

ONE WATCH

FOREIGN NEWS & PERSPECTIVES OF THE OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

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6 The Enemy's Strategy is to Promote 'American Islam'

"Estrategi-ye doşman tarvij Islam-i Amrika Ast" ("The Enemy's Strategy is to Promote American Islam"), Fars News Agency. 7 August 2012

Iranian regime propaganda depicting the United States as anti-Islam has fallen increasingly on deaf ears.



8 Debating what to do about Syria: Applying Lessons Learned from Iraq

Sedat Laçiner, "Türkiye, Suriye'de Ne Yapabilir? (What Can Turkey Do in Syria?)" Stargazete.com, July 29, 2012

"...what needs to be done is to utilize our National Intelligence Agency...Because in this day and age, the success that tanks and warplanes will produce is very limited."



13 Dreams of a Levantine Emirate?

"Al-Qaeda" Wings Battle for Control over the "Levant Emirate," al-Sharq (Saudi Arabia)

The article makes several important points, including the significance of potential competition among jihadi groups and the adoption by some of a more moderate tone



26 India: Cyber Warfare

Bangladesh joins China-Pak cyberwar club against India Rakesh K. Singh, New Delhi, The Daily Pioneer 16 February 2012

"Close on the heels of China and Pakistan persistently hacking Central Government and corporate websites, Bangladeshi hackers have joined the club through cyber attacks on India."



39 A Call to All to Leapfrog Toward Innovation and Economic Superiority

Xu Jingyue and Gu Ruizhen, "National Science and Technology Innovation Conference Held in Beijing, Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao Deliver Important Speeches," Xinhua Domestic Service, July 7, 2012

Hu Jintao emphasized: Building an innovation-oriented country is a common mission of the whole party and the whole society.



42 Spanish al Qaeda?

La AVT se persona en la causa contra los tres presuntos miembros de Al Qaeda (The AVT appears at the trial of three suspected al Qaeda members) El Mundo, 8 August 2012

...though Spanish authorities have arrested dozens of alleged militants since the deadly Madrid train bombings in 2004, these were the first arrestees since that attack to have been caught with explosives. For this reason, authorities believe that this cell had gone operational.



46 Iran's Hard and Soft Power in Afghanistan

"Dar pai efsha saazi 8 Sobh, modakhela rasaana-yi Iran barasee meshawad" [After disclosure by Hasht-e Sobh, Iran's media interference is being investigated], 14 August 2012

...due to perceived threats of a military action against its nuclear facilities, Iran sees the presence of U.S. troops in Afghanistan as a bigger threat. It, therefore, has accelerated its hard power and soft power efforts to drive the United States out of Afghanistan

FMSO Commentary: In May 2012, Operational Environment Watch discussed increasing labor discord in Iran. Independent labor unions first found their footing in the Islamic Republic in 2005, when Mansour Osanlou organized the Tehran regional bus drivers into an independent union outside the aegis of the Ministry of Labor. While trade unions in Iran have had some important triumphs over the last decade, notably among agricultural workers in southwestern Khuzistan, the government has relentlessly targeted their leadership to check their spread into more economically crucial areas, such as the oil industry. For the regime, however, countering labor is a tricky business: it wants to intimidate unions, but it also wishes to avoid the creation of martyrs around which labor supporters could rally.

It is in this context that the brief announcement of the arrest of his brother Afshin Osanlou is important. Labor leaders might become martyrs, but their immediate family members are less likely to. Reporting his arrest, the staunchly hardline news website Ammariyon.ir referred to the pattern of arrest and parole for Mansour Osanlou. This is par for the course: often the Iranian judiciary will pass harsh sentences but then parole those convicted. The sentence never goes away, and hangs like a sword of Damocles over the parolee's head to discourage further political agitation.

The arrest of Afshin suggests that revolving door imprisonment has apparently not been enough to control Mansour Osanlou, and so the security services are now targeting his family in order to try to intimidate the labor organizer into silence.

Afshin's name is relatively unknown because he is not an activist. That he spent time abroad is not surprising: many liberal Iranians—even regime supporters like Mehdi Hashemi, the son of former President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani—fled Iran in the wake of the 2009 crackdown and broader hardline consolidation of control. Many return regularly to test the water once tension has subsided. That Afshin was arrested at the airport suggests the anxiety that the regime feels toward the threat from organized labor and also reflects the increasing efficiency of the Ministry of Interior's computer system. The allegations that Afshin cooperated with foreign intelligence services while abroad was a charge the regime commonly leveled a decade ago, as it felt reformists were gaining too great a following, and was often followed by a televised forced confession. That the regime is again resorting to such charges may herald a renewed crackdown on Iranians who have lived, studied, or attended conferences abroad. **End FMSO Commentary (Rubin)**

Union Sympathizer is a Foreign Spy

26 July 2012

Source: "Afshin Osanlou Bazdasht shod" ("Afshin Osanlou Arrested,") Ammariyon.ir. 26 July 2012. <http://tinyurl.com/cnymmcl>

Mansour Osanlou organized the Tehran regional bus drivers, and brother of Afshin Osanlou. Photo by Sam Dawson, via <http://www.justiceforiranianworkers.org/?p=1444>



Afshin Osanlou Arrested

It is likely that you have heard the name Mansour Osanlou. A few years back, his name was associated with the Union of Workers of Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company (Vahed). Osanlou caused the Presidency of the European Union to take several measures that ran counter to our national security, and became the subject of foreign media.

Through the level of activity in this union, he has tried to exploit his position, abuse his authority, organize riots, all under the protection of workers and the union, to use it to pressure the Islamic Republic. The same issues led him to be arrested by security forces, tried, and jailed several times. He repeatedly conducted the same actions even though he had professed remorse and was paroled.

Mansour Osanlou has a brother named Afshin Osanlou. Several years ago, he was also charged with subversive activities and arrested by the security forces. After his release, however, there was no specific news about him.

But our correspondent reveals that Afshin Osanlou, during several years outside the country, took courses from intelligence and security services in sabotage and terrorist activities. Intelligence services tried to invest a few years in this, and by investing in him, they built elements following the commands for carrying out subversive activities inside Iran.

He recently re-entered Iran, but the vigilance and timely action of intelligence and security forces led to him being trapped and arrested, and so it can be said that he failed in his mission.

FMSO Commentary: *Whether to intimidate or to shame, justice in Iran is often public. Hangings and lashings can occur in town and village squares. Crime remains rampant, though, especially in Iran's rapidly expanding cities. Many Iranians, for example, remove ignition wires to prevent automobile theft. Drug abuse is especially rampant. Opium was used widely in Iran into the mid-twentieth century, when the Shah grandfathered the practice out. Still, with the world's largest producer of opium next door in Afghanistan, Iran remains not only a transit country for the drug, but also a major consumer.*

The photo essay focuses on criminality in the Atabak neighborhood in the Khavaran section of Tehran. The area derives its name from the Khavaran Highway, a major thoroughfare in southeastern Tehran. Atabak represents the area south of Fedayin-i Islami Park, stretching south to Besat Boulevard. The area is poor and working class, a sharp contrast to affluent northern Tehran.

The photos depict the prevalence of the drug problem in Iran; many of the young men on display have drug paraphernalia before them. The display of a suspect with an illegal rifle suggests an undercurrent of violent crime on the streets of Tehran. One parent also displays a photograph of an apparently murdered child with a knife wound to his face.

*The preparation for the display—not only the ready supply of tomatoes and apples but also the banners which read (translated from Persian), “Gangsters and Hoodlums arrested in the Atabak neighborhood”—suggest a public relations effort to ameliorate public frustration by demonstrating progress against street crime. Nevertheless, persistent stories about drug busts suggest that the Iranian government is waging an uphill battle. **End FMSO Commentary (Rubin)***

Pillorying the Pushers in Tehran 31 July 2012

Source: “Gardardan-e ashrrar dar Khavaran.” (“Rounding Up Hoodlums in Khavaran,” Faruru.com. 31 July 2012. <http://tinyurl.com/8mkhdj6>)



Criminals on display in the Atabak neighborhood of Tehran. Photos by farau.com



گرداندن اشرا در خاوران (Rounding Up Hoodlums in Khavaran)

Neighborhood initiatives to deal with hoodlums were carried out by the police. In this operation, a number of thugs in the Tehran neighborhood of Atabak were arrested by the police. In Khavaran, those arrested were exposed to local residents... The arrested were displayed with the contraband they possessed, and were targeted with apples and tomatoes by locals.

FMSO Commentary: Since Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini led the Islamic Revolution in 1979, regime rhetoric has depicted the United States as a “Great Satan” and an enemy of Islam. In this context, the shifting depiction of America’s relationship to Islam, exemplified in a recent speech by Mehdi Mahdavi-Nezhad, a brigadier-general in the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, is important. Rather than depict the United States as opposed to Islam, he promotes an alternative conspiracy about America trying to hijack Islam.

Mahdavi-Nezhad’s comments might be a tacit acknowledgement that ordinary Iranians recognize that the United States is not opposed to Islam. The Iranian Diaspora in the United States numbers several hundred thousand at a minimum, even if the Iranian community’s claim that it numbers more than a million in Greater Los Angeles alone is an exaggeration. Most Iranian émigrés in the United States are Muslim, and many maintain contact with relatives back in Iran. With such links between the two communities, Iranian regime propaganda depicting the United States as anti-Islam has fallen increasingly on deaf ears.

Ordinary Iranians living in Iran often refer to “din-i khodiman,” “my personal religion,” in order to acknowledge and define their own religiosity in opposition to state involvement in religious practice. Mahdavi-Nezhad’s discussion of “American Islam” as a plot might represent a tactic to stigmatize those who do not practice Shi’ism in the manner Iranian hardline clerics would like. As the former paramilitary Basij chief inspector, Mahdavi-Nezhad has made a career not only of military command, but also of promoting religious rigidity.

The Enemy’s Strategy is to Promote ‘American Islam’

7 August 2012

Source: “Estrategi-ye dooshman tarvij Islam-i Amrika Ast” (“The Enemy’s Strategy is to Promote American Islam”), Fars News Agency. 7 August 2012 <http://www.farsnews.com/newstext.php?nn=13910517000127>

Logo of Army of the Guardians of the Islamic Revolution, via Wikipedia



استراتژی دشمن ترویج اسلام آمریکایی است (The Enemy’s Strategy is to Promote American Islam)

The Fars News Agency reports from Qom that at the third gathering of the international mosque day, which was held on the occasion of the day of Basij Mosque and localities in Hosseinya Sarollah, Mehdi Mahdavi-Nezhad said that those who claimed the country was under Shib Abi Talib circumstances [a reference to the hardship faces by the Prophet Muhammad’s clan during the siege of Mecca] did not know the Iranian nation. He said, “As the Supreme Leader said, we are not under Shib Abi Talib circumstances. And in the current situation, all authorities and the entire nation must obey the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution with pride.”

He said that it was necessary for the Front of the Just to confront the enemies and reiterated that the sound of the unbelievers’ bones breaking could be heard.

The Commander of the ‘Ali bin Abi Talib Unit [of the IRGC] added, “The Guards and the Basij are the stronghold in the defense of the province, and that is the reason why the enemies and the arrogance [The United States] have attacked.”

Mahdavi-Nezhad cautioned that propagation of American Islam is the enemy’s most important plan in the region today, and added that the promotion of American Islam failed in Iraq, but today the project is planned for Syria.

He added, “The enemy has changed its strategy, and is not seeking to destroy Islam, but it has put the promotion of American Islam at the top of its agenda. Currently, this plan is being executed in Turkey.”

The Commander of the ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib Unit, referring to the speech of the Supreme Leader, said that Iranians are on the side of the Just.

Continued: The Enemy's Strategy is to Promote American Islam

His reference to American attempts to impose "American Islam" in Iraq, Syria, and Turkey also acknowledges the battle of religious interpretation which is afoot throughout the Middle East, as ordinary citizens embrace religiosity, but not always in the manner in which the Iranian state approves. At the very least, his reference suggests that the Revolutionary Guards interpret the "Arab Spring" and Turkish debate not only in diplomatic and political terms, but also through a religious lens.

*Should Mahdavi-Nezhad's reference to "American Islam" become a staple of the regime's rhetoric, it might presage a regime attempt to dissuade the dialogue of civilizations initiated by former President Mohammad Khatami and continued by the United Nations. The State Department has often promoted dialogue by sponsoring informal dialogue between American religious leaders and their Middle Eastern counterparts; Mahdavi-Nezhad's castigation of American Islam as some sort of plot might signal that Iranian clerics participating in any future dialogue could face retribution at home. **End FMSO Commentary (Rubin)***

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FMSO Commentary: This article by Sedat Laçiner, a Turkish academic specializing in the Middle East and international security, argues that Turkey must consider its lessons learned in Iraq and not make the same mistakes in Syria. Specifically, he claims that Turkey overestimated its importance and influence in Iraq, and that it should be more realistic about its power to affect Syria. Another lesson learned, he points out, is that military action alone is not sufficient, and that intelligence forces must be utilized if Turkey wants to protect its interests in Syria. He claims that Turkey must transform its intelligence agency into a more efficient organization that is able to quickly conduct covert operations and develop alliances with local actors.

The article is a veiled criticism of Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan's recent statements regarding a Turkish military intervention into northern Syria. Erdoğan said that it would be Turkey's "natural right to intervene" in Syria if the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK- a Kurdish separatist terrorist group that launches attacks on Turkey) finds a safe haven for itself in an autonomous Kurdish region there. Turkey had adopted a similar stance for northern Iraq in 2003, but the author points out that it did not work. He argues that Turkey cannot make similar empty threats regarding Syria if it does not have the muscle to back them up, warning that this approach is counterproductive to Turkey's goals. Many others in the Turkish press have echoed this view, arguing that this kind of rhetoric alienates both Turkish and Syrian Kurds.

The issue is a sensitive one for Turkey. The country has a long history with the PKK, in which almost 40,000 lives have been lost over the last 30 years, and the number of casualties continues to increase by the day. The PKK is currently based in the Qandil Mountains of northern Iraq, which it uses as a

Debating What to Do about Syria: Applying Lessons Learned from Iraq

Source: Sedat Laçiner, "Türkiye, Suriye'de Ne Yapabilir? (What Can Turkey Do in Syria?)" Stargazete.com, July 29, 2012, <http://www.stargazete.com/yazar/sedat-laciner/politika/turkiye-suriyede-ne-yapabilir/yazi-650298>

29 July 2012



The PKK and PJAK are based in the Qandil Mountains in northern Iraq, which border Turkey, Iran and Iraq. Map: Kurdish Inhabited Area [Public Domain], via CIA

Türkiye, Suriye'de Ne Yapabilir? (What Can Turkey Do in Syria?)

Turkey announced that it would not let things in Syria get out of hand. In particular, it expressed that it would prevent the establishment of PKK terror camps in the northern part of the country, and the separation of a related [Kurdish] structure from Syria. These are Turkey's red lines in Syria.

If you will remember, Turkey had red lines in Iraq too, but all of those lines were crossed and Turkey was unable to do anything. It couldn't do anything, because the U.S. (and Israel) did not allow it. Secondly, Turkey's 'hard power' in Northern Iraq was clumsy and insufficient. It had difficulty using its 'soft power' because it did not have the infrastructure to back it up. This was made it even harder by the fact that the government in Ankara was fragmented and there were a lot of tensions between the government and military.

In this framework, the first thing we need to do regarding Syria is to learn from our experience in Iraq. If you ask what these lessons were, first you have to know that you can't protect your red lines with rhetoric alone. So, Turkey needs to make everyone clearly sense what it will and will not allow in Syria. This is seldom done by words alone. In short, harsh rhetoric will not only make it harder to reach your goals, it can turn into a legitimizing tool for your enemy.

Is our muscle strong?

The second thing is that if you have military and political goals in the area, you have to have military and political tools also. Otherwise, you'll be at the mercy of other actors (like the U.S.). This is exactly what happened in Iraq. In 2003, when the Turkish Parliament

Continued: What Can Turkey Do in Syria?

stronghold to launch attacks on Turkey. Ankara is concerned that the group is exploiting the chaos in Syria to expand its base and influence into Syria as well. The issue of an autonomous Kurdish region in the northern part of Syria (where most Syrian Kurds live) is also of concern. In addition to being a potential base for the PKK, Turkey fears that such a scenario would embolden calls for Kurdish autonomy in Turkey or lead to similar territorial claims among its own Kurds. Turkey views this as a threat to its territorial integrity, given that it is home to almost half of the total Kurdish population of 30 million. End FMSO Commentary (Kaya)

refused the ‘motion’ [to allow U.S. troops to pass through Turkey to enter Iraq], the U.S. did not allow Turkey to enter Iraq, and Turkey was unable to do anything. So, this is a matter of power. If your muscle is not strong, you cannot sit down for a wrestling match. If you do, you will be beat.

If you are adopting an adversarial rhetoric against another country’s government, your actions must be consistent with that rhetoric. For example, you would have to support anti-regime forces with weapons and financial resources. In addition, you would try to organize the ethnic, sectarian and political groups in that country in accordance with your goals. Most importantly, at least one of these groups would be on your side, and consider your interests to be theirs. In this framework, Turkey must question itself on whether it has fulfilled these conditions in Syria.

The Free Syrian Army says it is not receiving enough support from Turkey. It is also clear that in Syria, where the PKK has comfortably established itself, there are no groups to defend Turkey’s interests. But Syria is one of the countries in the Arab world whose population has a favorable view. In other words, the conditions are favorable. So, what needs to be done is to utilize our National Intelligence Agency and other supporting groups. Because in this day and age, the success that tanks and warplanes will produce is very limited. These can be supporting tools at best.

The National Intelligence Agency (MIT) must change

Speaking of MIT, it would be wise to remind our readers that, one of the most important reasons for our failure in Northern Iraq was our reliance on the military (instead of MIT) for all activities. The military was unable to gather intelligence, and it was unsuccessful in conducting covert operations. On the other hand, all MIT did was gather information on PKK activities. MIT, who managed to

even take pictures of the organization’s top leaders, did not think to neutralize them. If we make the same mistake in Syria, we will take many pictures of the PKK, but then ask permission from other countries for our army to enter Syria. Thus, MIT must move towards becoming an organization that can quickly conduct covert operations and develop alliances with local actors. If it cannot do these, then we might as well forget about Syria.

There are many things to be said about what needs to be done in Syria. But the most important thing is to act according to the tools and infrastructure available to you; and not overestimate your power. Otherwise, you will invite the worst disasters.

RELATED ARTICLE

The Turkish-American Crisis: An Analysis of March 1, 2003,”

Published in *Military Review*, July-August 2011, <http://fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/documents/The-Turkish-American-Crisis.pdf>



FMSO Commentary: *In the last few months the outlawed separatist Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) has increased its violence in Turkey to unprecedented levels. The article attached by Fikret Bila, an expert on the PKK and the Turkish military, discusses the group's most recent high-profile act, involving the 12 August kidnapping of a respected member of the Turkish parliament, who is a pro-Kurdish activist and lawyer. The author argues that the PKK's ultimate goal is to undermine the Turkish government's sovereignty.*

The kidnapping occurred in southeastern Turkey on the Iraqi border, amid one of the fiercest clashes between the PKK and the Turkish army. The Turkish military launched a large-scale operation in Hakkari's Şemdinli district in late July after PKK terrorists blocked a village road in the region and interrogated villagers. Army forces fought the PKK with helicopters and fighter jets in Şemdinli's mountainous terrain. Throughout the summer the PKK has targeted army posts in southeast Turkey and killed dozens of Turkish soldiers. The group also conducted an attack in the Aegean city of Izmir, where they detonated an explosive as a military bus was passing on a road, on 9 August.

*The kidnapped parliamentarian was released on 14 August. Turkish analysts assess that the group has been emboldened by the changes in Syria, which have enabled a PKK-affiliated group (Democratic Union Party, known by its Kurdish initials PYD) to gain control of Syrian Kurdish towns along the Turkish border. Security analysts were also predicting that August would be a bloody month because 15 August 2012 marks the 28th anniversary of the PKK's battle for an independent Kurdish state that would unite the 30 million Kurds who are spread across Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. **End FMSO Commentary (Kaya)***

The PKK Escalates the Violence to Unprecedented Levels

Source: Fikret Bila, "PKK'nın Hedefi Egemenlik (The PKK's Goal is Sovereignty)," Milliyet.com, August 14, 2012, <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/pkk-nin-hedefi-egemenlik/siyaset/siyasyazardetay/14.08.2012/1580473/default.htm>

14 August 2012



PKK Militant near the edge of this dust-colored mountain village keeps sentry along a dry, rock-strewn creek bed. Photo by James (Jim) Gordon from Manhattan, New York City, USA [CC-BY-2.5 (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.5>)], via Wikimedia Commons

PKK'nın Hedefi Egemenlik (The PKK's Goal is Sovereignty)

By kidnapping the Member of Parliament from Tunceli Hüseyin Aygün (of the Republican People's Party, or CHP), the PKK raised the threat bar a little further. The terror organization kidnapped a member of parliament for the first time. The message that this is meant to send is that nobody in Turkey is safe, and that the terror organization has the power, nerve and audacity to kidnap a parliamentarian.

Symbols of sovereignty

In the past, the PKK had kidnapped soldiers, businessmen, teachers, doctors, mayors, municipality leaders, city council leaders and conducted systematic attacks on the country's symbols of sovereignty. But this time, it kidnapped a member of parliament, thus conducted a daring attack on the Turkish Grand National Assembly (Turkish Parliament), which represents national will.

One of the main goals of the PKK is to hurt the Republic of Turkey's sovereignty. They want to establish a parallel authority to the government's authority in the Southeast, and keep the public under the pressure of "two sovereignties". The Şemdinli attack also aims to eliminate government sovereignty and show that the organization is in control instead. The targeting of public offices, efforts to take down the Turkish flag and raise PKK symbols, stopping vehicles and conducting searches, spreading rumors that they now control municipality governments- these are all aimed to conduct a fight over sovereignty.

The concept of apprehension

Like its activities, the PKK also uses discourse to give the impression of sovereignty. It is developing a discourse that it has established an alternative government in the Southeast. This can be seen in particular in the activities of the KCK [the PKK's urban wing]. Every opportunity it gets, the KCK emphasizes that they have established a legislative branch, an

Continued: The PKK's Goal is Sovereignty

executive branch, courts, armed forces, a tax department, customs department and a conscription office. It is interesting that the PKK is using the same kinds of concepts in its announcements regarding the kidnapping of CHP Parliamentarian Hüseyin Aygün.

In its announcement on Hüseyin Aygün, the PKK states that he was “apprehended.” The concept of apprehension is a legal term used by the government. It is carried out by law enforcement based on a legal request, and is followed by an investigation and prosecution. By saying that they have “apprehended a Member of Parliament”, the PKK is using a concept that is used by the judicial branch of the government and alluding to the processes that follow, sending a message of sovereignty. In fact, in yesterday’s statement, they said, “Hüseyin Aygün will be released shortly after the necessary administrative and legal processes are completed.” The terms, “administrative and legal processes”, their establishing of courts and deciding on penalties are all aimed at sending this message.

With its most recent attacks, the PKK is trying to show both the Turkish and the international public that Ankara does not have sovereignty over the entire country.

National problem

Terror is a national problem. And it can only be dealt with through national policies.

Turkey is a country that has lost a lot of blood and resources to fighting separatist terror for 30 years. The PKK is a terror organization that threatens Turkey’s territorial and national integrity. In light of this fact, all parties in power or in the opposition, who care about democracy and national unity, should work to find a comprehensive political agreement to fight terror in a spirit of cooperation.

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: *The news article attached discusses Iran's Chief of the General Staff Hasan Firuzabadi's recent comments on Turkey, pointing out that the General referred to Turkey as a "friend and supporter" in his Ramadan message.*

This is a significant departure from recent comments by other Iranian officials, including threats to "crash and burn" Turkey and make it Iran's first target in the event of an attack on Iran. Bilateral relations between Turkey and Iran have changed significantly over the last two years. As recently as early 2011 the two countries were friendly neighbors in agreement on many issues, and their relationship had reached the level of strategic partners. However, since the Arab Spring hit Syria in March 2011, Turkey and Iran have witnessed diverging opinions and positions, moving to a more confrontational ground and being openly at odds over several issues. The most important reasons for this are the regional and international systemic changes that are taking place. These include ending up on different sides in the aftermath of the Arab Spring, particularly regarding Syria; Turkey's agreement to host a NATO defense shield radar on its territory; and a rising competition for influence in the Middle East.

*The message was sent to the so-called "Sunni Triangle" of Turkey, Qatar and Saudi Arabia. Iranian leaders are concerned by these countries' support for Syrian rebels, and fear that as the Assad regime gets weaker, Iran's regional influence will become limited. **End FMSO Commentary (Kaya)***

Iran's Ramadan Message to Turkey

15 August 2012

Source: "Iran Genelkurmay Başkanı'ndan Ankara'ya Mesaj (Message from Iran's Top General to Ankara)," CNNTurk.com, August 15, 2012, <http://www.cnnurk.com/2012/dunya/08/15/iran-genelkurmay.baskanindan.ankaraya.mesaj/673106.0/index.html>



Iran's Chief of the General staff Hasan Firuzabadi. Photo by Iranian Students News Agency, via <http://isna.ir>

Iran Genelkurmay Başkanı'ndan Ankara'ya Mesaj **(Message from Iran's Top General to Ankara)**

Iran's Chief of Staff General Hasan Firuzabadi said that Turkey was a friend and supporter of Iran, claiming that differences of opinion and misunderstandings do not affect good relations between neighbors. In an interview to the Fars News Agency, General Firuzabadi clarified his recent comments on Qatar, Turkey and Saudi Arabia.

It is noteworthy that Firuzabadi referred to neighboring countries as "our friends," saying "Iran has good relations with all its neighbors. Some disagreements and misunderstandings will not affect good relations." Firuzabadi, who discussed that Iran has a historical relationship with Turkey said that Turkey is Iran's friend and supporter.

Firuzabadi said that Iran had many things in common with Muslim countries, and that this formed the basis for a united Islamic world, particularly with Turkey. Firuzabadi said that conflicts among Muslim nations were against the Qur'an, and claimed, "Our enemies are the U.S., U.K. and the Zionist Israel regime. We have ideological and fundamental disagreements with them. They are constantly conspiring against Islam and Muslims. We, as Muslims, must be alert."

Firuzabadi, who said that complicit enemies are targeting Islam through cultural, political, military and economic attacks, said the most important thing was to resist these attacks, saying, "I send greetings to my brothers in Turkey, Qatar and Saudi Arabia, in honor of the bright and holy Ramadan days; and I am proud to share our common Islamic values with them."

FMSO Commentary: *Is al-Qaeda gaining a foothold in Syria and is this of concern? It all depends, of course, on what we mean by “al-Qaeda.” The following article, despite its faults, provides one perspective on this important issue. The article comes from al-Sharq, a fairly new Saudi Arabian newspaper (not to be confused with the established and influential al-Sharq al-Awsat, which generally toes Saudi government line).*

The article makes several important points, including the significance of potential competition among jihadi groups and the adoption by some of a more moderate tone. Some of the article’s claims are disputable, for instance, the number of fighters it claims are in Syria (at the time of writing) or the importance of the “Abdullah Azzam Brigades.” But accuracy, when it comes to the Syrian conflict, is in the eye of the beholder. Summoning the necessary data to back up the central claims of one’s narrative often entails little more than citing anonymous officials or purported eyewitnesses.

