambia

26 August 2013

“[Taiwan] has always maintained an unwavering commitment in accompanying [The Gambia] towards meeting her development priorities.”

“The Gambia is one of Taiwan’s 23 diplomatic allies.”

OE Watch Commentary: It is well known that in recent years China has been overtly expanding its influence in Africa to secure natural resources and develop trading partnerships that are essential to sustain China’s rate of economic growth. This expansion of economic influence has not occurred in a vacuum. China also continues to maintain efforts to isolate Taiwan diplomatically by pressuring China’s partners to relinquish ties to Taiwan. This has been almost universally successful in Africa, where The Gambia remains one of a small handful of nations to retain ties to Taiwan.

Consequently, Taiwan has been enthusiastic about providing support to The Gambia on multiple fronts. Recent increases of military aid to The Gambia described in these articles suggest Taiwan is concerned that China may attempt to isolate Taiwan from The Gambia. Taiwan has few friends in Africa and, as the first article indicates, comparatively few in the world. It is essential that Taiwan cement these ties in order to ensure trading partnerships for the future.

The relations between Taiwan and The Gambia extend beyond bilateral partnership. As the second article points out, West African nations have been exploited by transnational criminal elements, who rely upon limited ability of poorer nations to provide effective security. Thus, by helping The Gambia secure its territorial waters, Taiwan is also acting as a good global strategic player. **End OE Watch Commentary (Freese)**



Photo: Four patrol boats donated to The Gambia by Taiwan in 2009.

Photo Source: http://www.statehouse.gm/taiwan-donates-patrol-boats_260609.html

Source: Elaine Hou, “Taiwan to Donate Three Patrol Boats to The Gambia,” Focus Taiwan News Channel, 20 August 2013 <http://focustaiwan.tw/news/aip/201308200010.aspx>

Article 1:

Taiwan will donate three more patrol boats to diplomatic ally The Gambia to help strengthen its ability to patrol its coast, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said Tuesday. Taiwan donated four 50-ton patrol boats in 2009 ... The decision to donate more patrol boats to The Gambia came after one of those four boats previously donated suffered serious damage, the ministry said. The Gambia is one of Taiwan’s 23 diplomatic allies.

Source: Amadou Jallow, “Gambia: Taiwan Strengthens Gambia’s Maritime Security - Donates Three More Patrol Boats,” The Daily Observer, 26 August 2013, <http://allafrica.com/stories/201308261309.html>

Article 2:

The government of the Republic of China (Taiwan) has again strengthened The Gambia’s maritime security with the donation of three more boats. The [M2A2] boats, namely GN (Gambia Navy) Berre Kuntu, GN Kenyeh Kenyeh Jamango and GN Sanimentereng are fitted with 115 twin horse power out board motors with an endurance of two hours at full throttle and capable of a speed up to 80km per hour.

In her statement, Vice President Aja Dr. Isatou Njie-Saidy said within the framework of cooperation between The Gambia and Taiwan, the latter has always maintained an unwavering commitment in accompanying its ally towards meeting her development priorities.

[Taiwan Ambassador Samuel Chen] said ... although The Gambia has a coastline of 80km and that its maritime does not cover some vast area, yet it is important to hold the middle way ships from Europe to Guinea Gulf and even to the Southern Africa region.

The commander of The Gambia Navy, Commodore Madani Senghore ... lamented that threats like piracy, narcotic drug trafficking, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing; human trafficking and smuggling of goods in the maritime environment continue to affect the security and stability of the sub-region.

(continued)



Continued: Taiwan Donates Maritime Patrol Boats to The Gambia

Source: Amadou Jallow, "GAF Decorates 4 Taiwanese Military Instructors," The Daily Observer, 26 August 2013 <http://allafrica.com/stories/201308261462.html>

Article 3:

The Gambia Armed Forces (GAF) Friday decorated the four visiting Taiwanese military instructors with medals and distinguished service awards The four instructors have been deployed ... to train The Gambia Navy (GN) crew The training was part of preparations to enable The Gambia navy operate the three M2A2 high speed boards that are donated by the government of Taiwan. The Taiwanese ambassador ... reiterated that the donation of the boats and the training of the GN personnel will promote safety, security and protection of The Gambia's territorial waters from illegal exploitation.

Source: Nfamara Jawneh, "Taiwan Trains Gambian Soldiers," The Point, 14 May 2013 <http://allafrica.com/stories/201305141242.html>

Article 4:

Thirty Gambian soldiers drawn from various units of the Gambia Armed Forces, GAF, yesterday began a two-month training course on Guards of Honour. The training ... is funded by the Taiwanese government who also send three instructors to provide the training. According to [Col. Hina Sambou], the training is the first of its kind to be offered to Gambian soldiers on the Gambian soil.

(continued)



Asian Carrier Programs Suggest Naval Rivalries but Reflect National Priorities

23 August 2013

OE Watch Commentary: *India and Japan have recently produced aircraft carriers, and China is in the process of doing so, giving the impression of an Asian arms race. Although rivalry and competition may be factors, awareness of national priorities in context is also important for understanding the motives of each nation.*

The first article reveals India's emergence as a nation capable of domestically producing an aircraft carrier and emphasizes that this is an important achievement for India. India is no stranger to aircraft carriers, but the ability to produce its own, rather than buy a used carrier from another nation, is the real achievement. Nevertheless, the second article bemoans the state of the Indian Navy and includes a graphic (not referenced in the text) that compares the Indian Navy to the Chinese Navy. While this is a naïve perspective on naval rivalry – it assumes that China would be willing to deploy its entire naval power to the Indian Ocean at the expense of securing the East and South China Seas – it is noteworthy that voices in India perceive that China is nearing capability to deploy forces to and sustain forces in the Indian Ocean.

Regarding China, it is easy to view its expanding naval capability through the lens of potential rivalry with the U.S. However, China has very real maritime interests that support the expansion of naval capability – specifically, growing dependence upon maritime trade and overseas resources, especially in Africa. Securing these trade routes means operating forward in the Indian Ocean, fueling India's discomfort.

*The third article expands the perspective to include Japan. While, as the article states, Japan's carriers could be converted to more offensively oriented missions and their existence does send a strong message to potential adversaries, Japan's military and naval forces really do consider humanitarian missions to be their primary mission, one whose importance was cemented following the 2011 earthquake and tsunami. **End OE Watch Commentary (Freese)***

“China, India, Japan and Russia all appear to be aiming for a fleet of two to four operational carriers by the 2020s....”



INS Vikrant. Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-india-23662726>

Source: “Indian-built aircraft carrier INS Vikrant launched,” BBC News, 12 August 2013, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-india-23662726>

Article 1:

India has unveiled its first home-built aircraft carrier from a shipyard in southern Kerala state. ... With this, India joins a select group of countries capable of building such a vessel. The ship ... has been built at the shipyard in Cochin. It was designed and manufactured locally, using high grade steel made by a state-owned steel company.

Source: Presley Thomas with Prमित Pal Choudhuri, “A Navy under Neglect,” Hindustan Times, 22 August 2013, <http://paper.hindustantimes.com/epaper/viewer.aspx>

Article 2:

In 61 years since [independence], the navy has just one ageing operational carrier This is despite the fact that the navy has to protect the 7,500 km coastline, more than 1,200 islands, and an exclusive economic zone of 2.2 million sq km.

... governmental apathy was evident after the Chinese invasion of 1962. The government... decided to raise the army's strength from 550,000 men to 825,000 and the air force's strength from 33 squadrons (660 aircraft) to 45 squadrons (900 aircraft). But the navy's proposal to raise its strength from 35 ships to 130 was not taken seriously.

Even as the importance of the navy to India has grown along with its widening maritime interests ... the navy's share of defence expenditure has fallen by 16%.

Even if it had more ships, New Delhi has no clear plan about what to do with them ... India has no naval strategic doctrine.

(continued)



Continued: Asian Carrier Programs Suggest Naval Rivalries but Reflect National Priorities

Source: Trefor Moss, "Asian Powers' Carrier Craze," South China Morning Post, 23 August 2013, <http://www.scmp.com/comment/insight-opinion/article/1298598/asian-powers-carrier-craze>

Article 3:

... the regional carrier competition has reached a new level of intensity of late, as Japan, India and China (kind of) unveiled new ships within days of each other.

