

Foreign Military Studies Office

# OE WATCH

FOREIGN NEWS & PERSPECTIVES OF THE OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

## Special Essay: **Turkey's Protests:** Local Perspectives on Their Causes and Implications

Vol. 3 Issue #8 August 2013

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# OE Watch

## Foreign News & Perspectives of the Operational Environment

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## The Turkish Leadership's Concerns over Egypt

10 July 2013

*“Turkish Islamists are living the Egyptian coup not as a coup in Egypt, but as profoundly as a coup against themselves in Turkey.”*

**OE Watch Commentary:** As the accompanying passages point out, the Turkish leadership is troubled about the developments in Egypt. The Turkish prime minister was the first to condemn the Egyptian military's actions.

The Turkish leadership appears to have interpreted Egyptian President Morsi's removal as a sign that it too may be vulnerable to a military intervention. This is due to the recent widespread protests in Turkey against the prime minister's authoritarian governance style. Similar to Egyptian President Morsi, who has been criticized for overstepping democratic boundaries and consolidating too much power once he won elections, the Turkish prime minister has been criticized of the same thing by tens of thousands of demonstrators protesting on the streets of Turkey since early June. Feeding this fear is Turkey's history with military interventions and the widespread perception among the Turkish leadership that many countries in the West implicitly supported the Egyptian military.

Second, as the accompanying passages point out, the Turkish leadership of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) is ideologically close to the Muslim Brotherhood and identifies with the Morsi government. As such, they are feeling “victimized” by the removal of the Morsi government in Egypt.

Finally, Morsi's removal is a strategic loss for Turkey in that part of Turkey's foreign policy goals entailed establishing a Turkish-Egyptian axis in the region. This goal is now lost, and, as the final passage points out, Turkey is unlikely to have warm relations with any new government in Egypt, given its closeness with the former government and ideological affinity to the Muslim Brotherhood. **End OE Watch Commentary (Kaya)**



Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan and former Egyptian President Morsi, Source via: cbc.ca

**Source:** Kadri Gürsel, “Mağduriyet Simyacıları (Victimization Alchemists),” *Milliyet*, 7 July 2013, <http://dunya.milliyet.com.tr/magduriyet-simyacilari/dunya/ydetay/1733378/default.htm>

“Turkish Islamists are living the Egyptian coup not as a coup in Egypt, but as profoundly as a coup against themselves in Turkey... Or, they want those looking from the outside to put them in the place of victimized Egyptian Islamists... Turkey's Islamists really identify with Egypt's ‘Muslim Brothers’.”

**Source:** Cengiz Çandar, “Mısır’da darbenin Türkiye’deki iktidar için iki farklı sonucu (Two different outcomes of the coup in Egypt on Turkey’s government),” *Al-monitor.com*, 8 July 2013, <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/tr/contents/articles/opinion/2013/07/turkey-akp-demoralized-egypt-coup.html#ixzz2ZPzjmQaa>

“If there is one place on earth where the effects of the July 3 military coup in Egypt were felt as much as in Cairo by deposed president Mohammed Morsi and his Muslim Brotherhood, it must be Turkey. As Ankara coped with the trauma of the events [widespread protests] in Istanbul and most other parts of the country, the military coup in Egypt came as an additional tremor to Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and his ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP).

The overthrow of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt denies the AKP the chance to fulfill one of its goals...the establishment of a Turkey-Egypt axis in the region. The AKP and Muslim Brotherhood's ideological kinship was to have played a determinant role in the realization of this dream.”

**Source:** Soli Özel, “Mısır ve bölge (Egypt and the region),” *Haberturk.com.tr*, 10 July 2013, <http://www.haberturk.com/yazarlar/soli-ozel/859117-misir-ve-bolge>

“It is noteworthy that most countries at least implicitly supported the coup... The Turkish government had made a serious investment in its ideological friend in Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood. We cannot expect those who do not like the Muslim Brotherhood to forget or disregard this. In short, if Turkey will have a relationship with the new leadership in Egypt, it will be hard for it to be a close and genuine one.”

## Syrian Kurds Fight al Qaeda-linked Groups along Turkish-Syrian Border

18 July 2013

*“We fought hard to drive out the repressive regime and its army and we liberated the area from oppression. We will not allow either regime control or these al-Qaeda-linked groups. What is pushing them to fight us is their antagonism against our autonomous rule in Kurdish areas.”*

**OE Watch Commentary:** *When the Syrian crisis first erupted the Kurds in Syria kept their distance from both the Assad regime and the rebels and worked on securing their own cities. Instead of getting involved in the fighting, they focused on Kurdish national unification and established an army to secure their region. As the fighting spread in the rest of the country, a string of Kurdish-majority towns in the north seized local authority from the central government.*

*As the accompanying articles discuss, on 17 July al-Qaeda-linked groups in Syria attacked a Kurdish patrol in Ras al-Ain near the border with Turkey, prompting clashes with the Kurdish group PYD, the Democratic Union Party, considered to be the Syrian contingent of the PKK - the Kurdistan Workers' Party. According to a PYD-linked website, the Kurds took control of the town after 24 hours of fighting. The fighting spilled over the border and killed a Turkish teenager, prompting a response from the Turkish military, which fired into Syria in response to bullets that hit Turkish territory.*

*According to analysts, this shows that the conflict between the rebels in Syria and Assad's forces has spread into local wars that are not directly linked to ousting Assad. As one accompanying passage points out, one reason for the attack may be that the al-Qaeda-linked groups may want to give a message to Kurds that they will not allow Kurds to have their own autonomous regions in Syria. As another passage points out, another reason for the opposition to Kurdish autonomous rule in Ras al-Ain might be that it is an important oil resource.*

*The Turkish-Syrian border divides ethnic Kurds and traditional Kurdish lands. Drawn at the end of the World War I to follow an Ottoman railway line, it is approximately 560 miles long and is the longest border Turkey shares with any of its neighbors. People on both sides of the border are linked. Thus, any fighting on this border easily risks spilling over into Turkey. **End OE Watch Commentary (Kaya)***

**Source:** “Suriye'nin Türkiye sınırında PKK ile El Kaide savaşı (PKK- al Qaeda war on Syria's border with Turkey),” Rotahaber.com, 17 July 2013, [http://haber.rotahaber.com/suriyenin-turkiye-sinirinda-pkk-ile-el-kaide-savasi\\_384423.html](http://haber.rotahaber.com/suriyenin-turkiye-sinirinda-pkk-ile-el-kaide-savasi_384423.html)

“The PKK's [Syria] contingent YPG [the military arm of the PYD-Democratic Union Party], which has control over many towns, has practically entered into a war with al-Qaeda's Syrian arm, the al-Nusra Front. For the last two days, in the Syrian town of Ras al-Ain, weapons are talking. Female soldiers from the YPG were attacked yesterday while conducting their patrol. It is reported that the attackers were the al-Nusra Front, al-Qaeda's arm in Syria.”

**Source:** Aslı Aydıntaşbaş, “Ceylanpınar ve ruh halimiz (Ceylanpınar and our mental state),” Milliyet.com.tr, 18 July 2013, <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/ceylanpinar-ve-ruh-halimiz/siyaset/yarday/1738196/default.htm>

“There are two rising powers in Syria: The PKK and radical Islamic groups. And now these two groups are fighting each other, not against Assad. What should Turkey do? Ankara does not want its border to turn into Afghanistan. But it is also opposed to the PKK having control in the region.”

**Source:** Fehim Taştekin, “Kaide Kürtlere neden savaş açtı? (Why did al-Qaeda start a war against Kurds?)” Radikal.com.tr, 18 July 2013, [http://www.radikal.com.tr/yazarlar/fehim\\_tastekin/kaide\\_kurtlere\\_neden\\_savas\\_acti-1142284](http://www.radikal.com.tr/yazarlar/fehim_tastekin/kaide_kurtlere_neden_savas_acti-1142284)

“There are various scenarios regarding al-Qaeda attacking Syrian Kurds: Some say it has to do with al-Qaeda getting ready to establish an emirate; while other says it is meant to scare Kurds on the anniversary of their obtaining semi-autonomy in their regions.”

**Source:** “Syrian Kurds battle al-Qaeda-linked Islamists for oil fields,” The Globe and Mail, 18 July 2013, <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/syrian-kurds-battle-al-qaeda-linked-islamists-for-control-of-oil-fields/article13296061/>

“Nawaf Khalil, a spokesman for the Kurdish PYD, said the Kurds would fight back fiercely to maintain the autonomous zone they had set up in the area. ‘We fought hard to drive out the repressive regime and its army and we liberated the area from oppression. We will not allow either regime control or these al-Qaeda-linked groups. What is pushing them to fight us is their antagonism against our autonomous rule in Kurdish areas. I believe their other goal is Rumelian [the Kurdish name for Ras al-Ain] because it is an important oil resource.’ ”

## Recommendations of the Ministry of Intelligence to Citizens

11 July 2013

*“The Intelligence Ministry’s warnings reflect concern at the degree that the West (and, likely, East) penetrate Iranian networks and society.”*

**OE Watch Commentary:** *When Iranian officials depict their revolution to outsiders, they often describe the Islamic Republic in glowing terms, as a Utopia brought on through the insight and wisdom of revolutionary leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and his successor as Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Inside Iran, however, life is quite different and considerably more difficult.*

*The recommendations published by the Intelligence Ministry show its pervasiveness in everyday life. The recommendations excerpted here represent only a small portion of the 74 listed, which the Intelligence Ministry helpfully divides into categories: work and home safety recommendations; security recommendations with regard to neighbors; recommendations with regard to social interactions and in public; security advice with regard to automobiles; recommendations with regard to the protection of personal documents; recommendations with regard to the use of the telephone; safety recommendations regarding computer use; travel recommendations; and postal advice.*

*Both regime paranoia and fear of mundane criminality pervade the ministry recommendations. The Iran they hint at is a country replete with car thieves, muggers, and letter bombers, but the outside world they describe is even worse: hotel maids will steal documents, every computer will be hacked, and every foreigner is a spy.*

*The Iranian public may find such attitudes suffocating, but, at the same time, the Intelligence Ministry’s warnings reflect concern at the degree that the West (and, likely, East) penetrates Iranian networks and society. **End OE Watch Commentary (Rubin)***



Logo for Ministry of Intelligence and National Security (Iran). Source via: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:VEVAK\\_logo.png](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:VEVAK_logo.png)

**Source:** “Tawsehha-ye Hafezati Vizarat-e Etelaat beh Sharudan,” (“Recommendations of the Ministry of Intelligence to Citizens,”) Iranian Studies News Agency, 11 July 2013. <http://bit.ly/12puYnx>

### Recommendations of the Ministry of Intelligence to Citizens

- “Never be indifferent to events around you.”
- “Any communication with foreign nationals [and embassy members] without informing officials, whether inside or outside of the country, may result in your capture by foreign agencies.”
- “Never store copies of your data on computers.”
- “Never be indifferent to cars that are parked for a long time around work or home: Cars that are parked for longtime around your workplace might belong to a delinquent, thief, or even be related to a crime.”
- “Never ignore communication with God and seek His aid in all affairs, because the material life is very complicated and dangerous, and only He can accompany you on this path.”
- “Never activate the ‘blue tooth’ menu on your cell phone.”
- “If you observe suspicious individuals, terrorists, or saboteurs, report the matter to security centers, especially Ministry of Intelligence News Headquarters at [phone] number 113.”
- “If possible, follow them and ascertain their place of establishment without rousing suspicions.”
- “If they have attached suspicious objects to vehicles or released them in public, do not approach the object, and report it immediately to the authorities.”

*“That the Revolutionary Guards must send mobile propaganda units to the peripheries of Iran...might suggest that the IRGC leadership recognizes the hold of Ayatollah Khomeini’s philosophy on its rank-and-file may be tenuous.”*

**OE Watch Commentary:** *The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) is charged not only with territorial defense, but also with the protection of Iran’s revolutionary ideology. For the leadership of the Revolutionary Guards, the latter job is never ending. The Friday prayer leaders may spread the Supreme Leader’s vision in weekly sermons delivered in every city and town, but during the week Iranians are bombarded with cultural temptations, be they in manifestations of pre-revolutionary Iranian culture, Western television and radio beamed in from abroad, or from CDs and DVDs available on the Iranian black market. Indeed, this is at the root of the Iranian leadership’s obsession with “soft warfare” and what Iranian ideologues often call the “cultural NATO.”*

*Concern regarding the distracting influence of external culture extends to the IRGC. While many analysts and journalists place Iranian politicians along a continuum ranging from reformers to hardliners, there is no corollary understanding of the factional divisions within the IRGC. Some authors have tried to describe IRGC factions,<sup>2</sup> but insight into personnel does not exist with the precision needed to categorize individual officers, let alone rank-and-file guardsmen, by faction. All but the most elite IRGC units, which are more ideologically vetted, probably contain a mix of guardsmen, some of whom may be committed to revolutionary principles, but others of whom might have only joined the IRGC for the economic, social, and vocational benefits that accompany membership.*

*It is in this context that the IRGC’s mobile propaganda bookmobiles—the announcement of which is excerpted here—is interesting. While it may sound harsh to label them “propaganda bookmobiles,” the term propaganda (tablighat) tends not to have the same negative connotation in Persian that it does in English; indeed, it is the term that is also used for television commercials. Nevertheless, the fact that the Revolutionary Guards must send mobile propaganda units to*



Mohammad Ali Assoudi, deputy for culture and propaganda. Source via: <http://www.sepahnews.com/shownews.aspx?ID=93c5008d-e4d6-49e5-a76f-177d11a77879>

**Source:** “Ebtekar Sipah Dar Tarahi va Tajhiz Khodroha-ye Tablighat va Kitabkhaneh Siyar,” (“IRGC Initiative to Equip Cars as Propaganda Bookmobiles”), Sepah News, 14 July 2013. <http://www.sepahnews.com/shownews.aspx?ID=93c5008d-e4d6-49e5-a76f-177d11a77879>

#### IRGC Initiative to Equip Cars as Propaganda Bookmobiles

Mohammad Ali Assoudi, deputy for culture and propaganda of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, referring to new actions to promote cultural in difficult areas, announced a propaganda and cultural initiative of the IRGC to send six propaganda book mobiles as to boost the morale of the IRGC in the islands, and military exercise and study areas. According to the report of Sepah news, the ambition is to make the propaganda book mobiles to the IRGC Ground Forces, Navy and Aerospace in order to strengthen morale... General Assoudi stated, the IRGC commander [Mohammad Ali Jafari] visited the three islands and operational zones, and he emphasized the need to promote the vitality and cultural actions of the IRGC...



(continued)

## Continued: Revolutionary Guards Unveil Propaganda Bookmobiles

*the peripheries of Iran, such as the three United Arab Emirate islands which Iran occupies in the Persian Gulf, might suggest that the IRGC leadership recognizes the hold of Ayatollah Khomeini's philosophy on its rank-and-file may be tenuous or, at the very least, needs constant reinforcement. End OE Watch Commentary (Rubin)*

1. See "Iran's Soft Warfare Obsessions," Operational Environment Watch, January 2013, <http://fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/Archives/GSW/201301/201301.html#Iran%E2%80%99s%20Soft%20Warfare%20Obsession?>
2. See, for example, Frederic Wehrey, Jerrold D. Green, Brian Nichiporuk et al., Rise of the Pasdaran: Assessing the Domestic Roles of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps. Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2009.



“Iranian businessmen have had difficulty overcoming a reputation [in Iraq] for high prices and inferior goods.”

**OE Watch Commentary:** A frequent refrain of the Iranian government is that the Islamic Republic has benefited from international sanctions because it has forced Iranians to become self-sufficient. While it may be a stretch to suggest that indigenous Iranian industry can compensate for external refining, the Iranian offer to build refineries in Iraq and Pakistan suggests that the Islamic Republic is looking to nearby markets to win some much-needed hard currency.

The Iranian government will be hard-pressed to capitalize on such a strategy, however. Pakistan remains distrustful of Iran for sectarian reasons, especially as tension increases between Sunni radicals who have influence within the Pakistani government and Pakistan’s Shi’ite minority.

Nor will Iranian inroads into Iraq be so easy. While critics accuse Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki of pursuing a sectarian agenda, ethnic and national differences often drive a wedge between Iranian Shi’ites and their Iraqi counterparts. While Iran dominates the market in Iraq for packaged foodstuffs—largely a result of Iraq’s lack of manufacturing—Iranian businessmen have had difficulty making further inroads into Iraq. The market in southern Iraq—where Shi’ites predominate—is wide open because of a combination of Iraq’s oil boom and the withdrawal of many Turkish businesses, the latter being a result of popular Iraqi reaction to Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s sectarian incitement. Nevertheless, Iranian businessmen have had difficulty overcoming a reputation for high prices and inferior goods. Southern Iraqi officials have moved in recent months to entice American and European businessmen back into the Iraqi market in a conscious effort to balance the pressure from Iranian businesses and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps’ economic wing.

Iranian officials have responded by utilizing proxies in the Basra Airport and other officials elsewhere to put extra-legal hurdles in the way of Western businessmen entering Iraq or prospecting for business. Such extra-legal hurdles include misapplication of HIV test provisions and imposition of a nonexistent requirement to have an Iraqi official’s sponsorship to leave the airport. Such efforts, however, are unsustainable as the Iraqi government moves to crackdown on local officials who interfere in commerce.

Iranian officials may brag about their expanding domestic industries, but just as in the East bloc before the fall of the Cold War, they often find that domestic monopolies and local brand names and companies are insufficient in the face of international competition. While the Iranian recourse to this is diplomatic or more underhanded pressure, in the long term neither the Iraqi nor Pakistani markets will fulfill Iranian expectations absent improvement in the quality of Iranian goods and their cost-effectiveness. **End OE Watch Commentary (Rubin)**



[Oil Ministry Spokesman] Ali Reza Nikzad Rahbar,. Source via: <http://www.farsnews.com/newstext.php?nn=13920424001241>

**Source:** “Amadagi Iran Baraye Sakht Palaishgahha-ye Kuchek dar Iraq va Pakistan,” (“Iran Ready to Build Small Refineries in Iraq and Pakistan,”) FarsNews.com, 15 July 2013. <http://www.farsnews.com/newstext.php?nn=13920424001241>

#### Iran Offers to Build Refineries in Iraq and Pakistan

[Oil Ministry Spokesman] Ali Reza Nikzad Rahbar, in a conversation with the economic correspondent of the Fars News Agency, stated that we have completed technical studies to build small refineries in different parts of the country, prevented from selling crude, and said, also, if other countries desire, we will provide the services of these small refineries to them. He added, Iraq is one of these countries, and possibly Pakistan, or any other country that may be interested in this service...

1. “Keshevar ra Namitavan beh Vatan Firushha va Bi Butehha Separad” (“Country Cannot be Surrendered to Unpatriotic and Weak People”), Masheregh News (Tehran), June 3, 2013, <http://goo.gl/mnfVI>
2. This paragraph is based upon numerous interviews with American businessmen conducted by the author in Dubai, United Arab Emirates in June 2013; and with Iraqi businessmen, and local and national Iraqi officials in both Basra and Baghdad, Iraq, over the course of a two-week period later that month.

“...whether or not the border has been sealed, Jordanian policy has undeniably shifted...”

**OE Watch Commentary:** In early June Jordan began restricting movement along both official and unofficial crossings of its northern border, allegedly leaving thousands of refugees stranded on the Syrian side. Although Jordanian officials have repeatedly denied that the border has been sealed, several first-hand reports appear to indicate otherwise. The first accompanying article, from the daily al-Quds newspaper, argues that, regardless of whether or not the border has been sealed, Jordanian policy has undeniably shifted from one of relatively open borders to one of restricted movement. The strain of refugee influxes is well documented; the Syrian military's loss of control over countless border posts has further complicated conditions for Jordan. The article mentions a 19 June attack on a Jordanian border post, the details of which remain murky, as a likely trigger for the change in policy.

Confusion on Syria's side of the border is compounded by disarray within the Free Syrian Army's local military council (see last month's OEW for more on this: [http://fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/Archives/GSW/201307/MiddleEast\\_03.html](http://fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/Archives/GSW/201307/MiddleEast_03.html)). According to the second accompanying article, from the widely read daily al-Hayat, a key faction within the council has not only broken ties with Ahmed al-Naama, the council's nominal leader, but also called for his prosecution by local “revolutionary courts.”

Despite these internal squabbles, talk of further arming the rebels via Jordan continues. The dissenting faction of the council denies having received anything, as noted in the third accompanying article, taken from a prominent Saudi daily newspaper. The fourth accompanying article, originally published in a Hizbullah media source, claims otherwise. Amid the confusion, the one clear thing is that all parties are now



**Source:**

الأردن يرفع بدون إعلان لافتة 'ممنوع الدخول' على الحدود مع سورية  
 “Jordan Quietly Posts the ‘No Entry’ Sign” (al-Quds al-Arabi). Source via: <http://www.alquds.co.uk/?p=56125>

**Article #1**

**20 June 2013**

Jordanians believe that several groups within Syria will need to understand this message and adapt to the new reality, of which the extreme manifestation is the military option. The strategy of providing aid to the Syrian opposition has suffered a difficult birth, at a time when the numbers of Syrians in Jordan has increased to at least one million, among them 570,000 refugees for which there is no shelter, food or water. Last Sunday, King Abdullah II said openly that his country would take measures to protect its interests if the world did not provide assistance.

Logistically, it seems that last Wednesday's infiltration [19 June] was a powerful signal in terms of Jordanian measures to forbid or establish rules for the border, as best possible and without openly stating it.

**Source:**

عزل قائد «المجلس العسكري» في درعا  
 “Daraa ‘Military Council’ Commander Dismissed” (al-Hayat). Source via: <http://alhayat.com/Details/530512>

**Article #2**

**8 July 2013**

The Command Center of the Southern Front yesterday dismissed the head of the Daraa Military Council, Col. Ahmed Fahd al-Naama, and decided to prosecute him through a revolutionary court in the south of the country...

The statement pointed to al-Naama's negative role in the “fall of Khirbat and al-Maliha” and “his categorical refusal to participate with the rebels in their battles in Hawran rather than holing up in hotels in Amman” ...

(continued)

## Continued: Shifts on the Jordanian Border

*focused – to the best of their capabilities – on the Syria-Jordan border and what goes or does not go across it. End Commentary (Winter)*

After further accusations against the head of the Daraa Military Council, the statement added that al-Naama had become “officially wanted by the revolutionary court in Hawran. He will be arrested upon entering Syria so that the court may consider his case.”

**Source:**

غليون لـ الوطن : الأسد يسعى لإبادة حمص.. وتغيير التركيبة السكانية  
 “Ghalioun: ‘Al-Assad Seeks to Exterminate Homs and Change its Demographics’” (al-Watan [Saudi Arabia]), [http://www.alwatan.com.sa/Politics/News\\_Detail.aspx?ArticleID=151802](http://www.alwatan.com.sa/Politics/News_Detail.aspx?ArticleID=151802)

**Article #3**

**3 July 2013**

For his part, the FSA operations commander in the southern sector, Lt. Col. Yasser al-Abboud, warned against rebels having to rely on fighting groups that have weapons and ammunitions but are outside of the Free Syrian Army umbrella, given that weapons have not arrived. “If the situation continues as it is,” he added, “we will forego any commitments made to outside parties, including the Syrian National Council.”

In a telephonic interview with Al-Watan from his headquarters in the city of Daraa, he noted that the Free Syrian Army in the southern sector had not received a single weapon from abroad, and the rumors of the arrival of modern weapons is completely false. He added that the FSA in the south still relies on the weapons and ammunition that it has captured from the regime loyalist army.

**Source:**

تعاون مع الاستخبارات الإسرائيلية وتنسيق لادخال السلاح!  
 “Collaboration and Coordination with Israeli Intelligence to Smuggle in Weapons” (al-Ahed [Lebanon]), <http://www.alahednews.com.lb/essaydetails.php?eid=79721&cid=9>

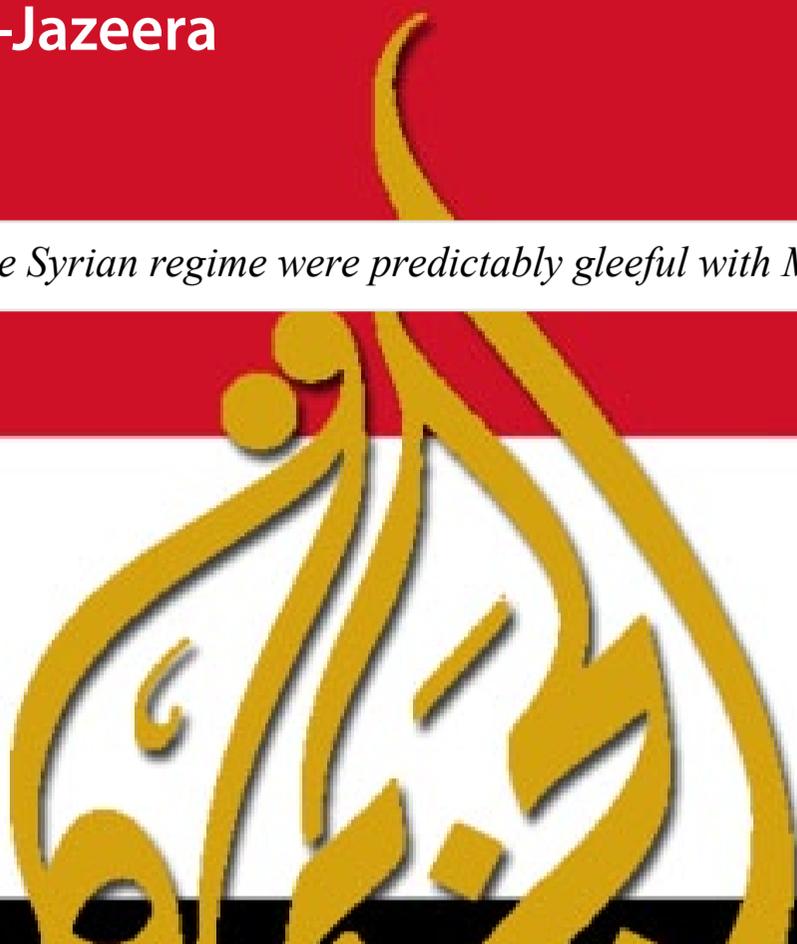
**Article #4**

**11 July 2013**

... As for the mechanism by which arms enter Syria from Jordan, the source summarized it as “the presence of a group of Syrian Army defectors, including Yasser al-Abboud and Ahmed Fahd al-Naama, the head of the so-called Daraa Military Council, who cross back and forth across the Syria-Jordan border and coordinate with Israeli and American intelligence and manage the battlefield.”

