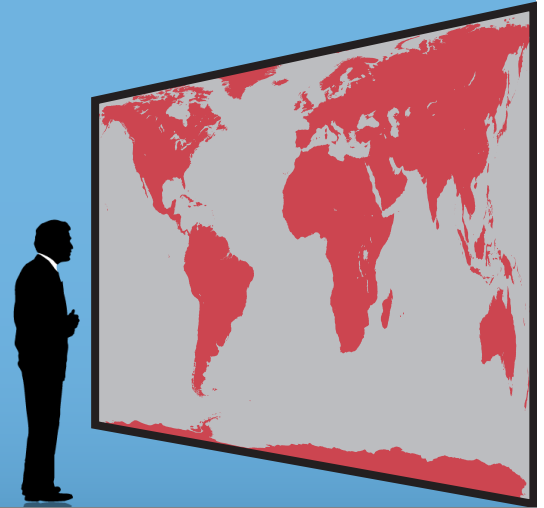


OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT WATCH



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For over 25 years, the Foreign Military Studies Office (FMSO) at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, has conducted open source research on foreign perspectives of defense and security issues, emphasizing those topics that are understudied or unconsidered.

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for Foreign News & Perspectives

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"During the days that the LRA was killing our people, the government did way too little for us northerners. And now that the rebels are finally gone, we are up against a killing disease – again, by ourselves."



30 Libyan Revolts Throw North Africa into Chaos

"Mali rebels strike amid post-Libya anarchy," UPI, 8 March 2012

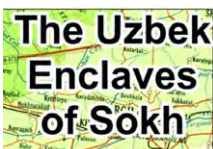
"Faced with a knot of security concerns so seemingly impossible to disentangle, some observers wonder whether Mali would not be wise to simply cut off the northern knot altogether."



38 Is a Trade Lawsuit to the WTO on China's Rare Earth Exports the Answer?

China's Emphasis on Rare Earths Control is Based on Environmental Protection, China Daily, 14 Mar 2012

Trade must be mutually beneficial, otherwise it cannot be sustained.



52 Future Bleak for Uzbek-Kyrgyz Border Demarcation

Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan: Demining around Uzbek enclaves brings hope to impoverished villagers, Integrated Regional Information Networks (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs), 12 March 2012

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, abstract borders soon became a concrete reality, as the fledgling states attempted to enact border control regimes. Securing the borders of the enclaves was particularly difficult; most enclaves are only a few square kilometers and have no natural borders

FMSO Commentary: Since the beginning of the crisis in Syria, the international community has floated ideas about how to provide humanitarian help to Syrians. One of these is a 'buffer zone' on the Turkish side of the Turkey-Syria border, which would be declared a no-fly zone by the UN and defended by armed international observers. Turkey has been reluctant to opt for this option because it involves military participation, and due to concern that it might exacerbate civil war by becoming an entry point for armed groups and weapons.

Instead, it has called for a 'humanitarian corridor' to be opened from Turkey to Syria. This corridor would provide help to those who cannot escape the violence in Syria. Turkey prefers this option because it requires less military involvement, and argues that it would be more likely to control tensions, as opposed to a buffer zone, which might raise them.

Currently Turkey hosts about 12,000 Syrian refugees in five refugee camps on its border with Syria. However, since Syrian forces started attacking the town of Idlib near the Turkish border on March 10th, another round of Syrian refugees flowed in, raising concern in Ankara about how best to be prepared for a mass influx of refugees. **End FMSO Commentary (Kaya)**

Bracing for more Syrian Refugees: Buffer Zone or Humanitarian Corridor?

Source: "Suriyeli Mülteci Sayısının Artması Türkiye'yi Kaygılandırıyor (Increased Numbers of Syrian Refugees worry Turkey)," Voanews in Turkish, 13 March 2012, <http://www.voanews.com/turkish/news/Suriyeli-Multeci-Saysnn-Artmas-Turkiyeyi-Kayglandryor-142458465.html>

13 March 2012



Syrian refugees who fled the violence in Idlib region, walk amid Red Crescent tents in a camp set by the the Turkish army near Kavalcik, on the border between Syria and Turkey, on March 14, 2012. FREDERIC LAFARGUE/AFP/Getty Images [CC-BY 2.0] via Flickr.com

Suriyeli Mülteci Sayısının Artması Türkiye'yi Kaygılandırıyor (Increased Numbers of Syrian Refugees worry Turkey)

Since Syrian forces attacked Idlib, a town in control of resistance fighters on Saturday, hundreds of Syrians sought refuge in Turkey. President of the Economy and Foreign Policy Research Center EDAM, Sinan Ülgen says that the Turkish government is concerned.

Syrians afraid of the Syrian army's attack on Idlib on the Turkish border are escaping to Turkey. The increasing number of refugees in the last few days has caused concern in Ankara.

Ülgen reminded that in 1991, following Saddam Hussein's massacres, 550,000 Iraqis had sought refuge in Turkey and that Turkish officials had learned many lessons from this. Ankara says that its doors are open to Syrians escaping the turmoil, and that already hosts 12,000 refugees.

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Selçuk Ünal says that Turkey is ready for all contingencies, and that they will continue to evaluate the events daily. However, the Turkish government is also saying that in the event of a huge influx of refugees from Syria, it cannot stand idly by.

Continued: Increased Numbers of Syrian Refugees worry Turkey

Professor of International Relations Soli Özel warns that this is not an empty threat. He says that in the event of a large-scale migration, Turkey would establish a safety zone within Syria, but that it does not want to do this alone, and would seek international legitimacy. Özel says that an operation like the one in Kosovo can only take place with NATO intervention, but that NATO does not want to even discuss such a scenario.

Ankara is disappointed that the Russian and Chinese vetoed the proposal to take a tougher stance on Damascus at the UN Security Council. Turkey worked hard to establish an international coalition called the "Friends of Syria" and is preparing to host the group's meeting in Istanbul at the end of the month [March].

Last week, during his visit to Tunisia, President Abdullah Gül said that he wants a diplomatic solution to the Syrian crisis. Gül said that Turkey and Tunisia both think that arming the opposition or a foreign military intervention would make matters worse. But

he reminded that both countries are prepared to join the Arab League peace force.

Professor Soli Özel warns that Ankara would be hard-pressed not to respond if fighting approaches the Turkish border and the threat of a larger influx becomes real. He says that Turkey would do whatever it can to avoid this, but that Ankara might get pulled in to the crisis if the situation gets out of control.

Meanwhile, there are reports that the Syrian army is increasing its presence on the Turkish border, and even some that claim that they are placing land mines in the border area. This information will make it more difficult for Syrian refugees to escape to Turkey. The number of Syrian refugees in Turkey is currently not high enough to create any real concern. However, analysts warn that if the crisis in Syria gets even worse, Turkey might be faced with a huge humanitarian crisis on its border.



The RED DIAMOND is the Army's leading e-journal highlighting current threats in the Operational Environment.

It is produced by the Threats Intelligence Support Activity (U.S. Army TRADOC G-2) and posted at <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/files/25364306>.

FMSO Commentary: *The Turkish press has been intrigued with the new Active Denial System (ADS) that was recently unveiled at the Marine Corps Base in Quantico, VA. Many newspaper articles discussed the features of this new, state of the art, nonlethal weapon.*

The weapon apparently makes the target feel as if his or her skin is burning, but it does not cause any permanent injury or damage. The Turkish press noted that Washington was worried about facing criticism due to the system being misrepresented in the Muslim world as a torture weapon. It also noted that the U.S. had previously denied allegations that the weapon was used in Afghanistan or Iraq.

The weapon, which can be used for riot control, perimeter security, and in various other ways, was noted to be very versatile. Press reports focused on rumors that the weapon would be designed for use on aerial vehicles as well, and that the project had cost the Pentagon around \$120 million. End FMSO Commentary (Kaya)

Turkey Intrigued by U.S.'s New ADS Weapon

12 March 2012

Source: "ABD'nin Süper Silahı hazır (The U.S.'s Super Weapon is ready)," NTVMSNBC, 12 March 2012, <http://www.ntvmsnbc.com/id/25329663>

The DoD Non-Lethal Weapons Program demonstrated it's latest system to a group of Marine Corps and DoD personel. Produced by Sgt. Andrew Milner. Read more: <http://www.dvidshub.net/video/139338/active-denial-system-demo#T2dWVvU4KkM#ixzz1pZxGyojY>



ABD'nin Süper Silahı hazır (The U.S.'s Super Weapon is ready)

The U.S. has unveiled its newest, most state-of-the-art technology weapon to the world press: The Active Denial System weapon.

The U.S. had tried out the ADS weapon in Afghanistan in 2010, but back then, it did not yield the desired results. Subsequently the U.S. continued its development process, and just presented the final product to the local and international press, at the Marine Corps base in Quantico, Virginia.

The weapon spreads high frequency electromagnetic beams and produces unbearable pain on the human skin. The ADS burns the top layer of the skin by one millimeter beams and forces the victim to move. It has been tested on 11,000 people and only two have suffered second-degree burns. The ADS has a range of one kilometer, and is planned to be used for riot control. Those who are exposed to the weapon start trying to escape immediately. Marine Cor. Tracy Tafolla, Director of the U.S. DoD Joint Non-Lethal Weapons Directorate said, "ADS is our newest state of the art weapon that doesn't threaten human life... You cannot hear, see or smell this weapon. You can only feel it."

"Like entering an oven"

Many international press agencies were present at the demonstration. Press members raced to get a feel for the ADS effects. Those who tried it out said it was "like entering a hot oven."

The Pentagon reporter from Ajans France Presse (AFP) Mathieu Rabechult was seen on camera with his hair standing straight up after testing out the electromagnetic beams. Another volunteer, journalist Trudy Hucherson from the Al Jazeera network, had visible signs of the weapon on her face.

It can also be produced as an aerial weapon

In 2008, the ADS weapon was placed on top of an armored vehicle in Afghanistan. But because it did not perform the way it was planned, it was withdrawn from use in 2010. Col. Tafolla now said that the development phase of ADS was complete and that it was ready for use. He said that he was waiting for orders from the Pentagon regarding where it would be deployed. In addition to crowd control, ADS will also be used for entry control points and to stop suspicious vehicles. According to some rumors, the Pentagon might also design an aerial version of the ADS weapon.

Continued: The U.S.'s Super Weapon is ready

Very low chance of injury

Susan LeVine, deputy director for policy and resources in the Joint Non-Lethal Weapons Directorate said, "...the weapon is an alternative tool between yelling and hitting." LeVine also said that the risk of injury was significantly less when compared to tear gas and plastic bullets.

To prevent any possible injury, the trigger is automatically locked within three seconds of being pressed. Stephanie Miller from the Air Force Research Laboratory said that the weapon has been tested on 11,000 people and there was no incidence of cancer, infertility or birth defects.

Safer than a microwave

The electromagnetic beams from the ADS are often thought to be the same as those from a microwave, but they do are not. ADS only moves 0.4 millimeter on the target. In contrast, a microwave beam is around 1 GHz, moves faster and goes deeper. The project manager of the ADS program Brian Long said, "When exposed to the weapon, the universal reaction is to escape. We have now arrived at our desired result." According to sources, the ADS project cost the Pentagon around \$120 million.



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**

FMSO Commentary: *As a member of NATO and a neighbor of Iran, Turkey often finds itself in a predicament. It has to co-exist with its neighbor Iran while fulfilling its duties within NATO. This has become even more difficult in the last decade, when Turkey had been trying to improve its relations with Iran, even voting against further sanctions at the UN Security Council in June 2010.*

This predicament became evident again last year, when Turkey agreed to host a radar as part of the NATO missile defense shield system. This decision was a sensitive one. Turkey had recently experienced a crisis in its relations with Israel due to the May 2010 flotilla incident (relations are still strained). In an effort to continue its stance on Israel, assuage Iran, and fulfill its NATO duties, Turkey had to play a balancing act: it agreed to the radar only on the condition that the intelligence would not be shared with Israel, and repeatedly reminded Iran that the radar system was not planned with any particular country in mind. It expressed its opposition to explicitly identifying Iran as a potential attacker.

Tehran saw the radar as a U.S.-led plot to protect Israel against a possible counterattack by Iran, in the event that Israel targeted Iran's nuclear facilities. It is now threatening to make the radar in Turkey its first target in the event of an attack. Turkey's strained relations with Israel, coupled with threats from Iran, led Turkey to take a clear stance against any intelligence from the radar being shared with Israel.
End FMSO Commentary (Kaya)

Turkey Opposed to Sharing NATO Radar Intelligence with Israel

Source: "İsrail'e İstihbarat Yok (No Intelligence to Israel)," Stargazete.com, 18 February 2012, <http://www.stargazete.com/politika/israil-e-istihbarat-yok-haber-426168.htm>

18 February 2011



NATO Secretary General visits Turkey on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the accession of Turkey to NATO. Joint press point. Left to right: NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, Ahmet Davutoğlu, via www.NATO.int

İsrail'e İstihbarat Yok (No Intelligence to Israel)

Both the NATO Secretary General and the Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu have reiterated that the NATO radar shield, part of which is in Turkey, does not include Israel.

Both the NATO Secretary General and Ankara have firmly denied that the intelligence gathered from the NATO radar shield, part of which is in Turkey, will be shared with Israel. NATO Secretary General Anders Rasmussen said, "The data and intelligence from the radar defense system will not be shared with third countries. They will only be shared within the alliance." Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu also said that Israel will not be allowed to use any NATO facilities.

Turkey's influence in NATO is rising

The NATO Secretary General Rasmussen was in Ankara for the 60th anniversary of Turkey's membership in NATO, and got together with both President Abdullah Gül and Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu. Following their meeting, Rasmussen and Davutoğlu held a press conference. Davutoğlu said, "Turkey will continue its participation in NATO's stabilizing efforts. Within NATO, globally and regionally, Turkey's role in dealing with problems is increasing." He said that among the topics discussed with Rasmussen were: NATO's new defense strategy, Afghanistan and the radar defense system.

Continued: No Intelligence to Israel

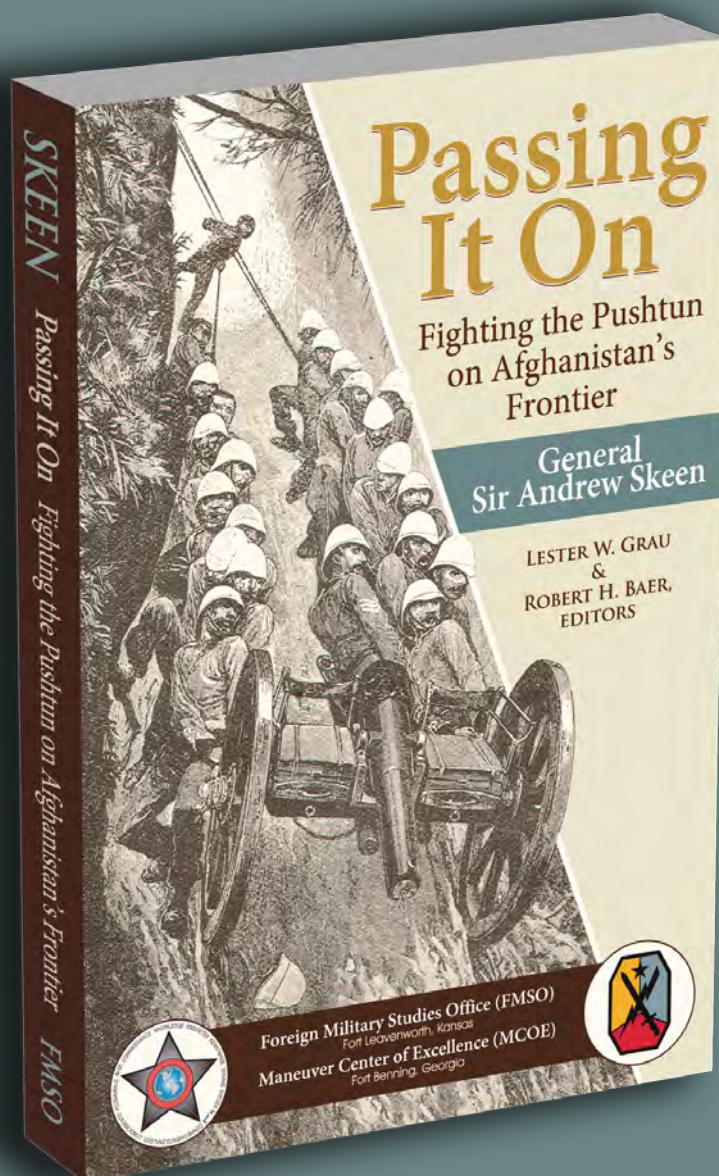
Turkey's leadership role is critical

Rasmussen also said that the long-standing cooperation with Turkey within NATO had been very productive and said, "Turkey is a vitally important NATO ally. Turkey's expertise in the Middle East and other regions is invaluable. There are peoples in the Middle East who are seeking their rights. As long as the Arab Spring continues, Turkey's leadership will keep becoming more and more vital." Rasmussen and Davutoğlu also answered questions on the NATO missile defense shield. In response to a question on whether the intelligence would be shared with Israel or not,

Rasmussen said, "The data and intelligence obtained from the missile defense system will not be shared with third countries. We will only share them with our allies within the alliance."

Our position on Israel is clear

Davutoğlu said that "NATO's resources and facilities can only be used among NATO members and within the NATO alliance... We will never allow any NATO facility to be used by a third party. I am making this very clear. If the third party is Israel, then our position is even clearer."



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.

FMSO Commentary: Upon the victory of the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini led Friday prayers at Tehran University. His sermon would carry the weight of an American State of the Union address. With time, Khomeini and his successor Ali Khamenei designated a substitute prayer leader from amongst the regime hierarchy. The Supreme Leader would appear only on special occasions and when a sermon would carry above-normal weight. Khamenei's recent discussion of Bahrain in a sermon marking the Islamic Revolution's anniversary indicates that events in Bahrain hold special importance for the Iranian regime.

Iran's stance toward Bahrain has grown aggressive in recent years. In 2007 Hossein Shariatmadari, Khamenei's appointee to edit the hardline state daily *Kayhan*, revived claims to Bahrain, which it labeled Iran's historical 14th province.¹ While the ousted Shah had once claimed sovereignty over Bahrain, he accepted the results of a UN-supervised plebiscite in which Bahrainis sought independence rather than unity with Iran.

Bahrain's ruling family is Sunni, although more than 70 percent of its population is Shi'ite. Sectarian tension is high, and grievances are legitimate: the Sunni elite have long relegated Bahraini Shi'ites to second-class status, banning residency in certain portions of the island and preventing most employment in security services and the military.

That Bahraini Shi'ite grievances are legitimate does not exculpate Iran. The Islamic Republic has a long history of seeking to subvert the Khalifa dynasty. In 1981 the Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain (IFLB) sponsored a coup attempt in Bahrain. The IFLB's publications make little secret of its goal

1. "Ahvaz-i Kucheh-i Baghi" [Street Garden Song], *Kayhan* (Tehran), July 9, 2007

Is Iran Behind the Bahrain Spring?

3 February 2011

Source: "Khamenei, Ali, "Khutbeh-hayi namaz-i juma'he Tehran" (Tehran Friday Prayer Sermon), 3 February 2012. <http://farsi.khamenei.ir/speech-content?id=18923>



Ali Khamenei by Sinaf77 (Own work) [CC-BY-SA-3.0 (www.creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0)], via Wikimedia Commons

خطبهای نماز جمعه تهران + ترجمه خطبه عربی

Tehran Friday Prayer Sermon

In the Name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful... Great achievements were made this year and popular movements achieved victory in the atmosphere created by the successful regional revolutions in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya. This is great news for the people of Iran. It is a pleasant and holy event. This year we will celebrate the victory of the Islamic Revolution and we will hold the ten-day Fajr celebrations in this atmosphere. I would say after the victory of these revolutions, the Iranian nation is no longer alone and by God's favor, I will briefly discuss this issue in today's sermons...

Our Revolution overthrew an anti-Islam regime and installed an Islamic government. It destroyed an autocratic and dictatorial regime and installed a democratic government in its place. It put an end to the long years of dependence – which was at its worst during the rule of the Pahlavi family – and brought about comprehensive independence for our nation. It put an end to the brutal suppression that had been imposed on our nation and brought about freedom for our people so that they could vote and express themselves freely. A free atmosphere was created. The Revolution put an end to the historical humiliation of our nation and brought about national dignity. Our nation was humiliated for decades. In spite of its historical background and its great cultural, scientific and historical legacy, this great nation was humiliated by bullying and corrupt rulers who were supported by colonialists and international hegemony. Our Revolution put an end to this and brought about national

to “Universal Islamic Revolution under the leadership of Imam Khomeini.”²

When it came to influencing Bahraini Shi'ites, Khomeini found an unintended ally in Iraqi President Saddam Hussein. Because Saddam's sectarian policies discouraged potential Bahraini clerics from study in the Shi'ite holy city of Najaf, many traveled instead to Qom, where they became susceptible to indoctrination by followers of Khomeini. Almost every Bahraini imam under the age of 50, therefore, was schooled in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Opposition leaders show fealty to local ayatollah Isa Qasim and acknowledge his influence in politics. As in Iran, among the opposition there is no clear division between mosque and state.

While younger Bahraini Shi'ites grew up in a Western-oriented society and seek Western freedoms, the older generation of Bahraini Shi'ite activists quietly leans more toward Khomeini's vision. Qassem al-Hashemi, a prominent member of the Society for Supporting Bahraini People, for example, has stated in meetings in Washington with Arabic and English-speaking Shi'ite Bahrainis that the opposition seeks to preserve Bahrain's traditionally strong relationship with the United States, to include preservation of the U.S. Fifth Fleet presence in the island nation. However, in the Iranian press he has stated the opposite: “Bahrain is America's front line,” he told Khamenei, “the Americans will not easily allow removal of their stooges in the region unless the conditions dictate otherwise. Where can they find a ruler who...will allow them to establish military bases? Allow them to do what they please in his country? To defend the Zionists?”³

2. Kifah Sha'b al-Bahrain [The Struggle of the People of Bahrain] (1980), p. 213, as cited by Hasan Tariq Alhasan, “The Role of Iran in the Failed Coup of 1981: The IFLB in Bahrain,” *Middle East Journal*, Autumn 2011.

3. “Qassem al-Hashimi: Bahrain Khat-i

Continued: Tehran Friday Prayer Sermon

dignity. Today the Iranian nation feels dignified and proud. The Revolution destroyed the sense of inferiority among our people and replaced it with national self-confidence. We used to suffer from a sense of inferiority. We used to think that we were incapable of scientific work. We used to think that we were incapable of political work and great military achievements. We used to think that we were a weak nation. They had instilled this idea into our mind. The Revolution put an end to this idea and replaced it with national self-confidence. Today we have self-confidence in all areas. We know that we have the capability and we act on this capability. And by God's favor, we always achieve our goals...

... The people of the region managed to overthrow four governments which rebelled against God over the past year. This is very important. A nation needs to make a lot of efforts in order to overthrow a government which has rebelled against God. Over the past year, four evil and dangerous governments were overthrown. This is a very important event.

Another important event is that the people voted for Islam in Tunisia and Egypt. In Egypt, around 75 percent of the people went to the ballot boxes and voted for Islamic groups. A similar event happened in Tunisia. This is very important. The meaning of these events is all the efforts of the Americans, westerners, western propaganda machines, Hollywood and others to promote Islamophobia and fear of Islamic government have been sent down the drain. The people support Islam.

One of the results of these movements is the weakness and isolation of the Zionist regime, which is very important. This is because the Zionist regime is truly a cancerous tumor in this region and it must be, and will be, cut out. Therefore, these movements resulted in further isolation and weakness of the Zionist regime. Palestinian youth become more dynamic and hopeful. They became more hopeful about their battle and their future. The people of nations became hopeful.

Of course, among these nations the people of Bahrain have been the most oppressed. This is because there has been a news blackout in the world on the issues of Bahrain. According to no human and global logic is their demand illegitimate. Their demand is legitimate, but they have been oppressed. They have been totally ignored by the media and they have even been the target of constant negative propaganda. Of course, this propaganda is futile and by God's favor, the Bahraini people will achieve victory as well.