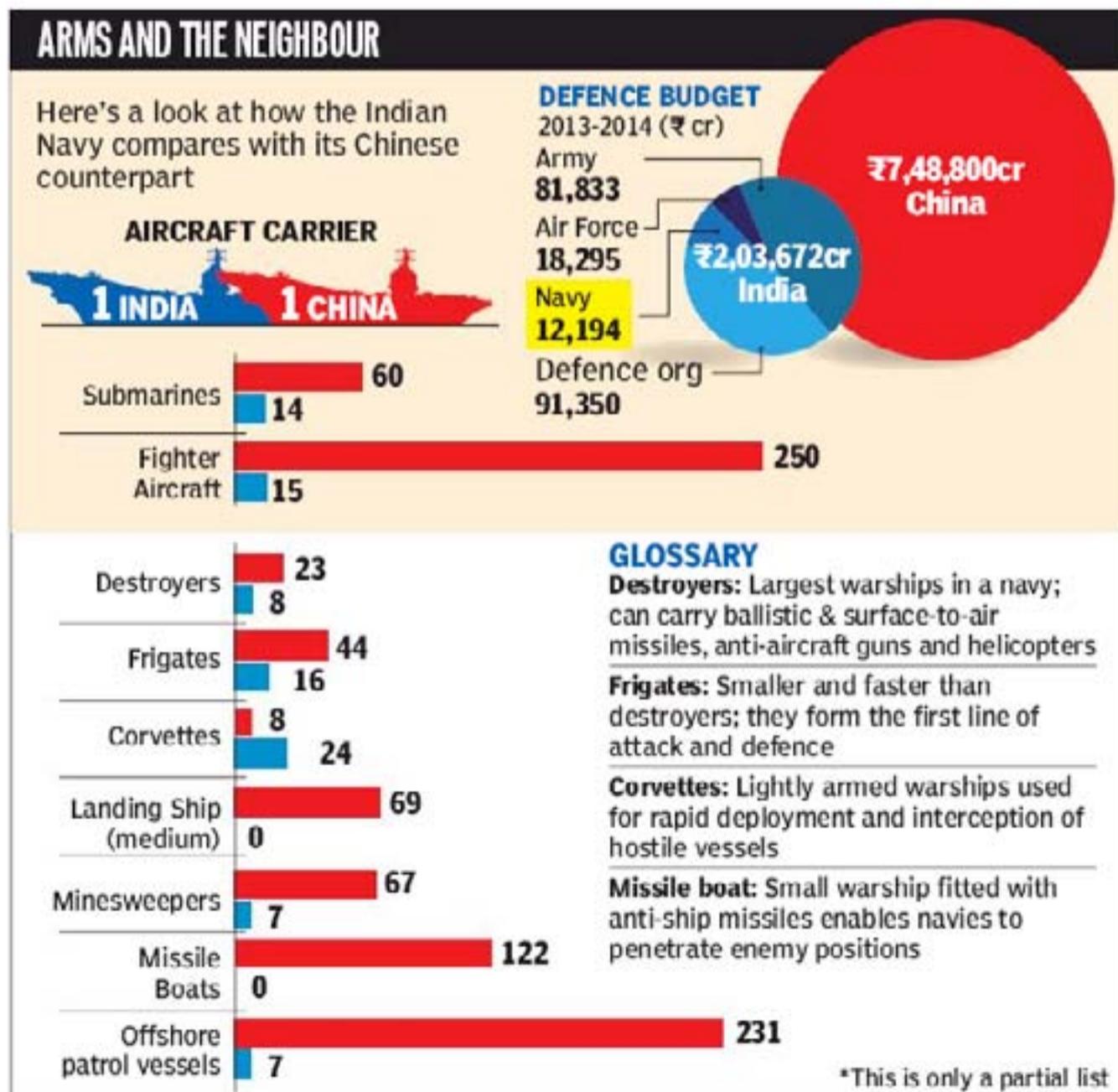
China already has one carrier, the Liaoning, but it's an old ship originally built by the Soviet Union. Having a brand new carrier, and most importantly one you constructed yourself, bestows a whole new level of prestige.

India has generally struggled to keep pace ... but in terms of aircraft carriers it actually has its nose in front. The Indians launched their first indigenous carrier, INS Vikrant, last week. For all the national fanfare, the ship is far from complete, and won't enter active service for at least five years.

Meanwhile, Japan's biggest warship in seven decades was being launched - the helicopter carrier Izumo. Izumo ... has a less-threatening complement of 14 helicopters....

Japan's approach is the most elegant.... However, humanitarian assistance is hardly the only purpose ... Japanese military could quite easily convert her into a much more potent war-fighter than she already is. Japan ... is waiting to see how the cards fall before arming up its new carriers.

In theory, the equilibrium should be preserved so long as these countries' military expansion plans keep pace with one another. China, India, Japan and Russia all appear to be aiming for a fleet of two to four operational carriers by the 2020s



Graphic: Comparison of Indian Navy with Chinese Navy
Graphic Source: <http://paper.hindustantimes.com/epaper/viewer.aspx>



Thailand as Foil to China

October 2013

“...Thailand, as a US Treaty ally, China’s special partner, Asean founder, and trusted friend...has its work cut out on the South China Sea...”

OE Watch Commentary: Political power and economic power are often dance partners on the international stage. The analysis of Western think tanks often conflates these forces when discussing the past decade of China’s rise. China’s economic investment and activity in its near abroad has been well documented. The member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) have benefited greatly from Chinese economic prowess and have equally been concerned about the political implications. Thailand is taking a leadership role in this regional concern for peaceful and stable growth.

As pointed out in the article from The Bangkok Post, Thailand is using its role as the ASEAN country coordinator for China–ASEAN relations to seek out progress in the joint use of the South China Sea. This editorial piece from a member of the faculty of Political Science, Chulalongkorn University, expounds on the unique role Thailand is now playing as a creditable broker of regional interests with China.

The Kyoto News reports how Japan is seeking to capitalize on the role Thailand provides as a significant participant in dialog with China. The article reveals intriguing insights into the mil-to-mil relations between Japan and Thailand. In the piece from The Irrawaddy we see how Myanmar (Burma) and Thailand are working together on major infrastructure projects. This is a revealing development, as these projects are in competition with Chinese-funded port improvements already underway. Myanmar (Burma) was very nearly a client state to China during its long separation from world markets and investments. One will do well to keep an eye on Thailand’s actions and to better understand their interests. **End OE Watch Commentary (Welch)**



Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs Wang Yi (left) is greeted by Thai Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra during a meeting at Government House in Bangkok (Photo: EPA). Source: <http://www.scmp.com/comment/insight-opinion/article/1242092/cosy-sino-thai-relations-affecting-asean-unity>

Source: The Bangkok Post, “Thailand fits bill as tough broker on South China Sea,” September 20, 2013, <http://www.bangkokpost.com/opinion/opinion/370598/thailand-fits-bill-as-tough-broker-on-south-china-sea>

Over the past several years, tensions in the South China Sea over conflicting territorial claims between ASEAN states and China have become Southeast Asia’s thorniest obstacle for regional peace and prosperity. But now a confluence of domestic and regional enabling conditions appears more promising for a workable resolution of the overlapping claims between Asean and China.

Prospects for a peaceful resolution seem more viable now than in the recent past, although key contentious issues remain to be worked out....

As country coordinator for Asean-China relations during 2012-15, Thailand will have to play an assertive brokering role to implement the Declaration on Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) and to secure the more permanent and institutionalised rules-based Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC) that is acceptable to the diverse and overlapping interests in the region. The short window of coordination means that if a concrete COC is not in place by 2015, prospects for a peaceful resolution may sour inexorably thereafter....

Of all the non-claimant mainland states in Southeast Asia, Thailand most aptly fits the bill as moderator and broker between Asean claimant states of Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines and Vietnam on the one hand, and China on the other....

Thailand holds a special relationship with China; the Bangkok-Beijing organic and centuries-old axis is conducive to Thai brokerage of both the DOC implementation and COC formulation. No other Asean state gets along as well with China without being a Beijing client of sorts....

The credibility and commitment of America’s rebalance towards Asia will likely face

(continued)



Continued: Thailand as Foil to China

scrutiny and doubt the more Washington puts down its stakes in the Middle East. Apart from Syria, the US is still trying to pull out of its unpopular war in Iraq, managing the Afghanistan-Pakistan theatre, and restarting the Israeli-Palestinian peace talks...

Thailand has to be prepared to broker hard and leverage its diplomatic and political capital for the effective implementation of the DOC and for the formulation and codification of the COC. Doing it right means Bangkok will have to ruffle some feathers of friends and partners in our neighbourhood. But as long as this is done in a fair and judicious fashion, it is likely to yield a tangible, comprehensive, acceptable outcome for regional peace and stability.

