

# O E W A T C H

FOREIGN NEWS & PERSPECTIVES OF THE OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

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Marikana... A Post-Apartheid Massacre



Rebuilding Russian Defense

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# OE Watch

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## 4 Iran's Combat Drones Fitted with Missiles

“Pehpadha-ye razme Iran be moshak-e mohjehaz mishavand (Iran's Combat UAVs equipped with missiles),” Fars News Agency, 2 September 2012

*A growing UAV fleet might embolden the IRGC to test the defenses of American naval vessels and the UAV's armament might also require U.S. or other international forces to fire sooner upon intruders*



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Igor Burgandinov, “Manhunt over: Kyrgyz fugitive border guard shot, killed,” *Kazakhstan Pravda*, 21 August 2012

*Kyrgyz President Almazbek Atambayev placed blame squarely on the leadership of the border guard service, a unit of the KGB successor State Committee for National Security*



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*Besides Internet control, to counteract US information dominance, the article recommends that Russian authorities adopt policies similar to those employed by the US.*

## Iran's Combat Drones Fitted with Missiles

2 September 2012

Source:

پهپادهای رزمی ایران به موشک مجهز میشوند

*Pehpadha-ye razme Iran be moshak-e mohjehaz mishavand* (Iran's Combat UAVs equipped with missiles)," Fars News Agency, 2 September 2012. <http://www.farsnews.com/newstext.php?nn=13910612000367/>

**OE Commentary:** Upon taking the helm of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) in September 2007, Mohammad Ali Jafari undertook a complete reorganization and review of the its posture. He positioned IRGC Ground Force units to focus more on the internal rather than external threat, and he has renewed emphasis on the IRGC-Navy and missile programs.

Much media analysis regarding Iranian capabilities in the Persian Gulf focuses on whether it has the naval capability to make good on its threats to close the Strait of Hormuz. Iranian naval exercises highlight the danger to American warships posed by swarming small boats. Maritime insurance companies worry about Iranian mining of oil tanker routes in the Persian Gulf.

Iran's nascent unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), however, pose a new threat which can impact international shipping and air traffic, both civilian and military, in the Persian Gulf. Iranian UAV development appears to be real; as mentioned in this latest Fars News article, Iran's Defense Ministry and the IRGC have tested UAVs publicly. An English language Fars News article picking up on the same deputy defense minister interview as the Persian version below focused more on UAV models and capacity than on recent decisions to fit drones with missiles or cultivate intelligence from the American drone captured by Iran in December 2011 (See: <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.php?nn=9106061460>).

The Persian Gulf is an extremely shallow body of water, with a maximum depth of less than 300 feet. Islands extending national maritime boundaries make international waters narrow.

If unarmed Iranian UAVs already posed a growing threat to aircraft and helicopters operating in international airspace over the Persian Gulf, then armed UAVs can throw gasoline onto an already combustible situation. Unlike their manned counterparts, radio protocols to warn off UAVs threatening U.S. ships' safety parameter are unclear. A growing UAV fleet might embolden the IRGC to test the defenses of American naval vessels and the UAVs' armament might also require U.S. or other international forces to fire sooner upon intruders while they are farther afield.

As Iran's UAV fleet grows in terms of range and capability, the Persian Gulf risks are becoming far more dangerous. **End OE Commentary (Rubin)**



Iranian UAV Bomber "Karrar" operational radius of 1,000 km. Photo by MEHR via <http://www.mehrnews.com/fa/newsdetail.aspx?NewsID=1138091>

**F**ars News Agency: Eslami, with reference to the capabilities of Iran in drone aircraft, said: We have now equipped the combat UAVs with missile systems.

Mohammad Eslami, deputy defense minister for armed forces logistics, in an interview with the Fars News defense correspondent, said in reference to the Islamic Republic's UAV capabilities, said the equipping of these drones with weapons is required. In recent exercises, in the last Revolutionary Guards exercises, we used Iranian drones, and we're scheduled to install missiles on UAVs.

According to the Fars Report, "Karrar (Striker)" the first Iranian-made UAV bomber, was unveiled in the presence of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad on August 22, 2010 (the Day of Defense Industry). This UAV bomber had many capabilities, including a range of 1,000 kilometers and increasing altitude.

Eslami also spoke about the capture of the U.S. drone and said we have observed what is visible and what is not visible and we know that the sensors which were installed on this aircraft could gather all types of data.

The Deputy Defense Minister continued: Based on this analysis, with confidence we know how they use these sensors but our examination of this plane will continue until our information is complete.

## Corruption Scandal in Iran's Central Bank

6 September 2012

### Source:

کشف فساد و اختلاس مجدد، این بار در بانک مرکزی

*Kashaf-e Fisad va Ekhtelas Mojaded, In Bar dar Bank Markazi (Another Discovery of Corruption and Embezzlement, This Time at the Central Bank),* Rah-e Sabz [Jaras] (Green Path), 6 September 2012. <http://www.rahesabz.net/story/58535/>

**OE Commentary:** Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's final term as president will end in 2013. While Western audiences remember the Iranian president for his blustery rhetoric, his legacy in Iran may well revolve around economic failings.

Throughout the first decades of the Islamic Republic, war and revolution took its toll on the Iranian rial. Unable to stem its devaluation, Iranian officials imposed an official bank exchange rate, which differed from the black market rate offered by traders in the traditional Tehran bazaar. When this author visited Iran in the late 1990s the discrepancy between the bank rate and the black market rate for dollar exchange was almost 300 percent. A hotel room, therefore, might cost three times as much for foreigners as it would for Iranians, even if they were paying the same rial price. The black marketing was so blatant that Iranian financial newspapers would print the current black market currency exchange rates openly.

As the currency declined further, Iranians began informally charting prices in toman, a unit of ten derived from Mongol times, to which the selected article also makes reference. In effect, the toman amount was the rial cost divided by ten.

In the beginning of the last decade, however, the Iranian government sought to diminish the discrepancy between the official and unofficial rates, and largely succeeded. With the ratcheting up of both international sanctions and unilateral



Iran currency by Milad Mosapoor (Own work) [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons

**J**aras [Rah-e Sabz]: Based on reports which have arrived, six people have been arrested on accusations of corruption in the international affairs section of the Central Bank.

Based on reports received by Jaras, the director-general for security of the Central Bank, who is an employee of the Intelligence Ministry for the control of security and intelligence reports in the bank, and one of the deputy heads of the Central Bank by the name of Abolhassani, were fired.

According to the reports that have come to hand, those arrested are accused of abuse in exchanging foreign currency for rials in the bazaar.

It is necessary to explain that the Central Bank exchanges huge sums of foreign currency each day in the bazaar in order to control the exchange rate.

The report adds that those arrested using the data took a great amount of money and put it at the disposal of the money changers against the rules and made a great deal of money with the discrepancy between the purchase price and selling price.

It is necessary to mention that Abolhasani was deputy minister of economic affairs before his appointment to the Central Bank.

He is also among the suspects in the embezzlement of three trillion tomans [\$3 billion]. Since those close to the government enjoyed judicial immunity, he avoided prosecution. However, he was dismissed from the Ministry of Economic Affairs and immediately appointed as deputy head of the Central Bank.

## Continued: Corruption Scandal in Iran's Central Bank

*U.S. banking sanctions, however, the value of the rial again hemorrhaged, declining more than 70 percent against the dollar. The Ahmadinejad administration again imposed official exchange rates, which assumed a far greater rial value than currency traders accepted.*

*The selected article, from the main news portal of Iran's reformist "Green Movement," hints that Iranian authorities are seeking to restore order to the currency market by exchanging rials in the open market. At the same time, corruption looms large. The article reports the arrest of two senior Central Bank officials, their specific portfolios and histories suggesting close affiliation to Ahmadinejad, for using inside bank information to profit from currency speculation. That one of the officials also allegedly played a role in last year's \$3 billion Bank Sedarat embezzlement scandal, the largest in the history of Iranian banking and a case which has resulted in death sentences for those who did not have immunity, highlights the cronyism and impunity for which Ahmadinejad's inner circle has a reputation.*

*Public discussion inside Iran of such high level corruption also blunts Iranian government attempts to blame its economic failings on sanctions and international isolation. **End OE Commentary (Rubin)***

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## Iran Raises Bounty on Salman Rushdie to \$3.3 Million

Source:

جایزه اجرای حکم اعدام سلمان رشدی 005 هزار دلار افزایش یافت

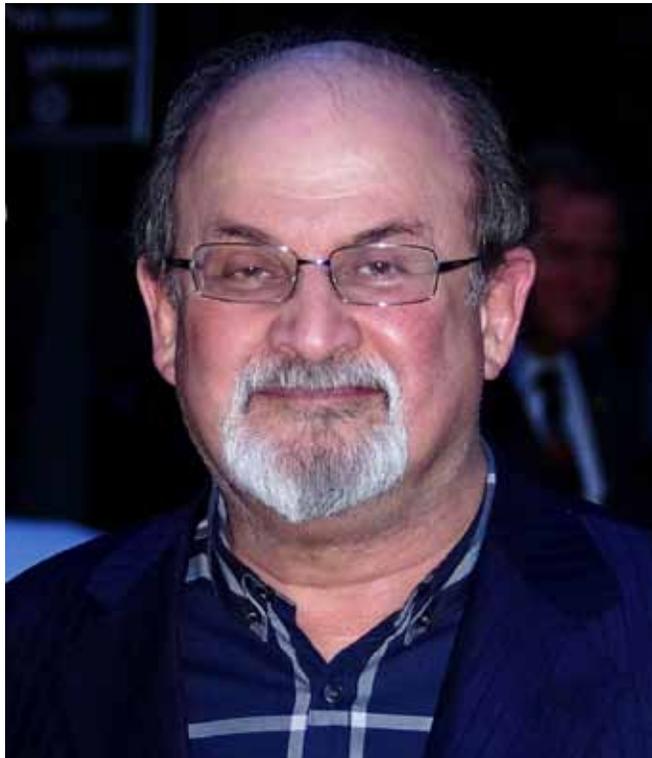
*Jayizeh Ijra-ye Hakam Salman Rushdie 500,000 Hazar Dollar Ifzayesh Yaft* (Bounty for Salman Rushdie's Execution Raises \$500,000 )," Mehr News Agency, 15 September 2012. <http://www.mehrnews.com/fa/newsdetail.aspx?NewsID=1696797>

**OE Commentary:** On 14 February 1989 Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini called for British author Salman Rushdie to be killed for allegedly blaspheming Islam in his book, *The Satanic Verses*. The brazenness of Khomeini's order caught the West by surprise. At the time, there was optimism in both Europe and the United States that the Islamic Republic had turned a new page. The Iran-Iraq War was over, and pragmatists such as Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani were on the rise.

Upon the announcement of the death warrant, almost every European embassy withdrew its ambassador. While these trickled back over subsequent months, the British government announced that it would not resume relations with Iran until the warrant was lifted. Khomeini's death, however, made it very difficult to do so within the context of Iranian politics, as his successor as Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei, did not have the religious or political credentials to reverse Khomeini.

The freeze in relations between London and Tehran continued for more than a decade. On 18 May 1999 the British government sent an ambassador back to Iran after the Iranian government agreed to suspend the bounty. The next day, however, as the British ambassador was settling into the embassy, the Iranian government re-imposed the bounty. Over subsequent years the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) reiterated its desire to kill Salman Rushdie.

*That against the backdrop of criticism*



15 September  
2012

Salman Rushdie at the Vanity Fair party for the 2012 Tribeca Film Festival. Photo by Salman\_Rushdie\_2012\_Shankbone.JPG: David Shankbone derivative work: Parzi [CC-BY-3.0 (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/>)], via Wikimedia Commons

The Representative of the Supreme Leader and the Head of the 15th of Khordad Foundation issued a statement condemning the cast and crew of the film insulting the Holy Prophet, and increased the bounty set by his excellency Imam Khomeini against the apostate Salman Rushdie \$500,000 bringing it to \$3.3 million.

According to the Mehr News Agency, the 15th of Khordad statement is as follows:

The making of this film insults the holy domain of the Prophet (Peace be Upon Him) is the last act to be so offensive. However, the latest actions by the enemies of God's religion are against Islam and especially the insult the Holy Prophet of Islam (Peace be Upon Him). But until now the historical verdict of His Excellency Imam Khomeini for the execution of the apostate Salman Rushdie, the insolent author of the book *Satanic Verse*, has not been carried out.

Surely, has the Imam's sentence been carried out, the [Danish] cartoons, and other articles and films would not have been produced. Strictly implementing Islamic law can prevent the brazenness of the enemies seeking revenge against Islam, who are under the banner of America--the Great Satan--and the racist Zionists. The order to execute the apostate Salman Rushdie was issued with the aim. And now, too, by this sentence we can trace this series of conspiracies back to this vindictive man. And these days are the best time to accomplish this duty.

## Continued: Iran Raises Bounty on Salman Rushdie to \$3.3 Million

*of an internet film ridiculing the Prophet Mohammad the 15 Khordad Foundation has increased the bounty for Salman Rushdie's murder highlights both the ideological nature of the Iranian regime and its belief that it should have the mantle to protect Islamic sensibilities anywhere in the world. The Foundation, named for the anniversary on the Persian calendar of the Shah's 5 June 1963 arrest of Khomeini and the huge resulting popular protest against the Shah, is today a revolutionary group close to the IRGC. The Foundation's belief that, had Rushdie been killed, a Danish newspaper never would have satirized the Prophet and that films such as The Innocence of Muslims never would have been made suggests a conspiratorial analysis which both dismisses individual liberty and free speech in the West and suggests an assumption that any medium criticizing Islam is directed by Zionists and America.*

*The tone of the article and the involvement of a revolutionary foundation (bonyad) so closely linked to the Revolutionary Guards suggest that Iranian statements regarding Rushdie are not mere rhetoric, but rather real threats which an increasingly ideological and IRGC-dominated government might actually carry out. End OE Commentary (Rubin)*

Soon after the verdict of Imam Khomeini, may peace be upon him, the blessed 15 of Khordad Foundation was charged with enforcement of the verdict, and we pursued the goal to eliminate the anti-Islamic conspiracy, and it is clear that this action is now more necessary than ever. It is therefore determined that the bounty for killing Salman Rushdie will be augmented an additional \$500,000 for the killing of Salman Rushdie, and this will be paid immediately to anyone who carries out the verdict.

In addition, it is necessary to declare that all those who comply with the policies of the government in the fight against anti-Islamic conspiracies, especially in the realm of defending the Prophet (Peace be Upon Him) will actively have the support of the Foundation.

## Foreign Military Studies Office ([FMSO.leavenworth.army.mil](http://FMSO.leavenworth.army.mil))

### International Research Collaboration Program

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

## What European Union?

16 September 2012

**Source:** Hasan Cemal, “Türkiye AB’nin, AB Türkiye’nin Neresinde? (Where is Turkey for the EU, Where is the EU for Turkey?)” Milliyet.com.tr, 16 September 2012, <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/turkiye-ab-nin-ab-turkiye-nin-neresinde-/siyaset/siyasyazardetay/16.09.2012/1597140/default.htm>

**OE Commentary:** *Turkey’s European Union (EU) accession process is not advancing. There have not been many reforms in the last couple of years, and a recent poll revealed that Turks have lost their enthusiasm on the issue. The poll, conducted by the Turkey-Europe Educational and Scientific Research Foundation, shows that those who believe in membership in the union stand at 17 percent, down from 78 percent in 2004. This poll has sparked a debate in Turkey about what the EU means for Turkey and what Turkey means for the EU.*

*The accompanying article, written by a prominent journalist from the mainstream-daily Milliyet, provides a good summary of this debate and points to a way forward. The author argues that Turkey’s declining enthusiasm and lack of reforms, coupled with the EU’s preoccupation with its own problems and ‘lack of vision’ regarding Turkey, is dangerous. Citing passages from Zbigniew Brzezinski’s book, Strategic Vision: America and the Crisis of Global Power, he alludes to the dangers of Europe cutting out Turkey and to the benefits of a Turkey that would be part of Europe. He argues that both sides should think long term and move forward on the issue.*

*The article points out that the sharp decline in Turkey’s enthusiasm can be attributed to a widespread impression in Turkey that the EU will never accept Turkey anyway, especially in light of Germany’s and France’s negative stance on Turkey’s membership. Moreover, Turkey’s strong economic growth, particularly in contrast to the economic crises in a number of EU countries, has led many to believe that Turkey has been more successful pursuing an economic path independent of the EU. Finally, Turkey is becoming increasingly more aware of its own geopolitical and geo-economic importance on the world stage. **End OE Commentary (Kaya)***



Turkey's fit  
in the EU, via  
silkroadstudies.  
org

Is Turkey still on Europe’s agenda? Or has it fallen off?

Is Europe still on Turkey’s agenda? Or has it fallen off?

These questions are important. For both sides.

**U**nfortunately, I have lost my old enthusiasm on this. I of course continue to follow developments. And I am aware of Turkey’s and Europe’s importance for each other. But the wave of excitement that existed in the early 2000’s just isn’t there anymore. This is the case for both Turkey and Europe.

The view that “Europe won’t accept us anyway!” dominates Turkish public opinion. The reasons for this range from Paris, to Berlin, to Ankara, namely the Justice and Development Party.

Plus, Europe has its own problems.

The Euro crisis continues to shake Europe to its core.

Shortly:

The EU is in no shape to see Turkey.

We can ask:

Looking at the point that relations have arrived at today; can either side cross the other one out? Can either side say to the other, “Whatever!” or, more bluntly, “Go to hell!”?

I don’t think so.

To say, ‘Good-bye’ is not in the interest of either side.

It is not right to get stuck in the current situation. I think it’s useful to look to the future.

## Continued: What European Union?

A book that I recently read has strengthened my opinion on this.

The book is called "Strategic Vision".

Its subtitle is: America and the Crisis of Global Power.

The author is American political scientist and famous strategist Zbigniew Brzezinski.

In his book, Brzezinski talks about how America and the West can balance a rising China; and criticizes America and Europe. He underlines the importance of Turkey multiple times.

The following lines for example:

"Despite the recent reservations of some EU members [to accept Turkey] - especially Germany and France- Turkey's EU membership is a geopolitical reality. A Turkish democracy in its own Western style, if tied strongly not only to NATO, but also to the West, can become a shield that could protect Europe from an unstable Middle East." (Page 157)

Or these lines:

"If Europe was a more active geopolitical player along with America; and focused on the long-term goal of a broader Western society- this could have a transformative effect on Turkey and Russia. However, a long-term vision requires a long-term strategy that could implement this vision. But today's Europe- along with America- lack both." (Page 156)

The following lines that point to the possibility of Turkey's detachment from Europe are also interesting:

"Turkey's promising and continuing transformation towards becoming a modern and secular country- despite some obstacles in the fields of freedom of press, education and some social areas such as human development- is providing its citizens with a sense of confidence. If Turkey keeps feeling rejected by Europe, this confidence can turn into an anti-Western tendency..."

A break from Europe which can turn into an anti-European stance would bring political tension and a radical renewal that can stop Turkey's modernization. The worst case scenario would be a break that reminds us of the consequences of the fall of the Iranian Shah in 1978, and one that can sabotage Ataturk's striking legacy." (Pages 166-167)

On the one hand, Europe's lack of vision for Turkey in some areas...

On the other, Turkey's ignorant attitude towards the EU in the last few years...

Both are wrong...

Whatever their current state is today, if Europe and Turkey

drop each other from their agendas, this would hurt both sides' interests.

The right thing is for Europe to get over its strategic myopia, and for Turkey to raise the bar on democracy and law.

**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**



## A Peaceful View on the Anti-Islamic Film

17 September 2012

**Source:** Mustafa Akyol, "Müslümanların Tepkisi (The Reaction of Muslims)," Stargazete.com.tr, 17 September 2012, <http://haber.stargazete.com/yazar/muslumanlarin-tepkisi/yazi-689434>

**OE Commentary:** *The anti-Islamic film that has sparked a wave of anti-American protests in the Middle East has generated debate in Turkey as well. Typically considered a 'mildly Islamic' or 'moderate Islamic' country, Turkey's views and reactions have differed from others.*

*The accompanying article by a prominent columnist and Islam expert claims that Turkey has been the only Muslim country that has reacted correctly to the film, and points out that there have been no violent acts there. He agrees with the top government and religious leaders, who have called for restraint and calm and who have urged Muslims to resist being provoked by the film. The author claims that such violent acts actually fuel the very Islamophobia that they are against, only to create a vicious cycle. He points to Turkey as a wiser Muslim country that has displayed a more sensible method to counter these acts, and urges Muslims to represent Islam by their calm and peaceful behavior.*

*He, like many others in the Turkish press, expresses disgust with the film, while strongly condemning the violence against U.S. interests. He also discusses freedom of speech in the U.S. **End OE Commentary (Kaya)***



A protest in Duraz, Bahrain against an anti-Islamic film. The banner (in Arabic) reads: "The Islamic nation will not tolerate with those who offend its sanctities." Photo by Mohamed CJ (Own work) [CC-BY-SA-3.0 (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>)], via Wikimedia Commons

**W**e've seen this vicious cycle before.

First, an anti-Islamic group produces a film or book that insults Islam and humiliates Muslims. It portrays Islam as the "**religion of violence**" and Muslims as "**barbarians**".