I would like to take this opportunity to announce something. The rulers of Bahrain claimed that Iran is involved in the events of Bahrain. This is a lie. No, we are not involved. Whenever we are involved, we explicitly declare it. We were involved in the anti-Israel events, which resulted in victories in the 33-day and 22-day wars. And from now on, wherever a nation or a group fights and confronts the Zionist regime, we will support and help it, and we are not at all afraid of saying this. This is a fact. But it is wrong to claim that Iran is involved in the events of Bahrain. This claim by the rulers of Bahrain goes against the truth. If we had interfered, the conditions would have been different in Bahrain.

The world is in an extraordinary situation. America is suffering from weakness – both economic and financial weakness, and political weakness. This is also a fact. America was defeated in its Middle East policy. It was defeated in the case of Palestine. It was defeated in the case of Iraq. The Americans wanted to take management of Iraq into their own hands, but they failed. The Iraqi nation stood up against them and did not let this happen. The Americans wanted to install a puppet government in Iraq, but they failed. They wanted to stay in Iraq by obtaining capitulation rights, but the people and government of Iraq did not let them do so. Today the Iraqi government is a populist government and the Iraqi

There is no evidence that Iranian government officials directly support the Bahraini opposition with weaponry; the Bahraini opposition has largely embraced nonviolence. However, when pressed, Shi'ite leaders acknowledge they receive money through the offices of several ayatollahs. While most Bahraini Shi'ites have traditionally looked toward Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani for religious guidance, Khamenei's office is increasingly active on the island, while the representative of the Grand Ayatollah Muhammad Hussein Fadlallah, a chief religious patron for Lebanese Hezbollah, actively collects and distributes money in the Bahraini community, despite Fadlallah's death in 2010. Solicitation of money from Grand Ayatollahs based in Iraq belies the claim that the Bahraini uprising is completely indigenous in nature. A February 2012 survey of religious bookstores in Manama suggests that Khamenei dominates the available literature and audiotapes of living, non-Bahraini clergy.

*Khamenei parses the truth when he denies direct Iranian involvement today, for his clerical office remains engaged in Bahrain even if he does not activate more formal agencies of state. He and his proxies are hijacking an indigenous uprising rather than sponsoring it in its entirety,⁴ aided by the Bahraini Kingdom's slow pace of reform. Ultimately, however, Khamenei's focus on Bahrain at such a prominent forum, his belief that the United States is weak and on the defensive, and Iran's recognition of Bahrain's importance for American regional security foreshadows an Iranian willingness to escalate conflict in Bahrain. **End FMSO Commentary (Rubin)***

Muqaddam Amrika Ast," ("Qassem al-Hashe-mi: Bahrain is America's Front Line," 598.ir, September 8, 2011.

4. Mahmoud Cherif Bassiouni et al. "Report of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry," November 23, 2011.

Continued: Tehran Friday Prayer Sermon

people are vibrant and vigilant. This caused the Americans to leave Iraq without having accomplished any achievements. Of course, they still interfere in oil and security issues and the people and government of Iraq will definitely do something about it in the future.

Foreign Military Studies Office (FMSO.leavenworth.army.mil)

International Research Collaboration Program

Quality researchers outside of the U.S. government express new ideas that will help define the current and future defense and security environment from understudied and unconsidered perspectives.

FMSO Commentary: While Western officials debate the efficacy of sanctions, the one certainty regarding Iran's economy is that the primary cause for its weakness is mismanagement. Iranian press analysis of domestic problems is often illuminating, as economics is the subject most immune from press censors.

Donya-e Eqtesad (World Economy), from which the selection below is drawn, is Iran's marquee economic newspaper, Tehran's equivalent of the Wall Street Journal or Financial Times. Its writers often subtly tweak Iranian politicians. For example, a year into President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's term the paper disputed his vice president's assertion that inflation was due to high unemployment, but then asked rhetorically, if Ahmadinejad administration believed the linkage to be real, why had they not created any jobs?

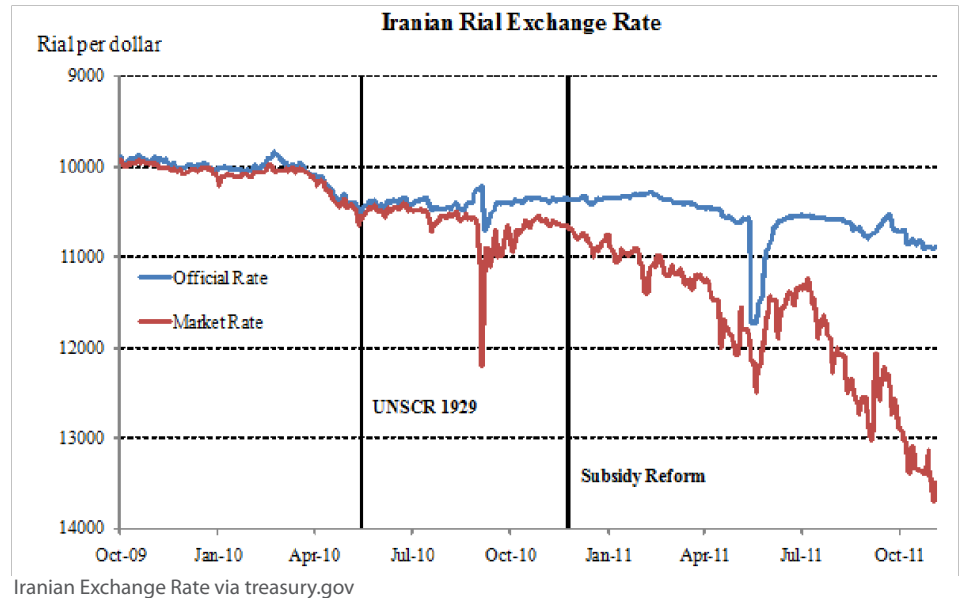
Economic columnists in other newspapers often join in the ribbing of the Iranian leadership. For example, last summer Abrar criticized Ahmadinejad's poor grasp and random citation of statistics in a headline, "Mr. Ahmadinejad! Statistics will no longer solve your problems!"² Indeed, it is not uncommon for financial beat journalists to catch the regime citing different statistics for the same item within the course of a week.³ Understanding the subtle ridicule, none other than Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei declared in a rare visit to a cabinet meeting that the government's arbitrary and fictional use of statistics should stop.⁴

1. "Afsun-i tavarram," (The Charm of Inflation), *Donya-e Eqtesad*, June 9, 2008.
2. "Aqa-ye Ahmadinezhad! Digar-e Amar Mushikal-i shoma rah al namikonad," *Abrar (Vanquish)*, August 14, 2011.
3. For example, "Amar-i Mutanaqiz dar Niaz va qa'i kishavarz beh benzin varadani!" ("Conflicting Statistics About the Need for Imported Gasoline"), *Abrar*, October 12, 2009.
4. "Mashruh-i rahnamudha-ye rahbar-i inqilab dar didar hayat-i dawlat" (Detailed Guidelines Given by Leader in Cabinet Meeting), *Alef*, September 15, 2010.

Iran's Statistical Manipulation Suggests Regime Vulnerability

5 March 2012

Source: "Madir-i kal-i iqtisadi bank markazi khabar dad: tavarram 21 dar sadi bara-ye sal-i 90." (The Director-General of Iran's Central Bank Reports: Inflation at 21 percent for Year 90," *Donya-e Eqtesad (World Economy)*. 5 March 2012 http://www.donya-e-eqtesad.com/Default_view.asp?@=293506



مدیر کل اقتصادی بانک مرکزی خبر داد
تورم 21 درصدی برای سال 90

The Director-General of Iran's Central Bank Reports: Inflation at 21 Percent for Iranian Year [13]90 [March 2011-March 2012]

Donya-ye Eqtesad - The economic director general of Bank-e Markazi reported the 21 percent inflation forecast for the Iranian economy for the year [13]90. Previously, economic officials had predicted an 18 percent inflation for [13]90. Regarding the increase in the expected level of inflation, Abolfazl Akrami, economic director general of Bank-e Markazi, said, "The fluctuations in the foreign currency and coin markets caused the inflation rate to be slightly higher than the inflation target of bank-e Markazi." He added, "If foreign currency and coin fluctuations had not occurred in the market, the expectation was that the inflation rate would be below 20 percent and within the range of Bank-e Markazi's inflation target..."

While the economic director general of Bank-e Markazi has reported the "beginning of inflation's downward trend," the review of the trend of the rate of inflation during the past months show this index to be on an upward trend.

Statistics and other metrics have become a political third rail for Iranian politicians, who appeal to populism or foment crises as a way to distract from their own failing. As the Iranian fiscal year ended a year ago, Tehran-i Emrouz [Tehran Today] reported that while it was traditional to provide year-end reports, the government seemed to be stopping the practice. "Of course, for some time, it has no longer been customary to deliver economic reports and governmental statistical bureaus no longer feel obliged to deliver precise statistics on current affairs of the state," the paper commented, adding, "Under such circumstances, one must use reports from international institutions such as the International Monetary Fund or the World Bank statistics in order to estimate industrial growth and the unemployment rate."⁵ The lament followed Ahmadinejad's attempt to coordinate statistical reporting to force statisticians to better conform to his political objectives.⁶ Understood by all Iranian economists was the huge discrepancy—seldom in the Iranian leadership's favor—when comparing statistics offered by Iranian political leaders and those gathered more scientifically

It is against this backdrop that the Central Bank's report on inflation is noteworthy. Two years ago, the Central Bank predicted inflation would be 10.8 percent.⁷ The Bank acknowledges inflation now to be 21 percent, three points higher than it had estimated

5. *Tehran-i Emrouz*, March 16, 2011, as translated in Ali Alfoneh, "Iran News Round Up," American Enterprise Institute, March 16, 2011. Original no longer available online.

6. "Ahmadinejad: Dastgahha-ye dawlati dar arayeh amarhamahang bashunad," ("Ahmadinejad: The Government Should Provide Coordinated Statistics,") *Abrar (Transcript)*, October 24, 2010

7. "Bank Markazi Khabar Dad: Kahesh-i Narkh-i Tavarram beh 10.8 dar sad dar sal 88" (Central Bank Reports: Inflation Rate Will Be Reduced to 10.8 Percent in Year [13]88," *FarsNews.com*, April 4, 2010.

Continued: The Director-General of Iran's Central Bank Reports: Inflation at 21 Percent for Iranian Year [13]90 [March 2011-March 2012]

Abolfazl Akrami, economic director general of Bank-e Markazi, told Fars News Agency yesterday that "the year-end inflation rate will not exceed 21 percent" and due to this "the decreasing trend of inflation has begun..."

This Bank-e Markazi official has reported the downward trend of the inflation rate from the month of Dey [December 22 – January 20] of the current year at a time when the estimates calculated by "Donya-ye Eqtesad" show a 0.5 percent increase in the average inflation rate for the month of Bahman [January 21-February 19] compared to the month of Dey. This rate's estimate has been calculated based on assumptions that are also confirmed by Bank-e Markazi's statistics on the inflation rate. According to this estimate, the upward trend of the inflation rate in the month of Bahman has continued; so that the average inflation rate in the month of Bahman reached 21.5 percent.

With all this being said, the economic director general of Bank-e Markazi does not consider inflation's downward trend in the near future as being farfetched and unexpected but believes: "During the past months the increase in prices of some goods has been seen and if inflation had continued its normal trend, by now the inflation rate would have reduced..."

This responsible official in the Bank-e Markazi emphasized: "As was said, we do not have an inflation table approved by the Majles in the current year and in the Fifth [Economic] Development Plan. But Bank-e Markazi had estimated current year's inflation rate at about 18 percent based on its own estimates while keeping in mind that we were in the first year of the implementation of the Targeted Subsidies Law and also the growth in liquidity."

In continuing, while explaining the reasons for the failure of the realization of Bank-e Markazi's 18 percent targeted inflation during the current year, the economic director general of Bank-e Markazi said: "Fluctuations in the foreign currency and coin markets caused the inflation rate to be a little higher than Bank-e Markazi's targeted inflation..."

In responding to a question about the reason why Bank-e Markazi did not announce the target inflation rate this year, he said: "Usually Bank-e Markazi's targeted inflation rate is determined based on the provisions of the plan, but an approved table for inflation did not exist in the Fifth Development Plan."

While pointing out that in previous years Bank-e Markazi determined the target inflation rate based on the Plan's approved table, Akrami said: "Since this year the Fifth Development Plan Law had not compiled this table, this rate was not accurately determined this year."

Regarding this same issue, the economic director general of Bank-e Markazi emphasized that of course setting the target by Bank-e Markazi has been determined and pursued internally keeping the implementation of the Targeted Subsidies Law in mind..."

In responding to a question about the reason for the Bank-e Markazi governor's announcement of the 5.5 percent economic growth rate while this rate is different according to the statistics announced by the Bank, he added: "In the first place the growth rates

for this year. While the government expected some inflation because of the replacement of some subsidies with cash allowances, the rate was beyond prediction and places the inflation above a rate which, as bad as it is, ordinary Iranians will amplify in their minds. Indeed, if the official statistics are taken at face value, inflation has doubled in just two years.

The economy might be the freest beat for Iranian journalists, but that freedom is relative. The studied omission of any discussion of sanctions suggests that, despite regime rhetoric belittling their impact, sanctions are biting. Simply put, Iranian economists and economy beat journalists recognize that the regime considers honest discussion of sanctions to be treasonous.

Iranians signal that they feel the pain. Between September 2011 and January 2012, as the Iranian rial lost more than 70 percent of its value against the U.S. dollar,⁸ Iranian tourism plummeted in neighboring Turkey as hotel prices nearly doubled for Iranians because of the unfavorable exchange rate.⁹

*The perfect storm of inflation and sanctions will come to a head this month, as Iranians celebrate Nowruz, the Persian New Year. Foodstuff prices traditionally spike in March as Iranians prepare to entertain family and friends. If Iranians normally grumble, it is possible that soon they may shout. That the Iranian government refuses to acknowledge the impact of sanctions suggests that when the Iranians do protest their failing economy, it will be the regime rather than the outside world which will be in their sites. **End FMSO Commentary (Rubin)***

8. Karit Radio, "Sanctions Push Iranian Currency to Record Lows," ABC News.com, January 23, 2012.

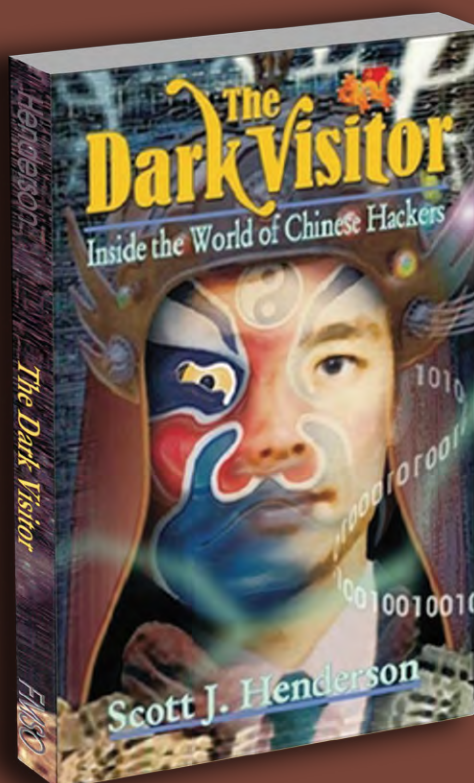
9. "Less Iranians Visit Turkey as Rial Falls," *Hürriyet Daily News*, March 8, 2012.

Continued: The Director-General of Iran's Central Bank Reports: Inflation at 21 Percent for Iranian Year [13]90 [March 2011-March 2012]

including and excluding oil must be separated. If we look closely, the 5.5 percent growth rate announced by Mr. Bahmani has been announced at 5.8 percent in Bank-e Markazi's new statistics."

Akrami said: "Also the economic growth rate excluding oil is 6.1 percent which was previously announced at over 5.5 percent as well. The rate announced by the governor did not consider the new reforms."

Scott Henderson's ground-breaking work, *The Dark Visitor* analyzes the history, ideology, organization, exploits, and political motivations of the Chinese hacker network. Whenever possible, the information contained herein has been taken directly from the Chinese hacker organization itself or from interviews with individual members.



FMSO Commentary: *The importance of Iran's March 2 parliamentary elections was not so much in their function to choose a new Majlis, but rather because they were the first nationwide poll since widespread fraud during the 2009 presidential election sparked the largest protests Iran had witnessed since the Islamic Revolution.*

That hardline factions consolidated control surprised no one. The Guardian Council, a 12-member appointed committee, vets candidates and before elections disqualifies those who, it believes, do not subscribe fully and with sufficient fervor to revolutionary principles. The resulting ballot represented ideological homogeneity.

Under such circumstances, many disaffected Iranians debated whether or not to bother voting. The regime places high importance on participation. The Supreme Leader equates high participation with popular support. Hence, Kayhan, a newspaper widely seen as the voice of the Supreme Leader, proclaimed that the "vast popular participation" represented a clear signal to the West that the Islamic Republic and Iranian people would hold firm against its pressure.¹ Alas, the regime's attempts to demonstrate popular solidarity are often clumsy. Only three hours into voting, the Guardian Council's spokesman declared that participation had increased nine percent over the previous parliamentary polls,² even though the regime had no way to gauge participation before ballots were counted. Meanwhile, Khabar [News] Online, a website affiliated with the hardline speaker of the parliament Ali Larijani, sought to show how its favorite candidate was a top vote-getter but, in

1. "Majlis-i navum bar amadeh az amase-haye bozorg," (The Ninth Majlis has emerged from a great epic), *Kayhan*, March 3, 2012.

2. "Afzayish 9 dar sadi musharakat-I mardam dar intikhabat ta sa'at 11 sobh," (9 Percent Increase in Turnout By 11 a.m.), *Mehr News*, March 2, 2012.

Election Boycott Drives a Wedge between Iranian Reformists

5 March 2012



Source: "Khatami biyaneh dad: Asir guzashteh nama'im. Beh ashti melli davit mikonam" (Khatami Statement: We shouldn't be trapped in the past. I call for reconciliation.), *Asr-i Iran* (The Age of Iran). 5 March 2012. <http://www.asriran.com/fa/news/204363>

Mohammad Khatami, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran (1997-2005), by World Economic Forum (Flickr) [CC-BY-SA-2.0 (www.creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0)], via Wikimedia Commons

خاتمی بیانیہ داد: اسیر گزشتہ نمائیم/ به آشتی ملی دعوت می کنم/ برای دفع تهدیدهای درونی و بیرونی رأی دادم

Khatami Statement: We shouldn't be trapped in the past; I call for reconciliation; I voted to counter internal and external threats

Given the difficulty and complexity of this issue, I do not expect everyone to be content with my explanations, especially that our limitation in the media has created an atmosphere where impossible and uncompromising expectations are made and a thorough explanation is difficult.

The existence of such ambiguities and questions in the general atmosphere is natural, especially by people who have suffered different problems and restrictions and paid heavy prices. I cannot ignore these questions, assessments and sincere sentiments and reiterate my respect to critics and even my opposition. Stressing that a detailed explanation of this issue requires a more suitable opportunity, I'd like to highlight a couple of points.

What I did has its roots in my political and intellectual views as well as in what I believe in and adhere to. I [voted] from the view of reforms, with an aim to preserve the chance

Continued: Khatami Statement

doing so, inadvertently revealed that votes cast by province were a fraction of what they were in 2009.³

Certainly, Iranian participation figures must be taken with a grain of salt; the Iranian government allows no independent verification or observation. While the Interior Ministry reported 64 percent turnout, the popular news website Baztab-e Emrouz (*Today's Reflection*) reported that the Tehran governorate dropped 2.5 million eligible voters from its ranks in order to inflate the participation rate. More likely, the Iranian government simply makes up its figures or eager-to-please commissars inflate their own district's results.

For the opposition, loyal or otherwise, refusal to participate provides the safest way to signal dissatisfaction with the regime and its political direction. The Basij paramilitary can bash heads of protestors in the streets, but it has no mechanism to intimidate those who simply stay home. Many of the reformers and Green Movement protestors sought an informal boycott. After all, the regime leadership allowed them no candidates to support.

It was a surprise to many reformists, therefore, when former president Muhammad Khatami eschewed the boycott and very publicly cast his ballot. Khatami subsequently issued a statement—translated below—to explain his motives. He argued that his vote was meant to reverse the polarization that has beset Iranian politics since the disputed 2009 election and to begin anew.

Khatami's efforts at reconciliation will not sit well with women and the youth, his traditional constituency. His actions recall his decision in 1999, against the backdrop of student protests, to remain silent rather than defend his principles after the security forces attacked a student dormitory, setting off a week of rioting. Then, a decade later, he remained largely silent as his allies were dragged off to prison in the wake of the 2009 election uprising. For many Iranians once enamored with Khatami, his vote will be strike three.

Conservatives approached Khatami's olive branch with derision. Fars News, a hardline news service, published a commentary speculating that the former president's action was a cynical attempt to appease the regime and pave the way for a comeback.⁵

Regardless of Khatami's motives, rather than reconcile Iran's volatile political scene, Khatami's vote marks the beginning of the campaign for 2013. The Iranian regime should not be fooled by the calm before the storm. Khatami's vote—and the reaction to it—suggests that battle lines are being drawn and that the reformists—traditionally the loyal opposition to the theocratic regime—will not be able to provide any insulation to widespread apathy or channel for growing popular anger. **End FMSO Commentary (Rubin)**

for reformism, which I consider the most important and even the only way for the country's prosperity, for the achievement of the ideals of the Revolution, and for preservation of people's rights and national interests, as well as to counter the internal and external risks and threats.

The feasible and desirable goal is the return of the situation where the expediency of the country and the people's fundamental and historic demands will be the priority.

Based on a reformist approach, I have and am calling for national reconciliation, return to the original ideals of the Revolution and the constitution, and establishment of an atmosphere of empathy and mass participation. I have and am expecting that everyone begins a new chapter in the country, not being trapped in the past but looking into the future.

Stressing reformism in legal and nonviolent processes does not mean that changing the country's affairs will be achievable without paying a price. But each political step needs to take into account the interests and conditions which the active forces within the country are facing.

With regard to the elections, active participation and nomination of candidates of course depend on the presence of appropriate conditions. The country's greater interests and reforms are more important than personal considerations. They have certain requirements. Designing a strategy, not fielding candidates, and not issuing a list [of candidates] were never meant to boycott the election. And it was necessary we proved this in practice so as not to provide an opportunity for ill-wishers and in order to provide an opportunity to promote greater understanding on the basis of people's rights and interests and the country's real progress. We hope for the creation of a shared understanding of the current situation.

I have no doubt that feelings and judgments at a suitable time will reach a point where, instead of any extreme or cautious justifications, right decisions are made for the national interest and reforms within the Islamic regime, and God willing, there will be a solution for the affairs.

3. "Dar sad rayi kidam namayangan marakaz ustan ba latar ast?" (Which Representatives Achieved the Greatest Percentage of the Vote?) *Khabar Online* (Tehran), March 6, 2012.

4. "Piruz-i Nizam dar intikhabat dar aqa ghir qabul dafa' taht dimat alsha'ah qarar nagirad," (Indefensible actions must not overshadow regime's victory in elections), *Baztab-i Emrouz* (Tehran), March 5, 2012.