The source added that “Israeli intelligence is eager to not provide Ahmed al-Naama, who is responsible for the western part of Daraa Province, with any game-changing or heavy weaponry for use in this sector, for fear that this will affect the security of its artificial existence...”

“Supporters of the Syrian regime were predictably gleeful with Morsi’s overthrow.”



**OE Watch Commentary:** *Of Mohammed Morsi’s many political blunders in his final months in office, his fervent and unexpected 15 June announcement cutting diplomatic relations with Syria was particularly egregious. This blustering act was for many the straw that broke the camel’s back, irreparably severing Morsi’s relations with the military leadership and the country’s foreign policy establishment. The first accompanying article, taken from the English version of the Egyptian state newspaper al-Ahram, details the military’s reaction to Morsi’s open support for the Syrian rebellion.*

*Supporters of the Syrian regime were predictably gleeful with Morsi’s overthrow. The second accompanying article, taken from a Syrian state newspaper, illustrates the way in which events in Egypt and Syria are woven into a single broader narrative, wherein the two stalwarts of Arab nationalism, via their popular and heroic armies, stand steadfast in the face of foreign conspiracies hatched in Washington and Tel Aviv and implemented by radical Islamist armed proxies. The response of Syrian rebels to events in Egypt has been more mixed. The third accompanying article, posted on al-Jazeera’s website, claims that the reactions among a random*

**Source:** “Morsi role at Syria rally seen as tipping point for Egypt army” (al-Ahram English) <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/2/8/75564/World/Region/Morsi-role-at-Syria-rally-seen-as-tipping-point-fo.aspx>

**Article #1**

**3 July 2013**

Army concern about the way President Mohamed Morsi was governing Egypt reached tipping point when the head of state attended a rally packed with hardline fellow Islamists calling for holy war in Syria, military sources said...

“The armed forces were very alarmed by the Syrian conference at a time the state was going through a major political crisis,” said one officer, whose comments reflected remarks made privately by other army staff. He was speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not permitted to talk to the media.

**Source:** مصر والإخوان .. رواية هزلية أسقطها الشعب  
 “Egypt and the Muslim Brotherhood... A Farce Ended by the People” (Al-Thawra [Syria]) [http://thawra.alwehda.gov.sy/\\_archive.asp?FileName=106012101920130706224331](http://thawra.alwehda.gov.sy/_archive.asp?FileName=106012101920130706224331)

**Article #2**

**7 July 2013**

They [the Americans] failed to carry out their hellish plan in Syria and now it is the noble Arabs of Egypt and its national army, standing with its finger on the trigger, which will refuse to be a tool in the hands of the enemies of the Arab nation... they once again stretched their arms to bring chaos to Egypt, by plunging the Egyptian military into street battles with the Muslim Brotherhood, with the goal of exhausting the Egyptian army in street battles as is currently taking place in Syria. This would be followed by the mobilization of al-Qaeda’s terrorist gangs and others in order to create problems in the Sinai ...

(continued)

## Continued: Egypt, Syria and al-Jazeera

*sampling of rebel sympathizers near the city of Aleppo was largely negative. While spokesmen and propagandists for both sides – rebels and regime – will work hard to frame events in Egypt to their benefit, the re-entry of Egypt’s army into politics at the expense of the Muslim Brotherhood is by itself likely to favor the Syrian regime, although the longer-term consequences of this may not necessarily do so.*

*When protests first broke out in Syria in March 2011, the Syrian government accused al-Jazeera of undermining the state and stoking dissent by providing an outsized platform for small groups to voice their demands. More than two years later, with Arab Spring fervor having faded and al-Jazeera’s credibility as a neutral news sources battered in large part due to its coverage of Syria, a similar scene appears to be unfolding in Egypt, where al-Jazeera and its staff have become persona non grata to the new regime. The fourth accompanying article is a short statement posted to the website of Egypt’s “Tamarud” (Rebellion) movement, the public face of the 30 June protests, condemning al-Jazeera’s decision to post a pre-recorded video statement by Mohammed Morsi at the height of tensions. Al-Jazeera, a key factor in the Arab Spring, may well be one of its new victims. **End Commentary (Winter)***

### Source:

سوريا ومصر.. من يعزي من؟

“Syria and Egypt... Who Consoles Whom?” (al-Jazeera)  
<http://www.aljazeera.net/news/pages/512add15-27a2-4160-9ce8-274cd2568e13>

### Article #3

13 July 2013

“What a pity, the Egyptian military... by God you failed us!” This phrase is often repeated exactly or with different terms by locals one meets in Syria.

The sharpness of expressions of disapproval, surprise and resentment about what happened in Egypt last week increases if you tell Syrians, in Aleppo for instance, that you are Egyptian or coming from Egypt. They shower you with questions without awaiting a response, as the indignation and resentment in the questions often carry the answer...

### Source:

جزيرة قطر تشعل النيران في مصر

Qatar’s al-Jazeera Inflames the Situation in Egypt (Tamarud website), <http://goo.gl/M9bPt1>

### Article #4

3 July 2013

It is with the same insistence on inflaming the situation, unwillingness to submit to the desires of the Egyptian people, and attempting to push the country toward more killing, that Qatar’s al-Jazeera broadcast a video clip of Mohammed Morsi, the former president who was deposed by the people, which he and his group posted on YouTube.

## Jordan and Saudi Arabia after the Arab Spring

By Lucas Winter

The effects of the 2011 uprisings continue to be felt throughout the region, both in countries that have experienced major political change and those that have not. In this paper, the effects of the Arab Spring are examined within Jordan and Saudi Arabia. Pressures on these countries’ ruling regimes are surveyed along four dimensions: political, economic, social, and regional/international. This study shows how these four dimensions are interdependent – they overlap and interact in different ways in each country, producing varying impacts across time and space.

<http://fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/documents/Jordan-Saudi-Arabia-After-Arab-Spring.pdf>

*OE Watch Commentary: It is called the Raïa Mutomboki, Kiswahili for “citizens in anger,” and they are angry, frequently clashing with other groups also located in the eastern region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), including the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), mainly comprising Rwandan Hutu genocidaires who crossed the border at the end of Rwanda’s civil war. Reportedly it was a massacre by the FDLR of 12 people in the DRC village of Kyoka which gave rise to the Raïa Mutomboki, forming as a self-defense group against further attacks.<sup>1</sup> The fighting among the various militias has been vicious, frequently involving machetes and mutilations.*

*The Raïa Mutomboki is rather amorphous, composed of many loosely affiliated groups, or as the Usalama Project’s Jason Stearns calls them, “armed franchises.” There is no discernible rigid command and control structure, and, as the accompanying article states, it “has a flat hierarchy, in part due to the way in which the Congolese government has managed to co-opt or buy off leading commanders in an attempt to decapitate different groups.” There is, however, a founder, spiritual leader and figurehead: that would be Jean Musumbu, who reportedly can concoct a potion capable of making fighters invincible.*

*“The militarization of communities in the eastern DRC can partly be seen as one of the logical consequences of long-term governance without government – whereby non-state actors take on some of the roles of the state or blend into the very same – in the region.”*



Image of a Hutu militia formed after the 1994 Rwandan genocide. Photo by Melani Gouby. Source via: <http://www.rnw.nl/africa/article/meet-drc%E2%80%99s-angry-villagers-part-1>

**Source:** Christoph Vogel, “Congo-Kinshasa: Who Are the Raïa Mutomboki?” Think Africa Press, 17 July 2013, <http://thinkafricapress.com/drc/drc-who-are-raia-mutomboki-south-kivu>

...The Raïa Mutomboki purportedly emerged as a means of self-defence following the massacre of 12 civilians in the village of Kyoka by the FDLR, a Rwandan Hutu rebel group predominantly made up of the genocidaires who fled into eastern DRC from Rwanda following Rwanda’s 1994 civil war...

...The Raïa Mutomboki engaged in a relatively quick and successful campaign against the FDLR in the mid-2000s, gaining in strength as they went along. As Rémy Kasindi, founder of

## Continued: DRC “Citizens in Anger”: The Raïa Mutomboki

*The Raïa Mutomboki’s size is unknown, but probably numbers in the thousands, with the numbers fluctuating greatly as civilians take up arms during periods of perceived threats and then put them down when calm, or as calm as the eastern DRC can be, returns. They increase their ranks through a process called “arsenal,” whereby following a village being defended or liberated from the FDLR or other Rwandophone group, the village’s males are “initiated into the movement creating a sort of snowball effect. If a subsequent neighboring village is then attacked, new recruits are expected to lend a helping hand.”*

*Though often described as a self-defense force, the Raïa Mutomboki includes former rebels who, when a treaty was signed in 2002, were supposed to be integrated into the army. That was largely a failure, in no small measure due to corruption, and many of the former rebels left the military, bitter, and joined groups such as Raïa Mutomboki.*

*There are several militant groups in the eastern DRC. Some arose because they could take advantage of the void of governance in the area. On the other hand, the Raïa Mutomboki, at least initially, arose to fill that void, offering protection, as well as retribution, for its members. With so many antagonistic groups, as long as that region of the DRC continues to be relatively isolated from the central government’s influence, the guns and machetes will likely continue to come out. **End OE Watch Commentary (Feldman)***

1. Jason Stearns, “Who Are the Raia Mutomboki?” Congo Siasa Blog, 21 July 2012 <http://congosisa.blogspot.com/2012/07/who-are-raia-mutomboki.html>

the Congolese think tank CRESA, points out, “successful attacks on FDLR yielded weaponry for the Raïa Mutomboki that only fought with spears and arrows in the first place”. After managing to establish their dominance over the FDLR, the Raïa Mutomboki lay largely dormant for a number of years...

...In 2011, the group re-emerged as a decentralized franchise once more, in response to increased insecurity. This time the regional security vacuum was partly caused by a reshuffling process within the government army (the so-called regimentation process),,

... one of the reasons for the emergence of the Raïa Mutomboki was the insecurity in South Kivu in the mid-2000s. This was again the reason for the group’s re-emergence in 2011, when the government’s attempts to undermine the influence of former CNDP rebels in the national army backfired. In the security vacuum left behind by this failed policy, the FDLR was able to regain territory that had previously been lost and re-start terrorizing civilians...

...The Raïa Mutomboki can also be seen as one particularly stark manifestation of the government’s failed policy of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR). As part of the Sun City peace agreement of 2002, which negotiated the end of the Second Congo War, thousands of combatants were to be integrated into the national army whilst others were to be demobilized and reintegrated into civilian life. Corruption in DDR, however, was rampant, and thousands of demobilized combatants never received any assistance to return to non-military professions, especially those in the most remote areas. To an extent, the re-emergence of a militant group in the area such as Raïa Mutomboki was somewhat predictable in the face of failures to demobilize former militants...

...Not only have disarmament policies brought perverse incentives to create or maintain armed groups, in order to be awarded the funds to then demobilize, but their uneven implementation has also created imbalances in the fragile local contexts, sometimes pitting communities against one another...

...The failures of reintegration have also contributed to the dynamics of militia formation... lukewarm efforts at army integration have been marred by irregularity and caprice. Integration into the Congolese military has typically either deprived communities of their own defenses or – when applied inconsistently – allowed some groups to maintain their military strength over others...

## 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://fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/documents/Africa’s-Brain-Drain.pdf>



## Uganda's Small Increase in HIV/AIDS Prevalence Could Become a Big Concern for the American Military

July 2013

*“...reports from health workers conducting HIV counselling and testing (HCT) outreaches reported HIV prevalence as high as 70% in some fishing villages.”*



**OE Watch Commentary:** For many years Uganda was the African poster child of success against HIV. After expending enormous sums of money - much of it donated by foreign governments - as well as countless hours of effort, the nation experienced a precipitous decline in its HIV/AIDS rate, going from 15% in 1991 to 6.4% in 2006.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, the prevalence of the disease has since been rising, with the latest research, as noted in the accompanying article, estimating 7.3% of the population is now infected.<sup>2</sup>

Some have noticed this rise, but for many the rate of increase has apparently been so slow it is basically off their radar. However, each tick up is cumulative, so barely perceptible annual increases can lead to major changes in the disease's prevalence over a time span of say five to ten years.

For both the Ugandan and American militaries these small annual increases should be a large concern. Throughout much of Africa the prevalence of HIV/AIDS is significantly higher in the military than the civilian population, which is not particularly surprising, considering soldiers are often young men living for

**Source:** Ninsiima, Rachel, "Uganda: 'Sex for Fish' Common as HIV Reaches 22%," The Observer (Uganda), 14 July 2013, [http://www.observer.ug/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=26404:sex-for-fish-common-as-hiv-reaches-22&catid=34:news&Itemid=114](http://www.observer.ug/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=26404:sex-for-fish-common-as-hiv-reaches-22&catid=34:news&Itemid=114)

...Rising HIV/Aids prevalence rates in fishing communities around lakes George and Edward in south-western Uganda call for increased funding for HIV prevention and related interventions, a 2012 study has advised...

...The study, conducted in Kasese, Rubirizi, Kamwenge and Rukungiri, found that the average HIV prevalence rate among the respondents was 22.4%, up from 19%, the previous year, and higher than the national prevalence rate of 7.3%...

"This prevalence is higher among the females because of multiple sexual partners, with one respondent mentioning 12 partners and only 13% of the respondents using a condom every time they have sex," said Seremos Kamuturaki, UFFCA executive director.

..."Transactional sex was reported to be very common and the payment methods took various forms, including fish for sex, shoes and alcohol, and the overall mean age for the first sexual debut was 13 years for all the respondents, with males having the first sexual partner as early as eight years," the study reveals...

...Of the 181 women interviewed, 11% reported that their first sexual experience was forced and that condom use was rare in such scenarios. Yet the pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) option for the victims was limited...

...Cross-generational sexual relationships were said to be frequent, especially due to financial constraints of women and compulsion from peers. Inevitably, sexually-transmitted infections (STIs) are common, accounting for 87% of the total infections.

...Kamuturaki, however, noted that there is limited access to anti-retroviral therapy (ARVs) owing to the poor road network and inadequate health facilities in these communities. He appealed to the government and development partners to establish an integrated rural HIV prevention strategy and to economically empower the women in fishing communities as mechanisms of addressing the scourge...

*(continued)*

## Continued: Uganda's Small Increase in HIV/AIDS Prevalence Could Become a Big Concern for the American Military

*extended periods of time away from their families. High rates of HIV/AIDS can be extremely detrimental to a military force, as units become hollowed out when soldiers become sick and scarce resources that would have been spent on military equipment and training are now diverted to medical care.*

*Uganda's military has played a key role in several missions important to the region and to the United States. Perhaps most importantly, the bulk of the African Union forces fighting al Shabab militants in Somalia has often been Ugandan. Some foreign observers have even described the Ugandan intervention in Somalia as America's proxy force.<sup>2</sup> Regardless, all nations with interest in a stable Somalia that can defeat the militants, who find the fractured nation an operational safe haven, Uganda's assistance is clearly helpful, perhaps even vital. Anything that weakens the Ugandan military, including HIV/AIDS, decreases the likelihood of success in the Somalia mission, as well as potentially future ones elsewhere in Africa where Ugandan and American interests coincide.*

*It is difficult to pinpoint exactly why Uganda's HIV/AIDS rate has gone up. Many, though certainly not everyone, feel the switch from emphasizing the use of condoms to abstinence was a significant factor, and that condom use again needs to be at the forefront. The barely perceptible change in the annual rate might also be lulling people into complacency. Additionally, as the accompanying article describes, there are certain areas, especially fishing villages, where the disease is essentially out of control, with some areas reporting rates as high as 70%. If America and Uganda want to ensure the Ugandan military does not become a hollowed out force, as some other African militaries have become, it is important to study why HIV/AIDS is increasing and then, based on these findings, implement appropriate public health measures. In Africa AIDS is often described as a WMD, and unless it is brought under control, the devastation it causes could hit an important regional military force particularly hard. **End OE Watch Commentary (Feldman)***

1. "HIV and AIDS in Uganda," Avert, 2013

2. Dan Damon, "Why is Uganda Fighting in Hellish Somalia?", BBC News, 15 March 2012, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-16853499>

### Europe's Somali Diaspora: Both a Vulnerability and a Strength

By Rob W. Kurz, U.S. Army

Somalia diaspora radicalization and participation in the activities of al Shabaab is documented throughout Europe, especially in those locations with the largest diaspora populations. This paper examines both the strengths and dangers of this troubling process. Analysts and law enforcement officials in Europe estimate that it is only a matter of time before these elements bring Somalia's instability to the streets of the host countries.

<http://fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/Collaboration/international/Sri%20Lanka/PTSD.pdf>

*“It has proclaimed the untenable truth that the black body is not safe where whiteness exists, whether in a colony, settler territory or a democracy.”*

**OE Watch Commentary:** *In the African press, the acquittal of George Zimmerman in the Trayvon Martin case has brought forth cries of racism against the United States. Unlike in America, where there is a diversity of opinion in the news media regarding the Florida courtroom's outcome, there appears to be near unanimity in the editorials of African newspapers, such as the one accompanying this commentary, not only that Zimmerman is guilty, but also that the US is racist. After years of AFRICOM and other US agencies burnishing America's image on the continent through humanitarian ops, as well as President Obama's recent visit to the continent, Zimmerman's acquittal appears to have had a negative impact.*

*Read some of the quotes from African editorials. This one, from about a month after the shooting, is by the same author as the accompanying article. It refers not just to the US, but also to the white enclaves of South Africa, “Middleclass communities build mini armies under the guise of ‘neighborhood watch’ to defend themselves from the black male. They say it is only about crime, but I think it masks a deeper fear of blackness. Too many innocent young black men have been killed ‘accidentally.’ The fear of black men is so deeply ingrained it has become part of the collective unconscious.”<sup>1</sup> Here is one from a Kenyan paper, “At home the United States is becoming an increasingly intolerant and unequal society.”<sup>2</sup> The final example is from Pambazuka News, “The story in the United States of Aggression is not dissimilar, with the names of [two black individuals] who have been brutally murdered by the institutional racism of the American police force ...; the 17-year-old unarmed African American Trayvon Martin was viciously murdered in February 2012 in Sanford, Florida.”*

*Africa has been angry at the US before. There is generally a steady stream of complaints from those rallying against American imperialism, especially cultural imperialism, as American music, movies, TV shows, and fashion inundate the continent. There have even been not-so-nuanced references to American racism against Africans in general. However, there has not been much written lately about Americans disliking blacks overall, not just black Africans.*

*One must keep in mind, however, that newspaper editorialists do not speak for all of Africa or Africans, a fact perhaps borne out by this commentator's*

**Source:** Gillian Schutte, “From Trayvon Martin to Andries Tatane: Cognitive Dissonance and the Black Male Body,” The South African Civil Society Information Service, 16 Jul 2013, <http://www.sacsis.org.za/site/article/1727>

...No matter how many may deny it, he is dead because he was black. He is dead because to someone else he did not look like a teenager in a hoodie with a Snickers and Iced-Tea in his pocket...

...While Fanon wrote about colonized blackness in the 20th century – nothing much has changed in the current epoch because if it had, Trayvon Martin would not be dead. Neither would his killer have been acquitted...

...The shock and horror of this information has resonated through the collective consciousness of black people, and black-positive people, right around the world. It has proclaimed the untenable truth that the black body is not safe where whiteness exists, whether in a colony, settler territory or a democracy. It demonstrates that no matter how post-race a multicultural discourse tries to convince us we are, this does not accurately reflect the world...

...The awful truth is that in a white supremacist society the black body remains a location of violence. The reality is that the black body has an identity that is still confined to and judged upon the colour of the skin. It is this skin, this exterior of the body, which becomes the fundamental focus in a racialised identity. As Fanon denoted, the white man sees only the black skin. It becomes the foundation for all relations. The black man is reduced to his outer coating and body. There is no depth – only surface. He is flattened out and stripped of psychology, emotion and intelligence. Thus the black man does not really exist as a fully-fledged human in this imaginary – he is an object. But more so he is an object that presents a danger to whiteness. He becomes nothing more than a signifier in service to white fear...

...Here in South Africa we are shocked and angry at Zimmerman's acquittal. We paste up Facebook memes that express our outrage. We write about the pain Martin's parents must be enduring. We commiserate about our own black sons and how unsafe they too would be in the States...

... Whether they were demanding better wages, marching for service delivery or simply refusing to be manhandled or profiled, this is what got them killed. The system, it seems, does not tolerate a black man who is not passive, not paid off and in the pocket of white business pushing a white supremacist agenda or being the black fall-guy for capitalist destruction wreaked by colonisation and neo-colonialism...

...And it is not always white men that directly perpetrate the violence against the black body. Many times it is black men themselves who work for corporate owned states as army, police or security men. In a frenzy of shattered male identity, black policemen will willingly open fire on their own in service to the state, but also in blind servitude to a 350 year old order in which manhood in South Africa and the USA was defined by the ability of one race of men to oppress and brutalize another...

...Perhaps history explains why black policemen will kill their own or why Zimmerman, a man of colour, will racially profile Martin and finally shoot him. They still abide by the logic of white supremacy that some black men must be killed with impunity to keep society-at-large safe...

*(continued)*

## Continued: Africa's Adverse Reaction to Zimmerman's Acquittal

*observations of numerous close friendships forged during the training of black African soldiers by their white American counterparts. Still, perceptions of racism, whether justified or not, could factor negatively in relations, including military relations, between America and Africa. End OE Watch Commentary (Feldman)*

1. Gillian Schutte, "Fear Wears a Black Man's Face," The South African Civil Society Information Service, 27 Mar 2012, <http://www.sacsis.org.za/site/article/1249>
- 2 "Kenya: U.S. Needs Some Soul Searching," The Star, 15 Jul 2013, <http://allafrica.com/stories/201307160563.html>

...And President Barack Obama's restrained reaction in response to the verdict also seemingly plays by the white supremacy rules of engagement...

...It is now no longer about "who" did the killing but about "how much value is placed on the killed". It is all about how much of a potential threat the person killed is to the white status quo.

...Based on this heinous logic the system continues to perpetrate violence against the black body and devastate justice and human rights for black people. It also relentlessly pushes the message that a white system does not embrace the humanity of the black human – thus the black person remains stuck in the untenable space between being both savage and invisible in the white supremacist imaginary...

...When is this going to change? How much longer must we witness the killing of young black men such as Trayvon Martin and Andries Tatane who are in the end, the sacrificial lambs to this untenable and enduring racism?...

**Source:** "USA Needs Some Soul Searching," The Star (Kenya), 15 Jul 2013 <http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/article-128198/usa-needs-some-soul-searching>

...But the greater tragedy is that, coupled with recent Supreme Court rulings outlawing positive discrimination, race relations in the United States now seem to be reverting back to the 1950s...

...At home the United States is becoming an increasingly intolerant and unequal society. Hopefully the Trayvon case will prompt a national soul-searching about why the US is no longer the land of equal opportunity and justice for all...

**Source:** Andrew Mwenda, "Inside 'Post-Racial' America," The Independent (Uganda), 19 July 2013 <http://www.independent.co.ug/the-last-word/the-last-word/8016-inside-post-racial-america#sthash.jjkWw4lr.dpuf>

...A narrative has been constructed in American media, popular culture and academia that their society is under the threat of crime and the perpetrator is a black male...

...By using black people as scapegoats for the ills that bedevil America, white society relieves itself of its own fears and anxieties and also allows itself to feel virtuous. But it has also allowed police to routinely stop and search black people; arrest, beat and often kill them with impunity, and also facilitated a mindset that allows juries – even those composed of a sizeable number of blacks – to easily convict black people or acquit those who violate them. This is the reality of the American criminal justice system that found Zimmerman not guilty...

**Source:** "Deal With the Log in Your Eye First, Uncle Sam, Leave the Twig in Ours" The Herald (Zimbabwe) 18 Jul 2013 <http://www.herald.co.zw/editorial-comment-deal-with-the-log-in-your-eye-first-uncle-sam-leave-the-twig-in-ours/>

...if the US is democratic and upholds the rule of law, why has the case on the murder of the black teenager, Trayvon Martin, caused such uproar? If American courts are capable of delivering justice, why are people all of over the world, including African-Americans, questioning the nature of America's justice system?..

...So, if the US is "deeply concerned about the lack of transparency" in Zimbabwe's electoral process, so, too, is Zimbabwe about the United States' human rights records, at home and abroad...

# Bulletproof Vest Misuse Leads to 15 Dead South African Soldiers

19 July 2013

*“American and British soldiers in Afghanistan eat and sleep with their jackets on, and they would not dare move from camp without them.”*

**OE Watch Commentary:** When it comes to Sub-Saharan African militaries, South Africa is generally considered the cream of the crop. However, as the article below details, the South African army still has some work to do to avoid the lamentable loss of lives in otherwise preventable circumstances.

In short, as the excerpt elucidates, a South African military spokesman recently revealed that fifteen South African soldiers were killed in the Central African Republic as a result of improper use of their bulletproof vests. Although details have not been released as to whether the misuse was a result of a fundamental training error or simply an unfortunate anomaly, the high number of casualties suggests that a pedagogical problem - rather than one-time carelessness by individual soldiers - was at the root of the deaths. The South African National Defence Force (SANDF) was in the country to help the incumbent government of François Bozizé battle Séléka insurgents, as stipulated by a bilateral mutual defense pact that the two countries had signed in 2007 and again 2012. Reports suggest that only 200 SANDF soldiers resisted more than 1000 Seleka insurgents during the so-called March 23 Battle of Bangui.

In sum, the reader should take away the point that although South Africa is hands down the continent's best military, even it is not above making careless mistakes that might seem quite basic to U.S. military personnel.  
**End OE Watch Commentary (Warner)**



Members of the South Africa National Defence Force (SANDF) carry the mortal remains of 13 members that were killed in Central African Republic (CAR) during the handing over to the respective families at the Waterkloof Air Force Base, in Pretoria, March 28, 2013. Source via: <http://www.timeslive.co.za>

**Source:** “Bulletproof vests worn ‘incorrectly’ in CAR,” News 24 (South Africa) 19 July 2013: <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/Bulletproof-vests-worn-incorrectly-in-CAR-20130719>.