Muslims throughout the world rightfully get upset and react. But some don't stop there; they attack those enemies of Islam who produce such vulgar things. They go even farther, and burn down anything they find that they equate with the '**West**' (consulates, embassies, flags, etc.), and kill innocent civilians in the process.

So what happens in the face of all this?

The anti-Islamic forces that lit this fire are basically saying to the Westerners:

**"See? Muslims are this kind of violent people. And you are still being stupid and tolerant towards them; you are allowing them to open mosques in the middle of Europe."**

So basically, the disproportionate fury in the Muslim world becomes the best propaganda material for the '**Islamophobia**' that the same people complain about.

To be or not to be provoked?

Last week's events that lit up the Middle East have become another ring to this vicious cycle.

The events started with the posting on the internet of a vulgar movie by the sarcastic name of '**The Innocence of Muslims.**'

## Continued: A Peaceful View on the Anti-Islamic Film

The producer was not a Jew by the name of Sam Bacille, as he originally said. He was a Copt with Egyptian roots, who chose to become Protestant later in life, and who joined the marginal group of fanatic pastor Terry Jones who had an eagerness to 'burn Qur'ans'.

The 11-minute amateur movie was vulgar because it contained all kinds of ugliness possible towards our Prophet, the Prophet Mohammed.

And it was every Muslim's right to curse the movie. That's what I did and am doing.

But the reactions of some Muslims didn't stop there. A series of violent acts, starting with the rocket attack against the U.S. consulate in Libya, took place and are still continuing. I condemn these acts.

And I remind the following to those who are inclined to view these [violent] acts with tolerance:

First of all, responsibility in Islam is '**personal**'; they are not '**communal**' like those who are unaware / ignorant think. So, when a few Americans insult Islam, it is only the anti-Islamic people involved who are responsible; not '*all Americans*' or '**the country of the U.S.**'

Furthermore, the fact that Islamophobic publications can be produced in the West does not mean that Western countries support them. In these countries, the concept of '**freedom of speech**' is a very broad concept, and the U.S. in particular is the most '**exceptionally tolerant**' country. In fact, the same America that we criticize for having a '**Crusader mentality**' did not ban the movie 'The Last Temptation of the Christ' which had ugly sexual implications for Jesus, and which generated wide reaction from Christians.

### The Turkey difference

It seems like Turkey is the only Muslim country that reacted to this situation in the right way.

This is because, despite demonstrations, there have not been any violent acts. Opinion leaders like the Prime Minister Erdoğan, the top official cleric Mehmet Görmez and Fethullah Gülen made rational statements calling on Muslims to stay calm.

This is the right thing to do. Because what Muslims need to do, in spite of all this tension, is to represent Islam '**by [their] behaviors**' as much as '**react to**' anti-Islamists.

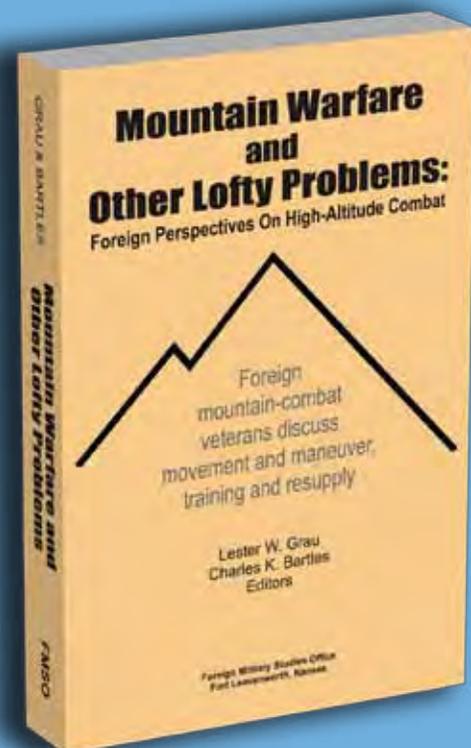
It is to display a maturity that disproves / corrects those who portray Islam as a '**religion of violence**', instead of conducting

violent acts that prove them right.

Otherwise this vicious cycle will only get bigger.

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.



## Expectations from General Dempsey's Visit

17 September 2012

**Source:** "Dempsey Türkiye' de, Gündem Suriye, (Dempsey is in Turkey, Syria is on the Agenda)," Zaman.com.tr, 17 September 2012, <http://www.zaman.com.tr/yazdir.do?haberno=1346406>

**OE Commentary:** General Martin Dempsey, US Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, made an official visit to Turkey during 16-18 September on an invitation from General Necdet Özel, Turkish Chief of the General Staff.

The accompanying article discusses the topics that the Turkish side expects to be addressed in the meetings. The article lists the topic of Syrian refugees, the issue of a 'buffer zone,' intelligence-sharing and cooperation on the PKK, among others. The fight against the PKK is particularly high on Turkey's list because of the significant increase in PKK violence and terrorist attacks in recent months.

This visit is the latest in a series of high-level visits between the two countries. The Turkish general had visited the U.S. and the Pentagon during 8-11 May 2012. U.S. Defense Secretary Leon Panetta had visited Turkey in December 2011, meeting with his counterpart, the Prime Minister and the Turkish President. These visits have prompted talk of a 'golden age' in U.S.-Turkish relations. **End OE Commentary (Kaya)**



Gen. Martin Dempsey and Gen. Özel. Photo by Zaman, via <http://www.zaman.com.tr/haber.do?haberno=1346810&keyfield=64656D70736579>

**S** yria is the main item on the agenda of the U.S. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Martin Dempsey, who came to Ankara on the invitation on the Chief of the General Staff Gen. Necdet Özel.

Another item on the agenda during the three day visit will be cooperation and intelligence-sharing on the fight against the PKK. The meetings are expected to include talks about the situation of refugees that escaped the civil war in Syria, and the topic of a 'buffer zone', which Ankara has repeatedly brought up. But in his recent statements, Dempsey had pointed to the security risks that a buffer zone would create and signaled that Washington would not consider this option. Another topic concerning the refugees will be how to minimize the security risks that uncontrolled border crossings pose for Turkey.

It is being alleged that the U.S. will request that Turkey move some of its military units currently based in the Aegean (as part of NATO), to its southern border. The topic of actionable intelligence provided by American planes that fly over Northern Iraq, a critical area for Turkey, will also be discussed. Officials point out that since the U.S.'s departure from Iraq last December; actionable intelligence has been reduced to those that come only from unmanned vehicles departing from Incirlik- which haven't been continuous- hurting the fight against terror. The U.S. apparently stopped obtaining images from Northern Iraq from its US spy planes, due to the risk of the PKK taking the pilots hostage in the event of a plane crash. It is expected that the U.S. will be requested to provide unlimited actionable intelligence sharing.

## Divided We Stand!

7 September 2012

Source:

معركة كلامية مبكرة بين قادة «جيش» المعارضة السورية

(Early War of Words between the Leaders of Syria's Two Opposition 'Armies') <http://aawsat.com/details.asp?section=4&issueno=12337&article=694225&feature=>

**OE Commentary:** Syria's civil war remains a localized affair. Although it encompasses the whole country, the fighting is largely carried out by local groups operating in a limited geographical area. The exception to this are campaigns on the periphery of urban centers (Homs, Aleppo and Damascus), where fighters from the surrounding countryside and beyond have congregated under a broader coalition, for instance the "Tawhid Brigade" in Aleppo (even then, the relative success in unifying ranks has been tempered by the animosity that rebel influxes have created with local residents). In short, the common goal of toppling the ruling regime has not translated into organizational unity within rebel ranks.

There is, of course, the Free Syrian Army (FSA). Founded by Colonel Riyad al-Asaad, an early defector who fled to Turkey in July 2011, the FSA has become the banner under which the insurgency operates. Yet there are negatives to having the FSA become synonymous with the armed insurgency, specifically, when rebel groups are accused of committing atrocities or of espousing an intolerant Sunni extremist ideology reminiscent of al-Qaeda. An early attempt to centralize the insurgency came when General Mustafa al-Sheikh, who defected in early 2012, proclaimed himself the head of the FSA's "Military Council," a step which on the surface did little beyond adding an additional layer of bureaucracy to the armed opposition's already fragmented leadership-in-exile.

In early August 2012 General Mohammed Hussein al-Haj Ali, former



Col. Riyad al-Asaad of the Free Syrian Army. Photo by Syria2011[CC-BY-2.0] via Flickr <http://www.flickr.com/photos/syria2011/6435865959/>

Col. Riyad al-Asaad, leader of the Free Syrian Army, denounced the creation of the "Syrian National Army," meant to unify the ranks of the opposition battalions under the leadership of Gen. Mohammed Hussein al-Haj Ali. In an interview with Deutsche Press Agency (DPA) he noted that the FSA has since its founding been structured and that those supporting the formation and structure of a different entity are doing it for their own sake. In response, al-Haj Ali called al-Asaad's statements false and qualified the FSA as "an advertising slogan rather than something on the ground."

"We still see an opportunity to agree and unify under a single banner," al-Haj Ali told al-Sharq al-Awsat, adding that "the FSA is not organized and the activities of the battalions are not controlled, each of them is led by a specific individual or commander and there is no single authority or military institution. Therefore, the main goal of creating the National Army is to unify the ranks of the battalions under a single banner and to organize its ranks."

Al-Haj indicated that his appointment as Supreme Commander of the Syrian National Army is a natural result of his qualifications and higher rank, something that is "normal within the military hierarchy but which al-Asaad still rejects." Regarding al-Asaad's statements on the leaders who attended the founding of the SNA not inviting him except until the very end, al-Haj Ali said: "We tried to contact him and invite him to the meeting several times but he refused, and it was a Turkish mayor who was in attendance rather than an ambassador as he claims."

Speaking to DPA, al-Asaad said: "We as leaders rely on God and our trust in the Syrian people. The FSA will be the nucleus for building a national army to which all Syrians belong, without exception or discrimination." He rejected statements by military leaders on restructuring the FSA and creating a so-called Syrian National Army, saying: "The FSA has since its founding been structured and that those supporting the formation and structure of a different entity are doing it for their own sake. We do not understand the significance of this name, it is as if we were not 'national!'"

Al-Asaad added: "There is in fact a structured military entity in existence and which is

## Continued: Divided We Stand!

*head of Syria's military college, became the highest ranking military defector. The following month, he announced that after consultations among leaders of the FSA, the rebel army would be renamed the "Syrian National Army" and would be placed under his control.*

*The accompanying article, which is taken from the Saudi Arabian daily al-Sharq al-Awsat, details how this announcement was immediately disputed by Colonel al-Asaad. Some see hints of megalomania in al-Asaad's unwillingness to defer to military rank; others question the sincerity of late defectors such as al-Haj Ali. The strongest position on FSA leadership is made by those who argue that former Syrian officers living in relatively luxurious exile have no business giving orders to commanders on the ground. It is these local commanders who ultimately lead the FSA. The degree to which they may be willing to submit to a supra-local authority needs to be a primary consideration for all parties concerned with Syria's current predicament. **End OE Commentary (Winter)***

succeeding, namely the FSA. Therefore, we hoped that everyone would collaborate with it caring for unity in the ranks, which is something which we, unlike others, seek and care for."

"We were not initially invited to the meetings of these leaders," he added. "Some figures then intervened to mediate and we were invited, but unfortunately, since the beginning they did not wish to listen to our viewpoint or even hear a sound from us. They then made their decisions on their own and in the presence of a European ambassador, in this dictatorial fashion."

Al-Asaad downplayed the importance of the new military formation. "These leaders have no control over the battalions of the FSA, which are the true fighting forces on the ground." He added that the "FSA has over one hundred armed brigades and battalions and all are under control. Although some breaches here and there may take place, things are generally going successfully and we have been able to deal the regime painful blows. We do not know who will join this new Syrian army."

Separately, officers from Homs province and its outskirts issued a statement yesterday saying: "We the officers of Homs and its provinces, residing outside of the country, announce our support for the Military Council of Homs Province and Outskirts led by Air Force Col. Qassim Saad al-Din. We announce that we do not recognize any other military council that has been formed domestically or abroad, and that the current council is the single legitimate one representing us and under which we can work, following its rallying under the banner of the Syrian National Army."

22 August 2012

## Too Early to Dismiss Saleh

Source:

(Warnings of a Counter-Revolution in Yemen)” <http://www.aljazeera.net/news/pages/4f094c4a-edb6-4521-9645-9e024bed3e57>

تحذير من ثورة مضادة باليمن

**OE Commentary:** Since April 2012 Yemeni President Abd Rabo Mansour Hadi has been systematically dismantling the network of former president Ali Abdullah Saleh’s relatives and confidants, who for years controlled the country’s key security and military positions. Two very powerful Saleh relatives are still standing: the former president’s son and erstwhile heir-apparent Ahmed (commander of the Republican Guard) and his nephew Yahya (commander of the Central Security Forces). Dislodging them from power will not be easy. The first concrete step in that direction came on 6 August, when Hadi issued a decree transferring command of several Republican Guard brigades away from Ahmed Saleh. A week after the order was issued Saleh-loyalist Republican Guards unsuccessfully tried to storm the Ministry of Defense.

On 11 September Hadi announced the latest round of Saleh-loyalist dismissals, which included Ali al-Anisi, who had for years been the powerful head of the presidential office and director of the National Security Bureau (an intelligence bureau formed in the wake of 9/11). The next day a mob attacked the US Embassy in Sanaa with what appeared to be complicity from the Central Security Forces (see: [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/09/14/the\\_silent\\_hand\\_of\\_saleh](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/09/14/the_silent_hand_of_saleh)). Although government forces have been able to contain the tit-for-tat responses of former regime loyalists, there is fear that a showdown between the two is looming.

Deposed president Ali Abdullah Saleh once compared ruling Yemen



Brigadier Ahmed Ali Abdullah Saleh, Commander of Republican Guards (right) with his father, deposed president Ali Abdullah Saleh (left). Photo by National Yemen, via <http://nationalyemen.com/2011/12/25/ahmed-ali-meets-gulf-foreign-diplomats/>

The recently attempted military rebellion in Yemen’s capital Sanaa, carried out by thousands of troops from the Republican Guard commanded by Brig. Gen. Ahmed Ali Abdullah Saleh (son of the deposed president), have led to warnings of a “counterrevolution” and a further shuffling of political cards. Analysts see these attempts as responses to the military decrees issued by President Abd Rabo Mansour Hadi to restructure of the army and end the control of relatives of Ali Abdullah Saleh. Some see the attempt to storm the ministries of defense and interior as part of a coup by Saleh’s son intended to regain the power his father lost in the popular uprising in 2011 and pre-empt any decree relieving him of his duty at the head of the Republican Guard.

Military analyst Brig. Gen. Muhsin Khasrouf told aljazeera.net that the attack on the defense ministry was a “warning message” to president Hadi, who took control over seven armored military brigades from Saleh’s son. Hadi took similar measures toward supporters of the peaceful popular revolution, by taking five armored and infantry brigades from the First Armored Division away from its leader Gen. Ali Muhsin al-Ahmar, whose defection was considered the death blow to the Saleh regime.

Brig. Gen. Khasrouf said that the Republican Guard’s attempt to storm the ministry of defense “tested the readiness and ability of the president and his troops to deal with emergencies.” Khasrouf said that any coup attempt against Hadi or attempts to turn the tables on the revolutionaries or bring back the former regime are bound to fail. He

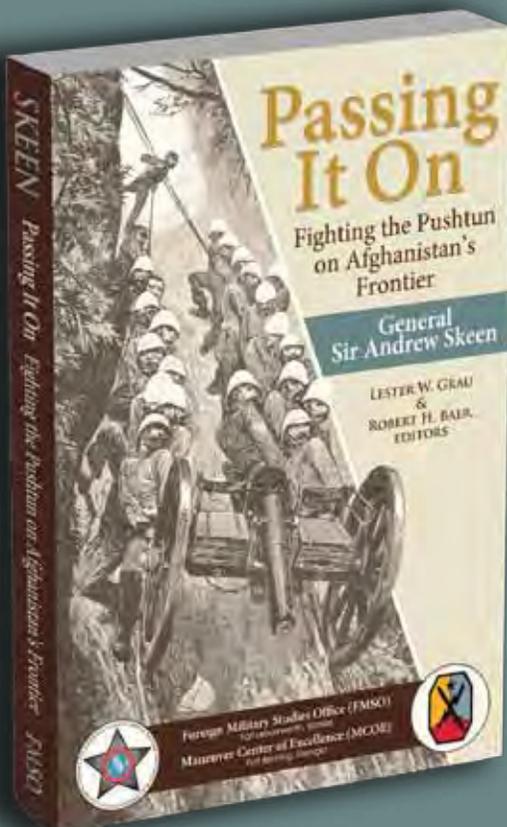
## Continued: Too Early to Dismiss Saleh

to “dancing on the heads of snakes.” Hadi, surprisingly, has proven to be a deft dancer, slowly and methodically stripping power away from the Salehs and their allies without losing control of the country. Although weakened, former regime leaders still control significant resources; if threatened, they have both non-state actors (the Houthis, al-Qaeda) and foreign powers (Iran) who may be willing to form a loose alliance, creating a major challenge to the new Yemeni government, with potential regional implications. The demise of Ali Abdullah Saleh has seemed imminent more than once over the past year; however, his formidable political skills, honed from over 30 years of dancing on snakeheads, should not be underestimated. **End OE Commentary (Winter)**

added that the ministry of defense events showed that Hadi and his forces are prepared to respond to any coup attempts.

For his part, researcher and university professor Said Abdel Mu'min told al-jazeera.net that the goal of the military rebellion and the targeting of the defense and interior ministries was “to send a message to president Hadi and the national unity government that corrupt forces are still able to disrupt the political process and stability in Yemen, perhaps even preparing for a military coup that would bring the situation back to how it was before the revolution.” He noted that leaders of the security and military institutions entrusted with protecting the ministries and state institutions are still loyal to deposed president Ali Saleh.

For his part, political analyst Yassin al-Tamimi told al-jazeera.net that the military rebellion and the attack on the ministries are part of a strategic plan whose goal is to undermine the political system led by president Hadi. He added to this resentment after Hadi included Ali Muhsin, the deposed president’s foe, as part of the presidential delegation that recently visited Qatar. Al-Tamimi confirmed that the military revolt is deeply linked to the deposed president’s desire to reclaim power, whether directly or through his son.



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.

## Egypt's Military Gets Younger

18 August 2012

Source:

السيسى.. قائد الجيش الوافد من بوابة الشباب والطموح والالتزام الدينى“ (Al-Sisi... Incoming Army Chief Brings Youth, Ambition and Religiosity)” <http://www.shorouknews.com/news/view.aspx?cdate=18082012&id=4153ae96-a2a9-49d5-8767-3f251257dce6>

**OE Commentary:** On 12 August Egyptian President Mohammed Morsy forced the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces' (SCAF) top two generals – Defense Minister and SCAF leader Mohammed Hussein Tantawi and Armed Forces Chief of Staff Sami Anan – into retirement. It was seen as a bold move; after all, the SCAF had proven to be the true center of power in post-Mubarak Egypt and seemed unwilling to put itself at the mercy of the first civilian president in Egypt's modern era. In truth, the reshuffling makes sense on many levels, several of them detailed in the accompanying article (taken from the daily al-Shorouq, a rising star in Egypt's vibrant independent media).

The retirement of Anan and Tantawi marks the end of an era in Egypt's military leadership. Unlike the previous generation, the new Defense Minister, Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, was too young to participate in Egypt's wars with Israel (1967-1973). Domestic counterterrorism rather than international conflict was a principal focus for the Egyptian military during al-Sisi's formative years, from Sadat's assassination in 1981 through the 1997 Luxor massacre and the Sinai tourist attacks of the early 2000s. Al-Sisi takes the reins of Egypt's defense establishment as the country enters a new, uncertain era of popular mobilization and democratic politics in a region undergoing rapid and often unpredictable change.

The reshuffling comes on the heels of the Egyptian military's first major security operations (in the Sinai) since the election of Morsy. Al-Sisi's challenges, though, will extend beyond issues of Egyptian national security. Indeed, his behavior in the political realm is likely to be closely scrutinized, particularly by those who see the Egyptian military as the principal bulwark against the threat of religion taking on an elemental role in the public and political spheres. **End OE Commentary (Winter)**



President Mohammed Morsi (center) with Abdel Fattah al-Sisi (left). Photo via <http://www.timesofmalta.com/mobile/view/20120813/world/Egypt-Defence-Minister-gets-retired-in-surprise-shake-up.432684>

“**W**hen he entered the meeting room there was a clear sense of respect, seriousness and intensity.” This is how one of the most prominent revolutionary activists describes Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, who was named minister of defense on August 12, replacing Field Marshall Hussein Tantawi, who held that post for over two decades.

The political activist was referring to a meeting he and other activists attended at the invitation of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF), which took over the country's affairs with clear popular consent on February 11, 2011. The meeting was held at a military intelligence office. According to those who attended the meeting on February 13 and spoke to al-Shorouq, al-Sisi seemed the most assertive and powerful. “I don't know if this was related to his being the head of military intelligence, but it was clear after that meeting that his simply passing in front of an officer made them rise to attention,” an activist who spoke to al-Shorouq said.

The same activist recalled that al-Sisi was “precise in his speaking, with a good memory and sharp arguments. When we told them that one of the most important issues to deal with immediately were the low wages of many workers and the need for a minimum wage, he immediately responded with points regarding economic income and expenditure. He then noted that a minimum wage would require at least a seven-fold rise in spending, and said that if anyone knew how to do that they could go ahead and do it.”