*Are the al-Qaeda battalions within the Free Syrian Army those waving the black flag identified with al-Qaeda in Iraq, or should the more visible and less crude flag used by Jabhat al-Nusra, both in its black-background and white-background variants, also be considered an open declaration of global Salafi jihadi sympathies? Should the strategic outline proposed by some Syrian and Lebanese jihadi groups, away from the gore and indiscriminate violence of Iraq and toward a strategy that incorporates local public opinion, be considered a genuine transformation or simply a strategic ploy? These are just two of the many questions that require analytical clarity if there is to be a discussion on the implications of al-Qaeda presence in Syria. **End FMSO Commentary (Winter)***

Dreams of a Levantine Emirate?

20 July 2012

Source: “Al-Qaeda” Wings Battle for Control over the “Levant Emirate,” al-Sharq (Saudi Arabia).
<http://www.alsharq.net.sa/2012/07/20/403170>



Al-Qaeda fighters raise their flag after crossing the Turkey border (center of photo). Photo via <http://www.alsharq.net>

أجنحة «القاعدة» تتصارع للسيطرة على «إمارة الشام» (“Al-Qaeda” Wings Battle for Control over the “Levant Emirate”)

The al-Qaeda terrorist group publicly announced its presence and open participation in the battles in Syria yesterday during the seizure of the Bab al-Hawa border crossing linking Syria and Turkey. The group announced its presence when the fighters who took over the crossing raised al-Qaeda’s black flag. Before destroying the picture of former Syrian president Hafez al-Assad, one of them confirmed that the crossing had been seized by the “Revolutionary Shield Brigade/Sarmada Freedom Fighters Battalion” and the Mujahideen Shura Council.

Six Thousand al-Qaeda Members in Syria

A Jordanian security source told al-Sharq that Jordanian security services estimated that more than six thousand al-Qaeda fighters had entered Syria over the past months, mostly since last November. The security source said most had entered Syria through Iraq and Turkey, with al-Qaeda presence strongest in northern and eastern Syria. The source added that Syria’s south had no prior al-Qaeda presence. According to the source, most fighters are non-Syrian Arabs that have fought in Iraq and other places. He added that Jordanian security was monitoring the entry of large numbers of Salafi Jihadist to Syria – especially from Libya – through both Turkey and Lebanon.

Competition between al-Qaeda Wings

These developments come on the heels of an audio recording from the Abdullah Azzam Brigades, the latest version of al-Qaeda. It contains a message from Majid al-Majid, the group’s recently named leader in the Levant and the most prominent wanted man to have left the Ain al-Hilweh camp. The recording begins by laying out the extremist group’s general policy in response to developments on the ground. Its contents betray a fierce competition between the Abdullah Azzam Brigades and the Jabhat al-Nusrah. These two groups, which did not have a foothold before the revolution, have now become a reality in Syria. Their first manifestation emerged with the appearance of what became known as the

Continued: “Al-Qaeda” Wings Battle for Control over the “Levant Emirate

Jabhat al-Nusrah in the Levant, which has claimed most bombings in Syria since the start of events. Members of this jihadi group, whose leader is known as “al-Fatih Abu Muhammad al-Julani,” “have come from nearby jihadi areas to overthrow the oppressive Alawi regime.” Despite questions about the group’s genuine jihadism and the Syrian regime’s role in creating it, it gained legitimacy in jihadi circles after publishing videos claiming attacks on jihadi websites used by al-Qaeda (al-Fajr Media Center, Shumukh al-Islam Network and others). In addition, jihadis have provided reliable information claiming that al-Qaeda has endorsed the emerging Jabhat al-Nusrah.

Improving al-Qaeda’s Image

After information Jabhat al-Nusrah suffered repeated blows at the hands of Syrian intelligence, the Abdullah Azzam Brigades arose in the Levant for the first time. This group is thought to be a revamped version of al-Qaeda, reflecting the group’s new concern with public opinion in a bid to improve its tarnished image. Also new is the handover of leadership to Saudi Arabian national Majid Mohammed al-Majid (b. 1973), who was named leader of the group in the Levant. He is among the leaders of the fundamentalist group that left the Ain al-Hilweh Camp headed toward Syria in the middle of last month. The appearance of the Abdullah Azzam Brigades in Syria is different to that of the Lebanese branch known as the Ziyad Jarrah Battallions. The statement titled “Levant Spring,” which was published on jihadi and news websites, is read by Majid al-Majid, the most wanted man on what is known as Saudi Arabia’s “List of 85” Most Wanted. In it he speaks in an unusual way of the group’s view of the ongoing conflict in Syria, highlighting an initial tactical shift by calling for “avoiding car bombs and explosive belts in cities even if the goal is an important one, because safeguarding the revolution’s popular appeal is the most important and enduring work.” He also emphasized that “important partial gains can be foregone when they affect the intent of the operations, the basis of their strength and the reasons for its spreading.”

Competition for the Levantine Emirate

This fundamental transformation appears to be a tactic to get around the Jabhat al-Nusrah, which has relied on and claimed bombings in Syria. In this context, jihadi sources speak of a fierce competition taking place behind closed doors among fundamentalist organizations, specifically as Jabhat al-Nusrah, which was unaffiliated with al-Qaeda initially, seems to have been endorsed by several of the group’s sheikhs. The same sources note that leaders in the Abdullah Azzam Brigades have seen the rug pulled out from under them and that one of their leaders was prepared to assume the leadership of the Levantine Emirate. This led the Brigades to quickly mobilize and indirectly present themselves as a preferable alternative to Jabhat al-Nusrah. They took advantage of that group’s temporary weakness by addressing the Syrian people as follows: “Oh our people of Syria, you have been guided to the path of victory, you are the heart of the rebirth of the Umma to save it, you are the land of jihad and the home of epic fights related by Mohammed.” The current leader also called for not targeting neutral civilians, whether Christian, Druze or otherwise among those captured if they did not join the regime in the fighting or expressed support for the uprising.

Clashes in Tal Kalkh and Camps in Idlib

Al-Qaeda’s first public appearance came in the Syrian area of Tal Kalkh, in the middle of the country, when disagreements erupted among members of the Free Syrian Army and those of the organization. Members of al-Qaeda wished to declare the region an Islamic Emirate headed by the Lebanese Walid al-Bustani, the former leader in Fatah al-Islam. The ensuing clashes resulted in 34 deaths. Al-Sharq reported on this in an article dated April 8, 2012; it also reported on al-Qaeda camps in Idlib (northern Syrian), where an activist in Idlib told al-Sharq that al-Qaeda had established at least one camp holding fighters of various nationalities near the village of al-Tamanan’a. He confirmed having visited the camp and met with a military and political leader who told him that the goal of al-Qaeda’s presence there was not only the overthrow of the Syrian regime but also the building of an Islamic State that would not depend on donations. In an article published last June 29, the activist in Idlib, who remained anonymous, said that near Idlib there is a notable deployment of the “Ahrar al-Sham,” a fundamentalist group calling for a tax to be imposed on other religions and which considers religious minorities to be apostates.

FMSO Commentary: The following article, taken from the website of a prominent Egyptian international affairs journal, provides a good summary of Egyptian security considerations in the Sinai. A consensus exists that a pure security response will not resolve the situation and could, in fact, exacerbate it. There is evidence to back this claim: Egypt's current security operation in the Sinai comes almost exactly one year after "Operation Eagle," whose stated goal was also to purge the area of extremists.

The call for a comprehensive policy to address the situation in the Sinai goes beyond dealing with the genuine grievances of Sinai residents to also include a recalibration of Egypt's relations with Israel. All of Egypt's defeated presidential candidates, along with much of its media, have called for, at minimum, the reconsideration of certain stipulations in the Camp David Accords, specifically those governing Egyptian military deployments in the center and east of the peninsula (see Operational Environment Watch #5, p. 7: <http://fms.leavenworth.army.mil/Archives/GSW/201109.pdf>).

Developments in the Sinai affect not only Egyptian domestic politics but also those of the Palestinian Territories. In these volatile times they have the potential to shake the relations of Arab states and Israel. Furthermore, the appearance of takfiri and jihadi networks in the Sinai could be symptomatic of a broader surfacing of battle-ready groups intent on openly establishing control over certain areas, as we have seen occurring clearly in both Yemen and Syria. **End FMSO Commentary (Winter)**

Dusting off Camp David?



6 August 2012

Source: Mohammed Abdullah Yunis. "Rafah Attack: Egypt's Choices for Dealing with the Security Problem in the Sinai," al-Siyassa al-Dawliyya. <http://tinyurl.com/8c7tl5n>

Gaza Strip map by Gringer, 8 January 2009 [CC-BY-SA-3.0 (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0>)], via Wikimedia Commons

هجوم رفح: خيارات مصر للتعامل مع معضلة الأمن في سيناء

Rafah Attack: Egypt's Choices for Dealing with the Security Problem in the Sinai

The attack against the Egyptian border police in Rafah, near the Kerem Shalom crossing, which killed 16 members of the armed forces, is an unexpected development in the security situation in the northern Sinai, along Egypt's border with Gaza and Israel. A look at how Sinai's security conditions have deteriorated since the January 25 Revolution reveals a multi-dimensional security problem. Its first indications began appearing right before the breakdown of the former authoritarian regime, as the state withdrew due to the growing internal crises. Added to this was competition between several groups during the transitional period and the associated security breaches and smuggling of weapons across Egypt's western border.

A. Indicators of an Escalating Security Problem

Egypt's security problem on its eastern border is linked to the complexities of Egypt's relations with the parties concerned with securing the border. This is especially true given the structural changes undergone by the Egyptian political system since January 25. Since then there have been successive crises in Egypt-Israel relations, beginning with the killing

Continued: Egypt's Choices for Dealing with the Security Problem in the Sinai

of Egyptian soldiers on the border in August 2011, followed by continual tensions due to weapons smuggling across the tunnels between Egypt and the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip and ending with Egypt's growing relationship with Hamas and the opportunities granted to residents of Gaza to overcome the Israeli siege that has been imposed on them for years. This is especially true since President Mohammed Morsi of the Muslim Brotherhood took office. In this context, the principal indicators of the security problem in the Sinai are as follows:

1. Upsurge in armed attacks on Egyptian border guards in Northern Sinai. There have been over 28 attacks in less than a few months. These include more than one organized attack on police stations. The intensity of the attacks and the type of weapons used demonstrate a qualitative transformation that increases the danger to the fragile security situation in the border region.
2. Repeated rocket attacks launched from Egyptian territory against targets in the Sinai and the Egypt-Israel border. Most prominent among them are Grad rockets that fell in the area of al-Reisan in central Sinai this past July. Confirming the absence of security, the perpetrators and planners of this launching were never discovered. Many groups have begun to increase their incursions across the border between Egypt and the Gaza Strip.
3. The continued bombings of the gas pipeline to Israel. No single group has taken responsibility for the repeated attacks, due to the complexities of the security situation and the spread of heavy weapons among residents of the Sinai. There have also been repeated clashes with security forces, making it unrealistic to identify a single group to hold responsible, given the clear fluidity of the security situation.
4. The growth of smuggling, particularly of weapons, across the border between Egypt and the Gaza Strip. Security threats have also increased since the revolution, especially as terrorist organizations linked to al-Qaeda, such as "Ansar al-Jihad," escalate activities. As a result, the Israeli Army has taken exceptional security measures along the border with Egypt, including increasing troop numbers, setting up a military base near the border, and accelerating construction of a 213-kilometer long border fence with Egypt, starting at the Kerem Shalom crossing in the Gaza Strip and ending west of the city of Eliat in Israel's far south.

B. Dimensions of the Security Problem in the Sinai

The timing of the recent attacks raises several questions linked to Egypt's political transformation and the reconsideration of Egypt-Israel relations following the inauguration of President Morsi. The most prominent indicator of this is the denial by the presidency and the Muslim Brotherhood of having sent a response to the letter of congratulations sent by Israeli President Shimon Peres to his Egyptian counterpart, despite the fact that Israeli media published a copy of the letter. This confirms that the collapse of the former regime requires a readiness for the decline and even collapse of the strategic alliance with Israel, which earned Israel stable security on the eastern front of a type it had not enjoyed since its founding. The most important dimensions of the renewed debate regarding the security problem in the Sinai are as follows:

1. Shift in the Institution of the Presidency

Morsi's election to the presidency indicates a transformation in Egypt's foreign policy, especially regarding relations with Israel and Hamas as well as Egypt's mediation of Palestinian reconciliation. Furthermore, it points to a review of the fundamentals of Egypt's Middle East policy and the likelihood or rapprochement with several regional players, especially Iran and Turkey. This represents a regional threat to Israel, especially given indicators of declining Egypt-Israel relations as a reflection of the popular stance rejecting the normalization of relations between the two countries pursued by the former regime.

2. The formation of a new government

The attack also took place a short time after the formation of a new Egyptian government led by Prime Minister Hisham Kandil and after the new interior minister took over his duties. It came on the heels of an attack by outlaws on the Nile Towers in downtown Cairo, itself an indicator of security gaps in the city center. The masterminds of the attack are taking advantage of a chaotic period following the transfer of power, especially given the delay of over 30 days in forming the government following Morsi's accession to office. There was also broad controversy preceding and during the formation of the government, diverting attention from the deteriorating security situation and Israeli warnings of an impending attack in Sinai. The attack comes just one day after President Morsi visited the Second Field Army, which was not random but rather carried a specific message to the presidency and the military during a difficult period of the transition.

3. Israeli Border Preparedness

Israeli security preparations have kept pace with the escalating security threats emanating from the Egypt-Israel border. Several Israeli

Continued: Egypt's Choices for Dealing with the Security Problem in the Sinai

analyses have stated that Israeli options for dealing with the fluidity of security in the Sinai are limited. One of the most important studies was done by Efraim Inbar, director of the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies at the Bar-Ilan University. It notes that Israel may be forced to create a buffer zone within Sinai if the security situation continues to deteriorate and the new Egyptian authorities fail to take stronger pre-emptive measures. This will increase pressure on Egypt to bring about radical changes in its security deployments in Sinai.

C. Egyptian Options for Dealing with the Security Problem:

Restoring security in the Sinai Peninsula can no longer be postponed given the increased dimensions and implications of security threats there, which are impacting Egyptian national security and its international obligations. This was made apparent by the swift security response to the attacks, the closing of the Gaza crossing and the increased security presence along the border. The security problem, however, goes beyond a security response and requires an examination of more sustainable options for dealing with the roots of the problem and its complicated dimensions. Among the best options available to Egyptian decision makers are:

1. Change the way of dealing with security threats:

This is the most important option to move from dealing with security control to dealing with the underlying causes behind the increase in attacks. The most important of these is to stop the smuggling of weapons across the Egypt-Libya border, as this has produced a qualitative change in insurgent attacks on the Egyptian security forces. It also includes strengthening security deployments on the border with Gaza and exercising full control over the tunnels, making Rafah the only route for travelers to cross as well as aid for the Gaza Strip. Additionally, it requires dealing with the presence of jihadist groups in the Sinai and the confiscation of weapons.

2. Resolve the issues and demands of the Sinai Bedouins:

This mechanism is no less important than the preceding one, as a full security deployment in the Sinai requires comprehensive reconciliation with the Bedouin, to cover all issues that inflame their relations with the state and which following the revolution created a crisis for all parties that may be a geostrategic threat. The most important issues include detainees, the demand for social and economic development and employment in state institutions, an end to lawlessness, the resolution of land ownership disputes, and other issues that would eliminate the hostility resulting from grievances accumulated against the former regime.

3. Enhancing Security Cooperation with Hamas to control the borders:

This option entails the opening of an ongoing dialogue between Egyptian authorities and Hamas to control the border, deal with criminals in Gaza and Sinai, and end cross-border smuggling via close security coordination supervised by the presidency. In exchange, the Rafah crossing will be kept open, destroying the foundations of the Gaza blockade and reducing dependence on the tunnels, which have become a central threat to Egyptian national security.

4. Review the Camp David security commitments:

Egyptian authorities may also resort to communicating with the Israeli side regarding the need to review the security commitments stipulated by the Camp David Accords, particularly the redeployment of Egyptian forces in sectors of limited armaments, especially sectors B and C. The Israeli government is likely to reject these requests in light of their fears of the Muslim Brotherhood's political discourse and the group's close ties with Hamas in the Gaza Strip. Israel may, however, accept a strengthening of security and military cooperation with the Egyptian armed forces to secure the border and neutralize security threats, considering it one of the dimensions of strengthening security relations. The Egyptian presidency itself may not accept this, given the political considerations mentioned above.

FMSO Commentary: Recent reports of cross-border clashes between Syrian and Jordanian troops, along with increased refugee flows and the occasional newsworthy defection, are only part of the story in the increasingly tangled dynamics between Syria and Jordan. The government of Bashar al-Assad seems intent on linking the fates of its smaller neighbors to its own (most acutely in the case of Lebanon), which means that the the dynamics between the crumbling Syrian regime and its seemingly stable Jordanian counterpart are likely to enter a delicate phase. As the following article details, Jordan's dilemma of balancing between international and local considerations in its Syria policy is begetting a policy of "wait and see," as much due to Syria's troubles as to domestic political disarray.

Why was there no Arab Spring in Jordan? At the crudest level, Gulf money bought it respite. For Jordanian opposition figures, this is bad policy that simply delays the inevitable; partial reforms, of the type that took place in Morocco, are seen as a superior measure with low costs to the monarchy. There are risks, though, but the longer the monarchy waits, the logic goes, the riskier even modest reforms become.

Although international considerations have pushed Jordan's Syria policy solidly into the anti-Assad camp, fears of Syrian government retribution, along with the growing influence of Sunni fundamentalism, temper the Jordanian position. Even though Syria has descended into civil war and Lebanon's sectarian cauldron is ready to overflow, Jordan's policy of ambiguity toward its northern neighbor appears to be working. Soon, though, greater clarity may be required. **End FMSO Commentary (Winter)**

Jordan Holds its Breath

7 August 2012

Source: Bassam Badarin. "Jordan's Decision Makers March to Different Beats on Whether or not to join the Overthrow Assad Camp," al-Quds al-Arabi <http://alquds.co.uk/index.asp?fname=data\2012\08\08-07\07qpt957.htm>



Minister of State for Media Affairs and Communications and Government Spokesperson Samih Maaytah speaks at a press conference. Photo via <http://www.jordanembassyus.org>

ايقاع متعاكس داخل مؤسسة القرار الاردنية بخصوص اللاحق بمعسكر 'اسقاط' بشار الاسد (Jordan's Decision Makers March to Different Beats on Whether or not to join the Overthrow Assad Camp)

Jordan's strategic options regarding Syria may soon narrow into a "lack of vision" if the policy of monitoring, waiting and working on a day-to-day, compartmentalized basis according to developments on the ground continues.

Even though in terms of politics, security and (to some extent) the border Jordan has moved in a direction opposed to President Bashar al-Assad, it has at the same time tried to show it retains some "common sense" and is not interested in running to embrace the Saudi and Qatari scenario, which puts strong pressure on the financial nerve of Jordan's economy.

Any observer can sense this in the comments of Information Minister Samih Maaytah, who struggled to articulate clearly the public position of the monarch King Abdullah II, qualifying the king's talk of a transitional phase and civil war in Syria as not a "position" as much as an expression of concern.

Maaytah's clarification is in fact indicative of the contradictions and lack of rhythmical uniformity within Jordan's decision-making institutions. These institutions, up to this point, do not appear unified in their interpretation of the Syrian situation. The government, for instance, is attempting to blunt the sharpness with which the palace speaks to the American media.

In practice, Jordan's decision-making bodies lack unity regarding other domestic issues of less importance, such as the elections and their law, social violence, soft or hard security.

Continued: Jordan's Decision Makers March to Different Beats on Whether or not to join the Overthrow Assad Camp

So why should it be unified regarding a file as complicated and open to possibilities as hefty as the Syrian one? Foreign Minister Nasser Judeh, for instance, began dealing with the issue in his own way by accompanying the ambassadors of ten foreign countries, naturally donor countries, to the opening of the Zaatari camp, the first one officially dedicated to Syrian refugees. The foreign minister portrayed it to his ambassador guests as a place that will require long-term spending. On the border, commenting on the defection of Syrian Prime Minister Riyadh Hijab, Interior Minister Ghalib al-Zu'abi said: "Our borders are open and will remain that way."

In practice, the cabinet divides up responsibilities. The interior minister will keep the borders open, the foreign minister will arrange donations for the camps and the information minister denies the events that the media speaks of and lightens Jordan's clear provocations against the Bashar al-Assad regime, at least in front of the media. The battle against Bashar al-Assad is not out in the open but it does exist, something at least alluded to by Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh during several Ramadan sessions.

Thus a seasoned politician such as Dr. Mamdouh Abbadi proposes that the project to topple the current Syrian regime is not in his country's interests as it could strengthen Jordan's political Islamist movement. At the same time, he acknowledges the existence of "vital interests" for Jordan that push the kingdom to continue trying to deal with all parties, whether or not the fall of the Syrian regime is desired.

The meaning of this is clear for political activist Emad Dabs. The Jordanian monarch is forced to address American media in a language that supports the "peaceful transition of power in Damascus," given that the Jordanian treasury's financial condition does not allow for words favoring Bashar al-Assad, especially with western media. Amman's vital interests call for not angering several capitals, headed by Washington and followed by Doha and Riyadh. The financial carrot is there, but the "Arab Spring" stick is also present. At least that is what is said in the depths of Jordan's decision-making corridors.

Prime Minister Tarawneh said in one of his sessions, "We cannot anger al-Assad's enemies, that is true, but at this stage we cannot risk angering al-Assad himself as it may come back to haunt us. The man is wounded and violent and may do anything to harm us; if he decides to do so, he could." Speaking to BBC, Maaytah said: "We speak of concerns rather than of a Jordanian position. Our priorities are clear, which are to protect Jordan, Jordanians and our borders."

In the meantime, a dangerous inference can be drawn in the surprising awakening that swept over US Ambassador in Amman Stuart Jones, who tagged alongside minister Judeh during the tour of the Zaatari camp. Before that, he expressed strange and

unprecedented praise for the gradual reform program in Amman, which the opposition rejects.

The most popular interpretation of this awakening is related to Washington's temporary delay or overlooking of the Jordanian Spring, in accordance with the priorities of this stage. The current aim is for a "greater Jordanian role" against Bashar al-Assad; down the road, the project to overthrow al-Assad may require direct clashes with Jordan, as occurred in the war to overthrow Saddam Hussein.

Here, the leaks of activists close to the American ambassador state that the Jordanian monarch promised Washington a comprehensive reform program that will surprise it and everyone, but asked for more time due to regional tensions and the tribal mobilization aimed at weakening the regime.

The difference between the story of Saddam Hussein and that of Bashar al-Assad for Jordan today is clear. In the case of Saddam Hussein, as with Qaddafi, everyone was against him. Bashar al-Assad, on the other hand, has support from regional and international powers that Jordan cannot disregard from its calculations, according to Dr. Abadi's suggestions.

On top of this, strategic analyst Amer Sbaalh alludes to the cost of publicly and fully joining the anti-Bashar camp. Amman always keeps in mind that it will become a target for al-Qaeda, Salafi jihadists and Hizbullah if the regime in Damascus falls and these forces take hold. Jordan also has absolutely no interest in a long-term civil or sectarian war whose dust may reach Amman's suburbs, which are only two hours from Damascus by car.

To complete the circle of complexity, an anonymous source told al-Quds al-Arabi of Washington and Qatar's financially tempting offer to Jordan, in exchange for a pivotal and geographical role in the strategy to overthrow Bashar al-Assad, specifically seven billion dollars in aid and debt relief, ensuring to end Jordanian mobilization and the economic crisis while strengthening Jordanian institutions internally and regionally.

An offer of this sort is hard to ignore presently, according to what Minister of Finance Suleiman Hafez told some visitors. However, Prime Minister Tarawneh noted the depth and difficulty and large risks and complications that would result if his country surrenders to fears of the cost of publicly and officially joining the anti-Bashar al-Assad camp. One of them whispered into the ear of the Jordanian foreign minister: "Your situation will become simpler if Washington made it easier for you and arranged things with Moscow and later excluded Tehran from the scene."

FMSO Commentary: *Once one of West Africa's most prosperous nations, Cote d'Ivoire has struggled through two civil wars since the turn of the millennium, the first in 2002 and the second in 2011. Unfortunately, repercussions continue to reverberate from the latter war, when incumbent President Laurent Gbagbo refused to step down and allow Alassane Ouattara, the internationally recognized winner of the contested election, to take power. After much bloodshed Ouattara finally assumed power, but as the accompanying article states, "...former members of the national defense and security forces and militias close to Laurent Gbagbo" are being accused of fomenting recent clashes. The problem extends beyond Cote d'Ivoire's borders, as Gbagbo loyalists residing in Liberia, as well as Liberian mercenaries, periodically make cross-border raids.*

The security sector, which some might argue should be taking the lead in restoring stability, is actually one of the problems. Creating a unified military force from different factions has proven difficult, as evidenced in part by the way former rebel heads have carved up control of various Abidjan districts (<http://www.theafricareport.com/index.php/news-analysis/c%C3%B4te-d-ivoire-torn-apart-but-thrown-together-50175042.html>). Meanwhile, reintegration of large numbers of combatants back into civilian communities as productive members of society has largely stalled. Indeed, the process known as DDR - disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration - is one that has bedeviled several African nations, with ethnic tensions, political differences, and/or lack of funds frequently proving to be exceedingly difficult obstacles to surmount. To be sure, it is not just the security sector in Cote d'Ivoire that is struggling with unity, as the accompanying article so clearly states: "The former ruling

Cote d'Ivoire Struggling with Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration 8 August 2012

Source: "Cote d'Ivoire: Sporadic Attacks Make Security Sector Reform Necessary," Institute for Security Studies - South Africa (posted on AllAfrica.com), 8 Aug 2012. <http://allafrica.com/stories/201208101148.html>.



An Ivorian soldier patrolling in Saho village in the west of the country. The region is plagued by recurrent violence. Photo © Olivier Monnier/IRIN via IRINnews.org

Cote d'Ivoire: Sporadic Attacks Make Security Sector Reform Necessary

Attacks by armed groups in Cote d'Ivoire continue to raise concerns over the state of security in the country.

After the attacks in the western region that killed eight United Nations (UN) peacekeepers in June, recent attacks in Abidjan, the heart of political and economic power in the country, brought to the fore the imperative to undertake, speed up and effectively complete the security sector reform (SSR).

On Monday 6 August 2012, a group of armed men attacked a military camp in Akouedo in Abidjan. The attack left seven soldiers dead. The previous day, a similar attack took place in Yopougon, resulting in the killing of five soldiers from the Republican Forces of Cote d'Ivoire (RFCI).

These incidents came a few weeks after the government made an announcement on a foiled coup meant to destabilize the current government.

There is no doubt that Cote d'Ivoire has made significant gains in terms of peace efforts since the political violence following the November 2010 elections that brought the country to the brink of all-out war.