## Bulletproof Vests Worn ‘Incorrectly’

The incorrect use of bulletproof vests during the Battle of Bangui in the Central African Republic (CAR) in March was probably why 15 South African soldiers were killed, Beeld reported on Friday. Colonel Renier “Doibi” Coetzee, a senior South African Special Forces officer, made this statement on behalf of his superiors at a press conference in Pretoria earlier this week. Coetzee said soldiers who had worn their jackets correctly withstood several bullets and survived the ordeal. He said that after the 23 March battle it had emerged that some of the South African troops had not worn their jackets in the prescribed way. “Some took out the bulletproofing plates, while others just wore breast plates. This left their backs unprotected.” Coetzee said the army was currently evaluating both instructions for wearing the jackets, and the quality of items being issued to soldiers. “It is true that our jackets are a bit old, and that the technology is a bit outdated... but there’s nothing wrong with them.” Wearing the jackets was optional, and especially when it was hot, soldiers tended to remove the plates. “American and British soldiers in Afghanistan eat and sleep with their jackets on, and they would not dare move from camp without them. This is one of the things that after the current evaluation will probably become mandatory for our soldiers,” he said.

*“...doing business with Chinese is like “playing with fire.” You may get burnt one day”*

**OE Watch Commentary:** Food security includes both the amount of food produced and access to that food for any given population. Many rice-exporting countries in Indo-Pacific Asia have a significant portion of their people still malnourished. Market forces and governmental policies are the largest drivers in the distribution of foodstuffs. China is currently the world's largest consumer of rice. It is also the world's largest producer of rice, yet it imports over 2.5 million tons each year. These critical imports are supplied primarily by Viet Nam. With half the world's population dependent on rice as the staple of their diet, China's importation of rice is a geostrategic issue. In 2012 China imported some 2.6 million tons of milled rice. China is on pace to import a new record amount of rice in 2013.

The impact of this demand is chronicled in the newspaper articles included here. In the online news source VietNamNet Bridge it is reported how China is using its position as a massive importer to drive prices and manipulate suppliers. Increases in exports from Burma (Myanmar) and Cambodia may be influenced by the Chinese demand. This will have consequences on availability of rice to other nations in the Indo-Asia Pacific realm. The Phnompenh Post records that China has invested in milling facilities in Cambodia to support these increased exports.

Thailand is currently the largest exporter of rice in the world. An article from The Irrawaddy points out that Burma (Myanmar) is seeking to expand its rice exports to the world. Increased demand from China is causing prices to rise. This can lead to rice being pulled from domestic consumption and moved to export to take advantage of the profit possibilities. It remains to be seen if this will serve to increase instability in those nations facing the greatest amount of undernourishment. **End OE Watch Commentary (Welch)**



Vietnam remains primary rice exporter to China. Source via <http://english.vietnamnet.vn/fms/business/74550/chinese-play-dirty--vietnam-s-rice-exporters-face-high-risks.html>

**Source:** VietnamNet Bridge, “Chinese play dirty, Vietnams’ rice exporters face high risks“ May 20, 2013, <http://english.vietnamnet.vn/fms/business/74550/chinese-play-dirty--vietnam-s-rice-exporters-face-high-risks.html>

### 64 percent of canceled contracts are from China

According to Nguyen Xuan Chien, Deputy Director of the Domestic Market Department under the Ministry of Industry and Trade, by April 30, 2013, Vietnamese enterprises had signed the contracts on exporting 4.2 million tons of rice, an increase of 9.92 percent in comparison with the same period of 2012. Vietnamese exporters would need to deliver 2.08 million tons from May under the signed contracts.

With the high volume of contracted exports, Vietnam will not have high inventories. ... The importers from China, the vast market which consumes 1/3 of Vietnam's total rice exports, have been trying to force the prices down, or threaten to cancel contracts....

“China is the biggest rice importer of Vietnam's rice. And China is also the most risky market. Up to 64 percent of canceled contracts in the first 4 months of the year were the ones with China,” Phong said.

The director of a rice export company complained he has tasted a bitterness when doing business with a Chinese enterprise.

The Chinese partner ordered 10,000 tons of rice, with the payment to be made after deliveries. When the products docked at the destination ports, the partner, complaining about the quality, insisted on lowering the prices. The rice exporter, who fell into dilemma, had to sell the consignment of goods at a loss.

... doing business with Chinese is like “playing with fire”. You may get burnt one day,” he said.

“Vietnam should not consider China as a strategic export market,” he added.

...The US has predicted that the country would have to import 3 million tons in 2014 to satisfy the domestic demand.

### Chinese play tricks to force prices down

...Regarding the payment method, Chinese importers always want to pay after deliveries. The payment method has put Vietnamese exporters at a disadvantage, while Chinese importers hold the handle of knife and they may force the prices down.

Some exporters complained that Chinese businessmen met them and placed big orders, but they later... did not return to get deliveries as promised. When the exporters cried of the big amounts of unsold rice, did the Chinese businessmen turn up and offered to buy the rice at very low prices....

(continued)

## Continued: Indo-Pacific Asia - Food Security and Rice

**Source:** The Phenompenh Post, “Cambodia to boost China rice exports,” 30 August 2012, <http://www.phnompenhpost.com/business/cambodia-boost-china-rice-exports>

Cambodia expects to export around 300,000 tonnes of milled rice to China per year, Minister of Commerce Cham Prasidh said during the 44th ASEAN Economic Ministers Meeting in Siem Reap...

The Chinese minister also expressed the intention to promote investment from China to rice processing and garment in Cambodia....

“We expect to export soon. Actually, there is a Chinese company from Guangxi province of China that is in the final stage of completing the construction of the rice milling plant in Kampong Chhnang province. And, there is another company from Yunnan also investing, in Takeo province, to install a huge rice processing mill,” he said....

The relationship between ASEAN and China has become increasingly important, and a counterbalance to economic relations with the euro zone and the United States, analysts have said.

The economic bloc of Southeast Asian nations is now China’s third-largest trading partner.

*“The Chinese minister also expressed the intention to promote investment from China to rice processing and garment in Cambodia.”*

**Source:** The Irrawaddy, “Burma to Coordinate Growing Rice Exports with Thailand, Vietnam,” March 14, 2013, <http://www.irrawaddy.org/archives/29373>

The RANGOON—Rice industry leaders from Burma, Thailand and Vietnam met in Rangoon on ... a first attempt to coordinate Burma’s rapidly growing rice exports with two of the world’s largest rice exporting countries.

The Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF) has joined its Thai and Vietnamese counterparts, who already have a framework to communicate on sales and trading rumors, as Burma aims to return to being among world’s largest rice producers, a position held half a century ago before military rule thrust the country into isolation....

A fourth of Burma’s economic output comes from the farming sector, according data by the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation from 2011, the most recent available figures. Agriculture then employed 61 percent of the national workforce....

Rice exports have almost tripled in the last three years, according to data presented at the forum, and are poised to reach 1.4 million tons in the current fiscal year, which ends in April....

“Rice is the one crop that is politically very sensitive. It still can topple the government,” said Tin Htut Oo, consultant and former director-general for agricultural planning at the Ministry of Agriculture.

“The objective of the trilateral co-operation is making us the kitchen of Asean and the world,” he said. “We don’t have to reduce each other’s market share; we can conquer the world market together.”

Burma has a long way to go to take over the other two rice major rice producers in Southeast Asia. Vietnam exported 7.7 million tons last year according to the Vietnam Food Association, almost eight times as much as Burma aims to export in six years time. Thailand exported around seven million tons, according to an estimate by the Thai Rice Exporters Association.

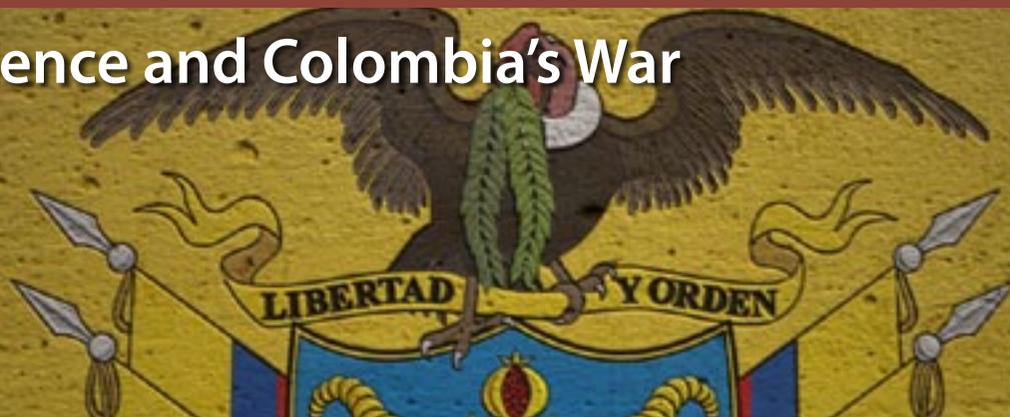
While Burma’s export has surged, Vietnam’s and Thailand’s output are facing challenges. In Thailand, government regulations have pushed up rice prices, reducing exports by more than a third last year. In Vietnam, urbanization has shrunk cultivation areas in the two main plantation areas, the Mekong and the Red River deltas....

“Normally the government encouraged overseas trade,” said Sein Win Hlaing on the sidelines of the trilateral talks. “China is the world’s biggest producer of rice, but they need large amounts of our rice....”



Myanmar Rice Harvest . Source via <http://www.rfa.org/english/news/myanmar/exports-05092013155301.html>

(continued)



**OE Watch Commentary:** *The Colombian internal war has not been fought or suffered evenly across Colombia. One of the areas that has seen more than its share of violence is called the Catatumbo, an area along the Venezuelan border in the Department of Norte de Santander. The human and physical geography presents a particularly volatile combination there.*

*Oddly, because of some historical curiosities involving personal disputes and nineteenth century surveying, the international border is not along the crest of the Andes but further east into what is called the Maracaibo Basin in Venezuela. Most waters in the Catatumbo flow toward Lake Maracaibo. To the north, on both the Colombian and Venezuelan sides of the border sit significant twin national parks, which are also the homelands of a group of indigenous tribes. The area is a major oil producer. It is home to thousands of acres of cocaine coca cultivations.*

*On the Venezuelan side of the border, the price of gasoline has been as low as nineteen cents a gallon, while on the Colombian side it might rise to four dollars a gallon.*

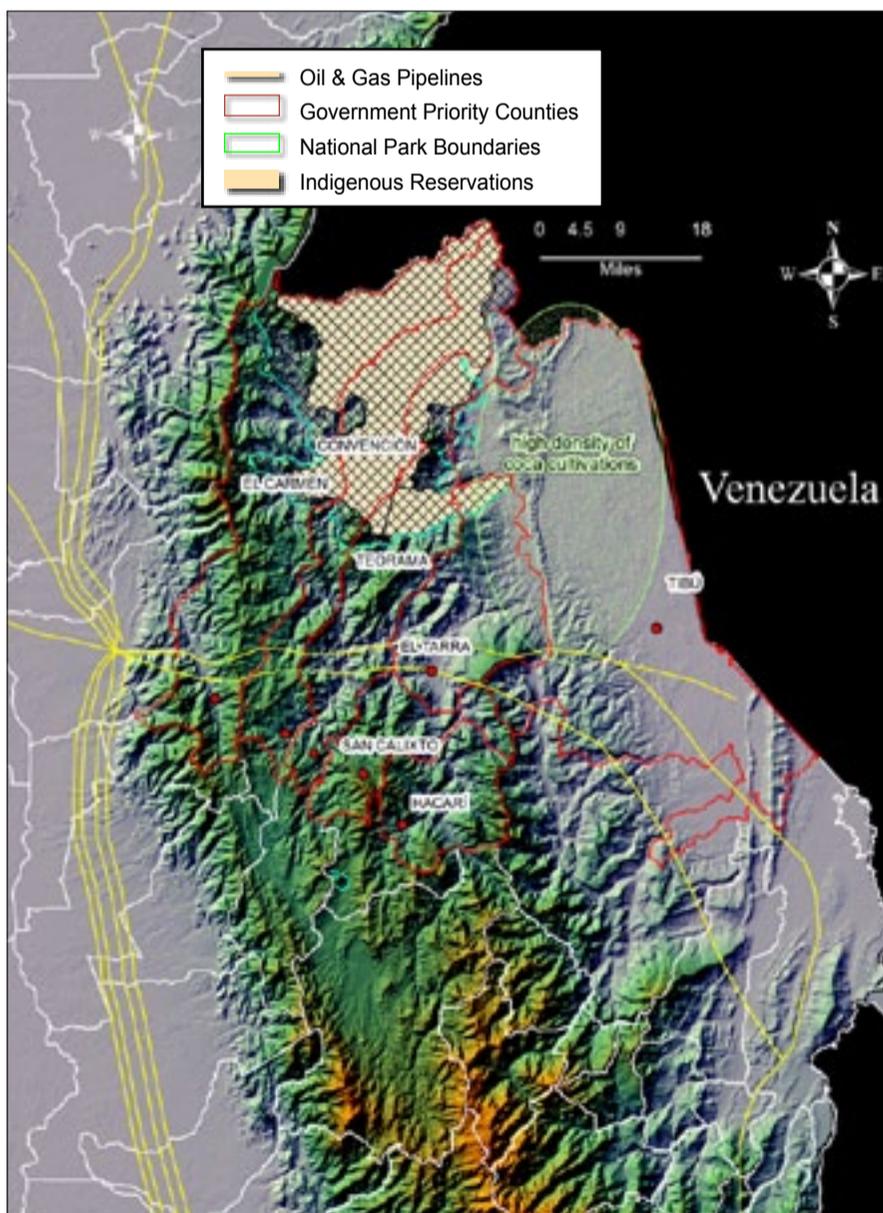
**Source:** Guillermo Rodríguez. "Catatumbo: ¡La guaca de las Farc!" ("Catatumbo: The FARC's money box." Guaca has other meanings, including sore and tomb) Kien&Ke, Bogotá 17 July, 2013. <http://www.kienyke.com/kien-escribe/la-guaca-de-las-farc-guillermo-rodriguez/>

### Catatumbo: The FARC's Money Box

"That population is rich in biological diversity, it is a strong border enclave of the Catatumbo-bari National Park, and area of bi-national [nature] reserve with Perijá National Park in Zulia State [Venezuela]. The subsoil of the Catatumbo possesses large reserves of oil, coal and uranium, but it also counts on extensions of coca cultivation that have reached twenty thousand hectares."... Since 2006 the Catatumbo presented the highest indicators of poverty, even more than in Vichada, especially in counties like Hacari, El Tarra and San Calixto, a situation that the last government, through great effort, mitigated... There were many things left to be done and which appear to have gone down the drain; adding to this the great generalized violence against the indigenous population since the beginning of the decade of the 80s, when the ELN and the EPL wanted to make themselves absolute owners of the region, sowing violence, terror, and death."

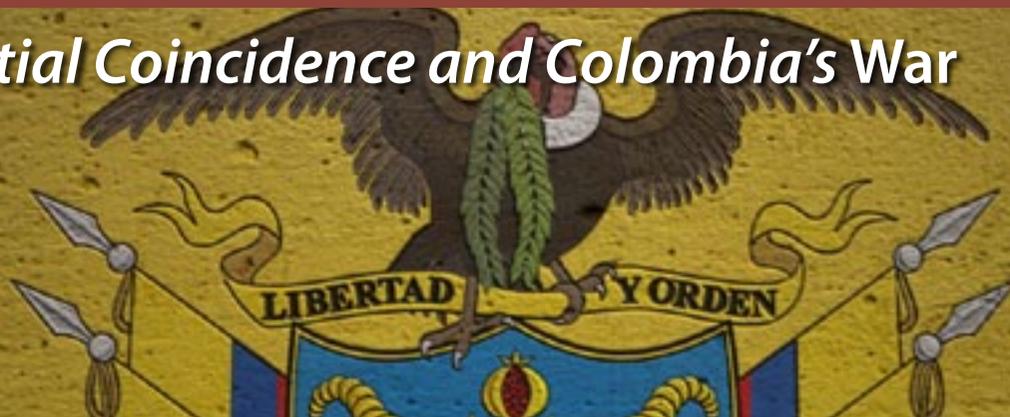


The map on the right is of the Catatumbo region of Colombia showing conflictive counties and contributing geography.



(continued)

## Continued: Spatial Coincidence and Colombia's War



*On the Venezuelan side, Marxist-socialist revolutionaries are welcomed by the central government, whereas on the Colombian side the same revolutionaries are the government's nemesis. It is rare to find families in the area that don't have members living on both sides of the border, or which don't have members actively involved in some kind of smuggling. Conditions, in other words, are as favorable for smuggling and guerrilla movement as anyplace on earth, but with the added inducement that there is much nearby to smuggle, as well as economic targets to attack. It is no wonder that the area has lately become a media focal point during the peace negotiations now being conducted between representatives of the Colombian government and leaders of the FARC.*

*The FARC and sympathetic organizations have orchestrated marches and demonstrations in the area. Jaded by many years of insurgent manipulations, however, knowledgeable Colombians look on the mass expressions with notable derision. The accompanying excerpts from longer commentaries are representative.*  
**End OE Watch Commentary (Demarest)**

**Source:** Fernando Londoño. "El Catatumbo es decisivo y hay que rescatarlo" (The Catatumbo is decisive and it needs to be rescued) La Hora de la Verdad. RCN radio, Bogotá 12 July, 2013 <http://www.pensamientocolombia.org/DebateNacional/este-gobierno-descuido-los-programas-sociales-y-de-seguridad-uribe>

"The Catatumbo is decisive: it is the continuation of the Maracaibo petroleum zone, ...It is a region connected to other vital zones of the country. Therefore, the FARC wants to control it."...

"The FARC try to convince the campesinos how to transform the Catatumbo into an autonomous zone with no other authority but themselves, but nevertheless financed by resources and budget from the national government -- resources that the FARC would administer with no controls whatever."...

"The FARC does not want the government to be a player or exercise authority in the Catatumbo. They and the narco-traffickers look to fill that void."

**Source:** José Lafaurie Contexto Ganadero. "El 'efecto' Catatumbo" (The Catatumbo Effect) 12 July, 2013 <http://www.contextoganadero.com/columna/el-efecto-catatumbo>

"...the poverty of the people of Catatumbo, or of whatever of these [conflictive] zones, contrasts with their richness, which attracts criminality like flies to honey. The illegal extraction of lumber resources, coal, gold or coltan is displacing coca and kidnapping as sources of financing for the guerrillas and Bacrim [criminal bands]. The jungle corridors they ply not only hide barbaric cages for kidnap victims and illicit drug laboratories but also a path of usurpation of campesino lands. As an obligatory passageway for gas and oil pipelines, it is a base for the extortion of multinationals and, of course, a habitat for FARC units and their social bases, who are submitted by terror."

## Thousands of Women Work within the Ranks of Mexican Drug-Trafficking Organizations

6 July 2013

**OE Watch Commentary:** Females of all ages are being lured into the world of drug trafficking by money and power. What they do not anticipate are the consequences that go hand-in-hand with this business: anguish, persecution by authorities, prison, and possibly death. Mexican women in particular have surpassed gender boundaries and are filling the same roles as men within the drug business. They have also broken the traditional belief that females do not possess the capacity to commit violent crimes.

In Mexico the involvement of women in drug-trafficking activities is noteworthy in states such as Sinaloa and Chihuahua. In Sinaloa the participation of women in this business is almost a certainty from birth, given the long-standing economic reliance of many families on drug production and distribution in the state. In Ciudad Juárez drug trafficking has a profound effect on the economic and political environment, so much so that drug trafficking has become a normal part of daily life for many women in the city. This is also the case of thousands of women who live along the US-Mexican border who depend on drug-trafficking related work to earn a living.

As the accompanying article illustrates, a good example is the case of Sandra Beltran Avila. The family of Sandra Beltran Avila, aka, *La Reina del Pacifico* (the Queen of the Pacific), has been in the drug business since the 70s. Her uncle is Miguel Angel Felix Gallardo, commonly known as the Mexican “godfather” of drug smuggling. He is currently serving a 40-year sentence for drug trafficking and the 1985 torture and murder of Enrique Camarena, an undercover DEA agent on assignment in Mexico.

Beltran Avila started her career in the drug business at an early age, and is said to have dated multiple drug kingpins. In 2007 she was arrested along with her



Sandra Beltran Avila. Source via: <http://www.nydailynews.com/news/crime/mexican-drug-queen-cops-plea-deal-article-1.1328392>

**Source:** “Miles de mujeres trabajan para las carteles de drogas mexicanos.” Mundonarco. [http://www.mundonarco.com/2013/02/miles-de-mujeres-trabajan-para-los.html?utm\\_source=feedburner&utm\\_medium=feed&utm\\_campaign=Feed%3A+Mundonarcocom+%28Blog+del+narco%29](http://www.mundonarco.com/2013/02/miles-de-mujeres-trabajan-para-los.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+Mundonarcocom+%28Blog+del+narco%29); Accessed on 7 July 2013

### Thousands of Women Work within the Ranks of Mexican Drug Trafficking Organizations

According to a 2012 study conducted by the Center for Research and Teaching in Economics (CIDE), the number of women serving prison time for their role in drug trafficking activities has increased by 121% since 2006. Those organizations identified as having the highest number of females within their ranks include Los Zetas, the Sinaloa Cartel, and La Familia Michoacana. Additional information regarding women and their role in drug trafficking activities was reported in this source as follows:

- The majority of women involved in drug trafficking activities work as drug mules or drug dealers
- The majority of females working within drug trafficking organizations earn an estimated \$(MXN) 800 weekly
- Female drug traffickers earn an estimated \$(MXN) 6,000 for each half kilogram of methamphetamine they smuggle into the United States
- Only a small percentage of women kill for pay; ie work as hitwomen/sicarias
- It is believed that Los Zetas have the largest number women working as sicarias
- In 2010, a La Linea operator identified as Rogelio Amaya informed police that at least a dozen women were working as sicarias (hitwomen) at the service of the Juarez Cartel
- Arturo Santamaria Gomez, the author of “Las Jefas del Narco”, reported that the Sinaloa Cartel uses women to win community support
- An estimated 12,000 women have been sentenced for charges related to homicide, kidnapping, drug trafficking, money laundering, and organized crime in Mexico
- An estimated 80% of women and 60% of men arrested since 2006 have been charged with drug trafficking related crimes

(continued)

## Continued: Thousands of Women Work within the Ranks of Mexican Drug-Trafficking Organizations

Colombian boyfriend, Juan Diego Espinoza Ramirez, for their role in coordinating a nine-metric-ton cocaine shipment. According to authorities, Beltran Avila served as the link between Mexico's Sinaloa Cartel and Colombian cocaine distributors.

While imprisoned in Mexico, Beltran Avila convinced prison officials to allow her doctor to visit so she could receive Botox treatments, a characteristic demonstration of vanity that has made her such an enthralling figure to so many Mexicans. Narcocorridos (drug ballads) have also been written about her by the musical group "Los Tucanes del Norte." In one of their songs they refer to Beltran Avila as a heavy hitter in the Mexican drug industry. **End OE Watch Commentary (Fiegel and Gonzalez)**

- An estimated 22% of women and 2% of men serving prison time for drug trafficking related charges are married
- Women between the ages of 11 and 30 are the most commonly targeted age demographic to conduct human trafficking activities
- An estimated 90% of the most significant drug lords now in police custody were arrested thanks to surveillance efforts of their girlfriends or lovers.

Recent cases involving women and their association with Mexican drug cartels were reported in this source as follows:

- November 2012: Maria Susana Flores Gamez, Miss Sinaloa 2012, actively participated in a confrontation with soldiers. She was killed during this aggression.
- August 2012: Sandra Avila Beltran, aka La Reyna del Pacifico, played a key role in coordinating cocaine shipments for the Sinaloa Cartel from Colombia. She is currently serving a 15-year prison sentence in Miami, FL
- October 2011: authorities arrested a Los Zetas accountant identified as Carmen del Consuelo Saenz, aka Claudia



Female Los Zetas drug cartel operators presented to the press at the Mexican Navy headquarters. Source via <http://www.allvoices.com/>



Female Caballeros Templarios operator posing with two other members of the criminal organization. Source via <http://www.historiasdelnarco.com/2013/07/foto-templario-uno-de-los-autores-del.html>

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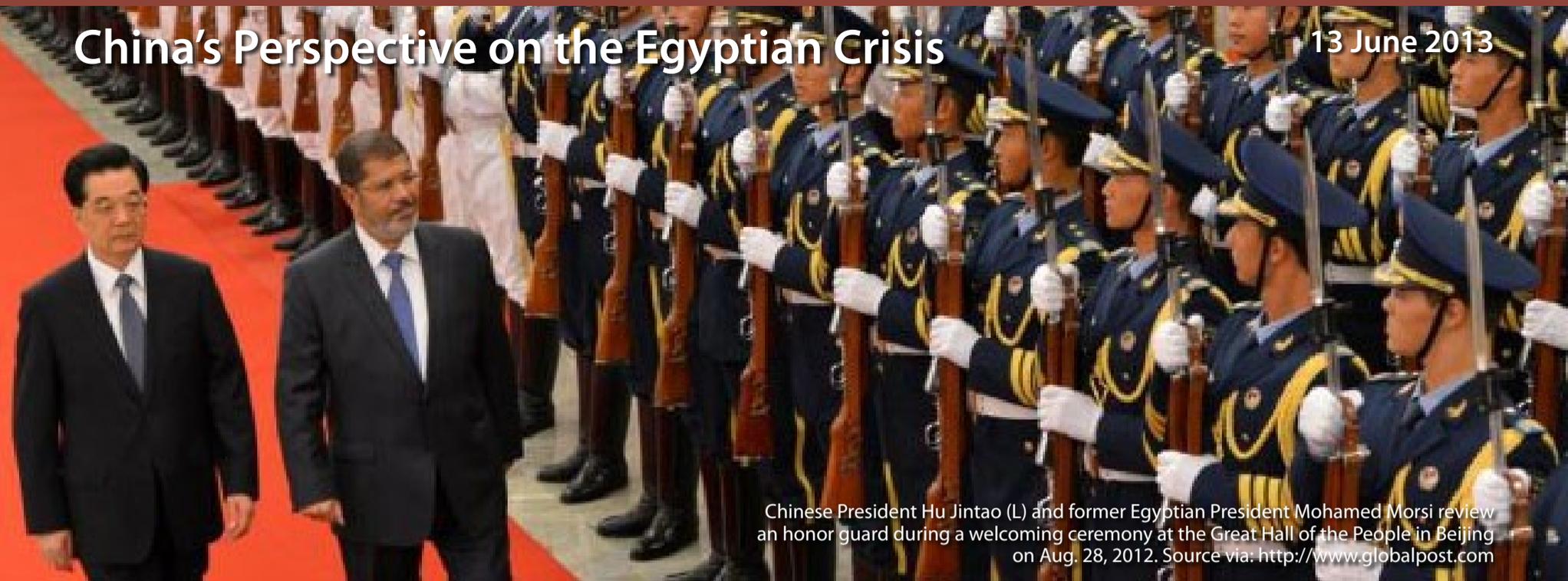


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## China's Perspective on the Egyptian Crisis

13 June 2013



Chinese President Hu Jintao (L) and former Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi review an honor guard during a welcoming ceremony at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on Aug. 28, 2012. Source via: <http://www.globalpost.com>

*“Egypt will be a testing ground on whether a country can escape from post-revolution chaos, which will influence how the world sees revolutions in modern times.”*

**OE Watch Commentary:** The following articles offer a glimpse into China's perspective on the situation surrounding overthrown Egyptian leader Mohamed Morsi (Mursi). In June 2012 Morsi was elected with 51.7 percent of the vote in Egypt's first ever election, becoming the country's first civilian and Islamist president. One year later the Egyptian military ousted him.