“...Japanese defense chief praised Thailand’s role as the coordinator of talks between ASEAN and China.”

Source: Global Post, “Japanese defense ministry, Thai premier discuss S. China Sea,” 18 September 2013, <http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/kyodo-news-international/130918/japanese-defense-minister-thai-premier-discuss-s-china>

Japanese Defense Minister Itsunori Onodera discussed security issues ... with Thai Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra, who doubles as Thailand’s defense minister, including simmering disputes in the South China Sea between China and some ASEAN members,

... both sides expressed hope for concrete progress on the implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea, in order to move forward talks on forging a legally binding code of conduct to prevent territorial and maritime disputes from flaring up.

The declaration, signed by the foreign ministers of China and ASEAN in 2002, urges claimants to resolve their disputes peacefully “without resorting to the threat or use of force” and to “exercise self-restraint in the conduct of activities that would complicate or escalate disputes.”

But tensions in the sea have continued and even increased since 2002, especially between China and the Philippines.

Onodera told reporters after the meeting that he hoped to see the problems in the South China Sea resolved in accordance with the rule of law and through dialogue.

Japan’s position is that all parties to the disputes should clarify their claims in accordance with international law, including the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea, and refrain from taking coercive and unilateral actions to change the status quo....

On bilateral ties, he said, Yingluck and Onodera discussed the dispatch of Thai military personnel to study at National Defense Academy of Japan.

More than 200 Thai military officials have studied there to date, while many Japanese officials have studied at the Army Command and General Staff College in Thailand, according to the Japanese Embassy in Bangkok.

The defense minister was in Bangkok on the second leg of his five-day trip to Vietnam and Thailand, ... to boost security cooperation, particularly maritime security.



Japanese Defense Minister Itsunori Onodera . Source: <http://www.marsecreview.com/2013/09/japan-vietnam-thailand-discuss-maritime-security/>

Below: A meeting between Burma’s military chief, Senior-Geneneral Min Aung Hlaing, and Thai Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra in Bangkok. Source: <http://www.irrawaddy.org/archives/44356>



(continued)



Continued: Thailand as Foil to China

“...building close ties with the Burmese military chief would help ...obtain trade opportunities.”

Source: The Irrawaddy, “Burma Military Chief Discusses Dawei Project with Thai PM” 19 September 2013, <http://www.irrawaddy.org/archives/44356>

RANGOON — Burma’s military chief met with Thai Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra ... in Bangkok, where they reportedly discussed border narcotics issues as well as investment projects, including the multi-million dollar Dawei deep-sea port project....

In the meeting with Yingluck on Tuesday, Min Aung Hlaing said he was “grateful to Thailand for taking part in the development of democracy in his country,” ...

... he welcomed Thai investment and offered assurances that his country was politically stable. He also reportedly told the Thai prime minister that Burma wanted to work with Thailand on the Dawei deep-sea port project as well as efforts to combat drug trafficking.

Many Thai businesspeople are looking to invest in Burma but have concerns about fraudulent business practices and political instability.

Min Aung Hlaing is believed to have close ties with former Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, Yingluck’s eldest brother. During a visit to Burma in April last year, Thaksin met with the Burmese military chief in Maymyo, also known as Pyin Oo Lwin, in Mandalay Division....

The Shinawatra family is believed to hold property in Dawei, the southernmost town in Tenasserim Division, where a special economic zone is planned and the multi-million dollar Dawei deep-sea port project is under construction....

(Below) A map showing the Kanchanaburi-Tavoy road (in red) as part of a larger transport network covering the Southern Corridor of the Greater Mekong Sub-region. (Source: Italian-Thai Development Company) Source: http://www2.irrawaddy.org/article.php?art_id=22109





China's Dilemma: Paranoia Hampers Technological Progress

“About 80 to 90 per cent of the geophysical surveying instruments on the international market are not allowed to be sold to China...They are also afraid we will use the knowledge in the military - highly sensitive geophysical sensors can be used to detect and identify submarines.”

OE Watch Commentary: The following article contains two points of interest. For one thing, it shows China's interest in cobalt. According to the United States Geological Survey (USGS), cobalt is a strategic metal with many industrial and military applications. The largest use of cobalt is in super alloys used to make jet engine parts. Cobalt is also used in rechargeable battery electrodes, which is where China says it believes the largest future consumption will be.

An interesting fact is that more than half the world's cobalt is mined in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), while only about six percent is mined in China. However, according to the USGS, China was the world's leading producer of refined cobalt, with much of its production originating from the DRC. China is also a leading supplier of cobalt imports to the United States.

The article also discusses the apprehension that other countries have regarding China and the effects this is having on the country. According to an expert cited in the article, “About 80 to 90 per cent of the geophysical surveying instruments on the international market are not allowed to be sold to China... They do not sell precise instruments to us. They are afraid we will copy their designs. They are also afraid we will use the knowledge in the military - highly sensitive geophysical sensors can be used to detect and identify submarines.”

The article blames China's inability to close the technology gap with the West on the world's apprehension. The question is, is this apprehension warranted or not? Certainly there is plenty of evidence that points to China's use of reverse



China is in a race with foreign rivals to mine the seabed for valuable minerals
Source: <http://www.scmp.com/news/china/article/1302836/china-enters-race-foreign-rivals-mine-seabed-valuable-minerals>

Source: Stephen Chen, “China Enters Race with Foreign Rivals to Mine the Seabed for Valuable Minerals,” South China Morning Post, September 4, 2013, Source: <http://www.scmp.com/news/china/article/1302836/china-enters-race-foreign-rivals-mine-seabed-valuable-minerals>

China Enters Race with Foreign Rivals to Mine the Seabed for Valuable Minerals

...the 165-member International Seabed Authority, which regulates deep-sea mining activities, approved exploration plans for cobalt-rich ferromanganese crusts by both China and Japan. (Note: The International Seabed Authority is an independent international organization established by the United Nations in conjunction with the 1982 Convention on the Law of the Sea)

The goal is to mine cobalt crusts, which are rich in iron, and hydroxide deposits containing significant concentrations of cobalt, titanium, nickel, platinum, molybdenum, tellurium, cerium and other metals and rare earth elements.

...China is reliant on overseas suppliers for technology and equipment for geophysical exploration. Amid concerns China could use and adapt such technology for its own engineering and military use, most countries restricted the export of advanced products to it. And now, some Chinese researchers doubt whether China can explore and exploit seabed minerals without the very best technology and equipment.

Xiao Zhijian, sales manager at China's biggest cobalt supplier, the Jinchuan Group, said cobalt reserves in China were small, and the country would desperately need them in the

(continued)



Continued: China's Dilemma: Paranoia Hampers Technological Progress

engineering in the past for many key technologies. Also, the country's interest in gaining even more control over cobalt, with its many uses, certainly warrants observation. End OE Watch Commentary (Hurst)

future. The metal is widely used in the aerospace industry, he said, where aircraft engines need cobalt to maintain strength amid high temperatures. But the biggest consumption of cobalt is anticipated to be in industrial batteries.

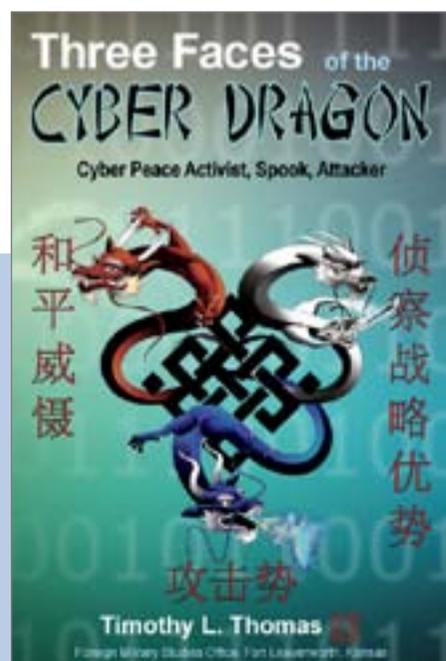
"But we expect explosive growth in cobalt after 2017 as electric cars mature. Perhaps that is why the government was so eager to secure the seabed contract," he said.

...Wang Xiuming, ultra-sonar expert with the Chinese Academy of Sciences' Institute of Acoustics, said China was still far behind developed countries in the mining technology race.