While the country managed to avoid war, the current situation in Cote d'Ivoire is still extremely fragile. As with previous violent clashes, the government was quick to point

party, the Front Populaire Ivoirien (FPI), boycotted the 2011 legislative elections and continued to reject most attempts by the government to have a national dialogue on the political future of Cote d'Ivoire."

*Gbagbo is presently awaiting trial at the International Criminal Court for alleged war crimes. His absence, however, has not quelled the unrest. President Ouattara has promised to take new steps to reinvigorate DDR. However, should the President not succeed in this difficult task, and Gbagbo's followers still feel disenfranchised, more bloodshed is likely to follow. **End FMSO Commentary (Feldman)***

Continued: Sporadic Attacks Make Security Sector Reform Necessary

to former members of the national defense and security forces and militias close to Laurent Gbagbo, the former president now standing trial at the International Criminal Court (ICC).

In reality, Cote d'Ivoire is facing numerous challenges, including stalled SSR. For almost a year, SSR has not been able to move beyond the integration of former rebels into the national army under the new name of the Republican Forces of Cote d'Ivoire. Though there are many plans under discussion, key actors involved still have to come up with an integrated approach to speed up reforms in major security agencies.

Indeed, there are military, political and social dimensions to the ongoing violence in Cote d'Ivoire. At a military level, two main problems remain to be resolved. Firstly, the harmonious functioning of the command structure across the various units of the army and security agencies needs substantial improvement. Secondly, it is perhaps time to pay attention to the practical phase of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) process, mainly the many volunteers and traditional fighters commonly known as dozos who joined the fight during the post-electoral crisis. Moreover, the new armed forces are still hampered by a lack of equipment as a result of a continuing United Nations (UN) arms embargo, yet the country faces the problem of a proliferation of small arms. The longer it takes to tackle this, the riskier it will be for peace and stability in Cote d'Ivoire.

At a political level, current arrangements meant to respond to the need to create a balance among the political forces that supported the election of President Alassane Ouattara, have not yet been able to usher in effective institutions, rule of law, a transparent and equitable justice system or an all-inclusive political consensus. The former ruling party, the Front Populaire Ivoirien (FPI), boycotted the 2011 legislative elections and continued to reject most attempts by the government to have a national dialogue on the political future of Cote d'Ivoire. At a social level the truth and reconciliation process, a key process to foster national cohesion, faces serious challenges due to the intransigence of former president Gbagbo's party members and a perception of impunity within the current government.

In his reaction to the attacks, President Ouattara promised to create a National Security Council (NSC) and a single authority to complete the DDR. It could provide for the adequate structure and institutions to address the complex challenge of disarming, demobilizing and reintegrating former combatants into society. However, for this to have a positive impact on peace and stability in Cote d'Ivoire it will require greater effort to make the truth and reconciliation exercise more effective, as well as a guarantee of socio-economic opportunities for the demobilised soldiers.

In the meantime, there are many questions that still need to be answered, including the real objectives of the various armed groups operating in the country. Beyond allegations of coups and threats to make the country ungovernable, it might also be important to reassess the relationships among the various units of the RFCI, as well as former national defense and security forces members who have been left out or neglected under the new dispensation.

It is hoped that the renewed mandate of the UN Operation in Cote d'Ivoire (UNOCI) until July 2013 will provide the government with the necessary support needed in the post-conflict reconstruction process.

While calling upon the government to develop and swiftly implement a DDR program with 'a clear eligibility criteria, a new secure and transparent database, and a central oversight authority', the UN also insisted on the need for a consolidated political dialogue and an impartial justice system. So far, these issues remain highly challenging.

FMSO Commentary: *To intervene or not to intervene? That has been the question on the international community's mind in relation to the current political and military impasse in northern Mali.*

When a mid-level Army officer led a coup that overthrew President Amadou Touré in March, the resulting power vacuum in the northern stretches of the country was quickly filled in by two groups, both of which have varying degrees of connection to al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). One of the two groups, Ansar Dine, which now controls the majority of northern Mali, is seeking to instill a very strict version of sharia law there, in addition to collaborating with a third jihadist group, the Unity Movement for Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO). The global community is now worried that with al-Qaeda affiliated elements exerting de facto control of northern Mali, al-Qaeda may have found a new foothold from which to launch its worldwide operations.

*As such, discussions have been percolating for months on the question of foreign intervention to oust the various groups that have taken control of the area from the government. While some say that a foreign military intervention will exacerbate problems in the country, others believe that inaction will be far more dangerous. Yet as the commentator in the accompanying article details, many Malians themselves are now of the mindset that foreign military intervention is indeed the least bad solution to a crippling dilemma. **End FMSO Commentary (Warner)***

Malian Perspectives on Foreign Intervention

12 August 2012

Source: "Mali: Contre le cancer islamiste, il n'y a que la thérapie du canon" ("Mali: Against the Islamic cancer, the only option is canon therapy.") L'Observateur Paaga (Bamako, Mali), 12 August 2012: <http://fr.allafrica.com/stories/201208130514.html>

ECOWAS Security Council President, Ambassador Gérard Araud of France. UN Photo/Evan Schneider, via www.un.org



Mali: Contre le cancer islamiste, il n'y a que la thérapie du canon"
("Mali: Against the Islamic cancer, the only option is canon therapy.")

The long-awaited plan of attack by the Security Council of Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is finally out of limbo after the meeting of heads of state of the countries of the held in Bamako.

According to one source, the brainstorming session gave birth to a scenario that would result in four acts: the installation of democratic institutions in Bamako, the protection of internal refugees, the formation of the Malian army, and the logistical support of it as well as auxiliaries to reconquer the territories of northern Mali. This is a play in four acts whose diligent staging will help to end the plight of populations living in the northern parts of Mali.

It is true that the Islamists have succeeded, by dint of pushing each day one step further along the scale of horrors, to demonstrate the futility of diplomacy: and after the smoking ban and the alcohol, television and even sports the destruction of holy places, flogging, limb amputation and stoning to death, Malians living in the north have no other option but to raise their children in the vision of jihad.

The aggressive proselytism and the generosity of interested Islamists are attracting more and more people to the jihadist cause. The longer the African community deliberates next steps forward, the more time is in favor of the Islamists, who quietly reinforce their bases by recruiting new converts and child soldiers who they turn into religious fighters and even, in the future, suicide bombers.

Soon, dare we believe, the Malian army will require assistance from the international community, and the sounds of cannons will resonate in the sands of northern Mali. It is a time to pull out all of the stops: given that diplomatic negotiations appear to have fizzled, it's time to switch therapy; after the homeopathy of diplomacy, it is appropriate to switch protocols, trying surgery of the gun, it appears, will be the only way to treat the Islamist cancer in northern Mali.

FMSO Commentary: As Africa's most populous country and arguably its most geopolitically powerful, Nigeria does not like to be told what to do. However, as the accompanying article describes, the Nigerian government is now taking lessons from the U.S. Army on how to more effectively pattern its security architecture in order to fight its own domestic terrorists.

Most interestingly, the article details the discussions percolating within the Nigerian government relating to the divide between the roles of the police versus that of the military in stabilization operations. The interface between the two bodies is particularly important in the north of the country, where Islamic militant group Boko Haram has proven to be devastatingly adept at subverting both state and national security authority over the past several years.

*Indeed, that the Nigerian government is now taking seriously the lessons learned by the U.S. Army may prove to be the first steps on the path to national stability that has for so long proven to be elusive. **End FMSO Commentary (Warner)***

Nigerians Take Lessons from U.S. Army Architecture

7 August 2012

Source: John Amoda, "Nigeria: U.S.'s Approach to Security Planning II." Vanguard (Lagos, Nigeria), 7 August 2012: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201208070765.html>



Nigerian soldiers assigned to the 322nd Parachute Regiment line up in formation before participating in target practice facilitated by U.S. Army. Photo by U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Michael Larson [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons

U.S.'s Approach to Security Planning II

The Saturday Vanguard July 14, 2012 carries the comment of the Attorney General of the Federation:

“The Federal Government, yesterday, expressed its concern over the increasing spate of violence across the country, saying it is working hard to stem the gradual descent into anarchy by diligently prosecuting all those indicted for civil disturbances to serve as deterrence”.

The story may be an overly parsimonious summary of what the AGF said. What analysis of the security condition of Nigeria has led to this idea? The FM 3 - 07 shows such an answer could be derived within the framework of stability operations.

“FM 3-07 stability Operations reflects a long journey by the American Military and a series of hard operational lessons learned by the post-Cold War generation. It underscores recognition that in addition to fighting and winning our national battles, the military will continue to be called on to bring peace and order to societies under stress. As doctrine, FM 3-07 fills a profound intellectual void by describing the complex 21st century landscape and articulating the military's unique role in bringing order to chaos” (Ibid Pp. XV).

The Nigerian government has yet to realize [that fighting terrorism] is a victor's task;

Continued: U.S.'s Approach to Security Planning

a military conflict resolution not a conflict management task. Bringing order to chaos is bringing order to the chaos of anarchy; a replacement of anarchy with order. This is what FM 3-07 calls stability operations that requires a whole of government approach.

A whole of government approach is an approach that integrates the collaborative efforts of the departments and agencies of the United States government to achieve unity of effort toward a shared goal. A whole of government approach is vital to achieving the balance of resources, capabilities and activities that reinforce progress made by one of the instruments of national power while enabling success among the others.

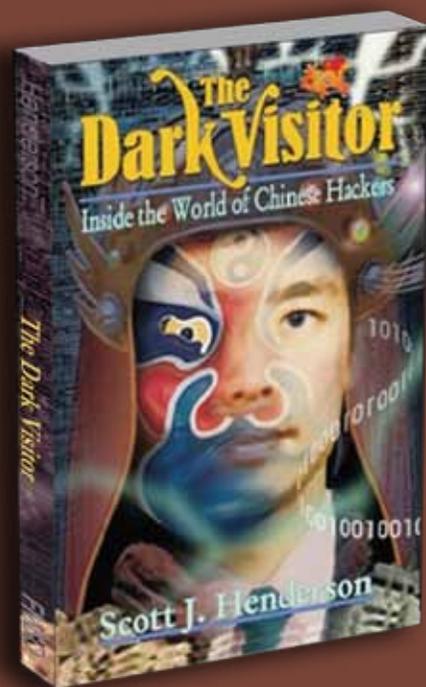
It relies on inter-agency coordination among the agencies of the USG, including the Department of Defense, to ensure that the full range of available capabilities are leveraged, synchronized, and applied toward addressing the drivers of conflicts and reinforcing local institutions to facilitate achieving sustainable peace.

Success in this approach depends upon the ability of civilian and military forces to plan jointly and respond quickly and effectively through an integrated, inter-agency approach to a fundamentally dynamic situation.

Accomplishing this requires a willingness and ability to share resources among USG agencies and organisations, while working toward a common goal. These resources- financial, military, intelligence, law enforcement, diplomatic, developmental, and strategic communication are often limited in availability and cannot be restricted to use by a single agency, service or entity.

How much can Nigeria learn from the US Army theorization of stability operations? The state governors demand state police as a substitute for the Nigerian Armed Forces. Why? Because the Armed Forces are apparently in the short run suffering setbacks.

Scott Henderson's groundbreaking 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: *When discussing al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), typical conversations of the group's presence in West Africa tend to focus on Mali, Nigeria, and, to a lesser extent, Niger. However, as the accompanying story details, the capture of a high-ranking AQIM commander in Mauritania highlights the group's little-commented upon presence in that country.*

Of note in this story is that the arrested leader, Hama Ould El Hadj, had, like many other terrorists operating in the Maghreb, taken advantage of the collapse of the Qaddafi regime in Libya to acquire and move weaponry across West African borders. The reverberations of that downfall have been felt across the West African region, particularly in Mali, where rebels who overthrew the government in Bamako used leftover Libyan arms. Indeed, West Africa is increasingly being viewed as a homeland of sorts for the global jihadist movement, not only because of the prevalence of Islam there, but also due to the existence of weak central African governments that are incapable of controlling the vast tracts of territory that they inherited at independence. This inability for effective surveillance has been at the core of West Africa's terrorist problem, and likely played no small part in the case of Mauritania. End FMSO Commentary (Warner)

Mauritanian al-Qaeda Leader Arrested

6 August 2012

Source: "Al Qaïda au Maghreb Islamique: Le leader de la branche Mauritanie arête" ("Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb: Leader of the Mauritanian branch arrested"). NoorInfo (Nouakchott, Mauritania). 6 August, 2012: http://www.noorinfo.com/notes/Al-Qaida-au-Maghreb-Islamique-Le-leader-de-la-branche-Mauritanie-arrete_b4596029.html.



AQIM leader Hama Ould El Hadj, via <http://terrorisminafrica.com/aqim-gives-proof-they-have-german-hostage/>

Al Qaïda au Maghreb Islamique: Le leader de la branche Mauritanie arête **(Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb: Leader of the Mauritanian branch arrested)**

According to the Algerian periodical "Chourouq," three weeks ago, authorities in Niger arrested Hama Ould El Hadj, one of the most important and most dangerous leaders of AQIM, who most notably founded the Mauritanian branch of the organization in 2004, called "Ançar Allah Al Mourabitoune Vi Bilad Chinguit".

According to the sources, Algerian investigators were allegedly involved in Niamey interrogation of the detainee. Hama Ould El Hadj was particularly active during the Libyan conflict, and was able to take advantage of the chaos to smuggle truckloads of sophisticated weapons and cargos of ammunition and military aircraft of the Libyan arsenal to be used by AQIM.

The "Hama terrorist", as he was designated in the Algerian newspaper, is regarded as the transmission belt between AQIM recruits and combat units currently in control of northern Mali. He participated in virtually all trips taken by his leader, Mukhtar Al Belmoktar said Khaled Abu Abass, the Emir of Kâtiba, to the mountains Boukhaïl in the Algerian desert expanses of Azawad. Hama Ould El Hadj was also throughout 2012 to recruit suicide bombers, especially Mauritanian youth, after the failure of the organization to find Algerian volunteers.

If "Chourouq" is correct, he has recruited dozens of people from Mauritania, Tunisia, Mali, and Niger to serve as suicide bombers. Much of this contingent was sent to Syria to fight with the local branch of Al Qaeda and have also been recognized on the battlefields in places such as Syria, via Libya, and Turkey.

FMSO Commentary: A 2010 report released by the University of Toronto-based Munk Centre for International Studies “documents a complex ecosystem of cyber espionage that systematically compromised government, business, academic, and other computer network systems in India.” The report concludes that “the global networked society in which we have evolved socially, politically, economically, and militarily carries with it an underground” network that is often hidden to those whom it compromises. This pronouncement may seem passé at this point, yet amazing data losses, denial of service attacks, and network penetrations continue to happen unabatedly.

India is known for its contribution to the worldwide computer software industry. Yet its industry and government remain vulnerable to casual, criminal, and other countries’ attacks on their information and technology infrastructure. The three articles featured here illustrate nation-based and criminal attacks, as well as the Indian government’s responses. **End FMSO Commentary (Welch)**

India: Cyber Warfare

16 February 2012

Source: Rakesh K. Singh, New Delhi, The Daily Pioneer 16 February 2012 [HTTP://DAILYPIONEER.COM/NATION/43060-BANGLADESH-JOINS-CHINA-PAK-CYBERWAR-CLUB-AGAINST-INDIA.HTML](http://DAILYPIONEER.COM/NATION/43060-BANGLADESH-JOINS-CHINA-PAK-CYBERWAR-CLUB-AGAINST-INDIA.HTML)



Many news site and media have reported an ongoing cyber war between some hackers based in Bangladesh and India and both hacker groups are known as cyber army . All postings also confirm that the hackers from both the countries have mostly targeted popular and government websites. Image via technotale.com

Bangladesh joins China-Pak cyberwar club against India

Close on the heels of China and Pakistan persistently hacking Central Government and corporate websites, Bangladeshi hackers have joined the club through cyber attacks on India — targeting the Border Security Force (BSF) in particular against which it carries a grouse for perceived atrocities on Bangla nationals.

The Bangladeshi hackers said their action was in response to the alleged killings by BSF on the border between the two countries.

The Bangladeshi hackers group identifying itself as Black HAT Hackers claimed to have hacked thousands of Indian websites in retaliation to the cyber attacks by the Indian Cyber Army and Indishell which have hacked over 400 Bangladeshi websites. The Black HAT Hackers also claimed to have opposition to the Tapaimukh Dam.

Last week, Indian Cyber Army and Indishell had attacked the websites of five Ministries in Bangladesh and that of a trade organisation there.

“On February 13, NIC identified some malicious Internet packets in their web servers’ traffic. As a precautionary measure, they blocked many of the Government websites for external traffic as per security drill. No penetration/website defacing could take place,” the BSF said in a statement.

NIC after completing the security audit of these websites (including BSF website) have also opened this for external traffic. “The claim regarding hacking of BSF website is baseless and malicious,” the BSF added.

BSF official website <http://bsf.nic.in> is hosted in National Informatics Centre (NIC) servers, where most of the Government websites are hosted. NIC is responsible for the maintenance and security of the websites hosted on their servers. They also conduct routine internet traffic analysis on the websites as a security measure.

China and Pakistan have been carrying out cyber offensives in the past and the Indian hackers have also been retaliating to such attacks.

Cyber security expert Dhruv Soi said, “With Bangladeshi hackers joining the cyber offensives against India, the Government of India must adopt better mechanisms to safeguard cyber space.”

Continued: India: Cyber Warfare**China hackers enter Navy computers, plant bug to extract sensitive data**

10 July 2012

Source: <http://www.indianexpress.com/news/china-hackers-enter-navy-computers-plant-bug-to-extract-sensitive-data/968897/0>



China's People's Liberation Army conducts computer and network operations. Photo by China Defense Mashup, via <http://www.china-defense-mashup.com/>

Hackers have broken into sensitive naval computer systems in and around Visakhapatnam, the headquarters of the Eastern Naval Command, and planted bugs that relayed confidential data to IP addresses in China.

The Eastern Naval Command plans operations and deployments in the South China Sea — the theatre of recent muscle-flexing by Beijing — and beyond. India's first nuclear missile submarine, INS Arihant, is currently undergoing trials at the Command.

The extent of the loss is still being ascertained, and officials said it was “premature at this stage” to comment on the sensitivity of the compromised data. But the Navy has completed a Board of Inquiry (BoI) which is believed to have indicted at least six mid-level officers for procedural lapses that led to the security breach.

The naval computers were found infected with a virus that secretly collected and transmitted confidential files and documents to Chinese IP addresses. Strict disciplinary action against the indicted officers is imminent.

Responding to a questionnaire sent by The Sunday Express on whether highly classified data had been sent to IP addresses in China due to the bug, the Navy said: “An inquiry has been convened and findings of the report are awaited. It needs to be mentioned that there is a constant threat in the cyber domain from inimical hackers worldwide.”

Sources, however, confirmed that classified data had been leaked, and the breach had possibly occurred because of the use of pen drives that are prohibited in naval offices. The virus was found hidden in the pen drives that were being used to transfer data from standalone computers to other systems, said a person familiar with the investigation.

The Navy — and the other armed forces — stores sensitive data only in standalone computers that are not connected to the Internet. These computers are not supposed to have ports or access points for pen drives or external storage devices.

The virus apparently created a hidden folder and collected specific files and documents based on certain ‘key words’ that it has been programmed to identify.

Continued: India: Cyber Warfare

The documents remained hidden on the pen drives until they were put in computers that were connected to the Internet, after which the bug quietly sent the files to specific IP addresses.

The cyber espionage came to light in January-February this year. Besides the Navy's resources, other cyber forensic agencies were involved in tracing the hackers, sources said. China has been accused earlier of using "cyber battalions" — specially trained military staff — to break into sensitive computer systems across the world.

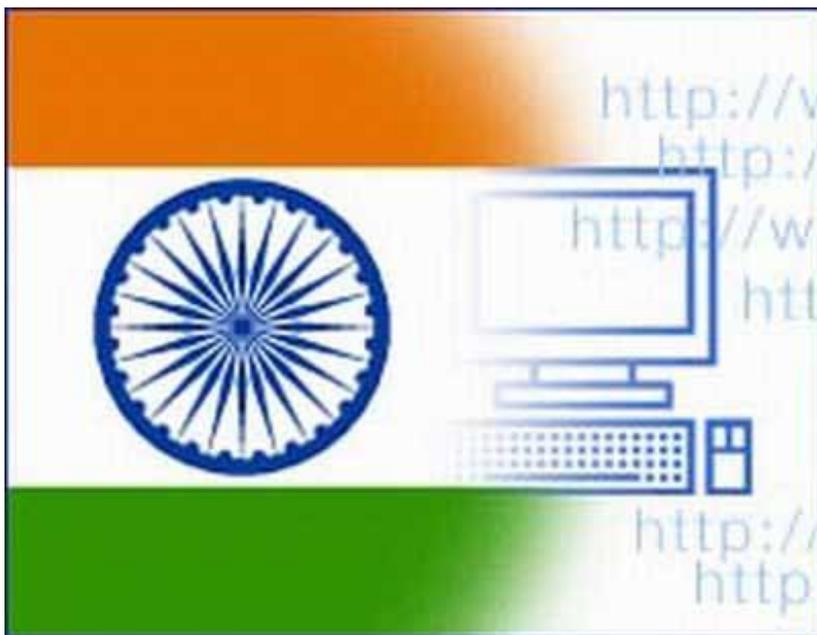
The Naval HQ in New Delhi is monitoring the case closely. Besides the Arihant trial, several other sensitive projects are being undertaken near Visakhapatnam, including an upcoming underground nuclear submarine base that is expected to house India's strategic assets

Indian Navy creates exclusive cyber warriors cadre

Source: <http://www.deccanherald.com/content/263791/indian-navy-creates-exclusive-cyber.html>

12 July 2012

India Cyber by firangionindia, via <http://firangionindia.com/2012/07/26/indian-navy-to-create-cyber-cadre-2/>



With cyber terrorism on the rise and the fight against it getting acute, the Indian Navy will soon have an exclusive cadre of cyber warriors to combat the menace and to counter the ubiquitous attacks of hostile hackers.

For the purpose, the Indian Navy has set in motion the process of recruiting its first batch of dedicated officers for information technology who would work at creating networks for the maritime force, man the networks and maintain the systems. The navy thus becomes the first of the Indian armed forces to create such a cadre of officers from among its executive branch, instead of the technical branch.

It is now looking at recruiting engineering, information technology and computer science graduates as short service commissioned officers for whom the training will begin in December.

Unfortunately, for women who may be interested in such a career, the navy's cyber warrior cadre, as of now, will be only an all-men affair. Only about two months ago, the navy had created a separate cell for communications, space and network centric operations (CS&NCO) under a rear admiral-rank officer, who would function as the assistant chief of naval staff (CS&NCO).

Though not a direct reason for setting up this exclusive information technology cadre, the Indian Navy had faced one of its worst cyber attacks on its Eastern Command headquartered at Visakhapatnam when a pen drive used by some of its officers had led to sensitive, secret information being passed on to China due to a malware in the device.

The navy had set up a probe into the role of six of its officers for breaching the cyber security protocol at Visakhapatnam.

***FMSO Commentary:** Since the inauguration of the Calderon administration in 2006, more than 45,000 soldiers have been deployed in areas throughout Mexico in an attempt to quell violence generated by drug-trafficking organizations. This strategy has been argued by politicians within Mexico and abroad, given that military organizations are trained in counterinsurgency operations, not in urban police operations. Soldiers focus on killing/capturing the enemy and winning wars; police focus on bringing criminals to justice and preventing an increase in violent crime.*

Disdain associated with the Calderon strategy prompted President-elect Enrique Peña Nieto to propose a Colombianesque strategy in Mexico. The Colombian strategy was used to restore order in the country during the 1980s and 1990s, and involved increasing police involvement in the national counterdrug offensive. This strategy, if applied in Mexico, would re-establish police presence in areas where criminal groups are currently in control. It would also put police back in control of urban operations and target all levels of criminal structures, not just cartel heads.

Mexico has 366 officers per 100,000 inhabitants, more than the United States, Britain, France, and Italy. Lack of officers in Mexico is not the problem: the problem lies in the fact that police are not evenly distributed within Mexico's 2,456 municipalities. Municipal police are only present in 335 municipalities; they are known for their corruption, and are not adequately utilizing resources or manpower. Furthermore, ungoverned areas in Sonora, Sinaloa, Chihuahua, and Durango facilitate the proliferation of groups, to include the Sinaloa and Juarez Cartels.

To solve this problem, Mexico would implement part of the Colombian strategy known as Plan Cuadrantes to divide

Mexico to Implement Colombian Strategy to Combat Drug Trafficking

10 July 2012



Source: “La receta colombiana contra el narcotráfico en México,” Milenio, <http://www.milenio.com/cdb/doc/noticias2011/ac7c316211feb4d36a82a1fee0ffc81f>. Accessed on 10 July 2012.

Óscar Naranjo Ex-Director of the Colombian National Police. Photo by La Silla Vacía, via <http://www.lasillavacia.com/perfilquien/21389/oscar-naranjo>

Mexico to Implement Colombian Strategy to Combat Drug Trafficking

On 11 July 2012, President-Elect Enrique Peña Nieto, in an effort to fulfill his campaign promise to decrease the number of violent crimes in Mexico by 50%, pledged to create a police force comprised of 40,000 elite officers. These officers will be deployed to areas most adversely affected by organized crime activity. As part of his plan to fight organized crime in Mexico, Peña Nieto is working with Oscar Naranjo, 55, a former Colombian National Police Director who helped re-establish order in the country in the 80s and 90s. Naranjo served under President Alvaro Uribe and President Juan Manuel Santos, and is regarded as a legendary figure in Colombia.

Plan Cuadrantes

The new plan to fight organized in Mexico will include dividing affected communities into quadrants. Focus will be placed on neighborhoods with excessive levels of street violence, micro drug trafficking rings (areas in which drugs are sold from houses/on the street), car theft problems, and extortion activity. The rationale of increasing police presence in problematic areas is to deter youths wishing to join organized crime groups and to help citizens cooperate with authorities in a more efficient manner. Another benefit of having continued police presence in affected communities is that citizens may regain trust in authorities. Naranjo estimated that Plan Cuadrantes will yield lower violence rates within 100 days following its implementation in Mexico.

Mexican communities/municipalities into quadrants. Police presence would be increased in quadrants plagued by crime. A second step that would be taken as part of the Colombian strategy would be to restructure police organizations in an effort to purge corruption from its ranks.

While fighting organized crime in Mexico, it is important to remember that all associated factors are not equivalent to what Colombia faced. For example, employing Colombian security strategies must take into account that the geography of the two countries differ, i.e., the US shares a border with Mexico, that the organized armed non-governmental groups in Mexico and Colombia are not the same, and that Mexican drug cartels are often better equipped than police and military.

End FMSO Commentary (Fiegel and Rosado)

Continued: Mexico to Implement Colombian Strategy to Combat Drug Trafficking

To fight drug trafficking in Mexico, Oscar Naranjo argues that the fight must be established based on four principles to include:

- Decisions must be made at the state level; not strictly the federal government level
- Victims of violence must receive the attention they need
- Authorities must examine criminal organizations, their operational scheme, and the effect of these same organizations in a particular region
- Groups charged with maintaining security and combating criminal networks cannot become corrupted by them

Naranjo also stressed the importance of targeting hitmen, not just cartel heads. All principles stressed by Naranjo were established as a result of lessons learned in Colombia. Success of Naranjo's strategy is evidenced by the lowest murder rate Colombia has seen in the last 32 years.