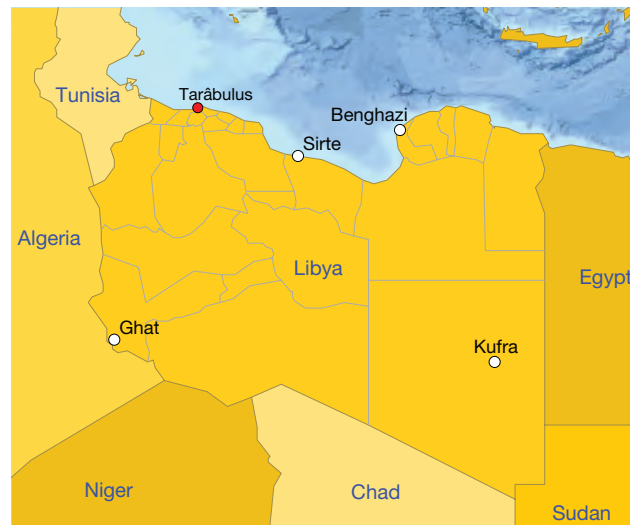
5. "O jam-i zahri ra neveshid ta dar intikhabat riyast jumhuri ba'di varad shod," ("He Drank a Cup of Poison to Participate in the Next Presidential Election,") *Kayhan*, March 6, 2012

FMSO Commentary: In the first week of March a group of leaders from Libya's eastern province declared their intention of unilaterally establishing an autonomous region with Benghazi as its capital. The declaration was met with stern rhetoric from the Tripoli-based leadership of Libya's ruling National Transitional Council (NTC) and with general popular opprobrium. Although the declaration of eastern autonomy was largely symbolic, it was preceded by more troubling events. On February 11, 2012, clashes broke out between the (Arabized Berber) Zuwaya (also spelled Zwai) tribe and ethnic Tibu (also spelled Tibo, Tubu, Toubu, etc.) in the town of Kufra, in Libya's southeastern corner. Although isolated, Kufra's location is important: near the borders with Chad, Egypt and Sudan, it has historically been a stopping point on the route from Sudan and East Africa to the Libyan coastline and beyond, a lucrative route for smuggling and various other illicit forms of trafficking.

The fighting was allegedly sparked when a group of Tibu, tasked with combating illegal trafficking, stopped a Zuwaya smuggler, who shot and killed many of the Tibu. Clashes escalated over the following week and were only contained when the national army moved into the area on February 23. In the end, over 100 people were reported killed, the majority from the Tibu. The Tibu narrative generally alleged that the NTC government was backing the Zuwaya and seeking to exterminate them, a charge that has some resonance, given the racist violence that has plagued Libya over the past year. The Zuwaya, meanwhile, claimed the Tibu (also present in Chad and Niger) were backed by Chadian mercenaries and were trying to secede. A battle for control over smuggling routes may have played an important role in the violence.

The accompanying article is an op-ed from Libya's al-Watan newspaper. What

Holding Libya Together



24 February 2012

Source: Muftah 'Abid al-Mashai, "Gentlemen, this is Kufra, for those who didn't know it," al-Watan (Libya). <http://www.alwatan-libya.com/more.php?newsid=20230&catid=23>

Map of Libya [CC-BY-SA-2.5(<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.5>)] via planiglobe.com

هذه الكفرة يا سادة لمن يجهلها Gentlemen, this is Kufra, for those who didn't know it

This is a similar title to an article published two years ago to this date. What is similar today is that it is clear that Libyan Tibu are citizens with rights like other Libyans and with same duties of defending and protecting the homeland. Kufra is one of Libya's most important cities geopolitically, that is in terms of military and political importance. Historically, the gifted war strategist Graziani knew the puzzle of Kufra well, as he prioritized its occupation despite the costs and hardships of crossing the great Saharan desert. He was not able to exert his influence on Barqa until after occupying Kufra, as it is without question the magic key to the whole northern area.

When we raise slogans of a safe Libya where peace prevails, courtesy and flattery may not be the most appropriate solutions for what is happening in the south, which is an inseparable part of our land, rich in its generous people and its water and potentially other more important resources that have not yet been discovered such as oil and uranium. These are the temptations of establishing a state in northern Chad with five million inhabitants. In the geostrategic ledger we find that the three most important points in Libya are the triangle represented by Ghat, Kufra and Sirte, as these cities have serious security importance, requiring great attention especially of the military variety.

Kufra today is a volatile region where unfortunate events are taking place, regardless of whether the reasons behind the ongoing clashes are over land and regardless of the goals. Demonstrating state authority in this conflict has become a pressing issue and a priority, due to the proximity of the city of Kufra to the tense area of Darfur. An objective proposal for a solution requires a short-term plan, to be carried out immediately by deploying strong brigades from the national army. They must be provided with logistical assistance by all possible means, including even foreign assistance and various forms of airpower. We should take advantage of the European countries' need to prevent illegal immigration by requesting assistance and support in order to fully secure Libya's southern border. By securing our

the analysis may lack in complexity or incisiveness is balanced by its providing a good barometer of what appears to be the general mood in Libya. Despite the difficulties that creating a new state will entail after the unlikely overthrow of Qaddafi, there appears to be optimism. Libya is resource-rich and generally homogenous. Political failure, it seems, is the main obstacle to a safe and prosperous future. In addition to building a modern, functioning state practically from scratch, however, the main challenge will be to balance between the impulses of autonomy and centralization. This may be of particular importance in its remote southern regions. With this in mind, top Libyan security and military officials have recently met with their Algerian and Egyptian counterparts, and the countries of North Africa and the Sahel recently pledged greater cooperation to tackle the problems of border security. End FMSO Commentary (Winter)

Gentlemen, this is Kufra, for those who didn't know it

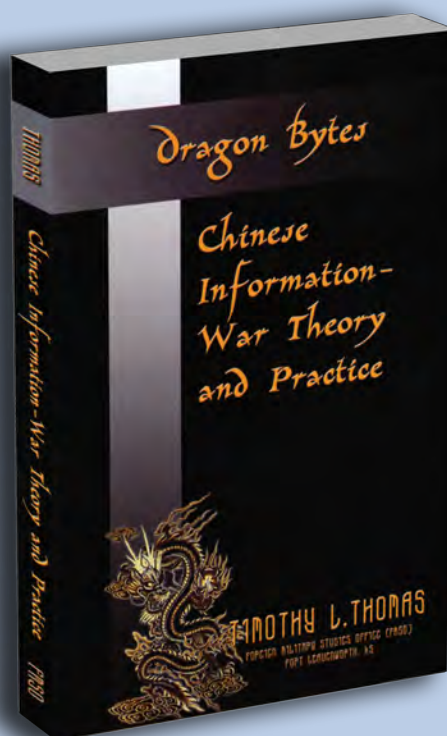
border we will have achieved something priceless, preventing the flow of large numbers of African refugees into our country, given the low population density in southern Libya.

Kufra is a safety valve for peace in northern Libya and defending it is something that all Libyans should be concerned with, including the Tibu brothers. Here we only ask the government to lay down a just solution that preserves the rights of all Libyans; those who threaten the sovereignty of the nation we have no need for and they must be distanced by all legal means.

We are lacking nothing. We have the will, the capacity, the mind, the money, the weapons and everything else that we need to protect our borders and impose sovereignty on our land and allow Libyans to enjoy peace and not only services but also a decent and luxurious life. This is so regardless of whether this citizen is in a corner of the earth and even if we are separated by the vast Sahara, as our will can overcome the might of the desert sands.

***Dragon Bytes* by Tim Thomas examines China's information-war (IW) theory and practice from 1995-2003. Some specialists may be surprised that the Chinese openly discuss not only computer network attacks and electronic preemption but also the development of IW units and an "integrated network-electronic warfare" theory (which closely approximates the US**

theory of "network-centric warfare"). The Chinese development of an IW theory is representative of their country's philosophy and culture. By creating an "IW theory with Chinese characteristics" the People's Liberation Army (PLA) has offered an alternate way of viewing the application of IW than in the West.



FMSO Commentary: *The fog of propaganda wars continues to settle over the Syrian conflict. Syrian media, reliable in their unreliability and disregard for any semblance of objectivity, continue to churn out the expected “reports” from the ground, blaming al-Qaeda and international conspirators for the ongoing unrest. On the other side, generally credible and professional Saudi and Qatari media have set aside any pretense of independence from state policy and continue to present as factually incontestable a parade of unverified eyewitness accounts. The best one can do under such circumstances is synthesize that which is of relevance in the combined narratives.*

Following are two articles, one taken from Syria’s semi-official al-Watan newspaper, the other from Saudi Arabia’s pan-Arab al-Sharq al-Awsat. The article from the Syrian newspaper was published one week earlier, but both, nonetheless, should be read in the context of the destruction of the Homs neighborhood of Baba Amr, once a bastion of armed rebellion, as well as the open pledges of financial assistance for the rebellion made by Gulf leaders.

*Syrian media, as should be expected, are and will continue emphasizing Saudi and Qatari financial backing and (indirectly) Turkish harboring of the leadership of the armed opposition. The splits between and within opposition groups – although caricaturized – are also a reality that Syrian media are more than willing to exploit and encourage. On the other hand, Saudi Arabia and Qatar no longer make a secret of the financial support they provide the opposition, an important issue, given the growing financial crisis in Syria. In addition, defections from the army are emphasized, as are the growing ranks of the Free Syrian Army and the fear of a flood of defections among non-Alawi conscripts. Interestingly, there is also mention of “sleeper cells” within the Syrian regime. The post-Baba Amr phase of the Syrian uprising is likely to be as unpredictable as what came before, only with higher and potentially international stakes at play. **End FMSO Commentary (Winter)***

The Fog of Propaganda Wars in Syria

Source: The National Council Receives Financial Assistance...

11 March 2012

Arming the ‘Free Army’ is a Priority,” al-Sharq al-Awsat. <http://aawsat.com/details.asp?section=4&article=667471&issueno=12157>

المجلس الوطني يتلقى المساعدات المالية... والأولوية
لتسليح “الجيش الحر”

The National Council Receives Financial Assistance... Arming the ‘Free Army’ is a Priority

The leader of the Free Syrian Army (FSA), Colonel Riyadh al-Asaad, said that although the Syrian regime may have a stronger military arsenal than the FSA its morale is beginning to suffer. As proof he pointed to the daily clashes between the two groups, as well as the growing number of defectors within army ranks. The FSA, he noted, now numbers around 70,000, including 5 generals. He also pointed to the military operations carried out in Baba Amr, with the military needing a month before being able to enter the area, despite the power asymmetries. Al-Asaad told al-Sharq al-Awsat: “We cannot say that we are in full control of certain areas, but we can confirm that we have presence in 60% of Syria and are carrying out military operations, while regime forces are limited to the military barracks. We are able to enter any area and bring anyone in, as we have done with journalists to report what is happening on the ground in Syria.”

Al-Asaad announced that unique operations will be conducted over the next few hours that will surprise the regime. He explained that yesterday the FSA brought down an army helicopter and destroyed 6 tanks in Idlib. He noted that the FSA has only simple personal and medium weapons, and that the helicopter was brought down by targeting its tail, an idea that has successfully been used to bring down six helicopters. By his estimation, to fight the regime and protect the areas where control has been established the FSA will need “medium weapons and anti-tank and anti-aircraft weapons.”

Al-Asaad said that “among young Syrian men asked to do military service in the regular army no more than 5,000 have joined, most of them from the Alawi sect; a large number of others have joined the FSA, in total more than 50,000 after six months.” In response to what has been published regarding the meeting of the Arab foreign ministers in Cairo, al-Asaad said “until now, we have heard only words. We thank them for their stance, but we want actions. We affirm that the FSA is the only guarantor for the unity of the revolution.” He noted that there had not been contact with Syrian National Council (SNC) head Burhan Ghalioun over the past few days but had not obtained details on the ongoing negotiations between the SNC and various countries regarding obtaining weapons.

With regard to SNC activities aimed at arming the FSA, Bashar al-Haraki, a member of the SNC secretariat, said that work between the two main opposition groups - the SNC and the FSA - is going as planned. In this context, a meeting was held that brought together members of the Military Advisory Council, made up of various members of the SNC as well as Col. Riyadh al-Asaad, Brig. Gen. Mustafa al-Sheikh and Brig. Gen. Faiz Amro. At the meeting, a draft was presented for agreement focused on uniting ranks for unifying

Continued: The Fog of Propaganda Wars in Syria

brigades fighting on the ground, including volunteer fighters, under the umbrella of the FSA led by Col. Riyadh al-Asaad and with Brig. Gen. Mustafa al-Sheikh as head of the military council. Most important is the work to put an end to the misuse of weapons and limit them to the FSA in accordance with its agenda in the national interest. He added that unifying the ranks of the FSA is a basic condition to extending financial assistance, and securing weapons will come after this. Al-Asaad believes that “the FSA is united and that there are not differences among its members. The differences alleged by Brig. Gen. Mustafa al-Sheikh are unjustified, he is creating the leadership conflict and is always trying to question the motives of the revolution, unlike the five other generals that defected and who support what we are doing.”

Al-Haraki noted that there are mechanisms that are being laid down for this. “We have begun receiving financial assistance from various sources and from Arab countries. The priority now is securing weapons for the FSA.” Al-Haraki considers it premature to discuss the type of weapons. According to a source in the SNC, “the weapons to be secured are the same weapons that were used in Afghanistan against Russian forces, as they have proven their usefulness and will be the best solution for the Syrian revolution. These are the RPG-7 and RPG-14 and other types of weapons that can be held on the shoulder.” On the source of these weapons, al-Haraki said, “The main aim is to obtain these weapons from within Syria, where weapons are bought from opportunistic militants and officers who can secure them in exchange for money. The second part will consist of military operations in coordination with officers and individuals that have not yet announced their defection but who are working for the benefit of the Syrian revolution, in order to secure weapons depots.” While al-Haraki noted that the attempts to obtain weapons for the FSA from the international community will not stop, he noted that introducing weapons or obtaining them from abroad are not the means at hand nor can it be done without an international resolution in this regard.

صراع على المال الخليجي يفتت «معارضة» الخارج... خلافات غليون والأسعد والشيخ
تؤدي إلى مقتل عدد من المسلحين

Struggle over Gulf Money Divides External ‘Opposition’... Disagreement between Ghalioun, al-Asaad, and al-Sheikh Leads to the Death of Several Gunmen

Source: Struggle over Gulf Money Divides External ‘Opposition’ ... Disagreement between Ghalioun, al-Asaad, and al-Sheikh Leads to the Death of Several Gunmen,” al-Watan (Syria). <http://www.alwatan.sy/dindex.php?idn=118717>

Information is still vague on the final hours of the Baba Amr battle and how a number of gunman “commanders” were able to flee toward Lebanon, leaving Syrian and foreign fighters to face their fate at the hands of the Syrian Arab Army, which retained full control over the area on Thursday morning. According to information obtained by al-Watan from civilian sources in this area, clashes broke out in the final hours among the armed groups themselves, resulting in different factions killing one another and many leaders fleeing toward Lebanon through narrow tunnels that allowed them to reach the border areas. According to information from Lebanon a group of smugglers was waiting for those that fled Baba Amr to transport them for care directly to hospitals in Tripoli, in coordination with a Lebanese group known for its hostility toward Syria.

Civilian sources say that the gunmen in Baba Amr were not a single group but rather several groups and followers of organizations from outside of Syria, including al-Qaeda. In the

final hours, as a result of confusion and the siege imposed by the Syrian Arab Army, disagreements arose among the groups, leading gunmen to kill their terrorist comrades and many to flee toward Lebanon.

A media source in Paris said that since the end of the Tunis Conference, the chairman of the Istanbul Council, Burhan Ghalioun, cut off communications with Riyadh al-Asaad, leader of the so-called Free Syrian Army, in the expectation of obtaining financial assistance from Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Libya. This led to disagreement and splits within the Istanbul Council, with many of its members objecting to Ghalioun taking over the management of the expected money. The council is counting on massive financial support from Saudi Arabia, following Qatari funding of the council.

In Istanbul, Turkish media sources confirmed recent disagreements between the Qatari-backed al-Asaad and the Saudi-backed al-Sheikh, also revolving around the expected funding by

Continued: The Fog of Propaganda Wars in Syria

Libya and Gulf countries. The source said that al-Asaad wants to control the money and weapons while Saudi Arabia refuses to back him and prefers the head of the “High Revolutionary Military Command” Brigadier General Mustafa al-Sheikh, in an indication of Qatari-Saudi disagreement over who should lead the armed resistance in Syria.

Al-Sheikh visited Riyadh recently and obtained a Saudi diplomatic passport, using it to travel to Paris and Tel Aviv, where he coordinated with Abdel Halim Khaddam under Saudi guidance and auspices, while al-Asaad remains under Qatari sponsorship.

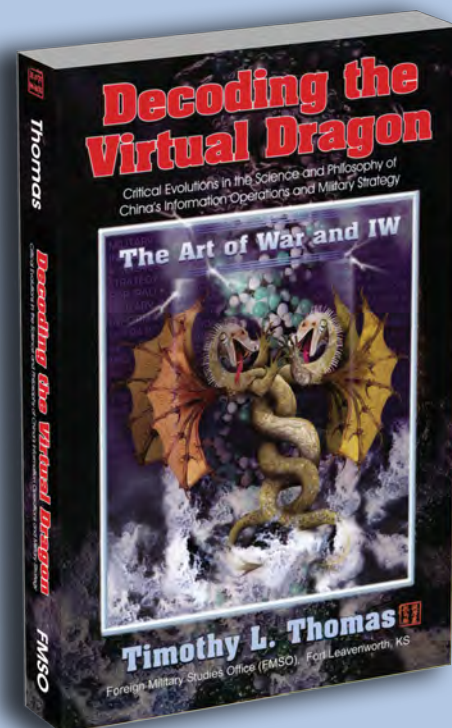
The sources say that several disagreements have arisen between al-Asaad and al-Sheikh regarding who will lead the armed opposition, especially as al-Sheikh claims a higher military rank and more experience while al-Asaad claims that he became a general, “promoting himself and those around him” and thus is no longer a colonel obligated to follow al-Sheikh. He is asking that the money and weapons be channeled to him directly, resulting in Ghalioun’s intervention asking in a press conference at the end of last week that the distribution of weapons take place via the Istanbul Council.

According to the sources all the differences among the so-called Syrian opposition abroad have become focused on money and influence, especially after the opposition received promises of hundreds of millions of dollars in cash and “humanitarian” assistance, with the first pledges from Libya amounting to 100 million dollars!

Going back to what is happening in Baba Amr, the disagreement has moved abroad, as leaders in Istanbul and Paris ask for positions to be held while leaders on the inside seek a way out. According to information posted by many Syrians on Facebook, a large number of those who did not fight in the battle between the armed factions fled to the tunnels and were subsequently captured. According to other sources, after all the gunmen’s fortifications collapsed and foreign leaders learned that the “fall” of Baba Amr was inevitable, directives were given to destroy communications equipment and kill prisoners.

Tim Thomas’s *Decoding the Virtual Dragon* explains how Chinese information warfare (IW) concepts since 2003 fit into the strategic outlook, practices, and activities of the People’s Liberation Army (PLA). The book offers IW explanations directly from the pens of Chinese experts. The Chinese authors discuss the application or relation of IW to strategic thought, the transformation plans of the People’s Liberation Army (PLA), the revolution in military affairs (RMA), and the revolution in knowledge warfare and cognition.

Tim Thomas provides an indispensable source for understanding the fundamentals of Chinese military thought and demonstrating how IW/IO has been integrated into the art of war and strategy.



FMSO Commentary: *The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) agreement that saw President Ali Abdullah Saleh step down was but a first step in Yemen's uncertain transition to a new political era. It is generally agreed that the country's political elite must now begin tackling the more difficult problem of restructuring the military and security services. Two main reasons make this a particularly difficult task. One is that nearly all top leadership in the military and security institutions is deeply intertwined with the Saleh family and his Sanhan tribesmen. Convincing them to give up these powers will not be easy. The other is that the army and security services, as the article below details, essentially split into two over the past year. Finding neutral figures to lead the institutions, who are both acceptable to all parties and independent of them, will prove especially difficult.*

The recent attacks by al-Qaeda that left over 100 soldiers dead is a warning of the dangers facing Yemen and the need for a strong and unified national army. Given the various armed and well organized non-state groups operating throughout Yemen, it is crucial to avoid the disintegration of the Yemeni military and security services, as this would in all likelihood bring about full state collapse and the dreaded "Somalization" of the country. Restructuring must be cautious yet effective.

*Following is an article detailing some of the challenges faced in restructuring Yemen's army and security services. The article is authored by a prominent Yemeni opposition journalist who has written on this subject for several years. The article was reprinted in various publications. Although the way the article divides Yemen's military and security into two competing factions may be simplistic, its general diagnosis appears to be accurate. **End FMSO Commentary (Winter)***

Reunifying Yemeni Army and Security

12 March 2012

Source: "The Road to Restructuring the Military and Intelligence Services," al-Masdar Online. http://www.almasdaronline.com/index.php?page=news&article-section=10&news_id=29687



Coat of arms of Yemen, by Connormah (Own work) [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons

الطريق الى إعادة هيكلة الجيش والمخابرات

The Road to Restructuring the Military and Intelligence Services

The obstacle when trying to restructure the military and security institutions is that we seem to be taking our time before reaching a definitive conclusion. Unlike most difficult issues, political decisions regarding the army and security services are governed by endless calculations by President Abd Rabo Mansour Hadi and his political team, which is made up of the ruling party alliance. Despite the enthusiasm for restructuring from the youth and the opposition parties, there are many complexities that ensure president Hadi will act with the utmost deliberation in dealing with this issue. The issue for him is not simply about a national decree dismissing the head of the Republican Guard and the First Armored Division, but rather – in his calculations – a historical political move that will be difficult without obtaining a high level of support both at home and abroad.

In third-world countries, military and intelligence services are the two true centers of executive and political power. Because of this the relationship between these institutions and civilian politicians is characterized by tension that usually becomes a battle of wills ending with civilians being subjected to the wishes of the military and security services.

The case of Yemen is complex as there are two competing military and security institutions. Toward the end of the Saleh regime, one set of them (the Republican Guard and the National Security Bureau [NSB]) took the reins of the administration and asserted its control over the older institutions (the First Armored Division and the Political Security Organization [PSO]). Nonetheless, the latter retained a wide margin of movement and influence, preparing them for reclaiming a position of power and control when the climate for this was ready.

After the irrevocable separation of the two institutions following the outbreak of the peaceful youth revolution, the state seemed on the verge of splitting into two authoritarian

Continued: The Road to Restructuring the Military and Intelligence Services

heads. Even though the PSO, which along with its brother the NSB is considered the heart of the regime, had been trying to keep neutral, the bulk of its interactions, activities and directives brought it closer to the forces of the revolution. The Republican Guard and the NSB were meanwhile dominating most political and military decision-making among the ruling team, especially during Saleh's absence. As for the revolutionary team, decisions were not monopolized by the First Armored Division and the PSO, but rather were taken with the agreement of the JMP allies and other components of the revolutionary actors. The GCC Agreement allowed civilian (political party) institutions to take a role of political leadership in the country, but the presence of the two divided institutions remained clear.

The restructuring of the armed forces and security services cannot end with the resignation of the president. The reality of the split and the independence of each institution require that restructuring, reorganization and a merger take place, in a way that first guarantees unity and then puts them under the control of the civilian authorities. The greatest complexities in the structure of these institutions, with the exception of the First Armored Division, which falls within the Ministry of Defense, is that the other three institutions (Republican Guard, NSB, PSO) are all linked to the presidency.

Regarding the Republican Guard, for instance, there are no fewer than 37 brigades with more than 75,000 soldiers and top equipment and ammunition. Even though the First Armored Division responds to the Northwest Military Command and the Ministry of Defense, this last does not have the effective power to manage and direct the division. For their part, the political and national security services are in no way subject to the authority of the Ministry of Interior, but rather follow the presidency in theory. In reality, the two are sovereign and independent and follow neither the presidency nor the Ministry of Interior.

The two armies must be restructured and unified in a single military formation under the leadership and authority of the Ministry of Defense. The two security services must follow suit and be merged into a single security service under the authority of the Ministry of Interior and supervised by the parliament. Talk of removing the leaders of the four institutions will necessarily raise questions regarding the possible alternatives to take their place. Some have suggested the following: naming Gen. Abu Bakr al-Ghazali, current Republican Guard Chief of Staff, as new head of the Republican Guard to replace Ahmed Ali Abdullah Saleh; naming Deputy Commander of the Northwest Command Gen. Al-Dhahir al-Shadadi to replace Gen. Ali Mushin al-Ahmar as head of the First Armored Division and the regional command; naming Brig. Gen. Ahmed Dirham, Deputy of the Internal Security at the

NSB to replace Ammar Mohammed Abdullah Saleh at the helm of the NSB; and, naming Brig. Gen. Mohammed Rizq al-Sarmi to replace Gen. Ghalib Mathar Ghomeish at the head of the PSO.