"About 80 to 90 per cent of the geophysical surveying instruments on the international market are not allowed to be sold to China," he said. "They do not sell precise instruments to us. They are afraid we will copy their designs. They are also afraid we will use the knowledge in the military - highly sensitive geophysical sensors can be used to detect and identify submarines."

China is now developing its own equipment, but the gap with overseas products is huge, according to Wang.

..."The government is now aware of the problem and wants to achieve independence in both software and hardware," Chen said. "But it is extremely difficult to change the situation, as almost every basic tool we use is a foreign product."



China's cyber policy has become partly visible to foreign nations through observation, tracking, and interference. The policy appears to have three vectors. *Three Faces of the Cyber Dragon* is divided into sections that coincide with these vectors. It attempts to provide context to the unfolding nature of China's cyber policy, and gives the analyst a more penetrating look into unconsidered, under "advertised" aspects of Chinese security thinking.



Retired Indian Flag Officer Voices Concern Over Possible Joint China-Pakistan Attack

19 August 2013

“...the Chinese Army can launch an air-ground offensive with 10-20,000 motorized troops and 100-300 tanks to capture the entire area it claims as its own in north-eastern Ladakh in 48 hours.”

OE Watch Commentary: The following article is interesting in that it was written by a retired flag officer who was a commander of India's Eastern Naval Command, Visakhapatnam. It describes ways in which Pakistan and China might attack India one day in a joint effort. The author begins with a discussion of some of the small activities and border skirmishes that caught his attention during his four-decade-long experience in the Indian Navy and the Coast Guard. He goes on to explain that he saw “a diabolic pattern emerging.”

The author is clearly concerned that, based on his observations, a joint Chinese-Pakistani threat could materialize. He discusses various ways that the Chinese Army can launch an attack. Then he goes on to explain the various reasons India is at a disadvantage in countering such possible attacks.

In the end, after making his case for increasing Indian defenses by changing the country's “no first use” doctrine, the author writes that “India should declare that it may use tactical nuclear weapons in case its ‘red lines’ [i.e., unacceptable loss of territory] are crossed. A hostile China-Pak adventure can only be deterred by nuclear weapons, political will, and a new nuclear doctrine.” **End OE Watch Commentary (Hurst)**

Source: Arun Kumar Singh, “Deterring a Joint-Pak Attack,” The Asian Age, August 19, 2013, Source: <http://www.asianage.com/columnists/deterring-joint-china-pak-attack-259>

Deterring a Joint-Pak Attack

... I am once again worried that a joint China-Pak threat may materialize at very short notice, especially now that we are in “election mode”.

Given the infrastructure and military capability in eastern Ladakh — armed Indian policemen and a few soldiers — the Chinese Army can launch an air-ground offensive with 10-20,000 motorized troops and 100-300 tanks to capture the entire area it claims as its own in north-eastern Ladakh in 48 hours.

The border airstrips of Daulat Beg Oldi and Nyoma could be captured by Chinese helicopter-borne forces in a few hours, thus cutting off airborne logistics to eastern Ladakh. Active intervention by the Indian Air Force (IAF), even if approved immediately by the government, may have little impact on the outcome given the current force levels on both sides...

If it seizes about 1,000 sq km in northeastern Ladakh, China would not only ensure security of its proposed “Karakoram-Gwadar” energy corridor, but also make our positions on the Salto ridge untenable — our troops would have the Chinese behind them and the Pakistanis in front.

If this crisis were to erupt, Chinese warships, submarines and aircraft would move to Gwadar port and airfield, thus nullifying peninsular India's natural geographical advantage of being located astride China's sea lines of communications, through which it exports goods and imports energy. Gwadar-based Chinese naval units could cut off Indian energy imports from West Asia.

A hostile China-Pak adventure can only be deterred by nuclear weapons, political will and a new nuclear doctrine. Our Mandarin-speaking China experts and Punjabi-speaking Pakistani experts need to let professionals advise the government on security matters.



Karakoram Pass is located at the north of the Ladakh region.

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Kashmir_2007.svg



Economic Growth and Energy Demand Go Hand-in-Hand

9 September 2013

“China’s air pollution issues are a direct result of excessive energy consumption during urbanization process”



中国石油天然气集团公司
CHINA NATIONAL PETROLEUM CORPORATION

OE Watch Commentary: *Thirty years of 10% average annual Chinese GDP growth made it difficult to perceive the unsustainable aspects of the Chinese development model. The slowing of China’s growth since 2012 has recently removed much of this “growth glare.” Official data and Chinese analysts’ own writings point to the bill for China’s stupendous growth that now needs to be paid in the form of fundamental reform if it is to avoid economic stagnation. The progress of urbanization in China that moved hundreds of millions of people from minimally mechanized agriculture to higher productivity factory and urban service work was and remains a principal mechanism of China’s growth model.*

Urbanization has brought with it challenges that range from the ineffective integration of the new arrivals into the urban fabric and a massive increase in energy consumption. Due to China’s population control system (hukou), most new arrivals have not gained city residency meaning that they do not qualify for relatively robust urban social services. With high city-living costs, an extremely limited social safety net, and continued state-sponsored financial repression favoring borrowers and investors over consumers, China’s urban populace is limited in its capacity as both workers and consumers.

Source: “Premier calls for new urbanization strategies,” China Daily, 9 September 2013.
Source: <http://english.people.com.cn/90785/8393783.html>.

Article 1: New Urbanization Strategies Ringing an Old Tune of Investment-led Growth

China should manage the pace and quality of its inevitable urbanization, Premier Li Keqiang said at a recent conference with the nation’s top scholars. It was an apparent sign of his concern about advancing urbanization, which has emerged among his top policy priorities since he took office. A medium- to long-term urbanization outline is expected to be announced after the 18th CPC Central Committee’s third plenary session in November. Chinese Academy of Engineering academician Zhu Gaofeng said urbanization should focus on employment. Urbanization without full employment could produce “ghost towns” and slums. Chinese Academy of Sciences scholar Lu Dadao said that, as China’s industrial structure upgrades, its technology advances and its labor costs rise, enterprises will reduce their workplace labor intensity.

Source: “Chinese political advisors warn of urbanization risks.” Xinhua, 16 July 2013.
Source: http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2013-07/16/c_132546934.htm.

Article 2: Rapid Pace of China’s Urbanization Presents Inherent Economic and Social Risks

As of last year about 52 percent of Chinese people have lived in urban areas, up from 20 percent some 30 years ago. The same process took Britain about 100 years, the United States 60 years and France 65 years. “Problems that had occurred in different stages of urbanization in these developed countries have mixed together in China due to the speed of growth,” said Wang Guangqian, a member of the Standing Committee of the CPPCC National Committee.

(continued)



Continued: Economic Growth and Energy Demand Go Hand-in-Hand

China's energy profile is profoundly influenced by the current demand of building 100 years of infrastructure in a 30 year period as well as a structural expansion in consumption resulting from the new urban footprint. Over the past decade, China's built-environment has increased its share of total energy demand from 19% to 30%. While since 2003 China's overall energy efficiency has increased 24%, it has done so from a very low number, remains in the bottom 25% of all countries excluding those least developed, and is 45% and 100% less efficient than the U.S. and Brazil, respectively. It is quite logical that China seeks to expand its access to energy supplies wherever it can. Globally, the Chinese government has made a focus of natural gas because it is less polluting than coal or oil and there is little domestic production. Given the scale of the country's energy consumption, the rest of the world cannot but be impacted.
End OE Watch Commentary (Zandoli)

Source: "NDRC's 12 measures to accelerate energy saving," Xinhua, 28 August 2013. <http://english.people.com.cn/90778/8381341.html>.

Article 3: Energy Efficiency Not Up to Plan

China has launched 12 new measures to accelerate energy saving and emission reduction as the country has been running behind its green schedule for the 12th Five-year Plan (2011-2015).

Source: "Natural Gas Development High on Energy Agenda," China Daily, 16 March 2013. <http://english.cri.cn/6826/2013/03/16/2702s754085.htm>

Article 4: China Prioritizes Natural Gas

The future importance of natural gas in the country's energy mix should be prioritized, and policies should be introduced to boost its development, according to the president of China National Petroleum Corp, the nation's biggest energy company. Zhou Jiping, a member of National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, said the use of energy source has gained far bigger prominence in recent times, as China struggles with its ongoing battle against carbon emissions. Zhou said China's air pollution issues are a direct result of excessive energy consumption during urbanization process. "Similar problems occurred in developed countries in the past, and raising natural gas's share of the energy mix, in some cases making it the primary part of it, was a key solution," he said.