On 30 May 1956 Egypt became the first Arab and African country to establish diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China. Since that time both countries have strengthened their relations, having signed various agreements on trade, infrastructure, investment protection, avoidance of double taxation, and so on.

After assuming office in late June 2012, Morsi made China his first official destination outside the Arab world. The fourth article discusses Morsi's visit to China and Hu Jintao's positive perception of the leader and Egypt. The article points out that, “Egypt needs China, and vice-versa. The achievements of Morsi's visit not only are embodied in eight economic and trade cooperation memoranda that the two countries have signed, but also offer reassurance that the Sino-Egyptian

**Source:** Laura Zhou, “China Backs ‘Choice of Egyptian People’ But Says Nothing on Mursi,” South China Morning Post, July 5, 2013, <<http://www.scmp.com/news/world/article/1275484/china-backs-choice-egyptian-people-says-nothing-mursi>>.

**Article #1****China Backs ‘Choice of Egyptian People’ But Says Nothing on Mursi**

Beijing said yesterday it supported the “choice of the Egyptian people” and called for dialogue and negotiation after the army toppled President Mohammed Mursi, detaining him and his top aides.

But Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying sidestepped questions on whether her comments offered “hope” to the Egyptian leader overthrown a year after his election.

“China respects the choice of the Egyptian people,” Hua said in Beijing.

Mursi's first official trip outside the Arab world was to Beijing last August, a fact highlighted by state media.

Egypt's coup has drawn heated debate among mainland internet users.

Unlike in 2011, when president Hosni Mubarak was overthrown by millions of protesters, mainland internet users were divided over whether democracy, or even constitutionalism, would really suit China.

Yang Yu, a commentator from state-run broadcaster China Central Television, questioned whether democracy in Egypt was a success. “There are two preconditions for a direct shift of the Western democracy,” Yang wrote on his Sina Weibo account. “First is economic freedom ... Second is a public following the rules ... [The result] would be today's Egypt if [we] force democracy into a populous country with an underdeveloped economy.”

Some disagreed. Qiao Mu, a professor at Beijing Foreign Studies University, slammed the idea that constitutionalism and elections fail. “Even in Egypt, when an elected president is deposed, it is the Constitutional Court president who works as acting president to prepare the next election,” Qiao wrote on his Tencent Weibo account.

An online commentator using the name Wuyuesanren compared the current upheaval as an inevitable problem in a growing democracy. “It's nothing new for a one-year-old child to wet the bed ... and [the current Egypt] is much better than a place where its people have no right to vote.”

*(continued)*

## Continued: China's Perspective on the Egyptian Crisis

*partnership will continue to flourish."*

*While both sides one year ago touted their long-lasting relations, expressing confidence in strengthening economic ties through Morsi, once he was ousted from the presidency the Chinese leadership and media have been cautious, expressing support for the Egyptian people, with little being said about the failed leader. According to the first article, Beijing supports the "choice of the Egyptian people," but Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying sidestepped questions regarding Morsi. The second article states that Hua stressed that China and Egypt "enjoy a profound friendship, and no matter how the situation evolves, the friendly cooperation between the two countries will never change." All the third article really says about Morsi is that he never really achieved anything, nor did he make any major mistakes.*

*Along with showing support for the country, Chinese media have also looked at the Egyptian crisis as a personal lesson. The first article reported that Egypt's coup drew heated debate among mainland internet users, who were divided over whether democracy, or even constitutionalism, would really suit China. One commentator questioned whether democracy in Egypt was a success. According to the commentator, there are two preconditions to ensure a successful shift to Western democracy: economic freedom and a public that follows the rules. The commentator opined that forcing a democracy into a populous country with an underdeveloped economy would result in "today's Egypt." Another online commentator compared Egypt's upheaval to an inevitable problem in a growing democracy.*

*The third article looks at the situation in Egypt as a lesson to society. Is a coup positive or negative? According to the author of the article, Egypt will be a testing ground on whether a country can escape from post-revolution chaos, which will influence how the world sees revolutions in modern times. **End OE Watch Commentary (Hurst)***



Hu Jintao, left, stands with Egypt's president Mohamed Morsi during Morsi's visit to China. (Photo/Xinhua)  
Source via: <http://www.wantchinatimes.com>

**Source:** "China Urges Dialogue Among Egyptian Parties," Xinhua, July 4, 2013, <[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2013-07/04/c\\_132512976.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2013-07/04/c_132512976.htm)>.

### Article #2

#### China Urges Dialogue Among Egyptian Parties

Hua stressed that China and Egypt enjoy a profound friendship, and no matter how the situation evolves, the friendly cooperation between the two countries will never change.

Hua said the Chinese Embassy in Egypt has been closely following the situation since the start of the turmoil and has started an emergency response to safeguard the safety, rights and interests of Chinese citizens and institutions there.

The embassy has published consular alerts on its website to warn Chinese citizens to carefully consider their travel plans to Egypt and urged those already there to exercise caution, said Hua.

**Source:** Huanqiu Shibao, "Egypt's Coup Provides a Lesson for Us All," Global Times Online, July 5, 2013, <<http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/794008.shtml#.UeRnnp3nY5s>>.

### Article #3

#### Egypt's Coup Provides a Lesson for Us All

Egypt will become the testing ground on whether a country can escape from post-revolution chaos. This will influence how the world sees revolutions in modern times.

Morsi reigned for only (one) year. Although he didn't make big achievements, he didn't make major mistakes.

Indeed, Egypt is becoming a textbook lesson of world politics. Is a coup good or bad? How can an Islamic society learn from political experiences in other parts of the world? The answers to these questions can serve as references for developing countries.

The Western-style democratic system has not offered any new models for developing countries for years. On the one hand, countries simply copying the Western style came to grief; on the other hand, disputes surrounding democracy have been complex.

*(continued)*

## Continued: China's Perspective on the Egyptian Crisis

**Source:** He Wenping, "Morsi Visit Opens New Chapter," China Daily, August 31, 2012, < <http://www.chinadailyapac.com/article/morsi-visit-opens-new-chapter>>.

### Article #4

#### Morsi Visit Opens New Chapter

Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi visited China from Tuesday to Thursday (August 2012), leading a large delegation consisting of ministers and about 80 Egyptian entrepreneurs. The country was Morsi's first official destination outside the Arab world since he took office in late June (2012). The visit was hailed by the Egyptian media as marking a moment of historic importance.

...While meeting his Egyptian counterpart, President Hu Jintao said: "You chose China to be one of the first countries to visit after taking office. This shows that you attach great importance to Sino-Egyptian relations. I believe your visit to China will further boost our cooperation in all fields."

Hu noted the important role Egypt has in international and regional affairs and said China has long seen Egypt as a partner in the Arab world and Africa. The two leaders agreed that their countries should uphold the friendship that has long existed between their peoples, cooperate more on various issues and bring the Sino-Egyptian partnership to a new height.

In 1999, a strategic and cooperative relationship was established between the two countries. Seven years later, they adopted an outline meant to guide their work to strengthen their partnership. In recent years, under the China-Arab Cooperation Forum and China-Africa Cooperation Forum, China and Egypt have cooperated on a variety of undertakings, including infrastructure construction, agriculture, transport, energy projects and finance.

Egypt needs China, and vice-versa. The achievements of Morsi's visit not only are embodied in eight economic and trade cooperation memoranda that the two countries have signed, but also offer reassurance that the Sino-Egyptian partnership will continue to flourish.



**Tim Thomas's *The Dragon's Quantum Leap* peels back the transformation process and uncovers the digital-age impacts of new modes of Chinese military thinking.**

***The Dragon's Quantum Leap* expands the scope of Tim Thomas's two previous works on Chinese information warfare concepts. As with his previous work, Tim Thomas primarily uses all-Chinese source material**

*“(China) has also set the goal of transforming itself from being “labor-rich” to “talent-intensive”, and has envisaged a talent pool of 180 million people by 2020, compared with 120 million now.”*

**OE Watch Commentary:** *Not much time seems to go by before the Chinese media report something about the country's goals to become an empire of innovation. For the past three decades China has invested heavily in programs in an effort to drive the country's research and development. Behind the goal of becoming an innovative force is the need to have talented individuals capable of leading the way. The following excerpts come from an article that takes a look at the requirements, goals, programs, and difficulties that China has in increasing its talent capacity in support of its goal, “to create an innovative society by 2020.”*

*According to Wang Huiyao, chairman of the newly-established China Global Talent Society, in order to become an “innovation destination” China must attract international expertise. The country has in place various recruitment programs. For example, the Thousand Talents program has attracted 3,300 “high quality professionals from abroad” since 2008. According to Wang, China has a good base of people. For example seven million students graduate each year. However, “their overall capabilities are still not top-notch.” China also loses 87 percent of its students when they travel overseas to obtain their educations in the science and technology fields and never return. Wang wants to see more of an international talent flow between China and other countries. China is pushing to transform itself from being “labor-rich” to “talent-intensive” and envisages creating a talent pool of 180 million people by 2020. Currently, that talent pool numbers 120 million.*

*It is important to track China's progress because innovation is a key component of military superiority. As the highlighted article points out, “Space scientist Qian Xuesen helped develop China's nuclear capabilities and rocket-launch technology, thereby paving the way for several historic achievements...” The case of Qian, while he was born over a century ago, is a lesson worth noting. After graduating from Shanghai's Jiaotong University he won a scholarship to study at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and then moved on to Caltech. He ultimately worked on the U.S. Manhattan Project to build the first atomic bomb. However, after the Chinese Communist party came to power in 1949, Qian was accused of being sympathetic to the communists, a claim that was never substantiated, and deported back to China, where his efforts played an important role in paving the way for the country to become a nuclear power. **End OE Watch Commentary (Hurst)***

**Source:** Chen Yingqun, “Time to Take a Proactive Approach in the Global Hunt for Rare Skills,” China Daily, July 15, 2013, <[http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/cndy/2013-07/15/content\\_16775201.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/cndy/2013-07/15/content_16775201.htm)>.

### **Time to Take a Proactive Approach In the Global Hunt For Rare Skills**

China should adopt more beneficial measures and strive to create an innovative environment to foster and attract international expertise if it wants to be known as the “innovation destination”, a top expert on talent research says... Wang Huiyao, director general of the Center for China and Globalization, and chairman of the newly-established China Global Talent Society.

“Space scientist Qian Xuesen helped develop China's nuclear capabilities and rocket-launching technology, thereby paving the way for several historic achievements...”

China has often expressed its desire to create an innovative society by 2020, with research and development accounting for 2.5 percent of overall GDP. It has also set the goal of transforming itself from being “labor-rich” to “talent-intensive”, and has envisaged a talent pool of 180 million people by 2020, compared with 120 million now.

The Thousand Talents Program launched in 2008 has attracted more than 3,300 high-quality professionals from abroad to China's key areas, while the Recruitment Program of Foreign Experts launched in August 2011 has attracted more than 100, according to the Center for China and Globalization. Tens of thousands of Chinese students studying overseas have also been attracted back.

Wang says that although China has a great base of people, with 7 million fresh college graduates every year, their overall capabilities are still not top-notch. Of the 1.6 million science and engineering graduates that pass out every year in China, only 10 percent match up to the requirements of international companies, says a report published by global consulting firm McKinsey.

... 87 percent of those (students who study abroad) in the science and engineering field who go overseas to study fail to return.

International talent-flows between China and other countries is another important lesson that China should learn, he says, citing the example of Israel, which has 4,000 professors in the country and 4,000 outside the country. This has helped Israel get connected with the rest of the world on matters relating to science and technology and communications.

“Without talent-flows and idea exchanges, there won't be any innovation,” he says, adding that China should strengthen communication and cooperation, send more professors overseas and bring in more overseas professors and students.

## Women in the Wings: China Looks to Train More Female Combat Pilots

*“There is a dearth of female pilots with the talent and skill of male pilots, however it is believed that Mainland China exceeds Taiwan in both the number and skill of its pilots.”*

**OE Watch Commentary:** China's efforts to train and recruit female fighter pilots, especially for combat roles, has been featured prominently in state-run media lately. These efforts and their media coverage are part of an ongoing push towards cultural modernization in the People's Liberation Army (PLA). Increased recruitment of female soldiers is seen as a key to maintaining an image of modernization and inclusiveness for the PLA, as numerous editorials have recently urged the armed forces not to lose touch with “the people” in a modernizing China. According to multiple reports, 16 future female fighter pilots – selected from 150,000 high school applicants – recently graduated with joint degrees in engineering and military strategy from Shijiazhuang Flight Academy, and will soon be posted to various aviation units in the PLA Air Force. This will be the second group of female pilots to graduate from the course.

The announcement comes on the heels of a story picked up by the Chinese Huanqiu Wang Zonghe Baodao (*Global Times Web Roundup*) – originally from a report on the US website Strategy Page – which notes the promotion of Taiwan's first female squadron commander. Though the *Global Times* article claims to offer a direct translation after an initial analysis, the translation differs from its English-language source material, making a more significant case for the superiority of Mainland Chinese pilots. The article also reinterprets or mistranslates source material about female pilots in India in ways that evoke the perceived strategic superiority of Chinese cultural modernity.

China's military is ever competitive with that of Taiwan – which it considers to be a breakaway province – and the article asserts that while Taiwan may have been first to promote a female



Female pilots of the PLAAF. Source via: <http://bbs.voc.com.cn>

**Source:** “Meit duibi liang’an nü feixingyuan: jiefangjun gengshengyichou (American media compares female pilots on both sides of the Straits of Taiwan: PLA pilots superior), Huanqiu Shibao (*Global Times – China*), 13 May 2013. <http://mil.huanqiu.com/observation/2013-05/3928243.html>

Sixteen female fighter jet pilots with bachelor's degrees in both engineering and military strategy will join the People's Liberation Army (PLA) Air Force following the completion of their education, a senior military academy officer said Friday.

The 16 women, initially selected from more than 150,000 senior high school graduates, received their education at north China's Shijiazhuang Flight Academy under the PLA Air Force, said Di Liwen, a senior officer at the academy....

“These pilots are of the highest quality and have solid technique,” said Qu Jiang, [a] senior officer at the academy.

The pilots have been given both theoretical and operational training, Qu said, adding that they have completed all of their flight requirements.

Pilot Yang Jing said she hopes to become “an outstanding pilot with matchless valor.”

(continued)

## Continued: Women in the Wings: China Looks to Train More Female Combat Pilots

squadron leader, “Mainland China exceeds Taiwan in both the number and skill of its pilots.” The Global Times notes that 328 female pilots have been trained in China since Mao first began military modernizations in 1952, but acknowledges that “female PLA pilots began to [re]-emerge” just in the last 10 years, alluding to a long gap following the Cultural Revolution, during which few female pilots were trained.

The article notes the success of female pilots in the US, and points out that many more conservative, and especially Islamic countries, are hesitant to train female pilots, owing to cultural mores, familial pressures and related problems of lower levels of female literacy and education, which leave a smaller talent pool from which to draw. The article claims that while India has tried to recruit female pilots in recent years, familial pressures from this conservative society leave these pilots “mentally and physically fatigued,” and tied to the home even while on active duty. By comparison China – which has nearly equal levels of education and literacy among genders – seems keen to exploit this third-world gender gap, opening up a potential advantage in talent recruitment over what it perceives as more culturally conservative nations. **End OE Watch Commentary (Moskowitz)**



Female pilots of the PLAAF. Source: Chinamil.com.cn

Source: “Highly Educated Female Pilots Join Military,” Xinhua (China), 28 June 2013. <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90786/8304147.html>

There is a dearth of female pilots with the talent and skill of male pilots, however it is believed that Mainland China exceeds Taiwan in both the number and skill of its pilots....

Taiwan’s air force recently promoted a C-130 pilot as its first female squadron commander. Lieutenant colonel Chen Yueh-Fang joined the air force in 1992, at a time when women were first being allowed to attend flight school. She was one of six (out of 14) female flight school students who completed flight training. Taiwan currently has allowed few women to become commanding officers in its air force, but increasingly has more and more female pilots.

China has also been recruiting female pilots, and on the military parade to mark the 60th anniversary of the founding of the People’s Republic of China [in 2009] a squadron of all female pilots participated in the military review. Over the last 60 years, and especially the last 10, China has trained 328 female pilots, with the first batch serving in the 1950s, though afterwards China stopped recruiting female pilots for a time.

Over the last 10 years, female pilots began to [re-] emerge in the PLA, initially in non-combat units, until three years ago when a group of female first lieutenants between the age of 21 and 24 graduated from a 44-month training program to become the nation’s first female fighter pilots. Additionally, the PLA has 52 female pilots serving in non-combat roles, and another 545 female pilots in training ...though not all will graduate.

Many countries, due to their cultural traditions, reject female pilots. India and Pakistan only began graduating female [military] pilots a few years ago, after noticing that many trained male pilots were leaving the military in favor of more lucrative jobs in civil aviation. But over half of these female pilots are home during their first five years of active service, as Indian women face enormous social pressure to get married and have children, which requires maternity leave, and even after face pressures to remain in the home. India provides generous maternity benefits to female pilots in training because the cost of training is so high and the Indian military cannot afford to lose trained pilots. [Ed note: The original article notes that half of Indian women depart after their first 5 years of active service, not that they stay in the home during these 5 years.] Even so, many Indian women are still willing to face these challenges, but compared with female pilots in the west, the shouldering the double-identity of pilot and motherhood leaves them mentally and physically exhausted.

## Party Attempts to Extend Anti-Corruption Measures to the PLA

9 July 2013

*“Sticking to the Party’s mass line, or furthering ties with the people, is the lifeline of the Party, as well as a magic weapon for the military to acquire victory...”*

**OE Watch Commentary:** Several articles have noted a recent “high-level” meeting between President Xi Jinping and military officials about the need to combat corruption in the People’s Liberation Army (PLA). Though not phrased in quite such explicit terms, Central Military Commission members were apparently briefed on the need to enforce a regulatory plan against “harmful work styles” such as “formalism, bureaucratism, hedonism and extravagance,” which was first issued to Party members in December.

While meeting attendees agreed that the “primary task” would be to “raise the armed forces’ combat capacity,” it is clear that Xi Jinping hopes to be seen as extending a public campaign against corruption into the ranks of the PLA. Members were urged to undergo “self-criticism” sessions, recalling practices prominent under the era of high-socialism. This could allude to Party attempts to assert greater control over the military, which is viewed as a somewhat autonomous partner of the Party, rather than explicitly under the Party’s control. As the Xinhua article noted, the Party’s Central Military Commission “will take the lead” on attempts to reform and enforce behavioral protocols in the PLA.

Since the recent leadership transition, there has been a lot of public press about potential corruption within the Communist Party, including the downfall of Bo Xilai, whose wife was accused of poisoning a foreign business partner, as well as foreign exposes of the wealth of the family of former Premier Wen Jiabao. Leadership transitions are always times of political insecurity in China, and this seems to have led to worries about the PLA – the most prominent public institution in China under Mao



Xi Jinping greeting Chinese Air Force officers. Source via: [http:// www.prcservice.com](http://www.prcservice.com)

**Source:** “Soldiers Reflect on Work Habits Among National Drive,” Huanqiu Shibao (Global Times – China), 8 July 2013. <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/794699.shtml#.UexmpI21HZI>

China’s armed forces have joined officials and government departments across the country in reflecting on their behavior in a campaign against harmful work styles at a high-profile meeting that concluded on Monday.

During the meeting presided over by Xi Jinping, chairman of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Military Commission, commission members were briefed on the implementation of an “eight-point” regulatory plan that the Party leadership began promoting in December last year in order to ban extravagance and formalism.

The campaign will focus on undesirable work styles such as formalism, bureaucratism, hedonism and extravagance.

Sticking to the Party’s mass line, or furthering ties with the people, is the lifeline of the Party, as well as a magic weapon for the military to acquire victory, according to a statement released after the meeting.

The armed forces are also urged to conduct criticism and self-criticism, in a bid to set an example for others in the campaign to strengthen ties with the people.

...This came after Xi announced in June that a year-long campaign would be launched in an effort to thoroughly clean up the undesirable work styles of some Party members.

**Source:** “Chinese Military Seeks Ways to Improve Work Styles,” Xinhua (China), 9 July 2013. <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/794733.shtml#.Uexm-o21HZI>

...During a meeting presided over by Central Military Commission (CMC) Chairman Xi Jinping, CMC members were briefed on the implementation of an “eight-point” regulation that the CPC [Communist Party of China] leadership began promoting in December in order to ban

(continued)

## Continued: Party Attempts to Extend Anti-Corruption Measures to the PLA

– being viewed as corrupt and distant. Xi Jinping has close familial ties to the PLA, which has long been seen as off-limits to direct political control during the era of reform. However, already this year, numerous speeches and editorials have urged the military to be less secretive and to maintain closer ties to the people. The PLA technically remains a militia operating at the discretion of the Communist Party, rather than a formal state-controlled military, and controls vast non-military holdings in numerous sectors of the economy. It is believed that many officers regularly exploit these business ties during and after their careers. **End OE Watch Commentary (Moskowitz)**

extravagance and formalism.

Senior military officers also examined their own conduct to verify whether they have complied with efforts to eliminate bureaucratism and formalism, as well as discussed ways to improve their work styles.

Meeting attendees decided to improve work styles using a top-to-bottom approach and CMC members will take the lead, it said.

It is important to make the campaign a regular and long-term task and the military must be perseverant in this regard, the statement said.

The primary task will be to raise the armed forces' combat capacity, meeting attendees agreed.

Senior officers, especially high-ranking ones, will be asked to focus on self-purification, self-perfection, self-renewal and self-progression.

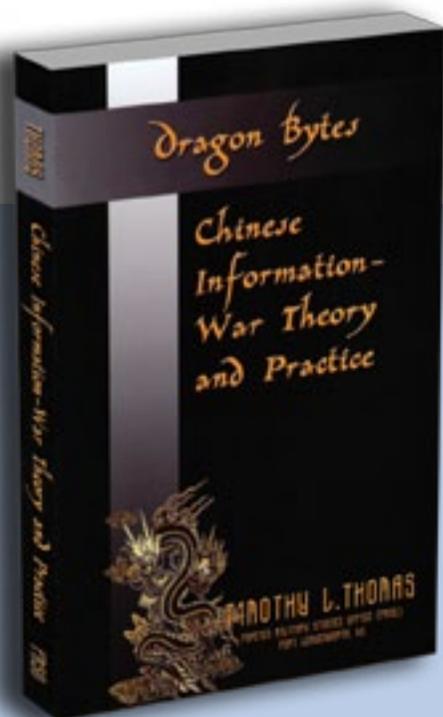
...[Xi] said China faces a complicated security situation both at home and abroad, as well as has a heavy task in boosting combat readiness.

Xi urged Central Military Commission members to unswervingly obey the leadership of the [Communist Party] and firmly stand with the [Party] Central Committee in terms of ideology and politics.

“Resolutely do what the Party wants us to do and never do what is not permitted,” Xi said.

...Xi also asked the CMC to be pragmatic, exercise its duties honestly and maintain strict self-discipline. He called for CMC members to act as role models in obeying regulations and warding off corruption.

The military meeting followed a special conference of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee held from June 22 to 25 at which senior party leaders examined their own conduct and set examples for others in fighting undesirable work styles.



**Dragon Bytes** by Tim Thomas examines China's information-war (IW) theory and practice from 1995-2003. Some specialists may be surprised that the Chinese openly discuss not only computer network attacks and electronic preemption but also the development of IW units and an "integrated network-electronic warfare" theory (which closely approximates the US theory of "network-centric warfare"). The Chinese development of an IW theory is representative of their country's philosophy and culture. By creating an "IW theory with Chinese characteristics" the People's Liberation Army (PLA) has offered an alternate way of viewing the application of IW than in the West.

**OE Watch Commentary:** *China's economic growth and the amount of capital thereby made available in the past 30 years for new infrastructure, new cars, new missiles and warships has been phenomenal. In so doing, China has built an economic growth model predicated on energy consumption. In 2010 China became the world's largest energy consumer, with 88% of its total energy derived from fossil fuels. More than 70% of this total is coal, 30% greater than the global average, and making China accountable for more than half of all the coal burned on the planet.*

*The twin pillars of China's economy, manufacturing and construction, are huge energy consumers, making the entire economy relatively energy intense. In 2011 China required 4.7 barrels of oil equivalent to generate \$1000 of GDP. Averages for the world's number 2 and 3 manufacturing economies, U.S. and Japan, are 1.3 and 0.8, respectively. An energy-intense economy powered by fossil fuels will produce a lot of pollution, which, among other problems, presents a severe threat to human health and labor productivity.*

*As the first two excerpts point out, Chinese officials are aware of these challenges. They must balance economic growth with continued environmental degradation. They understand that there will be no quick fixes, and even with technological advances (as the third excerpt indicates), increased energy consumption will have negative side-effects. Improvement is a decadal process, and then only in so far as China's incremental (new) economic activity is less energy intensive. A faster shift is only likely through a collapse in China's production stemming from a sizable drop in either exports and or domestic investment activity. The conundrum for China as well as its trading partners is that, in the short to medium term a low polluting China would likely be negative for global growth. **End OE Watch Commentary (Zandoli)***

**Source:** "NDRC: Energy conservation situation is grim in China," People's Daily Online. 15:40, July 12, 2013 Edited and translated by Huang Jin and Gao Yinan, People's Daily Online. <http://english.people.com.cn/90882/8324159.html>.

