

OE WATCH

FOREIGN NEWS & PERSPECTIVES OF THE OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Special Essay: The Promise of a Professional Army in Ukraine: a Myth or Reality?



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The Turkish Navy's Troubles

4 February 2013

*“The Naval Forces Commander has nobody below him
...When he retires in August, there is nobody with the rank of Admiral to take his post
...If you ask where the others are, they are in prison.”*

OE Watch Commentary: In September 2012, 326 retired and active duty officers were sentenced to heavy prison terms in the case known as Sledgehammer (“Balyoz” in Turkish) for allegedly conspiring to overthrow the mildly Islamist Justice and Development Party (AKP) government. One of the outcomes of this case has been the difficulty of filling cadres in the military. The situation is compounded by the fact that many other officers are facing extended detention periods in a series of other similar cases (known as “Ergenekon”).

As the accompanying passages from the Turkish press point out, the problem is currently most acute in the Navy. Due to the admirals and captains currently in prison, and some who are under arrest as part of another case (in which 33 navy and army personnel are accused of being part of an espionage network), the Turkish Navy is struggling to fill its cadres with officers with the required ranks.

Admiral Murat Bilgel, the current Commander of the Turkish Naval Forces, is set to retire in August. He was to be replaced by the Fleet Commander, Admiral Nusret Güner. However, Güner resigned in December 2012, in protest of the extended arrests of officers under his command, and there are no other qualified candidates. Thus, his resignation creates a void not only for the post of Fleet Commander; but also, as of August 2013, for the post of Navy Commander. (For the post of Fleet Commander, it is expected that Vice Admiral Bülent Bostanoğlu will be assigned as acting Fleet Commander and then be promoted to Admiral in August.)

Chief of the General Staff General Necdet



Admiral Nusret Güner resigned as the Fleet Commander. He was set to become Commander of the Navy in August 2013. via Bugun.com.tr



Admiral Murat Bilgel, Commander of the Turkish Naval Forces will retire in August 2013. via The Turkish Navy

Source: Mehmet Tezkan, “Ordu ‘Çökmüş’ Muhabbeti (The Army ‘Collapsed’ Chatter),” Milliyet.com.tr, 4 February 2013, <http://gundem.milliyet.com.tr/ordu-cokmus-muhabbeti/gundem/gundemyazardetay/04.02.2013/1664157/default.htm>

“...the navy is in the worst shape!...The Naval Forces Commander has nobody below him...When he retires in August, there is nobody with the rank of Admiral to take his post...If you ask where the others are, they are in prison..

The War Fleet commander is in the funniest situation... He is at his post but the court has forbidden him from going overseas... So if there is a war, he will not be able to take part. Or he can take part in it like this... He would have to wait for the enemy ships to enter our waters and then attack... If he beats them within our waters, he beats them! He is in trouble not because of Sledgehammer, but because of a gang... The Sledgehammer case has exploded... It will go down in history as a symbol of lawlessness...”

(continued)

Continued: The Turkish Navy's Troubles

*Özel brought the situation to the attention of President Gül and Prime Minister Erdoğan on 24 January during a meeting at the Presidential Palace. Following the meeting, Prime Minister Erdoğan made public statements about the issue and expressed concern over the morale of the armed forces. As the accompanying passages point out, this is considered a turning point, as it is the first time the Prime Minister has criticized the court cases. His statements raised hope that he will take steps to alleviate the situation in the form of a new reform package, which would ease these long detention periods. His comments have invigorated the public debate on the unjust treatment of those sent to prison without sufficient evidence. If the new reform package contains laws to address this problem, this would be a welcome development for the Army, which is also dealing with clashes with the Kurdish terrorist group PKK and with the spillover effects of the Syrian conflict. **End OE Watch Commentary (Kaya)***

***Note:** For further reading, please refer to Special Essay "Understanding Turkey's Coup Trial" by Karen Kaya in the October 2012 OE Watch.*

Source: <http://fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/Archives/GSW/201210/201210.pdf>

Source: Murat Yetkin, "Donanmadaki rahatsızlık Erdoğan'ı harekete geçirdi (Discomfort in the Navy caused Endogen to act)," Radikal.com.tr, 28 January 2013, <http://www.radikal.com.tr/Radikal.aspx?aType=RadikalYazar&ArticleID=1118784&Yazar=MURAT-YETKIN&CategoryID=98>

"Following these meetings, we get the surprising 'We can't find Commanders' statement [from the Prime Minister] on 25 January on Channel 24. So it has now been declared to our friends and enemies that the Prime Minister is experiencing problems with finding officers to commander posts, new ships, and even existing ships due to extended detention periods. And the problem is not just limited to the Navy. The Prime Minister was also lamenting-- like an opposition leader-- the fact that Ilker Başbuğ [a former Chief of the General Staff] was being tried under arrest. If these people were being accused of being terrorists while they are fighting terrorism, there had to be proof. If there was proof, the verdict would be given quickly; if not, this was hurting not just the military's reputation and morale, but itself as well. This can be considered a turning point."

Source: Fikret Bila, "Özel Paşa da ikna edemedi (Even General Özel couldn't convince him)," Milliyet.com.tr, 27 January 2013, <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/ozel-pasa-da-ikna-edemedi/siyaset/siyasyazardetay/27.01.2013/1660792/default.htm>

"Following the meeting, the following statements by Prime Minister Erdoğan on live TV, attracted attention:

"There are navy officers, and army officers among them. We have all these frigates, ships, etc... We almost have no officers left to send to command them, this is unthinkable. We currently have almost 400 retired or active duty officers and non-commissioned officers... Worse, [some are accused of] establishing, or being part of, a [terror] organization. If there is proof of such a thing, then issue the verdict and get it done. But if not, if you go and accuse hundreds of officers, most importantly a former Chief of the General Staff (Ilker Başbuğ) in this way, this would devastate morale. Then how are these people supposed to fight against terror?"

The Prime Minister also said that some media outlets had unfairly accused the Turkish Armed Forces. He also talked about work on a new law.

High-ranking personnel

Due to the admirals and captains under arrest, the Navy is having problems filling its cadres with the necessary ranking officers. For example, the cadre rank for the Fleet Commander, which will become open with the resignation of Güner, is Admiral. There are two of these cadres within the Navy. One is the Naval Forces Commander, the other is Fleet Commander. Due to the resignation, there is currently nobody with this rank to be assigned to the post of Fleet Commander. It is expected that Vice Admiral Bülent Bostanoğlu will be assigned as acting Fleet Commander and then be promoted to Admiral in August.

The same problem exists within the directorates of the Naval Forces Command. Normally these posts are filled with Rear Admirals (upper half), but due to the arrests, they are currently filled by Rear Admirals (lower half) in an acting capacity."

Terrorist Attack on the U.S. Embassy in Turkey

2 February 2013

“The historical background, sectarian character and ideological motivation of [the DHKP-C] points to a strong connection to Syrian Intelligence.”

OE Watch Commentary: On 1 February 2013 a suicide bomber named Ecevit Şanlı attacked the U.S. Embassy in Ankara. The attack killed a Turkish security guard and left a well known Turkish journalist blind in one eye. An ultra left-wing group called the Revolutionary People's Liberation Army (DHKP-C), designated as a terrorist group by the U.S., the European Union and Turkey, claimed responsibility for the attack.

Driven by a Marxist-Leninist ideology, the group is opposed to the U.S. and NATO and accuses the Turkish government of being a pawn of the United States. The written statement said, “Murderer America! You will not run away from people's rage,” and accused the United States of using Turkey as its “slave.” It said that the target was “America and the collaborationist Turkish government which has turned the country into an American and NATO base.” The statement claimed that the attack was done “for the independence of our homeland, which has become America's new colony.” The statement also called on Washington to remove the Patriot missiles deployed to Turkey, due to go operational three days later.

There is an on-going debate in the Turkish press about the motivations for the attack, as well as other possible actors who might be behind the attack. As the first accompanying passage points out, one theory is that the attack was carried out to protest the deployment of Patriot missiles in



The U.S. Embassy compound in Ankara, after the explosion at its entrance., via Al-monitor.com

Source: Mustafa Akyol, “The Ankara Bomber: A Pro-Assad Communist,” Al-monitor.com, 2 February 2013, <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2013/02/turkeyusembassybomb.html>

“First, while the DHKP-C has always been militantly anti-American, due to the war in Syria this has recently become a more prominent theme for the organization, as was also evident in the Internet message it released after Friday's bombing. Like much of the Turkish left, the DHKP-C sees the Syrian opposition as a pawn of the United States and its “comprador” Arab allies against the left wing and patriotic regime of Bashar al-Assad. The same political line also condemns the Turkish government for joining this “Islamist/capitalist” conspiracy against Syria. The recent installment of patriot missiles near Turkey's Syrian border by the NATO only further enraged Turkey's leftists, which certainly include the DHKP-C.

Turkish terrorism expert, Ali Nihat Özcan, points out that ‘The historical background, sectarian character and ideological motivation of [the DHKP-C] points to a strong connection to Syrian Intelligence.’ ”

(continued)

Continued: Terrorist Attack on the U.S. Embassy in Turkey

Turkey (even though Turkey asked for the missiles to protect the country in case the Assad regime targets it).

Some also believe that Syria or specifically Syrian intelligence is behind the plot, and that the attack is meant to protest Turkey's support for the insurgency in Syria. In fact, the group has a history of cooperation with the Syrian intelligence, as some captured members have confessed that they were trained by Syria during the 90s. Others, as demonstrated by the second passage, claim that it was meant to cancel the Turkish Prime Minister's upcoming trip to Washington.

Yet another aspect of the attack that some are focusing on, as explained by the third passage, is the issue of a security lapse on the part of European countries, particularly Germany, given that the attacker had been living in Germany despite having a long criminal record. He travelled from Germany and entered Turkey via Greece in order to carry out this attack. It is hoped that new information will shed more light on the event and the attacker's accomplices in the near future.

The DHKP-C is known for having killed a prominent Turkish businessman in Istanbul in 1996 and for having carried out attacks against American soldiers in Turkey during and after the First Gulf War. This particular attacker's criminal record goes back 20 years and includes rocket-propelled grenade attacks on a military facility and police headquarters in Istanbul in 1997.

End OE Watch Commentary (Kaya)



Deputy Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter with troops at a Turkish Army base, overseeing the Patriot missile batteries being installed, on 4 February 2013., via <http://www.stripes.com>

Source: "ABD Büyükelçiliği'ne saldırı: Neden? Niçin? Kim? (Attack on the U.S. Embassy: Why? What for? Who?)," Radikal.com.tr, 1 February 2013, <http://www.radikal.com.tr/Radikal.aspx?aType=RadikalDetayV3&ArticleID=1119552&CategoryID=78>

"The target is the U.S. Secondly, the target is President Barack Obama and the new Secretary of State John Kerry... The fact that the attack took place shortly before the Prime Minister is scheduled to travel to the U.S., shows that Turkey-U.S. relations in the Middle East are also being targeted. And the attack was meant to cancel the trip."

Source: Nihal Bengisu Karaca, "Yine Almanya (Germany Again)," Haberturk.com.tr, 6 February 2013, <http://www.haberturk.com/yazarlar/nihal-bengisu-karaca/817649-yine-almanya>

"...Ecevit Şanlı has managed to stay in Germany since 2001 illegally. According to Süddeutsche Zeitung newspaper, German authorities knew of Şanlı's connection to the DHKP-C. Despite all these, he was not followed or captured because the German security units did not consider him 'dangerous'... Ever since the DHKP-C claimed responsibility for the attack, the probability that the attack was planned in Germany is being seriously debated."

Turkey and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization

1 February 2013

“How, and around what ‘common values’ can an alliance take place with China and Russia, the main actors responsible for the catastrophe in Syria? This is a proposition that does not even make sense... Particularly at a time when Turkey’s need for NATO has reached an all-time high...”

OE Watch Commentary: On 25 January, during a TV interview, Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan dropped what has been called a “geostrategic bomb” and implied that Turkey wanted to join the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and abandon its decades-long European Union (EU) accession process. He also added that the SCO was “better and much stronger” than the EU.

His statements caused a huge stir in the media, where foreign policy analysts, journalists and commentators have been criticizing them. Many have debated the logic and the feasibility of such a move and concluded that Turkey cannot become part of the SCO, due to its being anchored in Western institutions - most importantly NATO, particularly at a time when its need for NATO has been highlighted with the arrival of the Patriot missiles meant to protect Turkish territory from a possible attack from Syria.

Many also touched on the issue of human rights and democratization, pointing out that the EU accession process has forced Turkey to improve in these areas, whereas the SCO does not have any such “common values” with Turkey. The accompanying passages from the Turkish press demonstrate these perspectives. It is important to note that these criticisms of Erdoğan’s comments come despite the prevalent widespread frustration



Leaders of the six members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization: Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, China, Kazakhstan, and Tajikistan., via Radikal.com.tr

Source: Sami Kohen, “ŞiÖ şart mı? (Is the SCO a must?)” Milliyet.com.tr, 1 February 2013, <http://dunya.milliyet.com.tr/sio-sart-mi-/dunya/dunyayazardetay/01.02.2013/1663085/default.htm>

“The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is not an organization that is based on our values. The Central Asian countries and Russia and China are countries that prefer authoritarianism and do not highlight values such as democracy, human rights, and the freedom of expression. Are these the “common values” that Turkey wants to share? The SCO is also far from being a venue where Turkey can be comfortable with its foreign policy. Take the latest example, the Syrian problem. Turkey’s stance on this issue is the exact opposite of that of China and Russia. From a security perspective, while Turkey is bringing in Patriots from NATO, Russia is perceiving this as a threat.”

(continued)

Continued: Turkey and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization

with the EU. A recent survey by a think tank called the Center of Economics and Foreign Policy Studies (EDAM) has found that only one-third of the Turkish public thinks that Turkey should persist with its aim of full membership, while the remaining two-thirds believe that it should abandon its pursuit of full membership.

The SCO was initially established as the 'Shanghai Five' in 1996, and consisted of China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan as a security agreement meant to provide military security measures at their borders. In 2001 Uzbekistan joined and the group became the SCO. Currently, the organization has five observing members (Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Iran and Mongolia); and three dialogue partners (Turkey, Belarus and Sri Lanka). **End OE Watch Commentary (Kaya)**

Source: "AB'den öteye yol mu var? (Is there a path beyond the EU?)," Zaman.com.tr, 3 February 2013, http://www.zaman.com.tr/pazar_abden-oteye-yol-mu-var_2048760.html

"It's not so easy to find an alternative; and even if you found one, to integrate with them. First and foremost, Turkey's umbilical chord with the West is not the European Union (EU), but NATO. We are western because of NATO, before the EU. Our military exercises, defense concepts are all based on NATO.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) has no goals regarding democracy, human rights or freedom... These are authoritarian structures. More critically, the Western block doesn't just provide us with democratization; it also provides security. Shanghai will not provide us security. Are we now going to leave NATO, get rid of all of our defense concepts and take on a new Russia-China indexed system? We can't participate in SCO and take our defense concepts from the West. Then the West would view us as a security threat. There is a limit to how much you can become close to authoritarian regimes..."

"Turkey cannot join Shanghai. Because it would have to sever its ties with NATO and the EU. This would be a dramatic shift. Above all, we are a NATO member. The Patriots just arrived, and continue to arrive. Are we going to reject all this?"

Source: Soli Özel, "Brüksel'den Şanghay'a (From Brussels to Shanghai)," Haberturk.com.tr, 3 February 2013, <http://www.haberturk.com/yazarlar/soli-ozel/816918-brukselden-sanghaya-3>

"How, and around what 'common values' can an alliance take place with China and Russia, the main actors responsible for the catastrophe in Syria? This is a proposition that does not even make sense... Particularly at a time when Turkey's need for NATO has reached an all-time high, and at a time when the government has intimate relations with the U.S. despite many problems."



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

By Karen Kaya

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

<http://fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/universities.html>

Clerics Should Prepare Public for Tough Times Ahead 27 January 2013

“Ordinary Iranians...still may depend on the mosque rather than the state media for their information..”

OE Watch Commentary: The 1979 Islamic Revolution, followed in short order by the Iran-Iraq War, devastated the Iranian economy. When faced with both popular complaints about the dire economic situation and the warnings of his aides, revolutionary leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini would often wave them off with the quip that “We didn’t have a revolution over the price of a watermelon.” As the revolution has aged, however, Iranian officials have grown increasingly wary of economic hardship. After all, many Iranians have grown cynical about the economic fortunes of those with political connections, which ordinary Iranians juxtapose with their own deprivation.

Nowhere might these tensions be more acute than in Khuzistan, the oil-rich province bordering Iraq at the tip of the Persian Gulf. While Khuzistan should be Iran’s richest province, it remains devastated a quarter century after the end of the Iran-Iraq War, a conflict which saw the destruction of its major cities and towns. Residents of Ahvaz, Khorramshahr, Abadan, and Dizful must regularly travel to Tehran, several hundred miles away, for medical care because the government has rebuilt mosques destroyed by the war, but has yet to invest in enough hospitals and medical clinics.

Seyyed Ja’far Hejazi’s warning to clergy, as reflected in the selected excerpt, may interest analysts for several reasons. First and foremost, it provides an illustration of the manner in which the Iranian government uses mosques and Friday prayer leaders in order to transmit messages to the public. While some reporters amplify their interactions



Iran's Khuzistan Province, via <http://www.wikipedia.org>

Source: “Rohaniyan Mardom ra baraye Shariyat-e Sakht Tahrim Amadeh Konad” (“Clergymen should prepare people for difficult conditions from sanctions”), Mehr News Agency, 27 January 2013. <http://www.mehrnews.com/Fa/NewsDetail.aspx?NewsID=1801160>

Clergymen should Prepare People for Difficult Conditions from Sanctions

Ahvaz—The Governor-General of Khuzistan said, “Clerics and imams should prepare people for the tough sanctions imposed by the Arrogance toward the nation and government of Iran.” According to a report from the Mehr News Agency, Seyyed Ja’far Hejazi on Saturday evening [January 26] told a conference of clergy and mosque imams in the city of Ahvaz sponsored by the Islamic Propagation Organization that... the reception of the people of Khuzistan has been unparalleled, and that some of them had walked dozens of kilometers to attend... And the Governor-General of Khuzistan said that, in reference to the sanctions that the enemies of the Islamic Republic and Iranian nation have inflicted, that the severity of the sanctions will be most high. The aim of our enemies in the coming weeks will be to cut completely import and export of basic goods for our country. However, without any doubt, that having endured eight years of the unjust [Iran-Iraq] war, our nation cannot be defeated by such adventures...

Continued: Clerics Should Prepare Public for Tough Times Ahead

with more cosmopolitan and educated Iranians in Tehran into broad assumptions about decreasing religiosity within Iran, and while participants in people-to-people dialogue—often called Track II—likewise interact with an elite but narrow segment of Iranian society, ordinary Iranians in their country's periphery and in more rural areas still may depend on the mosque rather than the state media for their information.

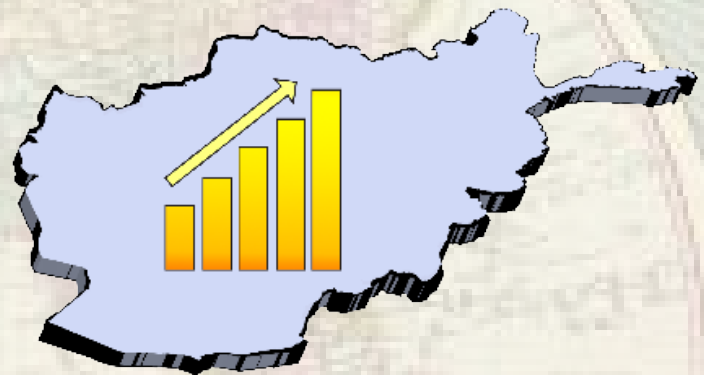
At the same time, Hejazi's speech suggests that sanctions are beginning to bite. The decline in value of the rial to record lows relative to the dollar—and to the currencies of Iraq and Gulf Cooperation Council states, which are effectively pegged to the dollar—might have the greatest impact on border provinces, in which residents are more likely to engage in casual cross-border trade.

*Disenchantment with Iran's economic situation might further be compounded by juxtaposition with events across the border. While Iraqi statistics, as with their Iranian equivalents, must be taken with a grain of salt, anecdotal evidence suggests that southern Iraq is booming as Persian Gulf investment transforms Basra, Najaf, and other southern Iraqi cities. If sanctions force a further diminishing of living standards in Iran while southern Iraq rebounds, many Iranians might start blaming their own government, questioning why southern Iraq can recover from a devastating war in a matter of years, while Khuzistan remains stagnant 25 years after the end of Iran's last war. **End OE Watch Commentary (Rubin)***

Measuring Progress in Reconstructing Afghanistan

By Christiaan Davids, Sebastiaan Rietjens & Joseph Soeters

Netherlands National Defence Academy



«Nation building and its supporting policy development should no longer occur without a careful cost-benefit analysis.»

<http://fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/International.html>

Is Iran's Automobile Industry Collapsing?

26 January 2013

“Production has fallen from 1.2 million vehicles to less than 700,000, a level akin to that of a decade ago.”

OE Watch Commentary: The Islamic Republic has long considered its domestic automobile industry to be a symbol of Iran's industrial might and world standing. “A country's car companies can define its industrial might, and put it on the map,” Iran's English-language television station Press TV explained.¹

While bragging about being 13th ranked in the world may, at first glance, seem akin to bragging about being valedictorian of a summer school class, Iran's success in the automotive sector has been formidable. Its ranking places its automobile sector above that of the United Kingdom (14), Turkey (17), and Italy (21).² Not only Iranian streets, but also those of Baghdad and Beirut are clogged with Khodros, Paykans, Saipas, and other Iranian vehicles.

Atieh Bahar, a consulting firm close to billionaire cleric and former president Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, charted the growth of the Iranian automobile industry in a 2008 report, tracing the quadrupling of passenger car production from a quarter million in 2000 to nearly a million by 2008.³

The financial crisis hit the Iranian car industry hard, however. A liquidity crisis forced the government to bail out Iran's largest vehicle manufacturer, Iran Khodro (sometimes referred to as Pars Khodro), to the tune of \$1 billion.⁴ While the Iranian government subsequently announced the privatization of Iran Khodro and its second largest automotive company Saipa, an Iranian parliamentarian exposed their privatization as a fraud.⁵ Indeed, the sale of shares to other government entities under the guise of privatization is usually a sign of transfer of ownership to the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps' economic wing.