## ***Continued: Egypt's Military Gets Younger***

According to the same activist, al-Sisi was a man who could control his temper and not overreact. When one of the meeting participants said that a rise in the salaries of the most disadvantaged was possible so long as “SCAF members and other senior officials give up the endless advantages they enjoy” he did not respond at all and there was no change in his expression.

One cannot describe al-Sisi without mentioning the religiosity made apparent by the prayer mark on his forehead, an observant wife who wears the veil, a daughter that began wearing the veil at an early age and three strictly raised sons. Some have claimed he is a Muslim Brother within SCAF, which the defense ministry denied after confirming that al-Sisi has never been a member of the Brotherhood or any other Islamic group. Many who know the man and who work in the armed forces say that al-Sisi's behavior regarding prayer and his wife's clothing are no different than that of the vast majority in the armed forces, the police, and the majority of Egyptians. They note that al-Sisi, as many other military leaders, is committed to a non-ideological military. There are some that say al-Sisi's religiosity is Sufi, which requires of him love for creation rather than the type of “ideological” religiosity, which seeks to impose extremism.

Al-Sisi was born in November 1954, two years after the July revolution. He graduated from the military college in 1977, three years after the October War, the last war between Egypt and Israel and one which ended the myth of the invincible Israeli army, at least at the time. As with his predecessor Tantawi, al-Sisi comes from the infantry. During his military promotion he became commander of the northern military zone before becoming head of military intelligence. “This man's role was vital during the past months, as the SCAF's trust was essentially with military intelligence,” according to a SCAF member's staffer.

Those close to Morsy deny that his choice of al-Sisi for defense minister was based on his religiosity, even though they do not deny religious commitment as a measure of an individual's seriousness and ability to trust them as principled and non-partisan. They insist that the appointment was due to several reasons, first of all al-Sisi's “appropriate age,” one of the main goals for the change. As Yasser Ali, the presidential spokesman notes, he is “an injection of new blood in the arteries of national institutions.”

Another criterion in al-Sisi's favor was his work in his service in the infantry. According to one of them, infantrymen are the ones with true military experience. An additional criteria was the “clear understanding” between Morsy and al-Sisi during a meeting where the president-elect met with SCAF immediately following his victory.

Al-Sisi, unlike Tantawi, “did not have loyalty to Mubarak,” according to a staff member at the ministry of defense. “Tantawi was one of the strongest opponents of the dynastic succession scenario and it was he who made the decision to not involve the armed forces in attacking protesters,” the same source added, “but he always remained committed to Mubarak and asked about him and inquired about his health.”

“Al-Sisi, however, spoke strongly against Mubarak,” said the political activist who participated in the meeting on February 13. “When we spoke he said that getting rid of Mubarak was a difficult dream to achieve and his overthrow was one of Egypt's happiest days, and that we must thank God that we got rid of this man.” In the same meeting, though, al-Sisi asked the political activists to hasten in clearing Tahrir Square and told them that now that Mubarak had gone there is no reason to protest. According to al-Shorouq's sources, he did not oppose the violence used to stop the protests.

Al-Sisi's most infamous position is his defense of the virginity tests scandal, which female protesters from Tahrir Square said they were subject to by supervisors of military detention centers. Al-Sisi said something considered unacceptable by all rights organizations in Egypt and abroad when he made claims contrary to those of other officials regarding these forced tests and justified them as a means of preventing activists from accusing soldiers who detained the women of rape while also protecting them from rape.

## Islamism and Liberalism in Tunisia

31 August 2012

**Source:** “«Nous risquons une dictature pire que celle de Ben Ali» (We risk a dictatorship worse than that of Ben Ali)” La Presse de Tunisie, 31 August 2012.

**OE Commentary:** *One of the first major conflicts to emerge within Muslim countries whose governments have been toppled by the Arab Awakening is between Islamists and liberals, who have very different visions for society. Though mainstream American analysts have repeatedly assured their audiences that electorally empowered Islamist parties will be moderate in general, and constrained in the changes they bring to society, prominent liberals who will actually have to live in these societies during the times of transition are not convinced.*

*The accompanying article features an interview that appeared in the Tunisian press with one of that country’s prominent jurists, Yadh Ben Achour. He argues that Tunisia’s religious movements—and he makes clear that he is not just talking about salafis—could bring a dictatorship worse than that of former President of Tunisia Zine el Abidine Ben Ali. Obviously, rhetoric about the threat posed by religious parties often outstrips the reality.*

*Despite this, the fact remains that much outside analysis of the impact of religious parties on Islamic societies in transition is based on surface-level engagement: Western analysts have been surprised by some of the region’s most significant developments in the past few years, and will certainly be surprised again. Ben Achour’s warnings are worth noting, as is his analysis of the mechanisms that religious parties could use to subvert the consensus-building mechanisms that are supposed to guide the process of crafting the country’s constitution. One of the main questions anchoring his discussion is what will happen if the National Constituent Assembly, as appears overwhelmingly likely, does not finish the work of drafting and adopting a new constitution by 23 October, as it had promised to do. **End OE Commentary (Gartenstein-Ross)***



Yadh Ben Achour  
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**D**oes October 23 constitute a deadline? Opinions are divided about this issue. Prof. Yadh Ben Achour answers frankly, explaining that the answer lies outside the legal field, but that “beyond that date, the National Constituent Assembly will lose much of its credibility and its moral and political legitimacy.”

Since he chaired the High Authority for the Achievement of the Revolution’s Objectives, Prof. Ben Achour has been very active in politics and the media. Consulted in high places and very influential, not a day goes by without Ben Achour—a longtime opponent of Ben Ali, a renowned journalist, and a recognized specialist in administrative law—being asked his opinion on a variety of issues.

Right now, Tunisia is in a critical transition period, during which the constitution of the second republic is being developed. Experts can make a valuable contribution. However, the decision was made to thank Ben Achour, and go without the services of the expert committee which he chaired. A volunteer committee was proposed in its place to bring specialized expertise to the work of the Constituent Assembly—but curiously, the proposal was rejected.

During this interview, La Presse raised questions relevant to the country’s current situation. The frank answers of “The Dean” will surely generate discussion and debate.

**You drew attention to certain passages of the draft constitution that would pave the way for a theocratic dictatorship...**

Since the first meeting of the Constituent Assembly, one is increasingly assailed by religious events or themes. One day it is certain constituencies demanding the application of Qur’anic penalties, such as amputation or crucifixions, another day it is more terrorist attacks improperly labeled “salafi” against artists or intellectuals, the day after that it is sensational proclamations and calls to murder on the part of certain thuggish imams. The next day it is violence against a Shiite group, an unfair trial against young cartoonists, a medieval lawsuit against the showing of Persepolis, along with debates about sharia and the adoption of personal codes pertaining to polygamy or the niqab.

There are heavy social and political debates about religion, while the country’s real problems are ignored indefinitely. And, contrary to what is said, religion is

## ***Continued: Islamism and Liberalism in Tunisia***

not gaining new followers; on the contrary, it is in the process of losing them. A number of believers who once peacefully prayed in the mosques are no longer there, so religion has become—not as it should be, the symbol of gentleness, serenity, and contemplation—but an expression of the most virulent political militancy, violence, hatred, and ugliness. All that the ruling party has managed to do is to transform our religion into a true social disease. Tunisians have experienced religion as an element of liberation, social cohesion, spirituality. Religion now lives like a cancer that eats the entire social body, and may throw it into underdevelopment and generalized regression. If this continues, Tunisia will not simply be downgraded by rating agencies, but by God himself.

It is in the context of a conference about the draft constitution, organized by the Tunisian Association of Constitutional Law, that I said this project paved the way for a theocratic dictatorship, and would sanction the death of the freedom of expression that we gained from the revolution. The constitutional committees unfortunately lacked methodology and lacked expertise in producing their draft of the constitution. They were not content to reference the “noble values of Islam” in the preamble, or the first article of the Constitution, a point on which virtually everyone agreed. Rather, they specified twice, in two different articles of their draft, that the state is the protector of religion, and in particular “sacred values,” which opens the way to many risks. They even added, in another article included in the chapter on fundamental rights and freedoms, that the state guarantees freedom of belief and practice of religion, and “criminalizes any violation of sacred values.”

Of course, some commentators have tried to minimize the significance of these items. But I can tell you that in the context in which we live, with the threats on freedom that we see on a daily basis, we are opening the door to all the abuses imaginable. Yes, we may shortly find ourselves in a dictatorship worse than that of Ben Ali, a theocratic dictatorship. Yes, we risk losing one of the most cherished achievements of the revolution: freedom of expression. But do not worry. Ultimately, the message of the revolution will always be there to remind those who forget their commitments to the people that these commitments are not about offering them prayer mats for their problems.

**Do you think that the roundtable was well organized, and that your various public comments on this subject can contribute to improving the text of the Constitution?**

I don't know if the roundtable and the criticisms I have made will have an effect. In the current state of things, I am wary of members of the National Constituent Assembly. Some of them, fortunately not all, have no culture, no appreciation of rights, no sense of the state. They are well aware of this fact. But in psychology this phenomenon

is well known. Instead of pushing them to modesty, it leads to them closing themselves off, to illusion, fantasy, and misplaced hubris. This is commonly called an “inferiority complex.”

**Legally speaking, is October 23 really a deadline? And politically, what is it?**

I've answered this question several times. October 23 constitutes a deadline. But we do not agree on the consequences. Personally, I think that beyond that date, the National Constituent Assembly will lose much of its credibility and its moral and political legitimacy. I do not really believe that the legal field can resolve the debate, to draw concrete conclusions and find the Constituent Assembly legally invalid beyond October 23.

**What are the possible scenarios beyond that date, beyond the hypothetical legal and political vacuum that many observers foresee?**

We cannot answer such questions, except to say that people today feel great weariness due to the length of the transition period, which unfortunately may be growing longer. This fatigue is due to enormous faults, unacceptable management of the state, the poor quality of some Constituent Assembly members, and unpleasant people within the government, in particular the head of government.

**Is it true that you mentioned during the August 23 roundtable some role that could be played by the National Army?**

I raised the issue of the use of the referendum, in case the two-thirds majority for the adoption of the Constitution could not be attained in the National Constituent Assembly. This idea of a referendum, against which I warned in December, is a kind of adventure for the highest authorities of the state. What would happen if the referendum's answer never turns out negative? It is precisely this trap that experts warned the National Constituent Assembly about. When this issue came under discussion within our own committee of experts, who worked with the High Authority for the Achievement of the Revolution's Objectives, the idea of a referendum was discussed. We immediately dismissed it because of this risk. Under the present system, they only have to manage to get a two-thirds majority, and this condition is also a guarantee of consensus.

Failing that, we run the risk of a total vacuum within state institutions. Neither the National Constituent Assembly nor the government nor the president will have legal or political legitimacy. This void can be fatal. It can lead to anarchy. And with that vacuum and anarchy, no legal armed force can remain indifferent. I say frankly: the army not only can intervene, but in this case of national disaster, it is bound by duty to the whole country to intervene to end the chaos.

## Marikana... A Post-Apartheid Massacre

6 September 2012

**Source:** Keith Somerville, "Mines, Malema and Mangaung: South Africa's Descent into a Morass of Corruption, Greed and Factionalism," African Arguments (Royal African Society), 6 Sep 2012. <http://africanarguments.org/2012/09/06/mines-malema-and-mangaung-south-africas-descent-into-a-morass-of-corruption-greed-and-factionalism-%e2%80%93-by-keith-somerville/>

***OE Commentary:** Prior to the recent attacks on embassies in North Africa, much of the world's focus was on the very opposite end of the continent, South Africa. There, in mid-August, striking miners in the Marikana area were involved in a violent confrontation with police. When the Marikana Massacre, as it has been dubbed, was over, 36 mine workers, four police, and four unidentified others were dead. Reports that some of the mine workers had been shot in the back fueled even greater anger at the security forces, who had just killed the largest number of civilians since the infamous 1960 Sharpeville Massacre, during the Apartheid era, in which 69 people lost their lives. Many commentators were quick to note that such violence against South Africa's civilian population as occurred at Marikana at the hands of a police force composed of both black and white officers has shaken the belief that, with the fall of Apartheid, mass killings would never again occur.*

*To be sure, there are conflicting accounts as to the exact details of what happened during the Marikana Massacre. Some have even defended the police at Marikana, who were facing a crowd armed with machetes and spears, after having three days earlier lost two of their own when they were hacked to death at a mine protest. However, as the accompanying article by Keith Somerville points out, there is much more to this story; indeed, what happened at Marikana is part of a larger picture of tremendous problems that are still growing in South Africa.*



Julius Malema, former president of the ANC Youth League. Photo by Gary van der Merwe (Own work) [CC-BY-SA-3.0 (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>)], via Wikimedia Commons

I've just returned from a couple of weeks in South Africa. It was supposed to be a holiday dominated by the Big Five on the safari circuit. But owing to the current news coming out of the country, a different Big Five dominated: Marikana, mines, mining unions, Malema and Mangaung. For the first time, following a large number of work and holiday visits to the country since 1990, I came away profoundly depressed by the future. The government and the ruling ANC are at war with themselves, administration policy on key issues is weak and erratic, Zuma offers no meaningful leadership and government bodies (especially the police and the prosecution service) seem irredeemably corrupt, incompetent or politically-oriented. Often all three at the same time.

Under a democratic government committed to righting the wrongs of apartheid, distributing wealth and providing services to ALL South Africans, events like the Marikana strikes and killings should never happen. Even before the strikes, the living conditions of the miners were appalling and wages had not improved to match higher costs of living. Yet, senior politicians who had fought their way to prominence as union leaders and opponents of apartheid, are seen to be reaping the benefits of investments in mining and of Black Economic Empowerment (BEE). They have become increasingly distant from those whose support made them national leaders. Every newspaper I read told this story and it was reflected in a general atmosphere of gloom, brooding resentment and a certain amount of fear.

As Martin Plaut and Paul Holden recently write in *Who Rules South Africa?*, the business or tourist visitor to South Africa could easily think all was well by observing plush hotels, new offices and gleaming malls filled with the old white and new black middle classes spending money. But scratch below the surface and that appearance is a thin, cosmetic layer hiding intense poverty, failures to supply basic services such as education to the poor majority (eg: no textbooks for schools across Limpopo) and the

## Continued: Marikana... A Post-Apartheid Massacre

*As a country which has traditionally supplied a large number of soldiers to various African peacekeeping missions, South Africa's troubles could have not just regional but also continent-wide implications for security and stability. The list of these troubles includes not only corruption, crime (including strong inroads by organized crime), immense unemployment, and staggering poverty, but also a middle class growing in large measure not through generation of new private enterprises but rather through procuring state tenders (creating in the process a group of people known as "tenderpreneurs"). Perhaps most damning of all is a political situation that offers little to no hope of making headway against these enormous problems. To paraphrase the description of the book, Who Rules South Africa?, many of those who thought the end of Apartheid would bring an end to most of South Africa's problems are, unfortunately, finding the reality to be quite different. **End OE Commentary (Feldman)***

grinding deprivation faced daily by those outside the privileged middle and super-rich classes.

How long can this last? Many commentators in newspapers such as the Mail and Guardian, Sowetan and City Press are asking whether Marikana is the turning point and whether politics and the solid support of the masses for the ANC will continue. There is a feeling that change, perhaps with much violence, is imminent.

I felt a change, but a change from confidence in the mid-1990s, through a fading but still evident hope in the early 2000s, to a rather bitter disillusionment and slow-burning anger now. The ANC will still be in power this time next year, but what will the political and industrial relations landscape look like?

### **Undermining the unions and ANC**

Mining has made South Africa and a limited number of South Africans very rich. It has been the bedrock of the country's economy for over 120 years. It remains a generator of wealth, division, deprivation and violence, despite the end of white minority rule and 18 years of ANC government. Few mineworkers (as opposed to owners and BEE investors or political freeloaders) have benefited from political changes. The union which represented them, the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), is an integral part of the ruling alliance and as such no longer has the unadulterated duty of representing miners' interests – it is now part of the governing group, has investments as a union and its leaders are wealthy men.

As I write, there is a strike continuing at Gold Fields' KDC gold mine. The company is setting up meetings with the NUM and also with what are described as disaffected NUM members. Unsurprisingly, former ANC Youth League head and troublemaker extraordinaire Julius Malema – after his interventions at Marikana and in other recent mining disputes – has involved himself. On 3rd September, he told the striking miners that they should 'lead themselves' when the big unions neglect them – but 'lead themselves' under his benevolent guidance, no doubt. He told the strikers that the NUM took its members for granted (something with which it is hard to argue) and he heard from the miners at KDC that they want the NUM local leadership at the mine to resign.

### **To Mangaung**

Mangaung and the ANC National Conference - will it be Zuma's last stand or can he snatch victory from the jaws of defeat?

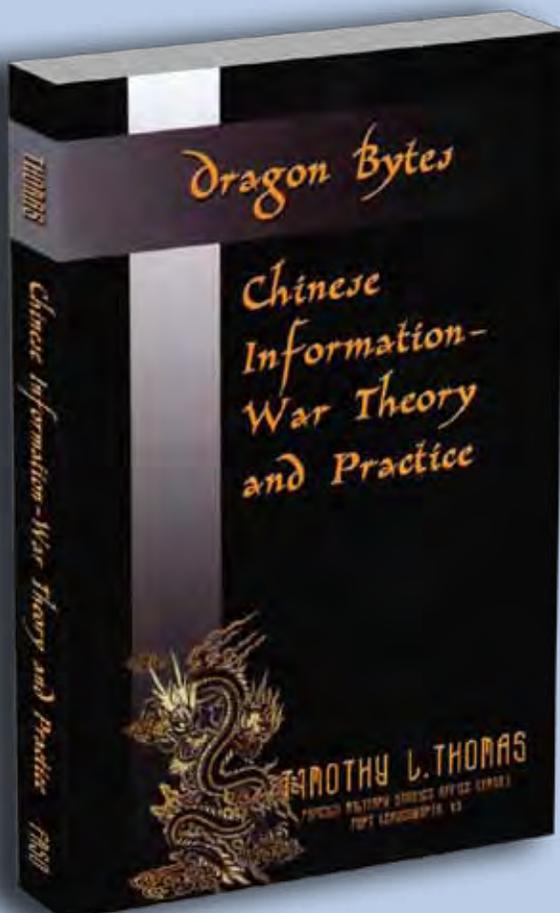
The rape trial, Zapiro shower cartoons, penis picture and a series of other embarrassments have made Zuma appear a bumbling figure, easily mocked and derided. He is far from that. His use of the intelligence services, ability to dodge or put off (Berlusconi-style) criminal investigations and prosecutions and his clever use of leaks and smear campaigns to damage opponents (Mbeki-style) mean he should not be underestimated. He has many enemies, and they have much ammunition to fire at him, but he has his intelligence screen around him and his opponents are often fighting amongst themselves and firing at the wrong target. Zuma could lose at the ANC Mangaung conference in December if they unite. But unite behind who? There are too many jostling for power and position, competing to get the support from Cosatu, the support that Malema had from the ANC Youth League and perhaps support from Malema himself.

Kgalema Motlanthe seemed a favourite of the ANCYL at one stage but recent polls suggest he has little support among younger black South Africans. Tokyo Sexwale is another

## *Continued: Marikana... A Post-Apartheid Massacre*

hopeful who tried to keep on Malema's side during the expulsion process but over the years has been the subject of repeated allegations about his financial affairs and political activities. Vavi is the fiercest critic of Zuma and of ANC corruption on the left of the alliance, but even Cosatu is split with many (including the NUM) against him. Perhaps Cyril Ramaphosa, the architect of the constitutional deal that led to the 1994 elections (but dropped out of frontline politics after being outmanoeuvred by Mbeki), could come back after his role heading the disciplinary committee that expelled Malema; but has he been damaged by his shareholdings in companies linked with Lonmin. Every possible contender seems to have question marks relating to integrity, financial dealings or political machinations against them or has a crumbling or unsteady powerbase. Malema himself is now facing possible arrest over corruption and tax evasion.

In such a situation, a battered, bruised but still battling and belligerent Zuma, with his intelligence agency cronies and continuing powers of appointment and patronage, could still win out. But whether he wins or there is a new man at the top of the ANC, whoever leads the party into 2013 will be heading an organization that is riven by factionalism, lacking clear policies, trusted leaders or, and this could be crucial, allies in the union movement with the solid backing of workers. Vavi and Cosatu got the voters out in the last election to keep the ANC majority and to back Zuma – they might not be willing or able to do so next time round. And, it is sad to say, but the violence and deaths at Marikana may just be the forerunner of an increasingly conflictual industrial, trades union and political environment. It may not become all-out shooting war, but it may be no less bitter for all that. Factionalism in the ANC and union battles have led, already this year, to scores of deaths. This is likely to get worse as we approach Mangaung and then between Mangaung and the elections in 2014.