#### **Article 1: Chinese Government Statistics Show Increasing Coal Consumption**

China is facing a grim situation in energy saving in the first half of 2013 but the energy saving industry has great potentials, said the latest analysis on China's energy-saving emission reduction situation by National development and Reform Commission (NDRC).

NDRC statistics showed that 1.1 billion tons of standard coal was consumed by industrial enterprises above designated size from January to May this year, an increase of 3 percent over the same period last year. The growth rate was 0.6 percentage points higher than the first quarter and a 0.4 percentage points higher than the same period of last year. Six high-energy-consuming industries' energy consumption grew 4 percent in May and 4.6 percent in April, higher than the 2.2 percent in the first quarter.

*(continued)*

## Continued: Chinese Economic Growth and Energy Consumption

**Source:** “More property developers predict rising profits in H1”, Xinhua. 20:01 July 12, 2013. <http://english.people.com.cn/90778/8324512.html>

**Source:** “China eyes energy-saving, IT industries to spur domestic demand,” Xinhua. 09:55, July 14, 2013. <http://english.people.com.cn/90778/8325045.html>.

### Article 2: Property and Associated Heavy Industry Remains China’s Economic Driver

More property developers have forecast profit hikes for the first half of the year, despite a cash crunch that sent interbank borrowing costs to a record high in June. China Vanke, the country’s largest developer by market value, on Thursday announced that it realized 83.67 billion yuan (13.58 billion U.S. dollars) in sales in the first half, up 33.79 percent year on year. Domestic investment bank China International Capital Corporation Limited predicted a 21-percent average rise in profits for key property developers.

### Article 3: China eyes energy-saving, IT industries to spur domestic demand

China is to speed up development in the energy-saving industry and promote consumption of IT-related products and services as it looks to spur domestic demand and push economic upgrading. The State Council vowed to promote the upgrading of energy-saving facilities, accelerate construction of major energy-saving projects, and channel more money from the central budget to support such projects. Regarding IT-related consumption...Efforts to boost consumption in the area also include widening Internet-based information services, piloting “smart city” schemes, boosting e-commerce, and increasing information securities. Through these plans, China aims to achieve an annual growth of over 20 percent in IT-related consumption for the 2013-2015 period, the State Council said.



**OE Watch Commentary:** North Koreans refer to the Korean War (1950-53) as the Fatherland Liberation War. As the accompanying excerpt points out, North Koreans believe that they were defending against the invasion of aggressive imperialist US and its puppet Republic Of Korea armed forces. This massive deception has deep historical roots.

Kim Il Sung (the first North Korean leader) and Stalin were very careful to hide their plans for a preemptive attack not only from the international community, but also from their own people. Before and during the war the term "counteroffensive" was used on all their documents, including maps and correspondence. For instance, the original invasion plan (in Russian) was titled "counteroffensive plan." The situation room where Soviet advisors helped with the war plan was a classified facility, and only very few North Korean military leaders were allowed access. Kim Il Sung wanted to hide his invasion plan from even his higher military commanders, as he feared a lack of support if they knew of his preemptive attack.

Kim Il Sung's skillful manipulation in hiding the truth of the war's origins continues in the North today. North Koreans still firmly believe that they were victims and that the Korean War was begun by the South and the US. As portrayed to them, the Korean War was not a single event, but rather a continuous war from the 1930s, which began with Kim Il Sung's guerrilla warfare against the Japanese Imperial Army. During the Korean War the enemy was transformed from the Japanese and pro-Japanese collaborationist Koreans to the imperialist US and pro-US collaborationist Koreans.

For North Koreans, the Fatherland Liberation War was basically a defensive war to free the Korean peninsula of all imperialists and collaborationists. Although distorted, this history has become the centerpiece of North Korean national consciousness and continues to dominate the hearts and minds of the people. **End OE Watch Commentary (Kim)**

**Source:** "Kim Jong Un Visits Fatherland Liberation War Museum," KCNA, 11 July 2013.

### Kim Jong Un Visits Victorious Fatherland Liberation War Museum

...Marshal Kim Jong Un [Kim Cho'ng-u'n], first secretary of the Workers Party of Korea [WPK], first chairman of the National Defence [Defense] Commission [NDC] of the DPRK and supreme commander of the Korean People's Army [KPA], visited the Victorious Fatherland Liberation War Museum close to its opening.

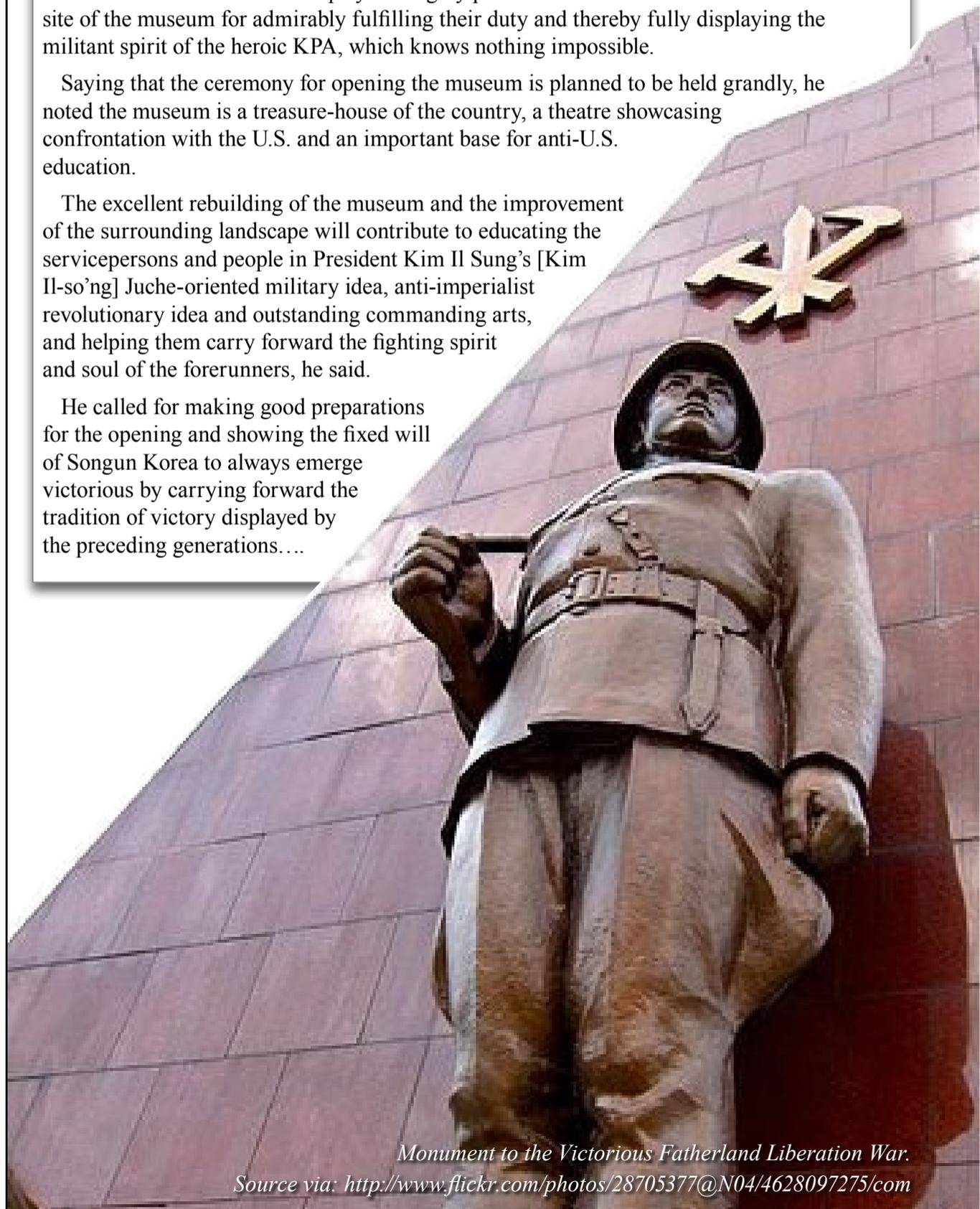
The museum was newly built as required by the 21st century and its area and the Monument to the Victorious Fatherland Liberation War turned into a general education center to mark the 60th anniversary of the victory in the Fatherland Liberation War under the grand plan and energetic guidance of Kim Jong Un, who has successfully carried forward the ever-victorious history and tradition started on Mt Paektu.

Going round different places of the museum, he learned in detail about historical materials and wartime mementoes on display. He highly praised soldier-builders in the construction site of the museum for admirably fulfilling their duty and thereby fully displaying the militant spirit of the heroic KPA, which knows nothing impossible.

Saying that the ceremony for opening the museum is planned to be held grandly, he noted the museum is a treasure-house of the country, a theatre showcasing confrontation with the U.S. and an important base for anti-U.S. education.

The excellent rebuilding of the museum and the improvement of the surrounding landscape will contribute to educating the servicepersons and people in President Kim Il Sung's [Kim Il-so'ng] Juche-oriented military idea, anti-imperialist revolutionary idea and outstanding commanding arts, and helping them carry forward the fighting spirit and soul of the forerunners, he said.

He called for making good preparations for the opening and showing the fixed will of Songun Korea to always emerge victorious by carrying forward the tradition of victory displayed by the preceding generations....



Monument to the Victorious Fatherland Liberation War.

Source via: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/28705377@N04/4628097275/com>

## An Assessment of the Response to Civil Unrest in Kyrgyzstan

11 June 2013

*“Perhaps the most significant part of the article is how the author writes that everyone knew that criminal elements were involved.”*

**OE Watch Commentary:** The recent protest in the Jeti-Oguz District (Issyk-Kul Province) that blocked the road to the Kumtor gold mine (see: July 2013 OE Watch, “Chronicle: Criminal charges have been filed on the detained protestors”) continues to receive attention in Kyrgyz media, as the accompanying article shows. While groups of protestors have proven to be effective at blocking roads and taking control of administrative buildings, the author of the article presents another side to this incident and believes that the security services are to blame for the recent protest spiraling out of control. The article is fairly blunt in its assessment of how the various security services of Kyrgyzstan performed during the protest, and the National Security Committee (GKNB) is singled out for blame for provoking the crowd.

Perhaps the most significant part of the article is how the author writes that everyone knew that criminal elements were involved. There are numerous protests in Kyrgyzstan in a given year, which vary by the number of participants and their grievances, but they do not always result in violence. The lack of violence in most protests can be attributed to the actions of protestors. If the bulk of the protestors in this instance (those that the article states were open to negotiations) knew that criminal elements were involved, it is worth considering why they did not or were not able to remove these people from their own ranks. Additionally, the author does not provide any insight as to who the criminal elements might be. While the author has some valid points and he offers another perspective on one of the more significant protests in Kyrgyzstan so far this year, there are still some unanswered questions about who was involved. **End OE Watch Commentary (Stein)**



**Source:** Alymbekov, Mirlan. “ИАЦ “Кабар”: Беспорядки в Кыргызстане: просчёты силовых структур (Information-Analytical Center “Kabar”: the Disorder in Kyrgyzstan – the Miscalculations of the Security Services),” *Kabar*, 11 June 2013. <http://www.kabar.kg/rus/analytics/full/56957>

### Information-Analytical Center “Kabar”: the Disorder in Kyrgyzstan – the Miscalculations of the Security Services

Personnel changes in the security services are fully reflective of the situation in the country’s law enforcement, which for a long time now does not answer the realities of the time... This is apparent in the events of this most recent spring – the conflict between the police and the National Security Committee (GKNB), the release of the crime boss A. Batukayeva, and of course, the disorder in the Jeti-Oguz District and in Jalal-Abad...

...According to analysts the unrest could have been prevented. The security services must have known about the plans, goals, participants, the mood of the residents, and about the people who financed the rally in Jeti-Oguz. It is possible, based on this information, to take steps to prevent this from escalating into an illegal action...

...Everyone (apparently, even the security services) knew that the unrest involved criminal elements. This was relayed to journalists by local public figure Zhypar Jeksheev, who was an eyewitness to the events. According to him, the crowd of protestors were not particularly radical minded and willing to negotiate with authorities; young people provoked the clashes with by throwing rocks at the police, which caused a reaction... The GKNB should know, better than anyone, that to provoke a disgruntled crowd of people is not difficult. The security services (also) need to be trained how to identify instigators in the crowd...

In complex situations that could turn into an open conflict, any action must be based on an analysis of the situation... Poor judgment in these situations reflects the problems in the system, including with personnel. It is time to teach these departments subjects like conflict management and social psychology. It appears that now good analysts and negotiators will be in demand within the law enforcement system as much as highly skilled operatives and investigators...

*“The articles offer more than just different perspectives on the same problems related to the enclaves in Batken, they provide some insight into how the problems might (or might not) be solved.”*

**OE Watch Commentary:** *Issues with Uzbekistan's Sokh enclave in the Batken Province, Kyrgyzstan, continue to develop, as the accompanying articles illustrate. The article from Nezavisimaya Gazeta (Russia) discusses the government of Kyrgyzstan's plans to place barbed wire around Sokh, while the other article, from a newspaper in Kyrgyzstan, mentions this plan, but in a somewhat different context. The articles offer more than just different perspectives on the same problems related to the enclaves in Batken: they provide some insight into how the problems might (or might not) be solved.*

*First, the title of the Nezavisimaya Gazeta article is somewhat misleading. While the wire would restrict movement of the residents of Sokh, it could do the same for anyone trying to travel to towns in Batken, west of Sokh. It is also important to keep in mind that the majority of the residents of Sokh are ethnic Tajiks, not Uzbeks. The author does mention how residents of Charbak are upset and how the fenced-off enclave could affect them, but seems to miss a point by including Alexander Knyazev's assessment at the end of the article. Knyazev is not necessarily wrong about Kyrgyz security forces, as there have been occasional shootings between the border guards of Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. However, the incident in January of this year was a conflict between civilians on both sides of the border, while the security forces of Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan stepped in to stop the fighting. Tension among the population might be just as important of a factor for stability as an overly aggressive security force.*

*The other article is no less critical of the situation that is happening in Batken, but offers insight into how the problems might be alleviated, specifically through infrastructure improvements. The barbed*



**Source:** Panfilova, Viktoriya. “Киргизы создают резервацию для узбеков (The Kyrgyz are creating a reservation for Uzbeks),” *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 9 July 2013. [http://www.ng.ru/cis/2013-07-09/1\\_kirgizia.html](http://www.ng.ru/cis/2013-07-09/1_kirgizia.html)

#### **The Kyrgyz are creating a reservation for Uzbeks**

Kyrgyzstan has put up the first two kilometers of barbed wire around the Uzbek enclave of Sokh; Kyrgyzstan's head of the State Border Guards Service, Taalaibek Usubaliyev, reported this at a meeting. The total length of this would be 134 kilometers...The decision to establish a barrier around the enclave was taken after the incident which took place at the beginning of this year...

Within six months another incident took place on the Uzbek-Kyrgyz border: Uzbek border guards shot and killed a citizen of Kyrgyzstan. It is believed that the cause of this is a lack of clear borders...The Kyrgyz authorities have decided to isolate the problematic Sokh enclave with barbed wire...Kyrgyzstan's Prime Minister Jantoro Satybaldiyev instructed officials to complete the work around the enclave by 2015.

According to Usubaliyev the Kyrgyz village of Charbak is already fenced off from the Uzbek enclave. However, the residents of Charbak are upset again. Their town is naturally isolated by surrounding mountains and there is no straight road to there. The only route that links the Batken Province passes through Sokh. Residents survive via Sokh: they buy food there, get drinking water, trade, and receive medical care.

...“For the Kyrgyz barbed wire illustrates the reality of the political regime and the level of public administration, including the ability to interact with neighboring countries. Isolating themselves is cheaper than building a road in Batken that travels around the enclave,”...said Alexander Knyazev, an expert on Central Asia and the Middle East. In Knyazev's opinion, this is alarming alongside Russia's decision to provide military assistance to Kyrgyzstan. This support, Knyazev says, can be misinterpreted by Kyrgyz security forces and as a consequence increase their level of aggressiveness...

*(continued)*

## Continued: Construction Projects on Kyrgyzstan's Borders

*wire fence might be part of an attempt to exert control over Sokh, as Nezavisimaya Gazeta suggests, but it appears that the mountainous terrain around the enclave has delayed construction. If the lack of funding is also causing construction delays, the 2015 deadline to complete the fence might be difficult to achieve, and, in turn, the "reservation" intended for the residents of Sokh may be a long way off.*  
**End OE Watch Commentary (Stein)**

**Source:** "Радующее наш слух строительство... Но... (Construction that is pleasing to our ears...but...)," Alibi, 5 July 2013. [http://www.gezitter.org/economics/21885\\_raduyushee\\_nash\\_sluh\\_stroitelstvo\\_no/](http://www.gezitter.org/economics/21885_raduyushee_nash_sluh_stroitelstvo_no/)

After the events in Charbak at the beginning of the year, the government has pledged 370 million Som (around \$7.5 million) to improve the infrastructure in the villages around the Sokh and Vorukh enclaves. Unfortunately, consideration was not given of the work of contractors, whose work has stopped because of a "drip" of government funding:

- 2000 meters of trenches dug for water for Charbak
- The placement of a wall around the border post Tayan. Stopped due to lack of funds
- For 2.5 km of barbed wire boundary fencing installed on concrete pillars. There have been 3.2 km installed in the village of Bozhoy and 54 pillars have been set up in Apkan. The rest of the border goes through the mountains, so work has been suspended. Officials report that there is no possibility of fencing until the road is built
- Construct the roads Aytulgash-Sogmet-Charbak, Bozhoy-Sogot-Bel

Although hearing the phrase "construction is under way" sounds nice, the money from the government does not arrive and the work is slow going.

## Drug Control in Central Asia: An Assessment of Compliance with International Law

By Major Timothy A. Krambs, U.S. Army

The link between terrorist activity and the illicit drug trade is becoming more and more evident, which significantly affects stability and security in the Central Asian region. The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) expressed "strong concern at the increased violent and terrorist activities by the Taliban, Al-Qaida, illegally armed groups, criminals and those involved in the narcotics trade, and the increasingly strong links between terrorism activities and illicit drugs..." The purpose of this paper is to analyze how each Central Asian country complies with the international law regarding the trafficking of narcotics through its political will in foreign and domestic policy, as well as in practice, as evaluated by the international community.  
<http://fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/Collaboration/FAO/Drug-Control-Central-Asia.pdf>

## Remembering the Tajik Civil War

1 July 2013

Former UTO commander Mirzo Ziyoev.

Source via: <http://rus.ozodi.org/content/article/9609686.html>

**OE Watch Commentary:** *The history of the Tajik Civil War (1992-97) is more complex than is often known, as the accompanying article demonstrates. There are a couple of things in particular that can be taken away from it. First, the article shows that the Civil War remains fairly fresh in the memories of those who lived through it. This might be somewhat trivial, but there are some in Tajikistan who believe that memories of the Civil War help prevent another conflict.*

*Second, the article is a good reminder of how the lines between the belligerents were not always clear cut and how much regional affiliation mattered; this relates to various incidents that have taken place since the end of the war. The story itself is quite interesting, but it does leave out a couple of points. The article mentions that this was an important step toward the eventual peace agreement and that the head of the Sughd Province approved the parents' trip. However, it does not mention what outcome the release of the prisoners had on peace negotiations or what the government in Dushanbe thought about the deal. At the very least the deal may have helped create an unofficial peace between those who were directly involved.*

*The article also mentions that the United Tajik Opposition (UTO), including UTO commanders Mirzo Ziyoev and Juma Namangani, treated its prisoners well. This may have been true, but the article seems to gloss over that the release of the prisoners took place later in the war. Additionally, the prisoners mentioned in the article came from the Sughd Province and not other regions like the Kulyab District (Khatlon Province), the support base of the government in Dushanbe. Ultimately, the article provides another glimpse into one of the most significant conflicts to take place in Central Asia since the collapse of the Soviet Union. **End OE Watch Commentary (Stein)***

*“...the article is a good reminder of how the lines between belligerents of the war were not always clear cut and how much regional affiliation mattered...”*

**Source:** Shodiyev, Haydar. “Когда на линию огня выходят матери... (When mothers went out to the line of fire...)” Asia-Plus, 1 July 2013. <http://news.tj/ru/newspaper/article/kogda-na-liniyu-ognya-vykhodyat-materi>

#### **When mothers went out on the front line...**

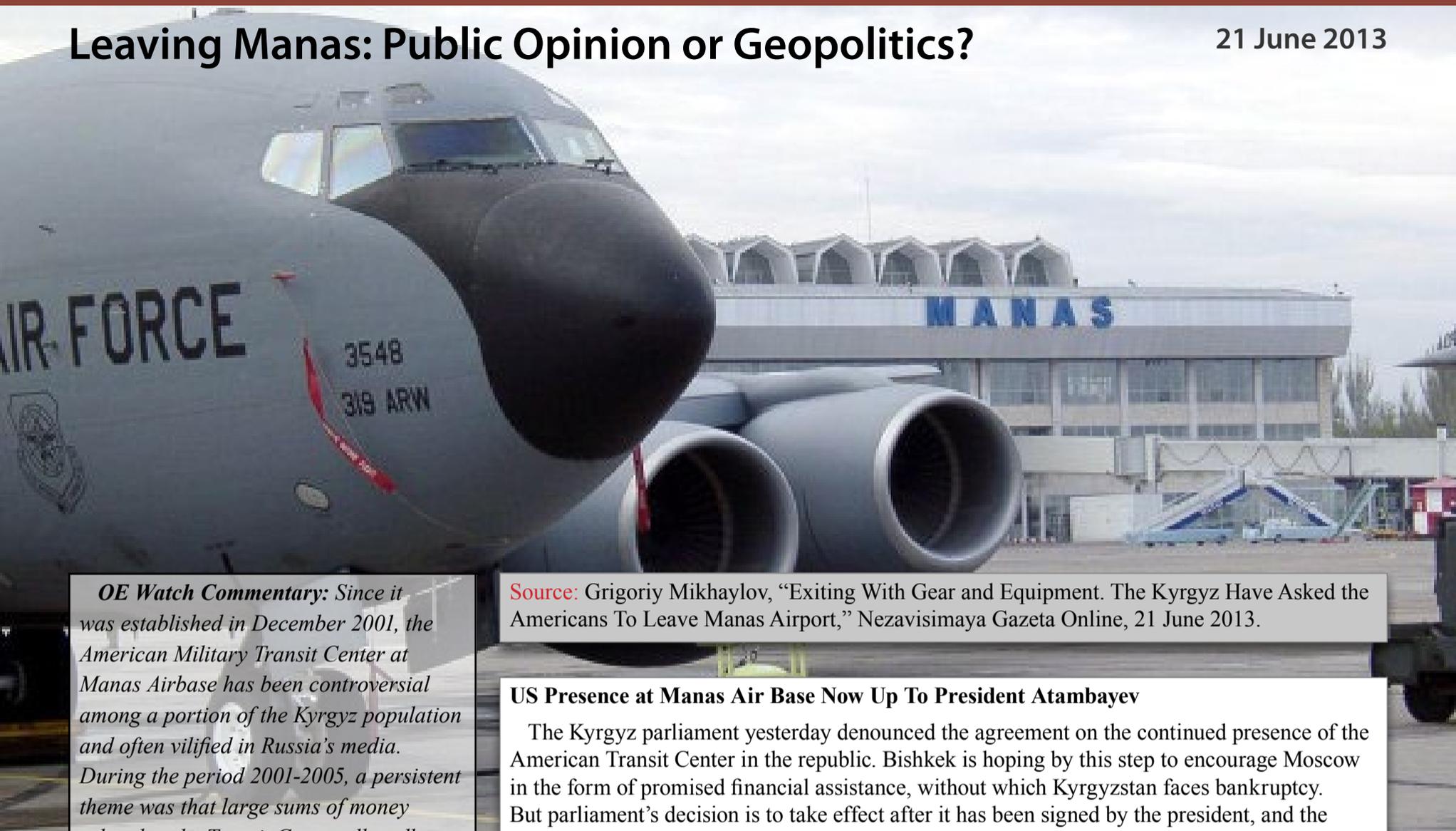
In October 1996 at the height of hostilities in eastern Tajikistan, the parents of a soldier from Sughd held captive by the armed opposition decided to go out on the front line and bring back their son... One of the most important steps on the road to peace should include the 1996 establishment in Sughd of a committee of parents of soldiers held captive by the opposition...

...In early 1993 most of the fighting moved to Rasht (District) and the districts of the Pamirs. In the middle of October 1995 the situation became significantly worse in the Tavildara District, where bloody battles took place between government forces and the United Tajik Opposition (UTO). Most of the soldiers of the NFT (People's Front of Tajikistan) did not want to fight in these regions and for the most part they were young conscripts... Often the inexperienced and unwilling conscripts left the battlefield or surrendered.

It was during this time that dozens of residents of Sughd heard that the UTO had a large number of prisoners, some from Sughd, and decided to head into the war zone to return their captured sons... It took some time but by order of the head of the province (Sughd), a caravan of cars carrying humanitarian aid was put together for residents of Karotegin. With this gift, it was decided to send the parents of the prisoners of war... The column of aid, with several men and a couple dozen women, arrive in Jirgital in December 1996 and from there onto Tajikobod...

In early December, more than 100 government soldiers and officers had been captured and were in the possession of (UTO commander) Iskandarov in Garm. The parents took the prisoners, more than 45 from Sughd, and went home... In February 1997, representatives of the committee decided to go back. This time they managed to get into Tavildara. While the prisoners were being gathered, the parents stayed in the homes of the villagers, where Mirzo Ziyoev and Juma Namangani were...