Automobile plants not only are a lucrative business for the Revolutionary Guards, but also have additional strategic benefits. In recent years Iranian automobile manufacturers have announced the establishment of automotive plants in Iraq, Syria, and Venezuela.⁶ In theory, this might enable penetration of these countries by Guardsmen serving under the cover of assembly line workers and supervisors. Iran Khodro web servers have been used to attack Green Movement websites in Iran.⁷ Moreover, a Revolutionary Guard newspaper has raised questions about the political loyalty of some Iran Khodro employees,⁸ perhaps setting the stage for laying off those without political connections in order to provide patronage to retired Guardsmen and their families.

The Iranian government and, especially, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps have been largely defiant in the face of sanctions, even if they increasingly acknowledge the pain which some Iranians may feel. While executives at Iran Khodro have claimed that their ability to produce parts domestically has immunized the industry from international sanctions, reality may increasingly bite.⁹ In March 2012 Iran Khodro announced plans for a 13-percent production increase,¹⁰ but, as the excerpted article suggests, Iranian officials

Source: “Rotbeh-e Khodrosazi Iran dar Jahan” (“The World Ranking of Iran's Automobile Industry”), Jahan News, 26 January 2013. <http://www.jahannews.com/vdcgn79xtak93t4.rpra.html>

The World Ranking of Iran's Automobile Industry

According to the Iranian Students' News Agency, our country leaped dramatically in 2011, with the production of 1,648,505 units and growth of 3.1 percent over 2010, making Iran the 13th largest automaker in the world. However, vehicle production has declined in 2012 after its dramatic rise in 2011.... In the worst case, there could be a 50 percent drop in January 2013 compared to the same period in the previous year....



Iran's Khodro, Paykan, Saipa company logos.

Continued: Is Iran's Automobile Industry Collapsing?

*are now facing the possibility that production will decline by half. Indeed, over the last nine months, production has fallen from 1.2 million vehicles to fewer than 700,000, a level akin to that of a decade ago. The domestic Iranian press also suggests that the Iranian government may have manipulated production figures to suggest the decline was less severe than in reality. Compounding the difficulty has been the decision by the French company Peugeot to suspend the shipment of parts to Iran in order to comply with international and European Union sanctions.¹¹ Plans to export a million cars by 2025 now appear fanciful.¹² **End OE Watch Commentary (Rubin)***

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Iran-Turkey Trade Jumps Again

31 January 2013

“Iran increasingly depends upon the Turkey to alleviate pressure from sanctions. In the first nine months of 2012, Turkey swapped approximately \$7 billion in gold to Iran in exchange for oil and gas.”

OE Watch Commentary: Sanctions have become a central component of U.S. efforts to coerce the Islamic Republic into conformity with United Nations Security Council resolutions and its Safeguards Agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency. While Turkey is a NATO member, a European Union aspirant, and an ally of the United States, it has also sought to bolster its trade relationship with Iran.

Turkey's trade with Iran has increased from \$1.25 billion in 2002, the year Turkey's Justice and Development Party (AKP) came to power, to over \$20 billion a decade later, according to statistics included in the excerpted article. According to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Turkish exports to Iran focus on machinery, iron and steel, and tobacco. Ninety percent of Turkish imports from Iran are crude oil and natural gas.¹ This places Turkey as Iran's fifth largest customer of its gas and oil.² The increased Turkish imports of Iranian gas and oil come despite an October 2012 explosion in the pipeline, which disrupted the trade;³ thus, bilateral trade could theoretically have been even higher.

While there has been sectarian tension between Turkey and Iran, especially with the two countries being on opposite sides of the Syrian conflict and holding opposing assessments of Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki's government in Iraq, the booming trade suggests that both Ankara and Tehran seek to compartmentalize their difficulties while they advance their relationship in other spheres.

Iran increasingly depends upon Turkey to alleviate pressure from sanctions. In the first nine months of 2012 Turkey swapped approximately \$7 billion in gold with Iran in exchange for oil and gas.⁴ The gold trade allows Iran to avoid sanctions on dollar transactions.

At a 30 January 2013 audience with outgoing Iranian ambassador Bahman Hosseinpour, Turkish President Abdullah Gül called for further strengthening of the two neighbors' bilateral relationship and cited Turkey's efforts to resolve disputes regarding Iran's uranium enrichment.⁵ Indeed, at the time when the United States and European Union was trying to amplify pressure on Iran, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan argued that concern regarding Iran's intentions were misguided.⁶



Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan and Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, via <http://undhimmi.com>

Source: “Tehran va Ankara ba Zarfiyatha-ye Gostar-deh Mitavanand dar Hal Meshkalat-e Montaqeh Tasir Gozar Bashand” (“The Extensive Capabilities of Tehran and Ankara Can be Effective in Solving Regional Problems”), Fars News Agency, 31 January 2013. <http://www.farsnews.com/newstext.php?nn=13911112000528>

The Extensive Capabilities of Tehran and Ankara Can be Effective in Solving Regional Problems

...The Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran [to Turkey, Bahman Hosseinpour], referring to the extensive exchange of official delegations and to the significant increase in trade relations between Tehran and Ankara to upwards of \$20 billion in 2012, said, “Iran and Turkey are friends and brothers, and enjoy good neighborliness, friendship, and understanding...”

Continued: Iran-Turkey Trade Jumps Again

Shortly after Hosseinpour's audience and remarks, Tabriz University Chancellor Parviz Ajideh announced that Iran and Turkey would open a joint university in the Eastern Turkish city of Van.⁷ Because the new university will emphasize engineering and the sciences, it may provide a venue for Iranian students to study fields relevant to Iran's missile and nuclear programs in laboratories not limited by sanctions prohibitions.

While hardline Iranian officials harshly criticize Turkey for allowing NATO to base an anti-ballistic missile radar system on Turkish territory, the sum of relations between the two countries remains on the upswing. With trade increasing by more than an order of magnitude over the past decade, and Iranian authorities seeking to increase it by another \$10 billion, the growing partnership between Tehran and Ankara may soon have an immediate impact on U.S. policy. After all, until Erdoğan's rise to power, American policymakers could take Turkish support for granted. Turkey was one of only two NATO countries to border the Soviet Union, and Turks fought alongside Americans in the Korean War, suffering the third greatest number of casualties among allied forces after the South Koreans and Americans. While Turks and Americans did not always agree, the two countries stood united against terrorism and together in pursuit of Middle East peace.

Disputes over Operation Iraqi Freedom might have been only a hiccup, but the surprise Turkish decision not to support the transit of U.S. troops or participate in a broader coalition marked only the beginning of a series of disputes which undercut U.S.-Turkish relations. In recent years, Turkey has both broken with the United States and other Quartet Partners by embracing Hamas and moved to undercut Western efforts to coerce Iran into abandoning its nuclear program. While Turkey agreed to host a NATO anti-missile radar system, its cooperation is less than absolute. Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu has said Turkey's agreement to host the radar would expire after two years, and that Turkey reserved the right to annul the agreement at any time.⁸

*Turkey may be a NATO member, but if its leadership decides to balance relations between Tehran and Washington much as do other states in the region, then the Islamic Republic might consider its outreach to Turkey successful. **End OE Watch Commentary (Rubin)***

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Sahelizing Libya

13 February 2013

“While Libyan disarray can obviously have regional repercussions, the opposite dynamic appears to now be at work. That is to say, international interest in the Sahel, illustrated by responses to recent events in Northern Mali and In Amenas in Algeria, is feeding back into Libyan politics.”

OE Watch Commentary: On 19 January the convoy of Libya's Defense Minister Mohammed al-Barghati was attacked by gunmen in the eastern city of Tobruk. Amid conflicting reports of what lay behind the violence, the minister issued a statement laying blame on a man named al-Sadiq al-Ghaithi al-Obeidi, an alleged former member of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group-LIFG from the powerful Obeidat tribe (Article #1). Al-Ghaithi had also recently been dismissed from his post as deputy defense minister in charge of border and vital installations security. It was alleged that he had refused to put himself under the command of the chiefs of staff.

This attack and the murky politics behind it underscore a key difficulty in Libya's post-Qaddafi state-formation venture, namely, creating an effective, unified and professional national security force. One need not scratch much below the surface (where local militias from Zintan, Misratah and beyond further complicate analysis) to see broad fault lines. A recent article on al-Jazeera's website (Article #2), for instance, makes a case for distinguishing among four separate and often competing poles of military power in Libya: one located in the defense ministry, another with the chiefs of staff, a third represented by Libya's eastern Cyrenaica region, and a fourth consisting of border patrol forces, which, according to the article's estimates, has 18,000 disparate fighters with competing personal agendas.

While Libyan disarray can obviously have regional repercussions, the opposite dynamic appears to now be at work. That is to say, international interest in the Sahel, illustrated by responses to recent events in Northern Mali and In Amenas in Algeria, is feeding back into Libyan politics. Border security and the protection of strategic installations have shot to the top of the regional agenda, with eyes focused



Libya's Defence Minister Mohammed al-Barghati , via <http://dunyanews.tv>

Source:

بيان عن وزير الدفاع

“Statement from the Minister of Defense” (Libyan Interim Government – Prime Minister's Office), 20 January 2013, <http://www.pm.gov.ly/ministries-news/>

Former deputy minister al-Sadiq al-Ghaithi is considered dismissed from his position and has no official position as head of security for borders, oil installations and strategic facilities, in accordance with the statement by the prime minister of the interim government in front of the national council...

The declarations made by al-Sadiq al-Ghaithi on the al-Jazeera Satellite Channel stating that what happened in the Tobruk Airbase was a tribal affair is untrue. He is charged with inciting to kill, as gunmen accompanying him fired on the car that was transporting the defense minister and he is also responsible for the attack on the head of the border security in the incident which took place in the Tobruk Airbase on Saturday, January 19 at nine thirty in the morning...

Continued: Sahelizing Libya

squarely on Libya. Al-Ghaithi's replacement (also a member of the Obeidat tribe) will have more limited authority, as border and strategic facilities protection is to be folded into the Libyan general military command. Centralizing power has never been easy in Libya, and it should be done with care. This is especially true if centralization policies are responding to broader regional changes, such as the fledgling regional security regime focused on the Sahel and backed by Europe, rather than local dynamics.

*The key player in the new Sahel security regime is likely to be Algeria. An editorial in Algeria's largest French-language daily newspaper (Article #3) wonders whether we are witnessing the "Pakistanization" of Algeria (with the Sahel region standing in for Afghanistan). As for Libya, barring bad policy it is likely to remain in flux as the contours of power along the Sahel are reconfigured. Throughout much of the 20th century, Libya's domestic policies have been intertwined with the international community in complex and unique ways that were for some period overshadowed by Qaddafi's idiosyncrasies. That period is over. **End OE Watch Commentary (Winter)***

Source:

أربعة جيوش في ليبيا

"Four Armies in Libya" (aljazeera.net), 8 February 2013, <http://aljazeera.net/news/pages/f2c76921-e2a1-470e-ab01-ffd795b7d535>

Al-Sadiq al-Ghaithi... told aljazeera.net that minister al-Juwaili did not adopt the proposals for restructuring the defense ministry and the general staff and that the Chief of Staff had "swallowed up" the powers and functions of the ministry... He accused the Chief of Staff of preventing a national army from being established while allowing the formation of partisan and regional armed militias, while denying having any forces operating in his name as has been alleged.

Saleh al-Obeidi, the head of the Cyrenaica Military Council, denies the existence of four separate Libyan armies, while acknowledging disagreements during the era of prime minister al-Juwaili. He said that the Cyrenaica army was neither secessionist nor demanding federalism and confirmed that it is under the umbrella of the chiefs of staff and the national army.

Hussein al-Fitouri, a member of the Gathering of Revolutionary Brigades and a leader of the Libyan Shield Forces, accused some of the new armies of fighting alongside Colonel Qaddafi and against the people during the recent war of liberation. He said some of these forces are now under the command of the chiefs of staff, while other "spineless" ones such as the Cyrenaica Army stayed at home, noting that there was "no disagreement regarding the dangers of the multiplicity of military doctrines."

Source:

Ballet Diplomatique, "Shuttle Diplomacy" (El Watan), 13 February 2013, http://www.elwatan.com/edito/ballet-diplomatique-13-02-2013-203154_171.php

Algeria has become a preferred destination in the region for foreign powers. Just this week, a kind of shuttle diplomacy with multiple delegations from several countries have come to advocate for strengthening bilateral cooperation for both economic and security reasons...

The situation in the Sahel, which required French military intervention in Mali, is such that Algiers has quickly become a necessary capital for the needs of the global fight against terrorism. The strong response by Algerian forces to the terrorist attack on the gas plant of Tiguentourin, at In Amenas, did the rest. Consequence: Algiers is increasingly sought after...

Does Algeria run the risk of becoming for the Sahel what Pakistan is for Afghanistan? In short, is the "Pakistanization" of Algeria likely for this reason? There is every reason to carefully consider the praise distributed by foreign countries for Algeria when talking about its experience in the fight against terror and its enviable financial health.

The recent Arab uprisings, which some have called the "Arab Spring," have shaken several countries though not Algeria. Ultimately, is Algerian exceptionalism best understood in terms of causes or of effects? If the first, it is certainly worth noting the absence of major revolts. If in the second, one must note that the government has avoided any serious political reform. The paradox of a country increasingly ready to take part in games of international politics and less and less willing to tolerate democratic internal political life.

The Quiet Cacophony of Saudi Arabia's Succession

12 January 2013

“Inevitably, a decision on the transfer of custodianship to a new generation of princes – numbering in the hundreds rather than the dozens – will have to be made. The uncertainty is producing intrigue and positioning that is likely to remain fluid until the end. It is not an easy race to handicap.”

OE Watch Commentary: King Abdul Aziz (Ibn Saud), the founder of what is now the kingdom of Saudi Arabia, died in 1953 and was succeeded by his son Saud bin Abdul Aziz, who at the time held the title of Crown Prince and the position of Prime Minister. In 1964 a palace coup forced King Saud to abdicate in favor of his half-brother Faisal, who would subsequently play a defining role in forging the kingdom's modern political identity. After Faisal came Khaled, then Fahd and now Abdullah, all half-brothers to one another and all children of Ibn Saud.

King Abdullah, the current Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques (the self-given legitimacy-granting honorific used by Saudi rulers since 1986), is becoming increasingly frail as he approaches his ninth decade of life. In 2011-2012, within a span of less than a year, two crown princes (Sultan and Nayef) passed away. Prince Sattam's February 2013 death is the most recent in this now endangered generation of the sons of Ibn Saud. He was nearly two decades younger than the current king. Saudi Arabia's gerontocracy is actually getting older.

Inevitably, a decision on the transfer of custodianship to a new generation of princes – numbering in the hundreds rather than the dozens – will have to be made. The uncertainty is producing intrigue and positioning that will remain fluid until the end. It is not an easy race to handicap.

The ultimate authority to appoint both the King and the Crown Prince lies with the “Allegiance Council,” a fairly recent creation in which the main royal factions are represented. Among succession precedents, the symbolic position of “second deputy prime minister” might be construed as the on-deck circle to Crown Princeship. Naming someone to this post constitutes a clear succession signal by the reigning monarch. The post had remained vacant since the promotion of Prince Salman to Crown Prince in June 2012. On 1 February 2013 King Abdullah named his longtime ally and half-brother Muqrin (who at nearly 70 is the youngest of Ibn Saud's remaining sons) to the position, and in doing so,



Prince Muqrin bin Abdulaziz, via <http://alarabiya.net>

Source:

ما لا تعرفونه عن الأمير مقرن (2-2)

“What You Don't Know about Prince Muqrin” (al-Riyadh), 4 February 2013, <http://www.alriyadh.com/2013/02/04/article807324.html>

... orders were issued appointing him as head of the intelligence services. It is true that we were sad about his departure from Medina but at the same time we felt he was the right man for the job. After all, he is a military man at heart, disciplined and responsible and – most importantly – a seasoned politician that does not discard conspiracies (I say this with reference to his advice when he gave me a copy of his favorite film, “Commanding Heights,” and told me: Don't believe everything that is in it!)

This, in short, is Prince Muqrin. The officer, the aviator, the governor, the administrator, and the intellectual adviser.

The citizen who never stopped serving his country since graduating from the Model Institute of the Capital in 1967 and who has won the confidence of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques as a governor, president and adviser and – presently – second deputy prime minister.

Continued: The Quiet Cacophony of Saudi Arabia's Succession

considerably muddled the already murky succession waters.

Following the announcement, Saudi media were filled with the predictable hagiographies of a man who has never been considered a serious candidate to ascend the throne. Among the most prominent was a first-hand account, written by a columnist for the important Saudi daily "al-Riyadh" (Article #1) of what Prince Muqrin was like during his stint as governor of the Hijaz Province, home to the holy cities of Mecca and Medina. The article portrays a compassionate, affable, intelligent and highly competent man, a voracious intellectual whose particular interests include political economy, world cultures and languages, and technology and innovation (particularly astronomy and flying).

A further detail of Prince Muqrin's quirkier side – at least as seen by denizens of an ironic corner of Saudi Arabia's twittersphere – was revealed in the standard biographical sketch published by the same newspaper the following day (Article #2): He stops for red lights!! Irony is but one character of the Saudi twittersphere. It is also informative, often more so than newspapers. The custodian of the critical political corner of Saudi Arabia's twittersphere is @mujtahidd, a purveyor of keen analysis based on insider information, who seems to have leveled off at slightly below the million-follower mark. For him, Prince Muqrin is an incompetent womanizing boozier who will act as placeholder for Abdullah's son Mutaib to eventually seize power (article #3).

As the generational transfer of power becomes a growing factor in the political calculations of Saudi Arabia's political elite, look for the informational cacophony to increase. This makes separating signal from noise all the more difficult. **End OE Watch Commentary (Winter)**

Source:

تعيين الأمير مقرن نائباً ثانياً لرئيس مجلس الوزراء ترجمة لخبرات وحكمة أنتجتها مدرسة المؤسس

"The Appointment of Prince Muqrin as Second Deputy Prime Minister the Result of Experiences and Wisdom Produced by the School of the Founder" (al-Riyadh) <http://www.alriyadh.com/2013/02/02/article806768.html>

...One of the nice stories told about Muqrin bin Abdul Aziz is that while he was governor of Hail Province (1980-1999) on more than one occasion he was seen waiting at a red traffic light on his way to the governor's office at eight o'clock in the morning...

Source:

"Saudi King Moves His Son One Step Closer to Throne" (al-Akhbar English), 2 February 2013, <http://english.al-akhbar.com/content/saudi-king-moves-his-son-one-step-closer-throne>

Concerning the timing of the announcement, @mujtahidd said, "Abdullah wanted to appoint him now because, in a while, it will become unequivocally clear that Salman's Alzheimer's will force his departure, after which Muqrin would be appointed as the crown prince. The king will then appoint his son Mutaib as his second deputy."

The next step, according to @mujtahidd, would be for Muqrin to abdicate, following which Mutaib would be appointed as his successor. The Twitter activist went on to say that "Muqrin's health makes this possible."

@mujtahidd also mentioned that he was aware of some reactions to Abdullah's decision, particularly from Prince Ahmed and Prince Turki (II) bin Abdul-Aziz. While "Prince Abdul-Rahman and Prince Talal are upset, naturally," @mujtahidd said, "Ahmed and Turki are more important."

He reckoned that "Ahmed is relatively active and healthy," while "Turki has since recovered from his troubles in Egypt and regained some respect in the family." @mujtahidd then predicted that Salman's sons would side "with anyone distraught by these developments."

In previous tweets, @mujtahidd describes Muqrin as an "unimportant man, both as the Governor of Ha'il and as head of the intelligence. He remained inconsequential after being sacked and there is nothing worth pointing out in his record."

He also said that Muqrin "is often preoccupied with women and alcohol, and has completely delegated his functions to his chief of staff, which led to catastrophic intelligence failures in Egypt, Iraq, Iran, and even in simpler issues such as the case of Princess Sara Bint Talal, who sought asylum in Britain."

The Cost of Porous Borders in Africa ...Terrorists without Borders

12 February 2013

“No solution to the Tuareg issue and the future of Islamist movements (whether linked to al-Qaeda or not) will be possible without cross-border cooperation and security, but that is almost impossible to achieve even if all states were willing to cooperate. And this then creates all sorts of tangled links between different conflicts.”

OE Watch Commentary: There have long been two main complaints regarding the African borders laid down by the colonial powers: they separated people who should have been together and they brought people together who should have been apart. As the accompanying article states, the borders also present problems of porosity, being unprotected, and blocking trade and economic development. From a security standpoint the porosity, which to a significant extent is a function of many of the borders being unprotected, is of special concern.

Mali, which currently holds the world's attention as its northern half, thanks in large part to French intervention, loosens the grip of Islamist fighters, is an excellent example of border porosity. The Tuareg are dispersed across that country's northern half, as well as portions of several other African nations - Niger, Algeria, Burkina Faso, Libya, and Mauritania - where their nomadic lifestyle often takes them across borders, sometimes without even realizing they have crossed one, as many are poorly marked. Despite aspirations for their own nation - aspirations which have led to conflict with government soldiers of Mali and Niger - they remain stateless. Unfortunately, the same border porosity which allows the Tuareg to cross large portions of North Africa with little regard to entering other nations, much as their ancestors had done before them, also facilitates the spread of arms and terrorists.