Location where two million peasants had been relocated from the mountains.
 Source: <http://reality.newsru.com/article/24jan2013/dadun>



Syrian Fallout in North Korea?

30 August 2013

“The U.S. and the Western forces speak loudly of “ensuring human rights” and “detering the development of weapons of mass destruction,” while citing them as a pretext of armed interference.”

OE Watch Commentary: *Recent developments surrounding Syria have shifted the global debate between state sovereignty and international human rights toward those who favor autonomy. Such a shift is warmly welcomed by the North Korean leadership, where for years they have argued that a state should be allowed to pursue any policy (save external aggression) to preserve its independence. This brief excerpt from North Korean media points out their oft-repeated claim that the US merely uses its concern for human rights or WMD proliferation as a pretext “to justify their interference in internal affairs, aggression and plunder.” It will now be interesting to follow how Russia and China respond to North Korea’s demand for nuclear-armed sovereignty. End OE Watch Commentary (Kim and Finch)*

Source: “Rodong Sinmun Calls for Establishing International Order of Respecting Sovereignty,” KCNA, 30 August 2013.

Establish International Order of Respecting Sovereignty

In order to ensure the world peace it is an essential to establish an international order of respecting sovereignty, says Rodong Sinmun Friday in an article.

...High-handed and arbitrary practices based on the theory of strength and double-standards are now allowed in international relations and the acts of violating sovereignty including the use of power, interference in internal affairs and sanctions have become undisguised.

Nevertheless, measures have not been taken to eradicate these acts and international organizations are misused for justifying them. The western forces including the U.S. have used the political and military pressures, economic sanctions and psychological warfare as the main weapon of violating the state sovereignty of developing countries.

These moves of outside forces resulted in wreaking havoc with internal affairs of other countries, making the “coloring revolution” sweep across the Eastern European and Arabic regions and toppling legitimate governments. And independent countries against imperialism including Iran, Syria and Venezuela have faced difficulties in the economic development and social life owing to various kinds of pressures and sanctions imposed by the West.

The U.S. and the Western forces speak loudly of “ensuring human rights” and “detering the development of weapons of mass destruction,” while citing them as a pretext of armed interference.

Through such moves they seek to establish the international order governed by jungle law and neo-colonial order to justify their interference in internal affairs, aggression and plunder. History clearly shows that the moves of aggression forces to violate sovereignty of other countries would put global peace and security in serious peril.

Shattered buildings following an airstrike in a northeast neighborhood of Aleppo City, Syria.

Photo credit: Narciso Contreras

Source: <http://narcisocontreras.photoshelter.com/image/I0000vip5vYCDZB4>



The Perception of Threats from Radical and Extremist Groups

30 August 2013

“There are various kinds of extremists. Political extremists trying to destabilize the internal political situation in Kazakhstan, including the use of labor conflicts and disputes.”

OE Watch Commentary: *The governments of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan have voiced numerous concerns about the threat of radical and extremist groups, and the accompanying articles offer some insight into how both countries view these threats. There is a difference between these perspectives: the member of Kazakhstan’s Security Council (interviewed for this article) sees the threats coming largely from within the country, while the Kyrgyz author thinks that the influence from external religious groups is becoming the main threat. Both articles make some interesting points, but the one from Kazakhstan seems to take a broader view of threats to stability.*

The number of religious organizations mentioned by the Kyrgyz author is useful information, but it does not specify where these organizations originated from or what international connections they might have. A number of Kyrgyz youth have been going overseas to receive religious education, but the author does not mention that they came back and started these groups, just that the number of groups increased. The author could be right about radical groups leading to a clash with the government in the future, and he seems to be suggesting that something akin to the Arab Spring could happen in Kyrgyzstan. It is worth remembering that religion did not play a role in the groups or individuals who initiated the two revolutions that took place in Kyrgyzstan.

The article from Kazakhstan deems that radical or extremist groups do not, for the most part, have a large number of members, and that religion is only one of several factors that have stimulated these groups into violence in the country. Local news sources attributed most of the terrorist attacks that took place in 2011



A scene from the April 2010 Revolution in Kyrgyzstan: Radical religious groups did not play a role in the revolt.

Source: <http://www.militaryphotos.net/forums/showthread.php?177277-April-6-Riots-in-Bishkek-Kyrgyzstan/page10>

Source: Aybashov, Kubatbek. “Религиозная ситуация превращается в главную проблему Кыргызстана (The Religious Situation is Becoming the Main Problem of Kyrgyzstan),” Gezitter, 30 August 2013. Source: http://www.gezitter.org/society/23268_religioznaya_situatsiya_prevraschaetsya_v_glavnuyu_problemu_kyrgyzstana/

The Religious Situation in Becoming the Main Problem of Kyrgyzstan

On August 21 the international conference “Religion and Security” took place in Kyrgyzstan...The participants discussed religious trends in the region and related security issues. Not long after, on August 27 a meeting was held of the Expert Council under the President of Kyrgyz Republic on religion and inter-ethnic relations. The president mentioned that the religious situation in the country is out of control...Today in Kyrgyzstan there are 2393 officially registered religious organizations, including 2005 Islamic and 372 Christian organizations...

With the increase in the number of religious entities and organizations of various kinds, there have been previously unseen radicalization of religion and a growing threat of conflicts on religious grounds. Members of religious movements and sects received education outside the country, mainly in Pakistan, Bangladesh, and India...After graduation they act not only as religious agitators (in most cases – extremist) ideologues, and even mimic the Kyrgyz people of (having) strange customs that insults the national pride of the population and creates a variety of conflicts....

...On October 24, 2012 the Pervomayskiy (District) Court of Bishkek banned the takfiri-jihadist, Salafi movements “Jaish al-Mahdi, Jund al-Khilafah, Ansarullah, and Takfir wal-Hijra”...In early May (2013) the State Commission on Religious Affairs considered the activities of the religious organization “Tablighi Jamaat” as spreading extremist ideas and raised the question of its ban...The wars taking place in Arab countries like Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Syria, Bahrain, Jordan, and Yemen, which Muslims of different schools and movements are carrying out on the pretext of creating democracy, cannot be called revolutions...The struggle for influence in the movements and sects in our country and their competition with the official, secular power will sooner or later lead to an explosive situation.

(continued)



Continued: The Perception of Threats from Radical and Extremist Groups

and 2012 in different parts of Kazakhstan as acts of revenge. The attacks targeted police and security services, not civilians or infrastructure. Ultimately, both articles help clarify how each country views threats from radical or extremist groups. However, it is worth remembering that religion is not always the driving factor behind these groups. **End OE Watch Commentary (Stein)**

Source: Basarova, Leyla. "Расслабляться нельзя (Relaxing is not allowed)," *Vremya (Time)*, 7 September 2013. Source: <http://www.time.kz/articles/moment/2013/09/07/rasslabljatsjanelzja>

Relaxing is not allowed

The government of the republic (of Kazakhstan), as reported this week, made adjustments to the organization that combats terrorism. It is worth paying attention to the fact that the authorities intend to fight against terrorism not only by propaganda and power measures, but by the recovery of the social-economic situations in the regions, the level of their development, as well as the reduction of unemployment...the Deputy Secretary of the Security Council of the country, Kozy-Korpesh Janburchin, discussed this in an interview with *Time*.

(Time): "Kozy-Korpesh Esimovich, six terrorists were recently sentenced in Astana for plotting to blow up a new opera house and other objects. The public is scared: how many more radicals are in hiding?"

(Janburchin): "There is no reason to panic. Dangerous, large-scale terrorist groups do not exist in Kazakhstan. There are, of course, individuals that are not satisfied with their social position and resent authority, especially because one of their relatives was convicted...In general the situation is under control. Our security services possess the necessary means to identify and neutralize terrorists. However, relaxing is not allowed."

(Time): "What is the situation with extremism?"

(Janburchin): "There are various kinds of extremists. Political extremists trying to destabilize the internal political situation in Kazakhstan, including the use of labor conflicts and disputes. Law-abiding citizens, sometimes unknowingly, become marionettes in the hands of extremists...Besides the work inside the country, we are closely tracking the situation in other countries to prevent possible threats. We must not forget that Kazakhs are participating in the military actions in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Syria, and receiving combat experience..."