The Fight in Police Hands

As part of Naranjo's plan, police in Mexico will play a key role in fighting organized crime. Within the Calderon administration, soldiers served this role. In order for police to assume these roles, the Mexican government must work on eradicating corrupt officers from its ranks; just as Colombia did during the 90s.

In Colombia, the government decided police should play an integral role in fighting organized crime because of the following reasons:

- It is an organization with civil character
- They are trained to fight in urban zones, not in counterinsurgency operations as soldiers
- In Colombia, the Director of Police is assigned by the President of the country, not by the Minister of Defense

The strategic importance of Colombia's reliance on Police forces emerged in 1992 following the escape of Pablo Escobar from La Catedral prison in Envigado. At this time, Escobar declared a formal war against the government. In response to this war, the government created the Bloque de Búsqueda (Search Block). This unit was comprised of 400 officers who received training from US Delta Force soldiers and support from the DEA.

Tactics learned by officers in Bloque de Búsqueda are similar to those tactics utilized today to fight illegal organizations (guerrilla groups and drug traffickers). These tactics include targeting logistical chains and the financial structure of criminal organizations. In addition to the first two steps, targeting hitmen rings is another key strategy in eradicating organized crime groups. These steps combined isolate the heads of criminal groups and make identifying their location easier.

In the case of Pablo Escobar, authorities managed to isolate him from his wife and children. This isolation led Escobar to commit an error that led to his arrest; making a phone call to his son that allowed authorities to track his location.

FMSO Commentary: *Until 1996 Bolivia and Peru led the world in coca leaf cultivation, with Colombia close behind. In 1996 Colombia took the lead, with Peru second and Bolivia third. Although Colombia has held a strong lead against the other two countries, they are still major players in the illicit market. In 2009 Colombia led coca cultivation with 116,000 hectares, followed by Peru with around 40,000 hectares and Bolivia at approximately 35,000.*

Although Bolivia still lags behind Colombia and Peru, it is the only country of the three that has seen a steady increase in coca leaf production since 2005. This is partly due to the fact that in 2006 coca leaf farmer (cocalero) Evo Morales was elected president. Not only did he openly support the scaling back of forced eradication efforts of the crop, but he also authorized its cultivation in the central Chapare region of the country, in addition to the already legal Yungas region. Since 2009 both Colombia and Peru have seen decreases in production, while from 2008 to 2009 Bolivia saw an increase in production of 10%.

*With US eradication efforts focused heavily at front-runner Colombia (under Plan Colombia), as well as Peru, eradication efforts have all but ceased in Bolivia due to the lack of governmental support. This article suggests that there is a perceptible Bolivian government backing of coca cultivation and that combined with eradication efforts in Colombia and Peru, Bolivia could attract transnational criminal organizations (TCOs), mainly Mexican cartels, to place it not only on top for cultivation, but also as a center for labs for the manufacture of coca paste. **End FMSO Commentary (Scheidel)***

Another Narcotics Supplier for Mexican Cartels

21 July 2012



Source: Source: “Bolivia, otro abastecedor de cárteles mexicanos (Bolivia: Another Narcotics Supplier for Mexican Cartels),” EUniversal.com.mx, 21 July 2012. <http://www.eluniversal.com.mx/nacion/198608.html>

A spoon containing baking soda, cocaine, and a small amount of water. Photo by Psychonaught (Own work) [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons

Bolivia, otro abastecedor de cárteles mexicanos **(Bolivia: Another Narcotics Supplier for Mexican Cartels)**

Information from the Counterdrug Agency and the UNODC reported that Mexican drug cartels are obtaining supplies of cocaine from Bolivia, which has become their new development area, a place where these criminal organizations have also set up clandestine drug labs for the production of synthetic drugs distributed to North America and Europe.

According to 2012 information from the UNODC, Bolivia is the third largest producer of cocaine in the world, while the routes most utilized to traffick this product towards North America and Europe are through the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico. Information released by the US DEA indicated that Bolivia is used by Mexican cartels as a second supplier for cocaine after Colombia and as a center of operations to reach other markets, due to its location.

Since 2009, the US DEA does not have any agents there, but reports from agencies such as the UN, the Bolivian government, and other regional governments, have made the presence of Mexican cartels in the country and specific cities known, and have exposed the fact that they are participating in more than just drug trafficking.

Using unmanned drones purchased from Israel, Bolivian counterdrug authorities dismantled 240 clandestine synthetic drug labs in the Santa Cruz zone (bordering Brazil) in just one month. For every clandestine cocaine or synthetic drug lab seized, authorities reported that two are created in their place, causing a problem for local law enforcement that has effectively doubled in a short time.

The International Drug Report released in March 2012 by the US State Department indicated stated that “in the short term, drug traffickers will continue to exploit the abundant opportunity to produce cocaine in Bolivia.” In the report, the US Government encouraged Bolivia to strengthen their controls on cocaine trafficking, including production and eradication efforts, in line with international agreements. In addition, they requested they provide protection to their citizens on the effects of drugs, corruption, and drug trafficking.

Additionally, the US suggested that Bolivia improve its legal and regulatory environment, as well as their justice sector efforts to combat drug production and trafficking, money laundering, corruption, and other transnational crimes, and to bring the criminal organizations responsible before the law.

FMSO Commentary: *As we have noted earlier, Cauca Department has become the geographic center of media attention, if not the military geographic center of gravity of Colombia's insurgent war. The article attached is a listserv report (by Paris-based journalist Eduardo McKenzie) of a radio interview of "Maria," an indigenous whistleblower. Rare, the interview provides trim insight into the nature of population-centric insurgent warfare by the Colombian FARC, and, if Maria's revelations and the interviewer's interpretations are close to valid, what may turn out to have been prolonged and clumsy government response to indigenous activism. The host of the radio show, Fernando Londoño, is a supporter of former president Alvaro Uribe, both of whom can be described as conservative and hawkish relative to the current president, Manuel Santos. Mr. Londoño was also the protagonist in a former article posted in this OE Watch, having been the target of a spectacular and failed bombing attempt. That event vaulted Londoño's profile, and increased both his listening audience and its sympathy. By this interview, a broad audience is given an idea that a cynical and manipulative FARC may have made fools of those who, perhaps well meaning, have been misled by indigenous identity-mongering. The interviewee's own words can be heard in Spanish at the provided link. **End FMSO Commentary (Demarest)***

Possibly Serious Revelations

19 July 2012

Sources: "Relating a Fernando Londoño Hoyos Interview," La Hora de la Verdad [The Moment of Truth], Radio Súper, Bogotá, July 19, 2012



Protesters gather to march against the FARC. Photo by Germán Cabrejo, for equinoXio (Por la libertad, la vida y la dignidad) [CC-BY-2.0 (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0>)], via Wikimedia Commons

Serious Revelations from Maria, Indigenous Leader from Cauca Department

80 % of these "civil defense groups" are recruited by guerilla militiamen. The other 20% are made to do so by force. If they resist, their healthcare ID cards are revoked, and they are prevented from receiving State aid.¹

A few months ago in the El Palo region, one of the leaders of the "Indigenous Guard" was killed because he was openly against the group receiving weapons.

Maria is asking President Santos, Congress, and the Colombian people to review indigenous legislation.² She criticizes the arguments made by Carlos Gaviria about this issue.³ In Caldono, these indigenous groups allow the rape of children, and attack peasants and those of African heritage, as seen in Mazamorrero and Cajibío. They murdered a councilman in Miranda, cut down his coffee plants, and threw his children and widowed wife into the street. They have sent death threats to the leaders of Juntas de Acción Comunal [Community Action Boards], corporations, and other associations. Two days ago, it was announced that the guerillas and "Indigenous Councils" in the Caloto area had sentenced Ana Silvia Secué, a member of Opic, to death.⁴ Additionally, former senator

Continued: Serious Revelations from Maria, Indigenous Leader from Cauca Department

Piedad Córdoba (removed from office), whom Maria used to admire, has distributed money in Miranda, and asked the people to “resist”, demand that the Military leave the Monteredondo region, and kidnap Miranda military personnel in order to demand autonomy from President Santos.

Maria claims that what was being planned in Toribío was much worse: kidnapping President Santos himself and demanding that he sign for territorial autonomy. For Maria, this so-called “territorial autonomy” would amount to a demilitarized zone. The peasant and afro communities of the Cauca Department, and even a portion of the indigenous community, do not agree with the education system of the Indigenous Councils: in their view, a system that trains children for war. A short time ago, over 300 children were drafted [by the FARC]. Indigenous health is being used to revive the guerilla resistance. Autonomy would aggravate this situation, and convert indigenous regions into demilitarized zones.⁵

Money from government programs and aid goes missing, and the indigenous groups respond by accusing the State of abandoning them. They use these accusations as a cover for planting coca. They disseminate a doctrine of hate, teaching that the State is to be reviled. They blame everything on the State. Yet at the same time, the indigenous leaders who receive the State’s money ride around in brand-new pickups, and their children attend the best universities and travel abroad. Meanwhile, the elderly and the children live in misery. However, neither the government nor State control groups review these monies or accounts. Senator Alexander López supports this state of affairs. Could these indigenous leaders be sacred cows? They also receive money from foreign NGOs, mostly from Italy and Switzerland. With all this money, indigenous leaders must be giving a part to illegal groups.

According to Fernando Londoño Hoyos, the amount of money indigenous communities receive is around 150 billion pesos⁶ per year. If utilized properly, this money could change the lives of the indigenous peoples of the Cauca Department. But the existing terror regime in this region stifles protests. Maria reports that right now there are lists of people who are to be assassinated in the coming days.

The Santos administration announces that it is ready to sign “peace accords” with these movements in Toribío, a fact that greatly worries Maria, as it could intensify the atrocities that she is denouncing.

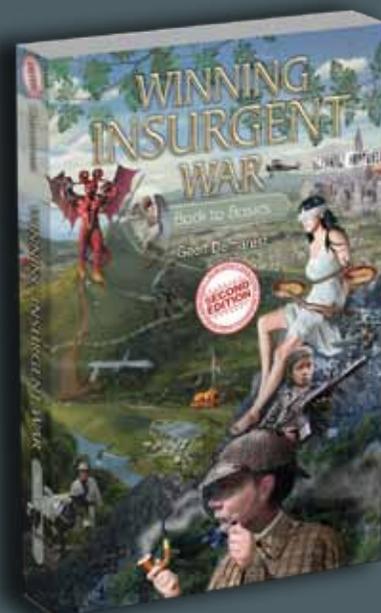
Maria requests to remain anonymous for reasons of safety—to avoid becoming a military target of the “Indigenous Guard” and the guerillas.

Listen to Maria’s statements at the following links:

http://www.4shared.com/mp3/AIHAEe3V/MARIA_LIDER_INDIGENA_19_DE_JUL.html

1. “Civil defense groups” are indigenous tribal and sub-tribal groups ostensibly organized to expel guerrilla, paramilitary, and military forces from what they variously claim as their lands.
2. Maria, the interviewee, is an anonymous indigenous leader from the southern Cauca Department.
3. Carlos Gaviria is a politician who ran and lost against Alvaro Uribe. He can be considered a leftist relative to former President Uribe and Mr. Londoño.
4. OPIC is the Organización de Pueblos Indígenas del Cauca [Organization of Indigenous Peoples of the Cauca Department].
5. That is, zones without government forces to resist the guerillas.
6. ~84 million US dollars (exchange rate as of 8/9/12)

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: *Taiwanese and Hong Kong activists failed in a joint effort to protest a planned landing of Japanese officials on the disputed Diaoyutai Islands (referred to as Senkaku Islands by Japan). The plan originally was for the Hong Kongers to sail out to Taichung, Taiwan and join a Taiwanese group en route to the Diaoyutais. The Hong Kong protesters were nearly denied landing privilege because they had failed to apply for an entry permit, and the Taiwanese activists reportedly were unable to sail out of the Taiwanese port because of an “unexpected cancellation” on the part of the boat owner. Furthermore, a typhoon made sailing dangerous for both parties. Because of the typhoon, the Republic of China (ROC) allowed the Hong Kong vessel to land after consulting parties from government security agencies.*

No official statement has been made on why the ship owner cancelled the trip; however, it is suspected that the government placed pressure on the owner, most notably considering the Taiwanese government has an official policy of not cooperating with China on the issue of the disputed territory. The ROC government may have been concerned that, though the Taiwanese citizens and Hong Kongers were participating in the joint venture in their private capacities, their actions might be construed by the international community, and especially Japan, as working in concert with China.

While the world continues to monitor the South East China Sea dispute, the Diaoyutai Islands represent a territorial battle between China and Japan, with Taiwan also claiming sovereignty. In response to the perceived territorial threat, Taiwan closely monitors the situation and has thus established a special “Diaoyutais response team” under its National Security Council. The Taiwanese media have also recently taken note of the recent U.S. decision to

Hong Kongers and Taiwanese Joint-Effort Protests Fail in the Diaoyutais (Senkaku Islands)

14 August 2012

Source: “Hong Kong activists fail to get supplies in Taichung,” Central News Agency, 14 August 2012, http://focustaiwan.tw/ShowNews/WebNews_Detail.aspx?Type=aIPL&TNo=&ID=201208140052



Defending the Diaoyu Islands activist by the Central News Agency, via http://focustaiwan.tw/ShowNews/WebNews_Detail.aspx?Type=aIPL&TNo=&ID=201208140052

Hong Kong activists fail to get supplies in Taichung

A group of activists from Hong Kong was making for the port of Keelung in northern Taiwan Tuesday to resupply en route for the disputed Tiaoyutai Islands, after their boat was denied entry at Taichung Port in central Taiwan, the activists said that day.

“It shows no compassion”, said Chan Miu-tak, chairman of the Hong Kong-based Action Committee for Defending the Diaoyu Islands, in response to the refusal by Taichung port authorities to give them supplies earlier in the day.

Chan said the group remained in high spirits despite the rejection.

The Central Coastal Patrol Officer under Coast Guard Administration said the group was denied entry because it has not applied for a permit.

Chan said the group is hoping to get some supplies at Keelung from Taiwanese activists.

The nation’s highest security authority decided later that day to offer fuel and water supplies to the Kai Fung No. 2 on humanitarian grounds and in accordance with international precedent.

The decision was made during a meeting of the National Security Council, with leading officials of the ministries of national defense, foreign affairs, transportation and communications and other government agencies also participating.

The NSC meeting also resolved to allow the Hong Kong vessel to sail to a safe port for shelter from approaching Tropical Storm Kai Tak, said Presidential Office spokesman Fan Chiang Tai-chi.

In addition, Yin Pi-hsiung, chairman of the Taipei-based Chung Hwa Baodiao Alliance, said the Taiwanese activists had been planning to sail for the Tiaoyutais with the Hong Kong activists until the owner of the boat they had been hoping to charter unexpectedly canceled the deal.

deploy reconnaissance drones to monitor Chinese activity. Currently, Japan controls and administers the islands. End FMSO Commentary (Faruolo)

Continued: Hong Kong activists fail to get supplies in Taichung

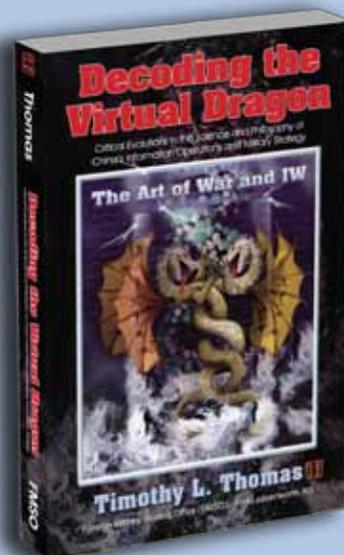
Before the Hong Kong activists set off Aug. 12, they had said they wanted to reach the Tiaoyutais along with the Taiwanese, as well as some Chinese activists, ahead of a group of Japanese activists who are also planning to visit the islands to make a sovereignty claim.

Meanwhile, Yilan Magistrate Lin Tsung-hsien also expressed his willingness to sail to the Tiaoyutais to defend the country's claim over the uninhabited islands.

The Tiaoyutais, known in China as the Diaoyutais and in Japan as the Senkakus, are claimed by Taiwan, China and Japan. The area surrounding the islands is rich in fishery resources, and possibly oil reserves.

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:

This article offers excellent insight into China's military intentions through the lenses of two high ranking (one retired) military officers: Major General Luo Yuan, Communist Party of China Central Committee (CPPCC) member and Deputy Secretary General of the Military Science Association, and Rear Admiral (retired) Yin Zhuo, CPPCC member and Chairman of the Chinese Navy Informatization Experts Advisory Committee.

The article clearly demonstrates these military officials' awareness of lessons learned, which could further prompt China's military expansion and global presence. These high ranking military officers hold a strong stance on China's security. While the country touts its diplomacy and peaceful rise, it is clear by the dialogue in this report that the country would use force when and if necessary.

*It is worth noting that, during the following discussion, China seems to feel more like a "victim" than a "threat," as which it so often is portrayed by the West (according to the article). This tends to put China in a more defensive posture. **End FMSO Commentary (Hurst)***

Interview with Chinese Military Officials on How China Can Protect Its Maritime Rights and Overseas Interests

19 March 2012



Source: Huang Yingying, "How Can We Protect China's Maritime Rights and Overseas Interests," Guoji Xianqu Daobao Online (Chinese), March 19, 2012, <http://www.qinan.org/2012/0320/3606.html>

Major General Luo Yuan, deputy secretary general of the China Society of Military Science and a member of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC)
Photo by Zhang Ming'ai/China.org.cn, via www.china.org.cn

How Can We Protect China's Maritime Rights and Overseas Interests?

China's Naval Open Ocean Capability is Still Inadequate

Q: What specifically are China's current overseas interests and maritime interests?

Yin Zhuo: Overseas interests primarily refer to overseas security interests and economic interests. Our overseas assets and investment security, and the personal security of workers, local overseas Chinese, and Chinese nationals are all part of the security interests we should protect. Overseas economic interests are primarily foreign trade. Some 90% of our \$3.3 trillion in annual foreign trade is conducted by sea. Second is imported oil and natural gas. Currently, we annually import about 250 million tons of petroleum, which will reach about 300 million tons in 2020. Third is overseas investment. Our current overseas investment is \$500 billion, and conservative estimates for 2020 have it reaching \$1 trillion or more. Fourth is our enterprises contracting for overseas projects. Currently, there are more than 1 million Chinese workers who are working abroad, which once peaked at 1.7 million persons. Fifth are the assets and interests of several tens of millions of overseas Chinese and Chinese nationals. The real estate they hold is worth about \$3 trillion, which does not include liquid funds. That is quite a large asset. The immense economic interests we have overseas play an important role in the sustainable development of our national economy.

Q: Can Chinese national defense forces satisfy the security needs of overseas interests?

Yin Zhuo: The rate of expansion of our overseas interests has far exceeded our estimates. Before, our national defense construction neglected to forecast the distribution of distant sea economic interests. We thus now face many threats, and have learned some lessons. In terms of security interests, we are currently threatened by pirates, terrorism, and regional turbulence. For example, the turmoil in the Middle East region constitutes a severe threat to our overseas assets and investment, and to the security of workers, local overseas Chinese, and Chinese nationals. During the turmoil in Libya, many Chinese nationals and overseas Chinese fled overland to Egypt and Tunisia, losing all of their property. If we had had large amphibious vessels in the vicinity of Libya, we would have been able to more rapidly and more directly evacuate our nationals. However, we do not have such a military capability.

While evacuating Chinese nationals from Libya, we were able to dispatch aircraft and ships because we had a frigate formation in the Gulf of Aden. Once, there was a coup d'état in a certain island nation in the Pacific. We got a cargo ship to change direction while en route and proceed to that country to pick up

Continued: How Can We Protect China's Maritime Rights and Overseas Interests?

Chinese and bring them back because our military did not have the ability to reach the location.

Our naval near sea fighting capability is increasing, but our open ocean capability is still inadequate. Our navy should possess the ability to handle multiple security threats and complete diversified military requirements. This task is parallel to our ability to fight and win an informatized local war.

We Need to Rely More on Diplomatic Means to Maintain Our Overseas Interests

Q: When resolving disputes over maritime rights with neighboring countries, what is the relation between military means and diplomatic means?

Luo Yuan: There are currently some countries that view China's restraint and patience as softness and gullibility. They even mistake this for trading land and islands for peace. They equate the "peaceful development" we are proposing with hanging out a "No need to fight" sign, where all problems are resolved only through peaceful means. If there is such a misunderstanding, the situation will continue to deteriorate, and may even result in more severe consequences. Our military struggle and diplomatic mediation must be mutually coordinated. Sun Tzu's Art of War says: "The ideal strategy is to thwart a plan. The next best is to thwart a negotiation. The next best is to thwart a strategy. The inferior politic is to attack a fortified area." Attacking fortified areas is a means we only use as a last resort, and is a means we cannot do without. Without this means, there would be no backing for thwarting plans and thwarting negotiations, and we would become pale and weak.

Yin Zhuo: The great majority of our overseas interests should be protected through reliance on diplomatic, economic, and legal means. However, some threats to overseas interests that are not in the form of countries — such as regional turmoil, terrorism, pirates, and large natural disasters — can only be dealt with using military force. The objectives and nature of our operations will not change. We will still ensure security, but may use different means to do so. In the past, we used destroyers and frigates to protect navigation. In the future, we may use aircraft carriers or large amphibious vessels to protect navigation. The means that we adopt will depend on the nature of the task. The form we adopt will depend on the scale of the mission. In the future, when our aircraft carriers and large amphibious vessels go global, it will not be an offensive act, but a defensive one.

Q: During the Two Sessions, you submitted proposals for establishing a coast guard and establishing special regions in the South Sea. What determinations were these proposals based on?

Luo Yuan: They were based on the increasing severity and complexity of the situations in the South Sea and East Sea. Proceeding from the sense of responsibility and sense of mission of a military member of the CPPCC, I proposed the organization of a national coast guard and the establishment of special administrative regions in the South Sea region. These proposals were subjected to

various investigation and study. Recommendations were solicited in various areas. Their purpose was to better protect China's maritime rights, allow us to better seize the initiative in military struggle and diplomatic struggle, and further integrate our maritime forces.

China's maritime interests are currently facing a severe challenge. Currently, our islands and reefs have been occupied, our resources have been plundered, and our national dignity has been infringed upon. Each year, Vietnam and the Philippines plunder large amounts of oil and gas resources from our South Sea region. Some small countries were originally poor, but due to having plundered our resources, number among the ranks of the world's wealthy nations. None of these oil and gas resources are renewable; whatever amount has been plundered has been lost. We want to leave a certain development heritage to our children.

Q: If the government were to adopt these recommendations, would China's peripheral diplomatic situation become even harsher?

Luo Yuan: If my recommendations were adopted, it would amount to our integrating with international standards. It would not cause the peripheral diplomatic situation to become even harsher. The United States has a coast guard, Japan has a coast guard, South Korea has a coast guard, and Russia has a border defense guard. Why can't we have a coast guard? A coast guard is a quasi-military unit. It can play crisis control and crisis handling roles, leaving more room for maneuvering and taking action for our military struggle and diplomatic mediation.

When a crisis erupted, the coast guard could enforce the law in corresponding waters. If the situation got out of control and escalated, the Chinese navy would serve as a firm backup force. A coast guard and a navy are tasked with different things. The navy is more often used to resist invasion, while a coast guard would maintain the orderly operation of maritime and fishing affairs in our territorial seas, exclusive economic zones, and continental shelf.

"Going Global" Refers First to Our Ideological Concepts

Q: The West is always playing up the "China military threat doctrine." In such an environment, how would our military diplomacy ever be effective?

Luo Yuan: The Western nations are always demanding Chinese military transparency. We have indeed achieved military transparency based on our national situation. In 2007, we joined the "United Nations Military Expenditure Transparency System." Now, once every two years, we publish a national defense white paper disclosing to international society what our military expenditures are. We also invite all military officials stationed in China to participate in our operational units and military exercises. We invited the US defense secretary to visit our strategic missile units. We exhibited our main equipment for them.

Despite this, one still hears about the "China military threat doctrine." That is because they are using "three lenses" to look at us. The first is a "condensing lens" that only sees China and does

Continued: How Can We Protect China's Maritime Rights and Overseas Interests?

not see other countries. US military expenditures reached \$725 billion last year. We only spent \$90 billion. However, the attention of the outside world is not focused on the United States, but on China. Second is a "magnifying lens." Our greatest growth in military spending over the past few years came in 2009, at 18.5%. However, some media claim that our military spending is growing at an annual average rate of more than 18%. That is clearly an exaggeration. Some countries even have exaggerated our military expenditures by four or five times. Third is a "tinted lens." We are already quite transparent, but some countries look at us through tinted eyeglasses. No matter what, they consider us not to be transparent and do not believe us.

Yin Zhuo: Currently, international society has recognized that we have legal distant sea interests and recognized that our operations in open oceans are defensive operations. Weakening the "China military threat doctrine" will primarily require relying on demonstrations by our own operations. The first way is through escorting convoys. Everyone clearly sees that we take defensive routes. Second, in the future, we will participate in more United Nations peacekeeping operations to make a contribution to world peace and regional stability. Once these operations increase in number, everyone will be able to see that we do not launch wars, do not use force to overthrow legal regimes, and are not a country that imposes its ideology or political system on others.

Q: What mode would be appropriate for the Chinese military to adopt in "going global"?

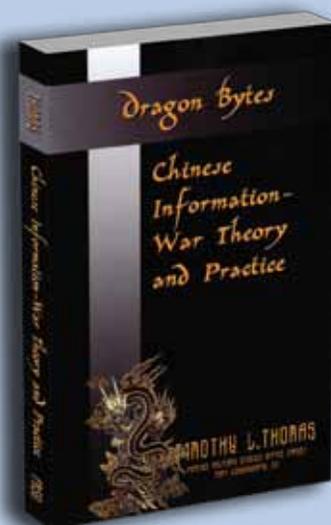
Luo Yuan: As the Chinese military goes global, it first means that our ideological concepts must "go global." Our ideological concepts must catch up with the trends of the new world revolution in military affairs. We must understand what the features and rules are for adapting to modern warfare. We must look out with our eyes and have the desire to catch up. Second, our military forces must provide the necessary protection to our rapidly expanding national interests. For example, we must participate in maritime rescue and support, international rescue and support, pirate fighting, antiterrorism, international peacekeeping missions, and the like.

International society is always demanding that China assume more international obligations and provide more public products. It follows that our military must make a corresponding contribution in this regard. To make such a contribution, we must train in corresponding fashion. Some countries have plenty to say about our navy moving beyond the so-called "first island chain"; in reality, such statements run counter to the demands that they are making of us.

Yin Zhuo: Specific actions. First is escorting convoys, which was just mentioned. Second is participating in United Nations peacekeeping missions. Third is foreign humanitarianism during large natural disasters. Fourth is diplomatic visits and joint exercises. We have conducted joint exercises with the navies of the United States, France, India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. As bilateral

relations further develop, we will dispatch more frequent formations and hold joint exercises at higher levels. In addition, global travel by naval officer training vessels is going to be conducted on a regular basis.