To follow the flow of arms it helps to follow the flow of those Tuareg who had served in Libya as part of Gaddafi's Islamic Arab Legion. As the accompanying article states, “[The Tuareg were] made part of Libya's armed forces - effectively mercenaries helping keep him in power and interfere in the affairs of neighboring states.” The militias which overthrew Gaddafi turned their ire against the Tuareg who had supported him. The Tuareg, carrying their weapons, fled. Many went to Niger, where they were disarmed. However, many also



African borders are frequently poorly marked and quite porous. (Need source), via <http://www.thetravelerszone.com>

Source: Keith Somerville, Africa's Borders - Porous, Unprotected and Blocking Trade and Economic Development African Arguments - Royal African Society, 12 Feb 2013, <http://africanarguments.org/2013/02/12/africa%e2%80%99s-borders-porous-unprotected-and-blocking-trade-and-economic-development-by-keith-somerville/>

...There are over 100 continuing border disputes between states in Africa - from the Ethiopian-Eritrean border (constantly in danger of setting off a new conflict between uneasy neighbours) to the current Malawi-Tanzania row over the demarcation of the lake border between them (exacerbated, as are so many global conflicts, by the lure of oil).

...Africa's borders are even more problematic than those in contested areas of Europe, Asia and Latin America. Whilst they are usually porous and almost impossible for weak state institutions, small armies and poorly funded police forces to control; they often divide peoples (especially nomadic ones like the Tuareg) and form huge obstacles to

Continued: The Cost of Porous Borders in Africa ...Terrorists without Borders

went to the northern part of Mali, where they were not disarmed. These former soldiers of the Libyan Army and their weapons helped strengthen the long simmering Tuareg rebellion in the north.

The inability of Mali to protect its borders led to the next inflow of people to the northern half of the country, i.e., Islamist fighters who were not Tuareg. Their role in the northern insurgency is beyond the scope of this commentary, but clearly the freedom of movement of Islamist groups such as AQIM (al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb) is not limited to just Mali's borders. Since several nations with conflicts or the potential for conflicts have porous borders, and Islamist groups can often freely cross them, the situation arises, as the article describes, where "this then creates all sorts of tangled links between different conflicts."

To be sure it is not just terrorist groups crossing borders. Transnational criminal organizations, rebel armies, and others all threaten the stability and security of nations unable to secure their own borders. The task to protect these, however, is daunting. Just look at Mali, which, according to the article "...has a 1,376 km border with Algeria, 1,000 km with Burkina Faso, 2,237 km with Mauritania and 821 km with Niger. Even with French support, US drones and the cooperation of neighboring states they cannot police this whole area." Unfortunately, previous continent-wide attempts to address border porosity have largely failed, and new initiatives to address the problem have still not taken shape.

End OE Watch Commentary (Feldman)

trade. Also, corruption and the desire of people to buy and sell goods across borders creates endless opportunities for smuggling, tax evasion and cross-border crime - not just problems in themselves, but often providing the funding for insurgency and revolt...

... The MNLA had initial successes, was then dominated and marginalized by Islamist movements and those movements are now being pushed back into the desert by French, Malian and Chadian troops. But they will just melt back into the arid, remote and thinly populated Sahel/Sahara with a wealth of porous borders to cross and re-cross to avoid counter-insurgency operations and establish new bases...

...The openness of borders and the security issues they raise are huge. No solution to the Tuareg issue and the future of Islamist movements (whether linked to al-Qaeda or not) will be possible without cross-border cooperation and security, but that is almost impossible to achieve even if all states were willing to cooperate...

...The LRA and Janjaweed are said to have killed elephants in DRC, CAR and Cameroon and transported the ivory to Sudan for smuggling abroad - so environmental damage can be added to the list of problems caused by weak African borders...

...There is clearly no easy, fast or obvious solution to the border issue. States which may have strongmen in charge but they have weak institutions and limited power over remote areas. They cannot police huge borders which are often the focus of conflict, irredentism, separatism and smuggling - especially when they often lack legitimacy in these areas through political and economic policies which marginalize them...

Are Saharan Islamic Militants Being Sent to Sudan?

11 February 2013

“Darfuri inhabitants’ suspicions that the newcomers are connected to Khartoum are not illogical.”

OE Watch Commentary: In the aftermath of the overthrow of Moammar Qaddafi, Saharan and Sahelian Africa were thrown into chaos as a result of the leftover arms and fighters that quickly began circulating in and out of the region’s porous borders. Some of these soldiers and weapons, for instance, have shown themselves to be part of the cause of the current crisis in northern Mali. However, while Libya’s insecurity spillover into Mali might have been somewhat anticipated, news that Mali’s conflict might now be rippling into Sudan’s Darfur region is far less expected.

As the accompanying story details, citizens in northern Sudan have recently reported the arrival of hundreds of vehicles carrying non-Arabic-speaking persons who appear to have come from West Africa. As various reports detail, these persons entered Sudan through the Central African Republic. Citizens in the embattled Darfur region claim that the government in Khartoum, which has historically oppressed them, is responsible for sending these fleeing fighters in a dual attempt to both shelter the newcomers from the French raid in Mali and potentially use them as its own proxy fighters in the region. For its part, Khartoum has issued statements denying any connection to the fighters, who, it insists, were not invited to come to the Darfur region, but rather “infiltrated it.”

While it remains unclear just who these new arrivals are, Darfuri inhabitants’ suspicions that the newcomers are connected to Khartoum are not illogical. Indeed, the primary fault lines between the



Sudan map., via <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/5405586.stm>

Source: “Sudan: Mali Militants On 200 Vehicles Arrive in Kutum, North Darfur – Sources,” 11 February 2013, Radio Dabanga (Darfur, Sudan): http://allafrica.com/stories/201302120093.html?aa_source=nwsltr-westafrica-en.

Article:

Multiple sources assert that 200 Land Cruisers with Islamist militants from Mali fleeing the hostilities in their country have arrived in Kutum, North Darfur, in the past 10 days.

They told Radio Dabanga on Monday the groups are stationed in three different areas around Kutum, adding they are “inciting a state of fear and terror” among citizens.

The first group can be found just one kilometer north of camp Kassab for displaced, the second in Jebel Mari, seven or eight kilometers northeast of Kutum, and the third in Sijana, about 10 kilometers north of Kutum, sources affirm.

Upon arriving in Kutum, the militants’ vehicles were covered with thick green tarps and they were carrying heavy artillery, eyewitnesses pointed out.

Some of the alleged Malian militants have “long beards, wear outfits resembling those found in Western Sahara and black shawls.” Witnesses added a number of them speak French and most do not speak Arabic.

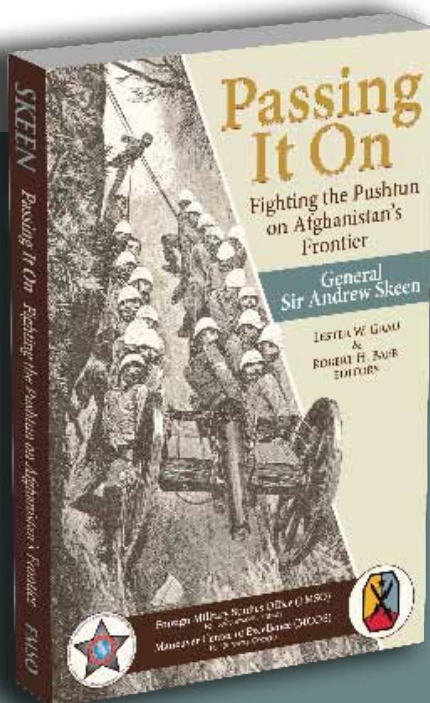
These groups go shopping at the Kutum market on a daily basis and use sign language to purchase goods, considering they do not speak the local language. They were last seen at the market on Monday and eyewitnesses claim they use Francs (savah), a currency mostly used in western African countries, while others use US dollars.

Continued: Are Saharan Islamic Militants Being Sent to Sudan?

Darfur region and Khartoum are religious, the former practicing local, traditional religions, and those living in the eastern parts of the country being Muslim. Given that Khartoum has allegedly previously employed the Janjaweed militia to carry out attacks on citizens in the Darfur region, if indeed the newcomers are from Islamist Ansar Dine, MUJWA, or AQIM, in Mali or the greater Sahara, they would theoretically already be ideologically aligned with the Bashir and serve to threaten local populations. End OE Watch Commentary (Warner)

Displaced living in Kassab told Radio Dabanga they do not feel safe to leave the camp to collect firewood or to fetch water due to the presence of militants from Mali nearby.

Civilians are urging local and federal authorities to expel these groups from Sudan and keep them away from the country. They further urged the UN and international organizations to intervene.



In resurrecting General Sir Andrew Skeen's *Passing It On*, the Foreign Military Studies Office and the Maneuver Center of Excellence, have provided a detailed look from 1932 that holds valuable lessons and understanding of the Operational Environment in the Af-Pak Theater of today.

CAR: Seleka Insurgency Not Over

11 January 2013

“Seleka rebels may well be holding onto various towns as insurance in case a satisfactory power-sharing deal with the government does not actually come through.”

OE Watch Commentary: Beginning in December 2012, a newly formed insurgent group named Seleka began its offensive in the Central African Republic (CAR), occupying towns in succession as it advanced towards the capital, Bangui, in an attempt to overthrow President Francois Bozize. After stationing itself less than fifty miles outside of the capital, by mid-January Seleka had reached a power-sharing deal with Bozize, which ostensibly ended the tense, weeks-long situation in the country. However, as the accompanying article details, some members of Seleka are still occupying towns, thereby generating a new crop of refugees in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The fact that there remain some Seleka fighters who may still be occupying towns while the military leadership is forming a coalition government in Bangui is not entirely surprising, given the ad hoc composition of the group. As an amalgamation of several former insurgencies that signed a peace deal with Bozize in 2007, Seleka seems to lack a truly centralized chain of command that could authoritatively demand its departure from occupied towns. Another interpretation of the continued occupation, however, could be a measure of precaution. Indeed, though a ceasefire between Seleka and the government has been made, one of Seleka's demands is Bozize's ouster, an unlikely outcome. That noted, the potential for violence to resume seems to be real; thus, lingering Seleka rebels may well be holding onto various towns as insurance in case a satisfactory power-sharing deal with the government does not actually come through. **End OE Watch Commentary (Warner)**



Rwandan Prime Minister Dr. Pierre Damien Habumuremyi

Source: “Congo-Kinshasa: Fuyant l’insécurité dans leur pays - Plus de trois mille centrafricains réfugiés à l’Equateur,” (Congo-Kinshasa: Fleeing from insecurity in their country, more than 3,000 refugees from Central African Republic are in the [the DRC state of] Equateur.” Le Potential (Kinshasa, DRC), 11 February 2013: <http://fr.allafrica.com/stories/201302111393.html>.

Article:

More than three thousand inhabitants of Mobaye-Banga in the Central African Republic, fled on Friday, February 8 to the Congolese territory of Mobayi Mbongo in the province of Ecuador. And for good reason: they claimed to be fleeing from the rebel coalition Seleka, which was occupying their town.

According to the source, these refugees are struggling to survive. Worried about them, the district commissioner of North Ubangi called for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to assist refugees.

The Congolese authorities say that people continue to arrive from the Central African Republic into Congo. Among these refugees, the Office of territory Mobayi-Mbongo said he recorded three officials, a mayor, a police commander and another government official from the Central African Republic influx.

The district commissioner of North Ubangi Isekusu Willy says his superiors have already contacted the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, in order to help the vulnerable people. As a reminder, thousands of Central African refugees arrived on Congolese soil since the beginning of fighting between the army and the Central African rebel coalition Seleka the Central African Republic in August 2012.

Foreign Military Studies Office

(FMSO.leavenworth.army.mil)



International Research Collaboration Program

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Op-ed: Keep U.S. Drones Out of Nigerian Terrorism Fight

8 January 2013

“Placating local populations’ fears about the intentions of new drone technologies will likely be a task that the U.S. military will increasingly face in the future, not just in Africa, but around the world.”

OE Watch Commentary: Fears have been spreading across the African continent about the implications that a U.S. drone program might have for their domestic security. As the accompanying article details, this is certainly the case in Nigeria, where one nongovernmental organization articulates disdain for potential U.S. drone strikes in the country to oust Islamist group Boko Haram.

While the Nigerian media has been circulating the possibility of U.S. drone strikes to oust Boko Haram since at least 2011, it was the January 2013 announcement that Niger had agreed to host a U.S. drone base that has been responsible for the latest trepidation. This worry, however, is based on a lack of nuance about the sorts of drones that the U.S. would be using. Nevertheless, given the recent French military intervention to oust Islamists in Mali, some Nigerians easily articulate an imagined, similiar incursion in Nigeria.

End OE Watch Commentary (Warner)



A map indicating the operational environment for the Boko Haram, which refers to itself as “Jama’atu Ahl as-Sunnah li-Da’awati wal-Jihad” (JASDJ; Group of the Sunni People for the Calling and Jihad) and “Nigerian Taliban”, via http://www.nctc.gov/site/groups/boko_haram.html

Source: Labour and Social Justice Institute, “No to planned US military intervention on terrorism in Nigeria!” Pambazuka News (Nairobi, Kenya), 24 January 2013: <http://www.pambazuka.org/en/category/advocacy/86061>.

Article:

We are vehemently opposed to the planned drone attacks by the United States’ military on terror groups in Nigeria, while we equally oppose the maiming of lives and properties by the terror groups themselves. We hold that the imperialist military intervention being contemplated by the United States will exacerbate the heightening rate of tensions in the country. We hold that the imperialist powers themselves and the twin forces of exploitation, the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, with their neo-liberal policies being implemented by successive regimes of the ruling class should be held responsible for the underlying basis for terrorism in Nigeria. We contend that just as the imperialist intervention of France in Northern Mali is currently amplifying tensions in the West African sub-region, the intervention of the United States will herald an era of unimaginable chaos and crisis. Already, terror groups in Nigeria with links with the Mali rebels have been laying siege on Nigerian military convoys to Mali and this will explode with a direct military intervention by the United States. We call on workers, youth and poor masses to build mass –based and democratically controlled defence committees up to armed self-defence under the control of the communities, to repel and liquidate terrorist elements everywhere.

Somalia: Are National Unity and Clan Federalism Mutually Exclusive?

6 February 2013

“A Somali becomes [a] foe of the other when clan diversity is discovered.”

OE Watch Commentary: As international military forces in conjunction with Somali troops make progress in wresting control of the country away from the Islamist group al Shabaab, it appears that for the first time since 1991, when a coup sent the nation into anarchy, there might be a federal government that rules over the land, or at least a significant portion of it. Unfortunately, for this nascent government, centrifugal forces - most notably clan federalism (where the country is essentially divided into regions according to clans) and secession - threaten to pull the nation apart just as it is coming together.

As the accompanying article states, “The Provisional Constitution (PC) rejects secession, [and] suggests voluntary federalism of regions while it establishes a unitary democratic central government.” However, that “federalism” is “clan federalism,” which is not surprising, as the committee to name people to serve in Parliament, where the constitution was approved, was selected according to a clan-sharing agreement, giving clan elders an extremely large influence in government affairs.¹ There are Federal Member States within the framework of the new Somali Federal government, but as evidenced by the aforementioned process to approve the constitution, the power of these regional governments, especially in relation to the power of the main clans, is quite small.

There is much to fear with this clan federalism. Once again, referring to the accompanying article, “Clan federalism worsens the situation and tears Somalia apart.” The article also quotes a book by the late Said Osman Kenedid, “a Somali becomes[a] foe of the other when clan diversity is discovered.” Thus, while there are unifying factors in Somalia, such as religion (essentially the entire nation is Muslim) and language, deep divisions among clans and subclans have often prevented the country from coming together. Clan federalism is a countervailing force to this nationalism, tearing the country into individual pieces ruled by clans instead of uniting it as a whole. Furthermore, it could result in the dominant clan of a particular region ruling other clans without regards to minority rights, almost guaranteeing anger and unrest.

Adding to the woes of clan federalism ripping Somalia apart are the fears of secession. Somaliland in the northwest part of the country has already declared its independence, though



Somali clan fighters, via <http://www.takungpao.com.hk>

Source: Mohamud M Ulso, “Clan Federalism Tears Somalia Apart,” Pambazuka News, 6 Feb 2013, <http://www.pambazuka.org/en/category/features/86132>.

...Clan politics, rivalry and hatred have ruined the social bond, moral principles and trust among Somalis who share a language, culture, territory, history and religion. Now, three political manifestations - secession, clan based federalism and a unitary decentralized political system - divide them and are an obstacle to the recovery of the lost nation...

...The Provisional Constitution (PC) rejects secession, suggests voluntary federalism of regions while it establishes a unitary democratic central government. Respect for human rights, political and civil rights for all citizens, a free market economic system, political pluralism and promotion of peace constitute the basic foundation of the new constitution. The US diplomatic recognition of the government of Somalia gives impetus to the implementation of these goals and offers space and encouragement for internal unity and dialogue...

...Puntland state is now in confrontation with the FG over formation of Jubbaland State which will comprise three regions-

Continued: Somalia: Are National Unity and Clan Federalism Mutually Exclusive?

no foreign nation has recognized its claim to sovereignty. Other regions have expressed their desire for autonomy, though these often include groups such as the Puntland Independence Movement agitating for their own sovereign nation.² The move towards clan federalism was in large part to usurp these secessionist tendencies, but, as previously stated, clan federalism comes with its own set of problems. Meanwhile, separatist pressures, whether for full independence or more autonomy, continue, further weakening the federal government.

*While there is some hope that Somalia, or at least a large portion of it, can unite under the new government, much uncertainty remains. The previous cost of a national government failing was a civil war which lasted for over two decades. Perhaps that knowledge will help the people overcome the clan federalism and various secessionist movements the article describes that threaten to lead them once again into chaos. **End OE Watch Commentary (Feldman)***

1. Somalia Swears in Historic New Parliament," Al Jazeera, 23 Aug 2012, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2012/08/2012818183718864689.html>
2. Puntland Independence Movement, <http://puntlandindependencemovement.tumblr.com/>

Lower Jubba, Middle Jubba and Gedo and will be under the rule of Harti, Ogaden, and Marehan as the majority group out of 38 clans in the area...

...As a consequence, Bay, Bakol and Lower Shabelle regions will be under Dighil and Mirifle rule. Middle Shabelle, Hiran, and Galgudud regions will be under Hawiye rule. Togdher, North West, and Awdal regions will be under Isaq rule. In consideration of clan imagination, Mogadishu, the capital and seat of FG, will be under sub-clan Abgal-Habargidir rule...

...Puntland federalism aims to deal with past and future "clan cleansing" and to control the central power if ever emerges. In Somalia, "clan cleansing" takes place every day as long as clans fight and people leave their homes for new destinations. It happens in different parts of the country...

...The signs of many problems associated with clan federalism like violent minority dissent within are now visible in Puntland. In fact, clan federalism rather than solving the problems of bad governance expands them. Only Ethiopia, Nigeria and South Africa practice clan based federalism in the African continent. A comparative study carried out in 2012 shows that African federalism fails for at least nine causes like a lack of commitment to democratic values and obstruction of the central government authority...

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>



Sheikh Gumi Condemns Nigeria's Troop Deployment in Sermons

20 January 2013

OE Watch Commentary: Sheikh Ahmad Gumi is a Nigerian cleric from a family of prominent Islamic scholars. He is best known for his sermons at Sultan Bello mosque in Kaduna State in the "Middle Belt," where Nigeria's majority Christian southern and majority Muslim northern regions meet. He delivered a sermon on 19 January 2013 called "No Nation Can Fight Islam And Succeed," which was published on the Sahara Reporters website. Gumi said there were "parallels" between Nigeria's decision to intervene in Mali and the Soviet Union's and the United States' experiences in Afghanistan, which led to the Soviet Union's fall and the United States' "strangulation." In a sermon the following day, which was also published by Sahara Reporters, Gumi blamed Nigerian Christians for the "draconian military occupation" of northern Mali in support of "foreign colonial interests." Gumi suggested that Nigeria remain neutral and engage the Islamists and Malian leaders in peace negotiations, as Nigeria did in Sudan. Gumi's remarks, which are widely disseminated in the Nigerian press and on social media, contrast from his usual support for peaceful co-existence between Christians and Muslims and lack of focus on the United States or European countries.

Gumi is no friend of Boko Haram, which rejects the traditional religious leadership in northern Nigeria, including Gumi, the sultan of Sokoto, the amir of Kano, the amir of Fika, and the shehu of Borno, all of whom survived Boko Haram assassination attempts within the last year. Gumi has condemned Boko Haram's killing of innocent Muslims, suicide bombings, and attacks on Christian churches. There are, however, correlations between Gumi's sermons and a new breed of Islamist militants in northern Nigeria, who, like Boko Haram, are anti-Western, anti-Christian, and anti-Nigerian government, but have broken away from Boko Haram for many of the same reasons that Gumi condemned Boko Haram. One such group is Ansaru, which on 20 January 2013 (the same day Gumi delivered his second sermon against the Mali troop deployment) ambushed a Mali-bound convoy of Nigerian troops in Kogi State, killing two soldiers. Ansaru broke away from Boko Haram in January 2012 because it disagreed with Boko Haram's killings of Muslim religious leaders and civilians, but claimed that it



Dr. Ahmad Gumi, via http://www.leadership.ng/nga/articles/44191/2013/01/05/what_happened_between_sheikh_dahiru_bauchi_and_me_sultan_bello_mosque_dr_ahmad_gumi.html?quicktabs_1=0



Sultan of Sokoto, Muhammed Sa'ad Abubakar III via <http://naijanewsroom.com/featured-article/6740512.html>

“What I am saying is that among the Christians are evil people that kill people. These evil killers can also be imbedded in our security apparatus. In fact they are more dangerous than the true Boko Haram who are mainly peasants, poor and untactful... So today if there is any terror attack, depending on the magnitude, the coordination and sophistication in its execution and target selection, you can see the finger print of these agents of evil. The draconian military occupation of the Muslim northern regions is a clear sign of such a plan.”

“If therefore, the Christian leadership of Nigeria is plunging us into Mali for the same reason of hatred and prejudice against Islamists, this is the warning they should heed, because Islam is unconquerable...”

Continued: Sheikh Gumi Condemns Nigeria's Troop Deployment in Sermons

is otherwise one and the same as Boko Haram and that it would target Nigerian officials and Christians.