There are, it must be noted, other institutions that need to be restructured, particularly the Air Force, Air Defense, Central Security, Special Forces and Special Guard. This will entail replacing the leaders of these institutions and appointing new leaders as a first step on the road to putting them under the authority of the interior and defense ministries.

The United States does not appear interested in restructuring the military institutions as much as it is in coordinating and networking with the theoretical leaders of these institutions. For instance, there has been major American reliance on Gen. Ahmed Ali al-Ashwal, Chief of Staff of the Yemeni Army, in carrying out the American military agenda, especially related to the battle with al-Qaeda. This became clear following bilateral meetings at the end of which the Americans were convinced that he was best qualified to manage this portfolio in particular and the Yemeni army portfolio in general. Information however indicates that al-Ashwal, despite his position as head of the Yemeni Army, is unable to mobilize a single battalion without the agreement of the actual leaders of the two divided military institutions. More than half of the Yemeni Army, particularly the Republican Guard, does not follow orders from the chief of staff and the Ministry of Defense but rather directly from the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces. In reality, it does not appear that the Americans want to deal seriously with the stark reality that most of those who on paper are leaders in the Ministry of Defense are unable to carry out any of the army's agenda unless it is first restructured in a way that puts it under the authority of the ministry and the chief of staff. Therefore one may say that any coordination or networking to manage and organize the Yemeni Army will have trouble achieving its goals before it is restructured.

By a republican decree president Hadi may legislate the restructuring of the army and the intelligence services and dismiss all the leaders of these institutions. Such a decree, though, is more complicated than it seems. Hadi did not come to the presidency under normal circumstances in order to have the unilateral authority to act without consulting with the political spectrum. By a broad interpretation of his powers he can take bold decisions in dismissals and appointments, but according to current information he will not do so without making precise and complicated calculations. No matter how persistent he is in delaying the clash with top leaders, he alone will be convinced that to achieve the goal of a modern civilian state one must simply cross the road of restructuring the army and the intelligence services!

FMSO Commentary: “Kony2012,” the video describing the atrocities perpetrated by Joseph Kony and the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA), as well as a strategy for stopping this reign of terror, has gone viral. Surely the organization which produced it, *Invisible Children*, must be pleased that as of 14 March it had over 75 million hits on YouTube.

There are criticisms of both the film and the organization. That Kony is a horrible human being or that the LRA needs to be stopped is not in question. However, some say the approach the organization advocates is too militaristic, especially since it depends heavily on the Ugandan army, which has been repeatedly accused of human rights abuses. Others fear the publicity could result in Kony changing his tactics, making him more elusive. There are additional criticisms, but it needs to be noted that there are also many strong supporters of the organization and its efforts, and it would not be surprising to find “Stop Kony” stickers appearing in significant numbers in several major American cities.

Perhaps somewhat lost in the discussion is that Kony, whose forces have been severely reduced in numbers, has not been active in Uganda for several years, having moved on to neighboring countries. There is still a need to stop him; it is just that it appears, at least for now, he might meet his end in South Sudan, the Central African Republic, or the Democratic Republic of Congo, as opposed to Uganda, though that could change should he return to his native country. Meanwhile, the people of northern Uganda are battling another killer, nodding disease, which, as the accompanying article states, has killed at least 170 people and infected at least 3,000 children since 2009. Most troubling is that both a cause and cure for this affliction, which is characterized by seizures and brain atrophy, as well as

A Changing Operational Environment in Uganda: From Kony to Nodding Disease

13 March 2012



Source: Mark Schenkel, “Northern Uganda fears ‘nodding disease’, not Joseph Kony,” Radio Netherlands Worldwide: Africa, 13 Mar 2012. <http://www.rnw.nl/africa/article/northern-uganda-fears-%E2%80%98nodding-disease%E2%80%99-not-joseph-kony>

A child with Nodding Disease tied to a tree to keep her from wandering into a river or bushfire.
© Photo: Mark Schenkel - <http://www.rnw.nl/africa>

Northern Uganda fears ‘nodding disease’, not Joseph Kony

In northern Uganda, people do not understand the global attention being given to Joseph Kony and his Lord’s Resistance Army. The militants have not been active here for six years. Nowadays the population is facing another deadly enemy.

Michael Odongkora (30) and his two wives and six children live in a thatched hut in Uganda’s arid north. Of course he knows all about Joseph Kony and the murderous Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA). From 1997 until 2010, Odongkora and his family took refuge in a camp for internally-displaced people in northern Uganda. ‘Invisible Children’, ‘Stop Kony’ or ‘#kony2012’? “That says nothing to me.”

Odongkora does not have access to Twitter, Facebook or TV. He only has a small transistor radio and on his local radio station he didn’t hear anything about Invisible Children’s much-debated initiative to create awareness about the LRA’s atrocities. After he has been told about it, he asks: “Why do people still talk about the LRA?” The militants haven’t launched one single attack in Uganda since in 2006 the army forced them into the DR Congo and the Central African Republic. “We have much bigger problems now”, Adongkora says. “Nowadays, it is this mysterious disease that threatens our future. Why is there no attention for that?”

other problems, are unknown. Parents who used to worry about Kony taking their children away from them now worry some mysterious disease will do the same.

*Kony may someday be captured or killed, perhaps even by African soldiers trained by American advisors, but nodding disease is a reminder that in many regions more than one significant problem exists. Eliminating Kony will be a triumph, but nodding disease will still be present in Northern Uganda, where Kony once roamed. It is also a stark reminder to those contemplating deploying US troops in the future... there is much we still do not know about the varied and changing operational environments of Africa, including the diseases. **End FMSO Commentary (Feldman)***

Continued: Northern Uganda fears 'nodding disease', not Joseph Kony

No cure

He is referring to the mysterious disease that according to government figures has claimed at least 170 lives and has infected at least 3,000 children since 2009, when Ugandan and American researchers concluded that it was not epilepsy or any other known sickness. 'Nodding disease' has not spread to other parts of Uganda and affects only children up to around 15 years. Since researchers from across the world have not yet established its cause, nodding disease cannot be cured. Some Ugandan doctors theorize nodding disease may be connected to river blindness, which occurs in this region.

Odongkora's daughter Nancy suffers from the disease. Nancy (12) frequently starts nodding with her head – hence the name. She also experiences seizures and convulsions, has lost her ability to speak and no longer reacts to any outside stimulus. Basically, nodding disease eats away the brain. "I don't see a future for Nancy," her father says. Like more parents in northern Uganda, he ties his sick child to a mango tree. This way, she can't wander off into a river or – as Odongkora claims has already happened to other children with nodding disease – into a bushfire. "My child is living like a dog," he says. His pigs have more freedom than his daughter.

Publicity

Though nodding disease may pose a bigger problem than the LRA, the recent publicity for the latter may lead to more attention for the first. Ugandan journalists and activists who are criticizing the simplified way in which Invisible Children portrays their country, are trying to channel the international attention towards nodding disease. "The most urgent challenge to a northern Uganda child," is how Ugandan journalist Rosebell Kagumire describes nodding disease on her blog.

The Ugandan government last month already reacted by promising more health facilities, research and medicines that can at least temporarily suppress the sick children's symptoms. President Yoweri Museveni recently visited 25 patients who were transferred to Mulago hospital in the capital Kampala. "We have just finished training a hundred health workers who know how to use the medicines," says Benard Opar, who two weeks ago was appointed national coordinator of the efforts against nodding disease. "We are still establishing how we can reach the affected families who can't travel twenty-five miles to the nearest health centre."

Michael Odongkora has little faith in the government. It has been neglecting northern Uganda for 25 years already, he says. "During the days that the LRA was killing our people, the government did way too little for us northerners. And now that the rebels are finally gone, we are up against a killing disease – again, by ourselves."

FMSO Commentary: *The United States' decision to send in some 100 special operations forces to locate Joseph Kony (the focal point of the eponymous "Kony 2012" viral video) is making some ethnic Acholi in northern Uganda nervous. As detailed below, many Acholi believe that the U.S.'s search for Kony and his Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) is simply a plot of collusion between the Ugandan government of longtime president Yoweri Museveni and the United States to reclaim Acholi land for future agricultural resale.*

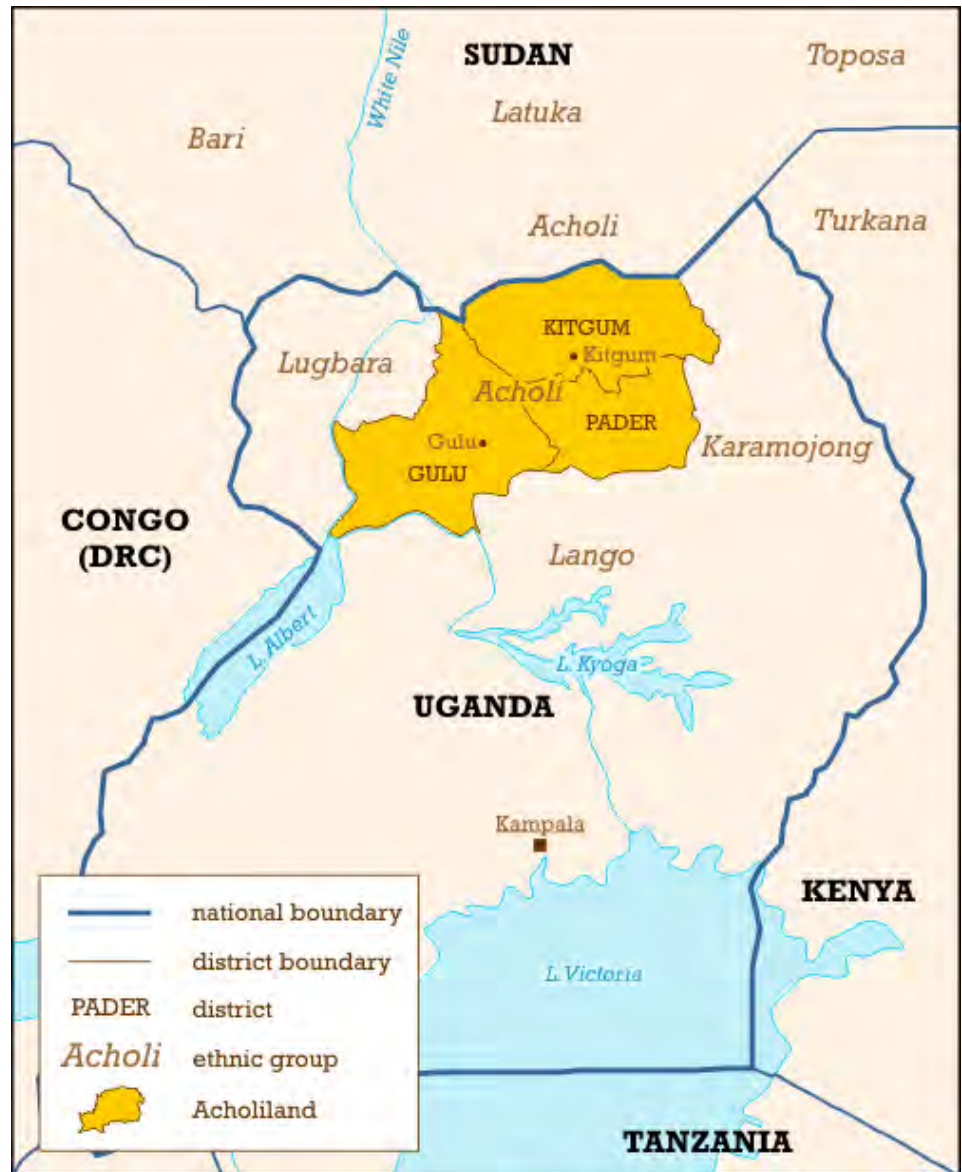
Their position is not hard to understand. Given that the Acholi were the primary victims of Kony and the LRA, in 1996 Museveni (of the Bankyankole ethnic group) enacted a forced displacement plan that included the resettlement of more than one million Acholi. Though arguably undertaken to protect those living in Acholiland, the move has aroused much resentment. More than fifteen years later, thousands of Acholi still live in such resettlement camps, some of whom suffer from some of the highest mortality rates in the world.

This historic Acholi wariness of the Ugandan state has only been exacerbated with the greater presence of the U.S. military in the Great Lakes region. To be sure, U.S. policymakers working there should be aware that even good intentions to put the LRA's reign of terror to an end in Uganda will ultimately be filtered by the Acholi through their lens of skepticism for Museveni. End FMSO Commentary (Warner)

Presence of U.S. Troops Threatens Indigenous Acholi in Uganda

8 March 2012

Source: Ann Garrison, "Uganda: Acholi Face Second Genocide With U.S. Troops," Pambazuka News, 8 March 2012: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201203091490.html>



Acholiland, Uganda - created by Mark Dingemanse [CC-BY-2.0 (creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0)]

Uganda: Acholi Face Second Genocide With U.S. Troops

In October 2011, President Obama sent 100 U.S. Special Operations Forces into Uganda's northern region to, he said, help the Ugandan Army protect the people by hunting down Joseph Kony, the leader of the Lord's Resistance Army, commonly known by its acronym, the LRA. Now, however, many Acholi and other indigenous people

Continued: Uganda: Acholi Face Second Genocide With U.S. Troops

of Northern Uganda say that Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni's attempt to evict them from their land is what really threatens their survival.

On Feb. 12, Ugandan American Black Star News Editor Milton Allimadi published 'Uganda: Museveni's and Madhvani Group's Acholi Land Grab Would Amount to Second Genocide.'

'A vicious land grab,' Allimadi wrote, 'is being carried out in Uganda, pairing the country's dictator with an 'investor,' and the targets are the Acholi, genocide survivors who live in the northern part of the East African country, on abundant, fertile and mineral-rich land.'

During Museveni's 26-year rule, since 1986, his army drove 90 percent of the Acholi people into refugee camps, where many died of starvation or disease or committed suicide, though Museveni justified the refugee camps by claiming that he was protecting the Acholi people from the LRA.

Allimadi cited documents attributed to President Museveni by American scholar Todd David Whitmore which show that Museveni was all the while eyeing Acholi land for mechanised agriculture. In recent years, he wrote, the land contest has intensified, as rich oil fields have been discovered in the region.

One member of a Northern Ugandan community which sustains itself by traditional, clan-based agriculture, said in the video, 'Shoot Us All Down,' made by the Kampala, Uganda-based Refugee Law Project, that many Northern Ugandans are ready to die to stop the land evictions: 'Everywhere you go, you ask, talk about land. Aiyiyiyiyi ... [people say]. Don't take the only resource we have left. For land, I'm ready to die. I'm ready to shed blood.'

Milton Allimadi and others have said for several years that Museveni and the U.S. government are using the infamous LRA militia as an excuse to send in troops to secure oil and other resources in Uganda, Congo and South Sudan.

In early January, Obama approved weapons sales to the new nation of South Sudan and the next week said that he would also send U.S. troops with expertise gained in the United States Marines, Air Force, Navy and Army, meaning again, Special Forces. In early February, they arrived in South Sudan, which borders northern Uganda and is also a homeland to the Acholi people.

During the third week of February, wire services and mainstream dailies reported that U.S. troops are now in Uganda, Congo, the Central African Republic and South Sudan. None reported the indigenous land evictions or what Milton Allimadi calls the Second Acholi Genocide.

FMSO Commentary: *That Boko Haram is terrorizing northern Nigeria is not a new revelation; that it is now actively advocating subversion of the region's most powerful religious leader and the spiritual leader of the countries estimated 75 million Muslims, the Sultan Sokoto, certainly is.*

As has been well noted, a uniqueness of African politics is the existence of parallel centers of governance, that is, informal, local figures (like religious and community leaders) often exert greater authority over populations than do official national and state entities. This tendency, which was the result of arguably "false" postcolonial statehood making, has meant the Sultan of Sokoto has become a de facto representative of northern Nigerian populations, and is thus greatly respected, particularly among the Hausa and Fulani ethnic groups. Boko Haram's decision to actively work around the revered Sultan will likely prove to be a controversial move, even for the radical Islamist group's increasingly alienated base of supporters.

*Boko Haram's decision to attack, at least verbally, the country's most revered Muslim religious authority highlights the rifts even within the Muslim communities of northern Nigeria. At one time the Sultan of Sokoto was thought to be the best bet for negotiating with the movement; as recently as late January, Boko Haram had openly appealed to the Sultan for help to release some of its members from jail. Now, by recognizing a new religious authority in Yobe State, Boko Haram is attempting to create an alternative center of governance to the alternative (the Sultan of Sokoto) that it already had in place. **End FMSO Commentary (Warner).***

Boko Haram Aims to Subvert Sultanic Authority in Northern Nigeria

8 March 2012

Source: "Nigeria: Qaqa, Sokoto - Boko Haram Plans to Tackle Sultan," Leadership (Abuja), 8 March 2012: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201203080621.html>

The Sultan of Sokoto is the religious leader of Nigeria's Muslim community, which consists of approximately half of the country's nearly 160 million inhabitants, and of millions of Muslims in adjoining countries in West Africa. Photo by Kris Snibbe/Harvard Staff Photographer, via www.wcfia.harvard.edu



Qaqa, Sokoto - Boko Haram Plans to Tackle Sultan

Two prominent members of the Boko Haram sect, Abul Qaqa and Kabiru Sokoto, have given a rare insight into the activities of the sect: it plans to challenge the revered authority of the Sultan of Sokoto Sa'ad Abubakar III.

According to the two Boko Haram chieftains, there is the need to reduce the power of the Sultanate because it is wrong to place tradition and religion on one person.

They added that the religious authority would now be vested in their leader who would be based in Yobe State.

A highly placed source within security circles confided in LEADERSHIP last night that the two chieftains of the sect disclosed this to security operatives during interrogation.

Qaqa and Sokoto are being detained in an undisclosed location in Abuja and are presently revealing the modus operandi of the sect.

The sect members have attacked police stations, churches, banks and schools and killed hundreds of people in Maiduguri, Damaturu, Potiskum, Gaidam, Kano, Bauchi, Gombe, Suleja, and Jos.

Speaking on the propriety of the sect's plans to curb the power of the Sultan and the need

Continued: Qaqa, Sokoto - Boko Haram Plans to Tackle Sultan

to purify Islam, Qaqa and Sokoto said, “We had a grand plan to Islamise Nigeria rightly starting with the North. We felt that a lot of Muslims were not practising the religion faithfully as they should.

“Part of the plan was to reduce the powers of the Sultan to traditional rulership functions only, while all religious authority would be vested with our leader (to be based in Yobe).

We believed there were so many things wrong with the present arrangement of combining tradition with religion and on one man.”

The Boko Haram suspects further gave reasons why schools were attacked in Maiduguri, saying it was due to the fact that the schools were teaching wrong values that were contrary to their faith.

According to them, there is the need to get rid of secular schools and allow only the Islamic schools to thrive in the north.

The source quoted Qaqa and Sokoto as telling the interrogators: “The plan to attack churches and schools was not a reaction to any provocation.

“These were part of our initial plans of allowing only Islamic schools and wiping away the so-called secular schools. Though a lot of us who had gone to school saw this approach as too rigid since we could use the medium to propagate the faith faster, but we were few and equally scared of being labelled traitors to face the ultimate consequence. We wanted to reform the schools to conform to our practice.”

But the suspects claimed that any royal father that obstructed their plans would be dealt with accordingly.

They said, “On the traditional institution, any ruler that would have obstructed our plans would have regretted his action.”

Meanwhile, the Muslim Ummah of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja have condemned the activities of Boko Haram, saying they are non-Islamic.

Chief Imam of the National Mosque Alhaji Mohammed Musa said that “Boko is not haram, but Bokoism is haram” (meaning “the love of western education is not an abomination, but the touting of western values to loot public treasuries is an abomination”).

Speaking at a programme of the Women for Change and Development Initiative, FCT chapter, which held in Abuja yesterday, with the theme “Peace, Stability and Nation building”, the Imam said, “There is no way for peace, but peace is the way” adding: “It is not only a duty but an obligation to work and pray for the peace of the nation, with the challenges of Boko Haram.”

Mohammed noted that Nigeria has supported many countries on peacekeeping but regretted that the same peace was absent in Nigeria.

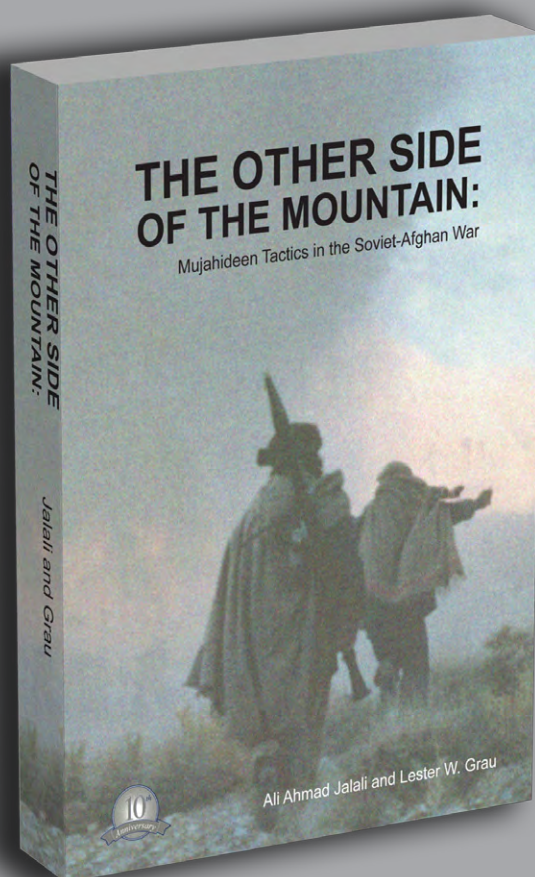
He identified poverty, corruption and unemployment as the factor

promoting Boko Haram

He maintained that “it is our duty to work for the peace of our nation, not only for the Muslims but also the Christians”.

Les Grau's classic *The Other Side of the Mountain*, is the most broadly distributed book on the Afghan theater. Capturing the personal stories and perspectives of Mujahedin fighters during the Soviet Afghan war, Les Grau has provided a blueprint of the belligerents in the current conflict.

It is on General Petraeus's reading list and in the rucksacks of deploying soldiers.



FMSO Commentary: *The Malian Sahara is becoming a tangled knot of insecurity whose constituent parts are ever-more complicated to separate.*

At least six actors are now working in some degree of concert to generate increased instability there. Nomadic Tuaregs (#1), many of whom have long been antagonistic to the Malian state that they deem as illegitimate, have been known to collaborate with affiliates of Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (#2) not only in attacking the Malian state, but also in activities like drug trafficking, alongside South American drug barons (#3). Reports have also suggested some degree of connection among these groups, particularly AQIM, and Boko Haram (#4) in Nigeria.

Now, as the story below details, the addition of former Libya rebels (#5) to the mix has created a level of toxicity that has only served to up the violence in Mali's northern stretches. Aided by the leftover artillery from the revolt that overthrew Moammar Qaddafi, these groups, in addition to what some observers guess to be a budding Algerian revolutionary movement (#6), are now waging a war of discontent, again primarily aimed at the Malian government. In opposition to these six variously aligned groups stand the Malian state (#7), West African regional security partners (#8), and assistance from U.S. special forces (#9).

*Faced with a knot of security concerns so seemingly impossible to disentangle, some observers wonder whether Mali would not be wise to simply cut off the northern knot altogether. **End FMSO Commentary (Warner).***

Libyan Revolts Throw North Africa into Chaos

8 March 2012

Source: Mali rebels strike amid post-Libya anarchy," UPI, 8 March 2012: http://www.upi.com/Top_News/Special/2012/03/08/Mali-rebels-strike-amid-post-Libya-anarchy/UPI-23251331238134/?spt%3Dhs%26or%3Dtn



A group of Tuareg men in traditional dress silhouetted on the crest of a sand dune at an oasis, west of Timbuktu, Mali. February 2008. Photo by Tugela Ridley/IRIN www.irinnews.org

Mali rebels strike amid post-Libya anarchy

North Africa, never the most placid of places, has been plunged into turmoil in recent weeks by groups of heavily armed fighters that have fanned out across the Sahara to destabilize the region known as the Maghreb.

The Feb. 8 capture of town of Tinzawatene on Mali's northern border with Algeria rebel Tuareg tribesmen, who served under Libyan dictator Moammar Gadhafi, vividly illustrates the growing scale of the crisis.