Kyrgyz security forces clash with protestors in Bishkek during the April 2010 Revolution.
Source: <http://www.militaryphotos.net/forums/showthread.php?177277-April-6-Riots-in-Bishkek-Kirgystan/page10>



The Continuing Development of Kazakhstan's Defense Industry

9 September 2013

“It is clear that the president has again thrown the “heavyweights” of national defense to eliminate “short-changes” and “half-measures” in outfitting the army with modern weapons and equipment.”

OE Watch Commentary: *The government of Kazakhstan continues to work on developing its defense industry, and the accompanying article highlights a recent conference that took place in Astana about some of the issues that the industry is facing. The author has written a number of articles on the development of Kazakhstan's Armed Forces and defense industry, and he is usually less than optimistic about any of the government's accomplishments in this sector. It is somewhat surprising, then, that this article has a more positive viewpoint on what the conference achieved. He also makes an interesting observation about the partnerships that the Ministry of Defense is pursuing.*

If the author is correct, the conference itself could make a positive contribution to development, though it remains to be seen what tangible impact this will have. The article alludes to the fact that one of the main issues for the development of the industry is a lack of

Source: Severniy, Vladimir. “Здравствуй, оружие. И... прощай (Greetings, weapons. And...farewell),” Megapolis, 9 September 2013. Source: http://www.megapolis.kz/art/Zdravstvuy_oruzhie_I_proshchay

Greetings, weapons. And...farewell

The international military-scientific conference, held in Astana, again exposed a number of problems, not only technical equipment, the modernization of the armed forces, but also the development of the military-industrial complex by itself. All 67 participants of the forum called for cooperation to actually be productive and beneficial, and not just in words...The organizers of the conference were LLP Research Institute «Kazakhstan Engineering» and the department of military-technical policy of the Kazakhstan Ministry of Defense...

It is surprising that in the Ministry of Defense negotiations with foreign business partners are being planned more often than with Moscow. Not one Russian was invited to the May-June tests of military equipment. Why? A behind the scenes answer to this is not diplomatic: “What is the point of inviting them, if, outside of long and painful toasts «for love and friendship», Russians do not take any tangible steps toward mutual and productive cooperation...”

Along with the success, about which much was said at the conference, there are pluses

(continued)



A S-300 missile system of the Russian Armed Forces.

Source: <http://rus.azattyq.org/content/russia-kazakhstan-air-defence-system/24642004.html>



Continued: The Continuing Development of Kazakhstan's Defense Industry

modern facilities and technical expertise to produce weapons systems and equipment. Kazakhstan previously had the means in both of these areas, but this largely disappeared following the breakup of the Soviet Union. Recent deals with Eurocopter (France) and Otokar (Turkey) to build helicopters (the EC725) and armored vehicles (the Cobra) in new facilities in Kazakhstan could improve the industry's capabilities.

The other part of the article that offers insight is what partnerships Kazakhstan is pursuing for its defense industry development. The author does not specify who the foreign business partners are (besides Eurocopter and Otokar), but does include the unattributed quote about Russia's involvement with Kazakhstan. While it is difficult to verify this, there has been a delay on Russian delivery of the S-300 missile system to Kazakhstan as part of a previous agreement. It is reported that the delivery will be worked out sometime in 2013. This could be one of the things the author is referring to, and it would be worth watching to see how Kazakhstan's partnerships progress. **End OE Watch Commentary (Stein)**

and minuses: the absence of operational and flexible systems to support scientifically sound decision making... I think that the solutions to these problems should be the focus of leaders, scientists, and specialists in the military and defense sectors... Immediately after the conference, the Deputy Defense Minister Sergei Gromov was appointed to the Senate (Upper House in Parliament) and Major General Talgat Zhanzhumenov took over the department of military-technical policy of Kazakhstan's Ministry of Defense. It is clear that the president has again thrown the "heavyweights" of national defense to eliminate "short-changes" and "half-measures" in outfitting the army with modern weapons and equipment.

The S-300P surface-to-air missile system

Designation:
 Russian military: S-300P
 NATO reporting name: SA-10 Grumble/SA-20 Gargoyle
 Class: medium/long-range surface-to-air missile system

Special features:

- Vertical launch
- Two missiles launched on one target
- Short deployment/redeployment time

History:
 The S-300 SAM system was developed in the 1960s-70s by the Almaz Central Design Bureau to replace the first-generation SAM, the S-75, for the country's Air Defense Forces, with a view to providing them with a road-mobile, multi-channel system to repulse massive air strikes; in service with the Russian Air Defense/Air Force (the S-300P family) and the Ground Forces (the S-300V family).
 S-300PS and S-300PM systems are exported as S-300PMU and S-300PMU-1/2

First tests:
 The mid-1970s

Put into service:
 S-300PT (1978); S-300PS (1982); S-300PM (1993)

Operators:

Specifications S-300PM (with 48N46 missiles)

Range:	5-150 km
Altitude:	10 - 27,000 m
Speed of targets engaged:	up to 1,800 m/sec (up to 2,800 with target designation)
Number of targets tracked:	up to 12
Number of targets engaged:	up to 6
Deployment/redeployment time:	5/5 min.
Number of missiles in a complex:	up to 48

The 48N6 surface-to-air missile

48N6 SAM specifications

Length:	7.5 m
Diameter:	0.519 m
Weight:	1,800-1,900 kg
Payload:	145 kg
Range:	150 km
Speed:	up to 2,100 m/sec
Overload:	up to 25G

Source: RIA Novosti 2008



Uzbekistan's Bilateral Security Relationships

20 August 2013

“Since 1993 “UzRosAvia” has successfully repaired Mi-8 and Mi-24 helicopters...”

OE Watch Commentary: Uzbekistan's decision to suspend its membership in the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) last year received considerable attention and some criticism from the media, particularly in Russia. The accompanying article, while short, illustrates a point that many who followed the story have not paid much attention to. Very soon after Uzbekistan suspended its involvement in the CSTO, Uzbek Foreign Minister Abdulaziz Komilov met with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov about strengthening bilateral relations. This meeting went largely unnoticed by the media, as did Uzbekistan's statements on how the country was not shifting its strategic interests away from Russia and toward the West.

The article serves as a good reminder that Uzbekistan continues to cooperate with Russia outside of the CSTO in areas of security. Part of this is the government of Uzbekistan's preference for bilateral security ties, and part of this is somewhat out of necessity, as the majority of its inventory of weapons and equipment are Russian made and serviced. This type of cooperation will continue for the foreseeable future, as long as Uzbekistan continues to utilize its current Russian weapons systems. One area that would be worth watching is what major new equipment purchases the government makes. The Mi-8 and Mi-24 helicopters certainly still have usefulness in combating any current threats, but the government has expressed interest in unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV). Uzbekistan's security forces reportedly have several UAVs in service that are relatively cheap and bought on the civilian market. If the government decides to buy more sophisticated UAVs, those purchases may not necessarily be made from Russia. In any case, while it has been almost a year since Uzbekistan officially left the CSTO, its cooperation with Russia continues nonetheless. **End OE Watch Commentary (Stein)**



An Mi-24P of the Uzbek Air Force. Source: <http://www.militaryphotos.net/forums/showthread.php?60250-Armed-forces-of-Uzbekistan>

Source: “Узбекистан намерен модернизировать парк российских вертолетов Ми-8 и Ми-24 (Uzbekistan plans to modernize its fleet of Russian Mi-8 and Mi-24 helicopters),” ITAR-TASS, 20 August 2013. Source: <http://www.itar-tass.com/c96/846635.html>

Uzbekistan plans to modernize its fleet of Russian Mi-8 and Mi-24 helicopters

Uzbekistan plans to modernize (its) fleet of Russian Mi-8 and Mi-24 helicopters...the modernization could affect 16 Mi-8 transport and 16 Mi-24 attack helicopters, the cabins of these will be adapted to use third generation night vision...

The Russian and Uzbek sides cooperate in areas of maintenance and repair of helicopters built in Russia through the Uzbek-Russian joint venture LLC “UzRosAvia”...This agreement provides for coordination of activities between the two companies for servicing Russian made helicopters in Uzbekistan...Since 1993 “UzRosAvia” has successfully repaired Mi-8 and Mi-24 helicopters...



ANTI-AMERICANISM IN THE KREMLIN NARRATIVE

Although anti-Americanism is not new in Russia, when half the Russian population indicates that they see America in a positive light, the Kremlin-backed media has to work harder to make the glass appear half-empty.¹ And it looks as though they are achieving their goals. Their tendency toward the negative has a twofold purpose: the current Kremlin leadership is aggrieved at the preeminence of America's global standing and they have rediscovered the value of a US bogeyman upon which they can blame many of their social ills.