Gumi could provide the ideological cover in mainstream society for Ansaru like Sheikh Ibrahim Datti Ahmed has done for Boko Haram. Datti Ahmed is the President of the Supreme Council on Sharia on which Boko Haram founder Muhammad Yusuf sat before Nigerian security forces killed him in July 2009. Datti Ahmed was also selected by Boko Haram leader Abubakar Shekau to represent Boko Haram in negotiations with the government that failed in 2012. In 2002 Datti Ahmed called on Muslims to "defend the Islamic Faith" to prevent a Miss World pageant in Abuja in 2002. Boko Haram became operational in September 2010 and carried out its fourth ever suicide-vehicle bombing in April 2012 on the ThisDay office in Abuja. Abubakar Shekau claimed the attack was retaliation for a comment ThisDay made in 2002 that the Prophet Muhammad would want to marry one of the pageant queens. Datti Ahmed, who is a highly respected medical doctor in northern Nigeria, also led the effort to undermine a polio vaccination program in northern Nigeria in 2003 on the premise that it was a Christian ploy to cause infertility in Muslims or inject them with HIV. On 8 February 2013 suspected Boko Haram militants killed nine female polio vaccination workers in Kano as part of a broader offensive focusing on medical workers in northern Nigeria.

Concerns were also raised about Gumi's ties to militants when he was arrested on 24 February 2010 in Saudi Arabia after his phone number was found in Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab's cell phone. Abdulmutallab, a 20-year-old Nigerian from a wealthy Muslim family, had attempted to detonate explosives in his undergarments on a Detroit-bound airliner for al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) only months earlier. Amid warnings from Nigerian military leaders that al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and Boko Haram could retaliate against Nigeria for the country's intervention in northern Mali, Gumi's remarks and their implications will not go unnoticed by Islamists seeking rhetorical clerical support for their operations. **End OE Watch Commentary (Zenn)**

Note: To view the statement that Jama'atu Ansarul Muslimina Fi Biladis Sudan (Vanguards for the Protection of Muslims in Black Africa, "Ansaru") issued to



Nigerian troops in Jaji, Kaduna State prepare for their deployment to northern Mali. via <http://saharareporters.com/news-page/%E2%80%98terrorists%E2%80%99-mali-seen-nigeria-army-chief-alleges?page=1>

Source: "Sheikh Again Defends His Stand On Troops Deployment To Mali," Sahara Reporters, 20 January 2013. <http://saharareporters.com/news-page/sheikh-again-defends-his-stand-troops-deployment-mali>

Original Article (excerpted)

"Brothers and Sisters, fellow Nigerians, No human has the monopoly of sentiments or emotional outburst, therefore whoever abuses me for not understanding me I have forgiven it. I hold no qualms against anybody. My only concern is over the evil people that kill innocent people for prejudice, malice, religious sentiments and share malevolence.

What I am saying is that among the Christians are evil people that kill people. These evil killers can also be imbedded in our security apparatus. In fact they are more dangerous than the true Boko Haram who are mainly peasants, poor and untactful. However these are highly trained individuals that can manipulate, strategize, camouflage and coordinate their terror in such a way that they cannot be recognized.

So today if there is any terror attack, depending on the magnitude, the coordination and sophistication in its execution and target selection, you can see the finger print of these agents of evil. The draconian military occupation of the Muslim northern regions is a clear sign of such a plan. The Mali intervention is also not far from the plan. Why send troops to Mali when our borders are porous? Spending millions that could benefit educational, health and agricultural sectors that are starving. Youth unemployment that is declared by an ex-president as

Continued: Sheikh Gumi Condemns Nigeria's Troop Deployment in Sermons

Kaduna-based Desert Herald clarifying Ansaru's relationship to Boko Haram, please read: <http://desertherald.com/latest-security-officials-and-christians-are-enemies-of-islam-and-muslims-we-will-target-and-kill-them-says-spokesman-of-jamaatu-ansarul-muslimina-fibiladi-sudan-abu-jaafar/>

Note: To read Sheikh Gumi's official Facebook fan page where supporters and critics of Gumi commented on his sermons about the Nigerian troop deployment to Mali, please see the following link: <http://www.facebook.com/AhmadAbubakarMahmudGumi>

very volatile. We negotiated peace between the warring Sudanese factions until they decided to divide in a plebiscite, why not also in Mali?

Nigerian involvement in Mali against the northern Tuareg is taking sides based on foreign colonial interests, and the hate of Islamists forming a government in the region. The difference between Islamist and Terrorist is that the former are fighters that are seeking independence and the rule of Islamic law through legal and accepted norms. Part of it is breaking away from a country where there is anarchy or dictatorship. The army took power in Mali, and a section of the country wanted to break way.

It is known fact that Christians in Nigeria are anti-Islam in everything even if it is beneficial to all. That explains the clamor against OIC membership at a time when we have representatives in the Vatican. That was where the clamor against Sharia law which has nothing to do with Christians. The Sharia checks crimes effectively yet, the Christians clergy prefer a state of lewdness, robbery, adultery, alcoholism than otherwise if such crimes can only be stopped by Islam. They prefer a harlot to a woman wearing hijab or niqab.

If therefore, the Christian leadership of Nigeria is plunging us into Mali for this same reason of hatred and prejudice against Islamist, this is the warning they should heed to, because Islam is unconquerable. But if they want peace to reign then we should not take sides but be peace negotiators. Imagine, Nigerian troops killing touareg in their own country, what moral ground do we have when later they influx into our country and cause havoc? May Allah guide us all and protect us from all evil."

Fergana as FATA?

Central Asia after 2014 – Outcomes and Strategic Options

By Ted Donnelly

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

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



Guerilla Groups in Mexico

3 February 2013

Source: Najar, Alberto. "México, país con guerrillas." Expresionlibre, <http://www.expresionlibre.org/main/nacional/mexico-pais-con-guerrillas>; accessed on 02 February 2013.

OE Watch Commentary: On 31 January 2013 at approximately 1600 hours, an explosion at a Pemex (a Mexican oil company) headquarters building in Mexico City left 33 dead and 121 injured. To date, Mexican authorities have not released any information regarding the possible perpetrators of this attack, but it is likely that the Popular Revolutionary Army (EPR) played a direct role in it. Pemex has served as a natural target for the EPR in recent years, as it is state-owned.

The Popular Revolutionary Army:

The EPR became operational on 28 June 1996. This group promotes an anti-PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party) ideology and has conducted operations against Pemex facilities in Oaxaca, Chiapas, Guanajuato, Tlaxala, and Veracruz. Following the inauguration of PRI candidate Enrique Peña Nieto in December 2012, the EPR publicly announced its re-emergence.

During the PAN (National Action Party) administration, multiple Pemex attacks were reported in 2007, but the EPR remained relatively inactive between 2008 and 2012. The most noteworthy attack perpetrated by the EPR against Pemex occurred on 11 September 2007, when 12 pipelines were blown up in Veracruz and Tlaxaca.

National Zapista Liberation Army (EZLN)

The EZLN became operational in 1994 and is led by an individual known as *Sucomandante Marcos*. The majority of its members are indigenous peoples from Chiapas. This group has been virtually inactive since 2000, but on 21 December 2012, 30,000 EZLN members marched through the streets of San Cristobal de Las Casas, Chiapas, demanding educational and labor reforms and improved public security. Signs held by the protesters read "Are you listening?" and "this is the sound of your world crumbling around you. This is our re-emergence."



Guerrilla Groups in Mexico

An estimated seven guerrilla groups are operational in Mexico; all of which are in the process of reorganizing themselves. The most influential organizations were identified as the National Zapatista Liberation Army (EZLN) and the Popular Revolutionary Army (EPR). The majority of guerrilla groups in Mexico, with the exception of the EZLN, are comprised of mobile cells that operate in a clandestine manner meaning they do not take control of plazas or openly conduct armed attacks.

At this point, there is no supporting evidence indicating that Mexican drug cartels and guerrilla organizations are working together in Mexico. Likewise, there have been no documented confrontations between these organizations; likely because guerrilla groups do not possess the strength or firepower to perpetrate attacks against DTOs.

It is believed PRI leadership in Mexico may revive some guerrilla groups given that all of them possess an anti-PRI ideology. However, authorities have hypothesized that even if this does happen, none of the existing guerrilla groups will have the capacity

Continued: Guerilla Groups in Mexico

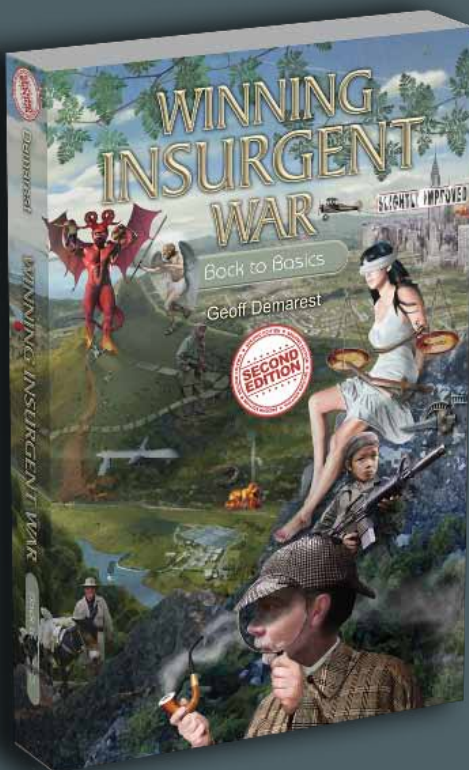
The EPR and the EZLN were most active in the 90s during the PRI administration. During PAN governance between 2000 and 2012, Presidents Vicente Fox and Felipe Calderon indicated that guerilla groups in Mexico were virtually non-operational and that they did not pose a threat to security in the country. During this same time period security forces in the country were overwhelmed with countering drug-trafficking activity, and little to no focus was placed on guerilla groups. This situation most likely allowed the EPR and the EZLN to re-organize. Hence, it can be concluded that if the EPR did indeed conduct the most recent Pemex attacks, it is likely this will be the first of many in coming months and years. End OE Watch Commentary (Fiegel)

to fight against Mexican authorities.

Background Information

Multiple guerilla organizations emerged in the 1960s but were subsequently dismantled between 1970 and 1980. Guerrilla groups that survived included the PROCUP-PDLP alliance and the National Liberation Front (FLN). The PROCUP gathered survivors from 13 guerrilla groups and formed the Popular Revolutionary Army which emerged in June 1996.

The EPR is the most active guerrilla group in all of Mexico and is responsible for the majority of violent attacks. Their most notorious attack was perpetrated against the Pemex pipelines in July 2007 in retaliation for the disappearance of two of the EPR key leaders (Edmundo Reyes Amaya and Gabriel Alberto Cruz Sanchez). Net losses caused by this attack were estimated at \$(USD) 136 million dollars.



Geoff Demarest's *Winning Insurgent War* is about a broader set of conflicts than just 'insurgency.' In its 144 sections, Geoff Demarest raises new and overlooked concepts related to modern conflict in a provocative manner designed to stir up debate and critical thinking. As Geoff Demarest puts it: "I hope that some of the ideas in it will be contagious."

Indonesia's Terror Problem to Worsen into 2013

28 January 2013

“Despite a slew of counter-measures after the terrorist bombings in Bali in 2002, the threat of terrorism continues to loom. Developments in 2013 are likely to worsen the security situation in Indonesia.”

OE Watch Commentary: Indonesia is home to the world's largest Islamic population. The state faces serious security threats and though it has at times effectively prevented and combated local terrorist activities, its central government is weak, corrupt, and fragmented and thus unable to implement adequate antiterrorism policies. It is strongly suspected in U.S. policy circles that terrorists in Indonesia are linked to Al-Qaeda.

In the first excerpt, Bilveer Singh points out that, despite instances of successful counter terrorism operations, Indonesia can be expected to face increasing threats to its security. Most noteworthy, according to him, is the upcoming release of over 300 convicted terrorists from Indonesian prisons, not to mention the release of untold numbers of their indoctrinated prison mates. This will undoubtedly lead to ex-convicts joining existing or forming and possibly leading new terrorist cells.

Singh also identifies the increasingly complex and shifting motives of Indonesian terrorists, who traditionally tended to focus their major struggle against the West, but have recently shifted focus onto their local communities, which are increasingly exposed to Western culture and Christianity (for example, Catholic schools provide a significantly higher quality of education than government schools and are an increasing source of tension within communities). Additionally, Singh cites concerns regarding changes in leadership positions, the emergence of little known

Source: Bilveer Singh, “Terrorism Threat in Indonesia: Key Concerns in 2013 - Analysis,” Eurasia Review, 28 January 2013, <http://www.eurasiareview.com/28012013-terrorism-threat-in-indonesia-key-concerns-in-2013-analysis/>.

Since the 2002 terrorist bombing in Bali by Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), Indonesia has done much to counter the threat of violent terrorism by Islamist militants.

...As of December 2012, more than 820 terrorists have been captured and 80 killed. Yet, this has not terminated the threat nor deterred them. While no major attacks have taken place since 2009, more than 110 militants were captured following the discovery of a major terrorist training camp in Aceh in 2010.

...Indonesia's inability to halt the threat was evident in the series of attacks in 2012 following which 11 terrorists were killed and 17 captured with 28 members of the police force killed.

...Complicating the picture is the emergence of new and splintered groups sworn to avenge the killing of their comrades, besides stopping perceived Christianisation of the country and aiming to build an Islamic state. ... The terrorists' targets have shifted from attacking the 'far enemy' (the West), to the 'near enemy', that is locals, especially the police.

...There is also the rise of 'soft violence' where radical adherents oppose mainstream political, economic, social-cultural and religious practices, and developing cells of like-minded hardliners bent on wreaking havoc on society when instructed to do so.

...By 2013, most of [the] top [counter terrorism] officers would have been retired or deployed elsewhere, weakening the leadership of Indonesia's CT capability. How successfully Indonesia fills the void remains to be seen.

Release of more than 300 convicted terrorists: More than 300 of the 830 convicted and imprisoned terrorists are due for release in 2013 and 2014 on completion of their sentences. With more than one third of Indonesia's imprisoned terrorists set to be free, there is grave danger of many re-integrating or developing new groups to exacerbate the terrorist threat in Indonesia. As there is also a high rate of recidivism, this is a cause for concern if hardened and newly networked terrorists are available for recruitment.

Continued emergence of new terrorist groups: The post-JI terrorist scene is more complex, populated by mainly small, diffused and home-grown cells that are difficult to detect.

...These 'new faces' are below the intelligence radar screen, surfacing only when it is



Logo for the Indonesian National Counterterrorism Agency (BNPT) via <http://www.thejakartapost.com>

Continued: Indonesia's Terror Problem to Worsen into 2013

terrorist cells representing other causes and populations, underdeveloped counter-radicalism measures within government policy plans, and a lack of political will to focus on eradicating terrorism or presenting strong policies geared towards that goal.

*As the second excerpt indicates, Indonesia has put into place strong counterterrorism measures, including a most recent bill that represents the country's first significant attempt to penalize those who fund terrorism activities. Even with these new measures, however, Indonesia faces increasingly difficult challenges in combating terrorism. **End OE Watch Commentary (Faruolo)***

“Indonesia tightened its grip on financial transactions on Tuesday as the nation introduced its first law aimed at choking off funding for radical organizations, marking what supporters called a key step in combatting domestic terrorism.”

too late to counter them.

Weak counter-radicalisation and de-radicalisation efforts: While Indonesia has one of the best counter-terrorism processes in place, its track record in counter-radicalisation and de-radicalisation is quite the opposite.

...As 2014 is the year of the general and presidential elections, the country's politicians will concentrate their energies on winning political power.

...With Indonesia being 90 percent Muslim, there is no appetite to launch major counter-terrorist operations. This stems from the fear of alienating the Muslim vote bank which can be accentuated by radical narratives that this is nothing more than an anti-Islam exercise undertaken at the behest of the West. Counter-terrorism, it is argued, is aimed at weakening, exploiting and dominating Indonesia.

...Corruption at the highest levels of the government has become endemic, leading to the general disenchantment with the largely secular-oriented political parties and politicians.

...Indonesia has always been permeable to external influences. The Arab Spring, the perceived anti-Islamism and double standards of the West, and brutal Israeli policies towards the Palestinians, especially in Gaza, have been critical vectors for radicalisation.

...With the central government's political leaders concentrating on the upcoming elections, the BNPT weakened by a leadership vacuum, the terrorists' potential strengthening of their ranks by the impending release of hardened cadres into a domestic setting that is conducive to radicalisation, Indonesia has to brace itself for greater insecurity in 2013.”

Source: “Indonesia Passes Law to Stop Terrorism Funding,” Jakarta Globe, 12 February 2013, <http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/home/indonesia-passes-law-to-stop-terrorism-funding/571184>.

The House of Representatives passed the bill into law on Tuesday, introducing harsh penalties for individuals and companies convicted of funding terrorist activity. Supporters called the bill a crucial component in the nation's ongoing battle against terrorism.

...Adang Daradjatun, the committee chairman, said the law allows law enforcement to flag the bank accounts and freeze the assets of those suspected of funding terrorism in Indonesia and abroad. The bill, while allowing the government to tighten its grip on money transfers, won't affect the average citizen, he said.

“...this legislation calls for tighter supervision of financial transactions, it won't inconvenience the general public, but only those who are involved in terrorist activities,” Adang said.

...Among the key provisions in the new law is an article stipulating a maximum prison sentence of 15 years for anyone convicted of funding or attempting to fund terrorist activity, while conspiring with others to fund terrorist activity carries a maximum sentence of life in prison.

Companies convicted of similar offenses face fines of up to Rp 100 billion (\$10.4 million) as well as the possibility of having their assets seized by the state, their permits rescinded or even of being dissolved.

The law also requires banks and other financial services providers, as well as the Financial Transaction Reports and Analysis Center (PPATK), the government's anti-money-laundering watchdog, to be more thorough about analyzing and flagging suspicious transactions.

Foreign governments can also ask Indonesian authorities to freeze the accounts of foreign individuals or companies suspected of involvement in terrorist activities.”

India and China: Action on the Border

March 2013

“...China has “aggressively” strengthened its military capabilities in the Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR)...”

OE Watch Commentary: The recent 50th anniversary of the six-week 1962 Sino–Indian War has brought some popular focus back to the 3500-km-long, high altitude border region shared by China and India. In 1996 China and India agreed to a “Line of Actual Control” in the most contentious areas. Yet political rhetoric from both sides continues to stir the pot regarding disputed areas such as the Akin Chin region and the region bounded by the McMahon line. Reports of Chinese soldiers in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir have added to a sense of unease. Discussion continues within the Government of India regarding improved military infrastructure along the border. There are also proposals for a mountain strike corps to be formed, along with integrated air forces, tasked with protecting the long and mountainous border region. As we see in the first Times of India article, this corps is very much still a “paper tiger,” with many forces vying to influence the promise and expenditure of significant public funds (about \$1.5 billion). However, in a very tangible act, two squadrons of Sukhoi-30 fighters have been moved into the Assam area.

Chinese infrastructure improvements in the Xizang Province (Tibet) appear to have an increasingly direct strategic impact on India. Most of the improvements are not concentrated along the border with India, and appear to be situated for the internal control of the Xizang Province. As pointed out in the second Times of India article, this may not be India's perspective. Most certainly, continuing construction of dams in the catchment area of the Brahmaputra River has become a keen point of interest to both India and Bangladesh. China holds the headwaters of two of Asia's great rivers,



Map of Tibetan Autonomous Region or “TAR” which was established in 1965 after Communist China had annexed Tibetan territory, via <http://www.windhorsetibet.com>

Source: The Times of India, “China-wary Army for mountain strike corps,” January 13, 2013, http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2013-01-13/india/36311136_1_new-infantry-divisions-12th-army-plan-mountain-strike-corps

NEW DELHI: The Army has come up with a fresh proposal for the new mountain strike corps, apart from two “independent” infantry brigades and two “independent” armoured brigades, to plug operational gaps along the LAC (line of actual control) as well as to acquire “some offensive capabilities” against China.

The raising of the new formations will cost around Rs 81,000 crore, spread primarily over the 12th Plan period (2012-17), with a little spillover into the 13th Plan if necessary, say sources.

...With additional armoured regiments and infantry units based in Ladakh, Sikkim and Uttarakhand, the new mountain corps (around 40,000 soldiers) will for the first time give India the capability to also launch a counter-offensive into TAR (Tibet Autonomous Region) in the event of a Chinese attack, say sources.

As with the development of the over 5,000-km Agni-V and 3,500-km Agni-IV ballistic missiles (coupled with the ongoing progressive deployment of Sukhoi-30MKI fighters, spy drones, helicopters and missile squadrons in the northeast) the overall aim is to have “strategic deterrence” in place to dissuade China from embarking on any “misadventure”.

The proposal for the new corps (recently approved by the CoSC (chiefs of staff committee) comprising the Army, Navy and IAF chiefs) will of course have to be

Continued: India and China: Action on the Border

the Brahmaputra and the Mekong; with increasing fears of a “Hydro- Hegemon,” dams may become the most disconcerting infrastructure in the region. End OE Watch Commentary (Welch).

get the final nod from the CCS (Cabinet Committee on Security) after requisite wetting by the defence and finance ministries for it to be implemented. The plan to raise a new mountain corps, headquartered at Panagarh in West Bengal, is not new. Last year, the government had referred it to the CoSC for a rethink and fine-tuning, which has now been completed.



Sukhoi-30 Deployed in Assam, via <http://www.deccanherald.com/content/24944/F>

As part of the overall plan for “major force accretion” along the “northern borders” with China, two new infantry divisions (35,000 soldiers and 1,260 officers), have already been raised at Lekhapani and Missamari in Assam in 2009-10. Their operational tasking is the defence of Arunachal Pradesh, which China often claims as its territory.

...The new corps, with two specialized high-altitude divisions for “rapid reaction force capability in mountains”, will add to all this. This will give India, which for long has focused on the land borders with Pakistan, some offensive teeth against China as well.

This is critical because China has “aggressively” strengthened its military capabilities in the TAR, with at least five fully-operational airbases, an extensive rail network and over 58,000-km of roads. This, as earlier reported by TOI, allows China to move over 30 divisions (each with over 15,000 soldiers) to the LAC, outnumbering Indian forces by at least 3:1 there.

1962 Sino – India War Battle Sites and Nathu La Pass (Created from Google Earth)



Continued: India and China: Action on the Border

“...There is no bilateral water treaty between India and China....”