***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.**

## Malian Arms, Gambian Row Cause Panic in Senegal

**Source:** “Malikcou Ndiaye, “Senegal: Circulation d’armes entre le Gambie et la Casamance: Panique au Palais de la Republique! (Malian Arms, Gambian Row Cause Panic in Senegal)” Koaci (Senegal), 9 September 2012: <http://koaci.com/articles-77392>

9 Sep. 2012

**OE Commentary:** *Senegal is learning that, unlike Las Vegas, what happens in Mali doesn't stay in Mali.*

*Today Senegal is feeling the reverberations of the collapse of the Malian government, particularly the arms that have been freely circulating in the country after a mid-level army officer overthrew Malian President Ahmadou Touré in March 2012. Since then a variety of militant groups of varying degrees of religious fervor have taken over the north of the country, sending it – and certain part of the region – into a tailspin.*

*Like the Libyan arms spillovers that radiated across West Africa in the aftermath of Qaddafi's downfall, Senegal is now worried that Malian arms are filtering into its southern Casamance region. Casamance, which has viewed itself as a more or less autonomous region since Senegal's independence from France in 1960, has long been a thorn in Senegal's side. While Senegal wants to maintain the country's territorial integrity by ensuring that Casamance remains under its control, secessionist-minded groups, spurred on by flares of violence, wish otherwise. That arms from the Malian conflict are now flowing into the region is not helping.*

*Further stoking tensions in Casamance was Gambia's recent decision to execute two Senegalese. Indeed, the Gambian capital of Banjul has long been assumed by Dakar to be funding and otherwise abetting the secessionist region; Senegal's anger about the execution of two of its citizens by Banjul will do nothing to ease tensions.*

*However, despite increased tensions as a result of both leftover Malian arms and a diplomatic row with Gambia, the chances of an independent Casamance remain very low. **End OE Commentary (Warner)***



Senegal map based on data from planiglobe.com CC-BY-SA-2.5

**T**he Palace of the Republic is in total turmoil. And for good reason, as it seems that the presidency suspects the occurrence of arms trafficking originating from neighboring Mali and heading towards Gambia and Casamance. This information, if true, could have devastating consequences for President Macky Sall who, we are told from a reliable source, is not sure how he would rectify the situation.

Security services of the Presidency of the Republic are working hard to verify the validity of the rumor that has been circulating the Senegalese capital city for at least the last 72 hours.

But what is the real story? Mali, Senegal's neighbor, is suspected of trafficking arms to Gambia and Casamance.

This would be a blow for Senegal at the moment, especially since the Casamance conflict is far from resolved.

Adding to the impasse is the fact that since Gambia executed a Senegalese citizen, the two countries no longer speak the same language.

Additionally, the situation is hard to resolve, precisely because Senegalese authorities have always thought that the Gambia has a role to play in the conflict in Casamance.

Indeed, the Casamance rebels tend to take refuge with the President Yaya Jammeh [in Gambia], with the latter displaying no commitment to support Senegal in the search for peace in Casamance.

“The weapons of the [Malian] rebels could easily surface in Gambia or fall into the hands of the rebels in Casamance through uncontrolled routes,” he adds.

## Kenyan Citizens Call for Military Intervention

10 September 2012

**Source:** “Kenya: Tana Delta MPs Want Army Sent to Quell Violence,” Capital FM (Nairobi). 10 September 2012: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201209110047.html>

**OE Commentary:** Long considered East Africa’s most stable state, Kenya has shown of late that it suffers many of the same problems thought to be unique to other places in the region.

Recently, pockets of Muslim religious extremists have surfaced in Kenya’s port town of Mombasa. The violence started after a radical Muslim cleric named About Rogo Mohammed (popularly known simply as “Rogo”) was killed in August. Rogo was accused of supporting al-Shebab and al-Qaeda interests, and was a vocal opponent of Kenya’s invasion of Somalia in 2011 to help oust the group there. Since Rogo’s death sectarian violence - the likes of which has not been seen in Kenya in recent memory - has erupted in the region. In the past three weeks alone more than one hundred have died, and many fear that the violence there could spill into other Kenyan regions.

As the accompanying article details, the situation there has reached a tipping point, and citizens are asking for an intervention by the nation’s army to quell the conflict. The Kenyan military, one of the more capable forces in Africa, would be in a precarious place if it were to do so. Given that it is already viewed as being “anti-Muslim,” (thanks to its efforts to oust al-Shebab), its attempts to help stop religious unrest might serve to simply add fuel to the ideological fires already engulfing the region. **End OE Commentary (Warner)**



Recent violence in parts of Tana River County has led to the deaths of at least 118 people and displaced about 30,000 others © Jimmy Kamude/IRIN

**L**eaders from Tana River are now calling for military intervention to quell rising insecurity in the Tana Delta which so far claimed 107 lives in two weeks.

Addressing a news conference at Parliament Buildings on Monday, MPs Danson Mungatana, Dhadho Godhana and Abdi Nuh said the situation on the ground was getting out of hand following Monday morning’s attack at a village and a police post which left 38 people - among them nine police officers - dead and two police vehicles torched.

Mungatana blamed the government’s inaction for the escalation of violence between the Orma and Pokomo communities.

“If the regular police were there; if Administration Police was there; if the General Service Unit was there and (yet) their equipment was stolen, there is no other better time than this for the military to be engaged on the ground to pacify the area.”

The Garsen MP said the National Intelligence Service and Criminal Investigations Department had failed to act on information given to them seven months ago, regarding the arming of militias in the region.

He wondered how it was possible that a few people who are armed and camping in a forest could be allowed to unleash terror on citizens.

“This militia must have somebody who is funding, feeding and clothing them; they are not using road transport, they are working in huge groups. Who is behind these militias? Who is sponsoring them?” asked Mungatana

He cautioned that if nothing is done to restore law and order in the Tana Delta, the same skirmishes could erupt in other parts of the country as militia and criminal gangs take advantage of the lax response to such threats by the government and security organs.

On his part, Godhana called on the government to facilitate peace talks through the

## ***Continued: Kenyan Citizens Call for Military Intervention***

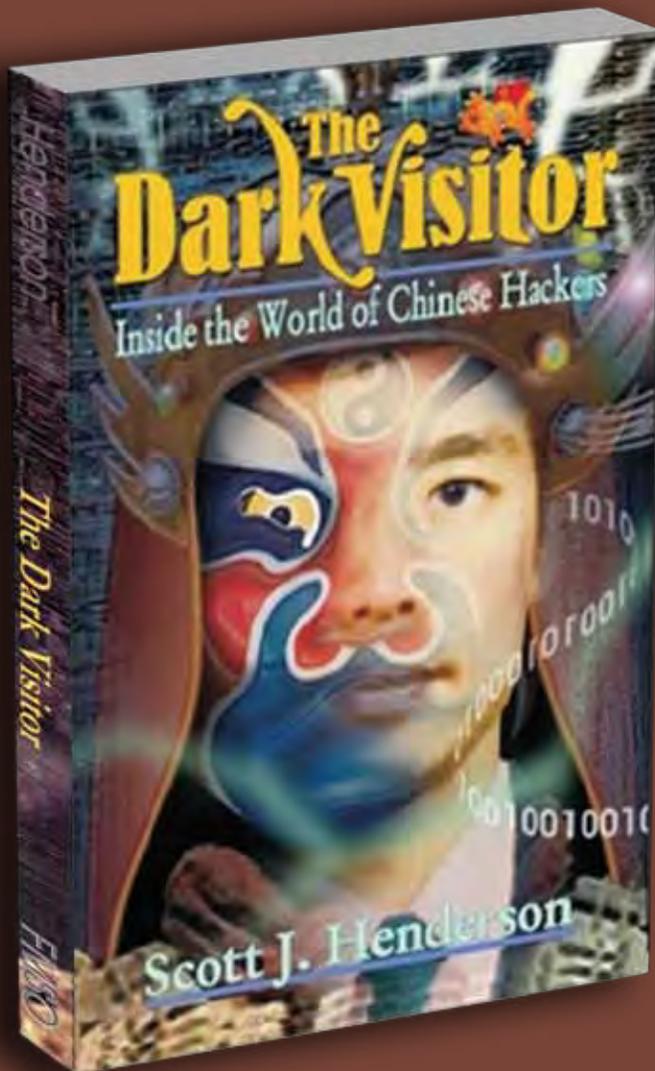
traditional elders.

“That is what has worked for us in Galole, because the elders have come together and talked to the youth and the women and they have said they don’t want the conflict to spread over to Galole. They have an initiative they are trying to drive and it is important that it is supported,” said the MP.

However, Mungatana and Nuh dismissed Godhana, claiming he was holed up in Nairobi and has not made efforts to seek peace in Tana River.

“If you have not been on the ground to see what we are doing then you theorise from Nairobi,” said Mungatana.

“We have been talking to these same leaders, so ask Godhana how many of those meetings he has come for,” Nuh retorted.



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.

## South Africa Criticized for Zimbabwe Arms Sales

10 September 2012

**Source:** Ticahaona Sibanda, “South Africa: Controversy Brewing Over South Africa’s Arms Sale to Zimbabwe,” SW Radio Africa (London), 10 September 2012: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201209110213.html>.

***OE Commentary:** South Africa has always held a precarious spot in continental security affairs. As Sub-Saharan Africa’s most diplomatically powerful country, as well as the one that hosts the continent’s most robust (and arguably, only) defense production industry, South Africa is frequently caught between playing conflict diplomat and arms vendor. This conundrum was highlighted most recently as South Africa was criticized for selling arms to Zimbabwe’s authoritarian Robert Mugabe.*

*As the article details, South Africa made a proclamation not to sell weapons to countries with so-called “political complications.” Zimbabwe would certainly appear to be just such a country. Ruled with an iron fist by octogenarian Mugabe since the country’s independence in 1980, Zimbabwe is rife with “political complications.” Mugabe has been accused of suppressing rival Morgan Tsvangirai’s Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) party for the last decade, including accusations of state-sponsored violence against Tsvangirai and the orchestration of the murder of his late wife. Zimbabwe’s human rights situation is precarious to say the least, and Mugabe frequently relies on the army’s military – filled with pro-Mugabe independence-era supporters – to do so.*

*South Africa is also in a tenuous geopolitical spot as of late. While it has historically served as a somewhat credible protector of human rights in the region and on the continent – its historically tepid condemnations of*



South African-made artillery: A Denel G6-45 155 mm howitzer. Photo by Flickr user DanieVDM (<http://www.flickr.com/photos/dvdmerwe/250838855/>) [CC-BY-2.0 (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/>)], via Wikimedia Commons

**S**outh Africa recently sold weapons worth \$276,000 to Zimbabwe’s defense forces, according to that country’s latest quarterly report of the National Conventional Arms Control Committee (NCACC).

This is despite the South African government’s pledge last year not to permit such sales to Zimbabwe. Justice Minister and chairperson of the committee, Jeff Radebe, said then that the government would not approve permits for the sale of weapons to countries with ‘political complications.’

The arms sale to Zimbabwe was between April and July this year, according to the report that has been extensively published in the South African media. During the same period, the South African government approved contracts to other countries worth R2.8 billion.

The NCACC report says contracts with 50 countries were signed, among them India, Gabon, the US and China.

The report says the weapons sold to Zimbabwe fall mainly into the C category, consisting of support equipment like teargas.

In the last decade the US and the European Union imposed an arms embargo against the former ZANU PF ruling party, in response to Robert Mugabe’s serious violations of human rights. The police, headed by Augustine Chihuri, have on numerous occasions

## Continued: South Africa Criticized for Zimbabwe Arms Sales

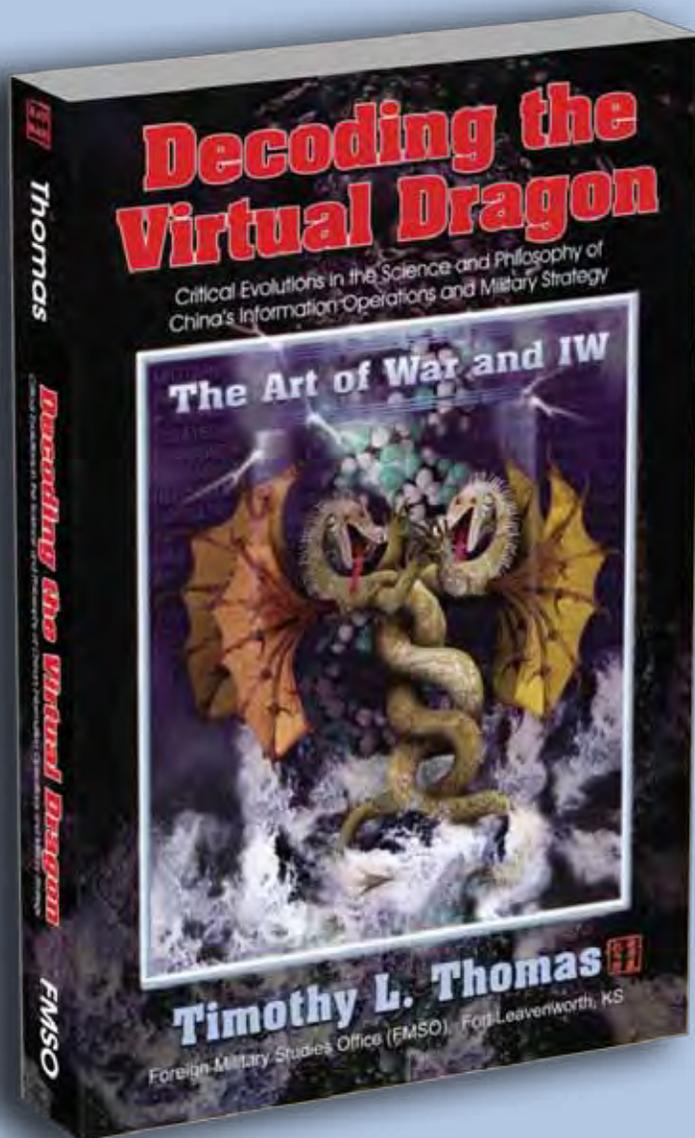
*Zimbabwe has been its Achilles' heel—South Africa is losing credibility thanks to the murders of 34 protesting miners by police.*

*Indeed, while the revelation of South African arms sales to Zimbabwe is not entirely surprising, it will nevertheless add to the growing list of critiques being leveled against President Jacob Zuma's leadership. End OE Commentary (Warner)*

used teargas to disperse peaceful political rallies and meetings organized by the MDC led by Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai.

With South African President Zuma the chief facilitator in Zimbabwe's crisis, political analyst Dewa Mavhinga told us it was unusual for South Africa to also be selling arms to the country.

'I think their impartiality will come under scrutiny considering the weapons have been used mainly to crackdown on MDC supporters. We are approaching a watershed election period in Zimbabwe and this is not the time to be selling arms to the country,' Mavhinga said.



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.

## US Residents are Blind Mules to Traffic Drugs

**Source:** Sanchez, Laura. “‘Mulas ciegas’, método para tráfico de drogas (Cartels Using US Residents as Blind Mules to Traffic Drugs)” El Universal. Retrieved from <http://www.eluniversalmas.com.mx/notas/2012/09/869129.php>

8 September 2012

**OE Commentary:** *Trafficking drugs across international borders is an activity that is constantly evolving. In the last two years drugs have been seized from shipments of cocaine-stuffed watermelons, stuffed animals, and even from the interior of refried bean cans. In 2011 catapults used to launch packages of marijuana into the US were seized in Naco, Sonora. In some instances drug traffickers even force undocumented persons to mule drugs across the border against their will. One ploy that had not yet been seen was the use of US residents/ citizens to blindly traffic drugs across international border, and in 2012 this method of drug trafficking evolved yet again.*

*On 24 March 2012 a grade school teacher living in Tijuana and working in the US reported that 30 kilograms of marijuana were left in a backpack on the backseat of her car. At the time she noticed the backpack she was getting ready to drive across the border. Between 18 January and 06 July 2012, eleven US residents were arrested at US/Tijuana border checkpoints after customs agents found drugs adhered to their vehicles. The common denominator among all of the arrested US residents is that they had responded to classified ads for work in the United States, allegedly posted by the Sinaloa and Tijuana Cartels. These individuals were specifically targeted because they could legally pass back and forth between Mexico and United States. What they did not know is that for the \$60 they were being offered to clean offices, transport merchandise, or sell furniture they could be facing 20-year prison sentences for trafficking drugs against their will.*

*Francisco Javier Viruete, the Municipal Police Director in Tijuana, has received 15 reports since 24 March 2012 regarding drug cartels planting drugs in the cars of US residents. In some instances the drugs are simply left in the vehicles without being concealed. In other instances the drugs are concealed underneath the car frame and affixed to it with magnets. In response to these claims, US and Mexican authorities are urging individuals to check their vehicles before crossing into the US to see if they have been tampered with. **End OE Commentary (Fiegel)***



Tijuana border crossing by ©Samuel Hsu, via <http://www.flickr.com/photos/samhsu/367531312/>

**T**he Sinaloa and Tijuana Cartels are using US citizens living in Tijuana and working in California as “blind drug mules.” This phenomenon was first noted in 2012, and so far this year, at least 15 cases involving US citizens unknowingly trafficking drugs have been reported in Tijuana, Baja California. According to US ICE Agents, US citizens may be tricked into blindly trafficking drugs after responding to classified ads to clean offices, sell furniture, or transport packages in the United States. The ads specify that respondents must be US citizens/residents, have a clean criminal record, and a driver’s license.

Once the US residents are hired, drug cartel operators most likely stash drugs in their vehicles the evening before the workers are to enter the United States. US citizens arrested claim that the drugs put in their cars were planted while they were sleeping and reported seeing groups of men prowling around their cars in the early morning hours before they were actually arrested. The common denominator between all individuals arrested in recent cases is that their vehicles were equipped with visaSENTRI; a card that allows them to pass back and forth between California and Mexico without having to wait in line.

## PGR Air Fleet Drug Trafficking Allegations

12 September 2012

**Source:** “La PGR investiga su flota aérea por tráfico de drogas (PGR Investigates Its Air Fleet on Drug Trafficking Allegations),” Blogdelnarco.com, 12 September 2012. <http://www.blogdelnarco.com/2012/09/la-pgr-investiga-su-flota-aerea-por-trafico-de-drogas/#more-14806>

**OE Commentary:** *Although corruption is not something new or surprising to Mexican society in general, we are seeing more active and depth of complicity among higher-level government and military officials. One of the most recent and visible was the May 2012 case of three Mexican Army generals and a lieutenant colonel suspected of passing information to the Beltrán Leyva criminal organization. This and other incidents have added to U.S. uneasiness regarding President Calderón’s ‘War on Drugs’.*

*We have also seen another recent incident in late-August 2012, where Mexican Federal Police opened fire on a diplomatically plated and armored vehicle; two U.S. embassy officials and a Mexican naval officer were injured. The Mexican Attorney General’s Office (PGR) is currently investigating a large-scale corruption case regarding their own air services branch (outlined in the article), where widespread illicit activities not only have negatively affected their branch and agency, but have also consumed their manpower to the point where their functional flying fleet has declined to a mere five aircraft.*

*With Mexican Attorney General Marisela Morales Ibáñez leading the investigation, reportedly stating that they will “get to the bottom” of the corruption, only time will tell how many more individuals, in addition to the already more than 12 officials implicated [as of the writing of the accompanying article], will fall in this case. As one on that list is former General Directorate of Aerial Services (DGSA) Director Captain Manuel Jesús González Flores, the list could become quite expansive if he attempts to make a plea deal. **End OE Commentary (Scheidel)***



PGR logo by Eddo [Public domain, CC-BY-SA-3.0 (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>)], via Wikimedia Commons

**T**he discovery of serious irregularities in the management of the air fleet of the Mexican Attorney General’s Office (PGR) includes suspicions that some of the aircraft have been used to transport drugs and has triggered one of the most thorough investigations being carried out by the agency.

The anomalies range from an absence of operations manuals to theft and trafficking of spare parts; simulated repairs and “misplacing” flight logbooks and maintenance reports; insurance contracts for helicopters and undertaking flights on aircraft without airworthiness certificates.

According to the reports from the agency, an investigation has been initiated that involves more than 12 officials that worked since 2006 in the PGR’s General Directorate of Aerial Services (DGSA). Attorney General Marisela Morales Ibáñez discovered that, out of the PGR’s own budget, the DGSA would pay businesses to package the items that the government employees were stealing and that were then sent to their buyers.

Morales Ibáñez also ordered the suspension of all fleet operations, a meeting of all personnel, and the immediate inspection of all the equipment, because an ongoing audit has determined that out of a total of 80 aircraft, only five are able to fly without any mechanical problems.

The Oficialia Mayor (the government’s office of internal administration) and the Office Specializing in the Investigation of Federal Crimes (Subprocuraduría de Investigación Especializada en Delitos Federales; SIEDF) and the Visitaduría General (equivalent to the Inspector General) were asked to “get to the bottom of this. Wherever it goes,” to uncover the corruption networks that are in place among DGSA officials, private contractors, and public servants from other agencies, as well as the General Civil Aeronautics Directorate (DGAC), a division of the SCT (Secretariat of Communications and Transportation).

Sources consulted on this story revealed that the actions of the Attorney General generated “warnings not to mess with the DGSA,” and instead of stopping the investigation, the audit, and the grounding of all flights, she ordered: “Do not stop the investigation. Take it wherever it goes.”

Towards the end of the 1990’s, the PGR came to own a fleet of 180 aircraft, which

## ***Continued: PGR Air Fleet Drug Trafficking Allegations***

was considered the largest in Latin America. Currently, it has 80, including airplanes and helicopters, that are in “disastrous” mechanical condition.

The DGSA audit also revealed that each hour of flight time in these aircraft represents a cost of \$(USD) 4,629.00, whereas a private firm charges \$(USD) 3,000.00 for the same service, without the PGR having to pay for salaries, insurance, maintenance, or fees for hangar space or overnight stays at airports.