"The overthrow of the Gadhafi regime has had an enormous impact on Libya's southern neighbors," most notably Mali, Niger and Mauritania, the Jamestown foundation has said.

There are growing fears that the Tuaregs' National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad and other armed groups roaming the vast wastelands of the Sahara and the semi-arid Sahel region to the south will join forces with the jihadist al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb that has extended its operations from Algeria to Mauritania, and even as far south as Nigeria.

Algeria, a major energy exporter where AQIM is based, fears an eruption of violence across the entire region and its government has raised its security alert to the highest level.

Continued: Mali rebels strike amid post-Libya anarchy

“Le Pouvoir, the Algerian political-military-business elite that controls most aspects of Algerian life, fears instability above all else and has tried to shut down any effort within Algeria to emulate the revolutionary unrest in Libya, Tunisia and Egypt,” Jamestown noted.

The MNLA seized Tinzawatene after weeks of fighting the Malian military, which is getting counterinsurgency training from U.S. Special Forces along with the security forces of neighboring states grappling with AQIM.

It’s not clear whether the Tuareg fighters, estimated at more than 1,000 strong and armed with missiles and heavy mortars taken from Libya, will be able to hold onto the town against counterattacks by the Malian army.

But if they can, they have access to a network of Saharan smuggling routes running from Algeria that would consolidate links to AQIM’s seasoned jihadist fighters as well as provide them with secure supply lines.

The Tuareg, a Berber people, inhabit the deserts across the deserts in north and west Africa.

Their struggle dates back almost a century and their last rebellion, demanding more autonomy and development, ended in 2008 with little to show for it.

But now the MNLA for the first time is seeking outright independence for three northern regions where the Tuareg, who make up 10 percent of Mali’s population of 13 million, predominate.

“This has been simmering for a long time,” said Jeremy Keenan, a Tuareg specialist at London’s School of Oriental and African Studies.

“But this new rebellion would not have happened if all these guys had not come back from Libya.”

He said there was little indication that the Tuareg in neighboring Niger, where some of Gadhafi’s family has found sanctuary, were going to join their cousins in Mali, as has happened in the past.

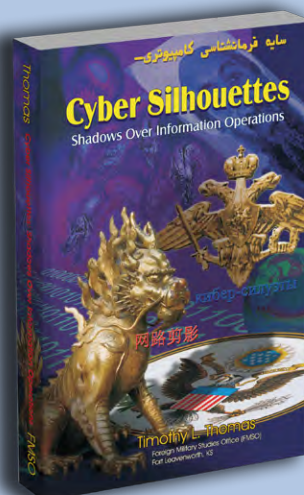
Algiers has traditionally mediated between the Mali government and the Tuareg, and its powerful intelligence service, the DRS, is once again seeking to broker a settlement in hopes of containing the current surge in violence.

Tim Thomas’s *Cyber Silhouettes* explores the impact of the Cyber Age on military thinking and operations worldwide.

***Cyber Silhouettes* presents challenges to the American information operations (IO) expert regarding inadequate current terminology, and the need for reevaluation of “core capabilities and supporting elements.” Tim Thomas further recognizes how cyber processes have allowed criminals and insurgents/terrorists to practice guerilla warfare tactics and illegal or extremist activities online. He contends that the subjective nature of war has changed to include a social context unlike any other time in history.**

Tim Thomas provides a unique perspective that will lead to a better understanding of our

complex digitized lives, new ideas for US armed forces to consider, and help analysts identify potential danger zones.



FMSO Commentary: Recent moves by the United States in the UN Security Council to press for further human rights violations investigation into the final stages of the Sri Lankan struggle against separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) were precluded by China's and Russia's veto power. The United States has changed the approach by using the UN Human Rights Commission as a venue for increased pressure for holding accountable those alleged to have been involved in human rights violations at the end of the war.

The position of Europe and the United States regarding the international investigation into the ending of the decades-old war continues to cause political friction with this geopolitically important island nation. Sinhalese academics see this effort as a reflection of US imperialist and hegemonic behavior. Consolidation of an anti-US movement is accelerating. Minister of Power and Energy Patali Champika Ranawaka has talked about new associations: "There are friends as well as enemies of the United States. We are ready to join the anti-U.S. allies if it is for forcing us to extremes." Housing Minister Wimal Weerawansa is calling for a boycott of US goods because of what he sees as a Western call for the revival of the defeated rebels.

China is clearly supporting Sri Lanka and has long been an "all weather" ally. The government of India is maintaining its traditional stance of not supporting a country-specific UN Human Rights Council resolution. As Asia grows as a US priority, action against Sri Lanka may have unintended consequences. **End FMSO Commentary (Welch)**

Sri Lanka: Friend or Foe?

7 March 2012

Source: US Submits Resolution on Lanka at UNHRC Calling On Govt To Address Several Issues", Colombo Daily Mirror online in English, 7 March 2012. <http://www.dailymirror.lk/news/17342-us-submits-draft-resolution-on-sl.html>



United Nations General Assembly, New York via www.thesundayleader.lk

US Submits Resolution on Lanka at UNHRC Calling On Govt To Address Several Issues

The United States today submitted the draft resolution against Sri Lanka to the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC).

Welcoming the constructive recommendations made by the LLRC in its report but, the resolution also notes with concern that the report does not adequately address serious allegations of violations of international humanitarian law.

It also stated that the report of Sri Lanka's domestic Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) and its findings and recommendations while acknowledging its possible contribution to the country's national reconciliation process.

Guided by the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenants on Human Rights, and other relevant instruments,

Reaffirming that States must ensure that any measure taken to combat terrorism complies with their obligations under international law, in particular international human rights, refugee and humanitarian law, as applicable,

Noting the Report of Sri Lanka's Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) and its findings and recommendations, and acknowledging its possible contribution to Sri Lanka's national reconciliation process,

Welcoming the constructive recommendations contained in the LLRC report, including the need to credibly investigate widespread allegations of extra judicial killings and

Continued: US Submits Resolution on Lanka at UNHRC Calling On Govt To Address Several Issues

enforced disappearances, de-militarize the north of Sri Lanka, implement impartial land dispute resolution mechanisms, reevaluate detention policies, strengthen formerly independent civil institutions, reach a political settlement involving devolution of power to the provinces, promote and protect the right of freedom of expression for all, and enact rule of law reforms,

Noting with concern that the LLRC report does not adequately address serious allegations of violations of international law,

1. Calls on the Government of Sri Lanka to implement the constructive recommendations in the LLRC report and take all necessary additional steps to fulfill its relevant legal obligations and commitment to initiate credible and independent actions to ensure justice, equity, accountability and reconciliation for all Sri Lankans,

2. Requests that the Government of Sri Lanka present a comprehensive action plan as expeditiously as possible detailing the steps the Government has taken and will take to implement the LLRC recommendations and also to address alleged violations of international law,

3. Encourages the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and relevant special procedures to provide, and the Government of Sri Lanka to accept, advice and technical assistance on implementing those steps and requests the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to present a report to the Council on the provision of such assistance at its twenty-second session.

Sri Lanka to resist US war crimes resolution



8 March 2012

Source: Sri Lanka to resist US war crimes resolution", Sunday Times Newspaper In Sri Lanka, 9 March 2012. http://www.sundaytimes.lk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=16779:sri-lanka-to-resist-us-war-crimes-resolution&catid=1:latest-news&Itemid=547

The Sunday Times Newspaper

COLOMBO, March 8, 2012 (AFP) - Sri Lanka on Thursday dismissed as "ill-timed and ill-conceived" a US move at the UN Human Rights Council to censure Colombo over alleged crimes against humanity in the final phase of its separatist war.

Water Supply Minister Dinesh Gunawardena said Sri Lanka was confident of defeating the three-point resolution at the UNHRC sessions in Geneva urging the island to probe alleged war crimes.

"This resolution is ill-timed, ill-conceived and borne out of ignorance," Gunawardena, who is also the chief government whip in parliament, told reporters. He accused the US of ignoring Sri Lanka's reconciliation moves.

Sri Lanka has faced strong international criticism over the bloody finale of its separatist war in 2009 but has avoided censure at previous UN meetings thanks to support from China and Russia.

Continued: Sri Lanka to resist US war crimes resolution

The US resolution, seen by AFP, urges Sri Lanka to ensure “justice, equity, accountability and reconciliation” and says Colombo’s own probe, the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission, did not adequately address concerns.

The Sri Lankan government initiated nationwide demonstrations last month to coincide with the opening of the UNHRC sessions and denounced Washington for leading international calls for a war crimes probe.

Rights groups say up to 40,000 civilians perished in the final months of Colombo’s military campaign to crush the Tamil Tigers, who waged a bloody decades-long campaign for a separate homeland for minority Tamils.

The UN estimates some 100,000 people died during Sri Lanka’s ethnic conflict between 1972 and 2009.

Xinhua: Sri Lanka Appreciates China’s Strong Support: External Affairs Ministry

Source: “Sri Lanka Appreciates China’s Strong Support: External Affairs Ministry”, Xinhua, 1 March 2012. http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-03/01/c_131440929.htm



8 March 2012

Chinese State Councilor and Defense Minister Liang Guanglie (R front) meets with Gotabaya Rajapaksa, Secretary of Ministry of Defence and Urban Development of Sri Lanka, in Beijing, capital of China, March 1, 2012. (Xinhua/ Zhang Duo) via news.xinhuanet.com

COLOMBO, March 8 (Xinhua) — Sri Lanka appreciated China’s firm and consistent support in safeguarding Sri Lanka’s sovereignty and territorial integrity, the External Affairs Ministry said Thursday.

Secretary to the Ministry of Defence and Urban Development Gotabaya Rajapaksa was quoted in a statement by the External Affairs Ministry as saying he was confident that the close cooperation, respect and friendship between Sri Lanka and China will continue to grow as Sri Lanka builds on the foundations of peace to achieve prosperity for its people through economic transformation in which China remains a trusted development partner.

Sri Lanka and China are celebrating the 55th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between both countries this year.

The Ambassador of Sri Lanka to China Ranjith Uyangoda was also quoted in the statement as saying that since the formalization of relations between both countries in 1957, there has been steady progress in many areas of cooperation including people to people contacts.

Uyangoda also said that in the recent past the relations have been further strengthened under the leadership of presidents of the two countries.

The Sri Lankan External Affairs Ministry meanwhile also quoted Chinese Minister of Industrial and Information Technology Miao Wei as saying that Sri Lanka has realized domestic peace and the post- war reconstruction is progressing steadily, while accelerated economic development has improved the livelihood of the people.?

He said that China believes that under the leadership of the President of Sri Lanka the country will make steady progress. China would like to continue to provide assistance to help the economic and social development of Sri Lanka.

FMSO Commentary: Upcoming presidential elections in Mexico are very important for future relations between Mexico and the United States. Historically, the PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party; left-wing) has distanced itself from efforts made by the United States to improve relations. On the opposite spectrum, with PAN (National Action Party; right-wing), military relations with NORTHCOM and ARNORTH have expanded and US federal agencies (Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Drug Enforcement Agency) have been able to play a more direct role in assisting Mexico in its counterdrug offensive.

Points of contention with the US government between both the PRI and PAN include the recent Merida Initiative (counterdrug money similar to that given as part of Plan Colombia), due to the fact that the Mexican leadership would prefer to receive the money with no strings attached and manage the funds at their absolute discretion. Recent allocations from this initiative have provided Mexican authorities with enhanced training and have provided military units with advanced technological equipment, to include surveillance helicopters.

The current presidential candidates for the PRI and PAN parties are Enrique Peña Nieto and Josefina Vázquez Mota, respectively. Historically, marginalization and poor education have resulted in direct oppression of the lower socio-economic classes within Mexico, and it can be said that the PRI is directly responsible for this, given the fact that it was the ruling party for over 70 straight years. Now PRI party leader Pedro Joaquín Coldwell is attempting to state that marginalization and drug-related violence in the country are a direct result of PAN leadership since 2000.

What Coldwell's argument fails to explain is that during the PRI reign, drug cartels were allowed to flourish

PRI Party Leader: We Do Not Want Another Six Years of Fear and Death

07 February 2012



Sources: No queremos otro sexenio de miedo y muerte: PRI, El Universal, <http://www.eluniversal.com.mx/notas/833943.html>, Accessed on 03 March 2012.

Partido Revolucionario Institucional (Institutional Revolutionary Party) By PuebloUnited [Public domain or Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons

No queremos otro sexenio de miedo y muerte (We Do Not Want Another Six Years of Fear and Death)

During the 83rd anniversary celebration of the PRI party, Pedro Joaquín Coldwell, the PRI party leader, publicly lamented work done by PAN in its fight against drug cartels during the last six years, claiming it is time for change. He further added that the PRI party could provide relief to the pain, violence, corruption, and poverty; that according to him, is a direct result of PAN leadership. A key point during his discourse was “we do not want another six years of death and fear”. Coldwell claims that the problem with the Calderon administration is that it has focused exclusively on organized crime activity, which according to him, doesn't actually debilitate criminal groups.

If PRI Presidential candidate Enrique Peña Nieto is elected, Coldwell indicated that the party will focus on revamping the education system that currently provides kids with what he claims to be a “sham of an education”. With added education, the argument is that Mexican citizens will be able to find stable jobs from which they are able to make a sustainable living.

Looking forward to 2012 Presidential elections, the PRI party is in line to provide fierce competition to the current PAN administration. Currently, PRI boasts a 60.3 million voter base, is the majority party in 62% of municipalities (1,510 of 2,400), and has won recent Governor elections in 20 states to include: Aguascalientes, Campeche, Chihuahua, Coahuila, Colima, Durango, Hidalgo, México, Michoacán, Nayarit, Nuevo León, Querétaro, Quintana Roo, San Luis Potosí, Tabasco, Tamaulipas, Tlaxcala, Veracruz, Yucatán, and Zacatecas.

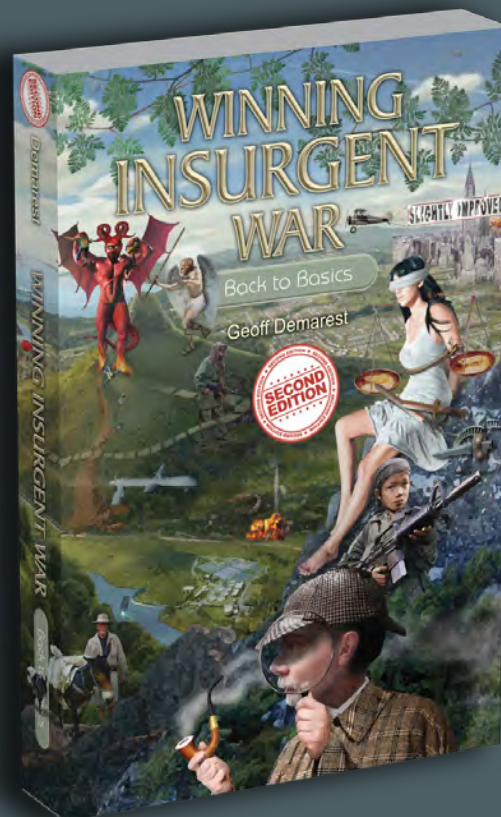
Continued: We Do Not Want Another Six Years of Fear and Death

and operate with virtually absolute impunity. Now PRI is attempting to use the estimated 50,000 deaths generated by the PAN counteroffensive against drug cartels as the backdrop of why this party should not be re-elected. The question then remains, if PRI candidate Peña Nieto wins the upcoming elections, will the government offensive against drug cartels completely stop, and would they be allowed to operate with complete impunity as in the past? PRI rhetoric has never focused on security issues as exclusively as PAN has, but it now seems as if they are trying to distance themselves as far as possible from actions that the Calderon administration has taken.

As part of their campaign, PAN has focused almost exclusively on an apparent stabilization of violence within the country as a direct result of their counterdrug offensive. Realistically speaking, violence has leveled off (not necessarily decreased) in select regions, to include Ciudad Juarez, but this can be attributed to multiple factors, to include reallocation of territories, achieved dominance over trafficking routes, and the demise of select criminal groups (Beltran Leyva, Tijuana Cartel). These same factors have caused violence to surge in Veracruz, Nuevo Leon, and Tamaulipas.

If PAN wants to use its violence stabilization argument against the PRI in the upcoming elections, levels of violence must drop drastically, or, the arrest of Sinaloa Cartel leader Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman would be necessary to gain back public trust. The Sinaloa Cartel is of particular interest in Mexico, as this group is the principal generator of violence, is battling more groups simultaneously than any other, has the largest cocaine trafficking network, and is considered to be the highest grossing cartel in Mexico. For these reasons the arrest of Guzman would represent a huge blow to the organization and would bolster public support for the PAN counterdrug offensive. However, if violence is not drastically reduced, or if Chapo Guzman is not arrested, it can be hypothesized that PRI will win the upcoming elections and that the counterdrug offensive initiated by the PAN party, along with positive gains made by the US government during the last 12 years in this area, may be a thing of the past. **End FMSO Commentary (Fiegel)**

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."



FMSO Commentary: *The article only refers to this new guerrilla group by its acronym, FARV, and fails to define what the name actually stands for and provide a thorough background regarding the organization. After a brief search online, I located the website of the group and discovered that FARV stands for the Federación Anarquista Revolucionaria de Venezuela, or “Revolutionary Anarchist Federation of Venezuela.” The general idea behind the group is socialism, and as quoted in its manifesto, “from each according to their ability, to each according to their needs.” The manifesto continues stating that they operate under the principles of horizontalism, self-management, mutual support, collectivism, the class struggle, anti-imperialism, solidarity among the villages, and popular struggles. They believe in the anarchist organization as the only form of struggle within libertarian communism, respecting individual work but far from selfish capitalism and neoliberal trends, building a platform where collective responsibility is taken by the militants. Additionally, they advocate direct democracy and popular self-governing communities, but, being based in Venezuela and not to enrage Chavez, indicate that the group supports the Bolivarian process as a militant radical social revolution and even go as far as to state that they are not “anti-Chavez, nor anti-Bolivarian.” Though the fight is framed in Venezuela, they extend the picture to all of Latin America, referring to numerous regional historical struggles, working locally and regionally with an end goal at the global level. The last three sentences are in all capital letters and read as follows: “FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A VENEZUELAN LIBERTARIAN MOVEMENT! FOR LIBERTARIAN SOCIALISM TOWARDS THE COMMUNAL FEDERATION! FOR A WORLD LIBERTARIAN COMMUNIST REVOLUTION! [signed] FARV. For Anti-Authoritarian Communism!”*

New Guerrilla Group Detected in Panamá

07 March 2012



FARV logo via <http://farvespecifistas.blogspot.com/>

Sources: “Detectan en Panamá nuevo grupo guerrillero (New Guerrilla Group Detected in Panamá),” Crítica.com.pa, 07 March 2012. http://www.critica.com.pa/hoy/sucesos-interna.php?edition_id=20120307&external_link=detectan_en_panama_nuevo_grupo_guerrillero

Detectan en Panamá nuevo grupo guerrillero **(New Guerrilla Group Detected in Panamá)**

Colombian security organizations have detected a new irregular organization in Panamá. The group is believed to have its operational base in a South American country but makes contacts throughout Central America to seek financial backing and supporters.

Intelligence reports to which Crítica gained access say the group known as FARV may have been operating for eight months in several Latin American countries, including Panamá, with the objective of seeking new members.

Continued: New Guerrilla Group Detected in Panamá

*While the true underlying motive of the group remains specifically undefined, it appears that regional leftists, with the help of some Middle Eastern supporters, are possibly up to something bigger. The principal tenet of the FARV, as defined in its manifesto, is general socialist beliefs with soft undertones of libertarian communism as an ideology. The article indicates that the group MAY have been operating in several Latin American countries for up to 8 months (the group, in fact, may be younger) and its website only has entries dating back to 19 January 2012, which is when it apparently went public with its statutes and manifesto. While the article lists connections to numerous countries, interestingly enough it does not mention Italy, which hosts the phone numbers given on their site (<http://farvespecifistas.blogspot.com>) where one can theoretically call up the organizational leaders directly. Given that the organized group as whole may be as young as two months old, the specific goals of the group might still be under development, or, if they have been defined, may remain a mystery to the lesser members and held in secrecy by their leaders. **End FMSO Commentary (Scheidel)***

Investigations by Colombian authorities reveal that this organization has three visible leaders who have held meetings in Panamá, Costa Rica, and Nicaragua.

Posing as tourists and businessmen, the meetings take place at exclusive restaurants and shopping centers in the capital city. Meetings with Palestinians, Iranians, Panamanians, Costa Ricans, and Nicaraguans were reported.

To get around they rent cars in the name of a nongovernmental organization that has ties in Venezuela and Ecuador.

These individuals stay at different hotels when they arrive in Panamá, although the hotels are situated in the townships of San Francisco and Bella Vista.

After their meetings they use public telephones located near their hotels to place calls to numbers in Costa Rica and Mexico.

Some of these people have been in contact by telephone with certain political and social leaders in Panamá, especially in the Darién Province.

They approach people in these Darién communities, specifically La Palma and Metetí, to lend assistance or provide guidance on family matters and small business investments.

Moreover, they use evangelical churches to enlist supporters.

They use this same methodology in San Miguelito, Arraiján, and Chepo (especially in towns near Lake Bayano), the report says.

Authorities suspect those meetings seek to establish pilot groups that will in turn recruit people from low-income sectors, with little formal education, as well as university students with socialist thoughts.

One of the most visible figures is a South American engaged in exporting coffee and selling used cars.

He has connections with businessmen who have frequent business dealings in the Colon Free Zone and Paso Canoas, a town on the border with Costa Rica.

He already has a tiny group of collaborators in Costa Rica.

According to the report, FARV members are trained in the use of low- and high-powered firearms, personal defense techniques, and undergo a training program they call reinforcement of ideological thinking.

RELATED LINK

Federación Anarquista Revolucionaria de Venezuela

The FARV welcomes all and all, this blog has been created to mantenerlx informadxs on all activities of the federation and national news and international texts for ideological training, activities of social movements in Venezuela and Latin America and more information on the social, cultural, political and ideological.

<http://farvespecifistas.blogspot.com/>

***FMSO Commentary:** There are two sides to every story. In the case of rare earth elements, many Westerners feel that China is holding back and manipulating the industry unfairly. China claims that the steps it has been taking are in an effort to protect its resources and environment. The article below, barely scratches the surface of some of the issues China is actually facing.*

China is being blasted for its growing control over the rare earths industry. In its own defense, China claims that cutting back export quotas is necessary for the country to try to clean up its environment. According to industry insiders, China is taking these measures very seriously. One might argue that China does not really care and that this is simply an excuse to gain favor for its actions in the industry. However, while the country may have shown little to no regard about environmental standards in the past, today, due to increased public awareness and discontent, there is a real push to clean up the environment with more stringent standards. Last year, China put such standards in place for its rare earths industry. In general, companies will be given two to three years to bring their operations into compliance and if they do not succeed, they will be booted out of the industry. Meanwhile some companies have already been put out of business without the two to three year window.

By default, cutting out companies that are unable to meet China's stricter environmental standards will mean there will be fewer materials available to export. The West should understand this viewpoint since environmental standards is one of the issues that led to China's near monopoly of the industry in the first place. In the 1990s, due to China's lack of environmental standards, cheap labor, and illegal practices, the country was able to mine and process rare earth elements at such a low price that it drove its global competitors out

Is a Trade Lawsuit to the WTO on China's Rare Earth Exports the Answer?

14 March 2012



Source: China's Emphasis on Rare Earths Control is Based on Environmental Protection, China Daily, 14 Mar 2012, http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/hqzx/2012-03/14/content_14828778.htm

Rare Earth mineral rock obtained by FMSO analyst.

China's Emphasis on Rare Earths Control is Based on Environmental Protection

Washington, Bangkok, Brussels, Beijing, 13 Mar –At noon Eastern Time on 13 March, US President Obama announced in the White House that the United States will bring a trade lawsuit to the WTO on China's restriction on rare earth exports, and the EU and Japan will join in the suit. The EU Commission announced that day that it will join with the United States and Japan a bringing the lawsuit to the WTO over China's restriction on exports of 17 materials including rare earths, tungsten, and molybdenum. China's rare earth trade policy has attracted widespread attention. In fact, it is not that China wants to restrict rare earth exports; instead it wants coordinated development of trade and environment, thus making trade more sustainable.