Source: The Times of India, “Ensure our states aren’t hit by your Brahmaputra dams, India tells China,” February 1, 2013, http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2013-02-01/india/36683325_1_zangmu-yarlung-tsangpo-china-s-qinghai-tibet

NEW DELHI: India took an unusually sharp stand against China’s unilateral moves to dam the Brahmaputra, saying it had “established user rights” to the river. Asserting itself for the first time, India asked China “to ensure that the interests of downstream states are not harmed by any activities in upstream areas”.

In its new blueprint for the energy sector for 2011-2015, China announced it would build three hydropower bases on the Yarlung Tsangpo river, at Dagu, Jiacha and Jiexu. A hydropower station at Zangmu is already under construction. The Chinese announcement earlier this week was not preceded by any consultation or sharing of information with New Delhi.

While this actually indicates China’s consistent policy that it does not believe it needs to engage India on this, the Indian response represents a distinct change in policy. Thus far, India’s stated position was that New Delhi “agreed” with the Chinese statement that it would “not hurt India’s interests”.

....Answering a question in Rajya Sabha in November 2011, the then foreign minister SM Krishna said, “The Chinese premier, during his visit to India in December 2010, said that China’s development of upstream areas will never harm downstream interests. Government has ascertained that the dam at Zangmu in the Tibet Autonomous Region is a run-of-the-river hydro-electric project, which does not store water and will not adversely impact the downstream areas in India.”

In fact, in the past few years, India has consistently tried to play down the threat that Chinese construction poses. Even when local reports said that in Pasighat town in East Siang district of Arunachal Pradesh, the water level of the Brahmaputra river receded so much that it was almost dry. In fact, Chinese spokespersons have even quoted Krishna to show that India “understood” the Chinese position.

In October, 2011, Jiao Yong, China’s vice-minister for water resources, was quoted as saying, “The Yarlung Tsangpo (Brahmaputra) river flows across China’s Qinghai Tibet plateau. Many Chinese citizens have been calling for greater usage of this river. However, considering the technical difficulties, the actual need of diversion, and the possible impact on the environment and state-to-state relations, the Chinese government has no plans to conduct any diversification project in this river.”

Clearly a lot has changed since then. For India, the biggest problem is not merely that China continues to build dams on the river with impunity, and might implement its long-term plan of diverting the waters of the Brahmaputra to its parched northeast. It is that China refuses to accede to any international rule of law. There is no bilateral water treaty between India and China. China is not ready to even discuss the issue with India.

Indian officials say a large proportion of the catchment of the Brahmaputra lies within Indian territory, which will not be affected by the Chinese dams. Within the government, there is an urgency to dam the waters of the Brahmaputra in Arunachal Pradesh and Assam. Some of this makes Bangladesh uneasy, but India is going out of its way to accommodate Dhaka’s concerns even to the extent of giving it a stake in these projects. None of this is forthcoming from China to India, however.

China's New Control over Gwadar Port Sparks Concern from India

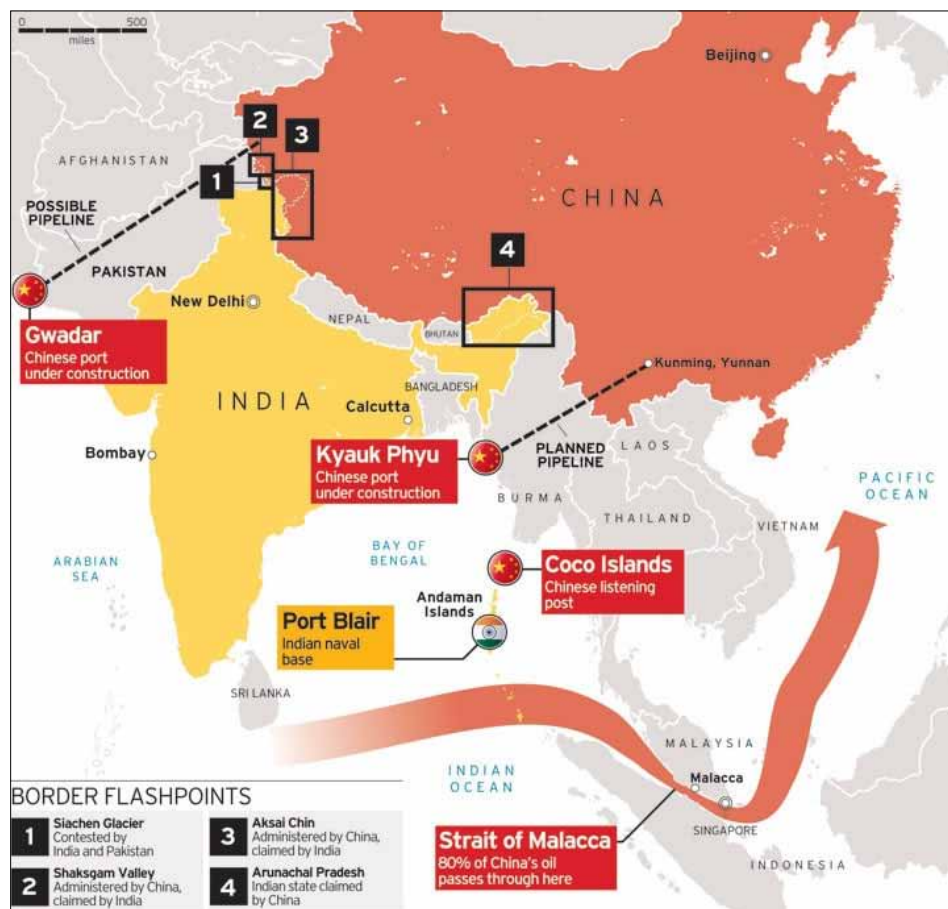
February 2013

“The Chinese Navy’s activities in the Indian Ocean region need to be monitored as closely as we monitor Pakistani-based terrorist moves.”

OE Watch Commentary: In late January the Pakistan cabinet formally agreed to hand over operations responsibility of Gwadar Port to China. Prior to China, the Port of Singapore Authority (PSA) International controlled it. However, due to PSA International and the Pakistan Navy falling out over land transfers, security issues, and a lack of infrastructure, PSA asked to withdraw from the contract.

Sixty percent of China’s energy comes through the Strait of Hormuz. The authors of these three articles point out that having control over Gwadar gives China the added security for its flow of energy, should a conflict arise in the region. However, they believe there are potential negative implications for India.

The transfer of control to China has India concerned that the move puts into place China’s famed “string of pearls” strategy. While each article points to various concerns and perceptions that India has, the authors of the third article do not seem to perceive China’s control over Gwadar as an immediate threat, pointing out that India’s geography, coupled with the strength of its navy and air force, is sufficient enough to counter anything China’s navy will put out. However, the authors go on to explain that with China’s economic and military growth, it could be a different scenario in 15 to 20 years. The author of the second article demonstrates more urgency in the situation by writing, “We need a strong 200 ship Indian Navy, inclusive of 12 tactical nuclear submarines (SSNs) and 500 aircraft. In addition, we need allies,



Map reflecting various areas in dispute., Via <http://www.marketoracle.co.uk>

Source: Indrani Bagchi, “India Irked as China Gets Pak Port,” The Times of India Online,” February 2, 2013, <http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2013-02-02/india/36703173_1_gwadar-china-s-overseas-port-holdings-south-china-sea>.

India Irked as China Gets Pak Port

China has already encountered opposition from Baloch people, who have objected to the Chinese taking over their traditional lands. And as the transition in Afghanistan draws near, that region, specially Quetta, which apparently houses top Taliban leaders, is likely to see more violence.

...Pakistan expects China to turn Gwadar into a naval base. However, China has its work cut out. A container terminal, rail and road links from the port across Balochistan

Continued: China's New Control over Gwadar Port Sparks Concern from India

among like-minded maritime nations of the Indo-Pacific Region."

However, it is not an easy move for China. As the first article points out, the security situation in Balochistan has been worsening and China has already encountered opposition from Baloch people, who feel the country is taking over its traditional lands. The author of this article believes that as the transition in Afghanistan draws near, there will likely be more violence in the area. End OE Watch Commentary (Hurst)

would need to be built, before China can take advantage of the port itself.

...In a conflict, it would be easy to shut off China's energy supplies. But not if they can be routed through Gwadar where Pakistan Navy can also add to the security.

According to recent figures, over 60% of China's imported oil travels through the Straits of Hormuz. Having Gwadar under its command would change the security dynamics for China.

From the security point of view, India could find itself considerably constrained. It's not for nothing that India has ramped up its relations with Oman, though there is no security presence there yet. India has been pushing to develop the Iranian port of Chahbahar, but that remains a long-term project.

Source: Arun Kumar Singh, "Dragon at Gwadar," The Asian Age Online, February 15, 2013, <<http://www.asianage.com/columnists/dragon-gwadar-947>>.

Dragon at Gwadar

...from Gwadar, there's a proposed rail, road link and pipeline to transport oil and other goods to China, thus avoiding the Malacca and Singapore straits which can be closed during wartime or are vulnerable to piracy.

The Chinese are not just helping Pakistan build the Gwadar port, but have provided practically all the funding.

These developments, when seen along with the Chinese-built ports in Hambantotha (Sri Lanka) and new terminals at Chittagong and Sonadiya port (both in Bangladesh), and China's move into the Maldives (where it's reportedly providing "security assistance"), indicate troubled times ahead for India, as they complete the final links in the Chinese "string of pearls" strategy — to safeguard its sea lanes for energy imports, encircle India and dominate the Indian Ocean region.

It will take China about 20 years to convert the Gwadar port into a full-fledged naval base comprising facilities to repair warships and submarines, set up ammunition dumps for arming them, and build a suitable airfield for maritime surveillance and interdiction using drones and aircraft. And it is true that in the event of war, the Gwadar port and its installations could be destroyed by the Indian Navy and Air Force (as well as the US Navy), using land attack cruise missiles and fighter aircraft, but such an action against China and Pakistan — two nuclear powers — would have serious repercussions.

... "In the event of war with India, Pakistan will not hesitate to invite the Chinese Navy to Gwadar".

...The Chinese Navy's activities in the Indian Ocean region need to be monitored as closely as we monitor Pakistani-based terrorist moves.

The time for fence sitting is over. We need a strong 200 ship Indian Navy, inclusive of 12 tactical nuclear submarines (SSNs) and 500 aircraft. In addition we need allies, amongst like-minded maritime nations of the Indo-Pacific Region, and we need to take bold decisions befitting a nation which will have the third largest GDP in the world by 2030.

(continued)

Continued: China's New Control over Gwadar Port Sparks Concern from India

Source: Manoj Joshi and Gautam Data, "Ring of Dragon Fire," India Today, February 2, 2013, <<http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/gwadar-port-china-pakistan-qamar-zaman-kaira-strait-of-hormuz/1/248577.html>>.

Ring of Dragon Fire: Pakistan's Transfer of Gwadar Port to China is a Significant Addition to the Latter's 'String of Pearls' Created to Contain India

One fanciful interpretation is that China seeks access to places like Gwadar and Sittwe because it can build oil pipelines to its mainland and bypass the Malacca dilemma.

The development of such facilities is not an immediate threat to India because our geography, as well as the strength of the Indian Navy and Indian Air Force, is sufficient to counter anything the Chinese Navy can put up.

But this is just the beginning. The Chinese economy and military acquisitions are outpacing India greatly and in another 15 or 20 years the situation could be different.

Beijing's diplomacy ... is directed towards offsetting Indian influence among its neighbours through high-profile economic assistance and infrastructure projects.

The Strategic Implications of Chinese Companies Going Global

By COL Heino Klinck, U.S. Army; Edited by Cindy Hurst, FMSSO

China's overseas direct investment (ODI) has become one of the biggest economic stories of the 21st century. In a relatively short time span, China has become the number one overseas investor amongst developing countries as well as the world's sixth largest overseas investor overall with \$150 billion invested in foreign markets. This marks a development of strategic significance with implications that go beyond simple economics. This paper explores China's economic and political strategies of going global as well as the geo-political implications for national security in political, economic, and diplomatic terms for the United States and other countries.

<http://fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/Collaboration/FAO/Strategic-Implications.pdf>

Cobra Gold: Chinese See Threat and Strategic Isolation in Annual US-Thai-led Joint Military Exercises

17 February 2013

“Using these military exercises and using Thailand, the United States can control the nations of Southeast Asia.”

OE Watch Commentary: *This Chinese account of Cobra Gold, the annual US-Thai-led joint military exercise, takes umbrage with the United States’ refusal to invite China to participate, despite inviting what it deems to be every other major East and Southeast Asian nation. (It should be noted, however, that China was invited to observe.) The article implies that the exercise is designed to intimidate China by showcasing the US’ strategic military cooperation with these other nations, some of which might otherwise remain neutral. The article describes the strategic military operations carried out as part of Cobra Gold as laying the groundwork for a “potential [regional] multi-national force.” It is implied that such force would be used to combat China and contain Chinese interests. Furthermore, the article sees the exercises as demonstrating and ensuring the US military’s capability to project force anywhere throughout Southeast Asia. The article also notes that Burma was, for the first time, invited as an observer nation. This is interpreted as part of a strategic attempt to further isolate China by driving a wedge between China and one of its stalwart allies in the region. **End OE Watch Commentary (Moskowitz)***



US and Thai Marine officers at a beachhead simulation as part of Cobra Gold. , via Global Times.

Source: “Jinse Shejingse Yi Zhenshe Zhongguo, Meijun Bu Huanying Jiefangjun Canjia” (Cobra Gold intended to deter China, US military does not welcome the PLA to participate) Huangqiu Shibao (Global Times – China) 17 February 2013 <http://mil.huanqiu.com/paper/2013-02/3646137.html>

Article:

For 11 days after the curtain rises in Chiang Mai, the US and Thailand will co- lead the 2013 ‘Cobra Gold’ joint military exercise, featuring 130,000 participating troops from the two host nations, as well as from Japan, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and South Korea. According to Thai military sources, the US’ intention was to invite every significant Asian power outside of China.

‘Cobra Gold’ is by far the largest joint military exercise in the Asia-Pacific Region. America has stressed that the main impetus of the exercise is to coordinate participating nations’ abilities to respond quickly to the outbreak of serious incidents in the region. Furthermore, it is widely accepted that the complicated maneuvers and realistic combat exercises are designed to strengthen these allied nations’ capabilities for joint military action, obviously establishing the model for a potential [regional] multi-national force.

Using these military exercises and using Thailand, the United States can control the nations of Southeast Asia. The joint leadership of ‘Cobra Gold’ serves to reinforce Thai-US bilateral military relations, but at the same time, the majority of the operations are designed, equipped and carried out by the US. Thai operations and strategic concepts merely mimic those of the US.

Continued: Chinese See Threat and Strategic Isolation in Annual US-Thai-led Joint Military Exercises

The operations allow the US to preserve its good relations with the Thai military and maintain a strategic and military foothold within Southeast Asia. If an incident were to suddenly occur in the region, the US could immediately launch large scale operations, giving it the ability to interfere anywhere throughout Southeast Asia.

Another feature of concern is the US' inaugural invitation to Burma to join the exercises as an observer nation...Some analysts believe that US overtures to Burma are part of a strategic plan to encircle and contain China, and that military engagement [as signaled by this invitation] is an early step towards this goal.

High-ranking Thai officers expressed to a Global Times reporter that the US really does not want China to join 'Cobra Gold,' though when China questions the US, the US claims that it is Thailand who does not want China to participate...However, since the US shoulders most of the financial responsibility for these exercises, the decision ultimately rests with the US.



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**

Nuclear Blame: Chinese Cite US Policies as 'Root' of North Korean Nuclear Tests 17 February 2013

“US-North Korean conflict is the root cause...North Korea’s nuclear tests are not aimed at China or even South Korea, but at America.”

OE Watch Commentary: This article in the PLA Daily, the official newspaper of China’s military, rejects criticism in the international media that recent North Korean nuclear tests are the result of failed Chinese policies towards North Korea. The article engages several Chinese experts in international relations, who all make similar points. First, they note that China has no real control over North Korea, which is a sovereign nation that makes its own strategic decisions. Of course, without Chinese economic aid North Korea would likely collapse, and this is the root of most international criticism: China does little to exercise its significant economic and political leverage over North Korea, and its continued economic aid serves to undercut UN sanctions and all other international efforts. Still, the assertion that North Korea does not blindly adhere to Chinese will might possibly be read as an expression of frustration at the Kim Jong-un regime’s failure comply with Chinese wishes.

Second, the experts quoted in the article lay the blame for North Korea’s recent misbehavior solely at the feet of the US. They cite economic sanctions and US hostilities as the main reason that attempts at denuclearization have stalled. The article advocates economic and political engagement, recalling the easing of tensions during the “Sunshine Policy” era of Liberal South Korean President Roh My Hun. The article proposes that the nuclear tests and other recent belligerent actions are indicative of an increasingly insecure, and potentially unstable North Korean regime. The article argues that increased sanctions and threats will only serve to provoke North Korea, causing it to retrench and increase its belligerent activities. **End OE Watch Commentary (Moskowitz)**



Kim Jong-un. , Source via <http://www.thejakartapost.com/>

Source: “Chaoxian Heshiyan: Genyuan Zai Nar?” (North Korean nuclear tests: where is the root?) Jiefangjun Bao (PLA Daily – China) 17 February 2013
http://news.xinhuanet.com/mil/2013-02/17/c_124352987.htm

Article:

Following North Korea’s third underground nuclear test several days ago, many with ulterior motives in the Western press have argued that this decisively shows the failure of Chinese policies towards the DPRK, however Chinese experts have unanimously rejected such slanderous claims. Chinese experts have noted that with regards to the Korean nuclear testing issue, it is the United States that must engage in a period of reflection and rethink its policies. As history makes clear, not only to sanctions and threats rarely convince another country to surrender, on the contrary such strategies typically encourage a country to strengthen its military and dig in its heels.

Shi Yinong, professor of international relations at Renmin University noted that North Korea makes its own strategic decisions, and does not simply act in accordance with Chinese will. North Korea was obliged to stop testing by all parties involved in efforts to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula. That these tests continued only shows the failure of these efforts.

According to [China Academy of Social Sciences Researcher] Tao Wenzhao, “China is a responsible nation, and as a signatory to the Nuclear Nonproliferation

Continued: *Nuclear Blame: Chinese Cite US Policies as 'Root' of North Korean Nuclear Tests*

treaty bears a solemn obligation to the international community in upholding nuclear non-proliferation. This is why China is firmly opposed to the root cause behind North Korea's nuclear tests. This position cannot be misunderstood."

US-North Korean conflict is the 'root cause.' According to [Tsinghua University professor of international relations] Liu Jiangyong, "North Korea's nuclear tests are not aimed at China or even South Korea, but at America. This issue really amounts to the failure of the policies of South Korea, Japan and the US. These nations really ought to reconsider." He believes these nuclear tests illustrate an impending feeling of crisis in North Korea. High-handed policy and economic sanctions will only make North Korea feel increasingly isolated and insecure.

...The North Korean nuclear issue is so complicated mainly because of over 60 years of bad relations between North Korea and the US.

Historically, US and South Korea's 'Sunshine Policy' [of engagement towards North Korea] led to an easing of tensions on the Korean Peninsula and to North Korea considering taking steps towards denuclearization...Sanctions and antagonism just lead North Korea to revert to its old way of doing things as part of a policy of self-preservation.

China promotes acting in accordance with UN guidelines, restarting the 6-party talks and using compromise and negotiation to push forward the cause of denuclearization on the Korean Peninsula. According to [Deputy Director of the China Institute of International Studies] Ruan Zongze, "We must rely on mechanisms of multi-party dialogue to solve the mistrust and hostilities between the US and North Korea. China should continue to play the role of peacemaker, facilitating these talks, as only negotiations can solve the fundamental problems."



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

North Korean Logic

19 January 2013

OE Watch Commentary:

Speculation continues over what prompted North Korea to once again rattle its nuclear saber. One possible motive for this third nuclear weapons test is plans by the North Korean leadership to align its controversial nuclear and missile programs with Russian-Chinese concerns over US plans to create a ballistic missile defense (BMD) system in North East Asia. As the brief excerpt from the attached article suggests, officials in Pyongyang argue that US plans to build this system are part of Washington's hegemonic designs in this part of the world.

*The article suggests that the American BMD system is a key component of the US strategic pivot to Asia, which North Korea claims is designed to contain any possible rival. Its anti-US missile defense propaganda serves to justify its unpopular nuclear and missile tests, reconceptualizing these tests within the framework of that propaganda. The North Korean leadership wants to revive the Cold War paradigm in North East Asia: Russia-China-North Korea vs. US-Japan-South Korea. The success of North Korea's propaganda in the long term will depend on whether China and Russia accept Pyongyang's argument: will they support North Korea's anti-US missile defense stance or draw different conclusions about North Korea's ballistic missile and nuclear aspirations? **End OE Watch Commentary (Kim)***



U.S. Aegis-class destroyer Hopper , via <http://www.navytimes.com>

Source: Ri Hyo'n-to, "Maneuver To Establish Missile Defense System Aimed at Global Hegemony," Rodong Sinmun, 19 January 2013.

DPRK Party Daily on US Missile Defense Program in Asia

In the results of the 8th Russia-China negotiations on strategic security issues that recently ended in Beijing, China, the two countries expressed concern over the maneuvers of the United States running amuck to establish missile defense systems not only in the Asia-Pacific region but also in the rest of the world, and agreed to jointly respond to it...

One can see this as a due response to the United States' maneuver to establish the missile defense system whose danger is increasing day by day.

...The United States has so far advertised that its missile defense system is designed to "protect" the homeland and allies from the "missile attacks" by the "enemies." In recent years, the figures of the US military and political circles have noisily made a great fuss about the non-existent "threats" in the Northeast Asian and the Middle East regions. Here, the "threats" mentioned by the United States mean that our and Iran's ballistic missiles are capable of striking not only neighboring countries but also the US mainland. They claim that a regional missile defense system must be established to hold in check this "threat." Especially, the United States tries to lend credence to its plan to establish a regional missile defense system, insisting that our launch of the artificial earth satellite for peaceful purposes is the launch of a ballistic missile.