Sources said that the case began in May 2012, when the office of internal administration requested in writing that former DGSA Director, Captain Manuel Jesús González Flores, to send the operations manuals for the area, including the repair shop procedures and records of aircraft management. The response was “that this would not be possible and that it was not necessary.”

To the inquiry, according to officials interviewed, have been added the results of the audit performed by the U.S. company, JDA Aviation Technology Solution, comprised of retired specialists from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) of the United States government.

The president of JDA is Joseph del Balzo, the former Acting Administrator of the FAA; assistant operations and systems development administrator and head of the technical center for that agency.

The audit firm was established in 1994,” and is an internationally recognized aviation consulting firm that specializes in developing solutions for regular airlines, charter operators, aviation corporations, aircraft manufacturers, and component suppliers, repair facilities, training centers, airports, and airport authorities, technology companies, developers, and other legal enterprises.

The first thing that the auditors requested from the DGSA were the operations manuals and they confirmed that the manuals do not exist. They also discovered that DGAC representatives failed to carry out their duties to inspect and supervise air and naval air facilities and technical aeronautical personnel, nor did they insure that work was performed in compliance with international standards.

The DGAC’s obligation is to insure that there is safe, competitive, and efficient air transport “that satisfies the needs of Mexican society.”

Sources pointed out that SCT organizations did not carry out inspections of the PGR’s Air Services because an official -whose identity was not disclosed- was working in both agencies and covered up the anomalies, and because of that, the former head of the DGSA, Manuel Jesús González Flores, is also under

investigation.

Auditors began a physical inspection of the bases and maintenance workshops in the southern part of the country. The facilities located in Tapachula, Chiapas, and Chetumal, Quintana Roo, were first. Next were the ones in Acapulco, Guerrero, and Cuernavaca, Morelos. But the most careful work was done at the Guadalajara, Jalisco, facilities, and the so-called Base Mexico, located at the Benito Juárez International Airport in the nation’s capital, because that is where the Air Service warehouses are located. There, they found 600 spare parts missing, and thousands of parts that are not usable since the PGR does not own aircraft that require them.

In recent days, the PGR suspended the purchase of an airplane motor, as it was discovered that in the \$(USD) 3 million dollar contract, that the motor was ordered for an airplane that does not exist in the PGR fleet. With the intensification of the inventory and operational reviews, there were other results: at least 20 of the 80 aircraft in the fleet have to be scrapped because they are in “deplorable condition. Any attempt to make them operational would cost too much,” said the officials who were interviewed.

The PGR will need to ask the Administrator of Insured Assets Office for advice on the legal status of the 20 aircraft, so that they can be auctioned or written off from government property books because they were seized from criminal organizations in years past.

The auditors also discovered that in air operations bases, like the one in Hermosillo, Sonora, the PGR had shops mounted on freight trailers, and mechanics and technicians did not have adequate tools or facilities to perform their work.

During one visit, they observed how the main motor on a helicopter was lowered by hand, “repaired” without the appropriate tools, and then placed back on the helicopter. In several installations, they found reports of repairs paid for by the agency, where work was never done.

Since 2006, La Jornada revealed that DGSA workers had reported acts of corruption in which area directors were involved, but where a preliminary investigation was never initiated. The fleet then was comprised of 163 aircraft. The head of the PGR was Daniel Cabeza de Vaca and the operational level of the fleet was 47%.

The investigation ordered by Attorney General Marisela Morales “will go back to 2004 if necessary, when supposedly the operational level of the fleet was higher than 75%, in order to determine on what date the complicities and dismantling of aircraft began,” said the officials interviewed.

## Chinese View US Mideast Policy as Flawed

13 September 2012

**Source:** “Ran Wei and Ge Xiangwen, “新华国际时评:美国应反思“班加西悲剧”政策根源, (Benghazi Tragedy Shows US Mideast Policy Flaws),” September 13, 2012, [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/hqzx/2012-09/13/content\\_15756093.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/hqzx/2012-09/13/content_15756093.htm)

**OE Commentary:** *The following article provides a brief analysis from China’s perspective of “the great flaws of the US Middle East policy.”*

*While a controversial film is blamed for having sparked the recent violence in the Middle East, the article blasts US strategy there. It negatively describes actions taken by the United States to try to “promote the so-called Greater Middle East Democracy Plan through various means including wars.” The author uses terms such as “forceful regime change,” stating that “the two wars that are mainly directed by the United States in Iraq and Afghanistan have not only brought great misery to the people of these two countries but also made the US pay a heavy price.”*

*China’s openly critical view of US involvement in the Middle East (particularly in the realm of democracy promotion) serves as a reminder to leaders in the region that Beijing is prepared to do business with any stable regime. This article expresses considerable schadenfreude and the author articulates the Chinese belief that a corrupt stability is preferable to an unstable democracy. **End OE Commentary (Hurst)***



Chris Stevens was a friend to all Libyans. Image from Benghazi U.S. Embassy attack protest. Photo by Ahmed Sanalla via [pic.twitter.com/jcCkMTUh](http://pic.twitter.com/jcCkMTUh)

**U**S ambassador to Libya and three other diplomats died on the evening of 11 September during anti-US protests in Benghazi, Libya’s second largest city.

This is the first US ambassador who died while performing official duty since 1979. The serious violent act aimed at diplomats has aroused international community’s strong condemnation. David Kenner, the associate editor of US Foreign Policy, commented on the magazine’s website: A US diplomat who helped liberate Benghazi died at the hands of the city’s citizens several months later is a “tragic irony.”

The direct cause of the violent attack can be traced to a movie produced in the United States that insults Islam’s prophet. Waves of anti-US protests emerged in Egypt on the same day. Anti-US protests thus triggered will also spread to other Muslim countries. Speaking from the perspective of the original source of the event, we can see that the incident exposes the great flaws of the US Middle East policy.

A year ago, NATO countries headed by the United States single-mindedly launched military strikes to forcefully effect regime change in Libya despite many countries’ opposition. Many politicians and analysts have warned that due to long-running domestic contradictions caused by complex reasons in Libya, forceful regime change from external military means could lead to a chaotic situation in this country in the future.

Now US diplomats were killed in Benghazi, the former headquarters of the Libyan opposition. On the one hand, it sharply illustrates the fragile security situation and intense

## Continued: Chinese View US Mideast Policy as Flawed

internal contradictions in Libya. On the other, it also shows that many who were “liberated” in Libya do not harbor a sense of gratitude toward the United States as expected by the United States.

In fact, such a situation is not only confined to Libya and to Egypt; it generally exists in the entire Middle East region.

For a long time, the Middle East policy of the United States has been sharply denounced for its prejudicial, two-handed, and contradictory nature. To a certain extent, the source of disaster has already been there. Since the 11 September event, the US administration has attempted to promote the so-called Greater Middle East Democracy Plan through various means including wars. But in the eyes of a large number of people in the Middle East, the essence of the US Middle East policy is to maintain its strategic interests and influence in the region.

The waves of violent incidents of anti-US protests that emerged in Libya and in Egypt again show that US reliance on the means of military intervention to forcefully promote the objectives of its foreign policies will bring forth enormous negative effect. An example at hand: The two wars that are mainly directed by the United States in Iraq and Afghanistan have not only brought great misery to the people of these two countries but also made the US pay a heavy price.

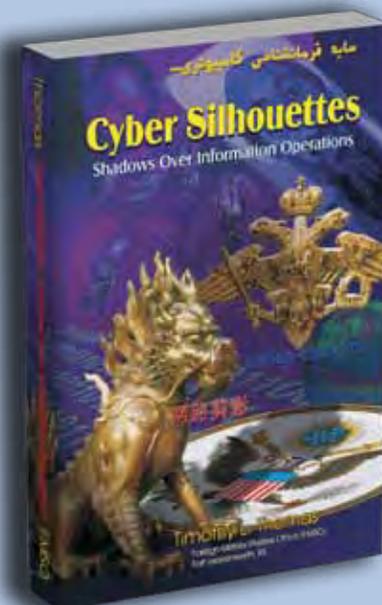
Now, against many countries’ opposition, the United States and some other countries are trying to bring about a regime change in Syria, and providing various forms of overt and covert support to Syrian opposition. And calls for adopting even more direct military intervention can often be seen in newspaper reports. But what will be the consequences of external military intervention? The Benghazi tragedy induces people to make deep reflection.

Perhaps it will be equally or even more important for the United States to make self-reflection on the policy source of the tragedy while enveloping itself in sadness, anger, and condemnation on the killing of US diplomats in Benghazi.

**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.**



## Serbia and Russia – Brothers in Arms

25 August 2012

**Source:** R. Dragović - B. Vlahović. “Posle više godina mlakih kontakata Srbija napravila zaokret u vojnoj saradnji sa Ruskom Federacijom (Following several years of tepid contacts Serbia turned toward Russia for military cooperation), *Vecernje Novosti Online*, 25 August 2012

**OE Commentary:** Relations between Russia and Serbia have become stronger with Tomislav Nikolić's election as president. During his campaign Nikolić often emphasized Serbia's role as a link where East and West meet: Serbia has a door leading to the West, with aspirations toward EU accession, as well as to the East, with increasing collaboration with Russia. Nikolić's first foreign visit took him to Russia, where President Putin assured him of Moscow's support in the realization of his policies.

Trade relations between Belgrade and Moscow are profitable and amount to \$800 million dollars in export from Serbia to Russia. In 2011 the total sum of trade amounted to two billion dollars, while investments from Russia to Serbia reached \$1.5 billion dollars (See: <http://russlandonline.ru/schlagzeilen/morenews.php?iditem=53712>). Russian investments in Serbia include portions of the Southstream pipeline and renovation of Serbia's railway system. As the referenced article makes clear, Russia now plans to invest in Serbia's defense sector.

First Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Aleksandar Jeremić explained that he could not give specific details as to the exact plans, assuring however, that a new factory, similar to the one that existed in Đuro Đaković, Croatia, will soon open.

Unlike many other sectors of the economy, Serbia's military industry has experienced a comeback during the past ten years. Buyers of Serbian armaments include states from North Africa, Iraq, Afghanistan, Jordan, and Kuwait, as well as Thailand and Indonesia. Serbia's largest customer is Algeria. Renovations and updates to Serbia's military industry will include the production of howitzers, “hurricane” rocket launchers, and armored vehicles, explained Marko Milošević from the Belgrade Center for Security Policy. Milošević added that while much of the military technology is slanted for export, some of it is bound to end up in Serbia's own military. **End OE Commentary (King-Savic)**



Serbian President Tomislav Nikolic meets with Russian President Vladimir Putin. © RIA Novosti. Alexey Druzhinin

**A**fter several years of lukewarm contacts Serbia has made a turn-round in military cooperation with the Russian Federation.

The building of a new plant for complex combat systems and Russian aid in the sale of the products of our domestic military industry is a sign of the changed relations between Serbia and Russia. After many years of chiefly formal contacts, the new wind from the east could bring Serbia a better international position, more revenue from domestic weapons and munitions, and modern resources which our army lacks.

The first sign of the strengthened cooperation between the two countries is arriving - from the skies. The Russian formation flying group, the “Strizhi” [Swifts], which will be the main attraction of the forthcoming airshow to mark the 100th anniversary of the Serbian Air Force, arrive at Batajnica military airfield in the next few days. It comprises five MiG-29 aircraft, the same number the Serbian Air Force has. Final confirmation that Russia is bringing its planes to Serbia came during the visit to Moscow by Aleksandar Vucic, first deputy prime minister and minister of defense.

This visit, among other things, ushered in a complete change of relations in the sphere of defense between the two countries. Vucic was given strong assurances from his hosts that Russia would help Serbia in the field of our special industry. In the first place this concerns the placement of our products on markets which so far

## ***Continued: Serbia and Russia – Brothers in Arms***

have not been accessible to us.

A key role in this can be played by the Rosoboroneksport company, which exports Russian arms and which could also push Serbian products. This is a powerful firm with strong international links, which is a regular guest at arms fair all over the world. In this connection came the announcement that a new military technology plant is going to be built, on the model of the one-time Djuro Djakovic from Slavonski Brod, which was a leader in the production of tanks.

This gave rise to speculation both in Belgrade and Moscow that the fruits of the love between Russia and Serbia could be an armored vehicle, which would then be produced in third countries. Since Matushka [Mother Russia] produces tanks of world renown, however, it is highly unlikely that Serbia could have a role in this.

Military analyst Aleksandar Radic believes that Serbia could find strengthening its cooperation with Russia useful, but that it is still too early to start forecasting what its volume might be.

“The capacity of this coming closer will be seen when the new government’s foreign policy directions become clearer,” says Radic. “It is rational to take advantage of Russia’s support, but the question remains as to how far we are able to impose ourselves. The strengthening of relations is also important because of the Russian technology used by our army. We need this and it is good that we shall have an opportunity in acquisition to choose between the weapons produced by the best producers from east and west.

Of the equipment stamped “Made in the USSR” Serbia is still using MiG-21 and MiG-29 fighter aircraft which were refitted in Russian plants between 2006 and 2008. Since these planes are at the end of their technical lives, however, the hand offered from the east could be crucial for the future defense of our skies. Moreover, the country’s complete air defense is based on Russian technology because the Neva and Kub [Cub] missile systems are their products.

Predrag Simic, professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences, also thinks that the purchase of Russian aircraft could be just one of the results of a turn-round in relations between the two countries. Stronger cooperation with Moscow in all spheres, not only in weapons, comes as no surprise to him.

“This was clearly intimated during the election campaign,” Simic recalls. “A rapprochement with Moscow does not mean a distancing from the EU, but the fact that an increasing number of people in Serbia are not well disposed toward Brussels. Russia, on the other hand, is a big market which could put wind in the sails of our domestic defense industry.

Simic says that the future of Kosovo could also have an impact on this matter, with Kosovo being a place where the interests of Russia and the United States clash.

“There is no doubt that in all fields, and especially in the area of military cooperation, you need allies with deep pockets. In the main, that is not good,” Simic concludes.

That we need money, however, is confirmed by the fact that some 100 million euros is necessary to modernize machines and equipment at six plants for the special industry in Serbia. Only then can we enter into serious competition in the production of arms and munitions with foreign factories.

“The effects of investment would be felt very rapidly because we are talking about factories which export 95% of their products, while they import immeasurably less raw materials,” says Rade Gromovic, director of the Zastava Oruzje plant in Kragujevac. “The average age of the machines in Zastava Oruzje is 39 years, and so it is difficult to speak of competitiveness when our rivals are working with state-of-the-art equipment.”

Gromovic says that the factories cannot secure investments themselves, but they need state help. Only in this way can the factories Sloboda, Krusik, Mladost Lucani, Prva Iskra and Prvi Partizan from Uzice think about increasing production.

It is no secret that no cooperation has been observed in recent years between the defense ministries of Russia and Serbia. Because of these “cool” relations with Moscow the Serbian Army has been unable for months to acquire tires for its MiGs. Dragan Sutanovac was seen in Moscow as a minister who wanted to bring Serbia as close as possible to NATO.

## The Kyrgyz KNB- The Last Casualty of the Recent Kyrgyz Border Troop Incident

5 September 2012

**Source:** Igor Burgandinov, "Manhunt over: Kyrgyz fugitive border guard shot, killed," Kazakhstan Pravda, 21 August 2012. <http://www.kazpravda.kz/eng>

***OE Commentary:** The 21 August 2012 incident, in which Kyrgyz Border Troop conscript Kulbarak Balbai shot and killed four of his comrades and an officer's wife in the Issyk-Kul Province, has outraged many in Kyrgyzstan. It is important to note that this incident is very much unlike "insider attacks" in Afghanistan, where Afghan forces turn their weapons on International Security and Assistance Force trainers. This incident was likely brought on by military hazing [dedovschina], and there was almost certainly no ideological or political motive.*

*One person who has been particularly dismayed by the incident is Kyrgyz President Almazbek Atambayev. Since Kyrgyz independence the Border Troops have fluctuated between being an independent cabinet-level organization and subordinate to the Kyrgyz Committee for National Security (KNB), the successor organization to the Kyrgyz KGB. In the most recent iteration of the cycle, in 2007, the Border Troops were again subordinated to the KNB. Initially, President Atambayev's comments after the incident were highly critical of the Border Troop leadership: "Apparently, the command of the Border Guard Troops of the National Security Committee failed to take any serious measures to improve the atmosphere among the personnel."*

*It is unknown what President Atambayev's office discovered from further investigation of the matter, but what is known is Atambayev's response. Instead of relieving Border Troop Commander Major General Zakir Tilenov, on 5 September 2012 President Atambayev chose to remove the Border*



Kyrgyz Border Troop SPETSNAZ Unit on Patrol", via [www.granica.kg](http://www.granica.kg)

**T**uesday, August 21, 2012 - The fugitive Kyrgyz soldier suspected of killing five people at a border outpost was shot dead by police Tuesday, ending a manhunt at the country's northeast frontier with Kazakhstan.

Balbai Kulbarak uulu was found by security forces hiding in a gorge in the Ak-Suu district of eastern Issyk-Kul province, not far from the murder scene.

Kulbarak uulu was killed after resisting arrest and shooting at frontier servicemen and police, according to a statement by the border guard service.

The fugitive was sought on suspicion for the killings Monday of the border outpost commander, a senior soldier, a warrant officer, a fourth soldier and his wife. Three other soldiers fled during the shooting and later reported him leaving the scene in a vehicle.

Kyrgyz President Almazbek Atambayev placed blame squarely on the leadership of the border guard service, a unit of the KGB successor State Committee for National Security.

"It seems the leadership of the National Security Committee of Border Troops has not taken serious measures to improve the atmosphere among its servicemen," Atambayev told a meeting of security officials, the KyrTAG news agency reported.

Atambayev ordered the officials to take all steps to avoid the repeat of such a tragedy.

He also expressed condolences to the families of those who were killed at the outpost.

Kyrgyz Prime Minister Omurbek Babanov announced in the meeting that the families of each victim would receive monetary assistance of 100,000 soms (\$2,140).

## Continued: The Kyrgyz KNB- The Last Casualty of the Recent Kyrgyz Border Troop Incident

*Troops from KNB subordination (see accompanying article). The KNB has traditionally had a “hands off” approach to the Border Troops, and has not made operational level decisions for the them. Presumably, President Atambayev’s decision to remove the Border Troops from KNB subordination involves higher-level actions, or inactions, by the KNB (possibly funding issues) that Atambayev believed could only be solved by again establishing the Border Troops as a cabinet-level entity. End OE Commentary (Bartles)*

Babanov also blamed senior officials for being out of touch with conditions on the ground.

“Every leader in every military unit has to know what is going on in the collective military, what happens in the barracks after lights out, what is the relationship of soldiers, NCOs and officers, and only then can we avoid such tragedies in the future,” Babanov told the emergency meeting of law enforcement heads.

## Kyrgyz border troops now separate from National Security Committee

5 September 2012

**Source:** Kyrgyz border troops now separate from National Security Committee,” Bishkek 24.kg, 5 September 2012. <http://www.24kg.org/>



Kyrgyz border troop shield, via <http://www.customsunion.ru/org/252.html>

**B**ishkek, 5 September: Kyrgyzstan’s Border Troops have now become a separate entity from the State National Security Committee. President Almazbek Atambayev signed a decree to this end, the public relations department of the president’s administration has reported.

“The Border Troops have become separate from the Kyrgyz State National Security Committee in order to better protect the state’s borders, counter external threats and optimize the performance of the executive power’s state agencies. It was transformed into Kyrgyz State Border Service,” the source said.

[Passage omitted: the new entity will be headed by a chairman appointed by the Kyrgyz president]

## Frustration in Khorog

23 August 2012

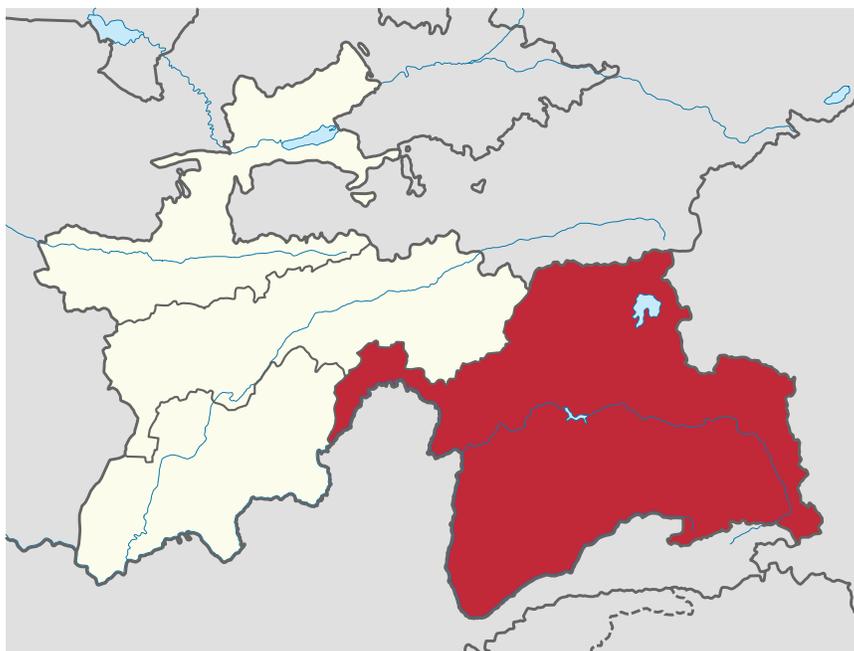
**Source:** Mirzobekova, Ramziya. “Хорог: Смерть Имумназара и новый митинг (Khorog: the Death of Imumnazara and a New Rally),” Asia-Plus, 23 August 2012. <http://news.tj/ru/news/khorog-smert-imumnazara-i-novyi-miting>

**OE Commentary:** While it appeared that the surrender of Tolib Ayombekov to authorities on 12 August and a few weeks of a cease-fire would pacify the situation in Khorog, the killing of former opposition commander Imumnazar Imumnazarov temporarily set back a resolution to the conflict in the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBAO). The conflict started on 21 July, when General Nazarov from the National Security Committee (GKNB) was stabbed to death outside the city of Khorog. The murder led to clashes in Khorog between government security forces and apparent supporters of Ayombekov, whom the government blamed for the murder (see: August 2012 OE Watch, “Dark Clouds over Khorog”).