China's Policy Focuses on Sustainable Development; Other Countries Also Ought to Undertake the Responsibility of Rare Earth Supply

EU Trade Commissioner de Gucht announced on 13 March that China's restriction on export of rare earths and other materials violates relevant WTO regulations and must be revoked. AP on 12 March quoted a senior White House official as saying that the United States will seek the WTO's help to urge China to consult with it on the rare earths export issue. This US Government move is aimed at putting pressure on China and getting the Chinese Government to rescind its policy on restricting rare earth exports.

On 13 March China received the consultation request put forward by the United States, the EU, and Japan under the WTO dispute settlement mechanism regarding its export control measures on rare earths, tungsten, and molybdenum. A responsible person of the Ministry of Commerce's treaty judicial division stated in this regard that China has previously consistently maintained contact and engagement with all parties regarding export of the relevant materials and products, and emphasized many times that China's policy is aimed at protecting resources and the environment and achieving sustainable development, and it has no intention of protecting its domestic industries through distorting trade. The responsible person also stated that China will appropriately handle the relevant request for consultation in line with WTO dispute settlement procedure.

At the Ministry of Foreign Affairs routine news conference on 13 March, a journalist

Continued: China's Emphasis on Rare Earths Control is Based on Environmental Protection

of business. Mining and processing rare earth elements in an environmentally friendly way can be costlier and more time-consuming, making Western mining/production ventures more challenging.

China's issues go beyond the environmental impact. A recent article in the Wall Street Journal pointed out that China wants to lure foreign companies into bringing their production bases to China. According to the article, "This would allow China to steal, er, learn from the foreigners." Indeed, China has a record of acquiring foreign technology and even adopting it as its own, as has been the case with certain weapons systems, for example. However, at this point, the possibility of acquiring technology is not what is important to China. Having the largest population in the world, 1.3 billion people, China is faced with a lack of employment opportunities and a growing population disparity created by its one child policy. What this means is that a family unit that might normally have multiple members who are of working age taking care of their retired relatives, will actually have only one or two members of working age taking care of multiple grandparents. The window of opportunity is narrowing, and over the next two decades, if China cannot provide more job opportunities to its citizens, the burden could end up on the government's shoulders. By offering various incentives that have pushed foreign companies to move their manufacturing bases to China, the country has been able to provide more jobs to its citizens, which is just one small fix to a larger problem.

Also notable is that last year, only about 55 percent of rare earth quotas offered by China were actually used due to the economic downturn. Many experts

asked about China's view of the US move in filing a complaint with the WTO about China's restriction on rare earth exports. MFA spokesman Liu Weimin said that rare earths are a rare and non-renewable resource, and exploiting rare earths has an impact on the environment; based on considerations of protecting the environment and resources, in order to achieve sustainable development, the Chinese Government has instituted control measures on the key links in rare earth extraction, production, and export, and not just on the key link of export; the relevant measures comply with WTO rules. China's rare earth resources account for 36.4% of the global total, and it undertakes over 90% of global supply of rare earths. (FMSO analyst note: according to the most recent figures put out by the U.S. Geological Society, China's known reserves are actually estimated at approximately 48%) Despite facing massive environmental pressure, China has for many years all along made efforts to maintain a certain amount of rare earth exports. In the future China will continue to supply rare earths to the international market, and carry out effective control of the exports in line with WTO rules. China hopes that other countries possessing rare earth resources will actively exploit those resources, and undertake together the responsibility for global rare earth supply; and China is also ready to strengthen cooperation with other countries in seeking rare earth substitute resources, improving the utilization rate of rare earth resources, and so on.

In fact, before 2010, China's low-priced rare earths long supplied the entire global market, and supply of them was ample at one time. As China's economic development and resource and environmental issues became prominent, since 2008, in order to protect its rare earth resources, China has started to strengthen control of rare earth production, including instituting an export quota control system. Starting in the second half of 2010, China came up with a stricter export quota control system for rare earths; this is extremely essential for protecting natural resources, reducing environmental damage, and satisfying internal demand.

With Many Parties Making Efforts to Reduce [External] Rare Earth Dependence, Global Rare Earth Production will Rise Accordingly

Since very small amounts of rare earths can markedly improve the performance of metals, they are extensively used in the hi-tech field, and are of important significance in the development of new energy, new materials, energy conservation and emission reduction, aviation and spaceflight, electronic information, and so on; rare earth demand on the international market has consistently maintained an upward momentum, and rare earth prices have markedly surged in the past year and more. Hence, various countries have supported and encouraged prospecting for new mineral products.

At present, a number of major rare earth companies are engaged in prospecting and exploitation in Australia, Africa, Canada, and the United States, and are also closely watching whether the byproducts of existing mineral products contain rare earths. The US General Electric Corporation and the Department of Energy are also studying how to use nanotechnology to create permanent magnets, thus reducing the utilization rate of rare earths by 80%. The EU and United States are also actively studying rare earth recycling plans, but at present they lack an effective collection system, and the separation and handling procedure is extremely complex. Japan and the ROK for their part are actively providing financial aid such as funds and loans for global prospecting of high-risk rare earths. The Japanese Government recently announced that it will provide 5 billion yen (\$1 is about 82.7 yen) in subsidy for Japanese enterprises, to reduce consumption of the rare earth

Continued: China's Emphasis on Rare Earths Control is Based on Environmental Protection

believe that the global economic crisis will not be resolved any time soon. As a result, it would seem that there are adequate rare earth elements available to those who need them. While many observers believe more quotas should be made available, what some might not realize is that the majority of production requiring rare earth elements can be found in China, which brings this commentary to one last point.

China holds the key to the industry. However, in this case, one might argue that Western capitalism turned out to be our own undoing. In an effort to maximize profits, countless foreign companies have moved their manufacturing bases to China, where assembly and access to raw materials could be accomplished more cheaply than, for example, in the United States. While these companies have benefited greatly through cost savings and higher profit margins, the move sends innovation overseas and puts the industry further into China's hands.

The topic of rare earth elements is complex, multifaceted, easily misunderstood, and sometimes there are no real answers. What is certain is that China is stuck between a rock and a hard place. If it gives up on various controls it has placed on the industry, it could well lose much of what it has been striving to accomplish – building jobs, cleaning up its environment, increased domestic innovation...etc. If the country fights, it could turn into a trade war, which could hurt those countries involved because the interdependency of global economies.
End FMSO Commentary (Hurst)

element dysprosium in electric vehicles and air conditioner motors by about 30% in two years.

Seeing the surging prices of rare earths, very many big corporations are eager to give it a try, and preparing to invest in rare earths minerals; for example, the US rare earth production and operating company Molycorp has restarted its large Mountain Pass rare earth mine; this project is planned to produce 19,000 tonnes of rare earths in 2012; by 2013, annual output will rise to 40,000 tonnes. The Lynas Mining Corporation of Australia for its part is preparing to provide ore for a rare earth refinery in Malaysia from its Mount Weld mine.

Dudley Kingsnorth, an energy expert of the Industrial Minerals Consultants Company of Australia, has stated that global rare earths production, apart from China, will increase 10-fold by 2016, and exceed 60,000 tonnes, while rare earth demand, apart from China, will be around 55,000 tonnes; this will mean a global surplus of rare earth supply by 2016. A report by the well-known Wing On accountancy firm believes that rare earth supply will exceed demand in 2014.

Of course, production at new mines can naturally make up for the supply shortfalls of some rare earths, and supply may even exceed demand for some light rare earths, but this cannot ensure the supply of all light rare earths. Very many experts hold the view that extraction capacity is important, and raising production capacity is similarly important. Ample mineral production capacity is only a part of resolving the shortage of rare earth elements, and only the raising of processing, refining, and manufacturing capacity can satisfy the continually growing demand; none of these are problems that can be resolved in a short time.

Comment: Zhao Yumin (director of International Market Research Department of MOFCOM Institute for Study of International Trade and Economic Cooperation): China's rare earth trade policy has recently attracted widespread attention. In fact, China does not want to restrict rare earth exports but wants coordinate d development of trade and environment, thus promoting more sustainable trade. The value of rare earths is being redefined by the market as the newly emerging green industries are developed. On the one hand, rare earths are indispensable raw material for practically all hi-tech green products, and market demand is continually growing; on the other hand, the rare earth extraction and separation and refining process produces a great deal of radioactive pollution, and the handling technology and costs are relatively high. For a long time Chinese enterprises have widely used low-cost extraction methods, causing ever more serious and shocking environmental damage. This state of affairs clearly conflicts with the original intention and aim of exploiting rare earths in order to develop green industry.

As China's environmental awareness awakens, the Chinese Government has started to consider drawing up a plan for sustainable development of the rare earth industry. Trade is the main reason for the large-scale massive environmental damage; given that China lacks technology for cleaning up the environment, reducing trade means reducing pollution, and this logic is established.

In addition, trade policy is a measure that costs relatively little and is relatively easy to operate in the current stage. The EU, the United States and others ought to squarely face China's resource and environment frailty, closely cooperate with China, and resolve together resource and technology bottlenecks in industrial development. Trade must be mutually beneficial, otherwise it cannot be sustained.

FMSO Commentary: With all the recent hoopla going on about China's rare earth elements industry (see previous article), it is easy to overlook one of the most important issues – China's research and development efforts versus that of the United States. The United States used to be at the forefront of R&D, coming up with numerous noteworthy innovations, some of which revolutionized the high tech sector. For example, in the 1960s it discovered that europium fixed the poor red coloring in color televisions. In the 1970s it discovered that a permanent magnet made out of samarium and cobalt was ideally suited for military and other applications needing a strong magnet capable of withstanding high temperatures. In the 1980s the United States and Japan each came up with the neodymium-iron-boron permanent magnet, the strongest magnet on the market today, and the one that is responsible for miniaturization in high-tech products. Since the 1980s, however, R&D in the United States has flat-lined. Meanwhile, China has kicked into high gear, taking full advantage of its domestic resources to try to capture a high-tech competitive advantage.

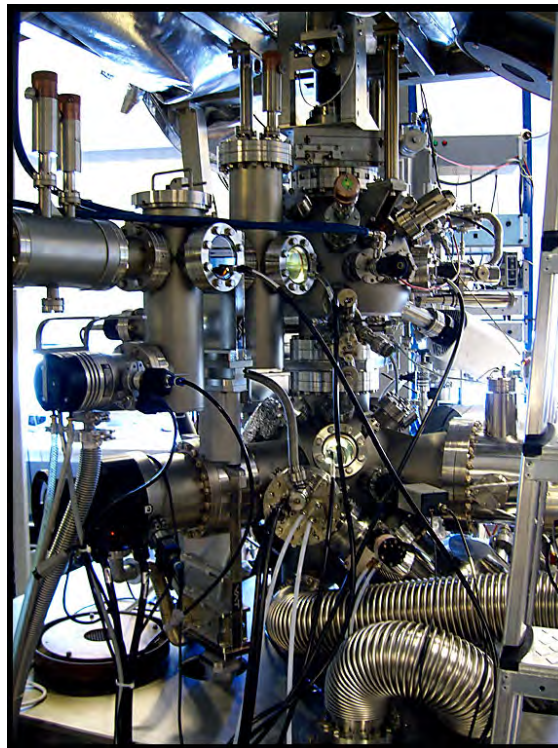
Rare earth elements have unique chemical, phosphorescent, metallurgical, and magnetic properties that make many of them ideally suited for critical high-tech applications, including military applications. While R&D efforts with regard to rare earth elements in the United States have decreased significantly, China's efforts have gone full throttle ahead.

Over the past two to three decades, China has dedicated millions of dollars toward both basic and applied research of rare earth elements. The Chinese Society of Rare Earths claims to have 100,000 registered researchers (Note: approximately one third of these are administrative, but the number is still significant when compared to the

China Continues to Forge Ahead in Rare Earth Development

22 February 2012

Source: China to Develop Rare-Earth Based New Materials, Xinhuanet, 22 Feb 2012, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-02/22/c_131425452.htm



An X-ray photoelectron spectroscope used to study surfaces of rare-earth materials by Stian Martinsen [CC-BY-2.0 (www.creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0)], via Wikimedia Commons

China to Develop Rare-Earth Based New Materials

Reportage

BEIJING, Feb. 22 (Xinhua) — China will develop rare-earth-based new materials during the 2011-2015 period, in an effort to boost manufacturing capacity, according to a five-year plan for the new materials industry released on Wednesday.

The government will “make full use of its rare earth resources to expand the industrial scale of new materials made with rare earth,” said the publication by the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology.

The government will focus on developing rare earth functional materials, increasing efforts to improve performances of new materials made with rare earth, promote its application in high-end manufacturing, and increase product added-value, the plan said.

Rare earth metals are a group of 17 elements that are widely used in high-tech products, including flat-screen televisions, lasers and hybrid cars.

The plan aims to promote the application rate of production technologies for rare earth functional materials to 70 percent in the country's high-tech industries by 2015, it said.

It also set goals to increase the output capacity for rare earth permanent magnet materials by 20,000 tonnes a year and that of rare earth hydrogen-containing alloy powder by 15,000 tonnes a year.

Continued: China to Develop Rare-Earth Based New Materials

scattering of scientists devoted to rare earths in the United States. Ever since Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping pointed out in 1992 that the Middle East has oil and China has rare earth elements, the government has placed a great deal of emphasis on their industry, production, and R&D. Whereas the Chinese once exported rare earth minerals and oxides, the country is now focused on improving its domestic high-tech capabilities; now it exports finished products.

The issue with rare earth elements is not that China is restricting export quotas, but rather that the country is using them in an effort to further build up its manufacturing industry, as well as its high tech capabilities, through the R&D of new applications. China's developing R&D efforts should be monitored. China's growing industrial scale of new materials within its borders is just another step in the right direction. While the United States today leads in technological innovation, China's position in the rare earth industry and its vast reserves and ability to mine and produce them, coupled with its intense R&D efforts, could one day give it a decisive advantage in military-based technologies. The U.S. military must plan for this eventuality and take appropriate actions today if it expects to maintain its lead in military and other technology.

End FMSO Commentary (Hurst)

Rare earth permanent magnet materials, which have rare earth elements in their composition, are widely used in electrical motors, medical treatment and spaceflight, while hydrogen-containing alloy powder is used in high-performance batteries.

The plan also sets higher output goals for a range of other new materials that contain rare earth metals.

Production bases for rare earth functional materials will be mainly built in Beijing, Baotou city in Inner Mongolia autonomous region, Ganzhou city in Jiangxi province, Liangshan and Leshan in Sichuan province, Longyan in Fujian province and Ningbo in Zhejiang province, the plan said.

While pledging policy supports to accomplish the goals, the plan also stresses efforts to protect energy resources and promote integrated utilization by developing reproducible resource technologies.

China's rare earth sales account for nearly 90 percent of the global total, but its reserves only account for one-third of the world's total. Decades of excessive exploitation has resulted in serious environmental damage.

To promote healthy development of the industry, China has suspended the issuance of new licenses for prospecting and mining and adopted production caps, export quotas and stringent environmental standards, while launching crackdowns on illegal mining activities.

China set the 2012 rare earth export quota at basically the same level of 2011. Its rare earth exports totaled 14,750 tonnes during the first 11 months of 2011, accounting for only 49 percent of the total quota.

The plan, which maps out development of the nation's new material industry, prioritizes the development of six types of advanced materials, including special metal functional materials, high-end metal structural materials, advanced macromolecular materials, new inorganic non-metal materials, high performance composite materials and frontier new materials.

The plan targets a 2-trillion-yuan (\$317 billion) output in the country's new material industry by 2015. The industry's output value stood at 650 billion yuan (\$102 billion) in 2010, growing by an annual rate of 20 percent since 2005.

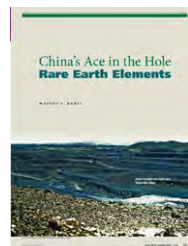
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Cindy Hurst's article on Rare Earth in the March 2010 issue of the *Journal of Energy Security*, published by the Institute for the Analysis of Global Security.

<http://www.iags.org/rareearth0310hurst.pdf>



China's Ace in the Hole: Rare Earth Elements

Cindy Hurst's article on Rare Earth in the October 2010 issue of *Joint Forces Quarterly*, published by the National Defense University Press.

http://fms.leavenworth.army.mil/documents/China%27s_Ace.pdf

***FMSO Commentary:** Democratic elections in South Korea are an important factor in North Korean foreign policy. The relationship between North Korea and South Korea has fluctuated between positive and negative over the past sixty years. Park Junghee and Roh Taewoo, who were former military generals and conservative presidents of South Korea, often had good relations with North Korea. Although North Korean foreign policy is also heavily influenced by China and the US, the major policy determinant remains South Korea. Since 2000 the relationship between the two countries illustrates that the political geography of South Korea has been the crucial factor to North Korea's national strategy. Under these circumstances it is clear that North Korea tries to intervene and influence the electoral process in South Korea by using informational tactics, such as warnings and provocations, before and during the elections.*

*The repeated hostile warnings to South Korea and renewed plans to negotiate with the US indicate that Kim Jung Un, the new leader of North Korea, wants to isolate South Korea and exclude Seoul's role on the nuclear weapons agenda and in the diplomatic geography of the Korean peninsula. Leaders in Pyongyang want direct negotiations with the US, while also conferring with Russia and China. Recent activities of the new leader of North Korea are designed to isolate South Korea from these discussions, while also influencing elections in their more democratic neighbor. The extracted article reveals some of the strategy of North Korea: talk about peace and good behavior with the US and China, while continuing to angrily shake its fists at its neighbors in the South. **End FMSO Commentary (Kim)***

North Korean Political Strategy and South Korea

Source: Agence France-Presse, 2 March 2012

2 March 2012



Inside the Korean Demilitarized Zone. Military Demarcation Line sign on the south side of the Bridge of No Return, by Edward N. Johnson, U.S. Army Public Affairs Officer [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons

DPRK Renews Threats to Launch 'Sacred War' Against ROK

North Korea Friday renewed threats to launch a "sacred war" against South Korea, indicating cross-border ties will remain icy despite Pyongyang's surprise nuclear deal with Seoul's close ally Washington.

The North's agreement to freeze some nuclear and missile activities in return for massive US food aid has raised cautious hopes of eased tensions under its new young leader Kim Jong-Un.

In statements released late Wednesday announcing the deal, both Pyongyang and Washington pledged to work for better relations.

But Friday's comments from the North's supreme military command struck a different tone with the South. The command accused South Korean troops of displaying slogans or placards slandering the North's top leaders at their barracks, shooting ranges and other military facilities.

The soldiers "openly slandered and defamed the dignity of the supreme leadership of the DPRK (North Korea) after creating a touch-and-go situation," it said in a statement on the official news agency. The command "solemnly declares once again that it will indiscriminately stage its own-style sacred war to wipe out the group of traitors."

"Those who hurt the dignity of the supreme leadership of the DPRK even a bit will find no breathing spell in this land and sky," it said. The command vowed to "mercilessly" wipe out anyone who "slightly insults and defames" the dignity of the North's supreme leadership.

Continued: DPRK Renews Threats to Launch 'Sacred War' Against ROK

Pyongyang made similar threats last year when South Korean reservists were found to be using pictures of the ruling Kim dynasty as rifle-range targets. The South says that practice has been stopped.

Pyongyang has taken a consistently hostile tone towards Seoul since Jong-Un took over after his father Kim Jong-Il died of a heart attack on December 17. Last Saturday it threatened a "sacred war" over US-South Korean joint military drills, describing them as a "silent declaration of war".

The North vows never to deal with the South's conservative leaders, accusing them of trying to spark a war and rejecting appeals for dialogue. On Friday it compared them to "a mad dog getting more ferocious before meeting its end." But Seoul's Unification Minister Yu Woo-Ik told a forum Friday: "We urge North Korea again to quickly respond to our proposal for dialogue."

Under the North's agreement with the United States, the communist state promised to suspend a uranium enrichment program and declare a moratorium on nuclear and long-range missile tests. It would also re-admit UN nuclear inspectors.

The United States said it would provide the impoverished and hungry country with 240,000 tons of food intended for young children and pregnant women. On Friday the US State Department said US and North Korean officials will meet next week in Beijing to finalize plans for the food aid.

Victoria Nuland, a State Department spokeswoman, said Robert King, the US envoy on human rights in North Korea who has been the point-man on food assistance, will meet in the Chinese capital on Wednesday for talks with a counterpart from Pyongyang. During her regular briefing Nuland added that the North's statement threatening "sacred war" was "unfortunate." "Frankly, it's not helpful to the kind of environment that we're trying to foster," she said.

The nuclear deal follows US-North Korean talks last week in Beijing aimed at restarting six-party negotiations on the North's nuclear disarmament. China, the North's sole major ally and economic prop, hosts those talks which also group the two Koreas, the United States, Japan and Russia. China has welcomed the deal and pledged to push ahead with efforts to revive the wider nuclear dialogue.

The disarmament talks have been stalled for some three years. The disclosure in November 2010 of the North's enrichment program, which could give it a second path to an atomic bomb, has lent urgency to the diplomacy.

The United States and its allies had demanded a shutdown of the program as one precondition for reviving the six-party forum. Washington had also called on Pyongyang to improve ties with Seoul, although the State Department made no mention of this in its statement Wednesday.

Analysts said Wednesday's deal could help revive the six-party talks, but many remain skeptical that the North will abandon its nuclear weaponry.

FMSO Commentary: Last December Bosnia i Hercegovina (BiH) finally broke its 15-month governmental deadlock, which led to the creation of a new government and passage of two key laws: the law of state aid distribution, and an agreement to conduct a new census. The law on state aid and a new round of counting BiH's population were conditions set by the EU on Sarajevo's road to Brussels and possible EU membership. However, while passage of the new laws on state aid and census are crucial, BiH has failed to implement a European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) ruling to include all ethnicities into the political process – pending since 2009 – and questions about BiH's alleged Wahhabi movement remain unanswered.

There has been no census since 1991, at which point BiH's population stood at 4.4 million: 43.7 percent were Muslims, 31.4 percent were of Serbian and 17.3 percent were of Croatian heritage. However, the Yugoslav wars claimed a large number of lives, in addition to rendering many people refugees and displaced persons – 100,000 people are thought to have perished while 2.2 million people lost their homes and/or were forced to flee to other parts of BiH. Demographic data are crucial for the distribution of aid the EU allocates to its future members.¹

As for the law on state aid, a commission was formed to oversee the process of assigning and controlling the distribution, as well as the return of misused funds in BiH. In addition, the commission has been formed to assure the implementation of market conditions in accordance with BiH's obligations reached in international agreements. The commission is to consist of eight members – one from the Brcko district, two from each entity (Republika Srpska

¹ "Bosnia adopts two key EU-sought laws". EUBusiness – legal, business and economic news from Europe and the EU. accessed March 18, 12. <http://www.eubusiness.com/news-eu/bosnia-politics-law.ey7>

Bosnian Prospects for EU Membership



29 February 2012

Source: Agence France-Presse, 2 March 2012

Coat of arms of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Christian Bier [CC-BY-SA-3.0 (creativecommons.org/license/by-sa/3.0)] via Wikimedia Commons

Bosnian Politicians Consider Prospects of Applying for EU Membership

Bosnia-Herzegovina has been discussed in the European Parliament today. If this country wants to get the status of a candidate for EU membership, it has to resolve the state property issue and finally define what belongs to whom. There is also the issue of the Office of the High Representative, which means that, as long as this office is operational, the country is not independent in its decision-making, but is considered to be under an international protectorate. B-H must also resolve the border issue, particularly the border with Croatia, which is soon to become a member of the EU. The adoption of the B-H Census Law was welcomed today. Katarina Drlja has been following the debate in the European Parliament.

Katarina, the resolution on B-H has been discussed today. Which issue took the most time, as there are certainly many of them?