This is a sophism that is matchlessly ridiculous.

...If the missile defense system of the United States is truly defensive, it should be limited to the NATO or territories under its jurisdiction. However, the operational scope of the United States' missile defense system covers great powers and strategic bases in the Asia-Pacific region.

Numerous US armed forces are concentrated around the DPRK and its neighborhood. Latest war equipment, including nuclear weapons and missiles, constantly aims at us. Nonetheless, the United States has a different purpose for pressing ahead with the establishment of the missile defense system under the pretext of our fictitious "threat."

It is to further threaten our Republic by force of arms, stifle us at any moment, and contain

Continued: North Korean Logic

great powers in the region. What the United States seeks through the establishment of the missile defense system is world domination. The missile defense system of the United States is not defensive.

The United States, which has already stepped up field deployment in the Northeast Asian region, jointly with Japan, by clinging to the establishment of a missile defense system, is attempting to even bring South Korean puppets into this. It is the United States' strategic calculation that should it involve South Korea -- a part of the Korean peninsula where acute military confrontation exists between the North and the South and where China and Russia are neighboring countries -- in the missile defense system, it can dominate its military competitors and realize its hegemonic ambition in the region....

By forming a powerful missile defense network, the US imperialists are trying to prevent, with military strategic superiority, the emergence of new powers that can stand shoulder to shoulder with them in the Asia-Pacific region and to crush the anti-imperialist and independent countries by force.

...The United States needs means to militarily contain these potential rivals. One of those means is the establishment of a missile defense system for this region.

...The United States' maneuver to establish the missile defense system in Northeast Asia and the Middle East regions evokes strong vigilance from several countries. The US completion of the establishment of MD [missile defense] will naturally compel strategic rivals including China and Russia to bolster nuclear and other strategic armed forces.

The Voice of Russia broadcasting station reported the following, commenting that the United States embarked on establishing a missile defense system to hold China and Russia in check:

"The United States' missile defense system in Asia is reminiscent of a gigantic encirclement net. US military bases stationed in Japan are emerging in the eastern front of this missile defense system. The official purpose of the establishment of the missile defense system is to repel the strike of Iran's nuclear missile. However, it is obvious that it is just an excuse. There is neither an intercontinental ballistic missile nor a nuclear warhead in Iran. The real targets of the US missile defense system can only be the missiles of China and Russia."

The facts substantiate that the United States' maneuver to establish the missile defense system is a factor that sparks off an arms race and seriously threatens and disturbs global peace and security.

...The United States runs amuck with maneuvers to establish the missile defense systems aimed at world domination, but it is bringing about a boomerang effect. The dangerous US maneuvers to establish the missile defense system are bound to meet destruction, being denounced and rejected worldwide.

emphasized, "[The fact] that the DPRK launched a satellite on a means of carriage built with 100 percent indigenous strength and technology is an epoch-making event that gives confidence and courage to all countries of the world intent on utilizing space for common civilization and development."

If our launch of a satellite for peaceful purposes were illegal, all international space treaties would be wrong and all satellite launches carried out by the treaty member countries after their accession to space treaties should be denounced as illegal acts.

Our satellite launch is legitimate also because it is a legitimate exercise of dignified sovereign right.

Sovereignty is a sacred right of all countries and nations aspiring to independently live and develop. It is, in its intrinsic content, a right to establish lines and policies in line with the interest of their people and the circumstances of their own, and a right to resolve all problems in accordance with the demands and reality of their people....

Our satellite launch followed the principle of independence in every respect.

Sovereignty is the life of a country and a nation. Countries and nations that have lost sovereignty are no different from dead men. This is why our Republic struggles now as before with indomitable faith and will that one cannot abandon the sovereignty of the country and nation though one may give up one's life, and [we] launched a satellite for the second time after April this year....

In one word, our Republic's satellite launch is a legitimate exercise of a sovereign right which conforms with international law....

Our Republic will continue exercising the independent right to launch satellites which conforms with international law and the global trend no matter what others may say.

Counter Narcotics Efforts in Central Asia

12 January 2013

“There are a number of security concerns on how the countries of Central Asia will be affected by the withdrawal of NATO forces from Afghanistan in 2014. These concerns have been appearing in the media in recent months, but they are not very specific about how the withdrawal will affect regional security.”

OE Watch Commentary: *There are a number of security concerns regarding how the countries of Central Asia will be affected by the withdrawal of NATO forces from Afghanistan in 2014. These concerns have been appearing in the media in recent months, but they are not very specific about how the withdrawal will affect regional security. The following article offers some insight into one of these issues, drug trafficking, which for Tajikistan has already been a problem for a number of years, let alone what might happen after the withdrawal date.*

The article notes statistics of seizures in 2012 and how they have increased from the previous year. While this is certainly possible, other statistics on drug seizures in Tajikistan from the past several years are incomplete (see: <http://dbroca.uz/?act=seizures>), and the UNODC (United Nations Office on Drug Crime) estimates (from a 2009 report) that the amount of drugs seized compared to the amount that are trafficked is very small (less than five percent, see: http://dbroca.uz/pubs/Compendium_2009.pdf). Looking past the issue of drug seizures, the article mentions other statistics related to trafficking.

In the article the Drug Control Agency (DCA) deputy director acknowledges that trafficking in Tajikistan is largely carried out by the unemployed; the deputy mentions that around 90 percent of those arrested for trafficking are



Deputy director of the Drug Control Agency (DCA), via <http://tojnews.tj/nigaroni-az-nashamandi-dar-poitaxt>

Source: Lekarkin, Igor. “AKH: В незаконный оборот наркотиков вовлечены, в основном, безработные (DCA: the illegal drug trade involves, for the most part, the unemployed),” Asia-Plus, 29 January 2013. <http://www.news.tj/ru/news/akn-v-nezakonnyi-oborot-narkotikov-vovlecheny-v-osnovnom-bezrabotnye>

DCA: the illegal drug trade involves, for the most part, the unemployed

In 2012 seizures of illegal drugs by counternarcotics agencies of Tajikistan increased by 41 percent, “which is a good indicator for us,” said Bunafsha Odinayeva, deputy director of the Drug Control Agency (DCA) at a January 29 press conference. According to the DCA report, the security structures of the country seized well over five tons of narcotics, including heroin (515 kg), raw opium (630 kg), and cannabis (4 tons, 832 kg). Compared with 2011 the volume of drugs seized increased by 41 percent, which, of course, raised questions with journalists at the press conference...

...“What will happen after the (NATO) withdrawal (from Afghanistan in 2014)? We are ready for anything,” said Odinaeva. “It is possible the withdrawal will affect drug smuggling...” It was noted that last year five employees of the DCA were prosecuted... Colonel Ravshanbek Mirzoakhmetov was prosecuted for trafficking 43 kg of heroin...

Who is most often involved in drug trafficking and what pushes people in this path? Largely – they are unemployed. “92 percent of people arrested for drug trafficking – unemployed,” said Odinaeva... “People are pushed into crime for quick profit...” Of all drug-related crimes committed by people in Tajikistan, 39 percent were committed

Continued: Counter Narcotics Efforts in Central Asia

unemployed. The more problematic statistic is the percentage of where drug-related crimes are taking place in the country (largely along the trafficking routes from southern to northern regions). Drug-related crime should be considered among the threats to security for Tajikistan and the region. The withdrawal of NATO forces could exacerbate this issue, but it is a specific threat that is already taking place. End OE Watch Commentary (Stein)

by Dushanbe residents, 31 percent by Sughd Province residents, 18 percent by Khatlon Province residents, 9 percent by residents of the Districts of Republican Subordination, and 3 percent by residents of Gorno-Badakhshan...

The Goals of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and Its Impact on Central Asia and the United States

By Mr. Matt Stein

The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) has been an active terrorist organization in the Central Asia region since its formation in 1998. Its original goal was to overthrow the government of Uzbekistan and establish an Islamic caliphate in the Fergana Valley region. When the terrorist attacks on 9/11 took place, the IMU was operating out of northern Afghanistan. Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) dislodged the IMU from its support areas, and the organization changed its priorities, particularly targeting the government of Uzbekistan. This brief study examines the history, current operations, and goals of the IMU to help determine what threat the organization poses for the governments of Central Asia and for the United States while its forces remain in Afghanistan.

<http://fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/documents/IMU-Goals.pdf>



Google.kg hacked?

30 January 2013

“The hacker could have redirected users to a phishing page and then stolen information.”

OE Watch Commentary: Defacements to websites in Central Asia are not uncommon events (see: June 2012 OE Watch, “The Official Website of the Ministry of Defense is Restored After a Possible Hacking, the Department Insists It Was «Preventative Maintenance»,” and December 2012 OE Watch, “Anonymous Did Not Appear Unexpectedly – Is the General Prosecutor Making the Sign of the Cross?”), but a recent defacement demonstrated a more serious vulnerability. The following article is about the recent attack on google.kg (the version of Google for Kyrgyzstan) that took place on 30 January.

The article mentions how the hacker (nicknamed MCA-CRB) behind the attack conducted something similar on Romanian DNS servers in November 2012. In that attack hacker MCA-CRB did not hijack google.ro (Google Romania, as well as several other .ro websites), but conducted a poisoning attack on Internet Service Providers (ISPs) in Romania. The same thing appears to have happened to google.kg. An analyst with Kaspersky wrote about how the Romanian attack may have been conducted (see: http://www.securelist.com/en/blog/208194028/Google_ro_and_other_RO_domains_victims_of_a_DNS_hijacking_attack).

Most importantly, the Kaspersky analyst mentions how the attack could have been more than just a defacement. The hacker could have redirected users to a phishing page and then stolen information. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the attack on google.kg is that the hacker did not take credit for it on Zone H (a database where hackers can send in screen captures of the websites they have defaced). The hacker’s profile shows credit for the attack on Romanian sites, and even more recently on sites for San Marino, but not for Kyrgyzstan (see: <http://www.zone-h.org/archive/notifier=MCA-CRB>). This might mean less attention for the ISPs in Kyrgyzstan that were attacked, but it proved a vulnerability in their system nonetheless. **End OE Watch Commentary (Stein)**



Source: Iskender, Bektur. “В проблемах кыргызской версии «Гугла» виноваты DNS-серверы в Кыргызстане (The problems of the Kyrgyz version of Google are the fault of DNS-servers in Kyrgyzstan),” Kloop, 30 January 2013., <http://kloop.kg/blog/2013/01/30/v-problemah-ky-rgy-zskoj-versii-gugla-vinovaty-dns-servera-v-ky-rgy-zstane/>

The problems of the Kyrgyz version of Google are the fault of DNS-servers in Kyrgyzstan

Google, which owns the most popular search engine in the world, confirmed the problems with access to its Kyrgyz version and said that “servers in Kyrgyzstan were responsible for redirecting all internet addresses.” The (Kyrgyz) version of Google, at google.kg, was not available in the morning on January 30 – instead of the search engine a black page opened with an inscription that read “Total Control By MCA-CRB, Algerian Hacker.”

...“The servers in Kyrgyzstan were responsible for redirecting addresses ending in .kg, not servers belonging to Google,” – wrote the press office of the Russian branch of Google. The DNS servers in Kyrgyzstan are controlled by the Internet Service Provider “AsiaInfo”, the country’s only domain registrar. Users of Twitter noticed that in addition to the domain google.kg, similar problems arose with other addresses, including microsoft.kg.

...One of the features of attacks on DNS-servers is that the website will appear to not have any problems for a long time for many users. This was the case in Kyrgyzstan – some users did not have problems with google.kg... Later in the day on January 30, google.kg was fully restored. A similar problem in November 2012 faced the Romanian version of Google, when it was attacked by the hacker MCA-CRB...

Kazakhstan's Internal Threats

7 February 2013

“It should not come as a surprise, then, that a conference on recent conflicts and the role of special forces would take place in Kazakhstan.”

OE Watch Commentary: *It seems as though the security threats to Kazakhstan in 2011-2012 have had an impact on the strategic thinking of the country's military and security forces. Special operations units were tasked with eliminating extremist groups in several operations that took place across Kazakhstan in 2011-2012. Government security forces took casualties, but eliminated the threat in each of the operations.*

It should not come as a surprise, then, that a conference on recent conflicts and the role of special forces would take place in Kazakhstan. The following article notes how the theme of the conference is relevant, but that it also misses an important aspect of internal security. This article is an honest look at one of the problems of dealing with internal security, namely that corruption in the Interior Ministry is damaging overall efforts to combat threats. The author makes an excellent overall point, but it might be worth examining and separating the internal threats into long- and short-term problems.

*In the short term special operations units, particularly those from the Interior Ministry or the National Security Committee (KNB), have proven that they are already capable of dealing with threats (from militant or extremist groups). Dealing with corruption within the Interior Ministry as a whole may take significantly longer. The fact that the article appears in a government-funded newspaper like Liter might be a sign that the government acknowledges the issue. Ultimately, it will be worth watching to see what steps are taken to solve the problem. **End OE Watch Commentary (Stein)***

Kazakhstan's Regional Command Structure



Regional Structure of Armed Forces of the Republic of Kazakhstan, via <http://www.wikipedia.org>

Source: Satpaev, Dosym. “Экспертсовет: Щит и меч (Expert opinion: the Shield and the Sword),” Liter, 7 February 2013., http://www.liter.kz/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=12511&Itemid=2

Expert opinion: the Shield and the Sword

Recently, a conference took place that was put together by leaders of Kazakhstan's Ground Forces, titled “Military conflicts of the modern historical period. The role and place of special operations forces to achieve military and political objectives.” The theme is very important considering that at the moment the risk of external aggression of a third country might be lower compared to the threat of an attack of “irregular” armed groups that conduct “asymmetrical” warfare. Not surprisingly, the security of Kazakhstan today depends not only on the military, but also on the partnership of all the security structures...

As incidents last year showed, new challenges for the security of the country are not only external, but internal. The situation at the Arkankergen border post, the strange suicide of the border guard officer, and a high-profile corruption scandal in the Ministry of Defense are all disturbing indicators of vulnerabilities in the national security of the country...

...In order to effectively combat external and internal threats, all security services must be internally strong...according to official data the Interior Ministry took first place in the registration of corruption charges. The former head of the ministry, Kairbek Suleymenov acknowledged in an interview that “out of ten random people entering into service, precisely half associate the ministry with commercial activities.” There is a feeling that the main threat to the national security of Kazakhstan is corrupt officials in uniform, which cause more damage than foreign spies or saboteurs...

...Six years ago in Sochi I observed how Islam Karimov announced the return of his country to the CSTO (the decision appeared to be a “thank you” to Moscow for its support of Uzbek leadership in Andijan), and stood next to a senior Russian official, who said quietly that Uzbekistan drags its problems into the organization. He was right.

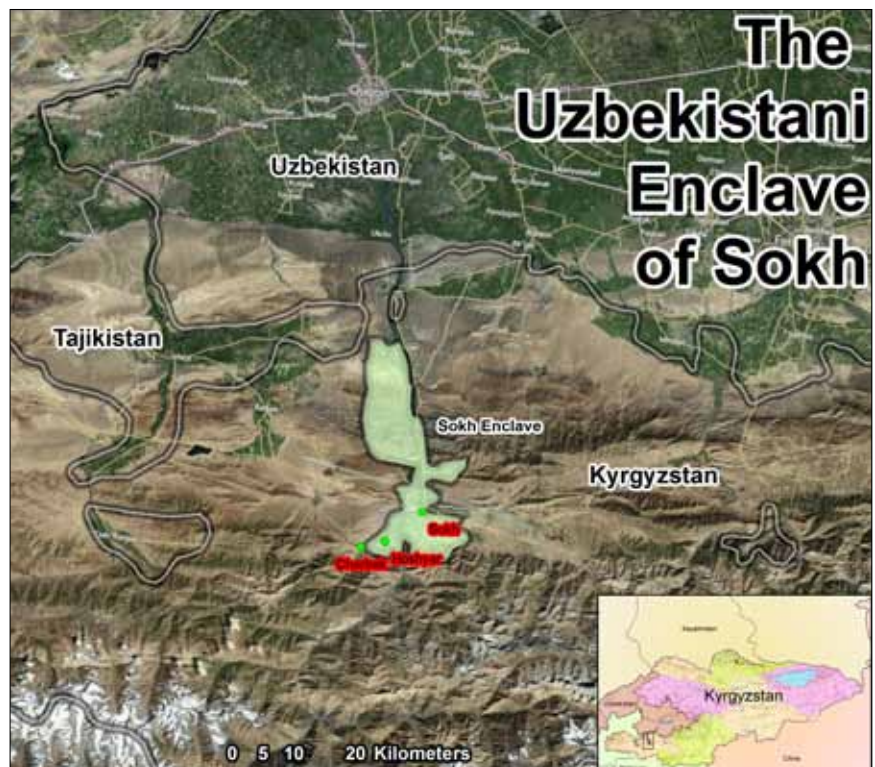
"Pure Kyrgyz" Supporters Respond to Ethnic Violence in Sokh

24 December 2012

“Some Kyrgyz politicians believe that the events that took place in Sokh were arranged and planned in advance despite that they realized the impermissibility of transgressing the frontiers of Kyrgyzstan, and their aggressive attempts to take hostages in Kyrgyzstan who resided Charbak village were obviously planned somewhere beyond.”

OE Watch Commentary: On 5 January 2013 residents from the town of Hoshiyar in the Uzbeki enclave of Sokh (see map) attacked Kyrgyz border guards they believed entered Sokh territory. According to Bishkek, the Kyrgyz troops responded by firing warning shots into the air, but Uzbekistan claims five residents were injured by the shots. On 6 January about 1000 residents of Sokh crossed the border into the Kyrgyz village of Charbak, took more than 10 Kyrgyz hostages (along with their vehicles), and tried to seize weapons from the Kyrgyz border guards at their post. In the ensuing days Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan blocked road access to each other's territories, which led to food shortages and the stranding of hundreds of citizens, before the hostages were freed and the conflict defused.

While Uzbek media was quiet about the incident, Kyrgyz media covered it widely, uniformly critical of Uzbekistan. An op-ed article published on fakt.kg on 24 January said that some Kyrgyz politicians believe that the incident was planned in advance by Uzbek officials who want to sow discord between Kyrgyzstan and its neighbors, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan (Sokh is more than 95% ethnic Tajik). The aim of the officials would be to pave the way for an Uzbek military intervention in Kyrgyzstan to claim the territory between Sokh, Uzbekistan's other enclaves and Uzbekistan proper, or to further the divide between ethnically mixed southern Kyrgyzstan and predominantly ethnic Kyrgyz northern Kyrgyzstan.



Source: Куурчак саясат (Puppet Politics) fakt.kg, 24 Jan 2013. http://fakt.kg/view_content.php?cat=12&content=11730

Original Article (excerpted)

“Debates related to the Transit Center at Manas have raised the issue that the world's dominant states play a dangerous game in order to create tensions between Central Asian states that inevitably could lead to military conflicts.

Complex problems were inherited from former Soviet Union and still remain a thorny issue. In addition, both Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan could not resolve problems related to enclaves and delimitation of frontiers. According to Uzbek president Islam Karimov “peace keeping in the Central Asian region is the top priority and some politicians intend to divide these countries”. He added in a speech that people are fully aware about possible conflicts and threats. Karimov stressed not to accept

Continued: “Pure Kyrgyz” Supporters Respond to Ethnic Violence in Sokh

However, the author of the op-ed also noted that Uzbek President Islam Karimov is expecting to reap “maximum benefits” – mostly military supplies – following the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2014, and that destabilizing Kyrgyzstan would not be in his interest now. According to the author, once Karimov has the new supplies his strategy could change, so his words should not be trusted. The author also argues that Uzbekistan will become a puppet of the U.S., while at the same time Kyrgyzstan is becoming a puppet of Russia, with Russia pulling the strings behind Kyrgyzstan’s opposition to the U.S. Transit Center in Manas, Kyrgyzstan.

Fakt.kg was one of several dozen Kyrgyz-language websites accredited by the Kyrgyz Central Election Committee in November 2012 to report on local elections held nationwide on 25 November 2012. Writers for this website seem to support the ultranationalist “pure Kyrgyz” movement, which has gained adherents in northern Kyrgyzstan since the ethnic clashes between Kyrgyz and Uzbeks in southern Kyrgyzstan in 2010. The leaders of this movement seek to take advantage of ethno-nationalism among ethnic Kyrgyz for political gain, but this has heightened tensions between Kyrgyz and Uzbeks in Kyrgyzstan.

With ultranationalist voices on the rise in Kyrgyzstan, it is likely that interethnic relations will continue to suffer following the Sokh incident. Meanwhile, a militarily bloated Uzbekistan after 2014 may not take such a cautious approach to resolving future conflicts in Sokh or other Uzbek enclaves in Kyrgyzstan. It is important to consider that the leader who replaces 75-year-old Islam Karimov as Uzbekistan’s next president may find it politically expedient to exploit nationalism in Uzbekistan in a way similar to the “pure Kyrgyz” movement in Kyrgyzstan. This could force the leader to intervene to protect ethnic Uzbeks in Kyrgyzstan. **End OE Watch Commentary (Zenn)**

Note: To read about Ata-Jurt (Fatherland) Party leader Kamchibek Tashiev’s controversial statements that Kyrgyzstan’s leaders should be of “pure Kyrgyz” parentage, please read the following article: <http://kloop.info/2012/02/12/kyrgyzstan-tashiev-s-nationalist-statements-anger-the-government-and-human-rights-advocates/>



Cartoon from fakt.kg depicting Kyrgyzstan’s President Atambayev as a puppet of Russia and Uzbekistan’s President Karimov as a puppet of the U.S. http://fakt.kg/view_content.php?cat=12&content=11730

inadequate recommendations from different outside mediators. “These issues are relevant to us (Central Asian states) only and we can resolve them through reasonable negotiations and actions. However, there are some groups pursuing the goal to exacerbate multilateral and bilateral conflicts among us... In sum, the five Central Asian countries have to respect our independence and solve our own internal problems. We need to remember we have same religion, so there is no reason for us to split up.”