The following article about the murder of Imumnazarov and the subsequent rally provides some good information about what happened. From a local viewpoint in the GBAO, Imumnazarov posed no real threat to the national government; his health had deteriorated and his influence did not reach beyond the region. It is possible that Imumnazarov’s status as a former opposition commander made him a target. He had also spoken out against the operation in an interview a few weeks prior to his death (see: <http://news.tj/ru/news/i-imumnazarov-vlasti-khoteli-pokazat-svoyu-silu-vsemu-pamiru>).

When security forces conducted the operation in late July and early August to apprehend those responsible for Nazarov’s death, the government specifically called out Ayombekov to hand over the suspects and then blamed him for the clashes. Supporters of Ayombekov fought with government forces in the streets, but they did not appear to be significant in number. Whoever was involved in killing Imumnazarov has only enflamed local resentment and, consequently, created more resistance than Ayombekov had.

**End OE Commentary (Stein)**



Location of province Gorno-Badakhshan. Map by TUBS [CC-BY-SA-3.0 (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>)], via Wikimedia Commons

**O**n the night of August 22 the informal leader of Badakhshan, Imumnazar Imumnazarov was killed in his home. Armed men threw two grenades into his house and then opened fire. People came to the square in protest, the young started throwing rocks at the mayor’s office, and shots were fired...

### Who killed Imumnazara?

Information about the death of Imumnazarov spread quickly. According to people close to him, the attack took place at four in the morning. There were several guards at the entrance (to his house), however, some people in military uniform with weapons snuck up to the other side. They first threw grenades, drawing attention to the window, then others entered the house and opened fire on people inside. Imumnazarov was hit in the left side and died on the spot. People have called it a contract killing and believe the security services had a hand in it.

### Rally

The murder of Imumnazarov caused outrage in Khorog. Residents of the city have called this a “cowardly” act, as almost 20 years ago Imumnazarov became confined to a wheelchair and recently developed gangrene (on his legs).

## ***Continued: Frustration in Khorog***

Imumnazarov himself said in an interview that he did not have long to live. A lot of people gathered at Imumnazarov's house, and then went with the body into the center of the city. Prior to the rally a large group of young people broke the gates of the provincial administration and began to throw rocks at the building.

After a period of time shots were heard near the administration building. At first it appeared that they warning shots fired into the air, but then there were two wounded people in the crowd. The truck with the body then arrived. (Later) The head of the Aga Khan Foundation spoke in front of the crowd. "...Today we can be proud, that after the 24th of July the people of Badakhshan did everything that was required of them. We complied with the requirements of the authorities, so now people have the right to demand that soldiers are withdrawn." – said Faizov.

Officials have promised to withdraw soldiers (from Khorog) more than once, but this was not upheld. They announced last week to completely withdraw from their positions on August 20. The good news spread immediately through the city. On Saturday (August 18) at the end of Ramadan there was a reconciliation meal between locals and government security forces in the districts of Khorog that were involved in the fighting. Both sides prayed for peace and were certain that there are no more threats and that they will not fight each other again.

Local residents already started to think about peace, but on August 20 there was a new incident. A resident of Khorog was arrested and somehow jumped from the third floor of the police station. On August 21 near the building of the district prosecutor's office, where an interrogation of another informal leader Mukhamadbokirov was taking place, dozens of soldiers took up positions around the building and dug trenches in nearby people's yards. In the city they again started talking about the provocations, while people called on each other not to give in to them. However, on this night Imumnazarov was killed...

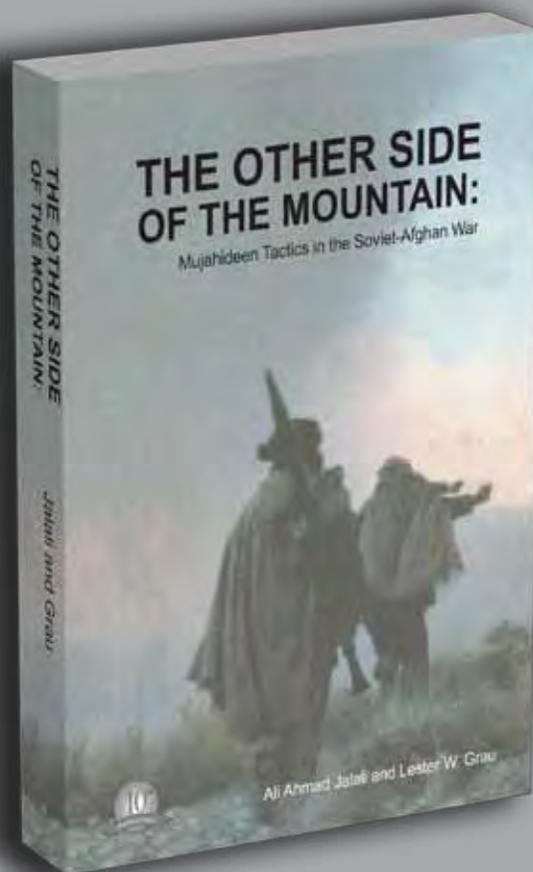
<http://news.tj/ru/news/prezident-posetit-khorog-vo-vtoroi-dekade-sentyabrya>

<http://www.avesta.tj/security/13796-horog-s-nachala-processa-vyvoda-voysk-pokinuli-svyshe-1-tys-voennosluzhaschih.html>

<http://news.tj/ru/news/i-imumnazarov-vlasti-khoteli-pokazat-svoyu-silu-vsemu-pamiru>

**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.**



## Hazing in Kyrgyzstan's Border Guards?

23 August 2012

**Source:** “Погранвойска КР: Причиной расстрела 5 человек на посту стали конфликты между рядовым и сержантами (The Border Guards of the Kyrgyz Republic: The Reason for the shooting of 5 people at the border post was because of a conflict between the private and the sergeants),” AKI Press Summary, 23 August 2012. <http://svodka.akipress.org/news:129409/>

**OE Commentary:** *The following article about a private in the Kyrgyz Border Guards service is an example (though an extreme one) of a problem in the military and security services in Kyrgyzstan and in other Central Asian states. While these governments have worked to improve overall quality of life for soldiers and create more billets for contract soldiers, conscripts still make up a significant number of the ranks in the military and security forces, including the Border Guards. There have been a number of instances of conscripts fighting and being involved in hazing, particularly when they are posted to a different region of the country where social and other dynamics (like clan or regional affiliation) can cause tension.*

*The fights that do take place are not likely to make the news, unless there is a death as a result of it, which is a rare occurrence. This shooting comes at a time when there is already attention on hazing because of the incident at the Arkankergen border post in southeastern Kazakhstan, where 14 members of the Border Guards and one civilian were found murdered. The only survivor initially confessed to shooting his fellow soldiers, but later retracted his confession. Hazing was thought to play a part in the incident, though it is still not entirely clear what happened.*

*While this article mentions a conflict between soldiers as the reason for the incident, an op-ed (see: [http://www.gezitter.org/society/13564\\_ubiystvo\\_trezyim\\_chelovekom\\_pyateryih\\_chelovek\\_govorit\\_o\\_netrezvosti\\_samoy\\_armii/](http://www.gezitter.org/society/13564_ubiystvo_trezyim_chelovekom_pyateryih_chelovek_govorit_o_netrezvosti_samoy_armii/)) in a Kyrgyz newspaper suggested that hazing pushed the soldier to murder. Whatever circumstances caused the private to kill and later refuse to surrender, it appears that military and security forces in Central Asia still face an uphill battle to improve quality of life in the ranks. **End OE Commentary (Stein)***



KNB border guards. Photo by Guri SHEDIN, via <http://www.kazpravda.kz/k/1152243624/2011-08-18>

“Summary” voiced a preliminary version of the reasons for the shooting of 5 people at a border post in the Issyk-Kul region. As it was reported by the Press Service of the Border Guards of the GKNB (National Security Committee) on August 20, 2012 at the border post “Echkilitash” located in the Ak-Suu district of Issyk-Kul (Province), an incident occurred that resulted in the death of four contract servicemen and a family member.

The Balykchy (Issyk-Kul Province) garrison prosecutor brought charges against Private Kulbarak uulu Balbay for killing five people. After committing the crime, Private Balbay took his weapon and more ammunition and fled. On August 21 Private Balbay was found 55 km from the crime scene.

After warning shots and request to surrender, Private Balbay created a situation that threatened the lives of local residents and border guards trying to arrest him. As a result lethal force was used against Balbay. According to preliminary results of the investigation, the motive of the crime was a strained relationship between Private Balbay with sergeants on contract service.

[http://www.gezitter.org/society/13564\\_ubiystvo\\_trezyim\\_chelovekom\\_pyateryih\\_chelovek\\_govorit\\_o\\_netrezvosti\\_samoy\\_armii/](http://www.gezitter.org/society/13564_ubiystvo_trezyim_chelovekom_pyateryih_chelovek_govorit_o_netrezvosti_samoy_armii/)

<http://www.knews.kg/ru/action/20670/>

## Analyzing (Additional) Terrorism in Kazakhstan

20 August 2012

**Source:** Nurmukhanbetov, Miras. “Антитеррор по-казахстански: живыми не брать! ( Antiterrorism Kazakh Style : Don’t Take Them Alive!),” Guljan, 20 August 2012. <http://www.guljan.org/ru/news/komments/2012/August/2441>

**OE Commentary:** *Kazakhstan continues to deal with terrorism and other violent incidents; the place names listed at the beginning of the following article were the sites where a contingent of Border Guards was killed in May (Arkankergen), where an explosion took place at a house in a village near Almaty in June (Tausamaly), where 11 bodies were found in a national park in the Almaty Province in August (Aksay Gorge), and where a government security forces’ operation against suspected militants took place on 17 August (Baganashyl). The explosion in Tausamaly reportedly led to the operation in Baganashyl. There is no apparent connection among the other incidents.*

*Given what happened in 2011 in Kazakhstan, where several acts of terrorism took place in different parts of the country, it is not surprising to see analysis (and some speculation) like this. The article brings up an important point, that it is difficult to know more about the suspected militants when security forces eliminate them instead of making an arrest. One possible explanation comes from the results of past operations. During two operations in the past year security forces took several casualties against militants barricaded in an apartment and a house. While it may appear to be heavy-handed tactics of security forces in the Baganashyl operation, it is still not clear what kind of resistance the militants put up. Additionally, some of the same analysts in Kazakhstan previously pointed out that terrorists largely targeted police and security services in attacks in 2011. They did acknowledge (as they also do in this article) that there is more to the recent terrorism than just religion, but time will tell how accurate that assessment is. **End OE Commentary (Stein)***



Abilov Bulat by Mheidegger (Own work) [CC-BY-SA-3.0 (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0>) ], via Wikimedia Commons

Arkankergen, Tausamaly, Aksay Gorge, Baganashyl – Harbingers of something more?

**T**he battle of the National Security Committee’s (KNB) special forces team with unknown terrorists ended with the complete annihilation of the latter. Even those ignorant of the investigation and operation express doubt: was it really not necessary to take one of them alive? For the past year and a half almost fifty armed men (who in one way or another are connected to extremism) have been killed. During the same time 15 police officers were killed. We spoke with our panel of experts about this situation...

Bulat Abilov (co-chair of Azat – the National Social Democratic Party): The situation is very serious. No one can guarantee the safety of citizens. The leadership prefers to remain silent. Of course, we should congratulate Olympians, but you have to explain to people what is happening in the country. We are (only) told that one and then another band of terrorists is completely destroyed. However, make sure that at least one is taken alive. You can wait until they go out on the street, go around the city and so on.

Baltash Tursumbayev (former secretary of the Security Council): In general the fight against terrorism in the last quarter of a century in many countries, including in developed countries, has been brought to the forefront. I note that in the last 10 years all the responsibility falls on the president. It is (also) not only the concern of the authorities and law enforcement agencies, but all of society. If they killed all the terrorists in the Aktobe region, why did it (other incidents) happen in Taraz and then in Almaty? It means that in our country there is a breeding ground for terrorism and not just religious – in Kazakhstan there are other areas of discontent, and that should bother all of us.

Murat Telibekov (Head of the Union of Muslims of Kazakhstan): The situation is getting worse every month. I have reason to believe that terrorism and religious extremism are being used by factions in a fight for power. It will get worse, because the two clans are ready to fight to the death for it.

## What Reportedly False Report in Saudi Daily Means for Russia-Saudi Relations with Regard to Syrian Conflict

17 August 2012

**Source:** Elena Chernenko, “Россию вменяли во внутрисемейные дела Сирии. Новость о ранении брата Башара Асада была подана на чистом арабском, но голосом МИД РФ (Russia Dragged Into Syria’s Internal Family Affairs. News about Wounding of Bashar al-Assad’s Brother was Reported in Native Arabic, but with the Voice of Russian Foreign Affairs Ministry),” *Kommersant* (The Businessman), 17 August 2012. <http://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2002973>

**OE Commentary:** On 17 August *Kommersant* (The Businessman), a respected, nationally-distributed business daily, published an article about a reportedly fake interview the Saudi daily *Al Watan* (The Nation) had published with Mikhail Bogdanov, the Russian President’s special envoy to the Middle East.

Bogdanov supposedly announced in the interview, among other things, that Syrian President Bashar al-Assad’s brother, Maher al-Assad, who commands one of the most efficient divisions in the Syrian army, had been seriously wounded. *Kommersant*’s experts, however, say that the interview, which had been recorded, is with a native Arabic speaker and imposter who identifies himself as Bogdanov. The Russian Foreign Ministry denied the interview ever took place, and stated it is a “provocation” and part of a propaganda war against Russia.

Saudi King Abdullah had publically stated that the kingdom has a “moral obligation” to intervene in Syria. Riyadh has reportedly been arming Syria’s opposition for many months now. *Al Watan*, one of the most widely distributed newspapers in Saudi Arabia, sticks to its assertion that the interview was real.

For Saudi Arabia the fight against Assad is also a fight against Russia’s influence in the Middle East, which the Saudi kingdom fought to curtail throughout the Cold War by pouring billions of dollars in foreign and military aid to Middle Eastern countries from Morocco to Afghanistan.

*Kommersant*’s report about misinformation spread by Syrian opposition follows several others earlier in August, when, reportedly, both supporters and opponents of Assad hacked into the Reuters blog and Twitter account and posted false articles and tweets about the fighters’ victories and losses against Assad in Syria, including about the death of Saudi Arabia’s Foreign Minister, Prince Saud



Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Bogdanov, via <http://en.rian.ru/world/20120123/170907773.html>

Russia found itself in the center of another questionable story connected with the Syrian conflict. Saudi newspaper *Al Watan* published an interview with the Russian President’s special envoy to the Middle East and Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Bogdanov, who announced, among other things, that President Bashar al-Assad’s younger brother was seriously wounded. Smolensk Square denies this interview took place at all, referring to another “provocation against Moscow.” Interview author, Omar al-Zubeidi, continues to insist that he had talked with the diplomat. However, experts *Kommersant* consulted about the language are convinced: the audio recording posted online from *Al Watan* is of a native Arabic speaker, not a foreigner.

The man presented as Mikhail Bogdanov told *Al Watan* amazing things. For example, that in an attack on the Syrian security forces on July 18 the president’s brother Maher al-Assad was seriously injured. That he supposedly lost his legs and is near death. And this had made such an impression on Assad that he is still depressed. Considering that Maher al-Assad commands the 4th Armored Division - the most efficient in the Syrian army - this information was proudly disseminated on Tuesday by President Assad’s opponents.

A reaction from Smolensk Square followed on the same day.

## Continued: What Reportedly False Report in Saudi Daily Means for Russia-Saudi Relations with Regard to Syrian Conflict

*al-Faisal* (See: [http://blog.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/08/07/reuters\\_twitter\\_account\\_hacked\\_in\\_syrian\\_tug\\_of\\_war](http://blog.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/08/07/reuters_twitter_account_hacked_in_syrian_tug_of_war); also <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/08/15/net-us-hacking-reuters-saudi-idUSBRE87E0HU20120815>, and [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/08/03/reuters-hacked-syria\\_n\\_1739095.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/08/03/reuters-hacked-syria_n_1739095.html)).

The Reuters' reports led Foreign Policy to conclude that there is at least some credibility to the Russian government's claim of a "misinformation war" in Syria (See: [http://blog.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/08/15/saudi\\_newspaper\\_causes\\_kerfuffle\\_claims\\_russian\\_minister\\_said\\_assad\\_is\\_ready\\_to\\_go](http://blog.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/08/15/saudi_newspaper_causes_kerfuffle_claims_russian_minister_said_assad_is_ready_to_go)). If this is the case, the propaganda war is likely to continue in the coming months. *Kommersant* reported that Russian diplomats plan to launch an "offensive" to "correct" the situation with regard to Syria by reminding Assad's opponents of their "written commitments."

*Kommersant* provides another relevant insight into the Kremlin's perception of the situation in Syria, citing a source in the Russian Foreign Ministry who observes, "Moscow is losing the information standoff with the West over Syria." Whether or not this is the case, the growing hostility between Russia and Saudi Arabia, symbolized by a major Saudi paper close to the king publishing a fake interview, is an important footnote to this situation. **End OE Commentary (Borshchevskaya)**

Russian Foreign Ministry said that Mikhail Bogdanov hasn't spoken recently with *Al Watan* representatives. "We note with regret that the situation in Syria is becoming the object of a propaganda war, a number of whose participants do not hesitate to use dirty tactics," said deputy director of the Russian Foreign Ministry's Information and Press Department Maria Zakharova. *Kommersant's* source in Russian foreign ministry said that Mr. Bogdanov is "actually on vacation."

However, *Al Watan* continued to insist it was right. On Wednesday, the newspaper posted an audio recording of the interview, and yesterday – also a photo, where correspondent Omar al-Zubeidi, who according to *Al-Watan* conducted the interview, was featured, along with Mikhail Bogdanov. "Mr. Bogdanov and I have known each other for a long time, we met in Moscow and Sochi. I have his cell phone, which I called this past Sunday to interview him about Syria," told *Kommersant* Mr. al-Zubeidi, "Yes, I know that he's on currently on vacation. Mr. Bogdanov himself told me that he is vacationing in Greece. But I assure you, the conversation took place. And the recording that we have circulated is genuine. My ironclad rule is—record all conversations. As we speak, all our words are recorded."

However, the recording distributed by *Al Watan* raised questions among experts. Arabic speakers *Kommersant* interviewed were unanimous: the voice on the tape belongs to a person for whom Arabic is native. "This is pure Arabic. I do not hear any foreign accent," told *Kommersant* bureau chief of Al Jazeera TV channel in Moscow Zaur Sheozh, adding that he had never heard how Michael Bogdanov speaks Arabic.

*Kommersant's* source in the Foreign Affairs ministry is convinced, "There was deliberate provocation and disinformation." According to him, this story resembles recent Syrian opposition report about the murder of a Russian general who worked as an adviser in Syria's Ministry of Defense. Later it turned out that the "killed" General Vladimir Kuzheev returned from Damascus a long time ago and lives in Moscow (see *Kommersant* on August 9), and left the military two years ago. However, *Kommersant's* source in the Russian Foreign Ministry admitted: "Overall, Moscow is losing the information standoff with the West over Syria."

To correct the situation, an offensive on the Syrian track is called upon which, as *Kommersant* learned, Russian diplomats are planning on undertaking in a couple of days. Moscow intends to remind the West, the Arab monarchies of the Persian Gulf and other opponents of Bashar al-Assad about the agreements they themselves signed in Geneva on 30 June (see *Kommersant* on July 2). The Geneva communiqué doesn't mention any preconditions for beginning the transition process and national dialogue, and the responsibility for the ceasefire lies on both sides of the conflict. But Russia's Western and Arab partners have adopted a different position, leading the case for sanctions against Damascus, the introduction of no-fly and buffer zones. "Russia will remind them of their undertaken written commitments," said *Kommersant's* source.

Moscow will simultaneously try to influence the Syrian government. According to *Kommersant's* information, a high-level delegation from Damascus will come to the Russian capital next week: Deputy Prime Minister Jamil Qadri and national reconciliation affairs minister Heidar Ali. However, there's little reason to expect substantial results from this visit: most experts agree that the opportunity to reach a peaceful settlement of the Syrian conflict was missed.