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 following article is a call to all of China, both at the private and government levels, to build up the country's innovation. After years of serving as a manufacturing hub and acquiring technology through various means, including reverse engineering and corporate infiltration, China has notably turned a new page. The biggest push, as outlined in the article, is in innovation.*

Since 1978, when Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping first implemented his economic reforms, which incorporated a more capitalistic approach to business and industry, China has been expanding its capabilities, and its economy has grown at an unprecedented rate.

In more recent years, with the global recession, China's economy has been slowing. While the country's growth is still considered substantial, at least in comparison to the rest of the world, many articles point to the dangers of China's slowing economy. One of these dangers is a negative ripple effect it is causing within the global economy. For example, China is the United States' third largest export partner. As a result, many American companies rely on strong sales in China to boost their business. As one CNN report explained, because of poor performance at home, U.S. and European companies have grown to rely more on China. Now, the slowing of China's own economy is bringing about fear and uncertainty.

The Chinese government is also concerned about social development. According to Premier Wen Jiabao, "As a developing nation, China needs to maintain a certain level of economic growth so as to provide a foundation for economic and social development, as well as improve people's livelihoods."

Hence, it is understandable that so much emphasis is being put on China's innovation, as well as its intellectual

A Call to All to Leapfrog Toward Innovation and Economic Superiority

7 July 2012

Source: Xu Jingyue and Gu Ruizhen, "National Science and Technology Innovation Conference Held in Beijing, Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao Deliver Important Speeches," Xinhua Domestic Service, July 7, 2012, <http://politics.people.com.cn/n/2012/0708/c1024-18466738.html>



Chinese President Hu Jintao. Photo by Dilma Rousseff from Brasil (Cannes - França) Uploaded by ASDFGH [CC-BY-SA-2.0 (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/>)], via Wikimedia Commons

National Science and Technology Innovation Conference Held in Beijing, Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao Deliver Important Speeches

The National Science and Technology Innovation Conference [NSTIC] took place in Beijing from 6 to 7 July.

The conference was attended by: Hu Jintao, general secretary of the CPC Central Committee, state president, and chairman of the Central Military Commission [CMC] (and a host of other officials from the CPC).

At the conference, Hu Jintao delivered an important speech, in which he emphasized the need to: vigorously implement the strategy of rejuvenating the country through science and education and the strategy of building a stronger nation by developing talent; adhere to the guiding principle of innovating independently, working for leapfrogs in key areas, supporting development, and leading the future; comprehensively implement the outline of the national program on the development of science and technology in the medium to long term; further deepen the reform of the science and technology system by centering on the enhancement of the independent innovation capacity and focusing on promoting the close fusion between science and technology on the one hand and economic and social development on the other; concentrate on solving outstanding issues that restrict scientific

and technical development. Such development provides more opportunities and, therefore, strengthens the economy. Of course, as the goal discussed in the article, it also strengthens the country's capabilities in many other areas, including, one can assume, the military.
End FMSO Commentary (Hurst)

Continued: National Science and Technology Innovation Conference Held in Beijing, Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao Deliver Important Speeches

and technological innovation; give full play to the supporting and leading role of science and technology in changing the economic development model and adjusting the economic structure; build a national innovation system at a faster pace; and lay a solid foundation for building a well-off society in an all-round way and thereby building China into one of the world's strong nations in science and technology.

Hu Jintao emphasized: Science and technology is a great product of human wisdom; innovation is an inexhaustible source of power that drives the progress of civilization. In today's world, scientific and technological innovation is shaping economic and social development and the life of the people in a more extensive way and the level of scientific and technological development is a more profound reflection of a given country's overall national strength and core competitiveness. In order to advance the reform, opening up, and socialist modernization, to achieve the goal of building a well-off society in an all-round way, to keep improving the people's living standards, and to realize the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, we must concentrate our energies on advancing scientific and technological innovation by taking into account the big picture of the country's development.

Hu Jintao pointed out: Our country has put in place a rather complete structure of disciplines, with abundant human resources in science and technology and a good foundation for scientific and technological development, which makes us perfectly capable of exploiting our own characteristics and advantages and keeping up with the pace of new scientific and technological revolution and industrial transformation in the world. On the other hand, we should also be soberly aware that in the face of new circumstances and new requirements, our country's independent innovation capacity is not yet strong enough and our systems and mechanisms in respect of science and technology are not yet able to meet the demands of economic and social development and international competition. We must enhance our sense of opportunity, sense of crisis, and sense of responsibility; firmly seize the opportunity for a new revolution in science and technology and an industrial transformation, the opportunity for adjusting the world structure of scientific and technological innovation, and the opportunity for steadily raising the level of economic development and steadily expanding the market; steadfastly focus on independent innovation; deepen the reform of the science and technology system; provide institutional and mechanism-based safeguards for building an innovation-oriented country at a faster pace; and strive to ensure that our country's innovation capacity can be significantly enhanced in a reasonably short time.

Hu Jintao pointed out: The goals that we aim to achieve by 2020 are: to basically have in place a national innovation structure with Chinese characteristics that caters to the system of socialist market economy and conforms to the pattern of scientific and technological development; to markedly enhance the capacity for original innovation; to significantly boost the capacities for integrative innovation and re-innovation based on importation-digestion-assimilation; to achieve major original breakthroughs in scientific research in key fields; to realize development by leaps and bounds in technological research and development in strategic high-technology fields; to become one of the leading countries in the world in terms of innovation outcomes in a number of fields; to have a more optimized

Continued: National Science and Technology Innovation Conference Held in Beijing, Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao Deliver Important Speeches

environment for innovation; to have greatly enhanced innovation efficiency and the emergence of numerous innovators; to see scientific qualities of the whole nation generally elevated and the capacity of science and technology in supporting and leading economic and social development significantly augmented; and to become one of the innovation-oriented countries.

Hu Jintao emphasized: We have less than 10 years left before we can achieve the goal of becoming one of the innovation-oriented countries. The situation is very pressing and the task is very arduous. A top priority of the moment is to further emancipate the mind, deepen the reform, do away with all ideological and conceptual shackles and institutional and mechanism-related obstacles that straitjacket innovation, and unleash and develop science and technology as the primary productive force to the maximum extent.

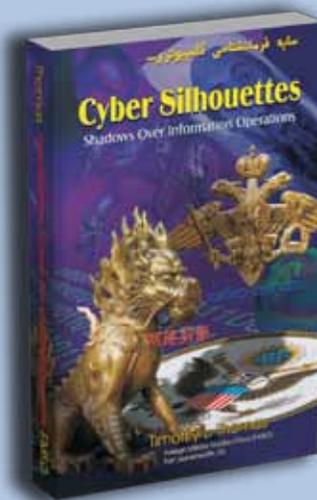
Hu Jintao emphasized: Building an innovation-oriented country is a common mission of the whole party and the whole society. Party committees and governments at all levels must enhance their understanding, have a greater sense of urgency, strengthen leadership, and work hard on execution. It is necessary to increase input in science and technology; give play to the guiding role of government in scientific and technological development; form a diversified, multilevel, and multi-channel system for investment in science and technology at a faster pace; and work toward the goal of increasing society-wide research and development funding as a percentage of gross domestic product to at least 2.5 percent by 2020. Party and government leaders at all levels, especially principal leaders, should study scientific and technological knowledge, persist in guiding development with scientific and technological knowledge, and listen to expert opinions and make a good job of scientific feasibility studies when making major decisions. They should care about and cherish scientific and technological personnel in their multitudes and study and solve, in a timely manner, various practical difficulties they encounter. The numerous scientists and technologists should always keep their motherland and their people in their heart and work hard to create innovative products that honor the expectations of the times and the people.

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: *On 1-2 August, Spanish police made a significant arrest of three alleged operatives, described as members of al Qaeda, whom authorities said were planning to carry out an attack. Both of the suspects arrested on 1 August on a bus traveling to France were Chechen, and the suspect arrested on 2 August, in the province of Cadiz, was Turkish. Details from the case are only beginning to emerge, so it isn't perfectly clear where these individuals were planning to attack, but authorities suggest that Gibraltar (in particular, one shopping center there) was the likely target.*

This arrest is significant for three major reasons. First, though Spanish authorities have arrested dozens of alleged militants since the deadly Madrid train bombings in 2004, these were the first arrestees since that attack to have been caught with explosives. For this reason, authorities believe that this cell had gone operational.

Second, though much more information will surely be revealed about this plot, the immediate designation of these men as "al Qaeda" is interesting. There is currently a debate about the vitality of al Qaeda as an organization, with some Western analysts suggesting that it is time to "declare victory" in the fight against the group. Did these operatives have a relationship with the jihadi group's core, or with one of its affiliates? Or was the "al Qaeda" terminology sloppily used as a kind of catch-all term for those trying to commit terrorist acts in service of jihadi causes? Given our limited visibility into al Qaeda's organizational dynamics, often we learn the most about it through the group's outputs, such as externally-focused plots. This plot may end up providing a number of relevant data points about how the group operates in late 2012, though one should obviously be cautious about reading too much into a single plot.

Spanish al Qaeda?

8 August 2012

Source: El Mundo, 8 August 2012



Logo for The Association of Victims of Terrorism, via <http://www.avt.org/>

La AVT se persona en la causa contra los tres presuntos miembros de Al Qaeda **(The AVT appears at the trial of three suspected al Qaeda members)**

The Association of Victims of Terrorism (AVT) has filed a complaint with the National Court (Audiencia Nacional) judge Pablo Ruz against three alleged members of al Qaeda arrested last week. In a letter sent to Central Court of Instruction no. 5 (al Juzgado Central de Instrucción número 5), the association accused both of the Russians of Chechen origin, Eldar Magomedov and Muhamed Ankari Adamov, who were arrested along with Turkish citizen Cenzig Yalcin, of the offenses of belonging to a terrorist organization and possessing explosives.

The AVT stated in its complaint that both Chechens moved to Spain in April or May of this year, where they contacted Yalcin "in order to prepare to carry out a terrorist attack."

Attack a Shopping Center

According to the researchers' hypothesis, the three alleged terrorists might have been planning to detonate an explosive device in the Puerta de Europa shopping center (which is located in Campo de Gibraltar) using a model airplane which has a two-meter wingspan and is capable of carrying a kilogram of explosives. The attack would coincide with the celebration of the Olympic Games in London.

Suspicions were raised after Magomedov and Adamov asked a paragliding instructor if they could take aerial pictures of the area where the attack was allegedly planned, to which he replied that it would first be necessary to request permission from Gibraltar authorities to fly over their airspace.

Yalcin argued before Ruz—who ordered his imprisonment on Friday for possession of explosives for terrorist purposes—that he had legally resided in Gibraltar for seven years, working there as an engineer in a construction company. He admitted to owning three model planes of different sizes, but justified the ownership based on his son's fondness for that hobby.

Third, it is always worth noting jihadis' targeting and tactical innovations. The likely target—a shopping center—is fairly familiar, as jihadi actors have attempted to strike such locations previously. However, the apparent intended means of attack, a remote-controlled model airplane, is rather new (other than the device that was to be used in the incident involving the megalomaniacal and apparently incompetent Rezwan Ferdaus, whom the FBI netted in a late 2011 sting operation).

The accompanying article from the prominent Spanish daily El Mundo details some of the latest information to emerge in this case, including the evidence against the accused. End FMSO Commentary (Gartenstein-Ross)

Continued: The AVT appears at the trial of three suspected al Qaeda members

The researchers' assessments are based on analysis of a video seized from Yalcin at his wife's home in the Línea de la Concepción (Cádiz), which shows a test flight with one of the planes. The Office of the National Court has ordered an expert to examine the voices heard on the video to determine whether they belong to any of the three arrestees.

“Serious Potential”

In the judge's order of unconditional imprisonment of the two Chechens on Sunday, Ruz alluded to the discovery of an “explosive device” of “serious potential harm” in a villa in La Línea, according to a report contributed by TEDAX [Spain's specialized bomb disposal team]. This device was composed of about 100 grams of explosive powder inside a glass container and, according to sources, was ready to be used, although it had no fuse.

Ruz sent the two Chechens to prison for another 48 hours last Friday pending the results of new investigative findings.

Radical Islam's Western Foothold:

Hugo Chavez and Hezbollah

By Sam Pickell

“This points to a particularly worrisome possibility: that Hezbollah will move beyond financing and support in Latin America to pursue operational objectives within the Western Hemisphere.”

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



FMSO Commentary: *Russia and Serbia have a long tradition of good mutual relations, and some point to the shared Orthodox faith as a major source of this amity. During the trauma of the 1990s, when Yugoslavia fell apart, political leaders in Belgrade looked to Moscow for support. When many in the West recognized the independence of the former Serbian enclave of Kosovo in 2008, Russian leaders stood firm with Serbia in non-recognition. For some Russians Serbia serves as a cautionary tale of the perfidy of the West. Harking back to Orthodox traditions, they reason that Serbia is on the ‘front-lines’ against the encroaching liberalism of the West.*

It comes as no surprise, then, that some Russian politicians want to use Orthodox soft power to strengthen their ties with Serbia. Russian private and governmental organizations help to sponsor various cultural programs, to include summer camps. The youth camp, as the abridged article points out, allegedly promotes a militant Christianity. Milica Jovanović clarifies the camp’s slogan “Healthy Life – Healthy Youth” in her article published by Peščanik. The children, according to the article, learn how a healthy body fosters and affects the Orthodox family, and how martial arts aid in defeating unpatriotic voices.¹

*Helping to host a summer camp designed to instill patriotic values among Serbian youth is a worthwhile cause. Confronting severe economic challenges (e.g., unemployment, poverty, crime and corruption), camps like the one described in the article attached have the potential to provide Serbian youth with the requisite skills to compete in a global economy. However, virulent nationalism combined with aggressive militarism and spiritual righteousness are goals that Russia and the Serbian leadership might be wary of promoting. **End FMSO Commentary (King-Savic)***

1. Jovanović, Milica. “Vesti”. *Peščanik*. July 19, 2012. <http://pescanik.net/2012/07/vesti/>

Serbian Summer Camp

18 July 2012



Source: “Apatin: Brainwashing Camp; Children’s Camp,” Belgrade e-novine, 18 Jul 2012. <http://www.e-novine.com>

Municipal location in Serbia with Apatin in red, by Dr. Blofeld (Based on File:Municipalities of Serbia.png) [CC-BY-SA-3.0 (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>)], via Wikimedia Commons

Far-Right Patriotic Front Opens Youth Camp in Serbia with Russia’s Support

The third so-called International Youth Education Camp — “Sabor [cohesion] 2012,” opened at the Junakovic Spa near Apatin on Sunday, 15 July 2012.

The main organizer of the event is a far-right association known as the Patriotic Front, which gained public attention a few years ago when it recruited Serb children for ultra-right camps in Russia, where little Serbs were taught everything about weapons — how to assemble and disassemble weapons, fire, throw bombs riding on horseback, fight, strengthen mind and body.

The rightist bacchanalia at the spa, opened by Apatin Mayor Zivorad Smiljanic from the Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS), was supported by the Russian Embassy in Belgrade and a few rightist and neo-fascist organizations from Russia. The slogan of the rightist gathering is “Healthy life, healthy youth.”

Smiljanic delivered the opening speech before a review of 70 participants from Serbia, Kosovo, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina (Serb Republic), and Russia. The president of the Patriotic Front Main Committee also gave an opening speech.

Alexander Konanihin, adviser to the Russian ambassador, addressed the participants and praised the “huge efforts by the municipality of Apatin and its mayor, who offered valuable help to establish the camp,” which, he said, fostered the traditions of Orthodox

Continued: Far-Right Patriotic Front Opens Youth Camp in Serbia with Russia's Support

Christians, the spirit of the Serbian nation and Serbian family.

The representative of the Patriotic Front thanked the officials in Apatin, the Russian Embassy in Serbia, Russian companies, the Moscow-based Kosovo Front, the Stjago, the People's Assembly, and local organizations, institutions, and persons who helped organize the camp and ensure its successful operation.

The slogan Healthy Life, Healthy Youth will gain in importance in the next 10 days through a carefully designed program of education, sports, competitions, and entertainment which closes on 24 July, after a review of the results which are expected to be good, the Front representative said.

The opening was attended by Dejan Drakulic, deputy mayor of Vukovar in Croatia, Mirko Pusara, mayor of Bac, Mirko Cveticanin, deputy mayor of Apatin, and senior representatives of the Apatin ORVS [Organization of Reserve Army Officers], the Serbian Army Fifth Training Center from Sombor, and the Sombor Police Department.

On first camp day, Smiljanic was awarded a prestigious charter as an honorable member of the extremist Patriotic Front.

“On day one, participants started activities in eight areas, with priority on themes against vice, juvenile delinquency, lessons on tradition, culture, and religion, medicine, environment, sports, and scouting.

“Significant interest by the media as well as camp participants and more than 20 trainers from all areas promise a bright future for the project, and the organizers plan to expand the camp to other areas in the years ahead, to grow in size and be an example of serious work with youth,” said the Patriotic Front.

The public at large heard of the far-right Patriotic Front when the organization recruited Serbian children into far-right camps in Russia a few years ago, where little Serbs were taught everything about weapons — how to assemble and disassemble them, fire, throw bombs while riding on horseback, fight, strengthen mind and body.

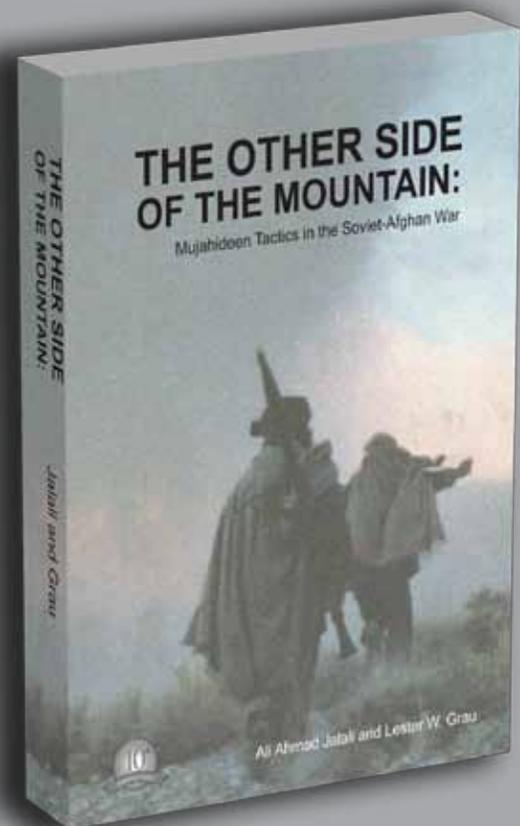
Extremists from Backa Palanka have contacts and cooperate with several Russian far-right and neo-fascist organizations such as the Stjago, the People's Convention, or the Kosovo Front — organizations that overtly funded the activities of the 1389 formation of Serb combat sheaves. The Patriotic Front website also promotes sundry local and foreign extremist lairs on the Internet where Serbian war crimes and atrocities are glorified.

The Patriotic Front is largely financed by the budgets of the municipality of Backa Palanka and of Vojvodina, and partly by private persons, institutions, and organizations, donors from Serbia

and beyond, said a post on the website of the organization, set up on 28 June 2007, as a nongovernmental organization seated in Backa Palanka.

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: On 3 August Iran's embassy in Kabul hosted an iftaar dinner for a group of Afghan media officials to discuss establishing a "union of journalists" to coordinate the work of pro-Iran media in Afghanistan. According to a report in the daily Hasht-e Sobh, representatives from major Afghan broadcast and print outlets attended the meeting, including Tamaddon (Civilization) TV, Noor (Light) TV, Ayna (Mirror) TV, Insaaf [Justice] (a daily newspaper), and Roshd [Progress] (a daily newspaper). Iranian cultural attaché Naser Jahan-Shahi chaired the meeting and pledged that the embassy would cover the expenses for the project.

The meeting selected Hussein Rezvani Bamyani, Director of the Cultural Committee of Afghanistan's Shia Ulema [Scholar] Council, as the head of the union. Jawad Mohseni, director of Tamaddon TV, and Zakaria Rahel, a prominent journalist, were appointed the first and second deputies respectively. Bamyani has close ties with the Iranian clerical establishment in Qom and promotes the teachings of Iranian revolutionary leader Grand Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini in Afghanistan. He has organized several anti-West and anti-Israel protest rallies in Kabul over the past years.

The leaked information alarmed many Afghans. Lawmakers and civil society activists condemned the initiative as overt interference in Afghan affairs. Afghanistan's upper house of parliament has tasked the country's intelligence agency to investigate the issue.

As the U.S. and NATO are winding down the war in Afghanistan, Iran has launched an aggressive campaign of hard power and soft power to speed up the withdrawal of foreign troops and maximize its influence in Afghanistan. While Iran's weapons and financial aid to the Taliban often make headlines, Tehran's soft power efforts

Iran's Hard and Soft Power in Afghanistan

14 August 2012

Sources: "Dar pai efsha saazi 8 Sobh, modakhela rasaana-yi Iran barasee meshawad" [After disclosure by Hasht-e Sobh, Iran's media interference is being investigated], 14 August 2012 http://www.8am.af/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=27044:—8—&catid=1:title&Itemid=553. "The journalists' union of Iran's cultural attaché" Hasht-e Sobh, 6 August 2012 [BBC Monitoring], Hasht-e Sobh, Kabul, Mazar-e Sharif, Konduz, Herat, Kandahar, Jalalabad in Dari 6 Aug 12 p 2



Afghans Gather to Listen to Local Radio Statio. by Dominic Medley/Internews Network [(CC BY-NC-SA 2.0) <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/2.0/deed.en>], via <http://www.flickr.com/photos/internews/2071312077/>

در پی افشاسازی ۸صبح، مداخله رسانه‌ای ایران بررسی می‌شود

(After disclosure by Hasht-e Sobh, Iran's media interference is being investigated)

Hasht-e Sobh has learnt that the Iranian cultural attaché in Kabul wants to form a journalists' union in collaboration with a number of pro-Iranian media outlets and journalists in Afghanistan.

Iran is supporting some media portals and programmes in order to counter the West and confuse the public about strategic cooperation agreements between Afghanistan and its Western allies. Spokesman for the National Directorate of Security had also made this point once.

in Afghanistan at the expense of U.S. interests are largely overlooked. According to Davood Moradian, former senior policy advisor at Afghanistan's Foreign Ministry, Iran spends \$100 million a year in Afghanistan on funding media, religious and cultural organizations. Quoting Afghan officials, a report in Reuters in May said Iran funded about one-third of Afghanistan's media, either financially or by providing content and direction.

As the article in Hasht-e Sobh points out, Iran through funding media aims to incite anti-American sentiments and strain ties between Afghanistan and the United States. As Kabul and Washington worked on drafting a Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) earlier this year, Iran waged a multilayered campaign to derail the pact. It tried to bribe Afghan lawmakers to reject the deal, and pro-Iran media outlets depicted the agreement as a U.S. tool to occupy Afghanistan. Despite all Iranian efforts, the Afghan parliament approved the pact.

Over the past decade Iran has played a two-faced game in Afghanistan. Tehran has fostered close ties to Kabul, aided Afghanistan's rebuilding, and invested in the country's industry and mining. Trade between Iran and Afghanistan increased from \$800 million in 2008 to \$2 billion last year. Conversely, Iran's Revolutionary Guards have provided weapons and money to the Taliban, fueled sectarian tension between the Sunnis and Shias, bribed Afghan politicians to influence policy in Kabul, and funded religious and media organizations to advance its own agenda.

*Iran's short-term and long-term objectives in Afghanistan appear to contradict one another. In the long term, Iran favors a stable, multiethnic, and friendly Afghanistan. Iran is politically and ideologically opposed to the Taliban and sees the extremist Sunni group as an instrument of its regional rivals Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. At present, however, due to perceived threats of a military action against its nuclear facilities, Iran sees the presence of U.S. troops in Afghanistan as a bigger threat. It, therefore, has accelerated its hard power and soft power efforts to drive the United States out of Afghanistan. **End FMSO Commentary (Majidyar)***

Continued: After disclosure by Hasht-e Sobh, Iran's media interference is being investigated

Pro-Iranian media outlets operate in a fashion that even ordinary audience realize that they serve as tools in the hands of the Iranian government, which seeks to interfere in Afghanistan. When a newspaper refers to the leader of the Iranian government, Sayyed Ali Hussein Khamenei, as Imam and another media outlet broadcasts a documentary entitled "The Consequence of Occupation", there is no reason why someone should not believe that they are affiliated with the government of Iran and that they are being used to interfere in Afghanistan. Now that the Iranian government wants to form a journalists' union, it only aims to coordinate the affairs of the media working as Iranian proxies in Afghanistan.

Unions are created to protect rights of journalists, defend freedom of expression and free circulation of news. Throughout the world, these unions defend journalists' rights, the rights of citizens to have access to information and the principle of freedom of expression enshrined in the Declaration of Human Rights.

Journalists' unions were created in Afghanistan after the fall of the Taleban. These unions are supported by international unions of journalists and international pro-democracy organizations.

In Iran, the government does not recognize freedom of expression. It tortures its critics and throws them to jails. It does not allow any anti-government organizations to run their own media outlets. How can it then create a journalists' union which can support freedom of expression and journalists' rights in Afghanistan? The truth is that the government of Iran is exploiting the open environment and freedom of expression in Afghanistan. It has supported a number of pro-Iranian media outlets to work for the Iranian government and spread propaganda against the government of Afghanistan and its international allies. Unfortunately, there are many such media outlets.

It now seems that the Iranian government is following its policy of interference aimed at damaging democracy, security and cooperation between Afghanistan and the world. It wants to coordinate work between pro-Iranian media in Afghanistan. The government of Iran thinks it can achieve its nefarious objectives by coordinating these activities. Unfortunately, the government of Afghanistan has so far not wanted to fight against the media which serve Iranian interests and which harm Afghanistan. The Afghan government has only exposed the names of some media outlets established in Afghanistan by the government of Iran to work for that government. Although it was necessary to expose the names of these media and this action informed the public, it was not enough. The Directorate of National Security should have used the evidence it had to approach the media violations commission and the judiciary to stop these media outlets from operating to serve the Iranian government and to harm the government of Afghanistan.

Journalists who will be used by the Iranian cultural lobby in the creation of a union should boycott the Iranian lobby if they are professionally committed and patriots. They should not allow their pens and tongues to be used to serve the interests of the Iranian government, which arms the Taleban, wants democracy to fail in Afghanistan and which wants to see Afghanistan poor and miserable.

FMSO Commentary: *The recent murder of General Abdullo Nazarov (of the National Security Committee, GKNB, of the Gorno-Badakhshan province) and the subsequent clashes in the city of Khorog are certainly destabilizing factors for Tajikistan's security, but it is important that the incidents are not blown out of proportion or mislabeled. There was concern among security analysts and the media about Tajikistan's stability when a group of militants escaped from a Dushanbe prison in August 2010, which led to clashes with militants in the Rasht District from September 2010-April 2011. There was also a suicide bombing at a police station in the city of Khujand in September 2010.*

These events were immediately thought to be related to violence in neighboring Afghanistan, specifically that the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) was involved, and that Tajikistan would again collapse into a situation like the Tajik Civil War (1992-97). There is no question that the events from 2010-11 threatened the country's stability, but the conclusion was drawn prematurely. Security forces recaptured or killed the majority of the prisoners and destroyed the militant group in Rasht, even after suffering a number of casualties and operational setbacks. It took several months before more information came out.