These spoken words were widely reflected in the media as well as social networks countrywide. However, the leftover military weapons that the USA plans to leave in Uzbekistan could change his mind, and he might turn into an obvious “US puppet.” There is a high risk in relying on those spoken words by Islam Karimov. One of the proven pieces of evidence is the flow of information from top secret meetings recently held in the Uzbek Security Council. Some Kyrgyz politicians believe that the events that took place in Sokh were arranged and planned in advance despite that they realized the impermissibility of transgressing the frontiers of Kyrgyzstan, and their aggressive attempts to take hostages in Kyrgyzstan who resided Charbak village were obviously planned somewhere beyond. Thus, these promises and the aforementioned statement are unreliable.

Russian Military Mulls Further Organizational Reforms

13 January 2013

OE Watch Commentary: The ouster of Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov in November 2012 has led to speculation that the new leadership would roll back some of the massive reforms of the unpopular defense minister. Serdyukov made large personnel cuts, eliminated partially manned division/regimental units in favor of fully ready brigades, and cut the General Staff, shifting some its responsibilities to the Ministry of Defense.

Among his most controversial reforms was the restructuring of the organizational and administrative control of the Armed Forces. The Russian Federation had been divided into six military districts, but the commanders of these military districts did not operationally control the vast majority of units on their territory. The operational control of military units had typically resided with the service commander (Ground Forces, Navy, etc.). Serdyukov merged the six military districts into four, which would also function as "Joint Strategic Commands," by giving operational control of most units to the military district commander. Pundits pointed out that this reform, like several others, was designed to make the Russian Armed Forces look more like the Armed Forces of the United States, where operational control resides with the regional combatant commander, while administrative control resides with the branch of service commander.

Three months into the appointment of Serdyukov's successor, Sergei Shoigu, it appears that there is little chance that this particular reform will be rolled back. The excerpt from the following article discusses the authors' proposal for further expanding upon the concept of splitting operational and administrative control functions, an interesting proposition considering the high value that the Russian military has traditionally held for the unity of command principle. **End OE Watch Commentary (Bartles)**

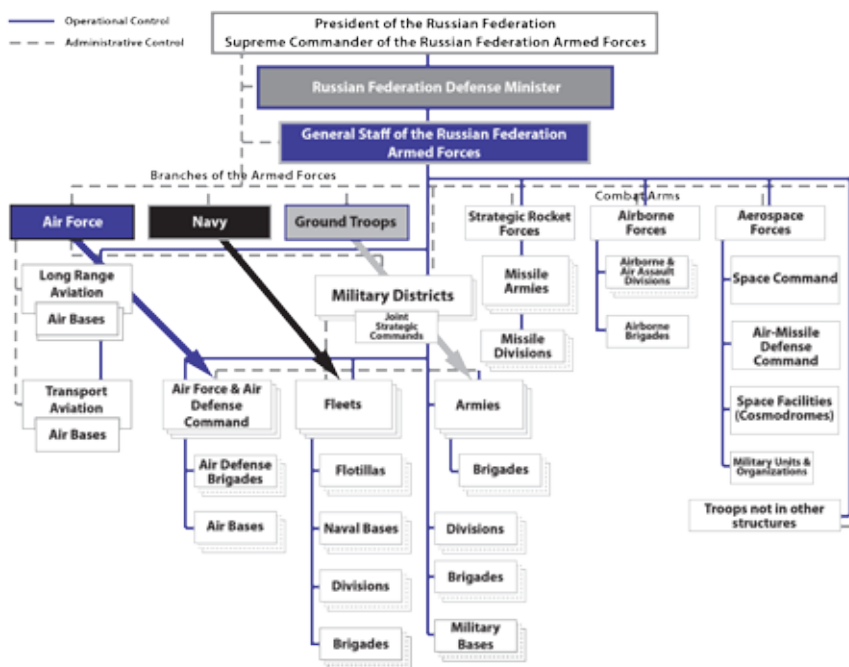


Fig. 1. Structure of the Russian Federation Armed Forces and variant of delimiting command and control functions as of 2012

Source: Vladimir Ostankov and Petr Lapunov, "Zigzags of Organizational Development: Armed Forces Structure Should Be Optimized Based on Functional Specialization," *Voyenno-Promyshlennyy Kuryer Online*, 13 February 2013, <http://www.vpk-news.ru/articles/14430>, accessed 13 February 2013.

Armed Forces Structure Should Be Optimized Based on Functional Specialization

...RF Armed Forces branches and combat arms are headed by commanders-in-chief (commanders), whose status predetermines centralization of command and control based on the principle of one-man command. The corresponding CINC has the necessary powers for organizing combat employment of all his subordinate forces and assets. At the same time, main commands also are responsible for development and comprehensive support of their troops, and these are administrative functions. Thus, until recently both operational as well as administrative functions rested simultaneously with commanders-in-chief (commanders) of RF Armed Forces branches and arms.

Current Version

The principle of delimiting rights and responsibility among military command and control entities into operational and administrative functions at a strategic level has been implemented since 2010 (Fig. 1). Interbranch groupings of troops (forces) and the entities for operational control of them were established -- four

Continued: Russian Military Mulls Further Organizational Reforms

combined strategic commands (OSK's). Combined formations [obyedineniye], formations [soyedineniye], and units of Ground Troops, Air Force, and Navy were directly subordinated to them.

It follows from the above RF Armed Forces organizational structure that the process of delimiting functions has not been completed. Commanders of combat arms still retain operational and administrative control functions.

In addition, the presence of the Air Force in this structure as well as of a separate combat arm, the Air Defense Troops, which certain experts propose to elevate to the rank of a branch of the Armed Forces, indicates a violation of the principle of unity of responsibility for development of forces and assets intended for waging armed warfare in the aerospace sphere. This inevitably will entail a duplication of missions, diffusion of resources, and blurring of responsibility in a sphere whose importance is disputed by no one. Unceasing discussions about the place, missions, and order of battle of this new combat arm are confirmation of this...

Rational Approach

But how to avoid the crude mistakes and senseless waste of resources and arrive at an optimal Armed Forces structure?

It is generally known that the principle of coordinated employment of troops and forces belonging to different branches (arms) is the basis of modern armed warfare. In this case the advantages of troop groupings inherent to combat systems are noted to the greatest extent. This is not just the sum of qualities of branches and combat arms. Such a system manifests emergence, i.e., properties appear which are not had by any one of its component elements taken individually. In other words, the value of interbranch groupings of troops (forces) increases in modern armed warfare, especially if we are talking about the strategic scale.

The substantiated nature of this conclusion conforms with the position of Academy of Military Sciences President General of the Army Makhmut Gareyev. In particular, he notes that active, coordinated actions of all branches of the Armed Forces assume decisive importance in the overall system of armed warfare. In his opinion, this circumstance must be reflected in the new Armed Forces organizational structure.

Indeed, considering the present-day nature of armed warfare, armed forces of the majority of foreign states have established entities for operational control of them already in peacetime. And as a rule, operational and administrative functions are not combined. That principle

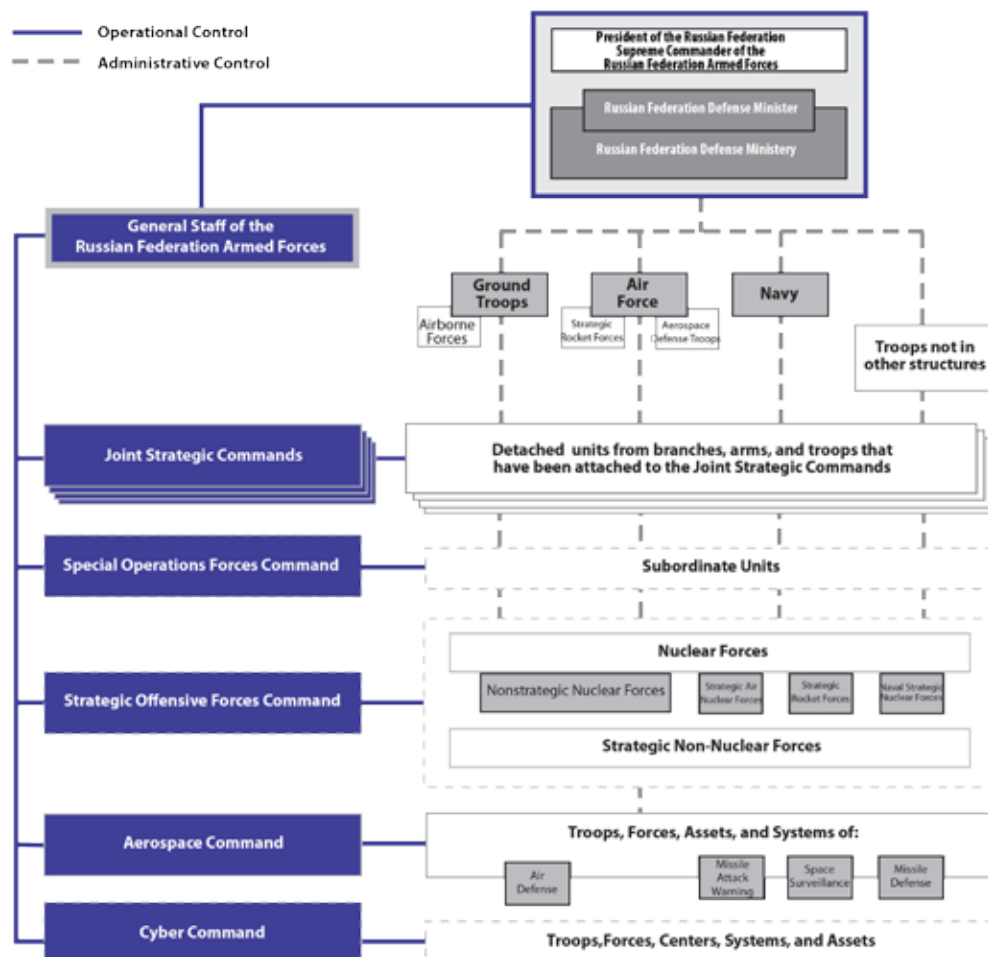


Fig. 2. Variant of the organizational structure of the Russian Federation Armed Forces

Continued: Russian Military Mulls Further Organizational Reforms

is realized in organizational development of armed forces of the United States and NATO countries. It should be emphasized that dividing operational and administrative functions also is an effective mechanism allowing assurance of one-man command of interbranch groupings of troops (forces)...

Division of Functions

In our opinion, in addition to the commands already established -- four OSK's and the VKO -- it is advisable to create a number of new ones in the RF Armed Forces structure: Strategic Offensive Forces (Deterrence Forces), Special Operations Forces, a Cyber Command, and certain others. Naturally, there must be corresponding combat systems under each of them.

A variant of the proposed RF Armed Forces organizational structure is depicted in Fig. 2. It is based primarily on logic and on principles of organizational development and military art. They should be viewed as a series of ideas which require further systems study involving Defense Ministry scientific research organizations. Nevertheless, this organizational structure permits overcoming the long-standing contradiction between the interbranch nature of employment of troops (forces) and assets and their branch subordination. This provision is confirmed by the experience of previously including the VKS and RKO Troops in the RVSN, which led to the appearance of an intermediate control echelon -- the branch Main Command -- and reduced promptness in making decisions and communicating missions.

The advisability of creating a system of operational and administrative control entities is motivated by one other circumstance. It precludes the possibility of combat arms being reoriented to execute missions in support of one branch of the Armed Forces to the detriment of others, which took place in the recent past. It will permit relieving the RF Armed Forces General Staff of tasks of day-to-day direction of troops not inherent to it by transferring the tasks to administrative control entities. In addition, real conditions will be created for transition to a three-branch structure, which the majority of experts do not dispute.

The first condition is to include the RVSN and VKO Troops as combat arms in the Air Force (Aerospace Troops). That said, only those departments and services of the RVSN Command and VKO Troops Command performing administrative functions should be included in its Main Command. Conditions thereby will be created for coordinated organization and development of troops and combat systems intended for actions in the aerospace sphere, as well as for the organization and accomplishment of special kinds of support.

The other departments and services of those combat arms together with operational personnel must be made part of Strategic Offensive Forces and VKO operational commands.

The second condition is inclusion of the VDV as a combat arm in the Ground Troops. That said, it is advisable to give the Ground Troops Main Command only those departments and services carrying out administrative functions as departments and services of the Airborne Troops.

Uncommitted departments, services, and operational personnel carrying out operational functions can be the basis of the Special Operations Forces Command...

Putin Strengthens Ties with Lebanon and Assists the Country with Syrian refugees

5 February 2013

OE Watch Commentary: On 21 January Lebanese president Michel Suleiman came to Moscow on a three-day visit to meet with Russian President Vladimir Putin and other senior Russian officials. Their meetings focused on improving bilateral ties, and on Syria in particular. In addition, Suleiman received an award from Russia's International Foundation for Unity of Orthodox Christian Nations for consolidating Christian values in Lebanese society.¹

The last time Suleiman came to Moscow was in November 2010, when Suleiman met with then-president Dmitry Medvedev to strengthen ties between the two countries. Suleiman obtained considerable military aid from Russia during that visit, including Mi-24 helicopters, T-72 tanks, 130-mm cannons, and artillery shells.²

Russia-Lebanon relations are an important piece of Russia's Middle East policy, particularly with regard to the current Syrian crisis. The following excerpts from two articles provide different perspectives about Suleiman's Moscow visit in January and help put together this picture from the Russian point of view.

The first article, by special correspondent Andrey Kolesnikov in the liberal and business-focused Kommersant, is about Putin's offer to help Lebanon with Syrian refugees. Kolesnikov reported from the presidential residence in Novo-Ogaryovo, where Putin met with Suleiman. The second is by Kseniya Redichkina in the Kremlin's official parliamentary newspaper, Parlamentskaya Gazeta, about



Source: Nikolai Nikolayevich Bobkin, "Сирийский конфликт: Иран – союзник России (Syrian conflict: Iran—Russia's Ally)," Mir-politika.ru (World-politics), 4 January 2013. <http://mir-politika.ru/2971-siriiskiy-konflikt-iran-soyuznik-rossii.html>

Vladimir Putin will help Lebanon with Money and Tents

Source: Andrei Kolesnikov, "Владимир Путин поможет Ливану деньгами и палатками. Чтобы решить проблему беженцев из Сирии (Vladimir Putin will help Lebanon with Money and Tents)," Kommersant (The Businessman), 24 January 2013. <http://kommersant.ru/doc/2111062>

Yesterday Russian President Vladimir Putin met with Lebanese President Michel Suleiman and announced that Russia is ready to allocate funds to Syrian refugees in Lebanon, and also said that "it would be good" if other countries followed Lebanon's example of not interfering Syria's internal affairs and affairs other countries....

Lebanese president was in Moscow on a private visit: he came to receive an award from the International Foundation for Unity of Orthodox Christian Nations....

The Lebanese president also spoke about Syria:

- Management of Lebanon adopted the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of Syria in order to protect our country from potential negative consequences, but, unfortunately, the continuation of the crisis, the complexity of the situation with Syrian refugees who are fleeing the country by tens of thousands (mainly in Lebanon – A.K.), places a heavy burden on our country. Now the number of Syrian refugees in Lebanon had reached just over 200 thousand. We do not know how many Syrian refugees will be on our territory. Lebanon has no capacity, neither material nor geographical, to take in such a

Continued: Putin Strengthens Ties with Lebanon and Assists the Country with Syrian refugees

Federation Council (upper parliamentary house) Speaker Valentina Matviyenko's meeting with Suleiman.

Kolesnikov notes that Suleiman has been following the principle of non-interference in Syrian affairs since the uprising began in March 2011. Putin said in his meeting with Suleiman that it "would be good" if other countries followed Lebanon's example.

According to Kolesnikov, the majority of refugees fleeing Syria go to Lebanon. Suleiman told Putin that Lebanon does not have the capacity to take care of these refugees. Yet, the author comments that assisting Lebanon is perhaps more important to Russia than to Lebanon. Moreover, while Suleiman did not directly ask for material aid, it appears Putin pushed for it—if Lebanon buys some Russian weapons first.

Redichkina's article adds a bit more context with the report on Matviyenko's meeting with Suleimanov, where the two stressed the need to improve Russia-Lebanon ties. Redichkina adds that Russians have a connection to Lebanon that goes back to the 19th century, with many Lebanese students matriculating in Russian schools every year, and several thousand Russians currently residing in Lebanon.

*Kolesnikov's article shows that Putin will not only maintain his position on Syria, but will also push other countries, including Lebanon, to do the same. In this context, Redichkina's article explains Russia's historical ties to Lebanon and confirms that Russia and Lebanon will keep working on strengthening their ties. **End OE Watch Commentary (Borshchevskaya)***

1. Vladimir Putin and President of Lebanon Michel Sleiman discussed opportunities for developing bilateral cooperation and exchanged views on issues currently on the international agenda, January 23, 2013 <http://eng.kremlin.ru/news/4884>. See also Naharnet Newsdesk, "Suleiman Heads to Moscow to Receive Award, Meet Top Officials." January 19, 2013, <http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/68912-suleiman-heads-to-moscow-on-saturday-to-receive-award-meet-top-officials>
2. See "Hariri secures significant military aid from Russia," The Daily Star of Lebanon, November 16, 2010, <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Politics/Nov/16/Hariri-secures-significant-military-aid-from-Russia.ashx#axzz2KbDMC9L3>

number of refugees.

It seemed that the president of Lebanon can now ask Russia for money: our country has the capacity both material, and especially geographical. Moreover, to provide Lebanon such assistance perhaps is more important for Russia than for Lebanon: no one can reproach in our country, and yet the gesture would have clear meaning.

But the president of Lebanon asked for non-material support.

- Therefore we would ask Russia to assist in organizing an international conference to on the issue of Syrian refugees, to discuss how to help countries hosting the Syrians - finished Michel Suleiman.

Meanwhile, the Russian president chose to understand his colleague literally. First, he said, of course, it would be nice if certain other countries followed Lebanon's example of non-interference in Syria's internal affairs. And then he took too-strong an interest in asking how much Lebanon spends on Syrian refugees.

Suleiman did not consider this [questioning] interference in Lebanon's the internal affairs of Lebanon, but found it difficult to answer, because he was unprepared for the question....

- But how much money precisely goes to taking care of the refugees, you cannot say now? – Mr. Putin asked anxiously.

No, the president of Lebanon could not. But it was unnecessary. Vladimir Putin could still finish for him.

- I have a proposal - he said. - Russia is ready to help Lebanon in this regard. Let do some work on this issue, and our experts will find out how much money you need.

Part of these resources the Russian president promised to compensate with in the form of humanitarian relief supplies: tents, food ... But a part, apparently, will be given in money.

If, for example, Lebanon first buy a little bit of Russian weapons....

Valentina Matviyenko: Friendship Russia and Lebanon will grow, despite the potential political or economic difficulties

Source: Kseniya Redichkina, "Валентина Матвиенко: Дружба России и Ливана будет крепнуть, несмотря на возможные политические или экономические трудности (Valentina Matviyenko: Friendship Russia and Lebanon will grow, despite the potential political or economic difficulties)," *Parlamentskaya Gazeta* (Parliamentary Newspaper), 22 January 2013. <http://www.pnp.ru/news/detail/9789>

Continued: Putin Strengthens Ties with Lebanon and Assists the Country with Syrian refugees

Federation Council Speaker Valentina Matviyenko had a meeting with the President of Lebanon Michel Sleiman. During his presidency, his second visit to Russia. The first was in February 2010.

The speaker welcomed the President and his delegation....

“Your visit to Russia suggests that the governments of Russia and Lebanon attach great importance to the development of friendship between the two countries - especially inter-parliamentary relations,” said the head of the Federation Council. She also noted that parliamentary elections will soon take place in Lebanon and expressed the hope that, regardless of the results, the relationship with Russia will only gain momentum.

But, unfortunately, there are, in the speaker’s opinion, aspects of relations between our countries that hinder the strengthening of political and economic relations... The speaker also expressed hope for further strengthening of cultural ties between the two countries and recalled that each year 100 Lebanese students matriculate to Russian universities. Valentina Matvienko also wished ...the implementation of the Year of Russia - Lebanon.

....

[Michel Suleiman] stressed that the development of the oil and gas industry and tourism should be the most obvious factor in strengthening the friendship between our two countries...

Interestingly, the Russian-speaking Diaspora in Lebanon is a special cultural phenomenon in general for the Middle East. The first Russians appeared there in connection with the pilgrimages in the 19th century, when some pilgrims made the decision to stay in Lebanon and forever link their life with this land. But the truly Russian Diaspora has developed in connection with the revolutionary events in Russia, when as the result of the civil war, part of the Russian army fled from the Crimea to Constantinople, and with the French military administration’s assistance ended up in Beirut. Today, Lebanon is home to several thousand of our compatriots.

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.pd>

Russia's Increasing Arms Exports

5 February 2013

OE Watch Commentary: Russian weapons sales have received attention in the Russian press in February 2013, as Russia continues to hold second place in world arms sales, after the United States. On 5 February 2013 Russian online news site Newsru.com published an article based on an interview with Federal Service for Military-Technical Cooperation (FSMTC) Director Alexander Fomin, who spoke to Russian reporters on the eve of the International Aerospace Exhibition Aero India 2013, held in Bangalore on 6-10 February 2013.

Fomin blamed recent wars and Arab Spring uprisings for Russia's loss or suspension of arms contracts in Libya, Iraq, Afghanistan, Egypt, and Iran. He alluded to his belief that the United States and its allies are to blame for the recent wars, which Russia disagrees with—but has no reason not to profit from. He also complained that Russia's "activities" in Syria are being "interfered with."

Nonetheless, Fomin said, Russia gained new arms markets in Venezuela, Peru, Mali, Ghana, Tanzania, Uganda, and Oman. Therefore, Fomin was confident that there are no reasons for pessimism from Russia's perspective with regard to its arm sales industry.

Earlier, Igor Popov, Russian Forbes editor, wrote an article on 29 January 2013. It confirms Fomin's optimism. In 2012, wrote Popov, Russia's arms exports exceeded \$15 billion. While U.S. weapons exports are more than three times this amount, Russia's exports are growing at an increasing rate and exceed their own projections, notes the editor.