## Armenia's New OSCE Envoy Argues Russia's Eurasian Union and CSTO are Key to Armenia's and Regional Security

**Source:** “Арташес Гегамян: Армения в Евразийском Союзе - важнейший фактор стабильности на Южном Кавказе (Artashes Geghamyan: Armenia in the Eurasian Union – Prime factor for South Caucasus stability),” *Informatskionnoye Aгенstvo Regnum (Information Agency Regnum)*, 18 August 2012. <http://регнум.рф/news/fd-abroad/iran/1562095.html#ixzz26AZs21Ko>

**OE Commentary:** *After Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan met with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow on 8 August, regional and Armenia's independent media and opposition reacted with strong concern over what they viewed as increased Russian influence in Armenia, which they perceive as a threat to Armenia's sovereignty (See: <http://kavkasia.net/Armenia/2012/1344924391.php>). In response, Artashes Geghamyan, Armenia's newly appointed OSCE delegation head, published an article on 18 August in Information Agency Regnum, dismissing these claims as “extraordinary emotional,” “poisonously irritable,” and expressed by “Armenia's enemies,” who fail to see Putin's commitment to peace in the Caucasus. Excerpts from the article are presented here.*

*Geghamyan is known for supporting Putin's Eurasian Union, an idea widely viewed by Western and regional analysts as an attempt to increase Russia's influence in its near abroad, which Moscow historically views as its “privileged sphere of influence.” Eurasian integration is a core element of Putin's foreign policy. This includes strengthening the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), a Russian-led military alliance that Moscow views as a regional NATO counterweight.*

*In his article Geghamyan argues that the Eurasian Union is key to stability in the South Caucasus, a sentiment Serzh*



18 August 2012

President Serzh Sargsyan [Public Domain], via <http://www.defense.gov/photos/newsphoto.aspx?newsphotoid=9623>

Ten days have passed since President Serzh Sargsyan's working trip to Moscow and his talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin... Reactions in electronic and print media, funded by various donors who are themselves dependent on the well-known power centers of world politics, were extraordinarily emotional and poisonously irritable. In the overwhelming majority, the essence of these publications came down to the idea that Russia has launched authoritative “political assault” in Armenia with a single purpose, namely... to pressure the Armenian Republic's government to persuade its leaders to join the Eurasian Union.

Judging by the confusion and incoherence of publications that came out after the Russia – Armenia summit, the anxiety of architects of the new order in the South Caucasus not only vanished, but increased. Let's try to understand what got them so worried...

Opponents of Armenia's entry into the Eurasian Union presumably are also unsettled by Serge Sargsyan's words in his opening remarks at a joint press conference with Vladimir Putin. The Armenian president said, in particular, “We believe that in matters of security in the South Caucasus, Russia plays a key role. This includes extremely important for Armenia constructive steps of the Russian leadership to resolve the Karabakh problem. We are grateful to you, Mr. Putin, for continued interest and effective steps in that direction.”

Irritability and confusion—this is how reactions from Armenia's enemies can be characterized to these unambiguous assessment of Russian president's role in providing a stable and peaceful environment in the Caucasus. Turkish MP from the Nationalist Movement Party, Director, Center for Strategic Studies (TURKSAM) Sinan Oğan, was

## Continued: Armenia's New OSCE Envoy Argues Russia's Eurasian Union and CSTO are Key to Armenia's and Regional Security

*Sargsyan expressed during his visit in Moscow, also thanking Putin for taking the "right steps" to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.*

*In the same vein Geghamyan supports in the article strengthening Armenia's role in the CSTO, and argues that 2010 extension of the Russian military base in Armenia until 2044 is in Armenia's security interests, sentiments Sargsyan expressed during his Moscow visit as well.*

*The concern in Armenia and the region, however, is that the CSTO agreement empowers Russia to veto any foreign base in a CSTO country, as the agreement makes it impossible for any individual country in the group to host a foreign military base on its territory without full consent from all other members. Uzbekistan left the alliance this July precisely because its leadership felt CSTO was encroaching on Uzbekistan's sovereignty.*

*Another issue that concerns opponents of Eurasian integration and the CSTO agreement is that just when Armenia agreed to extend Russian military base lease until 2044, Moscow had sold S-300 air defense systems to Azerbaijan, a country with which Armenia fought a war in the late 1980s-early 1990s over Nagorno-Karabakh, which remains an unresolved issue between the two countries. Sale of S-300s is seen in Armenia as double benefit for Russia—attaining influence in the Caucasus through Armenia and making money from S-300 sales, which also puts Azerbaijan in a better offensive position vis-à-vis Armenia.*

*Geghamyan's article should be understood in the context of these concerns over Eurasian and CSTO integration in both Armenia and the region. **End OE Commentary (Borshchevskaya)***

unable to hold back his emotions in an interview with Salam News. Information about this sad interview was posted on the website of IA REGNUM. "If Russia offers some sort of military assistance to Armenia, this will pull into conflict not only in Armenia, but also Russia, and other countries. If Russia, despite this, you still want to help Armenia, please help - generously allows Russia not some provincial commentator, but Sinan Oğan himself - but don't forget that when this war (Sinan Oğan has already decided that the war cannot be avoided - AG) will put Russia itself in a difficult position." We must assume that Sinan Oğan became enraged about Armenian president's assessment of the military component of the strategic partnership between Russia and Armenia, adherence to which was reaffirmed their briefing in Moscow, "Armenia is a staunch supporter of strengthening the CSTO structures and, as before, will make every effort aimed at improving our organization ... In 2010, the presence of the Russian military base in Armenia was extended. We believe that the presence of this base in the interest of our own safety. Protocol on the extension has also expanded the scope of application and database capabilities to threats Armenia's security. " And, of course, Mr. Sinan, as an analyst, made the appropriate conclusions from the answer to the question Vladimir Putin gave RIA Novosti on whether or not Russia had a plan of action in case of military aggression by Georgia in South Ossetia. "There was a plan, and is, in my opinion, it's no secret, that it is under the plan that the Russian side acted ..The plan was prepared by the General Staff somewhere in the end of 2006 or early in 2008 ... As part of this plan equipment was mobilized and so on and so forth ... " said the Russian president. There is especially no doubt that the General Staff in both the Russian Defense Ministry, and the CSTO there are well-developed plans to crush any military aggression against Armenia, same as any member-state of the CSTO. In this situation it is, without doubt, difficult to calm the angered, from realizing his own helplessness, Sinan Oğan.

## Russia's Military Housing Conundrum

29 June 2012

**Source:** “Бездомная жизнь солдата (The Homeless Life of a Soldier),” The Public Chamber Tribune, 29 June 2012. <http://top.oprf.ru/main/8227.html>

**OE Commentary:** *Western coverage of Russia's military often focuses on exposing the deteriorated state of the former Soviet fighting apparatus, with the implication that the lack of budgeting and technology are causing the degradation. While these issues are surely critical, other less-scrutinized problems are undermining the Russian military's readiness. The military housing problem is one that the Russian Ministry of Defense inherited from its Soviet predecessor.*

*Although the availability and quality of housing for Russian civilians have been improving in recent years, the situation for members of the armed forces still lags behind. Housing provided for both officers and enlisted ranges from barracks of variable livability to private apartments. Conscripted soldiers tend to have the most outdated facilities, while contract soldiers have been promised free and newer accommodations. The Ministry of Defense has begun offering draftees the opportunity to be assigned as near to their hometown as possible, perhaps as a means of improving morale and sharing the burden of housing with the civilian community.*

*The adjacent article explores the bureaucratic, financial, and infrastructural hindrances to providing better living conditions for the Russian military. It does not, however, address the overarching implications. Without access to safe and sanitary living quarters, service members are potentially subject to injury and frequent illness. Health concerns and disenchantment can negatively impact morale. These factors can detrimentally affect military readiness and are of paramount importance when evaluating the combat readiness of the Russian military.*

**End OE Commentary (Marcus)**



Renovated sleeping quarters for Russian soldiers. Photo by Denis Okrushin, via <http://twower.livejournal.com/720934.html>

The providing of housing for those serving in the military is one of the most important social problems for the Ministry of Defense. In recent years the number of those needing housing has strongly increased, however it is not rare to meet people who have been waiting 10-15 years for a promised apartment. Only patience and the army's familiarity with the discipline of standing in line keep the situation from growing into a large-scale social explosion.

The primary basis of legislation for providing those in military service with housing is codified in the federal law “About the status of those in military service.” The granting of free housing admittedly increases the attractiveness of contractual service. In essence, the government is pushing citizens toward military service, using the right to receive an apartment in the same way that private firms offer medical insurance and other kinds of benefits. Not providing for those in military service, the Ministry of Defense violates its own commitment to its employer, the Russian government.

Providing the construction for the necessary quantity of apartments has been unsuccessful for a long time. As a result, there are more than 100,000 people standing in line to receive housing. The war department did not fulfill the

## Continued: Russia's Military Housing Conundrum

presidential plan for providing housing for all military members by 2011, having explained the lack of success as an inexact calculation of those in need. The task of eliminating the wait-list and being able to provide improved housing within the same year a member declares his need was extended to 2013. For the plan's realization considerable means were allocated from the budget, however, experts are not certain that the question will be solved by that time.

The Accounting Bureau's testing determined that about 60,000 apartments purchased to provide housing to military members are empty. Homes are not inhabited for different reasons: because of poor quality construction; the builder's lack of agreement with local authorities; the problem with infrastructure—the lack of neighborhood markets, playgrounds, schools, and medical clinics. As a result, apartments that have already been built are already deteriorating, and those military members waiting in line cannot be discharged, meanwhile receiving monthly payments from the budget. Unfortunately, the issue of providing housing to those in military service often is not resolved, even through a favorable court decision. The Public Chamber receives many similar requests.

Especially striking is the problem of providing housing for service members expecting to receive an apartment in Moscow. The cost of a square meter is high in the capitol, and the Ministry of Defense somewhat frequently prefers to sell the Moscow apartment and provide a couple of wait-listed people housing in an apartment in another region. One of the ways to resolve this problem is construct homes in the Ministry of Defense's territories, allowing the cost of a square meter of housing to lessen markedly.

Every year about 10,000 separating personnel expand the line. In connection with this, the issue is never definitively resolved. However, in this case, if the Ministry of Defense is to succeed at reducing the line, every year it will have to build, for there are not many square meters of housing space available. Unfortunately, the process of providing constant housing for service members is encountering a huge quantity of obstacles.

(Guest expert perspectives supplement the article but are omitted here for brevity.)

## RELATED LINK

### Russian housing : government efforts to **fulfill the constitutional right to decent and affordable housing**

This study analyzes the efficacy of Russian government initiatives to address the endemic housing crisis in Russia since the end of Communism. Beginning with a background of Soviet residential practices, the paper covers housing privatization and the advent of the mortgage system in the early 1990s. The study additionally focuses on policies and programs instituted during the Putin administration, including the Russian National Projects, and concludes with an analysis of the political, economic, and social implications of the Russian government's handling of the housing crisis

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## The Great Game: Now Online

July 2012

**Source:** Dmitri Popov, “Большая игра: теперь онлайн (The Great Game: Now Online)”, National Defense, No.# 7, July 2012. <http://www.oborona.ru/includes/periodics/maintheme/2012/0604/19578571/detail.shtml>

**OE Commentary:** Many modern digital technologies over the past half century originated in the US. Though they now have a global reach, US firms such as Microsoft, Google, Apple, Facebook, Twitter, etc. are considered by many to be American tools of influence. As the excerpted adjacent article makes clear, some Russian analysts maintain that the US has been using these tools to advance its national interests around the world, to now include Central Asia.

According to this perspective, Washington exploits the dissemination and use of digital technology to spread an ‘American-friendly’ message throughout the region. Given their own long history of controlling the free flow of information, Russian analysts maintain that US government officials manipulate information to achieve geopolitical objectives.

In the Russian mode of thinking, the medium (digital technology) carries an inherent pro-US message.

The excerpted article below is from the Russian journal National Defense (журнал Национальная оборона, <http://www.oborona.ru/>), edited by Igor Korotchenko, an influential commentator on military affairs in Russia. (See his blog at: <http://i-korotchenko.livejournal.com/>) This journal retains many of the premises from the Cold War, chief of which is that the West/US remains a clear and present danger to Russia. While the article describes the dangers these new technologies present to the countries of Central Asia, the likely target audience is the Russian political leadership.

As article points out, as the primary



The Caucasus and Central Asia - Political Map [Public Domain], via Wikimedia Commons

U.S. is trying to destabilize the situation in Central Asia by digital diplomacy

In recent years, within international relations, the U.S. has been steadily increasing the importance of so-called digital diplomacy (Digital Diplomacy, Net Diplomacy, Public Diplomacy Web 2.0), which replaces the traditional channels for communicating information through radio, television and the press. Among the objectives of digital diplomacy include the formation of the youth protest movements through social networks, mobilizing groups of dissidents through the blogosphere, gathering information about the balance of political forces, and propaganda by transfer of broadcasting in an interactive environment.

Some experts have called Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, the “Godmother” of the new approach, when in the beginning of 2010, she gathered the heads the largest private Internet companies (i.e. Google, Facebook, Twitter, AT&T) to realize these objectives. Earlier, from 2006-2008, the State Department, the CIA, the Defense Ministry and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) combined efforts to establish over fifteen departments to work with the foreign Internet audience, specifically for the analysis of national and international social networks, blogs, chats, and sharing with them positive information about the U.S. Since that time, the power and scope of these departments have only increased.

Digital Diplomacy, as a way to influence people of other countries via the Internet, is focused on two target groups - active youth and opposition sectors of society (dissidents, journalists, etc.). This method proved effective in the spring of 2011 in Tunisia and Egypt, when using the Internet and mobile communications, groups of young people were mobilized for mass demonstrations. The free flow of information was the catalyst of these protests. An analysis of the current situation in Central Asia (CA) shows that the region has formed a favorable environment for the application of Western modern

## Continued: The Great Game: Now Online

*developer of this technology, the US wants to ensure that the Internet and related social media tools remain free of foreign government interference. This 'freedom' will guarantee that Washington will establish the rules and that it will be able to control the flow of information. Russia proposes that this 'freedom' should be monitored, supervised, and, where necessary, controlled by regional governments.*

*Besides Internet control, to counteract US information dominance the article recommends that Russian authorities adopt policies similar to those employed by the US. For instance, in the battle for Central Asian hearts and minds, Russian IT companies should link up with Russian governmental agencies to create Kremlin-friendly news and social media platforms. Given the many means of transmitting information the US is using to get its message across (radio, TV, YouTube, blogs, etc.), the article also recommends that Russia must employ a similar multi-vector approach. Finally, according to the article, the Russian government should also sponsor training programs in the region to instruct young activists on the latest IT tools and techniques. **End OE Commentary (Finch)***

schemes of information to influence the type of scenarios which previously worked in North Africa and the Middle East.

These conditions include: the vulnerability of Central Asian regimes, centered on one leader (i.e. long-time political leaders like Nazarbayev in Kazakhstan and Karimov in Uzbekistan, who have headed their respective countries since 1989); the spread of rumors about the power ambitions of presidents and relatives and clan-control over lucrative sectors of the economy; explosive population growth rates, with a predominance of young people (more than half of the population of Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan are among young people aged up to 25 years); and a strong social differentiation and high levels of poverty (in Egypt - about 40%, in Tajikistan - 45%).

Finally, the main thing - the ever-increasing role of the Internet and modern means of communication in the region. According to the international organization Internet World Stats, by early 2011, users of the "world wide web" in Egypt counted at 21.2% and in Tunisia - 34% of the population. At the same time, their share in Kazakhstan has already reached 34.3%, and in Kyrgyzstan - 39%. In this case, the actual number of users may be even higher due to those who go online via mobile. For example, in Tajikistan, according to the local Association of Internet Providers, the total number of persons with access to the network is more than 1.6 million people, of which only about 700 thousand (9.3% of the population) are stationary points, and the rest use the mobile Internet. It is predicted that, given the wide access to mobile communications (in the same rather poor Tajikistan, they provide services to about 80% of the population) and the lowering of the cost of communication devices and services to mobile operators in Central Asia, will also result in an "explosive" growth in the number of internet subscribers. The digital access will provide more critical information that does not correspond to official estimates, which in turn, will decrease the threshold of loyalty to local regimes.

In general, all of this creates a positive background for the United States to manipulate the information space in the region to meet their strategic objectives. It is already apparent that there is gradually increasing activity of U.S. Digital Diplomacy in Central Asia, which is carried out here on several fronts.

### 1. Protection of "Internet freedom"

Realizing that the main condition for effective digital diplomacy is continual citizens' access to information technology in foreign countries, the White House has focused considerable effort on the promotion of global "Internet freedom." For instance, when pressure was exerted by the Chinese authorities on the company Google in the winter of 2010, provided a good excuse to start a global American program to protect open access to the network. In her memorable speech on January 21, 2010 Secretary of State Hillary Clinton compared the introduction of restrictions by individual countries on the Internet with the Berlin Wall of our time, referring to the group of abusers on the "free Internet": China, Iran, North Korea and Uzbekistan. Moreover, according to the annual U.S. State Department report on human rights in the world, other countries of Central Asia are also at risk, to a greater or lesser extent, creating barriers in cyberspace. The most common "violations," according to Americans: monopolization of telecommunications services by state companies, blocking and cyber-attacks against the opposition and news resources, control of e-mail, difficult procedures for registration of sites, including the accreditation as media; government propaganda on the Internet and in some cases - the requirements of user personalization.

## ***Continued: The Great Game: Now Online***

Thus, in early 2010, the U.S. Embassy in CA received an unambiguous signal to step up work on promotion of “Internet freedom” in the region. The task assigned to the diplomatic corps - to provide easy access to local audiences to network resources (in particular, the opposition and the West), thus employing the dominant position of the U.S. in the global information space. In practice this meant, among other things, actively responding to violations of diplomatic missions of the “rights” of users.

### **2. Extension of interactive area of American broadcasting**

In 2002-2004, in response to the use of the web by terrorist organizations for recruiting and promoting extremism, American administration officials developed TV and radio stations on the Internet. They created about ten new stations and channels for working with the public through a network of overseas stations, mainly in the Middle East (Alhurra Arabic, Persian News Network, Free Iraq, Free Afghanistan, Voice of America in the Kurdish language, etc.). They also introduced the practice of placing the individual programs for wider exposure on popular video services such as Youtube.

Although recent U.S. efforts to promote its online interactive projects concentrated mainly around the Middle East, some broadcast resources were created in the neighboring states of Central Asia. They launched an online version of the American channel “Voice of America” in Uzbek. When the U.S. Information Service, “Radio Liberty,” programs were banned in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, they moved them to Internet access. Currently, on the Internet, there are sites of “Radio Liberty” in 28 languages in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, including all the state languages of the republics of Central Asia.

### **3. Promoting youth protest movement through social networks**

The use of social media (Facebook, Dipepedia, Twitter, LinkedIn™, Communities @ State) as a tool of diplomacy is stated expressly in U.S. State Department documents, including the strategic use of information technology plan for 2011-2013. The same plan included some technical measures to increase the efficiency of the U.S. diplomatic missions with digital resources (creation of an interdepartmental data exchange platform Foreign Affairs Network (FAN), the introduction of “cloud” technologies, etc.). As an indicator to measure the success of digital diplomacy, the document proposes indicators such as growth in the number of social network users and the time spent by computer users.

Even before the events of the “Arab Spring” in 2011, social networking tools for mobilizing the protest potential of young people have shown their effectiveness in Colombia and Mexico, where they have helped organized mass demonstrations against

the FARC terrorist movement and the drug mafia, as well as in Iran and Moldova, where they helped to organize waves of street protests against the election results. In Central Asia, in response to protests in April 2010, the Bakiyev government blocked access to the Internet and mobile communication in Bishkek and Talas, but this does not help him to stay in power.

Catching the existing trend, the U.S. administration is taking steps to unite under its reign Internet activists from different countries, establishing contact with youth leaders and providing them with the help of social networks, critical of international regimes and organizations. In late 2008, the U.S. government held a conference in New York, which brought together young bloggers and users, and set up a permanent organization “Union of Youth Movements” (Alliance for Youth Movements), the purpose of which is the use of youth activities in the network to change the socio- the political situation in foreign countries. Among other things, today it this group which is monitoring the Internet and searching for activists in Central Asia.

### **4. Revitalization of dissidents through the blogosphere and online journalism**

In autumn 2010, the State Department launched a Civil Society 2.0, where technical experts from the United States provided training for members of opposition and dissident groups from other countries with knowledge how to create blogs, websites, groups, social networking, and the use of special software. Similar and closely-related projects (“technological camps”, “serious games”, “shadow Internet”) are aimed, above all, to work with the opposition from China and Iran. However, some Tajik journalists who recently returned from U.S. training, were also taught ways to send and receive encrypted data (where they were supplied with special programs and keys), “unwinding” of pages on the internet, to overcome blocking traffic systems, and in case of overlapping network links, algorithm tools to set up an “Alternative internet” and independent mobile networks.

In Central Asia, training programs for bloggers and “independent” online journalists engaged in a famous American NGO Internews Network. In July 2010, the U.S. Embassy in Kyrgyzstan organized a series of seven-week workshops in which 123 young activists from different parts of the country learned a network of journalism skills: creating websites, injecting internet photos and video taken by phones and other portable devices, search and management of controversial issues of public companies against the government with the use of modern means of communication. Subsequently, 18 of the most active participants in the program were sent on a press tour around Lake Issyk-Kul on a bus with the title “Cyber Friendship Machine.” We must

## Continued: The Great Game: Now Online

assume that Internews did not accidentally choose Kyrgyzstan as the location for its experiment, where young people aged 14 to 35 years comprise 48% of the population, and where Internet reports can easily stir up public opinion. In the summer of 2010, using this local network of provocations, including video footage of scenes of abuse and killings on ethnic grounds, significantly increased the degree of the Kyrgyz-Uzbek conflict in the south.