*Not long after the clashes in Khorog started there were several videos posted on You Tube by Pamir TV (see: <http://www.youtube.com/user/pamir24tv?feature=watch>) that show a few minutes of what happened. Additionally, Tolib Ayombekov (about whom more is referenced in the article) surrendered to authorities on 12 August. At the time it was released the following article provided a fairly good account of what happened, but it is important to remember that a clear enough picture of the events has yet to come out. **End FMSO Commentary (Stein)***

Violent Incidents in Tajikistan

27 July 2012

Source: “Темные тучи над Хорогом (Dark Clouds over Khorog),” Asia-Plus, 27 July 2012. <http://news.tj/ru/newspaper/article/temnye-tuchi-nad-khorogom>

State National Security Committee Gen. Abdullo Nazarov was killed July 21. The government suspects he was killed by Tolib Ayombekov, and efforts to arrest him have resulted in a major battle in the GBAO. [Radio Ozodi], via http://centralasiaonline.com/en_GB/articles/caii/features/main/2012/07/24/feature-01



Темные тучи над Хорогом (Dark Clouds over Khorog)

In Khorog there was an announcement of a complete halt in the special operations of the security forces of Tajikistan against the Chief Deputy of the Ishkashim Border Guards, Tolib Ayombekov. He is charged with the assassination of General Abdullo Nazarov. There were dozens of people killed or wounded during the fighting.

How the tragedy started...The tragic events in Badakhshan (the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Province) began with the assassination of the head of the regional department of the GKNB, General Nazarov. He died of stab wounds on the evening of July 21, a few kilometers from Khorog – the administrative center of the province. According to a source in the power structures, negotiations with Ayombekov then began. He agreed to hand over his men who were suspected of attacking Nazarov. However, on the morning of July 22 helicopters from the “Alpha” group arrived and Ayombekov refused to continue negotiations. Ayombekov believes the troops are not there for four people, but for former commanders (of the UTO) and therefore refuses to cooperate.

The beginning of the special operation...On the evening of July 23, information came out about the beginning of the operation in Khorog. On July 24, the GKNB and the Interior Ministry of Tajikistan issued a joint statement that, according to a preliminary investigation, blamed an illegal armed group led by Ayombekov of killing Nazarov. “Ayombekov rejected proposals (to surrender and lay down their arms) and began armed resistance. The security forces of Tajikistan have started a special operation to capture and bring to justice members of the illegal group of Ayombekov.” – the ministries said in a joint statement.

Fights and losses...according to information from Khorog, intense gunfire took place mainly on three streets. Security forces later released information on casualties, and according to the public relations head of the GKNB, 42 were killed on July 24 (30 members of the armed group and 12 among the security forces). Radio “Ozodi” reported that Ayombekov has fled to Afghanistan.

Cease-fire...on Wednesday July 25 in Khorog, a cease-fire was declared. The chairman of the Gorno-Badakhshan Province reported that the President of Tajikistan has decided to implement a full cease-fire in Khorog. The requirement of disarmament of illegal armed groups remains in force. According to preliminary data, there were about 20 civilians killed in Khorog.

FMSO Commentary: *The following article about the Border Guards of Kazakhstan (which fall under the command of the National Security Committee or KNB) is an interesting look at some of the tasks that the service performs. While poaching in the Caspian Sea has been a major problem for a number of years, it is not the most serious problem the Border Guards face. The Border Guards' main problems are interdicting cross-border crime (particularly related to drug trafficking), combating extremist groups, and preventing conflicts in neighboring states from spreading into Kazakhstan, all of which take place on the land border.*

The article is significant not so much for demonstrating the activity of the Border Guards, but for the other information it reveals. The 25 ships in the Border Guards' fleet is roughly equal to the number that Kazakhstan's Navy has in service, although the latter has larger patrol vessels, better access to ports, and a new armed ship that was put into service in the spring of 2012. (The new vessel, aptly named "Kazakhstan," was constructed in Kazakhstan's Oral ship building facility and is armed with anti-aircraft missiles and 23mm cannons, and a heavy machine gun.) There are orders for additional ships for both the Navy and the Borders Guards.

While the Border Guards may not have a need for an armed vessel like the Navy's, more patrol ships would enable the service to better perform its tasks. It will be worth watching how many ships are produced in Oral in the next few years, as it will be a good indicator of how much progress Kazakhstan's defense industry is making and in which direction the country's security priorities are headed. End FMSO Commentary (Stein)

Patrolling the Caspian

13 August 2012

Source: Source: Severniy, Vladimir. "Виртуозы Каспия (Virtuosos of the Caspian Sea)," Megapolis, 13 August 2012. http://megapolis.kz/art/Virtuozzi_Kaspiya



Crew of the Baydi detained by border guards. Photo by Vladimir Severniy, via <http://meapolis.kz>

Виртуозы Каспия (Virtuosos of the Caspian Sea)

After several warning shots were fired from the Mi-8 helicopter, the border guards opened fire. I observed how the bullets hit the water in front of the ship of poachers on the vessel Baydi. This did not reduce their speed; (instead) they tried to maneuver under the helicopter.

The crew of the vessel Baydi did not submit to an inspection of service members of the Border Guards of the National Security Committee (KNB) of Kazakhstan. During the chase poachers, perhaps getting rid of evidence, were throwing bags and other objects overboard. Then, the border guards had to take tough measures to stop the boat. They did it, as emphasized by General Shintas Utyapov, in strict accordance with the law "On the Federal Borders of the Republic of Kazakhstan."

"First, we warned them on speakerphone, then fired (warning) shots and then (shot) the engines. You know what they usually do in this case? They lay down on the engines to protect them. When one of three engines stalled, the Baydi threw up a white flag and pleaded for help. We saw that a crew member was wounded in the leg. To save his life, a decision was made for an emergency evacuation. Under conditions of strong crosswinds, the crew managed to lower a winch to the wounded man and delivered him to the provincial hospital." - said Utyapov.

(Severniy) "Shintas Sarbasovich, when your pilots descended to the boat and threw the cable to pick up the wounded, the poachers could have caught the hook over the stern, hit the gas and pulled the helicopter into the sea." (Shintas Utyapov) "To be honest, we had these concerns. That is why a sniper had all on the boat in his sights when they lowered the winch. I give the order in what situation to shoot."

According to Major-General Utyapova, large-scale poaching is a major threat to the existence of sturgeon as a species. The border guards in recent years have greatly intensified the fight against illegal fishing in the Caspian Sea. "We have 12 radar stations, which can detect movement of all ships, including high-speed and low-dimensional craft."

In the border guards division there are about 25 boats. According to military experts, this "does not provide reliable protection of all the marine area." There is a need to purchase at least another 20 ships, including ships equipped with helipads.

***FMSO Commentary:** The shooting that took place between the border guards services of Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan on 17 July is not the first such incident to happen for either country, much less in Central Asia during the past several years. Not all incidents in the region, however, result in deaths or injuries. It may never be known exactly who or which side started shooting first; the border guards, and to some extent the civilians (construction workers from Kyrgyzstan were repairing a road on an unmarked part of the border, which caused the Borders Guards of Uzbekistan to demand that they stop and leave the area, ultimately leading to an argument and the shooting) of both countries involved share a portion of the blame. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of this incident is that while the two sides released strong statements accusing the other of instigating the shooting, cross-border traffic has likely resumed just as the article mentions.*

*This incident should not be viewed as an example of how the border demarcation problems in the region can cause violent incidents, but rather how these incidents often do not develop into a larger conflict. Recently there has been much attention on Central Asia and when the next conflict would occur, particularly in the wake of the June 2010 violence in southern Kyrgyzstan, several terrorist attacks in 2011 in Kazakhstan, and government security forces' operations against militants in Tajikistan in 2010-11. While this type of incident could have been the spark that started another conflict, it also demonstrates that incidents in the region often blow over just as quickly as they occur. **End FMSO Commentary (Stein)***

Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan Border Shooting

20 July 2012



Source: Погранвойска ГКНБ: Перестрелка между пограничниками двух государств была спровоцирована и начата пограничным нарядом Узбекистана (The Border Guards of the GKNB: the shooting between the border guards of the two countries was instigated and started by an order of the border guards of Uzbekistan),” K-news, 20, July 2012.

<http://www.knews.kg/ru/action/19263/>

Kyrgyzstan/Uzbekistan border. Photo by Kabar National News Agency, via <http://kabar.kg/eng/law-and-order/full/4763>

Погранвойска ГКНБ: Перестрелка между пограничниками двух государств была спровоцирована и начата пограничным нарядом Узбекистана
(The Border Guards of the GKNB: the shooting between the border guards of the two countries was instigated and started by an order of the border guards of Uzbekistan)

The National Security Committee of Kyrgyzstan (GKNB) border troops expressed surprise at the official announcement of the Border Guards of the Uzbek SNB (National Security Service) on the news site 12news.uz. According to the statement of the armed incident on July 17 in Alabuka, near Jalal-Abad, was called “an armed attack by the Kyrgyz Border Guards.”

This statement is at odds with agreements reached during a meeting of the leadership of the border departments of the two countries on July 18, 2012. Kyrgyzstan’s Border Guards have officially declared that the border skirmish between the two countries had been provoked and initiated by Uzbekistan, of which there is conclusive evidence.

The Border Guards of Kyrgyzstan were forced to return fire. As a result of the incident, a sergeant (of the Kyrgyz Border Guards) was killed and a civilian was wounded. All measures were taken to prevent an escalation of the incident and resolve the situation peacefully, first at the place of the conflict and then at negotiating table. The result was that the border agencies agreed to allow people and transport to continue crossing.

The Border Guards of Kyrgyzstan urged the SNB of Uzbekistan to refrain from making such statements about their Kyrgyz colleagues.

FMSO Commentary: *The late July shootout between Kyrgyz and Uzbek border troops at the Gava border crossing point near the village of Kyrgyz Bulak-Bashi is the latest example of how oddly drawn borders, rugged topography and intermeshed infrastructure have caused significant difficulties for post-Soviet Central Asia. In this particular instance the village of Bulak-Bashi is geographically separated from Kyrgyzstan due to mountainous terrain, and is further bottled into the valley due to the Kyrgyz-Uzbek border. The only practical way of traveling to the rest of Kyrgyzstan involves crossing through Uzbek territory.*

Unfortunately, the case of Bulak-Bashi is not unique in Central Asia. The infrastructure is so interwoven that travel by highway or rail between major cities within a given republic often requires travel through a neighboring republic, for example, Uzbekistan's highway between Tashkent and Samarkand, which passes through Kazakh territory. These situations have arisen due to the Soviet policies of developing infrastructure to support the region as a whole, not for the sustainability of separate sovereign entities. The post-Soviet states of Central Asia cannot make unilateral decisions about water resources, pipelines, roads, and railways that crisscross the borders of Central Asia.

*The confluence of mountainous terrain, irregular borders, enclaves, and shared Soviet infrastructure makes the complete sealing of borders nearly impossible, and occasionally, due to geographic necessity, has forced Central Asian governments to establish certain unofficial agreements to allow informal crossing of the borders. The following account of the Bulak-Bashi border incident sheds some light on how unofficial agreements have been made out of necessity, and their importance in the Fergana Valley. It is also important to note that the Gava checkpoint was opened soon after hostilities, likely due to strong economic ties between Bulak-Bashi and the adjacent Uzbek village of Varzyk. **End FMSO Commentary (Bartles)***

Border Blow-out at Bulak-Bashi

19 July 2012



Source: “Official Tashkent calls incident on Kyrgyz-Uzbek border “armed ruffian attack” of Kyrgyz special task force officers,” Website of Tandem Post, 19 July 2012. <http://www.tandempost.com/TPnews/4556-politics-3/official-tashkent-calls-incident-on-kyrgyz-uzbek-b>

Kyrgyz Special task force by Tandem Post, via www.tandempost.com

Official Tashkent calls incident on Kyrgyz-Uzbek border “armed ruffian attack” of Kyrgyz special task force officers

Uzbekistan voiced the official version of the incident that took place on July 17 on the Uzbek-Kyrgyz border calling it “armed ruffian attack” of Kyrgyz special task force officers. One Uzbek border guard was killed and the second was seriously injured. The governor of Kyrgyz rural municipality threatened to explode the Kasansai reservoir, official Tashkent said in its official statement about the incident.

According to the State Border Protection Committee of the National Security Service of Uzbekistan, which issued its statement through the news agency 12news.uz, Uzbek border guards stopped 2 vehicles belonging to Kyrgyz citizens near the Gava border checkpoint, Chust district, Namangan region, to check ID documents.

The car drivers refused to present documents and they were not allowed to cross into the border of Uzbekistan, the statement reads.

“Residents of the frontier area of Kyrgyzstan surrounded Uzbek border guards and demanded to let the Kyrgyz vehicle go voicing physical intimidation. Governor of Bulakbashi rural municipality A.Usenbaev instructed the truck driver to run into Uzbek servicemen... In case Uzbek border guards refused letting Kyrgyz vehicles cross the border, Usenbaev threatened to explode the Kasansai reservoir,” the statement said.

Uzbek border guards “tried to escape from the aggressive crowd and encountered shots fired by Kyrgyz special task force officers (14 servicemen), who appeared on that section of the border for unclear reasons,” the Uzbek Border Protection Commission said.

“A serviceman of the Border Troops of Uzbekistan, private Ibragimov, died of the gunshot wound, sergeant Eshnazarov was severely wounded in the result of the armed ruffian attack,” the Border Protection Committee said.

Uzbekistan said “this is the second case of armed attack of the servicemen of the Border Troops of Kyrgyzstan.”

Uzbekistan expressed its protest to the command of the Border Troops of Kyrgyzstan

Continued: Official Tashkent calls incident on Kyrgyz-Uzbek border “armed ruffian attack” of Kyrgyz special task force officers

“allowing such provocative actions leading to death of servicemen” and called for thorough investigation of the incident.

According to the version of Kyrgyzstan, the incident happened on the section of the border which is a disputable area. Villagers started repair on the road. The permission for repair of the road was obtained from Uzbekistan two weeks ago. However, when villagers started repair, Uzbek border guards were the first to fire shots into the air and then into locals. Kyrgyz border guards opened fire in return. According to the Border Troops of Kyrgyzstan, one Kyrgyz border guard died, 2 villagers received serious wounds.

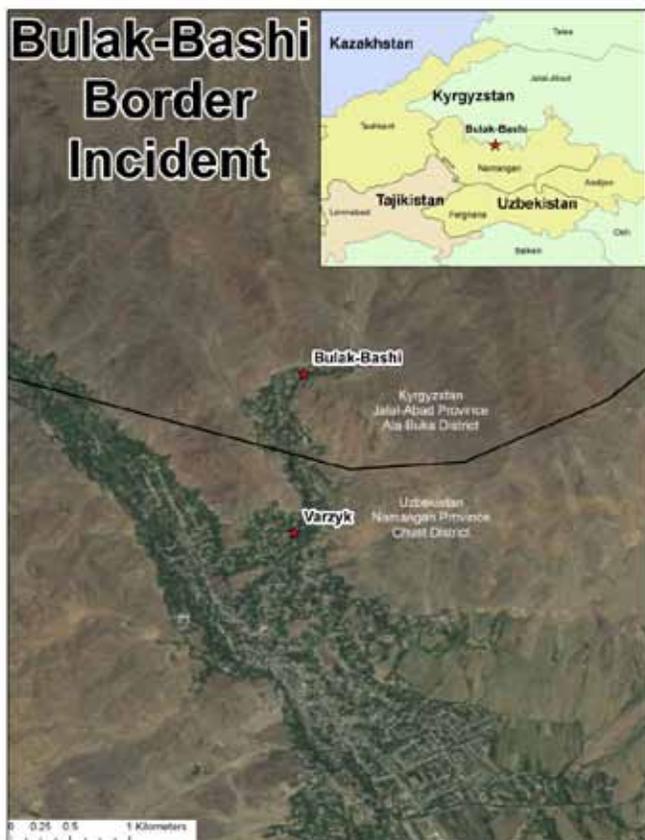
The Kazakhmys Gold Kyrgyzstan, company financing construction of the road, in turn confirmed that the shootout between border guards of Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan took place on the Kyrgyz section of the road on July 17 in Kok-Tash rural municipality, Jalal-Abad region.

The Kazakhmys Gold Kyrgyzstan confirmed death of Kyrgyz border guard Kadyrbek Abdrasul uulu, as well as wounding of villager Kubanychbek Adylov.

The company added Kok-Tash village is located in a small remote canyon bordering with Uzbekistan. Before 2008, villagers had to cross the territory of Uzbekistan to get to other parts of Kyrgyzstan. After the borders were closed, people had to reach other places using animals.

The technical road connecting the village with other villages was built later on. The condition of the road does not allow to use buses. The company finances construction of a new road now. The decision to build a road was made by the Kyrgyz government in 2009, construction is carried out by a local contractor.

Kyrgyzstan Hits Back at Uzbekistan over Border Incident



Source: “Kyrgyzstan Hits Back at Uzbekistan over Border Incident,” Website of independent opposition Bishkek newspaper Belyy Parus, 19 July 2012. <http://www.paruskg.info/>

Map of Bulak-Bashi border incident by Charles Bartles/FMSO

The committee [of the Uzbek National Security Service] for protecting the state border expresses its strong protest against the command of the Kyrgyz State National Security Committee’s Border Troops, which failed to prevent provocative actions that caused the deaths of servicemen, and urges it to carry out a thorough investigation into this incident.

[Passage omitted: the Uzbek border protection committee blames Kyrgyz villagers and border guards for the incident]

The Kyrgyz State National Security Committee’s Border Troops express bewilderment at the official statement by the committee of the Uzbek National Security Service for protecting the state border, which was posted on the website of the news agency 12news.uz.

The statement described the armed incident that happened in Ala-Buka District in the Kyrgyz Republic’s Dzhahal-Abad Region on 17 July 2012 as an “armed bandit attack by Kyrgyz border guards”.

This statement runs counter to agreements reached at talks between the command of the Kyrgyz and Uzbek border departments on 18 July

Continued: Kyrgyzstan Hits Back at Uzbekistan over Border Incident

2012 on carrying out a joint impartial investigation into the incident and closely clear up all the circumstances.

The Kyrgyz State National Security Committee's Border Troops officially state that the Uzbek Republic's border guards provoked and began the exchange of fire between the two states' border guards and there is irrefutable evidence of this [thesis]. Kyrgyz border guards were forced to return fire. A serviceman of the Kyrgyz State National Security Service's Border Troops, Sergeant Kadyrbek Abdrasul uulu died in the armed incident and a Kyrgyz citizen, Kubanych Adilov, was injured.

So the phrase "armed bandit attack" describes most likely the actions of the Uzbek border guards who were the first to use firearms against civilians of a different state, what is more, on territory of the Kyrgyz Republic. Similar actions of Uzbek border guards are a grave violation of agreements reached as part of bilateral and multilateral treaties.

The Kyrgyz State National Security Committee's Border Troops did everything in their power to prevent the armed incident from getting escalated and to peacefully settle the situation first directly at the scene of the conflict and then at the negotiating table. Thanks to this, representatives of the Kyrgyz and Uzbek border departments reached an agreement on resuming the movement of Kyrgyz people and vehicles and Uzbek border guards at the section of the state border which is not delineated.

The parties reached an agreement on continuing repair work on roads in sections of the state border outside the Uzbek border post Gava which have been delineated.

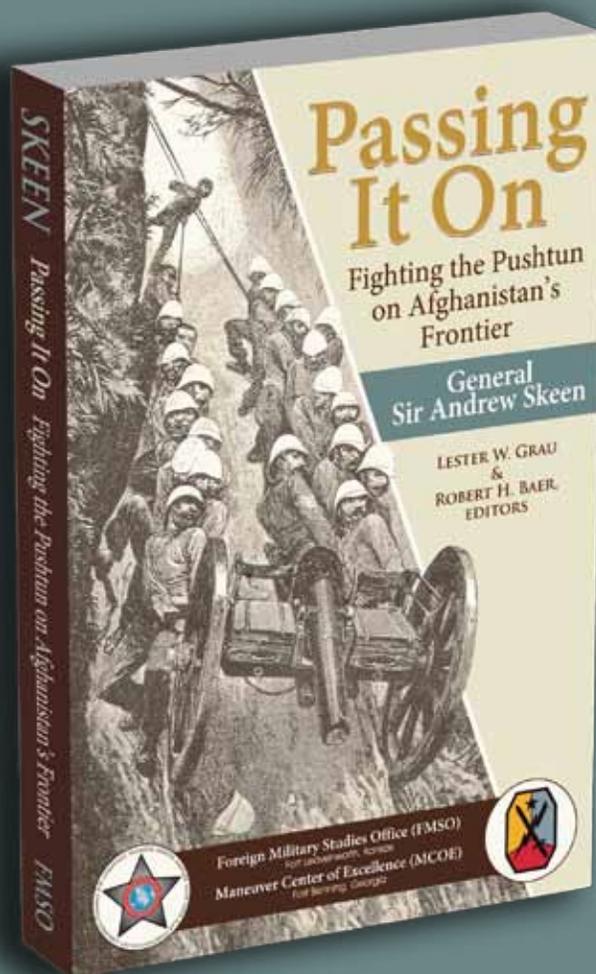
The Kyrgyz and Uzbek border departments will discuss in future the question of whether or not the road connecting Bulak-Bashi to Kok-Tash [both are Kyrgyz villages in Ala-Buka District in Kyrgyzstan's southwestern Dzhahalal-Abad Region] that goes through a section of the border which has not been delineated should be repaired.

The Kyrgyz State National Security Committee's Border Troops urges the committee of the Uzbek National Security Service for protecting the state border to refrain from making groundless remarks against their Kyrgyz counterparts and to jointly carry out an investigation into the armed incident.

Only consolidation of joint efforts will make it possible for us to bring about border security in the two states.

[Signed] The department for relations with the public and media.

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: On 3 August RBC.ru, a mainstream Russian media company targeting the Russian business community, published an article about Moscow supplying oil and considering giving loans to the Syrian government to counteract the effects of U.S. and European Union economic sanctions meant to cripple Assad's regime.

While Western media attention focuses on Russian weapons transfers to Assad and the Kremlin's diplomatic support for Assad at the United Nations Security Council, provision of long-term economic support serves as a reliable indicator of Russia's direction, regardless of any more hopeful diplomatic statements coming out of the Russian Foreign Ministry.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has often stated that Russia's Syria policy is not specifically pro-Assad, but rather adheres to the belief that any transition in Syria should be based on the Syrian people's wishes.¹ Hence, Lavrov argued that Russian warships sailing to Tartus, Russia's only military base outside the borders of the former Soviet Union, were not meant for Assad specifically, but rather to protect Russian citizens in Syria.²

Russia's oil sales and possible extension of credit, however, suggest that, despite Lavrov's officially stated Russian position, the Kremlin seeks to see Assad stay in power, regardless of what the Syrian people may want. The greater the Russian business investment in Syria, the less likely the Kremlin will be to back down. **End FMSO Commentary (Borshchevskaya)**

1. Reuters, "Russia Accuses West of Blackmail, Stands Firm on Syria," July 16, 2012. <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/07/16/us-syria-crisis-lavrov-idUSBRE86F08O20120716>

2. "Russian Warships 'to Set Sail for Syria.' Navy Official Says Amphibious Ships Preparing to Sail for Tartus to Protect Russian Nationals and Possibly Evacuate Equipment." The Guardian, June 18, 2012. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/jun/18/russian-navy-sail-syria-tartus>

Moscow Will Sell Oil to Assad to Counteract Western Sanctions

3 August 2012

Source: "Rossiya Pomozhet Sirii Den'gami i Nefteproduktami" (Russia Will Help Syria with Money and Oil)," RBC.ru (RossBusinessConsulting), 3 August 2012. <http://top.rbc.ru/economics/03/08/2012/663091.shtml>



Qadri Jamil by Alexander Naturskin/RIA Novosti, via <http://en.rian.ru>

Rossiia Pomozhet Sirii Den'gami i Nefteproduktami (Russia Will Help Syria with Money and Oil)

Syrian delegation discussed in Moscow possibilities of supplying Russian oil to Syria to compensate for the economic sanctions imposed by the European Union and the United States, said Syria's Deputy Prime Minister Jamil Qadri at a press conference in Moscow.

"I must say that we have come to certain agreements. We have developed a mechanism with which we hope to overcome our people's demand for these oil products," he said.

In addition, according to deputy prime minister, Russia promised to consider the possibility of extending credit to Syria. "This issue was raised before the Russian side. The question of Russia giving Syria a certain amount of hard currency to cope with the current situation in the country was raised," he said.

It should be noted that sanctions against Syria were imposed by the E.U., U.S., and some Arab countries. These measures have been repeatedly tightened. In particular, on July 23, 2012, the European Union decided to expand sanctions against Syria. At that time, the ban on supply of weapons into the country was tightened, and also the list of restricting actions

Continued: Russia Will Help Syria with Money and Oil

against the country's leadership was expanded. Under the new rules, inspections of aircrafts and vessels suspected of transporting weapons and other prohibited goods to Syria will be carried out in E.U. countries.

In addition, E.U. finance ministers froze assets of 26 individuals associated with the regime of Syria's President Bashar al-Assad and banned them from entering E.U. countries. Also, European companies were prohibited from doing business with three Syrian companies.

Meanwhile, in May 2012, U.S. President Barack Obama extended sanctions against Syria which were introduced in 2004. Later, it became known that the U.S. Treasury Department imposed sanctions on Syria's International Islamic Bank (SIIB). In accordance with the law on non-proliferation of weapons, bank assets in the U.S. were frozen. In addition, the Treasury banned U.S. companies and private entrepreneurs from doing business with SIIB.

After the introduction of international sanctions, Syria began to experience disruptions in energy supplies, and by May was able to meet only half the demand for natural gas. As reported by Syria's then Oil Minister Sufian Alaw, Syria seeks to build up oil and gas imports from countries that did not support the sanctions. Among them are Venezuela, Algeria, and Iran.

An armed confrontation between the government and the opposition continues in Syria since March 2011. The opposition demands resignation of President Bashar al-Assad, accusing government forces of mass atrocities against the civilian population. Damascus argues that under the guise of democratic slogans "gang of armed terrorists," supported by foreign radical Islamist groups, are operating in the country.