An example of this negative hyperbole was evident during a recently televised roundtable meeting on one of Russia's most popular news sites, when Russian military and security experts examined the likely consequences of a US attack on Syria. Their conclusions ranged from the catastrophic to the apocalyptic. One expert asserted that a US attack on Syria would amount to an attack against Russia. According to this speaker's logic, by attacking Syria the US was planning to spread instability throughout the region, to include the volatile North Caucasus region in Russia. An American strategic objective of overall hegemony over Russia was stated as the underlying reason.²

While such alarmist sentiments are rarely as explicit in the commentary of Russian officials, this anti-American narrative is, nonetheless, influential with the general population, once savvy to interpret Kremlin pronouncements with critical, independent thought.³ Despite the plethora both traditional and on-line news sources, anti-Americanism has emerged as the not-so-subtle background narrative to a host of Kremlin-sponsored media. This brief essay will examine the key components of this narrative and some possible implications stemming from portraying the US in a negative light.

America as Source of Russia's Problems

Whether defending the truth of religious or economic doctrine, there has long been a sense of antipathy among some Russians toward the West. The Russian Orthodox had to defend their faith against the predations of the pope. Centuries later, devoted communists fought to keep the Western capitalists at bay. The current generation, however, has been most heavily influenced by the traumatic events, and their retelling, of the past 25 years. In this tale the US increasingly plays the role of chief villain.

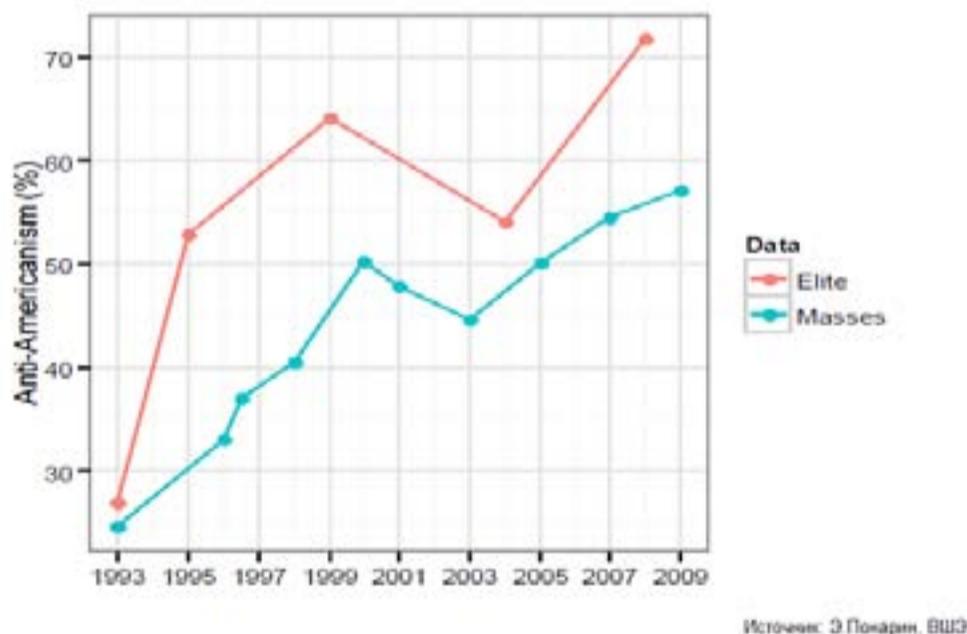
While some of the specifics are still open to debate, the current Kremlin story line revolves around an aggressive America that wants to weaken and ultimately subdue Russia. In this story, when the Cold War ended and the Soviet Union collapsed (thanks to the perfidy of the US and some of their quislings in the USSR), Russia retracted to its pre-imperial borders in the naïve hope that the US would fully accept it as an equal partner. Russia had been battered by its seventy-plus-year experiment with Communism and would need US help to rebuild its political, economic and social institutions. While there was no shortage of promises from Washington to assist Russia in its painful transition, the rhetoric rarely matched the reality. Instead of genuine assistance, the narrative explains that the sole superpower took advantage of Russia's

weakness, maneuvering craftily to strengthen its influence along Russia's borders and within its traditional sphere of influence. NATO was enlarged to Russia's very borders and Moscow leaders were marginalized in global politics. The story also describes how the US infiltrated Russia itself via business, government ties, and nongovernmental organizations to thwart Russia's recovery and to appropriate a large share of the country's abundant natural resources.⁴

In this Russian portrayal, the US is depicted as militarily powerful, yet morally weak and addicted to luxury and consumption. Leaders in Washington, described as hypocritical, will use their impressive information and ideological arsenal to claim that they are concerned with spreading democracy and human rights, when, in reality, they merely want to increase the country's dominance and share of the global market. Those countries that do not submit to the American ideological *diktat* soon find themselves as victims of American military force.⁵

This contemporary narrative is spiced with many painful grievances over the past twenty-five years, all designed to paint US policies and actions in an adverse light. US support for Presidents Gorbachev and Yeltsin and their faux-democracy was merely a pretext to weaken Russia. The "traitor" Gorbachev had caved in to demands from the

Являются ли США угрозой для России? Мнение элит и масс



Does the US present a threat to Russia? Opinion of the elites and masses.
Source: <http://finmarket.ru/main/article/3425783/>

(continued)



Continued: ANTI-AMERICANISM IN THE KREMLIN NARRATIVE

US to disarm and withdraw Soviet forces from Eastern Europe. *Glasnost* and *perestroika* were Western tools to dismantle the USSR. Some conservative Russian commentators have even suggested that Gorbachev was acting on orders from the CIA.⁶ Aggressive US policies during the Cold War, such as America's support for protests in the Baltics, helped to bring about the "greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th Century."⁷



American 'global' presence. Source: Topwar.ru

In this account, former President Yeltsin is guilty of even greater collusion with the "enemy." The US was responsible for developing Russia's economic shock therapy and the unfair distribution of Soviet wealth through the fraudulent voucher privatization program. Washington's "concern" for true democracy was fully apparent when US leaders applauded Yeltsin when he used tanks on the streets of Moscow to crush Russia's democratically-elected parliamentarians. Indeed, some prominent Russian leaders have put forward the theory that the US may have instigated this violence.⁸ Similarly, America's "understanding" of Chechnya's fight for independence in the 1990s was interpreted as the first step toward greater Russian dismemberment.

Conservative Russians like to point to the former Yugoslavia and how Washington helped to hasten its dissolution by labeling Serbia, Russia's traditional ally, as the chief aggressor. Ditto for 1999, when the US and NATO bypassed the UN and took unilateral action to force Serbs out of their traditional homeland in Kosovo. The one silver lining to this depiction of blatant Western aggression was the brief seizure of the airport in Pristina by Russian airborne forces. Long forgotten in the US, this incident "proved" that the US only understands the language of force, and though weakened, Russia still maintained the ability to stand up to the US.⁹

According to select Russian commentators and the Russian president, the US is a self-described "indispensable nation" that feels free to flex its military muscle whenever and wherever it deems fit.¹⁰ Armed with the flimsiest of evidence and without global community approval, the US had few qualms about invading sovereign Iraq in 2003. America has not only been the driving force behind NATO's continued enlargement, but continues to use the NATO alliance as a fig leaf for its aggressive actions. Libya is used as an example of this. This narrative claims that in its quest for global domination, the US abrogated the ABM treaty and continues to press forward with ballistic missile defense and other global weapon systems.

The US is also blamed for a series of economic disasters. Besides not helping Russia in the early 1990s, Washington is viewed as the chief culprit in the collapse of the Russian banking system in the summer of 1998. US banks were deemed complicit in Russian money-laundering schemes, transferring wealth out of Russia into the US. A decade later it was again greedy American bankers who were responsible for the global economic crisis. In the Kremlin calculus American profligate spending is one of the chief causes of international insecurity.¹¹

To buttress their anti-American arguments, these Russian experts will often cherry-pick quotes from American or Western sources, even when quite dated or obscure. One of their favorite authors is British geo-strategist Halford Mackinder, who wrote in 1904 that "Who rules East Europe commands the Heartland; Who rules the Heartland commands the World Island; Who rules the World Island commands the World."¹² The Russian experts now ascribe this theory to Washington's foreign policy, where the US has every intention of controlling the crucial pivot area of "East Europe," which includes Russia.