### Russian Response

Thus, the use of new forms of Washington informational impact on the population of Central Asia has become a reality today. The task of Moscow is to arrest the growing potential of the digital U.S. diplomacy as a tool of possible destabilization near the Russian border. Government institutions together with experts and stakeholders from neighboring countries should develop a system of asymmetric responses to such attempts.

Among these measures are:

- Establishing an effective bundle “state and Internet business.” Russian diplomacy must build a mechanism for interacting with large Russian Internet companies, including search engines and social networks have proved their international competitiveness and yet maintain its leadership position in the Central Asian segment of the Internet.

- Introduction to the Russian foreign policy practice of modern information techniques, the development of Russian digital diplomacy. It is advisable to adapt to the needs of our diplomacy the international best practice utilization of the “world wide web”, including: the creation of the structure of the foreign affairs agencies of specialized units for networking; online tracking of the diplomatic missions; search, train and cooperate with locals to develop a positive sentiment towards Russia foreign citizens; grants to promising online projects to promote the foreign policy of Russia; capacity of interactive broadcasting content with translation into other languages; the creation of research centers for the study of the state and problems of online sphere of foreign countries and foreign policy orientation of the Internet community, etc....

- Further progress on a global and regional level, on the principles of fair use of the Internet as an alternative to the American concept of “Internet freedom.” In this regard, the following are relevant to recognize such steps by Russia as preparation of a draft international convention “On ensuring international information security” and the “International Code of Conduct for Information Security,” the intensification of cooperation in this field with China and CSTO countries, held in Moscow on the Information Security Forum etc. This work should be continued.

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



## Russia Rejects CFE Censure

4 September 2012

Source: *Interfax*, “Russia Rules Out Return To Conventional Arms Treaty,” 4 September 2012.

*OE Commentary: Toward the end of the Cold War the USSR (Warsaw Pact) and the West (NATO) began to discuss limiting the amount of conventional weapons deployed in Europe. By 1990 they had hammered out what became known as the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) treaty, which set limits on specific conventional weapons (e.g., tanks, artillery, aircraft). The treaty also limited personnel and contained mutual inspection procedures to ensure compliance.*

*Besides economic considerations, part of the rationale behind these discussions was the belief that fewer weapons on the continent would reduce the likelihood of armed conflict. The treaty and subsequent negotiations appeared to become moot after the collapse of the USSR and Russia's westward leaning foreign policy in the early 1990s. Subsequent modifications were made to the agreement, but by 1999 altered geopolitical realities hindered final ratification of the treaty (i.e., Russia was upset at NATO expansion and would not agree to remove all of its military forces from Moldova and Georgia).*

*From the Kremlin's perspective the US and NATO took advantage of Russia's relative weakness during the 1990s to strengthen their conventional military position in Europe. Besides enlarging the alliance (to include former republics of the USSR), the US and NATO have undertaken unilateral military action without UN approval. Even more troubling for Moscow, the US appears determined to field elements of its ballistic missile defense system in Eastern Europe, conceivably weakening Russia's strategic retaliatory capability.*



Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, Blue = members, Red = Resigning. Map by MoRsE [CC-BY-SA-3.0 (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>)], via Wikimedia Commons

**M**oscow, 4 September: There can be no return to the old Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE), the Russian Foreign Ministry has said.

“It should be clear to everyone that there is and can be no return to the old schemes, and that one should talk about a fundamentally new accord which would take present-day realities into account. Nonetheless, unfounded reproaches are once again being hurled. We are in effect being accused of unwillingness to act to the detriment of our own interests,” says a Foreign Ministry press release issued on Tuesday [4 September].

This was the Russian Foreign Ministry's response to the 2011 Adherence to and Compliance with Arms Control, Nonproliferation, and Disarmament Agreements and Commitments report published by the US Department of State on 31 August and the separate reports on compliance with the CFE Treaty, the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the new START treaty.

“In its report, the US State Department continues to complain about Russia's noncompliance with the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE). Our 2007 moratorium on compliance with the obligations under this treaty is described as “a wrong step”, even though the US side itself, in the form of its previous administration, did everything it could to leave us with no other option,” the Russian Foreign Ministry stressed.

“All this cannot but cast doubt on the sincerity of the assurances received from Washington about its readiness to proceed together with Russia towards agreement on all the issues relating to conventional weapons in Europe on a mutually acceptable basis,” the press release says.

The Russian Foreign Ministry also notes that the report mentions Russian military presence in Moldova and Georgia as an “unresolved issue”. “If our US colleagues intend once again to weave the subject of conflicts into the fabric of new talks on conventional

## Continued: Russia Rejects CFE Censure

*Russian officials maintain that the limits and constraints contained in earlier versions of this treaty are no longer applicable today. In the Kremlin calculus Russia does not have armed forces stationed in Georgia, but rather in the new independent states of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Similarly, Russian forces located in Transnistria (Eastern Moldova) cannot be considered on foreign soil until the ultimate political status of this enclave is determined.*

*The timing of this Foreign Ministry demarche is curious, coming out more than a year after the State Department report which challenged Russia on various compliance issues. While some of the delay likely stems from normal bureaucratic procedure, Putin's return as Russian president could be a more feasible explanation. The tone of the referenced article reflects Putin's assertion that Washington is no longer the sole arbiter of global conduct and that Russia will pursue an independent foreign policy. **End OE Commentary (Finch)***

weapons, they knowingly doom them to failure; all the more so if US negotiating positions are based on the non-recognition of the new political realities in the Caucasus region," the Foreign Ministry says.

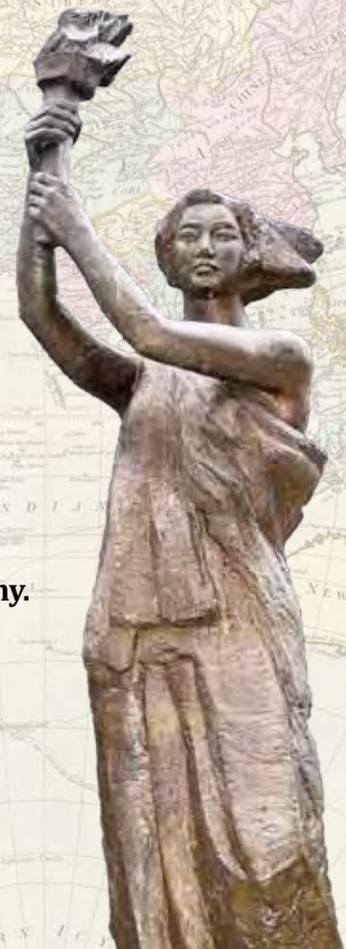
"On the whole, we regard the latest publication of the State Department report in which crusty old grievances are laid at Russia's door as counterproductive. We believe that it is more sensible to resolve issues that arise in the implementation of arms control agreements at bilateral consultations between experts, where one cannot get away with unfounded allegations," the press release says.

## 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>



## Rebuilding Russian Defense

31 August 2012

**Source:** Aleksandr Kots, “Russian Federation Security Council Secretary Nikolay Patrushev: К 2020 году Россия может войти в пятерку самых развитых стран (Russian May Be Among the Five Most Developed Countries by 2020),” *Komsomolskaya Pravda Online*, 31 August 2012.

**OE Commentary:** Over the next decade Russian leaders plan to spend a considerable amount of money modernizing their armed forces and military infrastructure. As believers in ‘realpolitik,’ Kremlin officials maintain that the country must possess a strong military to defend against foreign threats and protect Russian interests. As the excerpted article points out, restoring Russia’s military-industrial complex is a key component of this rearmament plan. According to some Russian leaders, investing in modern, state-of-the-art research institutes and manufacturing facilities will allow Russia to not only produce weapons to defend the Motherland, but also to provide spin-off technology and products for the civilian sector.

There are huge obstacles to realizing this plan. To name but a few: much of the old Soviet infrastructure has deteriorated over the past two decades; many of the experienced engineers and instructors have retired and there is a shortage of well-trained cadre; investment and pricing mechanisms for research and development and new equipment have yet to be firmly established (thus encouraging corruption). Even with all the great-power rhetoric, the Russian military-industrial complex still lacks both the incentives and guarantees necessary to encourage innovation within their arms industry.

Defense rearmament has been a priority for the past decade, and as the adjacent article makes clear, additional funding has resulted in greater production of some military equipment. Russia’s Security Council Secretary, Nikolay Patrushev, posits that if Kremlin production plans are fully realized, “Russia has every chance of joining the top five economically-developed countries by 2020.” For the foreseeable future Russian leaders will continue to maintain that military power is the chief criterion for measuring a country’s strength and position in the world. **End OE Commentary (Finch)**



The Secretary of the Security Council, Nikolay Patrushev during his bilateral meeting with NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen. Photo by NATO, via <http://www.nato.int>

**A**t the end of a session on the issue of increasing the effectiveness of the work of the defense-industrial complex (OPK), the Security Council’s secretary gave an interview to *Komsomolskaya Pravda*.

**[Kots]** Nikolay Platonovich, the Russian OPK faces a rather ambitious goal -- reequip the Army with modern weapons by 70 percent by 2020. Will we manage to do this?

**[Patrushev]** For a number of reasons, our OPK has missed several cycles at once in its modernization over the last 30 years. It is essential that we make a breakthrough in the next 10 years if we want to regain leadership throughout the entire spectrum of basic military technologies. Therefore, taking into consideration an analysis of the possible challenges and threats to the state, Russian President Vladimir Putin has designated three priority goals for the OPK.

Rearming is one of them. It should primarily affect nuclear-deterrence systems, aerospace defense, communications, reconnaissance, command and control, electronic warfare, aviation, precision-guided weapons, and individual outfitting.

The second matter is the formation of scientific-technical groundwork,

## ***Continued: Rebuilding Russian Defense***

which would support the development of competitive military products.

Third is the creation of a new manufacturing base, with which it would be possible to implement advanced technical solutions that are not behind their world counterparts. Unprecedented funding has been appropriated for these goals -- more than 22 trillion rubles.

Even under the conditions of the recent financial-economic crisis, more than 270 billion rubles were appropriated from the federal budget to support OPK organizations for the period 2007-2011. State-support measures having an investment character, mainly through the mechanism of accomplishing 11 federal targeted programs, were actively used. As a result, the reconstruction and creation of 181 manufacturing facilities and an experimental base were fully carried out. Around 75 percent of the investment went to the acquisition of new equipment to replace obsolete and worn-out units, modernization, and improvements in experimental-stand and test equipment.

As a result, the volume of production increased in 2009 by 4.3 percent compared to the level of 2008, and in 2010 it grew by 14 percent compared to the analogous period of the preceding year. In 2011, the increase in the total amount of OPK production amounted to around 10 percent.

**[Kots]** In the West, they are already talking about the militarization of our industry...

**[Patrushev]** One should note that the effectiveness of the updated OPK will have a healthy effect on the civilian sector. It will ensure the development of important sectors such as metallurgy, machine building, the chemical and electronics industries, information/telecommunications, nanotechnologies, healthcare...

More than 33 percent of the OPK's products are for civilian purposes; they are also created using dual-use technologies and are in demand in important sectors such as transport, communications and telecommunications, and energy. This is a very important factor for the innovation development of all spheres of our economy. Russia has every chance of joining the top five economically-developed countries by 2020.

**[Kots]** But is it possible to ensure the accomplishment of all the goals through federal-budget funding alone?

**[Patrushev]** It would be desirable for this not to be true, especially considering the necessity of resolving a large number of social and economic issues. Therefore, issues of the effective implementation of private-state partnership mechanisms are urgent today as never before. At the same time, private companies that are ready to invest their money and technologies in the development and series manufacture of weapons do not have information about the needs of the OPK in attracting private business and investment. It is no secret that the defense theme is a rather closed sphere, because of which the exchange of innovation technologies between the defense and civilian sectors of the economy is difficult. It is necessary to form new principles for the exchange of scientific-technical information and review the obsolete methods for protecting it. Of course, no one intends to eliminate the regulations supporting secrecy requirements. But they need to be to the benefit and not to the detriment of enterprises that want to participate in the performance of the defense order. It is essential to create conditions, under which the financial and innovation potential of private companies becomes an additional source of technological breakthroughs capable of radically changing our defense sector.

**[Kots]** Do we also plan to change it thanks to foreign weapons models?

**[Patrushev]** We did not plan and are not planning to equip our Armed Forces en masse with Western military-equipment models. At the same time, even the most developed countries in a scientific-technological sense import individual weapons models as well as the materials and technologies used in their production. Such an approach is optimal. On the one hand, urgent issues are effectively resolved, and on the other this stimulates national producers. Individual purchases of imported weapons and military equipment are made in order to conduct tests on them. We want to obtain new technologies and the knowledge necessary for developing series manufacture of military products that not only are not behind, but exceed their Western counterparts in their capabilities.

### **FROM KP's FILES**

1,353 organizations and enterprises, in which around 2 million persons work and which are located in 64 Russian Federation administrative entities, are on the consolidated register of OPK organizations.

Forty-five percent of the total amount of OPK production is for military purposes, and 22 percent of its products are manufactured for export under the Russian Federation's military-technical cooperation with foreign states.

## Russia and China vs. Star Wars

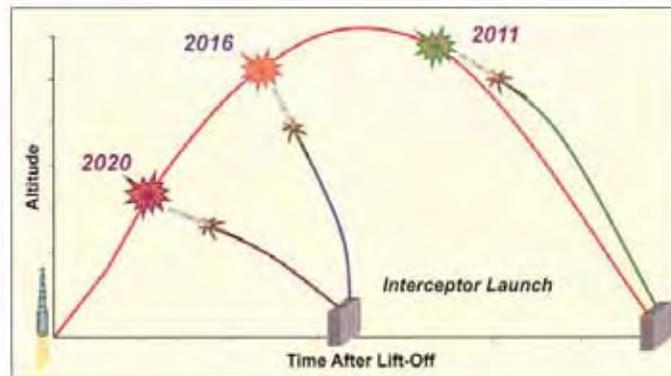
24 August 2012

**Source:** Aleksey Polubota, “Рискнут ли Россия и Китай дружить против США? (Could Russia-China Risk Joining Efforts To Counter the US?), Will Russia and China Risk Palling Up Against the United States? The Building of an American Missile-Defense System in Southeast Asia Could Alter the World Geopolitical Situation,” *Svobodnaya Pressa*, 24 August 2012.

**OE Commentary:** As detailed in an earlier edition of the OEW (December 2011), Russian leaders remain concerned with US plans to field a ballistic missile defense (BMD) system. In the Kremlin calculations, such a system could ultimately neutralize or degrade Russia’s ability to maintain a strategic balance of power with the US. Kremlin leaders do not believe that the system is designed to protect against a ‘rogue state’ missile threat (e.g., North Korea or Iran). According to some Russian strategists, given the technological advantages of the US, a robust BMD system would ultimately allow American leaders to pursue their goal of “global domination” without concern for possible retaliation.

Faced with such a dire threat, the adjacent (excerpted) article suggests that Russia should consider allying itself with China to counter Washington’s plans. Such an alliance would not only help to maintain the integrity of Russia’s nuclear deterrent forces, but could also stymie US plans for pivoting toward Asia to restrain China’s growing military might. The two countries could expand their military cooperation, pooling their efforts to penetrate the US global BMD system.

Not all Russian analysts, however, believe that an alliance with China is the best response to countering the US BMD system. Some Russians see a potential danger in sharing sensitive data with their increasingly assertive southern neighbor. Moreover, as the article points out, Russia is wary of repeating the mistake it made when the ‘Star Wars’ concept was first announced in the 1980s. These analysts maintain that countering the BMD system is not likely to serve as a strong basis for a Russian-Chinese military alliance, and could likely be a US ploy to weaken their economies. **End OE Commentary (Finch)**



Graphic of BMD timeline and capabilities. Image via <http://www.mda.mil>

The United States will be expanding missile defenses not only in Europe but in Southeast Asia also. This follows from a Wall Street Journal report. The building of new radars in Southern Japan and on the Philippines is seemingly geared to an intensification of supervision of the fractious and unpredictable North Korea. But American military experts are making no secret of the fact that the missile-defense system will in the future mainly contain the growing military might of China.

“North Korea is at the center of our rhetoric, but the reality is such that we are in the long term considering China also,” the publication quotes missile-defense expert Steven Hildreth.

Even today the Americans may monitor the air space of a significant part of the Celestial Kingdom, Taiwan included.

The expert says that the United States is laying the foundations for regional missile defenses, which could combine American systems with those of Japan, South Korea, and Australia.

Today, though, the Americans have hastened to put out an official statement that their missile-defense system is not directed against China. But contemporary history has shown clearly how much such assurances are worth.

The Chinese Defense Ministry is not commenting on the US plans directly but on Thursday it issued an admonitory note, which called on all actors to avoiding upsetting global strategic stability.

Against this background a number of experts have begun to say that the time has come when Russia and China need to be thinking seriously about palling up against America. Is such a Russo-Chinese alliance possible and what sort of risks would it entail for our country?

“Russia and China should pool their efforts to build a system for penetrating American missile defenses,” Konstantin Sivkov, vice president of the Academy of Geopolitical Problems, believes.

“The US missile-defense system which is currently being deployed in the Far East

## ***Continued: Russia and China vs. Star Wars***

threatens both Russia and China. The point is that the United States is building a global missile-defense system.

“Russia, as you know, attempted unsuccessfully to reach agreement with the Americans on joint monitoring of the air space. The attempts to entice Europe and build something together with them are obviously futile. Europe is in this global game acting the part of an extra, making its territory available for American interceptors. The European countries have long not been fully independent in decision-making. And I don’t believe that anything will change in this respect in the foreseeable future.

“The picture is entirely different when it comes to China. It is an independent power center. When it comes to confronting American missile defenses, China and Russia undoubtedly could and should unite in order to act more effectively. Joint political statements, the building of new arms systems capable of equalizing the missile-defense system, and even the imposition of economic sanctions against the United States and its allies could be set in motion.

“The formation of a full-fledged Russia-China military-political alliance could sober up many hotheads in the United States and not only force them to suspend the fielding of missile defenses in Southeast Asia but also to give thought to renouncing global domination.”

SP: Does the level of trust between our countries permit us to agree to such an alliance?

[Sivkov] In policy the question of trust is highly relative. Confidence arises when there are mutual interests. China and ourselves have them. Since the pretensions of the United States to world domination are a threat to both countries. Neither Russia nor China can confront this threat on its own. This is why our countries will be forced to counteract American expansion together. And it is this dependence that could be a guarantee of the formation of quite a durable alliance.

SP: It is known that China has not given an all that scrupulous account of itself in military-technical cooperation with us. It purchases one or two specimens of our modern weapons, copies them, and organizes its own mass manufacture....

[Sivkov] I may say that there’s nothing special in such Chinese policy. They are behaving perfectly rationally. The USSR adhered to a similar policy in the 1930s. We purchased small quantities of equipment in Europe, adapted it “for ourselves,” and organized mass manufacture. Even in the celebrated T-34 tank there are ideas borrowed from other countries.

Why we are today purchasing in Italy components and assembling Iveco armored cars on our territory, I cannot say. Our equipment is not one bit inferior.

SP: Might it not be that China would in the development of missiles penetrating missile defenses take our technology and then give us the brush-off?

[Sivkov] Yes, this is possible if the cooperation is incorrectly organized. This is why the production has to be interdependent. As was the case with India. We provided our technology, they, theirs. The good BrahMos missile was obtained as a result.

If we build together with China a common system of missile defenses, we need to intelligently locate the air and space monitoring stations so that China always be in need of our data.

Aleksandr Shatilov, deputy director of the Center for Political Trends, believes that friendship with China is a risky business.

“China now figures in many American documents as the main strategic adversary of the United States.

“The increased might of the Celestial Kingdom greatly unsettles the Americans. But building a missile-defense system in the Far East not in words but in deed is a very costly pleasure. In addition, offensive weapons are perfected far more rapidly, as a rule, than defensive weapons. This is why organizing a fixed-site missile-defense system in Southeast Asia means for the United States a risk of throwing money to the wind. I sometimes have the impression that the United States specially throws out various pieces of information in order to force its potential adversaries, China and Russia, to spend money on the development of new arms to the detriment of the civilian economy. We observed something of the sort during the cold war of the USSR and the United States, when ‘star wars’ was announced to the world.

“An alliance of Russia and China is possible only tactically--we have a number of conflict areas both in the economy and in policy. We may be united only by a serious external threat. And signs of it are noticeable. The United States is currently engaged in quite active expansion in the Middle East, duping one regime after another. I believe that after China spurned the offer from the United States to take part in a ‘Big Two,’ its rapprochement with Russia is possible. Specially since our countries are now acting quite concertedly in the UN Security Council. But nor have the contradictions gone anywhere either--we need to keep a weather eye open, lest we acquire an enemy instead of an ally.”

SP: Is Russia in some way capable of confronting the “missile-defense expansion” of the United States on its own?

[Shatilov] We should upgrade our missile-defense system. Some things are being done here. New S-600 systems have appeared. We need to perfect the offensive weapons that could penetrate the American missile-defense system also. But it is important not to succumb to militarist intoxication here, not allow the peaceful sectors of the economy to suffer.