Guests of UTO commanders were treated well... it should be noted that they (also) treated prisoners of war humanely. They were not held in cells or pits, but put up in schools and the homes of villagers... The committee operated until August 1997. During this period more than 150 prisoners of war were returned home, and the graves of 100 soldiers were found...



**OE Watch Commentary:** Since it was established in December 2001, the American Military Transit Center at Manas Airbase has been controversial among a portion of the Kyrgyz population and often vilified in Russia's media. During the period 2001-2005, a persistent theme was that large sums of money related to the Transit Center allegedly ended up in the hands of corrupt government insiders, including members of the Kyrgyz President's family. A perception of dishonesty was perpetuated through successive Kyrgyz governments as locals and outsiders accused the leadership of enriching themselves through Transit Center dealings. As indicated in the excerpted articles, this has bred vocal resentment among some of the local population and larger Russian-speaking audiences in the region.

Additionally, perceived arrogance is another factor that compounds ill feelings by some towards the Americans at Manas. As the second excerpt points out, there are growing concerns over possible environmental damage caused by the airbase. (The tragic shooting of a Kyrgyz citizen, a fuel truck driver, by a U.S. Air Force airfield guard in 2006, although investigated and handled according to U.S. procedures, only add to this negative perception, whenever that event is recalled in the press.)

Despite any true depth of ill-feelings among Kyrgyz, it is pressure from Russia,

**Source:** Grigoriy Mikhaylov, "Exiting With Gear and Equipment. The Kyrgyz Have Asked the Americans To Leave Manas Airport," *Nezavisimaya Gazeta Online*, 21 June 2013.

#### US Presence at Manas Air Base Now Up To President Atambayev

The Kyrgyz parliament yesterday denounced the agreement on the continued presence of the American Transit Center in the republic. Bishkek is hoping by this step to encourage Moscow in the form of promised financial assistance, without which Kyrgyzstan faces bankruptcy. But parliament's decision is to take effect after it has been signed by the president, and the law gives him a month for this. Unless Russian money is received by the republic in this time, Almazbek Atambayev could postpone the Americans' evacuation from the republic.

The Kyrgyz parliament yesterday adopted a law denouncing the agreement on the continued presence of the American Transit Center in the republic. Kanybek Izmanaliyev, chairman of parliament's International Committee, explained that it will take effect after it has been signed by the president. The head of state is required by law to do this within a month. "After signing, the Americans will be notified by diplomatic channels at any time, but no later than 16 January 2014," Interfax quotes Imanaliyev. But the term of the presence of the American air base in Bishkek expires in July 2014. Some Kyrgyz deputies believe that parliament has been in haste with the denunciation – why show the door to those who are themselves about to exit through it?...

...The Manas air base was deployed in Kyrgyzstan in 2001, after the start of the US military operation in Afghanistan. The military facility was used not only by the Americans – other representatives of the anti-terrorist campaign fighting Usama Bin Ladin and the Taliban movement in Afghanistan were here also.

The military facility has regularly been at the center of media attention. The scandals have concerned mainly two topics – money and the environment. At the start of the 2000s the rental payment for the continued presence of the base amounted to just \$2 million a year. But after Kurmanbek Bakiyev came to power in 2005, the national leadership began to regularly hint to the Americans that it would be no bad thing to increase the payments. The hints were received variously. The national leadership threatened removal of the US military contingent, pointing to the environmental damage and the threat to the country's security from the Islamic radicals allegedly thirsting to destroy the American base and everything living in the neighborhood. The political maneuvers ultimately resulted by 2013 in the rental payment growing 30-fold, amounting to \$60 million a year. In addition, over the 12 years the local elites had made pretty good money from deliveries to the base of fuel and food and also from mediation in the settlement of slippery questions with the national leadership.

The environmental damage caused by the base was one of the main subjects of criticism – tankers and transport planes coming in to land frequently dumped jet fuel in the vicinity of the airport. The local residents were angered, complaining about the poor harvest and about feeling bad.

(continued)

## Continued: Leaving Manas: Public Opinion or Geopolitics?

however, that might be the major driver of Kyrgyz policy vis-à-vis the Transit Center at Manas. As the first excerpt points out, Kyrgyzstan remains, to a large degree, dependent on Russia for its military, economic, and energy needs, and so cannot afford to ignore Moscow. President Atambayev, moreover, has encouraged policies to establish closer ties with Russia than did his predecessors. Kyrgyzstan is part of the Russian-led Collective Security Treaty Organization. Shortly after the U.S. began operating out of Manas, Russia established an airbase in the city of Kant, about 20 kilometers away from the American base. In 2012 it was reported that the Russian lease at Kant had been extended for another 15 years, and that Russian strategic bombers could potentially be stationed at the base.

While this is not the first time the lease was supposedly revoked, in June 2013 the Kyrgyz government declared that the American Transit Center at Manas will be closed sometime in 2014. Kyrgyzstan's government appears to put a higher priority on its economic and geopolitical ties with Russia than on the benefits it believes it can reap from a continued American presence at Manas. **End OE Watch Commentary (Artman)**

On several occasions the American warriors became participants in brawls in Bishkek itself. It is rumored that one conflict turned out to be truly international – in one entertainment establishment the warriors refused to share something or other with Russian officers from the Kant air base. A melee ensued, in which local residents took part with pleasure on the side of the Russian officers. After several such incidents, the possibility of travel from Bishkek (it is 23 kilometers from the base to the Kyrgyz capital) was considerably curtailed.

One time the local authorities “spoke adamantly” about their intention to remove the base from the country. At the start of 2009 President Kurmanbek Bakiyev announced his intention to “show the Yanks the door,” having solicited \$2 billion of financial aid from Russia here. On 19 February 2009 the Kyrgyz parliament resolved to denounce the agreement. Bakiyev signed the law. Despite the warnings about the unreliability of this decision (NG wrote about this also), Russia agreed to render assistance (many people at that time considered this decision a payment for the withdrawal of the Americans) and sent the Kyrgyz authorities the first installment of \$350 million. After he had received the money, Bakiyev renamed the military base the Transit Center, raised the rental payment, and authorized its continued presence in the country. The Russian money came in very handy for Kurmanbek Saliyevich at the time of the presidential elections in the summer of 2009.

The fickleness of the Kyrgyz president thoroughly impaired Russo-Kyrgyz relations. Less than a year later, in April 2010, Kurmanbek Bakiyev fled the country. He was replaced by a provisional government, a leader of which was current president Almazbek Atambayev. ...

...On his return home, Atambayev will have a difficult decision to make – it is he now, following the decision of the Kyrgyz parliament, who will decide the fate of the American base and it is he who will have to choose whether to go the route of Kurmanbek Bakiyev, attempting to sit on two stools, or, on the contrary, to honor the promise made two years earlier to remove the base from the country.

**Source:** “Молодежная группа совершит пеший ход против американской военной базы” (“Youth Group March against American Military Base”). May 7, 2013. Фабула. [http://www.gezitter.org/society/20203\\_molodejnaya\\_gruppa\\_overshit\\_peshiy\\_hod\\_protiv\\_amerikanskoy\\_voennoy\\_bazy/](http://www.gezitter.org/society/20203_molodejnaya_gruppa_overshit_peshiy_hod_protiv_amerikanskoy_voennoy_bazy/)

A youth group marched today... in Bishkek. As stated by the organizers, their goal is to draw public attention to the threat of Kyrgyzstan's security posed by an American military base.

“The crash of a tanker aircraft of the U.S. military base - this is another proof that there should be no military aircraft seated next to a civilian international airport. This tanker accident did not lead to the death of the local inhabitants, but no one has yet assessed the environmental damage done to our country. If a multi-ton tanker filled with jet fuel fell on the city or exploded at the airport, what would happen? “ Asked members of the movement. ...



## Russia's Strategic Mobility

Supporting 'Hard Power' to 2020?

By Roger N. McDermott

[http://www.foi.se/ReportFiles/foir\\_3587.pdf](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.



APRIL 2013

**OE Watch Commentary:** *The Russian Airborne Forces have long enjoyed a prominent place in the Russian Armed Forces. Airborne Forces are considered an independent branch of the Russian Armed Forces (as the Strategic Rocket and Aerospace Forces). The main maneuver units of the Russian Airborne Forces branch consist of two Airborne Divisions, two Air Assault Divisions, and one Separate Air Assault Brigade, as depicted in the attached graphic. (The Russian Federation also has four Separate Air Assault Brigades that belong to the appropriate military district/JSK commander, a holdover from a similar command and control relationship in Soviet times).*

*The radical defense reforms of the previous Defense Minister, Anatoli Serdyukov, had much less effect on the Airborne Forces, compared to the Ground*

**Source:** Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation in Russian, official website of the Russian Federation Ministry of Defense, <http://www.mil.ru>, accessed 16 July 2013.

#### Russian Airborne Forces Mission Statement

The Airborne Troops is a combat arm in the Armed Forces, subordinated to the Supreme Command. Their task is to envelop the enemy in the air and to conduct missions behind enemy lines aimed at disrupting command and control functions, seizing and destroying ground-based precision weapons, disrupting the advance and deployment of enemy reserves, and disrupting enemy logistics and communications, to provide cover for assigned areas and open flanks, to block and destroy landed airborne assault forces and enemy forces which have passed through friendly defense, and to perform other tasks. In peacetime, the Airborne Troops perform missions aimed at maintaining the combat and mobilization readiness at the level necessary for the successful fulfillment of their tasks.

**Source:** Andrey Bondarenko, "Peacekeepers in Blue Berets," Red Star, military affairs newspaper, 18 June 2013, <http://www.redstar.ru>, accessed 16 July 13.

#### Peacekeepers in Blue Berets

In addition to scheduled combat training, as of 1 June subunits of the Order of Kutuzov Guards 31st Separate Air Assault Brigade commanded by Hero of the Russian Federation [RF]

*(continued)*



*Russian Airborne troops in training.*

*Source via: <http://xn--80aeeijowaeiblaehk1r.xn--plai/?id=7>*

## Continued: Growing Role of Russian Airborne Forces

*Forces branch. Although there was a reduction of the Airborne Forces, there was no change in the command and control of the branch, unlike the Ground Forces, which had the operational control removed from the Ground Forces Commander and placed with the military district/JSK commander. Russian Airborne Forces units are considered elite units, and there are ongoing discussions in the Russian media about the possibility of establishing a Russian Special Operations Command, structured similarly to, or possibly subordinated to the Russian Airborne Forces.*

*The Russian Airborne Forces are commanded by Colonel General Vladimir Shamanov, a popular, but somewhat controversial general who gained a reputation for aggressive action while commanding various units in the Russian North Caucasus. General Shamanov has been championing the possibility of subordinating SPETSNAZ units to the branch, and was likely a strong proponent of the designation of his sole independent Air Assault Brigade as a “peacekeeping” entity. In the Russian Armed Forces peacekeeping units are typically better trained, receiving more qualified troops, training, and pay.*

*Some commentators have speculated that General Shamanov’s “airborne” approach is evident in the forceful way that he operates within the Russian Ministry of Defense. The designation of the 31st Separate Guards Air Assault Brigade as a peacekeeping unit, as the second excerpt discusses, illustrates how General Shamanov leverages resources for his beloved Airborne Forces. Should peacekeeping continue to be resource lucrative, such duties will likely become one of the Russian Airborne Forces core competencies. **End OE Watch Commentary (Bartles)***

Guards Colonel Gennadiy Anashkin began training activities under a program for training peacekeeping force elements...By decision of the Armed Forces leadership, this VDV [Airborne] formation, which has the highest manning of contract personnel, must be in readiness to participate in peacekeeping operations under UN or Collective Security Treaty Organization [CSTO] aegis.

The VDV commander announced that the Ulyanovsk formation will be reinforced by introducing a regular reconnaissance battalion and electronic warfare company to its makeup in place of the reconnaissance company. He assigned the mission of fully manning the brigade with contract personnel by fall... Brigade Commander Guards Col Anashkin stated: “By decision of the Supreme Commander we now can be sent to any point in the world at any moment to perform a peacekeeping mission...”

The “Winged Guard” from Ulyanovsk already has participated in a peacekeeping operation. This was in the Balkans when, based on a UN Security Council resolution and Russian Government decree, Russia’s 554th Separate Battalion numbering 900 persons and activated on the basis of VDV units was sent to the former Yugoslavia in the spring of 1992. Officers and men from Budennovsk operated as peacekeepers in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Kosovo-Metohija from 1994 on.

The Krasnaya Zvezda correspondent was informed by Formation Deputy Commander Guards Lieutenant Colonel Oleg Mityayev that special curricula and plans for training personnel in peacekeeping matters had been drawn up for brigade subunits. They were coordinated with the General Staff and approved by the Armed Forces Main Combat Training Directorate, and were designed to train personnel in the course of 1.5 months and five months. Training sessions under the peacekeeping subunit training program now will be held for servicemen of 31st Guards Separate Air Assault Brigade under supervision of the VDV deputy commander for peacekeeping forces and for the CSTO Collective Rapid Reaction Force (KSOR).

Work is being done to create and upgrade the necessary training facility for peacekeeping matters. A training complex for rehearsing peacekeeping missions is being prepared at the brigade’s Polivno Range. For quality preparation to participate in peacekeeping operations, VDV Commander Col-Gen Shamanov has assigned the mission to make use not only of domestic, but also foreign experience of UN “Blue Helmet” training...

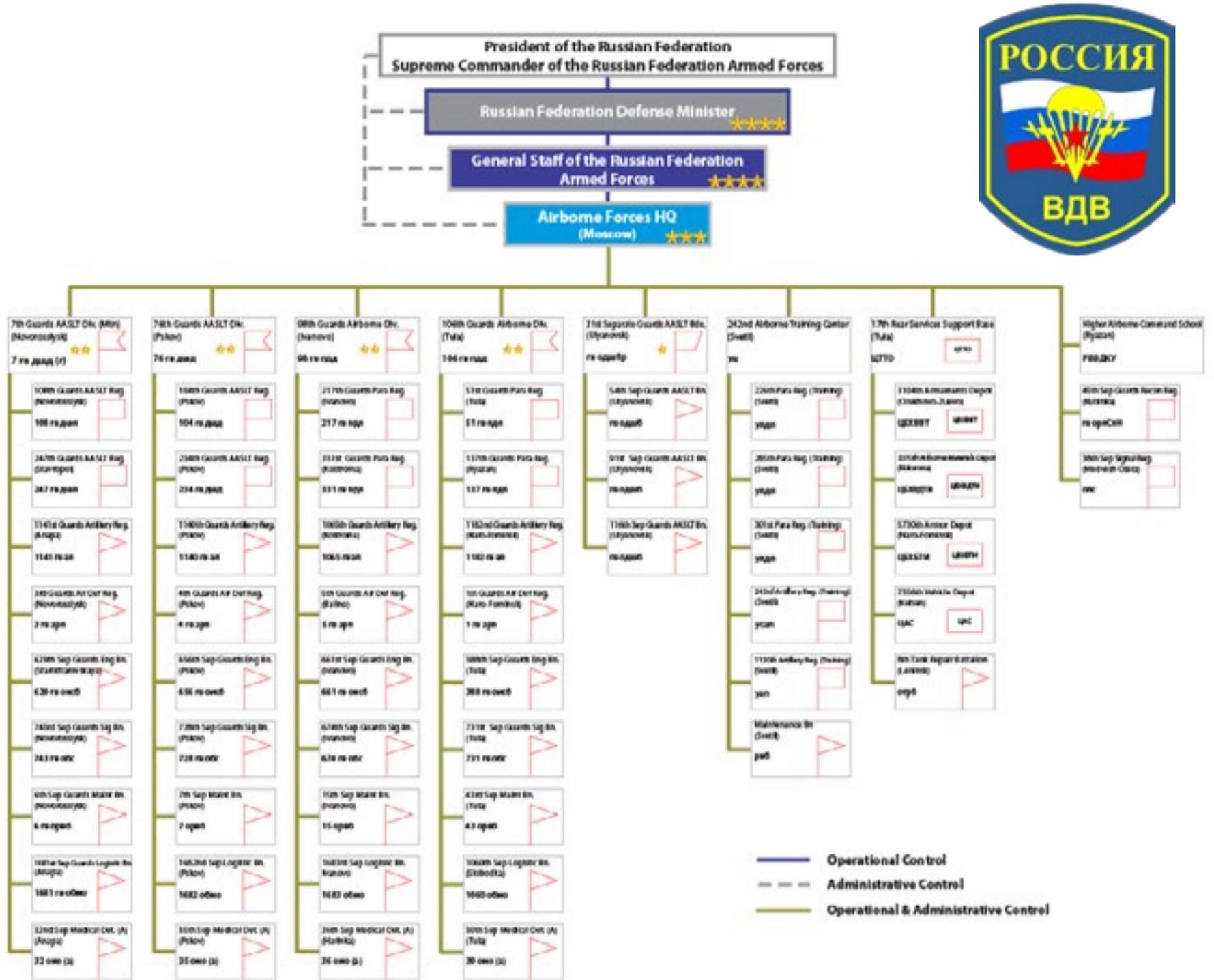


Colonel General Vladimir Shamanov.  
Source via: [http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/86/Vladimir\\_Shamanov\\_Cabinet\\_photo.jpg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/86/Vladimir_Shamanov_Cabinet_photo.jpg)

(continued)

## Continued: Growing Role of Russian Airborne Forces

Organizational Structure of the Russian Airborne Forces



(Click on the above image to see a higher resolution version of this organizational chart.)



## Russian Perspective on Morsi's Ouster and the Impact on Tourism

10 July 2013

**OE Watch Commentary:** *When the Egyptian military ousted Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi on 3 July 2013, Western press began debating whether or not this event was a coup. In the U.S. the discussion extended to whether or not the U.S. should cut off aid to Egypt in accordance with U.S. law.<sup>1</sup> By contrast, one major theme that emerged in the mainstream Russian press has been about Russian tourism in Egypt.*

*Indeed, Russia accounts for much of Egypt's tourism revenue, with more Russians visiting Egypt than any other group before 2010. Not only do tens of thousands of Russians go to Egypt on vacation every year, but some from the Russian diaspora also own property there. Morsi, prior to his ouster, had actively sought to attract Russian tourists and build stronger economic ties with Russia.<sup>2</sup> The accompanying excerpts illustrate the impact of events in Egypt on Russian tourism there.*

*The first is from mainstream Vesti.ru (News), which describes Egypt from a Russian tourist perspective. According to the author, Artem Potemin, the tourist resorts of Hurghada and Sharm el-Sheikh—Egypt's main tourist destinations for Russians, particularly Hurghada, Egypt's second largest city—are quiet and peaceful, perhaps to the point of "boring." Morsi's ouster has had no impact on businesses there, according to the author. "We could even say that the Egyptians have learned to plan their revolutions," writes Potemin, quoting one Russian seasonal worker in Egypt who says he was warned two weeks in advance about the upcoming unrest.*

*The second excerpt, from Rossiyskaya Gazeta (Russian Newspaper)—the Kremlin's official paper—posted an "exclusive" interview with Russia's Federal Tourism Agency Head Alexander Radkov by Alena Uzbekova. His core message to Russian tourists is to stay on resorts and be careful. The Russian authorities are in close touch with Egyptian authorities, he says, to ensure tourists' safety. Egypt and Russia remain on friendly terms, though Russian authorities are concerned about the current situation.*

*Despite the unrest, these articles present a vacation in Egypt for Russian citizens in a positive light, provided they are careful. Potemin concludes his article with an assertion that, regardless of*



Ousted Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi.

**Source:** Artem Potemin, "Мятежный Египет глазами российских туристов: все спокойно, даже слишком (Rebellious Egypt through Russian Tourists' Eyes: all is Calm, almost too Calm)," Vesti.ru (News), 8 July 2013. <http://www.vesti.ru/doc.html?id=1101946>

### Rebellious Egypt through Russian Tourists' Eyes: all is Calm, almost too Calm

In Cairo, tens of thousands of protesters remain on the streets, and the army does not leave the streets, either. Tent camps are still set up at Tahrir - people celebrate the change of power. There are no clashes. Messages from tourist resorts suggest that the Egyptian revolution has not scared the tourists.

About what is happening in Cairo, tourists in Hurghada learned only from television news... To many, it even seemed too calm. "There is everything you need here for a holiday: sun, sea, beach, bar," says tourist Karina Slobtsova, "I like everything here a lot, except that it's a tad boring. Because this place is a purely for family vacation, a bit too boring for the youth..."

Anatoly Morozov has been coming to Egypt to work as a street entertainer. He says that if in 2011, after the coup, there were shortages of food, and there were no tourists for several months, this time everything went relatively smoothly. We could even say that the Egyptians have even learned to plan their revolutions. "We were warned two weeks in advance," said Anatoly...

According to hotels, the revolution had practically no effect on their business.... Airlines also do not feel a particular lack of customers. According to statistics, this year's ticket sales were actually up by 20 percent... Russian diplomatic mission in Egypt so far sees no danger in visiting Hurghada and Sharm el-Sheikh does, and only advises tourists to be careful....

Whichever political party comes to power in Egypt at this time, one thing is clear: the new leadership will devote special attention to tourism. For example, annually, more than a million tourists from Russia come to Hurghada alone. And to lose this "gold mine" would be a big loss for Egypt's economy.

(continued)

## Continued: Russian Perspective on Morsi's Ouster and the Impact on Tourism

*who is in power in Egypt, its leadership will put its tourism industry first because it is a "goldmine" too important for Egypt's economy to lose. His articles, coupled with Radkov's statements, indicate that the Kremlin intends to maintain a business relationship with Cairo and point to the continued importance the Kremlin vests in an overall friendly relationship with Egypt, no matter who is in power.*  
**End OE Watch Commentary (Borshchevskaya)**

1. Ben Wedeman. Reza Sayah and Matt Smith, "Coup topples Egypt's Morsi; deposed president under 'house arrest'" CNN, July 4, 2013  
<http://www.cnn.com/2013/07/03/world/meast/egypt-protests>. Dan Roberts, "US hopes to use aid as incentive for Egypt generals to restore democracy" "Obama says overthrow of Mohamed Morsi will prompt review of aid programmes, including 20% of Egyptian military budget," July 4, 2013, The Guardian, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/jul/04/obama-egypt-mohamed-morsi-generals-coup>
2. See my past commentary: "Egypt's Morsi Seeks Russian Loans and Tourists" Operational Environment Watch, June 2013 [http://fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/Archives/GSW/201306/Russia\\_02.html](http://fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/Archives/GSW/201306/Russia_02.html)

**Source:** Alena Uzbekova, "Море волнуется 1Глава Ростуризма Александр Радков о наших туристах в Египте и талонах на отдых в России (The Sea is Agitated. Federal Tourism Agency Head Alexander Radkov on our Tourists in Egypt and Coupons for vacation in Russia)," Rossiyskaya Gazeza (Russian Newspaper), 10 July 2013. <http://www.rg.ru/2013/07/10/more.html>

### **The Sea is Agitated. Federal Tourism Agency Head Alexander Radkov on our tourists in Egypt and coupons for vacation in Russia**

More than 100,000 Russians are now vacationing in Egypt. 60 thousand bought tours, more than 20 thousand surfers and divers left on their own. And then there are the 30-thousand Russian diaspora. When everything was calm in Egypt, many bought low-cost apartments by the sea.

But right now vacationing in Egypt can only be called rebellious... **[the remainder of the article is written in an interview question and answer format]**

***Alexander Vasilyevich, the situation in Egypt remains very tense. It is worth it to buy tours into this country and what can you advise those who are there on vacation right now?***

**Alexander Radkov:** Egypt to Russia are friendly countries, but the current situation worries us very much. Large demonstrations because of the change of power have led to casualties. Including foreigners.

Russian tourists can be the unwitting victim of these events. Right now the Egyptian resorts there are some 80 thousand citizens. This is a serious figure, higher than last year. And we are constantly talking about not leaving the resorts—Hurghada, Sharm el-Sheikh—under any circumstances...

Russia's Federal Tourism Agency is now working in Egypt. Earlier our representatives met with the Governor of the Red Sea province, where the resort is located in Hurghada, with the director of the airport of the city, the police chief and members of the military, who now control the situation in Egypt, as well as representatives of local travel companies. The governor assured us that the Egyptian authorities are doing everything to ensure the safety of Russians. The resort is patrolled around the clock by the military, enhanced security, and airport hotels. The local population - 80 percent of whom, incidentally, are employed in the tourism sector, are asked not to protest.

#### ***Can Russia forbid its citizens to travel to Egypt?***

**Alexander Radkov:** If there is a real threat to the life and safety of Russian tourists, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs may recommend to the citizens not to travel to the country as tourists... There are other situations. For example, in a foreign country there can be an outbreak of an epidemic or armed hostilities. In such a case, the Ministry of Emergency Situations works on citizens' evacuations...

## Russia's Continued Population Decline: A Harbinger of Instability?

18 July 2013

**OE Watch Commentary:** *The accompanying excerpts (from right-of-center Nezavisimaya Gazeta—one of the largest publications in Russia) suggest that the Russian population appears to be continuing in a downward spiral, which may be a harbinger of greater instability. According to the first article, Germany's Ministry of Internal Affairs revealed in its semi-annual migration report, a sharp—more than 50 percent—increase in applications for political asylum in Germany as compared to the same period in 2012. According to the report, not only is Russia among the top ten countries whose citizens apply for asylum in Germany, it is even ahead of war-torn Syria. In absolute terms, this represents 10,000 Russian citizens in six months compared to 4500 Syrians. Russian applications reflect a threefold increase as compared to 2012, according to author Evgeniy Grigoriev.*

*The German media, writes Grigoriev, cite the "unstable situation" in the Chechen Republic as one reason for the increased applications from Russia. "The Russian authorities cannot be indifferent to any, even the smallest loss of citizens, and most importantly—its causes. Especially if those are political circumstances, dissatisfaction with conditions for personal development. Or problems in the regions." Grigoriev also asks*

**Source:** Evgeniy Grigoriev, "Россияне озадачили Берлин. Среди желающих обосноваться в Германии наших сограждан в два раза больше, чем сирийцев (Russians Have Puzzled Berlin. Among those wishing to settle in Germany, there are twice as many of our fellow citizens as Syrians)," Nezavisimaya Gazeta (Independent Newspaper), 18 July 2013. [http://www.ng.ru/world/2013-07-18/7\\_berlin.html](http://www.ng.ru/world/2013-07-18/7_berlin.html)

### Russians Have Puzzled Berlin. Among those wishing to settle in Germany, there are twice as many of our fellow citizens as Syrians

Germany's Ministry of Internal Affairs published its semi-annual report on migration. It records a sharp increase in applications for political asylum in Germany. Their number in six months has exceeded 43 thousand, which is almost twice as many as the same period in 2012. Russia leads as one of top ten countries whose citizens ask Germany for shelter.