[Drlja] Although the members of the Foreign Affairs Committee stressed a number of times today that they did not want to spend most of their time on this particular issue, they did discuss the Wahhabi issue the most. Rapporteur for B-H Doris Pack said that she did not have anything against Islam, but that she did not want Wahhabis to find their way into Europe through B-H. She said there was fear of Islam in Europe. She also said that this was not the core of her draft resolution, but she wanted to warn and ask the B-H authorities not to neglect this issue. The opinions were divided during the discussion and some other members of the Committee said that B-H was not an Arab, but a European democratic country, and that the isolated case in front of the US Embassy in Sarajevo could not represent the whole country. As for concrete conclusions, we will know more about what the resolution will ultimately say when the members of parliament vote on this document

and the BiH federation of Croats and Bosniaks) and three appointed by the state government.²

Party leaders, however, failed to amend BiH's constitution to meet the criteria set by the EHCR in 2009. The complaint brought to the EHCR by Mr. Sejdic and Mr. Finci, both citizens of BiH and of Roma and Jewish ethnicity respectively, challenged BiH's constitution on the grounds of failing to include minorities in its political process. According to the constitution, Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs are allowed to run for office, which essentially excludes minorities from partaking in BiH's political process. Two possibilities to amend the constitution are being discussed at the moment. One proposition aims to increase the number of delegates, to include ethnic minorities, while the other possibility envisions changing the tripartite presidential election procedures.³

The question about Europe's growing fear of Muslims reaching Europe by way of BiH was addressed during a parliamentary session in Brussels, though no solution has yet been brought forward. However, as the excerpted interview from the Al Jazeera Balkan service illustrates, there are a number of other serious obstacles which must be resolved before BiH is offered EU membership. **End FMSO Commentary (King-Savic)**

2. "State Aid Law Passed in Bosnian Parliament". Balkan Insight. Accessed March 18, 12. <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/the-state-aid-law-passed-bosnia-parliament>

3. Bosnians Fail to Agree Sejdic-Finci Changes. Balkan Insight. Accessed March 18, 12. <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/bosnian-leaders-fail-agreement-on-human-rights-ruling>

Continued: Bosnian Politicians Consider Prospects of Applying for EU Membership

tomorrow.

[Hrga] That was Katarina Drljca from Brussels. We have heard that B-H could apply for EU membership by June. We have heard the list of conditions and, while the new tasks are coming in, the B-H authorities have not yet resolved the old ones, such as the implementation of the European Court of Human Rights ruling in the Sejdic-Finci [minorities' political rights] case.

[Gagic] The National Minorities' Park in Sarajevo is one of several dozen equal green areas in the city currently covered by snow. But, in the political life of B-H, national minorities are not equal. They cannot run for the most important offices. Bosnian politicians have failed to implement the European Court of Human Rights ruling, which considered this a discriminatory provision in the Constitution, thus failing to fulfill a condition on the country's path toward the EU.

[Sarajevo resident Danko Milanovic] They are not very productive. The worst thing is that the young are unemployed.

[Sarajevo resident Rusmila Jahic] One side is always pulling the strings. Hardly any agreement can be reached here.

[Gagic] After the Council of Ministers was formed and two important laws passed on the population census and the state aid system, new tasks lie ahead for the national authorities. Without a budget for this year and the B-H fiscal balance for the period until 2014, the country's progress toward Europe will be delayed. Unlike Croatia, which has successfully climbed a number of steps toward the EU, or Serbia, which is also going that way, B-H is yet to apply for EU membership.

The state Parliament knows that the application has been delayed by some of the old issues, including the agreement on military and state property and the future status of the Office of the High Representative. Halid Genjac believes that it is possible for the country to apply for the EU membership by the summer.

[Halid Genjac, member of Bosnian Parliament's House of Peoples] There is a good atmosphere and a good basis for our application in June to be quite credible and for us to get the questionnaire by the end of the year. This means that we could get the candidacy status next year.

[Gagic] Former Foreign Minister Mladen Ivanic was not so optimistic. He said there had previously been a much better atmosphere for B-H getting the candidacy status.

[Ivanic] After Croatia, there will be no new accessions for eight to 10 years. As for B-H, this time span is too optimistic. I think that it will take much longer.

[Gagic] Analyst Srecko Latal says that internal cohesion is necessary for the application, which he has not doubted, to be implemented convincingly.

[Latal] We can see some very radical, hard-line positions on all sides. All sides have maximalist demands. There is no common vision for the future of B-H.

[Gagic] Until there is a common vision and a global fiscal framework is endorsed, B-H will not be allocated 100 million euros of the European Commission's financial aid.

FMSO Commentary: In June 2011 Kazakhstan's Senate (upper house of parliament) rejected a law that would have sent four soldiers from Kazakhstan on a deployment as part of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. The law had passed through the Majilis (lower house) in May. While Kazakhstan's president could still overturn this decision, it is not likely to happen, particularly with the coming drawdown and eventual withdrawal of ISAF forces from Afghanistan. In addition to the Senate's rejection, veterans groups of the Soviet-Afghan War, as well as the general public, opposed the deployment.

The following article about Colonel Kerimbayev mentions the significance of February 23, Defender of the Fatherland Day: in the Soviet Union the holiday had been observed on this day; in Kazakhstan, the holiday is now celebrated on May 7. While the article suggests that people in Kazakhstan have forgotten the Soviet-Afghan War, much less veterans of the war, their opposition to the deployment belies this. The article mentions Panfilov Park in Almaty, where Kerimbayev goes to commemorate this day. Within the park is a small memorial to the veterans of the war from Kazakhstan, where people place flowers on holidays and even throughout the year. In any case, while people in Kazakhstan do not want to get involved in the current conflict in Afghanistan, they have not forgotten Soviet war there.
End FMSO Commentary (Stein)

Remembering the Soviet-Afghan War in Kazakhstan

23 February 2012

Source: Mustafina, Mira. "Первый командир легендарного мусульманского батальона отмечает только один праздник – 23 февраля (The First Commander of the Legendary Muslim Battalion Commemorates Only One Holiday – 23 February)," *Liter*, 23 February 2012.
http://www.liter.kz/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=8987&Itemid=2

Первый командир легендарного мусульманского батальона отмечает только один праздник – 23 февраля (The First Commander of the Legendary Muslim Battalion Commemorates Only One Holiday – 23 February)

The Afghan warlord Ahmad Shah Massoud offered a million dollars for the head of not just any Soviet officer. That is how much he promised for the capture of the Soviet "Black-Major." This "Black-Major" was our fellow citizen Boris Kerimbayev, for whom the most important holiday is February 23. He goes to the Eternal Flame to commemorate his men from the Muslim battalion.

Now a retired colonel, Kerimbayev lives in the country near Almaty. He is writing his memoirs and we hope that it will be turned into a book. "This book is an attempt to explain how Soviet soldiers and officers courageously and selflessly fulfilled their duty in Afghanistan. I am convinced that a wounded generation returned. There is no difference in what circumstances an officer or soldier was killed. He is a hero all the same." – says Boris. Kerimbayev served from 1981-1984 and was awarded the Order of the Red Banner "For Service to the Motherland in the Armed Forces of the USSR," third degree. He later advised engineers and sappers of the Kazakh battalion that performed peacekeeping missions in Iraq.

An hour after arriving in Afghanistan (Kerimbayev's) battalion had to fight. They spent the winter in northern Afghanistan and in the spring were transferred to the Panjshir Valley. According to Kerimbayev, the 40th (Soviet) Army threw a huge force to clean out the Panjshir Valley. Soviet troops failed to clear the Panjshir. Kerimbayev was ordered "to spend a month in ambush," and that "there will be no attacks." However, life was different. Instead of a month, Kerimbayev and his men stayed in the valley a long and difficult eight months. That is when Massoud announced the offer of a million dollars. Massoud could not understand how this group of men can withstand his well-armed soldiers.

On February 23, he goes to the memorial in the Panfilov Park (in Almaty) to commemorate his fellow soldiers. It is his long-standing tradition. Many people have forgotten what was once a holiday, but not him. The colonel considers this a day of real men, defenders in the broadest sense of the word.

FMSO Commentary: A large number of military exercises in Central Asia have focused on a scenario of an enemy infiltrating their territory and targeting infrastructure, as well as taking over a village or remote area. Many of these have been joint exercises and sometimes conducted through the auspices of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), the regional military organization that could respond to a threat to a member country. Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan are current CSTO members.

The scenario for this exercise is similar to the incursions carried out by the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) in 1999 and 2000. Militants of the IMU crossed into southern Kyrgyzstan (and parts of Uzbekistan in 2000) from bases in Tajikistan, took hostages and clashed with government forces before withdrawing. In both instances the fighting took place in mountainous areas. Central Asian militaries, in this case Kazakhstan, have since then tried to prepare themselves for another incursion. While this scenario continues to be a credible threat, most of the threats to security have come in other forms. There were several violent incidents in Kazakhstan in 2011, but none involved a group of militants like the IMU. Instead, incidents ranged from a suicide bombing to a small group or a single man shooting policemen. The units tasked with responding to these incidents were from local police departments, the Interior Ministry (MVD), or the National Security Committee (KNB, the successor to the Soviet KGB), but not the Ministry of Defense.

While it is important for Kazakhstan's military to train and prepare for a possible incursion, it is more likely that local police, the MVD, or KNB will respond to such a future threat, particularly if it is similar to last year's incidents. It is not often that journalists

Defining Roles in Kazakhstan's Security

21 February 2012

Source: Plyanskina, Nadezhda. "Генералитет уходит в горы (The Generals Go into the Mountains)," *Время (Time)*, 21 February 2012. <http://www.time.kz/index.php?module=news&newsid=25993>



Chebarkul training ground. Centre-2011 strategic military exercises. Photo by Presidential Press and Information Office. [CC-BY 3.0 (www.creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/)], via Kremlin.ru

Генералитет уходит в горы (The Generals Go into the Mountains)

The first military exercise took place in mountain terrain under difficult winter conditions. The soldiers raised their combat capability at a garrison near the village of Otar in the Zhambyl Province. Our correspondent visited the final stage of the maneuvers, involving motorized infantry, armored, and artillery units from the regional command "South." The exercises were held in several parts: protecting critical facilities, fighting with subversive enemy forces, surrounding and destroying armed militants, organizing intelligence, and battling with enemies dug into a village.

A helicopter with journalists landed so the Southern Regional Commander Murat Maykeeva could come on board to show us the exercise from the air. "(It is) the first time exercises are not carried out on the usual ranges, but in unfamiliar mountain terrain. The brigade also marched at night," said the general.

The reconnaissance battalion raised the alarm and marched 500 kilometers to the dislocation point. Several teams parachuted into the rear of the enemy and along the border a series of observation posts were set up. "The main group of militants tried to penetrate (our) territory in three places. Armored vehicles rushed to the place of an enemy breakthrough and they were supported by air units." – General Maykeeva.

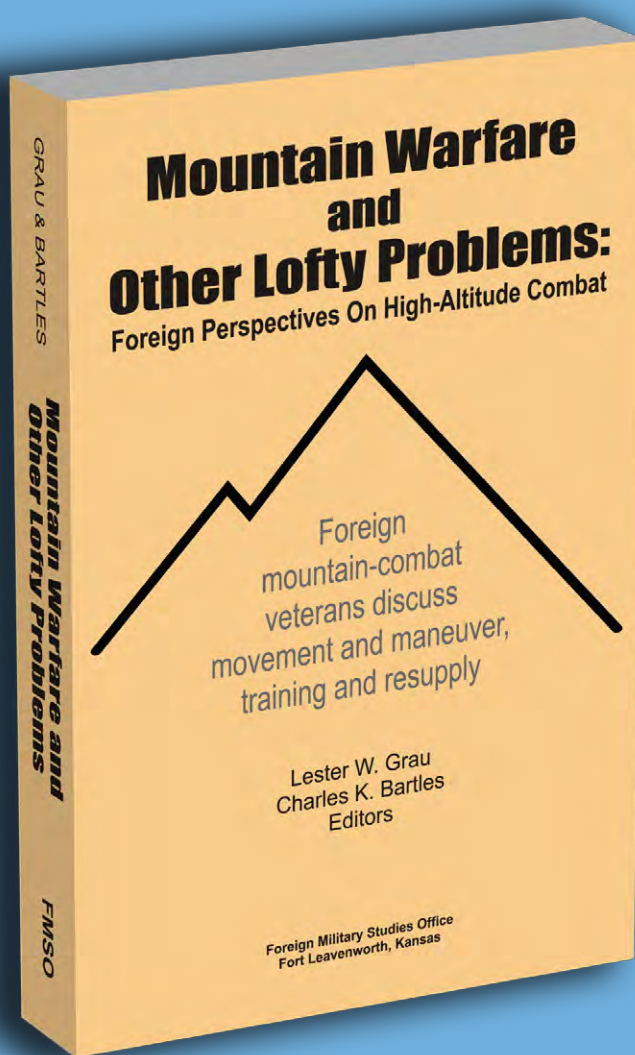
Some conclusions have already been made? "The march took place in the mountains at night, and of course, the soldiers have no experience in these conditions; that is why it is necessary to pay attention to training to carry out long, night marches." – General Maykeeva. The exercises will continue until February 23.

Continued: The Generals Go Into the Mountains

are shown the exercises with as much effort from the military (they were flown around in a helicopter) as the article mentions. Some media in Kazakhstan were critical of the government's responses to last year's incidents, that security forces were not adequately prepared to deal with militant groups. Some of the local policemen were unarmed. It is certainly possible that (nonmilitary) security forces have been training in the wake of last year's threats away from the public eye, but it would be more beneficial for Kazakhstan if exercises included some of the nonmilitary security forces. **End FMSO Commentary (Stein)**

The United States Army has been involved in a mountain war for a decade. After all this time, **mountain combat remains a stubbornly difficult mission** and technology can offer only modest support to the infantry's mission of closing with the enemy or the logistician's mission of getting support forward. This book by Les Grau and Chuck Bartles covers operations and tactics, artillery, and aviation support, reconnaissance, communications, training, and logistics in the mountains.

This book is not United States Army doctrine. Rather, it is offered as an alternate view to a most-challenging military environment.



FMSO Commentary: For the governments of Central Asia, the IMU is still considered a security threat. The group is most well known for the 1999 and 2000 incursions into Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. During the late 1990s and early 2000s the group recruited effectively among young men, particularly in Uzbekistan, but also in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. After 9/11 the IMU, based in northern Afghanistan, changed its focus from targeting and trying to overthrow the government of Uzbekistan to fighting against the United States and other coalition forces. In the fall of 2001 Juma Namangani, the co-founder of the IMU, was killed and the group relocated to Waziristan in Pakistan. After the relocation men from Central Asia continued to join the IMU, but in smaller numbers than before. It was speculated that some original members even quit and returned home or went into exile.

Takhir Yuldashev, the other co-founder of the IMU, was killed in an airstrike in Pakistan in 2009. While the group has continued to operate in parts of Pakistan and Afghanistan, the home countries of members of the organization are sometimes difficult to determine. The following article about two Tajik men sentenced to prison terms for membership in the IMU is not a major news event by itself—there are several reports and convictions a year from countries in the region—but it does provide more information. Yuldashev was considered the spiritual and public relations leader of the IMU (Namangani served in a more operational role) and his death probably had an impact on recruitment. The IMU, or someone affiliated with the group, maintains a website with past speeches, videos, and pictures of the IMU. The audio speeches mentioned in the article likely came from there or a related site.

The site also periodically publishes a list of martyrs, often including their

Determining the Members of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU)

23 February 2012

Source: Nazriev, Sayrakhmon. “На юге Таджикистана вынесены приговоры в отношении двух членов ИДУ (In the South of Tajikistan Sentences Were Given for Two Members of the IMU),” Asia-Plus, 23 February 2012. <http://news.tj/ru/news/na-yuge-tadzhikistana-vynesenye-prigovory-v-otnoshenii-dvukh-chlenov-idu>



Gavel by Jonathunder (Own work) [GFDL (www.gnu.org/copyleft/fdl.html) or CC-BY-SA-3.0-2.5-2.0-1.0 (www.creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/)], via Wikimedia Commons

На юге Таджикистана вынесены приговоры в отношении двух членов ИДУ (In the South of Tajikistan Sentences Were Given for Two Members of the IMU)

The district court of Qabodiyon (Khatlon Province) handed down sentences against two local residents found guilty of membership in the banned religious extremist group, the IMU. The judge presiding at the trial convicted two residents, Akmal Rashidov and Ibromkhim Kurbonov. Rashidov received 9 years imprisonment and Kurbanov 8.5 years. During the judicial investigation, both defendants pleaded not guilty.

According to investigators, Rashidov became interested in the IMU in May of last year. First he downloaded a photo of the leader of the IMU, Mukhammedtokhir Farrukh (aka Takhir Yuldashev), from the mobile phone of fellow village resident Nusratullo Abdulloev. Abdulloev advised him to join the IMU and together go to Afghanistan. However, only Nusratullo and Sunatullo Abdulloev went.

In early August, Rashidov downloaded an audiotape from the IMU. Later he showed these to a colleague, Bakhtiyor Saidov, asking him to also join the IMU. Soon the villagers exchanged CDs with propaganda speeches of IMU leaders and actively campaigned new members.

On September 15 last year, members of the regional department of the National Security Committee (GKNB) detained Rashidov. A search of his home turned up 12 CDs, some of which were extremist in nature. “Even before the arrest, I did not know that the IMU is an extremist organization.” – said Rashidov.

Continued: In the South of Tajikistan Sentences Were Given for Two Members of the IMU

home country and province. Recent IMU martyr lists have shown that more men from northern Afghanistan, and fewer from Central Asia, have been killed in the past year. This is not a definitive measurement of membership, but it is an indication that Central Asians may not be as involved with the IMU as regional media report. This is not to say that these men were not involved with an extremist group—it is likely that they were—but that association with the IMU is used liberally in Central Asia. Ultimately, articles like this may not be the best way to determine who is involved with the IMU, but it does show that young men are still joining the IMU or at least have an interest in the group. **End FMSO Commentary (Stein)**

Dr. Les Grau's article "The Delafield Commission: Forerunner to FAO Program" is the lead article in the December 2011 edition of The FAO Journal: International Affairs. The issue also includes Karen Kaya's "Turk Concerns with US Withdrawal from Iraq" as well as "Southeast Asia: 'Indo' or China'?" by Ivan Welch



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FAO HISTORY

Will the original FAO please stand up?

Inside This Issue ...

The Delafield Commission: Forerunner to FAO
In-Country Training Report: Paris and Brussels
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Book Reviews, Proponent news and other Field Reports

A Joint FAO Intro Course?
OSS Society's Annual Banquet Report
Turk Concerns of US' Iraq Withdrawal
Southeast Asia: "Indo" or "China"

FMSO Commentary: Border demarcation is one of the most challenging issues regarding border security in the Fergana Valley. The most difficult aspect of this challenge is the status of thirteen enclaves. The enclaves were originally drawn by Soviet mapmakers for the purposes of maintaining ethnic cohesion with the appropriate republic of titular majority (Uzbeks in Uzbekistan, Tajiks in Tajikistan, etc.). In Soviet times, enclave and Soviet republic borders were not demarcated; most Soviet citizens who traveled had little awareness that they were crossing any arbitrary borders.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, abstract borders soon became a concrete reality, as the fledgling states attempted to enact border control regimes. Securing the borders of the enclaves was particularly difficult; most enclaves are only a few square kilometers and have no natural borders.

The Uzbek enclave of Sokh is notable for several reasons. The enclave is the largest in Central Asia, covering several hundred square kilometers, and has a sizeable population of over 50,000. Interestingly, even though this territory belongs to Uzbekistan, this enclave has no ethnic Uzbeks; almost the entire population is ethnic Tajiks. Further complicating the matter is that the main road between the major city of Batken and the regional hub of Osh crosses through the enclave. When Kyrgyz-Uzbek relations are good, travel is relatively unhindered; Kyrgyz are allowed to cross through the enclave and are only occasionally checked for documents by the Uzbek Border Service. When Kyrgyz-Uzbek relations are bad, the Uzbeks often close the road, forcing travelers to take a lengthy detour around the enclave on dirt roads that are difficult to traverse in inclement weather and when the roads are muddy.

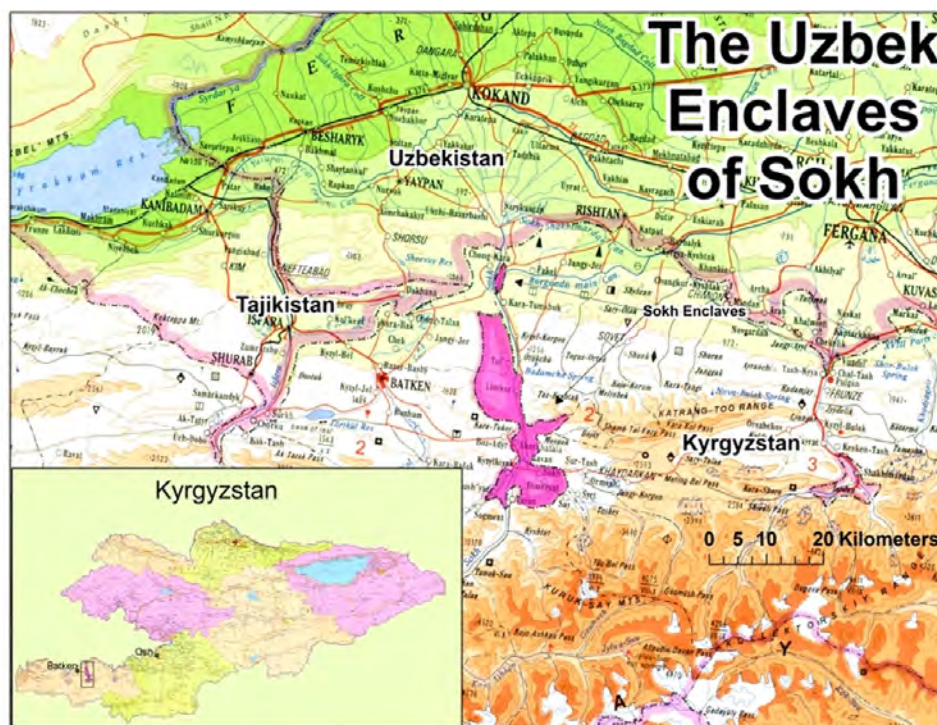
The Uzbeks have proposed several

Future Bleak for Uzbek-Kyrgyz Border Demarcation

12 March 2012

Source: Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan: Demining around Uzbek enclaves brings hope to impoverished villagers, Integrated Regional Information Networks (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs), 12 March 2012.

<http://www.irinnews.org/InDepthMain.aspx?InDepthId=19&ReportId=62816&Country=Yes>



Uzbek Enclaves map by FMSO analyst Bartles

Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan: Demining around Uzbek enclaves brings hope to impoverished villagers

OSH, 1 November 2004 (IRIN In-Depth) - Osh, Demining of the Kyrgyz-Uzbek border is bringing hope to parts of the local population, hope of a new life without fear, along with economic benefits that have been denied them since 1999, when the area was first mined.

Earlier in August, units of the Uzbek army started demining work around the Sokh and Shakhimardan enclaves located on the territory of Kyrgyzstan. Enclaves are islands of territory completely surrounded by land from a neighbouring country - a legacy of the Soviet era when borders were simply administrative.

*land swap schemes to join Sokh to Uzbekistan, but the Kyrgyz have refused. The Kyrgyz are concerned that unification will effectively cut the Kyrgyz Batken Province in half, turning the eastern end of the province into a de facto enclave due to mountainous terrain in the South. Uzbekistan is already seen as somewhat of a "bad actor" in the region, which can be notoriously difficult for neighbors to work with. The Kyrgyz likely believe that if Sokh was reunited with the Uzbek main land, the transportation corridor between the city of Batken and Osh would close almost immediately. **End FMSO Commentary (Bartles)***

***Continued:* Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan: Demining around Uzbek enclaves brings hope to impoverished villagers the IMU**

Valery Kolesov, an official at the Batken governor's office responsible for law enforcement and defence issues, told IRIN that the Uzbek military had almost cleared mines around the Shakhimardan enclave, while demining efforts around the Sokh enclave were expected to be completed by 1 December 2004.

According to the Uzbek Defence Ministry, Tashkent began planting mines in 1999 in some mountainous parts of its Kyrgyz and Tajik borders which were difficult to control in an effort to stave off incursions by the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) and to prevent drug trafficking and weapons smuggling through the area. Since then, more than 10 people have been killed by mines with several others injured. Furthermore, mine blasts killed around 100 head of livestock. The officials of the Batken governorship estimated the cost of the damage at US \$166,000.