Zbigniew Brzezinski is another favorite source of these authors for "proving" that US leaders are determined to weaken Russia and force the country to follow a Western path of development.¹³ Using the global-chessboard analogy, they tell their audience that it was Brzezinski who was behind the plan to arm the Mujahidin during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. They go on to explain that Brzezinski's claims regarding the universality of Western and US values which underpinned the "color revolutions," were nothing more than US-inspired plots to infiltrate Russia's traditional sphere of influence.

When necessary, these Russian experts have not been averse to simply making up anti-American quotes to strengthen their arguments. One of their oft-quoted favorites was purportedly made by former US Secretary of State Madeline Albright, who allegedly claimed that Siberia was just too big and rich for just one country to own, and it should therefore be chopped up by the major powers.¹⁴ Secretary Albright, of course, made no such comment.¹⁵

With their semi-control over Russia's major media, the Kremlin leadership reiterates this anti-US message in a wide variety of traditional formats, such as TV news, movies, documentaries, newspapers, magazines etc.¹⁶ They have enlisted a number of media pundits whose primary mission is to interpret select American-related news stories in a negative light.¹⁷ Some of these bellicose journalists have a long quasi-communist pedigree, stretching back to the collapse of the USSR and the "betrayals" of Gorbachev. Yet while these strident anti-Western

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critics were once numbered among the fringe in the Gorbachev, Yeltsin, early-Putin era, many have now become mainstream media figures.

The anti-US vitriol is reinforced on the Internet, where an ever-increasing number of Russians are turning for their information. Here one can find the most incredible conspiracies and allegations, all centered upon the belief that the US is determined to fatally weaken Russia.¹⁸ It is unclear which sites are affiliated with the Russian authorities, however.¹⁹

With regard to current international affairs, the US is often depicted as the dark power behind any political instability. Just as America helped to fatally weaken socialist Eastern Europe and the USSR with deliberately empty talk of democracy and human rights, so today, it is spreading its “freedom-chaos” to stable regimes throughout the Middle East and Africa. According to some of these Russian experts, terrorist groups like al Qaeda are really inventions of the CIA and serve as a mere pretext for American involvement in foreign countries.²⁰

Alongside the media, various Russian clerics have labored to enhance US fear-mongering.²⁰ It is not just American armaments that threaten Russia’s sovereignty and traditions, but also the materialistic, humanistic and secular values expounded by the US. Gay rights, gender equality as well as

other liberal social values are portrayed as US issues and the modern equivalent of Sodom and Gomorrah. These clerics preach that America’s insidious control over the global information sphere allows the US to infect Russian minds with these false values.²¹



“Shut your mouth, chicken” Source: demotivator.ru

Implications

This persistent and increasingly shrill America-bashing has resulted in an increased number of Russians who now see the US as Russia’s primary threat.²¹ While the resurrection of the US bogeyman may be an appealing and even useful domestic tool for the Kremlin, it inadvertently increases the strategic communication risk for Russia as it faces outside threats that may be ultimately common to both Russia and the US. Awareness of this negative narrative trend should also be understood by Americans as they design engagement with Russians or react when prevented by Russia from engagement.

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END NOTES:

1. Despite this semi-positive rating, in a relatively recent poll (June 2013), the US was considered Russia's most likely enemy. <http://www.levada.ru/18-06-2013/levada-tsentr-glavnym-vragom-rossiyane-schitayut-ssha> For a recent graphic (in English), see: <http://en.rian.ru/infographics/20130730/182491560.html>
2. The particular expert in this case was the retired Soviet/Russian general, S. Kanchukov, a popular military commentator, who describes himself as a "general in disfavor" on his blog: <http://kanchukov-sa.livejournal.com/>. The roundtable meeting can be found at: <http://pressria.ru/pressclub/20130906/948423254.html>
3. For a recent example of high-level, measured commentary, see President Putin's recent editorial in the *New York Times*: http://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/12/opinion/putin-plea-for-caution-from-russia-on-syria.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0
4. This is a favorite theme developed by many conservative Russian politicians, writers and media pundits. Some of the more influential include Mihhail Leontyev, Aleksander Prokhanov, Dmitry Rogozin, Sergey Kurginyan and Nikolai Starikov. For an example of how this theme is presented in the media. See: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=us6nQtSnQm4>
5. There have been a number of recent Russian documentaries which have developed this assertion. Mikhail Leontyev, who hosts the program "Odnako" on Russia's First Channel, has been one of the more influential proponents. See: <http://www.1tv.ru/news/leontiev/>. He also helps to maintain an influential website where these ideas are promoted: <http://www.odnako.org/> See, for example: http://www.odnako.org/blogs/show_28709/
6. While such a charge would never be voiced on official Russian media, there are a number of influential Russian bloggers who have made this accusation. One of the more popular bloggers/aspiring politicians is Nikolai Starikov. His theories regarding US involvement in weakening Russia are fantastic, yet he continues to gain a following. He is another good example of a fringe commentator moving toward the mainstream. His blog on the Gorbachev charge can be found at: <http://nstarikov.ru/blog/15440>
7. Putin made this quote in 2005. See: <http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1058688.html>
8. While he was Russia's representative to NATO, Dmitry Rogozin (now Vice Premier in charge of Russia's Defense Industry) wrote his memoir/political tract *Iastreby mira* [Peace Hawks]. He devotes a chapter to the events of October 1993, and in no uncertain terms suggests that unidentified snipers on top of the US embassy in Moscow were responsible for aggravating this conflict. See: Rogozin, *Iastreby mira*, 155-74.
9. Some Russians have claimed that the NATO/US bombing of Serbia over Kosovo was a watershed in modern Russian consciousness. For a couple of Russian sources, see: <http://www.srpska.ru/article.php?nid=8439>. The Russian Wikipedia entry also includes some interesting details: <http://goo.gl/7Cerg> This same "lesson" was proven during the August 2008 conflict with Georgia, where Russia demonstrated force to protect its interests.
10. For instance, see Putin's remarks at the 43rd Munich Conference on Security Policy, February 2007. "*One state and, of course, first and foremost the United States, has overstepped its national borders in every way. This is visible in the economic, political, cultural and educational policies it imposes on other nations.*" <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/02/12/AR2007021200555.html>
11. Over the past decade, there have been many Russian documentaries on this topic, many shown during primetime viewing. For a typical example, see: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i7OVRFit7m8>
12. See: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Halford_Mackinder
13. See: *Strategic Vision: America and the Crisis of Global Power*, by Zbigniew Brzezinski, 2012.
14. For an example of this oft-quoted (yet false) allegation, see: http://english.pravda.ru/society/stories/17-05-2012/121151-madeleine_albright-0/

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15. Secretary Albright has taken pains to deny that she ever made this statement. <http://www.themoscowtimes.com/news/article/putting-words-in-albrights-mouth/193094.html>
16. There is no direct censorship of Russia's national media, but there appears to be general line which editors are encouraged to follow.
17. Some of the more well known suspects include Alexander Prokhanov, Maksim Schevchenko, Mikhail Leontyev, Aleksei Pushkov, Sergei Kurginyan, Arkady Mamontov.
18. The recent revelations of Mr. Snowden have helped to convince some Russians that the Internet is a grand project run by the US with the ultimate goal of weakening Russia. They see a necessary connection between the development of the Internet and the collapse of the USSR. The Russian blogdom is full of this sort of argument. For instance, see: <http://goo.gl/p4jAqZ>
19. The Internet has helped to spawn every sort of conspiracy theory, and, as mentioned, many Russians now turn to the Internet for their information. For an example of this conspiratorial thinking, see: <http://aldegrase.livejournal.com/225903.html> Besides sponsoring al Qaeda, the CIA is implicated in every sort of dastardly crime (e.g., the murder of hundreds of Russia's leading scientists). <http://voprosik.net/cru-ubivaet-i-zapugivaet-rossijskix-uchenyx/>
20. For an example of anti-US views from the Orthodox perspective, see the comments of Father Vsevolod Chaplin: <http://www.kp.ru/radio/program/4905/> Another outspoken cleric from the Russian Orthodox Church is Metropolitan Ilariyon [Митрополит Волоколамский Иларион]. For a recent example of his US-bashing, see: <http://radonezh.ru/70941> For the Russian-Islamic anti-US view, see the remarks of Dzhemal Gaydar, a frequent guest at the Russian News Service <http://www.rusnovosti.ru/guests/visitor/36283/>
21. See data at footnote #1.