...The successful, against the backdrop of crisis-ridden Eurozone Germany remains a strong magnet [for migrants]. Last year, Germany took in the majority of migrants and refugees who find themselves within the EU...

...[I]n connection with the report...what attracts attention is, where is the greatest flow of applications for asylum in Germany. It turns out - from Russia! And only then from Syria.

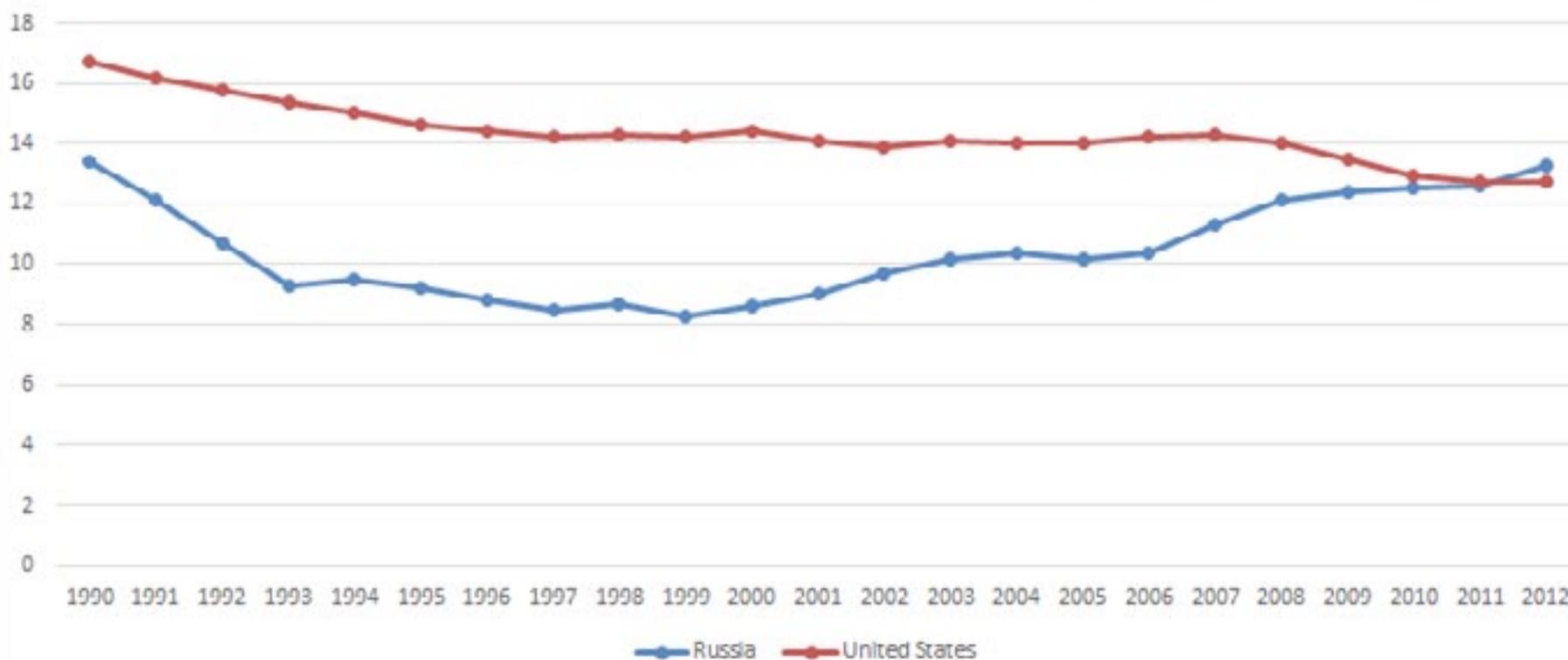
In absolute terms, this is almost 10 thousand of Russian citizens during six months. And from the Syrians – it is 4.5 thousand applications, more than twice as little. And neither the situation nor the motivation of Russian and Syrian applicants, of course, are comparable. ...The desperate humanitarian situation of the Syrian population is of course well known... Nothing of this sort, fortunately, exists in Russia... However, many Russians, according to surveys of Russian institutions of public opinion, we would like to look for happiness abroad...

To some extent, the German statistics confirms this. And the issue is not only that most who have applied for asylum in Germany are Russian citizens. Noteworthy are the trends. 10 thousand during half a year— that's more than three times more than

Source via <http://b-i.forbesimg.com/markadomanis/files/2013/07/RussiaUSBirths.png>

(continued)

Russia and United States Crude Birth Rate Per 1,000 (1990-2012)



## Continued: Russia's Continued Population Decline: A Harbinger of Instability?

*rhetorically what it says about Russia if it is in the same group that includes Syria, Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, and Somalia when it comes to applications for political asylum.*

*The second excerpt illustrates the latest polls in Russia about immigration. Among them, the Levada Centre—the most respected name in polling in Russia—found that every fourth to fifth Russian citizen wants to emigrate. One expert cited believes that there is a large gap between those who wish to leave and those who will actually do so.*

*Levada's Center Director Lev Gudkov believes, according to the article, that the number of those wishing to emigrate is increasing. He describes this situation as "exactly the repetition of the mood in 2011. There is a growing sense of frustration, a feeling of a dead end." Gudkov's statement is significant, as 2011 saw the largest protests in Russian history since the fall of the Soviet Union.*  
**End OE Watch Commentary (Borshchevskaya)**

during all of 2012. And the greatest "sprint" - more than 2 million per month - was in April-June. This means that something is propelling [this trend]...

The Russian authorities cannot be indifferent to any, even the smallest loss of citizens, and most importantly—its causes. Especially if those are political circumstances, dissatisfaction with conditions for personal development. Or problems in the regions. Particularly, right now the German media name one reason for the increased applications from Russia as "unstable situation" in the Chechen Republic.

And recall the issue of the image. How well does it serve Russia that it is leading in the top ten countries whose citizens are asking for asylum in Germany? And these are - Syria, Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Somalia. Among European countries - only Serbia and Macedonia. Georgia is the remaining one in this company. The [German] Federal Office for Migration and Refugees has received 1,068 applications from Georgia's citizens. Much larger than from Russia if correlated with Georgia's population. But is this really a consolation?

**Source:** Aleksandra Samarina, "Каждый пятый хочет уехать. Больше половины потенциальных эмигрантов, по мнению россиян, ищут за рубежом лучшей жизни" (Every Fifth Person Wants to Leave. More than Half of Potential Emigrants, According to Russian Citizens, Look Abroad for a Better Life) *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* (Independent Newspaper), 17 July 2013. [http://www.ng.ru/politics/2013-07-17/3\\_emigrants.html](http://www.ng.ru/politics/2013-07-17/3_emigrants.html)

### **Every Fifth Person Wants to Leave. More than Half of Potential Emigrants, According to Russian Citizens, Look Abroad for a Better Life**

Gesterday the Russian Center for Public Opinion (RCPO) presented the latest poll, which characterizes the mood of citizens regarding immigration. It turns out that 54% of respondents are confident that those who wish to leave the country are looking for the good life abroad. Meanwhile, according to sociologists of the Fund "Public Opinion" (FOM) and the Levada Center, every fourth or fifth Russian citizen dreams of leaving his homeland. RCPO asserts that there twice as little potential emigrants.

RCPO promises to give an exact figure by the end of the week of those who want to go abroad - the data is still being processed....

According to an expert of RCPO's monitoring department Tatiana Anchukovoy, this desire (expressed by 54% of the population) consists of: improvement of living standards and the desire to be socially protected. The most common responses: "tired of poverty", "people live better there", "want a normal pension", "living conditions are attractive," "life is better, a dignified salary," "in Russian people only survive", "do not like the economic situation of the country," "We are only surviving," "in Russia is impossible to live with dignity." Another 16% of potential immigrants, according to RCPO's respondents, want to "realize their potential" abroad....

President of the fund "Public Opinion" Alexander Oslon believes that in reality, only 1% of people are "sitting on their suitcases." ...On the other hand, the expert said, the fact that 20% of the population today are dissatisfied with their lives - is a good reason to think: "So, turn out living here is not that great."

The head of the Institute of Globalization Problems Mikhail Delyagin emphasizes the desire to leave an expression of dissatisfaction is the established order....

Levada Center Director Lev Gudkov is sure that today the number of those wishing to emigrate is not decreasing but increasing. According to his data, 23% of such people - almost one in four Russians— dream of emigration. And the expert believes is a natural process, "The current decline in the protest activity results in increased emigration aspirations. That's exactly the repetition of the mood in 2011. There is a growing sense of frustration, a feeling of a dead end. "...



The President of Belarus, A. Lukashenko met with Russian Defense Minister, Sergey Shoigu in Minsk, Belarus, April 2013. Photo source: www.nbcnews.com

**Source:** "Russia to Open Airbase in Belarus within Months," RIA Novosti, 26 June 2013.

#### Russia to Open Airbase in Belarus within Months

Russia is opening an airbase in northwestern Belarus, near the Polish and Lithuanian borders, within just a few months, a Russian Air Force general said Wednesday.

The airbase, modern Russia's first on Belarusian soil, will consolidate bilateral defense collaboration as part of the Union State of Russia and Belarus, Russian Air Force chief Lieutenant General Viktor Bondarev told reporters.

Located in Lida, a city of nearly 100,000, the base will be an important element in the "strategic defense of the Union State," the two-star general said, adding that Russian Su-27SM3 fighter jets would be stationed there.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said in May that the base was not being set up in response to deployment of a US missile shield in Europe that has been strongly opposed by Russia.

However, Moscow has also taken issue with NATO jets flying combat air patrols close to Russian airspace. Belarus borders NATO nations Poland, Latvia and Lithuania.

**OE Watch Commentary:** *Russia and Belarus continue to strengthen their military cooperation. Next month, for instance, soldiers from both countries will participate in the Zapad (West) 2013 military exercise. Similar to the training conducted in 2009, this exercise is designed to reinforce military coordination and operations between Moscow and Minsk in defending against a Western threat.*

*In addition to training alongside their comrades from Belarus, Russia recently announced that it has decided to forward deploy a squadron of multi-role fighters (likely an updated version of the SU-27) and establish a Russian Air Force base on Belarusian territory. As the excerpt from the brief article points out, this base will help to consolidate defense efforts within the "Union State of Russia and Belarus." Creating another actual military installation (Russia already maintains a communications and radar site) in Belarus will add a powerful bond to this heretofore ill-defined union.*

*From Moscow's perspective, strengthening their western air and air defense capabilities makes perfect strategic sense. Besides reinforcing their union with Belarus, Russian military planners are responding to what they perceive as potentially hostile moves on the part of NATO and the US. Russian military officials were upset about the US decision to station a squadron of F-16s in Poland, NATO's decision to establish an airbase in Siauliai, Lithuania, and the continued progress on European Missile Defense (which many Russians insist is directed against them). Stationing sophisticated Air Force assets along their western buffer state will presumably help to neutralize these perceived threats. **End OE Watch Commentary (Finch)***

**OE Watch Commentary:** *The Russian military continues to struggle with recruiting and conscripting a sufficient number of young Russian men to serve in the military. While the Spring 2013 draft reportedly conscripted more than 153,000 men, this number is inadequate to maintain a million-man military. To entice more young Russians to fulfill their soldierly duty, defense and government officials have helped to enact legislation which makes military service a prerequisite for other benefits.*

*As the first brief excerpt indicates, the most significant of these initiatives is a bill that makes completion of military service a necessary precondition for civil service or government employment. As opposed to 20 years ago, when government salaries often went unpaid for months, today, civil service positions are regarded by many as quite prestigious. With this new legislation, Russian men who want to pursue a government career will first have to demonstrate their dedication via military service.*

*To recruit the best and brightest university students, the Ministry of Defense is also moving forward on plans to create “scientific companies.” As the second excerpt points out, a pilot program has already been established whereby select university students will be able to satisfy their military service commitment while completing their degree. While details are still being worked out, early reports suggested that some of these soldier-students might be enlisted to help fight against historical distortions of the Great Patriotic War (WW II). More likely, they will conduct defense-equipment-related research and, upon graduation, will be prime candidates to work in Russia’s defense industry.*

*Yet another incentive provides additional post-grad educational assistance to university graduates who have completed their one-year conscript duty. As the third brief excerpt indicates, many young Russian*



Info for potential new Russian conscripts. Source: <http://stat.mil.ru/index.htm>

Source: Interfax 21 June 2013. <http://www.interfax.ru/>

### 1. Russian Parliament Passes Bill Limiting Draft-dodgers’ Employment Opportunities

The State Duma on Friday [21 June] passed in third, final reading a government bill aimed at raising the prestige and attractiveness of conscription service.

In line with the bill, a citizen cannot be employed in civil service if they have evaded military service.

State Duma Defence Committee Chairman Vladimir Komoyedov told Interfax earlier that currently citizens who have not done military service despite not having had lawful deferrals are subject to transfer to the reserve force when they reach 27.

“After that, a young man like that, just like those have completed service in the army, can hold posts in the state’s civil service. We have specified the category which will have state civil service limitations introduced against them. During their transfer to the reserve force they will be issued with relevant certificates by call-up commissions to the effect that they have not completed conscription service despite not having had any lawful grounds not to,” said the MP...

...Also, all other things being equal, a citizen who has completed military service is given priority for a place in the personnel reserve for civil service posts filled by competition.

Source: IOLga Bozhyeva, “В армии создают «научные роты»: одаренные солдаты будут разрабатывать оружие” [They Will Create ‘Scientific Companies’ in the Army: Gifted Soldiers Will Develop Weapons] Moskovskiy Komsomolets Online, 1 July 2013.

### 2. Defense Ministry to Create Scientific Companies

A “scientific company” will be created in Voronezh based upon the Air Force Academy imeni Professor N.Ye. Zhukovskiy and Yu.A. Gagarin Air Force Military Training-Scientific Center for the first time in the history of the Russian Armed Forces. The competition from

(continued)

## Continued: Military Service and Civil Benefits

*men attempt to avoid military service by pursuing post-graduate studies until they pass the conscript age limit (27 years). This initiative is designed to curtail this practice and to reward those graduates who fulfill their military duty.*

*For the past decade Russia has increasingly defined the country's greatness in military terms. According to the Kremlin's patriotic rhetoric, Russia needs a strong and combat-ready military to defend against external threats and dangers. To date, however, the martial rhetoric did not fully correspond to government policies that reflected military service as a valuable and prestigious vocation. These latest initiatives suggest that the situation is now changing. **End OE Watch Commentary (Finch)***

those who desire to serve in the "scientific company" totaled three people per place already today.

"The scientific company, in which gifted students of civilian higher educational institutions, whose achievements are in demand during the accomplishment of military scientific tasks, will perform military service based upon conscription, is being created in accordance with the decision of RF Defense Minister General of the Army Sergey Shoygu," a military department spokesman said.

At this moment, 35 men have been selected from Belgorod, Voronezh, Tambov, Kaluga, Yaroslavl, Astrakhan, Chelyabinsk and Moscow oblasts, and also from Moscow and the Republic of Bashkortostan from among those who desire to serve in the first "scientific company". The screening of the candidates occurred at the leading higher educational institutions of Moscow, St. Petersburg, Tula, Tambov, Kursk, Belgorod, Chelyabinsk, Ufa, and Voronezh. The age criteria of the draft are normal – candidates from 18 to 27 years of age, who are being drafted for a period of service of 12 months. Upon completion of service, the students must return to their higher educational institution, where they will continue their studies....

...For the time being, the creation of five similar companies is in the military department's plans. Depending on the results of the experiment, the number of these subunits can subsequently increase. The strength of the "scientific companies" is planned to be from 80 to 180 men. "Of course, the structure will be that, which is customary in the Armed Forces: this is the company or a platoon with a definite thematic accompaniment and 'filling' according to the specification," Deputy Minister Ostapenko said. In the process, no one has canceled the elements of military proficiency in the new companies. The deputy minister promises that each "will be taught the ability to fire a weapon and some other types of operations of a combined-arms nature, however, the main function of a 'scientific company' serviceman will still precisely be an occupation using scientific research work in support of the country's defense".

**Source:** Aleksey Pestov: "Draftee Soldiers Will Be Given a Second Higher Education Free," Izvestiya Online, 17 June 2013.

### 3. Draft Law Aims To Lure More Graduates Into Army With Promise of Free Second Degree Course

**Vuz [higher educational institution] graduates who complete Army service will gain the right to a second budget-funded educational course.**

Vuz graduates who complete draft military service will gain the right to a second higher educational qualification at federal budget expense. Such amendments are contained in the updated draft law "On raising the prestige and allure of military service," which also introduces a ban against those who evade Army service from working in state establishments.

The new norms, which help the Army to resolve the cadre issue, provide for "a preferential right of admission" for vuz graduates who have completed military service to courses "on higher educational programs in economics and administration, and on corresponding supplementary professional programs within the framework of programs and projects confirmed by the Russian Federation [RF] president and the RF Government, under a procedure and on terms stipulated by the said programs and projects"...

...State Duma Education Committee member Alena Arshinova explained in an interview for Izvestiya that the reason for promoting this bill is the shortage of draftees into the Army.

"Many young people these days, to avoid serving in the Army, go into postgraduate studies. This law's enactment would encourage them to go into Army service with a view to subsequently taking a second higher degree course free of charge," Arshinova explained.

State Duma Defense Committee member Viktor Vodolatskiy believes that, after this law is passed, over 100,000 young people will sign up for Army service.

Currently, 263,000 people are draft-dodgers," Vodolatskiy says. "I believe that, once this law is enacted, approximately one half of them will reconsider, as they will have the prospect of obtaining a second higher education."...

...According to State Duma sources, the total number of servicemen in Russia in 2012 was 800,000, which is 200,000 below the Armed Forces reform plan target.

**OE Watch Commentary:** *Armenian authorities were perturbed to learn that Russia had recently sold Azerbaijan nearly \$1 billion worth of advanced military equipment. Many Armenians regard Russia as their key strategic ally, and, as the excerpt points out, they had trouble understanding why Kremlin officials would sell modern armaments to their chief rival. Though it has been nearly 20 years since the end of the vicious conflict over the disputed region of Nagorno-Karabakh, passions between the two countries remain high. In the Armenian calculus, a modern, well-equipped Azeri military might be tempted to use force to reclaim this territory.*

*Russia maintains, however, a rather robust military presence in Armenia, and both countries are members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), which would obligate Russian forces to assist Armenia in the event of external aggression. In 2010 Russian officials worked with their Armenian counterparts to extend the Russian military presence in Gyumri until 2044. Besides this military presence, Russia continues to provide the Armenian military with the bulk of their equipment needs, often at reduced prices.*

*From a realpolitik (and perhaps cynical) perspective, in arming both sides of a potential conflict and aligning itself with Armenia, Russia has a vested interest in maintaining stability. As the article points out, Russian officials are aware that leaders in Azerbaijan want to transform some of their oil wealth into improved armaments, and from a business viewpoint it would be a mistake to ignore this customer. By expanding its military ties with Azerbaijan, Russian officials have not only gained a wealthy customer for its military hardware, but may have also placed themselves in a stronger position to influence the situation between Armenia and Azerbaijan. **End OE Watch Commentary (Finch)***

**Source:** Tigran Oganesyanyan in Yerevan and Konstantin Volkov, "Yerevan Asks Moscow to Explain about Arms Supplies to Baku. The Fear in Armenia Is That This Could Change the Balance of Forces in the Region in Azerbaijan's Favor," *Izvestiya Online*, 27 June 2013.

### Armenian Officials Voice Concern at Russian Weapons Deal with Azerbaijan

The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, which has been dragging on for years, turns any even minor difference of opinion between Yerevan and Baku into an acute and sensitive problem. Against this backdrop it is no surprise that the start of weapons deliveries to Azerbaijan from Russia has triggered an aggrieved response in Armenia.

Weapons deliveries are taking place; we know this for sure," Artsrun Ovanisyan, the Armenian Defense Ministry press secretary, told *Izvestiya*. "This is also confirmed by the fact that new equipment was demonstrated during the 26 June Baku parade in honor of Armed Forces Day."

According to some reports, the value of the Russian-Azerbaijani contract totals \$1 billion. We are talking about deliveries of tanks, self-propelled guns, multiple rocket launcher systems, and other weaponry.

"The sale of Russian arms to Azerbaijan has triggered concern in Armenia, and we intend to send queries to Russia at the level of the legislative and executive branches in order to clarify the motives and objectives of such actions," Koryun Naapetyan, head of the Parliamentary Commission for Defense, Security, and Internal Affairs, told *Izvestiya*.

Armenia also intends to discuss the question of arms sales to Azerbaijan at the session of the Coordinating Conference of Heads of Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) Parliamentary Commissions for Defense and Security in Minsk in September and at the meeting of the CSTO Parliamentary Assembly's Defense and Security Committee in Yerevan in October.

"We need to be clear about what Russia's priority in concluding this deal is," Naapetyan says. "Is it only commercial interest, or were there also other factors?"

Even more radical proposals than sending queries to Moscow are being heard in Armenia. Thus, for example, Ara Papyan, head of the Modus Vivendi analytical center and former Armenian ambassador to Canada, has urged the Armenian Foreign Ministry to send a protest note to Russia. He considers it "unacceptable when a strategic partner of Armenia is selling a large consignment of weapons to Azerbaijan."

The main reason for Yerevan's concern is a possible change to the balance of military forces in the region....

...But Russian political analysts are not inclined to feel that the weapons deliveries to Azerbaijan will have an impact on relations between Moscow and Yerevan.

"Russia and Armenia are linked by a collective security treaty to which, incidentally, Azerbaijan is not a party," Konstantin Zatulin, director of the Institute of CIS Countries, recalled. "The sale of weapons to Baku is a commercial project. If the Russia had rejected the deal Azerbaijan would have found other suppliers and this would not have impacted on the alignment of forces."

Zatulin also reminded us that Russia is continuing to deliver various kinds of arms to Armenia too, including S-300 missile systems, which are more powerful weapons than what is being sent to Azerbaijan.



## Russia's Most Wanted Man Threatens Sochi 2014 Olympics

**OE Watch Commentary:** In a video message posted on the Kavkaz Center website, Caucasus Emirate leader Doku Umarov called for his followers to disrupt the Russian-hosted 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi by any means. As the first excerpt describes, Umarov, donning his usual camouflage and sitting in a forest with the black banner of Islam behind him, protested the Olympics, citing that the Russians were hosting the Olympics on the “bones of [our] ancestors” as justification for the call to violence.

Umarov holds the top spot on Russia's most wanted list, and has claimed responsibility for multiple terrorist attacks in Russia, including the Moscow metro suicide bombings in 2010 and the Domodedovo suicide bombings the following year, which killed 40 and 36 people respectively. His stated ultimate objective is to carve out a caliphate in the North Caucasus region. Last year Umarov instructed his jihadist followers to avoid attacks on civilians and civilian facilities in Russia. In the latest video Umarov expresses his anger at Moscow for not respecting their moratorium and interpreting it as an act of weakness. This message, therefore, amounts to the end of the unilateral ceasefire and increases security concerns regarding the forthcoming Winter Olympics. He repeatedly referenced the Olympic Games as “Satanic acts” and claimed that the government was “trampling on our Islamic lands [and] trampling on our Islamic laws.”

In response to the video, Russia's Minister of Internal Affairs Vladimir Kolokoltsev promised a 37,000-man security force at Sochi and said that the security officials will have proper training and will develop plans to counter potential threats. The second excerpt stresses that Russian authorities are carefully monitoring the situation and that special forces are working to weaken Umarov's efforts.

Hosting the 2014 Olympics is Putin's opportunity to show off Russia's prosperity and assert its global power status. It is already the most expensive Olympics project to date, costing Russia over \$50 billion. Sochi is close to Umarov's area of operations, as Dagestan is only about 300 miles away. A terrorist attack on the Sochi Olympics could undermine Russia's international status and possibly strengthen Umarov's movement. One way or another, athletes may not be the only ones competing over the 2014 games. **End OE Watch Commentary (Kangas)**



**Source:** “Доку Умаров призвал боевиков сорвать Олимпиаду в Сочи (Doku Umarov calls on rebels to disrupt Olympics in Sochi),” NEWSru, July 3, 2014. [http://www.newsru.com/russia/03jul2013/umarov\\_sochi.html](http://www.newsru.com/russia/03jul2013/umarov_sochi.html)

Leader of the North Caucasus Islamist rebels, Dokku Umarov, published online a video message in which he called for his followers to make every effort to disrupt the Olympics in Sochi, occurring in 2014, reported Reuters...

In the video, posted on YouTube, the head of the internationally banned terrorist organization “Caucasus Emirate” claimed that Russia wanted to “host the Olympics on the bones of our ancestors.” He called for Islamists to use “every method permitted by Allah.” In the frame, Umarov is sitting in the forest, in the background are trees with the black banner of Islam with Arabic inscriptions hanging, on either side of him sit two of his bearded companions. Dressed in a camouflage jacket, the rebel leader spoke in a calm tone in a monotone manner. You can also hear birds singing in the background.

The rebel leader recalled his recent peace declaration, which called for “mercy on our part,” but that the “infidels” do not understand the kindness and consider it weakness. According to him, they have proven it through their “barbaric acts” in the Caucasus. In February, Umarov, in a video message, encouraged his followers to avoid attacks on civilian facilities in Russia and limit attacks on civilian citizens.

A year ago, Russia's Federal Security Service and the State Security Service of Abkhazia announced the prevention of the attempt by Umarov's militants to plan terrorist attacks in Sochi- then immediately reported the finding of ten weapons caches.”

**Source:** “Безопасность на Олимпиаде в Сочи обеспечат 37 тысяч полицейских (Security at the Olympics in Sochi will provide 37,000 policemen),” Pravda, July 5, 2013. <http://www.pravda.ru/news/sport/05-07-2013/1164307-olimpiada-0/#>

“The Internal Minister of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Kolokoltsev, announced that in Sochi security will be made up of 37,000 MVD policemen. The head of the MVD clarified that the police and other special forces services had conducted the necessary training and worked out plans for every possible situation.