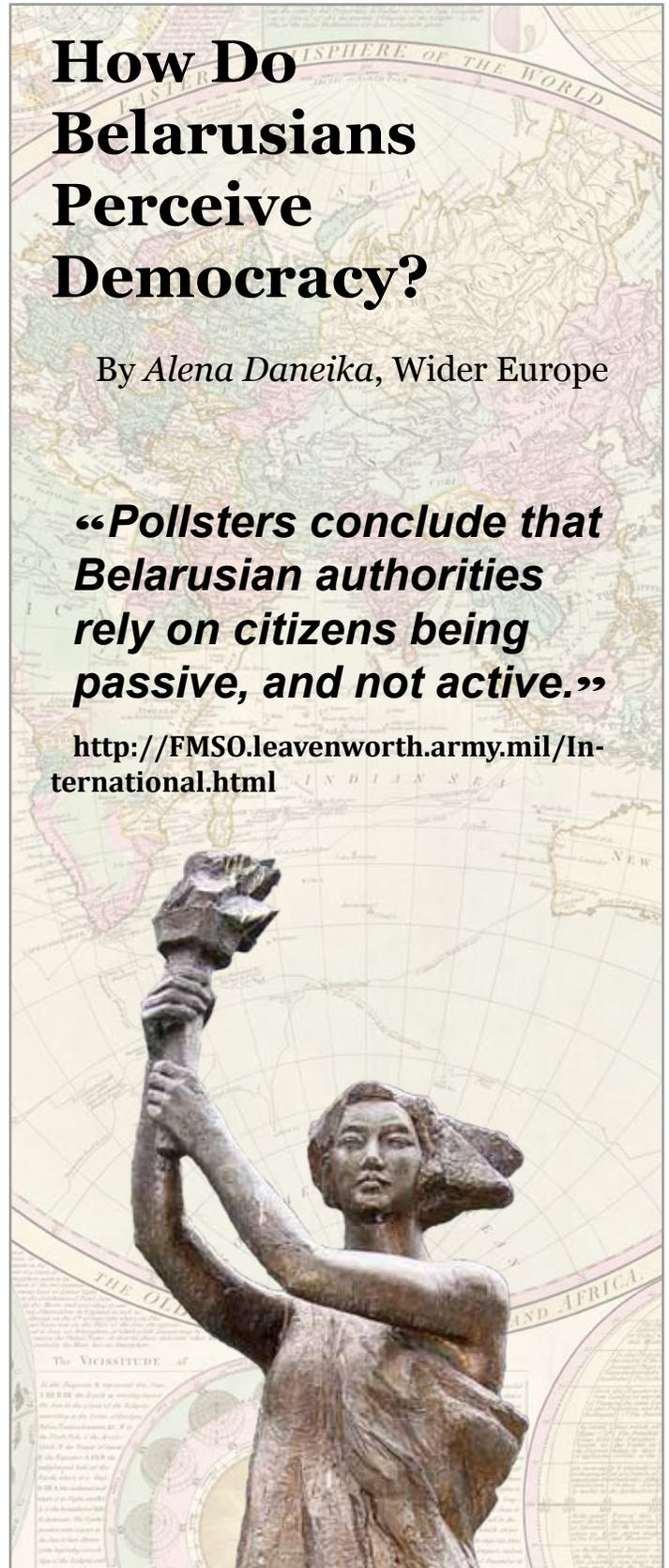
The United Nations reported in March that in the Syrian conflict, more than nine thousand civilians have died, but have stopped counting the deaths since then. According to current estimates of the human rights organization "Syrian Observatory for Human Rights," at least nineteen thousand people died during the conflict in Syria.

How Do Belarusians Perceive Democracy?

By Alena Daneika, Wider Europe

***“Pollsters conclude that
Belarusian authorities
rely on citizens being
passive, and not active.”***

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



FMSO Commentary: *On 3 August Neft Rossii (Oil of Russia), a mainstream trade website for Russian oil-related issues, reported Baghdad's intention to sanction Gazprom if the company signs an oil agreement with Iraqi Kurdistan. The Iraqi Oil Ministry has repeatedly said that all international companies that sign separate deals with Iraqi Kurdistan without first seeking Baghdad's approval will be subject to sanctions.*

Exxon Mobil was the first major oil company to buck Baghdad's threats to sign with the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). Baghdad considers the agreement illegal, but the KRG claims the constitutional right to issue oil tenders. Both the Iraqi central government and the KRG are operating without a finalized oil law. Many international companies find Kurdistan attractive, because of both its relative security and the fact that KRG offers companies a production-sharing agreement, a better deal than Baghdad's fixed rate per barrel of oil extracted.

According to the Neft Rossii's article, the Iraqi Oil Ministry is currently unsure of the status of Gazprom's agreement with the KRG. English sources such as the Washington Post do not question that an agreement between Gazprom and the KRG has in fact been signed.¹

If the agreement is finalized, Gazprom joins Exxon Mobil, Chevron, and Total in defying Baghdad. In July 2012 the Iraqi Oil Ministry broke cooperation with Chevron by banning it from future oil deals,² but it has not fully blacklisted the other two companies.

Numerous small and medium-sized oil contracts have been signed in Iraqi Kurdistan since 2003. However, when major oil companies bypass Baghdad to sign contracts directly with a region over which the Iraqi central government still claims to represent, they are, in fact recognizing the region as an independent entity.

Baghdad to Sanction Gazprom if It Signs an Oil Deal with Kurdistan. Implications for Russia-Iraq Relations

3 August 2012

Source: Irak planiruyet primenit' sanktsii protiv 'Gazproma' v sluchaye ego sotrudnichestva s Kurdskoj avtonomiyei (Iraq Plans to Impose Sanctions Against Gazprom if it Cooperates with Iraqi Kurdistan)," Neft Rossii (Oil of Russia), 3 August 2012. <http://www.oilru.com/news/329798/>



Gazprom logo via www.gazprom.com

Ирак планирует применить санкции против Газпрома в случае его сотрудничества с Курдской автономией
(Iraq plans to impose sanctions against Gazprom in the event that Gazprom cooperates with the Autonomous Kurdistan Region of Iraq.)

Iraq plans to impose sanctions against Gazprom in the event that Gazprom cooperates with the Autonomous Kurdistan Region of Iraq. Iraqi Oil Ministry representative Asym Jihad made this announcement, reports Trend agency. "The Iraqi government has repeatedly stated that all international companies collaborating with Iraqi Kurdistan without Baghdad's permission will be subject to sanctions, and Russian companies are no exception," said A. Jihad.

He also noted that the Ministry does not have accurate information about Gazprom's signing an agreement with Iraqi Kurdistan, but will investigate this matter, and therefore has sent an official inquiry Gazprom, and is waiting for a response. According to A. Jihad, if this information is confirmed, Gazprom could lose its share of Iraqi oil fields.

A. Jihad recalled that the Russian gas monopoly has major contracts with Iraq to develop

Gazprom, Russia's gas monopoly and major oil producer, became the operator of Iraq's Badra field in 2010 as part of a strategy to expand oil production outside of Russia. Gazprom also has ties to the Russian government. The Kremlin has been looking to expand its presence and influence in Iraq since 2003.

*Historically, Russia had favored Baghdad and opposed Kurdistan's separation from Iraq. If Gazprom pursues an oil deal in Kurdistan, and Baghdad forces it to choose between Iraq and Iraqi Kurdistan, the Kremlin will need to make a watershed decision about its intentions in Iraq. **End FMSO Commentary (Borshchevskaya)***

1. Associated Press, "Russia's Gazprom Neft Inks 2 Oil Deals with Iraq's Kurdish Region in Defiance of Baghdad," August 2, 2012. http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/russias-gazprom-neft-inks-2-oil-deals-with-iraqs-kurdish-region-in-defiance-of-baghdad/2012/08/02/gJQAFpW4QX_story.html

2. See Michael Kavanagh, "Iraq bans Chevron over Kurdistan deal," Financial Times, July 24, 2012 <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/570981f2-d5a4-11e1-af40-00144feabdc0.html#axzz23SMi56hV>

Continued: Iraq plans to impose sanctions against Gazprom in the event that Gazprom cooperates with the Autonomous Kurdistan Region of Iraq

oil fields. "If Gazprom still prefers to cooperate with Iraqi Kurdistan, all contracts with the company will come under a review," he said.

It was reported earlier that a subsidiary of Gazprom - OAO Gazprom Neft [Oil] - has undertaken, through its subsidiary Gazprom Neft Middle East BV, new projects for exploration and development of hydrocarbon reserves on Iraq's territory. The company has signed two production sharing agreements (PSA) with the Iraqi Kurdistan Regional Government with regard to blocks Garmian and Shakal, located in the south of Kurdistan. Currently, geological exploration continues in these two blocks, and upon its conclusion no later than in 2015, raw materials extraction should begin. During Garmian block development, Gazprom Neft will receive 40%. Canadian company WesternZagros, another PSA participant with a 40% share, remains the project's operator until the beginning of the main work under the agreement. In block Shakal, where Gazprom Neft will receive an 80% share, the company will receive the status of project operator. Iraqi Kurdistan's share in both agreements is 20%. According to Gazprom Neft's assessments, resource potential of the two deposits exceeds 500 million tons of oil equivalent.

The Garmian block is located in the south eastern part of Kurdistan, and its area is one thousand 780 square kilometers; Shakal block has an area of 474 square kilometers and is located in Garmian's immediate vicinity.

In early 2012, Gazprom Neft began drilling a second appraisal well in the Badra field in Iraq. The final Badra development plan will be approved after completing the drilling and appraisal wells testing, and also taking into account the 2011 interpretation results of 3D-seismic survey in February 2013.

Gazprom Neft (formerly Sibneft) is a subsidiary of oil producer OAO Gazprom, which owns more than 95% of the company's shares. In 2011, the company's extraction rose more than 7% — to 57.2 million tons of oil equivalent. Gazprom Neft's net profit on US GAAP in 2011 compared to 2010 increased by 71% — to 5 billion and 347 million US dollars.

According to BP, proven oil reserves of Iraq by the end of 2011 consisted of 143.1 billion barrels, which brings the country to a third place in OPEC after Saudi Arabia and Iran. Oil production in Iraq at the end of 2011 was 2.798 million barrels per day. On Kurdish administration territory in northern Iraq there are 45 billion barrels of oil reserves.

FMSO Commentary: *Over the last ten years, some three million entrepreneurs have been jailed in Russia, writes Russian information agency Stringer on 5 July, quoting Boris Titov, Russia's newly appointed ombudsman for businessmen's rights, who adds that entrepreneurs are the most persecuted social group in Russia. For a country of 140 million, 3 million jailed in a decade is a staggering statistic.*

It comes as no surprise, then, that last year, a record amount of capital left Russia—\$84 billion. Entrepreneurs feel their business is unsafe in their homeland.

Notably, even in this report important context is missing, which English sources, including English BBC, do provide: more and more Russian businessmen have been leading or at least joining the protests in Russia demanding judicial system reform. Instead, the Russia version quotes Duma Legislation Committee Chairman and Vladimir Putin's United Russia Party member, as well as former justice minister, Pavel Krasheninnikov, who denies a system of total corruption, and assures that the judicial system is already on the proper reform path.

In addition, Krasheninnikov questions total corruption of the judicial system by noting that only a rich oligarch would have enough money to bribe enough people in the system. English sources explain that all it takes is paying off the lowest arresting police officer, and the system takes care of the rest, whereas buying off one's release is much more expensive.

Boris Titov does not disclose how he came up with figure of three million, and certainly not everyone jailed was innocent. Still, Russian protests this year were primarily about corruption. Record capital outflows are also telling.

Heritage Index of Economic Freedom

3 Million Entrepreneurs Jailed in Russia in the Last 10 Years, Russia's Ombudsman Says

5 July 2012



Source: Ne khochesh? Posadim! (Don't want this? We'll jail you!) Informatsioonnoye Agenstvo Stringer (Information Agency Stringer), 5 July 2012. <http://www.stringer.ru/publication/mhtml?Part=48&PubID=21606>

Boris Titov by Alexander Utkin, via <http://en.rian.ru/business/20120621/174168935.html>

***Ne khochesh? Posadim!
(Don't want this? We'll jail you!)***

The number of convicted entrepreneurs in Russia today is 13,000 people. Moreover, the majority were wrongly convicted, believes Boris Titov, recently appointed ombudsman for businessmen's rights.

According to his information, over the past 10 years, about 3 million people have been convicted of economic crimes, most of them businessmen. "No other social group in Russia has been subjected to such widespread persecution," says Titov.

For many years, businessmen complain about the so-called cases-to-order. The corrupt police can arrest a person, to declare him a suspect—then the machine begins to work: the investigation, prosecution and the court do not pay attention to the lack of evidence, and the accused ends up behind bars.

It is not surprising that businessmen take their capital out of Russia. In 2011, a record amount was taken out of the country— 84 billion dollars.

Valery Haiduk, dental clinic owner in downtown Moscow, is convinced that his partner ordered a case against him. According to Hayduk's assessment, it cost about half a million dollars.

His former partner denies all these allegations. But as a result of their conflict Haiduk was convicted of fraud and sentenced to six years in prison. The clinic was closed, the equipment sold, the dentists left.

After nearly three years in prison Hayduk got parole. He still maintains his innocence. Valery Haiduk now became a member of the movement "Russia sitting [behind bars]," which opposes illegal judicial persecution of Russian citizens.

Why is illegal persecution possible?

ranks Russia 144th out of 179 countries. For comparison, countries such as Syria, Pakistan, and Guinea are ranked higher. Transparency International 2011 Index similarly ranked Russia 143rd out of 182 countries in 2011. Freedom House President David Kramer highlighted Russia's "rampant corruption" in March 2012, and former BBC Moscow correspondent and later Kremlin advisor believes corruption is the one "overriding reason why Russia is failing to achieve its economic potential and failing to attract outside investors."

Corruption stifles growth, facilitates organized crime, and is conducive to poor governance. A large outcry from the public in the context of recent protests could have been the impetus to begin reforms. This appointment could also be an attempt to co-opt the opposition or improve Russia's standing in the eyes of the Western business community, particularly in light of Russia's recent entry into the World Trade Organization.

*The idea of creating an ombudsman for business rights, according to Russian Forbes, came from Sergey Borisov, Deputy Chairman of the Government Commission for Development of Small and Medium Entrepreneurship, OPORA Russia, after Borisov met with the then-prime minister Vladimir Putin in December 2011—the same month that the protests began. According to one business community representative, Titov was chosen based on his service to the Kremlin. It is too early to tell whether Titov genuinely intends to fight corruption, but his appointment signals changes in the corruption discussion in Russia because for the first time, the Kremlin has publically acknowledged a problem. **End FMSO Commentary (Borshchevskaya)***

1. For comparison, see Rebecca Kesby, "Why Russia Locks up so Many Entrepreneurs," July 4, 2012, BBC, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-18706597>

2. Ibid.

3. Heritage Foundation in Partnership with Wall Street Journal, 2012 Index of Economic Freedom <http://www.heritage.org/index/ranking>

4. David J. Kramer, President of Freedom House, Testimony before the United States House Committee on Foreign Affairs "Russia 2012: Increased Repression, Rampant Corruption, Assisting Rogue Regimes" March 21, 2012. http://www.freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/inline_images/HFAC%20Kramer%20testimony%20on%20Russia%203-21-12.pdf

5. James Melik, "Russia's Growth Stifled by Corruption" BBC, June 28, 2012, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-18622833>

6. Roman Badanin and Irina Malkova, "How Titov Became Business-Ombudsman Under Putin," Forbes, June 21, 2012, <http://www.forbes.ru/sobytiya/vlast/83347-kak-boris-titov-stal-biznes-ombudsmenom-i-kto-s-nim-konkuriroval>

Continued: Don't want this? We'll jail you!

Former judges, lawyers and police officers, with whom we have been able to speak, admit that the Russian judicial system ignores the presumption of innocence. According to official statistics, the acquittal ends less than 1% of criminal cases. In practice, it seems, this figure is even lower.

Sergey Zlobin is the former deputy chairman of the Volgograd regional court. In an interview with BBC he said that in his 15 years on the job he made no more than seven acquittals, of which only two remained unchanged.

"Issuing a not guilty verdict is a waste of time- tells us the former judge. - law enforcement agencies do not allow us to do that. [There is] enormous pressure from the prosecutors, investigators, the FSB on the judge, and the chief justice is always exerts his influence on this situation. Independence in judicial decisions is absent. "

Sergey Zlobin admits that over the course of his work had to commit legal violations. "The system itself, the structure, is built in such a way that I sometimes had to implement senior management's decisions, - he said. - And now, with the hindsight of the years that have passed, I realize that I was completely wrong, in fact, my action were illegal, and I regret this very much."

The former Constitutional Court judge Tamara Morshchakova asserts that the stories, which Zlobin recalls, are not isolated cases. Morshchakova believes that the judges are the most unhappy people in Russia, because they know their actions are wrong.

"Look at how they read sentences in court – they mutter under his breath. They are ashamed to look people in the eye," she said.

Zlobin and other former judges, with whom we spoke, say that the investigation is often based on evidence gathered illegally by police.

A former cop, Marat Khisamutdinov explained to us how it is possible, for example, to plant drugs on a man not guilty of anything, "This is elementary, and no difficulties arise when it is done." He said that corrupt cops could plant the drugs if someone pays them for this.

Do the police feel sorry for destroying lives of innocent people? "But this is compensated for by money - answers Marat. - I see this person for an hour or an hour and a half. Who is he, why and where is he coming from - I do not care as an employee. What will happen to him, where is his business? What's the difference to me? I have money. "

Marat Khisamutdinov, who also worked as a prison inspector, admits that the conditions there present a danger to people's lives and health.

The conditions depend on the number of staff serving a particular cell. And because of the cuts, this problem is quite acute. For example, if someone among the prisoners requires assistance, the inspector may simply not to hear it, because it will be in the other end of the prison.

Continued: Don't want this? We'll jail you!

Amnesty with restrictions

Ministry of Justice and the Interior Ministry declined to give BBC a comment about this.

Former justice minister and now chairman of the Duma Committee on Legislation, member of "United Russia" party Pavel Krasheninnikov agreed to answer our questions.

Krasheninnikov says he has no illusions, and that the Russian judicial system is only the beginning of the path of reform. At the same time, according to the deputy, the liberalization process stipulated by the reforms of the departed president Medvedev, is in full swing.

Krasheninnikov denies total corruption and the practice of cases-to-order. "Somehow this is hard to imagine - he says of the ordered judicial persecution. - How much should a businessman earn to pay off the investigator and the prosecutor and the judge? This seems to be an oligarch of some kind."

The judges, according to the head of the Duma Committee on Legislation, are the pinnacle of justice. "If a judge sees flaws in the evidence and still makes a conviction, then the judge should work elsewhere. Or he himself should go to the place where he commits others to," says Pavel Krasheninnikov.

Ombudsman to protect the rights of entrepreneurs, Boris Titov sees his job as facilitating the release of wrongfully convicted entrepreneurs, and offers a wide-ranging amnesty for businessmen, which would affect about 118 thousand prisoners entrepreneurs convicted for the first time.

However, Mikhail Khodorkovsky and Platon Lebedev, for example, will not fall under this amnesty, as they have been convicted twice.

Journalist investigation was conducted by Assignment program of BBC World Service.

Measuring Progress in Reconstructing Afghanistan

By Christiaan Davids,
Sebastian
Rietjens
& Joseph Soeters

Netherlands National Defence Academy

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

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



FMSO Commentary: Nearly twenty years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia continues its transition from a conscript to a professional military, and the country is still wrestling with how to attract young men to serve in uniform. Previous plans to enlist large numbers of contract personnel failed for a number of reasons, not least of which were institutional obstacles created by the military, and today the Russian military is manned by a large number of one-year (and mostly poorly-trained) conscripts and a small percentage of contract soldiers. Many Russian military analysts claim that this hybrid manning system does not answer Russia's defense requirements.

The adjacent article suggests that the Russian military is now finally prepared to implement an effective and accountable recruiting system to attract qualified personnel into the ranks. Instead of relying upon a reluctant General Staff to carry out this mission, the Ministry of Defense has placed this recruitment mission under the auspices of the Main Personnel Directorate. In addition to improving recruitment accountability, incentives (e.g., increased pay, housing, education) have been authorized to make military service a more viable career choice for young Russian men and women. There are even provisions to allow for Russia's large immigrant population to gain citizenship via military service. Fully staffing and funding these recruitment centers will be an important step in Russia's plan to create a professional military. **End FMSO Commentary (Finch)**

Be All You Can Russian Be

30 July 2012



Source: Vladimir Mukhin, "Recruitment to the Rescue. The Defense Ministry Intends to Make the Russian Army One-Fourth Professional By the End of the Year," *Nezavisimoye Voyennoye Obozreniye Online*, 30 July 2012

Soviet recruiting poster - "The Motherland Calls," via <http://sovietart.me/posters/ww2/page3/4>

Вербовка в помощь (Recruitment to the Rescue)

The Russian military department is starting the mass recruitment of officers and soldiers for the Army and Navy. *Nezavisimaya Gazeta's* sources in the Russian Federation Defense Ministry reported that to this end recruitment centers are being opened in military districts and fleets from 1 August. These are totally new structures in the Armed Forces modeled on the type of centers existing in developed Western countries, particularly the United States. It is planned to recruit, select, and put into service around 50,000 people by the end of the year. There are supposed to be around 230,000 professional soldiers in the Russian Armed Forces by January 2013 — almost one-fourth of the army's regulation strength.

The planned recruitment level of 50,000 contract personnel in 2012 is not a random figure, *Nezavisimaya Gazeta's* source in the Defense Ministry notes. This is specifically the number of professional military personnel that Russian Federation President Vladimir Putin decreed that the department should put in post in the Russian Federation Armed Forces by his decree of 7 May 2012. The timeframe for fulfilling the edict was also set — "annually for five years." As Colonel Sergey Yarovoy, chief of the Central Military District Staff Organization and Mobilization Directorate's Department for Conscripting and Training of Civilians for Military Service, said a few days ago, contract personnel will be recruited for posts determining the combat capability of troop units: driver mechanics, gunners, snipers, technicians, communications and telemetry experts, and so forth. So the recruitment centers will have a great deal of work to do.

Continued: Recruitment to the Rescue

The recruitment centers will be created on the basis of military commissariats. Unlike the latter, where all posts are now civilian, their table of organization makes provision for two officer posts (a colonel and a major), three contract soldiers, and approximately five civilian personnel. “The centers will be under the jurisdiction of the Russian Federation Defense Ministry Personnel Department,” Sergey Tarovoy explained.

Colonel Anatoliy Mosolov, who headed up a Moscow Oblast city commissariat for a long time, told *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* that two or three years or so ago the recruitment of contract soldiers was handled by the General Staff and the organization and mobilization structures in military districts and fleets under its jurisdiction. But Minister of Defense Anatoliy Serdyukov adopted a decision to entrust the recruitment of contract personnel to the Main Personnel Directorate, where a special directorate was created. “The explanation for this was that that Main Personnel Directorate is a specialized structure that had been selecting candidates for military service as officers and warrant officers at a professional level on a more effective and competent basis,” Mosolov explains. Now the Main Personnel Directorate, through the recruitment centers, will also have to recruit candidates for professional trooper and NCO posts in the troops.

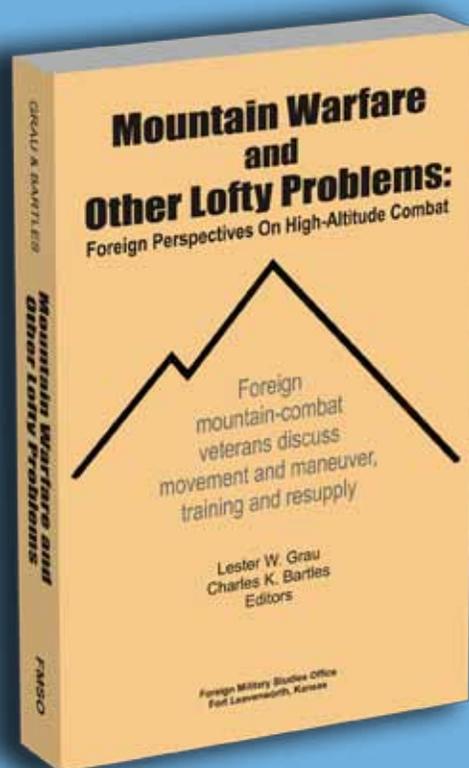
Sergey Fridinskiy, head of the Main Military Procuracy, has repeatedly criticized the Defense Ministry for the poor quality of the contract personnel being recruited into the Armed Forces, essentially saying that the transitioning of the army to a professional basis in 2004-2010 was a failure. Despite the fact that contract personnel accounted for a relatively low percentage of the Army and Navy’s regulation strength, they committed significantly more disciplinary offenses and crimes than other categories of service personnel. Time will tell what will happen in the future. But sources in the Defense Ministry say that the head of the military department has been given a tough order to recruit only well-trying, physically developed, disciplined, and competent contract personnel. This is allegedly why good material and moral incentives have been created — pay and monetary benefits of at least 25,000-30,000 rubles a month, accommodation in a hostel or a service apartment, the possibility of studying free of charge, and so forth — and for foreigners wishing to serve in the Russian Federation Armed Forces there is the possibility of obtaining Russian citizenship on an expedited basis. The recruitment centers will distribute advertising popularizing military service under contract in the regions. In addition, other actions (cooperation with employment exchanges and centers, the Federal Migration Center, higher educational establishments, and so forth) that will help the recruitment centers to recruit personnel are also planned.

According to the Main Guidelines of Budgetary Policy for 2013 and the 2014 and 2015 Planning Period, the government plans to

allocate the money for transitioning the army to a professional basis in full. The plan is to spend at least 25 billion rubles on this in 2012 and even twice as much in 2013.

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 those following developments within the Russian Armed Forces, there have been repeated proposals over the past 20 years designed to reduce criminality and re-establish effective discipline within the ranks. Though improvements have been made, much of the Russian military is still plagued with corruption and crime. The causes behind this lawless behavior are manifold and do not necessarily stem from an absence of rules. The regulations and laws have been written; effectively enforcing them, however, is another question.

When a Russian soldier becomes a victim of crime, his options to redress this injustice are limited. Some commanders are naturally reluctant to expose problems within their units, and outside agencies (e.g., Soldiers Mother's Committee or journalists) have no jurisdiction and are often too far removed to intervene. Only the most egregious criminal cases fall under the purview of the military procurator. Since plans to develop an NCO corps have somewhat faltered, there are renewed demands for instituting military police forces within Russia's armed forces to assist its leaders in maintaining various aspects of unit discipline.

Creating a Russian uniformed military police force is not a new idea, but, as the article suggests, circumstances have reached the point where it may soon become a reality. Some of the manpower for this new force will come from recently discharged officers, which will present a unique set of challenges. Will these officers be highly regarded by soldiers and other officers? Will they have received sufficient training and jurisdiction to actually effectively fight crime and corruption? Although questions remain regarding their specific duties, jurisdiction, and command and control, establishing military police forces within Russia's defense forces appears to be a step in the right direction toward greater unit discipline. **End FMSO Commentary (Finch)**

Policing the Ranks

3 July 2012

Source: "Military Police Recruiting Redundant Officers," *RBK Online* 3 July 2012



Russian Military Police by Alexander Cherkasov, via <http://www.mk.ru/politics/article/2012/03/21/684191-voennuyu-politsiyu-v-rossii-sozdayut-uzhe-20-let.html>

В военную полицию России наберут уволенных офицеров (Military Police Recruiting Redundant Officers)

Nikolay Makarov, Chief of the Russian General Staff, has stated that the creation of a new law-enforcement department — a subunit to fight crime in the Army — will be completed in December 2012. The institution's personnel reserve will be officers released from the Russian Federation Armed Forces.