Zulpukar Markaev, head of one of the local rural municipalities, pointed out the economic benefit which demining of the frontier belt was expected to bring. "There is an opportunity to use hundreds of hectares of land for agriculture, on both sides of the border, which have not been cultivated for the past four or five years," Markaev told IRIN. "It will remarkably improve the well-being of the local population. Arable land has a worth like gold here."

There is a scarcity of arable land in Batken, amounting to only 0.1 hectares per capita in the province, while in other parts of the country that figure is much higher. More than 95 percent of Kyrgyzstan's territory is mountainous and a lack of irrigated land and water is a real problem in Batken, the most underdeveloped part of the country.

Karim Tashbaltaev, head of the Batken association of war and labour veterans, told IRIN that people on both sides of the border were hoping for new prospects - reviving the cross-border trade. "Why not open border markets and resume bus routes with Uzbekistan?" Tashbaltaev asked. Local observers say border trade would contribute to boosting economic activities in the area and reducing poverty.

FMSO Commentary: A key platform in Putin's recent presidential campaign revolves around the restoration of the Russian military, to include research/development and defense production facilities. If Kremlin promises are kept, trillions of rubles will be allocated through 2020 toward modernizing the country's defense capabilities and improving the lives of those who serve in the military. Some of the current political rhetoric echoes from the late Soviet period, when many hoped that a robust and innovative military-industrial complex would be the catalyst to transform the Soviet economy from a fossil-fuel export model to one based upon high-tech manufacturing. We know how that worked out.

One industry where this rhetoric might actually conform to reality is in helicopter production. While it too suffered during the 1990s, over the past five years there has been an effective consolidation and streamlining of this industry, where today the major company, Russian Helicopters (<http://rus-helicopters.ru/en/>), expects to enjoy 15% of the global helicopter market by 2015. So far their achievements are quite impressive; sales continue to improve and Russian-made helicopters are operating in 70 countries around the world, to include Iraq and Afghanistan.

It is curious, then, that given this notable track record, the Russian Ministry of Defense has apparently decided to purchase foreign-made helicopters for some of its transport needs. As the extracted article suggests, some of this decision may be based upon the budget windfall promised to the military; a portion stems from limited production capacity within the Russian helicopter industry; and some of it may be due to the primitive highway system in much of Russia. (Anyone who has travelled by auto in Russia understands why defense officials would want to purchase helicopters.) The article's

Great Leap Forward?



24 February 2012

Source: Vladimir Pylyayev, "You Can't Get Anywhere Without Topographic Intelligence," *Suvorovskiy Natisk*, 4 February 2012

Russian Helicopters Promo Slide, via OAO Kamov

Генеральские вертолеты купят за границей (Generals Plan to Purchase Foreign Helicopters)

The state administration really is wonderfully well set up in today's Russia. No matter how often national leader Vladimir Putin may have declared in his election campaign article that "in rearming the Army we will be banking precisely on Russia's OPK [defense industry complex]," no matter how hard Dmitriy Rogozin, the vice premier responsible for the OPK, may try to straighten out the generals who argue that Russian-manufactured products are of poor quality, the Defense Ministry still gets its own way, firmly and without too much fuss. Just recently, for instance, the military department posted an order on a state purchasing website to buy 45 helicopters. The product requirements are compiled in such a way that it is clear the auction winner will be a European manufacturer.

Applications to take part in an open auction for the supply of 15 single-engine and 30 twin-engine light (multirole) helicopters are being accepted until 11 March. The actual auction is scheduled for the 19th of the same month. The total value of the contract is R6,606,194,970, with each single-engine aircraft costing R110.7 million and each twin-engine aircraft costing R164.9 million.

Formally the helicopters are intended for courier and postal communications, command and control backup, freight transportation, and official travel by Defense Ministry personnel. The helicopters have to perform their standard missions day or night, in normal weather conditions, in the absence of enemy attack, and in known operational circumstances. Their main payload will be Russian Federation Defense Ministry personnel, up to four at a time.

It is easy to guess what the real purpose of the helicopters is behind this form of words: carrying top ministry people in their accustomed luxury. Because here is what happens now: When an important person flies to attend an exercise somewhere, he has to either drive fifty dusty kilometers on a concrete highway across half the territory of the test

Continued: Generals Plan to Purchase Foreign Helicopters

author points out the stark contradiction between official rhetoric and this planned purchase. He neglects to point out, however, that focusing on restoring the country's defense industries without first developing the overall infrastructure (i.e., roads, schools, hospitals, housing) might not be a viable strategy for restoring Russia's power. End FMSO Commentary (Finch)

range or else fly in on board some Mi-8 of doubtful comfort or reliability.

This is a serious point, because it is unbecoming for substantial individuals of general-officer proportions to have to fly in the kind of "choppers" that are used to ferry cannon fodder to the front. So the expediency of the order is obvious. But there is an element on the tender announcement that is cause for concern. All 45 aircraft are supposed to be delivered to the Air Force army aviation center at Torzhok no later than 25 November this year. It is practically impossible for a single contractor to deliver that quantity of the required equipment in such a short time. And it is specifically beyond the capabilities of our own helicopter-building industry, because we do not have the appropriate production capacity. There is every indication that the vehicles will not originate from Russia, and they have most probably already been built.

Independent specialists and mere meticulous bloggers have already spent time studying the technical specifications for the vehicles signed off by Air Force Commander in Chief Aleksandr Zelin and have reached the conclusion that what the Air Force has in mind is the single-engine AS350 and the twin-engine AS355 (or modernized versions of them) made by the Eurocopter company, which is part of the European Aeronautic Defence and Space Company (EADS). In other words, a Franco-German company will be getting an order worth R6.6 billion. Bearing in mind the R23 trillion that the Defense Ministry has to assimilate in the next eight years this is a drop in the ocean, of course. Nevertheless, it is money that could well be used to stimulate Russia's economy.

In his program article Vladimir Putin writes: "It is precisely research and experimental development work in the defense sector, which gets substantial and sustained finance from the state, that enables many breakthrough technologies

that would simply not cross the 'profitability threshold' in the civilian sector to be brought to fruition. Then are subsequently taken up (in finished form) and adapted by the civilian sector." Then, a little further on: "The vast resources invested in renovating the OPK and rearming the Army must serve as an engine for the modernization of the economy as a whole." And in a synchronized move that stuns the imagination the Defense Ministry is doing the exact opposite: scorning Russian-manufactured products and the economy in every aspect.

It is understandable when high-ranking officials ride in luxury German cars. A Volga or a VAZ 2109 cannot be brought up to the same standard. But we have helicopters that fly just as well as theirs. We have the single-engine Mi-34 and Aktay, we have the twin-engine Ka-62, Ka-226, and Ansat. It could be that these vehicles do not suit the military in some way (in terms of trim or sound-proofing) or are simply too "basic." But that is surely not a matter of life or death or of some terrible technological secret known only to producers from NATO countries. We are not talking about an armored pod for the crew of a main battle tank or anti-mine protection on an armored vehicle.

It is perfectly realistic to upgrade one of these models to the required standard, set up production on the basis of state investment money, supply our own Defense Ministry, and then take the product onto the international market. Sure, it will take some time, but the generals have survived this long without such helicopters, and for the good of the Motherland they could put up with the situation for another year or two. In the light of everything that Vladimir Putin has written I would very much like to believe that that is what will happen.

FMSO Commentary: *When the Soviet Union collapsed 20 years ago, the Russian military inherited the bulk of the old Soviet structure, to include its officer education system. The USSR had over 150 different military institutions of higher learning, where officers could study everything from foreign languages to the intricacies of Marxist-Leninist thought. To advance to higher rank, Soviet officers had to prove their mental prowess by successfully graduating from one (or more) of these institutions.*

As part of the larger defense reform, this vast military education system has been drastically reduced, and, correspondingly, the requirements surrounding higher education and promotion have been revised. Where in Soviet times officers spent considerable time in the classroom, proving their mettle by obtaining multiple education credentials, under the reformed system today Russian officers will be encouraged to focus more on soldierly pursuits to obtain higher rank.

The reduction and consolidation of the military officer education system has been a painful and somewhat chaotic process. In 2009 defense officials placed a moratorium on assessing new cadets, and upper-level training programs were slashed or eliminated. Cadets who were expecting to join the military found themselves in limbo, while officers slated for advanced schooling had to scramble to find another assignment. Enrollments into the military academies have now resumed and the regulations regarding officer education and promotion have been drafted. Russian military schools will also begin to again accept foreign officers for various training courses. While the dust has not completely settled, the contours of the current officer education system (as the excerpted article suggests) appear to be more manageable and in better synch with Russia's actual manpower requirements.
End FMSO Commentary (Finch)

Officer Education and Promotion

22 February 2012

Source: Aleksey Mikhalev, "Closer to the Stars: Admittance to General's Rank for Officers Has Been Eased," *Lenta.ru*, 22 February 2012



Emblem of Armed forces of the Russian Federation by Flanker [Public domain or CC-BY-3.0 (www.creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/)], via Wikimedia Commons

Ближе к звездам; Офицерам облегчили доступ к генеральскому званию (Closer to the Stars; Admittance to General's Rank for Officers Has Been Eased)

For Russian officers to advance up the career ladder will require one higher degree, not several, as was customary earlier. Yekaterina Priyetzheva, director of the Defense Ministry Education Department, said on Monday, 20 February that, in place of instruction in service academies, it would be sufficient in the future for colonel and general candidates to take special courses.

The generals of the Armed Forces of Russia may rightly be categorized as the best-educated people of our country. Albeit from the formal standpoint. For in order to acquire pants with a broad stripe, senior officers have to spend much time at a desk and hold two, sometimes three, higher-education diplomas.

The Russian officer's career path may begin variously. Some, following their fathers, go into the cadet corps, then, to service schools. Others pass school exams and enroll at service institutions as regular undergraduates. Then the future lieutenants are for five years prepared for the higher-education diploma.

Up to 2007 the lieutenant could have risen to the rank of lieutenant colonel, given the corresponding appointments in his troop command, in just nine years (as of 2007 the requisite length of service in each appointment was increased). But the rank of colonel could not be acquired just like that. The officer had for this in the majority of cases to undergo instruction in a specialized academy and to have acquired an additional degree

Continued: Closer to the Stars; Admittance to General's Rank for Officers Has Been Eased

(this did not, as a rule, specifically, apply to lieutenants who had acquired their first higher degree in service academies). Colonels, though, with pretensions to further career growth frequently had to negotiate one further piece of schooling—in the General Staff Academy.

The director of the Defense Ministry Education Department says that the military will not henceforward have to chase after additional degrees. Yekaterina Priyezzheva says that to grow from lieutenant to general one higher degree will be sufficient for officers. But the contenders will not, for all that, be acquiring colonel's or general's epaulets just like that. They will effectually have, as before, for service advancement to sit at a desk for 10 months in a specialized service academy or the General Staff Academy.

Priyezzheva explained that the changes in the process of officer training have to do with the reform that has been pursued in the Russian Armed Forces since 2008. As part of the reform, specifically, the number of service institutions has been reduced considerably, and a limit on the admission of new officer candidates to service schools of an army and navy profile was introduced in 2009.

The number of service institutions has since 2008 been reduced from 65 to 17—three research centers (per service of the Armed Forces), 11 academies, and three military universities. Twenty-five branches and three research organizations of the Defense Ministry operate within the institutions of higher learning. To compare: up to 1991 Russia had 166 service institutions, which would annually graduate approximately 60,000 officers.

"We are putting the emphasis on the quality of education of the servicemen. The modernization of the training of officer candidates and enrolled personnel is being completed at this time," Komsomolskaya Pravda quotes Priyezzheva.

The Defense Ministry intends this year to resume the admission of applicants to the service institutions, army and navy institutions included. "The parameters of the intake are being more closely defined at this time, we are determining in which occupational specialties the recruitment will be performed and settling on the precise number of applicants—this will be about 8,000," RIA Novosti quotes the director of the Defense Ministry Education Department.

Priyezzheva, whom Rossiyskaya Gazeta quotes, says that in the coming years the Defense Ministry will continue the practice of the training of officers in the military-science departments of civilian institutions of higher learning. Their number, Priyezzheva

explained, will be small. It is planned to put the main emphasis on the training of humanities students, psychologists particularly.

As of 2012 the Defense Ministry will also lift the three-year freeze on the admission to service institutions of foreign servicemen. Interfax reports, citing Yekaterina Priyezzheva, that the conclusion of international agreements on the schooling of foreigners has not been completed at this time and that it is hard as yet to give the precise number of future officer candidates from overseas in Russian service institutions.

Applicants from countries of the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the CIS will be accepted on a priority basis. The Defense Ministry Main International Military Cooperation Directorate, quoted by Interfax, says that up to the 2008 reform Russia was graduating annually about 1,200 foreign military specialists, for whose training the Defense Ministry allocated from public funds over \$6 million.

During her 20 February news conference Yekaterina Priyezzheva spoke also about the coming fall intake for the service institutions. She said that the officer candidates are to take the Standardized State Examination and occupational screening and meet physical-fitness performance standards. Preference in the screening of the applicants will be shown "A" students who have completed regular school rather than "C" students from cadet corps. Given identical academic benchmarks of school students and Suvorov graduates, the latter will, nonetheless, be in an advantageous position.

The director of the Defense Ministry Education Department was not about to make some forecasts as regards the possible competition for the service institutions. "Judging by the correspondence that we receive, very many young people want on account of the recent positive changes that have occurred in the life of the servicemen to enroll at our institutions, there will be more than sufficient of those that so wish, I believe," Kommersant quotes Yekaterina Priyezzheva.

One further incentive of considerable importance for the future lieutenants will be a scholarship, the level of which, Priyezzheva says, will begin at R6,000 (the precise amount will depend on the officer candidate's progress and his participation in the institution's scientific activity). Given such conditions, it is unlikely that anyone will be perturbed that in his years of military service the officer will be able to boast of just one degree.

FMSO Commentary: Films, whether documentary or drama, continue to play a profound role in shaping public opinion. It is no surprise then that governments have been known to subsidize films which reflect the values of the governing class. During the Cold War, for instance, both the American and Soviet political leadership supported their respective film industries to produce movies that supported their particular worldview. While this ideological conflict has long since ended, the stereotypes live on. When Hollywood needs a world-class villain today, directors will frequently use a Russian; conversely, Russian film-makers will often cast an American as the bad guy.

Like much of the rest of their industry, the film business in Russia nearly collapsed along with the dissolution of the USSR. Bereft of state subsidies, film directors struggled to find private financing to produce new films. By 2000, however, state subsidies to key industries began to improve. As the Putin government consolidated political control over the country, it also gained the upper hand over much of the media, to include the film industry. While direct censorship was avoided, a tacit understanding between film producers and state officials developed. If movie directors wanted state funding, they would have to comply with Kremlin-friendly guidelines and support certain positions.

The August 2008 conflict with Georgia provides a graphic example of Kremlin involvement in the Russian film industry. Besides producing a half dozen documentaries which loudly proclaim the Russian perspective (i.e., Georgian/NATO/US treachery), Russian movie-makers have also produced a handful of popular dramatic reproductions of this conflict. The latest blockbuster, 'August Eighth,' was released just prior to the 23 February Defenders' Day holiday, and illustrates how the Kremlin is again

Filming History

24 February 2012

Source: Interfax-AVN
Online 24 February 2012.
<http://www.militarynews.ru>



Movie Announcement- 'August Eighth,' via ORT TV

Medvedev Praises Russia-Georgia War Film

President Dmitry Medvedev and Russian military officers who were involved in the Russian-Georgian war of 2008 have praised the film "August Eighth," which depicts the conflict.

"It is a big and epic film, which is based on complex material, and work on it has taken quite a long time," Medvedev said at a meeting with veterans of the war at the Glavkino cinema and television complex. The meeting focused on the movie.

"But I totally agree with all the officers who have spoken here, and spoke about the need to remember the events of those days. Everything gets forgotten in this world, unfortunately, even some of the most glorious pages recede into the background at some moments, and the way our descendants will see those events depends on the way they are recorded in films," the president said.

He credited "August Eighth" with being a truthful movie.

"There has been a lot of twaddle in foreign media to the effect that Russia attacked a defenseless state while, in actual fact, our army was saving people, children, old people. But truth must always be able to assert itself. I'm absolutely sure that history will highlight all the key points and accurate formulations will be found," he said.

"We know who was the aggressor, who attacked on that day, August 8, - everyone knows this today, only some people admit this, some are silent, and some are lying, and it is a very important mission of this film to show the truth with the language of cinema, naturally with some additions as is typical of the art of cinema. In my view, this has been achieved,"

Continued: Medvedev Praises Russia-Georgia War Film

using the big screen to get its message across.

Beneath all the action-packed, special effects and fantasy imaginations of a young Russian boy in this transformer-like movie lies the central Kremlin belief that Russia is surrounded by enemies. (For a brief preview, see the movie webpage at the link below.) Whatever its entertainment value, this film reflects the not-so-subliminal message that the West is evil, and that Mother Rus must be strong to protect her children. As the article below makes clear, the Russian leadership wants to ensure that this lesson is never forgotten. End FMSO Commentary (Finch)

<http://www.avgustvosmogo.ru/#/mainpage>

Medvedev said.

He claimed that the movie contained nothing that could stir hatred for ethnic Georgians.

“This is a theme that is pushed into the background anyway, the Georgian people have nothing to do with it, it was the fault of the leaders who were making decisions at that time, but not of those who were forced to take up arms, maybe against their will, and that makes up the humanistic component of the film, and that has also been achieved, and it seems to me that the scene where a Georgian soldier helps our heroine is absolutely correct both in essence and in the way we see those events,” the president said.

He also praised the film for doing credit to the Russian armed forces. “This is correct, first of all because we really have powerful armed forces, and secondly because that military operation was successful and brief, and when you watch the film, you feel proud of our armed forces, of those who were fighting,” he said.

Tim Thomas's *Recasting the Red Star* describes Russia's culture of military thought through its modernization effort. Adding to his robust library of work on the subject, Tim Thomas illuminates Russia's Defense Ministry reform efforts, the Russian national security

strategy take on the operational environment, and a relevant review of the Russian military doctrine.



FMSO Commentary: In December the Chinese-refurbished aircraft carrier *Shi Lang* (formerly a Soviet *Kuznetsov*-class, purchased from Ukraine in 1998) made news when open-source overhead imagery captured it under way during its second sea trial on the Yellow Sea. Amid all the speculation of its capabilities and China's aspirations toward a "blue water" navy, there is a bigger question about how the former Soviet Union has adapted to the concept of a unipolar, then multipolar geopolitical situation and its relations with other rising powers. As part of a recent series of reports inspired by the March 4th presidential election in Russia, the BBC Russia Service presents a piece by former Indian Foreign Minister and Ambassador to Russia Kanval Sibal. In it he discusses India-Russia relations in the wake of the Soviet collapse, with the rise of Vladimir Putin in 2000, and today. His observations on Russia's capability to compete in India's defense procurement process (including India's rental of an *Akula II* nuclear attack submarine from Russia and the possibility of producing her own such vessels), as well as bilateral cooperation in academic and space exploration endeavors.

Ahmed Rashid's recent book on Afghanistan-Pakistan, *Descent into Chaos*, views U.S. and ISAF efforts in Afghanistan as inextricably linked to Pakistan, because Pakistan views a friendly Afghanistan as a source of strategic depth vis-à-vis India. When this is juxtaposed with Russia's long-term concerns about Central Asia (which has justified periodic military adventures southward for hundreds of years), Mr. Sibal's perspective on the India-Russia relationship is noteworthy from a U.S. national security perspective. **End FMSO Commentary (McIntosh)**

Russian-Indian Relations

27 February 2012

Source: Kanval Sibal, former Indian Foreign Minister and Ambassador to Russia, "India Loves Putin but Has Stopped Loving Russian Weaponry," BBC Russia Service, 27 February 2012. (synopsis/translation-McIntosh) http://www.bbc.co.uk/russian/russia/2012/02/120224_india_russia_putin.shtml



Vladimir and Lyudmila Putin visiting the Taj Mahal October 4, 2000. Photo by the Presidential Press and Information Office, via kremlin.ru [CC-BY-SA 3.0]

India Loves Putin but Has Stopped Loving Russian Weaponry

On Putin's first visit to India in 2000 (shortly after becoming President of Russia, pictured in the article) he signed a strategic partnership agreement; Russia was the first country to establish such a partnership with India; this was very important to Delhi because under Yeltsin the Russian foreign orientation had changed and India was now favoring a multipolar world over unipolarity bearing in mind the fact that India had joined the nuclear club in 1998.

-India has since maintained close connections with Russia, based on military contracts providing the 50-70% of the weapons used by the Indian army; cooperation in other fields, however, has been slow and relations between the two nations can be described as hopeful but not too energetic.

-Russian and Indian leaders conduct yearly summits in the frame of strategic partnership (in the last decade India has signed such agreements with other countries and cultivated better relations with the U.S.); at the 11th such summit in 2010 Moscow and Delhi announced creation of a "special and privileged strategic partnership" to highlight the exclusively close connection between them.

Continued: India Loves Putin but Has Stopped Loving Russian Weaponry

-Russian-Indian relations have passed the test of time, with Russia lending its support to key issues and not getting involved in India's internal affairs or establishing relations with other nations to the detriment of India-i.e. providing weaponry to Pakistan; other issues include Afghanistan's future, solving Iran's nuclear problems with diplomacy rather than military methods, mixing into the Arab world with military action; in these realms, the author posits that Russia is closer to India's positions than are Western partners.

"But, of course, the basis of our relations is comprised of military contacts. Russian preparation to supply India new technologies—for example to rent the atomic nuclear submarine "Nerpa" or to hand off technical assistance for the creation of Indian-produced atomic subs—make her an

especially valuable partner."

-India is working with Russia on military projects to include development of 5th generation military aircraft; the author sees "a big minus" in the strategic partnership-the absence of developed economic connections in other realms could be seriously weakened if the volume of Russian arms purchased is lessened: "Our Russian partners ought to take one important circumstance into account. Up to now, Russian-Indian military contracts were the result not of bidding, but direct intergovernmental agreements. But now international bidding has become the norm for military purchases." Competition is now becoming important for Russian weapons, especially in evaluating reliability and durability-awarding contracts demands scrutiny of these factors.

-Russia is anxious about the development of India's military connections with the U.S. Delhi is attempting to retain a complicated equilibrium-from one side to retain deep arms-related connections with Russia and from the other to develop relations with new partners such as the U.S., Europe, or the Israelis.

-The atomic sphere is also an important facet of Russia-India relations, but the U.S. is moving in by displaying interest in joint work alongside the Indian nuclear program. Russia has already built 2 nuclear plants ("atomic energy stations") in Kudankulam. The two nations were supposed to sign an agreement on construction of additional units by the end of last year, but this provoked a "stormy reaction" in Indian society and this was shelved.

-In space exploration, India participates in work with GLONASS, the Russian navigation constellation that doesn't play well with either GPS or the Europeans' Galileo system.

-Last Fall Russia lost a bid on providing the Mi-28 as India's attack helicopter (pictured).

-Economic cooperation is weak between the two nations, with bilateral trade at a comparatively low level—\$8bil. At the 2010 Summit it was decisively agreed to raise this to \$15bil and at the 2011 Summit to \$20bil.

-The majority of Indians relate well to Russia but there is a curtailment of its global political influence and work toward innovation and technology; India's dynamic private sector is not attracted to Russia and governmental support to cultural connections has decreased. Many young Indians, like young Russians, are attracted to the West. There are now 5,000 Indian students studying in Russia but this is a pittance compared to the number of Indian students in Western universities.

-Many in India are astonished by the open criticism of Vladimir Putin, as his popularity was accepted as the norm; it is implicit that the West and part of the Russian middle class want him out of power. Delhi doesn't separate Western hostility toward Putin and is not interested in either his departure, nor any interference in Russia's internal affairs; we think his return to the Kremlin is advantageous to the Indian-Russian relationship. India is not interested in Russia's democratic process; that's the Russian populace's concern.