Kolokoltsev also announced that residents should not fear for their safety at the Sochi Olympics and explained that the work of the MVD would not negatively affect the residents of the seaside city. All possible restrictions are paid off by the presence of a large contingent of law enforcement and minimize the level of criminal threats.”

**OE Watch Commentary:** While not normally considered a sea power, Ukraine continues to strengthen its naval cooperation with other countries. As the brief excerpt points out, the Sea Breeze 2013 exercises started in Odessa and Mykolayiv on 7 July. In addition to antiterrorist and antipiracy training, Sea Breeze 2013 includes evacuation measures and techniques of providing humanitarian relief. Ten countries are participating in this iteration of Sea Breeze: Ukraine and the United States (the organizers of the exercise) plus Germany, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Romania, Turkey, Canada, Italy, and Bulgaria. More than 1700 servicemen, 15 vessels, 10 planes, and 35 units of tanks and other mechanized equipment are involved in this Black Sea training exercise. As usual, Sea Breeze was met with an anti-NATO rally in Odessa, sponsored by local communist and progressive socialist parties. These minor protests, however, have had negligible effect on the exercise.

Russia is not participating in Sea Breeze 2013, yet it is not neglecting its Black Sea fleet. The fleet is currently undergoing a \$659 billion rearmament program and has plans to add 18 warships and more than 30 other vessels by 2016.<sup>1</sup> While there is no official information explaining their non-participation in Sea Breeze, some of the rationale may stem from Russia's being engaged in its own annual exercises, "Peace Farvater" ("Fairway of Peace"), conducted with Ukraine and Belarus in Crimea. Although "Peace Farvater" is not as international as Sea Breeze, its scale and impact is comparable.<sup>2</sup>

Additionally, Russia's Black Sea Fleet will continue to maintain a presence in the Mediterranean during the summer 2013 training period.<sup>3</sup> In a recent speech, Black Sea Fleet Commander Vice Admiral Alexander Vitko said, "For more than a year and a half already the fleet's vessels continue performing the tasks in the Mediterranean, and such tasks will remain a top-priority during the summer training period."<sup>4</sup> Russia's nonparticipation in Sea Breeze 2013 may reflect a change in its strategic priorities. **End OE Watch Commentary (Moldavanova)**

1. Cristina Siva, Russian Navy Plans Huge Exercise in Mediterranean, Black Seas, January 3, 2013, <http://www.stripes.com/news/russian-navy-plans-huge-exercise-in-mediterranean-black-seas-1.202707>
2. Pavel Dulman, Military Drills Sea Breeze Started in Ukraine/V Ukraine Startovali Voyennyie Ucheniya Sea Breeze, July 9, 2013, <http://www.rg.ru/2013/07/09/briz-site.html>
3. Interfax Ukraine, Russian Black Sea Fleet to Keep Presence in Mediterranean Over Summer, June 3, 2013. <http://www.kyivpost.com/content/russia-and-former-soviet-union/russian-black-sea-fleet-to-keep-presence-in-mediterranean-over-summer-325107.html>
4. Russian Black Sea fleet vessels to continue sailing to the Mediterranean. June 6, 2013, <http://www.blackseanews.net/en/read/64958>

**Source:** "Sea Breeze Exercises Start in Odessa," Interfax, 8 July 2013.

### Sea Breeze Exercises Start

Sea Breeze 2013 international exercises started in Odessa on Monday.

Servicemen will be practicing until July 20, exercise supervisor, Ukrainian Navy Rear Admiral Denis Berezovsky told reporters. An international maritime security operation with the evacuation of non-combatants is the purpose of the exercise. Sea Breeze 2013 organizers will add an element of surprise to the drill scenario in order to assess the performance of commanders and military units.

The exercises will be held in the Odessa and Mykolaiv regions and engage 1,700 servicemen, approximately 15 ships of various classes, aircraft and armor of ten countries: Bulgaria, Italy, Canada, Germany, Romania, Turkey, the United States, Ukraine, Georgia and Azerbaijan.

A minor anti-NATO rally was held near the Odessa House of Officers in the morning, when the exercises began, an Interfax correspondent reported.

Sea Breeze exercises have been an annual event since 1997. The exercises are held under the Memorandum on Mutual Understanding and Defense Cooperation, which the U.S. Department of Defense and the Ukrainian Defense Ministry signed in 1993 to build up the combat might of the Ukrainian Armed Forces. This is a bilateral drill that is open to servicemen from other countries.



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

By Alisa Moldavanova

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



*“...in the early 2000s the Defense Ministry’s special center in Moscow was reorganized to form the Main Directorate of Deep-Sea Research, whose work was classified.”*

**OE Watch Commentary:** *Hydronauts is a term that is relatively new, even to long-time students of Russian military affairs. A check of sources within the Russian military indicates that the topic is rarely discussed in the open press, if at all.*

*According to an Izvestiya Online report of June 2013, Russia has such a classified force. Interestingly, the article says the force, which uses submarines, is an Army and not a Navy unit; this issue is further complicated, however, by the fact that one of the hydronauts in the article refers to himself as a former naval officer. The force’s focus is to bug communications cables, install movement sensors, and collect the wreckage of ships, aircraft, and satellites from the seabed. These divers work at depths of 3000-6000 kilometers in miniature submarines. Their branch of service is referred to as the Defense Ministry Main Directorate of Deep-Sea Research 10th Department (or the submarine intelligence service). The service was established in 1976, according to the article, which appeared in the press to charge former Defense Minister Anatoliy Serdyukov with allegedly paying “unlawfully” high wages to hydronauts.*  
**End of OE Commentary (Thomas)**

Russian Hydronaut emblem.



**Source:** “Serdyukov Unlawfully Increased Hydronauts’ Wages to 600,000 Rubles. In the Opinion of Comptroller’s Office Auditors the Defense Ministry Did Not Have the Right To Assign Such High Monthly Pay to Deep Sea Officers,” Aleksey Mikhaylov, Izvestiya Online, 24 June 2013.

### Hydronauts Conduct Deep-Sea Intelligence

According to figures from the Comptroller’s Office auditors, whose report Izvestiya has seen, the hydronauts were the most highly paid employees in the Army -- they were receiving 500,000-600,000 [rubles] a month. For comparison, the commander of a motorized rifle brigade in Siberia and the Far East receives no more than 80,000 rubles a month, while the commander of a strategic bomber base with the rank of colonel receives no more than 180,000.

The auditors note that in 2009 the then Defense Minister Anatoliy Serdyukov unlawfully set the booster coefficient -- by which the salary is increased -- at 2.9 for hydronauts. In this context, the hydronauts’ salaries rose from 6,300-9,300 rubles to 34,500-45,000 rubles a month. Then a 100% supplement was added to that.

“After the setting of salaries and supplements taking into account the above-mentioned coefficient on the salary, the pay for hydronauts in 2012 (after deduction of individual income tax) amounted to between 500,000 and 590,000 rubles a month,” the auditors reported.

Izvestiya was told by former naval officer and hydronaut Vladimir Ashik that his colleagues’ job was to collect intelligence information about enemy equipment, protect and service Soviet deep-water communications lines, and bring up from the bottom the wreckage of secret equipment left behind after tests or accidents.

“The financiers calculated the bonus from a transcript of the device’s onboard log. This indicated minute by minute how long we worked, and at what depth. The supplements were applied for every hour at a depth in excess of 500 meters, but above that depth it was the usual rate for submariners,” Ashik told Izvestiya.

According to him, in the early 2000s the Defense Ministry’s special center in Moscow was reorganized to form the Main Directorate of Deep-Sea Research, whose work was classified. On being discharged from the army the hydronauts were assigned the usual pensions, like submariners, because their personal files made no mention of their belonging to a detachment working at extreme depths.

“Our personal files contain no trace of our ever having been hydronauts. When we asked the military commissariats to clarify where we performed our service and how our pensions should be calculated, we received the reply that the officers of military commissariats do not have access to documents in this field and therefore are unable to clarify anything,” Ashik told Izvestiya.

Dmitriy Kornev, editor of the MilitaryRussia website, explained to Izvestiya that in 1980-2000 devices belonging to the Main Directorate of Deep-Sea Research performed special missions in the Sea of Japan in the North Atlantic and in the Arctic.

“Nobody in the world has the same experience of working on the bottom of the Arctic Ocean as the hydronauts from the Main Directorate of Deep-Sea Research -- this is our own unique national experience. During many years of operation there by nuclear deep-sea stations there was not a single accident, although, in the depths, the crews of these devices have no contact with the land. This is the direct consequence of the extremely high level of training of hydronaut officers. Therefore of course the hydronauts deserve such big wages,” Kornev explained.

## Russian Media Discuss Development of a Cyber Command

18 July 2013

*“...Minister of Defense Sergei Shoigu asked several General Staff divisions last February to complete the development of a cyber command.”*

**OE Watch Commentary:** *The 2008 conflict between Russia and Georgia highlighted the impending importance of information warfare and cyber topics for the Kremlin. Russian authorities studied their shortcomings and developed recommendations to improve the country's cyber capabilities. Russia maintains an impressive array of specialists in the software field. Russia's educational institutes have repeatedly produced topnotch mathematicians and algorithm writers, thus allowing the country to maintain an impressive array of specialists in the software field. One such institute of international renown is the Kaspersky Lab.*

*According to a report in Vzglyad in July 2013, Russia has decided to create a service branch dedicated to information security this year. This force has been under consideration for a number of years and is Russia's answer to the U.S. Cyber Command. The service will most likely be used in the creation of software for command and control equipment, precision-guided weaponry, satellite and C4ISR use, and a host of other capabilities. End of OE Commentary (Thomas)*



**Source:** “Better late than never: Russia to get cyber troops,” Anastasia Petrova, Vzglyad, 11 July 2013.

### Russia to Create Cyber Troops

A source at the Ministry of Defense told RIA Novosti that a service branch responsible for the nation's information security would be added to the Russian Army as soon as this year.

He said the new service's key tasks would include monitoring and processing information coming from the outside, as well as countering cyber threats, “in other words, something along the lines of the United States Army Cyber Command.”

Officers preparing to serve in this branch will require linguistic training, that is, they will have to learn a foreign language, primarily English. Minister of Defense Sergei Shoigu asked several General Staff divisions last February to complete the development of a cyber command.

“We had a rather heated discussion about it back then, and as far as I know, we should get this command very soon. Protecting our cyber networks is not only a task for our Armed Forces; it's a task for the entire state, for our security services. A cyber war is already on, so such commands are tasked not only with protecting, but also with delivering counter strikes if needed,” the expert told RIA Novosti, adding that Russia could outstrip its rivals in this area by listening to experts, because it was an urgent task “yesterday and the day before yesterday.”

“A concept for using cyber weapons was developed six or seven years ago. Today, this sort of weapon is second in importance only to nuclear arms,” Anatoly Tsyganok, Director of the Center for Military Forecasting and lecturer at Moscow State University's Global Policy Department, told Vzglyad.

“Cyber weapons are widely used in military conflicts, most recently during the US intervention in Libya, where they controlled not only airspace [...], but also telecommunication networks. They were hacking into Libyan TV networks to broadcast programs for the local population.”

“I heard on the TV today that students at a St Petersburg university won the global computer programming championship for the fifth time. We have to find them. We have to work with these guys somehow, because we need them badly,” Defense Minister Shoigu said at a meeting on Thursday with university rectors and the public on the subject of science units in the Army.

## Turkey's Protests: Local Perspectives on Their Causes and Implications

On 12 June 2011, during his victory speech after having won his third election in a row, Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan addressed cheering and hopeful crowds across the country, pledging that "...the AKP [Justice and Development Party] government will be the government of all 74 million Turks, not just those who voted for the AKP. We will embrace everyone. Nobody should doubt that we will protect the lifestyles, beliefs and values of not just those who voted for us, but also those who did not. Today, the victor of the elections is Turkey, democracy, the national will, and the entire nation."<sup>1</sup> His message was clear: he would be the prime minister of all of Turkey, and not just the 50 percent who had voted for him.

Two years later, large segments of the other 50 percent who did not vote for Erdoğan are enraged with what they say is an increasingly authoritarian prime minister who does not hear them. In an effort to make themselves heard, and frustrated with the lack of a functional opposition that represents them, at least two and a half million people have engaged in peaceful demonstrations in 67 of Turkey's 81 cities within the last two months.<sup>2</sup> Their frustration is fuelled by concern that their individual liberties are eroding, and concern that freedoms of speech, media, and assembly, minority rights and the rule of law are breaking down at an alarming rate, all while Turkey becomes less secular as Erdoğan pushes an Islamist agenda that risks taking Turkey down an irreversible path.

Erdoğan's reaction to the protests, his reliance on excessive use of force against demonstrators and subsequent developments have vindicated the people's concerns: as of late July 2013 police crackdowns on the demonstrations have left 5 people dead, 11 people blinded by tear gas canisters and 8000 with injuries, while unknown numbers of people have been detained.<sup>3</sup> Those detained include doctors and lawyers who helped the injured and peaceful demonstrators whose only "crime" was to use twitter to exchange information regarding the protests. These are indeed alarming signs that demonstrate the declining status of democracy and rule of law in Turkey.

While the international media have since turned their attention elsewhere, protests still continue in certain parts of the country, and many are calling this just the beginning of a new movement.<sup>4</sup> For now, it is unclear whether this movement can turn into a political one that can eventually challenge the



*(continued)*

## Continued: Turkey's Protests: Local Perspectives on Their Causes and Implications

government, because the people on the streets are not a homogenous group with a leader, party, common agenda or ideology; they are simply united by frustration over their eroding freedoms.

The protests in Turkey have been likened to the Arab Spring, Iran's Green Revolution, the Occupy Wall Street movement, the Chicago protests of 1968, and many others. Such analogies risk missing important nuances. In addition, the usual secularism versus Islamist dichotomy is not sufficient to explain the protests, because they have to do, first and foremost, with the quality of democracy in Turkey. This essay will aim to provide insight into the events by providing voices from within the country, including from journalists, human rights activists, demonstrators and politicians.

It is important to accurately assess the protests, because they will have implications for Turkish democracy, and, consequently for Arab countries that were looking at Turkey's democracy as a source of inspiration, as well as for Western countries that saw it as an example of moderate Islam. They will impact Turkey's foreign policy and its status as a candidate for the European Union (EU) and a neighbor of Iran, Iraq, and Syria. The EU has already suspended talks with Turkey until at least October, and Erdoğan's international standing as a popular leader has been shaken.

### The Spark

The protests were sparked at the end of May following a police raid on a peaceful sit-in by about 500 environmentalists against the planned demolition of Gezi Park in central Istanbul, adjacent to the central Taksim Square, to build a shopping mall that would be housed inside Ottoman-era-style army barracks. Police used excessive force such as pepper spray, tear gas, and water cannons to break up the demonstrators. This appeared to be the straw that broke the camel's back: tens of thousands of protesters all over Turkey joined together in peaceful demonstrations. According to the results of a poll conducted in the early stages of the protests, the first reason for the protesters' frustration was the prime minister's authoritarian attitude (92.4%), followed by police force (91.3%), the violation of democratic rights (91.1%), and by the silence of the Turkish media (84.2%).<sup>5</sup>

Erdoğan's response to the protests was interpreted as proof that not only had he fallen out of touch with the other half of the country, but he also was no longer acting as their prime minister. He adopted a rhetoric that was described as "divisive, harsh, uncompromising and stubborn,"<sup>6</sup> calling the demonstrators hoodlums, street thugs, drunks, marginal groups, radical elements and terrorists opposing Turkey's rise. A few examples of such rhetoric can be found in his words during a 15 June pro-government rally: "None of these people are concerned with trees, or the environment. They're concerned with a growing Turkey. Their issue is to stop a rising Turkey... You look at the posters they put up, they were [those of] terrorists, illegal organizations, thugs who insulted the Prime Minister..."<sup>7</sup> In another televised speech, he said, "They say this Prime Minister is causing tension, that the prime minister is too tough. Were we supposed to get down on our knees in front of them and beg them to bring down the thugs [from the Atatürk Cultural Center]? If you call this tough, then excuse me, this Tayyip Erdoğan won't change."<sup>8</sup>

His staff and pro-government media have reverted to conspiracy theories about who instigated the protests, ranging from Lufthansa, the CIA, and CNN to the American Enterprise Institute, an interest-rate lobby, the Jews, and even, telekinesis, a dark force that aimed to target Erdoğan due to jealousy with his success.<sup>9</sup> Turkish journalist Mustafa Akyol writes,

Erdoğan... found the real culprit behind the anger in streets: 'foreign powers' and their collaborators such as 'the interest (loan) lobby.' The more extensively the foreign media, such as *CNN International* and *The Economist*, covered the protests and criticized the government's heavy-handed response, the more Erdoğan and his followers became convinced about an ill-intended 'foreign hand' behind the masses.<sup>10</sup>

Since 2002, when the Islamist-rooted AKP came to power, there has been a deep-seated suspicion among secular Turks that Erdoğan had an Islamist agenda that he would eventually push once he consolidated enough power. During his early years many gave him the benefit of the doubt, because he adopted a conciliatory tone, pushed through democratic reforms and took steps to bring Turkey up to European standards of democracy and living. Erdoğan's response to the 2013 protests was seen as the ultimate moment when Erdoğan showed his true colors.<sup>11</sup>

### Erdoğan as the Main Problem

Above all, the protests are an outburst of anger towards Erdoğan's attitude and style of governance. Many claim that his understanding of democracy is more like majority rule than a pluralistic rule.<sup>12</sup> As journalist Mine Kırıkkanat writes in the mass daily, staunchly secular *Cumhuriyet*, "Prime Minister Erdoğan did not understand that people in this country... where he rules with such an authoritarian style, were sick of his stubbornness; and that they were saying 'enough' to the increasing way he silenced them and interfered in every aspect of their lives from what they ate and drank, to how many kids they should have, to what they should think."<sup>13</sup>

One example of this can be seen in the government's recent decision to introduce legislation to restrict the sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages, a piece of legislation hurriedly passed in the early hours of 24 May (a week before the protests erupted), without any public debate or consultation.<sup>14</sup> Other issues that he has floated include a ban on abortions and C-sections, while he has reminded women at

## **Continued: Turkey's Protests: Local Perspectives on Their Causes and Implications**

every opportunity that they should have at least three children. Aside from general frustration at his stance on such social issues, there is also concern regarding the absence of any public debate on many massive infrastructure projects planned for Istanbul. These include a new mega-airport and a third bridge across the Bosphorus.

A stark case, which a segment of society interprets as his disregard for them and minority rights, is his insistence on naming the new bridge after an Ottoman sultan, Yavuz Sultan Selim, who ruled the Ottoman Empire from 1470-1520 and who is known to have massacred tens of thousands of Turkey's Alevi minority. Alevis, which make up about 15 percent of the population, are offended by this insistence. Such moves are shown as proof that Erdoğan is not the inclusive, all-embracing leader that he promised to be. Human rights lawyer Orhan Kemal Cengiz writes, "The fact that the government decided to name the bridge after Sultan Selim serves to confirm the fact that they attach no importance whatsoever to the emotions and perceptions of the Alevis. And unfortunately, the sense held by the Alevis that they are becoming more and more distant from the rest of the Turkish population is only deepening."<sup>15</sup>

### **The Excessive Use of Force**

The authoritarian style can also be seen in the excessive use of force that the riot police used. Moreover, Erdoğan supported the police against national and international criticism of their brutality. On 15 June, in a pro-government rally, he said, "Police can use water, pepper spray, it is written in the EU documents, [this is how it is] in the U.S., in Russia and China, and in some countries, they even fire bullets. My police was patient. He was beaten. Over 600 of my police were hurt... This is unacceptable."<sup>16</sup>

Writing for the daily *Cumhuriyet*, Kırıkkanat recounts her first-hand experience from within the crowds:

I've been in the middle of the events since the start. I've seen the police attack people with the violence and vengeance that you might expect from an enemy's army. Those who banned smoking have been making the people inhale pepper spray to the public since Friday morning. This is what the Nazis did to the Jews. We should be glad that the death penalty was abolished before the AKP came to power. Otherwise, this police, who is spraying whatever they can find, would spray sarin gas on the people once they were out of pepper spray.<sup>17</sup>

### **Media Silence**

The media's stance has also vindicated the protesters' concerns regarding the erosion of an independent media, an important pillar of any healthy democracy. The Turkish media did not cover the initial stages of the demonstrations, out of reluctance to act against Erdoğan. While the international media were showing breaking news of the protests, the Turkish channels aired documentaries or cooking shows, leading to huge disappointment for protesters. The demonstrators had to rely on social media to exchange information about what was happening where.

As journalist Yavuz Baydar writes in his column in *Al Monitor*,

While the anger that ignited at Gezi Park was spreading street by street, almost all those channels were airing documentaries or talk shows that had no relevance to the extraordinary story breaking out. Their editorial choice was a necessity. Reporting the developments could have angered the Prime Minister. To practice good reporting would be out of the question for media bosses and managers who fear his anger could affect their business connections and their expectations of economic benefits from the government... On the night of May 31, people saw a media that had hit rock bottom under the ruthless censorship of bosses who have long been the slaves of political-bureaucratic power...<sup>18</sup>

In fact, in their 2013 World Press Freedom Index, Reporters Without Borders notes that Turkey is "the world's biggest prison for journalists," where approximately 70 journalists are in prison. Turkey ranks 154th for open press out of 179 countries - worse than Iraq, Afghanistan and Russia.<sup>19</sup> Amnesty International and the International Federation of Journalists have also pointed out that many renowned journalists have been forced out of their jobs by the personal intervention of the prime minister. Given this background, the media were reluctant to report the breaking story. Bekir Coskun laments this situation in his column in *Cumhuriyet*:

Media: You are just as responsible for what's happened as the government... You closed your ears... You closed your eyes... You were silent... You hid what was happening to Turkey from those who were watching you... Just look at yourself... In the square, on the street, on the roads, all hell is breaking loose... Fire, sirens and smoke have filled up the cities... People have turned on Al Jazeera asking 'What is happening?'... While the entire world was showing what's happening in Turkey as breaking news, you showed cooking shows...<sup>20</sup>

## ***Continued: Turkey's Protests: Local Perspectives on Their Causes and Implications***

### **Not a Turkish Spring**

Despite analogies with the Arab Spring revolutions, the events in Turkey cannot be compared to them. The most important distinction is that Erdoğan came to power in a free election and if another election were to be held tomorrow, he would still get more votes than the other party leaders. This is the dilemma facing Turkey: an authoritarian leader who came to power democratically, and who still has the support of almost half of the nation, disregarding those who did not vote for him. In fact, many have used the term “illiberal democracy” to describe Turkey nowadays, due to the fact that Erdoğan has become more authoritarian through the ballot box.<sup>21</sup> Another important distinction is that, in contrast to the Arab Spring protests, where people were calling for rights they did not have, the Turkish protestors are demonstrating against an encroachment on rights that they already do have.

One question that is asked about the protests in Turkey is whether the Army has a role to play or whether a military coup is possible. It should be noted that with all the changes that the government has made in scrapping the military's role in politics, and with the current reality that some 450 active and retired officers (including three former army commanders, as well as senior generals and admirals) are either in jail or being tried for staging coups and toppling or attempting to topple governments, it is highly unlikely that the military will play any role in this movement.<sup>22</sup> (See Special Essay, “Understanding Turkey's Historic Coup Trial” in the October 2012 issue of OE Watch.)

### **Implications for Turkey's Political Future**

Analysts have pondered whether the movement on the streets can turn into a viable opposition that can challenge the government, but many are skeptical. Dani Rodrik, a Turkish professor at Harvard, expresses pessimism, claiming, “Mere opposition to Erdoğan does not make for a lasting political organization. And no natural leaders have emerged so far from the protests. So I am sort of pessimistic that the protest will lead to a new kind of politics or greater democracy in Turkey.”<sup>23</sup>

Professor Kemal Kirişçi, director of the Center on the United States and Europe's Turkey Project at the Brookings Institute writes, “It is difficult to see how, under these circumstances, Turkey would be able to finally resolve the thorny Kurdish issue, continue to keep the economy growing, maintain Turkey as a major attraction for tourism, raise new generations of youth capable of keeping up with the challenges of globalization and manage the Syrian crisis in a manner that does not engulf Turkey.”<sup>24</sup> Lehigh University Professor of International Relations and Turkey expert Henri Barkey warns, “If managed poorly, the ripple effects of the crisis could have disastrous effects for both the economic stability of the country and the peace initiative designed to bring an end to the decades-long Kurdish insurgency.”<sup>25</sup>

### **Implications for Turkey's Foreign Policy**

According to Turkish analysts, the demonstrations will make Erdoğan adopt a more nationalist approach. There are already signs of this, in how he has pointed to Western and Jewish forces as being behind them. Analysts estimate that this would translate into a slowdown in newly re-established relations with Israel, a more tempered Syria policy, and possibly increased anti-American rhetoric. Given that the EU has postponed the opening of any new chapters for Turkish membership until October, they claim that the EU might cease to be an effective force and Turkish ambitions to join it might fizzle out.

According to many experts, hype about Turkey as a moderate Islamic democratic country will likely subside. They argue that the protests have revealed the declining state of democracy in Turkey. The Arab world is no longer likely to look to Turkey as a model, if they ever did. As Turkish journalist Kadri Gürsel testified to the United States House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia and Emerging Threats on 26 June 2013, “The social explosion in Turkey and government pressures that followed simply washed out the paradigm of the ‘Turkey model’ based on the rule of the Justice and Development Party, also known as the AKP. This was advocated as a model for the Middle East and was accompanied by the term ‘Muslim democracy,’ even though it was not applicable.”<sup>26</sup>

### **Conclusion**

The 2013 protests in Turkey have exposed the declining status of its democracy. They will have important implications for Turkey's political future, its foreign policy, and, consequently, the entire region. Currently, Turkey is scheduled to have general elections in 2015, and presidential elections in 2014. Erdoğan has expressed his wish to become the next president of Turkey in 2014, and continue ruling the country as president. He also wants to transform Turkey's parliamentary system into a presidential one, and in the process modify many of the checks and balances that are essential in a democracy. This is seen as further proof of his authoritarian ambitions. The outcome of these elections will define the fate of Turkey's illiberal democracy for decades to come.

## ***Continued: Turkey's Protests: Local Perspectives on Their Causes and Implications***

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