The job of creating a military police force is under the supervision of Lieutenant General Sergey Surovkin, the Mayak radio station reports. This career soldier currently heads the main directorate of the new department, which was set up in 2010.

Under the General Staff plans the military police will be organized in a vertical structure, from individual unit (brigade) through to military district (fleet). The new unit's T/O is expected to total 20,000 employees, professional soldiers, and officers.

Rossiyskaya Gazeta's information is that every military police officer will be on a salary; it has been decided to abandon the idea of conscripting the other ranks. The law-enforcers will do their work not just within military units but also outside them — conducting patrols and conveying prisoners.

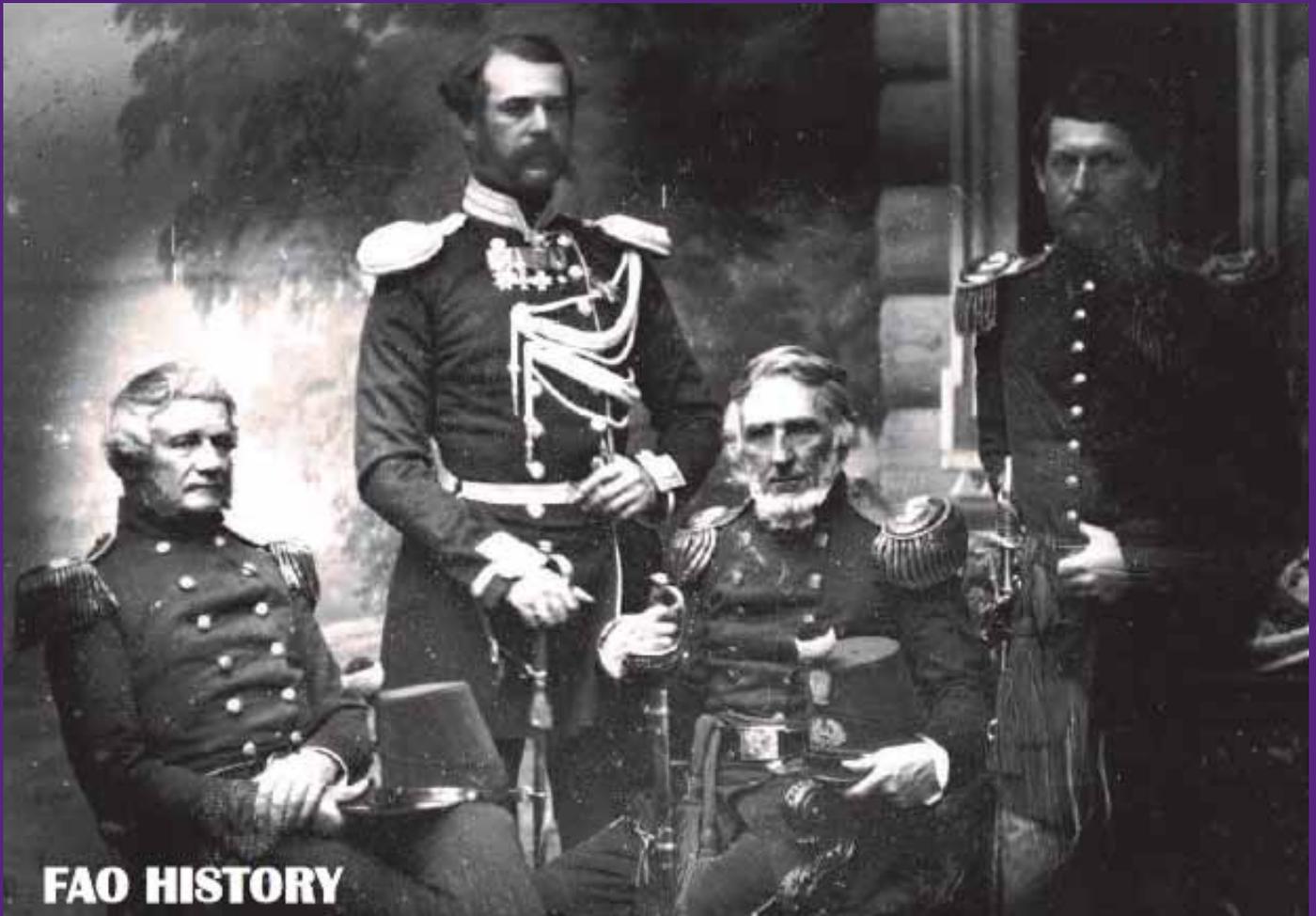
Continued: Military Police Recruiting Redundant Officers

The functions of the army commandant's offices, garrison commandant's offices, and the troop vehicle inspectorates will be transferred to the Main Directorate of Military Police. According to N. Makarov's statement, training of the future police officers is already under way at the present time.

Voices have been raised in support of introducing monitoring of the military's work since 1989. Russian Federation President V. Putin approved the idea in 2006. In July 2011 Defense Minister Anatoliy Serdyukov announced the creation of the military police. Until recently, however, the job of organizing the department had not gotten off the ground.

Russia is not the first country to be creating a law-enforcement subdivision within the Army. As of the present time military police forces are operating in 40 countries around the world. In addition to West European states and the United States they include Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia.

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



FMSO Commentary: *One key component of Russia's latest military reform centers upon relieving the soldier of all nonmilitary type duties (e.g., cooking, cleaning, farm work, etc.) so he can focus on combat training. Since the conscript period has been reduced to just one year, the focus must be on acquiring and perfecting essential military tasks. Moreover, in the long term, where Russia hopes to create professional armed forces, such a martial emphasis will hopefully attract contract soldiers to serve in the military.*

As in many other militaries, Russia has now contracted out many of these logistical, noncombat duties to private firms, to include mess facilities. Besides reducing the military bureaucracy, privatization of food preparation will allow for greater competition among suppliers, and, in theory, provide better food service to the soldier. The system has been in place for less than a year, and the initial results are mostly positive. While there have been a few problems, gone are the days of starving or poisoned soldiers (which were quite frequent in the past). Social media allow for soldiers and others to document both the successes and failures of the new provisioning system. For an encouraging recent example, see: <http://twower.livejournal.com/515796.html#cutid1>

*Nevertheless, as the referenced article explains, there are still a number of unresolved issues regarding the feeding of soldiers. While it is easy to find a civilian contractor to provide food service in major urban areas, it becomes more challenging to do this for remote units or during field exercises conducted in distant and inaccessible training areas. There are also concerns that funding designed to feed soldiers will be misappropriated, and, as the article points out, strict accounting measures are necessary for this initiative to work properly. **End FMSO Commentary (Finch)***

Feeding Russian Soldiers

4 July 2012

Source: Viktor Sokirko, "The Battalions Are Asking for Food: the New System of Messing in the Army Has Taken Hold Only in the Elite Units" *Sykytyvkar Komsomolskaya Pravda Sykytyvkar Online*, 4 Jul 2012.



Russian MRE. DoD photo by Staff Sgt. Aaron Betz, U.S. Army.

Батальоны просят еды (The Battalions Are Asking for Food)

The army reform has affected even the soldier's mess tin, the men are now fed on the basis of an outsourcing system—the food-management directors and logistics officers have been replaced by civilian cooks and suppliers. But problems with the messing periodically arise—sometimes there is a food shortage, sometimes the men are poisoned.

The celebrated Voyentorg [Commissary] on Vozdvizhenka Street in Moscow has since December 2011 been in the business of... supplying the army with food. The military now calls it behind its back "Voyenkharh" [Service Grub].

Voyentorg is now the Russian army's monopoly catering supplier. It has concluded dozens of contracts with outsourcing companies, which are now responsible for the soldiers being full when it comes to food. In the central region and the country's large centers of population the new system has taken hold pretty well. We inspected elite units—the 154th Command Regiment of the city of Moscow in Lefortovo. In former times also they were fed here to the full and issued extra rations for daily drill training. Now the messing is handled here by a company which receives for its services by no means small money and is jealous of its reputation.

Continued: The Battalions Are Asking for Food

Things are worse in remote garrisons, which were required to switch to outsourcing as of 1 January 2012—companies capable of professionally feeding several hundred persons are not thick on the ground here. And the soldier cook can no longer be put at the stove. Officers' wives and local residents, who were unable to boast of any particular culinary classifications, had to be recruited as cooks here. Making cabbage soup for the family is one thing, feeding hundreds of men three times a day, with a choice of dishes, what is more, is something else entirely.

“And how am I to feed the soldiers during exercises,” Major Alik Umyarov, deputy commanding officer for logistics of the Airborne Troops 45th Special Forces' Regiment of Moscow Oblast, expresses his bewilderment. “We spend a large part of the year in the field. How am I to provide the airborne with hot meals if I cannot take women from the mess to the field? The army schools for cooks have been closed, the field kitchens have been decommissioned....”

Although this sharp logistics officer was not about to eliminate the field kitchens. There's a problem only with the cooks, the enlistment offices had to be asked for recruits that had worked in civilian life as cooks.

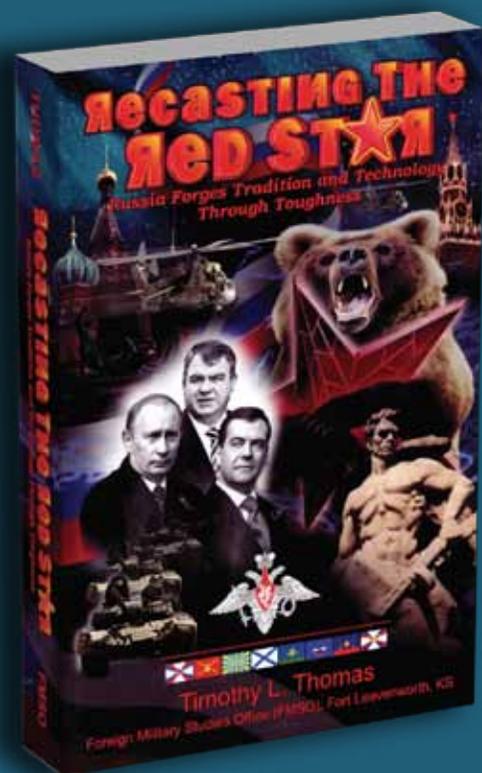
Such measures were adopted in the Defense Ministry itself also. Colonel Tomachev, chief of the Victualing Directorate, sent to the field before the new year telegrams on the enlistment of servicemen with the specialty of “cook” in the event of outsourcing not being ready.

Viktor Belyayev, president of the Inter-Regional Association of Culinary Experts, began to cook at a border unit. He then worked both at the Praga restaurant and in the Kremlin kitchen.

“Outsourced catering is a loophole for those for whom what is important is not how the soldier eats but how to get into the budget,” Belyayev believes. “Government control is needed to prevent the theft of money, which is spent on bribes to obtain a contract.”

He believes that the abolition of the soldier's kitchen has been unduly hasty. “The bicycle has been replaced by the child's scooter,” the restaurateur says. A good army cook and an honest food-management director could constitute competition for outsourcing.

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: During the recent summer Olympics Great Britain took unprecedented measures to provide security for the games. Besides increased police presence and intelligence surveillance, military units and private security companies were deployed to help defend against any possible threat. Their efforts paid off, and from many perspectives (to include security) the 2012 Summer Olympics were deemed a success.

In less than two years Russia will host the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, a resort city located on the Black Sea and neighboring the volatile North Caucasus region. Besides the massive planning and expense in constructing the necessary infrastructure and venues to host this competition, Kremlin leaders are rightly concerned with establishing the necessary security to prevent any sort of danger to athletes and spectators. Given Sochi's location and the proximity of recent conflict, this will be a major challenge.

Besides reinforcing police and military units in the region, Kremlin and local leaders also now plan to enlist Cossack forces in their defense effort. Cossacks were known for their fighting spirit and fierce loyalty during tsarist times, and traditionally helped to guard the empire's frontier. While heavily suppressed during the Soviet period, Cossack traditions have experienced a renewal in the past 20 years. According to recent census data, nearly 70,000 Russians identify themselves as Cossacks.

The adjacent article describes how the Ministry of Defense is hoping to attract more young Cossacks to serve in the military. These would not be independent units, but rather regular army brigades, manned by predominately Cossack soldiers and imbued with the Cossack fighting spirit. Ultimately, these Cossack-designated units could serve as the strategic reserve for the military. Given the ongoing challenges of military reform and the continued instability in the North Caucasus region, Cossack forces (both within the military and without) could play an important security role in the 2014 Winter Olympics. **End FMSO Commentary (Finch)**

Cossacks and the Army

3 August 2012

Source: Egor Cozayev-Guryev, "The General Staff is Increasing the Number of Cossack Units in the Army." *Izvestia*, 3 August 2012. <http://izvestia.ru/news/532117#ixzz22muoxNTj>



Men display the classical uniform of the Kuban-Cossack. Photo by RIA Novosti via www.rian.ru

Генштаб увеличивает число казачьих частей в армии (The General Staff is Increasing the Number of Cossack Units in the Army)

According to Chief of General Staff Nikolai Makarov, the Defense Ministry has decided to actively involve greater representatives of the Cossacks to serve in the army. If plans are realized, "Cossack designated divisions" will appear in each military district. In the future, the Cossacks could form the basis of the Supreme Commander's reserve force. Experts believe this Cossack renewal could qualitatively change the army - the Cossacks are more suited for military service and can become the backbone of future professional contract soldiers.

The process is gradual, but now each of the registered State Cossack Groups has the right to establish their own designated formation in the armed forces.

"The Cossack troops are forming. Each military district will be at least one of the designated Cossack Brigade," Chief of General Staff Nikolai Makarov told *Izvestia*. However, they won't be distinct units, but will be part of the combined-arms.

Even though the Chief of Staff called for forming of Cossack units, they won't be a separate type of forces. Nevertheless, in recent years, the Cossack presence in the military has grown. Many new soldiers are drafted through regional Cossack

Continued: The General Staff is Increasing the Number of Cossack Units in the Army

communities.

“In those Cossack-designated units, we have increased the number of Cossacks to about 40% of the personnel, and we hope to reach the 100%, in the 22d ‘Cossack’ Brigade. The ultimate goal of the Cossacks is to become the supreme commander’s reserve force,” explained Ataman of the Don Cossack Forces, Victor Vodolatsky.

The Ministry of Defense is pleased with Cossack discipline and cohesion. By arrangement with the Ministry, after studying at a military college, officers can go to serve in a Cossack unit. Although just a few years ago, most of these units were established in name only. “In the past year, over the past two draft cycles, we have sent over a thousand Cossacks into various brigades. If our soldiers serve poorly, we can talk to them and change their attitude. We have developed special Cossack insignia for the uniform, denoting affiliation to the Cossacks,” explained the Don Ataman.

Military experts positively assess the increase in the number of Cossacks in the army. They maintain that the Cossack units may eventually become the elite of the army and serve as a model for other units.

“The Cossacks are genetically predisposed to the army and serve with diligence. They are needed in the Caucasus, may also serve on the border in the Far East, or serve to form the best light brigade,” believes the Chairman of the Public Council under the Ministry of Defense, Igor Korotchenko. “When selecting contract soldiers, we should give priority to the Cossacks; and for the formation of the Military Police, I would bet on the Cossacks.”

According to former soldiers, Cossacks are able to form strong units, as Cossack recruits arrive much better prepared to serve in the army, and their health is better than the draftees from urban areas.

“In all the wars, whether the First or Second World War, local units - Siberian or Cossacks - never retreated. Soldiers in Cossack units are brought up from childhood to protect the homeland, so there is cohesion and no hazing. Cossack units are needed, but don’t expect a large increase in the Cossack troops in the army,” points out the head of the Center for Military Forecasting, Anatoly Tsyganok.

The Kazakhstan-Russia Axis: Shaping CSTO Transformation

By Roger N. McDermott

*Senior International Fellow,
Foreign Military Studies Office*

United Kingdom

“Viewed from Kazakhstan’s perspective, the need to transcend the symbolism of the CSTO’s collective defense theme and promote ways in which it might meet real transnational and emerging security challenges is both real and urgent...”

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



FMSO Commentary: The following piece was provided directly to this researcher [Dr. Demarest] by Professor Arturo Contreras of the Interamerican Defense College. Professor Contreras is a highly regarded Chilean author and strategist. His observation, in this researcher's opinion, is reflective of a current of thinking present beyond Chile, and beyond Latin America. Chile, meanwhile, is noteworthy for being a staunch supporter of the United States strategically, and for maintaining fidelity toward free market economic principles. It is also known for its vigorous economy and in military spheres for high professional standards. Professor Contreras' viewpoint should perhaps be weighed partly in light of those national characteristics.

*Professor Contreras alludes to the strategic dilemma in which a number of countries find themselves, attached by national interest, legacy, and ideological proclivity to the United States, and yet seeing a world in which power is shifting, if erratically. To Professor Contreras, that shift, somewhat amorphous, has economic dependencies potentially cutting across established military alignments. What does a country like Chile do? Professor Contreras, sophisticated in the true sense, does not presume a specific universal answer. His trajectory is more one of animating recognition of principles of free passage through the global commons. **End FMSO Commentary (Demarest)***

Redeployment of Power

Redeployment of Power on the World Strategic Stage Implications of a New Strategy

By Dr. Arturo Contreras

Introduction

On January 5, President Barak Obama announced the new United States defense strategy, and reactions were immediate. Some defended the right of the US to exert global geopolitical influence in keeping with the country's strategic stature, while others argued that the strategy revealed blatant imperial ambitions.

The Context of the Change

The new strategy was conceived to confront not a stable global process but rather a highly dynamic one, resulting from a constant restructuring of power. This redistribution of power puts pressure on the supply of and demand for the resources, goods, and services that states¹ need to support their development. This produces a two-fold effect: on the one hand, it deepens the need for an international system based on free trade that ensures access to markets, and on the other, it requires countries to develop strategic capabilities that guarantee their security.

So, while the most tangible aspects of globalization form a web of constantly shifting dependencies and interdependencies in which states go to enormous lengths to ensure themselves access to critical resources, the asymmetrical national economies and their trade are synthesized into one great market and monetary system that relies on a transport system whose availability, at this moment, is vital to both national and collective security.

In this context, there is no doubt that free trade, with its investment security and free access to resources, among other components, constitutes one of the keys to development and contemporary national and international security. Therefore, ensuring availability of the necessary supply is a political objective that requires those who are vitally dependent on petroleum to identify and discern who are their friends, allies, and trustworthy partners, and who are not; to identify the threats and risks that affect the transport of the supply from its source to its destination; to forecast fluctuations in price; and most importantly, to proactively take appropriate anticipatory measures.

Changes in the Strategic Concept

Prolonged wars, like those in Iraq and Afghanistan, require an enormous human

¹ For example, the impact of the BRIC countries on the value of raw materials through their continually increasing demand can be found at the core of the natural resource price boom.

effort. Contrary to what the American political leadership believed the war in Iraq was neither short nor decisive; instead, after their conventional victory, US forces were confronted with a long campaign of stabilization followed by reconstruction.²

Based probably on this experience, the United States perhaps seeks a new form of warfare that would permit it to achieve more rapid military and political victory over a potential adversary without having to resort to occupying territory. Such an approach would mean avoiding or at least limiting post-conflict stabilization operations. The consequences of such a strategy are numerous, but particularly significant is the renewal of the responsibilities of the defeated state, which, should such a situation arise, have to take on its own reconstruction and return to institutional normalcy.

Such a hit-but-don't stay strategy can be undertaken using a new generation of unmanned stealth aircraft and smart weapons, reducing to the minimum the number of ground forces needed for an occupation, but this would have a profound impact on the regional environment of the defeated country because it would obligate neighboring countries to contribute to the restoration of local security and stability. This is what Europe had to do for the countries that emerged from the collapse of the former Yugoslavia.

A US policy to not to get involved in long-term occupations is consistent with current and projected US strategic capabilities, and, as the US continues in the direction of cooperative multilateralism, the world strategic stage will be characterized by joint efforts based on shared objectives, interests, and/or values. Many less powerful countries must then ask what room exists for neutrality in world dependent on free access to critical resources.

Changes in Deployment

In terms of deploying US forces internationally, the new US strategy will examine the possible reduction of the American military presence in Europe in favor of two geostrategic regions defined as vital to national security and global stability: the Asia-Pacific and the Middle East. Withdrawal from Afghanistan and the already completed withdrawal from Iraq will allow the US to achieve the economy of forces necessary to reposition their forces around those two geostrategic pillars.

Contrary to what has been said, all evidence indicates that the change in emphasis announced by the Obama administration is not a unilateral decision or unexpected by its allies, and much less a disappointment, but rather the result of deep strategic reflection carried out over many years within NATO.

In fact, the evolution of the Alliance since the mid-90s – standing out among its “Out-of-Area Operations” are its involvement in Afghanistan, its intervention in Libya, and the active diplomacy that countries like France and Great Britain have been conducting in the so-called Arab Spring, confirming that the European pillar of NATO has been preparing for quite a while to take on greater responsibilities. In this context, when we refer to Europe, we are alluding to the European pillar of the Alliance, because we should not forget that not all European states belong to NATO, or to the European Union (EU).³

Therefore, the quantitative reduction of the American presence will not weaken the European pillar of the Alliance, but rather strengthen its roll in international security and extend its sphere of geopolitical action beyond the original Euro-Atlantic space.

In terms of the Middle East, the new strategy confirms the importance of the region for global security. Nonetheless, here the concept of redeployment acquires a different connotation because it does not necessarily imply an increased presence of American forces, since that country's strategic capability might better be increased through regional allies who have considerable military capabilities of their own. This, when added to US force projection capability, allows for decisive responses in case of clear strategic threat.

In that sense, impeding nuclear proliferation in the Middle East constitutes a strategic imperative for the US, its allies,

² Speech by President George W. Bush, from the White House Oval Office on March 20, 2003, regarding the start of military action against Iraq. See www.cnn.com

³ See *NATO Strategic Concept* Office of Information and Press, Brussels, 2005.

and the international community, all of whom are unanimous on this point. International inability to verify the nature of the Iranian nuclear program combines with the understandable Israeli perception of an imminent, existential threat which could fuel an Israeli decision to carry out a preemptive strike. That formula atop the world's list of ingredients in these "interesting times."

The US and Israeli positions have been unequivocal as to Iran's transformation into a nuclear power. Nevertheless, the political risk that even traditional military action against Iran carries does not stem from operational difficulties, but from Iran's threatened retaliation of cutting off the Strait of Hormuz. If successful, such a blockade would have devastating effects for the world in general and for countries dependent on oil imports in particular, since 44% of the petroleum consumed worldwide passes through this strait.

Despite this, in the strategic equation of risks, threats, costs, consequences, and benefits, the United States and its allies are convinced that the consequences of not acting outweigh the risks of doing so.

Meanwhile, evidence suggests that the primary driver of the US 'pivot' toward Asia-Pacific is perceived threat from China, the United States asking China to specify the objectives of its accelerated military, naval, and space program development. China responds by asking the US for prudence in its strategic actions. The growing geopolitical rivalry is evident, although tempered by their equally obvious interdependence. China is the primary creditor of the United States, while the US is the primary investor in and buyer of Chinese products.

The American pivot is seen by the states in accordance with their respective objectives, interests, and ideologies. Asia-Pacific political relationships form webs of interests and objectives that are not always compatible; perceptions of security vary widely; based in part on ancient mistrust. They variously view the increase in the American military presence as a stabilizing factor, a destabilizing factor, or even as a direct threat, all of which makes for a highly complex strategic scene. Home to half the world's population, the region can also claim the world's densest transport network with around 70% of world maritime commerce. Where so many states depend on the global commons, there is little room for neutrality. The situation transcends any reductionist dialectic of American hard power versus Chinese soft power.

One must also include the challenge presented by the Communist dictatorship of North Korea, whose nuclear and missile capabilities, developed in isolation from the international community. A nuclear armed rogue state complicates an otherwise sensitive region. We cannot easily disassociate North Korean nuclear power from Chinese claims to Taiwan, for instance, in that that North Korea would probably not be a nuclear power without the "consent" of China. China does not have its hands free to reincorporate Taiwan under its rule, but perhaps China envisions some way to freedom from the North Korean nuclear threat in exchange for global indifference toward Taiwan.

Clearly, then, the increase in the US military presence is not to be evaluated by homogeneous criteria. It is very well-received by Japan; it is rejected by North Korea, and viewed with positive skepticism by South Korea. Russia considers it a reinforcement of its continental confinement; Australia sees it as an opportunity; and many smaller nations of Southeast Asia, whose booming economies have a large Chinese component, have adopted a wait-and-see attitude.

The question that arises is, "What does the US hope to gain by shifting the focus of its strategic redeployment toward the Asia-Pacific region?" In my opinion, the desired effect of its decision is to prevent conflicts; ensure US strategic sufficiency if not superiority; help its allies' guarantee security; impede further nuclear proliferation; secure international transport routes; and strengthen its capacity for political persuasion and strategic deterrence in a region vital to global stability and peace. One part, securing of open international transport, talks directly to an existential concern for many national economies.

Changes in Methods

There are basically three measures the US seems to have to maintain its global strategic influence. Their interaction and interdependence provides structural synergy to the new defense strategy. They are:

- Develop a military force that is smaller than the current force, light, and flexible, and with strong force projection capability. The new strategy envisions a qualitative and quantitative increase in US naval and aerial power; a reduction in the expeditionary ground forces of the Army and the Marine infantry; and the incorporation of a new generation of high tech, cybernetic, and cyberspace weapons and unmanned stealth aircraft, among other technologies
- Develop alliances resulting in effective strategic cooperation that aids in the achievement of shared international security objectives, encouraging collective political action.
- Maintain industrial and R&D capabilities that allow the US to maintain its leading political and military position.

Conclusion

This new US strategic approach does not necessarily do away with the need for a ground campaign capability, but rather widens the range of available conventional military options, reducing the US's own risk while increasing the political, social, and economic consequences for a potential adversary.

Thus, the American strategic redeployment is not necessarily in response to any reconfiguration of the world order or in response to some new world power, but instead reflects a change in mechanism and approach enabling the US to ensure the most efficient use of its strategic capabilities when needed.

This does not constitute imperialism or messianic dominance, but simply the application of a basic strategic principle: take precautions to avoid having to improvise, and make preparations to avoid losing the freedom, opportunity, or sovereignty to act. In other words, in matters of defense and security, the most basic prudence advises that states not discard hypotheses when the data confirming them outweighs the data challenging them. It is not a question of will, but of realism.

On a larger scale, the search for regional and global alliances based on common development and security interests heralds the emergence of a cooperative multipolarity that may be very fruitful for assuring free access to critical resources. We can, therefore, foresee a new era of alliances, one that challenges the logic of geopolitical theories based on center-periphery relations and geopolitical hegemonies.

In this new era, emerging powers will play an important roll in maintaining international consensus and balance, forming interdependencies that keep legitimate differences within the bounds of manageable conflict. In order to get ahead of events, to prepare themselves, and to choose their friends and allies based on harsh factual realities, small and medium-sized states will study US strategic changes and its objectives, seeking consonance and inconsonance with their own national interests. This search may be most critical, and easiest, for states whose economies are vitally dependent on global free trade.