The Federal Military-Technical Cooperation Service (FSMTC) Alexander Fomin, via <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20130121/178925765.html>

Source: "Россия потеряла много оружейных рынков из-за 'заказчиков похоронной музыки.' Но ее ждут в других регионах (Russia lost many arms markets because of 'customers who ordered funeral music.' But other regions are waiting for Russia)," Newsru.com, 5 February 2013. http://www.newsru.com/russia/05feb2013/armslose_print.html

Russia lost many arms markets because of 'customers who ordered funeral music.' But other regions are waiting for Russia

Russia, one of the largest arms exporters, lost many markets because of wars and conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa. "Iraq we lost. Afghanistan nearly lost. Cooperation with Libya is suspended, deliveries declined to Egypt, Iran. Our work with Syria is interfered with - it's a fact," complained the director of the Federal Service for Military-Technical Cooperation (FSMTC) Alexander Fomin....

"Look what a tense international situation is going on, there is remaking of the world map. Course, we do not agree with the fact that the wars are carried out, issues are resolved with violence, presidents of sovereign states are killed," Interfax quoted him, "But whoever ordered this music, funeral music, is the one on one dancing, and begins to influence all aspects of life, or attempts to do so," continued Fomin, apparently alluding to the U.S. and its allies. [Fomin references a Russian expression here, "whoever pays, orders the music," meaning whoever pays is in charge]

However Russia has no reasons for desperate pessimism, according to FSMTC director. "In this tough competition, our industry continues to work at a respectable level. We have, of course, enough problem, of course, but our competitors also have many of them," -he said. Russia gained new markets in other regions - Venezuela, Peru, half-forgotten since the Soviet era Mali, Ghana, Tanzania, Uganda, Oman.

(continued)

Continued: Russia's Increasing Arms Exports

Some governments of developed countries, frightened by the Arab Spring, are looking to spend more on weapons, and Russia has learned to be more flexible and offer better terms to its customers, explains Popov. Algeria, Vietnam, and Indonesia are among major buyers of Russian arms; China and India are increasingly spending more on Russian weapons.

Iraq is another important partner for Russia. In October 2012 the Kremlin announced a \$4.2 billion arms deal with Iraq, Russian President Vladimir Putin's largest single deal ever. This would also make Iraq the third largest buyer of Russian arms. Despite reports that the deal was off, Russian and Iraqi leadership confirmed in February 2013 that this was not the case. (See Russian BBC, Ирак: контракты на покупку оружия в России не отменялись (Iraq: contracts for purchase of weapons in Russia have not been canceled)," February 13, 2013, http://www.bbc.co.uk/russian/russia/2013/02/130213_iraq_contracts_russia.shtml)

As Russia continues to expand its influence in the Middle East and other regions, its increasing weapons deals are important to watch. A recent report by the Washington think tank Global Financial Integrity estimated that an average \$61.72 billion earned from illegal activities—including arms smuggling—entered or left Russia each year since 2004. (See Stella Dawson, "Russia's dirty money flows more than doubled since 2004 – report," Reuters, February 13, 2013. <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/02/13/uk-financial-russia-corruption-idUKBRE91C00020130213>)
End OE Watch Commentary
(Borshchevskaya)

Earlier, Brazil has shown interest in Russian air defense missile and gun systems "Shell-C1" and the anti-aircraft missile system "Igla." Contracts, however, are not yet being prepared.

Source: Igor Popov, "Из России с любовью: за счет чего российский оружейный экспорт превысил \$15 млрд (From Russia with love: why Russian arms exports exceeded \$ 15 billion)," Russian Forbes, 29 January, 2013 <http://www.forbes.ru/sobytiya-photogallery/233609-iz-rossii-s-lyubovyu-za-schet-chego-rossiiskii-oruzheinyi-eksport-prevy/photo/1>

From Russia with love: why Russian arms exports exceeded \$ 15 billion

Russia firmly holds second place in the world in arms deliveries. Last year, \$15.13 billion worth of Russian weapons were sold abroad, \$2 billion more than in the previous year. If it had not been for the unsuccessful testing of aircraft carrier "Vikramaditya" for the Indian Navy and its transfer to the fall of 2013, Russian arms exports would have exceeded \$ 17.4 billion in 2012.

Although this indicator of Russian arms is more than three times behind their American colleagues, the annual export growth rate and over-fulfillment of annual plans cannot help but please the management of the domestic defense industry and the country's authorities.

The loss of Libya for Russian technology and suspended contracts with Iran and Syria so far had no immediate impact on the growth of arms flow: scared by the rapid Arab revolutions of developing countries are increasing purchases of military equipment. India and China continue to increase their spending on purchasing Russian weapons to. Algeria, Venezuela, Vietnam, Indonesia are considered major customers of the Russian military-industrial complex. Last year, among buyers of Russian military equipment appeared Azerbaijan, Iraq, and even the U.S., which will pay for the purchase of 70 helicopters Mi-15 for the Afghan army.

The report of the Congressional Research Service notes that in recent years Russia has learned to work flexibly with customers by offering favorable payment terms, loans and credits....

Last year, Rosoboronexport signed a contract to supply China with 52 transport helicopters Mi-171E for \$600 million...

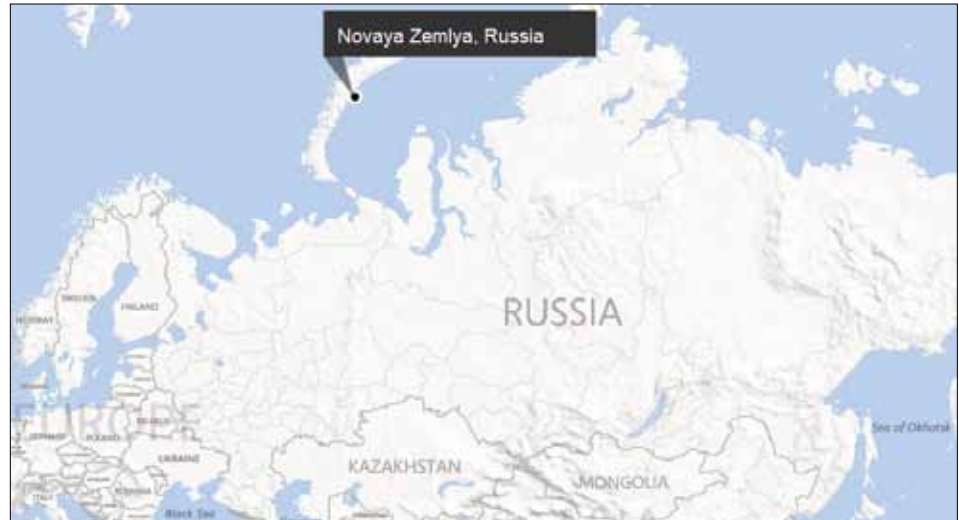
Premature Arctic Deployment

2 February 2013

OE Watch Commentary: Last year (2012) the Russian Ministry of Defense announced plans to strengthen its air force assets in the Arctic region by deploying a wing of MiG-31 fighters to a base on Novaya Zemlya. The announcement was widely interpreted as reflecting the Kremlin's intention to further protect its claims on Arctic resources and to defend against a possible NATO attack. Along with increased naval and ground forces, these long-range fighters would help to defend Russian-Arctic airspace.

In a recent decision, however, the new Russian minister of defense has cancelled these plans, and the excerpt from the attached article discusses plausible motives for this move. Despite plans to increase and modernize their armed forces, the Russian military inventory, particularly advanced fighter aircraft, remains in poor shape. The weakened military support infrastructure for air operations, including essentials such as runways and radar, further exacerbates any decision to redeploy forces, especially into the harsh climatic conditions of Novaya Zemlya. Similarly, the lack of well-developed social amenities (housing, schools, hospitals etc.) precludes a large deployment of air force personnel and their families to this remote location.

This article points out not only that the original decision was predicated upon the need to counter a hypothetical NATO incursion, but also that this deployment had not been coordinated with senior air force personnel. In reversing this decision, the new defense minister has perhaps demonstrated a willingness to listen to his subordinates and to develop a more realistic threat assessment. **End OE Watch Commentary (Finch)**



Map indicating the location of the Russian archipelago of Novaya Zemlya, via Bing maps.

Source: Aleksey Mikhaylov and Dmitriy Balburov, “Заполярье осталось без постоянного воздушного прикрытия” [Polar Region Left without Permanent Air Cover] Izvestiya Online, 2 February 2013.

Proposal To Base Fighter Group on Novaya Zemlya Seen as ‘Premature’

The Defense Ministry has given up the idea of basing a group of MiG-31 long-range fighter-interceptors permanently on Novaya Zemlya. A high-ranking source in the Air Force High Command has told Izvestiya that Sergey Shoygu’s proposal to this effect was drawn up back at the end of last year and has now been ratified by the minister.

“The proposal was made following a comprehensive analysis by our specialists,” our interlocutor stressed.

He said that the previous Defense Ministry leadership had decided to transfer an aviation group to the Rogachevo airfield on Novaya Zemlya last fall as part of the development of an overall blueprint for the defense of the Arctic.

The decision was based on the need to secure the exit of nuclear submarines carrying nuclear ICBMs from the bases in Murmansk Oblast to the open ocean. In the event of a hypothetical conflict the Northern Fleet’s ASW forces also require air cover against NATO strike naval forces. The blueprint provides not only for the emergency transfer of Su-27 fighter-interceptor groups to the airfields at Severomorsk, near Murmansk, and to Rogachevo but also for the permanent basing of MiG-31s on Novaya Zemlya....

...The Air Force High Command acknowledges the region’s importance in the state’s global security; however, it considers a decision to assimilate Novaya Zemlya profoundly political, and there has been no coordination with the High Command.

“Otherwise we would have warned that the transfer was technically infeasible for several reasons,” the source said, going on to list them:

First, the Air Force formally has approximately 100 MiG-31s on its books. They have a long effective range (up to 2,300 km) and powerful radar with phased-array antennas. Theoretically a pair of these fighters is capable of scanning an entire water basin such as,

Continued: Premature Arctic Deployment

for example, the Kara Sea, practically like long-range radar reconnaissance aircraft.

However, in fact there are many fewer MiG-31s than that in good technical working order, and the planes that are operational are 70-80% spent. They need to be sent for capital repair or upgrade -- not to the high latitudes, so the Air Force people are saying.

Second, the Rogachevo airfield is not suitable for Mig-31s to take off and land with a full combat load of 46-47 tons. The landing strip is adequate only for lightweight fighters with part-filled fuel tanks and standard-issue armaments, and they are of no use across the vast Arctic wastes.

Third, permanent basing on Novaya Zemlya presents major doubts as to radar backup for planes in the air. There are no radar stations in line of sight from the islands, so it will be necessary to keep between two and four MiGs constantly in the air to "back-light" their colleagues with their own radar sets. Which means that the worn-out fighters will finally go for scrap after a month of the harshest exploitation.

Fourth, social tensions. The High Command is well aware that not many officers with families will agree to transfer to live permanently in a camp at latitude 71 degrees 36 minutes North. The existing housing blocks are in a semi-derelict state, and there are no proper schools or kindergartens. Many will prefer to retire in the next round of T/O arrangements than to move to the end of the Earth, Air Force people are saying....

...Former Air Force Commander in Chief Vladimir Mikhaylov, however, thinks it premature to be creating an air base in the Arctic just now.

"In the existing circumstances a base is not needed there. First we need to deal with all the issues on the mainland; only then, when we are 'straight,' should we go to Novaya Zemlya. Ideally, of course, bases are needed everywhere," Mikhaylov told Izvestiya.

He stressed that, in the event of a deteriorating situation in the Arctic, the Russian Air Force could form an aviation grouping there in a matter of hours.

"Aviation is a very mobile category of troops, it can be in any region promptly, so there is no need to worry about that," the former commander in chief added.

A small military unit has remained at Rogachevo since Soviet times, keeping the airfield in working order. An-26 and An-72 light military transports fly there regularly, and sometimes heavy Il-76s and even wide-bodied An-22 Anteys call by.

The Collective Security Treaty Organization, the Caspian and the Northern Distribution Network: Central Asia in the Crossfire- Survival or War?

By Zhulduz Baizakova

This article provides a particular perspective of how not only Kazakhstan, but also all Central Asian governments have been developing their militaries in response to regional security threats.

<http://fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/Collaboration/international/Kazakhstan/Central-Asia-in-Crossfire.pdf>

Expanding Russian-Brazilian Military Trade

8 February 2013

“...the current condition of the military-political situation in the world is, to a large degree, characterized by uncertainty with a markedly negative tendency towards complications and the growth of tensions.”

OE Watch Commentary: Since returning to the Kremlin, one of President Putin's chief platforms has been the restoration and modernization of the country's military and associated defense industries. Trillions of rubles have been allocated toward strengthening Russia's overall defense posture, and, related to this, improving their overall share of international weapon sales. There is a prevalent belief among many Russian defense officials that the US/West gained a disproportionate share of the global arms market after the collapse of the USSR. Part of Russia's military reform has been predicated upon regaining a greater share of the arms market.

As the excerpt from the attached article indicates, Russian defense officials are now planning to expand their military trade with Brazil by offering to sell both advanced air defense weapons and the technological know-how to build these systems. For more than a decade Russia and Brazil have been cooperating in the realm of defense cooperation and production. Brazil has purchased everything from helicopters to small arms from Russian suppliers. They now appear to be working jointly on building advanced air defense systems in a production-sharing agreement.

That Brazil and Russia both belong to the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) organization will likely help to support this deal. One of the key objectives of this group is to increase trade and economic opportunities among member countries. As opposed to the agreement with France to build



Brazilian Defense Minister Celso Luiz Nunes Amorim, via <http://en.mercopress.com>

Source: “Brazil wants to buy Russian air defense systems,” Interfax-AVN Online, 8 February 2013. <http://www.militarynews.ru>

Brazil plans to buy Russian air defense systems

...“The final statement is evidence of our military-technical cooperation with an accent on air defense systems. Our first priority needs include a certain amount of military hardware, but we hope Russian companies will make part of the equipment here in Brazil. Talks continue on the technical aspects of the plan,” Amorim [Brazilian Defense Minister] said in an interview with Voice of Russia radio in remarks about the Russian-Brazilian military-technical cooperation agreement signed in December 2012.

The agreement deals with weapons production already launched, and with joint development of new types of weapons, he said.

“Talks are underway and a proposal was made during talks between the Brazilian General Staff chief and his Russian counterpart and company representatives,” Amorim said....

Under the new agreement, crews piloting Russian-made helicopters will undergo advanced training in Russia, he said.

Continued: Expanding Russian-Brazilian Military Trade

the advanced Mistral naval platforms, which has come under harsh Kremlin criticism for neglecting Russia's domestic shipbuilding industry, this proposed deal would entail Russia exporting both equipment and expertise to Brazil, where these air defense systems would be constructed. Such cooperation will likely enhance Russia's market share in global weapon sales, and specifically with Latin America's growing arms market. OE
Watch Commentary (Finch)

Brazilian media earlier reported that the Brazilian Defense Ministry had announced plans to buy Pantsyr-S1 missile and artillery systems as well as Igla-S man-portable missile systems made by Russia's Vysokotochnye Kompleksy (High-Precision Systems) company.

Biographical Sketch: Dmitry Rogozin and Russian Nationalism

By Ray Finch

Since the collapse of the USSR, Russia has struggled with developing a new national idea. The political and economic trauma of the 1990s discredited the idea of liberal democracy, and for the past decade Russian nationalism has become more prominent. While there are a number of Russian leaders who have been lifted up on this wave of nationalism (to include the current president, Vladimir Putin), few have been as successful in riding this surge as Russia's new Deputy Prime Minister in charge of the country's military-industrial complex, Dmitry Rogozin. This paper will briefly review Rogozin's biography, and in particular, the implications of his increasing political power for Russia and the United States.



<http://fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/documents/Rogozin.pdf>

The Promise of a Professional Army in Ukraine: a Myth or Reality?

Since the collapse of the USSR, reform of Ukraine's military forces has been a constant item on the country's agenda. Besides calls for modernizing structure and equipment, there have been repeated plans to shelve the Soviet conscript model and adopt a professional system for manning the Ukrainian armed forces. At one time, NATO aspirations were driving factors; most recently, however, political and military leaders have been motivated by economics, demographics and an understanding that a professional military is better suited for Ukraine's defense needs. In this brief essay, Ukrainian scholar Alisa Moldavanova examines the recent proposals surrounding this topic and some of the obstacles in realizing these plans.

Special Essay: The Promise of a Professional Army in Ukraine: a Myth or Reality?

The gradual transition of the Ukrainian military towards a contract army model was formally declared by the Presidential Decree "On the State Program of the Transition of Ukrainian Military Forces for Staffing by Contracted Servants," adopted in April 2002.¹ The decree obligated the Ukrainian Ministry of Defense to develop and implement a range of activities in preparation for the Ukrainian military's transition towards a professional service by the end of 2015. More recently, current President of Ukraine Victor Yanukovich declared "contracting out the Armed Forces of Ukraine" as one of his personal strategic priorities.²

Despite these formal declarations, at the beginning of 2013 the professional army proposal is still a subject of debate among Ukrainian politicians, the media and the people. Part of the explanation behind the struggling military reform in Ukraine is the lack of political will and leadership, and of a clear blueprint as to the overall future structure of Ukraine's military. For instance, former Ukrainian Minister of Defense Dmytro Salamatin, who served in the office for less than a year and resigned from his post in December 2012, had been accused of a lack of knowledge about the military and the defense sector.³ As a businessman and a former Russian citizen, he did not manage to build a coalition of supporters among the military, nor was he able to secure the necessary funding for this transition, which slowed down professional army reforms.⁴



Ukraine's Defense Minister Pavlo Lebedev, via <http://www.kyivpost.com>

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Continued: The Promise of a Professional Army in Ukraine: a Myth or Reality?

Current Minister of Defense Pavlo Lebedev has recently declared 2013 as the final term for the conscription military in Ukraine, and the start of the official and final transition towards a professional army.⁵ This transition, however, could take a decade or longer. Among other assurances, the Minister is also promising to modernize the equipment of the Ukrainian military, to enhance training and educational opportunities for military commanders, and to ensure greater social protections and public benefits for military members. The goal of the reform is to create “modern European-like armed forces, small in number, but well-trained, properly supported, mobile and professional.”⁶ In the process of professionalizing the military, the Ukrainian Armed Forces are to be downsized by almost 50% by 2017, from the current 193,000 personnel to 100,000. Elaborating on this, the Ministry of Defense website states that most likely Ukraine will be able to perform a full transition towards a professional army by 2025, with the process organized in three stages: 2011-2015; 2016-2020; and 2021-2025.⁷

Creating a professional military, however, is easier planned than done. Among the major obstacles in developing a contract army in Ukraine has been insufficient budget allocations for the program and the defense sector in general, as well as the poor capacity of the existing military infrastructure. Further hampering efforts has been a general reluctance among senior military personnel to embrace the reform effort.⁸ The problems are equally formidable in attracting new recruits and junior officers. For example, current military salaries and benefits (including health, among others) for entry- and mid-level military personnel are too low to serve as an attractive incentive for young Ukrainians to seriously consider a military career. There are also issues with the military infrastructure. As a result of the economic recession and general budget cuts, funding for building permanent housing for the military and their families is insufficient, and it will not cover the needs of the projected professional army personnel.⁹

To those who protest that a professional military model is too expensive for Ukraine to adopt, some experts claim that the costs of maintaining a professional versus a conscription army are approximately the same. An example of a financial advantage of a professional army over a conscription army is that the former would help reduce the costs of recruiting and training new personnel every year.

According to Ukrainian military expert Valentyn Badrak, Director of the Army Studies Center, because of the budgetary and other reasons the contract army reform in Ukraine is doomed to failure, at least in the near-term.¹⁰ Badrak points out that military service in Ukraine is associated with low prestige and negative stereotypes, forcing many young people to seek ways of avoiding regular military duty, not to mention dissuading them from considering the military service as a professional career. In response, some experts suggest developing both financial and non-financial incentives to motivate young people to join a professional army, for instance, offering better health care programs for military personnel and their families, and offering special admission policies to elite Ukrainian universities.¹¹

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10. BBC Ukraine. (12/29/2012). Міністр оборони обіцяє перехід на контрактну армію у 2013/The Minister of Defense Promises the Transition to Professional Army in 2013 Retrieved from http://www.bbc.co.uk/ukrainian/politics/2012/12/121229_army_contract_ukraine_sd.shtml

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In addition to the budget issues, there are several structural reasons preventing the professional army project from running at full speed. For example, some believe that the transition towards a contract army would be fatal for Ukraine's military sector, and, if anything, will further deplete existing military capacities.¹² A smaller military will mean less equipment, which, in turn, will force Ukrainian defense factories to cut back. Creating a professional military will involve privatizing (contracting out) some of the logistics and administrative functions in the military, but Ukraine has not yet developed fair and transparent privatization procedures. According to military expert and former adviser of the State Property Fund of Ukraine Volodymyr Lartsev, the process of shifting from conscription to a professional army is potentially rife with corruption, and might serve as a scheme to obtain existing army resources for someone's personal gain:

Facilitating the issue of the transition towards a contracted army now – is a crime against the military capacity of the country and the capabilities of the Military Forces. The thing is, in my mind, these declarations are mainly aimed at hiding that someone just wants to steal our army, the property of Ukrainian army that we still have, including the military equipment. That would explain the appointment of Pavlo Lebedev as the Minister of Defense. Yes, he is a military man, and this is better than Salamatin (former Russian citizen with the lack of army knowledge). Lebedev's biography shows that he has different tasks. Therefore, the entire "contract" thing will only be on paper. Instead of transitioning to a contracted army, it is better to leave the army as it is, and just work on improving it instead.¹³

Ukraine's current dilemma over the question of transitioning to a professional military may have less to do with economics and demographics than with the need for a transparent and vibrant economic, social and legal infrastructure. Young Ukrainian men (and perhaps women) will not be drawn to serving in the military without firm guarantees that the state will fulfill its social and legal promises. A professional military can be built only upon an equally proficient political system.

12. Viyskova Panorama. (01/20/2013). Українська армія стане контрактною лише на папері/Ukrainian Army will be Contracted Only on Paper. Retrieved from <http://wartime.org.ua/4865-ukrayinska-armiya-stane-kontraktnoyu-lishe-na-paper-ekspert.html>.

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